

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Agreement has been reached with U.S. Navy Dept. that U.S. flag ships and U.S. controlled ships should be treated as British and Allied ships for routing, inclusion in convoys &c.

Home Commands.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest at 1200 today shows GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST in their usual docks and PRINZ EUGEN alongside the Torpedo Boat station.

Enemy coastal batteries fired 14 rounds between 1814 and 1850 whilst C.W.61 was passing Dover. No damage or casualties are reported.

ILLUSTRIOUS collided with FORMIDABLE about 0020 today. Both ships are damaged and have also heavy damage. ILLUSTRIOUS will require 3 to 4 weeks for repairs and FORMIDABLE, whose fighting efficiency is unimpaired will require 2 to 3 weeks.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command aircraft attacked Brest and Ostend last night.

Enemy Air Operations.

Attacks which caused no damage or casualties were made today on trawlers off the Faeroes and off Peterhead and a collier in Skaale Fiord. Slight naval damage was caused at Dover this evening. Dutch motor coaster ZEELAND was slightly damaged near St. Govans L.V.

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SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

5 Hampdens laid mines last night in the Jade and Weser rivers.

Several mines were detonated off the Humber today. Minelaying by enemy aircraft between Flamborough Head and Lowestoft is suspected from 1745 to 2030 today.

Mediterranean.

21 Wellingtons attacked naval units at Taranto last night, air R/C yesterday (see 15/12) having shown a large number of naval units in port.

In accordance with Admty. 2330A/14, C. in C. Med. is sending SUTLEJ and JUMNA, sloops, and BATHURST and LISMORE, minesweepers, to join E. Indies Station, but he points out that this will finish the effective blockade of Jibuti as he is unable to send reinforcements from the Mediterranean.

At 1433B today R/C showed considerable enemy convoy activity commencing. SIKH, LEGION, MAORI and ISAAC SWEERS left Malta at 1100B. Force K. sailed at 1800. AJAX is out of action with defects.

Two enemy aircraft made a minelaying raid on Tobruk from 1820 to 1840 tonight and dropped 6 mines inside or near the harbour and 3 on shore on the south side of the harbour.

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SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

Air Reinforcements. A Wing H.Q. with 4 fighter squadrons and ancillary units in Convoy W.S.12 Z is being diverted to Karachi via Bombay to be at the disposal of C. in C. India. Middle East has been instructed to prepare to send 6 squadrons of Blenheim IV's, plus an air stores park and 1 repair and servicing unit, to India for Burma after "Crusader" is finished.

China.

Hong Kong.

Enemy bombers today caused damage to Aberdeen Dock, M.L.08 and GATLING were burnt out. The target was THRACIAN (destroyer) in dock who had been damaged by grounding during the night 14/15 Dec. The ship had to be undocked and beached and dismantled.

Penang.

Japanese have dropped a mine in Penang North Channel from an aircraft without parachute.

Malaya.

Air R/C today showed 13 merchant vessels, including one of 15,000 tons at Sungei Patani and 20 ships at Kota Bharu. There were 40 aircraft at the latter place.

Borneo.

The enemy have landed at Miri or to the northward of it. 13 warships, a tanker and a S/M are reported off Miri, and there are indications that transports are included in the force. D/F indicates Japanese units including C. in C. Second Fleet in the vicinity.

The Japanese flag was reported over Lutong, but this was unconfirmed at 1300 G.M.T. 1 warship was, however, reported off Lutong at 1335 G.M.T.

Wake.

There was a further air raid last night by 33 bombers.

/Shipping ..

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SITUATION REPORT.

America and West Indies.

Shipping.

C. in C. A.W.I. asks that steps should be taken to avoid a repetition of the recent hold up of shipping at Colon and Balboa which appears to have been done by the local U.S. Naval Authorities without reference to the Navy Department.

At 1647/16. Opnav directed Comdr. Panama Naval Coastal Frontier to clear ships for the Far East, Australia and New Zealand in accordance with previous routeing instructions as rapidly as possible, ships both over and under 15 knots.

Prior to the outbreak of war with Japan discussions were proceeding with U.S. authorities for agreement by which in event of war U.S. Naval authorities would be responsible for Trans-Pacific routeing of all merchant ships in consultation with N.Z.N.B. The agreement is not yet in force, but meanwhile C. in C. A.W.I. and N.S.H.Q. Ottawa are asked to conform to the wishes or recommendation of U.S. authorities regarding movements of shipping in that area.

S.S. HOEGH MERCHANT (Nor.) was sunk by internal explosion 29 miles from Cape Makapuu today. The master suspects sabotage.

Australia.

Tarawa.

Japanese have vacated Tarawa after destroying the W/T station and various buildings. The ships employed were apparently 2 A.M.Cs.

U-Boat Campaign.

SAINT DENIS.

Washington reports from U.S. Embassy at Vichy that SAINT DENIS was sunk by a German U-Boat and that Darlan has received an apology from the Germans.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

ANTHONY.

ANTHONY is required for escort duty leaving U.K. about 7/1 and subsequently to join Force H.
2. On completion of refit request you will sail her for the Clyde.
(D.O.D. (H.), 1219A/16 to F.O.I.C. Humber.)

EDINBURGH.

For operational reasons it has now been decided not to refit EDINBURGH in U.S.A. at the end of the year.
(V.C.N.S., 2257A/16.)

Movements.

SWEETBRIAR.

On reaching 059° 30' N. 013° W. SWEETBRIAR is to proceed Hvalfjord.
(ii) My 2311A/13. For THYME read SWEETBRIAR.
(C. in C. W.A., 0004A/16.) See p. 401. (Submarine for ROONEY.)

HARRIER.

On parting company with F.N.578 proceed to Aberdeen arriving before 1600/16. Sail from Aberdeen in company with SALAMANDER at 1900/16th for Scapa.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 0558/16 to HARRIER.)
Cancel my 0558/16. Proceed into Methil.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1026/16 to HARRIER.)
Proceed to Scapa passing May Island not before 1830/16. Fighter protection arranged.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1241/16 to HARRIER.)
HARRIER sailed 1730/16.
E.T.A. Scapa 0800/17.
(N.O.I.C. Methil, 1851/16.)

MONTGOMERY.
CHELSEA.

^{N.T. in W.D.} My 1647A/12 and my 2150A/15. ^{N.T. in W.D.} Do not sail MONTGOMERY, CHELSEA till new R/V is given.
(C. in C. W.A., 0946A/16 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry.)

BOADICEA.
NARCISSUS.

As no S/M available Lough Foyle am proceeding Loch Ewe. NARCISSUS proceeding to Loch Ewe so as to arrive R/V a.m. tomorrow.
(BOADICEA, 1001/16.)

RUBIS.

Your 1828A/15. Concur.
(C. in C. H.F., 1057A/16 to F.O.S.)

MONTROSE.
WORCESTER.

My 1024/16. Intend sailing 0930/17 to Scapa.
E.T.A. 1400/17.
(N.O.I.C. Invergordon, 1202/16.)

/BARCLOSE ...

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements - Contd.BARCLOSE,
BARFOAM,
BARFORD.

Intend sailing BARCLOSE, BARFOAM, BARFORD from Lough Foyle at 1800A/16. E.T.A. Milford Haven 1000A/18. Request you will arrange for fuelling at Fayal when ships sail.
(Capt. D. Londonderry, 1208A/16.)

SUFFOLK.

Scapa arrival SUFFOLK.
(A.C.O.S., 1307/16.)

P.39.

My 1139A/14, para. 1. For 290° Bishops Rock 5.0 miles read 270° Wolf Rock 3.0 miles.
(Capt. S.3, 1402A/16 to F.O.S.)

SHEFFIELD.

SHEFFIELD sailed for Scapa.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1505C/16.)

LANCASTER.
NEWARK
(Escort for
FORMIDABLE,
ILLUSTRIOUS)

Admty. 1936A/9 para. 5. LANCASTER and NEWARK detailed.
(R.A.M., 1602/16.)

VANQUISHER.
WITCH,
VOLUNTEER.

E.T.A. Position (B) 0930Z/18. WITCH and VOLUNTEER in company.
(VANQUISHER, 2014A/16 to ILLUSTRIOUS, FORMIDABLE.)

Operations.Biscay
S/M Patrol.

(i) Cancel my 1030A/14. From 049° N. 006° W. you are to proceed Falmouth to refuel and disembark passengers and be prepared to sail a patrol in Bay of Biscay as soon as possible.

(ii) You are to R/V in 180° Lizard Head 5 miles at 0930/17 with escort arranged by C. in C. Plymouth.

(iii) You are not to close within 10 miles of Lizard Head before 0830/17.

(Capt. S.5, 0004A/16 to REGENT.)

My 1139A/14. Para. 1. JUNON and O.21 will be in company.

Add new para. 2(A), thence JUNON and O.21 as ordered by F.O.S.

(Capt. S.3, 0005A/16.)

Cancel my 1151A/13 and 1722A/13.

(Capt. S.3, 0006A/16.)

My 2342A/15.

(a) Object of S/Ms is to attack and then report enemy cruisers and battle cruisers. S/Ms are not to be attacked unless hostile identity is absolutely certain.

(b) When weather conditions permit S/Ms should patrol in an approx. N.E. and S.W. direction within 5 miles of their patrol position.

(F.O.S., 0117A/16.)

/Intend ...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Biscay
S/M Patrol.
(Contd.)

Intend to sail S/Ms and escorts from Rothesay to arrive 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at following times.

Submarines	Escort	Sail	Expected time of arrival.
→ H.28, H.33, OTWAY.	Z.5.	0700A/16	1400A/18
OBERON,	CUTTY	1000A/16	1700A/18
→ O.10, H.50.	SARK		
→ H.31, H.34	ALECTO	1900A/16	0200A/19
H.43, O.9	BREDA	0015A/17	0715A/19.

All vessels routed through searched channels to 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles, thence as directed by F.O.S. S. of A. of all vessels 8 knots. F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to arrange fighter protection.

(Capt. S.7, 0226A/16.)

Sailed code word "Local".

(Capt. D. Londonderry, 0430A/16 to Capt. S.7.)

→ My 0226A/16. Sailed Z.5, OTWAY, H.28, H.33 delayed.

(Capt. S.7, 0701A/16.)

My 2211A/15. For Falmouth read Plymouth to embark torpedoes. REGENT is to proceed on surface at discretion during daylight 17/12. (F.O.S., 1121A/16 to Capt. S.5.)

F.O.S. 1121A/16. Cancel my 2320A/15. Intend ordering REGENT to R/V end of Q Z S 278 not earlier than 0900A/17. Request Lizard Head Light as follows.

(Capt. S.5, 1330A/16 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Sailed P.39, JUNON, and O.21 escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE in accordance with S.3's 1139A/14 as amended by S.3's 0005A/16.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1708A/16.)

Lettered Routes A to J, both inclusive, between 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles and Bay of Biscay are established as follows. Details.

(F.O.S., 1736A/16.)

See Summaries Folder.

→ My 0226A/16. Sailed BOARHOUND, O.10, H.31, H.34 at 2130A/16. E.T.A. 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0430A/19.

(Capt. S.7, 2146A/16.)

Operation
"Anklet".

Admiralty's 1918/5. Intend sailing SCOTT for Scapa at 1730 today. E.T.A. point of arrival 0900 tomorrow.

(R.A.M., 1119/16 to A.C.O.S.)

My 1155/15. TIGRIS will keep watch on 3000 kc/s and not 4740 kc/s.

(A.C.O.S., 1257A/16.)

TIGRIS sailing escorted (? to) position 060° 52' (? North) 001° 02' 30" W. then unescorted through positions (One) 063° N. 001° 00' E. (2) 066° N. 007° E. thence to patrol area North and East of position 2.

(A.C.O.S., 1402/16.)

/My 1155/15 ...

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
"Anklet".
(Contd.)

My 1155/15. Sailed at 1358/16. (TIGRIS & STELLA PEGASUS)
(A.C.O.S., 1452A/16.) JOSEPHINE
My 1534A/16. PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE returning
with defect. PRINCE ALBERT and escort
proceeding at 22 knots. E.T.A. 1100A/17.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1734A/16.)
Sailed SCOTT.
(N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 1734/16.)

Denmark
Strait
Patrol.

BERWICK sails to relieve NORFOLK on patrol
"White" after fuelling and transferring stores
to CUMBERLAND. BERWICK reports intentions
to F.O. 1st C.S. NORFOLK return Hvalfjord on
relief.
(C. in C. H.F., 1202A/16.)
Expect arrive destination 1000Z tomorrow.
(BERWICK 1834Z/16 to A.C.I.C.)

Sweep in
Northern
Waters.

Your 1639/15. In view of recognition and
enemy reporting complication it is essential
Allied ships operating together should be
in close company. Do not consider 8-inch
cruisers suitable for inshore operation of
this type. When 6-inch cruiser is available
consider sweep would be valuable. Can
procedure for withdrawing Soviet S/Ms be
modified in future to decrease probability of
enemy being warned by withdrawal signals. It
might be possible to restrict Area operations
so that fewer S/Ms need to be withdrawn.
(C. in C. H.F., 1227A/16 to S.N.O. North Russia.)

Dover
shelled.

Between 1814 and 1850 enemy Coastal Batteries
fired 14 rounds during passage of C.W.61.
No damage or casualties reported.
(V.A. Dover, 2132A/16.)

4 Enemy
M/Vs sunk.

Following Soviet successes.
K.23. On 26/11 in (70°) 25' N. 21° 33' E.
sank 800-tons vessel by gunfire. D.3 during
patrol off Svaerholthavet torpedoed following
ships. On 28/11 in 70° 54' N. 26° 15' E.
Eastbound vessel 6000 tons escorted 2 trawlers.
3 torpedoes fired. On 5/12 in 70° 59' N. 26°
36' E. 1 vessel 10,000 tons Eastbound in
convoy, escort included SLEIPNER class destroyer.
4 torpedoes fired. On 6/12 in 71° N. 26° 40' E.
5,000-6,000 tons vessel resembling Norwegian
ABRAHAM LINCOLN escorted 1 trawler Eastbound,
3 torpedoes fired.
All ships seen to sink.
(2) D.3 commanded Cdr. Bibeyev who took
passage for a patrol in TIGRIS.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1821C/16.)

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Bombing
Operations.

On day 15/12 no operations took place.
On night 15/16, thirteen A/C bombed Brest including 26 x 2000 lbs. bombs and 1 x 4000 lbs., and some bursts were seen.
15 A/C also bombed docks and shipping at Ostend. (H.Q. B.C., 1400/16.)

Bombing
restriction.

Operation H.J. Request bombing restriction between 005° and 007° W. from 047° to English Coast between 1800/16 and 0900/17.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1432/16 to H.Q.C.C.)

Enemy Air Activity.PUCKERIDGE
(Damaged
13/12.)

Inspection of damage of PUCKERIDGE shows that the bomb probably penetrated into after magazine before exploding.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1523A/16.)

Faroes
attacked.

1 enemy A/C attacked Faroese trawler off Transgisvaac at 1157 today. 2 bombs dropped. No damage or casualties. (N.O.I.C. Faroese, 1725A/16)
One enemy aircraft dropped three bombs off Trangisvaag at 1220 today. Objective probably Faroese Whalers at anchor, but bombs fell harmlessly on land. Collier in Skaale Fiord was attacked at 1236 from 7000 feet but both bombs fell wide. No casualties or damage from either attack. (N.O.I.C. Faroese, 2055A/16.)

Shetlands
attacked.

Junkers 88 came in from West over Muckle Flugga, then south over Herma Ness, then round from S.W. over Skaw at 100 feet where one 1000 lb. bomb was dropped at 1325A/16 in a field near the camp. Bomb exploded. No damage. Station machine-gunned, very minor damage. No casualties. (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 2037/16.)

Dover
bombed.

Aircraft dropped eight H.E. bombs and some incendiaries on Dover between 1726 and 1738 today. Four H.E. fell in the Harbour, remainder in the town. Slight naval damage by I.B.
(V.A. Dover, 2132A/16.)

FORFEIT.

At 1745/16 H.M. Trawler FORFEIT was attacked by A/C in 000° 3 miles Buchan Ness. No damage or casualties. Aircraft hit by L.G. fire. L.L.B. attack either two or four engined bomber, height about 50 feet, two bombs dropped about 20 yards from ship, which did not explode until well submerged. Help messages sent, fire opened before bombing or M.G. attack.
(N.O.I.C. Peterhead, 2202/16.)

/Blarrick

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity - Contd.Blarrick
Camp
bombed.

Hostile planes in area dropped four H.E's at 1920 on Blarrick Camp. One hut demolished, 2 huts damaged.
(B) One Corporal slightly injured.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 2330/16.)

Mining.Thames
Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1110/16.
Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1431/16.)

WELSHMAN.

Sailed 1346 WELSHMAN.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1454/16.)

Sweep by
13th M/S.
Flotilla.

Exploded 4 mines and lost 4 sweeps on 1st lap of 1st sweep. Line B.S. identified and longitude as charted, but latitude at least $\frac{1}{4}$ miles to southward. Southerly extremity not yet established. Observed 9th M.F. sweep 5 mines but lost visual signal touch. Am returning to Harwich to save daylight to replenish with minesweeping gear.
(S.O. 13th M/S.F., 1505A/16 to C. in C. Nore.)

Clyde M/S
Forces.

Your 1537A/9. Concur.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1513A/16.)

LL Trawlers
for Yarmouth.

Submitted that, in view of shortage of LL Trawlers at Great Yarmouth, those allocated to this port should be sent direct without working up at Port Edgar.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1550A/16 to Admty.)

Off
Aldbrough.

Possible 2 mines dropped in about 052° 15' 30" N. 001° 57' 30" E. Correct recognition signals observed.
(GUILLEMOT, 1830A/16 and 1956A/16.)

Humber.

Following four magnetic mines detonated today by LL Trawlers. Details.
Also one acoustic mine as follows.
(F.O. Humber, 2051A/16 and 2320A/16.)

Enemy Intelligence.Brest.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest 1200/16 shows PRINZ EUGEN alongside Torpedo Boat Station. GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST in usual docks.
(D.D.I.C., 1649A/16.)

/Enemy ...

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence - Contd.Enemy
Ship.

Bearing by D/F at 1730Z/16 position of enemy type unknown was 069° 38' N. 036° 24' E. Unreliable fix.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 2156C/16 to SHEFFIELD, C.S.18, Reptd. HAZARD.)

Navigational.Ice in
Baltic.

Ice report Baltic 15/12.
(N.A. Stockholm, 1619/16.)

Workington.

Cancel my 1201A/8/11. Owing to silting, draft of vessels for Workington must not exceed 13 feet at Spring Tide. Dredging will recommence as soon as weather permits.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1623A/16.)

Casualties and Defects.NIDARDAL
sunk.

NIDARDAL sinking deeper in the water engine room and tunnel full of water about to abandon ship. Position 56° 7' N. 21° W. at 1600 G.M.T./15th.
(NIDARDAL, 0148/16.)
Cancel my 0940Z. Ship settling fast, no hope of Salvage. Crew 25 safe aboard. Finished her with gunfire. Propose proceed Londonderry with ROSE to land survivors as cannot transfer.
(PICTOU, 1430Z/16.)
PICTOU's 1430Z/16. PICTOU proceeds to Reykjavik if conditions permit transferring survivors to ROSE before parting company. ROSE returns to Base.
(C. in C. W.A., 1820A/16 to PICTOU.)

Shipping and Convoys.P.W.81.

Cancel my 1232/11.
(2) JULIET is to take HORATIO and LADY ROSEMARY under his orders. Pass gate at 0800/16th astern the sweeper and proceed R/V TYNEDALE escort P.W.81 estimated position 295° Eddystone 8 at 0900.
(3) On being relieved by group F trawlers, group D trawlers are to proceed Plymouth.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 0516/16.)

/Convoys ...

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys - Contd.Convoys in
Irish Sea.

Your 1915A/15. Southbound convoys are not held back by Holyhead section. It is the Holyhead section that is frequently led back by the southbound convoys, which are late and make R/V at "X" impossible in daylight. Consider all difficulties would be eliminated if when occasion arises Holyhead section could be sailed independently as suggested in para. 3. (N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 1031A/16 to C. in C. W.A.)

P.Q.6.

SPEEDY, HAZARD sail to carry out A/S sweep in vicinity of Gorodetsky and R/V P.Q.6 to escort to Tersky Orlov.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1120C/16.)
P.Q.6. Your 1424A/15. Destination of ELONA is Molotovsk.
(D.T.D., 1222A/16 to C.S.18.)

LA NOUNE.
(not identified)

Your 2119A/15. LA NOUNE is delayed by weather only.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 1154/16.)

H.X.162.

Average speed 8.3 knots. Convoy scattered night 1/2 December in whole gale and reformed later. Six stragglers, two of which joined S.C.57. All ships now arrived.
(D.T.D., 1430A/16 to Opnav.)

Orders for
Escort Groups.

My 2205A/30th November. Detailed arrangements.
(C. in C. W.A., 1625A/16.)

REINE DES
FLOTS.
SLUBA.

Your 1246/16 not approved. Ships are to be sailed with a W.P.D. convoy.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1632/16.)

P.Q.
Convoys.

A.M. 1612A/15 para. (B). War Office requests that future sailing telegrams for P.Q. convoys should include notation against ships names whether they are ex U.S.A. or ex U.K. Request you will arrange accordingly.
(D.T.D., 1714A/16 to A.C.I.C.)

BATORY.

S.S. BATORY 17 knots carrying 290 Service Personnel will be ready to leave Clyde for Gibraltar p.m./16/12.
Request you will sail ship as requisite.
(D.O.D. H., 1755A/16.)

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

H.X. 162.

Many congratulations on bringing safely to the U.K. the ships of your convoy H.X.162. (C. in C. W.A., 1825/16 to Commodore N.H. Gale, R.N.)

S.C. 58.

H.X.163.

Stragglers from S.C.58 and H.X.163 may be met during dark hours. (C. in C. W.A., 1934A/16 to Escorts of O.N.46.)

D.S.18.

VERITY, WELLS arrived 2030. (A.C.I.C., 2146N/16.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS

Raiders.

Analysis.

Comment on recent encounters. (A.C.N.S. (F), 1618A/16 to Cs. in C. etc) See Lion Copy.

North Atlantic.

P.35.

My position 043° N., 012° 41' ? W., course 163° speed on surface 8 knots, submerged 3 knots. (P.35, 0131A/16 to F.O.C.N.A. (R) Capt. S.8). My 1106A/14 para. 2. Amend onward route from present position passing through (R) 036° 45' 011° 45' at 0700A/18 thence direct to arrive 350° Spartel 5 at 1200A/20th. Diving by day 18th/19th. Bombing restrictions arranged. (F.O.C.N.A., 1108A/16 to P.35).

MANXMAN.

Arrived. (F.O.C.N.A., 0202A/16 to Admty, C. in C. W.A. R.A. (M) N.O.I.C., Milford Haven). My 1709A/15. Report expected time of sailing. (A.C.N.S. (H) 1154A/16 to F.O.C.N.A., (R)MANXMAN) Admty. 1709A/15. Intend to sail MANXMAN at 1900 A/17 route (a) (?035°) 30' N., 010° 00' W., (b) 36.00 N., 12.00 W., (c) 39.00 N., 15.00 W. (d) 45.00 N., 15.00 W. MANXMAN will proceed at best speed weather permitting probable S.O.A. 23 knots.
2. Request C. in C. W.A. issue onward route from position (d).
(F.O.C.N.A., 1848A/16 to C. in C. W.A.)

URSULA.

Leave patrol forthwith and return to Gibraltar through 035° 55' 004° 00' and 035° 55' 005° 00' thence direct report E.T.A. T.B.R. arranged for. (F.O.C.N.A., 0236A/16 to URSULA, (R) OLYMPUS). E.T.A. 1530/16. (URSULA, 0502A/16 to F.O.C.N.A.) Arrival URSULA. (F.O.C.N.A., 1720A/16 to Admty). Admty 2329A/15, and F.O.S. 2342A/15.
A. Request URSULA may be ordered to proceed through 43° N., 11° 43' W., thence submerged by day to patrol in position 13. B. Disposition of other submarines will be signalled to URSULA in due course.
C. Request URSULA may be instructed to keep W/T Watch in accordance with A.F.O. "S" 2 table 2 (3) from time of leaving Gibraltar and also that departure signal may indicate whether she holds information contained in F.O.S.1736A/16. (F.O.S., 1817A/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 2329A/15. Intend to sail URSULA 0800/17. URSULA will pass through 043° 00' 011° 30' W. about 0100/20, shift W/T watch at that time. (F.O.C.N.A., 1823A/16 to Admty).

/SEVERN...

To C. in C. Home Fleet 219. Date 16.12.41. 516A

~~C. in C. Western Approaches 961~~
~~F.O.C.N.A. 2.~~

F.O. Force Hⁿ 278.

C. in C. Mediterranean 40.B3

C. in C. South Atlantic 17.

C. in C. America & West Indies 605.

C. in C. East Indies 314.

C. in C. Eastern Fleet 614.

Australian Commonwealth Naval Board 333.

New Zealand Naval Board 820.

Naval Cypher (D)

From Admiralty.

NITE.

Analysis of encounters with enemy merchant raiders by H.M.S. CORNWALL on 8.5.41. in the Indian Ocean, H.M.A.S. SYDNEY off the West Australian Coast on 19.11.41. and H. .S. DEVONSHIRE in the South Atlantic on 22.11.41 brings out following points:-

(A) Recognition.

- (1) CORNWALL's raider reported herself as S.S. TAMERLANE, who was not on the Station.
- (2) SYDNEY's raider replied to a challenge that she was S.S. STRAIT MALAKKA, who had that day left Beira.
- (3) DEVONSHIRE's raider reported herself as S.S. POLYPHEMUS then in New York.

Comment -

- (4) Enemy raiders will always disguise themselves and use the appropriate name in any signal whether by an RRRR message on 500 kc/s or the reply to a challenge.
- (5) In no case so far has the disguise adopted been such as should have deceived Commanding Officers had they trusted the negative intelligence that information of the ship's movements had not been reported to them.
- (6) Positive information of British, Allied and U.S. merchant men from Admiralty or S.O.I's is sufficiently accurate and positive information of neutral vessels by local war Trade Reporting Officers should be sufficiently

accurate/.....

~~SECRET~~ ~~MOST SECRET~~

accurate to enable Commanding Officers to be kept informed of the position of all non-enemy ships they may meet. Commanders-in-Chief should ensure that their information and plotting organisations can achieve this.

(B) Challenge procedure.

Merchant ship recognition procedure laid down in Recognition Manual and N.C.S.I. 371 does not appear to have been used. This is now only applicable to Red Ensign and some Dutch ships but arrangements are in hand for its extension to U.S. and all allied shipping.

(C) Tactics.

There is a possibility that Commanding Officers underestimate the offensive power of raider. They should be warned that enemy raiders are often powerfully armed with guns and torpedoes and if fitted with modern R.D.F. may be able to open fire even at long ranges with great accuracy.

(D) U-Boats.

Commanding Officers should be warned that all enemy vessels throughout the world may be accompanied by U-Boats and that the merchant vessel's tactics will be designed to lead the British ship towards the U-Boat.

1618A/13.

for D.O.D. (F) 164.

Approved A.C.N.S. (F)

1st Lord	D. of L.D.
1st S.L.	D.A/S W.
2nd S.L.	I.P. (2)
3rd S.L.	W.D.
4th S.L.	D.C. (2)
5th S.L.	Hd. of M.
V.C.N.S.	D.T.S.D.
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.P.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.T.D. (2)
A.C.N.S. (T)	N.I.D. 10
A.C.N.S. (W)	(Fay Cdr. Wilson.)
N.A. 1st S.L.	D.G.D.
D. of P. (2)	D.D.I.C.
D.O.D. (H)	
D.D.O.D. (H)	
D.O.D. (F)	
D.D.O.D. (F)	
D.N.I. (4)	
D.S.D.	
D.N.A.D.	

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - Contd.

SEVERN,
CLYDE.

SEVERN and CLYDE are to be brought to short notice for special operation. Further instructions will follow. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1237/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Your 1237/16. CLYDE at short notice. SEVERN in dock repairing engine and fuel leak. SEVERN will not be ready before p.m./18 when 50% fuel capacity will still be out of action. (F.O.C.N.A., 1610A/16 to Admty).

A.T.1237/16. SEVERN and CLYDE are to remain at Gibraltar at convenient notice. (A.C.N.S. (F), 1736A/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

ALOUETTE.

Departure H.M.T. ALOUETTE for Y.3. (V.A.C.N.A., 1342A/16 to Admty).

German A/C.

German seaplane patrolling off Sagres 0930/16th. (N.A. Lisbon, 1455/16 to Admty).

Destroyers,
P. Delgada.

Departure from Ponta Delgada VANQUISHER, 1500, VOLUNTEER, WITCH, 1815, arrived HIGHLANDER 1530, HARVESTER, LIGHTNING 1900. All times G.M.T. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 1720/16).

FARADAY etc.
for Freetown.

Weather permitting intend sailing FARADAY, SAN ZEFERINO, BERGA to Freetown Saturday 20/12 escorted by 3 trawlers. COWSLIP towing M/L 244 to sail later overtake and provide escort for last part of passage. (F.O.C.N.A., 1828A/16 to Admty) Reply: 2156/17.

South Atlantic.

BIRMINGHAM.

B.N.A. Buenos Aires 1535Z/15 (N.T. in W.D.). Could visit Loango in BIRMINGHAM Monday 22/12 for 48 hours. Please signal if this date is convenient to H.M. Ambassador and Minister when official request will be made. (R.A.S.A.D., 0921Z/16 to S.O.(I) Montevideo).

Overdue
Shipping.

STEEL SCIENTIST and LOSMAR due South Africa ports about 12th not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 1009B/16, to Admty C.in C. S.A. etc).

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - Contd.

C. M. 24.

CORNWALL escorting convoy C.M.24 sailed. E.T.A. Aden 1200/23 S. of A. 20 knots routed in accordance with C. in C. East Indies, 0714Z/10. (N.L.O. Durban, 1018Z/16 to F.O.R.S., C. in C. S.A., Admty etc).

QUEEN MARY
fuelling
Capetown.

Admty. 1809A/14 para. 3. Request your remarks and what patrols can be made available. (C. in C. S.A., 1104Z/16 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown, (R) Admty).

INDOMITABLE.

C. in C. A.W.I. 1112Q/13, not to R.A.S.A.D. Onward route from position (a) 005° 00' N., 046° 00' W., through (b) 003° 40' S., 030° 20' W. (c) 023° 00' S., 022° 30' W., (d) 032° 30' S., 005° 00' E., (e) 038° 00' S., 017° 30' E., (f) 037° 00' S., 028° 00' E., (g) 033° 30' S., 031° 00' E., thence to Durban. (ii) INDOMITABLE is to search as wide an area as possible with aircraft on passage without delaying time of arrival and having regard to serviceability of aircraft on arrival at Durban. (C. in C. S.A., 1155Z/16 to INDOMITABLE).

U.S.
Shipping.

C. in C. South Atlantic 1243Z/14 (not to C. in C. East Indies) Agreement has been reached with U.S. Navy Dept. that U.S. Flag ships and U.S. controlled ships should be:-
(A) Supplied with C.Bs. and S.Ps. as for Allied Merchant ships. (B) Routed by British N.C.S.Os. when sailed from ports on your stations. (C) Diverted by signal as requisite when in your areas by British Authorities. (D) Included in appropriate British convoys. (E) Instructed to read G.B.M.S. messages.
2. Admiralty will from time to time, inform you of any special routing required by U.S. Naval Authorities in area of U.S. responsibility. (A.C.N.S. (T) 1846A/16 to C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.I. (R) F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

Mediterranean.

AVON VALE.

Your 2015/15. Return to Alexandria, detaching COCKER off Mersa Matruh to enter Harbour if weather permits. (Malta W/T, 0010B/16 to AVON VALE).

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

FALK.

Your 0624/15 S.O. Force I 1858/12 and N.O.I.C. Alexandria 2355/15. Propose sailing FALK noon /16 through B to R/V ?(J) in position 032° 05' N. 025° 05' E., at 0400/17. (?Mersa Matruh, 0709B/16 to B.S.N.O. Tobruk).
My 0709/16 FALK reports that he badly damaged dome on leaving harbour. Have ordered him to proceed to R/V. (S.O. Force I, Mersa Matruh, 1259B/16 to B.S.N.O. Tobruk).

Enemy Hospital Ship.

One hospital vessel AQUILA^{EJ} 33.05 N., 24.30 E. 320 ll. (A/C duty B.203 Sq. 0930/16 to 201 Group, 11 Group)

YARRA.

Intended programme for YARRA. Transit Suez Canal 18/12. Leaves Suez 0400Z/19. Arrives Aden 0800Z/23. (R.A.(D) Med., 1058B/16 to C. in C. Med).

UPHOLDER, P.31, UNBEATEN.

See also next page.

Leave patrol at 2359B/17 returning to Malta UPHOLDER through 037° 30' 016° 05' and 035° 51' 015° 51' to arrive 0730B/19. P.31 through 039° 10' 017° 30' 037° 30' 016° 05' and 035° 51' 015° 15' same time following day. Anticipate UNBEATEN in approx. position 036° 24' 015° 48' at 1900B/18 E.T.A. Malta 0800B/19. Submarines encountered at night south of 036° 50' are not to be attacked. (Capt. S. 10., 1103B/16 to UPHOLDER, P.31 (Rep) S/Ms on Patrol etc).

CITY OF PARIS.

Required to move 1410 M.N.B.D.O. A.A.F. personnel from Suez to Colombo about 6/1. Request fitting for White troops may be placed on board for erection Suez. C. in C. E.I. requested advise if escort will be available ex Aden about 12/1. Date subject to confirmation G.H.Q. M.E.'s movement 1/114/63, 15/12 refers. (S.S.T.O. Egypt, 1124B/16 to S.S.T.O. India).

Blockade of Jibuti.

Ref. 2330A/14. Request you will comply with Para.3. (C. in C. Med., 1150B/16 to F.O. Red Sea)

Small Craft for East Indies.

Your 2330A/14. I am complying with para. 3. This will finish effective blockade of Jibuti as I am unable to send reinforcements from Mediterranean. (C. in C. Med., 1200B/16 to Admty).

/Proposed...

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Proposed Campaign.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.214 to C. in C Med., and M.E. Ref. Minister of State No.3929 Nocop. (N.T. in W.D.)

1. We agree that Middle East Joint Planning Staff should examine possibilities of proposed campaign.

2. There are no reasons of high policy which make study of this operation unnecessary. (1st S.L., 1218A/16 to C. in C. Med).

German Ships Valencia.

Following from Consul Valencia:- German Shipping agents here are reported having said German ships will not be coming to Valencia in future. Said to be going on Italy Libya run. 1159/15. (S.O.(I) Gib., 1242/16 to S.O.(Is) Malta Alexandria.)

Enemy M/Vs.

6 Italian M/Vs. N.W. of Harbour, one large M/V in Harbour Mouth 1450. (A/C, D.O.7 Q 1410/16 to Med., A/C)

TRUANT.

R/C shows considerable enemy convoy activity commencing. It will therefore be necessary for you to remain on patrol till p.m./19. (Capt. S.l. 1433B/16 to TRUANT).

Enemy Mines Navarin.

Enemy minefield reported outside Navarin. Position and extent unknown. (Capt. S.l., 1431B/16 to TORBAY).

UNBEATEN P.31.

Indication of Southern movement beginning dusk 16th. UNBEATEN on completion of withdrawal from area C as in my 1205B/15 remain on patrol in position M., 039° 17' 018° 00' until further orders. Aircraft R/C reports show you great importance of this operation. My 1103B/16, P.31 remain on patrol in position A until further orders. (Capt. S.10. 1537B/16 to S/Ms on Patrol)

Libya.

Military Situation Report. (C. in C. M.E., 1710/16 2322/16 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

TALISMAN. THORN.

Retire to N.W. on reverse of your present route and arrive sanctuary 0530B/17. THORN arrives from Eastward 1000B/17. Enemy S/Ms have been reported off Alexandria. (Capt. S.l., 1725B/16 to TALISMAN). See also p.521

MOST SECRET

1710/16th December

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

IN

From C. in C. Middle East

Date 16.12.41.

Recd. 2045.

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office (pass to Air Ministry) Repeated
C. in C. Mediterranean.

MOST IMMEDIATE250586. Q/38704 cipher 16/12 Most Secret.Cositrep No. 55.

1. Thirteen Corps 15 Dec.

(a) 5 N.Z. Bde., Polish Bde., and 4 Ind. Div. again attacked enemy all along the line. Objective 5 N.Z. Bde., with Polish Bde., on their left was U. 9385. Polish Bde. report capture two prisoners, no other details this sector. 5 Ind. Inf. Bde., attacked Pt. 205 and Pt. 208 area U. 97 whilst 7 Ind. Inf. Bde., attacked further South. 5 Ind. Inf. Bde., attack was held up and enemy subsequently counter attacked with twenty five tanks and motorised infantry. Enemy pressed home this attack and inflicted some loss on 5 Ind. Inf. Bde. No details yet available but by evening Commander 4 Ind. Div. considered situation satisfactory.

(b) Meanwhile 4 Armd. Bde. moved wide round enemy right flank and by 1540 hrs. had reached their objective Halegh el Eleba area U. 49. They were there reported engaging ten enemy tanks and some guns and were ordered to send detachment to Tmini early morning 16 Dec. to cut enemy communications.

(c) 1 S.A. Bde. ordered to area H.Q. 13 Corps to be at disposal Commdr. 13 Corps and 22 Gds. Bde., also warned to be ready to assist 13 Corps if required.

2. Frontier Area. 15 Dec. 3 S.A. Bde. continued offensive patrolling and arty. activity against outer defences Bardia. Enemy arty. still active area Halfaya.

3. Summary. Enemy are now in a difficult position with strong British Tank force in rear of his own tanks which have been attacking 4 Ind. Div. He seems to have been unaware of presence of 4 Armd. Bde. till quite late in day.

4. Further details fighting 13 and 14 Dec. 5 N.Z. Bde. shot down two enemy aircraft 13 Dec. and one 14 Dec. They had also captured nineteen officers and one thousand and fifty six O.Rs. Area Gazala up to morning 15 Dec. Now confirmed 4 Ind. Div. knocked out six enemy tanks 14 Dec. 7 Armd. Div. had eight tanks hit by A/Tk. fire 13 Dec.,

extent/.....

MOST SECRET

extent of damage unknown. 14 Dec. 7 Armd. Div. destroyed three hundred tons enemy ammunition.

5. L.R.D.G. attacked enemy convoy area SX 0662 night 14/15 Dec. burning three ten ton lorries and five fuel trailers westbound. Two enemy killed, telephone wires cut.

AIR.

6. Night 14/15 Dec. Malta Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour and shipping. Bursts on quays, base of outer mole and among buildings round harbour.

7. Day 15 Dec. Reconnaissance by two Hurricanes reported only twenty M.T. moving on Ageila-Ghemines road with about fifty stationary at Sidi Frag and Sidi Ahmed el Magrun. Hurricanes destroyed one lorry damaged seven on road. Reconnaissance Southern Greece reported one M/V 1000 tons one M/V 400 tons Navarino. One M/V 8000 tons close inshore Methone, possibly aground.

1710/16

Received from War Office at 2320/16 December

War Office Circulation

1st Lord	S. of S.	D.D.I.P.
1st S.L.	C.I.G.S.	D.M.I.
4th S.L.	V.C.I.G.S.	D.D.M.I. (I).
5th S.L.	D.M.O. & P.	M.I. 3.14.
V.C.N.S.	D.D.M.O. (O).	D.A.F.V.
A.C.N.S. (T).	D.P. (2).	Cabinet War Room
A.C.N.S. (F).	M.O. 1.5.6.	Col. Jacob.
A.C.N.S. (W).	C.A.S. (Air Ministry) (2)	
N.A. 1st S.L.	D. of Plans (Air Ministry) (2)	
D. of P. (2).	Plans 3 (Air Ministry) (2).	
D.O.D. (F).	D.O.O. (Air Ministry)	
D.D.O.D. (F).	D.M.C. (Air Ministry)	
D.N.I. (4).	P.S. to S. of S. (Air Ministry) (2).	
D.S.D.	Duty Group Captain (Air Ministry)	
D.N.A.D.	A.C.A.S. (I) (Air Ministry)	
D. of L.D.	Air Ministry War Room	
I.P. (2).	S. of S. (Foreign Office)	
W.D.	Duty Captain (Admiralty)	
Duty Captain (2).	Duty Officer Upper Admiralty War Room	
Head of M.	Head of War Registry Admiralty.	
E.P.S.		
D.T.D. (2).		
D.T.D. (M).		
N.I.D. 10 (Pay. Cdr. Wilson).		
D.G.D.		
D.D.I.C.		
D.P.D.		

520^c

MOST SECRET M E S S A G E 2322/16th Dec. 1N

From C. in C. Middle East. Date 17.12.41.
Recd 0110.

Cipher

Addressed War Office (Pass to Air Ministry),
repeated C. in C. Mediterranean.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

250594 0/38913 Cipher 16/12 Most Secret.

COSITREP No. 56.

1. No news received fighting 16th December.
Following details operations 15th December.
2. Polish Bde. Gp. reached pt. 183 area U.9782.
3. Now confirmed attack on 4 Ind. Div. made by
28 enemy tanks majority mark 4 and including 11 from
Ariete Division enemy casualties not known but
estimated heavy by 4 Ind. Div.

Morning 16th December 5 Ind. Inf. Bde. were
in possession of Pt. 205 and Pt. 208 area U.97 but
enemy held Pt. 204 area 87.

4. During night 15/16 December much enemy
movement West to East reported Pt. 201 area U.8074.
5. Ref. Cositrep No.55 paragraph 1a. Poles
captured two hundred prisoners.

Air.

6. 15 December. Fighter. Continuous offensive
patrols over Gazala-Tnimi-Gadd el Ahmar area in morning
sighted only one enemy aircraft which escaped in clouds.
Bad weather prevented all flying in afternoon.

2322/16.

Advance copy sent Duty Captain, D.O.D.(F) & D.D.I.C.

Received from War Office at 0350/17.

Markings over/...

MOST SECRET

1st Lord	<u>War Office Distribution.</u>
1st S.L.	S. of S.
5th S.L.	C.I.G.S.
V.C.N.S.	V.C.I.G.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.M.O. & P.
A.C.N.S. (W)	D.D.M.O. (O)
M.A. 1st S.L.	D.P. (2)
D. of P. (2)	M.O. 1.5.6.
D.C.D. (F)	D.D.I.P.
D.D.O.D. (F)	D.M.I.
D.N.I. (4)	D.D.M.I. (I)
D.H.A.D.	M.I. 3.14.
D.G.D.	D.A.F.V.
I.P. (2)	Cabinet War Room
W.D.	Col. E.I.C. Jacob.
Duty Captain (2)	C.A.S. Air Ministry (2)
Hd. of M.	D. of Plans Air Min (2)
D.D.I.C.	Plans 3 Air Min (2)
E.P.S.	D.O.O. Air Ministry
N.I.D. 10. Pay. Cdr. Wilson.	D.M.C. Air Ministry
	P.S. to S. of S.
	Air Ministry (2)
	Duty Group Captain Air Min.
	A.C.A.S. (I) Air Min.
	Air Ministry War Room
	S. of S. Foreign Office
	Duty Captain Admiralty.
	Duty Officer Upper
	Admiralty War Room.
	Hd. of War Reg. Admiralty.

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

A.T.4.

Convoy A.T.4. slow codeword "Loose". BANTRIA and GIBEL KEBIR escorted by HERO, AVON VALE and COCKER sailed 0900/17 through F.2100, A 0630 18, U 1230, N 1730, R 0400 19, S, 1130, Tobruk Boom 1215 19, speed 6 knots fighter protection required daylight hours 17th 18th and a.m. 19th. (R.A. Alexandria 1758/16 to S.O. Force I).

Air Operations.

Night 15/16th. 9 mark 2 Wellingtons and 12 mark 10 Wellingtons attacked Naval shipping Taranto. 1 aircraft returned engine trouble. 6 500 lb S.A.P. Augusta submarine base alternative target. Message in 2 parts. End of part 1. (H.Q. R.A.F., Malta, 1815/16).
Attack 1900 to 0010 hrs. Bombs in target ? area but owing effective smoke screen precise observation results impossible.
1740 to 0359 hrs. 6 alerts, 12 raiders, 6 crossed coast bombs land sea. 1 house damaged. No casualties. 16th. 2 alerts 0651 and 1540. (H.Q., R.A.F., Malta, 1839/16).

M/Vs. from Malta.

Your 1237B/27/11 and V.A. Malta 1237B/1/12. In considering sailing of M/Vs. from Malta, SYDNEY STAR, AJAX and ROWALLAN CASTLE are available for your use in Alexandria-Malta convoys.
2. CLAN FERGUSON has cargo for U.K. and SYDNEY STAR is required to load in South America. They should be sailed by whichever route you consider best. (A.C.N.S. (F), 1844A/16 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta) A.M.1844A/16, para 1. For SYDNEY STAR read CITY OF CALCUTTA. (D.O.D. (F) 1715A/18)

S/Ms.

Eastern Med., S/M movements summary 76.

Submarine	Est. noon position 17/12	Est. noon position 18/12
PERSEUS	034° 08'	032° 32'
	025° 22'	027° 54'
PORPOISE.	035° 26'	033° 20'
	026° 24'	028° 10'.

TALISMAN expected Alexandria a.m./17 from N.W.
THORN expect (?Alexandria) 1000B/17 from Port Said. (Capt. S.I., 1847B/16 to Med., Fleet).

See p. 520.

Greek Policy.

Greek Govt., although not at war with Japan, have broken off relations with that country and have notified that ships of Greek Navy will be instructed to treat as hostile every ship which is regarded as hostile by Great Britain, the U.S. and their Allies. They will thus continue to conform with the general instructions issued to British Fleet. (Head of M., 1904A/16 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.I.)

/Malta...

522

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.Malta,
Movements.

Departures 16/12 SIKH, LEGION, MAORI, ISAAC SWEERS at 1100B and AURORA, PENELOPE, LANCE, LIVELY at 1800B. (V.A. Malta, 1937B/16 to C. in C. Med).

Minesweeping
Tobruk.

Minesweeping Summary for week ending 14/12. 4 suspected minelaying raids. 2 parachute mines dropped in boom entrance of which 1 blue magnetic swept, 1 parachute mine dropped outside boom and 3 non-parachute mines in harbour. In addition 2 red magnetic and 2 acoustic mines swept, 1 counter mine ashore. (B.S.N.O. Tobruk, 2111B/16 to Admty).

Tobruk Raid
and
Minelaying.

C.A.F.O. 587/40. Para. 4.
(a) 1820 to 1840/16 cloud slight.
(b) 2 aircraft. No moon. (c) Minelaying attack.
(d) 2 mines with parachutes inside harbour north side. 1 mine with parachute in Boom entrance, 2 mines with parachute outside Boom in centre of searched channel, 1 mine with parachute off Tobruk point clear of searched Channel. 3 mines probably type C self detonated on shore south side harbour. (e) to (k) Nil.
(S.B.N.O. Tobruk, 2129B/16 to Admty).

AJAX,
KANDAHAR,
JAGUAR,
NEPTUNE.

Your 1806B/16 AJAX out of action with defects. KANDAHAR and JAGUAR in dock. Intend sailing these destroyers with NEPTUNE at about 1500/17 R.A. Alexandria pass to 201 group. (V.A. Malta, 2301B/16 to C. in C. Med).

Contacts
with Enemy
Forces.

Your 0850/15. (a) 004° 30' E. (b) Yes, for two hours from 1500 to 1700A/12. (c) No, fortuitous. (d) No. (V.A. Malta, 2332B/16 to S.O. Force H).

Air R/C.

(1) A.M. R/C from Malta covers 2 Areas enclosed by following positions. Area 1. A 038° 30' N., 019° 20' E., B., 036° 30' 020° 00' C., 036° 30' 018° 20' D 038° 00' 018° 00'. Area 2. A 036° 20' 019° 00' C., 035° 00' 020° 40' D., 035° 00' 019° 00'. (2) P.M. R/C depends on forenoon result. (3) Special Wellington will be sent for night shadowing. (V.A. Malta, 2350B/16, to F.O.15 C.S.) *B. 036° 20', 020° 30'.

/Escort...

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Escort for
Soviet
Tankers.

A.N.A. Istanbul's 1206/8. Soviet Embassy in London have asked that Soviet tankers should be convoyed between Rhodes and Cyprus. They have been informed that this question has been raised by Soviet N.A. in Angora and that the decision must rest with you. 2. It is appreciated that no protection can be provided until ships are clear of the Aegean and this has been stressed from the beginning (see A.T.1238/10/10). It is also realised that even then your other operational commitments may render the provision of surface escort impossible.

3. Request report so that a suitable reply to Soviet Embassy can be framed.

(Head of M., and A.C.N.S. (F), 2355A/16 to C. in C. Med).

Enemy Units.
UNBEATEN.

Large number of destroyers, possibly heavy ships, P.C. and S. 039° 17' 018° 00' 160°, 14 knots. (UNBEATEN, 2358B/16 to Capt. S.10).

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.B.A.11.Departure CALEDON escorting B.A.11.
(S.O.I. Bombay, 0118Z/16 to Admty. etc.)S.S.EMPIRE
SNOW.Cancel my 0346/13. ^{p.47} Error in decyphering
ship's name.
(S.O.I. Colombo 1140Z/16 to Admty.)W.S.12 X.

1. Destination of W.S.12 X has been changed to Bombay.
2. ORIZABA is to be detached in vicinity of Mombasa to fuel and will then join Indian section of W.S.12 Z when it passes Mombasa. Report now if any other ships cannot reach Bombay without refuelling.
3. CERES is to R/V with W.S.12 X as arranged by you to escort ships requiring fuel to Mombasa.
4. From (corrupt group) position (D) equator (?046°) proceed direct to Bombay arranged by W.S.12 X.
5. Report E.T.A. Bombay through CERES.
6. Inform Commodore.
(C. in C. E.I. 1414Z/16 to DORSETSHIRE, CERES (R) Admty., N.O.I.C. East Africa and Zanzibar.)

E.I. Station
Limits.

21027/C. Personal for C. O.S. from Wavell. In altered circumstances under which Arminia is responsible for military and air defence of Burma, consider it essential that limits of Naval East Indies Station should revert to their original limits to include coast of Burma and Andamans and Nicobar Islands.
(C. in C. India, 1615/16 to W.O.(R) C. in C. E.I.)
W.D. Note.- This point is dealt with in C.O.S. No. (India) 4, see 1900/16, and 0010/18.

Control of
Air Forces,
Ceylon.

20965/G cipher 16/12. 019841. Consequent on our assumption responsibility defence Ceylon, consider we should also assume operational control air forces. Confirm.
(C. in C. India, 1840/16 to W.O.(R) C. in C. F.E., C. in C. E.I.)
Confirmed (1st S.L. 0009A/18 to C. in C. E.I.)

Burma and
Indian
Ocean.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 4. Ref. your 20790/G cypher 13/12 by paragraphs. Para.3. Confirmed India to be responsible for air defence Burma. Wing H.Q. with 4 Fighter Squadrons and ancillary units in convoy W.S.12 Z being diverted to Karachi via Bombay to be placed at your disposal. Also Middle East has been instructed to prepare plans for sending 6 Squadrons of Blenheim IV's plus one air stores park and one repair and servicing unit to India for Burma after "Crusader" is finished.

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Burma and
Indian
Ocean -
contd.

Para.4. C. in C., Eastern Fleet, is responsible for Eastern theatre, including Indian Ocean. (W.O., 1900/16 to C. in C. India.)

Air Forces,
Burma.

1. I cannot agree to divide control over Air Forces in Burma but if C. in C. Far East will notify likely targets to A.O.C. every effort will be made to co-operate when bombers arrive. There are now only 4 available. We accept responsibility for administration.
2. Am not fully conversant with commitments undertaken by 204 Mission. Although initial instructions visualise co-operation with our forces holding Hong Kong, not clear how this could now materialise. Consider we must take over Mission but will keep you in touch with all matters of policy connected with Mission and should be glad of your views on these matters.
3. Will assume responsibility for plan of operations of R.A.F. bombers in China.
4. Discussions with Gen. Brett take place this week on co-operation of American Air Force from China.
(C. in C. India, 1935/16 to C. in C. Far East
(R) W.O. etc.)

China.

HAREL DAWINS
RAVNAAS.

British, 1523 tons, Hong Kong to Singapore.
Norwegian, 4019 tons, Calcutta to San Francisco.
Both reported sunk by enemy action off island of Luzon on 10/12. Crews safe.
(D.S. 833.)

ANSHUN.

British, 3188 tons, Singapore to Hong Kong.
Damaged by bomb on 10/12 in Manila Harbour.
Chief Officer and 2 men killed, 2nd Officer and 3 Chinese women passengers injured.
(D.S.833.)

Malaya.

Military situation report 1630 G.M.T./15.
(H.Q., M.C., 0345/16 to W.O.)
See Lion Copy.

/Mine ...

SECRET.

SECRET

0545/16th December

525 A.

From Hq. M.C.,

Date 16.12.41.

Time 0130

CYPRER

Addressed The War Office repeated C in C India G.H.Q. Far East
C in C East Indies.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

0211 cipher 16/12

Sitrop 1650 hrs. G.M.T. 15/12. A.O.C. LANCASTER ps.
to H.B. the Governor repeated Goto Magi Kili Goto Dalu
from Adv. H. C.M.C.

"Kedah" enemy resumed his attacks at dawn and drove
in right of position penetrating between 11 Div. and Krohcol
heavy fighting developed resulting in 6 Ind. Inf. Bde. on
left being cut off. Touch not yet restored in spite of
counter attack by two Bns. 28 Ind. Inf. Bde. command reserve
consisting of 12 Ind. Inf. Bde. Gp. less one Bn. has been sent
to this front. Trouble arises from impossibility of relieving
exhausted troops who have now been fighting continuously
for over a week owing to lack of adequate reserves in Malaya
and danger of uncovering Fortress area in view of our present
Naval and Air weakness. Doubtful if it will be possible
to hold Penang which has no adequate garrison for increased
scale of attack.

Krohcol. 12 Ind. Inf. Bde. taken over command and 2 A
and S H were holding baling 0330 hrs G.M.T. without being
pressed. Apparent object of enemy to penetrate into gap
between 11 Ind. Div. and Krohcol.

Kelantan. Some activity but no major change.

Kuantan Johore Singapore nothing to report.

Sarwak. Military and police forces evacuated from Miri
have arrived Kuching. No damage or casualties in attack
on this party reported yesterday.

Air. Recce. during last 24 hours into Gulf of Thailand
along east coast and in area south of Singapore all
negative. Ipoh town bombed this morning by twenty enemy
aircraft type unknown part of aerodrome petrol dump hit.
Kuantan aerodrome attacked by low flying fighters no damage
or casualties. Evacuation of Butterworth aerodrome
completed.

General. In Kedah enemy attacks pressed home with
fanatical courage in spite of very heavy losses.

Rec'd from W.O. 0642/16. Dec. 0345/16.

1st Lord
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(H)
A.C.H.S.(F)
A.C.N.S.(T)
A.C.N.S.(W)
Nav. Sec.
N.A. 1st S.L.
Capt. Pin
D.H.A.D.
H (2)
D.N.L.O.(2)
A.E.(3)
Ops.(5)
O.D.(5)
D.N.I.(4)
O.I.C.(3)
D.S.D.(2)

D.T.D.(M)
D.T.D.(C)
D of P (3)
D.A./S.W.
I.P.(3)
W.D.
D.P.D.
D.S.D (2)
Admiral Bailey
Admiral Bellairs
Admiral Chalmers
E.P.S.
D.T.S.D.

War Room A.M (2)
F.O.5 A.M (2)
Duty Capt. Admiralty
Duty Officer(Upper
Admiralty War Room)
Hd of W/R Admiralty
Colonial Office (Maj,
Rolleston)
S of S (Foreign Office)

War Office
circulation:-
S of S
C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S
D.M.O & P
D.P (2)
D.D.M.O.(0)
M.O.1 2 6 10
D.D.I.P.
D.M.I.
D.D.M.I.(I)
M.I.2 (3)
Cabinet War
Room
Col Jacob
(Cabinet Off.)
C.A.S.A.M
Plans 3 A.M(2)
Duty Grp. Capt.
A.M (2)
A.C.A.S.(I)
A.M (2)
D.M.C. (A.M)

R.G.H

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Mine,
Penang.

Japanese have dropped mine in Penang North Channel from A/C without parachute. B.A. D. Washington pass to C. in C. Pacific Fleet. (Capt. O.S. Singapore 0331Z/16.)

China,
Co-operation.

Interview with Generalissimo. (M.A. Chungking 0800/16 to C. in C. F.E., C. in C. India., G.O.C. Burma, W.O.) See Lion Copy.

Convoy
W.S.12 Z.

I understand that reinforcements for M.E. and Irak are being diverted to Malaya or India. Mr. Duff Cooper informs me 18th (? Div.) and four fighter squadrons, anti-aircraft and anti-tank (? regiments) etc., are now being sent to Southern Area (presumably in W.S.12 Z.)
2. C. in C. E.F. considers reinforcements for Malaya should be sent by quickest safe route with minimum delay.
3. Can you tell me: (A) What ship in W.S.12 Z contains reinforcements which are now available for Malaya. (B) If approved for these ships to proceed from Cape to Singapore by quickest safe route instead of calling at India. Troopers 57543 of 12/12 to Eastfar also refers. (C. in C. E.F., 0811Z/16. to Admty.(R) C. in C. E.I.)

K.12.

Netherlands Submarine K.12 arrived 16/12. (S.O.(I) Singapore 1017Z/16.)

Japanese
attack on
Borneo.

Coast lookout reports 13 large warships and one oil tanker north of (?Miri). Confirmed by Dutch air R/C. Neither reports timed but presumed A.M. today Tuesday. D/F indicates Japanese units include C. in C. Second Fleet in vicinity. Japanese radio announces Japanese army landed in B. North Borneo at dawn today Tuesday. (C. in C. E.F., 1037Z/16 to ? C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet, Admty.) My 1037Z/16. There are indications that transports are included in enemy force reported off Miri. C.Z.M. has been informed. (C. in C. E.F., 0231Z/16 to C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet, Admty.)

CAPETOWN.

^{N.T. & W.D.}
My 1721A/12 para.2. Requirement of CAPETOWN should also be met if ship is nearing completion. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1346A/16 to C. in C. E.F.(R) C. in C. E.I.)

/Petrol ...

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 0012/18th Dec. IN

From: M.A. Chingking.

Date 16.12.41.

Recd: 1350

Cipher

Addressed: C. in C. Far East., C. in C. India.,
G.O.C. Burma., The War Office.,019813. M 348 cipher 15/12.
IMMEDIATE.

Ambassador and I interviewed Generalissimo tonight. Magruder was present. We laid our cards on the table about the serious situation through air losses in Malay and weakness of Burma without adequate air support and said we wanted all help China could give us to weather present crisis which might last some weeks. In particular I made three requests

- (a) That he would reconsider his decision to withdraw A.V.G to Yunnan.
- (b) That he would increase Chinese regiment stationed wanting for reserve Southern Shan States to one division and earmark another division in case it was required.
- (c) That he would agree to transfer to G.O.C. Burma proportion of lease lend war material recently arrived Rangoon which included 75 calibre howitzers Bren guns 50 calibre A.A. guns wireless sets ammunition etc. G.O.C. Burma to provide details of requirements at once.

Generalissimo replied as regards (a) that decision to move A.V.G to Yunnan was due to several reports from Dhennaulu that warning system was totally inadequate and his squadrons ran serious risk of being written off on the ground without achieving anything. He was prepared to send them back to Burma as soon as any satisfactory air raid warning system exists. Will G.O.C. Burma please comment. One solution appears to be to move A.V.G from vulnerable Toungoo to aerodrome further South or West.

As regards (b) he regarded defence of Burma as defence of China and would send an Army Corps of 50,000 men tomorrow. They would be under command of G.O.C. Burma while in Burma but he must insist they must be given definite area or line of communications to guard and not mixed up with Burma troops. Otherwise no one could accept responsibility for anything.

(c) He would have to consult Minister of War as he was not fully briefed.

He then reverted forcibly to joint planning. Leaving Phillipines out of argument absolute essential was to hold Singapore. Next came defence of Burma. What Britain America and China must do was first to decide what is necessary to hold Singapore. Nothing must stand in the way of this absolute essential. Apart from air forces India and Burma must provide all ground troops required to make it absolutely secure. Next step was to decide what troops situation needed from China to make her secure. Thirdly what appeal to China could do to/.....

MOST SECRET

do to assist. At present everything was haphazard. For instance Burma asked for division and regiment there. Regiment has been moved to Mungoawng but had little idea of its task and this was bad for morale. He had never been taken into our councils for fighting this war.

Comment. It is quite obvious that Chinese help is now essential to us to see us through present crisis and we have not right to expect Chinese co-operation unless we take Generalissimo fully into our confidence. The sooner the Officers from India can arrive for joint discussions the better. C. in C India please wire their names and date of arrival. W.O. telegram 57779 (M.O.3) refers.

C800/16.

Advance Copy sent Duty Capt., D.O.D. (F)
D.T.D.,

Recd; from War Office 0257/17.

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- N.A. 1st S.L.
- P.A.S. (3)
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)
- D of P (2)
- E.P.S.
- Hd of M. (10)
- I.P. (2)
- N.I.L. 10 (Fay Cdr. Wilson)
- W.D.
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.C. (2)

- War Office Distribution
- S of S.
- C.I.G.S.
- V.C.I.G.S.,
- D.M.O. & P.
- D.D.M.C. (O) (H)
- D.P.
- M.O. 1.2.10.12.
- D.M.I.
- D.L.M.I. (I) (O)
- M.I.2. (3 cps)
- D.S.D.
- Foreign Office. (Mr. Sterndale Bennett)
- Hd of War Registry (Admiralty)
- C.N.S. Admiralty
- D of Plans (Admiralty)
- C.N.S. (Air Ministry)
- D of Plans (Air Ministry)
- Col Jacob (Cabnt Offs)
- Secy J. P.S. (Cabnt Offs)
- India Office (Col. McCay)
- Burma Office (Maj. Upson)

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - contd.Petrol from
Balik Papan.

Every endeavour should be made to lift stock of 22,000 tons Aviation Spirit components from Balik Papan to suitable discharge ports in Sumatra, using any available empty tankers including coastal tankers. Dutch authorities should be impressed with vital necessity of destroying any of this spirit which cannot be lifted to prevent it falling into enemy hands. (A.C.N.S.(T) 2013A/16 to C. in C. E.F.(R) R.A. Malaya.)

Hong Kong.

Sitrep up to 1900 hours local time 16/12. Both aerial bombing and artillery shelling on increased scale today and show high standard of accuracy on or near military objectives. 6 Army light bombers at 0030 hours G.M.T. dive bombed Shekko, Shaukiwan and Lyemud. No damage to military establishment or personnel. 17 aircraft probably naval bomber type 96 attacked early (?afternoon) (?Aberdeen) (17 bombs) Shaukiwan (1 bomb) where 150 (?civilian) casualties, Saiwan, Aberdeen (where 1 M.T.B. sunk) and Repulse bay. Some damage to Aberdeen Dock E.L.D.S. and casualties to naval personnel. (G.O.C. Hong Kong, 2310/16 to C. in C. F.E., W.O. amended 0922/17.)

Oil Schemes.

Your 1037/16. Are you satisfied that the Dutch will put oil denial Schemes into effect in good time? (V.C.N.S. 2356A/16 to C. in C. E.F.)

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

French
Corvettes.

It is desired that the French Corvettes ALYSSE, ACONITH, MIMOSA should remain at Halifax pending further instructions. (V.C.N.S. 0008A/16 to C.O.A.C. Halifax (R) N.S.H.Q., C.C.N.F.)

See also p. 530

S.C.60.

My 1308Z/15 and U.S. C.N.O. 0500/15. Delete MIMOSA. (C.C.N.F. 0134Z/16 to Admty. C.N.O. etc.)

See also p. 530

Shipping,
Canal Zone.

Have been most concerned at recent holdup of shipping at Colon and Balboa which appears to have been done by local U.S. Naval Authorities without reference to Navy Dept. vide your 2021R/14. It is believed that this action was taken as a result of reports of U-boats in Carribean. Could steps be taken to prevent a repetition of this and the vital necessity for maintaining flow of shipping once again emphasised? (C. in C. A.W.I. 1011Q/16 to B.A.D.) See 1647/16.

O.N.44.
CHICOUTIMI.

Separated from 4.1.13 during violent weather of night 13th instant and since searching for O.N.44. Position at 1100Z/16 056° 32' N. 024° 47' W. course 235°, speed 10 knots, fuel remaining 64%. As O.N. 44 now reported dispersing request instructions. Weather report. (CHICOUTIMI, 1100Z/16 to U.S. C.N.O.)

VAR
(French)
Naval Oiler.

Have you any information of French Tanker VAR? Request immediate reply. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1114R/16 to La Guayra).

VAN
KINSBERGEN.

Sailed in accordance with C. in C. A. and W.I. 1232Q/13. (N.O.I.C. Trinidad 1202Q/16 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

NEMOURS.
INDIANA.
(French)

Colon reports U.S. authorities have removed French crews from NEMOURS and INDIANA. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1214R/16 to Admty. etc.)

RESTIGOUCHE.

RESTIGOUCHE's 1205Z/14. Propose to carry out necessary repairs to RESTIGOUCHE on her arrival in Clyde. (D.O.D. (H) 1223/16 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa). Arrived Greenock 1530Z/16. Request information regarding date it is intended to refit RESTIGOUCHE in Canada so that extent of defects to be undertaken in U.K. may be determined. (RESTIGOUCHE 1801/16 to C.C.N.F.)

/Washington...

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.-Contd.

Washington Report.

Washops 6. (i) Philippine Is. Another battleship probably Japanese battleship HARUNA class, was attacked by B.17 aircraft on 14/12. 3 hits and one near miss are claimed and ship last observed on fire. Bombers also seriously damaged at least one transport at Legaspi. One bomber missing remainder going to Australia to refit. There were a few light air attacks yesterday, otherwise nothing to report.
(ii) Hawaii. 15/12 a Japanese submarine surfaced off Island Maui and fired several rounds into town Kahulvi. (? Kahulu).
(iii) Wake. This island has had further night raid, on 15/12 by 6 4 - engine seaplanes and on 16/12 by 33 bombers.
(iv) Johnson Island was bombarded by 2 surface vessels yesterday. (J.S.M. Washington 1331R/16 to Admty. etc.)

COLUMBIA repairs.

Ref. N.S.H.Q.'s 1340Z/17/10. (A) COLUMBIA (B) Halifax (C) 15/12 (D) 9/2/1942.
(C.O.A.C., Halifax, 1331Z/16 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

BENCLEUCH survivors.

NANAIMO arrived with survivors from British S.S. BENCLEUCH, ship burned out and sank in 53-10 N. 38-00 W. 11/12. Sabotage suspected. My 2315Z/16 with list of survivors follows. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1422Z/16, N.C.S.O. St. Johns N.F. 1901Z/16).
N.C.S.O. St. Johns 1901Z/16 not to C.O.A.C. Reported suspected sabotage should be investigated on arrival survivors. My 1422Z/16 refers. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2209Z/16 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).

BITTERSWEET.

Can arrive Charleston about 5/1 if acceptable. (C.C.N.F. 1455Z/16 to B.A.R.M.)

Routeing of ships.

Your 1725M/15. U.S. authorities although agreeing in principle with your suggestion prefer for the present to route all U.S. Flag trans-Pacific shipping to Wellington for further instructions. By doing this they feel that closer control of their shipping can be exercised in a situation which is at present extremely obscure. (B.A.D. 1521R/16 to N.Z.N.B.)

/S.C.....

530

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.S.C. Convoy
Bases.

Your 1544A/15. At present anticipate possible use Sydney until Mid-January. Suggest first S.C. from Halifax 17/1, (thence six day cycle) subject adjustment earlier or later as weather conditions allow. My 1525Z/16/11 also refers. (C.O.A.C. 1531Z/16 to Admty.)

S.C. 60.

My 1308Z/13 and U.S.C.N.O.'s 0300/15. Delete ACONITE and ALYSSE. Add CAMROSE. (C.C.N.F. 1539Z/16 to Admty. etc.) *See p 528*

Newfoundland
Escort Force.

Admty. 2210A/15, Para. 3. Take any action you consider necessary. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1546Z/16 to C.C.N.F. (R) C.O.A.C.)

U.S. Liaison.

My 1721Z/29. Regret that Second Officer suitable for Liaison with C. in C. U.S. Atlantic Fleet cannot now be provided from Canadian sources for at least 12 months. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1604Z/16 to Admty. (R) B.A.D.)

My 2005/5 (N.T. in W.D.) effective 0000G.C.T. 17/12. (Opnav 1620/16 to Com. Task for. 4. Rep. Com. Task Groups 4.6 and 7.5. N.S.H.Q., C.O.A.C. C.C.N.F. Cinclant, Admty.)

St. Lucia.

My 1115Q/13 your 1152Q/12. General position much improved. U.S. heavy forces withdrawn. U.S. Destroyers BARNEY, BLAKELEY only on patrol. Aid to navigation being relit tonight. (R.N.O. St. Lucia 1640Q/16 to Admty.)

Shipping.

Desire you clear ships for Far East, Australia and New Zealand in accordance with previous routing instructions as rapidly as possible. This includes ships both over and under 15 knots. Information from other sources received here indicates ships are still being held. (Opnav, 1647/16 to Comdr. Panama Naval Coastal Frontier).

U.S. Forces.

Spenavo 1506/10. Disposition U.S. Forces 15/12. (Opnav, 1655/16 to Admty.) See Lion Copy. (Note. This Signal is repeated as Admty. 1636A/17 see Tiger copy).

/RANPURA.....

MOST SECRET

530A

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

~~1856/16~~th December

IN

From Opanav.

Date 16.12.41.

Recd. 2330.

NAVAL CYPHER (U.S.X) BY CABLE

Addressed Admiralty.

IMMEDIATE

SPENAVO 1506/10 disposition U.S. forces 15th December follows. Atlantic Fleet. B B S ARKANSAS at Halifax. TEXAS at Argentia. At Norfolk NEW YORK, ready six January. NEW MEXICO ready 26th December. IDAHO, MISSISSIPPI, due Norfolk 17th December. WASHINGTON, and NORTH CAROLINA at Norfolk, leaving 26th December for intensive training Guantanamo area, ready for service 1st May. - Please inform SPENAVO. [C V S. WASP off Martinique. LONG ISLAND at Bermuda, at Norfolk RANGER, ready 16th December. YORKTOWN ready December 16. G. HORNET ready for service 15th February. [C. A. S. WICHITA, TUSCALOOSA, at Iceland. QUINCY, VINCENNES, ^{Cape Town,} ~~CAPE TOWN~~, AUGUSTA, Newport. C. L. S. At New York MILWAUKEE, ready 12th January. ATLANTA ready for service 1st March. BROOKLYN and CINCINNATI off Martinique. MEMPHIS at Trinidad. SAVANNAH en route Bermuda. OMAHA left Recife 13th December. NASHVILLE at Halifax. At Boston PHILADELPHIA, ready about 23rd December.

Pacific Fleet. B B S COLORADO at Seattle, ready 1st February. At Pearl Harbor, PENNSYLVANIA, TENNESSEE, MARYLAND, ready, and three ready indefinite. Two lost. C. V. S. Mid Pacific, SARATOGA, ENTERPRISE, LEXINGTON.

C. A. S. /.....

MOST SECRET

530 B.

C.A.S. Mid Pacific CHICAGO, PORTLAND, INDIANAPOLIS,
 NORTHAMPTON, SALT LAKE CITY, CHESTER, MINNEAPOLIS, ASTORIA,
 NEW ORLEANS. Pearl Harbor SAN FRANCISCO (?nems pdep)
 December. LOUISVILLE en route to Honolulu.
 PENSACOLA en route Brisbane. C.L.S. Mid Pacific.
 DETROIT. Damaged at Pearl Harbor RALEIGH, HONOLULU,
 HELENA, unfit for sea. Escort duty West coast to
 Honolulu, PHOENIX, and ST. LOUIS. RICHMOND due Valparaiso
 16th December. CONCORD at San Diego. TRENTON at
 Balboa.

Asiatic Fleet. Balik Papan area, C A HOUSTON.
 C.L.S. BOISE, MARBLEHEAD. Six Destroyers and two
 slightly damaged. 12 P S and tenders. 4 Destroyers
 due Soerabaja 16th December. Submarines operating
 27. One damaged one lost at Cavite.

1655/16.

Advance copy sent Duty Capt. D.O.D. (F) D.D.I.C. A.E.

EML.

1st Lord	D.O.D. (F)	W.D.
1st S.L.	D.D.O.D. (F)	A.E. (3)
V.C.N.S.	Duty Capt. (2)	Admiral Bailey
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.N.I. (4)	Admiral Bellairs.
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.D.I.C.	E.P.S.
A.C.N.S. (T)	Head of M.	
N.A. 1st S.L.	D. of P. (2)	
D.O.D. (H)	D.A/S.W.	
D.D.O.D. (H)	I.P. (2)	

531

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.RANPURA.Local arrangements for entering.
(B.A.R.M., 1720R/16 to Admty.)Suspicious
Warships.Pan American Pilot reports sighting 5 unidentified Warships in 24° N. 16° 30' W. at 1200. G.C.T.B.
(B.A.D. 1727R/16 to Admty. (R) C. in C. S.A. F.O.C.N.A.)Dakar
Intelligence.Dakar. 13/12 (A.2) 1. CARTHAGE, MONACO, SAINTE MAXIME departed for Casablanca.
2. Pro American ratings state that twice during November periscope of unknown submarine was sighted off Dakar. Same sources deny that JULES VERNE has refuelled U-boats. (B.A.D. 1731R/16 to Admty. etc.)
*X Not identified*Casablanca
Intelligence.1. Casablanca. 13/12. Access to port cannot now be had by American control Officers unless thoroughly investigated or escorted. (A.1.)
2. Source in Office of Maritime Commission states that all merchant shipping from Casablanca for Oran, Algiers or Marseilles will henceforth be convoyed. He believes all cargoes for Oran, Algiers and Marseilles when shown as phosphates or miscellaneous are contraband. (Ungraded).
3. Naval Officials confirm press report of sinking of SAINTE DENISE by British submarine. (W.D. Note - see 1841/16). *next page.*
4. Departures 10/12 French THESEE with 3100 tons phosphates, Spanish MINA PIQUERA for Bilbao with 5530 tons phosphates; 12/12, French TLEMCEN believed for Oran with unknown cargo excepting transshipment of sugar from LEOPOLD L.D., Spanish SAC 2 for Valencia with 4850 tons phosphates, Portuguese NEREIDA for Setubal with 460 tons phosphates. Arrivals 12/12, Portuguese SANTA IRENE from Lisbon and Spanish SAC 9 from Barcelona, both in ballast. (A.2.)
(B.A.D. 1735R/16 to Admty. etc.)Dispositions
Units for
Task Force 3.Your 1919A/15. Para. 5 of B.A.D. 1221/11 and paras. 1 and 2 of B.A.D. 2231R/14 are being complied with.
2. Request confirmation that further instructions will be given before para. (3 and 4) of B.A.D. 2231R/14 is implemented.
3. Presume VAN KINSBERGEN will be included in Units which may be used to reinforce Task Force 3. (? C. in C. A.W.I., 1741Q/16 to Admty.)
W.D. Note:- No trace of 1221/11 and 2231/14 in W.D.

/SAINT.....

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies-Contd.

SAINT DENIS.

U.S. Embassy at Vichy reports 14/12 that SAINT DENIS was sunk by a German U-boat and that Darlan states he had received a note of apology from Germans. (B.A.D. 1841R/16 to Admty. etc.)

See previous page.

NEA HELLAS.

Due Halifax 20/12 speed 14.5 knots has 268 Troops, 822 Prisoners on board. Assume she sails in H.X. 166 21/12 and request your decision if Air Force and civilian Personnel can be embarked at Halifax subject to restrictions in your 1936A/25/9 (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1941Z/16 to Admty. etc.) Approved (D.O.D. H. 2304/17)

INDOMITABLE.

INDOMITABLE's 1931Q/15, not to F.O.I.C. Simonstown. Subject to concurrence of C. in C. S.A. INDOMITABLE should fuel at Capetown not Simonstown. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1944A/16 to C. in C. A.W.I.).

Shipping
Routes and
Control.

Your 1032Q/14. Prior to outbreak of war with Japan discussions were proceeding with U.S. Authorities for agreement by which in the event of war U.S. Naval Authorities would be responsible for Trans-Pacific routeing of all merchant ships in consultation with N.Z.N.B.
(2) Agreement is not yet in force but meanwhile it is requested that N.C.S.Os under your control and that of N.S.H.Q. Ottawa should conform to any wishes or recommendation of U.S. Authorities regarding movements of shipping in that area.
(3) My 1915A/13 was drafted in reply to N.S.H.Q.'s 0036Z/13 and should have been addressed to you as well as N.S.H.Q. It was not intended to imply any change in responsibilities.
(4) In the near future it is expected that British N.C.S.O.'s at U.S. ports will be replaced by U.S. routeing officers, a British liaison Officer being retained where necessary. (A.C.N.S. (T) 2101A/16 to C. in C. A.W.I.)
Following is repetition of message 2126Z/15 (N.T. in W.R) from N.S.H.Q. Addressed to British routeing authorities in Pacific Coast of U.S.A. and Canada. "U.S. Naval Frontier Commanders are issuing route instructions to U.S. Shipping on Pacific Coast of U.S.A. British and allied ships on Pacific Coast of U.S.A. and Canada are still being routed by N.S.H.Q. Ottawa through N.C.S.O's and C.S.A's subject to advice and recommendation of U.S. Authorities. C.S.A. San Francisco is acting as British Liaison Officer for both N.S.H.Q. and N.Z.N.B. with Commandant 12th Naval District. N.O.I.C. Esquimalt is issuing orders for shipping in Canadian Coastal waters. C.S.A. San Francisco is hereby authorised to issue direct to N.C.S.O's and C.S.A's Pacific Coast Canada and U.S.A. repeated N.S.H.Q., B.A.D. Washington and C. in C. A. and W.I.

/route.....

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Shipping
Routes and
Control
- Contd.

route instructions for British and allied ships similar to those issued by U.S. Authorities if he considers such instructions are necessary to ensure the safety of British and Allied Shipping".
2. This arrangement is satisfactory to C.N.O. and is necessary for rapid promulgation of instructions originated by Commandant 12th Naval District. It is in addition to agreement reported in my 2141R/15. (B.A.D. 2107R/16 to Admty.)

Q.Z. messages. Re reporting.

(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2214Z/16) Concur (D.T.D. 1328A/19).

Spain and
Portugal.

Havana reports of expected Nazi invasion of Spain and Portugal. (B.A.D. 2335R/16).
See Lion Copy.

Disposition,
Eastern
Fleet, etc.

Your 1747R/15, not to C. in C. Eastern Fleet.
2. Estimated position of all British warships at sea East of Malay barrier and Australia is now included in daily signal to Opnav.
3. Present disposition is as follows:-
(A) Singapore Area. MAURITIUS, DRAGON, DURBAN. H.M.N.S. JAVA, ELECTRA, EXPRESS, ENCOUNTER, JUPITER, VAMPIRE, STRONGHOLD, TEREDOS, TEVIOT, BANK and 7 Dutch Submarines. Due 17/12 SCOUT, THANET.
(B) Hong Kong Area. THRACIAN.
(C) Australian Waters. CANBERRA, PERTH, ADELAIDE, F.F.S. LE TRIOMPHANT. Returning from Indian Ocean, AUSTRALIA, HOBART.
(D) New Zealand Waters, ACHILLES, LEANDER.
(E) East Indies Station. REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN, DORSETSHIRE, CORNWALL, EXETER, GLASGOW, EMERALD, ENTERPRISE, DANAE, CALEDON, CERES, COLOMBO.
(F). N.E.I. Ships. Mainly in Java Sea.
4. Future intentions depend on development of situation which does not at present admit of reforming a powerful Eastern Fleet at Singapore.
5. We know little of U.S. Ships movements.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 2357A/16 to B.A.D. (R) A.C.N.B. C. in C. E.F.)

2335R/16 December.

SECRET.

MESSAGE.

III.

From: B.A.D. Washington.

Date: 17/12/41.

Recd: 0550.

Naval Cypher D by Gable. Recirculation.

Addressed: Admiralty Repeated: F.O.C. North Atlantic.

IMMEDIATE.

693 Havana Cuba 16 December. Ungraded. U.S. N.A. reports Nazi Agents have stated they expect Hitler to invade Spain and Portugal A.M. 17th December. American authorities have informed Lisbon and Madrid

2335R/16.

N.I.D. Comment.

This is another sample of the flood of reports which have emanated from the Peninsula during the last week and which have suggested:-

(a) That Germans have requested facilities for passage of German arms and troops through Spain and Spanish Waters to North Africa and that all the Lieut-Generals had been summoned to consider this demand.

(b) That Serrano Suner was pressing the Spanish Government to make a lightning attack on Gibraltar before Christmas.

(c) That a meeting between Franco and Salazar was to take place in the immediate future.

(d) That, following Japan's entry into the war, German Minister gave Dr. Salazar 48 hours in which to declare himself one way or another.

(a), (b) and (c) categorically denied by A2 sources. N.A. Madrid states that Madrid is thick with rumours of this kind which are without any truth whatever.

Ambassador Lisbon says with regard to (d), that Secretary-General to H.F.A. had assured him that German Minister (who incidentally was showing signs of ever increasing depression) had made no move of any kind. F.O. do not attach importance to the statement "which emanates from an alarmist source".

There is as yet, no information regarding any move to strengthen the two divisions in the Bordeaux-Bondaye area. J.I.C. consider that at least 6 weeks would be required to bring the necessary forces across Europe and build up supplies.

Conclusion.

Germans are putting these reports in circulation with the intention of maintaining the nervous tension existing in Spain and Portugal. They have followed on with the sinking of Spanish Tankers.

~~BADALONA.~~ All this may be to distract attention from operation elsewhere or to maintain confusion of thought.

N.I.D. 3D

1st S.L.	Advanced Copy sent	O.I.C.
V.C.N.S.	Nav Sec.	D. of P. (3)
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.N.I. (4)	O.I.C. (3)
A.C.N.S. (T)	Cps. (3)	D.S.D. (2)
N.A. to 1st S.L.	O.D. (5)	H. (2)
		D.P.D.
		D. of L.D. (2)
		E.P.S.
		W.D.

War Diary.

16.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Tarawa.

My 1503Z/15. Air R/C revealed Japanese merchant ship 4000 tons off Kapingamarangi 0030Z/15. Japanese have vacated Tarawa after having destroyed W/T Station and various buildings. Ships which attacked Tarawa apparently comprised 2 armed merchant cruisers. C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet and C. in C. U.S. Pacific Fleet please pass to Command General U.S. F.F.E. Manila and Command General Hawaiian Department Honolulu respectively. (A.C.N.B., 0552Z/16 to Admty. etc.)

LE TRIOMPHANT

Your 2358A/15. LE TRIOMPHANT is escorting a small movement of 300 troops leaving Sydney for Noumea on Wednesday 17/12.

(2) On completion of this movement it is strongly recommended LE TRIOMPHANT be stationed in Pacific for the following reasons: (a) to stimulate Free French loyalty, (b) to assist in protection of ships victualling Free French dependencies, (c) protection of these dependencies in Pacific Ocean.

(3) No troops are available yet for reinforcing New Caledonia and in their absence French High Commissioner Pacific is obviously particularly anxious to have services of LE TRIOMPHANT. (A.C.N.B. 0602Z/16 to Admty.)

ACHILLES.

Arrival Auckland. (D.N.I. Wellington 1125M/16 to Admty. etc.)

CAP DES
PALMES.

A.T. 1621/30/11. Request you will not sail CAP DES PALMES for Singapore until ordered by C. in C. Eastern Fleet. (D.O.D. (F) 1226A/16 to A.C.N.B.)

CANBERRA.
PERTH.

Left Brisbane 1030Z/15 for patrol. (A.C.N.B., 1249Z/16 to Admty. C. in C. E.I. R.A. Malaya, C. in C. China, Capt. O/S Singapore).

Gilbert Is.
area.

(1) Japanese carried out Air R/C by seaplane as far south as Abmama Island on 14th, 15th and 16th. Grade B.2.

(2) 6000 tons vessel reported at Makin Island 14th. Grade C.2.

(3) Tarawa Island still clear of Japanese 16th. They removed Island Schooner and stores presumably to Makin.

(4) Consider it probable Japanese use Makin as advance seaplane base. (N.Z.N.B. 2207Z/16).

War Diary.16.12. 1941.
Tuesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.BADALONA
(Spanish)
sunk. 13/12.

Your 2252/14. Spanish ship torpedoed night 12/13. Request report name of Spanish vessel and any further details.

(Head of M. 0033A/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Your 1340/15. No British submarine in the vicinity.

(F.O.I.C. Gibraltar, 0315/16 to N.A. Madrid.)

Your 0033A/16/12. Ship was Spanish tanker BADALONA. Consul Malaga's 1833/15 and Consul Cartagena's 1900/15 are being passed to you for information.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1134A/16 to Admty.)

My 2041/15. For evacuate read abandon.

Ministry of Marine confirms tanker sunk 8 miles off Motril en route for Venezuela in ballast.

S/M surfaced and ordered officer on board. All complement of submarine seen were not in uniform and without caps. Impossible establish nationality but (? believed) German. Officer accused in Spanish of communicating with Gibraltar. This he denied but was given 10 minutes to abandon ship when S/M sank her by torpedo. Affair has caused intense indignation but will not be published.

(N.A. Madrid, 1242/16 to Admty. (R) F.O.C.N.A.)

COLTSFOOT, HESPERUS and 37th Group now in company are to part company forthwith and return to Gibraltar at best speed. Corvette detailed in my 1421A/16 (N.T. in W.D.) to return direct on completion of rescue.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1540A/16, to STORK.)

Escorts
H. 6. 76.ASHBY.
(torpedoed
30/11.)

Your 1040Z/14. 32 survivors from ASHBY at Fayal reported ship torpedoed 1715 G.M.T./30/11.

170 miles S.S.E. Flores. SHEAFHOLME sailed Ponta Delgada for Cape Town 11/12, F.O.C.N.A.'s 1328A/10 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgadarepeated S.O.(I) Freetown refers.

(D.T.D. 1251A/16 to C. in C.S.A.)

SAINT DENIS.

See America & West Indies 1841R/16.

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War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.

0745N. A.S.V. contact 062° 45' N., 018° 37' W., at 0745N/16. Possibly submarine. (A.C.I.C. 1154N/16 to S and A. Icelandic Waters.)

1338. Two Submarines reported off El Amaid, investigate. (201 Group 1338/16, to Aircraft of QUEEN ELIZABETH.)

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs. (D.D.I.C. 1424A/16.)

1710C. Russians report U-boats located by D/F in 069° 10' N., 037° 58' E. (S.B.N.O., Archangel, 1710C/16, to R.A. 18th C.S. S.O. M/S 1. (R) S.B.N.O. North Russia 126.

1725. Aircraft report submarine in 036° 00' N., 000° 57' (? W) at 1725/16. (F.O.C.N.A. 2136A/16 to OLYMPUS.)

1442. U-boat sighted at 1442/16 in 033° 15' N., 024° 32' E., steering 120° at 9 knots. (Med.) (C. in C. Med., 2223B/16, to Med. Fleet, Force I.)

Submarines Attacked.

By NESTOR
15/12.
U.127 sunk.
(Cmd: 6843.)

C.A.F.O. 834/41.
(a) NESTOR.
(b) 1114/15/12/41.
(c) 197° Cape St. Vincent 34.5.
(d) 5.
(e) Substantial evidence of destruction. (NESTOR, 1430A/16, to F.O.C.N.A. Admty.) My 2332A/15. Consider NESTOR undoubtedly destroyed German U-boat in 197° Cape St. Vincent 35 miles at 1100/15. Further report follows to Admiralty. (F.O.C.N.A., 1640A/16 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta, S.O. Force "H".

/My 1643A/16.....

War Diary.16.12.1941.
Tuesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked.By NESTOR
15/12.
Contd.
U.127 sunk.

My 1643A/16. (1640/16 intended.) NESTOR reports after sighting S/M at about 15000 yards A/S Contact was obtained and five pattern charge dropped. FOXHOUND then obtained contact but on run in lost it and D/C's were not fired. On passing over position of NESTOR'S attack, FOXHOUND heard and felt a very heavy explosion. CROOME then fired two pattern in same position as NESTOR on a firm contact. Following wreckage picked up in vicinity of attack.

- A. Pieces of Human flesh in which were embedded pieces of battery separator plates and battery grids.
- B. Sheepskin coat marked 'Fucher'.
- C. Glove marked 'Hirtel'
- D. A roll of toilet paper (unused)
- E. Assorted pieces of grating and five-ply wood.

Consider NESTOR undoubtedly destroyed submarine.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1730A/16 to Admty.)

Use of A.S.V.
Swordfish.

Your 2145A/15. In all attacks first contact was made by A/S vessel twice at $4\frac{1}{2}$ and once at six miles. Actual attack carried out visually.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1658A/16 to Admty.)

By A/C.

A.771 16/12. "Opsum" (4) Sunderland A/S search East. 0800 to 1930. Area 03° W., to 01° W., between parallels 37° N., and 36° N., attacked U/Boat in 36° N., 00° 57' W., at 1725. Attacked with D/Cs, no hits estimated.
(200 Group, 1753/16.)

By A/C.

At 1720/16 in 036° 00' N., 001° 00' W., Sunderland at 500 feet sighted U-boat at about 7 miles. Attacked with 6 depth charges. Missed.
(F.O.C.N.A., 2300A/16 to Admty.)

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

At 1840C today HAZARD and SPEEDY, while carrying out an A/S Patrol off Cape Gorodetsky, were attacked by enemy surface craft believed to be 2 Destroyers which maintained a high rate of fire with star shells and high explosive for 15 minutes. HAZARD and SPEEDY retired behind a smoke screen and separated; SPEEDY returning towards Murmansk with 2 casualties and some gunfire damage, and HAZARD returning at 2035C to Cape Gorodetsky to continue sweeping the searched channels. KENT with 2 Russian Destroyers sailed this evening from Kola Inlet with orders to intercept the enemy raiders or Destroyers concerned.

Photographic R/C of Brest at 1015 today shows no change in the positions of the Enemy Units; but a patrol of 13 S/Ms is ordered in the Bay of Biscay, where 9 should be in position on the 21st and 4 more on the 22nd.

BERWICK left Hvalfiord at 1700 to relieve NORFOLK on the Denmark Strait Patrol.

British Air Activity.

Wilhelmshaven, Ostend, Brest and Dunkirk were bombed last night.

Enemy Air Activity

Convoy "Uphill" was attacked this morning off Clacton.

It is reported today that ROSEMARY was attacked at 1800A yesterday by two Heinkel 115 Floatplanes off St. Govans Light Vessel and drove off the attack; and at 1815A yesterday the small Dutch Coaster ZEELAND was also attacked off St. Govans Light Vessel, sustaining some damage from near misses.

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

15 Hampdens laid mines last night off Brest.

Operation
H.J.

WELSHMAN returned to Milford Haven at 1503 today from a minelaying operation off Brest.

3 Magnetic and 2 Acoustic Mines were exploded by sweepers today off the Humber Light Vessel.

Minelaying by enemy aircraft is suspected at Hvalfiord, and between Berwick and Yarmouth this evening. Blyth and the Tyne Ports were closed at 2145 tonight owing to suspected minelaying.

North Atlantic.

F.O.C.N.A. proposed yesterday to sail FARADAY, SAN ZEFERINO and BERGA to Freetown on Saturday escorted by 3 trawlers. In view of the U-boat situation west of Gibraltar and great value of FARADAY, Admty. consider these ships should not sail until a strong escort can be provided through the danger area.

South Atlantic.

Troop
Convoys.

Revised disposal instructions for Convoy W.S.12 Z, from which certain reinforcements are being diverted to Singapore area, were sent today to P.S.T.O. Simonstown. In regard to the diversion of W.S.12 X, F.O.I.C. Simonstown points out that it is quite impracticable for W.S.12 X to be accepted at Durban at the same time as W.S.12 Z.

/Two ...

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic - contd.

Two U.S. ships, WILD WOOD and EAST INDIAN are discharging material by lighters on the coast of Liberia for an air port in Liberia for the movement of U.S.A. aircraft to the Middle East.

Mediterranean.

Force K
p561- An enemy force including 2 large vessels was reported by A/C at 0040B bearing 335° from AURORA 50'. (AURORA and PENELOPE with 2 destroyers left Malta at 1800/16 to R/V with BRECONSHIRE which is being escorted to Malta by C.S.15 in NAIAD with 8 destroyers.)

At 0825, 3 battleships, 7 destroyers were reported in 36.32' N., 20.8' E., steering 155° at 10 knots.

At 1006, a Blenheim aircraft reported 1 cruiser and 2 M/Vs in 35° N., 11.40 E., steering 000° at 10 knots.

At 1102B V.A. Malta proposed to sail Force B. (NEPTUNE, KANDAHAR, JAGUAR) at 1500B (the force sailed at 1532B) to reach 32.40 N., 16.06 E., at 2300B with Wellington co-operation and to sweep on N.E. course keeping south of 34° N., with the object of intercepting a Tripoli convoy. Torpedo bombers were to attack the merchant ships if the situation appeared suitable.

At 1545B, however, C. in C. Mediterranean cancelled this, and directed Force B. to cover BRECONSHIRE's passage to northward during the night.

C.S.15 was instructed that unless enemy battleships separated, or other good reason existed, he was not to seek out battleships but go for convoys, Force K. being detached to deal with the Tripoli convoy and C.S.15's force to go for the Benghazi ships. It was estimated the convoys would separate in approx. 34.55 N., 18.40 E., and proceed, the Benghazi convoy at 13 knots, and the Tripoli convoy at 16 knots. The battle fleet was expected to steer towards 33.00 N., 18.00 E.

/Force K ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean - contd.

(AURORA, PENELOPE, 2 destroyers)
Force K. reported at 1543 that he had been subjected to numerous torpedo bomber and H.L.B. attacks and had brought down one T.B. A/C.

At 1122B, 3 battleships, 7 destroyers were reported in 36.22 N., 20.08 E., course 220°, 10 knots, and another force of 2 cruisers and 3 destroyers was estimated to be 8 miles ahead of the battle fleet.

At 1525B, 3 battleships, 2 cruisers, 10 destroyers and 4 M/Vs were reported in 35.47 N., 18.11 E., steering 140° at 12 knots. An hour later this force was reported in 35.35 N., 18.16 E. steering 180° at 12 knots, and shortly afterwards in 35.23 N., 18.33 E.

At 1745 C.S.15 (NAIAD, with AURORA, PENELOPE and 14 destroyers) unexpectedly sighted 2 battleships and light forces to N.W. in 33° 52' N. 18° 39' E. At 1755 the battleships opened fire but darkness intervened and at 1845 C.S.15 had lost contact with the enemy.

No report of action having been joined was apparently received in Admty., but at 1735 F.O. 15 C.S. signalled that the scale of attack had become heavy and expenditure of ammunition high. 10 minutes later he estimated his position as 33.52 N., 18.38 E. The enemy was on course 180°. A further enemy force was about 70 miles to northward.

C. in C. Mediterranean ordered at 1922B that BRECONSHIRE was to be sent to Malta, covered by such force as C.S.15 thought fit, the risk for her being accepted. Alexandria Force and Group 1 were instructed to carry out the purport of C. in C's 1545B/17, if possible, but to be east of 31° E. by daylight. Force K. was to return to Malta likewise.

12 Wellingtons attacked naval units at Taranto last night. 5 Naval aircraft attacked Catania Aerodrome.

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

In response to a suggestion from Gen. Wavell that the limit of E.I. Station should include the coast of Burma and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, C. in C. E.I. considers the Far East situation is too fluid to allow of a specific alteration of station boundaries at this stage. He makes certain proposals re consultation.

C. in C. India in a telegram to War Office asks when Blenheim aircraft will arrive. Unless it is soon they may be too late. Japanese aircraft massed in Bangkok aerodrome could not be attacked as there were no bombers.

The defences of Nancowry are not to be proceeded with.

China.

Hong Kong.

Most of the A.P.V's are immobilised through the desertion of their Chinese crews.

The Japanese naval and military commanders today again made proposals for surrender.

Malaya.

Advanced H.Q. Malaya reports that it will no longer be possible to hold Penang. Withdrawal is proceeding.

In an appreciation today C. in C. F.E. emphasises that Singapore must not fall. The fall of Luzon would be distressing but not calamitous provided Singapore is held. The immediate need for Singapore is of submarines and destroyers. C. in C. Far East makes certain proposals for getting air reinforcements quickly, and suggests the Hurricane fighter wing in Convoy W.S.12 Z, now in Indian Ocean, be diverted to Java for aircraft erection.

G.H.Q. Far East, has been moved by C. in C. from the Naval Base to Combined Army and R.A.F. H.Q. near Singapore Town.

/Ships ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.SITUATION REPORT.China - contd.

Ships are leaving Singapore independently as quickly as possible after being loaded with as much rubber, tin and sugar as time permits. All full tankers are clear of Malaya. Valuable ships are being routed via Sunda and ships of secondary importance via Malacca Strait.

C. in C. Far East thanks the Chiefs of Staff for all their promises of help but he points out that our ability to hold the Japanese may well depend upon the speed at which air reinforcements reach Malaya.

Borneo.

British shipping has been withdrawn from British North Borneo. Air R/C showed one battleship or battle cruiser, one aircraft carrier, and 3 destroyers stationary at Miri and 3 cruisers 120 miles N.W. of Miri. Dutch bombers today located and attacked 2 cruisers, 2 transports and 2 destroyers in the Miri area and claim near misses on 1 cruiser and 2 transports, and a direct hit by a Dutch Naval Dornier on a destroyer. The bombers were attacked by Japanese fighters, probably from an unseen aircraft carrier.

In reply to Admty. inquiry, C. in C. E.F. has no reason to doubt the assurance of the Dutch regarding demolitions at the Dutch oil fields, which has been given him most definitely and would be in conformity with the full support they are giving us in other directions.

Landing
in Timor.

A Dutch protective force landed at Dilli in Portuguese Timor today, as a precautionary measure against Japanese occupation. The local Governor offered formal resistance.

America and West Indies.

A United States Naval Mission is flying to Martinique today from Washington under Rear-Adm. Horne to inspect ships etc., in accordance with recent agreement between Marshal Petain and Adm. Leahy.

/Instructions ...

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

America and West Indies - contd.

Instructions have been given to N.C.S.Os West Coast of Canada and U.S.A. to route British and Allied other than U.S. ships South of New Zealand when endurance permits.

Australia.

LE TRIOMPHANT escorted 300 troops from Sydney for Noumea ~~today~~ 15/12. No troops are available for reinforcing New Caledonia. *See p. 567.*

1st Naval Member, A.C.N.B., in a message to 1st Sea Lord says :- We shall want all the carriers you can spare, and air squadrons will need to be very quick off mark to defeat Japanese technique, which seems to be efficient and very similar to ours. It remains to be seen whether U.S. carriers' technique will stand the test of war.

(Note.- Vice Adm. Sir Guy Royle, 1st N.M. was formerly 5th Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Air Services.)

U-Boat Campaign.

Martlet aircraft from AUDACITY sighted a U-boat on the surface at 0918 today, 22 miles on port beam of Convoy H.G.76.

STORK, BLANKNEY and EXMOOR searched for and destroyed the U-boat (U.131) at 1339B today in about 34.18 N., 13.58 W. and took 55 prisoners, who confirm that there is another U/B in vicinity. The Martlet was shot down and the pilot was lost.

MOST SECRET

5-41A

MESSAGE. 1925/17th Dec.

MOST SECRET.

I II.

From Military Attache Stockholm.

Date. 18.12.41.

Recd. 0500.

CIPHER.

Recirculation at
request of D.N.I.

Addressed The War Office.

020210. 17117 cipher 17/12.

Following from Military Attache for D.M.I.

Source is second person named in my memo; 700 information B3), Military Attache Berlin reports as follows; Russian front, Germans genuinely intended withdrawing from salients to shorten line for winter. This withdrawal essential as German winter equipment was proving inadequate. M.T. maintenance and transportation difficulties were excessive. Army's morale was wearing thin in places. Russians took advantage of withdrawals to put in strong attacks which caught Germans on wrong foot.

Germans considerably concerned at degree success attained.

2. Large scale reliefs are contemplated and have already commenced. Eastern front will fall into three clearly definite sectors; (a) stabilizing fighting front, say Leningrad Pischon - Ciarkov - Mariupol.

(b) First line reliefs area say Reval - Smolensk - Crimea.

(c) Rest and refitting area East Prussia - East Poland where barracks accommodation has been prepared at high pressure.

Troops will be allotted to (a) (b) or (c) in inverse proportion to extent of which that have been decimated by battle.

3. Finnish front. In spite of rumours source confirms German troops on Finnish front have not and will not be reduced but reliefs will occur.

4. Berlin. Military Attache does not find that declaration or war on U.S.A. has produced undue despondency in Berlin. Acquisition of Japan as an ally was regarded appreciable compensation and war with America had long seemed inevitable.

5. Sweden. Germany is enraged at another refusal by Sweden to permit passage of German troops to Finland via Sweden.

Four large German troop transports have recently been put out of commission, one by collision, and two by standing off Sweden. In one of latter 1000 horses were drowned owing to holds (?word omitted)ing.

This has made need to use Swedish railways even more acute. In fact 3rd Mountain Division which is in bad shape and is to be sent back home is still stuck at Kemi.

/Swedes.....

13
544

Swedes are feeling pretty confident that they are in no immediate danger and German winter manoeuvres to take place Norwegian frontier in new year are not causing concern.

6. North Africa. Military Attache Berlin states he has heard from a good source that Rommel has telegraphed that he may find it necessary to abandon Cyrenaica entirely. Large convoy sunk complete east of Malta contained immensely valuable supplies including some 100 tanks for Rommel. This defeat was attributable to fact that Italian warships escort failed to locate and take over convoy.

One of the objects of present German pressure on France is to prevent a similar catastrophe by acquiring Bizerta and thereby obtaining shortest possible sea crossing.

1925/17

Advance copy sent D.N.I.

Recd. from War Office 0331/19/12.

War Office distribution:-

D.D.M.I. (1)

M.I.3.3a.3b.3c.14 (3)

M.O.1.2.4.5.

Admiralty (W.R.)

Foreign Office (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck)

Air Ministry (A.M.C.S.)

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (T)

A.C.N.S. (W)

N.A. to 1st S.L.

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.C. (2)

D.D.I.C.

D.N.I. (4)

D. of P. (2)

Hd. of M.

E.P.S.

D.S.D.9.

W.D.

I.P. (2)

MMC.

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.9th, 13th
21st, and
22nd, M.T.B.
Flotillas.Composition and allocations. Details.
(D.D.O.D. C. 1258A/17 to R.A.C.F.).WESTCOTT for
Gibraltar.WESTCOTT is to be exchanged with CAMPBELTOWN the latter re-joining W.A. Command as soon as possible after relief by WESTCOTT.
(2) C.in C. Western Approaches is requested to sail WESTCOTT for Gibraltar as early as practicable.
(3) WESTCOTT is fitted with Hedgehog A/S mounting. (D.O.D. (H), 2027A/17).Co-operation with Russia.SHUSA
SHIKA
(M/S
Whalers).

Your 1931A/11/12. Russian Admiral requires following alterations to be made (details). Questions of stability and fuel stowage are involved as explained to him but he wishes alterations carried out. SHUSA will be ready to sail for Greenock 22/12 and SHIKA 27/12 ex proposed alterations. Request immediate decision whether this extra work is to be completed at Aberdeen or at Clyde. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1628/17 to Admty.).

Movements.Z.5.You are to return to Rothesay on completion of present escort trip.
(Capt. S.7 0952A/17 to Z.5.).MANXMAN.

Route for MANXMAN through Plymouth Command. (C.in C. Plymouth 1026/17).

BERWICK.Hvalfjord arrival. BERWICK.
(A.C.I.C. 1058N/17). *See also p-547*PRETORIA
CASTLE.PRETORIA CASTLE reports three oil purifier bowls not received. Request efforts be made to trace and despatch to S.O.W.P. Greenock to arrive not later than 21/12, otherwise ship cannot sail on 22/12 as arranged.
(S.O.W.P. 1230A/17 to Admty.).AIGLON
LORD GREY.

Sailed AIGLON, LORD GREY in accordance with Admty. 1933/26/8 amended by 1652/23/9 and C.in C. W.A. 1146/11. Approx. E.T.A. Fayal 31/12.

(N.O.I.C. Greenock 1234A/17). *See also p 554.*

/LEDA.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.- Contd.LEDA.

Expect to pass Bolshoi Oleni 0145C/18th speed 14 knots. E.T.A. Gorodetsky 18th.
(LEDA, 2331C/17 to S.B.N.O. North Russia, KENT, 1st M/S. F.)

Operations.Biscay
S/M Patrol.

P.C.S. 049° 10', 005° 37', 041°, 9. R/V
0920A.

(REGENT, 0001A/17.) *(Rothesay - Risk List)*
My 0226A/16. Sailed ALECTO. ALECTO intends to overtake BOARHOUND, O.10, H.31, H.34, and take over duty of escort to submarines a.m. today. BOARHOUND will return to Campbeltown on relief.
(Capt. S.7, 0031A/17.)

My 0226A/16. Sailed BREDA and H.43 at 0430A/17. O.9 delayed 48 hours by defects.

(Capt. S.7, 0431A/17.)

Capt. (S) 7 X 4/02. Have assumed duty of escort at 0715/17.

(ALECTO, 0716A/17.)

Arrived 1008 REGENT.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 1033/17.)

F.O.S. 2341A/15. Sailed O.10 at 2100A/16.

O.9 delayed 48 hours at Rothesay by defects.

Z.5 sailed 0700/16 on escort duty, returning Rothesay on completion.

(Capt. S.7, 1146A/17.)

S.5's 1411A/16.

A. When REGENT is ready, request you will sail her for patrol in 47° 16' N. 6° 24' W., routed by route J between 48° 30' N. and Lat. 47° 30' N. Request C.O. may be shown C.B. 040137 chart Z.74 before sailing.

(F.O.S., 1153A/17 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

(1) Intend to sail P.36 passing Needles at 1615/18 for patrol in accordance with F.O.(S) 0117A/16 during by day routed as follows to 49° N. 6° W. and thence as ordered by F.O.S. proceeding Gibraltar on completion.

(Capt. S.5, 1803A/16.)

A. On passing Wolf Rock S/Ms proceed submerged by day by lettered routes indicated, thence direct to patrol positions as follows. Details.

B. S.B.R. arranged from 1200A/18 until further notice in areas 51 and 73 south of lat. 50° N., Area 56 west of 05° W., Area 75 east of 14° W., Areas, 52, 54, 76.

C. URSULA arrives in position 13 a.m./20th from south-westwards.

(F.O.S., 1906A/17 to S/Ms Area A.) *See p. 554*

A. In the event of breakdown submarines proceeding to Bay of Biscay should normally return by their outward route as far as latitude 49° N. thence direct to Falmouth, reporting E.T.A. about 30 hours before arrival when possible.

/B. Should ...

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Biscay
S/M Patrol.
(Contd.)

B. Should another submarine be proceeding outwards along the same route, the homeward submarine should transfer to the nearest unoccupied route. URSULA should proceed clear to the southward of position 14 thence by route J. *See p. 554*

C. Submarines must bear in mind the probability of mutual encounters and must of course not be misled into assuming that a submarine encountered steering a north-easterly course is enemy. (F.O.S., 1929A/17 to S/MS Area A, URSULA.) F.O.S. 2342A/15.

A. Submarines have been allocated to following patrol positions in Bay of Biscay.

B. H.50, 06; H.28, 07; H.33, 08; P.39, 09; OBERON, 10; OTWAY, 11; O.21, 12; JUNON, 14.

C. H.31, 02; H.43, 03; O.10, 04; H.34, 05.

D. URSULA, 13.

E. Submarines should arrive in their positions as follows. Para.D. 20/12; Para.B. 21/12; Para.C. 22/12.

(F.O.S., 1954A/17.)

Operation
"Anklet".

Return to Scapa.

(A.C.O.S., 0006A/17 to TIGRIS.)

Scapa arrivals. 0952 SPEEDWELL from Greenock. 1004 SCOTT from Z.A. 1041 HARRIER from Rosyth. 1013 GUDRUN MAERSK escorted by ACANTHUS and EGLANTINE from Liverpool. 1055 KRAKOWIAK from Plymouth.

(A.C.O.S., 1201A/17.)

Scapa arrival TIGRIS escorted by STELLA PEGASI.

(A.C.O.S., 1527/17.)

Scapa arrivals. 1342 LAMERTON from Falmouth.

1655 PRINCE ALBERT and KUJAWIAK.

(A.C.O.S., 1801A/17.)

RUBIS
Patrol.

F.O.S., 1828A/15. For 20/12 read 21/12.

(F.O.S., 1133A/17 to Capt. S.9.)

My 1828A/15 and C. in C. H.F. 1057A/16.

Object on passage to patrol and while on patrol to attack and then report enemy cruisers and above and to attack U-Boats. Object on return passage in accordance with F.S.B. two.

(F.O.S., 1729A/17 to Capt. S.9.)

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

C. in C. H.F. 1202A/16. Intend to leave Hvalfiord on completion of oiling about 1700Z today to relieve NORFOLK on patrol "White".

(BERWICK, 1308Z/17.)

1700 sailed BERWICK.

(AC.I.C., 1942N/17.) *See p. 545.*

War Diary]17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations - Contd.Exchange of Prisoners.

Request that all copies of operation J.W. may be destroyed by fire and destruction certificates rendered to C. in C. Portsmouth. The standing instructions should not be destroyed. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 1647A/17.)

C.W.61 shelled.

BLENCATHRA reports:- C.W. 61 arrived. Nothing to report apart from usual shelling resulting in minor damage to hull of CRICHTOUN and one very slight casualty in Deal. T.O.O. 1145/17. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 1726A/17.)

P.38 Patrol.

P.38 is to be ordered to Plymouth proceeding on the surface at discretion to prepare for a patrol off Cherbourg.

B. She is to be sailed p.m./20 to patrol in vicinity of position 49° 53' N. 1° 47' W.

C. Object to attack and then report enemy cruisers or battle cruisers.

(F.O.S., 1857A/17.)

Proceed forthwith to Plymouth to refuel and complete with provisions as quickly as possible.

(2) R/V end of Q Z S 278 not earlier than 0900/18, keeping 10 miles off Lizard Head.

(Capt. S.5, 2050A/17 to P.38.)

(a) My 1050A/14 (i) amend route as follows. Details.

(b) Cancel Capt. (S) 7 1624A/14. H.32 has been diverted to Portsmouth.

(c) Keep East of Meridian of Land's End from 1200/18 owing to movements from vicinity of Wolf Rock to Southward.

(Capt. S.5, 2213A/16 to P.38.)

Cable laying.
(M.L.MACKAY)

Sailed STELLA POLARIS and DRANGEY escorting Cable ship MARIE LOUISE MACKAY northabout to Ballinshelligs Bay, escorts returning to Belfast on complete.

(F.O.I.C. Belfast, 2015A/17.)

HAZARD.
SPEEDY.
Engagement
off Cape
Gorodetski.

My 1840/C. Enemy force not sighted except for gun flashes but estimated to consist of 2 destroyers who maintain a high rate of fire with star shells and high explosives for 15 minutes. HAZARD and SPEEDY retiring behind smoke screen. Have lost touch with SPEEDY who was last seen proceeding at high speed on approximate south-westerly course. Have returned to Cape Gorodetski and intend to remain in the vicinity till daylight and carry out further sweep of searched channels to investigate reports of obstruction where SPEEDY parted sweep today.

(HAZARD, 2035C/17 to S.B.N.O. North Russia, Reptd. 18 C.S., 1st M/S. F., SPEEDY.)

/In action ...

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War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.HAZARD.
SPEEDY.
Engagement
off Cape
Gorodetski.
(Contd.)

In action 010° 14 miles Gorodetsky with enemy surface craft. Cannot find HAZARD. Am returning for damage repairs to gun. 2 casualties. (SPEEDY, 2045A/17 to S.B.N.O. North Russia.) HAZARD at 1840C/17 reports being attacked by unknown enemy unit in position 068° 12' N. 41° E. HAZARD is in company with SPEEDY carrying A/S patrol prior to meeting P.Q.6. No further signal received from HAZARD or SPEEDY. KENT with 2 Russian destroyers sailed from Kola Inlet with orders to intercept possible raiders or destroyers. (S.B.N.O. North Russia, 2147C/17 to Admty.) Gunfire and searchlights reported from your estimated position at 1845C today. Have you anything to report. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 2150C/17 to HAZARD.) HAZARD's 2035C/17. LEDA proceeding now to R/V HAZARD. LEDA and HAZARD will await arrival P.Q.6 off Gorodetsky, (S.O. 1st M/S. F., 2359C/17 to C.S.18, SPEEDY, HAZARD.)

British Air Activity.Bombing
operations.

On day 16/12 no operations took place. On night 16/17, 70 A/C bombed Wilhelmshaven, 15 A/C attacked the Naval Units at Brest where bursts were seen in the dock area, 21 A/C bombed Ostend, and 5 attacked the harbour works at Dunkirk. (H.Q.B.C., 1510/17.)

Enemy Air Activity.Convoy.

Enemy aircraft are attacking "Uphill" in 51° 42' N. 1° 21' E. (Nore W/T, 0804/17.)

ROSEMARY
attacked
ZEELAND
damaged
on 16/12.

1. ROSEMARY attacked by two Heinkel 115 Floatplanes 6 miles east of St. Govans light vessel at 1800A/16. ROSEMARY reports attack driven off at close range and believed one aircraft shot down.
2. Dutch Motor Coaster ZEELAND attacked by one A/C believed Heinkel 115 Floatplane 5 miles W.N.W. of St. Govans light vessel at 1815A/16. Two bombs dropped. Vessel sustained some damage from near misses.
3. Both attacks from very low level. No enemy aircraft were being plotted by C.H.L. at these times. ROSEMARY first sighted 2 unidentified aircraft believed to be the above at 1730. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1609A/17.)

/Blarrick ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity - Contd.Blarrick
Camp bombed
on 16/12.

At about 1930/16, 4 bombs were dropped on Blarrick Camp (Tregantle) causing following damage. Only one minor casualty. (S.C.E. Devonport, 1725/17.)

Convoy
"Wheel".

Help "Wheel" 275 in 49° 27' N. 2° 36' W. (Plymouth, 1825/17.)

Mining.Hvalfiord.

Your 1834Z/16. Aircraft minelaying suspected in Hvalfiord. VERITY detailed by S.O. H.F. to meet you at entrance to Fiord and proceed ahead of you at high speed. (A.C.I.C., 0444N/17 to BERWICK.)

WELSHMAN.

Nothing to report. E.T.A. Milford Haven 1400. (WELSHMAN, 0855/17.) Arrived WELSHMAN. (N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1503/17.)

Off
Aldborough
on 16/12.

Add to my 1830/16. One Dornier 17E and one Heinkel 111 each seen to drop long cylindrical objects. Both aircraft strongly engaged before objects were dropped. Heinkel set on fire in starboard engine but not seen to crash. (GUILLEMOT, 1018A/17.) (C. in C. Nore, 2220A/17.)

II Trawlers
for Yarmouth.

Your 1550A/16. Not approved as great importance is attached to working up. Should situation deteriorate reinforcements will be sent. (A.C.N.S. H., 1227A/17 to F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth.)

Sweep off
Dover.

Trawlers TAIPO and KINGSCOURT sweeping between Dover and Dumpton. Expected time of departure 1715, expected time of return 0330/18. (V.A. Dover, 1549A/17.)

Thames
Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1242/17. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1720/17.)

Sweep by 9th
M/S Flotilla.

S.O. 13th M/S's 1505A, 2 laps swept by 9th M/S. One British M. Mark One mine swept and drifted into unswept water. 11 similar mines exploded in sweep. 4 sweeps destroyed. Estimate one mile B S 26 cleared. Concur in S.O. 13th M/S's remarks regarding position of this line. (S.O. 9th M/S. F., 1721/16 to C. in C. Nore.) /Operation ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining - Contd.Operation
H.J. 2.My 1348/17. Operation H.J.2, para. 9.
Amend position (D) to 047° N. 005° 12' W.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1932/17 to N.O.I.C. Milford
Haven, WELSHMAN.)Humber.3 magnetic and 2 acoustic mines exploded today.
Details.
(F.O. Humber, 1951A/17.)Blyth.Blyth port closed. Suspected minelaying.
Estimated time of opening 1200 tomorrow.
(N.O.I.C. Blyth, 2143A/17.)Tyne.Port closed owing suspected enemy minelaying.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne, 2145/17.)Enemy Intelligence.Brest.At 1015/17 a single indistinct photo shows
PRINZ EUGEN at same berth as yesterday protected
by Boom and camouflage in position. Floating
crane not now seen alongside.
GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST, latter only part
photoed, usual drydocks. GUEYDON Unit usual
berth. Rest of port not photoed owing camera
failure. M/V 450-500 ft. departed anchorage
south of Rade and not seen elsewhere.
(PRU St. Eval, 1330/17.)
A.M. 1649A/16. PRU at 1015 shows no change.
(D.D.I.C., 1635A/17.)Enemy Unit.Enemy unit unknown reported 60° 12' N. 41° E.
(Murmansk W/T, 1840C/17 to F.O.S.)Navigational.N.W.Scroby
Buoy.Missing from station. Report confirmed.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1255A/17.)62 C.
Buoy.Light extinguished.
(VORTIGERN, 1345A/17.)Casualties and Defects.BLACKFLY,
CAPE MARIATO,
PAYNTER.BLACKFLY, CAPE MARIATO and PAYNTER arrived with
defects.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1143A/17.)

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects - Contd.S.S.
MACBETH.MACBETH is to be towed to Belfast.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1343A/17 to ZWARTE ZEE.)VANOC.Cancel my 1028A/16. ^{H.T. n.w.D.} VANOC will not sail due to defects.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1545A/17.)Shipping and Convoys.O.N. 48
O.N.46.Your 1752N/16. Number of convoy should be O.N.46.
(D.T.D., 0611A/17 to A.C.I.C.)LA NOUNE.My 1700/16. Sailed.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0930/17.)H.M.
Convoys.Your 1915A/15. Proposal to run H.M. convoys is concurred in, escorts being provided from Holyhead and Milford Haven escort forces. Para. 2 concur, subject to remarks on paras. 3 and 4. B.B. convoys formed of ships from H.X. convoys will normally contain a large proportion of tankers, thus requiring double escort. It is therefore most unlikely that a third A/A ship would be available for a B.B.(H) convoy at the same time. It is therefore proposed that H.X. convoys should be reformed as B.B.(fast) convoys and that any ships from Holyhead capable of convoy speed should be sailed to R/V with it. Ships with insufficient speed to remain at Holyhead for next B.B.(slow).
(F.O.I.C. Belfast, 1024A/17 to C. in C. W.A.)O.S. 18.
O.S. 19.To avoid two convoys sailing from Liverpool on same date intend to sail O.S.18 on 18/1, O.S.19 on 30/1.
(C. in C. W.A., 1116A/17.)P.Q.7.My 1059N/12. Following ships of P.Q.7 not yet arrived LOWTHER CASTLE, EMPIRE ACTIVITY, and ANEROID.
(A.C.I.C., 1151N/17 to C. in C. H.F.)O.S.16.My 1114A/17. Amend to read O.S.16 sails 5/1.
(C. in C. W.A., 1726A/17.)U.R.1.Reykjavik arrived U.R.1, 1800N/17.
(N.C.S.O. Reykjavik, 1753N/17.)

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

C.T. 8.

My 0646/12 para. 2. Due to delay in completion date of repairs to BERGENSFJORD sailing date of C.T.8 is postponed by three days.
(D.S.T., 2039A/17.)

T.C.16.

My 2311A/13. Request you sail HAVELOCK, SHERWOOD, BLYSKAWICA, and NEWMARKET to meet T.C.16 and retain WALKER, WITHERINGTON, and VERITY as screen for RODNEY. HAVELOCK is required to refit in U.K.
(C. in C. W.A., 2146A/17 to A.C.I.C.)

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.IMPERIALIST. Departure for Y.I. (V.A.C.N.A. 0811A/17 to Admty.)URSULA. My 1823/16 departure URSULA A.M. Only such A.M. QZ affecting passage held. (F.O.C.N.A. 0832A/17 to Admty.)
Your 1817A/16 acknowledged. URSULA has your 1736A/16 and Q.Z message for Portsmouth Friday. (F.O.C.N.A. 2018A/17 to F.O.S.) *See p.p 546 & 547*Fuelling,
P. Delgada. ROCKROSE, JASMINE arrived Ponta Delgada 0930 G.M.T. HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER, LIGHTNING left 0900 G.M.T./17th. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 0945/17 to S.O.I. Gibraltar).Suspicious
ship. At 1045/16th A/C on passage to Gibraltar sighted about 30 miles N. of Farilhoes Island small ship resembling Dutch Skoot steering 200°. (F.O.C.N.A. 1001A/17 to Gibraltar Force).Sweep by
D.19. Swept through 0619 position at 0700. My position 1015, 290° Spartel II. Course 290° 18 knots. Oil patches over wide area. Request air co-operation. (Capt. D.19, 1018A/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)SCOTTISH. Your 2020A/16 (N.T. in W.D.) Owing to 7 hour delay in obtaining check of position I did not commence search until 1030. May I continue beyond 1500? Sea N.W. 25 Wind North 4. Weather Report 9080. (SCOTTISH, 1130A/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 2020A/16. Regret no result. Weather Report. (SCOTTISH 2000A/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)AIGLON.
LORD GREY. Following is repetition my 1236A/17 (begins) Addressed Admiralty repeated C.C. W.A. C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.I. F.O.C.N.A., N.O.I.C. Simons-town, N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada S.M. for British Vice-Consul Horta, N.A. Lisbon, from N.O.I.C. Greenock. Sailed minesweeping Trawlers AIGLON and LORD GREY in accordance with Admty. 1933/26/8 amended by 1652/23/9 and C. in C. W.A. 1146/11/12 approx. E.T.A. Fayal 31/12 (coal required). (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1238A/17 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada for B.V.C. Horta, N.A. Lisbon). *See p. 545*MANXMAN. My 1838/16. Sailed MANXMAN at 1615/17. MANXMAN will signal her E.T.A. Milford Haven 12 hours beforehand. (F.O.C.N.A. 1632A/17 to Admty.)

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic-Contd.

→ OLTERRA.
PLUTON.

Italian Tanker OLTERRA discharged at Algeciras into Spanish Govts. Tanker PLUTON on 16/12 and former is now in Ballast. PLUTON sailed a.m./17 laden without applying for Navicert, destination unknown. (S.O.I. Gib., 1736A/17 to N.A. Madrid).

? PLUTON.
* PAUT
(Spanish)
→ OLTERRA.
(Italian)

Spanish Fleet Oiler PAUT left Algeciras laden 0845 cargo believed ex. Italian tanker, OLTERRA at ?1445. She was sighted in 35° 34' N. 06° 28' W. steering 220°. (S.O.I. Gib. 1835A/17 to Admty.)

* No ship of this name.

See p. 602

PLUSOAK.
? PLUTON see p. 602.

Your 1625/17 (N.T. in W.D.) PLUSOAK will not state destination says she is Spanish Warship under Government orders. Course over 4 hours indicates Canary Islands. Am returning to Gibraltar. P.C. and S. 035° 07' N. 007° 04' W. 050° 12. E.T.A. 0700/18. (LA MALOUINE, 1845A/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)

FARADAY, etc.
for Freetown.

Your 1828A/16. In view of U-boat situation West of Gibraltar and great value of FARADAY these ships should not be sailed until a strong escort can be provided through the danger area. (A.C.N.S. (T) 2156A/17 to F.O.C.N.A.)

South Atlantic.

W.S.12Z.

Further transshipments necessary. Revised disposal of vessels. Details. (D. of S.T. 0125A/17 and 1902A/17 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown). See Lion Copy.

Following from Mideast addressed War Office. (Begins): Mov. 1/38619 16/12. In view of diversion W.S.12X request that if possible arrangements be made to disembark the drafts and details for Mideast in WEST POINT, WAKEFIELD, and ORIZABA to (group missing) about 9450 (?1430) at Durban or any other suitable point for on carriage. Agreed. (Ends). 2. It is quite impracticable for W.S.12X to be accepted at Durban at same time as W.S. 12Z. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1440Z/17, to C. in C. E.I. (R) Admty. C. in C. S.A., N.L.O. Durban).

/Enemy.....

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

DT 20/11/1941

OUT.

MOST SECRET

To: P.S.T.O. Simonstown
repeated

Date: 17.12.41.

555A

C. in C. East Indies
C. in C. South Atlantic
P.S.T.O. Egypt.
P.S.T.O. India.
F.O.C.R.I.N.
IMPCON Durban
S.T.O. Durban.

Naval Cypher(A2.)

From: D. of S.T.

IMMEDIATE to Simonstown and Durban only.

Regret that for operational reasons further transshipments ex W.S.12 Z are now necessary.

2. Following is revised disposal of vessels of W.S.12Z:-

(a) To continue to Suez - ORDUNA

(b) To turn round at Durban - MATAROA, MONARCH OF BERMUDA,

ARUNDEL CASTLE, EMPRESS OF ASIA

(c) To proceed definitely to Bombay - CAPETOWN CASTLE, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, DEUCALION, ADRASTUS, EMPIRE STAR,

(d) To proceed provisionally to Bombay but with possibility of diversion to Malaya - NARKUNDA, AORANGI, SUSSEX and ABBEKERK.

3. On this basis following personnel require transshipment and onward conveyance from Durban.

<u>Ship</u>	<u>To Middle East.</u>	<u>To India</u>	<u>To Malaya</u>
ARUNDEL CASTLE	686	-	-
MATAROA	673	99	-
MONARCH OF BERMUDA	36	479	1771
EMPRESS OF ASIA	1736	608	-
NARKUNDA	3	1188	942
CAPETOWN CASTLE	-	-	872
EMPRESS OF JAPAN	33	-	1045
DUCHESS OF BEDFORD	2	-	788

/4. Details ..

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

555B.

-2-

4. Details of personnel earmarked for Malaya are being communicated by War Office separately.
5. Personnel earmarked for Malaya other than those already in HARKUNDA should be accommodated in AORANGI and IEDRAPOERA
6. Details of transshipment of personnel for Middle East and India are left to you.
7. As AORANGI is now continuing voyage, one of ARONDA, EASTERN PRINCE or JOHAN DE WIET may not be required for West Indian personnel. If so she should be used for South African Middle East personnel.
8. Agree with War Office.
9. P.S.U.O. Simonstown pass to Impeon Durban.

0125A/17.

For D. of S.T. (164)

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.H.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
A.C.N.S. (W)
N.A. 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.
D.A/S.W.
I.F. (2)
W.D.
Duty Captain (2)
Hd. of H.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
N.I.D. 10 (Pay. Cdr. Wilson.)
D.T.L. (M)
D. of S.T.

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

Date: 17.12.41.

To: P.S.T.O. Simonstown.
Repeated ~~to P.S.T.O. East Indies. 342.~~

- C. in C. South Atlantic. 64.
- S.T.O. Durban.
- P.S.T.O. Egypt.
- P.S.T.O. India.
- C. in C. Eastern Fleet. 643
- F.O.C.R.I.N. 356.
- Impeon Durban.

Naval Cypher (C).

From D. of S.T.

~~IMMEDIATE to Simonstown and Durban only.~~

My 0125/17. Position has now changed further.

2. Personnel for Malaya are now as follows:-

Ex EMPRESS OF JAPAN	1,059
MONARCH OF BERMUDA	1,792
CAPETOWN CASTLE	259
NARKUNDA	714
DUCHESS OF BEDFORD	14

Total 3,838

3. These personnel should be accommodated in RORANGI and NARKUNDA which together with SUSSEX and ABBEKERK are now intended to proceed direct to Malaya.

4. INDRAPOERA will be available for South Africa/Middle East personnel.

5. Agreed with War Office.

6. P.S.T.O. Simonstown pass to Impeon Durban.

1902A/17
for D. of S.T.
(546)

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.I. D.N.I. (4)
- 2nd S.I. D.S.R.
- 5th S.I. D. of L.D.
- V.C.N.S. D.N.A.D.
- A.C.N.S. (E) D.A./S.W.
- A.C.N.S. (F) I.P. (2)
- A.C.N.S. (G) W.D.
- A.C.N.S. (W) Duty Captain (2)
- N.A. 1st S.L. Head of Mo
- D. of P. (3) D.F.S.D.
- D.O.D. (F) D.D.I.C.
- D.D.O.D. (F) E.P.S.
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic-Contd.Enemy
Transmission.

At 0253/17 Ricochet E 5104 35 17th, Simonstown
334 3rd class, Durban no zero (? signal), check
bearing Simonstown D.A.N. 355 3rd class.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0307Z/17 to Admty. C. in C.
S.A.)

NAILSEA MOOR
Suspicious
Ship.

Following has been read. 02.13 S. 03.27 W.
Follow suspicious vessel. (Takoradi Radio,
0825Z/17).
Following has been read. QQQQ Merchant Ship
Raider. NAILSEA MOOR. (Takoradi Radio,
0859Z/17).
Sighted vessel on starboard bow about 5 miles
nearly bow on. We altered course port, she
turned bow on. We put her (?dead) astern and
she remained bow on. We waited about 10 minutes
other vessel remained bow on and message was
sent. About 5 minutes after sending message
she turned stern on and when out of sight we
cancelled message. Steamer was about 10,000
tons 3 parts loaded grey hull and deck work.
Fore and main masts short orange mast by funnel.
Similar to modern Empire boats. Master.
(NAILSEA MOOR, 2030/17 to Admty. C. in C. S.A.)

INDOMITABLE.

My 1155Z/16 is being passed to you.
(C. in C. S.A. 1008Z/17 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown)
Admty. 1944A/16. Concurred INDOMITABLE fuelling
Capetown. My 1155Z/16, cancel positions (E),
(F) and (G) INDOMITABLE is to proceed direct
to Capetown from position D. (C. in C. S.A.,
1113Z/17 to C. in C. A.W.I., INDOMITABLE

3rd B.S.

On reaching 19° N. alter course for new position
X. 011° N. 017° 40' W. thence to Freetown
omitting position (B). To avoid convoy O.S. 13,
also due Freetown 21st, you should arrive
Freetown as soon after daylight as possible. A
trawler burning dimmed navigation lights will
be at the end of the swept channel from 0400Z/21.
(C. in C. S.A. 1227Z/17 to R.A. 3 B.S., (R)
BRILLIANT, HURWORTH, Admty. Escort O.S. 13).

/WILDWOOD.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic-Contd.WILDWOOD.
EAST INDIAN.

Following U.S. Flag ships are discharging cargo by lighters on coast Liberia.

(A) S.S. WILDWOOD at Marshall (06.07' N. 10.23' W.) until 7/1.

(B) S.S. EAST INDIAN at Fisherman Lake (06.47' N. 11.24' W.) until 24/12. 2. These two ships are landing bulk of material for airport in Liberia for movement of American aircraft to Middle East Their safety is therefore of great importance as loss of cargoes would delay completion six months. (D.O.D. (F) 1701A/17 to C. in C. S.A.)

S.L. Convoy
Telegrams.

Ref. C.B. 04024 Art. 82. To assist in allocation of destination of ships sailing in S.L. Convoys request advance sailing telegrams may be despatched not less than 4 days or more than six days before S.L. Convoy sails. (D.T.D., 1707A/17 to N.C.S.O. Freetown).

Local
Protection.

Consider reasonable protection can be provided with Corvettes, S.D.F. vessels and aircraft co-operating. (C. in C. S.A., 1811Z/17 to Admty. (R) C. in C. E.I.)

CROMARTY
FIRTH.

Your 1108Z/15. CROMARTY FIRTH did not sail in O.S. 12. (D.T.D. 1844A/17 to C. in C. S.A.)

PRESIDENTE
MITRE.

My 2137Z/13 PRESIDENTE MITRE left Buenos Aires 1900 G.M.T. today 17th. All Japanese crew have been taken off but there are 4 Japanese and 1 German aboard who are naturalised. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 1941Z/17 to Admty.)

R.A.3. B.S.

Admty. 2125/14. Rear-Adm. Bonham-Carter and staff should return to U.K. in S.L. 96. (Naval Secretary 2109A/17 to C. in C. S.A. (R) R.A.3.B.S.)

Reported
U/B Base.

Your 1429Z/10 (Establishment of supply base for submarines and raiders in vicinity of Florianopolis) so far no confirmation. (R.O. Florianopolis 2130Z/17 to S.O.I. Montevideo.)

/1.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic-Contd.

1. U.S. Minister in Liberia has asked U.S. Govt. for protection of radio stations at Harper and Pan American Airways developments as Vichy troops reported near Liberian borders.
2. Request cannot be met by American War Dept. but latter regard this radio and airport development important to maintenance of communications between U.S. and Middle East.
3. Liberian Govt. whilst desiring to remain neutral will interpret neutrality benevolently in favour of Allies.
4. Grateful your views and if you can assist in this problem. Provision of troops before emergency would of course require previous diplomatic arrangement.
5. Will B.A.D. Washington please cable details protection required to G.O.C. in C. West Africa with copy to Admiralty.
(W.O. 2200/17 to G.O.C. in C. W. Africa (R) B.A.D.)

Mediterranean.Encounter with Enemy Fleet.Enemy Fleet.

P.C. and S. of enemy 2 large vessels (type unknown), 335° AURORA 50. Enemy is formed in single line ahead. No. of destroyers screening enemy is unknown. (Med. A/C 0040B/17).
Following has been received. (Begins) Unknown number of destroyers and larger units P.C. and S. 039° 32' 017° 39' 140° 20 knots. 2245B/16. (ends). (C. in C. Med. 0606B/17 to Med, Fleet.)
Following has been received, (begins) Large numbers of destroyers, possibly heavy ships. P.C. and S. 039° 17' 018° 00' 160° 14 knots. 2358B/16. (Ends). (C. in C. Med., 0608B/17 to Med. Fleet amended 0936B/17).
Following received from Mediterranean A/C. P.C. and S. of 3 Battleships, 7 Destroyers, Position 36° 32' N. 20° 8' E. Course 155°. Speed 10 knots. (Nore W/T 0825/17 to Whitehall W/T).
Blenheim 1006/17, see 1535/B/17.

*part from
UTMOST**has UNBEATEN.*

/Force B.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Encounter with Enemy Fleet-Contd.Force B.

(1) Intend to sail Force "B" consisting of NEPTUNE, KANDAHAR and JAGUAR at 1500B today to reach $032^{\circ} 40' N.$, $016^{\circ} 06' E.$ at 2300B with second special Wellington co-operation.

(2) After reaching above position Force will sweep on N.E. course keeping south of latitude $034^{\circ} N.$ (3) Object intercepting of Tripoli (Libya) Convoy. (4) Torpedo Bombers will attack merchant ships if situation appears suitable.

(V.A. Malta, 1102B/17 to C. in C. Med.)

3 enemy battleships, 7 destroyers, $036^{\circ} 32' 020^{\circ} 08'$ course 155° , 10 knots, at 0825Z/17.

(Capt. S.10 1109B/17 to TORBAY amended 1239B/17).

At 1122B/17, 3 Battle ships, 7 destroyers in $36^{\circ} 22' N.$ $20^{\circ} 08' E.$, course 220° , 10 knots.

2 Cruisers and 3 destroyers are estimated 8 miles ahead of battle fleet. (V.A. Malta, 1330/17 to Med. Fleet.)

P.M. R/C.

(1) One Maryland shadowed battle fleet already reported to land back by 1830 from A.

(2) 2 Blenheims searching to west and north of enemy battle fleet for convoys.

(3) Wellington call sign "Diplomat" M. 9 V. co-operating with you after dark.

(N.O.I.C. Malta, 1412B/17 to F.O. 15 C.S.)

Following has been read from Mediterranean aircraft. P. C. and S. of enemy - 2 - KIAQS $33.36 N.$, $23.53 E.$, - $170^{\circ} - 4.$

(Nore W/T 1520/17).

P. C. and S. of 3 enemy battleships, 2 cruisers, 10 destroyers, 4 merchant vessels, $35^{\circ} 47' N.$ $18^{\circ} 11' E.$, 140° 12 knots.

(Med. A/C 1525B/17 to FLIRT).

Departure NEPTUNE, KANDAHAR, JAGUAR.

(N.O.I.C. Malta 1532B/17 to Admty.)

Following is correct text 1006 from Blenheim F (begins) H.Q. Malta from Blenheim F, 2 merchant vessels, 1 cruiser, $035^{\circ} N.$, $011^{\circ} 40' E.$, 000° , 10 knots, T.O.O. 1006 (ends).

(Malta C.C.O., 1535B/17 to Med. Fleet.)

Force K.

V.A. Malta's 1102B/17th received.

Force K operating West of $019^{\circ} 30' E.$ tonight 17th/18th. Alexandria force searching through M.E. positions. Numerous torpedo bombers and H.L.B. attacks. 1 T.B. A/C exterminated to date. (F.O.C. 15 C.S. 1543/17).

/Force B.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Encounter with Enemy Fleet-Contd.Force B.
revised
orders.

Cancel ?V.A. Malta's 1102B/17. Force B cover BRECONSHIRE's passage to Northward during night.

(2) Unless enemy battleships separate or other good reason exists do not seek out battleships but go for convoys. Force K being detached to deal with Tripoli (Libya) convoy, C.S. 15's force to go for Benghazi ships.

(3) Failing further R/C report it is estimated convoys will separate in approx. $034^{\circ} 55' N.$ $018^{\circ} 40' E.$ and proceed for Benghazi at 15 knots, Tripoli (Libya) convoy at 16 knots. Battle fleet is likely to steer towards $033^{\circ} 00' N.$ $018^{\circ} 00' E.$

(4) BRECONSHIRE proceed direct passing South of Hurd Bank. (C. in C. Med., 1545B/17 to C.S. 15., NEPTUNE, S.O. Force K, BRECONSHIRE (R) Mediterranean Fleet, etc.)

3 Battleships, 2 Cruisers, 10 Destroyers, 4 Merchant Ships, P.C. and S. $035^{\circ} 47' N.$ $018^{\circ} 11' E.$ 140° 12 knots at 1525B/17. (V.A. Malta 1615B/17 to S/M's on Patrol.)

P.C. and S. of enemy, 2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 12 destroyers 4 merchant vessels, $35.35 N.$

$18.16 E.$ 180° , 12. (Malta, 1625B/17 to G.B.2.)

14 Vessels, type unknown, Destroyers or larger Warships 4 Merchant Vessels, $170^{\circ} 10' 150^{\circ}$, $35^{\circ} 23' 18^{\circ} 33'$. (D.R.6 Aircraft of V. Squad 1630/17 to R.7 M?).

M. NR. one. Position $35^{\circ} 25' N.$ $18^{\circ} 16' E.$ $180^{\circ} 12.$ (Med. A/C of U Sqdn. 1707/17 to Hal Far).

Enemy Attack.

Scale of attack has become heavy and expenditure of ammunition high.

(F.O. 15 C.S. 1735/17 to C. in C. Med.) LNUN 300 $15 33.52 N.$, $18.38 E.$, based on reference position of the Admiral at 1700.

(C. S. 15 1745/17 to Malta W/T).

My 1745. 2 battleships, enemy course is $180^{\circ} 33.50 N.$, $18.37 E.$, based on reference position of Admiral at 1700. (C.S. 15 1755/17 to Malta W/T).

Battle
Fleet
Action.

Enemy battle fleet has opened fire.

(C.S.15 1755/17 to Malta W/T.)

Enemy course is 180° . (C.S.15 1756/17 to Malta W/T).

2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 12 destroyers, 4 merchant ships, P.C. and S. $035^{\circ} 35' N.$ $018^{\circ} 16' E.$ $180^{\circ} 12$ knots at 1625B/17.

(V.A. Malta 1817B/17 to S/Ms on patrol area A.)

/Following.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Encounter with Enemy Fleet-Contd.

Following has been read from C.S.15. Am not in touch Enemy Battle Fleet now. (Nore W/T 1847/17 to Whitehall W/T).

Force Q engaged at 1755 with a (? second) enemy force in position 53.50 N. 18.37 E. First enemy force about 70 miles to northward. Endeavour report both forces to C.S. 15. (C.C.O. Malta 1856B/17 to Med. A/C, (R) C.S.15.)

BRECONSHIRE.

p541

Unless you have good reason to contrary BRECONSHIRE should be sent to Malta covered by such force as you think fit. Risk for her must be accepted. (C. in C. Med., 1922B/17 to C.S.15 amended 1949B/17).

My 1922B/17. Alexandria force and Group 1 should carry out purport of my 1545B/17 if possible but be East of 021° 00' E. by daylight.

Force K should return to Malta likewise. (C. in C. Med. 1935B/17 to 15 C.S. (R) S.O.

Force K, BRECONSHIRE?)

10 unknown 515 AURORA 45 235 15.

(Med. A/C, 2252/17).

O.E.B.D. Enemy's centre bears 525° 38 miles from AURORA. (Med. A/C 0053B/18).

Enemy's centre bears 510° 18 miles from AURORA. (Med. A/C 0110B/18).

Enemy's centre bears 305° 40 miles. (Med. A/C 0151/18).

Following R/C's arranged by Naval Cooperative Group 2nd. Area South of 055° 40' N. Swept out to longitude 020° 00' E. by 0900 approx.

Southerly half of search repeat 5 hours later. Blenheims aircraft standing by to provide bomber cover. (C. in C. Med., 2258/17, F.O. 15 C.S. (R) N.O.I.C. Malta, S.O. Force K., Naval Co-op. Group 201).

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.UNIQUE
R. of P.

(I) UNIQUE reports no patrol S.E. of Spartivento Cape but constant E-boat patrol South of Del Armi when weather permits. (II) At 0900/14 heard 3 explosions at about 4 seconds intervals, about 5 minutes later depth charges commenced, over 40 being dropped in half hour. (III) At 0927/14 in 037° 45' 015° 43' sighted 1 battleship with 1 destroyer astern bearing 250° 12000 yards steering 125° speed 20. (IV) Closed at full speed 50 feet, at 0943 vessels approached at speed from N.W. and counter attacked with depth charges. UNIQUE went slow to 80 feet and at 0945 sweep wire scraped aft and immediately fired indicator charges, this was followed by 14 very small close charges, enemy heard over head but no further action. (V) Enemy definitely battleship class unidentified.
(Capt. S. 10 0150B/17 to Capt. S.1.)

"A" Lighters.

R.A. Alexandria 1758/16. If 2 or more A lighters are ready sail them to join "Loose" off Mersa Matruh with (? orders) to return to Mersa Matruh if they cannot keep up with (? convoy.)
(S.O. Force I. Tobruk, 0913B/17 to N.O.I.C. Mersa Matruh.)

Russian Ships
ex Black Sea.

My 1737B (1737B/5 intended re^A MIKOTAN attacked by E. Boats and torpedo A/C off Kastelerizo.) I have now received report from Lieut. Harkness and again stress necessity for defensive armament to be supplied to second batch. (ii) Please inform Adm. Miles.
(N.A. Ankara 1132B/17 to Admty.)

Russian Oil
for Turkey.

Your 1140A/12. Following from Adm. Kelly. Turks hope for (?total) delivery of oil approx. 65000 tons. Of this 24000 tons have been delivered by first batch of tankers. 2. Total remaining stowage available is just over 36,000 tons provided composition of the cargoes is such as to enable tanks to be completely filled. 3. Recommended that not more than 30,000 of oil products are loaded in second batch for Istanbul. 4. Please pass to Adm. Miles and C. in C. Med.
(N.A. Ankara 1214B/17 to Admty.)

Petrol and
Oil for
Malta.

Your 1300/4 para 2. Governor Malta reports requirements as 10,000 tons aviation spirit by 31st March if 9 months' reserve is to be built up.

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.General.Petrol and
Oil for
Malta -
contd.

Para.3. Consideration will certainly be given to running white oil tanker with black oil tanker if situation develops so that 10 knots convoy is practicable. Governor Malta suggests that 3,000 tons cased aviation spirit (100 Octane) should be held ready for shipment and presumably also requires a proportion of cased (Bows?) group missing ND Kerosene to be held ready. Seven days notice will be given for commencement of unloading a Malta Convoy. V.A. Malta pass to Governor Malta/Admiralty pass to D.S.T. Air Ministry War Office.
(C. in C. Med. 1301B/17 to M.E.S.C. G.H.Q. M.E. Admty. S.M.S.C. V.A. Malta Group Missing Alexandria H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Aden S.T.O.

Request reply to my 1845/19/11.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt 0913/13 to D. of S.T.)
Your 0223A/16 (Sent by W/R on receipt of P.S.T.O. Egypt's 0913/13) Following is a repetition of my 1845/19/11. Ref. C. in C. Med's 1219/18/10 (Red Sea including Aden to form part of Mediterranean Station.) Request instructions as to whether sea transport organization of Aden and Gulf of Aden ports are to be under control of P.S.T.O. Egypt.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt 1345/17 to D. of S.T.)

Enemy M/V.

6,000 tons ship Derna 290° 1215.
(201 Group H.Q. 1515/17 to Med.A/C B.C.8.)
My 1515. Fighters report 6,000 tons ship ANTIOCH X
Derna. (201 Group 1615/17 to Med. A/C B.C.8.)

*X not identified.*Libya.

Military Situation Reports, Group 4, Cositrep 57. (C.in C.M.E., 1658/17 to W.O.) ~~See Lion Copy.~~

Taranto R/C

Taranto R/C 17/12 blank owing to weather.
(V.A. Malta 1701B/17 to C. in C. Med., B.1.)

/Malta ...

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

Malta Air
Report.

C.S.R. Malta to 1600 hours 17/12/41 16th, 6
Blenheims attacked M/V Argostoli. 2 returned
engine trouble. Remainder bombed, near misses.
Night 16-17/12. 5 Naval aircraft Catania
Aerodrome. Bombs dropped. Some seen to
explode.
12 Wellingtons attacked Naval Shipping Taranto
bombs dropped, target obscured no results
observed, many flashes seen through cloud.
1 Aircraft bombed alternative Brindisi, bursts
near Naval H.Q. and railway station.
(H.Q., R.A.F. Malta, 2130/17.)

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Burma.

Situation report.
No enemy activity. Evening 13/12 patrol near Myawadi encountered Thai post, shots exchanged. Refugee from Thailand via Victoria Point states transporting 75 feet submarine in sections to Fakchan river. Previous report from this source unreliable. Believed, however, Japanese there considerable number outboard motors suitable local craft. Unconfirmed report 2,000 Japanese Ranong area operation up coast may be contemplated. Air R/C over Northern Thailand negative. (G.O.C. Burma, 0040/17 to W.O.)

Reinforce-
ments from
India.

Personal A.C.M. Brooke-Popham repeated Troopers for C.I.G.S. Possibility of reinforcements Singapore must be engaging your earnest attention and I am anxious to co-operate.
I imagine possibility of ships getting to Penang or to Singapore via Malacca Straits is remote in view of enemy air threats. Would it be advisable or possible to send troops by Sunda Strait to Batavia or Sumatra for onward shipment as opportunity offers? Early decision necessary as shipping necessarily takes some time. We could make one or possibly two infantry brigade groups available if your need is urgent but do not wish to despatch more troops unless reinforcements required to turn scale.
(C. in C. India, 0040/17 to C. in C. Far East).

EXETER.

Colombo arrival 0325Z/17.
(S.O.(I) Colombo, 0638Z/17 to Admty etc).

ELLENGA.

My 0914/15/11 ELLENGA which is due to sail December (?20) is now required to proceed to Rangoon and not Singapore. May ship join B.R one convoy off Madras 30/12. This date is based on convoy (?sailing from) Bombay 22/12.
(S.S.T.O. India, 0709Z/17 to C. in C. E.I.)

Limits of
E.I. Stn.

(1) Genl. Wavell has suggested in view of new conditions under which India controls military and air defence of Burma, limit of East Indies Station should be altered to include Coast of Burma and Andamans and Nicobar Islands.
(2) I feel this request is made chiefly because General is anxious there should only be 1 Naval Authority with whom he has to deal.
(3) I therefore propose to reply in following sense.

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Limits of
.E.I. Stn.
Contd.

(a) In opinion of C. in C. E.F. and myself, Far East situation is too fluid to allow of a specific alteration of station boundaries at this stage. (b) As a provisional measure it has been agreed, first that India should consult me on all Naval matters regardless of the area concerned; and, secondly, that I should assume full control of all convoys and shipping between India and Rangoon.

(c) In problems which arise off my station and in all matters of higher policies I will consult C. in C. E.F.

(d) Do you concur?

(C. in C. E.I., 0742Z/17 to C. in C. E.F. (R) Admty). Conur. (C. in C. E.F. 0150Z/18).

Mine watching.

In order to complete minewatching requirements in Persian Gulf S.N.O.P.G. requires 15 Motor Launches speed 7 to 8 knots, capacity 25 men each. Purpose to convey minewatching personnel. Can you provide. (C. in C. E.I. 0958Z/17 to F.O.C.R.I.N.)

WESTERNLAND.
DEMPO,
FELIX
ROUSSEL.

Transports sailed from Bombay 16/12. in BA 11 due Aden 21/12. Details. (S.S.T.O. India, 1132Z/17).

GUARDIAN,
KIRRIEMOOR,
LAOMEDON,
ATREUS.

In view of decision not to proceed with defences of Nancowry, (corrupt group) following programmes for ships concerned.

(1) GUARDIAN. To complete to capacity with standard nets (corrupt group) fuel, stores and provisions. Fit F and Q coils. Embark indicator nets for Diego Garcia and proceed to lay these at end of December.

(2) KIRRIEMOOR. See my 1214/15 para. (3).

(3) LAOMEDON. To be retained as a supply and personnel ship for Addu Atoll and Diego Garcia. The need for such a ship has greatly increased following recall of CHANGTE.

(4)*(?Mine Carrier ATREUS). To load to capacity C.M. loops and to remain at Ceylon in readiness for any further commitment.

(C. in C. E.I., 1304Z/17 to C. in C. E.F., Admty)

* Arrive Colombo 8/12 - (Pick up)

Diego Garcia.

Admty. Message 1202/12 and 1330/23/8 para. (F)

(1) The work at Diego Garcia is not progressing (G) The present position is that the M.N.B.D.O. have (a) landed the guns, mountings M.T. and stores (b) Towed the guns and mountings to Battery site (c) Erected and fitted fresh water tanks and (d) Supplied various stores and equipment for installing defences which Indians (corrupt group) lacked.

/(II)...

War Diary.

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Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Diego Garcia.
Contd.

(II) Despite this assistance it is becoming more and more evident these Indian troops have neither the makings nor the training required for a task of this nature.
(III) In view of increased urgency of matter I propose to suggest to A.R.M. India that force at short cut (The M.N.B.D.O. Contingent allocated to Nancowry operation) be sent to assist at Diego Garcia as soon as they have completed their recuperative leave i.e. early in January. (C. in C. E.I., 1356Z/17 to Admty).

Chinese Action.

Your 22/7 and 29/7 of 14/12 and W.O.57779 (M.O.1) of 13/12 (0155/14). Understand Chinese action in the direction of Hong Kong already arranged and seems obviously desirable. Invasion of Indo China will probably consolidate French to resist and direct effect would seem to be small. Indirect assistance advocated in para. 4 of your M.292 dated 9/12 might be valuable. Best role for Air Forces is protection of Rangoon and of Burma Road. (C. in C. India, 1815/17 to M.A. Chungking).

Need for Blenheims.

Following for C.O.S. When may we expect Blenheims Unless they can arrive very soon it may be too late. Japanese aircraft seen massed in Bangkok aerodrome could not be attacked owing to there being no bombers. It is essential we should reduce scale of attack on Rangoon by counter bombing or else reinforcement by sea may become impossible and aerodrome unusable. Defence of Burma depends mainly on keeping open Rangoon which is only port and keeping aerodromes in action. Loss of oil supplies from Burma will also be serious. (C. in C. India, 2205/17 to W.O.)

China.

LE TRIOMPHANT. Sailed (~~Sourabaya~~^{Sydney}) 15, following is proposed programme.

Arrive	Place	Leave.
23/12	Noumea	25/12
27/12	Brisbane	28/12
3/1	Port Darwin	4/1
7/1	Sourabaya	8/1
9/1	Batavia	

Passed to F.N.F.L. Noumea by British Consul Noumea. (LE TRIOMPHANT, 0025Z/17 to C. in C. E.F.)

/Japanese...

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Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - Contd.

Japanese
at Lutong
and Miri.

16/12. Kuchung reports today 10 large warships with tanker at Lutong and Miri. Asiatic employer Tanjong Barum W/T stations reports seeing Japanese flag over Lutong. No further confirmation received at 1300 G.M.T./16.
(C. in C. F.E., 0101/17 to W.O. (R) C. in C. A.F)
Report from Kuchung states that 9 warships Japanese, 1 Tanker 1 submarine are off Miri. Troops landed at D.S. (3 letters missing) Ram Poiy 20 miles north of Miri. One warship off Lutong. Time 1335Z/16. (C. in C. F.E., 0133/17 to W.O. (R) C.Z.M., C. in C. A.F.)

Dutch and
Oil Schemes.

Your 2356/16. I have no reason to doubt their assurance which has been given to me most definitely and would be in conformity with full support they are giving us in other directions. (C. in C. E.F., 0131Z/17 to Admty)

Malaya.

Military Situation report. (Adv. H.Q. Malaya 0622/17 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

G.H.Q.
Far East.

G.H.Q. Far East has been moved by C. in C. from Naval Base to (?vicinity of) combined Army and R.A.F. H.Q. near Singapore Town.
2. The (?Far East) Combined Bureau's function giving warning of war with Japan has ceased on outbreak of hostilities. The one intelligence organization of G.O.C. and A.O.C. have proved inadequate.
3. I have therefore consented to removal of Army and Air Sections of Far East Combined Bureau to new G.H.Q. (?Far East) and have made arrangements to keep their Heads in (?daily) touch with Capt. on Staff Singapore.
4. Capt. on Staff Singapore is informing D.N.I. of position as affecting Naval Section, Far East Combined Bureau. (C. in C. E.F., 0647Z/17 to Admty)

Hong Kong.

There appear to be movements of enemy troops eastwards towards High Junk, Clear Water Bay areas. Further enemy parties have landed on Lammas. (G.O.C. Hong Kong, 0922/17 to C. in C. F.E., W.O.)

Movements.

Singapore arrivals 17/12 Oiler ELMOL Netherlands Sloop SOEMBA, SCOUT, ELECTRA, EXPRESS, Batavia arrival and departure. ENCOUNTER, STRONGHOLD. TENEDOS. (S.O.(I) Singapore, 0957Z/17 to Admty).

also p. 570.

Night...

MOST SECRETMOST SECRETMESSAGE 0622/17th DecemberINFrom Adv. H.Q. Malaya C.
CIPHERDate 17.12.41
Time 0600Addressed War Office.
MOST IMMEDIATE

019966. 0/227 cipher 17/12.

To War Office Armindia Army Melbourne Defender
Wellington G.H.Q. F.E. C. in C. E.F. A.O.C. Lancaster
P.S. to H.E. the Gov. repeated 3 Corps Singapore
Fortress A.I.F. Malaya A.A. Defences Kuching from Adv.
H.Q.M.C.

SITREP 1630 hrs. G.M.T. 16/12.

Kedah. Heavy fighting continues. 11. Ind. Div. is now on line of R. Muda with 12 Ind. Inf. Bde. protecting its right flank. Losses in men and equipment have been heavy. This coupled with exhaustion of troops has necessitated a further withdrawal behind line of R. Krian where it is hoped to be able to reorganise force. In consequence it will no longer be possible to hold Penang from which some troops have already been drawn to join in Kedah battle. 6 Ind. Inf. Bde. cut off yesterday and strength reduced to a few hundreds. 15 Ind. Inf. Bde. also very weak. Intention is to cover Perak tin mining area which lies mostly round Ipoh. Kelantan some patrol encounters. Aerial photos today show large concentration of enemy transports off Kota Bharu and Patani. Estimated reinforcements one Div. for Kelantan and Kroh front. Also 40 fighters seen on the Kota Bharu aerodrome. Kuantan Johore Singapore nothing to report. Sarawak Kuching now report casualties to forces from Miri were 3 killed and 11 wounded. Ten warships and one tanker reported at Lutong with three large warships at Belait. Landing has taken place at Miri. Likelihood Labuan being occupied shortly.

Air. Enemy air activity on a limited scale. Our Air Forces were engaged in routine recce. in direction 350 miles N.N.E. of Singapore with negative results. PRU Buffalo carried our recce. of area Grik Patani Tanjong Mas Kota Bharu Machang Gong Kodak. Adverse weather conditions hampered photography. Two type 96 fighters collided in taking off to intercept our aircraft. Aircraft similar to a Fiat BR 20 was sighted

twenty/...

MOST SECRET

twenty miles east of Pulau Redang.

0622/17

Advance Copies P.O. A.C.N.S.(F). N.A.1st S.L.
Duty Capt. D.O.D.(F). D.D.I.C.

Received from War Office 0920/December 17th.

1st Lord.	<u>War Office Circulation:-</u>
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A.C.N.S.(T).	M.O. 1, 6, 10, 2b, 12.
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Capt. Pim.	D.D.M.I.(1).
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Admiral Bailey.	
Admiral Bellairs.	
Admiral Chalmers.	
E.P.S.	
D.T.S.D.	
N.I.D.10.	

DF

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Movements.
- Contd.

Night 16/17th heavy mortar fire along water front between Star ferry and Taikoo. 14 Army light bombers raided island this morning and made two separate attacks first in Shankiwan-Wanciai area Garden Road and Central District. No military damage or casualties. Aircraft hitherto identified as participating in attack on Hong Kong are Navy R/C float planes type 94, Navy heavy bombers type 96, Army light bombers type 98, Army fighters type (?97). Largest formation seen 36 in initial attack Kai-Tak. Largest bombs dropped 250 pounds. (G.O.C., Hong Kong, 2130/17).

Shipping.

Your 1830A/15 not to A.C.N.B. Policy in A.M. 1915A/10 being followed with exceptions (A) Coastal tankers for Singapore and West Coast Malaya up to Port Swettenham are still running.

(B) These tankers are still loading from Soe Ampladjoc and Galak Papam.

(C) These Tankers must continue to run as long as possible.

2. British shipping has been withdrawn British North Borneo. Position of ships from Hong (? Kong) and Manila is not yet clear.

3. Ships are leaving Singapore independently as quickly as possible, being loaded first with as much rubber, tin and sugar as time permits.

4. 40 British ships ?including coasters of aggregate tonnage about 150,000 tons are still in Singapore. Only 1 of these are above 5,000 tons.

4 Norwegian ships including one about 5,000 tons one American above 5,000 tons and nine Dutch including two above 5,000 tons are also present.

5. DOLIUS and BELLEROPHON being escorted from Batavia to Singapore with urgent war stores.

6. All full tankers and WAR SIRDAR are clear of Malaya.

7. BRITISH JUDGE bringing diesel oil from Luadjoe to Singapore.

8. Your 2013/16 not to C. in C. E.I. or A.C.N.B. Arrangements have already been made to lift 18000 tons aviation spirit from Balwh Papan.

9. Malacca Strait still being used for ships of secondary importance. Valuable ships routed via Sunda. Possibility exists of not being able to use Malacca Strait if and when enemy bombing commences.

(C. in C. E.F., 1030Z/17 to Admty (R) C. in C., E.I., A.C.N.B.)

/Dispositions...

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - Contd.

Dispositions.

Allied ships in Far Eastern area. Local defence vessels are not included. A. British (i) DURBAN(?), DRAGON, EXPRESS, ELECTRA, JUPITER, VAMPIRE, SCOUT and TEVIOT BANK at Singapore. ENCOUNTER and THANET expected to arrive 18th.

(ii) STRONGHOLD and TENEDOS left Batavia 17th for Singapore escorting 2 motor vessels.

(iii) KUNGWU leave Nancowry 18th.

B. Dutch.

(i) Submarines K.12 and K.13 at Singapore. Netherlands Submarine O(?) 16 expected 18th.

(ii) Submarine K.11 K.17 O? 19 and O? 20 patrolling off East Coast Malaya.

(iii) Cruiser JAVA in vicinity Christmas Island.

(iv) ~~DE RUYTER~~ DE RUYTER, TROMP, PIET HEIN, and BANCKERT in South China Sea south of Equator.

(v) Submarines K.14 and K.16 in Carimata Strait.

(vi) (Destroyer ? KORTENAER) in Celebes Sea.

(vii) Destroyer VAN NES escorting S.S. NELLORE from (corrupt group+) to Batavia.

(viii) Destroyer EVERTSEN at Batavia.

* (ix) JANSSEN due Singapore 19th.

(x) Submarines K.10 and K.15 near Sourabaya.

C. American.

(i) 2 large submarines off Indo China Coast.

(ii) Cruisers BOISE, HOUSTON, auxiliary GOLD STAR destroyers STEWART, J.D. EDWARDS, ALDEN, JOHN D. FORD, EDSALL, WHIPPLE, PARROTT, BARKER OT (corrupt group+) at Sourabaya.

~~Destroyer~~ GEO. E. BADGER, cruiser MARBLEHEAD, seaplane tender LANGLEY, oiler TRINITY, destroyers BULMER, PAUL JONES, POPE, Patrol Boat ISABEL, submarine Tender HOLLAND, oiler PECOS passage to Sourabaya from Balik Papan. (iv) Other units not known. (C. in C. E.F., 1157Z/17 to Admty).

* ? M/V JANSSENS - (Req: at Batavia - (17/12) Not warship)

Situation and Appreciation.

B.A.D. Washington message 2035R/14. Statement by U.S. C.N.O. Strikes me as extremely pessimistic perhaps due to severe and unaccustomed shocks recently received by him. Singapore must not fall. Fall of Luzon would be distressing but not calamitous provided Singapore is held.

Two. Situation in Far Eastern Area is seen in three stages. Stage one. The present. We must hold with Army and Air to what we can in order to secure Singapore. Stage two. We must throw in military and air reinforcements to Singapore. Stage three. After arrival of reinforcements we must drive Japanese up Malaya Peninsula and hit them with air until arrival Eastern Fleet at Singapore. This is complementary to broad plan in my 0445Z/15.

3. Glassford's cruiser force is suitably based at present at Sourabaya but talking of retirement to Australia is tantamount to abandonment of Far East Area. He should be looking west and north not east and south.

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Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Situation
and
Appreciation
Contd.

4. Requirements in stage one are submarines and destroyers based Singapore. The nearest available are American. Requirements in stage 2 are cruisers in addition and Glassford's help in passing reinforcements through Sunda Strait. Am confident Dutch will help to their utmost ability. By end of stage 3 it is hoped U.S. Pacific Fleet will have taken offensive action and be moving west to link with our Eastern Fleet.

5. Ref. part 2. para. 4 of B.A.D. Washington's 2035R/14. Have consulted C. in C. Far East who strongly advises that this equipment should not stop in Australia. He points out that its arrival in Java would enable either Philippine Islands or Malaya to be either reinforced or supported depending upon the position at the time. This would not be the case if situated at Port Darwin.

6. Under existing circumstances suggest question in paras. 3, 4 and 5 above can only be taken up effectively in London or Washington.

7. Meanwhile urgent need for Singapore in addition to military and air reinforcements is more submarines and yet more submarines.

(C. in C. E.F., 1337Z/17 to Admty (R) B.A.D. A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B., C. in C. F.E.)

Need for
Air
Reinforcement

Following for Chiefs of Staff. Very grateful for all your promises of help but our ability to hold Japanese may well depend upon speed at which air reinforcements reach Malaya. Chief anxiety at present fighters, since 17 Buffalos here out of dwindling reserve unserviceable awaiting spares from America, which were coming by air but now may not arrive. 24 of the 32 Buffalos in Burma have similar defects. Fortuitous availability of wing of Hurricane fighters with spares in convoy W.S.12 Z now in Indian Ocean may well be solution if it is at once diverted to Java where I would propose it should be disembarked for erection and aircraft flown here. In this way effective units might be in action within six weeks. To tide over interim period could aircraft carrier now in Indian Ocean be made available to transport Kittyhawks and spares to be erected on board and flown here. Large air reinforcements later including bombers would be valueless if we cannot maintain intact operational aerodromes and maintenance facilities which will soon be open to heavy scale of air attack from bases in Kelantan and Kedah. (C. in C. F.E., 1354/17 to W.O. (R) C. in C. India).

/Enemy...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China. - Contd.Enemy
Intelligence.

- (1) Sighted by air R/C today Wednesday 01. 502 of Miri, one battleship or battle cruiser, one aircraft carrier, 3 destroyers, all stopped. In position 005° N., 112° E., at 0130Z, 3 China, one destroyer course 270°.
- (2) Japanese transports using 375 kc/s frequency.
- (3) Russian merchant ships report being bombed position 004° 55' N., (?106°) 45' E.
- (C. in C. F.E., 1436Z/17 amended 0201Z/18)

Hong Kong.

Summary No. 3 Saturday 13th. One float plane destroyed. Claimed by TERN confirmed by CICALA. Sunday 14th. Steady shelling of Island during day. High level bomb attack on Aberdeen, 8 bombs hit. Generating station hit, but no damage to machinery. During night THRACIAN grounded on way into Hong Kong. Refloated under own power. Ship proceeded and sank two river steamers in Kowloon Bay. Monday 15th. Further bomb attack Aberdeen. A.P.V. INDIDA (?INDIRA) sunk alongside. THRACIAN docked at Aberdeen. Steady shelling of Island during day. Tuesday 16th. 8 high level bombing attacks on Aberdeen. Very accurate from 20,000 feet. 9 hits in Yard, one salvo. M.L. 08 and GATLING burst out. THRACIAN target, unable to effect repairs THRACIAN, Nos. 1 and 2 tanks flooded and living accommodation forward. Regret obliged to undock ship, beach elsewhere, dismantle, using crew and armament where can best be employed. Most A.P.Vs. immobilised due to desertion of Chinese crews.

(Commodore, Hong Kong, 1511HI/17 to Admty (R) C. in C. E.F.)

Air Report.

Daily operational summary up to 1030Z/17/12. R/C Miri Area had object to locate and attack 13 warships reported in my Oprep 2 16/12. 1 aircraft carrier, 1 battleship or battle cruiser, 3 destroyers, stationary at Miri. 3 cruisers in position 120 miles W.N.W. Miri. Total aircraft involved 5 Hudsons 9 Glen Martins. A/S patrol for mine-layer Durian Strait. Aircraft involved 3 Sharks. Bombing attack carried out on ships Miri area no hits no near misses. Bombers saw at Miri 3 cruisers, 6 armed raiders or auxiliaries 1 tanker but no aircraft carrier. No fighters seen but fairly heavy A.A. fire from ships and land. Aircraft involved 6 Glen Martins and 5 Buffaloes from Sinkawang. O.C. Troops Kuching reports Japanese landings at Lutong and Baram point and 10 warships 1 tanker and 1 submarine at Miri Roads and 1 vessel off Lutong. Taiping and Kuantan being evacuated and demolished. Latter in view of imminent withdrawal of brigade. 4 Beauforts being returned to Australia, for crew training and conversion Laverton. (A.H.Q., Far East, 1823/17).

/Singapore...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.- Contd.Singapore
D/Y Guard.

Your 0902Z/15. If possible Admiralty civilian employees forming Dockyard guard should be enrolled as part of local volunteer defence forces. If this cannot be arranged they may be temporarily enrolled in R.N.V.R. with suitable ranks and ratings and borne on ships books with existing rates of pay. If possible uniform should be supplied.
(Hd. of N.L. 2001A/17 to A.S. Singapore.)

Hong Kong,
demand for
surrender
refused.

After short but relatively severe bombardment by enemy artillery and mortars coinciding with air raid Japanese sent across Staff Officers with flag of truce bringing written proposal for surrender on same lines as previous occasion in evident expectation our morale would be severely shaken. Letter was signed by G.O.C. Lt. Gen. Sakai and Naval C. in C. Vice Adm. Niimi. Envoy apparently genuinely surprised and disconcerted when proposal was summarily rejected. They left with hint that bombardment would be more indiscriminate than hitherto. Consider that renewal Japanese demand for surrender within such short period indicates that all is not well in their camp although it is difficult to say whether this is due to Chinese threat to their communications or to loss we have inflicted or to a combination of both. Morale civil population continues to improve and rice situation slowly getting better.
(G.O.C. Hong Kong, 2300/17 to W.O.)

PANSCANDIA.

My 2013A/16. If situation permits S.S. PANSCANDIA believed to be at Sourabaya should be sent to Balik Papan to load all stocks of Toluol fraction filling up with 87 - 90 O.N. and/or Benzex 96 O.N. for despatch to Australia. Master should be informed Charterers agree.
(D.T.D., 2307A/17 to C. in C. E.F.)

W.S. 12Z,
W.S. 12X,
D.M.1.

Following amended arrangements for W.S.12Z and W.S.12X are to be made.
2. Convoy of 4 ships NARKUNDA, AORANGI, SUSSEX, ABBEKERK, speed of slowest ship 16 knots capable of proceeding direct to the Far East from Durban, is to be formed as soon as transshipment from W.S.12Z already ordered has been completed.
(Convoy to be known as D.M.1, see 1931A/18.)

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Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

W.S. 12Z,
W.S. 12X,
D.M. 1.
Contd.

3. This convoy will contain No. 232 fighter squadron of Hurricanes, complete with ground personnel, and comprising 51 Hurricanes and 18 pilots. Also 85 A.T. Regiment, 6 heavy A.A. Regiment, and 35 Light A.A. Regiment. Total personnel 3838. C. in C. E.F. IS requested to chose port of disembarkation.
4. Middle East portion of W.S. 12Z is to proceed to Suez and Indian portion known as W.S. 12ZB to Bombay as already arranged.
5. W.S. 12X carrying 18th Div. to continue to Bombay pending final decisions as to destination.
(A.C.N.S. (F), 2335A/17 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.WARSPITE.

A.M.2201/27/10 and B.A.R.M's 1720/5. C. in C. A.W.I. is requested to make arrangements for WARSPITE to work up at Bermuda. 2. WARSPITE is to submit a programme through B.A.R.M. for passage to Bermuda. 3. B.A.D. Washington is requested to arrange transit of canal and supply of fuel at Balboa. (V.C.N.S. 0104A/17 to C. in C. A.W.I., B.A.D., B.A.R.M., WARSPITE.)

A.M.0104/17. Please ask C.N.O. if he could help by providing destroyer A/S escort for WARSPITE on leaving Bremerton until well clear to sea, and again on approaching the Canal. (V.C.N.S. 0138A/17 to B.A.D.)

My 1720/5. In view of altered conditions it is requested I may be given information with regard to route of WARSPITE on completion of her refit. Ship will be ready to leave U.S.A. on 10/1 but will not have carried out working up practice which would have been done at Honolulu and (?trials) involving about 6 days. Attention is invited to A.M.2201/27/10 regarding exchange of ammunition. Your 2242/9 not to C. in C. Med. Consider it most undesirable for ship to visit Vancouver. Such a visit will require local escort and will advertise sailing of ship. (B.A.R.M. 1002R/17 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med. etc.)

ST.CLAIR.

To continue with S.C.59 to prudent limit and then return to St. Johns N.F. ST. CLAIR acknowledge when clear of Convoy. (C.C.N.F. 0215Z/17 to BURNHAM, ST. CLAIR.)

H.X.165.T.C.16S.C.60Air Cover.

Operations 16/12. 3 Hudsons 11 Br provided outer A/S patrol for H.X.165. Over convoy 0805 G.M.T., convoy badly disorganized over area 30 miles. Aircraft signalled stragglers position main convoy. 1100 G.M.T. convoy becoming organized. Left convoy 1530 G.M.T. position TCMV 30 30. One Bolingbroke 8 Br Squadron provided outer A/S patrol for H.X.165. Over convoy 1525 G.M.T. 46 ships forming up. Left convoy formed up at 1722 G.M.T. position TCPS 30 8 50 7. Patrol not continued due to weather. 2 Cansos (R.C.A.F.name for Catalinas) 116 Br Squadron provided outer A/S patrol for T.C.16. Over convoy 1250 G.M.T. JDPS 2000. U.S. escort joined convoy 1355 G.M.T. position JDPS 2000 course 117°, at 1852 G.M.T. left convoy. One Bolingbroke 8 Br attempted Harbour entrance and inner A/S patrol for S.C.60 at 1214 G.M.T., cancelled due to weather. One Bolingbroke 8 Br attempted outer A/S patrol for S.C.60 at 1606 G.M.T., cancelled weather. (A.O.C. E.A.C. Halifax 0335G/17.)

/Midget ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.Midget
S/M.

Your 1246A/16, Midget submarine. Following details from U.S. Authorities. (N.O.I.C. Trinidad 0952Q/17 to Admty.)

CHICOUTIMI

Your 1100Z/16. Return St. Johns N.F. (C.C.N.F. 0952Z/17 to CHICOUTIMI.)

DIOMEDE.

Your 0700Z/(?12). On return to Balboa you should complete with fuel and make contact with S.O.W.I. if DESPATCH is present. On completion, transit canal and proceed at best possible speed on 4 boilers to Bermuda via Windward Passage. Remaining 2 boilers, preferably A.1 and A.2 should be ready for examination on arrival at Bermuda, where defects will be taken in hand. S.O.W.I. inform Commandant (corrupt group) Naval district. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1042Q/17 to DIOMEDE.)

QUEEN OF
BERMUDA.

Your 1611/21. QUEEN OF BERMUDA will leave Norfolk on or about 28/12. C. in C. A.W.I. is requested to give route instructions. (B.A.R.M., 1150R/17 to Admty., C. in C. A.W.I.)

St. Lucia.
U.S. Mission
for Martinique.
** CROWNSHIELD 15*
R.N. 1940 27 CHELSEA
In Home Water 16/12.

Arrival and departure 17th under inter-allied orders U.S. MEMPHIS, CINCINNATI, JOUETT, DAVIS, CROWNINSHIELD. U.S. Naval Mission flying to Martinique today from Washington headed by Rear Adm. Home to inspect ships, etc., as per recent agreement between Marshal Petain and Admiral Leahy. (R.N.O. St. Lucia 1230Q/17 to Admty.)

WYOMING
(French)

Your 1519Q/27/11. Intercepted letter shows ship arrived Martinique prior to 3/12. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1249R/17 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Washington
Report.

Washops No.7. (i) Hawaii. 3 S/M contacts reported yesterday off Oahu but no ships were attacked, no results apparent from D/C attacks. (ii) Gilbert Island. Reference Washops No.4 para.(iv), now reported that ships which attacked Tarawa were A.M.C. (iii) West Indies. On 14/12 aircraft from U.S. Cruiser BROOKLYN saw periscope in 016° 07' N. 060° 12' W. and dropped 4 bombs. Submarine was observed to (?start) steep dive. Two hours later BROOKLYN passed near fresh oil bubbles still coming to the surface. Submarine believed sunk. (J.S.M. Washington, 1337R/17 to Admty. etc.)

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

DEVONSHIRE
retubing.

Following is a repetition of my 1404R/15 :-
Your 1740/14/12. Tubes are available.
(B.A.R.M. 1349R/17 to Admty.)

MARSDALE.

My 2238Z/12 (?2232Z/12 intended) Docking
MARSDALE unavoidably delayed until 21/12.
Ship sailed for St. Johns N.F. on 17/12.
Advantage will be taken of extra time to complete
defects and boiler cleaning.
(C.O.A.C. Halifax 1359Z/17 to S.O.W.P.)

PANDORA.

My 1344/5. PANDORA expects to leave Portsmouth
N.H. for New London and working up practice 28/12
and sail for Halifax 8/1. C.O.A.C. Halifax and
C.C. Newfoundland are requested to take action
necessary as C. in C. A.W.I. 0912/4 and my
1500/2.
(B.A.R.M. 1410R/17 to Admty.)

ARCHER.

Is expected to complete trials P.M./23.
Proposed she should then proceed to Jamaica to
embark remaining Swordfish and carry out flying
on and off trials. On completion it is desired
ship should return to Norfolk to embark Martlets
which will then be ready. ARCHER is to propose
programme dates and C. in C. A.W.I. is requested
to confirm visit to Jamaica is concurred in and
issue route instructions.
(B.A.R.M. 1420R/17 to C. in C. A.W.I., ARCHER.)

BITTERSWEET.

Your 1455/16. Date is acceptable. Request
definite date as soon as practicable. Ship to
meet Pilot at usual R/V and time.
(B.A.R.M. 1440R/17 to C.C.N.F.)

O.N.47.

Task Unit 4.1.3 designated NIBLACK (Senior),
BENSON, H. P. JONES, EDISON, TARBELL.
(Opnav 1513/17 to Admty.)

Shipping.

Your 1725/15. Admty. 2334/15 and B.A.D.
Washington 1521/16. Instructions have been given
to N.C.S.O's West Coast Canada and U.S.A. to
route British and Allied other than U.S. ships
south of New Zealand when endurance permits.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1531Z/17 to N.Z.N.B.)

/Ship ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.

Ship overdue. My 2126R/6 (N.T.in W.D.) New York agents cable Barbados Ship not arrived U.S. Port. Vessel held American Ship Warrant carried 1230 tons scrap iron Master and nine of crew Finns.
(S.O.(I) Jamaica 1632R/17 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, C. in C. A. and W.I. B.A.D.)

U.S. Forces. Disposition. 15/12.
(D.O.D.(F) 1636A/17 to Cs. in C.)
See Tiger Copy. (Note.- This signal is a repetition of Opanv 1655/16 in Lion Copy.)

ELIN K. Your 2212Z/8 and my 1508A/10. Norwegian ELIN K arrived Durban 10/12.
(D.T.D. 1724A/17 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

PENOLVER. Have you any news of PENOLVER due Hampton Roads 9/12 from O.N.37?
(D.T.D. 1725A/17 to D.N.I. Ottawa.)
Your 1725/17. PENOLVER has not arrived this side. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2022Z/17 to Admty.)

See also next page

Shipping. Information received indicates U.S. and U.S. owned and controlled merchant shipping being held for routeing instructions in ports of Far East and India and East Indies area. Request any and all such ships not required in war effort when loaded for U.S. East Coast ports be sailed via Cape Town using British routeings.
(Opanv 1826/17 to C in C. Asiatic Fleet, Alusna Colombo (for C. in C. East Indies) Alusna Cape Town.)
Pass to N.C.S.Os. Masters of ships bound for Australasia via Panama should be warned to have sufficient bunkers for a leg of 7800 miles from Panama.
(D.T.D. 1847A/17 to A.I.G.26.)

COLONIAL assistance. My 1913/15. Master Portuguese COLONIAL now reports conditions normal and assistance not required. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1901Z/17 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

SERAFIN TOPIC. Algiers 15/12 (B.2) S.S. COZALLA formerly SERAFIN TOPIC left Oran noon/14.
(B.A.D. 1917R/17 to Admty.)

/Japanese ...

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.Japanese
aircraft.

Following information on Japanese air tactics employed against H.M. ships and in attack on Pearl Harbour obtained from Alusna, Singapore, and Navy Dept.
(B.A.D. 2003R/17 to Admty. etc.) See Lion Copy.

Casablanca
Intelligence.

Casablanca 15/12 (B.2) PRIMAUGUET was brought alongside ~~AMARA~~ now BOUGAINVILLE on 14/12 and transferred torpedoes and munitions. BOUGAINVILLE is to be used for convoy duty. (B.A.D. 2009R/17 to Admty.) N.I.D. Comment. When previously fitted as an A.M.C. prior to Armistice, BOUGAINVILLE ~~AMARA~~ ex VICTOR SCHOELCHER did not carry torpedo tubes.

PENOLVER.

Your 1933A/18 November PENOLVER has not arrived this side.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2022Z/17 to Admty.) *See previous page*

Oil Ship
for
Martinique.

My 1213R/11 (Re ship arrived Port Stanley 10/12 discharging oil-gaseous Standard Oil Co. Charter) St. Thomas reports ship being given clearance by U.S. Authorities for Guadaloupe and Martinique. (S.O.I. Kingston 2142R/17 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

NEA HELLAS.

Your 1941Z/16. Approved.
(D.O.D.(H) 2304/17 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

Australia and New Zealand.Flag of
A.C.A.S.

Flag of (?Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron) hoisted in CANBERRA 15/12.
(A.C.N.B. 0531Z/17.)

/Use of ...

2003R/17th December.

SECRET

M E S S A G E

IN.

From: B.A.D. Washington

Date: 18.12.41.

Recd: 1105.

Naval Cypher "D" by Cable

Addressed: Admiralty, Air Ministry, Navy Office
Melbourne, Navy Office Wellington.

709. Following information on Japanese air tactics employed against H.M. Ships and in attack on Pearl Harbour was obtained from ALUSNA, Singapore and Navy Department.

(i) Local bombing. 9 aircraft in close line abreast formation height 12,000 feet bombs dropped by signal excellent pattern. 500 and one thousand pound bombs used fitted with both instantaneous and delayed action fuses. Heavy A.P. bombs also used, those at Pearl Harbour appeared to be converted 15 inch projectiles.

(ii) Torpedo bombing. 9 aircraft formation lose height outside gun range, approaching in loose columns and deploy to wedge or loose diamond formation before making individual and apparently un-co-ordinated drops. Released from heights up to 300 feet and as close as one thousand yards. 18 inch and 21 inch torpedoes used which ran well in 40 feet of water. One torpedo recovered had tail fitting or drogue to prevent too great a depth. No evidence of magnetic pistol.

(iii) Dive bombing. Height release reported very low.

(iv) No armour on any plane shot down gun armament was 20 m.m. and 7.7 m.m.

Admiralty pass to Air Ministry.

1st Lord

1st S.L.

3rd S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (W)

N.A. 1st S.L.

Ops. (3)

O.D. (5)

I.P. (3)

D.S.D. 9.

D.A/S.W.

W.D.

D. of P. (3)

E.P.S.

D.N.I. (4)

M. (6) and for Air Ministry.

D.N.A.D.

2003R/17.

Advance copies Ops. O.D. O.I.C.

O.I.C. (3)

D.T.S.D.

D.M.W.D.

D. of L.D. (2)

File X.

War Diary.

17.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand - contd.

Use of
Carriers.

The lessons learnt in Spring exercise of 1939 and previous years in regard to Carrier operations should be invaluable in this Far Eastern War. We shall want all the Carriers you can spare and air Squadrons will need to be very quick off mark to defeat Japanese technique which seems to be efficient and very similar to ours. It remains to be seen whether U.S. Carriers technique will stand test of war.
(1st N.M., A.C.N.B., 0628Z/17 to Admty. for 1st S.L.)

AUSTRALIA.

Arrived Fremantle 2001Z/15.
(A.C.N.B. 0711Z/17 to Admty. etc.)

LE TRIOMPHANT.

Your 0602Z/16. F.F.S. LE TRIOMPHANT is now under the strategic direction of C. in C. Eastern Fleet.
(D.O.D.(F) 1328A/17 to A.C.N.B.)

581

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.MIGUEL DE LARRINAGA.

Arrived safely at Freetown on 14/12.
Had reported being shelled by S/M on 2/12.
200 miles S.S.W. of Azores.
(D.S.834, 17/12.)

BADALONA.
(Spanish.)

Following for information. Addressed BEDROCK,
(R) N.A. Madrid. BADALONA torpedoed and sunk
by unidentified submarine 8 miles off Motril
13/12 at 0900. French was language spoken by
submarine Officer who gave crew 10 minutes to
abandon ship. Submarine then fired 2
torpedoes.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0907A/17 to C. in C. Med., Admty.)

CASSEQUEL.
(Portuguese
torpedoed
15/12.)? 14/12 (BR 1337)
P. 157

CAMPION in 035° 40' N., 011° 30' W., at 0900/17
reports picking up of chief officer and 12
ratings from CASSEQUEL apparently torpedoed
on Monday 15/12. Also report stop MARIA AMELIA
at 0100/17 with 1731 men from CASSEQUEL on
board. Area has been searched for further
survivors.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1258A/17 to Admty. (R) N.A.Lisbon.)
Portuguese CASSEQUEL sunk by submarine believed
German A.M./15 in approx., P. 34° N., 12° W.,
bound for Lobito with general cargo and some war
materials. Can presence of British and Allied
submarines be denied?
(N.A. Lisbon, 1703/17 to Admty. (R) Gibraltar.)

Submarines Reported.

1943/16.

By D/F at 1943/16 G.M.T. position of U-boat
was 32° 00' N - 36° 00' N., 11° 00' W - 14°
00' W.
(D.D.I.C. 0038A/17 to Escorts of H.G.76, WISHART,
VIDETTE.)

1818/16.

By D/F at 1818/16 G.M.T. position of U-boat was
within 60 miles of 63° 00' N., 20° 00' W.
(D.D.I.C. 0039A/17 to ST. KENAN, BERWICK.)

0535.

D/F Bearing suggests Submarine in your area.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0535A/17 to STORK, WISHART.)

0915A.

1 S/M submerged bearing 190° distance 22 miles
course 270° my position 34.44 N., 13.36 W.
(STORK, 0915A/17 to Gib. C.C.O.)

/1306.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Submarines Reported.Contd.

1306. One submarine 060° 10' 180° 34.18N., 13.58W.
(DEPTFORD, 1306/17, to Gibraltar, Repeated STORK)

1044Z. Unreliable D/F bearings indicate that UNA or P.35 may have been reported by U-boat at 1044Z/17.
(D.D.I.C. 1313A/17 to UNA, P.35.)

Balearic Is.

My 1545/12. Investigation proceeding but nothing yet definitely ascertained. It seems probable that submarine has occasionally been fuelling and provisioning near Foradada from vessel proceeding Port Soller by night. Torpedo parts are being sent and assembled Port Soller.
(S.O.(I) Gibraltar 1315/17 to Adty.)

Estimated approximate positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1422A/17, 1423A/17.)

1401Z. D/F bearings at 1401Z/17 indicate that Convoy H.G.76 was probably being shadowed by a U-boat.
(D.D.I.C. 1538A/17 to Escorts of H.G.76.)

1650. 1 S/M 135 7 34.40 N 21.14 E.
(Med.) (Med. A/C 1650/17 to 201 Group.)

Submarines Attacked.By A/C.

Am over enemy submarine on surface in position 46.35 N., 3.42 W. Attacked with depth charges result unknown.
(A/C T., 0025/17 to 19 Group.)
Course of S/M 310°, speed 12 knots.
(A/C T., 0025/17 to 19 Group.)
PPP 2 Subs course 210° 12 knots lost contact after attack.
(A/C using Callsign W7 JT 0115/17 to 9 (?19) Group.)
A/C. T/502. Position 235° St. Nazaire 80'
(D.S.834.)

By EXMOOR.
U/B sunk.
(U.131)

One Submarine bearing 050° distant 5 miles course 000° my position 34.19 N., 13.48 W.
(EXMOOR, 1314/17 to Gib. W/T.)

/My 1306A.....

War Diary.17.12.1941.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked. Contd.U.131 sunk.

My 1306A. S/M^s sunk by gunfire from BLANKNEY EXMOOR. My position 034° 18' 013° 58'. (STORK, 1339A/17, to Gib. C.C.O.) STORK's 1339A/17. Well done. (C. in C. W.A., 1710A/17 to STORK, BLANKNEY, EXMOOR.)

My 1339A. U 131. 55 prisoners in EXMOOR and STANLEY. Prisoners confirm another U-Boat in vicinity. Am leaving BLANKNEY and EXMOOR to search until dark when they will sweep area (100%) to Gibraltar unless otherwise ordered. Weather report.

(STORK, 1519A/17, to F.O.C.N.A.)

I fully appreciate the important part played by AUDACITY and her aircraft in the destruction of the U-Boat today and deeply regret the death of the pilot, Sub. Lt. G.R.B. Fletcher. R.N.V.R. (C. in C.W.A., 2311A/17, to AUDACITY.)

By BROOKLYN
14/12.

J.S.M. Washington 1337A/17.
See America & West Indies.

By A/C.
(Med.)

My 1520. (N.T. in W.D.) Have attacked enemy with bombs level, no hits, suspect damage. (A/C 203 Sqdn., 1550/17 to 201 Group.)

By A/C?

BB Dropped 3 D.C's will remain 30 MINT 1629. (Liverpool, 1630/17, to 15 Group H.Q.) Position indecipherable. BBBB, nothing observed, am returning to base. (A/C R, 1645/17 to 15 Group H.Q.)

By MALLOW
19/10.

U.204 sunk
(cmd: 6843)

Their Lordships consider that your attack at 2046/19/10/1941, achieved the destruction of a German U-Boat. 2. They congratulate you your officers and ship's company on this success. (D.A/S.W 1702A/17 to MALLOW.)

By A/C.
2119/16.

Daily Summary Ops.(1) F.A.A. Swordfish A/S ASV search 15 miles around Cape Spartel 1830/16 to 0900/17. U-Boat attacked with 3 D/Cs (Mk.VIII) from 70 ft. Position 285° Spartel 9 at 2119/16. 30 seconds after explosion periscope emerged 10 yds. ahead of disturbance. (200 Group, 1730/17.)

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest at 1330A today shows PRINZ EUGEN still alongside but camouflage netting between ship and jetty has been removed. GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST are in their usual docks. The old French cruiser GUEYDON camouflaged as a HIPPER class cruiser was seen being towed in a south-easterly direction off the Anse de Poulmic. C. in C. H.F. considers that in the present strategic situation it is vitally important to continue the attacks on the enemy units at Brest with maximum strength.

The Russians are preparing 2 S/MS for despatch to U.K.

4 corvettes are now available for Patrols "White" and "Black"; 2 are normally to be on patrol.

British Air Operations.

101 aircraft attacked Brest last night.

About 1300 today a total of 39 heavy bombers with fighter escort attacked the enemy cruisers at Brest.

Mining

Enemy aircraft were engaged in minelaying last night in the Tyne and Humber areas. The Tyne was re-opened at 1052 today and Blyth at 1341A.

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Force K operated west of 19° 30' E., last night, to intercept the Tripoli convoy (see 17/12).

At 1158 today a force was reported in about 33° 15' N., 16° 50' E., covering 19 merchant ships which appeared to be bound for Tripoli.

URGE, UPHOLDER, P.31, UNBEATEN and SOKOL have been ordered to be in position tomorrow to intercept a force of 2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 8 destroyers which were in 33° 32' N., 17° 34' E. steering 040° at 1700B today and are expected to return to Taranto or through the Straits of Messina tomorrow. All available surface forces are to leave Malta at 1800B to attack about 0200B tomorrow. Wellingtons are co-operating.

At 0600B today 2 large disabled destroyers were in 33° 50' N., 17° 30' E., being towed stern first towards Navarin.

Four Swordfish last night attacked a 4,000 ton tanker escorted by a destroyer off Kelibia and claim 2 hits which caused explosion and fire. The tanker could not be found today and is presumed sunk.

UPRIGHT reports that at 0212/13 in 40° 9' N., 17° 4' E., she fired 4 torpedoes at 2 northbound ships escorted by a destroyer, and secured 3 hits on the leading ship and one on the other.

Libya and
Western
Desert.

Heavy weather has caused some damage to small craft. Heavy scale of minelaying by aircraft continues at Tobruk.

East Indies.

The situation in Burma is causing anxiety. The Admiralty today asked C. in C. Med., whether he could despatch immediately one of the 6 Blenheim squadrons he is preparing for the Far East, without seriously affecting operations "Crusader" or "Acrobat".

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign. - Contd.

There appear to be 5 or 6 U-boats hunting H.G. 76 EXMOOR and BLANKNEY will have to leave shortly for fuel.

At 2230A today A/S trawler HAARLEM sighted and engaged a U-boat off Carnero; all available destroyers and M.Ls. from Gibraltar were sent to hunt, without success.

KINGSTON CYANITE attacked a U-boat contact with depth charges at 2355 today in 31° 18' N., 29° 26' E. The U-boat is thought to have been seriously damaged or sunk. C.S.15's force also attacked and possibly damaged or sank a U-boat at 2300 today in 31° 27' N., 29° 20' E.,.

Neither confirmed by com: 6243

During the past 6 days 7 contacts on enemy S/M have occurred in the West Indies and along the Atlantic seaboard.

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

GULLMAREN
TUNAHOLM

Swedish ships GULLMAREN and TUNAHOLM expected to leave Gothenburg for South America at 0900/19.
2. Speed 14 knots routed as in A.M. 1143/7/10.
3. Ships should not be molested if following this route.
(D.O.D.H. 1046 A/18).

R-class
S/M's.

As result of inspection and subsequent full consideration of qualities of American R class I consider they are suitable for training service only. As submarines are urgently needed for this purpose early information is requested how many of this class will now be available for transfer.
If obtainable intend to employ two of these to relieve L.27 and O.15 in Canadian waters when the latter proceed to refit. A written report will be forwarded on the suitability of both R and S Class for our service and of the work entailed to fit them for such service.
(F.O.S. 1151A/18 to Admty.).

6th M.T.B.
Flotilla.

A.M. 1524/12. The 6th M.T.B. Flotilla should be retained at Dover pending further instructions.
(D.D.O.D. C. 1728A/18 to V.A. Dover).

Co-operation with Russia.

Loan of
Russian
S/M's.

Your 1719A/25. Instructions have been given to Admiral Golovlo to prepare two (2) Soviet Submarines for despatch to U.K.
(Ad. Miles 1859D/18 to Admty.).

Movements.

P.38.

Capt. S.5. 2050/17. My position is 049° 40' N. 006° 56' W. course 085°. E.T.A. outer end Q Z 3 278 1100/18.
(P.38 0001/18).
My 2050A/17. Complete your passage on surface at your discretion and R/V with trawler CORNELIAN at 1000/18 at end Q Z 3.
(Capt. S.5.0245A/18 to P.38.).

LEDA.

LEDA sailed to Murmansk.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 0045C/18).

WESTCOTT

Sail WESTCOTT in accordance with Admiralty 2027A/17

/routed....

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

WESTCOTT
-Contd.

routed as follows to Gibraltar.
(C.in C. W.A. 1048A/18 to Capt. D. Londonderry).
Sailed WESTCOTT in accordance with C.in C. W.A.
1048A/18. E.T.A. Gibraltar 1500A/23. On
arrival boiler hours of WESTCOTT will be approx.
600.
(Capt. D. Londonderry 1914A/18).

AGAMEMNON

AGAMEMNON expects to be ready to sail p.m./19
for Port Z.A. Request surface escort. If none
available propose to sail AGAMEMNON with
Fighter protection only.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1144A/18).

P.36.

Cancel para (1) of my 1803A/16 and substitute:
intend to sail P.36 passing Needles at 1615/18
diving by day routed as follows to (F) 043° N.
012° 15' W. thence to Gibraltar as ordered by
F.O.C.N.A.
P.36 has orders to remain East of 005° W. until
2000A/19.
(Capt. S.5 1203A/18).

FAULKNOR
FORESIGHT
MATABELE.

After refuelling FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT, and MATABELE
are to proceed to Scapa at best speed that
endurance and weather permit.
2. F.O.C.N.A. and C.in C. W.A. are requested
to route them accordingly.
(A.C.N.S.(H.) 1222A/18 to D.S.).
Onward route to Scapa as follows.
(C.in C. W.A. 2201A/18 to FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT,
MATABELE).

NORFOLK

NORFOLK arrived Hvalfjord 1530.
(A.C.I.C. 1728N/18).

ALAUNIA
CHITRAL
WORCESTERSHIRE

A.M. 1307A/11.
ALAUNIA, CHITRAL, and WORCESTERSHIRE will call
at Freetown.
Amend speed of slowest ship to read 13½ knots.
Ref. para. 4 delete WIVERN.
(D.O.D.H. 1729A/18).

RODNEY

The strategic situation has undergone great
changes since I saw you and I much regret it
will not be possible to spare RODNEY to give
leave before end of January. H.M.S. RODNEY will
be withdrawn to Scapa soon for practice and to
get stores and provisions.
(C.in C. H.F. 2042A/18 to RODNEY).

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Exercise
"Striker".

C.in C. Home Forces has been informed that you will render assistance to Army Commands with exercise "Striker" and papers are being sent.
(A.C.N.S.H. 0200A/18 to C's in C. Portsmouth, Nore, Plymouth).

Engagement
on 17/12.

SPEEDY arrived at Murmansk.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1129C/18 to Admty. Rep. C.in C. H.F.).
My 2147C/17 KENT and 2 Russian Destroyers arrived at Murmansk nothing (?sighted). Admiralty pass to C.in C. H.F.C.S.18 (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1301C/18 to Admty.).
HAZARD and SPEEDY while carrying out A/S patrol were in action against enemy in position 10° Cape Gorodetsky 14 between 1840 and about 1910/17. Only gun flashes were sighted, but evidence indicates enemy consisted of 2 or more destroyers. SPEEDY reports one officer saw an E boat. Enemy opened fire at about 4,000 yards before being sighted and straddled, SPEEDY first salvo. Second salvo put after guns out of action and other hits were subsequently obtained. Torpedo track sighted close astern of SPEEDY.
SPEEDY only fired one round from foremost gun but states HAZARD opened fire. HAZARD and SPEEDY retired at once under cover of smoke and lost contact with each other.
SPEEDY has returned to Murmansk with following damage: after gun out of action. Wardroom deckhead badly holed. Fore gun instruments shot away. Motor boat burnt out.
Casualties. One Acting Leading Seaman died of wounds 18/12 and one Ordinary Telegraphist wounded. Names.
HAZARD has remained at sea and has not reported any damage.
Intend SPEEDY to return to U.K. with Q.P.4. in place of *LEDERER. It is necessary for SEAGULL to return to U.K. as she has defects and is in need of overdue refit. Admiralty pass to C.in C. H.F. (S.O. 1st M/S F. 1640C/18 to C.in C. H.F.).

* ?LEDA

Patrols
A and B.

VIVACIOUS and QUORN carry out Patrols A and B respectively tonight in accordance with my 1830A/11. Proceed to arrive on Patrol at 2100.
Trawlers will be stationed in Q Z S 277 from 59A Buoy to Sheringham inclusive.
(C.in C. Nore. 1140A/18).
Departure at 1645 QUORN to carry out patrol B.
(F.O. Humber 1701A/18).

/Denmark.....

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations -Contd.

Denmark
Strait
and
Iceland
Faroes
Patrols.

My 0106A/14. ANEMONE, ABELIA, VERONICA now available Hvalfjord and SWEETBRIAR is on passage.
(2) 2 Corvettes should normally be on patrol. Request you will arrange their disposition. W/T watch as for Northern patrol trawlers. Continuous Watch if operators are available. Signal for Corvettes should be passed by direct method.
(3) Suggest if Admiral Giffen is agreeable his cruisers should be used to strengthen your patrol when necessity arises.
(4) Intend initially that RENOWN and RODNEY should concentrate with KING GEORGE V and VICTORIOUS.
(C.in C. H.F. 1228A/18 to C.S.1.).

North
Russia
S/M
Patrols.

Cancel my 1759A/2.
It is now intended to sail STURGEON on about 27/12 for patrol, then North Russia, and TRIDENT on about 15/1 direct to North Russia.
SEALION and SEAWOLF leave North Russia on about 21/12 and 5/1 respectively for patrol and to arrive Holy Loch about 9/1 and 23/1 respectively.
(F.O.S. 1343A/18).

Operation
"Anklet".

Intend to sail TIGRIS escorted by STELLA PEGASI at 0930/19 to 060° 52' N. 001° 02' 30" W. E.T.A. 0300/20. Then unescorted diving by day at C.O's discretion through position.
(A) 063° N. 001° E. (B) 066° N. 007° E. to area of operations North and East of position.
Request T.B.R. as follows.
(A.C.O.S. 1400A/18).

East Coast
Patrols.

Patrols tonight Thursday.
2 Motor Gunboats Q.E.4A shifting to Q.E.6A at 0100/19.
2 M.L's Q.E.6A shifting to Q.E.8 at 0100/19.
4 M.G.B's in the vicinity of 052° 30' N. 3° E.
(C.in C. Nore. 1521A/18).

Landing
Exercise.

A landing exercise employing 4 Eureka's has been arranged by N.O.I.C. Dartmouth in conjunction with 209 B.D.E. for tonight between 1900 and 0100 near Start Point.
(C.in C. Plymouth 1544/18).

Biscay S/M
Patrol.
REGENT.
H.43.

F.O.S. 1153A/17 cancel para. A. It is not anticipated that this position will be occupied by any submarine. REGENT if fit for patrol will probably be required to fill one of the numbered positions in Bay of Biscay,
(F.O.S. 1724A/18).

/Expect.....

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Biscay
S/M Patrol.
REGENT.
H.43.
-Contd.

Expect to arrive Falmouth with H. 43 0900A/19.
(BREDA 1730A/18). *See p. 596 -*

Aux.
Patrols.

Brightlingsea Auxiliary Patrols withdrawn owing to shortage of ships due to engine defects.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1810A/18).

British Air Activity.

A/C for
Operation
"Anklet".

Reference aircraft detailed operation "Anklet", R/C Vestfjord from Tranoy (68° 11' N. 15° 40' E) to lat. 66° 30' N. is requested as soon as possible after daylight on D1 and D2 days. Object is to report enemy surface ships and convoys. Aircraft should keep to the East side of the Fiord as H.M. ships will be operating in the centre and West side. Date of D1 will be communicated later giving about 4 days warning. Request type of aircraft may be communicated. (R.A.D.H.F. 0058/18 to H.Q.C.C.). Your 0058/18. Type of aircraft is Liberator. Request arrangements are made for Captain of Aircraft to meet your Staff. (H.Q.C.C. 1120/18 to R.A.D.H.F.).
(1) One Liberator from each addressee to move to Prestwick as soon as weather permits.
(2) Probable duration of attachment 28/12.
(3) A.O.C. 18 Group to arrange briefing of crews for operation "Anklet".
(H.Q.C.C. 2010A/18 to 15 Group, 18 Group).

Brest.

I am more than glad to hear of the air attacks on ships at Brest. I consider with present strategic situation it is vitally important to continue these attacks with maximum strength. (C.in C. H.F. 1411A/18 to Adnty.).

Bombing
restrictions.

My 1348/17. Request bombing restrictions between 1745/19 and 0900/20 in area bounded by following positions.
(A) 50° N. 6° 30' W.
(B) 46° 30' N. 5° 30' W.
(C) 46° 30' N. 4° 30' W.
(D) Ushant.
(E) Lizard.
(C.in C. Plymouth 1650/18 to H.Q.C.C.).
Institute surface bombing restrictions as above
(H.Q.C.C. 2050/18 to 15, 16, 18, 19 Groups).

War Diary;

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy
"Major".

Following received.
Enemy aircraft are attacking "Major". 190 Del
65 330 17.
(?AURORA 0847/18). *Should be under head: -p.606 -*

Faroes
attacked
on 17/12.

Enemy aircraft attacked Traøngisvaag and shipping
in Skaalefjord 1230/17. No casualties or damage.
British fighter patrol in the vicinity unable
intercept as no means available inform it
whereabouts of enemy aeroplanes.
(O.C. Troops, Faroes 1130/18 to War Office).

Enemy
Patrol.
Convoy
H.G. 76.

Four F.W. aircraft operated in a South Westerly
direction from Bordeaux to an area off the West
coast of Portugal. There were indications that
convoy H.G. 76 was sighted.
(D.D.I.C. 1836A/18 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Mining.

Blyth and
Tyne.

My 2234/17 and 2346/17. Expect ports open by
1300 today. (C.in C. Rosyth 0940/18).
My 2145/17. Port of Tyne open. Ships to keep
strictly to centre line of Q Z S 124.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 1052/18).
My 2143A/17. Blyth port open.
(N.O.I.C. Blyth 1341A/18).
Amend my 1052/18 to read as near to centre of
Q Z S 124 as possible.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 1605/18 to Admty.).

Thames
Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1325/17. Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness 1120/18).

Approaches to
White Sea.

Do you consider enemy surface forces encountered
by HAZARD and SPEEDY were engaged in minelaying?
(A.C.N.S.H. 1220A/18 to S.B.N.O. North Russia).
Your 1220A/18. There is evidence to show mines
were being laid but the position is suspicious.
LEDA and HAZARD have been ordered to meet P.Q.6
in 068° 10' N. 041° 22' E. and sweep them in
with double Oropesa.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1938C/18 to Admty.).

N.P. 7A.

Intend to carry out operation N.P. 7A tonight.
(V.A. Dover 1344A/18).

Operation
Q O

9th M/S Flotilla completed two laps, four mines
exploded one British M mark one clearly identified.
Gap first and second days sweeping now cleared.
(M/S 9 1746A/18 to C.in C. Nore.).

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.Operation,
Q.O.
(Contd.)

My 1645A/17. Sweep completed to latitude 051° 46' N. Suggest S.O. 13th M.F. remains in harbour tomorrow to refit Minesweeper's gear, anchoring at Cork dusk 19th sailing a.m./20th to arrive in area at daylight. Sweep commencing to northward will then be carried from 1 mile to eastward of C one, starting from latitude 051° 45' N. which position must be accurately established to avoid sweeping into line B.S.60. Alternatively if considered desirable to enter area at safest period sweep cannot be commenced until 1330.

(S.O. 13th M/F., 1900A/18 to C. in C. Nore.)

My 1746. Propose remaining in harbour tomorrow 19th. 2 ships of 9th M/S. F. have major defects and all short of Dan buoys and range setting M/S stores.

(S.O. 9th M/S. F., 2017A/18 to C. in C. Nore.)

My 1746 and S.O. 13th M.S. Flotilla's 1900A/18. Propose both Flotillas sail from Cork at 0530/20 arriving position "A" at 0830. 9th M.S. F. then sweeping as follows. Details.

(S.O. 9th M/S. F., 2215A/18.)

Operation Q.O. will not take place tomorrow.
(C. in C. Nore, 2230A/18.)

Enemy Intelligence.German
Warship
movements.

(1) It appears Germans planted rumour in certain quarters of Stockholm about December 10th that TIRPITZ had sailed for Norway and Atlantic.

(2) Following reports of TIRPITZ and other warships now received. (a) between Lubeck and Gotenhaven one battleship believed TIRPITZ on December 6th carried out gunnery exercises at wireless control target. Straddles were observed on target at estimated range of 16,000 yards. Target then obscured itself with smoke. (b) Swinemunde 9/12 one battleship believed TIRPITZ one KÖLN Cruiser and 2 destroyers. (c) Between Rixhoft and Hela on 11/12 one battleship and 2 cruisers one of which believed HIPPER were exercising with U-Boats in vicinity. (d) Kiel 14/12 TIRPITZ reported in bay.

Above reported by different trained observers graded B.2. Sources I.D.
(N.A. Stockholm, 1631/18.)

/Enemy ...

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence. - Contd.Enemy shipping.*Vestra?*

- (1) Recent losses.
 (a) December 3rd southbound convoy approaching Stavanger lost by air attack one German steamer sunk, one had (? machinery) damage, two German and one Norwegian ran ashore.
 (b) December 3rd Norwegian VESTRIA was on fire off Norwegian Coast.
 (c) December 4th convoy from Stavanger lost by air attack, one sunk, one had machinery damage and two ran ashore.
 (d) December 4th BLACK PRINCE newly arrived at Danzig as accommodation vessel, set on fire by sabotage and destroyed. All C.3.
 (N.A. Stockholm, 1809/18.)
 O.I.C. Comment. Paras. (a) and (b) - Attacks by British aircraft were carried out on 3rd and 4th December in this area and hits claimed on at least one ship each day.

Brest.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest at 1330A/18 shows PRINZ EUGEN still alongside but camouflage netting between ship and jetty has been removed. GNEISENAU and SCHARNHORST are in usual docks. Old French battleship GUEYDON camouflaged as HIPPER class cruiser was seen being towed in south-easterly direction off the Anse Du Poulmic.
 (D.D.I.C., 1847A/18.)

2 Vessels off Gris Nez.

R.D.F. plotted 2 enemy vessels larger than E-Boats passing Gris Nez eastward at 2215, speed 30 knots, proceeding between Le Dyck and Outer Ruytingen.
 (V.A. Dover, 2329A/18.)

Navigational.Workington.

1623A/16. Port of Workington is closed after 18/12 until further notice.
 (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 0419A/18.)
 Until further notice Port of Workington is closed from half an hour after sunset until half an hour before sunrise.
 (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1201A/8.) Note: Referred to in Liverpool's 1623A/16/12.

Drifter off Naze Tower.

Drifter SILVER DAWN is being anchored in position 075° distant 7.4 miles from The Naze Tower from 1000 B.S.T. today until 1100 B.S.T. 19th. Request shipping be warned to keep well clear of her or to proceed at slow speed past her. FRANKLIN will remain close in attendance.
 (FRANKLIN, 0830/18.)

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Navigational - Contd.Ice in
Denmark
Straits.

Thick ice in 067° 19' N. 024° 48' W. at 0300Z/18 running south for unknown but probably short distance and north for 15 miles and then 055° for 20 miles. Aircraft reported similar trend to latitude 068° 20' N.

Examine ice in Gap. Carry out short patrol to eastward of gap. Whenever position is accurately known take soundings in area of your patrol in position neighbourhood of minefield.

(C.S.1, 0859Z/18 to BERWICK.)

My 0859Z/18. Correct last sentence to read: Your patrol and in the neighbourhood of Minefield.

(C.S.1, 1512Z/18 to BERWICK.)

B.7 Buoy.

89 Q.Z.H. Nore Area. B.7 light buoy damaged, and light extinguished.
(Hydrographer, 1837A/18.)

54 G. Buoy.

90 QZH Yarmouth area. No. 54 G light buoy reported extinguished.
(Hydrographer, 1838A/18.)

Casualties and Defects.NEWMARKET.

My 2000A/17. NEWMARKET did not sail owing to defects.
(N.O.I.C. Londonderry, 0215A/18.)

H. 43.

Port circulator driving shaft sheared inside armature end of bearing.

Suspect repair impossible.

Consider proceed on patrol with starboard circulator only unjustifiable risk.

Intend to proceed to Falmouth with BREDA.

Request spare armature rushed there. Estimate it can be shipped in a few hours.

(H.43, 0800A/18 to Capt. S.7.) See p. 592

WELSHMAN.

Twice during last day delays occurred due to Plommet weights releasing while mines were moving aft. Details.

Consider that expert advice and dockyard assistance should be afforded at first opportunity.

(WELSHMAN, 0900/18.)

OBERON.

Have following defects. Details.

Cannot view fortnights patrol with confidence.

Request instructions.

(OBERON, 1040A/18 to Capt. S.7.)

/Your ...

597

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects.OBERON.
(Contd.)

Your 1040A/18. After reaching Wolf Rock return to Rothesay escorted by CUTTY SARK. (Capt. S.7, 1631A/18 to OBERON.)
After reaching Wolf Rock you are to escort OBERON back to Rothesay. (Capt. S.7, 1632A/18 to CUTTY SARK.)
CUTTY SARK escorting OBERON leaving vicinity of Wolf Rock 1900A/18 for Rothesay. Speed of Advance 9.5 knots. Request fighter protection.
(Capt. S.7, 2251A/18 to N.O.I.C. Greenock.)

BOADICEA.

P.C.S. 058° 47' N. 007° 58' W., 302°, 15 knots. Consider ship capable of completing convoy and am joining O.N.S.47. Heavy vibrations at high speed. Propeller certainly damaged and shaft possibly damaged.
(BOADICEA, 1301A/18.)
BOADICEA's 1301A/18. Request arrangements to dock BOADICEA on return from present escort duty about 28/12 and that spare propellers may be made available.
(C. in C. W.A., 1519A/18.)

FORMIDABLE.
ILLUSTRIOUS
collision
on 16/12.

At about 0020/16 ILLUSTRIOUS ran up on FORMIDABLE. Port foremost corner of flight deck hit starboard after corner of FORMIDABLE's flight deck. Following damage occurred. Estimated time for repairs 2 to 3 weeks. Fighting efficiency unimpaired.
ILLUSTRIOUS. Estimated time for repairs 3 to 4 weeks. Ship can operate aircraft and steam 26 knots in moderate weather. Armament undamaged. Both ships have sustained other damage from heavy weather repairable within period mentioned above.
(FORMIDABLE, 1631Z/18.)

SWEETBRIAR.

Have defective boiler room fan and steering (corrupt group). Damage to mess deck fittings. E.T.A. 2200/18.
(SWEETBRIAR, 1700N/18 to A.C.I.C.)

H.34.

Partial seizure in steering transmission box. Intend to proceed Falmouth for repairs in company with ALECTO.
(H. 34, 1810A/18 to F.O.S.)

LA MELPOMENE.

LA MELPOMENE has developed a rumbling in after Turbo main circulator impellor. Docking may be necessary. Propose that ship returns to Sheerness immediately for repairs. Ship is urgently required for operational duties.
(N.O.I.C. Harwich, 1840A/18 to C. in C. Nore.)

/MACBETH ...

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects - Contd.S.S. MACBETH
(Damaged
11/12.)

Leave tow off Belfast and proceed Liverpool.
(C. in C. W.A., 1920A/18 to PIMPERNEL.)
Please convey to the Captain, Officers and ship's company of the ZWARTE ZEE my heartiest congratulations on their particularly fine achievement in towing MACBETH to the U.K.
(C. in C. W.A., 2312A/18 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)
The location and escort of MACBETH was a fine bit of work and reflects great credit on all concerned.
(C. in C. W.A., 2319A/18 to PIMPERNEL.)

NIDARDAL.

27 survivors landed today ex NIDARDAL. Being sent U.K. in S.D.18. Including (1) 2 Finnish (Aliens). (2) 2 Army Gunners.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland, 2332A/18.)

REGENT.

Request REGENT may be sailed for Portsmouth for repairs.
(F.O.S., 2147A/18 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Shipping and Convoys.PRAGUE.

My 2242A/15 and 2240A/15. S.S. PRAGUE delayed. ST. ALBANS with VIVACIOUS in company to H.3 buoy sailing independently.
(C. in C. Nore, 1040A/18.)
VESPER is to leave Sheerness at 0850 tomorrow and R/V with S.S. PRAGUE off "J" buoy at 0915.
2. Proceed by swept channels and Q Z S 287 and 277 to H.3 buoy when VESPER is to hand over escort to ACTIVE about 1815/19th and proceed to join F.S.676 as additional escort to Sheerness. ACTIVE is to proceed with PRAGUE in company by swept channels to junction of Q Z S 243 and 161 where S.S. PRAGUE is to part company for Aberdeen and ACTIVE proceed to Londonderry.
(C. in C. Nore, 1654A/18.)

H.X.163.

My P.C.S. at 1230A 058° 20' N. 007° 29' W., 195°, 13 knots. Expect join H.X.163 in North Channel.
(HIBISCUS, 1207A/18.)

Convoys
B.B.(Fast)
and H.M.

Cancel my 1915A/15.
1. In order to provide for a fast convoy with ships ex H.X. convoys from Belfast to Bristol Channel ports, it is intended to form a fast B.B. Convoy consisting of these ships sailing from Belfast at about 0600 proceeding at it's

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

Convoys
B.B.(Fast)
and H.M.
(Contd.)

best speed, which should be about 9 knots or over.

2. Any ship from Holyhead capable of this convoy speed should be sailed to R/V with this B.B.(Fast).

3. Other ships of insufficient speed should remain at Holyhead and be sailed to R/V with the next following B.B., which will be sailed as heretofore from Belfast.

4. In order to relieve the possible congestion at Holyhead caused by the hold up of the slower ships mentioned in para. 3, it is intended (as an experiment) to run an H.M. convoy from Holyhead to Milford Haven as a reverse convoy to the present M.H. convoy: the escorts being provided by the Holyhead Milford Haven escort forces.

5. The H.M. Convoy will consist of coasters and will be under the operational control of Holyhead.

6. It is requested that F.O.I.C. Belfast and N.O.I.C. Holyhead will commence sailing these convoys as and when necessary.

(C. in C. W.A., 1312A/18.)

A/C
communication.

To facilitate communications between our A/C when meeting Convoys and a Convoy Escort vessel, the latter should open out distance the Convoy to about three miles should A/C wish to communicate.

This should permit the A/C to circle the escort and keep outside the 1500 yards range of M/V's while passing the signal.

(C. in C. W.A., 1315A/18.)

E.N.
Convoy.

Your 1227. E.N. Convoy leaves Methil 2000. Warn ships in convoy to keep well to starboard in vicinity of Rath Grounds North.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1501/18 to LIDDESDALE, Reptd. VANITY and JAN VAN BRAKEL.)

T.C. 16.

My 2146A/17. NEWMARKET not available owing to defect. Escort of 3 destroyers only is accepted.

(C. in C. W.A., 1520A/18 to A.C.I.C.)

O.G.
Convoys.

In view of 573 A.Z. intend to stop signalling estimated time of crossing 11° W., W.A.C.I's part 110 subject to your concurrence.

(C. in C. W.A., 1648A/18 to F.O.C.N.A.)

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

B.B.T. 37.

Intend sailing H.M. Tug SEA GIANT with B.^{P.}S.T.37
at 2100/19. E.T.A. Scapa 1100/20.
(N.O.I.C. Invergordon, 1721/18.)

O.N.48.

Rescue ship ZAAFAREN is not to be sailed with
Convoy.
(C. in C. W.A., 1830A/18 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Russian
M/V.

One Russian Merchant ship escorted by 2 Russian
A/S Trawlers will pass through your area tonight
from direction of Kanin to Gorodetsky.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1955C/18 to LEDA.)

Norwegian
M.F.V's.

Your 0955N/13 and A.M. 2053A/15. Request
names of Norwegian M.F.V's to be replaced
by 5 Icelandic vessels.
(D.S.V.P., 2124A/18 to A.C.I.C.)

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Italian
Repatriation
from E.
Africa.

Ref. A.M.2006A/4 para. 11 and 8. Italian Govt. have now been informed that no letters or packages can be carried in these ships either on outward or homeward journeys.

2. In view of possibility of smuggling of correspondence, ships and crews should be searched as far as may be possible at Gibraltar. Any matter found should be handed to Imperial Censorship, Gibraltar or to the Chief Censor at any other ports of call. S.N.O. of each ship should be instructed to collaborate with appropriate authorities with a view to prevention of illicit mails being landed or brought on board.

(Head of M. 0920A/18 to F.O.C.N.A., Cs. in C. Med., S.A. E.I. etc.)

Small Craft.

Aircraft report small craft resembling Dutch Skoot about 30 miles north of (?Farilhoes) Island steering 200° at 1045/16th.

(F.O.C.N.A. 0936A/18 to URSULA.)

Lisbon.

My 2103/17. Do you agree that I hold sufficient tonnage here to evacuate British Community if necessary?

(N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1001/18 to Admty.)

N.I.D. Comment. No indication from either N.A. or Ambassador that circumstances have arisen which call for the above signal. N.C.S.O. informed in this sense and instructed to clarify.

In the event of evacuation ships will sail for (?Boston) dispersing at 15 mile intervals on either side following route :-

(C) 034° 50' N. 020° W.

(D) 034° 025°

(E) 036° 040°

(F) 037° 30' 060°

Ships from Oporto

(V) 034° 50' N. 025° W.

(W) 035° 50' N. 031° W. thence great circle to destination.

(N.C.S.O. Lisbon, 1759/18 to Admty. (R) F.O.C.N.A.) Your 1001/18 not to F.O.C.N.A. and your 2103/17.

No intimation received from Ambassador that situation is as grave as would appear from these messages. You should ask Consul General to consult Ambassador with a view to obtaining confirmation of situation. 2. Shipping now

in Lisbon and due to load at other ports should not be held unless F.O.C.N.A. considers U-boat situation requires it. Similarly ships loading at Lisbon should be sailed for Gibraltar as arranged by F.O.C.N.A. unless special escort to effect junction with H.G.77 can be provided.

(A.C.N.S.(T) 1936A/18 to Consul, Lisbon, F.O.C.N.A.)

/There ...

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Lisbon -
contd.

There is no indication from either Naval Attache or Ambassador that circumstances have arisen which call for your 1001/18. Hasten reply to my 1801/16.
(D.N.I. 1937A/18 to N.C.S.O. Lisbon.)

PLUTON
(Spanish)

My 1736A/17. PLUTON was sighted at 1445/17 in 35.34 N. 06.28 W. Ship refused to disclose destination on the grounds of being a warship under Government orders. Course steered indicated bound for Canary Islands.
(S.O.I. Gib., 1052A/18 to N.A. Madrid.)

MALAYA.

Will be carrying out gunnery practice in area between Gibraltar and 20 miles to Eastward a.m./19, returning to harbour p.m.
(S.O. Force H., 1141A/18 to Admty. (R) F.O.C.N.A.)

FAULKNOR
FORESIGHT
MATABELE.

FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT, MATABELE arrived Ponta Delgada 1430 G.M.T./18.
(N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1356/18 to S.O.I. Gib.)
N.O.I.C. Greenock's 1204A/13. For 18/12 read 19/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 1631A/18 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada.)
After refuelling proceed Scapa at best speed that endurance and weather permits passing through position (A) 37.40 N. 25.10 W. (B) 45.00 N. 21.00 W. (2) C. in C. W.A. is requested to supply onward route.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1642A/18 to FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT, MATABELE.)
A.M.1222A/18. As there appear to be 5 or 6 U-Boats hunting H.G.76 propose FAULKNOR and FORESIGHT after fuelling at Ponta Delgada should join H.G.76 if they can be spared. EXMOOR and BLANKNEY will have to leave H.G.76 shortly for fuel. (F.O.C.N.A. 1708A/18 to Admty.)
Your 1708/18. Regret these ships cannot be spared. (A.C.N.S.(H) 2323A/18 to F.O.C.N.A.)

O.24.

Cancel W.M.P.12 Para 18. Leave patrol after dark 19th routed - E.038° 35' 009° 00' E. F.038° 30' 004° 00' E. G. 038° 00' 001° 00' E. H.036° 13' 002° 35' W. thence direct Gibraltar to arrive 1000A/23. 2. Proceed on surface at your discretion when West of 007° E.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1406A/18 to S/M O.24.)

see also next page

/KINGSBOROUGH ...

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - contd.KINGSBOROUGH.

N.C.S.O. Lisbon's 2103/17. In absence of any cautionary warning from Madrid or Admiralty intend sailing KINGSBOROUGH for Cadiz today Thursday.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1528A/18 to Admty.)

COZALLA.

Your 1006A/15 America report "so far no further trace of Steamer COZALLA."
(Greenleaves, 1800/18 to S.O.I. Gibraltar.)

UNA.

My 1406A/16 (N.T.in W.R.) Escort is SPIREA. Report if unable to comply within one hour. Several U/Bs operating in Western Approaches.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1906A/18 to UNA.)

IMPERIALIST.

Your 1124A/16. ^{N.T. in W.R.} Operation completed at 1820/17.
(IMPERIALIST 2000A/18 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Lack of Oil,
Spain.

My 1101/28 and your 1642A/12. Ministry of Marine States Campsa figures are probably correct but Navy cannot get anything like monthly amount mentioned. 2 cruisers and 11 destroyers in commission now immobilised for lack of fuel having only small amounts being kept for emergency. Naval stock at Ferrol less than 1000 tons used for training ships JUAN SEBASTIAN DE ELCANO and NEPTUNO and for trials of minelayer EOLO. In desperation owing difficulties with Campsa he proposed sending Naval oiler PLUTON to Venezuela but has suspended voyage pending full knowledge who is at war with whom in South America. Reason for taking crude to Tenerife was because he can deal with Cepsa who can only buy crude in Venezuela. Refined in Venezuela can only be bought by Biscsa who are supposed to recommend if voyage is revived that we offer no objections. It would give me weapon with which to obtain any oil secretly you wish.
(N.A. Madrid, 2020/18 to Admty.)

O.24.

Your 1406A/18. Patrol off Ustica in accordance with Capt (S) 10 1317B/5. Left area at 1700A/17 intend diving by day during passage. Position at 1900A/18 (? 038°) 37' (?009°) 45'. Request further orders.
(O.24, 2100B/18 to F.O.C.N.A.) *See previous page*

/French ...

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - contd.

French Shipping.

Gibraltar 1527 Minesweeper ENGAGEANTE, S.S. CEVENNES, THISBE, STRASBOURGEOIS, S.MARTIN LEGASSE, Trawlers MEN GWEN, JOSEPH ELISE, KERPAPE, all laden eastbound. (S.O.I. Gib., 2145A/18 to Admty. C. in C. Med.) Passings on 16/12. See D.O.R. 18/12.

WISHART.

WISHART passes through 034° 08' 009° 44' W. at 2000A/18 thence Gibraltar 15 knots. (F.O.C.N.A. 2206A/18 to UNA.)

BLANKNEY EXMOOR.

BLANKNEY and EXMOOR in 036° 14' N. 014° 40' W. at 1430A/18 to Gibraltar 18 knots. They know your position. (F.O.C.N.A. 2336A/18 to UNA, P.35.)

South Atlantic.

"Q" Reports KING WILLIAM NAILSEA MOOR

Are you satisfied with KING WILLIAM's cancellation of her QQQQ message observing that it would not appear to have the DR prefix? Have you any further news of NAILSEA MOOR? (A.C.N.S.(F) 0151A/18 to C. in C. S.A.) Your 0151A/18. Consider KING WILLIAM's cancellation genuine. NAILSEA MOOR appears to be safe, see her 2030/17. (C. in C. S.A., 0909Z/18 to Admty.)

W.S.12 Z.

Durban arrivals ROYAL SOVEREIGN, MILFORD, ASTER and MARGUERITE escorting Convoy W.S.12 Z. (N.L.O. Durban 0258Z/18 to Admty. etc.)

ANN SKAKEL ELIN K.

Your 1604/15. ANN SKAKEL arrived Durban 13/12, departed 15th, due Laracfi 1/1. ELIN K arrived Durban 10/12. (S.O.(I) Capetown 0903Z/18.)

Lagos Black Out.

Your 26, request relaxation Admiralty order at Lagos. Nigerian Govt. regulations re Passive Defence Lighting Restrictions are strict and considered adequate. Besides being further cause for illness no useful purpose served by complete black out in Naval Shore Establishments only. For alarm whole city is darkened instantly by pulling main power switch. (N.O.I.C. Lagos, 0933Z/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - Contd.

22 A/S
Group.

Your 2026/2. Union Govt. have extended period of loan of 22nd A/S group for one year. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1045Z/18 to Admty).

U.S. ships
suspect list.

A.M.1846/16. When may suspect list for U.S. merchant ships be expected as it is possible that there may be main Irish W/T operators and even Masters who should not be issued with C.B.s. and S.Ps. (S.O.(I) Freetown 1109Z/18. to Admty.)

Pan-American
Conference.

The Pan American Conference Chancellors to consider defence Western Hemisphere and economic measures will be held at Rio de Janeiro on 15/1. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 1206Z/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

Local
Protection.

Presume your 1811/17 is reply to A.M.1809/14 Para. 3. (D.O.D (F) 1240A/18 to C. in C. S.A.) Reply: Yes. (C. in C. S.A., 0950Z/19, 0002Z/21)

U.S. Ships
off Liberia.

Your 1701A/17. Importance of these ships is fully realised and they will be given as much protection as possible. Ships lying in an open anchorage for long periods, however, can never be considered fully safe and suggest attention of U.S. authorities should be drawn to this. (C. in C. S.A., 1455Z/18 to Admty-).

Routeing of
M/Vs.

Your 1755Z/5/11/41. Propose suspending Zig-Zag South of 10° South. If concurred in request Admiralty will initiate action. (C. in C. S.A., 1533Z/17 to Admty).

Force "Q"

Request report whether ships of Force Q at present at Freetown are getting their bottoms foul and what you consider to be the present maximum sea-going speed of each unit. (A.C.N.S. (F), 1703A/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

KAJAK.

Your 1951A/4 and my 2127Z/12 KAJAK will leave Montevideo 0700 G.M.T./19 for Capetown. She will fly Russian flag when she is getting out to sea. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2233Z/18 to Admty).

AIDA LAURO
(Italian).

My 2153Z/10 AIDAIAURO has not transferred to Brazilian Flag. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 2239Z/18 to Admty).

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War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Fleet Operations.2
A/C torpedo
attack.{ See news have
Caird 0930/18Air R/CHave attacked enemy with torpedoes.
(Med., A/C N., 0431B/18 to Med., Authority
(Call sign R7M)).A.M. R/C from Malta between 036° 20' N., and
033° 30' N., and between 020° 00' E., and 017°
00' E., and clearing search for BRECONSHIRE.
(V.A., Malta, 0616B/18 to F.O. 15th C.S., S.O.
Force K).
Add to my 0616B/18. A.M.R/C Eastward from
Tripoli (Libya). (2) Blenheims will attack if
located. (V.A. Malta, 1036B/18 to C. in C. Med).Bardia.Following has been read by Nore W/T. Nazi barge
nearing Bardia. (Gibraltar, 0650Z/18).Alt Report - (AURORA 0547/18) See p. 543.Enemy Fleet.Following has been read. Italian Fleet, 11
knots, composition uncertain, P.C. and S. of
enemy battle fleet 33° 37' N., 22° 40' E., 180°
20, driven away fighters escort.

(A/C call sign K7TK, 0830/18)

Following has been read:- Objective of aircraft
is enemy battleship in 33.37 N., 23.40 E., course
180° 20 K. (A/C call sign BC8, 0840/18 A/C call
sign 6FJ 0900/18)Following has been read. Enemy battle fleet
is in two columns course 1470. (A/C call sign
K7TK, 0900/18)Following has been read. Have gained contact.
(A/C call sign K7TK 0915/18)AVON VALE,
FARNDALE.Indicate present P.C. and S. of (?corrupt group).
(N.O.I.C. Mersa Matruh, 0920B/18 to AVON VALE,
FARNDALE).Your 0920B/18. 031° 25' N., 028° 35' E., 100° 6
knots. (FARNDALE, 1001B/18 to N.O.I.C. Mersa
Matruh).Enemy
Fleet.Following has been read. Enemy's course and
speed is 130° 20 knots. (A/C call sign K7TK,
0924/18).Following received from A/C using call sign
6FJ. Your 0840, are ships hostile?
(Med., A/C, 0930/18).

/Sit...

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Fleet Operations. - Contd.Situation Report.*(R. of P.,
M. 04223/42)*

Situation 0745/18. C.S.15 with 4 cruisers and 12 destroyers was covering BRECONSHIRE during 17/12. He was shadowed and attacked by high level and torpedo bombing throughout the day. Enemy heavy forces were sighted by aircraft at 0825 and reported in $036^{\circ} 32' N.$, $020^{\circ} 08' E.$, and were again reported during afternoon. Positions were conflicting and even now it is not known with any certainty if one or two forces were at sea or, exact composition. Convoy was first spotted in company of heavy ships at 1525 in $035^{\circ} 47' N.$, $018^{\circ} 11' E.$ At 1745 C.S. 15 most unexpectedly sighted 2 battleships and light forces to N.W. in $035^{\circ} 52' 018^{\circ} 39'$. Battleships opened fire but darkness intervened and at 1845 C.S.15 had lost contact with enemy. Subsequent actions are not yet clear but C.S.15 was directed to send BRECONSHIRE on to Malta and to sweep for enemy convoys. NEPTUNE and 2 destroyers which left Malta 1500/17 were covering BRECONSHIRE to northwards. From intercepted signal C.S. 15 was sweeping across enemy track during the night but does not appear to have made contact. Enemy may have retired to North. A.S.V. Wellington (?was) co-operating and it is possible that an aircraft attacked with torpedoes about 0430.

(C. in C. Med., 0930B/18 to Admty.)

Following has been received. Am returning to base O.E.C.S. 160. 20 ships unidentified. (A/C using Call Sign KT7 1015/18).

M/V destroyer.

One medium-sized M/V not exceeding 10,000 tons bearing 215° distant 10 miles. One destroyer bearing 150° distant 8 miles from position $36.34 N.$, $10.35 E.$ (Med., A/C call sign D07 1016/18 to Med., A/C).

Enemy Fleet.

Following has been read. P.C. and S. of 2 Battleships 8 Destroyers $33.34 N.$, $23.26 E.$, $150^{\circ} 15$ knots. (Aircraft using call sign 7QBA, 1100/18).

Following has been read. Aircraft R - Squadron. Your 1100, confirm 2 BS not 2 CR. (A/C call sign GY27 1136/18).

Following has been read. Addressed:- Aircraft Y Squadron. Do not attack.

(A/C Call sign 6 F.J. 1112/18).

Re NR.1. (T.O.O. 1112/18) Own Forces.

(A/C using 7 QBR., 1150/18 to A/C using 6 FJ).

C.S.15.

Continual air reports of enemy fleet in your vicinity. Consider these probably your force. Make smoke at 1220 to enable aircraft to identify you. (C. in C. Med., 1147B/18 to C.S.15).

/Enemy.....

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Fleet Operations - Contd.

Enemy Ships.

Italian Position of 19 enemy ships 33.14 N. 16.50 E. course 220°. (A/C call sign R8VU, 1158/18.)
✓ *Vian* Following has been read: 2 Cruisers 8 Destroyers bearing 090° 15 knots course 150° 33.15 N. 24.12 Am over enemy submarine in 33.18 24.12 2709E (sic) (A/C using Call sign 7QBF, 1200B/18.)
X *Vian* Our ships will make smoke at 1220 EE (? port)* 5 *Actually received EEPOPT 5) if seen. (A/C 6RJ, 1210/18.)
✓ *Vian* Ships friendly, uncertain of sub. (A/C using Call Sign 7QB, 1215B/18.)
Italian Following has been read: 1 battleship, 2 cruisers 5 destroyers, 33.22 N. 17.10 E, course 240° 16 knots. (A/C B7G, 1225/18.)
 Search westwards 50 miles to confirm no enemy naval forces there. (A/C using call sign 6FJ, 1229/18 to A/C using call sign 7QBR.)
Italian Following has been read: 8 destroyers, 4 9000-ton M/Vs. Position 33.06 N. 16.47 E. course 240°, speed 12 knots. 3 destroyers, 3 cruisers, 1 battleship, 33.06 N. 16.46 E. course 240° speed 12 knots. (A/C using call sign R8VU, 1245/18.)
Italian Following has been read: 2 destroyers, 2 unknown vessels, destroyer or larger warship. One S/M on surface position 33.42 N. 18.20 E. course 200° speed 25 knots. (A/C R8VH, 1250B/18.)

C.S. 15.

Following from 201 Group. A 161, 18/12. Position C.S.15 at 1200/18, 33.20 N. 24.35 E. position at 1500/18, 32.25 N. 25.40 E. giving fighter cover as soon as possible. T.O.O.1158. (R.A. Alexandria, 1251B/18 to C.S.15.)

Enemy Units.

Following received. Ref. NR.1 N.R.3, 2 destroyers 1 M/V stationary 33° 06' N. 16° 47' E. main force continuing. (A/C R8VU, 1320B/18.)
 Following has been read: Enemy previously reported in my 1250 are 2 cruisers of 10,000 tons 3 destroyers 33.39 N. 18.18 E. stopped 1325. (A/C R8VH, 1330/18.)

Situation, proposals for Forces B, K. and T/B's.

(1) Expect Forces B and K to arrive off Grand Harbour 1430B. Should be ready to leave by 1800B/21. (2) Enemy Forces escorting 4 M/Vs consisting of 2 battleships 5 cruisers and 16 destroyers in approx. 033° 06' 016° 46' at 1245B steering towards Tripoli (Africa). (3) Malta Forces could attack off Tripoli at about 0200B tomorrow. Request your decision if this attack should be carried out. (4) If surface attack is not approved, torpedo bombers will attack M/Vs in vicinity Tripoli as it is possible that enemy heavy forces will retire at dusk. (V.A. Malta, 1345B/18 to C. in C. Med.)

/Your ...

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Fleet Operations. cont:

Situation,
proposals
for Forces
B, K, and
T/Bs.
Contd.

Your 1345B/18. Torpedo bombers only, odds are too heavy for the cruiser.
(C. in C. Med., 1653B/18 to V.A. Malta).
Cancel my 1653B/18.
(C. in C. Med., 1809A/18 to Malta C. and C.O.)

4 M/Vs.

Following has been received Alexandria.
Pass to A.O.C. from 8th Army. Hope you will be able to deal with 4 Merchant Ships now being escorted to Tripoli.
(?Med., 1431B/18).

A/C Sweeps.

Following received begins - Advance Base 815 Squadron Grebe repeated C. in C. Med., C.S.15, R.A. Alexandria, S.O. Force I., from 201 Group.
1 Swordfish from Sidi Barrani carrying out A/S sweep from 031° 36' N., 026° 15' E., to 032° 18' N., 024° 37' E., returning on reciprocal track 8 miles to N.E. 1 aircraft from Dekhalla carrying out A/S sweep from 031° 15' N., 029° 40' E., to 031° 50' N., (27°)? 20' E., minelaying on reciprocal track 8 miles to N.E. Both sweeps to commence 1800. Force Q may be sighted. Operation order 360 not to be carried out. Naval authorities please inform ships. T.O.O. (?1246) /18 (ends).
(R.A. Alexandria, 1431B/18 to C.S.15, S.O. Force I).

Enemy Fleet.

Italian
Hebrew

Following has been read. P.C. and S. of enemy:-
3 cruisers, 6 destroyers, 3 M/Vs, 4 aeroplanes - 33.05 N., 15.58 E., - 27 S - 14. (A/C R8VX, 1514B/18).
At 1430, 1 battleship, 3 destroyers, P.C. and S. 033° 16' 016° 58' (?060°) 16 knots. 5 miles ahead, 1 battleship, 2 cruisers, 5 destroyers same course and speed. (V.A. Malta, 1616B/18 to C. in C. Med).
(1) My 1616B/16. Intend torpedo bombers attacking at about 2300B. (2) All available surface forces leaving Malta 1800B and attack about 0200B tomorrow. Special Wellington co-operating. (3) Wellingtons will be mining entrances to Tripoli (Africa) and bombing enemy ships when entering harbour. (V.A. Malta, 1655B/18 to C. in C. Med.)

URGE.

Forced to withdraw by E-boats and aircraft operating by night. Avoided torpedo last night and was hunted for 2½ hours. (URGE, 1630B/8 to Capt. S.10).

/Destroyers...

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Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Fleet Operations. - Contd.

Destroyers.

Your 0938/17 (N.T. in W.R.) Approved. Destroyers should make (?complete) cast to Eastward from Tobruk before dark/19th and should be East of Tobruk by daylight/20. (C. in C. Med., 1736B/18 to S.O. Force I).

FLAMINGO.
PERSEUS.
PORPOISE.

Cruiser and destroyer will be operating to south and west of you during night 18/19. They have been informed of your route. FLAMINGO in tow and escorted by destroyer and trawler E.T.A. Alexandria 0830B/19 by inshore route. You may (?enter harbour) any time after 0800B. Give Sweeper a wide berth. (Capt. S.1., 1741B/18 to PERSEUS, PORPOISE).

Force B.

Do not approach within 10 miles Tripoli. Wellingtons will bomb merchant ships within 3 miles of entrance. (V.A. Malta, 2017B/18 to Force B.)

C.S.15.

Following received (begins). C.S.15 Rep. C. in C. Med., R.A. Alexandria from 201 Naval Co-op. Grp. A. 171 18/12. 1 Swordfish will be off end of Swept Channel at 2300 tonight and will carry out a S.V. search until you arrive when he will carry out an (2 corrupt groups) ahead of (corrupt group) until you enter harbour. Aircraft will show I.F.F. and will identify himself to you by flashing letter of day. T.O.O. 20 (corrupt group)/18 (ends). (R.A. Alexandria, 2104B/18 to C.S.15).

Orders to S/Ms.

2 Battleships, 2 Cruisers, 8 Destroyers, 033° 32' 017° 34', 040° 20 knots, at 1700B /18. Withdraw well clear from present patrol to charge and rest but be in position given in my 1912B/17 URGE and UPHOLDER by dawn, P.31 UNBEATEN, and SOKOL by noon 19/12. Anticipate enemy may arrive Messina about 1400B or Taranto 2000B on that day. It is not thought destroyers have sufficient fuel to maintain 20 knots until arrival. (Capt. S.10., 2145B/18 to 10th S/M Flotilla).

Swordfish to Attack.

Wind has now altered to allow Swordfish to operate. They will attack not later than 0100. (V.A. Malta, 2155B/18 to Force B).

/Disabled...

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Fleet Operations - Contd.

*Granatieri
Corazzieri } collected
0630/18*

Disabled
Destroyers.

2 large disabled destroyers in 033° 50' 017° 30'
at 0600B/18 being towed stern first towards
Navarin, speed unknown.
(Capt. S.I.2209B/18 to TORBAY repeated TRUANT).

Malta
Movements.

18/12 arrived UPRIGHT, DECOY, BRECONSHIRE,
JAGUAR. Arrived and departed AURORA, PENELOPE,
NEPTUNE, LANCE, LIVELY, KANDAHAR, HAVOCK.
(V.A. Malta, 2220B/18 to Admty).

Swordfish
to attack.

Expect Swordfish attack 0100.
(Med., A/C DVR7 2250B/18 to Med., A/C A.M9).

Enemy
Destroyer.

1 Destroyer 180 5 200 33° N., 13° E., 3 W 2.
(A/C D. Sqdn., 2325/18 to S.O. Force B).

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

General.

Libya.

Military Situation Reports. (C.in C. M.E. 0240/18, 1440/18) ~~was deleted copy.~~

Lighters

Lighter 'A' 9 and 'A' 4 returned to Harbour latter with engine trouble. Will not join "Loose". (N.O.I.C. Mersa Matruh 0700B/18 to R.A. Alexandria).

Air Sqdns.
for
Burma.

Following from Chief's of Staff No.215 to C's in C. M.E. and Med. (R) C.in C. India reference his 21197/G of 17/12. Situation in Burma causes us anxiety. Reinforcements by 1 squadron Blenheims urgently required. Would immediate despatch of 1 of the 6 Squadrons which you are preparing for the Far East seriously affect "Crusader" and/or "Acrobat?" If not, despatch at once and inform C.in C. India. (1st Sea Lord 1339A/18 to C.in C. Med.).

R.N. Air
Station.
Aden.

Request received from C.in C. East Indies through Admiralty to transfer R.N. Air Section at Aden to Port Reitz Mombasa immediately. Admiralty propose to approve subject to A.M. concurrence. Admiralty state A.O.C. 201 (?) Group agrees. Admiralty intention is to establish storage section of 25 aircraft at Port Reitz and re-establish section at Aden. (Air Ministry 1530/18 to H.Q.R.A.F.M.E.).

Situation
report 176.

Central Mediterranean.

See my 0930/18 (2) Aircraft continue to report sightings of U/B's in area between Crete and Cyrenaica but attacks unsuccessful.
(3) My 1105/15 GALATEA was torpedoed in 31° 17' N. 29° 13' E. at 2359/14, and sank immediately. Destroyers rescued 13 Officers and 141 men. A/S hunt unsuccessful. (Sunk by U.557.)
(4) Western Desert. HUNT Class destroyers and A/S craft are escorting convoys now running regularly to Tobruk. FLAMINGO in tow Tobruk to Alexandria. Heavy weather has caused some damage to small craft. Tug JEDDAH ashore near Mersa Matruh, Lighter A.11. waterlogged also reported ashore in Gulf of Sollum. M.T.B. 68 sunk after collision with M.T.B. 215, RODI slightly damaged by near miss in Tobruk harbour where fighters now in operation. Heavy scale of minelaying by aircraft continues at Tobruk. Sweepers doing good work. Greek destroyers and T.B.D's have maintained night patrol off Bardia and Sollum but have not encountered enemy.
(5) Submarines. 1109/15 U/B engaged by TALISMAN considered sunk. My 2018/10 TALISMAN thought destroyer was U/B and engaged it, destroyer made

/off...

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War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Situation
report 176.
Contd.

off after being hit. (8) THRASHER torpedoed 5,000 ton M/V or A.M.C. on 25/11 last seen with heavy list and on fire in 40° 37' N., 18° 27' E. (7) Red Sea. All Suez escort force now withdrawn and Aden Force consists of two sloops and two trawlers. (C. in C. Med., 1655B/18 to Admty)

PORPOISE,
PERSEUS,
THORN.

PORPOISE and PERSEUS are due Alexandria about 0600B/19 from 032° 20' 029° 02' and 033° 48' 026° 26' respectively. THORN leave Alexandria at 1630B/18 to pass through 032° 58' 029° 24'. Capt. S.l., 1655A/18 to Med., Fleet at Sea).

THORN.

THORN leaves Alexandria at 1700B/18 routed through 32° 58' 29° 24' 35° 26' 26° 24' 35° 45' 23° 30' 36° 08' 20° 18' 37° 32' 20° 24' to area P within 48 miles of 38° 11' 20° 21'. She has been ordered to operate off Candia and Suda Bay during daylight 21st and 22nd respectively. (Capt. S.l., 1659B/18 to C. in C. Med).

M/Vs from
Malta.

A.M.1844A/16, ^{p.521} para 1, for SYDNEY STAR read CITY OF CALCUTTA. (D.O.D.(F), 1715A/18 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta)

Jibuti,
use of
French S/M.

From Ops. Sitrep 12/12 to 17/12. Free French report that Vichy submarine identified as VETGEUR (?VENGEUR) Djibuti carrying supplies confirmed by air R/C 15/12 when located leaving. Submarine is expected fortnightly bringing supplies evacuating 10 men. Unconfirmed report states 13 dhows arrived Obock JZX 44. Italian Commission Djibuti now reported to be only 5 Europeans. (G.O.C. in C. East Africa 1730/18).

"Merit".

"Merit" sailed 1750 routed in accordance with S.O. Force I 1701/14 (N.T. in W.R.) (B.N.O., Tobruk, 1805B/18 to R.A. Alexandria).

FLAMINGO.

FLAMINGO in tow of ST. MONANCE with FARNDALE and FALK. E.T.A. Alexandria 2030/18. (C. in C. Med., 1824B/18 to C.S.15 (R) Capt. (D) 14).

/REWAK...

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

REWAK
interception
treatment
of officers.

Admty 1504/18. C. in C. E.I. will presumably reply as this matter occurred before C. in C. Med., took over Red Sea. From subsequent correspondence, however, it appears that local authorities at Berbera were not entirely free from blame. Though two wrongs do not make a right it might be an offset to remind French that we also have had much cause for complaint, and I would draw particular attention to treatment of Mr. Flett, D.N.S.O., and other survivors of S.S. JAPAN, account of which was forwarded under Med., 1432/00190/2 of 25/8. The case of our Officers captured in Syria when in THEOPHILE GAUTIER is another instance of bad treatment.

(C. in C. Med., 1956B/18 to Admty (R) C. in C. E.I., F.O.R.S.)

KINGSTON
CYANITE.

Has taken up J patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 2019B/18 to Force Q Group I)

Malta
Air Report.

Night 17/18. Weather very bad rain and low clouds except to west. Alert 2052 to 2127 hours, single aircraft. Bombs land. 4 Swordfish shipping sweep found tanker 4,000 tons with D/R 210° Keliba 5 miles southbound. 2 hits claimed. Explosion and fire. Could not be found today. Presumed sunk. Special Wellington search found 1730 hours 14 ships 220° Sapienza 250 miles course 015° varying 030° 25 knots, unable identify. 2026 hours found 10 more ships including 3 very large 240° Sapienza, 190 miles, course S.W. speed unknown. Refound original force then identified as friendly. 2102 hours again picked up 10 ships position then unknown and established communicative link with friendly forces until 0030 hours when lost through bad weather and technical trouble. 0245 hours 8 vessels 230° Sapienza 230 miles unidentified. Set course for base 0250 hours owing petrol shortage and engine trouble.
(H.Q., R.A.F., Malta, 2050/18).

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Control of
Air Forces,
Ceylon, by
C. in C.
India.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 7 to C. in C. India repeated C. in C. F.E. and E.I. Ref. your 20965/G cipher 16/12. Confirmed. (1st S.L. 0009A/18 to C. in C. E.I.)

Limits of
E.I.
Station.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 8 to C. in C. India repeated C. in C. E.I. & E.F. Ref. your 21027/C of 16/12. Point you raise is covered in our C.O.S. No. (India) 4 of 16/12. (1st S.L. 0010A/18 to C. in C. E.I., C. in C. E.F.)

Malaya.

Reinforcements. C.O.S. No. (India) 5. (W.O. 0225/18 to C. in C. India, C. in C. F.E.) See Lion Copy.

SOLAR.

Request nationality of tanker SOLAR. (N.O.I.C. Bahrein, 0759Z/18, to Admty.)

CAPETOWN.
CASTLE.

Your 0741/14. Personnel for Malaya in CAPETOWN CASTLE are being transhipped at Durban for onward passage.
2. CAPETOWN CASTLE will therefore have on board on arrival in Bombay personnel for India only.
3. After disembarkation she should proceed to New Zealand direct. (D. of S.T. 1041A/18 to P.S.T.O. Bombay).

QUEEN MARY.

Your 2126/15, ?1126/15 intended. Intend sailing ship P.M. Friday 19th. (C. in C. E.I. 1222Z/18, to Admty.)

ATREUS.

ATREUS should load up with mines, stores and 2 Control Stations at Trincomalee to full capacity and on completion report number of mines, number of control stations and amounts of cable. (a) on board and (b) remaining at Trincomalee. (D.T.M. 1355A/18 to C. in C. E.I.)

Oil
Transport.
Towage of
F/D.

Owing to latest developments Anglo Iranian Oil Co. inform me on instructions from London they are required to prepare to ship from Abadan and Bandar Mashur double quantity of oil which they are now despatching with consequent bunching oftankers. If fully implemented this programme will entirely preclude use of their tugs to remove floating dock. Priority decision will be required. (S.N.O. P.G., 1440Z/18 to C. in C. E.I.) Reply: 1018/19.

MOST SECRET

615A

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

0225/18th December

IN

Date 18.12.41

From The War Office

CIPHER

Addressed C. in C. India, C. in C. Far East

MOST IMMEDIATE

58683 Cipher (M.O.12) 17/12.

Following from C.O.S. No. (India) 5.

Part I

We confirm that everything possible must be done to sustain the defence of Malaya. We trust that all arrangements will be made to despatch to Singapore at once, by whatever route and in whatever manner may be thought most suitable, the reinforcements requested by C. in C. Far East in his unnumbered telegram to the War Office dated 16th December, namely, one Infantry Brigade Group and reinforcements for 9th and 11th Divisions etc.

2. In addition you should consider possibility of sending to Singapore in the same convoy as above all light tanks which can be spared from India, bearing in mind that India is to receive 50 light tanks from the Middle East.
3. You should consider at once and report whether the above reinforcements should be followed up by the further Brigade Group tentatively offered to C. in C. Far East by C. in C. India in his 21076/G of 16th December.
4. Reference War Office No. 57543 cipher 12/12, we have now issued orders that the following ex Convoy W.S.12Z are to go direct to Malaya or N.E.I. from Durban, leaving latter about end December, 85 A.Tk. Regiment complete, 6 Heavy A.A. Regiment (16 guns), 32 Lt.A.A. Regiment (24 guns).
5. Picture as regards air reinforcements follows in separate telegram. End of Part I.

Second and Last Part

1. The following arrangements are in hand or proposed for the reinforcement of India and the Far East.

MOST SECRET /4.....

615B

SECRET

-2-

Aircraft.

4 Catalinas and 2 spare crews from the United Kingdom or Gibraltar due to depart at an early date. 6 Blenheim IVs from the Middle East left 12th December and 6 left 14th December. 6 more will be sent if and when they can be spared. 52 Hudsons from the United Kingdom under orders to proceed as early as possible.

2. H.Q. Middle East have been asked to prepare 32 cased Kittyhawks together with a pack-up of spares and erection equipment and to notify Air Ministry of date they will be ready for shipment. Destination to be decided later.

3. 1 Fighter Squadron from W.S.12Z complete with ground personnel, and generous technical equipment, 51 Hurricanes and 18 Pilots to go direct from Durban to Singapore.

Reinforcements for India.

4. A Wing Headquarters with three Fighter Squadrons and ancillary units, less aircraft, plus 6 pilots in Convoy W.S.12Z to proceed from Durban to Bombay and placed at disposal of C. in C. India.

5. The aircraft for these three squadrons will be provided thus - H.M.S. ATHENE to proceed from Gibraltar to Takoradi embark 40 Hurricanes and deliver to Bombay, proceeding independently. 13 Hurricanes at present en route from U.K. to Middle East to be diverted to India. After unloading at Bombay H.M.S. ATHENE will return to Port Sudan for another 40. Pilots for these Squadrons will be provided by the 80 (ex GYMNAST) now proceeding from Gibraltar to Middle East via Takoradi. They will be sent on from Middle East to India by quickest means possible

6. A.O.C. in C. Middle East has been instructed to prepare plans for sending 6 Squadrons of Blenheim IVs (plus 1 Air Stores Park and 1 Repair Servicing Unit) to India for Burma, after CRUSADER is finished.

Of these Squadrons 2 may be converted to Wellington but this is the maximum number of heavy bomber squadrons we can maintain East of Suez. The pack up of ground equipment for 2 Wellington Squadrons is being diverted from Iraq to India.

The initial equipment of these Wellingtons will have to be provided by flying out aircraft from England. The Blenheims thus displaced will act as reserve for the remaining 4 Squadrons supplemented by flow of

/ Bisleys....

Bisleys from U.K.

Maintenance of Hurricanes in Singapore

7. It may not be possible to maintain a flow, and the Hurricane Squadrons will have to exist on the initial supply of 51. In the meantime a small Fighter Erection Depot capable of dealing with 20 or 30 Fighters a month will be established at some port to be decided later but probably in Sumatra or Australia. This Depot would handle American Fighters, which, it is hoped, will eventually replace Hurricanes in the Far East.

C. in C. Far East is being asked if erection can be carried out at Padang on S.W. Coast of Sumatra in case of need.

8. C. in C. Far East unnumbered telegram to the Chiefs of Staff of 17/12 regarding Fighter reinforcements was received just as this telegram was about to be despatched. This telegram answers all the points he raises except that there is no Aircraft Carrier available in the Indian Ocean.

C. in C. Far East please pass copy to C. in C. Eastern Fleet.

0225/18

Received from War Office 0819/18

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W.D.	Admiral Chalmers
D.S.D.	E.P.S.
Admiral Bailey	N.I.D.10.Pay.Cdr.Wilson.

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies-Contd.

Command
of Air
Force
in Ceylon.

Following is paraphrase of message passed between C. in C. India and myself begins: Troopers repeated Eastfar C. in C. E.I. from Arm India. Consider as the defence of Ceylon is now responsibility of India operational control of air forces should also be vested in me. 2965/9. Reply. Personal General Wavell from C. in C. E.I. I suggest as all aircraft now in Ceylon are for Naval Co-operation there is no immediate need to change the present operational control. My Chief of Staff is waiting on Viceroy shortly and will also confer with you. Please defer the question of control of Air Force in Ceylon until after you have seen him. (C. in C. E.I. 1454Z/18 to Admty.)

HOBART.

Admty. 2235/11.
(1) HOBART has one 4 barrel multiple pom-pom on board for mounting on quarter deck.
(2) Pending a decision as to her destination work is being put in hand now at Colombo to plane the fuse ring and mount the gun to await at normal notice. Work should be completed and ship ready to sail (? P.M.) Monday 22/12. (C. in C. E.I. 1526Z/18 to A.C.N.B.)

China.

Limits of
E.I.
Station.

Your 0742/17. Concur.
(C. in C. E.F. 0150Z/18 to C. in C. E.I.)

SAGOLAND.

U.S. 5554 tons, reported set on fire in air raid on Manila on 17/12, expected total loss. (D.S. 835, 18/12).

CORREGIDOR.

Press reports from Manila state mined and sunk off Manila. Local passenger steamer. (D.S. 835).

/Japanese.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

2355/18th December

FROM: G. in C. India.

Date

18.12.41.

Recd.

1810

CIPHER.

ADDRESSED: War Office, Repeated C. in C. Middle East,
C.C.C. Iraq.

020715 21201/G cipher 18/12. Reference COS/210 13/2.

Angle Saudi Arabian Alliance.

1. From military aspect consider alliance has much to recommend it.
2. It may enable us to develop alternative land L. of C. from Kuwait to Iraq should this be necessary and develop air routes across Saudi Arabia. In certain circumstances aircraft based on North Saudi Arabia might be of considerable value.
3. Ibn Saud should be able to exercise considerable influence in Yemen to our benefit.
4. The alliance should be of value as an offset to German and Italian propaganda directed against the Moslem world.
5. Ibn Saud may ask for assistance in war material but quantities should not be great and his open support would be cheap at the price.

2355/18

Received from War Office A.M./22nd Dec.

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MOST SECRET

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Air Ministry
of Plans Air Ministry.
F.O. (Mr. Baxton)

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China-Contd.Japanese
land on
Hong Kong
Island.

After heavy bombardment Japanese have effected a landing on N.E. corner of Island. Am using all resources to evict them. (G.O.C. Hong Kong, 0530/18 to W.O.)

D.M.I.

A.M. 2535A/17 para. 2. Intend convoy proceed to Singapore via Sunda Straits provided situation at time permits. Request early information approximate date when fast convoy will leave Durban intended route and composition of escorts. (C. in C. E.F. 0443Z/18 to C. in C. E.I. N.O.I.C. Durban. Rep. Admty. F.O.C.R.I.N. N.O.I.C. Simonstown, C. in C. S.A.) *See also p. 619.*

Malaya.

Military Situation Report. (G.O.C. M., 0625/18 to W.O. etc.) See Lion Copy.

Air
operations.

Daily Op. Summ. up to 1050Z/18/12.
11 large transports Pattani considerable launch activity between transports and shore. R/C Miri Area from Sinkawang located and attacked 1 cruiser or battleship 3 destroyers. No direct hits. Combat between 3 Navy 'O' fighters retractable undercarriage type and 2 Buffalos, pilots reported enemy aircraft faster and more manoeuvrable than Buffalos and handling perfect. Later R/C Miri area from Sinkawang reported unknown number of ships and very bad weather. Dutch Bomber Squadrons Samiukoa 17/12 located and attacked 2 cruisers 2 transports 3 destroyers Miri area. Near misses on 1 cruiser and 2 transports. Dutch Navy Dornier scored direct hit on destroyer. Bombers attacked by Jap Fighters probably from aircraft carrier unseen. (A.H.Q. Far East 1415/18).

Troop
Reinforcements

Personal for Gen. Wavell. Your 21076/16/12 crossed my 50/7 16/12. Most grateful. More troops are required to turn the scale. Time factor is likely to be all important. I understand from Mr. Duff Cooper that British 18th Div. is being routed to India to be used to best advantage. It will certainly be required here. Without knowing its position or loading cannot judge whether its leading bde. could reach here sooner than yours. Agree passage of Malacca Straits likely to become impracticable soon. C. in C. E.F. intends to keep open Sunda Strait route and we are exploring the problem with the Dutch. (C. in C. F.E. 1451/18 to C. in C. India.)

MOST SECRET~~MOST SECRET~~ ~~M I S S I L E~~ 18th Dec. IN

From G.O.C. Malaya.

Date 18.12.41.

Recd 0710.

CipherAddressed War Office, C. in C. India, C.G.S.
Australia.MOST IMMEDIATE.

020211 0/244 Cipher 18/12.

From Adv. H.Q.M.C. Sitrep 1630 hrs.
G.M.T. 17/12.

Kedah. Today enemy attacked our detachments in Grik area in some strength. Such reinforcements as are available locally have been sent but these consist only of small detachments volunteer forces. If this attack develops it will constitute serious threat against communications of our forces North of Kuala Kangsar. 11 Ind. Div. due to withdraw tonight from line of river Muda to South of Sungei Krian. In view Grik situation Cmr. third Ind. Corps has been authorised to withdraw behind Perak River. 12 Ind. Inf. Bde. still covering right flank 11 Ind. Div. 28 Ind. Inf. Bde. now on Sungei Krian. 6 and 15 Ind. Inf. Bdes. have suffered heavy casualties.

Penang. Withdrawal proceeding.

Kelantan. Our troops now on line of Sungei Nal. Were in contact 17/12 with enemy who broke off engagement after suffering casualties.

Trengganu. Captured Japanese civilians from Trengganu report no Japanese troops south of Besut.

Kuantan. Johore. Singapore. Sarawak.
Nothing to report.

Air. Enemy air activity negligible. Routine reces. were carried out 350 miles N.N.E. of Singapore up East coast as far as Pulau Redang and in neighbourhood of Singapore with negative results. Following aerodromes and landing grounds have been blown up. Sungei Patani. Alor Star. Kuala Ketil. Jabi. Penang NW. Butterworth. Sungei Dua. Sitiawan. Miri. Six Glen Martins and five Buffaloes of N.E.I. Air Force from Sinkawang carried out bombing attack against three Japanese cruisers six armed raiders and one tanker anchored off Miri. No hits or near misses reported. A.A. fire was fairly heavy from ships and from the land.

General....

617^B

General. A.A. defences have shot down thirteen enemy aircraft up to date and five probable

Please pass C.G.S., New Zealand.

0625/18

Received from War Office 1150/18.

1st Lord
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War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China-Contd.

Publicity.

Your 0325Z/6. Your difficulties are fully appreciated and every endeavour will be made to meet your requirements. Extremely difficult matter to find suitable officers with the necessary experience. As a temporary arrangement it may be you could use the three R.N. Officers (Retired) survivors of PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE. (2nd S.L. 1604A/18 to C. in C. E.F.)

Defence of Sunda Straits.

58599 Cipher (M.O.10) 17/12.
Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E. 61. Report Dutch arrangements for protecting Sunda Straits. (W.O. 1710/17 to C. in C. F.E.)
Your 58599 (M.O.10) 17/12. Defence of Sunda Straits. No fixed defences. Straits patrolled by 2 sloops, 1 flying boat. 1 cruiser, 2 leaders, 4 destroyers, and 2 submarines which operate in South Java Sea can assist. Air forces which might be made available from Batavia about 9 R/C, 9 bombers.
2. To bring a convoy through Straits entails a combined operation which will take precedence over other operations. (C. in C. F.E., 2234/18 to W.O.)

Minister at Singapore.

Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster has been appointed Resident Minister of Cabinet rank at Singapore for Far Eastern Affairs. He will serve under and report directly to War Cabinet. He will preside over War Council which will consist of: Govr. of Straits Settlements, C. in C. F.E. N.C. in C. A.O.C. G.O.C. Director of Propaganda for Far East. Officer Commanding Australian Troops will be invited to attend when in Singapore, and will be informed when matters affecting Australia are to be discussed. (Addition of other members to Council may later be found necessary). His principal task will be to assist successful conduct of operations in Far East:-
(a) by relieving Cs. in C. as far as possible of extraneous responsibilities with which they have hitherto been burdened, and
(b) by giving them broad political guidance. Appointment of Chancellor does not, of course, in any way impair existing responsibilities of Cs. in C. or H.M. representatives in Far East, or their official relationships with their respective Departments at home, with whom they will continue to correspond direct. Geographical sphere of appointment will coincide with that of C. in C. Far East, but in present situation activities are in practice likely to be confined to Malaya. Appointment will be announced at noon B.S.T/19. (Head of M. 1927A/18 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

/Malaya.....

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China-Contd.

Malaya Reinforcements. The following moves necessitated by situation in Far East are under consideration by C. in C. India. (Military and Air).
6. These moves are additional to those in A.M. 2335/17. (D.O.D. (F) 1929A/18 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

Convoy D.M.I.

Convoy constituted by A.M. 2335/17 para. 2 is to be known as D.M.I. (D.O.D. (F) 1931A/18 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I., F.O.C.R.I.N., etc.)

See p. 617

Far East Appreciation.

C. in C. F.E., 2219/18 to W.O. See Lion Copy.

Hong Kong Situation.

Sitrep to 1900 hours local time.
Night 17/18 very quiet and artillery fire negligible. Aberdeen shelled from seaboard. No damage. Enemy air activity today on intenser scale than hitherto.
Probable number (bombs) dropped exceeded 100 which is highest number to date. Stanley barracks and Murray barracks bombed. Military casualties. A.P.C. installation at north point set ablaze. Deliberate and accurate dive bombing attacks on centre civil government. Japanese have cleared Kai Tak aerodrome of all obstacles. Continual artillery, mortar shelling and dive bombing on north face of island all day. Bowen road Hospital badly hit and upper floor a shambles. Civilian hospitals also damaged shell fire. In general much damage such as water mains cut, roads cratered, tram wires down etc., and road communications becoming a serious problem. All signal communications including buried cable cut many (?times) and maintenance very difficult matter.
Morale of population continues improving. Rice situation a little easier but storage large quantity in go-downs on water destroyed is unfortunate factor. (G.O.C. Hong Kong 2335/12 to W.O.)

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

2219/18th December.

MOST SECRET

IN

From C. in C. Far East.

Date 18.12.41.

Recd. 2030.

CIPHER.

Addressed The War Office, Repeated A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B.,
C. in C. India, G.O.C. Burma, G.O.C. Hong Kong.

MOST IMMEDIATE

020371.

76/7 cipher 18/12.

No grounds for altering views in my 483/6 of 11/12. Both in P.I. and Malaya Japanese plan is evidently to secure aerodromes close to the ultimate objectives. At the same time indications are that policy of trying to cut reinforcements routes is being actively pursued.

Luzon. It now appears that landings were with object of securing use of airfields at points difficult to recapture. Present lull may be due to temporary exhaustion after great initial effort or building up process may have begun. Air situation is in favour of Japanese. Whether object is to neutralise naval and air bases by air action or to capture Luzon is not yet clear.

Malaya. Though there have been suspicious movements of shipping in South China sea enemy operations on east coast of south Kelantan have been in the nature of feelers. Present indications are that comparative safety of sea communications to Singora coupled with success of enemy advance through Kedah will decide him to exploit this line of advance. The tired condition of our troops their losses and the difficulty they have found in countering the enemy's excellent infantry tactics give cause for considerable anxiety. Comparative air lull partly due to weather conditions. Question of best use of available forces of great importance and under active study. On one hand strong desire to prevent establishment of air forces closer to Singapore and retain largest possible base for eventual offensive action. On the other danger of weakening vital area in so doing. G.O.C. Malaya is at present forward on reconnaissance.

Burma. Estimated Japanese forces moving into Thailand 2 Divisions though no recent information. Consider enemy likely to continue penetration of Thailand.

/ Feel

Feel his way into Tenasserim and prepare for further action against Burma.

Hong Kong. Indications that Japanese wanted rapid success and that robust attitude of defence has surprised them.

2219/18.

Advance copy D.C., D.O.D. (F), D.D.I.C.

Received from War Office 0203/19/12.

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N.A. 1st S.L.	D.D.M.I. (I)
Capt. Pim.	M.I. 2.
D.N.A.D.	C.N.S. Admiralty.
Head of M. (30).	D. of Plans. Admiralty.
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D.D.O.D. (F)	Col. Jacob.
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Admiral Bellairs.	
Admiral Chalmers.	
E.P.S.	
D.T.S.D.	
N.I.D. 10.	

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

INDOMITABLE.

Sailed INDOMITABLE in accordance with C. in C. A.W.I. 1112Q/15 and C. in C. A.W.I. 1156Z/16 and 1115Z/17. E.T.A. Capetown 1600Z/1/1. (N.O.I.C. Trinidad, 0012Q/18 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

S.C.60.

Departures 17/12, SAGUENAY, SPIKENARD, SHEDIAC, CAMROSE, WETASKIWIN for S.C. 60. (C.C.N.F. 0025Z/18 to Admty.)

Dispositions.

Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied ships at 1800 G.M.T./18. (D.O.D. (F), 1025Z/18 to Opnav). See Lion Copy.

NEA HELLAS.

Your 1941Z/16 and A.M. 2504A/17. Number of Army personnel should be restricted in accordance with A.M. 1936A/25/9. Surplus removed should await next available opportunity. (D.O.D. (H) 1121A/18 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Movements
of U.S.
Ships.

Your 2357A/16 para. 5.
(i) All information obtainable was sent by Opnav in his 1655/16 addressed Admty.
(ii) Suggest exchange of this information should be a routine matter, request instructions including desired interval between reports and we will endeavour to arrange. (B.A.D. 1147R/18 to Admty.)

Hawaii
damage,
salvage.

In connection with damage to U.S. ships at Hawaii, you may wish us, as a gesture or otherwise, to offer services of British salvage experts with experience of methods used at Scapa. (B.A.D. 1541R/18 to Admty.)

MATHILDA.

My 2018/12 (MATHILDA to proceed to Mobile for repairs etc.) Norwegian MATHILDA reported 18/12 drifting ashore 10 miles N.W. of Nuevitas. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1527Z/18 to S.O. Kingston etc.)

PENOLVER
overdue.

Your 1725/17. See my 2022/17 re PENOLVER. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1529Z/18 to Admty.)

Wreck.

W.J.A. 58 wreck of small craft observed in position 044° 00' N. 048° 21' W. at 2000/16. (C.N.S. Canada 1531Z/18).

/U.S.....

6208

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE 02027/10 Dec. **MOST SECRET**

OUT

To OPNAV.

Repeated SPENAVO.

Date: 18.12.41.

NAVAL CYPHER (X) U.S.A.

From Admiralty.

IMPORTANT.

Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied Ships at 1800 G.M.T. 18th December.

<u>Ship.</u>	<u>Position.</u>	<u>Course.</u>	<u>Speed.</u>
ILLUSTRIOUS } FORMIDABLE and } 3 Destroyers }	47° N, 28° W	037°	18
CILIGIA	16° N, 29° W	173°	14
CARNARVON CASTLE	29° N, 72° W	340°	14
NEWCASTLE	35° N, 71° W	117°	15
PRINCE DAVID	Approaching Colon from N.E.		20
TULIP	11° N, 46° W	090°	12
D.S. VAN KINSBERGEN	08½° N, 49° W	102°	14
CIRCASSIA	03° N, 43° W	Patrol	Blank.
INDOMITABLE	09° N, 56° W	112°	17
ASTURIAS	18° S, 35° W	Patrol	Blank.
DERBYSHIRE	28° S, 08° W	Patrol	Blank.
Convoy T C 16 } CUBA } LETITIA } PASTEUR } ARKANSAS } PHILADELPHIA } 7 U.S. Destroyers, }	49½° N, 46½° W	032°	14
MAURITIUS	01° S, 93° E	290°	17
Convoy with } KANIMBLA }	Approaching Fremantle from N.W.		14
CANBERRA and } PERTH }	Tasman Sea	Patrol	Blank.
Convoy with } F.F.S.LE TRIOMPHANT }	30° S, 156° E	040°	12
LEANDER	24½° S, 177° E	010°	10
DIOMEDE	Approaching Balboa from S.W.		14

1025Z/18.
for D.O.D.(F) 164.

V.C.N.S. D.O.D.(H). I.P.(2). N.I.D.10. (Pay.Cdr.
A.C.N.S.(H). D.D.O.D.(H). W.B. Wilson).
A.C.N.S.(F). D.O.D.(F). Duty Capt.(2). A.E.(4) (to pass
A.C.N.S.(T). D.D.O.D.(F). Hd. of M. to SPENAVO).
N.A.1st S.L. D.N.I.(4). D.D.I.C.
D. of P.(2). D.N.S.W. E.P.S.

MOST SECRET

621

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.U.S. Convoy.

U.S. convoy (b) 02 escorted by U.S. Cruiser PENSACOLA will arrive in position 200° east of Brisbane at 2300 G.C.T./20. PENSACOLA has set watch in accordance with S.P. 02376 table 8 Appendix 1. (ii) Has this information been received from any other source?
(B.A.D. 1621R/18 to A.C.N.B. (R) Admty. N.Z.N.B.)

Seamen
from
Finland,
etc.

My 1448Z/13. Does decision to intern all Finnish, Roumanian, Hungarian seamen on arrival U.K. still stand? Large proportion of these seamen have no definite leanings, are reliable and recommended to continue in service. In view of M. of W.T. instructions that they will be interned on arrival U.K., it is assumed these seamen should be held in Canada. Until situation is clarified Canadian Immigration have agreed to detain any seamen when so requested where they will be clockwise treated. Seems very few of those detained will be interned in Canada and it is hoped that Canadian Govt. will approve employment in Canadian coastal trade of seamen well disposed to allied cause. Question of internment is still being considered. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1641Z/18 to Admty.)

Washington
Report.

Washops 8.
1. Hawaii. U.S. Merchant ships PRESIDENT COOLIDGE and SCOTT arrived Honolulu from Manila 17/12.
2. Nothing else of interest to report.
(J.S.M., Washington, 1747R/18, to Admty. etc.)

NEWCASTLE.

Your 2142A/22/10. Provided weather does not interfere with working up practice, intend NEWCASTLE to leave Bermuda for U.K. P.M./21. Request destination. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1752Q/18 to Admty.) Reply: 2003/20, Devonport.

MIMOSA.
ALYSSE.
ACONIT.

Cancel A.M. 0008A/16. MIMOSA, AYSSE and ACONIT may now be sailed as required by C.C.N.F. C.O.A.C. is requested to obtain Adm. Muselier's agreement. (A.C.N.S.(H) 1811A/18 to C.O.A.C., C.C.N.F.)

S.C.42.
KENOGAMI.

For D.A.S.W.
Ref. analysis of U-boat operations convoy S.C.42. It is not clear whether para. 85 is intended as a reproof for KENOGAMI or as information to all corvettes for future action. KENOGAMI is not fitted with a searchlight. (C.C.N.F., 1831Z/18 to Admty.) Reply: 1151/19.

/Hawaii.....

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.→ Hawaii
U/Boats.

Report from C. in C. Pacific Eastern passage between Oahu and Hawaii considered submarine hazard. (Opnav, 2009/18 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, (R) Admty.)

EMMY.
TOVELIL.

Your 1950/5. Greek EMMY and TOVELIL have not yet arrived this side. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2137Z/18 to Admty.)

BYT 1 - 5.

Your 1835R/14 para. 5. In the present situation we are anxious to assist meeting U.S. Navy's wishes wherever possible. U.S. Authorities accordingly should be asked if they would like to retain BYT numbers 1 to 5. Admiralty would readily agree. (Vice-Controller 2204A/18 to B.A.D.)

→ Hawaii,
U/Boats.

Opnav reports Eastern passage between Oahu and Hawaii considered submarine hazard. N.C.S.O.'s. West Coast Canada and U.S.A. informed. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2257A/18 to Capt. O.S., Singapore, A.C.N.B., etc.)

Australia and New Zealand.AWATEA.

Re use for transport of air trainees to Canada, as MONTEREY unlikely to be available. (N.Z. Govt., 0200/18 to S. of S. for Dominions). See Lion Copy.

Enemy
Activity,
"Digest"
Summaries.

My 0552Z/16. Unidentified motor ship considered possibly enemy A.M.C. sighted off Nissan Island New Guinea, 0330Z/15. Enemy submarine (?near) missed off Koepang 16/12. A 6000 ton ship (probably Seaplane Carrier) (?reported to be) at Butaritari which appears to be now Japanese Air Base in Gilbert and which possesses advantage over Tarawa. Dutch protective force landed at Dilli, Portuguese Timor, 17/12 as a precautionary measure against Japanese occupation and with consent of local Governor. C. in C. 4th Japanese

/Fleet....

622A

~~SECRET~~ ~~SECRET~~ 200/18th Dec.

MOST SECRET.

I N.

From New Zealand (Govt.)

Date. 17.12.41.

Recd. 2015.

CIPHER

Addressed D.O.

No. 532 SECRET.

Addressed to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs No. 532. Repeated to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia No.413. Rangi Washington No.164.

My telegram No.512 of 9th August and Australia's No. 542 of 19th August (not to Rangi Washington).

His Majesty's Government in New Zealand have received information from their naval representative in Washington that the MONTEREY is unlikely to be available for January voyage from Australia and New Zealand and it is, therefore, necessary to consider other arrangements for the conveyance of air trainees to Canada.

(2) The New Zealand naval representative is consulting the shipping liners and the United States authorities with the following alternatives:

- (a) The MARIPOSA unless requisitioned to maintain a 35 day turn round.
- (b) Movements of trainees to be considered with U.S. troop movements.
- (c) Any available British vessel to be employed.

(3) It is understood to be of primary importance to the Air Training Scheme that trainees should arrive in Canada in regular monthly batches, in order to avoid dislocation and alternative peaks of congestion and emptiness in the camps. Alternatives (a) and (b) would therefore appear to be unsatisfactory.

(4) When negotiations for the transfer of AWATEA and MORANGI from the Pacific were in progress, it was suggested that an assurance on the part of the United States that the Matson service would be maintained if Japan entered the war should be given.

(5) His Majesty's Government in New Zealand consider it essential that a fast service between New Zealand and North America should be maintained

for/.....

MOST SECRET

for general purposes and particularly for air trainees. They realise the fact that the exigencies of the present situation have no doubt necessitated a readjustment of United States shipping schedules. For that reason they would prefer that a British ship be made available and they particularly desire that urgent consideration be given to the return of the AWATEA. It is appreciated that the AWATEA could not, by herself, maintain a monthly service but it is not proposed to ask for a second vessel pending further experience.

0200/18

Recd. by hand from Dominions Office
at 0809/19.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
P.A.S. (S)
N.L. 1st S.L.
Sec.
D. of P. (2)
D.O. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.F.I. (4)
D.A./S.W.
I.P. (2)
W.D.
D.C. (2)
Hd. of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
D.T.D. (M)
D.T.D. (C)
N.I.D. 10
Admiral Bailey
Admiral Mellairs.
D. of S.T. (2)

War Diary.

18.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Enemy
Activity
"Digest"
Summaries.
Contd.

Fleet is now in Truk area. Note; future signals containing summary of enemy activity in Australian station and adjacent waters (?will) commence with word "Digest" which will indicate that they are addressed to authorities in this message. C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet and C. in C. U.S. Pacific Fleet please pass this and future "Digest" signals to Command General U.S.A. F.F.E. Manila and Command General, Hawaiian dept. Honolulu respectively.
(A.C.N.B., 0651Z/18 to Admty. etc).

EMPRESS OF
CANADA,
ACHILLES,
transport of
air Trainees.

A.M.1744B/16. Due to present suspension of facilities for conveying air trainees it is intended utilising EMPRESS OF CANADA bound Vancouver for large number awaiting passage. Anticipate vessel sails from Wellington about 28/12. Intend ACHILLES escorts for approx. 1700 miles en route. south Tahiti and east of Marquesas. (Numbers being embarked) B.N.L.O. San Francisco requested to report what arrangements will be made for subsequent protection.
(N.Z.N.B., 1210/18 to Admty).

China
Coasters.

Understood some 20 vessels of China Coasting Trade have reached ports in Australia. M. of W.T. is anxious that any of these ships which cannot usefully be employed locally should be sent to Indian waters if practicable.
(A.C.N.S. (T), 1450A/18 to A.C.N.B.)

CHEVREUIL.

Programme:- 16/12 Goro. 17th Mare Island. 18th Lifou Oueva Islands. 19th Pott Island. 20th Islands of Huon, Surprise and Hart. 21st Paagoumene. 22nd Noumea ends.
(B.C.Melbourne, 2311Z/18)

624

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.ST. DENIS.

My R.S. 604, 28/11. (1) This Attache, who has recent news from Vichy, stresses political bargaining strength gradually accruing to Darlan due to our increasing naval successes against Italian warships in Mediterranean. He again repeats his conviction that never could French Fleet be used in support of German sea transport to Africa.

(2) Two matters causing distrust at present:

(a) Intentions of British if and when we reach Tunisian border.

(b) Sinking of ST. DENIS on decisions. Though aware of B.B.C. statements that U-Boat could not have been British he states that only a personal assurance from our Admiralty would convince him of truth of this information.

Note: Should you decide to do this his subsequent telegram to Vichy will be intercepted and read by Swedish and probably by Germans.

(N.A. Stockholm, 1131/18, to D.N.I.)

EMPIRE
BARRACUDA.

My 1748A/16 Para. 2. Area searched but no further survivors seen.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1149A/18, to Admty.)

CASSEQUEL,
(torpedoed
15/12.)

14/12 (BR 1337)

Your 1703/17. No British or Allied submarine was in the vicinity.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1234A/18, to N.A. Lisbon.)

My 1258A/17. Chief Officer landed today stated 4 boats got away from CASSEQUEL, CHAMPION picked up one boat. No further survivors have been landed Gibraltar.

2. Chief Officer also stated ship torpedoed 2000 G.M.T./14 in 035° 08' N., 011° 14' W. (Gibraltar, 1848A/18, to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

2126/17.

A.S.V. Wellington reports possible submarine 10 miles north of Mersa Metruh at 2126/17.

(C. in C. Med., 0031B/18 to Med. Fleet.)

Your 0001A/18. Those signals were from a U-Boat to the Westward of Gibraltar.

(D.D.I.C. 0322A/18 to BROKE, (R) C. in C. W.A.)

0410. (Med.)

Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 34.30 N., 15° E., Probably a S/M.

A/C AM 9 Duty D. 0410/18 to A/C R 7 M.

0900.

One S/M on surface bearing 209° distance 15 miles course unknown position ?? 306-36° N., 15° W., 47.

(STORK, 0900A/18, to F.O.C.N.A.)

My 0900A. EXMOOR, BLANKNEY, STANLEY, and DEPTFORD searching.

(STORK, 0915A/18, to F.O.C.N.A.)

/1228. There.....

625

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported. Contd.

1228.

There are indications that U-boats are being homed on to H.G.76 possibly by aircraft. (F.O.C.N.A. 1228A/18 to Ships escorting H.G.76.) Am over enemy S/M in position 33.00 N.22. 40 E 290° 9. (A/C using Call Sign R8VH, 1316B/18.)

Canary Islands Base.

No. 1230/18. Following received by my U.S., colleague from his Consulate, Casablanca, 16/12. December U.S. observer is informed from a reliable source that 12 German submarines are operating from Canary Islands and patrolling coast from Dakar to Casablanca. Consul endeavouring to obtain more details. 2. My U.S. colleague is doubtful of accuracy of reports. (Tangier 1335/18 to F.O., (R) Adm., Gibraltar.)

Estimated approx. positions of U/B's. (D.D.I.C. 1352A/18, 1353A/18.)

1350.

1350 G.M.T./18 reliable report enemy S/M 025° 50' N., 079° 50' W. Aircraft and surface craft of forces proceeding to area. (U.S.C.N.O., 1850/18 to U.S. Destroyer GOLDSBOROUGH etc.

2245.
(Med.)

Following has been read Alexandria W/T, from S.O. 15 Cr. Sq. One S/M on surface position 31.32 N., 29.14 E. (Nore W/T, 2245/18.) S/M on the surface could this be H.M.S. PERSEUS? (C.S.15, 2259/18 to Capt. S.I.) My 2245. 14th D.F. hunting. They are short of oil. (C.S.15, 2317/18 to C. in C. Med.) Submarine sighted in 031° 32' 029° 14' at 2245B/18. (Capt. S.I., 2357B/18 to PERSEUS, PORPOISE.) Your 2317. (Re:- 14 D F still hunting but short of oil, and previous signal. Accurate position PERSEUS and PORPOISE unknown. Estimated positions are in accordance with my 1911B/17 and my 1655B/18. Both submarines have been warned of your approach. (Capt. S.I., 2359B/18 to C.S.15.)

AN Admiralty statement to-day revealed the names of three U-boats sunk while attacking a convoy last December, and told of how escorting ships smashed the submarines with depth charges or gunfire and forced them to the surface.

The statement recalled that it was announced on January 3 that two Focke-Wulf long-range bombers and at least three U-boats had been sunk in a determined and sustained attack on one of our convoys. The U-boats, from which prisoners were taken, were U 131, U 434 and U 571.

Her Second Trip

U 131 was a 710-ton boat, commissioned for service in 1941. U 131 had previously carried out only one operational cruise—in the North Atlantic—and she had sunk only one ship. Prisoners complained that, during that cruise, they were repeatedly forced to dive by air patrols.

On the morning of December 17, U 131 was seen on the surface by one of the air escorts of the convoy. Escorting warships escorted proceeded at high speed to the attack. Depth charges exploded close to the U-boat hull. The U-boat took on a big list and angle. Her motors were damaged. Water was coming in and she was forced so deep that doors jammed and steel plates buckled and cracked.

All the Crew Saved

The wonder was that U 131 ever reached the surface, but she just managed to do so, though she was unable to dive again. As U 131 came to the surface, the convoy escorts closed her at high speed and opened fire. The crew opened the vents and abandoned ship.

Like U-131, U-434 (500 tons, commissioned in 1941) had patrolled the Northern Atlantic before being ordered south. This patrol had lasted nearly three weeks, but U-434 had failed to make any attack.

On the morning of December 18 U 434 was sighted by destroyers, which closed at high speed and attacked with depth charges.

Water Poured In

One caused water to stream into the control room and succeeding depth charges increased the damage. Steering gear and hydroplanes became useless, instruments and gauges shattered and all the lights put out. The commanding officer gave the order to blow the tanks in an attempt to reach the surface.

U 434 reached the surface and the crew abandoned ship, but she sank immediately and one officer and one rating of her crew of 41 were drowned. The remainder were picked up.

The third submarine—U 571 (500 tons) had also been in North Atlantic waters without success.

Early on December 19 U 571 attacked the convoy. One torpedo sank the ex-American destroyer H.M.S. Stanley (Lieut.-Comdr. D. S. Shaw, O.B.E., R.N.), which had taken part in the destruction of U 434 on the previous day.

Quarrel on Board

H.M.S. Stork (Cdr. F. J. Walker, R.N.) attacked with depth charges. They put both the U-boat's main motors out of action and caused short circuits and fires and shattered compressed air bottles. One of the main pressure hull frames was fractured. Water was entering the U-boat, yet her commanding officer was reluctant to bring her to the surface.

It is reported that a heated altercation broke out between the officers before the Commanding Officer was forced to give the order to blow the tanks. U 571 reached the surface and the crew abandoned ship just as H.M.S. Stork rammed the U-boat and rolled her over so she sank.

Of her complement of six officers and 37 ratings two officers—one the Commander—and 25 ratings lost their lives.

626

War Diary.18.12.1941.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked.By COCKER.

COCKER gained contact in 031° 17' 028° 46' at 2230. Have had no further reports and have ordered COCKER to rejoin.
(HERO, 0025B/18, to N.O.I.C. Alexandria.)

By STORK,
EXMOOR,
etc.

U.434~~U.574~~(Cmd: 6843)

U.574 sunk
19/12.

To ships concerned - well done - keep it up.
(C. in C.W.A., 1051A/18, to STORK.)
Well done again. There are more Birds about.
I hope you have got your loader with you.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1059A/18, to STORK, EXMOOR.)
My P.C. and S., are 036° 14' N., 014° 40' W.,
090° 18 knots at 1430, EXMOOR in company.
H.G.76 P.C. and S., 036° 15' N., 015° 45' W.,
310° 7½ knots at 0830.
Have 45 survivors from U-Boat 434, and 4 U-Boat
~~121~~, and EXMOOR 44 from U-Boat ~~125~~. Learnt from
survivors position and movements of convoy and
name of aircraft carrier are known. STORK
informed. BLANKNEY damaged port side due to
ramming U-Boat. Docking required. Weather
report. Request fighter protection.
(BLANKNEY, 1431A/18, to F.O.C.N.A. (R) Admty.,
etc.)

U.131.
(sunk 17/12.)

Their Lordships congratulate you, your officers and ships companies upon the destruction of U.131. 2. Their Lordships have noted the important part played by AUDACITY's aircraft and they deeply regret the death of her pilot.
(A.C.N.S. (T) 1438A/18 to STORK, AUDACITY, EXMOOR, BLANKNEY.)

By A/C's
from
Gibraltar.

A. 780 18/12 Opsum.
(2) 2 Simultaneous Hudsons parallel track A/S Sweep 1200 to 1900. U-Boat position 35.52 N., 03.25 W., at 1430 hours attacked, 3 near misses.
(3) Sunderland A/S Sweep 0730 to 1830. U-Boat attacked at 1750 position 3603N., 0324W, estimate 2 hits.
(7) Hudson U-Boat strike 1600 and 2030 U-Boat attacked at 1430 hours in 3552N., 0335W.
(200 Group, 1750/18.)

By A/C.

Am over enemy submarine in 36.06 N., 3.24 W.
(Med. A/C (Call sign W9HQ) 1750/18 to Med. A/C. (Call sign GFGJ.)
Enemy submarine previously reported was sighted on surface and observed to submerge, when first sighted was on course 080°. Have attacked enemy with depth charges and bombs dive.
(A/C M9HQ 1755/18.)

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

It is reported (B.5) that at 1600/15 3 German warships believed to be cruisers accompanied by other vessels passed between Skaw and Gothenburgh on a northerly course; one of the warships seemed larger than the others, though darkness prevented identification.

Visual R/C of Brest at 1745 today showed that PRINZ EUGEN had left her berth. As smoke cover obscured most of the harbour it cannot be said whether the ship has sailed or not.

It has now become a matter of the utmost urgency to secure Soviet agreement to the full use of Murmansk, if the flow of military supplies is to be maintained; Archangel cannot be relied upon to handle all convoys now on the way or planned. Local Russians cannot agree to the use of Murmansk or to expediting the necessary preparations; this decision can only be taken in Moscow.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command aircraft attacked the battle cruisers at Brest last night.

Enemy Air Operations.

Tanker LUCCELLUM in Convoy B.B. 13 was attacked set on fire and abandoned at 1830 today near Bardsey Island. Later, tugs were sent and she was towed to Holyhead.

Mining.

Enemy aircraft were suspected of minelaying in the Humber area last night. Several magnetic mines were exploded in the Humber area today.

Enemy aircraft were also engaged last night in minelaying in the Merseyside area.

628

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

Naval Martlets from AUDACITY escorting Convoy H.G.76 shot down two F.W. 200's and damaged two more, this afternoon, about 450 miles west of Lisbon.

Dutch S/M O.24 is to be withdrawn from patrol and sail from Gibraltar to the Far East via the Mediterranean.

Mediterranean.

There were air raids on Malta between 2111/18 and 0059/19. Damage was caused at Luqa Aerodrome.

6 Albacores were despatched last night to attack a convoy found dispersed north of Homs (apparently the important convoy covered and escorted by the Italian battle fleet). Two hits with torpedoes on 2 merchant vessels are claimed.

NEPTUNE, AURORA, PENELOPE and KANDAHAR were mined early today in about 33° 15' N. 13° 12' E. AURORA proceeded to Malta at 16 knots. PENELOPE also struck a mine but was not seriously damaged, NEPTUNE who struck 3 or 4 mines sank. JAGUAR successfully rescued 8 officers and 166 ratings of KANDAHAR under very difficult conditions and KANDAHAR was subsequently sunk by torpedo.

Libya and
Western
Desert.

Wellingtons last night mined the Approaches to Benghazi harbour in connection with the approach of a convoy reported by Malta R/C. The operation was covered by further Wellingtons which bombed the harbour with 4000 ton bombs. Tripoli and Derna harbour were also bombed. Our troops occupied Derna this morning without opposition.

C. in C. Med. reported (22/12) that an attack by human torpedoes was made on Alexandria harbour last night. (See Notes in page 650)

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Hong Kong.

The G.O.C. Hong Kong sent a message at 1019 local time that the last remaining cipher book and table was being destroyed after that message. The situation is very grave, a deep penetration to the southward having been made by the enemy who have landed in the Taikoo area and at Lyemun. During the afternoon a counter attack with torpedo boats was attempted, to regain possession of Mount Parker, Mount Butler and Jardines Island, but proved abortive. Our M.T.B's made 3 separate attacks on enemy landing craft in Kowloon Bay, destroying 2 and losing 2 themselves. (c.f. 20/12).

Malaya.

Penang has been evacuated.

Borneo.

Aircraft bombed Miri today with 500 kg. bombs; one direct hit and one near miss are claimed on a cruiser, and a direct hit and 2 near misses on a ship, possibly a large transport, seaplane carrier or aircraft carrier.

Kuching was bombed today.

Batavia reports that Pontianak town and aerodrome and Kuching aerodrome were bombed this morning. Pontianak town is reported destroyed. Slight damage was caused by 2 air raids on Ipoh.

Indo
China.

A Japanese transport full of troops is reported to have been sunk today off Quinhon Point 13° 45' N. 109° 11' E.

U-Boat Campaign.

Convoy H.G. 76 was attacked early this morning off Cape Roca and STANLEY (destroyer) and S.S.

RUCKINGE were torpedoed and sunk. STORK sank the U-boat and picked up some survivors; a prisoner stated that the U-boat last refuelled at Vigo.

U.574.
sunk.

JERVIS reports sinking or seriously damaging a U-boat in the early hours of today in 297° Ras el Tin 37 miles. (Not sunk - cmd: 6643.)

Soviet tanker VARLAAM

~~U.574~~ AVANESOFF was torpedoed at 2151 today and sank later, by a S/M similar to Italian BALILLA class, 3 cables from the Turkish coast near Cape Baba.

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Iceland
W/T
communication.

Your 1049A/18. Until the W/T transmitter type 21B is in working order in Iceland a depot ship with a good L/F transmitter is required for communication with U.K. The type 21B working a fixed service at Reykjavik will cause considerable interference to local broadcasting station and hence diplomatic difficulties. VULCAN the present U.S. depot ship has not got suitable W/T transmitters. (C. in C. H.F. 1120A/19 to Adty.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Use of
Murmansk
for
Russian
Convoys.

Following for Maclay from M.W.T. is repetition of F.O. tel. No. 23 to Ambassador at Moscow. Repeated to Kuibyshev and to Maclay Archangel. Begins:-

Following from Allied Supplies Executive. He would be grateful if you would discuss with Secretary of State who as member of Executive will be familiar with the problem. Begins:-

1. Please refer to tel. 34 from Maclay. It has now become a matter of the utmost urgency to secure Soviet agreement to the full use of Murmansk, if the flow of military supplies is to be maintained. Delay in completion of Molotovsk and Ekonomiya, shortage of first rate ice-breakers and increasing difficulty of ice conditions make it now certain that Archangel cannot be relied upon to handle all convoys now on the way or planned.
2. Local Russians cannot agree to use of Murmansk or to expediting necessary preparations. This decision can only be taken in Moscow.
3. Any risks and inconvenience involved in using Murmansk must be weighed against possibility of interruption of the Archangel route at any moment on account of lack of reserve icebreakers and increasingly severe conditions.
4. Following your 61 and 62 Mossy we have as notified in our number 126 Mossy continued to load all ships as for Archangel and have assumed that Murmansk will be available only when Archangel fails to cope with the flow. This point is now imminent and the immediate completion of Murmansk organisation for discharging and defence is vital to the assurance of supplies. Please take this up urgently and request that authority be given to discharge at Murmansk part of convoy P.Q.7. due about 30/12. Please repeat answer to Maclay. (D. of S.T. 2227A/19 to N.C.S.O. Archangel.)

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.VESPER.
ACTIVE.

Cancel my 1654A/18 owing to fog. F.O.I.C. Humber is requested to sail ACTIVE for Londonderry independently as convenient. (C. in C. Nore 1042A/19 to VESPER).

Intend to sail ACTIVE to Londonderry at 1145 tomorrow, speed 20 knots. Speed will be adjusted to arrive during daylight. (F.O. Humber 1758A/19)

~~NT. in W. 3~~ My 1558/19. Delete reference to ACTIVE. (C. in C. Rosyth 1824/19).

P.36.
for
Gib.

(A) Adjust route to pass 49° N. 007° 06' W. and proceed onward by route E, thence patrol in position 10. Remain to eastward of longitude 005° W. until 2000A/19th and be clear either to Eastward or Westward of area between 005° 30' W. and 006° 30' W. at 0800A/20th punctually. (F.O.S. 1116A/19 to P.36.)

SUFFOLK.

Your 1859A/18. For SUFFOLK to dock Rosyth would prejudice the completion date of NELSON.

2. SUFFOLK can be taken in hand for docking at South Shields forthwith.

3. Request you will sail her accordingly arranging with C. in C. Rosyth for air protection and S.A. (? A/S) escort as necessary.

(D.O.D. H. 1205A/19 to C. in C. H.F.)

Adty. 1205A/19. SUFFOLK sails from Scapa to arrive at May Island 1130/21. C. in C. Rosyth is requested to arrange for S.A. escort to R/V off May Island and escort SUFFOLK to Tyne. Fighter protection arranged. (C. in C. H.F. 2351A/19 to SUFFOLK).

0.9.

At 0200A/20 intend to sail 0.9 escorted by ANGLE from Rothesay to arrive 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0400A/22. Thence 0.9. as directed by F.O.S. and ANGLE return to Clyde. F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to arrange fighter protection for passage to Wolf Rock.

(Capt. S.7. 1421A/19)

AGAMEMNON.

Sailed AGAMEMNON in accordance with my 1144A/18. E.T.A. 1015A/20. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1514A/19 to R.A.M.)

23rd M/L
Flotilla.

A.M. 1847A/10/12. Request 23rd M.L. Flotilla may be sailed for Great Yarmouth as soon as ready. (R.A.C.F. 1529/19 to F.O.I.C. Aberdeen)

/FORMIDABLE.....

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements-Contd.FORMIDABLE.
ILLUSTRIOUS.

R.A.(M) is requested to sail LANCASTER, NEWARK to meet FORMIDABLE, ILLUSTRIOUS in position (X) 180° Otter Rock 5 miles at 0900A/21 then to act in accordance with Admiralty's 1936A/9 para. 5. (ii) VANQUISHER, VOLUNTEER, WITCH on relief by LANCASTER, NEWARK, are to fuel at Londonderry then proceed to Liverpool. (iii) MONTGOMERY, CHELSEA are to remain with aircraft carrier during flying on and off then escort FORMIDABLE to Belfast. (iv) MONTGOMERY to Greenock. CHELSEA to Londonderry on completion. (C. in C. W.A. 1548A/19).
Ship will be basined A.M. 26th. (C. in C. Rosyth 1825/19 to ILLUSTRIOUS).

BEGONIA.

C. in C. W.A. 2555A/18. Refuelling Londonderry. E.T.A. Scapa 1600/20. (BEGONIA 1954A/19).

RENOWN.
RODNEY.

RENOWN sails from Scapa and RODNEY from Hvalfjord as necessary to R/V in 061° N. 014° 30' W. at 1230A/21. Ships are to exchange screens and RENOWN proceed to Hvalfjord, RODNEY returning to Scapa. (ii) R.A.(D). H.F. is requested to detail 3 destroyers to sail with RENOWN and return to Scapa with RODNEY. (C. in C. H.F. 1655A/19).

NIGER.

Engine trials of NIGER justify ship sailing p.m. 21st. (N.O.I.C. Dundee 1733/19).

→ SEAGULL.
→ EDINBURGH.

SEAGULL will be at position R one 1130C/20. EDINBURGH with 2 destroyers escorting 2 M/V's, E.T.A. Kola Inlet A.M. 20th, routed as in my 2549C/17. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1741C/19 to SEAWOLF).

→ HEBE.
→ SEAWOLF.
→ SEAGULL.
→ EDINBURGH.
→ ECHO.
→ ESCAPADE.

HEBE from 069° 34' N. 034° 24' E. at 1600C/19 proceeding Iokanka, E.T.A. 1000C/20. SEAWOLF on patrol, returning from R/V position 069° 34' N. 034° 24' E. with SEAGULL 1130C/20 for escort to Polyarno. EDINBURGH, ECHO, ESCAPADE escorting two M/V's E.T.A. Kela Inlet A.M. 20th. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1848C/19 to C.S.18, HEBE).

CAIRO.

CAIRO's steaming performance and good work during the past year reflects great credit on all concerned. (C. in C. W.A. 2542A/19 to CAIRO).

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation
"Anklet".

TIGRIS sailed escorted position 060° 52' N. 001° 2' 30" W., then unescorted through (1) 065° N. 001° E. (2) 066° N. 007° E., thence to patrol north and east of position (2). (A.C.O.S. 0945/19 to S/M's Area A.)

Biscay S/M
Patrol.

F.O.S. 1906A/17. A. Delete OBERON, H.34, H.43. B. Following submarines proceed by lettered routes previously ordered, thence to new patrol positions indicated.
H.31. 04.
O.10. 05.
(F.O.S. 1117A/19).
F.O.S. 1954A/17. Para. B delete OBERON. Para. C. delete H.43, H.34. Amend H.31 to position 04, and O.10 to position 05. Add P.36 to position 10. (F.O.S. 1558A/19).

Exercise
"Striker".

Your 0200/18. Assistance of Naval Commanders much appreciated. It is regretted not now possible to accept offer in case of C. in C. Portsmouth owing to distance between Naval and Army H.Q.'s concerned. (Hofors., 1227/19 to Admty.)

Patrol off
Cherbourg.

Request P.38 may be sailed in accordance with paras. two and three of F.O.S. 1857A/13. (Capt. S.5. 1653A/19 to C. in C. Plymouth).
(a) H.32 is to be sailed p.m./20 to patrol in vicinity of 049° 53' N. 001° 14' W. Object as in my 1857A/17 para. C.
(b) P.38 and H.32 are not to attack S/M's while in vicinity of their patrol position. (F.O.S. 1654A/19).
Intend to sail H.32 from seaward end Q.Z.S. 169 about 1500/20 diving by day to comply with F.O.(S) 1654A/19. (Capt. S.5. 2104A/19).

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

Admiralty's 1311A/13 para. 3.
(a) After discussion with (corrupt groups) consider maintenance patrol near minefield is not repetition not justifiable under typical conditions of infrequent sight low (? visibility) and gale until (?corvettes) have been fitted with echo sounding. They have no D/F (?and) compasses are unstable.
(b) A patrol at a distance from minefield in co-operation with the cruiser and relying on her slow speed position is however being arranged.

/(c).....

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Denmark
Straits
Patrol.
- Contd.

(c) Consider ships for this patrol must have echo sounding to 500 fathoms and direction finding and should be fitted as soon as possible.

(d) For efficiency of this patrol and safety of ships also recommend: (i) shore D/F stations be established (ii) accurate sounding of area be published.

(e) Ice is now within 25 miles of (?minefields) and closer in calm weather. (C.S.1. 19012/19 to C. in C. H.F.)

Patrol A.VIVACIOUS proceeding on patrol A now.
(VIVACIOUS 1915A/19).British Air Activity.ENGADINE.My 1106/23/11. Admiralty greatly appreciate the work of R.A.F.E.O. Glasgow in loading ENGADINE under difficult conditions.
(D.N.A.D. 1121A/19 to Air Ministry.)Biscay
Patrol.

Weather permitting following air patrol will be flown tonight. A "Cross Over" from 2200/19 to dawn 20th. Through (A) 047° 28' N. 007° 10' W. (B) 046° 00' N. 006° 35' W. (C) 046° 18' N. 006° W. (D) 047° 11' N. 007° 48' W. First Sortie Sunderland then Whitley. B. line from 0015/20 to 0345/20 through (E) 047° 35' N. 4° 37' W. (F) 047° 14' N. 003° 25' W. (G) 045° 43' N. 001° 30' W. Whitley. (C. in C. Plymouth 1732/19 to WELSHMAN).

A/Cs
approaching
Plymouth.

If friendly bombers accidentally approach the Plymouth gun defended area, there is a possibility, particularly at night or in low visibility, that they will be fired on by the local naval patrols which operate within a radius of 4 miles to seaward from Breakwater Fort.

2. In order to avoid this possibility request that I may be informed when Bomber Command aircraft are carrying out operations which may bring them near Plymouth. Patrols will then be warned accordingly. (C. in C. Plymouth 1757/19 to H.Q.B.C.)

AUDACITY.My warmest congratulations to you, your fighters, directing staff, and the pilots concerned on destruction of two more Condors.
(C. in C. W.A. 1933A/19 to AUDACITY.)A/S
Method.Following method of aircraft A/S operation by moonlight has been employed with success by Swordfish fitted A.S.V. Mark II N. based Gibraltar. Details. Has also succeeded on moonless nights.
(D.N.A.D. 1947A/19).

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.→ WELSHMAN.

My 1201/18. Sailed WELSHMAN. (N.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1101A/19).
WELSHMAN passes Wolf Rock southbound at 1745A/19 and northbound through 049° 30' N. 006° E. at 0800A/20. (F.O.S. 1112A/19 to S/M's Area A).

Bristol Channel.

Exploded red mine at 1124A in 188° 1.7 miles from Flatholm Light. (Capt. M/S Bristol Channel 1447A/19).

N.P.18.

Intend to carry out operation N.P. 18 tonight. (V.A. Dover 1500A/19).
Departures M.G.B's 63, 65, 67.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 2157A/19).

Humber.

Following six magnetic mines exploded today by Sweepers. Details.
(F.O. Humber 2058A/19).

Enemy Intelligence.3 Warships in Kattegat.

It is reported Graded B.3. that at 1600/15 three German Warships believed cruisers, accompanied by other vessels, passed between Skaw and Gottenburg, course North.
Darkness prevented identification, but one warship seemed larger than others.
(D.D.I.C. 1229A/19 to C. in C. H.F., V.A.2., C.in C. Rosyth, H.Q.C.C.)

→ PRINZ EUGEN.

Aircraft R/C indicates PRINZ EUGEN may have sailed at dusk today or be sailing during the night. (C. in C. Plymouth 1804/19 to WELSHMAN).
A.M. 1649A/16. PRINZ EUGEN was alongside the jetty to westward of Torpedo Boat Station.
2. At 1745/19 visual R/C reported EUGEN had left this berth. Remainder of harbour obscured by smoke. (D.D.I.C. 1851A/19).
Visual R/C at 1745 today showed PRINZ EUGEN had left her berth. As smoke cover obscured majority of harbour it cannot be said whether ship was sailed or not. (F.O.S. 2002A/19 to S/M's Area A.)

E-boat.

Suspect E-boat in vicinity of Sheringham.
(C. in C. Nore 2059A/19).

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Navigational.Yarmouth.Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1047A/19).
Port now open. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1151A/19).8C. Buoy.
62C Buoy.Commodore of F.N.581 reports No. 8C buoy light extinguished at 0200/18 and No. 62C buoy damaged and light extinguished a.m. 1100/18.
(N.C.S.O. Methil 1212/19).
62C Buoy damaged. All superstructure missing.
(WESTMINSTER 1535A/19).Harwich.Port now open.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1326A/19).Gidoyamo
Radio
Beacon.Your 1353A/8. This beacon is not in operation.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1522C/19).Brightlingsea. Port open. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1555A/19).Technical.Recognition
Procedure.

Admiralty 514AZ/6th Sept. S.P. 02220(2) Art. 37. Sector System is not to be employed in recognition procedure between British and Soviet warships. (D.S.D. 1937/A/19).

Casualties and Defects.H.34.
H.43.My 1714A/18.
Amend Para. 1 to read H.34 escorted by ALECTO approx. position 49° 52' N. 05° 10' W. proceeding to Falmouth. (F.O.S. 0049A/19).
A. When ready request you will sail H.43 and H.34 as follows. Routes H.43 to position 03, and H.34 to position 02.
B. Submarines should be escorted if possible to longitude of Lizard Head. They should remain to the eastward of this longitude until 1800A/19 and be clear either eastward or westward of the area between longitude 05° 30' W. and 06° 30' W. at 0800A/20.
(F.O.S. 1114A/19 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).
Arrival 1124/19 ALECTO and H.34.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1210/19).KELLETT.

KELLETT delayed Aberdeen for fitting temporary piston ring for passage to Nore. Anticipated sailing 22/12. (F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1101/19).

/MACBETH....

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects-Contd.MACBETH.

Request you will convey to the Master, Officers, and ship's company of MACBETH the hearty congratulations of the Board of Admiralty on their safe arrival in harbour resulting from their stout-hearted endurance through a long period of discomfort and danger. (A.C.N.S. T. 1252A/19 to F.O.I.C. Belfast).

BLACKWATER.

My S 1736/18. S.A. ranging of BLACKWATER unsatisfactory. Ship is returning to Port Edgar for necessary action. (Capt. I/C Port Edgar 1453/19).

KING HAAKON VII.
MYRMIDON.

Immediately on launching at Barclay Curles Shipyard Clydeholm this afternoon, S.S. KING HAAKON VII collided with S.S. MYRMIDON which ship was coming up river loaded. Damage to both ships highly probable. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1557/19).

SLEIPNER.

Have developed condenser pump defect. Maximum speed reduced to 18 knots. Request survey on arrival at Sheerness. (SLEIPNER 1753/19).

REGENT.

(? Portsmouth) sanctuary extended 15 miles to South and East in force from 0730 to 1200. Airborne fighter protection arranged weather permitting. (Capt. S.5. 1801A/19 to REGENT). Sailed 1745 REGENT escorted by ELLESMERE. E.T.A. QZS 169 at 0900/20. Escort parts company at end of QZS 278 and returns Plymouth. (C. in C. Plymouth 1802/19).
My 1714A/18. Add para. (O). REGENT leaves Plymouth 1700A/19 for Portsmouth via QZS 169. S/M will be escorted until dark thence unescorted. (F.O.S. 1851A/19).

* CHASER II leaves Spithead at 0900 at 14 knots tomorrow to transfer Flotilla Engineer Officer to you on meeting for engine trials vide F.O.S. 1802A/19. CHASER will remain in company as escort during trial. (Capt. S.5. 2107A/19 to REGENT).

* ? CHASSEUR II. (alias BOULOGNE.)

ST. LOMAN.
(Escort
Trawler)
SAXON
QUEEN
damaged.

Report were struck on port bow by S.S. SAXON QUEEN at 1815 when on starboard side of Victoria Channel. Plates pierced below whale back to underwater damage. S.S. SAXON QUEEN returned to harbour. (ST. LOMAN 2007/19 to ANTRIM).

Tanker.

Proceed with all despatch to assist Tanker on fire 270° Bardsey Island 5 miles at 2020A/19. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2114A/19 to AMSTERDAM).

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys.P.Q.6.

My 1424A/15th. Amend E.T.A. Kola Inlet 0900C/20. (18th C.S. 0211C/19 to S.B.N.O. North Russia). Your 0211C/19. Anticipate local fog throughout Kola Inlet a.m. 20th, improving later and recommend E.T.A. 1230C. If fog persists it is recommended that M/V's anchor south of east end Kildin Island. R/V for EDINBURGH with pilot vessel will be signalled and pilot will come on board. Pilot vessel will then lead EDINBURGH to berth using special direction finding apparatus. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1540C/19 to R.A. 18th C.S.)

Your 1424A. Escort arrangements made. Pilots will board EDINBURGH 12 merchant ships off Bolshomain Oleni in entrance of Kola Inlet. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1831C/18 to 18 C.S.)

My 1540C/19. Following arrangements have been made. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 2106C/19 to C.S.18).

F.N.582.

Cancelled owing to fog. (C. in C. Nore 1020A/19).

B.B.14.

Procedure outlined in your 1312A/18, para: 1, will start with B.B. 14. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1034A/19 to C. in C. W.A.)

P.Q.7.

SALAMANDER with BRITOMART proceed 1730 today to Seidis Fiord(s) Iceland passing west of Orkneys and East of Faroes thence north Iceland - Faroes Minch Barrier.

On arrival complete with fuel and await arrival of TARTAR and ICARUS. You will be required to provide escort for P.Q.7.

SHEFFIELD from northward expects to arrive Scapa 1300 tomorrow. (R.A.D. H.F. 1146A/19).

R.U.1.

Sailing delayed 24 hours owing to bad weather. (N.C.S.O. Reykjavik 1439N/19).

H.G. 76.

If fuel permits join H.G. 76 routed as follows.

Estimated P.C.S. of convoy at 2000A/19, 39° 30' N. 19° 28' W., 320°, 7½ knots.

Remain with convoy until P.L.E. proceeding to Gibraltar on conclusion. H.G. 76 is being shadowed by two or more U-boats. (C. in C. W.A. 1509A/19 to WESTCOTT.)

/STAFFORDSHIRE.....

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys-Contd.

STAFFORDSHIRE. Intend to sail S.S. STAFFORDSHIRE in company with FORTH from Rosyth for Clyde at 0200/28 escorted by CURACOA and WHADDON to Dunnet Head. I shall be glad if you would send two destroyers to take over this escort at 1500/28 as I cannot spare CURACOA and WHADDON from their East Coast convoy duties to go further to the westward. (C. in C. Rosyth 1517/19 to C. in C. W.A.)

Zigzagging
by M/V's.

Admiralty message "H.J." Merchant ships routed independently or after dispersal from convoy are not to zigzag in the Atlantic when southward of 10° south. Admiralty message "H.D." is cancelled. C.A.M.S.I. 618 will be amended. (D.T.D. 1710Z/19).

EMPIRE
FULMAR.
SULTAN
HISSAR.

A.M. 1307A/11.³³⁴
EMPIRE FULMAR, 16 knots, conveying military stores to Suez via Freetown and the Cape, will be ready to leave Clyde on 22/12. Request you will sail her with the A.M.C's referred to in above message, escorted by ACTIVE and SULTAN HISSAR and local escort of one or if possible two other destroyers who should remain to prudent limit of endurance. SULTAN HISSAR is required to proceed via Cape to Mediterranean where she will be turned over to Turkish authorities as arranged by C. in C. Mediterranean. (D.O.D. H. 1712A/19).

O.N. 47.

Task Unit Four .1 .3 (S.O. NIBLACK) sailed 1500 with Merchant Ship. (A.C.I.C. 1740N/19).

Incorrect
Diversion
of Ships.

SUNFLOWER 1027/13 and BROKE's 0632/18. Four ships have been incorrectly diverted because of D.G. defects. Request the attention of escorts and commodores may be drawn to I.C.O.C. Number 4 last paragraph which was signalled to convoy ports abroad by A.M. 2008/26/2 for information of commodores. (D.T.D. 1927A/19 to C. in C. W.A.)

F.S. 676.

My 1420A/19. Returned to Humber L/F. Unable to contact. (F.O. Humber 2135A/19).

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.French Shipping.

Passings 18/12. French, Eastward, CEVENNES, THISBE, STRASBOURGEOIS, LEGASSE, MENGWEN, JOSEPH ELISE, KERPAPE, all full.
(V.A.C.N.A. 0923A/19 to Admty.)
Escorted by M/S ENGAGEANTE (D.O.R. 20/12.)

FAULKNER,
FORESIGHT,
MATABELLE.

Left Ponta Delgada 0930 G.M.T./19th.
(N.C.S.O. P.Delgada 0958/19.)

Allied landing in Timor.

Portuguese authorities here taking seriously Timor incident. If situation deteriorates there is a possibility of harbour facilities being curtailed.
(Ponta Delgada 1055/19 to D.N.I. for E.P.S.)

German ships visiting Valencia.

My 1242/16. Following from Valencia (begins):
My 1159/15, it is said German ships ordered to proceed French ex Italian ports. LISBOA (German) left before completion loading, 1955/16 (ends).
(S.O.I. Gib., 1240A/19 to Admty. etc.)

FARADAY, etc for Freetown.

Cancel my 2156A/17. The present moment appears opportune for sailing ships mentioned in your 1828A/16.
(A.C.N.S.(T) 1248A/19 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Cable Operations.

My 1226/13/10 and 1948/18/11 present state of cable communications imposes following order of priority of repairs - (1) Fayal St. Vincent, (2) Waterville-Fayal 2, (3) Lisbon diversion, item (1) being of great importance. If escort cannot be spared for Fayal work request item (3) may be progressed to enable Channel connection to be effected for which cable ship is now available in U.K.
(D.S.D. 1249A/19 to F.O.C.N.A.)

O.24.

Your 2100B/18 acknowledged. Proceed as routed my 1406A/18 adjusting speed to pass through 037° 05' 000° 50' W. at 1900/22 thence on surface arriving Gibraltar 1500/23. Bombing restrictions arranged. C. in C. Med. and V.A. Malta pass to Capt.(S) 1 and Capt. (S) 10.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/19 to O.24 (R) C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta, Capt.(S) 1, Capt. (S) 10, S.O. Force H)

See next page.

/O.G. Convoys ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - contd.O.G. Convoys.

Your 1648A/18 (re intention to stop signalling O.G. Convoys) Concur.
(V.A.C.N.A., 1433A/19 to C. in C. W.A.)

Lisbon,
shipping for
evacuation.

Your 1936A/18 and your 1937A/18. All ships are being sailed to their loading destination when ready. By 21/12 the only ships in Portuguese Ports will be MERKLAND at Lisbon and COMO at Oporto. My 2103/17 and my 1001/18 were sent as Embassy considered most urgent that ship should be kept for their own evacuation. Embassy were sending telegram on same lines to Governor, Gibraltar, but I have since learned this was cancelled as they considered my signal sufficient. Second part of my 2103/17 is based on my own considered opinion.
(N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1556/19 to Admty. (R) F.O.C.N.A.)

AUDACITY.
F.W. shot
down.

Another F.W. shot down by AUDACITY's fighter.
(STORK 1650A/19 to Admty., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. W.A.)
Three F.W. aircraft have been active and there were indications that Convoy H.G.76 was sighted and reported for the benefit of U.Boats.
(D.D.I.C. 1651A/19 to F.O.C.N.A.)

O.24.

Dutch S/M O.24 is to be withdrawn from patrol. When ready she is to be sailed from Gibraltar to the Far East passing through the Mediterranean. She should embark as much of her stores and spare gear as possible.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 1746A/19 to F.O.C.N.A.) *See previous page*

P.35.

My 1108A/16. Your escort is HELIOTROPE. Report if unable to comply within 1 hour. Several U. Boats operating in Western Approaches.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1806A/19 to P.35.)

DIDO.

Your 1241A/18 E.T.A. 2300A/20 P.C. and S. at 0700A/20 035° 00' N. 011° 30' W. 084° 18.
(DIDO 2245Z/19 to S.O. Force H.)

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.M/V
Aircraft
recognition
procedure.

Your 1645/3. Since its introduction no experience of this procedure has yet been obtained on S.A. Station.
(C. in C. S.A. 0818Z/19 to Admiralty (R) C. in C. East Indies.)

ENGADINE.

In W.S.14 has a cargo of 9 Swordfish 9 Sea Hurricane 2 Albacore and 5 Pegasus 30 engines.
2. Her original orders were to land 6 Swordfish at Freetown and remainder in Egypt.
3. Request you will sail ENGADINE independently for the Cape without delay in order to transfer 2 Albacore and 2 Sea Hurricane to INDOMITABLE. The 6 Swordfish for Freetown should be landed at the Cape. 4. Further signal will be made regarding onward movements of ENGADINE and disposal of remaining aircraft.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1216A/19 to C. in C. S.A.)

Vichy S/Ms
to escort
convoy.

Report graded A.3. that 6 submarines are now at Diego Suarez and will escort convoy expected to sail January with orders to fire if intercepted. Confirmation is being sought.
(S.O.I. Capetown 1412B/19 to Admty.)

ATHENE.

My 1047A/14. ATHENE after arrival at Takoradi will disembark Hurricanes now embarked and embark 40 other Hurricanes. 2. She is then to be sailed independently as expeditiously as practicable to Bombay where she will disembark these Hurricanes. 3. F.O.C.N.A. is requested to report his intentions for implementing my 1047/14.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1635A/19 to C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. E.I.)

W.S.15.

Your 1637/18. Approved. 2. It is presumed this arrangement will allow one sloop to accompany W.S.15 from Freetown to Cape.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1636A/19 to C. in C. S.A.)

DULVERTON.

SOUTHWOLD 2000, not to Admiralty. DULVERTON docked 18/12 undocking p.m. Tuesday 23/12 sailing 1500Z/23. Following is intended programme arrive and leave (i) Mombasa p.m./28 (ii) Aden p.m. 2/1 (? anchoring) Suez a.m./6/1.
(N.O.I.C. Durban 1810Z/19 to C. in C. Med.)

JAGUAR
UTMOST.

Departures 19/12 JAGUAR, arrivals UTMOST.
(N.O.1/c Malta 1821B/19.)

/Brazil ...

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

Brazil and
Canadian
Warships.

Secretary General Spokesman for M. of F.A. informs me that if we have any Canadian Cruisers, Destroyers, or Canadian Ships of any kind which we might wish to use in these waters they could enter any Brazilian Port as often as they wish and stay as long as desirable.
(N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1841Z/19, 1921Z/19 to Admty.)

Troop
Transport.

Have received a request from G.O.C. in C. for transport for one African brigade group from Lagos to Freetown as soon as possible after 1/1. Approx. number 536 Europeans and 6370 Africans with baggage and first line transport.
2. A similar brigade group has to be moved from Takoradi to Bathurst and of this about one third should be moved 21/1, one third 21/2 and one third 31/3. 3. Request returning Transports of suitable draft may be diverted to Lagos and Takoradi respectively for these movements.
4. Maintenance of above troops will require 2300 tons monthly from Lagos and Takoradi to Freetown and Bathurst.
(C. in C. S.A., 1937Z/19 to Admty.)

Mediterranean.

A/C Report.

Target not located by 0100.
(A/C N.No.261 Squadron, No T.O.O/19 to Med.
A/C (Call sign R 7 M.)

14 D.F.

Cease hunting and return to Alexandria.
(? 0006B/19 to 14 D.F.(R) Capt. S.1 S.O.15 C.S.)
See also U-B Campaign.

M/Vs
attacked.

Albacores attacked 2 small merchant ships unsuccessfully in 33° 5' N. 14° 50' E. and 33° 3' N. 14° 7' E. at 2150 and 2217 respectively.
(Malta, 0105B/19 to Force B.)

Enemy
Units.

P.C. and S. 2 (?Merchant ships) 3 destroyers 32° 55' N. 13° 50' E. 290°, 14 knots, 2240.
(Malta, 0120B/19 to Force B.)

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.D.14

For information KINGSTON CYANITE contact 284°
Ras-el-Tin 23 at 2350. Enter harbour in
accordance with Cs in C. 0006/19.
(Alexandria 0124/19 to Capt. D. 14 (R) C.S.15.)

Enemy Units.

2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 1 merchant ship,
P.C. and S. 33° 4' N. 14° 13' E. 270° unknown
at 2210.
(Malta 0132/19 to Force B.)

NEPTUNE
AURORA and
KANDAHAR
mined.

*see p 687**Neptune p 559**Aurora**Force K' p 560*

NEPTUNE mined 3 times, AURORA once in estimated
position 033° 10' 013° 12'. NEPTUNE lost all
steam and power. PENELOPE, KANDAHAR and LIVELY
standing by. My course and speed 015° 16 knots,
HAVOCK and LANCE in company.

(AURORA 0145B/19 to V.A. Malta.)

NEPTUNE and KANDAHAR mined, unable to steam in
033° 15' N. 013° 30' E. Unable to approach
them through minefield. Suggest Sunderland
or submarine to sent to boats North of minefield,
E.T.A. 1100. LIVELY in company.

(PENELOPE, 0530/19 to V.A. Malta.)

Destroyer (?number 28) sinking 035° Tripoli
30 miles, crew aboard.

(A/C duty H., 1026/19 to Hal Far.)

Arrived AURORA, PENELOPE, LANCE, LIVELY, HAVOCK.
Report later.

(V.A. Malta 1215B/19 to C. in C. Med., (R)
Admty.)

JAGUAR is being sent to your assistance.

Maryland will attempt to locate you before dark.
If possible special Wellington will locate you
after dark. Do not break W/T silence unless
you are sinking or are attacked, in which case
inform JAGUAR.

(V.A. Malta, 1452B/19 to KANDAHAR.)

KANDAHAR report that at 1300B still afloat
drifting about one knot to East. Consider she
should be clear of minefield by midnight by which
time JAGUAR should be in touch. Order to tow
if possible. No sign of NEPTUNE.

(V.A. Malta 1501B/19 to C. in C. Med.)

At 1700 KANDAHAR 058° Tripoli (Libya) 25 miles,
down by stern, signalled S O S, rafts out,
visibility 10 miles.

(V.A. Malta 1845B/19 to JAGUAR.)

The following has been read, addressed A/C
using call sign 8 JHD: Have you located
KANDAHAR?

(A/C call sign R 7 M, 2359/19.)

/10 Corvette ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.10 Corvette Group.
25 A/S Group.

10th Corvette Group is to form part of Western Desert Escort Force and 25th A/S Group is to be employed on escort duties in Eastern Med. as ordered by N.O.1/c Syria. R.A. Alexandria is requested to arrange exchange of duties. (C. in C. Med., 1113B/19 to Alexandria C. and C.O. etc.)

Movements.

Arrivals 18/12 Tug ST. MONANCE, FLAMINGO. Greek Destroyer IERAX, M.L.1017. SOUTHERN SEA, FARNDALE, FALK. Departures 18/12 THORGRIM, SNAPDRAGON, THORN. Arrivals 19/12 NAIAD, EURYALUS, SIKH, MAORI, LEGION, KIMBERLEY, JERVIS, NIZAM, KIPLING, ISAAC SWEERS. Departures 19/12 HASTY, HOTSPUR, GRIFFIN. (S.O.I. Alexandria 1120B/19 to Admty. etc.)

Enemy Units, Benghazi.

Aircraft report 1 (? merchant ship) 9,000 tons in Benghazi. 2 cruisers and 2 destroyers patrolling to seaward. (N.L.O. 8th Army 1156B/19 to C. in C. Med.)

Losses of landing craft.

Since my 1410B/5/10 (N.T.) following are registered numbers of landing craft lost in Mediterranean up to 1/12. T.L.C's Nos.2 and 7 total 2 A.L.Cs, S.L.Cs, M.L.Cs and Eureka nil. (C. in C. Med., 1245B/19.)

Benghazi mined and bombed.

Night 18/19 Dec., mines laid by 1 Wellington Squadron in entrance to Benghazi harbour in connection with approach of Italian Naval Convoy reported by Malta R/C. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1247/19.) Operation covered by further 3 Squadrons which bombed harbour with 4,000 lb bombs and Berka Aerodrome also objectives in Benghazi Town. Minelaying reported as accurate and successful. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1303/19.)

/Escort ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Escort for
Soviet
Tankers.

Your 2355/16 (?At present) with all our forces engaged in attacking enemy supplies to Libya and covering our own lines, it is not possible for me to hold out any hope of providing escort for these ships. It might be pointed out that essence of success lies in these vessels making the journey by short rushes and seizing (?favourable) opportunities caused by weather or other diversions. In consequence their time of emerging from the Aegean can neither be (?ascertained) nor predicted and this makes it all the more difficult to cover them as force cannot be kept waiting on chance that (?ships) may slip out. 2. I fully sympathise with desire for escort and anything that is possible will be done but it is unlikely to be very much. Admty. pass to Adml. Miles.
(C. in C. Med., 1307B/19 to Admty.)

UTMOST
M/V hit
13/12.

(1) UTMOST reported at 0131/13 in 039° 47' 017° 22' fired 4 torpedoes at 2 large Northbound M/Vs speed 15 knots escorted by 2 destroyers. One appeared GARIBALDI class. One hit, followed by counter attack of 40 charges, this hit corroborated by UPRIGHT. 0230 one prolonged explosion, result unobserved. (2) At 1510/13 in 039° 44' 017° 30' sighted one 6000 ton M/V course 130° escorted by 2 destroyers, 3 aircraft, out of range. (3) At 0355/14 sighted large transport Northbound in 040° 02' 017° 22', out of range. (4) During Northern Patrol 8 destroyers observed to use course 210° from Taranto for 10 miles then alter to 160°. (5) At 1515/14 in 040° 00' 017° 03' one destroyer and small M/V Northbound sighted out of range. (6) At 2035/14 in 039° 50' 017° 26' considered from (? datum) that 2 heavy ships with destroyers passed out of sight to Westward. (7) At 2234/16 fired 4 torpedoes at one Southbound cruiser, escorted by 2 destroyers, missed. 2240 several destroyers heard. 2310 3 heavy units passed overhead at 160 revolutions.
(Capt. S. 10, 1330B/19 to Capt. S.1.)

MARIANNA
S.Ps.

Auxiliary vessel sailed German (ex Greek) MARIANNA, gross tonnage 29 speed 5 knots transited from Piraeus to Varna 18/12. Please bring into force SP 02341 number 1284.
(S.O.I. Istanbul 1515B/19, 1746/19 to S.O.I.Med.)

/A/S Protection ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.A/S
Protection
of Aden.

Your 1347B/9. Admiralty appreciation is that there is at present little danger of attack by German U-Boats and only remote possibility of attack by Japanese U-Boats.

2. Should Malay barrier fall or should the Axis acquire bases in Madagascar attack by Axis U-Boats would become possible. The latter possibility is being carefully watched.

3. Retaliatory attack by Vichy submarines from Madagascar will remain a possibility until Jibuti surrenders but there is no evidence that numbers have been increased or that orders for more offensive action have been issued.

4. Attack by raider is in all circumstances considered improbable owing to the natural reluctance of such vessels to venture into areas where evasion after attack is difficult.

5. Unless you have positive evidence of threat from Japanese S/Ms extending westward across the Indian Ocean the blockade of Jibuti should take precedence before A/S defence of ships at Aden. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1545A/19 to C. in C. Med.)

RAMB IV.

H.M.G.'s declaration of 2/7/1941, stated that RAMB IV would be detained for a minimum period of 6 months. As this period has almost expired request report: (a) how the Medical, religious and hospital staff of the ship, if any, were disposed of and where they are now; (b) whether there has been any further interference with British hospital ships; (c) your remarks on question whether RAMB IV should be released or detained for a further period. (Head of M. 1546A/19 to C. in C. Med.)

Enemy Units.

2 battleships and 4 destroyers mean course 350° speed 20 knots position 039° 05' 017° 32'. (P.31 1658B/19 to Capt.(S) 10, V.A. Malta.)

M.N.B.D.O.

A1/39955 A 19/12. At recent conference with C. in C. Med., it was agreed desirable that M.N.B.D.O. should be brought up to strength. Request arrangements made for 280 A.A. and 220 S/L total 500 personnel to be included in December convoy. Further draft of 600 in January followed by drafts of 350 in successive Convoys to complete. Details with M.E.L.O. now en route to U.K. Admiralty pass to A.G.R.M. (Mideast, 1700/19 to Troopers (R) Admty.)

/Malta ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Malta
Air Report.

7 enemy aircraft crossed coast 2111 and 0059 hours night 18/19th bombs land and sea. Luqa bombed. Damage to main runway and Wellingtons. Casualties.

0843 hours Hurricane escort Naval Units attacked 3 JU.88s, 1 damaged 1 shot down on land, 1 crew dead 2 injured.

18th. 6 Blenheims attacked bombs and machine guns 1310 hours 2 Schooners escorted 2 aircraft East Melita 31 miles, bombs dropped mast height, no hits observed. 1 enemy aircraft attacked and hit. P.M. searches Italian Fleet sighted

1500 hours 4 Battleships 8 D/Rs 072°. Homs 170 miles course north east 18 knots. 1314 hours 3 Cruisers 6 Destroyers 3 M/Vs 8000 tons 072°. Homs 85 miles course west 14 knots. Special

Wellington night 18/19th found convoy dispersed North Homs. 6 Albacores despatched attack. 1 returned engine trouble. Remainder dropped 4 torpedoes scoring 2 hits on 2 M/Vs. 1 Albacore missing. Searches unsuccessful. 5 Swordfish

despatched later as could not reach target in high wind at time Albacore attack. Nothing found. 1 aircraft burnt out on landing. Crew unhurt. 7 Mark 2 Wellingtons Tripoli. 1

returned mechanical trouble. 3 bombed town diversion for 3 others laying mines. 3 mines laid just inside the harbour, 3 just outside in approach. 14 Wellingtons for bombing attack on ships when entering harbour grounded by bombing attack Luqa.

(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700, 1721/19.)

SOKOL.

Leave patrol 0001B/20 and proceed through 039° 05' 017° 25' to spend daylight hours within 10 miles Stilo on 20/12 and Spartivento Cape on 21/12 thence to carry out anti U-boat patrol off Augusta on 22nd leaving there to pass through 035° 51' 015° 15' to arrive Malta before 1700B following day. Any submarines encountered may be attacked.

(Capt. S. 10, 1705B/19 to SOKOL.)

PERSEUS.

My 1521B/14, remain on route ordered adjusting speed to arrive Sanctuary 0530B/20 small convoy escorted by destroyers and trawlers, E.T.A. 0630B from West on inshore route and another from East at 0900B.

(Capt. S.1, 1721B/19 to PERSEUS.)

/Insurance ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Insurance
of 8 ships
for Turkey.

Agreed that four of the eight ships would be delivered now and four in one year's time, and that liability of Turkish Govt. for Insurance would not commence until the ships have been delivered in a Turkish port. My 1152B/12/11 refers.
(N.A. Angora 1758B/19 to Adty.)

UPRIGHT,
patrol report.

My 1821B/18 part 1.
(i) UPRIGHT report from 6th to 9th off Messina no target sighted, E-Boat patrols constantly day and night. (ii) Near position 39 27 17 24 between 11 and 14 Dec. sighted 2 destroyers northbound, 3 southbound, all speeds 20 knots probably ferry service, passed out of range. Throughout this period 800 ton ?schooner remained in vicinity. (iii) At 0212 13th in 40 09 17 04 fired 4 mark 8 torpedoes at 2 northbound ships with overlapping continuous silhouettes, escorted 1 destroyer. 3 hits on leading ship 1 on other.
(Capt.(S) 10 1817B/18.)
Note: Part 1 only received.

Benghazi
mining and
bomb raid.

Night 18/19, 42 Wellingtons operated, 5 bombed Benghazi Harbour to cover mine laying, bombs including 3 of 4000 lbs. bursting on Moles and Harbour works, damage unobserved. 7 bombed M.T. concentrated near Benghazi starting many fires among continuous stream of traffic. 10 mines laid accurately in area off harbour entrance prescribed by Navy.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1831/19.)

Libya.

Military Situation Reports.
(C. in C. M.E., 1836/19. 2240/19 to W.O.)
See Lion Copy.

2 U/Bs.

Attacked by JERVIS and KINGSTON CYANITE, both considered U-Boat sunk or seriously damaged.
(C. in C. Med., 1853/19) See U-Boat Campaign.

DERNA.

Departure 18 Genoa.
(Barcelona 1845/19.)

Enemy
Units.

3 cruisers unknown number of destroyers P.C. and S. 039° 05' 017° 29' 350° 16 knots at 1730B. Unknown number of ships passed (corrupt group) (Possibility of CAPE BAZARUTO?) proceeding northwards in approx. 039° 19' 017° 47' at (?1200)B (UNBEATEN 1901B/19 to Capt. S. 10.)
2 Battleships, 2 Cruisers, 10 destroyers, P.C. and S. 039° 14' 017° 49', 295°, (?20) knots at 1200B. (SOKOL 2110B/19 to Capt. S.10, V.A. Malta) (V.A. Malta 2332B/19 to C. in C. Med.)

/Following ...

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 2240/19th Dec. IN

MOST SECRET

From ~~C. in C. Middle East.~~ Date 19.12.41.

Recd 2330.

Cipher

Addressed War Office, repeated C. in C. Mediterranean.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

260865 0/40140 Cipher 19/12/41 Most Secret.

COSITREP No.61.

1. Midday 19th December Derna and Mechili occupied by us.

2. Air. Night 18/19 December Wellingtons mined approaches to Benghazi Harbour for expected naval convoy sighted by Malta under cover of heavy bombing attack by further Wellingtons on harbour and M.T. concentrations near town. Mines laid accurately in selected area off approaches. Many fires started among continuous stream of M.T. near Benghazi, but damage from bombing of harbour unobserved. A.A. Benghazi much decreased. Further report follows. War Office pass Air Ministry.

2240/19.

Received from War Office 0152/20

1st Lord

1st S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T)

A.C.N.S. (W)

N.A. 1st S.L.

D. of P. (2)

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.N.I. (4)

D.N.A.D.

I.P. (2)

T.D.

Duty Captain (2)

Hd. of M.

E.P.S.

N.I.D. 10. Fay. Cdr.

D.D.I.C. Wilson

D.G.D.

War Office Circulation

Internal

S. of S.

C.I.G.S.

V.C.I.G.S.

D.E.O. & P.

D.D.M.O. (O)

D.P. (2)

M.O. 1.5.6.

D.D.I.P.

D.M.I.

D.D.M.I. (I)

M.I. 3.14.

D.A.F.V.

External

Cap. War Room

Col. Jacob Cab. Offices.

C.A.S. Air Ministry (2)

D. of Plans Air Min. (2)

Plans 3 Air Min. (2)

D.O.O. Air Min.

D.M.C. Air Min.

P.S. to S. of S. Air. Min (2)

Duty Group Capt. Air Min.

A.C.A.S. (I) Air Min.

War Room Air Min.

S. of S. Foreign Office

Duty Capt. Admiralty

Duty Officer Upper Ad. War Room

Hd. of War. Reg. Admiralty.

jr

MOST SECRET

Head of Watch
War Records.

Request I may be supplied
with a copy of Cir C Med^{istn} -
2157/19 referred to in his
Post Secret 2004 B/22.

W.D. Dunningham
W. D.

24/12/41

DGP

Will you please say whether
the above request may be complied
with in view of the fact that this
signal is HUSH

W.D. Dunningham

W.D. Dunningham

2300/24

Reference: C m C Med: 2151/19

This signal is to remain
'HUSH' and D of P does not
wish at the moment to extend
the circulation.

25. XII. 41

[Signature]
~~ASIP~~
Peace Division

~~Radio Watch
War Regn.~~

[Signature]

Times 9/11
says Dec 17 attack
by assault ships.
9th claim
1 ship 2 Valiant
also torpedoed
very severely damaged

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Enemy
Units -
contd.

Following from UNBEATEN: 3 cruisers unknown number of destroyers P.C. and S. $039^{\circ} 05' 017^{\circ} 29' 350^{\circ} 16$ knots at 1730B. Unknown number of ships passed over northward in approx. $039^{\circ} 19' 017^{\circ} 47'$ at 1200B.
(V.A. Malta 2119B/19 to Med. Fleet.)

E.Boats.

Following has been read. P.C. and S. of 6 E-boats $33^{\circ} 10' N. 14^{\circ} 00' E. 60^{\circ} 20$ knots.
(A/C using call sign 8 JHD 2255/19.)

Attack on
Alexandria by
Italian
Subs.

QUEEN ELIZABETH and VALIANT were seriously damaged in an attack on Alexandria Harbour between 0325 and 0610/19 by human torpedoes. Destroyer JERVIS and oiler SAGONA were also damaged.

(Med. War Diary, TSA. 3762 A/42)

651

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.W.S. 12Z.B.*WS 12A - Adm and
Sub**WS 12B - Bombay**WS 12M - Malaya*

Your 0454Z/6. It is desired that ROYAL SOVEREIGN should accompany W.S. 12Z.B. throughout as much of its passage as possible. (A.C.N.S.(F), 0055A/19 to C. in C. E.I.) Intended arrangements for sailing and escort of W.S. 12Z follow in my 1234Z/19 (N.T. in W.D.) (ii) Request early information of date convoy and ROYAL SOVEREIGN will be ready to leave Durban. (C. in C. E.I., 1220Z/19 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown, (R) Admty., etc.)

Reply: N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0144Z/20.

*See also C in CEI, 1234Z/19 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown, in Lupton's Signal Book*Troops for
Burma.

Ref. 58739 (M.O.12) 13/12. I agree to divert to Malaya Indian Inf. Bde. group due to sail 22nd from Bombay to Burma. Request adequate protection may be provided. The above subject to approval of Viceroy who is being consulted. (C. in C. India, 0223/19 to W.O.)

Burma
Situation
Report.

No enemy activity. Some doubt as to presence of Japanese motor boats Victoria Point air R/C ordered.

1/7 Gurkhas arrived Rangoon and proceed tonight to Moulmein.

(G.O.C. Burma, 0410/19.)

B.M. 9A.
B.M. 9B.*December*

My 0759/14 and my 0726/17 to S.T.O. Rangoon, your 1512/18 to F.O.C.R.I.N. B.M.9A will now sail 0830Z/21 ~~(P. dash)~~ five personnel ships DEVONSHIRE, LANCASHIRE, ETHIOPIA, VASOWA, ~~SHEAF~~ ~~CREST~~. RAJULA.

B.M. 9B to sail 0830Z/22, 1 personnel ship EL MADINA and 3 M.T. ships RISALDAR, ~~ARLETTA~~, RAJPUT JALARAJAN. All ships for Singapore not Rangoon. TALMA will also sail in B.M.9B for Colombo. (P.S.T.O. India, 0729Z/19 to C. in C. E.I.)

Towage of
F./Dock.

Your 1440/18.

(1) There is certain to be some delay before this programme can be put into effect and I hope you will find it possible to complete the first stage of the towing (ie. to Karachi) while the tugs are still available.

(2) Request you will inform me (A) What gear and personnel required for towing is still lacking. (B) When you anticipate preparations will be completed.

(C. in C. E.I., 1018Z/19 to S.N.O.P.G.)

Reply: 1450Z/21.

/Troop ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies - Contd.Troop movement.

Following move is being arranged. Bombay Singapore 31/12. Five personnel ships CAP ST. JACQUES, ISLAMI, ROHNA, KHEDIVE, ISMAIL and three M.T. ships SUBADAR, JALARATNA, JALAVIHAR. There is a possibility this move may proceed to Rangoon this will be confirmed later.

(S.S.T.O. India, 1049Z/19.)

B.A. 12.

My 1137/11th. My 1245/16. Your 0814/17 not to D. of S.T. All 3 ships of B.A. 12 now unable to sail until 28/12 through a fire in bunkers of CITY OF PARIS and further engine repairs to ASCANIUS and YOMA. Can escort be provided on 28/12?

(S.S.T.O. India, 1125Z/19 to C. in C. E.I.)

S.D.1 Drafts for Burma and Malaya.

S.D.1. Ref. your 58739 (M.O.12) (0330/18) not to C. in C. E.I. and in furtherance of our 96278/G dated 18/12. I propose loading another Brigade Group at Bombay for Burma ready to sail about 1/1. If the situation demands this Brigade Group could be diverted to Malaya but I am unwilling to agree this being done at the moment. In addition I propose loading about 8/1 as many of the drafts and other Units required for Malaya as I can find subject to shipping and escort being available. Will C. in C. E.I. confirm as regards escort as soon as possible.

(C. in C. India, 1700/19 to W.O.)

In continuation my 21278/G 18/12 (0223/19) and reference Easfar 66/7 18/12 (1431/18).

S.D.1. Have no objection to diversion of H.T. WEST POINT containing infantry brigade group 18 Division to join convoy sailing from Bombay to Malaya about 24 inst. if Chiefs of Staff so desire.

Units will have no M.T. and we do not know if unit equipment is loaded in same ship or not and therefore doubt if proposal is practicable.

(C. in C. India, 1700/19 to W.O.)

59101 Q(M)2.c. 19/12.

Following summary may be useful if you are considering despatch of part or all of 18 Division to Malaya. Personnel are in six American transports of which 5 in W.S.12X are expected Bombay about 31/12. Sixth, ORIZABA with part of 54 Inf. Bde. etc. is expected Bombay with W.S.12Z.B. about 6/1. Of American ships, three are much too large and all are too crowded to proceed to Malaya. Division who will have been on board over two months must therefore land Bombay. Any onward movement by sea must be in shipping collected by P.S.T.O. India. This will affect other movement and we should like your proposals as agreed with P.S.T.O. (W.O., 2355/19 to C. in C. India.)

War Diary.19.12.1941
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Lights.

Nr. 172 W.D.B. Southern Burma, Tenasserim. All navigational lights on Tenasserim Coast have been extinguished.
(R.A. Malaya, 0141Z/19 to China Station and R.F.A.S.)

Hong Kong.

Controlled minefield fired but 4 loops mis - fired. Both mine control stations and fixed defence stations attacked.

(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0339Z/19 to Admty.,
(R) C. in C. E.F.)

020442. Unnumbered cipher. Situation very grave, deep penetration made by enemy. All cipher books and drums destroyed except W. General reciphering tables 16. Latter's will be reported in clear.

(G.O.C. Hong Kong, 0836/19 to W.O. Recd. in War Reg. at 0930/19.)

020444. Unnumbered cipher 19/12. Last remaining cipher book and table being destroyed after this message.

(G.O.C. Hong Kong, 1019/19 to W.O., Recd. by hand from W.O. at 0925/19.)

020453. Cipher 19/12. W/T station being abandoned due to adjustment of line (? previous to) 1801 from Hong Kong.

(G.O.C. Hong Kong via Singapore, 1019/19 to W.O. Received in W.R. at 0930/19.)

Following communique issued 1030 today. The enemy shelled residential area welfare Victoria at dusk yesterday evening and did some damage to property. After dark they increased the severity of their bombardment on the Eastern section of the North shore of the Island and some enemy troops succeeded in landing in the neighbourhood of North Point and Taikoo during the night. The enemy are now being engaged by our forces. 1430 P.M. Counter measures against Japanese landing parties continued in operations. The Governor has sent following message to all H.M. Forces in Hong Kong the time has come to advance against the enemy. The eyes of the Empire are upon you. Be strong, be resolute and do your duty. Mark Young, Governor. 1730 P.M. Operations against the enemy landing parties on the Island are proceeding. Ends.

(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 1023Z/19.)

LE
TRIOMPHANT.

Your 0856Z/18th. Request LE TRIOMPHANT be sailed for Batavia in accordance with programme proposed in her 0025Z/17th.
(C. in C. E.F., 0433Z/19 to A.C.N.B.)

/Malaya ...

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Malaya
Evacuations.

As there will be a considerable number of women and children who wish to be evacuated from Malaya for South Africa and U.K. propose sending them in MARNIX VAN ST. ALDEGONDE and ?those for Australia in ORION. There are also not more than 100 American citizens who wish to return to U.S. Request instructions if they should be embarked in MARNIX VAN ST. ALDEGONDE or ORION and for what port.

(F.O. Malaya 0437Z/19 to D.of S.T.).

Malaya

Situation Report. (Army and Air) (Adv. H.Q. Malaya 0456/19 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

Routeing of
shipping.

My 1030/17. Please add to para. 1 C.Z.M. is continuing to send on independently ships with cargo for Singapore which arrive at N.E.I. ports. (C.in C. E.F. 0507Z/19).

Merchant
shipping
movements.

Your 1915/10 and A.C.N.B. 0737/18 to C.in C. E.F. only. Sailings from Australia have been held up since 11/12. Propose that a trial convoy should be run from Melbourne sailing about 28/12 if A.C.N.B. can provide ocean escort as far as Christmas Island without prejudicing troop convoy escorts. Will A.C.N.B. please remark if situation deteriorates while convoy is on passage it would be necessary to divert it elsewhere.

Similarly it is proposed to run a convoy from Colombo via Sunda Straits as soon as convenient. Will C.in C. E.I. please remark. The importance of not taking escorts that may be required for important troop convoys must be kept in mind. Unless very important warlike stores are being carried consider one eight inch cruiser or two old six inch cruisers should suffice for ocean escort. Intend to continue sailing ships from Singapore independently for the present ends. (C.in C. E.F. 0513Z/19 to Admty. A.C.N.B. C.in C. E.I. N.Z.N.B. repeated C.Z.M. (SHM).)

PRINCE OF
WALES.
REPULSE.

Remarks on air attacks on PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE 10/12.

(2) T/B's were twin engined Monoplanes Naval 96 type IE shore based. Probably H.L.B.S. were same type.

(3) 4 T/B's Squadrons each of 9 aircraft were used. 3 H.L.B. attacks were made possibly all by same squadron.

(4) H.L.B. attack in tight formation 10,000 feet simultaneous dropping of one bomb per aircraft very accurate.

(5) Torpedoes dropped at range between 1000 and 2000 yards from height noticeably greater than

/we.....

~~0756~~ 19th December

From:- Adv. H.Q. Malaya,
Command.

Date. 19.12.41.
Recd. 0535

Cypher

Addressed:- The War Office.

020454. O.253 cipher 19/12.

To Troopers London Armindia Army Melbourne (please pass Defender Wellington) G.H.Q., F.E., C.in C. E.F. A.O.C. Lancaster PS to H.E. the Governor rptd. Poni Sara Fomi Filo Sarfor Kuching Lido from Adv. H.Q. M.C.

SITREP 1630 hours. G.M.T. 18 Dec.

North West Malaya. Withdrawal from line of Sunge Muda was carried out successfully. Attempt by enemy to force crossing at bridge Batu Pekaka was repulsed with loss, 11 Div. and 12 Bde. now south of Sungei Krian. One Bn. withdrawn from Kelantan and one Coy. from Penang now in reserve at Tanjong Malim. Marked inactivity by enemy land and air forces during last 24 hours. Attack on our detachment in Grik area was not pressed but unconfirmed report indicates possibility of infiltration astride road south of Grik. Penang. Military evacuation has been carried out. Three ships carrying evacuated troops have reached Singapore and one Port Swettenham. Full details not yet available but will be sent in special SITREP midday tomorrow 19 December.

Kelantan. Fourteen enemy aircraft reported to have bombed East Coast railway about Merapoh 40 miles north of Kuala Lipis.

Trengganu. Further reports from civilian sources state no Japanese tps. in Trengganu.

Kuantan. Johore. Singapore. Nothing to report.

Sarawak/....

654^B

Sarawak. Japanese tps. landed 13 miles east of Kuala Belait.

Air Recces. carried out (A) 350 miles N.N.E. of Singapore (B) East Coast Malaya (C) Rhic Archipelago (D) Miri and Kuching. Attack made on one enemy cruiser and three destroyers near Miri but no direct hit observed.

(? Air) recce carried out over area Grik Patani Tanjong Mas. Eleven large enemy transports and considerable launch activity reported Patani. and M.T. in Patani and at Tanjong Mas. station. Two Buffaloes engaged three Navy type O fighters and two enemy aircraft were reported damaged. Our aircraft sustained minor damage only. Our pilots state O fighters were faster and more manoevrable than Buffaloes and were exceptionally well handled. Dutch Navy Dornier scored direct hit on destroyer. Dutch bomber squadron from Samarinda attacked two cruisers and two transports near Miri near misses being reported. Three air raids on Ipoh during the day. Some damage reported.

0456/19

Note by C.4. Tels

1st Lord	Above has been repeated to Britman Washington.
1st S.L.	
4th S.L.	Received in War Reg. at 1620/19
5th S.L.	
V.C.N.S.	Copies circulated by War Office to
A.C.N.S. (H)	S. of S.
A.C.N.S. (F)	C.I.G.S.
A.C.N.S. (T)	V.C.I.G.S.
A.C.N.S. (W)	D.M.O. & P.
N.A. 1st S.L.	D.P. (2)
Capt. Pim.	D.D.M.O. (0)
D.N.A.D.	M.O. 1. 6. 10. 2. 12.
Hd. of M. (2)	D.D.I.P.
D.O.D. (H)	D.M.I.
D.D.O.D. (H)	D.D.M.I. (I)
D.O.D. (F)	M.O. 2. (3)
D.D.O.D. (F)	Cabinet War Room
D.C. (2)	Col. Jacob (Cabinet Offices)
D.F.I. (4)	C.A.S. Air Ministry (2)
D.D.I.G. (2)	Plans. 3 Air Ministry (2)
D.T.D. (2)	Duty Gp. Capt. Air Ministry
D. of P. (2)	A.C.A.S. (I) Air Ministry
D.A/S.W.	Air Ministry (War Room)
I.P. (2)	F.O. 5 (Air Ministry)
W.D.	Duty Captain Admiralty
D.S.D.	Duty Officer (Upper Admiralty War Room)
Adml. Bailey	Colonial Office (Maj. Rolleston)
Adml. Bellairs	S. of S. (Foreign Office)
Adml. Chalmers	Hd. of War Reg. Admiralty
E.P.S.	D.M.C. Air Ministry
D.T.S.D.	A.A.4.
N.I.D. 10	
D.P.D.	
D.N.L.O.	

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.PRINCE OF
WALES
REPULSE
-Contd.

we do. Torpedoes ran very straight track readily visible. No indication of pistols were other than contact.

(6) PRINCE OF WALES hit by 4 possibly 5 torpedoes and one bomb. REPULSE hit by 5 torpedoes and one bomb. About 8 aircraft shot down.

(7) First hit on PRINCE OF WALES abreast exploded 3 Turret disastrously putting both port shafts out of action, steering gear failed, list 13°.5, 5.25 inch Turret out of action owing to power failure and or (~~corrupt group~~). *list.*
(C.in C. E.F. 0859Z/19 to Admty.). *See p. 655^A*

Movements.

Singapore arrival 19/12 DANAE, departure DRAGON, DURBAN, VAMPIRE.
(S.O.(I) Singapore 0944Z/19).

Singapore.

The port of Singapore is closed at night. Ships arriving after dark will be fired on if they cross long. 104° 25' E. from the Eastward or long. 103° 30' E. from the Westward or if they approach within three miles of Pan Reef from the southward. (R.A. Malaya 1007Z/19).

Hong Kong.

Part Two of my 1157Z/19.

Strength unknown but described as possessing ~~packs~~ artillery and mortars. Stanley Peninsular and Hill to Northwards as far as a line running approx. E. and W. deepening Stanley Mound held by 1 Bat. of Canadians, 2 Companies of Indian Infantry and Scratch Force Artillery and M.G.'s. Otherwise situation East Tai Hang-Wong Nei Chong Gap and Repulse Bay Road Line obscure. Probably Lyemun and Saiwan over run but Collinson and D'Aguilar Artillery personnel successfully withdrawn to Stanley after destroying heavy guns and equipment. (Part 3 follows 1131Z/19).

Part 4 of my 1157Z/19.

Air activity relatively slight and consists mainly of R/C although an attack was made on Mount Davis with not more than 6 aircraft. Japanese will undoubtedly try to ferry more men over tonight and continue infiltration but I hope to be in a position to launch a general counter attack tomorrow at dawn. Exhaustion of troops, shortage of ammunition and difficulties of communication all present serious problems.

Part 5 follows. (Care. Hong Kong, 1150Z/10 to Admty.). War Reg. Note. Only these two parts of 1157Z/19 received.

From Fervour During night of 18/19th. Japanese succeeded in effecting landing in Taikoo area and Lyemun whence they steadily infiltrated over hill to Wong Nei Chong Gap and Tytam Gap which they

/occupied.....

SECRET. MESSAGE. 0859Z/19th December.

From C. in C. Eastern Fleet.

IN

Date. 21.12.41.

Recd. 0426.

NAVAL CYPHER D BY W/P.

CORRECTION.

Addressed Admiralty, Repeated C. in C. East Indies,
C. in C. Mediterranean, Australian Commonwealth
Naval Board (?C. in C. America & West Indies,)
C. in C. South Atlantic, New Zealand Naval
Board.

NITE.
AIDAC.

854. Remarks on air attacks on H.M.S.
PRINCE OF WALES and H.M.S. REPULSE 10th December.
(2) T/Bs were twin engined monoplanes Naval 96 type
IE shore repeated shore based. Probably H L B s were
same type.

(3) 4 T/B Squadrons each of 9 aircraft
were used. 3 H L B attacks were made possibly all by
same Squadron.

(4) H L B attack in tight formation 10
thousand feet simultaneous dropping of one bomb per
aircraft very accurate.

(5) Torpedoes dropped at range between
one thousand and 2 thousand yards from height noticeably
greater than we do.

Torpedoes ran very straight track
readily visible. No indication of pistols were other
than contact.

(6) H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES hit by 4
possibly 5 torpedoes and one bomb. H.M.S. REPULSE hit
by 5 torpedoes and one bomb. About 8 aircraft shot
down.

(7) First hit on H.M.S. PRINCE OF WALES
abreast P 3 Turret disastrously putting both port
shafts out of action steering gear failed list 13 degs.
5, 5.25 inch turret out of action owing to power failure
and or list.

0859Z/19.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
3rd S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
Nav. Sec.
N.A. 1st S.L.
Ops. (3)
O.D. (5)
O.I.C. (3)
D. of P. (3)
D.N.A.D.

D. of L.D. (2)
D.M.S.
D.M.S. Basement.
D.D.T.M.
Press Division.
I.P. (3)
D.N.I. (4)
M. (7)
W.B.
D.M.W.D.

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Hong Kong
-Contd.

occupied this morning. Strength unknown but described as possessing packed artillery and mortars. Stanley Peninsular and Hill to northwards as far as a line running approx. E. and W. deepening Stanley Mound held by one battalion of Canadians, two Companies of Indian Infantry and scratch force Artillery and M.G's. Otherwise situation East Tai Hang-Wong Nei Chong Gap and Repulse Bay Road Line obscure. Probably Lyemun and Saiwan overrun but Collinson and D'Aguilar Artillery personnel successfully withdrawn to Stanley after destroying heavy guns and equipment. During afternoon counter attack was attempted with torpedo boats to regain possession of Mount Parker, Mount Butler and Jardines Island but proved abortive owing to exhaustion of troops, heavy shelling in Leighton Hills area and Kennedy Roads and breakdown on inter communication. Nevertheless this peninsula stopped further enemy advance and position temporarily stabilised at nightfall. Our M.T.B's made three separate attacks on enemy landing craft in Kowloon Bay and destroyed two losing two boats themselves. Air activity relatively slight and consists mainly of R/C's although an attack was made on Mount Davis with not more than six aircraft. Japanese will undoubtedly try to ferry more men over tonight and continue infiltration but I hope to be in a position to launch a general counter attack tomorrow at dawn. Exhaustion of troops, shortage of ammunition and difficulties of communication all present serious problems. Civilian population surprisingly calm and Chungking representatives offer of services of thousand trained men has been accepted. Fresh increase of fifth column snipers and grenade throwing activity reported. Auxiliary Police strengthened to cope with this. Enemy has again given conclusive proof of a very high standard of night training. (Cdre. Hong Kong 1157Z/19).

Air Report.

W.X. 4617 Part 1. Oprep/5 19/12.
Reference your X.709 14/12 following for C.A.S. from A.O.C.
Daily Operational Summary to 1030Z 19/12.
(H) Armed R/C locate and attack Jap. force Iri (Miri?) area from Sinkawang 6 aircraft bombed Miri from 14,000 feet, dropped 12 bombs, 300 K.G. each 1 direct hit and 1 near miss on cruiser and direct hit and 2 near misses on ship possibly large transport, seaplane carrier, or aircraft carrier. Aircraft attacked by floatplanes, 1 shot down, 1 broke off burning, A/A fire from ship only not heavy. 1 Glen Martin shot down. Following seen at Miri, 3 cruisers 4 destroyers, 3 transports 7 flying boats close together.
(A.H.Q. F.E. 1330/19).

/Penang.....

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. -Contd.

Penang.

Evacuation. Preliminary report from Comdr. Penang Fortress. (Adv. H.Q. Malaya 1756/19 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

Pontianak
bombed.

Herewith Part 2 my Oprep/5 19/12 from A.H.Q.F.E. begins.
G.H.Q. Batavia reported at 0650Z received 0725Z Pontianak continuously bombed since 0500Z by landplanes and floatplanes and city destroyed. Sinkawang reported 16 aircraft bombed Pontianak and 15 aircraft bombed Kuching aerodrome-petrol store burning. High level bombing attacks on LIPIS and S.S. SHINIA 14/12 and 16/12 delivered with unusual accuracy 3 bombs reported by passengers having erred 12 yards or less. 2 air raids Ipoh slight damage.
(A.H.Q.F.E. 1355/19).

America and West Indies.

Units for
Taskforce 3.

Your 1741/16 to Admiralty only. The intention of my 1919/15 was that British forces under your orders on A.W.I. Station should without further instructions from Admt. be placed at disposal of C.in C. Lant for employment with Taskforce 3.
(2) Further signal will be made regarding VAN KINSBERGEN.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 0057A/19 to C.in C. A.W.I.).
A.M. 0057/19 para.2. Dutch Authorities agree that for the present VAN KINSBERGEN should be placed at the disposal of Cinclant for employment with Taskforce 3.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2008A/19 to C.in C. A.W.I.).

BITTERSWEET

Your 1440R/17. BITTERSWEET can now arrive Charleston 31/12 if this is acceptable.
(C.C.N.F. 0057Z/19 to B.A.R.M.).
Your 0657/19. BITTERSWEET is now expected Wednesday 31/12. (B.A.R.M. 1402R/19 to C.C.N.F.).

WARSPITE.

B.A.R.M.'s 1002/17, not to all addressees. Reply to your 1720R/5 is contained in A.M. 0104A/17.
A.M. 0138A/17 to B.A.R.M. only refers. (2) Arrangements for exchange of ammunition contained in A.M. 2201/27/10 para. 2. remain in force.
(3) A.M. 2242A/9. Concur that visit to Vancouver is now undesirable. (A.C.N.S.(F) 0058A/19 to B.A.R.M.).

/MIMOSA.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

1756/19th December.

IN.

From: Advanced H.Q. Malaya Command. Date: 19.12.41.

Recd: 1645.

CYPHERAddressed: The War Office, C. in C. India,
C.G.S. Australia, C.G.S. New Zealand.MOST IMMEDIATE.

020547. O.256 cipher 19/12.

Secret and Most Immediate.

Penang Evacuation. Following preliminary report from Cndr. Penang Fortress.

1. All regular military personnel evacuated plus all British volunteers personnel with (?five) Malay volunteer who elected to sail. Remainder of volunt volunteers (Asiatics) given the option to evacuate without families. These being unwilling leave families were left with arms which included some automatics with orders not to resist the Japanese. These arms were left for the purpose of keeping order in town. Good Malay officer in charge.
2. Civil Police. All British evacuated, Malay and Chinese elected to remain and handed in their arms. As their families could not be evacuated 80 Sikh police elected to remain and were left armed.
3. Civil officials. British evacuated. Resident Counsellors Chief Clerk (Malay) remained in charge of non European civilians.
- (?4) All six inch guns destroyed and Coast Artillery denial scheme implement. Very few vehicles left and those damaged. Most first line transport already on mainland with ammunition for 3rd. Corps. (Ind). Magazine at Glugor left with delay action demolitions. Majority of approved armament withdrawn with troops.
5. Petrol. A.P.C. and S VO C believed run to waste. Prai Power House blown up.
Aerodrome destroyed and racecourse denied by trenches and wire ropes. Orders given that telephone exchange and cable and wireless station should be put out of action.
6. Reserve of food opened at Glugor for use of civil population. In addition 180 days white rice and 180 days parboiled rice and two months supply of milk (tinned) were left in civil godowns.

MOST SECRET

7. Details of such ships (up to 75 tons) as could not be removed owing to desertion of crews have been passed to R. Navy who hope to take action. Eastern Smelting Coys. stocks were at low record and plant was put out of action by smashing electrical machinery and oil fueling system.

8. Total air raid casualties in Penang are estimated at 600 killed and 1100 wounded (minimum).

9. Present location of military units evacuated is (A) Coy. 5/14 Punjab 3 M.R.C. and Det. 1220 Labour Coy. have joined 3rd Ind. Corps. (B) remainder Singapore. Later report of position of cables and wireless station as follows.

Singapore-Colombo and Singapore-Madras cables connected by binding screw and working. Fast cable to Colombo also connected but not working. Enemy may find these cables but could only tap if special personnel and equipment available. Destruction of remainder of equipments not finally confirmed.

1756/19.

Recd. from War Office 2340/19.
War Office circulation

Internal

1st Lord
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
A.C.N.S. (W)
N.A. 1st S.L.
Captain Pin.
D.N.A.D.
Head of M (Z).
D.O.D. (H).
D.D.O.D. (H).
D.O.D. (F).
D.D.O.D. (F).
Duty Captain (2).
D.N.I. (2).
D.D.I.C.
D.T.D. (2).
D. of P. (2).
D.A/S.V.
I.P. (2).
W.D.
D.S.D.
Admiral Bellairs
Admiral Bailey.
Admiral Chalmers.
E.P.S.
D.T.S.D.
N. Ind. 10.
D.P.D.

M.O. 10 (for action)

S. of S.
C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S.
D.M.O. & P.
D.D.M.O. (O)
M.O. 1.10.
D.M.I.
D.D.M.I. (1)
M.I.2.
A.A.4.
D.D.S.D. (W).
Q (Ops)
Sigs 2c.

External

Admiralty (Hd. of War Reg.)
Air Ministry (F.O.5.)
Air Ministry (Plans 3)
Colonial Office (Major Rolleston) (4)
Col. Jacob
Min. of Economic Warfare (Mr. Troutbeck).

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. -Contd.MIMOSA
ALYSSE
ACONIT.A.M. 1811A/18.
If Admiral Muselier agrees request MIMOSA, ALYSSE,
and ACONIT be sailed to arrive St. John's N.F.
a.m./28. (C.C.N.F. 0232Z/19 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).S.S. HOEGH
MERCHANT.Following from N.C.S.O. San Francisco begins:-
Navy reports:- HOEGH MERCHANT (Norg) has been sunk
29 miles from Cape Makapu 16/12 Master states
ship suffered internal explosion and suspects
sabotage. U.S. Navy has been asked to investigate.
0057Z/18. Ends.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 0331Z/19).ARCHERYour 1420R/17. Concur in visit to Jamaica.
2. Route via Crooked Island and Windward Passage.
B.A.R.M. pass to ARCHER.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1032Q/19 to B.A.R.M.).Oil for
Martinique.Gov. Trinidad's tel. 1261 of 15th to S.of S. Shell
Co. requesting permission to make urgent shipments
to Martinique 250 tons paraffin in Venezuela
tanker leaving here 20th. Should shipment be
made as no further opportunity will occur for
several weeks?
(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 1057Q/19 to C.in C. A.W.I.).
Your 1057Q/19. In view of improvement in
situation shipment is approved.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1642Q/19 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad).PRINCE DAVID.Arrived 0800R/19 and is fuelling at Cristobal by
order of U.S. Naval Authorities.
(N.C.S.O. Colon 1112/19 to Admty.).Oil Ship
for
Martinique.My 2142R/17, ship sailed 0200 G.M.T./19 cargo 3000
ton fuel oil for Guadeloupe and Martinique.
(S.O.I. Kingston 1131R/19 to C.in C. A.W.I.).S.C.42
KENOGAMIYour 1831/18. Request you will consider latter
alternative as intention. Periodic Summary No.11
para. 39 also refers. Letter follows.
(D.A.S.W. 1151A/19 to C.C.N.F.).S.C.61.(1) Task Unit 4.1.16 NIAGARA (S.O.) DIANTHUS,
LETHBRIDGE, NANAIMO, MATAPEDIA, GALT, SOREL.
(C.C.N.F. 1318Z/19 to Admty. etc.)."Q" Messages
reporting.Your 2214/16. Concur.
(D.T.D. 1328A/19 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

/ILEX.....

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.ILEX.

Your 1649/3/11. Request confirmation date of arrival ILEX.
(B.A.R.M., 1400R/19 to Admty.)

?

Your 2359Z/12 (N.T. W.R. ? 2359Z/16 or 2359Z/17 (Both Most Secret)).
This was passed by Ottawa to Washington on 15/12 in accordance with arrangements for passing Vesca information. This is presumably source of United States advice.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1434Z/19 to S.O.(I) Esquimalt.)

S.S. TOVELIL.

My 2137Z/18th. TOVELIL arrived Clarendville N.F. 18/12.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1501Z/19.)

BAHRAM.
(French)

Departure 18th Guadalupe 19th.
(St. Thomas V.I., 1537/19 to M. of W.T.)

S.S. EMMY.

My 2137Z/18th. Greek EMMY arrived St. John's N.F. 18/12.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1541Z/19.)

U.S. Air
Patrol.

Task group 3.3. 6 planes commenced patrol on 13/12 sea area bounded by lines drawn as follows: Trinidad to Bahia, to Sao Paulo Docks, to Trinidad.
(Opnav, 1600/19 to Adty.)

EMPIRE
MARLOWE

Request Salvage Tug for freighter EMPIRE MARLOWE (Group Missing) from O.N.47 who has lost propeller. Am standing by in approx. 059° 11' N. 027° 11' W. Westerly gale.
(TRAIL, 1630Z/19 to A.C.I.C.)

PORTLAND.
REGENSBURG
(German)

Report received from Callao and Venezuela that German ships PORTLAND, REGENSBURG sailed or about to sail Bordeaux or other European port to South America. Grading of intelligence awaited.
(S.O.(I) Kingston, 1701R/19 to Admty., etc.)
Comment. PORTLAND left Talcahuano, Chile on 30/1/1941 and arrived at Bordeaux at end of March. On 18/10 she was reported in dock at Bordeaux, and loading a general cargo. REGENSBURG left Kobe on 22/4 and arrived at Bordeaux on 27/7. No later information of the two ships has been received.

War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.PROTEUS,
NEREUS.

Of three ships carrying Bauxite St. Thomas to Portland (Maine) one only Dutch HERMES has arrived. PROTEUS, British, is 21 days overdue and NEREUS, British, is three days overdue. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1846Z/19 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

O.N. 48.

Task Unit 4.1.12 designated comprising ST. LAURENT (.S.O.), HEPATICA, PICTOU, BUTOUCHE, MOOSEJAW and BATTLEFORD. (Opnav, 1900/19 to Admty.)

SURCOUF.

Your 1242Q/13. At request of Admiral Muselier SURCOUF is being held in Halifax until his return to that port. From conversation with Muselier, probable she will sail for Freetown shortly after his arrival on 21/12. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2006Z/19 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

West
Indies.

Following seven contacts on enemy subs. have occurred in West Indies and along Atlantic Seaboard during past week. 13/12 sound contact and torpedo sighted at 1930 G.C.T. in 40-17 N. 72-16 W. 13/12 probably erroneous contact in 24-08 N. 79-10 W. 14/12 BROOKLYN planes attacked sub. in 16-07 N. 60-12 W. at 1700 G.C.T., hits claimed. 17/12, sound contact and depth charge attack in 36-49 N. 75-27 W. inconclusive. 17/12 periscope reported in 13-58 N. 60-10 W. not positive. 17/12 good sound contact and depth charge attack about sunset in 14-46 N. 59-16 W. results unknown. 18/12 conning tower reported sighted by plane at 1350 G.C.T. in 25-50 N. 79-50 W. (Opnav, 2007/19 to C. in C. A.W.I., Admty.)

PENOLVER.

My 2002/17 (2022 intended). Signal received from PENOLVER states due to arrive Hampton Roads p.m./18 considerable weather damage. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2012Z/19 to Admty.)

4 warships
sighted.

Yankee Clipper reports sighting 4 warships described as heavy cruisers or battleships in line ahead accompanied by one destroyer in 23.55 N. 16.03 W. at 1200Z/16 steering N.E. or S.W. (C. in C. A.W.I., 2109Q/19 to Admty., C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A.)

Martinique
Patrol.

BROOKLYN, WILSON, leave Martinique Patrol Stations 19th for New York, arrive 24th. (Opnav, 2200/19 to Admty.) *Cancelled 20/12 - Sup. 692*

War Diary.

19.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

→ LEANDER.

Departure Suva on escort duty due Auckland
0800Z/22.
(N.Z.N.B., 0650Z/19.)

ACHILLES.

→ LEANDER.

My 0831M/13 not to all addressees.
If ACHILLES is being spared for escorting
EMPRESS OF CANADA anticipate LEANDER will be
available to leave Suva p.m./27 to join
striking force.
(N.Z.N.B., 1137M/19 to A.C.N.B., F.O.C. Aust.
Sqn.)

Recognition
Signals.

My 1002Z/19 (Allocation of British Signal letters
to Free French shipping wearing Red Ensign.
N.T. in W.D.) and your 1933A/16/9. Consider
it most desirable allied and neutral merchant
vessels trading in British interests should be
able to carry out identification procedure.
Inability to identify friendly shipping may
hazard H.M. Ships.
(A.C.N.B., 1918Z/19 to Admty.)

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War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.

RUCKINGE.
H.M.S. STANLEY.
(H.G.76)

RUCKINGE torpedoed at 0515A. 35 survivors
6 missing.
(STORK, 1140A/19, to F.O.C.N.A., C. in C.W.A.,
Admty.)
RUCKINGE sinking slowly and on fire. No sign
of crew, only empty life boats. Rejoining
convoy. 3 survivors ex STANLEY and 13 Germans
ex U-boat on board.
(SAMPHIRE, 1330A/19, to F.O.C.N.A. (R) STORK.)
STANLEY was sunk by U/B while escorting H.G.76
at 0450/19. *STORK sank the U-boat. (D.O.R.
19/12.) No signal in W.D., but see 20/12.

* U. 514. (Cm: 6642)

Submarines Reported.

0123A. At 0123A/19 U-Boat made sight report, probably
of convoy H.G.76.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0241A/19 to Ships Escorting Convoy
H.G.76.)

0130.G.M.T. On 4796 Kc/s at 0130 G.M.T. Convoy was
probably reported by German U-Boat.
(D.D.I.C. 0311A/19 to Escorts of H.G.76.)

2357B/18. My 2357B/18 HOTSPUR and HASTY leave harbour
0330 to hunt.
(Capt. S.I, 0327B/19, to PERSEUS, PORPOISE.)

0103. Small U-boats sighted in position 297° Raseltin
37 at 0103.
(R.A.Alexandria 0400B/19 to Greek Destroyer
ASPIS, H.M.S. PRIMULA.)

1120Z.
1615Z. Hudson aircraft on passage Gibraltar Bathurst
reports sighting U-Boats in 24° 31' N., 15°
31' W., at 1120Z/18 14° 05' N., 17° W., at
1615Z/18.
(C. in C.S.A., 1149Z/19, to Admty.)

1340A. 1 S/M bearing 183° distance 22 miles course
unknown. My position 080°, 39° N., 18° W., 6
(STORK, 1340A/19, to Liverpool C.C.O.,
Gibraltar C.C.O. (R) Admty.)

Estimated approximate positions of U-boats.
(D.D.I.C. 1403A/19, 1404A/19.)

/R.D.F. bearings...

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War Diary.19.12.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported. Contd.

R.D.F. bearings from 1421/18 to 0133/19 indicate at least one sub. in area 42° to 46° N., and 33° to 38° W.
(Opnav, 1441/19, to Admty.)

0942N.

Aircraft obtained possible A.S.V. contact in 062° 52' N., 020° 21' W., at 0942N/19.
(A.C.I.C., 1548N/19 to Ships north of 60° N., between 10° and 30° W., Admty., C. in C.W.A., A.C.O.S., S.O.N.T., C. in C. Home Fleet.)

Submarines Attacked.

By JERVIS
18/12, off
Alexandria.
(U/S not sunk -
cmd: 6843.)

C.S.15. Your 2317. Small U-boat sighted on the surface in 297° Ras-El-Tin 37. First pattern dropped by eye very close as U-boat dived. Consider possibly sunk or seriously damaged. (Capt. D.14, 0103/19, to C. in C. Med., (R) C.S.15.) Attack was by JERVIS. (D.O.R.20/12.)

909. U-boat sighted on the surface in position 031° 27' North 029° 20' East at 2300 18th by C.S.15 Force returning to Alexandria. JERVIS reports pattern dropped by (corrupt group) very close to U-boat 315. U-boat considered possibly sunk or seriously damaged.

KINGSTON CYANITE attacked contact at 2355/18 evidently in 031° 18' N., 029° 26' E. U-boat contacted in centre of pattern at angle 35° and sank again immediately. No further contact obtained. Consider U-boat sunk or seriously damaged.
(C. in C. Med., 1833/19 to Admty.)

By KINGSTON
CYANITE.
18/12.

(U/S not sunk.
cmd: 6843.)

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

It is reported in the press that Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, has been appointed commander of the combined U.S. Fleets.

Home Commands.

E.boats were active from 2100/19 to 0430/20, between Cromer and Yarmouth, possibly engaged in minelaying. Our M.Ls and M.G.Bs made contact and some engagements ensued in which damage to the enemy is claimed and our M.Ls sustained slight damage but no casualties.

Reports graded B.2 suggest that a raider recently passed down Channel. The ship may have already left a Biscay port for a raiding cruise.

PRINZ EUGEN and the two battle cruisers were all seen in dock at Brest by P.R.U. R/C at 1200A today. GUEYDON was not seen. The S/M patrol in the Bay of Biscay is to disperse tomorrow.

Harwich and Yarmouth were closed about 0830 today on account of fog. Yarmouth was reopened at 1031A but was closed again from 1301A to 1441A.

Enemy Air Operations

ECHO and S.S. DEKABRIST in P.Q.6 were attacked at 1224C in 69° 27' N. 34° 30' E. Two U.X.Bs were dropped in DEKABRIST. There was no other damage.

BRITOMART called for help in 62° 20' N. 0° 0' W. at 1253 today and convoy W.P.83 in 50° 34' N. 5° 11' W. at 1839. No damage is reported.

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

WELSHMAN arrived at Milford Haven this afternoon for minelaying operations off Brest.

Enemy aircraft were intensely active this evening over the Thames Estuary. Minelaying is suspected. Most of the patrols were fogbound in Sheerness, but visibility at the time of the raid had increased to about 10 cables.

Mediterranean.

Wellingtons bombed Benghazi harbour last night. Tobruk was heavily attacked by enemy aircraft last night but no damage is reported.

Far East.

There are the following forces in the Far East area as defined in A.B.C.1 :-

- (1) British based on Singapore
2 D class cruisers
7 destroyers.
- (2) U.S. operating in the area Balikpapan, Surabaya, Darwin
2 cruisers
8 destroyers.
- (3) Dutch operating in Java Sea
3 cruisers
6 destroyers.
- (4) 7 Dutch S/Ms operating from Singapore in Gulf of Siam, and about 30 U.S. S/Ms operating from Manila in China Sea.

The U.S. Naval Intelligence reports the following dispositions of the Japanese aircraft carriers :-
South China & Gulf of Siam - AKAGI and KAGA with 60 A/C each.
Luzon, Formosa - 2 A/C carriers with approx: 70 A/C and 5 converted seaplane tenders with a total of 60 A/C.

/Saipan ...

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.SITUATION REPORT.Far East - contd.

Saipan - Palao. SORYU and HIRYU with 42 A/C each. Also possibly RYUJO with 30 A/C.
 Hawaii - Mandates area. 4 - 6 A/C carriers with a total of approx. 124 - 180 A/C.
 The following bases are being used by Japanese fighters:- Basco (Batan Is) Vigan, Aparri, Legaspi.

China.Hong Kong.

The fortress is still holding out in a restricted area. It was reported at 0245Z today that M.T.Bs attacked craft crossing from Kowloon Bay and sank 4 enemy landing craft with troops. M.T.B.12 and 26 were sunk and 07 damaged (cf.19/12). The situation is very confused. An A.P. vessel, Oiler EBONOL, B.D.V. BARLIGHT and H.M.S. TERN who were unable to steam were scuttled. CICALA, ROBIN, REDSTART, M.T.Bs 09, 10, 11, 27 are in service. The force blockading Hong Kong is reported to consist of 2 cruisers, 2 destroyers and 2 T.Bs.

Malaya.

H.M.S. LIPIS arrived today at Singapore ^{from Kuching.} with detachments and S.S. Police from the Miri area. 21/12.

See Jp. 640.720/12.p
719.

Timor.

Full military control of Portuguese Timor is deferred pending clarification of the Portuguese attitude.

America and West Indies.

Now that the U.S. have put W.P.L.46 into force the Pacific area as defined in A.B.C.1 is a U.S. responsibility and the only British unit in the area other than Canadian vessels is a D. class cruiser co-operating with the U.S. S.W. Pacific Forces in the Galapagos area.

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Flag of V.A.2.

Flag of F.O. 2nd I.C. Home Fleet has been transferred temporarily to DUNLUCE CASTLE. Office of F.O. 2nd I.C. Home Fleet is in RENOWN to which all correspondence and signals are to be sent.
(C. in C. H.F. 1301A/20.)

Proposed U.S. Depot Ship at Hvalfiord.

Your 1049A/18. Consider that U.S. Depot ship could deal with most repairs satisfactorily. Following points are however against employment of U.S. Depot Ship.
(A.C.I.C. 1638N/20 to Adty.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Russian S/Ms for U.K.

Admiral Miles 1859D/18. If these two S/Ms are sent I would prefer to base them at Gibraltar for operations in Western Mediterranean. If Russians will not agree to this I would base them at Dundee.
(F.O.S. 1059A/20 to Admty.)

Movements.

EDINBURGH, ECHO, ESCAPADE with MIRLO and DEKABRIST arrived Murmansk.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 0530C/20.)

WESTCOTT.

My P.C.S. 049° 34' N. 015° 53' W. 214°, 14½ knots. (WESTCOTT 0700Z/20.)

MATABELE.

My position 045° 22' N. 020° 40' W.
(MATABELE 0800Z/20.)

MANXMAN.

Arrived.
(N.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1011A/20.)

JAVELIN.

Your 1734/14th. Subject to satisfactory trials throughout and deperming, ship should be ready for service 17/1.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1201/20 to Admty.)

RODNEY RENOWN SHEFFIELD.

My 1655A/19. Amend time of R/V to read 1400A/21.
(C. in C. H.F. 1150A/20 to RODNEY, RENOWN.)
Hvalfjord departure RODNEY, WALKER, VERITY, WITHERINGTON at 1100.
(A.C.I.C. 1223N/20.)
Scapa departures for Hvalfjord 1517 RENOWN. MONTROSE (F.L) WORCESTER and FORESTER in company. Arrival 1337 SHEFFIELD.
(A.C.O.S. 1521A/20.)

/My 1521A/20. ...

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS

Movements.

RODNEY
RENOWN
SHEFFIELD
contd.

My 1521A/20. E.T.A. RENOWN at Hvalfjord
1000Z/22.
(A.C.O.S. 2222A/20.)

HAZARD.

HAZARD arrived Murmansk.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1615C/20.)

LANCASTER
NEWARK.

Sailed LANCASTER, NEWARK to comply with C.
in C. W.A. 1548A/19.
(R.A.M. 1700A/20 to FORMIDABLE, ILLUSTRIOUS.)

TURBULENT
TEMPEST.

F.O.S. 1312A/20/11. TURBULENT and TEMPEST are to
be sailed about 3/1 for Gibraltar where they
should carry out their O.N.E. working up
patrol before joining 1st Flotilla.
(F.O.S. 1808A/20.)

O.9.

Return to Rothesay. O.9 pass to ANGLE.
(F.O.S. 1904A/20 to O.9.)

P.39
P.36.

A. P.39 proceed submerged by day through position
09 thence through 43° N. 11° 54' W.
B. P.36 proceed submerged by day through position
10 thence through 43° N. 11° 13' W.
C. Both S/Ms proceed onwards to Gibraltar as
ordered by F.O.C.N.A.
(F.O.S. 2144A/20.)

Z.5.

At 2100A/21, intend to sail Z.5 from Rothesay to
arrive Falmouth 1300A/23. F.O.i/c Greenock is
requested to arrange fighter protection.
S. of A. 12 knots.
(Capt. S.7. 2214A/20 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Operations.

E-Boats
chased off
Cromer.

3 Stragglers from F.S.676 found in Q Z S 311 and
turned back to Humber via Q Z S 308. E-boats
were encountered and driven off while escorting
them to East Dudgeon.
(QUORN 0333A/20.)

E-boat activity night 19/20 from 2100 to 0430
between Cromer and Yarmouth. Probably working
in two groups possibly minelaying. One group of
3 boats sighted by QUORN on "B" Patrol and chased
from near Cromer to Haddock Bank where touch was
lost. The other group of two boats was inter-
cepted in 52° 55' N. 02° 42' E. by M.Ls 187 and
147 on patrol but contact was lost after about
20 minutes. Convoy not attacked.
(C. in C. Nore 0818A/20.)

/My 0818A/20 ...

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

E-Boats
chased off
Cromer -
contd.

My 0818A/20. Following is preliminary report of anti-E-Boat activity night 19-20 December.
2. QUORN intercepted 3 E-Boats near 8C.Buoy at 0207/20 pursuing them northwards to 57G.Buoy then eastwards until contact was lost near the Haddock Bank at 0311/20. No further details available.

3. At 0305/20 M.Ls 187 and 147 on patrol between Q Z X 39 and the mine barrier sighted 2 E-Boats on an E'ly course in 52° 52' N. 2° 43' E. and engaged with all guns at 1 cable range. Running fight developed in North Easterly direction M.Ls losing contact at 0330/20. Contact was again made at 0357 and with the enemy steering S.W. a circling action developed for 13 minutes, the enemy finally disappearing East. M.Ls pursued and made contact for third time at 0423 with E-Boats apparently stopped. M.Ls overshot them and failed to remake contact after circling to re-engage. Hits were observed in all three actions, M.Ls sustaining slight damage and no casualties.

3. M.G.Bs. 63, 65 and 67 were sailed from Harwich on reports of suspected E-Boat activity to patrol N.W. of Brown Ridge. No 63 was left at Aldeburgh Buoy with defective shaft, Nos.65 and 67 while proceeding to their patrol made contact with 2 large and 1 small E-Boats on S.W. course in 52° 43' N. 3° E. A general action developed in a S.E'ly direction for 90 minutes with contact being lost and regained. Two depth charges were dropped in a good position by M.G.B.65. Both M.G.Bs W/T put out of action by weather but no other damage reported. They consider enemy was damaged.
(C. in C. Nore 1852A/20.)

Operation
Q.N.

Prepare to carry out operation Q.N. tonight.
(C. in C. Nore 0936A/20 to BEEHIVE.)
Orders for operation Q.N. para 4B. In order to counter possible lack of air R/C, M.G.Bs are to pass through positions HLYX 3028 and VCYX 0432 en route for their patrol position.
(C. in C. Nore 1040A/20 to BEEHIVE.)
My 0936A. Q.N. postponed 24 hours on account of weather.
(C. in C. Nore 1750A/20 to F.O. Yarmouth.)

Patrol.

Departure M.G.Bs 88 and 91 on patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1718A/20.)

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War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations - contd.

Signal Exercise.

It is proposed to hold a Force 110 signal exercise from 14/1 until 17/1 inclusive using KARANJA, KEREN, and M/V WINCHESTER CASTLE. F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to approve of the ships anchoring in the Firth of Clyde in an area 150° Toward Point 3 miles during daylight hours of 16/1.
(C.Q.2 0950/20.)

Patrols A and B.

WALPOLE and MENDIP are to carry out patrols A and B respectively tonight. Patrol A is to be between H.3 and East Dudgeon Buoys. Patrol B is to be between East Dudgeon and 57 D Buoys in Admiralty message Q Z S 308 only. Trawlers will be stationed in Q Z S 277 from 59 A Buoy to Sheringham inclusive and are to be instructed to remain close to Channel Buoy when they are in swept channel. Patrols A and B are to commence 2100.

(C. in C. Nore 1034A/20.)

My 1034A. MENDIP is fog bound. WALPOLE is to carry out patrols A and B.

(C. in C. Nore 1557A/20.)

WALPOLE at 1625 to anchor at Humber L/F, thence to patrol A in accordance with C. in C. Nore's 1034A/20.

(F.O. Humber 1638A/20.)

M.G.B. Patrol.

M.G.Bs 316, 314, 312, are to leave the eastern searched channel at 1800/20 to carry out patrol between Cap. D'Antifer and Guistreham, returning to searched channel at daybreak 21/12. Policy - shoot at sight. Communication - Nyko only, land other books.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 1107A/20.)

S/M Patrol off Cherbourg.

S.5's 2104/19. H.32 sailed 1047 for exercises and patrol.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 1147/20.)

H.32 leaves Portsmouth p.m./20 to patrol in 49° 53' N. 01° 14' W.

(F.O.S. 1643A/20 to Admty.)

H.32 left Portsmouth from end of Q Z S 169 at 1500/20 direct to patrol vicinity of 049° 53' N. 001° 14' W. (II) P.38 left Plymouth from end of

Q Z S 278 through 180° Start Point 15 miles to patrol vicinity of 049° 53' N. 001° 47' W.

(Capt. S.5 1750A/20.)

Sailed 1715 P.38 for patrol escorted by ELLESMERE. Escort parts company at end Q Z S 278 returning Plymouth.

(C. in C. Plymouth 1752/20.)

After dark 21st S/Ms are to be ordered to proceed as indicated. P.38 return to Portsmouth. H.32 proceed to Falmouth.

(F.O.S. 2142A/20.)

/SEAWOLF ...

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War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations - contd.SEAWOLF
Patrol.

SEAWOLF arrived. Westbound convoy 4 ships escorted by one destroyer attacked 70° 49' N. 30° E. 1945C/9 in heavy gale. No hits. No other ships sighted. Bad conditions experienced. Several cracks discovered in side of Wrapper plates of main engine frames in way of bolt plates. Admty. pass to R.A.(S). (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1442C/20.)

East Coast
Patrols.

Brightlingsea Auxiliary patrols remaining in harbour fogbound. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1540A/20.)

Biscay
S/M Patrol.

A. Anticipate following numbers of S/Ms will be occupying patrol positions in Bay of Biscay on the dates indicated. 21st December 8, 22nd December 11, 23rd December 12, 24th December 12, 25th December 11, 26th December 9, 27th December 8, 28th December 7, 29th December Nil.

B. P.38 and H.32 will be on patrol off Cherbourg from 21st until 29/12. (F.O.S. 1807A/20.)

A. Submarines in Biscay area remain in vicinity of positions reached at 0800A/21 except P.36 and P.39 for whom orders follow.

B. After dark 21st following S/Ms proceed to Falmouth by outward routes as far as lat. 49° N. thence to R/V as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth on the dates indicated. O.21, O.10 December 23rd. H.31, H.50, H.28, H.33, OTWAY, JUNON, December 24th.

C. URSULA leave patrol at 2359/21 and proceed through position 14 thence by route J to lat. 49° N., thence to Portsmouth as ordered by S.5. (F.O.S. 2139A/20.)

Object for S/Ms while on return passage from Bay of Biscay and Channel Area is in accordance with F.S.C. and F.S.F. respectively. S/Ms are not to be attacked unless hostile identity is certain. (F.O.S. 2141A/20 to S/Ms Area A.)

H.43.Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

See p. 676 -

My 1901Z/19. Cancel para D (i) and substitute "some form of W/T transmission which ships can D/F be established at Goltr light". (C.S.1 2015Z/20 to C. in C. H.F.)

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War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Escort for
RENOWN and
RODNEY.

My 1655A/19 and my 1150A/20. RENOWN approaching R/V on course 298°, S. of A. 17½ knots. RODNEY's estimated position at 0930A/22 340° Cape Wrath 10 miles, course 090°, 16 knots. Request A/S air escort may be provided for both ships as far as practicable.
(C. in C. H.F. 1427A/20.)
Expect A/S air escort of one Catalina from dawn/21.
(C. in C. W.A. 2322A/20 to RENOWN.)

Escort for
FORMIDABLE
ILLUSTRIOUS.

Request fighter protection for FORMIDABLE, ILLUSTRIOUS & 4 destroyers as follows. Details.
(C. in C. W.A. 1750A/20.)

Enemy Air Activity.LUCELLUM
(Damaged
19/12.)

Your 2134A/19. Sailed PAUL RYKENS escorting Salvage Tug RANGER to assist LUCELLUM.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 0301A/20 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

A/C off
Lisbon on
18/12.

One F.W. sighted at 1620A/18 in 39° 25' N. 14° 40' W. Circled ship from horizon and disappeared to North East.
(MANXMAN 0947/20.) *WR Note: MANXMAN arrived Milford Haven 20/12 from Gibraltar. See p. 667.*

BRITOMART.

Help 62° 20' N. 6° W.
(BRITOMART 1253/20.)

Unknown
Ship.

Intercepted 1347 G.M.T. from unknown station automatic AAAA heard at 1345/20. Bearing 327°, unreliable.
(Burnham Radio 1347/20.)

Convoy
W.P.83.

Help "Watch", 2 aircraft, 50° 34' N. 5° 11' W. course 055°, speed 8 knots.
(BROCKLESBY 1839/20.)

ECHO and
DEKABRIST.
attacked

P.Q.6 S.S. DEKABRIST attacked by 2 JU.88s about 30 miles North East Kola Inlet entrance at 1220C/20 December. 6 bombs dropped and 2 hits both unexploded, 1 on bridge, 1 through ship's side in number 4 hold causing partial flooding. No casualties in DEKABRIST. ECHO lost 2 men overboard during bombing attack.
(C.S.18 1932C/20.)
2 Junkers 88 attacked ECHO and S.S. DEKABRIST position 069° 27' N. 034° 30' E. at 1224C/20 dropping two U.X.Bs in DEKABRIST. No other damage. Soviet fighter aircraft were in the vicinity.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 2225C/20.)

673

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Operation
Q.O.

If flying conditions permit intend sailing 13th and 9th Flotilla at 0800 and 0815/20, passing through position G arriving vicinity position A about 1120. 13th M/S.F will sweep C.1 and C.2 lines between 051° 45' N. and 052° N, 9th M/S.F will sweep B.S.26 only. Will return in company through position G arriving Cork about 1930.

(S.O. 9 M/S.F 0022A/20.)

50% of sweeping force still detained in harbour by fog. Visibility to seaward 1 mile. Propose cancelling Q.O. for today.

(S.O. 9 M/S Flotilla 1007A/20.)

Your 1552A/16 November. Subject to a satisfactory percentage mines being found to remain in B.S.26, suggest that southern end B.S.28 be located but that this latter line should not be swept up.

(C. in C. Nore 1244A/20 to Admty.)

Both flotillas fog bound. (M) 9 in harbour, less SIDMOUTH, at Platters. (M) 13, less FELIXSTOWE, anchored at Cork. FELIXSTOWE in harbour. Propose sweeping as in my 0022A/20. (M) 9 sailing from Cork at 0530/21 if ships in harbour have joined me, but not later than 0930. Passage to and from position A via position G at 13½ knots. Request ROMNEY may be kept informed of prospects of fighter protection and if favourable he may sail with remaining ships to join me by 0530.

Programme for (M) 13 as in S.O.(M)13's 1720A/20.

If ships in harbour cannot sail request instructions whether M (13) can proceed independently.

(S.O. 9 M/S.F. 1935A/20 to C. in C. Nore.)

Operation
H.J.

My 1231/12. 1. Request you repeat Operation H.J. on night of 22nd/23rd December with WELSHMAN and MANXMAN laying in Area B. 2. On completion MANXMAN to proceed to Clyde for docking.

WELSHMAN to proceed to Milford Haven.

(A.C.N.S. H. 1231/20 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Operation
26.C.

Intend to carry out with SOUTHERN PRINCE and WELLS on 23/12. Details.

(R.A.M. 1326/20.) See Lion Copy.

WELSHMAN.

My 1101A/19. Arrived WELSHMAN.

(N.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1409A/20.)

N.L.50.

Intend to carry out operation N.L.50 tonight. In vicinity of Dunkirk No.7 W. Buoy.

(V.A. Dover 1502A/20.)

MOST SECRET

673A

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

1326/20th December

From:- R.A.M.

Date. 20.12.41.
Recd. 2142.

Naval Cypher A.1 by T/P

Addressed:- Admiralty, repeated C.in Western
Approaches, C.in C. Rosyth, ... C.O.S.
A.C.I.C., F.O.(S), Air Ministry, H.Q.C.C.
H.Q.F.C., Group 18, N.O.I.C. Stornoway.

IMPORTANT

Intend to carry out operation ^{S.M.} 26 C as follows.

- (a) Deep mine-field . . .
- (d) H.M.S. SOUTHERN PRINCE, H.M.S. WELLS.
- (f) from
- (a) 058 degs 31' 18" north 006 degs 21' 48" west
through
- (b) 058 degs 34' 48" 006 degs 29' 48"
- (c) 058 degs 31' 18" 006 degs 37' 48" to
- (d) 058 degs 34' 48" 006 degs 45' 48" . . .
- (g) 0200 December 23
- (j) Through 058 degs 25' north 005 degs 42' west
- (k) 14½ knots
- (i) 0830 December 23
- (n) direct
- (o) and
- (p) Port Z A 1700 December 23
- (q) None
- (w) 16.3 miles, 10 knots
- (x) Mark 19/XIX one star. First 40 set to 80
and 120 feet alternately. Remainder to
80, 120, 160' in rotation
- (y) 652 units. Standard line with combined
depth
- (z) single line ship in area B.

1326/20

Advance copy sent D.C.
D.O.D.(H), D.D.O.D.(M)

V.C.N.S.
N.C.N.S. (H)
N. 1st S.L.
D.O.D.(H)
D.D.O.D. (M)
D.D.O.D. (M)
D.A./S.W.
L.T.M.
I.P.(2)
W.D.—

E.P.S.
D.C.(2)
L.D.I.C.(2)
D.N.I.(4)
D.S.D.
D.of 1.

674

War Diary.20.12.1941
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.3 Warships
in Kattegat
on 15/12.A report grade B 3 indicates that 3 warships believed to be cruisers passed through the Kattegat Sound northbound p.m.15th.
(F.O.S. 0057A/20 to S/Ms on Patrol.)Off Lorient.From D.120. Have obtained A.S.V. contact in position 46° 50' N. 7° 3' W. Probably a surface vessel.
(D.120 0515/20 to H.Q. 15 Group.)
Have lost touch with enemy.
(D/120 0625/20 to H.Q. 15 Group.)Brest.Brest R/C at 1200/20. PRINZ EUGEN has returned to her former dry dock since 18/12. Light camouflage erected at bows and stern. Impossible determine state of dock. GUEYDON not seen in port or Rade, but Chateaulin River not photoed. SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU usual dry docks with no material change camouflage. The two M Class M/S departed, none now present. Two, possibly three, S/Ms seen Port Militaire compared three on 18/12.
(P.R.U. St. Eval 1650/20) (D.D.I.C. 1825A/20.)Raider.B.2 reports suggest that a Raider recently passed down Channel. This ship may already have left a Biscay port for a raiding cruise.
(D.D.I.C. 1810A/20.)Navigational.Yarmouth.Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0825A/20.)
Port is now open.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1031A/20.)
Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1301A/20.)
Cancel my 1301A/20.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1441A/20.)Harwich.Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0849A/20.)Casualties and Defects.Convoy O.N.45
EMPIRE CHIEF
Distress.EMPIRE CHIEF position 59° 08' N. 27° 12' W. Helpless, steering engine and gear completely smashed. Send help immediately. Master.
(Valentia Radio 0147/20 to Adm. Devonport.)
EMPIRE CHIEF. Position. Are you in touch.
(D.C. 0640A/20 to TRAIL.) *See next page*

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects

→ Convoy O.N.46
EMPIRE CHIEF
Distress -
contd.

A.M. 0640A/20. Is rescue tug available.
(D.C. 0641A/20 to C. in C. W.A.)
Request you will sail rescue tug to assist
EMPIRE CHIEF.
(D.T.D. 0822A/20 to C. in C. W.A.)
Rescue tug will be sent as soon as possible.
(D.T.D. 0824A/20 to Opanv.)
EMPIRE CHIEF reported broken down in 59° 08' N.
27° 12' W. at 0147A/20. SNOWDROP will escort
you to her assistance. Sail to R/V with
SNOWDROP in 000° Inistrahull 10 miles at 0900A/21.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1103A/20 to TENACITY.)

EMPIRE
MARLOWE.

TRAIL's 1630Z/19. Is tug being sent.
(D.C. 0212A/20 to A.C.I.C.)
Your 0212A/20. Repairs to FREEBOOTER will not
be completed before p.m. 21st at earliest.
No other tug available.
(A.C.I.C. 0432N/20 to Admty.)
Your 1101A/20. Further inspection of FREEBOOTER's
boilers show that she is unfit for ocean towing
work. Earliest possible date she can proceed
is a.m. 22. Request tug be sent from U.K.
(A.C.I.C. 1255N/20 to Admty.)
Your 0432N/20. The fact that FREEBOOTER was out
of action should have been reported in accordance
with C.A.F.O. 1672/41 para 1.
(D.T.D. 1631A/20 to A.C.I.C.)
→ MARAUDER is to be sailed with despatch to assist
EMPIRE MARLOWE who has lost her propeller in
58° 58' N. 26° W. at 0851 today. TRAIL standing
by. TENACITY and SNOWDROP are proceeding to
→ EMPIRE CHIEF broken down in position 59° 08' N.
27° 12' W.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 1925A/20 to N.O.I.C. Stornoway.)
→ MARAUDER sailed to comply with your 1925A/20.
(N.O.I.C. Stornoway 2154A/20.)
Your 1631A/20. This is regretted but FREEBOOTER's
defects were cumulative and it was not originally
expected she would be out of action more than a
few hours.
(A.C.I.C. 2353N/20 to Admty.)

BOURGEOISE III Following received by Cullercoats Radio, begins.
From BOURGEOISE III. Am fighting fire. Ends.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0849/20.)

Not identified
? CHERBOURGEOISE III
(Rescue Tug.)

OBERON.

Arrived CUTTY SARK and OBERON.
(Capt. S.7. 0916A/20.)

/SPEEDY ...

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects - contd.

SPEEDY
BRAMBLE
LEDA.
SEAGULL.

My 1640C/18th not to all addressees. Damage to SPEEDY add part of fore top mast shot away. SPEEDY has following major defects. LEDA reports serious increase boiler tube trouble and cannot guarantee having both boilers available any length of time. SEAGULL has similar trouble. Intend LEDA to return to U.K. with SEAGULL and SPEEDY with Q.P.4. All ships require docking and LEDA and SEAGULL to be fitted with greater down comers and baffles. (S.O. 1st M/S F. 0926C/20.)

H.43.

*Should be on
page 671 -
(Biscay 3/71
p. 101.)*

Intend to sail H.43 at 1200/20 escorted by CHILTERN to end of Q Z S 180 thence independently in accordance with F.O.S 1114A/19. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 0934/20.) My 0934/20. Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1237/20.) H.43 routed through 049° N. 7° 29' W, thence by route C. to position 03, leaving Falmouth at 1200A/20 escorted to vicinity of Wolf Rock thence independently diving by day. (Capt. S.7. 1129A/20.) Return to Falmouth. R/V A.M./21 as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth who is requested to order the necessary T.B.R. in vicinity of R/V. (F.O.S. 1902A/20 to H.43.) Intend to sail M/S trawler FLUELLEN at 0500/21 to R/V with H.43 at E.buoy 180° Lizard Head 3 miles at daylight 21st. (N.O.I.C. Falmouth 2238/20.)

LA MELPOMENE.

Admiralty's 1933/19. Intend to sail LA MELPOMENE at 1200 today or as soon after as fog lifts speed 12 knots for Sheerness for onward passage to Poplar. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0946A/20.) My 0946/20. Postponed owing to fog. Intend to sail LA MELPOMENE 0900 tomorrow. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1230A/20.)

RODNEY.

Admiralty's 2005A/9 and C. in C. H.F. 2042A/18. RODNEY will not now be taken in hand before early February 1942. 2. RODNEY can be received in the basin at Cammell Laird's Liverpool between 2nd and 4th February and 14th and 17th February. (Controller 1141A/20.)

ALIX
destroyed.

(Clyde river patrol motor boat) ALIX destroyed by fire 0715/20. Probable total loss. No loss of life, one man suffering from effect of fumes. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1156/20.)

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War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects - contd.

REGENT.

My P.C.S. are 163° Brighton East Pier 3.4, 237°,
11. Arriving E A 5 Buoy 1410.
(REGENT 1210A/20.)

LETTIE ?

Wreck of a tug has been located off outer edge
of Abertay sound in approaches to Dundee in a
position approx. 23 cables 163° from Buddon High
Light. Vessel appears to correspond with
description of missing tug LETTIE. Ship is
upright and in 10 ft at LWOS and may be salvageable
Request salvage Authorities Leith or Aberdeen be
directed to examine.
(N.O.I.C. Dundee 1739/20.)

H.34.

My 1114A/19. Defer sailing of H.34 until further
notice.
(F.O.S. 1902A/20 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth.)

RONALDSAY
(A/S - M/S
Trawler.)

S.O. 4th M/S F. reports C.O. of RONALDSAY medically
unfit to continue in command as result of recent
gales. RONALDSAY's anchor cables and winch also
unserviceable. As ship is due for boiler cleaning
I suggest she proceeds south forthwith. Request
repair port be allocated.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes 2215A/20.)

Shipping and Convoys.

F.C.16.

F.C.16 19 hours late. New M.O.M.P. follows.
(C. in C. W.A. 0950A/20 to N.O.I.C. Iceland.)

F.S.675

Am in company rear of F.S.675 anchored near B.2
buoy. Thick fog.
(WINCHESTER 1116/20.)

F.N.583.

F.N.583 anchored in thick fog near B.2 buoy.
(WOLSEY 1130A/20.)
Visibility improving. Should F.N.583 proceed
tonight.
(WOLSEY 1631A/20 to C. in C. Nore.)

U.R.3.

Route for U.R.3 sailing from Loch Ewe 23/12.
(C. in C. W.A. 1210A/20.)

/Q.P.4 ...

678

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys - contd.Q.P.4.

Your 1045C/20. LENIN instantly available for perhaps the last opportunity of breaking DANK-BRYN (corrupt group) METEOR, CAPE CORSO, CAPE RACE, and ST. CLEARS out of their precarious position at Bakaritsa. Under advice from Papanyn and with Maclay's full concurrence I have accordingly delayed sailing of Q.P.4 to cross Dvina (corrupt group) 2200C/23 when convoy will consist of 15 ships.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1225C/20 to Adty.)

Your 1633A/20. Following is repetition my 1045C/20 ends. To S.B.N.O. North Russia, LEDA, repeated C.S.18, M.S.1, Admiralty. LENIN now breaking out Q.P.4. Fair prospect (?closing) Dvina Bar high water 1900C today.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel 2359C/20 to Admty.)

BOADICEA.

In good radio telephony touch with escort but unable to find convoy low visibility. My P.C.S. 059° 17' N. 015° 43' W., 270°, 7 knots.
(BOADICEA 1330A/20.)

P.Q.6.

STALIN has encountered very thick ice and is steaming towards P.Q.6 still 50 miles away at Intzi making good (corrupt group) slow speed. She will require to bunker from one of the ships before leading them to Molotovsk. This largely influenced my decision deferring sailing of Q.P. as well as reason given my 1225C/20.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1815C/20 to Adty.)

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Dispositions

Your 1633/10.

A. Now that U.S. have put W.P.L.46 into force Pacific area as defined in A.B.C.1 is a U.S. responsibility and only British Unit in this area other than Canadian vessels is a "D" Class cruiser co-operating with U.S. S.W. Pacific Force in Galapagos area. Disposition of U.S. forces in Pacific area not known here and this information best obtained by you direct or through B.A.D. Washington.

B. In S.W. Pacific west of U.S. strategic area are majority of Australian and New Zealand Navies.

C. In Far East area as defined in A.B.C.1. are following Forces:-

(1) British based on Singapore.

2 "D" Class cruisers.

7 Destroyers.

(2) U.S. operating in area Balikpapan, Surabaya, Darwin:-

2 Cruisers.

8 Destroyers.

(3) Dutch operating in Java Sea:-

3 Cruisers and

6 Destroyers.

(4) 7 Dutch submarines operating from Singapore in Gulf of Siam and about 30 U.S. submarines operating from Manila in China Sea.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 1636A/20 to C.N.S. Ottawa) P.D. 0664/41.

North Atlantic.

Movements.

Departure VIDETTE 0300 WISHART 0614 to R/V with S.S. BATORY. (F.O.C.N.A. 0642A/20).

O.24.
CANADA.

Shift normal W/T watch to Gibraltar Broadcast at 2200A/21. (2) French Hospital Ship CANADA off Cape Gata 22nd making passage Straits of Gibraltar 23rd. (F.O.C.N.A. 0908 A/20 to O.24).

ZULU
WHITEHALL.

Intend ZULU for U patrol and WHITEHALL for Western Approaches tonight. (Capt. (D) 19 1050A/20 to F.O.C.N.A.).

HERMIONE
(carrying out
exercises with
ARGUS).

Have developed severe condenseritis in forward unit. Returning to harbour now to rectify. E.T.A. Gate 1140. (HERMIONE 1050A/20 to S.O. Force H). My 1050/20 density clearing. Can remain at sea. Am joining ARGUS for F.D.X. (HERMIONE 1115/20). *See p.681*

ARGUS A/C

1 Aircraft crashed astern. (WHITEHALL 1129/20).

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. -Contd.

FARADAY

My 1828A/16. Sailing of FARADAY delayed until stronger escort is available. (V.A.C.N.A. 1150A/19 to C.in C. S.A.). Your 1248A/19. Trawler not now available until 23/12 earliest. (F.O.C.N.A. 1901A/20 to Admty. (R) C.in C. S.A.).

Destroyers at Gibraltar.

- (1) Advantage has been taken of group 2 destroyers to exercise MALAYA and ARGUS for one day each.
- (2) After departure of group 2 escort commitments of ATHENE, BATORY, and H.G.77 will reduce number of destroyers available for Force H and patrol to 5 or 6 depending on numbers boiler cleaning or defective.
- (3) With present U/B dispositions this precludes possibility of carrying out further exercises until about 7/1.
- (4) Escort as in para. 2 is all that can be kept available should Force H have to proceed in an emergency. (S.O. Force H. 1257A/20 to 1603A/20 to Admty.).

Patrols 2 sweeps.

Group 4 passing through 000° Spartel 5 at 2000A in this position detach 1 corvette to patrol line Spartel - Cape Trafalgar. Report name of corvette detailed. Remainder of Group 4 passing through 180° Europa Point 7 thence carry out A/S sweep in area 036° 30' N. 035° 30' N. 004° 00' W. 004° 25' W. By night sweep in 2 divisions one North of 036° 05' N. the other South of 036° 00' N. By day sweep as one group. WHITEHALL and M.L. No. 174 will be on U patrol. Report E.T. of passing position in para. 2. (F.O.C.N.A. 1327A/20 to BLACK SWAN Rep. S.O. Group 4, HERMIONE, WHITEHALL).

ROCKROSE JASMINE.

ROCKROSE, JASMINE, in the vicinity of 26.28 23.20 through 25.00 23.00 thence 159° 9. Situation 2001A/20. (F.O.C.N.A. 1424A/20 to A.I.G.65).

See p. 682.

CAMPOMANES.

Your 1555A/20th ship was CAMPOMANES boarded 0930 southward Seville, Corvette from Vigo. (?Southward) (?since) allowed to proceed. (IMPERIALIST 1715A/20 to F.O.C.N.A.).

French Movements.

Gibraltar 0900 French Light cruiser^{LE} FANTASQUE French ship CAP BLANC full deck cargo military transport. 1033 French survey ship ESTAFETTE, French CAPITAINE LUIGI full deck cargo of motor transport MENHIR BRAZ laden, VILLE D'ORAN light trawler CAPITAINE ARMAND westbound. (S.O.I. Gibraltar 1725A/20 to Admty. etc.).

/F.W.....

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. -Contd.F.W.
activity.

Three F.W. aircraft active to W.S.W. of Bordeaux one probably sighted and reported convoy H.G.76 before noon. (D.D.I.C. 1739A/20 to F.O.C.N.A.).

ATHENE

Admty. 1635A/19. Intend sailing ATHENE escorted by EXMOOR, CROOME at 1800A/23 routed through (a) 35.50 N. 06.30 W. (b) 32.45 10.10 (c) 28.00 13.30 (d) 23.20 17.40 (e) 14.00 19.00. S.of A. 15 knots.
(2) from position (e) destroyers will proceed Bathurst for fuel subsequently returning to Gibraltar. (3) C.in C. S.A. is requested to make onward escort and routing instructions, observing ATHENE has insufficient endurance to reach Takoradi without fuelling en route. (F.O.C.N.A. 1740A/20 to Admty. C.in C. S.A.).

→ Situation
Report
No.1.

My 1416A/20th. Add new para 11. HERMIONE passes Gibraltar westbound through Straits at 0001A/21. (F.O.C.N.A. 1754A/20 to N.A. Station).

200 p. 679

O.24.

My 1336A/19. Your 1506 restrictions have been instituted assuming that you will dive between 038° 10' 002° 00' E. and 038° 00' 001° 20' E. on 21st also 037° 20' 000° 20' W. and 037° 05' 000° 50' W. on 22nd. (F.O.C.N.A. 1936A/20 to O.24). P.C. and S. 1900A/20th. 038° 18' N. 002° 48' E. 258° 8 several ships sighted off Oran none of which at close inspection answered description. Sighted one U/B North of us 11th; long range attack frustrated by 090° zigzag and subsequent diving. Hydrophonic effect of possible other U/B 13th same position not sighted. No other shipping in vicinity. Slight air activity. Fired 3 torpedoes. (O.24 2118A/20).

Lisbon
shipping for
evacuation.

Your 1556/19. This question must be handled by Ambassador and F.O. are telegraphing to that effect. In the meantime, you are to comply with my 1936/18. (A.C.N.S.(T) 2041A/20 to N.C.S.O. Lisbon).

→ HERMIONE

Departure.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2130A/20).

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

W.S.12 Z.
ROYAL
SOVEREIGN.

Your 1220/19. Probable date p.m./23/12 on completion of boiler cleaning ROYAL SOVEREIGN. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 0144Z/20 to C.in C. E.I.).

Convoys
W.S.12 Z.A.
12 Z.B.
12 Z.M.

Your 2234/19 and my 0116/20. Following is final composition of convoys.
(2) All above will be ready to leave Durban p.m./24. Speed 14 knots.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1049Z/20 to C.in C. E.I.).

MILFORD
BRIDGEWATER
W.S.15.

A.M. 1723A/24/11.
MILFORD after docking Durban is having short refit at Simonstown but will be available to meet W.S.14 if situation requires.
(2) Intend sailing BRIDGEWATER with W.S.15 and for short refit at Simonstown if situation permits.
(3) If no submarine activity in Cape area intend both these ships return Freetown after refit. (C.in C. S.A. 1201Z/20 to Admty.).
My 1201/20. If no Admty. objection intend MILFORD should visit Loanda for 24 hours on passage to Freetown, as I consider contact with Portuguese authorities Angola would do good. Will obtain permission direct through C.G. Loanda.
2. Intend MILFORD to pay short visit to Matadi after Loanda. (C.in C. S.A. 1231Z/20 to Admty.).

ROCKROSE
JASMINE.

Your 1601A/2 request route and approx. position of ROCKROSE JASMINE.
(C.in C. S.A. 1301Z/20 to C.in C. W.A.). *See p. 680*

Routes of
U.S. Ships.

Request I may be informed whether routes of U.S.A. ships in south Atlantic are being passed to U.S.A. Naval Department by Admiralty or whether they should be repeated to Chatfold by N.C.S.O's. (C.in C. S.A. 1330Z/20 to Admty.).

ILEX.

B.A.R.M. (1443R/19) and Admty's 1649/3/11. Request report completion date of ILEX when ready she is to be sailed for Freetown via Pointe Noire for fuel. (C.in C. S.A. 1401Z/20 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

S.S. STEEL
SCIENTIST

Overdue shipping. My 1009/16. STEEL SCIENTIST arrived Durban a.m./20.
(S.O.(I) Capetown 1445B/20).

Raider
actions.

Following facts emerged from 3 recent engagements between H.M. Ships and enemy armed merchant raiders. (A) Recognition. 1. Raiders must

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20.12.1941.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Raider
actions.
-Contd.

be expected to be disguised and will use a name suitable to the disguise in reply to any signal or if an RR RR message is made. 2. Disguise should be penetrated without difficulty provided information of shipping movements as received is relied upon to show that no such ship should be in position of encounter. 3. Information of movements of British, Allied and Neutral shipping passed to ships is sufficiently accurate to enable merchant ships plot to be kept which should slow all merchant shipping likely to be encountered. (B) Challenging. Challenging procedure in accordance with N.C.S.O. 371 and recognition manual was not used in these encounters. This procedure is shortly being extended to all Allied shipping and should assist identification. (C) Tactics. (1) It must be borne in mind that enemy merchant raiders possess a powerful armament of both guns and torpedoes and are capable of accurate fire at long ranges. (2) It should always be suspected that U/B's may be in company with any enemy vessel encountered and that an endeavour will be made to lead the intercepting ship towards these U/B's. (C.in C.S.A. 1455Z/20 to S.A. Station).

ALBATROSS

B.A.R.M. is requested to ascertain whether arrangements can be made for ALBATROSS to be taken in hand in U.S.A. at an early date for repairs to two steam dynamos and one Diesel Dynamo.

(2) C.in C. S.A. is requested to sail ALBATROSS as soon as practicable in anticipation of a favourable reply. Work is not within capacity of Simonstown Dockyard.

(3) Two aircraft should be embarked for A/S protection during passage if they can be operated Aircraft to be disembarked to a N.A.S. as directed by C.in C. A.W.I.

(D.O.D.(F) 1635A/20 to C.in C. S.A. B.A.R.M.).

Air
Operations.

Sunderlands 0515-1447 and 1050-1847 A/S escort convoy O.S.13. First Sunderland did not meet but sighted Vichy convoy 2 MV 2 DRS at 1300 1520-010-15. Aircraft was fired on but not damaged while trying to identify nationality. Flying boat probably Vichy escorting also sighted at same time. Second Sunderland met OS 13 - 1221-VTCE 4522 left 1543-

VICE.....

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Air
Operations.
-Contd.

VICE 2240. 1 Sunderland and 2 Hudsons 0430-1430-1020-1700 and 1440-2045 A/S escort convoy "Roberts". Convoy not met as nearly 24 hours in advance of expected position and revised position received after noon. Freetown. Patrols (details). (A.H.Q. West Africa 1745/20).

S.S.
PERMIAN

Overdue Shanghai PERMIAN Curacao departure 26/11 for Montevideo has not arrived.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo 2227Z/20).

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Jibuti,
Dhow Traffic,
VENGEUR.

Following addressed Middle East for Ministry of State received from Force Nairobi. Ref. my O/1/17 of 17/12. Free French report many Yemen Dhows at Khorangar. Refugee states 13 Dhows arrived Obok last week. S/M identified as VENGEUR. Fortnightly S/M expected bringing supplies and evacuating 10 men. Vichy plane expected 17th, or 18/12. Italian Commission now only 5. Comment on above. Prospect of early surrender appears to be receding. (C. in C. M.E., 0005/20 to C. in C. Med.)

Precautions
against
Human
Torpedoes.

Instructions.
(C. in C. Med., 0930B/20 to R.A. Alexandria, V.A. Malta, S.O. M.N.B.D.O., S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area, B.N.O. Tobruk, N.O.i/c Mersa Matruh, N.O.i/c Famagusta, Cyprus, N.O.i/c Tripoli (Syria), N.O.i/c Beirut, N.O.i/c Haifa, N.O.i/c Port Said, A.S. Alexandria. (R) F.O.C. Red Sea Force, Admty.)

PAUL
COUNDOURIOTIS.

F.O.C.R.I.N's 1023/11. Intend following programme for voyage to Bombay.
2. N.O.i/c Port Said is requested to arrange the removal of after torpedo tubes.
3. S.N.O. Red Sea is requested to arrange the embarkation of any ex Italian spare parts and Naval Stores required during refit.
(C. in C. Med., 1018B/20 to C. in C. E.I., etc.)

1 M.V.

1 M.V. position 34° 35' N. 12° 8' E. 6000 ton course 180° 15 knots.
(A/C A830 Squad, 1045B/20.)

Air
Operations.

Night 18-19/12 my Opsum 566 results of bombing Benghazi Harbour unobserved 1 Wellington bombed Derna Harbour starting 3 small fires.
Night December 19/20. Weather poor 2 Wellingtons dropped 2 - 4000 lb. bombs on Benghazi results unobserved.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1207/20.)

JAGUAR
(rescuing
survivors of
KANDAHAR.)

Hurricanes will look out for you in 035° 01' N. 014° 14' E. at 1500B/20. Meanwhile do not break W/T silence unless necessary.
(V.A. Malta, 1423B/20 to JAGUAR.)
Cancel my 1423B/20.
(V.A. Malta, 1439B/20 to JAGUAR.)

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War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.→ 2 Cruisers,
3 Destroyers.2 Cruisers 3 Destroyers 036° 59' 018° 12' 350°
20 Minutes (? knots).
(Capt. (S) 10, 1455B/20 to SOKOL, A/C B to
Med. A/C.)M.V. and
destroyer.One M.V. not exceeding 2000 tons. One destroyer
bearing 171° distance 9 miles course 110° speed
5 knots position 34.50 N. 11.40 E.
(A/C J, 1522/20 to Med. A/C.)PERSEUS.Acknowledge my 1521B/14th and my 1741B/18th
report E.T.A.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1545B/20 to PERSEUS.)Mining of
Tripoli.H.Q. R.A.F. Malta's (i) 291 19/12. Position
of mines laid Tripoli (Africa) night of 18/19
Dec. by Wellingtons. Bearing and distances
in cables end of North Mole. 2 mines 270° - ½,
2 mines 090° - ½, 2 mines 090° - 1½.
(V.A. Malta, 1723B/20 to C. in C. Med.,
(R) S.O. A/C Carriers Med.)Malta
Raid.One alert 0717 to 0836 hours, total 40 fighters
and bombers, two attacks Ju. 88's Macchis
and 109's. Bombs dropped, one civilian killed,
35 injured, scattered damage civilian property.
Deluge has arrived once again.
(A.H.Q. Malta, 1750/20.)Escort for
Soviet
tankers.My 2355A/16. Soviet Embassy in London pressing
for decision. Can reply now be given.
(Hd. of M., 1933A/20 to C. in C. Med.)→ SOKOL.My 1705B/19. Cancel patrol off Augusta and
leave vicinity Stilo through 035° 51' 015° 15'
to arrive at Malta before (?)1800B/22 or
0800B next daylight. Shore directional under-
water beam transmission station installed near
Messina and east coast of Sicily co-operates
with surface air forces.
(Capt. S.10, 2015B/20 to SOKOL, (R) P.31,
UNBEATEN.)

/Mining ...

687

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd. see p 644Mining of
KANDAHAR,
NEPTUNE,
AURORA,
PENELOPE
19/12.

JAGUAR successfully rescued 8 Officers 166 ratings of KANDAHAR under very difficult conditions. KANDAHAR subsequently sunk by torpedo. Casualties will be signalled as soon as known. NEPTUNE after striking 2 or 3 mines struck another and capsized. KANDAHAR endeavouring to get alongside was mined and drifted away. Fear little possibility of survivors visible. AURORA following in wake of NEPTUNE also mined and holed, out of action for at least three weeks. PENELOPE struck a mine while turning but not holed or seriously damaged. Being docked Monday. Position of minefield approx. 033° 15' N. 013° 12' E. It is considered that the enemy cannot have any idea of this loss.

(R.A. Malta, 2023B/20 to F.O.(D) Med., Admty., etc.)

Arrival 20/12 JAGUAR, URGE.

(V.A. Malta, 2024B/20.)

TREHANDRI.

Small ammunition carrier TREHANDRI 200 tons with grey hull left Gulf of Athens today course 180° probably bound for Candia or Suda Bay.
(Capt. S.1, 2215/20 to THORN.)

Libya.

No further news of today's operations as 13th Corps. H.Q. has been moving. R/C aircraft reported submarine stern on to jetty at Bardia at 1530 today.

8 heavy 6 light A/A guns sent to Derna. 12 of each ready for Benghazi. H.Q. 8th Army Intelligence Summary 71 appendix "A" gives information concerning Keyes party.

(N.L.O. 8th Army, 2256B/20 to C. in C. Med.)

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

B.P.30.
B.P.31.
B.P.31.B.
etc.

My 0754/3. B.P.30 cancelled. Following moves have been arranged. Bombay Basra B.P.31A 7/1. 4 personnel ships. NEURALIA, TAKLIWA, NEVASA, CITY OF LONDON. This sailing date depends on the arrival date of W.S. 12 Z.B. Bombay Basra B.P.31B. 9/1. VARELA with troops and stores. Karachi Basra 9/1. SANTHIA with troops and stores. Bombay Colombo 30/12 two store ships. Bombay Colombo 6/1 one store ship. 7/1 3 M.T. ships. Can the Bombay Colombo store ships proceed without escort. (P.S.T.O. India 0721Z/20 to C.in C. E.I.).

EMERALD
DAUNTLESS.

Durban departure 20/12 EMERALD 1026Z in accordance with (? C.in C. E.I's) 1220Z 19th S.of S. 16½ knots E.T.A. Kilindini 0400Z/25. (ii) DAUNTLESS 12012 S.of A. 20 knots E.T.A. Simonstown 0600Z/22. (N.O.I.C. Durban 1203Z/20).

Diego
Garcia

Troopers state all supplies for Diego Garcia Garrison are in future to be sent from Mauritius instead of India.

2. This arrangement will result in a most uneconomical use of shipping observing I am already committed to supplying Addu Atoll from Ceylon and had intended same ship would also supply Diego Garcia.

3. The situation in the Indian Ocean may well reach point where independent sailings cannot be accepted. Under these circumstances the escorts required will be difficult to find.

4. Request Troopers may be asked to report on this decision.

(C.in C. E.I. 1416Z/20 to Admty.).

COMMANDANT
DOMINE.

Arrived Mombasa 0830Z/19. Sailing from Mombasa A.M./21 E.T.A. Aden 26/12 about noon. 16 days for repairs are urgently required. (COMMANDANT DOMINE 1635B/20 to C.in C. F.N.F.L.).

Burma.

Again no enemy activity reported which is puzzling. R/C of Victoria Point - Mosed revealed no troop or air movements and no concentration of boats for possible movement on Mergui. Now some doubt whether Japanese have occupied Victoria Point. (Govr. Burma 2325/20).

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War Diary.20. 12. 1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Hong Kong.

Operation proceeding on line roughly north south through Wongneicho Fuss Gap which we hold. B.C. say Japanese story about my departure has been discounted. Suggest categorical denial.
(Govr., Hong Kong, 0151Z/20, to Admty.) * 17th. Stonecutters W/T broken down. Very heavy shelling of Island during forenoon. Further delegation sent by Japanese. Surrender refused. Thursday. Repeated bombing attacks during day and heavy shelling of Dockyard. P.M. enemy landed North Point Takoo Area. Friday. Enemy landing in some force confirmed. Penetration towards south of Island extensive. M.T.B. attacked craft crossing from Kowloon Bay and 4 enemy landing craft with troops sunk. M.T.B.12 and 26 sunk 07 damaged. Enemy penetrated to neighbourhood. Deep Water and Aberdeen and situation extremely confused. A.P.V. Oiler EBONOL B.D.V. BARLIGHT and H.M.S. TERN who were unable to steam were scuttled. H.M.S. CICALA, ROBIN, REDSTART M.T.B.09, 10, 11, 27 in service, 07 hopes to be available shortly. Bomb attacks and shelling continued during daylight.
(Cdre Hong Kong 0245Z/20.)
* Note message received very corrupt.

Malaya.

Situation Report. (Adv. H.Q., M.C., 0316/20 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

SAIDJA,
GADILA and
SAROENA.

Your 2241/19 ^{N.F. in W.D.} arrangements made.
(C. in C.E.F., 0750Z/20 to Admty. (R)
R.A. Malaya.)

Hong Kong
Communiques.

Pass following to S. of S. for Colonies. Following communique issued 0930 to-day (begins) Yesterday afternoon we launched a successful counter attack against enemy in neighbourhood of Wongneichonand Gap. Japanese were thrown back from this keypoint which previously had been in their hands for a short period and we have since maintained our line. There have been no further enemy advances and throughout night we remained in control of situation. Heavy shelling of mid level of city took place towards dusk yesterday and there was some damage. Enemy bombing attacks throughout day were continued (ends) Following communique issued 1230/?18 (begins.) Operations have been proceeding satisfactorily to-day.

/Parties.....

689A

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

0316/20 Dec.

IN

From Adv. H.Q. M.C.

Date 20.12.41.

MOST SECRET

Recd. 0310.

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office, C.in C. India, C.G.S. Melbourne,
C.G.S. Wellington N.Z.

MOST IMMEDIATE

020624 0/260 cipher 19/12/41.

SITREP SERIAL No.10. 1630 hrs. G.M.T.19/12.

Perak. Movement of 11 Div., and 12 Bde., from Sungei Krian was completed without enemy interference. Present dispositions 12 Bde., Kuala Kangsar 28 Bde., Pontoon Bridge Blanga (on Perak R. 20 miles South of K. Kangsar) 6 and 15 Bdes., and 11 Div. tps., area Ipoh. Reorganisation in progress. On road Grik-K. Kangsar our tps., were in contact with enemy but detailed reports have not been received.

Kelantan. Patrol contact with enemy near Machang last night. Bombing attacks on railway reported in last Sitrep caused no damage. Mysore Inf., withdrawn from 8 Bde. Group now in Singapore.

Kuantan. Johoro. Singapore. Nothing to report.

Sarawak. Aerodrome Kuching bombed this morning by 15 enemy aircraft.

Air. Routine reconnaissance and special reconnaissance to locate suspected enemy aircraft carrier proceeded during 19/12 with negative results. Six N.E.I., Glenn Martins attacked enemy shipping off Miri claiming one hit one near miss on cruiser and one hit two near misses on large ship possibly seaplane tender. This force shot down one enemy aircraft certain one probable. Own losses one Glenn Martin. Enemy aircraft bombed Kuching a.m., and Pontianak p.m. 19/12. Damage Kuching unknown Pontianak reported by Dutch as severe. Two bombing attacks Ipoh aerodrome during 19/12 by Army Type 97 T.E. bombers caused slight damage. One enemy aircraft machine gunned streets in Ipoh and was probably shot down.

Note by C.4 Tels. The above telegram has been repeated to Washington.

0316/20

Distribution over....

MOST SECRET

B
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(2)

Received from War Office at 0510/20

1st Lord	War Office Distributions:-
1st S.L.	S. of S.
4th S.L.	C.I.G.S.
5th S.L.	V.C.I.G.S.
V.C.N.S.	D.M.O. & P.
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.P. (2)
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.D.M.O. (0)
A.C.N.S. (T)	M.O. 1.2.6.10.12
A.C.N.S. (W)	D.D.I.P.
N.A. 1st S.L.	D.M.I.
Captain Pin	D.D.M.I. (I)
D.N.A.D.	M.I. 2(3)
Head of M. (2)	A.A. 4
D.O.D. (H)	Cabinet War Room
D.D.O.D. (H)	Col. Jacob (Cabinet Offices)
D.O.D. (F)	S. of S. Foreign Office
D.D.O.D. (F)	Colonial Office (Major Rolleston)
D.C. (2)	Duty Captain Admiralty
D.N.I. (4)	Duty Officer (Upper Admiralty War Room)
D.D.I.C.	Head of War Registry Admiralty
D.T.D. (2)	C.A.S. Air Ministry (2)
D. of P. (2)	Plans 3, Air Ministry (2)
D.A/S.W.	Duty Gp. Captain, Air Ministry
I.P. (2)	A.C.A.S. (I) Air Ministry
W.D.	War Room, Air Ministry
D.S.D.	F.O. 5 Air Ministry
Admiral Bailey	D.M.C., Air Ministry
Admiral Bellairs	
Admiral Chalmers	
E.P.S.	
D.T.S.D.	
N.I.D. 10	

TOP SECRET

689C

1819/20th December

MOST SECRET **MOST SECRET** IN

From G.O.C. Malaya. Date 20.12.41.

Recd. 2050.

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office.

IMMEDIATE

020776.

27293 cipher 20/12 Ref. Sitrep 0259 19/12.

Request no publicity be given to remark concerning Sikh Police. Matter somewhat obscure and investigation proceeding.

1819/20

Received from War Office at 0655/21 Dec.

+ ? 0256 19/12 T.O.O. 1756/19 re Penang Evacuation.

- 1st Lord. W.D.
- 1st S.L. D.S.D.
- 4th S.L. Admiral
- 5th S.L. Bailey
- V.C.N.S. Admiral
- A.C.N.S. (H) Bellairs
- A.C.N.S. (F) Admiral
- A.C.N.S. (T) Chalmers.
- A.C.N.S. (W) E.P.S.
- N. 1st S.L.D. T.S.D.
- Capt. Pin. N.I.D.10.
- D.N.A.D.
- Hd. of M. (2)
- D.O.D. (H)
- D.L.O.D. (H)
- L.O.D. (F)
- D.L.O.D. (F)
- D.C. (2)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.D.I.C. (2)
- D.T.D. (2)
- D.T.D. (M)
- D of P (2)
- D.A/S.W.
- I.P. (2)

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MOST SECRET

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War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Hong Kong
Communiques.
(Contd.)

Parties of enemy have been mopped up in Repulse Bay area and our troops have pushed enemy forces back across Happy Valley. Message has been received from General Yuhanmow from which it appears his forces are now within very short distance of Hong Kong and that relief for garrison may be expected in near future. During morning force of 3 bombers escorted by 6 fighter aircraft was seen carrying out dive bombing attacks on Japanese on north of Kowloon. Governor. (Ends.)
(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0842Z/20, to Admty.)

Destroyers.

Arrival 19/12 TENEDOS, STRONGHOLD, departure 20/12, SCOUT.
(S.O.I. Singapore, 1033Z/20, to Admty.)

Daily
operational
summary up
to 1030Z/20.

R/C's directed to areas 300 miles N.N.E., Singapore visibility good negative report. Armed R/C's Malay East Coast. Armed R/C's Rhio Ar-chipelago and 107° to depth 70 miles from Rhio Straits and 106° to depth 80 miles from Horsboro Light had object also locate H.M.S. LIPIS now arrived Singapore from Kuching. Photographic R/C's Sungei (Patani) A/S patrol for minelayer Durien Straits enemy aircraft interception Pulo Tioman area negative. Armed R/C's from Sinkawang 50 miles W.N.W. seaward from line Tanjong Batu Belat and Paloh River having object locate and attack enemy aircraft carrier carried out this morning and not on 19/12 as ordered and mentioned in my Oprep.5. Results negative. Total aircraft involved 1 P.R.U. Buffalo, 2 Vildebeestes, 2 Catalinas, 3 Glenn Martins, 3 Blenheims, 1 Hudson 14 Buffaloes and 3 Glenn Martins and 8 Buffaloes from Sinkawang. Photo R/C's 19/12 no indication of enemy operating from Alor Star aerodrome. At Sungei Patani aerodrome about 30 enemy fighters. No group disbanded and our fighters now based at Kuala Lumpur. Summary of operationally serviceable aircraft position as follows.
(Air H.Q.F.E., 1205/20, 1216/20.)

Malaya
evacuations.

Your 0437/19 not to C. in C. E.F. Agree your proposal subject to approval of C. in C.E.F. 2. Suggest U.S. Citizens be embarked in ORION which will return to U.K. via Panama Canal. Passengers could disembark at Panama or possible Halifax if it is decided to make a call there.
(D. of S.T. 2230A/20 to F.O. Malaya.)

/German.....

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War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China. Contd.German
Internees,
Sumatra.

No. 261. My No. 106 of 9/8/1940. About 2,000 German internees in North Sumatra including many technicians and men with military training. Consider with Dutch security authorities they should be sent without delay for internment in British India if Netherlands Govt., agree and shipping available. In view of Japanese approach to Sumatra by way of Penang, I recommend that every effort be made for removal now. (Consul-Gen., Batavia, No. T.O.O./20.)

America & West Indies.D/G defects.

1. Knowledge of D.G. defects governs destination allotted to ships. If defects are not communicated until after sailing diversions at sea are caused. Request therefore that names of ships likely to sail with defective D.G. be indicated in advance sailing telegrams.
2. Owing to several recent mistakes attention is called to A.M.2008/26/2 not to Sydney and to I.C.O.C. No. 4. third para.
(D.T.D., 1156A/20 to C.O.A.C.Halifax, N.C.S.O. Sydney C.B. etc.)

A/S escort
for WARSPITE.

Your 0138A/17. Destroyer and air escort arranged.
(B.A.D., 1315R/20, to Admty.)

Washington
Report.

Washops 10. 1. Philippines. A report from Manila dated 18/12 states that up to that date the Japanese had used 17 warships and 24 transports in their attack on Luzon.
2. Hawaii. From midnight 16/17/12 to midnight 18/19, there has been (1) no air activity (2) radio interference has diminished (3) presence of one S/M off Hawaii and one off Molokai has been confirmed. There are no further reports of the Japanese midget S/Ms being active. 3. Johnston Island. Examination of damage caused by the bombardment and of fragments of shell recovered indicates that the bombarding ships mounted 5.5" gun.
(J.S.M., Washington, 1331R/20, to Admty., etc.)

/Pacific.....

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. Contd.

Pacific Shipping.

My 1341R/18 not to Admiralty. Pending final decision Opnav is instructing Com. 12 that for the time being (A) N.Z.N.B., N.O., Wellington, will route U.S.A., Flag shipping from Australia and New Zealand to west coast. Present approx., routes to be south of Chatham Island and east of Marquesas Island. (B) Return route will not be given to ships sailing from U.S.A. Ports.
(B.A.D., 1345R/20, to N.Z.N.B., etc.)

M.O.M.P. For O.N. convoys.

O.N. Convoys. Reference A.M. 1934A/21/8, para. D, adherence to the date of M.O.M.P. recommended a fortnight in advance has in many instances proved impracticable owing to weather conditions. Propose for your consideration that route recommendation should include date of sailing from Liverpool and that M.O.M.P. recommendation be given only in the information signal on each convoy reaching the open sea. In reasonable weather O.N. convoys take about 4 days to reach the longitude of 22 30 W., and O.N.S. convoys about 5 days.
(A.C.N.S.(T) 1400Z/20 to Opnav.)

BROOKLYN WILSON.

Cancel my 2200/19.
(Opnav 1420/20.)

S.C.61.

My 1318Z/19. Delete SOREL and ST. CLAIR who will sail to overtake and assume S.O. on joining.
(C.C.N.F., 1424Z/20, to Admty., etc.)

DIOMEDE.

Left Cristobal 1600R/20.
(N.C.S.O. Colon, 1612/20, to Admty.)

Suggested use of Lourenco Marques.

(1) U.S. Authorities suggest that since congestion is being caused at Capetown due to U.S. Ships carrying lease - Lend cargoes for Red Sea calling there for onward routing, instructions and bunkering, a proportion of these ships should be routed from U.S.A. direct to Lourenco Marques. Bunkering facilities for 40 or 50 ships a month could be arranged at that port by California Texas Oil Co. (ii) Request opinion (a) Whether this step is necessary to relieve congestion: (b) If so, whether it is desirable for onward routing to be carried out by C.S.A. Lourenco Marques.
(B.A.D., 1615R/20, to Admty., N.O.I.C. Simonstown.) Reply: Admty. 1326/27.

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.Contd.

MAYFLOWER.

C.C.N.F.'s 2040Z/15. Confirm MAYFLOWER will arrive Charleston 2000 zone 5/22/12. (C.O.A.C., 1619Z/20, to B.A.R.M.)

Japanese Disposition.

U.S.A. Naval Intelligence reports foll. Disposition Japanese Aircraft Carriers.
1. South China and Gulf of Siam, AKAGI, and KAGA, with 60 Aircraft each.
2. Luzon Formosa. 2 Aircraft Carriers with approx., 70 Aircraft including Air Squadrons Nos. 6 and 7. Also 5 converted seaplane tenders with total of 60 Aircraft.
3. Saipan-Palao (Mandates). SORYU and HIRYU with 42 aircraft each. Also possibly RYUJO with 30 aircraft.
4. Hawaii - Mandates Area. 4-6 Aircraft Carriers with total approx., 124-180 aircraft.
B. Foll. bases reported used by Japanese fighters. (1) Basco in Batan Islands. (2) Vigan. (3) Aparri. (4) Legaspi. C. Manila reports Japanese using ME.109's with black cross marking. D. Jettisoned Belly Tanks from OO and OI type ship borne fighters have capacity of 8 Galls. E. Report from Bandoeng states aerodrome at Miri Sarawak, is probably being re-constructed by Japanese. Please inform Admiralty. (Rafdel, 1920/20, to Airwhit.)

NEWCASTLE.

Your 1752Q/18. Destination Devonport. 2. C. in C. A. & W.I., to report by signal any essential items of work to be carried out at Devonport during leave period. (V.C.N.S., 2003A/20, to C. in C.A.W.I.)

ALBATROSS.

Admty. 1635Z/20. Aircraft should be disembarked at Bermuda. (C. in C.A.W.I., 2213Q/20 to C in C.S.A.)..

Information of U.S.Movements.

Following received, originally addressed Atlantic Fleet for action, all Naval Coastal Frontier Commanders Opanav for information, now sent to you for information. The S.O. of a fleet detachment departing from port is responsible for informing the local echelon of the N.C.F. Command approx., time of departure.

/The S.O.....

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Information
of U.S.
Movements
-Contd.

The S.O. of a fleet detachment at sea shall inform the appropriate N.C.F. Commander about 24 hours prior to predicted arrival of the detachment at any port or ports within the Frontier Command. Information in each case shall include composition of detachment and expected track while within limits of the N.C.F. which approximate an average of about 100 miles off shore. Such instructions herein contained as may be in conflict with N.D.P.1 when received are automatically abrogated thereby. (Cinclant, 2359/20, to Admty.).

Australia & New Zealand.

Japanese
Carrier
Australian
Landing at
Dilli.

My 0651Z/18. Sighting of enemy aircraft indicates that a Japanese aircraft (or seaplane) carrier is operating between Nissan and Kapingamarangi which latter place was bombed by Hudson Aircraft 18/12. Force which landed at Dilli 17/12 included Australian Troops and it is now known that local Governor offered formal resistance. Full military control of Portuguese Timor deferred pending clarification of Portuguese attitude. (A.C.N.B. 0700Z/20 to Admty. etc.).

LE
TRIOMPHANT.

Arrival Brisbane 1435Z/19, escorting ORMISTON. (A.C.N.B. 0929Z/20 to Admty. etc.).

Merchant
ships.

1. Following ships due shortly Fremantle should be sailed CHINA, VERA, Bahrein. OSTHAV, BELITA, GYLFE, Abadan.
2. Your Vesca 0756/17 did my 1854/12 reach you too late.
(D.T.D. 1742A/20 to N.C.S.O. Fremantle).

QUEEN
MARY.

My 0351/19, request report also of length of time QUEEN MARY will require in dry dock itself. (D.of S.T. 2037A/20 to A.C.N.B.).

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.STANLEY
RUCKINGE.
(torpedoed
19/12.)

- (i) At 2230A/18 in 180° Carnero 5 miles HAARLEM sighted and engaged U-Boat steering east. All available destroyers and M.L.'s sent to hunt without success.
- (ii) At dusk 18th in 037° 00' N., 016° 48' West U-Boat sighted on Port Beam of H.G.76 convoy.
- (iii) At 0415A/19 probably 2 miles astern of convoy STANLEY was torpedoed and sunk. STORK obtained A/S contact and destroyed U-Boat. (U.574)
- (iv) At 0515A/19 RUCKINGE in convoy H.G.76 torpedoed.
- (v) At 1340A/19 when in 039° 00' N., 018° 00' W., STORK reported U-Boat bearing 183° 22 miles. (F.O.C.N.A., 0016A/20 to Admty.)

CASSEQUEL.
(torpedoed
15/12.)

17 of crew of CASSEQUEL who were missing have been picked up. (D.S., 837.)

Submarines Reported.

2300Z/19.

Bearing by D/F at 2300Z/19 position of enemy U-Boat(s) was 069° 48' N., 033° 05' E.
Unreliable fix.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 0316C/20 to Admty., 0332C/20 to SEAWOLF.)

0935.

D/F at 0935/20 G.M.T. suggests that U-Boat is in the vicinity of convoy H.G.76.
(D.D.I.C. 1114A/20 to Escort of H.G.76.
F.O.C.N.A.)

Estimated approx., positions of U-Boats.
(D.D.I.C. 1430A/20. 1431A/20.)

1800A.

Two submarines 320° 23 miles from 040° 56' N., 020° 22' W., at 1800A. My P.C. and S., are at 2000A, 041° 08' N., 020° 14' W., 020° 7½ knots. Condor shadowed this forenoon. Prisoner stated U-Boat last ? (refuelled at) Vigo.
(STORK, 2100A/20, to C. in C.W.A.)

695 A

Admty. Narrative given to Press (Times 14/3/42)
gave the identify of the 3 U/Bs sunk between
17.12.41 and 19.12.41 as

U.131 Korvetten Kapitän Arend Baumann

U.434 Kapitän Leutnant Wolfgang Heyda

U.574 Ober Leutnant zur see Gagnälbach.

See next page.

698

War Diary.20.12.1941.
Saturday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Attacked.By STORK.
19/12.F.O.C.N.A. 0016A/20.
See Ships Attacked.By 2nd.D.F.Hunting suspected S/M in position 274° RET.
18 miles. NEREUS and OSIRIS on the surface and
clear.
(S.O.2nd D.F., 1034/20 to Alexandria C.C.O.)U.131.
U.434.BLANKNEY 1431A/18. Prisoners landed at
Gibraltar are from:-

(a) U. 131 Korvetten Kapitän Baumann.

See previous page (b) U. 434 Korvetten Kapitän Heyda (Wolfgang).(ii) From information obtained from documents
U 131 was from a German port and there is no
evidence this boat having made any contact with
Spain.(iii) A list from U 434 of medical supplies
obtained bears the following endorsement in
pencil "Emgfangen Speltigo Den 15 December 1941."
Also matches of Spanish manufacture recovered
which provide additional evidence of contact
with Spain.(iv) Documents are being forwarded at first
opportunity by air.

(S.O.I., Gibraltar, 1050A, 1052A/20 to Admty.)

By HERMIONE,Have counter attacked firm contact in position
(? 218°) Europa 3 miles.
(HERMIONE, 1052/20, to Gibraltar W/T.)By WESTCOTT.One S/M bearing 290° 7 miles approx., true
course unknown. Position OMNA 1244.
(indecipherable.)
(WESTCOTT 1055A/20.)My 1055A 20th no further contact with submarine
which was sighted 1050 by C.O. at between 5 and
7 miles. Am continuing search till 2000 then
proceeding to original destination. 049° 00'
016° 13' weather report.

(WESTCOTT 1430A/20 to C. in C.W.A.)

My 1430A/20. Have carried out 4 attacks on
probable U-boat in 48° 40' N., 16° 32' W.
Result doubtful owing to pronounced skip
effects. Unexplained explosion was heard after
last attack at 1845. Remaining in the vicinity
till midnight.

(WESTCOTT, 2230A/20, to C. in C.W.A.)

2200/19.....

War Diary.

20.12.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked. Contd.

2200/19.

Good sound contact and propellor noises attacked at 2200 G.C.T./19 in 27.28 N. 79.20 W. Results oil on water and prop noises ceased. This contact is probably same sub. as reported by plane 1350 G.C.T./18 in 25 50 N., 79 50 W.
(Opnav 1538/20 to Adty., C. in C.A.W.I.)

By Swordfish.

(1) Swordfish ASV A/S patrol 1830/19 to 0930/20 area 15 miles radius Spartel. 1 U-Boat, sighted and attacked at 2141, 265° Spartel 2½ effect unknown.
(200 Group, 2210/20.)

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS | - Policy |
| (Classification | - Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects) | - Movements |
| | - Operations |
| | - Allied Air Activity |
| | - Enemy Air Activity |
| | - Mining |
| | - Enemy Intelligence |
| | - U-Boats |
| | - Navigational |
| | - Technical |
| | - Casualties and Defects |
| | - Shipping and Convoys |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - North Atlantic |
| (Classification | - South Atlantic |
| by stations) | - Mediterranean |
| | - East Indies |
| | - America and West Indies |
| | - Australia and New Zealand |
| | - U-Boat Campaign |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Harwich remained closed until 0840A owing to fog.

Mining.

Operation
N.L. 50.

M.L's 101 and 102 laid mines last night near Dunkirk.

The ports of Tees and Hartlepool will be closed daily from dusk until noon next day, owing to suspected minelaying.

S.S. NELLIE (Greek) was mined off Spurn Point and was beached for safety on Haile Sand. S.S. BENMACDHUI in F.N.585 was mined and sunk at 2145 off H.5 buoy.

There was marked enemy air activity over the Thames Estuary from 1740 to 1820 today, and mines were laid.

North Atlantic.

It is reported that a convoy of 20 ships is being formed at Casablanca and will sail shortly for Marseilles escorted by warships.

South Atlantic.

RAMILLIES arrived at Freetown today with Convoy W.S.14.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Trials are being carried out with a Wellington A/C converted to carry two 18 inch torpedoes. The use of such aircraft would enable us to attack enemy forces and merchant shipping in almost any part of the central Mediterranean.

TRUANT reports that on 11/12 she torpedoed a large tanker entering Suda Bay and believes she sank it.

URGE reports that at 0858B/14 in 37° 53' N. 15° 29' E. she fired a salvo of torpedoes at 2 battleships escorted by 4 destroyers steering 207°. There were 2 definite hits at correct running time and interval and a probable third. At 0927 UNIQUE sighted one battleship and one destroyer in 37° 45' N. 15° 36' E. steering 125° at 20 knots. URGE came to P.C. depth at 0940 after being heavily counter attacked, and sighted this battleship and destroyer to S.E. steering 90° no other battleship could have passed east of URGE without detection.

East Indies.

Convoy B.M. 9 sailed from Bombay today for Singapore, carrying 8600 Indian troops.

China.

Hong Kong.

The Governor at 0521Z today asked H.M. Govt. for permission to make terms if necessary. A position is rapidly being reached at which the only remaining resistance open to the defence will be to hold for a short time only a small pocket in the centre of the city. The War Office at 1542A sent a message to the G.O.C. to endeavour by all means in his power including

/gunfire....

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.SITUATION REPORT.China.Hong Kong
- Contd.

gunfire to wreck the oil installations and storages. The troops are tired and food and ammunition stores cannot be reached as the position is surrounded. CICALA was bombed and sunk today. The dockyard was heavily shelled and bombed; several fires were started but were got under control.

Malaya and
Siam.

The Chiefs of Staff are representing urgently to the U.S. authorities that the 90 U.S. aircraft now arrived at Brisbane should be sent to Singapore.

Dutch S/M O.16 has been sunk apparently on the east Johore minefield on 12/12. There is one survivor.

A battery explosion which caused several casualties occurred in Dutch S/M K.13 in the Naval Base at Singapore this morning.

It is reported that 5,000 reinforcements from Tongking are being sent to Singora by sea. The date and place of departure are not known.

Philippines.

The C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet reports from Davao landing operations today in which 12 transports, a cruiser and 3 destroyers are engaged.

Wake.

There have been two further air raids (one last night) on the island and considerable damage has been caused. At 1521R it was reported that only one 3 inch A.A. battery was left in action.

U-boat Campaign.

At 1115A STORK reported two U-boats in 42° 25' N. 20° 19' W, one of which was unable to dive. These U-boats had been sighted by aircraft alongside each other, transferring men, 3 of whom the aircraft shot. One U-boat had a hole in its side. The relief aircraft was unable to locate either U-boat, and it is presumed the damaged boat either dived or was scuttled. Collision during the night is suggested as the cause.

/STORK.....

701

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.SITUATION REPORT.U-boat Campaign-Contd.

STORK despatched ships of the escort of H.G. 76 to attack but asked for long range aircraft to attack also; none were, however, available in Western Approaches Command until tomorrow. AUDACITY and S.S. ANNAVORE were torpedoed this evening in $45^{\circ} 44' N. 20^{\circ} W.$ 8 miles. AUDACITY sank.

U-boat prisoners have volunteered the information that their boat fuelled and provisioned from a German merchant ship in Vigo during the night 14/15 Dec. F.O.C.N.A. suggest that maximum pressure should be brought to bear on the Spanish Govt. to have the 3 German ships in the refuelling refuge at Vigo removed.

S.S. HELLEN (Norw.) was torpedoed off Cape Negro at 2310A today whilst escorted by ARCTIC RANGER. The ship was inside territorial waters.

U-451 Sunk.
(Dr. Rosbotham's
list.)

A Swordfish attacked and sank a German U-boat at 0320A today in 35° Sparte 15 miles. One survivor was picked up by MYOSOTIS.

The following attacks by enemy S/M's on U.S. merchant ships off the Pacific coast have been reported in the last 48 hours:- Off Columbia River $46^{\circ} 30' N.$ S.S. *DOHENY; SAINT CLAIR by gunfire. Off Cape Mendocino $40^{\circ} 30' N.$ S.S. SAMOA by gunfire 18/12, tanker EMIDIO sunk by torpedo and gunfire. Off Santa Cruz $37^{\circ} 0' N.$ S.S. AGWIWORLD by gunfire. Most of these attacks were carried out by night.

*? LARRY DOHENY.

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.Norwegian
M.F.V's to
be
replaced.N.T. W.D.
Your 2124A/18. Names as follows.
VAAGSFJORD, ANDHOLMEN, SJOGUTTEN, VESTFJORD,
RIKENS. (A.C.I.C. 1903N/21).Co-operation with Russia.Use of
Murmansk by
Russian
Convoys.

Following from Sir Stafford Cripps to Llewelin Allied Supplies Executive for Maclay. (Begins) Question of use of Murmansk was fully discussed on 18/12 by Admiral Miles and Hynard with Mikoyam who stated that Papanyn already had authority to (grp undec.) ships between Murmansk and the White Sea, as necessitated by conditions; in consultation, as regards British ships, with British local authorities. He stated that 3 or 4 ships could be received at Murmansk now and 6 or 7 in a few weeks time. If therefore local Soviet authorities are still in doubt as to their powers it would appear desirable for them to ask at one for clarification from Moscow (Ends). (D.N.I. 1826A/21 to S.B.N.O. Archangel).

Movements.SUFFOLK.Scapa departure SUFFOLK. E.T.A. Tyne 1530/21.
(A.C.O.S. 0156/21).LAMERTON
ESKIMO.

My 1214A/19. R/V with ESKIMO in 245°. Muckle Flugga 11 miles 0930/22. ESKIMO proceeds east Shetlands. (R.A.D.H.F. 1303A/21 to LAMERTON).

NIGERIA.

Intend to sail NIGERIA for Scapa at 1230/23. Ship is fitted with S.A. Request fighter protection. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1542/21).

CHITRAL
ALAUNIA
WORCESTERSHIRE
PRETORIA
CASTLE.
EMPIRE FULMAR
GARLAND.
SULTAN HISAR.

Intend sailing CHITRAL, ALAUNIA, WORCESTERSHIRE, PRETORIA CASTLE, and EMPIRE FULMAR escorted by GARLAND and SULTAN HISAR passing Clyde Boom at 1600A/22 to R/V with ACTIVE from Londonderry in 270° Oversay 6 miles at 0115A/23. Thence as in C.in C. W.A. 1027A/20. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1544A/21).

ILLUSTRIOUSE.T.A. Clyde 1820.
(ILLUSTRIOUS 1637Z/21).
Arrived ILLUSTRIOUS.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 1928A/21).

/VANQUISHER.....

SECRET

M E S S A G E

1950/21 December

IN

From 126 Base Unit Archangel

DATE: 23.12.41
RECD: 1310

cypher

Addressed The War Office, Repeated Ambassador Kuibyshev.

IMPORTANT.

021482. 35 cipher 21/12.

Following for Min. of War Transport from Maclay. The following is latest position regarding ports and homeward cargoes. Bakharitsa will be working three British ships and two Russians ex PQ 5 for another week. The homeward sailing of these ships very indefinite but will do utmost. Thereafter efforts will be made more floating cranes to Ekonomia if ice permits but doubtful.

2. Molotovsk all quays now ready but no heavy crane available as repairs required to floating crane from Murmansk indefinitely delayed. Will endeavour handle any heavy lifts by sheerlegs but will be difficult and very slow. No homeward cargo or ballast available until early January when expect some ore and timber.

3. Ekonomia all quays will be ready by end December but railway connection across Dwina River cannot be used until ice becomes stronger which subject to weather anticipate first week January. The heavy crane not yet erected and personally doubt if ever will be. Homeward cargo same as Molotovsk.

4. Murmansk understand facilities reasonable also Stisl one 25 ton floating crane available. Intend visiting shortly to verify position also arranging Cormack act for M of W.T. and I.T.O.Nell who is already there. (Two groups corrupt) ore and timber available for ballast but Russians wish quantities limited to minimum.

5. To enable us decide which ships ex PQ 7 to divert to Murmansk imperative have earliest information names and approximate cargoes of ships from U.K. also U.S.A. on leaving Iceland. This information up to date been delayed also inaccurate.

6. Please see my 1850/21 to Ambassador.

1950/21

Advance copy Ops O.D. Trade.
Recd from War Office 2156/24

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T)
- Nav. Sec.
- N.A. 1st S.L.
- D of P (3)
- Ops (3)
- O.D. (5)
- O.I.C. (3)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.T.D. (4)
- D.T.D. (M)
- D.T.D. (C)
- M(7) & for War Cab. Off.
- E.P.S.
- I.P. (3)
- W.D.

War Office Circulation:-

- D.Mov.
- D.D.Mov (P)(S)
- D.D.Tn. (O)(D)
- A.F.V.1
- Q(M)1.2.3.
- R.L.G.
- S.D.1
- M.I.1. 3 (J.I.C.)
- Tn. 1. 2. 5. 6.
- Q(Ops)
- N.A.B.
- Army Council Secretariat
- Min. of W.T. (Mr. McDavid)
- Min. of W.T. (Mr. J.N. Wood)
- Admiralty Comdr. Secker
- War Registry (Admiralty)
- Air Ministry (Mov 2)
- R. E. Liaison Officer.

Min. of Supply
Min. of Economic Warfare.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. -Contd.

VANQUISHER
VOLUNTEER
WITCH.

Return to Merville forthwith and refuel.
(C.in C. W.A. 1813A/21 to VANQUISHER,
VOLUNTEER, WITCH).

NORTHERN SKY
(Illness of
Officer).

A.C.I.C's 1308. ^{N.T. & W.D.} Regret ships are not to
deviate for this.

(C.in C. H.F. 1932A/21 to RENOWN, RODNEY).

LANCASTER

Your 1821A/21 addressed ILLUSTRIOUS. Return
to Port Z.A. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 2116A/21 to
LANCASTER).

Operations.

Operation
"Anklet".

Sailed PRINSES^{SEPHINE} J^A CHARLOTTE to R/V WHEATLAND in
270° Oversay 6 miles at 1000A/21, thence via
Minches to destination as in R.A.D.H.F.
2315A/19. E.T.A. A.M./22. S. of A. 16 knots.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 0318A/21).
My 0058/18. D.1 day is 26/12. H.Q.C.C. pass to
18 Gp. (R.A.D.H.F. 1301A/21 to H.Q.C.C.).

Scapa departures ESKIMO, PRINCE ALBERT, and
GRAY RANGER. (A.C.O.S. 1612A/21).

S/M patrol
of
Cherbourg.

Leave patrol after dark tonight routed as
follows. (A) H. 32 on surface at her discretion
through following positions for Falmouth. Keep
east of 004° 15' W. until daylight.
(B) P.38 through 050° N. 001° 45' W. to R/V
050° 31' N. 000° 41' W. at 0845/22 for
Portsmouth.

(C) Bombing restrictions arranged as follows.
(Capt. S.5 1000A/21 to H.32, P.38).

1. KINGSTON CHRYSOBERYL and KINGSTON TOPAZ will
be at R/V at 0845/22.

2. Sanctuary in force from 0745 to 1200/22.

4. Keep south of 050° 25' N. until 0730.

(Capt. S.5 1749A/21 to P.38).

1. LOCM PARK will be at R/V at 1200/22.

2. Convoy P.W.84 expected Falmouth 1100/22.

No other movements affect you.

(Capt S.5. 1751A/21 to H.32).

Biscay
S/M Patrol.

My 1643A/20. Amend as follows. Para C D E G
H K L M. Submarines named leave patrol after
dark 21st for Falmouth by their outward route
submerged by day.

Para 1. URSULA leaves patrol 2359/21 for
Portsmouth submerged by day.

Para F. and J. Submarines named are proceeding
to Gibraltar.

Para. N. and OP.P38 and H.32 leave patrol after

/dark...

21.12.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations, cont:Biscay
S/M Patrol.
-Contd.

dark 21st for Portsmouth and Falmouth respectively.
(F.O.S. 1007A/21 to Admty.).
R/V with M/S trawlers in 180° Lizard Head 5 miles at daylight. T.B.R. in force in area radius 20 miles from R/V from daylight till noon. (N.O.I.C. Falmouth 1155/21 to S/M's Area A, negative URSULA, P.38).
(A) F.O.(S) 2139A/20 para. (B). Delete O.10 and O.21.
(B) After dark/21 O.10 and O.21 are to proceed by outward routes as far as lat 49° N. thence to R/V in vicinity of Bishops Rock on 23/12 as ordered by S.7 for onward passage direct to Clyde.
(F.O.S. 1243A/21 to S/M's Area A).
F.O.S. 1243A/21 (a) From Lat. 049° N. proceed to R/V with CUTTY SARK at 0930A/23 in 290° Bishops Rock 8 miles.
(Capt. S.7 1601A/21 to ?10).
Cancel my 1155/21. F.O.(S)'s 2139A/20 para. (B). R/V at 0900 with M/S Trawlers and BREDA in 180° Lizard 5 miles on 24/12. T.B.R. in force in area radius 20 miles from R/V from 0800A/24 until 1200A/24.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1636/21 to H.31, H.50, H.28, H.33., JUNON, .OTWAY)
Captain (S) 3 1139A/21. R/V with O.10 and O.21 in 290° Bishops Rock 8 miles at 0930A/23 and escort them to Rothesay and Holy Loch respectively, arriving Clyde 1200A/25.
(Capt. S.7. 1721A/21 to CUTTY SARK).
Continue to take every possible precaution to avoid detection in joining area.
(F.O.S. 2216A/21 to S/M's Area A).

Chase of
E-Boats
on 20/12.

My 1852A/20/12. Cancel para 2 and substitute QUORN intercepted 3 E-boats close eastward of 57G buoy at 0230/20 and pursued them to the eastward until contact was lost. No details of damage to enemy known.
(C.in C. Nore. 1114A/21).

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

My 1901Z/19, Para. 3. Intended to sail ANEMONE and SWEETBRIAR from Hvalfiord a.m./22nd for patrol 30 miles North Eastward of Q.Z.X.366. Information to BERWICK follows.
(C.S.1 1226Z/21 to C.in C. H.F.).
My 1226Z/21. A. Corvettes ordered to patrol to N.E. of minefield in line abreast 10 (corrupt groups being called for) on 16 miles beat parallel to ice edge. Northern bank about 8 miles from ice. S.W. end of beat 30 miles from minefield.
(B) Both ships fitted with type 271.
(C) Routed coastwise to (?Straummales?) thence east of minefield. E.T.A. on patrol am/24.

/D. BERWICK.....

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. contd.Denmark
Straits
Patrol
-Contd.

D. BERWICK is to make contact with Corvettes in daylight at intervals of not more than 48 hours to give them their position.

E. Corvettes W/T watch.
(F.O.C. 1.C.S. 2021Z/21 to BERWICK, A.C.I.C.).
Denmark Straits Corvette patrol. In order to avoid false enemy reports A.C.I.C. is requested to assume responsibility for passing direct to corvettes on patrol information of shipping passing Denmark Straits.
(C.S.1 2042Z/21 to A.C.I.C.).
My 1226Z/21. Denmark Strait patrol corvettes keep wireless watch as for Northern patrol trawlers maintaining constant watch on 1570 Kilocycles per second. Enemy reports will be transmitted to shore on this frequency and broadcast on 500 Kc/s. A.C.I.C. is requested to retransmit any message required by corvettes on port waves using alternate method.
(C.S.1 2043Z/21 to C.in C. H.F. A.C.I.C.).

East
Coast
Patrols.

Brightlingsea Auxiliary patrols remaining in harbour owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1436A/21).
Carry out patrol A and B tonight commencing at H.3 Buoy at 2030.
(C.in C. Nore. 1443A/21 to WALPOLE).
HAMBLEDON will relieve you on patrol area tomorrow. Return to Harwich on completion of patrol tonight.
(Capt. D.16 1730A/21 to WALPOLE).

Dover
Patrol.

M.L's 104 and 102 leave Dover at 2300 to carry out N.L.I.B. and return at 0300/22. Route via South Varne buoy each way.
(V.A. Dover 1531A/21).

Operation
Q.N.

My 1750A/20. QN postponed further 24 hours.
(C.in C. Nore. 1545A/21).
Search back to 54 E buoy for E-boats.
(C.in C. Nore. 2049/21 to WESTMINSTER).
If you find nothing on reaching 54 E buoy proceed to Humber L/V reporting your E.T.A.
(C.in C. Nore. 2159A/21 to WESTMINSTER).
Departure M.G.B's 60, 67.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 2159A/21).
Departure M.G.B's 88, 86, 91, 16 on patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 2205A/21).

Operation
"Archer"

Intend to sail TUNA escorted by STELLA PEGASI at 1000/23 passing east of Orkneys and Shetlands to 060° 52' N. 000° 22' W. E.T.A. 0300/24. Then unescorted diving by day to 062° 12' N. 004° 20' E. thence to area of operations.
Request S.B.R. as follows. (A.C.O.S. 1831A/21).

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Escorts
for
RODNEY
RENOWN.

Your 1427A/20. A/S cover will be provided for RODNEY from dawn to 1400A and for RENOWN from 1400 A to dusk 21/12 by Whitley A/C. (A.C.I.C. 0025N/21 to C.in C. H.F.). My 2322A/20. A/C may approach to 5000 yards with I.F.F. switched on flying at 1000 feet. Listening watch will be kept on R/T but will only be used if called by ship. (C.in C. W.A. 0107A/21 to RENOWN). Expect A/S escort by Hudson from first light. Aircraft may approach to 5000 yards with I.F.F. switched on flying at 1000 feet. (C.in C. Rosyth 1839/21 to RODNEY).

Missing
A/C.

^{/N.T.N. W.D.}
Your 1601/21. LANCASTER and NEWARK have been detached to search 1 missing aircraft west of Machrihanish. (ILLUSTRIOUS 1650/21).

A/S
Operational
method.

Admty. Amendment. 1947A/19.
(D.N.A.D. 1847A/21).

H.G.76

Heartiest congratulations on magnificent work of escorts and F.A.A. with H.G.76. (H.Q.C.C. 1917/21 to D.A./S.W.).

Enemy Air Activity.

FAULKNOR
FORESIGHT.

You were probably reported by enemy A/C about 1050. (D.D.I.C. 1156A/21 to FAULKNOR, FORESIGHT).

Method of
Attack.

Western Approaches General Message. (262) N. In 3 recent air attacks in South Irish Sea enemy A/C have attacked in pairs, one A/C approached first and drew anti-aircraft fire of convoy and escort, the second then approached and carried out a low attack. This stresses the obvious necessity of vigilant look-out on the disengaged side. (C.in C. W.A. 1239A/21).

Mining.

Operation
N.L.50

By M.L's 101 and 102, at 0123/21 in 51° 4' N. 2° 14' 12" E. extending 175° for 6 cables. Details. (V.A. Dover 0925A/21).

Off Bodo.

Report graded B.3. Minefield laid mid December 4 miles off Bodo 67° 17' N. 14° 23' E. (D.D.I.C. 1039A/21).

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.S.N.26.C.

WELLS R/V with SOUTHERN PRINCE in 240° Rudh
Re 5 miles at 1100A/23 for operations^{S.N.} 26.C.
(R.A.M., 1113A/21.)

Owing to delay in arrival of WELLS operation S.N.
26.C must be delayed 6½ hours. Amend my
1326/20th as follows.

(e) Request air A/S escort from 1330/23 in
058° 25' N. 005° 42' W. until last light.

(g) 0830/23.

(l) 1500/23.

(o) and (p) Port Z.A. 2330/23.

(R.A.M., 1124A/21.)

Off
Whitby.

Detonated 2 acoustic mines at 1200 approx. in
54° 40'55" N. 0° 7'25" W.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool, 1240/21.)

Thames
Estuary.

Between 1735 and 1930/20 there was intense enemy
air activity over the Thames Estuary.
Plots were obtained of between 20 and 30 planes.
Chief plotted activity on areas Knob and
Edinburgh Channels and the Black Deep. Planes
were heard as far west as the Boom and definite
minelaying activity was reported in the Knob
Channel and Barrow Deep. Explosions probably
due to mines occurred off Bartons Point,
Sheerness, Shoeburyness, and further out in the
Estuary. Definite positions have been reported
in X.D.O's 0910A/21.

Majority of patrol vessels fogbound in Sheerness.
But the visibility at the time of the raid had
increased to about 10 cables in the outer
estuary. The only 2 mines actually seen are
thought to have exploded soon after having been
laid.

The only report so far received of aircraft
actually sighted estimates the height as 700
feet.

Ships of F.S. and F.N. Convoys were anchored at
intervals in or near the channels from the Boom
to the far end of the Barrow Deep.

The only 2 patrol vessels out each reported a
mine near them.

(S.O. T.L.D.F., 1253/21.)

N.L.1B.

Intend to carry out operation N.L.1B tonight.
(V.A. Dover, 1416A/21.)

Drifting
Mine.

Following received from Cullercoats Radio
intercepted 1529 G.M.T.

T T T Mine Warning. Drifting mine observed at
1300 Tjockoe Archipeligo Nord Himmelskaer
distance 0.2 minutes wind West.

(C. in C. Rosyth, No T.O.O., Recd. 1914/21.)

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. -Contd.

Tees
Hartlepool.

Ports of Tees and Hartlepool will be closed daily owing to suspected minelaying until further notice from dusk until noon approx. following day. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1815/21) (C.in C. Rosyth 2151/21 to WESTMINSTER etc.).

NELLIE
(Greek 4826
tons)
damaged.

Damaged by mine off Spurn Point and beached for Safety Haile Sand.
(F.O. Humber 2220A/21).

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

Brest 1315/21. All 3 main units in respective docks. GUEYDON moored off Lanveoc.
(D.D.I.C. 1839A/21) (F.O.S. 2151A/21).

E-Boats.

Suspected 'E' Boat activity W.G.
(Harwich W/T 2007/21 to Yarmouth W/T).
E-boat activity in Yarmouth vicinity.
(C.in C. Nore. 2033A/21).

Navigational.

Harwich.

Port remaining closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0805A/21).
Port now open.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0840A/21).

Mew
Light.

My 1845A/18. Mew light and whistle buoy. Light reported irregular and whistle out of action.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1810A/21).
My 1810A/21. Mew light now reported extinguished.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 2110A/21).

6A Buoy

6A Buoy light extinguished.
Report unconfirmed.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1906A/21).

Technical.

D/C
Tests.

If in over 200 fathoms detail one Corvette to drop six depth charges one at a time set to safe and note time of explosion if any. Report if already inside necessary depth.
(C.in C. W.A. 1025A/21 to WANDERER).

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE
CHIEF.
(Broke
down 20/12).

Sailed SNOWDROP to comply with my 1103A/20.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0115A/21).
Position 059° 30' N. 025° 53' W. Temporary
repairs now effected. Proceeding towards
Reykjavik, speed 9 knots.
(EMPIRE CHIEF 1145/21). (A.C.I.C. 1401N/21 to
Admty.).

STUART
QUEEN.

Following received from Cullercoats Radio
begins:- Received 0225 G.M.T. from STUART
QUEEN begins:-
I require immediately tug. I am distance 20,
022° from Cullercoats Radio. Ends.
(C.in C. Rosyth 0344/21).

STOKE
CITY.

Your 1857A/20. Concur in ST. OLAVES towing
STOKE CITY direct to Aberdeen. Request you
will make necessary arrangements.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0949A/21 to A.C.O.S).
Have returned to Thurso for shelter until
the weather moderates.
(ST. OLAVES 1115A/21).

EMPIRE
MARLOW.
(Lost
propeller
19/12).

My 1318N/21. ^{N.T. W.D.} FREEBOOTER sailed. Speed 11
knots. (A.C.I.C. 1532N/21).

ILLUSTRIOUS.

Cancel Admiralty's 1252A/26/11. ILLUSTRIOUS
will be taken in hand at Birkenhead about
1/1.
C.in C. W.A. is requested to sail ILLUSTRIOUS
as requisite and to provide the necessary
escorts.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1820A/21).

M.L.146.

My 1631A/21. M.L.146 returned owing to
engine trouble. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 2033A/21).

Shipping & Convoys.

F.N.583 A

My 1152/20. F.N.583 A postponed owing to fog.
(F.O.Humber 1052A/21).
My 1201/15/12. Additional slow convoy F.N.583 A
(CONSEQUENCE 11) Humber to Methil leaves
Humber 22nd escorts WESTMINSTER, SLEIPNER.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1539/21).

P.Q.6.

In circumstances described by S.B.N.O.
Archangel it appears unwise to send ships
of P.Q.6 to Molotovsk unless the risk of

/them....

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

P.Q.6
-Contd.

them remaining in territorial waters during the Winter is accepted.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1105C/21 to Admty.).
Following received LEDA from S.B.N.O. Archangel STALIN unable to locate P.Q. six and I can get no answer to my signal to convoy. Endeavour to communicate with Commodore by W/T and ask him for his position and inform me 1223C 21st. Request you will contact him on power.
(LEDA 1429C/21 to EDINBURGH).
Your 1105C/21. We do not wish ships to be tied up for the winter but until Russian agreement to use of Murmansk is received, vide my 1646A/12 and D. of S.T.'s 2227/19, every endeavour must be made to continue using Archangel. (A.C.N.S(T) 1456A/21 to S.B.N.O. North Russia).
Circumstances defined in your 1105C/21 are not understood and clarification is requested.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 2330C/21 to S.B.N.O. North Russia).

H.G.76

Cancel my 1827A/20. Request you will sail VANOC to Milford to refuel. VANOC is subsequently to proceed to meet H.G.76.
(C.in C. W.A. 1151A/21 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool).
Sailed VANOC in accordance with C.in C. W.A. 1151A/21 E.T.A. Milford Haven 0700A/22.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1740A/21).
Convoy has been followed continuously by S/M and/or F.W. aircraft since leaving Gibraltar and seems likely to remain so. Propose to shorten voyage as much as possible by proceeding home by most direct route.
(STORK 1500A/21 to C.in C. W.A.).
H.G.76. Report if you consider fuel situation satisfactory.
(C.in C. W.A. 1539A/21 to STORK).

F.S681
F.S682.

Amend my 1201/15/12.
F.S681 ("Booty") cancelled.
F.S682 ("Arena") will run as a slow convoy leaving Methil 1030/25 escorts VIVIEN, VORTIGEN^R.
Time Table.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1231 /21).

E.N.23.

E.N.23 cancelled.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1233/21).

O.N.S.47.

Am at M.O.M.P. in R/T contact with U.S. Escort. Have never seen VULCAN whose position received by R/T at 1200A/21 is 059° 16' N. 017° 18' W. Course 265°, 4½ knots. Will lead U.S. Escort back to convoy. (BOADICEA 1301A/21).

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

- W.S.15. Request you will sail RESOLUTION for the Clyde as convenient to you to arrive not later than A.M/5/1.
(2) RESOLUTION will be required to sail with W.S.15 leaving about 7/1.
(A.C.N.S.H. 1304A/21 to C.in C. H.F.).
- F.N584. F.N584 cancelled owing to fog.
(C.in C. Nore 1336A/21).
- P.S.21. P.S.21 arrived S.P.22 not sailing.
S.P.22. (R.N.O. Shoreham 1405/21).
- C.W.62. M.L.246 is to remain at Shoreham and act as A.A. guard to M.V's arriving from C.W.62 on Tuesday. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1417A/21).
My 2150A/19 and 1220A/20. C.W.62 postponed 24 hours owing to fog.
(C.in C. Nore. 1638A/21).
- E.N.22. E.N.22 proceeding by route G. Request following lights. (SWORD DANCE 1515/21 to A.C.O.S.).
- F.N583. Van of convoy F.N583 anchored at B Six A Buoy. Intend to proceed at daylight.
(WOLSEY 1726A/21).
- U.R.2. My 1259A/21.
A/C reported left convoy at 1315A/21 in 60° 05' N. 08° 55' W.
(C.in C. W.A. 1733A/21).

712

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.O.24.

Your 1936A/20. Instructions will be followed. Being ahead of schedule it is possible to arrive at 1000A/23 proceeding at 13 knots by night 2 knots by day after surfacing at dark 21st. (O.24 0055A/21 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 0055A/21. Adhere strictly to time given in my 1336A/19. (F.O.C.N.A. 0906A/21 to O.24).

SCOTTISH.

Unless otherwise ordered intend to leave patrol at 0001/22nd proceeding coastwise. (SCOTTISH, 1145A/21 to F.O.C.N.A. (R) IMPERIALIST, ALOUETTE).

Vigo.

Use by U/B's. (F.O.C.N.A. 1246A/21) See S/M's attacked.

Cable Repairs.

Admty. 1249A/19. Intend to sail cable ship MIRROR escorted by a corvette on 23/12 to carry out these repairs. (F.O.C.N.A. 1248A/21 to Admty.)

P.39,
P.36.

(i) Report P.C. and S. of A. on crossing 043° N.
(ii) P.39, onward route X, 043° 00' 011° 54' Y, 036° 00' 011° 00' Z, 350° Spartel 5 miles.
(iii) P.36, onward route P, 043° 00' 011° 15' R. 036° 40' 010° 25', thence to Z. (iv) Proceed on surface at your discretion. (F.O.C.N.A. 1410A/21 to P.39 P.36).

Operation "Pantaloon".

Sailing date 23/12. (200 Group 1545/21 to Air Min.) See Lion Copy.

H.G.77.

As last of 7 ships loading bitter oranges at Spanish Port will not arrive at Gibraltar until 5/1 propose delaying sailing convoy until 6/1. (F.O.C.N.A. 1630A/21 to Admty.) Reply: 1313/22.

Casablanca Convoy.

The following note in Spanish was passed to Boarding Officer from URUMEA. At Casablanca convoy of 20 ships being formed shortly sail for Marseilles escorted by warships. (IMPERIALIST, 1705A/21 to F.O.C.N.A.)

/SERAFIN.....

MOST SECRET

~~MOST SECRET~~ ~~1946/15th December~~

From Air Ministry,
Kingsway.

1103/16th December
1830/16th December
1545/21st December

Cypher

Date 13.12.41.
Recd. 2055

IN

Addressed - 200 Group and Admiralty.

IMMEDIATE

X.6050 13/12. Reference PANTALOON. All remaining Hurricane aircraft to be loaded in ATHENE under arrangements to be made by R.A.F.E.O. with local naval authorities at Gibraltar. PANTALOON Maintenance and assembly party will be utilised by R.A.F.E.O. for loading aircraft after which they are to be embarked for U.K. in first available ship under arrangements made by R.A.F.E.O. Equipment required for assembly of aircraft and sling skates side tracking and chocks to be loaded in ATHENE. All remaining PANTALOON Pilots including reserves will embark with aircraft in ATHENE. Sailing instructions will be given by Admiralty. After arrival at port of discharge all pilots will be utilised for flying these and other Hurricane aircraft to final destination W/Cdr. Royce to be instructed to return to U.K. after completion of loading ATHENE. Passage to be arranged by R.A.F.E.O. Pilots will take with them all operational equipment required for flying on to final destination including flying topees, anti-glare goggles, full flying kit with parachute harness. R.T. equipment Life Saving Jackets K type Dinghies and Revolvers. Maintenance Party Starter trollies and Tropical kit to be returned by R.A.F.E.O. Gibraltar to U.K. Please signal number of aircraft loaded and names of Pilot Officers and Sergeants separately embarked. Acknowledge.

Received from Air Ministry ^{1946/13} 0852/23rd December.

From 200 Group

Date 16.12.41.
Recd. 1341

Cypher

Addressed - Air Ministry Kingsway.

IMMEDIATE

X 9979 A769 16/12 Your X6050 13/12

2 Reserve Pilots PANTALOON survivors ARK ROYAL

unable /

MOST SECRET

unable replace Flying Kit here Confirm Pilots will
be kitted destination or should they return U.K.

1103/16

Air Ministry distribution.

A.M.S.O.	D.D.W.O.
D/A.M.S.O.	A.D.O. Ferrying
D.C.A.S.	Wing Commander E.N. Lowe
D.G.O.	Admiralty D.N.A.D.
D.W.O.	Movements 1 (Action) (3)
D. of O.	0.7
D.O.O.	0.8
D.O.N.C.	W.O. 3
D.D. Movements.	
D.D.O. 3.	

From Air Ministry (Movements)
Kingsway.

Date 16.12.41.
Recd. 2010

Cypher

Addressed - 200 Group

IMMEDIATE

X 6597 16/12 Your A 769 16/12

Reference PANTALOON. 2 Reserve Pilots to
embark ATHENE. Kitting to be effected next destination.
In addition to information regarding names Pilots and
number of aircraft please signal ATHENE sailing date.

1830/16

Copy to - Corridor Supervisor, War Registry, Admiralty
Movements 1

From 200 Group

Date 21.12.41.
Recd. 1813

Cypher

Addressed - Air Ministry, Kingsway.

IMMEDIATE

X 8717 A788 21/12

Your X6597 16/12

Ref. PANTALOON. Sailing date 23/12

1545/21

Received from Air Ministry 1426/22nd December.

1st Lord	D.D.O.D.(H)	Air Ministry distribution.
1st S.L.	D.N.A.D.	Mov. 1 (Action)(2). D.G.O.
5th S.L.	N.A.2 S.L.	V.C.A.S. W/Cdr. Lowe
V.C.N.S.	(Air)	D.O.O. D.D. Mov. (3).
A.C.N.S. (F).	D.D.I.C.	D.D.E. 8. D.D.S.M. 1
A.C.N.S. (H).	E.P.S.	D.O.N.C. W.O. 3
N.A. 1st S.L.	Hd. of M.	0.7. Admiralty
D. of P. (2).	I.P. (2)	A.M.S.O. D. of O.
D.O.D. (F).	W.D.	D.W.O. D.D.E. 1.
D.D.O.D. (F).	N.I.D.	D.D.O. 2. D.D. OP.
D.O.D. (H).	PC Wilson	0.8. W.O. 5.

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic-Contd.SERAFIN
TOPIC.

Report graded B.2. states S.S. COZALLA has been at Algiers loading minerals since 16/12. She is due to leave on 20/12. If ship has not yet sailed, CLYDE may be used. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1825A/21 to F.O.C.N.A.)

BLACK SWAN.
EXMOOR.

BLACK SWAN and 5 Corvettes passing through Straits from Eastward. EXMOOR on U Patrol. (F.O.C.N.A. 1951/21 to FORTUNE).

South Atlantic.Local
Protection.

Your 1152A/20. Following is a corrected version of my 0950Z/19 (Begins)Amty. 907 from C. in C. S.A, your 1240A/18. (Requesting confirmation that C. in C. S.A's 1811/17 replied to A.M. 1809/14). Yes. (C. in C. S.A. 0002Z/21 to Admty.)

OMAHA.
SOMERS.

A.M. 1155/13. OMAHA and SOMERS arrived Pernambuco 20/12 and will sail for Ascension Island patrol, returning Pernambuco. (D.O.D. (F) 1047A/21 to C. in C. S.A., R.A.S.A.D.)

Shipping
Diversions.

Your 1439A/30/11. Intend initiating any necessary diversions to Cape-bound ships dispersed from O.S. convoys in accordance with A.M. 0001/1/5/41, Sec. 1, para 9 (1). (C. in C. S.A., 1153Z/21 to Admty.)

PERMIAN.

Overdue Shipping, my 2227Z/20 PERMIAN arrived Montevideo 21st. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 1237Z/21 to Admty., etc.)

Ships
taking
supplies
to St. Helena
and Ascension.

My 1831/7/11 as amended by my 1313/14/11 not to Admiralty. Restrictions may be temporarily removed but may have to be re-imposed in an emergency at short notice. (C. in C. S.A. 1515Z/21 to N.O I.C. Simonstown, General (R) Admty.)

/BADSWORTH.....

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic-Contd.

→ BADSWORTH.

Intended to sail BADSWORTH a.m./22 to Bathurst for fuel thence leaving p.m./23 at S. of A. 16 knots by following route to Gibraltar. (a) 014° 00' N. 018° 12' W. (b) 018° 50' N. 019° 20' W. (c) 024° (245' or 25') N. 017° 30' W. (d) 029° 00' N. 012° 40' W. (e) 033° 25' N. 010° 00' W. thence to base, E.T.A. 0800/28. (C. in C. S.A., 1825Z/21 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Convoys
W.S.12ZA,
12ZB,
12ZM.

My 1049/20 para. 2. Transhipment is being effected so rapidly at Durban that if all goes well it is probable that Convoy will sail p.m. 23/12. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1919Z/21 to C. in C. E.I.)

ENGADINE.

Your 1820A/26/11. ENGADINE states aircraft on board are for Simonstown and Near East only, not for Freetown. (C. in C. S.A., 1953Z/21 to Admty.)

W.S.15.

Yes, either a Sloop or VANSITTART whom I am considering sending to Simonstown then for half yearly docking if situation permits. (C. in C. S.A. 2133Z/21 to Admty.)
Note. This message refers to A.M. 1636A/19 re Sloop to accompany W.S.15 to Cape.

→ RAMILLIES.
W.S.14.
O.S.15.

Arrivals 21/12 with W.S.14. RAMILLIES, CILICIA, VANSITTART, WILD SWAN, BRILLIANT, BEAUFORT, ENGADINE, HURWORTH, BADSWORTH. With O.S.15, VIMY, CLOVER, SOUTHERN GEM, BERGAMOT, EREBUS, SCARBOROUGH, ROBERTS, FRITILLARY, BRADFORD. (S.O.I. Freetown, 2315Z/21 to Admty. etc.)

Mediterranean.

URGE.
UNIQUE.
R. of P.

(i) URGE reports M/Vs escorted by 2 destroyers passed eastbound out of Straits noon 12th, 1 identified as "Garibaldi" Class, these successfully attacked by UTMOST 12 hours later. (ii) At 0840/14 on hearing H.E. northward URGE observed 2 battleships steering 207° range 12,000 yards escorted by 4 destroyers, attacked from port side, obtained speed from wing destroyer 170 revolutions no zigzag.

/(iii).....

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.URGE.
UNIQUE.
R. of P.
- Contd.

(iii) At 0858B/14 in 037° 53' 015° 29' fired dispersed salvo A of Mark (VIII) 2 star torpedo depth set 18 and 20 feet, speed 40 knots, 90 track range 3000 yards, URGE course 297°, firing interval 14 seconds.

(iv) Two definite torpedo hits at correct running time and interval, first particularly powerful. Third hit reported by personnel forward and heard in UNIQUE 12 miles distant, this possible if speed reduced immediately by first two. Close counter attack with 40 charges, later a further 20 heard northward since concussions reverberated off-shore of Straits.

(v) At 0927/14 UNIQUE sighted 1 battleship and 1 destroyer in 37° 45' 15° 36' steering 125° speed 20. At 0940 URGE returned to periscope depth and sighted this battleship and 1 destroyer to S.E. steering 90°. Careful observation for 10 minutes showed only 1 destroyer manoeuvring at speed in position of attack. No other battleship could have passed East of URGE without detection.

(vi) Ref. 1535B/14 from V.A. Malta it is emphasized that 4 destroyers were with Battleships and no other Destroyers came from Messina during previous night or for 4 hours after attack. The second Destroyer referred to in para. (v) hunted UNIQUE and withdrew East at 24 knots with 1 other after 1000.

(vii) Submerged horizontal directional transmissions located at 7 shore plotted positions. These appeared to fix URGE with accuracy on 7 occasions during patrol. Detection by day resulted in schooners, E-boats and air R/C converging with accuracy on submarine.

(viii) At night similarly, aircraft flares in addition and shore stations burned 2 vertical red lights sweeping, when both stopped and directed on S/M this indicated contact and the hunt commenced.

(ix) At 0401/18 E-boat fired torpedo missing close ahead due to broad zigzag employed. Between 14th and 20th URGE forced down at night 20 times. (Capt. S.10, 0045B/21 to Capt. S.1.)

Enemy M/V.

Following has been read. No merchant vessel around, one merchant vessel 38° 04' 20° 50' 060° 8 knots. (A/C using call sign B.7.G. 1025/21).

/Orders.....

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.Orders for
Striking
Force.

My 1132/16. The object of striking force is the destruction of enemy submarines. They are to reinforce the convoy escort until required to hunt submarines. Subject to discretion of S.O. present, striking force should normally proceed without further orders to hunt any submarines reported within 25 miles of convoy. Striking force will be detailed by R.A. (D) Med. as required by C. in C. Med. They are to be sailed by same authority that sails the convoy and are to confirm to sailing orders of convoy until detached, when they will come under the orders of C. in C. Med. Fleet direct. (C. in C. Med., 1201B/21 to F.O.C. (D) Med., N.O.I.C. Alexandria, S.O. Force I.)

Enemy
Sailing
Boat.

Following has been read. One sailing boat 32.46 N., 24.24 E. 360° 4, shall we attack?
(A/C using call sign K7TM, 1300/21).
Following has been read. N.R.l. Attack.
(Med. A/C using Call sign 6FJ, 1325/21 to A/C using call sign K7T).

Defence of
Middle East.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. 216 to C. in C. India, repeated C. in C. E.I., M.E. and Med. Your 17863/G dated 14/11.
Position has altered considerably recently owing to favourable development of situation in Russia and Libya and to outbreak of war in Far East.
Events are moving too fast to enable us to appreciate what forces will be required or be available for defence of Middle East in 1942, but a joint appreciation will be made here as soon as possible. (1st S.L., 1407A/21 to C. in C. Med.)

Tobruk
Minesweeping.

Summary for week ending 20/12.
Monday. ? (Group missing), mine probably acoustic self detonated close inshore outside harbour.
Tuesday. Minelaying mainly evening and early next morning, 7 parachute mines reported in or near harbour, 7 exploded on shore, 2 landed failing to explode.
Wednesday. 2 Red 2 Blue magnetic and 3 possible Acoustic, swept in and near harbour. All suspected Sammy owing to extreme sensitiveness.
Thursday. 1.C. type mine demolished on shore. 1 in good condition left for examination.
Friday. 2 Red mines laid Thursday night swept. P.M. Light minelaying raid, 4 exploded ashore, 1 dropped in harbour.
(B.S.N.O. Tobruk, 1610B/21 to Admty.)

/Malta.....

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Malta Air Report.

20th, Alert 1503 to 1529 hours, approx 12 Ju. 88's escorted 6 Macchis. Bombs sea, no interception.

21st, 4 Alerts, 0655 hours, 12 unidentified Fighters 1 Ju. 88 crossed coast, bombs land, no damage. 0923 hours, 20 Fighters, 4 Bombers Fighters Macchi 202's and Me. 109's bombs land, slight damage barracks and house, 3 civilians 2 soldiers killed.

1105 Hours. 3 R/C Aircraft crossed coast great height. 1312, 20 Fighters approached possibly to intercept delivery 13 Beaufighters and Maryland, no interception. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1630/21).

Torpedo carrying by Wellingtons.

A Wellington aircraft has been converted to carry two 18" Mark 12 torpedoes with air rudders and drum control gear. One successful run has been made, torpedo being dropped from 70 feet at 140 m.p.h. Only difficulty so far encountered is liability of air rudders to break off after one or two hours in the air. Request early information on possibility of increasing strength of shearing pins. Considered of highest importance to press on with minimum delay development of use of torpedo by these long range aircraft. Their use will allow us to attack enemy forces and merchant shipping in almost any part of the central Mediterranean. (C. in C. Med., 1935B/21 to Admty.)

5-1-43

Defence of Gibraltar Bay.

F.O.C. N.A. 1930A/29/9 para. 5. Request early information on effective lethal 5-pound charges. (C. in C. Med. 1937B/21 to Admty.)

TRUANT. R. of P.

2 Merchant ships entered Argostoli from west dawn 14/12 none observed leaving. 11/12, Large tanker torpedoed entering Suda Bay and believed sunk. S/M will require to dock for minor repairs to A/S. (TRUANT 1947B/21 to Capt. S.I.)

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Persian Gulf.

Anticipated arrivals of ships at Persian Gulf ports from all areas.
(D.S.T., 0359A/21 to Consul, Basra, P.S.T.O. India.) See Lion Copy.

Convoy B.M.9 A.

0830Z/21. VARSOVA, RAJULA, DEVONSHIRE, ETHIOPIA, LANCASHIRE, all carrying troops and stores for Singapore. Sailing order.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay 0836Z/21 to Admty. etc.)
Departure GLASGOW, SONAVATI escorting B.M.9 A.
(S.O.I. Bombay 0910Z/21 to Admty., F.O.C.R.I.N. S.O.(I)'s Colombo and Singapore.)

Diego Garcia.

Request early report by signal whether Diego Garcia is suitable for use by aircraft carriers and large cruisers, allowing for a draught of 29 feet and 24 feet respectively. At what state of the tide can they enter?
(Hydrographer 1103A/21 to CLIVE (R) F.O.C.R.I.N.)

Middle East Defence.

Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 10 (as Mediterranean 1407A/21.)
(1st S.L. 1406A/21 to C. in C. E.I.)

Towage of F/Dock.

Your 1018/19 para.2. (a). No parachutes or personnel have arrived yet from outside source.
(b) All (local?) preparations will be complete by 15/1.
(S.N.O.P.G. 1450Z/21 to C. in C. E.I.)

Troops for Malaya.

Ref. our 59407 cipher (M.O.I.) 20/12. Chiefs of Staff wish diversion of Brigade group to be made to Malaya if possible.
(W.O., 2330/21 to C. in C. India.)

China.ENDEAVOUR.

Admiralty 2151/4. ENDEAVOUR is fit for service ordered.
(A.S., Singapore 0302Z/21 to Admiralty, C. in C. E.F., R.A. Malaya, C. in C. Med.)

/Offer ...

Date 21.12.41

To H.M. Consul Basra
P.S.T.O. India
Repeated Campbell, Calcutta.

Naval Cypher X D

From Ministry of War Transport

IMPORTANT Following for Lock.

Anticipated arrivals at Persian Gulf Ports from all areas are as follows

Part I January

A represents anticipated arrivals in 1st 10 days of month B 2nd 10 days of month and C remainder of month.

From United Kingdom

M.T. and Store Transports B2 C.10

Liners B1 C.1

Of the above KING WILLIAM, TREVAYLOR, NAILSEA COURT and HISTORIAN each have 2 Locomotives TUREBY 15 and CLAN CAMERON 8 Military cargo on the 14 ships 2600 vehicles and 25,000 tons stores for Basra and 5000 tons stores and 8000 tons coal for Persia. Locomotives to be discharged at Abadan except CLAN CAMERON which can discharge with own derricks at Bandar Shahpour.

From U.S.A.

Liners A1 B1 C5 with approximately 3500 tons British Military cargo also 23 Aircraft 700 trucks 2500 tons stores for Russia and 2000 tons Commercial Cargo.

From India

(a) Approximately 20 troopships mostly carrying little cargo

(b) Approximately 18 store transports and liners with 45,000 tons deadweight Military stores and 1000 vehicles. Included in these will probably be late January LA PAMPA and CITY OF BARCELONA each with locomotives to capacity.

Far East

Reliable information difficult to obtain but it appears that a maximum of 7 Russian and 2 British ships may arrive with 40,000 tons deadweight cargo mainly for Russia including following items in tons. Rubber 8,000, Tin 2,500, Sugar 14,000, Wool 2,700, Lead 7,500, Jute 8,000. One Russian ship WELLEN with 7,500 sugar is the most doubtful.

/Part II.....

Part II FebruaryFrom United Kingdom

M.T. and Store Transports 5

Liners 4

These ships will carry approximately 1,300 vehicles 20,000 tons of Military stores and 7,000 tons of coal. Of these CLAN MACTAGGART and KATTEGAT have 8 and 16 locomotives respectively for Abadan.

From U.S.A.

Liners 20

With approximately 100 aircraft 5,000 trucks and 30,000 tons Military and Commercial cargo. These figures are subject to early end to present stoppage of Russian Persian Gulf shipments.

From India

Troopships 25

Store Transports 20

including further large shipments of locomotives, wagons and railway material.

From Far East

No forecast can be given at this stage.

Pass copies to S.T.O. Basra and G.O.C. Iraq. We are repeating to Campbell and P.S.T.O. India.

0359A/21

For D. of S.T.

1st Lord

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T)

N.A. 1st S.L.

D. of S.T. (2)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.T.D. (2)

Head of M.

D.D.I.C.

D. of P. (2)

I.P. (3)

W.D.

E.P.S.

MOST SECRET

c
718

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET ~~SECRET~~ 0245/21st Dec. IN

Date 21.12.41

From War Office.

Cipher

Addressed C. in C. Far East, repeated C. in C. India, C. in C. East Indies.

MOST IMMEDIATE.

59407 Cipher (M.O.1.) 20/12.

Reference 21316/G of 19/12 from C. in C. India and 66/7~~xx~~ of 18/12 from C. in C. Far East.

1. Shipping situation of 18 Division now en route to Bombay is as follows:-

(a) Personnel are in six American commissioned transports of which five in W S 12 X are due Bombay about 31st December. Sixth with part of 54 Infantry Brigade Group is due Bombay about 6th January.

(b) Three of these American ships are large and all are very crowded. In addition personnel will have been on board for over two months, and should therefore land at Bombay. Onward movement from Bombay would be in suitable shipping collected by P.S.T.O. India.

(c) Full scale transport, seven days compositions, 90 days uncontrolled ordnance stores, and 30 days reserve of weapons and ammunition are in fifteen British ships. All except three of these ships are due Bombay between 28th December and 6th January. These three include LOCHRANZA only of ships in (d) below.

(d) 53 Infantry Brigade Group is specially loaded so as to be capable of diversion, with personnel in American Transport. MOUNT VERNON (not repeat not WEST POINT) and transport guns etc., in LOCHRANZA, TILTHYBIUS, and BRITANNY.

2. Our estimate earliest date personnel and transport ships for 53 Infantry Brigade Group could leave Bombay is 10th January, assuming escort available. This allows troops one week ashore at Bombay. Presumably the ships required for 53 Infantry Brigade Group would join the convoy carrying drafts and other units for Malaya from India, which it is proposed to load about 8th January (vide telegram 21299/G~~xxx~~ of 19/12 from C. in C. India).

3. Possible alternatives are:-

(a) Diversion....

MOST SECRET

- 2 -

(a) Diversion of MOUNT VERNON to Mombasa whence she could join at sea MARKUNDI, MORINGI, BEEKERK, and SUSSEX for Malaya. This means that personnel will only get ashore for a few days at Mombasa and considerable risk would have to be accepted to a large and crowded American personnel ship on the Malayan run. American agreement to this plan is essential. Earliest possible arrival date Singapore 8th January. Brigade Group will be without transport or guns, but Inf. Battalions will have G.1098 equipment and unit S.A.M. but no (repeat NO) mortar ammunition, grenades etc.

(b) Transshipment at Bombay before onward passage to Malaya as in paragraph 2 above. Earliest date arrival in Singapore 24th January less LOCHRANZA, in view of whose slow speed (10 knots) naval authorities would have to make separate arrangements.

4. Advantage clearly lies with second alternative subject to urgency of your need for troops, even though soft and unacclimatized and without transport or guns. Cable your recommendation.

5. C. in C. Far East pass to C. in C. Eastern Fleet. C. in C. India pass to P.S.W. India.

6. Agreed.

0245/21.

Received from War Office 1226/21.

* 1700/19

** 1431/18

*** 1700/19

Advance copy sent Ops, O.D. & O.I.C.

1st Lord

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T)

N. 1st S.L.

P.S.S. (S)

D.C.D. (F)

D.D.C.D. (F)

Duty Captain (2)

D. of P. (2)

E.P.S.

Hd. of H. (4)

I.P. (2)

N.I.D. 10. Pay. Cdr. Wilson.

W.D.

D.N.I. (4)

D.D.I.C.

D.T.D. (2)

D.T.D. (H)

War Office Distribution:-Internal

S. of S.

C.I.G.S.

V.C.I.C.S.

A.C.I.C.S.

D.P. & P.

D.P. (2)

H.O. 1. 5. 10, 12.

D.M.I.

D.D.M.I. (I)

D.D.M.O. (O)

M.I.2.

D.S.D.

S.D.2.12.

D.S.D. (T)

D.D.S.D. (W)

D. Mov.

D.D. Mov. (p) (S)

C.M.2.3.

D.C.M.G.

Q(Ops.)

External

C.N.S. Admiralty.

D. of Plans Admiralty

Cdre. Jenkins. Admiralty.

H.W.R. Admiralty.

C.N.S. Air Min.

D. of Plans Air Min.

Col. Jacob Cab. Offices.

Secy. J.P.S. Cab. Offices.

Col. Office. Lt Col Rolleston

India Office (War Staff)

Min. of W.T. (S.N. Wood Esq)

jf

WORLD RECORD

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Offer of
light Tank
Squadron.

Offer gratefully accepted. Your 0108/20.
(G.O.C. Malaya 0306/21 to C. in C. India.)

Removal of
German
internees.

p. 691
20/12/41

Your 265 to F.O. I do not anticipate difficulty in providing shipping for removal of German internees provided India will accept them. Suggest Dutch authorities should lose no time in moving them to south Sumatra or Java until definite arrangements are made. Please keep C.Z.M. informed.
(C. in C. Eastern Fleet 0433Z/21 to C.G. Batavia)

Situation,
Malaya.

Sitrep 11, 1630 hours G.M.T. 20/12. Perak. At conference between G.O.C. Malaya Command and Comd. 3 Corps it was decided while adhering to general policy of withdrawal behind R.Perak to hold enemy west of river as long as possible without permitting forces to become inextricably committed.
Singapore. H.M.S. LIPIS arrived today with detachments 2 Loyals and S.S. Police from Area Miri Seria of whom all safely evacuated.
Sarawak. Raid on Kuching 19/12 carried out by 15 heavy bombers and 1 seaplane. Slight damage to aerodeome now being repaired. 22 civilians killed 84 wounded. Borneo Company Benzine Stores destroyed.
General. Japanese naval aircraft are dropping small flare bombs probably in strings of 6 or 8 with bursting charge in nose ignited by percussion striker. On hitting ground they explode giving off flash and producing smoke cloud. Chocolate coloured stains are found nearby. More information being sought about these bombs which should not be touched.
(G.O.C. Malaya, 0450/21 to W.O. etc.)

BANKA
(mined 10/12)

My 0501/13 and R.A. Malaya 1201/13. 6 Malay Ratings succeeded in landing on Island Pulo Tinggi. It now seems certain that BANKA was sunk by one of our own mines off Johore 10th. Loss is being announced at Singapore today Sunday.
(C. in C. E.F. 0453Z/21 to Admty.)

/Hong Kong ...

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - contd.Hong Kong.

From Fervour. Sitrep to 1030 hours 21/12. Enemy attacking westward across Mount Nicholson through Middle Gap. Our troops holding approx line Kaifing - Bennets Hill - Middle Gap - Blue Pool Gap - Leighton Hill and Line Red Hill - Stone Hill - Repulse Bay Hotel. Troops very tired after long day's fighting and very wet cold nights. Although little of Hong Kong still in our hands, unable to reach food and ammunition store as position surrounded. Transport facility difficult. Royal Canadian Rifles attacking from (?Blue) Stream area through Tytam Tuk toward enemy rear but progress slow. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong 0501Z/21 to Admty., C. in C. E.F.)

For S. of State from Governor, Hong Kong (begins) Military situation is now as follows :-

Enemy hold key position on hills and G.O.C.

advises that we are very rapidly approaching a point at which only remaining resistance open to us will be to hold for short time only a small pocket in centre of city leaving bulk of fixed population to be overrun. I feel it will be my duty to ask terms before this position is reached. If (?H.M.) G. feels able to give assent (?please) cable single word "Ability". (Ends)

(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong 0521Z/21 to Admty.)

By all means in your power including gunfire endeavour to wreck oil installations and storages.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 1542A/21 to G.O.C. Hong Kong.)

Commodore Hong Kong 0521Z/21. Hong Kong cannot now be heard but may be still able to receive.

(C. in C. E.F., 1548Z/21 to Admty.)

My 1548Z/21. Communication with Hong Kong has been re-established.

(C. in C. E.F. 1744Z/21 to Admty.)

Movements
Singapore.

Singapore arrival Neth: Sub: K.11, departure EXPRESS and Neth: Sub: K.12.

(S.O(I) Singapore, 0937Z/21 to Admty. amended 0237Z/22.)

/Dispositions ...

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - contd.Dispositions.Dispositions of Allied ships in Far Eastern area.
A. British. 21/12.

(i) DRAGON, DURBAN and VAMPIRE off West Coast Sumatra escorting, due Padang 25th.

(ii) DANAE, JUPITER, ELECTRA, ENCOUNTER, STRONGHOLD, TENEDOS, THANET, TEVIOT BANK and Dutch ship JANSSENS concentrating Singapore.

(iii) Dutch Submarine O.16 overdue. K.11 and K (corrupt group) at Singapore. K.12, K.17, O.19, and O.20 on patrol in South China sea.

(iv) EXPRESS operating in Malacca Strait.

(v) SCOUT working from Cebu.

B. Dutch. 19/12.

(i) Cruiser DE RUYTER and K.10,12, Sourabaya. Sloop SOEMBA leaves for Rhio Strait 21st.

(ii) Cruiser JAVA and Destroyer VAN NES at Batavia.

(iii) U.S. Submarine SALMON at Tarakan.

(iv) Cruiser TROMP, Destroyer and Minesweeper PIET HEIN, Destroyer BANCKERT in Carimata Strait.

(v) Submarines K.No 14, K.No.15 and K.No.16 East of Anambais.

(vi) Destroyer KORTENAER in Celebes Sea.

C. United States. 20/12.

(i) Cruisers HOUSTON, BOISE, Destroyers ALDEN, EDSALL, EDWARDS, WHIPPLE, PARROTT, STEWART, BARKER. JOHN D. FORD, J.P. JONES, POPE. Destroyer Tender BLACK HAWK, Submarine Tender CANOPUS, at Sourabaya.

(ii) Cruiser NEW ORLEANS at Makassar. Cruiser MARBLEHEAD, Oilers TRINITY, PECOS, Auxiliary GOLD STAR, on passage to Soemba. 265° Destroyer BULMER, Submarine SEA DRAGON on passage to Sourabaya.

(iii) Gunboats ASHEVILLE, TULSA, M/S LARK, M/S WHIPPOORWILL at Balik Papan. Submarine Tender HOLLAND and Patrol Boat ISABEL on passage to Sourabaya.

(iv) Seaplane Tender CHILDS at Manado.

(v) Destroyer PRESTON and ~~Aircraft~~ tender HERON left Tarakan 14th.

(vi) Destroyers PEARY, PILLSBURY, River Gunboat LUZON, Submarine SEADRAGON, Mindanao; Submarine Rescue Vessel PIGEON, M/S PENGUIN and about 25 submarines at Manila or operating in vicinity (?of Skagoshima). 2 large submarines off Indo China coast.

(C. in C. E.F., 1040Z/21 to Admty. etc.)

Enemy Intelligence.

(1) (?Japanese) transport full of troops reported sunk Quinhon Point 013° 43' N. 109° 1' E. 19/12.
 (2) 5000 reinforcements from Tongking being sent Singora by sea. Date and place departure not stated. (3) Force blockading Hong Kong 20/12
 2 cruisers ABUKUMA (?KUMA) class 2 destroyers 2 torpedo boats. (4) C. in C. U.S. Asiatic Fleet reports (?reliable information) from Davao indicates 12 transports one cruiser 3 (?destroyers) in landing operations on 21st. (5) Japanese KANA KANA (?KATA KANA) call sign changed 20th Dec.
 (C/S Singapore 1351Z/21 to Admty. C. in C. U.S. /Asiatic....

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Enemy Intelligence contd.

Asiatic Fleet, B.A.D., C. in C. E.I., C. in C. Pacific Fleet, A.C. N.B., N.Z.N.B.)

Removal of Oil from Balikpapan.

My 2013A/16 and your 1030Z/17 para.8. Request names of ships detailed, quantity embarked, and destinations may be signalled. (D.T.D. 1608A/21 to C. in C. E.F.)

P. 527. 16.12.41.

Singapore, reinforcements, evacuation, aircraft.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.62.
1. After consultation with Dutch you should recommend what land reinforcements are necessary in Java and Sumatra in present conditions and in the event of a Japanese occupation of Singapore.
2. Malaya's 27178 dated 19/12 (N.T.in W.R.) Consider a measure of obligatory evacuation desirable. Further telegram follows which will deal with broader issue of evacuation of non service as well as service families.
3. We are representing urgently to U.S. authorities that 90 U.S. aircraft now arrived at Brisbane should be sent to Singapore.
4. You should make recommendations as to the most urgent requirements of the N.E.I. air forces repeating your reply to J.S.M., Washington. (W.O. 2230/21 to C. in C. F.E.)

America and West Indies.

HOEGH MERCHANT.

Norwegian, 4858 tons, from San Francisco to Manila, sunk by enemy action, exact cause unknown, probably near Honolulu about 11/12. Crew reported safe. (D.S. 838, 21/12.)

ISLA DE TENERIFE.

Spanish, 5115 tons, arrived New York from Barcelona on 3/12, has been seized by Federal agents on grounds that ship has undeclared cargo on board, including oil and radio parts. (D.S., 838, 21/12.)

/ARCHER ...

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

ARCHER.

ARCHER will leave Norfolk p.m./23 arriving Jamaica a.m./28. Propose ship should leave Jamaica p.m./5/1 arriving Norfolk p.m./9. She will then be ready to sail for U.K. p.m./11. (B.A.R.M. 1100R/21.)
War Reg. Note:- C. in C. A. and W.I. 1542Q/22 says "concur".

U/Boats.

B.A.D., 1129R/21. See U-Boat Campaign.

S.S. PROTEUS
S.S. NEREUS

see p789

*Proteus sailed from
St Thomas 23/11/41*

*Nereus from St Thomas
10/12/41*

p789

*docket about
TD 50/47, 20/11/47*

D.N.I. Ottawa 1846Z/19 and S.O.(I) Kingston (Jamaica) 2332R/20. Non arrival at Portland (Maine) of British PROTEUS and NEREUS, both carrying bauxite from St. Thomas, suggests possibility of sabotage. There is no confirmation of raider or U-boat activity in this area and unless this is evident routing via Florida Coast, which logically should be applied to all shipping, does not appear desirable. U.S. Authorities at St. Thomas should be requested to make searching enquiries into possibility of sabotage. B.A.D. pass to Portland (Maine.) (C. in C. A.W.I. 1132Q/21 to R.N.O. St. Thomas.) N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 1846Z/19. Can you suggest any explanation for non-arrival of PROTEUS and NEREUS?
(D.T.D. 1918A/21 to C. in C. A.W.I.)
Your 1918A/21. See my 1132Q/21. (C. in C. A.W.I. 0932Q/22.)

Washington Report.

Washops 11. (i) Philippine Is. Japanese are now reported to be using Legaspi, Vigan and Aparri as bases for fighter aircraft. Considerable Japanese activity at Davao where U.S. 101st division is in contact with enemy. (ii) Wake. Island has had two further air raids. Considerable damage. Only one 3-inch A/A battery left in action. (iii) U.S. Pacific coast. Following attacks by enemy submarines on U.S. Merchant vessels have been reported in the last forty-eight hours. Off Columbia River 046° 30' N: S.S. ^{LAKE}DOHENNY, S.S. SAINT CLAIR by gunfire. Off Cape Mendocino 040° 30' N: KTUI (SAMOA) by gunfire, KDTJ (EMIDIO) hit by torpedo and gunfire. Submarine was attacked by aircraft with depth charges which failed to explode. Crew abandoned ship which was last seen with deck awash. Off Santa Cruz 037° 00' N: S.S. AGWIWORLD by gunfire. Most of these attacks were carried out at night. Admiralty pass to Air Min. and W.O. (J.S.M., Washington 1321R/21 to Admty.)

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

H.X.166.

Task Unit 4.1.4 escort H.X.166, PLUNKETT, 5 ships.
(Opnav. 1330/22 to Admty.)

Washington Report.

Washops 12.
(i) Philippine Is. Air R/C shows one cruiser, 3 destroyers and 12 transports in Gulf of Davao. U.S. 11th Division sharply engaged along north shore of Lingayen Gulf. A report dated 22/12 states that 70 to 80 enemy transports are off Lingayen Gulf. Scattered bombing over Luzon; disused airfields at Del Monte heavily bombed.
(ii) Hawaii. Position of S/M contact depth charged off Pearl Harbour on night of 20/12; this position was marked by an oil slick on 21/12. Another S/M contact south Oahu last night.
(iii) U.S. Pacific Coast. Reference Washops 11 para.3. Further details are now available of S/M attack on S.S. SAMOA, now arrived in San Francisco. SAMOA reports being attacked by S/M on the surface on 18/12 in 041° 09' N. 124° 37' W. 4 rounds were fired followed by a torpedo fired at close range off port bow believed to have passed under ship and exploded close in on starboard quarter showering the ship with fragments. SAMOA had used W/T on 17/12 which may have revealed her position to S/M.
(J.S.M. Washington 1515R/22 to Admty.)

SURCOUF
MIMOSA
ACONITA
ALYSSE

Free French Submarine SURCOUF and F.N.F.L. armed merchant vessels, MIMOSA, ACONITA, AYSSE sailed Halifax 1600Z/22 for St. Johns N.F. under orders of Adml. Muselier in MIMOSA. Ships will carry out exercises off Halifax then proceed by most direct route. Estimated speed 11 knots. R.C. A.F. bombing restrictions lightened (?arranged.) (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1646Z/22 to Admty. etc.)

should be on 22/12 - p.755-

Communications

Your 1147R/18. Requirements are :-
A. General Dispositions. From here: Spenavo can obtain and pass to Opnav all information he may require. From you: A weekly signal as in Opnav's 1655/16 meets our requirements.
B. Daily Movements in adjacent areas. From here: Daily signal of British movements in or near U.S.A. Atlantic area and in Pacific East of Malay barrier is passed through Spenavo. From you: We require similar information so that U.S.A. and British Naval Forces may be able to co-operate should enemy forces be reported.

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Communications
contd.

2. Presumed C. in C. Eastern Fleet is fully informed by C. in C. Asiatic Fleet of his movements and vice versa.

3. Understood the whole subject will be discussed in near future but in the meanwhile it is desired that the above requirements should be met.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 1752A/21 to B.A.D.)

NEWCASTLE.

Bermuda departure in accordance with my 1742Q/20.

(C. in C. A.W.I. 1823Q/21 to Admty.)

Australia.

LE
TRIUMPHANT.

F.N.F.L. London requests you will comply with C. in C. E.F. 0433Z/19. Authorities will be informed of programme. Dutch Authorities have agreed to your visit to Batavia.

(A.C.N.B. 1056Z/21 to LE TRIUMPHANT.)

Marangi.

My 0700Z/20. Further R/C Marangi reveals 2 double float seaplanes patrolling over island. Dilli aerodrome now under occupation of Australian independent company.

(A.C.N.B. 1501Z/21 to Admty., C. in C. E.F. etc.)

726

War Diary.21.12.1941.
Sunday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.LARRY
L.P.
DOHENY,
SAINT CLAIR,
SAMOA, EMIDIO,
AGWIWORLD.

U.S. Ships. See Washington 1321R/21, under America & West Indies, and D.S.839.

VARLAAM AVANESOV.
~~AVANASOFF~~

(See BR. 1337 Page 187)

Russian tanker, torpedoed and sunk on or before 21/12 about 15 m. N. of Mitylene (D.S., 839, 22/12).

AUDACITY
(Aux.
Aircraft
Carrier).Following has been received. AUDACITY and some of convoy torpedoed position $38^{\circ} 44' N.$, $20^{\circ} W.$, 8. (STORK, 2105A/21). AUDACITY sank. CONVULVULUS, MARIGOLD, picking up survivors. My position 1000A/22 will be $044^{\circ} 48' N.$, $020^{\circ} 20' W.$, 047° . (STORK, 2210A/21 to Admty. C. in C. W.A.)Submarines Reported.

0320

Following has been read from Gibraltar W/T One S/M on surface position 315 SPA 13 course 095° speed 17 knots. (Med. A/C., 0320/21).

1038A

Four U Boats estimated to be in area bounded by $47^{\circ} N.$ and $43^{\circ} N.$ and $15^{\circ} W.$ and $17^{\circ} W.$ (D.D.I.C. 1038A/21 to WESTCOTT).

1055A

One S/M bearing 290° 7 miles approx. true course unknown posn. QMNA 1244. (49.12 N. longitude indecipherable) (WESTCOTT, 1055A/20).

1115A

Two U-Boats in $042^{\circ} 23' N.$ $020^{\circ} 19' W.$ one unable to dive. Have despatched ships to attack but suggest long range aircraft also. (STORK, 1115A/21 to C. in C. Plymouth). STORK's 1115A/21 if fuel permits proceed forthwith to attack these U/Boats. (C. in C. W.A., 1245A/21, to WESTCOTT Repeated STORK F.O.C.N.A. Admty).Report received from STORK two U-Boats unable to dive in position OPS 359 21/12 $4223 N.$ $2019 W$ at 1115/21 (H.Q.C.C., 1300A/21 to 200 Group). My 1115A. 2 more submarines reported by aircraft in $042^{\circ} 40' N.$ $020^{\circ} 00' W.$ (STORK, 1300A/21 to C. in C. W.A., Admty. etc.) Your 1115A/21. No aircraft available to hunt today, but Liberator should arrive dawn tomorrow. (C. in C. W.A., 1325A/21 to STORK).

Your 1245. Could arrive vicinity at daylight 22/12 and after searching during daylight would have to proceed Ponta Delgada for fuel. Intend to proceed Gibraltar unless other instructions received. (WESTCOTT, 1330A/21 to C. in C. W.A.)

/My 1115A....

727

21.12.1941.
Sunday.War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.

1115A
(Contd.)

My 1115A. Aircraft sighted two U-Boats alongside each other transferring men, three of whom were shot by aircraft. One U-Boat had hole in side. Relief aircraft unable to locate either. Damaged U-Boat presumably either dived or scuttled. Suggest cause collision during night. Weather report. (STORK, 1355A/21 to Admty. C. in C. W.A., etc.)
Your 1330A/21. Proceed to Gibraltar. (C. in C. W.A., 1550A/21 to WESTCOTT).
Uncoded weather report. My P.C. and S. 044^o 40' N. 016^o 26' W. 200^o 15 knots. (WESTCOTT, 1800Z/21 to Admty.)

Pacific.

From somewhat confused reports of definite attacks on Merchant shipping mainly by gunfire at night, deduction is that enemy submarines are operating in following areas off U.S. Pacific Coast - (A) Columbia River 4630 N. (B) Cape Mendocino 4030 N. (C) Santa Cruz 3700 N. One vessel has been torpedoed and abandoned off Cape Mendocino. (B.A.D., 1129R/21 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, C.O.P.C. (R) Admty.)

S. Atlantic.

Estimated approximate positions of U/Bs. south of 30^o N. No indication of any U/B in this area. (D.D.I.C. 1436A/21).

Estimated approx. positions of U.Boats North of 30^o. (D.D.I.C. 1440A/21).

1637A.

There is one eastbound U-Boat in approx. 045^o N. 012^o W. (F.O.S., 1637A/21 to Submarines on Patrol in Area A).

South Atlantic.

200 Sqdn. Hudson arrival Bathurst from Gibraltar sighted 1 U-boat 1120-LBPH 313 and second U-Boat periscope depth 1615-LVNT 0508 Hudson retiring from convoy at 1800 directed to attack but landed before receiving signal. (A.H.Q., W.A. 1705/21).

1130 (Med.)

At 1130 G.M.T./21 1 Submarine on surface in 037^o 31' N. 007^o 46' E. course 132^o 8 knots. (N.O.I.C. Malta 1810B/21 to Med.Fleet).

2315

Following has been read:- 1 S/M N 70 E. Cape Negro 4. (ARCTIC RANGER 2315/21 to Gibraltar Port Wave).

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C
19/12

(1) At 2141/19 in position 265° Cape Spartel 2½ Swordfish, at 800 feet after ASV contact at four miles, sighted U-boat on surface. Attacked from 80 with depth charges. Result not observed. Destroyer hunted without success.

By HERMIONE
20/12

(2) At 1114/20 HERMIONE attacked doubtful contact in position 115° Europa Point 3. (F.O.C.N.A. 0002A/21 to Admty.)

U/B prisoners
intelligence,
use of Vigo.

S.O.(I) Gibraltar 1052A/20th to Admty. and STORK 2100A/20 neither to B.N.A. Madrid. Prisoners from U (?8) have also volunteered information their boat fuelled and provisioned from German Merchant Ship in Vigo night 14-15/12 Name vessel not obtainable but description indicates probable German BESSEL.

(2) In view of agitation now obtaining concerning visits U.Boats to Vigo suggest maximum pressure should be brought to bear on Spanish Gov. with object having the 3 German ships in refuelling refuge at Vigo removed.

(3) In face of Germany Freighter shortage there appears no reason to retain these ships at Vigo other than to employ them as supply ships for U.Boats. (F.O.C.N.A., 1246A/21, to Admty. (R) N.A.Madrid).

By A/C

Swordfish attacked and sank German U-Boat in position 330° Spartel 13 miles at 0320 A/21.

(2) A/S V contact obtained from 3½ miles at height of 800 feet. Aircraft closed, contact being held until U-Boat sighted from a height of 60 feet as expected 200 yards on port beam. Normal attack from astern 3 depth charges, 2 at 25 feet, 3rd at 50 feet. (Note:-W/T version of this signal says 12 feet). Depth charges straddled U-Boat (corrupt group) course, centre depth charge exploded immediately beneath her.

(3) Flares dropped by aircraft disclosed large patch of oil but no U-Boat. Flame float dropped to indicate position to patrol vessel MYOSOTIS who subsequently picked up one survivor believed to be the first Lieut.

(4) Weather clear, dark night, no moon. (F.O.C.N.A., 1246A/21 to Admty.)

By A/C

U/B damaged (STORK, 1355A/21) See S/M's Reported.

By A/C

Following has been read. Have attacked enemy with bombs level. One near miss, no change of course, E.T.A. 1430. (A/C using call-sign K7TM 1355/21).

By A/C's.
U 451 sunk.

(Dr. Rowbotham's list.)

(1) Swordfish ASV A/S Patrol 1830/20 - 0930/21 area 15 miles radius Spartel. 1 U Boat attacked

/and sunk...

War Diary.

21.12.1941.
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C's
(contd.)

U-451 sunk.
(Cmdr. Rowbotham's
list.)

sunk 330 Spartel 13 at 0316/21 1 survivor.
(4) 3 Hudsons A/S Sweep to East as far as 01° E.
1 U boat attacked 35.22 N. 03.30 W. damage unknown.
(A.H.Q. Gibraltar, 2045/21).

By A/C.

(1) My 1246A/21 refers.
(2) At 1110/21 in 35.22 N. 03.40 W. Hudson at
500 feet sighted U-boat distance 8 miles.
Attacked with depth charges, no result.
(F.O.C.N.A., 2350A/21, to Admty.)

By U.S.S.
HAMILTON.

At 1100/21 59.01 N., 34.02 W., 300' E.X.S. of
Cape Farewell. Result unknown.

By U.S.S.
LUDLOW.

At 1220/21 59.01 N., 34.02 W., 300' E.X.S. of
Cape Farewell. Result unknown.
(D.S., 839) See 22/12.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

C. in C. H.F. instructed C.S.1 at 2241A today that in order to reduce the strain on ships patrol "White" could be discontinued unless he received information which indicated that the patrol should be re-instituted.

It is reported (B.2) that the GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN are fit to sail. None of them was damaged in the daylight attack on 18/12.

Operation
"Anklet".

ARETHUSA, SOMALI, ASHANTI, BEDOUIN, KRAKOWIAK, KUJAWIAK, SCOTT, HARRIER, SPEEDWELL, HALCYON, ACANTHUS, BLACK RANGER, EGLANTINE, JAUNTY, and GUDRUN MAERSK sailed from Scapa at 1221 today.

CHITRAL, ALAUNIA, WORCESTERSHIRE, PRETORIA CASTLE and EMPIRE FULMAR, sailed from the Clyde this evening for Freetown, escorted by GARLAND and SULTAN HISSAR (destroyer). The latter is for transfer to the Turks; the A.M.Cs. are for foreign stations. EMPIRE FULMAR has military stores for Middle East.

British Air Operations.

Coastal Command aircraft carried out successful attacks on enemy shipping off the coast of Norway today.

Mining.

Several magnetic and acoustic mines were detonated today in the Humber area. S.S. STYLIANOS CHANDRIS was mined and sunk at the mouth of the Humber at 1945 today.

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22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining - Contd.

Measures approved today to counter enemy mine-laying in the Thames Estuary are detailed in Antacor London 1815/22.

North Atlantic.

COWSLIP ran ashore near Gibraltar today and was extensively damaged. Complete repairs will take 2 to 3 months.

Mediterranean.

Mines were laid in air raids on Malta last night.

Two good S/Ms. are to be sent to Singapore as quickly as possible, to provide a British nucleus, TRUSTY and TRUANT are to be sailed as early as possible.

NETRAVATI (sloop) was in action off Jibuti this morning with Vichy Naval Oiler ELORN which was apparently trying to escape with a submarine (VENGEUR). There was no result and ELORN and VENGEUR returned to harbour. NETRAVATI had no casualties.

PERSEUS is overdue from patrol since 0600/19 and must be considered lost.

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Hong Kong.

In a situation report up to 1800 local time today it was reported that the enemy had landed fresh troops on the N.E. coast of the island and had been attacking continuously all last night and today with land forces, mortars, gunfire and dive-bombing. Our troops are very tired and have suffered heavy casualties. The island is now split into 3 parts. The water and transport situation is critical and ammunition supply cannot be replenished as required. Oil installations at Texa Co., A.P.C. Mau Tau Kok have been destroyed, but that at Lai Chi Kok cannot be destroyed as a large civil hospital is near. Practically all naval personnel are now ashore and fighting alongside the soldiers.

Borneo.

It is reported that the enemy arrived at Danau in Brunei at 0830 today.

Philippines.

Air R/C shows 1 cruiser, 3 destroyers and 12 transports in the Gulf of Davao. It is reported that 70 to 80 enemy transports are off Lingayen Gulf.

Wake.

Japanese forces landed yesterday from several transports. 2 Japanese destroyers ran aground.

U-Boat Campaign.

S.S. STOREY reports being unsuccessfully attacked by torpedo off Point Arguillo, 60 miles N.W. of Santa Barbara, Cal., and S.S. PANAMA EXPRESS was twice unsuccessfully attacked by torpedoes last night 30 miles west of San Diego.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Proposed
U.S. Depot
Ship at
Hvalfjord.

Admty 1049A/18. Concur in N.O.I.C. Iceland 1638N/20. Assistance with boiler cleaning is imperative and it may be difficult for U.S. Navy to provide satisfactory boiler cleaning and repair parties. It may therefore be necessary to accommodate a Royal Naval party of about 3 Officers and 100 Ratings. Provision of necessary D.C. power requires confirmation. Consider C. in C. W.A. should be consulted. Former messages are being passed to him. (C. in C. H.F., 1201A/22 to Admty).

LA
MOQUEUSE.
REINE DES
FLOTS.

Following instructions are issued with the concurrence of Admiral Commanding F.N.F.L. LA MOQUEUSE and REINE DES FLOTS are required to proceed to Aden and Beyrouth respectively. The latter is expected to be ready at Plymouth about 24/12.

2. Speed of slowest ship is $8\frac{1}{2}$ knots.
3. Vessels will sail in company from Milford Haven as arranged by C. in C. W.A.
4. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to sail REINE DES FLOTS for Milford Haven when ready.
5. C. in C. W.A. is requested:-
 - (a) To sail LA MOQUEUSE for Liverpool for stores as soon as possible and subsequently to join REINE DES FLOTS at Milford Haven.
 - (b) To sail and route both vessels to Freetown. (D.O.D. (H.), 2004A/22).

Movements.

VANQUISHER,
WITCH,
VOLUNTEER.

VANQUISHER and WITCH sailed in accordance with C. in C. W.A 1832A/21. VOLUNTEER will follow on completion of her oiling. (VANQUISHER, 0016A/22).

LANCASTER,
NEWARK.

Arrived LANCASTER and NEWARK. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 1145/22).

WIDGEON.

Delayed 24 hours at Southend owing to fog. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1408A/22).

RODNEY.

Scapa arrival 1216 RODNEY. WORCESTER, FORESTER, MONTROSE in Company. (A.C.O.S., 1432A/22 to A.C.I.C.)

FAULKNER,
FORESIGHT.

FAULKNER and FORESIGHT E.T.A. Scapa 0500/23. (Capt. D.8, 1622A/22).

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

NIGERIA.

Your 1542/21. In view of undesirability of ships being under way off East Coast between sunset and total darkness NIGERIA is to be sailed after dark on 23/12.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 1707/22 to F.O.I.C. Tyne).

RENOWN.

Hvalfjord arrival RENOWN, VERITY, WALKER, WITHERINGTON 1245. (A.C.I.C., 1737N/22).

CHITRAL,
ALAUNIA,
WORCESTERSHIRE
PRETORIA
CASTLE, FULMAR,
EMPIRE ~~SULMAR~~,
GARLAND,
SULTAN HISSAR.

My 1544A/21. Sailed.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1756A/22).

see also p. 740

CORINTHIAN.

Please cancel my 1642/22. (F.O.I.C. London, 1944/22 to C. in C. Nore).

S/Ms. from
Biscay Patrol.

- A. S/Ms. at Falmouth and proceeding to Falmouth are to remain there till further orders.
B. O.21 and O.10 are to be ordered to proceed to Milford Haven.
C. O.9 is to be sailed for Milford Haven.
D. S/Ms. proceeding to Falmouth and Milford Haven are to fuel on arrival and remain at 4 hours notice for patrol.
E. F.O.I.C. Falmouth pass to ALECTO and BREDA. (F.O.S., 2336A/22).

Operations.

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

My 1226Z/21. For SWEETBRIAR read VERONICA. (C.S.l., 0034Z/23).
Request you will arrange reliefs on patrol "White" as convenient to you.
(C. in C. H.F., 1411A/22 to C.S.l)
Sailed ANEMONE and VERONICA at 1400 for Patrol. (A.C.I.C., 1737N/22).
Patrol "White".
A. Intend to sail in NORFOLK at 1500N/23 to relieve BERWICK.
B. BERWICK is to leave patrol a.m./24 for Hvalfjord C. Unless otherwise ordered BERWICK is to sail P.M./28, to relieve NORFOLK. (C.S.l., 1543N/22 to C. in C. H.F.)

/My...

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23.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Denmark
Straits
Patrol - Contd.

My 1226Z/21.

A. Corvettes ordered to patrol to N.E. of minefield in line of 151 10 519 on 16 mile beat parallel to ice edge. Northern bank about 8 miles from ice. S.W. end of beat 30 miles from minefield.

B. Both ships fitted with type 271.

C. Routed coastwise to (?Straummales?) thence East of minefield. E.T.A. on patrol a.m./24.

D. BERWICK is to make contact with corvettes in daylight at intervals of not more than 48 hours to give them their position.

(C.S.I., 2022Z/21 to BERWICK, A.C.I.C. Reptd. ANEMONE, VERONICA).

To reduce strain on ships, Patrol "White" can be discontinued until other instructions are received from me or unless you receive information which indicates it should be re-instituted.

(C. in C. H.F., 2246A/22 to C.S.I)

East Coast
Patrols.

Arrival M.G.B.16 from patrol.

(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1005A/22).

COTTESMORE and HAMBLEDON carrying out patrols A and B respectively tonight.

Patrol A from H.3 to East Dudgeon Patrol B from East Dudgeon to 57D Buoy.

Trawlers on patrol in Q.Z.S. 277 from Sheringham to 59A inclusive. (C. in C. Nore, 1052A/20).

Arrival M.G.Bs. 88, 86, 91 in company from patrol. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1305A/22 to F.O.I.C. Yarmouth).

Departure M.Ls. 150 and 152 on patrol.

(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1421A/22).

My 1052A/22. COTTESMORE on passage South due to reach patrol A 0200/23. Speed 23 knots.

(C. in C. Nore, 1521A/22).

On completion of patrol A return Sheerness.

(C. in C. Nore, 1549A/22 to COTTESMORE).

Brightlingsea Auxiliary Patrols returning Brightlingsea owing to visibility.

(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1650A/22).

On completion of patrol tonight proceed Humber and await further orders.

EGLINTON will be sailing to carry out patrol night 23/24. (Capt. D.16, 2200A/22 to HAMBLEDON)

Patrol of
Q.Z.S.271.

3 A/S Trawlers patrolling Q.Z.S.271 returning St. Helens dawn.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1417A/22).

/Operation...

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War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. - Contd.Operation
"Archer".
(Raid on Vaagsø.)

Operation "Archer" Appendix B. Add para. 15. If it becomes necessary to break W/T silence to make an urgent message which affects Force P, it should be made to Whitehall W/T Station in usual manner. If W/T conditions permit, 3000 k/cs. should be used as KENYA will be keeping watch on this wave. If another wave has to be used, the signal should also be broadcast on 3000 k/cs. for benefit of Force P.
(C.S.10, 1451A/22 to TUNA).

Operation
Q.N.

My 1545A/21. Q.N. postponed further 24 hours.
(C. in C. Nore, 1533A/22 to F.O.I.C. Yarmouth)

Operation
"Anklet".

I will not complete oiling until 1800 WHEATLAND will be ready at 1600. (PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE, 1535A/22)
Scapa departures 1221/22. ARETHUSA, SOMALI, ASHANTI, BEDOUIN, KRAKOWIAK, KUJAWIAK, SCOTT, HARRIER, SPEEDWELL, HALCYON, ACANTHUS, BLACK RANGER, EGLANTINE, JAUNTY, GUDRUN MAERSK.
(A.C.O.S. 1719A/22).
Intend to sail 1300/23 in accordance with A.J.19. (PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, 1836A/22).
Following received from N.O.I.C. Lerwick begins: PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, WHEATLAND arrived Sullom Voe 1417A/22. Ends. (R.A.D. H.F., 1846A/22 to S.O. Force J).

Enemy Air Activity.LUCELLUM
(Bombed
19/12).

Arrived Holyhead 0330/21 Rescue Tugs AMSTERDAM and CHERBOURGEOIS 3 with LUCELLUM in tow.
(N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 1645A/22).

Mining.Yarmouth.

S.A. Sweeper detonated acoustic mine at 0755/22 Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1001A/22)

Operation
Q.O.

Weather permitting propose following programme for 23/12. Details. (S.O. M/S F. 9 1410A/22 to C. in C. Nore)
Your 1410A/22. Approved but Flotillas are not to proceed until ordered. (C. in C. Nore, 2216A/22 to M/S 9.)

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining - Contd.

Thames Estuary.

Marked enemy air activity over the Thames Estuary between 1740 and 1820/21. Some 20 enemy A/C are thought to have taken part, but only three are believed to have flown west of a line joining Margate and Burnham. Of these, 2 laid mines on the southern edge of the channel between East Spile and B.1. buoys. Planes were received by a great volume of fire from patrol vessels and ships of convoys fog bound in the Oaze and Barrow Deepes. At 1756 QUEEN EAGLE near B.3. Buoy reports that she believes she damaged an aircraft by 3 inch Harvey and gun fire, aircraft appeared to be listing and turned to S.S.W. losing height. New fixed shore barrage was opened on aircraft which appeared to be approaching boom from eastward. (S.O. T.L.D.F., 1621/22) Following measures approved to counter minelaying in Thames Estuary after meeting this morning. Details. (Antacor, London 1815/22) See Lion Copy.

BENMACDHUI
(British,
6869 Tons)
mined on
21/12.

BENMACDHUI 62 crew landed, 2 men missing. (Capt. Base, Grimsby, 1643A/22). Struck Mine at 2145/21, 8 cables 90° from H.5. Buoy. Details. (F.O. Humber, 1813A/22).

Operation
"Tincture".

Request you will repeat operation "Tincture" by p.m./25 in the manner described in my 1207A/10/9. (D.M.S., 1728A/22 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven)

Humber.

Following 4 Magnetic and 6 Acoustic Mines detonated today. Details. (F.O. Humber, 2101A/22)

Enemy Intelligence.

GNEISENAU,
SCHARNHORST,
PRINZ EUGEN.

Following has been received graded B.2:- State of Warships at Brest on 21/12. GNEISENAU, SCHARNHORST, and PRINZ EUGEN are fit to sail. Daylight bombing raid on 18/12 was magnificent but unlucky. 15 bombs fell close or between docks, one fell in SCHARNHORST dock. Gate of SCHARNHORST dock damaged but ship can be undocked in a few days' time. GNEISENAU due to undock 1200Z/23 probably for tests. Redocking of PRINZ EUGEN was according to programme. (D.D.I.C., 2159A/22).

SECRET

MESSAGE

1815/22 December.
IN.

From: ANFACOR London.

Date. 22.12.41.

P/L by T/P

Recd. 1935.

Addressed: Genacor Uxbridge, Genacor Kimberley.
Repeated Airgenarch Stanmore, Admiralty,
General Chelmsford.

IMPORTANT.

O 8263 22. Anti-minelaying Thames Estuary.
Consequent upon meeting this morning under A O C. in C. Fighter
Command. Following measures approved to counter minelaying
Thames Estuary. Temporary repeated temporary reinforcements
as follows. From London I A Z one mobile H A A Regt. to
area North Foreland. One mobile H A A Regt. less one Bty. to
area Foulness. From 2 A A Corps one mobile H A A Regt less
one Bty. to area Clacton-on-Sea. Object to prevent landfalls
and minelaying by dead reckoning, also for anti-minelaying
barrage. G L Sets will be provided by 1 A A Corps, as required.
For all Guns at North Foreland, Foulness and Clacton Ord,
will provide flashloss AMN Fuzed 207 50 Rpg. for predicted
concentrations and fuzed 199 100 Rpg. Fullest use will also
be made of Shrap and Comd. 6 A A Div. has received verbal
instructions from G O C. in C. on this point. Further decided
that 6 A A Div. will be allotted S L C for anti-minelaying S.L.S.
Up to total requirement of thirty in priority over all other
issues. Extra S.L.S. will be deployed in area North Foreland
to assist seen engagement low flyers with H A A Shrap and
L A A. Comd. 6 A A Div. has been instructed to work out
details of control and co-ordination of A A Defences with
Fighter Aircraft with 11 GP. Permission is accorded to fire
unseen from areas North Foreland and Clacton-on-Sea after
permission given from 11 GP. Admiralty are arranging to relax
present restrictions on fire for safety of convoys Admiralty
also investigating possibility of supplying barges for mounting
Bofors and S.L. equipped S L C. Further details regarding
barges follow. Moves H A A Guns and S.L.S. will take place
forthwith.

1815/22.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (T)

A.C.N.S. (W)

N.A. 1st S.L.

Ops (3)

O.D. (5)

O.I.C. (3)

I.P. (3)

D.S.D.9.

D.A/S.W.

W.D.

D. of P (3)

D.M.S.

D.M.S. Basement.

Advance copy Ops. D.M.S.
D. of L.D.

D.T.M.

D.D.T.M.

M (2)

D. of L.D. (2)

A.C.O.

D.T.S.D. (C.O)

D.N.E. (C.O)

E.P.S.

D.T.D. (4)

D.T.D. (M)

D.T.D. (C)

D.N.A.D.

D.N.O.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Navigational.

Sound of Sleat.

Admiralty 1321A/20. It is considered that fish carriers should not use Sound of Sleat as a routine. When carriers cannot make the passage west of Skye permission should be obtained from N.O.I.C. Lochalsh and E.T.A. given. Passage of Sound of Sleat can only be made during daylight hours and patrols at either entrance should be contacted before entering. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0939/22 to Admty).

Q. Z. S. 285.

Request Q.Z.Y. instructing shipping to keep to the Northern half of the Channel in Q.Z.S. 285 when between B.l. and East Spile buoys. (C. in C. Nore, 1140A/22).

Hammonds Knoll.

Superintendent Trinity House reports:- Normal conditions restored to Hammonds Knoll light buoy. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1244A/22)

H.10 Buoy.

H.10 buoy missing from station. (Hydrographer, 1737A/22).

AHAMO Wreck Buoy.

Wreck marking light buoy marking wreck in 53° 22' 28" N., 01° 00' 04" E., light extinguished. (Hydrographer, 2349A/22).

B.7. Buoy.

B.7. buoy damaged and light extinguished. (Hydrographer, 2350A/22).

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE CHIEF, EMPIRE MARLOWE.

EMPIRE CHIEF is proceeding under own steam towards Reykjavik. Continue in company to assist S.S. EMPIRE MARLOWE broken down in 58° 58' N., 26° W., at 0851/20. TRAIL standing by. Tug FREEBOOTER is also proceeding from Reykjavik. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0235A/22 to SNOWDROP, TENACITY)

KING SOL.

Steering gear broken down. Temp. reps. unsuccessful. Endeavour to use jury steering from windlass. My position at 0600 is 058° 24' N., 6° 47' W. (KING SOL, 0605/22 to WANDERER).

STORK.

Collision damage. (STORK, 1053A/22, see U-boat Campaign).

NEWARK.

My 1603/16 and 1832/20. Intend sailing NEWARK at 1730 today for docking at Scapa. (R.A.M. 1058/22.) Sailed NEWARK. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 1732/22).

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects - Contd.

HEARTSEASE.

Arrival HEARTSEASE for fuel and repairs to main bearings. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea, 1317A/22).

CONQUEROR.

Intend to proceed to Greenock 1030/23 in accordance with my 1600A/19/12 to Admiralty. (CONQUEROR, 1400A/22).

Unknown Ship.

Intercept 1341 G.M.T. S O S begins:-
B Q X J 28 (taking bearing) taking water.
Bearing 322° good quality 375 k/cs.
(Port Patrick Radio, 1412/22).

VOLUNTEER.

Main steam joint after end expansion gland starboard engine joint blown out. Attempted repair unsuccessful. My P.C.S. 054° 05' N., 010° 26' W., 010° 14 knots (?up to) Moville. (VOLUNTEER, 2000A/22).

Shipping & Convoys

H.G.76.

C. in C. W.A. 1843A/21. Sailed VANOC. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 0545A/22).
H.G.76. Omit A. Steer direct to B. (C. in C. W.A., 0932A/22 to Escorts H.G.76).

C.T.8.

Intend sailing Clyde portion of C.T.8 consisting of BERGENSFJORD and Polish Destroyer BURZA passing Clyde Boom at 2200A/23 to R/V with Liverpool portion and BEVERLEY and ROCKINGHAM from Londonderry at 0930A/24 in 000°. Inistrahull 14 miles, thence as in Admiralty 1508A/16. 2. BURZA return Clyde from R/V. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0954A/22).

O.N.48.

O.N.48 report your P.C. and S. and expected time of arrival M.O.M.P. (C. in C. W.A., 1010A/22 to CALDWELL)
O.N.48. Ship No. 2876. Request reason why independent route positions have been lettered F-G-K-S-T A.M.0945A/11 para VI gives initial letter. Subsequent letters should follow in sequence. Latitude and longitude of F not understood. Attention is also called to N.C.S.O. Mersey's 1230A/23/9. The appropriate collective distinguishing signal should be inserted on Outward Routeing Form. (D.T.D., 1611A/22 to N.C.S.O. Belfast).

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - Contd.

F.N585,
F.N586.

As F.N583 is only 6 miles ahead intend anchoring F.N585 for 4 hours between B.4. and B.5. buoy. (LOWESTOFT, 1105A/22).

Your 1515A/22. Visibility shows no sign of improving. Intend weighing at dawn and proceeding at $9\frac{1}{2}$ knots of which 3 ships in company are capable. (LOWESTOFT, 1610A/22 to C. in C. Nore). F.N585 cancelled owing to fog. (C. in C. Nore, 1704A/22).

Your 1610A/22. You are to order all ships of F.N585 in company to remain anchored until over taken by F.N586 tomorrow Tuesday when they are to form astern F.N586 becoming part of that convoy.

2. Take WOOLSTON under your orders and proceed day to Rosyth at your best speed. (C. in C. Nore, 1706A/22 to LOWESTOFT).

H.X.163.

Average speed 8.7 knots till 11/12. Gales and hove-to 11th 12th and 13th December. All ships now arrived. (D.T.D. 1610A/22 to Opanav).

EMPIRE
FULMAR.
SULTAN
HISAR.
ACTIVE.

A.M.1307A/11 amended by A.M.1729A/18 and A.M.1712A/19. Sailed. S. of A 12 knots. Routed as in C. in C. W.A., 1027A/20. Expected time of passing into N.A. Station 0115A/27. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1754A/22). *See p. 734.*

S.C.58.

Heartiest congratulations on bringing home safely the ships of your convoy S.C.58.

(C. in C. W.A., 1804/22 to Rear-Admiral E.O. Cochrane).

S.C.58. Average speed 7.1. knots, hove-to and split into two portions 11/12 December.

All ships arrived except NIDARDAL which foundered in about 21° W.

(D.T.D., 1915A/22 to Opanav).

B.B. Convoys.

The following limitations in numbers are proposed for tankers in B.B. convoys.

A. During dark nights - No limit.

B. During moon period - 3 Tankers for each A/A ship of escort. (A.C.N.S. (T), 1846A/22 to C. in C. W.A.)

H.X.163.

Many congratulations on bringing safely to the U.K. all the ships of your Convoy H.X.163.

(C. in C. W.A., 2053/22 to Rear Admiral E. Manners)

/Humber...

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - Contd.

Humber.
Area L.F.

Request authorities for routing ships to the Humber may be informed that an area for ships anchoring at the Humber L/F in the event of the Port being closed is established and is known as Area L.F. Area L.F. is as follows.
(F.O. Humber, 2145A/22).

C.W.62.

My 1638A/21. Owing to four days of fog and consequent non-arrival of Merchant Vessels C.W. 62 postponed further 24 hours.
(C. in C. Nore, 2218A/22).

Lake
Steamers.

Pass to N.C.S.Os. In spite of efforts to find more suitable employment for them, some of the lake steamers are still employed on the East Coast. In light condition these vessels are extremely difficult to handle. With reference to T.D. Memo D/1/051 dated 6th December, an exception may be made of these ships and the Masters of them advised not to sail if the weather forecast is bad.
(D.T.D. 2321A/22 to Cs. in C. Rosyth, Nore).

PASTEUR
(T.C.16).

On arrival of PASTEUR Master is to be questioned as to why he broke away from convoy and proceeded independently. (D.T.D., 2322A/22 to N.C.S.O. Clyde)

22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

French Shipping.

Passing 21/12. Eastward VILLE DU HAVRE, CHELMA, CROIX, all full. Westward 20/12, CAP BLANC, CAPITAINE LUIGI, MENHUR, BRAZ, full. VILLE D'ORAN in Ballast. CAPITAINE ARMAND.

(V.A.C.N.A., 0925/22 to Admty. for M.E.W.)

See also next page

UNA. P.35, O.24.

Anticipate sailing UNA p.m./26 and P.35 p.m./27 for Malta and O.24 p.m./29 for Malta and onward passage. C. in C. Med. pass to Capt. (S) 1. N.O.i/c Malta pass to Capt. (S) 10.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1038A/22 to C. in C. Med.)

→ MARSDALE.

My 1604A/12 and your 1350A/21 not to C.O.A.C. Halifax. MARSDALE delayed and docking at St. John, N.B.

(S.O.W.P., 1040A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Ponta Delgada.

My 1055/19 (Re Timor incident reaction in Portugal.) Situation here returning to normal.

(Ponta Delgada, 1155/22 to D.N.I. for E.P.S.)

H.G. 77

Your 1630A/21. Undesirable to delay sailing H.G.77 on account of escort situation and desirability of using moonlight periods for these convoys. Request you report number of ships which will be excluded if original date is adhered to and whether it will be possible to sail these ships as a separate convoy to R/V with S.L.97 leaving Freetown 5/1.

(A.C.N.S.(T), 1313/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

COWSLIP. Aground.

COWSLIP grounded on Punta-Ah-Boassa, 3 miles east of Malabata at 0505/22. Refloated at 1510/22 and brought into harbour.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1314A/22 to N.A. Madrid.)

→ MARSDALE. MARAN.

Situation report No.3. Situation 2004A/22 (i) MARSDALE patrol B X 2. (ii) MARAN 40.00 30.11 236° 12.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1328A/22 to N.A. Stn.)

Cancel reference to MARSDALE. Sailing has been delayed.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1247A/23.)

743

22.12.1941.

Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.WESTCOTT,
P.39.

WESTCOTT (? in) approx. position 042° (? 00') 014° 00' at 0800A/22 is routed through 185° Cape St. Vincent 15, speed 15 knots. You are not to pass through 039° (? 20') 011° 20' before 0200A/23. She has been told to keep 30 miles clear of you.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1436A/22 to P.39.)

(? Your) 1140 (N.T. in W.R.) acknowledged.

My P.C. and S. are at 2100A/22, 040° 36' N. 013° 34' W. 156° 13½ knots, altering to 102° at 1330A/23. E.T.A. Gibraltar 1000A/24.

(WESTCOTT, 1730A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

COZALLA,
(ex-SERAFIN
TOPIC.)

America reports present painting COZALLA as follows. No name visible.

America reports COZALLA returned to Algiers night of 21st, believed owing to fear of British attack. She may now be given French Air Escort. Cargo on arrival Algiers believed to be minerals, believed to have loaded more minerals there.

(Brit. Consul, Tangier, 1510/22, 2010/22 to S.O.I. Gib.)

O.I.C. Comment. Ships is suspected of having part cargo of rubber.

French
Shipping.

Following is a repetition of my 1725A/20 (begins). Gibraltar 0900 Light Cruiser LE FANTASQUE, S.S. CAP BLANC full deck cargo Mica Mediates. P.1033. Survey vessel ESTAFETTE, S.S. CAPITAINE LUIGI full deck cargo motor transport, MENHIR BRAZ, laden, VILLE D'ORAN, Light, trawler CAPITAINE ARMAND Westbound 1725A/20. (ends). *See previous page*

(S.O.I. Gib., 1513A/22 to Admty., etc.)

Gibraltar 1210 armed trawler LA TOULONNAISE S.S. IMERETHIE II, MAROC, both laden, SURVILLE, MARICE, both full, eastbound.

(S.O.I. Gib., 1655A/22 to Admty., C. in C. Med.)

SULTAN
HISSAR.

Request arrangements may be made for SULTAN HISSAR to fuel at Ponta Delgada on 28/12 amount of fuel required 300 tons.

(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1758A/22 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada.)

MIRROR.
Cable
operation.

My 1948/18/11 and 1249/19. Cable & Wireless now consider diversion should be carried out on Vigo-Gibraltar Cable instead of Vigo-Lisbon. This is agreed especially as it should shorten operation. MIRROR should effect joint where La Panne-Lisbon and Vigo-Gibraltar cables cross in approx. 10° 21' W. 38° 44' N.

(D.S.D., 2115A/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

744

22.12.1941.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.S.L. 95.

(?) TOTLAND being detached in accordance with your 1345Z/16, E.T.A. Ponta Delgada 0800Z/23. Request she may fuel (? here). Weather report. (WESTON, 0400Z/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

Routes of
U.S. Ships.

Your 1330Z/20.

Movements and estimated daily position of all merchant vessels (including U.S. flag ships) in area North of 20° S. and West of 26° W. are reported by Admty. to Navy Dept. Washington, and N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, by means of a daily "Grid" signal.

2. Gridded chart with numbered rectangles measuring 2½° of latitude by 2½° of longitude is used and method of reporting rectangles through which each vessel will pass on successive days indicates approx. routes.

3. N.C.S.O's are not required to repeat routes to Chatfold but S.Os.(I) should include routes of U.S. flag vessels in inter-station route signals to S.Os.(I) of contiguous stations concerned in usual manner.

4. Future policy regarding exchange of information of routes of U.S. flag ships is under discussion.

(D.T.D., 0553A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

ILEX.

C. in C. S.A. 1401/20, completion date cannot be given until starboard H.P. Turbine has been opened for examination at end of December. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0800Z/22 to C. in C. A.W.I., etc.)

Belgian
Troops,
proposed
for B.W.A.

Your 59461 (M.O.4) 21/12. My G/17347 12/12 (begins). Your 97753 (M.O.4) 24/11. I consider it very desirable to invite Belgians to despatch Belgian Brigade group to British West Africa at earliest opportunity.

(2) Shipping difficulties are such that I am most anxious to ensure that Belgian troops will be available within my command when wanted.

(4) Request authority to issue formal invitation to Belgian C. in C. accordingly. (Ends). (G.O.C. in C. W.A., 0830/22 to W.O.)

Simonstown.

Proposal for new jetty to increase berthing accommodation. (Capt. Supt. Simonstown, 0911Z/22 to Admty.) See Lion Copy.

/LOSMAR ...

SECRET

MESSAGE

0911Z/22nd December, IN

Date: 25.12.41.

From: Capt. Supt. Simonstown.

Recd: 1022.

Naval Cypher (X) by W/T.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated C. in C. South Atlantic. F.O.I.C. Simonstown.

220 C. in C. South Atlantic number 1544/12 (dated twentythird October para. five) cases have occurred where (A) Warships have been sent to Capetown from Simonstown owing to lack of berthing accommodation at latter Port thus causing further congestion at former (B) Anchored in Bay and exposed to underwater attack. (C) Valuable storeships anchored in the Bay and discharged into Lighters.

2. In order to ease above situation as quickly as possible following scheme in which F.O.I.C. Simonstown concurs is submitted for early approval.

3. (A) Throw out across undredged area from centre of Bay to wall adjacent to football pitch a reinforced concrete piled jetty thirty feet wide and three hundred feet long (B) Construct two DOLPHINS each thirty feet square upon either side of Jetty head and distant about hundred feet in order to provide deep-water oiling and discharging berths on extended line of wall across dry dock entrance. (C) Jetty head to be without transverse projections to provide small ship berths alongside jetty. i.e. Four Corvettes for which little or no dredging necessary.

4. Preliminary investigations and reference to works records indicate construction practicable. Propose to invite Christnanni and Nielsen of Capetown to assist in design and to construct for cost plus fixed fee and to appoint firm of Quantity Surveyors to measure. Time for completion under six months. Total cost of enterprise not expected to exceed thirty-five thousand pounds.

0911Z/22

Advance Copy Ops. O.D. O.I.C. Trade.

1st Lord.	D. of N. T/P for Dep. Contr. (3))
1st S.L.	D. 57 O.B.	D. (4))Bat
3rd S.L.	D.T.D. (4)	C.E. in C.)BA
Vice Controller.	D.T.D. (M)	(for action.))654
4th S.L.	D.T.D. (C)	
V.C.N.S.	D. A/S.W.	
A.C.N.S. (F)	D. of L.D. (2)	
A.C.N.S. (T)	I.P. (3)	
Civil Lord.	W.D.	
N.A. 1st S.L.		
Ops. (3)		
O.D. (5)		
M. (2)		
D. of P. (3)		

745

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - Contd.LOSMAR.

Overdue shipping. My 1009/16 LOSMAR arrived Durban.
(S.O.I. Capetown, 0921B/22 to Admty., etc.)

→ CANTON.
CILICIA.

(?) CANTON sails p.m./22 to patrol in area H.33 (?) CILICIA sails 23/12 to join CANTON. Thereafter ships will operate in company with objects of interception of possible surface raiders (?) from North and Axis shipping from the South.
(C. in C. S.A., 1259Z/22 to Admty.)

CHALLENGER.

Hydrographic instruction No. 7/41 completed. 14 days required to finish tracing and printing etc.
(II) Partial collapse of furnace in No. 2 boiler now occurred and prevents its use for main steaming. Repairs not possible before refit. No sign of trouble in No. 1 boiler.
(III) Intend leaving Bathurst for Kuntaur, river Gambia, 26/12 and there clean No.1 boiler whilst in fresh water clear bull of fouling.
(IV) Propose returning to Bathurst 10/1 in time to sail for U.K. with expected departure of escort group on 13/1 or two days before date ordered to sail. Anticipate speed through water $(8\frac{1}{2})$ knots. Endurance 8000 miles.
(CHALLENGER, 1442N/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

Movement Summary.

2000/22. ASTURIAS patrol carried out along C and D. BULOLO patrols K.32 and K.33. DERBYSHIRE 033° 20' S. 015° 40' E. 105° 13½ knots. LAVENDER patrols off Roberts Port. STARWORT patrols off 006° 07' N. 010° 23' W. SURPRISE with CAMBRIA repairing cables 19 miles north of Island of St. Vincent. TULIP 008° 15' N. 027° 15' W. 106° 8, 12 knots. RUNSWICK BAY 006° 06' N. 011° 50' W. 130°, 8 knots. RAPIDOL off Freetown southbound. BADSWORTH 010° 05' N. 015° 40' W. 316° 16 knots. WOODRUFF with RANGITATA from Lagos to Freetown. ROCKROSE, JASMINE 020° N. (?021°) W. 159°, 9 knots.
CANTON off Freetown.
(C. in C. S.A., 1607Z/22 to S.A. Squadron.)

2 Vichy Officers.

Your 1843/7. Vichy Officers should not be moved for the present as other negotiations for their exchange are in progress.
(Head of M., 1647A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

/PIERRE LOTI ...

746

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - Contd.PIERRE LOTI,
collision,
ship sunk.

Following received from Harbour Master (R.O.) Port Harcourt, Nigeria: PIERRE LOTI arrived 1030/21. Master reported collision with MMAX (Not identifiable) in 004° (?10') N. 007° 24' E. at 0425/20. MMAX was taken in tow but foundered in 004° (? 57' or 14')30" N. 007° 12'30" E. at 1455 G.M.T./20 in 8 fathoms of water. 62 surviving, one since died, 2 Africans missing. Survivors leaving p.m. today for Lagos in LAGOSIAN due 23/12. Wreck dangerous to navigation.
(N.O.I.C. Lagos, 1700Z/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

INDOMITABLE.

My 1155/16. INDOMITABLE is proceeding direct to Capetown from position D left Trinidad 18/12. E.T.A. 1600Z/1/1. See 15/12 - p-620
(C. in C. S.A., 1701Z/22 to R.A.S.A.D.)

AURIGNY.

AURIGNY on fire in New Port, Buenos Aires. (Asst. S.O.I. Montevideo, 1835Z/22 to Admty.)

VISUT
KASATRI
NAWA.
(Siamese)

My 1742Z/10. Siamese ship VISUT KASATRI NAWA sailed from San Francisco Do Sul for Durban 1800 G.M.T./21st.
(S.O.I. Montevideo, 1924Z/22 to Admty.)

ATHENE.

A.T. 1635A/19, para. 2. Destination of ATHENE is Karachi, not Bombay.
(D.O.D.(F), 1930A/22 to C. in C. S.A.)

AMARANTHUS.

1421/9. Intend AMARANTHUS to sail with convoy S.L.96 and continue with ocean escort to U.K. for (refit?).
(C. in C. S.A., 2011Z/22 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET M E S S A G E 2321/22nd December IN.

FROM: G.O.C. in C. West Africa.

Date: 23.12.41.

Recd: 0730

CIPHER.

ADDRESSED: The War Office.

021479 TN/32058 cipher 22/12. MOST SECRET

My C./17348 14/12.

Para. 3 move of 2 W.A. Inf. Bde. Gold Coast to Bathurst. Increase in Gambia feeding strength and impossibility of obtaining within the Gambia items of the African ration scale makes it imperative for regular (repeat regular) monthly shipment Lagos and Gold Coast to Bathurst. Total tonnage including Ordnance and R.E. stores excluding petrol and hutting Nigerian and Gold Coast to Bathurst 1500 tons.

Second. Para. 7 move 1 W.A. Inf. Bde. Nigeria to Freetown. Similar need for regular (repeat regular) shipment monthly 800 tons Nigeria and Gold Coast to Freetown. C. in C.s signal 1937Z/19 19th. December to Admiralty refers.

2321/22

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
N.A. 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (F)
D.D.O.D. (F)
D.N.I. (4)
D.A/S.W.
I.P. (2)
W.D.
D.C. (2)
Hd. of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C.
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
D.T.D. (M)
D.T.D. (C)
D. of S.T.

Re transport for troops from
Lagos to Freetown.

Advance copies sent D.C. D.O.D. (F)
D.T.D.

Received from the War Office:-
2150/24th December.

War Office circulation:-

D. Mov.
D. Tn.
D.Q.N.G.
D.D.M.O. (O)
D.D.S.D.
M.O. 1, 1(J.P.), 4.
G.S. (P)
Q.M. 2.
S.D. 2.
Q. (Ops.).
Admiralty (War Registry)

MFG

MOST SECRET

747

22.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

UPRIGHT,
M/V's hit.

At 0112/13, UPRIGHT fired 4 torpedoes at 2 north-bound M/V's with overlapping continuous silhouettes escorted by 1 destroyer in Gulf of Taranto. 3 hits on leading ship and 1 on the other. (D.O.R. 22/12).

HARBOE JENSEN,
A/C attack.

Following received, from S.S. HARBOE JENSEN. Description seaplane believed to be Fiat attacked, Rosetta Light bearing 140° 7 miles, one man wounded. (Nore W/T, 0545/22, to Admty.)

PIETRA
LIGURE.
(Italian).

Refloated and (to-day?) seized in lawful prize. (N.O.I.C. Massawa, 0900Z/22, to S.N.O. Red Sea.)

THUNDERBOLT.

Regret THUNDERBOLT is 2 hours late due to breakdown. (Capt. S.1, 1130B/22, to LEGION).

VARLAAM
AVANESOV.
SAKHALIN.

Following from Adm. Kelly. In view of sinking of U.S.S.R. Oiler AVANESOV off Cape Baba and Waxing Moon I have postponed sailing of Oiler SAKHALIN to wait more favourable conditions. (N.A. Ankara, 1211B/22, to C. in C. Med.) (W.D. Note. - According to D.S.840, correct name of first oiler should be VARLAAM AVANESOV). SAKHALIN - see p. 748 - bottom para:

221 Sqn.,
Wellingtons.

A.M. 1219/8 para. 6. Hoped 221 Sqn. of Wellington aircraft trained in A/S warfare will reinforce Middle East shortly. Aircraft are fitted A.S.V. and carry depth charges. Following details may be helpful. (D.A/S.W., 1242A/22, to C. in C. Med.) See Lion Copy.

Enemy Units.

1 Destroyer 1 large vessel 6000 tons 32.20 N. 16.20 E. Course 3 (?4) 1° (?9 knots). (Med. A/C Duty L. 1305B/22 to Hal Far).
3 Merchant vessels one destroyer (3) miles North of Miserath going towards Tripoli. (Malta 1516B/22, to Med. Fleet).

Jibuti.

*Submarine and ELORN returned after attempted escape. (F.F.N.L.O. Aden, 1410Z/22, to F.N.F.L., London).

*VENGEUR.

see p. 749

Libya.

Military Situation Report. (C. in C. M.E., 1545/22 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

/M.N.B.D.O. ...

MOST SECRETM E S S A G E. 1242./22nd Dec.MOST SECRET.O U T.

To C. in C., Mediterranean, 222. Date. 22.12.41.
 Repeated V.A. Malta, 467.
 F.O.C.N.A. 179.
 F.O.C. Force "H" 316.
 C. in C., East Indies, 421.
 C. in C., Eastern Fleet, 704.
 C. in C., South Atlantic, 165.
 R..... (Mediterranean) 584.

Naval Cypher "D"

From Admiralty.

NITE.

A.M. 1219/8 para. 6 not to all addressees. It is hoped that No. 221 Squadron of Wellington aircraft trained in L/S warfare will reinforce Middle East shortly some aircraft leaving U.K. in about 10 days time.

2. These aircraft are fitted A.S.V. and carry Depth Charges. Following details may be helpful.

3. Atlantic experience leads to belief that aircraft sights U-boat in about one case out of three before U-boat sights aircraft. In hopes of increasing this proportion coastal command aircraft have been camouflaged in light colours. Clear weather in Mediterranean may reduce aircraft's chances of first sighting. Flying at greater height will increase chances of sighting but will also increase difficulties of getting low enough in time for depth charge attack. Clear weather increases value of camouflage.

4. In Atlantic about 40 per cent daylight sightings initiate from A.S.V. contact.

5. Naval Swordfish aircraft at Gibraltar have recently achieved remarkable results in night attacks on U-boats both on moonlit and dark nights. Flying at about 800 feet A.S.V. contact has been obtained at ranges of 4 to 6 miles and followed until visual sighting usually of wake is made. Subsequent depth charge attack has been made by eye without illuminants.

6. Night attacks now being made in Atlantic by Coastal Command and trials in hand to determine best form of illuminant. Aircraft searchlight and delay action flares both under trial. Meanwhile visual sighting possible even on dark night after A.S.V. contact and moonlight should give good chance of accurate attack specially up moon path. No. 221 Squadron no experience to date of this form of attack.

7. Coastal Command aircraft attack with depth charges at about 50 feet using 60 foot spacing of charges and shallowest setting possible. Mark 13 pistol should give detonation at depth of about 25 feet. ~~Mark 13 pistol is to launch attack as early as possible~~ Irrespective of angle but where any choice

MOST SECRET

/EXISTENCE

747^B

MOST SECRET

exists preferable with more than 2 charges to attack across track but with 2 charges to attack up the track of U-boat.

1242A/22

D.A/S.W. (698)
Approved A.C.N.S. (F)

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- 2nd S.L.
- 3rd S.L.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T)
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (W)
- N.A. to 1st S.L.
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)
- D.O.D. (H)
- D.D.O.D. (H)
- D.C. (2)
- D.D.I.C. (2)
- D.N.L.B.
- D. of P. (2)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.S.W.
- D.C.D.
- D.T.D. (2)
- D.T.S.D.
- Hd. of M.
- D.S.D.
- I.D.
- I.P. (2)
- N.I.D.10. Paym. Cdr. Wilson.

MMC.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

M.N.B.D.O.

After departure of Anti-Aircraft Brigade Group referred to in your 1108A 13th following units of 1st Royal Marines Group will remain in Egypt:- (List and numbers).

(ii) Is it policy to reform this M.N.B.D.O.? This can only be done by (?relieving) forces ordered to Ceylon as details remaining have insufficient experience to form basis of new organization.

(iii) If not intended to reform it is particularly desired to retain 11 R.M.Bs. suitably organized with 20 per cent. reinforcements and personnel for a small base depot and necessary transport. This force would be used to provide (?relief of) raiding forces. The advantages of employing these R.Marines are that they (?would have) (?a) nucleus of men with sea experience who could embark at very short notice to carry out raids as opportunity offers without calling on Army.

(iv) Further requested, in order to release N.C.O's and R.Marines trained in sea service now being employed in shore establishments, approx. 200 non-specialist ranks of M.N.B.D.O. should be retained on Station. This would enable immediate reliefs to be provided for ranks now on home service roster in seagoing ship. (C. in C. Med., 1600B/22 to Admty.)

PERSEUS
overdue.

PERSEUS is now overdue since 0600/19 and must be considered lost. PERSEUS was not heard of from time of leaving harbour on 26/11 for Benghazi. She was directed to patrol various positions in Ionian sea as required by general situation and finally to patrol to Argostoli to leave there to arrive Alexandria 19th.

(ii) It is not considered likely that books are compromised.

(iii) Capt. S.1 is requested to signal casualty lists to authorities concerned. (C. in C. Med., 1636B/22).

TRUSTY,
TRUANT.

It is necessary to send two good submarines to Singapore as quickly as possible to provide a British nucleus. Request you will sail TRUSTY and TRUANT as early as possible. This reduction in your force is regretted but we have no others we can send at once. (V.C.N.S., 1729A/22 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.F.)

Movements.

Summary 225 Part A.
ERICA and 3 ships due Alexandria 1000/23 from Port Said. SNAPDRAGON with one ship towing Z Lighter due Alexandria p.m./23 from Port Said. Hospital ship RAMB IV due Port Said 0700/23 from Tobruk. Russian Tanker SAKHALIN leaving Dardanelles 23rd via Turkish Territorial waters for Famagusta. *See A. 747*

/FAREHAM ...

749

22.12.1941.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - contd.Movements
(contd.)

FAREHAM probably on passage Beirut to Alexandria. PRIMULA and FALK with one ship left Alexandria 1600/22 due Port Said 1000/23 and Beirut 0600/24. GRIFFIN, NIZAM, KIMBERLEY, SIKH, operating during night 22nd/23rd in area South of 32° N. between 029° 50' and 030° 30' E. then to Alexandria. Part B. FARNDALE, ERIDGE, and PRINCE BAUDOUIN due Alexandria 1400/23 from Tobruk passing Y at 0445/23rd.

HASTY, HOTSPUR, HEYTHROP, SALVIA, and A.T.5 due Tobruk 1300/23 through R at 0700.

MOY, APHIS, SKUD 5, leaving Tobruk p.m./23rd for Derna. PROTEA, Oiler ZAHRA, Fleet Tug ST. ISSEY with lighter left Alexandria p.m./22 for Mersa Matruh and Tobruk through A, 0630/23, and H. 1700/23. M.T.B.215 anchored off Kenayis. N.O.I.C. Tobruk pass to Derna. N.O.I.C. Haifa pass to H.Q. R.A.F. Levant. (C. in C. Med., 1732B/22).

Jibuti, Vichy
* S/M. ELORN
(Oiler),
action with
NETRAVATI.

* VENGEUR.

Daily Int. Summ. 598 for 24 hours ending 1500 22/12. At 0500 hours message received from R/C aircraft that the submarine was not in Jibuti harbour. At 0505 aircraft signalled that ELORN was sighted at sea. Photographs confirm. Aircraft was ordered to search for submarine. At 0620 Navy informed operations room ELORN was in action with sloop NETRAVATI. On request from Navy one aircraft was despatched at 0625 to attack ELORN if found in action with NETRAVATI and O.C. detached flight Aisha was ordered by W/T to put up a fighter umbrella over NETRAVATI A.A. protection against Potez aircraft known to be at Jibuti. At 0700 hours Navy informed operations room action had been broken off with nil result and ELORN had returned to harbour. Blenheim aircraft was then ordered to restrict activities to R/C until further instructions and Aisha aircraft were recalled. At 0820 Blenheim aircraft signalled ELORN had berthed and submarine was not present. At 1415, a third R/C aircraft reported submarine present in Jibuti harbour. (C.H.Q. Aden, 1832/22).

Malta Air
Report.

21st. 1506 hours 1 raider, bombs sea, no interception.
Night 21/22. 1840 to 0430 hours. 4 alerts, 8 raiders. Bombs sea land. No damage. Mines laid South Malta. No fighters up, unserviceable, rain. A/A fired. (H.Q. R.A.F., Malta, 1835/22).
22nd. 4 alerts 0645 hours 15 fighters, 0829 hours 4 R/C aircraft, 1120 hours 1 R/C aircraft, 1229 hours 23 fighters including M.E.109s Hurricanes up no interceptions, all at great height.
11 Blenheims out to attack shipping en route or transport Buerat-Tripoli Road, remaining Blenheims bogged, unable get off. (H.Q. R.A.F., Malta, 1845/22).

/UNBEATEN, ...

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

UNBEATEN,
P 31 patrol
reports.

- (3) At 2304/16 in 039° 17' 018° 00' 2 waves of destroyers forced UNBEATEN down momentarily, heavier ships heard but not seen.
- (4) At 0800/19 in 039° 11' 017° 42' sighted one cruiser hull down.
- (5) At 1639/19 in 039° 10' 017° 41' sighted 3 Northbound cruisers passed to westward near P.31.
- (6) P.31 reports sighting small convoy of small ships Northbound past Colonne on 18/12.
- (7) (?At) 1316/19 enemy cruiser 037° 17' 019° 09' hunted by small destroyer using form of directional beam and hydrophone. Hunt continued until 1613, 34 charges dropped quite close.
- (8) At 1658 fired (corrupt group) salvos A at 3 cruisers Northbound range 1000 proximity angle 150, missed counter attack with 24.
(Capt.(S) 10, 1911B/22).

AURORA,
German mine.

Pieces of mine found on board AURORA after being mined off Tripoli (Africa) have been identified as belonging to German 6 horned antennae mine.
(V.A.Malta, 1920B/22, to C. in C. Med.)

Situation
report 177.

Central Mediterranean.

As reported by V.A.Malta, C.S.15's Force was heavily attacked by T/B dive bombing and high level aircraft throughout 17th and while returning to Alexandria on 18th. No damage to any ship.
Alexandria.

Attack on Harbour by human torpedoes night 18/19th
See my 2151/19. (N.T. w.w.D.)

- (2) Further evidence indicates that U Boat attacked by JERVIS and reported in my 1833/19 was sunk.
- (3) Four Destroyers carrying out A/S search to-night 22/23rd in area close N.E. of Alexandria.
- (4) Western Desert. N.O.i/c established at Derna and clearance party moving forward. Port damaged but usable. Salvage in progress of Tug JEDDAH and Lighter A 11. Greek patrol off Bardia withdrawn.
- (5) Submarines. 6,000 ton merchant ship torpedoed by PORPOISE at 1425/9 and beached off Methoni later torpedoed again by TORBAY when salvage was in progress.
- (6) UTMOST scored one hit on target of two large Northbound merchant ships escorted by GARIBALDI Cruiser and Destroyers in position 39° 47' N. 17° 22' E. at 0131/13. Heavy explosion followed.
- (7) My 1109/15. Both ships attacked by UPRIGHT at 0210/13 considered sunk and were approx. 7,000 tons. Speed 14 knots.
- (8) TRUANT torpedoed large tanker entering Suda Bay 11/12 believed sunk. No details.
(C. in C. Med., 2004B/22, to Admty.)

War Diary.

22.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Troops for Malaya.

Your 21412/G cipher of 19/12. (N.T. in W.D.)
Despatch squadron first available opportunity.
Malaya to note India's suggestion that this squadron
be attached 3rd Cavalry.
(W.O., 0600/22, to C. in C. India.) p. 78c
Ref. W.O. telegram:- 59407 (M.O.I.) 20/12 and
59557 (M.O.I.) 21/12. Presumably Chiefs of Staff
will decide which alternative they wish to adopt
and you will issue necessary instructions. Mean-
while we will take all preliminary steps to arrange
transshipment 53 Infantry Brigade Group under
alternative B. (C. in C. India, 2045/22, to W.O.)

B M 9 B.

Departure GIORGIOS AVEROFF escorting B M 9 B.
(S.O.(I) Bombay 0816Z/22.)

DULVERTON.

Sailed 1548Z/22. S. of A. 15 knots E.T.A.
Kilindini 1700Z/27. Routed in accordance with
C. in C. East Indies' 1110Z/18/4. (II) Intend
programme date given in my 1810Z/19 should be
advanced by 24 hours. N.O.I.C. Kilindini pass to
SOUTHWOLD. (N.O.I.C. Durban 1645Z/22 to C. in C's
Med., E.I., N.O.I.C. Kilindini).

CENTURION.

Revised camouflage design for disguising
CENTURION as KING GEORGE V, being flown to you in
cover reference ~~DESTER~~, shows dummy structures
additional to those used in her previous disguise
and also a new scheme of painting. It is sent as an
alternative to MALAYA disguise for use as may be
decided. Request design may be delivered to ship.
(D.T.S.D. 1907A/22, to C. in C. E.I.)

MOUNT
VERNON.

p. 78c
W.O. 59407 cipher M.O.I. of 20/12, para. 3 (a).
Request you will divert MOUNT VERNON into Mombasa.
(D.O.D.(F) 2006A/22 to C. in C. E.I.)

Saudi-Arabian
Alliance.

A.M. 1122/13. There appears to be little Naval
significance in such an alliance so far as it would
affect the E.I. Station. (C. in C. E.I. 2056Z/22.)

China.

Hong Kong.

I have not heard Stonecutters W/T since 2305Z/21.
(Singapore W/T, 0114/22, to Admiralty (via
Flowerdown).
Pass following to S. of S. Colonies (begins)

War Diary.Monday.
22.12.1941.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Hong Kong
(contd.)

Chapelries London. 1485/21. Following communique issued 0830 (begins.) There has been no substantial change since yesterday afternoon. Both sides are fighting with great stubbornness and the enemy is attempting to reinforce his invested associates on the South side of the Island. We have maintained our lines with difficulty. Governor (ends).

(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0731Z/22, to Admty.)
Please pass to Ottawa. (Begins). For Minister of National Defence. 001/22. Your cable received, situation critical, Canadian troops part prisoners, residue engaged, casualties heavy. Lawson missing believed killed, Hennessey killed, Linden missing. Troops have done magnificent work spirit excellent. Sutcliffe. (Ends.) (Cdre. Hong Kong, 0827Z/22 to Admty.)

Joint Order 309 G.O.C. and Comdre. Applied section 90A Naval Discipline Act and section 184A Army act 24/12 in accordance with A.F. Order 3173/40. Inform War Office. Agreed.

(N.O.i/c Hong Kong, 0925Z/24 to Admty.)
Pass following to S. of S. for Colonies. (Begins.)
Following communique issued 1430 (begins).

Position substantially unchanged. Enemy continues to press his attack on land and from the air but our troops are defending their positions with utmost vigour, strength and determination. Whenever opportunity offers or can be made our troops deliver counter attacks to gain local successes and are inflicting heavy casualties on enemy.

Gratitude of people and fighting services for H.M. message. Governor. (Ends).

N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0927Z/22 to Admty.)
Summary 5. CICALA dive bombed and sunk yesterday. Practically all naval personnel now ashore and fighting alongside military. Dockyard heavily shelled and bombed yesterday, several fires started but got under control. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0935Z/22, to Admty.)

From Fervour begins.

Sitrep up to 1800 local time 22/12. Enemy landed fresh troops on N.E. Coast of Island and has been attacking continuously with land forces, mortars, gunfire and dive-bombing. Yesterday and today counter attacks failed. Our troops are very tired and have suffered heavy casualties.

Island now split in 3 parts. Isolated British Force in Stanley, Japanese on eastern half of Gap just west of Repulse Bay W/T Station still infiltrating, and ourselves still in possession of Wireless apparatus though very weakly held adjacent to tip. Small pockets of British remnants still holding out in isolated positions. Water and transport situation critical. Still unable to replenish ammunition supply as required. Hong Kong surrounded though still holding out. Much material damage. Have successfully destroyed oil installations at Texa Co Asiatic Petroleum Co. (?Dump) Ma Tau Kok but cannot destroy at Lai Chi Kok on account of proximity of large civil hospital.

(Cdre. Hong Kong 1105Z/22, to Admty, (pass to Troopers in C. in C. E.F.)

/Eastern ...

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - contd.Eastern
Fleet.

Following ships are to be regarded as forming part of Eastern Fleet. REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN, DANAE, DURBAN, DRAGON, JUPITER, VAMPIRE, ENCOUNTER, ELECTRA, and EXPRESS. (C. in C. E.F., 0525Z/22).

S/M's O.16
lost, K.13
damaged.

Neth. S/M O.16 lost probably in E (?Johore) mine field. One survivor who will be interrogated when able to. (11) A battery explosion took place in Neth. S/M K.13 at 0630Z/21 in Naval Base. 2 killed, 4 injured. (111) C.Z.M. has been informed. (C. in C. E.F., 0311Z/22 to Admty.)

TEVIOT BANK.

I shall shortly have completed local mining operations and may be able to make TEVIOT BANK available elsewhere. Have you any useful employment for her?
(C. in C. E.F., 0313Z/22, to C. in C. E.I., A.C.N.B., (R) Admty.)

Manila.

Ships in port 21/12 (list). Sailings reported F.O. by Consul-General in view of possibility that my code compromised. (N.C.S.O., Manila, 0350Z/22, to Admty.)

Malaya.

Military Situation Report. (Adv. H.Q., M.C., 0512/22 to W.O., etc.) ~~0512/22 to W.O., etc.~~

Superior
Japanese
Aircraft.

Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030 22/12. Combats confirm Navy 'O' fighters faster and more manoeuvrable than Buffaloes. My OPREP 4 refers. Also underlines vital necessity for speedy Hurricane reinforcement now at sea. (A.H.Q., F.E., 1530/22).

754

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.U.S. Merchant
Ships, C.B.'s.

Admty. 1933A/15 passed to A.I.G. 130 with
T.O.O. 1714Q/18. "U.S.A. Merchant Ship" is to
include merchant ship flying U.S. flag only.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1052Q/22 to A.I.G. 130).

CASTLE
HARBOUR.

Your 1257A/20. CASTLE HARBOUR is one of the only
two A/S fitted vessels based at Bermuda. Consider
it an unjustifiable risk to release her until a
suitable relief has arrived.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1201Q/22 to Admty.)

MATHILDA.

Ottawa 1527Z/18 (MATHILDA drifting ashore 10
miles N.W. of Nuevitas). Ship signalled brought
to anchor and ordered tug, 21/12, no information
at Havana of arrival at Cuban port.
(S.O.I. Jamaica 1231R/22 to N.S.H.Q. etc.)
My 1231R/22. KILLERIG proceeding to assist.
(S.O.I. Jamaica, 1803R/22 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa,
C. in C. A.W.I., Admty.)

PASTEUR.

T.C. 16. Opanav 1820/19 and 0215/21. Request
report if PASTEUR in company when convoy met at
M.O.M.P. or any recent information on her
position. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1332Z/22 to C. in C.
W.A.)
Com Task for 19 reports T.C. 16 less PASTEUR now
in company British escort time 1110Z/22.
(Opanav, 1625/22 to C.O.A.C. and Admty.)

DINARIC.

Your 1312A/26/11 ^{N.S.H.Q.} DINARIC has not arrived.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1414Z/22 to Admty.)

S.C.61.

My 1424Z/20. Ref. ST. CLAIR, defective, unable
to sail. NIAGARA will sail to overtake convoy
during daylight on 28/12 and this be with convoy
over more dangerous part of route. DIANTHUS S.O.
until NIAGARA joins. (C.C.N.F. 1503Z/22 to
Admty. etc.)

S.C. 62.

Task Unit 4.1.17 ASSINIBOINE, S.O. of Escort,
MIMOSA, KENOGAMI, SOREL, ALYSSE, ACONITX.
(C.C.N.F., 1616Z/22 to Admty. etc.)

BITTERSWEET.

Being sailed p.m./22 to arrive Halifax 24/12
to discharge ratings to leave. Request ship be
subsequently sailed so as to arrive Charleston
Sea Buoy 2C at 2000 zone 5 on 31/12.
(C.C.N.F., 1619Z/22 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).

/T.C.17.....

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.T.C.17.

Movement control reports total 7,800 will be ready for embarkation mid-Jan. Request early advice ships allocated and indicated sailing date for Halifax. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1653Z/22 to D. of S.T.)

SURCOUF etc:

See p. 724. (included under 21/12 in memo.)

Bona Intelligence.

Bona (? Bona) 17/12. Arrivals, 15/12, SAINT FRANCOIS from Algiers, CATHERINE SCHIAFFINO from Sete. Departures: 15/12, G.G. de GUEYDON for France, P.L.M. 21 for France. (B.A.D., 1711R/22 to Admty.)

QUEEN OF BERMUDA.

My 1557/20. Would appreciate early details all accommodation available service passengers to U.K. in QUEEN OF BERMUDA. In lieu of passengers proceeding Norfolk (Virginia) to embark prior sailing via Bermuda 28th, could QUEEN OF BERMUDA after working up at Bermuda for about a week proceed Halifax to embark passengers? If additional accommodation above these requirements is available Air Force personnel can be embarked. Norfolk (Va.) pass to QUEEN OF BERMUDA. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1722Z/22 to B.A.R.M.)

U.S. Shipping.

N.Z.N.B. 1725M/15. U.S. Flag vessels bound Port beyond New Zealand will be routed South of New Zealand when endurance permits. (B.A.D., 1801R/22 to Admty., N.Z.N.B.)

French Shipping.

C. in C. A.F. reports 21/12 that S.S. MARECHAL JOFFRE has been taken over and sailed under armed guard for a 'safe Southern Port'. The ship had little cargo. S.S. SIKIANG is being unloaded at Mariveles. There is at present no question of moving her. (B.A.D. 1929R/22 to Admty.)

Transport of Air Trainees.

N.Z.N.B. 1210M/18. Request early information as to U.S. Naval Authorities intentions in view of the importance of this movement and observing that it has previously been escorted throughout its passage. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1940A/22 to B.A.D. (R) N.Z.N.B.)

Convoy Routes.

Proposals for routes for H.X, O.N. and S.C. Convoys and for reductions in signal traffic. (A.C.N.S. (T), 2057A/22 to B.A.D.) See Lion Copy.

2057A/22nd December

SECRET MESSAGE

OUT

To: B.A.D. Washington 120
Repeated C. in C. Western Approaches 201

Date 22.12.41. 755A

NAVAL CYPHER (X) & P/L BY T/P

From Admiralty.

NITE

Experience has shown that it is rarely possible to adhere to routes for HX, ON and SC Convoys promulgated 7 days before sailing with result that there is considerable signal traffic.

- (a) Between Admiralty, OPNAV and escorts regarding the ocean route.
- (b) between Admiralty and stragglers, and
- (c) between Commodore and ships in Convoy regarding the Standard Route.

(2) With a view to effecting a most necessary reduction in signal traffic and at the same time disturbing the existing routing system as little as possible the following is proposed.

- (a) A first position (in some cases a second position) only on the ocean route to be included in route proposal signal to OPNAV
- (b) The Standard route to be abolished.

3. The new procedure would be as follows:-

(i) HX and SC Convoys

- (a) Sailing dates would be continued on the present fixed regular schedule.
- (b) The Admiralty would recommend to OPNAV four days before sailing a first position on route in the longitude of Cape Race, and a

second/.....

second position in 40° W. On receipt of C1NAV's concurrence, the Admiralty would inform British commands as at present.

(c) Twelve secret reference positions widely dispersed in North Atlantic would be issued to all ships in convoy and to all authorities concerned by the Naval Control Service Officer at the port of assembly.

(d) Recommendations for onward route and adjustment of first and second positions, if necessary, would be made, as is now done for diversions, after the convoy had sailed.

(1) ON and ON(S) Convoys. A similar procedure would be followed except that:-

(a) The first and only recommended position would be the M.O.M.P.

(b) Recommendations for dispersal of ON convoys would be passed through C1NAV to escort.

4. M.O.M.P. for HX and SC convoys, giving time and date, would be suggested by the Admiralty during the voyage, not less than 4 days' notice being given. The time of M.O.M.P. for ON convoys would be suggested when the convoy reached open sea.

5. Whenever a diversion is ordered the Admiralty would initiate by G.B.M.S. a stragglers' route and would inform C1NAV and British authorities, G.B.M.S. signal being repeated every 48 hours if no subsequent diversion has been ordered.

6/.....

7560.

(3)

6. It is requested that you will obtain the views of C.N.O. on these proposals.

2057A/22

D.T.D. (983)

Approved A.C.N.S.(T)

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L.
- W.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S.(H)
- A.C.N.S.(F)
- A.C.N.S.(T)
- Naval Sec.
- N.A. 1st S.L.
- Cps. (3)
- O.D. (5)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D. of S.2A
- D.T.D. (4) (T.D.0163/41)
- D.T.D. (M)
- D.T.D. (C)
- I.P. (3)
- D.A/S.W.
- C.I.C.
- W.D.
- D.S.D. (2)

War Diary.22.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies-Contd.Production
of Naval
Fighters.

Personal for B.A.S.R. from 5th Sea Lord.
Your 1951R/19. Wording of Cabinet decision was -
(a) The highest priority should be accorded to the production of the fighter aircraft necessary to equip and maintain the armoured aircraft carriers of the Royal Navy.
(b) That the above should be put into effect in a manner which would cause the least interference with the production of other important aircraft, particularly heavy bombers.
Surely the demand for 440 Naval Fighters is large enough and sufficiently freed from restrictions for vigorous measures to be taken to fulfil it. If you can get 360 as an absolute minimum during 1942 we may be able to keep going. (5th Sea Lord 2145A/22 to B.A.D.)

Lights
on M.V's.

Does C.N.O. agree that Navigation Lights should not be shown by any merchant ships in areas 8 or 10? If confirmed, request Admiralty will promulgate generally. (C. in C. A.W.I., 2212Q/22 to B.A.D.)

U.S.N.
Dispositions.

Changes my 1655/16 to be sent weekly new locations 22/12 follow: BBS - ARKANSAS due Iceland 23/12. At Norfolk IDAHO, MISSISSIPPI, NEW MEXICO, ready about 3/1. CVS - WASP due Norfolk 24/12. RANGER due Bermuda 23/12. YORKTOWN now Pacific left Balboa 22/12. HORNET leaves for Key West Area 26/12. LONG ISLAND en route Argentina. CAS - QUINCY, VINCENNES en route San Juan. CLS - MEMPHIS at Miami. CINCINNATI due Recife 26/12. SAVANNAH at Bermuda. OMAHA left Recife 21/12 for Ascension. PHILADELPHIA at Casco departs 26/12 for Argentina. NASHVILLE due Iceland 23/12. Pacific. BBS - MARYLAND, TENNESSEE, PENNSYLVANIA, left Pearl 20/12 for West Coast. CAS - LOUISVILLE at Pearl. PENSACOLA at Brisbane. CLS - DETROIT due San Francisco 25/12. PHOENIX due Honolulu 23/12. ST. LOUIS at Pearl. RICHMOND, TRENTON, left Balboa 22/12 for San Diego. Asiatic. All heavy units Java Sea. (Opnav, 2346/22 to Admty.)

Australia.BRITISH
SAILOR.

Your 1708A/15 Tanker BRITISH SAILOR overdue at Darwin since 17/12. (A.C.N.B., 1421Z/22 to Admty.)

War Diary.

22.12.41.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

HELLEN.
(torpedoed
21/12).

HELLEN torpedoed 080^o. Cape Negro 4 miles while escorted by MAIDA 2352A/21st. (F.O.C.N.A., 0109A/22, to Admty.).

HELLEN Norwegian, 5289 tons, from Lisbon to Gibraltar. Position about 12 miles S.E.E. of Ceuta Morocco. (D.S., 839).

Norwegian S.S. HELLEN was torpedoed and sunk at 2310A/21 off Cape Negro when bound from Gibraltar to Isle of Sheppey.

(2) Ship was inside territorial waters and being escorted by ARCTIC RANGER. (S.O.I., Gib., 1246A/22 to N.A. Madrid (R) Admty. amended 0943A/23).

S.A.F.O. 770/20. My 0109A/22. Norwegian HELLEN. All C.Bs placed in weighted bag and dumped overboard in about 40 fathoms of water. No possibility of compromise. Register of C.Bs in drawer in Master's cabin. No casualties. Information from Master. (V.A.C.N.A., 1302A/22 to Admty.)

ANNAVORE.
(H.G.76.)

Only casualty to Convoy in last night's attacks was ANNAVORE. Probable 3 Submarines, the last of which was beaten off by DEPTFORD without loss. All well depth charged. Have collision damage aft but am reasonably seaworthy. Weather. (STORK, 1053A/22 to C. in C. W.A.)

ANNAVORE, Norwegian, 3324 tons, from Huelva for Oban in H.G.76 with iron ore. (D.S.840).

Submarines Reported.

0900Z/19
0132Z/22.

Following reports of S/Ms received (a) from American Ships' Exchange. At 0900Z 19 in 008^o 00' North 082^o 00' East. Conning tower sighted (b) From American Clipper. At 0132Z 22 in 007^o 56' N. 082^o 21' E. S/M steering 280^o. (C. in C.E.I. 0528Z/22 1226Z/22 to E.I.Station).

My 0528/22. After interviewing the pilot of Clipper there seems little doubt that submarine report is genuine. (C. in C. E.I. 1306Z/22 to E.I.Station) See 24/12.

Estimate approx. positions of U. Boats.
(D.D.I.C. 1400A/22, 1403A/22).

1615.

Am over enemy submarine in 45.15 N., 19.08 W., enemy sighted on surface and observed to submerge. A/C Using Call-sign O7MW. 1615/22 to 15 Group).

1640.

My 1615. Am over 2 enemy S/Ms in position 1 - 330^o 8 knots, 1 - 060^o 8 knots. W.W. (A/C W. Sqdn. 1640/22 to 15 Group.)

/1940 ...

758

War Diary.

22.12.41.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. - contd.

1940. Am over enemy sub. in 45.04 N., 18.59W., sighted on surface. (A/C using call sign 07MW. 1940/22 to 15 Group.)
2022. German S/M at 2022 G.M.T. code message on 5660 K/Cs bearing 348/2 sensed. (V.A.Malta 2024B/22 to C. in C. Med., C.O.I.S.Alexandria).

Submarines Attacked.

By U.S.S.
HAMILTON,
LUDLOW.

Comtaskforce 19 reports U.S.S.HAMILTON made a definite sound contact at 1000 G.C.T. /21 in 59°-01' N., 34°-02' W. Made a depth charge attack but results are unknown, Lost contact. At 1120 in same general locality LUDLOW made sharp sound contact, made depth charge attack and lost contact. (Opnav. 0200Z/22, to Admty.) HAMILTON and LUDLOW made good sound contacts at 1000 and 1120 G.C.T./21 in 59°-01' N. 34°-02' W. Our R.D.F. bearings p.m./21 and a.m./22 give fair indications of subs. North of 42° N. and West of 30° W. Positions as yet cannot be determined from these R.D.F. bearings X. (Opnav, 1545/22, to Admty.)

By A/C.

Am over enemy S/M in 45.10 N., 19.40 W., sighted on surface and observed to submerge. Have ~~attacked~~ attacked with depth charges and estimate no hits. (A/C Duty L. 1318/22 to 15 Group).

By WESTCOTT
20/12.

Your 2230A/20. Report whether Hedgehog was used in last attack. (C. in C. W.A. 1817A/22 to WESTCOTT (R) Admty.) Your 1812/22nd (1817A intended). My 2230/20 was incorrect. First, second, and fourth attack were combined with Hedgehog and depth charge. 3rd and 5th attack depth charges only. Unexplained explosion at 1845 occurred after fourth attack roughly 2 minutes after firing Hedgehog and 1 minute after explosions of depth charges. Last attack of 40 minutes later and no contact being obtainable inside 900 yards time to fire was obtained by stop watch. (WESTCOTT, 2230A/22 to C. in C. W.A., (R) Admty.) See also C. in C. W.A. 1801A/23).

By ARCTIC
RANGER.

1. My 1246A/22 refers. (N.T. in W.D.)
2. At 0135/22 in position 143° Almina Point 9, ARCTIC RANGER attacked contact. Result doubtful. 4 (? underwater) explosions heard, one very loud. (F.O.C.N.A. 2350A/22 to Admty.)

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
"Archery"

TUNA sailed this morning escorted by STELLA PEGASI as far as 60° 52' N. 0° 22' W.

At 1620 GNEISENAU was seen berthed at the T.B. Station at Brest, emitting smoke and with bows pointing west. Orders were given to reinstitute the Biscay S/M patrol.

TETCOTT (new Hunt class destroyer) was in collision last night in the Minches with corvette HEARTSEASE who was badly holed and was towed to Greenock. TETCOTT is badly damaged above water.

British Air Operations.

Wilhelmshaven was attacked last night.

At 0900 today an aircraft reported a 12000 ton tanker in 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W. steering 205° at 12 knots, which increased speed on sighting the aircraft. The aircraft subsequently attacked with depth charges and A/S bombs, estimating one hit and reducing the vessel's speed, leaving an oil track, course altered to 160°. VANOC (escorting H.G.76) proceeded to intercept and aircraft were sent to patrol from Ferrol to 100 miles to the N.W. At 2010 a U-boat was sighted and VANOC was ordered to abandon the search at 0400 if not in contact, and rejoin H.G.76.

Mining.

Operations
H.J.
S.N.26 C.

WELSHMAN and MANXMAN laid mines last night off Brest.
SOUTHERN PRINCE and WELLS laid mines today off the Butt of Lewis.

/Mining ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining. - Contd.

Mining of
Humber area.

Greek S.S. STYLIANOS CHANDRIS from Convoy F.S.679 was mined and sunk 2 miles S.W. of 62 D Buoy at 1945/22.

S.S. LEOPOLD II (Belgian) in F.S.679 was mined and sunk at 0215A in 52° 53' 48" N., 2° 5' 20" E. S.S. ROKOS VERGOTTIS (Greek) in Convoy F.S.679 was damaged early this morning off 55A buoy, presumably by a mine. She was taken in tow by GUILLEMOT but grounded later in approx. 52° 52' 48" N., 2° 12' 12" E.

There was some air activity over the Thames Estuary late this evening and minelaying is suspected.

North Atlantic.

Whilst concurring with F.O.C.N.A. that the recent sinkings by U-boats of British and Spanish ships in Spanish territorial waters (see 13/12) warrant the taking of reprisals against enemy merchant vessels in Spanish territorial waters T.L. do not yet consider this advisable since the enemy dispose of a much greater force of S/MS than ourselves for such a purpose and would be likely to throw off all restraint in attacking the important Spanish ore trade with the U.K. if we begin attacking enemy ships in Spanish waters.

Operation
"Pantaloons".

ATHENE left Gibraltar this evening with 2 destroyers, carrying Hurricanes for Takoradi.

South Atlantic.

BULOLO and ASTURIAS are to patrol to intercept French S.S. PERSEE (ex PIERRE L.D.) expected to sail from Saigon via Cape or Cape Horn with rubber for Germany.

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean.

It was reported that S.S. COZALLA (ex-SERAFIN TOPIC) sailed from Algiers ~~from~~ an unknown destination at 1300 today.

Several mines have been accounted for off Valetta harbour during the last 3 days. Enemy aircraft have been operating at night at very low levels off Valetta harbour for the past two weeks. Malta was bombed this evening and possibly some mines were laid.

Air R/C yesterday and today showed considerable shipping traffic off the Tripolitania coast especially in the Misurata area. On the night 21/22 6 or 7 large ships were seen anchored off Jedabya and vessels described as barges off Carcura.

U.79 sunk.
(Com:6843.)

HASTY and HOTSPUR sank a German U-boat at 1130 today in 32° 15' N., 25° 19' E., and took 43 prisoners. These two destroyers were A/S striking force with a convoy of returning store ships from Tobruk which was later attacked by a second U-boat and SHUNTIEN with 850 prisoners of war was torpedoed and sunk at 1900/23 in 32° 6' N., 24° 46' E., and SALVIA (corvette) which was collecting survivors was last heard at 2200 today and is feared lost.

APHIS was unsuccessfully attacked by a torpedo bomber this morning in 32° 40' N., 23° 41' E.

S.S. MEMAS reported that she was attacked by enemy aircraft at 1215B and 1247B today in 32° 20' N., 34° 0' E. No details are known.

East Indies.

There was an air raid on Rangoon this forenoon by 60 bombers escorted by fighters. Some 10 of the enemy were shot down. The attack seems to have been directed at the civilian population; damage in the harbour was apparently light. Rangoon is to be developed as a base for a force which may ultimately reach 4 divisions and 15 squadrons.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Far East.

Information has been received that attempts are likely to be made to order Norwegian vessels in the Pacific by means of W/T messages purporting to come from owners, to proceed to Japanese ports.

The Chiefs of Staff are to make recommendations to H.M.G. within the next few days, as to the extent to which reinforcements, both land and air, will have to be sent from the Middle East, first to stabilise and then to restore the position in the Far East.

China.

Hongkong.

At 0830 a communique was issued in Hongkong that fighting continued all along the lines held yesterday, with a local success for us in the south. There is a shortage of water. The enemy have been seen stripping uniforms from wounded British soldiers and have caused confusion by wearing discarded gas proof capes.

Borneo.

Sighting reports received today from British and Dutch aircraft indicate that attack on Kuching is imminent by a force comprising at least 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, and 10 transports. The destruction of Kuching aerodrome has been carried out and air R/C and striking forces have been detailed to locate and attack the convoy at first light tomorrow. It is reported that Dutch S/M K.14 sank 3 large Japanese transports and an oil tanker off Tanjong Po (N.E. of Kuching) today.

N.E.1.

2 Japanese convoys, each consisting of about 3 transports with 2 cruisers or destroyers were sighted. Landing is expected at Menado (Celebes) and Ternate (N.W. New Guinea).

Australia and New Zealand.

Australian troops arrived at Noumea today in transport ORMISTON escorted by LE TRIOMPHANT, to reinforce the local garrison.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia & New Zealand. - Contd.

A report timed 0513 today stated that Johnston Island was being shelled by a submarine.

U-Boat Campaign.

The tanker MONTEBELLO was sunk by torpedo early this morning in approx. 35° 10' N., 121° W. Shortly before this the tanker LARRY DOHENY was unsuccessfully attacked by torpedoes and gunfire.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

A/S
Trawlers
for
Faroes.

N.O.I.C. Faroos 2011A/19. There is acute shortage of A/S trawlers in all commands. LEICESTER CITY will be sailed to Faroos on return from boiler cleaning.

ii. S.O. Northern Patrol trawlers is to lend one N.P. trawler to Faroos temporarily and report name of vessel detailed.

iii. Instructions for sailing RONALDSHAY are being signalled separately. (A.C.O.S. 1258A/23 to N.O.I.C. Faroos).

Patrol
Boats
at
Brightlingsea.

Following from F.O.I.C. Harwich is submitted for favourable consideration. Begins:- Reference withdrawal of all patrol boats from Brightlingsea it is urgently requested that four may be retained. Reasons. 1530A/22. (C. in C. Nore 2018A/23 to Admty.)

Norwegian
M.F.V's
to be
re-placed.

Your 1903N/21 regarding 5 Norwegian M.F.V's. Repeat last name. If facilities available the 5 vessels are to be reconditioned as opportunity occurs ready for future use. Request names of Icelandic vessels substituted. (D.S.V.P. 2320A/23 to A.C.I.C.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Soviet
Fishing
Area.

Soviet Authorities have arranged following fishing area in which Soviet fishing trawlers may be met.

The area bounded North and South by parallels 072° 30' N. and 071° N. and between meridians 042° 30' E. and 049° 30' E.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1642C/23).

Use of
Murmansk
for
Convoys.

Following for Maclay from Llewillin. Your No. 19. We are much concerned at suggestion that it will be "a few weeks time" before Murmansk is ready for 6 or 7 ships. In my view the position is much more urgent and I hope all possible will be done to impress on Russians need for expediting development works, organisation of labour, and any necessary work on the railway.

2. Understand that there may be some difficulty about securing homeward cargoes and trust that these will also be made available with least possible delay.

3. Assume that you have persuaded Papanyin to clear up with Moscow any doubt about his power to divert vessels to Murmansk. Even if this has been done, Papanyin's discretion will evidently be fettered until he knows that Murmansk is ready and only Moscow can ensure this.

(D.N.I. 1727A/23 to S.B.N.O. Archangel).

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War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.O.10.
O.21.

Cannot comply with your 1557A/21. E.T.A. R/V 290° Bishop Rock 8 miles 2130A/23. If on 23rd proceeding on surface by day E.T.A. R/V 1200A. Unless otherwise ordered will proceed R/V unescorted on surface by day on 23rd. (O.10 0415A/23 to Capt. S.7). You are to escort O.10 and O.21 to Milford Haven arriving 0400A/24th. (Capt. S.7. 0427A/23 to CUTTY SARK). Proceed to Milford Haven escorted by CUTTY SARK fuel and remain at 4 hours notice for patrolling. (Capt. S.7. 0442A/23 to O.10, O.21). My 1721A/21 and 0427A/23. R/V and E.T.A. 2½ hours late. (Capt. S.7. 1042A/23 to CUTTY SARK)

VANQUISHER.

Your 0104A/23. Position 047° 47' N. 016° W., 20 knots. (VANQUISHER 0800A/23 to Adty.)

O.9.

My 1652A/22. Add new para. (L) O.9 escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE leave Rothesay 0930A/23 for Milford Haven. Due Milford Haven at 1930A/24. (F.O.S. 0834A/23 and 1413A/23). My 0203A/23. Sailed O.9. escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE (Capt. S.7. 0920A/23).

LA MOQUEUSE.

A.M. 2004A/22. Request you will sail LA MOQUEUSE for Liverpool on completion of duty with B.B. 15. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 0949A/23 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven.) *see also next page*

CONQUEROR.

Sailed CONQUEROR in accordance with CONQUEROR's 1400A/22. (N.O.I.C. Campbeltown 1105A/23).

URSULA.

After passing latitude 49° N. proceed direct to Falmouth to R/V as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth on 25/12. (F.O.S. 1129A/23 to URSULA). R/V 180° Lizard 5 miles daylight 25th. T.B.R. requested radius of 20' from R/V from daylight to noon 25th. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1514/23 to URSULA).

ADVENTURE.

F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1605A/20. Main engines cannot be completed by 26th and it will not be possible to move out of basin until 29th. Intend to sail about 1000/29. (ADVENTURE 1134A/23 to R.A.M.)

MANXMAN.

A.M. 1416/21. Para. 7. MANXMAN is to proceed to Liverpool where she will be taken in hand by Harland and Wolff on 29/12. 2. MANXMAN is to report E.T.A. in order that air protection may be arranged. (D.O.D.(H) 1253A/23 to MANXMAN).

/H.31.....

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements-Contd.

H.31.
H.50.
H.28.
H.33.
OTWAY.
JUNON.

Intend sailing Z5 at 0630/24 and FLUELLEN and CHILTERN at 0545/24. To R/V with H.31, H.50, H.28, H.33, OTWAY and JUNON at 0900/24 in 180° Lizard 5 miles. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1404/23).
My 1428 amend to read 6 S/M's due 180 Lizard 5 at 0900/24 not 0900/23.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1628/23).

LORD GREY.
AIGLON.

My 1254A/17. LORD GREY, AIGLON returned Greenock reporting inability to proceed due to adverse weather. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1644A/23).

*also p. 776 -*CAPE
PORTLAND.

Your 1258A/23. CAPE PORTLAND detailed for duty with N.O.I.C. Faroes. She is due to arrive Oaze Deep A.M. 25th.
(S.O. N.P. 1826A/23 to A.C.O.S.)

LA MOQUEUSE.
REINE DES
FLOTS.

Admty 2004A/22 not to F.O.C.N.A.
(1) route for LA MOQUEUSE and REINE DES FLOTS:
(A) 051° 58' N. 006° 15' W. (B) 051° 43' 007° 29'
(C) 050° 50' 010° 00' (D) 050° 00' 015° 00'
(E) 048° 00' 020° 00' (F) 041° 00' 028° 00'
passing West of Azores to (G) 020° 00' 023° 00'.
(2) C. in C. S.A. is requested to issue onward route. (3) N.O.I.C. Milford Haven is requested (a) to arrange if necessary for REINE DES FLOTS to fuel at Fayal (B) to sail ships accordingly. (C. in C. W.A. 2205A/23 to N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, C. in C. S.A.)

Operations.Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

Cancel my 1545N/22. Return to Hvalfjord.
(C.S.1. 0015N/23 to BERWICK, ANEMONE, VERONICA).

Interception
of Enemy
Tanker.

One Motor Vessel Tanker bearing 205°, distant 12 miles. My position 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W. (A/C ? K. Squadron 0900/23 to 19 Group H.Q.)
My 0900. Enemy has made a large increase of speed, at 0915. (A/C K. Sqdn. 0932/23 to 15 Group H.Q.)
Proceed forthwith to intercept enemy tanker sighted by aircraft at 0900/23 in 045° 45' N. 011° 48' W., course 205°, speed 12 knots and increased on being sighted. A/C are co-operating. (C. in C. W.A. 1010A/23 to VANOC).
My 1010A/23. Any further instructions will be issued by C. in C. Plymouth. (C. in C. W.A. 1041A/23 to VANOC).
Your 1010A/23. P.C.S. 047° 37' N. 015° 55' W., 168°, 25 knots. Fuel remaining 240 tons.
Weather report. (VANOC 1100A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

/My.....

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Interception
of Enemy
Tanker.
- Contd.

My 1048. Bad oil leak. Course 160°, speed 8 knots, 45° 50' N. 12° 2' W. (A/C K. Sqdn. 1110/23)
 My 0900. Have attacked enemy tanker with depth charges and estimate 1 hit.
 (A/C ? K. Sqdn. No T.O.O. to 19 Group H.Q. Recd. 1111/23).
 C. in C. W.A. 1010A/23. Enemy's course and speed 160°, 8 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 1132/23 to VANOC).
 My 1132. At 1110 reported position was 45° 50' N. 12° 02' W. Enemy probably damaged by depth charge attack by Sunderland. 2 Catalina shadowing, 6 Beauforts due to attack at 1400.
 (C. in C. Plymouth 1204/23 to VANOC).
 BB 1 merchant vessel tanker 45° 26' N. 11° 14' W., 135, 10. (A/C Duty S. 1210/23 to 19 Group).
 My 1100A/23. Course 135° (VANOC 1230A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)
 My 1204/23. Position enemy 45° 26' N. 11° 14' W., course 135°, 10 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 1346/23 to VANOC).
 My P.C.S. 040° 25' N. 014° 44' W. A, 122° 25 knots. (VANOC 1430A/23).
 Position given in my 1346/23 was at 1210/23. (C. in C. Plymouth 1524/23 to VANOC).
 A/C reports position tanker at 1605/23 44° 32' N. 10° 48' W., course 102°, 8 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 1656/23 to VANOC).
 3 Whitley A/C will be patrolling parallel lines 20 miles apart centre line from FERROL to 100 miles to N.W. from 2030 to 2200/23. They have been informed of your position. Enemy A/C active in vicinity. (C. in C. Plymouth 1730/23 to VANOC)
 Enemy Tanker is about 12,000 tons. (C. in C. Plymouth 2306/23 to VANOC).
 U-boat reported by A/C in 43° 52' N. 9° W. at 2010 (C. in C. Plymouth to VANOC 2316/23).
 Unless in contact abandon search at 0400 and rejoin H.G. 76. (C. in C. Plymouth 2354/23 to VANOC).

Operation
Q.N.

My 0936A/20 and 1545A/21 4th M.T.B. Flotilla are to return to Felixstowe.
 (C. in C. Nore 1012A/23).
 Departure 4th M.T.B. Flotilla. E.T.A. Felixstowe 1300A. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1110A/23).

Operation
"Archery"

Scapa departure TUNA escorted by STELLA PEGASI. (A.C.O.S. 1028A/23).
 TUNA sailed Scapa passing east of Orkneys and Shetlands escorted by STELLA PEGASI to 060° 52' N. 000° 22' W., then unescorted diving by day to patrol area C.5. (A.C.O.S. 1032/23 to S/M's Area A.)
 TUNA escorted by STELLA PEGASI are due 060° 52' N. 0° 22' W. at 0300/24 from southward. (F.O.C.O.S. 2125/23 to PRINCESS J. CHARLOTTE).

/Operation.....

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations-Contd.

Operation
"Anklet".

Following received N.O.I.C. Lerwick begins ESKIMO, LAMERTON, PRINCE ALBERT, GREY RANGER sailed 0539A/23. Ends. (R.A.D. H.F. 1130A/23 to S.O. Force J.)
PRINCES JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE and WHEATLAND sailed. (N.O.I.C. Lerwick 1351A/23 to S.O. Force J).
One extractor pump broken down, making ship operationally unfit. Repair beyond ship's staff.
My P.C.S. 470° Muckle Flugga 6 miles, proceeding to East of Shetlands. Request instructions. (PRINCES\$ J CHARLOTTE 1930A/23 to A.C.O.S, Reptd. S.O. Force J.)
Your 1930A/23. Return Scapa if weather permits. (F.O.C.O.S. 2100A/23 to PRINCES\$ J CHARLOTTE).

Exercise
"Victor II".

Admiralty 2335/13 January 1941 referred to Exercise "Victor".
An exercise "Victor II" on similar lines to the Exercise previously carried out will take place in February, 1942.
Exercise "Victor II" is now being planned by C. in C. H.F. and the same degree of co-operation between all Authorities concerned will be required as for the January exercise. (A.C.N.S. H. 1233A/23).

Biscay
S/M
Patrol.

Following S/M Patrol Positions numbered 20 to 31 both inclusive are established in Bay of Biscay. Details. (F.O.S. 1534A/23).
See Summaries Folder.
Bring H.32, H.43, H.34, to immediate notice for sea. (F.O.S. 2029A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).
Proceed forthwith to patrol in 46° 57' N. 6° 42' W.
Object to attack and then report enemy Cruisers and Battlecruisers. (F.O.S. 2039A/23 to URSULA).
F.O.S. 1534A/23. Sail H.32, H.34, H.43, as soon as ready proceeding submerged by day to patrol in following numbered positions: H.32 position 20. H.34. position 23. H.43. position 29.
object as in F.O.S. 0117A/16/12.
(F.O.S. 2054A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).
Request S/M's arriving at Falmouth 24/12 may be prepared for Patrol and brought to immediate notice for sea as soon as possible after arrival. (F.O.S. 2322A/23 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).

East
Coast
Patrol.

Departure M.L.'s 149 and 151 on patrol. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1538A/23).

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

S.B.R. S.B.R. in Area 73 west of 009° W. and in Area 76 west of 8° 30' W. and in Area 556 south of 045° N. are cancelled from 1600A/23. (F.O.S. 1041A/23).

Tanker attacked. See Operations.

Biscay Patrol. (C. in C. Plymouth 1730/23 to VANOC).
See Operations.

Enemy Air Activity.

LUCELLUM
(Bombed 19/12). Propose retaining Rescue Tug CHERBOURGEOIS III here until condition of LUCELLUM is secure. (N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 1145A/23).

A/C over Faroes. One unidentified A/C flew over Svino, Nolso and Syderto today between 1125 and 1145, height about 2000 feet. As there was no air patrol today A/C presumed enemy although no incident reported. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1610A/23).

Mining.

LEOPOLD II
(Belgian, 2902 Tons) sunk. Dangerous wreck with 2 masts showing in position 205° ½ mile of 56 Buoy. Name of ship LEOPOLD II. Explosion felt at 0220. (corrupt group) picking up survivors. (WHADDON 0323A/23).
Arrival at 0702A M.L. 194 with 7 survivors from LEOPOLD II sunk by mine 1 mile N.W. of 56 buoy at 0215A. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 0731A/23).

ROKOS
VERGOTTIS
(Greek, 5637 Tons) damaged. Am taking in tow Greek ship damaged by mine or torpedo position 55 A buoy. Ship making water slowly aft but otherwise all right. (GUILLEMOT 0444A/23).
My 0444 tow slow and difficult. Request tug may be sent. (GUILLEMOT 0513A/23).
My 0444. Damaged ship is ROKOS VERGOTTIS. No casualties. Am towing under difficulties and making no headway. SAPPHIRE and CALENDULA standing by. Request fighter protection in morning. My position 052° 45' N. 002° 10' E. (GUILLEMOT 0558A/23).
Departure tug SUPERMAN to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0625A/23).
Departure Tug DIVERSION to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0725A/23).

/Departure.....

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.ROKOS
VERGOTTIS
(Greek
5637 Tons)
damaged
- Contd.

Departure Salvage Vessel NESSUS to assist ROKOS VERGOTTIS. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0845/A/23). Proceed to overtake your convoy. (C. in C. Nore 0929A/23 to CALENDULA). Chief Salvage Officer, Yarmouth, reports ROKOS VERGOTTIS ashore Smith's Knoll one mile E.S.E. from 55B buoy and abandoned. After decks awash. Tug ropes parted owing to heavy swell. Will attempt salvage as soon as weather moderates. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1800A/23). (C. in C. Nore 1908A/23).

Operation
Q.O.

Proceed in accordance with M.S.9's 1410A/22. (C. in C. Nore 0725A/23 to M.S. 9, M.S. 13). My 1410A/22. 3 Laps completed 9 mines reported. 32 mines exploded 3 sweeps lost. At least 4 Cables clear water swept to East and West of mines. Explosions show considerable number of gaps in line and variation depth. Intend returning harbour to replenish gear tonight if possible, otherwise after daylight tomorrow. (S.O. 9th M/F 1755A/23). Weather permitting propose both flotillas sail 0900/24 position G 11 45 position E 12 40. 13th M/S Flotilla sweep north and south Laps as in M.S. 13's 1755A/23. 9th M.S. sweep 5 miles East and West Laps to northwards of original position B.S. 26. Both flotillas return through position G.17 45, (? N) 19 45 and enter harbour. (S.O. 9th M/S F. 2203A/23). Your 2203/23. Approved. Do not sail till ordered. (C. in C. Nore 2327A/23 to M/S 9.)

Operation
S.N.26.C.

Sailed SOUTHERN PRINCE. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 0836/23). Arrived SOUTHERN PRINCE and WELLS. (N.O.I.C. Port Z.A. 2310/23).

WELSHMAN.

Nothing to report. E.T.A. Milford Haven 1240. (WELSHMAN 0908/23). Request you will sail WELSHMAN as convenient for Port Z.A. (A.C.N.S. H. 1615A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

Tees.
Hartlepool.

Port of Tees and Hartlepool now open in accordance with my 1815/21/12. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1145/23).

/NELLIE.....

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.-Contd.

NELLIE
(Mined
21/12).

NELLIE unable to ^freloat owing heavy leaks. Necessary lay out anchors to secure vessel whilst salvage operations in progress. Can you place YORKSHIREMAN at our disposal during salvage operation owing suitable draft. (Chief Salvage Officer, Hull, 1520/23 to F.O. Humber). F.S.678. NELLIE arrived Humber and beached after being mined. (N.C.S.O. Humber 1724A/23).

STYLIANOS
CHANDRIS
(Greek,
6059 Tons)
sunk.

Struck Mine at 1945/22. 4. Master thinks near H.5. Buoy. Details. Ship bound Methil to Hull in F.S.679 sank 2 miles 235° from 62 D Buoy at 2045/22. Total crew 30, including 2 gunners, landed Grimsby. Only minor casualties. (F.O. Humber 1545A/23) (C. in C. Nore 1908A/23). My 1908A/23. Amend to read position of wreck of STYLIANOS CHANDRIS is 235° 2 miles from 62D Buoy. (C. in C. Nore 2042A/23).

Bristol
Channel.

2 Type A Mines detonated today by Sweeper at 1315A/ and 1340A respectively. Details. (Capt. M/S Bristol Channel 1713A/23).

Humber.

One magnetic mine exploded today, at 1334 by Sweepers. Details. (F.O. Humber 1818A/23).

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

R/C of Brest at 1620/23.
D. GNEISENAU left dry dock since 21/12 and is now berthed T/B station within boom with bows pointing west. Vessel emitting smoke. Light coloured camouflage over bows and between starboard side and quay. Drydock No. 9 now unoccupied. Position of SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN unchanged and no apparent alteration their camouflage. Two possibly three S/MS port Militaire as 20/12. In Rade position of Gueydon Unit not photod. Two M/V's 330/350 ft. departed Rade where 530 ft. tanker seen usual anchorage. 500 ft. armed M/V seen entering Goulet from west. (PRU St. Eval 2015/23).
My 2159A/22. Preliminary report of photographic R/C of Brest at 1615A/23 shows GNEISENAU alongside Torpedo Boat Station. SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN still in dock. (D.D.I.C. 2037A/23).

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE.
TETCOTT.

Have been in collision with HEARTSEASE. Am towing HEARTSEASE to Clyde. My position 56° 56' N. 8° 52' W. (TETCOTT 0107A/23). HEARTSEASE seriously holed in collision with

/TETCOTT.....

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE.
TETCOTT.
- Contd.

TETCOTT. Proceed with all despatch to her assistance. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0143A/23 to CAROLINE MOLLER).
Proceed to escort HEARTSEASE. TETCOTT has HEARTSEASE in tow proceeding Clyde at 0130. CAROLINE MOLLER being sailed from Lough Foyle to take over towing. (C. in C. W.A. 0222A/23 to NORTHERN DAWN).
Sailed CAROLINE MOLLER. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0545A/23).
Have made 8 attempts to tow HEARTSEASE and am waiting for daylight. Damage to TETCOTT above water serious, below water apparently little. W/T Office wrecked. No casualties. (TETCOTT 0720A/23).
Proceed to escort HEARTSEASE. (C. in C. W.A. 1146A/23 to VERVAIN).
HEARTSEASE in tow. P.C.S. at noon, 056° 52' N. 006° 48' W., 215°, 3.5. (TETCOTT 1225A/23).
TETCOTT reports position at 2000A/ 220° Skerryvore 12.5 miles, speed 3 knots. VERVAIN in company. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2245A/23 to CAROLINE MOLLER).
Can you give me position for R/V at daylight tomorrow. (CAROLINE MOLLER 2200/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

TOKEN
(Wooden
Steam
Drifter)
aground.

TOKEN has gone aground on Skerry, Skerry Sound E. Entrances, South of blockship EMERALD WINGS. C.S.V.O. considers salvage impracticable. Request relief steam drifter may be allocated to Scapa drifter pool for S.C.E. (Special Construction). (R.A. Scapa 1731/23).

Shipping and Convoys.

Convoy.

Anchored with rear ships of Convoy near B.4. Visibility nil. (VANITY 1106A/23).

STAFFORDSHIRE.

My 1517/19.
(i) FORTH and STAFFORDSHIRE escorted by CURACOA and WHADDON are to be sailed for Clyde so as to pass May Island at 0200/28.
(ii) You are to take ships addressed and STAFFORDSHIRE under your orders and sail them accordingly, to pass Dunnet Head at 1500/28. C. in C. W.A. has been requested to provide onward escort from Dunnet Head. (C. in C. Rosyth 1121/23 to FORTH)

/Belfast.....

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys-Contd.

Belfast
Fleetwood
Ferry.

Admiralty 2323A/24/10 and C. in C. W.A. 1130A/25/10. Arrangements have now been completed and the service will run between Belfast and Fleetwood, starting from Belfast on 29/12. Programme up to the end of March is as follows. (D.O.D. H. 1306A/23).

F.S.678.
F.N.586.

F.S. No.678 and F.N. No.586 proceeding.
(LIDDESDALE 1404A/23).

F.S.679.

Convoy F.S. No.679 anchored in fog between B.6 and B.6A buoy. (LEEDS 1425/23).

BARANDA.

BARANDA arrived heretoday having lost as result of heavy weather all the 1920 gallons petrol loaded as deck cargo at Leith. This petrol was carried in 4 gallon tins. On her last voyage to Faroes she lost in similar manner 2196 out of the 2500 gallons carried. It is considered this constitutes a very grave danger to the steamship beside creating a serious shortage of petrol for military purposes. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 1605A/23).

U.R.5.

Your 1706/20. U.R. 5. sailing is to be postponed until ships from O.N.S. 49 can be included. (D.T.D. 1605A/23 to N.C.S.O. Aultbea).

O.N. 48.

Convoy O.N. 48 not met. BATTLEFORD, BUCTOUCHE, and PICTOU in company. HEPATICA, MOOSEJAW, and 4 M/V's 40 miles ahead proceeding on route. My P.C.S. estimated 058° 00' N. 020° 55' W., 270°, 6.5. (ST. LAURENT 2000Z/23 to U.S. Chief of Naval Ops.)

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Sinkings in
Spanish
Waters.

Concur that sinkings referred to in para. (ii) of your 1622/13 warrant the taking of reprisals.

2. Spanish Ore trade with U.K. is, however, of very great importance at present and if we begin attacking enemy ships in Spanish waters the enemy are likely to throw aside all restraint in attacking this trade.

3. Enemy can dispose a much greater force of S/Ms than we can for purpose of attacking shipping.

4. Therefore not yet considered advisable to attack enemy M/V in Spanish territorial waters.

5. Enemy infringements of Spanish Sovereignty and attacks on Spanish Shipping will be used as justification for any incident that may arise out of instructions in A.T.0119/28/11.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 0027A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

P.36.

My P.C. & S. 043° N. 011° 13' W. 175° 9.5 knots.
(P.36 0114A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Your 0014A/23 acknowledged. Dive by day 25th and 26th adjust speed to pass through 037° 00' 010° 25' at 0730A/25. 2. R/V escort in position (Z) 0830A/27. 3. Bombing restrictions instituted assuming you will dive between 037° 00' 010° 25' and 036° 40' 010° 10' on 25th also between 036° 15' 008° 15' and 036° 10' 007° 35' on 26th. 4. A/S trawler on patrol inside 40 miles Cape Recca.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/23, to P.36 (R) P.39).

WISHART,
VIDETTE,
BATORY.

E.T.A. Gate 0800/23 VIDETTE and BATORY in company. Request dockyard berth for WISHART and assistance for test of leakages in condenser.
(WISHART, 0350A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Arrival WISHART, VIDETTE, BATORY.
(F.O.C.N.A., 0816A/23).

French
Shipping.

Passings 22/12 eastward IMERETHIE II, SURVILLE, MAROC, all full. (V.A.C.N.A. 0925A/23 to Admty. for M.E.W.)

WESTCOTT.

Arrival. (F.O.C.N.A. 1028A/24).

French Ship.

Departure CAUDEBEC for Casablanca via Lisbon.
(Porto 1029/23).

BADSWORTH.

C. in C. S.A. 1825Z/21. Amended route. From C. proceed to new D.D. 028° 06' N. 013° 35' W. thence to E, omit D. (F.O.C.N.A. 1018A/23 to BADSWORTH).

/Force H. ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. - contd.

Force H.
destroyer
screen.
ATHENE.

If Force H has to proceed to sea in near future to deal with ships leaving Brest, following immediate action necessary. (a) Postpone sailing ATHENE. (b) Sail DINGLEDALE to westward. (2) Subject to 1(a), and using all destroyers of 19th D.F. and 13th D.F., following will be numbers available for Screen:- Now - 6; 25th - 7; 30th - 9. WHITEHALL excluded owing to poor endurance. BLANKNEY, FORTUNE, defects, date of completion uncertain. (3) 8 Swordfish should be available for ARGUS. (4) Request very early reply. (F.O., H., 1118A/23, to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. H.F.)

Your 1118A/23. It is of greatest importance to Far Eastern air reinforcements that ATHENE should sail as soon as possible. In view of apparent U/Boat situation West of the Straits and unlikelihood that Brest Force is immediately ready to sail, this reduction to long range screen will have to be accepted. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1626A/23 to F.O. Force H).

** sailed - see next page*

MIRROR.
cable
operations.

Admiralty 2215A/22 (2125 intended). Consider it preferable to carry out operation in position proposed in A.M.1948A/18/11 where water is much shallower and easier to work on cable. Therefore intend to adhere to position given in A.M.1948A/18/11 (F.O.C.N.A., 1114A/23, to Admty.)

Route for
S/M's.

UNA's 1705A/15. In view of frequent passages now being made by submarines from U.K. to Gibraltar, suggest that practice of ordering submarines to report on crossing 43° N. be discontinued as this almost certainly provides the enemy with knowledge of our submarines' movements and routes (F.O.S., 1131A/23, to F.O.C.N.A.)

Enemy Tanker
Attacked by
A/C.

BONNO ex
ole JACOB

At 0900/23 aircraft reported a tanker in 45° 45' N. 11° 48' W. course 205° speed 12 knots, which increased on sighting aircraft. A/C subsequently attacked with D/C's, estimating 1 hit. Speed reduced to 8 knots, leaving oil track, course altered 160°. VANOC has been ordered to intercept. (D.D.I.C. 1224A/23, to F.O.C.N.A.)

MARSDALE.

My 1550A/21 and 1328A/22 (situation report). Cancel reference to MARSDALE, sailing has been delayed. F.O.C.N.A., 1247A/23, to A.I.G.65).

BADSWORTH.
CAMPBELTOWN.
BATORY.

A.M. 2027A/17. BADSWORTH and CAMPBELTOWN may be held to act as return escort for BATORY. (D.O.D. (F), 1343A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

/MARON ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. - contd.

MARON.

Situation 2000A/23 (i) MARON 42.12 33.45 236°
(F.O.C.N.A., 1350A/23, to A.I.G.65).

S.S. DUERO.
(Spanish).

Admty. 1921/4/9. S.S. DUERO was thoroughly examined at Gibraltar 21st. By Contraband Control and Security.

2. Since date of previous report Master and crew have changed. Attitude of ship is now friendly and nothing suspicious found.

3. Recommend removal from Admiralty Black List and M.E.W's G List. (F.O.C.N.A., 1608A/23 to Admty.)

LORD GREY.
AIGLON.

My 1234A/17/12. LORD GREY and AIGLON returned to Greenock owing to adverse weather conditions (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1648A/23 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada for B.V.C. Horta.) *See p. 766.*

COZALLA.

My 20.10 22/12. U.S. Charge d'Affaires has just heard that COZALLA sailed from Algiers for unknown destination at 13.00 today. (Tangier 1735/23, to N.O.I.C. Gibraltar).

ATHENE.

Sailed ATHENE escorted by EXMOOR, CROOME routed in accordance with my 1740/20. S. of A. 14 knots. ATHENE has endurance for 4000 miles. (F.O.C.N.A., 1918A/23, to Admty. etc.)

Fuelling of
U Boats in
Vigo.

Your 1246A 21st. I will take this up at once but would welcome being detailed. *784/23*
(N.A. Madrid, 1930/23 to N.O.i/c Gibraltar).

South Atlantic.

QUEEN MARY.

Tanker SCOTTISH CHIEF should be retained for bunkering QUEEN MARY at Capetown. 2. Request report of likely requirements of fuel and water at Trinidad.

3. Destination in U.S.A. probably New York. (D. of S.T. 0256A/23, to F.O.I.C., Simonstown).

Wreck.

Wreck dangerous to navigation in 004° 14' 30" N. 007° 12' 30" E. in 8 fathoms.
(S.O.I. Freetown, 1236Z/23 to Q.G.B. 80).

/W.S.12 Z. ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - contd.

W.S.12 Z.

My 1919/21. Weather is delaying sailing from Durban of W.S.12 Z. 9 ships are outside and remaining 6 will proceed as soon as weather moderates, probably A.M./24.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1427Z/23, to C. in C. E.I.)

GENERAL
BIRDWOOD.

M.S.Trawler sailed 1300/23 for Walvis Bay routed through (a) 005° 00' N. 003° 30' E. (b) 000° 00' 007° 50' E. (c) 006° 20' S. 010° 45' E. (d) 019° 00' 010° 45'. M.W.V.recognition signal to 11/1/1942
Coal required approx. (?624) tons, E.T.A. 3/1.
(N.O.I.C.Lagos, 1610Z/23 to N.O.I.C. Walvis Bay).

Movements.

My 1031Z 10th amend as follows.
BULOLO's visit signal will be made by me.
(II) BULOLO on leaving Buenos Aires is to patrol southern half of J.33 and 34.
(III) ASTURIAS is to visit Rio De Janiero 8/1 then to patrol K.33 and 34.
Visit signal will be made by me.
(IV) Intend in BIRMINGHAM to visit Rio De Janeiro 30/12 but further signal will be made concerning subsequent movements.
(V) Object of extension of patrols to eastwards is interception of French ship PERSEE referred in C. in C. S.A. 2141Z/13 addressed S.A.Station.
(R.A.S.A.D.1651Z/23 to BULOLO, ASTURIAS).

ENGADINE.

A.M.1216A/19th. ENGADINE sailed from Freetown p.m./22 by direct route to Capetown E.T.A. 1/1.
6 Swordfish and 2 Hurricanes were badly damaged in heavy weather on passage out.
(C. in C. S.A., 1845Z/23 to Admty.)

Vichy
Shipping.

1. Foreign Office have authorised S.O.E. to take action against enemy shipping and Vichy ships working for Vichy interests except those engaged in the trades approved by M.E.W.
2. The following conditions apply:-
 - (a) French West Africa - At present S.O.E. have a free hand but F.O. will review periodically.
 - (b) Spanish and Portuguese African Colonies:- Consent of Head of Mission concerned in each case, or of responsible consular officer in colonial territories, is required for action, including suborning of masters or crews.
3. Local representative S.O.E. has been instructed to obtain concurrence of C. in C. S.A. in each case where maritime action is proposed.
4. Admty. have requested C. in C. S.A. to afford all assistance possible in projects involving seizure of certain axis ships in Fernando Po and Lobito.
5. Cover must ensure that collision with British authorities or forces will not be apparent.
6. Request you will give any assistance possible in Fernando Po project (W.O., 1935/23, to G.O.C. in C., W.Africa).

/BULOLO, ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - contd.

BULOLO.

Siamese Vessel.

S.O.(I) Montevideo's 1924Z/22nd, 2119Z/22nd.
Unsuccessful search during whole of daylight 23rd
in maximum visibility indicates that Siamese
vessel is not on direct route to Durban at a speed
between $6\frac{1}{2}$ and 11 knots. My P.C. and S. are at
2200 Z $027^{\circ} 22'$ South $041^{\circ} 38'$ West $104^{\circ} 15\frac{1}{2}$ knots.
Weather report. (BULOLO, 2230Z/23 to R.A.S.A.D. etc)

779

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Libya

Military situation reports. (C.in C. M.E. 0019/23 1810/23 2055/23 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

LANCE

A.S. Malta's 1602/5, concur in proposal to dock vessel for examination in three months time or earlier if rivets necessitate it, subject to ship being available. Careful survey should be made and report forwarded. (D.of D. Bath 0113A/23 to C.in C. Med.).

R.N. Air Section Aden.

T.Q. 736 23/12. Concur to proposal in your X 5029 18/12. (1530/18). (H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 0846/23 to Air Min.).

Navigation Danger. Cap de Garde.

Following received from Lands End Radio. Intercept at 0941 G.M.T. DE FUX TTT Avurnav Bizerte NR 9233 spave de vapeur en derivée dangereuse pour la navigation a 8 miles 4 au 110 du feu du Cap de Garde (36° 56' N. 7° 47' E.) le 22 a 17 heures 2010/22/12 Comar Bizerte 0945/23. Lands End Radio. Telegrams T.O.R. 1020/23. (C.in C. Plymouth T.O.R. 1035/23 to Admty.). Translation by O.I.C: Wreck of ship drifting in a manner dangerous to shipping at 8.4 miles bearing 110° from the lighthouse of Cap de Garde on 22nd at 1700.

APHIS A/C attack.

Torpedo attack by one aircraft torpedo missed P.C. and S. 32° 40' N. 23° 41' E. 299° 5 knots. (APHIS 1035/23 to S.O. Force I Tobruk via WITHERINGTON).

KIMBERLEY KINGSTON.

Join Capt. (D) 7th D.F. at charted position of Shiek Mirbat I. Buoy at 1645 today Tuesday. (R.A.D. Med. 1036B/23 to KIMBERLEY, KINGSTON).

Precautions against Human Torpedoes.

Your 0930B/20th. Present stock of explosive charges would only last one week at increased rate. Intend maintain old rate and size of charges until further supplies arrive. Request these may be sent at first opportunity. (V.A. Malta 1155B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Enemy M/V.

P.C. and S. of enemy M/V 37° 06' 11° 04' 110° 5 knots. (A/C B Sqdn. 1240/33 to Hal Far).

VARLAAM AVANESOV (Torpedoed 19/12).

My 1441B/21. (N.T. in W.D.) Lt. Cmdr. Rogers and all crew arrived Istanbul today except one injured man hospital Chanak. (2) AVANESOV (Correct name should be ESOV.

/VARLAAM....

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean, contd.

VARLAAM
AVANESOV
(Torpedoed
20/12/12) by U.S.S.
-Contd.
(B.R. 1337.)

VARLAAM AVANESOV - D.S. (840) hit engine room at 2151/19 by torpedo from submarine 3 cables from Turkish Coast 126°. Cape Baba 2½ miles. First torpedo missed and exploded on beach. Scuttling charge exploded with detonation torpedo and ship started settling at once, finally sinking at approx. 0200/20 in at least 30 fathoms. Crew landed 3 miles East Cape Baba and eventually reached Chanak 2400/21.
(3) Nationality of submarine not identified but similar Italian BALILLA class.
(4) Turkish soldiers Cape Baba stated S/M had been sighted in vicinity that afternoon.
(5) Admty. pass to Adm. Miles.
(A.N.A. Istanbul 1306B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

MEMAS A/C
attack.

MEMAS reported herself attacked by enemy aircraft at 1215 B and 1247 B/23 in 032° 20' N. 034° 00' E.
(N.O.I.C. Port Said 1420B/23 to HYACINTH).
MEMAS attacked by aircraft (position) LOCH MELFORT proceeding to investigate at 1515C/23. Air protection sent but had to return through weather.
(N.O.I.C. Haifa 1603C/23 to C.in C. Med.).

TRUSTY.

Return Harbour on completion of exercises. Acknowledge.
(Capt. S.1 1431B/23 to TRUSTY).

TRUANT.

Small convoy expected from Westward A.M./24th. U/B's have been sighted near end of searched channel. You may enter harbour any time after 0800B. Give sweepers wide berth.
(Capt. S.1 1605B/23 to TRUANT).

Enemy
Units.

2 Destroyers 1 Merchant Vessel 3250 N 1630 E. 280° 10 knots.
(Med. A/C A., 1615/23).

NEPTUNE

Following New Zealand Officers are missing believed killed when NEPTUNE was lost on 19/12/1941 (C.S.7 1715B/23 to N.Z.N.B.).
List of ratings following.
(V.A. Malta 2350B/23).

KANDAHAR.

Following ratings of Chatham and Portsmouth Port Divisions missing believed killed when KANDAHAR was lost on 20/12 1941.
(C.S. 7. 1750B/23 to Admty).

/Enemy.....

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. -Contd.

Enemy
destroyers.

It is possible a small force enemy destroyers may be proceeding Tripoli passing Pantellaria at about 0100B/24 speed 22 knots. (2) Special Wellington, call sign R 8 V V, will endeavour locate after dark. (3) You will be kept informed.

(V.A. Malta 1825B/23 to S.O. Group 2, C.in C. Med. F.O.C.N.A. S.O. Force H.).

Malta
raids.

Night 22/23. 11 Ju. 88's 8 alerts, 1628, 1737, 1930, 2127, 2303, 0115, 0324, 0450 hours. Bombs land. No damage A.A. fired. 1 Ju 88 damaged. Hurricanes up. No interceptions, bad visibility.

(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1845/23).

Part 2. 23rd 0900 hours 20 fighters including M.E. 109's escorted 2 Ju. 88's attack Grand Harbour. 2 houses damaged. 1 Hurricane damaged 1 pilot slightly wounded.

(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1850/23).

Enemy
mining
Malta.

Minelaying suspected in North West Channel. After passing through 0600A position ordered, pass through 36.13 N. 13.34 E. thence by Q.B.B. 197 para 2 (B) and para 4.

(N.O.I.C. Malta 1903B/23 to S.O. Gp 2).

→ SHUNTIEN
torpedoed.

SHUNTIEN hit by torpedo 32° 06' 24° 46'.
(SALVIA 1908/23 to Alexandria W/T.).

Destroyer
Patrol.

My 1143B/23 (N.T. in W.D.). Patrol is to be continued till 0800B/25. KIMBERLEY is to be detached to reach Alex Boom at 0900B/26. NIZAM is to leave Alexandria 0600B/24 to R/V with Capt. (D) 7th D.F. in 31.40 N. 30.10 E. at noon/24.

(F.O.(D) Med. 1913B/23 to Capt. D.7 NIZAM, KIMBERLEY).

→ SHUNTIEN

Your 1908. Report situation and who is in company with you.

(C.in C. Med. 2128B/23 to SALVIA).

Destroyers have proceeded with RODI. SALVIA in company picking up survivors, intend join convoy shortly, SALVIA following. SHUNTIEN sunk by submarine torpedo.

(HEYTHROP 2136B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Enemy
Mines
Malta.

4 mines have been detonated on Oropesa Sweep off Valetta Harbours in over 50 fathoms.

(2) One moored Antennae mine on the surface in 40 fathoms, has 4 floats.

(3) Attempts will be made to recover this mine intact.

(4) Two Acoustic and 4 Magnetic mines have also /been.....

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Enemy
mines
Malta
-Contd.

(4). been detonated outside swept (100%) channels in 40 fathoms area has not been swept (100%) for (?6 miles).

(5) All these mines have been accounted for in last 3 days.

(6) Enemy aircraft have been operating at night at very low levels off Valetta Harbour for past two weeks. Is there any evidence to show that aircraft can lay German Type T mines or any other types moored mines without landing in water?

(N.O.I.C. Malta 2033B/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Enemy
Units.

One M/V 3 small craft 180° 1 355° Misu Ata 5. (A/C D. 2117/23 to Med. A/C Call sign R 7 M). P.C. and S of enemy destroyer, 110 33° N. 14° E. 11, 090°. Am proceeding to investigate in direction 270°.

(R 8 V (Med A/C) Duty D. 2225/23 to R 7 M).

P.C. and S. of one enemy M/V and 4 enemy destroyers 1 D 33° N. 14° E? 7 - 270° - 8.

(A/C R 8 V D 2315/23 to R 7 M).

My 2315. One M/V 2 destroyers, A A A D.

(A/C R 8 V D 2322/23 to R 7 M).

Vichy
Gold.

American reports 3 tons gold will be flown from Algiers to Marseilles tomorrow and further 8 tons 26/12.

(C.G. Tangier 2300/23 to S.O.(I)Gib. Admty.).

783

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.S.S.
PROSPEROUS.

PROSPEROUS aground 9 miles west of Cutch Mandui Number one hold and number one leaking. Understand charterers have sent lighter and tug to lighter (? lighten) ship. Davidson.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay, 0714Z/23.)

W.S. 12X.

Request disposal instructions of ships of W.S. 12X due Bombay 27/12.
(S.S.T.O. India, 1020Z/23 to D. of S.T.)

B.M. 9.

Following transport of B.M. 9 sailed from Bombay 21st December for Singapore (carrying 8600 Indian troops).
(S.T.O. India, 1225Z/23.)

Equipment
for Malaya.

Following transports sailed from Bombay 22/12
(S.S.T.O. Bombay, 1317Z/23.)

Equipment
and stores.

Following 4 transports sailed from Bombay 22/12 for Singapore.
Request C. in C. Eastern Fleet will inform R.A. Malaya T.O.A. Singapore following transport sailed 22/12 for Colombo and Port T.
(S.S.T.O. Bombay, 1319Z/23 to R.A. Malaya.)

Rangoon
Raid.

Rangoon had its first air raid this morning 10 o'clock. Details follow later.
(Govr. Burma, 1340/23 to S. of S.)

A/S Escorts,
Durban area.

Your 1508Z/25/11.
1. Owing to shortage of ocean going A/S escorts it is not yet possible to provide more than the 5 Corvettes mentioned in A.T. 1824A/4/11.
2. If U-Boat attacks develop in this area dispersion must be adopted in the first instance.
(D.O.D.(F), 1627A/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

KUNG WO.

Your 2058Z/22 I have had to withdraw KUNG WO from Nancowry in order to repatriate labour to Singapore.
KUNG WO is a river steamer and not very suitable for operations in unsheltered waters without considerable building (in ?).
Intend to hold her pending A.C.N.B. and your reply to my 0313Z/22.
(C. in C. E.F., 1944Z/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Hong Kong.

Following communique issued 0830/22 (begins). Relatively quiet night and our positions have been maintained. Abortive attempts by small parties of the enemy to land on North side of Island during early part of the night were successfully beaten off. (Ends).

1400 (begins). Enemy continues to press his attack with great energy and has succeeded in bringing up some fresh troops. Our Forces are defending their positions resolutely with every means at their command.

(Govr. Hong Kong, No T.O.O./23 to S. of S. for Colonies.)

Following from Governor, Hong Kong, for S. of S. 1495 dated 23/12. (Begins).

General situation, Monday, Tuesday.

Enemy has slightly improved his position in last 24 hours but lines hold generally as yesterday. Troops very tired but spirit generally good, stating understood that every day's resistance is of value to Allied cause. Water position in city and on peak is most precarious, since principal reservoirs are in enemy hands and vital connections from remaining reservoirs have been extensively damaged by persistent enemy shell fire. Little more than one day's supply is at present moment available. Every effort is being made by P.W.D. to repair damage and by enemy to prevent repair. Food supplies are greatly reduced by enemy occupying many depots and by destruction through fires caused by enemy action. Civilian casualties in very round figures 4000 of whom 1000 killed but accuracy quite impossible since many report centres are in enemy hands. Enemy has practically unhindered observation of all our movements.

(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0555Z/23 to Admty.)

Situation report up to 1700 local time 23rd.

During past 24 hours enemy has kept up incessant attacks and local raids accompanied by intensive bombardments of troops and important points by dive-bombers mortars and artillery of all calibres. Communication very difficult to maintain. Some ground on Mount Cameron lost during the night was recaptured early this morning by party of Royal Marines. Position now materially unchanged.

Garrisoned Hotel was evacuated by Stanley Force last night as surrounded and untenable. Further counter attacks by Stanley Force towards Stanley Mound failed with some casualties. Enemy in possession of Indian military hospital at Tungwah east of Carolens (?Cliff) but behaving well towards wounded. Troops now very tired. Water and transport situation still very grave. Chinese Secret Intelligence indicates possible backward movement of some Japanese transport and artillery. Fortress headquarters now being bombarded. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0837Z/23 to Admty., C. in C. E.F.)

/Batavia ... ^{see} p. 786

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies - Contd. (from page 783)Troops for Malaya.

Chiefs of Staff have decided that the second Brigade Group of 17 Indian Division will be diverted to Malaya, sailing from Bombay as soon after 1/1 as C. in C. E.F. can provide necessary escort.
(W.O., 1945/23 to C. in C. India.)

Port Defences.

Your 0240Z/15/12/41. 5 H.D.M.Ls will be shipped in January and 3 in February and will be off loaded at Durban. A.L. M.O.D. 5034/41 of 29/11/41 gives pendant numbers of boats constituting the 110th M.L. Flotilla allocated to your command.
(D.D.O.D.(C), 2004A/23 to C. in C. E.I.)

Troops for Malaya.

21608/G 23/12.
Ref. G.O.C. Malaya 27363 22/12.
S.D.1. This indicates that he considers the whole 18 Div. available for Malaya in addition to 53 Inf. Bde. Group which we have agreed to. In view of your 57756 (M.O.1) please state policy to be adopted.
(C. in C. India, 2116/23 to W.O.)

Air Raid on Rangoon.

Preliminary reports first air raid are not too bad.
Strength of enemy effort 60 bombers escorted by fighters. We seem to have bagged 10 Japanese. Our losses 3 machines one pilot safe. (? 20) still serviceable.
3. In Rangoon itself although harbour was attacked fact that Japanese seem to have used A.P. bombs point to conclusion that civilian population was a major objective. Unconfirmed estimates of casualties are about 1,000 including about 400 killed. Damage to harbour seems to have been light.
(Gov. Burma, 2300/23.)

Development of Rangoon.

No. 59902.
To provide for the land and air defence of Burma both for immediate defensive and for eventual offensive needs, you should proceed immediately with administrative arrangements for the development of Rangoon as a base for a force which may ultimately reach four divisions and fifteen squadrons.
(W.O., 2325/23 to C. in C. India.)

MOST SECRET

785 A

MCST SECRET

M E S S A G E

IN

2010/23/December

From C. in C. India.

Date 24.12.41.

CIPHER

Time 0614.

Addressed C. in C. East Indies, repeated O.C. Troops Mauritius
The War Office.

IMPORTANT

21583/G cipher 23/12. 021548

Your 1056Z 10/12 and 1126Z 13/12.

S.D. 5. Responsibility for Diego Garcia.

First. India's responsibility for Diego Garcia confined to (a) provision of artisan works personnel for construction of accommodation and mounting of guns. (b) Provision of personnel and accommodation stores for 20 bedded hospital in February.

Second. Personnel in (a) para 1st above other than British are being rationed by India. Those in (b) will be maintained by Mauritius from time Mauritius garrison arrives. General Vaccas confirms this in his 2727 of December 10th to Arminia only.

Third. Troopers 58642 (Q.Ops) of Decr. 17th also confirms India not responsible for provisioning Diego Garcia.

Fourth. Question of provision of cipher for use of Diego Garcia now settled as War Office providing.

Fifth. 2 lift and force pumps being despatched Colombo as soon as possible for onward shipment Diego Garcia. Troopers 58642 of December 17th refers.

2010/23.

Advance copy sent D.C.D.O.D. (F)

D.D.I.C.

Recd from War Office 1604/26/Dec.

1st Lord

1st S.L.

2nd S.L.

4th S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (F)

N.A. 1st S.L.

D. of P. (2)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

D.N.I. (5)

D. of L.D.

D. A/S.W.

D.M.S.

D.G.D.

I.P. (2)

W.D.

D.C. (2)

Hd. of M.

D.D.I.C. (2)

E.P.S.

War Office Circulation

M.O. 10

A.A. 4.

F. 1

Q.M.G.F.

A.M.D. 8.

D.S.T.

S.T. 1.6.

D. Mov

Q(M) 3. x.

Q. (Ops)

F.W. 1.

D.A.V. & R.S.

D.Q.

Q. 2.

Air Ministry (A.M.C.S.)

Admiralty (War Registry)

India Office (Brig. Drummond)

/ HUSH distribution.

MOST SECRET

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War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - Contd. (*imp. 784*)Batavia,
Exam.
Service.

Batavia Roads Chart 933.
 (1)(a) An examination service has been established. Examination signals are shown from Edam Island Light House, on the Island of Leiden and from Batavia Light House 06° 06'18" S. 106° 48'4" E. (approx.)
 Examination area instructions and prohibited areas.
 (R.A. Malaya, 0237Z/23 to China Stn., etc.)

KAMPAR.

At Penang on 12/12 K(?AM)PAR C.O. Tempy. Lieut. Henry W. Richardson R.N.R. (T.124) (?) floating near miss and beached.
 On (? 13) December machine-gunned and bombed set on fire magazine finally exploding. No European casualties.
 (Cdre. Malaya, 1047Z/23.)

Malaya.

Situation Report, Military and Air.
 (Adv. H.Q. Malaya, 0525/23 to W.O., etc.)
 See Lion Copy.

PEREKOP
sunk.

Soviet PEREKOP, 2493 tons, for Vladivostok from Surabaya in ballast, attacked by Japanese aircraft on 20/12 and is presumed to have sunk. 8 of crew killed, 32 saved.
 (D.S., 840, 23/12.) (*18/12 BR1337.P.127*)

Danger
areas.

Graspar Straits charts affected Nos. 2137, 2149, 3597 and 1263. The area dangerous to shipping: The parallels 02° 24' S. and 03° 10' S. and the meridians 106° 50' E. and 107° 40' E.
 Any vessels entering the above area do so at their own risk and peril.
 (R.A. Malaya, 1117Z/23.)

Air Reports
of Enemy
Forces.

Daily Op. Sum. up to 1030Z/23/12.
 R/C report from Singkawang received 0350Z hours covering Tanjong Datoek to Tanjong Sirik 12 plus unidentified ships and warships sighted 150 miles North Tanjong Sirik 0030 hours. 2 Catalinas despatched to shadow. Dutch flying boat R/C Sambas-Natuna no report. Hudson R/C East coast negative report. Hudson diverging search 300 miles N./N.E. negative poor visibility. Glenn Martin R/C East coast negative. Hudson R/C West coast negative.

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War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Air Reports
of Enemy
Forces.
(Contd.)

6 Glenn Martins ordered to attack force sighted 150 miles North Tanjong Sirik from Singkawang. Meanwhile Singkawang reported aerodrome unserviceable due heavy bombing raid but no aircraft destroyed, aerodrome repairs in progress. 0930Z hours report from Batavia 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 2 large ships 8 others in position 70 miles 354° from Kuching course 216° speed 6 knots. Catalina reported 1005Z hours 2 cruisers 1 destroyer 240 miles N. of Kuching course 190° 9 deg. (? knots). (A.H.Q. Far East, 1230/23.)

U.S.
Pacific
Fleet.

A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes in disposition of U.S. Pacific Fleet.
Battleships: MARYLAND, TENNESSEE, PENNSYLVANIA, left Pearl Harbour 20/12 for West Coast America.
Carriers: YORKTOWN entered Pacific and left Balboa 22/12.
8" Cruisers: LOUISVILLE at Pearl Harbour.
PENSACOLA at Brisbane.
6" Cruisers: DETROIT due San Francisco 25/12.
PHOENIX due Honolulu 23/12.
ST. LOUIS at Pearl Harbour.
RICHMOND, TRENTON, left Balboa 23/12, for San Diego.
(D.O.D.(F), 1815A/23 to C. in C. E.F., N.Z.N.B., A.C.N.B., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

Warning to
Norwegian
Ships.

Information received that attempts are likely to be made to order Norwegian vessels in the Pacific by means of W/T messages purporting to come from owners to proceed to Japanese ports. Masters are to be warned accordingly.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 2337A/23 to C. in C. E.F., A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

America and West Indies.Air Attacks
on Hawaii.

Following report received by War Dept. re Japanese air tactics Hawaii. All targets attacked almost simultaneously, primary objectives Pearl Harbour and Hickam Field regarded as single objective. Wheeler and other fields secondary objectives. Dive-bombers attacked from all directions simultaneously initiating dive of 45 to 50° from 3000 to 5000 feet and

/continuing ...

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Air Attacks
on Hawaii.
(Contd.)

continuing almost on to targets. High altitude bombers flew in 'V' formation of 12 to 15 aircraft spaced at average width of 2 spans. Bombing height 8000 to 12,000 feet. Dive and high altitude bombing well synchronised. Dive-bombers had close fighter support but no report of support to high altitude bombers. Latter employed only against primary objectives. Dive-bombers after releasing bombs machine-gunned aircraft and personnel on ground. Impossible at present to estimate total number of aircraft employed but apparently at least 3 aircraft carriers used. Success of attack due to careful planning and preparation, complete knowledge objectives, surprise, and determination in execution. Fragmentation and demolition bombs dropped by dive-bombers, none larger than 500 lbs. High altitude bombers dropped converted 15-in shells, apparently for P.E.S.

(Rafdel, 0456/23 to Airwhit, (R) C.A.S., R.C.A.F. Ottawa.)

F.A.A.
Officer
for U.S.
B. of A.

Repeat to Admty. and C.O.A.C.

On 15/12, Adm. Towers complained strongly at our failure to supply adequate liaison officers in the Bureau of Aeronautics. He particularly noted that no Fleet Air Arm Officer has ever been appointed to his Bureau and specifically requested that this should be done. Unless some action is taken Navy Bureau may begin to doubt our sincerity.

(Brit. Air Commission, Washington, 0603/23 to M.A.P.)

ROODE ZEE,
towing
operation.

Your 2308A/15. No difficulty anticipated. M. of W.T. New York informs me there is now some probability that other arrangements will be made for towage and that crane will not be ready to proceed till late February.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 0932a/23 to Admty.)

BURWELL,
RAMSEY.

My 1540/26/11. To where are BURWELL and RAMSEY to proceed on completion on 19/1.
(B.A.R.M., 1236R/24 to C.C.N.F.)

MIMOSA,
SURCOUF,
ALYSSE.

P.C. and S. 045° 30' N. 058° 23' W. 073° 8. Gale N.N.W. (damper ?) Peak from battery in SURCOUF caused by small fire but now extinguished and all in order.
(Adm. Muselier, 1300Z/23 to C.C.N.F.)

789

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.S.S.
CLUMBERHALL.*Should be on
p. 789-819.*

PRUDENT proceeded to assist S.S. CLUMBERHALL 62 miles from St. Johns N.F. Out of fuel and towed her to St. Johns. 24/12 - See p. 844 25/12. (F.O.N.F., 1339Z/24.)

S.S.
PROTEUS.*see p 723*

Your 11320/21 suggestion is made that enemy has made selective raids on Bauxite ships (1) to hamper aeroplane productions (2) to obtain much needed supplies of ore: note possibly Balkan insurrectionaries hamper mining of ore (3) to hide presence of raider by ignoring other ships.

Wireless silence of both ships supports this hypothesis: entails necessity for treachery in order to silence wireless and refuelling prizes from prepared supply in raider in order to try running them in.

A fireman, U.S. citizen, honourably discharged from NEREUS says Wireless Operator told of speaking PROTEUS early a.m./2 roughly 250 to 300 miles from Firisland, 54 hours after departure from Portland (Maine). (R.N.O. St. Thomas, 1530/23 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Japanese
Carriers.

Estimate of possible conversions of Japanese M/Vs into aircraft carriers. (B.A.D., 1537R/23 to Admty., C.O.I.S. Singapore.) See Lion Copy.)

Washington
Report.

Washops 13. (i) Wake. Further air raid by 17 heavy bombers on night of 20/21 Dec. Japanese forces landed on Island yesterday from several transports. 2 Japanese destroyers ran aground. (ii) U.S. Pacific Coast. S.S. STOREY reports being attacked by a torpedo which missed in a position 2 miles from Point Arguillo 60 miles N.W. of Santa Barbara, Cal. A U.S. Army aircraft sighted a submarine in 034° 18' N. 126° 33' W. S/M crashed dived immediately. A/C dropped 3 500-pound delay action bombs, the closest of which fell 100 feet ahead of submerging S/M. An oil slick appeared shortly afterwards. Both these incidents took place yesterday 22/12. (J.S.M. Washington, 1549R/23 to Admty., etc.)

Routeing
signals.

In order to provide Navy Dept. Washington with detailed information of routes of all U.S. Flag or U.S. controlled merchant vessels sailing from African Ports to North, Central and South American Ports, S.Os.(I) Freetown and Capetown are to repeat relevant route signals to Chatfold Ottawa.

/2. N.S.H.Q. ...

989A

1537R/23rd December.

SECRET

M E S S A G E

IN

From: B.A.D. Washington.

Date: 24.12.41.

Recd: 0230.

Flag Officers Cypher ZD by cable. RECIRCULATION by
N.I.D.

Addressed: Admiralty C.O.I.S. Singapore.

319. LBTTER. The following estimate of possible conversions of Japanese merchant vessels into aircraft carriers and their capacities have been made by Navy Department. IZUMO and KASHIWARA, each of 27,500 tons and 720 feet length now building are expected to be completed late in 1942 with a capacity of 60 aircraft each. KASUGA laid down as luxury liner believed completed as aircraft carrier with capacity of 48 in June or July 1941 and believed now in Naval service. Following passenger vessels were constructed to facilitate conversion and are classed as potential carriers with following respective speeds and capacities
KAMKURA 21 knots 48 aircraft ASAMA 21 knots 48 aircraft
TATUTA 21.7 knots 48 aircraft TAIYO 19 knots 40 aircraft
NITTA 22.5 knots 48 aircraft YAMATA 22.5 knots 48 aircraft
ARGENTINA 22 knots 36 aircraft BRASIL 22 knots 36 aircraft.

1537R/23

Advance copy sent O.I.C.

N.I.D. Comment

Remarks regarding IZUMA, KASHIWARA and KASUGA agree with N.I.D. estimate.

ASAMA, TATUTA and TAIYO were in mercantile service up to the outbreak of war and could not be ready as aircraft carriers for many months. They are comparatively old ships.

NITTA, YAMATA, KAMKURA, ARGENTINA and BRASIL are all potential A.M.C.s. but N.I.D. has no information to suggest that their original construction allowed for conversion to aircraft carriers. KAMKURA is 17,500 tons,

/NITTA

789^B

1537R/23rd December.

-2-

NITTA and YAWATA 16,500 tons and ARGENTINA and BRASIL
13,000 tons. NITTA and YAWATA are new ships but all
have been in mercantile service.

1st Lord
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
A.C.N.S. (W)
N.A. 1st S.L.
Capt. Pin.

D.H.A.D.

H (30) - (2) only if from other Government
Departments.

Ops (3)
O.D. (5)
D.N.I. (5) (and for A.E)

O.I.C. (3)
D. of P (3)
D.A/S.W.
I.P. (3)
W.D.
D.P.D.
D.S.D. (2)
Admiral
Bailey.
Admiral
Bellairs.
E.P.S.

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Routeing
signals.
(Contd.)

2. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa is requested to pass this information to Opnav Washington by mutually agreed means.
(D.T.D., 1555A/24.)

→ ALCANTARA.

Your 1344/22. If ALCANTARA is proceeding U.K. will any accommodation be available for personnel of services from Halifax late January.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1559Z/23 to B.A.R.M.)

S.S. NEREUS.

Greek NEREUS sailed Gibraltar 4/12 for Baltimore has not yet arrived. Gibraltar has no information.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1601Z/23 to Admty.)

PENSACOLA,
EMPRESS OF
CANADA.

Admty. 2020A/22 (Circulated as T.O.O. 1940/22.) If U.S. Cruiser PENSACOLA could be relieved by British escort of duty escorting convoy 40 02 from Brisbane to Torres Strait she would be available for covering EMPRESS OF CANADA. As PENSACOLA's destination is Honolulu EMPRESS OF CANADA would have to continue unescorted for part of route. Arrangements are being made for onward escort from S. of Galapagos (Is.) and N.Z.N.B. is requested to propose a R/V.
(B.A.D., 1603R/23 to Admty., A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B.)

→ ALCANTARA.

R.A.S.A.D., 1105Z/20 and B.A.R.M. 1344R/22. Subject to concurrence of C. in C. S. A., on completion of refit about 20/1/1942 ALCANTARA is to be sailed to Bermuda to carry out one week's gunnery practices and then sailed to U.K. to give leave.
(D.O.D.(F), 1609A/23 to B.A.R.M.)
Concur. (C. in C. S.A., 1152Z/26.)

O.N.
Convoys.

Recommendations made in your 1400/20 are approved.
(Opnav, 1633/23 to Admty.)

Patrols
off Chile.

Re my letter dated 25/10 dealing with patrol of southern channels within Chilean Territorial waters. Whatever decisions are arrived at regarding main naval forces off west coast of South America whether they be American, British or Chilean, consider highly desirable that patrol of channel should be done by ourselves under Canadian flag as indication now to Canadian war vessels being granted non-belligerent facilities onwards forthcoming Rio de Janeiro Conference.

/Vigorously ...

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War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.Patrols
off Chile.
(Contd.)

Vigorously advocated because efficient patrol depends so much on S.I.S. organizations which we do not want to uncover. I much doubt if U.S. or Chilean Authorities have more than very superficial knowledge of probable enemy bases. I have impression that Admiral Allard without backing of late President will not long retain post and sympathy of his successor may not be so favourable towards us which would reduce efficient Chilean Naval co-operation. My 1830/9 shows that present disposition of Chilean (group missing ? naval) forces make no provision for adequate patrolling of channels.

I am not hopeful that Chilean Air Force will produce satisfactory result. At present they have no suitable machines and vigil of these channels by air R/C only would be very difficult. (N.A. Santiago, 1740/23 to Admty.)

FIREDRAKE.

B.A.R.M.'s 1340R/22.

On completion of satisfactory trials FIREDRAKE should be sailed for Halifax. Ship will be required to leave Halifax for convoy escort duties about 22/1.

(D.O.D. H., 1823A/23 to B.A.R.M., C. in C. A.W.I.)

ARCHER.

Your 1032/21.

Destroyer escort for ARCHER can probably be made available in the vicinity of the Azores about 16th or 17/1 depending on sailing of a convoy from U.K.

2. Necessary that, provided Martlets have been embarked, ARCHER should be sailed in time to make this R/V which will be arranged by C. in C. W.A.

3. Request you will report anticipated S. of A. of ARCHER.

(D.O.D.(H), 1824A/23 to B.A.R.M.)

Japanese
Vessel,
Chile.

Report I classify as B.2 states that Japanese vessel likely to arrive at Chilean port within next 24 hours. Whether war vessel or otherwise informant does not know, like-wise port of call. If visit of clandestine nature consider Guaitecas most likely. Hope to obtain more details. (N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1840/23 to Admty.)

Navigation,
Delaware
River.

C.S.A. Philadelphia reports "No navigation in lower Delaware River is permitted during hours of darkness by order of local Naval Authorities." (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1909Z/23 to Admty.)

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.H.X.166.

Escort Commander reports contacted 12 ships. Convoy apparently badly scattered. Informed convoy not formed due to fog. Unable to locate or contact by radio Escort Commander or Commodore. Convoy has tomorrow noon position. Will carry out Opnav 1535/23 with ships in company and continue attempts to assemble convoy.
(Opnav, 2155/23 to Admty.)

U.S. Forces.

A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes disposition U.S. Forces on A. and W.I. Station:
Battleships: ARKANSAS due Iceland 23/12; IDAHO, MISSISSIPPI, NEW MEXICO, at Norfolk ready about 3/1.
Aircraft Carriers: RANGER due Bermuda 23/12; YORKTOWN now Pacific left Balboa 22/12; HORNET leaves for Key West area 26/12; WASP due Norfolk 24/12.
8" Cruisers: QUINCY and VINCENNES en route to San Juan.
6" Cruisers: MEMPHIS at Miami; SAVANNAH at Bermuda; PHILADELPHIA at Casco departs 26/12 for Argentina; NASHVILLE due Iceland 23/12.
(D.O.D.(F), 2238A/23 to C. in C. H.F., C. in C. A.W.I., N.S.H.Q.)

Australia and New Zealand.Enemy Intelligence.

Gilbert Island. Japanese carried out air R/C of Gilbert Island on 17th, 19th and 22nd December. Aircraft reported as 4 engined high wing flying boats. Seaplanes also reported hospital ship using Makin British North Borneo as base. Reported further Japanese boom defences Tarawa. Grade B.2.
Nukufetau report submarine sighted Sarawak. Grade C.3. Pacific Fleet (U.S.) pass to Opnav. (N.Z.N.B., 0436Z/23.)

Enemy A/C
Namatanai,
BRITISH
SAILOR
overdue,
Noumea
Garrison.

My 1501Z/21. An enemy A/C believed type 97 Kawanisi flying boat flew over Namatanai (New Ireland) 20/12. British tanker ? BRITISH SAILOR 5 days overdue at Darwin from Tarakan. Australian troops in transport ORMISTON escorted by Free French light cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT arrived Noumea 23/12 as reinforcement for local garrison.
(A.C.N.B., 1104Z/23 to Admty., etc.)

Kel 792A ✓

SECRET

M E S S A G E

1030Z/23rd December.
IN.

From: Australian Commonwealth
Naval Board

Date: 24.12.41.
Recd: 2106.

Anglo French Cypher by W/T

Addressed: Admiralty repeated (corrupt group) 364,
Submarine LA CLORINDE, C. in C. Eastern
Fleet, C.Z.M., New Zealand Naval Board,
C. in C. East Indies.

See 0604/28/11

* 374. The following signal amplifies my
1700Z November 27th my 0700Z December 7th and my 0604Z
November 28th. One the approach. Just before
the action started, number 41 broadcast on
500 kc/s - Q Q Q Q 26 south 111 east STRAAT MALAKKA
and repeated it once. When H.M.A.S. SYDNEY was
approximate abeam number 41 she made "Where bound" -
reply "Batavia". H.M.A.S. SYDNEY then made I K,
the centre letters of I I K P, STRAAT MALAKKA's
secret call sign. My 0700Z/7th December paragraph
three add one speed boat reputed to be capable of
laying four magnetic mines. My 0700Z/7th December
paragraph 4 add March met SCHEER and raiders 16 and 33.
Transferred prisoners to NORDMARK. CANADOLITE sent
to Bordeaux with prize crew but no prisoners. April
met small oil-tanker RUDOLF (AL) BRACHT and
transferred AGNITA prisoners. Sunk NICOLAAS (D L)
May met ALSTRUPER and NORDMARK who left in company.
MET ALSTERTOR reputed supplying ships for number 33.
September in Indian Ocean met KULLERLAND disguised
as (?FORMOSIAN) LUCHENBACK to which survivors of
VELEBIT, MAREEBA, EMBERICOS were transferred. In
company for 10 days took 4000 tons fuel.
Consumption 20 to 25 tons per day. Normal cruising
speed 9 knots.

(B) Following broad lessons learnt.

1. Captain of H.M.A.S. SYDNEY was deceived and placed himself in tactically unsound position.
2. The fundamental importance of good challenge and reply procedure by merchant ships. Desirable to make it compulsory for independently routed merchant ships to carry daylight lamps range 10 miles. Some merchant ships of allied nations may not carry secret call signs. All ships trading in allied interests ought to possess these. Admiralty 1223/20th December refers.
3. The necessity of Commanding Officers to regard all ships as suspicious.
4. The necessity of being ready to open fire at a moment's notice when approaching a merchant ship and for keeping a close watch for the dropping of screen or other device for concealing guns.

Usually there will be a delay of 20 to 25 seconds while the guns of the merchant ship are being trained on to the correct object.

(5) Apparently the fire could not be fought due probably to fire amidships. Consider wide separation of fire pumps desirable.

1030Z/23.

✓ Most Secret.

1st Lord
 1st S.L.
 2nd S.L.
 4th S.L.
 5th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T)
 A.C.N.S. (W)
 N.A.1st S.L.
 Ops. (4)
 O.D. (5)
 O.I.C. (2)
 Press Division
 D.N.I. (4)
 D. of P. (2)
 D.A/S.V.
 M. (4) for action
 I.P. (2)
 N.I.D. 10
 N.L.O. Australia House
 D.T.S.D.
 File X.

Advance copies 1st Lord,
 A.C.N.S. (F), N.A.1st S.L.
 D. of P., D.P.D., Ops.,
 O.D., O.I.C.

MES

War Diary.23.12.1941.
Tuesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.HELLEN
(torpedoed
21/12).

Your 0715A/23. Originated by W.R. requesting date of sinking of Norwegian S.S.HELLEN reported in S.O.(I) Gibraltar's 1246A/22 as having taken place at 2310A/25. Time and date is 2310A/21. (S.O.I.), Gibraltar, 0943A/23, to Admty.)

VARLAAM
AVANISOVA,
SHUNTIEN.

See Mediterranean.

SAGADAHOC
(torpedoed
3/12).

Admty. 1650/16. Master and 15 survivors of U.S. SAGADAHOC landed Durban from U.S.KENTUCKIAN. Ship was torpedoed by submarine at 1950/3/12 in 21.50 S. 07.50 W. Three torpedoes fired, all of which hit. No W/T message sent out. Submarine was of large type painted light grey, one gun before and one gun abaft conning tower, boats were hailed in English with German accent. Ship has U.S.A. colours on both side fully illuminated when hit. Second boat with Chief Officer and 19 others missing. (S.O.I.), Cape Town 1001B/23 to Admty. etc.)

Submarines Reported.2221/23.
(Med.)

German S/M at 2221 G.M.T. 26. (?groups) code (corrupt group) 5660 bearing 352/2 sensed. (V.A.Malta, 0024B/23 to C. in C. Med., C.O.I.S.Alexandria).

H.G.76.

My P.C. and S. are 047° 16' N., 018° 47' W. 055° 7½. U-Boat may have been fooled last night by an half-hour staged battle of star shells, depth charges, etc. put on to E.N.E. an hour after convoy had in fact altered to N.W. (STORK, 1000A/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

1006A.

U-Boat known to be operating close East of Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1006A/23 to S/M. O.24).

1045A.

There may be 2 U-Boats in area bounded by 59° N. and 61° N. and 17° W. and 20° W. (D.D.I.C. 1045A/23 to Escorts of T.C.16).

1047A.

There may be a U/B in your vicinity. (D.D.I.C. 1047A/23 to Escorts of O.N.49).

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs. (D.D.I.C., 1429A/23, 1430A/23).

1710A.

1 U-Boat in position 294 Z (? J X X) (? 48° N., 18° W) 17. U-boat dived. (WITCH, 1710A/23, to C. in C. W.A.).

/1740 ...

War Diary.

23.12.1941.
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. - contd.

1740. Am investigating suspicious object (possibly periscope) in 48.55 N., 14.18 W. (A/C L, 1740/23, to 15 Group).
- 1745Z. By D/F at 1745Z/23 Position of German U/Boat was 46° N. 12° 30' W. reliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1912A/23 to S. and A., Plymouth Command).
2010. SPP One Submarine 43.52 N., 28.00 E., (? see next signal) course 070° 12 knots Hone Queen Light at 2010. (A/C T. 2155/23, to 19 Group). U-Boat reported by aircraft in 043° 52' N. 009° W. at 2010. (C. in C. Plymouth 2316/23 to VANOC).

Submarines Attacked.

Swordfish
attacks. use
of D/C's.

Your 1246A/21, para. (ii). Effect against U-boats on surface or just submerged is much more likely to be lethal with charges set to detonate at 25 feet than with those set to detonate at 50 feet. Considered advisable therefore to set all three charges on shore-based Swordfish aircraft to 25 feet detonation in accordance with Admty. 297R. (D.N.A.D. 1741A/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

By WESTCOTT.
20/12.

Your 2230A/22. Hedgehog and depth charge attack are incompatible and should not be combined. (C. in C. W.A. 1801A/23, to WESTCOTT).

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

At 0925 aircraft reported the enemy tanker (see 23/12) in 43° 55' N. 7° 50' W., but VANOC reported at 1128A that there were two merchant ships of 4000 tons in this position, neither of which were tankers; the tanker was signalled by a Sunderland in territorial waters near Cape Ortegal, escorted by a German aircraft. At 1020 VANOC was attacked and missed, and another aircraft was homed on to her; she reported a split seam and a small leak in ship's bottom and that she must return for fuel. C. in C. Plymouth ordered her to proceed to Gibraltar at best speed.

Enemy coastal batteries fired 24 rounds at C.W.62 when off Dover late this evening. No casualties or damage are reported.

H.31 was ordered to leave patrol after dark 21/12 and R/V off the Lizard at 0900/24. H.31 had not arrived by 2201A/24.

British Air Operations.

Bomber Command aircraft last night attacked Brest, Ostend, Dunkirk and Calais Docks.

Enemy Air Operations.

It was reported by one of our aircraft that H.33, returning from Biscay patrol, was bombed at 1025.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

6 Hampdens laid mines last night in the Elbe area.

Normal procedure was resumed at the ports of Tees and Hartlepool today.

Several mines were exploded today in the Humber area.

S.S. EASTWOOD in F.N587 was mined at 1800 off Aldeburgh and was towed to Harwich. At 2200 S.S. STANMOUNT and MERCHANT also in F.N587 were mined and abandoned.

North Atlantic.

The 12000 ton German tanker which was attacked yesterday by our aircraft (see Home Commands 23/12) was sighted by a Sunderland at 0848 today, about 10 miles east of Cape Ortegal. The Sunderland engaged the escorting JU.88 and at 0915 attacked the tanker with depth charges, A/S bombs and machine gunfire. The JU.88 attacked VANOC and the Sunderland remained as escort to VANOC, having several inconclusive engagements with the JU.88. At 1028 a Whitley sighted the tanker in Ortigueira harbour and this afternoon a Beaufort attacked and secured one torpedo hit on the tanker which when last seen appeared to be settling by the stern. About an hour later a Whitley again attacked the tanker, which now appeared to be beached about a mile from the shore, and scored very near misses with bombs. When last seen the tanker appeared to be aground with after well deck partly submerged amidst a mass of oil; the crew were abandoning ship.

'BENNO' ex OLE J.R. 08
2316 PR
1000
14/12/41
(Comdr. Warner)

497

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

ROYAL SOVEREIGN, escorting Convoy W.S.12 left Durban at 0543 today.

Mediterranean.

Malta had 3 alerts today. In the first, at 0746 the Grand Harbour was attacked; transport AJAX received superficial damage and a merchant vessel was hit. There were no naval casualties.

11 ships are reported in Suda Bay. Troops may be embarking.

Our troops captured Benghazi at noon today. The town is reported to be devastated. During the day the enemy dropped 12 mines on Benghazi; one fell on the mole, the remainder outside the harbour.

At 1315/24, our artillery engaged a vessel 75 ft long at point 526371; direct hits were scored and the craft was beached and burnt out.

6 Naval aircraft from Malta laid mines late this evening outside Tripoli harbour with 1 Albacore bombing as a diversion. An aircraft reports one hit on a submarine in 33° 32' N. 24° 58' E. at 1035 today.

Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa Harbour today and set fire to oiler VILJA; the fire in the latter was got under before the tanks were fired. Most of the ships were got out of harbour where the oil was on fire. The main boom defence was damaged by fire and the port was closed until a.m./26.

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.SITUATION REPORTEast Indies.

C. in C. India reports that the present position at Goa is intolerable, as a number of German ships are lying in harbour and their crews are at large. He recommends that the German ships be cut out. C. in C. E.I. does not agree with the proposed operation and considers both naval and land forces should be employed. (The Chiefs of Staff eventually, decided, however, that nothing should be done, on account of the delicate situation with the Portuguese Govt. over Timor.)

HOBART, escorting B.M.9A, left Colombo for Singapore p.m. today.

China.

C. in C. Far East has been instructed to ensure that the dispositions of the Dutch land and air forces in N.E.I are such as to provide adequate protection for really important strategic localities, in particular the aerodromes covering Malacca and Sundra Straits.

The Chiefs of Staff "feel that they must get reinforcements into Malaya while air situation permits."

Philippines.

The enemy continues to land reinforcements. The main Japanese effort is reported to have developed in the Lingayen area. The enemy have landed at ? Antimovast S.E. of Lugon on Lamon Bay and heavy fighting is in progress. Manila port area was bombed shortly before noon today (local time); the military authorities are considering declaring Manila an open city. At Davao the Japanese have landed from 3 to 4 transports.

Borneo.

5 Blenheims were sent to attack the enemy force off Kuching this morning and report a direct hit on a transport and 6 near misses 15 to 30 yards. The vessels sighted were 2 cruisers, one large destroyer, 8 transports, one tanker exuding oil and one sunken transport.

/Wake ...

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday

SITUATION REPORT.

China - contd.

Wake.

A communication has been received from Wake Island since the Japanese were reported landing.

Australia and New Zealand.

A Japanese landing or bombardment was reported at 0210Z today at ? Abaiang, Gilbert Is. one cruiser is reported to be present.

The Flag of F.O.C. Australian Squadron was transferred to AUSTRALIA today.

U-Boat Campaign.

A U.S. army bomber claims to have destroyed a U-boat off the Columbia River today.

S.S. ABSAROKA was hit by a torpedo p.m. today in approx. 34° N. 118° W, but although badly damaged she reached San Pedro under tow.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Patrol Boats, Your 2018A/23. This matter is being considered.
Brightlingsea. (D.S.V.P. 2104A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

Co-operation with Russia.

Officers and
ratings from
EDINBURGH and
KENT to be
lent S.B.N.O.
North Russia.

My 1051A/24 ^{N.T. W.D} and S.B.N.O. Archangel 1345C/22. ^{N.T. W.D}
Request officer, communication ratings, books and
stores for the 3 icebreakers may be sent to Scapa
by 30/12 for passage in escort of convoy P Q 8.
(C. in C. H.F. 1055A/24 to Admty.)

Minesweepers
for U.S.S.R.

C. in C. Northern Fleet requests full description
of minesweepers to be transferred to U.S.S.R.
Request Lieut. Comdr. Vickers may be lent to me for
instructional duties. (S.B.N.C. North Russia,
1142C/24 to Adm. Miles).

Shipping
information.

Ref. M.E.W. tel. No. 2477 addressed to Madrid
repeated Kuibishev. Representations being made to
Soviet D.C.N.S. for supply of the information
required. Most desirable that brief periodical
summary of Axis shipping should be sent to me for
transmission to Soviet Naval Staff.
(Ad. Miles, 1210D/24 to Admty.)

Movements.

ARCHER.

Cancel my 1824A/23. ARCHER has been delayed about
a week. Further arrangements with regard to escort
will be promulgated when date of sailing is known.
(D.O.D.(H) 1225A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

ILLUSTRIOUS.

Cancel my 1015A/22 ILLUSTRIOUS should arrive Bar
L.V. before dark 29/12 and anchor for the night.
Re. proceeding up harbour etc.
(N.O.1/c Liverpool 1748/24).

H. 31.

R/V 180° Lizard 5 miles daylight/25 with Z5.
T.B.R. arranged within 20 miles of this position
from 0800 until further notice.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 2159A/24 to H.31)
Note. See also Casualties & Defects.
Return to Falmouth by outward route reporting
P.C. and S. when north of 049° N.
(N.O.I.C. Falmouth 2345A/24 to H.31).

Operations.

Biscay S/M.
patrol.

My 2053/23. Request you will sail 0.10 and 0.21
escorted by CUTTY SARK as soon as possible for
Wolf Rock and Patrol. Further details will be

/signalled ...

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Biscay S/M.
patrol.
(contd.)

signalled. Submarines should be ordered to continue to read H S Routines while in harbour. (F.O.S. 0004A/24 to F.O.i/c Milford Haven). F.O.S. 1534A/23 and 2054A/23. H.32 and H.43 sailed for positions 20 and 29 respectively through position 180° Lizard 20' thence H.32 proceeds direct and H.43 through 47° 40' N. 06° 35' W. to patrol positions. (F.O.i/c Falmouth 0245/24 to S/M's Area A). My 0245/24. Escorted by M/ST CHILTERN to 180° Lizard 3 miles. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 0250/24 to C. in C. Plymouth). Proceed to vicinity Wolf Rock escorted by LA CAPRICIEUSE thence to Patrol in Biscay. Orders for Patrol will be signalled. On arrival Wolf Rock LA CAPRICIEUSE return to Holy Loch. O.9, pass to LA CAPRICIEUSE. (F.O.S. 1016A/24 to O.9, LA CAPRICIEUSE). After passing through position 20 proceed to patrol in position 23. (F.O.S. 1116A/24 to H.32 (R) S/M's Area A). Admty. 2037A/23. URSULA is on patrol about 120 miles S.West of Brest. 2 'H' Class arriving patrol in this vicinity A.M./25. I hope to be able to sail about 9 further S/Ms within the next two or three days. (F.O.S. 1129A/24 to C. in C. H.F.) A. The object of submarines on patrol and sailing for patrol in Bay of Biscay is to attack. Then report enemy Cruisers and Battle Cruisers. Submarines are not to be attacked unless their hostile identity is absolutely certain. B. When weather conditions permit submarines should patrol in an approx. N.- E. and S.- W. direction within 5 miles of their patrol positions. (F.O.S. 1323A/24 to S/M's on patrol in area A. F.O.I.C. Milford Haven F.O.I.C. Falmouth, ALECTO. My 2322A/23. When ready submarines should be sailed to fill patrol positions in following order of priority. 31, 28, 25, 22, 21, 20. (F.O.S. 1326A/24 to F.O.I.C. Falmouth).

Search for
tanker by
VANOC.BENNO
ON DE JACOBS

Tanker escorted by Junkers 88 reported in territorial waters in vicinity of Cape Ortegale by Sunderland. Fuel situation will soon be critical. Am returning to Milford Haven via Hartland Point. Junkers now shadowing VANOC. Request repetition B N 703. Position and weather report respectively follow 043° 57' N. 007° 52' W. (VANOC 1009A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth). Enemy aircraft bombing. (VANOC 1020/24). My position now is (course and speed) 044° 04' N. 007° 58' W. 110° 12 knots. (VANOC 1025/24). A/C reports position of Tanker at 0925 43° 55' N. 07° 50' W. (C. in C. Plymouth 1044/24 to VANOC). Have split seam and small leak in 23 station in ships bottom. (VANOC 1048A/24 to C. in C. W.A., N.O.i/c Liverpool, Capt. (D) Liverpool. Your 1044A. Two merchant ships of 4000 tons were

/about ...

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Search for
tanker by
VANOC.
(contd.)

about this position at 0930A, neither of these were tankers. Sunderland signalled tankers in bay. Must return for fuel. Junker has attacked and missed and is now homing other on to me. (VANOC 1128A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth). Your 1009/24. Proceed to Gibraltar at best speed. (C. in C. Plymouth 1224/24 to VANOC). Am proceeding to Gibraltar. E.T.A. 1200/26. (VANOC 1620A/24 to C. in C. Plymouth).

WITHERINGTON.

Return to Harbour. (R.A.I.C.S., 1651N/24 to WITHERINGTON N.C.S.O. Sydney, C.B, RENOWN, WALKER, A.C.I.C.)

C.W.62,
Shelled.

Enemy coastal batteries fired 24 rounds between 2011 and 2039 at C.W.62 when off Dover. All rounds fell in the sea, 16 to the east and 8 to the west of Dover Harbour. No casualties or damage reported. (V.A.Dover 2334A/24).

British Air Operations.Enemy Tanker.

Have attacked enemy tanker with 4 bombs (level) and estimated no hits, in 43° 55' N. 7° 50' W. (A/C O.Q.7.S. 0925/24 to 19 Group H.Q.)

Bomber
Command
Operations.

Day 23rd. No operations took place. Night 23/24th. 35 Wellingtons and 8 Stirlings attacked the naval units at Brest. Ostend Docks 8 Wellingtons attacked. Dunkirk Docks 2 Wellingtons bombed the docks. Minelaying. 6 Hampdens laid mines successfully. Two Wellingtons attacked Calais Docks. (H.Q.B.C. 1357/24).

Operation
"Archery."

Stirlings will not take part in Operation. (C. in C. Bomber Command 1830/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Bombing
restrictions.

Cancel my 1514/23. (F.O.I.C.Falmouth 1929/24).

?Operation
"Anklet."

AP/377 24/12. Your T.O.O. 0937A/20 (N.T.) fighter escort will be provided from 0915 hours to 1600 on day (1) either by a section of three Beaufighters or a section of two Beaufighters and a section of two Blenheims at A.O.C. 18 Group's discretion. (H.Q.C.C., 2041/24 to C.S.10).

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Operations.VANOC.

Enemy Aircraft Bombing. (VANOC 1020/24).

H.33.Enemy Aircraft bombing H.33 1025.
(A/C OQ7S. 1040/24).Xmas Day
precautions.Special care is to be taken against enemy trying to surprise us by air attack on Christmas Day.
(C. in C. H.F. 2259A/24 to General at Scapa
(R) A.C.O.S.)Mining.Operation
Q O.

My 2303A/23 owing to weather propose cancelling operations today. (M.S.9. 0741/24).

S.S.ROKOS
VERGOTTIS.Entire crew were landed at Great Yarmouth p.m./23.
(F.O.i/c Gt. Yarmouth 1006A/24).Tees &
Hartlepool.Negative my 1815/21. Ports of Tees and Hartlepool now open. Normal procedure resumed.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool, 1140/24).S N 26 C

Details of lay. (R.A.(M), 1216/24).

Thames
Estuary.

My 1830A/11. The following additional patrols will be instituted. Patrol C between 57D buoy and 56A buoys. Patrol D between 56A and 54G buoys.

2. It is not expected that sufficient destroyers will be available to carry out all these patrols on any one night. Positions will therefore be filled as may seem most expedient in the light of existing circumstances.

3. If patrol D is required it will normally be carried out by the emergency destroyer from Harwich or Sheerness. (C. in C. Nore 1400A/24 to D.16 D.21 F.O.I.C.Humber Repeated F.O.I.C.Yarmouth C. in C. Rosyth, Admty.)

There was some enemy air activity over the Estuary between 1810 and 1940/23.

Some six plots of enemy aircraft were obtained. These were for the most part in the outer estuary though several aircraft were sighted and heavily engaged in the Southern end of the Barrow Deep.

At 1829 a parachute mine was observed to fall probably in the Swept Channel and near the wreck buoy marking the wreck of S.S.BRADGLEN between B.2 and B.3 buoys. This wreck buoy is very bright and most noticeable from the air.

Aircraft was estimated to have been at about 3,000 feet. The night was clear with a young moon, although there was some surface haze.

(S.O.T.L.D.F.Sheerness 1418/24).

/Confirming ...

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.Thames
Estuary.
(contd.)

Confirming telephone message today S.S.OLEV reports two parachute mines seen one mile three cables 076° from East Spile buoy at 1809 date not given. Unable obtain date. Please confirm you have already been informed.

(F.O.I.C.London 1740/24 to X.D.O.Sheerness).
Your 1740/24 S.S.OLEV reported particulars of these mines laid on 21/12/41 to examination vessel.
(X.D.O.Sheerness 1830/24 to F.O.I.C.London).

B.S.26.

Your 1244/20. 1 The number of mines found in B.S.26 indicates a wastage of over 50%.

2. Line B.S.28 originally contained the same number of mines as Line B.S.26 but spread over a distance of 6 miles.

3. A similar wastage in Line B.S.28 would represent a remaining density of 12 mines per mile.

4. This is considered to be inadequate and Line B.S.28 must be swept up.

(A.C.N.S.(H) 1638A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

S.S.EASTWOOD.

S.S.EASTWOOD mined in 104° Aldeburgh light 2½ miles. (WALPOLE 1809A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

Your 1809 tugs are being sent from Harwich.

(C. in C. Nore 1901A/24 to WALPOLE).

My 1809 S.S.EASTWOOD floating with both anchors down. Have 13 survivors on board. Please send Tug.

(WALPOLE 1835A/24 to C. in C. Nore, Repeated LEEDS, Ships employed on East Coast Convoy duties.)

Departure KENIA and CHAMPION to assist.

(F.O.I.C.Harwich 2003A/24).

Have transferred survivors to BASSET. BASSET ordered to stand by EASTWOOD. Fair chance salvage.

Am rejoining convoy. (WALPOLE 2021A/24 to C. in C. Nore).

S.S.STANMOUNT.
S.S.MERCHANT.

Your 2207A 24th. Tug being sent from Yarmouth now. (C. in C. Nore 2247A/24 to WHADDON).

Departure DIVERSION and KROOMAN at 2350A to assist S.S.STANMOUNT and one other merchant vessel in distress 1 mile North No.6 Buoy.

(F.O.I.C.Great Yarmouth 2359A/24).

Humber area.

LL Trawlers ROLLS ROYCE, HENRIETTE, and WILLIAM BELL, exploded the following 8 magnetic mines 24/12. (F.O. Humber 2127/24).

Enemy Intelligence.Brest.

R/C of Brest shows SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN still in dock. GNEISENAU has undocked and may sail shortly. (F.O.S. 0003A/24 to S/M's on patrol in Area A.)

/Tanker.....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence. - contd.Tanker.

PPP FRL Tanker Admiralty 2335A/23 Most Secret refers. (N.T. in W.D.) 43° 45' N. 7° 52' W. in harbour photographed. (A/C WS6K 1055/24). (BENNO 4066 JAKOB 8706 SKT)

Navigational.56 Buoy.

56 Buoy reported damaged and extinguished. Request Q Z H. (C. in C. Nore 1203A/24 to Admty.)

B 7 L.B.

Trinity House reports B7 Light Buoy alight but unreliable. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1641A/24 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Nore.)

Casualties & Defects.TETCOTT,
HEARTSEASE.

Your 2255A/23rd remains with HEARTSEASE until tug CAROLINE MOLLER joins at daylight. Inform N.O.I.C. Greenock estimated daylight position. (C. in C. W.A. 0032A/24 to TETCOTT). Estimated daylight position of TETCOTT and HEARTSEASE 300° Skerryvore 5 miles. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0259A/24). Position of HEARTSEASE at 0745A/24 280° Skerryvore 16 miles steering 265° at 2 knots. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0849A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER). Position of HEARTSEASE at 1021A today 286° Skerryvore 15' now lying stern to sea. Imperative you make contact with all despatch. Acknowledge. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1137A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER). Am making for Clyde at best speed VERVAIN standing by HEARTSEASE damaged my ship's D/F gravely (displaced)(?) ? ? E.T.A. (TETCOTT 0645A/24 to C. in C. W.A. F.O.I.C. Greenock). CAROLINE MOLLER reports Addressed C. in C. W.A. F.O.I.C. Greenock, repeated Admty. Rescue Tugs. From CAROLINE MOLLER. On R/V position 0800 to 1200 W.N.W'ly gale bow plate strained and D.G. disorganized. Temporary repairs in shelter off Tiree. Will proceed with all haste for new position. 1500 G.M.T/24 ends. Weather is expected to moderate. RESTIVE is being sailed to you from Campbeltown. Report any change in position. Your 1630A (+) acknowledged. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1915A/24 to HEARTSEASE) (+) N.T. in W.R. Sail RESTIVE with all despatch to assist HEARTSEASE damaged in collision in 294° Skerryvore 13.5 miles. VERVAIN is standing by and CAROLINE MOLLER may be searching if her defects have been completed. HEARTSEASE with (?will) home tug by D/F. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1923A/24 to N.O.I.C. Campbeltown). Signalling arrangements. Position of HEARTSEASE at 1530 G.M.T. was 294° 13.5 miles from Skerryvore. Acknowledge. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1943A/24 to CAROLINE MOLLER, RESTIVE, & 1945A/24 to HEARTSEASE).

/Have ...

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.TETCOTT.
HEARTSEASE.
(Contd.)

Have made contact with HEARTSEASE also acknowledge 1943A/24. (CAROLINE MOLLER 2300 G.M.T./24 to C. in C. W.A.)

S.S. BINTANG.

Following has been received addressed Admiral Plymouth. Intercept. 0509 G.M.T. Valencia Radio to Wick Radio. Campbeltown is broadcasting SOS QRM very bad think position is 43.25 N. 23.10 W. can't say whether its MDDI or PDDI BINTANG lifeboat smashed. Not rebroadcast. (Lands End Radio 0614/24).

Following received from Lands End Radio: Important Admiral Plymouth.

Important intercept 0512 G.M.T. DE unknown station probably VCE or VCS begins. S.O.S. DE PDDI (BINTANG) 43 unread No.1 hold unread broken off may unread dangerous lifeboat smashed require assistance speed 4 knots bearing from VCE 205 approx. Remainder unread. Not re-broadcast. (Lands End Radio 0617/24 to Admty.)

M.F.V. MARGARET
HAMILTON.Sunk in collision with WANDERER. Salvage operations are being instituted, but it is not anticipated that hull will be serviceable again. Another 50 ft. M.F.V. is urgently required for D.E.M.S. duties. (F.O.i/c Greenock 0951A/24). *See next page.*NIGER.

Defects. (R.A.D. 1146A/24).

NIGER has now been out of action for five months with this defect. In view of defects and damage occurring in other Fleet Sweepers NIGER is urgently required.

Request ships may be sent to a Royal Dockyard for thorough investigation and repair. (C. in C. H.F. 1902A/24 to Admty.)

EMPIRE
MARLOWE.

My position at 1200 060° 16' N. (?022°) 008° (?8') W. have not yet located S.S. MARLOW (sic) (?Request) aircraft may assist search.

(SNOWDROP 1230A/24 to A.C.I.C.)

FREEBOOTER reports EMPIRE MARLOWE in tow 1330 in 60° 20' N. 21° 38' W. Ordered to proceed U.K.

Aircraft sighted EMPIRE MARLOWE in 060° 40' N. 021° 40' W. at 1225.

(A.C.I.C. 1609n/24, TRAIL 1730Z/24).

Have met TRAIL and S.S. MARLOW in tow of FREEBOOTER. Request instructions for TRAIL, TENACITY, and SNOWDROP. (SNOWDROP 2340A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

FISKAREN.

Convoy servicing motor fishing vessel FISKAREN sunk last night in collision no hope salvage. (F.O.i/c Belfast 1235/24).

/M.T.B's.....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects. - contd.M.T.B's 54.
56. 51.

A.M.1524A/12^{N.T. & W.D.} and R.A.C.F. 1645/18^{N.T. & W.D.} M.T.B's 54 and 51 arrived eventually on 21st and 22nd respectively. Both required engines changing and defects taken in hand and will not be ready for service for several days at least. M.T.B.56 has not yet arrived. As the state of the 11th Flotilla is thus unsatisfactory and the work on repairs occupies the time of the Base staff to the detriment of the maintenance of other coastal craft it is recommended that no further boats of this Flotilla should be sent to Dover until a sufficient period has elapsed to show that they are reliable and ready in all respects for action 54 and 51 being sailed for Portland to rejoin Flotilla when ready.
(V.A.Dover 1238A/24 to Admty.)

BIDEFORD.

Sailed LULWORTH. BIDEFORD has returned with A/S defects. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1523A/24).

RANPURA.

Damage due to fire 24/12 is estimated to require 17 days to repair. Ship will probably not be ready to sail with W.S.15. (S.O.W.P. 1716A/24).

O.21.

I understand it is unlikely that O.21 is fit for patrol. In view of the grave emergency I would be glad if you would arrange for Dutch engineer and electrical officers to visit the S/M at Milford Haven at the earliest possible moment and for them to report if any steps can be taken to make her fit for patrol within the next few days.
(F.O.S. 1914A/24 to S.O.D.S.)

O.9.

Tooth wheel of transmission of lubricating and circulating pump starboard engine broken down. Engine out of action. Spares not on board. Intend return Milford Haven for repairs.
(O.9 2030A/24).

WANDERER.

WANDERER can be taken in hand for damage repairs at Falmouth A.M./26 and is to be sailed accordingly. Ship is required for escort duty leaving North Channel on 3/1. (C. in C. W.A. 2057A/24 to F.O.I.C.Greenock). *See previous page.*

H.31 overdue.

H.31 was ordered to leave vicinity of 46° 48' N. 10° 30' W. after dark/21 routed through 47° 59' N. 08° 04' W. and 49° N. 07° 40' W. to R/V in 180° Lizard 5 miles at 0900/24. H.31 has not yet arrived and may be in difficulties and on the surface. I do not intend to ask for T.B.R. to cover this route but I should be grateful if any aircraft which may be operating in the vicinity could be warned to keep a look out for H.31 and for any sighting of her to be reported to me as soon as possible.
(F.O.S. 2201A/24 to H.Q.C.C. (R) Admty. C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.I.C.Falmouth, ALECTO.)

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

S C 59.

Ships not present., EMPIRE SELWYN, JOBSHAVEN,,
IRISH LARCH, LANGLEECRAG, NORTH DEVON, CYDONIA,
DIMITRIOS, CHANDRIS, CONDYLIS, AGIOI VICTORES,
EMPIRE UNITY, NADIN, IRON BARON, ST. BERNARD.
(DOUGLAS 1015A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

Russian
convoy.

Russian convoy (details) may also pass through
your Patrol area tonight. (S.B.N.O. Archangel
1242C/24 to SHARPSHOOTER).

PASTEUR.

PASTEUR left convoy 0230/19 as ship had severe
damage and was unmanageable at convoy speed
rolling 44 degrees. Failed to contact escort at
M.O.M.P.
Captain considered the safest course was to proceed
North and then follow standard route.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde 1544/24 to Admty.)

P Q 7.

Sailing delayed. Further signal will be made.
(A.C.I.C. 1634N/24).

S.S. CUBA.

^{N.T. in W.D.}
Your 1811A. S.S. CUBA not met. My position 055°
52' N. 007° 21' W. proceeding to Newcastle-on-Tyne.
(HAVELOCK 1910A/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Diversion of
Vigo-Gib.
Cable.

Your 1114/23 and my 2115/22. Change of operation was due to political and not technical considerations. Requirement is now to provide connection through to Gibraltar and not Lisbon. (D.S.D. 0057A/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Departure MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT to carry out in accordance with A.M. 1249A/19 and 0057A/24, in addition, repairs to Fayal San Miguel cable will be carried out in approx. 037° 41' N. 025° 51' W. (F.O.C.N.A. 1020A/24).

VANOC.

Your 1009/24. Proceed to Gibraltar at best speed. (C. in C. Plymouth 1224/24 to VANOC).
Keep well clear of:-
(1) S/M P.39 position 2000A/24 035° 58' 010° 10' 092° diving by day 25th speed submerged 2½ knots.
(2) S/M P.36 position 2000A/24 038° 03' 010° 35' through 36.40 10.25 thence 103° diving by day 25th from position 37.00 10.25 speed submerged 2½ knots.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1546/24 to VANOC, EGRET, Capt. (S) 8, Admty, C. in C. Plymouth.)
VANOC off Cape Ortegal at 1228A/24th has been ordered to Gibraltar by shortest route at best speed. She has been given your movements. (F.O.C.N.A. 1606A/24 to P.36, P.39).

TOTLAND
S.L. 95.

TOTLAND steering position D course 024° S. of A. 8, expect to rejoin Convoy S.L. 95 at 1300N/25th. (N.C.S.O. P. Delgada, 1450/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

FARADAY.

FARADAY ran into heavy weather after leaving Gibraltar and has returned with the remainder of the convoy. Proposed movements will be signalled. (F.O.C.N.A. 1618A/24 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

PLUTON.

Your 1736A/17th and your 1052A/18th. PLUTON is Naval vessel and cannot be required to have a Navicert.
Destination of ship. Cargo about 1,000 tons crude oil for refinery. Nothing wrong. Navy is desperate for fuel and cannot get what it wants from Campsa.
Spain bought rest of this cargo some time ago with our knowledge. (N.A. Madrid 1830/24 to S.O. (I) Gibraltar).

COWSLIP.

COWSLIP ran aground nine miles Gibraltar 22/12. Refloated and brought to Dockyard. Dry docked 23/12. Extensive hull damage. Internal structural damage still under survey. Intend temporarily repairing hull and refloating in about 14 days to release dry dock. Complete repairs will take two to three months mostly in dry dock. Completion date uncertain. (C.S. Gibraltar 2018A/24)

COMMUNICATIONS

MESSAGE

1108/24th December.

FROM Lisbon.

DATE 25.12.41.

RECD. 0213.

NAVAL SHORE CODE N BY CABLE. RECIRCULATION.

ADDRESSED Admiralty for D. of N.I. Repeated S.O. (I)
Gibraltar B.N.A. Madrid B.N.A. Lisbon.

My 1833 9th anti-British feeling dying down.
Now mainly confined Government party and its more
enthusiastic supporters among upper and monied class.
Bulk of people now consider we took only action possible.
Friday's speech probably weakened Salazar's hold on
country. Feeling stronger against Dutch than British.

1108/24.

N.I.D. Comment.

N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1833/19 reported inter alia a
lightning attack on Gibraltar before Xmas. This signal
was considered unduly alarmist, no confirmation having
been received from Naval Attache or H.M. Ambassador.

✓ 1833/19 intended - Feeling in Portugal as
result of Timor occupation.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
N.A. 1st S.L.
M. (4)
Ops. (3)
O.D. (5)
D.N.I. (5) (and for A.E.)
O.I.C. (3)
D. of P. (3)
D.A./S.W.
I.P. (3)
W.D.
D.S.D. 9.
Ad. Bailey.
Ad. Bellairs.
E.P.S.
D.N.L.O. (2)
FILE X.

MP.

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.→ INDOMITABLE.
U.S. Forces.

It appears from Admiralty plot that INDOMITABLE and American Forces ex. W.S. 12 X may be passing through the same area. Not known here whether they have been mutually informed. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0205A/24 to C. in C. S.A.)

WOODRUFF.

If you can make good 8 knots proceed towards Freetown. If not proceed Takoradi. Report situation. (C. in C. S.A. 0909Z/24 to WOODRUFF (R) N.O.I.C. Takoradi).

U.S. QUINCY
U.S. VINCENNES
→ INDOMITABLE.

U.S. Cruiser QUINCY and U.S. Cruiser VINCENNES with 6 destroyers left Capetown 0500/16 proceeding by great circle for (correct group) 012° 50' N. 060° 00' W. speed 17 knots. (C. in C. S.A. 1205Z/24 to INDOMITABLE).
From Myfot these forces appear to be well clear but as B.A.D. Washington has both routes presume he has informed Opanav. I have informed INDOMITABLE. (C. in C. S.A. 1257Z/24 to Admty.)

RAMILLIES.

Fuel consumption and endurance.
(C. in C. S.A. 1831Z/24)

Siamese
Vessel.VISUT KASATRI NAWA
P.746

Your 2230Z/23rd Siamese vessel reports engine defect and is making for Rio de Janeiro.
(S.O.(I) Montevideo 1931Z/24 to BULOLO).

DEVONSHIRE.

DEVONSHIRE leaves Freetown A.M./26 to join CANTON and CILICIA for patrol in H.33. (C. in C. S.A. 2025Z/24 to Admty.)

Mediterranean.M.T. store
ships.

Details of cargoes. (W.O. 0530/24 to C. in C. India.)

Distress
Signal
VARVARA.

S.O.S. From ship position 40 W.N.W. of Alex investigate. (A/C using Call Sign 6 FJ 0821/24 to Call sign L2L).

Proceed with despatch to assist S.S. VARVARA reported in position W.N.W. Alexandria 40 in company at 0525Z/24. (C. in C. Med., 0831B/24 to NIZAM).

S.S. VARVARA in position 295° Ras-el-tin 28. Am escorting her to Alexandria speed (75 knots). (KIMBERLEY, 0931B/24 to NIZAM, C. in C. Med. etc.)

/Proceed.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET.

MESSAGE 1217Z/24 December IN.

From: R.A.S.A.D.

Date: 24.12.41

Recd: 2230

Naval Cypher D by Cable

Addressed: Admiralty, C. in C. South Atlantic.

933. Ambassador Buenos Aires minister Montevideo and U.S. Ambassador held a meeting at Montevideo 22nd December at which I was present. Meeting agreed (i) desirable U.S. Cruiser visit Montevideo before Rio de Janeiro conference (ii) If at Rio de Janeiro conference Brazil is ready actively to support Pan American defence and Argentina hesitates, Uruguay position will be difficult but desirable she follow Brazil and minimise deleterious effect on practical results of conference of Argentine attitude. (iii) Thought desirable to emphasize deferential attitude to Axis would not reduce likelihood of attack, but active defence by 3 countries might do so by making attack on South American trade less easy.

Similar telegram sent by Minister Montevideo to Foreign Office and U.S. Ambassador to Washington.

1217Z/24

1st Lord
 1st S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T)
 Secretary.
 N.A. 1st S.L.
 P.A.S. (S)
 D.O.D. (F)
 D.D.O.D. (F)
 D.O.D. (H)
 D.D.O.D. (H)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D. of L.D.
 D.A/S.W.
 D. of P. (2)
 I.P. (2)
 W.D.
 D.C. (2)
 Hd. of M. (2)
 A.C.O.
 D.D.I.C. (2)

E.P.S.
 D.T.D. (2)
 N.I.D. 10
 Admiral Bailey.
 Admiral Bellairs.

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Distress
Signal
VARVARA.
- Contd.

Proceed with all despatch assistance of S.S. VARVARA reported in position 40 miles W.N.W. Alexandria at 0725B today. ST. MONANCE sailing at 0900 and NIZAM and KIMBERLEY are also proceeding to VARVARA. (V.A. Alexandria 0925B/24 to AURORA II).
VARVARA arrived Alexandria in tow ST. MONANCE. (R.A. Alexandria 1508B/24).

D.7.

One Sunderland will co-operate with you from 1000/23rd for as long as required. Frequency 6540 Kc/s. (R.A. (D) Med. 0857B/24 to Capt. D.7).

HEYTHROP.
HASTY 9
HOTSPUR.
(U-79 sunk 23/12.)

HEYTHROP 1624B/23 (N.T) Well Done.
(C. in C. Med., 0955B/24 to HASTY, HOTSPUR. ~~122~~)
~~See p. 761 -~~

Suda Bay.

11 ships reported in Suda Bay. Troops may be embarking. (S.1, 1005B/24 to OSIRIS (R) S/Ms on Patrol, *FORESIGHT). * *at Suda!*

SOKOL,
patrol
report.

1. SOKOL reports, from 1130 until 1200/19 heavy rain squall reduced visibility and rain on calm sea prevented effective listening watch.
2. At 1200/19 in 039° 14' 017° 49' sighted 2 battleships 2 CONDOTTIERI cruisers and 10 destroyers range 10,000 yards course 295°. Squadron obscured by rain squall until abeam attack not possible. Escort ship hunted SOKOL using ranging charge but no attack developed.
3. At 0025/22 sighted red recognition lights burnt twice nothing seen or heard on hydrophones in spite of 15 minutes search. Observed similar lights but white at 2100/22 in position 36.11 15. 30 propeller noises heard for 3 minutes good visibility nothing seen. (Capt. S.10 1034B/24).

Minefields.

A report graded D.O states that contact mines have been laid in the following three areas:-

- A. Between 32° N. and 33° N. and between 15° E. and 17° E.
- B. Between 32° N. and 33° N. and between 18° 30' E. and 20° E.
- C. Between 32° 25' N. and 32° 45' N. and 20° 15' E. and 20° 45' E.

Positions are approximate. Nationality of mines not stated. (D.D.I.C. 1255A/24 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta, F.O.C.N.A., Force H, C.O.I.S., Alexandria).

/Action.....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.* 22/12. See pp 747 &
x 749Action
off
Jibuti.

French ship ELORN was noted off Jibuti on 23/12. Ship refused to obey international signal to stop and both ships opened fire. ELORN then broke off action and returned to Jibuti.
(ii) At 0700/24th NETRAVATI sighted one S/M escorted by *BOUGAINVILLE approaching Jibuti. BOUGAINVILLE warned NETRAVATI that she would open fire if latter approached. Further details awaited. (C. in C. Med. 1350B/24 to Admty.)

*BOUGAINVILLE, Sloop, sunk at Libreville 9/11/40

Vichy sloop
and S/M.

Sloop possibly D'IBERVILLE and PASCAL Class submarine arrived Jibuti this morning 24th. (F.F.N.L.O. Aden 1519Z/24 to F.N.F.L. London).

PHENIX.
VILJA.

Tanker PHENIX blew up in Haifa harbour at 1400/24 whilst leaving her berth and set fire to tanker VILJA. Oil still fiercely burning and harbour entrance now closed. While present westerly wind prevails other shipping in harbour is safe. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1530C/24, C. in C. Med., 2037B/25).

U-boat
off
Bardia.

Following received begins. D/F bearings indicate presence of German submarine off Bardia at 0412 G.M.T./24. 201 Naval Co-operation Group informed T.O.O. 0958/24th Ends.
(S.O. Force I 1634/24 to AVON VALE, KIMBERLEY).

M.T.B's
shipped.

M.T.B's 259 and 260 shipped S.S. WEST IRA 24/11/41 and M.T.Bs. 263 and 264 S.S. BIENVILLE 20/12/41 both New York/ Suez. M.T.B's 261 and 262 shipped S.S. HARDANGER 18/12/41 New York/ Alexandria.
(D.D.O.D. (C) 1649A/24 to C. in C. Med.)

Situation
at Haifa.

My 1530/24 Situation 1730C/24. PHENIX burning and settling. VILJA upper work burnt but fire under control at present tanks not fired. Attempt is being made to tow VILJA clear. Following ships have got out of harbour, ATHENE, HOPESTAR, THORDIS, ARMADALE, BRITISH SAILOR. ATHENE with FALK sailed to Port Said E.T.A. 1200/25 ARAMURA sailed independently to Port Said E.T.A. 1400/25 THORDIS to sail to Beyrout with VICTORIAN E.T.A. 0700/25. (N.O.I.C. Haifa 1732C/24 to C. in C. Med.)

Air Sweep.

Long range Swordfish leave Sidi Barrani to be in 31° 35' N. 26° 40' E. at 1730. Sweep to 32° 00' N. 26° 10' E. to 32° 15' N. 25° 00' E. to 080° Tobruk 10 miles to 32° 10' N. 25° 00' E. to Sidi Barrani. (C. in C. Med. 1802B/24 to Med. Fleet, Force I).

/Mining.....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.Mining
of Malta.

V.A. Malta's 2033B/23. Request information on para. six. (C. in C. Med. 1839B/24 to Admt.) Your 2033B/23 para. 6 only known cases of Type "T" from aircraft have been seaplanes alighting on water. Considered improbable that this type could be used in flight. Both Type "T" and Type "C" with its various assemblies can be laid by E-boats. (D.T.M. 2355A/24 to V.A. Malta).

Malta
Air
Report.

1635/23. 2 Bombers. 1852 10 Raiders bombs land and possibly minelaying, civilian damage.
4 Wellingtons mark 2 nuisance raid Tripoli 1830 to 0425 hours.
Tripoli harbour and town covered by smoke screen. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1855/24).
3 alerts 0746 hours 36 fighters escorting 4 JU 88's which attacked Grand Harbour 1 bomb hit merchant vessel another AJAX superficial damage no naval casualties.
1101 hours 30 ME. 109 escorting 4 JU. 88 second attack Grand Harbour bombs sea no damage.
1353 hours 5 fighters 1 JU. 88 crossed coast no bombs dropped. (H.Q. Malta 1857/24).

Operation
B.S.

Bring into force condition B.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1945B/24 to S/M's on Patrol).

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

1845/24/December.

To:- C.in C. Middle East.

Date 24.12.41.

CIPHER

From The War Office

MOST IMMEDIATE

60092 cipher (M.O.5.) 24/12.

Following from Commanders-in-Chief from Chiefs of Staff No. 219 begins.

1. Within the next few days, we will have to make important recommendations to H.M.G. as to the extent to which reinforcements, both land and air, will have to be sent from the Middle East, first to stabilise and then to restore the position in the Far East.

2. It would be most helpful if each C.in C. would send home an officer who knows intentions regarding Acrobat, and post-Acrobat period, and who can explain the implications involved in the despatch of reinforcements.

3. How soon may we expect these officers? Ends.

Please pass to A.O.C.in C. as from Air Ministry
1845/24.

Advance copy sent D.C. D.O.D.(F) D.D.I.C.

Recd from W.O. a.m./25/Dec.

War Office Circulation

1st Lord

1st S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S.(T)

A.C.N.S.(F)

N.A. 1st S.L.

D.O.D (F)

D.D.O.D.(F)

D.N.I. (4)

D. of P. (2)

D.C. (2)

E.P.S.

Hd. of M. (2)

I.P. (2)

W.D.

D.D.I.C. (2)

D.T.D. (4)

D. of S.T.

D.S.D.

S. of S.

C.I.G.S.

V.C.I.G.S.

D.M.O. & P.

D.D.M.O.(O)

D.P.

M.O. 1.5.10.12.

D.M.I.

D.D.M.I. (I)

M.I. 2.3.14.

C.N.S.

D. of Plans, Admiralty

C.A.S.

D. of Plans, Air Ministry

Colonel Jacob.

Secy. J.F.S., Cabinet Offices

Hd. of W.R., Admiralty

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Rangoon.

Rangoon bombed 1030 to 1100 hours 23/12. 15 fires started in the town. Believe 4 enemy aircraft shot down. No other details. (C.in C. India 0005/24 to W.O.).

Enemy shipping at Goa, proposed cutting out expedition.

Personal for C.I.G.S. from Gen. Wavell repeat C.in C. E.I.

Goa. Present position is intolerable as a number of German ships are lying in harbour and their crews are at large. Wireless station is utilized continuously and there is a grave danger of leakage of information. There have been reports though not confirmed that port has been recently used by an enemy submarine. Possible alternatives are to:-

(a) Request that wireless station be shut down. This we are entitled to do but previous requests have met with no response.

(b) Put in hand "cutting out" operations to seize enemy ships. This is the only possible way getting them intact and avoiding danger of clash with Portuguese.

(c) Occupy colony with land forces. These could later be withdrawn subject to conditions which would ensure control over use of wireless and of harbour and also internment of crews of enemy ships. It is unlikely to secure enemy ships intact.

(d) To put pressure on Portuguese to take action themselves or to allow us to do so with their connivance. Last named course renders surprise impossible and increases possibility resistance result of which will be unfortunate. It will also permit of escape or scuttling of German ships which we hope to avoid. We therefore recommend course B and consider that in view of entry of Japan and U.S.A. into war that political effects of such action can now be disregarded.

(C.in C. India 0130/24 to W.O.).

Personal for Gen. Wavell.

Your 1330/23.

(1) I am unable to agree with conclusion reached in alternative B.

(2) The German and Italian crews in Goa outnumber the European residents and are known to be on alert. Furthermore the ships will in accordance with their practice be ready for fire and scuttle at very short notice.

(3) While operation is feasible resistance is to be expected and from our experience at Bandar Shahpur a considerable force equipped for fire fighting will be required to overcome resistance and save ships.

(4) Should fighting occur a clash with Portuguese would appear to be almost inevitable particularly in view of Timor adventure.

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Enemy shipping at Goa, proposed cutting out expedition.
-Contd.

5. I suggest primary object is to remove subversive element in Goa rather than capture ships. I do not consider a cut out operation would achieve this since we are unlikely to be able to prevent at least some crew from escaping ashore where they will be out of our reach.

6. My view is that half measure will be disastrous. If it is decided to clear up the situation it is essential both naval and land forces should be employed.

7. Has my chief of staff been consulted on this appreciation?

War Office pass Admiralty.

(C.in C. E.I. 1308/24 to C.in C. India).

Diego Garcia.

Hydrographic information Diego Garcia is recommended as suitable for use for aircraft carriers and large cruisers. Entrance will be swept to 5 fathoms very early and further reports submitted on completion.
(CLIVE 0351Z/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Aerodromes Persian Gulf.

(1) R/C carried out by R.A.F. India on Persian shore only with view to developing Air reinforcements route. Intention also to provide for operations of aircraft against German threat to shipping in Gulf.

(2) In this connection see para. 4 and 5 our 17863/G of 14/11 which suggests priority to development of strip of Persian shore as opposed to Arabian shore.

(3) The reasons for this are given in our telegraphic summary 12330/G of 2/9 of detailed R/C of requirements for defence of Persian Gulf.

(4) We do not consider entry of Japan into war has modified these views as air operations against this threat could be satisfactorily carried out from Persian shore along which shipping is routed and not Arabian coast.

(5) Suggest therefore development should begin with aerodromes at Jask Bandar Abbas Lingeh Asalu detailed report on which is being sent separately with H.Q. R.A.F. India.

(C.in C. India. 0450/24 to H.Q.R.A.F.M.E.).

Threat to Aden.

No.15.

(1) I have seen signal from F.O.R.S. to N.O.I.C. stating that Admty. appreciation is that S/M threat to Aden is small and raider threat negligible. May I assume that:-

(A) There is no present possibility of Japanese attacking force of brigade or more being transported to within 100 miles of Aden without being detected and brought to action, and

(B) you will inform me at once of situation /deteriorates....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Threat to
Aden.
-Contd.

deteriorates sufficiently to render such an operation possible.
(2) I ask this because A.O.C. has insufficient aircraft to patrol Gulf of Aden and garrison which is immobile has been so depleted that I doubt whether determined seaborne attack could be effectually resisted. Capture of Aden might paralyse our military effort in Middle East. (Govr. Aden 1012Z/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

A/S escorts
Durban area.

A.M. 1627/23. For A.T. 1824A/4 read A.T. 1824A/24 November.
(D.O.D.(F) 1328A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Reinforcements
for Malaya.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. (India) 12 to C.in C. India. Repeated C.in C. F.E. (Pass to C.in C. E.F.), C.in C. E.I. G.O.C. Malaya.

W.O. No. 59918 23 /12 crossed your 21592/G 23/12.

2. We have given further consideration to this question and feel that we must get reinforcements into Malaya while air situation permits. We therefore confirm that second brigade group of 17 Indian Division should go to Malaya.

3. Destination of remaining brigades 18 Division is still under consideration.
(1st S.L. 1341A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Sailing of
Tankers from
Rangoon.

It is reported from commercial sources that you have ordered the sailing of all tankers from Rangoon. Is this correct?

(2) Present policy is to step up shipments of refined petroleum products from this port. It is also necessary to import some quantities of 100 octane spirit for R.A.F. use preferably from Pladjoe. Request your remarks.
(4th S.L. 1554A/24 to C.in C. E.I.).

Ref. A.M. 1554A/24. I have issued no such instructions.

(2) Subject to concurrence of C.in C. E.F. my intention is that tankers should be permitted to proceed to and from Rangoon as required. (C.in C. E.I. 1848Z/24 to Admty.).

S.S.
WAIRUNA.

Have you any news of WAIRUNA due Colombo 18/12 from Fremantle?
(D.T.D. 1905A/24 to S.O.(I) Colombo).

53rd Infy .
Bdge.

Please pass our 59921 of 23/12 to C.in C. E.I.
(W.O. 2045/24 to C.in C. India).

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 2205/24 December IN

From C. in C. India.

Date 24/12/41
Recd. 2320CYPHER

Addressed The War Office.

IMMEDIATE

021687 21716/G cipher 24/12.

Your Mov./59101 (Q.(M).2.c.) 19/12.

S.D.5. Despatches Malaya.

Part One. First. In order to meet essential overseas despatches we require shipping for 13500 T D ex Bombay mid January additional to that now available.

Second. This caters for Movement (A) 53 Inf. Bde. Bombay-Malaya (B) 7,000 reinforcements Bombay-Malaya (C) 1500 reinforcements ex W.S.12X. required urgently Midcast.

Third. P.S.T.O. India has asked D.S.T. London to allot W.S.12Z. ships due Bombay early Jan. for these moves to Malaya.

Fourth. If moves to Malaya are to be expedited this essential and request you ask D.S.T. to arrange.

2205/24

1st Lord.)		Recd. by hand from War Office
1st S.L.)		War Office circulation to:-
V.C.N.S.)		S. of S. Col Jacob Cabinet
A.C.N.S.(T))		C.I.G.S. Offices.
A.C.N.S.(F))		V.C.I.G.S. Sec.J.P.S. Cabinet
N.A. 1st S.L.)		A.C.I.G.S. Offices.
D.O.D.(F))		D.H.O. & P. India Office (War Sta
D.D.O.D.(F))		D.P. Min. of War Transport
D.N.I.(4))	ONLY	D.D.H.O.(O) (J.N.Wood Esq.for
D. of P.(2))		H.C.1.5.10.12. D. of S.T.
D.C.(2))		D.M.I.
E.P.S.)		M.I.2.
Hd. of M.(2))		D.Q.M.G.
I.P.(2))		D. Mov.
W.D.)		D.D. Mov.(P)(S)
D.D.I.C.)		D.S.D.
D.T.D.(2))		Q.(M)2.3.
D. of S.T.)		C.N.S. Admiralty.
D.S.D.)		D. of Plans Admiralty.
		H.W.R. Admiralty.
		C. in Ministry
		D. of Plans Air Ministry.

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

BANKA

Auxiliary M/S. Now appears was sunk by one of our own mines off Johore on 10/12. 6 survivors, Malay ratings landed at Pulo Tinggi Island. (D.O.R. 24/12).

Removal of petrol from Malaya.

Most urgent to move 29,000 tons aviation spirit from Pladjoe and Singapore and Pangkalan Brandan to M.E. and 43,000 tons components from Pladjoe and Singapore to Australia. Economically it would be preferable to send tankers from Australia to load these cargoes but if delay on ballast voyage is probable or if for any reason this course is unacceptable to you tankers can be despatched from Colombo. If you prefer first alternative request you will arrange direct with A.C.N.B. for despatch to loading ports of following four tankers BRITISH PRINCESS due Fremantle, ELSA and MARIDAL at Melbourne, VERA at Sydney. (D.T.D. 0103A/24 to C. in C. E.F.)

Ships detailed to remove aviation spirit components from Balik-Papan.

Your 1608/21. PAN SCANDIA due Balik Papan 26/12 will lift total of 14,000 tons aviation spirit and components for Australia. Of remaining 4,000 tons Netherlands requires 2,000. Balance of 2,000 not sufficient to justify sending large tanker and A.P. Co. are endeavouring to arrange small tanker. (C. in C. E.F. 0115Z/24 to Admty.)

K.14.

C. in C. Netherlands report that K.14 has sunk 3 large transports and one tanker off Sarawak coast. (C. in C. F.E. 0402Z/24 to Admty.)

Reinforcements for Malaya.

60026 24/12. Following from Chiefs of Staff. Ref. C. in C. India, No. 21537/G 22/12+ and C. in C. F.E. unnumbered tel. ϕ dated 22/12. We have decided to accept recommendation by C. in C. F.E. and C. in C. E.F. that 53rd Inf. Brigade should proceed direct Malaya as suggested in alternative (a) of W.O. tel. No. 59407 20/12* This cannot be finally settled until we get the permission of American Authorities for their ship (MOUNT VERNON) to proceed direct to Malaya. 2. We have cabled the Prime Minister to ask for this urgently. (W.O. 0200/24 1130/24 to C. in C. F.E.) + 2045/22, ϕ 2004/22, * 0245/21. ^{p. 751} _{p. 718c}

Situation.

Sitrep No.14. 1630 G.M.T./23, includes:- Borneo. Sighting reports received 23/12 from Dutch and British aircraft indicate attack on Kuching imminent by force comprising at least 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 10 transports. Destruction of aerodrome Kuching ordered, and air R/C and striking forces detailed to locate and attack /convoy....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Situation
-Contd.convoy first light 24/12.
(Adv. H.Q. M.C. 0509/24 to W.O. etc.). See
Lion Copy.Dutch.
land and
air
dispositions.No. 60019 24/12.
Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.64.
Please report dispositions of Dutch land
and air forces in E.I. You should ensure
that dispositions will provide adequate
protection for really important strategic
localities in particular the aerodrome areas
covering Malacca and Sunda Straits.
(W.O. 1015/24 to C.in C. F.E.).Air
Operations.Daily Operational Summary up to 1030/24/12.
No movement west coast recco to 4° 26' N.
Local A/S patrol. Diverging search to depth
of 250 miles north east from Singapore
negative report. Diverging search to depth
320 miles to coast North Borneo. 1 S/M
believed to be Dutch seen at 1050 in 1° 21'
N. 108° 32' E. 5 Blenheim IV despatched to
attack enemy force off Kuching priority
transports tanker warships. 1 direct hit
on stern of transport 6 near misses 15 to
30 yards all our aircraft returned safely.
Enemy air activity negligible.
(A.H.Q. F.E. 1730/24).America and West Indies.Gilbert Is.Japanese landing or bombardment reported at
0210Z/24 at (Abaiang) Gilbert Is. B.1.
One 8000 ton cruiser reported present. Type
of ship grade C 2.
(N.O. Wellington 0236Z/24).BINTANG
distress.Intercept DE VCE Cape Race Radio (begins).
S.O.S. BINTANG 43. 25 N. 53.10 W. in distress,
lifeboat smashed, require immediate assistance
bearings VCE Cape Race Radio 205 approx. VGS
S. Paul Island 139 VAX Canso Radio 103. (Ends).
(Valentia Radio 0541/24 to Admty.).Japanese
vessel
Chile.N.A. Santiago's reference 1840/23. Informed
A 4 Japanese cotton firm Peru received orders
to have cotton ready to ship in Japanese

/convoy.....

MOST SECRET~~MOST SECRET~~ ~~SECRET~~ 0509/24th Dec. IN

From Adv. H.Q. M.C.

Date 24.12.41.

Recd 0509.

CipherAddressed War Office, C. in C. India, C.G.S. Melbourne,
G.O.C. N.Z. Military Forces.

021530

MOST IMMEDIATE.

O.337 Cipher 24/12.

Sitrep No.14 1630 hours G.M.T. 23/12.

Perak. Contact with enemy during 23/12 on Perak River at Iakandar and railway bridges near Kuala Kangsar. 12 Ind. Inf. Bde. now east of river in this sector and both bridges demolished. 12 Bde. moving towards Chemor 10 miles North of Ipoh. On left of 11 Ind. Div. front Div. recce regt. 3 Cav. and one Bn. 28 Ind. Inf. Bde. were still West of pontoon bridge Blanja this evening with supporting arty. East of river in area Parit 2 miles South of Blanja. One Bn. 28 Bd. in area West of Batu Gajah. Many enemy bombing and M.G. attack during 23/12 particularly on Ipoh and pontoon bridge Blanja. Petrol dump ammunition train destroyed and signal box hit Ipoh station and some damage to railway at Chemor. Pontoon bridge still open and railway working at least up to inclusive Ipoh. Transport of a Bn. of 12 Bde. also attacked near Salak North 2 miles East of Iskandar bridge causing some casualties.

Kelantan - Pahang. Following sentence not for release at present. 8 Ind. Inf. Bde. now withdrawn to area Kuala Lipis - Raub with rearguard known as Macforce composition Comd. Lt. Col. Mackewler tps. 4 F.M.S.V.F. one regular coy. of 8 Bde. one coy. Malay Regt. special platoon and armoured train still in area Dabong with task of withdrawing down railway demolishing it as they go.

Kuantan no change.

Johore Singapore no change.

Bornoo.....

Bornoo. Sighting reports received during 23/12 from Dutch and British aircraft indicate attack on Kuching imminent by force comprising at least two cruisers three destroyers ten transports destruction of aerodrome Kuching ordered and air recce and striking forces detailed to locate and attack convoy first light 24/12. Reported enemy arrived Danau in Brunei 0830 hours 22/12.

Air. Three Blenheims attacked Sungei Patani before first light 23/12. Target located and bombed but poor visibility hampered observation of results. Our aircraft met no ground or air opposition and all returned safely. Final casualties Kuala Lumpur 22/12 are enemy one Navy O one M.E. 109 certain two unspecified probable. Own three Buffaloes shot down one collided with enemy three crashlanded. Three pilots killed. Pilots again report superior speed and Manoeuverability of Navy O fighter over Buffalo. All our fighters now withdrawn to Singapore Kuala Lumpur and Fort Swettenham being kept as advanced landing grounds. Except as mentioned under Borneo all recco. during 23/12 negative. 5 Blenheims ex Rangoon and Hudsons ex Australia arrived Singapore 25/12.

0509/24.

Received from War Office at 0831/24

1st Lord	War Office Distribution:-
1st S.L.	Internal M.O.10 for action, S. of S.
4th S.L.	C.I.G.S., V.C.I.G.S., D.M.O. & P.,
5th S.L.	D.P.(2), D.D.M.O.(0), M.O.1.2.6.10.
V.C.N.S.	12., D.D.I.P., D.M.I., D.D.M.I.(I),
A.C.N.S.(H)	M.I.2.(3), A.A.(4), External
A.C.N.S.(F)	Cabinet War Room, Col. Jacob (Cab
A.C.N.S.(T)	Offices), S. of S. (Foreign Office)
A.C.N.S.(W)	Col. Office (Maj. Rolleston),
Nav. Sec.	Duty Captain (Admiralty), Duty
N.A. 1st S.L.	Office (Upper Admiralty War Room),
Capt. Pim. Ad. House.	Hd. of War Reg. Admiralty, C.A.S.
D.N.A.D.	Air Ministry (2), Plans (3) Air
Hd. of R. (2)	Ministry (2), Duty Gp. Capt. Air
D.O.D.(H)	Ministry, A.C.A.S.(I) Air Ministry,
D.D.O.D.(H)	War Room Air Ministry, F.O.5. Air
D.O.D.(F)	Ministry, D.M.C. Air Ministry.
D.D.O.D.(F)	
Duty Captain	
D.N.I.(4)	
D.D.I.C.(2)	
D.T.D.(2)	
D. of P.(2)	Admiral Bellairs
D.A/S.	Admiral Chalmers
I.P.(2)	E.P.S.
W.D.	D.T.S.D.
D.S.D.	N.I.D. 10.
Admiral Bailey	D.P.D.

jf

8188
818 0717

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 2400 24th Dec. IN

From: The Military Date 25.12.41.
 Attache Chungking. Recd: ?

Cipher

Addressed: The War Office repeated C. in C China.
 C. in C Far East, and G.O.C. Burma.
 tel. No. M 400 from N.A. China W.O. please
 pass India Far East and Burma.

IMMEDIATE

40024 cipher 24/12.021809

My tel. No. M 3(?) of Dec. 18th.

1. Chang Kai Shek convened most secret 1st meeting
Chungking joint military conference December 23rd.
General Wavell and General Brett attended. No
Russian or Netherlands East Indies representatives
present. Outline of general plan discussed and
approved as follows: - (A) First essential is to
make Rangoon and Burma secure against enemy attack
since both are vital for continued Chinese resistance
and any extension of combined action in China.
Offensive air action to greatest extent permitted by
resources should meanwhile be conducted against
Japanese bases installations and communications.

(B) Continue supplies of material to China to
maintain her resistance and enable Chinese armies
to train and prepare for offensive ultimately.

(C) Chinese armies meanwhile to continue to contain
Japanese forces in China by increased pressure and
action against vulnerable Japanese L of C.

(D) To pass to offensive against Japan with combined
Sino- British - America forces as soon as resources
permit.

(E) The Chungking joint conference will meet and
submit information of the above proposals to the
Allied War Council to enable it to prepare combined
strategical plans for East Asia.

(F) Conference expressed the hope that a joint
Allied War Council would soon be set up in U. S.A.

2...../

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

2. Magruder appointed U.S.A. member for future meetings. C. in C. India nominated Deenys representative until officer from India arrived.

2400/24.

Recd; from War Office 0544/26

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ist Lord | War Office Distribution |
| 1st S.L. | S of S |
| 4th S.L. | C.I.G.S., |
| 5th S.L. | V.C.I.G.S., |
| V.C.N.S. | D.M.O. & P. |
| A.C.N.S. (T) | D.D.M.O. (O) |
| A.C.N.S. (F) | D.P. (2) |
| A.C.N.S. (H) | M.O. 1.2.10. 12. |
| A.C.N.S. (W) | D.M.I.D. D.M.I. (I) (O) |
| N.A. 1st S.L. | M.I. 2. 2a. 2c. |
| D.N.A.D. | D.S.D. |
| Hd of M (1) | C.N.S. Admlty |
| D.O.D. (H) | D of Plans Admlty. |
| D.D.O.D. (H) | Hd of War Reg. (Admlty) |
| D.C.D. (F) | C.A.S. (Air Min) |
| D.D.O.D. (F) | D of Plans Air Min. |
| Duty Capt (2) | Col. Jacob. (Cabnt Offs) |
| D.N.I. (5) and for
A.E. | Sec. J.P.S. (Cabnt Offices) |
| D.D.I.C. (2) | India Office (Col. McCay) |
| D of P (2) | Burma Offices (Maj Upson (3) |
| D.A/S.W. | For. Office (Mr. Sterndale Bennett. |
| I.P. (2) | N.A.B. |
| W.D. | |
| D.P.D. | |
| D.S.D. | |
| Admiral Bailey | |
| Admiral Bellairs. | |
| E.P.S. | |

Note: by M.O.12.

1. It is presumed that the telegram referred to in the first sentence is M.A. Chingking's No. M 348 of 15 Dec.
2. Telegram has been repeated to C. in C. India., C. in C. Far East and G.O.C. Burma.

MOST SECRET

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.Japanese vessel Chile.
-Contd.

convoy arriving Peru for cotton, Chile for nitrate and minerals. Japanese saw how many German ships tied up cruiser to guard them. Submit this might be same move. (S.O.(I) Callao 105OR/24 to Admty.).

Tank.

Large cylindrical tank floating in 937 North 5804 West at 1340 G.M.T./21. (Bermuda W/T 1133Q/24).

Situation in Far East.

Washops 14. (1) Philippine Islands. In Aparri area Japanese have reached Tuguerara at Vigan they have made a R/C in force to Candon Main Japanese effort has developed in Lingayen area: Heavy fighting in Pangasinan: enemy ships reported off Batangas. Enemy landed? Antimovast (S.E. Luzon on Lamon Bay). Heavy fighting in progress. In Legaspi area Japanese occupied Naga and Daet. Manila Port area was bombed shortly before noon/24 local time. At Davao Japanese have landed from 3 to 4 transports. Returning from Darwin 9 B-17 bombers bombed Japanese Transport at Davao; result unknown. (2) Hawaii 23/12 a S/M contact was depth charged in this area with indications that attack may have been successful. (3) Wake Island communication has been received since Japanese were reported landing. (4) Johnston Island. A report timed 0513/23 states island was being shelled by submarine. (5) U.S. Pacific Coast. Further reports of S/M activity in this area. In approx. 035° 10' N. 121° W, tanker MONTEBELLO was sunk by torpedo early yesterday morning. Shortly before this tanker LARRY DOHENEY was attacked by torpedoes and gunfire without result. It seems probable these two attacks were carried out by same S/M. S.S. PANAMA EXPRESS was twice attacked by torpedoes 30 miles west of San Diego during night 21/22 without result. Admiralty pass to W.O. and Air Min. (Joint Staff Mission, Washington 1337R/24).

S.S. CLUMBERHALL - See 23/12 - 4-789 -Use of Brazilian ports by Canadian ships.

Repeating N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1841Z/19. (D.N.I. 1350A/24 to C.in C. A.W.I. C.in C. S.A. R.A.S.A.D. B.A.D. Washington. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

/S.S.....

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. - contd.S.S. BARDALAND
(Swedish).

Trinidad intercept suggests carrying enemy cargo. Shipment to be effected approx. 21/11. Details. (S.O.(I) Jamaica. 1449R/24 to Admty.)

SOREL.(1) SOREL ordered to proceed with S C 62 to prudent limit thence to Greenock for completion of refit subsequently for training Tobermory.
(2) Completion of items will be signalled.
(C.C.N.F. 1501Z/24). (Above as amended by C.C.N.F. 2415Z/15 p.344.)S.S. WYOMING.
(French).

St. Thomas arrival today S.S. WYOMING. St. Thomas reports may load 1600 tons oil fuel and general cargo mostly sugar for Casablanca via Guadeloupe and Martinique. (S.O.(I) Jamaica 1649R/24).

QUEEN OF
BERMUDA.To sail from Norfolk for Bermuda on 28/12 by direct route to Bermuda. Ship is to report E.T.A. to C. in C. A. & W.I. direct together with report required by refit order number 703.
(B.A.R.M. 1738R/24).Navigation
lights.

Your 2212Q/22 instruction that British and Allied merchant ships were not to show navigation lights in areas 8 and 10 except for dimmed navigation lights at discretion in coastal waters was issued by G.B.M.S. Time of origin 2340Z/7/12 and B.A.D. was informed of this. It was presumed you would have received text of G.B.M.S. from Captain i/c. Bermuda. (D.T.D. 1811A/24 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

St. Pierre
taken over by
Free French.

In compliance with order quite recently received from General de Gaulle and request of inhabitants I have proceeded this morning to Island Saint Pierre and rallied people to Free France and allied cause with enthusiastic reception.

ALYSSE.
ACONIT.Unless otherwise ordered by Admty. ALYSSE and ACONIT will arrive St. Johns N.F. P.M./27.
(Adm. Muselier 1910Z/24).S.S. CARLIER.

Dakar 23/12 B, 2. Arrived 22/12 Belgian CARLIER for Bordeaux or Antwerp. Master has indented for Charts of Vigo and Northern Spanish Ports. Superstructure white, funnel buff, Hull light grey. (B.A.D. 1913R/24 N.I.D. Comment: This ship has been reported several times since the beginning of July 1941 as about to proceed from Dakar to Bordeaux.)

Coastal
routeing.Orders for coastal routeing so far issued cover only U.S. Flag and U.S. controlled vessels. Others may accept such routeing if they so desire.
OPNAV 2145Z/24).

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

EMPRESS OF
CANADA.

Your 1603M/23. As full escort not available New Zealand Govt. will only allow 100 R.N.Z.A.F. to embark, no R.A.A.F. embarked. Ship will be routed well South, no cover required, Normal routing signal will be made. B.A.D. Washington pass to B.N.L.O. San Francisco.
(N.Z.N.B. 1450M/24 to B.A.D.)

Zigzagging.

Reference A.M. 1303/14. In order that information may be promulgated generally request you will state in which areas on your station merchant vessels proceeding independently are required to zigzag. (D.T.D. 1858A/24 to A.C.N.B., C. in C.E.F.)

Tankers.

Disposition tankers Australia Station 24/12.
BRITISH SAILOR is 7 days overdue at Port Darwin.
(A.C.N.B. 1921/24 to Admty.)

War Diary.24.12.1941.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.MONTEBELLO
LARRY DOHENEY
PANAMA EXPRESS

See A. & W.I.

ABSAROKA.

Navy Dept. announced 24/12 that U.S. ABSAROKA, 5695 tons, had been attacked by U/B, presumed Japanese, off coast of California and abandoned in a sinking condition. 1 member of crew killed. (D.S. 843, 26/12.)

Submarines Reported.

1908/23.

U-Boat in 032° 06' N. 024° 46' E. at 1908/23. (C. in C. Med. 0021B/24 to Med. Fleet, Force I.)

Off Bardia.

0412 G.M.T./24. See Mediterranean.

Tripoli.

Italian S/M bearings 190/2, working Tripoli (Africa). (V.A. Malta, 1010B/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

1034.

Following has been read. P.C. and S. of enemy, one submarine on surface, 33.32 N., 24.58 E.* (A/C call sign K7TP, 1034/24.) * (?290°) 1 knot

C. Verde Is.

Received reliable information that 2 S/Ms were sighted off Solamasa Bay St. Vincent, C.V., early 24th. (N.C.S.O. St. Vincent, C.V. 1135/24.)

1234B.

Position of enemy S/M 033° 30' N. 024° 32' E. course 290° speed 5 knots. (V.A. Malta 1234B/24.)

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs. (D.D.I.C. 1357A/24, 1358/24.)

0132Z/22.

Cancel my 1306/22. Further evidence from other craft indicates Clipper was mistaken. (C. in C. E.I. 1430Z/24 to E.I. Station.)

Bay of Biscay

Several U.Boats may be leaving Bay of Biscay. 8 are bound for Bay of Biscay ports of which 6 are in following positions. (F.O.S. 1927A/24 to S/Ms on patrol Area A.)

War Diary.

24.12.1941.
Wednesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported - contd.

2012 G.M.T. S/M bearing 315/2 sensed 26 groups at 2012 G.M.T.
(V.A. Malta 2215B/24.)

Submarines Attacked.

1034B. P.C. and S. of U-Boat attacked by aircraft
1034B today 033° 32' 024° 58' 290° 5 knots.
Acknowledge. Surface tonight.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1431B/24 to PROTEUS, THUNDERBOLT.)

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

U.S. C.N.O. has agreed as a temporary measure that Canadian escorts for S.C. and O.N. (S) convoys shall proceed to Londonderry instead of Iceland (see 15/12 A. and W.I.)

Enemy Air Operations.

Military Transport LOCHGARRY was unsuccessfully attacked 15 miles E. of Sydero at 1252.

→ Convoy F.N.587 was attacked at 1800 off Hartlepool. S.S. CHARLES PARSONS is reported to have been slightly damaged.

Convoy E.N. 44 was attacked at 1744 in 57° 15' N. 1° 45' W; no damage is reported.

→ Convoy F.N.587 was attacked at 1825, 18 miles E. by N. of Harwich, but was not damaged.

Mining.

Operation
"Tincture".

This operation was reported completed at 1728A today. Results were negative.

4 mines were detonated today off Spurn Point.

4 mines were detonated in the Thames Estuary early this morning. S.S. CORMEAD in F.N.588 was mined at 2315, near 5 Buoy and sank later in tow. Enemy activity in the Estuary this evening was confined to the outer area, and no minelaying is suspected in the swept channels. An apparent premature mine explosion was seen about 1850 in the direction of Kentish Knock.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Convoy W.S.14 (26 ships for Middle East) escorted by RAMILLIES, 4 destroyers and 1 sloop, left Freetown today.

Mediterranean.

9 Wellingtons attacked shipping at the Spanish Quay at Tripoli last night.

~~WARSAWA carrying troops was torpedoed this afternoon in 52° 10' N. 24° 30' E. and again this evening, and sank.~~

Security of Aden.

The Governor of Aden inquired yesterday whether he might assume that there is no present possibility of a Japanese attacking force of a brigade or more being transported to within 100 miles of Aden without being detected and brought to action, and, whether C. in C. E.I. will inform him at once if the situation deteriorates sufficiently to render such an operation possible, observing that the A.O.C. has insufficient aircraft to patrol the Gulf of Aden and the garrison has been so depleted that he doubts its ability effectually to resist a determined seaborne attack; the capture of Aden might paralyse our military effort in the Middle East. C. in C. E.I. replied that he cannot at this stage assess the scale of attack to which Aden will become liable; his views are that it is highly unlikely that the Japanese will attempt a landing in force near Aden in the immediate future, but that if such a landing were attempted it cannot be guaranteed that the force would be detected or brought to action before reaching its destination.

Naval Casualties at fall of Hong Kong
December, 1941.

Total all over figure 152 plus 1 New Zealander = 153.

Officers 1 Killed
7 Missing presumed killed
7 Died in captivity

Other ranks 28 Killed
80 Died in captivity
29 Missing presumed killed
1 New Zealander killed

153 Total

Entered in P.N. Vol II

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

There was an air raid on Rangoon today by a large number of bombers with fighter escort. No naval or military and little civilian damage is reported. Ten enemy bombers and 10 fighters are reported to have been shot down.

Rangoon town and Mingaldon aerodrome were raided today by 54 Japanese bombers escorted by 30 fighters. Comparatively little damage was done, and over 20 Japanese planes were shot down, but we lost 6 (4 in the air and 2 on the ground) and A.V.G. lost 2, so that air strength is much weakened, and C. in C. India considers that if the Japanese persist they will soon reduce our fighter strength to nil. Reinforcement of Burma by 2 fighter squadrons, he says, is vitally urgent.

China.

Hong Kong.

At 0529Z today the Governor reported that street fighting was going on and the enemy were working towards the centre of the town. He had another request for surrender this morning, which he refused.

At 0751Z today the Governor reported that the military and naval commanders advised him that no further effective military resistance could be made, and he was taking action accordingly. All necessary naval demolitions were carried out.

Malaya.

S/M K.17 left Singapore on 6/12 for operations in the Gulf of Siam and was ordered to return by 21/12. Nothing further is known of her movements and she must be considered lost.

N.E.I.

The port of Surabaya is closed until further notice on account of mines.

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

New Zealand.

U.S. destroyer DRAYTON claims to have sunk a Japanese S/M 60 miles south of Oahu (Hawaii) at 0140Z today. (Not confirmed by cmd: 6843.)

War Diary.25.12.1941
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.L.L.
Trawlers for
Yarmouth and
Harwich.

Two L.L. Trawlers are to be sailed as soon as practicable from Harwich to Yarmouth to operate under F.O.I/c Yarmouth and two from Sheerness to Harwich to operate under F.O.I.C. Harwich. (C. in C. Nore 1021A/25 to Cdre. Sheerness, F.O.I/c Harwich.)

Flag of
C.S.18.

Flag of C.S.18 struck in EDINBURGH at 1600/25. R.A. Syfret and personal staff taking passage in *KENT. Routine administration of 18th C.S. will be continued in EDINBURGH pending further instructions.
(EDINBURGH 1601/25 to Adty.) * See next page

S.S. FINN.

Swedish ship FINN sailed from Gothenburg without ship Navicert but is to be treated as if holding one. 2. Obtain copy of Manifest and send to D.E.W.D. Admiralty by quickest available route. (D.E.W.D. 1659A/25 to N.O.I/c Faeroes.)

Co-operation with Russia.9 Whalers
for Murmansk.

Nine ex Norwegian whalers LL/SA fitted are to proceed in 3 groups to Murmansk.
2. 1st Group (3 ships) expected to be ready at Greenock by 7/1.
2nd Group (4 ships) at Greenock by 13/1
3rd Group (2 ships) at Greenock by 31/1
3. Vessels are capable of max. speed 10 knots have an endurance of about 1600 miles and carry 70 tons oil fuel.
4. C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail each group when ready to Seydisfiord to complete with oil fuel and A.C.I.C. is requested to sail them subsequently for Murmansk.
5. I suggest endurance permitting that whalers should accompany P.Q. convoys.
(D.O.D.(H) 1152A/25 to C. in C. W.A., A.C.I.C.)

Movements.TARTAR.

Delayed by bad weather. (Weather Report) 4877, 2416 my position 064° 35' N. 009° 40' W.
(TARTAR 0934Z/25 to A.C.I.C.)

JONQUIL

C. in C. W.A. 2255A/24. Request JONQUIL may be sailed to Portsmouth for onward passage to Sheerness in first available C.E. Convoy.
(C. in C. Nore 1002A/25 to C. in C. Plymouth

/STURGEON ...

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements-cont'd:STURGEON.

(1) Intend to sail STURGEON escorted by WHITE BEAR for Scapa at 1700A/27. Arrangements. (Capt. (S) 3 1039A/25.) *(x from Holy Loch - Pick list)*

BURZA
ST. ALBANS
ILLUSTRIOUS.

Request you will sail BURZA and ST. ALBANS to escort ILLUSTRIOUS to Liverpool in accordance with N.O.I.C. Liverpool 1748/24 on completion of escort duty BURZA is to return to Clyde and ST. ALBANS is to enter harbour in order that C.O. may attend convoy conference on Dec. 30th. (C. in C. W.A. 1059A/25 to N.O.I.C. Greenock, Capt (D) Londonderry.)

KENT with
Mr. Eden.

Intend leaving anchorage Kola Inlet at 1630C/25 and pass through (route). S. of A. 20 knots, E.T.A. Clyde 1530A/29. (KENT 1240C/25 to Adty., C. in C. H.F., N.O.I.C. Greenock.)

KENT's 1240C/25. KENT sailed Murmansk. Admty. pass to all addresses except Ad. Miles.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia 1831C/25.) *See previous page*

VOLUNTEER.

Detach VOLUNTEER at daylight tomorrow VOLUNTEER is to proceed to Clyde and comply with N.O.I.C. Greenock 1052/25.

(C. in C. W.A. 1609A/25 to VANQUISHER, VOLUNTEER.)

PHILOCTETES

A.M.1936/23/9 PHILOCTETES is now allocated as destroyer depot ship in the Far East.

2. When ready C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail her for Durban. Speed of PHILOCTETES 13½ knots.

3. Final destination will be decided later.

(D.O.D.(F) 1735A/25) (P.D. 02041/41)

SULTAN HISAR
DEMIR HISAR

Object of passage of destroyers SULTAN HISAR and DEMIR HISAR to Turkey via the Cape is their safe and timely arrival at their destination although it is anticipated that on certain portions of the route they will be employed as A/S escorts.

2. Any U-boat in a position to endanger either them or ships in company may be attacked. Enemy surface ships are to be reported and may be shadowed by day or night and attacked at night if favourable opportunity occurs.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 1831A/25.)

GARLAND.

Detach GARLAND at daylight tomorrow. GARLAND is to return to Greenock reporting convoy's and her own P.C. and S. when well clear.

(C. in C. W.A. 1834A/25 to CHITRAL, GARLAND.)

War Diary.25.12.1941
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements - contd.U.S. Units.

U.S.S. ARKANSAS, NASHVILLE, and six destroyers
CHATEAU THIERRY and TARAZED sailed 1945.
(A.C.I.C. 2386/25.)

Operations.Biscay S/M
patrol.

OTWAY and H.33 leave Lizard Head at 1000A/25
diving by day OTWAY route J and H.33 by route H
to lat. 047° N. thence OTWAY to position 28 and
H.33 to position 25.

(N.O.I.C. Falmouth 0701A/25 to S/Ms on Patrol
in Area A.)

Your 2031A/24, and my 1827A/24. OTWAY and
H.33 escorted by Z.5 from Falmouth arrive 180°
Lizard 5 miles at 0830 thence proceeding S.W.
to patrol submerged by day. My 1827A/24.

Delete para.D.

(F.O.S. 0839A/25 to Adty.)

My 1847A/25. Para.(E) Amend to read. 0.10
escorted by CUTTY SARK leaves Milford Haven
0900A/26 for Wolf Rock. Thence dived by
day to south westwards for patrol.

(F.O.S. 2229A/25 to Adty.)

At 0430A/26 intend to sail H.50 escorted by Z 5
from Falmouth to arrive position 180° Rame Head
Chapel 2.2 miles at 0930A. S. of A. 9½ knots.
Z 5 return arrangements.

(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1749A/25.)

Operation
"Archer"

Covering force will remain at Scapa at short
notice.

(C. in C. H.F. 1729A/25 to C.S.10, S.O. Force J.)
Scapa departures F.O.C.C.(10) in KENYA, ONSLOW,
OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE
LEOPOLD. E.T.A. 1000/25 Sullom Voe.
(A.C.O.S. 2118A/24.)

British Air Operations.Operation
"Archer"

25/12 amend my 2041/24 for UMPIRE read TUNA.
(H.Q.C.C. 0211/25 to C.S.10.)

S.B.R.

Request S.B.R. in (a) area 73 East of 008° 30'
W. and south of 049° 30' N. (b) area 76 East of
008° 30' W. and North of 045° 30' N. (c) area
56 West of 005° W. and North of 045° 30' N. from
0800/26th until further notice.
(F.O.(S) 1632A/25 to H.Q.C.C.)

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Operations.Convoy
E.C.

Enemy aircraft attacking convoy "Paddle" in
57° 15' N. 1° 45' W.
(JASON 1744/25.)
Fighters being sent to assistance of "Paddle".
(Rosyth W/T 1742/25.)

LOCHGARRY.

M. Transport LOCHGARRY proceeding to Thorshavn
was attacked by 1 enemy aircraft 15 miles East of
Sydero at 1232/25. Bombs fell wide. No damage
or casualties.
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes 1840A/25.)

Mining.S.S.EASTWOOD
S.S.MERCHANT
Tanker
STANMOUNT.

Arrivals tugs KENIA and CHAMPION towing S.S.
EASTWOOD escorted by A/S Trawler BASSET.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 0355A/25.)
Your 2307A/24, report position explosions took
place.
(C. in C. Nore 0633A/25 to WHADDON, LEEDS.)
Your 0633. No.1 at 2200 in 052° 39' 30" N.
002° 00' 56" E. S.S. MERCHANT. No.2 in 052°
39' 22" N. 002° 00' 31" E. S.S. STANMOUNT.
Both positions approx. for lat.
(WHADDON 0710A/25 to C. in C. Nore.)
Proceed and search for S.S. MERCHANT abandoned
drifting south eastwards from 6 buoy. Tug in
vicinity searching.
(C. in C. Nore 0807A/25 to WALPOLE.)
S.S. MERCHANT reported by A/C in 2° 04' 30" E.
52° 40' 00" N.
(F.O.I.C. Great Yarmouth 0907/25 to C. in C. Nore,
C. in C. Nore 1017A/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 0915A. You will probably have to put
boarding party on board. Proceed with all
despatch.
(C. in C. Nore 0959/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 1017A/25. Tug reports MERCHANT not in
position given. Another air search going out now.
(C. in C. Nore 1107A/25 to WALPOLE.)
Your 1110A/25. Carry thorough search E. and S.E.
of No.6 buoy. If nothing is found order tugs
to Yarmouth and proceed to Harwich yourself.
(C. in C. Nore 1157A/25 to WALPOLE.)
My 1212A/25 S.S. MERCHANT has not been located.
Both MERCHANT and STANMOUNT now presumed sunk.
(C. in C. Nore 1444A/25.)
S.S. EASTWOOD in F.N587 badly damaged by mine in
284 Aldeburgh L.F. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles at 1800/24 has been
towed into Harwich. Four of crew being landed at
Humber, remainder at Harwich. At 2200/24 one
mile north of 6 buoy S.S. STANMOUNT and MERCHANT
also of F.N587 mined and abandoned survivors being
landed at Humber.
(C. in C. Nore 1212A/25 to Adty.)

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.S.S. EASTWOOD
S.S. MERCHANT
Tanker
STANMOUNT.
contd.

Ref. C.A.F.O. 1968/40. 1. 2216/24 (Approx)
2. STANMOUNT. 5. Approx. true North. 4 7/2 Knots.
7. None. Abandoned in above position (approx)
26 of crew out of a total of 41 landed at
Grimsby by REBOUNDO p.m./25. H.M.S. WHADDON
A 7216A/25 to C. in C. Nore only states 15 of
crew retained on board, thus total crew is
accounted for. C.B.S. were on the bridge in
weighted boxes.
(F.O. Humber 1901A/25.)

Operation
"Tincture"

Your 1728A/22. Operation completed.
Negative results.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1101/25 to Admty.)

Thames
Estuary.

4 mines presumed magnetic detonated by S.A.
LL Trawlers. Positions.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1211A/25.)

Humber area.

Following Magnetic Mines exploded today by
ROLLS ROYCE and HENRIETTE. (details)
(F.O. Humber 2032A/25.)

Navigational.Wreck.

Wreck probably dangerous in approx. 020° one
mile from No.6 buoy.
(C. in C. Nore 1425A/25 to WALLACE, Ships employed
on East Coast convoy duties N.O.I.C. Yarmouth.)

Casualties and Defects.HEARTSEASE

TRAIL'S 1730Z/24. You are to endeavour to
make contact with EMPIRE MARLOWE, TRAIL and
FREEBOOTER and accompany them to Clyde.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0019A/25 to SNOWDROP, TENACITY,
(R) TRAIL, FREEBOOTER, A.C.I.(C) C. in C. W.A.
Admty (Rescue Tugs).)
CAROLINE MOLLER has made contact with HEARTSEASE,
you should attempt to intercept them and render
whatever assistance may be necessary.
(O.I.C. Greenock 0209/15 to RESTIVE.)
In tow by CAROLINE MOLLER estimated P.C. and S.
at 02.00A 56° 21' N. 07° 33' W. 144° 4 knots.
VERVAIN escorting.
(HEARTSEASE 0241A/25, F.O.I.C. Greenock 0355A/25.)
Request instructions.
(CAROLINE MOLLER 0245 G.M.T./25 to C. in C. W.A.)
Immediate to ships. Return to Reykjavik.
Congratulations on the successful outcome of
your long vigil.
(C. in C. W.A. 0437A/25 to TRAIL.)
Your 0245/25 return to Clyde RESTIVE is also
attempting to make contact with you.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0553/25 to CAROLINE MOLLER.)
/Contact ...

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

HEARTSEASE
contd.

Contact HEARTSEASE at 0800 a.m. (?a.m.) requested to stand by. (RESTIVE 0825A/25.) CAROLINE MOLLER no longer requires our assistance. Am proceeding Campbeltown. (RESTIVE 1230/25.) P.C. and S. at 1300A/25 112 Oversay Light 2.5 miles 135° 5 knots. CAROLINE MOLLER towing, VERVAIN and RESTIVE in company. (HEARTSEASE 1300A/25.)

SHEPPERTON
FERRY.

Your 0518/9 and your 1329A/13. No news of SHEPPERTON FERRY. Admiralty pass to A.C.I.C. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 0210C/25 to Admty.)

WANDERER

Captain (D)
Greenock 1820/23 reports :-
WANDERER has developed hull damage requiring docking as follows (details). Consider repairs should be effected before proceeding on escort duty in winter for which it is estimated four days will be required. Docking cannot be arranged at Glasgow without seriously interfering with existing programme. Ship required for escort 2/1/42.(ends.) (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0110A/25 to Admty.)

TETCOTT.

WANDERER sailed in accordance with my 2254A/24. Delete all reference to TETCOTT who is delayed pending further examination of damage. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1046A/25.)

O.9.

F.O.S. 1016A/24. O.9 has returned to Milford Haven with defects. (F.O.S. 1001A/25 to S/Ms area A.)

STORK.

Admiralty have arranged for STORK to dock at Devonport. STORK is to part company at 2000/25 and proceed to Plymouth. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to route STORK to Plymouth and forward numbers of survivors from STANLEY, AUDACITY, and two M/Vs, by signal as soon as received. (C. in C. W.A. 1229A/25 to C. in C. Plymouth, STORK.)
C. in C. W.A. 1229/25. Route and arrangements. (C. in C. Plymouth 1533/25, 0046/26.)
Reference C. in C. W.A. 1212. My P.C. and S. 50° 28' N. 09° 03' W. 114° 9 knots. Owing to damage have taken JONQUIL with me. My maximum safe speed 9 knots. D.G. out of action. (STORK 2330A/25.)

/M.V. ...

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects - contd.M.V.
SHANTUNG
(Swedish)

S O S SHANTUNG. 59° 50' N. 23° 30' W.
We have to abandon ship any moment.
(Liverpool W/T 1417/25.)
Class I Bearing 301°. S O S SHANTUNG 1450 G.M.T.
(Tiree 1501 G.M.T./25.)
Position 1500Z 060° 42' N. 019° 48' W. proceeding
to assist SHANTUNG. Weather report 3855 4046.
(TRAIL 1515Z/25 to A.C.I.C. Repeated, C. in C.
W.A. Newfoundland Force.)
Bearing from Port Patrick Radio 313° unreliable
sector.
(Port Patrick Radio 1517/25 to Navy Charge,
Greenock.)
If FREEBOOTER can tow EMPIRE MARLOWE to U.K.
SNOWDROP detach TENACITY to proceed forthwith
to assist SHANTUNG on fire and abandoned in
59° 33' N. 20° 38' W. at 0230/25. NARCISSUS
is standing by SHANTUNG. NARCISSUS established
direct communication with TENACITY on 500 K/cs.
SNOWDROP report action taken. NARCISSUS report
whether SHANTUNG salvable.
(C. in C. W.A. 1607A/25 to SNOWDROP, NARCISSUS (R)
F.O.I.C. Greenock, BOADICEA, TENACITY Admty.,
Rescue tugs.)
Not rebroadcast should this be done.
(Port Patrick Radio 1615/25 to Navy Charge,
Greenock.)
1510/25 position 59° 50' N. 23° 15' W.
(Lyness W/T &c., T.O.R. 1623/25.)
1645/25. Fire is gaining ship must be abandoned
any moment approx position 59 R.50 N.23 R.30 W.
(SHANTUNG 1650/25.)
Your 1607/25. TENACITY detailed forthwith to
proceed to assist SHANTUNG. Orders issued for
853 or 500 K/cs. with NARCISSUS.
(SNOWDROP 1818A/25 to C. in C. W.A.)
Your 1606A/25th.* My position 2000Z 059° 50' N.
023° 30' W. have not located SHANTUNG intend
sweeping back to 059° 33' N. 020° 38' W.
(NARCISSUS 2020Z/25 to C. in C. W.A.)*1607A/25
intended.
My 2020Z/25th. ELLIS reports SHANTUNG probably
30 miles West of my 2009 position a.m.(?a.m.)
proceeding that direction ELLIS reports*INGHAM
proceeding to assist.
(NARCISSUS 2205Z/25 to C. in C. W.A.)

*SAMUEL D. INGHAM

H.31.

F.O.S.2201A/24 not to C. in C. H.F. H.31 has
not yet arrived nor has there been any news of her
since parting company with her escort near Wolf
Rock on 19/12 for patrol in Bay of Biscay. She
has not replied to signals ordering her to report
her position transmitted during the night of
24th/25th Dec. and if she does not arrive by
1200/27 she must be considered lost.
(F.O.S. 1837A/25.)

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys.Q.P.4.

8 ships of Dvina portion of Q.P.4 are being gradually worked down mouth of River and Zero hour for breaking them over bar is now given as p.m./26. Westerly wind may make this extremely difficult and if likely to delay seriously propose to press for sailing of the 5 Molotovsk ships as soon as possible. EMPIRE STEVENSON berthing Ekonomia which Papanyn reports ready. Only SAINT CLEARS and CHUMLEIGH at Bakaritsa give cause for anxiety.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1000C/25 to Admty., C.S.18. S.B.N.O. North Russia. Repeated S.O.1st M/S F. C. in C. H.F., Ad. Miles.)

S.C.59

Missed LONDONDERRY while searching for 2 stragglers. Have contacted LEAMINGTON with S.C.59 who reports that he cannot get into touch with O.S.15. Have taken over S.C.59. (KIRKELLA 1045A/25 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

F.N.⁵⁸⁷

On mustering F.N.⁵⁸⁷ the following ships missing NEA with two survivors from EASTWOOD, unable to overtake convoy. HIGHWOOD suspected straggler. SHERWOOD is believed to have gone into Humber. Am retaining 15 survivors from STANMOUNT on board unable to transfer due to weather sea edging from N.N.W. progress slow. (WHADDON 1215/25 to C. in C. Nore.)

H.X.165

Report situation.
(C. in C. W.A. 1215A/25 to BOADICEA.)

H.X.164.

Average speed 7.9 knots. Convoy scattered by heavy gales 18/19th December, which continued to U.K. All ships arrived.
(D.T.D. 1250A/25.)

Vesca System

Admty. 1710A/25. See Foreign Stations: General.

STAFFORDSHIRE

My 1516/25. Amend to read:- F.N.⁵⁸⁷ 20C Buoy 0200/26. WHADDON due 20C Buoy 2215 to take over escort of STAFFORDSHIRE and conduct back to your main convoy.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1828/25 to Admty., C. in C. Nore, General Rosyth South, Neg. N.Os 1/c.)

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.General.Vesca
System,
Extension.

Desired to extend operation of the Vesca system at ports abroad so that Intelligence Centres in receipt of Interstation Vescas promulgate the E.T.A. of merchant vessels to N.C.S.Os. or C.S.As. concerned. N.C.S.Os. and C.S.As. would liberate this information to M. of W.T. representatives, bona fide ships' agents, and local authorities in sufficient time before date of arrival, to comply with prevailing local requirements. When this system is working satisfactorily, it is intended to request shipowners and others to utilize Naval Control Service channels for obtaining information regarding movements of ships which it is necessary they should know. Request your remarks.

(A.C.N.S.(T), 1710A/25 to C's. in C. S.A., Med., E.F., E.I., A.W.I., etc.)

North Atlantic.Air Attack
on tanker.

As a result of British Air Attacks on a German Tanker in Ortugueira on 24/12, German aircraft may take retaliatory action in vicinity Gibraltar.

(V.C.N.S., 1151A/25 to F.O.C.N.A.)

A provisional report of attack by R.A.F. on a German Tanker in vicinity of Cape Ortegal is contained in F.O. tel. to H.M. Ambassador No. 1808.

(Hd. of M. 1924A/25 to N.A. Madrid.)

South Atlantic.Convoy
W.S.12Z. ORUNDA?

Sailed 24/12 for Aden personnel on board ARONDA ORUNDA, NIEUW AMSTERDAM. E.T.A. 1300Z/14.
(S.S.T.O. Durban, 0640Z/25 to S.S.T.O. Aden.)

Troop
transport.

Request early reply to my 1937Z/19.
(C. in C. S.A., 1024Z/25 to Admty.)
My 1937Z/19/12 para. 3. Request I may be informed of arrangements made as soon as possible.

(C. in C. S.A., 2045Z/25 to Admty.)

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - Contd.FORT DE
TROYON.Arrival 24th.
(N.C.S.O. Donala, ? Douala, 1037/25 to M. of
W.T.)American
aircraft.About (? 80) 4-engined American (? bomber)
reinforcements for Middle East will be flying
in one group of 3 daily from Brazil to Accra
or elsewhere in West Africa starting now.
(C. in C. S.A., 1121Z/25 to DEVONSHIRE, CILICIA,
CANTON.)ROBERTS.
EREBUS.On arrival Cape area ROBERTS and EREBUS will
require a period for boiler cleaning and
making good defects.
(C. in C. S.A., 1057Z/25.)Raider.A.M. 1810/20. This vessel may be raider E,
having been in Germany since May 1941. Photo-
graphs in raider supplement to W.I.R. number
(? 64)* but No(t) Sampson decks forewell decks
filled in. Recorded with 5.9 guns giving
a broadside of 4. Torpedo tubes and aircraft
but probably no mines. Ship often appears
larger than she really is.
(C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/25 to S.A. Station.)
* 804 and 371 can also apply.ASTER.Your 1425N/4, addressed to ASTER. On what
information are these orders based?
(A.C.N.S.(F), 2119A/25 to C. in C. S.A.)Mediterranean.S.S. SURCOUF.Your 0057/14 and my 0801/15. Have not received
your 2217/28/6 and 2103/1/11. No Officers
or members of crew of SURCOUF are willing to
serve.
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 0613Z/25 to Admty., (R) C. in
C. Med.)

/Enemy ...

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.Enemy
Intelligence.

P.C. and S. of 2 enemy surface craft 300 100
33° 0' N. 12° 23' E. 290 3.
(Med. A/C, 0946/25.)
P.C. and S. of 1 small merchant vessel (enemy)
is WAQP 56 39 120 - 6. (Position indecypherable)
(Med. A/C F, 0954/25.)

Haifa,
PHENIX,
VILJA.

Situation 0900/25. PHENIX (? taken to) middle
of harbour burning (corrupt group) water line.
Fire not dangerous at present. VILJA cargo and
hull intact. Bridge living quarter and engine
room burnt out. (? Harbour) closed, intensive
emergency loading proceeding on other ships.
(N.O.I.C. Haifa, 1000C/25 to C. in C. Med.)
W.D. Note. Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa 24/12
and set fire to VILJA. See 2037/25.)

AJAX.

Transport AJAX hit by bomb superficial damage
no casualties.
(D.S.T.O. Malta, 1040B/25.)

TRUANT,
TRUSTY
for Far East.

Admiralty 1729A/22. TRUANT returned to
Alexandria 24/12 after 24 days patrol. TRUSTY
was recalled after first day of patrol having
sailed (? without the) power to operate side
stops of 2 tubes defective. Defects now made
good. Intend to sail S/Ms. for Port Said and
onward passage, TRUSTY 1400/26, TRUANT 3/1.
S.B.N.O. Suez Canal Area is requested to arrange
transit canal and S.N.O. Red Sea for routeing
to Aden.
(Capt. (S) 1, 1131B/25 to C. in C. Med.)

Italian
main units.

Following is estimated disposition effective
Italian main units on 25/12: Taranto 4 battle-
ships one LITTORIO and 3 CONTE DI CAVOUR class.
2 8-inch cruisers, 5 6-inch cruisers. Special
service: Taranto - Aegina one 6-inch cruiser.
(C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 1200B/25 to V.A. Malta,
F.O.C.N.A., S.O. Force H, repeated C. in C.
Med., Admty.)

Benghazi
mined.

During 24/12 enemy dropped twelve mines on
Benghazi one fell on mole remainder outside
Harbour.
(C. in C. M.E., 1735/25.)
Benghazi was reoccupied early on 24/12. It was
first taken by Army of the Nile on 6/2/1941 and
evacuated on 3/4/1941.
(D.S., 842, 25/12.)

/Malta ...

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.Malta air report.

24th. 3 Blenheims attacked bombs and machine guns large schooner Zuara Harbour probably damaged schooner below water line. Shipping Spanish Quay. 1710 to 1953 hours 9 Wellingtons I.C. dropped 69 x 500 lb. G.P. bombs causing fire. Large explosions and scoring many hits quay. Other results unobserved. Smoke screen effective. 3 bombs dropped on 3 D/R's 1 cruiser 330° Tripoli 10 miles course 330° 25 knots. 1 stationary cruiser north West Tripoli 10 miles. Another stationary East Tripoli half mile. 2115 to 2159 hours 1 Albacore dropped 24 x 40 lb. Coopers bombs Tripoli diversions for 2 Albacores 4 Swordfish which laid 6 mines outside harbour. 0035 to 0235 hours 1 Wellington 1 C nuisance raid dropped 6 x 500 lb. G.P. 12 x 4 lb. incendiaries Tripoli tow results unobserved. 0746 1 schooner 1 minesweeper 280° Tripoli 40 miles course N.W. 3 knots 2 Blenheims attacked 1140. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1821/25.) My 1821/25. Amend cruisers outside Tripoli to read destroyers. (H.Q. Malta, 1025/26.)

Bardia.

Aircraft R/C R reported surface craft ships in Bardia Harbour at 1630 today 25th loading or unloading stores. (N.L.O.(?30) Corps, 1920B/25 to C. in C. Med.)

THUNDERBOLT.

My 1745B/22nd. Establish patrol in area Q in addition to Q one.

(Capt. (S) 1, 1945B/25 to THUNDERBOLT.)

COZALLA.

Reported when COZALLA left Algiers 23rd she proceeded Bona. ^{P/Bona.} (Tangier, 2015/25 to S.O.(I) Gibraltar.)

Situation Report 178.

U.79 sunk 23/12.
(Cmd: 6643)

Western Desert. HASTY and HOTSPUR sank German U-Boat at 1130/23 in 32° 15' N. 25° 19' E. and have returned Alexandria with 3 Officers and 40 ratings prisoners. HASTY, HOTSPUR were A/S striking force with Convoy of returning store ships from Tobruk which was later attacked by 2nd U-Boat, SHUNTIEN with 850 prisoners of war being torpedoed and sunk at 1900/23 in 32° 6' N. 24° 46' E. SALVIA collected large number survivors but has not answered signals since 2200/23 and is feared lost.

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Situation
Report 178.
(Contd.)

2. H.M. Schooner TIBERIO capsized and sank 1310/23 off entrance Mersa Matruh Harbour. Crew rescued but one rating dead. Heavy weather has caused some damage to older merchant ships operating on coast resulting in supply delay.
3. Benghazi captured noon 24th. Town reported devastated and harbour mined. Naval advance party thought to have arrived.
4. Greek Schooner KETTY with enemy cargo arrived Tobruk 19th and taken in prize.
5. My 2004/22 para. 3. A/S search maintained in vicinity Alexandria 23rd, 24th, 25th without results, now withdrawn.
6. Haifa. Oiler PHENIX blew up in Haifa 24th and set fire to Oiler VILJA. PHENIX burnt out and settling VILJA upperworks burnt but fire under control and tanks not fired. Oil fire in harbour but most ships now clear.
7. Red Sea. Cased petrol carrier PORT FOUAD blew up at Gimsah anchorage night 23/24th, no details.
8. Aircraft. Aircraft reports one hit on submarine in 33° 32' N. 24° 58' E. at 1035/24. (C. in C. Med., 2037B/25.)

Libya.

- Cositrep No. 73.
5. 1315 hours 24/12 our arty. engaged vessel 75 ft. long at 526371, direct hits were scored and craft was beached and burnt out. (C. in C. M.E., 2140/25.)

AURORA.

- Damage. At least 6 weeks required in dock. (A.S. Malta, 2230B/25.)

SECRET.

MESSAGE

1135/25th December IN

From Air Ministry, Whitehall.

Date 25.12.41

CYpher.

Addressed H.Q. R.A.F. Middle East.

IMPORTANT.

X.485. 25/12.

Our X.390 23/12. We anticipate shortage of T.B. pilots to be one of main factors affecting proposed increase of your T.B. Squadrons. Admiralty have made proposal which we welcome that Naval air crews after conversion in Middle East to Beauforts might be employed in R.A.F. Squadrons as Naval flights. Proposal has been made to C. in C. Mediterranean by Admiralty.

1135/25

Received from Air Ministry at
1710/25

1st Lord
1st S.L.
2nd S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (F)
Sec.
Nav. Sec.
N.A. 1st S.L.
P.A.S. (S)
D.N.I. (4)
O.D. (5)
Ops. (3)
H. (2)
D. of P. (3)
O.I.C. (2)
I.P. (3)
W.D.
D.N.A.D.

Circulation in Air Ministry:-

Internal

C.A.S.
V.C.A.S.
D.C.A.S.
A.M.S.O.
A.M.P.
D.G.O.
D.W.O.
D.O.N.C.
D.O.C. (Orig)

External

Admiralty

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

B.M.10.

My 1121/23 last para. This force B.M.10 will now proceed to Singapore. In view of your 1804/23, date of sailing of B.M.10 will now be 8/1. Will escort be provided.

My 0746/17 to D. of S.T. Your 0810/23 to C. in C. E.F. para. H.B.M.(?11) will now be ready to sail about 14/1 not 8/1.

F.O.C.R.I.N., requested to pass to Arm. India. (S.S.T.O. India, 0606Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

B.A.12.

My 1125/19. As YOMA is further delayed owing to rudder repairs intend delaying sailing of all 3 ships 30/12. Can escort be provided on this date. (P.S.T.O. India, 0633Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

D.M.1.

Convoy hitherto referred to as W.S.12 Z (?M) will now be called D.M.1.

(C. in C. E.I., 0800Z/25)

Amend my 1234/19 as follows.

(C. in C. E.I., 1154Z/25).

Threat to Aden.

Personal for Governor. Your No. 13 T.O.O. 1012/24.

1. Difficult at this stage to give assessment of scale of attack to which Aden will become liable since this depends largely upon the rapidly changing situation in the Far East.

2. In existing circumstances my views are as follows:- Present preoccupations of the Japanese, and those of immediate future, are such that it is highly unlikely that they will attempt a landing in force in vicinity of Aden.

3. If such a landing were attempted it cannot be guaranteed that the Force would be detected or brought to action before reaching its destination.

4. Request you pass this and your No.13 T.O.O. 1012/24 to C. in C. Med., F.O.R.S. and N.O.I.C. Aden. (C. in C. E.I., 0812Z/25 to Govr. Aden)

W.S.14 D.

It is under consideration that destination of W.S. 14 D in para 4 of my 0108/26/11, not to C. in C. Eastern Fleet, should be Malaya. (D.O.D. (F), 1215A/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

CARTHAGE.

Your 1810Z/23 not to S.O.W.P. CARTHAGE may be retained on Station until arrival of ALAUNIA, CHITRAL or WORCESTSHIRE which are E.T.R. Durban about 20/1.[^]

(A.C.N.S. (F), 2133A/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Surabaya
mining.

The port of Surabaya is closed until further notice owing to presence of mines.
(F.O. Malaya, 0143Z/25 to China Stn).

Situation
report,
1630 G.M.T.
/24.

Trengganu. Now reported enemy troops arrived K. Trengganu 21/12 and have also reached Dungun. Pahang. Johore. Singapore. Christmas Island nothing to report.
Sarawak. Large enemy concentrations off Sadtfbong and landings being attempted. Fighting at Pending reported 0700 G.M.T./24.
N.E.I. Report submarine sunk three large Japanese transports and one oil tanker off Tanjong Po on 23/12. Kuching aerodrome denied and all denial schemes completed 24/12 reported that leading Malays have evacuated Kuching and Labour has disappeared.
Air. Japanese vessels sighted near Kuching were two cruisers one large destroyer eight transports one tanker exuding oil one sunken transport. Five Blenheim IV attacked 24/12 and reported one transport hit on stern six near misses. Other R/C reports nil.
Singkawang. Raided by 24 aircraft. Damage to aerodrome prevents loaded aircraft from taking off. Dutch moving aircraft to Palembang.
(T.O.O. 0140). (G.O.C. Malaya 0411/25).

Tankers.

Your 1848Z/24. Concur. (C. in C. E.F., 0513Z/25 to C. in C. E.I.)

Vichy ships
sink-at-sight.

Surface ships, submarines and aircraft in vicinity sink at sight any Vichy ships encountered in Gulf of Siam or China sea.
(C. in C. E.F., 0515Z/25 to Eastern Theatre).

Hong Kong,

Capitulation

0731 G.M.T./25

For S. of S. from Governor, Hong Kong, 25/12. Street fighting is going on. Enemy working towards centre of town. I had another request for surrender this morning and answered briefly in negative. All in very good heart and send Christmas greetings. (N.O.I.C. Hong Kong, 0529Z/25 to Admty).
All S.Ps. and C.Bs. destroyed.
(N.O.I.C. Hong Kong 0643Z/25 to C. in C. E.F. (r) Admty).
Military and Naval Commanders have now advised me that no further effective military resistance can be made. I am taking action in accordance with that advice. Lord.
(Governor Hong Kong, 0731Z/25).
No.2 all necessary demolition carried out. Naval personnel performed their duty in an exemplary manner until ordered to lay down arms today 25/12. Lord. (Care. Hong Kong, 1045Z/25 to Admty).

842 A.

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

0155/25th December

IN

Date 24.12.41

Recd. 0715

From C. in C. India

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office, repeated C. in C. Middle East,
C. in C. East Indies.

IMPORTANT

021779.

21703/G cipher M.O. 4 25/12.

Your 59501 (M.O.1) 21/12.

Following is subject to confirmation by C. in C. on return from Chungking.

Para. 1. War in Far East has completely altered situation and we are now on defensive until power of U.S.A. is developed. Russian recovery has decreased or postponed menace to Caucasus. Success in Libya has removed danger in that theatre.

Para. 2. It is vital to secure Burma and India and if possible Singapore even at expense of operations and preparation elsewhere.

Para. 3. Essential requirements are Air Forces Anti Aircraft and Naval Forces especially for convoy protection and anti-submarine work. There will be serious shortage in equipment and certain munitions which should be accelerated as much as possible.

Para. 4. In view of more time available we may still be able to send substantial reinforcements to Iraq or Persia before operations develop. We deprecate withdrawal of divisions unless or until required by Middle East for operations. It is unlikely 18 Divisions will become available for Iraq. For our views on question of command in Iraq see our 20868/G of 15th December to War Office only and our 21059/G of 15th December to Middle East only.

Para. 5. Request urgent consideration of defence of Sumatra which is vital to defence of Singapore and Naval security in Indian waters.

0155/25

Received from War Office 0544./26

2050/21

1st Lord	A.C.N.S. (H)	D.O.D. (F)	I.P. (2)
1st S.L.	A.C.N.S. (W)	D.D.O.D. (F)	W.D.
4th S.L.	N.A. 1st S.L.	Duty Capt. (2)	D.P.D.
5th S.L.	D.N.A.D.	D.N.I. (5) & for A.E.	D.S.D.
V.C.N.S.	Hd. of M. (1)	D.D.I.C. (2)	Admiral Battle
A.C.N.S. (T)	D.O.D. (H)	D. of P. (2)	Admiral BeL
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.D.O.D. (H)	D.A/S.W.	E.P.S.

AFP

T.O./.....

MOST SECRET

War Office Distribution:-

- S. of S.
- C.I.G.S.
- V.C.I.G.S.
- A.C.I.G.S.
- D.M.O. & P.
- D.D.M.O. (0)
- D.P. (2)
- M.O. 1.5.12.
- D.M.I.
- D.D.M.I. (I)
- M.I. (J.I.C.)
- M.I.3.
- Q(Ops)
- Head of War Reg. (Admty)
- C.N.S. Admiralty
- D. of Plans Admiralty
- C.A.S. Air Min.
- D. of Plans (Air Mins.)
- Col. Jacob (Cab. Offices)
- Secy. J.P.S. (Cab. Offices)
- India Office (War Staff).

EML.

SECRET

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - Contd.

K.17 Lost.

Submarine K.17 left Singapore on 6/12 for operation in Gulf of Siam and was ordered to return by 21/12. Nothing further is known of her movements and I fear she must be considered lost. I am confident (corrupt group) that her exploits compare with those of O.16 and K.14. (C. in C. E.F., 0846Z/25 to C.Z.M. (R) Admty).

HOBART.

B.M.G.A.

(See p. 798.)

C. in C. E.I. 1312Z/23 (N.T. in W.D.) I would be most grateful if HOBART could be spared to remain with this important convoy bringing reinforcements until its arrival at Singapore. In view of increased security to Darwin and North Australia provided by United States Naval Forces perhaps you could agree to HOBART remaining here until all immediate reinforcements have arrived. (C. in C. E.F., 0918Z/25 to A.C.N.B.)

→ MOUNT
VERNON.

W.O. 59921 23/12. Opnav reports Navy Dept. has agreed to diversion of U.S.S. MOUNT VERNON to Singapore. Please issue necessary orders to her and inform Senior U.S. Naval Officer of Convoy our consent.

Inform Opnav probable time arrival Singapore ends (D.O.D. (F), 1216A/25 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

Air R/C.

1030Z/25. No shipping off Kota Bharu or Pattani. Negative report Haadyai Junction - Singora poor visibility. Photo R/C Kuching 3 large transports 10 miles West of Tanjong Sipang at 1440 course 310°. 1 submerged transport 2 transports 1 destroyer 15 miles N.E. Tanjong Sipang 2 transports N.N.E. Tanjong Sipang course 260° 2 large barges, 1 submerged mouth of Kuching River no activity Kuching River. 7 enemy aircraft bombed Sibu at 1470 (or 1460 corrupt) details not available. (Air H.Q., F.E., 1705/25).

→ Reinforce-
ments.

60301 25/12. Following from Chiefs of Staff. No. C.O.S. India 13. U.S. authorities agree to MOUNT VERNON proceeding direct to Malaya. We therefore confirm that alternative (a) of W.O. tel. 59407 of 20/12 is to be adopted. (W.O. 1900/25, to C. in C. F.E., C. in C. India). P. 218c

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - contd.

Prohibited area.

Java Eastern portion Madura Strait charts now 65 3C and 941B.

(1) The area bounded by the following positions declared prohibited area for shipping.

(a) From position 07° 19' 15" S., 113° 54' 45" E. to (b) 07° 13' 00" S., 114° 02' 20" E., to (c). (R.A. Malaya, No. T.O.O./25).

America & West Indies.

S.S. CLUMBERHALL.

St. John's N.F. 24/12 arrivals PRUDENT with S.S. CLUMBERHALL in tow. (F.O.N.F., 0124Z/25).

SOREL.

My 1501Z/24 for S.C.61 read S.C.62. (C.C.N.F., 0415Z/25). See p. 620.

Vichy French Units and Shipping.

Algiers. 22/12 B.2.^{LE} FANTASQUE and 4 sloops left Oran during night of 17/18 December. DJEBEL NADOR is reported loading rubber at Oran. (B.A.D., 1039R/25).

Dispositions.

Your 1919/15. C.N.O. has expressed appreciation he is instructing C. in C. U.S. Atlantic Fleet to arrange details direct with C. in C. A.W.I. C.N.O. assumes these forces may also be operated as part Com Task Force 2 should this prove desirable. (B.A.D. Washington, 1041R/25 to Admty).

Free French at St. Pierre.

Admiral Muselier reports (as 1910Z/24) 2. Please inform H.M. Ambassador urgently. This action has come as a complete surprise to us. (V.C.N.S., 1131A/25 to B.A.D.)

Situation Report.

(1) Phillipine Isles 24/12. Very heavy fighting reported on both N. and S. fronts. Enemy continue to land reinforcements. Consideration is being given by military authorities to declare Manila an open city.

(2) U.S. Pacific coast. A U.S. army bomber claims to have successfully attacked a Japanese S/M 50 miles off Columbia river 24/12 S/M which was submerged, was brought to surface by 2 bombs close astern. A third bomb fell close alongside which caused a sharp explosion followed by an oil patch and miscellaneous debris on surface which received a further bomb from aircraft. Admiralty pass to W.O. and A.M. (Joint Staff Mission Washington 1147R/25)

/QUEEN...

War Diary.25.12.1941.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies. - Contd.QUEEN OF
BERMUDA.

B.A.R.M. Washington's 1032/23. Admty have no objection to QUEEN OF BERMUDA proceeding Halifax to embark passengers after her work up at Bermuda C.in C. A.W.I. is requested to sail ship accordingly.

2. After passengers have been embarked at Halifax QUEEN OF BERMUDA should be sailed independently for U.K. (D.O.D. (F), 1326A/25).

Canadian
escorts for
S.C. and
ON.(S)
convoys.

Ref. A.M. 2309/15 and C.C.N.F. 1913/15 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa not to Admty.

U.S. C.N.O. agrees as a temporary measure Canadian escorts proceed Londonderry instead of Iceland. (c) Provided (a) long-endurance British escort ships thus released are made available for Canadian Ocean escorts and for escort units of H.X. and O.N. route convoys which may be directed to proceed Londonderry.

(b) Iceland shipping not to be routed via U.K. but sailed direct from U.S.A. to Iceland with suitable frequency (c) Operational and administrative control of escort units to remain unchanged.

(2) Proviso modification is not understood by B.A.D. Washington and elucidation is being sought. U.S.C.N.O. is understood to have communicated with Spenavo on this point (iii) U.S.C.N.O. hopes to be ready to discuss very shortly proposals in A.M. 1119/6 (N.T. in W.D.) (B.A.D., 1651R/25).

Coastal
routeing.

Opnav reports orders for coastal routeing so far issued cover only U.S. Flag and U.S. controlled vessels. Others may accept such routeing if they so desire 2145Z/24 ends.

(D.T.D., 1713A/25 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

U.S.
Dispositions.

Modify my 2217/17. Ships mentioned less U.S. Aircraft carrier WASP depart Hampton Roads 1600Z/26 arrive Casco 28th.

(U.S.C.N.O., 2115/25 to Admty etc).

S/M SURCOUF.

Request you will sail SURCOUF as soon as she is released from her present employment to Tahiti via Bermuda and Panama Canal.

2. On arrival she will come under orders of C. in C. E.F.

(A.C.N.S. (F), 2121A/25 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

War Diary.

25.12.1941.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Flag of F.O.C.

Flag of F.O.C. Australian Squadron transferred 24/12 to AUSTRALIA. (A.C.N.B., 0254Z/25).

Convoy for Singapore AQUITANIA.

C. in C. E.F. 0513Z/19.
(i) I intend to sail a convoy, containing warlike stores, including M.T. of a (?full) Battalion from Melbourne for Singapore, on 31/12. Escort KANIMBLA and HOBART as soon as available.
(ii) C. in C. E.I. will state when and where HOBART will be released from present duties.
(iii) AQUITANIA with 3500 troops and 50 R.A.A.F. personnel embarked, and escorted by an 8 inch cruiser, will sail from Sydney for Singapore about 7/1.
(iv) It is considered escort of AQUITANIA should be more than one 8 inch cruiser. Request consideration be given to reinforcing this escort from Far Eastern Fleet.
(v) Both the (?convoy) and AQUITANIA should arrive Singapore about 20/1.
(A.C.N.B., 0635Z/25 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

NEPTUNE.

May next of kin now be informed observing this discloses loss of ship.
(N.Z.N.B. 1226M/25 to Admty).
Your 1226M/25. Next of kin should be informed by telegram not mentioning name of ship or circumstances. Casualties are to be treated as missing.
It is probable that an announcement of the loss of the ship will have to be made within the next few days.
(2nd S.L., 1601A/25 to N.Z.N.B.)

Mines.

W.M.15. Floating Mines reported in 034° 50' S., 164° 58' E., at 0246 GMT/23. Stone colour with red band. (N.Z.N.B., 1912M/25 to Admty, W.M. Addressees).

Timor.

My 1104Z/23. Portuguese Govt. now amenable to presence of Dutch and Australian troops in Portuguese Timor. 3 Enemy aircraft sighted over Nissan Island (New Guinea).
(A.C.N.B., 1941Z/25 to Admty etc).

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 1251R/25th December. IN

From B.A.D. Washington.

Date 26.12.41.
Recd. 0140Naval Cypher D. by W/T. CORRECTIONAddressed Admiralty, Rept. C. in C. Eastern Fleet,
Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, New Zealand Navy
Board.

847. In attack on Pearl Harbour Japanese bomber made use of armour piercing high explosive which resembles slightly modified 16 inch armour piercing shell. Particulars at present available are as follows: diameter of body 16 inch tapering to 12 inches in after portion. Wall thickness 4 inches at maximum diameter. Cavity for charge has parallel sides. Two fuses fitted in base. indentations around nose as though armour piercing cap had been fitted. No cap actually recovered. Light tail with fins presumably fitted although not actually recovered. Length of actual projectile without cap or tail approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ calibres \times . At least one of these missiles penetrated a battleship turret top and one failed to explode. Thickness of armour 5 inches but of a batch already known to be of low quality.

Penetration did not greatly surprise U.S. authorities who have recently been able to penetrate $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches of best quality armoured plating with their own armour piercing bombs.

1251 R/25.

* As received ? feet intended.

1st Lord

1st S.L.

3rd S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (W)

N.A. 1st S.L.

D. of P. (2)

D.T.S.D.

D.N.A.D.

D.O.D. (H)

D.D.O.D. (H)

D.O.D. (F)

D.D.O.D. (F)

Advance copy D.C., D.O.D. (F), D.D.I.C.

D.N.I. (4)

D.C. (2)

D.G.D. (2)

Hd. of M.

D.D.I.C. (2)

E.P.S.

I.P. (2)

W.D.

P.d.

MOST SECRET

25.12. 1941.
Thursday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

SAGADAHOC
(torpedoed
3/12)

Survivors from SAGADAHOC landed Trinidad in care of U.S. Authorities from S.S. (?BE)RING yesterday. Report leaving New York 7/11 bound Port Elizabeth. On 29/11 received instructions U.S. Navy code proceed Durban. On 2/12 picked up message from CLAN MACBEAN distant from her E.S.E. 200 miles that she had seen track of torpedo. Ship was steering 123°. On 3/12 at 2010 she was torpedoed by large S/M with high bow and guns fore and aft in 021° 50' S. 007° 50' W. Local U.S. Navy Authorities express doubt as to security of naval code.
(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 1721Q/25 to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

1403/24.

Barranquilla reports submarine nationality unknown. Speed estimated 15 knots course 215° cruising on surface sighted 1403/24th 011 30 N. 076 11 W. at altitude 1000 feet by pilot of clipper. Check requested on position. (S.O. (I) Jamaica 0016R/25).
There were 3 U.S. S/M's in that Area at the time steering approx. 215°. (B.A.D. 1549R/25).

0952.

Italian S/M bearing 289°/1 at 0952 G.M.T.
(Malta 1156B/25).

1240.

Position course and speed of Submarine 35° 20' N. 21° 5' E. 270 6. (A/C K 1240/25, N.O.I.C. Malta 1359B/25 to S/Ms on Patrol).

Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1401A/25, 1402/25).

Submarines Attacked.

My 1240 have attacked enemy submarine with bombs dive and estimate no hits. Submarine did not submerge. (A/C 203 R 1250/25).

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
"Archer".

Force P. C.S.10 left Sullom Voe at 1617A in KENYA with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES and PRINCE LEOPOLD. This is D.1 of the operation.

Patrol
"White".

At 1442A today C. in C. H.F. instructed C.S.1 to establish Patrol "White" with one cruiser and 2 corvettes, to intercept enemy surface vessels breaking in.

Operation
"Anklet".

S.O. Force J. reports all assaults carried out according to plan. A patrol Trawler was sunk off Tranoy. The force is oiling in Skjelfjord.

Enemy Air Operations.

S.S. CHARLES PARSONS was bombed and damaged in Tees Bay last night and was towed into Hartlepool.

Mining.

Two ground mines were detonated off the Tyne and several magnetic mines in the war channel off Yarmouth today.

M/S Trawler HENRIETTE was sunk by an acoustic mine off Spurn Point at 1244 today.

North Atlantic.

3 French merchantmen escorted by an armed trawler were reported to have entered Melilla from westward at 2300 today.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

There were several attacks on Malta last night by enemy aircraft, the most important one being on Luqa this morning where several of our aircraft were damaged or destroyed.

Operation
M.F.1.

CARLISLE, NAPIER (D7, S.O), NIZAM, KINGSTON and ISAAC SWEERS sailed from Alexandria today to bring in Convoy M.E.8 from Malta. This is D.1 of the operation. C.S.7 in AJAX, with DIDO and 6 destroyers left Malta at 1930/26 escorting the Convoy.

Albacores and Swordfish laid mines last night and again about 1950 today outside Tripoli harbour. Wellingtons made successful attacks on shipping in Tripoli harbour from 1718 to 2020 today. At 1730 today 2 Blenheims attacked 2 1500 ton merchant ships at Zuara; a direct hit caused one of the ships to blow up with a very heavy explosion which may have damaged the mole. S.S. WARSZAWA on Tobruk convoy service was torpedoed by U/B at 1430 today and again at 2015 whilst in tow of PEONY, and the ship has sunk.

East Indies and China.

Until it becomes possible to reform a strong Eastern Fleet, REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN and other R class battleships as they arrive in East Indies may be employed on convoy escort work west of the Malay barrier. The following ships, in addition to REVENGE and ROYAL SOVEREIGN, are to be regarded as forming part of the Eastern Fleet :- DANAE, DURBAN, DRAGON, JUPITER, VAMPIRE, ENCOUNTER, ELECTRA, EXPRESS.

China.

Malaya.

Reinforcements for Singapore already arranged sail as follows:- From Bombay 8/1, 14/1, 21/1, 22/1. From Durban 24/12. From Calcutta about 29/12. From Melbourne 31/12. AQUITANIA from Sydney 7/1.

A naval patrol vessel sank 3 small craft manned by the enemy in the vicinity of Pangkor Island today.

/Philippines ...

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China - contd.

Philippines.

Manila has been declared an open city. Admiral Hart has left Manila to join the U.S. naval forces in the South. Admiral Haswell is now in command of the U.S. naval force with his H.Q. on Corregidor. Recent reports from the U.S. S/Ms of the Asiatic Fleet claim one transport and one minesweeper sunk, one transport probably sunk, one seaplane tender possibly sunk.

N.E.I.

Port Montrose (Surabaya) was closed at 0700Z owing to mines.

C. in C. Netherlands, reports that the Dutch S/M K.14 has sunk 3 large transports and a tanker off the Sarawak coast.

6 N.E.I. Dorniers were destroyed in a Japanese air attack on Lake Tondang today.

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

TRUSTY,
TRUANT.

It has been decided to sail TRUSTY and TRUANT shortly from the Mediterranean to join the Eastern Fleet. (F.O.S., 1139A/26 to COLOMBIA).

State of war exists with Bulgaria as from 13/12. (Head of M., 1350A/26) (A Message 962A).

M/S Groups
143 and 146.

Request you will sail M/S Group 143 to North Shields and M/S Group 146 consisting of CONGRE, FLYING WING, PORTIA, and ROTHERSLADE to Yarmouth. (A.C.N.S.(H.), 1359A/26).

LA
MOQUEUSE.

My 2205A/23. As REINE DES FLOTS is delayed, LA MOQUEUSE may be employed in Irish Sea Escort Force till further notice. (C. in C. W.A., 2347A/26).

Movements.

H.50.

My 1749A/25. Sailed H.50 escorted by Z.5. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0431A/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).

JONQUIL.

Unless JONQUIL has Survivors on board or needs fuel she is to be detached to Portsmouth at seaward end of Q.Z.S.278.

2. Route for JONQUIL.

3. Speed to be adjusted to arrive Needles at 0815/27. (C. in C. Plymouth, 1052/26 to STORK, JONQUIL)

STORK.

E.T.A. midnight. Have 5 officers and 35 men survivors. This includes 3 and 10 mercantile also 3 prisoners.

(STORK, 1330/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).

My 1533/25. Amend position A to 180° Bishop Rock 5. (C. in C. Plymouth, 0046/26 to STORK).

VERONICA.

My 1135A/24. Request VERONICA be ordered to Londonderry before proceeding to Newport. (C. in C. W.A., 1501A/26 to A.C.I.C.)

WHADDON.

On relief by Destroyers from W.A. Command proceed to Invergordon and fuel.

2. You are required for Special escort Duty to Lerwick as ordered by N.O.I.C. Invergordon, returning to Invergordon as ordered by N.O.I.C. Lerwick. 3. On return to Invergordon proceed to Rosyth. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1539/26 to WHADDON)

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

TRAIL.

TRAIL's 1515Z/25. Request she may be ordered to return to St. Johns N.F. as soon as you can arrange for a vessel to stand by SHANTUNG TRAIL urgently required to rejoin proper task unit. (C.C.N.F., 1556Z/26 to A.C.I.C.)

See also p. 872

BARFORD.
BARCLOSE,
BARFOAM.

N.O.I.C. Londonderry's 1600A/15. Anticipate sailing these vessels A.M./28. Calling Horta, Fayal. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1601/26)

BLLENHEIM.

Can probable date of arrival of BLLENHEIM at Hvalfjord be given.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1632N/26 to Admty).

O. 21.

On return of CUTTY SARK request you will sail O. 21 to Clyde for onward passage to Dundee as arranged by S. 3. (F.O.S. 1757A/26 to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven).

WHITEHAVEN.

At 0700/27 intend sailing WHITEHAVEN for Port Edgar fuelling port Z.A. en route.
(WESTERN ISLES, 1913A/26).

Operations.

Biscay
S/M Patrol.

My 1701/25. Sailed H. 34 and JUNON escorted by BREDA at 0015/26. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 0016/26). Sailed CUTTY SARK and O10 in accordance with F.O.(S) 1327A/24. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1013A/26).

In the event of breakdown S/Ms in Bay of Biscay Area are to return to Falmouth keeping as clear as possible of other S/M positions and routes. An E.T.A. should be made about 15 hours before arrival off Lizard Head if possible.
(F.O.S., 1053A/26 to S/Ms Area A).
After passing Wolf Rock at about 0400A/27 proceed by route C thence position 24.
(F.O.S. 2319A/26 to O.10).

Iceland
cable.

Request cable ship may be sent at earliest opportunity to repair number one I/L.
(A/S F.D. Seidisfiord 1145N/26 to D.A/S.W.)

East Coast
Patrol.

Departure M.Ls. 191 and 189 on patrol.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft, 1346A/26).

Denmark
Straits
Patrol.

Request you establish patrol "White" with one cruiser and 2 corvettes. Object to intercept enemy surface vessels breaking in.
(C. in C. H.F., 1442A/26 to C.S.1)

/C. in C...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Denmark
Straits
Patrol-Contd.

C. in C. H.F. 1442/26.
A. Intend to proceed in NORFOLK at 1900N for patrol "White". VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR sail from Reykjavik 2300N. S.O.P.A. informed.
B. Unless otherwise ordered BERWICK is to sail P.M. Wednesday 02764 to relieve NORFOLK a.m./1. (C.S.1., 1734N/26).

Operation
"Archery".

Sullom Voe departures C.S.10 in KENYA, ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD.
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 1617A/26).
Force "P" sailed operation "Archery".
(C.S.10 1601A/26 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)

Operation
"Anklet".

All assaults carried out according to plan Patrol trawler sunk off Tranoy. Force oiling in Skjelfjord. Some enemy aircraft R/C.
(S.O. Force J., 1621A/26 to Admty).

Enemy Air Activity.CHARLES
PARSONS.
(British,
1554 tons)
damaged.

CHARLES PARSONS attacked by A/C in position approx 8 miles North of Hartlepool at 1750/25.
Damaged by near miss. Ship towed into Hartlepool. 2 men injured. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool, 1045/26)
Early this morning pumped out vessel with salvage tug. T.H. TILLY now tightening leak from ballast tank into No. 2 Hold. Will remain in attendance until all in order. (Smith 1110/26 to Admty).

Convoy
"Ocean."

Fighters are being despatched to assist Convoy Ocean. (Rosyth, 1606/26)

Mining.Convoy F.N588.
CORMEAD
(British,
2848 tons)
sunk.

Departure at 0045A Tug SUPERMAN to assist vessel in distress 350° No. 5 buoy 3 miles.
(F.O.I.C. Yarmouth, 0047A/26).
Have CORMEAD in tow. Engine room which is aft is flooded. Midship watertight bulkhead holding.
(WIDGEON, 0933A/26)
Departure tug ERSION at 0905 and salvage tug NESSUS at 0930 to assist CORMEAD.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 0949A/26).
CORMEAD in F.N588 mined at about 2315/25 3 miles 350° from 5 buoy. Engine room and after hold flooded. Now in tow of WIDGEON and tugs proceeding to Yarmouth where it is hoped to beach vessel.
8 of crew in WIDGEON, 17 in MEYNELL.
(C. in C. Nore, 1150A/26).

War Diary.

26.12.1941.

Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.

Convoy F.N588.
CORMEAD
 (British,
 2848 tons)
sunk. - Contd.

CORMEAD foundered and sank in approx. 052° 24' 36" N., 002° 13' 30" E. 8 Survivors will be landed Yarmouth. Remainder on board MEYNELL. (WIDGEON, 1152A/26).
 17 of crew including 4 D.E.M.S. ratings landed today at Grimsby from MEYNELL. The remainder of crew (7) including the Master and Deck Officers are aboard WIDGEON. (F.O. Humber, 1545A/26).

WELSHMAN,
MANXMAN.

If it is intended to continue to operate the fast minelayers in Biscay area during dark periods it is requested that operations may be carried out from Milford Haven (which means sailing for operations only two and a half hours earlier than from Plymouth). This will ensure that C.Bs. can be recovered without delay on completion of offensive operation and will allow ships to lie in shelter while awaiting the first operation.

2. It is requested that WELSHMAN may proceed to Plymouth for 48 hours alongside in Dockyard at conclusion of next dark period to make good various minor defects including type 28 and repair to mine rails.
 (R.A.M., 1033/26 to Admty).

EASTWOOD
 (Mined,
 24/12).

One of crew of EASTWOOD landed at Grimsby from Norwegian Steamer NEA. Jones Harrington A.B. states ship mined off Aldeburgh 1750/24. 7 or 8 men got away in his boat which capsized. He was picked up after nearly one hour in the water. Nothing known of the others. (F.O. Humber, 1047A/26).

Thames
Estuary.

One magnetic mine detonated at 1828/25. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1106A/26).

There was some enemy activity in the Thames Estuary between 1805 and 1900/25 but this was confined to the outer area, and no minelaying is suspected in the swept channels.

About 1830 an explosion which appeared to be a premature mine was observed in the direction of Kentish Knock.

(S.O. T.L.D.F., 1402/26).

One S.A. Mine detonated at 1200/26. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1932/26).

N.L. 52.

Intend to carry out Operation N.L. 52 tonight. (V.A. Dover 1321A/26).

/Yarmouth...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining. - Contd.Yarmouth.

LL Sweepers detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1325A. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1424A/26)
 LL Sweepers detonated 1 blue magnetic mine at 1415A. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1459A/26)
 Sweeper detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1547A. Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1626A/26).
 LL Sweepers detonated 1 red magnetic mine at 1610A. Details. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1755A/26)

HENRIETTE
(M/S Trawler)
sunk.

HENRIETTE damaged by a mine and sunk while in tow of H.M.T. ROLLS ROYCE in approx. position South of H.9 Buoy. No casualties. (F.O. Humber, 1502A/26).
 Acoustic mine exploded 1124/26 sinking HENRIETTE in 134 $\frac{1}{2}$ ° Spurn Point 3.4 miles. (F.O. Humber, 1955A/26).

Tyne.

Detonated one Blue Magnetic 1030/26 and one Acoustic 1210/26. Details. (N.O.I.C. North Shields 1508/26).

Humber.
(TYPHOON)

Owing to shortage of LL trawlers and loss of one today request every endeavour may be made to speed up completion of TYPHOON. (F.O.I.C. Humber, 1843A/26 to F.O.I.C. London).

Enemy Intelligence.Brest.

My 2037A/23. Photographic R/C of Brest at 1330A/26 shows no change. (D.D.I.C., 1949A/26)

Navigational.8B Buoy.

8B Buoy is extinguished. (WALLACE 0955A/26) (C. in C. Nore, 1115A/26).

36 Buoy.

Number 36 Buoy reported about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles S.E. of position and flashing irregularly by HORNPIPE at 0735/26. (A.C.O.S., 1505/26).

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.SHANTUNG
(casualty
25/12).Position 59° 50' N., 23° 30' W., only approx.
Ship must be abandoned any moment.

(SHANTUNG, 0044/26).

SHANTUNG (not yet?) located. Request air
co-operation daylight. (NARCISSUS, 0140Z/26).
NARCISSUS 0140Z/26. Weather unsuitable for air
search from Iceland today..

(A.C.I.C. 0720N/26).

Position 059° 40' N., 020° 20' W. In company
NARCISSUS searching for SHANTUNG on information
received from Swedish ship who has survivors of
SHANTUNG aboard.

(TENACITY, 1300Z/26).

Contacted Swedish Freighter TUNAHOLM. Freighter
SHANTUNG's crew picked up by her. SHANTUNG
possibly still afloat in 059° 47' N., 021° 35' W.
(TRAIL, 1355Z/26 to A.C.I.C.)Met COLOMBIA at 1030Z/26th in reliable position
059° 30' N., 021° 25' W. She has picked up
survivors from SHANTUNG, 5 have been lost.COLOMBIA reported SHANTUNG bearing approx. 080°
50 miles Carlingford steering 080° for 60 miles.
No trace of ship. Intend sweeping N.E. and S.E.
of present position throughout night. TENACITY
in company. (NARCISSUS, 1635Z/26)HEARTSEASE
(collision
23/12).Remain with HEARTSEASE until permission is
granted to proceed up Harbour.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0335A/26 to CAROLINE MOLLER).

Following from CAROLINE MOLLER to F.O.I.C. Greenock.
078°, 5 miles from Holy Island.

HEARTSEASE very difficult on short rope.

Cancel E.T.A. Will contact TOWARD by visual
signalling as soon as possible.

(Port Patrick Radio, 0715/26).

Arrived HEARTSEASE with collision damage in tow
of CAROLINE MOLLER escorted by VERVAIN.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1145A/26).

HEARTSEASE berthed Gourock 1940.

(CAROLINE MOLLER, 1959A/26).

Convoy O.N. 50.
DELFSHAVEN
(Dutch,
5281 tons).DELFSHAVEN returned to Belfast Lough from O.N.
50 having been in collision off Corsewall Point.
Agents attending.

(N.C.S.O. Belfast, 1245A/26).

STOKE CITY.Intend sailing STOKE CITY towed by ST. OLAVES
escorted by CAPE PORTLAND to Kirkwall at 1600
tomorrow weather permitting.

Request air escort accordingly.

(N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 1845A/26 to A.C.O.S.)

/Convoy...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects. - Contd.

Convoy F.S.682. EMPIRE LOUGH of F.S. No.682 reports making water after hold. Pump unable to control. Can make Yarmouth with assistance of salvage tug. (WIDGEON, 2220A/26).
EMPIRE LOUGH. Your 2220A/26. Tug, KROOMAN with Salvage Officer and portable pump proceeding as soon as possible to your assistance.
 (C. in C. Nore, 2331A/26 to WIDGEON).

H. 31.

Report P.C.S. Return to Falmouth by route B to 49° N., thence to R/V in position 180° Lizard 5 miles. (F.O.S., 2301A/26 to H.31)
 With reference to aircraft report of a submerged S/M in 48° 27' N., 07° 58' W., at 1659/26, course 037° request aircraft may search from this position Northwards along route B as far as 49° N., thence towards Falmouth from daylight 27th. (F.O.S., 2337A/26 to C. in C. Plymouth).
 My 1837A/26. A/C reports having sighted submerged S/M in position 48° 27' N., 07° 58' W., course 037°, at 1659A/26, leaving trail of oil and bubbles. This may be H.31.
 (F.O.S., 2338A/26).

Shipping & Convoys.H.X.164.

Warmest Congratulations. All the ships of your convoy H.X.164 have now arrived safely.
 (C. in C. W.A., 1008/26 to Rear-Admiral B.W. Barrow).

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Detach WHADDON to escort STAFFORDSHIRE to Rosyth at best speed. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1028/26 to LEEDS).

H.G.76.

My 2255A/24 para.2. In view of STORKS 2330A/25 and possibility of air attack during moonlight, DEPTFORD is to act as additional escort for Bristol Channel ships until moonset tomorrow, then return to Liverpool.
 (C. in C. W.A., 1044A/26).

Q.P.4 .

Conditions favourable today and ships from Doina and Molotovsk are now being broken out. In order to take full advantage of this opportunity I have had to agree to leave EMPIRE METEOR at Batharitsa. Convoy will now consist of (?WANSTEAD) (CDRE) TREKIEVE, CAPE CORSA, CAPE RACE, EL CAPITAN COCKLE, DANBYBRYN from Doina, SAN AMBROSIO, BRIARWOOD, TREHATA, ELONA, X SUKH one from Molotovsk STALINGRAD not joining from Iokanka. ARCOS doubtful starter. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1215C/26)

X? SUKHONA.

/Request...

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

Q.P.4.
Contd.

Request information if Q.P.4 has sailed and if so how many ships. (N.O.I.C. Iceland, 1343N/26 to Admty).

S.B.N.O. North Russia's 2131C/25 and my 1215C/26. Westerly winds have made it impossible to clear DVINA ship without prolonged delay. Panamanian ~~COCLE~~ x ~~COCLE~~ however is now beyond bar. MOLOTOVSK portion of 5 ships is clear. Intend sailing this portion and ~~COCLE~~ p.m./27 for R/V off Panoior Terski Orlov according to position of ice edge. Probable E.T.A. R/V a.m./29. Russians have promised remaining 6 ships of DVINA portion will be unloaded at Docks weather conditions permitting. I intend sailing these ships to await convoy for anchorage in Kola Inlet which Admiral Golovkov asked to decide upon. Meantime these ships will have safe anchorage in static ice. ARCOSA ~~is~~ non started from Iokanka. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 2230C/26).

P.Q.7.

Owing to continuous defects in M/Vs only 2 have sailed at 1330 today with HUGH WALPOLE and OPHELIA. (A.C.I.C., 1511N/26 to Admty). 2 ships only sailed 1330/26, local escort HUGH WALPOLE, OPHELIA. Remaining ships delayed by defects.

2. CUMBERLAND is to sail SALAMANDER and BRITOMART to relieve local escort in accordance with my 0838A/17. Remainder ocean escort is to remain at Seidis Fiord until further orders. (C. in C. H.F., 2215A/26 to CUMBERLAND, A.C.I.C.)

O.N. and O.S.
convoys.

Commodores are to be informed that ships bound for West Indies and South American ports should not be detached from O.N. or O.S. convoys until instructions are received from Admiralty Opanav or C. in C. W.A. Provisional Dispersal Point in Convoy Routeing Signal is merely for convenience of laying off dispersal routes. (D.T.D., 1626A/26 to M.C.S.O. Mersey).

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.P.39.

S/M P.39 escorted by WHITEHALL from position 359° Spartel 5 at 0830/26, speed 8 knots, to Gibraltar.

(F.O.C.N.A. 0217A/26 to Ships on Patrol Gibraltar Force, Group 4, WHITEHALL.)

Arrival P.39.

(F.O.C.N.A. 1122A/26.)

German Threat to Tunisia, Spain and Morocco.

Following received via Tangier from U.S. Consul Tunis. Indications of German concentration in Southern Italy and (corrupt group) and that these may be directed against Tunisia. Understood that Gen. Delaitre intends to resist unless positively ordered by Petain to submit. French Forces not more than 20,000 badly armed and almost without aviation, troops including Officers ordered to remain in Barracks tonight. Concentrations of troops are officially reported on French Spanish Border and in Spanish Morocco. Supposition here does not exclude joint action with Spanish.

24/12. No confirmation here of troop concentrations in Spanish Morocco. T.O.O. 1705/25 Ends.

(F.O.C.N.A. 1016A/26 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta) N.I.D. Comment. W.O. consider that whilst there are no actual troop concentrations in Southern Italy, this may refer to movements south mainly of Air Personnel.

(ii) Statement re French Forces in Tunisia is approximately correct.

(iii) Statements as to troop concentrations on Franco-Spanish border and in Spanish Morocco are not correct.

(iv) Taken as a whole this report repeats previous stories, being circulated as part of the war of nerves, and the general situation remains as outlined in Admiralty 1141A/24/12, which gives summary of J.I.C. Report on possible Axis developments in French North Africa and Spain.

(C. in C. Med. and V.A. Malta are addressees.)

P.35.

My 1038A/22, not to Admiralty and F.O.S. Intend to sail P.35 p.m./27 for Malta. P.35 will pass through 038° 20' 009° 00' E. about 0300A/29 thence as ordered by V.A. Malta. C. in C. Med. pass to Capt. S.1., V.A. Malta pass to Capt. S.10. (F.O.C.N.A. 1136A/26 to C. in C. Med.)

MIRROR, cable repairs.

MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT E.T.A. Fayal a.m./29. Escort will not enter Harbour. MIRROR will carry on cable repairs in vicinity of Azores. COLTSFOOT will require fuel at Ponta Delgada before leaving area.

(F.O.C.N.A. 1154A/26 to Admty.)

/Majorca ...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - contd.Majorca
Intelligence

Following to Admiralty for information.
My 1545/12. An Italian S/M was seen at Calobra, Majorca, on 15/12 (Grade A1 Binoculars).
An Italian bomber aircraft was seen falling into sea 2 miles from Formenter Cape on 19/12, 2 of crew baled out but were not picked up, one parachute made in Italy washed ashore.
(Consul, Palma, Majorca. 1325/26 to S.O.I. Gib.)

→ JOAO PESSOA
EUGENIO C. *Italian*
(German)

Arrivals 25th JOAO PESSOA and EUGENIO C to load Iron Ore, the latter at Castro Urdiales. JOAO PESSOA expected to be loaded tomorrow evening 27th. EUGENIO C ditto Monday evening 29th.
(Consul, Bilbao 1459/26 to Admty.)

Air Attack
on German
Tanker.

235. Your 1151A/25/12. Can any details be given of circumstances under which attack took place, was ship sunk? Was this same oiler referred to in A/M 1224A/23?
(V.A.C.N.S. 1516A/26 to Admty.) Reply: 1114/27.

→ Axis Shipping.

Arrival 25th JOAO PESSOA, German. EUGENIO C. Italian.
(Bilbao 1624/26 to M. of W.T.)

ARCTIC RANGER

Trawler ARCTIC RANGER is escort to Merchant Ship at present loading at Melilla. They may sail for Gibraltar without previous warning.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2306A/26 to UNA, P.35.)

South Atlantic.Troop Convoys.

Position. Convoy WS12ZA, WS12ZB and D.M.1 (A) Sailed 24/12.
(Simonstown (?) 0737Z/26 to Admty.) *See also next page*

Capetown
docks.

7. My 1545N/18/10. Is any action being taken on proposal in para 2 please?
(C. in C. S.A. 0952Z/26 to Admty.)

DAUNTLESS.

Your 21V5/21 not to Admty. Programme for DAUNTLESS is as follows. Simonstown depart Table Bay D/G Range arrive and depart all 29/12. Pointe Noire arrive 0700Z/3 depart 1700Z/4. Freetown arrive 0900Z/9 depart a.m./11.
(F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1023Z/26 to C. in C. S.A.)

/ALCANTARA ...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - contd.ALCANTARA.Admty. 1609A/23 concur.
(C. in C. S.A. 1152Z/26 to B.A.R.M.)W.S.14
Escort.I have only DERBYSHIRE available to escort Durban portion of W.S.14 due Cape area 4/1. Request whether you will have a cruiser available at Durban then in case it becomes necessary to reinforce this escort.
(C. in C. S.A. 1301Z/26 to C. in C. E.I.)Defence of
S. Africa.Ref. my G/SS/3839, 24/12. I now learn Smuts holds similar views to C.G.S. He considers defence of Union is purely a Naval and Air Force matter and that construction of pill boxes or other field works is purely waste of time. I cannot subscribe to this view nor do several senior staff officers at Defence H.Q. I feel that any reasonable efforts that can be made with limited resources available to make it that much more difficult for enemy is worth while. Chiefs of Staff appreciation would therefore be welcome.
(203 M.M. Pretoria 1345/26 to W.O.)INDOMITABLE.W.S. 122B.

Adm. 1944/16. Request E.T.A. Capetown. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1440Z/26 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad) Convoy W.S.12 ZB sailed 24/12 for Bombay, CAPETOWN CASTLE, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, INDRAPOERA, DEUCALION, ADRASTUS, EMPIRE STAR. Numbers carried. E.T.A. 1100Z/6/1. (S.S.T.O. Durban 1552Z/26 to S.S.T.O. Bombay.)

OSKAWA.Have you any news of OSKAWA due Buenos Aires 17/12 from Trinidad?
(D.T.D. 1714A/26 to S.O.I. Montevideo) Reply: 1301/27.MALANCHA
PALACIOAdmty. 1909A/4. MALANCHA and PALACIO arrived Freetown 25/12. Intend to sail both ships for Durban p.m./27th with local escort only.
(C. in C. S.A. 1755Z/26 to Admty.)Force Q.Your 17030/18/12. All ships of Force Q. (QUEEN EMMA, PRINCESS BEATRIX, BACHAQUERO, MISOA, DEWDALE, ENNERDALE) at present at Freetown have foul bottoms. Speed in knots and dates when last docked.
(C. in C. S.A. 2115Z/26 to Admty.)

/MORETON BAY ...

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

MORETON BAY.
W.S.14.

Your 1616A/7. As MORETON BAY was not included
Admty. 1834/13 it is presumed this ship did not
sail.

(C. in C. S.A. 2125Z/26 to Admty.)

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.MEMOS.
LESBOS.

Merchant shipping Movements Summary 198. MEMOS overdue Alexandria from Haifa. A ship believed to be LESBOS is aground about 10 miles East of Cape Brulos. (Capt. O.S., Alexandria 0243B/26 to Med Fleet, etc.)

PHENIX.
Fire at Haifa.

My 1100C/25 (? 1000/5 intended re situation of fire in harbour at 0900/25.) Situation 0900/Friday 25. Fire in PHENIX practically out. Haifa Port now open. Main Boom defence damaged by fire. One line only in operation. Court of Inquiry now sitting. (N.O.I.C. Haifa, 0934C/26 to C. in C. Med.)

ERIDGE.
D.2.

Reverse course at 1400 and join me. Have just left Great Pass Beacon with ELPIS. (Capt. D.2, 1012B/26 to ERIDGE).

Enemy
Destroyers,
Tripoli.

My 1821/25 25/12. Amend cruisers outside Tripoli to read destroyers. (H.Q., Malta, 1025/26).

Enemy
Destroyer.

P.C. and S. of enemy, 1 destroyer, is 31° 30' N. 16° 05' E. 270° 20 knots. Med. local call sign 76KFMI 1030/26 to Hal Far).

Operation
M.F.1.

Carried (? Carry) out operation M F (? 1). D.1 day is today 26th. (C. in C. Med., 1108B/26 to V.A. Malta). Take CARLISLE, NIZAM, KINGSTON, ISAAC SWEERS under your orders. Carry out Operation M.F.1, D.1 day is today 26th. Sail when ready along reverse route of convoy M.E.8 to cross 021° 00' E. by 1600/27. V.A. Malta report expected position of Convoy M.E.8 at 1700/27. Report intended timing to 201 Nav. Co-Op. Group, to enable fighter protection to be arranged. (C. in C. Med., 1124B/26 to Capt. D.7).

Wreck.

Q B C 367 Mersa Matruh. Wreck exists in 031- 22' 47" N. 027° 14' 21" E. This is 370 yards clear to eastwards of leading line for Mersa Matruh entrance, in 18 fathoms. (Alexandria, 1115B/26, to Med. Fleet).

WARZAWA sunk.
*(Polish s.s.,
2486 tons)
(see next page)*

PEONY and AVON VALE returning to Tobruk with survivors WARZAWA, KIPLING and LEGION continuing search. (KIPLING 1125B/26, to Tobruk).

Losses,
Publication.

It would be of some advantage if I could be informed before hand if and when losses H.M. Ships in Mediterranean are to be published. Request this information with regard to GALATEA. (C. in C. Med. 1210B/26 to Admty.)

/Yugo-Slav.....

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - contd.Yugoslav
request for
S/M.

Your 1042/3/10 and my 2301/6/10. Gen. Ilitch is pressing for a submarine to be allocated to and manned by Yugo-Slav Forces for use in landing supplies to assist "Insurrection." I have informed him that a submarine even if manned by Yugo-Slav could not be allocated solely for this purpose but that if one were allocated she could certainly include this work with her other operational duties. What is present position as regards sending Yugo-Slavs to U.K. for manning a submarine? (C. in C. Med., 1216B/26 to Admty. (R) Capt. S.I.)

WARSZAWA
torpedoed.

*(Polish S.S.,
2086 tons)
See previous page*

WARSZAWA has been struck by torpedo aft, 32° 10' 24° 32', think she can keep afloat. (PEONY, 1430B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Ship afloat, may be able to tow, rescued survivors. (PEONY, 1435B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
All soldiers probably saved, may tow Tobruk. (PEONY, 1530B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
H.M.S. PEONY's 1430B/26. LEGION and KIPLING searching for S/M. Intend continuing search till dusk and then escorting PEONY and WARSZAWA to Tobruk. (KIPLING, 1538B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Request aircraft protection, my position now is 32° 10' 24° 32'. (PEONY, 1540B/26 to Malta).
Have WARSZAWA in tow, AVON VALE screening, am proceeding to Tobruk. (PEONY, 1605B/26 to C. in C. Med.)
Following has been read.
C. in C. Med. S.O. Force I., repeated Alexandria from PEONY.
Suggest area be avoided, suspect mine. (KIPLING, 1609B/26, to Alexandria.)
Following has been read. BURGONET and ALISA (As decoded), have proceeded independently to Tobruk 6 miles apart. Request M.L. protection may be arranged during daylight hours. (KIPLING, 1717B/26 to Alexandria.)
2 A/S vessels and 2 sweepers being sent to assist with personnel. Send H.M.S. AVON VALE and one A/S vessel on with ALISA instantaneously others and destroyer with you. (S.O., Force I 1718B/26 to PEONY).
Your 1609B/26. On what ground do you suspect mines? Was torpedo seen? (C. in C. Med. 1735B/26 to PEONY).
WARSZAWA torpedoed again. (PEONY, 1930B/26, to C. in C. Med.)
WARSZAWA sunk - all saved. (PEONY, 2025/26 to C. in C. Med., S.O. Force I., R.A. Alexandria).

Japanese
Tactics and
A/S Equipment.

Request information may be sought from U.S. Navy and Dutch Naval Authorities on use by Japanese of following in (?respect of) S/M's and A/S vessels. S/T or a Super S/T with frequency employed. Hydrophone directional quality and ability to

/receive

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - contd.Japanese
Tactics and
A/S Equipment.
(contd.)

receive asdic transmission. Echo detection device with frequency employed. General A/S tactics, size and number of depth charges used. Information is also requested on use by Japanese of R.D.F. for S/M surface vessels. (Capt. S.1, 1204B/26, to F.O.S. (R) TRUANT, TRUSTY, etc.)

Axis
Shipping.

Departure 24th LISBOA for Marseilles.
Arrival 22nd ~~CASHELLON~~ and SULLBERG (German).
(Valencia, 1212/26 to M. of W.T.)

*x not identified*OLYMPUS.

OLYMPUS leaves Malta P.M./26 and expect to pass 38.05 N. 09.00 E. about 2000B/28, thence as ordered by you. OLYMPUS has been ordered to proceed submerged during daylight hours throughout whole of passage unless otherwise ordered and has 4 mark (iv) torpedoes on board.
(V.A. Malta, 1230B/26, to F.O.C.N.A.)

*Sailed - see next page -*TORBAY.
TRIUMPH.
CARLISLE.

Remain north of 032° 20' until 2200B/26.
TRIUMPH sails 1600B through 033- 06' 027° 12'.
CARLISLE and 3 destroyers cross your track from east to west about 2200B. (Capt. S.1. 1521B/26 to TORBAY (R) TRIUMPH.)

Libya.

Cositrep No. 74. 1. It appears enemy have been compelled to withdraw to Agedabia and beyond.
4. Benghazi. Northern mole blown in many places, centre mole blocked by sunken ships, southern mole intact for 1300 feet from base. Bridge between town and southern mole demolished but pontoons available. No lighters or cranes. 5. TAC/R afternoon 25/12 reports five small ships off Ras Alla A 77843 also no signs enemy in Marada area.
10. R/C reported five small ships 20 miles north Ageila, course west. (C. in C. M.E., 1710/26).

Malta Air
Report.

Night 25/26, 3 raiders crossed coast 1815 2126 2313 hours, bombed land sea, no damage, no Hurricanes up bad weather, A.A. probably destroyed 1 bomber. Wellingtons for Tripoli unable to take off, wind across runway. 1 Albacore dropped bombs, flares Tripoli town diversion for 4 Swordfish 3 Albacores which laid 7 mines outside Harbour. 1 hospital ship seen anchored Harbour entrance. 26/12. 3 alerts, 0632 hours. 6 R/C aircraft crossed coast, Hurricanes up, no interception; 0842 hours approx. 20 M.E., 109 escorting few JU 88 crossed, Hurricanes drove off attack, no bombs dropped. 1116 hours, 30 raiders, fighters and JU 88, attacked Luqa. 2 Blenheims 2 Wellingtons 1 Maryland 1 Hurricane destroyed.

/3 Blenheims....

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (contd.):

Malta Air Report.
(contd.)

3 Blenheims 1 Maryland 1 Hurricane damaged. 1 civilian killed 3 wounded. Hurricanes up, no interception A.A. probably destroyed 1 JU 88. (H.Q., Malta, 1720/26).

SALVIA lost.

5 Regret to report SALVIA overdue and must be presumed lost. SALVIA last reported in 032° 06' N. 024° 46' E. at 2200/23 in vicinity of sinking of SHUNTIEN, having rescued about 100 survivors most probably prisoners of war. Not known how many finally embarked. Weather moderate. Air search instituted 25th without result and so far no trace of wreckage or survivors. Until definite evidence to contrary is obtained possibility exists that crew was over powered and ship captured though this is considered most unlikely. (C. in C. Med. 1922/26 to Admty.)

Convoy M.E.8.

M.E.8 and escort sailed 1900B/26. Cargo agreed. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 2015B/26 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta Movements.

26/12 departure OLYMPUS, DIDO, AJAX, NESTOR, ARROW, FOXHOUND, GURKHA, LANCE, LIVELY. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 2030B/26 to Admty.)

UTMOST.

Intend to sail UTMOST for U.K. shortly after arrival of P.35 and UNA in early January. (Capt. S.10, 2031B/26 to Capt. S.1.)

Libya situation Report.

Cositrep No. 75.
1. 25/12. C.I.H. who reached Benghazi from N.E. report large ammunition depot found six miles from town. Benghazi power station in working order.
4. Large ship reported Bardia afternoon 25/12. (C. in C. M.E., 2340/26 to W.O.)

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Conveyance
of Shah of
Persia.

F.O. state that desired to move ex Shah of Persia and accompanying personnel, about 15, to Canada. Request you arrange for a suitable vessel to call Mauritius on route Durban for this purpose.
(D.of S.T.0319A/26 to P.S.T.O. India).

Surabaya
mining.

Q.C.A. 344 Surabaya. Port Montrose closed owing to mines.
(S.O.I. Colombo 0700Z/26 to all concerned Q.C.A.344).

Goa.

Chiefs of Staff consider and F.O. concur that we should not attempt anything in Goa at present owing to delicate situation with Portuguese Gov. over Timor.
(1st Sea Lord 1148A/26 to C.in C. E.I.,W.O., 1000/26 to C.in C. India).

Rangoon
raid 23/12.

Further details raid Rangoon 23/12. Rangoon City and harbour also attacked. (A.H.Q. India 1205/26).

Diego
Garcia.

My 1356/17 and my 1318/23. I have been informed the Indian troops at Diego Garcia do not anticipate completing defence until end of March. O.C. Force Shortcut estimates that by using M.N.B.D.O. personnel and equipment he can complete by early February.
(C.in C. E.I. 1214Z/26 to Admty.).

TEVIOT?
BANK.

I am reviewing policy of defensive mining on E.I. Station in light of present conditions and matter is now under discussion with ARMINDIA. I hope to be able to reply to your 0313/22 shortly.
(C.in C. E.I. 1216Z/26 to C.in C. E.F.).

ATREUS

Ref. 1946/19 from Admty. Intend Mine Carrier ATREUS to lay guard loop at Colombo vide my 0808 Monday (Presumably 0808Z/21 intended) before she lifts and relays gun Channel guard loop. Latter operation will commence about 6/1.
(C.in C. E.I. 1218Z/26 to Admty.).

Mines.

My 1533/13 and C.B. 4082 Para. 5. 1. To take full advantage of the non-contact properties of the M Mark I Mine it is desirable to lay them at a greater depth than the draught of the ship attacked. 2. In Home Waters it is the practice to

/lay...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATION.East Indies.Mines.
-Contd.lay these mines at a depth of at least 18 feet below chart datum.
(D.D.O.D.(M) 1824A/26 to C.in C. E.I.).Minesweepers.My 2304/25/11. 170th M/S Group for Colombo has been delayed.
(D.M.S. 1838A/26 to C.in C. E.I.).Rangoon raid.

Personal for C.I.G.S. from General Wavell.

1. Rangoon Town and Mingaldon Aerodrome were raided yesterday by 54 Japanese bombers escorted by 30 fighters. Comparatively little damage was done and over 20 Japanese planes shot down. But we lost 6 planes (4 in the air 2 on the ground) and A.V.G. lost 2 planes so that air strength is considerably weakened, and if Japanese persist they will soon reduce our fighter force to nil. Reinforcements of Burma by 2 fighter squadrons is vitally urgent.

2. Mass exodus of civilian population from Rangoon has created many difficult military problems. Labour for unloading ships, and much other urgent work is (?unobtainable). Such troops as can be made available are being used for unloading ships in (dock?).
(G.H.Q. India 2045/26)

Battleships.

Until it becomes possible to reform a strong Eastern Fleet, REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN and other "R" class battleships as they arrive may be employed on convoy escort work west of Malay barrier.

2. Their employment without destroyer escort must depend on local U/B situation.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2352A/26 to C.in C. E.F. C.in C. E.I.).

China.B.M.9 A.Request disposal Convoy B.M.9.A after unloading at Singapore.
(R.A. Malaya 0343Z/26 to D.of S.T.).

/Escort....

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China -Contd.Escort for
Australian
reinforcements.Ref. Commonwealth Gov. telegram 828 to
C.in C. Far East para. No.2.(1) Ships available from East Indies and
Eastern Fleet are for the moment the bare
minimum for escort of reinforcements from
west to Sunda Strait and from Sunda Strait
to Singapore. This is reason for request
in my 0918Z/25 (N.T. in W.R.).(2) If Australian reinforcements are likely
to start in near future will it be possible
for R.A.N. to provide cruiser escort for them
through to Singapore or alternatively to route
them via Torres Straits with Task Force 5 as
escort?(C.in C. E.F. 0427Z/26 to A.C.N.B.(R) Admty.
C.in C. E.I.).Situation
report 1630
G.MT./25.Sarawak. No comm^unications since yesterday
evening. B.R. Sibiu reports five bombs dropped
by seven enemy aircraft at Sibiu.
Air R/C 25/12. P.R.U. Kuching Area 8 transports
one Smd. and one destroyer in vicinity of
T.G. Sipang. Two barges one Smd. at mouth
of river 5 miles N. of Kuching aerodrome, no
activity in Kuching River.
(G.O.C. Malaya 0555/26 to W.O.).W/TFollowing wave frequencies are allocated.
3300k/s destroyer fire-control wave for use
when ordered by S.O. destroyers present for
concentration or intercommunication between
destroyers differently classed or flotillas.
850 k/s common flotillas wave for use as
ordered by S.O. destroyers present. R/T may
be used between destroyers when hunting on
either wave by day and on flotillas wave only
by night. P/L is not to be used except in
emergency with C.O.'s approval.
(C.in C. E.F. 1155Z/26 to Eastern Theatre,
Admty.).PERSEE.My 2251/4. French ship PERSEE, ex PIERRE
L.D. was still at Saigon on 10/12.
(D.D.I.C. 1240A/26 to C's. in C. etc.).N.E.I. Army,
Air Force.Requirements of N.E.I. for aircraft and A/A
guns.
(C.in C. F.E. 1621/26 to W.O.).

/Air...

War Diary.26.12. 1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China. -Contd.Air report.

Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030Z/26.
Diverging search on mean bearing of 023° from Pulo Aur to a depth of 230 miles. Large explosion position 02° 08' N. 104° 21' E. possibly enemy submarine blown up by minefield or possibly mine exploded. R/C Kuching area 4 transports 1 burning number of barges, 1 light cruiser, 1 destroyer, all northwest Tanjong Sipang. No land operations observed. R/C confirms successful demolition Kuching also that Singkawang still unserviceable owing to bombing.
(A.H.Q.F.E. 1745/26 to Air Min.).

Borneo.

Instructions for removal or demolition of all small craft (Govr. North Borneo 1746/26, to S. of S. for Colonies) See Lion Copy.

Troop Convoys.

Reinforcements for Singapore already arranged appear to be as follows.
(a) B.M.9a - Leaving Bombay 21/12 - see P.S.T.O India 0729Z/19/12.
(b) B.M.9b - Leaving Bombay 22/12 - see P.S.T.O India 0729Z/19/12.
(c) B.M.10 - Leaving Bombay 8/1 - see P.S.T.O India 0606Z/25/12.
(d) B.M.11 - Leaving Bombay 14/1 - see P.S.T.O India 0606Z/25/12.
(e) D.M.1 - Leaving Durban 24/12 - see C. in C. E.I. 0800Z/25/12.
(f) S.S.1 - Leaving Calcutta about 29/12 - see C. in C. East Indies 0806Z/23.
(g) U.M.1 - Leaving Melbourne 31/12 - see A.C.N.B. 0635Z/25.
(h) U.M.2 (AQUITANIA) - Leaving Sydney 7/1 - see A.C.N.B. 0635Z/25.
(2) Request you will signal for information of War Cabinet your confirmation of the above and your intentions for:-
(a) Ocean Escort.
(b) A/S Escort.
(c) Route East of Sunda Strait.
(d) Air Escort.
(e) Protection against mines.
(3) Request your views on employment of AQUITANIA. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1916A/26 to C. in C. E.F.).

Dutch Air Forces.

Following are dispositions of Dutch Air Forces 25/12/41. (1) Army.
(2) Navy. Groups of 3 F/BS each. 2 Natuna Pontianak area. 2 Batavia Sunda area. 1 Tarakan 2 Celebes New Guinea area. At least 50% reserves of Catalinas or Dornier boats. Believed 10 American P.B.Y.'s. now operating Ambon area.
(C. in C. F.E. 2116/26 to W.C.).

SECRET. , M E S S A G E 1746/26th December, IN.

From. Governor North Borneo. Date. 26.12.41.

Recd. 2125.

CYPHER.

Addressed. Secretary of State for the Colonies.

IMMEDIATE.

No. 45. Addressed to the British Agent No. 110.
Repeated to the S. of S., for the information
of the Court of Directors.

Reference your immediate telegram of 25th December conveying C. in C.'s advice to remove or demolish all small craft, I have issued necessary instructions for immediate action with the following modifications:-

(1) Native boats under 30 feet in length used by their owners for their livelihood are not to be destroyed.

(2) Small motor craft used exclusively for communication and conveyance of food to camps in Sandakan Bay and which cannot be used at sea are not for the present to be destroyed.

(3) Three launches on coastal patrol not for the present to be destroyed.

(4) Two Government launches essential for conveying food supplies and guard to a temporary internment camp and a leper settlement in Sandakan Bay not to be destroyed.

(5) Ten out of thirty-nine Chinese fishing junks at Sandakan to be preserved for the present for important food supplies.

(6) A few craft now employed on denial work to be preserved until that work is completed.

2. Completion of action now being taken under these instructions will seriously affect our food supplies especially in places where there is no communication except by water. To go further and destroy those craft which I have considered it necessary to preserve would be highly dangerous. I shall be grateful if I may be informed whether the discretion which I have exercised is disapproved.

3. Such craft as can remove to Tarakan are being ordered to do so as alternative to destruction.

1746/26.

1st Lord.	
1st S.L.	O.I.C.(3)
4th S.L.	D.of P.(3)
5th S.L.	D.A/S.W.
V.C.N.S.	I.P.(3)
A.C.N.S.(H)	W.D.
A.C.N.S.(F)	D.P.D.
A.C.N.S.(T)	D.S.D.(2)
A.C.N.S.(W)	Admiral Bailey.
N.A.1st S.L.	Admiral Bellairs.
Capt Pin,	E.P.S.
D.N.A.D.	D.T.D.(4)
M.(2)	D.T.D.(M)
Ops.(3)	D.T.D.(C)
C.D.(5)	
D.N.I.(5) (and for A.E.)	

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.QUEEN MARY.

My 0256/23. Destination of QUEEN MARY is New York. 2. Tanker MIRZA may be used for bunkering QUEEN MARY at Trinidad as required.
(D. of S.T. 0320A/26 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad.)

CIRCASSIA.

C. in C. W.A. 1643Q/20 and CIRCASSIA's 1815Q/22, not to Admiralty and B.A.D. CIRCASSIA arrived 0930Z/24. Repairs now completed.
(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 0952Q/26 to C. in C. W.A.)

German Use of French Ships.

Intercept states following French ships being operated in Mediterranean by Germans: KERKENA ILE ROUSSE, GRAND-QUEVILLY, MOSTAGANEM, CAP PINEDE, BONIFACIO, ESPIQUETTE, BOUGARONI, LEZARDRIEUX.
(S.O.I. Jamaica 1004R/26 to D.N.I. etc.)

St. Pierre Miquelon.

Your 1131A/25 para 2 (Occupation of Island Saint Pierre by Adm. Muselier unknown to Admty.) It was assumed that Admty. were aware of the operation wide last para. of Natal T.O.O. 1910A/16/12 (Saint Pierre and Miquelon to be taken under Allied control.)
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1052Q/26 to Admty.)

Navigation Lights.

My 1022Q/8. Amend to read Areas No.8 and 10. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1053Q/26 to A.W.I. Stn. etc.) Your 1811A/24. G.B.M.S. message was received from broadcast to area 10 only in accordance with A.F.O. S.3/41. Suggest general promulgation by Admiralty lettered message.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1057Q/26 to Admty.)

WYOMING (French)

My 1649R/24. Ship sailed St. Thomas 2000 G.M.T/25 for Guadeloupe with 1600 tons oil fuel.
(S.O.I. Jamaica 1156R/26 to Admty. etc.)

S.S. NEREUS.

Your 1601/23. N.C.S.O. Baltimore reports arrival of Greek NEREUS on 21st vide his Vesca 2312/22.
(D.T.D. 1226A/26 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

/Washington ...

War Diary.

26.12.1941.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - contd.

Washington Report.

Washops. 16.

(i) Philippine Is. Manila has been declared an open city. Adm. Hart has left Manila to join U.S. Naval forces in South. Adm. Haswell is now in command of U.S. Naval Force with his H.Q. on Corregidor. Recent report from U.S. S/Ms of Asiatic Fleet claim following successes - one transport and one minesweeper sunk. One transport probably sunk, one seaplane tender possibly sunk.

(ii) Hawaii. 25/12. U.S. Destroyer DRAYTON claims a successful attack on a Japanese S/M 60 miles south of Oahu at 0140Z/25. After dropping depth charges the bow of submarine broke surface went vertical and sank. 26/12. Two submarines were sighted westward of Kauai. One was attacked by aircraft apparently without success. (J.S.M. Washington 1343R/26 to Admty. etc.)

Sinking not confirmed by comd: 8843

Escorts for S.C. and O.N.(S) Convoys.

Your 1651R/25. Grateful for C.N.O.'s concurrence in southerly routeing but request you will explain (a) that no long-endurance British escorts are now available for trade convoys, those in service being required to meet troop convoy commitments. (b) That Southerly routeing will not alter in any way present system of M.O.M.P. Only difference is that Canadian escort when relieved will proceed to Londonderry to fuel instead of Iceland (C).

2. It is presumed that escort for ships proceeding to Iceland (C) will be arranged by C.N.O. (A.C.N.S.(T) 1420A/26 to B.A.D.)

?

Your 1510Z/26 (N.T. in W.D.) affirmative 2300/26 Opnav. (U.S. Govt. Washington to Admty., recd. 0037/27.)

TRAIL.

TRAIL's 1515Z/25. Request she may be ordered to return to St. John's N.F. as soon as you can arrange for vessel to stand by SHANTUNG. TRAIL urgently required to rejoin proper Task unit. (C.C.N.F. 1556Z/26 to A.C.I.C.) W.D. Note.- SHANTUNG on fire (Home Commands) TRAIL standing by.

See p. 852.

DELHI.

B.A.R.M.'S 1046R/24. On completion of DELHI'S working up B.A.R.M. and C. in C. A. & W.I. are requested to sail her for the Clyde. A.M. 1612A/1/11 refers. (D.O.D.(F) 1630A/26 to B.A.R.M., C. in C. A.W.I.)

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.DJEBEL NADOR.

Your 1039R/26^{P.844} (~~N.T.in W.D.~~ Ship reported loading rubber at Oran.) Further information including probable date of sailing of DJEBEL NADOR urgently required.
(D.N.I. 1659A/26 to B.A.D.)

T.C.17.

Anticipated that by end of February there will be approx. 15,000 Canadian military personnel awaiting transport to U.K. Request you will ask Opnav if suitable date can be arranged end of February or early March when U.S. escort can be provided for this convoy.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1702A/26 to B.A.D.)

Troop Convoys,
T.C., N.A.

Your 2245Z/9. T.C. convoys will in future be run at intervals of two to three months, sailing dates to be dependent on the ability of U.S. authorities to provide escort.
2. Arrangements are being made for the escorts of C.T. convoys to return with intermediate convoys of approx. two ships which will be known as N.A. convoys and which will be primarily used for the transport of Air Force and R.N. personnel.
3. N.A.1. consisting of BERGENSFJORD and STRATHEDEN will leave Halifax approx. 9/1 and N.A.2 will leave Halifax approx. 23/1.
4. U.S. authorities are being requested to suggest a suitable date at the end of February or early March for sailing T.C.17 from Halifax.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1703A/26 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

MARSDALE.

St. John N.B. departure MARSDALE for patrol area B.X.2 E.T.A. 1200Z/30.
(C.O.A.C. Halifax 1902Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

French
Fishing
Vessels.

Your 2204/29/11 and 1202/14/7. Assume all French fishing vessels are still to be brought in when season reopens on Newfoundland Banks and that Opnav is fully conversant with our attitude.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1902Z/26 to Admty.)

O.N.48.

O.N.48, serial number 4, N.U, steering direct to (f), omitting (e). (Admiralty diversion.)
(U.S.C.N.O., 1937/26 to Com Task Unit 4.1.12.)

COZALLA.

Algiers 25/11 (?25/12) B.3. Consul now reports S.S. COZALLA, ex SERAFIN TOPIC, has proceeded to Bone, and states she probably took on Iron Ore and military equipment at Algiers. Rumoured she carried also Cobalt, Gold and Rubber.
(B.A.D., 1945R/26 to Admty. V.A. Malta.)

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.

Free French at St. Pierre. My 1910Z/24. Sailed ALYSSE 1900Z today for St. Johns N.F. ACONITY will sail for St. Johns N.F. p.m./ 27 and will be ready for sea after refuelling. Intend remaining with MIMOSA and French S/M SURCOUF for local organisation and defence. All is proceeding absolutely calmly and satisfactorily.
(Adm. Muselier, 2120Z/26 to C.C.N.F. (R) Admty., C.O.A.C., Capt. D. St. Johns, N.F.)

S.C. Convoys, Escort Groups.

Following is a repetition of F.O.N.F.'s 1837Z/24.

1. Dates of sailing of S.C. convoys from Halifax present difficult problem for N.F.
2. If Iceland is still in use the escort of S.C.65 which in present schedule would leave St. Johns 15/1 to arrive Iceland 26th or 27/1 and return with O.N.62 will not sail St. Johns until 19/1. This means that this escort group under best conditions will have only about 36 hours in Iceland before it must sail for O.N.62. The same thing would apply to all future escort groups. This tolerance is insufficient to allow for weather delays.
3. If Londonderry is in use the same thing occurs. This very short turn round even if it can be achieved is most undesirable.
4. If alternatively one escort group is sailed independently from St. Johns to return with the first O.N. convoy after the change comes into effect, this will mean that all future escorts will spend some 7½ to 8 days at either Iceland or Londonderry at the expense of the time they should be spending at St. Johns or Halifax for repairs, training and recreation.
5. This could be remedied by forming an 8th group but this at present is out of the question.
6. Alternatively if sailing of first S.C. convoy from Halifax could be advanced to 14/1 or retarded to 20/1 and thereafter every six days the escort problem would be solved. 1837Z/24 ends.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2226Z/26, to Admty., Opanav.)

Australia and New Zealand.Australian Units off Numea, etc., Notification & Liaison.

Following from French High Commissioner (begins)

- (1) Early 18/12 2 unannounced warships eventually recognised as Australian were observed about 20 miles from Numea.
- (2) About same time a seaplane flew further north over New Caledonia. As seaplane omitted to first identify itself to Amedee Lighthouse and failed to approach on course agreed on 9/12 with Numea R.A.A.F. Commander, it was nearly attacked by ground defences before recognised as Australian.
- (3) To minimize danger to shipping and aircraft using French ports, would it be possible to advise me in advance of all movements of warships,

/merchant ...

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.*Australia and New Zealand.*
~~America and West Indies~~ -- contd.Australian
Units off
Numea, etc.,
Notification
& liaison.
(Contd.)

merchant ships, aircraft, Allied as well as enemy, in Area New Caledonia, New Hebrides and Australia, New Zealand.

(4) Am sending to Australian Commandant Gilbert O.C. Marines and Air New Caledonia and my Liaison Officer Lt. Cdr. Galsworthy to discuss with you certain questions regarding Naval Liaison etc. (Melbourne, T.H.I. 0210/26 to N.O., Wellington, Admty. for F.N.F.L. London.)

Enemy
Aircraft from
Ships.(i) ^{maiana} MAIANA reported ship 1800Z/24 which launched aircraft at 1905Z/24. (ii) ~~MAIANA~~ reported Cruiser operating a seaplane at 2355Z/24. Both reports graded B.2. (Omitted probably N.Z.N.B., 0415Z/26 to C. in C. E.F., Admty. etc.)Convoy
M.S.1.

Your 1233A/19. Following ships will be included in convoy M.S.1 from Melbourne to Singapore 1/1:- PEISANDER, PHRONTIS, ENGGANO, TJIKARANG. (A.C.N.B. 0704Z/26 to Admty.)

HOBART.Your 0918Z/25 (^{See p. 843} ~~MAIANA~~.) Concur. HOBART should proceed from Singapore to Fremantle with all despatch. Request E.T.A. My 0635Z/25 refers. (A.C.N.B. 1024Z/26 to C. in C. E.F.)LE
TRIOMPHANT.

Departure Numea for Brisbane 0230Z French Light Cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT, E.T.A. 0130Z/27. (A.C.N.B. 1434Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

BRITISH
SAILOR.

My 1104Z/23. C. in C. E.I. vesca, BRITISH SAILOR at Tjilatjap en route Darwin. (A.C.N.B. 1436Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

Timor Air
operations.

My 1941Z/25. Situation at Dilli as regards compliance of local authorities (and also Portuguese Government) is at present somewhat (?confused). Japanese aircraft (type 97 F/B) flew over Vunakanau aerodrome, Rabaul 0410Z/25. Further attacks carried out 25/12 against Kapine Tarangi by R.A.A.F. aircraft which again met air opposition. (A.C.N.B. 2031Z/26 to Admty. etc.)

War Diary.26.12.1941.
Friday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.WARSZAWA.

See Mediterranean.

Submarines Reported.Estimated approx. positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1431A/26 1433A/26).1245A/25.

Following report made verbally by T L C 144 on arrival at Oban (begins):- Sighted S/M in 057° 44' 24" N. 006° 42' 36" W. approx. at 1245A/25 whilst on passage from Stornoway escorted by H.M.T. SOUTHERN WAVE. (Ends). SOUTHERN WAVE reports search but with negative result. Investigation reveals that C/O of T L C 144 is definite in his opinion that he sighted a conning tower and had it in view for two minutes at a distance of ½ mile on a course approx. S. 60 W. magnetic. This is corroborated by Second Skipper T L C 144. (N.O.I.C. Oban, 1620A/26 to C. in C. W.A., etc.)

1430B
(Med.)

Enemy Submarine reported in 032° 10' N. 024° 32' E. at 1430B today. (Alexandria 1644B/26 to Force I., Med Fleet).

Submarines Attacked.

Following has been read (begins) KK. Have attacked oil streak with depth charges and estimate no hits.
(C. in C. W.A., 1155/26 to SEC O.S. Convoy 15).

War Diary.

27.12. 1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Visual R/C of Brest at 1639 showed that GNEISENAU was not alongside the Torpedo Boat Station. The dry docks and the remainder of the port could not be seen, on account of low visibility.

Enemy Air Operations.

Convoy F.S.684 was attacked off Saltburn late this evening. No damage was caused and one enemy aircraft was destroyed by the fire of the ships in convoy.

Mining.

The Port of Liverpool, including the swept channel seems to have been closed tonight until tomorrow morning.

North Atlantic.

ALOUETTE is sending in S.S. EL CONDADO (Spanish) to Gibraltar under armed guard.

South Atlantic.

Falklands.

R.A.S.A.D. considers that recent Japanese successes and desire to exploit them render more likely an attack on the Falklands. He proposes ASTURIAS should proceed there now and BULOLO after fuelling

/at...

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Falklands.
-Contd.

at Buenos Aires on 29-30/12. He also proposes to go to Falklands in BIRMINGHAM after a conference with the Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro on 30/12. If, as he believes, the loss of the Falkland Islands would be a disaster, he strongly urges immediate reinforcement of the S.A.D. by not less than one 8-inch cruiser and if possible a submarine, at least until the decisions of the Rio Conference are known.

Mediterranean.

Malta.

9 raiders dropped bombs on Malta at 1557 today and caused civilian casualties.

Tunisia

F.O.C.N.A. reports from a secret source on the petrol supplies in Tunisia. The Air Force is given as 100 planes which could not operate more than 4 days, and the Army estimated at 15,000 men with little mechanisation.

Libya and
Western
Desert.

N.O.I.C. Benghazi reports no positive evidence of any mines inside the harbour, but weather is severely impeding reconnaissance. He still has no power boat.

Sweeping of the northern channel into Benghazi is to begin at dawn/30, provided fighter protection is available.

LEGION was attacked at 1410 today by 4 torpedo bombers in 32° 5' N. 24° 30' E. and drove off the enemy without suffering any damage.

East Indies.

Convoy W.S. 12 X. escorted by DORSETSHIRE, arrived at Bombay today.

War Diary.

27.12. 1941.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

Malaya

Lieut.-Gen. (Acting General) Sir Henry Pownall has arrived in Singapore to take up the appointment of C.in C. Far East in succession to Air Chief Marshal Sir R. Brooke-Popham.

C. in C. E.F. emphasises the necessity of reinforcing Malaya quickly. The escorts for reinforcements already arranged are weak, but time does not permit awaiting U.S.A. co-operation. It is a race against Japanese seizing and using aerodromes in S.W. Borneo.

America and West Indies.

C.in C. A.W.I. considers it most important that British naval patrols should be allowed into Panamanian territory when one of H.M. ships is present.

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Japanese A/S
methods.

In view of the imminent departure of two T class submarines to the Far East, request all available information on Japanese A/S methods and devices and their capabilities may be communicated. Information is also requested on the possible use of R.D.F. by the Japanese for detection of surface vessels. (F.O.S. 0039A/27 to Admty.)

Corvettes
temporarily
stationed in
Iceland (C).

Following arrangements are to be made for relief.
(C. in C. W.A., 1447A/27).

Movements.

STORK.

Arrived 0001 STORK. (C. in C. Plymouth 0008/27).

O.21.

My 0731/27. Sailed CUTTY SARK with O.21. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1015A/27 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).
Arrangements for sailing to Dundee. (Capt. (S) 3. 1801A/27).
My 1624A/27 O/21 and CUTTY SARK have been ordered to proceed Dundee instead of Greenock. (C. in C. W.A. 2026A/27 to BOADICEA, COVERLEY, CONVULVULUS, IMPULSIVE, SNOWDROP, HYDRANGEA, ULSTER QUEEN, COVENTRY CITY, Escorts of B.B.17. Repeated N.Os. i/c Holyhead, Liverpool, Greenock, F.O.S. S.9. S.5, WHITE BEAR, CUTTY SARK.)

See next page

URSULA.

(1) Leave patrol after dark 27/12 and proceed to Portsmouth routed as follows (A) 048° 52' N. 005° 46' W. (B) 050° 12' N. 001° 18' W. to R/V 050° 31' N. 000° 41' W. at 0900A/30.
(2) S.B.R. arranged. (A) area 53 1200/28 to 2359/29. (B) area 41 0001/29 to 1200/30.
(3) Attention is called to QZX376A British ground magnetic mines dropped in error approx. in 049° 44' N. 002° 34' W.
(Capt. (S) 5, 1025A/27 to URSULA.)

BARCLOSE,
BARFOAM,
BARFORD.

C. in C. W.A. 2354A/10. If weather forecast is not unfavourable. Intend sailing B.D.V's. BARCLOSE, BARFOAM and BARFORD with Ferry Steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company for Horta, Fayal at 0900/28. Code Word "Saxhorn".
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1107A/27).

BREDA,
Information
for H.31.

BREDA will be in the vicinity of 180° Lizard Head 5 miles from 1600/27 until 1000/28. Lizard Head light will be exhibited 5 minutes every half hour

/during ...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.BREDA.
Information
for H. 31
(contd.)
LEWES.during the night.
(N.O.I.C. Falmouth 1216A/27 to H. 31).
Re sailing BREDA for this position.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1224/27th).
LEWES leaves Plymouth 0930A/28th for Scapa.
20 knots. (Capt. (S) 3. 2133A/27 to H. 31).S/M
Movements.Following Submarines included on passage tonight Saturday and may be met during dark hours.
STURGEON escorted by WHITE BEAR left Holy Loch 1700A/27th for Scapa. 0.21 Escorted by CUTTY SARK left Milford Haven 1015A/27th for Greenock.
(C. in C. W.A. 1624A/27 to BOADICEA, COVERLEY, CONVULVULUS, IMPULSIVE, COVENTRY CITY, HYDRANGEA, S.E.E., B.B.17 ULSTER QUEEN Repeated N.O.i/c Holyhead, Liverpool, Greenock, F.O.(S) Capt.(S) 5, Capt. (S) 9, WHITEBEAR, CUTTY SARK.*See previous page.*Operations.Operation
"Archery".Operation "Archery," appendix B. para. 14 add. Any tankers will use following identification signals if challenged. By day flags J O E international. By night flash group J.O.E (F.O.S. 0306A/27 to TUNA, Reptd. C.S.10). Scheme B. Request Sumburgh Head from as soon as possible until 0700A/27 only.
(D.C. 0455A/27 to N.O.I.C. Lerwick).
Your 0455A/27. Arranged.
(N.O.i/c Lerwick 0604A/27 to Admty).
TUNA has been ordered to adjust route to pass through 061° 45' N. 003° 15' E. in search of Hampden Aircraft reported in distress at 1230.
(F.O.S. 1754A/27 to S.O. Force P.)
TUNA is also searching position 061° 45' N. 003° 15' E. (C.S. 10, 1927A/27 to ORIBI).
Proceed Scapa (C.S. 10 2159A/27 to ORIBI).Biscay S/M
Patrol.My 1129A/24. There are now eight Submarines on patrol in Bay of Biscay off Brest. One more arrives on patrol in this area A.M. 28th, and one leaves patrol P.M. 27th. (F.O.S. 1018A/27).
(a) At 2359A/27 H. 33 proceeding to patrol in position 26 (b) 0.10 after passing through position 24 proceed to patrol in position 25 to arrive this position not earlier than 0400A 28th. (F.O.S. 1839A/27 to H. 33, 0.10.)Patrol
"White."My position at 1200N will be 066° 24' North 023° 24' West speed 14 knots SWEETBRIAR in company reference F.V.C.19 request position.
(VERONICA, 1026Z/27 to C.S.1).
Formation R. (a) VERONICA 067° 30' N. 022° 30' *W.

/(b)...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Patrol "White."
(contd.)

(b) Not applicable. (c) SWEETBRIAR 268° (?).
Patrol on course 90° Ice in 067° 51' N. 023°
40' W. running 050° and loose ice also extends 180°
for 35 miles from that position. NORFOLK going west
of minefield to investigate ice. RENOWN informed
S.O. P.A. (C.S.1 (?) 1502N/27 to VERONICA
SWEETBRIAR Repeated A.C.I.C. RENOWN C. in C. H.F.)
could be 44'.

WHITEHALL.

On completion of exercise assume that WHITEHALL
will patrol today in accordance with 48 K of
24/12. (Capt. (D) 13. 1119/27 to WHITEHALL).

Operation
"Anklet."

(a) A.C.O.S. is requested to sail STURGEON after
fuelling for Vest Fiord to arrive A.M./3/1 for
patrol as ordered by S.O. Force J.
(b) S.O. Force J is requested to sail SEALION 3/1
to R/V off Shetlands as directed by Capt. (S) 3 for
onward passage to Holy Loch. Also to sail STURGEON
for Polyarnoe on 10/1.
(c) S.B.N.O. North Russia is requested to sail
SEAWOLF so as to arrive at Vest Fiord 10/1. for
patrol as ordered by S.O. Force J.
(F.O.(S). 1238A/27).

TUNA.

1. TUNA is to leave Patrol at 1900A/27 routed
through (a) 062° 10' N. 003° W. (b) 062° N. 002° E.
(c) 061° 31' N. 000° 15' W. to R/V escort in 060°
52' N. 000° 39' W. at 1400A/28 for onward passage
to Scapa.
2. TUNA is to proceed diving by day when east of
the meridian of Greenwich thereafter on the surface
at C.O.'s discretion.
3. Name of escort will be signalled.
(Capt. (S) 3, 1343A/27 1638/27 to TUNA).
My 1343A/27.
(1) T.B.R. are in force area 101 South of 063° N.
and area 15 North of 061° N.
(2) S.B.R. arranged 30 miles either side of line
joining 062° N. 002° E. and 061° 31' N. 000° 15' W.
from 0001A/27th to 1200A/28th.
(3) T.B.R. arranged in area 22 South of 062° N.
and east of 002° W. and in area 14 west of 001° E.
from 0500A/28th to 1800A/28th.
(4) Name of escort is STELLA PEGASI.
(Capt. (S) 3. 1423A/27, 1642/27 to TUNA).

British Air Operations.Operation
"Archery."

(1) A.O.C. C.C. 2041/24. Fighter escort will be
by Blenheims until 1015 then by Beau fighters
until 1600 hours.
(2) Hampdens will co-operate as arranged.
(18 Group 0205/27 to C.S.10).

/Operation ...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Operations. - contd.Operation
"Anklet."Aircraft R/C for D.2 cancelled owing to adverse weather conditions at Case (? base).
(18 Group 0207/27 to S.O. Force J.)Enemy Air Operations.Convoy F.3684.
attacked.One enemy aircraft destroyed by gunfire from ships in convoy. One bomb dropped no damage.
(LOWESTOFT 2215A/27).
Convoy estimated off Hartlepool at this time.
(C. in C. Rosyth 2357/27).
Further to my 2215A 27th and your 2234 27th. Aircraft was shot down 054° (?Saltburn) 6½ miles. One yellow float and one rubber cushion marked G U R T 2 seen but not recovered by WOOLSTON who was investigating. Any survivors from aircraft considered impossible.
(LOWESTOFT 2354A/27 to C. in C. Rosyth.)Mining.NL.52.My 1321A/26. Postponed owing to weather.
(V.A. Dover 0146A/27).Operation
Q.O.Operation Q O cancelled today owing to weather.
(C. in C. Nore 0412A/27 to M/S 9.)Fast
Minelayers.R.A. (M) 1033/26 (N.T. in W.D.) concur operating fast minelayers from Milford Haven.
(C. in C. Plymouth 1316/27 to Admty.)Clyde

SHIANT reports having sunk a mine in 267° Kingston 2.6 miles at 1100/27. (WESTERN ISLES 1738A/27 to F.O.i/c Greenock).

Bristol
Channel.Exploded Red at 1416 in 350° 8 cables from Faltholm Light. Probable date of laying 1/12/41.
(Capt. M/S Bristol Channel 1739A/27).Thames
Estuary.Apparent mine explosion observed at 1303 in approx. position S.E. Shipwash Buoy. No ships in vicinity.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1912A/27).Humber.Following acoustic mine exploded 27/12.
(F.O. Humber 2028A/27).Liverpool.Your 1930A/27th Port including Swept Channel closed until 1000A 28th. Acknowledged.
(N.O.I.C. Liverpool 2129A/27 to VETCH).

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.GNEISENAU

My 2037A/23. Visual R/C of Brest at 1639/27. GNEISENAU definitely not alongside Torpedo Boat Station. Dry docks and remainder of port not seen due to bad visibility. No photographs taken.
(D.D.I.C. 1856 A/27).

Casualties & Defects.

EMPIRE
LOUGH
(Leaking
26/12).

Expect to arrive number 5 buoy 0145/27 EMPIRE LOUGH in company.
(WIDGEON 0035A/27 to C.in C. Nore).
Departure Tug KROOMAN to assist EMPIRE LOUGH.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0128A/27).
My 0128A/27. Tug KROOMAN and EMPIRE LOUGH now anchored in Yarmouth Roads.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0729A/27).

S.S. EMPIRE
MARLOWE

Arrived in tow of FREEBOOTER escorted by SNOWDROP. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0135A/28).

NORTHERN
GEM.

My 1430A/26 and Capt. D. Londonderry's 1756A/26*
NORTHERN GEM unable to sail owing to engine defects. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 2035A/27).
*Re Escorts for U.R.4.

Shipping & Convoys.

H.X.165.
KASTELHOLM
INDUS.

All ships present at R/V but KASTELHOLM and INDUS now missing. (BOADICEA 0232A/27).

H.X.166

Proceed to Iceland (C) to fuel. Ships will be required to meet H.X.166 about 31/12.
(C.in C. W.A. 1101A/27 to HONEYSUCKLE, GARDENIA, GENTIAN).

Navigation
lights.

A.M "HN". Except in coastal waters, merchant ships are not to burn navigation lights in areas, 4A, 4B, 8 and 10. In coastal waters in these areas dimmed navigation lights may be shown.
C.A.M.S.I. 463 is amended accordingly.
(D.T.D. 1510Z/27 to G.B.M.S. in all areas except A.I.G.12).

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys. - contd.Q P 4.

My 2230C/26th. Molotovsk ships in company of STALIN 60 miles N.W. from Molotovsk at 1420C/27th. They should reach clear water between Panoi and Terski Orlov during daylight 29th but further progress will be reported, COCLE has now been able to join but icebreaker LENIN has broken 2 more Dvina ships over bar. Possible therefore other Dvina ships will arrive clear water in a few days time when local escort will be required to take them from Terski to ice free anchorage in Kolorlop Inlet as Stepanovsay Ioranka at present has no room. I fully realise disadvantage but consider release of ships from ice of paramount importance. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1801C/27 to Admty. S.B.N.O. Murmansk, EDINBURGH).

My 1801C 27th. All Dvina portion are now broken out over bar. Molotovsk portion are making very bad headway speed 1 cable to 1 knot. If you can delay R/V at Panoi Terski Orlov there is an excellent chance of bringing out all 12 ships together. I will keep you fully informed. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 2235C/27 to Admty. S.B.N.O. Murmansk, EDINBURGH).

O.G. Convoys.

O.G. Convoys. W.A.C.I's Part 110.

In view of 573AZ the estimated time of crossing 11° 00' W. will not be signalled in future.

(C. in C. W.A. 1852A/27 to Capts. D. Liverpool, Londonderry, Greenock, Repeated Admty. F.O.C.N.A. N.C.S.O. Mersey for Cdre.)

Re plot of Convoy positions more important to maintain than W/T silence.

P Q 7.

Your 1511N/26. Request names of 2 ships sailed may be signalled. It is important that detailed sailing telegrams of P.Q. convoys should reach Admty. with least possible delay and repeated to Admiral Miles. (D.T.D. 1906A/27 to A.C.I.(C).)

S L 94.

Warmest congratulations on bringing safely to the U.K. all the ships of your convoy.

(C. in C. W.A. 1912A/27 to Cdre. Crabbe).

British
signal
letters
allotted to
Allied Ships.

Admty. 942A/20. British signal letters have been allocated to Norwegian, Polish, Greek and Belgian merchant vessels, and published in "S" Orders. British signal letters are also being allocated to Free French merchant vessels. 2. N.C.S.O's are to be instructed that the recognition procedure is to be explained to Masters of allied merchant ships and their War W/T call signs taken from S.P.02182 series are to be given to them as soon as their signal letters have been received. 3. Extension of recognition procedure in this way must increase risk of enemy raiders (a) becoming aware of details

/of ...

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

British
signal
letters
allotted to
Allied Ships.
(contd.)

of the procedure, (b) obtaining secret call sign of a ship sunk and then simulating recognition procedure with that ship's letters. Merchants ship recognition procedure must therefore be treated as only one of the factors in determining whether ships sighted are friendly or hostile. (D.S.D. 2048A/27 to A Mge. Home & Abroad).

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET MESSAGE 2129R/27 December IN

From B.A.D. Washington.

Date 28/12/41
Recd. 0952

NAVAL CYPHER X BY CABLE.

Addressed Admiralty. Repeated N.S.H.Q.

878. Present position of control of merchant shipping is

(A) Discussions forecast in N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 2238/26/11 can begin when U.K. and Canadian representatives have considered draft proposals substituted for those in serial 011512-108 (011512-108)(reported in B.A.D.1631/26/11) which is cancelled.

They are long and include definitions and broad divisions of responsibility without reference to practical measures and reporting system. Assumption of U.S. control is to be by stages over about six months.

(B) British ships continue to be routed by British N.C.S.O.'s and C.S.A.'s in American Continent on instructions issued by Admiralty, C. in America & West Indies and N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.

These instructions are subject to changes desired or recommended by C.N.O. see my 1307/9.

(C) U.S. Authorities have assumed control of U.S. flag vessels and issued a number of publications. Instructions are issued by Navy Dept. to Commandants of districts for routeing and general control. Reliance is at present placed on N.S.H.Q. Ottawa for collating movements of U.S. vessels as well as British.

2. At present C.N.O.'s recommendations for change of instructions to N.C.S.O.'s and C.S.A.'s derive from U.S.

Officers who have little special experience and without full consideration of all factors. Study of possible future conditions and measures to meet them is lacking.

3. If available request an officer of Trade Division

preferably of Captain's rank may be attached to British

MOST SECRET

- 2 -

Naval Staff in Washington for two or three months for following duties -

- (A) To conduct discussions para. 1(A) in conjunction with representative of C.I.S. Ottawa.
- (B) To give benefit of experience to U.S. Authorities in arriving at recommendations for changes to British routing instructions para. 1(B), and to assist Navy Dept. as required in creating full organisation 1(C).
4. Commander Leggatt was released at Admiralty request before U.S. became involved, vide A.M. 1644/27/10. Now we are far more occupied. Although permanent attachment of an officer with Trade Division experience should not be necessary, I consider the visit requested in para. 3 above is very important.
5. If Captain Bittleston is available he would be very suitable.

2129R/27

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
4th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S.(H)
A.C.N.S.(F)
A.C.N.S.(T)
Sec.
Nav. Sec. for action
P.A.S.(S)
N.A. 1st S.L.
D.O.D.(H)
D.D.O.D.(H)
D.O.D.(F)
D.D.O.D.(F)
D.C.(2)
D.A./S.W.
D.D.I.C.
D.F.I.(4)
D.T.D.(2)
D.T.D.(M)
D.T.D.(C)

D. of S.T.
I.P.(2)
J.D.
D. of P.(2)
D.C.(2)
Hd. of M.
E.P.S.
D.T.S.D.
Admiral Bellairs.
Admiral Bailey.
N.I.D.10

MOST SECRET

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.French Shipping.

Passing Gibraltar 25/12. (D.O.R., 27/12).

Tunisia, Intelligence.

My 1016/26. Same source reports 5117 troops from French Syria arrived up to 22/12 destination Algeria and Morocco. Supplies petrol in Tunisia estimate 1/12, (corrupt group) as follows:-
 In tons, civilian, zero; Military, 2,000; aviation, civilian, 200; military, 1,000; gas oil 1,000; fuel oil, 20; alcohol 1,000. Air Force total 100 planes which could not operate more than 4 days. Strength of Army estimated at 15,000 with little mechanisation. (F.O.C.N.A., 0018A/27 to C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta)

ACTIVE.

Parted company from Convoy at 1800N/26 in 043° 20' N., 023° 03' W. Convoy course and speed 182° 13.2 knots. My E.T.A. 1300A/29. (ACTIVE, 0820N/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Calls at Gibraltar, censorship.

My 0920/18 para. 2. Instructions to search for correspondence at Gibraltar applies only to outward voyage in view of instructions to S.N.Os. of ships in last sentence of para 2.
 2. On homeward journey therefore ships should only stop off Gibraltar to disembark Naval and Military parties. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0924A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

O.24

My 1038A/22. Cancel sailing of Netherlands S/M O.24. C. in C. Med., and V.A. Malta pass to Capt. (S) 1 and Capt. (S) 10. (F.O.C.N.A., 1008A/27 to C. in C. Med).

Convoy.

Your 1313/22. 7 or 8 ships which will be sailed as a separate convoy to meet S.L.97. (F.O.C.N.A., 1014A/27 to Admty).

A/C attack on Enemy Tanker.

Your 1516A/26. Tanker was the one mentioned in a.m. 1224A/23. Vessel was attacked and damaged at 1047A/23 in 45° 16' N., 12° 17' W., and shadowed intermittently until she entered territorial waters in vicinity of Ortugueira. At 1443A/24 ship was attacked and hit amidships by aerial torpedo in 43° 44' N., 7° 52' W. At 1540 a bombing attack was made, near misses being obtained. When last seen ship appeared to be aground with after well deck partly submerged amidst a mass of oil. Crew were abandoning ship Tanker had air escort. (D.O.D.(H), 1114A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. - Contd.FARADAY.

Intend to sail FARADAY about 10 days hence subject to suitable conditions and after cranes have been secured by steel straps to hull. (F.O.C.N.A. 1350A/27 to Admty).

SALVONIA.

My 1611/11. Decision over SALVONIA still held up in Portuguese Foreign Office. Favourable reply unlikely. (N.A., Lisbon, 1629/27 to Admty).

French Shipping.

LIEUT. DE LA TOUR full, ST. MAXIME laden, FOIJ (not listed) and BONIFACIO both full deck cargo barrels, Trawler AUGUST DENISE, motor Trawler TATIANA, escorted by armed trawler ESTAFETTE. Eastbound. (V.A.C.N.A., 1645A/27 to Admiralty., C. in C. Med).

French Ships Melilla.

H.M. Trawler reports three French Merchantmen entered Melilla at 2300/26. They were escorted by armed trawler and came from westward. Presumed this convoy was the one mentioned in my 2345/25. All ships were reported light. (S.O.(I) Gib., 1757A/27 to Admty).

EL CONDADO (Spanish).

Have sent in EL CONDADO under armed guard. E.T.A. 1700A/28. Propose escort until 0100/28 then return to Gibraltar by coastal route. (ALOUETTE, 2125A/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

South Atlantic.DEVONSHIRE.

Departure 26/12 DEVONSHIRE for patrol H.33. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 0137Z/27 to Admty R.A.S.A.D.)

W.S.12 Z.B.

My 1552/26. Fuel Supplied and Bunkers on sailing. (S.S.T.O. Durban, 0752X/27.

D.M.1.

Convoy D.M.1 sailed 24/12 for Port T. (1) Ships AORANGI, NARKUNDA, SUSSEX, ABBEKERK. Personnel on board and Destinations. E.T.A. Port T 1100Z/4/1. (S.S.T.O. Durban, 0930Z/27 to S.S.T.O. Singapore)

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

INDUSTRIA.

Overdue shipping. British Ship INDUSTRIA due Capetown 24/12 from Freetown not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 1006B/27 to Admty, C. in C. S.A.)

PERSEE.

My 2141/13/12. French Ship PERSEE ex PIERRE L.D. was still at Saigon on 10/12. (C. in C. S.A., 1109Z/27 to S.A. Stn).

→ Lourenco Marques.

Have you replied to B.A.D. Washington's 1615/20? (C. in C. S.A., 1124Z/27 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown)

OSKAWA.

Your 1714A/26. OSKAWA arrived Sarate 23/12. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 1301Z/27 to Admty).

Vesca system at ports abroad.

Reply to A.M.1710A/25/12. (C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/27 to Admty).

→ Lourenco Marques.

B.A.Ds. 1615/20. There is no objection to California Texas Oil Company making the necessary bunkering arrangements at Lourenco Marques. Request your urgent remarks on para II (a) and (b) (A.C.N.S. (T), 1326A/27 to C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.I.)

Appreciation Defence of Falklands.

Admty.0107A/26(N.T. in W.D.) Appreciation of present situation. My object is defence of trade and although there are no known raiders in South Atlantic I consider that with Japan in the war they are likely to appear again soon and certainly after Rio de Janeiro conference. I therefore do not consider that my ships should remain long off trade routes.

2. While agreeing that threatened attack on Falkland Is. is probably intended to influence the Rio conference, recent Japanese successes and desire to exploit them may indicate greater possibilities of such attack than was suggested in Admty. 2006A/7/10. As the attack has been announced, if attempted it is likely to be made with sufficient naval strength to deal with such British naval Forces as are known to be available and therefore I feel I cannot count on deterrent effect of ships of S.A.D. showing themselves off Patagonia and Terra del Fuego.

While deprecating locking up of naval forces in defence of their base, if there is any real threat to Falkland Is. and if, as believe, their loss would be a disaster, sufficient forces should be made available to counter such threat while it lasts. I therefore strongly urge immediate reinforcement of S.A.D. by not less than 1 (one)

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic contd.Appreciation
Defence of
Falklands,
contd.

8 inch cruiser and if possible, submarine, at least until decisions of Rio conference are known.

4. Reinforcements, the deterrent effect of showing ships of S.A.D. S.A. Station must be tried. Under all circumstances I consider it inadvisable to maintain a small force of this nature for long at Falkland Is, and prefer that ships should return to trade route where they can be more usefully employed as soon as their presence has been sufficiently advertised.

5. Propose ASTURIAS should proceed Falkland Is. now and BULOLO after fuelling at Buenos Aires on 29/30/12.

Unless you consider BIRMINGHAM should go there now I propose to proceed Falkland Is. in BIRMINGHAM after my conference with Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro on 30/12.

(R.A.S.A.D. 1731Z/27 to C. in C. S.A.)

Mediterranean.KETTY

Greek schooner, arrived Tobruk 19/12 with enemy cargo and was taken in prize.
(D.O.R. 27/12.)

Operation
M.F.1

Your 1124B/26. Expect position at 1700B/27
33.56 N. 19.46 E.
(V.A. Malta 0745B/27 to 7 D.F., C. in C. Med.
201 Group.)

Hunting submarine off Tobruk.

(KIPLING 0909/27 to C. in C. Med.)

Following received (begins) Advance H.Q. 201 group repeated 234 Wing, CARLISLE, from 201 Naval Co-operation Group, A.114 27/12. Estimated P. C. and S. at 0800 now 032° 41' N. 025° 50' E. 13 knots, same course. T.O.O. 0820/27 (Ends)

(R.A. Alexandria 0910B/27 to CARLISLE.)

My 1402B/24 (N.T. in W.D.) Force B. is to R/V with M.E.8 in 033° 30' N. 023° 00' E. at 0700B/28.

Force D. is to return Malta, R/Ving with Force B at discretion of R.A.7th C.S.

(C. in C. Med. 1055B/27 to R.A.7th C.S., Capt.(D) 7th D.F., V.A. Malta, R.A. Alexandria, S.O. Force I., Capt. (S) 1st S.F., KIPLING, 201 Naval Co-operation Group, Air H.Q. W.D.)

/Following ...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. contd.Operation
M.F.1
contd.

Following received (begins) 201 Advance H.Q. rep. C. in C. Med, CARLISLE, from 201 Group A.120 27/12 R/V of Force B now 033° 30' N. 023° 00' E. at 0700, D.3. Request you make provision fighter cover today. Request A S V Swordfish be given forces estimated movements. T.O.O. 1100/27. (R.A. Alexandria 1205B/27 to CARLISLE.)

Following from Group 201 begins. Advance H.Q. 201 GREBE repeated 55 Sqn., C. in C. Med., R.A. Alexandria, S.O. Force I F.O.7th C.S. from 201 Naval Co-operation Group. A.135 27/12 Swordfish from Tobruk be in 032° 40' N. 025° 38' E. at 1730/28. Sweep 032° 20' N. 027° 20' E. land at landing ground 17. Swordfish from Dekhalia proceed during daylight to landing ground 17. Be in 032° 20' N. 027° 12' E. at 2330/28. Sweep 032° 00' N. 029° 00' E., land at Burg el Arab. T.O.O.1840/27.

(Group 201 1940B/27 to Med. Fleet.)
A.133/27. Following air co-operation 28th. Repetition my dusk search 27th in A.M./28. Fighter cover as from dawn if possible till dark. Inner A/S patrol from dawn till 1130 by Albacore to be relieved by Sunderland if possible. A.S.V sweep at night by Swordfish over convoy track. T.O.O. 1805/27.
(201 Group 1945B/27 to Med. Fleet.)

→ TRUANT
TRUSTY
for Far East.

Your 1131B/25. A proportion of spare crew and repair parties should be detached for these vessels. Crews of 2 submarines which are being delivered to Turkey in January and February will return to Alexandria after delivery of S/Ms and augment your spare crews. Depot ship allowance of spares referred to and special stores should also be transferred with S/Ms.
(F.O.S., 1034A/27 to Capt. S.I.)

APHIS.

Your 0947B/27 (N.T.in W.R.) Sailing APHIS 1130/27 through 032° 40' N. 023° 20' E. thence through 032° 20' N. 024° 00' E. E.T.A. Tobruk 2030/27. (N.O.I.C. Derna, 1047B/27 to S.O. Force I.)

*See also next page*C.M.24.

Arrived Suez Dec. 26th 27th.
(P.S.T.O. Egypt 1100B/27 to D. of S.T.)

→ Movements.

Arrival 26/12 HYACINTH, departure 26/12 TRUSTY, NAPIER, NIZAM, MAORI, CARLISLE, TRIUMPH, ISAAC SWEERS. Arrival 27/12 TORBAY, ISAAC SWEERS. (S.O.I. Alexandria 1154B/27 to Admty. etc.)

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.PHENIX
VILJA.

Signal Officer for I.P.C. From Haifa (Begins)
PHENIX while in process of sailing on 24/12
was damaged by an explosion and was burned out and
sank. VILJA came into contact with PHENIX and
took fire but cargo intact. VILJA remains in
port. (Ends)
(N.O.I.C. Palestine, 1251C/27.)

APHIS
A/C attack.

Following has been read. Am being attacked by
enemy aircraft 196 33° N., 23° E., 16.
(APHIS, 1325/27 to *WITHERINGTON.) *See previous page.*

** see below.*LEGION
A/C attacks.

Following has been read. Am being attacked by
enemy aircraft.
(LEGION, 1410/27.)
My 1410, position 32° 05' N. 24° 30' E.
4 torpedo bombers.
(LEGION 1412/27.)
Enemy driven off. No damage.
(LEGION, 1422/27.)
Am being attacked by enemy aircraft 32° 5' N.
24° 30' E.
(LEGION 1440/27 to *WITHERINGTON.)
4 Torpedo bombers approaching your position.
(KIPLING 1440/27 to PEONY.)
My 1440, 4 torpedo bombers steering 0900.
(LEGION 1446/27 to Alex. Port Wave.)
4 Torpedo bombers 180° 7 miles position 032° 12'
024° 29'.
(LEGION 1510/27.) * WITHERINGTON at Hualfina!
(Pink list)

Enemy Units.

Aircraft R/C shows 4 fast merchant ships with 3
escorts leaving Gulf of Athens southbound at 1530B/
27 probably for Suda Bay.
(Capt. S.1, 1551B/27 to OSIRIS.)

Mines.
Pylos Is.

TORBAY confirmed presence of mines from close south
of Pylos Islands to lat. 036° 50'. Point of
arrival and departure of all shipping including
destroyers appears to be 036° 50' 021° 40', ships
hugging coast between this point and harbour
entrance.

(Capt. S.1, 1557B/27 to THUNDERBOLT.)

/ISAAC SWEERS ...

War Diary.27.12. 1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.ISAAC SWEERS
defects.

Admiralty is informed by Netherlands authorities that ISAAC SWEERS has following defects. 2. Ship is required in Far East and must be fit for service before proceeding. 3. As modifications will take approx. 5 months in U.K. and longer elsewhere, request your remarks as to possibility of elimination of boiler trouble by local labour, or by using a mixture of fuel. 4. If this is possible could longitudinalinals be repaired at Alexandria? 5. Hand control of Bofors must be accepted if ship does not return to U.K.
(D.O.D.(F) 1611A/27 to C. in C. Med.)

Malta Air
Report.

26th 1401 hrs. 45 fighters escorting R/C aircraft crossed coast great height. Hurricanes up, 1 destroyed, pilot safe.

Night 26/27. 4 alerts 1615 to 0039 hours for approx. 14 enemy aircraft, bombs land, slight civilian damage, no interceptions. 2 Blenheims attacked 2 1500 ton M/Vs Zuara, 1730 hours. Direct hit 1500 tons M/V which blew up terrific explosion, possible damage to Mole. 1 Albacore as diversion for 3 others which laid 3 mines outside harbour dropped bombs 1950 hours on Stores Zuara result unobserved. Wellingtons successful attack shipping Tripoli Harbour 1718 to 2020 hours, scoring 2 hits 1 near miss on shipping. Large fire Spanish Fort area.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1655/27.)

Part 2 C.S.R. Malta 27/12/41.

27th. 5 Alerts. 0622 and 0732 hours, 2 Fighters Sweeps each 12 Aircraft. 0909 hours 20 Me.109s escorting 3 JU.88s, bombs land, no damage. Hurricanes intercepted, 1 JU.88 destroyed, 1 Me probable. 1250 hours 20 Fighters crossed Coast and withdrew. 1417 hours 9 Aircraft approached did not cross coast.

(H.Q. Malta, 1656/27.)

British
Prisoners,
Athens.

Reported there are 18 to 20 prisoners of War ex British Submarines in Averoff Prison, Athens. Date of capture and name of Submarine unknown. Has Admiralty any confirmation?
(C. in C. Med., 1753B/27 to Admty.)

/Massawa ...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Massawa.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.220. Ref. Telegram No.151 Susan from Prime Minister to General Auchinleck, para.2 (b). Please state if Massawa is best port for loading Hurricanes and handling carrier.
(W.O. 1915/27 to C. in C. M.E., C. in C. Med.)

Benghazi,
port
situation.

Aircraft R/C at 1100. 2 more mines exploded. No positive evidence of any mines inside harbour. Weather severely impeding R/C. First boat to be used filled and abandoned. Still no power boat. Some part of super-imposed wreck disappeared. Possibilities exist of opening up of passage in port. Native labour reluctant to come forward resulting from threats by enemy.
(N.O.I.C. Benghazi 1925B/27 to S.O. Force I.(R)
N.L.O. 8th Army C. in C. Med., A.S. Alexandria.)

Benghazi
Minesweeping.

My 1836/24 and 1205/21. Sweeping of northern channel into Benghazi should commence at dawn 30th. R.A. Alexandria is requested to sail SIKH, HERO, HOTSPUR as escort to PRINCE BAUDOUIN to arrive Tobruk 0500/29. These Destroyers are then to act under orders of S.O. Force I to provide cover for the M/S Flotillas. Destroyers are to keep outside 100 fathom lines. On arrival of M/S Flotillas at Benghazi Destroyers return to Alexandria. M/S Flotillas should sail from Tobruk covered by GRIFFIN and HASTY until SIKH, HERO and HOTSPUR overtake. 201 Group are requested to give this operation special priority for Fighter Protection when west of Tobruk. If Fighter Protection off Benghazi on 30th is not available operation will be postponed.
(C. in C. Med., 1935B/27.)

Tobruk
Movements.

27/12 arrivals AVONDALE, PEONY, KIPLING, APHIS, B.D.V. BURGONET, ALISA, departures AVONDALE, PEONY, KIPLING, SVANA, THORGRIM, A.13, A.17, VOLO, GIBEL KEBIR.
(B.S.N.O. Tobruk 2359B/27 to Admty.)

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

WAIRUNA.

Your 1905/24. Ship arrived Colombo 20 left 24 for Calcutta, due 30 ref. Fairmiss 280 and route signal 785.
(S.O.I. Colombo 0142Z/27 to Admty.).

W.S. 12 X.

Arrivals DORSETSHIRE with W.S. 12 X.
(S.O.I. Bombay 1152Z/27 to Admty. etc.).

R.N. Air
Section for
Mombasa.

Admty. 1136/8/11 and your 1544/25/11. Approved to transfer R.N. Air Section from Aden to Mombasa. Arrangements will be made to send out personnel to re-establish R.N. Air Section at Aden and to build up R.N. Air Section at Mombasa to the scale approved in Admty. 1136/8/11 plus 2 to 3 major inspections per month.
(Head of Air Branch 1434A/27 to C.in C. E.I.).

Rangoon
Air Raid.

Sitrep 2.
Air raid on Rangoon on 25/12 by large number bombers with fighter escort. 17 certain, 4 possible destroyed, with prospect more being found later. No military, little civilian damage of importance caused. No military activities.
(C.in C. India 1630/27 to W.O.).
Sitrep 3. Verified Japanese air losses Rangoon 25/12 now ten bombers 10 fighters. Air alert 26/12 but no raid in morning.
(C.in C. India 1615/27 to W.O.).

China.

Malaya.

Your 0055Z/17. Following is present position and my appreciation.
2. In their effort to seize Singapore Japanese are engaged in a fight for strategic aerodromes hitherto confined Malaya but now extending to Borneo.
3. To combat this we must reinforce Malaya with troops to hold ground and with air to strike at enemy aerodromes. Philippine Islands are already a wasting asset and we must act quickly to prevent Malaya becoming one also.
4. Present arrangements for passage of reinforcements are:
A. Convoy B.M.9 A escorted through Sunda Straits to Singapore by HOBART, DRAGON, DURBAN, and 3 /destroyers...

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Malaya
-Contd.

destroyers with all available air cover and every assistance from Dutch. E.T.A. Singapore 3/1.

B. Convoy B.M.9 B escort DANAE, Netherlands Cruiser JAVA 3 destroyers similar air and possibly HOBART in addition. E.T.A. 7/1.

C. Convoy D.M. one escort as for A if HOBART is available. E.T.A. about 12/1.

D.. Future convoys from Indian ocean or Australia with similar escorts. E.T.A. unknown.

5. Escort of all foregoing is weak and could have been strengthened if Americans had co-operated. Time apparently does not permit awaiting American co-operation. It is a race against Japanese seizing and using aerodromes in S.W. Borneo.

6. Reference para. 4 (C) and (D). By the time these convoys approach Sunda it may be necessary to consider diverting them to Java. This particularly applies to aircraft in D.M. one.

7. I consider the material and psychological effect of the arrival of these immediate reinforcements in Malaya justifies the risks run. (C.in C. E.F. 0336Z/27 to Admty. Rep. C.in C. F.E. C.in C. E.I. B.A.D. Washington. A.C.N.B.).

HOBART

Your 1024Z/26. Grateful for prompt response. If HOBART leaves Singapore (?cover) of B.M.9A E.T.A Fremantle 8/1. If she leaves after arrival of D.M.1 she could still meet KANIMBLA convoy well South of Sunda. My 0336Z/27 to Admiralty will explain position here. (C.in C. E.F. 0433Z/27, Navy Office Melbourne, (R) Admty.).

Zigzagging.

Your 1858/24 (In what areas are independently routed merchant ships required to zig zag). In all areas when in open water during daylight and moonlight hours. (Cdre, Malaya 0704Z/27 to Admty.).

America and West Indies.H.X.167.

Task Unit 4.1.5 designated escort, MAYO (S.O.) SIMPSON, BABBITT, SCHENCK, LEARY. (Opnav 0740/27 to Admty.).

/ ALCANTARA...

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Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. -Contd.

ALCANTARA.

N.S.H.Q. 1559/23 and your 1609/23.
Is it approved for ship to proceed via Halifax?
(B.A.R.M. 1016R/27 to Admty.).

Dispositions.

Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied ships
at 1800 G.M.T./27.

Ship.	Positions	Course	Speed.
MARON	38°N 43°W	Patrol	Blank.
ALBATROSS	10°N 38°W	273°	14.
CANTON } CILICIA }	05°N 35°W	Patrol	Blank.
DEVONSHIRE	07°N 21°W	261°	15.
ASTURIAS	18°S 35°W	Patrol	Blank.
Convoy C.T.8 } BERGENSFJORD } MORETON BAY } ROCKINGHAM } BEVERLEY. }	50°N 36°W	237°	14.
ADELAIDE	29°S 155°E	South	14 knots.

(D.O.D.(F) 1022Z/27 to Opnav, (R) Spenavo).
Your 1041/25. No objection to forces being
operated as desired by C.N.O.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1239A/27 to B.A.D.).
Add to my 1022Z/27 MARSDALE 43°N. 57°W. 112°
12 knots. (D.O.D.(F) 1528Z/27 to Opnav (R)
Spenavo).

Panama
British
patrols.

Minister Panama's telegram No. 375 to F.O.
repeated to Washington No. 178. Consider
it most important that British Naval Patrols
should be allowed into Panamanian territory
when one of H.M.Ship's is present.
(C.in C. A.W,I. 1124Q/27 to Admty. (R) B.A.D.).

Washington
report.

Washops 17.
(1) Philippine Islands 25/12. U.S. forces
have occupied fresh delaying positions in
Lingayen Sector B/17's have been moved to
bases in Australia and Netherlands E.I. as
heavy bombing operations are no longer possible
from Luzon. R/C is being provided by Pursuit-
planes.
(2) N.E.I. A report from U.S. Military
observer at Bandoeng dated 25/12 states:-
(1) On 23/12 2 Japanese convoys each approx.
3 transports with 2 cruisers or destroyers
were sighted. Landing is expected at Menado
(Celebes) and Ternate (N.W. New Guinea).(2) N.E.I.
aircraft formerly based Borneo are now operating
in Sumatra.
(3) U.S. Pacific Coast S.S. ABSAROKA was hit
by a torpedo p.m./24 in approx. 034° N. 118° W.
though badly damaged she has reached San Pedro
under tow. (J.S.M. Washington 1409R/27 to
Admty. etc.).

/ROLFSBORG....

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.-Contd.ROLFSBORG.Your 1608/30 ROLFSBORG has not arrived.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1416Z/27 to Admty.).VINCENT
FIRETHORN

My 1123R/13. U.S. VINCENT due Balboa 23/12 not arrived. Panamanian FIRETHORN also 3 days overdue. (S.O.I. Jamaica 1551R/27 to Admty.). FIRETHORN arrived, see 0902R/28 VINCENT, 6210 tons, which left Sydney N.S. on 21/11, made a raider distress signal on 12/12 in 22.41 S. 118.19 W. (D.S. 846).

ROXBOROUGH

Has sailed from Iceland E.T.A. St. Johns 31/12. E.T.A. Charleston 2000 Zone 5 6/1. (F.O.N.F. 1636Z/27 to B.A.R.M.). Weather report. My position at 1700 G.M.T. 61.22 N. 31.34 W. (ROXBOROUGH 1700Z/27).

AUSONIA
CIRCASSIA.

Request Admty. intentions re sending AUSONIA to A.W.I. Station under altered circumstances. Unless required elsewhere I suggest that AUSONIA should relieve CIRCASSIA in order that latter may proceed to U.K. to give leave and refit. Last leave and refit in U.K. Feb.1941. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1702Q/27 to Admty.).

TURECAMO
BOYS.Your 1519Z/6. Have you any further news of American Tug TURECAMO BOYS?
(D.T.D. 1704A/27 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).BATTLEFORD.

Proceeding St. Johns N.F. with damaged dome. (BATTLEFORD 1710Z/27 to C.C.N.F. (R) C.O.A.C. ST. LAURENT.). P.C. and S 052° 10' N. 040° 00' W. 240° 8 visibility; cable lost contact with convoy. (BATTLEFORD 2330Z/27 to ST. LAURENT).

ROODE ZEE
towing
operation.

My 2308A/15 and your 0932Q/23. It is not now intended to proceed with this project. (A.C.N.S.(T) 2047A/27 to C.in C. A.W.I.) Refers to towage by ROODE ZEE only see 1021A/1/1.

Shipping
control.

Present position. Suggestion re staff. (B.A.D. 2129R/27) See Lion Copy. Reply. Admty. 1411A/29.

ALYSSE

Has orders to proceed with S.C.62 to prudent limit of endurance and thence direct to Clyde to carry out crew adjustment and to give leave. Request she may be sailed to return to N.E.F. with O.N.S. about 14 days. (C.C.N.F. 2135Z/27 to C.in C. W.A.).

/Air....

War Diary.27.12.1941.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. -Contd.Air
Patrol.

Cancel my 1600/19. Six U.S. planes Task Unit 3.3.1 stationed Natal now patrolling area between Natal and Sao Pauls Rock. (Opnav 2203X/27 to Admty.).

Australia and New Zealand.TEVIOTBANK

Your 1034Z/26 TEVIOTBANK cannot be used on Australia Station. (A.C.N.B. 0949Z/27 to C.in C. E.F.).

Zigzagging.

Your 1858A/24. Zigzag area Australia Station.
(a) Within 200 miles of east and south coast from Cape York Queensland to Kangaroo Island South Australia.
(b) Within 200 miles of N.W. coast from Port Darwin to 020° south (c) Arafura Sea. (A.C.N.B. 1151Z/27 to Admty.).

M/S and
A/S vessels.

Outbreak of war with Japan finds New Zealand Naval Forces with only 10 minesweepers in commission, of which 2 are fitted with ?asdic and 4 more will be fitted shortly. In addition there are 5 LL sweepers nearing completion which is held up until cables patterns 6181A (Demand 757) arrive from U.K.
(2) All recent appreciations emphasise probability of minelaying and sporadic S/M activity. Consequently additional vessels are urgently required particularly in view of increasing amount of shipping passing through New Zealand.
(3) Deficiencies in local defence vessels are
(1) Port M/S vessels, 13.
(2) Port A/S vessels, 15 vessels and 12 M.M/LS.
(3) Ocean A/S escorts for convoys 7. These numbers make no allowances for casualties.
(4) In addition 2 M/S A/S vessels and 2 LL sweepers are required for Fiji.
(5) To meet these deficiencies 7 vessels from U.K. are expected by March 1942. Projected building in New Zealand consists of 9 port M/S A/S vessels of the Castle Trawler type due for completion in about 12 months time and 12 Fairmile motor launches which may be completed in 1942 if prefabricated parts are received from U.K.
(6) The 7 vessels referred to in para. 5 must be used as ocean escorts until such time as

/corvettes....

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

M/S and A/S
Vessels.
-Contd.

corvettes may become available at the expense of the defence of the ports.
(7) This situation was raised previously in my 1134M/29/9.
(N.Z.N.B. 1501M/27 to Admty.).

Shipping
routes.

Q.F.A.72. Cancel Q.F.A. 28. All ships bound for Ports in Spencer and St. Vincent Gulfs are to be routed via Backstairs passage. Small Coastal vessels may be exempted from this restriction at discretion of D.N.O. Adelaide (S.A.). Ships are to pass through Backstairs passage only during daylight. Attention is called to W.F.50.
(A.C.N.B. 1654Z/27 to all concerned with Q.F.A. messages).

War Diary.

27.12.1941.
Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Off Tobruk.

KIPLING, 0909/27.
See Mediterranean.

Estimated approx. positions of U-Boats.
(D.D.I.C., 1251A/27, 1253A/27.)

Submarines Attacked.

By HOTSPUR,
HASTY.
(U.79)

Congratulations on the destruction of a German
U-Boat on 23/12/1941.
(A.C.N.S.(T), 1759A/27 to HOTSPUR, HASTY.)

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

C.S.10 in KENYA, with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, and PRINCE LEOPOLD (Force "P") arrived at Scapa at 1549 today having successfully completed yesterday Operation "Archery". C.S.10 reports that an enemy Battery and an industrial target were destroyed, together with 5 M/Vs. which had been beached by their crews, 2 Armed Trawlers, and one Armed Tug. Heavy German casualties were inflicted and at least 80 German prisoners were brought back. The naval casualties were light and military casualties not heavy in spite of some stiff street fighting. Our own ships suffered only very minor damage from gunfire and near-miss bombs, although they were attacked at intervals from 1000 yesterday until after dark by small A/C formations.

C.S.2 in ARETHUSA reports that Force "J" is withdrawing tonight from Operation "Anklet".

Attempts to carry out a photographic R/C of Brest today have failed, and F.O.C.N.A. and F.O. Force H have been informed by Admiralty that the possibility of GNEISENAU attempting the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar cannot be ruled out.

The Swedish authorities have been informed that, up to about the middle of February, no more than two Swedish M/Vs may arrive at the Faeroes in any one day.

The S/M H.31 has not arrived at her R/V on return from the Biscay Patrol and must now be presumed lost.

Enemy Air Activity.

The British J.B. PADDON, 570 tons, was bombed at 1710 yesterday off Flamborough Head and abandoned. All her crew were saved.

At 1307 today Thorshaven and Skaale in the Faeroes were attacked by A/C.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

In the Thames Estuary 3 Magnetic and 2 S.A. Mines were detonated by Sweepers yesterday, and one S.A. Mine today.

South Atlantic.

Convoy
Diversion.

The whole of Convoy W.S.14 D (4 troopships and 1 M.T. ship) is to be diverted to Malaya, sailing from Durban as D.M.2.

Aircraft,
Falklands.

C. in C. S.A. desires to have some air R/C available for the Falklands, and makes certain proposals for obtaining float-planes.

Mediterranean.

Operation
M.F.1.

PEONY reported at 0300 that she believed one ship in Convoy M.E.8 had been torpedoed. KIPLING later reported this as VOLO, 1587 tons. At 0450 KIPLING sank the German submarine U.75 31° 50' N., 26° 40' E., and took 2 officers and 19 ratings prisoners; 9 more ratings were picked up by LEGION.

C.S.7 reported at 0905 that he was being bombed in 33° 7' N., 23° 47' E. Further attacks were made at 0908, 0957 and 1518, but no hits were made. In the last attack, one enemy was shot down by AJAX and CARLISLE, and we lost one Martlet.

Libya and
Western
Desert.

R.A.F., H.Q. M.E., states that small coastal vessels in Ageila - Jedabya Area are apparently being used by the enemy to supply his troops in Jedabya area, petrol and stores being dropped close in shore for collection and delivery by M/T.

Albacore and Swordfish aircraft laid 7 mines outside Tripoli Harbour last night, while Wellingtons attacked shipping in the Harbour.

/Malta...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Malta.

There were 7 alerts between 1740 and 0320 last night, and bombs dropped on sea and land caused only slight damage to officers' quarters at Luqa. 1 enemy bomber was shot down.

Red Sea.

Italian GIOVE, scuttled at Main Quay, Massawa Island, in April, and salvaged in August, left for Aden today under tow.

A/S Vessels.

2nd Trawler Group should arrive shortly and 4 A/S whalers, now converting in South Africa, in April. Admty regret demands in other theatres of war prevent improvement on these numbers at present. Corvettes with their long endurance cannot be spared from ocean routes.

China.

Malaya.
Convoys.

Shortage of escorts makes it essential that Convoys B.M.10 and 11, U.M.1 and 2, and subsequent convoys should not arrive Sunda Strait at less than about 5 days interval unless ocean escort of U.M.1 and 2 accompany them to Singapore. It may thus be necessary to decide precedence of these convoys, and C. in C. Far East is being consulted. S.S.1. containing stores, must proceed unescorted.

Philippines.

Japanese are steadily bringing up reinforcements from transports at Lingayen and Atimonan. 63 enemy bombers attacked Manila today, causing severe damage.

America & West Indies.

Trinidad.

Admty are concerned about the safety from S/M attack of the increased number of ships using Port of Spain, Trinidad, and desire to approach U.S. authorities to see if reliance could be placed on their assistance in the event of a sudden necessity. M.L. flotillas fitted with asdics are due to arrive about April and June.

/St. Pierre...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

America & West Indies. - Contd.

St. Pierre.

Adm. Muselier informed the Admty today that the restrictions against entering the waters of St. Pierre and Miquelon do not apply to ships of the R.N.

Australia.

HOBART.

A.C.N.B. concur in C. in C. E.F's request for the retention of HOBART to escort D.M.1. Convoy M.S.1 will be delayed to allow HOBART to join convoy in the Leeuwin Area.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

ORUC REIS.

Further trials carried out yesterday with the Turkish Submarine ORUC REIS which were attended by a representative of Vickers have confirmed reports previously received that, while in every other respect the performance of the submarine has proved excellent, she has tendencies which make her liable to get out of control at submerged speeds exceeding 6 knots.
2. Action is therefore necessary to improve the submerged performance of this class and I have therefore directed that ORUC REIS is not to sail in accordance with Admiralty 0054A/3/12. Admiralty 1823A/2/12 also refers.
(F.O.S., 1058A/28 to Admty.)

Japanese
A/S methods.

Your 0039A/27 and Captain (S) 1, 1204B/26. It must be assumed that Japanese A/S hunting craft have all information on A/S tactics and methods of A/S detection employed by Germany and Italy.
2. It is probable therefore that they use multi-hydrophone and echo detection. Transmission between approx. 8 and 15 k/cs have been used by German and Italian vessels. It is believed that super-sonic transmission have been intercepted in the neighbourhood of Japanese ships and trawlers.
3. Japanese may also use small charges for detection as reported by our submarines on several occasions in home waters and Mediterranean.
4. No information is available on R.D.F. German U-Boats are not so fitted so far as is known.
5. C. in C. Eastern Fleet is requested to supply any further information obtained as result of war experience.
(D.N.I., 1252A/28 to F.O.S.)

EAGLE.

EAGLE's programme as submitted in No. 00191 of 9/12 is approved.
C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail ship for the Clyde when ready.
EAGLE is to be given 14 days working up in the Clyde area.
(A.C.N.S. H., 1615A/28.)

Swedish
Shipping
to Faroes.

My 1250A/12.
Swedish authorities have been informed that (a) Admiralty are unable to accept any reduction in the 50 miles minimum interval between ships.
(b) It is essential outward and inward bound Swedish ships should arrive at the Faroes in daylight.

/(c) That ...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Swedish
Shipping
to Faroes.
(Contd.)

(c) That up to about the middle of February 1942 it will not be permissible for more than two Swedish ships to arrive at the Faroes on any one day.

(D.E.W.D., 1818A/28 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)
My 1818/28. Swedish Legation reports your Boarding Officer told certain Swedish Control Officers that two hour intervals between ships is sufficient and that lighting arrangements could be made to facilitate arrivals after dark which would be preferable provided time of arrival given in advance.

2. Doubtless this is exaggeration but it is most important to give Swedes no encouragement but merely reply to any suggestion that you will forward it to Admiralty.

3. All Swedish troubles at Faroes are due to Germans not us.

(D.E.W.D., 1923A/28 to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

C.A.M. Ships
Radio Officer.

It has been decided to appoint one specially trained Radio Officer to each C.A.M. Ship for the purpose of operating and maintaining service R/T equipment. Arrangements.
(D.S.D., 2119A/28.)

Co-operation with Russia.

Return of
Foreign
Secretary.

My 1240C/25. New E.T.A. 1200A/29.
(KENT, 1936A/28 to Admty.)

Movements.

ILLUSTRIOUS.

(a) ILLUSTRIOUS escorted by BURZA leaves Clyde Boom 0630A/29 via swept channel to Q S 3010 thence by standard route to Bar L.V. S. of A. 24 knots E.T.A. 1700A/29. ~~S~~ ALBANS joins escort at Q S 3010 at 0845A/29.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0928/28 to 13 and 82 Groups, H.Q.F.C.)

Intend sailing ILLUSTRIOUS escorted by BURZA passing Clyde Boom at 0630A/29 to R/V with ST. ALBANS from Londonderry in 237° Ailsa Craig 13 miles at 0845A/29 thence by standard route to Bar L.V. S. of A. 24 knots. E.T.A. 1700A/29.

(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0944A/28.)

LEWES.

Sailed 0930. E.T.A. Scapa 0900/30.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 0933/28.) Jan 1941 -

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements - Contd.BREDA.Arrival 1145 BREDA only.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 1152/28.)O.14.My 1221A/27. ^{N.T.M.W.D.} Ships sailed.
(Capt. S.9, 1541/28.)ANTHONY.Intend to sail ANTHONY proceeding by swept channels to Greenock at 1600/1st. Speed 20 knots. E.T.A. 0900/3.
(F.O. Humber, 1807/28.)Operations.Denmark Strait Patrol.Unless other orders received intend to sail ANEMONE and ABELIA a.m./29th to relieve VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR after R.D.F. spares from BELLWORT who arrived today have been fitted to ABELIA. VERONICA to sail for Londonderry after fuelling Hvalfjord and transferring warm clothes to BELLWORT. Thereafter length of patrol to be as in F.V.C.1 Para.31. Exact time of departure and E.T.A. position 066° 26' N. 023° 11' W. will be signalled later.
(ANEMONE, 1000/28 to C.S.1.)
NORFOLK and 2 corvettes on patrol "White".
(A.C.I.C., 1610N/28.)Operation "Anklet".Withdrawing night of 28th-29th.
(S.O. Force J., 1124A/28 to Admty.)Operation "Archery".Force P requests Hoxa Gate 1550 today. Request hospital boat may be despatched on arrival for approx. (? 70 or 135) casualties.
(C.S.10, 1429A/28 to A.C.O.S.)
Force P arrives 1600/28. PRINCE CHARLES must have a buoy or secured berth on arrival.
(C.S.10, 1431A/28 to C. in C. H.F.)
Operation "Archery" successfully completed. Military battery demolished and industrial target destroyed. Heavy German casualties inflicted and at least 80 German personnel brought back. Naval casualties light, military casualties not heavy in view of very stiff opposition in street fighting. 2 Hampdens and 1 Blenheim aircraft known down, one crew saved
1 Hampden.
5 Merchant ships, beached by their crews, were destroyed: two armed trawlers and one armed tug sunk. Not possible to take prizes.

/Our ships ...

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
"Archery".
(Contd.)

Our ships suffered very minor damage from gunfire and near missing bombs. Force was attacked at intervals from 1000 until after dark by small formation H.E.111's and J.U.88 usually supported by two M.E.109's.
(10 C.S., 1459A/28 to Admty.)
Scapa arrival C.S.10 in KENYA with ONSLOW, OFFA, ORIBI, CHIDDINGFOLD, PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD.
(A.C.O.S., 1549/28.)

Channel
Patrol.

3 A/S trawlers patrolling Q Z S 271, returning to St. Helens at dawn.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1457A/28.)

British Air Activity.Operation
"Anklet".

Aircraft R/C for D.3 leaving base 0300/28.
(18 Group, 0045/28 to S.O. Force J.)
My A.730, 28th Dec. Liberator landed 1100A/28. Forced to return early by severe icing. Task not carried out.
(18 Group, 1420/28 to S.O. Force J.)

Enemy Air Activity.Convoy
F.S.684.

Your 2354/27. Available evidence now indicates that your victim was undoubtedly enemy.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 0256/28 to LOWESTOFT.)

J.B. PADDON
(British,
570 tons)
bombed
on 27/12.

Your 1003A/26. J.B. PADDON bombed and abandoned at 1710/27 in 53° 55' N. 0° 16' E. Crew all saved.
(N.O.I.C. Sunderland, 1245/28 to N.C.S.O. Gt. Yarmouth.)

Faroes
bombed.

Help Thorshavn.
(Thorshavn W/T, 1307/28.)
Help Skaale.
(Thorshavn W/T, 1309/28.)

Mining.Thames
Estuary.

Three magnetic mines detonated at 0630/27, 0640/27, and 0643/27 respectively. Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1009/28.)

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining - Contd.Thames
Estuary.
(Contd.)Two S.A. mines detonated at 0643/27. Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1013/28.)
One S.A. mine detonated at 1047/28. Details.
(Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1626/28.)HENRIETTE
(Mined 26/12)My 1502A/26 and 2203A/26. Wreck located in
53° 32' 31" N. 00° 08' 22" E.
(F.O. Humber, 1802/28.)Enemy Intelligence.Brest.A.M. 1856/27. Photographic R/C of Brest
today has so far failed. The possibility of
GNEISENAU attempting the passage of Straits
of Gibraltar cannot be ruled out.
(A.C.N.S. F., 1711A/28 to F.O.C.N.A., F.O.
Force H.)North Sea.Ten vessels in 53° 8' N. 4° 35' E., course
030°. speed unknown.
(A/C P.407 Sqdn., 1750/28 to North Coates.)
5 Merchant vessels 030° 53° N. 4° E. 5 miles.
(A/C. J.4071, 1820/28 to Base.)Navigational.H.3 Buoy.Commodore of F.N.588 reports H.3 Lt. Buoy
light unreliable at 1040/26.
(N.C.S.O. Methil, 1224/28.)Ice in
Denmark
Straits.Heavy pack ice running W.N.W. in 060° 54' N.
023° 27' W. No loose ice between patrol
position and ice.
(VERONICA, 1601N/28 to C.S.1, SWEETBRIAR, Reptd.
RENOWN, A.C.I.C., ANEMONE.)
Air R/C of ice sailings from 28/12 report
sighting Brash between 065° 50' N. 27° 30' W.
and 066° 10' N. 027° 30' W. At latter position
Brash considerably thicker but considered
navigable for ships of medium size.
(A.C.I.C., 1908N/28.)Rosyth.Port of Rosyth closed owing to low visibility.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 2319/28.)

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects.EMPIRE
MARLOWE
(Lost
propeller
19/12.)Arrival EMPIRE MARLOWE in tow of FREEBOOTER escorted by SNOWDROP.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0135A/28.)
Please convey to the Master of EMPIRE MARLOWE and C.Os. of FREEBOOTER and SNOWDROP my congratulations on the safe arrival in harbour of EMPIRE MARLOWE.
(C. in C. W.A., 1012A/28.)LA MELPOMENE.Sheerness departure LA MELPOMENE at 0951.
(C. in C. Nore, 1042A/28 to F.O. Humber.)LEWES.My 0933/28. Owing to defect, LEWES returned to Plymouth.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 1150/28.) *See p. 907*M.L.171.M.L.171 unable to sail owing to port engine being out of order.
(R.N.O. Shoreham, 1200/28.)H. 31.My 2338A/26 and 1837A/26. H.31 has not arrived and I regret that her loss must now be presumed.
(F.O.S., 1207A/28.)SAPPHIRE.My 1000/27. ^{N.T. W.D.} SAPPHIRE did not sail. Broken down.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1256A/28.)S O S.Intercept at 1417 G.M.T. from unknown station.
Begins:- S O S. Ends.
Nothing further heard and signal too weak to obtain bearing.
(Wick Radio, 1422/28 to A.C.O.S.)STOKE CITY.My 1845A/26. Sailed.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes, 1601A/28 to A.C.O.S.)WOOLSTON.Have struck submerged object in 053° 03'36" N. 001° 32' E. Starboard shaft vibrating badly. Am proceeding on one engine.
(WOOLSTON, 1804A/28 to C. in C. Nore.)

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys.Q.P. 4.

Your 2235C/27. Sailing of MIRLO and Ocean Escort postponed 24 hours.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 0336C/28 to S.B.N.O. Archangel, EDINBURGH, C. in C. H.F., M/S.F.1, LEDA.)

Position at 1200C/28.
STALIN with 5 ships 065° 24' N. 038° 28' E.
LENIN with 7 ships in (?) channel between ice about 40 miles astern. It is hoped to effect junction of 2 portions in about 12 hours when complete to reach R/V in company with the 2 ice-breakers.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1622VC/28.)

If severe ice conditions persist it will probably be necessary to bunker from ships in convoy LENIN and STALIN, whose consumption is 95 and 130 tons a day respectively during present operations. I have accordingly arranged that *TRESHNA bunkers STALIN with 300 tons and *TREKIVE bunkers LENIN with 250 tons. This will leave both M/Vs with bunkers for 20 days steaming.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 2309C/28.) * ?TRESHATA
? TREKIEVE.

S.C. 60.

S.C. 60. Leave convoy forthwith and proceed to Iceland. When well clear of convoy, DAUPHIN and WETASKIWIN report situation.

(C. in C. W.A., 0916A/28 to DAUPHIN, WETASKIWIN, SPIKENHARD.)

P.Q. 7.

Do you intend to sail remaining ships of P.Q. 7 in near future.

(C. in C. H.F., 1100A/28 to A.C.I.C., CUMBERLAND.)

Sailed BRITOMART and SALAMANDER in accordance with your 2215A/26th.

(CUMBERLAND, 1200N/28.)

P.Q. 7B.

Your 1100A/(?28). Expect to sail P.Q. 7B on 31/12 using same route and R/V as for P.Q. 7.

(A.C.I.C., 1834N/28.)

C.T. 9.

Convoy C.T.9 composed of MONTCALM and VOLENDAM carrying Naval and Air Force personnel for Halifax will leave U.K. on 7/1.

2. MONTCALM will leave Clyde on 7/1 and R/V with VOLENDAM who will leave Avonmouth on 6/1.

3. Speed of slowest ship 14 knots.

4. Admiralty will promulgate route.

5. C. in C. W.A. is requested to: (a) provide two destroyers to provide through A/S escort to Halifax. (b) to arrange sailing of ships to R/V as convenient.

6. Destroyers will return to U.K. as escort for N.A. 2 sailing approx. 23/1.

(D.O.D. (H.), 1931A/28.)

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Suspicious Ship.

Transit aircraft from U.K. reports a large M/V 10,000/15,000 tons 10 miles N. of Cape Villano at 1110Z/28 course 220° speed 10 knots.
(1) Possibly Spanish MAGALLANES 9700 tons arrived Bilbao 22/12.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1958A/28 to Admty.)

South Atlantic.

W.S.14.

Propose that SCYTHIA, ORONSAY, ANDES and CAMERONIA at present in W.S.14 should be turned round at Durban.

Following approximate numbers will thus require on carriage from Durban. Ships available for onward conveyance.

(D.S.T. 0104A/28 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown).

KENNET,
MYRLAND.

Sailed 0900 G.M.T./28. S. of A. 8 knots, E.T.A. Capetown P.M./1/1.

(N.C.S.O. Walvis Bay, 1032Z/28 to Admty.)

A/C for Falklands.

Admty. 0107/26. Desired to have some air R/C available for Falkland Is. Would be grateful if Oiler BROOMDALE due to leave Trinidad about 4/1 could, provided she is not delayed, embark 1 Walrus Seafox or other float-plane complete with crew and maintenance ratings. 2. ALBATROSS is due Trinidad about 4/1 with 2 Walrus of 710 Sqn. with crews and maintenance ratings. Suggest one of these might be used for this service or to replace an aircraft provided from Trinidad if available. 3. If you concur request you issue necessary instructions to ALBATROSS.

(C. in C. S.A., 1317Z/28 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

See Lion Copy - next page -

Accra Convoys.

Admty. 1202A/28/11. Use of convoy system at Accra as suggested has not been put into force owing to:-
(a) Difficulty of providing adequate escorts for convoys.

(b) Delay which would be caused whilst forming up convoys at Lagos or elsewhere.

(c) Uneconomical use of the limited capacity of the Port.

2. Present system enables resources of the Port to be applied to one or two ships at a time which

/reduces ...

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET.

M E S S A G E.

1317Z/23th Dec
IN.

From : C. in C. South Atlantic.

Date : 29.12.42.

Recd : 0907.

Naval Cypher C by W/T & T/P

Addressed : C. in C. America & West Indies, Repeated
N.O.i/c Trinidad, R.A.S.A.D., Admiralty.

42. Admiralty Message 0107/26 not to N.O.i/c Trinidad. It is desired to have some Air reconnaissance available for Falkland Island. Would be grateful if Ciler BROOMDALE due to leave Trinidad about 4th January could, provided she is not delayed, embark 1 Walrus, Seafox or other Float Plane complete with Crew and Maintenance Ratings.

2. H.M.S. ALBATROSS is due Trinidad about 4th January with 2 Walrus of 710 Squadron with Crews and Maintenance Ratings. Suggest one of these might be used for this service or to replace an Aircraft provided from Trinidad if available.

3. If you concur request you will issue necessary instructions to H.M.S. ALBATROSS.

1317Z/28

Advance Copy Ops., O.D., D.N.A.D.
+ Re Japanese Convoy to Argentina.

1st Lord.

1st S.L.

5th S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S.(F).

A.C.N.S.(T).

N.A. 1st S.L.

D. of P.(2).

D.O.D.(F).

D.D.O.D.(F).

D.N.I.(4).

D.N.A.D.

D.A./S.W.

D. of L.D.

I.P.(2).

W.D.

D.C.(2).

Hd. of M.

D.D.I.C.(2).

E.P.S.

D.T.D.(2).

D.T.D.(M).

D.S.D.

N.I.D.10.

N.P.

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.Accra
Convoys.
(contd.)

reduces the time for which any one ship is anchored off the Port. 3. 17th M.L. Flotilla based on Takoradi maintains a patrol off Accra when ships are there. Hudson Air Patrol is also now available. 4. With present reduced scale of S/M activity, position is satisfactory and maximum value is being obtained from the Port. (C. in C. S.A., 1325Z/28, to Admty.)

MOOLTAN.

Sailed 26/12 in Convoy S.L.96. Service passengers. Naval personnel embarking included Rear Adm. S.S. Bonham Carter and Staff and Capt. W.H. Best D.S.T.O. and Staff. (S.S.T.O. Freetown, 1505Z/28, to D. of S.T.)

EXMOOR,
CROOME.

Sail EXMOOR and CROOME for Gibraltar A.M./29. (C. in C. S.A., 1607Z/28 to N.O.I.C. Bathurst, Gambia).

VELOX,
AMARANTHUS.

Following is a repetition of my 1801/28 (begins). N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada (San Miguel). Inform British Consul VELOX and AMARANTHUS will require 290 and 170 tons fuel respectively on 7/1. (Ends.) (C. in C. S.A., 1803Z/28 to ROCHESTER, VELOX, AMARANTHUS F.O.C.N.A., Admty.)

Floating
Dock.

C. in C. S.A.'s. 0952/26 D. of D's proposals dated 1/11/41 are in M.016302/41. Possibility of obtaining floating dock in India has been investigated by M. of W.T. and Foley informed Controller 5/12/41 that prospects were not promising. My report to Controller dated 21/12/41, refers. Presume M. Branch will reply to C. in C. S.A. (D. of D. Bath, 1806A/28 to Controller, etc.)

Convoy
Conferences,
Sierra Leone.

Your 2553A/26. (? 2353 intended, re C.O.W.A. escorts attending SL Convoy conferences at Sierra Leone).

I agree, but there are difficulties. Air passage between Bathurst and Freetown cannot be relied upon and to bring the S.O's ship to Freetown would seriously curtail time in harbour. If this curtailment of rest is acceptable arrangements will be made. (C. in C. S.A., 1835Z/28 to C. in C. W.A.) Additional sea time not acceptable:-- see 1854/29).

CAMBRIA,
Cables.

CAMBRIA has completed repairs to Freetown-Ascension, Freetown-Bathurst and Madeira-St. Vincent 2 and 3 cables. Freetown-Accra cable, understand interrupted close to Freetown is now being repaired.

(2) Following programme is intended (a) Leave Freetown 2/1 escorted by SURPRISE. (b) Repair

/Accra ...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

CAMBRIA,
Cables,
(contd.)

Accra Lagos Cable. (c) Divert Libreville Kotonu cable into Lagos. (d) Repair Libreville Port Ellen Gentil cable. (e) Repair Port G Point Noire cable.
(3) Above should be completed 4th week in January. (C. in C. S.A., 2027Z/28 to Admty.)

W.S.14D.

Decided that whole of convoy W.S.14D is to be diverted to Malaya sailing from Durban as D.M.2. (2) Ships are WARWICK CASTLE, EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA, CITY OF PRETORIA, TROILUS. (3) S.S. MALANCHA (13½ kts.) sailed Freetown 27/12 also carries equipment and M.T. belonging to units in W.S.14D and should be included in convoy D.M.2 if sailing date from Durban is not delayed thereby. (A.C.N.S.(F) 2201A/28 to C. in C. S.A., C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I.)

Mediterranean.

Greek Ships
raised.

Following Greek ships sunk during war operations in Greek waters are reported to have been raised, repaired and to be now in service again:-
AGALLIANI, 1656 tons; ARTEMIS PITTA, 1433 tons; CONSTANTINOS LOULODIS, 4697 tons; ELSI, 1433 tons; HOLLANDIA, 1759 tons; PETRAKIS NOMIKOS, tanker 7020 tons; POPI S., 2083 tons; TETI, 2747 tons. (D.S., 845).

Ship
Torpedoed.

Ship in convoy believed torpedoed. (PEONY 0300/28, to KIPLING) Name, see 0911/28 1202/28.

U/B sunk by
KIPLING.

U.75

Have sunk German S/M in position 031° 50' N. 026° 40' E. (KIPLING, 0455/28). My 0455. Sunk U-boat was U.75. KIPLING has 2 officers and 19 ratings and LEGION 9 ratings prisoners of war. LEGION has recovered 3 survivors and 4 mail bags from sunk VOLO. Ref. LEGION's 1236/27 Electric charge was not fired. KIPLING and LEGION rejoining convoy. My P.C. and S. 031° 02' ?N. 026° 42' E. 120° 27 knots. (KIPLING, 0911B/28 to C. in C. Med.) U.75 sunk by KIPLING at 0450/28 in 031° 50' N. 026° 40' E. 2 officers and 28 ratings rescued by KIPLING and LEGION. At 0300/28, U 75 had sunk OBAYO (? VOLO) in convoy returning from Tobruk to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med., 1202B/28 to Admty.) Return to Alexandria with all despatch (C. in C. Med. 1241B/28 to LEGION, KIPLING).

/GIOVE ...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - contd.

GIOVE.
(Italian).

GIOVE left in tow of PAULINE MOLLER at 0425Z/28 E.T.A. Aden 3/1. (N.O.I.C. Messawa 0639Z/28 to S.N.O.R.S.)
Position 28/12 captured prize GIOVE sailed for Aden under tow.
(S.T.O., Massawa 0915Z/28 to D. of S.T.)

OSIRIS.

Keep to Westward of 025° 30' forthwith until 0001B/31st. (Capt. S.1, 0701B/28 to OSIRIS).

C.S.7.
A/C attack.

Enemy aircraft bombing - Jumbo - 33° 7' N. 23° 47' E. (C.S.7. 0905/28 to 238 Wing H.Q.)
1 bomber, no hits. Shadowing.
(C.S.7. 0908/28 to Alex. C.C.O.)
Further attack, no hits. (C.S.7. 0957/28 to Alexandria W/T). *See next page*

Tripoli
Mines.

R.A.F. H.Q. Med's. I.305 dated 26/12.
Position of mines laid Tripoli (Africa) by Swordfish and Albacores night of 25/26. Bearings and distances in cables from end North Mole.
068° 7½, 062° - 12, (065°) - 7, 075° - 11, 040° - 6
045° - 5½, 090° - 1¼.
(V.A.Malta, 1153B/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Air Report.

Small coastal vessels reported in previous Opsums in Ageila-Jedabya Area apparently being used by enemy to supply his troops in Jedabya Area, petrol and stores being dropped close in shore for collection and delivery by M.T.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1156/28).

S/Ms.

Your 2206B/27. Intend following dispositions:-
leaves Malta

	P.M.	Area.
UNIQUE	29/12.	H North of line. Alice Maria di Leuca,
P.34	29/12.	J.036° 56' 015° 24' 174° 40 70.
URGE	30/12.	K.035° 25' 011° 10' 345° 30 60.
UPHOLDER	30/12.	L.034° 55' 011° 37' 345° 30 60.

(Capt. S.10, 1159B/28 to Capt. S.1).

COETLOGON,
French.

Departure 27th for Sete.
(Barcelona, 1314/28, to M. of W.T.)

/C.S.7. ...

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. contd.C.S.7.
A/C attack.

Attacked by 4 torpedo bombers position 018° 32° N., 25° E., 44. No hits, one enemy shot down, one Martlet shot down. (C.S.7., 1518B/28 to C. in C., Med.)
Join me forthwith. (C.S.7, 1532/28 to MAORI).

*See previous page*NEPTUNE,
KANDAHAR,
GALATEA.

Your 1210B/26. In accordance with request in your letter 2287/427/P.O. of 23/11, arrangements have been made to signal to you when losses of H.M. Ships are announced. Loss of NEPTUNE and KANDAHAR will be announced as soon as next of kin, including those in New Zealand have been informed, probably about 31/12, loss of GALATEA will be announced a few days later.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1542A/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Tobruk,
Minesweeping.

Summary for week ending 27/12. Sunday 21st routine sweep nothing to report. Monday 22nd routine sweep nothing to report. Tuesday 23rd SVANA exploded 1 (blue) magnetic mine (probably Sammy) pulsing on battery 150 yards from tail close to wreck of MANZ. Wednesday 26th routine sweep nothing to report. Thursday 25th routine sweep nothing to report. Friday 26th routine sweep nothing to report. Saturday 27th a.m. CALAMARA exploded 1 (red) magnetic mine 149° 7.4 cables from Tobruk Point; p.m. HAILSTORM exploded 1 (red) magnetic mine 142° 6 cables from Tobruk Point. BAGSHOT cut 1 moored mine in Q.B.C. 235 sank it by rifle fire.
(B.S.N.O. Tobruk., 1550B/28 to Admty.)

Malta Air
Report.

27th. 1557 hours 9 raiders, bombs land, 4 civilians killed 1 injured 14 houses demolished, no interceptions.

Night 27/28. 7 Alerts, 1740 to 0320 hours, total 10 enemy aircraft, bombs sea and land, slight damage Officers' quarters Luqa, 1 enemy bomber shot down in flames by Hurricane no survivors. 3 Albacores 4 Swordfish laid 7 mines outside Tripoli Harbour. 11 mark 1C Wellingtons attacked shipping Tripoli Harbour 2325 to 0215 hours.
(H.Q., R.A.F., Malta, 1731/28).

Benghazi
Minesweeping.

Intend BAGSHOT, ABERDARE, SOTRA, HAILSTORM sail at 0430/29 through S position, thence 032° 20' N. 024° 00' E. to position 040° Ras Et Deflat 8 miles at noon/29, thence through 033° 10' N. 023° 00' E. to 033° 00' N. 020° 43' E. passing 4.5 miles Ras Hilal 000° at 1845 to arrive 004° Benghazi Light 27 miles at 0715/30 - speed 9 knots. From this position sweep at 7 knots 180° to position 000° Mingar Es Seghir 3 miles and thence to position 253° extra Light 2.3 cables. Fighter protection required day 29th, A.M./30.
Code name Screw. (S.O. Force I. 1731B/28 to C. in C. Med.)

/My ...

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Benghazi
Minesweeping.
(contd.)

My 1731/28. Proceed (? on arrival) Tobruk to overtake Minesweeping Flotilla and escort them till 0715/30. When sweep commences establish patrol to seaward until signal received that Flotilla has arrived Benghazi, then comply with C. in C. 1935/27. Destroyers are to keep outside 100 fathom line. Attention is called to QB.51 and QB.53. (S.O. Force I, 1845B/28 to SIKH, Repeated HERO, HOTSPUR, BAGSHOT).
Following received, addressed SIKH, HERO, Repeated S.O. Force I. P.C. and S. "Booty" at 2300 position S. 065° 6 knots, altering course to 245° at 0300. (Capt. D.2, 2334B/28).
Comply with C. in C. 1935/27 and S.O. Force I. 1731/28. S.O. Force I left in BAGSHOT 0430. (S.O. Force I, Tobruk, 0745B/29 to SIKH, HOTSPUR (R) BAGSHOT).

Escort
Flotilla,
Hunts.

Now desired to form an escort flotilla of Hunts under direct administration of R.A.D. Request Flotilla numbers may be allocated. (C. in C. Med., 1759B/28 to Admty.) Reply: 11th Flotilla allocated. (D.O.D.(F) 1810A/29).

A/S Vessels.

Your 1630/2 and 1245/3. Every consideration has been given to remedying your shortage of small A/S vessels. Corvettes with their long endurance cannot be spared from the ocean routes. 2nd Trawler Group should arrive shortly and four A/S Whalers now converting in South Africa should reach you in April. 2. Regret demands in other theatres of war prevent improvement on these numbers at present (V.C.N.S. 1807A/28 to C. in C. Med.)

Midget S/M's.

Your 1937B/21 and 0950B/27. Re trials of lethal range of a 5 pound charge. (3) Considered that 5 pound charges fired at short intervals are likely to be more effective than 10 pound charges fired at double the interval, but 10 pound charges should be used if there are indications that human torpedoes may be attacking. (4) 10 pound charges are unlikely to be effective against midget submarines as opposed to human torpedoes. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1929A/28 to C. in C. Med., F.O.C.N.A., V.A. Malta).

Enemy Units.

3 unknown bearing 150° 2 miles approx., true course 290°, position 353°, 32° N. 27° E., 10 miles based on fix within ½ hour of 1200. (Nore W/T 2139/28 from Call Sign GYX.6)

Oil Patch.

Your 2151 (N.T. in W.R.) Oil patch last seen bearing 230° approx. course 290° distance 5 miles. No further information. (NESTOR 2156/28 to C.S.7.)

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Rangoon Report.

(a) 20% of night conservancy staff are on duty and 1/6th of day staff.
(b) Rangoon Port. 2/3rds of port coolies, 1/5th of workshop coolies and great bulk of launch crews are back. 22 ships in port and labour can be found for urgent work. Night unloading will be carried out. (c) Railways. Services are tending to return to normal.
(Govr. Burma 0255/28 to S. of S.)

Dante.

Dante as bunkering port. Bunkering facilities will be used by Navy as soon as available. C. in C. E.I. will be responsible for replenishing stocks. Port will be administered by O.E.T.A. with help and advice of C. in C. E.I.
(G.O.C. in C.E. Africa 0805/28.)

Troops for Malaya.

My 0746/19. In view of your 0304/24 following ships will now be required to move 7000 troops Bombay to Malaya about 14/1:- CAPETOWN CASTLE, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, EMPRESS OF ASIA. Request very early confirmation that these ships of W.S.12Z may be used for this move, as no other ships are available. Intend using JOHAN DE WITT and KOSCIUSZKO Bombay Karachi about 12/1 for approx. 1400 R.A.F. personnel ex W.S.12Z. Your 0349/19. Intend using JOHAN DE WITT and KOSCIUSZKO sailing from Bombay about 21/1 to Suez for these personnel plus an additional 400 reinforcements from India. INDRAPOERA will replace NEURALIA in B.P.31S.
(P.S.T.O. India 0959Z/28 to D. of S.T.)
Reply D. of S.T. 0346A/29.

W.S.12X.

Request early reply to my 1020/23 expect to complete disembarkation all ships 2/1.
(P.S.T.O. India, 1015Z/28 to D.S.T.)

MAURITIUS DORSETSHIRE

My 1408/28 (defects MAURITIUS) If it is the policy for a cruiser to escort the U.S. Transport back to U.S.A. it is suggested that MAURITIUS should undertake this duty. In the absence of MAURITIUS I would ask if DORSETSHIRE might be allocated temporarily to my station.
(C. in C. E.I. 1410Z/28 to Admty. (R) C. in C. S.A.) (Address amended 0556Z/29.)

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - contd.

Communiques

1. Agree you prepare and issue communiques locally. If possible issue at fixed times each day.
2. Communique should when required combine land and air information and such naval information as C. in C. East Indies agrees. Concert arrangement with O.C.221 Group. (C. in C. India 2115/28 to G.O.C. Burma.)

Burma Situation.

No air activity. New attack being staged Bokpyin. Reliably reported Mehsai reinforced by 400 troops. Troops in Thai uniform. Labour situation Rangoon slightly improved. (G.O.C. Burma, 2130/28 to W.O.)

Possible use of Gas.

1. No doubt you have considered possibility of Japanese using gas in attacks on large centres in Burma.
2. Suggest desirable to review defensive measures. (W.O. 2200/28 to C. in C. India.)

A/A forces, Rangoon.

1. Suggest you consider immediate despatch of A/A regiments from Iraq to Rangoon. In principle any regiments sent from Iraq to Rangoon will be replaced in Iraq from U.K. in due course. (W.O. 2200/28 to C. in C. India.)

China.

Malaya Situation

Sitrep No.18, 1630 hrs. G.M.T. 27/12.
Perak. Naval patrol vessel sank three small craft manned by enemy in vicinity Pangkor Island on 26/12.
Borneo. Resident Labuan reports enemy navy 96 aircraft machine gunned Labuan town this morning including European quarters and hospital.
Kuching. 250 small craft including 50 barges at Georgetown.
General. Enemy air activity 27/12 light. (Adv. H.Q. Malaya 0240/28.)

/Troop ...

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China - contd.Troop
Convoys.

Your 1916A/26. Situation regarding B M 9 A, B M 9 B and D M 1 are as described in my 0336Z/27. Shortage of escort makes it essential that convoys B M 10 and 11, U M 1 and 2 and subsequent convoys should not arrive Sunda Strait at less than about 5 days interval unless ocean escorts of U M 1 and 2 accompany them to Singapore. It may be necessary therefore to decide precedence of these convoys and C. in C. Far East is being consulted. S.S 1 containing stores must proceed unescorted. (2) Escort will be as in my 0336Z/27. Am arranging for air patrol and search, air A/S patrol, fighter protection in Sunda Strait, Banka Strait and Rhio Strait (which is route selected) and air striking forces all of which are necessarily small owing to limited means and with further loss will become smaller still. Am also sweeping in Rhio Strait and Banka Strait. (3) Regarding AQUITANIA see my 0411Z/27. (C. in C. E.F. 0501Z/28 to Admty.)

Navigation.

Java Eastern portion Charts Nos. 1653C and 934. Sapudi Strait and Raas Straits are closed to shipping. Vessels entering Madura Strait from the Northward must keep East of Raas Siland. (R.A. Malaya, 0711Z/28 to China Stn.)

JUPITER
ENCOUNTER.

Singapore departures 28th JUPITER and ENCOUNTER for Batavia. (S.O.I. Singapore 0943Z/28 to Admty.)

LE
TRIOMPHANT.

N.Z.N.B. Wellington 2129M/26. Request you will instruct French Light Cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT to return to Noumea and operate in New Caledonia area until further orders. (C. in C. E.F., 1021Z/28 to ? A.C.N.B. Admty. N.Z.N.B.) Arrived Brisbane 0740Z/27, see Australia.

/Disposition ...

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Disposition
Far East area.

A. British

- (1) DRAGON, DURBAN and VAMPIRE left Padang 28th.
- (2) DANAE at Batavia leaves 29th.
- (3) JUPITER and ENCOUNTER leave Singapore 28th for Batavia. *Sailed - see previous page.*
- (4) ELECTRA, EXPRESS, STRONGHOLD, THANET and TENEDOS at Singapore.
- (5) SCOUT at Sabang.

(6) Dutch S/Ms. K.17 overdue since 21st. O.20 due Singapore 29th, O.19 and O.12 at Singapore. K.11 on patrol North of Kuching. K.13 due Batavia with escort 29th.

B. Dutch

- (1) Cruiser DE RUYTER, Destroyer and Minesweeper PIET HEIN, BANCKERT, south of Java, proceeding west Java Sea.
- (2) K.10 on patrol south of Davho.
- (3) Sloop SOEMBA in Rhio Archipelago.
- (4) Coast defence vessel SOERABAJA, Destroyers KORTENAER, WITTE DE WITH at Sourabaya.
- (5) Destroyer EVERTSEN on patrol Sunda Strait.
- (6) Destroyer VAN NES escorting K.13 due Batavia 29th.
- (7) Cruiser JAVA at Padang.
- (8) K.14 K.15 and K.16 returning to Sourabaya via Carimata Strait.

C. U.S.A.

- * *Sta-Ship* (1) Cruiser HOUSTON, Drs. WHIPPLE, ALDEN, EDSALL, GOLD STAR, ^{Sta-Tender} OTUS, and ^{Sta-Ship} PECOS at Darwin.
- (2) Seaplane Tender LANGLEY and Dr. PRESTON due to leave Sourabaya for Darwin 26th.
- (3) Seaplane tender CHILDS and Aircraft tender HERON at Amboina.
- (4) ~~TRINITY~~ at Soemba.
- (5) Crs. BOISE, MARBLEHEAD, S/M Tender HOLLAND, Dr. Tender BLACK HAWK, U.S. Drs. STEWART, J.D. EDWARDS, PARROTT, ~~H.M.S.~~ MENTOR U.S. Drs. JOHN D. FORD, ISABEL, U.S. Gunboats TULSA, ASHEVILLE, U.S. Minesweepers LARK, WHIPPOORWILL at Sourabaya.
- (6) Other forces not known.
- (C. in C. E.F., 1056Z/28 to Admty. etc.)

Coastal patrol vessel

* *See also p.926*

Japanese
A/S methods.

Your 0039A/27 and Capt.(S) 1 1204B/26. It must be assumed that Japanese A/S hunting craft have all information on A/S tactics and methods of A/S detection employed by Germany and Italy. 2. Probable therefore that they use multi-hydrophone and echo detection. Transmissions between approx. 8 and 15 kcs. have been used by German and Italian vessels. It is believed that super-sonic transmissions have been intercepted in the neighbourhood of Japanese ships and trawlers. 3. Japanese may also use small charges for detection as reported by our submarines on several occasions in home waters and Mediterranean. 4. No information is available on R.D.F. German U-Boats are not so fitted so far as is known.

War Diary.

28.12.1941.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Japanese
A/S methods -
contd.

5. C. in C. E.F. is requested to supply any further information obtained as result of war experience.
(D.N.I. 1252A/28 to F.O.S.(R) Cs. in C. Med., E.I., E.F. etc.)

Convoys.

Ref. C. in C. E.F. 0336/27 to Admiralty (HUSH distribution, N.T. in W.D.) I agree with opinion expressed in para.7. Risks must and will be accepted to get these convoys through but they will be greatly increased if in meantime our strength in fighter and R/C aircraft becomes seriously diminished.
(C. In C. Far East, 2206/28 to W.O.)

America and West Indies.

St. Pierre

Following received by Marine Department St. Johns N.F. from Free French Govt., St. Pierre. (Begins) For Immediate Publication effective today 27/12/1941 at 1730 (Atlantic?) Standard time. Access to territorial waters of St. Pierre and Miquelon is prohibited to all warships of any nationality except under special permission previously asked and granted. Flying over the Islands without previous permission is (also?) prohibited to all aeroplanes. All lighthouses (may be?) extinguished as from tonight. Signed, Vice-Admiral C. in C. of Free French. (Ends)
(C.C.N.F. 0054Z/28 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa (R) C.O.A.C. Halifax, Comdr. Task Force No.4.)
It is emphasized that restrictions against entering water of Saint Pierre and Miquelon does not apply to ships of R.N.
(Adm. Muselier 0140Z/28 to Admty.)

FIRETHORN
(overdue)

My 1551R/27. FIRETHORN arrived.
(S.O.I. Jamaica, 0902R/28 to Admty. etc.)

M/V fire
on Catalina.

Master of British ship LAGUNA reports at about 1030Z/11 in 58.25 N. 12.19 W. ship opened fire with machine gun on an aircraft which flew straight in from starboard bow at height of about 300 ft. in misty weather. Aircraft stated to have been hit, and altered course, and was then recognised as a Catalina.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1019Q/28 to Admty. (R) C. in C. W.A.)

/Dakar ...

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.Dakar
Intelligence.

Meter. Dakar 24/12 (B.2) ARIZONA and MORON arrived from southward with 1800 Sengalese and Malagony troops. CARBET, PLATON, SAINT BASILE, JAMAIQUE departed for southward.
(B.A.D., 1141R/28 to S.O.I. Freetown.)

ALCANTARA.

Your 1016R/27. Approved for ALCANTARA to proceed Halifax to embark passengers after carrying out practices at Bermuda.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1206A/28 to B.A.R.M.)

Washington
Report.

Washops 18. (i) Philippine Islands. Desultory fighting reported in North Luzon (corrupt group) very heavy fighting in S.E. Japanese steadily bringing up reinforcements from transports at Lingayen and Atimonan.
(ii) Netherlands East Indies. 6 N.E. I. Dorniers were destroyed by Japanese air attack on Lake Tondang on 26/12. No Japanese are reported to have landed Menado or Ternate.
(J.S.M. Washington 1311R/28 to Admty. etc.)

BITTERSWEET.

Sailed a.m./28 to arrive Charleston S.C. 2000 zone 5 31/12.
(C.O.A.C., 1347Z/28 to B.A.R.M.)

Oil Ship for
Martinique.

My 1131R/19. CARTIERDOC, British, reported sighted off Bahram stopped 12 miles eastward of Tobago midnight 23/12. Only masthead light burning but after British Ship(s) passed French Ship(s) lit bow and upper deck light.
(S.O.I. Kingston 1453R/28 to Admty. etc.)

ARCHER.

Arrived Philadelphia.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1510Z/28 to Admty.)

QJA. WJA
Messages.

QJA 55. Ref. QJA 50, these messages will in future be numbered in sequence with QJA and WJA series but with 500 added for easy differentiation. QJA 54 should be numbered 554 and WJA 59 becomes 559.
(C.N.S. Canada 1801Z/28 to all concerned.)

A/S Protection
Trinidad.

Following for First Sea Lord. We are concerned about the safety from S/M attack of M/Vs at anchor off Port Spain, the number of which has considerably increased since ships returning to U.K. from the Cape were routed via Trinidad.
2. One flotilla of 110 feet M.Ls and flotilla of 72 ft. H.D.L's are allocated and should commence to arrive about April 1942 and June 1942 respectively. Both these flotillas will be fitted with asdics.

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.A/S
Protection,
Trinidad.
contd.

3. Additional corvettes are desirable, but present commitments elsewhere are more pressing. It would be appreciated if reliance could be placed on assistance being forthcoming from U.S. forces at Trinidad in the event of a sudden necessity arising. 4. Request you will approach U.S. authorities accordingly when you consider circumstances are propitious.
(V.C.N.S. 1810A/28 to B.A.D.)

Aircraft
for
Convoys.

Re use of auxiliary carriers and C.A.M. ships, and suggesting development of Autogyro aircraft. (M. of A.P., 1835/28 to B.A.C., Washington.)
See Lion Copy.

Operations
"Archery"
"Anklet".

Personal for C.N.S. Reporting Operation "Archery" successfully completed, etc., and Operation "Anklet" withdrawing tonight 28/29.
(V.C.N.S. 1900A/28 to B.A.D.)

Miquelon
Lights.

Light (?on) Cape Galantry will be extinguished for tonight and (?other) lights in Miquelon group may be extinguished also. This information is strictly for British Canadian and U.S. Commands only.
(Adm. Muselier, 2115Z/28 to C.C.N.F.(R) U.S.C.N.O. Admty. etc.)

TURECAMO
BOYS.

Following from Admty: Have you any further news of American Tug TURECAMO BOYS? 1704A/27 (Ends) No further news at N.S.H.Q. If you have any information request you will pass it to Admty. repeated to other addressees for information. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2115Z/28 to Opnav, C.O.A.C., F.O.N.F.(R) Admty.)

St. Pierre.

Following from Adm. Muselier. I wish to emphasize that I will always be very willing for ships of R.C.N. to call at Saint Pierre but political situation at present demands that I be informed of their E.T.A.
2. I am prepared to provide meteorological information from this station. Do you wish me to organize regular service?
3. Radio Station has resumed service and I am prepared for it to work in conjunction with your W/T organization in common war effort. Request your requirements.
4. Request F.O.N.F. inform me of safe arrival of ACONITA at St. John's N.F.
(MIMOSA, 2120Z/28 to C.N.S. Canada.)

/CORNEVILLE ...

SECRET.

MESSAGE

IN

1835/28, Dec.

From: Ministry of
Aircraft Production.

Date: 28.12.41.

Recd: 2200.

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed British Air Commission Washington.

MAP 12910 28/12.

BRINY 11988. T. of O. 0403/21/12/41.

Admiralty would like these trials pursued in America and give you the following as operational and tactical arguments.

2. Recent experience has justified completely our firm belief that, given enough aircraft round the convoys, we can defeat the U.Boat massed attack in its present form.

3. There is no doubt that this air effort can best be provided by Auxiliary Aircraft Carriers but not only are a great number required which can ill be spared from trade, but they are extremely vulnerable.

4. Consequently the next best thing is to try to develop the principle that every merchant ship shall carry its own aircraft and although C.A.M. ships fulfil part of this object they are one shotters, uneconomical on aircraft and hard on personnel in cold waters.

5. Our chief object is to get plenty of aircraft round convoys and we feel sure that both the Auxiliary Carrier and the merchant ship aircraft would be justified. We have never yet had enough aircraft with the convoys even in the approaches to our coasts.

6. The Auto-Gyro seems to be at present the type that offers the greatest promise of being able to return to a merchant ship, but its practicability can only be proved by trial.

7. The Stinson O point 49 model C.413 is a possible alternative provided it could be developed to reduce still further its take-off and landing run.

1835/28.

1st Lord.	D.A.M.(2)	
1st S.L.	D.A.M.R.	Circulation by MAP:
2nd S.L.	D.S.R.	
5th S.L.	Air Branch.	P.S. to Minister.
V.C.N.S.	N.A.S.(4)	Parl. Secretary.
A.C.N.S.(H)	D.T.S.D.	Controller General.
A.C.N.S.(F)	D.T.D.(4)	Permanent Secretary.
A.C.N.S.(T)	D.T.D.(M)	C.R.D.
A.C.N.S.(W)	D.M.W.D.	C.R.A.D.A.S.
N.A. 1st S.L.	M.(2)	D.G.N.D.P.(orig)
Ops.(3)	E.P.S.	C.N.R.
O.D.(5)	I.M.N.G.	D.P.C.A.
O.I.C.(2)	I.P.(3)	D.T.D.
D.N.I.(4)	W.D.	P.B.4.
D. of P.(3)		
D.A./S.W.		
D.G.D.(2)		
D.N.A.D.		

Received by hand
from MAP @ 1855/29.

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - contd.CORNEVILLE.

Norwegian ship CORNEVILLE sailed Hong Kong 29/11 due San Pedro 21/12 has not yet arrived. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 2221Z/28 to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.LE TRIOMPHANT.

Arrival Brisbane 0740Z/27 LE TRIOMPHANT. (A.C.N.B. 0037Z/28)
Departure LE TRIOMPHANT, E.T.A. Darwin 0100Z/3/1. (D.N.O. Queensland, Brisbane 0946Z/28 to A.C.N.B.)
See also China 1028/28.

HOBART.

Your 0433Z/27 concur in the retention of HOBART for escort of D.M.1. Convoy M.S.1 will be delayed to allow HOBART to join convoy in Leeuwin area. (A.C.N.B. 0339Z/28 to C. in C. E.F.)

AQUITANIA.

Your 0411Z/27 (N.T.in W.D.) No suitable ships in Australia for use instead of AQUITANIA. An alternative method is being investigated of transfer of troops from AQUITANIA to Dutch or British ships (ex Malaya) at Oosthaven about 16/12. Troops thus transferred would proceed Singapore via Sunda Strait or to Padang whence troops would be taken by road to Djambi and ferried to Singapore. Noted that AQUITANIA cannot use Padang. Request your views include availability of shipping. C.Z.M. has been consulted. (A.C.N.B. 0725Z/28 to C. in C. E.F.)

Movements.

*U.S. Cruiser HOUSTON, U.S. Destroyers WHIPPLE, ALDEN and EDSALL escorting GOLD STAR, OTUS and PECOS arrived Darwin 0250Z/28. AUSTRALIA (~~FLAG~~) (Flag) (Corrupt Group) CANBERRA, PERTH and ACHILLES escorting AQUITANIA, SARPEDON, HERSTEIN, left Sydney 2350Z/27 for (?Eastern Theatre.) (A.C.N.B. 1134Z/28 to Admty. etc.) * See p 922

War Diary.28.12.1941.
Sunday.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.VOLO

British, 1587 tons, on Government service, sunk about 45 miles N.W. off Mersa Matruh a.m./28. (See Mediterranean) (D.S. 846).

HYDRA II
(torpedoed
?13/12).

Norwegian, 1375 tons. from Bangkok to Hong Kong, torpedoed off Mindoro Island, Philippines, on about 13/12. 9 survivors rescued by Swedish COLOMBIA, 5297 tons, and landed at Fremantle. (D.S. 846).

ABSAROKA
(torpedoed
24/12).

U.S. 5695 tons, torpedoed and damaged on 24/12, has arrived at San Pedro, California in tow. (D.S. 846).

ANNAVORE
(torpedoed
22/12).

Norwegian 3324 tons. torpedoed during night of 21-22/12, is now presumed to have sunk. 13 survivors picked up by a British ship. (D.S. 846).

Submarines Reported.Estimated approx. positions of U/B's.
(D.D.I.C. 1306A/28).

1900A

U/B signal not first sighting report, medium strength bearing 215° at 1900A. My position 060° 30' N. 022° 35' W. May be in vicinity of O.M.50.
(BROKE 2030A/28 to A.C.I.C. Rep. BURNHAM).Submarines Attacked.U.75

Sunk by KIPLING. See Mediterranean.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

To intercept enemy shipping which may now be proceeding to the westward of the Lofoten Islands, TIGRIS and SEALION have been ordered to remain on patrol off the Norwegian coast until the situation clears.

KENT, with Mr. Eden and Mr. Maisky on board, arrived in the Clyde at 1334A today.

At 1215A S.O. Force J engaged upon Operation "Anklet" reported that the Force has been sighted in 66° 31' N. 5° 38' E. by reconnaissance A/C, and escorts of 3 Blenheim Fighters are to meet the Force during daylight tomorrow and the next day.

It has been decided that FORMIDABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS are to proceed to the Far East as soon as possible after completion of refit.

British Air Activity.

During last night 74 A/C attacked Wilhelmshaven, 36 A/C bombed Emden, and 4 A/C attacked the docks at Dunkirk. The operations were helped by perfect visibility and large fires were started at all three places.

Enemy Air Activity.

At 1800A yesterday the Dutch Coaster DE RUYTER was attacked 23 miles N.N.E. of the South Bishops by 3 A/C which fired 2 torpedoes under the ship and dropped 4 bombs astern of her. The ship was damaged and is now beached at Fishguard.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mining.

A.C.I.C. reports today that 124 mines were sunk and 41 more rendered safe off the East Coast of Iceland from the 16th November to the 22nd December.

Owing to fog the approach channels in the Thames Estuary were not swept last night, and one magnetic mine was detonated there by Sweepers at 0715 this morning.

5 magnetic mines were exploded by Sweepers today in the Yarmouth area, and one off the Humber.

The Tyne was closed at 2230 tonight owing to suspected minelaying.

South Atlantic.

Possible
Raider.

At 0747, DEVONSHIRE intercepted a "Q" report from S.S. ~~CITY OF LISLE~~ in 04° 12' S., 35° 58' W. P/L cancellation has been received, but at 1215 DEVONSHIRE intercepted a message in M.N. code with corrupt indicators, and the probability of it being an attempt by a Raider to simulate a cancellation could not be ignored. However, at 2122Z C. in C. S.A. reported that the message had been decoded and appeared to be a genuine cancellation.

X? CITY OF LILLE.

Suspicious
Ship.

Master of U.S. COLLAMER reports sighting a suspicious tanker on 19/12 in 8° 25' S., 34° 21' W.

D/F Stations.

C. in C. S.A. considers that the decision to put an H/F D/F station at Tristan da Cunha needs reconsideration, and prefers St. Helena, where there is already both cable and W/T communication.

/Lourenco ...

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic - Contd.

Lourenço
Marques.

With regard to the proposed use of Lourenço Marques, F.O.I.C. Simonstown reports that while the proposal is desirable to relieve congestion, the U.S. Naval Attaché, Capetown, is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend cargoes calling there for security reasons.

Enemy
M/V.

D/F bearings at 2036 and 2219 suggest a German M/V within 150 miles of 29° S., 22° W., probably northbound.

INDOMITABLE.

INDOMITABLE which is due at Capetown on 1/1 is to proceed to Port Sudan to load aircraft for a ferrying trip to the Far East. C. in C. Med. is to provide A/S escort of 3 destroyers, preferably the 3 Australian N's, NAPIER, NIZAM and NESTOR, who will form part of the Eastern Fleet as long as INDOMITABLE remains with that Fleet.

Mediterranean.

As there is urgent need to increase offensive mining in the Far East, C. in C. Med. was asked if he could spare PORPOISE (S/M) or ABDIEL (minelayer) for this duty. He agrees to ABDIEL, and will sail her for Port Said at once. *See also p. 932*

The title 5th Flotilla has been allocated for the escort flotilla of "Hunts" which C. in C. Med. now desires to form under the direct administration of R.A.(D).

4 alerts were sounded during last night, and bombs were dropped on land and sea. 1 JU.88 was destroyed. Today Malta had 9 alerts. In one at 0747, 36 raiders attacked destroyers off the island and Luqa aerodrome, damaging 2 Blenheims. Another raid at 1243 was made by 24 raiders.

/A force ...

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.SITUATION REPORT.Mediterranean - Contd.

A force of Wellingtons was despatched last night to attack the Naval Base at Salamis and oil installations at the Piraeus. The operations were adversely affected by bad weather. The aerodrome at Heraklion and Suda Bay were also bombed.

Libya
and W.D.

3 Sqdns. of Blenheims, including Free French, bombed enemy positions at Bardia. No activity was seen there.

A mine-sweeping flotilla is on passage from Tobruk to Benghazi. S.O. Force I left Tobruk at 0430 in BAGSHOT to direct minesweeping operations in the northern channel into Benghazi which are due to begin at dawn tomorrow.

The port of Derna is now open.

Convoy
M.E. 8.

A convoy of 4 M.T. ships from Malta arrived at Alexandria this morning escorted by AJAX, DIDO and 6 destroyers from Malta, 2 of which switched p.m./27 for Malta. CARLISLE and 3 destroyers from Alexandria joined the convoy yesterday morning. The force was attacked several times by JU.88 and once yesterday by T.B. aircraft but the only damage caused to our ships was minor damage to MAORI from near miss.

Piraeus.

Ships in Piraeus have been observed to be embarking German troops and M.T., and their departure is probably imminent, but there is no indication of destination.

Salamis,
Crete.

R.A.F. objectives in Greece last night were the naval base at Salamis and oil installations at the Piraeus. Owing to bad weather, only 3 Wellingtons reached Greece. 8 other Wellingtons bombed Heraklion and Suda Bay, Crete. TORBAY has returned from patrol and reports having sunk several ammunition schooners off Crete and secured one torpedo hit on an Italian destroyer of the PARTHENOPE or CLIO Class inside Navarin harbour on 23/12.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Far East.

The original plans for allied co-operation in the Far East dealt mainly with the situation on the outbreak of war. C. in C. Far East points out that some machinery for quick executive action is needed, particularly in connection with our vitally important convoys, and he asks whether anything was settled at Washington which bears on the question. C. in C. Far East 1735/29 contains his appreciation of the situation in the Pacific.

China.

Air raids on Singapore this evening caused only slight damage.

ABDIEL is to sail from Mediterranean, after embarking an outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders, to join Eastern Fleet. *See p. 930*

Shortly after a heavy air raid on Fort Mills (Philippine Is.) today a S/M contact was made in the controlled minefield; 2 mines were fired and a large oil slick was seen.

Slight damage was caused at Medan by air attack today. The reports of parachute landings are without foundation.

America and West Indies.

Oilers.

In view of the new conditions re operational responsibility on A.W.I. Station, C. in C. considers he can surrender one of the station oilers when repairs to ORANGELEAF are complete.

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

→ FORMIDABLE,
ILLUSTRIOUS.

FORMIDABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS will be required to proceed to Far East as soon as practicable after completion of refit.

Request you will direct ships to forward programmes to include minimum essential working up.

It is important that C.A.F.O. 2380/41 should be fully observed. (A.C.N.S.(F), 1653A/29).

CONQUEROR.

Your 2120A/14 and N.O.I.C. Faeroes 1629A/12. Consider it more desirable oil fuel barge should be allocated. In absence of increased storage facilities operational value of CONQUEROR will be much restricted and ship will have to return to Scapa to refuel. Barge could be moored in near oiler berth at Skaale Fiord where protection could be afforded both to it and to CONQUEROR^{when} the latter is fuelling. (A.C.O.S., 1704/29 to Admty)

Co-operation with Russia.

Movements of
Russian Ships.

Serial No. 8. Six M/Vs. Details. (D.T.D., 1800/29 to Adm. Miles).

Movements.

→ ILLUSTRIOUS,
ST. ALBANS.
BURZA.

C. in C. W.A. 1059A/25. Sailed ST. ALBANS. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry, 0402A/29). My 0944A/28. Sailed. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 0644A/29) Arrived ST. ALBANS at 1720A. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1747A/29) 1700A/29 arrived at Bar Light Vessel ILLUSTRIOUS, ST. ALBANS. BURZA detached to base from I one buoy. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 2255A/29).

ASCANIA.

A.M. 1232/30/10. ASCANIA will be ready to sail a.m.6/1. Request destination. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 0907A/29 to Admty). Your 0907/29. Destination of ASCANIA on leaving Southampton is Clyde. (D.O.D. (H), 1658A/28 to C. in C. Portsmouth). *See also p. 940.*

ADVENTURE.

My 1059A/27 and 1116A/27. ADVENTURE delayed 24 hours due to fog. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 0927A/29).

STURGEON.

Request you will hold STURGEON at Scapa for the time being. (F.O.S., 1003A/29 to A.C.O.S.)

See also p. 936

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - Contd.

CHESHIRE.

CHESHIRE leaves Clyde for Freetown 10/1.
(S.O.W.P., 1020A/29)

BARCLOSE,
BARFOAM,
BARFORD,
CARDAK,
SILIVRI.

C. in C. W.A. 2354A/10 and 1605A/11.
Sailed B.D.Vs. BARCLOSE, BARFOAM, and BARFORD
with Ferry Steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company
speed 7 knots. E.T.A. Horta, Fayal A.M. 7/1.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1125A/29)

See also p. 941.

KENT.

Request you will sail KENT for Scapa a.m./31.
(C. in C. H.F., 1232A/29 to N.O.I.C. Greenock).
KENT arrived Clyde. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 1334A/29)

O.14.

Scapa arrival O.14 with LOCH MONTEITH.
(A.C.O.S., 1233A/29).

O.21.

Dundee arrival. O.21.
(Capt. S.9., 1315A/29).
(1) Intend to sail O.21 from Dundee 0900A/30
for Rosyth. E.T.A. May Island 1300A/30.
(2) O.21 will be escorted from Buddon to No.22
buoy by Trawler RIVER LOSSIE request onward escort
may be arranged from thence to Rosyth.
(3) Request fighter protection may be arranged.
(Capt. S.9., 1455A/29 to C. in C. Rosyth)

REGENT.

Subject to defects and change of batteries being
completed by 10/1 it is intended to sail REGENT
for Portsmouth p.m.16/1.
(Capt. S.5., 1416A/29)

PRINCE CHARLES
PRINCE
LEOPOLD,
PRINCESS JOSEPHINE
CHARLOTTE.

C.S.10 is requested to sail PRINCE CHARLES,
PRINCE LEOPOLD, and PRINCESS JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE to
arrive Invergordon at 0900A/30.
(ii) R.A. (D) is requested to detail escort of
one Destroyer. (C. in C. H.F., 1616A/29)
Proceed by searched channels so as to arrive
Invergordon at 0900A/30.
(C.S., 10 1929A/29 to PRINCE LEOPOLD, PRINCE
CHARLES, PRINCESS JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE).
My 1616A/29. After exchange of troops has taken
place request you will sail PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE
LEOPOLD, and PRINCESS JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE, escorted by
FORESIGHT, for Scapa.
(C. in C. H.F., 2215A/29 to N.O.I.C. Invergordon).
Add to my 1535/29. PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE
LEOPOLD, PRINCESS JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE escorted by
FORESIGHT leaving Scapa 0230/30 to Invergordon.
(A.C.O.S., 2306A/29)

SAN ZOTICO.

When convenient detach one ship to Sullom Voe
to escort oiler SAN ZOTICO to Scapa.
(C. in C. H.F., 1629A/29 to S.O. Force J).

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
"Archery".

Have received the undermentioned thirteen German wounded prisoners on 28/12. Names. (V, A, S, N, A., 0131/29). (Hosp. Ship VASNA.)

Denmark
Strait
Patrol.

My 1000/28. Leaving Hvalfjord with ABELIA 0900/29. E.T.A. 066° 26' N., 023° 11' W. 0100/30. BELLWORT did not bring correct R.D.F. replacement for ABELIA but has transferred part of her own set so that ABELIA is now in full operation and BELLWORT is not. Suggest VERONICA be instructed to do likewise to BELLWORT on return to Hvalfjord. Unless otherwise ordered intend to take up patrol in accordance with F.V.C., One para. 18 and 19 without attempting contact VERONICA.

(ANEMONE, 0800/29 to C.S.1)

(1) Corvette patrols against (corrupt group) enemy. (a) ANEMONE 066° 25' N., 026° W. (b) Not applicable. (c) ABELIA 180° Patrolling on course 270°. (2) On 28/12 very irregular ice edge running 045° and 270° from position 066° 29' N., 026° 11' W. (3) NORFOLK will patrol area between Straumnes and ANEMONE (4) VERONICA and SWEETBRIAR leave patrol for Hvalfjord 18 hours after ANEMONE and ABELIA sail. (5) RENOWN inform S.O. P.A. (C.S.1., 0930N/29 to ANEMONE, VERONICA, A.C.I.C. ABELIA, SWEETBRIAR).

At 1959/29. Estimated situation. NORFOLK and two corvettes on patrol "White". Two corvettes en route for patrol "White".

(A.C.I.C., 1610N/29)

TIGRIS,
SEALION.

Unless F.O. Force J orders otherwise I intend you to remain in present patrol areas until situation clarifies. (F.O.S., 1004A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).

A. TIGRIS leaves patrol after dark 29th and proceed dived by day as follows:- Through 66° 20' N., 09° E., 63° N., 03° E., 62° N., 03° E., to patrol in vicinity of 270° Utvaer 10 miles. Object to attack cruisers and larger warships. (F.O.S., 1639A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).

Enemy shipping may now be proceeding to Westward of Lofoten Islands. SEALION remain on patrol until after dark 30th., then proceed through 67° N., 08° E., and 62° N., 00° 00', to R/V as ordered by S.3. on 2/1 for escort to Holy Loch. (F.O.S., 1721A/29 to TIGRIS, SEALION).

/East...

29.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. - Contd.

East Coast Patrols.

Patrol tonight 2 M.G.Bs. Q.E.3. 3 M.L's Q.E.6.
(C. in C. Nore, 1051A/29).
My 1230A/29. One destroyer only is to be sailed to take up patrol C.
(C. in C. Nore, 1516A/29 to Capt. D.16)
My 1045A/29. M.G.Bs. are to carry out patrol Q.E.4.A tonight.
(C. in C. Nore, 1551A/29).

Operation "Anklet".

Following has been received begins: C. in C. H.F. from S.O. Force J. My P.C.S. 066° 31' N., 5° 38' E., 245° 11 knots. Sighted by R/C aircraft. Proceeding by reverse of outward route.
T.O.O. 1215A. Ends.
(C. in C. H.F., 1522A/29 to F.O.S., C. in C. Rosyth, A.C.O.S.)

SEAWOLF.

Request you will sail SEAWOLF so as to arrive Holy Loch about 23/1 carrying out a patrol in Northern Waters on the way if desired.
(F.O.S. 1719A/29 to S.B.N.O. North Russia)

STURGEON.

Cancel my 1238A/27. When fuelled, A.C.O.S. is requested to sail STURGEON for Polyarno escorted to position:-
(a) 61° N., 03° 30' W., thence proceeding submerged by day through positions
(b) 66° 30' N., 03° 30' W., (c) 71° 50' N., 11° 30' E., to waiting position
(d) 73° 30' N., 24° E. Thence as ordered by S.B.N.O. North Russia. Request A.C.O.S. will indicate E.T.A. at position (d). Object on passage to attack and then report enemy vessels. Torpedoes should not however be expended on unimportant targets. (F.O.S., 1723A/29 to S.B.N.O. North Russia). *Doc # 933*

British Air Activity.

S.B.R.

My 1632A/25. Amend paras. A and B to read
A. Area 73, East of 009 W., and South of 049° 30' N. B. Area 76, East of 009° W., and North of 045° 30' N., (F.O.S., 1024A/29 to H.Q.C.C. Rpt. C. in C. Plymouth) (F.O.S. 1756A/29)

Bombing Operations.

On day 28/12 no operations. On night 28/29, 73 A/C attacked Wilhelmshaven, 31 A/C bombed Emden and 4 A/C bombed the Docks at Dunkirk.
(H.Q.B.C., 1200/29).

/Escort...

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. - Contd.

Escort for Force J.

Expect escort Sorties of 3 Blenheim fighter aircraft from 1st to last light tomorrow. Your estimated position at 0945/30 being 064° 35' N., 001° 30' W., course 180°, speed 11 knots. Escort will be repeated the following day. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1737/29 to S.O. Force J).

Use of Flares by A/C near Convoys.

When in the vicinity of a convoy (minimum limit 15 miles) A/C will not ~~repeat~~ not drop flares to illuminate suspicious A/SV contacts at night unless the escorts have already fired illuminants. In such cases they will inform the S.O. escort of the position of the contact by R/T and suggest the use of flares. When outside this range from a convoy A/C may use flares to illuminate suspicious contacts firing two star recognition cartridges at the same time thereby establishing identity should the contact prove to be friendly. (C. in C. W.A., 1833A/29).

Enemy Air Activity.

"Smilax".

Fighter protection being sent to assist Code Word "Smilax". (Nore W/T, 0751/29).

DE RUYTER attacked on 28/12.

(Dutch Coaster) DE RUYTER when 23 miles N.N.E. of S. Bishops at 1800A/28, was attacked by 2 Heinkels and 1 Junker. 1 Heinkel fired 2 torpedoes from 120 ft. which went under ship, broke surface, and exploded 500 yds. away. 2nd Heinkel dropped 4 bombs astern of ship and machine-gunned ship. Bridge and upper works shot away. 1 casualty badly wounded. Ship now beached at Fishguard. At 1752 CH.L. Strumbles plotted 3 unidentified A/C and 1 surface vessel in close proximity. Western Filter did not identify these plots. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1339/29).

Unknown Ship.

Intercepted at 1753 G.M.T. D E unknown Station on 1650 kc/s A3. AAAA attacked by aircraft. No position given. (Port Patrick Radio, 1755/29).

Faeroes bombed on 28/12.

Enemy aircraft attacked Skaale Fjord at 1310/28, bombing at random. No casualties or damage. Blenheim patrol in immediate vicinity unable to intercept largely due to lack of communication between ground and aircraft. (O.C. Troops, Faeroes, 1830/29 to War Office).

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.Thames
Estuary.

Owing to fog the approach Channels have not been swept. (X.D.O. Sheerness, 0850/29).
On magnetic mine detonated by Sweepers at 0715/29. Details. (Capt. M/S Sheerness, 1533/29).

Iceland.
Mines
cleared.

My 1814/9/11. 52 mines sunk between approx. 064° 40' N., 014° 17' W., and 065° 23' N., 013° 39' W. Also 72 mines sunk Reydar Fiord Seidis Fjord (Iceland) area from 17/11 to 22/12. Rendered safe 10 mines mark XX and 31 mines type not yet specified between 064° 15' N., 015° 15' W. and 066° 27' N., 14° 52' W., from 16/11 to 10/12. (A.C.I.C., 1047N/29 to Admty, C. in C. H.F.)

Yarmouth
Area.

LL. Sweepers detonated one blue magnetic mine at 1115A/29. (Details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1207A/29).

LL sweepers detonated 1 blue magnetic mine at 1250 A, and 1 red magnetic mine. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1325A/29).

LL Sweeper detonated one red magnetic mine at 1425A. (details) (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1459A/29)

LL sweeper detonated one red magnetic mine at 1300A and one blue magnetic mine at 1311A. Details (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 1607A/29).

Mine off
Tjockoe
Light.

Following received From Stavsnæs Radio. Mine warning. A mine sighted at 1515 G.M.T. in bearing 10 degrees from Tjockoe Light distance 0 - 5 min. (Nore W/T, No T.O.O., T.O.R., 1850/29).

Operation
Q.O.

Your 2146A/28. 1. Advantage of permanent minefield is considered to outweigh disadvantage
2. Suggest you consider cutting a channel through 403 Q.Z.X. after operation Q.O. and while sweepers and air co-operation are available.
3. Subsequently Gap E might be mined.
4. Consider PLOVER should carry out Dover operations first.
5. Above scheme was discussed today with V.A. Dover and with an officer on your staff. (A.C.N.S. H., 1916A/29 to C. in C. Nore).
When B.S.28 has been cleared the final phase of the operation will consist of clearing the overlap of 384 and 403 Q.Z.X. and doing a high percentage sweep 120°, from position A for 10 miles to ascertain possible density of enemy minefield This sweep however should not be undertaken if the force is being shadowed by enemy aircraft.
Request your proposal for final phase. F.O.I.C. Harwich pass P/L version to M/S 9 and M.S.13. (C. in C. Nore, 2156A/29 to M/S 9).

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining. - Contd.Humber.

One magnetic mine exploded today at 1107 by Sweeper. Details. (F.O. Humber, 1920A/29).

Tyne.

Port of Tyne closed owing to suspected enemy minelaying. Expect to reopen about noon tomorrow. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 2230/29).

Navigational.Rosyth.

My 2319/28. Port now open. (C. in C. Rosyth, 0757/29).

Tersky
Orlov
Light.

Your 2225C/7 and Admiralty's 620 A.Z. Tersky Orlov light. Authorities here state insulation changed from Green to White. Character as given in Admiralty list Light Co 12, 1941 560. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 1048C/29 to S.B.N.O. Archangel. Reptd. 1st M/S.F., DEDA).

8 B. Buoy.

8 B Buoy reported extinguished. (F.O.I.C. Gt.Yarmouth, 1606A/29).

Casualties & Defects.QUEBEC CITY.My 0650A ^{INT. W.D.} and 0854A. ^{INT. W.D.} QUEBEC CITY now developed further furnace troubles. Have diverted her to Humber. (WINCHESTER, 1200A/29).MONTENOL.
DUCHESS OF
MONTROSE.

Master R.F.A. MONTENOL reports that ship was involved in collision with S.S. DUCHESS OF MONTROSE p.m. 27th December off Gourock. DUCHESS OF MONTROSE is being repaired on Clyde. (N.S.O., Greenock, 1610/28).

Shipping & Convoys.C.T. 9.

C.T. 9 will now comprise VOLENDAM and MONTCALM ex Avonmouth and Clyde respectively. (3) VOLENDAM will embark at Avonmouth on 5/1 and sail 6/1. MONTCALM will embark at Gourock 6/1 and sail 7/1. (D. of S.T., 0348A/29).

P.Q. 7.

Russians have requested that the two ships of P.Q. 7 be sent to Murmansk to discharge. This will afford them breathing space for ice breakers and increase chances of clearing EMPIRE MEEOR, CHULMLEIGH, and SAINT CLEARS from Bakaritza. Request BRITOMART and others concerned may be informed. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1135C/29 to Admty).

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys - Contd.P.W. 92.
ASCANIA.

Your 1000A/28 and my 0907A/29. As no escort is available for independent sailing intend to sail ASCANIA in convoy P.W.92 on 6/1, if a destroyer is available for that convoy, for Milford Haven proceeding thence independently to Clyde. E.T.A. 0900/9.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 1253A/29.) ~~See~~ p.933

LOCH GARRY.

N.O.I.C. Oban 1826/28. N.O.I.C. Oban is requested sail LOCH GARRY to R/V with CAPE PORTLAND in position 058° 47' N. 005° 13' W. at 1000/31. S.O.N.T. is requested sail CAPE PORTLAND accordingly to provide escort to Thorshavn. Route as follows from R/V to Thorshavn. Fighter protection requested. (A.C.O.S., 1538/29 to N.O.I.C. Oban.)

Q.P. 4.

SEAGULL, SPEEDY, STELLA CAPELLA, BUTE with tanker MIRLO sailed Murmansk for Iokanka to await Q.P. 4.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 1555C/29.)
My 2309C/28. State of affairs 1200C/29. STALIN bunkered from TREHATA. LENIN's portion has been delayed by bad visibility but now proceeding. Position 064° 48' N. 038° 57' E. Speed will be adjusted so that both portions meet at ice. Latest ice R/C shows condition from Puimaup Terski Coast not porous.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 1659C/29 to Admty., EDINBURGH, S.B.N.O. Murmansk.)

Q.P.
Convoys.

Signals concerning progress of sailing of Q.P. convoys should be repeated to A.C.I.C.
(D.T.D., 1739/29 to S.B.N.O. Archangel.)

STOKE CITY.

Your 1601A/28. Arrived.
(N.O.I.C. Kirkwall, 1830A/29 to N.O.I.C. Faroes)

P.Q. 7.

My 1834N/28. This should consist of 7 or more ships.
(A.C.I.C., 2245N/29 to C. in C. H.F.)

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

B.D.V's.
Horta.

N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada pass to B.C. at Horta, Fayal. B.D.V's BARCLOSE, BARFOAM and BARFORD with ferry steamers CARDAK and SILIVRI in company E.T.A Horta A.M./7. Coal required on arrival. (N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 1127A/29 to F.O.C.N.A. etc.) *See p.934*

Naval
Vessels
and
Navicerts.

Your 1850/24. "Naval vessels" are not automatically exempt from complying with Navicert requirements. Exemption is dependent on nature both of cargo and service on which vessel is engaged. (D.E.W.D. 1533A/29 to N.A. Madrid).

Rubber,
Casablanca.

C.5. America reports 6 - 20-ton trucks left Casablanca 24/12 for Nemours loaded bales refined rubber, destination Marseilles. (Tangier, 1900/29 to Admty.)

South Atlantic.

INDUSTRIA.

Overdue shipping. Cancel my 1006/27. INDUSTRIA arrived Capetown. (S.O.I. Capetown, 0951B/29, to Admty. etc.)

S.S. QUEEN
MARY.

D. of S.T.'s 0301/23. QUEEN MARY sailed from Capetown for Trinidad today 29th requires on arrival 7000 tons fuel 500 tons water. (P.S.T.O. Simonstown 1044Z/29 to N.O.I.C. Trinidad)

D/F Stations,
Tristan and
St. Helena.

My 0953N/30/10. Admty. 1903/12/10 and F.O.I.C. Simonstown's 0959/19/12. Suggest that decision to put an HF/DF Station at Tristan Da Cunha needs reconsideration for the following reasons.
2. Consider there is a definite need for an H/F D/F Station at St. Helena and recommend that equipment allocated to Tristan Da Cunha should be installed there.
3. Next position in order of importance in S. Atlantic, in my opinion, is in Gulf of Guinea, preferably at Pointe Nore or Libreville. If undesirable to put a station in Allied Territory, Lagos is the next choice. Further South at Walvis Bay would be uneconomical as it is on the Great Circle between Ascension and Durban and the climate and conditions are very bad. (C. in C. S.A., 1241Z/29 to Admty.)

/DAUNTLESS....

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.-Contd.DAUNTLESS.

Your 1023/26. DAUNTLESS from Simonstown after ranging on Capetown degaussing range departs for Table Bay 1420 G.M.T./29 for Pointe Noire, S. of A. 17 knots, E.T.A. 0700 G.M.T./3/1. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1503Z/29 to B.L.O. Pointe Noire, Admiralty, etc.)

DAUNTLESS
carrying
gold.

My 1503Z/29. Before leaving Simonstown DAUNTLESS embarked £3,000,000 bullion for U.K. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1505Z/29 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

Visit to
Rio.

Visit approved, 48 hours, dress white. (N.A. Rio de Janeiro 1532Z/29 to S.O.(I) Montevideo, R.A.S.A.D. S.A.S.)

Lourenco
Marques.

B.A.D. Washington 1615/20 and Admty. 1526/27. Matter is still under discussion with U.S. N.A. Capetown. While proposal is most desirable to relieve congestion U.S. N.A. is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend cargoes calling at Lourenco Marques for security reasons. C.S.A. Lourenco Marques is able to route onwards if required. (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1545Z/29 to C. in C. S.A., (R) Admty., C. in C. E.I.)

* CITY OF
LISLE.
"Q"
Report.* ? CITY OF LILLE.

DEVONSHIRE intercepted QQQQ from ^{*}CITY OF LISLE, suspicious vessel in 004° 12' S. 035° 58' W. at 0747. H/F P/L cancellation has been received but at 1215 DEVONSHIRE intercepted 8 groups of M.N. Code with corrupt indicators from CITY OF LISLE. This may have been genuine but probability of it being an attempt by a raider to simulate a cancellation cannot be ignored. (C. in C. S.A. 1550Z/29 to Admty., R.A.S.A.D., (R) DEVONSHIRE CANTON, CILICIA).

My 1550/29. Message from CITY^{of} LISLE has now been decoded and appeared to be a genuine cancellation. (C. in C. S.A. 2122Z/29 to Admty. etc.)

DEVONSHIRE.
CILICIA.
CANTON.

Your 2117Z/24. Fuel remaining at 1200Z/29 DEVONSHIRE 76% CILICIA 80% CANTON 56%. R/V for 1100Z/31 007° 30' N. 035° 00' W. A.M. Cs. will pass through 006° 39' N. 040° 00' W. tomorrow Tuesday. (DEVONSHIRE 1732Z/29 to C. in C. S.A.)

/INDOMITABLE.....

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic-Contd.

INDOMITABLE.

Amended E.T.A. 1500B/31. Intend to fly 2 Albatrosses ashore arriving about 0800B/31. Request any local recognition procedure for aircraft may be communicated. (INDOMITABLE, 1837Z/29 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown).

Convoy
Conferences
Sierra
Leone.

Your 1835Z/28. Additional seetime entailed in S.O.'s Ship proceeding to Freetown is not acceptable. (C. in C. W.A., 1854A/29 to C. in C. S.A.)

Suspicious
Tanker.

Master of COLLAMER reports having sighted on 19/12 in 008° 25' S. 034° 21' W. a tanker which he considered acting suspiciously. Description. Ship overhauled COLLAMER until 2 miles abeam then altered course to northward and stopped. Ship made definite smoke signals with stack but at no time made any recognizable signal. Last seen heading west. (S.O.I. Montevideo, 2017Z/29 to R.A.S.A.D.)

Mediterranean.

Piraeus
Activity.

Several ships in Piraeus observed to be embarking German troops and M.T. Departure probably imminent destination unknown. (Capt. S.I., 0005B/29 to S/M's on Patrol).

PORPOISE.
ABDIEL.

There is an urgent requirement for increasing our offensive mining effort in Far East. Request your views on whether you can spare either PORPOISE or ABDIEL for this duty. (Hd. of M. 0015A/29 to C. in C. Med.)
Your 0015A/29 ABDIEL can be spared. Intend to sail her for Port Said at once. Should an outfit of mines be embarked for passage Far East? This would entail a visit to Haifa before proceeding. (C. in C. Med., 1131B/29 to Admty.)
Your 1131/29. ABDIEL should embark an outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders. (D.D.O.D. (M) 1657A/29 to C. in C. Med.)

/Benghazi.....

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Benghazi
Minesweeping.

Comply with C. in C. 1935/27 and S.O. Force I 1731/28. S.O. Force I left in BAGSHOT 0430. (S.O. Force I Tobruk, 0745B/29 to SIKH, ? HOTSPUR (R) BAGSHOT).

KINGSTON.

Return to Alexandria. (C. in C. Med. 0816B/29 to KINGSTON (R) Capt. (D) 14, R.A. (D) Med.)

LIPARI.
(German)

Departure about 23 hours 28/12. (Consul, Malaga 1030/29 to Bedrock (R) Admty.)

Enemy
Units.

Have gained contact 1 D/R 1 M/V 33.56 N., 11.15 E. 011° 12. (A/C F. 1120/29 to Med. A/C).

UNA.
P.35.

Proceed through positions:- A. 038° 05' 010° 50' B. 037° 54' 011° 53' C. 037° 20' 012° 50' D. 037° 10' 013° 12' E. 036° 10' 014° 00' (Corrupt group). Adjust speed to proceed submerged between positions B and C during daylight 2/1 and thence by S.E. searched channels to arrive Marsamsett before 1800B /3rd making E.T.A. when east of 14°. Ref. QBB 198 southern sector Gozo light will be exhibited for 10 minutes every hour from 0500 to 0710/B on 3rd and 4/1. P.35. to follow same route 24 hours after UNA. (V.A. Malta 1131B/29 amended 2045B/29 to UNA (R) F.O.C.N.A. Capt. S.8, P.35, P.39, O.24, C. in C. Med., Capt. S.1.)

Carrier
Position

Ref. Prime Minister's Susan No. 151 of 27/12 para. 2b. Place name to which carrier is to be sent to put up Hurricanes was received corrupt and doubt arises as to whether port intended is Massawa or Kilindini. Your 220 of 27/12 mentions Massawa. Please confirm. (C. in C. M.E., 1132/29 to W.O.)

U-boat
sinkings.

Consider it very desirable to publish sinking of enemy submarines in this area in order to encourage crews of ships on Western desert run who have suffered many losses and show some reluctance to sail. Intend making statement to press on 2/1. (C. in C. Med. 1145B/29 to Admty.) Reply: Admty. 1742A/1/1/42).

/Alexandria....

0948B/29th December.

944A

Date: 31.12.41.
From: C. in C. Mediterranean Fleet.

Recd: 0653

Naval Code 'J' by W/T

Addressed: Ships and Authorities Mediterranean
BASEGRAM

Merchant Ship
Movement
Summaries.

The present system of issuing Merchant ships movements summaries has not proved satisfactory as the information contained therein has rarely been sufficiently up to date.

(2) To remedy this, as from 0001 G.M.T. first January paragraph 2 of my 829B/6/12 is cancelled and the following instructions are to be carried out:

(a) N.O.i/c Syrian Ports N.O.i/c Palestine Ports
N.O.i/c Famagusta N.O.i/c Port Said N.O.i/c Alexandria
and C S A Iskanderun are to make a signal if possible 24 hours before a merchant ship sails from their port giving:

- (1) Name of ship and name of escort if any.
- (2) Time of sailing
- (3) Route.
- (4) Brief description of ship. (correct B R 115)
- (5) Speed of advance and expected time of arrival.

This signal is to commence with the word TACT and is to be made to A.I.G. 76. N.O.i/c Alexandria will only make tact signals for eastbound ships.

(B) N.O.'s i/c Benghazi Derna Tobruk Mersa Matruh and N.O.i/c Alexandria (westbound only) are similarly to signal information of intended sailings from their ports to A.I.G. No. 72 these signals need not necessarily be in the form of a tact signal.

(C) The N.O.'s i/c at all Ports are to compile a Merchant Ship movement summary from this information and are to distribute it to:

- (1) H.M.S.'s sailing from their ports.
- (2) F.O.'s afloat for issue to ships which they may sail.
- (3) Appropriate R.A.F. Authorities in their areas.

(D) The expected time of arrival only of Merchant ships should be passed immediately to official members of local M.O.W.T. M.E. Committee or port control committee.

(E) Instructions to ports Red Sea will follow.

0948B/29

A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
N.A. 1st S.L.
Ops. (3)
O.D. (5)
O.I.C. (3)
D.S.D. (2)
D.N.I. (4)
M. (2)
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (4)

D.T.D. (M)
D.T.D. (C)
D. of S.T. (2)
I.P. (3)
W.D.

J.R. 2.

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.Alexandria,
boom gate.

State of Boom gate at Alexandria considered unsatisfactory for defence against human torpedo. Proposals. Request advice.
(C. in C. Med., 1215B/31 to Admty.).

Benghazi.

Following is my general intention for opening port of Benghazi.

(A) S.O. Force "I" is to report expected date port will be opened. N.O.I.C. Alexandria is to sail ANTWERP escorted by 2 destroyers detailed by R.A. (D) Med. to arrive Benghazi on that day. Naval and army port operating parties and their stores are to be embarked in ANTWERP.

(B) 2 "A" lighters and 4 "D" Lighters are to be sailed to Benghazi by S.O. Force "I" as agreed locally with proposals of 8th Army.

(C) N.O.I.C. Alexandria in conjunction with P. S.T.O. Egypt and S.O. Force "I" is to arrange tonnage or shipment to Cyrenaican port of tugs and lighters (corrupt group) "Aggression" para. 44. Naval crews will be provided for the 2 seagoing tugs at Benghazi.

(D) First convoy for Benghazi consisting of HARBOE ~~and~~ JENSEN, and CYRISTA is to be sailed when ordered by C. in C. Med. N.O.I.C. Benghazi to report time it can be received.

(E) 2 motor launches will be sailed to join Force "I" on completion of refit.

(C. in C. Med. 1227B/29 to all concerned in "Aggression").

Libya.

Cositrep No. 80. 4 Ind. div. states reliably reported Benghazi that about 5,000 own prisoners have been evacuated by sea to Greece. Summary. Continued pressure has not yet succeeded in dislodging the enemy from his strong position at Agedabia, the right flank of which is protected by his armour.

(C. in C. M.E. 1525/29 to W.O.)

Situation and Appreciation, for C.I.G.S. from Gen. Auchinleck.

(C. in C. M.E., 1636/29 to W.O.)

See Lion Copy.

/INDOMITABLE.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

1636/29th December
IN

From C. in C. Middle East.

Date 29.12.41.
Recd. 2145.

Cypher.

Addressed - War Office.

MOST IMMEDIATE

2 1683. C.S/479 cipher 29/12.

First of Two Parts.

Personal for C.I.C.S. from Gen. Auchinleck.
Cairo 0900 hrs. G.M.T.

1. Area north of an east and west line through Antelat now reported clear of formed bodies of enemy though possibly many small parties and stragglers remain to be collected. 7 Ind. Inf. Bde. of 4 Ind. Div. has taken over Benghazi from Spt. Gp. of 7 Armd. Div. which is joining our troops facing Agedabia. Heavy rain and demolitions have hindered traffic on main road Tobruk-Derna-Benghazi.
2. Enemy has prepared some defences covering Agedabia from north east and south stretching roughly from a point ten miles north of that place to a point fifteen miles south of it. Much enemy M.T. reported round Agedabia. Yesterday 22 Armd. Bde. was engaged most of the day with enemy columns said to include fifty tanks in area twenty to thirty miles south and south east of Agedabia apparently with inconclusive results. Our patrols believed to be pushing westwards towards Agheila.
3. There are no signs of enemy being reinforced but it is likely he will try to stay where he is till pushed out or starved out. He seems to intend to stand at Agedabia using his armour to cover his southern flank to prevent envelopment by us. Ritchie is making every effort to cut the road behind him while keeping up pressure on him from north and east but owing to maintenance difficulties forces available are comparatively weak especially in infantry and can not be risked in attacks which might involve heavy losses.
4. Enemy submarines have created serious situation as regards shipment of M.T. fuel to Tobruk which has caused temporary petrol shortage in forward area. This is being rectified by direct supply from railhead but this demands much extra transport as distance to Antelat is over 300 miles as crow flies.

5. /

5. Bardia has been heavily bombed and shelled during last few days preparatory to being attacked by our forces.

6. 4 Ind Div. report from Benghazi that reliable information shows that enemy succeeded in evacuating following prisoners of war held by them by sea Buff's 500 including C.O. New Zealanders 700 South Africans 3000. This is regrettable but was to be expected. Rough round figure.

Last Part.

Estimate our total casualties today in Cyrenaican campaign all causes offr. and other ranks British 550 and 5500. Indian 60 and 1200 South African 220 and 4000. New Zealand 220 and 3000. Polish 6 and 130. Australian 4 and 80. Total 14970. These figures are on no account for publication. Enemy p.o.w. received to date at Alexandria or in base hospitals about 4500 German and 8500 Italian total 13000. more on the way.

7. Ritchie has got only five infantry bns. in addition to armoured cars three and a half field regts. L.R.D.C. patrols and 22 armd. bde. with about 130 American tanks. By his present dispositions he hopes to prevent supplies reaching Rommel and eventually force him into an encounter battle in an attempt to break through westwards. If successful in enforcing encounter battle our superior tank strength should offset our present inferiority in infantry and guns. Ritchie cannot risk an attack against the prepared Agedabia positions believed to be held by the whole of the remaining German Force which although disorganised still has plenty of fight left in it.

1636/29

Received from War Office p.m.30/12.

	War Office distribution.
1st Lord.	S. of S.
1st S. L.	C. I. G. S.
5th S. L.	V. C. I. G. S.
V. C. N. S.	D. M. O. & P.
A. C. N. S. (F).	D. D. M. O. (O).
Nav. Sec.	D. P. (2).
N. A. 1st S. L.	M. O. 1, 5, 6.
P. A. S. (S).	D. D. I. P.
D. O. D. (F).	D. M. I.
D. D. O. D. (F).	D. D. M. I. (I).
D. of P. (2).	M. I. 3, 3b, 14.
E. P. S.	D. A. F. V.
H. of M. (10).	Cabinet War Room.
I. P. (2).	Col. Jacob (Cabinet Offices)
N. I. D. 10 (Pay Gen. Wilson)	Duty Captain (Admiralty)
D. P. D.	Duty Officer (Upper Admiralty War Room)
D. N. A. D.	
D. A. S. W. (2).	H. of War Registry (Admiralty).
D. D. I. C.	A. M. C. S. Air Ministry.

946

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.INDOMITABLE.

A.M. 2125/10. (page 314)

- Cs. in C. concerned are requested to arrange for INDOMITABLE (due Capetown 1/1) to proceed independently to Port Sudan at best speed to load aircraft for a ferrying trip to Far East, details of which will be signalled later.
2. Ship is to disembark her own outfit of aircraft at Aden on passage North except 12 Albacores and 8 Sea Hurricanes which are to be retained for protection.
3. C. in C. Med. is requested to detail 3 destroyers and arrange for them to meet INDOMITABLE in vicinity of Socotra and act as A/S escort to Port Sudan and throughout ferrying operation. It would be convenient if the 3 Australian N's NAPIER, NIZAM and NESTOR could be detailed for this. They will subsequently ~~be~~ be required to form Eastern Fleet so long as INDOMITABLE remains with that Fleet.
4. Authorities are requested to pass necessary information contained in this and subsequent signals to Air Authorities concerned.
5. F.O.I.C. Simonstown pass to INDOMITABLE on arrival at Capetown. (A.C.N.S. (F) 1639A/29 to C's in C. Med., E.I. S. A.)

German Shipping.

Departure 27th ELIZABETH HENDRIK FISSER for Cartagena in ballast. Departure 24th from Burriana SULLBERG for Marseilles. HANS SCHMIDT expected sailing 29/30th for Garrucha to load Iron ore. (Valencia 1712/29).

11th D.F.
(HUNTS)

Your 1759B/28. 11th flotilla allocated. (D.O.D. (F) 1810A/29 to C. in C. Med.)
A.M. 1810A/29. For 11th read 5th.
(D.O.D. (F) 1259A/1/1/1942).

Day 28/12.

Air Report.

Martlets patrolling over convoy en route to Alexandria from Malta engaged 4 enemy torpedo bombers off Cyrenaica coast destroying 1 forcing 2 to jettison. Fourth made a wild shot which ran wide. 1 Martlet down. Fulmars subsequently drove off large formation JU. 88's attempting high level attack forcing them to jettison bombs. Night 28/29. Objectives in Greece were naval base Salamis and oil installations Piraeus. Only 3 Wellingtons reached Greece owing to bad weather. Bombs dropped near munitions factory Salamis, on Piraeus, and jetty port Heracles. Bursts seen but damage not ascertained. 8 Wellingtons bombed Heraklion and Suda Bay Crete. Bombs fell on aerodrome runway Heraklion and started fire near buildings in town. Remaining Wellingtons returned or jettisoned bombs owing to icing and engine trouble. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1819/29).

/THORN.....

947

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean-Contd.THORN.
PROTEUS.
THUNDERBOLT.

THORN is to leave patrol p.m./31 and return to Alexandria through $037^{\circ} 46' 019^{\circ} 30' 035^{\circ} 44' 021^{\circ} 10' 032^{\circ} 35' 028^{\circ} 26'$ passing second position about 2200B/1/1 and arriving Alexandria Sactuary 0500B/5.

PROTEUS and THUNDERBOLT are to establish patrols in areas P.1 and P. respectively entering these areas at 0200B/1/1 keeping to N.E. of line $320^{\circ}/140^{\circ}$ through $037^{\circ} 54' 019^{\circ} 54'$. (Capt. S.1, 1921B/29 to S/M's named).

Situation
Report 179.

Convoy of 4 M.T. ships from Malta arrived Alexandria a.m. /29 one ship continuing to Port Said. Convoy was escorted by AJAX, DIDO and 6 destroyers from Malta, 2 of which switched p.m. 27 for Malta. CARLISLE and 3 destroyers from Alexandria joined convoy a.m./28. Force was attacked several times by JU.88 and once by T.B. aircraft on 28th apparently not having been sighted previously. Attacks successfully broken up on 2 occasions by Fulmar and Martlets, one enemy T.B. being shot down by Martlet, who was afterwards shot down himself by enemy. One Fulmar forced to land, crew saved. Minor near miss damage to MAORI.

2. Western Desert. Mine-Sweeping Flotilla now on passage Tobruk to Benghazi covered by destroyers Sweeping to commence daylight 30th. Extensive minelaying by aircraft reported off Benghazi and possibly some mines in harbour. Harbour facilities and moles reported damaged and (? one) ship scuttled to block entrance. But anticipate daily rate of 600 tons can be handled after some clearance.

3. Port of Derna now open.

4. Convoys running to and from Tobruk have encountered heavy scale of U-boat attack. WARSZAWA torpedoed by U-boat at 1430/26 in $032^{\circ} 10' N. 024^{\circ} 32' E.$ taken in tow by PEONY to Tobruk but torpedoed again and sunk at 2015/26. Total casualties four crew and 20 South African. B.D.V. BURGONET rescued 309 and PEONY remainder of survivors. My 1202/28, about 14 survivors of VOLO in Lighter A.11 and LEGION. My 1922/26, no survivors rescued from SALVIA but wreckage found in $031^{\circ} 46' N. 028^{\circ} E.$ at 1630/25 indicating SALVIA probably torpedoed and sunk there while returning with SHUNTIEN survivors.

5. In addition to U.75 definitely sunk by KIPLING and LEGION at 0450/28, (? already) attack delivered by KIPLING and LEGION a.m./27 on submerged object 15 miles West of Tobruk.

/6.....

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.-contd):Situation
Report 179
- Contd.

6. Haifa. PHENIX now sunk in middle of harbour with stern clear of water. VILJA cargo and hull intact bridge living quarters and engine room burnt out.

7. Submarine. TORBAY returned from (corrupt group) patrol. One ammunition schooner sunk off Suda Bay on 12/12. 3 schooners sunk off Methoni on 15/12 and one 22/12 all sunk by gunfire. Folbot attempt on ship in Navarin night 16th 17th foiled by ship sailing. Several attacks on destroyers unsuccessful but one torpedo hit scored on it. destroyer PARTENOPE or CLIO Class inside Navarin Harbour 1025/23.

Aircraft. See H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1656/27.
(C. in C. Med., 1945B/29 to Admty.)

Malta Air
Report.

C.S.R. Malta to 1600 hours 29/12.
28th 1535 hours 12 ME. 109's escorting 1 JU. 88 crossed coast, no bombs, Hurricanes intercepted, 1 missing. Night 28/29, 4 alerts for 10 JU.88's, 1606, 1740, 1947, 2125 hours. Bombs land, sea, damage reports not yet available. A.A. destroyed 1 JU. 88. 4 Wellingtons Mark 2 successful attack main quay Tripoli 2246 - 2333 hours, bombs hitting quay, 1 fire started.
29/12. 9 Alerts. 0608 hours, 1 R/C Aircraft. 0747 hours, 36 Raiders Fighters and Bombers attacked 2 Friendly D/Rs off Malta (Bomb damage not yet reported) and Luqa Aerodrome damaging 2 Blenheims. Hurricanes intercepted 1 ME. 109, probably destroyed. 2 Hurricanes collided crashed Sea 1 Pilot safe. 1 other Hurricane damaged. 1008 and 1121 hours, total 12 R/C aircraft crossed coast great height. 1243 hours, 24 Raiders Fighters and Bombers crossed Coast. Bomb Damage not yet available. 1 ME. 109 and 1 Hurricane destroyed. Pilot of Hurricane missing A.A. in action 3 Alerts. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 2035/29, 2047/29).

APHIS
bombardment.

C. in C. 2021/27 and 1135/29. Sailing APHIS escorted by SOUTHERN MAID at 0715/30 through Z at 1020 thence to position 032° 16' N. 025° 05' E. at 1315, arriving Bombardment position 1600/30. On completion returning by reverse route arriving dawn Tobruk. 269 Wing requested to arrange fighter protection from 1300/30. Codeword "Minor".
(S.O. Force I, Tobruk, 2109B/29 to C. in C. Med. etc.)

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Defence of Rangoon.

3. Internal situation Rangoon much brighter.
7. When House re-assembles I trust (? Prime Minister) will give some prominence to battle for Rangoon. Our pilots have done even better than was achieved in battle for Britain. (Govr. Burma, to S. of S., 0235/29.)

Troops for Malaya.

Your 0959/28. ^{p. 919.} Cannot agree to use of CAPETOWN CASTLE. Propose convoy should comprise DUCHESS OF BEDFORD, EMPRESS OF JAPAN, EMPRESS OF ASIA, KOSCIUSKO and JOHANN DE WITT.
2. WINDSOR CASTLE and CAPETOWN CASTLE should be used for Bombay to Karachi requirement. My 0418/27 refers.
3. WINDSOR CASTLE should be used for movement referred to in my 0349/19.
4. Agree use of INDRAPOERA in B.P. 31. (D.S.T., 0346A/29 to P.S.T.O. India.)

B.M. 9A.

R.A. Malaya's 0343/26 asks for disposal instructions for B.M. 9A. Request you will reply. (D.S.T., 0347A/29 to P.S.T.O. India.)

Diego Garcia.

Para. 1. Please see troopers 60468Q (Ops.) T.O.O. 0600/27 addressed O.C. Troops Mauritius.
Para. 2. I am most loth to undertake this commitment which involves not only the provision of power boats (of which my resources are still far short of other and more urgent requirements) but also that of crews, maintenance personnel and stores at an island which has no naval base facilities or accommodation.
Para. 3. I have already given the Indian contingent at Diego Garcia all the assistance in my power (vide my 1356/17) despite A.M. ?330/23rd August, para. (D) which states that this is entirely an Indian commitment and I am at a loss to understand why it should now be suggested that I should also provide the boats crews etc. (C. in C. E.I., 1316Z/29 to Admty.)

Accommodation for H.Q.

It appears inevitable that my staff will require expansion and very possibly accommodation will be required for C. in C. E.F. with necessary H.Q. Construction of a special H.Q. is impracticable. The only suitable building to which communications can easily and quickly be run is Bauer Block of Flats adjacent to my present Headquarters. Intend therefore to requisition this block of flats in stages as necessary. (C. in C. E.I., 1758Z/29 to Admty.)

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

OUT

1850A/29 December

Addressed C.in C. Eastern Fleet 801
 C.in C. Mediterranean 425B Date 29.12.41.
 C.in C. East Indies 575
 C.in C. South Atlantic 310
 Australian Commonwealth Naval Board 438
 New Zealand Naval Board 880
 F.O.I.C. Simonstown 500
 B.A.D. Washington.235

NAVAL CYPHER (D).

From Admiralty.

A.M. 2125A/27 para D. (NT. & WP)

The administrative arrangements of these bases is under consideration on the following lines:-

1. It is desired to develop, to the maximum extent practicable facilities for the maintenance of the entire Eastern Fleet to consist of

9 Capital ships	10 S/M's
4 Aircraft Carriers	2 Depot Ships.
10 Cruisers	1 Repair ship
24 Destroyers	16 Fleet Minesweepers.

and auxiliaries at Main Fleet Bases, and of a force of not less than 1 battleship, 1 aircraft carrier, 3 cruisers and 8 destroyers at operational bases.

2. In assessing priorities of requirements our aim must be

(a) to complete the arrangements for the Indian Ocean bases including main storage depots in Ceylon and at Durban:

(b) subject to the concurrence of Australian Authorities to complete all practicable preliminary arrangements for the Australian bases, including the equipment of storage depots at Sydney and Fremantle;

3. Much of the action to implement (a) and (b) can be taken concurrently; but wherever requirements clash, priority should be given to (a).

1850A/29.

for Head of M (558) Approved V.C.N.S.

1st Lord.	A.C.N.S.(F).	E.P.S.	Hydrog.	D.N.A.D.
1st S.L.	A.C.N.S.(T).	D.C.(2).	D.TSD.	D.D.O.D.(M).
2nd S.L.	A.C.N.S.(W).	D.S.D.	D.G.D.	D.M.S.
3rd S.L.	N.A.1st S.L	D.D.I.C.	D.A.S.(L).	D.A/S.W.
4th S.L.	D.O.D.(F).	D.of L.D.	M.D.G.	D.T.M.
5th S.L.	D.of P.(2).	D.of S.	D.S.V.E	D.B.D.
V.C.N.S.	D.N.I.(4).	D.of V.		Hd. of S.W.R.(2)
M.(3).				and for Dep.Con.Bath
D.D.O.D.(F).				D.N.O.Bath
Hd. of Air.	D.N.O.	D.A.S.	London.	
S.G.D.	D.N.O.	D.A.S.	Bath	
W.D.				

950

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Japanese
Destroyer
sunk.

At 1600/24, a Netherlands S/M sank a Japanese destroyer of the AMAGIRI class off Kuching in Sarawak, Borneo.
(D.S., 846, 29/12.)

Japanese
Cruiser
bombed.

A Japanese cruiser steaming north of the Celebes was set on fire by bombs dropped by an Australian Hudson aircraft stationed at one of the N.E.I. aerodromes.
(N.E.I. Official Report, Batavia, 29/12, in the Times 30/12.)

Malaya.

Sitrep No. 19. 1630 hours G.M.T./28.
Sarawak. Kuching occupied by Japanese.
Air. 28/12, Glenn Martins carried out attack on enemy destroyers or light cruisers and merchantmen off Kuching. No direct hits.
R/C West coast Malaya negative report and R/C N.W. from Palau Timman reported one M/V only. Raid by 3 Japanese Army type 97 on Port Swettenham. Damage to wharf and train and one tug sunk. A.A. shot down one certain and one probable.
(Adv. H.Q. Malaya, 0434/29 to W.O.)

Vesca
System.

Your 1710/25. Concur.
(C. in C. E.F., 0541Z/29 to Admty.)

Navigation.

Singapore Strait.
Red conical light buoy group flashing green referred to in C. in C. China's memorandum No.4658, Oct. 1941 para.7 of 094 W.D.B. (original W.D.B. No.125) has been sunk. Further notice will be given when re-established.
(R.A. Malaya, 0751Z/29 to China Station and R.F.A's.)

Shipping
Control,
Malaya.

Control of shipping in Malay is to be based on following policy.
(1) No ships are to be sailed for Malay Harbour unless (a) loaded with essential war stores or food supplies; (b) suitable for lifting essential cargo which is already available.
(2) Ships leaving Malay are to be loaded with rubber or other priority cargo even in comparative small amounts whenever opportunity occurs.
(3) Coastal shipping is to be maintained at the highest level consistent with the possibilities of trading and the exigencies of existing situation.

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Shipping
Control,
Malaya.
(Contd.)

(4) The quick turn round of shipping in Malayan ports, together with the policy of keeping the minimum number of ships of large tonnage in port at any time, is to be considered as being of utmost importance.
(R.A. Malaya, 0947Z/29 to S.O.I. Singapore.)

Allied
Co-operation.

For Chiefs of Staff.
Original plans for allied co-operation in the Far East dealt mainly with situation on outbreak of war. Now we are past the initial phase not only joint planning but some machinery for quick executive action is needed. This is not easy as the Americans are remote and deeply committed in the P.I., also they seem strictly controlled from Washington.
2. C. in C. E.F. has drawn attention to urgency of Naval aspect in his personal 0753/28 or 0754/28 to First Sea Lord.
3. Problem concerns all services and we are puzzling over it particularly in connection with our vitally important convoys. If anything was settled at Washington bearing on this question it would be helpful to hear earliest.
(C. in C. F.E., 1130/29 to W.O.)
Reply: 1250/30.

Far East.

Situation and appreciation.
(C. in C. F.E., 1735/29 to W.O.)
See Lion Copy.

Mine
Warnings.

The policy with regard to promulgation of mine warnings and searched channels adopted advantageously in Home Waters has been (details).
2. The following methods are available to you - vide C.B. 01618L/40.
3. Present method of promulgating dangerous areas by W Message and searched channels in Cyphered Q.D.B. Messages may be disadvantageous in the long run.
(A.C.N.S.(F), 1905A/29 to C. in C. E.F.)
(R) R.A. Malaya, A.C.N.B., N.Z.N.B., C. in C. E.I)

Disposal of
American
Aircraft.

Following for Chiefs of Staff.
Major Gen. Brett, U.S. Air Corps Chief of Staff passed through Singapore 29/12 remaining only 15 minutes but one of my staff met him. Realised need for fighters superior to Buffaloes here having seen raid on Mingaladon with Wavell 27/12. We represented need here for Tomahawks to assist

/arrival ...

MOST SECRET

1735/29th December

~~MOST SECRET MESSAGE~~

IN

Date 29.12.41

Recd. 2345

From C. in C. Far East.

CIPHER

Addressed The War Office.

IMMEDIATE

022603.

160/7 cipher 29/12. Most Secret.

First of three parts.

Ref. your 581 66 M.O.10.

1. C.O.S.F.E. 63 re-affirms vital issue is to ensure security of Singapore Naval Base.

2. Broad picture.

A. Japanese appear to be seeking decision in Phillipine Islands doubtless to secure their sea communications to N.E.I. and Malaya. Meanwhile step by step action to threaten Singapore and its communications is likely to continue, e.g. present action against Kuching and Sinkawang.

B. Action against Rangoon probable if only to hamper Chinese war effort.

C. Security of Sumatra essential for defence of convoy route through Sunda and Banka Straits for air reinforcement route and bases for offence. Important high octane refinery is at Palembang. Full Dutch co-operation clearly required for which it is essential to hold Java. *lm*

D. Hence protracted defence of Singapore means defence of Southern Malay Sumatra and Java.

3. Enemy has marked air superiority in P.I. and North Malaya. Coupled with command of the sea this allows him great freedom of movement and choice of objectives. His present estimated strength in Malaya unlikely to capture Singapore. Estimated possible reinforcements 5 Divs. now but fall of P.I. and reduction of China commitment would release 6 more. Only light forces can operate from Singapore Base at present. Without reinforcements of destroyers submarines and aircraft with adequate range suitable for attacking convoys together with fighters to cover day action by bombers there is therefore danger of landings by large numbers.

4./....

4. At present enemy can reinforce his air and land forces in Malaya more quickly than we can. By attacking convoys air bases and communications whenever possible we could slow him down but aircraft must be carefully conserved.

5. The army reinforcements now planned can do little more than relieve tired troops guard against West coast coast landings and increase slightly ground and A.A. protection for Sumatra aerodromes. Fighter reinforcements in view will give welcome relief but are a wasting asset.

6. Adm. (A) Considerable losses of stores and supplies on Kedah and Penang.

(B) About one quarter of the military immobile workshop facilities and one third of the reserves of ordnance stores and vehicles are at Kuala Lumpur where are also the main railway establishments would be serious.

(C) Civil and Military food resources main ammunition holdings and Adm. installations are in Singapore which together with Naval Base must remain port of entry. Obviously desirable to keep enemy's air bases as far from Singapore as possible.

Part 2.

7. Following estimates make no allowance for losses by bombing.

(A) Sufficient food stocks exist for military including reinforcements in view and civil population for more than 4 months. Civil Authorities are increasing dispersion which is badly needed.

(B) Ammunition other than A.A. adequate to mid April at F.F.C. rates.

(C) Similarly heavy A.A. ammunition adequate to end June but light till mid February only unless expenditure severely restricted.

(D) Acute shortage of signal equipment.

(E) Reserve vehicles very low.

8. Joint Civil and Military Executive Committee exists to help maintain essential services under bombing and to keep up civilian morale. Experience to date shows that essential civil services break down under bombing and Asiatic labour disappears. Railways

already/....

MOST SECRET

already heavily affected. This is serious as there are insufficient Europeans to run the country and we cannot safely deplete fighting services further.

9. Assuming enemy now seeking decision in P.I. he may subsequently concentrate on Malay or attack N.E.I or attack Malaya and N.E.I. simultaneously in addition to acting against Burma. Reinforcement by about 1 Div. through Singgora is now probably in progress which would make fourth in Malaya. Probably immediate intention is to make ground southwards with his main strength on the West. Use of Kuantan and Kuala Lumpur aerodromes would greatly facilitate provision of fighter cover over Singapore for the daylight attacks that enemy must contemplate. To some extent this can be given already though we are uncertain how many long range fighters he has.

10. Our policy is opposition on mainland to impose delay covering arrival reinforcements. C.O.S.F.E. 63 Para. 2 refers. With troops available only main communications can be held. Railway Kuala Krai to Kuala Lipis is being destroyed. Positions are in view covering Kuala Lumpur and communications eastwards. Kuala Lumpur can only be held by keeping enemy from well roaded area extending 20 miles North of it. Subsequent positions covering lateral road Bahau Seremban Railway junction at Gemas line Mersing Segamat Muar. Withdrawal from latter would uncover aerodromes at Kahang Kluang and Batu Pahat. Further South positions become in nature of last ditch and withdrawal South of Kota Tinggi Gunong Pulai would jeopardise Naval Base. Possible landings on West coast a new feature.

11. Main factors in air defence problem. See my 431/6 of 8/12 487/6 of 11/12 and 56/7 of 17/12.

A. Enemy superiority in fighters and bombers.

B. His ability to reinforce outside range of our striking forces.

Last Part.

C. The long range of his Bombers which enables them to operate from safe aerodromes.

D. We are at present restricted to 4 aerodromes on Singapore Island and 3 in Johore.

E. In addition to protection of Naval Base: of aerodromes and other targets our fighters have to cover

vital/....

SECRET

-4-

vital convoys.

F. Need for conserving strength in view possibility of further seaborne attacks.

G. Owing to enemy fighter cover we cannot bomb by day without incurring losses we cannot afford.

H. The 5 existing Sumatra aerodromes of great importance but communications to them poor. Administrative considerations preclude major operations from these for some time.

J. Until facilities are provided in Java aircraft shipped to Singapore must be erected and repaired in Singapore with attendant dangers.

K. Stocks of petrol bombs and S.A.A. should be adequate for at least 3 months for present strength plus reinforcements in view and are reasonably well dispersed.

12. Plan is.

A. Hold enemy as far North as possible while keeping 3 Indian Corps. in the field as a fighting formation and without drawing on the Johore and Singapore Fortress Garrisons see my 108/7 of 21/12.

B. Disperse our air forces on all available aerodromes in Johore and Singapore and operate them with a view to (1) safe arrival of reinforcements, (2) defence of Naval Base aerodromes and vital targets on South Malaya. (3) Defeat of seaborne attacks on South Malaya.

C. Provide facilities including ground and A.A. defences communications bombs and petrol etc., to enable substantial bomber force to operate from Sumatra.

D. Establish erection and repair facilities for our aircraft in Java.

13. Impossible at present to give precise estimate of other reinforcements required. Have already mentioned whole of 18 Division (see my 66/7 of 18/12). At least 1 other division should follow at once. Troops with war experience badly needed suggest consider Australian Division from Middle East. I do not intend to move any A.A. guns from Malay to Sumatra but may send some of the A.A. reinforcements there.

14. Forces will be required for Sumatra and possibly Java. Problem of requirements there now

being/.....

MOST SECRET

-5-

being studied. Administrative problems would be considerable and outside scope of Malaya Command.

15. Lesson of Phillippines and Malaya is absolute necessity of being able to deny aerodromes to enemy and retain them for our use. Present Dutch Forces quite inadequate to prevent Japanese landings everywhere which makes need for bombers torpedo bombers naval light forces and aerodromes defence all the more urgent.

16. C. in C. F.E. concurs.

1735/29

Received from War Office 1300/30

War Office Distribution:-

1st Lord	S. of B.
1st S.L.(6)	C.I.G.S.
V.C.N.S.	V.C.I.G.S.
A.C.N.S.(H)	D.M.O. & P.
A.C.N.S.(W)	D.P.
A.C.N.S.(F)	D.D.M.O.(O)
A.C.N.S.(T)	M.O.1.10.
N.A. 1st S.L.	D.M.I.
D.C.D.(F)	D.D.M.I.(I)
D. of P.(2)	M.I.
D.C.D.(H)	C.N.S. Admiralty
D.N.I. (4)	D. of Plans Admiralty
E.P.S.	C.A.S. Air Ministry
Duty Capt.(2)	Director of Plans Air Ministry
D.S.D.	Secretary Joint Planning Staff
D.D.I.C.	Col. Jacob
D.D.O.D.(F)	Head of War Registry Admiralty
Hd. of M.(2)	
I.P.(2)	
W.D.	
D.T.D.(2)	
D.T.D.(M)	

29.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China.

Disposal of
American
Aircraft.
(Contd.)

arrival of convoys and use of available heavy bombers to deal with ships and bases. Urge every effort be made to convince Washington that Australia is not at present threatened and immediate use of these aircraft in Malaya and Java might well mean it would not be.
(C. in C. F.E., 2116/29 to W.O.)

Singapore.

Re Commerical Coal Stocks.
(D.T.D., 2116A/29 to C. in C. E.F.)

ABDIEL.

After embarking outfit of Mark XVII mines with flooders, ABDIEL is being sailed from Med. to join Eastern Fleet. 2. C. in C. E.F. is requested to inform necessary authorities of her destination.
(A.C.N.S.(F), 2250A/29 to C. in C. E.F.)

America and West Indies.

U.S.
Co-operation,
Trinidad.

Admty. 1810A/28. Please inform 1st S.L. that reports from N.O.I.C. Trinidad indicate that U.S. authorities there are giving all assistance possible with such forces as are available. Any additional A/S craft which can be spared will be of greatest assistance until motor launches arrive.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1001Q/29 to B.A.D.)

Oilers.

In view of new conditions regarding operational responsibility on A.W.I. Station, consider that one of Station oilers can be surrendered for other service when repairs to ORANGELEAF are complete. Propose BISHOPDALE should be surrendered, the other two being fully employed.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1141Q/29 to Admty.)

PANDORA.

My 1410/17. Programme for PANDORA is delayed 3 days. Ship finally sails for Halifax Sunday 11/1.
(B.A.R.M., 1206R/29 to Admty.)

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

Sweepers and
A/S Vessels.

Following for B.A.S.R. Your 1059B/29/10.
1. A.M.C. class of minesweepers unsuitable for meeting requirement included as 6th item in our 1408/13/12 for moored and magnetic minesweepers.
2. P.C. 542-577 class sub-chasers appear suitable for local patrol work, but not for ocean escort. Owing to shortage of local A/S vessels overseas, 50 vessels would be acceptable towards meeting urgent and immediate requirement of A/S Local Craft included as 7th item in our 1408/13.
(Head of N.A.S. Section, 1305A/29 to B.A.D.)

Washington
Report.

Washops 19.
(i) Philippine Is. and N.E.I. At Danortis enemy have constructed a pier capable of handling 3 ships simultaneously. Additional sinkings are reported by U.S. S/Ms. as follows: 25/12 one transport, 27/12 one supply ship. The continuance of S/M operations from Manila Bay is now impracticable considered due to Japanese air superiority, increased bombing activity and lack of overhaul and supply facilities. 6 P.B.Ys from Ambon made an unsuccessful attack on a Japanese battleship, cruisers, destroyers and transports lying in Tutu Bay Jolo. U.S. Destroyer PEARY reports being attacked in Celebes Sea by 4 four-engined aircraft and 3 dive-bombers carrying British markings: aircraft presumed to be Japanese. Medan, Sumatra, bombed by 17 Japanese planes during afternoon of 28/12. Small Japanese landing on Tambelan Island (between Singapore and Sarawak).
(ii) Hawaii. A report dated 29/12 states S/M contacts have been more numerous in last 2 days all being outside immediate approach to Pearl Harbour, 1 contact report 180 miles North Palmyro. 3 attacks were carried out by destroyer and 4 by aircraft. 1 attack is considered successful. 13 survivors from S.S. PRUSA landed Honolulu report their ship was torpedoed on 18/12 100 miles south of Hawaii.
(iii) U.S. Pacific Coast. U.S. Naval Commander Hawaii Anamba Is. District considers Japanese submarine organisation operating as follows: 3 in approx. 022° N. 120° W., 1 near San Diego, 1 or more in general vicinity of San Francisco.

(iv) U.S. ...

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. cont'd.→ Washington Report.
(Contd.)

(iv) U.S. Atlantic Coast. Following received from master of PRESIDENT ADAMS on arrival at Key West: on 25/12 when about 300 miles off Savannah, periscope was sighted off port quarter, range at approx. 2000 yards steering on easterly course at slow speed but speed increased soon after sighting. PRESIDENT ADAMS fired 5 rounds from her 5-inch guns. After fifth shot an unmistakable torpedo track was sighted showing (Corrupt group) on glassy sea. Torpedo track passed astern of S.S. EXETER who reported seeing a line of bubbles. Captain and whole of bridge staff of PRESIDENT ADAMS substantiate this statement.

(J.S.M. Washington, 1331R/29 to Admty., etc.)

Shipping Control Staff.

Your 2129R/27. Capt. Bittleston will be sent but we should prefer to have copy of new proposals mentioned in para. 1A for study before he leaves, so that he may be acquainted with Admiralty views thereon. Request summary may be signalled. 2. Lt. Com. Goldrich who has expert knowledge of Vescas and independent routeing will also be sent.

(A.C.N.S.(T), 1411A/29 to B.A.D.)

Information of Movements.

Your 1752A/21. Para.(a). Opnav is now sending a weekly signal to Admty. giving positions of main U.S. units (not destroyers or submarines). (ii) Para.(b). At present Opnav are not making daily signal but are informing Admty., C. in C. A.W.I., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, and C.O.A.C. Halifax of all movements affecting them before or when they take place. They are against a daily signal because it might be inaccurate as Task Force Commanders sometimes have to change their plans without breaking W/T silence to tell Opnav. (iii) Para.(b)(ii). This recently has been fully emphasized here, and it is understood it is being done.

(B.A.D., 1421R/29 to Admty.)

→ U/B Report.

At 1704 G.M.T. in position 30 miles off Savannah Georgia, 25/12, U.S.S. PRESIDENT ADAMS reports having sighted periscope off port quarter, ADAMS firing 5 shots from deck gun at periscope and after 5th shot saw torpedo track pass astern of another ship in company. This report considered reliable.

(U.S.C.N.O., 1511Z/29 to Admty., C. in C. A.W.I., F.O. Jamaica Force.)

War Diary.29.12.1941.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.DONERAIL.

Have you any news of Panamanian DONERAIL due Vancouver 20/12 from Suva?
(D.T.D., 1536A/29 to D.N.I.(Ottawa).)

BENCLEUCH.

My 2209Z/16. Interrogation of Chief Engineer and Second Officer ? seems sabotage suspected at Leith and that crew considered completely reliable. Written report follows.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1546Z/29 to Admty., (R)
C.O.A.C., C.C.N.F.)

C.A.M. Ships' Movements.

Possibility suggested of raids on vulnerable points in Newfoundland or Eastern Canada by catapulted planes.
2. For information of air patrols it is therefore essential that movements of friendly C.A.M. ships be known.
3. Suggested for consideration that all intended routes of C.A.M. ships after dispersal from O.N. Convoys be communicated in advance direct to F.O.N.F. repeated N.S.H.Q., C.O.A.C.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1631Z/29 to Admty.)

NIDARDAL distress.

Master of British SAN GASPARD reports at 1612Z/15/12 intercepting S O S message from Norwegian ship NIDARDAL giving position as 56° 07' N. 21° 00' W, and stating slowly sinking owing to bad leak in engine room.
(C. in C. A.W.I., 1639Q/29 to Admty., etc.)

French Shipping.

Casablanca and Marseilles, arrivals and departures.
(B.A.D., 1717R/29, 1719R/29 to Admty.)
See Lion Copy.

Vichy Intelligence.

Meter, Dakar 24/12 A.1. MONTESQUIEU, MEDIE II, ARIZONA and C.M. ARMAND BLANC left, Casablanca. Casablanca 26/12 A.1. CHATEAU PAVIE, CAPITAINE LE DIABAT, S. MAXIME, BONIFACIO sailed northwards.
(B.A.D., 1723R/29 to Admty., etc.)

Vichy Shipping.

Intercepted letter dated Marseilles 8/12 states "I am still in the SIDI OKBA and we make regular trips Bone-Phillipeville-Marseilles. This is the only oil burning ship the Company has left. Two other ships which are running have been adapted for coal. The rest of the S.G.T.M. Ships are stationed at Bougie."
(C. in C. A.W.I., 2129Q/29 to Admty.)
N.I.D. Comment: Only 4 ships of this company are known to be laid up at Bougie, ALSINA, FLORIDA, SIDI BEL ABBAS, SIDI BRAHMIN. There are 13 ships in all belonging to this company.

/CIRCASSIA ...

SECRET

MESSAGE.

1717R/29th. December.

IN.

From: B.A.D. Washington.

Date 30.12.41.

Recd. 1030.

FLAG OFFICERS CYPHER X BY CABLE

Addressed: Admiralty, S.C.I. Freetown, S.C.I. Gibraltar.

899. Casablanca 24th. December B.2 Arrivals. French.

Date	Ship	From
7/12	STRASBOURGEOIS	-
14/12	THISBE	-
15/12	KEROMAN.	Oran
15/12	ILE DE BREMAT	Oran
15/12	IMERETIE II.	Oran
16/12	CHATEAU PAVIE	Oran
18/12	LIEUTENANT DE LA TOUR	Oran
18/12	x DUPERRE	Oran
18/12	x KEMERAIRE II.	Oran
19/12	PONTECANET	Lisbon
19/12	VILLE DU HAVRE	Dakar ?
19/12	CHEIMA	Dakar (Meter ML) *
19/12	x LEFROIX	Dakar
25/12	MONROVIA	Dakar
26/12	OUERCHA	Dakar
26/12	SAINTE MAXIME	Dakar
20/12	CAPITAINE LE COMMANDANT DIABAT	Dakar
21/12	MENHIR BRAZ.	Oran
21/12	VILLE D'ORAN	Oran
21/12	CAPITAINE COMMANDANT LUIGI	Oran
21/12	CAPITAINE ARMAND	Oran

Departures.

Date.	Ship.	For.
15/12	KITA	Oran
15/12	PARAME	Oran.
18/12	CEVENNES	Oran.
18/12	THISBE	Oran
18/12	STRASBOURGEOIS	Oran
19/12	SAINTE LOUIS	Dakar
19/12	x LEBROIX	Oran
19/12	ILE DE BREMAT	Dakar
20/12	VILLE DU HAVRE	Algiers
20/12	CHEIMA	Oran
21/12	MAROC	Oran
21/12	MARBE	Oran
21/12	SURVILLE	Oran
21/12	IMERETIE II.	Oran
23/12	KERMARIA	Oran
23/12	x ? TOUR CAINO S.	Oran
23/12	LIEUTENANT DE LA TOUR	Dakar
23/12	CARTHAGE	Oran

x TOUR QUENNOIS

/Spanish...

15/12
15/12
18/12
18/12
18/12
19/12
19/12
20/12
20/12
21/12
21/12
21/12
21/12
23/12
23/12
23/12

KITA
PARAME
CEVENNES
THISBE
STRASBOURGEOIS
SAINTE LOUIS
LEBROIX
ILE DE BREMAT
VILLE DU HAVRE
CHEIMA
MAROC
MARBE
SURVILLE
IMERETIE II.
KERMARIA
TOUR CAINO S.
LIEUTENANT DE LA TOUR
CARTHAGE

Oran
Oran.
Oran.
Oran
Oran
Dakar
Oran
Dakar
Algiers
Oran
Oran
Oran
Oran
Oran
Oran
Oran
Dakar
Oran

Spanish Arrivals.

<u>Date.</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>From</u>
12/12	SAC FOUR	Alicante
15/12	SAC SEVEN	Seville
17/12	SAC TWO	Valencia
18/12	ZURRIOLA	Ceuta
18/12	* NURIAN	Illavos
19/12	* URUELLA	-

Spanish departures.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>For</u>
15/12	RICARDO R.	Barcelona
16/12	LOLITA A.	Seville
16/12	SAC SEVEN	Seville
18/12	SAC TWO	Malaga
19/12	ZURRIOLA	Bilbao
19/12	* NURIAN	Malaga

Portuguese Arrivals.

		<u>From</u>
12/12	* ZEMANAL	Lisbon
19/12	* AMPHITRITE	Genoa
	? ANFITRITE 1°	

Departure.

		<u>For</u>
15/12	PADUA	Setubal

1717R/29.

* as received

- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S.(F)
- N.A.1st.S.L.
- D.N.I.(4)
- O.I.C.(3)
- Ops (4)
- C.D.(5)
- W.D.
- D.T.D.(2)
- D.T.D.(M)
- D.T.D.(C)
- D.E.W.D.(3)
- M(2)
- Admiral Chalmers

SECRET.

1719R/29th. December.

MESSAGE

IN.

From. B.A.D. Washington.

Date. 30.12.41.

Recd. 0505.

F.O. Cypher by T/P

Recirculation

Addressed. Admiralty.

900. METER. Marseilles 24th December. B.2. Arrivals.

Date	Ship	From
17/12	STE MONIQUE	Oran
17/12	LAMORICIERE.	Algiers.
17/12	BOUGES	Casablanca
18/12	ST SAUVEUR	Oran
18/12	KITA	Casablanca.
18/12	G.G. CHANZY.	Oran.
19/12	STE. ROSELINE	Nemours.
19/12	RHEA	Oran.
19/12	SIDI OKBA	Bone.
19/12	S N A 9	Tunis.
20/12	PARAME	Casablanca.
20/12	SIDI AISSA	Algiers.
20/12	CHATEAU LA ROSE	Philippeville.
21/12	STE LUCILE	Bone.
22/12	G.G. LEPINE	Tunis.
22/12	CRETE	Valencia.
22/12	DJEBEL NADOR	Oran.
22/12	G.G. LAFERRIERE	Algiers.
22/12	GENERAL BONAPARTE	Bastia.
23/12	G.G. GREMY.	Algiers.
23/12	MARIGOT	Oran.
23/12	ASTREE	Tunis.

Departures.

Date.	Ship.	For.
17/12	G.G. LAFERRIERE.	Algiers.
17/12	CHATEAU LATOUR	Tunis.
18/12	MOSTAGANEM	Bone.
17/12	(IRST RAYMOND?) ST RAYMOND.	Nemours.
18/12	GENERAL BONAPARTE	Ajaccio.
18/12	REMIOSEZ REMOIS	Nemours.
18/12	GONNEVILLE	Bone.
19/12	G.G. DE GUEYDON.	Tunis.
20/12	LAMORICIERE	Algiers.
20/12	ST. SAUVEUR	Oran.
20/12	DJEBEL AMOUR	Oran.
21/12	VILLE D'AJACCIO	Bastia.
21/12	G.G. CHANZY	Oran
22/12	DJEBEL DIRA	Bone.

1719R/29.

Advance copy sent O.I.C.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| V.C.N.S. | |
| A.C.N.S. ((F)) | D.T.D. (2) |
| N.A. 1st S.L. | D.T.D. (M) |
| D.N.I. (4) | D.T.D. (C) |
| O.I.C. (3) | D.E.W.D. (3) |
| Ops. (3) | M. (2) |
| O.D. (5) | Admiral Chalmers. |
| W.D. | D.S.D.9. |

War Diary.

29.12.1941.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

CIRCASSIA,
refit.

Your 1702/27. Decision must await conclusion of conference now in progress at Washington. D. of P. Approved A.C.N.S.(F), 2146A/29 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Gilbert Is.
Ocean I.

Japanese in Gilbert Islands.

Holland in Tarawa has reported that Christmas Day raid was mild, no damage or casualties but that some stores were taken. Betio only visited; Japanese flag ordered to be flown daily and early occupation of Tarawa likely. He enquires as to possibility of approach to the Japanese S.N.O. Jaluit, regarding safe conduct of vessel to evacuate Europeans from the Island.

2. Position with regard to supplies in Ocean Island will become extremely serious when the present stocks are exhausted, as the population will then face starvation. Indigenous population could no doubt subsist if Europeans and Cingalese labourers, Chinese and Gilbertese (numbering approx. 228 and 701 respectively exclusive of Gilbertese wives and children) were removed and conditions are presumably (same ? omitted) in Nauru.

3. In view of the gravity of the position, I earnestly renew the suggestion in my telegram of 10th December that some plan of action should be considered with a view to evacuating Ocean Island.

(High Commr. W. Pacific, 1635/29 to S. of S. for Colonies.)

957

29.12.1941.
Monday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approximate positions of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C., 1409A/29, 1412A/29.)

1704
G.M.T./25.

U.S.C.N.O., 1511Z/29.
See America and West Indies.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

A photographic R/C of Brest at 1450 today shows GNEISENAU alongside the T/B Station, and SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN in their usual docks.

S.O. Force "J", now returning from Operation "Anklet", has detached LAMERTON for Scapa with 27 German prisoners, and reports that 266 Norwegian refugees, of whom 133 are men, are embarked in others of his ships.

In view of the difficulties experienced in sailing P.Q. Convoys punctually from Hvalfiord, it is suggested today that they might preferably be sailed direct from Loch Ewe exchanging escorts when off Seidisfiord. It is also suggested that the Q.P. Convoys on reaching Seidisfiord might be escorted to Loch Ewe instead of to Kirkwall.

British Air Activity.

2 sorties of Fighter A/C were made this morning to Force "J", but no more will be possible today owing to the weather. Bomber Command aircraft attacked the battlecruisers at Brest today.

Mining.

Minelaying by enemy aircraft last night is reported from the Tyne to the Wash.

The Tyne was re-opened at 1054 this morning.

At 0014 the ports of Tees and Hartlepool were closed owing to suspected minelaying, and they will be closed daily for the next 12 days from 1800 till about noon on the following day.

Eight Magnetic Mines were exploded by Sweepers today off Spurn Point.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Freetown.

C. in C. S.A. reports that the water situation at Freetown is serious. M/V's are to take in as much as possible at other ports and distil on passage.

Falkland Is.

C. in C. S.A. asks whether the Admiralty can rush out one or more long range 6 inch guns to strengthen the coast defence of the Falkland Islands (see 27/12). BIRMINGHAM, wearing flag of R.A.S.A.D., arrived Rio de Janeiro today and will leave on 1/1 for the Falklands where she is due on 7/1.

Co-ordination of effort.

C. in C. S.A. requires earlier information of intended movements of U.S. Task forces in the South Atlantic, so that the movements of his Patrol Force may be co-ordinated to the best advantage. In his opinion too, forces whose object is the interception of southbound raiders and northbound Axis shipping are more economically employed in working an area than on taking a cast into mid-Atlantic. The question is under discussion in Washington.

Mediterranean.

Malta.

3 soldiers were killed and 4 injured in an air raid last night. There were several raids today, in one of which at 0942, 40 fighters and 6 JU. 88's attacked Takali, Luqa and the dockyard. The dockyard was again bombed at 1440, but no damage is reported.

S/M. Operations.

S/M TRIUMPH reports part 1 of her special operation completed. She has brought back certain information re German forces in Crete, which, however, N.I.D. state is quite untrue.

SS. CAMPINA
3032 tons

M.V. CITTA DI MARSALA
2480 tons

At 1641B today THORN secured 3 hits with torpedoes on a laden 6,000 ton tanker in 38° 35' N. 20° 27' E., course 290° and sank her. (off Cephalonia) PROTEUS at 0900 today hit and probably sank a 4000 ton transport with destroyer escort steering west in 38° 7' N. 20° 25' E. Was beached.

(Com. Warner,
15.9.49)

/Convoy.....

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean-Contd.

Convoy
A.T.9.

HEYTHROP, escorting Convoy A.T.9 to Tobruk was attacked without success at 1448B by 2 torpedo bombers which were driven off by gunfire in 32.10 N., 25.18 E.

Libya
and
Western
Desert.

3 Albatroses laid mines outside Zuara Harbour last night while 1 Albatros as a diversion bombed Zuara town. A 2000-ton M/V was seen 2 miles north of the port steering west.

Albatroses last night bombed small ships and M.T. at Ras El Aali (26 miles W. of Agella) scoring near misses on the ships and probably damaging M.T. and jetty.

3 small ships and 3 lighters had been reported close inshore there, lightering supplies ashore to a temporary jetty.

APHIS left Tobruk at 0715 today for a bombarding position at 1600/50. She was unable to bombard as 2 guns south of Bardia straddled her at 1800 yards, but she fired 10 rounds per gun.

C. in C. Middle East emphasises that success in Libya will only reduce our defensive commitments temporarily and we must be prepared to meet a similar scale of attack at some future date. Moreover we shall be faced with the protection of a vulnerable line of sea communications to North African ports.

Black Sea.

Russian landing operations on the Kerch Peninsula started on 26/12 and are continuing. Theodosia has been occupied.

China.

~~From~~ A report of C. in C. E.F. ^{shows} that ~~it~~ ~~was~~ the Dutch S/M K.14, operating in British sphere but under C.Z.M.'s operational control, ~~which~~ shadowed an enemy force approaching Kuching p.m./23, and in the evening entered very shallow water and sank 3 troopships and a tanker in spite of escort by a cruiser and 2 destroyers. K.14. was heavily depth charged but was unhurt. see p. 977

Malaya.

4 bombing attacks by 30 enemy aircraft on Singapore Island last night caused very slight damage. There were several air raids on Port Swettenham today and H.M.S. KUDAT was sunk in the approaches to the port.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Conference
of Umpires.

Admiralty 1233A/23. A Conference of Senior Umpires from each Command will be held in the near future in London. It is requested Officers for this duty may be nominated and their names signalled to the Admiralty. The Officers nominated should be of appropriate seniority to express the views of their Commander-in-Chief.
(A.C.N.S.(H) 1720A/30 to C's in C Home).

P.511.

On completion of defects to wiring about 7/1 intend that P.511 should be transferred to the 7th Flotilla for A/S training duties. She will not be considered fit for operational patrols, other than in the event of invasion.
(F.O.S. 1834A/30).

Co-operation with Russia.

Technical
information

Your 2046A/2. Written replies now received from Russians covering the following points of your signal. Details of Russian mines, sweeps, and Depth-Charges. (Ad. Miles 1230D/30 to Admty.).

Russian
S/M's for
U.K.

Your 1859D/18. This is a very welcome reinforcement. Request you will obtain confirmation that the Russian authorities have no objection to these submarines being based on U.K. for operations in Biscay and N. Sea areas.
(1st Lord 1244A/30 to Ad. Miles).

Movements.

ADVENTURE

My 0927A/29. ^{N.T. K. W.D.} ADVENTURE delayed further 24 hours by fog.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0928A/30).

O.21.

My 1455A/29. O.21 sailed E.T.A. 1300A/30.
(Capt. S.9. 0955A/30 to C.in C. Rosyth).
My 1427A/30. Expect to arrive Rosyth 1900A
(O.21 1730A/30).

SEALION.

F.O.(S) 1721A/29. Proceed direct on surface at C.O's discretion from 062° N. 000° E. to R/V with WHITE BEAR in 060° 50' N. 000° 40' W. at 1000A/2.
(Capt. S.3. 1029A/30 to SEALION).
(1) Intend to sail WHITE BEAR at 1200A/31 via Pentland Firth to R/V with SEALION in 060° 50' N. 000° 40' W. at 1000A/2 and escort her to Holy Loch.
(2) N.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to arrange following fighter co-operation.
(Capt. S.3. 1059A/30).

KENT.....

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.--Contd.

KENT.

Intend sailing KENT for Scapa passing Clyde Boom 1430A/31 S.of A. 19 knots. E.T.A. 1100A/1. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1616A/30).

STURGEON

My 1723A/29. Defer sailing of STURGEON until weights and ballast on board have been adjusted for which instructions follow. (F.O.S. 1712A/30 to A.C.O.S. F.O. Force "J" etc.).

BOREAS

Intend to sail BOREAS at 1015/2 for Clyde, carrying out full power trials in War Channel, North of 20 R buoy. E.T.A. Boom noon/3. Request fighter protection. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1750/30).

- O.10.
- OTWAY.
- JUNON.
- H.34.
- H.33.
- H.43.
- H.28.
- H.32.

(A) At 2130A/30 submarines proceed submerged by day as follows:-

(B) O.10 through 47° 18' N. 08° 12' W. thence by route C. OTWAY by route D. Both to R/V in vicinity Wolf Rock on 1/1 as ordered by S.7 for onward passage to Clyde.

(C) Following submarines to R/V off Lizard Head on 1/1 as ordered by F.O.I.C. Falmouth for passage to Falmouth. JUNON by route E. H.34 by route F. H.32 by route J. H.33 through 47° 30' N. 07° 16' W. thence by route G. H.43 through 47° 16' N. 07° 10' W. thence by route H. After crossing latitude 49° N. Submarines proceed direct to R/V ordered. H.28 through 46° 48' N. 06° 20' W. 47° 44' N. 06° 46' W. thence direct to R/V ordered.

(F.O.S. 1859A/30).

F.O.S. 1859A/30 para (B).

F.O.I.C. Falmouth is requested (1) To sail Z5 to R/V with O10 and OTWAY in position 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0900/1 and escort them to Rothesay.

(2) To arrange for fighter protection on passage to Rothesay. S.of A. 9 knots.

(3) To arrange for lights to be shown as follows.

T.B.R. in vicinity of R/V will be ordered by me. (Capt. S.7 2251A/30).

R/V on 1/1 in 200° Lizard Head 5 miles with one following ship which will be in R/V from 0900A/1. BREDA or a trawler M/S.

(2) Bombing restrictions as follows. (N.O.I.C. Falmouth 2326A/30 to JUNON, H.43, H.28, H.32, H.33, H.44.).

F.O.S. 1859A/30. R/V Z 5 in 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles at 0900A/1.

T.B.R. and lights have been ordered as follows. (Capt. S.7 2352A/30 to OTWAY, O.10).

/WALKER.....

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.-Contd.

WALKER
VERITY
WITHERINGTON
ONSLOW
OFFA
MARNE.

R.A.(D) H.F. is requested to sail 3 destroyers to arrive Hvalfjord on 2/1 to relieve WALKER, VERITY and WITHERINGTON.
(2) On relief, WALKER, VERITY, and WITHERINGTON are to proceed to Scapa.
(C.in C. H.F. 1921A/30).
Your 1921A/30th. Intend sailing Capt. D.17 in ONSLOW with OFFA, MARNE, p.m. 31st for Hvalfjord.
(R.A.D.H.F. 2315A/30 to C.in C. H.F.).

Operations.

Operation
"Anklet"

Following is a repetition of S.O. Force J's 1215/29.
(A.C.O.S. 0420A/30 to 6th D.F.).
LAMERTON detached with 27 German prisoners and 2 Quislings. Also Sub. Lieut. Billington with papers. Following Norwegian refugees embarked in other ships. 133 men, 68 women, 65 children.
A.C.O.S. acknowledge.
(S.O. Force J.1113/30 to Admty. A.C.O.S. Reptd. C.in C. H.F. and R.A.D.H.F.).
Your 1113/30. Acknowledged.
(A.C.O.S. 1430A/30 to S.O. Force J.).

Denmark
Strait
Patrol.

Intend to sail to relieve NORFOLK, cruiser, ^{Patrol "White"} ~~WHITE~~ at 2100N/30.
(BERWICK 0908N/30 to A.C.I.C.).

Biscay
S/M
Patrol.

Large ship reported at 2255A/29 in about 046° N. 001° 30' W. course 270°, 15 knots. Object in Bay of Biscay area is now to attack and then report enemy ships of all descriptions.
(F.O.S. 1008A/30 to S/M's Area A).

Channel
patrol.

Night 30/31. 3A/S Trawlers patrolling between St. Helens and Beady Head.
(C.in C, Portsmouth 1427A/30).

East
Coast
Patrols.

HAMBLEDON is to be sailed as requisite visibility permits to take up patrol "C" tonight, thence proceeding to Humber.
(C.in C. Nore. 1450A/30).
Night 30/31
Q.E. (3) Patrol, shifting to Q.E. (6A) at 0230/31- M.G.B's 319. 325.
Q.E. (4A) Patrol, shifting to Q.E.(7) at 0230/31 -M.L's 149, 201.
(C.in C. Nore 1930A/30).

Dover
patrols.

Night of 30/31. Trawler patrols cancelled owing to weather. M.L. 139 on O.D. 6 and 7 combined.
(V.A. Dover 1649A/39).

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Escorts
for
Force "J".

My 1737/29. First sortie two aircraft only, third joining after about one hour. (C.in C. Rosyth 0816/30 to S.O. Force "J").
My 1737/29. 2nd sortie should arrive 1100, then no further sortie today owing to weather at base.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1025/30 to S.O. Force "J" Rep. C.in C. H.F.).

Mining.Tees
Hartlepool.

Ports of Tees and Hartlepool closed owing to suspected minelaying. Estimated time of opening noon 30th.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 0014/30). My 1004/30
Ports of Tees and Hartlepool will be closed daily for 12 days from 1800 approx. to noon approx. following day.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1114/30).

Operation
"QO".

Operation "QO" cancelled today owing to fog. (C.in C. Nore 0705/30 to M.S.9.).
Your 2156A/29. Assuming that high percentage search only of overlapping areas of QZX 384 and 403 is required vide para. 1 of Nore No. 0803A/18 dated 1st December 1941, my proposals are as follows. Details.
(M.S.9., 1101A/30 to C.in C. Nore.)
Reply to his 1101/30.
(C.in C. Nore 1746A/30 to M/S 9.).

Tyne.

My 2230/29. Port of Tyne open.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 1034/30).

Firth of
Forth.

Latest searched channels Firth of Forth are as follows. Details.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1522/30).

Faroes
mine
clearance.

Comply with C.in C. H.F. 2231A/29.
(A.C.O.S. 1832A/30 to M/S 4).

High percentage search yesterday actually commenced at new Eastern limit proposed in C.in C. H.F.'s 2231/29 but only taken to original Western limit. On receipt of latter signal today search was extended to proposed new Western limit also. Only 2 mines found in yesterday's search, one well inside original area where Gap was suspected, other in unknown position as it was dragged in sweep. No mines found today. Intend completing search over whole new area and, if no mines are found in it, I consider Gap may be declared clear. Analysis of all positions in which mines have been swept definitely suggests the view those in S.N.6 have dragged towards S.N.66 and not that any line has been undetected. R.A.(M)'s 2138/5/1 reporting severe weather /conditions....

965

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.-Contd.Faroes
mine
clearance
-Contd.

conditions at the time of laying S.N.6 supports this theory. (S.O. 4 M/S F. 2134A/30 to A.C.O.S.).

Spurn
Point

Following eight magnetic mines detonated today by sweepers. Details. (F.O. Humber 1935A/30).

Enemy Intelligence.Off
ile
d'Oleron.

Large vessel reported at 2255A/29 in approx. 46° N. 01° 30' W. course 270° 15 knots. (F.O.S. 1008A/30 to S/M's Area A).

Brest.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C at 1430/30 shows GNEISENAU alongside T/B Station, SCHARNHORST and PRINZ EUGEN in usual docks. (D.D.I.C. 1818A/30).

Navigational.Harwich.

Port closed owing to fog. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0815A/30).

Yarmouth

Port now open owing to improved visibility. (F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 1432A/30).

Cape
Orlov
light.

Your 1618A/29. Cape Orlov light. Characteristic changed to flash white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes are 000° to 160° visibility 23 miles. Russian authorities state change will be for about 2 months. Admiralty please inform P.Q.7. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1730C/30 to Admty. Rep. 1st M/S F.).

Casualties & Defects.BURZA

Small gusset plate on 'A' bracket is torn and distorted, requiring docking for repair. Request this may be made good when vessel is in hand for condenser repairs. In view of this and my 1240/25/12 consider ship should not be employed on further service in present condition. (Capt. D. Greenock 1650A/30).

Shipping & Convoys.W.S.15My 0345/29. Y.3 will not now be ready for W.S.15. Y.1 will be reincluded.
(2) Y.6 and Y.1 will embark at Liverpool on 9.1.42. (D.S.T. 0650/30).
Convoy W.S.15 with Military personnel and stores for Middle East will be ready to leave U.K. for Freetown on 10/1. Composition and escorts. Details. (D.O.D.(H) 1923A/30) See Lion Copy.
/When.....

MOST SECRET

965A

MOST SECRET

M E S S A G E

OUT

1923A/30/December.

To:- C. in C. Western Approaches 449

Date 30.12.41.

RESOLUTION

Repeated F.O.I.C. Liverpool
F.O.I.C. Greenock
F.O.I.C. Cardiff
F.O.I.C. Belfast
F.O.I.C. Milford Haven
N.C.S.O. Mersey
N.C.S.O. Milford Haven
N.C.S.O. Clyde
N.C.S.O. Newport
N.C.S.O. Swansea
B.A.R.M. 632
B.A.D. 256
H.Q.F.C.
H.Q.C.C.
C. in C. Home Fleet 92
R.A(D) Home Fleet 576
V.A. 2. 658
N.O.I.C. Londonderry
S.O.W.P.
R.A. (M)

F.O.C.N.A. 334
C. in C. South Atlantic 339
C. in C. East Indies 599
C. in C. Mediterranean 446
C. in C. Eastern Fleet 824
S.O. Force H. 357
H.N.M.S. COLOMBIA
.....
H.M.S. NORMAN
H.M.S. WIVERN
H.M.S. DEMIRHISSAR
H.M.S. ANTHONY
H.M.S. BOREAS
H.M.S. CHESHIRE
H.M.S. ASCANIA
H.M.N.S. HEEMSKERK

NAVAL CYPHER (C)

~~From Admiralty~~

Convoy W.S.15 carrying Military Personnel and Stores for Middle East will be ready to leave U.K. for Freetown on 10th January.

2. Ships will sail from the following ports:-

Newport	Stores	PORT CHALMERS PARDO
Swansea	Stores	DORSET
Liverpool.	Personnel	BRITANNIC EMPIRE WOOD LARK ARAWA LETITIA ORONTES OTRANTO STIRLING CASTLE CHRISTIAN HUYGENS LACONIA
	Stores	MELBOURNE STAR ELIZABETH BAKKE
Clyde	Personnel	LLANGIBBY CASTLE PASTEUR STAFFORDSHIRE STRATHMORE STRATHNAVER VICEROY OF INDIA
	Stores	AUTOIYCUS AAGTEKERK

H.N.M.S. Submarine Depot Ship COLOMBIA.

3.....

965B

MOST SECRET

3. All ships have a speed of 15 knots except EMPIRE WOODLARK 14 knots, STAFFORDSHIRE 14½ knots, and AUTOLYCUS 14½ knots, who should be placed as leaders of centre columns of convoy.
4. Ships from Bristol Channel Ports will be ready to sail on 7th January and P.O.L.C. Cardiff is requested to sail them as requisite to Clyde to attend main convoy conference.
5. Ocean escort will be provided by H.M.S. RESOLUTION, CHESHIRE and ASCANIA and H.N.M.S. HEEMSKERK.
6. ~~FAMILIES~~ ^{RESOLUTION} with separate escort will be sailed to R/V at (X) at 1200Z 14th January in approx position 46 00 North 23 00 West.
7. H.N.M.S. HEEMSKERK will after fuelling at Azores proceed at best speed to Durban, fuelling at Freetown and Simonstown.
8. CHESHIRE will rejoin C. in C. South Atlantic. ASCANIA will proceed to New Zealand.
9. A/S escort will be provided by:-
 - (a) NORMAN, BOREAS, WIVERN and DEMI/HISSAR to Freetown fuelling at Ponta del Garda.
 - (b) ANTHONY who should part company as necessary for Gibraltar
 - (c) 6 destroyers to R/V (X) or the limit of their endurance
10. C. in C. Western Approaches is requested:
 - (a) to provide 6 destroyers as in paragraph 9 (c)
 - (b) to allocate destroyers as in paragraph 9 to RESOLUTION screen or convoy as requisite.
 - (c) to provide escort for Bristol Channel ships to Clyde
 - (d) sail Clyde and Liverpool portions to R/V off Oversey Light as requisite
11. Admiralty will promulgate route.
12. RESOLUTION will detach destroyers mentioned in paragraph 9 (a) to fuel at Ponta del Garda two at a time. HEEMSKERK will fuel after destroyers.
13. Main convoy conference will be held at Greenock at a time convenient for C.O. of RESOLUTION to attend.
14. RESOLUTION pass to V.A. 3 as requisite.

1923A/30
D.O.D. (H) Approved.

1st Lord			
1st S.L.	N.A. 1st S.L.	D.A/S.W.	N.I.D. 10 (Pay Cdr Wilson)
2nd S.L.	D. of P. (2)	D.M.S.	
3rd S.L.	D.O.D. (H)	I.P. (2)	D.G.D.
4th S.L.	D.D.O.D. (H)	W.D.	F.O.S. by courier.
5th S.L.	D.O.D. (F)	D.C. (2)	
V.C.N.S.	D.D.O.D. (F)	Hd. of M. (6) & to pass to	
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.N.I. (4)	D.T.S.D. H.Q.C.C., H.Q.C.C.	
A.C.N.S. (F)	D.S.D.	D.D.I.C.	
A.C.N.S. (T)	D.N.A.D.	E.P.S.	
A.C.N.S. (W)	D. of L.D.	D.T.D. (2)	

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE No T.O.O./31st Dec. OUT

From War Registry.

Date 31.12.41.

Reference Admiralty message 1923A/30 addressed C. in C. Western Approaches, H.M.S. RESOLUTION, Rept. F.O.I.C. Liverpool etc., amend paragraph 6 to read RESOLUTION with separate escort will be sailed to r/v at (X) at 200Z/14th January in approx. position 46 00 North 23 00 West.

No T.O.O./31st
for H.W.R.

(Note:- recirculated on instructions from D.S.O.)

- 1st Lord
- 1st S.L.
- 2nd S.L.
- 3rd S.L.
- 4th S.L.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (T)
- A.C.N.S. (W)
- N.A. 1st S.L.
- D.O.D. (H)
- D.D.O.D. (H)
- D.O.D. (F)
- D.D.O.D. (F)
- D. of P. (2)
- D.N.I. (4)
- D.S.D.
- D.N.A.D.
- D. of L.D.
- D.A/S.W.
- D.M.S.
- I.P. (2)
- W.D.
- D.C. (2)
- Hd. of M. (6) and to pass to H.Q.F.C., H.Q.C.C.
- D.T.S.D.
- D.D.I.C.
- E.P.S.
- D.T.D. (2)
- N.I.D. 10 Pay Cdr. Wilson
- D.G.D.

.O. (S) by courier.

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.W.S.15.
-Contd.

When ready for sea request you will sail NORMAN to Clyde.
NORMAN will form part of escort for W.S.15 to Freetown leaving U.K. on 10/1 as ordered by C.in C. W.A.
From Freetown she is to proceed at best speed to Capetown.
(D.O.D.(H.) 1649A/30 to F.O.I.C. Southampton).

Q.P.4.

My 1659C/29. State of affairs 0800C/30.
STALIN completed bunkering. LENIN hampered by bad visibility, position 065° 06' N. 038° 33' E. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1046C/30 to Admty. EDINBURGH).
My 1350C/30. LENIN's position at 1100C/30 065° 15' N. 038° 30' E., speed of advance 3 knots. Junction with STALIN should be made overnight when LENIN will bunker from TREKIEVE.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel 1805C/30 to Admty. EDINBURGH).

S.C.60

DAUPHIN not arrived.
(A.C.I.C. 1058N/30).

F.N.592

Postponed 24 hours owing to fog.
(C.in C. Rosyth 1101A/30).

S.C.59

Warmest congratulations on the safe arrival of your convoy S.C.59.
(C.in C. W.A. 1144A/30 to Rear-Admiral Rowley Conwy).

P.Q.7 B.

A.C.I.C's 1834A/28. CUMBERLAND, TARTAR, and ICARUS are to provide ocean escort for P.Q.7 B.
(C.in C. H.F. 1353A/30 to CUMBERLAND).
Your 1353A/30 understood.
(CUMBERLAND 1641N/30 to C.in C. H.F.).

P.Q.7.

If SALAMANDER and BRITOMART have not joined by 1200Z/31 local escort is to return to Iceland, reporting P.C.S. of convoy when well clear.
(C.in C. H.F. 1414A/30 to HUGH WALPOLE).

LOCH
GARRY.

Your 1538A/29. CAPE PORTLAND sailed for R/V.
(S.O.N.P. 1747A/30 to A.C.O.S.).

/ P.Q.....

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. -Contd.

P.Q. and
Q.P Convoy
routes.

from

Owing to weather and lack of servicing facilities at Hvalfjord, serious delays are being experienced in the sailing of P.Q. Convoys.

(2) These difficulties could largely be overcome if P.Q. Convoys sailed for a U.K. Port direct to N. Russia and it is under consideration that P.Q. Convoys should sail from Loch Ewe proceeding west of the Faroes escorted by the trawlers now employed as local escorts as far as the vicinity of Seidisfjord where H.F. escorts would take over the convoy.

(4) It is also suggested that Q.P. ships on arrival at Seidisfjord should be escorted to Loch Ewe instead of Kirkwall.

(5) Request your remarks.

(A.C.N.S(T) 1926A/30 to C.in C. H.F. C.in C. W.A.).

Reply: 1752A/31, page 991.

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War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.Forcing of Straits by GNEISENAU.

Your 1711/28 (Possibility of GNEISENAU attempting passage of Straits of Gibraltar) Action taken by Force H. and local air and surface forces to guard against this possibility reduces (?weight of our) offensive. Any further information or assessments of probable break out will be welcome.
(S.O. Force H., 1055A/30 to Admty.)
Your 1055A/30. Admty. 1818A/30 (Brest reconnaissance report) should enable you to resume your local offensive.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 2329/30 to S.O. Force H.)

Cable Operation.

Situation at 2005A/30, MIRROR escorted by COLTSFOOT cable operations vicinity of Fayal.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1220A/30 to N.A.S.)

Flights Over Sunken Enemy Tanker, Spain.

British aircraft still flying over sunken German tanker BEMSO* in Ensenada de Cino. ^{*BEMSO intended}
Germans confirm abandoning vessel. Minister of Marine requests aircraft desist for fear of serious incidents.
(N.A. Madrid, 1425/30 to Admty.)

GERMANIA (German)

At Teneriffe, reported to have received a further supply of oil fuel during past month transferred from CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN.
(D.S. 847.)

SHAHRISTAN survivors.

Your 1026A/30 (Request information re disposal of survivors ex S.S. SHAHRISTAN - see South Atlantic) Military Survivors left Lisbon for Gibraltar 3/12.
(N.A. Lisbon 1732/30 to Admty.)

Landing Craft Gibraltar.

Govr., Gibraltar, 1800/30 to W.O.

BATORY.

My 1500/29 (N.T.in W.D.) Sailed BATORY escorted by VANOC, BADSWORTH.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1820A/30 to Admty., C. in C. W.A.)
My 0132A/30 not to Admty., C. in C. W.A. Remain in company with BATORY onward from position C. as instructed by C. in C. W.A.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2142A/30 to VANOC, BADSWORTH.)

/French ...

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - contd.French Shipping.

Gibraltar 0930 minesweeper ENGAGEANTE, S.S. FAUZON, ROUBAISIEEN, both laden, VOLONTAIRE, ASTREE, D'ARTAGNAN, all full, westbound. (S.O.I. Gib., 1847A/30 to Admty. etc.) D.O.R. 1/1.

South Atlantic."Q" Report 29/12.

R.A.S.A.D. 2211Z/29. ^{K.T. W.D.} Cancellation which appears to be genuine of CITY OF LISLE's Q Q Q message has been made. ^{X? CITY OF LILLE}
(C. in C. S.A. 0330Z/30 to ASTURIAS.)

SHAHRISTAN survivors.

My 1610/18/11. Request latest information about disposal of 21 military survivors ex S.S. SHAHRISTAN stated by N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada to have been sent from there to Lisbon on 9/11. (Head of M. 1026A/30 to C. in C. S.A., F.O.C.N.A. N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, N.A. Lisbon.) See reply 1732/30 under N. Atlantic.

WOODRUFF.

Has fractured forward LP cylinder cover beyond repair. Cylinder is being (? blanked) off and ship should then be able to maintain about 9 or 10 knots. Intend to sail ship with SL 97. (C. in C. S.A. 1131Z/30 to Admty. (R) Capt. D.18.)

Enemy M/V

D/F bearings at 2036 and 2219/29 suggest German merchant ship within 150 miles of 29° S. 22° W. probably northbound. Reliability 55%: within 500 miles, reliability 85%.
(C. in C. S.A., 1143Z/30 to S.A. Sqdn.)

Freetown, Water..

Water situation at Freetown is serious. All measures are to be taken to ensure that merchant vessels take in as much water as possible at other ports and distil on passage. It will not be possible to meet large demands at Freetown. (C. in C. S.A. 1149Z/30 to N.O.I.C's Bathurst, Takoradi, Lagos.)

AMARANTHUS.

Your 2011/22. Intend to include Item 173 A.F.O. (A Series) 646/41 Extension to forecastle and modification of bridge in AMARANTHUS. This will entail duration of refit 8 weeks. (D.O.D.(F) 1245A/30 to C. in C. S.A.)

/U.S. Movements ...

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - contd.

U.S.
Movements.

My 1201Z/24 to DEVONSHIRE only and my 1243Z/22 not to DEVONSHIRE. U.S. Cruiser CINCINNATI and U.S. Destroyer JOUETT left Pernambuco a.m./28. (C. in C. S.A. 1255C/30 to DEVONSHIRE, CANTON, CILICIA.)

DEVONSHIRE
CANTON.

Following is a repetition of my 1301Z/30 (N.T.in W.R.) N.A. Rio de Janeiro repeated Admty., DEVONSHIRE, R.A.S.A.D., CANTON, CILICIA. Request you obtain permission for DEVONSHIRE and CANTON to obtain about 2000 tons and 1000 tons oil fuel respectively at Pernambuco between 2nd and 5/1. Exact dates will be signalled later. Request early reply. (C. in C. S.A. 1303Z/30 to Admty. etc.) It looks as though between 4/1 and 5/1 might be a fruitful period in your patrol area. Hope to arrange for DEVONSHIRE and CANTON to fuel at Pernambuco on 2/1 and 5/1 respectively. You should adjust movements in time required. (C. in C. S.A., 1521Z/30 to DEVONSHIRE, CILICIA, CANTON.

ENGADINE.

In view of your 1639/29/12, ^{N.T. in W.D.} does para 3 of your 1216/19/12 re transfer of Albacore and Sea Hurricanes still apply? (F.O.I.C. Simonstown 1455Z/30 to Admty) See 2144/30

See also next page

Falklands
Defences.

A.M.0107A/26. Would it be possible to rush out one or more long range 6 inch guns to strengthen coast defence of Falkland Isles? (C. in C. S.A. 1601Z/30 to Admty.)

BIRMINGHAM
ASTURIAS
BULOLO. *see next page*

Your 1401Z/27 addressed R.A.S.A.D. only and my 1731Z/27. Intend to proceed Falkland Is. in BIRMINGHAM leaving Rio de Janeiro a.m./1 and showing BIRMINGHAM off Deseado. E.T.A. Falkland Is. 7/1. Intend ASTURIAS and BULOLO to continue as in my 1651/23 pending reply to my 1731Z/27. (R.A.S.A.D. 16?02/30 to C. in C. S.A.) BIRMINGHAM wearing Flag of R.A.S.A.D. arrived Rio de Janeiro 1230 G.M.T./30 and leaves 1230 G.M.T./1 for Falkland Isles. (R.A.S.A.D. 1711Z/30 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.)

BRILLIANT
ABOSSO.

Departures 30th BRILLIANT escorting (?ABOSSO). (N.O.I.C. Takoradi 1615Z/30 to Admty., C. in C. S.A.) Leave ABOSSO and return to Freetown at best speed. (C. in C. S.A. 1703Z/30 to BRILLIANT.)

/BULOLO ...

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - contd.BULOLO.Arrived Buenos Aires 29th, intend leaving 1130Z/31.
(BULOLO, 1632Z/30 to Admty. etc.) *See previous page*Cable
Operation.Your 2027/28. Extremely desirable CAMBRIA should return to her South American Station as soon as possible after repair Accra-Lagos cable. Repairs (d) and (e) and diversion (c) are scheduled for LADY DENISON PENDER who has requisite cable on board and is due at Capetown for onward routing to Freetown shortly.
(D.S.D. 1736A/30 to C. in C. S.A.)Information
of U.S.
Task Forces.B.A.D. 1221R/11/12 para 3 and 4. Unless U.S. Force(s) are going to assume responsibility for area to westward of proposed dividing line very shortly would it be possible to arrange with Opnav that I get earlier information of intended movement(s) of U.S. Task Force(s) in South Atlantic so that movement of my Patrol Force can be co-ordinated to best advantage?
(2) In my opinion, forces whose object is interception of southbound raiders and northbound Axis shipping are more economically employed working an area than taking a cast into mid-Atlantic.
(3) The ideal would be if clearance force could patrol in particular areas on particular dates to be intimated in advance. I could patrol these or adjacent areas with my limited force so as to fill in gaps in time and space.
(C. in C. S.A. 1919Z/30 to Admty.)ENGADINE
INDOMITABLEMy 1216/19, 1639/29 and C. in C. S.A. 1845/23.
(1) All damaged aircraft in ENGADINE are to be transferred to Wynberg. (2) INDOMITABLE should embark as many of her reserve Sea Hurricanes from ENGADINE as can be stowed, without prejudice to future operations. (3) ENGADINE should then be sailed for Suez with remaining cargo whose composition should be reported on sailing.
(D.N.A.D. 2144A/30 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown, ENGADINE, INDOMITABLE.) *See previous page.*

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War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.APHIS.
bombardment.

Tobruk. My 2109/29. APHIS sailed 0715/30 to carry out para.1 of C. in C's 2021/27 (N.T. in W.R.)
(S.O. Force I. 0907/30 to C. in C. Med., etc.)
Unable to carry out bombardment owing to 2 guns Bardia south point straddling at 1800 yards. APHIS fired 10 rounds per gun. B.N.O. Tobruk pass to N.L.O. 30th Corps.
(APHIS, 1741B/30 to S.O. Force I.)

Convoy
A.T.9.

Two M. type A/C have been sent to assistance of convoy codeword "Vowel" at 0715. 6000 k/cs. (Alexandria W/T 1102B/30 to FARNDAL.)
Fighter aircraft have been despatched to your assistance. 2 short ranged Hurricanes 1345, 1630, 1645 till dusk SOLAR R T 441 k/cs. (WITHERINGTON 1151B/30 to HEYTHROP.)
Have been attacked by 2 torpedo bombers driven off by gunfire. No fighter escort seen today. My position 032° 10' N. 025° 18' E.
(HEYTHROP 1448B/30 to Tobruk.)
Following has been read: HEYTHROP. Two short range Hurricanes have been sent to assist convoy codeword "Solar" from 1645 to 1745. 6000 k/cs. (Fighter H.Q. W. Desert, 1615B/30.)

Black Sea
Situation.
16/12.

Following is repetition N.L.O. Black Sea 1405C/16 (begins) Addressed Admty. from N.L.O. Black Sea.
1. Sevastopol holding firm. Approx. 6 enemy divisions attacking mostly German. 2. 1 enemy division and 1 brigade Roumanian Cavalry on Kerch Peninsula. 3. German Fleet inactive except for some submarine activity. 4. Russian morale always good being high as result of recent land successes. 5. News hard to obtain in Tuapse. (Ends.)
(Adm. Miles 1118D/30 to Admty.)

Libya,
Situation,
Defence.

Ref. C. in C. India's 21703/G of 24/12 para. one.
1. Must emphasize that success in Libya only reduces our defensive commitments temporarily. The enemy can come again and we must be prepared to meet a similar scale of attack at some future date. 2. Distances and limited communications prohibit the rapid reinforcements of Libya from Egypt particularly by armd. forces. Therefore bulk of garrison must be located permanently in Libya. 3. Moreover, we will be faced with the protection of vulnerable line of sea communications to N. African ports involving Naval, Air and A.A. resources.
(C. in C. ME.. 1125/30 to W.O.)

/Movements ...

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Movements.

Arrival 29/12 AJAX, ARROW, CARLISLE, DIDO, FOXHOUND, GURKHA, KINGSTON, NESTOR, NAPIER, MAORI, KHEIR EL DIN. Departure 29/12 KIPLING, UPRIGHT, LEGION, ABDIEL, FARNDALE, KLO. Arrival 30/12 NIZAM.
(S.O.I. Alexandria 1130B/30 to A.I.G.74, Admty.)

INDOMITABLE.

Admty. 1639A/29. Request you will inform me earliest date INDOMITABLE can reach Socotra area. N.O.I/c Simonstown pass to INDOMITABLE. (C. in C. Med., 1144B/30 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown.)

UPHOLDER
UPRIGHT.

My 1159B/28 not to Capt.(S) 8. Cancel reference to UPHOLDER and Area L. Intend sailing UPHOLDER p.m./31 for Area M, N. of Messina, S. of 039° and E. of 015°. UPRIGHT leaves p.m./1 for Area L, 034° 21' 011° 47' - 345° - 30 - 60. (Capt. S.10 1155B/30 to Capt. S.1.)

Air Report.

1. Cyrenaica. My Opsum 579 (Day 28/12) 4 S.79 torpedo bombers were engaged over convoy by single Martlet which shot down first, forced 2 to jettison, and was itself shot down by fourth which was however prevented from aiming accurately. Martlet pilot killed. Day 29/12. 3 Squadrons Blenheims including Free French bombed enemy positions Bardia obtaining many hits. No activity seen in Bardia. R/C reported 3 small ships 3 lighters close inshore Ras El Aali, 26 miles West Agelia where supplies now apparently being lightered ashore to temporary jetty. Also at Ras Ypnuf. Also 500 MT dispersed round jetty. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1214/30.)

S/Ms for
Far East.

Admty. 1729/22. Spare crew will be sent in these vessels. Repair party cannot be supplied by MEDWAY without relief. Request you provide repair party at Singapore from ratings ex PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE. F.O.S's (?Admty) 1729A/22 states TRUSTY and TRUANT are to form a nucleus. Consider repair party should therefore be size used for 6 Subs.
(C. in C. Med., 1230B/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

American
S/Ms.

C. in C. Med. 1216B/26. As I hope that American S Class after modification will prove suitable for operational work in certain parts of Mediterranean where Italian A/S measures are not severe, request whether in view of changed situation the American Authorities are still prepared to transfer a further S class submarine for manning with Jugo Slav personnel.
(F.O.S. 1242A/30 to Admty.)

War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.QUEEN OLGA.

Your (1523 ? 1525)/13. Greek destroyer QUEEN OLGA now completed before SPETSAL, and expects to arrive Alexandria end of Jan. Gun and mounting being shipped to Alexandria, which is presumably 3" and not 4.7, will be mounted in her. (C. in C. Med., 1250B/30 to Admty.)

→ KINGSTON
NIZAM.

Leave Alexandria 1300B/30 proceed direct to carry out A/S search in Gulf of Sollum during night of 30/31 joining C.S.7 a.m./31st. (F.O. 7 C.S., 1401B/30 to C. in C. Med., R.A. Alex., etc.)

Black Sea,
Russian
Landings.

D.C.N.S. in Kuibishev informed Cmdr. Ambrose today that landing operations on the Kerch Peninsula started on 26/12 and are evidently continuing. Theodosia occupied by Units from the Soviet 51 and 55 armies. Other landings attempted N. and S. of Kerch. Northern landing from sea of Azov postponed owing to weather but may be in progress now. Southern landing at Kamisf Burun successful. These operations planned quite 2 weeks ago when Germans stated to withdraw certain units from Kerch Peninsula. (Adm. Miles 1545D/30 to Admty.)

Bulgarian
Shipping.

Arrived Istanbul 29/12 from Burgos ^{not identified} STARIYA VOLK (auxiliary sailing vessel) and RUDNITCHAR, both Bulgarian. (S.O.I. Istanbul, 1548B/30.)

German Ship.

Arrival 30/12 German steamer to load zinc ore. (Cartagena T H I 1600/30 to M. of W.T.)

RAMB IV
and further
attacks on
hospital
ships.

Your 1546A/19. (A) Disembarked before capture. Present whereabouts unknown. (B) (1) AMRA on 7/8, see A.L. M.015271/41 of 11/10. (B) (11) RAMB IV on 27/11. (111) SOMERSETSHIRE on 7/12, see Med. 2513/543/27 of 14/12. None of these attacks considered deliberate. (C) There is unfortunately no good reason for retaining ship. When released, consider she should be filled with Italians of non-military age, ex Benghazi and sent to Italy. (C. in C. Med., 1601B/30 to Admty.)

→ A.S.V.
Patrol.

Following received (Begins) Grebe repeated C. in C. Med. R.A. 7th C.S. KINGSTON from 201 Group. A.199 30/12. One Swordfish to be in position at end of Swept Channel at 1800 (275 Alexandria 25) and carry out A S V patrol with naval force till 2030 course 316°, speed 21 knots. Land at Burg-el-Arab. 203 Sqdn. to arrange night flying facilities. T.O.O. 1435/30. (Ends) (R.A. Alexandria 1611B/30 to R.A. 7th C.S., KINGSTON.)

/Malta ...

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War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - contd.Malta Air Report.

No damage from enemy raids night 28/29.
29th. 1410 hours 5 Me.109s machine gunned naval units and rescue launch. Hurricane probably destroyed 1 Me.109. 2 Hurricanes missing and not found by subsequent search. 12 other raiders bombers and Me.109s attacked Luqa. Some damage to aircraft, full reports not yet available.
Night 29/30. 1832 to 0221 hrs 5 raiders approached, 3 crossed coast, bombs land, 3 soldiers killed 4 injured. 3 Albacores laid 3 mines outside Zuara harbour while 1 Albacore as diversion dropped bombs, flares, Zuara Town.
30/12 3 alerts.
0750 hours, 12 Me.109s crossed coast, driven back by Hurricanes. 0942 hours, approx. 40 fighters 6 JU.88s attacked Ta Kali, Luqa and dockyard. Exact damage to aircraft not yet established. One JU.88 damaged by A.A., one by Navy. Hurricanes intercepted 2 JU.88s, destroyed one probable, one damaged. 1253 hours, 12 raiders fighters and bombers crossed coast and withdrew. No bombs.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700/30, 1705/30.)

Air Report.

Night 28/29. My Op. Summary 580. FAA Albacores bombed small ships off Ras El, Aali and MT in vicinity previously located by Air R/C. Bombs fell near ships and probably damaged Jetty and some M.T.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1729/30.)

Air Patrols.

Sunderland arranged for A S V R 2030/30 to 0545/31 not now available. One Sunderland will carry out A/S patrol for "Motor" from 0745/31 until dusk. one Swordfish will carry out A/S patrol ahead of "Motor" from 0545/31 until relieved by Sunderland.
(C. in C. Med. 1835/30 to C.S.7.)

Bardia.

Day 29/12. During day three Blenheims squadrons continued attacks on enemy positions inside Bardia perimeter, obtaining several direct hits. R/C reported 3 small ships, 3 lighters inshore Ras El Aali where 500 M.T. dispersed near jetty. No land or sea movements Bardia.
(C. in C. M.E. 1850/30.)

ABDIEL.

My 2049/29 not to all. On completion proceed Port Said for transit Canal and passage Aden with moderate despatch thence as ordered by C. in C. E.F.
(C. in C. Med. 1850B/30 to ABDIEL)

/Your 1657A/29 ...

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War Diary.30.12.1941.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.cont:-ABDIEL -
contd.

Your 1657A/29. ABDIEL is embarking outfit mark XIV mines with flooders as mark XVII mines cannot be made available without delaying her sailing. (C. in C. Med., 1940B/30 to Admty.)

TRIUMPH
R of P.

Part one Special Operation completed. Following information received. 20,000 Paratroops Messaria Plain, Crete. 300 Light Tanks, Light Mechanical Transport and large quantity Aircraft torpedoes Heraklion. Source considered reliable. Weather report.

(TRIUMPH 2121B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

N.I.D. Comment. Information concerning German forces in Crete is quite untrue. Total forces in Crete are not believed greatly to exceed 20,000; there may be a few paratroops among them. It is possible that a small number of tanks may now be in Crete in the process of attempted transfer to Libya but the number 300 far exceeds all possibilities and would represent from one to two armoured divisions.

Libya Coast
Bombardments.

Two enemy Coast Defence Guns, calibre 105 m.ms. position 520 539 56 effectively engaged by APHIS. Army do not consider AJAX shooting sufficiently important if it involves serious risk to ship. (N.L.O. 30 Corps 2218B/30 to C. in C. Med., AJAX, C.S.7.)

Libya Air
Ops.

4. Night 29/30. Albacores bombed small ships and M.T. Ras El Aali. Near misses on ships, M.T. and jetty probably damaged. (C. in C. M.E. 2247/30 to W.O.)

UPHOLDER,
attack by
own A/C.

My 1543B/28 (N.T.in W.D.) Cancel reference UPHOLDER. Lieut. Comm. Wanklyn re-assumed command to date 29th vice Norman who was wounded by fighter aircraft attack on UPHOLDER during exercise off Malta. Lieut. Norman hospital with several flesh wounds nonserious, probably returns to duty within 4 weeks. UPHOLDER proceeds on patrol tomorrow 31st. (Capt. S. 10, 2315B/30 to C. in C. Med.)

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

W.S.14.
CERES.

Your 1301/26. CERES arrived Durban 29/12 and will be available for this duty if required. (C. in C. E.I., 0616Z/30 to C. in C. S.A.)

Communications. Owing to enemy action the cable facilities to the East have been greatly reduced and furthermore are now largely dependent on retention of Cocos Is. (ii) Requested that Cable and Wireless may be approached with a view to them arranging with Indian Radio and Cable Communication Co. for latter's radio link between Bombay and Tokyo to be now diverted to some station in Australia. (C. in C. E.I., 1204Z/30, to Admty.)

LAOMEDON.

Your 1304Z/17/12. Regret LAOMEDON can only be employed in this way temporarily as she will be required for laying defences at other bases later on. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1335A/30 to C. in C. E.I.)

China.

Malaya Report.

Johore. 18 enemy type 97 aircraft bombed and machine gunned Kluang aerodrome at 1130, casualties slight. No bombs on aerodrome. Singapore. 3 air raids on Singapore Island evening 29/12. (Adv. H.Q., Malaya, 0345/30).

K. 14, enemy ships sunk, 23/12.

Please pass to C.Z.M. My 0402/24, not to C.Z.M. Neth. S/M K.14, Lt. Cdr. P.A. Mulock Van-Der-Vores Bik, operating in British Sphere but under C.Z.M.'s operational control, shadowed enemy force approaching Kuching on afternoon of 23/12. In the evening he entered very shallow water and sank 3 troop ships and one tanker in spite of an escort of one cruiser and 2 destroyers. K.14 was heavily attacked with depth charges but was unhurt. (C. in C. E.F., 0435Z/30, to Admty. (R) B.N.L.O. Batavia).

Air Raids. Singapore.

Four air raids Singapore Island night 29/30. Total enemy aircraft involved 30. Temporary petrol dump Atrbuller Camp, Alexandra, set alight but no damage to M.T. lines or other petrol dumps. No other damage and only 4 casualties reported. (Adv. H.Q. Singapore, 0611/30 to W.O. etc.)

/Allied ...

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. - contd.

Allied
Co-operation.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. F.E.65. Your 1130/29. Whole question of inter allied machinery is receiving urgent consideration on highest level at Washington. You will be notified as soon as decisions are reached.
(W.O., 1250/30 to C. in C. F.E.,)

U.S. Pacific
Fleet.

A.M.1815A/23. Following changes in disposition:-
Battleships. PENNSYLVANIA at San Francisco.
MARYLAND, TENNESSEE at Bremerton. Aircraft Carrier. YORKTOWN due San Diego 30/12.
8ⁿ Cruiser. LOUISVILLE at San Francisco.
6ⁿ Cruisers. ST. LOUIS due San Francisco 31/12.
DETROIT due San Francisco 5/1. CONCORD at Mare Island. RICHMOND, TRENTON due San Diego 30/12.
(D.O.D.(F) 1647A/30 to C. in C. E.F., N.Z.N.B., A.C.N.B., N.S.H.Q., Ottawa).

R.D.F. ratings
ex ship sunk.

Admty. 1721/12. All R.D.F. Officers and ratings ex PRINCE OF WALES and REPULSE should be retained against future requirements, being temporarily disposed of as desired. Suggest as many ratings as possible be distributed additional in ships fitted R.D.F. (D.S.D. 1740A/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

Penang.

Details of evacuation and demolitions.
(G.O.C., Malaya, 2118/30 to W.O.) See Lion Copy.

Singapore
Raids.

Daily Op. Summ. up to 1030Z/30. Singapore Island. Three bombing attacks night 29/30. Total 30 enemy Aircraft. Very slight damage.
(A.H.Q., F.E., 2355/30).

America & West Indies.

Dispositions.

Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied Ships at 1800 G.M.T/30.

Ship.	Position	Course	Speed.
MARSDALE	39°N, 43°W.	Patrol	Blank
MARON	38°N, 43°W.	Patrol	Blank
See p.979 → ALBATROSS	10°N, 41°W.	273°	10
DEVONSHIRE)	07°N, 38°W.	Patrol	Blank
CANTON			
CILICIA			
ASTURIAS	18°S, 35°W.	Patrol	Blank
Convoy C.T.8)	46°N, 54°W.	275°	12
ROCKINGHAM			
			/Correction ...

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

FROM: G.O.C. Malaya.

2118/30th December.

Date: 31.12.41.
Recd: 0330.CYpher.

Addressed; The War Office.

Evacuation from Penang.

IMPORTANT.

022884. 0.434. cipher 30/12.

Penang evacuation. Following in amplification of my 0.256 of 19/12. Paras: below refer to those in my 0.256.

1. Total numbers final evacuation by sea Brit. Tps. 534 Asiatic Tps. 806. Remainder of Regular Tps. had already been removed via main land.
2. Doubtful now whether offer of evacuation without families was in fact conveyed to Sikh Police. Further enquiries being made.
3. Nothing to add.
4. 6 inch guns BATU MAUNG wrecked by exploding gelignite in chambers. Charge both guns fired successfully. One gun inspected subsequently had top half of chamber from cone seating to beginning of rifling completely blown away together with breech carrier top and sides of shields dials telescope brackets and cams. Cornwallis Battery explosives not used since guns in view of enemy on mainland and explosion might have drawn premature attention to evacuation. Breech screws and threads were burred and broken with sledges and breeches then jammed home. Detachable small parts of breeches removed and thrown into sea. Sights instruments dials switches etc. etc. smashed. Buffers emptied. Engines having been drained of oil pumps were filled with sand and engines run until they seized. All breakable parts of engines and G.A.S.L.S. smashed. All spare parts removed to a distance and thrown into sea. Consider all fixed defence works rendered useless except as scrap metal. Over 60 military vehicles evacuated. About 50 destroyed or immobilized. About 20 may have been left intact but reported that many vehicles thrown into sea on morning 17 December of portable weapons and equipment great majority evacuated some destroyed and Asiatic volunteers remaining in Penang instructed to sink remainder in sea. Ammunition, 105 lorry loads evacuated to Mainland before final evacuation. 75 per cent of unit equipment and surpluses held by units evacuated by sea. Of balance 100 rounds per man left with Asiatic volunteers who were instructed to sink remainder in sea. 1500 rounds 6 inch ammunition in forts

were/

2.

were not destroyed. Fairly large quantities of ammunition and explosives various natures were left in magazines for demolition by delayed action after evacuation. Charges were duplicated. Not ascertained whether this succeeded but if so very little useful ammunition can have remained in Penang. Reason for delayed action was to avoid drawing enemy attention to withdrawal until after it was completed.

5. Of total military and civil oil stocks following amounts were certainly destroyed. All figures in gallons. Motor spirit 83000 aviation spirit 32000 lubricating oils 4000. Following were prepared for destruction and orders given but not definitely known to what extent carried out. Motor spirit 360000 aviation spirit 60000. Kerosene 675000. Diesel Oil 280000. Bulk heavy oils 1080000. Following for various reasons were not destroyed. Motor spirit 51000 aviation spirit 1000. Lubricating oils 57000. Kerosene 164000.

6. Orders were issued by Command H.Q. for destruction of all War Dept., supplies and stores which could not be removed. Military supplies mentioned in my O.256 were however left in view of (a) needs of civil population who would probably consume available supplies in 48 hours (b) complete breakdown of normal civil supply system (c) time and space factors which prevented removal.

7. As far as can be ascertained shipping left in Penang did not exceed six 75 ton vessels and 45 launches lighters small tugs and ferry vessels.

8 and 9. Nothing to add.

2118/30.

Recd in War Reg. at 1650/31.

War Office Circulation:

1st Lord.	S. of S.
1st S.L.	C.I.G.S.
4th S.L.	V.C.I.G.S.
5th S.L.	D.M.O. & P.
V.C.N.S.	D.D.O. (O)
A.C.N.S. (F)	M.O.L. 10.
A.C.N.S. (F)	M.I. 2.
A.C.N.S. (H)	D.S.D. (W)
A.C.N.S. (W)	L.I. 4.
N.A. 1st S.L.	Q. (Ops.)
Nav. Sec.	C.N.S.
D.N.A.D.	Admiralty (H.W.R.)
Hd. of M. (2)	C.I.S.
D.O.F. (H)	Colonial Office (Lt. Col. Rolleston)
D.D.O.D. (H)	M.F.W. (Mr. Troutbeck)
D.O.D. (F)	Col. Jacob.
D.D.O.D. (F)	
D.C. (2)	
D.N.I. (5) & for	
D.D.I.C. (2)	
D. of P. (2)	
D.A/S.V.	D.S.D.
I.P. (2)	Admiral Bailey.
J.D.	Admiral Bellairs.
D.P.D.	E.P.S.

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Dispositions.
(contd.)

Correction to A.T. 0935Z/29.
Ship. Position. Course Speed
ALBATROSS 09½° N, 37° W. 273° 10
(D.O.D.(F) 0920Z/30 to Opnav amended 1159Z/30).

Walrus,
ALBATROSS.
/immediately
on arrival
at

Subject to Admty. approval one Walrus of 710 Squadron with Crew and maintenance ratings is to be disembarked from ALBATROSS/Trinidad. N.O.I.C. Trinidad is requested to arrange for shipment in Oiler BROOMDALE in accordance with C. in C. S.A. 1317Z/28. If available an Aircraft from R.N.A.S. Piarco may be loaded in BROOMDALE now in order to save time and ALBATROSS Aircraft used in replacement. (C. in C. A.W.I., 1012Q/30 to ALBATROSS, N.O.I.C. Trinidad) Approved. (A.C.N.S.(F) 2254A/31 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

Suspicious
Ships,
Easter Is.

Confidential information received from Chilean Naval source reports 2 unidentified Warships sighted off Easter Island at 1800/28. They were long way off Island and steering west. (N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1132Q/30 to Admty.) My 1132Q. Ships were sighted to Southward of Island Distance 10 miles approx. (N.A. Santiago de Chile, 1627/30 to Admty.)

U.S. Forces.

A.T. 1636A/17. Following changes U.S. Forces on A. & W.I. Station since A.T. 2238A/23. Battleships. ARKANSAS at Argentia, NEW YORK ready late January. WASHINGTON and NORTH CAROLINA in Key West Area. Aircraft Carriers. WASP at Norfolk, RANGER at Bermuda, HORNET in Key West Area, LONG ISLAND due Argentia 30/12. 8" Cruisers. QUINCY and VINCENNES at Trinidad. 6" Cruisers. PHILADELPHIA due Argentia 30/12. NASHVILLE en route to Norfolk, BROOKLYN at New York. (D.O.D.(F) 1302A/30 to C. in C. H.F., C. in C.A.W.I. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Washington
Report.

Washops 20. (i) Philippine Islands. Gen. Macarthur reports on 28/12. 63 bombers attacked Manila, severe damage. 29/12 contact successfully broken off in south and hope to hold in north until both U.S. forces make contact in San Fernando area. Heavy air attacks continue. (ii) Hawaii. Air route to Australia via Canton Suva Noumea open 28/12. (iii) Borneo. Observer Bandoeng reports Japanese plane bombed Tarakan, Borneo, 28/12. (J.S.M. Washington, 1331R/30 to Admty, etc.)

RAMAPO
Suspicious
vessel.

Two U.S. patrol planes were fired on 4 times by a suspect vessel which appeared to be trailing U.S. tanker RAMAPO about 500 miles 245° Point Lomas (San Diego) p.m./28th. Dropped four bombs without
/result ...

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

RAMAPO
Suspicious
vessel.
(contd.)

result. Trying to regain contact daylight 29th.
(B.A.D., 1537R/30 to Admty.)

Suspicious
Oil Barge.

Master Norwegian S.S. ^{? NOVASLI}NOVASH reports sighting 22/12
in 55.40 N. 30.19 W. Square Steel oil barge approx.
400 tons D.W., black hull, red and green deckworks,
marked Brothers No.6. (C.O.A.C., 1559Z/30 to
N.S.H.Q., Admty, Opanav.)

Lourenco
Marques.

Your 1615/20. Following received from N.O.I.C.
Simonstown (begins). Matter is still under
discussion with U.S.N.A. Capetown. While proposal
is most desirable to relieve congestion U.S. N.A.
is not in favour of ships carrying Lease Lend
cargoes calling at Lourenco Marques for security
reasons. Further signal will be made. C.S.A.
Lourenco Marques is able to route onwards if
required. 1545/29. (Ends).
(D.T.D. 1636A/30 to B.A.D.)

BURWELL.

My 1236/26 (N.T. in W.R.) Intend to direct
BURWELL to call at Halifax after refit to complete
with 12 pounder ammunition. U.S. 4 inch is being
provided at Boston. (B.A.R.M. 1738R/30 to C.C.N.F.)

German Heavy
Units.

Preliminary report of photographic R/C at 1430/30
shows GNEISENAU alongside T/B Station, SCHARNHORST
and PRINZ EUGEN in usual docks.
(D.D.I.C. 1814A/30 to B.A.D.)

Casablanca
Shipping.

French and Spanish Movements Casablanca 27/12 (B.2)
(B.A.D., 1941R/30, to Admty.)

ROXBOROUGH.

Your 1345R/27. ROXBOROUGH will be sailed to arrive
Charleston at 1200 Zone 5 time on 6/1 in
accordance with your instructions.
(F.O.N.F., 2033Z/30 to B.A.R.M.)

Shipping
Lights.

Instructions issued that U.S. coastwise shipping
may use dimmed navigational lights in areas where
submarine raiders or aircraft are not likely to be
met. Lights to be dimmed to two mile visibility
with only one masthead light. Ship otherwise to
be darkened. (Opanav, 2146/30 to Admty. etc.)

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Japanese A/C.
R/C. Timor
Occupation.

My 2031Z/26. Japanese aircraft sighted over New Guinea mainland 28/12 namely at Salamaua Lae and Madang. Also over Nauru 29/12. Attitude of local Portuguese administration towards occupation Portuguese Timor has shown no improvement. Master and crew of ~~NANYEI~~ MARU (Tender for Palao-(?Dilli) flying boat service) have been (?taken) into custody at (?Dilli). * ? NANREI MARU. (A.C.N.B., 0021Z/30 to Admty. etc.)

Shipping
Route.

Your 0551Z/29 my 0955M/19. As protection of shipping in Pacific is under control of U.S. Authorities suggest vessels be (?routed) South of Chatham Islands. (N.Z.N.B., 0928M/30 to A.C.N.B.)

AQUITANIA.
HOBART,
D.M.I.

Your 0336Z. On completion para. 4 (c). It is estimated machine gun btn., A.I.F. and R.A.A.F. reinforcement ex AQUITANIA could arrive Singapore about 21/1. M/T for foregoing could arrive 24/1 in M.S.1, if HOBART is not retained by you for escort of D.M.1. In event of you desiring HOBART for escort of D.M.1, M.S.1, would not arrive in Singapore until about 29/1. Either alternative is acceptable Ottawa to Naval Board Melbourne, but request your view observing troops ex AQUITANIA will be without their M/T for an additional 5 days, if you retain HOBART for escort of D.M.1. (A.C.N.B., 1222Z/30 to C. in C. E.F.)

War Diary.

30.12.1941.
Tuesday.

U BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

29/12.

Unreliable estimate of U-Boat in approx. 063° N. 002° W. on 29/12. (C. in C. H.F., 1027A/30 to S.O. Force J., Capt. D.6.)

Estimated approximate positions of U.Boats.
(D.D.I.C. 1405A/30, 1407A/30).

1720.

I consider target with which I am in contact is a S/M position 090 Pentland Skerries 6.
(SCALBY WYKE, 1720/30 to Kirkwall W/T.)
Proceed with despatch to position 90° Pentland Skerries 6 investigate suspected S/M. SCALBY WYKE searching in the vicinity (R.A.D.H.F., 1807A/30 to CALPE (R) A.C.O.S., C. in C. H.F.)
Motor Launch 228 and CALPE joining you.
(A.C.O.S. 1810A/30 to SCALBY WYKE).
My 1755/30 SCALBY WYKE lost contact and proceeded at 1750. Request CALPE may investigate at position given before returning to harbour.
(A.C.O.S. 1855A/30 to R.A.D. H.F.)
If not in contact at 2230 return Scapa.
Acknowledge. (R.A.D. H.F., 2114A/30 to CALPE).

Submarines Attacked.

By A/C (Med.)

Have attacked one enemy submarine with bombs level and estimate 3 near misses 0 (?3) 10 kcs. 35.48 N., 20.08 E. on surface.
(A/C K7TF. 1055/30).
My 1055. 2 DC 56 55 300 10 KT on surface returning to base. (A/C. K7TF 1200/30).

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

A German plane is reported to have attacked SCOTTISH, on patrol off the Tagus this morning; no damage was caused.

Mediterranean.

There were further air attacks on Malta from 1622/30 to 0400/31. Some damage was caused at Kalafrana and Halfar.

Wellingtons last night bombed Salamis and Megalo Pefko Seaplane Bases and other targets at Salamis and Piraeus, and Heraklino and Maleme Aerodromes.

AJAX escorted by 6 destroyers bombarded Bardia H.Q. last night, to synchronise with the attack of the army. APHIS attempted harassing bombardment of positions North of Bardia last night but was driven off by a coastal battery after firing 20 rounds.

East Indies.

The Officer Commanding Air Forces in Ceylon is to be responsible to A.O. C. in C. India for operational control, administration, training and efficiency of Air Forces in Ceylon; he is to accept general directives from C. in C. E.I. for operation of G.R. aircraft but is responsible for execution of directives. The primary roles of the air forces in Ceylon are co-operation with Naval and Military forces in that area, maintenance of sea communications and air defence of Ceylon. Naval aircraft either shore based or temporarily disembarked from carriers will be under the direct control of C. in C. E.I.

Mines are to be laid at Horsborough Atoll.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

China.

The following is an estimate of the shipping position in the Far East, to date 25/12;
(a) Presumed lost, 47 vessels of 78,276 tons.
(b) Known to be safe, 31 vessels of 94,802 tons.
(c) Between Shanghai, Hong Kong and South, or at Manila, of which part is still uncertain and part is known to be safe 20 vessels of 53,711 tons.
N.O.I.C. Hong Kong reported that all ships unable to leave Hong Kong district, amounting to 43,000 tons had been scuttled.

Bombs were dropped in the Naval base at Singapore this evening. It is reported that Senoko oil fuel depot was bombed on the nights of 29th and 31st; 4 tanks were slightly damaged.

Manila was uncovered by nightfall today.

8 U.S. aircraft today attacked an enemy naval concentration at Davao. 3 direct hits are claimed on a battleship, one destroyer was sunk and other naval units were hit.

New Zealand.

Kahulahi harbour and a few other places in Hawaii were lightly shelled last night, presumably by a submarine; slight damage was caused at Hilo.

U-Boat Campaign.

Tanker CARDITA, a straggler ahead of HX 166 was torpedoed this evening in approx. 59° 18' N. 12° 50' W. and was abandoned later. Capt. D.17 (ONSLow) with MARNE and OFFA were ordered to carry out A/S sweeps passing through this position on passage to relieve RENOWN's destroyer screen; he reported at 2115/1 that CARDITA could be salvaged. Tugs have been sent. (CARDITA sank at 0855A.)

3rd Jan '42

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Clyde M/S
Force.

At present there are in service between Glasgow and Greenock three L L Whalers, four baby L L drifters, and one skid drifter. Should river be mined at least eight M M/S vessels would be urgently required to assist in clearing dredged channel of river alone. (F.O.I.C.Glasgow 1031/31). Your 1031/31. Should this position arise the necessary M/S vessels will be temporarily reallocated with the command (C. in C. W.A., 1556A/31 to F.O.I.C.Glasgow).

Flag of
C.S.10.

Flag of C.S.10 has been transferred to NIGERIA. (C.S.10 1555A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

Co-operation with U.S.A.

U.S.Warship
Emergency
Signals.

Information given in Admiralty 776A/5th. November is supplemented as follows. Details. (D.S.D.1453A/31) ("A" Message 986A.)

Defence of U.K.

Thames
Estuary
A/A Defences.

Admiralty 1929A/23/9. Request you examine, in conjunction with A.A. Defence Commander, desirability of extending within the Estuary, A.A. cover and anti-minelaying defences, by provision of further Maunsell forts of new type which can be employed in depth between 0 and 9 fathoms M.L.W.S. and consist of layouts comprising - (a) 4 Heavy, 2 Bofors and 1 Searchlight with R.D.F. Control, or (b) 2 Bofors and 1 Searchlight. 4. Request you will forward by signal a rough estimate of probable requirements and detailed proposals including sites, later. (D. of L.D. 2205A/31 to C. in C. Nore.)

Movements.

STURGEON.

My 1712A/30. Request you will sail STURGEON routed to comply with S.B.N.O. North Russia's 1128C/30 when alterations to ballast have been satisfactorily completed. (F.O.S.0113A/31 to A.C.O.S.) (1) Intend sailing STURGEON escorted by STELLA PEGASI at 0945/1 passing West of Orkneys to position (A) 061° N. 003° 30' W. E.T.A. 0100/2. Then unescorted diving by day through 066° 30' N. 003° 30' W. (C) 071° 50' N. 011° 30' E. (D) 073° N. 024° E. Thence as ordered by S.B.N.O. North Russia. E.T.A. position. (D) 1700/8. (3) Request S.B.R. as follows. (A.C.O.S. 1701A/31).

OTWAY. O.10.

At 0500A/1 intend to sail Z 5 from Falmouth to R/V at 0900A/1 270° Wolf Rock 5 miles with OTWAY

/and ...

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

OTWAY, O.10. and O.10 and escort them thence to arrive Rothesay
(Contd.) 1600A/3. S. of A. 9 knots. C. in C. Plymouth is
requested to arrange fighter protection.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1002A/31).

PRINCE CHARLES, Your 2215A/29. Intend sailing 0300/1. E.T.A.
PRINCE LEOPOLD, Scapa 0900/1.
PRINCESS JOSEPHINE (N.O.I.C. Invergordon 1043/31 to C. in C. H.F.)
CHARLOTTE,
FORESIGHT.

RESOLUTION. Admiralty's 1648A/22 and 1259A/27. Intend to sail
RESOLUTION to arrive Clyde a.m. 8/1.
(C. in C. H.F. 1123A/31).

→ JUNON. On 1/1 intend to sail BREDA and NIGHTHAWK at
H.28, H.32, 0600A and ~~PLADDAN~~ at 0800A to 200° Lizard Head
H.33, H.34, 5 miles. There vessels will R/V from 0900A onwards
H.43. with six submarines returning from south westwards.
BREDA will detail trawlers to escort submarines as
necessary to Falmouth, remaining herself at the R/V
until the last S/M has been met. C. in C. Plymouth
is requested to arrange fighter protection.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1136A/31).

MANCHESTER My 1126/29. When ready for sea, C. in C. W.A. is
CITY, JAY. requested to sail MANCHESTER CITY (Controlled Mine
Base Ship) loaded with controlled mines and
equipment to Freetown in an O.S. convoy.
3. C. in C. S.A. is requested to arrange for onward
passage to Durban.
4. MANCHESTER CITY will require a layer and JAY
is only vessel available. It is suggested JAY be
retained in vicinity of Durban until arrival of
MANCHESTER CITY. My 1249/11/10 refers.
(D.T.M. 1249A/31).

S/M F.O.(S) 1859A/30. (A) Following movements are to
Movements. be arranged with authorities concerned.
"H" Class arrives Falmouth from patrol to Clyde
when ready.
→ JUNON to Plymouth for repairs.
H.50 and O 9 on completion of repairs to Clyde (B)
S/Ms may be placed at extended notice on arrival
as follows. S/Ms which have carried out both
patrols for 14 days. S/Ms which have carried out
one patrol only seven days. (F.O.S. 1314A/31).

ASPHODEL. My 1817A/30. Ship not fitted with S A gear, speed
between 17 and 21 A buoy ten knots.
(F.O. Humber 1505A/31).

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. - contd.

SEALION.

Your 1029A/30. Will be 24 hours late.
(SEALION 1649A/31).

KIWI.

See Shipping.

Operations.

Denmark
Strait
Patrol.

Encountered forming ice in 066° 33' N. 025° 16' W. apparently trending 120°. Have altered patrol to (A) 066° 20', 025° 23' (B) 250° (C) ABELIA 160° 5 miles till daylight.
(ANEMONE 0830N/31 to BERWICK).
Your 1135A/24. VERONICA expects to arrive Moville 1200A/3 to collect stores before sailing for destination. (RENOWN 1140N/31 to C. in C. W.A.) ABELIA's R.D.F. broken down. Contacted ice at 1030 in 066° 20' N. 027° W, course 065°. (ANEMONE 1330N/31 to BERWICK).

Q N.

Prepare to carry out operation Q N. (C. in C. Nore 1010A/31 to BEEHIVE).
My 1010A/31. Carry out operation Q N tonight as amended by my 1040A/20/12. Suspected northbound convoy 5 miles west of Yjmuiden at 1440/31. (C. in C. Nore 1526A/31 to F.O.Yarmouth, BEEHIVE).

Patrol off
Flushing.

Weather permitting available M.T.B's of 1st Flotilla are to carry out a patrol tonight between Ostend and Schouwen.
If conditions permit Flushing Roads should be searched. Surface vessels met east of 2° 40' E. may be attacked without challenge.
(C. in C. Nore 1220A/31 to BEEHIVE).

Vest Fiord.
Proposed S/M
Patrol.

It is probable that enemy shipping does not use the inner leads between Bodo and Tranoy during darkness. Suggest that one of the subs. on patrol proceed into Vest Fiord for a few days before withdrawing. Admiralty pass to F.O.S.
(S.O. Force J. 1700A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

Exercise.
(KENT).

R/V with RESOLUTION at 1400 in 180° Bear Bear 4 for A L T attacks. F.O.C. 10th C.S. will inform you if it is possible to arrange R.A.F. exercises for you with NIGERIA or TRINIDAD between A.A. firing and A L T attack.
(C. in C. H.F. 2358A/31 to KENT).

/Proposed ...

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. - contd.

Proposed
Signal
Exercise.

Your 0950/20. Approved, providing the ships are not otherwise employed.
(C.C.O., 2359A/31 to S.O.A.S.C. Largs).

British Air Activity.

S.B.R.

My 1632A/25. Cancel para. (c).
(F.O.S. 1206A/31 to H.Q.C.C.)

Brest bombed.

On day 29/12, Night 29/30, Night 30/31, and day 31/12 no operations took place. On day 30/12, sixteen Halifaxes, supported by 9 squadrons of fighter aircraft, were detailed to attack the battle cruisers at Brest. Weather fair and visibility good. 11 Halifaxes dropped their bombs. No results observed owing to evasive action having to be taken. Our A/C encountered intense heavy and light flak which was extremely accurate - all the Halifaxes were damaged, some extensively.
(H.Q.B.C. 1345/31).

Mining.

Operation Q O. Cancel operation Q O today Wednesday. Eleven Group fogbound. (C. in C. Nore 0719A/31 to M/S.9).

Clyde M/S.
Force.

See Policy.

Yarmouth.

Trawler detonated Acoustic Mine 1335A today 355° 1½ miles No.6 Buoy. (F.O.I.C.Gt.Yarmouth 1515A/31).

Thames
Estuary.

One Magnetic Mine detonated as follows at 1937/30 by Sweepers. (Capt. M/S Sheerness 1810/31).

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Brest.

Brest 1416/31. Preliminary interpretation of photographs shows all three Major Units in same positions as on 30/12. (D.D.I.C. 1823A/31).

TIRPITZ.

Following sentences incorporated to today's daily summary of information passed from G.H.Q. Washington to General Commanding U.S. Force in Iceland read - "VON TIRPITZ last reported at Trondhjem, now believed in Atlantic". Can this be confirmed. (A.C.I.C. 1845N/31 to Admt.) Your 1845N/31. Following is repetition of Admiralty 1130A/31 to B.A.D.Washington. Your 1510R/30. There is good reason to believe TIRPITZ is still in the Baltic. (N.I.D.1. 2249A/31 to A.C.I.C.)

Navigational.

Yarmouth.

Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C.Gt. Yarmouth, 0706A/31).
Port now open owing to improved visibility.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 0917A/31).

Denmark
Strait.

Ice. See Operations.

Harwich.

Port now open (F.O.I.C.Harwich 0912A/31).

Q.Z.H. 122.

Request Q.Z.H. 122 may be cancelled. This area is considered clear. (C. in C. Nore 1121A/31).

Cape Orlov
Light.
(PQ.7)

Characteristic changed to flash white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes, are 000° to 160°, visibility 23 miles. You are requested to instruct escorts to inform Ships of PQ 7.
(2) Russian Authorities state change will endure for about 2 months.
(D.T.D. 1146A/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

South Shear
Buoy.

Light on South Shear Buoy, vicinity Tuskar, extinguished. (F.O.I.C.Milford Haven, 1317A/31).

No.8 Medway
Buoy.

No.8 Medway Buoy dragged to approx. 51° 27' 47" N. 00° 46' 52" E. (C. in C. Nore, 1847A/31).

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Technical.

Oiling at Sea. My 1928/24 re R.F.A. EAGLESDALE. Request necessary arrangements be made for oiling at sea trials with rubber hose.
(D. of Stores, 1134A/31 to C. in C. W.A.)

Casualties & Defects.

NELLIE
(Mined 21/12). Request 3 tugs may be sent to endeavour re-float NELLIE at 1500/1. If re-floated vessel should proceed if possible to King George Dock, Hull.
(Chief Salvage Officer, Hull, 1051/31).

JUNON. Arrangements can be made to dock JUNON at Devonport for repair of propellers. Date of arrival at Devonport to be reported in due course.
(D.O.D. H. 1053A/31 to F.O.S.) *See p. 986*

Shipping & Convoys.

Convoy
PQ. 7B. Composition, Escorts, Route. Details.
(N.O.I.C. Iceland 1049N/31). See Lion Copy.

E.N.27. Amend my 1709/22. E.N.27 postponed 24 hours to 2100/2. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1211/31).

BATORY. F.O.C.N.A. 2142A/30. Route from
(c) 045° N. 019° W. (d) 180° Fastnet Rock. 10 miles.
Thence Q.Z.F.18 and route A and B of W.A.C.I.
part 131 omit positions L J and I.
VANOC proceed Liverpool on passing Skerries.
BADSWORTH escort BATORY to Clyde thence proceed Londonderry. (C. in C. W.A., 1502A/31).

QP.4.
AMBROSE ROYAL.
EULIMA. I estimate AMBROSE ROYAL and EULIMA now have only 9 days diesel oil remaining. If this is correct they will require to bunker in Kolo Inlet before proceeding Iceland. Request S.O. of escort may ascertain position on making contact and report to you for orders. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 1533C/31 to S.B.N.O. North Russia, EDINBURGH).

/Routeing ...

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

MESSAGE

IN

FROM: N.O.I.C. Iceland.

1049N/31st December

Date: 31.12.41.
Recd: 1525.

Naval Code L by W/T.

ADDRESSED: Admiralty, C. in C. Home Fleet. H.M.S.'s
CUMBERLAND, TARTAR, ICARUS. S.O. 1st N/S.F.
Admiral Miles. S.B.N.O. North Russia.
Repeated R.A. (D) H.F. A.C.O.S. S.B.N.O.
Archangel. R./L.C.S. R.A. 18.C.S.
H.M.S. BRITOMART.

IMPORTANT.

- 101. (A) P Q 7 B 1100Z 31 December.
- (B) (i) from U.K. GROK (BOTAVON) Cmdr. EMPIRE
ACTIVITY. GSPL (JUTLAND), EMPIRE HOWARD, EMPIRE
HALLEY, CHERNYSHEVSKI.
- (ii) from U.S. ANEROID, EMPIRE REDSHANK,
REIGHCOUNT.
- (C) H.M.S. CAPE ARGONA S.O. H.M.S. WASTWATER.
- (D) 069 degs 00' North 012 degs 00' West 1300Z/3
January 1942.
- (E) H.M.S. CUMBERLAND. H.M.S. TARTAR. H.M.S. ICARUS
- (F) Estimated time of arrival position M Z 0900Z/10.
January approach course 250 degs or position (Y)
0900Z/10 January approach course 168 degs.
- (G) 8 knots from (D) above.
- (H) Friday H.M.S. CUMBERLAND 1100 tons H.M.S. TARTAR
480 H.M.S. ICARUS 400.

1049N/31.

Advance Copy D.C. D.O.D. (H)
D.T.D.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (H)
A.C.N.S. (H)
N.A. 1st S.L.
D. of P. (2)
D.O.D. (H)
D.D.O.D. (H)
D.N.I. (4)
D. / S.W.
D.M.S.
I.P. (2)

W.D.
D.C. (2)
Hd. of M.
D.T.S.D.
D.D.I.C. (2)
E.P.S.
D.T.D. (2)
D.T.D. (M)
D.T.D. (C)
N.I. 10.
A.E. (3)
D. of S.T.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - contd.

Routeing of
PQ and QP
Convoys.

Your 1926A/30. Concur policy of sailing the convoys direct from Loch Ewe but, in view of navigation difficulties involved in approaches of Seidisfiord from (? Archangel). (See A.M.1559A/3/10 my number 1464/HF.1060/9 dated 15 Oct. 1941 and A.L. M/PD.0278/41 dated 11 Nov. 1941), I do not consider the route west of Faroes is acceptable. Consider route should pass east of Faroes and thence through approx. 066° N. 010° W.

(ii) In this event, additional AA protection should be provided during early part of the journey and it will rarely be possible to provide this from Home Fleet. Fighter escort for as far to northward as practicable will also be necessary during daylight hours.

(iii) It will be necessary to review situation when risk of air attack becomes greater with longer periods of daylight.

(iv) Concur suggestion in para. 4.
(C. in C. H.F. 1752A/31 to Admty.)

F.N592.
F.N593.

If you have lost contact, anchor rear part of Convoy and endeavour to join up with F.N593. Keep SAPPHIRE with you. WIDGEON remaining with F.N592. (LOWESTOFT 2153A/31 to WOOLSTON).

Your 2153A/31. Lost touch with Convoy and escort. Visibility nil, position uncertain. Intend remaining in vicinity to collect stragglers when visibility improves.

(WOOLSTON 2315A/31 to LOWESTOFT).

Rear of F.N593 anchored in vicinity 54 F Buoy thick fog. JAN VAN BRAKEL, PUFFIN, BASSET in company. JAN VAN BRAKEL is not aware rear has lost contact with van. (PUFFIN 2345A/31 to LIDDESDALE).

P.Q.7.
P.Q.7B.

Inform ships of P.Q.7 and P.Q.7B. Characteristic of Cape Orlov Light changed to flashing white for 5 seconds every 2 minutes Arc 000° to 160°. Visibility 23 miles. (C. in C. H.F. 2212A/31 to CUMBERLAND, SALAMANDER, TARTAR).

O.N.52.
KIWI.

Sailed KIWI for St. John's Newfoundland with O.N.52 in accordance with my 1114A/27. F.O.C. N.F. is requested to take necessary action in accordance with B.A.D. Washington's 1659R/7/11. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 2344A/31).

991 A

MOST SECRET. M E S S A G E 2016/31st December. WT
MOST SECRET Date 31.12.41.

To P.S.T.O. Simonstown.
Repeated S.T.O. Durban.
P.S.T.O. Egypt.
P.S.T.O. India.
C. in C. South Atlantic.
C. in C. East Indies.
C. in C. Mediterranean.
F.O.C. Royal Indian Navy.
C. in C. Eastern Fleet.
IMPCON DURBAN.
F.O.R.S.

Naval Cypher (X).

From Director of Sea Transport.

IMPORTANT.

Reference Admiralty message 1834/13 paragraph

13. All ships of W.S.14.D. comprising EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA
WARWICK CASTLE CITY OF PRETORIA and TROILUS and also
MALANCHA which is proceeding independently should now
proceed to Durban.

2. My 0104/28. Following personnel are now
required to be transhipped so as to be able to accompany
W.S.14.D. to Malaya. See A.M. 2201/28/12.

EX HIGHLAND PRINCESS	406.
ATHLONE CASTLE	581
ESPERANCE BAY	684
STRATHALLAN	83
DUCHESS OF ATHOLL	1109
ANDES	367.
Total:	<u>3230</u>

Six personnel ex CITY OF PRETORIA and 65 ex TROILUS
should also be transferred. Propose DUNERA and DILWARA
be used but you should arrange as you consider best.

3. Details of personnel and also cargo to be
transhipped ex ATHLONE CASTLE to ships of W.S.14.D. have
been communicated by War Office.

4. 100 personnel for India and 170 for Middle
East should be disembarked ex EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA and
onward conveyance arranged.

5.....

MOST SECRET

MOST SECRET

- 2 -

5. 118 personnel ex ANDES formerly for Middle East are now to proceed to India.
6. Agreed.
7. S.T.O. Durban pass to IMPCON DURBAN.

2016A/31.

Director of Sea Transport.
M.W.T. Extn. 2187.

1st Lord.	D.N.I.(4)
1st S.L.	D.S.D.
2nd S.L.	D. of L.D.
3rd S.L.	D.N.A.D.
4th S.L.	D.A/S.W.
5th S.L.	D.M.S.
V.C.N.S.	D.G.D.
A.C.N.S.(H).	I.P.(2)
A.C.N.S.(F).	W.D.
A.C.N.S.(T).	D.C(2)
A.C.N.S.(W).	Hd. of M.
N.A. 1st S.L.	D.T.S.D.
D. of P.(2)	D.D.I.C.(2)
D.O.D.(F).	E.P.S.
D.L.O.D.(F).	D.T.D.(2)
D.O.D.(H).	N.I.D. 10.
D.D.O.D.(H).	D. of S.T.
	D.T.D.(M)

MOST SECRET

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Raiders.

Intelligence

* New German
BENND

A.M. 1801A/23.

(1) On 23/12 outward bound tanker, probably ex Norwegian *OLE JACOB, bombed in 45° 16' N. 12° 17' W. torpedoed by A/C on 24/12 in 43° 44' N. 7° 52' W. last seen beached with after well deck submerged.

(2) By D/F at 2036/29/12 German Unit probably M/V in 25° to 30° S. 25° to 35° W. possibly homeward bound from Japan. FRANKFURT is reported to have remained four weeks in same area in July 1941, waiting orders to proceed.

(3) VINCENT, see A.M. 1650A/16, is overdue at Balbao since 23/12.

(4) Confidential Chilean Naval Sources report two unidentified warships off Easter Island steering west on 28/12.

(5) U.S. Aircraft fired on by unidentified ship apparently shadowing U.S. Tanker RAMAPO about 500 miles 245° San Diego P.M. 28/12 bombed without result.

(D.D.I.C. 1610A/31 to C's in C. etc.).

North Atlantic.

SCOTTISH
a/c attack.

Am being attacked by enemy aircraft bearing 313° from Porthcawl 19 miles at 8 O'clock. 2 F.W's bearing unknown height unknown. Course 360°. (SCOTTISH 0930/31 0935/31 to Gib. W/T).

W.D. Note. Porthcawl is evidently incorrect. Position is probably off Tagus.

My 0930 and 0935/31. One F.W. aircraft approached from Southward but was driven off without pressing home attack. B.3 hit. Second F.W. aircraft followed 5 minutes later but did not attack. (SCOTTISH 1000A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

One airplane unknown height unknown, course 360° my position 310° from Porthcawl distance 39 miles.

(SCOTTISH 1130/31 to Gib. W/T) (See note to former re Porthcawl).

U/B.

A U/B is operating in the vicinity of Azores and may be aware of MIRROR's activities. (D.D.I.C. 1015A/31 to F.O.C.N.A. (R) COLTSFOOT).

P.39

Intend to sail P.39 p.m./2nd for A/S patrol in vicinity. Alboran Island. (F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/31 to C.in C. Med.).

War Diary.31.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.- Contd.CAMPBELTOWN

In view of WESTCOTT defects request you will retain CAMPBELTOWN for the present. Further signals will be made when she can no longer be spared. (C.in C. W.A. 1050A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Gibraltar

Gibraltar W/T Stn. will be out of action on 44.8 k/cs/Sec. from 0700 to 1500 G.M.T. 1/1. Other services will be maintained on reduced power.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1611A/31 to N.A.S.).

Vesca system, extension.

Your 1810A/25 (1710/25 intended) Promulgation on lines set out is satisfactory so far as N.A. Station is concerned. From security point of view, essential that local discretion should be exercised in promulgating shipping dates of arrival and departure. This is necessary as majority of ships arrive and leave Gibraltar in convoy. (F.O.C.N.A. 1620A/31 to Admty.).

P.39.

Intend to sail P.39 p.m./2nd for A/S patrol in vicinity of Alboran Island.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1336A/31, to C.in C. Med.).

LIPARI (German).

Malaga reports LIPARI sailed 29/12. Destination unknown.
(S.O.I.Gibraltar 1700A/31 to Admty.).
This is the first movement of this ship since she originally arrived on 5/9/1939. (D.S. 848).

H.G.77.

Departures BLACK SWAN, FOWEY, BLUEBELL, HELIOTROPE, CAMPION, STONECROP, with Convoy H.G.77. Local escort WISHART, VIDETTE. (F.O.C.N.A. 1946A/31 to Admty. C.in C. W.A.).

EXMOOR CROOME airmen from CONGO.

My P.C. and S. 027° 02' N. 014° 26' W. 036° 20'. CROOME has four survivors from Hudson aircraft recovered from Portuguese ship CONGO. Have one serious hospital case. E.T.A. 0900A/2. (EXMOOR 2001A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).
Following from B.N.A. Lisbon (Begins). Portuguese Naval Authorities inform that on 28th Portuguese steamer CONGO picked up pilot and all crew of British aircraft in 035° 10' N. 011° 55' W. CONGO bound Sao Thome. Authorities will furnish P.C. and S. to enable H.M. Ship to take off airmen thus avoiding internment. (Ends). (F.O.C.N.A. 2305A/31 to C.in C. S.A.).
Recovered by CROOME see 0801A/1.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

DUNNOTTAR
CASTLE.

My 1541/6. Date of completion of DUNNOTTAR CASTLE is now 10/1 ex trials. Extension of time caused by necessity for manufacture of new exhaust piston.
(C.S. Simonstown 0741Z/31 to Admty.).

INDOMITABLE
exercises.

While in West Indies fighter aircraft were exercised daily in interception being controlled by R.D.F. and R/T. Owing to necessity for R/T silence no further practices appear possible. Most desirable for occasional exercises to be carried out. Request if type 57 may be used in South African waters.
(INDOMITABLE 1037Z/31 to Admty.) Reply C.in C. S.A. 1936Z/1.
Your 1455Z/30. INDOMITABLE must not be delayed to await ENGADINE's cargo.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1135A/31 to F.O.I.C. Simonstown).

→ ASTURIAS

My 1630Z/30 and C.in C. S.A. 1331Z/30. ASTURIAS is to proceed forthwith to Falkland Is. for fuel, reporting E.T.A.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1046Z/31 to ASTURIAS).

Minesweepers.

Your 0017N/4/12. Anticipate five Oropesa 'LL' and S.A. Minesweepers will be joining your station about May 1942.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1051A/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

Removal of
Vichy French

My 1654/12. (Re efforts to induce Union Govt. to remove Vichy French from Cyattal areas). Can a reply now be given?
(S.O.I. Capetown 1104B/31 to Admty.).

→ DORSETSHIRE
ASTURIAS
BIRMINGHAM
BULOLO.

Your 0731Z/27 (1731/27 intended).
Para. 2 (?Concur).
Para.3. DORSETSHIRE is on detached duties in Indian Ocean. I cannot send you an 8 inch cruiser. DORSETSHIRE will have to have a short spell for making good defects when she returns to Cape area. After that, if U.S.A. should have taken over strategic control of your area and situation elsewhere permits, I will send (groups missing) DORSETSHIRE. *See also p. 1000*
Para.4. Concur.
Para.5. Concur that ASTURIAS should proceed Falkland Isles now and BIRMINGHAM after your Rio visit (vide my 1401Z/27) but consider BULOLO should remain on trade route for time being.
(2) I am considering possibility of sending another A.M.C. to strengthen your squadron temporarily but cannot do so at once.
(C.in C. S.A. 1331Z/31 to R.A.S.A.D.).

/DEVONSHIRE...

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. -Contd.

DEVONSHIRE
CANTON
Pernambuco.

Your 1301/30 (1303/30). Requirements for DEVONSHIRE, CANTON arranged. (N.A. Rio de Janeiro, 1402Z/31 to C.in C. S.A.). Your 1301/30 and R.A.S.A.D's 1119/29. Visit of DEVONSHIRE, CANTON, to Pernambuco and Oiler ARNDAL to Rio de Janeiro approved. (N.A. Rio De Janeiro 2036Z/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

B.D.V's

Sailed BARSTOKE, BARBOUR, BARONIA, S.of A. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ knots E.T.A. Kilindini 12/1. Routed as in my 1400Z/19/5. (N.O.I.C. Durban 1547Z/31 to C.in C.S.A. C.in C. E.F. S.N.O.C.R.S. etc.).

RESOLUTION.

Your 1423A/29. Most important you should carry as many mails as possible. Request space which can be allocated to confidential bags and mails for the Cape. (D.O.D.(H) 1558A/31 to RESOLUTION).

South
American
Countries
policy.

During past 10 days have discussed war situation as affecting South American countries with H.M. representatives, S.N.O. including U.S. as well as Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and Brazil. Point always made that chance of attack by Axis powers is unlikely to be diminished by adoption on part of these countries of an accommodation attitude to Axis powers, and that signs of preparation to defend themselves and their trade by maintaining patrols on trade routes might well act as deterrent. Fleets of Brazil, Argentine, and Chile are by no means of negligible value and activity by these forces cannot but help common object. Tendency in these countries to discount the value of their own forces, and I have stressed how much they can help. Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and Brazil appreciate this. Whilst Uruguay has no forces whatsoever Brazilian Navy already commenced a small patrol in North and Dr. Aranha has almost convinced me that after conclusion of conferences more extensive patrols will be instituted. Attitude of Argentina remains the difficulty but I am satisfied that Argentine Navy will not be averse to playing its part if Govt. permits. Both Dr. Guani and Dr. Aranha told me that they have every hope that Argentine can be brought to their point of view. Unfortunate if Uruguayan ports were available to our ships without co-operation of Argentina in defence of Plate and its trade outer, and I feel from a Naval point of view, it might be wise to try and influence Rio de Janeiro conference along following lines.

/(1).....

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

South
America
Countries
policy.
-Contd.

(1) Persuade S.A. countries that too accommodating an attitude towards Axis powers will not deter the latter from aggression.

(11) Whatever diplomatic relations resulting from conference may be the presence of South American Naval forces on trade route is highly desirable.

H.M. Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro agrees.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1730Z/31 to Admty.).

U/B

Boeing Fortress Bomber on passage (?Natal) to Freetown reports sighting S/M on surface in 0605 N.15.03 W. at 1030/31. Submarine dived on sighting aircraft.

(C.in C. S.A. 1825Z/31 to Admty.).

W.S. 14 D.

Admty. 1834/13, para 13. All ships of W.S.14 D. should now proceed to Durban. Personnel required to be transhipped so as to be able to accompany W.S. 14 D to Malaya, (details).
(D.S.T. 2016A/31 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown) See Lion Copy. P 991 A

Request you will order ships of W.S. 14 D. to Durban in accordance with D. of S.T.'s. 2016A/31 para. 1 to P.S.T.O. Simonstown.
(D.O.D.(F) 2017A/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

EXMOOR
CROOME

Your 1446A/31. (Requesting route for EXMOOR & CROOME). Ships routed (?direct from) (?East) of Canary Islands approx. T.of A. (?10)00Z/1. (N.O.I.C. Bathurst 2035N/31 to F.O.C.N.A.).

U.S.
Movements.

Pernambuco arrival 31st U.S. Cruiser OMAHA, U.S. Destroyer SOMERS, arrival 30th Brazilian minelayer CAMOCIN.
(S.O.I. Montevideo 2040Z/31 to S.A. Div.).

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

U/B.

German S/M. suspected near harbour entrance.
(R.A. Alexandria, 0020B/31 to Force I., Med.Fleet).

A/S patrol
for "Motor."

My 1835/30. Para. 1 second sentence. Sunderland will not contact before 0900/31 owing to weather conditions. (C. in C. Med., 0516B/31, to C.S.7.)

U/B.

Periscope sighted in ?Great Pass at ?1910.
Investigate. (201 Group 0926/31 to F.B.N.9029).

F.A.A. Sqdns.

There are now 8 Albacores of 828 Sqn. and 7 Swordfish of 830 Sqn. Suggested the 2 Squadrons should be amalgamated and run as 2 separate flights retaining present personnel. Advantages. If approved it is proposed squadron should be called the Malta Naval Air Squadron and Lt. Cdr. Hopkins should remain in command.
(V.A.Malta., 1010B/31, to C. in C. Med.)

Sinkings.

Following ships have been sunk at sea by enemy action. SHUNTIEN on 23/12. WARSZAWA, Polish, on 26/12, VOLO on 28/12.
(N.C.S.O. Alexandria 1148B/31 to Admty.)

TRUANT,
TRUSTY. for
Far East.

My 1131B/25. Both submarines are painted dark blue and have no pendant number painted on conning towers.. (Capt. S.1, 1215B/31, to C. in C. E.I.)

Libya,
30/12.

Small ships previously off Ras Aali now moved to presumed inloading point 10 miles west possibly owing to Albacore attacks previous night. Throughout day 4 Blenheims Sqn. including Free French heavily bombed enemy positions inside Bardia perimeter obtaining many direct hits and near misses. Boat in Bardia harbour later sunk by gunfire. (H.Q., R.A.F., M.E., 1219/31).

Sinking of
U/B's 11/12,
23/12, 28/12.

AMMIRAGLIO

Italian U-Boat CARACCILO sunk by FARNDAL 11/12 carried 7000 tins petrol 20 litres capacity to Bardia, was returning to Suda Bay to take on further fuel supplies. U-Boat left Bardia with captured British documents and about 20 passengers. Documents sunk with boat. Italian Gen. Lami of Engineer Corps? and C.O. U-Boat, Lieut. Comm. Musotto both missing. Full report on CARACCILO sent by air. Ref. C. in C. Med. 1624/23, (N.T. in W.D. but see 1255/6/1) name of U-Boat not yet ascertained. C.O. Kaufmann taken prisoner. Ref. C. in C. Med. 1202/28, name of U-Boat U.75 C.O. Regelman missing. Thiesenhausen believed Commander of German U-Boats in Eastern Med.
(S.O.I. Med., 1222B/31, to Admty. C. in C. Med.)

/Zuara ...

SECRET

M E S S A G E

IN

1219/31st December

FROM:- N.A. Stockholm

DATE:- 31.12.41.

RECD:- 2228

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CYBER UNIT FILE LABEL BY CABLE

ADDRESSED:- D.N.I.

RECIRCULATION BY N.I.D.

Following information from recognised dependable source who left Rome December 15th.

(a) After Admiral Raeders Italian visit arrangements were made to send certain German Personnel to take charge of essential controls in fighting organisation of Italian warships.

(b) Certain Officers and key ratings from SCHARNHORST GNEISENAU and one other cruiser arrived about mid-November and have been accommodated in battleships where they are now studying manipulation Italian control instruments.

(c) German technical experts in connection with development of new magnetic pistol are now at Naples.

(d) Admiral Riccardi though thoroughly disgusted at this German infiltration was believed by source to have decided to continue in office for the present.

B 3 repeat B 3.

1219/31

Advance copy sent D.N.I.

Comment by N.I.D.

Further details of source have been requested though it is probable that in some positions certain German infiltration has taken place it is considered this would be more likely in staff duties than in fighting control organisation.

V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
M.A. 1st S.L.
Ops. (3)
O.D. (5)
O.I.C. (2)
D.S.D. 9.
D.N.I. (4)
D. of P. (3)
H. (2)
E.P.S.
I.P. (3)
W.D.

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. contd.

Zuara,
mining.

R.A.F. H.Q., Med. I.310 dated 30th (?.) Position of mines laid (?Z)uara by Albacores. Bearing and distance (? in) (? cables) from end of North Mole (corrupt Gp.) $1\frac{3}{4}$ 210° $\frac{3}{4}$ 090° . (V.A. Malta, 1433B/31 to C. in C. Med.)

Japanese
Policy.

(1) A.1 Source reports following conversation with Arzur French N.A., Istanbul, who is in constant active collaboration with German and Japanese attaches.
(2) Japanese Military Attache who came here direct from operations staff Tokyo told Arzur (a) Japanese consider it now impossible for British to reinforce Singapore with aircraft from India because north south communications cut (b) reinforcements from aircraft carriers impossible in view of great Japanese strength torpedo carrying aircraft (c) Torpedo carrying aircraft manned by fanatics who expect to suffer 50% casualties on any major enterprise (d) Singapore should fall about Mid-March (e) attack on Dutch East India will follow (f) then attack on Australia which should fall end of 1942 (g) Though Japanese knew America unprepared actual degree unpreparedness amazed them (h) Japanese have so far engaged pick of air force but only older naval units. (M.A., Ankara, 1445/31 to W.O.)

UTMOST.

Intend sailing UTMOST for Gibraltar and U.K. p.m. on 2/1, diving during daylight throughout passage to Gibraltar. UTMOST will have only 2 mark 2 torpedoes on board. (Capt. S. 10, 1510B/31 to Admty.)

ABDIEL.

C. in C. Med. 1850B/30. E.T.A. Port Said 0630B/1st. (ABDIEL, 1641C/31).

French &
* German
Shipping.

Departure 30th. ST. BRIE^UC Sete.
Arrival 31st. DERNA COETLOGON. (Barcelona, 1703/31).

*? Italian.

German
Shipping.

Arrivals. 30, LORENZ L.M. RUSS, 31, LISBOA.
Departures 30, HANS SCHMIDT, OTTO LEONHARDT, both for Cartagena, OTTO LEONHARDT, about 10,000 tons Cyanacide. (Valencia, 1723/31).

Malta Air
Report.

CSR Malta to 1600 hours 31/12/41.
30th, damage not yet reported, air raid 1148 hours, nil. 1440 hours, 3 JU. 88 20 ME.109 crossed coast, bombs dockyard, 1 civilian killed, 9 injured.
Night 30/31, 1622 to 0400 hours, 23 raiders crossed coast, bombs land and sea, 17 houses demolished, 27 damaged. Kalafrana 1 airman killed 3 wounded, mobile oxygen plant destroyed, slight damage power cables and diesel fuelling system. Halfar slight

/damage ...

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. cont:-

Malta Air
Report.
(contd.)

damage. 4 alerts 0645, 6 raiders crossed coast great height, 0804 hours 6 ME.109 circled Island, 1044 hours 46 raiders ME.109 and bombers. Takali bombed, 3 airmen slightly injured (HM) Abingdon machine and destroyed 1 ME.109, 3 naval crew wounded. 1310 hours 1 raider approached did not cross coast. (H.Q., Malta, 1805/31).

Precautions
against
Human
Torpedoes.

My 0930B/20. Amend last sentence of para 1.
(2) Para. 3. Stock available will allow following issues to be made from Alexandria.
(3) Further supplies are not expected before March and economy of charges is therefore essential.
(C. in C. Med., 1855B/31 to N.O.i/c Malta N.O.i/c Alexandria, A.S.Alexandria, S.B.N.O.Suez. (R) F.O.C. Red Sea Force, Admty. N.O.i/c's Port Said, Syrian Ports, Famagusta (Cyprus), Haifa, B.S.N.O.Tobruk, N.O.i/c's Tripoli (Syria), Derna, Benghazi, Mersa Matruh.)

Navigation.

Following has been read. Tug sank position 031° 16' 029° 14', one lighter adrift dangerous to navigation. Direction of drift S.E. between 1 knot and 2 knots. (PEONY, 1950B/31).

1000

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Burma.

30/12, Situation report. Japanese evacuated Bokypin night of 28/29, occupied by us this morning. Air R/C today 3000 feet saw 3 aeroplanes believed fighters on Raheng aerodrome. Considerable influx of labour into Rangoon, dock workmen about 50% back, trains also working in docks.
(G.O.C. Burma, 0055/31 to W.O.)

Convoy
B.A.12.

0130Z/31, ASCANIUS, CITY OF PARIS, YOMA, Troops and Stores, Aden.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay 0139Z/31 to Admty.)

DORSETSHIRE
MAURITIUS
W.S.12 X.

C. in C. E.I. 1410Z/28.
2. DORSETSHIRE is to remain on E.I. Station until further orders.
3. Future of convoy W.S.12 X is at present uncertain, but will be communicated as soon as known. 4. Arrangements should be made to complete work on MAURITIUS fire main at Simonstown.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 1017A/31 to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. E.I., C. in C. S.A.)

CAPETOWN
CASTLE.

Your 0346/29 and 1041/18. CAPETOWN CASTLE not now required to proceed to Karachi. Ship should be ready to sail to New Zealand a.m. about 11/1. Can ship embark approx. 120 R.I. Navy Ratings to be disembarked Sydney en route?
(S.S.T.O. India, 1131Z/31 to D. of S.T.)

Ammunition
Ships.

1. Request 4 ships may be taken up immediately for service as A.S.I.S. to accommodate ammunition now on passage from U.K. A.M.0019/25 refers.
(C. in C. E.I. 1140Z/31 to P.S.T.O. India.)

TEVIOT BANK.

Your 0313/22. Although not entirely suitable, I would like to employ TEVIOT BANK at Horsborough Atoll (?using) KUNG WO where a less effective lay will require to be accepted. Request she will be sailed for Trincomalee as convenient.
(C. in C. E.I. 1248Z/31 to C. in C. E.F.)

Port Blair
defences.

1. Armindia inform me they are sending a force of 1,000 troops and 2 18 pounder guns for defence Port Blair, due to leave Madras on 2/1. They ask whether 2 of 4-inch guns earmarked for Nancowry could be used for same purpose.
2. I am reluctant to agree observing this will leave only 2 4-inch guns available in Colombo for any future M.N.B.D.O. operation, but I have informed Armindia that I have referred matter to you for a final decision.

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War Diary.31.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.Port Blair
defences -
contd.

3. I am discussing with Arminia possibility of laying minefields to assist in defence of Port Blair and our recommendation will be signalled to C. in C. E.F.
(C. in C. E.I., 1344Z/31 to Admty.)

Ceylon
Base
Staff.

Responsibility for bases in Ceylon on scale outlined in Admty. 1850/29 necessitates considerable grading up of Naval and Admty. civil staff in the Island. (II) I strongly urge (a) flag officer be appointed as R.A. Ceylon. Present appointment as Capt. i/c, Ceylon, to lapse. (b) Capt. Merriman now on passage to relieve present Capt. i/c be re-appointed as Capt.-Superintendent i/c Naval Establishment in Ceylon. (III) Appointment of Capt. Wood as N.O.i/c Trincomalee would not be affected. (IV) Propose R.A. Ceylon be flown to Ceylon and that he should on arrival make his own recommendations as to additional naval and civil staff required.
(C. in C. E.I. 1528Z/31 to Admty.)

Ceylon.
Control of
Aircraft.

Part 1. Chiefs of Staff in their 58805 cypher M.O.12 18/12 confirmed that India should assume general control of Air Forces in Ceylon. C. in C. East Indies has suggested that, as primary role of Air Forces in Ceylon will be co-operation with Navy, operational control should be vested in him. General control of Air Forces in Ceylon must be vested in you and another independent Command cannot be established. In order to clear the relative position between O.C. R.A.F. Ceylon and C. in C. East Indies, a directif as in parts 2 and 3 should be issued by you. This directif has been agreed by Admty. Note that control of Air Forces operating in defence of Ceylon as distinct from G.R. aircraft, remain your responsibility under G.O.C. in C.

Part 2. O.C. Air Forces in Ceylon to be responsible to A.O.C. in C. India, for operational control, administration, training and efficiency of Air Forces in Ceylon. O.C. Air Forces in Ceylon is to accept general directif from C. in C. East Indies, for operation of G.R. aircraft, but is responsible for execution of directif. Primary roles of Air Forces in Ceylon are co-operation with naval and military forces in that area, maintenance of sea communications and air defence of Ceylon.

Part 3. Naval aircraft, either shore based or temporarily disembarked from carriers, will be under the direct control of C. in C. East Indies. At his discretion, naval fighter aircraft may be employed in the defence of Ceylon, in which case they will be placed under the operational control of the O.C. R.A.F. Ceylon.

Part 4. Request copy may be passed to C. in C. East Indies.

(Air Ministry 1755 G.M.T./31 to A.H.Q.India.)

/A/A Units ...

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War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - contd.

A/A Units
W.S.14.

Personal C.I.G.S. from Gen. Wavell. Your 60754 (M.O.1) dated 25/12. Am averse to withdrawing A.A. units from Iraq if avoidable. Understand some portion of W.S.14 is being transhipped at Durban. Request your decision regarding A.A. in W.S.14 is reconsidered with view to both light and heavy regiments being sent direct to India.
(C. in C. India, 1930/31 to W.O.)

Base Craft.

Ten motor fishing vessels with diesel engines are being shipped Trincomalee for use as harbour service craft at Trincomalee and Fleet Base Addu Atoll. Report if these vessels can be manned from local sources. Crew 1 coxswain, 1 engineman, 4 deckhands.
(D.S.V.P. 2131A/31 to C. in C. E.I.)

China.

Removal of
Petrol from
Malaya.

Ref. 0103/24 from Admty. Can take 4 tankers named, to Pladjoe initially, to lift 43,000 tons. Please sail independently.
(C. in C. E.F., 0345Z/31 to A.C.N.B.)
Your 0103/24 and my 0345Z/31 to A.C.N.B., N.O. Melbourne. Further tanker tonnage required to lift (A) 29,000 tons aviation spirit for Middle East (B) Surplus production of Pladjoe of 40,000 tons motor spirit, which otherwise will clog storage. Destination (3) as you require. Tanker for (A) and (B) to Pladjoe in 1st instance. Please advise Asiatic Petroleum Co. London.
(C. in C. E.F. 0347Z/31 to Admty.)
Your 0103/24. Not now anticipated possible (A) to lift regular cargoes at Pangkalan Brandan, as air attack on ports and refinery must be expected very shortly, or (B) to receive regular (corrupt group) oil cargo at Singapore. Singapore's surplus, after allowing retention of 6 months service and civil requirements plus 50% to meet loss by enemy action etc., will be lifted as your signal quotes. It is intended all tankers proceed to Pladjoe in first instance, to use to maximum, bar permitting, thence to Singapore to complete full cargo, and sail destinations required. Sailings will be arranged so that tankers arriving Singapore P.M. top dash up during the night, and leave dawn next day.
(C. in C. E.F., 0349Z/31 to Admty. (R) F.O. Malaya, A.C.N.B.)

/Demolitions ...

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China - contd.

Demolitions

Stonecutters and Kuching D/F Stations demolished. Penang demolished but part of equipment evacuated with crew to Singapore. S.Ps and C.Bs were destroyed in each case. (C.S. Singapore 0421Z/31 to Admty.)

ABDIEL.

Admty. 2250/29. Request ABDIEL may be sailed for Colombo where she will receive further orders. (C. in C. E.F. 0840Z/31 to C. in C. Med.)

Shipping
Tonnage,
position.

Your 0009/30 to S.O.(I) Singapore. Approx. estimate of position is to date 25/12 (a) tonnage presumed lost. 78,276 (47 vessels). (b) tonnage previously on China coast and now known to be definitely safe: 94,802 (31 vessels). (c) tonnage between Shanghai Hong Kong and south, or at Manila, of which part is still uncertain: 53,711 (20 vessels). Further details will be signalled by S.O.(I) Singapore as available. Foregoing include Norwegian and Panamanian, but not Russian or Swedish vessels. N.O.I.C. Hong Kong reported that all ships unable to leave Hong Kong district amounting to about 43,000 tons had been scuttled. There is every reason to believe that some at least of ships under (c) have arrived safely in British or Allied ports. (C. in C. E.F., 0923Z/31 to Admty.)

Movements.

Victoria departure 29/12 DRAGON, DURBAN, VAMPIRE
Singapore departure 30/12 KELANTAN, 31/12 TENEDOS,
ELECTRA, EXPRESS, STRONGHOLD, THANET.
(S.O.I. Singapore, 1031Z/31 to Admty.)

Japan.

Intelligence re Policy.
(N.A. Ankara 1445/31) See Mediterranean.

Situation
Report.

Oprep/17. H.M.S. KUDAT sunk by dive bombers 30/12 at Port Swettenham. Kuala Lumpur bombed and machine gunned by 4 enemy aircraft no details. Kuala Lipis attacked by unspecified number of E/A. No casualties reported. 3 out of 4 Catalinas ex U.K. arrived. Fourth remaining Ceylon (A.H.Q. F.E. 2358/31.)

War Diary.

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Dispositions.

Estimated positions of H.M. and Allied Ships at 1800 G.M.T./31.

Ship	Position	Course	Speed
MARSDALE	39°N. 43°W.	Patrol	-
MARON	38°N. 43°W.	"	-
ALBATROSS	10°N. 45½°W.	273°	10
DEVONSHIRE			
CANTON			
CILICIA	07½°N. 35°W.	Patrol	-
ASTURIAS	18°S. 35°W.	"	-
Convoy C.T.8.			
ROCKINGHAM	45½°N. 60°W.	242°	12
F.F.S LE TRIOMPHANT	13°S. 148°E.	326	14
H.M.T.EMPRESS OF CANADA.	47°S. 156°W.	090°	17½

(D.O.D.(F) 0952Z/31 to Opanv.)

Programme for MOA

My 1232Q/26/11. Request you will arrange details of onward passage of MOA from San Diego via Honolulu consulting U.S. Authorities as necessary. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1042Q/31 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa (R) N.Z.N.B. B.A.D.)

Vesca System Extension.

Your 1710/25. Request confirmation that intention is to limit this to inter-station movements. If, as seems to be foreshadowed in Part 2, it is to be extended so as to eliminate private cables regarding all merchant shipping, including movements within station limits, this will necessitate addition to staffs. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1129Q/31 to Admty.)

→ ALBATROSS.

In view of B.A.R.M's 1528A/30, my 2213Q/20 is cancelled. ALBATROSS is to leave Trinidad after disembarking one Walrus in accordance with my 1012Q/30 and proceed to Mobile calling at Kingston Jamaica to disembark remaining aircraft to R.N.A. Stn., Palisadoes. Maintenance personnel is to be landed with aircraft. Report in due course E.T.A. at Kingston Jamaica and anticipated date of arrival Mobile. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1132Q/31 to ALBATROSS.)

Washington Report.

Washops 21. (i) Philippine Is. 29/12. Gen. MacArthur reports Fort Mills heavily bombed by 60 enemy A/C; 4 were destroyed by A.A. fire. Shortly after raid a submarine contact was made in controlled minefield, 2 mines were fired and a large oil slick was observed. 31/12. General MacArthur reports heavy enemy pressure; enemy armed forces infiltrating and all roads controlled by enemy dive bombers. Manila will be uncovered by nightfall 31/12. Next U.S. position will be Abataan.

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War Diary

31.12.1941.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Washington Report contd.

(ii) Hawaii. A report up to midnight 29/30 states no enemy activity with exception of believed presence of enemy submarine off North Oahu; submarine W/T has been frequently heard.
(iii) U.S. Pacific Coast. 30/12. A U.S. army aircraft reports sighting a submarine off Cape Disappointment (Columbia River)
(J.S.M. Washington 1259R/31 to Admty.)

RAMAPO, suspicious vessel.

My 1537R/30. From description given by Ship's Officers of U.S. Oiler RAMAPO and by pilot of one of aircraft it is believed suspected vessel was KUNIKAWA MARU or that class.
(B.A.D. 1341R/31 to Admty.)

ROXBOROUGH.

My 2033Z/30. ROXBOROUGH has now developed serious defects which must be taken in hand before sailing. Anticipate completion 7/1 and arrival Charleston 1200 zone 5 time on 12/1.
(F.O.N.F. 1405Z/31 to B.A.R.M.)

T.C.16 GEORGE WASHINGTON.

My 0349/13/11. It is now anticipated GEORGE WASHINGTON completes conversation Philadelphia early Jan. proceeding New York mid January and ready to sail from New York about 30/1.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1427Z/31 to D. of S.T.)

BELLE ISLE (French)

Censorship intercept indicates French ship BELLE ISLE was scheduled to leave Casablanca 12/12, and that she will be due at Marseilles about 12/2.
(C. in C. A.W.I. 1429Q/31 to Admty., F.O.C.N.A., C. in C. Med.)

→ BEVERLEY.

Several urgent defects render ship unserviceable. All necessary spares not carried. Work is (in) hand at St. Johns N.F. estimated date of completion 11/1.
(C.C.N.F. 1435Z/31 to Admty.)

N.A.1

Convoy N.A.1 composed of BERGENSFJORD and STRATHEDEN will be ready to leave Halifax carrying personnel for U.K. on 9/1.
2. Speed of slowest ship 17 knots.
3. Destination of both ships Clyde.
4. Through A/S escort will be provided by ROCKINGHAM and BEVERLEY. In view of experience gained on outward voyage BEVERLEY should join convoy from St. Johns N.F.
5. C.O.A.C. is requested to sail ships for position (X) in 47.00 N. 51.00 W. arranging local escort as requisite.
6. Route from position (X) will be promulgated by Admiralty.
(D.O.D.(H) 1510/31 to C.O.A.C. Halifax.)

/DJEBEL NADOR ...

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War Diary.31.12.1941.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.DJEBEL NADOR.

Meter. Your 1659/26. DJEBEL NADOR sailed 20/12 for unknown destination with miscellaneous cargo including 30 tons rubber. (B.A.D. 1517R/31 to Admty.)
 N.I.D. Comment. B.A.D. Washington in 1719/29 reported that DJEBEL NADOR had arrived at Marseilles on 22/12.)
 W.D. Note.- See also 1941/31.

French Shipping.

Meter. Algiers 30/12 B.2 Oran Departures - 19/12 MONT SAINT ~~CLAIR~~, 20/12 DJEBEL NADOR, G.G. TIRMAN. 21/12 SEBAA, 23/12 MARIE LOUISE LE BORGNE, PLUTO, 24/12 G.G. CAMBON, MOSTAGANEM. Departures - 15/12 XSAINT SAUVEUR, 17/12 SEBAA, 21/12 VILLIERS. Nemours. Departures - 22/12 XSAINTE CHRISTINE. Destinations not stated. (B.A.D. 1941R/31 to Admty.) *x not identified*

QUEEN OF BERMUDA.

Your 1326A/25. Is QUEEN OF BERMUDA to be sailed independently from Halifax if she can arrive in time to sail with N.A.1 9/1?
 (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 2114Z/31 to Admty.)

ALBATROSS.

1. B.A.R.M's 1528R/30 (N.T. in W.D.) Request you will reply.
2. Your 1012Q/30. Approved.
3. In view of possible U-boat activity off E. Coast of America, remaining aircraft should be retained on board.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 2254A/31 to C. in C. A.W.I.)

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War Diary.31.12.1941.
Wednesday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.CARDITA.

Following has been read. SSSS 59° 18' N., 12° 00' W., mined. (CARDITA 1759/31).
SSSS Read position 59° 18' N. 12° 50' W. (CARDITA, 1828/31).

Detach one Corvette to assist CARDITA torpedoed in 59° 18' N. 12° 50' W. at 1859/31, ship detached to report name when clear of convoy. (C. in C. W.A., 1933A/31 to SCIMITAR).

CARDITA torpedoed. Position 59.18 N. 12.50 W. approx. at 2000/31.

(Valentia Radio, 2010/31, Wick Radio T.O.R. 2112/31).

Request you will sail CAROLINE MOLLER to R/V with ST. MELLONS and VIZALMA at entrance to Lough Foyle at 0500A/1 and proceed in company with them to assist S.S. CARDITA. Further signal will be made. CAROLINE MOLLER to keep constant W/T watch 500 K/cs. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2119A/31 to N.O.I.C. Campbeltown).

Abandoned ship, hit amidships starboard side, all boats have gone, position 59.18 N. 12.50 W. approx. at 2000 G.M.T. de GCK 2025/31.

(CARDITA 2133/31).

ST. MELLONS and VIZALMA are to R/V with CAROLINE MOLLER off entrance to Lough Foyle at 0500A/1, then to proceed with all despatch to assist Tanker CARDITA (position) proceeding through 57° 24' N. 09° 10' W. N.O.I.C. Londonderry is requested to sail VIZALMA accordingly.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 2145A/31 to VIZALMA, ST. MELLONS CAROLINE MOLLER, N.O.I.C. Londonderry)

CARDITA torpedoed (position).

Carry out A/S sweeps passing through this position on passage. (F.O.C. (D) H.F. 2150A/31 to Capt. D.17).

Your 1933A/31. My P.C. and S. 060° 34' N. 020° 22' W. 109° 10.5 knots. E.T.A. 2000Z/1. Weather report. (GARDENIA, 2203Z/31 to C. in C. W.A.)

F.O.I.C. Greenock 2119A/31. Sailed CAROLINE MOLLER. (N.O.I.C. Campbeltown, 2211A/31 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

Submarines Reported.

Estimated approx. position of U/Bs.
(D.D.I.C. 1439A/31, 1440A/31)

1654A

1 U-boat northbound in 049° N. 010° W.
(F.O.S., 1654A/31 to S/MS on Patrol in Area A.)

1805.

Ref. Admty. message AF. 59° 18' N. 12° - 50' W. at 1805/31 G.M.T. (D.D.I.C. 1845Z/31 to G.B.M.S. Area 1)