

THE NORSEMAN

Nov. 13. 1947

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DOCUMENTED FROM THE "FUEHRER CONFERENCES."

THE collection of documents known as the "Fuehrer Conferences" was among the German Naval Archives captured by British and American Intelligence Officers at Tambach during the war.

The "Fuehrer Conferences" are minutes of staff meetings between Hitler and the various commanders of the German Forces. They were written up from rough notes taken by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, or his deputy during the conferences. Among the documents are also a number referring to the invasion of Norway.

The most comprehensive one is a report from the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, to the Fuehrer on April 22, 1940, in which he summarises the operation "Weseruebung." (Invasion of Norway). Present also at this meeting in addition to Admiral Raeder were General Jodl, Chief of Staff, Army High Command and Commander von Puttkamer:

Supplement to the War Diary of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, Operation "Weseruebung."

1. On 10 October, 1939, for the first time the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, called the Fuehrer's attention to the importance of Norway for naval and air warfare. The Fuehrer stated that he would consider the matter.

On 12 December, 1939, Quisling and Hagelin were received by the Fuehrer. As a result, instructions were given to the Armed Forces High Command to make preparations. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy had a survey made, which was completed in January. Following this survey, Captain Krancke worked in the Armed Forces High Command on operation "Weseruebung."

Hagelin meanwhile maintained contact with the Chief of Staff, Naval Staff. His objects were to develop the Quisling Party so that it would become capable of action, and to inform the Naval High Command on political developments in Norway and on military matters. In general he urged speeding up the preparations, but he considered it necessary first to expand the Quisling organization. The support promised him in money and coal was very slow in coming, and he complained about this repeatedly. It was not until the end of March that Quisling considered the operation so urgent that expansion of his organization could not wait. The military advice given by Hagelin was forwarded to the Armed Forces High Command.

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2. The attitude of the Western Powers at the end of the Finnish War made the operation urgent, but its commencement was delayed at first by ice conditions in the Baltic. As soon as these became more favourable the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, in a conference with the Fuehrer, urged the selection of 7 April as X day, regardless of whether the weather was already suitable also for operation "Gelb." The Fuehrer decided on 2 April that 9 April should be X day.

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3. On 4 April there was a conference in K. between Quisling and a General Staff Officer of the Armed Forces High Command. Hagelin, on behalf of Quisling, repeatedly urged that Quisling should be given an assault group in good time, with the aid of which he could at once seize power and install a new Government with the consent of the King. This request, unfortunately, could not be met, since Quisling and Hagelin, according to orders, could not be informed of the imminence and the time of the operation.

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4. On 8 April the British laid mines in Norwegian territorial waters. At the same time a stiffening in the Norwegian attitude had been noticed during the preceding days, indicating possible difficulties in the operation. For example, the coastal fortifications were alerted;

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leaders of the "National" party, were to be encouraged in their efforts to secure control of the Norwegian Government, and, when this had been achieved, Quisling was to offer Germany the use of Norwegian ports and bases. If these political measures failed, force was to be used and preparations for the occupation by force were to be made. As the occupation of Norway was almost entirely a naval matter, both from the point of view of strategical advantage and of execution, Raeder and his staff were given the principal task of planning and organizing the invasion.

At a conference on 23 February Admiral Raeder again reported to the Fuehrer in the presence of General Keitel, General Jodl and Commander von Puttkamer:

Operation "Weseruebung."

The Commander-in-Chief, Navy, when asked by the Fuehrer about the possibility of maintaining the ore traffic from Narvik following the occupation of Norway, replies as follows:

a. The best thing for maintaining this traffic as well as for the situation in general is the maintenance of Norwegian neutrality.

b. What must not be permitted, as stated earlier, is the occupation of Norway by Britain. That could not be undone; it would entail increased pressure on Sweden, perhaps extension of the war to the Baltic, and cessation of all ore supplies from Sweden.

c. The occupation of Norway by us would cause the ore traffic from Narvik to be completely suspended at least for a time, since the protection of sea traffic is very difficult even along the inter-island route on a large portion of the 800-mile passage. Extensive use of submarines and aircraft squadrons would be necessary along a great part of the route. It is possible that enemy submarines would penetrate through the many approaches and the ships would be fired on from the sea. However, only about 2,500,000 to 3,500,000 tons per year would be lost, while if the British occupied Norway all supplies would be cut off. If Germany occupies Norway she can also exert heavy pressure on Sweden, which would then be obliged to meet all our demands.

d. Questions on carrying out the occupation are then discussed: The Commander-in-Chief, Navy points out the difficulty of synchronizing occupation in the south by Air Force transports and in the north by naval transports. Transport would be by ships of the SCHARNHORST* class (about 20 knots) or naval store ships (also about 20 knots) Transports carrying materials, perhaps also troop transports, should proceed first of all to "Basis Nord,"† since from there the approach route is shorter.

The Armed High Command will be instructed to investigate these questions.

In a note the British Admiralty states that reports from Hagelin in January and February indicated that Quisling's party was not being as successful as expected. Instead, a new wave of sympathy with and friendliness towards England was sweeping the country, and the chances of Quisling's accession to power were dwindling. German help had not been forthcoming in spite of Rosenberg's promises, and the coal, money, and selected Germans had not been sent. The German Foreign Office had further bungled the matter by encouraging people who, whatever their feelings towards Germany, were strongly opposed to Quisling, and thus, instead of building up a strong party which would have made German victory easy, the Foreign Office were them-

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* The passenger ship, not the battleship.

† "Basis Nord" was the German naval base near Murmansk ceded by the Russians in August, 1939.

selves dividing Germany's supporters. Hagelin appealed for encouragement for Quisling alone, and for stronger German action.

Reports from England were also disturbing. A mine-laying operation had been planned off Norway, and though this was not known to the Germans, it was known that something was brewing. The Allies feared that the mine-laying operation would precipitate German action against Norway, and they were accordingly preparing troops and transports so that immediate steps could be taken if Germany struck.

On March 1, Hitler finally decided that Norway must be occupied by force and issued the following directive :

Berlin 1.3.1940.

Top Secret.

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

Directive for "Fall Weseruebung."

1. The development of the situation in Scandinavia requires the making of all preparations for the occupation of Denmark and Norway by a part of the German Armed Forces ("Fall Weseruebung"). This operation should prevent British encroachment on Scandinavia and the Baltic, further, it should guarantee our ore base in Sweden and give our Navy and Air Force a wider start-line against Britain. The part which the Navy and the Air Force will have to play, within the limits of their capabilities, is to protect the operation against the interference of British naval and air striking forces.

In view of our military and political power in comparison with that of the Scandinavian States, the force to be employed in the "Fall Weseruebung" will be kept as small as possible. The numerical weakness will be balanced by daring actions and surprise execution. On principle we will do our utmost to make the operation appear as a peaceful occupation, the object of which is the military protection of the neutrality of the Scandinavian States. Corresponding demands will be transmitted to the Governments at the beginning of the occupation. If necessary, demonstrations by the Navy and the Air Force will provide the necessary emphasis. If, in spite of this, resistance should be met with, all military means will be used to crush it.

2. I put in charge of the preparations and the conduct of the operation against Denmark and Norway the Commanding General of the XXI Army Corps, General von Falkenhorst (Commander of "Group XXI").

In question of the conduct of operations the above-named is directly under my orders. The Staff is to be completed from all the three branches of the Armed Forces.

The force which will be selected for the purpose of "Fall Weseruebung" will be under separate command. They will not be allocated for other operational theatres.

The part of the Air Force detailed for the purpose of the "Weseruebung" will be tactically under the orders of Group XXI. After the completion of their task they revert to the command of Commander-in-Chief (Air).

The employment of the forces which are under direct Naval and Air Force command will take place in agreement with the Commander of Group XXI.

The administration and supply of the forces posted to Group XXI will be ensured by the branches of the Armed Forces themselves according to the demands of the Commander.

3. The crossing of the Danish border and the landings in Norway must take place simultaneously. I emphasise that the operations must be prepared as quickly as possible. In case the enemy seizes the initiative against Norway, we must be able to apply immediately our own counter-measures.

It is most important that the Scandinavian States as well as the Western opponents should be taken by surprise by our measures. All preparations, particularly those of transport and of readiness, drafting and embarkation of the troops, must be made with this factor in mind.

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In case the preparations for embarkation can no longer be kept secret, the leaders and the troops will be deceived with fictitious objectives. The troops may be acquainted with the actual objectives only after putting to sea.

4. *Occupation of Denmark* (Weseruebung Sud).

The Task of Group XXI. Occupation by surprise of Jutland and of Fuenen immediately after occupation of Seeland.

Added to this, having secured the most important places, the Group will break through as quickly as possible from Fuenen to Skagen and to the east coast. In Seeland bases will be captured early on. These will serve as starting points for later occupation. The Navy will provide forces for the securing of the connection Nyborg-Korsor and for swift capture Kleine-Belt-Bridge as well as for landing of troops should the necessity arise. They will also prepare the defence of the coast.

The Air Force will provide squadrons of which the primary object will be demonstrations and dropping of leaflets. Full use of the existing Danish ground defences and air defences must be ensured.

5. *Occupation of Norway* (Weseruebung Nord),

The Task of the Group XXI.: Capture by surprise of the most important places on the coast by sea and airborne operations.

The Navy will take over the preparation and carrying out of the transport by sea of the landing troops as well as the transport of the forces which will have to be brought to Oslo in a later stage of the operation. They will escort supplies and reserves on the way over by sea.

Preparations must be made for speedy completion of coastal defence in Norway.

The Air Force, after the occupation has been completed, will ensure air defence and will make use of Norwegian bases for air warfare against Britain.

6. Group XXI will make regular reports to the Supreme Commander concerning the state of preparations and will submit a chronological summary of the progress of preparations. The shortest necessary space of time between the issue of the order for "Weseruebung" and its execution must be reported.

Intended Battle Headquarters will be reported.

(signed) A. HITLER.

The plans of the German Navy were by then almost complete. The attack was to be launched on six main areas, ranging from Oslo to Narvik; transports were to be heavily escorted; and the High Seas Fleet, in two groups, was to cover the flank of the long Norwegian coastline and was to give all its attention to warding off attacks of the British Fleet. No support was to be given to the Army, once the troops had been landed, as the entire German Navy would be needed to defend the invasion areas from sea attack. Raeder appreciated fully the risk of such an operation in waters where they did not have control of the sea, but he relied on tactical surprise and speed to defeat Allied counter-attacks.

On March 9, Raeder informed Hitler of the naval plans, and strengthened Hitler's determination to attack.

Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy to the Fuehrer on 9 March, 1940 at 1200.

Also present: General Keitel.

Operation "Weseruebung."

1. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy states that he has always been, and still is to-day, of the opinion that the occupation of Norway by the British would have a decisive effect against Germany, since then Sweden might also be drawn into the war against Germany and all the ore supplies from Sweden would cease. The British now have the desired opportunity, under pretext of supporting the Finns, to send troop transports through Norway and Sweden, and therefore to occupy these countries if they wish. Therefore,

operation "Weseruebung" is urgent. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy feels it his duty, however, to present to the Fuehrer a clear picture regarding the character of the naval operation.

The operation in itself is contrary to all principles in the theory of naval warfare. According to this theory, it could be carried out by us only if we had naval supremacy. We do not have this; on the contrary, we are carrying out the operation in face of the vastly superior British Fleet. In spite of this the Commander-in-Chief, Navy believes that, provided surprise is complete, our troops can and will successfully be transported to Norway.

On many occasions in the history of war those very operations have been successful which went against all the principles of warfare, provided they were carried out by surprise. The critical moment is the penetration of the harbours while passing the coastal fortifications. It is to be expected that this will succeed if carried out by surprise, and that the Norwegians will not make the decision to fire quickly enough, if they decide to do so at all.

The most difficult operation for the ships is the return voyage, which entails breaking through the British naval forces. The main British force has lately been stationed in Scapa Flow again; at present there are two battle cruisers, three battleships, and at least three or four heavy cruisers there. Light naval units will shadow our forces and attempt to direct the main British force to them. All modern naval forces must combine for this break-through, i.e., battleships, the HIPPER and all destroyers from Narvik and Trondheim. The forces at and south of Bergen (small cruisers and special service ships) must break through along the coast with the support of LUETZOW. Not one destroyer may be left behind, let alone a cruiser (the HIPPER) either in Narvik or in Trondheim, at a time when the fate of the German Fleet is hanging in the balance. Strongest co-operation on the part of the Air Force is necessary. Four large submarines will be stationed in Narvik and two probably in the other bases; a number will be disposed along the advance route of the British Fleet.

In the period immediately following occupation, escort of transports to Oslo will be of primary importance, as well as the establishment of safe bases for naval forces in the harbours on the south-west and west coasts. Subsequently operations can be carried out from these.

The transport of ore from Narvik will be interrupted until further notice, because the problem of whether and in what manner the extensive coastal waters can be defended against British attacks must be clarified first.

2. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy suggests that the Russians be informed, following the occupation, that Tromso has not been occupied by the Germans. This could be interpreted by the Russians as constituting some consideration for their interests. It is better to have the Russians in Tromso than the British.

The Fuehrer does not wish to have the Russians so near, and is of the opinion that Tromso will also have to be occupied by us.

3. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy requests permission for the Naval Air Force to lay about six aerial mines in Scapa Flow, in order to inflict damage on the British capital ships, which might subsequently withdraw to the Faroes.

The Fuehrer gives his full consent and considers an agreement with the Air Force necessary, since the latter is planning bombing attacks soon.

4. The Commander-in-Chief, Navy gives a survey on the execution of the naval operation by the various groups.

signed : *Raeder*
countersigned : *Assmann.*

At a conference on the afternoon of 26 March, 1940, Admiral Raeder again reported to the Fuehrer in the presence of General Keitel, General Jodl, and Commander von Puttkamer :

Operation "Weseruebung."

Occupation of Norway by the British was quite imminent, according to the following information received at the High Command, Navy: Submarines were concentrated

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off the Skagerak on 13 March; a radio telegraph message gave 14 March as the time limit for preparedness of transport groups; numerous French officers arrived in Bergen on 15 March. These are all sure indications that an operation was being prepared before the Russo-Finnish peace treaty. Beginning 10 March the Navy stationed submarines outside the main bases in order to combat a British operation.

In my opinion the danger of a British landing in Norway is no longer acute at present. NB!!

The question of what the British will do in the north in the near future can be answered as follows: They will make further attempts to disrupt German trade in neutral waters and to cause incidents, in order perhaps to create a pretext for action against Norway. Pelly!! One object has been and still is to cut off Germany's imports from Narvik. These will be cut off at least for a time, however, even if operation "Weseruebung" is carried out.

Sooner or later Germany will be faced with the necessity of carrying out operation "Weseruebung."

Therefore it is advisable to do so as soon as possible, by 15 April at the latest, since after that date the nights are too short; there will be a new moon on 7 April.

The operational possibilities of the Navy will be restricted too much if "Weseruebung" is postponed any longer. The submarines can remain in position only for two to three weeks more.

Weather of the type favourable for operation "Gelb" is not to be waited for in the case of operation "Weseruebung"; overcast, foggy weather is more satisfactory for the latter. The general state of preparedness of the naval forces and ships is at present good.

As regards the possibility of getting past the fortifications, the Norwegians have perhaps become somewhat firmer in their desire to preserve their neutrality; however, it is improbable that they will decide to fire quickly enough.

The British Fleet is at present well prepared for action. Five of the battleships attacked in Scapa Flow by the Air Force are reported at sea; it is therefore to be assumed that only large cruisers were damaged.

U "47" sighted three battleships proceeding at high speed on a northerly course off the Orkneys.

The Fuehrer agrees to operation "Weseruebung" on D-day about the time of the new moon. II

Again, on the afternoon of 29 March, 1940, Admiral Raeder reported in the presence of Generals Keitel and Jodl and Commander von Puttkamer: Operation "Weseruebung."

According to a report from the Naval Attache, anti-aircraft units have been given permission to fire without consulting Oslo; it is probable (but not certain) that such a permission was likewise given to crews of coastal fortifications. It is to be expected that the attitude of the Norwegians is becoming more determined, therefore it is desirable to accelerate operation "Weseruebung." NB!!

Regarding "U 21," there are as yet no reports from the commanding officer which would give a clear picture of the incident. At the present moment it is not to our political advantage to put Norway in an unfavourable position as regards Britain by exercising too great pressure, since Britain must not be given any pretext now for action against Norway.

On April 1, all plans for the invasion of Norway were completed. The date was settled in Hitler's final order—April 9 at 5.15 a.m.

Naval Officers received an additional exhortation from Raeder.
C. in C., Navy.

Berlin 1.4.40. I?

Decree for Execution of "Weseruebung."

The Fuehrer and Supreme Commander, in order to ensure vital German interests, has imposed upon the Wehrmacht a task the success of which is of decisive importance to the war.

The execution and protection of the landing operations by the Navy will take place mainly in an area in which not Germany, but England with her superior naval forces is

able to exercise control of the sea. In spite of this we must succeed, and we will if every leader is conscious of the greatness of his task and makes a supreme effort to reach his objective assigned to him.

It is impossible to anticipate the course of events and the situation which may arise locally. Experience shows that luck and success are on the side of him who is eager to discharge his responsibilities with boldness, tenacity and skill.

The pre-requisites for the success of the operation are surprise and rapid action. I expect the Senior Officer of every Group and every Commanding Officer to be governed by an inflexible determination to reach the port assigned to him in the face of any difficulty which may arise: I expect them to enter the ports of disembarkation with the utmost resolution, not allowing themselves to be deterred by the holding and defence measures of the local commanders, nor by guard ships and coastal fortifications.

Any attempt to check or hinder the advance of our forces must be repulsed. Resistance is to be broken ruthlessly in accordance with the Directives in the operational orders.

The Navy has a large part to play in the operation which has been ordered; the greater therefore must be the will to master every obstacle to its successful execution.

Faith in the justice of our cause and implicit trust in our Fuehrer and Supreme Commander give us the assurance that in this task, as always, victory will be on our side.

This Decree is to be promulgated to the entire Officers Corps when under way for the operation.

(signed) *Raeder*,

Commander-in-Chief of the Navy.

On April 5, the Allies sent strong Notes to the Norwegian and Swedish Governments declaring that they could not allow the present advantages to Germany (i.e., ore traffic) even under pressure, and that they were determined to defend their vital interests.

Two days later British and French naval units sailed for Norway to lay mines off Bud, Stadlandet and West Fjord. At dawn on April 8, the Allies broadcast throughout the world their actions, and the reasons for mining territorial waters.

On the same day (April 8) in the afternoon and evening the German invasion fleet sailed, the advance units—GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST, and HIPPER—having previously put to sea at about the same time as the Allied fleets.

The German Battle Fleet was intercepted early on the morning of April 8 by the destroyer H.M.S. GLOWWORM, who rammed the HIPPER, tearing a 120-ft. hole in the German cruiser's bows and forcing her to put in to Trondheim. H.M.S. GLOWWORM was destroyed, but the alarm was given and British ships raced to intercept the German Fleet.

The invasion of Norway and Denmark began shortly after 5 a.m. on April 9. After sporadic resistance Denmark surrendered. The Norwegians opened fire on the German ships advancing on Oslo, sank the cruiser BLUECHER, and damaged another cruiser, the EMDEN, while the submarine H.M.S. TRUANT sank yet another German cruiser, the KARLSRUHE.

Fleet Air Arm and R.A.F. aircraft attacked and sank a third German cruiser, the KOENIGSBERG, at Bergen.

Meanwhile, the British Home Fleet was disposed in the North Atlantic to intercept the German Fleet. Before dawn on April 9, H.M.S. RENOWN contacted the GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST, but after a short exchange of salvos, the German battleships escaped in the bad weather and

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mist. British destroyers were more successful, and at Narvik intercepted and sank nine merchant ships (including one ammunition ship), two destroyers and damaged another destroyer. Four days later additional British destroyers, now supported by the battleship H.M.S. WARSPITE, again entered Vest Fjord (Narvik) and sank seven more German destroyers and one U-boat, thus clearing Narvik of enemy shipping and making it possible for the Allies to land troops in Norway.

In all, German naval casualties during the first few days of the Norwegian invasion were :

- 3 Cruisers sunk,
 - 2 Cruisers severely damaged,
 - 9 Destroyers sunk,
 - 1 Destroyer severely damaged,
- and about 12 Merchant Ships sunk or damaged.

These losses were severe, but they were approximately what Raeder had expected, and indicated what might be in store for Germany if they also tried to invade England.

By the end of the day of the invasion most of Southern Norway was in German hands.

The German Naval Attaché recorded in his official diary what happened in Oslo :
April 9, 1940.

- 0400 I am in harbour, ready to receive the German warships. Lt. Kempf is in a German ship out in bay to serve as pilot. Berths have been arranged so as to be able to carry out the action in Oslo as quickly as possible. Everything that I can do here has been considered and prepared down to the smallest detail. English and French leave the town of Oslo in the morning hours. The Ambassadors of England, France and Poland will follow. Secret papers are being burnt in the garden of the English Embassy.
- 0445 The German Ambassador presents the Memorandum.
- 0800 Shortly after 0800 the first German aircraft fly over the harbour. The Norwegian flak opens fire.
- 0923 The airfield Forenbu—Oslo is in German hands.
- 0930 The Royal Standard is taken down from the Castle. German air attack on fortresses Akershus and Hovedoya. Paratroops are fetched from Fornebu under flak and machine-gun fire by the Naval and Air Attachés. The arrival of German fleet units is awaited in vain. Berlin gives no reply to W/T. Panic in the town in consequence of flak defence and the appearance of German aircraft. In the office of the Naval Attaché, the top secret papers are partly destroyed, because the position has become tense owing to the delay in the arrival of the German warships. It is possible that Norwegian soldiers, police, or English defence groups will thrust their way into the house. Pistols have been distributed. The house is secured. I drive unmolested through the town in a German car, my uniform under a civilian overcoat.
- 1200 About 1200 the first German soldiers land in Fornebu, occupy the Embassy and the most important points of the town. The leader of the action is Colonel Pohlmann of Group XXI. Telephone communications cut off in the town. The telephone connection between the Naval Attachés Office and the German Embassy is in order. In the late afternoon an aircraft report announces German ship has grounded at the entrance at Oscarsburg. Lt. Pusback in the office of the Naval Attaché receives orders

Berth : any place in which a vessel may lie at anchor or at a dock.

to sail to Oscarsburg. On his arrival the task had already been carried out and the survivors brought to German ships.

The crew of the torpedoed German steamer assemble in great numbers in the offices of the Naval Attache. Instead of the Norwegian Government, which is in flight, there is a new Government formed towards evening by Quisling.

1700 The position in the town has become clear. There are no Norwegian officers at their posts in the Defence Ministry. I help the advancing troops by giving them plans of the town and so on.

My conviction that the Norwegian operation would have gone through without a shot had the surprise remained secret has not changed during the process of fighting. Until the late afternoon of the 8th April nothing was known to the Government or the Admiralty staff of the operation. I was continually in communication with authoritative powers under the understandable guise of wishing to hear something of the English operation. I should certainly have obtained an impression if the Government at this time had been ready to defend a German action had they seriously believed one was meditated. No, it was not expected. As, however, the torpedoing of German special ships mounted, and as the survivors of the RIO DE JANEIRO gave evidence that they had come to protect Norway, the incidents of POSIDONIA (tanker) and U-21 stood in a new light. During the night of the 8-9 April, the Norwegian Government made its weighty decision. The King left the town on the 9th during the morning.

On 10 April, 1940, there was a new "Fuehrer Conference" when the Commander-in-Chief, Navy reported to the Fuehrer on the invasion which took place the previous day. Present were Chief of Staff, Armed Forces High Command, General Jodl, Commander von Puttkamer, Commander-in-Chief, Air, General Bodenschatz:

The Commander-in-Chief, Navy refers to his views on operation "Weseruebung" expressed in recent conferences. He had said that passage to Norway would with some degree of luck be successful provided the elements of surprise were maintained; the breakthrough and landing would probably also be successful if a determined thrust were made through the fortification zones, even though a certain stiffening in the attitude of the Norwegians was observed in the last few days; the return passage would be the most difficult part of the operation, and would call for all-out co-operation by the whole German Navy. The first two parts of the operation, the approach and the penetration and landing, were carried out on the whole successfully, as anticipated. The losses (BLUECHER and KARLSRUHE) are quite in proportion to the risks run and can definitely not be considered high. The third part of the operation is in progress and will probably entail further losses.

The situation was made more difficult than anticipated by the fact that the British were also just conducting an operation involving minelaying on 8 April, to be followed by occupation of Norwegian bases. This was confirmed by the presence of transports with the British Home Fleet, which were sighted on the afternoon of 9 April in the northern North Sea by attacking aircraft. Numerous British and French naval forces were thus at sea in the northern North Sea as far North as the Lofoten Islands.

Yesterday morning there was an engagement with heavy British forces in the Lofoten Islands area. The REPULSE and another battleship were probably involved. Further details are not known. In the evening the Fleet Commander reported: Only 25 knots; two heavy turrets out of action. Further enquiries have not yet been answered. Losses by the enemy are probable. Radio telegraph communication with the Lofoten Islands is very uncertain.

Both battleships are to force their way into home waters as soon as possible.

If a battleship is put out of action or is not ready for action, the question will arise whether to send the damaged battleship to Narvik for protection against further attacks, which are sure to come. Putting into Narvik means that the ship is eliminated from future

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operations. She will also be in great danger from aircraft carriers, without the compensation of any promise of effective operation.

Enemy battleships: Their situation and position this morning was not yet known. The aircraft carrier FURIOUS put out of Scapa Flow yesterday evening, apparently to join the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.

Note. According to later reports, three British and two German destroyers were sunk; several German destroyers have been partially paralyzed and are serving as barrage batteries. Situation in Narvik: According to a garbled radio message (not in code) received at 0604 to-day, destroyers were attacked this morning in Narvik by enemy forces, probably destroyers and several cruisers. The situation is not clear. At 0830 one destroyer reported a severe destroyer engagement off Narvik. The situation must be regarded as serious, since the troops on land are without artillery. The most urgent matters are the defence of Narvik and the question of supplies. No supply vessels have arrived as yet. It is requested that reinforcements and material be sent immediately on Swedish railways via northern Sweden.

It is planned to increase the number of submarines in order to take effective measures against British operations.

Situation in Trondheim: The situation regarding the coastal batteries is still obscure; according to information from the Armed Forces High Command, fortifications are safe in German hands and the airfield is out of service. The vessels of the supply group have not arrived, and it is uncertain whether they will arrive. Increased submarine protection is also planned here.

Cruiser HIPPER and two, later three, destroyers will put out this evening, carrying only a small amount of fuel. They are to refuel at sea, but it is questionable whether this can be accomplished.

Situation in Bergen: The cruiser KOENIGSBERG (damaged), the BREMSE (damaged), the CARL PETERS, and the PT boat flotilla remain in the harbour. A ship arrived with mines. Three batteries are partially ready for firing this evening. The Commanding Admiral, Scouting Forces, plans to put out this evening with the KOELN and torpedo boats.

The situation in Bergen appears to be assured. This base is very exposed to air attacks, however.

Situation in Kristiansand: The TSINGTAU and the PT boat flotilla remain in the harbour. The KARLSRUHE was torpedoed yesterday while putting out and was later sunk. The crew was taken on board torpedo boats.

Situation in Oslo: The LUETZOW and the EMDEN have not put in because the mine situation is not yet clarified. The BLUECHER sank yesterday after hitting a mine. It is planned to withdraw the LUETZOW this evening.

Urgent missions: Reinforcement of the Skagerak minefield. Submarine chase is to be carried on in the Kattegat and Skagerak with all available means. Sea transports must be escorted.

Supplies to western ports cannot be shipped by sea.

At the beginning and at the conclusion of the conference, the Fuehrer expressed his full appreciation to the Commander-in-Chief, Navy for the great achievement of the Navy.
signed: *Raeder.*

In addition to the conference on 22 April, 1940, already referred to, there was also a conference on 29 April. This is the last document referred to by the Admiralty.

By the middle of June the occupation was completed and Norway was in German hands.

Sporting Life in Norway

KENNETH HARE-SCOTT

IT is impossible to spend one day in Norway or one hour in the company of a Norwegian without discovering that people of all ages and all sections of the community are dominated by a love of exercise in any shape or form. They strive for physical fitness and worship at the shrine of its perfection. When British Forces were stationed in Norway in 1945, the authorities placed at their disposal every available sporting facility. The weather was perfect and many in England who were soldiers in that year retain happy memories of bathing, yachting, ski-ing in the mountains, cycling and athletic meetings in towns and villages throughout Norway — memories which to-day come as a refreshing breeze into the daily lives of those soldiers who are now living and working in town and office of England's cities. In this short article, I am going to tell you something of the sports which have in the past appealed to visitors from other countries and dwell on the prospects of an early return of facilities for the visiting sportsman.

In Norway, ski-ing is the most popular winter sport. Most Norwegians learn to ski at the age of three, which is appropriate when it is remembered that the dictionary definition of Ski is "Norwegian snowshoe of wood about 8 ft. by 4 ins." On Sunday mornings from the towns and villages there is a general exodus into the hills for the day's sport. A different technique is required for ski-ing in the woods

as compared with the mountain slopes, and during the months of November, December and January ski-ing in the woods is more popular. Later, however, when the sun gets stronger and the days longer, the mountains draw the enthusiasts and from Easter and during the early spring a constant stream of skiers move from the towns into the mountains, indulging in their sport under a blazing sun.

Competitions are held throughout the winter and produce a very high standard of efficiency and skill. There are four favourite competitions. *Langrenn* is long distance ski-ing. A race will be held over a long course over hills and across dales which requires not only great staying power but also great ski-ing skill. *Stalom* is also becoming more and more popular in Norway. The same is the case with *Utforren*, a straight race down the mountainside just developed in the Alps, when competitors go all out, often reaching a speed of over 60 m.p.h. *Hopprenn* are jumping races. The most famous place for international competitions in all types of ski-ing is Holmenkollen. Many nations before the war entered teams, and I am told that even Japan has sent competitors. English competitors particularly excel themselves in mountain ski-ing and the Norwegians consider them apt pupils because the average Englishman's attempts are never half-hearted and they show plenty of pluck. Most large hotels have permanent ski-ing instructors on the staff, and one of the most