In the event, owing to the modest dimensions of the attack, only one further battery was deployed.

142. I also earmarked six Mustang squadrons for operations against the bombs in daylight, and arranged that their engines should be specially boosted. Three of them, together with a squadron of Meteors which I arranged to borrow from the Second Tactical Air Force, were to operate between the guns and London; the other three forward of the guns, over the sea. At night two Mosquito squadrons would patrol over the sea and a squadron of Tempests behind the guns. A direct link with the radar stations of the Second Tactical Air Force in Belgium was set up to assist in giving warning of the approach of flying bombs from the general direction of the Scheldt.

143. The attack began in the early hours of the 3rd March. The first bomb to reach this country got through the defences and fell at Bermondsey at 0301 hours. The next six bombs were all destroyed by anti-aircraft fire: five of them exploded in the air and the sixth fell into the sea. After a lull of nine hours the attack was resumed in the afternoon of the same day and continued intermittently until noon on the 4th, when there was another lull. Ten bombs came over during this second burst of fire: four of them were destroyed by the guns and only two reached London.

144. The second lull came to an end late in the morning of the 5th March. Thereafter, until activity finally ceased on the 29th March, there was spasmodic activity punctuated by intervals of quiet. The performance of the guns during this phase was outstanding. Indeed, it was so good that, in view of the unexpected lightness of the attack, I was able to dispense with the Meteors and five of the six Mustang squadrons, which returned to their former duties. During the whole of this last phase of the flying bomb campaign 125 bombs approached this country. Eighty-six were shot down by anti-aircraft guns alone, one by the Royal Navy and shore guns jointly, and four by fighters. Only thirteen bombs reached London.

145. Typhoon fighter-bombers of the Second Tactical Air Force attacked the launching-site at Vlaardingen on the 23rd March, Spitfire fighter-bombers of my Command that at Ypenburg on the 20th and again on the 23rd March. At both sites essential components were destroyed. Presumably the missiles launched during the last few days of the attack came from the third site, of whose existence we had not previously been aware.

146. The attacks ended with a bout of intermittent firing between half-past nine on the evening of the 28th March and lunch-time on the 29th. During this period 21 bombs approached this country: 20 were shot down, and the twenty-first came ignominously to earth at Datchworth, a village of some seven hundred inhabitants twenty-five miles from London Bridge. This was the last bomb of the whole campaign to fall on British soil.

(j) *Summary.*

147. The following table summarises the progress of the campaign and the results achieved by the defences in its various stages:

	Phase 1		*Phase* 2	*Phase* 3	*Total*
	(a) 12/6–15/7/44	(b) 16/7–5/9/44	16/9/44–14/1/45	3/3–29/3/45	12/6/44–29/3/45
(i) No. of bombs reported	2,934	3,791	638	125	7,488
(ii) No. of bombs in target area ...	1,270	1,070	67	13	2,420
(iii) Percentage of (ii) to (i)	43·3	28·5	10·5	10·4	32·3
(iv) No. of bombs brought down					
(*a*) by fighters	924⅓*	847	71½	4	1,846⅚
(*b*) by guns	261⅓	1,198½	331½	87	1,878⅓
(*c*) by balloons	55⅓	176½	—	—	231⅚
(*d*) by all arms	1,241	2,222	403	91	3,957
(v) Percentage of (iv) (*d*) to (i)	42·3	58·6	63·2	72·8	52·8

* The fractions relate to claims shared between different arms of the defence.

PART III: THE ROCKET CAMPAIGN.

(a) *Intelligence and Countermeasures,* 1939 *to November,* 1943.

148. The German long-range rocket, known to the enemy as the A-4 and to us as "Big Ben," was a rival to the flying bomb. There is no doubt, however, that if circumstances had permitted, the Germans would have conducted simultaneous campaigns with the two weapons from northern France.

149. The first hint that the enemy intended to use a long-range rocket for military purposes was contained in a report received in this country soon after the outbreak of war. More was heard of the project towards the end of 1942, when agents reported that trial shots with such a missile had been fired shortly beforehand on the Baltic coast. Early in 1943 a connection was established between this activity and the German experimental station at Peenemünde.

150. From that time onwards a stream of intelligence about the rocket reached this country. Not until more than a year later, however, did we receive conclusive evidence about the characteristics and performance of the weapon. During part of the intervening period responsibility for investigating the new threat was taken out of the hands of the intelligence staffs and placed in those of a governmental committee created for the purpose. A number of distinguished scientists and ordnance experts were invited to speculate about the nature of the rocket, and some hypotheses were advanced which ultimately proved wide of the mark. The prevailing impression in responsible quarters during the earlier months of the investigation was that the enemy was forging a titanic weapon which weighed seventy or eighty tons and carried a warhead containing some ten tons of explosive, which would descend upon London with little or no warning. The problem of defending the capital against so disobliging a projectile was naturally a source of some anxiety to my predecessor.