Contingent holding the area Bjerkvik-Oijord, and in contact with the enemy to the Eastward.

iv. One battalion Chasseurs Alpins to the North of the Foreign Legion, having advanced from the direction of Gratangen, and in contact with enemy elements about Hartvigvand.

v. The Norwegian 6th Division (5 bns. of infantry and a few mountain guns) under General Fleischer to the North and East of the Chasseurs Alpins and in touch with the enemy in the Graesdalen valley and to the East of it.

vi. A battalion Chasseurs Alpins near Gratangen.

vii. A Polish battalion near Harstad and another at Ballangen on the south shore of Ofot Fjord and a third at Salangen.

(*b*) In the Mo-Bodo area dispositions were:—

i. 1st Battalion Scots Guards less one company and one Independent Company at Mo and in contact with enemy forces which had landed on the Hemnes Peninsula 20 miles south of Mo. This force was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Trappes-Lomax, Scots Guards, and included also one troop 203rd Field Battery (four 24-pdr. guns) and one troop 55th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (four Bofors guns).

ii. In the Bodo area, one company Scots Guards and three "independent" companies.

iii. En route to Bodo in *M.V. Chrobry* the 1st Battalion Irish Guards, H.Q. 24th Guards Brigade and detachments of the 230th Field Company, R.E., and 137th Field Ambulance.

iv. Brigadier Fraser proceeded ahead of *Chrobry* in *H.M.S. Somali* to Mo, visiting Bodo on the way. At Mo, news of the bombing of *M.V. Chrobry* was received, and *H.M.S. Somali* at once left to render assistance. On the way, however, *Somali* was bombed and had to return to Scapa. Later Brigadier Fraser succeeded in transferring to *H.M.S. Curlew* and arrived back at Harstad. It was evident that he had not recovered from a wound received at Ankenes, and it was therefore necessary to convene a medical board. The Board found that he was unfit and he had unfortunately to return to U.K.

16. The force was maintained through the Base Area which had been established from the outset at Harstad, the forward delivery to Units and Formations in contact being made by locally procured water transport to Fjord Head, where approximately 10 days' reserve supplies, etc., were held.

Inland Water Transport was thus the main agency for forward maintenance. Yet, although a study of the map would have shown that this was so, no provision had been made to send with the Force at the outset the necessary personnel to organize and operate Inland Water Transport in the way that railway units are sent to operate railways in a theatre where the railway is the main transport agency.

17. The policy of the War Office and the French Co-ordinating Staff in London by which the French maintenance system was to be welded into the British system and controlled by Force H.Q. had not been fully realised.

This was necessary as the items of supply common to both and all reserves of ammunition and fighting equipment were to be held in a common Base Area, whilst Force Headquarters were to be responsible also for forward maintenance.

In actual fact the French had been permitted to commence the establishment of a separate Base Area at Ballangen, and provided with water transport under their own control. As the French Administrative Staff was very small, and had at its disposal only a few issuers and checkers, and no personnel for handling stores, there was a great delay in dealing with their store ships; in fact 5 had remained near their Base Area only partially unloaded for 16 days or more.

18. The reserve of supplies, ammunition and general stores was low for the whole force, this situation being aggravated by the fact that the French had not arrived with 60 days' supplies as had been arranged. Motor Transport repair facilities and spares were almost non-existent.

19. At Harstad itself, the number of quays available for unloading ships was sufficient for the amount of stores going through the Base Port at that time, but the facilities for clearing and holding the stores up to the scale of reserves to be held, was quite inadequate. The port had not sufficient accommodation for the number of personnel required to be accommodated in the Base Area, nor were there storage facilities available in sufficient quantity or in dispersed areas.

The Medical plan for the evacuation of Allied casualties through British Medical Units back to the Base was working efficiently, but the number of beds available in the General Hospital at Harstad was inadequate, as only approximately 500 beds were available in three buildings.

General survey of events during the period.

20. The principal military activities during the period under review were the attempt to stabilise the position on our Southern front in the region of Mo and Bodo, the establishment in the theatre of war of land-based aircraft, the organisation of a base and its protection against attack from the Air.

These activities are dealt with separately in subsequent paragraphs. Other events of interest are described briefly in the following paragraphs.

21. Throughout the period the enemy was active in the air and carried out numerous attacks of varying intensity and duration against H.M. Ships and other vessels in the area. Attacks on ships and other craft in the Ofot Fjord and off Narvik were of daily occurence, and several attacks were made on Harstad itself and on shipping in the harbour. On May 20th enemy bombers succeeded in setting light to an oil tank at Harstad and two oil tankers moored in the vicinity were also set on fire and burned out. On the whole, however, except for the damage to shipping which was considerable, little harm was caused to Harstad by these attacks and casualties were few. The