

AIR HISTORICAL BRANCH

S E C R E T

TRANSLATION NO. VII/90

OPERATION MARITA

BAIKANS, 1941

PART I

TRANSLATED BY

AIR MINISTRY, A.H.B.6

OCTOBER, 1949

G.240265/IF/9/49/35

Berlin, 2 February 1940

Measures for deception in the Balkans

Purpose :

To emphasize the strong German position in the Balkans.

Execution :

OKW Intelligence Division :

The following idea is to be spread : Germany is prepared for the fact that the enemy wants to establish a Balkan front from European Turkey or Greece, and is prepared to launch a blitz operation with superior forces against such an attempt at the very start. This would of course temporarily interfere with German supplies from Rumania, but in the long run would strengthen Germany's position, especially since Italian interests are not to be affected.

The necessary forces for such an operation are available and are not being employed in the West. Nevertheless the growth of Weygand's army in Syria is being followed with concern.

Army and Luftwaffe :

The Army and Luftwaffe will use newly formed units, occupy training areas, etc., in the south-eastern part of Germany, in order to confirm rumours spread by the Intelligence Service (cooperation with OKW Intelligence Division).

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Fuehrer Headquarters,

20 September 1940

Following the request of the Rumanian Government for German training personnel and demonstration troops, the Fuehrer and Supreme Commander has made the following decisions :

1. The Army and the Luftwaffe are to send military missions to Rumania. On the surface it will be made to appear that it is the task of these missions to aid Rumania, our friend, in organising and training her armed forces.

2. The real tasks which must not be apparent either to the Rumanians or to our own troops, are as follows :

(a) To protect the oilfields from attacks by a third power and from destruction.

(b) To enable the Rumanian armed forces to carry out certain tasks according to a definite plan drawn up in the interest of Germany.

(c) To make preparations for operations by German and Rumanian forces from Rumania in case we are forced into a war with Soviet Russia.

3. Thus the following are laid down for the work and the composition of the Army Mission and the strength of the demonstration troops :

/(a)

(a) For the direct protection of the oilfields (against sabotage or risings) German troops should be used only in special cases. This is rather the task of the Rumanians. The cooperation with the special forces which are already in the oilfields should not be apparent.

(b) The German demonstration troops should consist at first of one motorised division reinforced by tanks. To what extent they will be reinforced later, ostensibly for training purposes, remains to be seen.

(c) Training is to be carried out in such a way that some of the Rumanian forces will be trained as model divisions for later use on our side. The Rumanian Command is to be influenced to give these forces preference as to personnel and equipment. This is for the present more important than influencing the entire army, for example by training the officer corps, giving courses at schools, etc.

(d) The tasks of members of the Army Mission in preparation for large-scale troop concentrations should be camouflaged.

4. The task of the Luftwaffe Mission consists primarily of protecting the oilfields against air attacks by means of demonstration troops, and in training the Rumanian Air Force for this purpose and, as far as possible, for later combined operations with the Rumanian army. It is important to make preparations for using strong German forces in possible later operations based in Rumania. C. in C. Luftwaffe will decide in accordance with the over-all situation what forces will be available for the military mission.

5. In order to regulate questions concerning the military missions of both branches of the Armed Forces which have to be decided on the spot, a common commander will be appointed by special order. In other respects the military missions will be directly subordinate to their high commands. In order to establish close liaison with the German Legation, the Army and the Luftwaffe are requested to make their attachés members of the military missions.

6. OKW (Intelligence Division) in cooperation with the Foreign Office will instigate discussions with Hungarian authorities for the purpose of transporting German forces through Hungarian territory.

7. The Commanders-in-Chief of the Army and the Luftwaffe are requested to report when the military missions for Rumania will be available, and in what strength.

8. Officers who are to be sent for purposes of investigation or as advanced command are to be reported to OKW which will obtain the approval of the Fuehrer and will ask the Foreign Office to announce these officers.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Fuehrer Headquarters,

12 November 1940

Directive No.18

The preparatory measures of the High Commands for the conduct of the war in the near future are to be in accordance with the following guiding principles :

1. (France)
2. (Spain and Portugal - code name "Felix")
3. (Italian offensive against Egypt)

216265/17/9/49/35

/4.

4. The Balkans :

C. in C. Army will make preparations to occupy continental Greece north of the Aegean Sea from Bulgarian bases, if necessary - thus making it possible to employ Luftwaffe units against targets in the eastern Mediterranean, especially those British air bases which threaten the Rumanian oilfields.

To be equal to any eventuality and to keep Turkey in check, plans and transport calculations should be based on the assignment of an Army Group in the strength of approximately ten divisions. The railroad running through Jugoslavia cannot be counted on for transporting these forces. In order to shorten the period required for the movement, plans for reinforcing the German military mission in Rumania before very long are to be prepared and submitted to me.

C. in C. Luftwaffe will, in accordance with prospective Army operations, prepare to assign Luftwaffe units to the south-eastern Balkans and a Luftwaffe signal service unit to the southern border of Bulgaria.

The Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania will be augmented to the extent proposed to me.

Bulgarian requests for arms and ammunition for their army are to be met if possible.

5. (Russia)

6. (Landing in British Isles - code name "Seeloewe")

7. I expect reports of the Commanders-in-Chief regarding measures referred to in this directive. After they have been received I shall issue orders concerning the method of execution as well as chronological coordination of the individual actions.

Special precautions are to be taken to safeguard secrecy by limiting the number of those working on the preparations. This refers especially to the enterprise in Spain and to plans concerning the islands in the Atlantic.

signed: Adolf Hitler

Army Headquarters,

6 December 1940

To : C. in C. Luftwaffe - Luftwaffe Operations Staff

In accordance with Directive No.18 these Luftwaffe units will be considered necessary for the intended operation against the Balkans :

1. For Army Cooperation :

(a) Reconnaissance Forces :

- for 1st Army Headquarters = 1 long range Staffel
- for the Kleist Group)
- for XXXX Army Corps)
- for XI Army Corps) 1 Army recce. Staffel each
- for XIV Army Corps)
- for XVIII Army Corps)
- for XXX Army Corps)
- for 2nd, 5th, 9th and 11th Panzer Divisions 1 panzer recce Staffel each.

Altogether : 1 long-range, 6 army and 4 panzer recce Staffeln.

/Since

Since units which are intended for the operation "Seeloewe" or which are attached to other army units cannot be withdrawn for this purpose and the reconnaissance Staffeln under the command of the Air Officer with C. in C. Army are not sufficient, it is requested that the following be immediately seconded to and placed under the command of C. in C. Army :

1 long-range recon Staffeln for the 1st Army Headquarters
6 army recon Staffeln

namely :

from Luftflotte 1 : 4(H)/32 for XXXX Army Corps
5(H)/32 for XI Army Corps

from Luftflotte 3 : 2(H)/31(Pz) for the 5th Panzer Division
5(H)/13 for XXX Army Corps
4(H)/22 for XIV Army Corps
1(H)/13 for the Kleist Group

a marginal note states that these two were deleted later.

(b) Anti-aircraft units :

for each corps 1 flak battery
for each panzer division 1 flak battery (self-propelled mounting)

for three infantry divisions which will be engaged on independent tasks particularly exposed to air attack (narrow valleys in mountainous country) and whose air protection cannot be guaranteed by the Corps

3 light flak batteries (tractor drawn)

Altogether : 6 flak, 4 light flak (self-propelled) and 3 light flak (tractor drawn) batteries.

Besides I/14 Flak Battery (then in Leipzig) for the XIV Army Corps and 92nd Light Flak Battery for the 2nd Panzer Division, an allocation will be requested from those flak units which were subordinate to the Army during the operations in the West and which are not designated for operation "Seeloewe".

2. Operational Air Force :

For cooperation with the Army a dive-bomber Geschwader of three Stuka Gruppen will be requested.

Any reconnaissance, bomber, fighter, and anti-aircraft units necessary for the operation are to be determined by C. in C. Air.

Information is requested as to when and where the proposed formations can be made available. Further it is requested that airfields in Luftflotte 4 area are secured for the reconnaissance Staffeln to enable the Staffeln to work in cooperation with Army Headquarters.

signed : Halder

Fuehrer Headquarters,

8 December 1940

1. C. in C. Luftwaffe will send 4 officers (in civilian dress) to Bulgaria to gather information.
2. C. in C. Navy will send 2 officers and 1 official (in civilian dress) to Bulgaria to determine what aid can be given to Bulgaria in coastal defence.

/The

The branches of the Armed Forces are requested to contact OKW Intelligence Division directly regarding the time of departure of the investigating groups.

for Chief of Staff OKW

signed : Warlimont

OKH Operations Staff,

9 December 1940

Assembly directions for the 12th Army

1. The political situation may make it necessary to occupy Greek Macedonia via Bulgaria. There is also a possibility that the operation may be continued into Thessaly.

Bulgaria, in view of the weakness of her land defences, will to begin with carefully avoid openly taking the side of Germany; she will nevertheless support the preparations of the German High Command - although under cover of strict camouflage - and eventually offer no resistance to the entry of German troops into her territory. Her active participation in the attack on Greece is not to be counted upon. It can however be expected that Bulgaria will first of all defend her southern and especially her south-eastern frontiers with her own forces and will at the same time take into consideration the requirements of the German High Command.

Rumania will permit and assist the assembly of the German forces in her territory.

The occupation of Greek Macedonia, if this should be necessary, will not be dependent on a simultaneous resumption of the Italian offensive in Albania.

2. The code-word for the operation is "Marita".

3. The enemy

(a) Greek Macedonia

The present grouping of the Greek forces and their strength - five Greek infantry divisions and half of a cavalry division - allow it to be expected that the Greeks, in view of the forces which will be interpreted as a threat to her Macedonian territory, are determined to defend themselves, relying on the field fortifications along their frontier.

Changes in the political situation and the threat to Macedonia from strong German forces may however induce the Greek High Command to give up Thrace and eastern Macedonia. In that case the defence of the river Mesta Karasu sector may come into question, and this could be done by holding the mountain ridge which blocks the entry towards the west and the Strymon gorge south-east of Petrich (this appears to be protected by some modern fortifications) or even by a defence of the river Strymon sector, with the northern wing resting on the Yugoslav frontier.

The entry of British forces (one or two divisions to begin with) into the Macedonian theatre of war is not excluded.

(b) Turkey in Europe

An attack by Turkey on Bulgaria to prevent the Germans marching through against Greek Macedonia is hardly probable. If however Bulgaria, without the prospect of swift and strong German support, were exposed to an attack by the numerically superior forces standing ready in European Turkey, then

/the

the possible outcome must be assessed, having regard to the gaps in the Bulgarian mobilisation against a Turkish attack. Edirne (Adrianople) - Stara Zagora and Edirne - Plovdiv must be considered as the central lines of such an attack.

For an appreciation of the enemy see supplement number 1.

4. Directive for the 12th Army

(a) Task

The 12th Army will deploy in Rumania in such a manner that from 7 February 1941 it is ready to march into Bulgaria within twelve hours on the command of OKH, to cover the advance to the Greco-Bulgarian frontier by throwing forward strong defence forces against any reaction from Turkish territory, and to cross the southern Bulgarian frontier on 22 March to occupy Greek Macedonia and Greek Thrace.

(b) With the advance through Bulgaria is to be secured:

protection against Turkey such that a Turkish attack could be answered at once by a German counter-attack which would throw the Turkish forces back over the Turkish frontier and create favourable conditions for an early attack against the Turkish forces in Thrace by the employment of stronger German forces; swift taking over by German troops of the defences on the southern frontier of Bulgaria;

preparation for the attack in such a way that the invasion of Greek territory can follow as quickly as possible on the advance through Bulgaria.

(c) Preparations for the attack on Greece so that a strong right wing of the 12th Army on X-Day can cross the Greco-Bulgarian frontier, annihilate the enemy forces in Macedonia and take possession of Salonica and the northern coast of the Aegean Sea.

It must here be the task of strong and fast-moving units operating on the right wing to gain the Salonica district and bridgeheads over the river Vardar as soon as possible, after fighting their way out of the Rhodope mountains, to bar the retreat of the defeated enemy towards Thessaly and to ensure for the 12th Army the possibility of a rapid continuation of the offensive over the river Vardar in a south-westerly direction.

The operation of weaker motorised forces via Gumuljina (Komotini) to roll up the enemy front from the east is to be considered.

Rapid occupation of the Greek district south-west of Edirne (Adrianople) and an early establishment of an adequate defence line on the lower Maritsa are important.

5. Camouflage and directions

Directions to any necessary extent are only to be imparted to the staff officers necessary for the scheme down to the commanders and higher staff officers of divisions, the reconnaissance elements and individual officers whose closer briefing is necessary.

No special instructions are to be given to the troop commanders beyond the statement of an imminent assignment in the central mountains.

The appropriate measures are to be camouflaged up to the entry into Bulgaria as reinforcements for the training units and after the entry into Bulgaria, as long as the situation permits, as protective measures against an impending Turkish attack on Bulgaria.

6. 12th Army Command is to submit by 12 December, on the basis of the assembly directions:

/(a)

- (a) proposals for the direction of the operations
- (b) a time-table for the period of the movements up to the termination of the preparations for the offensive
- (c) requirements in the way of Luftwaffe operations
- (d) requirements desired of the Bulgarian General Staff

signed: Halder

Supplement 1. Appreciation of the enemy

I. Greek Macedonia

1. The immediate defence of the frontier will be made by troops of the Frontier Guard. In the Gumuljina (Komotini) - Sidhirokastron sector are about 6 to 8 battalions which are distributed between the four main frontier crossings (north of Komotini, north of Xanthi, north of Drama and north of Serrai). A further two to three battalions are stationed east of Komotini and these have been reinforced by regular troops.

The troops of the Frontier Guard are well trained but are only incompletely armed. They have at their disposal only light and medium machine guns and each battalion has at the most one or two light guns, but no heavy weapons. Their special characteristic is an exceptional knowledge of the country.

Blocking and destruction of the roads from the above-mentioned frontier crossings is definitely to be expected.

2. The enemy main defence line runs roughly along the line Meherkoz (north-east of Komotini) - 6 km. north of Komotini - Mountain 1350 (east of Xanthi) - Gabrova - the river Mesta Karasu from Jenik (Yeni Karasu) to north of Peruh - the Phalakron Mountains - Mountain 1376 (due north of Serrai) Sidhirokastron - Neon Petritsi (on the river Strymon).

The country - southwards from the frontier rising in places steeply to 1500 metres - offers good defence possibilities. It is mostly of high mountainous character. The roads are narrow and there is seldom room for traffic to pass. The bridges generally can bear loads up to five tons.

The main battle line is strengthened by well camouflaged field fortifications; in some places - especially on the mountain passes - concrete installations have been erected. Stronger installations (and artillery) are to be especially expected on both sides of Sidhirokastron, where they extend as far as the frontier. However, a continuous system of fortifications does not exist.

The main defence line is at present held by five infantry divisions (including one reserve infantry division) which probably are grouped under one Army H.Q. (2nd ? Army) (IV and V Army Corps). As army reserve only one brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division - at present south-west of Drama - is available. As long as the campaign in Albania claims the forces hitherto in operation there, at the most one more reserve division by way of further troops can be brought up; this reserve is at present being formed in the Peloponnese.

Nothing is yet known about the presence of British troops. A landing of one or two infantry divisions must however be reckoned with. This could be in Dedeagach (Alexandroupolis), Kavalla, Eraklitsa (Cajezi, at the mouth of the Strymon) or Salonica. The best ports for landing troops are Salonica and Kavalla; Eraklitsa has with British help for a year past been built

up for this purpose, but has at the moment only small unloading capacity.

Air bases for the northern Greek front are: Salonica (water and land), Serrai, Drama, Kavalla (land) and Dedeagach (water and land). The British have in addition established air bases on Lemnos and other Aegean islands.

3. Fighting quality of the enemy

The armament and equipment of the Greek troops does not come up to modern requirements. Above all the infantry entirely lack mortars, anti-tank guns and infantry guns. But it is possible that a few of these weapons - especially anti-tank guns - have now been delivered from Britain. Certainly anti-aircraft gear will have been delivered from Britain.

It is worth noting that the artillery regiments of the Greek regular divisions are exclusively equipped with 7.5 cm. mountain guns. The reserve divisions probably have only weaker artillery. Heavy artillery exists only as Corps troops (with the IV and V Army Corps together are four batteries of 10 cm. cannon and six batteries of 15 cm. medium field howitzers). The heavy artillery is motorised. There exists only one battalion of armoured vehicles (40 tanks). It comes under the Cavalry Division. It is likely that the tank battalion has been united with the motorised infantry regiment to form a motorised brigade.

The ammunition position is with the exception of infantry ammunition bad. For lack of munitions factories of their own, supplies have hitherto had to be procured from abroad. It is to be supposed that at the moment Britain provides their minimum needs in munitions.

The quality of the troops is good. The soldiers from northern Greece are recognised as especially tough. Their technical development as well as their general battle training is however backward. Similarly the corps of officers is not trained to modern standards. The bearing of all grades can be considered as conforming to pattern.

To summarise it can be said that the Greek army is vastly inferior to the German troops.

II. Turkey in Europe

1. The Turkish forces are deployed with main concentrations in Turkish Thrace and the Straits. Since the commencement of the Italo-Greek conflict these forces have been further reinforced and have now reached a total strength of

- 28 infantry divisions
- 2 cavalry divisions
- 1 motorised/mechanised division
- 1 brigade of fortifications troops
- 1 brigade of frontier guards

They are grouped in three armies:

- Army of the West: with headquarters at Edirne (Adrianople)
- Army of the East: with headquarters at Kirk Kilissa (Kirkklareli)
- Army of the Dardanelles: with headquarters at Chanak (Canakkale).

These armies comprise Army Group Thrace, with headquarters at present at Corlu. The bulk of the troops are advanced right up to the frontier. At the moment there are available as army or group reserves XX Army Corps in the area west of Bunarhisar (Pinarhisar), IV Army Corps in the Corlu-Muratli-Rodosto (Tekirdag) area, the 2nd and 4th Cavalry Divisions in the area Luleburgaz - Babaeski - Buyuk. Further strengthening by the use of troops from Anatolia is hardly to be expected as the present massing of troops in Thrace has already led to considerable provisioning and supply difficulties. Also the accommodation of the troops is so insufficient

/that

that repeated epidemics have broken out. In addition, the Anatolian troops (altogether 22 infantry divisions, two cavalry divisions and three brigades of frontier guards) are tied down to the defence of the frontiers of Asia Minor.

2. The defence of Thrace is hinged on the line of fortifications which has been under construction for a long time; these generally do not exceed the proportions of reinforced field fortifications. The following lines are known:

- (a) Pristan (Igne Ada) - Samakov - Uskub - Kirk Kilissa - Edirne.
- (b) Midye - Saray - Muratli - Rodosto.
- (c) Terkos - Yazı Euren - Catalca - Bogados (so-called "Catalca" line).

In addition the Bosphorus (both shores) and the Dardenelles are fortified; the northern land approach to the Gallipoli peninsula is blocked by fortifications on both sides of Kavak. Details of the positions and nature of the fortifications are not at the moment known.

The terrain on the whole is undulating without any great variation in height with the exception of the Stranja Balkans (Istranca range) in the north-eastern part of Thrace. Numerous north-south flowing rivers which carry a lot of water, especially in the autumn and spring, could greatly hamper movements from the west towards the east. The Maritsa and its marshy banks form an obstacle.

3. Fighting quality of the Turkish troops

The armament and equipment of the Turkish units is not everywhere uniform and - especially in the reserve formations - not modern. Only arming with light and medium machine guns is probable. The shortage of anti-tank guns, mortars and infantry guns, tanks, light and heavy anti-aircraft artillery has not been removed in spite of former French help and help which is now being received from the British. Infantry guns are not available at all; as a stopgap - as far as available - old field guns are being employed. Anti-tank gun and mortar equipment is very deficient. Only 200 tanks are fully serviceable, 150 armoured vehicles are available.

Furthermore there is an exceptional shortage of artillery ammunition. The present supply of artillery ammunition in the Turkish army is estimated at about 6 ammunition issues of 250 rounds for each gun of all calibres. So that at the moment artillery ammunition is only available for a short period of large-scale fighting. Supplies of machine-gun ammunition are better and can be considered as sufficient.

The Turkish air force has been considerably strengthened during the last year with assistance from the British. The ground organisation and training are however still inadequate and the stocks of bombs and anti-aircraft ammunition are small.

The troops are sufficient in numbers and capable of endurance. Their weapon and general battle training is carried out on German principles, but shows particular deficiencies in coordination of weapons, in reconnaissance and in the use of terrain. The rate of march of the Turkish troops is good.

The Turkish officers are brave and well-equipped. They frequently lack however a sense of reality; they are not trained for independent action. Except for the present Chief of the General Staff most of the higher leaders are average persons and are only superficially intimate with the questions of modern warfare.

To summarise it can be said that the Turkish army has grown only in relation to its immediate neighbours - with the exception of Russia. Compared with a modernly equipped and led army - especially the German army - it is inferior in defence and attack.

/Supplement 2.

Supplement 2. Summary of forces and organisation into Aufmarschstaffeln
(composite forces of a varying number of divisions and
other units)

1. Forces

12th Army G.H.Q.
1st Panzer Group
H.Q. Staffs of XXXX, XI, XIV, XVIII and XXX Army Corps
2nd, 5th, 9th and 11th Panzer Divisions
60th Infantry Division (motorised)
"Adolf Hitler" SS Division
5th and 6th Mountain Divisions
50th, 72nd, 73rd, 164th, 46th, 56th, 183rd, 198th, 294th and 76th Infantry
Divisions
125th Infantry Regiment

2. Organisation into Aufmarschstaffeln

I Aufmarschstaffel

12th Army G.H.Q.
1st Panzer Group
XXXX Army Corps H.Q. Staff and Corps troops
9th Panzer Division
60th Infantry (motorised) (without tracked vehicles)
XIV Army Corps H.Q. Staff and Corps troops
5th and 11th Panzer Divisions
"Adolf Hitler" SS Division
XXX Army Corps H.Q. Staff and Corps troops
164th Infantry Division
50th and 72nd Infantry Divisions - to be ready from 1 January
One-third of the G.H.Q. troops
50 Luftwaffe transport units
50 Supply transport units

II Aufmarschstaffel

XVIII Army Corps H.Q. Staff and Corps troops
5th and 6th Mountain Divisions
2nd Panzer Division (without tracked vehicles)
Two-thirds of the G.H.Q. troops
73rd Infantry Division (to be ready from 15 January)
125th Infantry Regiment
Tracked vehicles of the 2nd Panzer Division
Tracked vehicles of the 60th Infantry Division (motorised)
Tracked vehicles of the G.H.Q. and Corps troops

III Aufmarschstaffel

XI Army Corps H.Q. Staff and Corps troops
46th, 56th, 183rd, 198th and 294th Infantry Divisions - to be ready
from 15 January
76th Infantry Division - to be ready from 1 February
Remainder of the supply transports

Supplement 3. Luftwaffe formations

A. Reconnaissance forces for the 12th Army

for 1st Panzer Group	4(H)/22
for XIV Army Corps (Mot.) and 5th Panzer Division	2(H)/31 Pz

/for XXXX

for XXXX Army Corps and 2nd Panzer Division	1(H)/14 Pz
for XI Army Corps	4(H)/32
for XVIII Army Corps	2(H)/10
for XXX Army Corps	5(H)/13
for 9th Panzer Division	1(H)/23 Pz
for 11th Panzer Division	3(H)/21 Pz

Altogether 4 army co-op and 4 panzer recce Staffeln

Operational air reconnaissance for the 12th Army will be carried out by the long-range recce Staffeln of Fliegerkorps VIII according to the requirements of the 12th Army.

B. Anti-aircraft units

for each corps and for 1st Panzer Group - 1 flak battery
 for each panzer division - 1 light flak battery (motorised self-propelling)
 and in addition 3 light flak batteries (motorised tractor-drawn)
 Altogether 6 flak, 4 light flak (mot.s.p.) and 3 light flak
 (tractor-drawn) batteries.

<u>Unit number</u>	<u>Entraining date in present operational area</u>
I/Flak Regiment 37	1 January 1941
Light Flak Battery 74 (motorised)	12 January 1941
I/Flak Regiment 61	13 January 1941
II/Flak Regiment 24	
Light Flak Battery 73 (motorised)	
Light Flak Battery 76 (self-propelled)	
Light Flak Battery 83 (self-propelled)	
I/Flak Regiment 14	15 January 1941
I/Flak Regiment 43	
I/Flak Regiment 64	
Light Flak Battery 71 (self-propelled)	
Light Flak Battery 85 (motorised)	
Light Flak Battery 86 (self-propelled)	

C. Operational Air Force (detailed for cooperation with the 12th Army)

Staff of Fliegerkorps VIII with:

- 2 long-range recce Staffeln
- 1 reinforced bomber Geschwader (3 Stuka Gruppen and 1 bomber Gruppe)
- 1 fighter Geschwader (2 S.E. fighter Gruppen and 1 T.E. fighter Gruppe)

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Berlin, 10 December 1940

Subject: Assignment of German air force units to fight from Italian bases
 (Special Operation "Mittelmeer")

In agreement with our allies, German air units amounting to approximately a Geschwader are to be assigned as quickly as possible (for a limited time only) to fight from Mediterranean bases in southern Italy.

Their most important mission is to attack the British fleet, especially in the harbour of Alexandria, and to combat enemy traffic through the Suez Canal and through the strait between Sicily and the North African coast.

However, the critical situation in the Mediterranean may make it necessary to use them in the Ionian or the Aegean Seas also. Therefore their assignment

is to be arranged in accord with the Italian High Command.

Since Germany is not in a state of war with Greece, no hostile actions may be undertaken directly against the latter for the time being.

signed: Adolf Hitler

OKL Operations Staff

Headquarters, 12 December 1940

The Air Attache in Sofia is exploring the operational possibilities of a Fliegerkorps in the Bulgarian theatre. The Air Attache in Sofia will be placed under Luftflotte 4 as regards investigation and all preparatory measures for the setting up of the ground organisation in Bulgaria.

This reconnaissance is to be carried out so that a Fliegerkorps can assemble in the area around Bucharest and be transferred at short notice and be sent into action in the Salonica area (main effort) and against Lemnos and the Turkish front.

Forces expected to be required for this purpose are:

- 1 staff of a Fliegerkorps with 1 air signals regiment
- 1 mixed bomber Geschwader (3 Gruppen of dive-bombers and 1 Gruppe of Ju 88's)
- 2 long-range recon Staffeln
- 3 S.E. fighter Gruppen
- 1 T.E. fighter Gruppe
- 3 mixed flak batteries

Ground reconnaissance is to be carried out in connection with the expected occupation of the airfields by Bulgarian Air Force units. C. in C. Luftwaffe will accordingly issue instructions to Luftflotte 4 as to which measures in connection with the setting up of the Bulgarian ground organisation are more urgently required by the High Command and which are to be left to the Bulgarian High Command.

signed: Jeschonnek

The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces

Fuehrer Headquarters,

13 December 1940

Directive No. 20

Operation "Marita"

1. The outcome of the battles in Albania is still uncertain. In view of the dangerous situation in Albania it is particularly important to keep the British from establishing an air base under the protection of a Balkan front, which would be a threat to Italy as well as to the Rumanian oilfields.

2. My plan is therefore as follows :

(a) To set up a gradually increasing force in Southern Rumania during the coming months.

/(b)

(b) When favourable weather begins, probably in March, to send this force to occupy the northern Aegean coast by way of Bulgaria, and if necessary to occupy the entire Greek mainland (operation "Marita"). The support of Bulgaria is to be expected.

3. The following should be kept in mind in assembling the force :

(a) The 16th Panzer Division, arriving in December, will become part of the Military Mission, the tasks of which are unchanged thereby.

(b) Subsequently a force of approximately 7 divisions (= I Aufmarschstaffel) is to be transferred to Southern Rumania. Sufficient engineer forces for preparing the Danube crossing can be integrated into the transports of the 16th Panzer Division (as demonstration troops). C. in C. Army will request my decision at the proper time concerning their assignment at the Danube.

(c) Preparations should be made to transport additional troops until the entire force intended for operation "Marita" has been assembled (total 24 divisions).

(d) The Luftwaffe must provide air protection for the force being assembled, and prepare command posts and supply installations on Rumanian soil.

4. Operation "Marita" itself should be prepared on the following basis :

(a) The first objective of the operation is to occupy the Aegean coast and Salonica valley. It may become necessary to continue the attack via Larissa and the Isthmus of Corinth.

(b) The Bulgarian Army will be in charge of flank protection towards Turkey, but in addition German troops should be held in readiness as reinforcements.

(c) It is uncertain whether other Bulgarian forces will participate in the attack. Likewise it is not possible to predict the Yugoslav attitude at the present time.

(d) It will be the task of the Luftwaffe to support the army advance effectively, eliminate the enemy air force, and as far as possible occupy British bases on Greek islands by means of airborne landings.

(e) It will be decided later to what extent the Italian Armed Forces are to participate in operation "Marita"; and how the operations should be coordinated.

5. The great political consequences on the Balkans of the military preparations require careful planning of all such measures by the High Commands.

The Armed Forces High Command will report the transport of troops through Hungary and their arrival in Rumania step by step, explaining them at first as reinforcements of the Military Mission in Rumania.

Conferences with the Rumanians or the Bulgarians which might give indications of our plans, as well as notification of the Italians, are subject to my approval in each case. The same applies to the despatch of scouting missions and advance commands.

6. After operation "Marita" it is planned to withdraw the forces used for new assignments.

7. I expect reports from the Commanders in Chief concerning their plans; the Army has already reported. Exact timetables for the planned preparations should be submitted to me, as well as plans for the necessary recalling of men from the armament industry (re-forming of divisions on special leave).

signed: Adolf Hitler

Fuehrer Headquarters,

19 December 1940

Re : Directive XX No. 20

Recommendations of OKH

Communication from Chief of Staff, OKW to General Hansen, dated 24 November 1940 (copy forwarded to OKH)

Preparations for "Marita"

1. The suggestion of OKH to make a display of the accompanying transport columns of the 16th Panzer Division in front of the Rumanians as a security measure against complications in the Balkans, especially a threat to the oil district, will be adopted.

In addition the following are authorised :

Despatch to Rumania of an advance detachment for I Aufmarschstaffel of the Army and the corresponding section of the Luftwaffe;

Discussions and arrangements with the Rumanian General Staff, with the restriction that the aims of the offensive are not to be discussed;

Operations of engineer forces on the Danube;

Measures of the Chief of Military Transport for producing the maximum efficiency on the Hungarian and Rumanian railway systems.

The legation in Bucharest is to keep a check on progress through the Chief of the Military Mission and to participate in fundamental questions.

2. The Hungarian and Rumanian governments will be informed through the Foreign Office of the strength of the incoming German transports in two phases:

- (a) at once; about transports up to the middle of January;
- (b) about 2 January; about transports for the second half of January.

OKH is to give corresponding data, including Luftwaffe transports, as soon as possible to OKW (Foreign Section and Operational Staff Defence Department).

The Rumanian General Staff is to be informed through the Chief of the German Military Mission.

3. All measures which allow the intention of marching into Bulgaria to be revealed are to begin as late as possible.

On the Danube work is only to begin on the construction of bridges when air cover is assured and stronger components of I Aufmarschstaffel have arrived in southern Rumania. Smaller and locally distributed work (e.g. assembly of bridge sections and so on) can commence previously.

Also German preparations in Bulgaria on the lines of the reconnaissance already taking place may only commence so as to be completed at the latest possible moment. This applies both to preliminary transport of fuel oil, etc., as well as to bridging preparations on the southern bank of the Danube.

The strengthening of the road bridges along the advance routes towards Sofia and Plovdiv is to be requested of the Bulgarian General Staff in accordance with more detailed directions from the C. in C. Army through the Reconnaissance Staff in Sofia (Bulgarian labour, German financial assistance). The Foreign Office will undertake corresponding action with the Bulgarian Government.

4. The Commanders-in-Chief are requested to prepare by 30 December time-tables covering all the measures drawn up for the preparatory period and the continuation of operation "Marita".

Special instructions from OKW (including the question of foreign exchange) follow.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

OKL Operations Staff,
Headquarters,

19 December 1940

Operational instructions for operation "Marita"

1. The transfer of Fliegerkorps VIII to Rumania is to be carried out in the following time phases :

I To arrive in the Luftgau XVII area by 15 January 1941 :

Stab Fliegerkorps VIII
2/(F) 11
7/L.G.2(from Luftflotte 2)
Stuka-Geschwader 2, with 3 Stuka-Gruppen
Stab J.G.27 with II and III/J.G.27
Flak Regiment 201, with I/Flak Regiment 6
I/Flak Regiment 19
I/Flak Regiment 23

II Fliegerkorps VIII must arrive in Rumania with all the above-mentioned subordinate units by 7 February 1941.

2. The flak batteries of the 201st Flak Regiment are to take with them one issue of ammunition each.

On arrival in Rumania the anti-aircraft and fighter forces are to be put into operation for the protection of the oilfield districts, by immediate agreement between Fliegerkorps VIII and the German Luftwaffe Mission to Rumania.

3. The Quartermaster General is to arrange with the Chief of Transport for supplies and provisions from Germany to be immediately transported to Rumania, before the arrival of the formations.

signed : Jeschonnek

Fuehrer Headquarters,

21 December 1940

German military preparations in the Balkans

The Military Mission in Rumania which originally consisted of a reinforced panzer division, a few Luftwaffe formations and demonstration troops for the Military Academy and similar institutions will now be reinforced by a further panzer division (transport through Hungary to Rumania from 13 to 25 December).

/In

In addition the Fuehrer has now ordered the concentration in southern Rumania of a strong force independent of the Military Mission, of which Field Marshal List has been appointed leader. Its task will be to advance if necessary through friendly Bulgaria, without touching Jugoslavia or Turkish territory, as far as the Aegean coast - or even further into Greece as the situation demands - and so eliminate the British from this theatre. The possibility of such a German move has already been pointed out by the Chief of OKW to General Antonescu during his visit to Berlin at the end of November. General Antonescu gave his consent and only asked that his people be spared material burdens as far as possible, which was promised him.

It is intended that during the operations the Bulgarian Army will take over the protection of the flank facing Turkey; military intervention by the latter however is considered improbable. Whether Jugoslavia will follow up a German attack by seizing Salonica cannot be foreseen.

In detail the timetable of the military moves is as follows :

Rumania

21 December

The Chief of the German Military Mission (General Hansen) has been instructed to announce at once in cooperation with the German Legation the formations which will be arriving in Rumania up to the middle of January. At the same time General Hansen will state that the reinforcement is being made in view of the situation in the Balkans and especially for the protection of the oilfields. The transports following in the second half of January are to be similarly announced on 2 January, and any further movements step by step.

General Hansen has been authorised to discuss the matter and make arrangements with the Rumanian General Staff, with the stipulation that the plans for the offensive (via Bulgaria) are not to be discussed).

End of December - beginning of January

German engineer units will appear on the Rumanian bank of the Danube. Preparations for crossing the river (pontoon-bridge building, etc.) - carried out with all concealment possible - will become more evident as the month of January proceeds.

In southern Rumania German troops will be continually arriving by railway transport (especially armoured and motorised formations).

In Hungary and Rumania from 0000 hours on 1 January 1941 the military railway timetable must be introduced on certain stretches, because of the increase in troop and supply transport. It will then be necessary to restrict somewhat the commercial and passenger traffic of the country.

The Chief of Military Transport is commissioned to discuss the necessary measures in both countries. Support by way of appropriate steps by the Foreign Office and the closest cooperation with the Chief of the German Military Mission in Bucharest seems to be called for.

End of January

In addition to the greater distribution round the country of the Military Mission (2 panzer divisions and Luftwaffe formations), by this time 7 or 8 German divisions will be stationed in southern Rumania.

Whether eventually further strong forces will be brought in has not yet been decided.

/Bulgaria

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria at the moment is the "Reconnaissance Staff Sofia" consisting of 15 army officers, and also a small reconnaissance group from both the Navy and Luftwaffe. The most important task of these staffs, who are wearing civilian dress, is to check up on the roads and operational conditions. The leader of the "Reconnaissance Staff Sofia" (Colonel Zeitler) is commissioned to request the Bulgarian General Staff to strengthen a few road bridges (with Bulgarian labour). German financial assistance will probably be forthcoming.

The laying out of rations and supply depots in Bulgaria will be provided for later as the situation develops.

Reconnaissance activity will probably be increased in the course of January. As the time for building the pontoon bridges over the Danube approaches, (this at the moment cannot be determined and is also dependent on weather conditions) the German intent to march into the country will become more evident.

To sum up : the impression is that the German entry into Rumania will cause unrest in the Balkans and probably also in Soviet Russia. The possibility is not to be ruled out that the mere fact of the concentration of German troops on the Danube will cause the Greeks to yield in their attitude and thus it is desired that the impression of a strong concentration of forces is given with the means available.

Soviet Russia can receive as answer to the questions which can certainly be expected, that Germany cannot tolerate the British establishing themselves in the Balkans, and moreover now that Rumania has joined the Tripartite Pact Germany is bound to protect her. The concentration of forces which has been carried out for these reasons are however in no way directed against Russia; even the concentration has been confined exclusively to southern Rumania.

It will be of importance to Russia that Germany intends no kind of action against Jugoslavia or Turkey.

The Italians will for the time being only be advised in general terms by the Military Attaché in Rome that the German military mission in Rumania is to be reinforced by several divisions.

signed : Jodl

OKL Headquarters,

23 December 1940

(including amendments dated 27 March 1941)

Operational directions for "Marita"

1. British efforts to establish an air base under the protection of a Balkan front, which would be a danger to Italy and to the Rumanian oilfields, must be frustrated.

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander intends therefore :

- (a) To set up a gradually increasing force in southern Rumania during January.
- (b) When favourable weather begins - probably in March - to send this force by way of Bulgaria to occupy the northern Aegean coast and the entire Greek mainland including the islands of Thasos, Samothrace, Lemnos and the Cyclades.

/Code name

Code name for the operation: "Marita".

2. Rumania will permit and assist the assembly of the German forces in her territory.

Bulgaria will support the preparations of the German troops under cover of the closest camouflage and will offer no resistance to the entry of the German troops into her territory. Her active participation in the attack on Greece is not to be counted upon.

3. Enemy appreciation see Supplement No.1.

4. OKH has entrusted the 12th Army (at present in Vienna) with the carrying out of the operation and has issued the following directive :

(a) Task:

The 12th Army will deploy in Rumania in such a manner that from February 1941 it is ready to march into Bulgaria within 12 hours, on the command of the OKH, to cover the advance to the Greece - Bulgaria frontier by throwing forward strong defence forces against any reaction from Turkish territory, and to cross the southern Bulgarian frontier on 22 March to occupy Greek Macedonia and Greek Thrace.

The Greek resistance is to be broken as quickly as possible, the Greek district east of the Pindus Mountains as well as Attica is to be quickly taken, and finally the Peloponnese is to be occupied.

This will depend on the prevention of the withdrawal to the west of the enemy forces operating in the district east of the Vardar and their destruction, and at the same time on forcing as quickly as possible an entry into the Greek mountain country west of Salonica before the enemy is able to set up a defence in strength in this district. Finally, fast moving forces are to drive forward without delay in the direction of Larissa and Athens in order to prevent the enemy from setting up a defence line further back.

A simultaneous attack by the Italian forces west of the Pindus Mountains is to be expected.

(b) With the advance through Bulgaria, is to be secured :

protection against Turkey of the kind that a Turkish attack could be answered at once by a German counter-attack which would throw the Turkish forces which have come out of Turkish territory back over the Turkish frontier and create favourable conditions for an early attack against the Turkish forces in Thrace by the employment of stronger German forces:

swift taking over by German troops of the defences on the southern frontier of Bulgaria :

preparation for the attack in such a way that the invasion of Greek territory can follow as quickly as possible on the advance through Bulgaria.

In the meantime the attitude of Turkey has been clarified to the extent that interference on the part of Turkey is not to be expected.

As a gesture towards Turkey, German and Bulgarian troop movements are not to take place in the immediate front of Adrianople eastwards of the line Mustafa - Pascha (Svilengrad) to Demotika (Dhidhimotikhon) .

(c) Preparations for the attack on Greece so that a strong right wing of the 12th Army on X-Day can cross the Greco - Bulgarian frontier, annihilate the enemy forces in Macedonia and take possession of Salonica and the northern coast of the Aegean Sea.

It must be the task of strong and fast moving units operating on the right wing to gain the Salonica district and bridgeheads over the river Vardar as soon as possible after fighting their way out of the Rhodope mountains, to bar the retreat of the defeated enemy towards Thessaly and to ensure for the 12th Army the possibility of a rapid continuation of the offensive over the river Vardar in a south-westerly direction.

The operation of weaker motorised forces via Gumuljina (Komotini) to roll up the enemy front from the east is to be considered.

Rapid occupation of the Greek district southwest of Edirne (Adrianople) and an early establishment of an adequate defence line on the Maritsa are important.

5. Directive for Luftflotte 4

(for forces see Supplement No. 2)

(a) The concentration of the groups of forces in Rumania, the advance to the Greco-Bulgarian frontier as well as the operations in Greece are to be covered as far as is possible by the fighter forces of Fliegerkorps VII.

At the same time the operation in Rumania is to cooperate with the forces of the Luftwaffe Mission. The anti-aircraft forces of Fliegerkorps VIII can be employed for the protection of the oilfields district on the orders of Luftflotte up to the commencement of the advance.

At the appropriate time 6 mixed and 7 light flak batteries will be transferred to the 12th Army for the protection of their forces.

(b) The preparations of Fliegerkorps VIII in Rumania are to be so arranged that support for the 12th Army is guaranteed from 7 February 1941.

(c) The advance of the 12th Army is to be supported in all sectors by direct intervention in the ground battles.

(d) The Greek and British air forces as well as naval units affecting the operations of the army are to be eliminated by attacks on the coastal bases and the naval units.

(e) Support is to be prepared for the planned airborne landings to seize British bases on the Greek islands (Lemnos).

6. Fliegerkorps VIII will come under the command of Luftflotte 4 from 1 January 1941. Direct cooperation between the 12th Army and Fliegerkorps VIII in all questions of tactics and execution of the planned operation must be guaranteed by this subordination.

7. The Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania as well as the Air Attache in Bulgaria must continue to support Fliegerkorps VIII in all preparatory questions of supply and maintenance (ground organisations, accommodation, rations and so on).

The task of the Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania is protection of the oilfields and refineries in the Ploesti area as well as the training of the Rumanian Air Force and still stands.

The repercussions of an attack by us on the British bases in Greece demand increased attention to air defence. The advancing of the aircraft reporting lines is to be examined and adjusted at the right time.

The task of the Air Attache in Bulgaria is preparatory ground reconnaissance for the reception of units of Fliegerkorps VIII and still stands.

/8.

8. An order follows about the coordination of the operations with those of the Italian Armed Forces.
9. Discussions with the Rumanians or the Bulgarians which might indicate our intentions, as well as notification of the Italians, are subject in each case to the approval of the Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the German Armed Forces. The same applies to the despatch of scouting missions and advance commands.
10. Fliegerkorps VIII is to submit by 15 January 1941 :
 - (a) Plans for the execution of the operations,
 - (b) Timetable for the operation up to the ending of the preparations for the attack.

signed : Jeschonnek

Supplement 1. Appreciation of the enemy

(Position as at 18 December 1940)

A. Greece

I. Greek Army

Already mobilised:

In Albania against the Italians:

14 infantry divisions

1 cavalry brigade (partly mechanised)

1 infantry division being brought up from Salonica

1 infantry brigade being brought up from Corfu

Front line is Lake Ochrid - Mount Pupatit - Zerec - Gradec - Kelcyre - Golem - Dzhore - Grava Bay.

On the Bulgarian frontier :

5 infantry divisions

1 cavalry brigade

On the Jugoslavian frontier:

Weak units of the frontier guards

In addition:

1 brigade in the Athens area

2 or 3 reserve divisions being formed in the Peloponnese

(creation only possible with British assistance)

II. Flying Corps

(a) Strength and equipment

40 reconnaissance aircraft, 2nd class

(Aircraft types : Henschel 126, Potez 25 and Breguet XIX)

/25 fighter

25 fighter aircraft, 2nd class

(Types : Avia 534, PZL P 24, Gladiator)

15 bombers 1st class

(Type : Blenheim)

(b) Operation

The whole of the Greek Flying Corps is at present operating from advanced airfields in Albania.

(c) Ground organisation:

Supply aerodromes:

Athens - Tatoi
Salonica - Sedes
Larissa
Athens - Phaleron

Aerodromes:

Eleusis
Trikkala
Salonica - Mirka (sea)

Airfields in and near the occupied Albanian district:

Yannina (civil airfield)
Koritza Aerodrome
Florina and Kastoria (landing strips)

There are a large number of emergency landing grounds in Thrace and the Peloponnese

III. Anti-aircraft artillery

(a) Strength

5 anti-aircraft regiments = 21 heavy AA batteries = 66 heavy AA guns
36 light AA batteries = 189 light AA guns
16 searchlight batteries = 37 AA searchlights

Permanent coastal AA guns in unknown strength established round Piraeus, and in the areas round Salonica and Patras.

(b) Anti-aircraft material

Heavy AA guns : 33 Krupp 8.8 cm.
4 Bofors 7.5 cm.
8 Hungarian Bofors 8 cm.
21 Vickers 7.6 cm.

Light AA guns : 74 Rheinmetall 3.7 cm. with Zeiss sights
109 Berlin-Suhler 2 cm.
6 Vickers 4 cm.

(c) Operation

The bulk of the anti-aircraft batteries are in action in the battle area in Albania. Besides this stronger anti-aircraft protection in the area around Salonica is to be presumed. The anti-aircraft protection of Athens will be looked after by the British.

/IV.

IV. British reinforcements

(a) Flying units

So far operating in Greece:

50 fighters (mainly Gladiators, probably a few Hurricanes and Spitfires)
120 bombers (types : Wellington, Blenheim, Hampden and Swordfish)

(b) Probable employment

Fighters : Principally on the Albanian front, and in addition for the protection of Athens

Bombers : Chief base Athens-Tatoi, other bases Athens-Phaleron, Larissa, Trikkala, Salonica-Sedes, Cephalonia, Drama (1 bomber flight and 1 fighter flight), Kavalla, Volos

(c) British bases are being built :

in the Peloponnese west of Sparta, on Cape Araxos and in Crete

(d) British anti-aircraft artillery is established around Athens and on Cape Araxos.

Estimated total strength : 60 AA guns, mainly light.

(e) Further British reinforcements in Greece are to be expected.

B. Turkey

I. Turkish Army:

(a) Strength:

50 or 51 infantry divisions, of which 32 are fully equipped for battle, remainder being formed.

(Equipment : difficulties in arming)

(b) Organisation

1st Army Group:

Army of the East :	Kirklareli (Kirkelesse)
Army of the West :	Adrianople (Edirne)
Army of the Dardanelles :	Canakkale (Chanaq)
	28 infantry divisions
	2 cavalry divisions
	1 mechanised division
	1-2 brigades of fortification troops

2nd Army Group:

2nd Army : Western and Southern Anatolia
11 infantry divisions
1 cavalry division
1 brigade of fortification troops

3rd Army : Eastern and Northern Anatolia
11-12 infantry divisions
1 mountain brigade
1 cavalry brigade
3 brigades of frontier guards

II. Air Force

1. Flying units:

(a) Strength and equipment

- (i) 71 obsolete reconnaissance aircraft (Breguet XXIX, Smolik S 16)
- (ii) 60 fighters, 1st class (predominately Morane 405/6, with a small number of Spitfires and Hurricanes)
60 fighters, 2nd class (PZL P 24, and Curtiss-Hawker)
- (iii) 94 bombers (24 He 111, 50 Blenheim and 20 Glenn-Martin)
40 light bombers (Vulzee 12)
15 obsolete bombers (Fairey Battle I)

(b) Ground organisation

Main base is at Eskischehir

Aerodromes in Thrace:

Corlu
Yesilkocuy (St. Stefano)
Edirne (Adrianople)

Aerodromes in West Anatolia:

Kutahia
Smyrna (Izmir)
Bandirma (on southern coast of the Sea or Marmara)

Aerodromes in Eastern Anatolia:

Dyarbekir
Adana
Erzerum
Under construction : concrete strips, e.g. in Banirma

2. Anti-aircraft artillery

42 Heavy AA batteries
38 Light AA batteries
20 Searchlight sections

Equipment

Heavy AA guns : 66 Schneider-Creuzot 7.5 cm.
64 Vickers 7.5 cm.
14 Vickers 9.4 cm.

Light AA guns : 12 Rheinmetall-Borsig 3.7 cm.
26 Rheinmetall-Borsig 2 cm.
24 Solothurn 2 cm.

about 110 AA guns of unknown types

Duties

The bulk of the anti-aircraft artillery is subordinate to the Army. In addition anti-aircraft protection is to be assumed at the following points :

Ankara
Industrial works at Karabuk, Kucukyozgat, and Kirikale
Coal mining district of Zonguldak
Naval base at Izmit (Kocaeli)
Areas around Smyrna and Kanakkale (Dardanelles), as well as near the most important aerodromes.

/Supplement 2

Supplement No. 2. Organisation of Fliegerkorps VIII from
1 January 1941

Stab of Fliegerkorps VIII

2(F)/11
7/L.G.2 (from Luftflotte 2)

Stab of St.G.2

I/St.G.2
III/St.G.2
I/St.G.3

Stab of J.G.27

II/J.G.27
III/J.G.27

Flak Regiment 201 with

Flak Battery (Abteilung) 1/23

Flak Battery (Abteilung) 1/6

Flak Battery (Abteilung) 1/19

Luftwaffe Signals Regiment 38

Supply units (in accordance with special instructions from the
Quartermaster General)

At the right time transfer and subordination of a bomber Gruppe (of Ju 88s)
and twin-engined fighter Gruppe is intended.

OKH Headquarters,

28 December 1940

The chain of command in Rumania.

From his arrival in Rumania, C. in C. 12th Army will assume as cover the title of Commander-in-Chief of the German Army in Rumania, while 12th Army Headquarters will be known as the General Headquarters of the German Army in Rumania. Subordinate to him are the staffs and formations comprising the battle organisation of the 12th Army, from the time of their arrival in Rumania.

Moreover, on the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army in Rumania, the Chief of the German Army Mission in Rumania will be subordinate to him for the purpose of the preparation and execution of the assembly.

The Chief of the German Military Mission (General Hansen) assumes at the same time the responsibility for liaison between the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army in Rumania, the German Legation and the Rumanian Armed Forces. His remaining tasks remain unaffected by the foregoing regulations, and the demonstration troops will remain subordinated to him.

signed : Brauchitsch

/OKH Headquarters,

OKH Headquarters,

30 December 1940

Re : Anti-aircraft protection for the Rumanian oilfields

To : Luftwaffe Operations Staff

In accordance with OKW orders the bridge construction over the Danube is to have special anti-aircraft protection. Commencement of building of the temporary bridges is planned for 15 January. For this date, only one flak battery and one light flak battery are available. For the construction of another bridge, planned to commence on 23 January, anti-aircraft protection must be guaranteed by the flak batteries at present with the transports.

Therefore at the moment it cannot yet be ascertained whether and to what extent additional anti-aircraft protection for the oilfields can be covered by the Flak Abteilungen seconded to the Army.

OKH Headquarters,

14 January 1941

To : GHQ of the German Army in Rumania

1. GHQ of the German Army in Rumania is to hold itself ready from the end of January, as soon as the necessary anti-aircraft protection has been provided, to march on the orders of OKH into northern Bulgaria with the formations which have up to then arrived, crossing according to the situation either the frozen Danube or if necessary over the open Danube, and to dispose them first of all north of the line Sofia - Plovdiv - Varna so that from these positions they can at any time carry out the tasks laid down for them.

The order will be issued by OKH at the right time.

2. The entry will probably be made on the grounds of protecting Bulgaria, who by then will have joined the Tripartite Pact, against a possible attack by other states.

3. Authority for detailed discussions between the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army and the Bulgarian General Staff will be given as soon as the necessary political preliminaries are concluded.

It is proposed to authorise the construction of the bridges, from 20 January.

4. A ruling follows later on the chain of command as it concerns the Bulgarian Armed Forces.

signed : von Paulus

Fuehrer Headquarters,

16 January 1941

The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs has issued the following directive to the German Legation in Sofia.

1. "I request you to seek audience again immediately with the Bulgarian Minister-President or Foreign Minister or both.

/Please

G.240265/IF/9/49/35

Please reply that the Reich Government agrees to the immediate inception of discussions between the two General Staffs. It is also agreed that the discussions should not in any case take place in Sofia. It was our intention to propose Vienna for them. However, in the meantime Field Marshal List has already left for Rumania. Indeed he does not intend to conduct the discussions himself with the officers of the Bulgarian General Staff, but will leave his Chief of Staff to deal with these. Nevertheless he would greatly appreciate being kept fully informed of the General Staff discussions. Therefore it would be best if the discussions took place at Field Marshal List's Army Headquarters in Rumania. Where in Rumania the Army Headquarters will be located has not yet been determined. It certainly will not be in Bucharest, but in a smaller place. As soon as the place has been settled we will request the officers of the Bulgarian General Staff to go there perhaps in civilian clothes, in order to avoid drawing unnecessary attention.

The Bulgarian Legation in Berlin has meanwhile expressed the wish that a German specialist in air defence be sent post haste to Bulgaria to tour the country and discuss the necessary defence measures with the Bulgarian posts. The Reich Government agree to this also, and the officer of the Luftwaffe whom we have in view for this could perhaps take part one day in the general discussions of the General Staffs, so that he could then undertake the reconnaissance trip suggested by the Bulgarian Government. In this case it would be practical if the officer of the Bulgarian military delegation detailed for this reconnaissance journey also belonged to the Bulgarian Air Force. The German Military and Air Attaches in Sofia are also to take part in these discussions.

It is important that the discussions between the General Staffs commence at once, at the latest in two or three days' time. We shall let you have definite information as to place and time immediately. Meanwhile we would like the Bulgarian Government to give instructions for the Bulgarian General Staff officers to get ready to leave at once.

II. As regards the military questions the following is given primarily for your own information, but may however be made use of as thought fit :

The moment for beginning the march through Bulgaria has not yet been exactly decided. It depends partly on the conclusion of the deployment of the German troops on the southern frontier of Rumania; and partly on the weather, especially on the state of ice on the Danube. In any case it is the intention of the Reich Government to commence the march through as early as possible. It will probably be possible in about three weeks. However, the march through will only be begun when sufficient forces have been concentrated on the southern frontier of Rumania to guarantee in every respect the military protection of Bulgaria. It is intended to have the German troops in sufficient strength to carry out all tasks and to be adequate for any eventuality.

As you know, the Bulgarian Army will take no active part whatsoever in the military operations. It will be carried out by German troops alone.

The German troops will bring with them all necessary rations, petrol supplies, etc., so that Bulgaria's own supplies will not be affected by the march through".

Field Marshal List was informed of the above through the OKW Foreign Section on the afternoon of 15 January prior to his departure.

In future the C. in C. 12th Army is to be responsible for the arrangement of all military discussions.

for the Chief of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces

signed : Warlimont

/Fuehrer Headquarters

Fuehrer Headquarters,

17 January 1941

(as amended on 21 January 1941)

1. The Fuehrer agrees to the proposed ruling on the position of C. in C. 12th Army as concerns the Bulgarians.

Field Marshal List is authorised to make arrangements accordingly. OKH is to report on the outcome.

2. OKH in conjunction with the Foreign Intelligence Section is to set up with the Bulgarian General Staff a joint security service on the Bulgarian roads and railways (Field Marshal List - War Office Sofia).
3. The Fuehrer himself will decide when preparations may be openly made for the crossing of the Danube. C. in C. Army in conjunction with the C. in C. Luftwaffe is to submit in due course proposals for action to be taken on receipt of this authorisation, together with a detailed account of the progress of the following preparations :

- (a) Fighter and anti-aircraft protection of the bridge and crossing positions, the oilfields and Constanta.

As long as anti-aircraft and fighter protection for these is not available from the forces of C. in C. Luftwaffe, anti-aircraft protection to the extent of about a regiment is to be withdrawn from the anti-aircraft artillery allocated to the army (12th Army Command) and temporarily placed at the disposal of C. in C. Air (Luftwaffe Mission). C. in C. Air is to request that the Rumanian Air Force provide the fighter cover.

- (b) Guaranteeing all these measures necessary for the protection of Bulgaria, so that bridge construction or the crossing of German troops over the Danube into Bulgaria can liquidate any enemy action against this country, on the basis of the discussions to be held between the General Staffs of the 12th Army and Bulgaria.

4. Directives will be published about the reinforcement of the Rumanian coastguards at Constanta as soon as the preparatory questions have been dealt with.

5. The start of II Aufmarschstaffel is authorised. The expected reinforcement of the anti-aircraft protection for Rumania, which will be split between I and II Staffel, is to accompany II Aufmarschstaffel.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW.

OKH Headquarters,

14 January 1941

To : OKW Operations Staff

OKH proposes :

1. Ruling on the position of C. in C. 12th Army on the entry into Bulgaria.

During the entry itself, so long as no military threat arises from the neighbouring states, it is not necessary to place the Bulgarian troops under German orders. The defence of the frontier between Bulgaria and Turkey by Bulgarian troops during the entry and the preparations for the operation

/Marita"

"Marita" is to be determined by the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army in Rumania in cooperation with the Bulgarian General Staff, as far as method and strength of the forces used are concerned. On the Greco-Bulgarian frontier it will be necessary on the arrival of the German covering troops to subordinate the Bulgarian forces employed on frontier guard to the German Command.

In the event of a Turkish attack it will be necessary for C. in C. 12th Army to take over complete command of all the forces. Bulgarian requirements for land defence must therefore conform to the frame of the general situation. Assurances will be correspondingly given at the discussions.

With the commencement of the operation "Marita" the 12th Army must in any case assume complete command over the German and Bulgarian forces employed on the Greek and Turkish frontiers. Thus the German and Bulgarian troops placed on the frontier towards Greece come under the 12th Army, as well as the German formations under the German Commander-in-Chief which have been kept back as operational reserves, and the Bulgarian troops under the Bulgarian Commander-in-Chief employed on the Turkish frontier.

2. The establishment of a security service on the roads and railways in Bulgaria by the German Counter-Intelligence Department in conjunction with the GHQ of the German Army in Rumania.

The organisation of a security service for the protection of the roads, bridges and railways used by the advancing forces gains in significance in view of the hostile resistance and sabotage activity which a German entry would stir up in the south east, and this activity must not be underestimated. By arrangement with the Bulgarian General Staff this security service must be carried out either by native forces or by German security units.

3. Authority to commence construction of the bridges from 20 January on the assumption that this - if the weather permits it at all - is carried out at the latest possible moment that the situation allows and that it is considerably prepared and shortened by the prefabrication of parts on the northern bank.

4. Authority for the start of II Staffel from 6 February to be announced on 20 January, with the possibility of a postponement of the starting date any time up to 2 February.

OKL Headquarters,

18 January 1941

1. The Bulgarian Government wishes in the General Staff conferences to discuss the whole setting up of the Bulgarian air defences and to be given expert advice on the matter, since the British have threatened to make air raids on Bulgarian towns if German troops should cross to the south side of the Danube.

2. Luftflotte 4 is therefore to see to it that the Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania ensures the unity of air defence in the Rumanian-Bulgarian theatre when German troops cross the Bulgarian frontier, so far as is necessary for the air defence of the oilfields and of the rear communications of the Army and Luftwaffe in Rumania and Bulgaria. For this it will be necessary:

(a) that the German air defence forces subordinate to the Luftwaffe Mission and the Rumanian air defence forces should be detailed for the protection of the Rumanian oilfields as well as the Danube crossing places;

/(b)

- (b) that the Bulgarian air defence forces should be detailed for defence against low-level attacks on the rear communications of the 12th Army and Fliegerkorps VIII.

Special points:

The Isker gorge north of Sofia; the Trans-Balkan railway at Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa; the Sofia-Plovdiv line at Ichtiman.

Unless it has already been done, the Air Attache in Bulgaria is to hand to the Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania as soon as possible data concerning the strength and employment of the Bulgarian air defence forces.

3. The employment of the air defence forces under the command of Fliegerkorps VIII in Bulgaria is as far as possible to be made to conform with the air defence measures decided upon by the Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania.
4. OKH will be requested to instruct the 12th Army to make the employment of their subordinate anti-aircraft forces in Bulgaria conform as far as possible with the air defence measures decided upon by the Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania.

draft signed by Jeschonnek

Fuehrer Headquarters,

21 January 1941

The conferences of the Fuehrer and the Duce on 19 and 20 January showed that it is very desirable to send the forces to Tripoli which are intended for there as soon as possible (operation "Sonnenblume"), but that the transfer of German forces to Albania (operation "Alpenveilchen") cannot be carried out as previously planned, since this would make reinforcement and supply of the Italian divisions impossible, and thus the preparation for the Italian offensive would be badly hampered.

Supplementing and correcting previous orders, the Fuehrer decided as follows:

1. (Operation "Sonnenblume")
2. Operation "Alpenveilchen"

The orders issued are changed to the effect that for the time being only one mountain division without heavy vehicles is to be provided for Albania. It is to be equipped as indicated by the results of the investigation taking place at the present time.

The Italian High Command intends to prepare 10 divisions in Albania for combat within 8 to 10 weeks. It will be decided at the beginning of March whether one more German mountain division should be transferred to Albania.

3. Operation "Felix" (Iberian Peninsula)

Possible changes in political conditions make it necessary to alter previous orders to the effect that preparedness for operation "Felix" should be maintained to so far as this is still possible.

Therefore the first Mountain Division is not to be counted on for operation "Alpenveilchen".

for Chief of Staff, OKW

signed : Warlimont

/Sofia

Sofia, 25 January 1941

Supplement 2 to Situation Report dated 25th January 1941 (Sofia-Berlin). Report on the conference between the German General Staff's representative General von Greiffenberg (Chief of List's Army) and the Bulgarian General Staff's representative General Boydeff (A.O.C. Bulgarian Air Force), held at Predeal in Rumania from 22 to 24 January 1941.

1. The most essential points of the discussion between the representatives are recorded in the supplement in the form of a protocol.

2. At the close of the conference, at my instigation, General Baron von Richthofen had a talk with General Boydeff. During this the following important points were dealt with.

(a) General Boydeff promised every assistance as regards forwarding supply trains into the neighbourhood of Plovdiv and south of Sofia. The equipment will be taken over on the Bulgarian-Rumanian frontier by the Bulgarian Air Force and thence transferred to the selected airfields. As General von Richthofen was told, it would be useful that a German escort of one or two men in civilian clothes be allocated to each transport.

(b) General Boydeff again requested General von Richthofen to place at his disposal before the actual commencement of the operations sufficient anti-aircraft forces for the protection of Sofia, Plovdiv and for the armament works situated near Kazanlik and Karlovo. General Boydeff proposed that these anti-aircraft units disguised (personnel in civilian clothes) as "purchased Bulgarian equipment", should be despatched in good time. As General von Richthofen was unable to give any promise of this I proposed that the Bulgarian Government make application now through diplomatic channels for this protective measure. General von Richthofen declared that from a military point of view he had no objection; on the contrary it was greatly to be desired that the anti-aircraft forces should already be prepared for action in Bulgaria at the commencement of the operations.

(c) The Bulgarian Air Force has - as previously reported - agreed to allow German personnel in civilian clothes to take up duties in the repair shops at Karlovo and the airfields at Sofia and Plovdiv. As so far no advice has been received from the Director General of Luftwaffe Equipment as to whether assistance from German personnel can be provided in the immediate future, I proposed that the technical personnel (repair and maintenance) which are at the disposal of Fliegerkorps VIII take over these duties. General Boydeff agreed to 50 men being attached to Karlovo and 20 men each to Plovdiv and Bozhurishte (approximately 15 km. north-west of Sofia). I request a decision as to whether Fliegerkorps VIII or the Director General of Luftwaffe Equipment is to be responsible for dealing with this matter. It is important that something should be done about it as soon as possible, as the repair shops are at the moment overflowing with Bulgarian equipment, and the repair of this equipment could be undertaken by our personnel up to the commencement of the operations.

(d) General Boydeff stated that he also agreed that the frontier guards on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier should be reinforced at once by aircraft reporting troops of Fliegerkorps VIII in civilian clothes so that a smooth, efficiently working network is available before the commencement of operations.

I request that the protocol contained in the supplement be treated confidentially as I did not receive the document through official channels.

Moreover I would once more like to mention that the whole series of discussions established in general that Bulgaria will support us to the full in the forthcoming operations.

/I

I should like General Boydeff to be thanked for his cooperation.

signed : von Schoenebeck

Supplement to situation report above

Summary of the main points discussed between the representatives of the Royal Bulgarian General Staff and of the German Army High Command on the 22, 23 January 1941

Bulgarian representative: General Boydeff

German representative: General von Greiffenberg

A. Bulgarian questions and requests

1. Boydeff: Will the Bulgarian Army's part in the forthcoming German operations be such that it will remain available for the subsequent new order in the Balkans?

Greiffenberg: We do not expect that the Bulgarian Army will be employed in an offensive against the Turks or Greeks. We do however expect Bulgaria to defend her southern and especially her south-eastern frontiers with the means at her disposal, and in doing so to take into consideration the requirements of the German High Command.

In order to remove any apprehensions of the Bulgarian Army Command, especially on the south-eastern front, sufficient German forces, especially tanks, will be placed at first behind the existing Bulgarian frontier defences. The two armoured divisions which are standing ready in the Dobruja can under normal conditions be moved up in three or four days, ready for action behind the Bulgarian forces. The other forces designated for the operations, further infantry and armoured divisions, will be arriving later, depending on the weather and on the condition of roads and bridges.

The Luftwaffe will stand ready in sufficient strength on Rumanian territory from the moment the frontier is crossed, so that it can effectively attack any hostile move dangerous to the Bulgarian defence. It will be transferred at the latest during the first days of the advance to the operational areas of Plovdiv and Sofia, provided that the state of the airfields and weather conditions permit. As far as it is at all possible, supplies for the airfields should be brought up now under camouflage.

The German anti-aircraft artillery will be with the first of the German advance forces, where it has not already been possible to send parts (material) into Bulgaria by now.

2. Boydeff: When can Bulgaria commence a disguised mobilisation of her army?

Greiffenberg: That depends on the size of the forces required. The German opinion is that it is necessary to have at least six Bulgarian divisions ready on the Turkish front, and furthermore an adequate defence on the Greek front, and that behind these a certain number of Bulgarian troops available as reserve.

Since according to the information given by the Bulgarian General Staff a concealed mobilisation and assembly of these forces will take 21 days, we must ask that this concealed form of mobilisation begins immediately. Whether this is politically practicable will have to

/be

be determined through the diplomatic channels between the two Governments.

3. Boydeff: How will you defend us if we are attacked by one or other of our possible enemies?

Greiffenberg: (a) Turkey: A Turkish attack on Bulgarian territory is not considered probable. However German forces, especially armoured divisions, sufficient for any eventuality will be thrown in against the Turkish frontier behind the Bulgarian defence lines. Similarly the German air forces will be at hand ready for defence.

(b) Greece: Against the Greco-Bulgarian frontier motorised advance detachments are to be pushed forward immediately and as rapidly as possible to support the Bulgarian frontier defences there.

(c) Yugoslavia: The German High Command considers that offensive measures on the part of Yugoslavia against Bulgaria can be ruled out. Should Yugoslavia interfere however, the columns deployed on the right rear of the German infantry divisions would take over the defence on the western side at first, and further German forces would come to grips with Yugoslavia from the other side. It is assumed in this connection that there will be reinforced Bulgarian frontier guards on the Bulgarian-Yugoslav frontier too.

(d) Russia: The Germans do not expect the Russians to interfere. Adequate German forces are standing ready for any eventuality on the German eastern frontier, and in addition in Rumania the excellent German demonstration troops are available, together with the Rumanian Army.

(e) Landing attempts: The German troops in cooperation with the Luftwaffe are able at any time to defend the Black Sea coasts against any landing that may be attempted. Moreover the Army High Command will pass on to the appropriate German naval authority Bulgarian requests for the protection of the ports of Varna and Burgas.

4. Boydeff: How is it intended to supply the German Armed Forces?

Greiffenberg: Provisioning will be effected as far as possible from our own German supplies. Nevertheless to ease the strain on the railway and transport routes assistance will be requested from the Bulgarian side, especially rations. According to the information supplied to us by the Bulgarian General Staff this assistance can only be provided within the scope of the "quotas".

5. Boydeff: To what extent will be Bulgarian State services (railways, telegraphs, etc.) be required for use by the German Armed Forces?

Greiffenberg: An allocation from these services will be necessary to the extent that the Bulgarian economy can afford it. The details about this will be laid down by the special commission which is already in Sofia. It is taken for granted that above all the railway network and rolling stock will be made available for the needs of the German Army.

The Army High Command notes the claim of the Bulgarian General Staff that the Bulgarian railway system will need a contribution of some 100 locomotives and 1500 goods trucks to be able to satisfy all the requirements of the Bulgarian Army, Bulgarian economic system and the German Army. The Army High Command will pass on these requests, but points out that engines

/and

and goods trucks are in extremely short supply. All installations and management of the Bulgarian State railways, postal and telegraph communications are to remain in Bulgarian hands.

6. Boydeff: In what way will compensation be assured for damaged to Bulgarian private and state owned property caused either by manoeuvres etc., of the German Armed Forces in Bulgaria, or by measures adopted by the enemy?

Greiffenberg: The Army High Command is unable to answer that question at the moment. It will be passed on to the Supreme Command of the German Armed Forces.

7. Boydeff: The Bulgarian Staff considers it essential that their orders for war material (details of which are known to the Military Economic Department and the German Air Ministry) which were ordered a long time ago from Germany, should be speedily completed. Otherwise they will not be able to render the promised assistance.

Greiffenberg: According to information received from the German Military Attaché deliveries are already under way. The matter will again be investigated from this end.

8. Boydeff: How is it intended to employ and reinforce the Bulgarian Army after the conclusion of the operations, "so that it will be in the position to accomplish the new order in the Balkans?"

Greiffenberg: This can not be foreseen at the moment and depends on how the situation develops.

B. German questions and requests

1. Greiffenberg: When does the Bulgarian General Staff believe that these preparations will be sufficiently advanced so that the German entry can take place at the most favourable moment from a military point of view, quite independent of the political side and of whether the German assembly in Rumania has already been completed?

Boydeff: Not before the middle of March. Whether we can adhere to that date depends on the arrival of deliveries from Germany.

2. Greiffenberg: It is important that the chain of command in Bulgaria should be definitely settled. The German Supreme Command put forward the following point of view: during the entry, so long as there is no military threat from neighbouring states, it is not necessary for Bulgarian troops to be subordinate to the German Command. When the German covering forces arrive on the Bulgo-Greek frontier it will be necessary to place the Bulgarian forces there under the German Command. In the event of an attack by Turkey, it will be essential that the German Commander-in-Chief should assume complete command of the German and Bulgarian forces. At the same time Bulgarian interests in matters relating to the defence of the country will be taken into consideration. Also when the German operations against Greece commence it is essential that the German Commander has complete control over the German and Bulgarian forces engaged. Thus units stationed on the Greek front would come under the German High Command, while the Bulgarian forces on the Turkish front would be subordinate to the Bulgarian High Command.

Boydeff: The representatives of the Bulgarian General Staff recognise the necessity of a clearly defined chain of command on the lines suggested. They are however not empowered to give definite consent on this point but will refer the matter for consultation. The Bulgarian representatives wish to know what will be the approximate strength of the German force it is intended to send into Bulgaria. It will

/be

be given out that the numerical and fighting strength of the German units entering Bulgaria will be at the very least one and a half times that of the mobilised Bulgarian forces.

3. Greiffenberg: The representatives of the German General Staff wish to point out the special importance of precautions against sabotage etc., during the course of the operations.

Boydeff: The Bulgarian representatives state that measures in this respect have already been taken and that they are prepared to cooperate fully with the German authorities in this connection.

4. The representatives of the German General Staff request early and definite information on the following points:

- (a) Will the Bulgarians agree to the proposed chain of command?
- (b) In what manner, in what strength and in what period of time will the Bulgarian forces intended for the defence of the country's frontiers be deployed?

The representatives of both General Staffs state that in addition to the foregoing main questions, a great number of individual points were dealt with, on which in general both sides agreed, but also there are still quite a number of further points which yet remain to be settled in special discussions.

The representatives of the Bulgarian General Staff concluded by declaring that they have no plenipotentiary powers, so that the arrangements made here still require the approval of the Bulgarian Government.

Berlin, 28 January 1941

Chief of OKW Operations Staff

To the Foreign Office,

for the attention of Ambassador Ritter

After discussion the Fuehrer has today decided the following with regard to the military operations in the Balkans.

1. The entry of the German troops into Bulgaria is to take place as late as possible. The moment will be determined by these factors:

- (a) The bases for the Luftwaffe in Bulgaria and air and coastal defence for Constanta, Varna and Burgas must be completed beforehand as unobtrusively as possible.
- (b) The date for the commencement of the attack (about 1 April) must be adhered to.
- (c) Interruption of the crossing, once it has commenced, by drift ice on the Danube shall be avoided.

2. The exact moment of the entry therefore cannot at present be envisaged, but will in all probability not be before 20 February.

/3.

3. The Fuehrer also considers a mobilisation in Bulgaria inadvisable before sufficient numbers of German troops have arrived there, since such a mobilisation probably cannot be concealed.

On the other hand the Bulgarian flying formations, anti-aircraft artillery and civil ARP must be put on an operational basis beforehand in as concealed a form as possible.

4. There is no longer any hurry to announce Bulgaria's joining the Tripartite Pact and this can be given out shortly before the entry of the German troops.

The prior conclusion of a non-aggression pact between Turkey and Bulgaria, as well as between Jugoslavia on the one side and Germany and Bulgaria on the other is desired by the military.

Likewise it would very much ease the transport position if it were possible to despatch the supply transports (but no war equipment) through Jugoslavia after the entry into Bulgaria.

signed : Jodl

Fuehrer Headquarters,

31 January 1941

On the basis of new decisions by the Fuehrer the following come into force for the further preparations for operation Marita.

1. Provisional date of commencement of attack on Greece: beginning of April.
2. Entry into Bulgaria is to take place as late as is compatible with this date.

Conditions for this entry are:

- (a) sufficient air raid protection for Rumania by C. in C. Luftwaffe, relieving the bulk of the Army anti-aircraft batteries at present on those duties
 - (b) defence of Constanta against sea attack at least by the first of the forces provided for this purpose (urgent incorporation of the coastal batteries into the transport schedule)
 - (c) stocks of supplies for Fliegerkorps VIII in Bulgaria (about 40 trains via Cernavoda) which is hereby authorised and is to be carried out with the greatest possible concealment.
3. Preparations for bridge construction from the Bulgarian side are authorised. It is necessary that this work starts as late as possible. (OKH will shortly make an announcement concerning the exact time).
 4. From the commencement of these preparations on the southern bank those forces on the Dobruja area must be ready to enter Bulgaria if necessary before the main forces.

In conjunction with this C. in C. Luftwaffe is to prepare rapid reinforcement of the anti-aircraft and fighter protection in Bulgaria (especially important: Varna as port for oil imports).

Code word for the corresponding decision by the Fuehrer: 'Heerstrasse'.

5. Bulgaria is to be requested at the General Staff talks not to mobilise before the entry of the German troops. However the flying formations and all air defence forces camouflaged as much as possible should be made ready beforehand for operations.

The arrival of the German coastal artillery for Varna and Burgas is to be expedited by all means possible.

6. In order to ensure the limitation of the theatre of war, the conclusion of non-aggression pacts Bulgaria - Turkey and Germany, Bulgaria - Jugoslavia will be urged.

The Yugoslav railways will not at first be available for German transport (including supplies).

The High Commands are requested to submit data for the revised timetable on the basis of these decisions by the Fuehrer.

OKH is requested at the same time to propose a date for the Danube crossing and to make periodical reports on the trend of the weather.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

OKW Headquarters,

2 February 1941

Protocol

of the questions discussed between the representatives of the Royal Bulgarian General Staff and of the German Supreme Command - Field Marshal List - in connection with the forthcoming march of German troops through Bulgaria and their employment against Greece and possibly against Turkey, should the latter join in the war.

The representatives of both General Staffs have gone into the situation which may arise from the German troops marching through Bulgaria and are agreed on the following points:

1. Both Governments have agreed that the Bulgarian Army will not take any offensive action in the operations of the German troops against Greece or Turkey. It will be strengthened so that it can safeguard the 'new order' in the Balkans.
2. Until the arrival of German troops on the Bulgarian south and south-eastern frontiers the Bulgarian Army will defend its own territory with its own troops alone, to begin with roughly on the lines of the following: at least six Bulgarian divisions on the Bulgo-Turkish frontier, sufficient forces for frontier patrol on the Greek frontier, and reinforced frontier patrols on the Yugoslav frontier.

The Bulgarian Army will take over later similar defensive duties on the fronts where the German forces are not engaged in offensive action.

Mobilisation and deployment of these forces may begin at once under camouflage. However in order that these measures may have the desired effect the deliveries for Bulgaria from Germany must be completed immediately.

/The

The German Supreme Command will do everything possible so that the German troops appear in the shortest time in sufficient numbers on the Bulgo-Turkish and Bulgo-Greek frontiers.

To this end, right from the beginning, sufficient German forces - especially armoured and motorised divisions - will be pushed forward in the shortest possible time behind the Bulgarian troops guarding the frontiers. This advance will commence with the deployment of the two armoured divisions already in the Dobruja, together with the armoured and motorised divisions which are in Walachia. The other forces provided for the operation, that is to say further infantry and tank divisions, will follow behind, depending on the weather and on the condition of roads and bridges.

The Luftwaffe will be standing by on Rumanian soil in sufficient strength, from the moment the frontier is crossed or danger is imminent, or at the request of the Bulgarian Supreme Command even before the frontier is crossed, in order to be able to combat effectively any hostile moves which may appear dangerous to the Bulgarian defences.

The Luftwaffe will transfer its own formations to the Plovdiv and Sofia operational areas, commencing at the latest in the first few days of the advance. The preparation of the airfields must begin at once under cover.

German anti-aircraft artillery will be held ready so that in the event of evident danger and at the request of the Bulgarian Supreme Command it can move into Bulgaria even before the German troops cross the frontier.

3. The Bulgarian and German General Staffs will take all the necessary measures to conceal the preparations for the operation and thus ensure the most favourable conditions for its execution.

The representatives of both General Staffs consider it advisable to inform their Governments that it would be a good idea to bear in mind the necessity for secrecy and surprise on the occasion of Bulgaria's signing the Tripartite Pact, to ensure the success of the military operations.

4. In order to safeguard Bulgaria from any possible enemy, before and after the commencement of the operation, the German Supreme Command will take the following measures:

(a) Against Turkey

Right from the start sufficient German forces, especially armoured divisions, will be thrown forward against the Turkish frontier behind the Bulgarian defence front. At the same time the German air forces will stand ready for action.

If Turkey attacks Bulgaria during the course of the operation against Greece, the Bulgarian Army will defend itself, assisted by sufficient German forces. The German Supreme Command will immediately take all necessary steps to defeat and throw back the Turkish army, using German troops, so that a prolonged defence by Bulgarian troops will be avoided. The same applies also for Greece should Greece attack Bulgaria during German operations against Turkey.

(b) Against Greece

Advanced motorised detachments are to be sent forward as quickly as possible towards the Greco-Bulgarian frontier, to support the Bulgarian frontier defences there.

/(c)

(c) Against Yugoslavia

Should Yugoslavia attack, then at once the right rearward formations of the German infantry divisions would take over the defences towards the west, and further German forces would also come to grips with Yugoslavia from the other side. In this connection it is assumed that the Bulgarian frontier guards on the Bulgarian-Yugoslav frontier have also been reinforced.

(d) Against Russia

Sufficient German forces are standing by on the eastern frontiers of Germany for any assignment. Furthermore, the German demonstration troops in Rumania are available, along with the Rumanian army.

(e) Against landing attempts

The German forces are in a position to intervene at any time in cooperation with the Luftwaffe to combat any landing on the Black Sea coast. In addition the Supreme Command of the List Army will put forward suggestions to the appropriate German naval authorities, to strengthen the defences of the ports of Varna and Burgas in accordance with the already known wishes of the Bulgarian Supreme Command.

The Bulgarian Army for its part will also ensure the defences of both these ports by preparing the necessary forces.

5. In order to avoid the bombing and destruction of the capital Sofia, the German Supreme Command will not allow staffs and troops to remain in Sofia, neither will larger formations be permitted to march through Sofia.
6. Supplies for the German troops during their march through Bulgaria and their operation against Greece or Turkey will be made from German stocks. However to ease the burden on the railway and transport routes, assistance will be necessary from the Bulgarian side, especially as regards rations. This assistance will only be asked for within the framework of the "quotas". Details about the erection of the necessary depots, purchases, payment for labour, rent etc., as well as the control of imports and exports will be dealt with by a special commission.
7. It will be essential to appropriate the Bulgarian State services (railway, postal, etc.) for German military purposes, to the limit of Bulgarian economy. Details as regards this will be arranged by the special commission already in Sofia. It is assumed that the railway system especially and rolling stock will be made ready to meet the requirements of the German army. For this it is necessary that the Bulgarian railways receive an additional contribution of some 100 locomotives, 1500 goods trucks and material for 30 kilometres of line, in order to fulfil all the demands of the Bulgarian army, economic system and the German army. Management and administration of the Bulgarian State railway, postal and telegraphic services will remain in Bulgarian hands. Transport requirements for the German army will be organised through the Bulgarian General Staff. Details about the railway, postal and telegraphic services will be discussed and arranged by a special commission.
8. The question of compensation for damage to Bulgarian privately owned and state-owned property caused by manoeuvres etc. of the German Armed Forces in Bulgaria, or caused by enemy action will be decided through mutual diplomatic negotiations.
9. Legal matters and questions will be settled, according to the rules of international law, by a special commission.
10. The activities of the defence services of the German and Bulgarian General Staffs have already been laid down by a special commission.

11. It has not yet been possible to decide finally the question of the chain of command in Bulgaria. The German Supreme Command will revert to this question again as soon as possible.
12. The Bulgarian Supreme Command will take steps to safeguard the progress of the German operation against sabotage and so on.
13. Any questions which may arise later will be dealt with at further talks.
14. The terms laid down in the foregoing protocol, as far as they concern political issues, will only come into force after receiving the approval of OKW.

In order that the final preparations for the deployment can be carried out on the Bulgarian side in good time, it is essential that the Bulgarian General Staff be notified 10 days prior to the German crossing of the frontier.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

10 February 1941

Conference with representatives of the Bulgarian

General Staff on 10 February 1941

I. The mobilisation and deployment of Bulgarian Forces

Protocol

Bulgaria is herself to protect her own territory until the arrival of the German forces and also later on the fronts where no attack is being made. To begin with:

Against Turkey about six divisions.

Against Greece and Jugoslavia adequate frontier patrols.

Bulgaria assures us that mobilisation and deployment of these forces can begin at once.

The legation at Sofia reported on 7 February that Bulgaria had already ordered mobilisation on 6 February, but is nevertheless willing to execute these already slackened or interrupted final preparations as provided in the protocol at ten days' notice.

Points for discussion

1. Considerable movements of troops would mean giving the enemy, especially Turkey, premature warning. Therefore the necessary preparations are to be made at the last minute. For the purpose of the surprise element, the less that Bulgaria does before the German entry, the more completely will our fast arriving armoured divisions and the Luftwaffe be able to hold Turkey in check. So no mobilisation until the entry and then with all speed (also in the second protocol ten days' notice to the Bulgarian Government is expressly laid down).
2. What is the position as regards operational readiness of the Bulgarian Air Force and the Bulgarian ARP services (not mentioned in the protocol)?
3. German deliveries of weapons which have been requested for the mobilisation will come too late owing to present transport difficulties.

/II,

II. Tripartite Pact.

Protocol

Bulgaria and Germany consider it advisable to synchronise the signing with the commencement of the operations.

Point for discussion (with Foreign Section)

The best thing for us would be carte blanche to announce participation at the commencement of the entry. Should non-aggression pacts with Turkey and Jugoslavia not be concluded by that time, it would appear to be a good idea to offer these at the same time.

III. Defence of Bulgaria by us

Protocol

1. (a) Against Bulgaria's neighbours: arranged and in order. The legation in Sofia reports however on 7 February that the Bulgarians in Predeal have not learned the strength of the German forces and would like to know.
- (b) Against landings: Agreement that the German troops and Luftwaffe are the best protection. Coastal batteries for Varna and Burgas are to be placed, but will hardly be ready before the middle of March.
- (c) Against air raids: Agreement about German anti-aircraft forces marching in quickly with the spearhead of the entering forces, readiness of the German flying formations in Rumania, preliminary preparations in Bulgaria.

New: Although prepared on the spot, anti-aircraft is to be transferred to Bulgaria in certain circumstances before the army troops (Panzer Division Dobruja). In this connection the legation in Sofia reports on 7 February that the Bulgarians are worried that the German preparations in Bulgaria, without providing at the same time anti-aircraft protection, might offer an 'invitation' to the enemy.

2. It is agreed to leave Sofia free of German troops.
3. The supply question, including Bulgarian assistance as regards rations, is settled.
4. The use of railway and postal services, etc., (which remain in Bulgarian hands) fundamentally recognised. Further details will be arranged by the special commission at present in Bulgaria. The letter will also confirm that Bulgaria requires no German railway material for the only railway line required by us at the moment, that via Cernavoda, and that therefore the necessity for German railway material laid down in the protocol is not pressing.
5. Compensation by Germany.
6. Defence measures decided.

Points for discussion

with Bulgaria: Assurance that Bulgaria is fully defended and that their own armed forces will not be required for German offensive operations. What is the position as regards operational readiness of the Air Force, anti-aircraft and Coastal Defence? Importance of Varna!

/with

with General Paulus: Remind him that bridging preparations on the Bulgarian bank are to be notified several days beforehand through OKH.

(Foreign Office to be notified by Foreign Section.)

IV. Chain of Command

Protocol

Not yet conclusively determined.

Point for discussion (first of all with General Paulus):

The following may be a solution:

Supreme Commander of the whole area Field Marshal List.
Command on the Greek frontier: from the time of the arrival of the first German troops, in German hands, since although to begin with only weak forces will be employed, preparations for the attack begin at once.
Command on the Yugoslav frontier: remains in Bulgarian hands.
Command on the Turkish frontier: remains in Bulgarian hands so long as there is no fear of an attack by Turkey. If such an attack is definitely indicated or expected, the Bulgarian covering forces should be subordinated to us (to be decided by Field Marshal List).
The position of King Boris has also to be discussed with the Armed Forces Propaganda Department.

OKW Headquarters,

11 February 1941

To the Chief of the Military Mission in Rumania

The Foreign Office advises as follows: "The Bulgarian Ambassador on a visit to the Reich Foreign Minister on 8 February alleged among other things the following: The German military personnel who at present are coming over the Bulgarian frontier with special permission often do not pay sufficient attention to the need for disguising their activities both from foreign eyes and also from the Bulgarian population. The German military personnel are making too open an appearance. For example, a few days ago a German officer in uniform came to the Bulgarian commander of a frontier post and told him that he had to travel further inland along this road with his companions in order to reconnoitre this road for large transport vehicles, about which the Bulgarian officer concerned had naturally not been instructed.

The Bulgarian Government requests that German military personnel be again instructed to pay special attention during this preparatory stage to the fact that the Bulgarian populace and also the other Bulgarian army units have not yet been informed and furthermore are not to be informed."

You are requested to pass this on to the people concerned.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

13 February 1941

Defence measures in Bulgaria : Supplement to Directive No. 20

1. 12th Army Command will take all the necessary measures for defensive protection in Bulgaria (later in Greece as well) in close cooperation with /the

G. 240265/IF/9/49/35

the Bulgarian War Office. The Bulgarian War Office has been directed to impart to the Army Command all information about the enemy received through Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia and south-west Russia and also internal political information about Bulgaria and any such information picked up by the Bulgarian General Staff. The Bulgarian War Office will appoint a liaison officer to the Army Command for this purpose.

2. Any necessary measures for protection against sabotage in Bulgaria will be taken by the 12th Army Command in agreement with the Bulgarian General Staff. For this protection against sabotage one company of the Brandenburg Regiment 800 (instructional regiment on special duties) will be placed at the disposal of the 12th Army Command. An advanced detachment of this company will be attached to the Bulgarian General Staff well before the Danube crossing. The move of the company proper will follow a few days before the Danube crossing.

3. 12th Army Command is to carry out the following measures to control movements of persons and information.

- (a) Agreements are to be made immediately with the Bulgarian Government to bring the system of marks and endorsements for journeys into and out of Bulgaria into line with the German system of controls.
- (b) The Bulgarian Government is to arrange that when the German troops begin to cross the Danube a stoppage or at least a considerable restriction of the passage of persons and information across the Bulgarian frontiers is imposed.

The negotiations with the Bulgarian Government will be carried out by the 12th Army Command. The Security Control Office in Rumania (Bucharest) will be available to give advice on questions of technical detail of the marks and endorsements as well as on the blockade or restriction of the movement of persons and information across the frontiers; this office will when necessary seek decisions from the OKW Foreign Security Department.

4. The Military Legal Regulations for Bulgaria will be in force to cover treatment of espionage and suchlike cases.

5. A security detachment will be subordinated to the 12th Army Command by the Foreign Security Department to secure important defence material in Greece. The Foreign Security Department will issue in detail the necessary directions for the tasks.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

14 February 1941

On 13 February, the Fuehrer, in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister, has decided:

- 1. There are no further objections to the Bulgarian mobilisation. It should if possible be finished by 24 February.
- 2. All preparations are to be based on the following timetables:

21 February - commencement of bridge construction over the Danube. At the same time entry of the Dobruja force and of the flak batteries of Fliegerkorps VIII detailed for the protection of Sofia and of the ports. It must be ensured that the building of bridges over the Danube can be postponed at short notice (24 hours) before this date.

/24

24 February - crossing over the Danube.

3. For political reasons the Dobruja force may not for the time being cross south of the line Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa - Yambol - Burgas.
4. The Bulgarian War Minister and the King are to be informed that the strength of the German troops being provided for Bulgaria amounts to 680,000 men, but that this deployment can be further increased from inexhaustible reserves so that we are equal to any political and military development in the Balkans.
5. The Fuehrer again pointed out the great importance of giving sufficient protection to the Rumanian oilfields, which are vital to us, and that if flak batteries provided for that purpose are sent to Bulgaria they must be replaced.
6. If at all possible German and Bulgarian anti-aircraft defences in Bulgaria are to be kept separate and not mixed together.
7. If, contrary to expectations, Turkey should open hostilities against Bulgaria on the entry of the German troops, I. Aufmarschstaffel and the 2nd Panzer Division are to be switched against this, and it is desired that an early change-over to an attack in the direction of Istanbul should be made, with the Bulgarians of course participating.
8. C. in C. Army is requested to make out as soon as possible a brief timetable which will set as a guide for the Fuehrer's final political decisions. At the same time an announcement should be made of the latest date when bridge-building can still if necessary be held up.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

15 February 1941

1. (Norway and the West)
2. (Mediterranean theatre)
3. Operation "Alpenveilchen"

Since the Italian front in Albania has been consolidated in the meantime, and since reports indicate that no decisive successes can be expected in Albania during this season even with German troops, forces need not be held in readiness for this operation.

4. Operation "Barbarossa" (Russia)

OKW will set this time - which should be as late as possible - for making connection with Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Slovakia and Rumania.

The High Commands are requested to report their wishes in this respect to OKW. (OKH has already done so).

Before this time only General Antonescu may be told that it is best to reinforce the forces in Moldavia. Rumania will be informed of our plans later by the Chief of the Armed Forces Mission in a special notice from OKW.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

/Fuehrer

Fuehrer Headquarters,

15 February 1941

Re: Establishment of coordinated defence of the Rumanian and Bulgarian Black Sea coasts

1. The German Navy is despatching a Naval Mission to Rumania on the lines of the Army and Luftwaffe Missions to Rumania. On the surface this Mission is supposed to have the task of guiding a friendly Rumania in the organisation and training of her Navy and coastal defences.
2. The real tasks are:
 - (a) To protect the Rumanian coast, especially the naval harbour at Constanta, against seizure by a third power from the sea.
 - (b) To direct the Rumanian Navy and coastal defences according to German interests and to assist in every way in carrying out such tasks.
 - (c) After the entry of the German troops into Bulgaria, to guarantee the coordination of the defences of the Rumano-Bulgarian Black Sea coast against attacks from a third power.

As far as our troops and the Rumanians are concerned these tasks can be openly carried out.

3. The German and Rumanian forces employed on coastal defence duties will be subordinate to the Naval Mission.

As long as batteries of the Army or Luftwaffe are or become employed in Rumania on temporary coastal defence against sea objectives they will also be subordinate to the Naval Mission.

4. In Bulgaria coastal defence will remain in Bulgarian hands. Liaison officers are to be placed at the disposal of the Bulgarian High Command to give advice to the Bulgarians and to coordinate the defence system on the Rumano-Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

5. The list of service regulations issued to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Luftwaffe in Rumania applies equally to the German Naval Mission in Rumania.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Fuehrer Headquarters,

16 February 1941

The Foreign Office advises on 16 February at 1400 hours:

"The following telegraphic report has been received from the German Legation in Sofia, in which opinions are expressed on individual points raised by General von Greiffenberg in his report to OKH dated 15 February.

1. Bulgaria requests that the operation does not commence before 28 February. In any case the entry of the Dobruja group before this date would cause confusion in the Bulgarian deployment. Is it necessary, since a Bulgarian-Turkish agreement is imminent, to send the Dobruja group into Bulgaria before the crossing of the Danube takes place?

/Special

Special care must be taken here if, on the first news that German tank formations are advancing in the direction of the Turkish frontier, incidents should occur through nervousness on the part of Turkey.

2. Agreement satisfactory to both sides reached on the matter of command.
3. I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Prime Minister about a proclamation by the Bulgarian Government or the King to the Bulgarian people. His and General von Greiffenberg's opinion is that there should only be a proclamation from the Bulgarian side, and not from the German Commander-in-Chief. Please give a directive in case you have special wishes as to the contents of the proclamation or have other views on it.
4. Leave the question as to whether and when disguised anti-aircraft units are sent to Bulgaria for now imminent agreement between the German and Bulgarian military authorities. If any other opinion, I request a directive.
5. Regarding the question whether mines are to be laid off Varna and Burgas, I have requested, in view of possible repercussions on Russia, that I or the Foreign Office be consulted before any decision is made.

signed : Richthofen"

The following directive has been sent concerning section 3 of the Legation's telegraphed report:

"It goes without saying that the proclamation must not be issued by the German Commander-in-Chief but from the Bulgarian side. The Minister for Foreign Affairs urgently requests that you ask the Bulgarian Government to inform us in good time of the text of the proclamation so that if necessary the Foreign Minister can still make suggestions."

As regards section 5 of the Legation's telegraphed report, about mine-laying off Varna and Burgas, I would be obliged if the Foreign Office could have the opportunity to comment on this point before a decision is taken.

signed : Ritter

Fuehrer Headquarters,

19 February 1941

On 18 February the Fuehrer made the following decisions regarding execution of operation "Marita":

1. The following dates are envisaged:

beginning of pontoon-building:	28 February
crossing of Danube:	2 March

The final order for carrying out the operation will be given on 26 February at the latest.

It will be decided on 26 February at the latest whether XIV Army Corps will march into Bulgaria when bridge-building operations are begun or whether only anti-aircraft forces will be moved in.

2. It is for the Bulgarians alone to decide if and when to lay mines off Varna and Burgas.

/3.

3. If air attacks are carried out against Bulgaria and Rumania from Greek territory, Fliegerkorps X too has freedom of action in operations against Greek territory.

for Chief of Staff, OKW

signed : Warlimont

Berlin,

19 February 1941

To: OKW Operations Staff;
Army General Staff - Operations department;
Luftwaffe General Staff (Air Operations Staff);
Chief of the German Military Mission to Rumania.

I. The following Commands will be set up by the Navy in the Balkan theatre for Operation "Marita":

1. Naval C. in C. Balkans (to be known for the present as Admiral Z);
officer not yet appointed.

Duty: Safeguarding naval interests in the Balkans and cooperation with the other branches of the Armed Forces (especially with List's Army Group).

Later cooperation with the Italian Navy in questions of coastal defence and naval tasks.

He is immediately subordinate to the Operations Division, Navy.

Location: Bucharest to begin with, later Sofia or Athens, to be in the neighbourhood of List's Army Group.

II. Subordinate to Admiral Balkans will be:

2. Naval C. in C. Rumania (present name: Admiral B), who as far as Rumania is concerned will be known to begin with as:
"Commander of the Naval Mission to Rumania": Rear Admiral Fleischer.

Duty: (a) Command of all the German and Rumanian units defending the Rumanian coast. To him is subordinated Artillery Commander in the Constanta sector for the concentration of all the coastal artillery protecting Constanta.

(b) Coordination of Rumanian naval operations.

(c) Liaison with the Chief of the German Military Mission to Rumania and the other two branches of the Armed Forces in Rumania.

Location: Bucharest.

3. Naval Liaison Staff, Bulgaria (present name: Naval Liaison Staff K): Captain Wesemann.

Duty: Representation of German naval interests in Bulgaria, coordination of measures of the Bulgarian Navy for naval

/operations

operations and coastal defence. Liaison with the other two branches of the German Armed Forces in Bulgaria.

Location: Sofia.

4. Naval C. in C. Greece (present name: Admiral A), Rear Admiral von Stosch.

Duty: Support for the army during the attack on Greece in matters of warfare in the case of hostile action by sea, as well as occupation of the most important Greek ports. At the same time closest cooperation with the 12th Army Command, liaison with the Army and Luftwaffe formations operating against Greece. After Greece has been occupied, safeguarding naval interests in Greece. Erection of coastal defences in Greece.

Location: To begin with at 12th Army Headquarters, later in Athens.

III. Subordinate to the Naval C. in C. Greece will be:

5. 3 Sea Defence Commanders (present names: Sea Defence Commanders L, M, N)

Duty: To take over the most important ports, to begin with Salonica, Volos and Piraeus and to set up the first coastal defences. For this purpose a total of 4 batteries of artillery will be made available to man any Greek coastal batteries which are still serviceable.

IV. These intended staffs will be appointed in the home country and will take over their appropriate duties at the right moment.

Please inform the Army and Luftwaffe Commands with which the naval units will be cooperating. The individual Naval Staffs will get in direct touch with the appropriate Commands of the Army and Luftwaffe about further details (e.g. regarding seconding of naval officers and men to individual bodies of troops for the period of the operations against Greece, and to take over the ports, etc.)

signed : Schniewind

Fuehrer Headquarters,

20 February 1941

Re: Protection of Constanta and of the oilfields

1. The responsibility of the Chief of the Military Mission for the task of protecting the Rumanian oilfield district and protecting the oil installations in Constanta extends to arranging the necessary cooperation of the different German Service Missions and military commands between themselves and with the Rumanian Armed Forces.

2. The Chiefs of the Service Missions will bear individual responsibility for the duties falling in their sphere of work and will issue individually the necessary commands and instructions for these duties in accordance with directions received from their Commanders-in-Chief.

The same applies to the military commands in Rumania.

3. In no circumstances may the German troops be tactically subordinated to the Rumanian command.

/The

The Chief of the Military Mission in conjunction with the other Chiefs of Missions is to issue orders to secure tactical cooperation with the Rumanian commands.

It will be the duty of the Chiefs of the Service Missions to give any further necessary orders or directions for local and operational cooperation with the Rumanian commands.

4. Decisions about questions of competence are to be made by the Chief of the Military Mission having regard to the priority of German interests

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

OKW Headquarters,

20 February 1941

To: OKW Operations Staff

OKH encloses herewith a study for an attack against Turkey in Europe; this study may form a basis for political decisions and the evaluation of contemporary relations. In this study only Army considerations are dealt with; requirements by the Luftwaffe need a special examination.

The political decision will depend on whether the attack against Turkey is carried out only when the operation against Greece has ended and the resultant regrouping has been effected, or whether it is to take place simultaneously, in which case the attack on Greek Macedonia must be restricted in forces and objectives.

A decision of the political command - on the assumption that entry into Bulgaria commences on 2 March - must be made

(i) in Plan A (simultaneous attack against Turkey and Greece with restriction of the objective as regards the latter) at the latest on 7 March (2 days before the date for switching the 5th Mountain Division);

(ii) in Plan B (attack against Turkey after reaching full objectives in Greek Macedonia and after the resultant regrouping) at the latest on 10 April (4 days before the scheduled close of operations against Greece).

OKH suggests the adoption of Plan B, since only this plan would make it possible to eliminate the British from the Macedonian area and enable Salonica to be seized.

In both cases Operation Barbarossa cannot be carried out on the scheduled date.

signed : Halder

Supplement 1. Operational objectives for an attack against Turkey in Europe

Group A. (10 formations, including 3 fast-moving divisions):

Thrust along the road Edirne - Luleburgas - Corlu on Istanbul with the object of destroying the Turkish forces and gaining bridgeheads on the eastern bank of the Bosphorus at the north-west of Istanbul.

/Group B.

Group B. (7 formations, including 1 armoured division):

Thrust through the Turkish fortifications on each side of Kirk Kilissa (Kirkklareli) with the object first of all of rapidly gaining the area around Saray and destroying the Turkish forces at Kirk Kilissa and east of it.

Group C. ($4\frac{1}{2}$ formations, including 2 fast-moving formations):

Support for the breakthrough of the main forces by enveloping the first Turkish defence line through Demotika (Dhidhimotikhon) with the task of reaching Rodosto (Tekirdag) early and forming a protection for the southern flank of the main forces.

Supplement 2. Comparison of forces and time requirements

1. Forces required

(a) for Plan A (simultaneous attack against Turkey and Greece) the operation will require:

against Turkey

German formations : $5\frac{1}{2}$ motorised and 9 infantry formations
Bulgarian formations: 6 infantry divisions and 1 cavalry division

Total: $21\frac{1}{2}$ formations, $6\frac{1}{2}$ of them fast-moving

against Greece

German formations : 3 infantry formations and 1 regiment
Bulgarian formations: 3 infantry formations

Total: $6\frac{1}{2}$ formations

The weak forces employed against Greece compel a limiting of the operational objective set (renunciation of Salonica).

(b) for Plan B (attack against Turkey after conclusion of the operation against Greece) to begin with it is planned to have:

for the covering group against Turkey

German formations : $2\frac{1}{2}$ motorised formations and 6 infantry formations
Bulgarian formations: 6 infantry divisions and 1 cavalry division

for the attack on Greece

German formations : 3 motorised and 6 infantry formations plus one regiment

for the regrouping for the attack on Turkey the covering Group (Turkey) will be reinforced by

formations of the group used to attack Greece: 3 motorised formations (including 1 armoured division which will be withdrawn from the instructional troops in Rumania) and 3 infantry divisions 1 armoured division, 3 infantry divisions and 3 Bulgarian divisions would remain in Macedonia.

/The

The force for the attack on Turkey is of the same strength in either Plan A or B i.e.,

5½ motorised formations and 9 infantry formations, together with 6 Bulgarian infantry divisions and 1 Bulgarian cavalry division, making a total of 21½ formations, 6½ of them fast-moving.

2. Comparison of Forces

(a) for the attack on the Turkish front a total of 21½ German/Bulgarian major formations are opposed to 30 Turkish formations.

(b) for the attack on the Greek front

in Plan A: 6 German/Bulgarian formations are opposed to 4 Greek formations,

in Plan B: 12 German/Bulgarian formations are opposed to 4 Greek formations.

3. Time calculations

The time required is calculated on the assumption that the entry of the Dobruja group into Bulgaria and the Building of the pontoon bridges over the Danube takes place on 28 February, with the Danube crossing on 2 March.

In Plan A the simultaneous attack on Greece and Turkey can begin on 11 April.

In Plan B the conclusion of the operation against Greece, if the attack starts on 1 April, is taken as on 14 April. The assembly of the covering force for Turkey is finished on 13 April.

From 15 April commences regrouping for the reinforcement of the covering force for Turkey by 3 motorised formations and 3 infantry divisions (see section 1(b)), from 16 April the formations of the covering group are brought up to the Turkish frontier and preparations for the attack are concluded. This movement can be completed by 21 April.

An attack on Turkey is therefore possible any time from 21 April.

4. The time lag in Plan B for the attack on Turkey amounts to 11 days.

The drawback in this time lag is offset by the military advantage of a satisfactory conclusion of the Greek operation (occupation of Salonica and the effect on the general situation in the south-east).

G.H.Q. Fliegerkorps VIII

24 February 1941

To: Luftwaffe Operations Staff

Appreciation of the position for the advance against Greece

I. Ground position

According to the latest information in Macedonia 4 Greek infantry divisions - 3 active, 1 reserve division - are to be assumed behind the frontier guard battalions in the area from the river Struma to east of Xanthi; over and above this the presence of 2 reserve divisions in the area to the west of Salonica is to be reckoned with. According to the development of the situation further forces could

/be

be transferred to Macedonia from Albania, where there are about 15 Greek infantry divisions.

There is also the possibility of the arrival of the 2 British divisions which are standing ready in Egypt awaiting transport, as well as of the 2 or 3 British divisions which left Britain at the beginning of February for a destination in the Middle East.

So one must reckon with the appearance in Macedonia of 6 to 8 battalions of frontier guards as well as of about 8 divisions, of which the Greek divisions at any rate will be inferior in armament. Only the British divisions, if they appear in Macedonia - when they would be employed against the part of the 12th Army attacking from the mountains - will represent an opponent worthy of notice.

To oppose this possible hostile array the 12th Army will deploy as a front line two mountain divisions through the Pass of Petrich (main point of attack here) as well as one infantry division through each of the Nevrokop, Smolyan and Komchilgrad valleys, so that when the Petrich Pass has been cleared an advance with 2 armoured divisions can be made in the general direction of Edessa. Further forces will be moved up later.

The nature of the forces employed on both sides in the first phase of the attack - forcing a way out of the mountains - makes for a rough equality of numerical strength provided there is no marked numerical inferiority on the attacking side.

The unfavourable nature of the terrain encountered by an attacker on emerging from the mountains is increased by the configuration of the country in the area north of the frontier crossing places. Deeply cleft valleys with roads in bad condition, and to a large extent only wide enough for a single line of traffic, offer targets for the enemy air forces. A few enemy bombers attacking here can hold up for a long time the advance of the rear elements. Owing to the road conditions it is not everywhere possible to bring up anti-aircraft artillery for the protection of this easily threatened road.

The position with regard to terrain forces us to recognise that the divisions of the 12th Army employed in the forward line are faced with a stiff task in the first phase of the attack. The quicker they succeed in gaining space to deploy their forces, the sooner will the superiority of the German weapons make itself felt. All means are to be concentrated on achieving this end. During this first phase of the attack the forces of Fliegerkorps VIII are to abandon all other tasks in order to attain this objective.

II. Air situation

According to the latest information the following is to be expected at the worst:

1. Bombers

30 Greek bombers
100 British bombers in Greece
130 bombers

The possibility of the transfer to this theatre of about 60 British bombers from Egypt must also be considered. According to the Intelligence report from the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, no more aircraft of the 250 British bombers based there are considered to be operational. Even if the appearance of Turkish aircraft is improbable, the potential value of these must not be overlooked; this could be a matter of about 120 first and second class bombers.

2. Fighters

No Greek fighters
50 British fighters in Greece
90 British fighters from Egypt
60 British fighters from aircraft carriers
200 fighter aircraft

And in addition to this total a possible 120 Turkish fighters, 1st and 2nd class.

To oppose these enemy forces Fliegerkorps VIII has 153 bombers (39 Ju 88, 114 Ju 87) and 121 fighters (83 Me 109, 38 Me 110).

If the forces of Fliegerkorps X as well as units of the Italian Air Force, whose strength is unknown to us here, are considered as available for operations against Greece, then conditions for Fliegerkorps VIII would be proportionately more favourable.

The task laid down for Fliegerkorps VIII are:

1. The advance to the Greco-Bulgarian frontier as well as the operation in Greece is to be protected as far as is reasonably possible by the fighter forces of Fliegerkorps VIII.
2. The advance of the 12th Army is to be supported in all sectors by direct intervention in the ground campaign.
3. The Greco-British air force as well as naval units affecting the operations of the army are to be eliminated by attacks on the coastal bases and the naval units.

To discharge these duties the forces mentioned above are at the disposal of Fliegerkorps VIII. The variety of the tasks and their relation to the strength of the Fliegerkorps compels a concentration of our forces for the different tasks according to the requirements of the situation, with the knowledge that other apparently important kinds of targets must at the same time take second place. Direct or indirect support for the attacking army will be determined according to the kind of target selected.

Since it is essential that all means should be employed to help the advance of the attacking elements of the army over difficult country, the full strength of the Stuka Geschwader will be needed during the first phase of the attack, to carry out this task in the main battle area. If part of this Geschwader were detached to attack other objectives, sea targets, enemy air force, etc., it would lead to neglect of the primary purpose - helping the ground troops forward. For attacking these targets, as far as indirect support for the army is concerned, only 1 bomber Gruppe of Ju 88s is available. The vast extent of the area from the Bosphorus to the Peloponnese, in which these targets may lie, makes it clear that the forces of Fliegerkorps VIII, as far as long-range bombers are concerned, are too weak to attack such targets, and this might possibly have decisive effects on the course of the land campaign.

Should enemy fighters put in an appearance it would not be possible to send the dive-bombers into action without fighter protection. On the appearance of hostile fighter aircraft the available fighter forces would therefore have to be principally employed for these protective duties. Otherwise they are also to be used in the ground campaign. In accordance with the directive of C. in C. Luftwaffe, cover duties for the army can only be afforded "within the bounds of possibility".

/Should

Should the enemy make air attacks on Rumanian or Bulgarian territory from the moment that the entry into Bulgaria commences, then Fliegerkorps VIII has to carry on air warfare until the deployment of the army is completed - that is, about 35 days - before it starts its chief task, which is cooperation with the army. Any losses and casualties during this time will result in the Fliegerkorps no longer having its full fighting strength available when the army commences the attack and being able to carry out only with weakened formations the concentrated air attacks which are so vital in the early phase of the land campaign.

signed : Richthofen

G.O.C. Fliegerkorps VIII

G.H.Q. Fliegerkorps VIII

24 February 1941

Proposals for carrying out the operations

I. Tasks assigned to Fliegerkorps VIII

- (a) The advance of the 12th Army is to be supported in all sectors by direct intervention in the ground campaign.
- (b) The Greco-British air force as well as naval units affecting the operations of the army are to be eliminated by attacks on coastal bases and the naval units.
- (c) Preparations are to be made to support an airborne landing to seize British bases in the Greek islands (Lemnos).

II. Plans of the 12th Army Command

The 12th Army will - starting on A-day-2 from the Dobruja - move through Bulgaria towards the south with several task forces, to complete the advance to the southern Bulgarian frontier about a month later.

In this connection Panzer Group 1 will stand by behind the Bulgarian frontier defences along the Turkish frontier until A-day+2:

- (a) to cover the advance of the following elements of the army against moves from Turkey;
- (b) to go over at once to the counter-attack in the event of a Turkish attack.

The bulk of the infantry divisions will be brought up into the assembly area on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier. After the position has been clarified on the Turkish frontier, Panzer Group 1 will join up with the main body behind the right wing in the area south of Sofia.

On X-Day the 12th Army will set out from this second assembly area on a broad front towards the south so as to attack with a strong right wing in the direction of Edhessa and Veroia.

III. Operations by Fliegerkorps VIII during the advance into and through Bulgaria (1st Phase)

After the southern Rumanian frontier has been crossed attacks by the Greco-British air force on Bulgarian territory to interrupt the German

/deployment

deployment and to terrorise the population have to be taken into consideration, as well as a possible move of the Turkish forces from Thrace against the Burgas - Stara Zagora line; even if the latter is improbable, it may still not be disregarded. An advance by the Greeks is not expected.

1. Operation of the defence forces

The expected attacks by hostile air forces necessitate the early deployment of the defence units in Bulgaria.

The organisation of Fliegerkorps VIII in Rumania has therefore been so arranged that by throwing forward from the Dobruja the units necessary for defence (advance Staffel), anti-aircraft and fighter forces can be quickly installed in Bulgaria. Since the advance from the Dobruja area is to take place two days, or according to earlier orders three days, before the completion of the Danube pontoon bridges, the forces detailed for Plovdiv and Sofia must assemble in the Dobruja.

Only by sending the advance body from the Dobruja will it be possible to install anti-aircraft defences in the Bulgarian area in good time. The flak regiment detailed for this can reach the Plovdiv area in 55 hours from the Dobruja, and the Sofia area in 65 hours. Thus anti-aircraft defence at Plovdiv and the industrial centres Karlovo and Kazanlik will be ensured with 1 battery each by the afternoon of A-Day, and at Sofia ten hours later, with 1 battery.

In the case of the originally scheduled entry on A-Day-3 the additional anti-aircraft protection in the Bulgarian theatre would have been assured by A-Day-1.

The measures taken by G.O.C. Fliegerkorps VIII to hasten the installation of the fighter Geschwader at Plovdiv and Sofia (incorporation of the ground staff in the advance Staffel, employment of the transport group) render it possible for this formation to have one Gruppe operating at Sofia and one at Plovdiv from midday on A-Day-2.

2. Operation of the attacking forces

On the day of the entry (A-Day-2) the formations of Fliegerkorps VIII will be at their airfields in Rumania.

A removal forward of the Stuka Geschwader to the area around Plovdiv can only be undertaken if the operationally necessary ground staff have already arrived there by air and by land. In the case of the ground personnel moved by air this will be on the morning of A-Day-1. Until this time therefore, from the commencement of hostilities by the enemy, all targets in Thrace, Greece and on the coast or over the sea can only be attacked from the Bucharest area by I/L.G.1 (Ju 88), II/Z.G.26 and III/St.G.2 (Ju 87'R').

According to the situation and results of reconnaissance the targets in question for these forces in this first phase are:

- (a) In the case of non-intervention by Turkey: attacks on the Greco-British air force in their bases or on attempts by the British to land in Greece (Salonica, Kavalla, Dedeagach).
- (b) If Turkey intervenes: combating attempts to land on the Bulgarian coast (Burgas, Varna) as well as attacks on the Turkish ground forces and if necessary the Turkish-British air force in and to the north of Thrace.

/On

On arrival in the Plovdiv area at midday on A-Day-1 of the ground staff sent by air, the whole of the dive-bomber Geschwader as well as a long-range reconnaissance Staffel will be available in the Plovdiv area. Before the arrival of the ground personnel moving with the land forces, by making the fullest use of the battle strength of the Fliegerkorps it will only be possible in the Bulgarian theatre to conduct a defensive campaign against Turkey; that is to say, the deployment of Panzer Group 1 in the Maritsa valley can be covered.

It would not be possible to support Panzer Group 1 in a counter-attack until the operating base had been advanced to the line Chaskovo (Haskovo) - Yambol; that is to say not until the arrival of the ground staffs and supply units moving with the land force.

Provided the units coming with the land force are incorporated early enough, the advance and supply of the operating base would appear to be ensured in time for a possible counter-attack by Panzer Group 1.

In this first phase the G.O.C. Fliegerkorps VIII is aiming at distributing his forces so that they are ready to intervene where most needed when the army later advances out of the Struma Valley against Greece; it is the intention in agreement with the 12th Army Command, that to being with all forces should be employed to conclude the repulsion of the Turkish opponent - a task which may become necessary - before the attack on the Greek army is commenced.

IV. Operation of Fliegerkorps VIII during the entry into Greece (2nd Phase)

1. Offensive forces

After the position on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier has been clarified, the 12th Army will regroup for the advance over the Bulgarian-Greek frontier, concentrating on the valley of the Struma. By this time it will be necessary for the formations of Fliegerkorps VIII to regroup to make better use of flying range, to cooperate more closely with the ground forces at decisive points, and to take advantage of the more favourable meteorological conditions in the Struma valley. Stuka Geschwader 2 and Jagdgeschwader 27 will therefore be removed from the Plovdiv and Sofia area to the Struma valley, so that there they can operate against ground targets in the closest cooperation with the ground troops, who will be fighting their way out of the mountains under most difficult terrain conditions. I/L.G.1, II/Z.G.26 and 7/L.G.2, which will remain in the Plovdiv area since their transfer to the Struma valley is not possible, will then be available for raids on targets which are of decisive importance to the ground campaign and which lie deeper in enemy territory. All formations will later be taken across the Greek frontier as soon as necessary preparations have been carried out beyond the frontier.

2. Defence forces

In any case a regrouping of the anti-aircraft forces will be necessary with the transfer of the flying units to the Struma valley. For the protection of the units remaining in the Plovdiv area one flak battery will be sufficient, while it is intended to relieve the units at Kazanlik and Karlovo by anti-aircraft units belonging to the army. In addition, the extra flak battery detailed for the protection of Sofia will be sent forward. These two flak batteries are to take over the protection of the flying formations lying in the Struma valley; also a part of them will hold themselves ready to go into action against ground targets, so that they also can thus help the advance of the attacking infantry. As soon as the flying units from the Struma valley or from the Plovdiv area have been moved forward over the Greek frontier, the anti-aircraft forces necessary for the protection of the ground organisation will be moved up.

V. Operation against the Greek islands

It is not yet possible to estimate the support which will be provided for the planned airborne attack to seize British bases on the Greek islands because according to information about the enemy no British base on the Greek islands is known, with the exception of Crete, and details of the operational areas on Greek soil which will probably be required for such an attack cannot yet be envisaged.

signed : Richthofen

G.O.C. Fliegerkorps VIII

OKL Operations Staff,

25 February 1941

- To: (a) Luftflotte 4
(b) Italuft Rome, personally for General von Pohl
(c) Fliegerkorps X, personally for General Geisler

- Re: 1. Attacks on sea targets in the Mediterranean
2. Boundaries in Greece from the commencement of operation "Marita"
3. Air warfare for operation "Marita"

I. Owing to the new situation which will arise in the Mediterranean as a result of operation "Marita", the campaign against enemy warships and against enemy and neutral merchant shipping in the central and eastern Mediterranean from the commencement of operation "Marita" will be uniformly controlled as follows:

1. In the following sea areas the unrestricted attacking of sea targets (unrestricted war on merchant shipping) is authorised: southern limit: the coast of Africa; western limit; 6 degrees East; northern limit: from 6 degrees East along latitude 40 degrees North eastwards as far as Sardinia. From Cape Carbonara (south-east point of Sardinia) to Trapani (north-west point of Sicily). From Messina to Reggio (Strait of Messina), along the Calabrian coast to the north-west as far as Cape Colonne (south-east of Cotrone), thence to the Greek frontier north of Corfu, and northwards along the Albanian coast as far as the Greek positions. In addition the whole of the Aegean Sea and the eastern Mediterranean.

2. Exceptions

Attacks on the following sea objectives of any kind are on principle forbidden:

- (a) in the Sea of Marmara
(b) in the Dardanelles
(c) in Turkish territorial waters
(d) installations or shipping in the Corinthian Canal, since it is of the utmost importance that there shall be free passage for our shipping through the Canal when it is in our possession.

/3.

3. On the commencement of the operation against Greece, the eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea will be declared an operational area by the Foreign Office.

II. Boundaries for attacks on sea objectives in the Aegean Sea for Fliegerkorps VIII and Fliegerkorps X and/or the Italian Air Force:

Fliegerkorps VIII east and north of the line Trikeri (south-east of Volos) - Euboea - Andros - Tinos - Mikonos (excluding the islands) - Ikaria and Samos (including the islands).
Fliegerkorps X and the Italian Air Force west and south of this line.

III. Boundaries in Greece: Fliegerkorps VIII east and north, Fliegerkorps X and/or Italian Air Force west and south of the line centre of Lake Mikra Prespa (155 km. west of Salonica) - thence in a south-easterly direction along the valleys of the Aliakkov and Aliakmon rivers as far as Hill 679 (these to Fliegerkorps X area) - along the railway leading to the south via Kalabaka and Trikkala as far as Kardhitsa - Lamia (towns to Fliegerkorps VIII area) - sea coast - continuation as under paragraph II.

IV. During the entry into Bulgaria the line River Maritsa - Turnovo (Zlati Dol) - Yambol - Burgas may not be flown over in the direction of the Turkish frontier, with the exception of defensive flights in protection of the port of Burgas.

Violations of the Yugoslav frontier are to be avoided in all circumstances.

v. Should air attacks on Bulgaria and Rumania take place from Greek territory, Fliegerkorps VIII is authorised to make attacks on Salonica and on airfields in its battle area known to be occupied.

Forces of Fliegerkorps X will receive orders at the appropriate time for attacks on targets in the operational area of Fliegerkorps VIII.

VI. Luftwaffe General in Italy and Fliegerkorps X may only inform Italian commands about this order at a date to be advised later by C. in C. Luftwaffe.

(Translator's note: On receipt of his copy General von Pohl (Luftwaffe General in Italy) commented: "I draw your attention to the fact that so far the airfields in southern Italy have only been supplied with small quantities of fuel oil and with no munitions at all, therefore to begin with Fliegerkorps X will have to operate exclusively from Sicily.")

Fuehrer Headquarters,

25 February 1941

The Fuehrer in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister decided on the 25 February 1941 at 1730 hours:

1. Start of pontoon-bridge building: 28 February 1941

At the same time transfer of the necessary air defence forces to Bulgaria.

2. Crossing of the Danube and entry of XIV Army Corps: 2 March 1941

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Operations Division of the Naval Staff,

Berlin,

26 February 1941

To: Admiral Z (Admiral Schuster)

Admiral A (Rear Admiral von Stosch)

Admiral B (Rear Admiral Fleischer)

Naval Liaison Staff K (Captain Wesemann)

Re: Directive for naval operations in the Balkan theatre

I. The following has been laid down in OKW directives for the intended operations in the Balkans.

1. The result of the campaign in Albania has not yet been settled. Efforts are being made by the British to establish an air base under the protection of a Balkan front, which would be a threat especially to Italy, as well as to the Rumanian oilfields.

Because of this situation the Fuehrer has ordered operation "Marita", with the object of occupying from Rumania and by way of Bulgaria the northern Aegean coast and the Salonica basin, and if necessary occupying the whole of the Greek mainland via Larissa and the Isthmus of Corinth.

The advance of the army is to be supported by the Luftwaffe, by the elimination of the enemy air force and as far as possible by the occupation of the British bases on Greek islands by means of airborne landings.

Bulgaria is expected to render assistance. It is uncertain whether the Bulgarian forces will participate in the attack, but the Bulgarian Army will be in charge of flank protection towards Turkey; in addition German troops will be held in readiness there.

The attitude of Yugoslavia is not yet definitely known, and for the time being the possibility of using the Yugoslavian railways even for supplies is not to be expected. It will be decided later to what extent the Italian Armed Forces are to participate in operation "Marita", and how the operations should be co-ordinated.

In order to ensure the limitation of the theatre of war, efforts will be made to conclude non-aggression pacts between Bulgaria and Turkey (since concluded) and Germany-Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

After operation "Marita" it is planned to withdraw the forces for new assignments.

2. In detail it has been decided:

Constanta must be protected as quickly and strongly as possible against attacks by enemy sea forces and against air attacks. For this purpose mobile forces, anti-aircraft and army batteries must be used first, even if they are detailed later to carry out the Marita operation. Railway cannon with rotating mountings are to be transferred on request by the Navy. They are to be replaced later by fixed coastal batteries.

/Meanwhile

Meanwhile the Navy has ordered the M III battery (3 17 cm. guns) and the Tirpitz battery (3 28 cm. guns) with German personnel to Constanta. Delivery is being arranged of mining material for the Rumanian Navy.

One battery of 3 17 cm. guns for Varna and one battery of 2 24 cm. guns for Burgas have been placed at the disposal of Bulgaria, to be manned with Bulgarian personnel. In addition 700 mines, 1,000 explosive buoys, steel rails and sweeping equipment will be delivered. Whether and when mines are to be laid off Varna and Burgas remains for the Bulgarians to decide.

II. On the basis of these directives and orders from OKW the following directive is issued for the German Naval Staffs operating in the Balkan area:

1. The task for the German naval elements operating in the Balkan area is: Employment of the available naval forces to defend the Balkan area from the sea against enemy attempts at landing and against bombardment of important places on the coast. Exploitation and protection of the sea route along the Black Sea and Aegean Sea coasts for our own sea traffic. The possibility of using the Turkish straits will have to be dealt with through political channels.

The tasks may be later extended, especially in the Greek area, by the addition of Italian naval forces for taking the Aegean islands, protecting the Dodecanese, and finally seizing Crete. The final aim of acquiring an outlet for an extension of warfare in the eastern Mediterranean must be remembered.

2. The forces available to gain this objective are barely adequate as far as the German Navy is concerned, and as far as the Rumanian and Bulgarian Navies are concerned very small. It can be taken for granted that Italian forces will be employed at some later date in the Greek theatre.

The main strength must therefore lie in the initiative of the few German Commands and by the systematic use of the small forces with precise German organisation and giving of orders.

3. At the moment only Rumania is the starting area for fulfilling the tasks in the Balkans. Therefore it is here that the foundation must be laid with all possible speed for the sure accomplishment of the measures that have to be taken in the Black Sea area.

In this connection the vital points in the Rumanian theatre are the Constanta district and the area of the Danube delta. The responsibility for coastal protection at Constanta, consisting of close concentration of the artillery of the German and Rumanian Navies and of the German and Rumanian Armies, will be taken over by the "Artillery Commander of the Constanta sector" nominated by the Navy. In addition it is intended to lay a minefield which should make it difficult for the enemy to come within firing distance. For the district at the mouth of the Danube the Rumanian naval forces will prepare for action and likewise also protective minefields will be laid where the Rumanians have not already done so. The threat of possible mining of the Danube itself from the air must be taken into account. In such an event it is intended to use the Rumanian Danube flotilla, if necessary with German ground minesweeping gear. Since offensive tasks in the Black Sea may also arise as a result of developments which cannot be foreseen, the Rumanian naval units, strengthened by improvised war material, are also to be prepared for such an operation, as far as it possible within the limited scope available.

4. In Bulgaria the measures taken by the Bulgarian Navy for the protection of the Bulgarian coast and ports must be especially supervised. It is expected that a fully effective arrangement of the small forces of the Bulgarian Navy for the joint defence of the Black Sea coast will be quickly effected on the basis of the preparations already made. In case such an order should be issued, the Bulgarian forces are to be prepared for operations in the Macedonian coastal area, especially for the defence and administration of the ports east of Salonica.
5. During the advance of the army against Greece the main task for the Navy will be to take over as far as possible the protection of the flank towards the sea, by guarding as soon as possible the most important ports as they are taken and securing the shipping area off the Greek east coast. Altogether four German battery crews will be detailed for the defence of Salonica, Volos and Piraeus. In case the Greek batteries do not fall undamaged into our hands, four medium batteries (2 of 3 17 cm. and 2 of 3 15 cm. guns) will be got ready in Germany for immediate forwarding to Greece.
 - Since it will not be possible even at a later date to allocate further German forces, the area on the Greek west coast and the Peloponnese will probably have to be handed over to the Italian Navy to defend.

The Italian Navy will also have to take over the defence in the Aegean by sea patrols.

A directive about the participation of the Italians in the tasks in the Greek theatre will be issued at the proper time.

6. Operations are to be carried out in detail on the basis that influence must especially be brought to bear on the operational deliberations of the Rumanian and Bulgarian Navies as well as later of the Italian Navy - as far as this last has not already been done through the Naval Liaison Staff in Rome. When the German Naval Mission to Rumania is announced it will already have been requested of General Antonescu that the Rumanian naval forces in Constanta and Galatz take over this duty. Owing to lack of our own personnel it will not be possible at first to interfere with the tactical execution. In this sphere too influence at a later date is to be aimed at.

Of more especial importance however is the immediate uniformity of control, down to the last detail of the tactical execution, for the recognition signal service, aircraft reporting service, service for transmission of communications, as well as coastal lighthouses and visual signal batteries.

In this connection an especially close cooperation with the Luftwaffe is to be established.

Strict supervision of ports and shipping is required; if necessary it may be found useful to bring in German Consuls, business men, etc., for this purpose. Such German persons, possibly as specialists, are to be employed to attend to these duties in respect to Greek airfields.

Furthermore in the Greek area our own Observer Service is to be set up as soon as possible along the coast and on the adjacent islands. We must try to get local inhabitants for these duties by offering suitable remuneration.

7. Owing to the smallness of the naval forces available, close liaison with the headquarters of the Army and Luftwaffe is of

/decisive

decisive value. It must be pointed out again and again to these staffs that great importance is attached to protection of the coast and sea-lanes, and especially in the Greek theatre, in all operations. The employment of army units, especially artillery, and air patrol of the coastal districts is to be demanded to oppose possible enemy attacks from the sea.

To this end the closest contact is to be maintained between the Naval C. in C. Balkans and List's Army Group, between the Naval C. in C. Rumania and the Commander of the Army Mission to Rumania, between the naval liaison staff in Bulgaria and the Naval C. in C. Greece and the commander of the 12th Army. For the operations in Greece the Sea Defence Commander appointed will probably have to be attached to the various divisions so that they can take part in early discussion on questions which may arise out of enemy measures at sea.

8. The great number of tasks which have to be performed by only a small number of German officers and soldiers demands especial clarity in the issuing of orders and giving of directions to the other Navies, as well as adaptability, initiative and liberal improvisation on our part.

Each individual is to embark on this difficult task in the knowledge of the sympathetic thoughts of our allies, and by awakening and bringing out their own latent strengths and talents, and having regard to the often narrowly defined limits of efficiency, is to achieve the utmost possible with the small forces available, and by clear and purposeful leadership the German Navy will gain recognition in these waters too.

draft signed by : Raeder

"MARITA" DOCUMENT No. 52

27 February 1941

Teleprint message from

Luftflotte 4

to: C. in C. Luftwaffe

I. Operational plans of Fliegerkorps VIII

1st phase: Stab and III/J.G.27 Krumowo (10 km south-east of Plovdiv)

II/J.G.27 Vrba (near Radomir, 35 km. south-west of
Sofia)

Stukageschwader 2 Krumowo

7(F)/L.G.2 Krumowo

2(F)/11 Vrba

In the event of danger from the south-east it is intended - according to the situation - to move Stukageschwader 2 and III/J.G.27 forward to the airfields planned near Yambol, Stara Zagora and Haskovo.

So long as the situation permits I/L.G.1 and II/Z.G.26 will not be moved forward at the start from Rumanian airfields to Krumowo, so as not to commence hostilities with a removal.

||

/Order of

Order of removals:

On A-Day - 2: Stab and III/J.G.27, any necessary ground personnel by Ju transports. (Time required depends on the number of Ju's taking off). As soon as the Ju's are free, removal of II/J.G.27 to commence. On the completion of the removal of J.G.27, Ju 52's will be at the disposal of Stukageschwader 2, at the earliest on A-Day - 1, since before then only defence forces may be sent forward. 7(F)/L.G.2 and 2(F)/11 will be moved when ground personnel coming with the land forces arrive, probably A-Day + 1.

As soon as it is recognised that no danger threatens from the south-east the 2nd phase begins: Stab and two Gruppen of Stukagwchwader 2 from Krumowo to Krajnica (40 km. south-south-east of Sofia), one Gruppe to Belitsa
Stab and III/J.G.27 from Krumowo to Belitsa

I/L.G.1 from Silistea to Krumowo; (Silestia Crucii, east of Bailesti)
II/Z.G.26 from Alexandria (80 km. south-west of Bucharest) to Krumowo
7(F)/L.G.2 remains in Krumowo

2(F)/11 and II/J.G.27 remain in Vrba

On the day before the attack II/J.G.27 moves from Vrba to Belitsa.

On the commencement of the "Marita" attack, as soon as the frontier is clear of the enemy and Petrice (Petrich) airfield no longer overlooked, the Stukagruppe moves from Belitsa to Petrich.

II. Battle HQ of Fliegerkorps VIII located since 1700 hours on 27 February at Baneasa airfield (near Bucharest).

III. II/J.G.27 and 2(F)/11 have removed to Giulesti (near Bucharest).

Fuehrer Headquarters,

27 February 1941

Re: Operations of German flying units in the Mediterranean area
(Operation "Marita")

1. The behaviour of the German flying formations towards Greece, from the date of the entry of German troops into Bulgaria until authority to attack is given by OKW, will be modelled on the lines of the directions to Fliegerkorps X, with the following exceptions:

When it has been established that enemy aircraft have crossed the Greco-Bulgarian frontier and made air raids on German or friendly troops or on areas which are under German protection, then the Luftwaffe is authorised to carry out air reconnaissance over Greek territory.

Raids on Greek territory are authorised as soon as it has been established without doubt that the enemy is attacking from Greek land or waters. In doubtful cases a decision is to be obtained from the OKW before our own attacks on Greek territory are launched.

2. Raids on Turkish territory, Turkish waters and the Sea of Marmora, as well as flights over these areas except in an emergency are forbidden.

/Should

Should it be established that England is making air raids from Turkish waters, or is installed on Turkish airfields or has sent naval forces through the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus, a decision is to be obtained from OKW about further measures to be taken.

Should it be necessary to carry out unarmed reconnaissance over Turkish territory, an application to this effect is to be submitted by the Luftwaffe.

3. With the commencement of the attack on land the Luftwaffe is given complete freedom of action both against Greece and the Greek islands.

It is intended when the attack begins to allow immediate and full offensive operations in the Aegean Sea with the exception of Turkish territorial waters and to warn neutral shipping against navigating in the threatened waters.

An order follows.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Telephone message:

28 February 1941

From C. in C. German Army in Rumania

To: German Military Mission in Rumania

The HQ Staff of L Army Corps with Corps troops will be transferred to Rumania in the III Aufmarschstaffel and placed under the command of the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army in Rumania from the middle of March.

It is intended to place the 46th and 183rd Infantry Divisions (Dobruja) under L Army Corps command.

Corps Headquarters will be in Constanta.

The Command of XI Army Corps will make arrangements for unloading, accommodation, etc., for L Army Corps HQ Staff, the 46th and 183rd Infantry Divisions until L Army Corps Staffel arrives.

OKW Operations Staff

Berlin,

5 March 1941

To: OKL Operations Staff

Copy to: General von Rintelen in Rome

The Fuehrer has issued the following order concerning your attitude to Italian intentions in Albania.

We are not interested in the Italian offensive in Albania before the completion of our deployment on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier.

/Therefore

Therefore no influence is to be exercised, either positive or negative, on any plans of theirs, which can saddle us with any responsibility for Italian actions or omissions.

On the contrary, the impression must be clearly given that our careful deployment and preparations for an offensive on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier will not be completed before the first days in April.

Exchange of liaison staffs is therefore not necessary for the time being.

Agreements between the High Commands on the tasks as a whole and the boundaries of operational areas in the air will suffice until direct contact between the German and Italian troops on Greek territory is expected, and not until then will direct communications circuits from List's Army Headquarters to Cavallero's Army Group be possible or useful.

OKW Operations Staff,

Berlin.

6 March 1941

To: OKL Operations Staff

copy to: OKH Operations Division

The Fuehrer decided on 5 March:-

Deployment for Marita is to continue according to plan, measures for a previous attack with mobile formations are meanwhile not expected.

Danger from the Turkish side can be taken as removed.

Operations Division of the Naval Staff,

Berlin.

7 March 1941

To: OKW Operations Staff

OKH, Army General Staff

OKL, Operations Staff

Re: "Marita"

Enclosed herewith for your information a copy of a communication from Naval C. in C. Balkans concerning naval operations in the south-eastern area,

OKH and OKL are requested to issue any necessary instructions relative to paragraphs 5 and 6.

draft signed by : Fricke

/Berlin

Berlin

6 March 1941

Enclosure to above

To: 12th Army GHQ.

Fliegerkorps VIII

HQ Luftgau XVII

Admiral A

Admiral B

Naval Liaison Staff K

Re: Naval operations in the south-eastern area

1. After the occupation of the most important coastal places and the early restoration of their seaward defences, the Navy considers taking the operation as a whole that its chief task will be to clear and set in operation as soon as possible the sea transport lane from the Rumanian Black Sea coast through the Dardanelles and the Aegean to the Isthmus of Corinth, thence connecting with the Italian sea routes.

Preceding this task or at least simultaneous with it, it will be especially important to support the Army and the Luftwaffe in the occupation of the islands, by organising transport over the sea.

2. At the moment only the few merchant ships lying in Bulgarian and Rumanian Black Sea harbours and the units of the Rumanian and Bulgarian Navies are available for these tasks. The fighting quality of these few units cannot be estimated very highly and must, especially in the case of the Rumanian Navy, be first increased by German aid.

3. In the Aegean ports it will only be apparent after the occupation what means of transport are available. Although we will try to bring Italian naval forces into this area as soon as possible so they can carry out the above-mentioned tasks under German direction, the German Naval Commands will have at first to improvise the necessary escort vessels from the shipping available. This will primarily be concerned with harbour defence flotillas, patrol flotillas, auxiliary cruisers and armed transports.

4. The Navy is largely dependent on the assistance of the Army and Luftwaffe in the execution of these tasks. In view of the transport and battle problems which the Army and the Luftwaffe have to solve such assistance will be very much in the interests of both these branches of the Services.

5. (a) When the ports and harbour installations, and even the smallest coastal towns are captured, ships of all sizes and harbour installations (batteries, signal stations, storage sheds, material for fitting out ships, etc.) must be spared as much as possible during the fighting and secured at once for the Navy. It will be the duty of those commissioned by the Admirals commanding to decide which material is to be used for the Navy and which material can be released for other military or civilian uses. Please issue the appropriate directions and orders to the subordinate commands.

- (b) Should suitable naval forces be lacking, the planning of a safe supply and transport route will at first depend almost

/exclusively

exclusively on reconnaissance. The close cooperation at top level between the corresponding Commands of the Luftwaffe and the Navy and the carrying out of any reconnaissance needed is therefore necessary.

Also the Naval Commands concerned must be linked up with the aircraft reporting service of the Luftwaffe and also with the coastal reporting service of the Army, which is to be installed if possible. Since the Navy has no suitable signals network or means of communication at its disposal, the Army and Luftwaffe are requested to set up adequate signals connections from their end.

- (c) If it should be the case that only unsuitable or numerically insufficient auxiliary warships can be prepared, then in the opinion of the Operations Division of the Naval Staff the Siebel pontoon ferries built and provided for "Sea Lion" (invasion of Britain) must be considered for use as emergency craft. It will be proposed that, for the Aegean theatre, material for about 50 of these Siebel ferries should be prepared in Bulgaria, so that they can be used there as required by the Navy.

The help of Army engineer units will be necessary for assembling the ferries, for armament there will be if necessary anti-aircraft batteries or 2 and 4 cm. Army or Luftwaffe guns, and crews will be provided by the Navy.

draft signed : Schuster

12th Army Headquarters,

10 March 1941

Army Order No. 2

1. The Danube crossing and entry of the 12th Army into Bulgaria have been completed according to plan and so far without enemy interference. The Bulgarian people and the Bulgarian Government have received the German troops joyfully and have energetically assisted.

In spite of the great difficulties of terrain and in some places very bad road conditions the objectives have been reached by the evening of 10 March after considerable feats of marching.

The first task of the 12th Army, deployment of the mobile forces opposite Turkish Thrace and throwing out advance detachments to the Bulgarian-Greek frontier, is thus accomplished.

2. Military and political position in the Balkans

- (a) Yugoslavia

The Yugoslav Armed Forces are partially mobilised. The 5th and 3rd Armies are deployed in the south-east of the country. Parts of the 2nd and 1st Armies are also to be called up. Altogether at the moment 17 divisions at the most (but probably less) can be ready for employment.

With these steps the Yugoslav Command will probably succeed in keeping the fighting on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier clear of Yugoslav territory.

/(b)

(b) Greece

In spite of the German entry into Bulgaria, so far no notable reinforcement on the Bulgarian front has been observed. At the moment it can be accepted that the north-eastern Greek frontier is garrisoned by frontier guards and (at the most) 4 divisions. In addition to these the Greek Command has only 2 reserve divisions (including the battle-weary 4th Division) available in the Veria district. 2 or 3 further reserve divisions and one motorised division are being formed, but are not yet ready.

Details about Greek operational plans are not to hand.

(c) Turkey

The organisation of the Turkish forces is unchanged. As before 27 infantry divisions, 2 cavalry divisions and 1 motorised-mechanised division are stationed in Turkish Thrace.

Since 2 March field fortifications have been very hurriedly built along the following lines:

So-called Tendon positions: Gedege (Sazara) - Derekoey - Kovcas - Erikler - Suelecik (Sueloglu) - Edirne (Adrianople)

Switch line: Suelecik - Haskoey - Havsa

The Cakmak Line: Jundala (north-west of Uskup) - Kirklareli - thence following the Tekesuyi (River Inece) to Pehlivankeoy

Edirne and especially Kirklareli have modern defence installations. Construction is however not completely finished.

According to what had so far been established there is nothing to indicate an offensive by Turkish forces. It must however be taken for granted that the Turkish Command is fully determined to defend Thrace.

(d) British forces

There are no army units on the Greek mainland. 2 or 3 divisions are standing by in Egypt, possibly for a landing on the Greek islands (Crete, Lemnos). According to information to date the Greek Government refuses to allow a landing of British troops.

British flying units are stationed in the north-eastern area of Greece. Their strength has not been ascertained, but certainly amounts to only a few squadrons. Sedes near Salonica, Larissa and Lemnos must be assumed to be British airfields, which in certain circumstances could be quickly manned from the air.

Only a number of specialists (for the Air Force and for construction of fortifications) have definitely been located in Turkish Thrace. The presence of British anti-aircraft forces (Istanbul, Edirne, Corlu) has it is true been reported, but not confirmed.

3. The 12th Army has been so grouped that it can commence the attack on Greece on X-Day (not before 1 April).

The primary aim of this attack continues to be the swift occupation of Salonica and the northern Aegean coast.

4. In this connection I order the following:

/(a)

- (a) Panzer Group 1 is to take over the command, from 1200 hours on 11 March, of all the forces on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier, but leaving XIV Army Corps as a reserve army behind the Bulgarian armies covering the Turkish front (4th and 3rd Bulgarian Armies).

Dividing line between Panzer Group 1 and XIV Army Corps:

Ruse (Ruschuk), Trnovo, Stara Zagora, Harmanli (towns and roads to Panzer Group 1), the Harmanli-Edirne road (latter town to XIV Army Corps).

It is the immediate task of Panzer Group 1 to execute the whole of the deployment (including XVIII Army Corps) on the Bulgarian-Greek frontier swiftly and inconspicuously so that they can make a surprise crossing of the Bulgarian-Greek frontier on X-Day with the strongest possible force. At the same time the bulk of the forces are to be assembled to form a concentrated breakthrough point in the Petrich area.

After the mountain and infantry divisions have opened up the frontier passes, strong mobile forces are to be sent in without delay as far as Salonica and across the river Vardar (Axios) against Edessa and Verria, while weaker mobile forces are to roll up the enemy front from the east by way of Gumuljina (Komotini).

Precautions are also to be taken so that British attacks from the Aegean Sea (landing attempts) can be warded off.

- (b) XIV Army Corps - directly under the Army - is to hold itself ready in the general area of Stara Zagora - Yambol - Burgas - Sliven so as to be able to hold up a Turkish thrust into Bulgaria in the closest cooperation with the Bulgarian forces stationed there.

The line Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa (Simeonovgrad) - Yambol - Burgas may not until further orders be flown over or crossed by German troops.

It is intended later to place the 73rd Division under this command for employment on the Greco-Turkish frontier (on the river Maritsa south of Edirne).

- (c) XI Army Corps will hold itself in readiness after unloading (from the end of March) to march on orders from the Army into Bulgaria over the Danube bridges at Turnu Magurele and Giurgiu, so that together with L Army Corps they can later relieve XIV Army Corps.

5. Bulgarian Army

There is no change in the deployment and tasks of the Bulgarian Army.

6. Fliegerkorps VIII will be made ready so that

- (a) when the enemy attacks it can go into immediate action with partial counter-attacks on the Greek ground organisation, traffic routes and unloading ports and carry out reconnaissance (covering the Greek bases, traffic in the port areas of the unloading bases as well as transport and troop movements against the Bulgarian-Greek frontier);

- (b) it can intervene in the ground fighting if the enemy attacks during the deployment period;

/(c)

- (c) from X-Day, in direct cooperation with Panzer Group 1, it can give support first of all to the attack to open up the Roupel Pass and later to the mobile forces attacking Salonica and in action along the coast, rolling up the enemy front;
- (d) it can at once oppose attempts by the British to land on the Aegean coast (at Salonica, Kavalla, Dedeagash, etc.)

The rearward limit for dropping bombs will be ordered by Panzer Group 1; also the line where air identification signs (swastika flags) are to be displayed.

The dividing lines between the German and the Italian air forces will be laid down later.

7. Reconnaissance

- (a) Flights over the Greek theatre are authorised from Y hours on X-Day. Even then however - in order to prevent frontier incidents - no flights may be made within a distance of 5 km. of the Yugoslav-Bulgarian and the Yugoslav-Greek frontiers without express orders from the Army.

On the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier the line Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa - Yambol - Burgas, on the Greco-Turkish frontier the railway line which runs from Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa along the Turkish frontier to Dedeagash may not be flown over.

The Black Sea may be flown over up to a distance of 8 km. from the Russian and Turkish coasts, and the Aegean Sea, from X-Day, up to a distance of 8 km. from Turkish territory.

- (b) In the event of Turkey remaining neutral, no air reconnaissance flights will take place over Turkish territory.

In the event of armed intervention by Turkey XIV Army Corps may carry out air reconnaissance as far as the line: Uzunkopru - Kirk Kilissa (Kirkklareli) - Midye (towns included).

The task then will be to obtain as soon as possible clear details of the direction, strength (breadth and depth) and main effort of the Turkish advance. The Black Sea coast is to be watched.

- (c) Panzer Group 1 may carry out air reconnaissance from Y hours on X-Day as far as the line: River Vardar (Axios) - Salonica - north coast of the Aegean Sea; concentrating in the direction of Salonica.
- (d) Fliegerkorps VIII is requested, when flights over Greek areas are authorised, to keep a good watch, to ascertain whether Greek forces are withdrawn from Albania and whether enemy troops land on the north coast of the Aegean Sea.
- (e) The importance is specially pointed out of rapid transmission and evaluation as well as reciprocal exchange of all air reconnaissance results.

The Bulgarian Air Force will pass their reconnaissance results direct to the Army, Panzer Group 1 and Fliegerkorps VIII.

8. Air defence

Panzer Group 1 will order the anti-aircraft operations of its subordinate formations for the deployment and later attack against Greece. At the same time a heavy flak battery is to take over as before the defence of Sofia. The 73rd Light Flak (5th Mountain Division) and the 76th Light Flak (2nd Panzer Division) will again be at the disposal of the 5th

/Mountain

Mountain Division and the 2nd Panzer Division respectively after these divisions have crossed the Danube.

Anti-aircraft operations in the Stara Zagora - Yambol - Burgas - Sliven area will be ordered by XIV Army Corps. Stara Zagora and Burgas are each to continue to be defended by a heavy flak battery. I/Flak 14 remains until further orders under the command of XIV Army Corps.

The anti-aircraft units of Fliegerkorps VIII will be employed for the defence of the ground organisation of Plovdiv, Krainici (10 km. north-east of Dupnitsa) and in the southern Struma valley, with some units ready to intervene in the ground fighting, by arrangement with Panzer Group 1.

Protection of Varna and of the bridges over the Danube will be taken over by the Luftwaffe Mission to Rumania.

Once again attention is called to the necessity for air protection for the troops and for camouflage as well as for careful preparation of black-out measures.

Battle headquarters:

12th Army GHQ - Chamkoriya
Panzer Group 1 - from 11 March, Kocherinovo, 20 km. south of Dupnitsa
XIV Army Corps - Burgas, later Stara Zagora
XI Army Corps - Alexandria (probably from 15 March)
I Army Corps - Constanta (probably from 16 March)
Fliegerkorps VIII - Kostenev

signed : List,

C. in C. 12th Army

Supplement to 12th Army Order 2

RUMANIA 2nd Panzer Division unloading in the area around Craiova
"Adolf Hitler" SS Division unloading, from 11 March, in Rosiori de Vede area
73rd Infantry Division in and around Alexandria, motorised elements being en route for Giurgiu, where they are due to arrive on 11 March

BULGARIA 12th Army GHQ at Chamkoriya
Fliegerkorps VIII at Kostenev
Panzer Group 1 at Kocherinovo, subordinate formations being:

XXXX Army Corps (Plovdiv) comprising
60th (mot.) Division (Plovdiv)
9th Panzer Division (Turnovo-on-the-Maritsa)
2nd Panzer Division (unloading, see above)
The Corps area extends from Pazarjik - Plovdiv - Stara Zagora - Nova Zagora - Turnovo (Maritsa) - Haskovo.

XXX Army Corps (Hisar) comprising
72nd Infantry Division (Novoselci), with reconnaissance units at Nevrokop, motorised elements around G. Belovo, and remainder en route for Novoselci area
164th Infantry Division (Gabrovo), reconnaissance units at Smoljan, motorised units round Karlovo, remainder between Gabrovo and Kazanlik;
50th Infantry Division (Sevlievo), reconnaissance units at Homcilgrad, remainder, including the 125th Infantry Regiment along road from Sevlievo to Trnovo;
73rd Infantry Division (Rumania, see above)

/XVIII Army

XVIII Army Corps (Gorna Jumaya) comprising

5th Mountain Division (Vladaja), with motorised elements east of Sofia, and remainder on the march from the Bechet bridge via Ferdinand towards Sofia

6th Mountain Division (Svei Vrac), motorised elements on the move southwards between Petrohan Pass and Sofia, with remainder following close behind

The 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 143rd Mountain Rifle Regiment are in the Petrich area, while the 3rd Battery of the 95th Mountain Artillery Regiment is on the move southwards near Vratca.

"Adolf Hitler" SS Division (motorised) about to unload in Rumania, as above

XIV Army Corps (Burgas) comprising

11th Panzer Division (Yambol) and the

5th Panzer Division (Burgas) with units spread over the area Sliven - Yambol - Aitos - Burgas

XI Army Corps, comprising the 56th, 76th, 198th and 294th Infantry Divisions

L Army Corps, comprising the 46th and 183rd Infantry Divisions

These 2 Corps have at this date not yet arrived in Bulgaria or southern Rumania.

Fliegerkorps XI GHQ,

12 March 1941

To the Chief of the General Staff

In the event of an attack on Lemnos the following is proposed:

1. General appreciation

An operation by part of Fliegerkorps XI against the island of Lemnos is possible as far as aviation and the terrain are concerned. In order to make the best use of the surprise element it is proposed that the time for the operation be chosen as early as possible, that is to say simultaneously with the crossing of the Greek frontier by the vanguard of the German troops. In this way a dissipation of the British fighter forces would be achieved, thus giving indirect protection to the movements of Fliegerkorps XI.

2. Appreciation of the enemy

The island is at the moment occupied by weak Greek police forces and small British units. It would appear that some anti-aircraft forces have been installed, the exact strength of which has not yet been ascertained. According to the latest reports the British are preparing further landings. We are nevertheless of the opinion that energetic resistance to a surprise landing from the air is not likely.

3. Forces required

On the basis of the enemy appreciation we calculate that the following forces would be needed:

Commanding Officer: O.C. 7th Flieger Division, with Divisional Staff

/Troops:

- Troops: (a) Ground troops: 1 paratroop regiment
1 flak company
1 troop of the Parachute Artillery Unit
1 platoon of engineers
Signals units
1 medical company
Supplies
- (b) Flying units: Staff of an air transport Geschwader
5 air transport Gruppen, less 2 Staffeln
1 Staffel of troop-carrying gliders
3 reconnaissance aircraft

It is proposed that the Divisional Staff together with the allocated troops be directly under the command of Luftflotte 4 during the operation.

4. Plans for execution

(a) Assembly

The area around Plovdiv is proposed as an assembly and taking off area. The ground units and the glider Staffel to reach this area by rail. Air transport Gruppen to move empty by air. For these, intermediate landing in the Vienna area.

The time required for assembly can only be notified after local reconnaissance has been carried out and after discussion with Luftflotte 4 and the transport authorities.

(b) Air operation

The Balkan Mountains (Rhodope Mts.) lying to the south of Plovdiv prevent a direct flight by the transport planes. The intended air route therefore leads over Haskovo, 70 km. south-east of Plovdiv, and thence direct to the objective. The flying distance amounts to between 300 and 350 km. The range of the Ju 52, even with troop-carrying gliders in tow, is therefore sufficient.

(c) Operation on the ground

It is planned to get a firm hold on the towns of Mudros and Kastorn as well as the country around Mudros Bay, including Livazi airfield, in the first attack. Radiating thence the whole of the island is to be occupied. By bringing in heavy weapons in the second wave the main body will be strengthened so that it can effectively resist any possible attempts by the British to land.

(d) Cooperation with the operational Luftwaffe

The strength of the cooperating bomber forces will depend on the further development of the enemy position on the island. It will probably be necessary to suppress the anti-aircraft artillery on the island immediately before commencing to land.

In the event of the enemy getting in fighter forces before the start of the attack it will be necessary to put the enemy fighters out of action by a bombing raid.

The allocation of three complete twin-engined fighter Gruppen to cover the air passage and landing is considered essential.

(e) Supplies

Supplies chiefly of ammunition will be dropped from the air shortly after the first wave goes into action, further supplies

/dropped

dropped by He 111's to begin with and later landed by Ju 52's. It is requested that one Staffel of He 111's be detailed for two days for this purpose.

Since in the opinion of the Operations Division of the Naval Staff the appearance of light hostile sea forces could considerably delay shipping traffic with the mainland, 2 Junkers Gruppen must continue to be available to fly in supplies until the sea link has been restored.

5. Preparations for assembly

(a) Ground organisation

Five airfields with refuelling capacity sufficient for 360,000 litres per Gruppe daily, of which each field must be capable of feeding 100,000 litres within two hours. One of the airfields preferably on the forward edge of the assembly area with rail connections and decentralised storerooms with 10,000 square metres of covered area. Here there is to be storage space prepared (decentralised) to take about 900 tons of ammunition, explosives and jettisonable gear. A repair shed preferably on each field, if this is not possible then at least one repair shed for every two Gruppen.

Each airfield must have billeting facilities for 1600 men, of which 100 will be officers, within a maximum radius of 15 km.

If the place intended as a supply dump has a railway siding, the following will be required for the erection of the supply depot: 1 supply company, 60 lorries, 1 land defence platoon. If there are no railway sidings, the requirements will be increased to 2 supply companies, 100 lorries and 1 land defence platoon.

- (b) It would appear advisable to set up an air-sea rescue service during the operation.
- (c) Before the assembly an operational and control network must be installed, and direct telephone connections between the five airfields as well as with the operational headquarters of the divisional staff will be required, if possible with teleprinter circuits.
- (d) It will be necessary to prepare a temporary airfield headquarters for later operations in the battle area.

signed : Student,

G.O.C. Fliegerkorps XI

Teleprint

From: OKW Operations Staff

dated 13 March 1941

To: OKL Operations Staff

Consideration is being given to creating a zone on the Turkish frontier which may not be entered by German troops when Greece is occupied.

The Luftwaffe is requested to advise how far it is interested in an extension of the occupied area towards the east.

/Since

Since a seizure of the island of Lemnos has to be taken into account, the question must also be considered from the point of view of the ground organisation necessary for such an operation.

Teleprint reply to above

From: OKL Operations Staff

dated 14 March 1941

To: OKW Operations Staff

It is requested that a zone 30 km. wide be established along the Turkish frontier.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

16 March 1941

When the Aegean coast has been taken it is intended to occupy Lemnos with German troops, in the event of the island not being occupied by the British or only weakly so. The operation is to be so prepared that the island will be taken by surprise from the air, and secured by a following transfer of army units by the sea route.

The capture from the air and the air cover necessary for effecting, surprise will be arranged by the Luftwaffe.

The most favourable moment would appear to be the day of the commencement of the operations against Greece, provided the Luftwaffe believes it can hold the island for 8 to 10 days without receiving supplies by sea.

Preparations for taking across the garrison troops will be a matter for the 12th Army G.H.Q. working in conjunction with the Navy. Operations Division of the Naval Staff will go into the question of bringing in Italian surface forces to act as escort. No contact may however yet be made with the Italian authorities.

It is requested that plans in detail and progress of preparations be reported by 25 March 1941. OKW will issue the order to carry out the operation.

When the whole of the Greek mainland has been occupied all branches of the Armed Forces are to prepare for a swift occupation of the Cyclades. Orders will be issued later as soon as it can be foreseen whether the general situation in the Aegean Sea permits at all of such intentions being realised.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

Operations Division of the Naval

Berlin, 18 March 1941

To: OKW

Copies for information to: OKH Operations Staff and OKL Operations Staff

Re: Occupation of Lemnos

/I.

I. With reference to plans for the occupation of the island of Lemnos after the Aegean coast has been taken Operations Division of the Naval Staff reports the following:

1. It has no means of combat at all at its disposal in the Aegean. Therefore the possibility of carrying troops by sea to Lemnos is dependent on
 - (a) the situation of the enemy which will have to be found out by means of ample air reconnaissance;
 - (b) air forces being provided to keep the enemy off and to carry out anti-submarine patrols.
2. An evaluation of the possibilities of ferrying can only be given if it is made clear what transport is available after the ports of Salonica and Volos as well as the small harbours on the coast of Thrace have been taken. It is the first and foremost task of the Naval C. in C. South-East and the authorities under him to locate, get hold of and prepare this transport space at once.

The enlistment of German shipping from the Black Sea and western Mediterranean also comes into the question.

3. The distance of the island of Lemnos from the coast of Thrace, and from Salonica and Volos is relatively small. Provided that adequate transport is available, it should be possible to cross mainly during the hours of darkness, and so avoid enemy attacks from the air. The choice of the time for the crossing must be dependent on the reports received on the enemy situation.
4. The introduction of Italian naval forces to protect the transports is very much desired. According to the Operations Division of the Naval Staff, however, this will only be possible when the Greek mainland and the Peloponnese is under the control of the Axis powers. Before then a move of Italian light naval forces through the Strait of Cerigotto could hardly succeed, especially if the initiative of the Italians so far is taken into account.

It is desirable that the protection of the transports from Salonica and Volos be taken over by one torpedo boat or destroyer flotilla and one MTE flotilla at each place. In any event these forces must be prepared in the Aegean even after the successful occupation of Lemnos for similar tasks (Cyclades) and for escorting supplies to Lemnos.

II. With reference to the 8 - 10 days period before the arrival of the first reinforcements for the airborne troops mentioned in the previous communication, the Operations Division of the Naval Staff once more emphasises that the date for this arrival is primarily dependent on finding suitable transport. It is extremely probable that under British guidance shipping in the harbours in question will be either sunk or rendered unserviceable.

Airborne troops landed on Lemnos at the beginning of the campaign will therefore very possibly have to rely on their own resources or on supplies from the air for considerably longer than 8 to 10 days.

signed : Fricke

/Teleprint

Teleprint

From: OKL Operations Staff

dated 19 March 1941

To: Fliegerkorps XI, Luftflotte 4 and the Quartermaster General.

Preparations for the occupation of the island of Lemnos are to be made so that from 21 March 1941 after seven days' warning the occupation can be carried out at any time from the eighth day.

The island must also be able to be held for 8 to 10 days without receiving supplies by sea.

Code-word for preliminary warning: "Get ready for Hannibal".

Code-word for execution: "Carry out Hannibal on the....."

The order for preliminary warning and execution will be issued by OKL.

Example:

21 March 1941: XI Fliegerkorps, Luftflotte 4 and the Quartermaster General receive codeword "Get ready for Hannibal".

from 22 March 1941: transfer of elements of Fliegerkorps XI to the taking-off area in Bulgaria.

28 March 1941: Fliegerkorps XI, Luftflotte 4 and the Quartermaster General receive code-word "Carry out Hannibal on 29 March."

29 March 1941: Occupation of the island.

Fliegerkorps XI, Luftflotte 4 and the Quartermaster General are requested to report detailed plans and progress of preparations to OKL Operations Staff by the evening of 23 March.

Teleprint

From: OKL Operations Staff

dated 22 March 1941

To: Luftflotte 4
Fliegerkorps XI
Quartermaster General

Re: "Marita"

Get ready for Hannibal (1st day 23 March 1941).

Teleprint

From: OKL Operations Staff

dated 22 March 1941

To: OKH, Army General Staff

1. Lemnos: OKL is getting one reinforced paratroop regiment ready for the occupation of Lemnos. Preparations are being so made that with 7 days preliminary warning from OKL the operation from the area around Plovdiv can take place from the eighth day. It is however pointed out

/that

that according to the latest appreciation of the situation submitted by the 12th Army, with which General von Richthofen agrees, an occupation of Lemnos can be considered at the earliest on X-Day + 3 (X being the 1st day of the attack on Greece).

The enemy position at the moment is estimated to be such that the forces of Fliegerkorps VIII will without exception be required during the first few days for cooperation with the army. During this time they will not be available for protecting and supporting the units of Fliegerkorps XI being taken over to Lemnos and set down there. It is not possible to supply Fliegerkorps VIII with further flying forces.

2. Cyclades: The most favourable moment appears to be when the Luftwaffe operating from the area around Athens can protect and support the landing operations on the individual islands. Landings with land planes cannot be carried out on the islands. Occupation by paratroops and troop-carrying gliders is not possible if the operation against Lemnos takes place previously, or if fresh forces are not brought in for Fliegerkorps XI. Since there are seaplane stations at a number of the Cyclades islands, OKL is at present examining to what extent it is possible to transfer seaplanes from the aviation schools (sea) for patrol duties - 3 He 59's or He 60's for each seaplane station.

OKH Headquarters

22 March 1941

Supplementary directive for the 12th Army

1. The development of the situation in Greece leads us to expect that Greece, relying upon British assistance, will put up a determined resistance to the German attack. There is also the possibility that the Greeks, by abandoning the district east of Salonica and by delaying the German advance over the rivers Strymon (Struma) and Vardar (Axios), will defend themselves in the mountains south-west and west of Salonica, with the northern flank on the Yugoslav frontier.

After the loss of this defence position the defence of Greece can if necessary be continued down to Athens in further positions resting on the mountain barrier, so long as the High Command succeed in bringing fighting units into action in these rear positions at the right time.

The appearance of British forces (two or three divisions to begin with) on the Greek front must be taken into account.

Turkey's attitude appears to be sufficiently clarified and intervention on the part of Turkey is not expected.

2. Task for the 12th Army

- (a) It is the task of the 12th Army to break the Greek resistance as quickly as possible, to take speedy possession of the Greek district east of the Pindus Mountains as well as of Attica, and finally to occupy the Peloponnese.

This will depend on the prevention of the withdrawal to the west of the enemy forces operating in the district east of the Vardar and on their destruction, and at the same time on forcing as quickly as possible an entry into the Greek mountain country west of Salonica before the enemy is able to set up a defence in strength in this district. Finally mobile forces are to drive forward without delay in the direction of Larissa and Athens in order to prevent the enemy from setting up a defence line further back.

A simultaneous attack by the Italian forces west of the Pindus Mountains is to be expected. It is not intended to set up a general German command over the forces of both sides operating against Greece. The necessary influencing of the Italian army group in Albania should be effected through a liaison staff. Orders follow later on this point.

An order will be issued by OKL concerning the boundaries of the operational areas of the Italian and German air forces.

As a cover against Turkey it will suffice to leave XIV Army Corps in temporary possession.

On entry into eastern Thrace, as a gesture towards Turkey, the Greek district in front of Adrianople (Edirne) and lying to the east of the bridge at Demotika is not to be disturbed by German troops without special authority.

- (b) The islands of Thasos and Samothrace and, in given circumstances, Lemnos are to be taken by surprise at an early date in order to prevent the British installing themselves in these islands.

OKM has been asked to investigate whether suitable shipping can be held ready in Bulgarian harbours and transferred to the Greek embarking harbours (primarily Dede Agach), in case no suitable shipping is seized along the Greek coast.

It is intended to occupy the island of Lemnos if the island is not occupied by the British or is only weakly held. Preparations for the occupation are to be made in such a manner that the island will be taken by surprise from the air by formations of the Luftwaffe, or will be secured by a following transfer of units of the 12th Army by the sea route.

12th Army GHQ, in cooperation with the Navy, is to make preparations for ferrying across the garrison troops. Plans in detail and progress of preparations are to be reported as soon as possible. OKH will issue the order for the execution of the operation.

- (c) Concerning later tasks of the Army: an order will be issued in due course. OKH hopes to use as few forces as possible of the 12th Army for purely garrison duties and to leave these duties primarily to the Italians.

In the course of further duties the question may arise of occupying the Cyclades.

3. Cooperation with the Bulgarian forces

The entry of Bulgarian formations into Thrace is not desired so long as the enemy takes no military action in or against Bulgarian territory. Should that happen however it is left for 12th Army GHQ to decide when the defence of the coast between the districts at the mouths of the Strymon and Maritsa is to be taken over by Bulgarian troops. The Bulgarian troops are not to be moved into the district north of the Ortakoj - Demotika road.

4. Participation by Jugoslavia

In the distant future it may possibly be necessary to authorise Yugoslav troops to move up to Salonica.

/5.

5. Allocation of forces (see supplement 2)

For carrying out the operation the forces of Panzer Group 1 (without HQ Staff) will be at the disposal of the 12th Army GHQ, as well as the 4th Mountain Division whose removal in the direction of Salonica is being hastened. Of the III Aufmarschstaffel, I Army Corps staff, the 46th and 294th Divisions are at the disposal of the 12th Army. To begin with they are to be brought up to the line Sofia - Stara Zagora.

The HQ Staff of Panzer Group 1 will withdraw from the 12th Army with effect from 31 March and will be sent off on other duties.

*XIV Army Corps and part of the GHQ troops will return from Bulgaria to Rumania to take part in another assignment. (See supplement 2).

6. Plans for Barbarossa will be changed in that operations by the 12th Army from Rumania will be dropped. 12th Army GHQ will remain in the south-east even after the close of the operation Marita, with any troops that the situation requires. Directions for its later duties and directives for later cooperation with the Italians will be issued in due course.
7. Copies of plans (disposition of forces and organisation) as well as requirements from the Navy and Luftwaffe should be submitted as soon as possible.

It is desired that the operation should start at the beginning of April; notice of the day intended for the attack is to be passed to OKH by return.

signed : von Brauchitsch

Supplement 1. The Neutral Zone on the Turkish Greek frontier

The western boundary of this zone is indicated by a line running from the point where the Bulgarian, Turkish and Greek frontiers meet southwards, so that the following villages are in the neutral zone:

Krios - Platj - Waltos - Ambelakia - Lagos - Thirea thence to a point between the town of Dimotika (Greek side) and the railway bridge over the Kizil stream. The Greco-Turkish frontier is then followed to a point south-east of Ferrai and thence along the northern branch of the Maritsa to the Aegean Sea.

Supplement 2. Forces available

A. Major formations

I. The following are at the disposal of the 12th Army GHQ for the attack on Greece.

1. HQ Staff of XXXX Army Corps
 - XIV Army Corps
 - XVIII Army Corps
 - XXX Army Corps

- 2nd Panzer Division
- 9th Panzer Division
- 60th Infantry Division (Motorised)
- SS Division "Adolf Hitler"
- 4th Mountain Division
- 5th Mountain Division
- 6th Mountain Division

50th Infantry Division
72nd Infantry division
73rd Infantry Division
164th Infantry Division
125th Infantry Regiment

2. From the III Aufmarschstaffel:

HQ Staff of L Army Corps
46th Infantry Division
294th Infantry Division

} available at first only as far
} as the line Sofia - Stara Zagora.

3. As a covering group against Turkey the following remain for a limited period (see paragraph II)

HQ Staff of XIV Army Corps
5th Panzer Division
11th Panzer Division

II. The following will withdraw from the 12th Army force:

1. Staff of Panzer Group 1 with headquarters troops to arrive in the Bucharest - Piatra Olt entraining area by 8 April.
2. HQ Staff of XIV Army Corps with Corps and headquarters troops, 5th Panzer Division and 11th Panzer Division, to arrive in the Bucharest - Piatra Olt entraining area by 18 April, 10 April and 18 April respectively.
3. SS Division "Adolf Hitler" to arrive in the Bucharest - Piatra Olt entraining area by 3 May.
4. HQ Staff of XI Army Corps with Corps troops, 76th Infantry Division and 198th Infantry Division to remain in Rumania for other employment.

B. GHQ troops

Luftwaffe units to remain with the 12th Army :

Staffs of senior Luftwaffe officers with 12th Army and XXXX Army Corps

5(H) 13 with XXX Army Corps
 2(H) 10 with XVIII Army Corps
 4(H) 22 with XXXX Army Corps
 1(H) Panzer 14 with 2nd Panzer Division
 1(H) Panzer 23 with 9th Panzer Division
 4(H) 32 with XI Army Corps, and the L Army Corps
 Light Flak Battery 76 with 2nd Panzer Division
 Light Flak Battery 86 with 9th Panzer Division
 I/Flak Battery 64 with XXX Army Corps
 I/Flak Battery 43 with XVIII Army Corps
 II/Flak Battery 24 with XXXX Army Corps
 I/Flak Battery 14 at the disposal of 12th Army GHQ

Luftwaffe units to be withdrawn from the 12th Army:

Staffs of senior Luftwaffe officers from Panzer Group 1 and XIV Army Corps

2(H) Panzer 31
 3(H) Panzer 21
 Light Flak Battery 84
 Light Flak Battery 71
 Light Flak Battery 74
 Light Flak Battery 73
 Light Flak Battery 85
 I/Flak Battery 37

}
} from XIV Army Corps

/The

The GHQ troops being withdrawn must arrive in the entraining area Bucharest - Piatra Olt by 17 April.

Fuehrer Headquarters,

22 March 1941

Subject: Declaration of an operational area in the Eastern Mediterranean

1. With the commencement of hostilities against Greece the Government of the German Reich will declare as an operational area the eastern Mediterranean including the Aegean Sea, together with the waters already closed to neutral shipping by the Italian Government. At the same time the German Armed Forces are authorised to carry on unrestricted warfare against all shipping.

Excluded from this are the Turkish territorial waters, the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, which will continue to be open to neutral shipping. Shipping in these waters will not be attacked.

Turkish territory must not be violated by aircraft of the Luftwaffe except in cases of emergency.

2. When the flying units are allowed free action against targets in Greece on the commencement of the Marita attack, ships and installations in the Corinth Canal must not be attacked, since the unrestricted passage of our own shipping through the canal after it has been taken is of the utmost importance.

signed : Keitel

Chief of Staff, OKW

From: OKL Operations Staff

dated 22 March 1941

To: Luftflotte 4

Provided the Reichsmarschall agrees, it is intended to reinforce Fliegerkorps VIII now with Stab St.G.3, II/St.G.2 and III/K.G.30. Thus the formations of Fliegerfuehrer South-east will be ready to go into action in their battle area and the later withdrawal of Fliegerkorps VIII will be made easier.

Luftflotte 4 is requested to advise whether the additional accommodation of the Geschwader Staff and the two Gruppen with Fliegerkorps VIII is possible at the moment.

Teleprint

From: Luftflotte 4

dated 23 March 1941

To: OKL Operations Staff

Reinforcement of Fliegerkorps VIII by Stab St.G.3, II/St.G.2 and III/K.G.30 can proceed at once. Removal of Tarogul-Nou airfield can be carried out at once. Thence further movements will be arranged by Fliegerkorps VIII in direct liaison with the German Luftwaffe Mission in Rumania.

/Fuehrer

Fuehrer Headquarters

24 March 1941

Re: Reconnaissance and attacks in the Greek territorial waters of Crete

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces has ordered reconnaissance and attacks on all naval forces (including Greek ones) in the Greek territorial waters of Crete, effective at once.

for Chief of Staff, OKW

signed : Jodl

Fuehrer Headquarters,

25 March 1941

Subject: Capture of Lemnos by the Luftwaffe

It is desirable that the island of Lemnos should be occupied as early as possible by the Luftwaffe. The earlier the operation can be carried out, the easier it will be.

Since the German flying formations in Bulgaria must be held ready to support the advance over the frontier, and will thus not be able to assist the parachute operations, the latter will have to be postponed for the time being.

The new time will be settled by 12th Army GHQ in agreement with the appropriate Luftwaffe authorities, who have received their directive from the Luftwaffe accordingly. Efforts are however to be made to carry out the occupation at the earliest date on which the necessary flying forces can be made available.

It will be advisable to reinforce the flying formations operating from Rumania, especially with dive-bomber units. If these forces are withdrawn from employment in Italy, the Naples - Tripoli convoy route must still remain escorted.

signed : Jodl

Teleprint

From: OKW Operations Staff

dated 27 March 1941

To: OKL Operations Staff
OKH Operations Staff

The Fuehrer has decided that 12th Army GHQ, according to the weather and in liaison with Fliegerkorps VIII is to decide on the moment to commence the "Marita" attack. 1 April remains desirable as M-Day, and the date is to be reported in advance to OKW.

/OKL

OKL is to ensure that any intended attacks by Fliegerkorps X on Greek territory do not take place before the commencement of the "Marita" attack (territorial waters of Crete excepted).

A.H.B.6 Distribution

C.A.S.
A.M.F.
A.C.A.S.(Ops.)
A.C.A.S.(I)
D.S.T. (12 copies)
Chief Military Historian (2 copies)
Representative of the Australian War Memorial

U.S. Military Historian
A.H.B.1 (2 copies)
A.H.B.2
A.H.B.5
R.N.Z.A.F.
R.A.A.F.
File