

26. I had difficulty in getting Senior Officers of forces to say how many troops had been embarked in the large transports. On this depended the decision whether to send all ships direct to Alexandria or some to Suda. It also complicated the arrangements of escorts and fuelling before escorting. The KHEDIVE ISMAIL had none and I thought of sending her to Suda, but there was no escort to take her there.

27. *Convoy G.A.14.*—As there was no room in Suda and I deemed the changing situation to make further delay dangerous, Convoy G.A.14 was formed and proceeded, consisting of GLENGYLE, SALWEEN, KHEDIVE ISMAIL, DILWARA, CITY OF LONDON and COSTA RICA escorted by COVENTRY, CALCUTTA, FLAMINGO, STUART, VENDETTA, WATERHEN and VAMPIRE. They were covered from the north-westward by PERTH, PHOEBE, DECOY, HASTY, NUBIAN, DEFENDER, HERO, HEReward and WRYNECK during the night 27th/28th April, 1941.

It was arranged for this convoy to form up—and for escorts to be exchanged—in position 35° 50' N. 23° 50' E. (about 20 miles north of Maleme aerodrome) and the Senior Air Force Officer, Crete, was asked to provide maximum fighter protection while this was in progress.

28. *H.M.S. GLENEARN.*—Meanwhile the GLENEARN had been towed to Kissamo Bay by GRIFFIN, and GRIMSBY was sent round from Suda to take over. GRIFFIN took off 150 of GLENEARN's complement leaving 90 onboard. The GLENEARN had no steam and no anchors and required 12 hours to prepare for towing. She was eventually taken in tow by GRIMSBY and reached Alexandria safely although attacked by aircraft while off Gavdo on 28th April.

29. *General Movements.*—AJAX, from Alexandria, joined my flag at 0730 and I arrived at Suda in H.M.S. ORION with PERTH and AJAX in company at 1130, 27th April and disembarked troops. AJAX, KINGSTON, KIMBERLEY and HAVOCK sailed soon after noon for Raptis. PHOEBE, with DEFENDER, HEReward, KANDAHAR, NUBIAN, DECOY, HASTY and HERO arrived at 1900, disembarked troops and fuelled. PERTH and PHOEBE with DECOY and HASTY left at 2030 to cover G.A.14. NUBIAN, HERO, HEReward and DEFENDER also sailed at 2300 for the same purpose. I reported to you the progress made.

30. *S.S. COSTA RICA—Sinking.*—The COSTA RICA in G.A.14 was hit by a bomb at about 1500 in position 35° 54' N. 23° 49' E. and sank 90 minutes later. AUCKLAND and SALVIA were sent out from Suda to assist, but her entire troops and crew had been taken off by HERO, HEReward and DEFENDER and were landed at Suda.

31. *Loss of DIAMOND and WRYNECK.*—When it was realised that DIAMOND had not arrived with PHOEBE and other destroyers I became anxious about her. From 1922 to 1955 DIAMOND had been called without

reply. As DIAMOND had last been heard of with WRYNECK during the forenoon, PHOEBE and CALCUTTA were asked whether WRYNECK had been seen going away with G.A.14 since I did not wish to ask WRYNECK herself to break W/T silence. Their replies at 2235 and 2245 gave no definite indication. I therefore despatched GRIFFIN to the position of the sinking of the SLAMAT to investigate. At 0230 GRIFFIN reported she had come upon a raft from WRYNECK and everything pointed to the fact that both WRYNECK and DIAMOND were sunk. H.M.S. GRIFFIN picked up about 50 survivors. WRYNECK's whaler was reported to have made towards Cape Malea. This eventually arrived at Suda. The total naval survivors from the two ships comprised one officer and 41 ratings. There were, in addition, about 8 soldiers. From statements of the survivors, it appears that the two ships were bombed at about 1315 both receiving hits which caused them to sink almost immediately.

32. *Movements of Vice Admiral, Light Forces.*—I had intended to go with the covering force of G.A.14 but I decided that I must stay in Suda for the night so that I would be free to communicate by W/T. Experience had shown it would be quite impracticable to maintain W/T silence.

NIGHT 27TH/28TH APRIL.

33. AJAX with KIMBERLEY, KINGSTON and HAVOCK were sent to Raptis to arrive 2200 27th April, to embark the rearguard of about 3,000 and the beach party. This was the final evacuation north of the Corinth Canal.

(The following were embarked:—

AJAX ...	2,500
KINGSTON ...	640
KIMBERLEY ...	700
HAVOCK ...	800 from Raphena Cove.

ISIS and HOTSPUR took a battalion of troops from Suda to Canea for the defence of the aerodrome at the urgent request of CRETFORCE.*

28TH APRIL.

34. *Formation of Convoy G.A.15.*—I was now becoming increasingly anxious to evacuate as many troops as possible from Crete. This anxiety was also shared by the Senior Officers of the other services. There was the probability of heavy air attack at any moment and the possibility of an attempt to take Crete and interference by enemy surface forces. I therefore proposed sailing G.A.15 via Kaso p.m. 29th April or a.m. 30th April after the final evacuation on the night of 28th/29th. The route through the Kaso Strait was selected as interference from Italian forces and attack by the German air force was less likely and cover by the battleships possible. This course of action was approved in your 0917/28th and 1444/28th April.

35. I reported progress to you in my 1515 of 28th April, 1941.

Admiralty footnote:—

*CRETFORCE—Officer Commanding Military Forces in Crete.