

ROYAL AIR FORCE NARRATIVE

(First Draft)

THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA

JUNE 1941

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AIR MINISTRY.

THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA

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CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS

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MAP:

THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA

CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS

1941

June 8                    Invasion of Syria

June 21                  Capture of Damascus

July 4                    Capture of Palmyra

July 12                   Vichy Surrender

## THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA

### SECTION I

#### THE PROLOGUE TO THE CAMPAIGN

There was one great difference between the Syrian campaign and other campaigns of the war. In other campaigns with the exception of the Madagascar operations, we were opposed to the Axis powers and our object was to prevent our enemy from occupying territory and to defeat his forces. In Syria we were opposed, not to the Axis, but to the Vichy French. When the Vichy Government accepted its armistice with the Germans we acquiesced in that decision, in so far as we did not attempt - what at that date we were in no position to do - forcibly to challenge the Vichy rule in the French territory where it was able to impose itself. In Syria, as elsewhere throughout the French Empire, there was in the first days of surrender a hope that the authorities would declare for a continuance of the struggle, but that hope did not prove well founded. Syria, along with other French territories, relaxed into neutrality which was much more favourable to the Germans than ourselves, and we, while we never gave any formal recognition to the Vichy Government, did nothing actively to challenge this neutrality. For a year after the Franco-German armistice the Vichy Government was allowed to reign in Syria unchallenged. The German conquest of Greece and Crete created a very much more dangerous situation for us in the Near and Middle East. While Turkey might possibly resist a direct attack it was obvious that she would do nothing to prevent herself from being by-passed. There was every reason to fear that the Germans, having conquered Crete, would use it as a stepping stone to Syria whence, in turn, they would be able to strike either against Iraq or down south through Palestine as the left arm of a pincer attack on the Suez Canal. A positive

/British

British policy was required if such dangers were to be avoided.

It is indeed possible that the British authorities at that time underrated the importance of the attack on Russia in the German strategical schemes and that the immediate German purpose in occupying Crete was rather to block the Aegean than to step forward to further victories on the Asiatic mainland. But, however that may be, the need was at least thought to be desperately urgent. During May 1941, the month of the Cretan campaign, we had also been conducting a campaign in Iraq, the result of which was that we were able to establish in that country a regime upon which we could count for friendly co-operation. But the Iraq campaign showed to us that the Vichy authorities would put no obstacle in the way of German use of Syrian facilities. If our position in the Middle East was to be in any way secured, that position must be secured in Syria as well as in Iraq.

#### The de Gaulliste complication

The campaign was complicated by these conditions. Whereas elsewhere we had to fight against Germans whose readiness to fight back was in no sort of doubt, in Syria our opponents were Vichy Frenchmen, and if we could get control of the country without bloodshed obviously, for reasons alike of humanity and policy, it was highly desirable to do so. The Vichy authorities did indeed co-operate with the Germans, but they did so not through love of the Germans but because they did not want to fight, and, unless they were prepared to fight, co-operation was necessary. There was some reason to think that they would be glad enough to follow a similar policy of non-resistance if we were to challenge them in force, and so indeed they might have done had not the de Gaullistes been present among our troops. The major concern it is possibly not unfair to say - of most Frenchmen in Syria at that date was to keep their Government jobs.

/This

This anxiety greatly outweighed any ideological preference for British, German, Vichy or de Gaulle. Vichy officials were quite prepared to do a deal with the British and change sides on condition that they might keep their jobs. The presence of the de Gaullistes in the Allied forces meant that they could not do this as the de Gaullistes, of course, would insist on having all the jobs for themselves.

There was also the problem of the native population. This population had hated all Frenchmen of every school ever since the French occupation. For the French had misgoverned, massacred and lied to them. The French surrender in Germany had destroyed France's last asset - the prestige of strength. The only desire of the native population was to be rid of the French, and with that desire they were prepared to welcome the British. On the other hand, Frenchman for Frenchman, they preferred the Vichyites as the feeble. British prestige was high when they made the returning de Gaullistes give a promise of Syrian independence, just as it has subsequently sunk when that promise was substantially violated. "We are heading for a packet of trouble in Syria", Air Vice Marshal Drummond was to write in the subsequent August. "Our Free French allies have got the bit between their teeth and seem determined to go ahead with their own machinations regardless of the fact that we have to clean up the mess if the whole country goes up in flames as it threatens to do. If this happens it is going to be very bad for us if we are faced with the Hun coming through Turkey in the near future, which we anticipate".

#### The British attitude to de Gaulle

While it is quite beyond the purpose of this narrative to attempt to sketch the extraordinarily complicated story of the relations between the British authorities and General

/de Gaulle

de Gaulle yet it must be remembered that at this time, as indeed for a long time afterwards, they were by no means good - either between General de Gaulle and the politicians or between General de Gaulle and the fighting services. It was then widely thought that there were many pro-Allied Frenchmen who were by no means pro-de Gaulle and that General de Gaulle's totalitarian claims were as much an obstacle as an assistance to the rallying of Frenchmen to the Allied cause. It is clear that these political considerations to some extent influenced British strategy. It was important to occupy the country as rapidly as possible but important also to do so with as little bloodshed and destruction as possible.

The Vichyite attitude to the Germans

As far back as April 1941 General Dentz, Vichyite High Commissioner in Syria had been approached to ask him if he would resist a German attack on Syria. The approach was a delicate one for it was feared that General Dentz would reply by asking what forces we could provide for his assistance and would then very likely pass on this information to the Germans. The General's first answer was that he "would consider such action as contrary to the German armistice and would accordingly resist..... It was necessary, however, for the General to report to the Vichy Government, whose instructions he would have to carry out." The two sentences created an ambiguity, as they were obviously intended to do. Nor, had the result of the appeal to Vichy been known to the British authorities at the time, would it greatly have reassured them. Early in May, General Huntziger, the Vichy War Minister, sent a telegram to General Dentz. "In the course of conversation with the Fuhrer" he wrote "Admiral Darlan has conceded to the Germans the use of the aerial bases of the Levant. I beg you to inform me personally by telegram if such

a measure would cause a risk of bringing about discontent in the army of the Levant. Telegraph your suggestions. No step will be taken before your reply has been communicated to the Armistice Commission". General Dentz replied that such measures would indeed bring about discontent and that he proposed to fire on any aircraft flying over Syria of whatever nationality. General Huntziger replied "In the event of German or Italian aircraft refrain from any retaliation. If some of these aircraft land on your aerodromes receive them and ask for instructions. English aircraft must, on the contrary, be attacked by all possible means". A German emissary, Herr Otto Rahn, travelling under the pseudonym of Renouard, arrived in the country. He was followed by Colonel von Manteuffel, an air technician.

Quoted in Au Service de la France. (Official publication of Free French Committee. Art. les Allemands Etaient en Syrie. Page 47.

#### Demand for an active policy

There was a strong feeling at home that the situation could only be saved if in contrast to the previous policy of leaving the initiative entirely to the enemy we were prepared to follow a timely and aggressive policy ourselves. At the beginning of May when Air Marshal Tedder assumed the command of the Royal Air Force, Middle East, the Chief of the Air Staff signalled to him - "There appears to be no co-ordinated plan for making the most of our opportunities at this juncture. I believe that bold thrusts against the enemy's communications using the land and air forces in a well co-ordinated plan might make his position intolerable and bring about the defeat, or at least retreat, of all his forces".

A.O.C.-in-C.,  
Enc. 5A.  
4.5.41.

#### Field Marshal Wavell's account of preparations

Wavell Despatch  
Part III  
Secs.85-87

Field Marshal Wavell in his despatch recounts how early in May the Chiefs of Staff instructed him to prepare to send a force in to Syria. Field Marshal Wavell replied that the largest force which he could then make available in

/Palestine

Palestine was 'one incomplete cavalry brigade' - wholly insufficient, as he argued, for the task. General de Gaulle was at that time concentrating all the Free French forces in Egypt under the command of General Legentilhomme, and Field Marshal Wavell a little reluctantly agreed to their transfer to Palestine. By the middle of May the Free French forces in Palestine, stationed at Qastina to the south of Jaffa, consisted of six battalions, a battery and a company of about 20 tanks. They were incomplete in transport and in some instances in weapons. Almost all the transport in Palestine had been moved across to Iraq for the campaign there.

Late in the evening of May 18 General Catroux, the Free French Commissioner in the Middle East, came to Field Marshal Wavell and reported that he had certain information that the Vichy French were withdrawing the whole of their forces into the Lebanon and handing over Syria entire to the Germans. This left, General Catroux argued, the road to Damascus for the moment open, the French having gone and the Germans not yet come. General Catroux was most insistent that we should move in immediately with whatever force we had and seize Damascus. 'Previous experience' Field Marshal Wavell reported, 'had taught me to regard the information produced by the Free French from Syria with caution, and what General Catroux stated was not confirmed by intelligence I had received from other sources'. Field Marshal Wavell therefore refused the request and instead summoned a meeting for the next day.

Field Marshal Wavell reported General Catroux's request to the Chiefs of Staff, who urged him to allow the Free French to go into Syria, if the British were not prepared to go in themselves. Field Marshal Wavell demurred. On May 21 General Catroux cabled from Palestine admitting that his information was entirely incorrect, that far from withdrawing from

/Damascus

Damascus the Vichy troops were taking up strong defensive positions to the south of the city, that far from Syria being ours for the taking a very strong force would be required to conquer it and that the Free French could not possibly undertake the task alone. Meanwhile General de Gaulle, observing the situation from the vantage point of West Africa, was sending angry telegrams, 'couched in imperative language', to know why Free French troops were not already on the march to Damascus.

#### The first clashes

On May 9th the first enemy aircraft arrived at Nerab. A few days later further aircraft landed at Mezze and Palmyra. In all, it is estimated that 66 Axis military and 40 transport aircraft landed in Syria in early May. On May 14th Air Marshal Tedder reported to Air Ministry that there was now no doubt that the Germans were using Syrian airfields. He requested permission to attack those airfields in spite of the inevitable risk that French aircraft as well as German might be hit. He received this permission and was keen to follow up his advantage. "Have available French Glenn Martin crew with knowledge Syria. Am sending Glenn Martin with French markings tomorrow to attack German aircraft on the ground Damascus and Rayak, subsequently to drop pamphlets" he signalled.

The first French attacks were not very successful, and our effort was switched to Aleppo. "First French Maryland sortie had no success but repeating today. Present indication enemy giving up use Rayak and Damascus and using Aleppo. On the 14th p.m. I authorised attack on enemy aircraft Palmyra. Since confirmed at least one Ju.52 burnt out. Some also attacked successfully yesterday at Erbil" reported Air Marshal Tedder.

A.O.C.-in-C.  
Enc.27B  
14.5.41.

A.O.C.-in-C.  
Enc.25A  
14.5.41.

A.O.C.-in-C.  
Enc.29A  
16.5.41.

French reliance on German landings

The result of the Royal Air Force attacks was that for the moment the French became a good deal more anxious to provide Syrian facilities for the Luftwaffe than the Germans were to use them. General Jeannequin, the French Air Chief, succeeded in obtaining the German consent to confine themselves to Aleppo, but this concession was due more to R.A.F. bombing than to French negotiating skill, for the attacks on Palmyra and that part of Ncrab which was occupied by the Germans had been heavy. In addition to their hospitality to aircraft the Vichy authorities had also allowed Syrian railways to be used during the Iraq troubles to send aviation petrol, arms and ammunition to Mosul. As the railway passed through Turkish territory these goods were disguised as French and the excuse was made that they were being sent to meet the threat of an alleged Kurdish rising. Once it was clear that the British intended a serious attack "there were but few signs of support from the Axis" reported the R.A.F., M.E. Fortnightly Summary for June 5th to 18th "which the insurgents had expected and required so urgently, such support being limited to about 30 German aircraft with personnel and a few train loads of French arms from Syria".

On May 15th Mr. Eden stated in the House of Commons that Syrian aerodromes were in German use and warned the Vichy Government of the consequences, possibly a somewhat tardy warning. The French declared that the Germans had used Syrian airfields only in forced landings, but this lie hardly deserved serious consideration. The attacks continued. On May 18th one Glenn Martin and three Blenheims of No. 84 Squadron from Habbaniyah attacked Rayak airfield with twelve 250 lb bombs, which all over-shot the target, and three Blenheims of No. 84 Squadron attacked Palmyra airfield with the same weight of bombs, with more success, one He.111 being seen on fire and

/other

other unidentified aircraft destroyed. At Rayak the French opened up with heavy but inaccurate anti-aircraft fire. The attack was continued on May 19th. On that day one Glenn Martin and two Blenheims of No. 84 Squadron attacked Palmyra airfield but the bombs overshot the target. Five Hurricanes of No. 112 Squadron from Ramleh in Palestine machine-gunned Damascus airfield on May 19th, severely damaging two aircraft.

The need to strike quickly

C.O.S. Signals  
108  
19.5.41.

"It appears to me" signalled the Chief of Staff to the Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East "that there is no option but to improvise the largest force you can manage without prejudice to security Western Desert and be prepared move into Syria at the earliest possible date. Whether initial operation should be undertaken by British troops alone as suggested in paragraph 4 in General Wavell's telegram under reference or whether it should be undertaken by Anglo-French forces or even by the Free French must be left to you. Air action on largest scale achievable without endangering Western Desert would encourage friendly element, impress local population, and might enable operations to be undertaken with smaller land forces than would otherwise be necessary. In addition, naval action in co-operation any advance made would have real and material effect".

A.O.C.-inC.  
Enc.37A.  
19.5.41.

Little could be achieved by an aggressive air policy if such a policy was not supported by the army. The difficulty was to obtain the army's assent to these more adventurous tactics. "I feel" signalled C.A.S. "whereas the Air Force and to a less extent the Navy have all their units in constant action which lash out in all directions whenever the chance occurs, the Army tends to proceed methodically and unimaginatively along approved text book lines, thereby

/missing

missing opportunities which can only be seized if one is prepared to take chances. The army seems to regard Hun infiltration into Syria and Iraq as an unpleasant subject which should be ignored and reference to it by Chiefs of Staff is considered an attempt to thrust a puking infant into the unwilling arms of busy men... Possibility of considerable French and Arab sympathy in Syria ... valuable prizes which might be won by bold and rapid action which cannot be taken by one service alone".

There was another danger, which was that if we delayed too long the Free French might strike first and strike with inadequate forces, thus throwing all into confusion. As it was, it was a race who would open the ball. "Looks as though Free French may act first" reported Air Marshal Tedder on May 20th. There were some Frenchmen, as is shown in a later report from Glubb Pasha "who preferred any Frenchman in Syria to any Englishman and tried to arrange deals by which the Vichy French should hand over to the de Gaullistes so as to keep us out".

#### Preliminary attacks

The restlessness of the Free French had played its part in overcoming the reluctance of the army to act. On May 26th General Dentz was told that the Germans wanted the ports of Beirut, Tripoli and Lattakia. He objected, and suggested instead that they content themselves with Chekka, a port so small that it could hardly be called a port at all. 'The use of Beirut, Tripoli and Lattakia by the Germans' he reported, 'seems to me impossible without risking grave troubles. I suggest the Bay of Chekka, where the chances of scorchy would be greater'. The Germans replied by insisting on the immediate use of Lattakia. The matter was still in debate when the British struck. On that same day (May 26th) a second attack was delivered against Palmyra by Blenheims of No. 84 Squadron. It had more success than its predecessor; the airfield was rendered temporarily unserviceable

/and

A.O.C.-in-C.  
Encl. 38A.  
20.5.41.

7.7.41  
Middle Eastern  
Council Papers

Au Service de  
la France,  
Les Allemands  
Etaient en Syrie  
Page 47.

and the barracks were believed to have been hit and some people wounded. Another attack on May 28th was delivered during an offensive reconnaissance. Blenheims of No. 211 Squadron from Lydda attacked Nerab airfield at Aleppo on May 24th, 27th and 31st, damaging buildings, destroying two aircraft on the ground and damaging others. Single aircraft of No. 211 Squadron also attacked the airfields at Deir-az-Zor and Homs on May 28th.

"Have just received first-hand information" Air Marshal Tedder signalled on May 31st "location bulk stores aviation petrol in Syria, especially Beirut. Dispersal arrangements expected to be completed in few days. Aviation petrol obviously one of key factors in Syrian situation. Am anxious not to let slip this excellent opportunity destroying these supplies which would have vital effect enemy air effort in forthcoming operations against Syria and incidentally on ability Germans undertake sustained air operations against Cyprus from Syrian bases if attempt made immediate future capture island".

On June 2nd, four Beaufighters of No. 252 and 272 Squadrons from Egypt and one Maryland of No. 39 Squadron from Libya unsuccessfully attacked the petrol dump at Beirut. The petrol installation at Beirut was again attacked on June 4th and June 6th.

A.O.C. to  
V.C.A.S.  
Enc. 30A

"I discussed Syria with Bingo Brown and Wilson at Jerusalem yesterday" wrote Air Marshal Tedder on June 3rd "I think that party is laid on and have made both No. 80 and No. 11 Squadrons up to strength. I am afraid that No. 3 with their Tomahawks will not be ready for operations. The Australians very unexpectedly are making very heavy weather over the Tomahawks but I have applied a little ginger which, I hope, will have the necessary effect". It did, and his fears

/proved

proved unnecessarily pessimistic.

We knew that the Vichyites had very little petrol and, indeed, only small forces, but we had fully expected that the Germans would come to their assistance. "Morale and operational value French Air Forces doubtful factor" reported Air Marshal Tedder. "Information at present indicates they can count on German assistance up to 30 long range fighters and that German operational facilities exist in Syria". But the Germans, thinking discretion the better part of valour, did not accept a challenge that they would not be able to meet.

A.O.C.-in-C.  
Encl. 78A  
7.6.41.

SECTION IIFROM THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE CAPTURE  
OF DAMASCUS, JUNE 8TH - JUNE 21st.Air forces.

The air forces available for this campaign at the outset were:-

- No. 11 Bomber Squadron, Blenheims (much depleted both in aircraft and crews).
- No. 80 Fighter Squadron, Hurricanes (re-equipping)
- No. 208 Army Co-operation Squadron (1 Flight Hurricanes)
- No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron, Tomahawks (re-equipping)
- X Flight, Gladiators
- No. 815 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm (based in Cyprus) (1)
- No. 84 Bomber Squadron, Blenheims, in Iraq were detailed to co-operate in the campaign.

Bombing operations were also carried out by Egypt- and Libya- based aircraft, which were not under the command of the A.O.C. Palestine and Transjordan.

Supply bases were Haifa and Amman, and it was ordered that throughout the campaign the following stocks be maintained at those bases:-

<u>Haifa</u> -	Petrol.	D.T.D. 230 - not less than 3,000 gallons 100 octane - not less than 10,000 gallons.
	Oil.	D.T.D. 109 - not less than 200 gallons D.T.D. 472B- (Aeroball 100) - not less than 500 gallons.
	S.A.A.	Not less than 100,000 rounds mixed as required for Hurricanes.
<u>Amman</u> -	Petrol.	D.T.D. 230 - Not less than 50,000 gallons 100 octane - Not less than 2,000 gallons.
	Oil.	D.T.D. 109 - Not less than 200 gallons D.T.D. 472B- (Aeroball 100) - Not less than 500 gallons.
	S.A.A.	Not less than 100,000 rounds mixed as required for Hurricanes.

/To

To the above aircraft were later added -

No. 260/450 Fighter Squadron, Hurricanes

No. 45 Bomber Squadron, Blenheims

No. 806/33 Fighter Squadron, Hurricanes

No. 208 Army Co-operation Squadron, made up of one Flight of Lysanders and one Flight of Hurricanes

No. 14 Bomber Squadron, arrived too late for operations

No. 272 Detachment, Beaufighters.

At the beginning of the campaign No. 11 Squadron had its base landing ground at Aquir. It was to act both as a striking force against strategical targets and also in close support of the military. No. 80 Squadron was based at Haifa with operational landing grounds at Ramat David and in Cyprus. Four Hurricanes of this squadron were to be stationed at Nicosia for the defence of Cyprus; six Hurricanes were detailed to the defence of Haifa; and the rest to the defence of other Palestinian targets. All were to attack fleeting enemy targets as opportunity offered. No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron was based on Lydda, No. 208 Squadron on Gaza, with operational landing grounds for the Hurricanes at Haifa. Four short range Hurricanes of this squadron were to operate from Haifa in close co-operation with the military authorities. Three long range Hurricanes were to operate from Aquir on strategical reconnaissance. X Flight was based at Amman, with operational landing ground at Mafraq. This gave us a total of some 70 aircraft I.E. with some 20 I.R. By the end of the campaign we had 80 I.E. and 25 I.R. (2)

/On

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(1) For places of arrival of reinforcements, see Appendix A.

(2) For details of squadron strengths, see Appendix A.

The Organisation of the Force.

On the outbreak of the Iraq war Air Vico-Marshal D'Albiac had been transferred from the Royal Air Force Command in Palestine and Transjordan to that in Iraq, while Air Commodore L.O. Brown was appointed A.O.C. Palestine and Transjordan. Air Commodore Brown held this position throughout the Syrian campaign.

At the beginning of the campaign the following sources of information were available:-

- (1) The Palestine Observer Screen (manned by the Palestine Police Force) comprising 31 posts.
- (2) One complete section of No. 14 W.O.U., comprising 10 posts.
- (3) The three Air Report centres at Jerusalem, Palestine and Tel Aviv.
- (4) The A.M.E.S. units, Nos. 236, 503 and 508 in the Haifa area.

Information from the A.M.E.S. units and Observers screens was disseminated by the Filter Room and Advanced Liaison Officers. At the beginning of the campaign the system worked very smoothly but it showed signs of strain as the campaign developed. The difficulties of reporting arose chiefly, on the one hand, from the continual shifting of bases of operational units and from the fact that aircraft based in Iraq, Syria, Cyprus and Egypt were all taking part in the Syrian campaign. New personnel do not seem to have fully appreciated the importance of observing reporting regulations. Air Commodore Brown gives special praise to the efficiency of the A.M.E.S. units at Haifa.

From the medical point of view the airfields and stations were well-sited and living conditions were good. Water

/was

was plentiful. Mosquito-nets and other devices were available, so that no cases of malaria were reported. Rations were sufficient for the ground crews, though there were some complaints of lack of reserve rations for air crews.

The distance between squadron landing grounds and divisional headquarters made impossible personal contact between the Wing Commander and the Squadron Commanders or Advanced Liaison Officers. Direct land-line communications were only possible between the landing grounds and Corps Headquarters, and thence to Divisional Headquarters by the general operational line. This was unsatisfactory and often congested. Therefore arrangements were made for special W/T links between Divisional Headquarters and the Squadrons and also between Divisional Headquarters and the Advanced Liaison Officers. A listening set was provided at Corps Headquarters, which could be used in emergency as a relaying station. Signals were, if possible, transmitted en clair so as to reduce delay to a minimum. But, as it turned out, the signals system was tardy and unsatisfactory owing to the insufficiency of experienced personnel. Signals at the best took from 5 to 10 minutes to transmit, and the code which was introduced was only suitable for the simplest messages. Secret messages of any complexity had to be sent by the land-line.

#### Military forces.

The military forces available were:-

7th Australian Division (less one Infantry Brigade)

5th Indian Brigade Group

A composite mechanised regiment of Greys and Staffordshire Yeomanry

C Battalion S.S. Brigade

A Free French Division

Certain artillery and engineer units.

Vichy

Brown  
Despatch  
Close  
Support  
Operations  
in Syria,  
by W/Cdr.  
Gator.  
Appx.G.  
Sections  
12-15

Vichy air forces.

The Vichy forces at the beginning of the campaign were:-

Bombers	14 Glenn Martin 167
	6 Bloch 200
Bomber-Transport	4 Potez 65
Fighter/Bomber/Recce	20 Potez 63
Single Seater Fighter	17 Morane 406
	26 Dewoitine 520
Sea Recce	5 Loire 130 F.Bs
	<hr/>
TOTAL	92

There were also a number of civil transport aircraft.

Throughout the campaign Axis landing grounds in Italy and elsewhere were freely at the Vichy disposal, and a steady stream of reinforcements flowed in, particularly from French Morocco. By June 16th their strength, allowing for casualties, was estimated at -

Bombers	14 Glenn Martin 167
	4 Bloch 200
	26 Leo 45
Bomber-Transport	5 Potez 65
	6 Farman 222
	13 Dewoitines 337
Fighter/Bomber/Recce	17 Potez 63
Single Seater Fighter	16 Morane 406
	53 Dewoitine 520
Sea Recce	5 Loire 130 F.B.
	<hr/>
TOTAL	159

At the beginning of the campaign the Germans withdrew their aircraft and personnel, judging them insufficient to resist the British attack and thinking that their oil reserves would be in danger from our bombers. They contented themselves throughout the campaign with attacks on British shipping and on the naval base at Haifa from Dodecanese bases. The greater part of the Vichy air force was based at Rayak with small forces at Damascus, Palmyra, Aleppo and at the Tripoli sea-plane base. As the campaign progressed the enemy tended more and more to scatter his forces to a variety of satellite airfields.

It was of course one of the peculiarities of the campaign that it was difficult to know exactly what such figures as those of his total air force would in the event mean in military strength. An aircraft is an aircraft, but it was of little use to the enemy if his crew were not willing to fly. We had from the first hopes that there would be considerable reluctance to fight and even some refusal to fight on the part of the enemy air force. 'There is a fairly large body of opinion among French forces in Syria, particularly the Air Force', wrote Operation Instruction No. 60 of June 6 'against this close co-operation policy of the Vichy Government with the Axis, and, whilst this body may to a large extent be neutralised by certain measures of the Syrian authorities, there is a potential possibility of the personnel concerned refusing to help the Axis-Vichy forces or even taking steps to aid our forces'. It was on the whole the former rather than the latter prophecy which proved correct.

Vichy

Vichy military forces.

There is a similar difficulty in estimating the strength of the Vichy military forces. Their great advantage over us was that they had some 90 tanks, and we could spare no armoured vehicles from the Western Desert. On paper, their forces were considerably superior to ours - that is to say, there were in Syria many more men who had received a French military training than we could put into the field against them. But the figure had little meaning. When we understand that a very high proportion of the French troops were determined on no account to risk their lives for either side, that some were pro-Allied and pro-de Gaulle, that others were pro-Allied and anti-de Gaulle, that almost all the French-trained Syrian troops cared only to get rid of the French and asked only which side's victory would get rid of them the more quickly, it is clear that a mere total of numbers could give no indication at all of Vichy's military strength. The reinforcements of air crews, which had recently arrived in Syria, had all been specially selected for their political sympathies, but the soldiers were just people who happened to be left there by the Armistice - the relics of General Weygand's army - their morale already undermined by inaction, corruption, exile and the hatred of the native population. The number that was willing to fight ebbed and flowed from day to day with the rise and fall of morale. As soon as they saw how small was the force that had been sent against them, some of them were encouraged to a vigour of resistance which was probably as surprising to themselves as to us. The disgraceful state of French morale in itself set up to some extent a counteraction, and many fought bravely simply because to show courage in whatever cause was, they thought, the only way left to vindicate the honour of French arms.

Wavell.  
Despatch  
Middle  
East  
Part III  
Sec. 94

The country of Syria.

The country of Syria may be divided into five unequal areas. First, there is the coastal plain; second the mountain regions of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon; third, the central depression which runs down from Aleppo to Lake Tiberias; fourth, the large area of the Eastern Desert; fifth, there is on the southern frontier of the country the small natural fortress of the Jebel Druse. Of these areas, the first contains no important airfield except Beirut. The fourth and fifth contain no airfields. Therefore, the capture of the country's airfields virtually resolved itself into the capture of the second and third of these areas: that is to say, first of Damascus, then of the Lebanon airfields of Rayak, Talia and Ballbek and their satellites at Kuseir and Homs, and lastly of the Aleppo airfields. The hilly nature of the country throughout makes it cloud covered until late in the morning, even in summer time.

The first advances.

There are two lines of advance against Syria from the south. One is the coastal road from Haifa to Beirut, the other is that of the railway from Trans-Jordan to Damascus. The plan was that on June 8th the Australians on the left flank should advance up the coast to Beirut, the Indians should cross the frontier at the frontier station of Deraa and advance to Sheikh Meskine and Ezraa, some 30 miles further north. The Free French were then to come up, pass through the Indians and push on to Damascus. On the first day of the campaign Tyre, Kuneitra, Sheikh Meskine and Ezraa were captured, and on the next day Free French forces captured Kiswe, but after that the operations did not meet with any very rapid success. The morale of the Free French was not good and for a time it looked as if the campaign

/night

might be a prolonged one. The opposition on the coast proved stiffer than inland, and the Vichy French held our advance at Damour, 12 miles south of Beirut. By June 12 on the right the Free French had advanced to within about ten miles of Damascus. On the left the Australian right column captured Merdjayoun and the left column after a very hard fight crossed the river Litani on the coast on June 9. In this action a Commando from Cyprus made a landing on the coast, though at the cost of somewhat heavy casualties. The Vichy French then began a series of counter-attacks. They sent a column from Damascus which made a turning movement by the Jebel Druse and attacked our lines of communication between Damascus and Deraa. Further west another column attacked the 1st Royal Fusiliers at Quneitra. Another column advanced on Merdjayoun and recaptured it, the Australians here having made a wide out-flanking movement against the next French position and having thus left the main road open. On the coast also there was severe fighting. In all these actions the Vichyites used their medium tanks effectively. The result of these attacks was to bring our advance to a standstill.

Field Marshal Wavell saw that it would be necessary to bring in reinforcements. By the middle of June, by taking transport as it came off the ships and issuing it direct to our troops, he was able to make one brigade of the 6th Division and an artillery regiment mobile and to hand them over to General Maitland Wilson. By June 15th the line ran roughly Sidon - Jezzine - Rachaya El Ouada - Kiswe, and to the south of that the Vichy forces held Merdjayoun and were counter-attacking at Quneitra. Damascus was entered on June 21st by a fine effort of the 5th Indian brigade under

Wavell.  
Despatch.  
Part II  
Sec. 92

/General

General Lloyd and the Free French after severe fighting and heavy casualties on both sides while Beirut was still untaken.  
Need to protect the Navy.

The coastal defence was assisted by a Cruiser Squadron of the Royal Navy which was responsible for landing the Commando Battalion at the mouth of the Litani river on June 8th. This squadron was supposed to be protected by a small force of Fulmar aircraft, but these did not prove sufficient for the task. In the first week of the campaign 3 Fulmars were destroyed and 2 Destroyers badly damaged. The protection of the Navy had to be taken over by fighters of the Royal Air Force and regular reconnaissances of the whole length of the Syrian Coast had to be carried out from Palestine and Cyprus throughout the rest of the campaign. "I have pointed out clearly to Wavell and Cunningham what this means" complained Air Marshal Tedder. "Cunningham at first said that his naval operations were only in support of the land advance and if they were not necessary could and would be stopped. He now however says that these are essential duties for the Navy to perform off Beirut and Wavell has consequently accepted the position. Tomahawks successfully dealt with an attack by Ju. 88s on Fleet to-day and preliminary reports indicate four certainties without loss. This is, of course, yet another example of the lack of effective co-ordination of combined operations which is inevitable under present conditions. I raised this point at C-in-Cs Meeting to-day but, as was expected, no solution was arrived at since the Admiral insisted on the necessity for him to be physically with his Fleet and in direct control of operations."

Brown  
 Despatch  
 Sec. 93

A.O.C./14  
 Enc. 20A  
 13/6/41

/Task

Task of the R.A.F.

The task of the Royal Air Force at the beginning of the campaign was -

- R.A.F. M.E.  
Fortnightly  
Operational  
Summary No. 16  
Sect. 51
- (1) to provide close and direct support for the army;
  - (2) to maintain protective fighter cover for the Fleet which was co-operating with the coastal advance of our troops and restricting movements of Vichy shipping;
  - (3) to attack strategical objectives, including ports, shipping and oil installations;
  - (4) to bomb enemy aerodromes to limit the activities of the Vichy air force."

Our forces were not then sufficient for it to be possible to decentralise or to attach any of the aircraft other than the Army Co-operation aircraft to particular military forces. Close air support had to be arranged and provided on each particular occasion as proved possible. Four Mark IV Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron were allowed to provide direct and close support to our ground forces, but this was on a day-to-day allotment and always subject to revision. On June 12th bombers of No. 11 Squadron bombed gun positions north of Kiswe, and Hurricanes of No. 80 Squadron attacked M/T vehicles nearby. When fighter support, contrary to original expectations, had to be provided for the naval squadron, our resources were scanty. Air liaison officers were attached to the two Army Headquarters and it was their duty to report all requests for support to Air Headquarters. On June 18th the first Australian Corps took command in the field of all ground operations in Syria, and the air liaison officer with the Damascus force then came under Wing Commander Cavor, the air liaison officer at First Corps Headquarters.

/It

It was also necessary to see that no reinforcements reached the enemy by sea. This task was assigned to our Cyprus-based aircraft. After an enemy reinforcing ship, Le Chevalier Paul, had been sunk by an aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm off Cape Gelidonya on June 15th/16th in the first week of the campaign, the enemy's first plan for reinforcement by sea was abandoned.

The first fortnight of the Campaign.

During the first fortnight of the campaign - from June 8th up to the capture of Damascus on June 21st - our air effort was naturally mainly devoted to the support of the columns advancing along the coast and up the railway from Trans-Jordania by Hurricanes, Tomahawks and Gladiators, and to attacks on objectives in Damascus and Beirut. On the first day of the campaign (June 8th) Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron, escorted by Hurricanes of No. 80 and Tomahawks of No. 3 Squadron R.A.A.F., attacked the Damascus landing ground and the Soony Vacuum at Beirut, damaging the airfield and starting a large fire at the Nation Company's premises next door to the Vacuum installation. But information received gave reason to think that the enemy's resistance was largely dependent on his success in receiving petrol supplies from Turkey. The Turkish Chief of Staff on May 24th had said that Turkey "remained entirely faithful to her alliance with us but urged absolute necessity of occupying Syria at once." Nevertheless, when we did come to attack Syria, the Turks were entirely willing to sell supplies to the Vichy forces which were resisting us. Therefore, in the next few days our bombers were reserved for attacks on such supplies, should they come in, and on targets far behind the battle line.

Of our Blenheims on June 8th three attacked Damascus and three attacked Rayak. On June 9th/10th Blenheims attacked Palmyra. On June 10th Blenheims attacked Aleppo, Palmyra, Damascus and Rayak. Swordfish of No. 815 Fleet Air Arm Squadron made five sorties against Vichy shipping at Beirut on the night of June 10th/11th. On June 11th Blenheims again attacked the landing ground at Aleppo. The enemy appeared to be making a strong stand at Kiswe, some 15 miles to the south of Damascus. Therefore, on the 12th and 13th our bombers co-operated with our fighters in attacking the gun positions there. On the night of June 12th/ 13th Swordfish of No. 815 Fleet Air Arm attacked Vichy warships in Djounich Harbour, and on the 13th/14th merchant ships at Beirut. But on the 14th, on the report that the enemy was expecting air reinforcements at Aleppo, our attack was switched back to the landing ground there, where one enemy aircraft was burnt out and others damaged on the ground. On the 16th our bombers attacked the Lebanese airfield of Rayak from which enemy aircraft had been active against our troops, also damaging a merchant vessel off Tripoli. On that day also 3 Blenheims bombed and machine-gunned enemy A.F.Vs at Quneitra, where the Vichy troops were holding up our advance. But after that their main effort was again switched back to the attack on supplies from Turkey. The railway bridge at Ekbes was unsuccessfully attacked by 3 Blenheims on the night of the 16th/17th. The landing ground at Homs and the railway viaduct over the Adana - Aleppo railway at Heredere were attacked on June 17th. A direct hit was claimed on an enemy aircraft at Homs, but the viaduct at Heredere was missed. On the next day (the

18th) the Heredere bridge was again attacked and again missed, but this time the railway track was hit. A Blenheim on that day also attacked the fortress at Suweida in the Jebel Druse where a stand was being made against the advance of our troops. Pamphlets were dropped among the neighbouring villages where sympathies were still undecided. There was also a Blenheim attack on troops in Quataana village, a dozen miles to the south-west of Damascus. Quataana was again attacked on the 19th, and 3 Blenheims attacked without result a Destroyer in Beirut Harbour.

In the first week of the campaign, up to June 15th, out of a total of 72 medium bomber sorties 33 were against airfields at Aleppo, Palmyra, Damascus and Rayak. Aleppo was attacked seven times by Blenheims of Nos. 11 and 84 Squadrons with 22 sorties. Hits were scored on runways, buildings, and hangars; large fires were started, and other bombs fell among dispersed aircraft. 33 sorties were made against petrol installations, stores and shipping in or near the harbours of Beirut and Djounieh. The other six were against gun and troop positions in the area of Kiswe. Between June 18th and June 24th, Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron made 15 attacks, and Albacores and Swordfish of No. 829 Squadron of Fleet Air Arm 12 on the harbour and shipping at Beirut, hits being obtained on the jetties and on 3 ships, including a destroyer and a submarine.

On the 20th it was reported that the enemy was evacuating Damascus in the direction of Zahle and Beirut, and 3 Blenheims attacked M/T on that road and also at Beter to the north of Jezzine. The roads and some 20 M/T vehicles were damaged by the bombers. Similar attacks on the Damascus - Beirut road were made on the 21st, and bombs fell on some 40 M/T vehicles with uncertain results.

/Fighter

Fighter operations.

It had been intended to use our fighters during this same period exclusively in support of our ground forces. In these operations they had some success in damaging enemy aircraft on the ground, but lack of incendiary ammunition, which was at that time very short throughout the whole Middle East, prevented them from doing as much damage as might otherwise have been possible. On June 8th a Hurricane destroyed a Morane on the ground at Estabel. On the same day 5 Tomahawks and 4 Hurricanes successfully machine-gunned enemy fighters on the airfields at Rayak. On June 15th 7 Tomahawks of No. 3 Squadron R.A.A.F. machine-gunned enemy M/T and A.F.Vs near Ezraa, at the same time intercepting and destroying 2 Glenn Martins. During the evacuation of Damascus 24 successful medium bomber sorties were made against enemy positions at Quataana and M/T vehicles on the Damascus - Beirut road. There were a number of combats with Vichy fighters during the first week of operations as a result of which 8 enemy aircraft were claimed as destroyed and others damaged, against a loss of 2 Gladiators. But the disappointing performance of the Fulmars of the Fleet Air Arm made necessary a diversion of our fighter effort to the protection of the Navy which had not been foreseen. As a result the protection of our troops was not wholly adequate, but on June 21st, the day of the evacuation of Damascus, our fighters claimed hits on approximately 34 vehicles on the road from Damascus to Shtama and dispersed 2 troops of cavalry.

/Our

Our fighters' protection of the Fleet involved them in several combats. On June 9th 3 enemy aircraft were claimed as shot down and others damaged, against a loss of 3 Hurricanes, one being in a collision with a Dewoitine from which our pilot escaped by parachute. On June 13th Tomahawks and Hurricanes claimed 3 Ju. 88s destroyed and a fourth damaged, and on June 15th Hurricanes of No. 80 Squadron claimed a further 3 Ju. 88s probably destroyed and a Morane damaged. On the 16th 6 Hurricanes of No. 80 Squadron from Agir on fleet protection west of Saida (Sidon) engaged 9 Ju. 88s, shot down 1, and damaged 4 others. 2 Vichy fighters were shot down over Quataana on June 18th by 5 Gladiators of X Flight, and on the 19th 5 out of 8 Glenn Martins were damaged over Damasous by 6 Tomahawks of No. 3 Squadron R.A.A.F.

On the other side, 3 waves of 20 German aircraft each raided Haifa on June 9th/10th and scored a bomb hit on a tanker.

SECTION III.FROM THE CAPTURE OF DAMASCUS  
TO THE CAPTURE OF PALMYRA JUNE 21 - JULY 4

After the fall of Damascus our forces were able to push on into the Homs - Damascus - Beirut triangle. Our plan was to dislodge the enemy from Beirut by moving down on him in an outflanking movement from Damascus, but it was found that he was holding strongly west of Damascus. Pockets of resistance were left behind further south in the Mardjayoun and Jebel Druse areas. The former of these was only finally eliminated after changing hands several times on June 24th. Suweida in the Jebel Druse was never captured up to the time of the final French surrender.

Habforce (so called because its base was at Habbaniyah in Iraq) was, at the same time, advancing on Palmyra from the Iraq frontier. It encountered what is considered heavy air attacks, and requested assistance. Up to the fall of Damascus the French had a group of Potez 63 stationed there. Air Marshal Tedder warned Air Vice Marshal D'Albiac not to lend too ready an ear to the soldiers' complaints yet. It was after the fall of Damascus possible to provide it with restricted air assistance. A fighter squadron was put under direct control of Corps Headquarters, operating on the orders of the Air Liaison Section. There was provision for re-calling it if at any time it should be necessary to do so. After the fall of Palmyra it was also possible to provide restricted assistance to the Indian Division advancing up the Euphrates. In general, however, the most effective tactics were to attack the enemy's airfields. At the beginning, only the Lebanese airfields up to Baalbek could be reached, but after the capture of Damascus airfields as far north as Hama to the north of Homs and after the capture of Palmyra all Syrian airfields

/were

were within range.

Bombing attacks.

After the capture of Damascus there was a somewhat larger number of aircraft available than at the beginning of the campaign. There were then 18 of No. 11 Squadron, 8 of No. 80 Squadron, 8 of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron, 4 Hurricanes and 4 Lysanders of No. 208 Squadron and 2 Lysanders of X Flight. On June 23rd, No. 45 Squadron of Blenheims and 260/450 of Hurricanes and 2 Fleet Air Arm Flights of No. 806/33 of Hurricanes all moved to airfields in Palmyra, and on the same date Wellingtons in the Canal Zone began their attacks on Syrian airfields. It was thought possible to detach the aircraft of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron to the support of the ground forces advancing against Beirut along the coast, and of X Flight to that of Habforce advancing on Palmyra. But the greater part of our air forces were ordered to prevent the arrival of seaborne reinforcements at Tripoli from Salonika. Bombing attacks were however also made in direct support of troop operations.

Eleven bomber attacks were made on Suweida in the Jebel Druse on June 23rd and 24th by Blenheims of 45 Squadron, and Blenheims of 45 and 11 Squadrons again attacked it on June 30th and July 1st and 2nd, and delivered a final attack on July 11th, the eve of the French capitulation. Our attacks were handicapped by strict instructions to confine them to the Citadél and Cité Militaire. The Druses had little sympathy with the French and it was, therefore, politically undesirable to offend them.

The least fortunate of our bombing attacks were on June 11th, 18th and 19th on four villages in the Kiswe area from which the French had withdrawn and where there were no military objectives whatsoever. The raids were by Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron. Twenty-one people were killed in these attacks and there were other casualties, and considerable damage. The raids had been requested by the army, of course, under the impression that the villages were occupied by the enemy. It was not until after the surrender that this impression was discovered to have been erroneous.

On June 27th, 13 Blenheims of 11 and 45 Squadrons bombed and machine-gunned M/T columns and gun positions just outside Damascus, but with inconclusive results. There were sorties against Palmyra by Tomahawk fighters on the 24th and 26th. On the 26th, 4 Blenheims of 11 Squadron attacked fuel dumps at Telkalakh, north-east of Tripoli, and set them on fire. Blenheim bombers of 45 and 11 Squadrons made 17 sorties against the barracks at Palmyra on the 28th and 29th, their Tomahawk escort, of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron shooting down 6 Vichy Glenn Martins. Blenheim bombers again attacked the stores and barracks there on June 29th and 30th and July 1st. Fighters attacked the town on July 2nd. There was a similar record of attacks on Beirut and on the troop positions south of Beirut and between Beirut and Damascus.

#### Sea reinforcements.

But the main issue was whether the Vichy forces would succeed in introducing reinforcements. Their first hope had been to bring them in through Turkey but the Turks, promising at that time a policy of somewhat indeterminate neutrality, were willing to sell back to the French the petrol which the French had sold to them in the days before their collapse but were not willing to allow troops to pass through Turkey to Syria. Photographic reconnaissances on June 22nd showed Vichy Destroyers in Beirut Harbour, and Blenheim bombers attacked them on that day, badly damaging a destroyer and hitting a merchant vessel. On the 24th it was reported that there was further shipping in the harbour, and a somewhat ineffectual attack was made on the jetty by an aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm. On the 26th enemy naval forces were still reported in Beirut Harbour. The Fleet Air Arm therefore undertook three sorties against them, and 12 fighter sorties protected our naval forces returning to Haifa after a night operation. On the 27th our ships commenced their bombardment of Damour Harbour, and

11 fighter sorties were flown in protection of them. A Fleet Air Arm sortie also attacked Beirut Harbour. Our Hurricanes again flew in protection of the Fleet at Damour on the 28th and 29th. Attacks on Beirut were not entirely confined to the harbour. Four Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron attacked Beirut on the 29th, obtaining 12 direct hits on the Residency. General Dentz was not in it at the time. As for Beirut, wrote Air Marshal Tedder, "I felt that the moral effect of our intermittent bombing of the port would be very limited so long as

A.O.C. - the Vichy thought we were being the perfect gentleman. Hence  
 V.C.A.S. the frightfulness on the Residency (which was Dentz's Head-  
 Enc. 57B. quarters) which is on the other side of the town. I saw the  
 7/7/41. Commanding Officer of No. 11 Squadron before and told him 'no women and children'. I'll enclose copies of the photos since it is one of the best bits of bombing I've seen. There were sixteen 250 lbs. in the salvo".

On the night of the 29th/30th heavy bombers attacked against Beirut from the Canal Zone and 5 Wellingtons of No. 37 Squadron obtained direct hits on the Northern Mole, and started small fires. On July 1st the Vichy authorities, compelled to accept the Turkish refusal to allow our reinforcements to reach Syria through Turkey, now hoped to receive them by sea from Salonika. Vichy Destroyers left Beirut to escort these reinforcements. Loire 130 Flying Boats based on Tripoli were detailed to shadow our Fleet. In reply, our bombers with the exception of 4 Blenheims which went to Suweida stood by to attack Vichy shipping.

#### Summary of Operations.

In all, 38 medium Bomber sorties were made against airfields targets by Blenheims of Nos. 11 and 45 Squadrons from Palestine in the fortnight from June 16th to 29th, principally against Palmyra and Rayak, the latter of which was attacked eleven times. Six sorties were made against Deir-ez-Zor airfield by Blenheims of No. 84 Squadron from Iraq on June 26th. All bombs fell on the target, and fires were started.

In the period from June 15th onwards we had carried out 125 medium bomber and 5 heavy bomber sorties in all. During the same period our fighters delivered over 100 low flying attacks on airfields and M/T in addition to maintaining standing patrols for our troops and H.M. ships. Sixty seven fighter sorties were made against airfields, 31 by Hurricanes of Nos. 208 and 260, and Tomahawks of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron attacked the airfield at Quesair destroying 5 Glenn Martins on the ground and 3 in combat. Eight Tomahawks of the same squadron destroyed 4 and damaged 6 Moranes at Homs airfield on June 26th, and also machine-gunned and damaged a number of M/T north-east of Qeneitra. On June 16th and 17th Tomahawks of the same squadron made twelve offensive sorties against M/T concentrations. Enemy cavalry and M/T on the Damascus - Beirut road were successfully attacked on the 20th and 21st by 15 Tomahawks, and on the 22nd by 6 Hurricanes of No. 80 Squadron. Considerable damage was done to the vehicles. In all these operations we lost 2 Hurricanes, and 5 Tomahawks suffered slight damage. On the 23rd, over Palmyra, Tomahawks shot down 3 Potez 63s out of 4 and set the fourth on fire. On the 28th, 8 Hurricanes shot down in flames 6 Vichy Glenn Martins which were bombing our troops at Palmyra.

SECTION IVFROM THE FALL OF PALMYRA TO THEVICHY SURRENDER JULY 4 - 12.

Towards the end of June Field Marshal Wavell was able to make use of troops from Iraq against Syria. Two brigades of General Quinan's force moved from Baghdad up the Euphrates by Abu Kanal and Deir-ez-Zor towards Aleppo, while Habforce was moving across the desert towards Palmyra and Homs. The Free French advanced north from Palmyra towards Homs, while the 6th Division, of which two brigades were now ready, moved north-west from Damascus towards Rayak. The 7th Australian Division which had advanced to Saida prepared to assault the last remaining Vichy position covering Beirut and Damour.

On July 4th Palmyra fell. On the 1st July the 10th Indian Division had crossed the Iraq-Syrian frontier at Abu Kanal with the intention of advancing right up the Euphrates to Aleppo. At the same time, since the enemy were holding strongly west of Damascus, it was decided to re-open the attack on them on the coastal road south of Beirut. The R.A.F. was able to give support to this operation. On July 6th it was found possible to detach a bomber and a fighter squadron and place them under the direct control of the 7th Australian Division in its advance on Beirut. But there was no landing ground near Divisional Headquarters at Saida. The Bomber squadron had, therefore, to operate from Mugehilia, a landing ground 65 miles from Divisional Headquarters, and the fighters from Roshpina, 40 miles away. They were controlled by W/T direct from the Air liaison Section at Divisional Headquarters with an alternative telephone line from Corps Headquarters. This method of communication was not found wholly satisfactory, as, if a high grade cypher was used, there was delay in decoding, and, if it was not used, there was insufficient security.

/Attacks

Attacks on Beirut

But in accordance with our general strategy the major air effort was directed, not against the enemy's front line, but against his shipping and airfields behind the front line. Beirut was attacked every night from June 30th to July 9th. The most successful attack was that by 3 Wellingtons of No.33 Squadron on the night of July 4th/5th, which caused many large explosions and fires in the fuel depot. On the 7th/8th three Wellingtons of the same squadron and three of No.70 scored direct hits on fuel tanks, and started a fire which was visible for eighty miles. The harbour and shipping at Tripoli were attacked on July 4th and 8th by a total of eleven Blenheims of No.11 Squadron. They failed to hit merchant shipping, a medium sized tanker and the railway, but in the raid on July 8th hit two warehouses. One Blenheim later crashed on landing but the crew were saved.

Summary of bomber and fighter effort

In all, 33 heavy bomber sorties were flown against docks and harbours of Beirut, and 11 medium bomber sorties against the ammunition dump at Hamma in the last fortnight of the campaign. Twelve Blenheims of No.45 Squadron, escorted by 7 Tomahawks of No.3 Squadron R.A.A.F., attacked Hamma on July 10th. Hits on ammunition dumps caused violent explosions lasting for more than thirty minutes and completely destroyed the main bomb and ammunition stock of the Vichy Air Force. Five Dewoitines attacked the Blenheims from below and shot down 2 of them, but three of the crew escaped by parachute. A third Blenheim made a forced landing behind the enemy lines, and a fourth crashed on returning to base. The escorting Tomahawks shot down all 5 of the Dewoitines without loss to themselves.

In the last fortnight of the campaign our fighters flew more than 300 offensive sorties, destroying 8 Vichy aircraft in combat and 23 on the ground. Of the latter, 9 were destroyed at Aleppo, 7 at Hamma, 3 at Talia and 2 each at Baalbek and Rayak airfields.

Seven seaplanes were also damaged at Tripoli and other aircraft elsewhere. At Aleppo, on July 1st, one Blenheim of 84 Squadron attacked aircraft on the satellite landing ground, damaging 6 Blochs and setting fire to another 3. On the 9th, 10 Hurricanes of 450/260 Squadron machine-gunned 6 Potez 63s, 3 biplane fighters and 2 large biplane transports. One of the transports and one of the Potez were completely burnt out. At Aleppo, Hama and Fah landing grounds one large three-engined aircraft, one Leo 45, and one Potez 63 were destroyed and eight other aircraft damaged by 6 Tomahawks of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron on July 11th. One Dewoitine, which attempted to intercept, was shot down. Five attacks were made on Baalbek airfield between June 30th and July 10th. Petrol dumps were exploded. Twelve Vichy aircraft were damaged and 2 Potez 63s destroyed. Airfield buildings and artillery emplacements were machine-gunned, and two tanks and twenty M/T vehicles destroyed on the road between Dina's and Beirut by Hurricanes of 450/260 Squadron and Tomahawks of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Squadron. This last squadron made 25 sorties on July 9th against military objectives south and south-east of Beirut in support of our forces which were turning the Damour line. An ammunition dump was exploded near Damour, and three goods trains and a number of M/T vehicles were heavily machine-gunned. On July 10th, aircraft of the same squadron made twenty sorties against Talia and Hama airfields and M/T in that area. 2 Leo 45s were destroyed on the ground, 6 damaged, and a further 3 unidentified aircraft were damaged at Talia. 25 vehicles were severely damaged on the roads. On the same day 7 Hurricanes of 80 Squadron machine-gunned Talia and Rayak airfields, one unidentified aircraft being destroyed on the ground and 10 others damaged. As the enemy air force was by now almost destroyed, there were few combats in the air. The enemy lost 8 aircraft in such combats as there were and we lost 14, 4 crashing on return from operations. Our losses were

/mainly

mainly from ground fire. On July 1st one Hurricane of No. 127 Squadron engaged and damaged 2 Dewoitines, and on July 3rd 2 Hurricanes of the same squadron were shot down over Deir-ez-Zor by 2 Bloch bombers escorted by 5 fighters.

Air support to the Indian Division

There was considerable confusion about the air support that could be given to the Indian Division advancing on Aleppo. Since it came from Iraq and not from Palestine or Transjordan it was the duty of the Iraq Command rather than the Palestine Command to provide it with air support. Air Vice-Marshal D'Albiac pleaded "that he was quite unable to provide the air support our columns should have even for their own safety. I have at present at my disposal 127 squadron, equipped with 2 Hurricanes, 4 Gladiators (this squadron has recently been formed from No. 9 F.T.S. with pilots quite untrained in modern warfare). 89 Squadron with 4 Blenheims". He complained that "these operations were ordered, I understand, by Milpal<sup>1</sup> and decided upon without prior reference to me". Air Marshal Tedder sympathised with him in his complaint.

A.O.C/15  
Enc. 59A  
6/7/41

A.O.C/15  
Enc. 71A  
6/7/41

Ibid  
Enc. 77A  
10/7/41

Attacks on enemy bases

While the Australians were preparing and delivering their final assault on the Vichy positions at Damour, the R.A.F. continued with its policy of bombing communication centres behind the lines. The railway station and track at Aleppo were attacked on the nights of 7th/8th, 8th/9th and 10th/11th by 10 Wellingtons of Nos. 37, 38 and 148 Squadrons. Blenheims of No. 11 Squadron attacked railway sidings and warehouses at Rayak on the 9th and 11th, hitting a level crossing and doing other damage.

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1. i.e. Military Authorities in Palestine.

The radio station at Soffe was damaged by 20 Blenheims of No.45 Squadron on July 8th. At Aleppo the landing ground and dispersed aircraft were bombed by 15 heavy and 10 medium bombers in a series of day and night attacks by Wellingtons of 37, 38, 70 and 148 squadrons and Blenheims of 84. On the night of July 5th/6th heavy explosions were caused in the hangars there, and three enemy aircraft were destroyed. On the night of July 7th/8th, Wellingtons of 70 Squadron attacked Nasuda satellite landing ground destroyed three enemy aircraft on the ground and damaging two others. Enemy fighters tried to intercept our bombers, and in the combat one was destroyed, one probably destroyed, and one damaged. A Wellington crashed on landing. In the attack on Hama on July 4th, 6 Blenheims of No.45 Squadron dropped 6,000 tons H.E. bombs, starting fires and destroying 2 Vichy aircraft. Palmyra airfield, barracks and stores were bombed on June 30th and July 1st by 10 Blenheims of No.45 Squadron in each raid.

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Assess-  
ment of  
Damage in  
Syria  
p.10.

On July 11th, the eve of the Vichy surrender there was also a further attack on Suweida by Blenheims of Nos.45 and 11 Squadrons. In this attack we dropped pamphlets and then, when the people rushed to pick them up, followed them with a farewell bomb which killed two persons, a display of high spirits that was of course in direct defiance of instructions. This gave a very unfavourable impression.

But the battle-line itself was not neglected. The Vichy forces had retired to well-prepared defences behind the Damour River, twelve miles south of Beirut. On July 6th 11 Blenheims of 45, escorted by 3 Tomahawks of No.3 R.A.A.F. Squadron, attacked the bridge at Damour, and 12 Blenheims of the same squadron again attacked it on July 8th. On July 9th Imperial troops, supported by naval bombardment and by our

/bombers

bombers and fighters, out-flanked and captured this line. On the same day, columns of our troops reached Homs and thus threatened Beirut from the north-east. Our forces advancing from Iraq up the Euphrates, captured Deir-ez-Zor and were advancing on Raqqa with the intention of attacking Aleppo. Other forces advanced westwards from Palmyra after its capture on July 4th, and these forces succeeded in linking up with our main forces at Qarytain in the Damascus area and joining in the attack on Homs. By July 9th the Vichy Commander still had 24,000 troops under his command, but his air force was almost entirely destroyed, and when his naval support and hope of reinforcement by sea also vanished he surrendered.

#### Air activity in closing weeks of Campaign

During July the Vichy forces were threatened in Beirut, Rayak, Homs, Tripoli and Aleppo, and our offensive activity was intense. By July 10th we had destroyed or damaged four-fifths of the opposing air force. 228 heavy and medium bomber sorties were flown during this closing period by Nos. 815, 826 and 829 Fleet Air Arm, 52 against airfields at Aleppo, Hama and Palmyra. At Aleppo the landing ground and dispersed aircraft were bombed by 15 heavy and 10 medium bombers in a series of day and night attacks by Wellingtons of 37, 38, 70 and 148 Squadrons, and Blenheims of 84. On the night of July 5th/6th heavy explosions were caused in the hangars there, and three enemy aircraft were destroyed. On the night of July 7th/8th Wellingtons of 70 Squadron attacked Nasuda satellite landing ground, destroying three enemy aircraft on the ground and damaging two others. Enemy fighters tried to intercept our bombers, and in the combat one was destroyed, one probably destroyed and one damaged. A Wellington crashed on landing.

In the attack on Hama on July 4th 6 Blenheims of 45 Squadron dropped 6,000 lbs. H.E., starting fires and destroying two Vichy aircraft. Palmyra airfield, barracks and stores were bombed on June 30th and July 1st by ten Blenheims of 45 Squadron in each raid. Over three hundred fighter sorties were also made by Hurricanes of Nos. 80, 127 and 450/260 fighter Blenheims of 84 (from Iraq), Tomahawks of No. 3 R.A.A.F. and Beaufighters of 272.

Failure of enemy's hopes of sea reinforcement

The enemy's one hope lay in reinforcement by sea.

Our main air effort had been directed to preventing this.

Relations between the R.A.F. and the Navy were friendly,

though not untroubled by unfortunate mistakes. "King who has

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the cruiser squadron operating off Syria", wrote Air Marshal Tedder "came into Jerusalem to see me. Very enthusiastic about the good co-operation with 80 Squadron Hurricanes with whom they chat by R/T like real buddies. Whether he will be so enthusiastic since armed Blenheim recco retorted to naval A.A. with a load of bombs (fortunately missing) remains to be seen. We've suffered a good deal from naval A.A. lately (not that one can blame them for being pretty light on the trigger) ....."

Twenty-seven fighter sorties were flown in fleet protection, and six Tomahawks attacked flying-boats off Tripoli on July 2nd. The Vichy Destroyers, which had sailed from Beirut to escort the reinforcements coming from Salonika, were not located, but two flying-boats were damaged. On July 3rd two Blenheims of No. 11 attacked and missed what was thought to be a light cruiser but turned out to be a coaster, in Chekka Bay. A Swordfish of No. 829 Fleet Air Arm torpedoed a Vichy yacht in Castel Rosso harbour. Five Blenheims of No. 11 attacked merchant shipping in Tripoli harbour on July 4th with 7 x 500 lb. bombs. A portion of the convoy, with an escort of Destroyers, was observed in the Bay of Adalia Keurfezi on July 4th and

/attacked

attacked by Albacores of No. 826 Fleet Air Arm from Cyprus and succeeded in sinking the Troopship St. Didier. Twenty-one fighter sorties were flown that day in Fleet protection and twenty on July 5th. On July 6th a strong attack against our naval forces off the Syrian coast developed from Rhodes. Sixty-seven sorties on Fleet protection were flown on that day. Twelve were flown on July 7th. Tripoli harbour was attacked on July 8th.

Beaufighters of No. 272 Squadron operating from Cyprus attacked shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean on July 5th, 6th, 7th and 10th. Caiques were attacked by Beaufighters with machine-gun and cannon fire on July 5th and 6th, and on July 6th a Beaufighter severely damaged with cannon a merchant vessel of 2,000 tons ten miles east of Rhodes. On July 7th two attacks by Beaufighters (two in each attack) severely damaged seven seaplanes at Tripoli, and on July 10th a two-masted ship carrying stores was sunk by Beaufighter cannon fire between Rhodes and Castel Rosso. Patrols in defence of our ships off the Syrian coast were flown throughout the period by Hurricanes of 80, 450/260 and 806/33 squadrons. On July 7th Hurricanes of 80 Squadron destroyed a JU.88 attempting an attack on H.M. ships. Reconnaissances to prevent seaborne reinforcements were carried out by Swordfish of 230, Beaufighters of 272, Blenheims of 203 and Marylands of 39. In the course of these, three Blenheims on July 11th nearly missed with 4 x 250 lb S.A.P. bombs an unidentified submarine in the Scarpanto - Rhodes - Cyprus area.

By the 10th the withdrawal to the north-west of Vichy forces showed that they were beginning to lose hope of these seaborne reinforcements, and on that day the final shipping attack was made by a Blenheim of 203 from Egypt,

/which

which obtained near misses on a 2,000 ton vessel. On July 12th, hope being finally abandoned, the Vichy forces capitulated.

The enemy effort

Except for a few raids on Haifa, notably one by Rhodes-based JU.88s on June 25th in which one Glenn Martin and one JU.88 were shot down, the enemy did not attempt any counter-attacks against Palestine. There were a few low flying machine-gun and bombing attacks on our troops in Syria, which cost the enemy a number of casualties. On July 1st/2nd unidentified aircraft bombed Latrun in Palestine, damaging the water pipe line. Two hits on a prisoner-of-war camp caused casualties among the prisoners. Haifa was again bombed by 5 Vichy aircraft, of which one Glenn Martin was shot down by anti-aircraft fire, on the night of July 2nd/3rd; only civilian damage was caused. Aircraft, believed to be JU.88s, also attacked Haifa on July 6th/7th, starting a fire in the oil refinery which was soon under control. Daylight attacks were also made on Nicosia airfield and Famagusta Harbour in Cyprus on July 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th by German and Italian aircraft, including JU.88s, torpedo carrying S.79s and S.84s. Several soldiers were killed or wounded. Little damage was done, but at Nicosia one Albacore and one Hurricane were destroyed on the ground and six other aircraft damaged. On July 2nd eight unidentified aircraft dropped fifty bombs on Akheila, south-east of Paphos, without causing serious damage.

SECTION VFEATURES OF THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign was, in comparison with many of this war, a minor one. Yet, even so, it was able to reveal certain deficiencies and to teach certain lessons. So far from being, as is sometimes thought, a campaign in which victory was inevitable, we must, thought Field Marshal Wavell, be considered fortunate in achieving victory with forces that were really insufficient for their task.

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Sec.94.

Air raid reporting

The machinery of information, comprising the Palestine Observer Screen, manned by the Palestine Police Forces, and the three Air Report Centres at Jerusalem, Jaffa and Tel Aviv, proved most adequate and efficient in the first days of the campaign, but later, with the arrival of new squadrons, the extension of operations and the continual movement of operational units, reporting fell into some confusion. Things were also made more difficult as radio identification was only fitted to a few of the aircraft operating.

Technical defects in aircraft

Many of the Lockheed hydraulic pumps on Hurricanes became unserviceable owing to 'swarf' in the hydraulic pipe line. Several oil temperature gauges Mark IA in both Hurricanes and Blenheims failed. Some of the undercarriage retracting arms on Tomahawks bent.

Supply difficulties

There was a certain lack of co-ordination between the air and administrative branches. The main railway finishes at Haifa and a narrow gauge line runs thence northwards to Beirut. All supplies had therefore to be unloaded and reloaded at Haifa. There was often a considerable bottleneck in this process and two instances of petrol and ammunition not being loaded on to their

/right

right trains at all. As mentioned, the Tomahawks suffered from a lack of incendiary ammunition. R/T communication between bombers and fighters was lacking.

#### Reconnaissance and Army Co-operation work

In a general summary of the air operations of the campaign it was considered that the reconnaissance and army co-operation work, in spite of the small number of aircraft available, was, on the whole, successful. The demands of the army, reported O.C. No. 208 Squadron were "except for one short period never excessive, though many were quite unnecessary". The absence of Vichy reserves made it possible to concentrate reconnaissance on the front line and facilitated the work.

#### Bombing attacks

The bombing attacks on petrol dumps were reasonably successful, about 280 tons of petrol and oil being destroyed by five tons of H.E. and incendiary bombs., in 10 Blenheim sorties. Attacks on ammunition dumps were less successful. Some damage was done at Hammana but even there, where 50 per cent of the buildings were affected by our bombs, only 3.5 per cent of the ammunition dumps were destroyed. At Talia, where most of the shells and ammunition were stored in ordinary galvanised iron sheds, our bombs were much more effective. The attacks on airfields were disappointing. 43,000 lbs of H.Es and 3,800 lbs of incendiaries only destroyed five aircraft at Hamma, the 250 G.Ps used proving ineffective and doing little damage except when they exploded actually inside a building. At Palmyra twelve incendiaries penetrated the roof of the main hangar but did not touch any part of any of the aircraft there. One penetrated the top and bottom plane of an aircraft and burnt itself out there without even singeing the aircraft. In Beirut, which was the main target of our bombs, we

/seriously

seriously damaged in all about fifty houses, killed about sixty-four people and wounded one hundred and eight. There were complaints of the low standard of bombing of new aircrews.

Fighter attacks on airfields

On the other hand the outstanding success of the campaign was that of fighter attacks on aircraft on the ground. From 140 sorties, 81 by Hurricanes and 59 by Tomahawks, it was claimed at the time that 36 aircraft were destroyed and another 107 damaged. After the armistice, inspection of the ground showed 55 destroyed or irreparable Vichy aircraft. "The Tomahawks", reported Air Marshal Tedder, "have been doing some really good work in shooting up Vichy aircraft on the ground and surprisingly, considering they have no incendiaries, setting them on fire. I think a very considerable percentage of the Frogs have been disposed of in this way". The extreme weakness of the enemy's anti-aircraft defences is shown by the fact that in all these attacks on grounded aircraft none of our aircraft were destroyed and only three were damaged'. There is little doubt that these attacks on airfields were of more value to the ground forces than attacks on M/T vehicles on roads or immediately on the enemy's battle line. Quite apart from the number of enemy aircraft destroyed, the effect of these attacks was to compel him to base his aircraft far back behind the battle line. Close support work was complicated by the carelessness of the troops in displaying their identification strips. These attacks could, of course, have been heavier and yet more successful, had it not been for the unforeseen demands for protection of naval shipping.

A.O.C. to  
V.C.A.S.  
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ORDER OF BATTLE H.Q. PALESTINE & TRANSJORDAN

APPENDIX A

UNIT	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT	I.E.	I.R.	UNIT	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT	I.E.	I.R.	UNIT	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT	I.E.	I.R.
2. 6. 41.					16. 6. 41.					30. 6. 41.				
No. 3 Sqdn. RAAF	Lydda	Tomahawks	16	5	No. 3 Sqdn RAAF	Lydda	Tomahawk	10	5	No. 80 Sqdn 806/33 Sqdn Det. (2)	Aqir	Hurricane	16	5
No. 11 Squadron	Aqir	Blenheim IV	16	5	No. 11 Sqdn	Aqir	Blenheim IV	16	5	"X" Flight	Amman	Hurricanes		
No. 80 Squadron	Aqir	Hurricane	16	5	No. 80 Sqdn	Aqir	Hurricane	16	5	3 Sqdn RAAF	Lydda	Tomahawks	16	5
No. 112 Squadron	Haifa	Hurricane	16	5	No. 80 Sqdn (Det.)	Haifa	Hurricane			11 Sqdn	Aqir	Blenheim IV	16	5
No. 208 Squadron	Gaza	Hurricane	4	1	No. 208 Sqdn (Det.)	Haifa	Hurricane	8	2	80 Sqdn (Det.)	Haifa	Hurricanes (1 flight)		
No. 211 Squadron	Lydda (Re-forming)	Blenheim			No. 208 Sqdn (Det.)	Haifa				208 Sqdn	Ramleh	(Hurricane Lysander 1 Flight)	8	2
No. "X" Flight	Amman	Gladiators			No. 208 Sqdn (Det.)	Rochpina				208 Sqdn (Det.)	Rochpina	1 Flight	4	2
										208 Sqdn (Det.)	Gaza	1 Flight		
										450/260 (3) Sqdn.	Aqir	Hurricane	16	5
										272 Sqdn (Det.)	Lydda	Beaufighter		
ORDER OF BATTLE H.Q. R.A.F. CYPRUS														
No. 3 Sqdn RAAF Detachment.	NICOSIA	Tomahawks			No. 80 Sqdn (Det.)	Nicosia	Hurricane			3 Sqdn RAAF Det.	Nicosia	Tomahawk	1 Flight	
										80 Sqdn Det.	Nicosia	Hurricane	1 Flight	
										815 Sqdn Det.	Nicosia	Swordfish	6	

1. Withdrawn to Fayid (Egypt) to rearm with Tomahawks. 5.6.41.

2. No. 23 Squadron was moved from Edeu to Amriya on June 15. It consisted then of 16 Hurricanes I.E. and 5 I.R. The personnel of two flights of 806 Fleet Air Arm were there attached to it and together the composite squadron moved to Lydda on June 23. On July 11 No. 33's flight returned from Lydda to Amriya.

3. The personnel of No. 450 Squadron went to Aqir on June 23 and formed the composite squadron 450/260.

## TABLE OF R.A.F. BOMBING OPERATIONS - SYRIA

## PORTS, BASES AND SHIPPING

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>BEIRUT</u> Petrol dump	2 June	2 Beaufighters 2 Beaufighters 1 Maryland	252 272 39	Numerous hits cannon observed. One near miss. No fires or explosions. Tanks appear empty.
Petrol installations  N.B.Photos	4 June  taken 5 June	4 Blenheims	11	Bombs fell in and around target area. 1 x 250 lb direct hit on tank NE. edge of installations. Hole in tank SW. edge of installation. Large columns of black smoke seen rising from target. 1 Blenheim slightly damaged by splinters. taken 5 June show 2 petrol tanks destroyed.
Harbour	6 June	1 Maryland	39	Low level bombing and ground strafing. Bombs overshot target and dropped on wharf. Weather good. No opposition.
Oil tanks and stores	6 June	4 Blenheims	11	Low level bombing and ground strafing. Storage tanks and sheds received direct hits. All a/c found target. Weather good. Heavy A/A fire. 2 Blenheims slightly damaged by A/A fire. 1 officer slightly wounded.
Petrol stores	8 June	3 Blenheims 3 Hurricanes	11 80	Large fires started, with flames rising to 300 feet, and a number of sheds destroyed.
Petrol store	8 June	3 Blenheims 4 Tomahawks	11 3 Sqdn RAAF	2480 lb. bombs. Results unobserved.
Shipping in harbour	Night 10/11 June	3 Swordfish	? FAA	Bombing attack. Results unobserved owing to cloud.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Shipping in harbour	Night 10/11 June	2 Swordfish	815 Sqdn FAA	1 Swordfish attacked large ship just North of pier. Second Swordfish attacked 2 merchant vessels West of pier. No explosions observed. A/A encountered from ships anchored on E. side of main pier.
Shipping in harbour	Night 13/14 June	4 Swordfish	815 Sqdn FAA	Merchant ships in harbour attacked. 1 ship torpedoed - further results unknown.
Harbour	18 June	2 Albatrosses	829 Sqdn FAA	Bombing attack on harbour. One bomb very near miss on destroyer.
Vichy warship N. of BEIRUT	18 June	1 Albatross	829 Sqdn FAA	Vichy warship at sea North of Beirut attacked, but no results observed.
Destroyer in harbour	19 June	3 Blenheims	11 Sqdn.	Level attack at 10,000' 12 x 250 G.P. bombs. All fell 100 yards astern. Heavy calibre pom-pom inaccurate. Weather fine.
Harbour	19 June	1 Swordfish 2 Albatrosses	829 Sqdn FAA	Dive-bombing attacks. 4 hits on large jetty. One submarine hit.
Destroyer in harbour	22 June	6 Blenheims	11 Sqdn.	24 x 250 lb. bombs. Attack from 10,000'. 1 direct hit. Slight pom-pom fire. Weather fine.
Destroyer in harbour	Night 21/22 June	1 Albatross 1 Swordfish	829 Sqdn. FAA	Torpedo attack. Results unobserved.
Shipping in harbour	22 June	4 Blenheims	11 Sqdn.	Attacks from 2000'. 16 x 250 lb. bombs. 1 ship on fire. Intense accurate pom-pom 8/10 cloud at 3,000'. 1 observer wounded by A/A.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Harbour	Night 23/24 June	3 Swordfish	815 Sqdn FAA	Dive-bombing attack. 1 stick of bombs on east side of jetty near destroyers. Damage not stated. No details of A/A and weather.
Harbour	24 June	2 Albacores 5 Hurricanes (Escort)	289 Sqdn FAA 80 or 260 Sqdn.	Dive-bombing attack. Hits on jetty with destroyer alongside. Damage not stated. A/A and weather - no details.
1 small m/v N. of BEIRUT	26 June	1 Swordfish	829 Sqdn FAA	Dive-bombing attack. No hits observed.
Shipping and docks	Night 29/30 June	5 Wellingtons	37 Sqdn.	Attacks from 3/8,000'. 11,000 lbs. HE, 720 lbs. incendiary bombs. 2 direct hits on northern mole near ships. 4 small fires. Barrage A/D inaccurate. 9/10 cloud at first, clearing later.
Residency	29 June	4 Blenheims	11	Residency bombed. 12 direct hits with 250 lb. bombs. Amount of damage unobserved.
Shipping and docks	Night 30 June/ 1 July	7 Wellingtons	70	17,940 lbs. bombs on docks. Direct hits. Possible hits on ships at northern mole. A/A erratic. Weather good.
Docks	Night 1/2 July	3 Wellingtons	38	6,500 lbs. HE. 640 lbs. incendiary bombs. Small fire northern mole. Ships hit. Inaccurate slight A/A. Weather clear.
Docks	Night 2/3 July	2 Wellingtons	37	6,500 lb. HE. 480 lbs. incendiary bombs. Direct hits, one fire, and explosion with blue flashes on central quay. Slight A/A heavy calibre, inaccurate. Weather clear

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Harbour	Night 3/4 July	2 Wellingtons	38	6,000 lbs. HE, 960 lbs. incendiary bombs. 2 fires. 1 big explosion. Erratic A/A. Clear weather.
<u>DIJOUNTEH</u> Harbour	Night 12/13 June	3 FAA Swordfish		A direct hit registered on the largest of 3 warships.
Shipping	Night 12/13 June	1 Swordfish	815 Sqdn FAA	Destroyer of "Guepard" class attacked and damaged.
<u>EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN</u> Vichy Destroyer	Night 15/16 June	3 Swordfish	815 Sqdn FAA	1 direct hit registered amidships, and a further two probable hits. 1 Swordfish missing.
1 Vichy m/v SW. of Cyprus	4 July	4 Albacores 7 Swordfish	826 and 829 Sqdn FAA 815 Sqdn FAA	Vichy merchant vessel attacked with torpedoes. Sunk by Albacores.
SW. of <u>TRIPOLI</u> 3000 ton enemy vessel	16 June	2 Blenheims	11	1 bomb fell near or on the vessel, but full results were unobserved.
<u>TELKALKH</u> Fuel dumps	26 June	4 Blenheims	11	Medium level attack. 8 x 250 lb. BAP, - 24 x 40 lb. GP., 240 x 4 lb. incendiary bombs. Direct hits on dumps. Large column black smoke visible 50 miles away. Weather fine.
Petrol dump	10 July	4 Blenheims	11	16 x 250 lb. bombs. Overshot target and straddled village - 10/10 cloud.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>TRIPOLI</u> Merchant ships	4 July	5 Blenheims	11	Medium level attack, 7 x 500 lb. bombs near misses. Heavy and accurate A/A. Fine weather.
Harbour, medium sized tanker, 2 warehouses, and railway sidings	8 July	6 Blenheims	11	Attacks from 10,000'. 13 x 500 lb. bombs. 2 hits on warehouses. A/A, 2 puffs, slight, inaccurate. 8/10 cloud.
<u>BAROUK</u> Dump east of town	4 July	9 Blenheims	45	28 x 250 lb. 90 x 40 lb. and 100 x 4 lb. incendiary bombs. All in target area. Weather cloudy.
<u>SAIN</u> Docks	Night 3/4 July	2 Wellingtons	70	5,980 lbs. HE bombs, 1,400 rounds ammunition. Accurate A/A. Good weather.
Docks, barracks and railway	Night 4/5 July	3 Wellingtons	37	Attacks from 2,500' to 8,000'. 9,950 lbs. HE. and 720 lbs. incendiary bombs. Direct hits on docks, barracks, and railway. Terrific explosions and enormous fires at fuel depot. Intense accurate A/A. 7/10 cloud. A/C damaged by shrapnel.
Harbour	Night 5/6 July	2 Wellingtons	70	750 lb. bombs. 1 direct hit on barracks. Weather good.
Harbour	Night 6/7 July	1 Wellington	148	Attack from 5,000'. 1970 lbs. bombs. Slight erratic A/A. Results unobserved.
Harbour	Night 6/7 July	3 Wellingtons	37	750 lbs. HE dropped. 3 hits near barracks and railway. A/A slight heavy. 6/10 cloud.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Harbour	Night 7/8 July	3 Wellingtons 2 Wellingtons	88 70	Attacks from 5/8000'. Direct hit on fuel tanks. Terrific fire visible 80 miles. Sparse A/A. Excellent weather.
Harbour	Night 8/9 July	1 Wellington	148	Level attack from 8000'. 1 x 250 lb. bomb. Good weather. Results unobserved.
Harbour	Night 8/9 July	1 Wellington	37	Attack from 7,000'. 1 x 250 lb. bomb. Results unobserved.
<u>HAMMANA</u> Ammunition dump	9 July	10 Blenheims	45	9 a/c failed to locate target. 1 straddled it with bombs. Weather cloudy. Results unobserved.
Ammunition dump	10 July	12 Blenheims 7 Tomahawks (Escort)	45 3 Sqdn RAAF	32 x 250 lb, 118 x 40 lb. bombs plus incen- diary. Many hits exploded whole dump. Weather fine. 3 Blenheims missing.
<u>CHEKKA BAY</u> Vichy cruiser	3 July	2 Blenheims	11	Medium level attack. 4 x 250 lb. bombs undershot. Fine weather.
<u>ADALIA</u> Harbour Vichy ship	4 July	4 Albacores	826	Vichy ship "ST.DIDIER" attacked. 2 torpedoes hit ship submerged.
<u>SYRIAN COAST</u> Enemy vessel	10 July	1 Blenheim	203	1 enemy vessel approx. 2,000 tons attacked. 1 bomb burst a few feet from the stern.

AERODROMES AND LANDING GROUNDS

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>ALEPPO</u> A/C on aerodrome	5 June	3 Blenheims	11	6 x 250 lb. 18 x 40 lb. bombs. One small a/c seen to be hit. Hits also registered on hangars and tarmac. 2 columns of black smoke seen rising to 100', either from the hangars or in front of them. 3 Moranes tried to intercept, but failed.
Aerodrome	8 June	3 Blenheims	84	Attack from 6,000'. Near misses on buildings SE. corner of aerodrome. No opposition. Weather good.
Aerodrome	Night 9/10 June	2 Blenheims	11	1420 lbs. HE. 480 lbs. incendiary bombs. Blenheims despatched to bomb aerodrome found town lighted and flare path on aerodrome, presumably for raiders returning from HAIFA. 15 a/c, approx, on ground. Bombs dropped from 2,000' across aerodrome buildings and runway. Only opposition ground M/G fire.
Aerodrome	Night 10/11 June	2 Blenheims	11	Direct hits registered on buildings starting 2 fires. Further bombs fell on runways and in the a/c dispersal area.
Enemy aircraft	14 June	3 Blenheims 3 Blenheims	11 84	1 a/c on ground destroyed, and others damaged.
Aerodrome	Night 14/15 June	3 Blenheims	84	Bombs fell amongst dispersed a/c and on W. end of runway. Further bombs started a large fire visible for 30 miles. 1 Morane on patrol damaged.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Dispersed a/c on aerodrome	15 June	3 Blenheims 1 damaged on landing - temporarily u/s.	84	Attack from 5000'. 2820 lbs. bombs. Bombs fell among dispersed a/c. Small bombs W. end of runway. One fire started, visible for 30 miles. Damage not assessed. Weather good. No A/A fire.
Dispersed a/c	29 June	2 Blenheims	84	Level attack 12,000'. 2920 lbs. bombs. Small bombs straddled aerodrome. 1 small bomb amongst dispersed a/c. 1 direct hit on runway. Small bombs very close to large a/c. Dust prevented assessment of damage. A/A slight and inaccurate. Weather good.
Dispersed a/c on aerodrome	30 July	3 Blenheims	84	1888 lbs. bombs straddled aerodrome NE. to SW. 2 Moranes attacked Blenheims feebly from astern.
Dispersed a/c on aerodrome	30 July	3 Blenheims	84	2,760 lbs. bombs fell among 15 a/c setting 1 on fire. A/A heavy calibre.
Aerodrome	30 June/ 1 July	3 Blenheims	84	Attack from 8,000'. 10 x 250 lb. on runways. A/A heavy calibre. Inaccurate, concentrated. Weather - poor visibility.
Aerodrome	Night 5/6 July	2 Wellingtons 2 Wellingtons	70 38	Attacks from 6/8000'. 7840 lbs. HE. 480 lbs. incendiary bombs. Direct hits on hangars caused large explosions. Several a/c hit by incendiaries and M.G. fire. Several fires started. 3 a/c destroyed. A.A. erratic. Weather good.
Aerodrome	Night 6/7 July	1 Wellington	38	Attack from 5000'. 2,2440 lb. HE. 240 lb. incendiary bombs. Bombs fell in vicinity of hangars and barracks. A/A slight and inaccurate. Weather clear.
Aerodrome	Night 6/7 July	3 Wellingtons	37	5940 lbs. HE, 720 lbs. incendiary bombs. 2 direct hits on hangars. Explosions and fires caused. Good visibility.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>NASRULLA</u> (Satellite)	2 July	2(B) Blenheims 1(F) Blenheim	84	Low level bombing and ground strafing. Dust storms. Results of attack not observed. No details of A/A. 1(B) and 1(F) Blenheim missing.
"	Night 7/8 July	2 Wellingtons	70	Attack from 1,600 to 2,000'. 3690 lbs. incendiary bombs. 3 a/c on ground destroyed and 2 damaged. Wellingtons engaged fighters, shooting down one, probably destroying another and damaging a third. Weather good.
Aerodrome	Night 8/9 July	3 Wellingtons	37	980 lbs. HE. and 240 lbs. incendiary bombs fell across aerodrome. 2 hits on runway. Very slight A/A. Good visibility.
<u>ALEPPO</u> A/c on aerodrome	5 June	3 Blenheims	11	6 x 250 lb. 18 x 40 lbs. bombs. One small a/c seen to be hit. Hits also registered on hangars and tarmac. 2 columns of black smoke seen rising to 100 feet, either from the hangars or in front of them. 3 Moranes tried to intercept, but failed.
Aerodrome	8 June	3 Blenheims	84	Attack from 6,000'. Near misses on buildings SE. corner of aerodrome. No opposition. Weather good.
Aerodrome	Night 9/10 June	2 Blenheims	11	1420 lbs. HE. 480 lbs. incendiary bombs. Blenheims despatched to bomb aerodrome found town lighted and flare path on aerodrome, presumably for raiders returning from HAIFA. 15 a/c, approx. on ground. Bombs dropped from 2,000' across aerodrome buildings and runway. Only opposition ground M.G. fire.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN.	RESULTS
Aerodrome	Night 10/11 June	2 Blenheims	11	Direct hits registered on buildings starting 2 fires. Further bombs fell on runways and in the a/c dispersal area.
Enemy aircraft	14 June	3 Blenheims 3 Blenheims	11 84	1 a/c on ground destroyed, and others damaged.
Aerodrome	Night 14/15 June	3 Blenheims	84	Bombs fell amongst dispersed a/c and on W. end of runway. Further bombs started a large fire visible for 30 miles. 1 Morane on patrol damaged.
Dispersed a/c on aerodrome	15 June	3 Blenheims 1 damaged on landing - temporarily u/s.	84	Attack from 5000'. 2820 lbs. bombs. Bombs fell among dispersed a/c. Small bombs W. end of runway. One fire started, visible for 30 miles. Damage not assessed. Weather good. No A/A fire.
Dispersed a/c	29 June	2 Blenheims	84	Level attack 12,000'. 2920 lbs. bombs. Small bombs straddled aerodrome. 1 small bomb amongst dispersed a/c. 1 direct hit on runway. Small bombs very close to large a/c. Dust prevented assessment of damage. A.A. slight and inaccurate. Weather good.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Aerodrome	Night 8/9 July	2 Wellingtons	148	Attack from 9000'. 3690 lbs. bombs. Direct hits on hangar followed by large fire and numerous explosions. Visible from LATTAKIA. Good weather.
<u>PALMYRA</u> Aerodrome	Night 9/10 June	2 Blenheims	11	Bombs fell on the runway and buildings.
Aerodrome	10 June	3 Blenheims	11	Direct hits on hangars, other results unobserved.
Aerodrome, barracks and store buildings.	28 June	3 Blenheims 4 Blenheims 8 Tomahawks (escort)	45 11 3 Sqdn RAAF	Level attacks 7/9000'. 8 x 250 lbs; 48 x 40 lb. GP; 120 x 4 lb. incendiary and 3920 lbs. mixed bombs. Stick started 100 yds. short of store buildings and cut right across them. 1 x 250 lb. bomb direct hit on west inner buildings. Incendiaries fell on west wall. Bombs overshot barracks. No opposition. Weather good.
Aircraft on aerodrome	29 June	10 Blenheims 8 Tomahawks	45 3 Sqdn RAAF	Level attack 8000'. 10 x 250 lb. G.P., 66 x 40 lb. G.P., 480 x 4 lb. incendiary bombs. Bombs overshot a/c. Believed incendiaries hit build- ings. A/A light calibre. Weather fine.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
Aerodrome	30 June	10 Blenheims	45	Attack from 6000', 18 x 50 lb., 120 x 40 lb, bombs. 240 x 4 lb. incendiary bombs. Direct hit on barracks and stores. A/A M/G fire. Fine weather.
Aerodrome	1 July	10 Blenheims	45	Barracks, stores and buildings on aerodrome attacked. Several direct hits. Weather fine.
<u>DAMASCOS</u> Aerodrome	8 June	3 Blenheims	11	Direct hits on hangars, and on one large a/c on the ground, believed to be S.82.
<u>RAYAK</u> Aerodrome	Night 15/16 June	3 Blenheims	11	High level bombing 10,000'. Runway hit. Incendiarics near buildings and railway sidings. Also hits on North main runway. No opposition. Weather Hazy.
Aerodrome	16 June	Blenheim	11	2 sorties. First dropped 740 lbs. HE, 240 lbs. incendiary bombs across main runway, causing one very large explosion. Second dropped similar load on runway aerodrome buildings. Third failed to locate target.
Aerodrome and railway adjacent	24 June	3 Blenheims	11	Level attack 10,000'. 6 x 250 lb. 360 x 4 lb. incendiary bombs. Bombs burst across railway sidings and aerodrome

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>RAYAK</u> (contd) Aerodrome and railway adjacent				buildings. Details of damage not stated. A/A slight heavy calibre, fairly accurate. Weather fine.
Aerodrome and adjacent railway	28 June	3 Blenheims 3 Blenheims	45 11	Level attacks at 13,000'. 5 x 250 lb. G.P. 36 x 40 lb. G.P. and 3920 lbs. mixe. bombs. 1 x 250 lb. bomb on railway line. Further bombs straddled sidings. 1 x 40 lb. bomb on building North of a/c repair shop. No opposition. Weather good.
<u>DEIR-EZ-ZOR</u> Aerodrome buildings, ground defences and M.T.	26 June	3 Blenheims	84	2580 lbs. bombs. All in target area. Results unobserved. Weather good.
Aerodrome	26 June	3 Blenheims 1732 hours L.S.T.	84	Level attacks at 4,000'. 29 x 40 lb, 2 x 250 lb. All in target area. Fire in SE. corner. 2 direct hits on buildings. Good weather.
Aerodrome buildings	28 June	1 Blenheim	84	980 lbs. bombs. All bombs overshoot target. Opposition and weather - no details.
<u>HOMS</u> Aerodrome	Night 16/17 June	1 Blenheim 2 more crashed on taking-off Both write-offs Crew of 1 a/c injured.	11	Level attack from 10,000'. 2 x 250 lb. and 2 SBC. 4 lb. incendiary bombs. One on NW. edge of disper- sal area went short. Weather clear. Heavy calibre A/A weak and inacourate.
<u>HAMA</u> Landing ground	4 July	6 Blenheims	45	Medium level attacks. 6,000 lbs. HE. bombs. 2 direct hits on a/c. 2 a/c destroyed. Fires and large columns of smoke other bombs near hangars and dispersed a/c. Intense heavy A/A. Fine weather.

ENEMY CAMPS, POSITIONS AND LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>KISWE</u> Enemy positions	12 June	6 Blenheims 1 Blenheim hit by A/A fire by own troops. A/G wounded.	11	Gun positions north of town and enemy positions south of town bombed. Results unobserved.
<u>DAMASCUS-BEIRUT</u> <u>ROAD</u> M.T. concentra- tion	20 June	4 Blenheims	11	Results of attack unobserved.
M.T. concentra- tion	21 June	3 Blenheims	11	Attack from 3000'. 6 x 250 lb. 36 x 40 lb. bombs. Bombs fell among M.T. and many direct hits were obtained.
<u>DAMASCUS-ZAHLE</u> <u>ROAD</u> M.T. in gorge	21 June	4 Blenheims	11	Level attack 8,000', 8 x 40 lb bombs. Some fell on road and all in gorge. Results unob- served.
<u>DAMASCUS</u> Gun battery and M.T.	27 June	9 Blenheims	11	Level attack at 10,000'. 14 x 250 lb. 690 x 4 lb. incendi- ary bombs. Light M.G. encountered. Fine weather.
M.T.	27 June	4 Blenheims 1 Gunner killed	45	5 x 250 lb., 22 x 40 lb. bombs. Bombs overshot. Weather fine. Results unobserved.
<u>DYMAS</u> 2 gun batteries	25 June	2 Blenheims	11	Medium level 9,150'. 4 x 250 lb. G.P., 24 x 40 lb. bombs. Bombs overshot. Heavy cal- ibre. A/A. Pom-pom heavy and accurate. Weather fine.
<u>EKBES</u> Railway bridge 5 miles S. of town.	Night 16/17 June	3 Blenheims	11	Level attack at 6000'. 500 lb bombs fell around target. Weather fine. No A/A.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>HEREDERE BRIDGE</u>	18 June	3 Blenheims 2 damaged due to bullet holes and temporarily u/s.	11	Level attack at 1,500'. 4 x 500 lb bombs missed. 2 hit railway. M/G fire. Fine weather.
<u>JEZZINE</u> M.T. in ravine	20 June	3 Blenheims	11	Level attack 5,000'. 6 x 250 lb. 26 x 40 lb. bombs. 20 M.T. destroyed. Weather fine.
<u>QUATAANA</u> Village	18 June	1 Blenheim	11	Level attack 6,000'. All bombs (number unstated) N.E. corner of village. No A/A. Weather fine.
Village	19 June	3 Blenheims	11	Level attack 3,500'. 5 x 250 lb. bombs. No A/A weather fine.
Wood	18 June	1 Blenheim	11	Level attack 6,000'. 1 x 250 lb. on target. 1 x 40 lb. bomb over- shot. No A/A. Weather fine.
<u>QUNELTRA</u> Enemy A.F.Vs.	16 June	3 Blenheims	11	Bombing and machine gun attack. Results unobserved.
<u>SUWEIDA</u> Fort	18 June	1 Blenheim	11	2 x 250 lb, 12 x 40 lb. bombs. Overshot target. No A/A. Weather fine.
Fort	23 June	3 Blenheims	45	Level attack 10,000'. 4 x 250 lb. 21 x 40 lb. bombs. Bombs fell around fort. Weather fine.
Citadel	24 June	4 Blenheims	45	Level attack 6,500'. 9 x 250 lb 96 x 40 lb. bombs. Several burst on target, the remainder fell near. No opposition. Weather fine.
Citadel	24 June	3 Blenheims	45	Level attack 7000'. Bomb load no details. Bombs overshot target. No opposition. Weather fine.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>ALEPPO</u> Railway	Night 7/8 July	3 Wellingtons	38	4 x 250 lb, H.E. 720 incendiary bombs. Stations and line hit. Very little, inaccurate A/A. Excellent weather.
Railway Stn.	Night 8/9 July	3 Wellingtons	37	Attacks from 2/6000'. 4,500 lbs HE, 480 lbs. incendiary bombs fell on tracks near station and depots. 2 large and several small fires. 5 explosions.
Railway	Night 10/11 July	2 Wellingtons	148	4480 lbs. bombs. Large fires on station and depots. Moderate, heavy, fairly accurate A/A. Weather good.
Station and sidings	Night 10/11 July	4 Wellingtons	37	Attacks from 5,200 - 7,000'. 9000 lbs. HE. 969 lbs. incendiary bombs. Hits between railway station and power station and sidings. 6 explosions, some small fires. A/A moderate, light, inaccurate. Weather clear.
<u>BEIT ET DINE</u> Vichy troops	4 July	6 Blenheims	45	Bombing attack. 24 x 250 lb. HE. bombs. Results unobserved.
Army H.Q., and defended positions.	5 July	4 Blenheims	45	Bombs straddled targets. 40 x 250 lb, 840 x 4 lb. bombs. A/A and M/G fire. Cloudy.
Road nlook between BEIT ET DINE and RAYAK	10 July	3 Blenheims	45	Bombs fell both sides of road. Little A/A. Weather fine.
<u>RAYAK</u> Railway sidings	9 July	3 Blenheims	11	Bombs overshoot. A/A inaccurate. 9/10 cloud.
Stores buildings near railway	11 July	3 Blenheims	11	6 x 250 lb. 36 x 40 lb. bombs fell on level crossing. Slight heavy accurate A/A. Good weather.

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQDN	RESULTS
<u>SOFFE (Syria)</u> Radio Station	8 July	12 Blenheims	45	6 x 250 lb. G.P., 37 x 40 lbs incend. bombs. Hits between radio mast and road. Fine weather.
<u>SUWEIDA</u> Fort	30 June	3 Blenheime	45	Attack from 7,000'. 6 x 50 lbs, 30 x 40 lb. bombs. 1 direct hit on citadel and one on buildings. M.G. fire. Fine weather.
Fort & Citadel	1 July	3 Blenheime	45	Several direct hits on citadel. Slight A.A. weather fine.
Fort & Military barracks	2 July	4 Blenheime	45	High level attack. 8 x 250 lb, 48 x 40 lb bombs. Direct hits. Slight inaccurate A.A. Weather hazy.
Fort & Cite Militaire	11 July	3 Blenheims	11	6 x 250 lb, 24 x 40 lb bombs & 12 x 25 lb incend. bombs. 1 x 250 lb. bomb hit fort. Several 40 lb hit buildings, near cite militaire. Weather good.
<u>TAZIA</u> Marquees & Tents	10 July	8 Blenheims	11	4 x 250 lbs. bombs. Target destroyed. M.T. 5 miles N. of Zahle bombed. Road and 1 lorry hit. Road HARIANA-ZAHLE bombed. A.A. slight, heavy, accurate. 7/10 cloud.
<u>TRIPOLI Area</u> (Syria) 4 heavily laden M.T. North of Tripole.	11 July	3 Blenheims	11	4 x 250 lb & 24 x 40 lb bombs fell near target. 6 gun emplacements near TELKALAHH bombed. Bombs fell between road and guns. Medium inaccurate A.A. Weather good.

## SUMMARY OF BOMBING OPERATIONS IN SYRIA

PORTS BASES & SHIPPING TARGETS	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		AERODROMES AND LANDING GROUNDS TARGET	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		ENEMY CAMPS. POSITIONS AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION TARGET	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		GRAND TOTALS				
		HEAVY	MEDIUM			HEAVY	MEDIUM			HEAVY	MEDIUM					
<u>2nd - 15th June, 1941.</u>																
BEIRUT	10	-	26	ALEPPO	7	-	22	KISWE	1	-	6					
DJOUNIEH	2	-	4	DAMASCUS	1	-	3									
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN	1	-	3	PALMYRA	2	-	5									
RAYAK				RAYAK	1	-	3									
TOTALS	13	-	33		11	-	33		1		6	25	-	72		
<u>16th - 29th June, 1941.</u>																
BEIRUT	11	5	27	ALEPPO	1	-	2	DAMASCUS - BEIRUT ROADS(M.T.)	2	-	7					
TRIPOLI	1	-	2	DEIR-EZ-ZOR	3	-	7	DAMASCUS - ZAHLE (M.T.)	1	-	4					
MISCELLANEOUS				HOMS	1	-	1	DAMASCUS(M.T. & BATTERY)(M.T.)	2	-	13					
BEIRUT	1	-	4	PALMYRA	2	-	17	DIMAS (Gun Batteries)	1	-	2					
TELKALKH	1	-	4	RAYAK	3	-	11	EKGES (Railway Bridge)	1	-	3					
								HEREDERE BRIDGE (Bridge)	1	-	3					
								JEZZINE (M.T.)	1	-	3					
								QUATAANA (village & wood)	3	-	5					
								QUNEITRA (Enemy A.F.V.S.)	1	-	3					
								SUWEIDA(Fort & citadel)	4	-	11					
TOTALS	14	5	37		10	-	38		17	-	54	42	5	129		
<u>30th June - 13th July, 1941</u>																
BAROUK	1	-	9	ALEPPO	10	15	11	ALEPPO (Railway station and sidings)	4	12	-					
BEIRUT	13	33	-	HAMA	1	-	6	BETT ET DINE(Vichy troops and positions)	3	-	13					
HAMMANA	2	-	13	PALMYRA	2	-	20	DAMOURE (Bridge & enemy gun positions)	2	-	23					
TELKALKH	1	-	4													
TRIPOLI	2	-	11													
CHEKKA BAY	1	-	2													

PORTS BASES & SHIPPING TARGETS	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		AERODROMES AND LANDING GROUNDS TARGETS	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		ENEMY CAMPS. POSITIONS AND LINES OF COMMUNICATION TARGET	NO OF RAIDS	SORTIES		GRAND TOTAL		
		HEAVY	MEDIUM			HEAVY	MEDIUM			HEAVY	MEDIUM			
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ADALIA	1 1	- -	11 4					RAYAK (Railway sidings and stores) SOFPE (Radio station) SOUEIDA (Fort & barracks) TALIA (Marquee & tents) TRIPOLI Area (M.T.)	2 1 4 1 1	- - - - -	6 12 13 8 3			
TOTALS	23	33	55		13	15	37		18	12	78	54	60	170

SUMMARY TABLE OF BOMBING OPERATIONS IN SYRIAJUNE 2nd to JULY 13th, 1941.

TARGET	NO. OF RAIDS	SORTIES	
		HEAVY	MEDIUM
<u>PORTS, BASES &amp; SHIPPING.</u>			
Beirut	34	38	53
Djounick	2	-	4
Eastern Mediterranean	2	-	14
Tripoli	3	-	13
Beirut (Miscellaneous)	1	-	4
Telkalkh ( " )	1	-	4
Barouk	1	-	9
Hamaana	2	-	13
Telkalkh	1	-	4
Chekka Bay	1	-	2
Adalia	1	-	4
Syrian Coast	1	-	1
TOTALS	50	38	125
<u>AERODROMES &amp; LANDING GROUNDS</u>			
Aleppo	18	15	35
Damascus	1	-	3
Palmyra	6	-	42
Rayak	4	-	14
Deir-Ez-Zor	3	-	7
Homs	1	-	1
Hama	1	-	6
TOTALS	34	15	108
<u>ENEMY CAMPS, POSITIONS, &amp; LINES OF COMMUNICATION</u>			
Kiswe	1	-	6
Damascus (M.T. & Gun Battery)	2	-	13
Damascus - Beirut Roads (M.T.)	2	-	7
Damascus - Zahle (M.T.)	1	-	4
Dinas (Gun Batteries)	1	-	2
Ekbes (Railway Bridge)	1	-	3
Heredere Bridge (Bridge)	1	-	3
Jezzine (M.T.)	1	-	3
Quataana (Village and Wood)	3	-	5
Quneitia (Enemy A.F.Vs.)	1	-	3
Suiveida (Fort & Citadel)	4	-	11
Aleppo (Railway station & sidings)	4	12	-
Beit et Dine. (Vichy troops & positions)	3	-	13
Damour (Bridge & enemy gun positions)	2	-	23
Rayak (Railway sidings & stores)	2	-	6
Soffe (Radio station)	1	-	12
Soucida (Fort & barracks)	4	-	13
Talia (Marquees & tents)	1	-	8
Tripoli Area (M.T.)	1	-	3
TOTALS	36	12	138
GRAND TOTALS	120	65	371

APPENDIX C.

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND GROUND ATTACKS.

SYRIA

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULT	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>ALEPPO</u>	7 June	1 Hurricane	208	1 enemy fighter engaged - Combat indecisive		
"	Night 14/15 June	3 Blenheims	84	Blenheims met a standing patrol of 3 Moranes over Aleppo.		1 damaged
"	1 July	1(F)Blenheim	84	Dispersed a/c. on NASRULLA Satellite landing ground shattered. 6 Blocks con- firmed damaged, 3 probably damaged by fire. 1 other destroyed. Weather good.		
"	4 July	1(F)Blenheim	84	Straffing NASRULLA Satellite. Good weather. a/c. missing.	1	
"	9 July	10 Hurricanes	450 260	Aerodrome attacked. 6,000 rounds of ammunition. 6 Potez 63, 3 biplane fighters and 2 large biplane transport heavily machine- gunned. 1 Potez 63 and 1 transport burnt out. Light in- accurate A.A. Fine weather.		
"	11 July	6 Hurricanes	450 260	Aerodrome and satellite attacked. Machine-gunned 1 transport a/c.		

2.  
FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND GROUND ATTACKS

SYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULT	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>ALEPPO</u> (CONTD.)	11 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Aleppo, Havre and train in vicinity machine gunned. On FAH Landing ground, 1 large 3 engined a/c. destroyed. At ALEPPO 1 L.E.O.45 destroyed, 8 other a/c damaged. At HAMA 1 Potez 63 destroyed, and 8 a/c. damaged. 1 Dewoitine intercepted and was shot down. Train machine-gunned, without visible results. Heavy inaccurate A.A. Weather fine.	1	1
<u>BAALBEK</u>	30 June	10 Hurricanes	450 260	Aerodrome ground strafed, 4 Potez a/c probably damaged. Slight inaccurate A.A. Weather fine.		
	1 July	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn RAAF.	A/c on L.G. machine-gunned, 2 Potez 63 destroyed, 4 unidentified damaged. Weather fine.		
	4 July	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. RAAF.	4 artillery emplacements machine-gunned. Weather fine.		
	6 July	6 Hurricanes	450 260	4 Glenn Martins on aerodrome machine gunned. Petrol dump on fire and exploded. Intense A.A. Fine weather.		
	10 July	8 Hurricanes	450 260	Aerodrome petrol dumps M.G.'s, 2 large fires. Light moderate A.A. Weather fine.		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND GROUND ATTACKSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULT	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>BEIRUT</u>	15 June	1 Hurricane	80 Sqn. Detachment	Encounter with 3 Moranes 5 miles West of BEIRUT.		1 dam- aged.
<u>BEIRUT-- DIMAS Road.</u>	2 July	3 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	M.T. machine- gunned. Heavy, fairly accurate A.A. Weather fine.		
"	1 July	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	20 M.T., 2 light tanks destroyed 2 cars machine- gunned. Weather fine.		
<u>BEIRUT</u>	6 July	6 Hurricanes	450 260	A/c. on Fleet patrol. E/G. intercepted and driven off.	1 slight- ly dam- aged	
<u>BEIRUT area</u>	7 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	15 M.T. machine- gunned. 5/10 cloud.		
"	8 July	12 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	1 railway engine, 12 armoured cars and 12 M.T. Machine-gunned. Heavy accurate A.A. 8/10 cloud.		
<u>BEIRUT</u>	9 July	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Gun emplacements and ammunition stores attacked with M.G. fire- Ammunition dump blown up. A.A. heavy. Weather heavy cloud.		
	9 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	3 goods trains and 6 M.T. machine-gunned. Results not stated. Heavy cloud.		
<u>BEIRUT area</u>	9 July	12 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	2 A.F.V's and 5 M.T. machine- gunned. Results not stated. Heavy cloud.		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND GROUND ATTACKSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
BEIRUT area	10 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Machine-gunned 24 M.T. and severely damaged them. 1/10 cloud.		
<u>BEIT-EL DIVE</u> area.	7 July	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Machine-gunned and damaged 3 armoured cars, 20 M.T. and 1 staff car. 5/10 cloud.		
<u>DAMASCUS BEIRUT Road.</u>	20 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	M.T. machine-gunned. Considerable number damaged or destroyed. A.A. light. Weather fine.	3 damaged	
"	21 June	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Enemy cavalry and M.T. machine-gunned, dispersing 40 horses and damaging 35 vehicles.		
"	22 June	6 Hurricanes	80 Sqdn. Detachment.	Bomber escort and ground-strafting M.T. A.A. moderate, weather good.		
DAMOUR	19 June	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	A/c. on escort to to leaflet Blenheim, 8 Vichy Glenn Martins engaged, No A.A. Weather fine.		5 hit
DAMOUR Area	8 July	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	12 A.F.Vs, 6 M.T. and 2 Staff-cars machine-gunned. A.A.-M.G. only. 8/10 cloud.		
"	9 July	6 Tomahawks	"	M.G. attack on an M.T. vehicle. Results not stated. Heavy cloud.		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>DEIR-EZ-ZOR</u>	26 June	1 Blenheim	84	Straffing. 3 Potez 25 on aerodrome all confirmed damaged. Good weather.		
"	27 June	2(F)Blenheims	84	A/C machine- gunned 2 army lorries containing troops, on road W. of ABU SAMAJ. Damage unobserved, but troops abandoned lorries. a/c. also M/G'd 5 Potez a/c. on aerodrome. Bullets hit a/c. Damage unobserved.		
"	1 July	1 Hurricane	127	Engaged 2 Dewoitine fighters and damaged both of them.		2 damaged
	3 July	2 Hurricanes	127	3 Blochs and 5 fighters engaged.	2	
"	5 July	14 Gladiators 2 Hurricanes	127 127	10 enemy bombers and 5 enemy fighters bombing DEIR EZ ZOR were intercepted.	1 (pilot safe)	
<u>ESTABEL</u>	8 June	1 Hurricane	80	Aerodrome M.G'd and 1 Morane probably des- troyed.		
<u>EZRAA</u>	15 June	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. RAAF.	5 A.F.Vs and 4 M.T. machine- gunned. 2 Vichy Glenn Martins engaged and destroyed.		2

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>FAMAGUSTA</u> (Cyprus)	4 July	1 Hurricane	80	1 unidentified a/c. intercepted over CYPRUS. 2,310 rounds expended. No results observed.		
"	5 July	1 Beaufighter	272	1 Vichy Glenn Martin pursued out to sea.		
<u>FORWARD AREA</u>	9 June	2 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	1 Vichy Glenn Martin intercepted and driven off in attempt to bomb our forward troops. 3 more driven off and forced to jettison their bombs.		
<u>HAIFA</u>	9 June	? Hurricanes	80	1 a/c. believed to be a Glenn Martin driven off when attempting recce. of HAIFA.		
<u>HAMA</u>	3 July	10 Hurricanes	450 260	Aerodrome SW. of HOMS straffed. 12 Vichy twin-engined a/c. attacked on ground. 2 burnt-out. 8 damaged. Light intense A.A. Fine weather.		
<u>HAMA-TALIA</u>	10 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R., A., F.	a/c machine-gunned landing-grounds at HAMA and TALIA. 240-45 destroyed at HAMA and 9 a/c damaged at TALIA. A.A. light and heavy, accurate. 1/10 cloud.		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>HAMA-TALIA</u>	11 July	1 Tomahawk	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Combat with 1 Dewotine.		1
<u>HAMMANA</u>	10 July	7 Tomahawks (escorting bombers)	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	5 Dewotines (intercepting our bombers) all destroyed. 1/10 cloud.	1 damaged	5
<u>HOMS</u>	26 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 4 Moranes, petrol & ammunition dump blown up. 6 Moranes well hit. 10 M.T. hit on road. Fine weather.		
<u>JDEDIDE</u>	22 June	4 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	About 12 M.T. attacked and hit. Weather fine.		
<u>KISSWE</u>	12 June	2 Hurricanes	80	A/C. M.G'd about 50 enemy vehicles, damaging several.	1 damaged 1 force-landed.	
"	15 June	10 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	Intercepted by Vichy Fighters, 0950 hours. Encountered 12 Dewotines 520 and drove them off.	1 missing	1 shot down. 1 u/s
<u>MAZAR-RIDGE</u>	11 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	30 M.T. 1 tank and 4 guns machine-gunned. 3 M.T. burnt out. Weather fine.		
<u>PALMYRA</u>	28 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	A/C escorting Blenheims to PALMYRA. 6 Vichy Glenn Martins intercepted bombing our troops. All shot down.		6

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>PALMYRA</u>	25 June	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	4 Potez 63's intercepted. Fine weather.		3 down 1 on fire.
<u>QUATANA- QUARANTA Area.</u>	18 June	5 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	No A.A. Weather fine. Vichy Fighters shot down, confirmed.		2
"	18 June	5 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	Ground strafing Vichy fighters. 5,500 rounds expended. No A.A. Weather fine.		
<u>N.E. QOUNEITRA</u>	16 June	3 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Vichy M.T. concentrations M.G'd. Some good billets. M.G. fire near M.T. Weather fine.		
"	16 June	5 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Low lying M.G. attacks on Vichy M.T. Concen- trations. No results observed. M.G. fire near M.T. Weather fine.	1 dam- aged.	
<u>QOUIVEITRA</u>	? June	4 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Ground strafing N.E., N.W. and South. Weather fine. No A.A.		
<u>QOSSEIR</u>	29 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 4 Glenn Martins destroyed on ground. 1 triple-engined a/c. severely damaged. 1 Glenn Martin intercepted near QOSSEIR and shot down into sea off BEIRUT.		1
<u>RAYAK</u>	8 June	5 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. S.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 6 Fighters on ground believed hit by bullets. Details of damage unobserved, as no		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>HAMA-TALIA</u>	11 July	1 Tomahawk	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Combat with 1 Devotine.		1
<u>HAMMANA</u>	10 July	7 Tomahawks (escorting bombers)	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	5 Dewotines (intercepting our bombers) all destroyed. 1/10 cloud.	1 damaged	5
<u>HOMS</u>	26 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 4 Moranes, petrol & ammunition dump blown up. 6 Moranes well hit. 10 M.T. hit on road. Fine weather.		
<u>JDEDIDE</u>	22 June	4 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	About 12 M.T. attacked and hit. Weather fine.		
<u>KISSWE</u>	12 June	2 Hurricanes	80	A/C. M.G'd about 50 enemy vehicles, damaging several.	1 damaged 1 force-landed.	
"	15 June	10 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	Intercepted by Vichy Fighters, 0950 hours. Encountered 12 Dewotines 520 and drove them off.	1 missing	1 shot down. 1 u/s
<u>MAZAR-RIDGE</u>	11 July	6 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	30 M.T. 1 tank and 4 guns machine-gunned. 3 M.T. burnt out. Weather fine.		
<u>PALMYRA</u>	28 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	A/C escorting Blenheims to PALMYRA. 6 Vichy Glenn Martins intercepted bombing our troops. All shot down.		6

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>PAIMYRA</u>	25 June	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	4 Potez 63's intercepted. Fine weather.		3 down 1 on fire.
<u>QUATANA- QUARANTA Area.</u>	18 June	5 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	No A.A. Weather fine. Vichy Fighters shot down, confirmed.		2
"	18 June	5 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	Ground strafing Vichy fighters. 5,500 rounds expended. No A.A. Weather fine.		
<u>N.E. QOUNEITRA</u>	16 June	3 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Vichy M.T. concentrations M.G'd. Some good billets. M.G. fire near M.T. Weather fine.		
"	16 June	5 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Low lying M.G. attacks on Vichy M.T. Concentrations. No results observed. M.G. fire near M.T. Weather fine.	1 damaged.	
<u>QOUIVEITRA</u>	? June	4 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Ground strafing N.E., N.W. and South. Weather fine. No A.A.		
<u>QOSSEIR</u>	29 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 4 Glenn Martins destroyed on ground, 1 triple-engined a/c. severely damaged, 1 Glenn Martin intercepted near QOSSEIR and shot down into sea off BEIRUT.		1
<u>RAYAK</u>	8 June	5 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. S.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd. 6 Fighters on ground believed hit by bullets. Details of damage unobserved, as no		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>RAYAK</u> (CONTD.)				no incendi. ammo, available.		
"	8 June	3 Hurricanes	80	Aerodrome empty. M.G'd 1 CR-42 3 miles to NE. and 1 Morane 6 miles West, the latter believed destroyed.		
"	8 June	1 Hurricane	208	RAYAK Satellite L.G. machine- gunned. 1 CR-42 damaged on ground.		
"	23 June	5 Hurricanes 6 "	260 80 Det.	Aerodrome strafed. Also BAALBECK and TALIA. 4 a/c. destroyed on ground.	2 missing	
"	23 June	6 Hurricanes	80 Det.	TALIA and RAYAK aerodromes attacked, 11,836 rounds ammunition expended. 4 E/A burnt out; many damaged. Some A.A. from TALIA. Weather good.		1 prob- ably destroyed in combat.
"	26 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome attacked. 4 biplanes and 1 Dewotine hit. Fine weather.		
"	26 June	6 Hurricanes	80 Det.	4 a/c. destroyed on aerodrome and 10 damaged. Good weather.		
"	1 July	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	M.T. and A.F.Vs machine-gunned. 2 light tanks and 20 large M.T. destroyed.		
"	1 July	7 Tomahawks	3 Sqn. R.A.A.F.	Aerodrome M.G'd 2 a/c. burnt out 4 Potez shot up.		

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>RAYAK</u> (CONTD.)	11 July	7 Hurricanes	80	Aerodrome M.G'd. 1 a/c. burnt out. 10 other a/c. damaged. Goods train at RAYAK M.G'd. A.A. fairly accurate. Weather fine.	.	
<u>SAIDA</u>	13 June	8 Tomahawks	3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	Interception by Tomahawks - Ju.???		3 des- troyed 1 dam- aged.
15 miles W. of SAIDA.	16 June	6 Hurricanes	80	A/C. on fleet protection engaged 9 Ju.88s. 2,820 rounds ammunition expended. No A.A. Weather good.		1 down. 4 dam- aged.
<u>SHEIKH</u> <u>MISKIN</u>	15 June	6 Gladiators	"X" Flt.	12 Dewotine 520s engaged by Gladiators over Sheikh Miskin and driven off.	1 down 1 dam- aged.	2
<u>SYRIAN</u> <u>COAST</u>	9 June	? Hurricanes ? Tomahawks	80 3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	French a/c. attempting to attack our a/c, who were maintaining fighter patrols over H.M. ships, were intercepted. 1 Potez, 2 Dewotines and 1 Bloch probably destroyed, and a third Dewotine in collision with one of the three missing Hurricanes.	3 missing	5 prob- ably destroy- ed.
"	13 June	? Hurricanes ? Tomahawks	80 3 Sqdn. R.A.A.F.	A/C. maintaining standing patrols over H.M. Ships intercepted 8 Ju. 88s.		3 down 1 dam- aged.

FIGHTER INTERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTSSYRIA (CONTD.)

TARGET	DATE	FORCE	SQUADRON	RESULTS	LOSSES IN AIR	
					OWN	ENEMY
<u>SYRIAN COAST</u> (CONTD.)	15 June	3 Hurricanes	80 Det.	6 Ju.88s escorted by 6-12 Dewotines or Moranes attempting to attack H.M. Ships were intercepted by Hurricanes.		3 Ju.88's probably destroyed.
"	15 June	1 Hurricane	80 Det.	Engaged 3 Moranes over H.M. Ships.		1 damaged.
"	7 July	6 Hurricanes	80	A/C. on fleet patrol. 1 Ju.88 intercepted and thought too damaged to return to base.		1 badly damaged.
<u>TALIA</u>	4 July	10 Hurricanes	450 260	Vichy a/c. on aerodrome and satellite L.G. machine-gunned. Goods train also attacked. Light inaccurate A.A. Fine weather. 2mm e/a. destroyed.		
<u>TALIA-HOMS</u>	5 July	10 Hurricanes	450 260	Vichy a/c. attacked. 1 u/s Dewotine destroyed. Sandstorms.		
<u>TALIA</u>	6 July	6 Hurricanes	450 260	L.G., hangar, 1 biplane and 1 monoplane machine-gunned. Fine weather.		
"	10 July	7 Hurricanes	80	8 a/c. on aerodrome M.G'd. All hit, but damage not observed.		

## NUMBER OF E/A DESTROYED ON THE GROUND BY OUR FIGHTERS

Date	Place and Time	Own aircraft	Enemy aircraft	Own casualties	Enemy casualties
8.6.41	Rayak Satellite Estabel 0550	3 Hurricanes	Morane and C.R.42	Nil	1 Morane 1 C.R.42 destroyed
8.6.41	ditto 0615	5 Tomahawks	Fighters	Nil	6 "Well Hit"
23.6.41	Talia 1325	6 Hurricanes	36 Glenn Martins and Potez 63	Nil	4 destroyed, 12 badly damaged
23.6.41	Rayak 1340	2 Hurricanes	24 Dewoitines	Nil	6 Dewoitines damaged
23.6.41	Talia 1355	5 Hurricanes	Potez 63 or Glenn Martin and possibly a JU.52	Nil	4 E/a destroyed, 8 E/a damaged. <u>Note:</u> Of these 8 possibly 1 was a JU.52.
23.6.41	El Kuseir 1810	12 Tomahawks	1 Glenn Martin 1 Potez 63	Nil	1 Potez 63, 1 Glenn Martin destroyed
26.6.41	Homs 1520	8 Tomahawks	Fighters (Dewoitines)	1 Badly damaged Pilot safe.	4 destroyed
26.6.41	Deir Ez Zor 0545	3 Blenheims	Potez 63	Nil	3 Potez damaged
26.6.41	Rayak 1800	12 Hurricanes	Unknown fighters	Nil	4 destroyed 10 Damaged
29.6.41	Kuseir 1830	9 Tomahawks	Glenn Martin	Nil	4 Glenn Martins destroyed 1 Dewoitine 338 damaged
30.6.41	Baalbek 2nd Satellite 1800	10 Hurricanes	5 Twin Engined	Nil	4 Twin Engined a/c heavily hit
1.7.41	Baalbek 2nd Satellite 0745	7 Tomahawks	8 Unidentified	Nil	1 destroyed, others damaged
2.7.41	Tripoli 1745	6 Tomahawks	5 Loire 130	Nil	Two left in sinking condition
3.7.41	Hama 1600	10 Hurricanes	12 Leo 45 ?	Nil	2 Leo's destroyed (on fire) 8 damaged
4.7.41	Talia Satellite 1000	10 Hurricanes	9 Glenn Martins	Nil	4 damaged
6.7.41	Baalbek and Talia 0630	6 Hurricanes	Glenn Martin, Leo 45, and various unidentified a/c	Nil	1 Glenn Martin damaged 4 Leo's 35 " 2 Unidentified "
7.7.41	Tripoli 1330	2 Beaufighters	8 Flying Boats Unidentified	Nil	4 Damaged
7.7.41	Tripoli 1640	2 Beaufighters	8 Flying Boats Unidentified	1 Beaufighter slightly damaged	2 Damaged

Date	Place and Time	Own aircraft	Enemy aircraft	Own casualties	Enemy casualties
9.7.41	Aleppo 1250	10 Hurricanes	2 Mixed a/c	Nil	1 Potez 63 ) 1 Farman 222) Destroyed 7 Potez 63 ) Damaged 1 Glenn Martin )
10.7.41	Hama 0700	6 Tomahawks	8 Leo 45	Nil	2 Leo 45 Destroyed 6 Leo 45 Damaged
10.7.41	Talia 0730	6 Tomahawks	Unidentified	1 damaged	3 Unidentified damaged
10.7.41	Talia 1750	7 Hurricanes	9 Mixed a/c	Nil	6 Strafed but probably all had been shot up previously
11.7.41	Fah, Aleppo, Hama 1320	6 Tomahawks	Various	Nil	<u>Fah</u> 1 Three engined a/c destroyed <u>Aleppo</u> 1 Leo 45 destroyed 1 Leo damaged 7 Unidentified damaged <u>Hama</u> 1 Potez 63 destroyed 1 Bloch 200 damaged 2 Unidentified damaged
				<u>Total</u> None destroyed 3 damaged	<u>Total Vichy casualties</u> 33 destroyed 107 damaged

NUMBER OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED IN THE AIR BY OUR FIGHTERS

Date	Time (LT)	Own aircraft	Hostile aircraft	Own casualties	Hostile casualties
9.6.41	1030	3 Hurricanes of 80 Squadron	1 Potez 63	Nil	1 probably destroyed
9.6.41	1540	3 Hurricanes	3 Bloch 6 Dewoitines	2	1 Bloch probably destroyed
9.6.41	1605	3 Hurricanes	3 Dewoitines.	1 (Pilot safe)	3 destroyed. One pilot safe.
13.6.41	1530	8 Tomahawks	8/9 JU.88	Nil	3 destroyed, 1 probably destroyed, 1 damaged.
13.6.41	1830	2 Hurricanes	2 Potez 63 3 Moranes	1 damaged	2 Potez destroyed (Confirmed OPS)
14.6.41	1800	3 Hurricanes	3/4 bombers 6/12 Dewoitines	Nil	1 Dewoitine probably destroyed
14.6.41	1750-1815	1 Hurricane	4 Loire 3 Morane	Nil	1 Morane damaged
15.6.41	1800	5 Tomahawks	2 Glenn Martins	Nil	2 destroyed
15.6.41	0950	6 Gladiators	12 Dewoitines	1 destroyed	2 destroyed
15.6.41	1715	6 Hurricanes	Approx. 9 JU.88	Nil	1 JU.88 destroyed, 1 damaged
18.6.41	1700	5 Gladiators	6 Dewoitines	Nil	2 destroyed, 1 pilot safe
19.6.41	1645	5 Tomahawks	8 Glenn Martins	Nil	2 damaged
23.6.41	-	5 Hurricanes	3/5 Dewoitines	3 Hurricanes (1 pilot safe)	2 probably damaged
24.6.41	1230	7 Tomahawks	4 Potez 63	Nil	3 destroyed, 1 probably damaged
28.6.41	-	9 Tomahawks	6 Glenn Martins	Nil	6 destroyed
29.6.41	1245	1 Blenheim	3 Dewoitines 2 Potez	Nil	1 Dewoitine damaged
29.6.41	-	9 Tomahawks	1 Glenn Martin	Nil	1 destroyed
6.7.41	0700	1 Hurricane	2 Dewoitines	1 Hurricane damaged	-

Date	Time (LT)	Own aircraft	Hostile aircraft	Own casualties	Hostile casualties
7.7.41 10.7.41	1515 1055	6 Hurricanes 7 Tomahawks 7 Blenheims	1 JU.88 5 Dewoitine 520	1 Hurricane damaged 2 Blenheims destroyed. (3 men baled out) 1 Blenheim badly damaged. 1 Tomahawk destroyed	1 JU.88 probably destroyed 5 Dewoitines destroyed
11.7.41	1320	6 Tomahawks	1 Dewoitine 520	1 Tomahawk destroyed	1 Dewoitine destroyed (Pilot safe)
14.7.41	1350	1 Hurricane	1 S.79	-	1 S.79 damaged
			<u>Total</u>	10 destroyed 5 damaged	31 destroyed 6 probably destroyed 13 damaged

RECORD OF FLEET AIR ARM OPERATIONS  
8th June to 1st July, 1941.

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
8/6	803 Squadron (Fulmar) Protection of Fleet off Coast.	Protected Fleet from 0700 to 1830.	Two Fulmars shot down by French fighters. One forced landed in sea. Two shot up by French fighters.	This left three serviceable Fulmars. It was decided that these aircraft could not operate against shore-based fighters, and so fighter protection by No. 3 and No. 80 Squadrons R.A.F. would be substituted.
9/6	815 Squadron (Swordfish) to dive bomb Vichy destroyers at Beyrouth.	Not carried out.	Nil.	815 Squadron unable to carry out attack as, by mistake in their orders, they did not have bomb racks.
10/6	829 Squadron (Albacores and Swordfish) to dive bomb Vichy destroyers at Beyrouth at about 2330.	4 Albacores and 3 Sword- fish set out. 3 Alba- cores and 3 Swordfish arrived about 2400. 2 Albacores attacked.	Not seen. Nothing shown by RCN next day.	Vichy destroyers were not certainly located, and owing to cloud only two a/c attacked. Results were not observed.
	815 Squadron (Swordfish) to dive bomb or torpedo destroyers at Beyrouth at about 0030/11.	Not carried out.	Nil.	Orders were received from C. in-C. Med. that no attack was to be carried out without his permission. As result of this 815 Squadron was told to cancel attack. When permission was finally granted 815 was told to attack - but this signal did not get through in time for them to attack.

NOTE: C. in-C. Med. ordered at this stage that ships INSIDE the harbour were not to be attacked. This left as the only targets ships lying in the anchorage outside, or ships lying up the Coast.

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
11/6	829 Squadron (Albacores and Swordfish) to dive bomb destroyers lying in anchorage at Beyrouth at about 2330. 815 Squadron (Swordfish) to attack destroyers lying in anchorage at Beyrouth at about 0030	2 Albacores and 2 Swordfish attacked at 2400.  3 Swordfish searched Beyrouth at 0100.	Nil.  Possible hit on merchant ship.	Aircraft attacked flotilla leader lying outside harbour in anchorage inside nets. All bombs missed, nearest being 10 ft.  No warships seen.
12/6	829 Squadron (Albacores and Swordfish) to attack destroyers lying in anchorage at Beyrouth. One a/c. to patrol off harbour from dusk until 2230 to intercept enemy if they left harbour to disperse up Coast.  815 Squadron (Swordfish) to sweep down Coast Tripoli to Beyrouth to attack enemy warships. Attack after 0030/13th.	1 Albacore patrolled off Beyrouth 2030 to 2230, attacking after patrol. 2 Albacores 2 Swordfish attacked at about 2300. Of these latter only one dropped bombs.  3 Swordfish carried out sweep armed with torpedoes.	Nil.  One warship torpedoed in Djounieh harbour.	One a/c attacked a destroyer in the roads, and one a warship about 5 miles N. of Beyrouth steaming North. Both missed. One aircraft forced-landed in sea near Saïda, crew safe, pilot S/Ldr. Phillips slightly injured.  One swordfish torpedoed largest of three warships in Djounieh harbour, 8 miles North of Beyrouth. No ships seen in anchorage outside Beyrouth. Enemy appeared to be dispersing shipping up the Coast during the night.
13/6	815 Squadron (Swordfish) to sweep coast from Tripoli to Beyrouth.	4 Swordfish carried out sweep between 0300 and 0400/14.	One unidentified vessel torpedoed outside Beyrouth.	No warships in anchorage at Beyrouth. One suspected submarine in harbour at Djounieh. Oil observed at Djounieh confirming hit during attack of night 12/13th. RCN on 14/6 showed lots of oil in harbour at Beyrouth, probably from tanker "Adour", thought to have been hit. Ship not sunk.

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
14/6	829 Squadron proceeded back to Egypt.  815 Squadron intercepting French merchant ships of Cyprus.	829 Squadron proceeded back to Egypt.  815 Squadron intercepting ships.	Ships made to steer S.E. away from Turkish coast.	2 ships anchored in Turkish waters, but were persuaded by Swordfish to proceed S.E., towards Cyprus. No attack on Syrian coast arranged for tonight.
15/6	815 Squadron reinforced with 2 Albacores from 829 Squadron.  815 Squadron (Swordfish) to carry out dusk attack on Vichy destroyer attempting to reach Beyrouth from the West.	Dusk attack.  Attack by three a/c at 0400/16th	Could not find target.  One certain hit, two probable. Ship sank. 1 Swordfish lost.	Ship was hit and RCN by 815 next day showed oil and wreckage in the position of the attack. Reuter telegram of 17/6 quoting Vichy verifies that ship was sunk. a/c crew were not recovered, but dinghy was found amongst many empty rafts and boats. It is hoped that crew were taken prisoner by the French.
16/6	815 Squadron. Search by one a/c to find Swordfish missing on raid 15/16.	Search carried out by one Swordfish.	Wreckage found East of Cyprus.	See above.  F.A.A. put under

C. in-C. Med. ordered Vichy destroyers to be destroyed, using F.A.A. and R.A.F. resources. operational control of H.Q., R.A.F., P. & T.J.

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
17/6	815 Squadron Sweep down Coast Tripoli to Beyrouth during moonlight, to destroy Vichy destroyers.	Sweep carried out 0300 to 0415 by 3 Swordfish.	No shipping sighted.	RCN carried out at 500 to 1500 ft. No shipping seen. One a/c forced landed near C. Kiti on return.
18/6	829 Squadron detachment arrived Lydda (3 Albacores)  829 Squadron (Albacores) dusk torpedo attack on Vichy destroyers at Beyrouth.	Dusk torpedo attack on sloop or submarine, by one Albacore.	Unknown.	Vichy warships had been bombarding Coast. Intention was to torpedo one on arrival back in harbour. Sloop or submarine was encountered lying well out in anchorage, and was attacked. Aircraft forced landed near Saïda, in sea. Cause: bullet in oil system. Crew unhurt.
19/6	829 Squadron Night dive bombing attack on destroyers in Beyrouth.	Attack by 2 Albacores and 1 Swordfish flare-dropping at 2200.	One hit claimed on submarine, two or three on jetty.	Attacked ships lying alongside main ware-house jetty in Beyrouth.
20/6	815 Squadron, to intercept and attack Vichy destroyer en route Kaso-Beyrouth.	Shadowing aircraft lost touch.	Nil.	Destroyer subsequently entered Beyrouth
21/6	815 Squadron (Swordfish) to attack 3 Vichy destroyers in Beyrouth after 2330/21.	No attack.	Nil.	

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
22/6	829 Squadron (Swordfish) (and Albacores) to attack 3 Vichy destroyers in Beyrouth before 2300/21.	Attacked shipping at Beyrouth at about 2230, with 2 a/c and 1 flare-dropper.	Not observed.	One a/c dropped torpedo at centre one of 3 destroyers lying inshore in anchorage. Results not observed. One a/c bombed across edge of wharf between New Breakwater and Main Jetty.
23/6	815 Squadron to attack Beyrouth destroyers before 0300/24. 829 Squadron to attack Beyrouth destroyers after 0300/24.	Attacked shipping in Beyrouth 2345 to 0015 (3 Swordfish) Attacked shipping in Beyrouth (2 Albacores) at 0430.	Not observed except for 1 stick on jetty near target. Hits seen on jetty near destroyer.	One stick on E. side jetty near destroyer. 1 a/c damaged by A.A. More A.A. than usual. 1 a/c did not drop. Dawn attack. Hurricane protection provided for return journey. More A.A. fire than usual.
24/6	806 Squadron two flights arrived at Lydda preparatory to operating as Fleet protection Unit. Maintenance and ground personnel due 26 June - and equipment.			
25/6	829 Squadron attack destroyers in Beyrouth at any time.	2 Albacores attacked destroyers 2130 (bombs). 1 Swordfish (torpedo) found no target.	On jetty near target.	Two Albacores dive bombed destroyer alongside wharf between New Breakwater and Main Warehouse jetty. Sticks in approx. position of ship, but no certain results. One Swordfish with torpedo found nothing but a hospital ship, which it did not attack.
26/6	829 Squadron attack shipping Beyrouth and Northward, dusk torpedo attack	1 Swordfish attacked small motor vessel off Beyrouth at dusk.	Unknown.	Small motor vessel proceeding towards Beyrouth from 5 miles N.W. No result seen.

Date	Operation arranged	Operation carried out	Results	Remarks
27/6	806 Squadron moved to Ramat David, Satellite of Haifa			
28/6	806 Squadron protect naval forces	2 patrols over naval forces	Nil	Working under direction of Haifa R.A.F. and in conjunction with 80 Squadron, Hurricanes
30/6	5 aircraft 826 Squadron arrived Lydda for special operations reinforcements for Syria			under 201 Group, concerning interception of Vichy
1/7	8/ 826/829 Squadron and 6/ 806/803 Squadron departed for Cyprus, to be under the Command			of 201 Group.

BOMB DAMAGE ON MAIN SYRIAN TARGETSALEPPO

Location	Damage
Aerodrome	<p>Direct hit on small hangar full of aircraft spares, hangar collapsed and material destroyed. Direct hits on four small stone houses, men's quarters and Officers' Mess. Quarters partially destroyed, dud hit on Officers' Mess only damaged roof as bombs were instantaneous. Six wooden huts, men's quarters, shattered by blast and bomb splinters. Others slightly damaged. One petrol waggon, 1 fire engine, 1 aircraft, 1 truck full of ammunition and 1 empty truck all close to each other near main hangar hit by bomb splinters and burnt out.</p> <p>Nearly a dozen incendiary bombs penetrated the roof of the main hangar and burnt out harmlessly on the concrete floor. The hangar was full of aircraft at the time (about nine aircraft) but the flames did not reach high or far enough to touch any part of the aircraft. In one case, an incendiary bomb penetrated the roof of the hangar and the top and bottom plane of an aircraft and burnt itself out underneath without even singeing the aircraft.</p> <p>Fifteen aircraft were destroyed by bombs and machine-gun fire (including two large Air France passenger aircraft) in the South West corner of the aerodrome. Several direct hits were scored on the runway. Seven aircraft were destroyed or rendered unserviceable in one attack by our fighters.</p>
Comment	<p>It is reported that the Vichy forces at Aleppo usually had the following notice of approach of our aircraft:-</p> <p>From Iraq: 1 hour's warning by telephone from Deir-oz-Zor.</p> <p>From the coast: 15 minutes' warning.</p> <p>From S.S.E: No warning. Aircraft avoiding towns.</p>
Aleppo Railway Workshops	<p>Four bombs dropped between workshop buildings and trains. One bomb destroyed three passenger coaches, two cranes, one gasoil tank waggon, one water tank waggon and damaged the framework of two workshops. The other three bombs damaged workshop walls and roofs but not the machinery or equipment inside.</p>
Aleppo "Baghdad" Railway Station	<p>Direct hit on open large empty shed (steel framework) opposite main station building, wrecking one end of it.</p> <p>One delayed action bomb two yards from main line, destroying four passenger coaches and cutting line. Incendiary bombs on office building (50 yards N. of main station building) destroying several offices. At the time of the raid, an ammunition train was in the D.B.P. station, which is half a mile South of the "Baghdad" station.</p>

Location	Damage
Aleppo Town	Several bombs fell on the town, causing some damage to civilian property and several casualties. One bomb fell at the back of the Baron Hotel and the owner, who thought that his hotel had been picked out as the target (sic) because the German Commission had made it their Headquarters, asked the one remaining member of the Commission to leave the hotel. The German left!
<u>BEYROUTH</u>	
Port	Three bombs through main Western Customs sheds next to Base Militaire.
Installations	<p>Roof partly destroyed, but building un-scathed. No fire, no damage done to goods as there were none there.</p> <p>One bomb hit a small galvanised shed next to the entrance to the Port, destroying a quantity of cement.</p> <p>Five bombs hit a line of six sheds in the Base Militaire, blowing the galvanised roofs off three sheds and partly damaging the other three. Apart from superficial blast damage to the walls, the sheds remain intact. No damage caused because the sheds were empty.</p> <p>Two bombs blew up the railway line leading through the main entrance to the Base Militaire. The red beacon at the end of the breakwater was damaged.</p> <p>Two bombs fell near the Gare D.H.P. (Railway Station) of the port, doing little damage.</p>
Comment	Owing to the fact that practically all the sheds in the Port were empty of goods, little damage was caused. Apart from destroyed and partly destroyed roofs, the sheds remain intact. The railway installations within the Base Militaire were untouched and the two blocks of sheds at the Western end of the Mole were also untouched.
Port	It is confirmed that the "Pegasus" was hit amidships, causing a fire.
Shipping	It is confirmed that the destroyer "Vaughlin" received a direct hit, but did not sink. The aft gun was dismantled and used by the Army as an A.A. gun. Four sailors were killed.
<u>Shell Co.</u>	
Petrol	Tin factory destroyed. General store burnt out. Roof of 1 tank blown off. Others perforated by blast and splinters. 120 tons lubricating oil destroyed. 90 tons aviation spirit destroyed. 50 tons M/T spirit destroyed.
Comment	A direct hit was scored on a tank filled with 400 tons of gasoil. The only damage done was to blow off the roof. Bomb splinters perforated the tank, but did not reach the level of the gasoil. The gasoil did not catch fire.

Location	Damage															
<u>Socony Vacuum Co.</u>	Damage nil. No bombs hit the target.															
<u>Nation Co. (Adjacent to S.V.C.)</u>	<p>One bomb hit side of building where pumps were stored, doing a little damage to the building. 37 barrels containing 9360 litres of petrol were burnt.</p> <p>One bomb fell half a metre away from one of the big tanks, causing a big hole in the side of the tank and rendering it unserviceable. Two other big tanks and two small tanks were perforated by bomb splinters.</p> <p>Comment: All the tanks were empty. With the exception of one tank, all the others are repairable. There were no casualties.</p>															
<u>Mantacheff &amp; Co. (Adjacent to National Co.)</u>	<p>One bomb fell on a shed containing the records. Shed gutted.</p> <p>One bomb fell on a shed containing petrol pumps, destroyed them all. A number of barrels containing the following were destroyed:-</p> <table data-bbox="582 1308 1309 1407"> <tr> <td>Mineral Oil</td> <td>1776 kilos</td> <td>valued at</td> <td>£S.</td> <td>962</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Petrol</td> <td>2 tons</td> <td>"</td> <td>"</td> <td>£S. 210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benzine</td> <td>15 tons</td> <td>"</td> <td>"</td> <td>£S. 3169.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Comment: A bomb happened to fall in front of the entrance to the Installation just as a passenger train from Djouné was passing. A carriage was hit and fourteen people killed.</p>	Mineral Oil	1776 kilos	valued at	£S.	962	Petrol	2 tons	"	"	£S. 210	Benzine	15 tons	"	"	£S. 3169.
Mineral Oil	1776 kilos	valued at	£S.	962												
Petrol	2 tons	"	"	£S. 210												
Benzine	15 tons	"	"	£S. 3169.												
<u>Soc. de Nafto. (S.L.O.C.)</u>	<p>Three bombs fell near tanks and two tanks were perforated by bomb splinters. The tanks were empty. Barrels containing 1400 litres of petrol were burnt (20 barrels).</p> <p>Comment: No casualties. A number of bombs fell in the sea near this point.</p>															
The Residency, Beyrouth	<p>One bomb fell in the drive 25 yards away from and directly opposite the main entrance, causing a fairly substantial amount of blast damage.</p> <p>One bomb fell in drive 25 yards away from and opposite North corner of the building, doing a limited amount of superficial damage. Two direct hits through the smoking room (and bar) in the North West corner of the building, causing two metre holes in the room and doing a lot of superficial damage to the walls.</p> <p>One bomb hit roof of verandah adjoining the smoking room. Fair damage.</p> <p>One bomb fell three metres away from the centre of the West side of the building (staircase) blowing in all the windows and doing a lot of damage to the woodwork and causing a lot of superficial damage to the walls.</p>															

Location	Damage
<p data-bbox="78 505 194 533">Comment</p> <p data-bbox="78 887 209 949">Beyrouth Civil</p> <p data-bbox="63 1834 178 1861">Comment</p>	<p data-bbox="348 383 1228 480">Six bombs were counted in the racecourse about 250/440 yards away. Two bombs were not accounted for.</p> <p data-bbox="348 513 1233 859">The Southern end of the building was hardly touched. In spite of three direct hits and three almost direct hits, the building is certainly no shell. Most of the roof is still intact, the walls are still standing, as is the verandah; the building is not wrecked and can be repaired in a fairly short space of time. What effect the bombing has had on the foundations is not known. Reports that General Dentz was in the Residency at the time are not confirmed. Mmc. Dentz would normally be in the building at that time, but happened by some coincidence to be in Aley on that day.</p> <p data-bbox="340 892 1253 1622">The main damage to civilian property was caused in the area near the Port, the Rue Gourand (parallel to the Port) and the Armenian Quarter near the Abattoirs. 1 x 500 lb bomb fell 1 metre from the Omar Mosque in the Sursuck Suk, damaged the wall of the Mosque and completely destroyed two big blocks of flats (4 storeys). 3 unexpected bombs fell into the Municipality, 1 through the Director's room. 1 big block of flats in the Suk Jamil was destroyed. A number of bombs fell in the Rue Gouraud at intervals of 100 yards, destroying several houses and damaging several others. Six bombs fell very near the Regie Tabacs buildings, damaging them pretty badly. (Rue Boitros Dagher). A number of incendiaries fell on the tram sheds, doing no damage at all. A number of bombs fell near the Abattoirs, though none of them were direct and only a very little superficial damage was done. Four bombs fell on the Armenian Quarter (tin huts) near the Abattoirs, destroying a number of huts and killing 20 persons. Three bombs were dropped near the Garage Municipale destroying two houses and killing six persons.</p> <p data-bbox="335 1654 1222 1814">The total number of houses seriously damaged is estimated at 50. The total number of killed is estimated at about sixty-four. The total number of wounded is estimated at about 108.</p> <p data-bbox="335 1846 1207 2063">It is difficult to ascertain how much of the damage suffered by civilian property can be attributed to the R.A.F. bombing. Bomb pieces and fragments of German origin have been found near the American University and on the Boulevard Nahr el Beyrouth, and there is no doubt that German bombs are responsible for a proportion of the damage.</p>
<u>DAMASCUS (Mezze)</u>	
<p data-bbox="58 2212 209 2275">General Aerodrome</p>	<p data-bbox="329 2220 1182 2374">The buildings have suffered no damage apart from a certain amount of broken panes of glass - the results of machine-gun attacks. They were on no occasions target of our bomber operations. The following aircraft were ground strafed and destroyed:-</p>



Location	Damage
Comment	<p><u>Raid on 9/7/41</u></p> <p>It is reported that no bombs fell on the railway sidings during this raid and no damage was done to the railway or railway installations. Most of the bombs fell in the empty and open fields to the East of the station.</p>
	<p><u>Raid on 11/7/41</u></p> <p>Results nil. Damage nil. No stores were hit, though the Recreation Hall of the Rayak aerodrome, about 50 metres across the road, was touched by bomb splinters. One bomb grazed the corner of the bridge crossing the railway line (on the Baalbek-Rayak road).</p>
	<p>It is of interest to note that three bombs hit three different and separate stone built ammunition and shell dumps, blew up a case of shells, and yet did not explode the other cases of shells which were stacked around, below and adjoining.</p> <p>The first time pamphlets were thrown over Suweida everybody was anxious to get a copy and nobody took shelter. Just as the pamphlets had been dropped, a bomb was dropped as a farewell present. Two soldiers were killed. This caused a very unfavourable impression.</p>

APPENDIX G

AIR MARSHAL TEDDER AND GENERAL DE GAULLE

Air Marshal Tedder's opinion of General de Gaulle may be seen in a letter to the Vice Chief of Air Staff on June 3rd, shortly before the campaign opened. "De Gaulle", he wrote, "with whom I had a tête à tête this morning, is anxious that if we do have to fight in Syria we will try and clear the way with the air first. I think his idea is that the French in Syria would be satisfied with a token resistance and that air action by us would meet that requirement and so avoid internecine war. Incidentally, I was not very impressed with de Gaulle. I do not think he is half as big a man as he thinks he is. He is being incredibly stupid and rigid over the Frenchmen who have joined us and whose last wish is to become Free French. He has had the effrontery to issue an order proscribing those people (some officers and some men) in the R.A.F.V.R. and saying that if they do not join him they will be liable to arrest. I tried to get him to see reason, but it was hopeless, and the final stages of our discussion on this point after I had explained that we had definite obligations towards these men in our services were -

De Gaulle - It is the law.

Myself - It is our honour.

De Gaulle - It is my duty.

Myself - A shrug of the shoulders.

I am sure that our "backsheesh" allies are far more trouble than they are worth and I believe if there were no Free Frenchmen in Palestine we could probably walk right through Syria, but as it is I am afraid there will probably be more fighting."

There were not wanting some officers both of the Army and of the R.A.F. who definitely preferred the Vichyites to the de Gaullistes. Air Marshal Tedder did not go quite as far as that, strongly disliking both of them.

"Apart

A.O.C. to  
V.C.A.S.  
Enc. 57B.  
7.7.41.

"Apart from the pedestrianism of the Army" he wrote after the fall of Damascus "the big danger in Syria is, I think, de Gaulle & Co. I think there is no doubt at all that he and many of his entourage are violently anti-British and they are doing their best to rouse feeling against us. They are also trying to take the line that Syria is French and our forces are only there on sufferance. They have taken over Mezze aerodrome at Damascus, and a Free French guard had the effrontery to try and turn our re-fuelling party off the place. They are also demanding (I had a letter from de Gaulle yesterday) that I take into one of my squadrons in which we were trying to collect the Free French pilots some rag, tag and bobtail ex-Vichy airmen who have baled out of Vichy aircraft and some who have been dug out of jug in Damascus. I have the strongest objection to taking in people who change their costumes so quickly, so I'm afraid there may be a spot of bother."

APPENDIX H

VIEWS OF SENIOR R.A.F. OFFICERS ON THE CONDUCT OF  
MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SYRIA

A.O.C./15  
Enc. 69C.  
30.6.41.

R.A.F. senior officers were not wanting in criticism of our military strategy in Syria. "I am afraid I cannot congratulate anyone on the Syrian campaign" wrote Air Vice Marshal D'Albiac. "If ever there was a show where speed was of importance this surely was the one. Can you imagine the Germans making a laborious forward advance against a country designed for wide sweeping flank attacks? The Druses have been our friends through the ages - did we make full use of this during this operation? I should say that politically and militarily this has been so far one of our more outstanding blunders. Air Marshal Tedder was of the same opinion. "I also quite agree on the subject of Syria and feel it very difficult to be polite to our brothers in arms. The delays there are doing incalculable harm. I went up there myself two or three days ago with Blaney to see what I could do to urge on a move. They seem quite immovable, and if an enemy gun goes off they want to know why the Air Force has not knocked it out. I started a nerve war on Beirut, which opened with a really first-class attack on the Residency by 11 Squadron; if the Army cannot beat them in front we may be able to beat them from behind. However, words fail me!"

A.O.C./15  
Enc. 69B  
4.7.41.

"The most urgent job at the moment" wrote Air Marshal Tedder on July 7th "is to clear up the Syrian affair. When I heard of the possible French sea move I went along to the soldiers to see if they could be encouraged to push on. A naval battle with the French is about the last thing we want (repercussions in Alexandria, West Africa, etc., etc.) and if Beirut could be liquidated the French venture would probably be dropped. Stimulated Blaney to go up to Palestine (Wavell being away) and decided at last minute

A.O.C. to  
V.C.A.S.  
Enc. 57B.

/to

to go up with him. Told the soldiers we would try and cause alarm and despondency in Beirut (which was already getting very jumpy), and hoped they would stage an aggression in front. No luck. I am afraid we have got a very pedestrian army, though in fairness one must admit that they have got themselves tied up in some pretty difficult country ..... Had a talk with Auchinlock about things, and he is determined to get Syria cleaned up and Cyprus secured, which sounds promising. At the present it could go on indefinitely".