

RESTRICTED

AIR HISTORICAL BRANCH

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EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS
OF FUEHRER CONFERENCES
HELD ON 5.3.1943,
DURING MAY, 1943, AND
ON 25.7.1943.

RESTRICTED

TRANSLATED BY
AIR MINISTRY, A.H.B. 6.
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CONFERENCE HELD ON 5TH MARCH, 1943.

Africa

Jodl had little to report from North Africa. The Bersagliere had pushed their reconnaissance still further and had encountered little resistance. In some places there had been spasmodic heavy artillery fire and some reinforcement of the enemy, as had already been reported yesterday. Clearly these were preparations for the attack. The enemy had appeared for the first time in the Sbeitla area, where he had been spotted by ground reconnaissance near Sidi bou Zid. There had been a number of tank and other movements. The southern area was completely clear.

The "Grenadierregiment Afrika" had been brought up behind the left flank of the Mareth Line, as Rommel expected an attack here, conditions being the most favourable to the enemy at this point. The losses of the 5th Panzer-Army which had been reported here, were said to be 19 Panzer III's,.....Panzer IV's and 7 Tigers.

The Fuehrer said that the loss of the 7 Tigers could only be explained, if they had had their usual transmission trouble and had simply broken down.

Jodl continued that Rommel naturally did not want to go on leave yet, despite the advice of his doctor. He had the 15th March in mind as he wanted to supervise the counter-attack personally.

The Fuehrer said there was nothing to be done except to bring up forces as quickly as possible.

Jodl reported that yesterday a number of ships had arrived. They had been carrying: 2,000 tons of ammunition, 1,000 tons of rations, 600 tons of equipment, 180 M.T. vehicles, 6 7.5 cm. anti-tank guns, 9 5 cm. anti-tank guns, 1 four-barrelled gun, 2 17 cm. guns, 1 light field-howitzer, 1 heavy infantry gun, heavy howitzers, mortars, sound detectors, searchlights and 2,200 German personnel by destroyers.

Naval Situation

The Navy reported lively artillery activity in the Baltic and heavy M.T. traffic to Saaskaari. It was probably connected with the fact that they were laying in stocks of supplies while the ice lasted. Anyway it would still take heavy traffic. All the U-Boats operating in the area were in contact with the returning convoy in the Arctic, but due to bad visibility, strong defences and heavy pack-ice they had been unable to achieve anything.

In the North Sea there had been numerous successful minesweeping operations in the Bight of Heligoland. The Elbe had had to be closed between Hamburg and Stade because of mines.

The air attack on Rotterdam on the 4th March had caused damage to the docks and casualties amongst the Dutch dockyard workers. A patrol boat had also been damaged.

South of Boulogne, part of the convoy route had been closed following the discovery of mines.

Last night, S-boat flotillas had attacked a southbound convoy off the East Coast of England. One S-boat, -S 70 -, had struck a mine and sunk off the English coast. Apart from that, there were no further reports. Another S-boat flotilla had attacked an eastbound convoy in the Western Channel. Details were not yet to hand. In the region of the Cape, a U-Boat had sighted a convoy of 10 ships 100 miles S.S.W. of

Durban, proceeding on a southeasterly course.

Von Puttkamer remarked that it would be bound for Australia.

Jodl continued that the U-Boat had sunk 6 freighters and 1 tanker, making a total tonnage of 48,000. All ships were fully laden.

The British Motor Ship "California Star" of 8,300 tons had been sunk 600 miles E. S. E. of Newfoundland. It was carrying butter and meat from New Zealand to Britain. In the same area another U-Boat had sunk a fast moving 9,000 ton steamship, which was laden with ammunition. It blew up on being hit.

Mediterranean

Shipping at Gibraltar on the 4th March consisted of ...?.. Battle-ships, 1 aircraft carrier, 14 destroyers, 26 corvettes,...?. escort vessels, 6 passenger ships, 8 tankers and 50 freighters. The amount of merchant shipping at Gibraltar had therefore returned to normal, after a pronounced temporary reduction.

To the West of the Straits of Gibraltar there had been strong enemy air reconnaissance and minesweeping. It was surmised that the enemy was expecting the arrival of a convoy from the Atlantic, and that he had detected the presence of U-Boats.

In Tunisia the 6,000 t "Catharine Costa", the 3,740 t "Saluzzo", the 1,780 t "Pierre Claude" and 6 T.L.C.'s had arrived at Biserta. In Tunis harbour 5 destroyers had landed German troops and had already begun the return journey. The convoy of ships which had arrived at Biserta had been unsuccessfully attacked with aerial torpedoes during the night of the 4th March

To the West of Alexandria, a U-Boat had torpedoed a steamship belonging to a convoy of five. It had not been possible to observe the sinking.

A report had come in that a submarine had reappeared in the Aegean for the first time, near Melos.

In Norway there had been a brief exchange of fire, 30 km south of Drontheim, between Occupation Forces and some Norwegian or other partisans. One civilian had been killed and one injured. Details were not available.

The Fuehrer said he had been speaking with Zeitzler, who took the same view as he did, that the offensive against Leningrad could not succeed before the middle of June or the beginning of July. That did not mean that there was any time to be lost. He was in agreement with Zeitzler's suggestion, that the time of the muddy season should be used to strengthen the Panzer formations. Then, as soon as the dry season set in, they could switch over to the offensive again.

There was the question of what to do in the West. He was convinced that we should send those vehicles to the West which were not fully serviceable. It was a case of sheer inertia, if it was said that these vehicles could not be sent there. The best thing to do, then, was to send the Panthers and all the available Tigers. They could then be built up there and sent back to the East later. It would be necessary to see that they had some assault guns there too. They were being produced the fastest now. Above all, the smaller units must have them, so that each had at least one assault-gun battery. We would then have mobile artillery everywhere. The heavy tanks were better than anything else in the West, anyway, as they were primarily intended for beating off enemy tank attacks and not for independent operations.

He would much rather have the Panthers there than in the East, where they must always be on the move. In the West, where the roads were good, he could, if the worst befell, move them somewhere, dig them in, as the Russians did, and use their heavy armament. The same applied to the Tigers. This would mean that the greater part of the Panzer IV's would be sent to the East, as well as a part of the assault-guns and M.T. vehicles. This question of artillery must be put right, whatever happened. Anyway, that would be discussed tomorrow, when it would be possible to get an overall picture of the output of weapons.

One thing was quite clear: if the Russians were going to use tanks of that size, the only thing to do would be to use divebombers against them. It was not possible to have sufficiently heavy weapons everywhere. At the moment there would probably be no defence wherever these huge tanks appeared. He was not so sure that anti-tank guns would not eventually be shortened 15 cm. guns, using hollow-charge ammunition.

Jodl agreed that this would be the ultimate aim, for he could not bring into use an anti-tank gun as long as the present 15 cm. gun.

Far East.

Jodl said that the Military Attache at Tokio had given a review of the disposition of Japanese forces.

The Fuehrer interjected that, if reports were to be believed, the Japanese had been unlucky with that big convoy. It appeared that the convoy had been smashed up.

Jodl continued that the Attache reported on the total strength: 63 Divisions, 6 Infantry Brigades, 2 Armoured Divisions, 4 Motorised Brigades and 18 Reserve Divisions of the Reserve Army at home. The strength of the Kwantung Army Group had apparently decreased. At any rate, we had always assumed that it was greater. There were 15 divisions and 2 armoured divisions on the North-East front. Further South there was an Army, to which the Manchurian divisions belonged, of 2 Infantry Divisions, 2 Infantry Brigades, 1 Cavalry Division and 1 Motorised Brigade. In addition there were the Korean Army and the Peking Army.

The enemy had 2 American and 2 Australian divisions on New Guinea, and in the group of islands to the East they had 5 American, 1 Marine and 1 New Zealand division. In the New Hebrides there were 3 American and 1 New Zealand division. On the Aleutians the enemy also had strong forces. The Japanese were limited here a force of approximately one regiment. They did not possess an airfield:

The number of aircraft which they maintain the enemy had, was not particularly large. With the 8 British and 2 Chungking divisions in Burma there were about 350 aircraft, on the Solomons about 250, on New Guinea 350, in Australia 500 and in the New Hebrides 100.

The Japanese were quite convinced that Europe would remain the main theatre of war during 1943.

The Fuehrer remarked that the prospect was not very pleasing.

/Jodl

- * This refers to a new heavy Russian tank, which had been observed at one place on the Eastern front. It was estimated to be of 50 - 80 tons, with two turrets. 7.5 cm projectiles were said to have glanced off it.

Jodl said that the evacuation of Guadalcanar had succeeded.

The Fuehrer remarked, you could not always rely on what the Japanese said. He did not believe a word of it.

Jodl agreed that one could not believe them, because they were the only people who would quite shamelessly tell you a lie without turning a hair.

Hewel mentioned that public opinion in America was inclined very strongly towards regarding the Far East as the main theatre of war.

The Fuehrer maintained that to win over an American all you had to say was: 1) The war is being fought in the interests of America. 2) Liquidation of the British Empire. 3) The Chief enemy is Japan. Then you would have the vast majority. The Jews would be against it, but the others would form a tremendous majority. The British were complaining more and more about the political developments, and were very worried lest they take a turn unfavourable to the Empire.

Hewel remarked that it would be interesting to know what the American Divisions in North Africa were like. Neurath had returned from Tunis yesterday. It was interesting to hear what he had to say. He interviewed American prisoners and said it was shocking. Most of them had come over to earn some money or for excitement, to see something new, for adventure. They had no political aims. They were rowdies who would never weather a crisis. He had said he had talked with hundreds of them, and there was not one of them with any political views.

The Fuehrer commented that America would never be the Rome of the future. Rome had been a peasant State.

Jodl added that with the English one had the feeling that they were fighting for their Country and Empire. That feeling was not there with the Americans.

The Fuehrer thought that might be the reason why the British said that they would always be able to handle the Americans.

Hewel thought this was a very irresponsible attitude. They could not handle the Americans, because they were economically and in every other way dependent on them. But they felt politically and militarily so superior to the Americans, that they said: In 10 years we will be all right again. One heard many Britons saying that. It was very wishful at the present.

The Fuehrer said that if we did not win more space, it would mean the end. Space was one of the most important military factors. Nations that had plenty of space would be the only ones to survive in future wars. That had been France's misfortune. In one single offensive during the last year, we had covered more ground than in the whole of the campaign in the West. France had been finished in 6 weeks, whereas in the East the war dragged on in the vast spaces.

Jodl remarked that times had changed. At the time of the Roman Wars Germany was a big area. In the Middle Ages, Germany was crossed and recrossed on foot, and now, in the era of the tank and the aeroplane Russia, on the other hand, Jodl continued was a country which defied the aircraft altogether. Take the Urals industries, they were quite out of reach.

The Fuehrer said that pre-war Germany was insignificant in size compared with the rest of the world.

Think of Australia! There, seven million people had a whole continent. The Prince of Wales had said that the Germans ought to colonise North Australia and he (Hitler) had always pleaded that we should have it.

Hewel claimed that the whole of Australian agriculture was German anyway. The German element in Australia was by far the most creative.

Turning to the question of the Japanese, Jodl complained that they gave no indication of their intentions. They said that Vladivostock would be untenable for any length of time. To avoid splitting their forces, however, they would not attack the Russians in the Far East unless there were American bases there, or the Soviet Union collapsed. At any rate, the Japanese war economy was being prepared for a long war. The Japanese did not believe that 1943 would be the year of decision.

The Fuehrer remarked that if they were preparing for a long war, they would have to dig themselves in, as the Americans would be sure to build up bases there.

The Fuehrer said that it was ridiculous that the Japanese could not produce more than 30 divisions. Japan had more inhabitants than Germany. They could form 120 divisions at least. Of course, one could not tell how many they really had. It was understandable that they would not say in order to cover themselves. It would suddenly be revealed that instead of 15 divisions "up there", they had 30.

Hewel did not consider that it would split their forces if they operated against the Russians. Surely it was quite independent from the rest?

The Fuehrer said that he was not able to judge their position regarding armour. Had they any modern tanks?

Hewel said he had not heard anything.

The Fuehrer thought that Oshima had said that they had some modern tanks.

Christian doubted if Oshima would have been told by his people. They were no more communicative about their tanks than they were about their aircraft.

The Fuehrer pointed out that they had not said anything about their ships either, but suddenly they produced the biggest ships in existence. They had not said anything about aircraft carriers, and suddenly it became apparent that they had a large number of these.

Hewel remarked that a couple of times the Japanese had nearly come to grief over aircraft. They had been hard put to it at Midway and generally in the Pacific.

The Fuehrer continued that no one ventured forth with his big ships any more.

Hewel said that perhaps the Japanese had realised that they must build tanks.

Christian did not think tanks would be much use in the jungle.

The Fuehrer pointed out that we did not use our heaviest tanks in Yugoslavia. Why should we employ Tigers just to deal with a partisan? It was quite possible that the Japanese had produced the heaviest tanks, but with their great reticence and cunning they had completely

withheld tanks from "this" area and not allowed them to appear at all, so that the Russians suspected nothing. Then, one day they would appear.

Christian pointed out that, in the frontier clashes which the Japanese had had with the Russians, they had taken a beating.

The Fuehrer maintained that it had only happened once. Then they had been encircled.

Christian said they had been beaten in the air as well.

The Fuehrer said that normally the Japanese had the Russian beaten, and with anything like equal weapons, it would be the same again. In the war against the Chinese "here", they used the "Itsomu", which was launched in 1899, in other words quite an old kettle. That had been the flagship. They had used only the oldest ships. They had saved up the whole of their really good fleet. After all, we did not use the most up-to-date ships to bombard the Westernplatte.

The Fuehrer continued that if there was really anything in the wind, we would never know about it. If they drew attention to the fact that they had an operation on in the South, he would sooner believe that they were up to something in the North rather than in the South. He had said to the Foreign Minister; "My dear Ribbentrop, they will operate when and as they please." As long as they noticed that the Russians were withdrawing forces, they would say, with asiatic cunning; "let him bleed". But as soon as they noticed that the Front were becoming stabilised over here, and that reinforcements were being sent to the East, one would see how quickly they toed the line and how soon they were there.

Air Situation

Christian had to report that a 13th aircraft had been shot down during the previous night's raid on Hamburg.

During the attack on the railway at Hamm, some of the aircraft had apparently jettisoned their bombs on Brielle in Holland. There had been 27 fatal casualties among the population, mostly children. In Germany the number of dead had increased to 82, because of the hits on 2 works shelters. The number of injured had risen to 161. Three shelters in all had been hit.

During the night there had been 10 incursions over the Reich, over the coast in the area of Goeteborg, the Swedish coast, Danzig Bay and back over Elbing: probably minelaying operations. There had been further activity over the Frisian Islands as far as Juist. Minelaying was also suspected here.

15 aircraft had been over Nordhorn, west of Muenster, south of Dortmund, Duesseldorf, Euskirchen and Trier. Up to the present the dropping of 15 H.E. Bombs and a number of incendiaries at various places had been reported. At Bochum, 3 H.E. Bombs had destroyed the assembly shop of an industrial plant. There had however been no appreciable drop in production.

On our own attacks Christian reported that this morning's fighter-bomber attack had been abandoned because of thick mist and because the sea was as smooth as glass.

The Fuehrer wanted to know if the aircraft floated on the water?

/Christian

Christian pointed out that the fighters had to fly very low, and it was feared that they might get into difficulties because of the thick mist. There would be no change in the weather during the day. The fighter-bomber attack was to be carried out the day after tomorrow, however. Tomorrow the fighters would be required to give cover for the 6 destroyers passing through the Channel. They were lying at Cherbourg, and all fighters were being concentrated for this task.

Christian asked if Kampfgeschwader 6 (Bombers), which had been taking part in the attacks on London could be returned to the South of France to continue their training?

The Fuehrer thought it might be possible. But a new spirit must be instilled. When was the Reichsmarschall coming here? It was not good enough; we would never defeat the British like this. They must have a new man at the top. It was not true that we had not sufficient aircraft. He was quite sure that if Droschel(?) were given the instructions he would carry them out to the letter.

Christian continued that three bombers had attacked a northbound enemy convoy of 20 ships to the West of Cap Finisterre. One 8,000 ton merchant ship was hit and was listing heavily. ...bombers had attacked a southbound convoy of 50 ships. There seemed to be a lot of traffic round this part of England fairly close to the coast. A 7,000 ton merchant vessel was set on fire; and a near miss had been scored on an 8,000 ton vessel which also caught fire. Otherwise there was nothing special to report.

Close support formations in the Mediterranean, comprising altogether 37 fighter-bombers, 28 divebombers and 32 fighters had attacked Medenine airfield, destroyed a gun and a whole column of vehicles at the front, and attacked columns in the Northern sector with bombs and machine-guns. 10 M.T. Vehicles had been destroyed and artillery had been silenced.

Altogether 452 sorties had been carried out

During the night 18 aircraft had been out, of which 14 attacked shipping in the harbour of Philippville. Three merchant ships of 6,000 to 8,000 tons had been damaged. Other hits were observed amongst shipping and on harbour installations.

The enemy had attacked two airfields in Tunisia. No damage had been caused. One of our convoys was attacked by 15 bombers in the sea area east of Biserta, but suffered no damage.

In the East, Luftflotte 4 had attacked columns and places on the left wing of with bombers and divebombers. Apart from this, the main field of activity was North of the Don, chiefly in front of the 1st and 4th Panzer Armies. The main objective was the destruction of the 3rd (Russian) Army. Detailed reports had not yet come in. 40 Bombers had attacked the Waluiki-Kupiansk railway. There had been hits on the permanent way and on engine-sheds. 3 trains had been damaged.

Luftwaffenkommando East had been engaged in the Dimitrievsk area, taking part in the defensive battles of the 78th Division. In this area they had destroyed 18 tanks and 60 vehicles of all types and had damaged many more. Over 500 aircraft had been operating. For the small number we had, this was satisfactory.

The Fuehrer complained that the offensive against England had certainly slackened. Warnings and instructions were being ignored.

/The

The trouble was at the top and that would not do. The worst was the attitude of: "Let us not provoke the other fellow". Such people ought to spend a time in Cologne or Muenster, or anywhere in Western Germany. They would soon see who was provoking whom.

Christian thought the unit C.O.'s were hardly to blame.

Luftflotte 1 had made attacks on encampments, preparations positions and railways in the areas immediately behind the front line.

The Fuehrer said he had seen an article written by a British airman on anti-searchlight camouflage. He had sent copies to the Reichsmarschall and to Fieldmarschal Milch.

Christian said it was fantastic. The British still had their aircraft painted with bright paint, so that in a searchlight they looked like silver birds.

The losses had been 4 of our own compared with 12 enemy aircraft in the West, in the South 4 of our own for none of the enemy and in Russia....of our's for 14 of the enemy.

The Fuehrer commented that at last we were getting somewhere near the truth.

(END OF CONFERENCE)

CONFERENCE HELD DURING MAY, 1943 (Exact date unknown)

Air Situation.

The weekly report of the C.-in-C. Norway, which was chiefly concerned with the Air Force was read. As was clear from the daily reports, the British had been attacking with more than usual intensity; between the 13th. and the 16th. as much as 24,000 tons of shipping had been damaged or sunk. For the first time Beaufighters had appeared over the area, whereas until then only Hampdens had been operating. On the other hand it had been necessary because of the fuel shortage, to curtail our own air activities, so that only under special circumstances had coastal reconnaissance been possible.

The Fuehrer interrupted to demand why.

Christian explained that he had gone into this matter. It had been caused by the general order, misunderstood by a number of units, that fuel must be saved. Of course, where operations were absolutely essential, fuel must not be stinted.

Warlimont continued that reconnaissance was only carried out under special circumstances. Even convoy protection in the area of the Lofotens was only undertaken in the case of particularly important convoys.

He also reported that in view of the successful attack on the Gnaden-Heilbringer(?) pits, he did not consider the industrial anti-aircraft defences adequate.

The Fuehrer asked for a map (presumably with A.A. defences shown). He thought that seen like this, it looked pretty bad. He had another set of maps, 1:25,000, in which one could go through 12 sheets without coming across a single battery. Of course, it was quite different from when we went there first. If, at that time, we had had a fraction of what we have there now, they would never have taken Narvik. There had been absolutely nothing there then.

What was the general air situation?

Christian reported a number of nuisance flights over the Reich during the day by Mosquitoes, which had come in to the north of Potsdam-Stendal over Hannover. Other Mosquito formations had been over New Brunswick. They had travelled at very high speeds, 500 - 600 km.p.h. There had been no attacks. Anti-aircraft fire had had no visible effect. Fighters were unable to intercept. The sky had been cloudless and visibility good. One Mosquito had penetrated over the Reich as far as Colmar-Siegmaringen in the Munich area, returning to West of Augsburg. Here too, no actual attack had taken place.

The main attack had been in the Munich area. Fighters which had taken off were unable to catch up. There had been a cloudless sky and visibility was from 10 to 20 km.

The Fuehrer said that he had heard that when the Mosquito flew at a height of about 7,500 metres it could not be seen and was invisible to the naked eye. An expert had said to-day that you could not see any aircraft above 7,500 metres with the naked eye.

Christian maintained that it depended on the weather.

The Fuehrer thought that in winter you ought to be able to see vapour trails.

/Christian

Christian pointed out that clear weather was necessary.

The Fuehrer asked Christian to continue with his report.

Christian stated that during the evening of the previous day a strong force of fighters, 180 to 200, had made shallow penetrations along the Belgian and Dutch coast and down as far as Western France. Apart from this there had been nothing outstanding to report in the West.

(There followed an incomprehensible report on the batteries at Flensburg, evidently with reference to a raid). The batteries had only fired for about 2 minutes.

The Fuehrer commented that there had not been a barrage. He said there should have been a barrage. The shipyards had been smashed, a U-Boat had been damaged and a couple of batteries had been put out of action. He could quite see that if an aircraft came over at 6 to 7 thousand meters, you could not keep shooting at it for half an hour, it passed over too quickly. But had they put up a barrage instead of aiming at the aircraft In the Great War there had been practically no reliable ranging apparatus. Predicting instruments were in their infancy. Yet it had been possible, with these ridiculous batteries, to protect vital areas with barrages, so that not a single bomb fell there. What was the use, the Fuehrer complained, if all the shipyards were smashed, of them triumphantly saying: "My Fuehrer, we only used so-and-so-many rounds."

The Fuehrer added that if there were not enough batteries, then they should simply fire faster. There was no excuse. With this so called predicting apparatus one achieved nothing. With these fast machines our flak lagged behind in any case. It was generally accepted that the naval A.A. bursts were in front and Air Force A.A. bursts were always behind. Was that perhaps symbolical? The Navy used observation. They would say, for instance: "two in front. That must be the apparatus," and would make the necessary adjustments. Of course, he had not wanted to queer Goering's pitch, but he could have made some pretty shattering comments. They had been together at Schilling-Reede. Then they had gone to Wustrow and found that the shooting at Schilling-Reede had been roughly 75% better.

Voss remarked that he had been at a Naval A.A. -Gunnery School for four years. It had always been said that our predictors lagged behind, and therefore we must improve the technique by the use of human judgement. The Luftwaffe, however, had always taken the view that the human element was too fallible and the instruments did not lie.

The Fuehrer was of the opinion that it was better to have the bursts in front rather than behind.

Voss agreed and said that behind was no good at all.

The Fuehrer pointed out, however, that the psychological effect was the same. It was equally unpleasant to be shot at from behind

Christian continued with his report. Last night 35 German bombers and 9 torpedo bombers had operated against the harbour of Oran. In Italy, our airfields had been subjected to heavy enemy air attack. An airfield in Sardinia had been attacked, and 2 Me 322's had been shot down to the north of Alghero by enemy fighters.

(END OF CONFERENCE).

CONFERENCE HELD ON 25TH JULY, 1943

Mediterranean

Christian reported that air support of the defensive battle on the ground had been carried out chiefly by light bombers and fighter bombers. No night activity had as yet been reported.

Enemy air activity consisted mainly of attacks on communications. A day-light attack by 43 four-engined bombers had been made on Bologna. Railway buildings had been hit. One ammunition train, a large number of passenger coaches and one railway-gun truck had been destroyed.

The Fuehrer asked what a railway-gun battery was. Was it A.A.?

Christian said he had only just received the report.

Jodl said it was 12.8 cm.

Christian continued that there had been 7 killed and 2 injured. During the night, 60 to 80 aircraft attacked Livorno in waves. The railway station and a petrol refinery were hit. The aircraft flew back to England over Western France. In the Straits of Messina, 5 fighter-bombers attacked Italian naval units. 1 corvette was sunk and 1 torpedo boat slightly damaged.

40 bombers, with an escort of 50 fighters, had attacked Canzaro. He did not know what particular significance the town had. The Navy did not seem to know and neither did the Air Force. Reports of damage had not yet come in. One aircraft had been shot down in the Straits of Messina by a motor-launch.

There had been a machine gun attack on Calamate. A number of H.E. bombs had been dropped without causing any damage. In this attack 21 aircraft were claimed shot down. The British themselves reported that they had lost 17 aircraft.

The Fuehrer remarked that those were still heavy losses.

Christian explained that it had been a low-level attack, and that light A.A. had been responsible for the success.

The Fuehrer said that would make 17 to 20%.

Sea Situation.

Junge reported that in the West the U-Boats had had another success to the south of Rio. A cargo liner of 10,000 t had been sunk. There had again been lively enemy air activity in the Bay of Biscay. Near the Canary Islands, a U-Boat had at first beaten off an attack, but was afterwards damaged so that it had to make for home.

In the North Sea and the Channel there had been intense enemy activity with high-speed launches, mainly during last night. A convoy of two steamers, with escort and 6 Patrol Vessels and Minesweepers, was attacked by 15 M.L.'s. The sinking of 1 enemy vessel had been observed, while at least 3 others retired badly damaged and on fire.

Air Situation.

Christian reported that 43 aircraft had flown in over "this" coastal area, to be followed by a further 23 aircraft. Attacks were mainly on stations and locomotives. Yesterday 9 locomotives had been shot up. Some of the trains had A.A. protection.

The attack in Norway had taken roughly the following course: 100 aircraft crossed the coast at Stavanger and split up. 50 flew to the east and attacked at the entrance to Oslo fiord; the rest flew on to attack Trendheim. A number of sheds in the arsenal had been damaged, 1 tug hit, a destroyer set on fire and ammunition detonated in the Naval Ordnance Department.

The Fuehrer said he presumed that in both cases the fighters failed to get there in time.

Christian explained that there had been altogether 4 aircraft shot down, all by A.A. The fighters had taken off but there was a cloud base of 200 to 300 m, in places closing down to zero, so that the fighters had simply been grounded. Normally the fighter defences were very efficient in Norway. The attack in the Far North had turned out very well. "This" convoy which was being attacked, was located right away by the fighters and of more than 30 attacking aircraft a total of 17 was shot down, to a large extent before the attack took place.

The Fuehrer asked where that had been.

Junge replied that was a few days ago, near Vardo.

Christian continued his report. Last night the enemy had employed a device which we had been fearing for some time. He had dropped hundreds of thousands of strips of tin foil. All radar equipment except the "Freya" had been interfered with; hence the small number shot down by the night fighters, which only accounted for 10 aircraft. Three aircraft had been shot down by A.A.

The defences of Hamburg comprised 54 heavy batteries, 26 light batteries, 22 searchlight batteries, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ balloon barrage batteries and 3 smoke-screen batteries, - which constituted a very strong defence. It had been reported by the Luftgau that some heavy guns had been withdrawn. This was the case. Two Railway Anti-aircraft Detachments had been moved to the Ruhr, but were on their way back again. In addition 8 to 10 heavy batteries had been dispatched to Italy.

The Fuehrer said this would not do. He had been told that the batteries were to be taken from central Germany and not from Hamburg. How many had they shot down, and with what expenditure of ammunition?

Christian replied that the reports on that had not arrived yet. The attack had lasted 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, which meant that the enemy was over the target for practically an hour. With that terrific concentration of flak, they would use a good deal in an hour. Damage had been caused to a number of public buildings.

The Fuehrer said he didn't have to be told about that, he had already seen the pictures of it. But what effect did this dropping of tin foil produce?

Christian explained that it interfered with the Wuerzburg apparatus. The night fighters were still partly guided by the Wuerzburg instruments. When this device was used, our instruments would show hundreds of targets, so that it was impossible to tell where to send the fighters. The Freya apparatus did not show the tin foil as it was not sensitive to it.

The Fuehrer wanted to know what sort of equipment the British had. Were their instruments sensitive to it as well?

Christian admitted that he did not know, but it was assumed they did.

The Fuehrer said he was to find out.

Christian said he would. - The "Y" - Instruments, which were being used more and more by night fighters, were not sensitive to the tin foil either. Here was the solution, but it took time with these instruments.

In his opinion, the only reason why the enemy had not flown last night, was that the weather had been too bad over England to make such an attack, involving 400 to 500 aircraft over the target within an hour.

Christian continued that 51 German aircraft had been engaged in mine-laying operations over the Humber estuary. Of these, 47 had successfully completed their task. In his opinion, however, if those 47 aircraft had been over the English airfields, there would not have been 500 aircraft over Hamburg. Whether all the aircraft were in a position to do this, or whether only some of them could, he did not know.

The Fuehrer asked where the new mining campaign was going to start.

Junge replied that, with the Fuehrer's approval, it would start at the end of August, in order to use the most advantageous phase of the moon.

Christian continued that there would be little danger of enemy night fighters attacking our aircraft engaged over enemy airfields in interfering with the enemy take off, as there was so much traffic in the air that the enemy night fighters had been grounded anyway.

The Fuehrer said that he considered that it would be much better to attack the towns. In the present situation you could not always say to the German People: "Fifty aircraft have carried out mining operations". It was completely ineffective.

Christian pointed out that it was not reported anyway for security reasons, so that the enemy did not find out that the mines had been laid.

The Fuehrer said he was not sure about the effect of these new mines --. The enemy would sweep them in any case.

Christian said that it was quite clear that one could not inflict heavy enough casualties with fighters and A.A. alone. Out of 400 or 500 he had so far lost 13. If you counted double, to allow for those lost on the way, it was still not enough to make the attacks too costly to carry out.

The Fuehrer remarked that that had been the trend of the argument at that conference a few days ago, when he had pointed out: "Terror is broken by terror". We would have to resort to reprisals, everything else was rubbish. All this mining had no value in his view; it had no effect on the people, and it did not affect the people over there either. Was it supposed to produce some psychological effect on the German people to hear that a ship had been sunk by a mine? It did not effect them in the least. In his opinion, the best use for our aircraft was to attack the very person of the enemy.

Christian replied that the Luftwaffe had been of the opinion that it was useless to make a terror attack on some little backwater with only 50 aircraft. That would make no impression. It would be better to use the 50 aircraft to ensure that the enemy could not send 500 over, but had to split his forces. That was in his opinion the only solution.

/ The

The Fuehrer said that was all very well, but in practise they were sure not to attack the airfields. He did not believe that they would ever find them. We could consider ourselves lucky that they even found London these days. He was told these days "We hope to find London alright" - It was scandalous and he would tell the Reichsmarschall so.

Christian pointed out that there would be so much night flying activity that everything would be lit up.

The Fuehrer interrupted that one airfield might be illuminated, but 50 to 100 would be missed in the night. We hoped that they were there, but there was no certainty that they were. Terror was broken with terror. And the British were very sensitive to such operations. Only a few bombs with the new explosives, and they would cry out "The Germans have new weapons" - He did not understand why we always approached the question with such diffidence. Our people would eventually go mad for there would come a time when they would have no more confidence in the Luftwaffe. This was already partly the case. It made little difference whether 400 - 500 or only 200 - 300 aircraft attacked Hamburg.

He (the Fuehrer) was always being told: "They could not find it", or again: "We have not enough aircraft for it," but there always seemed to be enough aircraft for other purposes. Another time it was said: "It would not be effective, we must lay mines." Then again it would be: "The A.A. was too strong." Most of the explanations pointed to the fact that they simply did not find the target, which was scandalous. And then some fool came and told him: "You see, my Fuehrer, if they come over Dortmund from England, they can, with their beam system, accurately drop a bomb on a hangar of 500m by 250m." But we could not even find London, with a cross section of 50km, at 150km distance from the coast. He had spoken to the other gentlemen about it, too. Christian should not think that he only said it to him. He could not help it, he was only the Adjutant.

Christian said he still took the view, that the 400 to 500 aircraft which we would require to achieve the same result against the enemy, were not available.

The Fuehrer pointed out that the enemy had to cover a far greater distance. We had only a fifth of the distance to cover. To get to Hamburg, they had at least 600km to cover, probably more, and for the most part over the sea. We had only a short distance to go from our bases.

The Fuehrer continued that instead of using their present dilatory methods, the Luftwaffe should prepare to attack a target, it did not matter what target. - It was no good going on like this. When he heard that 50 bombers had been in operation, had laid mines and had attacked an airfield somewhere, it sounded like a feeble joke. It was an evasion of the only remedy: terror was broken with terror, and by no other means. The decisive thing was that the British would not stop unless their towns were smashed. He would only win the war by destroying more of the enemy's than the enemy destroyed of our's, and so bringing the horrors of war home to him. That had always been true, and it applied to the air war too.

Christian continued that operations on the Eastern front had been similar to those carried out in the past few days. Luftflotte 4 had been mainly engaged near Kuibishev, with reduced activity at Isium, and some 45 aircraft operating on the Bielgorod front. Night operations had again been carried out near the front line, principally against railway lines and airfields.

The Fuehrer asked if there was any indication yet of the number of aircraft reported by the enemy as lost over Hamburg?

/Christian

Christian said he would enquire. We had as yet no idea of the casualties among the civilian population.

The Fuehrer said that in a single district there had been 800 dead so far.

The Fuehrer thought that the populace would now really expect reprisals. He was hearing wonderful tales that the Heinkel 177 was here at last, and that it could be flown at night, etc. Now we could make an attack on London with 100 Heinkels. Each could take at least six 1,000kg bombs.

Darges reported that the British claimed to have dropped 2,000t of bombs for a loss of 12 bombers.

The Fuehrer said he would like to know where these bombers were shot down.

Christian explained that it took a little longer these days, as no allocation of petrol was made for this purpose and they had to send people out on bicycles to search.

The Fuehrer said that was quite right. They would have to send people on bicycles, otherwise how were they to make a report themselves?

Jodl produced some suggestions for the re-distribution of forces before the Autumn, with a view to gaining an operational army both in North Italy and in the Balkans. The usual 26 Coastal Divisions would be left in the West, all the mobile divisions being removed by Autumn and only one other Reserve Division would be left on the coast. As a second line there would be available six Infantry Divisions, four of which were to have more Russian guns, so that the C.-in-C. West could always count on them, and regroup them now, so that the frequent removal of divisions did not involve constant reshuffling.

(END OF CONFERENCE).

DISTRIBUTION:

Same as for Translation No. VII/44.