

Results probably not satisfactory, observation by Forward Observation Officer difficult and possibly an incorrect map reference received.

(d) at 1720, against a defended post near Catania. Result reported satisfactory by Forward Observation Officer.

(e) from 1753 to 1800, target Lentini.

H.M.S. TETCOTT.

(a) at about 2300, opened fire on a defended area south of Catania in support of commando landing from H.M.S. PRINS ALBERT at Murazzo Point. Enemy guns not completely silenced. Target engaged again after midnight with the result that the enemy guns ceased fire.

H.M.S. EREBUS.

(a) at 0938. Shore batteries near Carlentini, range 2,500 yards, rounds 10.

(b) at 1105. Catania Airfield, range 30,000 yards, rounds 10. Indirect fire.

(c) at 2140. Catania Airfield, rounds 20. Results unobserved but a fire seen when bombardment complete.

#### *Enemy Air Activity.*

The only air attacks this day were in the ACID area. There were continuous though ineffective raids during the night 12th/13th July, as well as the usual dawn attack. The most serious incident occurred a little before noon when two fighter bombers scored hits on S.S. THOMAS PICKERING in the after hold. The ship, which had only arrived earlier in the morning, became a total loss.

Shortly before midnight intermittent attacks with bombs and torpedoes on the empty personnel ships from Syracuse caused some confusion but no damage or casualties.

*Augusta.*—The naval port party returned during the forenoon. The town was found deserted with considerable damage at the northern end but none at the southern end. There was no power and a shortage of water.

The conditions in the harbour varied in one part and another. Only the northern entrance was open, but there was a four hundred foot quay with twenty-two feet of water alongside and ample berthing for all types of landing ship. The Carlo del Molo harbour and jetties were, however, found to be completely obstructed. The floating dock was undamaged and, in addition to one large oil carrier and three small petrol carriers, lighters were available though without means of towage.

*Commando landing.*—After dark H.M.S. PRINS ALBERT successfully landed No. 3 Commando with little loss near Murazzo Point, north of Augusta. H.M.S. TETCOTT, escorting, effectively engaged a battery which opposed the landing and also sank one of three E-boats\* which attacked.

*Local Defence Forces.*—In view of the progress made and in anticipation of the capture of Catania, Naval Commander Eastern Task Force re-allocated local defence forces as follows:—

1. Syracuse.  
13th Trawler Group (A/S),  
153rd B.Y.M.S. Flotilla,  
6 H.D.M.L. from Force "A".

2. Augusta.

8th Trawler Group (A/S, M/S†),  
105th M.M.S. Flotilla,  
4 H.D.M.L. from Force "B".

3. Catania.

4th Trawler Group (A/S, M/S),  
4 H.D.M.L. from Force "A",  
2 H.D.M.L. from Force "B".

4. Group "P".

Hunt class destroyers, CROMARTY, POOLE, BOSTON, SEAHAM and 22nd M.L. Flotilla to be based on Augusta when Catania occupied.

5. 20th M.G.B. Flotilla and 32nd M.T.B. Flotilla to be based on Augusta as ordered by Commander-in-Chief.

*Inshore Squadron for army support.*—In accord with instructions from the Commander-in-Chief, Naval Commander Eastern Task Force also placed under the orders of Flag Officer Sicily for service in the inshore squadron in support of the army the following: H.M.S. EREBUS, ROBERTS, D.S. FLORES, SOEMBA, H.M.S. CROMARTY, POOLE, ROMNEY, SEAHAM, the 22nd M.L. Flotilla and temporarily two Hunts to be detailed by Naval Commander Force "A". It was stated that three L.C.R., three L.C.G. and four L.C.F. would also be available from Malta if required. The latter were requested forthwith by Flag Officer Sicily.

*S.N.O.L. prepare to leave.*—At the end of the day proposals were submitted by S.N.O.L.(N) and (Q), with which Naval Commander Force "V" concurred, that they should withdraw from the Island on the 15th July with their staffs, leaving the Beach Commando and Deputy S.N.O.L. at BARK EAST and a nucleus beach party at BARK SOUTH. Naval Commander Eastern Task Force also concurred with this.

*U-boats.*—Further successes were recorded against U-boats at no great distance from the operational area of the Eastern Task Force.

M.T.B. operating under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief encountered two U-boats southbound in position 38°10'N.15°27'E. and sank one with a torpedo. The U-boat was not identified.

H.M.S. ECHO and H.M.S. ILEX, two of Force "H" destroyer screen, sank the Italian NEREIDE in position 37° 36' N. 16° 17' E., taking twenty-five prisoners. This boat was only twenty-four hours out from its base.

#### **D+4 DAY.**

*Wednesday, 14th July.*

*Weather.*—Weather was unchanged at very fine.

#### *Situation at beaches.*

##### **A. BARK WEST.**

All unloading was stopped over these beaches. The M.T. ships were divided between BARK SOUTH and EAST with their superior facilities and there was an improvement in the rate of unloading. All ships were clear of BARK WEST by 2030 and H.M.S. HILARY, headquarters ship Force "V", anchored at BARK SOUTH.

*Admiralty footnote:*

\* E-boats—motor torpedo boats.

*Admiralty footnote:*

\* M/S—minesweeping.