

# The Texts of the Day's Communiques on Fighting in Various Zones

## United States

WASHINGTON Dec 16 (AP)—The Navy's 5 30 P M communique follows

Two islands in the Hawaiian area have been shelled by Japanese war vessels within the last twenty four hours. The naval outpost of Johnston Island figured for the first time in Pacific action. It was bombarded by ships of the enemy at dusk.

On the northeastern coast of the island of Maui the shipping center of Kahului was shelled by an enemy submarine at about the same time. Damage in both instances is believed to be slight. Naval operations are continuing against the enemy.

Wake Island has sustained two additional bombing attacks. The first occurred in the afternoon, the second in the evening. The first attack was light, the second heavy. Wake and Midway are countering the blows of the enemy.

The War Department this morning issued the following:

1. Philippines Theatre—Enemy air activity was of a minor character. Four Japanese fighting planes were shot down. American Army bombers renewed attacks on Japanese vessels off Legaspi, seriously damaging one enemy transport. No ground operations reported.

2. No change in the situation reported from other areas.

The Army communique covering operations up to 5 P M follows:

1. Philippine Theatre—The commanding general Far East Command reports that there was a marked lessening of enemy activity. There were no Japanese air attacks of any consequence and ground operations were of only a local character.

2. Hawaii—Reports that a disabled enemy airplane and a Japanese pilot were found on Niihau, a small island in the western portion of the Hawaiian group are being investigated.

3. There is nothing to report from other areas.

MANILA Dec 16 (AP)—The Manila Army Headquarters' morning communique, issued at 11 o'clock today said:

There has been no major activity on any land fronts.

The afternoon Manila communique said:

No change in the situation on the ground.

## British

CAIRO Egypt, Dec 16 (AP)—The British General Headquarters communique follows:

General area—southwest and west of El Gazala—Our troops yesterday continued their steady advance in the face of resolute opposition and repeated counterattacks by German and Italian infantry tanks and air forces.

About Alem Hamya some fifteen miles southwest of El Gazala, British and Indian troops attacked a defensive position held by strong elements of one German and three Italian divisions supported by all the remaining German tank strength.

After heavy fighting during which the center of the enemy position was penetrated in spite of two determined counterattacks by German motorized infantry and tanks progress was made. The enemy supported their counterattacks with their maximum available force of dive bombers and with other forms of air attack but our air forces effectively countered these activities.

Further southwest and west our armored forces simultaneously carried out a wide outflanking movement. By yesterday evening they had reached Halebah el Eleba some thirty miles west of El Gazala from which area they were continuing their thrust against enemy reserves and the rear.

During the day our armored forces not only inflicted many casualties on the enemy but they also destroyed 300 tons of enemy ammunition.

In the El Gazala area itself operations continued against strong forces of the enemy entrenched between the sea and the escarpment. Here also satisfactory progress at little cost to ourselves was made in the face of resistance.

Up to yesterday New Zealand troops engaged in this operation had captured a number of 75 mm Breda guns, many heavy machine guns and ammunition and a total of 1,100 prisoners. They also shot down two enemy aircraft.

Meanwhile an enemy strong point southwest of El Gazala was attacked and captured by Polish troops. Some 200 additional prisoners were taken in this area.

In the frontier area South African troops continued offensive operations against German and Italian detachments now isolated at Bardia and Halfaya. During the day one more enemy strong point was captured in the latter area.

During yesterday's heavy fighting our air forces operating over the Mediterranean rendered invaluable assistance in limiting the degree of the enemy air interference with our ground troops. Enemy motor transport columns on roads about Tmimi and Derna also were heavily attacked with good results. Further west our air forces destroyed and damaged many lorries in columns carrying troops.

The R A F Middle East Command in Cairo issued this communique today:

Dust storms seriously curtailed air activity over the Libyan battle area yesterday. Our fighter aircraft, however, were active over the El Gazala, Tmimi and Gedd el Ahmar zones and machine gunning attacks were made on motor transport on the Ghemmes el Ghilla road.

Sunday night bomber aircraft of the R A F successfully attacked harbor installations at Bengazi. Direct hits were obtained on wharves and buildings near the quayside.

All our aircraft returned safely.

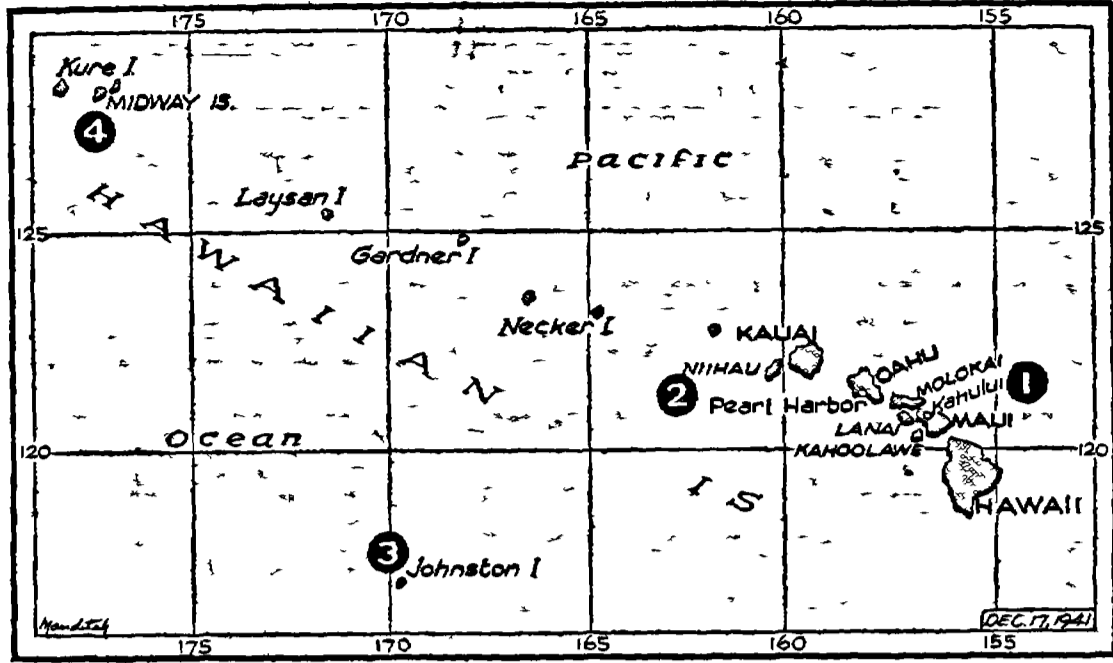
LONDON Dec 16 (AP)—An Air Ministry communique early today said:

Last night aircraft of the Bomber Command attacked docks at Ostend and at Brest and laid mines in enemy waters.

Fighter Command aircraft on offensive patrol attacked an enemy airfield in occupied territory.

From these operations one air-

## ENEMY SHELLS FALL AT TWO POINTS IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS



A submarine fired on Kahului, on the island of Maui (1) and surface ships bombarded Johnston Island (3) but in neither case according to Washington was serious damage done. A report that a disabled Japanese plane and a pilot had been found on Nuhau (2) was being investigated. Midway Island (4) continued to resist.

craft of the Bomber Command and one of the Fighter Command are missing.

The Air Ministry later issued this communique:

An enemy flak (anti aircraft) ship was hit by a torpedo and probably sunk during an attack on shipping off the Dutch Coast this afternoon by aircraft of the Coastal Command escorted by fighters. None of our aircraft is missing.

The Ministries of Air and Home Security issued this communique today:

There was a little enemy activity over one or two coastal areas early last night.

Bombs dropped at two places in Southwest England caused slight damage and injured a small number of people.

The British Admiralty issued the following communique:

The French Admiralty have issued a communique that on Dec 9 the S S St Denis carrying foodstuffs for France and flying the French flag was torpedoed in the vicinity of the Balearic Islands. The communique goes on to say that the submarine surfaced challenged the St Denis and asked for her papers then torpedoed her while she was stopped and preparing to comply with the order.

The French Admiralty finally make the wholly unwarranted assumption that the submarine was British and conclude by threatening to take measures to put an end to such outrages.

The Admiralty can state as a fact that on the date mentioned no British submarine was either operating in or passing through the area reported as the scene of the incident.

Moreover some eight weeks ago German U boats began to enter the Mediterranean and since then our patrols have frequently sighted and attacked U-boats in the Strait of Gibraltar and in the western end of the Mediterranean.

The arrival of the German U-boats was followed at once by violations of Spanish territorial waters by the enemy and heralded an end to all security for French and Spanish seamen.

It was perhaps hardly a matter of surprise that the British S S Grethead and the Norwegian S S Fjord should be torpedoed with out warning inside Spanish territorial waters or that during the same period two British ships the S S Sarastone and the Baron Newlands should have been attacked by a Focke-Wulf (German airplane) within Spanish territorial waters as they were leaving the Spanish port of Huelva, but the Germans do not hesitate to attack indiscriminately all shipping in accordance with their usual practice.

First the French naval oiler Tarn was attacked by a U boat off Algiers by night then the Spanish S S Castillo Oropesa was sunk off Melilla within Spanish territorial waters.

Next the S S St Denis has been torpedoed by a U boat south of the Balearics and finally only yesterday the Spanish S S Badalona was sunk at night by a U boat east of Malaga. In none of these cases was any British submarine anywhere near the areas where these sinkings were reported to have occurred.

The French Admiralty nevertheless draw the conclusion wholly unwarranted by the facts that it was a British submarine that torpedoed the S S St Denis although the calculated brutality with which it was carried out stamps the attack as the work of a German U boat.

There can be no doubt that the to create trouble between the British and French navies and between Britain and Spain in order to obtain relief from the serious military situation in which they are beginning to find themselves in Russia and Libya.

The French Admiralty are of course very well aware that while German warfare at sea both in this war and in the war of 1914 has been wholly indiscriminate it is not the practice of the Royal Navy to sink merchant vessels without warning in areas not previously declared dangerous to shipping.

VALLETTA, Malta, Dec 16 (Reuters)—A communique issued tonight said:

There were six alerts at Malta.

last night. A small number of enemy aircraft dropped some bombs causing some civilian damage and one serious casualty.

There were two alerts today. A single enemy aircraft crossed. No bombs were dropped.

## Russian

MOSCOW, Dec 16 (From Russian broadcast recorded by The Associated Press)—A Soviet communique broadcast today said:

During the night of Dec 15-16 our troops fought the enemy on all fronts.

Fliers of one unit in one month of operations brought down twenty-six German aircraft in air combats, destroyed fifty-four German tanks, over 100 lorries with arms and ammunition, thirty-six guns and ten tank lorries filled with fuel and killed over 1,300 officers and men.

MOSCOW Wednesday Dec 17 (From Russian broadcast recorded by The Associated Press)—The Soviet Information Bureau today issued the following:

During Dec 16 our troops fought the enemy on all fronts. On the Western Front our troops occupied several villages.

During Dec 16 our air force destroyed forty-three German tanks, thirty armored cars, 640 trucks with troops and supplies, four field guns, seven anti-aircraft guns, many wagons with ammunition, two tank cars with fuel and annihilated about a regiment of infantry.

A special Soviet communique today said:

After fierce fighting our troops occupied the town of Kalinin on Dec 16.

In the fighting for Kalinin our troops inflicted a heavy blow on the Ninth German Army under the command of Col Gen Strauss. They routed the 88th, 310th, 129th, 161st and 251st divisions of this army.

Remnants of divisions of the enemy are withdrawing westward.

In fighting for the town of Kalinin troops of General Maslennikov and of Major Gen Fuskievich have distinguished themselves particularly.

Great booty was taken which is now being counted.

The fleeing army is being pursued and annihilated by our troops.

## Netherland

BATAVIA, Netherlands Indies Dec 16 (AP)—A military communique said today:

No activity took place within Netherland East Indies territory during the last twenty four hours.

During the night of Dec 15 a number of unidentified aircraft were observed over Northeast Sumatra.

Our maritime operations are continuing.

## Japanese

TOKYO Dec 16 (From Japanese broadcast recorded by The Associated Press)—The naval section of Japanese Imperial Headquarters today issued the following:

Japanese forces landed at the port of Apra in Western Guam at dawn of Dec 10 and attacking a number of strategic points took prisoner thirty naval officers and men including a commander. They also seized a 3,000-ton tanker.

On Dec 11 Japanese forces

German bombers set fire to quay installations at Tobruk.

Other attacks were directed against the important railway center of Abu Schaiban in North-eastern Egypt.

A U boat commanded by Lieut. Captain Paulsen attacked a British cruiser formation in the Eastern Mediterranean off Alexandria and sank a cruiser by torpedoes. The ship split in two after a terrific explosion and sank in a few minutes.

In flights by minor British forces into the German-occupied western territory the enemy lost one bomber.

## Italian

ROME, Dec. 16 (from Italian broadcast recorded by The Associated Press)—The Italian High Command issued this communique today:

On the El Gazala front bitter and prolonged fighting took place yesterday. There were insistent and violent enemy infantry and tank attacks against our positions.

Italian motorized and armored divisions with the support of large German units fought with extreme tenacity and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. Many armored units were set on fire and destroyed. Prisoners were numerous and included a brigade commander.

An enemy air raid on Bengazi caused two casualties and only negligible damage.

Enemy attempts to attack the stronghold of Bardia were repulsed.

The German air force yesterday

day shot down six enemy planes. Two Italian planes did not return.

Last night the British Air Force bombed Taranto and caused slight damage to several buildings. There were no casualties among the civilian population. Anti-aircraft defenses immediately went into action and shot down three planes.

Bombs dropped on Augusta and in the Province of Brindisi caused no damage.

Italian air formations bombed air and naval bases at Malta.

## Finnish

HELSINKI Finland, Dec 16 (from Finnish broadcast recorded by The Associated Press)—The Finnish High Command issued this communique today:

Karelian Isthmus—Both sides mid harassing fire. Our artillery destroyed several enemy positions and log bunkers and caused the enemy to suspend work on the construction of certain sites.

Svir River Front—In the river mouth sector both sides scattered artillery and trench mortar fire. In the Lotin Anpello sector heavy artillery and trench mortar fire on both sides.

In the Ostia sector the enemy launched a general offensive under cover of artillery and trench mortars. Battles and counter-measures are going on.

East Front—South sectors enemy attempts at an attack were repulsed.

DO NOT FORGET  
The Hundred Needles