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THE DIEPPE RAID.

The following despatch was submitted to the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth, on the 30th August, 1942, by Captain J. HUGHES-HALLETT, R.N., Naval Force Commander.

Portsmouth Combined Headquarters,
Fort Southwick.
30th August, 1942.

I have the honour to submit the accompanying report of proceedings for Operation "Jubilee" which was carried out on 18th/19th August, 1942.

2. Generally speaking I consider that the Naval Forces engaged in the operation carried out their role as well as was possible under conditions which became increasingly difficult as the operation proceeded. A number of minor mistakes were made, chiefly by myself, and find their place in the narrative. Fortunately none of these had any vital influence on the operation as a whole.

3. I am glad to be able to report that almost without exception the conduct of all Naval personnel was exemplary, and in accordance with the traditions of the Service. Recommendations for honours and awards are forwarded separately, but I have no doubt that many unrecorded acts of heroism must have occurred off the beaches and in vessels which were lost.

4. The fighter cover afforded by No. 11 Group was magnificent and the fact that a number of bombers got through was to be expected. It is considered that the loss of only one ship from bombing should be regarded as an unusually fortunate result.

5. I wish respectfully to pay a tribute to the Military Force Commander. No one could have been more helpful than Major-General J. H. Roberts. All our major decisions were jointly made in complete agreement.

6. I wish also to draw your particular attention to Major P. Young of No. 3 Commando, who with the troops from a single L.C.P. effectively diverted the attention of the coast defence battery at Berneval during an important part of the operation, thereby averting the exceedingly serious consequences which might have resulted from the failure of the Yellow Beach landings. In my judgment this was perhaps the most outstanding incident of the operation.

7. Operation "Jubilee" differed fundamentally from any other Combined Operation that has been carried out by this country in modern times, inasmuch as it amounted to a direct daylight assault upon an important objective strongly held by the first army of Europe. From the point of view of its perspective in the war as a whole, it may perhaps be compared to the British offensives on the Western front during 1915. Although from purely a military point of view the results achieved were disappointing, and the heavy casualties sustained regrettable, it is considered that the operation was well worth while provided its lessons are carefully applied when the time comes to re-enter France on a large scale. The principal lesson appears to be, firstly, that much stronger military forces are required to break through the German coastal defences in any important area; secondly, that a very much higher proportion of the military force should be held in reserve until the progress made in the initial assaults is known, and that this reserve should then be employed in exploiting success. Unless this is done there is no guarantee that any of the beaches will be properly secured, and this is an absolute prerequisite of success whether the subsequent phases of the operation are to take the form of a withdrawal or a further follow-up.