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UNITED STATES NAVY

WAR DIARY
OF
ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA



1 SEPTEMBER, 1943-30 SEPTEMBER, 1943
PG NUMBERS 31539-31540

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WAR DIARY

OF

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1 - 30 September 1943

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Editorial Note:

The translation of this German War Diary was made in London, England, under the guidance of Commander S. R. Sanders, USNR. When his London Office was closed and the translation project was discontinued, much unfinished material was sent to Naval History Division, (CP-29).

Because the dissemination of the data contained in these documents is important, the translations and stencils have not been checked for accuracy of interpretation, phraseology, and spelling of officers' names or geographical names. Distribution under these conditions seems justified because of the excellent reputation of the London personnel and because translators are not available in Naval History Division. Research to correct possible inconsistencies did not warrant the time involved.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
Naval History Division
Washington 25, D. C.

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WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL BLACK SEA

1 - 15 September 1943

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1 September 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

At 0520 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 5 gunboats putting out from Ghelenjik. Some 5 miles from the beachhead, the boats tacked about and dropped depth charges. At about 0615 they disappeared on a southerly course. At 0530 4 tugs with 8 lighters of 150 - 200 tons, 2 gunboats and 1 patrol vessel were sighted at sea and they put in to Ghelenjik at 0635. At 0945 3 gunboats put in to Ghelenjik from the south. At 1000 4 gunboats put out, course southwest, and at 1105 2 gunboats put in again. At 1455 4 motor minesweepers were observed proceeding from the southeast in T-formation. They probably dropped depth charges (more than 50 explosions were observed). They put in at 1745.

From 0427 to 0539, air reconnaissance detected no shipping traffic in the Ghelenjik-Kerch area as far as 40 miles out to sea. Air reconnaissance flown in the forenoon also detected no shipping. Nothing particular was detected in Ghelenjik. At 0645 off the Turkish coast in the Zonguldak area, there were 11 freighters, including 6 of more than 3,000 tons, course west; at 0710 7 freighters in Eregli roads, including 6 of more than 3,000 tons; at 0800 1 freighter of 3,000 tons was observed 20 miles northeast of the Bosphorus, course east. Photographic reconnaissance of Ghelenjik revealed at 1450: 7 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 11 M.T.B.s, 4 large motor minesweepers, 3 small motor minesweepers, 22 troop landing boats (?) 14 meters long, 17 troop landing boats (?) 11 meters long, and 40 boats. At about 1630 a report was received to the effect that a reconnaissance group of fighters observed 4 torpedo boats and a convoy of 1 large freighter and 2 tankers escorted by 2 destroyers putting out from Ghelenjik and then between Ghelenjik and Novorossisk. However, special air reconnaissance was flown and no vessels were sighted.

Inexperienced in sea reconnaissance, the fighters were probably misled by small vessels whose size they grossly overestimated. As air reconnaissance in this area was exhaustive during the day, this report was doubted from the very beginning. 2 motor minesweepers were sighted in the Sea of Azov in the Yeisk area. 15 motor gunboats were detected in the Yeisk area and 2 in Primorsko Akhtari. No large vessels were at sea according to radio inference. Slight activity of small vessels off the East Coast. The disposition of submarines in the operational area was unchanged.

At the Kuban bridgehead the enemy advanced with stronger forces up to regiment strength. It was learned from the southern front that according to an Army report, the frontline will be temporarily withdrawn as far as Dudjenovka.

Own Situation:

The following details were reported on the torpedoing of steamer THISBE on 30 Aug.: At 1812 the escort met THISBE near point Bucharest. From 1750 to 1820 each destroyer dropped 4 depth charges east and west of the rendezvous point to deter the enemy. Previously, anti-submarine operations had been carried out by 2 armed fishing vessels and 2 motor minesweepers.

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At 1835 the convoy steered a course of 010°. Weather: wind east northeast, force 3, sea force 3, sun on the port quarter. MINIA was proceeding on the port bow, motor minesweeper R 204 on the port quarter, THISESTI on the starboard bow and motor minesweeper R 163 on the starboard quarter. MINIA sighted 2 torpedo tracks, 1 of them a surface runner. At 1836 THISEE was hit by 2 torpedoes, the first on hitting the foreship, the second the area under the bridge. A third explosion was heard, presumably boiler explosion. The ship sank immediately. Motor minesweepers rescued 27 survivors. MINIA at once dropped 17 depth charges in the presumed place of diving and later THISESTI dropped 9 depth charges. No success was observed. At 1840 a third torpedo was fired which passed the stern of MINIA at a range of 200 meters. At 1900 the destroyers commenced return passage to Constantza. 2 armed fishing vessels were left behind for anti-submarine operations. The motor minesweepers with survivors, including 4 seriously wounded men, commenced passage to Varna.

This was the correct procedure. However, again a submarine attack surprised them. The fact that the search gear of the escorting vessels obtained no locations may be explained by the extremely unfavorable dense layering off the Bosphorus.

Torpedoes were fired at THISEE at 1836. At the presumed attack position, destroyer MINIA dropped 17 depth charges and at 1840 the destroyer herself was attacked with torpedoes. This showed that either there was a second submarine which attacked MINIA or the depth charge attack was not directed against the exact position of the submarine which attacked THISEE. The submarine chasers which remained behind obtained no locations.

At 0217 a radiogram was transmitted to the patrol forces east of Krivaya Kossa, stating that no fighter escort could be provided for return passage and that the boats should therefore commence return passage to be south of Krivaya Kossa at 0330.

At 0230 naval ferry barge No. 419 which ran aground on the previous day refloated and anchored in Temriuk roads.

At 0500 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Mariupol from the patrol line. Enemy not sighted.

At 0500 the vessels on coastal defense duty put in to Temriuk. Nothing to report.

At 0600 3 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Theodosia from operations. They had been in the operational area until 0230 as ordered. Enemy not sighted.

At 0610 motor minesweepers R 30, R 52, 54 and 56 put out from Mariupol on a minesweeping operation. At 0730 the eastern group of naval ferry barges put in to Mariupol. Nothing to report.

At 0710 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Mariupol for 1st E-Boat via Kerch.

At 0800 the Commanding Officer 1 returned to Simferopol from Mariupol by plane.

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Simferopol at 0930:-

Weather forecast for Eupatoria to Novorossisk: variable winds, mainly southeast to south, force 3 - 4, at night force 3 - 2, cloudy, visibility 15 miles. Sea of Azov: easterly winds, force 2 - 3, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to lay a meteorological buoy in 43° 55' N, 36° 20' E during the night of 1/2 Sep. The boats are to put out from Ivan Baba at 1930, setting a direct course for the prescribed position. After carrying out the task, the boats should commence return passage in reconnaissance line to reach Ivan Baba at about 0400. Anti-submarine operations are forbidden because one of our U-boats will presumably return from the Caucasus coast to Theodosia on the night of 1/2 September.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to arrange transportation of wounded men by naval ferry barges (hospital) from Mariupol to Berdyansk effective from 2 Sep. The first transport should put out from Mariupol at 1900 on 1 Sep. and then every other day. Return passage on the following night in each case. Escort will be provided by 2 naval landing craft (guns). 2 naval landing craft (guns) and 1 naval ferry barge (hospital) have been subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine for this task.

The following operation was ordered in the patrol line in the Gulf of Taganrog on the night of 1/2 Sep.:

1. The 1st operational group of naval ferry barges, comprising 4 boats, should operate in pairs in the patrol line east of Mariupol between 37° 45' E and 38° 00' E. Distance from the coast some 3 miles. The boats should put out at 1830 and commence return passage to Mariupol at 0300.
2. The 3rd operational group of naval ferry barges, comprising 4 boats, should occupy the patrol line in pairs along the coast between Mariupol-Port and Kossa Byelosaraika. Distance from the coast some 2 miles. The group should put out from Mariupol at 1900 and commence return passage to Mariupol at 0330.
3. 3 naval landing craft (guns) of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla should occupy the patrol line between 37° 50' E and 38° 00' E on 46° 55' N. The naval ferry barges should stand on and off at slow speed in the patrol line. The group should put out from Mariupol at 1800 to reach the patrol line at about 2100. Return passage to Mariupol should be commenced at 0230 at maximum speed.

Task of naval ferry barge groups: to prevent enemy landings on our coast and to destroy all vessels approaching the coast for landing operations or bombardment. The group of naval landing craft (guns) should attack from their patrol line all enemy forces which they meet or which are reported.

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Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that he would continue to defend the harbor and that he had distributed the battalion which had arrived in the individual sectors of defense. Naval Port Commander and the battalion commander had been subordinated to the regimental commander there. The area from coal quay to grain quay had been mined and further minelaying had been started. Minelaying of the harbor will be commenced on the night of 1/2 Sep. The roads from the site at the west harbor to the southern part of the town will also be mined.

All civilians have been evacuated from the harbor area.

At 1855 the 1st operational group of naval ferry barges and the group of naval landing craft (guns) put out from Mariupol for the patrol lines.

At 1915 motor minesweeper # 30 and 3 motor minesweepers (RA) put into Mariupol from minesweeping operations south of Kessa Byelosaraika. No mines were swept. At 1755, while the gear was being taken in 2 Russian bombers attacked them from an altitude of 1500 to 1,800 meters. A bomb which landed close to RA 56 wounded 4 men with its splinters. The rough sea made defense very difficult at dusk. No planes were shot down. The boats were not damaged.

At 1915 the first transport of wounded put out from Mariupol for Berdyansk. It comprised 1 naval ferry barge escorted by 2 naval landing craft (guns).

At 1830 2 naval ferry barges and 10 combined operations boats put out from Terriuk for patrol duties. 2 naval ferry barges were lying in the roads ready for operations.

U-Boat Situation:

At 0235 Italian midget submarine CB 4 put in to Sevastopol because one of the crew was ill. Enemy not sighted. The boat lost her D/F loop and will therefore be non-operational until about 8 Sep.

At 1545 CB 1 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations in the Eupatoria area. No incidents.

At 1900 CB 3 put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the Eupatoria-Tarkan area. CB 2 had already put out for anti-submarine operations at 0700.

At 1905 U 23 reported that she would be off Theodosia at 0730 on 2 September.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Apart from the bombing of the minesweeping group south of Kessa Byelosaraika, there were no air raids on convoys or naval forces.

At 1845 on 31 Aug., 2 enemy planes dropped 2 bombs on Mariupol Port. No damage. At 0310 1 enemy plane dropped 3 bombs on the town area.

The situation in Novorossisk had not changed.

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Minesweeping Activity:

The enemy danger area southeast of Byelosaraika was checked without result.

Minesweeping on the Danube and in Kerch Strait brought no results. While continuing minesweeping off Sevastopol, the Crimea group swept a mine in $44^{\circ} 41.5' N, 33^{\circ} 12.5' E$.

No mines were swept in Kerch Strait or in the Danube.

Supply Traffic:

a) Kerch Strait: As scheduled.

b) Anapa convoys:

At 1730 convoy No. 178 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c) Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 1200 convoy No. 72 put in to Temriuk with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d) Genichesk-Temriuk: No convoys ran owing to lack of cargo.

e) Sea of Azov: For special convoy, see above.

f) Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

(Signed) Kieseritzky

2 September 1943

Simferopol Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported: At 2130 on 1 Sep., 1 vessel off landing area A and 3 vessels off landing area B were attacked by artillery. At 0700 1 gunboat and 2 patrol vessels put in to Ghelenjik. At 0800 1 gunboat put out from Ghelenjik, course southwest. At 1535 2 M.T.B.s put in to Ghelenjik from the southeast.

Daylight air reconnaissance sighted nothing in the Black Sea. Lively freighter traffic off the Turkish coast. A convoy of coastal vessels and small armed vessels was intercepted on passage to Ghelenjik in the area south of Ghelenjik.

According to aerial photographs, the number of enemy ships in Ghelenjik had increased by 3 coastal vessels, 7 motor minesweepers and a number of boats since yesterday. The other ports on the Caucasus coast were not reconnoitered on account of the weather.

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No enemy shipping traffic was reported from the Sea of Azov. Primorsko-Miditari at 0801 (aerial photograph, oblique view): 1 large motor tugboat and some 35 boats. According to radio inference, no large navy vessels were at sea during the night of 1/2 Sep. or throughout the day. Slight activity of small vessels in the East Coast area. Submarines detected: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea, 2 probably in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 submarines and 1 tender in the East Coast area.

No important operations were reported from the Kuban front.

No reports received from the southern front.

Requests were sent to 6th Army Headquarters to provide continuous information on the frontlines on the north coast of the Gulf of Taganrog. 1st U.S. Army Commander, Ukraine was to be simultaneously informed.

At 0250 2 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Iwan Eoba from operations. The boats put out from Iwan Eoba at 1930 on 1 Sep. and, despite continuous deterioration of the weather, they laid the meteorological buoy in the prescribed position from 2225 to 2330. Return passage was made on a direct route because use of weapons would have been very limited on account of the weather.

At 0510 the 2 groups of naval ferry barges put in to Mariupol from the patrol lines east and west of Mariupol. Nothing to report.

At 0530 1 naval ferry barge, 2 naval landing craft (guns) and 2 motor minesweepers (M) put in to Berdyansk with the first transport of wounded men.

At 0500 the vessels employed on patrol duties put in to Terriuk. Nothing to report.

At 0705 5 miles southwest of Zhukovskiy Reg 12 ground-attack aircraft and 3 fighters bombed and machine-gunned large convoy No. 178. Some of the planes also spread a bright yellow or red paste which did not burn or smoke in the air. Statements on the nature of this weapon could not be made because it reached none of the vessels. The planes attacked 3 times at an altitude of 100 to 500 meters. Our anti-aircraft guns shot down 2 ground-attack aircraft and another one was set in fire. No boats were damaged, but 1 man slightly wounded.

Mariupol at 0930:

Weather forecast for Mariupol to Novorossiisk: wind southwest, force 5 - 6, squally with rain, visibility 10 miles.

Sea of Azov: wind south to southeast, force 4 - 5, rain squalls, visibility 10 miles.

In view of the state of readiness of the boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, 142 was ordered to proceed alone from Constantin to Iwan Eoba as her routine deckhand repairs had been completed a few days ago. This was an exceptional case.

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6th Army Headquarters was informed that coastal defense of the north coast of Taganrog Bay has been ensured by suitable vessels. We have promised the amount of sea transportation requested by 6th Army Headquarters, i.e. a daily performance of 500 tons for the evacuation of Mariupol to Berdyansk. The Army has to provide troops and facilities for loading and unloading. It was pointed out that loading facilities in Berdyansk must be improved. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was made responsible for the execution of this transportation.

All competent authorities were informed that the concentration of transport and escort vessels for this requested sea transportation would require immediate reinforcement of anti-aircraft guns in Berdyansk.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was directed to carry out the ordered minelaying operation (see War Diary of 28 Aug.) on the night of 2/3 Sep. In view of the changed situation, he was ordered to lay the mines some 12 miles further west. The Air Forces was asked to provide fighter escort for return passage from 0400, but 4th Air Corps refused the request as impossible at present.

Nevertheless, I decided to carry out the operation. I ordered the 3rd operational group of naval ferry barges to pick up the minelaying formation on the following morning at dawn when leaving their patrol line as reinforcement against aircraft. (?)

4 naval ferry barges of the 3rd operational group were ordered to occupy the patrol line east of Mariupol in pairs on the night of 2/3 Sep.

3 naval ferry barges of the 5th operational group will be available to carry out the transportation assignment in connection with the evacuation of Mariupol.

At 1830 2 naval landing craft (guns), 1 naval ferry barge (hospital), 2 motor minesweepers (RA), 1 tug and lighter put out from Berdyansk for Mariupol. The convoy turned about owing to the weather and put in to Mariupol again at 2020 (wind south to south-east, force 5 - 6).

At 1855 the minelaying formation put out from Mariupol for the operation with 3 naval landing craft (guns) and motor minesweepers R 30, RA 54 and RA 56.

At 1930 5 naval ferry barges and 4 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk on patrol duty. 3 naval ferry barges were lying at readiness in the roads.

U-Boat Situation:

Italian midget submarine GB 6 reported that she was operational, but her operation was postponed on account of the weather. At 1115 U 23 put in to Theodosia to replenish. Important details from the report of her commander: The patrol vessel which was sunk on 24 Aug. was set on fire in close combat with hand grenades and machine-guns, at times U 23 lay alongside her.

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Most of the enemy crew were killed in the action. The patrol vessel was finally destroyed with hand grenades and explosives. No survivors were found. On 25 Aug., a Q-ship was unsuccessfully attacked although her location gear was clearly heard. The location noise was similar to that of the first British Asdic types. U 18 sank the Q-ship on 29 Aug. At 1600, because of the weather, Italian midget submarine CB 3 put in to Ak Mochet from anti-submarine operations. At 1930 U 23 put out for grid square 6410. The boat was ordered to remain as guard for 5 days beside the meteorological buoy, which has been transmitting reports since the morning of 2 Sep. The boat has the task of destroying any enemy forces approaching the buoy or otherwise sighted.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Apart from the reported air raid on the Anapa convoy, there were no raids.

Novorossisk reported harassing artillery bombardment of the entire harbor area and the southern part of the town. The fire abated in the late afternoon hours and at nightfall ceased entirely. Some quarters were hit and 1 man was wounded.

Minesweeping Activity:

On the night of 1/2 Sep., 4 mines were laid according to the plan for minelaying in Novorossisk harbor. The Crimea group continued minesweeping off Sevastopol, but swept no mines. The groups with towed loop gear and skid gear and minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

As there was still an inadequate amount of cargo, supply traffic was greatly reduced despite the shipping space available.

- a) Kerch Strait: Nothing to report.
- b) Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 178 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.
- c) The Kerch-Tarank convoy ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.
- d) The Genichesk-Tarank convoy did not run owing to lack of cargo.
- e) Sea of Azov: The Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put in to Berdyansk because of the weather (see above).
- f) Some Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed because of the weather, otherwise nothing to report.

(Signed) Kieseritzky

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

During the night of 2/3 Sep., the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk did not sight anything owing to the bad weather. At 0900 1 large sea-going tug, 4 gunboats and 1 patrol vessel put in to Ghelenjik from the southeast and at 1000 1 gunboat put out from Ghelenjik to the southwest.

No air reconnaissance results were reported.

No large vessels were detected at sea according to radio inference. Slight activity of small vessels, mostly in the north-eastern Black Sea. 1 submarine was detected in the northwestern Black Sea. Radio observation was greatly impaired by strong thundery disturbances. No important report was received from the Army fronts.

Own Situation:

At 0430 the coastal defense forces put in to Lemriuk. Nothing to report. All the naval ferry barges employed remained in the roads. At 0618 motor minesweeper R 30, the leading boat of the minelaying formation, reported that the operation was carried out and that the formation was proceeding 7 miles southeast of Krivaya Kossa. Owing to the bad weather, 1 naval landing craft (guns) sprang a leak, shipped water at the bow and had to be towed off by the stern. The formation requested fighter escort.

At 0645 R 30 reported that the 4 naval ferry barges from the patrol line had joined the formation west of Krivaya Kossa.

At 0723 another report was received, stating that for some time planes had been circling around the formation, apparently shadowing it.

At 0842 the formation requested fighter escort immediately.

At 0851 they reported bombing and continuous low-level attacks. R 30 was towing 1 naval landing craft (guns).

According to this report one had to assume that the formation was exposed to concentrated enemy air raids. Verbal requests were made at 4th Air Force but they repeated that no fighter escort could be provided on account of the situation on their own coast.

At 0909 motor minesweeper R 30 reported that attempts to tow off the naval landing craft (guns) were postponed because the hawsers kept breaking. Fighter escort was again urgently requested.

When this report was received at 1045, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered by telephone to dispatch 2 tugs with good hawsers escorted by 3 naval ferry barges to assist the formation.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that the van of the formation was already in sight but was making no headway because of the weather. Details could not yet be made out.

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Simferopol at 0930:

Weather forecast for Apatoria: wind northwest, force 5, thundery squalls, visibility 20 miles.

Yalta to Novorossisk: wind southwest to west, force 5 - 7, in thundery squalls increasing to force 9, visibility 20 miles.

Sea of Azov: wind, east to southeast, force 5 - 6, squally, showers, visibility 20 miles.

The E-boats did not operate because of the weather.

Naval Liaison Officer to 4th Air Force reported that the Corps was unable to reinforce the anti-aircraft guns in Berdyansk as requested (see War Diary of 2 Sep.).

Orders issued for the patrol line in the Gulf of Taganrog:

During the night of 3/4 Sep., 4 naval ferry barges of the 1st group of naval ferry barges should occupy the patrol line east of Mariupol as far as our frontline. The boats should put out from Mariupol at 1830, commencing return passage to Mariupol at 0300.

During the night of 3/4 Sep., if the weather is good, the 5th group of naval ferry barges should carry out supply task from Mariupol to Berdyansk in accordance with directions from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine.

At 0955 motor minesweeper R 54 put in to Mariupol towing naval landing craft (guns) No. 8.

At 1054 upon inquiry, motor minesweeper R 30 reported her position as air grid square 7888 (8 miles east of Mariupol).

At 1225 tugs MISL and BRUNIKOLE, escorted by 3 naval ferry barges, put out from Mariupol in an easterly direction to tow off the damaged naval landing craft (guns).

At 1455 motor minesweepers R 56 and R 30 put in to Mariupol. The rest of the formation was some miles off the harbor entrance.

At 1535 naval landing craft (guns) No. 9 and 7 naval ferry barges put in to Mariupol. The following vessels were still at sea: 2 tugs, 2 motor minesweepers (R) and 1 naval landing craft (guns).

At 1630 2 naval ferry barges (mines), motor minesweepers R 216 and 4 submarine chasers put out from Constantza to carry out the special minelaying task in Bosphorus area. The operation will be controlled by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea also reported that he intended to dispatch 5 more motor minesweepers at 0200 on 4 Sep. for the same operation.

At 1855 3 naval ferry barges of the 5th operational group put out from Mariupol for Berdyansk with 2 naval landing craft (guns) and 1 motor sailing vessel.

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At 1850 3 naval ferry barges of the 1st operational group put out from Mariupol on patrol duty.

At 1905 tug MSEL put in to Mariupol. She and another tug are to join the Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy which put out at 1850.

At 1930 6 naval ferry barges and 10 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

At 2000 tug BRAUNKHLE 8 put in to Mariupol. The motor mine-sweepers (RM) put in shortly before.

At 2030 Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla reported by telephone that naval landing craft (guns) No. 2 had been beached on the leeside of the mole. She is to be brought in to the harbor at dawn. At present, the naval landing craft (guns) is drawing about 4 meters. Some parts of the bridge and the guns are still visible. The naval landing craft (guns) was made fast at the mole and is being guarded from there. Final action report of the commander of the minelaying formation has not yet been submitted.

U-Boat Situation:

At 1500 Italian midget submarine CB 2 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations in theatoria Bay. Enemy not sighted. Except for CB 3, which is lying in Ak Mochet, all the other midget submarines are non-operational at present.

U 9 and U 18 were informed of the further increase in landing boats in Zhelenjik during the last few days and were ordered to operate especially against these towed convoys of landing boats proceeding close to the coast.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Apart from the attack on the minelaying formation returning from the Gulf of Toganrog there were no air raids. Throughout the day, heavy harassing artillery and mortar bombardment of the entire harbor district of Novorossisk. Guns of all calibers were used. 1 man was killed and 2 men wounded, all personnel of Naval Port Commander.

At 2135 on 2 Sep., 1 enemy plane penetrated the town area of Berdyansk and dropped 5 bombs.

Minesweeping Activity:

6 more mines were laid in the harbor of Novorossisk. (?) No mine-sweeping was carried out off Sevastopol, in Kerch Strait or in the Sea of Azov because of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

a) Kerch Strait: Nothing to report.

b) Anapa convoys: No convoys ran because of the weather.

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- c) and d) No Touriuk convoys ran owing to lack of cargo.
- e) Sea of Azov:

At 1830 the Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put out with 1 naval ferry barge (hospital), 2 naval landing craft (guns), motor minesweepers RM 2 and 3, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 2020 they put in again because of the weather.

- f) Crimea convoys did not run because of the weather except for 1 Theodosia-Kerch convoy comprising 4 naval ferry barges and 1 tug.

No convoys ran in the northwestern Black Sea because of the weather.

(Signed) Kieseritzky

4 September 1943

Sinferopol Enemy Situation:

From 2140 to 2200 on 3 Sep., the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 4 vessels off landing area B and lively searchlight activity from Cape Boob and Ghelenjik directed to the south and southwest. At 0645 5 vessels were sighted proceeding from the southeast to the beachhead.

Air reconnaissance detected lively traffic close to the Turkish coast: At 1220 2 steamers of some 2,000 G.R.T., course west, 15 miles northwest of Urogli; at 1218 1 Turkish merchantship of 600 tons, 1 freighter of 2,000 - 3,000 tons, 2 freighters of 500 - 800 tons 12 miles northwest of Avanzik; at 1218 1 Turkish gunboat 13 miles northwest of Avanzik; at 1225 2 Turkish merchant ships of 500 - 800 tons 10 miles north of Inebolu; at 1413 1 freight and passenger steamer of 3,000 tons 10 miles north of Anasra and 4 merchantmen totaling 1,500 tons in Anasra harbor.

Otherwise no reports were received from ships in the entire Black Sea area.

No enemy shipping traffic was detected in the reconnaissance area of the Sea of Azov.

Enemy shipping in port: Yuzisk at 0736 (partially covered by clouds): 5 motor gunboats and some 20 boats. Primorsko Akhtari (partially covered by clouds): 2 motor gunboats, 2 small coastal vessels and 75 boats.

The following ships were in Ghelenjik according to rough evaluation of the aerial photographs: 20 motor minesweepers, 10 M.T.B.s, 64 landing craft (personnel), 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,500 tons, and some 40 boats. Results of exact evaluation have not yet been submitted. No large vessels were at sea according to radio inference. Activity of single small vessels in the East Coast area was slight. Submarines detected: presumably 3 in the northwestern Black Sea and 2 in the southwestern Black Sea. At 2030 Anapa radar station located 1 probably M.T.B., course 175° 8 miles west of Anapa. The vessel was proceeding at very high speed making more than 23 knots.

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No important reports from the Army fronts.

Own Situation:

According to the action report of Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, submitted on the minelaying operation in Taganrog Bay carried out during the night of 2/3 Sep., mines were laid in the prescribed position from 0105 to 0140. On account of the weather, they had to be laid in 2 rows of 6 mines each; the plan however was to lay the mines irregularly. At 0430 on return passage, motor minesweeper R 30 had to tow naval landing craft (guns) No. 2 as her bows were flooded. The boats therefore, lost contact with motor minesweepers RA 54 and 56 and naval landing craft (guns) No. 8, until, at 0640 west of Krivaya Kossa, they met the formation of naval ferry barges which was proceeding from the patrol line to reinforce their anti-aircraft defenses. RA 56 had already joined the formation. At 0815 2 enemy planes (fighters) attacked without bombing. From 0830 to 0845 5 bombers attacked with some 25 bombs and machine-guns in 3 run-ins. No damage or casualties. Our anti-aircraft guns could not be used to good effect because of the weather (wind south, force 6, in squalls force 8, heavy showers of rain). Naval landing craft (guns) No. 2 had to be towed by the stern because her bows were quite flooded. The rear gun could still be manned. The towing hawser broke repeatedly in the rough sea. In a violent squall, naval landing craft (guns) No. 2 listed to starboard and sank deeper by the stern. At 1320 the crew was taken aboard by RA 56 and at 1405 tugs ABEL and BRUNNEN 8 took over the towing of naval landing craft (guns) No. 2. They had been despatched from Mariupol to meet the convoy. In the meantime, the guns and deckhouse were under water so that only the port side of the hull was visible. Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla boarded the ABEL. Naval landing craft (guns) No. 2 was beached off the west mole.

At 0500 6 naval ferry barges and 10 combined operations boats put in to Temruk from coastal defense duties. Nothing to report.

Simferopol at 0930:

Weather forecast for Lupatoria to Novorossisk and the Sea of Azov: wind, west to northwest, force 4 - 5, throughout the day force 6, heavy clouds, showers, visibility 15 miles.

If the weather permitted, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to transfer S 28, S 51, S 52 from Ivan Baba to Constantza for repair and routine dockyard periods.

When completed, S 45 and S 42 which had already been repaired, should be transferred from Constantza to Ivan Baba (Provisionally on 6 Sep.)

At present, there are 4 boats ready for operations in Ivan Baba. No operations are intended for the coming night as the weather does not guarantee successful employment of weapons.

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In ASM Gkdos. 5515 A I of 4 Sep., Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to dispose an operational group of 4 naval ferry barges, in the patrol line from 47° 00' N, 37° 41' E to 46° 52' N, 37° 55' E during the night of 4/5 Sep. The operational group should stand on and off along the patrol line in pairs. The boats should put out from Mariupol at 1330 commencing return passage at 0330. The 4 naval ferry barges of 5th Landing Craft Flotilla, 1 freight towing vessel and 2 lighters at present lying in Genichesk waiting for cargo have hitherto been subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for operations. They will now be subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine with immediate effect. So, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine received the 4th operational group of naval ferry barges. The towing vessel and the lighters were to be employed for transportation from Mariupol to Berdyansk.

This transfer also met an Army request for additional tonnage to evacuate the workers of the Azov factory. Apart from the above mentioned 4th operational group of naval ferry barges which still has to be transferred from Genichesk to Mariupol, 3 operational groups of naval ferry barges, each consisting of 4 naval ferry barges, the 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla and an operational group of 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla with R 30 and 4 motor minesweepers (RM) were temporarily subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine for operations. Employment on patrol and escort duty will be ordered by Admiral, Black Sea. Executive orders for the operational groups will be issued by Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. The Mariupol-Berdyansk evacuation transports and, if necessary, the Mariupol-Genichesk transports will be organized directly by Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. For this purpose, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine has formed a transportation staff.

At 1300 XANTEN and submarine chaser No. 2304 put out from Constantza for anti-submarine operations south of Cape Satch. At dawn on 6 Sep., both the vessels should join a Constantza-Sevastopol convoy proceeding via the southern route to reinforce the escort.

At 1430 naval landing craft (guns) No. 2, assisted by BRAUNSCHELE 8 and a crane of the shipyard, was brought to the shipyard.

At 1850 the 2nd operational group of naval ferry barges put out from Mariupol with 2 naval ferry barges and 1 naval landing craft (guns) for the patrol line east of Mariupol as far as our frontline.

Contrary to the first orders to occupy the patrol line from 47° 00' N, 37° 41' E to 46° 52' N, 37° 55' E, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine occupied the patrol line east of Mariupol close to the coast because the announced withdrawal of the frontline up to 6 km. east of Mariupol had not yet been carried out.

At 1930 6 naval ferry barges and 6 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duty in Temriuk Bay.

U-Boat Situation:

At 1545 Italian midget submarine CE 3 put out from Isk Mechet to operate in the Buratic area during the night of 4/5 Sep. and put in to Sevastopol on 5 Sep. CE 1 reported that she was ready for operations.

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3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba at 1930 for dockyard repairs and exchange of engines in Constantza.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

During the day, no air raids were carried out on convoys or naval forces. During the evening hours of 3 Sep., Mariupol reported several enemy penetrations without bombing; the planes machine-gunned the searchlights of Naval Port Commander. Novorossisk reported mortar bombardment of the entire harbor area and the southern part of the town. The quarters of Naval Commander received a direct hit. 1 man was killed in action and 1 man slightly wounded.

Minesweeping Activity:

The minesweeping formations were not employed because of the weather. At 0745 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the explosion of 4 mines at sea (?). The cause was not discovered. 10 more mines were laid in the harbor Novorossisk.

Supply Traffic:

Supply traffic to the Kuban bridgehead is still very slight owing to lack of cargo.

a) Kerch Strait: Nothing to report.

b) Anapa convoys:

At 1745 Anapa convoy No. 179 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort and anchored off Cape Tkil.

c) and d) No Temriuk convoys ran owing to lack of cargo.

e) Sea of Azov:

At 1730 Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy No. 1 put out from Berdyansk with 1 naval ferry barge (hospital), 1 motor sailing vessel, 1 tug and 1 lighter escorted by 3 naval ferry barges. At 1855 Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy No. 2 put out from Mariupol with 1 motor sailing vessel, 1 tug, 1 lighter, 2 transport cutters, 4 naval ferry barges and 1 naval landing craft (guns).

f) Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

(Signed) Kieseritzky

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

At 1730 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 1 minesweeper, course southwest, putting out from Galenjik. There are no reports on reconnaissance on the night of 4/5 September because the plane failed to return. Daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea reported no enemy vessels. Slight traffic was detected off the Turkish coast. No reconnaissance reports were received from the Sea of Azov.

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The exact evaluation of yesterday's reconnaissance photographs confirmed the numbers of enemy ships in port reported yesterday according to rough evaluation. Slight activity of small vessels in the East Coast area according to radio inference. Air reconnaissance and air activity were detected west and southwest of the Crimean area in the afternoon.

At 2225 1 submarine was located 55 miles southwest of Cape Berich. Submarines detected: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea during the day and 1 in an unidentified position probably in the southwestern Black Sea. From 1916 to 1939 Anapa radio station reported locating enemy planes en route Brown between Maria Magdalena Bank and Anapa. Mining suspected. No important operations were reported from the Army front. The announced withdrawal of the front as far as 6 km. east of Mariupol has not yet been carried out.

Air Situation:

- 0425 Naval auxiliary lighter No. 8 and 2 naval ferry barges put in to Mariupol from the patrol line east of Mariupol. Nothing to report.
- 0500 Six naval ferry barges and 6 combined operations boats put in to Terriuk from patrol duties. Nothing to report.
- 0625 Three ground attack aircraft dropped 6 bombs on the Dnyansk convoy as it entered port. No casualties, no planes shot down.
- 0721 Four Boston bombers and 3 IL 2 planes bombed and machine-gunned Anapa convoy No. 179 in air grid square 6689. The attack was carried out from an altitude of 500-600 meters; the planes glided down to 20 meters and made repeated single attacks. At 0730 6 IL 2 planes bombed and machine-gunned the convoy a second time. Our anti-aircraft guns scored several hits and 2 planes were seen ablaze as they made off. Naval ferry barge F 326 was damaged by bombs and 3 men were wounded. Our fighter defenses reported 3 planes shot down.
- 0730 3 28, 51 and 52 put in to Constantza from Ivan Baba for their routine dockyard period or repairs.

Weather for east (Simferopol 0930):

Ukrainia - Novorossiisk: W - NE winds, force 3, sea wind by day, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Sea of Azov: W winds, force 3 - 4, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate against enemy supply traffic close to the Caucasus coast off Vulkan Valley during the night of 5/6 September. The boats should put out from Ivan Baba at 1630 and leave the operational area at 0130 on 6 September. Outward and return passage at a certain distance from the coast. Anti-submarine operations are forbidden as U 23 is in the vicinity of the meteorological buoy laid by 1st E-Boat Flotilla and U 9 is on return passage from the Caucasus coast heading for Cape Moranom and will therefore

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probably pass through the area by which 1st E-Boat Flotilla approaches and returns during the night of 5/6 September. On the night of 4/5 September the deep minefield off the Bosphorus was laid as planned.

According to a report from the officer commanding the formation, the minelaying operation was not observed. With immediate effect, 7th Landing Craft Flotilla is also subordinated for operations to Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea. Of the 7 naval ferry barges of 7th Landing Craft Flotilla now in commission, 4 are at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea for escort tasks etc. He has been ordered to transfer the 3 remaining naval ferry barges to Kerch via Sevastopol as soon as possible and to place them at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to be used in the Gotenkopf supply traffic. The 2 naval ferry barges of 1st Landing Craft Flotilla hitherto assigned to Commander, Convoys and Escorts should also be dispatched to Kerch as quickly as possible. As Admiral, Black Sea does not have suitable mines to mine the harbor at Mariupol should the port be evacuated, 1st Air Corps was requested to make some 50 LMB mines available for this purpose. They were to be transported by sea from Kerch to Mariupol. 1st Air Corps was requested to give information if and when the mines could be allotted. On 4 September, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was directed to speed up the transfer of towing vessel "Junak" and a lighter with coal cargo from Berdyansk to Kerch. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to place 2 naval gunnery lighters and 1 motor minesweeper (RA) at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to escort and give navigational aid for this transfer. After the execution of the task, the naval gunnery lighters and the motor minesweeper (RA) return immediately to Berdyansk where they will again be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine.

Army Group South and 4th Air Force were simultaneously informed of the directive sent to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine in which he was directed to dispose 1 operational group of naval ferry barges into the patrol line east of Mariupol as far as our frontline from nightfall to dawn every day until the Army front is withdrawn to the Kalnius position. When the front is withdrawn, there will be no need to occupy this patrol line and the patrol line of 4 and in exceptional cases 3 naval gunnery lighters as ordered on 4 September (see War Diary 4 September) should be occupied instead.

The reinforcement of the minesweeping forces at present at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus is considered necessary in view of the increase in transport traffic to the Gotenkopf bridgehead expected in the next days.

Accordingly the above orders concerning the transfer of towing vessel "Junak" and a lighter from Berdyansk to Kerch and their later return were canceled and Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to run the convoy with 1 naval gunnery lighter, 1 motor minesweeper (RA) and motor minesweeper R 30. On arrival at Kerch, R 30 and the motor minesweeper (RA) will be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus. The order for return passage of the naval gunnery lighter will follow later.

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- 1540- Three WB 3 planes attacked the Burgas convoy (Constantza-
1543 Sevastopol) in air grid square 1535. Although they approached with the sun behind them, the enemy planes were driven off by our anti-aircraft guns.
- 1550 Another attack was made, the planes again coming out of the sun. The planes spread out and flew in at a low altitude. No bombing was observed as the planes were driven off by anti-aircraft guns before they reached the convoy. No hits on the planes were observed. At 1510 3 WB 3 planes made another attack in air grid square 1544, running in from ahead in wide spread formation. Two planes were driven off by anti-aircraft guns, but the third broke through the fire of the guns and dropped several bombs 25 meters ahead of the escorting destroyer. The planes flew off apparently undamaged.
- 1630 Simferopol reported that the operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla had to be abandoned because of the weather.
- 1847 Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported from Mariupol that at the request of the Army 300 rounds would be fired by naval gunnery lighters on the enemy front near Besymonivka and Cricheff at dawn on the night of 5/6 September. One naval gunnery lighter and 2 naval ferry barges would protect the formation to seaward.
- 2130 The vessels on patrol duty anchored off the harbor entrance because of the weather.

U-boat Situation:

At 0155 a radiogram was received from U 9 stating that she has to commence return passage as both compasses, the after periscope and the multi-unit hydrophones had broken down. The boat is steering for the Crimean coast by the stars. She reported that she would arrive at Cape Naganin at dawn on 6 September. She was ordered not to make for Cape Naganin but for point Brown 6 and to report her arrival at this point by short signal. She will be met by 2 naval ferry barges which will escort her to Sevastopol. U 9 was informed of the position of U 23 in air grid square 6410 near the meteorological buoy. From 2000 on 5 September, anti-submarine operations are forbidden in the area between Theodosia and Sevastopol. Coastal authorities have been informed. U 9 and U 23 will be informed of the operational plans of 1st E-Boat Flotilla on the night of 5/6 September.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

For air raids on convoys and naval forces, see above.

At 1624 2 enemy planes penetrated to Mariupol without bombing. At 1705 the battery of Level Port Dzhurdor, the harbor area and the vessels lying there were machine-gunned by 2 enemy planes.

Novorossisk: Situation unchanged.

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Minesweeping Activity:

The extension of the minefield in the harbor of Novorossisk was completed by the laying of 32 more LMB mines.

Sevastopol: 6 more mines were swept by the Crimea group while continuing minesweeping off the northwestern tip in the minefield.

Kerch: No ground mines were swept by the anti-mine escort of Anapa convoy No. 179 in Kerch Strait or en route Red between points 15 and 220.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Nothing to report.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 179 ran with anti-mine escort and 7 naval ferry barges. For air raid, see above. At 1410 convoy No. 180 put out from Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort and anchored off Zhulezni dog.

c. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 1645 convoy No. 73 put out from Kerch with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 motor sailing vessel, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter and anchored in Vasovka Bay.

d. Owing to lack of cargo, no Genichesk-Temriuk convoys.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 1900 the Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put out from Berdyansk with 1 naval gunnery lighter, 4 naval ferry barges, 1 motor sailing vessel, 2 tugs, 1 lighter and 2 transport cutters. The vessels returned to Berdyansk at 2100 because of the weather.

At 1700 the Genichesk-Mariupol convoy put out from Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 freight towing vessel and 1 lighter. At 1900 the Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy put out from Mariupol with 2 naval gunnery lighters, 5 naval ferry barges, motor minesweepers RA 30 and RA 52, 2 tugs, 2 lighters and 12 transport cutters.

f. Crimea convoys ran as scheduled. Convoys ran in the western Black Sea. For air raid on the Constantza-Sevastopol convoy, see above.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

From 2200 to 2300 on 5 September the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 4 vessels off

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landing area B. Daylight air reconnaissance detected slight traffic off the Turkish coast. No reports of sightings were received from the Black Sea area. Of the ports on the Caucasus coast, only Ghelenjik was reconnoitered. Enemy shipping in port showed no special change. No enemy shipping traffic was observed in the Sea of Azov.

Yeisk at 0740 (aerial photograph): 10 motor gunboats, 5 coastal vessels and some 50 boats. Prinorsko Mhtari at 0755: 1 motor gunboat and 1 coastal vessel. No activity of large surface vessels was detected from radio traffic. Some small vessels were identified in the east coast area.

Submarines detected: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea and 1 in an unidentified position, presumably in the southwestern Black Sea. In the forenoon, enemy naval planes were observed reconnoitering the southern to southwestern Crimean coast. Bomber activity in the same area in the afternoon.

Own Situation:

An amplified report was received on the aerial torpedo and bomb attack on the convoy from Constantza to Sevastopol reported yesterday:

At 1540 (5 September), 3 torpedo planes were sighted far off to the south in $44^{\circ} 33.2' N$, $31^{\circ} 07' E$. They were shelled with 7.5 cm. and 12 cm. anti-aircraft guns. The planes approached from the east and launched 3 torpedoes at long range without effect. At 1708 the convoy was attacked from ahead by torpedo planes in $44^{\circ} 39.3' N$, $31^{\circ} 24.5' E$, course 070° . When the anti-aircraft guns fired, the plane on the right turned off without dropping any torpedoes. The second plane approached, curving slightly from the port bow and launched a torpedo at long range without success.

When naval ferry barge F 583 was being loaded on the shore west of Cape Ojuk, she capsized. The accident took place at 2130 (5 September) when the boat was attempting to make off from the beach (E winds, force 5 - 7, squally, sea 5).

F 307 and F 577 attempted to tow her off, but were unsuccessful because of the darkness and the increasing swell. Making another attempt at 0230, F 577 herself ran aground but was towed off by F 307. The attempts were then given up and F 307 and F 577 put in to Theodosia. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus dispatched tug "Kreuzenstein" and 2 naval ferry barges to give assistance, but the attempts to tow the ship off had to be abandoned because of the weather. They were to be continued on 7 September if the weather was suitable.

0430 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 3, 4 and 8 and 2 naval ferry barges put in to Mariupol. The formation had been assigned to shell the enemy coast near Bosenyovka and Orichoff, but because of the weather the operation had to be abandoned before carrying out the bombardment.

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0500 Six boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. They are lying in the channel because it was impossible for them to remain in the roads on account of the weather.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Temporarily - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: NE - E winds, force 5 - 6, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to run convoys and supply transports between Mariupol and Berdyansk at night only. Exceptions can be made in cases of emergency e.g. if the weather prevents sufficient shipping from reaching Mariupol. Convoys of naval ferry barges only will run without naval gunnery lighter escort, but towed convoys must be escorted by as many naval gunnery lighters as are available. Since under these circumstances a meeting of the convoys by night cannot be prevented, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine has been ordered to ensure that convoys are instructed as to where the meetings will take place.

Night passage cannot be avoided because lack of planes prevents the allocation of fighter escort for the convoys in the Sea of Azov and with the present lively air activity losses would be inevitable with daylight passage. The Army and Air Force have been informed accordingly.

1227 In $44^{\circ} 22.5'$ N, $33^{\circ} 43.5'$ E two three-engined and 3 twin-engined planes flew over the Burgas convoy from the northeast at an altitude of 3,500 meters. The planes dropped no bombs, but the anti-aircraft guns opened up. At 1237 the planes ran in a second time, dropping 4 bombs far away to port. At 1250 4 bombers flew in a third time from the east. Six bombs were dropped without result between the destroyer "Floria" and Burgas. Simultaneous machine-gunning wounded 1 man on board naval transport No. 25. Prompt, well-aimed anti-aircraft fire prevented accurate bombing. The fighter escort with the convoy accounted for 1 plane and another enemy plane was probably shot down. At 0535 the convoy sighted a Russian reconnaissance plane far ahead of the convoy.

1925 Temriuk reported that the patrol line Temriuk Bay could not be occupied because of the weather (NE - E winds, force 6 - 7, sea 4 - 5).

2050 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 3 and 8 put out from Mariupol for the patrol line in the area southeast of Mariupol.

U-boat Situation:

At 1135 U 9 escorted by 2 naval ferry barges put in to Sevastopol from the abandoned operation. On 28 August, the boat operated against the enemy destroyers reported by air reconnaissance. At 1345 (28 August) she sighted 3 destroyers, 2 of the "Chevny" class and flotilla leader "Charkov" 20 miles northeast of Inebolu, course 090°, speed 20 knots.

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No air-zapping. At 1350 U 9 submerged and began to attack "Charkov", but she dipped and the target sailed off. As the gyro-angling gear was wrongly set and the periscope tipped, the desired angled shot had to be forgone. U 9 pursued the target but, owing to the high speed of the enemy, could not attack again. The position for attack was rightly chosen by the operational command, but the boat did not succeed. At 0735 on 30 August, U 9 arrived in the Batum operational area where she detected no traffic. At 1605 on 31 August, the boat was recognized at periscope depth by an IER 3 plane and was attacked with accurate bombs and depth charges. As a result of this attack, the periscope for air targets and the multi-unit hydrophones broke down. At 0745 on 1 September, the boat left the operational area off Batum and at 1200 laid an IES mine in the area northwest of Poti as ordered. At 1800 the boat arrived in the operational area off Sukhum.

At 2010 on 4 September, it was discovered that the gyro-compass had broken down. As this could not be repaired on board and the magnetic compass had already broken down on the second day at sea, the operation was broken off and U 9 commenced return passage.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

For air raid on the "barras" convoy, see above.

At 1215 5 Boston bombers flew over Yalta without dropping any bombs. Our anti-aircraft guns were unsuccessful. At 1504 the 5 Bostons flew in again and dropped 25 to 30 bombs which landed across the harbor and on the town district of Massandra. Apart from a hit on the mole, no damage or casualties. Our anti-aircraft guns failed to bring any planes down.

Marjupol: At 140 and again at 2243 on 5 September, 1 plane penetrated without bombing. At 0315 2 bombs landed in the harbor. No damage.

Situation in Novorossiisk unaltered.

Minesweeping Activity:

The search for ground mines in the Danube from Mile 522 to Mile 556 and from Mile 397 to Mile 420 brought no results.

Novostopol: Minesweeping was abandoned because of the weather.

Kerch: 3 drifting horned mines were destroyed by rifle fire between Brown 19 and 20 by the anti-mine escort of the Anapa convoy.

Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in Kerch Strait. No mines swept. No mine minesweeping was carried out because of the weather.

Two mines exploded in the rough sea on the supply route to Anapa.

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Reference the unexplained explosion of 4 mines reported in the War Diary of 4 September, it was later reported that the mines exploded at 0745 between 80 meters north of the small gye at the mole and the center of the harbor entrance. The type of these mines could not be accurately determined as there were various types used to mine this area.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Ferry traffic was held up by the weather.

b. Anapa convoys:

The convoy No. 180 ran as scheduled with 4 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Tenriuk convoys:

At 1550 convoy No. 73 put in again with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 motor sailing vessel, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter because of the weather.

d. No Genichesk-Tenriuk convoys ran because of the weather.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 1100 the Genichesk-Mariupol convoy returned to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter because of the weather. At 1700 the Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put out from Berdyansk with 9 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Despite the weather, Crimea convoys ran as scheduled.

Convoys also ran in the western Black Sea. For air raid on the Constantza-Sevastopol convoy, see above.

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Siniferopol Enemy Situation:

From 2200 to 2330 (6 September), the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossiisk observed 15 vessels off landing area B which were shelled by artillery. From 0900 to 1300 3 minesweepers, 2 motor minesweepers, 6 gunboats, 6 M.T.B.s and 1 sea-going tug with 5 lighters, each about 100 to 150 tons, put in to Chelenjik from the south. Three M.T.B.s were sighted at 1407 and 1 tug of some 400 - 600 tons and 2 minesweepers at 1455 putting in to Chelenjik from the southeast. On the night of 6/7 September, night air reconnaissance detected slight activity of small vessels off the northern Caucasus coast. Daylight air reconnaissance reported no enemy forces in the Black Sea. The ports on the Caucasus coast were not reconnoitered. No enemy shipping traffic was detected in the reconnaissance area in the Sea of Azov. Four motor gunboats were detected in Primorsko Akhtari harbor. This meant that the enemy had retransferred some of their motor gunboats to Primorsko Akhtari. No activity of large enemy vessels according to radio traffic. Slight activity of small vessels in the east coast area.

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Several motor launches and small vessels were at sea in Primorsk, Kiptori area. Submarines detected: 5 in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the Crimean coast and the southwestern Black Sea. One submarine was detected at sea in an unidentified position tuned to reception. It was reported from the Kuban bridgehead that several enemy attacks in battalion strength had been repulsed, some at the expense of high losses.

Gen. Situation:

At 0350 the naval gunnery lighters employed on patrol duty put in at Mariupol. Nothing to report.

At 0922 the "Kreuzenstein" and 3 naval ferry barges put out from Tbilissia to tow off naval ferry barge F 583 which had run aground west of Gruz.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Europe - Khoroshevsk and S of Azov: NE winds, force 5, cloudy, local showers, visibility 15 miles.

The 4 naval ferry barges, tug "Fischer" and 1 lighter placed at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine which had to return to Genuichesk because of the weather were again subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus with immediate effect for transport tasks to the bridgehead.

Net Barrage Group, Black Sea was informed that the net barrage to protect the bridge between Yankale and Rossa Chuska (Kerch Strait) had been omitted.

1st Air Corps H.Q. reported that in view of the few fighters available it would in future generally not be possible to decide whether fighter escort for convoys could be provided by German planes until the morning of the day of the operation when the land and air situation were known.

1st Air Corps also pointed out that fighter escort for convoys far out at sea would be much more difficult as more forces would be required than for the protection of convoys proceeding close to the coast. Off the western Crimean coast German fighters would give protection as before.

That would mean that convoys which had to put out in the evening to reach their place of destination by day would have to be dispatched without promise of fighter escort by German fighters. However, this state of affairs can be accepted for the night convoys which are particularly threatened because the convoy route runs in the direct vicinity of Anapa airfield. German fighters lie there at immediate readiness and according to past experience approaching enemy planes are reported early by land and sea T kil ruler stations and this will enable the fighters to take off in good time.

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Upon request, 4th Air Force was given detailed information of the following losses and damage sustained by the 12 light naval vessels as they returned from Taganrog on 30 August after an operation which 6th Army H.Q. had urgently requested.

Owing to lack of fighter escort the formation was continuously attacked by planes. 110 impacts were counted on 9 vessels, inflicting 15 slight and 16 serious cases of damage. When they put in, four of the vessels were declared unfit for operations as a result of the damage. In this operation casualties amounted to 3 men killed and 15 men wounded i.e. 10% of the crews of the vessels involved (see War Diary of 30 August).

- 1330 A hopper barge sank in the main Dnieper fairway off Kherson abreast of buoy No. 7. It was suspected that she struck a mine and the fairway was closed.
- 1700 Tug "Kreuzenstein" abandoned the attempt to tow off naval ferry barge F 583 and put in to Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges.
- 1940 Temriuk reported that the patrol lines could not be occupied because of the weather.
- 2010 Four naval gunnery lighters put out from Mariupol for the patrol line southeast of Mariupol.

U-boat Situation:

Commander, 30th U-boat Flotilla reported that U 20 would probably not be ready to put out until 14 September as the wrong spare parts for her multi-unit hydrophones had been delivered. The boat was ordered to carry out a minelaying operation in the Batum area. She was equipped with 9 TMB mines, five with period delay mechanism 1 and four with period delay mechanism 5 to be laid mixed. None of the mines has a timing system, clockwork setting switch IIa or a time setting for 6 hours. It was planned to have U 9 transferred to Constantza with the next Sevastopol-Constantza convoy.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Throughout the day there were no air raids on convoys or naval forces. At 2050 (6 September) Mariupol reported an enemy penetration without bombing. Novorossisk reported a few bombs on the east and west harbors and slight artillery and mortar fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Dnube: Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines from Mile 325 to Mile 349. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: The Crimea group broke off minesweeping because of the weather. Minesweeping planes search for ground mines. No mines swept.

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Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Traffic was held up by the weather.

b. Inga convoys:

At 1445 convoy No. 181 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort and anchored off Zheleni Bay.

c. and d. No convoys ran owing to lack of cargo and because of the weather.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 1830 the Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy put out from Mariupol with 8 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 2 lighters, 2 cutters, 1 transport cutter and 4 motor minesweepers (101). The Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put in again owing to the weather.

f. Crimean convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed for 24 hours because of the weather.

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Chief naval Base Situation:

At 1455 on 7 September, the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol sighted 1 tug of some 400 to 500 tons and 2 minesweepers putting in to Zhelenjik from the southeast. Air reconnaissance on the night of 7/8 September reported no enemy forces. At 1650 10 ships of up to 5,000 tons were detected in the harbor. Otherwise no reports from daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea. No enemy traffic was detected in the Sea of Azov. Enemy shipping in port was unchanged. Light activity of small vessels in the east coast area. Four submarines were detected at sea turned to reception, 2 in the western to southwestern Black Sea and 2 in the east coast area. The enemy succeeded in making a small penetration at the Kerkennik bridgehead front. Counter-attacks are in preparation with a view to mopping them up.

Own Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol reported that, acting on orders from Army Division H.C., he had again assumed command of the entire harbor area for defense purposes.

0415 Four naval gunnery lighters put in to Mariupol from the patrol line south of Mariupol. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Chief naval C/30):

Evaporator - Sevastopol and Sea of Azov: NE winds, force 5-6, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

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Four of the naval ferry barges now employed on patrol duty in Temriuk were withdrawn and engaged in traffic in Kerch Strait. Until the naval gunnery lighters at present employed in the Gulf of Tiganrog return to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus the patrol line in Temriuk Bay will always be occupied by 2 naval ferry barges. General Busse, Chief of General Staff, Army Group South, requested that the naval ferry barges employed in Mariupol-Berdyansk traffic should also proceed by day without fighter escort in an all-out operation. I had ordered that sea transports had to run by night because of the continuous enemy air raids and lack of German fighters. This had of course reduced the transportation performance. A further drop in transportation was caused by the bad weather of the last few days.

I telephoned the following to Chief of General Staff, Army Group South: In view of possible losses in an all-out operation can only be carried out if our troops have suddenly to withdraw. In that event, tonnage will be assured. Vessels in the Black Sea cannot be replaced and, after the evacuation of Mariupol, they will be urgently required for tasks of Army Group A. Hence, an all-out transportation operation to remove commercial goods from the Mariupol area is impossible and moreover is a railroad there. The lack of fighter escort made it primarily necessary for the convoys to proceed by night and this led to certain delays. The delays which occurred during the last 48 hours were caused by the weather. In view of the tasks for Army Group A, no further tonnage will be available in the Black Sea beyond the vessels already provided. Naval Group South has been informed.

A communication was sent to Army Group A with copy to Naval Group South, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q. informing them that all available vessels would be used for transportation to the bridgehead except those already employed in the Kerch area. Four naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter which had been employed with Army Group South had already been ordered to Kerch.

The following vessels hitherto employed in transportation in the western Black Sea will be dispatched with all speed:

4 ships totaling 1,300 tons, 2 tugs, 2 lighters now lying in Sevastopol, 5 more naval ferry barges, 6 tugs and 10 lighters from Rumanian ports and Odessa. The naval ferry barges and lighters which are still employed in the Gulf of Tiganrog for Army Group South will reinforce the ferrying forces in Kerch Strait as soon as they have carried out their task there. Experiences of last spring showed that the transportation performance greatly depends on the weather. In northeast winds, Kerch-Temriuk and Genichesk-Temriuk traffic cannot run. Loading activity on the Tman coast is also badly impeded or had even to be suspended.

2030 Four naval gunnery lighters put in to Mariupol from the patrol line south of Kerch.

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- 2030 Two naval ferry barges and 7 combined operations boats put out from Tauriuk on patrol duty. At 2200 the 7 combined operations boats put in again because of the weather.
- 2317 The report of Italy's capitulation was received in Simferopol. The Italian ridget submarine flotilla controlled by Admiral, Black Sea was placed under guard with all their equipment. For the time being, officers and crews will remain in their quarters under open arrest.

U-boat Situation:

U 23 commenced return passage to Constantza and reported that she would arrive off Constantza at 1800 on 9 September.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Throughout the day there were no air raids on convoys or naval forces. At 1200 3 enemy planes machine-gunned and bombed Berdyansk lighthouse from an altitude of 200 - 300 meters. No damage. Several planes penetrated to Mariupol, but dropped no bombs.

Minesweeping Activity:

No minesweeping was carried out because of the weather. Three mine explosions were observed by Anapa convoy No. 181 in the vicinity of the supply route. The explosions were believed to have been caused by the rough sea.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Increased convoys were organized as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 181 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c. Kerch-Tauriuk convoys:

Convoy No. 73, comprising 1 naval ferry barge, 1 freight towing vessel and 1 lighter, did not put out because of the weather. At 1520 4 naval ferry barges put in to Kerch from Tauriuk.

d. Sea of Azov:

The Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy ran as scheduled with 1 tug, 2 lighters, 4 motor minesweepers (IM), 2 cutters and 8 naval ferry barges.

At 1800 the Berdyansk-Mariupol convoy put out from Berdyansk with 1 naval gunnery lighter, 10 naval ferry barges, 2 motor sailing vessels, 2 tugs and 2 lighters.

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At 1630 the Yenichesk-Kerch convoy put out from Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 freight towing vessel and 2 lighters. At 2125 the Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy put out from Mariupol with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 motor minesweeper (M) and 1 transport cutter.

- e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed because of the weather.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

At 0505 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 2 M.T.B.s putting out from Ghelenjik to the southwest. At 1300 1 sea-going tug with 3 lighters (800, 400 and 200 tons) and 3 minesweepers put in to Ghelenjik from the southeast.

During the night of 8/9 September, air reconnaissance did not report any enemy forces. Morning reconnaissance in the northeastern Black Sea was also without result.

At about 0700 2 motor gunboats were reported in the Sea of Azov northeast of Yeisk, heading for Yeisk. Enemy shipping in the ports on the southern coast of the Sea of Azov was unchanged. The ports on the Caucasus coast were not reconnoitered.

At the Ku an Bridgehead frontline, an attack by an enemy battalion was repulsed and enemy assemblies were destroyed by dive-bombers and artillery fire.

According to radio traffic, there were no large vessels at sea. Activity of small vessels still slight. One submarine was detected in the eastern Black Sea and more are believed to be in the northwestern and southwestern Black Sea. At about 2100 on 9 September, 6th Army H.Q. reported that Mariupol would be evacuated in the early hours of 10 September and that the Navy would have to ensure the blasting of the harbor installations. The necessary preparations had already been made as far as was possible.

Army Group South ordered partial evacuation in the area east of the river Dnieper including the Dnieper frontline.

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that orders had been issued for the withdrawal of the front to the Siegfried line and presumably would be carried out within the next few days. Naval Meteorological Station, Myshako was to be evacuated on the evening of 9 September. The observation post on Sapun mountain and Novorossisk radio station will operate until the frontline is withdrawn.

Own Situation:

Approximately 100 enemy soldiers and partisans landed near Yalta (southwest of Mariupol) in the early hours of 8 September. Defensive action was immediately taken and some 30 men were killed and 1 lieutenant and 23 partisans taken prisoner. The rest retreated to Samarina Balka.

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About 1200 the enemy was encircled and totally destroyed. 35 more men were killed, 6 soldiers who took flight to the sea were drowned and 1 soldier and 4 partisans were taken prisoner. The main company of Naval Shore Commander took part in the fighting. Army troops annihilated small sections of the enemy which had pushed through to Artyush. German casualties: 1 man killed and 3 men wounded. It was later reported that in the course of these engagements 15 Rumanians were liberated and 1 anti-tank rifle, 3 heavy machine-guns and 7 tommy-guns were captured.

0345 Four naval gunnery lighters put out from Mariupol for the patrol line south of Mariupol. Nothing to report.

0515 Two naval ferry barges put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk: NE - E winds, force 4 - 5, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Sea of Azov: NE winds, force 3 - 4, fair, visibility 15 miles.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was instructed to arrange that the parts of the net barrage in Merch which were meant for the Inapa barrage should be made available for blocking Merch harbor. He was also to ensure that the Inapa net barrage should be lifted promptly, if possible at once, and towed to Merch. It was to be used for the Merch barrage.

In answer to a query, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was informed orders had been issued for the retransfer of motor minesweeper R 30 and 1 motor minesweeper (M) to his command. For the time being, 2 more motor minesweepers (M) will remain in the Sea of Azov at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, but they should be returned to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus as soon as possible.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was also directed to dispose 2 naval ferry barges in the patrol line in Temriuk Bay and when 1 naval gunnery lighter arrived from Berdyuzhsk to send 1 naval gunnery lighter and 2 naval ferry barges. To avoid a reduction in transportation, the naval ferry barges in the patrol line should where possible also be employed in transportation, e. g. naval ferry barges with cargo which put in to Merch at dawn. The task of the boats on patrol should not only be to protect the Army flank but also to patrol the sea transportation routes at the same time. Orders were issued to Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast to dispatch naval ferry barges F 132 and F 335 which were employed off the southern Crimean coast to Merch as quickly as possible. They will then be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for ferry traffic. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was instructed to take F 301 and F 304 at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts,

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Crimoean Coast to replace them as convoy escorts off the southern Crimoean coast. The former task of increasing the escort forces on the Sevastopol-Cape Tarkhan route by using naval ferry barges will be suspended until naval ferry barges can be returned from Kerch. Naval Group South inquired whether it would be advisable to employ naval ferry barges as escort forces for the increasing Bosphorus-Varna traffic and was given the following answers:

In view of the slight speed of the naval ferry barges, their employment as escorts for Bosphorus-Varna steamer convoys seems ill-advised, as the cruising speed would have to be reduced to about 7 knots and the steamers would therefore be in greater danger from submarine attacks. Moreover, with the present demands of Army Group A and Army Group South, no naval ferry barges can be made available for escort duties in the near future.

As the crane installations in Mariupol broke down, the LTB mines which were made available by the Air Force for minelaying in Mariupol harbor were transferred to Berdyansk. It is planned that naval gunnery lighters and possibly naval ferry barges from Berdyansk should lay the mines in Mariupol harbor. If minelaying should not be possible should Mariupol be evacuated prematurely, the LTB should be used for irregular minelaying off the entrance to the Gulf of Taganrog between Kossn Byelesraika and Kossn Dol'nya outside the 6-meter line. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine has been directed to make the necessary preparations after the arrival of the mines in Berdyansk. Further orders for minelaying will then be issued from here.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to dispatch all naval ferry barges and lighters with cargo for Genichesk and Harbor Defense Flotilla, Genichesk to Genichesk on 10 September. Four naval gunnery lighters, 4 naval ferry barges, 1 motor minesweeper (all), Harbor Defense Flotilla, Berdyansk and Harbor Defense Flotilla, Mariupol should remain in Berdyansk for defense purposes etc. All the other unloaded naval ferry barges, motor minesweepers (all), motor minesweeper R 30 and naval gunnery lighters should be dispatched for Kerch with the Berdyansk-Kerch convoy on 10 September.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was ordered not to send naval transport No. 25 with the scheduled Sevastopol-Constantza convoy but to dispatch her from Sevastopol to Kerch as soon as possible for employment in the ferry traffic in Kerch Strait.

Reference the transfer of authority for the defense of the entire harbor area in Nevorossisk to the naval port commander reported in the War Diary of 3 September, it was pointed out to 17th Army H.Q. via Naval Liaison Officer that the naval port commander's forces cannot be reinforced for this task. 17th Army H.Q. must decide whether the defense of the harbor area would be possible with the forces now available to the naval port commander.

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Group South reported that it was at present impossible to transfer naval ferry barges to the Aegean Sea as a result of a veto enforced by the Turkish Government, but it was planned to load motor boats on freighters.

- 1340 Naval Harbor Master, Ochakov reported that a probable magnetic mine exploded 15 meters astern of the Russian tug "DMO 1" in Ochakov roads. Three men were wounded and a small leak was repaired on board.
- 2200 Tourink reported that the coastal defense forces could not put out on account of the weather (NE winds, force 5 - 6, sea 4).
- 2225 A report was received from motor minesweeper M. 54 in the Gulf of Taganrog (on passage from Berdyansk to Mariupol) that she had been attacked by several gunboats in air grid square 7762. No further details were given.

U-boat Situation:

At 1300 U 23 put in to Constantza from operations.

At 1825 U 9 put out from Sevastopol for Constantza.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Throughout the day there were no air raids on naval forces or convoys.

At 0400 on 8 September, 1 probably Russian M.T.B. was sighted off Illekine and was shelled by our anti-tank guns southwest of Mariupol. The M.T.B. replied to the fire with 2 cm. guns and then turned off towards Yeisk. At 1230 on 8 September, several Russian M.T.B.s shelled the village of Lycosaraika with 2 cm. guns. No damage was reported. At 2355 on 8 September and again at 0510, 1 enemy plane dropped several bombs on Mariupol.

Situation in Vorossisk unchanged.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Min sweepin; planes searched for ground mines. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: The Crimea group continued minesweeping off the northwestern minefield cap. No mines swept.

Kerch: Minesweepin; planes searched for ground mines in Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Vessels searched for moored mines in Kerch Strait and when acting as anti-mine escort for the Anapa convoy. No results.

The anti-mine escort for the "Zar Ferdinand" convoy swept a mine on route Green 1 mile north of point 24.

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Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: as scheduled.

b. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 1400 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 73 put in to Temriuk with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter.

c. Anapa convoys:

At 1815 Anapa convoy No. 182 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort and anchored off Zhelezni Ro.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 1240 the Ganichesk-Kerch convoy put in to Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 2 lighters.

At 1900 the Mariupol-Berdiansk convoy put out from Mariupol with 7 naval ferry barges, 3 naval gunnery lighters, 1 motor minesweeper (M), 3 tugs, 4 lighters and 2 motor sailing vessels.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

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Siniferopol Enemy Situation:

After a violent preparatory artillery action from 0135 to 0310, the enemy landed in Novorossisk harbor on the west mole, on the U-boat mole and the cold-storage building from M.T.B.s and landing craft (personnel). The landing parties on the U-boat mole and the west mole were then cut off, while the situation at the cold-storage house was confused. A rifle battalion was sent out on reconnaissance and if possible to counter-attack. The U-boat mole was mopped up with the help of forces of the naval port commander. According to a report from Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk, all secret material has been destroyed.

At 1200 the situation at both moles was unchanged, but the cold-storage house was again in German hands. The focal point of the enemy attack altered to Novorossisk-North between the 1st and 2nd companies of the forces belonging to Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk. All contact with the 1st company was broken, so that the situation there was not known. Forces of the naval port commander reported the sinking or setting on fire of the following ships: 1 patrol boat and 1 unboat. Casualties in the 2nd company amounted to 4 dead, 4 men seriously and 5 slightly wounded, 2 men missing.

At 1800 the situation in Novorossisk-South had not changed. In Novorossisk-North, some Army troops were counter-attacking. Still no reports from the 1st company of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk.

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At 2000 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported his subordination to 1st Mountain Regiment and that, after a temporary withdrawal and reorganization of his forces, he had taken over the defense of the west mole and the adjacent section between the U-boat mole and the cold-storage house. 15 soldiers of the 1st company worked their way through the enemy lines and reported that the front had been withdrawn as the result of a heavy enemy creeping barrage and their overwhelming superiority in numbers and that the platoons had joined with rear positions.

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that by 0835 all vessels which took part in the landing operation had returned to Gholenjik.

One patrol boat was located off Tuapse and one off Gholenjik by night air reconnaissance, while 1 submarine was detected south of Cape Izkopas.

Daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea reported no enemy forces. In the early morning hours traffic of landing boats was observed between Gholenjik and Novorossisk.

Lively shipping traffic was detected off the Turkish coast in afternoon. Many shipping in port: Gholenjik: still many boats. Comparison with the photographs taken on 8 September revealed an increase of 23 motor minesweepers, 23 M.T.B.s and 44 landing boats. Tuapse: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 6 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 1 minesweeper, 5 motor minesweepers, 1 M.T.B. and 25 boats. The other ports on the Caucasus coast were not reconnoitered.

No enemy shipping traffic was detected in the Sea of Azov. The number of enemy ships in the ports of Yeisk and Primorsko Akhtari was unchanged.

No large surface vessels were inferred to be at sea, but increasing fleet radio traffic was detected. Activity of small vessels normal off the east coast.

One submarine was detected in the area southwest of the Crimean coast, but no further submarines were detected in the operational area.

Nothing important was reported from Kuban bridgehead.

Presumably with weak forces, the enemy landed near Melokino southwest of Mariupol. No further details as yet.

Own Situation:

0532 Naval Port Commander, Anapa reported 3rd degree of alarm from 0400. All the soldiers were at battle stations and all other work was suspended.

Simultaneously, Naval Port Commander, Anapa reported that in the net barrage 50 meters of the net had been lifted but further work had to be interrupted because the tractor was withdrawn.

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0758 At 0758 in 45° 16' N, 32° 38' E, tug "Lubeck" proceeding with the Odessa-Sevastopol convoy was attacked by a submarine. The torpedoes passed ahead of the ship. D 9 dropped a depth charge barrage at once. Two escorting armed fishing vessels failed to obtain any locations on their echo-ranging sets. When the attack occurred, they were sailing on the starboard quarter of the convoy; the attack was carried out from the seaward side. One armed fishing vessel and a D-boat started anti-submarine operations at once. All the other escort vessels had to stay with the convoy because 1st degree of anti-aircraft readiness was ordered some time before when the convoy was detected by enemy air reconnaissance. At about 0900 anti-submarine operations were broken off and both vessels tried to reach the convoy. At 0930 armed fishing vessel No. 9 obtained a location on her echo-ranging set. Six depth charges were dropped without result. No further locations. Violent concussion when the depth charges exploded had broken the echo-ranging set. At 1840 the BV plane which was providing close escort dropped a depth charge on a submarine which was identified off Sevastopol. Immediately afterwards, armed fishing vessel No. 9 headed for the submerged submarine, discovered a slight oil patch and dropped a depth charge barrage on to the target. Thereupon, a large oil patch appeared. In all, 21 depth charges were dropped. The concussion slightly damaged armed fishing vessel No. 9 and she sprung a leak. Anti-submarine operations were discontinued because the echo-ranging set broke down and the listening position could be occupied. The suspension of anti-submarine operations when attacked at 0758 and after the location at 0930 cannot be condemned, because the defense of the convoy could not be weakened in the Eupatoria-Sevastopol area where there is increased danger of submarine and air attack. This fact was confirmed by the later location and sighting of a submarine. On the other hand, armed fishing vessel No. 9 should have remained at the place where she dropped depth charges after the attack at 1840 even although her echo-ranging set had broken down. She should have waited at least until the arrival of a relief, because the convoy had meanwhile put in to Sevastopol. I have repeatedly ordered intensive pursuit of submarines. This incident induced me to refer again to my order.

To continue anti-submarine operations, two motor minesweepers were ordered to put out from Sevastopol at once for the prescribed position.

0837 Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea ordered the Odessa-Sevastopol convoy to full anti-aircraft readiness because it had been spotted by enemy reconnaissance planes.

At 0915 fighter escort was requested from 1st Air Corps.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: N winds, force 3 - 4, fair, visibility 20 miles, morning haze on the coast.

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On the night of 10/11 September, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to operate with 4 boats against enemy supply traffic close to the Caucasus coast off Cape Idkupas. The boats shall put out from Ivan Eoka at 1630 and leave the operational area at 0130 on 11 September. Outward and return passage far from the coast. Anti-submarine operations permitted.

The operations should be carried out on the supply route between Tanjse and Ekelanjik because further transportation of supply goods and means of transport to Ekelanjik was expected to ensure supplies to Novorossisk where the enemy had landed during the night.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed that 3 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were disposed in the patrol line between Cape Utrich Nok and the Oseraika valley.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats in the patrol line between Cape Utrich Nok and Oseraika valley on the night of 10/11 September. The boats should patrol 3 miles off the coast at slight speed along the patrol line. Outward passage via route Brown as far as point 17 and from there on direct course to the operational area. The boats should put out to pass point 17 at about 1900. Return passage should be commenced 1 hour before dawn and the boats should put in via the approach route to Theodosia.

If enemy forces should be encountered, they should be attacked and a Most Immediate report transmitted. Anti-submarine operations permitted. The flotilla has been informed of the plans of 1st E-Boat Flotilla. From 1800 Naval Communications Officer, Anava should switch to the E-boat wave and should at one repeat Most Immediate reports from the E-boats, transmit sighting reports and radar locations of enemy forces on the E-boat wave.

The patrol line between Cape Utrich Nok and Oseraika valley was occupied, because according to statements of prisoners-of-war the enemy had planned to land off Oseraika valley simultaneously with the landing operation in Novorossisk.

Because the power station in Mariupol broke down and hence the electric cranes, the mines which were transported overland to Mariupol could not be transhipped to the mine-carrying vessels there. They were therefore transferred to Berdyansk and unloading in Mariupol harbor was no longer possible in the time available. Instead, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to lay mines in the area between Kassa by Osarika and Kassa Dolgaya during the night of 10/11 September. Mines to be used: 24 LMB with clockwork setting switch IIA (6 hours) and period delay mechanism 1. Two naval gunnery lighters were to act as mine-carrying vessels and 2 naval ferry barges as escort on outward passage. On return passage the naval gunnery lighters and ferry barges still lying in Mariupol were to

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provide additional escort. One motor minesweeper (M) will be detailed to assist in navigation. The minelaying formation should put out from Berdyansk to reach the minelaying area at 2400. When the mines have been laid, the formation should return to Berdyansk at maximum speed. 4th Air Corps was asked to provide fighter escort from dawn on 11 September until the vessels reach port, but this request could not be granted owing to lack of Forces. Simultaneously, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was informed that another minelaying operation was intended with 12 LMB mines in the same area during the night of 11/12 September. The 8 LMB mines left over were to be kept for possible blocking of Berdyansk harbor.

The German Naval Command, Constantza was informed that the 4 boats of the Crimea group would be placed at their disposal for minelaying off Sevastopol.

The naval ferry barges, tugs and lighters due to proceed from Berdyansk to Genichesk with cargo during the night of 10/11 September will remain subordinated to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. He was instructed to employ them for the quick evacuation of Berdyansk and for transportation of all non-priority provisions etc. to Genichesk.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was directed to transfer 3 naval ferry barges of 7th Landing Flotilla and 2 naval ferry barges of 1st Landing Flotilla at once. This order had already been issued on 4 September (see War Diary 6 September). The naval ferry barges are urgently required. There are sufficient lighters there, but the difficulty of loading lighters compared with naval ferry barges is so much greater that as many naval ferry barges as possible should be assembled.

Net Barrage Group, Black Sea was ordered to carry out repairs to the outer barrage at Theodosia when the vessels had completed the lifting of the net at Anapa. They were then to have repairs done or they might lay the net off Sevastopol.

- 1000 The last Army forces and vessels left Mariupol. Barrages were laid and blastings carried out as scheduled. The harbor entrance has been blocked by training ship "Iovarich" and the unfinished steamer "Trud". When the last vessels left, the west entrance was blocked by a hulk which was left for that purpose. The fishery harbor was blocked by steamer "Grossneft". The harbor mole and the last useful cranes were blasted.
- 1155 The last formation passage from Mariupol to Berdyansk was spotted by enemy reconnaissance planes off Kossa Byelosaraika: fighter escort was requested.
- 1630 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for operations in the Cape Idkopas area.
- 1745 Two E-boats put out from Constantza for Ivan Baba when they had completed routine dockyard repairs.

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1700 One naval ferry barge escorted by 3 naval gunnery lighters and 1 motor minesweeper (RM) put out from Berdyansk for the mine-laying operation in the Kassa-Dalyaya area.

One naval ferry barge was used as a mine-carrying vessel because the installations for mine-laying on board the naval gunnery lighters could not be fitted in time.

1805 Contrary to the orders given, 1st E-boat Flotilla was directed to occupy the patrol line between Oseraika valley and Cape Utrich Nsk because the operation by 11th E-boat Flotilla had to be abandoned as this flotilla reported only 1 boat at readiness.

The 1st E-boat Flotilla operation in the patrol line was ordered when 17th Army H.Q. had reported that an enemy landing was expected in Oseraika valley as well as in Novorussisk.

2115 Harbor Defense Flotilla, Penriuk reported that the boats could not put out for patrol duty because of the weather (NE winds, force 4 - 5, sea 4).

At about 2215 a long distance call was received from General Janicke, Commanding General, 17th Army H.Q. informing me that the Russians were landing on the shore of Novorussisk from numerous boats. Commanding General requested employment of our E-boats for defense in the inner bay. I refused, pointing out that even an all-out operation would bring no success, whereas the E-boats involved would certainly be destroyed. Reason for my refusal: On both sides of the bay, there are enemy batteries of various calibers equipped with strong searchlights and star shells. The number of E-boats available was four, while the enemy had many times that number. I pointed out that, with the naval forces available in the Black Sea, such an operation would be quite impossible. I had the impression that Commanding General was unconvinced and was wrongly claiming operational readiness of his forces.

A report was made to Group South at the same time, requesting them to explain the impossibility of this operation to higher authorities. Naval Liaison Officer to Army High Command was informed by telephone.

Commanding General later informed me that he no longer expected a landing in Oseraika valley. I therefore ordered 1st E-boat Flotilla to occupy lurking positions off Ickopas close to the coast immediately in accordance with original orders. Return passage to Iven Baha should be commenced at 0230, proceeding far off the coast. Commanding General, 17th Army H.Q. also expressed astonishment that the E-boats always left their positions so early. I pointed out the danger from the air and the lack of fighter escort, to which he replied that he could not see that E-boats were exposed to any danger from the air. I answered that experience had shown otherwise.

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U-boat Situation:

At 1900 U 9 put in to Constantza from Sevastopol. No reports were received from the boats at sea.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in the Danube delta and Kerch Strait. No mines swept. Searches with towed loop gear on route Green off Sevastopol brought no results.

Vessels acting as anti-mine escort searched for moored mines in Kerch Strait along the supply route to Anapa without result. Four boats of the Crimea group swept for mines off Sevastopol.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: As scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 82 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c. Kerch-Tarriuk convoy No. 74 ran as scheduled with 4 naval ferry barges and 1 tug with 2 lighters. Convoy No. 73 ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges and 1 towing vessel.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 1815 the Berdyansk-Kerch convoy put out from Berdyansk with 2 naval gunnery lighters, motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52, 1 naval ferry barge, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug and 2 lighters. The Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy put in to Berdyansk with 3 naval gunnery lighters, 6 naval ferry barges, motor minesweeper RA 56, 2 motor sailing vessels, 3 tugs, 4 lighters and 13 cutters.

At 1920 the last Mariupol-Berdyansk convoy put in to Berdyansk with 3 naval gunnery lighters, motor minesweeper RA 54, 6 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 cutter and 2 motor minesweepers (RM). At 1530 the Berdyansk-Genichesk convoy put out from Berdyansk with Harbor Defense Flotilla, Genichesk with 3 boats and 16 transport cutters.

e. Crimea convoys ran as scheduled. Some convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed because of the weather.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Situation in Novorossisk: While the enemy forces which landed in the south mole and railroad yard area were confined to a narrow space, those in the northern part of the harbor extended their area of penetration and succeeded in establishing land communication with the east.

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At 0600 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that various landing attempts during the night had been repulsed by concentrated fire of all weapons in the well-lit area. It was discovered that the 1st company of the naval port commander was again in its former position. At 1200, Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that, after softening up by heavy artillery, the terrain from the west mole as far as the cold-storage building had been taken in assault. Fighting is still going on in the east harbor district. Apart from the vessels which were already reported sunk on 10 September, a large rubber dighy was destroyed with its crew.

Enemy attacks in up to regimental strength were all repulsed on the rest of the front at the Gotenkopf bridgehead.

Night air reconnaissance reported 4 small vessels in the area off Ghelenjik during the night of 10/11 September.

Daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea sighted no enemy forces. Three freighters were detected off the Turkish coast in the early hours of the morning. At about 0430 a convoy of 4 small coastal vessels, 4 motor gunboats and 8 M.T.P.s heading for Ghelenjik were detected. When bombs were dropped, the vessels put up an artificial smoke screen. Three large and 10 small boats were detected in Kabardinka Bay.

Apart from 2 motor gunboats proceeding course north at high speed 23 miles southwest of Primorsko-Akhtari, no enemy forces were sighted at 0915.

According to radio traffic, presumably 2 torpedo-boats were at sea during the night of 10/11 September. Increasing activity of M.T.B.s and small vessels was detected in the area off the east coast with focal point off the northern part and in the Sea of Azov during the night of 10/11 September. Throughout the day slight activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 1 in the northwestern Black Sea and another in an unidentified position at sea. At 2350 1 submarine was located 80 miles southwest of Sevastopol. The presence of further submarines in the operational area must be expected.

Cyn Situation:

0640 Three boats of 1st F-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from operations. From 2000, the flotilla headed for Cape Utrich Nok in accordance with orders from Admiral, Black Sea and there, from 2050 to 2320, occupied the patrol line. When the order to take up lurking positions off Cape Idokonas was received (see War Diary 10 September), the flotilla left the patrol line at 2320 and took up positions in air grid square 8555 from 0110 to 0130. Presumably the boats were detected from the shore on outward passage, because searchlights swept over the sea accurately where the boats were. No traffic was detected in the operational area. Because of deteriorating weather conditions (thunderstorm, increasing

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winds, squalls up to force 6) and because of the swell, return passage to Ivan Baba was commenced at 0130 via air grid square 7564. It was impossible to remain in the lurking positions any longer or to use their weapons. At 0430 the boats were detected by a reconnaissance plane. From 0450, the boats were continuously attacked by 8 to 10 armored fighter-bombers in air grid square 6517 which, in an almost perpendicular dive down to 10 meters, machine-gunned the boats with 3 - 4 cm. guns. Our anti-aircraft guns were unsuccessful because of the strong armor of the enemy planes. Ineffective deflection of our 2 cm. shells was observed. In the first attack, S 46 was hit in the smoke containers, her 2 and 4 cm. guns and her starboard engine broke down and the exhaust, oil, water and air pipes were destroyed by shells. The navigator was killed. The enemy concentrated their attacks on S 46 and destroyed the fresh water pipe to the port engine; fire broke out in the main engine room and electric installations broke down. The center engine and port auxiliaries were destroyed by shells. Further shells destroyed the port engine, so all the engines were then out of order. In continuous new attacks, both torpedoes were hit in their tubes and exploded. This explosion destroyed the foreship completely as far as the bridge. The other boats gave fire protection, put up an artificial smoke screen and tried to take over survivors during the attack. S 49 succeeded in taking over all secret material and the crew except 2 men who were killed. The boat was then blasted and scuttled by firing 2 torpedoes. At 0540 she sank in 44° 47.4' N, 35° 59' E. The whole crew was wounded, 4 men seriously, and 2 men were killed. S 72's 2 cm. gun jammed through overheating. No casualties aboard S 25 or S 49. The commander and crew of S 46 behaved splendidly. The fighter escort immediately requested appeared at 0550 and accompanied the formation for a short time.

Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q. was requested to report this incident to Commanding General, 17th Army H.Q. as he had proposed the employment of the E-boats in the operational area on the evening of 10 September and doubted that E-boats could be sunk by planes. (See War Diary 10 September.) These apparently unimportant facts (see War Diary 10 September) were laid down in the War Diary to show how misleading in most cases (if not always) the opinions of higher Army Officers were concerning the tactical employment of naval forces and consequently how fatally naval warfare might be affected if at times some vessels were to be temporarily seconded to higher commands of the Army.

0745 Two naval ferry barges and 4 combined operations boats put out from Lemrik to the north, as the bombardment of one of our bases on the coast by 2 Russian gunboats had been reported. At 0930 the formation returned without sighting the enemy. According to an Army report, the enemy shelled one of our positions with 100 rounds at 0730, but inflicted no damage. When one of our shore batteries returned the fire, the enemy made off to the northeast. No hits were observed.

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0905 Submarine chasers Nos. 2301, 2312 and 2306 put out from Ak Mochet for anti-submarine operations in the Euxatiria area.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Euxatiria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: Light variable winds, sea wind in the afternoon, fair, visibility 15 miles, morning mist.

The following was reported to Naval Group South:

All available vessels have been employed on transportation in Kerch Strait. In addition to freight-carrying vessels already available in Kerch Strait, tugs and lighters have been brought up from Odessa. The first vessels have already arrived at Sevastopol. Naval ferry barges which hitherto were employed on patrol and transportation duties close to the Crimean and west coast are now en passage to Kerch. Four small freighters are also on their way; two of them arrived in Kerch today. The first of the tugs, lighters and naval ferry barges hitherto employed in the Sea of Azov for Army Group South arrived at Kerch on 11 September. Further vessels will be brought up from the Sea of Azov in the next few days when Berdyansk and Gonichesk have been evacuated. The freighter tonnage then available in Kerch Strait will be sufficient for the higher rate of performance demanded. Army Group South reported that the tactical situation made it necessary to evacuate Berdyansk as soon as possible. Group requested that the 3 tugs, 5 lighters and 2 motor sailing vessels (totaling some 5,000 tons) should remain there. Army Group South was informed that the above-mentioned vessels could remain in Berdyansk and that 4 naval gunnery lighters and 4 naval ferry barges would also remain there for coastal defense of the north Azov coast. The naval ferry barges should also be employed with tugs and lighters for transportation. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to operate against the Funchal-Gelendjik supply traffic running close to the coast off Vulcan valley during the night of 11/12 September. The boats should leave at 1630. Outward passage far off the coast. Boats should leave the operational area at 0200 and put in to Anapa. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to continue minelaying with 16 LMB mines in the area between Kossa Byelosaraike and Kossa Ol'nyaya during the night of 11/12 September. One naval ferry barge should be employed as mine-carrying vessel, 3 naval ferry barges as escort and 1 motor minesweeper (M) for navigational leadership. The boats should put out from Berdyansk so that minelaying can be commenced at 2400. Having completed the task, the formation should return to Berdyansk.

0930 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Boga from Constantza with S 42 and S 45. The arrival was delayed due to faults in S 42's engine cylinders.

1000 The minelaying formation put in to Berdyansk from the operation. At 0445 the formation was headed by 2 enemy

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planes; at 0730 6 planes machine-gunned it at low level and at 1000 5 planes bombed and machine-gunned the boats. The commander of naval gunnery lighter No. 1 was killed and 3 men were wounded. All the vessels were hit by machine-gunfire above and below the waterline. Our anti-aircraft guns were unsuccessful. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that the leakage of the pontoons at the joint bolts was steadily increasing on board all the naval gunnery lighters each time they went to sea. On 10 September despite calm weather during outward passage, the pontoons of naval gunnery lighter No. 1 filled with water, so that the vessel had to be towed back by motor minesweeper RA 56. In such circumstances the naval gunnery lighters would only be fit for restricted operations and lengthy patrol would have to be carried out by naval ferry barges.

1415 After putting in to Sevastopol, armed fishing vessels Nos. 8 and 9 and D 9 which were ordered to examine the place of anti-submarine operations on 10 September reported an oil patch in $44^{\circ} 39.6' N$, $33^{\circ} 27' E$. Search gear hooked slightly on the bottom. Depth charges resulted in a swell of air bubbles. The place was marked with a buoy. The destruction of the submarine might still be possible. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast was ordered to send out at once the 3 armed fishing vessels of 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla, which were putting in to Sevastopol for further anti-submarine operations at 0800 on 12 September.

At 1630 submarine chasers Nos. 2301, 2302 and 2306 were attacked by 6 torpedo planes coming from west to southwest at an altitude of 10 - 20 meters. The boats carried out anti-submarine operations in line abreast, course 138° . The enemy was recognized at a range of 4,000 meters and, at a range of 2,000 meters, they opened fire. Then the planes spread and four of them launched their torpedoes which passed by at a range of some 600 meters astern. The other 2 planes tried to attack the boats from farther off but could not launch their torpedoes accurately because of the good defensive fire. The torpedoes passed far from the boats. Hits were scored on the last planes, but no plane was shot down. The planes returned the fire unsuccessfully. The enemy squadron made off to the south. No damage or casualties aboard our boats.

1754 Three naval ferry barges and motor minesweeper RA 56 put out from Berlyansk for minelaying operations as ordered. On his own initiative, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine added 2 more naval gunnery lighters as escorts. As a gale warning was announced, Admiral, Black Sea recalled the naval gunnery lighters at 1915 because they were not adequately seaworthy to stand up to this operation. Upon request from RA 56 at 1945, RA 54 was sent out to meet the formation to fetch a man aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 9 who had been injured in an accident.

1930 Two naval ferry barges and 10 combined operations boats put out from Tauriuk for patrol duty.

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- 2130 Submarine chasers Nos. 2301, 2302 and 2306 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations. Apart from air mail's nothing to report.
- 2138 Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported from air grid square 7576 that he was turning about because of the weather and would return to Ivan Baha. The maximum speed against the sea was 15 knots in a strong swell from the south and increasing, veering winds. At 2340 the following special report on the situation was sent to Naval Group South:
1. The withdrawal of the eastern front line as far as east of Melitopol must be expected shortly.
 2. For the time being, Naval Harbor Master, 4 naval gunnery lighters, 4 naval ferry barges, harbor defense boats and batteries of Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 (one 15 cm. gun, provisionally motorized, one 10 cm. and one 7.5 cm. gun, provisionally motorized) will remain in Berdyansk. In case of further withdrawal the 3 batteries will be employed to assist the Army. Infantry protection will be provided by troops of Naval Harbor Master, Mariupol.
 3. Naval ferry barges and naval gunnery lighters mentioned in 2. will be employed in patrol lines, while the naval ferry barges with tugs and lighters will also be used for sea transportation to Ganichesk.
 4. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine has been temporarily transferred to Melitopol and will later proceed to Nikolaiyev, although his H.Q. is still in Berdyansk.
 5. The 3 batteries mentioned in para. 2. will be transferred later to Ganichesk where a 15 cm. battery has already been sent. The 7.6 cm. battery Berdyansk (on pivot mountings) will be transferred to Ganichesk as quickly as possible. The next placement will be proposed later.
 6. Merch convoys will fulfill requests at present. Passage by night as ordered.

In the evening, there was a call from Army Group 1 asking the Navy whether it could proceed by night in Kerch Strait as the engineers were already going. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus already had the necessary instructions and reported to Army Group 1:

Lighters and naval ferry barges will proceed by night during the night of 11/12 September. On the previous night, 1 lighter was to proceed by night but she had not been fully loaded by the Army. In future, ships will proceed by night provided that loading on shore has been completed. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to make every effort to have the boats proceed by night.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

For air raids on 1st E-Boat Flotilla and the returning mine-laying formation and submarine chasers, see above.

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The air raids on the boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla which were carried out with extraordinary dash and great tactical skill suggest British or American influence upon the Russian airmen, but no proof is available. The commanders of the boats which participated in the operations in the Sea of Azov also reported increasing intensity of air raids and improved accuracy of bomb aiming.

On 10 September, Berdyansk reported enemy penetrations at 2010, 2135 and 2200. One bomb was dropped. No damage was reported. At 1450 5 planes dropped 40 bombs on the harbor district of Yalta. No damage. Our anti-aircraft guns were not successful.

Minesweeping Activities:

Danube: After three covering runs, the operation by minesweeping planes from Mile 150 to Mile 175 was broken off because of the weather. The Rumanian Air Reporting Service reported the penetration of enemy planes over the Danube and suspected minelaying between Braila and Galatz. The Danube was then closed for shipping from Sulina as far as the Iron Gate because of suspected minelaying.

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear searched for ground mines off Sevastopol on route Green, no mines swept.

The Crimea group was at sea on minesweeping operations in preparation for minelaying off Sevastopol.

Kerch: Minesweeping planes searched the southern entrance to Kerch Strait for ground mines 24 times. No mines were swept. Search for moored mines in Kerch Strait and on the route to Peresyp (west of Temriuk) yielded no results.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Ferry traffic ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

At 1810 convoy No. 83 put out from Kerch with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort. The convoy anchored off Zhelezni Ber.

c. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 1910 convoy No. 75 put in to Temriuk with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug; and 1 lighter. At 1805 convoy No. 76 put out from Kerch with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug; and 1 lighter. The convoy anchored in Warsovka Bay.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 1210 the Berdyansk-Kerch convoy put in to Kerch with 2 naval gunnery lighters, motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug; and 2 lighters. The Genichesk-Berdyansk convoy put in to Berdyansk at 1700 with 3 naval ferry barges. At 1825 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 lighter and 4 transport cutters put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk.

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c. Crimed convoys run as scheduled. Convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed for 24 hours owing to the weather.

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Sinfernal Enemy Situation:

Situation in Novorossisk:

In several fruitless attacks, enemy battalions supported by tanks attempted to relieve their forces from the beachhead south of Novorossisk to the north and from the army front east of Novorossisk. Mopping-up of enemy forces still in the railroad district continued successfully.

Naval Port Operation, Novorossisk reported in detail:

At 2300 on 11 September, after stiffening up by artillery our infantry forces began the counter-attack against the U-boat mole at 1430. After successful initial advances, the enemy deflected the U-boat mole with accurate fire of heavy caliber guns and caused serious casualties among our troops. Under the command of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk 20 men were thrown into battle to strengthen the attacking wave. At first they advanced smoothly as far as the shed at the mole, then the attack came to a standstill in the face of stronger enemy resistance. They held this position until nightfall. Six prisoners were taken in this operation.

Situation at 0730:

The Navy repelled landing attempts in the west mole and killed the crew of a rubber landing. Our infantry started to attack again with tank support. Forces of the Navy were held in reserve. At the site at the east harbor, the enemy was supported by forces from the railroad. Our forces were advancing from west to east. Our lines are now near the pier where grain is loaded.

Situation at 1400:

The Army and Navy together recaptured the harbor district from the west mole as far as the cold-storage building including the U-boat mole. The Navy is still mopping up the west mole. Prisoners: 3 officers, 1 commissar and about 120 men. Many times this number were killed.

Captured weapons: 2 anti-tank guns, 3 mortars of very heavy caliber, 1 anti-tank rifle, rifles and hand-ammos.

Own casualties: 10 dead, 5 men seriously wounded, 9 men slightly wounded and 47 men still missing. Some of the missing soldiers were said to have arrived at Anapa.

Casualties among infantry forces: 9 dead, 24 men seriously wounded and 48 men slightly wounded.

Mopping-up of the site at the east harbor continued.

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The following situation arose when contact was regained with the Navy troops which had been surrounded by Russian forces:

On 10 September after softening up by artillery and launching of several torpedoes, the Russians attacked the Navy bunker system south of the town with superior forces. When they had pushed through this system, they surrounded the bunkers occupied by the Navy. The soldiers stuck to their bunkers and defended them until relieved by parts of a mountain infantry regiment on 12 September. The following vessels were sunk by naval forces in the attempted landing operation:

1 merchant, 1 M.T.B. and 5 landing craft. One landing craft has already been reported as sunk. Many prisoners were also taken. German casualties: 13 dead, 7 men seriously wounded, 10 men slightly wounded and 35 men still missing.

During the early morning hours of 12 September, night reconnaissance reported 1 motor minesweeper off Cape Pitsunda and 4 small unidentified vessels in Anapa area.

Daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea seriously impeded by the weather. One merchant ship of 5,000 tons was sighted off the Turkish coast 12 miles northwest of Sinope.

At 0545 1 submarine was bombed without result 65 miles south of Cape Svirich. At 0525 2 coastal vessels were bombed 5 miles northwest of Ghelenjik; one believed to be sunk. The sinking could not be observed because of strong anti-aircraft and fighter defenses.

According to radio inference, the torpedoboats which were already reported yesterday were still at sea. At 1800 1 torpedoboot was located in the area between Ghelenjik and Anapa. One submarine was detected south of Sevastopol. Further submarines must be expected to be at sea. No reports were received from the Sea of Azov. The number of enemy ships in port was not reported.

Own Situation:

0515 The vessels employed on coastal defense duty put in to Temriuk. Nothing to report.

0720 Motor minesweeper M 56 and 3 naval ferry barges put in to Berlyansk from their minelaying operation. Mines were laid as scheduled. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimea - Novorossisk: W winds, later NW, force 5 - 6, overcast, showers, visibility 10 miles.

Sea of Azov: S - SE winds, force 3 - 4, overcast, showers, visibility 10 miles.

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Owing to the weather the E-boat flotillas were not employed. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was ordered to dispatch 2 naval gunnery lighters and an ambulance naval ferry barge with the next naval ferry barges proceeding to Kerch, possibly via Genichesk.

Commander, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 was ordered via Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to dispatch 3rd Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 immediately to Genichesk. Further operational orders will follow. Commander, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 was also directed to form a mobile motorized detachment of one 15 cm. battery, one 7.5 cm. battery and one 10 cm. battery to support the Army. Infantry protection will be detailed from men of Naval Port Commander, Mariupol. The Army will have to be supported when Berdyansk harbor is given up. Reduced mobility of the 15 cm. battery and its slight speed must be taken into consideration when tactical planning is done. Immediate contact must be made with the Army in view of the employment of these batteries. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to disperse naval gunnery lighters and naval ferry barges in daily patrol lines close to the coast from nightfall until dawn west of our own front line as far as the weather would permit. For this purpose, the 4 naval gunnery lighters and 4 naval ferry barges still at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine should be employed. Plans must be reported daily until 1800. 1st Air Corps reported that the 15 LMB mines which were requested for minelaying in Anapa harbor had been placed at the disposal of the Navy. 1st Air Corps was requested to allocate 10 more LMB for minelaying in Terriuk harbor. Delivery in Kerch on 14 September would be desirable.

1930 Two naval ferry barges put out from Terriuk for patrol duty. At 2145, after weather improvement 8 combined operations boats proceeded to the roads and remained there ready for operation. Heavy air raids throughout the day.

No reports were received from our U-boats.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: The group with towed loop gear and skid gear searched for ground mines. They swept the route to Senaya and Taman several times. No mines were swept.

The anti-mine escort of an Anapa convoy searched for moored mines on the supply route to Anapa and on the Taman-Senaya route. No mines were swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Convoys ran as scheduled.

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b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 83 ran as scheduled with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort. At 2100 convoy No. 84 put out from Kerch with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 76 ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1725 convoy No. 77 put out from Kerch with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter and anchored in Warsovka Bay.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 2030 the Berdyansk-Genichesk convoy put in to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 lighter and 2 transport cutters. Two transport cutters of this convoy disappeared and a search is now in progress. At 2400 the Berdyansk-Genichesk convoy put out from Berdyansk with 4 naval ferry barges.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea were postponed for 24 hours because of the weather.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

In the Novorossisk area the enemy captured half of the eastern part of Mefodievski.

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported in detail:

Throughout the night of 12/13 September, the enemy repeatedly shelled the harbor district and town of Novorossisk-South. There was bitter fighting at the site at the east harbor. The group of forces encircled there comprising 1st guard company of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk was not relieved. The section of the west mole as far as the cold-storage building was defended by the Navy and mountain infantrymen. At 0700 on 13 September, Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk transmitted the following summary of the Navy's successes:

Ships sunk, set afire and stalled by shelling: 1 patrol vessel, 1 gunboat, 2 M.T.B.s, 7 landing boats and 2 rubber dinghies. The ships sunk by 1st company have not yet been listed. At 1900 repeated bombardment of Novorossisk-South was reported and fighting in the eastern part of the harbor which is still going on. The task force with 1st company of Naval Port Commander was still surrounded by the enemy. On other Army frontlines, several enemy shock detachments were repulsed. In variable visibility, daylight air reconnaissance in the Black Sea sighted no enemy forces. There was moderate traffic of freighters off the Turkish coast. The Caucasus coast was reconnoitered as far as Batum and 30 km. out to sea. No shipping. The battleship was lying off Poti as usual. Continuous lively activity of boats was detected

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in Ghelenjik. No reports were received from the Sea of Azov. According to radio traffic, 1 torpedoboot put in to base from the northwest on the evening of 13 September. Lively activity of small vessels off the east coast with focal point in the northern part. According to radio inference, several patrol vessels and motor vessels were at sea during the night of 13/14 September. At about 1900 Cape Tekil radar post detected enemy naval forces 10 miles south of Kerch Strait, course south.

This report seemed very improbable. During the last few days unlikely locations have been repeatedly reported at dawn. Probably they were dawn reflexes.

Throughout the day and night 5 submarines were detected: 1 in the northwestern Black Sea as far as Crimean east area, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 on return passage in the eastern Black Sea. At 2120 Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected 1 submarine 25 miles north of Cape 6th Army H.Q. reported that the frontline of the northern Azov coast will be withdrawn as far as Ursuf during 13 September and from there will run in a general northwest direction.

Own Situation:

1545 Two naval ferry barges and 8 combined operations boats put in to Terriuk from patrol duty. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossiisk and Sea of Azov: N - NE winds, force 4 - 5, mainly overcast, showers in patches, visibility 6 - 10 miles.

The following minelaying operations are intended to prevent the penetration of enemy naval forces into Kerch Strait before and after execution of the Kuban bridgehead and any enemy landing operations on the north coast of Kerch Peninsula (Arabatzi Bay): See Appendix.

Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was charged with the execution. Orders for further minelaying in Kerch Strait will follow later. On account of information received from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, orders were issued to dispatch Harbor Defense Flotilla, Mariupol to Kerch immediately on its arrival in Genichesk. Motor minesweepers RM 02 and RM 03 will remain at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus also kept 4 naval ferry barges for patrol duties as ordered and 2 more naval ferry barges for the defense of convoys. The remaining 6 naval ferry barges which should be lying in Genichesk should be dispatched immediately to Kerch. Otherwise they should be dispatched on arrival. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 11 should be sent to Kerch with the next formation of naval ferry barges. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine will keep naval gunnery lighters Nos. 3, 4, 8 and 9. As soon as the weather permits all the transport cutters should be transferred to Kerch where

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they will be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus for disposition in patrol line for aerial minelaying observation. Upon special request from Army Group A, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to dispatch to Genichesk at once the entire personnel of Naval Port Commanders, Mariupol and Berdyansk and the water police with the exception of the men of Naval Control Service Officer employed in the west under the leadership of Lieutenant Commander Haecker. Troops already transferred to Nikolaiev should be brought back to the Haecker detachment. Commander Haecker should then place his forces at the disposal of the local defense officer for infantry fighting in Genichesk. 2nd Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 should at once be sent to Genichesk under the command of Lieutenant Commander Werner. At present 4th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 (10 cm. guns) will remain to defend Berdyansk harbor and then, with the withdrawal, will be subordinated to 6th Army H.Q. With the aid of requisitioned tractors, 1st Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 should be brought into field positions in Genichesk.

1420 Three submarine chasers of 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the area south of Cape Sarich. At 1610 Commander, 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla reported that, despite good listening conditions, no locations had been obtained at the probable place of sinking of the enemy submarine on 11/12 September.

1615 Motor minesweeper RA 56 reported unidentified vessels 20 miles southwest of Berdyansk which, on sighting, made off to the northeast at high speed.

Investigation of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine revealed that these were our own vessels (2 naval ferry barges and 1 tug) which were on passage from Genichesk to Berdyansk.

1941 Harbor Defense Flotilla, Tomriuk reported that the flotilla could not put out for patrol duty because of the weather (NE winds, force 4 - 5, sea 3 - 4).

It was planned to employ 5 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla off Oseraika valley. On account of the weather, the operation had to be abandoned.

The employment of E-boats during the present night moonlit nights would entail great danger in view of the increasing enemy air activity. Nevertheless, on account of the situation at the Novorossisk frontlines, operations were planned as soon as the weather would allow the boats to sail and use their armament.

U-boat Situation:

When all the non-commissioned officers, crews and officers of the Italian CB-Flotilla, Sevastopol had declared their loyalty, further employment of the flotilla was planned under Italian colors. Group South approved this decision. The boats were

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ordered to be ready for action on 15 September. On account of the expected increase of Russian activity at sea caused by the new situation on the mainland, 30th U-Boat Flotilla was directed to have all boats fully operational as quickly as possible. Only 1 U-boat has been in the operational area since the breakdown of U 9, but this situation will be remedied from approximately 20 September as repairs have been speeded up.

At 1645 U 18 reported illness of one Stoker Petty Officer, 2nd class which had become more serious since the beginning of the cruise. As the boat had already been at sea for 23 days and supplies must be low, U 18 was ordered to return to Theodosia for replenishment and delivery of the sick man. The boat reported by short signal that she would be off Theodosia at 1000 on 15 September.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Throughout the day there were no air raids on convoys or naval forces. At 1600 5 planes bombed and machine-gunned Berdyansk harbor. One fishing smack was sunk by a bomb, otherwise no incidents.

Minesweeping Activity:

Donau: Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: The Crimea group continued minesweeping.

Kerch: Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in Kerch Strait. No mines were swept. The anti-mine escort of the Anapa convoy searched for moored mines. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Convoys ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

At 2130 on 13 September, convoy No. 84 put out from Kerch with 9 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 0600 convoy No. 77 put out from Kerch for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 twin vessel and 2 lighters. Convoy No. 76 ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 1330 the Berdyansk-Genichesk convoy put in to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges.

At 1800 the Genichesk-Berdyansk convoy put in to Berdyansk with 2 naval ferry barges and 1 tug. At 1120 2 naval ferry barges put out from Genichesk for Berdyansk. At 1700 2 naval ferry barges,

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1 tug, 2 lighters and 1 motor sailing vessel put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk. At 1145 2 naval gunnery lighters, 2 motor minesweepers (MA), 5 harbor defense boats and 1 lighter put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk.

- e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

Situation in Novorossisk: The Russian attack in the eastern part of Mefodievski is gaining ground. Enemy attacks on this suburb east of Novorossisk were expected to continue to obtain shielding cover from Novorossisk in the future. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported in detail:

In the forenoon, contact was regained with the 1st guard company of Naval Port Commander by an Army formation. On 10 September, Lieutenant Lorenz (Naval Gunnery, Reserve) was killed in action. In the attack on 10 September, the gun squad of machine-guns on the moles held out to their last cartridges in their bunkers and then retreated in close combat with open bayonets to house No. 17 where they entrenched. During the night of 13/14 September, there were continuous low-level raids and sudden firing in the town and harbor area of Novorossisk.

The bravery of the forces of Naval Port Commander was particularly acknowledged by Commander, Regiment 228. The infantry assault badge was awarded to Naval Port Commander and 9 men by Commander, Mountain Infantry Regiment 91. The withdrawal of Naval Port Commander from Novorossisk was ordered for 1900 on 15 September.

On the rest of the Kuban front, strong enemy attacks with tank support were repulsed with high casualties for the enemy.

Night air reconnaissance on the night of 13/14 September reported 3 M.T.B.s and 2 landing craft off the beachhead. At 0120 the M.T.B.s were bombed and machine-gunned. Apart from 1 medium vessel lying stopped off Tuapse, no further vessels were detected. The Caucasus coast was completely reconnoitered up to Sichi as far as 80 km. out to sea.

Apart from 1 submarine which was unsuccessfully attacked with depth charges by a BV 138 10 miles south of Khersonese, daylight air reconnaissance detected no enemy shipping in the entire Black Sea. According to a report from Naval Port Commander, Sev stopol, this submarine was probably sighted at 0945 by German anti-aircraft forces 12 miles southwest of Cape Khersonese.

According to radio inference no large vessels were at sea. Lively activity of small vessels with focal point off the northern part of the east coast continued. Several patrol

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vessels and motor launches were detected in the Sea of Azov. Submarines detected: 1 in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the Crimean coast, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 on return passage in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

0727 A periscope with a framy wake was bombed and machine-gunned by the BV 138 10 miles south of Cape Khersonese. Commander, 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla was immediately sent out to pursue the submarine with 3 armed fishing vessels. The BV 138 transmitted the sighting report to the submarine chasers which were ordered to return to Sevastopol if they did not get a bearing by 1300.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: N winds, force 3 - 4, sea wind in the afternoon, at night E winds, force 3 - 4, fair, visibility 15 miles.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats in the patrol line between Cape Utrich Nek and Oseraika valley during the night of 14/15 September. Distance from the coast some 5 - 6 miles. The boats should stand on and off in the patrol line at slight speed. Enemy forces should be reported at once and should be attacked according to the situation. Night attacks by enemy naval forces combined with landing operations must be expected in the Oseraika valley area as far as Anapa. Outward passage via route Brown as far as point 17, from there direct course for the patrol line which should be occupied at 2200. The boats should put out for Anapa at daybreak. Anti-submarine operations permitted. The flotilla was informed that U 18 was on return passage to the west on 44° N. She will be off Theodosia on 15 September. Coastal authorities will be informed. Naval Communications Officer, Anapa will transmit sighting reports from coastal authorities on the Azov frequency. Naval Communications Officer, Kerch will switch to the E-boat frequency to pass on the reports to the E-boats.

The minelaying operation off Sevastopol has been postponed for 24 hours to the evening of 15 September because a mine was swept in the southwestern corner of the enemy danger area when it was checked again. Another examination of this area seems necessary.

1800 Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the patrol line between Utrich Nek and Oseraika valley.

1830 Three naval gunnery lighters put out from Berdyansk for the patrol line east of Berdyansk.

U-boat Situation:

U 18 began return passage to Theodosia with a seriously ill man on board.

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U 20 reported readiness for 16 September and was ordered to put out at 1400 on that day via the open sea route for mine-laying operations off Poti, alternatively off Ochenchiri, where 9 TMB should be laid.

The Italian Midnet Submarine Flotilla reported CB 1 and CB 6 ready for operation on 15 September. The submarines were ordered to carry out anti-submarine operations between Sarich and Yalta south of the Crimean coast.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

At 1645 2 bombers bombed and machine-gunned motor minesweeper RA 56 which was on passage from Genichesk to Berdyansk. No damage.

At 1755 4 enemy planes raided Berdyansk harbor. It was machine-gunned and several bombs were dropped. Our anti-aircraft guns were not successful.

At 0645 Anapa harbor was raided; 8 men were slightly wounded, 3 of them belonged to the Navy. Slight damage. Ten IL 2 planes dropped some 18 - 20 bombs and machine-gunned the harbor and the ships lying there. Anti-aircraft guns shot down 1 plane. From 1058 to 1106 DB 7 planes again attacked Anapa harbor. They dive-bombed, dropping some 20 - 25 bombs, and machine-gunned the area. No damage. One DB 7 was shot down by anti-aircraft guns.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in the Danube. No mines were swept.

Ochakov: 2 minesweeping planes swept 1 ground mine in water 2 meters deep south of Ochakov.

Sevastopol: When continuing minesweeping off Sevastopol, the Crimea group swept 1 mine.

Kerch: FZ-boats and minesweeping planes continued minesweeping in Kerch Strait as scheduled. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait: Convoys ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 185 ran as scheduled with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort. At 2115 Anapa convoy No. 186 put out from Kerch with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

At 1800 convoy No. 77 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug, 2 lighters and 3 fishing smacks. At 1715 convoy No. 78 put out from Kerch with 1 naval ferry barge, 1 tug and 1 lighter. The convoy anchored in Warsovka Bay.

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d. Sea of Azov:

At 1815 3 naval ferry barges, 2 naval gunnery lighters, 3 harbor defense boats and 3 transport cutters put out from Genichesk for Kerch. The Berdyansk-Genichesk convoy ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 motor sailing vessel and 4 transport cutters. At 1915 2 naval ferry barges put in to Genichesk from Berdyansk. At 0655 2 naval ferry barges put in to Berdyansk from Genichesk. At 1945 motor minesweepers M 54 and M 56 put in to Berdyansk from Genichesk. At 1800 1 naval ferry barge and 1 tug put out from Genichesk. At 1835 1 naval ferry barge, 1 naval gunnery lighter, 1 tug and 2 lighters put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

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Simferopol Enemy Situation:

No reports were received from Evpatoria today. Air reconnaissance on the night of 14/15 September reported 1 towed convoy, course northwest, off Tuapse, 2 coastal vessels lying stopped off Ghelenjik and 12 boats at the beachhead. At 2112 on 14 September, 1 submarine was detected, course north, 45 miles southwest of Sevastopol.

There was no enemy shipping traffic in the Black Sea by day. At 0836 2 minesweepers were sighted putting out from Tuapse, course south.

At 0810 1 motor launch was detected on a northeasterly course 20 miles northwest of Achuevski in the Sea of Azov.

Only Tuapse was reconnoitered on the Caucasus coast. The following ships were lying in the harbor at 0838 according to an aerial photograph: 1 minesweeper, 3 M.T.B.s, 5 motor launches, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, and some 30 boats.

Some of the ports on the south Azov coast were partially reconnoitered. Nothing to report.

At 2040 the position of 3 unidentified vessels was transmitted to 2 enemy M.T.B.s in the Anapa area. Presumably, these were our E-boats in the patrol line. The anti-submarine operations which were carried out by the Air Force during the night of 14/15 September southwest of the Crimean coast brought no result.

The radio intercept service detected no large vessels at sea. There was moderate activity of small vessels off the northern to central parts of the east coast, slight activity off the southern part. Some small vessels were detected in the eastern Sea of Azov during the night of 14/15 September.

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Submarines detected: 2 in unidentified positions at sea.

Strong enemy attacks continued at the Kuban bridgehead. They were repulsed with high casualties for the enemy.

Own Situation:

- 0400 Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Anapa from the patrol line between Utrich Nok and Oseraika valley. Nothing was sighted in bright moonlight.
- 0430 Three naval gunnery lighters put in to Berdyansk from the patrol line east of Berdyansk. Nothing to report.
- 0545 Two naval ferry barges and 8 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Mupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: NE winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon, fair, visibility 20 miles, morning haze on the coast.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats in the patrol line between Cape Utrich Nok and Oseraika valley during the night of 15/16 September. Distance from the coast 10 miles. The flotilla should put in to Anapa at dawn. Anti-submarine operations were permitted.

During the night of 15/16 September, 11th E-Boat Flotilla is to occupy the patrol line between Maria Magdalena Bank and Anapa. Distance from the coast 8 miles. The boats should put out from Theodosia to arrive in the patrol line at 2000. The boats should put in to Anapa at dawn on 16 September. Outward passage via route Brown as far as point 17, then directly to the patrol line. 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas were informed of both operational plans. Coastal authorities and the Anapa convoy due to run during the night of 15/16 September were also informed.

This defensive operation of the E-boat flotilla in the patrol line off the north Caucasus coast meets the demand of 17th Army H.Q. who were expecting more intensive landing attempts in the rear of our frontline once the enemy knew of our proposed withdrawal. I plan to employ the E-boat flotilla to defend the Caucasus coast during the critical days of the retreat.

On 14 September, Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to employ laden naval ferry barges also in the patrol line off Berdyansk if there were no empty barges available and naval gunnery lighters could not be employed because of the weather.

- 1715 Submarine chasers "Xanton" and Nos. 2304, 2305, 2306, 2301 and 2302 put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the area northwest of Sevastopol.

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- 1725 Two boats of 11th E-boat Flotilla put out from Theodosia for operations in the area northwest of Anapa.
- 1900 Eight boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, 2 mine-carrying naval ferry barges and "Kuryescu" put out from Sevastopol for the minelaying operation off Sevastopol.
- 2000 Two naval ferry barges and 2 combined operations boats put out from Tuzriuk for coastal defense duty in Tuzriuk Bay.
- 2000 Three boats of 1st E-boat Flotilla put out from Anapa for the patrol line between Cape Utrich Nok and Osernika valley.
- 2016 Naval Harbor Master, Berdyansk reported that 9 LEB mines had been laid in the harbor as scheduled.

U-boat Situation:

At 0700 Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 6 put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the area between Cape Sarich and Yalta.

At 1030 U 18 put in to Theodosia to disembark the sick man, take on more supplies and undergo minor repairs.

The short report of the officer commanding of U 18 revealed the following details:

The submarine chaser or Q-ship sunk on 29 August was a small coastal steamer with passenger accommodation on deck, 1 stack and 2 oblique masts. Guns could not be seen. Her courses suggested that she had location sets. After she sank, about 18 of the depth charges on board exploded. No survivors were found. The submarine chaser which U 18 attacked with 2 cm. guns on 30 August was of normal type, similar to motor gunboats. After a request for recognition signals the ship opened fire at a range of 200 meters. After the boat scored several good hits, the enemy vessel turned off developing smoke and made for the coast, shooting red stars. The U-boat was then driven off by searchlights and batteries.

During her 7 days close to the coast on the approach routes to Tuapse, the boat detected no shipping traffic but heavy transportation of goods on the coastal railroad, particularly many tanks and trains with tank cars.

At 2245 Italian midget submarine CB 1 reported that she was out of control 10 miles from the coast off Yalta. At 2330 she was met by a tug and 1 naval ferry barge which put out from Yalta. No further reports as yet.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Throughout the day there were no air raids on naval forces or convoys.

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At 2045 and again at 2320 on 14 September, 1 enemy plane flew over Berdyansk without bombing. At 0200 1 enemy plane bombed the town. No damage was reported. At 0345 2 enemy planes dropped phosphorus incendiary bombs over Kerch. No damage was reported.

At 1300 Senaya was attacked by 3 waves of 8 bombers each escorted by 7 fighters at an altitude of 3,000 meters. About 120 bombs were dropped. A direct hit destroyed pier No. 1 on the head piece of the traverse pier. It might still be usable, but berths for 3 lighters were destroyed. Two lighters, each 800 tons, exploded and became total losses. The first one was loaded with 400 tons of ammunition and sank at the seaward side of pier No. 1, the second with 120 tons of ammunition at the southern side of pier No. 1. Another lighter was damaged and set on fire. Presumably, the latter could be refloated when her cargo was unloaded. One Siebel ferry was slightly damaged. Serious damage was inflicted to the building of Naval Harbor Master, Sea Transportation Office, the radio station and the signal station. One man was seriously wounded and 6 men were slightly wounded. Our anti-aircraft guns were not successful.

The need for protection at the loading places in Kerch Strait was pointed out to the Army and Air Force. For instance, anti-aircraft defense in Senaya at present consists of one 8.8 cm. battery with 6 guns and 24 2 cm. guns, 3 of them quadruple guns. However, when raids are made at high altitudes, the light anti-aircraft guns cannot be employed. In the attack against Senaya, fighter defenses only appeared after the attack.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines in Kerch Strait and the Danube. No mines swept. In preparation for the minelaying operation off Sevastopol, 10 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla were employed on minesweeping. No mines were swept.

The group with skid gear and towed loop gear swept Kerch Strait for mines as scheduled. No mines swept.

The anti-mine escort searched for moored mines on the supply route to Anapa. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Due to delayed unloading in Kerch, there was a drop in performance. The delay was caused by lack of trucks and goods wagons. Thus ferry traffic was reduced despite the ample tonnage available. Army Group 4 and Kant 587 were informed that 6 lighters and 1 freight towing vessel were lying waiting in Kerch roads to be unloaded.

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b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 186 ran as scheduled with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort. At 2010 convoy No. 187 put out from Kerch with 9 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and anti-mine escort. The 2 tugs were to take in 2 pieces of net barrage 100 meters long and one 50 meters long.

The marker buoys belonging to the nets will be loaded on a naval ferry barge.

c. Kerch-Tekriuk convoys:

Convoy No. 77 ran as scheduled with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter.

At 1100 convoy No. 78 put in to Tekriuk with 1 naval ferry barge, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1715 convoy No. 79 put out from Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Sea of Azov:

At 1245 2 naval gunnery lighters, 3 naval ferry barges, 3 transport cutters and 3 harbor defense boats put in to Kerch from Genichesk.

At 2000 1 naval gunnery lighter, 1 naval ferry barge, 1 tug and 2 lighters put in to Genichesk from Berdyansk. At 1900 2 naval gunnery lighters, 2 motor minesweepers (RM), 3 naval ferry barges, 1 motor sailing vessel, 2 tugs, 1 lighter, 3 transport cutters and 1 harbor defense boat put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk.

At 1500 4 naval ferry barges, 3 boats of the water police, 1 harbor defense boat and 3 transport cutters put out from Genichesk for Kerch.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk

Novorossisk
14 September 1943.Action Reporta. Plan of the Russian landing operation (10 September 1943)

After 1½ hours of intense bombardment of the town and harbor district of Novorossisk, enemy forces began to land in Novorossisk at 0315 on 10 September from some 50 landing boats which were protected by 1 torpedeboat, some gunboats, patrol vessels and a large number of M.T.B.s. The landing was part of a large-scale operation planned to cut off Novorossisk and to extend the beach-head. Landings in Stanitzka and in the area of the main line of defense were connected with this landing operation in Novorossisk. At first, the enemy landed in groups on the west mole and on the U-boat mole to the south; later they landed at the power station, in the area of the cold-storage house and at the same time on all the jetties at the apex of the harbor basin. 2,000 Russians equipped with a large number of light and heavy mortars, anti-tank weapons and tommy-guns are estimated to have landed at Novorossisk.

During the night of 10/11 September, the enemy landing forces were reinforced and supplied with ammunition.

b. Plan of defense

Only the forces and armament of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk were at first available for defense against the landing operation. There were the following weapons: 7 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns, type 38, 11 heavy machine-guns and 27 light machine-guns. On the day of the landing the combat strength in personnel amounted to:

3 officers,
3 warrant officers,
18 non-commissioned officers and about 220 men.

The harbor basin is oval and 8 km. long with many jetties and piers to defend. The battlefield directly adjacent the harbor where the installations had to be set up in depth made defense difficult owing to tall grass and bushes and bombed buildings which gave no clear range. Both 73rd Infantry Division and 4th Mountain Division knew that the weak defense forces of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk would only be able to repulse minor enemy operations and give restricted resistance in heavier attacks. After repeated requests, a battalion of mountain infantry was transferred to Novorossisk and placed at my disposal as a reserve on the evening of 9 September. A few hours before the attack, the battalion was guided into position.

A few days before the landing, the entire defense system had to be reorganized because of the withdrawal of an infantry battalion which was charged with the defense of one harbor district and the transfer of responsibility for the harbor to Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk alone. The previous defenses could only be used in a restricted manner because there were 2 sections now unoccupied: one of them was a probable focal point and yet had no defense in depth.

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After the reorganization of the defense and orders for quick improvement of strong field positions, only 1 machine-gun was put out of action despite 1½ hours of drum fire in the area of the 2nd company. At present no clear data can be given concerning the section of the 1st company at the site at the east harbor.

c. Course of the defensive battle with the 2nd company

The artillery fire which began suddenly with all guns and ceased just as quickly could only be taken as the first phase of the attack.

Therefore, without waiting for any orders, I ordered full battle readiness even during this softening-up by artillery. As the enemy barrage crept up, all battle positions were manned in full strength and the assault reserve troops of the naval port commander were ready in their quarters. The fact that during the period of artillery fire all telephone communications to higher commands and our own commands were destroyed made it difficult to give the alarm and conduct defense operations later. On 10 and 11 September, radio communication with Battle H.Q. of Rifle Regiment 186 was our only contact. When the regiment was withdrawn, this line went too. The absence of clear-cut subordination units also impeded the fighting. Until this was settled, I conducted the defense in the light of my own tactical considerations. As they put in to Zemleskaya Bay, the enemy boats encountered barrage fire from artillery and the concentrated fire of the light and heavy machine-guns of the naval port commander. Our guns sank or set on fire the following vessels:

- 1 patrol vessel,
- 1 M.F.B.,
- 2 landing boats and
- 2 rubber dinghies.

Several of the boats were very badly damaged and other suffered casualties among the troops on board, so that they made off and attempted to escape towards Phelenjik. Some of them were trapped in the barrage fire of the artillery and sunk.

All the machine-gun crews remained in their firing position as long as their ammunition supplies held out and the enemy situation permitted. The machine-guns installed on the mules generally had to go to the rescue of battle outposts as they could not stand up to the enemy superiority in numbers. Their battle instructions were to make every attempt to prevent the enemy from landing and especially to prevent them from penetrating in depth. Thanks to this heroic resistance against an enemy far superior in number, the enemy did not succeed in encircling Novorossisk and establishing contact with the main line of defense at the beachhead. The machine-gun crews had to fight against an enemy 20 times stronger than they were. With some exceptions, the machine-gun crews continued fighting with hand-grenades long after their last cartridges had been fired. They then withdrew under cover of the anti-aircraft guns which were deployed in outflanking positions at the base of the mules. Many men were killed in close combat on the mules. The landing was intercepted in the sector of the west mole up to the oil-storage house when the reserve battalions arrived.

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Because supplies to the enemy on the west mole and the U-boat mole were completely cut off, the destruction of these forces could only be a matter of days. Near the cold-storage building, the enemy succeeded in penetrating into our rear zone of defense and in cutting off the entire platoon of the 2nd company which was defending that area. According to my information to date, the platoon leader, P.O. 1st class Kruege (Naval Gunnery), must be blamed for this breakthrough. He left his encircled platoon and did not contact it again until he reached Anapa. Group of this platoon, now on their own and without leader, fought hard and escaped from their encircled position. They at once reported for duty. Through this penetration near the cold-storage building, the 4th platoon and the entire 1st company were able to break through the defense ring. The leader of the 4th platoon with the survivors succeeded in penetrating the double enemy line without casualties and fought their way through to my Battle H.Q.

The enemy was then cut off by the soldiers of the naval port commander, reinforced by the new reserve battalion. After moving into assembly positions, we began to counter-attack immediately in all landing areas. On the west mole we succeeded in recapturing 3 bunkers in the first attack. Strong enemy fire from the U-boat mole forced us to abandon the bunkers again until the mole was mopped up. The counter-attack against the U-boat mole was a joint Army and Navy action. In the third attack after fierce fighting, the enemy forces were destroyed. The number of prisoners and dead revealed that our own weak forces had opposed a well-armed battalion, if not a larger force. About 130 men were taken prisoner. Enemy casualties amounted to many times this number.

Our own losses were moderate, amounting to:

- 10 dead,
- 19 men missing,
- 8 men seriously wounded,
- 10 men slightly wounded.

The forces of the Navy which fought under my command were stubborn and courageous. Commander, Mountain Regiment 91 requested me to express his appreciation to those men in my command.

The following weapons were lost through enemy action:

- 5 heavy machine-guns,
- 2 light machine-guns,
- 3 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns were put out of action by barrel protrusions.

The guns were salvaged under heavy enemy fire.

When the U-boat mole was mopped up, the battle against the west mole was resumed but, to avoid further losses, was suspended again on 12 September by orders of Regiment 91. The enemy troops which landed there will be compelled to surrender in any case for want of water and supplies.

The enemy group which landed near the cold-storage building was attacked and annihilated by the reserve battalion.

(Signed) Hossfeld.

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16 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

0030 On the night of 15/16 September, air
reconnaissance reported 10 small vessels
proceeding between Ghelenjik and the beach-
0047 head in both directions and 1 submarine 15
miles north of Kala Burnu.

0450 No shipping was identified by day in the
Black Sea. 3 steamers, one of them carrying
troops, were sighted on various courses off
the Turkish coast. A Russian convoy of 1
merchant vessel of 800 tons, 2 coastal vessels
and 4-5 boats was sighted 3 miles north of
Ghelenjik on a southerly course.

No shipping was identified in the Sea of Azov.
The number of enemy ships in the ports on the
south coast was approximately the same.

No large ships at sea according to the radio
picture. Lively activity of small vessels
during the night and moderate to slight
activity by day off the northern and central
parts of the east coast.

Submarines detected: 2 in the Crimean area as
far as the northwestern Black Sea, 2 in the
eastern Black Sea and 2 in unidentified
positions.

According to radio traffic, there was lively
air activity west and east of the Crimea in
the morning and afternoon. 4 bombers and 2
reconnaissance planes were intercepted in
radio intercommunication and communication
with ground stations.

Our forces withdrew as scheduled at the bridge-
head. In the central sector the enemy pursued
them with strong tank formations, but in the
other sector their advance was hesitating.
On the evening of 15 September, Berdyansk was
evacuated according to plan. Mines were laid
in the harbor and all harbor installations
were destroyed. The last vessels which
remained there, 1 naval gunnery lighter and
1 naval ferry barge, put out for Genichesk at
2200 on 15 September.

Own Situation:

On 15 September, when Novorossisk had been
evacuated as scheduled, Naval Port Commander,

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Novorossisk went to Anapa, boarding a returning Anapa convoy for Kerch on 16 September. His temporary station was to be Theodosia.

This place was chosen because Army Group A had more than once asked Admiral, Black Sea to reinforce the land forces in Theodosia, if at all possible, in view of the lack of troops there at present and the acute danger of landing operations.

At about 2100 on 15 September, some of the crew of a Rumanian tug observed an unidentified plane flying at an altitude of 100 meters over the Dnieper estuary. As it was seen dropping objects into the water, minelaying is suspected.

During the night of 15/16 September, the minelaying operation off Sevastopol (mine-field section S 48) was carried out according to plan.

- 0430 3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Anapa from the patrol line. Enemy not sighted. Sailing close to the coast, the boats were caught by Russian searchlights and then fired at unsuccessfully by a Russian reconnaissance plane.
- 0440 2 boats of the 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Anapa from the patrol line south of the Taman coast. Enemy not sighted.
- 0515 2 naval ferry barges and 9 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duties. Nothing to report except lively air activity during the night.
- 0700 Submarine chasers Nos. 2302 and 2301 located a submarine in 45° 05.5' N, 33° 16.4' E. After depth charges had been dropped, oil, wreckage and a dead dog appeared on the surface. In passing over the spot with a search line, no wreck was found. No further locations.
- 1150 The flotilla commander with submarine chasers Nos. 2304 and 2305 joined Nos. 2301 and 2302; at 1217 a new location was obtained in 45° 05.5' N, 33° 14.8' E. After three attacks, in each of which 5 depth charges were dropped, a small oil patch appeared and an old life-belt covered with shells and marked "St. Etienne, Marseille" floated up. In both cases wrecks were discovered.

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Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
S winds, force 2 - 3, SW winds in the afternoon, force 3 - 4, overcast, showers, visibility 15 miles.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was instructed to occupy a patrol line between Point Otrishenok and the Oseraika valley during the night of 16/17 September. On the morning of 17 September, the boats will transfer to Ivan Baba via route Brown. They should leave the patrol line to pass Anapa at dawn. The flotilla was directed to keep accurately to route Brown from Anapa onwards because of the danger of mines outside the channel. Anti-submarine operations permitted. 11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to occupy a patrol line northwest of Anapa during the night of 16/17 September. The boats should leave the patrol line at dawn and return to Theodosia via Brown 21 and route Brown, keeping accurately to route Brown because of the danger of mines outside the channel.

1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas were informed of both operational plans.

Despite the report of suspected minelaying between Brown 17 and 18 during the night of 15/16 September, the boats were ordered to return via route Brown as the anti-mine escort of the Anapa convoy would have already swept the channel twice for moored mines. Their wooden construction made the E-boats safe from magnetic mines and so, after a comprehensive patrol by our own fighters, return via route Brown was thought to be advisable. Recent experiences had proved that, with the present high level of training of the enemy Air Force, it was dangerous for the boats to proceed in the open sea, but withdrawal from the patrol line before dawn would substantially reduce the tactical value of the operation.

The enemy will make every effort to disrupt the ferry traffic in Kerch Strait as soon as they discover the recurring service. Night attacks on shipping by surface forces may also be expected. The following minefields have been planned and prepared to protect the ferry traffic (see Appendix, Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chfs. 217/43 A I Para. 2).

In the event of landing operations in the Crimea, Army Group A expects simultaneous

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landings in the southern Crimea and on the Azov coast. As the fortifications of the Azov coast are much weaker than those of the south Crimean coast, probable landing places on the former coast must be protected by minefields. Particularly suitable bays must be blocked by mines. (See Appendix, Paras. 3a. and b.). Mines are available in the Crimea for all the minefields planned, but there will be few left over and non for any further minefields off the south Crimean coast. Group South was asked to speed up the allocation of 400 UMB mines. For plans to use the 300 LMB mines allotted by Group South, see Appendix Paras. 5 a. - d., Admiral, Black Sea Chfs. 217/43 A I.

Plans for minelaying given in Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chfs. 211/43 (see War Diary of 13 September) have been altered: see Appendix, Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chfs. 216/43 A I. The change arose because Kazantip Bay had also to be mined and the necessary mines could only be obtained by reducing the number of mines to be laid in Arabat Bay.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was directed to dispose 2 naval gunnery lighters daily in patrol line in Temriuk Bay from nightfall to dawn. If the weather was too bad for the gunnery lighters, 2 naval ferry barges were to be employed, if need be even those with cargo.

- 0935 The Yalta-Theodosia convoy was attacked by an enemy submarine which fired 1 torpedo off Sudak. The attack was made from astern on the seaward side from a range of some 800 - 1,000 meters and was unsuccessful. The escorting naval ferry barges immediately turned about, but in bad visibility could not find the submarine. No depth charges were dropped.
- 1539 Naval Port Commander, Anapa reported that a 250-meter section of a net barrage had been despatched for Kerch towed by 2 tugs.
- 1905 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas were informed from Simferopol that a formation of naval ferry barges was sailing to Anapa via route Brown during the night of 16/17 September and would arrive at approximately 0500 on 17 September.

The anti-mine escort of the Anapa convoy

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which returned in the evening cut 3 mines or explosive floats.

It was therefore thought that the route had been more intensively mined between Brown 17 and 18.

As a result, the patrol line boats of 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas were ordered at 2300 to leave the patrol line at 0230 because of the danger of mines between Brown 17 and 18. They were to return via the following routes:

- a. 1st E-Boat Flotilla from Point Utrishenok directly to Brown 15 and then via route Brown to Ivan Baba,
- b. 11th E-Boat Flotilla from 45° 00' N to Brown 16, then onwards via Brown 16 to Theodosia.

- 1930 4 submarine chasers of 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla put in to Sevastopol from operations.
- 2200 10 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duties.
- 2218 S 72, in patrol line off the Oseraika valley, reported 2 enemy M.T.B.s, course west, speed 30 knots, in grid square 75443.

U-boat Situation:

At 0045 Italian midget submarine CB 1 was towed in to Yalta by 1 naval ferry barge. At 2145 on 15 September, CB 1 sighted 3 enemy vessels at a range of about 1,000 meters, course west, speed 6 - 7 knots. There was a very flat vessel some 20 meters long without any superstructure. On board were 4 men in rubber suits. The other 2 vessels seemed to be escorting gunboats. The flat vessel was sunk by a torpedo fired at very short range. The explosion of her own torpedo damaged CB 1 in the stern. Water poured in and the engine broke down. Both the gunboats made off, dropping a few depth charges. Apparently the purpose of this operation was to land agents. In Yalta the damaged submarine is being kept afloat by pumping and she will be transferred to Sevastopol in towed convoy on 17 September.

- 1400 U 20 put out from Constantza via the southern route for the minelaying task in the operational area off Poti.
- 1700 U 18 put out from Theodosia for operations in the area between Ghelenjik and Tuapse.

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CB 2 and 3 reported ready for operations on the evening of 17 September.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

- 1250 2 torpedo planes escorted by 2 fighters raided the Kerch-Theodosia convoy 5 miles south of Cape Chauda. The planes launched their torpedoes from an altitude of 20 meters at a range of 1,000 meters, both were ground-runners. The planes then machine-gunned the convoy. Hits scored by our 2 cm. guns had no effect because no armor-piercing ammunition was available. No damage or casualties.
- 1545 - 4 raids were made on Temriuk by a total
1700 of 30 bombers escorted by fighters. Numerous bombs were dropped on the harbor area. No damage was inflicted on naval or supply vessels. 5 naval personnel were wounded. Our anti-aircraft guns were unsuccessful.
- 1805 6 torpedo planes attacked 4 boats of the 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla about 15 miles north of Sevastopol. Attacking altitude 30 - 40 meters, loose formation. The planes launched 1 torpedo each and machine-gunned the submarine chasers. 2 torpedoes were outmaneuvered, the others passed wide of the boats. No damage or casualties. Concentrated defensive fire brought down 1 plane for certain.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes swept a mine between Giurgi and Russe while searching the area according to plan.

West Coast: On 14 September motor minesweeper R 209 swept 1 inertia contact mine with 6-meter pendant 1 mile north of Green 22; shortly afterwards the mine exploded.

Sevastopol: While searching the area off Sevastopol, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept 2 mines.

The FZ-group swept route Green for ground mines north of Sevastopol. No mines swept.

Kerch: During the night of 15/16 September planes were observed circling low between points 17 and 18; minelaying was suspected.

Minesweeping planes and the FZ-group swept Kerch Strait for ground mines without result.

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moored mine check sweeps were carried out in Kerch Strait on the supply route to Anapa by the anti-mine escort of the Anapa convoy. Minesweeping south of the line between Cape Chroni and Cape Achilleon according to plan. 3 mines or explosive floats were swept by the anti-mine escort of the returning Anapa convoy between Brown 17 and 18.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Kerch Strait: Fewer supplies were transported because unloading was held up in Kerch owing to lack of goods wagons and trucks. As a result, the many vessels available could not be used.
 - b. Anapa convoy No. 187 ran with 9 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and anti-mine escort.
- 2015 Convoy No. 188 put out from Kerch with 10 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.
- c. Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 79 ran with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 3 lighters.
- 1830 Convoy No. 80 put out from Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 naval gunnery lighter, 1 freight towing vessel and 1 lighter.
- 2200 Convoy No. 78 put out from Temriuk for Kerch with 1 towing vessel, 1 lighter and 2 naval ferry barges.
- 1030 d. Sea of Azov: 2 naval gunnery lighters, 2 motor minesweepers (RA), 3 naval ferry barges, 1 motor sailing vessel, 2 tugs, 1 lighter and 3 transport barges put in to Genichesk from Berdyansk.
- 2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 1 naval ferry barge put out from Berdyansk for Genichesk.
- e. Crimea convoys ran according to plan. For submarine attacks and air raids, see above. Convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan.

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17 September, 1943

Sinferopoli

Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance detected coastal vessel supply traffic off the Caucasus coast proceeding in both directions between Tuapse and Ghelenjik. Small boats were identified carrying supplies between Ghelenjik and the beachhead. At 0248 2 M.T.B.s heading for Ghelenjik were located west of Ghelenjik.

No reports on the enemy were received from daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea. Neutral shipping traffic was detected off the Turkish coast. 1 M.T.B., course northwest, was detected in Novorossisk Bay.

According to the radio picture, activity of small vessels was generally slight during the night of 16/17 September and in the course of the day, no special incidents. In the forenoon reconnaissance planes were intercepted, but their position was not determined. At 2055 Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected 2 destroyers, 1 torpedoboat, 2 submarine chasers and 2 submarines in radio traffic. Exact positions were not determined, but they were probably in the southeastern Black Sea.

Admiral, Black Sea did not act on this report. He preferred to await further observations and information from the current air reconnaissance. It was presumed that the formation was on exercises.

Submarines detected: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the area southwest of the Crimea and 1 in an unidentified position.

Attacking enemy battalions, some of them with tank support, were repulsed on the Army front at the Kuban bridgehead. New enemy concentrations were observed.

After the evacuation of Novorossisk, our own lines on the coast were withdrawn to the Dyurso River.

Own Situation:

At 0105 a report was received from Bugaz

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that at 2220 on 16 September a Rumanian picket south of Bugaz heard loud engine noises, presumably caused by ships which were approaching the coast. A recognition signal was requested without result, then the vessels withdrew from the coast. No further observations were possible owing to fog.

As the radius of action of enemy M.T.B.s would not allow them to reach the west coast, it was assumed that the vessels were submarines, possibly on minelaying operations.

At 0450 3 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from a patrol line between Point Utrishenok and the Oseraika valley. At 2212 on 16 September 2 M.T.B.s, course west, high speed, were sighted close to the coast in grid square 7544. An attempt to attack them failed because of their superior speed. During pursuit, our boats were caught by searchlights from Point Utrishenok and this considerably reduced their chances of success.

- 0500 9 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duties. Nothing to report.
- 0540 2 E-boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Theodosia from a patrol line northwest of Anapa. Enemy not sighted.
- 0930 S 47 put in to Ivan Baba after her routine dockyard repairs had been completed in Constantza.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
Variable winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind and local thunder squalls in the afternoon, visibility 10 - 12 miles.

The Crimea group (4 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla) was ordered to sweep route Brown in loose formation from point 1 to point 17 on 18 September. Oropesa gear with 15-meter pendant was to be used. The boats were then to put in to Kerch. If any mines were swept, a "Most Immediate" report was to be transmitted and the minefield cleared. Sailing from Sevastopol was to be arranged to reach Kerch before nightfall on 18 September, if the operation was without incident.

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1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to occupy a patrol line between Utrishenok and the Useraika valley during the night of 17/18 September at a distance of 10 miles from the coast. Approach should be made via route Brown as far as point 16, then the boats should head directly for the patrol line. Anti-submarine operations permitted. Boats should enter Anapa at dawn on 18 September.

- 1143 The convoy with the steamer "Tissa" which was proceeding from Sevastopol to the south was detected by enemy air reconnaissance. Protection will be arranged by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea.
- 1230 Naval Shore Commander, Crimea reported that an unexploded torpedo of unknown origin had drifted ashore near Cape Chauda. Barrage Group, Kerch was informed and will deal further with the matter.
- 1800 2 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the patrol line between Cape Utrishenok and the Oseraika valley.
- 1800 Naval gunnery lighter No. 10, naval ferry barge F 493 and 9 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duties.
- 2150 The 2 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla in patrol line were ordered by radio to operate between Utrishenok and the Dyurso estuary, because it had been learned that the enemy had occupied the coast east of the estuary.
- 2155 The E-boats in patrol line in grid square 7536 reported that they had attacked 2 enemy M.T.B.s which came into sight on a northwesterly course and disappeared to the southeast.

U-boat Situation:

- 1400 Italian midget submarine CB 6 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations, no encounters with the enemy.

Since the latest daylight and night reconnaissance had reported increased enemy traffic from Tuapse to Ghelenjik, U 18 was ordered to the Ghelenjik-Tuapse area as her operational area. Night reconnaissance will be sent out to support her.

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CB 2 and 3 received operational orders for anti-submarine operations in the area south and east of Cape Sarich on the morning of 18 September. At present, no operations are possible in Eupatoria Bay owing to our convoy traffic.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

No air raids on convoys or naval forces during the day.

Kerch reported a penetration of enemy planes at 1930 on 16 September, no bombing. Further penetrations during the night by planes flying at an altitude of some 1,500 meters, bombs were dropped in the vicinity of Senaya.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping was continued according to schedule in the Danube, off Sevastopol, in the Dnieper estuary and in Kerch Strait. 1 mine was swept by a plane in the Dnieper estuary.

Supply traffic:

a. Delays in unloading were caused by the continued lack of trucks and goods wagons in Kerch.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 188 ran with 10 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

2035 Convoy No. 189 put out from Kerch with 11 naval ferry barges and 2 tugs.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 80 ran with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 3 transport barges.

1750 Convoy No. 81 put out from Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 2 lighters.

d. At 1815 naval gunnery lighter No. 8, 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 lighter and 1 motor sailing vessel put out from Genichesk for Kerch.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran according to plan.

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placed enemy forces were hot in pursuit but were repulsed.

Army Group A reported that during the night of 18/19 September our lines will be withdrawn to the Wotan position on the north Azov coast.

Own Situation:

At 0425 2 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Anapa from the patrol line off Point Utrishenk. At 2155 on 17 September 2 enemy M.T.B.s came into sight from the southwest. Our boats opened fire against them and they at once made off at maximum speed, course southeast, disappearing at 2202. No hits were observed on the enemy boats.

At 0545 1 naval gunnery lighter, 1 naval ferry barge and 9 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duties. No incidents apart from lively air activity.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
NE - E winds, force 4 - 6, mostly fair,
visibility 20 miles.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 2 boats in patrol line in the area off Cape Utrish during the night of 18/19 September. In the event of northeasterly winds, the boats should proceed directly under the coast, sailing from Anapa at nightfall. At 0230 the boats should leave the patrol line and proceed directly to Brown 15 from Cape Utrish, thereafter via route Brown to Ivan Baba.

Considering the situation in the Kuban bridgehead and the repeated prisoners' statements regarding intended landing operations east of Anapa, I decided despite unfavorable weather to order the boats to occupy the patrol line. In the event of northeasterly winds, passage from Anapa and sojourn in the patrol line close to the coast seem possible. On return passage to Anapa, the boats will be proceeding with the sea.

Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was directed to transfer the new steamer "Feodosia" from Kerch to Sevastopol. The transfer should be carried out on receipt of dated codeword "Schleppgeleit". Date = X-day. "Woywoda" and "Mosel" are to be employed as tugs from Kerch to Sevastopol and they will be joined

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by "Gestmann 9" from Kerch to Brown 17. Anti-submarine escort and protection from planes will be provided by 4 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and 2 naval ferry barges. No anti-mine escort will be employed on the mine-free route through Kerch Strait or on route Brown.

The towed convoy will leave Kerch on X-day to pass Cape Takil at 1900. From there the convoy should proceed at night via route Brown as far as Brown 10. From here the boats should proceed astern of the anti-mine escort of 2 motor minesweepers into the bay between Kuese Burnu and Cape Elchan Kaya. There close to the coast "Feodosia" should anchor from 0500 until nightfall on X + 1 day. The anchorage should be chosen so that enemy air reconnaissance should have difficulty in discovering the steamer against the high coastline. While she is at anchor, the tugs should lie alongside her. "Feodosia" should be ready to slip anchor.

The naval ferry barges should stay close to "Feodosia" as anti-aircraft protection, while the motor minesweepers form a semi-circle around her in sectors to provide anti-aircraft and anti-submarine protection. Naval ferry barges and motor minesweepers should not anchor. The convoy will proceed to Sevastopol via route Brown at 1800 on X + 1 day.

The interruption of the passage during daylight on X + 1 day was ordered in view of the following factors:

As the towed convoy might be detected by the daily enemy reconnaissance of our supply routes close to the Crimean coast, attacks by torpedo planes and bombers were to be expected. Aerial torpedo attacks in particular would be very dangerous as the 8,000-ton steamer towed at a speed of 6 knots could not outmaneuver such attacks. Sufficient protection against air raids is not available, indeed 1st Air Corps might not be able to provide any fighters and, if at all, it would be a case of only one or two. The convoy's passage had therefore to be organized so that enemy daylight reconnaissance should not detect the ships. With this aim in view, the bay west of Cape Meganom surrounded by cliffs 300 meters high should be most suitable. Moreover,

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aerial torpedo attacks could only be carried out from the seaward side and the escort vessels formed up in sectors around the steamer should offer an effective protection from low-level attacks.

The officer commanding the convoy should report by "Most Immediate" signal if on X + 1 day the towed convoy in its anchorage might possibly or definitely be sighted by enemy reconnaissance planes.

1st Air Corps was requested to provide fighter escort over the anchorage from 0500 until night-fall on X + 1 day and on X + 2 day from dawn until the convoy reached Sevastopol.

Sea Transportation Office, Kerch will ensure that "Feodosia" and the tugs are ready to leave Kerch at 1600 on 19 September. Arrangements have been made to inform the coastal authorities and Crimea convoys.

In answer to their inquiry, the following was reported to Group South concerning the convoy rendezvous off the Bosphorus and the torpedoing of the steamer "Thisbe":

Convoys were picked up near point Bucharest within limits of 10 miles east or west. The steamer "Thisbe" did not approach the rendezvous point ordered via Naval Attache, Istanbul 3 miles west of point Bucharest. When the orders had been twice transmitted by visual signaling without result, the escort forces were ordered to proceed on zig-zagging courses in the zone off the Bosphorus where there was a particular danger of submarine attacks. The Russians were not expected to respect neutral waters. For that reason, after leaving the Bosphorus, it was advisable to pick up the escort as soon as possible.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was directed to change the rendezvous points of the Bosphorus convoys continuously and to have the steamers proceed east or west through the Turkish territorial waters as far as the agreed rendezvous point.

- 1700 A low-level attack was made on Anapa convoy No. 189 in grid square 6689 by 8 IL 2 planes which bombed and machine-gunned the vessels. No damage, 1 plane was shot down by naval ferry barges.
- 1800 3 naval ferry barges of the 7th Naval Landing Craft Flotilla proceeding from Sulina to Odessa were attacked by 5 enemy bombers. No damage was reported. 1 plane was shot down by the naval ferry barges.

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18 September, 1943

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Enemy Situation:

0150 Air reconnaissance during the night of 17/18 September reported 1 coastal vessel and 1 patrol vessel leaving Ghelenjik, course southeast.

By day no enemy shipping was identified in the Black Sea. Turkish coast: 1 Turkish freighter of 2,000 tons 5 miles north of Inebolu, course east; at 1250 1 Turkish freighter of about 2,000 tons 10 miles northeast of Tirebolu; 2 freighters, each 3,000 tons, in Trabzon harbor; 1 freighter of 1,900 tons, course west, 10 miles northeast of Rizeh.

No enemy shipping traffic was detected in the Sea of Azov. Enemy ships in Tuapse at 1213 (aerial photograph): 1 torpedoboat, 3 minesweepers, 4 gunboats, 3 M.T.B.s, 7 small armed vessels, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 10 coastal vessels totaling 2,300 tons, 57 boats, some beached. Entering the harbor: 1 motor minesweeper, 1 M.T.B. and 1 small coastal vessel. Outside the harbor 2 coastal vessels, course south, and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest. Enemy shipping in the ports Yeisk, Primorsko Akhtari, fishery Sadki, fishery Yassenka was unchanged.

At 2050, according to radio traffic, 1 torpedoboat was probably off the central part of the east coast. In the course of 18 September continuous M.T.B. activity in the Novorossisk-Tuapse area and normal activity of small vessels off the rest of the east coast. The 2 destroyers, 2 submarine chasers and 1 torpedoboat which were intercepted yesterday in radio communication were not detected again. No exact details were obtained on the distribution of enemy submarines: either 1 or 2 must be expected in both the northwestern and southwestern Black Sea.

In the forenoon, air activity was detected in the Crimean coastal area as far as the northwestern Black Sea. Several enemy planes appeared in radio traffic transmitting reconnaissance reports.

The withdrawal in the Kuban bridgehead proceeded according to plan. In several

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- 1830 2 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Anapa for the patrol line in the Point Utrishenok area.
- 1935 A radiogram from Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was received in Simferopol. It stated that at 0800 1 Soviet freighter called at Trabzon. Her escort as far as the limit of the territorial waters off Trabzon comprised 3 torpedoboats which turned about quickly.
- None of our U-boats could be sent out to attack this steamer because U 20 which was proceeding to the operational area via the southern route was equipped for a minelaying operation and had only 1 torpedo aboard.
- 1935 Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that naval gunnery lighter No. 8 on transfer from Ganichesk to Kerch had filled with water in NE 6 and was anchored near Cape Kozanip about to sink. The crew were taken aboard by naval ferry barges. Salvage measures have been arranged. A tug and a salvage group on board 1 naval ferry barge have been ordered to sail when weather permits.
- 1923 Radar station No. 7 (Cape Takil) reported enemy naval forces heading west 10 miles south of Cape Zhelezni Rog. Anapa convoy No. 189 which was proceeding in that area was immediately warned.
- 2010 The leading boat of Anapa convoy No. 189 reported by signal from Brown 17 that German guns had bombarded the convoy although the recognition signals had been given.
- It was evident that radar station No. 7 had located our convoy and believed it to be hostile. The radar post had been informed of the passage of the Anapa convoy by Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and the error was theirs. However, the bombardment inflicted no damage.
- 2030 S 42, the leading boat of the E-boat group in the Cape Utrish area, reported that the weather prevented continuation of the operation and that both boats were turning about.
- 2150 Temriuk reported that owing to weather conditions, the patrol line in Temriuk Bay could not be occupied. (Wind northeast, force 5 - 6.)

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At 2400 2 E-boats put in to Ivan Baba because of the weather. (See 2030.)

U-boat Situation:

At 0800 Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 put out according to plan for anti-submarine operations in the area south of Cape Sarich. At 2000 they put in to Sevastopol again because of the weather.

At 2055 U 18 reported that she had sunk 1 freighter of 800 tons with 2 torpedoes (1 hit) in grid square 85592. The ship belonged to the convoy reported by night reconnaissance at 0150 as proceeding from Ghelenjik to Tuapse. The boat also reported that she had proceeded to the attack area south of Tuapse, i.e. the southern part of the operational area which was allotted to her. She probably did this because of the coastal shipping south of Tuapse reported by daylight reconnaissance. This measure was in accordance with the independence granted to the commander in his operational order and was approved.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

For air raid on the Anapa convoy and the naval ferry barge convoy proceeding from Sulina to Odessa, see above.

1615 20 P2 planes bombed Anapa from an altitude of 4,000 meters. No damage was inflicted to naval buildings, but 3 naval personnel were slightly wounded. Our guns had no successes.

From 2130 (17 September) to 0145, Taman and Senaya were continuously attacked from the air, no damage to naval property was reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: A Rumanian vedette swept 1 mine near Mile 57. Minesweeping planes swept for ground mines. No mines swept. The Danube is still closed from Braila as far as Chernavoda and from Galatz as far as Tulcea.

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green for moored mines as far as the 40-meter line. No mines swept.

Kerch: While escorting the Anapa convoy, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept route Brown for moored mines as far as point 17. No mines swept. The group with towed loop gear swept the northern entrance to

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Kerch Strait for ground mines. No mines swept. Owing to transfer to another base, minesweeping planes were not employed in Kerch Strait.

1450 4 boats of the Crimea group put in to Theodosia. Sweeping of route Brown had been abandoned owing to the weather.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

At present 14 laden lighters, totaling 4,800 tons, are lying in Kerch roads. Their cargo cannot be unloaded because of the lack of trucks and goods wagons. If this situation lasts any longer, no lighters will be employed at all within a few days. Even new lighters could not change these conditions. Commanding General, Kerch Strait is about to arrange for more trucks.

b. Kerch-Temriuk:

1800 Convoy No. 81 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 2 lighters.

1700 Convoy No. 82 put out from Kerch with 1 naval ferry barge, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

1700 c. Genichesk-Kerch convoy put in to Kerch with 1 naval ferry barge, 1 motor sailing vessel, 1 tug and 1 lighter. Naval gunnery lighter No. 8, which belonged to this convoy, is lying at anchor about to sink near Cape Kazantip. Naval gunnery lighter No. 2 remained with her to give assistance.

d. Some Crimea convoys were postponed owing to the weather. In the western Black Sea convoy traffic was badly impeded by the weather.

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19 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Apart from German vessels, air reconnaissance in the northeastern Black Sea sighted nothing on the night of 18/19 September.

Daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea did not sight the enemy. In the late afternoon the Caucasus coast was examined from Batum as far as Ghelenjik, no shipping was detected. Slight neutral shipping traffic off the Turkish coast. No shipping was detected in the south Azov coast area between Temriuk and Yeisk.

Enemy ships in Ghelenjik showed a decrease in coastal vessels, landing craft (personnel) and small vessels. They may be in Novorossisk. Aerial photographic reconnaissance of the port of Novorossisk was requested from 1st Air Corps. Enemy shipping in ports and fisheries on the south coast of the Sea of Azov revealed no new information.

According to the radio picture, 1 torpedo-boat appeared in the northeastern Black Sea as far as the Tuapse area during the night of 18/19 September. Radio traffic by the fleet was intercepted in the course of the day, but no activity of vessels was detected. Activity of small vessels was normal, no focal points.

At 2115 according to radio traffic, there was 1 probable destroyer at sea in the southeastern Black Sea.

Submarines detected: 2 in the northwestern Black Sea, 2 in unidentified positions. Lively air activity was detected over the west coast of the Crimea during the day. Several bombers and reconnaissance planes appeared in the radio traffic.

According to an agent's report, 3 transports loaded with British and American tanks, guns, machine-guns and ammunition and 1 tanker escorted by 2 torpedoboats, 1 submarine and 12 small M.T.B.s put out from Poti to the north on 15 September.

In the Gotenkopf beachhead our movements were as scheduled. Some enemy attacks in the central sector of the front were repulsed and the enemy suffered casualties.

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Own Situation:

Harbor defense boat RB 01 has been overdue since 18 September. She had been assigned with RB 02 and cutter No. 2283 to transfer the Port Control Sub. Office, Obitochnaya to Genichesk. On the evening of 18 September, RB 02 put in to Genichesk. The cutter had run aground off Kossa Biriuchi, but her crew was rescued. RB 01 presumably sank in the rough seas.

Naval gunnery lighter No. 8 is anchored and sinking off Cape Ziuk and not off Cape Kazentip as was originally reported. She is lying in water 4 meters deep. Bad weather has so far prevented salvage.

Owing to the weather, the patrol lines in Temriuk Bay and off the north coast of the Sea of Azov were not occupied during the night of 18/19 September.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
NE-E winds, force 4, at times force 6,
fair, visibility 20 miles.

On inquiry, Group South was informed that the 440 explosive floats available in the area were to be used to protect the minefield A-5 and another planned for Theodosia Bay.

Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was directed to lay a row of explosive floats north of the north row of FMB mines for the protection of minefield A-5. The 160 explosive floats which will be required for this purpose will be available in Kerch. Depth setting minus 3 meters. Distance of the row of explosive floats from the north row of FMB mines should be 100 meters. The explosive floats should be divided equally among sections a, b and c. In view of the evacuation routes planned in the northern part of Kerch Strait, the position of minefield K-8 was altered about 1.3 miles to the north. The position of the minefield, types of mines, depth setting, distances between mines and rows will not be changed. The present position of the minefield will not affect the Cape Achilleon - Cape Chroni route or the route around Cape Achilleon to the east. The route from Red 14 to Red 15 has

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been abandoned. Orders will follow on the later closing of the minefield gap between Cape Achilleon and the east flank of K-8. Minefield K-10, which was ordered in Admiral, Black Sea Chfs. 211/43 A I Para. 5) (see War Diary of 13 Sept.) had to be abandoned, new orders will follow. These changes were necessary because the engineers had asked for new transportation routes.

With the development of the situation, measures and plans for coastal defense in the Sea of Azov and protection of Kerch Peninsula had to be instigated. They were reported to Group South in Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chfs. 222/43 A I dated 19 September. (See Appendix.) General directives from Naval Staff, Operations Division were given special consideration.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine and Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus were informed that 4 naval gunnery lighters and 4 naval ferry barges had been placed at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine for coastal defense assignments. The present number of vessels in Genichesk will be brought up to full strength by the allocation of operational vessels.

- 1400 Mine exploding vessel No. 192 and 3 naval ferry barges were attacked by 3 Russian torpedo planes which launched 5 torpedoes. The torpedoes were outmaneuvered. No damage, no planes shot down. The attack was made off St. George.
- 1410 3 submarine chasers of 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the Eupatoria area, at 1535 they returned owing to bad weather.
- 1800 Naval gunnery lighter No. 10, 1 naval ferry barge and 9 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duties.
- 2245 A report from Naval Port Commander, Anapa was received stating that a Russian radiogram had been intercepted by the Rumanians. According to the message, the last Anapa convoy was to be attacked by 100 planes.

In view of this report, 1st Air Corps was immediately requested to provide fighter cover. 1st Air Corps approved the request.

U-boat Situation:

The 1st CB-Flotilla was not employed owing to weather conditions. Italian midget submarine CB 1 was lying damaged in Yalta and was to be

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transferred when the weather improved.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

For the aerial torpedo attack on the convoy off St. George, see above.

Otherwise no attacks on convoys or naval forces.

At 0615 15 planes made a low-level attack on Anapa. Naval ferry barge F 539 was damaged by bombs, no further damage was reported. At 1530 15 planes dropped about 70 bombs on Taman. 1 lighter of about 1,000 tons received a direct hit, she started to leak and was beached. The lighter had no cargo, total loss likely. No planes were shot down. At 1610 9 planes bombed Temriuk. No major damage was reported.

During the night of 18/19 September, several air raids were carried out on Taman and heavy damage was inflicted in the town and harbor area. However, no damage to Navy property was reported.

From 0302 to 0415 several bombs were dropped east of Kerch, damage not known.

During the night Temriuk reported several penetrations by enemy planes. A few bombs were dropped, no damage or casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes and 1 Rumanien vedette swept for ground mines. No mines swept.

The Crimea group abandoned minesweeping in Kerch Strait and the intended sweep of the route from Theodosia to Kerch because of the weather. Minesweeping planes swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait for ground mines. No mines swept. Despite weather conditions, the anti-mine escort for the Anapa convoy operated, but swept no mines.

A drifting mine was sighted south of the Sulina entrance.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

The Officer Commanding Army Supply Division 587 and Quartermaster General, Army Group A

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were informed that for the past few days unloading in Kerch had been seriously impeded by the lack of trucks and goods wagons. As many vessels were lying in the roads ready for unloading, they were requested to make every effort to speed up the unloading by adopting more adequate measures.

b. Anapa convoys:

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the last Anapa convoy would run on 20 September. Convoy No. 190 ran with 8 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

At 2100 the last Anapa convoy put out from Kerch with 12 naval ferry barges, 1 naval ferry barge (mines) and anti-mine escort.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 81 ran with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs, 2 lighters, several cutters and Kuban lighters.

At 1730 convoy No. 82 put out from Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges, 2 towing vessels, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

d. Because of the weather, Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea were either postponed or they put in to their ports of departure again.

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20 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

With the exception of neutral shipping off the Turkish coast, no enemy activity was detected by daylight air reconnaissance in the southeastern Black Sea. The Caucasus coast was examined from Poti to Novorossisk as far as 40 miles from the shore. 4 landing boats and coastal vessels, course northwest, slight speed, were sighted 8 miles southwest of Ghelenjik. Night reconnaissance did not observe any enemy shipping in the northeastern Black Sea. 5 M.T.B.s off Oseraika, course south; 1 motor minesweeper leaving Ghelenjik, 1 tug of about 150 tons with a barge of 100 tons entering Ghelenjik; 1 tug of about 150 tons with 4 landing boats, 3 motor minesweepers, 3 M.T.B.s and 3 landing boats; 1 Turkish freighter of about 1,500 tons, course west, 15 miles north of Gitresum.

As on the previous day, air reconnaissance detected very few enemy ships in Ghelenjik: 4 motor minesweepers, 13 M.T.B.s, 50 boats, 3 motor gunboats, 23 motor landing boats and 4 coastal vessels totaling about 700 tons. The whereabouts of the other vessels were not determined.

Visual observation of Novorossisk revealed no new enemy ships in port since the evacuation.

6 motor gunboats heading for Primorsko were observed in the Sea of Azov 15 miles northwest of Primorsko. Enemy ships in port at fishery Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 21 boats. Fishery Sadki: 35 boats. Primorsko: 1 motor gunboat, 2 coastal vessels and 105 boats.

Main Naval D/F Station reported that no movements of large vessels had been detected. Activity of small vessels was normal without perceptible focal points. In the forenoon armed reconnaissance was carried out in the northwestern Black Sea and the Crimean area. 4 planes were identified in radio traffic. In the afternoon no air activity was detected. During the day there were no clues as to submarine positions. At 2045 Mamaia obtained a bearing of 058° on a submarine.

Withdrawals in the Gotenkopf bridgehead proceeded according to plan. Attacking enemy

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battalions were repulsed in various sectors of the front.

Own Situation:

Harbor defense boat RB 01, reported as lost (see War Diary 19 September), is stranded 1.5 miles west of Kirilovka.

The entire crew has been rescued and is en route to Genichesk.

At 0440 the last Anapa convoy was bombed 3 miles off Anapa shortly before entering; no damage or casualties were reported. At 0530 and 0630, after the convoy had put in, high and low-level attacks were made by about 30 DB 3 and IL 2 planes. Naval ferry barge F 586 was hit in the bows but remained afloat. F 125 suffered splinter damage, 3 men were wounded, no planes were shot down.

0530 F 315, naval gunnery lighter No. 10, 4 mine-sweepers and 5 assault boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duties. Nothing to report.

0715 S 72 put in to Constantza from Ivan Baba for routine dockyard repairs.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
SE winds, force 2 - 4, during the night
variable winds, force 2 - 3, fair visibility
15 miles, morning mist.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats in patrol line between the Sukko estuary and Anapa and 2 boats between Anapa and 45° 00' N during the night of 20/21 September. Distance from the coast according to visibility should be 3 - 5 miles, so that the boats cannot be detected from the coast. Enemy forces should be attacked and reported by a "Most Immediate" signal. Boats should put out from Ivan Baba at 1800, commencing return passage at 0300 on 21 September. Approach and return passages were ordered via route Brown as far as Brown 16, then the boats were to proceed directly to the patrol line. Anti-submarine operations permitted. The flotilla was informed that no German forces or convoys would be on passage between Kerch Strait and Anapa during the night of 20/21 September, also that our Army front on the Caucasus coast had been withdrawn to the estuary of the Sukko River and that enemy

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landing operations were imminent southeast and northwest of Anapa within the next few nights.

A special situation report was sent to Group South giving the following information:

On 19 September the Army front on the north Azov coast was withdrawn to the Wotan position on the Osero Molochno River.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine and his operations staff were transferred to Genichesk, the rest of the staff went to Nikolaiev. The defense of the remaining northern part of the Azov coast was entrusted to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, and 4 naval gunnery lighters, 4 naval ferry barges and harbor defense flotillas were assigned to his command for operations. All the other forces, tugs and lighters, have been withdrawn from the Sea of Azov for employment in Kerch Strait.

At the Kuban bridgehead evacuation is now in full progress, but the vessels available for sea transportation could not all be used as unloading and transshipment were held up in Kerch by the lack of goods wagons and trucks. On 19 September, 14 lighters were lying in Kerch ready for unloading. To relieve the situation in Kerch, evacuation vessels from Taman are to cross the sea to Theodosia. The last convoy from Anapa, comprising 12 naval ferry barges, was ordered for 20 September. After it had put out, 15 LMB mines were to be laid in the harbor.

Hitherto, the withdrawal movements have proceeded according to plan. Generally, the enemy followed very slowly and only in a few places did they make more forceful efforts to pursue our forces with tanks.

Army Group A planned to evacuate commercial goods from the Kuban bridgehead by approximately 20 October and to conclude the whole evacuation early in November. However, an earlier date for evacuation must be expected.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea was ordered to determine the new route for the approach to Sevastopol from the west after the northwestern minefield gap through the enemy declared area west of Sevastopol is swept and opened to traffic. Sevastopol should be considered in planning this new route.

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At 1035 minelaying in Anapa harbor was carried out according to plan.

At 1138 at Brown 21 several planes machine-gunned Anapa convoy No. 191 in a low-level attack. 1 man was seriously wounded aboard motor minesweeper RA 54 and 7 men were slightly wounded aboard naval ferry barges. No planes shot down. The badly wounded man was transferred to a sea rescue plane. Detailed action report from 3rd Landing Craft Flotilla will follow.

- 1630 Submarine chasers Nos. 2302, 2304 and 2305 put out from Ak Mechet.
- 1700 The towed convoy with steamer "Feodosia" put out from Kerch.
- 1800 4 E-boats put out from Ivan Baba for patrol activity in the Anapa area. 1 E-boat could not proceed because of engine trouble.
- 1800 Naval ferry barge F 380, naval gunnery lighter No. 10, 4 minesweepers and 5 assault boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duties.
- 1900 The mole at Anapa was blasted; apart from minor explosions afterwards, the blasting succeeded.

U-boat Situation:

Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 reported ready for operations on the evening of 20 September. They were ordered to carry out anti-submarine operations from 21 to 23 Sep. in the area south of Sarich-Yalta. Tug "Schürmann" commenced transfer passage to Sevastopol with the damaged CB 1. At 2352 U 20 reported by short signal: "Task carried out".

The boat had completed minelaying off Poti harbor entrance according to plan. Barrage report will be made after entering. U 20 was ordered to return immediately to Sevastopol, proceeding within the operational zone via the coastal route south of the Crimea. She was to take in torpedoes as she had only one on board.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of the continuous raids already reported on the Anapa convoy, no convoys or naval forces were attacked from the air.

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At 1215 Temriuk harbor was raided by 18 planes which dropped numerous bombs outside the harbor basin; no damage, no planes shot down.

From 0205 to 0310 Naval Port Commander, Anapa reported continuous bombing by single planes, no damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes swept for ground mines according to plan. No mines swept. The Danube was re-opened between Sulina and Galatz.

Sevastopol: Ground mine check sweeps were carried out with towed loop gear on route Green off Sevastopol as far as the 40-meter line. No mines swept.

Minesweeping planes swept Kerch Strait for ground mines according to plan, while the group with towed loop gear swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 56 took soundings for minefield K 7.

2 motor minesweepers (RA) swept the supply route to Anapa for moored mines while protecting the Anapa convoy. No mines swept.

4 boats of the Trimeia group swept the route from Kerch to Theodosia. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Lack of trucks and goods wagons in Kerch continued to delay unloading.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the jetty which was damaged by bombing on 15 September could again be used.

b. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 82 ran with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel, 2 lighters and 1 harbor defense boat.

At 1020 convoy No. 83 put out from Kerch with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug and 2 lighters. Owing to engine

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trouble aboard the towing vessel, the convoy anchored at point 201. Convoy planned to continue passage at 1800.

- c. At 1900 2 tugs, 2 naval ferry barges, 4 lighters, 1 motor sailing vessel, 3 water police boats and 2 transport barges put out from Genichesk for Kerch.
- d. The last Anapa convoy, No. 191, ran with 13 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.
- e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan.

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21 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance in the north-eastern Black Sea failed to sight the enemy. Throughout the day no enemy shipping was observed in the Black Sea. At 1600 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, was sighted off the Caucasus coast near Tuapse and at 1640 9 M.T.B.s and 23 boats, also course northwest, were detected between Ghelenjik and Novorossisk.

Visual observation revealed the following enemy shipping in port:

Tuapse: 1 destroyer, 1 torpedoboat, 4 minesweepers, 4 motor minesweepers, 1 tanker of about 7,000 tons and 10 coastal vessels.

Ghelenjik: 3 coastal vessels, 6 motor gunboats and some 30 boats.

Novorossisk: at 1625 1 coastal vessel in the harbor making for the harbor exit.

At 1724 an Air Force observation post reported 6 enemy M.T.B.s cruising off Anapa. 2 Turkish merchant vessels of 500 and 2,500 tons were sighted at anchor off the Turkish coast.

The M.T.B.s sighted west of Anapa and the convoy south of Novorossisk suggest landing operations against the coast at the Kuben bridgehead. It was also reported that while the isolated units were withdrawing through Anapa, they were engaged by enemy forces which had been landed in Anapa harbor at nightfall by 3 M.T.B.s and several small boats.

Radio traffic revealed no major concentration of ships or large-scale enemy activity. Transmission of the position of a vessel some 16 miles southwest of Sochi was intercepted and it was also learned that Sukhum transmitted the position of an unidentified vessel some 17 miles southeast of Tuapse to an M.T.B.

At 2230 1 submarine was located some 20 miles southwest of Cape Tarkan and at 2255 another submarine was located 90 miles east of Constantza.

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In general, activity of small vessels was moderate by day and lively at night, when several M.T.B.s and motor minesweepers were operating. Submarines detected: 3 off the northwest coast of the Crimea, 1 homeward and 1 outward bound in the eastern Black Sea.

From the Gotenkopf bridgehead it was reported that the enemy was following up our retreating forces along the entire front. Enemy attacks were made in up to regiment strength, but were repulsed.

Own Situation:

At 0000 motor minesweepers R 30, RA 54 and 56, FR 7 and naval ferry barges F 418 and 419 put out from Kerch to the south to lay minefield K 7.

At 0102 S 49 reported enemy naval forces 12 miles westnorthwest of Anapa. Shortly afterwards she reported them to be enemy M.T.B.s which she attacked at 0200 one mile west of Anapa.

At 0225 she reported that her previous report should have said motor gunboats instead of M.T.B.s. At 0305 S 42 and S 49 both reported that they had commenced return passage to Ivan Baba.

During the night of 20/21 September, boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla occupied the patrol line southeast and northwest of Anapa in pairs from 2200 to 0300. From 0040 to 0048 the northern group had contact with 5 enemy M.T.B.s. After shelling, the enemy made off to the south at maximum speed. At 0144 they made contact with 4 enemy motor gunboats. As our boats were in an unfavorable position against the horizon and the enemy vessels had superior armament (7.5 cm. guns), the engagement was broken off at 0149. The enemy made off to the south. The southern group of 1st E-Boat Flotilla did not sight any enemy vessels. Proceeding approximately 10 miles from the northern group, the boats did not join in the action after receiving the radiogram because interference might have caused confusion. For that reason, the group remained in patrol line as ordered. This measure was approved. At 0530 the boats returned to Ivan Baba.

0515 Naval ferry barges F 329 and 382, naval gunnery lighter No. 10, 4 minesweepers and 5 assault boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duties. Nothing to report.

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- 0620 The towed convoy with the new steamer "Feodosia" anchored in Sudak Bay according to plan.
- 0830 Submarine chasers Nos. 2302, 2304 and 2305 put in to Sevastopol from escort duties.
- C805 Motor minesweepers R 30, RA 54 and 56, FR 7 and naval ferry barge F 419 put in to Kerch after laying minefield K 7 according to plan.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria-Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: NE-E winds, force 3 - 4, at times force 5, fair, visibility 15 miles.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to provide 3 fully operational naval ferry barges for operations in a patrol line off the south Taman coast from 1400 on 22 September. Naval ferry barges with the strongest armament were to be selected for this task and an attempt was to be made to increase the armament by mounting anti-tank guns and machine-guns. Furthermore, in view of the special danger of boarding, the crews were to be increased and given adequate small arms.

After the laying of the new minefields in Kerch Strait, our declared area in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait was extended in a corrected announcement and the new limits published in "Notices to Mariners."

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was again informed that there was an order for the increase of the forces of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to 4 naval gunnery lighters and 4 naval ferry barges. He was therefore directed to despatch 1 naval gunnery lighter and 2 naval ferry barges as quickly as possible.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 2 groups of boats in patrol line southwest of Anapa during the night of 21/22 September. The groups should stand on and off at slight speed. They should sail from Ivan Baba at 1800 and return passage to Ivan Baba is planned for 0300 on 22 September. The flotilla was informed that Anapa had been evacuated during the night of 20/21 September and that the frontline lay some 8 km. north of Anapa.

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At 1815 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the patrol line as ordered.

Shortly before leaving, Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed of sighting reports and reconnaissance results in the Novorossisk-Anapa area (see Enemy Situation). He was ordered to close in the group to operate against the reported enemy forces, so that in the probable engagement with the enemy their gunfire would be concentrated.

At 1955 Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported that 4th Battery, Naval Artillery Detachment 614 had moved into position near Genicheskaya Gorka and had been ready to fire from 1800. The transfer of 3rd Battery to Biriuchi is to be carried out on 22 September.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that salvage work had started aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 8 and that it was planned to employ submersible lifting pontoons on 22 September. The naval gunnery lighter is well down in the sand and it will take at least 3 - 4 days to tow her off.

U-boat Situation:

- 0945 The damaged Italian midget submarine CB 1 was towed in to Sevastopol from Yalta.
- 0800 CB 3, followed at 1100 by CB 2, put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations south of the Crimea.

U 20 reported that at 0800 on 22 September she would be at Brown 10 to pick up her escort. The boat was informed that 2 naval ferry barges would be available then to escort her to Sevastopol. At 1800 U 18 was informed that at 1000 the following vessels had been detected by visual reconnaissance in Tuapse harbor: 1 destroyer with steam up, 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 torpedoboat, etc.

The boat was ordered to proceed at once to a position south of Tuapse boom to attack the tanker which according to experience would put out approximately 24 hours later. At 2000 U 18 reported that at 0900 she had sighted and attacked 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 5 torpedoboats and minesweepers with close escort by 5 planes. They were in grid square 94113 heading for Tuapse. The attack on the tanker failed and the freighter was able to outmaneuver 2 single torpedoes. The boat was observed, shelled and attacked with numerous depth charges.

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U 18 had thus been in the right position. She had attacked the convoy later reported by air reconnaissance to be in port while it was putting in. The strong escort and unfavorable attacking conditions with smooth sea prevented success.

The boat was ordered to lay 1 EMS mine in grid square 9410 as it was expected that, after detecting the U-boat off Tuapse, the enemy would launch anti-submarine operations before the tanker put out again. In that case the EMS mine should have the desired effect. The boat was then to return to Constantza as she had fired all her torpedoes and had been at sea for more than 30 days. U 18 was informed of the anti-submarine operational area of the Italian midget submarines and ordered to alter course to pass 20 miles south of it.

Unfortunately just when there is continuous enemy supply traffic which is expected to increase, no U-boats will be in the operational area for several days. Attempts were made to avoid such a situation, but the unexpected breakdown of U 9 and U 20's delayed sailing brought them to nought.

Enemy Air Activity:

During the night of 20/21 September, Kerch reported bombing north of Kolonka and south of Achilleon, no damage reported.

- 0830 8 bombers raided Taman, dropping 40 bombs, most of which landed in the sea. 1 plane was shot down. No casualties or damage were reported.
- 0635 Temriuk outer harbor and the battery area were raided by 1 plane which dropped 11 bombs. 1 assault boat belonging to the combat engineers was destroyed by a direct hit. One man was seriously wounded and several men slightly wounded, no damage to naval property.
- 0800 Temriuk harbor was machine-gunned in a low-level attack by 4 fighters and 8 IL 2 planes. No damage or casualties.
- 0945 Temriuk convoy No. 83 was raided off Kuchugury. No damage was reported.

At 1224 a low-level machine-gun attack was made on Taman harbor. No damage to naval property. Another low-level attack was made at 1625, again no damage to naval property.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: Boats with towed loop gear swept route Green six times from the approach buoy at Sevastopol northwards as far as the 40-meter line and eastwards as far as the minefield. No mines swept. Mine exploding vessel No. 193 swept the Danube eight times between Mile 55 and 46. No mines swept.

Kerch: Apart from the laying of K 7 mentioned above, minefield K 8 was marked and soundings taken. Soundings for minefields A-5 and A-6 were planned for the next day.

Work was done on the net barrage in Kerch Strait and the coastal route from Achilleon to the Peresyp estuary was swept. No mines swept. The route from Red 14 to Ilich was swept 20 times for ground mines. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait continued according to plan although delays in unloading were still caused by the lack of goods wagons and trucks, making it very difficult to keep the transports running to a smooth routine.
- b. With the despatch of the last Anapa convoy yesterday and its arrival in Kerch according to schedule, it can now be stated that since the beginning of transportation on 23 Feb. 1943 a total of 191 convoys has run up to 20 Sep. 1943. 61,717 tons were carried in a west-east direction and 8,583 tons in an east-west direction (since 7 Sep. 1943).

From 23 Feb. to 11 May, no convoys were attacked by planes, while from 11 May to 20 Sep. 33 raids were carried out with bombs, machine-guns and phosphorus. About 520 bombs of small, medium and heavy caliber were counted in these raids. In addition, there were raids with a great many bombs which were not counted. 13 attacking planes were shot down by the Navy and 56 by the Air Force. 6 more enemy planes were probably shot down by naval vessels and one by the Air Force. We suffered the following losses in the above-mentioned period: 7 men were killed, 13 seriously wounded and 62 slightly wounded, while 5 naval ferry barges were lost and 11 were damaged.

Apart from the air raids, submarine attacks were carried out on 18 and 21 May and 5 June. 6 torpedoes were fired, no damage. The distance from Anapa to the next enemy port

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(Ghelenjik) amounts to 45 miles.

- c. 2 Temriuk convoys put in to Kerch and at 1500 the last Temriuk convoy put out from Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 1 lighter.
- d. At 1700 1 motor sailing vessel, 2 tugs, 4 lighters, 2 naval ferry barges and 5 boats put in to Kerch from Genichesk.

At 1915 on 21 September 2 naval ferry barges put out from Kerch for Genichesk.

- e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan.

To relieve the situation in Kerch harbor, it is planned to withdraw any vessels which are not required. It is intended to transfer 3 lighters from Kerch to Theodosia every second day and then from there they will proceed to Sevastopol.

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22 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Owing to bad weather no air reconnaissance was flown during the night of 21/22 September. Daylight reconnaissance did not detect any enemy shipping in the Black Sea. A few small vessels and 1 M.T.B. were observed in the area off Anapa. Reconnaissance in the Sea of Azov revealed a distinct change in the focal point of the boats' activity from the Gulf of Taganrog, particularly from Yeisk, to Primorsko Akhtari.

At 0840 the following enemy ships were observed in Yeisk: 4 M.T.B.s, 2 small patrol vessels, 1 paddle steamer (old and well down in the water), 2 coastal vessels and 30 boats. 1 small coastal vessel and 1 small patrol vessel were putting out on a northerly course.

Enemy ships in Primorsko at 0830: 1 small and 12 large motor gunboats, 2 M.T.B.s, 15 small patrol vessels, 2 small coastal vessels and 80 boats. It may be assumed that not only had ships been transferred but also that small patrol vessels had again been brought to the Sea of Azov.

The following vessels were detected by visual reconnaissance off Anapa at 1620: 1 M.T.B. 10 miles west of Anapa, 1 M.T.B. east of Cape Sukko, 2 small coastal vessels south of Anapa.

At 2100 long-range reconnaissance was flown between Ghelenjik and Anapa as far as 30 miles out to sea, no sightings were made. Photographic evaluation of yesterday's reconnaissance results for the ports of Novorossisk, Ghelenjik and Tuapse revealed only slight changes compared with the findings of visual observation (see War Diary of 21 September). In particular, 4 submarine chasers were identified off Tuapse.

Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate radio traffic and no perceptible movements of large vessels. Lively M.T.B. activity was detected off the northern east coast with moderate activity of small vessels off the central and southern parts.

Towards evening 2 submarines were detected in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the southwest coast of the Crimea, according to air reconnaissance, presumably off the south coast

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of the Crimea. 2 more submarines were identified in the eastern Black Sea, one of them on return passage from the operational area.

From the bridgehead it was again reported that enemy attacks in up to regiment strength, some with tank support, had been repulsed. The attacks were made over the whole front-line of the Rumanian Army.

Own Situation:

On 21 September the enemy attacked our positions northeast of Kirilovka across the isthmus between Osero Molochno and the Sea of Azov. In response to an urgent request from Army Group A, I therefore ordered 3 naval gunnery lighters to leave at once to bombard the enemy concentrations. At 0225 the 3 naval gunnery lighters arrived at Kirilovka, at 0350 they reached the northern firing position and the bombardment was carried out from 0455 to 0525. 2 fires with heavy smoke clouds and some violent explosions were observed. At first the boats were met by strong defensive fire which ceased, however, towards the end of the bombardment. The ships also observed that when the bombardment was over, our infantry counter-attacked, while near Kirilovka Russian prisoners could be seen being marched back.

At 0100 the north mole in Kerch caught fire and there were loud explosions. The fire started on a truck which was being loaded with detonators and hand-grenades. The lines of wagons and ammunition piles carried the fire to lighter No. 1139 which was loaded with ammunition. The fire on the mole has been extinguished.

At 0400 the burning lighter was towed off and later on was scuttled between the fishery harbor and Kolonka.

Damage: lighter No. 1139 was a total loss; lighter No. 1476, tug "Lobau" and 3 small lighters were damaged; 1 combined operations ferry was damaged by splinters. The north-eastern corner of the mole was destroyed and 2 - 3 berths for large lighters cannot be used.

At 0545 E-boats S 26, S 42, S 45 and S 49 put in to Ivan Baba from the patrol line between Anapa and Maria Magdalena Bank, no sightings.

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No incidents were reported from the patrol line in Temriuk Bay; the ships operating there joined the last Temriuk-Kerch convoy.

At 0745 the minelaying formation put in to Kerch after completing minelaying assignment K 9 according to plan.

At 0830 the towed convoy with the new steamer "Feodosia" put in to Sevastopol. This slow-moving convoy had reached port without being attacked.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
Variable winds, mainly south, force 2 - 3,
fair, visibility 15 miles.

1150 The last Temriuk convoy put in to Kerch after scuttling lighter No. 1480 to block the Temriuk channel. She was loaded with concrete. LMB mines were laid in the approach to the Temriuk channel.

Since Anapa is occupied by enemy forces, landings may be expected on the German-occupied south Taman coast or enemy naval forces may bombard our coast. In view of this, the flank protection for the bridgehead has been reinforced from the sea and the patrol lines extended and strengthened by naval ferry barges. Our forces in that area had the task of preventing landing operations and coastal bombardments. Orders were accordingly issued for attacks on enemy forces.

1400 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 11 and 3 RK-boats put out from Kerch for patrol duties off the north Taman coast.

1440 The "Prodromos" convoy was attacked off St. George by torpedo planes. She was proceeding from Sevastopol to Constantza. No damage was reported.

1700 4 E-boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for assignments close to the Caucasus coast between Cape Idokopas and the Vulkan valley.

1700 Motor minesweepers R 30, RA 54 and 56 put out from Kerch for minelaying assignments.

1700 S 28 put out from Constantza to proceed alone to Ivan Baba.

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- 1710 2 naval ferry barges put out from Kerch for the patrol line off the south Taman coast.
- 1900 2 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put out from Theodosia for the patrol line west of Cape Utrish.
- 1900 3 naval gunnery lighters put out from Genichesk to repeat the bombardment of enemy positions on the isthmus between Osero Molochno and the Sea of Azov. 6th Army H.Q. was to send one liaison officer to be embarked on the leading boat.

If the liaison officer did not arrive in time, the boats had orders to sail to bombard the village of Stepanovka Yanzgury where the enemy concentrations were believed to be.

U-boat Situation:

At 1550 the Italian midget submarine CB 2 put in to Sevastopol because of engine trouble. At 1910 U 20 put in to Sevastopol escorted by 2 naval ferry barges.

Enemy Air Activity:

- 0655 A heavy air raid was carried out on the port of Taman. Berth No. 1 was hit but can still be partially used, berth No. 4 received a direct hit and berth No. 2 was damaged by splinters. No casualties.
- 1652 Yalta was raided by 5 Boston bombers which dropped 20 bombs on the harbor and town area, no damage was reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

The formation led by motor minesweeper R 30 returned from minelaying assignment K 9 and, after replenishing throughout the day, put out again in the evening for minelaying assignment K 8.

Danube: The river was swept several times by minesweeping planes and mine exploding vessels without result. Mine exploding vessel No. 192 also swept the Sulina Arm after mines had been laid off Mile 22. No mines swept.

A German boat claimed to have observed minelaying activity when several planes flew over. A lighter struck a mine off Mile 22 and a small Rumanian passenger steamer was destroyed by a mine off Kilometer 58 in the Moain Channel.

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Further minesweeping in the Danube and off Sevastopol was carried out according to plan. Kerch Strait was also swept according to plan.

Supply Traffic:

- a. No change in return transports across Kerch Strait.
- b. At 1150 the last Temriuk convoy No. 84 put in to Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 2 lighters.
- c. At 1635 naval ferry barges Nos. 446 and 575, naval gunnery lighter No. 10 and tugs "Braunkohle" and "Amsel" put out from Kerch for Genichesk.
- d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan.

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23 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance in the eastern Black Sea and off the Caucasus coast did not detect any enemy forces. No enemy shipping was reported in the Black Sea throughout the day.

Between 0620 and 0700 several Turkish merchant ships were sighted in the vicinity of the Turkish coast: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, course west, 12 miles northwest of Inebolu; 1 freighter of 2,500 tons and 2 coastal vessels, each 300 tons, anchored 5 miles northwest of Gide; 2 freighters of 3,000 and 5,000 tons, course southwest, 3 miles northwest of Curucasile and 1 freighter of 5,000 tons on a southwesterly course 5 miles west of Curucasile. At 1115 3 coastal vessels, course northwest, were sighted 8 miles south of Anapa and 1 motorboat, course northwest, was observed 3 miles south of Anapa.

Enemy ships in port in the forenoon:
Ghelenjik: 3 minesweepers, 12 motor minesweepers, 7 M.T.B.s, 30 motor landing boats, 10 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, and 40 boats.

Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 15 boats.

Sadki: 30 boats.

Primorsko Akhtari: 2 M.T.B.s, 14 gunboats, 2 coastal vessels, 15 small patrol vessels and 60 boats.

Main Naval D/F Station reported moderate activity of small vessels off the entire east coast and in the Sea of Azov. No perceptible focal points. At 1750 a destroyer was reported from radio traffic to be off the central to northern part of the east coast.

In the forenoon, 2 submarines were intercepted receiving transmissions in the northwestern Black Sea and in the afternoon, 3 submarines were identified in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the southwest coast of the Crimea. With reference to the Army situation at the Gotenkopf beachhead, it was reported that the breakthrough east of Pirenkovo had been sealed off. All attacks were repulsed and the enemy suffered casualties. Dive-bombers brought relief to the fighting troops.

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Own Situation:

The coast northeast of Genichesk was again bombarded during the night of 22/23 September, but the Army liaison officer was not present. The focal point of the attack by the 3 naval gunnery lighters was near Stepanovka. The bombardment lasted from 0455 to 0530. Several fires and explosions were observed in the village. From 0535 to 0545 enemy batteries were attacked. At the beginning of the bombardment, the enemy fired back violently, but later the gunfire abated. While turning away, the naval gunnery lighters were shelled by heavy batteries which were emplaced far inland. Our guns certainly put 2 enemy batteries out of action. A column of trucks was shelled with good results and some vehicles were destroyed by fire. Range of the action was 3.5 to 6.5 km., consumption of ammunition approximately 800 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. At 1215 the naval gunnery lighters returned to Genichesk.

At 0440 S 28 put in to Ivan Baba and was reported ready for action by 1200 on 23 September.

At 0535 S 502 and 504 put in to Theodosia from the patrol line west of Cape Utrish, no enemy sightings. At about 0030 a bombing attack was observed on Anapa and 2 fairly large fires were started.

At 0700 I proceeded to Genichesk to obtain information on the situation from Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine and to discuss operational questions in person.

At 0730 S 26, 42, 45, and 49 put in to Ivan Baba from their lurking positions between Vulcan valley and Chugovko passage. No enemy shipping was observed and no planes, patrol vessels or searchlights were detected.

At 0745 the formation which was ordered to lay minefield K 8 put in to Kerch after execution of the task. Miscalculation of the throwing interval due to insufficient study of the currents resulted in the mines being laid too close together. The gap between the eastern end of the minefield and Cape Achilleon was 2 miles wider than intended. It was planned to close this gap by a new minefield.

At 0745 naval ferry barges F 302 and 315 put in to Kerch from patrol line off the south coast of Taman Peninsula. Nothing to report.

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Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
S winds, force 3 - 5, at night SW - S,
force 4 - 3, cloudy, overcast and showery
in the west, visibility 6 - 10 miles.

In Nikolaiev naval transport No. 31 was
launched and naval ferry barge F 560 was
commissioned in Varna.

The patrol lines to provide flank protection
for the Gotenkopf position off the south
and north Taman coast were ordered as on
preceding days. The patrol line off the
north coast of Taman Peninsula as far as
Temriuk Bay was to be strengthened by 1
naval ferry barge.

At 1615 motor minesweepers RA 54, 56 and
FR 2 put out from Kerch to take soundings
for the planned minefields A-5 and A-6.

Simferopol
1700

Gale warning: wind NW - N, force 7 - 8.

After this warning, the operations which had
been ordered were canceled and execution was
postponed for 24 hours. The formations
which had already put out were ordered to
return.

Temriuk battery moved into position in Shukovka
and 1st Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614
was entrained for the Russian position near
Genicheskaya Gorka.

After the minelaying in the northern entrance
to Kerch Strait, the declared area was
announced in "Notices to Mariners".

At 1900 I returned to Simferopol from my
visit to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine where
I discussed and settled operational questions.

U-boat Situation:

U 20 is taking in her supply of torpedoes
and undergoing minor repairs in Sevastopol.
She will be ready for torpedo operations on
24 September.

Important information from U 20's short report:
Strikingly heavy coastal traffic in the Poti
area, 5 steamers in 1 day in both directions.
At night 2 semi-darkened destroyers were standing

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on and off between Poti and Batum. Mines were laid on the observed steamer route approximately 1.5 to 2 miles from the coast in water 17 to 24 meters deep. The minefield lies some 3 miles north of the harbor entrance. Boat not observed before, during or after minelaying. She could not proceed nearer to the coast owing to visibility and the line of patrol vessels, but avoided the outer patrol vessels on the surface.

At 1330 Italian midget submarine CB 3 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations south of Sarich, enemy not sighted.

CB 1 reported that her electric motors had broken down as a result of flooding which occurred when she torpedoed the enemy vessel off Yalta. She would therefore be unfit for operations for at least 2 months. Transfer of the boat to Constantza for repairs was discussed, but this cannot be done until we learn the Rumanian attitude towards the Italians who continue to fight.

Enemy Air Activity:

From 0815 to 0823 enemy planes raided Taman in 3 waves. No further damage to naval property. Transshipment is still going on. The main railroad tracks for troops and heavy freight were badly damaged.

At 1258 Kerch harbor was heavily bombed. The raid was a complete surprise and no anti-aircraft guns were in operation. Damage: Motor minesweeper R 30 and 4 boats of the harbor defense flotilla were total losses. The tugs "Moliere" and "Gestmann 9" were heavily damaged, "Lübeck" and "Saale" slightly damaged. Berth No. 3 was destroyed. 12 - 15 Navy personnel dead, 3 men seriously wounded, 7 slightly wounded and 4 civilians dead.

At 1531 Yalta was raided by 5 Boston bombers. About 20 bombs were dropped into the water outside the harbor and on the Massandra district of the town. No damage was reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes and mine exploding vessel No. 193 swept the river according to plan. No mines swept. The mine exploding vessel covered the area between Miles 17 and 27 seven times.

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Sevastopol: Route Green was swept six times northwards and eastwards as far as the minefield. No mines swept.

Kerch: Minelaying was carried out according to plan. Soundings were taken for minefield A-5 and it was marked by buoys.

The group with towed loop gear and minesweeping planes swept Kerch Strait and the coastal route as far as the Peresyp estuary according to plan. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait continued according to plan.
- b. Naval ferry barges F 446 and 575, tugs "Braunkohle 8" and "Amsel" and naval gunnery lighter No. 10 put in to Genichesk at 1100.
- c. Throughout the day Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan. As a result of the gale warning, convoys which were planned for late afternoon did not put out.

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24 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Night air reconnaissance off the Caucasus coast as far as Cape Pitsunda did not sight the enemy on 23/24 September. Throughout the day there was no enemy shipping in the Black Sea. In the forenoon several freighters were detected off the Turkish coast: 1 passenger steamer of 4,700 tons 25 miles north of Rizeh, course west; 1 freighter of 2,000 tons also course west, 20 miles north of Rizeh; 1 freighter of 1,200 tons, course west, 28 miles to the northwest, 1 freighter of 2,000 tons, course east, 15 miles northeast of the Bosphorus entrance and 1 freighter of 3,000 tons on a westerly course 15 miles north of Sile.

No enemy shipping was observed in the Sea of Azov.

Air reconnaissance revealed the following enemy shipping in port:

Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 18 boats.

Yeisk: 1 motor gunboat, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 40 boats, some beached.

Primorsko Akhtari: 12 motor gunboats, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 2 smaller vessels, 6 M.T.B.s, 14 small patrol vessels and 50 boats.

Sadki: 30 boats.

Yassenka: 13 boats.

Evening reconnaissance off the Caucasus coast from Sukhum to Anapa and 30 miles out to sea sighted no enemy shipping traffic.

At noon, Main Naval D/F Station detected 1 destroyer presumably in the Tuapse area, also 1 submarine in the central Black Sea which was returning to the east.

During the day moderate activity of small vessels was observed. No changes in the focal points. In the evening another submarine was detected in an unidentified position which was later stated to be 30 miles southwest of Tarkan.

With reference to the Army situation at the Gotenkopf bridgehead, it was reported that the enemy was quickly following our retreating troops. The attacks which were supported by

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tanks were repulsed. Dive-bombers brought the advancing tanks to a standstill and forced the enemy to turn off.

Own Situation:

In addition to the action report on the bombardment of the coast northeast of Genichesk during the night of 22/23 Sept. (see War Diary 23 September), it was learned that the headland was heavily shelled by the 3 naval gunnery lighters and that the Russians were pushed to the German lines by the continuous barrage. Our infantry were able to overrun the Soviet troops in a counter-attack, taking 180 prisoners. Commander-in-Chief, Army Group A expressed the Army's thanks for this effective support and transmitted a message of special acknowledgment to the units of the Navy concerned.

Owing to bad weather conditions, E-boats did not operate during the night of 23/24 September. With the exception of the patrol line off the north Taman coast, the patrol lines were not occupied. The vessels which were on patrol duty off the north Taman coast did not receive the order to return and on their own initiative anchored off Cape Perli. At 1015 naval ferry barge F 449 put in to Kerch while naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 11 anchored near Ilich. During the night naval gunnery lighter No. 1 was rammed by naval ferry barge F 449. Her forward gun was damaged, but she remained operational.

At 0715 motor minesweepers RA 54, 56 and FR 2 put in to Kerch after taking soundings and marking the minefield sections A-5 and A-6 with buoys. Work had to be abandoned owing to the weather. New marking buoys would have to be laid on the night of 24/25 September, because those already laid would be moved in the violent northerly gale.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
W winds, force 4 - 5, at night force 4 - 3,
visibility 15 miles. Local thunderstorms
except in the Sea of Azov.

The activity of enemy forces, the number of ships in Anapa and prisoners' statements indicate that an enemy landing on Taman coast seems imminent. Such an action might seriously interfere with our planned withdrawal.

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I therefore decided on the following measures:

1. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats in patrol line west of Cape Utrish on the night of 24/25 September. The line was to be at right angles to the coast, with focal point close to the coast. Boats should put out at 1830 and commence return passage from the patrol line at 0230. Anti-submarine operations permitted. The flotilla was informed that 3 naval ferry barges would be on patrol close to the south Taman coast east of Zhelezni Rog.
2. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was directed to dispose 3 well-armed special purpose naval ferry barges in patrol line off the south Taman coast. They must not proceed beyond our own front line which should be in the vicinity of Vitiasevski Liman. Later on, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to dispose naval ferry barges F 302, 315 and 445 from 1 hour before night-fall to 1 hour before dawn each day in patrol line off the south Taman coast between Zhelezni Rog and our own frontline. The barges should be very heavily armed. As mentioned in the previous order, they must not pass east of our front. Only the worst weather will cause this operation to be canceled.

30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was informed that the orders for the additional blocking minefield east of minefield K 8 would follow after completion of the minelaying task already ordered.

At 1520 motor minesweepers RA 52 and FR 4 put out from Kerch for Cape Kazantip to take soundings for minefield section K 5.

At 1600 S 26 and 47 put out from Ivan Baba for overhaul in Constantza.

At 1740 naval ferry barges F 474 and 306 put out from Kerch for the patrol line and to act as operational reserves off the north Taman coast. These 2 barges were also well-armed and manned for the occasion.

At 1740 naval ferry barges F 302, 315 and 445 put out from Kerch for the patrol line off the south coast of the Taman Peninsula.

At 1830 S 28, 42 and 45 put out from Ivan Baba for patrol duties off Cape Utrish.

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At 1800 3 naval ferry barges and motor minesweepers RM 2 and 3 put out from Genichesk for the patrol line from off the southern tip of Biriuchi to our own main line of defense.

The harbor defense boat RB 01 which was stranded south of Kirilovka has been blown up. The guns were salvaged.

1st Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 614 moved into position near Genicheskaya Gorka and reported ready to fire from 24 September.

A report was submitted to Army Group A to the effect that an agent from the Swedish Embassy in Bucharest had reported that some 1,200 landing boats of 5 - 10 tons and 300 larger vessels (presumably coastal vessels) delivered from the U.S.A. were lying in the Caucasus ports. They were or would be ready to land Russian troops on the Crimean Peninsula. Furthermore, 3 or 4 Russian oil tankers were said to have been converted for use as covering vessels for the crossing operation. The landing operation was believed to be scheduled for early in Oct.

The possibility that a fairly large number of landing boats is assembled in the Caucasus ports cannot be rejected. The number of ships mentioned by the agent does not seem credible, because even if the boats had been delivered to Russia, transportation difficulties would prevent their transfer by railroad to the Caucasus ports. In all probability, unobserved transfer by sea would have been impossible because the boats would then have had to pass through the Dardanelles. We have no means of checking the report at present because the Caucasus ports have not been reconnoitered for a long time owing to lack of planes. I have repeatedly asked 1st Air Corps for constant reconnaissance of the ports and coast from Batum to Tuapse and I took this opportunity to enlist the support of Army Group A in my request.

U-boat Situation:

At 1145 U 18 put in to Constantza from her third operation. After taking in more torpedoes, U 20 put out from Sevastopol at 1500 with instructions to proceed via the northern route to the "Tapir" operational zone for torpedo operations against enemy naval vessels and supply traffic.

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Owing to the weather, Italian midget submarines CB 4 and 6 which reported ready for action did not operate.

Commander, Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla was sent to Constantza to determine the attitude of the rest of the flotilla and to negotiate for Italian supplies.

Enemy Air Activity:

From 1306 to 1437, 27 PE 2 planes raided Kerch in 3 waves from an altitude of 6,000 - 7,000 meters. About 100 bombs were dropped. The tugs "Saale" and "Ivan Vasov" were damaged by splinters. 1 PE plane was shot down by fighters.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: With reference to the minesweeping tasks of 23 September, it was later reported that motor minesweeper R 209 found 2 mines shortly before entering Sulina while pulling in the sweep. Their type could not be discovered because they exploded within the gear. Mine exploding vessel No. 193 carried out several sweeps without result. 1 mine was swept by minesweeping planes in 44° 57' N, 29° 33' E after they had covered the area in St. George Arm several times.

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear swept route Green northwards as far as the 40-meter line.

Kerch: FZ-boats and minesweeping planes swept the area from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait to the Peresyp estuary for ground mines. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait continued according to plan.
- b. After they had been delayed or forced to anchor because of the weather on the previous night, Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident.

On the proposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Commanding General, Kerch Strait appointed naval officer as port commissars with special authority to keep a strict check on loading and unloading. This would ensure that all possible measures to speed up the evacuation of troops and goods from the Taman Peninsula would be adopted. The port commissars will be supervised by Naval Port Commander, Kerch. (In actual fact, loading and unloading should be the task of the Army.)

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25 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Owing to a radar breakdown, night air reconnaissance obtained no locations. At dawn, numerous small enemy vessels and landing boats were sighted off the north and south coast of the Taman Peninsula. An enemy force of about 600 landed on the north coast: 13 small naval vessels were identified in the operation. On the coast about 200 men landed and 31 small naval vessels and landing boats were counted off the coast. After the landings, the following vessels made off in the Sea of Azov: at 0642 12 small armed vessels, course north, 15 miles northeast of Kuchugury and 1 boat, course north, 10 miles north of Temriuk; at 0655 3 M.T.B.s, course 140°, were observed 10 miles south of Anapa; they increased their speed and disappeared from view about 15 miles northwest of Anapa.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik: 1 minesweeper, 2 motor minesweepers, 5 M.T.B.s, 8 landing boats (personnel), 1 small armed vessel, 9 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, and 45 boats. At 0656 3 motor minesweepers were proceeding on a southeasterly course 25 miles west of Ghelenjik. Off Novorossisk at 0700: 2 motor minesweepers, 3 landing boats and 1 coastal vessel, course east. At 0711 8 motor minesweepers and 11 landing boats were 2 miles south of Anapa heading for the coast. Off Achuevski at 0729: 4 motor gunboats, 3 coastal vessels and 1 coastal vessel, course northeast. Sadki: 45 boats. Primorsko Akhtari: 3 motor gunboats, 4 M.T.B.s, 1 laden tank landing craft 45 meters long, 2 coastal vessels, 15 small patrol vessels and 55 boats. Kamyshevotka: 10 boats. Yeisk: 1 motor gunboat, 3 coastal vessels, 1 M.T.B. and 35 boats. No important shipping was detected in the Black Sea. Freight traffic was observed close to the Turkish coast and on the previous day air reconnaissance also reported 2 Turkish passenger steamers carrying troops.

Main Naval D/F Station reported lively activity of small vessels off the central and northern parts of the east coast. No activity of large vessels was perceptible. 2 submarines were on passage to the west.

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According to inexact locations, the destroyer which was already reported was in the area between Tuapse and Anapa.

With reference to the land situation at the Gotenkopf bridgehead, it was reported that withdrawals were being made according to plan and enemy vanguard attacks and thrusts had been repulsed. Any enemy troops which landed were annihilated.

Own Situation:

The following details of enemy landings on the north and south coast of the Taman Peninsula were reported; at first, 200 men in the Kuban Delta east of Chaikino, then some 150 - 200 men near Golubitzkaya, where 11 Russian gunboats were identified. Approximately 200 men landed on the south Taman coast near Bugaski Liman. During the landing operations, our patrol forces had the following encounters with the enemy: At 0005 1st E-Boat Flotilla met an S-class 2-stack torpedoboat and 1 gunboat in the patrol line west of Cape Utrish. The E-boats attacked the Russian torpedoboat until 0200. They fired 5 torpedoes, but because of their easily visible tracks, the boat avoided them all. The enemy's defensive fire was also unsuccessful.

0500 The naval ferry barges in the patrol line off the south Taman coast were engaged by light naval forces off Zhelezni Rog.

0300 The naval gunnery lighters and ferry barges in the patrol line off the north Taman coast had an encounter with light enemy naval forces.

Our patrol forces could not prevent the enemy from landing at 2 places on the long coastline. On the other hand, it can probably be assumed that their interference disrupted and prevented further landing operations at other places. Furthermore, they effectively brought to nought the enemy plans for penetrating into Kerch Strait, while the E-boat attacks also prevented any large vessels from supporting the landing operation.

0425 Motor minesweepers RA 54 and 56 put out from Kerch to take soundings.

0450 The E-boats which operated last night returned to Ivan Baba.

0500 S 26 and S 47 put in to Constantza.

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0555 Naval ferry barges F 476 and 306 put in to Kerch from patrol duties.

0605 Naval ferry barges F 474 and 306 put out from Kerch for patrol duties.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported a lengthening of the patrol line off the north Taman Peninsula and reinforcement by naval ferry barges F 449 and 126 and naval gunnery lighter No. 11. Naval ferry barges F 306, 168 and 474 were in the western part of the patrol line, while barges F 472, 382 and 342 were deployed in the north as operational reserves. They had orders to take all possible action to prevent further enemy landings near Golubitzkaye.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
NE winds, force 3, sea wind during the day, force 4 - 5, variable winds at night, force 2 - 3, fair visibility 15 miles.

As further enemy landings were to be expected on the next night, the following orders were issued: During the night of 25/26 September, 1st E-Boat Flotilla will dispose 3 boats in patrol line between Cape Utrish and 44° 10' N, 37° 12' E with focal point near the coast. At 44° 55' N 11th E-Boat Flotilla will occupy a patrol line from 36° 55' E to 37° 05' E. The boats should stand on and off at slight speed along the patrol line.

From 1 hour after nightfall until sunrise, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus will dispose naval ferry barges F 302, 315 and 445 in patrol line between Brown 18 and Brown 20.

All forces will have orders to attack enemy vessels and prevent landing operations; if they encounter the enemy, a "Most Immediate" report with position, number and type of enemy forces should be transmitted.

1st E-Boat Flotilla should not pass north of the connecting line from Brown 16 to 44° 48' N, 37° 00' E to Anapa, while 11th E-Boat Flotilla should remain north of the same line.

After putting in to Kerch, motor minesweeper R 35 was ordered to take in 12 LMB mines for the minelaying operation planned for the night of 26/27 September. The mines were available at Mining and Barrage Command in Kerch.

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At 1630 on 26 September, 4 boats of the Crimea group were at readiness in Kerch.

Nothing to report from the patrol line east of Genichesk during the night of 24/25 September.

At 1830 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out for the patrol line west of Cape Utrish; at 2100 they turned about owing to the weather.

At 1900 S 502 and 504 put out from Theodosia for the patrol line; at 2110 the operation was broken off owing to the weather.

Further patrol lines as ordered above were occupied by naval ferry barges and naval gunnery lighters.

At 2230 a report was received that at 2110 4 enemy boats had again landed troops near Golubitzkaya.

The following measures were ordered:

The naval ferry barges and naval gunnery lighters in the patrol line off the north Taman coast were to proceed eastward with all speed to the area off the enemy landing place near Golubitzkaya. They were to attack the enemy forces and prevent further landing operations. The reserve group of naval ferry barges at the northern entrance to Kerch Strait was immediately to occupy the western part of the patrol line between Kuchugury and the Peresyp estuary. Regardless of the danger from planes, the groups of patrol boats should remain at sea after daybreak on 26 September until air reconnaissance reports Temriuk Bay free of enemy forces and 49th Army Corps no longer requires naval forces for bombardment of enemy landing places. For this bombardment after daybreak on 26 September, an Army liaison officer should be embarked near Peresyp and recognition signals for determining our own positions settled with the Army.

The attempt to salvage naval gunnery lighter No. 8 failed as the hawsers broke during the attempt to raise her. Further attempts would be useless because the sand is steadily gaining hold.

After ordering the transfer of motor mine-sweepers FR 2, 4, 7 and 8, Group South was informed that with the increased east-west transportation across Kerch Strait the enemy would be laying a great many more mines there. As this made it advisable to move the ships

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later after all the evacuation transports had left the Kuban bridgehead, Group South agreed to the postponement of the transfer.

In Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chefs. 230/43 AI, motor minesweeper R 35 was ordered to lay mines in the approaches to Primorsko Akhtari. This was because air reconnaissance had detected a great number of enemy ships there. (See Appendix, Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chefs. 230/43 AI.)

U-boat Situation:

Because of the convoys in Eupatoria Bay, the sailing of the Italian midget submarines was postponed for 24 hours.

Enemy Air Activity:

From 0000 to 0300 enemy air activity with bombing was reported from Senaya. At 1400 Kerch was raided by 8 P2 and 4 LAG planes. The tug "Moliere" received a direct hit and sank. 1 plane was shot down by fighters.

At 1450 naval ferry barge F 449 reported that she had been attacked by 6 enemy bombers, no damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes operated without sweeping any mines.

Sevastopol: No mines were swept while sweeping route Green again several times with towed loop gear.

Armed fishing vessel No. 14 reported that she had swept 2 mines off Kilia, one at 2130 and the other at 2215. Both exploded immediately.

Kerch: The FZ-group and minesweeping planes swept the coastal route as far as the Peresyp estuary for moored mines and ground mines. No mines swept.

Motor minesweepers (RA) and the FZ-group took soundings and laid minefield sections A-5 and A-6.

Naval Harbor Master, Ochakov reported that at 0000 4 - 5 Russian planes were detected. From the noise of their engines, they seemed to be flying low over the water and minelaying was suspected. As a result, the convoy on

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passage was ordered to put in to Odessa. It was also reported that a plane had flown over the Beresanski channel several times. 4 splashes were heard. The fairway was then closed owing to suspected minelaying.

Supply Traffic:

Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran according to plan. Convoys close to the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea also ran according to plan. Suspected minelaying in the Beresanski channel and the temporary closing of the fairway off Ochakov were mentioned above.

2130

A submarine attacked the Kerch - Theodosia convoy 6 miles southeast of Cape Opuk. 1 torpedo was fired from the port quarter between tug "Lobau" and lighter No. 1349. Depth setting of the torpedo which missed its target was 1.5 meters.

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26 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance in the southeastern Sea of Azov and the northeastern Black Sea during the night of 25/26 September, detected activity of small vessels only. The following enemy vessels were located in the Caucasus coast area and in the Sea of Azov early in the morning:

Anapa harbor: no enemy ships in the forenoon, later on 2 coastal vessels and 2 boats. Many boats, small patrol vessels and coastal vessels in Anapa roads.

Ghelenjik: 4 motor minesweepers, 5 M.T.B.s, 3 small patrol vessels, 3 tugs, 11 motor gunboats, 11 coastal vessels and 70 boats.

Novorossisk: 5 small patrol vessels. South of the port at the beachhead: 2 motor minesweepers, each towing 1 landing boat; 1 landing boat, course southeast; 3 motor minesweepers, each towing 3 landing boats and 1 motor minesweeper towing 2 landing boats, course southeast; 2 motor minesweepers, each towing 3 landing boats, course west, 3 miles south of the beachhead.

In the early morning, 4 M.T.B.s and 5 more boats were observed west of Primorsko from a range of 10 - 15 miles and 6 smaller boats were identified 10 - 15 miles north of Temriuk.

Achuevski fishery: 1 coastal vessel and 9 boats, also 4 coastal vessels, course northeast. Yassenka: 15 boats. Yeisk: 2 motor gunboats, 1 paddle steamer, 1 coastal vessel and 100 boats. Primorsko Akhtari: 1 tank landing craft, 5 motor gunboats, 3 M.T.B.s, 8 small patrol vessels, 2 coastal vessels, 2 tugs and 70 boats.

0950

4 motor gunboats, course north, dead slow speed, were sighted 12 miles north of Temriuk. At the same time 12 M.T.B.s, course east and 2 tugs and 6 boats, course west were observed off Novorossisk.

Main Naval D/F Station detected activity of small vessels only off the central and north coast of the Black Sea and in the Sea of Azov. There was 1 torpedoboat in the Tuapse area.

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Situation at the Kuban bridgehead:

The 17th Army withdrew according to plan and the main force reached the small Goten position, with the left flank near Temriuk.

Own Situation:

Our patrol lines were occupied according to plan off the north and south coast of the Taman Peninsula and the boats disrupted and prevented any enemy landing operations.

They had the following encounters: At 0222 the patrol group off the south Taman coast encountered light enemy naval forces approximately off Veselovka.

At 0250 and 0450 the easterly group off the north Taman coast was bombarded from the shore. The boats were also engaged by an enemy gunboat from 0510 to 0530.

It is assumed that the bombardment from the shore (near Golubitzkaya) was the work of German forces. To avoid such incidents in future and to protect our patrol forces from unnecessary danger, the Army was requested from 27 September to embark a liaison officer with radio equipment on board the leading boat. This would enable the establishment of communication with the headquarters of the Army coastal batteries, whose guns could then be controlled. Peresyp was chosen as the port of embarkation.

It was later reported that the attack off the south Taman coast had been carried out by 5 small gunboats from a range of 300 - 500 meters. The heavy fire from the naval ferry barges forced the enemy to turn away and, after exchanging fire at long range, the gunboats made off to the south.

1 man was killed aboard naval ferry barge No. 302. No damage.

As there had been continuous shelling from the shore and requests for recognition signals before the encounter with the enemy, the enemy forces were able to detect the naval ferry barge formation in plenty of time. The interference of the coastal authorities subjected the formation to needless danger and signals have been arranged with 17th Army HQ to avoid such incidents in future.

Although our guns had repelled enemy landings near Golubitzkaya at daybreak, further landings were made between 0830 and 0900. Protected

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by 6 boats, a landing boat zig-zagged to the shore and landed 100 men. The boats then turned out to sea. Naval ferry barges from the patrol line off the north Taman coast were deployed off the main enemy landing place to cut it off from the sea, while the operational group in the north of Kerch Strait was brought up to occupy the patrol line to the east. The western operational group had put in to Kerch at 0445 because the boats had not received the radio order to advance eastwards to the enemy landing place. During the night of 25/26 September, a patrol line was formed off Genichesk by 4 naval gunnery lighters and despatch vessels Nos. 2 and 3. It stretched from the southern tip of Biriuchi as far as the main German line of defense. No special incidents were reported. A similar disposition was planned for the next night.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
E winds, force 3, sea wind in the afternoon up to force 5, SE winds, force 2 - 4 at night, fair, visibility approximately 15 miles.

On the night of 26/27 September, 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas and the patrol forces of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus were ordered to occupy the same patrol lines as on the night of 25/26 September, bearing in mind that the German frontline was near Veselovka on the south Taman coast. I advised Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla by telephone to strive to reach the operational area, even in bad weather, if it were navigationally possible and not to turn about unless the boats could not use their armament. (This advice was necessary because bad weather was frequently encountered south of Kerch Strait while further east the weather would again improve. At this juncture every opportunity for operations must be seized.) Patrol duty off the north Taman coast as on the previous day, with concentration off Golubitzkaya.

At 1715 the minelaying group led by motor minesweeper R 35 put out from Kerch to lay mines off Primorsko Akhtari (task "Pressburg").

At 1830 the boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the area off Cape Utrish.

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At 2200 S 502 and 504 put out from Theodosia for the patrol line off the south Taman coast.

Patrol boats put out as usual.

Sailing was ordered for 1900, but had to be postponed for 3 hours owing to engine trouble aboard one of the boats. Nevertheless, I decided that the boats should operate. With this favorable weather, enemy operations could be expected, particularly in the latter part of the night, and the boats would still be able to remain in the patrol line for $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 hours.

3rd Battery on Biriuchi reported ready to fire from 25 September.

By special request of the Army (6th Army H.Q. and Army Group A), 2nd Battery with its four 15 cm. guns will remain in Genichesk.

Minelaying assignments A-5 and A-6 were carried out according to plan.

U-boat Situation:

Nothing to report.

The following was learned from U 18's short report on the second part of her third operation:

On 16 September after taking in torpedoes, the boat put out from Theodosia and proceeded to the operational area. On 18 September she attacked 1 patrol vessel and 1 coastal vessel: 2 single torpedoes were fired at the coastal vessel which was seen to sink. 9 depth charges were counted. On 21 September a convoy was sighted, consisting of 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 5 escort vessels with 2 planes and 3 fighters acting as close escort. The boat was ready to attack the tanker, but the enemy vessel altered course and she was too late in gaining a firing position. Only the freighter could now be attacked. 2 single torpedoes were fired, but they missed as the enemy turned away. The boat was recognized by a plane and the periscope was machine-gunned. An escort vessel approached at high speed and dropped 14 accurate depth charges. The short-wave transmitter and D/F apparatus were put out of order and the boat had expended all her torpedoes. On 22 and 23 September she was on return passage to Constantza.

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Enemy Air Activity:

Peresyp was bombed at 0820.

At 0945 the naval ferry barge formation off the north Taman coast was attacked by 4 enemy bombers, but there were no casualties. The same formation was also attacked off Golubitzkaya at 0800.

At 1355 and 1405 19 planes carried out 2 heavy raids on Sevastopol. At least 50 bombs were dropped in the south bay. 1 plane was shot down by anti-aircraft guns.

Shore installations were slightly damaged. 1 man belonging to the Naval Port Commander's staff was killed.

A Russian lieutenant parachuted and was taken prisoner by Naval Harbor Master. According to a statement made by the prisoner, the 40 planes had taken off from Ghelenjik to attack a convoy. Failing to find their target, they attacked Sevastopol. He also said that 15 Boston bombers, each with 3 Americans in the crew, had been with the Russian planes.

The fish-salting factory was attacked by 6 bombers at 1445 and by 15 at 1800. No damage. At 1735 and 1800 Taman Peninsula was raided. No damage to naval property.

At 1605 the patrol line off the north Taman coast was bombed in a high-level attack: 1 man was seriously wounded, no damage reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine exploding vessel No. 193 and minesweeping planes swept the river several times without result.

Odessa: The route to Sulina and the Beresanski Channel from Odessa was checked for moored mines. No mines swept.

Crimea group: Channels were swept according to plan. No mines swept.

Kerch: The FZ-group and minesweeping planes swept the coastal route several times for ground mines as far as the Peresyp estuary. No mines swept.

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Supply Traffic:

- a. Considering the constant difficulties in unloading, ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran according to plan.
- b. At 1800 4 naval ferry barges, 3 tugs, 8 lighters and 19 fishing smacks put out from Genichesk for transfer to Kerch. Transshipment in Genichesk is thus at an end. It is planned to dissolve the Sea Transportation Office within the next few days.
- c. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan and without incident.

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27 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance during the night of 26/27 September detected no enemy forces in the northeastern Black Sea or in the southeastern Sea of Azov. The enemy was not sighted in the Black Sea during the day. Between 0700 and 0800 the following ships were counted in Anapa roads: 9 motor minesweepers, 3 small patrol vessels, 6 tugs and 16 naval landing cutters. Off Ghelenjik: 2 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s, 1 small patrol vessel, 4 naval landing boats, 9 coastal vessels and 40 boats.

At approximately the same time the following enemy ships were detected in port: —

Anapa: 5 M.T.B.s and 5 small boats.

Novorossisk: 4 small patrol vessels.

Primorsko Akhtari: 4 motor gunboats, 5 M.T.B.s, 8 small patrol vessels, 2 coastal vessels and 60 boats.

Sadki: 40 boats.

Kamyshevotka: 12 boats.

Yeisk: 1 motor gunboat, 1 coastal vessel and 55 boats.

Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 15 boats; 3 small patrol vessels off the estuary and 2 motor gunboats 12 miles northeast of Temriuk, course south.

1 destroyer and 1 torpedoboat were observed by evening reconnaissance.

Moderate steamer traffic close to the Turkish coast, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons off Inebolu and 1 passenger steamer of 3,000 tons.

Main Naval D/F Station also located a destroyer and a torpedoboat near Tuapse in the afternoon; otherwise moderate activity of small vessels was reported.

Submarines detected: 3 between the northwestern Black Sea and the Crimea, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 2 more in the eastern Black Sea.

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Army situation report from Gotenkopf stated that on the whole eastern front the enemy was approaching our main line of defense. In some places they had tank support.

Own Situation:

At 0312, while 11th E-Boat Flotilla was in patrol line off the south Taman coast, S 502 sighted 2 silhouettes bearing 340°. They were assumed to be patrol vessels or gunboats. From a range of 500 and 800 meters respectively, S 502 and S 504 fired a total of 3 torpedoes which the enemy outmaneuvered. A sudden attack was then made from a range of 400 meters and several hits were observed in the stern of the enemy boat. The enemy made a weak attempt at a counter-attack and turned away. Contact was lost at 0330. It is a pity that, despite their spirited attempt, the boats did not manage to sink the enemy vessel.

If the enemy intended a landing, the boats brought their plans to nought.

0635 The E-boats put in to Theodosia.

Also in the patrol line close to the south Taman coast during the night of 26/27 September was naval ferry barge No. 472.
2122 She was engaged by 2 or 3 enemy vessels (presumably gunboats) off Zhelezni Rog. She opened fire with all guns from a range of approximately 600 meters. After the fourth round from the 7.5 cm. gun, a very large black cloud of smoke developed aboard one of the target vessels. The enemy boats ceased fire and disappeared.

0600 S 28, 42 and 45 put in to Ivan Baba from the patrol line off Cape Utrish. Enemy not sighted.

The naval ferry barges in the patrol line off the north Taman coast encountered no enemy forces during the night.

0700 The minelaying formation led by motor minesweeper R 35 put in to Kerch after laying the LMB mines unobserved in the approaches to Primorsko according to plan. No enemy contact.

Naval ferry barges and naval gunnery lighters carried out patrol duties east of Genichesk. Nothing to report.

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Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
S winds, force 3 - 5, light variable
winds at night, fair, visibility 15 miles.

According to air reconnaissance, varying numbers of coastal vessels and other vessels have been anchored off Anapa harbor in the bay west of the mole since 25 September. The enemy must therefore have been using Anapa as a jumping-off harbor for landing operations on the south Taman coast or as a supply harbor. I therefore issued the following orders:

During the night of 27/28 September 4 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla, using guns and if possible torpedoes, will attack enemy vessels lying in and off Anapa harbor. The positions of German minefields must be taken into consideration. After completing this task, the boats will occupy a patrol line at 44° 57' N between 36° 48' E and 37° 00' E in pairs. Their task will be to attack enemy forces and prevent landings; if the enemy is encountered, a "Most Immediate" report should be transmitted.

The flotilla was informed that on the same night 3 naval ferry barges would be proceeding in patrol line close to the coast off Zhelezni Rog and that our own frontline was at the western corner of Kossa Blagoveshchenskaya.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to dispose 3 naval ferry barges (a special group) in patrol line off the south coast of the Taman Peninsula as far as the western end of Kossa Blagoveshchenskaya.

2 more barges with increased armament should be made available to reinforce the southern patrol line or relieve other boats if necessary. They must be ready for action by the afternoon of 28 September.

Since the enemy has landed on the north Taman coast several times on recent nights by motor gunboats and small armed vessels, further landing operations may be expected on the German-occupied coast to disrupt our retreat. I have therefore ordered that the patrol lines be reinforced by faster vessels.

During the night of 27/28 September, motor minesweepers R 35, 166, 197 and 203 will occupy a patrol line in Temriuk Bay.

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area. Boats should approach and return on the surface on the prescribed routes. If the operation should have to be broken off because of engine trouble, the weather, etc., commencement of return passage and expected time of arrival in Sevastopol should be reported by radio. Surface forces should only be attacked by special order from Admiral, Black Sea.

Enemy Air Activity:

Throughout the day 13 air raids were made on the naval ferry barges on patrol duties off the north Taman coast. Naval ferry barges F 342 and 306 each shot down 1 plane. No damage.

Taman and Senaya were bombed at approximately 0600. 2 direct hits were scored on Taman harbor. Railroad tracks and 1 silo were damaged. No damage to naval property.

At 1000 another heavy low-level raid was carried out on Taman harbor and roads. An ammunition truck was hit and berth No. 2 was badly damaged. Unloading was interrupted when some trucks caught fire. Several men were killed and several wounded. At approximately 1000, enemy planes approached Sevastopol, but dropped no bombs. At 1650 Kerch harbor and town were attacked. Approximately 30 bombs were dropped. A lighter carrying ammunition exploded and sank, a small fire was started in the north dockyard, 1 naval ferry barge was sunk and further damage was caused to harbor installations. Several berths were temporarily put out of use.

It was later reported that in the air raid on Sevastopol on 26 September 1 sailor was killed in action, 4 were seriously wounded and 2 slightly wounded. Some ships were slightly damaged.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes swept the river several times without result. The Danube was re-opened to shipping, but St. George Arm remained closed.

Motor minesweepers R 205 and 206 put out from Ochakov to carry out a check sweep.

Kerch: Several check sweeps and searches for ground mines on the coastal route off Cape Achilleon yielded no results. Minesweeping planes also swept the area from Red 14

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Their task is to attack enemy forces and transport vessels and to prevent or disrupt enemy landing attempts.

In addition to the motor minesweepers, 7 naval ferry barges and 1 naval gunnery lighter will be on patrol duty off the north coast of the Taman Peninsula at dusk.

As on previous days, the other patrol lines off Genichesk and the south Taman coast will be occupied by naval gunnery lighters and naval ferry barges.

After the breakdown of naval gunnery lighters Nos. 2 and 8, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus had only 2 naval gunnery lighters left. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was therefore ordered to send 1 naval gunnery lighter from Genichesk to Kerch as soon as possible to be at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus. Both Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine and Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus will then have 3 naval gunnery lighters for action. In Chcfs. 232/43 AI, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla were ordered to lay mines between Kossa Tuzla and Cape Tuzla in accordance with Appendix No. 232/43 Chcfs. AI.

The E-boats and the other groups of patrol boats put out from their bases as ordered at dusk.

On 24 September a teletype was sent to Naval Liaison Staff, Bucharest (copy to Group South, Sofia) stating that I wholeheartedly support German Naval Command's demands for the speedy erection of a mine observation post on the Danube between Braila and Sulina. I asked that the demand should be firmly represented to the Command of the Royal Rumanian Navy. Reference should be made to the losses on 22 September which could have been avoided if there had been a systematic mine observation scheme and they should be warned that the Danube may have to be closed if further ships are sunk by mines. The matter is regarded here as extremely urgent.

U-boat Situation:

30th U-Boat Flotilla reported that U 24 would be ready for action on 30 September.

At 0530 Italian midget submarines CB 4 and 6 put out from Sevastopol with orders to carry out anti-submarine operations in the Tarken

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to Peresyp twice for ground mines. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

Despite harassing air raids, transportation from the Kuban bridgehead across Kerch Strait continued according to plan.

At 2000 the large Genichesk-Kerch convoy anchored off the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. Despatch boat No. 2299 and 3 fishing smacks belonging to the convoy returned to Genichesk at 1100. Their towing hawser had broken and they had lost the convoy. Despatch boat No. 2206 was stranded 8 miles south of Genichesk.

Convoys close to the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea ran according to plan. The Russian monitor which put in to Eupatoria with escort at 0600 was sunk in Eupatoria harbor to serve as a breakwater.

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28 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance during the night of 27/28 September located 6 small vessels, course north, off Anapa and 1 small vessel off Ghelenjik harbor entrance. No enemy shipping was detected in the eastern Black Sea or in the Sea of Azov during the day.

Enemy ships in port in the forenoon:

Ghelenjik: 8 motor minesweepers, 9 M.T.B.s, 4 small patrol vessels, 15 landing craft (personnel), 9 coastal vessels and 55 boats.

Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 10 boats.

Yassenka: 11 boats.

Yeisk: 3 motor gunboats, 1 coastal vessel and 50 boats.

Primorsko Akhtari: 2 motor gunboats, 4 M.T.B.s, 4 small armed vessels, 3 coastal vessels and 50 boats.

Sadki: 20 boats.

Several Turkish freighters, motor sailing vessels and 1 passenger steamer were observed off the Turkish coast.

Nothing of importance was detected in the radio traffic by Main Naval D/F Station except continuous activity of small vessels without any obvious changes in the focal points. Submarines detected: 4 between the northwestern Black Sea and the southwest coast of the Crimea, 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 1 in the eastern Black Sea.

Reconnaissance and shock troop activity by German and enemy forces at the Kuban bridgehead.

Own Situation:

During the night of 27/28 September, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, S 28, 42, 45 and 49, attacked the enemy vessels detected by air reconnaissance in Anapa roads. They sank 2 coastal vessels of 500 and 300 tons respectively, 2 lighters, each 500 tons, and 1 lighter of 300 tons. The course of the action was as follows: At approximately 2330

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the flotilla was some 800 meters off the mole on a course of 160°. Due south of the mole off the high cliffs, S 28 sank 1 lighter of 500 tons, S 42 1 lighter of 500 tons, S 49 2 coastal vessels, one of 300 tons and the other of 500 tons, which were lying on the seaward side of the mole, and S 45 1 lighter of 300 tons which was lying in the bay. Two of the vessels sunk must have been carrying ammunition, because they exploded violently and high fountains of water and mushrooms of smoke could be seen. Most probably more small vessels lying at the mole were hit by the explosions of torpedoes and ammunition. No more enemy vessels were sighted when the 4 E-boats approached again. The boats then remained in the patrol line off the south Taman coast till 0300 without sighting any further enemy vessels. At 0545 they put in to Ivan Baba. The naval ferry barges and naval gunnery lighters which were on patrol duty off the north and south coasts of the Taman Peninsula had no encounters with the enemy, sighting no enemy vessels.

The patrol line east of Genichesk was occupied by 2 naval gunnery lighters and 2 naval ferry barges.

At 0806 naval ferry barge F 306 reported that the enemy had put up a smoke cover along the coast off the eastern entrance to Temriuk. She was 3 miles north of Golubitzkaya. The enemy forces had been repulsed to the east.

At 0900 motor minesweeper R 35 reported that the 4 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla had put in to Kerch. No observations were made during their patrol duties in Temriuk Bay. Return passage was delayed by fog.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
Wind force 2 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon,
fair, visibility 15 miles, morning mist.

As I assumed that after the attack on the supply vessels which were lying off Anapa, the enemy would not be able to adopt effective defense measures in one day, I issued the following orders:

During the night of 28/29 September, 4 boats of the 1st E-Boat Flotilla are again to attack enemy vessels in Anapa roads and close to the coast further south near the airfield. The boats should put out from Ivan Baba at 2130 so

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that they can attack between 0100 and 0200.

The later hour for sailing to attack was chosen so that the enemy would be unable to sight the boats in advance by air reconnaissance and furthermore, from a tactical point of view, it was advisable to alter the time of the attack.

The operation should be carried out in cooperation with 1 night reconnaissance plane of 1st Air Corps. For this purpose an Air Force liaison officer would be embarked on the leading boat, while a Navy officer of the flotilla should be available to make the reconnaissance flight. Anti-submarine operations permitted.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 2 boats in patrol line at 44° 57' N between 36° 48' E and 37° 00' E during the night of 28/29 September. The boats' task will be to attack enemy forces, transmitting a signal or "Most Immediate" report on sighting the enemy.

The flotilla was informed of the operations of 1st E-Boat Flotilla and the naval ferry barge formation.

The Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla led by R 35 was ordered to commence transfer passage to Theodosia at once and there await further orders. This measure was ordered because there must be no vessels left in Kerch unless absolutely necessary, otherwise they would be needlessly exposed to danger from the air.

The following patrol line positions were also ordered for the night of 28/29 September:

2 naval ferry barges and 1 naval gunnery lighter off the south coast of the Taman Peninsula near Zhelezni Rog.

7 naval ferry barges and 1 naval gunnery lighter off the north Taman coast.

2 naval ferry barges and 2 naval gunnery lighters east of Genichesk.

Detailed orders for these patrol lines as on previous days.

When Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that naval gunnery lighter No. 1 was again at operational readiness, he was ordered to despatch the vessel to the north Taman coast.

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- 1230 Naval ferry barges F 333, 337, 576, 578 and 335 put out from Kerch for patrol duties in the north.
- 1344 Naval ferry barge F 449 reported from the patrol line off the north Taman coast that all her anti-aircraft weapons were unserviceable.
- 1500 Naval ferry barges F 315 and 445 and 1 naval gunnery lighter put out from Kerch for patrol duties.
- 1730 Naval ferry barges F 449, 126, 306, 168 and 474 put in to Kerch after relieving the patrol forces off the north Taman coast.
- 1745 Motor minesweepers R 35, 166, 197 and 203 put in to Theodosia.
- 1915 S 502 and 504 put out from Theodosia for patrol duties off the south Taman coast.
- 2055 Naval ferry barge F 472 reported from the patrol line off the south Taman coast that she had an encounter with the enemy at point 18.
- 2115 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the Anape area.
- 2126 11th E-Boat Flotilla reported: 1 engine out of order, commencing return passage.
- 2345 S 502 and 504 returned to Theodosia.

U-boat Situation:

In view of the many enemy ships discovered in Anapa by our E-boats and the supply traffic which had probably run to this port, U 20, operating south of Tuapse, was ordered to occupy the operational area between Cape Utrish and the Oseraika estuary and further west.

As her crew and the Naval Fitting-out Depot, Constantza had worked overtime, U 24 reported that her date of operational readiness would be advanced to 30 September. (See War Diary of 13 September.)

Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 reported that they would be at operational readiness on 29 September.

Enemy Air Activity:

During the day the naval ferry barges in patrol line off the north Taman coast were repeatedly bombed and machine-gunned by bombers and fighters. No planes were shot down and no casualties or damage reported.

1252

Constantza was attacked by 6 Douglas DG 7 planes which flew in low from the north. 4 torpedoes were launched; one of them hit the mole causing slight damage.

As U 9 entered port, one of these 4 torpedoes was fired at her. She was also machine-gunned and 4 small bombs were dropped. The torpedo was a ground-runner and the bombs missed the target, no damage. The effect of U 9's guns was not observed.

Four of the 6 attacking planes were shot down by anti-aircraft guns.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Minesweeping planes swept the Machin Arm three times. No mines swept.

Otherwise nothing to report.

Minefields K 11 and K 12 were laid during the night of 27/28 September.

Supply Traffic:

Kerch Strait: Transportation from the Kuban bridgehead ran according to plan. One part of the Genichesk-Kerch convoy put in to Kerch at 0850, followed by further ships at 2130.

Ten of the fishing smacks sent out from Genichesk arrived in Kerch by the morning of 29 September. We have not yet discovered where the others are, although it may be assumed that those with Russian crews separated from the convoy during the night and entered a Russian-occupied port on the Sea of Azov.

Crimea convoys and convoys in the eastern Black Sea ran according to plan and without incident.

29 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0105 on the night of 28/29 September, the night reconnaissance plane located 2 ships off Anapa and at 0225 2 more ships 18 miles southeast of Ghelenjik. In the early morning 3 enemy boats were detected 8 miles northwest of Anapa and 15 enemy boats off Kuchugury, but in the rest of the Sea of Azov no further vessels were detected.

Enemy ships in port:

Achuevski: 1 coastal vessel and 25 boats.

Primorsko Akhtari: 1 motor gunboat, 2 small armed vessels, 2 coastal vessels and 70 boats.

Sadki: 45 boats.

Kamyshevotka: 17 boats.

Yeisk: 2 motor gunboats, 6 motor landing boats and 1 coastal vessel.

Gluchoy Channel: 1 motor gunboat and 11 boats, also 3 small armed vessels northeast of the Kuban estuary.

Anapa: 2 landing boats and 8 motorboats.

Ghelenjik: 3 motor minesweepers, 10 M.T.B.s, 2 small armed vessels, 15 motor landing boats, 2 coastal vessels and 40 boats.

Novorossisk: 1 small armed vessel and 8 boats, also 1 coastal vessel in Zemeskaya Bay.

Freighter and passenger steamer traffic was again detected close to the Turkish coast.

In the forenoon Main Naval D/F Station intercepted 1 destroyer in radio communication off the southern to the central part of the east coast. Many small vessels and several M.T.B.s were detected in the northeastern Black Sea and off the central part of the east coast. Submarines detected: 5 in the area between the southwest Crimean coast and the northwestern Black Sea, 3 in the eastern Black Sea and 1 in an unidentified position.

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Withdrawals from the Gotenkopf position continued according to plan. Nothing to report.

Own Situation:

4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, which in cooperation with 1 night reconnaissance plane were operating against Anapa harbor and roads during the night of 28/29 September, detected no enemy forces or supply vessels. They examined the harbor and inshore waters thoroughly by means of flares.

The enemy had therefore withdrawn from Anapa harbor and roads again because of their losses during the night of 27/28 September. Last night's operation was thus successful in two ways: 5 vessels were sunk and the enemy was forced to abandon Anapa as a jumping-off base although it was on the Russian-occupied coast.

After proceeding to Anapa, the 4 E-boats occupied the patrol line until 0300 without sighting any vessels and then put in to Ivan Baba at 0600.

At 2025 the naval ferry barges in patrol line off the south Taman coast had a short brush with light enemy naval forces off Zhelezni Rog. The type of the enemy vessels could not be made out. No damage. No hits were observed on the enemy vessels, but the engagement prevented the enemy from approaching our coast.

Nothing to report from the patrol line off the north Taman coast.

0800

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 4, 9 and 10, naval ferry barge No. 492 and motor mine-sweepers RM 2 and RG 01 put in to Genichesk from the patrol line north of Genichesk. Nothing to report.

At 0824 the Naval Liaison Officer to 49th Army Corps reported to Temriuk that enemy vessels were proceeding off Kuchugury. According to air reconnaissance, 9 landing boats and 2 gunboats were sighted at 0630 1 km. north of Kuchugury, while at 0550 15 landing boats were detected proceeding from the north towards the coast near Kuchugury.

0943

Naval ferry barge F 342 reported that no landings had been carried out near Kuchugury. Visibility was reduced by fog.

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1124 F 342 reported that the area north of Kuchugury was free of the enemy.

Thus the patrol line had again prevented the enemy from landing, forcing them to turn away to the north.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
Light variable winds, mainly southeast, sea wind in the afternoon, fair, cloudy in the north with local showers, visibility 15 miles, fogbanks in the morning.

As 1st E-Boat Flotilla had been operating for four nights, the patrol line off the south Taman coast at 44° 57' N from 36° 48' E to 37° 00' E was to be occupied by motor minesweepers R 35, 166, 197 and 213 during the night of 29/30 September. The boats were ordered to put out from Theodosia at 1700, leaving the patrol line at 0230 on 30 September. The group of motor minesweepers was informed of the operations by the naval ferry barge formation off the south Taman coast and also of the fact that our frontline would be at the western end of Blagoveshchenskaya.

I also ordered the following patrol lines for the night of 29/30 September:

2 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla south of Kerch Strait, 3 naval gunnery lighters off the south Taman coast near Zhelezni Rog, 1 naval gunnery lighter and 8 naval ferry barges off the north Taman coast and 2 naval gunnery lighters and 1 naval ferry barge east of Genichesk. Detailed orders for these patrol lines as on previous days.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast, Sevastopol was ordered to route to Sevastopol as quickly as possible any tugs, lighters or other transport vessels which had arrived or would be arriving in Theodosia in the next few days to relieve the congestion in Kerch.

In Gkdos, Chefs, 235 AI, Chief, German Naval Command, Constantza was requested to have "Romania" ready for laying minefield S 47.

Quartermaster General, Group South was informed that motor minesweepers FR 2, 4, 7 and 8 were to be transferred immediately to the Danube. This was in direct opposition to my request that the boats should remain in Kerch Strait until

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all the transports had returned from the Taman Peninsula. They are to put out via Sevastopol and Odessa for Sulina on the afternoon of 29 September.

Minesweeping activity and the preparatory measures for the "Krimhild-Bewegung" minefields will be seriously impeded by the absence of this group.

- 1440 Naval ferry barges F 305 and 535 and naval gunnery lighter No. 1 put out from Kerch to relieve the patrol forces off the north Taman coast.
- 1650 Naval ferry barges F 472, 302 and 583 put out from Kerch for patrol duties off the south Taman coast.
- 1715 Motor minesweepers R 35, 166, 197 and 203 put out from Theodosia for patrol duties off the south Taman coast.
- 1855 Naval ferry barges F 382, 342 and 125 put in to Kerch. They had been relieved from their patrol duties off the north Taman coast.
- 2145 Motor minesweeper R 35 reported an engagement with 2 Russian M.T.B.s 10 miles south of Kerch Strait. 2 torpedoes were fired.
- 2305 S 502 and 504 put out from Theodosia for patrol duties off the south Taman coast.

The group of motor minesweepers was informed of the position of the boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that, in addition to its minefields, Tuzla passage was blocked by scuttled lighters.

U-boat Situation:

- 1400 Italian submarines CB 4 and 6 put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine operations. Enemy not sighted.

CB 2 and 3 received their operational orders for 30 September for anti-submarine operations in the area south of Sarich and Yalta. Owing to the increasing east-west convoy traffic in the dark nights, operations in the more profitable operational area south of Tarken are not possible. U 24 received orders to put out on 30 September via the northern route and zones C and D to the attack area south of Tuapse. The boat will also carry 1 EMS mine.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 0940, 0950 and 1600 Genichesk harbor area and town were attacked by about 9 planes which dropped 60 - 80 bombs. Vessels RG 01, 05 and 2 water police boats were sunk. Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, motor minesweeper RM 2 and naval ferry barge No. 575 received slight to moderate splinter damage. 1 gun was disabled aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 4. On shore, 1 truck was destroyed by fire, while the harbor area and some buildings were fairly badly damaged. Casualties: 5 men dead, 7 seriously wounded and 5 slightly wounded.

From 0723 to 1020 Yalta reported lively air activity, no bombing.

Minesweeping Activity:

Motor minesweeper R 205 swept a mine in 45° 15' N, 29° 47.5' E on 28 September. The mine was cut with a 6-meter pendant and exploded immediately. Minesweeping in Kerch Strait was carried out according to plan. Nothing to report.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Kerch Strait: Return transports from the Kuban bridgehead across Kerch Strait ran according to plan.

A condensed report was forwarded to Naval High Command, Naval Staff, First Division giving evacuation figures for troop and freight transports from the Kuban bridgehead:

The following is an extract:

Up to now, evacuation from the Kuban bridgehead has generally gone according to plan. After transportation on the Anapa-Kerch and Temriuk-Kerch routes had been stopped one day before the evacuation of the ports, transports ran only from the loading places Senaya, Taman and the fish-salting factory to Kerch and from the embarkation points on Kossa Chuchka preferably to Yenikale. Bulky service supplies, especially ammunition, provisions and other supply goods were carried mainly in naval ferry barges and lighters, while troops and vehicles were evacuated chiefly by combined operations ferries and boats, if possible via the short route from Kossa Chuchka to Yenikale.

On detecting the evacuation craft, the enemy immediately intensified the air raids on

convoys, ships on ferrying duties and the loading and unloading harbors. Some lighters, tugs, naval ferry barges and harbor defense boats were lost. Although hits on transshipping jetties and railroad tracks often hampered transshipment, there were adequate ships available every day. Delays occurred only on certain days when there were no goods wagons or trucks available in Kerch. This meant that lighters with cargo had to be in Kerch harbor and roads for several days. From the start of the evacuation on 7 September until 26 September, the following goods were transported to Kerch Peninsula:

1. Total carried on all routes by the Navy and combat engineers:

- 80,547 tons service supplies of all kinds
- 132,600 German and Axis soldiers and voluntary helpers
- 13,818 wounded soldiers
- 22,843 civilians
- 11,687 motor vehicles
- 16,641 horse-drawn vehicles
- 796 guns
- 43,774 horses
- 4,796 heads of cattle

2. Of that total, the Navy transported the following:

- 69,296 tons service supplies
- 5,000 soldiers
- 11,615 wounded soldiers
- 12,383 civilians
- 171 motor vehicles
- 647 horse-drawn vehicles
- 72 guns
- 918 horses
- 2,096 heads of cattle

The Navy figures include the lengthy transportation assignments, especially those on the Anapa-Kerch and Temriuk-Kerch routes which were exposed to enemy countermeasures. Those convoys, which consisted largely of naval ferry barges, ran from ports adjacent to the Army front to relieve the loading places on the east coast and greatly reduced land transportation to the places of loading. This saved a great many motor vehicles, fuel and other transport space.

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- b. Genichesk-Kerch: At 0600 naval ferry barges F 476 and 313, tug "Amsel" and 2 lighters put in to Kerch. At 1600 naval ferry barges F 493 and 303 put out from Kerch for Genichesk.
- c. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran according to plan.

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30 September, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

No reports on enemy shipping movements were received from night reconnaissance on 29/30 September. In varying visibility, daylight reconnaissance over the Black Sea also produced no results. 4 boats, heading southeast, were observed off the coast near Blagoveshchenskaya, also 2 landing craft (personnel) 8 miles south of Anapa and 1 coastal vessel and 2 motor minesweepers.

Enemy ships in port:

Ghelenjik: 5 motor minesweepers, 16 M.T.B.s, 5 small armed vessels, 35 landing craft (personnel), 5 coastal vessels and 33 boats.

Novorossisk: 1 small armed vessel and 2 boats.

Anapa: 1 small armed vessel, 10 landing craft (personnel) 2 tugs and 5 boats.

Sukhum: 1 coastal vessel, 7 fishing boats, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 1 floating dock and 1 tanker (both old wrecks).

Adler: 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons.

Sochi: 5 motor minesweepers, 2 M.T.B.s and 50 fishing boats.

Chemitokvach: 37 boats.

Tuapse could not be reconnoitered because of fog.

In the Sea of Azov 2 small armed vessels were detected 15 miles north of Yeisk. The following enemy ships were observed in port:

Yeisk: 2 motor gunboats, 1 coastal vessel and 35 boats. (The landing craft (personnel) reported yesterday in Yeisk were not confirmed by today's photographic reconnaissance.)

Yassenka: 14 boats.

Primorsko Akhtari: 5 small armed vessels, 2 coastal vessels and 70 boats.

Sadki: 35 boats.

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Submarines detected by Main Naval D/F Station: 6 in the northwestern Black Sea as far as the southwest Crimean coast, probably 2 in the southwestern Black Sea and 3 in the eastern Black Sea; of the latter 3, one was heard receiving a transmission on return passage, while the others were approaching.

Activity of small vessels off the east coast continued to be moderate.

The Army situation report from the small Gotenkopf position revealed that strong enemy forces had attacked both flanks and the center. They were constantly reinforcing their left flank which was proceeding in the direction of Taman. With enormous enemy losses, the penetrations on the northern front were mopped up, while the breakthrough area southwest of Veselovka was narrowed down in a counter-attack.

Own Situation:

At 2145 the 4 boats occupying the patrol line off the south Taman coast had a short brush with 2 enemy M.T.B.s 15 miles south of Cape Takil while they were approaching their positions. After shelling our boats and firing 2 torpedoes, the enemy boats made off to the west at high speed. The torpedo surface-runners were out-manuevered. The boats then occupied the patrol line without sighting anything.

- 0545 E-boats S 502 and 504 put in to Theodosia from the southern entrance to Kerch Strait. No encounters with the enemy.
- 0620 Motor minesweepers R 35, 166, 197 and 203 put in to Theodosia from the south Taman coast.
- 0745 Naval gunnery lighters No. 9 and 10, naval ferry barge No. 492 and motor minesweepers RB 02 and 04 put in to Genichesk from the patrol line east of Genichesk. Nothing to report. The patrol line off the south and north Taman coast was occupied during the night of 29/30 September. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast:
(Simferopol 0930)

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
Light winds, mainly SE, fair, visibility 6 - 10 miles, fog in the morning.

- 1007 Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported: Torpedo planes have taken off from Ghelenjik, our fighters have been alerted.

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Simultaneously, the same report was received from 1st Air Corps. They added that our fighters could not take off owing to early morning fog and that an enemy shadower had been discovered with the convoy "Turm" (steamer "Prodomos") which was proceeding from Constantza to Sevastopol with 2 naval ferry barges and 4 motor minesweepers. The convoy's escort was reinforced by 2 BV and 2 He 114.

Motor minesweeper R 165 was immediately informed of the take-off of the torpedo plane formation.

As the Gctenkopf position still required flanking protection from the sea and our patrol forces had already repeatedly repulsed enemy naval forces as they approached the coast, I ordered the following patrol line for the night of 30 September/1 October:

4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla in 2 groups at 44° 57' N between 36° 48' E and 37° 00' E.

During the nights of 20 September/1 October and 1/2 October, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus will be responsible for the patrol line off the south Taman coast, where he will employ 2 reserve naval ferry barges and 5 more barges. The barges will take up position off Zhelzni Rog some 2 - 3 miles from the coast.

7 naval ferry barges and 2 naval gunnery lighters will be off the north Taman coast, while 2 naval ferry barges and 2 naval gunnery lighters will lie in patrol line east of Genichesk. Detailed orders for the patrol lines as on previous days.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that since 2100 on 29 September the battery at Zhelezni Rog had been shelling enemy tanks. The battery had been bombed and machine-gunned by planes. No damage or casualties were reported.

At 1045 naval ferry barges F 333 and 335 reported that they were shelled from the enemy coast between point 405 and Golubitzkaya. No casualties. In accordance with orders, they occupied the patrol line only as far as Peresyp throughout the day, moving further east after nightfall.

1715 Naval ferry barges F 303 and 493 put out from Kerch for Genichesk.

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1750 Naval ferry barges F 449, 126, 306 and 474 put out from Kerch for the patrol line off the north Taman coast.

1830 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the patrol line south of the entrance to Kerch Strait.

Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus received orders in Gkdos. Chefs. 240 AI for the laying of minefields K 10, 13, 14 and 15. (See Appendix.)

The following is an extract from a review of offensive operations in September submitted to Group South:

Enemy attacks: 4 submarine attacks on convoys, 47 air raids on harbors and 35 air raids on convoys, also continuous air raids on patrol lines off the Taman coast. 8 planes were shot down, 5 by naval forces and 3 by fighters.

German offensive operations: 5 U-boats operated off the Caucasus Coast; at present there is one in the operational area and one approaching the operational area. Also continuous assignments of the Italian midget submarines in offensive anti-submarine operations close to the south coast of the Crimea and in the Eupatoria area.

1st E-Boat Flotilla: 14 operations off the Caucasus Coast, 1 operation off Taganrog Bay, attack on enemy ships off Anapa.

11th E-Boat Flotilla: 6 operations off the Taman and Caucasus coasts. Motor minesweepers: 2 operations off the Taman coast, offensive operation off Primorsko Akhtari.

Naval gunnery lighters: 2 offensive operations off the north Azov coast and 2 offensive mine-laying operations in Taganrog Bay.

Continuous anti-submarine operations on convoy routes and in the main enemy submarine operational areas.

Naval gunnery lighters and naval ferry barges continuously occupied patrol lines off the south and north Taman coast and the north coast of the Sea of Azov, where they frequently encountered the enemy.

U-boats sank 1 supply vessel of 800 tons and 1 special purpose vessel.

E-boats sank 2 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons and 3 lighters totaling 1,300 tons.

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Naval ferry barges off the south Taman coast probably sank 1 motor gunboat.

German losses: To mines: 1 hopper barge.
To bombs: 5 lighters totaling 3,800 tons,
2 small fishing smacks, tug "Moliere", motor
minesweeper R 30, 4 harbor defense boats,
naval ferry barge F 217 and motor minesweeper
RG 04. Due to the weather: naval gunnery
lighter No. 8 and motor minesweeper RB 01.
Due to gunfire from enemy planes: S 46.
When the enemy landed near Novorossisk, naval
shore units sank 1 patrol vessel, 1 gunboat,
2 M.T.B.s, 2 landing boats and 2 rubber dinghies.

U-boat Situation:

0620 Italian midget submarines CB 2 and 3 put out
from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations
south of the Crimea.

1400 U 24 put out from Constantza for her seventh
operation. She was to proceed via the
northern route to operational area "Tapir"
at the rate of 170 miles per day.

U 9 reported that she would be ready to
operate on 2 October. She will be equipped
with 1 EMS mine in addition to her normal
complement of 5 T III torpedoes.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 0730 planes flew over Senaya and Taman.
At 1500 1 DB 3 attacked Constantza harbor,
but the anti-aircraft guns prevented any
bombs being dropped. The plane was shot
down and crashed into the sea off the harbor.

With reference to yesterday's enemy air attacks
on Genichesk (see War Diary 29 September), it
was reported that additional anti-aircraft
protection had been requested from the Air
Force to safeguard the vessels in the harbor
which were protecting the German positions
from the sea. Without these vessels, no
enemy landing attempts could be repelled.

Mindsweeping Activity:

Danube and Kerch Strait:

Check sweeps for ground mines were carried
out without incident. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

- a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait according to
plan.
- b. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western
Black Sea ran according to plan and without
incident.

APPENDIX I

Situation for September

- A. Number of naval vessels escorted: 7.
- B. Number of merchant ships escorted giving total tonnage, also tonnage carried by diverted merchant ships, quoting number and tonnage:
- a. Western Black Sea and Crimea convoys:
143 vessels totaling 101,225 tons.
- b. Kuban bridgehead:
Outward passage: 12,550 tons.
Return passage: 79,378 tons.
- C. Air raids:
35 raids on convoys and naval forces; at present continuous attacks on the patrol lines off the Taman coast.
47 heavy raids on ports and bases.
Submarine attacks:
4 unsuccessful attacks on convoys.
- D. Total losses due to enemy action or mines:
1. Due to bombing:
5 lighters totaling 3,800 tons, 2 small fishing smacks, tug "Moliere", motor minesweeper R 30, 4 harbor defense boats, naval ferry barge F 217 and motor minesweeper RG 04.
2. Due to mines:
1 hopper barge.
3. Due to the weather:
Naval gunnery lighter No. 8 and motor minesweeper RB 01.
4. Due to machine-gun fire from planes:
S 46.
- E. Number of mines swept, planes shot down, ships sunk and other successes:
1. Sunk:
- a. By E-boats:
2 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons,

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3 lighters totaling 1,300 tons.

b. By U-boats:

1 freighter of 800 tons.

By Italian midget submarines:

1 special purpose vessel (probably used to land agents).

c. By naval ferry barges:

1 motor gunboat (probable).

d. By armed fishing vessels:

1 submarine (probable).

e. By naval shore units:

1 patrol vessel, 1 gunboat, 2 M.T.B.s, 7 landing boats and 2 rubber dinghies (Novorossisk).

2. Planes shot down:

By naval forces: 5.

By fighter cover: 3.

3. Mines:

a. Mines laid:

18 offensive and defensive minefields comprising 1,214 moored mines, 155 LMB and TMB mines and 160 explosive floats, type C.

b. Mines swept:

39 moored mines and 5 magnetic mines.

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APPENDIX II

Admiral, Black Sea

Serial No. Gkdos. Chefs. 232/43 AI

M O S T S E C R E T

(Senior Officers Only)

To:

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Kerch,
Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, Kerch,

Copy to:

Naval Group Command South Ops., Sofia.

Subject: Confirmation of discussions in Kerch on
26 September, 1943

The following minelaying operation will be carried out by Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla to block the passage between Kossa Tuzla and Cape Tuzla:

1. Minefield K 11:

10 LMB mines are to be laid in the area between the connecting lines of the following points:

From 45° 13.2' N, 36° 34.5' E
to 45° 12.3' N, 36° 35.3' E
to 45° 12.2' N, 36° 35.1' E
to 45° 13.1' N, 36° 34.3' E.

Clockwork setting switch II a = 24 hours, period delay mechanism 1, minimum depth of water 5 meters. As the charts are not accurate, soundings should be taken first and the minefield's position altered if necessary.

Minimum distance between mines: 150 meters.

2. Minefield K 12:

Minefield of FMB mines:

From 45° 13.3' N, 36° 33.3' E
to 45° 11.8' N, 36° 34.8' E.

Slight deviation permitted.

Mines required: 120 FMB mines.

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Depth setting: minus $\frac{1}{2}$ meter.

Average distance between mines: 30 meters.

Mines should be laid in two rows, distance between rows 100 meters.

3. Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla will submit his orders and after completion of the task will give his report in accordance with S.A. II, Volume g) Para. II.

Additional note to Paras. 1 and 2:

The mines will be available at the Mining and Barrage Command in Kerch.

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APPENDIX III

Admiral, Black Sea

Serial No. Gkdos. Chefs. 230/43 AI

M O S T S E C R E T

(Senior Officers only)

To:

Commander, motor minesweeper R 35, Kerch,

Copy to:

3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, Sevastopol,
Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Kerch,
Naval Group Command South Ops., Sofia.

Subject: Minelaying in the approaches to Primorsko
Akhtari

1. Situation:

Air reconnaissance confirmed that during the last few days the enemy Azov forces have been assembling in Primorsko Akhtari. It can be assumed that Primorsko Akhtari is to be the base for the landings which agents report are planned against the north Azov coast.

2. Order:

- a. On receipt of the dated cover name "Pressburg", in which the date will indicate X-day, mines are to be laid irregularly between the following points in the area off Primorsko Akhtari Bay:

From 46° 06.5' N, 38° 00.0' E
to 46° 06.5' N, 38° 01.5' E
to 46° 05.5' N, 38° 01.5' E
to 46° 05.5' N, 38° 00.0' E.

- b. Mines required: 12 LMB mines, 6 with firing unit M-1, 6 with firing unit MA-1.

Clockwork setting switch II a' = 6 hours, period delay mechanism 1.

Mines with firing unit M-1 and MA-1 are to be laid mixed.

- c. Mines will be available at the Mining and Barrage Command in Kerch.

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- d. Minimum distance between mines 150 meters.
- e. Mine-carrying vessels: 2 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla.

Protection: 2 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla.
- f. Commander: Lieutenant Schneider on board motor minesweeper R 35.
- g. The mines should be laid unobserved by the enemy.
- h. On outward passage, enemy forces should be avoided if possible. If the minelaying formation is observed or attacked by enemy forces before reaching 37° 40' E, the boats should make every effort to attack them. In that case minelaying should be abandoned. If the minelaying formation is attacked after passing the 37° 40' E or while laying the mines, the escorting boats should distract the enemy while the minelaying vessel completes her task.
- i. The minefield should, if possible, be laid within the limits set out in Para. 2a., but slight deviations will be accepted. Minimum depth of water 5 meters.

3. Execution:

- a. On receipt of cover name "Pressburg", the mines are to be taken aboard in Kerch on X-day.
- b. The minelaying formation should leave Kerch on X-day to pass Cape Chroni at 1830. From there, the boats should proceed at 15 knots via the route set out in Appendix 1 to reach the minefield area at approximately 0000. The mines should be laid in accordance with the diagram in Appendix 2 by direction of the flotilla commander. After completion of the task, the boats should return to Kerch at maximum cruising speed.
- c. Routing through Kerch Strait as far as Cape Chroni will be provided by Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus. Route Red is closed from Red 14 to Red 15.
- d. Communications arrangements:

Command frequency East.

If any forces are encountered, a "Most Immediate" report should be transmitted, otherwise radio silence is to be maintained.

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4. After entering Kerch, execution should first be reported by teletype. The minelaying report in accordance with S.A. II., Volume g, Para. II. should later be sent in triplicate to Admiral, Black Sea.

APPENDIX IV

M O S T S E C R E T

(Senior Officers only)

To:

Naval Group Command, South.

1. Reference: OKM 1.Skl I Op. 2830/43 Chefsache.
2. Reference: Group South Op. 5357 Gkdos:

Re 1. On 16 September after the evacuation of all essential stocks etc., Berdyansk was evacuated according to plan. Freighters and naval ferry barges used for transportation were transferred to Kerch after unloading in Genichesk. For coastal defense in the Sea of Azov, 4 naval gunnery lighters, 4 naval ferry barges and 8 boats of the harbor defense flotilla remain in Genichesk. The naval ferry barges must stay there, as naval gunnery lighters could only operate on a few days in autumn because of their poor seaworthiness. The above-mentioned force will stay in Genichesk as long as the harbor can be used as a base, although we have to accept the fact that if there is icy weather the ships will not be able to withdraw through Kerch Strait. In that case, the naval gunnery lighters would have to be taken apart in Genichesk.

Re 2. With the transfer of the Gotenkopf forces, the Navy is represented in Kerch Peninsula by the following artillery groups and batteries:

a. Artillery group, Kerch Strait:

1st Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613, Battery Takil should be at readiness in 2 weeks with the 4 rapid-firing 15 cm. guns, type C 28, intended for Anapa.

9th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: 4 captured Russian 12.2 cm. guns with split-trail gun carriage hitherto emplaced at Zhelezni Rog. After the retreat, it is to be set up near the light at Kys Aul, southwest of Takil.

13th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: 4 captured Russian 7.62 cm. guns with split-trail gun carriage, hitherto emplaced at Anapa harbor. New emplacement planned near Yanysh Takil, north of Cape Takil.

Task of 9th and 13th Batteries, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: defense of dead ground on both flanks for the elevated Battery Takil.

7th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: 3 7.62 cm. rapid-firing guns on central pivot mounting, hitherto near Taman. New emplacement planned near Kamish Burun to defend the harbor. The fourth gun will be brought up from the former Battery Berdyansk.

2nd Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613, Communa Initiativa: 4 17 cm. rapid-firing guns.

3rd Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613, Ak Burnu: 3 13 cm. rapid-firing guns.

4th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613, Kerch naval harbor: 3 7.62 cm. rapid-firing guns.

b. Subordinate group, Kerch-North:

5th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613, Cape Fonar: 2 10.2 cm. rapid-firing Russian guns under construction will be ready to fire in 2 weeks. Gun platform for a third captured gun of the same type is being prepared.

6th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: 3 7.5 cm. rapid-firing guns, type 16, hitherto near Temriuk, will be brought into position near Shukovka, approximately 2 km. southwest of Fonar.

12th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 613: 3 8.5 cm. Russian guns with split-trail gun carriage, hitherto at Battery Anapa 2, new emplacement planned near Cape Chroni.

c. Artillery group, Theodosia:

8th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 601, Ivan Baba: 3 13 cm. Russian rapid-firing guns. The platform of a fourth captured gun is under construction.

9th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 601, Cape Ili: 4 12.7 cm. rapid-firing guns in completion, 3 guns ready to fire.

10th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 601, Theodosia harbor: 3 7.62 cm. Russian rapid-firing guns. The fourth gun will be brought up from one of the former Berdyansk batteries.

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Emplacement of the new battery planned in Temriuk with 4 8.8 cm. rapid-firing guns, type C30 on central pivot mounting C30. It is to serve as a blocking battery and provide anti-aircraft protection for Theodosia harbor.

We again urgently request transfer of at least 2 modern 15 cm. batteries for Cape Chauda and Sevastopol-North. For the continuation of construction work, information on the type of guns, double or single mounting or gun turrets, is urgently required.

Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chefs. 222/43 AI.

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