

MS#D-008

I. Designation of Oberbefehlshaber Süd (O.B.Süd) as Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean Theater in September 1942 pursuant to "Führer's order".

by

General der Flieger

Paul Deichmann

Prepared at Garmisch (Germany)

Date completed: 31 March 1947

Sources: a. personal: from own memory
b. documentary: none

Charts and overlays: Organization chart of O.B.Süd, September 1942 (annex 1)
Comparative chart of OKW control (annex 2)
Organization chart of O.B.Süd after it had assumed command over the German armed forces in the Mediterranean. (annex 3)

Table of abbreviations: O.B. Oberbefehlshaber (Commander-in-Chief)
O.K.W. Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (High Command of the Armed Forces)
O.K.H. Oberkommando des Heeres (Army High Command)
Ob.d.L. Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe (Commander in Chief of the Air Force)
O.K.M. Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine (Navy High Command)
Gen.Maj. General Major (Brig.Gen.)
Gen.D.Flg. General der Flieger (General of the Air Force)
Italuft Verbindungsoffizier zum Oberkommando der Italienischen Luftwaffe and Befehlshaber der deutschen Flakartillerie in Italien. (Liaison officer with the Italian Air Force High Command and Commander in Chief of the German antiaircraft artillery in Italy.)

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D.G.b.H.I.W. The German General at G.M.Q. of the Italian Armed Forces.

Luftw. Air Forces

Kdo. Command

[End of title page]

Garmisch, 31 March, 1947

Deichmann, Paul

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Source: own memory

Map: Mediterranean 1:4,000,000

Annexes: 5

I. Oberbefehlshaber Süd (O.B.Süd) charged by order of the Führer, September 1942, with the high command of the Mediterranean Theatre.

1. Until September 1942 O.B.Süd was responsible in the Mediterranean solely for the conduct of the air war. His staff was merely the staff of an air fleet [Luftflottenkommando], to which units of the German Luftwaffe alone were attached. (See Annex 1.)

2. On the basis of the intelligence available at OKW concerning an imminent landing of hostile forces in the Mediterranean, O.B.Süd was placed in supreme command of all German Forces (army, navy, air) in the Mediterranean Theatre, with exception of the German-Italian Panzer Army. The latter continued under Italian command (Oberkommando Afrika)

3. It now became the mission of O.B.Süd to prepare for the concentration and employment of all German armed forces in the event of an Allied landing in the Mediterranean Theatre and to beat off any such landing with these forces.

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The German General at G.M.Q. of the Italian Armed Forces.

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3. It now became the mission of O.B.Süd to prepare for the concentration and employment of all German armed forces in the event of an Allied landing in the Mediterranean Theatre and to beat off any such landing with these forces.

4. Further measures might be necessitated in case the Russian naval and commercial fleet erupted out of the Black Sea through the

Dardanelles, a thing which appeared not outside the realm of the possible in consequence of the capture of or threat to the Black Sea ports ~~ka~~ by German troops.

II. Estimate of the Situation with Respect to an Allied Landing in the Mediterranean Theater.

1. Following the German-Italian defeat in North Africa at El Alamein the rumors of a projected landing of the Allies in the Mediterranean increased. At the same time it was not apparent whether this landing should be looked for in the Western or Eastern portion of the Mediterranean and whether the Allied approach would be made from the west through the Straits of Gibraltar, from the east through the Suez canal or (perhaps in order to split the German air forces) from both sides.

Greece and Italy were regarded as the most likely countries for a landing. In addition to these two, other possibilities were evaluated: Italian North Africa, Southern France, French North Africa, Spain.

2. Landing in Greece.

A factor in favor of this point was that the British probably had a special political interest in this country, the more so since the British had landed there back in the first World War and again in 1940. Furthermore, in case of a surprise landing in Greece it would be impossible for the Axis to reinforce its weak and insufficient forces in that theatre in time, as there was only a single railroad of low operating efficiency. As it was, this road scarcely sufficed for the then existing supply situation. Its improvements moreover could easily be destroyed ~~xxxxix~~ by guerrilla bands or air attack. For example, it was thus that the great railway bridge at Sotta Potamos (?) [sic] about this time was destroyed by partisans and our supply problems rendered materially more difficult in consequence. To repair it required many weeks.

No little weight was given in these considerations to the fact that Russia at this time had suffered heavy defeats on the southern part

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No little weight was given in these considerations to the fact that Russia at this time had suffered heavy defeats on the southern part of its front and was reported to be clamoring urgently for armed support

by the Allies.. A successful landing in Greece would inevitably affect the German campaign against Russia, particularly by the acquisition of airfields. Furthermore, in the event of a landing there the Allies could count on immediate support by the Greeks, either by open rising of large elements of the population or by guerrilla and partisan activity. Moreover the Allied troops would have the assistance of the great partisan leaders Mihailowitsch and Tito. One purpose of such a landing could also be the gaining of air bases from which ~~to be able~~ to attack the Romanian oil refineries. The landing could take place, at the same time avoiding Crete. German forces on that island could be eliminated by cutting their supply lines.

Operating against an Allied landing in Greece would be the unfavorable terrain, in which the Allies could be held up by rather weak German forces. Then too the whole of the landing operation and the Allied supply line would have to take the long route via the Suez Canal, as the German Luftwaffe in Italy (including Sicily and Sardinia) and the Italian fleet would make the sea lane from the west through the strait of Sicily too costly if not impracticable.

As an initial phase of a landing operation in Greece consideration was given to the seizure of the island of Rhodes which the Italians occupy.

3. Landing in Italy or Italian North Africa

a. Landing in Italy

Political considerations

To begin with, an Allied landing in Italy was anticipated.

Beyond any doubt the great war weariness and indifference of a large portion of the Italian people toward the war could not remain concealed from the Allies, any more than the serious tensions could that existed among the higher levels of the Italian Command (Fascism-Monarchy). In addition Mussolini had lost power tremendously, apparently as a result of illness, particularly in the Army. www.maparchive.ru

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It was therefore quite obvious that the Allies would attempt to eliminate Germany's chief partner in the Axis from the war.

Military Considerations

In case of an Allied landing in Italy it was considered possible that one or even several of the islands lying off Italy (Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica that had just been won) would be taken or that a landing would be made on the Italian mainland, either at the heel of the boot (the plain of Bari) or in the Neapolitan plain, or at Rome.

At this time Italy had put the best troops still left in its Army on the islands for their defense. In the German opinion however, these forces lacked the quality and strength to prevent an Allied landing. On the Italian mainland proper the number of the Italian troops was still less in proportion to the size of the area to be defended; moreover they were inadequately armed. Except for a number of men returning from furlough or hospital, and replacements for the German-Italian Panzer Army who were in southern Italy awaiting transportation to Africa, there were at this time no troops of the German Army either on the Italian islands or on the mainland.

By landing on one or several islands the Allies therefore could destroy considerable forces of the Italian Army. What is more they would be in a position to acquire airfields and from these latter to carry the attack against the mainland that was only weakly defended.

The chances of the Allied Air Forces being able to support such an attack from the airfields located on Malta, without being dependent solely on air support from aircraft carriers, indicated a capture of Sicily. As the German Luftwaffe from its ground organization in Sardinia could materially interfere with such an Allied landing in Sicily, it seemed probably that in such event a landing in the southern part of Sardinia would be effected as a secondary operation, with the objective of seizing the airfields located there. These flying fields

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could be neutralized from Malta as a base only to a limited degree.

On the other hand the capture solely of Sardinia as a spring-board for the immediately following landing in middle Italy was regarded as a distinct possibility. Circumstances favoring a capture of Corsica in conjunction with this landing might take place, in order to gain control of the passage between these two islands.

A landing directly on the Italian mainland was also considered quite possible. In this connection a landing on the heel of the boot seemed more likely, if the Allied landing fleet came from the eastern Mediterranean, ~~xx~~ in whole or in part. In case the Allied forces approached from both ends of the Mediterranean, a secondary landing on the heel in conjunction with a main landing in the middle of the mainland of Italy was expected.

Such a landing would have held the advantage for the Allies that the main strength of the Italian Army would have been kept out of the affair and the thrust toward northern Italy -and across the Alps toward Germany too, if the situation were to develop so- could have been executed quickly, with^{out} giving Germany, in particular, enough time to organize a defense. The chief disadvantage lay in the threat to Allied supply and their sea communications from the German Luftwaffe based on the islands.

Furthermore it did not seem precluded that after a successful landing on the Italian mainland the Allies, operating from there as a base, might make a descent upon the Balkans across the Adriatic, or encircling that sea on the north.

b. Landing in Italian North Africa

An Allied landing in Italian North Africa was similarly viewed as possible at any time. It took on added probability if the Allies did not undertake a landing on a ~~major~~ major scale but only a landing on a lesser scale for the special purpose of ending the war in North Africa. Because the strait of Sicily was blocked by the German Luftwaffe and the Italian navy, it was expected at first to come from the eastern

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During Rommel's fighting around Tobruk and El Alamein we regarded the Benghazi area as most likely in case a landing were made. After Rommel's retreat, the Tripoli area looked most likely.

4. Landing in Southern France or French North Africa

a. Landing in Southern France

What made a landing in Southern France seem most probable was the fact that in case it succeeded it would affect the overall military situation with the greatest speed and decisiveness. It was assumed to be probable that the Allies -in case they landed more to the west- would occupy Mallorca in order to obtain flying fields for executing the attack. If they should land farther east in France, then the portion of Southern France occupied by the Italians would in that case be especially threatened. In that case it was expected that Corsica would be taken to protect the flank. In any such landing the Allies could presumably count on the cooperation of large portions of the French people and perhaps of the French Navy.

Against this landing stood the fact that the then French government would be ~~xxx~~ fairly certain to meet an Allied landing on French soil with force. Since the British attack on the French fleet in Oran there prevailed ^a among many Frenchmen considerable ill-feeling toward the Allies. All over France and particularly in Paris large and very impressive placards on this incident were displayed bearing the inscription: "Do not forget Oran!". The French Government moreover had somewhat earlier offered Germany active participation against the Allies. And the Allies would have to count on finding themselves in battle with very strong elements of the German Armed Forces if they landed in Southern France.

A landing of this sort, therefore, presupposed that the Allies had at their disposal strong enough forces and suitable technical means, which according to the German calculations was not the situation exist-

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A landing of this sort, therefore, presupposed that the Allies had at their disposal strong enough forces and suitable technical means, which according to the German calculations was not the situation existing at that moment.

Consequently, while regarded as possible, a landing in Southern France was not held to be any too likely.

b. Landing in French North Africa.

OKW viewed such a thing as improbable; at the same time the O.B. Süd was unable to learn for certain the reasons that caused the OKW to arrive at such a conclusion. In due course conferences on these questions took place between Mussolini and Hitler. The OKW seemed to rely on information of the most secret kind. Possibly we have here a successful maneuver on the part of the Allies to mislead us. Only partial reasons were mentioned by OKW; they led us to assume that the French leaders in French North Africa were loyally devoted to Pétain and so would probably oppose any attempt at a landing with military resistance. A landing that could be effected only by fighting the French was, however, not regarded as any too probable, as it would conceivably drive all France into the arms of the Axis.

O.B. Süd, to be sure, was well aware that various representations had been made by the French Government on the score that Germany herself had seriously limited French chances of defending French North ^{Africa} by having demobilized the French artillery and Air Forces in particular.

If a landing were designed to terminate the fighting in Africa, then this objective could be attained more quickly and without provoking

French resistance by landing in rear of the German-Italian armed forces in Italian North Africa.

On the other hand, if such a landing were to represent a prelude to an attack on Fortress Europe, then it afforded time for the forces of the Axis to take decisive countermeasures and even possibly to bring France to their side.

5. Landing in Spain.

A landing in Spain, particularly if made from the Mediterranean, was regarded as unlikely. Sooner or later such an attack would stall

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at the Pyrenees. Besides, a landing in Spain could be made by the Allies more easily from England on the northern coast of the country.

III. The Command Set-up.

Until the defection of Italy from the Axis, the war in Africa and Italy was regarded as a purely Italian affair. The resultant situation in matters of command and of attaching troops was one of extreme difficulty for the German forces provided for the support of the Italians.

It was quite natural that the Italian Armed Forces should ^{seek} to keep command entirely in Italian hands and to insert German units into the Italians organizations. On the other hand the German Armed Forces sought to keep German troops that were being used to support Italy under German command and to employ them in accordance with German doctrines of command and operations. Then too the supply and delivery of German am-
munitions to the troops demanded a single German command.

Italy was the only war theatre where the three German components of the Armed Forces, Army, Navy and Air Forces, were assembled under a single German commander. This organization therefore represented a first attempt at unified command of the Armed Forces in a war theatre that was a separate and distinct unit by itself. In all other theatres the three components were not unified until the level of the OKW was reached. (see comparative chart, annex No. 2) It is apparent from the normal organization of the German Armed Forces that questions of command and operations rested chiefly with the heads of the several components. However, because of the command set-up in Italy the Higher Commands of the components of the Armed Forces were to a very great extent eliminated from operational questions, the chain of command in this instance leading directly from the OKW to O.B.Süd. The Higher Commands of the components of the Armed Forces nevertheless retained the right to issue orders on "Fundamental Operational Questions" to their own component. But a line of demarkation between "Operations" and "Fundamental Operational Questions" was difficult to lay down, as these questions cut across each other in actual practice. As a result friction inevitably

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on the one hand and O.B.Süd on the other.

IV. Organization of the Authorities Attached by Order of the Führer to O.B.Süd (see Annex No.3)

1. Staff of O.B.Süd

Following the transfer to O.B.Süd of the missions of the Armed Forces on September '42, ^{the} staff of the former was enlarged by a small "Operations Group, Army", consisting of a General Staff Officer (Army) and an officer assistant.

An Italian air force and navy liaison detachment was assigned to O.B.Süd on the one hand and the Italian Air Ministry and the Italian Naval High Command on the other (particularly for air protection of convoys).

The headquarters of O.B.Süd at the time of the transfer of the High Command over all German troops was located in Taormina, Sicily.

In October 1922 [sic] the Hq. of O.B.Süd was moved to Frascati near Rome, as the tense situation in Africa made it appear expedient, if O.B.Süd (Feldmarschall Kesselring) were to be able personally to exert a stronger influence by his presence in Rome on the Comando Supremo in matters of supply to Africa. Although O.B.Süd was solely responsible for air protection of the shipments by water, whereas the execution of the actual shipments was a function of the Italian Comando Supremo or the Italian Navy, still this mission turned out worth while, for it enabled O.B.Süd constantly to influence the Italian command agencies in the interests of the German-Italian Panzer army.

2. Subordinate Commanders and their missions

a. Greece.

The German O.B. Südost in Greece was only under the tactical control of O.B.Süd. In this sort of set-up, O.B.Süd issued instructions to O.B. Südost in matters pertaining to defense in case of a hostile landing in Greece and passed upon before transmittal to the OKW, requests of O.B. Südost. Otherwise O.B. Südost had very great latitude. In questions

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concerning the defense of Greece, in technical naval matters and all other questions concerning naval warfare and maritime affairs he made use of Admiral in command in the Aegean. The X Fliegerkorps and Air Force Administrative Command Greece were under the complete control of O.B.Süd.

b. Italy - The Mainland

aa. Army

The German General at the Hq. of the Italian Armed Forces
(D.G.b.H. I.W.)

Under the control of the above-named officer were all personnel of the German Army in Italy of the following categories: convalescents, individuals returning from furlough, and replacements for the German-Italian Army. This personnel constantly accumulated in the southern Italian ports as a result of the difficult situation existing in the matter of transportation to Africa.

In the ~~xx~~ same manner the D.G.b.H.I.W. was responsible for the storage and administration of the war material intended for the German-Italian Panzer army and for its dispatch to Africa to meet the requirements of the German quartermaster. The D.G.b.H.I.W. had under him for this purpose the Africa Transportation Detachment and the chief quartermaster at Rome. In materials too there developed a constant piling up.

The attachment of the D.G.b. H.I.W. to O.B.Süd merely meant that in case of an enemy landing in the Mediterranean the latter could issue orders to the D.G.b.H.I.W. concerning the use to which this personnel and material should be put.

This accumulating personnel that varied constantly in strength and composition was at the time the only German force at the disposal of O.B.Süd in the Italian Theatre in case of a hostile landing.

In other respects the D/G.b.H.I.W. continued under the control of German OKW. Moreover he was the sole representative of the German OKW at the headquarters of the Italian Armed Forces. This status was specifically provided for in the Führer's directive which regulated the authority

Force Administrative Command Greece were under the complete control of O.B.Süd.

b. Italy - The Mainland

aa. Army

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of O.B.Süd. It appeared also in the later directives which, in addition to this, transferred command to O.B.Süd of all German troops operating in Africa. In practice this directive presented an intolerable encroachment on the command powers of O.B.Süd, who in his cooperation with the Italian Comando Supremo constantly had to take himself to the D.G.b.H. I.W. In this authority possessed by the D.G.v.H.I.W. there was also opportunity to make reports to the OKW, without O.B.Süd being able to present his view that might possibly differ on questions that concerned him.

This arrangement, provided in this and subsequent directives of the Führer, led to sharp protests by O.B.Süd. No change worth any great consideration to O.B. Süd was made in any directive of the Führer until Feldmarschall Kesselring demanded ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ that he be relieved ~~xxxxxx~~ unless a directive were changed.

bb. Navy.

The Commander of the German Naval Command in Italy

At this time he was under O.B.Süd for all matters concerning defense against a hostile landing in the Mediterranean. Under this heading belonged U-boat operations, and those of a German destroyer in the Aegean and of German shipping in that sea.

The E-boats stationed in Sicily, whose nominal commander was the German Naval Commander in Italy, were actually under the tactical control of the Italian Admiralty.

The Italian Admiralty alone was exclusively responsible for carrying out and protecting marine transportation to Africa.

Units under the Commander of the German Naval Command in Italy were at the same time incorporated into the Italian Naval Command as a liaison detachment.

cc. Luftwaffe

All German Air Force units in the Mediterranean Theatre were under the control of O.B.Süd in his capacity as Chief of Luftflotte 2. In Italy these were:

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Luftflottekommmand 2 (initially identified with O.B.Süd)

The II Fliegerkorps

Italuft

The mission of Italuft was the function of a Luftgaukommando [Air Force Administrative Command Hq.] (ground organization and supply) together with the command of the antiaircraft artillery on the Italian mainland and Italian islands. In addition to these duties he was liaison officer with the High Command of the Italian Air Forces.

c. Africa

Here O.B. Süd in his dual capacity as Commander of Luftflotte 2, had under his control only the units located in Africa, with the following headquarters:

Fliegerführer Africa [Air Force Commander Africa]

Fliegerführer Lybia-Cyrenaica, for preparation of the defense

against a hostile landing in the Benghazi-Tripoli area

19th Flak [AA] Division

Luftgaustab z.b.V. [Provisional Air Force Administrative Hq.]

(Supply and Ground Organization)

3. Examination of this Organization

The relationship between commanders resulting from the Führer's directive were anything but clear, as far as the German command in the Mediterranean Theatre was concerned. Such clarity as existed was limited solely to all units of the Air Force, which were uniformly and in all respects under the control of O.B.Süd in his capacity as commander of Luftflotte 2. In the case of the other German headquarters so many restrictions existed as to their status, as for example only tactical or only partial attachment, that the relationships between commanders was extremely confused. To cap it all O.B.Süd ~~in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ was under the control of his Italian allies. Thus O.B.Süd in some matters was under the German OKW, in others under the Italian Supremo Commando. Furthermore, in his quality as commander of Luftflotte 2, O.B.Süd

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direct orders from the German O.K.L. [High Command of the Air Forces] and was at the same time enjoined to close collaboration with the Oberkommando [High Command] of the Italian Air Force. These orders frequently overlapped and cut across each other. Then too the German Hqs. under O.B.Süd for the execution of his mission were in addition almost all under the control of several other German and Italian Hqs. With the many opportunities for friction arising from these confused relationships between commanders it was possible only for an individual endowed with a personality like Feldmarschall Kesselring to overcome the problems that developed, without too serious damage to the cause.

V. German Forces in Mediterranean Theatre in Sept 1942

(see Annex 4).

It is apparent from an examination of the forces listed in this annex that:

1. The only German Army units that O.B.Süd had at his disposal for use in case of a hostile landing consisted of the accumulations of soldiers intended for Africa (convalescents, men coming off furlough, and replacements) who were held up in south Italian ports. These had been provisionally organized into units for that purpose and armed.

In addition O.B.Süd had formed a combat unit for the protection of the airfields, consisting of 3 Air Force Guard Cos. who had received the best of equipment, with machine guns and Panzerabwehrgeschützen [anti-tank guns]. These were well trained. In the first occupation of Tunis and Gabes later on these companies were to play a special role as airborne troops.

The troops located in Greece were tied up there by their occupational duties including operations against partisans and in case of an allied landing outside of Greece could ~~not~~ not be taken away from these.

2. The following units of the German Navy were all that were available:

1 destroyer (Hermes)

15 U-boats (approximately)

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1 destroyer (Hermes)

15 U-boats (approximately)

1 E-boat flotilla (about 6 boats)

~~1~~ ^{mine-sweeper} ~~minesweeper~~ flotilla (about 12 boats)

1-2 Landing boat flotillas

3. The Fliegerverbände [Air Force units] of the German Luftwaffe in southern Italy and Greece constituted the great strategic reserves of O.B.Süd. These units had at their disposal adequate airdromes in

Southern Greece and Crete

Southern and Central Italy

Sicily

Sardinia

Corsica (only for fighters and dive-bombers; the necessary fields for bombers were in Central Italy)

Tripolitania

The airdromes were amply stocked with fuel and munitions, and were protected by A A artillery. The requisite ground personnel (airdrome operating companies and field dock units [? Feldwerfteinheiten] were available. It was possible at any time to receive additional units of the German Luftwaffe on these fields and operate them from these points as bases.

VI. Preparations for Defense against an Allied Landing

1. Greece

Preparations for the defense of Greece was the responsibility of the German Commander in Chief of the Southeast located there (O.B.Südost). These preparations were very much in detail and thorough. O.B.Südost made frequent reports to O.B.Süd concerning these defensive measures. In each he strove to obtain considerably more forces for his mission. These were promised by OKW only in case an attack was actually imminent.

O.B.Süd regarded it as his chief mission to ensure the timely and strong commitment of the German Air Force units and of strong forces of the German Army in case of an Allied attack on Greece. He took care that suitable supplies of munitions, fuel and rations were available. By command of the Führer a 6-months combat supply was ordered for Crete.

The X Fliegerkorps in Greece was charged with the preparations for the Luftwaffe there. This unit, cooperating very closely with O.B.Südost,

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The X Fliegerkorps in Greece was charged with the preparations for the Luftwaffe there. This unit, cooperating very closely with O.B.Südost, had checked all possibilities in numerous wargames and studies.

On top of all this O.B. Süd regarded it as of prime importance that preparations to attack be detected in ample season by constant surveillance of the ports in the eastern Mediterranean, so ~~that OKW~~ ~~was~~ as to enable OKW in ample time to throw reserves into the Balkans. For this reconnaissance mission special planes using a special fuel were employed. They were able to reach particularly high altitudes in order to carry out their photographic missions in spite of the strong antiaircraft defenses over the ports of the eastern Mediterranean.

In case of an allied landing in Greece the provisional units that had been formed out of the accumulation of troops in Southern Italy were to be flown to Greece.

U-boats ready to clear for sea were to be dispatched to the eastern Mediterranean.

Whether it was possible to shift Italian Navy units and German E-boats stationed in Southern Sicily to the eastern Mediterranean was not easy to determine, as these were under Italian command.

The question of cutting the Suez canal by air bombing or by dropping commandos was being constantly checked.

2. Italy

The defense of a German ^[sic] landing was most essentially the mission of the Italian Armed Forces. Consequently O.B.Süd could employ German forces as reinforcements only within the general scheme of the Italian planning.

For defense against such a landing it had been agreed with the Italian Commando Supremo that:

- a. Air reconnaissance to the limit of range of the planes would be performed continuously to maintain contact with hostile convoys.
- b. The approach of the hostile convoy would be opposed by:
 - aa. Using bombers to the limit of flying range to the extent weather conditions or the time of the day made it possible to use bombers without fighter escort (small radius of fighters). Conse-

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eliminated, bombers were limited to operating only when the sky was overcast and under cover of the cloud canopy, by night, or in the morning or evening twilight.

The enemy's carriers were to be the primary target, his naval transports the secondary. No attacks against enemy warships.

bb. Combined attacks by German bombers and Italian torpedo planes.

cc. Continuous attacks by bombers, dive-bombers and torpedo planes with fighter cover, as the convoys come within the radius of action of the fighters.

c. In case of a landing continuous massed air attacks would be delivered on the landing operation. If the enemy succeeded in getting ashore, then attacks would be made against the beachhead, especially by dive-bombers. The air attacks were to be made from airdromes in southern Sardinia during the phase of the approach of the landing fleet, and from Sicily as the convoys drew closer.

In the case of a landing on Corsica after opposing the hostile approach, light air task units were to be employed, along with fighters and dive-bombers from Corsica, and bombers from airdromes in central Italy.

In the event of a landing on the Italian mainland, after the hostile approach had been opposed, only local forces in southern or central Italy were to be employed for direct support of the defense there, while the rest of the forces had to continue the fighting against the allied supply oversea.

d. In addition to the foregoing, O.B.Süd had promised, in any sally made by the Italian fleet for an attack, to provide strong fighter cover for these fleet units. On the basis of their experience in an earlier sally of the Italian fleet to engage allied convoys running for Malta, the Italian fleet made its sally dependant on the assignment of ample German fighter cover and ~~ix~~ of air force units for defense against U-boats.

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The negotiations with the commander of the Italian 6th Army in Enna

on Sicily were conducted by the II. Fliegerkorps, which was ordered to cooperate with that army in case of an enemy landing. Clear information was available on this score, that the Italians expected a landing primarily on the west coast (the Trapani plain) and probably another south of Comiso at the same time.

Arrangements were concluded for the immediate support by the German Luftwaffe of the troops operating on the coast, particularly by dive-bomber and fighter formations, and in addition, by the incorporation of the ground personnel of the Luftwaffe and A A artillery into the defense, in case the airdromes were evacuated by the flying organizations because of having come inside the combat zone.

Like agreements were effected with the Italian military commander of Sardinia, who considered it most probable that the enemy would make his landing in the southern portion of the island for reasons of terrain and in order to gain possession of the airdromes there. To ensure support by the German Luftwaffe a liaison detachment was given this military commander. He was persuaded to transfer his C.P., out of the southern portion of the island where it was in immediate danger, to a point farther north.

Understandings were reached with the Italian C.G. and the admiral in command in Bastico on Corsica concerning air support in event of an allied landing. The shift of light formations (fighters and dive bombers) to airdromes on the east side of the island was pledged. Support by heavy bomber formations from Central Italy was to be given. Construction of airdromes on Corsica was accelerated. At the time the agreement was made only one airdrome south of Bastico was usable. A radio station was assigned to the admiral in command, which stood in continuous communication with O.B.Süd. By means of this station reports on reconnaissance and meteorological reports were exchanged.

3. Italian North Africa

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similarly in Italian hands. Only by shifting light air task forces for the support of the German-Italian troops could O.B.Süd assist the Italians. To this end the ground troops in the region of Bengazi and Tripoli underwent further organization and were supplied with gasoline and ammunition. A special air force commander (Fliegerführer Lybia-Cyrenaica) was detailed there to prepare these measures. In addition to these duties he was charged with air protection for naval convoys approaching the African coast. For this mission he had at his disposal an interceptor group (2-seater fighters) and a weak fighter group. Furthermore, during the unloading of supply ships he was responsible for the protection of the port of debarkation of Bengazi (later Tripoli) with interceptors and German flak. In case of a hostile landing this AA artillery was also to be used to defend the coast. For supply reasons (heavy use of fuel and ammunition) provision was made to base the operation of the German heavy bomber formations against an enemy landing in Italian North Africa, on Crete or southern Italy. In the event of an allied landing in Italian north Africa a considerable portion of these forces would have been occupied with keeping down the allied bomber formations in Malta.

Lastly in event of an allied landing in Italian North Africa provision was made for transporting by air or water (destroyers) the units available in southern Italy from the accumulation of Africa-bound troops.

4. Southern France

In case of a landing here O.B.Süd was only responsible for engaging the hostile landing fleet on the water and at the beach, using the forces of the Luftwaffe and Navy in the same manner as in the case of an attack on Italy. In addition he had to reckon on a sally by the Italian fleet.

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Measures were ordered by OKW to prevent the French fleet from running out of Toulon to effect junction with the Allied landing fleet.

5. French North Africa

In this case all that was done was to apply the same measures to meet the approach of the Allied landing fleet as in the case of an attack on Italy.

Beyond this no preparations of any sort were made. OKW had up to that time positively declined to permit steps of any description to be taken in French North Africa, despite the fact that German armistice commissions were stationed in the larger cities. Even at the most urgent representations on the part of Feldmarschall Rommel that at least a part of his supplies be permitted to move via French North Africa where they would not be seriously disturbed from Malta -even this request at the time of the most serious situation in which he had been thus far after the fighting around El-Alamein was refused by OKW.

Consequently no steps of any kind could be taken in French North Africa by O.B.Süd against the contingency of such a landing.

But that was not all. O.B.Süd could not even take steps outside of French North Africa in order to intervene in case of a landing there, since:

- a. by doing so O.B.Süd would have acted contrary to the views of OKW and would have become involved in purely political matters "right off the bat",
- b. O.B.Süd lacked the decisive means such as troops, shipping and war vessels for such a counteraction. As for the Italians, no steps had been taken by them either, as was apparent from their action at the time the landing took place.

However, O.B.Süd did know that there had been discussions between the Italian and German High Commands on the question whether an Allied landing in French North Africa could be parried by seizing Gibraltar in advance of such action. O.B.Süd did not know whether a decision on this score had been reached. The question of closing the western entrance of the Mediterranean by the capture of Gibraltar was looked upon by the

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5. French North Africa

In this case all that was done was to apply the same measures to meet the approach of the Allied landing fleet as in the case of an attack on Italy.

Beyond this no preparations of any sort were made. OKW had up to that time positively declined to permit steps of any description to be taken in French North Africa, despite the fact that German armistice commissions were stationed in the larger cities. Even at the most urgent representations on the part of Feldmarschall Rommel that at least a part of his supplies be permitted to move via French North Africa where they would not be seriously disturbed from Malta -even this request at the time of the most serious situation in which he had been thus far after the fighting around El-Alamein was refused by OKW.

Consequently no steps of any kind could be taken in French North Africa by O.B.Süd against the contingency of such a landing.

But that was not all. O.B.Süd could not even take steps outside of French North Africa in order to intervene in case of a landing there, since:

- a. by doing so O.B.Süd would have acted contrary to the views of OKW and would have become involved in purely political matters "right off the bat",
- b. O.B.Süd lacked the decisive means such as troops, shipping and war vessels for such a counteraction. As for the Italians, no steps had been taken by them either, as was apparent from their action at the time the landing took place.

However, O.B.Süd did know that there had been discussions between the Italian and German High Commands on the question whether an Allied landing in French North Africa could be parried by seizing Gibraltar in advance of such action. O.B.Süd did not know whether a decision on this score had been reached. The question of closing the western entrance of the Mediterranean by the capture of Gibraltar was looked upon by the Commando Supremo and O.B.Süd as the key problem in the conduct of the

Axis defense in that sea.

VII. Indications of the Imminence of an Allied Landing up to the Time of the Appearance of the Landing Convoy off Algiers.

1. Beginning September 1942 a large number of reports of all sorts, including those of secret agents, began to come in daily from OKW. (Security Section), concerning an imminent landing in the Mediterranean Theatre. Among these reports were continuous reports from a very reliable agent who reported with very exact detail that a landing operation was absolutely imminent ~~in the immediate future~~ in the eastern Mediterranean. In O.B.Südost in particular these reports created anxiety again and again, and led to demands that troops and also units of the Luftwaffe be dispatched to Greece.

A very violent discussion took place during October between O.B. Süd and Admiral Canaris, chief of the security section of OKW, over the form and the transmission of these reports. Admiral Canaris was reproached with the fact that according to the reports coming in, it would be necessary to figure on landings almost everywhere in the Mediterranean. The further reproach was made to him that his office not only had taken over the war of nerves against the German command, but apparently would even pay the enemy agents who were conducting this war of nerves in behalf of the Allies. In as much as the reports of the agents were given to O.B.Süd minus the names or other identification of the agents (code names or code numbers), O.B.Süd was even unable to form any picture from the numerous reports as to whether certain agents, whose reports when checked by air reconnaissance were patently misleading the German command, were not following a definite pattern. The security section was requested to transmit the reports of the agents under code names or code numbers. Admiral Canaris vindicated his view point by asserting that he considered it important for all reports to be transmitted to O.B.Süd unevaluated, as it was only there that any evaluation could be made. As to designating the agents by code numbers

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the same agents, Admiral Canaris promised it a trial. However nothing was ever done about it. Consequently the conviction arose with O.B.Süd that the misleading reports ~~misagents~~ he was receiving were deliberately being given out by the enemy security system. Thus it was that the reports of agents caused the German command in the Mediterranean extraordinary trouble without permitting any clear and definite conclusions at all.

Not even the time preceding the landing was without its false and alarming reports. For instance, a lighthousekeeper one night reported that he could see out on the water hundreds of lights. On this basis he put into play the defense measures of the German Luftwaffe.

2. During October '42 reports of preparations for a landing in the Mediterranean Theatre increased:

a. It was ascertained that the ports in southwest England were occupied by rather larger numbers of merchantmen. Great piles of material (boxes, etc.) for which there was apparently no available storage space in the warehouses, could be seen on the docks and adjacent depots.

d.[sic] Movements of shipping and activity at Gibraltar were on the rise. It was learned also that great quantities of stores were being unloaded there, among them many large cases which could only be crated fuselages of rather small planes, probably fighters. Tankers were arriving in increasing numbers too and were being unloaded.

3. On the other hand the ports in the eastern Mediterranean showed normal activity. Air photographs revealed that only the normal amount of shipping was entering them. Special attention in this connection was devoted to the conduct of the French fleet in the harbor of Alexandria. It neither shifted its berths nor were ^{there} any other noticeable indications of any preparations to put to sea in the near future.

4. Consequently the probability grew greater that the landing would take place only in the western Mediterranean. The question was checked by O.B.Süd whether it was possible in case it proved desirable to employ special technical means to attack Gibraltar by bombers

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event they would have to make emergency landings on Spanish territory.

For reasons of supply however this project was dropped.

5. ~~XX~~ There was still nothing clear about the probable time and place of the landing. About that time however the Italian High Command got wind of a letter from a British Admiral found on the body of a British naval officer cast upon the Mediterranean coast apparently after his plane had crashed in the sea. In this letter the words: "Sardine box" was openly used as a code ~~XX~~ name. This gave rise to ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ^{the} inference of a possible landing in Sardinia even though the choice of the code name was considered extremely awkward because of its similarity with the objective of the operation.

6. Between the end of October and the beginning [of November?] indications of an impending landing increased. The amount of shipping in ports of southwest England and in Gibraltar was on the rise. This increase of shipping in Gibraltar however might also have been connected with the running into port of line escort units, as occasionally happened when big convoys in the Atlantic detached boats or when supplies of gasoline [tankers] came in. Consequently this increase in shipping that had been noted need not necessarily indicate that a landing was imminent.

Agents reported that fighter planes were being assembled in Gibraltar. For the employment of these planes there were 3 possibilities:

a. The fighters were acting merely as protection for the port of Gibraltar and the straits, in order to ~~XXX~~ assure the safety of the naval forces that were running into port there. However, the number of planes being put together in Gibraltar was too great for this. Coupled with the heavy unloadings of material that were being made there, this fact was the surest indication that the landing was about to take place in the Mediterranean Theatre.

b. These fighters remained in Gibraltar for employment on airdomes lying within their radius of action, for example Mallorca. This would indicate an attempt to land in southern France. To be sure they could

also serve as replacements for planes lost on carriers.

c. However if these planes appeared in Malta, then we might expect a landing in Sicily or even a breakthrough by the landing fleet through the Sicilian strait.

Up to this time the English had replaced their fighters in Malta by bringing these planes to Gibraltar packed in shipping boxes, assembling them there, placing them on carriers and having these latter run out of Gibraltar just in time to reach a point in the Mediterranean on the approximate line of the 4th degree of longitude at dawn. From there the fighters could approach Malta which would be within flying range. Consequently Malta was kept at all times under surveillance to determine the number of planes there and also of war vessels and merchantmen.

7. The next thing noted was that at Gibraltar were a rather large number of warships of the smaller types. This was taken as a sign that the landing was only a short time off.

8. Then the report was received that a large convoy with strong naval escort had left the southwest coast of England in a southwesterly direction.

Thereupon O.B.Süd stepped up the continuous reconnaissance in the western Mediterranean. This was flown in V-formation with as many as 5 German reconnaissance planes beside one another, dependant upon the weather and visibility conditions. Connecting up with this to the north as far as the French coast Italian reconnaissance formations flew the same mission. Single planes pushed all the way to the Strait of Gibraltar.

9. Then came the surprising report that a strong fleet of vessels had left Gibraltar sailing west. Now consideration was given to a landing on the west African coast.

However the matter was cleared up when a report (according to my recollection a U-boat report) was received to the effect that a strong convoy was approaching from the west Atlantic. It was www.maparchive.ru

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However the matter was cleared up when a report (according to my recollection a U-boat report) was received to the effect that a strong convoy was approaching from the west Atlantic. It was now certain that the fleet that had left Gibraltar was an escort force. Consequently it

was apparent that

- a. a convoy from the southwest of England, and
- b. another convoy from across the Atlantic were approaching at the same time.

O.B.Süd was now certain that he had to deal with a landing operation in the Mediterranean.

10. On the part of the German OKW, the view was taken that the Allies would land in the region of Tripoli on account of the developments in the situation in Africa. At this particular time the German-Italian forces were in retreat east of Tobruk. The war would be over in Africa if a landing were made in the region of Tripoli where the means for defense were totally inadequate. The political repercussions on the attitude of Italy would not be long in making an appearance.

In support of this interpretation on the part of OKW there presumably were at hand for consideration security reports of the security section of OKW (Admiral Canaris), which were not available to O.B.Süd. On the other hand O.B.Süd took the position that the Allies would scarcely force a passage through the Strait of Sicily, in view of the strength of the German Luftwaffe and the almost certain intervention by the Italian fleet. In the convoy actions connected with the supplying of Malta the Allies had had ample opportunity to become acquainted with the strength of the air arm and furthermore they knew that the Germans had enough ground personnel and supplies to be able to reinforce the Luftwaffe materially in very short time. The activity of air and naval forces at Malta moreover did not show such an increase as would be likely to be expected if a landing were to be made in Tripoli. Nevertheless German OKW held fast to its view. The ideas of Mussolini on the matter, that the landing would take place in French North Africa were rejected.

11. Ob.d.L. promised that a torpedo unit would be sent from Norway. The Grosseto airdrome was designated by O.B.Süd as the field on which this unit should complete its flight. An airfield in the vicinity of Cagliari was assigned as base, the field ~~X~~ already being supplied with

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12. The purport of the next important message was that war vessels and merchantmen had run through the Strait of Gibraltar with lights dimmed after nightfall of 7/8 November 1942. They were spotted by the German reconnaissance the next morning.

13. The next message of importance to the German command disclosed that a big fleet, heavily protected, was hove to off Algiers facing east, while a second fleet in rear was running for Oran. At this moment there existed no clear idea of the Allied plans. It was possible that:

a. The most advanced fleet was hove to north of Algiers, awaiting evening before sailing east, so as not to come within the radius of action of the German bombers in daytime. This radius of action lay east of the 4th degree of longitude. The direction in which the rearward formation was moving -on Oran- could be coincidence (cruising in order not to stand still) or a deliberate feint.

b. However it was necessary to figure on a possible landing around Algiers or Oran.

14. An Italian aviator's report that came in at this time caused some confusion. It stated that a strong enemy naval force was running for Mallorca. At the Hq. of O.B.Süd a check was made to determine the chances of occupying the airfields there with German formations before an Allied landing and of supplying them. What was considered were fighters and dive-bomber formations with supply by air. A report subsequently received from reconnaissance planes (German) that were assigned to check up on the Italian report, showed that the latter was erroneous.

15. The next reports came in all together or one after another from the German reconnaissance planes and a French radio broadcaster in North Africa to the effect that fighting was in progress at Oran and Algiers. With this the veil had fallen.

16. When the indications that an Allied landing operation in the Mediterranean Theatre began to pile up, Feldmarschall Kesselring had ordered the head of the German Naval Command in Italy at his C.P. at Frascati near Rome to send the German U-boats in the western Mediterre-

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Naval Command to shift the German E-boats located in southern Sicily to southern Sardinia. The command set-up which has already been pictured as particularly bad for O.B.Süd on account of reservations by the High Commands in basic matters concerning use of forces, came to the fore at this time, when the consent of the High Command of the Navy had first to be obtained by the head of the German Naval Command in Italy before the U-boats could be employed as indicated above. A temporary difference of opinion that developed in this connection was decided by O.B.Süd in order to avoid delay in getting the boats at work.

VII. Conclusion

Summing up, it can be stated that:

1. O.B.Süd was informed concerning the time of the landing in ample season and was given all the necessary data.

2. As to the place of the landing there existed at his Hq. a clear idea, in ample season, of the extent to which the landing operation would be carried out exclusively from the western Mediterranean. Up to the moment of the landing there was no positive information concerning the exact place where it would occur.

Up to that moment OKW clung to its idea that a landing would take place in the region of Tripoli.

O.B.Süd considered a landing on one of the western Italian islands as most likely but also considered possible that a landing might be made in southern France with Mallorca being involved as an air base [literally "as an aircraft carrier"].

3. Preparations to meet an allied landing in French North Africa had not been made by O.B.Süd because of OKW's orders which were based on political reasons, and also on account of the fact that he lacked proper means (no available troops, no water transportation, insufficient German naval forces). The sole preparations consisted of reconnaissance over the sea and in action against the allied convoys in the Mediterranean by air formations and by German and Italian naval forces.

At the moment of the landing there were in French North Africa

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At the moment of the landing there were in French North Africa only

2 or 3 German Armistice commissions, including one in Tunis. With this latter however, O.B.Süd had no sort of communication.

4. O.B.Süd could offer only very limited resistance to the landing, for

- a. the few German U-boats that were ready for sea in the Mediterranean could probably accomplish little or nothing at all ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ in view of the clearness of the water in that part of the Mediterranean where they could easily be detected by planes and of the strong escorts that probably would accompany the convoys.
- b. The landing at Oran lay outside the radius of action of the German bombers and torpedo plane formations.
- c. The landing point at Algiers could be attacked only when weather conditions were especially favorable (overcast skies) or at twilight or at night, because of the fact that the radius of action of the German fighters did not permit them to fly cover for the German bombers.
- d. No dependance could be placed on the Italian Navy for any effective action, as it could not be employed without effective German fighter cover. Moreover it had been shown on earlier occasions in connection with action against convoys that the Italian naval forces were not adapted by training or equipment for night fighting.

5. At this moment the German-Italian Panzer army stood in the Marmarican, lacking sufficient amounts of fuel and ammunition. Supply by sea had proved unfeasible, due to the interference from the air and by sea of forces operating from Malta. Air supply was possible only by using the airdromes of the Great Syrte; because of the limited flight range of the transport planes however, these fields were of no value for this purpose. For their round trip the transport planes required more fuel than they could even carry as a supply load.

6. The German-Italian forces and the African w www.maparchive.ru

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6. The German-Italian forces and the African war theatre seemed

lost, even if the French could not or did not try to prevent the landing. The consequences to the politics of the Axis (attitude of Italy) were impossible to determine.

Signed: Deichmann

(Deichmann)

Signed: Deichmann

(Deichmann)

Annex 1

Organization of O.B.Süd (Luftflotte Kdo.2)
until Sept. 1942

[Translator's note: Only Title and Legend partially translated]

- Italian administrative center
- - - - - Assigned to mutual work
- Subordinate

- German administrative center
- - - - - Assigned to mutual work
- Subordinate

Annex 2

[Translator's note: only title and legend at foot of page translated]

Comparative sketch

- Assignment
- - - - - Cooperation in basic question of commitment

Annex 3

[Translator's note: only title and following translated:]

1. Unmittelbares Vortragsrecht: privilege of direct communication
2. Grundsätzliche Einsatzfragen: fundamental questions involving employment of forces.

[Title] Organization of the Kommando Hqs. placed under the control of O.B.Süd by the Führer's directive.

Annex 4

German Forces in the Mediterranean Theatre in September 1943

I. Greece

1. Command: O.B.Südost General Oberst Löhr
2. Troops:
a. Army

[Translator's note: Only Title and Legend partially translated]

----- Italian administrative center

----- Assigned to mutual work

----- Subordinate

----- German administrative center

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1. Command: O.B.Südost General Oberst Löhr

2. Troops:

a. Army

On the mainland only Italian troops under one Italian

Army High Command

b. Air forces

aa. Fliegertruppe.

X Fliegerkorps (Gen.Lt. Hoffmann von Waldau)

assigned to tactical mutual work with O.B.Südost.

Units: 1 Kampfgeschwader for each 2 Gruppen; a total of 84 planes.¹

1 Jagdstaffel of 12 planes.

1 Fernaufklarungsstaffel of 6 planes

1 Transportgruppe of 27 planes.

bb. Signal units

cc. Ground organization

Luftgaukommando Greece (Gen.d.Flg. W.Mayer)

Units: 3 airdrome districts including Crete; numerous air base hqs. and airdrome hqs. as well as signal units.

~~1~~ Seenotdienststaffel [sea emergency squadron?] of 6 (?) planes

Transport columns, etc.

Total strength of the airforce administrative command about 10,000 men.

dd. Flak artillery (under the control of the air force administrative command).

Units: 2 flak regiments of 3 bns. each; 1 of these regiments in Crete. Exact strength of the regiments not remembered.

c. Navy

Admiral Aegean (Admiral Förster)

1 destroyer (Hermes)

Transport ship area

XX. Italy

1. The number of planes as given is the authorized number. www.maparchive.ru

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Admiral Aegean (Admiral Förster)

1 destroyer (Hermes)

Transport ship area

II. Italy

1. The number of planes as given is the authorized number. The actual number was below that.

II. Italy

1. Command: O.B.Süd in personal cooperation with Luftflotte 2
(Gen.Feldmarschall Kesselring)

2. Troops:

a. Army

No German units on the main land and the adjacent islands excepting emergency units composed of men returning from furloughs, rehabilitated and replacements in various strength and 3 Luftwaffen-Wachkompanien.

b. Luftwaffe

aa. Fliegertruppe

1 squadron of 9 planes from the Fernaufklärungstruppe 122 under the control of O.B.Süd.

II. Fliegerkorps (Gen.D.Flg.Lörzer)

Units:

1 squadron of the Fernaufklärungsgruppe 122 consisting of 9 planes

1 weather reconnaissance squadron of 6 planes

Kampfgeschwader 54, consisting of 3 groups totaling 81 planes

Kampfgeschwader 76, consisting of 3 groups totaling 81 planes

1 dive-bomber group of 3 squadron totaling 27 planes

Jagdgeschwader 54 with 3 groups totaling 108 planes

1 group of Zerstörergeschwader 26, consisting of 3 squadrons totaling 27 planes.

bb. Signal units

cc. Ground organization

Italuft (Gen.D.Flg.Ritter von Pohl)

Units: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Airdrome ~~XXXXX~~ district ~~max.~~, air

base hqs., airdrome detachment, transport columns,

signal units, etc.

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cc. Ground organization

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Units: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Airdrome ~~XXXXX~~ district ~~XXXX~~, air detachments

base hqs., airdrome detachment, transport columns,

signal units, etc.

dd. Flak artillery (Under the control of Italuft)

Units: strength no longer known; employed for the protection of airfields and of harbors.

c. Navy

Commander of the German Navy in Italy
(Admiral Weichhold).

Units: about 15 U-boats

1 E-boat flotilla of approximately 6 boats

1 mine-sweeper flotilla of approximately 12 boats

1-2 landing flotillas

III. Africa

1. Command: Feldmarschall Rommel with his German units at that time not yet under the control of O.B.Süd, but under the control of Commando Supremo.

2. Troops

a. Army

As German units the 15. and 21. Panzer Divisions, the 90. light and 164. light Divisions.

b. Luftwaffe

aa. Fliegertruppe

Fliegerführer Afrika (Gen. Maj. Seidemann) assigned to cooperation with the German-Italian Panzerarmee.

Units:

1 dive-bomber group of 27 planes

1 fighter group of 36 planes

1 close reconnaissance squadron of 9 planes

1 night fighter squadron, the 2d, of 36 planes

bb. Ground organization

Luftgaustab z.b.V. (Gen. Maj. Gottlob Müller)

instructed to cooperate with Fliegerführer Africa

Units: Transport columns, airdrome detachments, signal units etc.

Fliegerführer Libyen-Cyrenaika (General Maj. Rath)

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bb. Ground organization

Luftgaustab z.b.V. (Gen. Maj. Gottlob Müller)

instructed to cooperate with Fliegerführer Afrika

Units: Transport columns, airdrome detachments, signal units etc.

Fliegerführer Libyen-Cyrenaika (General Maj. Rath)

Units:

1 destroyer group of 27 planes

1 fighter group , depleted, about 15 planes

2 flak battalions of unknown strength

cc. Flak artillery

19th Flak Division (Gen.Maj. Burchardt)

Units: 3 Flak regiments for protection of airfields

etc. and for employment in ground fighting.

Deichmann

Translated by J.S. Smith

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