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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Air sea
co-operation
of British
and U.S.
forces.

1(a) In a message to B.A.D. Washington today the Admiralty give a precis of a message from C. in C. Western Approaches dated 6th December which exemplifies the difficulties of air sea co-operation between British and U.S. forces.

(b) The Admiralty are asking the U.S. Authorities to adopt the Convoy Escort Code for standard use in all cases where British and U.S. surface and air forces are co-operating.

Home Commands.Operation
F.V.

2(a) The Russian Convoy J.W.55A was about 200 miles E. by S. of Jan Mayen Island at 0800 today escorted by Capt. D.3 in MILNE with 7 other destroyers; and 2 U-Boats were reliably fixed by D/F today to the North and East of Bear Island respectively.

(b) C. in C. H.F. in DUKE OF YORK, with JAMAICA and 4 destroyers, arrived at the Kola Inlet at 0930 in readiness to cover the Convoy during its passage from 27° to 38° E.

Operation
"Tabarin".

3. HIGHLAND MONARCH sailed from the U.K. today in K.M.F.27, with 17 personnel for South Georgia.

Bay
Patrol.

4. The Cruiser GAMBIA was ordered at 1933A today to patrol forthwith in the area about 1200 miles West of Cape Finisterre; and C. in C. Plymouth intends to maintain upon the "Stonewall" patrol one cruiser to be relieved every 3 or 4 days and to fuel as necessary at Horta. GLASGOW is now fuelling at Horta; and PRINCE ROBERT leaves Convoy O.S.61/K.M.S.35 in the southern Biscay area at noon today to R/V with Convoy K.M.F.27 off Cape Clear.

SS. BLUE
JACKET
engaged by
DUCKWORTH.

5. At 0226 today the Frigate DUCKWORTH of E.G.3 when about 640 miles W. by S. of Lands End sighted the U.S. M/V BLUE JACKET who failed to answer signals and opened fire upon DUCKWORTH at close range in the belief that DUCKWORTH was a U-Boat. An inconclusive action followed until 0452, during which BLUE JACKET was damaged and 5 of her crew injured. But at 1015Z the damage had been sufficiently repaired to enable BLUE JACKET to resume her voyage to the U.K. escorted by BERRY of E.G.3. DUCKWORTH was undamaged.

Home Fleet.

6. QUEEN ELIZABETH with 2 destroyers arrived at Scapa at 1523 today from Portsmouth; and RODNEY left the Clyde at 1344 for Scapa.

German
Admiralty.

7. The Air Ministry have information that buildings in the Tirpitz Ufer in Berlin, containing the Admiralty and certain sections of the General Staff have been completely destroyed by air attack.

/Air ...

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SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands - Contd.

Air raid
on Bremen.

8. 547 heavy bombers, escorted by 572 fighters attacked Bremen today. 11 bombers and one fighter are missing. 16 enemy fighters are claimed destroyed and 11 damaged.

Mediterranean.

G.U.S. 24
attacked:
U/B sunk.

9. SS. JOHN S. COPLEY in Convoy G.U.S.24 was torpedoed by a U-Boat in about 36.00 N. 00.30 W. (off Oran) p.m. today. Tugs were sent and brought the ship into harbour this evening. The U-Boat was hunted by U.S.S. WOOLSEY, EDISON and TRIPPE and H.M.S. BRILLIANT brought to the surface by depth charges, and was finally sunk with gunfire by WOOLSEY and TRIPPE at 1935 today in 36.09 N. 00.50 W., the Captain, 6 other officers and 27 ratings being taken prisoners. Initial evidence indicates that the U-Boat may be U.73.

10. 24 U.S. Invaders attacked Civitavecchia today and possibly destroyed two freighters.

Adriatic.

11(a) During a patrol last night destroyers sank a schooner off Civitanova.

(b) Two merchant ships were attacked today by aircraft off Zara: one was left on fire and the other was sunk.

(c) 24 U.S. Mitchells of N.W.A. Strategic Air Force attacked shipping and harbour installations at Sibenik today. Several hits were made on the east and west quays.

(d) 51 U.S. Mitchells attacked shipping and harbour installations at Zara. Two small ships were hit and one exploded. A hit on a 460 ft. ship anchored off the Peninsula was followed by a very heavy explosion. The south-east dock was hit and a large explosion ensued.

Aegean.

12. Aircraft laid mines in Portolago, Leros last night.

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America and West Indies.

13. The American tanker MCDOWELL (10,200 tons) (New York to Aruba independently) was torpedoed by a U-Boat at 0128Z today in 13.08 N. 70.02 W. (about 28 miles north of Aruba).

Australia and New Zealand.

14. Eight Beaufighters this forenoon attacked a medium transport unloading in north-east Timor and made 8 hits with 250 lb. bombs, leaving the ship on fire and considered a total loss.

15. M.T.Bs. bombarded enemy positions east of Torokina, Bougainville, last night.

16. Three possible hits with bombs on a U-Boat 45 miles east of Buka today are claimed by a Beaufort.

17. A Naval Catalina reports two possible hits with depth charges last night on a U-Boat 20 miles north of Sio (Solomon Is.)

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Frigates for Admiralty 122332, 192345, 241245 all November and 142300 December.
Eastern Fleet. (2) The sailing and escort of Group B is under reconsideration and the transfer of the A/S sloops to the Eastern Fleet may be postponed. In this case it may be necessary, in order to provide escorts on the new sailing dates, to use the River Class frigates nominated in your 221909/November.
(3) Request you will prepare these frigates for service in the Eastern Fleet on the highest priority. It is probable that the 1st February is the latest acceptable sailing date.
(4) It is assumed that WEAR, AMETHYST, BLACK SWAN and ERNE will be available for escort duty on the 15th January in accordance with your 081651 and 122329.
(A.C.N.S.(H), 160045A to C. in C.W.A.).

Movements.

RODNEY Sailed RODNEY for exercise, thence in accordance with RODNEY 151459A.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 161344A to A.C.O.S.).

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Scapa arrival. QUEEN ELIZABETH escorted by TUSCAN and TENACIOUS.
(A.C.O.S. 161523 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

S/M movements. Positions of S/Ms. at 0800/17 and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 161734).

Operations.

Operation "F.V." Owing to congestion and threatening ice conditions it will not be possible to accept more than 6 dry cargo ships and 1 spirit tanker in White Sea. Selection as follows. Destination Economica, EMPIRE ARCHER, FORT THOMPSON, and FORT ASTORIA. Total 3 ships. Destination Molotovsk JAMES A FARRELL, JAMES WOODROW, GEORGE WEEMS and LUCERNA. Total 4 ships. In the event of casualties substitute THISTLEDALE for Economica and COLLIS P HUNTINGDON for Molotovsk.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 160032A to S.B.N.O. North Russia).
Your 152001 approved.
(R.A.D.H.F. 160121A to RATTLESNAKE).
By D/F at 0104Z position of U-boat was 074 degs. 51' N. 018 degs. 22' E. Reliable fix.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 160403A to Admty.).
Force 2 arrived Kola Inlet.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 160930 to Admty.).
C. in C.H.F. 070943 para. F. Delete OB DURATE add SCOURGE.
(R.A.D.H.F. 160944A to N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe).
Faeroes departure HYDRA.
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 161431A to N.O.I.C. Aultbea).

/By...

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Operation "F.V." (Contd.). By D/F at 1210Z/16th supposes U-boat position 075 degs. 07' N. 019 degs. 40' E. Unreliable. By D/F at 1053Z/16 supposes U-boat position 074 degs. 15' N. 025 degs. 35' E. Unreliable. (S.B.N.O. North Russia, 161635A to Admty.). Operation "F.V." (1) para.(4) (a) local escort J.W.55 B HOUND S.O., WALLFLOWER, BORAGE, HYDRA. (2) para (4) (c) amend through escort J.W.55B to read WHITEHALL, S.O., WRESTLER, OXLIP, HONEYSUCKLE. (C. in C.H.F. 162131A to H.F.).

SS BLUE JACKET engaged by DUCKWORTH. One medium Merchant Vessel speed unknown, 005 2130 GFKK. (DUCKWORTH, 160226 to Admty.). Intercept at 0348 G.M.T. SSSS still being fired upon. (BLUE JACKET, 160350 to N.O.i/c Humber). Apparently an engaging BLUE JACKET. Is call sign genuine. Will not reply to WBA. (DUCKWORTH, 160420Z to Admty.).

Your 160528. SS BLUE JACKET was engaged by me. Vessel failed to reply to signals and opened fire at close range each time he was called by lamp. Vessel was not included in my situation report. Weather 1870, 2443 position 4922.

(E.G.3, 160425 to C. in C.W.A.).

Following from Lands End Radio.

Intercept 0342 G.M.T. De BLUE JACKET. SSSS position 48.47 N. 22.01 W. Being followed upon by submarine.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 160442A to Admty.).

Following from Lands End Radio.

Intercept 0347 G.M.T. de BLUE JACKET. Still being followed upon position 48.47 N. 22.01 W.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 160450A to Admty.).

SSSS. Position 48 degs. 47' N. 22 degs. 01' W.

Being fired upon by submarine.

(BLUE JACKET T.O.R. 160452).

Proceed forthwith to assist SS BLUE JACKET shelled by S/M. at 0343Z/16th in 048 degs. 47' N. 022 degs. 01' W.

Vessel bound U.K. independently.

(C. in C.W.A., 160528A to E.G.3.).

Help is near.

(C. in C.W.A., 160538A to BLUE JACKET).

Your 160420. Call sign genuine.

(C. of W., 160621A to DUCKWORTH).

My 160425. SS BLUE JACKET escort by BERRY left vicinity of 047 degs. 13' N. 021 degs. 39' W. at 1015Z routed through 050 degs. N. 020 degs. 10' W. and 055 degs. N. 017 degs. W. S.O.A. 15 knots.

SS BLUE JACKET reported W/T damaged and number 3 and 4 holds still on fire but sealed and filled with C.O.2. Shell holes near waterline have been plugged. 5 of her crew injured and doctor of BERRY is on board BLUE JACKET.

BERRY instructed to remain in attendance until fire is under control and subsequently to rejoin me at nearest point along route. DUCKWORTH undamaged and proceeding with COOKE in accordance with previous orders.

Weather 1952, 2243.

(E.G.3, 161005N to C. in C.W.A.).

/Your...

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SS BLUE JACKET engaged by DUCKWORTH. (Contd.). Your attention is directed to A.M.33A of 081352B June. Report if BLUE JACKET materially damaged. (C. in C.W.A. 161042A to DUCKWORTH). Remain with BLUE JACKET and escort her to U.K. (C. in C.W.A., 161626A to BERRY).

Coastal Force Patrols. Departure on P.Y.B. patrols.
R.M.L.512 at 1028 to Z.55.
H.S.L. 2679 at 1034 to 53 degs. 00' N. 03 degs.00' E.
H.B.L. 2706 at 1058 to 52 degs. 40' N. 03 degs. 00' E.
R.M.L. 492 at 1129 to Z.54.
R.M.L. 515 at 1135 to Z.53.
R.M.L. 517 at 1150 to Z.52.
H.S.L. 158 at 1255 off Winterton.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth, 161259A to C. in C.Nore).
1(a) 2 Chasseurs anti E-boat patrol on 50 degs. 24' N. between 0 degs. 35' W. and 0 degs. 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A.
(b) M.L.344 short notice St. Helens.
(c) STEVENSTONE short notice Yarmouth.
(d) Available M.G.Bs. short notice Portland.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 161323A).

Bay patrol. P.C.S. of enemy 3 medium merchant vessels 46 degs. 50' N. 05 degs. 05' W. 180 degs. 7 knots. (A/C Duty E. 160227 to 19 Group). Have A.S.V. contact, probably U-boat. (A/C UAXS, T.O.R. 160430 to 19 Group).
No enemy sighted in area.
(A/C UAXS, T.O.R. 160436 to 19 Group).
You may encounter two westbound U-boats today. (D.D.I.C., 160905A to RORQUAL).
1 unknown ship bearing 090 degs. 16 (corrupt group) 355 degs. 18 knots. My position 46 degs. 32' N. (longitude indecypherable). (E.G.3, 161300N to Admty.).
Disposition at 162000. RORQUAL 046 degs. 10' N. 012 degs. 55' W. 000 degs. daily advance 144 miles. (C. in C. Plymouth, 161445A to Admty.).
On completion of exercise and after topping up with fuel, B1 group comprising HURRICANE S.O., WATCHMAN, WANDERER, GLENARM is to sail p.m. 17th making 15 knots weather permitting towards 047 degs. N. 025 degs. W.
(C. in C.W.A., 161821A to Cdre.(D) W.A.).
My 161341. To ensure fuelling facilities are available all time at Horta for further protection and assistance during operation "Stonewall" it appears most desirable a tug should be available to assist berthing of these ships.
(2) If a tug from Gibraltar can be made available F.O.i/c Gib. is requested to sail her to Horta as soon as possible to relieve EMPIRE SAMPSON while latter cleans boiler and make defects.
(3) My present intention is to maintain one cruiser on patrol, relief to take place every 3 or 4 days. Ship leaving patrol is to proceed to Horta for fuelling. If unable to fuel there ship

/to...

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HOME COMMANDS

Operations.

Bay Patrol (Contd.) to proceed to Ponta Delgada for fuelling as arranged S.B.N.O. Azores in accordance with A.G.M.66A paragraph 2.(B). Visit to Ponta Delgada is not desired unless unavoidable.
(4) Anticipate GLASGOW sail 18th and GAMBIA arrive Horta 19th December.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 161901A to S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.I.C. Gibraltar).
GAMBIA is to take up new patrol (F) forthwith within 50 miles each side line joining to (JJ) 041 degs. 02' N. 032 degs. 10' W. and (KK) 044 degs. 29' N. 035 degs. 27' W.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 161933A to GAMBIA).

"V.P." operations. (1) Patrol A.T. (2) 61 and 101A. (3) A.M. 18th Dec. or first suitable day thereafter.
(A) (Carry out "V.P." (4) One. (5) No. (6) No. (7) 075 degs. Bressay. (8) Yes.
(B) Cancel my 101951.
(A.C.O.S. 161649A to Admty.).

S/M Patrols. Positions of S/Ms. at 0800/17th and movements for following 24 hours.
(A) SIRDAR on patrol North of Soroy.
(B) VENTURER on patrol vicinity 63 degs. 30' N. 01 degs. 05' E.
(C) STUBBORN on patrol off Folden Fiord.
(D) SATYR on patrol off Statlandet. (E) O.15 on patrol off Skudesnes.
(L) SERAPH enters home station 43 degs. N. 12 degs. 54' W. at 1600/17th, thence course 260 degs. dived by day, daily advance 144 miles.
(F.O.S., 161734 to Admty.).

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy convoy. Course and speed of one large vessel, 2 tankers, 2 medium vessels, 180 degs. 10 knots.
(A/C, 161010 to 18 Group).

Navigational.

Dundee My 151055A cancelled.
(N.O.I.C. Dundee, 160500).

Casualties and Defects.

RATTLESNAKE Your 152045. Proceed to Scapa as ordered by my 151733. Your 152001 understood.
(A.C.O.S., 160147A to RATTLESNAKE).

/Your...

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RATTLESNAKE Your 160147. Intend sailing at 0900A/16th.
(Contd.). E.T.A. Scapa 0900/17.
(RATTLESNAKE, 160510A to A.C.O.S.).
Position at 162000.
RATTLESNAKE 060 degs. 16' N. 004 degs. 30' W.
to Scapa 12.
(A.C.O.S., 161111 to Admty.).

Request information whether RATTLESNAKE can be taken in hand for boiler clean and minor defects. Only vessel available now.

RATTLESNAKE's part bilge keel will need replacing.

RATTLESNAKE's 141511 refers.

(A.C.O.S., 161212A to F.O.i/c Aberdeen).

My 160510A. Amend to read 1400A/17th.

(RATTLESNAKE, 161422A to A.C.O.S.).

FAEROES departure RATTLESNAKE.

(N.O.i/c Faeroes, 161456A to A.C.O.S.).

COCKATRICE COCKATRICE developed leaky condenser and suspected leak in reserve feeding tank.

Estimate time to reduce density and clean tanks 48 hours. COCKATRICE can proceed to sea on one

boiler 10 knots. Request instructions.

(RATTLER, 161025A to C. in C.H.F.).

Your 161025 to C. in C.H.F. Proceed with repairs forthwith making every endeavour to be ready for sea on both boilers by p.m.18th. If it becomes necessary to do so proceed on one boiler.

(R.A.D.H.F., 161551A to LOYALTY, COCKATRICE).

ZEEHOND Hove to and W.S.W. gale. DR position 51 degs. 26' N. 26 degs. 35' W. Hunting gear shafting of after planes broken. Planes in hand.
(ZEEHOND, 161801Z to F.O.S.).

Shipping and Convoys.

O.S.61/
K.M.S.35. Leave O.S.61/K.M.S.35 at 1200A to-day and proceed to R/V with K.M.F.27 before dark on 18th.

(2) K.M.F.27 route.

(3) Estimated position of convoy at 1800A/18th 052 degs. 05' N. 016 degs. 35' W.

(4) S.O. Escort Group 4 in BENTINCK.

Admiralty 091509 refers.

(C. in C.W.A., 160050A to PRINCE ROBERT).

Arrived Liverpool Section K.M.F.27 less SCYTHIA and ORONTES.

(N.C.S.O. Belfast, 160156A to C. in C.W.A.).

C. in C.W.A. 151915. Arrived URCHIN escorting 5 merchant vessels.

(F.O.I.C. N.I. 160207A to C. in C.W.A.).

My 151935A. ORONTES and SCYTHIA sailed 1505/16th.

(P.S.T.O. N.W. Ports, 161930A to D.S.T.).

K.M.F.27. Sailed Clyde portion in accordance with my 141706A 24 hours late.

(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 162128A to Admty.).

/O.S.62/K.M.S.36...

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Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

- O.S.62/
K.M.S.36. Sailed STRIKER to comply with C. in C.W.A. 131505A. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 160906A to C. in C.W.A.). Sailed EXE, AMERIA, PETUNIA, CLARKIA, MOYOLA, PIMPERNEL, VANOC, KISTNA, CAUVERY, SNOWFLAKE, HUGH WALPOLE, COTILLION, NORTHERN GIFT, CAPE COMORIN, B.Y.M.S. 2051 and ALLEGIANCE for O.S.62/K.M.S.36. (Cdre. D.W.A., 161202A to C. in C.W.A.).
- D.S.47A. My A.C.N. 523/15th Dec. D.S.47A is to be covered during hours of darkness night 16/17 Dec. (Coastal Command, 161015A to 15 Group). Your 161015. Request you cover D.S.47A from last light. We will attempt to take over at your aircrafts time off convoy. Expect weather bases and area unfit. (Iceland, 161318A to 15 Group).
- O.N.S.25 Your 151820. When ready request you will sail SWEETBRIAR to overtake her Group on O.N.S.25. (C. in C.W.A., 161019A to F.O.I.C. N.I.). Sailed HESPERUS, MOURNE, VANESSA, CLEMATIS, GENTIAN, VESPER, NORTHERN GEM and EMPIRE GULF all for O.N.S.25. (Cdre.D.W.A., 162242A to A.I.G.196).
- E.G.3. If present weather persists expect to be 60 miles North of R/V at 1200A/17th. My anticipated course and speed 180 degs. 15 knots until 1400A subsequently 00 degs. 15 knots. Intend to home on 4400 kc/s at 1400A if not met. (E.G.3, 161131N to ISIS).
- DUCHESS OF RICHMOND. DUCHESS OF RICHMOND sailed 1100Z/16. E.T.A New York 25th December. (N.C.S.O. Mersey, 161250Z to Admt.).
- FRANCONIA FRANCONIA sailed 1157Z/16th. E.T.A. New York 26th Dec. (N.C.S.O. Mersey, 161334Z to Admt.).
- D.F.17 My 141241 para.1. CELIA. Para.two, for RIPLEY read HAMLET. HAMLET will arrive Aberdeen daylight 19th. (A.C.O.S. 161626 to N.O.i/c Faeroes). Intend to sail TORDENSKJORD passing Clyde Boom 0130A/20th Dec. to comply with A.C.O.S's. 141241A. E.T.A. Faeroes 1330A/22nd. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 161626A to C. in C.W.A.).
- SAMARIA SAMARIA sailed 1530Z/16th. E.T.A. New York 26th Dec. (N.C.S.O. Mersey, 161647Z to Admt.).

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POMPEO
MAGNO. Left for Oran 152330.
(F.O.C.Gib. 160040A)

LETITIA. Sailed unescorted.
(F.O.C.Gib. 160055A to R.A. Alex. Cdre. Algiers)

O.S.61/
K.M.S.35,
S.L.142. Escorts O.S.61/K.M.S.35. Please confirm
that I shall receive instruction regarding
detaching ships for Azores and Lisbon.
(S.O.E.G. B.3, 160900Z to F.O.C.Gib.)
Leave O.S.61 as requisite after dark to-day
escorted by 1 escort detailed by B.3 and
proceed to join escort of S.L.142 at 0900A/17th.
S.L.142 escorts HIGHLANDER, S.O. WALKER, CLOVER, ABELIA, ASPHODEL,
AVON, NORTHERN SUN, NORTHERN SPRAY.
(5) Escort detailed by B.3 is to rejoin O.S.61 after R/V has
been made.
(F.O.C.Gib. 161147A to FENCER)
As no reply to my 160900Z received have detached LINGE
escorted by FISHGUARD to Horta.
Your 161147 to FENCER. INVER detailed.
(S.O. Escort Group B.3, 161715Z to F.O.C.Gib)

ALBULA
Safe
Conduct. Expected to leave Marseilles about 19th to
Cape San Sebastian thence by approved route.
Not to be molested this voyage.
(F.O.C.Gib. 161029A to 10th S/M.F. CURIE(R)
Capt. (S) 10)

J.W.55B. My 091035 amend through escort to read WHITEHALL
S.O., WRESTLER, OXLIP, HONEYSUCKLE.
(C. in C. N.A. 161021A to C. in C. H.F.,
F.O. 1st C.S., N.O.I.C.Greenock, (R) Admty.
R.A.D. H.I. Cde. (D) W.A., N.O.I.C. Aultbea,
Capt.(D) Greenock.)

ANDES. Sailed Casablanca 161530Z.
(C.M.S.F.161031Z, 161755Z)

Azores
Movements. U.S. escort vessels HILL and FESSENDEN arrived
and left same day 16th, 1145, 1800 G.M.T.
(N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, San Miguel, 161623)

GAMBIA. GLASGOW arrived Horta 0921/16th.
Departed GAMBIA 0751/16th.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 161323 to C. in C. Plymouth)

Axis /...

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Axis Shipping. 55 arrived 0015/15.
(H.M.C. Bilbao, 161212 to M.E.W. Telegram 206
(R) Admty. (D.N.I.) B.N.A. Madrid, S.O.(I) Gib.)
55 SCHARLACHBERGER.
042/16. Arrival Dec. 14th. Enemy controlled
SPES in ballast from Bayonne. Departure Dec.15th REGEJA for
Bayonne with F spar.
(Gijon, 161735A to Adty. B.B.)

B. or C. Patrol Reports. Concur but early information when air patrols
are unable to fly is equally desired.
(2) Request signal may be repeated to ships on
patrol as well as Admty. F.O.C.Gib. and
C. in C. W.A.
(3) Your 151150Z refers.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 161346A to S.B.N.O. Azores
(R) Admty. F.O.C.Gib., C. in C. W.A.)
Propose reporting when B. or C. Patrols
commence or cease.

C.G.80. Intend sail 3 ships. Escorts COMMANDANT
DELAGE (Senior), COMMANDANT DETROYAT.
(C.M.S.F.161402 to Gib.)

GONCALO VELHO. Following is repetition of S.O.(I) Gib's 151825
(Begins) addressed B.N.A. Lisbon U.S. Naval
Intelligence Casablanca inform me Portuguese
sloop GONCALO VELHO in response to challenge
by aircraft on the 29th Nov. gave the proper
letter numeral letter identification signal of the day for
Allied Merchant ships. (2) Request early remarks after
consulting N.C.S.O. No information here that secret
recognition signals are being issued to Portuguese ships (Ends.)
(2) Am informed by Ministry of Marine Portuguese sloop
GONCALO VELHO is en route for Lourenco Marques to U.S.A.
Believed now approaching destination. Nothing is known here
of passing recognition signals to Portuguese.
(N.A. Lisbon, 161614 to Admty. (R) S.O.(I) Gibraltar.)

RITA GARCIA. Re: examination for contraband.
(D.E.W.D. 161623A to C.C.S.O. Gib.)

CLUMBERHALL, IERE. Admty. 101740. Am sailing CLUMBERHALL and
IERE to Ponta Delgada as soon as possible.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 161714Z to F.O.C. Gib. (R)
Admty.)

DEMPO. A.M.301042 (N.T. in W.D.) Nov. Intend sailing
DEMPO escorted by two of 13 D.F. A.M.22nd
arriving Horta p.m. 25th.
(2) Anticipate DEMPO and escort will be required
to sail again p.m. 27th to join M.K.F. 27, 39 North A.M.29th.
(F.O.C.Gib. 161803A)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.32 Hospital
Ships
fitting up
with water
at Malaga.

My 301351 Nov. M.F.A. have agreed. Request information date of arrival of hospital ship in Malaga to ensure there is no hitch. (N.A. Madrid, 161819 to C. in C. Med. (R) F.O.C.Gib. Admty.)

NICOLINE
MAERSK.

Your 151058. Owing to bad weather ship loading slow. Several days delay expected. Watch and special arrangements continue. (B.N.A. Madrid, 161856A to C. in C. Med. (R) Admty. F.O.C.Gib.)

LAVORO,
GAETA.

Following repeats my 161832 (Begins) Addressed B.N.A. Madrid (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.T.A.L.I. Para.2 of your 151215A. Dec. Giuriati arrives Madrid tomorrow with names personnel detailed for each ship.

- (2) Spanish Consul General Gib. has referred issue of Visas to Madrid Authorities and is awaiting their instructions.
 (3) Request you accelerate issue of these instructions. (Admty. 161859A to Admty. C. in C. Med. F.O.T.A.L.I.)

Flight 11.

Cominch 291931Z/11.

- (2) Amend destination of Flight 11 as follows:-
 (a) 2 L.C.I.(L) to Milford Haven for onward routeing to Clyde.

(b) 4 L.C.I.(L) (to include craft in which S.O. is embarked) to Plymouth.

(D.O.D.(H), 161900A, to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) C. in C. W.A. C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.I.C.Greenock, F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, F.O.I.C.Cardiff. Capt. M.L.C.)

POMPEO
MAGNO,
Capt. Muffone,
Cdr. Fucci.

My 111315. Capt, Muffone, C.O. ordered Cmdr. Fucci and his paymaster to proceed Barcelona afternoon 11th. H.M. Ambassador wrote Italian Ambassador that Fucci's presence was required in Madrid. On being informed of this, Muffone left his office in a huff same evening and has not returned since.

Italian Ambassador has instructed Consuls disregard all orders emanating Muffone. Fucci co-operates satisfactorily. (A.B.N.A. Madrid, 161926A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) C. in C. Med. F.O. Gibraltar, Admty. (D.N.I.)

Route and
sailing of
S/MS.

It is requested that route and sailing of Submarines from your Command bound for U.K. to be repeated to C. in C. W.A. (C. in C. W.A. 162244A to F.O.Gib. Info: F.O.S. Admty.)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

- U-Boat. (7S/M sighted submerged) probable from observed torpedo wake 06.35 N. 27.27 W.
(GLOIRE, 161015Z to F.O.C.W.Af. C. in C. S.A.)
- Suspicious Ship
8th Dec. Following received from Com. 4th U.S. Fleet in amplification of aircraft sighting on 8th Dec. A.M.100725 (Not to H.Q.C.C.) and A.M.131557 para.2 refer.
Begins: - "Following firing across bow British R.A.F. Concentric Circle Ensignia uncovered on bow deck. Strong resemblance to BURGENLAND but no King Post forward of bridge. Gray superstructure extended forward resembling PROME. Two A/A guns at bow, emplacements along superstructure one large protected gun aft."
(D.D.I.C. 161117A to F.O.C. W.Af., C. in C. S.A. F.O.Gib. S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C., C. in C. W.A.)
- T.S. 54. Arrivals 0858Z/16th.
WELLINGTON, LOWESTOFT, DUNCTON, BUTSER with T.S. 54.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 161612)
- EMPIRE
PENNANT
"Q" Report
1st Dec. By whom. were wrong identification signals referred to in your 142141 issued.
(D.T.D. 161824A to B.R.L.O. Buenos Aires)
- CORFU. On crossing longitude 010 degs. W. alter to pass through new position 015 degs. 00' S. 014 degs. 00' W. thence rejoin route in F.008 degs. 00' S. 025 degs. 00' W.
Acknowledge and report revised times of shifting to W/T (watch?) for area F and P.
(C. in C. S.A. 162327C to CORFU.)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

- T.X.11. Intend to sail 4 ships. Escort BURRA.
(N.O.I.C. Tripoli 160909A to R.A.Alexandria.)
- Air reports. M.S.23959. A.344/16th Daily Opsum 232. 14/15th
1 Wellington mined Ieros Harbour.
15th December 4 U.S.Mitchells (B.25) shipping
strike south eastern Aegean. 2 caiques 1 of 40
tons and 1 2 masted 75 ton attacked east of Kalimno.
M/G strikes on both vessels, 3 or 4 hits on larger one with 75
m.m. shells, leaving caique listing and settling in the water.
(H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 160939Z.)
M.S. 23980. A.F. 252 16, N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 298.
N.W.A.T.A.F. 15th, 7 Missions total 70 U.S. Warhawks and 6 U.S.
Thunderbolts offensive patrols Yugoslavian Islands and coastal
areas. 2 Missions U.S. Warhawks dropped 23 x 500 small vessel
Neretljanski Channel scoring 2 direct hits. Vessel strafed and
left smoking. Another vessel strafed off north coast Peljesac
Peninsula.
N.W.A.C.A.F. At 1828/13 enemy aircraft estimated between 12 and
20 attacked Bari Harbour. Bombs fell mostly in sea. No damage
reported. A/A claim 2 destroyed.
(H.Q.N.A.A.F. 161558A.)
- K.G.V. Propose sailing KING GEORGE V in company with
LONDON. LONDON escorted by ULSTER, GRENVILLE and ROCKET
after dark 17th my 151102 N.T.A. (N.T. in W.D.)
refers.
2. If approved F.O.I.C. Gib. is requested to comply
with para. 1 above and with para. 3B of C. in C.H.F. 061958. R/V
should be made in the vicinity 040° N. and Med. escort remain in
company until after dark 19th.
3. Admty. is requested to confirm destination for ship is Plymouth
(C. in C.Med. 161032A to Admty. (R) F.O.I.C. Gib. C. in C.Plymouth
KING GEORGE V, C. in C.H.F.)
- M.O.R.U. 15th. Main effort switched to Yugoslavia. 3 M/S
Situation were attacked in channel between Peljesac Channel
report 157. and the mainland 2 were damaged by direct hits. 5
Me. 109s seen over Yugoslav coast but made no
attempt to intercept our aircraft.
(H.L.O. M.O.R.U. 161042A.)
- "Window"
Anti-Radar
Device. "Window" is the codeword for the Anti-Radar device
described in para. 1 of 179B.*
2. Reports of recent attacks by enemy aircraft
indicate that enemy uses of "Window" is increasing
and that very serious interference to Radar warning
is caused when large quantities are employed.
3. The methods of dropping "Window" employed by enemy aircraft
have been of 2 types. A. Each aircraft dropped a quantity insuf-
ficient to cause serious interference. B. A small group dropped
large quantities to saturate a sector through which the main
force approached undetected.

16.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

"Window"
Anti-Radar
Device.
(Contd.)

4. The detection of "Window" should be taken as an indication that an attack is developing. (C. in C.Med. 161127A to Med. Station, Levant Station 398, 7th S/M F. (R) Admty. C. in C.E.F.) * 290951 Sept. Possible use of Anti-Radar device by enemy aircraft.

V.N.12A.

Intend sailing 0630/18th. 8. BLANKNEY, (S.O.), LAMERTON, WHEATLAND. (S.N.O.East Sicily 161142A to F.O.W.It.) Amended see 180837.

BALKAN.

My 151254C BALKAN not yet reported as passing into Aegean. May indicate that vessel is awaiting inward bound convoy concerned (BOURGAS and CELENO at Piraeus 10th in ballast and ready to sail, probably for Black Sea.) (S.O.I. Istanbul 161227C to C. in C.Levant, (R) Capt. S.I, D.N.I.)

Italian
Personnel
in Spain.

Are sufficient further Italian personnel available in Spain for evacuation to justify second trip by ARIGUANI.
2. If so and if 168 Italian personnel for merchant ships are also required request B.N.A.Madrid will signal number required direct to F.O.T.A.L.I. (C. in C.Med. 161244A to B.N.A.Madrid, F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) N.O.I.C. Gib. Admty.)
See Asst. B.N.A.Madrid 201316A (North Atlantic).

B.Y.M.S.72.

Stoker P.O. survivor from B.Y.M.S. 72 rescued from Hospital Ship GRADISCA has been interviewed at Algiers.
2. He is still in a shaken condition and not very coherent.
3. Was landed Leros after ship was bombed and was not on board when ship was captured.
4. He understands from conversation with Germans that ship was beached and Captain, First Lieut. and 14 ratings including wireman were captured.
5. He has no knowledge as to what gear or books fell into enemy hands.
6. He is being sent to U.K. N.O.I.C. Brindisi. 092122 refers (N.T. in W.D.)
(Algiers 161253A to Admty.)

TRUCULENT.

From 034° (47'?) 021° 53' proceed 11 knots through 033° 58' 025° 01' at 1703B/18th and 033° 46' 034° 59' at 1300B/20th to arrive Beirut 1601B/20th.
2. No. 201 Naval Co/op group is requested to arrange M.J.A.O. 24 for this route. (Capt. S.1st 161458B to TRUCULENT, (R) N. & A. Authorities, East of Alex. N.O.I.C. Tripoli, C.F.E. F.O.S. Malta.)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

- G.U.S.25. 27 ships. 2. 1344B/16. Direct air E. S.O.
SAXIFRAGE, SPIREA.
(N.O.I.C. Port Said 161627B.)
- M.K.F.27 7 ships. 2. 1549B/16th. 4, 5. As in C. in C.
X.I.F.6. Levant 131531 and C. in C.Med. 132155 N.T.A.
(N.T. in W.R.) Escorts ANTWERP S.O. THEMISTOCLES,
EXMOOR.
(N.O.I.C. Port Said 161701B.)
- U/B. N.R.2 have obtained A.S.V. contact in 34.04 N.
.22.32 E. probably a S/M.
(A/C GMP/Q 161850Z J.N.9.)
- Number in Your 141928. The number of through ships in K.M.F.
K.M.F.28. 28 will be restricted to twelve.
(D.O.D.(F) 161918A to C. in C.Med.)
- U.593. Request you will convey our congratulations to
U.S.S. WAINWRIGHT and CALPE on the sinking of a
U-Boat on the 13th.
(1st Sea Lord 161955A to C. in C.Med. Info.
Comnavnav, Commander 10th U.S.Fleet.)
- G.U.S.24 G.U.S.24. JOHN S.COPLEY returned to Port having
COPLEY sustained torpedo hit.
torpedoed. (Com. N.O.B. Oran 162025A to Admty. F.O.C.Gib.
C. in C.Med. R.A.Alexandria, V.A.Malta, C. in C.
Levant, Care. Algiers, (R) C.M.S.F.)
- POMPEO MAGNO. Arrived and sailed.
(Com. Algeria 162120A.)
- Yugoslav C. in C.Med's 141224. Propose to send Commander
Ships. Saksida, Senior Officer R.Y.S.N. to Malta to
discuss requirements, as he will know more clearly
what trained personnel are available at Alexandria,
he will also be able to start training and orga-
nisation of his ships.
2. I consider that will need the services of a Liaison officer
with good executive experience to assist him, if any results are
to be achieved.
3. If you agree intend sending him as soon as possible.
(C. in C.Levant 162134B to V.A.Malta, (R) C. in C.Med. F.O.T.A.L.I
Admty.)
Agreed. (V.A.M. 171135 to C. in C.Levant.)

/Med...

16.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

- Med. Cosintrep Signed Eisenhower.
No. 157. During night 13/14th destroyers carried out sweep from Benedetto to Ancona but sighted nothing.
2. During patrol by same destroyers between Dubrovnik and Durazzo night 14/15th a tug and lighter were attacked with gunfire off Kotor. The former believed sunk and latter damaged.
 3. Other destroyers sank schooner off Civita Nuova (?Civitanova) during patrol night 15/16th.
 4. SS. JOHN S. COPLEY in convoy G.U.S.24 was torpedoed by U/B off Oran p.m. 16th. Salvage appears possible and tugs are proceeding to take in tow 4 destroyers hunting U/B with air co-operation.
 5. UNTIRING reports sinking ship believed to be minelayer in Monaco Harbour on 14th.
(C. in C.Med. 162245A.)

ANEMONE. Your 162231B (N.T. in W.R. P.C. and S. 032° 57' N. 020° 00' E. 088° 9 knots. Request instructions.
(ANEMONE 162253B to C. in C.Levant, (R) S.N.O. Cyrenaica.)

Anglo-Italian Naval agreement concluded between C. in C.Med. and the Italian Minister of Marine. Vishinsky asked for a copy.
(C. in C.Med. 162255A to Admty.)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.

Night air escort. (Tactical).
(A.C.N.S.(U.T.), 160035A .)

U/B Ref. Eastern Fleet 452 Y of 14th. Area A, B, C, dispositions. D, E - no change.
(2) SS. DAIAMOLLER (? DAISY MOLLER) reported sighting U-Boat 0520Z/14th 50 miles south of Vizagapatam Japanese U-Boat by D/F 1506Z/15th within 200 miles position 013° N. 088° E. Area F air escort Y area G air escort X.
(C. in C. E.F., 160355Z to E.F. 454 Y.)

PELLICULA. Presume you will arrange for repair of PELLICULA. N.O.I.C. Aden's 150949 refers.
(2) No facilities are available at India ports.
(C. in C. E.F., 160618Z to C. in C. Levant, (R) Admty., D. of S.T., N.O.I.C. Aden, S.N.O.P.G.)

O. 24. Intend to sail Dutch S/M O.24 unescorted on the surface on 20th to arrive Aden 28th.
2. Com. i/c Aden is requested to arrange onward passage to Suez.
3. Route to Aden follows.
(S.O. S/Ms. Colombo, 160745Z to C. in C. E.F., Com. i/c Aden, (R) Admty., F.O. Ceylon, F.O.(S), B.S.O., F.O.R.S.C.A., C. in C. Levant, C. in C. Med., S.1, S.4.)

DIOMED. Not yet arrived.
(N.C.S.O. Mauritius, 160748Z to Admty., C. in C. E.F., S.O.(I) Kilindini, S.O.(I) Bombay.)

TALLY HO patrol. TALLY HO patrol 3rd to 16th December. Patrol blank, special operation unsuccessful, no contact being made with party ashore. TALLY HO had to abandon her patrol after last R/V date for special operation owing to flooding of bi-focal periscope.
(Capt. (S) 4, 161006Z to C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.), F.O.S.)

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.

- U/B. S/M. attack reported in 13.08 N. 70.02 W. at 0928 G.M.T. 16th.
(S.O. (I) Jamaica 160600R to Admty.)
- N.S.H.Q. (N.S.H.Q. 161450Z.)
S/M.
Estimate.
- DEANE. At 1130Q/16th DEANE (B.D.E.86.) Departs Boston
(B.D.E.86.) Gate via direct route Casco Bay. Guards Halifax L and 2716 kc/s. E.T.A. Point X 1645 same date. Holds Q.J.C.159. Speed 20 knots.
(C.T.G. 02.1 161515 to S.O.P.A. Casco Bay.)
- KING HAAKON VII. A.M. 071914 and S.B.N.O. W.At. 082355.
1. KING HAAKON VII has now arrived Halifax ship is entirely unsuitable for winter escort work in this area due to no heating no de-icing and shallow draft A/S efficiency to zero in rough weather.
2. Since ship not required Bermuda suggest she be employed in patrol or escort work S. of Charleston for winter months and returned to this command in the Spring. 3. Ship within 600 hours due for main engine overhaul. Request this also be carried out during winter months. 4. Grateful for early decision.
(C. in C. C.N.A. 161518Z to B.A.D. (R) Admty., N.S.H.Q., Norg. Naval Service, N.Y.)
- U.S. (Cominch 161621.)
S/M.
Estimate.
- Air Sea A.M. 280124A. An example of the difficulties of
Co-operation air sea co-operation with U.S. and British Forces
between has been given by a recent attempt to provide homing
British & for two escorting aircraft on to C.U.7 escorted
U.S. forces. by T.G.21.9. 2. Following is a precis of
C. in C.W.A. 061221:- (e) After enquiry by Cmdre.
(D) W.A. to Escort Control at Londonderry the following points came to light. (1) (as C. in C. W.A. 061221 para.6.) (2) They did not have W/T or R/T call signs nor information regarding frequencies for homing aircraft. A.C.Ib. were not amended to date. (3) Escort made signal to aircraft using U.S.Navy aircraft code. (4) Convoy escort code not carried. Reptile patrols not understood. 3. These facts are forwarded to lend greater weight to the suggestions made in paras.2 and 3 of A.M. 280124 for a combined policy and to make clear the urgency of the matter. 4. Add to my 280124 para.5 as follows:- "It is proposed that Convoy Escort Code, with the inclusion of any additional words that the U.S. Authorities may wish to add, should be adopted for standard use in all cases where British and U.S. Surface and air forces are co-operating". 5. C. in C.W.A. is requested to provide 200 copies of the Convoy Escort Code for use of American Escorts if agreed, despatching them to B.A.D. Washington by quickest route.
(Hd. of M.II. 161907A to B.A.D.)

U/B...

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies - Contd.

U/B sunk 20th Nov. Full report of part taken by SNOWBERRY and CALGARY in sinking U/B on 20th Nov. is to be forwarded by quickest route. Brief report by signal. (N.S.H.Q. 161935Z to S.C.N.O. London.)

LINCOLN, GEORGETOWN. Departures LINCOLN, GEORGETOWN to U.K. via Azores. (?C.C.O. Halifax 162000Z to Admty.)

Straggler report No.31. Arrived St.Johns Newfoundland from S.C.148. FORT RICHELIEU 9th. Engine trouble. 3 Arrived Halifax from O.N.213 SAMUEL MOODY U.S.9th lost convoy due to steering gear defects. NATHAN TOWSON U.S. 11th. Lost Convoy due to steering gear defects. LISTA (Nor.) 11th. Lost Convoy. 4 Arrived Halifax 13th. from H.X.270. STEEL INVENTOR (U.S.) to send Hospital cases NATHAN CLIFFORD U.S. collision damage. CHARLES A. MCALLISTER U.S. and CHRISTOPHER GALE U.S. lost Convoy due to bad weather. 5 arrived New York from H.X.270 CHARLES CARROLL U.S. ROBERT LANSING U.S. DOLLY MADISON U.S. and WINIFRED L. SMITH U.S. 13th. heavy weather damage. ROBIN ADAIR U.S. 14th. unable to maintain speed and damaged by heavy weather. (N.S.H.Q. 162033Z.)

S/M. attack and sighting summary. Para.A. SS. MCDOWELL torpedoed 13.08 N. 70.02 W. 160128Z. Para.D. Brazilian pilot sighted S/M. 22.38 S. 41.42 W. 141930Z. (Cominch 162045 to Admty.)

Suspicious Ship sighted 8th December. F.O.C. West Africa reports:- Master of LEONIDAS states ship was circled height 150 feet by American Liberator at 1100 ships time 8th in 06° 30' S. 23.06 W. Aircraft flashed letter M. Ship made recognition signal exposed large name board hoisted international signal letters and national flag. 2. LEONIDAS had no contact with any ship. A.M. 100725 and 161117 (neither to all addressees) also refer. (D.D.I.C. 162120A to Cominch, Info. Commaveu, C. in C.S.A., F.O. Gibraltar, S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C., C. in C.W.A., F.O.C.W.Af.)

HOSTE. Sail HOSTE when ready about 22nd Boston direct to Halifax advising routing instructions. (Cominch 162136 to E.E.S.F.)

B.Y.M.S. When ready about 21st C.E.S.F. sail British Y.M.S. 253. 279, 280 Charleston to Bermuda. N.O.B. Bermuda route onward to Horta Azores for further routing to Gibraltar. Ultimate destination Eastern Fleet. (Cominch 162140Z to C.E.S.F., N.O.B. Bermuda.) See Cominch 201936Z.)

/DAKINS...

16.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies - Contd.

DAKINS. (B.D.E.85.) DAKINS (B.D.E.85.) departs Boston Gate 0900Q/17th via direct route to Casco Bay. (C.T.G. 02.1 162142 to (U.S.) S.O.P.A. Casco Bay.)

Zig-zagging. Proposals in C. in C.S.A. 071143 (0711430 intended) appear to offer a substantial and much needed acceleration of independant shipping at little extra risk. 2. If you concur suggest these be put into force from 1st Jan. 1944. You may however wish to exclude Pacific area in view your 211708 Oct. (A.C.N.S. (U.T.) 162319A to Commav, Info. B.A.D.)

SEARCHER, EMPEROR. Escort arrangements. SEARCHER and EMPEROR will be ready to leave Norfolk by 16th Jan. Admty. require SEARCHER to proceed to Gibraltar and EMPEROR to U.K. each escorted by two worked up Captain Class Frigates. (2) MALABAR's 092025 shows BICKERTON, KEMPTHORNE, BLIGH and BULLEN as being available. (3) Admiralty state BICKERTON required in U.K. so should be used for EMPEROR. (4) Request these frigates be sailed to arrive Norfolk by 4th Jan. and that you detail escorts for each ship. Those with SEARCHER will proceed from Gibraltar to U.K. unless otherwise ordered by Admty. (B.A.D. 162327Z to S.B.N.O. W.At. (R) Admty.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest Serial No.695. 2. U.S. Army Troops landed in some strength at three Points Arawa Peninsula dawn. Destroyers bombarded beach-heads prior to and covering landing of amphibious craft. 15 Mitchells bombed straffed Army positions behind beaches first light. Considerable opposition one beach apparently eliminated by bombardment. All small craft beached before first Japanese Air Strike when 30 to 40 Dive Bombers Fighters ineffectively attacked personnel and boats anchored, also retiring naval and surface vessels. Preliminary reports indicate ships shot down 2 planes while Lightning cover drove off 2 Medium Bombers with Fighters escorting without actually engaging. Objective reached by noon. 60 Japanese dead estimated our casualties light. 4. R/C. Liberator reported 1 small freighter 1 sea truck 6 unidentified type ships 15 miles S.W. New Hanover course S.E. afternoon. 6. Four Lightnings on morning R/C. sweep Eastern New Britain reported 1 large possibly flat topped vessel Rabaul Harbour, 1 destroyer, 10 small ships in Blanche Bal Area. 8. 5 Aircobras on mid-day sweep N.E. Coast Huon Peninsula probably destroyed 9 barges located beached at various points. 12. Evening 14th single Mitchell effectively

/s/traffed...

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16.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest
Serial No.695. (contd.)

straffed 3 barges loaded with personnel and supplies near Saidor heading for Bogadjim. Later machined 4 loaded barges, 3 empty ones alongside. That night M.T.Bs. damaged another large barge beached East of Saidor. Previous night Allied patrol craft sank 1 small barge off Southern Rooke Island also attacked with unobserved results possible S/M. approaching Sio from North. 13. Three R.A.A.F. Catalinas bombed Sorong early hours leaving whole town area apparently burning. 1 large, 1 small ship observed in area 4 or 5 fighters ineffectually attempted interception. 15. 8 Beaufighters sank by straffing 2 large barges off Manatuto severely damaged 6 schooners alongside jetty dawn. Later straffed 2 medium transports crowded with troops escorted by probable gunboat off Dilli. Casualties damage inflicted all three ships. Five Dutch Mitchells despatched to attack found 3 ships stationary near Cape Ciater (N.E. Timor) scoring 5 direct hits $\frac{1}{2}$ ton bombs, 6 near misses 1 merchant vessel 1 hit on other from masthead height. Same Beaufighters also straffed and sank small sea truck off shore Vila De Liqutl ? near Dilli. 21. Mid-day 14th patrol plane bombed damaged enemy S/M. off Northern shore Wide Bay. 22. That night Japanese Float planes ineffectively bombed straffed Allied Patrol craft off N.W. Bougainville.
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 160825Z.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 161435A, 161440A.)

Submarines Attacked.

S/M. attack
and sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/16th.

Para.C. (I) F.S. SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA attacked contact (possibly Japanese U/B.) at 0615/13 in 11 20' S. 56 50' E.
(D.D.I.C. 161102A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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17.12.1943.
FridayWar Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.Operation
V.V.

1(a) Convoy J.W.55A was about 270 miles S.W. of Bear Island at 0800 to-day; and at 2030 a U-Boat was located by D/F bearings of second-class reliability about 150 miles S.E. of Bear Island.

(b) C. in C. H.F. DUKE OF YORK with the Battleship Covering Force 2 intends to leave the Kola Inlet at 0830A to-morrow to cover the Convoy.

Bay
Patrol.

2. GAMBIA is on Patrol F in the western Biscay area, where she will be relieved to-morrow by GLASGOW who is to leave Horta at noon.

Convoy
K.M.F.27.

3. The troop convoy K.M.F.27, consisting of 17 M.V.'s left the Clyde at 0054A to-day 48 hours late on its scheduled time; and E.G.4 (S.O. in BENTINCK) left Belfast at 0041A to escort it.

Convoy
O.S.62/
K.M.S.36.

4. The B.1 Escort Group of 3 Destroyers and one Frigate (S.O. in HURRICANE) sailed from Belfast to-day to overtake and support Convoy O.S.62/K.M.S.36 which with STRIKER and E.G.40 was off N.W. Ireland at 2000.

RODNEY.

5. RODNEY arrived at Scapa at 1433 to-day from the Clyde.

6. Aircraft of Bomber Command laid 102 mines last night in Biscay ports.

Weather.

7. Wick harbour was closed from 1400 to-day until 0845A on 18th, owing to the weather.

North Atlantic.Flight "Q"
L.C.T.

8. Flight "Q" L.C.T. which sailed from Gibraltar for the U.K. on 10 Dec. had to turn back on 14th and returned to Gibraltar to-day, less L.C.T.372, a straggler for which tug EMPIRE JOHN was sent to search. After 5 days steaming into head winds and seas only 8 to 9 days fuel remained. Seven L.C.T. now require docking

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War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

Flight "Q"
L.C.T.
(Contd.)

for hull defects due to weather and none of them are considered by F.O.C. Gibraltar to be operationally fit until they have had a major engine overhaul. F.O.C. Gibraltar considers it impracticable for these craft to return to the U.K. until the spring.

9. KING GEORGE V and LONDON sailed from Gibraltar for the U.K. today.

South Atlantic.

U-Boat
Attacked.

10. The A/S Trawler PICT attacked contacts early this morning off Takoradi. Independent sailings between Lagos and Takoradi were cancelled.

Mediterranean.

Bastia.

11. Enemy ships fired 12 shells into Bastia harbour during the early hours of to-day, but caused no damage. (p. 388)

12. The S/M UNTIRING, on patrol off the south coast of France, destroyed to-day two 500 ton coasters which she blew to pieces with torpedoes.

13. Two gun accidents occurred on board LAMERTON to-day, causing some serious casualties.

Air
Operations.

14(a) 8 or 9 Bostons intruded on Split and Zara harbours last night. A direct hit is claimed on a merchant vessel in Zara harbour. (b) The dock area at Anzio was attacked to-day by aircraft, and several fires were caused.

War Diary.

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Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

Aegean.

15. Aircraft laid mines at Chalcis last night.

Australia and New Zealand.

U-Boat
Claimed
Sunk.

16. A Naval Catalina claims to have sunk a large submarine which was sighted on the surface 90 miles North of Sio (Solomon Is.) in the early hours of to-day.

17. Aircraft destroyed 4 small barges at Kelaua harbour and 4 at Reiss Point to-day.

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Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Proposed
Tug at
Horta.

C. in C.Plymouth's 161901 re tug to be made available at Horta in connection with operation "Stonewall" has been passed to N.A.Lisbon for information at request of Head of M. The other addressees of 161901 have not been informed. (H.W.R. 17 December.)

DIADEM.

DIADEM commissioned for trials and service today. (DIADEM 171200A to Admty.)

FLAMINGO.
PELICAN.

FALMINGO is to join Eastern Fleet on recommissioning for service in place of PELICAN who is to be retained in home waters for the time being. C. in C.E.F's 070946 November and C. in C.W.A's 221910 refer. (A.C.N.S.F. 171900A to C. in C.W.A.)

Movements.

RODNEY.

Scapa arrival RODNEY. (A.C.O.S. 171433A to N.O.I.C. Greenock.)

S/M Move-
ments.

Positions of S/Ms at 0800/18 and movements for following 24 hours. (F.O.S. 171736A.)

VICTORIOUS.

VICTORIOUS is required to conform to the following programme:

A. Date of completion February 3rd.
C. Leave U.K. about March 7th, working up to be completed on passage.

D. Arrive Colombo April 1st.
(1st S.L. 172010A to F.O.C.T.)

ESSINGTON,
DAMETT,
BLACKWOOD.

151554. Anticipate they can arrive Scapa Dec. 29th. (C. in C.W.A. 172350A to R.A.(D) H.F.)

Operations.

Operation
F.V.

After embarking equipment, passengers, and mail for Force 2 proceed passing Switha 1500A today to arrive Skaalefjord a.m. 18th.

2. On arrival transfer mail and passengers to LOYALTY and COCKATRICE, thence return to Scapa. (R.A.D.H.F. 170912A to VIGILANT.)

Group 2. Operation postponed due to bad visibility. My 151337A refers.

(S.B.N.O.Archangel 171002 to S.B.N.O.N.Russia.)

In the absence of other information intend to proceed DUKE OF YORK with Force 2 passing Toros Is. at 0830A/18th December.

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Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

- Operation F.V. (Contd.)
2. Route through Rosta EE. 071° 48' 035° 30' E. FF. 072° 47' 029° 58' E. GG. 072° 39' 022° 45' E. Thence Akureyri. E.T.A. Hrisey Island 2000A/21st. S.O.A. 16 knots to position FF. thence 20 knots to long. 015° E. then 16 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 171208A to S.B.N.O.N.Russia, C.S.10, Capt. D.3.)
See also S.B.N.O.N.Russia 181630A.
- Have discussed S/M question with Russian C. in C.
2. He can keep 5 (?on patrol) and increase to 8 during convoy periods.
 3. Strongly recommend turning over area 2A to Russians now who state they would return it whenever required.
 4. S.B.N.O.N.Russia (Polyarnoe) concurs, so perhaps you will re-consider existing affairs and communicate your decision. (C. in C.H.F. 171215A to F.O.3.)
C. in C.H.F.'s 091201, para. 4(c). For INCONSTANT read WRESTLER. (R.A.D.H.F. 171236A to H.F.)
Proceed passing Gate at 1500A/17th for Loch Ewe, E.T.A. 1230A/18th. C. in C.W.A. 091035 refers. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 171324A to OXLIP.)
Sailed HURON and SCOURGE to comply with my 162118A. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 171454A to C. in C.W.A.)
Sailed VIGILANT to Skaalefjord. E.T.A. 1030A/18th. (R.A.D. 171552A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)
WALLFLOWER, BORAGE 055° 23' N. 006° 47' W. to Loch Ewe, 12. ONSLOW sails Scapa p.m. 17th to Loch Ewe 18.
HURON, SCOURGE 056° 16' N. 007° 12' W. to Scapa, 18. (Capt. S.3 171717A to S/MS.)
Sailed my 161330A (ONSLAUGHT.) (C. in C.Rosyth 171722A to A.C.O.S.)
Following ships are to proceed White Sea Ports.
1. EMPIRE ARCHER, FORT THOMPSON, and FORT ASTORIA, total 3 ships to Economia.
 2. JAMES A. FARRELL, JAMES WOODROW, GEORGE WEEMS, and LUCERNA (T), total 4 ships, to Molotovsk.
 3. FORT HALL, THISTLEDALE, SAN AMBROSIO (T), LAPLAND, FORT MISSANABIE, EMPIRE PICKWICK, THOMAS SCOTT, LEWIS EMERY JUNIOR, COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON, PHILIP LIVINGSTONE, STAGE DOOR CANTEN and DANIEL WILLIARD total 12 ships to Kola Inlet for Murmansk.
 4. In the event of casualties in paras. 1 and 2 substitute THISTLEDALE to Economia and COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON to Molotovsk. (D.T.D. 171911Z to B.A.M.S. 1A.)
J.W.55A. Destinations given in S.B.N.O.N.Russia's 160032 (?S.B.N.O.Archangel 160032 intended) have been broadcast by B.A.M.S. (D.T.D. 172005A to A.I.G.47.)
Correct my 152001A to read C. COCKATRICE S.O. and LOYALTY. (RATTLESNAKE 172052A to C. in C.H.F.)
Proceed to Skaalefjord. Complete and await further orders. (R.A.D. 172201A to M/S 1.)
After embarking mail from VIGILANT S.O. 1st M.S.F. in HARRIER with RATTLER proceed from Skaalefjord as necessary to arrive Akureyri p.m. 20th.
2. On arrival act in accordance with C. in C.H.F. 101132 paras. 1 and 2.

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Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

- Operation F.V. (Contd.) 3. COCKATRICE is to continue with repairs referred to in RATTLER 171636.
(R.A.D.H.F. 172234A to M/S 1.)
By D/F at 2030/17 U-Boat position approx. 073° 00' N. 025° 32' E. Reliability second class.
(S.B.N.O.N. Russia 172245A to Admty.)
- Coastal Force Patrols. Order for night 17th/18th December.
1. A. 3 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven anti E-Boat patrol 10 miles south of convoy route between eastern limit of command and long. 00° 20' W. abreast C.W. 232 from 0200A to 0700A. From 0830A to Ppepa off C.2A Buoy.
B. 2 CHASSEURS anti E-Boat patrol on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35' W. and 00° 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A.
C. M.L. 291 short notices St. Helens.
D. BLEASDALE, LA COMBATTANTE short notice Yarmouth after night-firing off Needles.
E. 3 M.Ls. from Portland anti E-Boat patrol on 50° 18' N. between 01° 45' W. and 02° 35' W. abreast 20 447.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 171252A.)
M.T.Bs. 353 and 357 at number seven buoy. E.T.D. 1750,
E.T.R. 0810/18.
M.G.Bs. 3 and 42 at Bullock Bank. E.T.D. Ramsgate 1615, E.T.R. 0945/18.
M.Ls. 104, 102, 125, 128 and M.T.Bs. 221, 229, 205, 209 in company with M.T.Bs. 705 and 700 carrying out operation N.L.113.
E.T.D. 1645. E.T.R. 2310. Route via number one and U. Buoys each way.
Three M.M.S. sweeping to the westward. E.T.D. 0300/18. C.W. 232, E.T.A. off Dover 1930.
M.Ls. 139 (S.O.) 142, 137, 138 and 143 return Dover from north-eastwards. E.T.R. 1830.
(V.A. Dover 171631A to Admty.)
My 171645. Your Humber M/S Patrols tonight GE. GD. GC. GL. GK. GJ. "Deadly" cancelled.
(C. in C. Nore 171827A to S.E.E.C.C.D.)
- S/M Patrols. Positions of submarines at 0800/18th and movements for following 24 hours.
A. SIRDAR, VENTURER, STUBBORN, SATYR, O.15 all as in my 161734.
(F.O.S. 171736A to Admty.)
- Bay Patrol. It is considered that A/C from TRACKER can be more usefully employed during next 3 days searching for inward bound blockade-runners as opposed to providing A/S protection for the convoy.
2. To this end patrols should be flown maximum depth either side of convoy route. Escorts should immediately follow up any sighting of suspicious Merchant Ships.
3. Attention is called to A.G.M. 33A of 081352 June 1943.
(C. in C.W.A. 172202Z to Escorts H.X. 270.)

/Have...

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Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Bay Patrols. Have A.S.V. contact position 44° 07' N. 10° 08' W. (Contd.) possibly U-Boat.
(A/C Duty K 172230A to 19 Group.)
Paras. 3 and 4 of my 161901A. GLASGOW is to leave Horta at 1200A tomorrow and proceed to take up patrol F keeping west of line JJ. to KK. until daylight 19th. My 161933A refers.

2. GAMBIA on patrol F is to keep east line JJ. to KK. after dark on 18th December and is to leave patrol as requisite to arrive Horta about 1500A/19th for fuel.
(C. in C.Plymouth 172302A to GLASGOW, GAMBIA.)
Have A.S.V. contact position 44° 05' N. 10° 25' W. possibly U-Boat. 2225 contact lost.
(A/C Duty Q 172355A to 19 Group.)

Mining.

Operation My 171631A. Abandoned owing to weather.
N.L.113. (V.A.Dover 171847A to Admty.)

Navigational.

Wick. Wick harbour closed owing to weather.
(R.N.O.Wick 171400A.)

Casualties & Defects.

ZEEHOND. Your 161801. Weather forecast your area wind decreasing gradually but considerable swell and big sea for 36 hours. Thereafter wind going down markedly.

2. You have complete freedom of action and if in any doubt you should return to U.K.

3. Report your intentions.
(F.O.S. 171112A to ZEEHOND.)
ZEEHOND reported hove to 51° 26' N. 26° 35' W. 1801Z/16th in bad weather and has consumed half her fuel. I have given her complete freedom of action as to whether she continues her passage or returns to U.K. and ordered her to report her intentions.
(F.O.S. 171144A to Admty.)
Your 171112A. Observed position 0840Z 51° 12' N. 27° 28' W. Since then speed 4 knots. Intend proceeding westward, S.O.A. 5½ knots.
(ZEEHOND 171734Z to F.O.S.)
My 171144. ZEEHOND is proceeding to westward by route ordered at 5½ knots. Position at 2000A/17th approx. 501° 12' N. 028 degs. 50' W.
(F.O.S. 172131A to Admty.)

RATTLESNAKE. Your 161212A. Regret that dry-dock at Aberdeen will not be available until late in January '44.
(F.O.I.C. Aberdeen 171230A to A.C.O.S.)

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.

- RATTLESNAKE. Scapa arrival RATTLESNAKE at 1320A.
(Contd.) (A.C.O.S. 171442A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)
- VANOC. Number one boiler out of action, tubes leaking.
Returning to Londonderry.
(VANOC 171238A to N.O.I.C. Londonderry.)
- COCKATRICE. R.A.(D) H.F's 161551A and my 161025A. Following
from COCKATRICE. Begins. Tanks have been
cleaned but condenser leak has developed badly.
All feed water polluted. A further 48 hours
required to make good defects. Ship is not fit for operational
steaming until defects made good. Ends. Request instructions.
(LOYALTY 171636A to C. in C.H.F.)

Shipping & Convoys.

- K.M.F.27. K.M.F.27 sailed less SCYTHIA, ORONTES at 2130Z to
R/V in 055° 46' N. 007° 40' W. at 0800Z/17th.
(N.C.S.O. Belfast 170003A to Admty.)
Sailed BENTINCK (S.O.), BYARD, CALDER, BAZELY,
BURGES, DRURY, URCHIN for K.M.F.27.
(N.C.I.C. Belfast 170041A to C. in C.W.A.)
Sailed convoy composed and escorted as in A.M. 042355 and
082310 and in accordance with A.M. 091734, 48 hours late.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 170054A to C. in C.W.A.)
- O.N.216. Sailed SASKATCHEWAN, RIMOUSKI, EYEBRIGHT, PICTOU,
SUMMERSIDE, NORTHERN PRIDE, and GRIPER for O.N.216.
SKEENA will sail to overtake on completion of
calibration.
(Cdre. D.W.A. 171035A to Admty.)
My 171035. Sailed SKEENA to overtake O.N.216.
(Cdre. D.W.A. 171631A to C. in C.W.A.)
Cancel my 161115 (LACKLAN).
(F.O.I.C. Glasgow 171802 to Admty.)
- D.F.17. Intend sailing 1700A/19th SS. MORIALTA escorted
by HAMLET routed to Cato Is. A.C.O.S. 141241A.
S.O.A. 10.5 knots, E.T.A. Thorshavn daylight 21st.
(N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 171142A to C. in C.W.A.)
- Rescue ships for convoys. My 231847 Nov. The following priorities for allo-
cation of vessels employed on rescue duties are
promulgated for guidance until such time as suf-
ficient vessels are available to meet all commit-
ments: 2. A. A/S and rescue trawlers.
1. O.N.S. and S.C. 2. K.M.S. and M.K.S.
3. O.N. and H.X.

/A...

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.Rescue ships
for convoys.
(Contd.)B. Rescue Tugs escort trawlers
1. K.M.S. and M.K.S. 2. O.N. and H.X. 3. O.N.S.
and S.C.

C. Ocean rescue tugs:

1. K.M.S. and M.K.S. 2. O.N. and H.X. 3. O.N.S.
and S.C.D. Rescue ships: 1. O.N. and H.X. 2. K.M.S. and M.K.S. 3. O.N.S.
and S.C.Regarding B. above it is desired that whenever possible an A/S
and rescue trawlers should be sailed with the tug escort trawler
on M.K.S. and K.M.S. convoys.3. It is emphasized that these priorities should not be so rigidly
adhered to as to entail a rescue vessel remaining in harbour for
a period unduly long. A rescue vessel at sea on whatever route
is of infinitely greater value than 10 such vessels in harbour
awaiting their appropriate convoy.(C. in C.W.A. 171240 to N.O.I.C. Liverpool, Greenock, F.O.C.
Gibraltar.)

U.C.8.

Delayed 24 hours. My 151113A refers.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde 171245A to Admty.)O.S.62/
K.M.S.36.Cancel my 161812. 2. Sail B.1 group comprising
HURRICANE S.O., WATCHMAN, WANDERER, GLENARM at
economical speed to overtake and support O.S.62/
K.M.S.36.

(C. in C.W.A. 171259A to Cdre. D.W.A.)

Sailed HURRICANE, WATCHMAN, WANDERER and GLENARM in accordance
with C. in C.W.A.'s 171259.

(Cdre. D.W.A. 172325A to C. in C.W.A.)

T.U.5.

Admiralty 151635. 1. Escort A. Bristol Channel
portion COWIE, KNIGHT. B. to join at Oversay R/V
from Belfast. C.T.F.69 in NEVADA, JEFFERS,
GLENNON, NELSON, RHIND, EARLE, DORNA.C. to join at Oversay R/V from Londonderry. BUTLER, QUICK,
GHERARDI, HERNDON.

2. Oiler U.S. ship CHENUNG is to sail with Clyde portion.

(C. in C.W.A. 171449Z.)

Comply with Cominch 142010, C.T.F. 69 pass to SS. SIBONEY.
(Comnaveu 171738 to C.T.F.69.)Intend to sail U.S.S. DORAN as escort for Clyde portion T.U.5
(N.O.I.C. Belfast 171842A to N.O.I.C. Greenock.)

K.M.S.36.

47 ships. Names and destinations.
(C. in C.W.A. 171513Z to F.O.Gibraltar.)

E.G.3.

Assume state Y. My 061842 refers.
(C. in C.W.A. 171916A to DUCKWORTH, COOKE, AVON.)

17.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

- Patrols B. & C. Patrol C. 70% and B. 60% (S.B.N.O. Azores 171036Z to GAMBIA C. in C.Plymouth, (R) F.O.C.Gib.)
- GONCALO VELMO. Your 151825 as my 161614 N.C.S.O.Lisbon believes these signals may have been passed by U.S. Authorities who he understands have done so to Portuguese and Swiss ships in past. U.S. Naval Attache has no knowledge of this matter. (N.A.Lisbon 171159 to S.O.I. Gibraltar, (R) Admty.)
- HOCHERINER. 17th in outer harbour full load ready for sea. (H.M.Consul Bilbao 171305C to M.E.W.)
- FISHGUARD, LINGE. My P.C. and S. 038° 12' N. 024° 01' W. 280° 8½ knots. E.T.A. Angra 0800Z/18. SS. LINGE in company. Intend proceeding Ponta Delgada for 100 tons fuel. E.T.A. 1500Z/18 weather report. (FISHGUARD 171400Z to S.B.N.O.Azores, (R) F.O.C. Gib. B.N.A.Lisbon, C. in C.W.A.)
- G.U.S.24. 1. Sailing telegram. Part 2 (ships). (C.M.S.F. 171420.)
- K.G.V. LONDON. Intend sailing KING GEORGE V, LONDON for Clyde at 2200A/17th escorted by GRENVILLE, ULSTER, ROCKET.
2. Route. All positions are North and West unless otherwise indicated A. 036° 01' 015° 01' B. 041° 01' 023° 30' C. 045° 01' 023° 30' thence as ordered by C. in C.W.A.
3. S.B.N.O.Horta is requested to sail OBDURATE, TERMAGANT and (KEMPENFELT) to R/V KING GEORGE V, and LONDON in position Z 039° 41' N. 021° 12' W. at 1200A/19th.
4. GRENVILLE, ULSTER, ROCKET will part company at 2000A/19th and proceed to Gib. through Y. 037° 01' N. 010° 01' W. speed of advance 17 knots.
5. Codewords KING GEORGE V and ships in company "Pinns" GRENVILLE, ULSTER, ROCKET after part company "Relax".
6. KING GEORGE V shift W/T watch to home station organisations at 2359/19th.
(F.O.C. Gib. 171550A to C. in C.W.A. S.B.N.O.Horta, (R) OBDURATE, TERMAGANT, Admty. S.B.N.O.Azores, C. in C.Plymouth, C. in C.Med. C. in C.H.F. H.Q.C.C. (KEMPENFELT).)
My 171550A sailed.
(F.O.C.Gib. 172201A.)
- L.C.T.332. Your 302031 Nov. Presume you are now taking action to secure facilities for repair and release of L.C.T. 332. (Hd. of M.I. 171645A to N.A.Madrid, Info. F.O.I.C. Gib. H.M.Consul Gijon.)

17.12.1943.

Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

T.G. 21.14. Intend sailing T.G. 21.14 U.S.S. CARD, U.S.S. DECATUR, U.S.S. LEARY, U.S.S. SCHENCK in accordance with C. in C. Atlantic Fleet 102236. Departs Casablanca swept channel 1130A/18 via Q.B.A. 102 to R/V G.U.S. 24 0900/18 speed of advance 15 knots. Last Q.J.C. 157, Q.J.B. 9.
(C.M.S.F. 171703Z to F.O.C.Gib.)

CALDWELL, Estimated position at 0900Z/17 is 42.26 N. 36.12
CHELSEA, W. 124° 13 knots.
RICHMOND. 2. Following relevant signals are being passed to you. F.O.N.F.'s 151921 and C. in C.C.N.A.'s 161537. (D.C.D.(H) 171800A to F.O.I.C. Gib. (R) S.B.N.O. Azores.)

BLACKHEATH Have ordered BLACKHEATH to Horta. Boiler trouble.
Defects. My P.C. and S. 038° 45' N. 018° 15' W. 310° 7½ kts. (B.4 171803Z to F.O.C.Gib. (R) C. in C.W.A. Admty. C. in C.Med. S.B.N.O. Azores.)
Cancelled see 181802Z.

Flight Q All L.C.T. well filled to capacity before leaving
L.C.T. Gib. giving estimated endurance of 2600 miles.
2. After five days steaming into head winds and seas only eight to nine days, endurance remained.
3. Seven now require docking for hull defects due to weather.
4. It is unlikely that better weather conditions will be experienced at this time of year and it is therefore considered impracticable for these craft to return to U.K. until the Spring.
5. None are considered operationally fit until they have had a major engine overhaul.
6. Intend L.C.Ts. should remain at Gib. pending disposal by C. in C.Med. Additional stores and personnel will be shipped to U.K. at first available opportunity.
7. KINGSTON AGATE, LORD NUFFIELD and SCOTTISH will be sailed as escort to X.K.13.
8. Your 152016 (N.T. in W.D.)* refers.
(F.O.C.Gib. 171820 to C. in C.Med. (R) Admty.)
* Flight Q L.C.T. Requesting reasons for shortage of fuel.

T.G. 27.4 C.R. No. 175. This is C.M.S.F.'s 171240.
Arrived 171330A.
(Comnav 171829Z.)

ARCOLA, (In Portuguese custody, to be handed over to
TAIGETE. British.) Your 141134. Position is as follows.
(B.N.A.Lisbon 171832 to F.O.C.W.Af. (R) Admty. Consul St. Vincent.)

/ISIS...

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

ISIS. In view of weather, late R/V and destroyer having consumed more than 50% of fuel am proceeding Ponta Delgada to complete before return to Gib. ANTHONY and REDPOLE in company. (ISIS 172202Z to F.O.C.Gib. (R) S.B.N.O.Azores.)

U.S. Move- Arrivals U.S.S. GROATAN, NICHOLSON, BROOME, ments. McCORMICK. Departed U.S.S. HOUSATONIC, STEVENSON, STOCKTON, THORN, TURNER, JACOB JONES, HAMMAN, ROBERT E. PERRY, BLAIR, BROUGH, STURTEVANT, INCH, STANTON, SWASEY join G.U.S.24. (C.M.S.F. 172259A.)

SHAKESPEARE. Arrived. (F.O.C.Gib. 172307A.)

South Atlantic.

CORFU. Your 162327C acknowledged. 1. E.T.A. 015° 00' S. 014° 00' W. 0539Z/17th, S.O.A. 15.5 knots. (CORFU 170116Z to C. in C.S.A. (R) Admty. C. in C.10th Fleet, F.O.C.W.Af. B.A.D.) Confirm date and time in para. 1 and 2 of your 170116 received here as 0530Z/17th and 1100Z/18th. (C. in C.S.A. 170718Z to CORFU, (R) Admty. F.O.C.W.Af. B.A.D. Com. 10th Fleet.)

BUTTERMERE Request you will sail BUTTERMERE for Capetown when refit. ready. Endurance figure not available here. Request you will therefore signal proposed route your 141949 refers. (C. in C.S.A. 170939C to Naval Attache Rio de Janeiro, (R) Admty. F.O.C.W.Af. N.S.Ottawa.)

EMPIRE Your 161824. Issued by N.C.S.O.Gibraltar 15th Nov. PENNANT numeral Pendants issued for first December and Q Report for disposal periods were 6 and 8 respectively. 1st Dec. (B.R.L.O.Buenos Aires 171559Z to Admty.)

U/B attacked. Your 171421Z (N.T. in W.R.) report by PICT obtained contact 170150 bearing and distance south 60 E. 13 hundred approx. course suspected south west, 1st attack 0155 position 04.30 N. 01.08 W. held

/contact...

War Diary.

17.12.1943.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

U/B attacked. contact attacked ?again lost contact carried out
(Contd.) "Fox" radius 20 miles had contact 0422 00.55
bearing and distance east 15 hundred attacked twice
with depth charges contact lost, marked position
of attack with flares, patrolled area no further
evidence.

(COMMANDANT DROGOU 171910 to N.O.I.C. Takoradi.)

Am engaged in hunting enemy S/M 004° 25' N. 001° 06' W.

(COMMANDANT DROGOU 172105Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi.)

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17.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

G.U.S. 24: My 162215* para. 5 (N.T. in W.D., but see C. in U/B sunk. C. Med. 162245A.) Ship brought into Harbour.
J.S. COPLEY U-Boat sunk.
brought in. (C. in C. Med., 170800 to Admty.)
* Med. Situation Report, No.251. Ship referred to is SS. JOHN S. COPLEY.
U.S.S. WOOLSEY hunting with U.S.S. EDISON, U.S.S. TRIPPE and H.M.S. BRILLIANT obtained A/S contact at 1815/16. After depth charge attacks U-Boat surfaced. Contact was regained by Radar and gun action ensued. U-Boat was sunk by U.S.S. WOOLSEY and TRIPPE at 1935/16 in 36° 09' N. 00° 50' W. Seven officers including Captain and 27 ratings prisoners. Initial evidence indicated U-Boat possibly U.73. My 170800 refers.
(C. in C. Med., 171346A to Admty.)

CASABIANCA. Intend to sail at 1100/20th through (? 038°) 07' 006° 11' at (?01)30/21st 040° 00' 006° 11' at 1100/21st thence to patrol as ordered by Capt. (S) 10 in zone SU. All times zone minus one, all positions north and east.
(N.O.I.C. Algiers, 171036A to C. in C. Med., Capt. (S) 10, (R) 10th S.M.F., F.O.I.C. Gib., S.O.I.S., CURIE.)

X.I.F.6. Sailed 17th for Taranto.
(D.S.T.O., Alexandria, 171045 to Admty.)

BALKAN. My 171030C (N.T. in W.D.) Vessel entered Aegean 2130 G.M.T./16th. 100 escort. Course reported as south towards Smyrna. B.4.
(S.O.(I) Istanbul, 171112C to C. in C. Levant, (R) S.1, D.N.I.)

Yugoslav ships. Your 162134, I agree.
(V.A.M., 171135 to C. in C. Levant, (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.T.A.L.I., Admty.)

K.M.F. 27. Request K.M.F.27 may be instructed to proceed at best speed.
2. Unless K.M.F.27 arrives Algiers a.m./24th it is impracticable for M.K.F.27 to arrive U.K. on Jan. 3rd unless it is accepted that OTRANTO and MALOJA do not return with M.K.F.27.
(C. in C. Med., 171142A to Admty., (R) F.O.C. Gib., Com.Algeria.)
Your 171142. OTRANTO and MALOJA must return with M.K.F.27. Delay in arrival date of M.K.F.27 in U.K. up to 25th Jan. is accepted.
(D.O.D.(F), 172002A to C. in C. Med., (R) F.O.I.C. Gib., Com. Algeria, C. in C. W.A.)

KING GEORGE V, Please implement the proposals in your 161032.
LONDON, 2. Destination of both ships - Clyde.
(D.O.D.(H), 171232A to C. in C. Med., Info. C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. H.F., F.O.I.C. Gibraltar.)

/Joint ...

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

Joint Army 393473. I/48820, 17th.
 R.A.F. Intell. 24 hours to 1000/17th. All times G.M.T.
 Appreciation. 1. R/C enemy shipping in Aegean 16th (Details).
 6. Caique-lighters convoys from Portolago having
 stages Kos probably destined Rhodes. Sailing
 further troop convoy from Piraeus for Samos and/
 or Dodecanese still believed imminent. Appreciation Kastelorizo
 unchanged.
 (C. in C. M.E., 171340B.)

M.K.F.27/
 X.I.F.6. 3 ships sailed from Alexandria. All carrying
 troops for Taranto.
 (R.A. Alexandria, 171434.)
 (1) M.K.F.27/X.I.F.6. Sailing telegram, part 2.
 7 ships.
 (N.O.I.C. Port Said, 171525B, 171731.)

Fast
 convoy
 Gib. to
 Levant. Sailed from Algiers 171330. Composition LETITIA,
 HIGHWAY, LLANGIBBY CASTLE, CUBA in accordance
 with C. in C. Med's 131211 amended by 161105 (N.T.
 in W.D.)
 (N.O.I.C. Algiers, 171448A to C. in C. Med.)

PROTEE. Onward routeing from 040° 03' 006° 06' at 1100/
 19th on surface at your discretion to pass 042°
 25' 005° 12' at 0200/20th thence to patrol in
 Zone SW. until further orders.
 (Capt. (S) 10, 171501 to PROTEE, (R) 10th S/M.F.,
 N.O.I.C. Algiers, C. in C. Med., F.O.C. Gib.,
 CURIE.)

P. 49
 (UNRULY). Reports unsuccessful attack on ship recognised
 as DRACHE off Karlovassi on 13th. Torpedoes
 probably missed astern due under estimation of
 speed of this ship which is capable of 15 knots.
 (Capt. (S) 1, 171534B to 1st S/M.F., (R) C. in C.
 Levant.)

LAMERTON
 damaged. 2 accidents occurred on board today. Premature
 burst at Mark VIII pom-pom.
 (2) Premature burst outside left gun of "X" gun
 4-inch mark XVI during practice shooting. Details
 of damage. Casualties reported in my 171531* (N.T.
 in W.D.) 3. Written reports follows.
 (LAMERTON, 171542A to C. in C. Med., (R) V.A. Malta, S.N.O. East
 Sicily, Capt. H. Malta, Admty.)
 * Personnel seriously injured due to premature explosion of
 4-inch shell.

Air
 Report. M.S.24036. A.F.253, 17th. N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 299.
 N.W.A.T.A.F. 16th. 24 U.S. Mitchells shipping
 and harbour installations Sibenik 3 x 1000, 130 x
 500 several hits on East and West quays and
 road along water front. Some bombs
 /along ...

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17.12.1943.

Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

Air Report. (Contd.) along south edge of town. 51 U.S. Mitchells shipping and harbour installations Zara 54 x 1000, 192 x 500, 251 x 250, area well covered. Large explosion and smoke buildings south-east dock. 2 ships on West side 1 of 100 feet and one 130 feet both hit, 1 exploded. Direct hit followed by terrific explosion, 460 feet ship anchored off Peninsula. 5 missions total 29 U.S. Warhawks, 14 U.S. Thunderbolts offensive patrols Yugoslavia. Claim 100 foot vessel sunk by strafing and 200 foot vessel set on fire off Zara. 24 U.S. Invader Civitavecchia, 48 x 500 hits buildings and warehouses. 2 freighters possibly destroyed. (H.Q.N.A.A.F., 171635A.)

U.G.S.26,
K.M.S.35.

Since U.G.S.26 is early and K.M.S.35 is late request you will adjust their movements as follows (details).
4. Your 171200 C. in C. Med. only refers. (C. in C. Med., 171637A to F.O.C. Gibraltar.)

UNRULY
patrol
report.

UNRULY returned from patrol having fired 8 non-contact torpedoes. First attack 2 fired to hit caiques at anchor depth setting 2 feet. Missed and exploded on shore. Second attack 4 fired to run under 2000 ton merchant vessel escorted by destroyers and E-Boat. Periscope attack by moonlight estimated range 4000 yards. One explosion 7000 to 7600 yards. Consider miss likely owing to error in estimation of speed. Explosion possibly caused by a torpedo striking the shore. Third attack two fired to run under 1500 ton merchant vessel escorted by 2 destroyers and two E-Boats. Periscope attack by moonlight estimated range 1000 yards. One explosion at 3500 yards. Consider miss probable due to under-estimation of speed. Possible non-contact hit under screening destroyer. There is some confirmatory evidence of one having been sunk SPORTSMAN and SICKLE now on patrol with non-contact pistols. Stock of A units expended. Additional supply referred to in Admty. 300214 Nov. has not been received. (S.1, 171819B to Admty., (R) C. in C. Levant, F.O.(S), VERNON, W.S.T.E.D.)

BALKAN.

My 151603. Vessel entered Aegean 2130 G.M.T./16. No escort. Course reported south towards Smyrna. (Capt. (S) 1, 171905 to P.239 (SURF), (R) 1st S/M.F., C. in C. Levant.)

Med.
Situation
Report
No. 252.

(1) My 162215 para. 5. SS. JOHN S. COPLEY reached Oran in tow of MINDFUL. U-Boat surfaced following depth charge attack by U.S. WOOLSEY and after gun action with U.S. WOOLSEY and U.S. TRIPPE sank at 1935/16th Dec. in 036° 09' N. 000° 50' W. 34 prisoners including C.O. picked up. My 171346 to Admty. only refers.

17.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Med.
Situation
Report
No. 252.
(Contd.)

2. About 12 shells were fired at ANTIGUA (?Bastia intended) from the sea at 0140/17th. No damage.
(C. in C. Med., 172109A.)

R-A.Frolon
(Russian)

Asking for Admiralty policy re communicating information.
(C. in C. Med., 172203 to Admty.)

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.

SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA. No objection to proposals in your 121701, re F.S. SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA. A.M. 132333 refers.
(C. in C. E.F. 170331Z to B.A.D. (R) Admty.
C. in C. Med., F.O.C.W.Af. F.O.E.A.)

Bi-weekly U-Boat dispositions No.10. Area A and B: no change. Air escort W.
Area C: no further indication Japanese U-Boat since D/F fixed to eastward to Socotra 7th December, but may still be in area.
Air escort.
Area D: No further news, probably Japanese U-Boats reported attacked by F.S. SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA to eastward Diego Suarez 13th but may be in Mombasa area or in Mozambique Channel. Air escort.
Area E, F, G. No information of whereabouts (German) U-Boats fixed by D/F to be off south east coast of India 14th.
Indications that Japanese U-Boats fixed by D/F in Bay of Bengal 15th December, is still in area. Air escort.
Area E. abd G. Scale X.
Area F. Scale Y.
(C. in C. E.F. 170410Z to E.F. 456 Y)

JALAPA defect. Stopped due to engine defects 53 miles 323 degs from Y.
(JALAPA 170630Z to C. in C. E.F.)

M.E.I.R.I. amendment. F.O.N.I.C. 297 pass to N.C.S.Os M.E.I.R.I. Amendment No.43. Section IV C. Amend heading sub. para. to read: Shipping to Bombay and to and from Persian Gulf and Karachi.
Amend heading sub. para. 2 to read: Shipping from Bombay and to and from Ceylon and south.
(C. in C. E.I. 170908Z)

M.B.58. Sailing telegram. (2) 1027Z/17th.
(6) JUMNA, LAUNCESTON.
(N.C.S.O. Colombo, 171027Z to Admty.)

S.E.A. Air Report. A.O.293. 17 Dec. Daily Opsum No.642.
Part 2. 16th Four Beaufighters Chauk Henzada damaged 10 Rivercraft four Motor Transport two left blazing. Four Beaufighters communications South Arakan Coast and Magwe.
Ienangyaung one aircraft missing. Damaged 11 Rivercraft three ablaze one ferry two bridges possible W/T installations.
10 Hurricanes Hunters Bay Koladanam damaged factory Akyab Area 7 Sampans. One small steamer one motor transport left burning.
14th U.S.A.A.F.15 Dec. 2 U.S. Mitchells B.25 sea sweep Tongli Gulf. Large tug sunk. End of message.
(S.E.A.A.C. 171127Z to Air Min.)

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. - Contd.F.O.N.I.C.
Amendment.

F.O.N.I.C.(298) pass to N.C.S.O's add to para.4
of F.O.N.I.C. 290 Y (11th Dec.) release B.M.-
M.B. convoy class A. Cancel F.O.N.I.C.282/
(4th Dec.).
(C. in C. E.F. 171148Z to All interested on
Stations.)
Y Re: Sailing of convoys.
/ Re: Release of ships depending on enemy
activity.

M.N.1A.

Sailing telegram. (2) 1500Z/17th.
(6) VIRGINIA to Seychelles only.
(N.C.S.O. Kilindini, 171600Z to Admty.)

C.J.9.

Sailing Telegram (6 ships).
(2) 1729 G.M.T. 17th Western Channel L.V.
(6) To Vizagapatam PATNA (Not N.U.)
(N.C.S.O. Calcutta, 171735Z to Admty.)

H.C.14.

Sailing telegram (5 ships). (2) 1930Z/17th.
(6) NARBADA. (7) K.X.NEVASA 13 $\frac{1}{2}$.
(N.C.S.O. Calcutta, 171938Z to Admty.)

War Diary17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.

Landing Craft in U.G.S.28, T.G.61 129 constituted. This is Cinclant 162220 to Comcortdiv five action, my 162150. Additional landing craft sailing U.G.S. 28 follows L.C.I. 487/492 inclusive. Comtask Force 61 at appropriate point near Azores direct this group (then constituted task group 61.1 Lt. Comdr. Shubin Comdr. L.C.I. Group 28 in 490 proceed U.K. via Horta if necessary for logistic reasons. Along route prescribed and to destination directed by Admiralty. Upon arrival U.K. report Com. 12th Fleet for duty. Task Group 61.9 dissolved upon arrival U.K. (Cominch, 170208Z to S.B.N.O. Horta).

Refer to this as C. in C. Lant's 162150 to Comcortdiv 5, for action.

T.F.61 is hereby re-established Comdr. Hoffman Comcortdiv in EVARTS Cortdiv 5, Comcortdiv 22 in POOLE, KIRKPATRICK, LEOPOLD, CHEPACHET, HARVESON plus S.C.1346 and certain landing craft listed in separate despatch. Departing Chesapeake Bay 25th escort U.G.S.28 to North Africa. When directed by Commorseafron return to U.S. as escort G.U.S.27. LE MEKONG French Naval Tanker may sail in convoy. Direct S.C.1346 report Comnavnaw upon arrival for further orders. Orders separately for landing craft.

(Comnavau, 171226 to Admty.).

This is C. in C. Lant's 162220 addressed to Comcortdiv 5. L.C.I. 487 - 492 inclusive are additional landing craft sailing U.G.S.28 at appropriate point near Azores, C.T.F.61 direct this group proceed U.K. via Horta if necessary for logistic reasons, along route prescribed and to destination directed by Admty. This group constituted T.G.61.9 dissolved upon arrival U.K. Upon arrival U.K. report Com. 12th Fleet for duty. My 162150.

(Comnavau 171227 to Admty.).

U/Bs. Submarines sighted in 013 degs. 29' N. . . .
068 degs. 08' W. at 0930 G.M.T.
(S.O.(I) Jamaica, 171307R to Admty.).

T.G.21.8 This is C. in C. Lant's 1932/16 addressed to Cort-re-established. div 12.

T.G. 21.8 hereby re-established Cortdiv 12 Lt. Comdr. Perry in FOGG. Escort C.U.10 sailing New York to U.K. 26th. When directed by Comdt.

N.O.B. Londonderry return New York escorting U.C.10.
(Comnavau, 171352 to Admty.).

C.T.G.21.15 Re-encipherment of C.T.G. 21.15 171120 addressed C. in C. Lant (R) Cominch, Admty. Commorseafron, Comnavnaw. "Unless otherwise directed propose proceed from 17 noon Z position 35.20 N. 22.30 W. to vicinity Caraday Hills passing through point D 39 even N. 18.30 W. advance 14 knots except during 19th advance 11 weather 9380, 2882".
(Radio Washington, 171400Z to Admty.).

N.S.H.Q. (N.S.H.Q: 171440Z).
S/M
Estimate.

/PASTEUR...

War Diary17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.

PASTEUR

Arrived New York 171051Z.
(P.D. New York, 171528Z).U.S. S/M
Estimate.

(Cominch, 171600Z).

Policy
re sailing
ships in
convoy.

Prefer individual consideration.

(2) Normal policy for ships which cannot declare 16 knots would be to hold them for convoy unless situation appears clear and delay would be more than 4 days.

(3) Normal policy for ships which can declare 16 knots or more would be so sail independently

unless no repetition no delay waiting for convoy.

Your 152213 refers.

(D.T.D. 171655A to B.A.D., Info. N.S.H.Q.).

EKINS
(B.D.E.87).Departs Boston Gate 0900G/18 Dec. via direct
route to Casco Bay.
(C.T.G. 02.1, 171949 to (U.S.) S.O.P.A.).

Helicopters.

Your 062123 (N.T. in W.D.).

(3) Request you issue the necessary instructions for the operation of DAGHESTAN's Helicopters, and ensure that the convoy is given sufficient

information about DAGHESTAN's activities to avoid misunderstandings.

(5th S.L. 172025A to B.A.D.).

Sub. attack
and sighting
summary.

My 162045 MODOWELL presumed sunk.

(B) All times Z S.C. 1299 sights S/M 13.27 N. 68.51 W. 170820 and attacked S/M approx. 13.09 N. 68.58 W. 170930. D. R.A.F. Ferry Plane sights S/M. 05.21 N. 52.11 W. 161415. Navy Transport Plane sights conning tower area 25.15 N. 79.13 W.

162129.

(Cominch 172128.)

B.E.C.8.

Arrived Bermuda.
(S.B.N.O. W.At. 172235Z.)Re-armament
of M.T.B.
Flotillas.Re proposal to re-arm 19th (ex 26th) M.T.B. Flotilla.
(B.A.D. 172335 to Admty., C. in C. Med., Info. C.C.F.)

War Diary.17.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia & New Zealand.Digest
No. 696.
Dec. 16.

3. 8 Beaufighters attacked medium transport unloading Cautemtlp(?) (Northeast Timor forenoon) scoring eight hits with 250 pound bombs. Ship left burning fiercely considered, total loss, 3 Japanese fighters intercepted whereof 1 shot down. Vessel heavily hit previous day by Mitchells ref.

Digest 695 para. 14 was still burning. 4. Ref. strike Sorong reported Digest 695 para. 13 4th. Catalina straffed 4 of 8 light R/C planes grounded Effman airfield also scored 3 bomb hits on 1000 ton merchantman off Sorong jetty. 5. Mid-day patrol Beaufort dropped three bombs 250 pounds each possibly hitting submerging S/M. 45 miles E. of Northern Bula (?Buka) Island course 90°. Oil patch and bubbles appeared. 6. R/C. 7. M.T.B. shot down enemy four-engined flying boat early hours 8 miles off Gasmata. 13. Same time another Liberator sank 1 of 2 southbound laden sea trucks 150 miles N.E. of Wewak heading thereto. Cargo included numerous crates. 14. 12 empty barges beached near Sio Strafed noon by Search Liberator. 16. Night 15th Navy Catalina attacked northbound S/M. 20 miles N. of Sio. Two depth charges fell close another. 2 possibly hit S/M. 17. Ref. southbound convoy off new Hanover report Digest 695 para. 4 further reports indicate 9 ships present, including 1 medium, 1 small merchantman, 1 small oiler, 6 unidentified. Bombs fell 100 feet off largest ship. 4 fighters, 1 float plane ineffectually attempted interception. 18. Three Beaufighters sank or destroyed 5 barges during straffing sweep Kimie bay afternoon 15th. 2 Bostons damaged 2 barges on similar mission next afternoon along S.E. coast New Britain. 24. Early morning patrol plane bombed unidentified vessel 20 miles N.W. Choiseul. 26. Search Liberator reported 2 destroyers, 2 medium to large freighters, 2 barges Kavieng anchorage noon 15th (G.H.Q., S.W.P.A. 170630Z.)

U.S.S.
CHANTICLEER.Arrived Fremantle 15th.
(A.C.N.B. 171052Z.)U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 171405, 171410A.)

Submarines Attacked.S/M. attack
and sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/17th.

Para.A. Am. JOHN S. COPLEY (7176) torpedoed at p.m./16 in 36° 00' N. 00° 30' W. approx.
Para.B. (1) Free French ship sighted torpedo wake at 1015/16 in 06° 35' N. 27° 27' W. (2) SS. DAISY MOLLER sighted U/B (possibly Japanese) at 0530/14 in 16° 30' N. 83° E.
(D.D.I.C. 171016Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

17.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked - Contd.

Information required re Gnat Torpedo attacks.

In event of actual or suspected attack by Gnat Torpedo, the following information is to be signalled to Admty. at the first opportunity.

2. (a) Time, range and relative position of initial contact. (b) Nature of contact, and whether confirmed by sighting. (c) Movements of U/B. stating whether known or estimated.

(d) Action taken by escort vessels, including changes in course and speed. (e) Use of any form of decoy by U/B. (f) Time, and position of Gnat explosion, relative to ship. (g) Whether foxers were in operation. (h) Visibility and weather conditions. (i) General circumstances of attack, i.e. escort screening, searching or hunting, etc. (j) Was same contact gained by other ships in company. (k) Were other U/Bs. known or suspected to be in the vicinity. (l) Any relevant information not covered in above.

(Admty. 171955A to all Cs. in C., F.O.C.W.Af., F.O.C.Gib., A.C.I.C F.O.N.F., S.B.N.O. Azores, S.B.N.O. W.Af., Info. Commaveu.)

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18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.

1(a) Force 2 (Battleship Covering Force - DUKE OF YORK (C. in C. H.F.), JAMAICA, SAVAGE, STORD, SAUMAREZ and SCORPION) sailed from Kola Inlet at 0830A today.
(b) Group 2 sailed from Archangel at 0930 today, after being delayed by the weather.

Operation
"Stonewall".

2(a) At 0244A today aircraft reported a possible outward bound blockade breaker in 49.13 N. 09.25 W., (about 150 miles west of Ushant) steering west at about 15 knots. At 0413 another aircraft bombed an 8000 ton flush decked ship in 49.02 N. 09.18 W. steering a course 315° (doubtful) at 15 knots. The result was not seen.
(b) There were other, conflicting reports, and C. in C. Plymouth considered that at least one outward bound blockade breaker was concerned, and possibly as many as three. At 1139A he ordered GAMBIA on Patrol F to proceed to intercept; GLASGOW sailed from Horts at 1206 p.m. for the Operation; and the sloop GODAVARI was also diverted. Aircraft continued to search.
(c) At 1228 today 12 escorted Beaufighters, 6 with torpedoes, attacked the blockade runner PIETRO ORSEOLO off Lorient. The vessel was hit by two torpedoes and was gunned, and was left listing and severely damaged.

North Atlantic.

"Chop" line.

3. F.O.I.C. Gibraltar reports that the present position of the "Chop" line has caused a series of anomalies consequent on the use of the Azores as an air base; and he asks that consideration may be given to reverting it to its previous position of 40° W.

South Atlantic.

Atlantic
Narrows
patrol.

4(a) In a message today F.O.C.W. Africa explains the system of patrols employed against blockade runners in the Atlantic Narrows.

/(b) ...

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Atlantic
Narrows
patrol.
(Contd.)

(b) The Admiralty criticism of the system is given in a message on 22nd December, in which F.O.C.W. Africa is asked to concert with Com. 4th Fleet a system of combined patrols or searches utilising their combined available ships on the general line Freetown Recife in the area through which it is expected the blockade runners will pass. The withdrawal of A.M.Cs. from the command of F.O.C.W. Africa (see 19th December) will leave him dependent upon French and Italian cruisers for the Atlantic Narrows patrol: these are weak in air and Radar.

Mediterranean.

FELIXSTOWE
sunk.

5. The minesweeper FELIXSTOWE was mined and sunk 3 miles east of Cape Ferro (north-east corner of Sardinia) this morning. There were no casualties. Six mines in all were cut in clearing the area.

S/M
operations.

6(a) UNTIRING, returning from patrol off the south of France, reports that she has sunk a pair of 500 ton ammunition ships (C. in C. Med. reports "a 2500 tons ammunition ship").
(b) UNIVERSAL reports that she has sunk a 5000 ton tanker in convoy in the Gulf of Genoa.
(c) ULTOR sank a 250 ton barge this evening off Toulon.

7. Sousse and Sfax are now under French control. No British personnel or communications remain.

8. Owing to their speed, it is necessary to include certain personnel ships in slow convoys for local moves in the Mediterranean. The numbers in any one ship are limited to 1000.

Adriatic.

9(a) TYRIAN and TEAZER carried out a sweep last night between Durazzo and Dubrovnik, but saw nothing.
(b) 36 light bombers today attacked 4 ships at the south end of Pasman Island; one of the ships is thought to be the ex-Yugoslav cruiser DALMACIJA (now flak ship DALMATIA). Near misses only are claimed.

/Aegean ...

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Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

Aegean.

10. C. in C. M.E. reported on 23rd December that it is believed that German SS. BALKAN from Istanbul was sunk by Allied naval action last night off the south-east tip of Lemnos.

East Indies.

11. C. in C. Eastern Fleet today issued instructions for the routeing of shipping from the east coast of India and Ceylon to Aden, east and south Africa and Australia.

S.E.A.F.O.G.

12. C. in C. Eastern Fleet today sends a message dealing with a standard method common to all 3 services for reporting the position of aircraft for air defence purposes (called the South East Asia Fighter Operations Graticule System - short title S.E.A.F.O.G.) which is to be brought into force in the South East Asia Command east of 70° E. on 1st January 1944.

Australia and New Zealand.

13. A patrol Liberator bombed and it is believed sank with a direct hit with a 1000 lb. bomb the largest of 3 small tanker type ships accompanied by two unidentified vessels 50 miles north of Cape Gloucester last night.

14. Allied M.T.Bs. operating in Buka Passage, Solomon Is., last night destroyed 2 barges.

15. Three Japanese bombers raided the anchorage at Torokina (Bougainville) last night, causing slight damage and casualties.

War Diary.18.12.1943.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.General.

- "Tiptree". In order to assist in organising counter measures against radio controlled bombs, codeword "Tiptree" is allocated meaning "attack radio controlled bombs expected". Any ship suspecting this type of attack is to make this signal by quickest available method.
2. On receipt of this signal, the following action is to be taken.
 6. Consideration should be given to the possibility of screening convoys with smoke when H.S.293 attack is expected. (D.G.D. 180933A to A.G.M. H. & A 182 A 35.)

Movements.

TRUSTY,
UTHER,
URSULA. Have lost contact with TRUSTY. My position 019° No.29 Buoy 4 miles. Proceeding with UTHUR and URSULA at 10 knots to R/V No.33 Buoy at 0901 as previously arranged. (LOCH MONTEITH, 180357 to Capt. S.9.)

ZEEHOND Weather deteriorating again. Unable to make St. (Dutch S/M) Johns. Returning Londonderry along shortest possible route starting from position ZK. S. of A. 6 knots. Fuel left 4700 gallons. (ZEEHOND, 180430Z.)

Your 180430 acknowledged.

2. Steer for position ZJ 051° 40' 024° 01'. Onward route will be signalled.

3. Bombing restrictions arranged.

(F.O.S.180634A to ZEEHOND C. in C. W.A. H.Q.C.C. Admty.)

My 172131.* ZEEHOND reports that weather deteriorated again and that she is returning to U.K. passing through 51° 25' N. 30° 35' W. at 0430Z 18th and 51° 40' 24° 01' speed 6 knots.

(F.O.S. 180637 to Admty. (R) C. in C.W.A., S.7, H.Q.C.C., C. in C. C.N.A., N.S.H.Q., B.A.D., Cominch, S.B.N.O. W.At., C. in C. Lant., B.D.Z.)* ZEEHOND proceeding westward by route ordered. Proceed through ZO. 051° 30' 028° 01', ZP 055° 01' 018° 01' ZQ 055° 30' 007° 30' thence Londonderry. All positions North and West.

2. Keep W/T watch in accordance with A.F.O.'s 243 Table 2.

3. Total bombing restrictions will be arranged.

(F.O.S. 181314 to Admty., (R) C. in C.W.A., S.7, H.Q.C.C., C. in C.C.N.A., N.S.H.Q., B.A.D., Cominch, S.B.N.O., W.At., F.O.N.F., C. in C. Lant., B.D.Z.)

Single merchantman course 070° speed 20 knots passed through 52° 15' N. 26° 01' W. at 0900A 19th Dec. then altering to 050°. She has been warned of your movements.

2. After ZEEHOND is to pass through 51° 45' N. 26° 01' W. thence to ZP. Bombing restrictions will be arranged.

(F.O.S. 181807Z to ZEEHOND, Info. Admty., C. in C.W.A., H.Q.C.C. S.7.)

/RORQUAL...

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18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Movements. - Contd.

RORQUAL, Escort from 180° Bishop Rock 10 miles for
SERAPH. RORQUAL and S/M SERAPH respectively are Trawler
PATTI and Chaser 41. My 131148 para. 1 not to
SERAPH and my 151122 not to RORQUAL refers.
(F.O.S. 180927A, 181618A to S/Ms operating South
of 051° N. (R) C. in C. Plymouth, N.O.I.C. Falmouth, Capt. (S)
5th S/M Flotilla.)

STURDY. Request escort may be provided for passage
Birkenhead - Clyde leaving a.m. 27th. Escort
should arrive not later than 1200A/26.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 181034A to S.3.)

KING F.O.C. Gibraltar's 171544A. Intend final
GEORGE V., destinations as follows KING GEORGE V and
LONDON. OB DURATE Scapa. LONDON Rosyth.
2. R.A.(D) H.F.'s 181125A refers to TERMAGANT
and KEMPENFELT.
(C.S.1, 181307A.)

S/Ms. Positions at 0800/19 and movements for
following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 181814A, 181903A, 191012A, 191201A,
191059A.)

Operations.

Operation Merchant vessel 49.13 N. 09.25 W. 270° 15 knots
"Stonewall". 6000 tons white suspicious.
(A/C 58/V 180244 to 19 Gp. H.Q.)
P.C.S. of 1 merchant vessel, 48.59 N. 08.44 W.
315° 15 knots. Name and nationality unknown.
8000 tons.
(A/C F/19 180413A.)
P.C.S. of enemy 49.18 N. 08.17 W. 090° 20 knots.
(A/C X/19 18/0630A.)
Nr. 2. My 0630 no change M/Vs (? ignored) W.B.A.
(A/C X/19, 180704)
No. 3 (Merchant vessel)* 49° 14' N. 08° 26' W. 000° 18 knots.
Request fighter aid.
(A/C X/228 180730)* Note: This group was received corrupt.
Plymouth say that merchant vessel is presumed to be intended.
Nr. 2. M/V (?M) W 43.41 course 270° speed 15 knots.
(A/C C/S OUPV 180743.)
Nr. 4. My 0630 ship previously reported is tug position
49° 29' N. 08° 00' W. 15 knots course 360°. Miotooms resuming
patrol.
(A/C X/228 180915A.)
Nr. 2 Ocean Tug EMPIRE TOMILFORD.*
(A/C P/228, 180930) * Vessel previously reported as enemy.
Message has been transmitted on broadcast B.N. for S.B.N.O.
Azores GLASGOW, GAMBIA..
Proceed at best speed to position 49° N. 15° W. and sweep 270°.
Aircraft reports possible outward bound blockade breaker in
49° 13' N. 9° 25' W. at 0244A today steering west at about 15
knots.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 181139A to GODAVARI, Info. Escorts, 0562, C. in C.W.A.
etc.) /Nr. 1 ...

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War Diary.18.12.1943.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations - Contd.

Operation "Stonewall". (Contd.) Nr. 1., Abandon escort. Investigate unidentified unit position 050° N. 015° W. Instructions follow. (A.O.C. 15 Gp., 181250A to A/C BLLW2.)

Nr. 2. Carry on CLA search for enemy M/Vs area. (050° N.) to 46° N. and 15° W. to 13° W. sweep South East visibility 15 miles. (A.O.C. 15 Group, 181320A to A/C BLL/W2.)

1. At 0244A today 18th aircraft V/58 reports large ship in 049° 13' N. 009° 25' W. course W. 15 knots.

2. At 0413A aircraft F/502 attacked with bombs, flush decked ship of 8000 tons in 049° 02' N. 009° 18' W. course 315° doubtful and speed 15 knots. Result unobserved ship replied with light flak.

3. Other conflicting reports received but consider one outward blockade breaker for certain and possibly as many as 3 may be involved.

4. At 0915A aircraft K/228 reported a tug giving name EMPIRE in 049° 29' N. 008° 00' W. course N. if not a decoy this might be EMPIRE JOHN.

5. Aircraft searching (GODAVARI) diverted. (C. in C. Plymouth 181400A to Admty., C. in C.W.A., F.O.C.Gib., C. in C.H.F., (N.O.I.C. Azores) C. in C. Med., H.Q.C.C., F.O.S.) Your 181139A signal. My P.C. S. 050° 00' 012° 02' 244° 10 knots against heavy south west gale. 5582 9567. (GODAVARI 18145A to C. in C. Plymouth, (R) O.S.62 S.E.C. K.M.S.36, GLASGOW, GAMBIA, H.Q. 19 Group.) Report your P.C.S. and whether you were sighted or attacked by aircraft last night. (C. in C. Plymouth, 181715Z to EMPIRE JOHN.) Were you sighted or attacked by aircraft last night. If so signal position. (C. in C. Plymouth, 181800A to GODAVARI.) Your 181800. Was directly illuminated Allied aircraft at 0423A today Saturday in 049° 54' 008° 36' approx. No attack made on me. Flares also seen at 0305, 0415 and 0440 to southward. (GODAVARI, 181950A, to C. in C. Plymouth.) Re: Signal position if sighted or attacked by aircraft last night.

Operation F.V. (J.W.55A and J.W.55B.) D/F bearing on 3750 kc/s at 0425Z indicate U/Boat may have reported convoy J.W.55A. (D.D.I.C. 180637A to A.I.G.47, H.Q.C.C.. Info. S.B.N.O. N. Russia.) Kola Inlet sailed Force 2. (S.B.N.O. Russia (Polyarnoe) 180830A.) ONSLAUGHT with destroyer escort to proceed to pass Switha 1700A/19 to Skaalefiord. ONSLAUGHT report E.T.A. to me before sailing.

2. On arrival complete with fuel thence act in accordance with C. in C.H.F. 070943 as ordered by Capt. (D) 17th D.F. (R.A.(D) H.F. 181116A to ONSLAUGHT, ORWELL, IROQUOIS, IMPULSIVE, SCOURGE, HAIDA, HURON, (R) Capt. (D) 17, N.O.I.C. Faeroes, A.C.O.S., C. in C.H.F., C/S.]

/Group...

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation Group 2 sailed 0930/18th December. My 171002
F.V. refers. Admiralty pass to M.W.T.
(J.W.55A (S.B.N.O. Archangel 181132A to S.B.N.O. North
and J.W.55B.) Russia (R) Admty. C. in C.H.F., M.W.T., S.B.N.O.
(Contd.) Murmansk, Adm. Fisher, RHODODENDRON.)
Amend C. in C.H.F.'s 171208A para. 2 to read:-
S.O.A. 20 knots for whole passage C. in C.H.F.'s
180810 to S.B.N.O. North Russia, refers.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 181630A to C.S.10, Capt.D.3.)

Position December 18th. Following ships ready. JAMES GORDON
BENNET PARK LYND, EDMOND FANNING, DANIEL YEATES, RATHLIN, SAN
ADOLPHUS, MIJDRECHT, HENRY VILLAAMBA, GILBERT STUART, WILLIAM
WINDOM. Total 10 ships. 2. Discharging expected ready Dec. 20th
EMPIRE CARPENTER, OCEAN STRENGTH, FORT MCMURRAY, FORT YUKON.
Total 4 ships. 3. Loading expected ready December 20th.
EMPIRE CELIA, FORT MCMURRAY. Total 2 ships. 4. Discharging
expected ready December 27th WILLIAM L. MARCY, THOMAS KEARNS,
ARTHUR L. PERRY. Total 3 ships.

(S.B.N.O. Murmansk 182102A to Admty.)

Request you will TAKU at 1700A/20 through 090° Muckle Flugga
10 and route Orange to 070° 29' thence direct to patrol position
T.7 proceeding on surface at C.O.'s discretion until within 50
miles of Norwegian coast, thence diving by day. (2) TAKU is to
remain W. of T.7 until 0100A/24 when she has freedom to act in
accordance with F.O.S. 071934.

(Capt. (S) 9 181115A to S.O. (S) Lerwick (R) Capt. (S)
F.O.S., A.C.O.S., C. in C.H.F., C. in C. Rosyth.)

STUBBORN. Request you will recall P.238 (STUBBORN) to arrive
Lerwick 24th Dec. before P.215 (SCEPTRE) sails
from there.

(F.O. (S) 181634A to Capt. S.9.)

(P.226) SIRDAR amend patrol positions to T.7 and T.8. TAKU
patrol position to be similarly amended. Russian S/M. may be
expected on patrol in near future off North Cape as far West as
022° 47' E. 2. S.O. S/Ms. Lerwick pass TAKU on arrival.

(F.O. (S) 181722 to S/Ms. operating N. of 51° E. (R) Admty.,
C. in C.H.F.)

Russian S/M. C. in C.H.F. reports have discussed S/M question
patrols. with Russian C. in C. (2) He can keep 5 on patrol
and increase to 8 during convoy period.

(3) Strongly recommend to turn over area 2A to
Russians who state they would return it whenever
required. (4) S.B.N.O. Polyarnoe concurs so
perhaps you will reconsider existing arrangement and communicate
your decision T.O.O. 171215. Ends. 2. Request S.B.N.O. North
Russia be instructed to inform Russians that reference para. 1 of
Admty. 181631 Nov. British S/Ms. will now only occupy area 2 and
to arrange for Russian S/Ms. not to operate W. of 022° 47' E.
(F.O.S. 181154A to Admty. (R) C. in C.H.F.)

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

TIRPITZ. Russian visual R/C. at 1052A/18 shows (?German Battleship ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ) and one Destroyer in Kaa Fiord. No Warships in Lang Fiord. Pilot reports (?adequate visibility) for this observation but not sufficient light for carrying out P.R.(2).
Further R/C. first suitable opportunity (group missed).
(3) Admiralty pass to H.Q.C.C.
(S.B.N.O. N. Russia 181446A.)

U-Boats.

U/B. By D/F on 3750 kc/s at 2206Z 17 U/B. in 073° 18' N. reported. 027° 00' E. Reliability second class.
(S.B.N.O. N.Russia 180550A to Admty. (R) Home Fleet Operational.)

U/B. NR.1. Have A.S.V. contact position 46° 23' N. 09° attacked. 02' W. probably U/B. Have attacked U/B. with depth charges.
(A/C. H. 4th U.S. Wing 180646A.)

U/B. Negative contact.
(A/C.L. 181021A.)

2 U/Bs. Am over enemy S/M. in 60.50 N. 17.00 W. Flak. reported. Am over enemy S/M. in 61.00 N. 17.07 W. Enemy S/M. previously reported was sighted on surface and observed to submerge, when first sighted was on course 330° estimated speed 13 knots.
(A/C. A/Finngley 181246.)

Navigational.

Wick. My 171400A. Wick Harbour now open.
(R.N.O. Wick 180845A.)

Casualties & Defects.

THOR THOR capsized off St. Anne's Head in heavy weather (?Dutch M/V. 326 tons). 3 men missing. Survivors landed at Milford Haven.
(N.C.S.O. Milford Haven 182158A.)

SS. BLUE Cancel my 171845. Destination of BLUE JACKET is JACKET. altered to Liverpool. BERRY escort her to Bar L/V. then return Belfast.
(C. in C.W.A. 181239A.)
Your 181239. E.T.A. K.1 Buoy 190315A E.T.A. Bar L/V 190730A BLUE JACKET's refrigerator and radio now reported satisfactory. BERRY has one cot case with depressed fracture of the skull.
(BERRY 181511Z to C. in C.W.A.)
My 181511Z am reduced to (?10) knots by weather submit BLUE JACKET proceed independently.
(BERRY 181612Z to C. in C.W.A.)

/My...

War Diary.

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

SS. BLUE JACKET.
(Contd.) My 181612Z speed now 15 knots.
(BERRY 181907Z.)
Your 181612Z approved for BLUE JACKET to proceed independently BERRY proceed Belfast.
(C. in C.W.A. 181930A to BERRY.)

Shipping and Convoys.

D.S.47A. D.S.47A and U.S.S. MERAK arrived.
(A.C.I.C. 180100A.)

T.U.5. Arrangements for sailing various portions.
(F.O.I.C. Cardiff 181220A, N.O.I.C. Greenock 181234A D.O.D. (H)182007A.)

R.U.101. R.U.101 (1) 1100A/18th. (2) QUADRILLE (AO) TRONDA
(3) 7½ knots. (4) As in my 151806.
(N.C.S.O. Iceland 181546A to Admty.)
Sailed EL MIRLO (Tanker Message) and COWRIE in
R.U.101(A.M's 161300 071310 refer.)
(A.C.I.C. 181750A to Admty.)

O.N.216. (A) 1200Z/17. (B) C.3. SASKATCHEWAN, SKEENA,
EYEBRIGHT, PICTOU, SUMMERSIDE, RIMOUSKI. Addition-
al A/S Escort and for rescue duties NORTHERN PRIDE.
Rescue Tug GRIPER, rescue ship PERTH, Mac Ship
EMPIRE MACRAE, Radar R/T. DELILIAN HF/DF. (C) 43.
(C. in C.W.A. 181925Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)

Coasters' balloons. A.M. 151331A. Para.1 concur.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 181806A.)

One merchant ship. From position M pass through new positions.
N. 55.25 N. 18.15 W. O. 56.28 N. 10.02 W.
P. 55.29 N. 07.10 W. Reason N.U.
(D.O.D. (H) 181855A to DUCKWORTH, COOKE, AVON.)

AQUITANIA, SS.QUEEN ELIZABETH. Convoy T.A.79 SS. AQUITANIA and T.A. 80 SS. QUEEN
ELIZABETH will be ready to sail from Clyde p.m.
22nd and p.m. 23rd respectively. 2. F.O.I.C.
Greenock is requested to sail ships to New York,
Admiralty will signal route. 3. Fighter protect-
ion code words. T.A.79 "Sparrow" T.A.80 "Trysail"
(D.O.D. (H) 182017A.)

EMPRESS OF RUSSIA. (S.D.47A.) Sailing escorted by SALADIN and SKATE
at 0201A/19. (Route). S. of A. 14½ knots. Code-
word "Boliard."
(A.C.I.C. 182112A.)

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

ISIS.

(As received possibly intended to read "Report forthwith" Admiral French to British Consul Ponta Delgada.)

(A) E.T.A. Ponta Delgada. (B) Amount of fuel required. (C) Ships in company for your 172202Z. Ref. A.M. 271958A Nov. and C.A.F.O. 1924/42 refers. (F.O. Gib. 180155A to ISIS (R) S.B.N.O. Azores.)

ISIS, ANTHONY and REDPOLE E.T.A. Ponta Delgada 1600A/18th, requiring 150 tons oil fuel each.

(ISIS 180300Z to British Consul Ponta Delgada.)

Your 172202 not to Admiralty. Proceed to Horta.

(F.O. Gibraltar 180939A to ISIS (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, Admty.)

Cancel my 180300Z, not to Admiralty and N.O.I.C. Horta.

ISIS and ANTHONY E.T.A. Horta 2000A/18th. REDPOLE E.T.A. Horta 0800A/19th. Each ship requires 200 tons oil fuel. Position (estimated) and course of all ships at 1300A/18th. 038° 37' N. 025° 57' W. 264° ISIS, ANTHONY 22 knots, REDPOLE 14 knots. 9170 1954 swell 2.

(ISIS 181307Z to S.B.N.O. Azores (R) N.O.I.C. Horta, British Consul Ponta Delgada, B.N.A. Lisbon, Admty., F.O.C. Gib.)

My 181307Z. Request instructions whether to sail for Gib.

with ANTHONY on completion of fuelling or to await REDPOLE.

(ISIS 181802Z to F.O. Gib. (R) REDPOLE, S.B.N.O. Azores.)

Sail in company on completion. ISIS's 171802Z refers. Pass through position (Q) 037° 01' N. 018° 02' W. S. of A. 18 knots.

(F.O. Gibraltar 182057A to ISIS, ANTHONY (R) REDPOLE.)

Arrival 2001Z/18 of (?ISIS and) ANTHONY at Horta 1.

(S.B.N.O. Azores 182257Z to Admty. (R) F.O. Gibraltar.)

T.G.21.14.

Sailed (accordance with ?) my 171703A.

((U.S.) C.M.S.F. 180943 to C. in C.U.S. Atlantic Fleet.)

Rosia
H.D.A.
Station.

Approved A/S fixed defence at Gib. to comprise type 135 at harbour entrances only, your 142059.

2. H.D.A. Station Rosia Bay should be dismantled and equipment made available for other Med. station requirements.

(C. in C. Med. 181000A to F.O.C. Gib. (R) Admty., CURLEW.)

My 142059. Fault has developed in remaining sea unit (B) and H.D.A. section? is completely out of action.

(F.O.C. Gib. 182129A to C. in C. Med. (R) Admty. CURLEW.)

Sailing of
LAVORA and
visa for
Italian crew.

Your 171610 refer. (Begins) F.O.C. Gib., C. in C. Med., Admty. F.O.T.A.L.I. from B.N.A. Madrid. Spanish visa for Italian personnel proceeding merchant ship in Madrid will be issued as quickly as possible when nominal lists have been submitted to M.F.A. Ministry of Marine have promised full aid. My * 151215 para.2 refer. 161904A Ends. (Madrid 181003A to Admty.) * Admty. signal requesting repetition previously received undecypherable.

Patrols B. and 100 per cent.

C.

(S.B.N.O. Azores 181012Z to GAMBIA, C. in C. Plymouth (R) F.O. Gib.)

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Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

L.C.T. 332. Your 171654*. Note to this effect was sent to M.F.A. when we were ((?) word omitted) of internment of U/B crew my / 161834 refers. K.H. Master requests survey of damage to determine time required for repair and that representatives of Embassy should be present during survey. Requests that survey be done as quickly as possible in view of possibility of further damage due to bad weather conditions. Ministry of Marine agree to repair. All attempts to refloat unsuccessful but further attempt will be made during high water later this month.
(B.N.A. Madrid 181217A to Admty. (R) F.O.C. Gib. (Corrupt Group)).
* 171645 intended. / Re internment of U-Boat crews.

GONCALO VELHO. B.N.A. Lisbon's 161614* Dec. My 151825A referred to merchant ship GONCALO VELHO. 2. Naval Intelligence Casablanca reported this ship replied to U.S. aircraft challenge on 29th Nov. with correct Allied Merchant Ship identification signal of the day. 3. As ship sailed Ponta Delgada 1st Dec. for Philadelphia am advising Casablanca to report facts direct Philadelphia for necessary enquiries there.
(S.O. (I) Gib. 181242A to B.N.A. Lisbon (R) Admty.)* Gives rep. of S.O.(I) Gib. 151825 re GONCALO VELHO.

GLASGOW. Departed Horta 1106Z/18th.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 181259Z to C. in C. Plymouth (R) Admty., F.O. Gib.)

HOCHHERINER. Sailed 2250, 17th.
(Bilbao 181310 to M.E.W. (R) Admty., B.N.A. Madrid, S.O.I. Gib.)

SHAKESPEARE. Your 151131A. Intend to sail about 28 Dec.
(S.O. S/Ms. Gib. 181617A to F.O.S.)

14th
M/S. Flotilla
CLUMBERHALL
IERE. N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 171850. Can any decision be given on A.M. 1017400* four 171820 para.7 also refers. None to all.
(D.T.D. 181628A to F.O.I.C. Gib. Info. S.B.N.O. Azores, N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, C. in C. Med.)
*Investigate possibilities of using 2 ships of 14th M/S. Flotilla to proceed to Azores.

RITA
GARCIA. Your 161623. Spanish RITA GARCIA consider discharging the necessary 10,000 bags and cases, former already in bad condition, impracticable and probing would still be unsatisfactory. F.O.C. agrees. (2) Have arranged with Spanish Consul for two Contraband Officers to sail in ship to supervise discharging of cargo at Melilla and Valencia, as suggested in para.5 of Madrid's Arfar Saving 387 of 23rd. Nov. 1942. (3) Holdback obtained any unnavicerted goods found will be held by Consul until re-shipped to Gibraltar. (4) Consider this arrangement watertight and have released ship.
(C.C.S.O. Gibraltar 181657A to Admty.)

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18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

- K.M.S.35,
U.G.S.26. Ships in K.M.S.35 of 10 knots or over bound for Ports East of Gib. are to be transferred to U.G.S. 26 and are to part company escorted by 4 escorts detailed by B.3 as necessary to R/V U.G.S.26 in G.A. 034° 36' 006° 23' at 201200A. Estimated number of ships 18. (3) U.G.S.26 to pass (J) at (A) Med. escort will relieve American escorts who are then to part company and proceed to Casablanca. (B) British escort ex K.M.S.35 are to enter Gib. (4) Delete all after rendezvous in para.1 of my 171726 (N.T. in W.D.)
(F.O.C. Gib. 181705A to S.E. K.M.S.35, S.E. U.G.S.26. (R) Admty., C. in C. Med., Commorseafon, Comnob, N.O.B. Oran.)
- B.4.
BLACKHEATH. Cancel my 171803Z. BLACKHEATH now attempting to catch up. My P.C. and S. 040° 31' 020° 34' 305° 6 (corrupt group). Weather report 47.82 23.65.
(B.4 181802Z to F.O. Gibraltar.)
- B.Y.M.S. Cancel my message T.O.O. 171218 and my 180113. Admiralty's 181135 not to B.Y.M.S. refers.
(F.O. Gibraltar 181817A to B.Y.M.S. 2060, 2181, 2236 (R) C. in C. Med.)
Your 180213A. (Circulated T.O.O. 171218.) Acknowledged.
E.T.A.1200 20th.
(B.Y.M.S. 2060 182159Z to F.O. Gibraltar.)
- X.K.13
14th M/S.
Flotilla.
Flight Q.
L.C.T. Endurance of 14th. M/S. Flotilla is insufficient to reach U.K. escorting X.K.13. (2) My previous intention was that SCOTTISH, LORD NUFFIELD and KINGSTON AGATE should act as through escorts and 14th M/S. Flotilla act as additional escort between 43 and 48 North. (3) In view of C. in C. Med. (?181152) this arrangement cannot obtain unless escorts for flight Q can be sent from U.K.
(4) Anticipate sufficient time will be available to send escorts from U.K. in view of para.3 of my 171820.
(F.O.C. Gib. 181841A to Admty., C. in C. Med.)
- Flight "Q". Less L.C.T.372 Gib.17th with KINGSTON AGATE, SCOTTISH, LORD NUFFIELD, Tug HUDSON. My 091754 (N.T. in W.D.) and 1216⁺ referred.
(F.O.C. Gib. 181852B to Admty. (R) C. in C.W.A., C.M.S.F., C. in C. Med., N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C. Plymouth.) * Re sailing telegram flight Q.L.C.T.380 (S.O.) 446, 388, etc.
- "Chop" line. Present position of "Chop" line has casual series of anomalies consequent on use of Azores as air base. (2) Request consideration may be given to reverting it to its previous position of 40 W. particularly in view of the possibility of Coastal Command providing air protection for American convoys.
(F.O.I.C. Gib. 181857A to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med. H.Q.C.C.)

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War Diary.18.12.1943.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.

Atlantic Narrows, Patrol system.

Your 150046. 1. System of patrols designed by my predecessor was based with view to placing three fences in supposed path of blockade runners. 2. Patrols are on Western portion of my area on suppositions that blockade runners are less likely to pass further East. 3. Ships are placed to cover each other on receipt of sighting report. 4. Further West is responsibility of Com. Fourth Fleet whose plan B.R. is designed to cover his area though it appears to leave middle portion very empty. 5. Americans also patrol sea and air to N.E. Ascension. If any indications of blockade runners passing further East present themselves West African Coastal aircraft are ready to patrol the gap to Africa. 6. Without? such indications it is considered preferable to use limited air forces for anti-submarine purposes, covering convoys and important individual ships and carrying out sweeps on shipping lines. 7. Single armed merchant cruisers and cruisers of limited endurance and in some cases no range of detection beyond visibility distance prevent no sure obstacle to blockade runners passing through their area. 8. It is therefore considered that three potential stops disposed North, West and South West in expected danger area are better than one third East and West line covering the whole path of blockade runners. 9. Also a virtual East and West patrol does exist by ships passing Dakar or Freetown and their areas. Due mainly to short endurance of French and Italian cruisers there are on passage during a 15 day cycle two to four ships on nine days and one on remaining six days. 10. On return of CORFU it is intended to cancel area A.B.C. and institute new area V.W.X.Y. bounded by lines joining following positions:-
(v) 05° N. 26° W. (w) 05° N. 20° W. (x) Equator 15° W.
(y) Equator 21½ W. This area to be divided into V.W.X.Y. (North) and V.W.X.Y. (South) by latitude 02½° N. 11. One of these two areas will always be filled and sometimes both.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 180320Z to Admty. (R) F.O. Gib.)

- C.M.48. Sailing telegram. (2) 0700Z/18th. (6) RACEHORSE, REDOUBT. RACEHORSE and STRATFORD will be relieved by 2 destroyers from Kilindini as arranged by Cdre. (D) in position (G) at 0400Z/25th thence proceed to Kilindini. RACEHORSE reporting E.T.A.
(N.C.S.O. Durban 180714Z to Admty.)
- T.S.55. Intend to sail S.55 1600Z/20th 9 ships including AMERICAN MANUFACTURER for Marshall and U.S.A. route "Carp" E.T.A. 1000Z/25th escorted by DROGOU, HYDRANGEA, AMARANTHUS, KELT, MORRIS DANCE and FOLKESTONE latter sailing p.m. 20th to overtake.
(N.O.I.C. Takoradi 181431Z to Admty.)
- S.T.L.8. Intend to sail S.T.L.8 at 1230Z/20th escorted by WELLINGTON, LOWESTOFT, WESTON, BUTSER, DUNTON, ARRAN and SOUTHERN PRIDE. (6) N.O.I.C. Takoradi sail convoy for Lagos with same escorts by 26th after troops embarked in NEW NORTHLAND and THYSVILLE
(F.O.C.W.Af. 181444Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi.)

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

U/Bs.
Reliability
of reports
of French
ships.

A.M. 181432A. Request views of U/B. tracking room
as to reliability of reports from French ships
referred to.

(D.D.I.C. 181456A to F.O.C.W.Af.)

Your 181456. GLOIRE reported torpedo wake observed
at 1014Z/16th in 06° 35' N. 27° 27' W. Consider
report unreliable. PICT made four attacks on
contacts between 0150/17th and 0422/17th 04° 30' N.

01° 08' W. French COMMANDANT DROGOU made depth charge attacks on
contacts at 2105/17th and 0615/18th in 04° 25' N. 01° 06' W. and
reported no real evidence of a S/M. Contacts considered non S/M.
possibly wreck of CORNEVILLE. American transit aircraft reports
sighting large white S/M. at 0308/18th 05° 28' N. 00° 08' W.
course 244° crash dived. Consider unreliable. There is no
positive evidence of a U/B. still patrolling off the Coast.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 182356Z to Admty.)

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- P.59 (UNTIRING). One torpedo remaining. Returning to base P.C. and S. 0600A/18th 43° 01' N. 08° 29' E. 180 8/2. Pair of 500 tons ammunition ships sunk.
(P.59 (UNTIRING) 180406A to Capt. S.10, (R) C. in C. Med. 10th S/M F.)
- My 180406A. Will R/V as in your 181518B 3 days early.
(UNTIRING 182304A to Capt. S.10, (R) C. in C. Med. 10th S/M F.)
Your 180406 acknowledged. R/V with escort 240° Monachi Rock 5 miles at 1200/19th.
(Capt. S.10 182354 to P.59 (UNTIRING) (R) C. in C. Med. 10th S/M F.)
- U/B attacked. Have attacked enemy S/M with depth charges estimate no hits. 0655Z.
(A/C CXZS 180700Z to 201 Group H.Q.)
- V.N.12A. My 161822A. Sailed. My 161142 para. 8 delete LAMERTON and insert ILEX S.O.
(N.O.I.C. Augusta 180837 to F.O.W.It.)
- U/B. Am over enemy S/M in 33.55 N. 23.00 E. enemy S/M previously reported sighted on surface and observed to submerge when sighted was on course 130 speed 6 knots.
(A/C CXZH 180850B to 201 Group H.Q.)
- SOKOL, SPORTSMAN (P.229) SURF (P.239) SOKOL proceed forthwith to patrol Northern Approaches to Khios Straits cancel my 111923 not to C. in C. Levant.
2. (P.239) SURF patrolling south west of Cape Eski Stambul Close to Turkish Territorial Waters.
3. After 0001/19th (P.229) SPORTSMAN patrol south of Lemnos Area west of long. 025° 43'. Do not approach within Cape Sigri Mytileni.
(Capt. S.1 181031B to SOKOL (P.229) SPORTSMAN, (P.239), SURF, (R) 1st S/M F. C. in C. Levant.)
- Air reports. A.348 18th Daily Opsum 234 M.S. 24087.
16/17th 2 Wellingtons successfully mined Khalkis Harbour, Greece 2 Liberators (B.24) on similar operation abandoned task due to bad weather over target area.
- 18th. 3 Baltimores (A.30) armed R/C north of Crete. 1 aircraft attacked 2 M/Vs in Candia Harbour but did not observe results of bombing.
(H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 181114Z.)
A.F. 254 18th N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 300. M.S. 24114.
N.W.A.T.A.F. 16/17th 9 Bostons (A.20) intruded Split/Zara Harbour. 144 x 40 claim direct hit merchant vessel Zara Harbour.

/17th...

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Air reports. 17th Dec. 24 U.S. Invaders (A.36) Civitavecchia due
 (Contd.) weather aircraft attacked Nettuno Anzio. 45 x 500
 many hits (?docks). Large explosion boat yard.
 Several fires dock area. 18 U.S. Warhawks (P.40)
 escort 4 Spitfires and 14 U.S. Thunderbolts (P.47)
 offensive patrols coastal areas Yugoslavia. 1 150 ft. merchant
 vessel off Trapano strafed and left smoking.
 (H.Q.N.A.A.F. 182011A.)

Yugoslav Ships and Volunteers. Your 061221, not to F.O.T.A.L.I. F.O. have in-
 structed H.M. Ambassador to inform Yugoslav Govern-
 ment of directions of C. in C.A.F. reported in
 your 061225 and to urge them to adopt a more
 reasonable attitude to assist Allied war effort.
 2. For your information F.O. are in agreement
 with policy you are pursuing and only request that
 A. no stops should be taken involving official recognition of
 Partisan administration, e.g. transfer of Yugoslav ships to
 Partisan Flag;
 B. no action should be taken definitely hostile to Yugoslav Govt.
 e.g. internment of volunteers for Yugoslav Navy.
 (Hd. of M.I. 181125A to C. in C. Med. Info. C. in C. Levant,
 F.O.T.A.L.I.)

B.Y.M.S. Your 170940 not understood as B.Y.M.S. 2060, 2181,
 2060, 2181, 2236 allocated 166th M.S.F. E.F.
 2236. (D.M.S. 181135A to C. in C. Med. Info. F.O. Gib.
 Capt. M/S Med.)
 Cancel my 170940.
 (C. in C. Med. 181610A. to F.O.C. Gib. (R) Admty.)

My 170940*. Destination of B.Y.M.S. 2060, 2181 and 2236. Cominch
 011853 Nov. was received corrupt and significance consequently
 missed. It does not agree with latest Pink List held dated 1st Nov
 1943 nor does either give any indication of destination of B.Y.M.S.
 2236.

2. Your 181135 was first indication of their correct allocation
 received from Admty.

3. To avoid further misunderstanding can information regarding
 destination of B.Y.M.S. and similar craft routed through my
 station be given in advance.

(C. in C. Med. 181644A to Admty. (R) F.O. Gibraltar.)

* (Cancelled by 181610/12.) re B.Y.M.S. 2060 and 2181 allocated
 to U.K. 2236 allocation not known.

NICOLINE
 MAERSK
 delay.

It is most important that I should be informed
 earlier of such delay as that referred to in your
 161856. Delay in receiving this information has
 resulted in holding unnecessarily at short notice
 a ship which might otherwise have been actively
 employed.
 (C. in C. Med. 181228A to B.N.A. Madrid, (R) F.O.
 Gibraltar, Admty.)

/Flight Q...

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18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.

- Flight Q. C. in C.Plymouth's 161901A. It would be much appreciated if tug could be made available from your resources to comply with para. 2.
2. It is not desired to use EMPIRE JOHN and HUDSON which were with Flight Q as they are required in U.K. as soon as they can be made available.
(D.O.D.(H) 181251A to C. in C.Med. Info. F.O.I.C. Gib. S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C.Plymouth.)
- P.315. My P.C. and S. 034° 13' 023° 44' 105° 11 knots your 181052 refers.
(P.315 181301B to Capt. S.1, (R) C. in C.Levant.)
- M.K.S.35. N.O.I.C. Port Said sail ships escorting M.K.S.35 p.m. 21st Dec. inshore route to Alexandria.
6. UPRIGHT, MAMMOTH. 8. BARLE (E.G.48) BERGAMOT, BRYONY, F.S. LE MALOUINE, MYOSOTIS.
(C. in C.Levant 181350B to Ships escorting M.K.S. 35.)
- Joint Army 393800 I/49249 18th, 24 hours to 1000/18, all R.A.F. Intel. times G.M.T.
appreciation. 1. Ph. R/C enemy shipping in Aegean 17 (details).
3. Ref. para. three appreciation 17th reliable source now reports SS. BALKAN entered Aegean p.m. 16th reported heading south toward Smyrna. C.X. 17th confirms ORIA discharging cargo at Suda. Destination SS. APRILIA sailed Candia but held up Suda on account mines. Same source reports departure from Candia SS. LIVENZA and DANAIIS also held up owing mines. Comment. Good example "nuisance value" mining.
6. Further indications enemy intention develop Syri as staging point and/or offensive base on Leros-Rhodes route. Flotilla small landing craft now at Portolago probably intended further employment inter-island transport troops and/or supplies. Departure further troop convoy from Piraeus to Samos and/or Dodecanese still considered imminent. Appreciation Kastelorizo unchanged.
(C. in C.M.E. 181405B.)
- CASABIANCA. Onward routing from 040° 00' 006° 11' at 1100/21 proceeding on the surface at your discretion to pass 042° 27' 005° 52' at 2300/21 to patrol in zone SU.
(Capt. S.10 181453 to CASABIANCA, (R) 10th S/M F. PROTEE, (F.S.) P.67 (LE CURIE) C. in C.Med. N.O.I.C. Algiers, F.O.Gibraltar.)
- P.59 Leave patrol to pass 043° 49' 008° 20' at 2300/21st (UNTIRING).
thence through 041° 57' 008° 14' at 0500/22nd and R/V with escort in position 240° Monachi Rock Light 5 miles at 1200/22nd.
(Capt. S.10 181518B to P.59 (UNTIRING) (R) 10th S/M F. PROTEE, P.67 (LE CURIE) C. in C.Med. N.O.I.C. Algiers, F.O.Gibraltar.)

/Flight...

412

18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

- Flight Q
L.C.T. Request amplification para. 5 of your 171820. Record of engine hours indicates all engines except one this flight practically new. (C. in C.Med. 181611A to F.O.I.C. Gib. (R) Admty.)
- UNICORN. In view of her great value UNICORN is to rank as a Fleet Carrier for the purpose of providing escorts.
2. Para. 2 A.M. 122332 Nov. (Hush) and para. 5 A.M. 142300 Dec. refer. (D.O.D.(F) 181719A to C. in C.Med. C. in C.Levant, C. in C.E.F.(S.E.A.C.) Info. C. in C.H.F. F.O. Gibraltar.)
- Sousse and Sfax. Now under French control. No British personnel or communications remain. British M.W.P. is still represented. (C. in C.Med. 181752A to Med. Stn. Levant St. 402B, (R) Admty.)
- Passengers in Trade Convoys. Owing to their speed it is necessary to include certain personnel ships in slow convoys for local moves in the Med.
2. Ref. to para. 4C of C.A.F.O. 2247/43* the numbers in any one ship are limited to 1000. (C. in C.Med. 181813A to Admty.)
* (M.08855/43 - 14.10.43.)
- Italian U/Bs building at Taranto. 1. A.M. 091407 statements in para. one are confirmed subject to following remarks. (Particulars of equipment available).
2. All work on submarines is being stopped.
3. Microfilms of further particulars of these S/Ms will be forwarded direct to D.N.C.
4. Constructor Capt. King returns to Algiers 20th to report to C. in C.Med. on proposed new construction programme. Advanced clearing of ships has been arranged. A.M. 050450 refers (N.T. in W.D.) (F.O.T.A.L.I. 181825 to Admty. (R) C. in C.Med. Comnavnaw, B.A.D. C.S.Taranto, F.O.S.)
- KAIPURA, JEANNE D'ARC. French Admty. request docking of KAIPURA A.M. 2316/15 may be arranged to follow JEANNE D'ARC, expect to clear dock by 25th Dec. (C. in C.Med. 181841A to F.O.C.W.Af. (R) Admty. Navale France.)
- SOKOL. P.239 (SURF). To leave patrol at 1602/19th directed to leave Aegean by southbound route (my 071423 Nov.) arrive position A. 035° 06' 026° 44' at 1801/21st, thence position B. 034° 25' 030° 01' at 0902/22nd to arrive Beirut 1001/23rd.
2. SOKOL is leaving patrol at 0001/20th direct to leave Aegean by southbound route to position A. at 0602/22nd and position B. at 0830/23rd arriving Beirut 1503/24th. (Capt. 3.1 181849B to P.239 (SURF), SOKOL, (R) 1st S/M F. etc.)

/JAUNTY...

413

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

JAUNTY.

Request you will sail JAUNTY for duty in C. in C. Plymouth's 161901 A.M. 181251 also refers.
2. JAUNTY is to proceed to U.K. for refit on completion of boiler cleaning of EMPIRE SAMSON.
(C. in C.Med. 181901A to F.O.Gibraltar, (R) Admty. S.B.N.O.Azores, C. in C.Plymouth.)

"Gnat"
Torpedoes.

W.A. experience with "Gnat" torpedo has demonstrated vital necessity for ships not fitted with "Foxers" to reduce speed to 7 knots immediately asdic contact is obtained since a "Gnat" may have already been fired and immediate action would then be vital.

2. A high degree of immunity is almost certainly obtained immediately engine starts to ease down owing to drop in cavitation on the propellers.

3. 388 (A) refers.

(C. in C.Med. 181941A to Med. Station B.403 (R) C. in C.Levant, C. in C.W.A.)

P.57
(UNIVERSAL.)

Westbound coast crawling. One merchant ship, 4 escorts passed 044° 15' N. 009° 20' E. 1130/18th speed 9 knots. 5000 tons tanker sunk same convoy. ((P.57) UNIVERSAL 182020A to Capt. S.10, (R) C. in C.Med. 10th S/M F.)

"Crystal" 8. Recommend patrol off 5th Port tomorrow. Your 182020. Well done.

(Capt. S.10 182222 to P.57 (UNIVERSAL).)

414

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U/B dis-positions.

Ref. E.F. 456 Y of 17th. DAISY MOLLER was sunk by U-Boat presumed Japanese at 2150Z/13th in 016° 21' N. 082° 13' E. this is probably the Japanese U-Boat plotted by D/F in Bay of Bengal 1506Z/15th. Scale of air escort all areas remains unchanged. (C. in C.E.F. 180348Z to E.F. 457Y.)

P.312 (TRESPASSER)
P.339 (TAURUS).

P.312 (TRESPASSER) and P.339 (TAURUS) will have completed 18 months service in March and April, 1944, respectively. Request information when they will be required to sail for U.K. for refit in order that programme of special operations may be worked out.
(Capt. S.4 180514Z to C. in C.E.F. (R) F.O.S.)

J.C.29.

Arrival SHOREHAM, POONA escorting J.C.29. (Bombay Fort W/T 180530Z.)

Method of reporting aircraft for Air defence (S.E.A.F.O.G.)

A standard method common to all three services for reporting position of aircraft for air defence purposes is being adopted in the S.E.A.C. east of 070° E. and is to be brought into force on 1st Jan. 1944. It is called the South East Asia Fighter Operations Graticule System (short title: S.E.A.F.O.G.)

2. The method of preparing any chart with chart Graticule and examples of manner in which positions are to be reported is being promulgated by signal separately. Written instructions are being issued.

3. The system of reporting is not intended for internal use in forces at sea which will normally continue to report aircraft in bearing and distance. It must however be used on and after 1st Jan. when reporting aircraft contacts or sightings to any authority outside the force of which the ship forms part

A. for air defence purposes only
B. when the outside authority is not immediately aware of the ship's position
C. where speed is essential and security of secondary importance.

4. It will be brought into use for all reporting A positions of aircraft in the early warning system at all wings in the network from 1st Jan. Ships and Naval Shore Authorities must therefore be prepared to receive plots of aircraft from the R.A.F. shore warning system in Graticule.

5. It is stressed that this system is only for use in air defence for air warning purposes in fighter operations rooms ashore and air plots of ships afloat. It has no security. It is never to be used for enemy reports other than for immediate air warning. It is never to be used for plan reporting ship's position. (C. in C.E.F. 181139Z to all S.Os. Ships, establishments, W/T Stations, and other N.As. and civil establishments concerned ashore and afloat (including R.I.N. R.N.N. on East Indies stn.) (525C.) (R) Admty. Navy Office Melbourne, C. in C.S.A. Cdre. Durban, F.O.R.S.C.A.)

See also (C. in C.E.F. 181203Z to E.I. Station General.)
See Lion Copy. (This message describes the system).

/M/Vs...

SECRET

414 A. E. I.

WARNING: This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher or confidential code message and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.
(*Note: Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad: "O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

MESSAGE 181203Z/December IN

From O. in O. E.F.

Date 19.12.43
Recd. 2220

OTP (PP) by W/T

Method of reporting Aircraft for
Air defence, S. E. A. F. O. G. System

Addressed East Indies Stn, General (526C).
Repeated: Admiralty.

S.E.A.F.O.G.

~~Sea-Fog~~ System. Refers to S.C. of 18th Dec. (181139Z)

(2) This is a method by which an area is divided into 20 degs. squares, sub divided into 5 degs. squares and finally into 1 (one) degs. squares.

(3) The starting point is the meridian of Greenwich and the Equator.

(4) The 20 degs. squares are not lettered, but each is divided into 5 degs. squares which are lettered from A to P starting in the N.W. corner and working eastward so that the N.E. corner is square (P).

(5) For the present the S.E.A.F.O.G. ~~Sea-Fog~~ System may be considered as operative in the area directed by latitude 030 degs. North 050 degs. South and longitude 061 degs. and 110 degs. East this area may have to be expanded at any time.

(6) As a check of the lettering of the 5 degs. square, the square directed by latitude 020 degs. and 015 degs. North and longitude 080 degs. and 085 degs. East is A.

(7) 5 degs. squares are divided into 1 degs. (one) square lettered from A to Y in the same way as the 5 degs. square. Thus the 1 degs. (one) square in 5 degs. square A directed by latitude 017 degs. and 016 degs. North and longitude 082 degs. and 083 degs. East is square R.

(8) Positions are reported by indicating the (? 5 degs) square then the 1 degs. (one) square and finally the number of minutes north followed by number of minutes East from the S.W. corner of (corrupt group) square. As a check Colombe Clock Tower is LT 56 51: Bombay Sunk Rock is CB 53 50 and Vizagapatam Fort is AN 42 18.

(9) Each ship (corrupt group) to devise its own system for Air defence purposes of converting bearing and distance into graticule and (corrupt group) with (? the) minimum delay.

(10) Chart /.....

(10) Chart 748 B is suitable for preparation as a master graticule of the whole area from which local suitable scale chart or diagram can be prepared.

131203Z.
Advance copy Ops., O.D.

1st Lord
1st S.L. (2)
D.F.S.L.
5th S.L.
D.C.N.A.E.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (W)
A.C.N.S. (A) (2)
A.C.N.S. (UP) (2)
N.A. 1st S.L.
U.W.R.
Ops. (2)
O.D. (5)
O.I.C. (2)
Plot
D. of P. (3)
D. of P. (Q) (3)
D.N.I. (5)

M. (6)
I.P. (3)
W.D.
D. Map Room
D.S.D. (3)
Ad. Blake (4)
D. of L.D. (3)
C.C.L.S. (2)
D.A.W.T.
D.T.D. (4)
D.T.S.D.

ME

415

18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies - Contd.M/Vs and
Convoys,
routeing.

F.O.N.I.C. 299 pass to N.C.S.Os.

1. Shipping of 8 knots and over from East Coast of India and Ceylon bound for Aden except class A (see F.O.N.I.C. 289 Dec. 11th para. 3) is to be routed to Colombo for inclusion in onward convoy.

2. All ships of 8 knots and over from Colombo and Cochin except class A bound for Aden are to be held for convoy forthwith. These ships are to be sailed in an Aden portion of M.B. convoy.

3. Ships in para. 2 will leave M.B. convoy under their own escort after making the R/V off Cochin. They are to be routed through the 009° Channel to long., 070° E. where they are to be dispersed to proceed independently. Escort will then return to Colombo unless otherwise ordered.

4. Class A ships will continue to be sailed independently until further orders.

(C. in C.E.F. 181151Z to All interested on Stations.)

F.O.N.I.C. 300 pass to N.C.S.Os.

1. A. Routeing of shipping from East coast of India and Ceylon to East and South Africa and Australia.

B. All ships from Colombo and independents from the East coast India and Ceylon are to be routed between longs. 079° 30' E. and 082° 00' E. until South of the equator.

C. Ships in C.J. convoy bound for destination as in para. 1A. If not calling at Colombo are to be routed as in para. 1B and are to be dispersed in vicinity of Little Basses after crossing long. 082° 00' E.

2. Ships of 8 knots and over, except class A, from Cochin to East and South Africa are to be sailed in the Aden portion of M.B. convoys. (See F.O.N.I.C. 299 Dec. 18th) Class A ships are to be sailed independently through the Nine Degree Channel keeping North of lat. 009° 00' N. until reaching long. 070° 00' E.

3. All ships except class A from Cochin to Australia are to be sailed in B.M. convoys and are to be disposed off Colombo and through routed as in para. 1B.

(C. in C.E.F. 181159Z to All interested on Station.)

B.M. 77A. Arrival, DIPAVATI, LILAVATI.
(N.C.S.O. Cochin 181220Z.)

B.M. 78. Arrived Colombo portion escorted by IPSWICH, ORISSA
(N.C.S.O. Colombo 181230Z.)

M.N.I.B. 2. 1340Z/18. 6. NIZAM.
(N.C.S.O. Kilindini 181401Z.)

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Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

G.U.S. 22. New York section 33 ships arrived last in Ambrose 171853Z.
W.A. GRAHAM due New York section arrived Norfolk 172255Z. Chesapeake section, 16 ships arrived last 171437Z. Delaware section, 8 ships arrived last 171536Z. (P.D. at New York, 180102Z.)

EMILE
BERTIN. Norfolk (Vir.) sailed December 17th French cruiser EMILE BERTIN for Althorpe Island via San Juan. (N.S.H.Q., 180455Z to Admty.)

T.F. 60
constituted. This is Cinclant's 171458 for action Com. Bat. Div. 5. Task Force 60 is constituted as follows: Rear-Adm. Bryant in TEXAS, Comdesron 15 in DAVISON Desdiv 29 less QUICK, Comdesron 16 in PARKER, Desron 16 MERRIMACK. Escort convoy U.T.6 to U.K. It departs from New York on 27th and from Boston on 28th. Return to U.S. escorting T.U.6 when directed by the Admty. Boston section will be escorted by Destroyers training under Comdes. joining the New York section at R/V designated by the New York P.D. SANTEE with no operating aircraft will be included in convoy. (Comnaveu, 180943Z to Admty.)

LEANDER. Departure 1800 G.M.T./18th LEANDER with escorts U.S.S. RICH and U.S.S. BARBER, E.T.A. Boston p.m./24th Dec. (B.R.L.O. Cristobal, 181327R to Admty., N.Z.N.B, S.B.N.O.W.At., B.A.D., N.S.H.Q., S.O.(I) Kingston.)

N.S.H.Q.
S/M Estimate. (N.S.H.Q., 181440Z.)

U.S. S/M
Estimate. (Cominch, 181608.)

INDOMITABLE. Will return to U.K. after refit. Your 032216 refers. (A.C.N.S.(H), 181725A to B.A.M.R.)

T.G.21.11
constituted. This is Cinclant's 172238 to C.T.F.23 and C.V.E. 59 (MISSION BAY). T.G.21.11 hereby constituted Capt. Rees in MISSION BAY, Comdesdiv.61 in LEA, Desdiv 61. Co-operate with C.T.F.61 escorting U.G.S.28 sailing Hampton Roads 25th Dec. Depart Hampton Roads 25th Dec. C.T.F.23 direct Comdesdiv 61 report with his division to C.T.G.21.11 by noon 25th Dec. for this duty. You may cease support T.G.61 when considered appropriate and operate against submarines. Further orders later. You may enter Bermuda for fuel. (Comnaveu, 181821 to Admty.)

/Homing ...

18.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

Homing of "Monsters". Agree provided the homing is specifically ordered by the authority that controls the movements of the "Monster" concerned namely Comeastseafon for the U.S. It is not desired that parent air stations of escorting aircraft be given this power. Your 140204* refers.
(Com. 10th Fleet (C. & R.), 181823Z to Admty., (R) C. in C. W.A., C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.N.F., N.S.H.Q., and A.O.C. in C. E.A.C.)
* To Masters.

BOUNTIFUL, SAMARITAN, REFUGE (U.S. Hospital ships). The U.S. Navy Department has designated the U.S.S. BOUNTIFUL, SAMARITAN, REFUGE as Hospital ships. Marks of identification.
(Cominch, 181931 to U.S. Fleet, (R) Admty., N.Z.N.B., A.C.N.B., N.S.H.Q., C. of S. Army.)

SUFFOLK (U.S.) overdue. Lloyds state SUFFOLK (U.S.) is reported overdue and lost in storm off Montauk.
2. Request details of voyage and any further information available.
(D.T.D., 181931A to N.S.H.Q.)

Italian and French training S/Ms. Proposed allocations.
(B.A.D., 181937Z to Admty., (R) C. in C. Med.)
See also B.A.D. 191721Z.

Dutch S/M O. 24. Repetition of S.O. S/Ms. Colombo 160745.
(D.O.D.(F), 181951A to B.A.D.)

MONTGOMERY, LEAMINGTON. Anticipate sailing MONTGOMERY and LEAMINGTON 22nd December to U.K. via St. Johns N.F. and Azores.
My 101848 refers.
(C. in C. C.N.A., 181954Z to Admty.)

AYLMER repairs. Departs Bermuda for Boston 191230.
(N.O.B. Bermuda, 181957 to Com. 1.)

Sub. attack and sighting summary. Para. A. P.B.M. Radar contact and sights sub. course 080° 13.29 N. 68.48 W. 170928. All times Z. P.V. sights sub. 13.45 N. 67.40 W. 181310. Liberator sights sub. course 330° 60.50 N. 17.00 W. 181212.
(Cominch, 182047 to Admty.)

REDMIL. Comply my 191828 Oct. for H.M.S. REDMIL when ready about 21st Dec.
(C. in C. U.S. Fleet, 182105 to (U.S.) C.E.S.F.)

/BRONZO ...

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Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.

BRONZO. Cominch has agreed that C. in C. Med. using only British and French resources should make good defects in BRONZO as and when he thinks fit. A.M. 091729 refers.

2. Adm. King considers the transfer on loan of this Italian sub. to the French would be most impolitic in view of the co-operation being given by Italians. It would appear that his fears are shared to a certain extent by C. in C. Med. vide para. 2 of his 031840.

3. Adm. King suggests that she be used for A/S training outside the Med. manned by either Poles or Dutch if British crew is not available, but in view of question of policy involved he is of opinion that matter should be referred to C.C.S. Recommend we agree with this.
(B.A.D., 182119Z to Admty., (R) C. in C. Med., V.A. Malta.)

TRUMPETER. Your 132117Z. It is intended to take TRUMPETER in hand for modifications about the end of Jan. Your proposal would entail an unacceptable delay in her readiness for service.

2. If the ferrying situation requires she could sail from U.K. in U.C.9 on 29th December, returning to U.K. with the minimum delay with such aircraft as are ready.

3. Request your early remarks.
(D.O.D.(H), 182129A to B.A.D.)

MAGIC. Arrived Bermuda.
(S.B.N.O.W.At., 182301Z.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest Noon R/C Liberator unsuccessfully attacked single
Serial probable destroyer 130 miles north Nassau Island
No. 697, course 10°.
Dec. 17th. (9) Navy Catalina claims sinking large surfaced
submarine 90 miles north Sio early hours. 1
depth charge 650 pounds hit sub. amidships,
another exploded within 10 feet and ship went down
stern first. Second Catalina added 2 more depth charges to oil
patch after submarine had disappeared.
(12) 3 Aircobras strafed solitary barge located Reiss Point
forenoon. 6 Aircobras destroyed 4 small barges early evening
Kelana Harbour, and another 4 at Reiss Point.
(15) Possible submarines sighted 50 miles off Merobe midday.
(20) Motor torpedo boats bombarded enemy positions east of
Torokina night 15th/16th.
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A., 180834Z.)

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18.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.

A/S hunt by F.S. COMMANDANT DROGOU during 17th S.E. of Accra may have been on the U-Boat estimated off coast between Dakar and Cape Palmas and thought possibly to have fired torpedo at F.S. GLOIRE. Reliability of evidence of presence of U-Boat in these respective positions cannot yet be assessed but probably there is only one. Other estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 181432A, 181441A.)

Submarines Attacked.

Sub. attack and sighting summary for 24 hours to 0900Z/18th.

Para. A. (1) U.S.S. WOOLSEY and U.S.S. TRIPPE attacked U-Boat with depth charges and gunfire at 1835Z/16th in 36° 09' N. 00° 50' W.

(2) Aircraft attacked U-Boat, course 130° with depth charges in 33° 55' N. 23° 00' E. at 0655Z/18th.

Para. B. H/4th U.S. Wing attacked A.S.V. contact with depth charges in 46° 23' N. 09° 02' W.

at 0546Z/18th.

Para. C. (1) K/311 obtained A.S.V. contact in 44° 07' N. 10° 08' W. at 2130Z/17th.

(2) Q/311 obtained A.S.V. contact in 44° 05' N. 10° 25' W. at 2125Z/17th.

(3) F.S. COMMANDANT DROGOU made 4 attacks on contact about 0155Z/17th in approx. 04° 25' N. 01° 00' W.

(D.D.I.C., 181035Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

See D.D.I.C. 201009 re para. C (3).

19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

A.M.Cs.

1. (a) The withdrawal of A.M.Cs. is to be accelerated in order to provide crews for escort carriers now completing in U.S.A. CILICIA and CORFU from West Africa, and CHITRAL and ALAUNIA from the East Indies are to be sailed for the U.S.A. as soon as possible. *p. 437*

(b). The three former A.M.Cs. will be converted to troop transports and ALAUNIA will be paid off. CANTON from the East Indies Station will be withdrawn later.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.

2. (a) Convoy J.W.55A was about 180 miles N.N.E. of the Kola Inlet at 0800 today; and, owing to severe weather at Loch Ewe, the sailing from there of Convoy J.W.55B scheduled for today has been postponed 24 hours. Force 1 (Cruiser Covering Force - C.S.10 in BELFAST, NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD) arrived at Kola Inlet this evening from covering convoy J.W.55A.

(b). The air R/C of Alten Fjord today was unsuccessful.

Operation
"Stonewall"

3. C-in C. Plymouth considers that the large west-bound ship attacked by A/C F/502 at 0413A yesterday 120 miles W. by S. of Lands End may have been a blockade-breaker, and at 1345A today he ordered GODAVARI to continue searching for her till midnight. A/C are assisting the search; and Admiralty have directed Coastal Command that the search for blockade-runners is to have priority over all other air operations.

4. L.B.V. 455 sank at her moorings in Langstone Harbour this morning.

South Atlantic.

U/B off
Takoradi.

5. SS. PHEMIUS was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-Boat 2320Z today in 05.01 N. 01.(or 00) 17 W. (off Gold Coast) SS. KINGSWOOD is presumed to have been torpedoed, date and position not known,

/since...

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Sunday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

U/B off
Takoradi.
(Contd.)

since 48 survivors landed 50 miles west of Kotonou p.m. today. Endeavours were made, on receipt of PICT's reported contacts on 17 Dec. (q.v.) to recall these two ships and SS. EEMLAND, F.O.C.W.Africa ordered search for EEMLAND, PHEMIUS and U-Boat by aircraft and by the available escort vessels.

Mediterranean.

6. Last night U.S. P.T.boats on patrol northeast of Bastia report attacking two enemy destroyers with torpedoes. The enemy retired and were intercepted north of Elba by other coastal forces. During these engagements a possible torpedo hit was made on one destroyer. The result of the gun action was not seen.

Adriatic.

7.(a) Coastal force operating from Vis Island (Yugoslavia) last night report sinking a Siebel Ferry, an escort vessel and two E or R-Boats; one M.T.B. sustained slight damage.

(b). 12 Bostons and 24 Baltimores attacked two naval units and a small motor vessel reported off Pasman Island (south of Zara) today, several near misses are claimed on one of the naval units and the motor vessel.

(c). 22 U.S.Warhawks escorted by 18 U.S.Thunderbolts attacked two stationary motor vessels southwest of Split today. They claim a direct hit and near misses on one vessel which was left smoking. A vessel was near missed near Trogia.

(d). TYRIAN and TEAZER patrolled between San Benedetto and Ancona last night, but sighted nothing.

(e). M.T.Bs. captured two German schooners north of Hvar today. They were taken into Bari. There were 12 prisoners.

(f). 24 U.S.Invaders bombed Civitavecchia today and made hits on the docks and railway. A large explosion was caused in the harbour area.

/(ε)...

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Sunday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Adriatic.
(Contd.)

7. (g) It is reported that Partisan landings continue in the area between Primosten and Rogozinca, with the object of infiltrating Partisan forces behind the German position in Split.

Aegean.

8. It appears from secret reports that the Allied mining campaign in the Aegean (see 7th December) is having at least a nuisance value. Sinkings and delays of enemy supply vessels are reported, and there is said to be a serious shortage of fuel and food in Crete. There are indications (20th December) of enemy intensified repair and salvage activity to redress his shortage of shipping.

East Indies.

LE
TRIOMPHANT.

9. The French contre-torpilleur LE TRIOMPHANT which got into difficulties when caught in a typhoon on 2nd December about 800 miles south-east of Diego Garcia arrived at Diego Suarez today in tow of H.M. Tug PRUDENT, escorted by SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA.

Australia & New Zealand.

10. Last night, Allied M.T.Bs. operated off the north east coast of Huon Peninsula (Papua) and sank or destroyed 10 barges.

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

- Group B. The composition, disposition and sailing-date of Group B is under reconsideration.
(2) No ships will be required to leave U.K. before 1st Feb.
(A.C.N.S.(H), 191740A to F.O.C.T., R.A.E.C. E.F)
- Eastern Fleet and Med. re-inforcement. A.M. 241245/Nov. C. in C. W.A. 122329, A.M. 160045 and C. in C. W.A. 172254. It has been decided not at present to allocate A/A sloops to Eastern Fleet.
(2) Four A/A sloops are to be allocated to C. in C. Med. the remainder being retained in your command.
(3) Request you will nominate ships accordingly.
(4) It is confirmed that 8 frigates should be ready to sail for foreign service by 1st Feb.
(D.O.D.(H), 191751A to C. in C. W.A.)

Movements.

KING GEORGE V. Onward route from (C) to (D) 050 degs. 01' N. 022 degs. 30' W. (E) 055 degs. 31' N. 020 degs. 29' W. (F) 055 degs. 29' N. 009 degs. 59' W. thence to Clyde.
(C. in C. W.A. 191546A to KING GEORGE V.)

S/M Movements. Positions of S/M's at 0800A/20 and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.S.191719A, 191931, 200614, 201047A, 201653, 201811)

Operations.

- Bay Patrol. Search for blockade-runners is to have priority over all other air operations.
(A.C.N.S.(H), 190852A to H.Q.C.C., C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. W.A., S.B.N.O. Azores.)
- My P.C.S. 048 degs. 45' N. 017 degs. 11' W. 298 degs. 11 knots. Nothing sighted. Request instructions.
(GODAVARI, 191200A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
- Amend position of suspected westbound blockade-breaker to 049 degs. 39' N. 008 degs. 36' W. at 0413A/18th, speed 15 knots maximum.
(2) Alter direction of sweep to 290 degs. forthwith and continue until 2359A to-day. If no further information by that time proceed to join O.S.62.
(3) Aircraft will be searching in your vicinity. Any suspicious activity including aircraft flares is to be investigated.
(4) My 181139 and your 191200 refer.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 191345A to GODAVARI.)

My /...

19.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Bay Patrol.
(Contd.)

My 181400A.

All evidence so far available appears to confirm presence of one large westbound ship which was attacked by aircraft F/502 at 0413A/18th in amended position 049 degs. 39' N.

008 degs. 36' W.

(2) Vessel reported by aircraft V/58 at 0244A/18th was probably same ship, position signalled being in error.

(3) GODAVARI in approx. 049 degs. 54' N. 008 degs. 36' W. at 0423A sighted flares dropped by F/502 during attack referred to in para.1. GODAVARI was illuminated by E/502 at 0423 but not attacked by any aircraft.

(4) Tug EMPIRE JOHN and L.C.T. 372 were in same area early on 18th.

Former reports being sighted by aircraft but not attacked.

No report from L.C.T. 372 yet available.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 191401A to Admty.)

(1) SERAPH. Position at 192000, 048 degs. 05' 012 degs. 54', 049 degs. 10', 012 degs. 54' thence 049 degs. 29', 012 degs. 25' thence 090 degs. daily advance 140 miles.

(2) Hospital ship LADY NELSON 045 degs. 55' 013 degs. 30' 000 degs. 13 knots.

(3) Hospital ship ATLANTIS 044 degs. 33' 012 degs. 40', 000 degs. 14 knots.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 191452A to Admty.)

This is C.T.G.21.15's 191613. Position 44.22 N. 20.45 W. speed 15, course 292, at 191442Z to make air search 240 miles to Northwest dawn 20th, blockade-runner objective.

(Comnaveu, 192136Z to Admty.)

Operations
"Manacle"
and
"Hardtack".

Operations "Manacle" and "Hardtack" will not take place tonight.
(V.A.Dover, 190948A to Admty.)

Operation
F.V.

Owing to severe weather at Loch Ewe sailing of J.W.55 B is postponed 24 hours.

(R.A.D. H.F. 191022A to H.F.)

My 181116. Postponed 24 hours.

(R.A.D. H.F. 191023A to N.O.I.C.Faeroes)

Scapa arrival VIGILANT at 1145A.

(A.C.O.S.191303A to N.O.I.C.Faeroes)

A.M. 181631 November paras. 1 and 2.

British submarines will now only occupy Area 2.

(2) Request you will arrange for Russian submarines not to operate West of 22 degs. 47' W.

(3) From discussions between C. in C. H.F. and the Russian C. in C. it is understood that the Russians can keep 5 submarines on patrol increasing to 8 during convoy periods.

(A.C.N.S.(H), 191405A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

R/C of Alten Fjord unsuccessful today owing to weather.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 191414A to Admty.)

Intend /...

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Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation F.V. (Contd.) Intend sailing group 3 consisting of EMPIRE STALWART, FORT POPLAR and FORT COLUMBIA on arrival of escorts of ? R.A.55 A White Sea Section.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 191536A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

Kola Inlet arrived Force one.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 192058A to H.F.)

S/M Patrols. STUBBORN is to leave patrol as requisite to pass through 064 degs. 05' 003 degs. 44' at 2243A/22nd, thence by route Orange to arrive Lerwick a.m. 24th.
(Capt. (S) 9, 191113A to S/M's)

Positions of submarines at 0800A/20th and movements for the following 24 hours.

(A) SIRDAR, VENTURER, STUBBORN, SATYR, O.15, as in my 161734.
(F.O.S.191719A to Admty.)

Negative patrol. P.C.S. at 2100/19th 062 degs. 19' N. 004 degs. 34' E. 238 degs. 6 knots. Weather and position 4752 5046 6205.

(SATYR, 192010Z to F.O.S.)

Coastal Force Patrols. M.L's 107 and 104 at number 7 buoy, E.T.D. 1745, E.T.R. 0815/20.
M.L's 141 and 203 at Bullock Bank, E.T.D. 1615, E.T.R. 0945/20.
(V.A. Dover, 191643A to Admty.)

DUCKWORTH and BLUE JACKET. Intend to convene a Board of Enquiry at Liverpool on 23rd December to consider the incident at sea between DUCKWORTH and U.S. Ship BLUE JACKET at 0345 on 16th December.
DUCKWORTH is proceeding to Liverpool now and BLUE JACKET is already here. Request the concurrence of American Authorities may be obtained for necessary witnesses to give evidence before this Board. S.O.3rd E.G's 160425 refers.
(C. in C. W.A. 191838A to Admty.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy Convoys from Stavanger. B.2 report of convoy sails from Stavanger at 0600Z/19th southbound consisting of 2 5,000 - 7,000 tons and 4 2,000 - 5,000 tons ships loaded.
Northbound 2 ships 5,000 - 7,500 tons loaded. Both escorts unknown.
(F.O.S.191043A to S/M's)

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.U-Boats.U-Boat
Report.

By D/F at 2338Z/18.
U-Boat, possibly outward bound, estimated within 45 miles of 60 degs. 40' N. 04 degs. 40' E.
(D.D.I.C. 190155A to S/M's on patrol N. of 51 degs. N.)

U-Boat
attacked.

Doubtful sound contact at 1300Z latitude 55.46 longitude 07.48. Attacked with depth charges. (C.T.G. 21.6 192010 to Admty.)

Technical."Gamma"
Search.

A.M.091730A. Proposed plan for "Gamma" search is concurred in generally but it is recommended that all reference to specific areas by omitted as well as para.9.
(C. in C. W.A. 191845 to Admty.)

Casualties and Defects.THOR
Sunk.

Sailed Rescue Tug ABEILLE IV at 1740/18th to assist SS. THOR, bound Mersey to Fremington, in distress through weather in 225 degs. St. Anns Head 3-1/2 miles. Ship subsequently capsized and sunk. 6 survivors landed by ANGLE Life-Boat, 1 by Examination Vessel. ABEILLE IV returned. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 190031A to Admty.)

Unknown
Ship.

Following from Lands End Radio. Intercept 0312 G.M.T. de WNAO to Harbour Master in Gourock. Our situation is bad if tugs are not coming we can go aground 0320Z Master.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 190419A to Admty.)

EMPEROR.

My 190104A. EMPEROR returned with engine defects.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 190506A to Admty.)

L.C.F.38.

My 182200. L.C.F. 38 refloated and entering Bridlington Harbour for temporary repairs. (F.O. Humber, 191108 to F.O. Tyne.)

JAMES FENI-
MORE COOPER.

In distress in hurricane vicinity Cape Wrath and working north 134. Holds filled with water, unable to control ship, danger of going ashore. Master.
(Wick Radio, 191255Z to A.C.O.S. Lyness)
Following received. S.O.S. JAMES FENIMORE COOPER in distress in hurricane in vicinity of Cape Wrath from BRITISH HARMONY. (Burnham Radio, 191414)

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Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects. - Contd.

- WATCHMAN. Proceed to Belfast for repairs to dome.
S.O.B.1 181925 refers.
(C. in C. W.A. 191514A to WATCHMAN)
- PORCHESTER
CASTLE. My 172130. PORCHESTER CASTLE has arrived
at Greenock with defective back brick work
in both boilers. Estimate repairs will take
48 hours.
(Capt. D. Greenock, 191528 to C. in C. W.A.)
- ZEEHOND. Will pass through position ZP 1801Z/20th.
S.O.A. 8 knots.
(ZEEHOND, 191721Z to F.O.S.)
- VANESSA. VANESSA returning to harbour with defective
steering-engine.
(HESPERUS, 191740Z to C. in C. W.A.)
- HARVEY C.
MILLER. Position 540 miles 051 degs. from first
straggler R/V R. Arrive 0400/20th.
(HARVEY C. MILLER, 191900Z to Ad. Liverpool)
Intercept 250 G.M.T. HARVEY C. MILLER. Require
assistance to Belfast or anchorage. Gyro
failed, magnetic compass also unreliable. Innistrhull
unread miles 192040Z ends.
(Ormesby Radio, 192203 to N.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth)

Shipping and Convoys.

- U.C.8. Sailed EMPEROR and SEARCHER in U.C.8 to comply
with A.M.111345A as amended by B.A.R.M.
SEARCHER. Washington's 131454.
(N.O.I.C.Greenock, 190104 to Admty.)
- U.R.8. Sailed Task Force 21.6 in CHARLES LAWRENCE
plus SIMS, DONNELL, REEVES, HOPPING, DANIEL T.
GRIFFIN for U.R.8.
(U.S.E.C.Londonderry, 190700Z to C. in C. W.A.)
- H.X.270. My 172202Z. Preference is to be given to A/S
protection until it is considered convoy is
clear of possible position of U-Boat referred
to in Admiralty 190437A.
(C. in C. W.A. 190709Z to Escort H.X.270)
- S.L.142/
M.K.S.33. Assume state Yoke. My 061842 refers.
(C. in C. W.A. 190846A to Escort S.L.142/M.K.S33)

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Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys. - Contd.

- T.U.5. Intend sailing C.T.F.69 in NEVADA with NELSON, GLENNON, JEFFERS, RHIND and EARLE at 0005A/21st to R/V in accordance with Admiralty 152115A. (N.O.I.C.Belfast, 190925A to C. in C. W.A.)
- A.M.182007. Intend sailing GEORGIA, FORT LARAMIE and POWDER RIVER 1600A/20th to R/V in position B at 1100A/21st, thence in accordance with A.M.152115A. (N.O.I.C.Liverpool, 191130A to Admty.)
Intend sailing U.S. destroyer DORAN at 1000A/20th to arrive Tail o' the Bank 1600A/20th. My 171842A refers. (N.O.I.C.Belfast, 191200A to N.O.I.C.Greenock)
- S.D.47A. Sailed at 0917A/19th. My 190612 refers. E.T.A. 0201A/22nd. (A.C.I.C. 191016A to N.O.I.C. Greenock)
- S.C.149. (1) S.C.149. (2) December 15th. (3) 1200Z/20. (4) 7½ knots. (7) 35 ships including rescue ship.
9 Tankers sailed.
(D.T.D. 191048A to C. in C. W.A.)
- Names and Destinations.
(D.T.D. 191755A)
- Balloons in Coasters. A.M.151331A. Concur in suggestion for P.W. convoys but it would seem unnecessary to make any change in the case of W.P. convoys. (C. in C. Plymouth, 191121A to Admty.)
- O.S.62/
K.M.S.36. Commodores R/V as in your 191100Z is being broadcast. (C. in C. W.A. 191453A to Escorts O.S.62/K.M.S.36)
P.C.S. at 1600Z, 053 degs. 18' N. 013 degs. 10' W. 215 degs. 11 knots. PIMPERNEL and 13 stragglers from O.S.62 in this vicinity. CRAGPOLE, OMEGA 14 and 20 miles to Northward. FLYING DALE in 054 degs. 06' N. 012 degs. 20' W. at 1000Z returning to Clyde.
Weather 7468 0268.
(B.1, 192140Z to C. in C. W.A. (R) E.G.40)
Comdre's Section Convoy is to reduce speed as convenient to enable section escorted by MOYOLA to overtake. MOYOLA 191810 refers.
(2) One or more escorts are to be detailed to proceed Comdre's noon R/V 20th to collect stragglers.
(C. in C. W.A. 192336A to Escorts O.S.62/K.M.S.36)
A/C will be assisting to round up stragglers tomorrow.
(C. in C. W.A. 192339A to Escorts O.S.62/K.M.S.36, O.N.S.25, O.N.216.)

A.T.79 /...

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys. - Contd.

- A.T.79. AQUITANIA arrived Clyde.
(F.O.I.C.Greenock, 191526A)
- U.R.103. Escorts detailed MAZURKA and VELETA.
(F.O.I.C.Liverpool, 191614A to Admty.)
- H.X.271. (1) H.X.271. (2) 15th December.
(3) 1200Z/21. (4) 9 knots. (7) 54 ships
including rescue ship.
4 tankers sailed.
(D.T.D. 191634A to C. in C. W.A.)
- C.U.9. (1) C.U.9. (2) December 15th.
(3) 1800Z/21. (4) 13 knots. (7) 17 ships.
14 tankers sailed.
(D.T.D.191636A to C. in C. W.A.)
- O.N.S.25 and O.N.16. Keep a good look-out for other shipping in your
area. Dimmed Navigation Lights are to be
burned during hours of darkness tonight.
(C. in C. W.A. 191925Z to O.N.S.25 and
Stragglers)
O.N.S.25 and O.N.216. Dimmed navigation
lights are to be burned during hours of darkness tonight.
All ships and stragglers are being informed and ordered to
keep a good look out for other shipping in your area.
(C. in C. W.A. 192025A to Escorts.)
- D.F.17. My 171142A. Sailed.
(F.O.I.C.Aberdeen 192153A to A.I.G.188, N.O.I.C.
Faeroes.)

19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

U.S. movements. U.S.S. CHASE departed. U.S.S. NIBLACK arrived. (Gib. C.C.O., 190140A to Adnty.)

? U/B. Possibly periscope sighted 0905A 35.19 N. 09.09 course 000, proceeded on course. (A/C 1F09, 190830 to R.A.F. Gib.)

T.G. 27.4 This should be referred to as 190130 from Comnorseafron to C. in C. Lant for action. Intend sail unless otherwise directed T.G. 27.4 U.S.S. BROOME, CROATAN, McCORMICK, NICHOLSON E.T.D. Casa. 1500/19. (Comnaveu, 190906 to Adnty.) My 190130 sailed for Norfolk. (C.M.S.F., 191557 to C. in C. U.S. Atlantic Fleet)

PHINEAS BANNING repairs. Intend sailing PHINEAS BANNING to Ponta Delgada where repairs can be carried out escorted by NORTHERN WAVE. NORTHERN WAVE to return Horta unless other orders are received. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 191018Z to F.O. Gib., (R) Adnty., C. in C. W.A., N.O.I.C. Horta.)

CALDWELL, CHELSEA, RICHMOND. Arrival Horta 0951Z/19th. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 191114Z to Adnty., (R) F.O. Gibraltar.)

KING GEORGE V, escorts. ULSTER, ROCKET, GRENVILLE are to detach at 2000A/19th to proceed with despatch to Horta to fuel. (2) When 100 miles clear ULSTER is to report E.T.A. Horta and amount of fuel required. (3) Further orders for destroyers follow. (4) S.B.N.O. Azores pass to S.B.N.O. Horta. (F.O. Gibraltar. 191119A to ULSTER, ROCKET, LONDON, GRENVILLE, KING GEORGE V, (R) Adnty., C. in C. Med., S.B.N.O. Azores.) All positions N. and W. P.C. and S. KING GEORGE V 042° 28' 023° 30', 000°, 22. ULSTER 041° 01' 024° 23', 235°, 19. E.T.A. Horta 1101A/20th GRENVILLE, ROCKET in company each ship requires 300 tons fuel. Weather 6758 1462, sea 24. (ULSTER, 192230A to F.O.C. Gib., N.O.I.C. Horta, (R) Adnty., C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C., N.O.I.C. Azores, C. in C. H.F.)

EMPIRE JOHN. I have already tried to contact EMPIRE JOHN by W/T without success. Your 181958 refers. (F.O. Gibraltar, 191208A to C. in C. Plymouth, (R) Adnty., C. in C. W.A.)

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.ISIS,
ANTHONY,
REDPOLE.

ISIS and ANTHONY are to return to Gibraltar with all convenient despatch. REDPOLE is to return independently to Gibraltar on completion of fuel. ISIS 191147 refers.
(F.O. Gibraltar, 191508A to ISIS, ANTHONY, REDPOL)
Departure 19th ISIS, ANTHONY, REDPOLE.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 191715Z to Adnty., (R) F.O. Gibraltar.)

ISIS and ANTHONY position (based on fix at 1800) course and speed at 2001A/19th 038° 17' N. 027° 37' W., 099°, 20.
Weather report.
(ISIS, 191830Z to F.O. Gib.)

GAMBIA.

Arrived Horta 1458/19th.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 191551Z.)

O.S. 61.

Sailed LEITH, SANDWICH, ANCHUSA escorting Gib. section.
(F.O.C. Gib., 191743 to F.O.C.W.Af.)

Convoy
X.K. 13.
Flight "Q".

Your 151635, 171820 and 181841.
1. Request you will delay sailing of X.K.12 pending a decision on the sailing of Flight "Q".
2. In view of para. 1 of your 181841 propose that 3 ships of 14th M/S Flotilla be sailed as soon as convenient to fuel at Ponta Delgada and then escort ships referred to in A.M. 101740 to U.K. (D.O.D.(H), 191809A, 201935A to F.O. Gib., Info. C. in C. Med., S.B.N.O. Azores.)

CEVENNES,
ST. LOUIS.

Intend sail to Dakar 1600A escorted by ASPIRANT BRUN (Senior) (3 corrupt groups) and Chasseur 62 French standard coastal route, convoy will call at Agadir and Port Etienne to fuel escorts.
(C.M.S.F., 191827A.)

SUFFREN.

Intend to sail French cruiser SUFFREN for Dakar 201200. All times A.
(C.M.S.F., 191831A to Comar Dakar, (R) F.O.C.W.A., F.O.C. Gib., C. in C. Med., Adnty.)

BIDEFORD.

P.C. and S. 1959Z/19th, 025° 57' N. 016° 34' W., 052°, 7 knots.
(BIDEFORD, 192015Z to F.O.C. Gib., (R) N.O.I.C. W.Af.)

19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

PHEMIUS
torpedoed
19th.

Following received by Freetown W/T. SSSS de
SS. MAYCREST (GNBV) 05.01 N. 01.17 W. torpedoed.
(Burnham Radio No T.O.O. Recd. 192338 G.M.T. to
Adnty.)

W.D. Note. It has been established that PHEMIUS
and not MAYCREST was torpedoed.
(See F.O.C.W.Af., 200145Z.)

Local
Escort
vessels.

Present dtate of local escort vessels as requested
by your 161245 (not to Admiralty) is as follows
(details).
(B.N.L.O. Pointe Noire, 190945A to F.O.I.C.W.Af.,
(R) Adnty.)

Patrol.

Departure 18th Dec. Italian cruiser D'AOSTA on
ocean patrol.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 191225Z to (U.S.) Cdr. 4th
U.S. Fleet.)

Operation
"Tabarin".

Your 101911 reference Operation "Tabarin". Presume
Marchesi is bringing necessary charts of
Antarctic, none held here.
(N.O.I.C. Falkland Isles, 191234Z to Adnty.)

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19.12.1943.

Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

- D.K.A.8. Arrived, escorted by LULWORTH, GENISTA.
(N.C.S.O.Aden 190735A.)
- K.M.F.27. Owing to delay of K.M.S.27 and in order to reduce consequent delay in M.K.F.it is desirable that MALOJA and OTRANTO should arrive Algiers at least 24 hours ahead of K.M.F.27.
Para. 2. To implement this ULSTER, ROCKET and GRENVILLE are to be detached at 2000A/19th to fuel at Horta. Your 171550. They proceed to R/V with K.M.F.27 a.m. 21st and escort MALOJA and OTRANTO to Algiers at best speed.
Para. 3. Request you will issue the necessary instructions.
(C. in C.Med. 190932A to F.O.C.Gib. (R) Admty. Com. Algiers.)
- U.G.S.26. Onward route. Escorts A. JOHAN MAURITS (S.O.), CAMPION, DEPTFORD, FOWEY, FRISO, LINARIA.
B. to Bone tug ORIANA. C. to Bizerta ULSTER QUEEN, BLENCATHRA, HAMBLEDON. D. to Malta RINALDO, BRAVE.
(C. in C.Med. 190937A.)
- K.M.S.35. Escorts A. DART, GLOXINIA, PRIMULA, ROSARIO, SOUTHERN MAID, WOLBOROUGH (?INVER).
B. to Bone tug MINDFUL. C. to Bizerta COLOMBO. .
D. to Malta WATERWITCH (?due) to proceed at best speed after Augusta R/V.
(C. in C.Med. 191037A to F.O.I.C. Gib.)
- Air reports. M.S. 24167. A.300 19th Daily Opsum 235 19th. 18th 7 Beaufighters (R.P.) scored cannon strikes on a beached 50 foot caique at Cape Farthenos (Naxos) and wrecked barges in Yanni Bay (Paros).
(H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 191048Z.)
Note by A.M.C.S. Delay due to message being recd. undecypherable.
- M.S. 24172 A.F. 256 19th N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 301.
N.A.T.A.F. 18th 24 U.S. Invaders Terracina. 42 x 500 hits supply dump on beach. 6 U.S. Warhawks escort 9 U.S. Thunderbolts offensive patrol Yugoslavian coastal areas. 350 foot schooner strafed at Trogia with unobserved results.
N.A.C.A.F. 18th 14 Spitfires picked up Italian refugees in small boat 15 miles northeast Brindisi.
(H.Q.N.A.A.F. 191735A.)
- FELIXSTOWE. Mined and sunk in 093 Cape Ferro (Sardinia) 3 miles. No casualties. *Sunk on 18th see 192320*
(C. in C.Med. 191048A to Admty.)
- A.B.25A. Sailing telegram (6 ships). 2. 1100Z/20th.
6. PLYM, SUTLEJ, TRENT to Bombay BENGAL to Hormuz.
(N.C.S.O.Aden 191114Z to Admty.)

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.

N.S.F.10. Arrived (6 ships).
(N.O.I.C. Naples 191240A to C. in C.Med.)

Joint Army I/49628 19 Dec. 394113.
R.A.F.Intel. 24 hours to 1000/19 all times G.M.T.
Appreciation. 1. Ph. R/C enemy shipping in Aegean 18 (details). 2. Visual R/C shipping. 18th 0825 hours about 80 miles north Ras El Tin one U-Boat surfaced heading south east. Comment. Possibly the U-Boat 200/250 foot which had left Salamis Naval Dockyard by a.m. 13th (see para. one appreciation 14th.)
3. C.X. reports SS. SONJA (1650 tons) sunk 10th whilst on passage to Dardanelles and Roumania. See para. one appreciation 10th.
5. G.A.F. activity. 18 December. 5 Ju.88s active on R/C. One making extensive meteorological survey area Athens - Kythera - Benghazi 120 miles north of Misurata - Navarino. Another claimed to have forced submarine to submerge south west of Cyprus and was later off south east Cape Sidero.
6. Sailing further troop and/or supply convoy for Samos and/or Dodecanese probably including DRACHE still believed imminent. Reliable source reports serious food and fuel shortage Crete. Recent mining Suda and Candia believed to have increased enemy shipping and maintenance difficulties this direction. Appreciation Kastelorizo unchanged.
(C. in C.M.E. 191400B.)

U/B report. A/C reported sighting a probable periscope track in 42° 38' N. 15° 35' E. at 1326/19th.
(N.L.O.Number 1 M.O.R.U. 191614A to F.O.T.A.L.I.
(R) PENN, S.N.O. A.L(E) TEAZER, N.O.I.C. Bari, Capt. D.24, C.F.W.)

Bulgarian S.O.(I) Istanbul reports (begins)
Curfew. Bulgarian B'casts 0600C have this morning from Varna declared an all day curfew. (Details). Reason not known here. N.L.O.Black Sea informed. T.O.O. 191210 (Ends.)
(C.O.I.S. Alexandria 191631B to D.N.I.)

K.M.F.28 Our present plans for K.M.F.28 are as follows (de-
M.K.F.28 tails). 2. P.S.T.O. Middle East 141120 para. 4
X.I.F. 8. composition of M.K.F. 28, X.I.F. 8 and M.K.F.29
(details).
(D.S.T. 191837A 231236B.)

ARROW. Greek C. in C. informs me that ARROW has been offered to and accepted by Greek Navy. He requests information A. when she will be ready. B. whether she will have been reconditioned as regards hull and machinery and modernized as regards equipment.
(C. in C.Levant 191935B to Adnty. (R) C. in C.Med. F.O.T.A.L.I.)

/TORBAY...

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

TORBAY.

Remain in Symi - Rhodes area until dusk 20th and then proceed to patrol off North coast of Crete in accordance with W.D. 3.

2. Cancel my 191452 (N.T. in W.D.) Make your presence known at some time whilst in Symi area at your discretion.

(Capt. S.1 191941B to TORBAY, (R) 1st 3/M F. C. in C. Levant.)

S.N.F.10.

Request N.O.I.C. Naples will sail 1 ship to Algiers 1 ship to Oran and 4 ships to Oran for U.K. at 1630/20th. Escorts PLUNKETT (U.S.) U.S. LUDLOW, U.S. BENSON, U.S. GLEAVES U.S. WAINWRIGHT to Oran.

B. PORTENT, PREVAIL to Bizerta. C. U.S.S. STRIVE SCOUT (corrupt group) SYMBOL Bizerta to Oran. (F.O.W.It. 192209 to N.O.I.C. Naples.)

SURF.

You are not to cross 035° 50' before 0501/21st. (Capt. S.1 192217B to SURF (R) TORBAY, SOKOL.)

Med. Situation report
No. 253.

1. During the night of 17th/18th Dec. TYRIAN and TEAZER carried out sweep between Durazzo and Dubrovnik but saw nothing.

2. FELIXSTOWE was mined and sunk a.m. 18th in 093° Cape Ferro Sardinia 3 miles. No casualties. 4 other mines have been swept in this area.

3. (P.59) UNTIRING report having sunk 2500 tons ammunition ship during patrol off South Coast of France.

4. (P.57) UNIVERSAL report sinking 5000 tons tanker in convoy on 18th whilst on patrol in Gulf of Genoa.

(C. in C. Med. 192320A.)

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U-Boat Dispositions. (C. in C. E.F. 190304 to E.F. 458Y)

O.24 Refit. D.S.O.24 due Aden 28th for onward passage through Med. to U.S.A. East Coast for refit. (2) In view of her mechanical state consider it necessary to allow for a possible requirement of 14 days at Gibraltar before passage across the Atlantic.

(3) Admiralty is requested to inform C. in C. Med. of her destination and arrangements for onward passage from Gib. (C. in C. E.F. 190344Z to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med. C. in C. Levant, Capt.(S) 1, Capt.(S) 4, S.O.(S) Colombo, F.O.R.S.C.A., F.O.Gibraltar, C. in C. Neth. Forces in East.)

SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA attack on U-Boat 13th Dec. report. Following is repetition of further report by SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA of attack on Asdic contact in 011 degs. 20' S. 056 degs. 50' E. on 13 Dec. My 140517⁴ refers. (Begins). My 130855 (N.T. in W.R.). Attack was started against definite submarine contact above 110 yards wide and deeper (?). Two min 32 sec. after explosion of first pattern we heard a muffled prolonged explosion then 300 yards from pattern a slowly moving patch of huge bubbles of about 70 yards diameter followed by a trail of bubbles about 300 yards long and 20 wide.

During the second attack noticed near oily track huge and deep volume of dark brown coloured water. Contact was immediately regained after each attack and suddenly lost only during third run in. I stopped engines two miles away and waited one hour keeping watch for Hydrophone effect without effect. T.O.O.150623 (Ends.)

(C. in C. E.F. 190445Z to Admty.)
/ Bi-weekly U-Boat disposition No.4.

C.J.9. Arrival PATNA escorting C.J.9. (N.O.I.C.Vizagapatam, 190500Z)
(1) Vizagapatam portion. (2) 0050/19th.
(3) SHOREHAM, POONA, BERAR.
(N.C.S.O. Vizagapatam, 190516Z to Admty.)

A.B.24A. Arrived A.B.24. A with BOXER escorted by ROEBUCK, KALE, DERG, BATTLER, ROTHERHAM and RAPID. (N.C.S.O. Bombay, 190813Z)

J.C.30/...

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. - Contd.

J.C.30. (1) Sailing telegram (13 ships).
(2) 0828Z/19th.
(6) IPSWICH, ORISSA.
(N.C.S.O. Colombo, 190828Z to Admty.)

S.E.A.Air A.C.519. 19 Dec. Daily Opsum No.644.
Report. Ref. Daily Opsum No.642 18 Dec. should read
No.643.
Outstanding Reports. 14 U.S.A.A.F.16 Dec.
2 U.S. Mitchells (B.25) sweep South China Sea.
One small freighter sunk one small freighter damaged 2 U.S.
Mitchells (B.25) sweep South China Sea. No shipping sighted.
One A/C bombed Kengwa. Area Canton fires started.
(H.Q.S.E.A.A.C. 190900Z to Air Min.)

ERITREA. Colombo 19th. Arrivals 0600Z Italian Ship
ERITREA 0730Z.
(F.O. Ceylon, 191253Z).

A.M.C's It has been decided that withdrawal of A.M.C's
acceleration must be accelerated to provide crews for C.V.E's
of now completing in U.S.
withdrawal. (2) F.O.C.W.Af. is requested to sail CILICIA
and CORFU as soon as practicable for the U.S.
port of destination to be arranged later where
ships will be reduced to C. & M.
(3) C. in C. E.R. is requested similarly to sail CHITRAL for
U.S.
(4) Consideration is being given to where these vessels are
to be converted to troop transports. If this has to be
undertaken in the U.K. merchant navy crews will be provided to
steam them back for disarmament and fitting out.
(5) ALAUNIA is to be sailed to U.K. at earliest possible date
for paying off.
(6) CANTON will remain temporarily on East Indies station
for transporting naval personnel till a trooper is available
to replace her. Possibility of sending out a merchant navy
crew to enable her present crew to proceed to U.S.A. is being
investigated.
(2nd S.L.191556A to C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.) F.O.C.W.Af.
(R) B.A.M.R. C. in C. S.A.)
Reply from B.A.M.R. 2122522 see America West Indies.

LE TRIOM- Arrived LE TRIOMPHANT in tow PRUDENT escorted
PHANT. by SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA.
(N.O.I.C. Diego Suarez, 191731Z to Admty.)

HIGHWAY /...

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. - Contd.

HIGHWAY,
EASTWAY.

C. in C. E.F.'s (S.E.A.C.) 171203 (Hush).
HIGHWAY is on passage and expected to arrive
Port Said 21st.

(2) C. in C. Levant is requested to inform
C. in C. E.F.(S.E.A.C.) of arrangements for
onward routeing.

(3) EASTWAY is expected to leave U.K. mid Jan.1944 and arrive
Bombay end of Feb.

(D.O.D.(F), 191924A to C. in C. E.F.(S.E.A.C.), C. in C. Levant
Info: C. in C. Med.)

H.C.15.

Sailing telegram.

(2) 2100Z/19th. (6) KATHIAWAR.
(N.C.S.O. Calcutta, 192108Z to Admty.)

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19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

Captain A.M. 302111 Nov. B.A.M.R. 021432, A.M. 091954
Class and F.O.I.C. N.I's 131235 none to all - Captain
Frigates. class frigates RETALLICK, ROWLEY, RUPERT,
Laying up. STOCKHAM, SEYMOUR, SPRAGGE, STAYNER, INMAN,
NARBROUGH, WALDEGRAVE, WHITAKER, HOSTE, MOORSOM
and subject to para. 2(b) below M.C.F.'s
PITCAIRN and ST. HELENA are being sailed to U.K.
upon completion manned by runner crews. These ships will be
put into reserve temporarily. Arrangements.
(D.O.D.(H) 190040A.)

Sub. Cominch's 182047 (repetition).
attack (Comnavu, 190138 to Admty.)
and
sighting
summary.

A.T.81 D/F of transmissions on series one of a message
(MAURETANIA) at 0654Z, 0718Z, 0724Z and 0731Z indicate a
U/B. U/Boat in your vicinity which may have reported
you.
(D.D.I.C., 190855A to A.T.81, Info. C. in C.W.A.
H.Q.C.C., A.C.I.C., Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

ARETHUSA. Norfolk arrived Dec. 18th ARETHUSA for working
up.
(N.S.H.Q. 191307Z to Admty.)

N.S.H.Q. (N.S.H.Q. 191350Z.)
S/M
Estimate.

S.C.149 You may encounter homeward bound German blockade
German running ships whilst on passage. Independent
blockade merchant ships are to be treated with suspicion
runners. but due caution to be observed when closing to
investigate as ships probably heavily armed.
(C. in C.C.N.A. 191405 to Ships escorting S.C.149
(R) N.S.H.Q., F.O.N.F., GEORGETOWN, LINOOLN.)

U.S.S/M (Cominch, 191505.)
Estimate.

French Following is repetition of C. in C.A.F.091531
S/Ms. referred to in para. 6 of my 181937. From
C. in C. A.F. To Cominch (R) C. in C. Med.
Reply to last sentence your 222148.
At present inside Metiterranean there are 6
operational French submarines all of which are employed under
C. in C. Med. for patrol and clandestine landing operations,
off south coast France.

/This...

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Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

French
S/Ms.
(Contd.)

This does not include LA(?PEIE) sailing shortly for U.S.A.

2. In consequence of Corsican operation in which French submarine CASABLANCA played notable part French desire to keep as many submarines as possible in active operations and I agree.

In spite of maintenance difficulties 3 were on patrol last week.

3. French state submarine AMAZONE, ARGO and GLORIEUX are now at Bermuda. Am not fully informed of C.C.S. intentions for GLORIEUX and ARGO. If, however, they are leaving Bermuda for overhaul and it is intended to return ACHIMEDE to Mediterranean for operation there will be strong grounds for pressing French to release submarine from operations here for training use as desired.

4. Only other repairable submarines are CENTAURE for A/S training Dakar area (?ARSOUL) and (?ATALANTE) out of action at Casablanca, VESTALE and ANTIOPE out of action at Oran. If project for getting 2 Italian submarines to Freetown area materializes it should be possible to send CENTAURE to Bermuda later.

(B.A.D. 191507Z to Admty.)

LINCOLN
information.

You may sight IRISH ELM Eire Westbound IRISH FIR Eire Eastbound p.m. 20th.
(N.S.H.Q., 191607Z to LINCOLN, GEORGETOWN, S.B.N.O. W.At. Admty.)

Homing of
"Monsters"

Com. 10th Fleet's 181823. It is difficult to see how this can be arranged in practice since apparently C. in C. C.N.A. and F.O.N.F. would have to obtain sanction of C.E.S.F. before ordering "Monsters" to Home aircraft.

2. It is observed that "Monsters" are regularly covered by aircraft under my control although only the movements of those entering and leaving Halifax are controlled by me.
(C. in C.C.N.A. 191646A to N.S.H.Q. (R) Admty., C. in C.W.A. F.O.N.F., A.O.C. in C. E.A.C., Com. 10th Fleet, C. and R.)

French
Vessels
responsibility
for overhaul
and repairs
materials.

Your 151625. Final reply cannot be made pending full consideration of supply problems involved, but hope to let you have our views shortly. C. in C. Med. 151252, will also be dealt with in final reply.
(A.C.N.S.(F), 191649A to B.A.D.)

Italian
and French
S/Ms.

Para. 11 of my 181937. Adml. King concurs.
2. The Americans hope that we may give a reply to the proposals made in my above quoted message by 22nd. since they must start moving submarines now operating in the Pacific.
(B.A.D. 191721Z to Admty., Info.C. in C.Med.)

19.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

H.X.269. Average speed 9.3 knots off Oversay at 0830Z/15.
All arrived.
(D.T.D. 191723A to Connav. N.S.H.Q.)

S.C.148. Average speed 7.9 knots. Off Oversay at
1530Z/15. All arrived.
(D.T.D.191727A to Connav, N.S.H.Q.).

EVADNE. Your 231748 Nov. to Admty. only A/S Yacht
EVADNE is re-allocated to C. in C. Mediterranean
and will be based at Gibraltar.
2. Request she be sailed as convenient for
Gibraltar via Azores.
(D.O.D.(F) to S.B.N.O. W.At., C. in C. Med.,
F.O. Gibraltar, S.B.N.O. Azores.)

SEARCHER. A.M. 151919 (Hush) para. 2(a) SEARCHER is not
now required at Gibraltar.
2. Request you will sail SEARCHER to U.K. as
soon as ready escorted as convenient by
frigates. Your 131845Z refers.
(D.O.D.(H) 191814A to B.A.D.)

R.Adm. Personal for Adml. King from 1st S.L.
Kauffman. Appreciation of the valuable services rendered
Rear-Admiral Kauffman while President of the
Allied A/S Survey Board.
(1st S.L. 191912Z to Cominch.)

Sub. Para. A. Aircraft attacked Sub. 14.20 N.
attack 66.59 W. 191630. PBM attacked Sub. course
and 030° 13.38 N. 66.32 W. 190125 A/A fire.
sighting Para. D. Surface craft attacked sound contact
summary. 28.15 N. 86.38 W. 190800. All times Z.
(Cominch, 192025 to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest 2. Previous night (18th) possible Submarine
Serial located by Aircraft 40 miles South Cape St.
No.698 George.
Dec. 18th. 3. Same time patrol Liberator bombed and
believed sank with direct hit with 1,000 lb
bomb largest of 3 small tanker type ships
accompanied by 2 unidentified vessels 50 miles
North Cape Gloucester heading east.
7. Twenty three Mitchells dropped 26 tons 300 lb bombs

/barge...

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No.698
Dec.18th.
(Contd.)

barge and Supply Base Borgen Bay also strafed from minimum altitude mid morning. Excellent coverage obtained. Few barges, 1 possible small naval craft observed in target area.
9. Southbound Submarine sighted by Navy Catalina Northern entrance Vitia Strait early hours.
15. Three Liberators conducting midday armed R/C North West New Guinea-Banda Sea midday 17th hit jetty area (eight corrupt groups) Later attacked Utarw Aerodrome near Kasmana also unsuccessfully bombed 1 of 3 small ships observed Kamrau Bay same vicinity and lastly bombed? enemy occupied village Trangan Island in Aroe Group. One small vessel observed stationary off Northeast Aroe Islands.
16. Two R.A.A.F. Catalinas on darkness strike same date struck waterfront Taberhane exploding probable ammunition dump.
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 190500)

U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 191406A, 191407A.)

Submarines Attacked.

Sub.
attack
and
sighting
summary
for
24 hours
to 0900Z 19th.

Para. A. 1. At 2150Z 13th DAISY MOLLER torpedoed and sunk presumably by a Jap. U/Boat in 16° 21' N. 82° 13' E.
2. Transit Liberator sighted surfaced U/Boat at 1246Z 18th Co.330° which opened fire and then submerged in 61° 00' N. 17° 07' W.
(D.D.I.C. 191105A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

20.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.Operation
F.V.

1. Convoy J.W.55B, consisting of 19 M/Vs escorted by WALLFLOWER, BORAGE, and HOUND of the Local Escort and by WHITEHALL (S.O.), WRESTLER, OXLIP, HONEYSUCKLE, and GLEANER of the Through Escort, left Loch Ewe at 1700 today; and 7 destroyers, which, with Capt. D.17 in ONSLOW, will form the Destroyer Escort of the convoy left Scapa at 1707A for Skaalefjord (Faroes). HYDRA of the Local Escort left Loch Ewe at 2335A to overtake.

Operation
"Stonewall"

2.(a) The suspected blockade runner attacked by aircraft early on 18th, 150 miles west of Ushant was later established to be L.C.T. 372. This craft was in Flight Q; she did not return to Gibraltar with the remainder (see 17th Dec.) but held on and reached the U.K. independently and successfully, but unplotted (*hinc illae lacrimae.*)

(b). The tug EMPIRE JOHN was also in the area, unplotted (see 17th Dec. para. 8) Eventually it transpired that the aircraft attacks and reports all referred to our own ships, and at 200002A G. in C.Plymouth made a signal that he considered that there remained no evidence that an outward bound blockade breaker was at sea. GLASGOW remains on the "Stonewall" patrol; and C. in C.Plymouth considers that the air patrols should be extended northwards to about 700 miles from the Azores. But the search by A/C for blockade-runners is no longer to have priority over all other air operations.

Air attack
on Bremen.

3. 367 Fortresses and 100 Liberators with escort of Lightnings and Thunderbolts attacked Bremen this forenoon, with good effect. From 40 to 65 enemy aircraft are reported to have been destroyed in combat.

North Atlantic.

U/B sunk.

4. A U-Boat is reported to have been sunk by aircraft from U.S. Escort Carrier BOGUE at 1539 today in 32.54 N. 37.01 W. (about 500 miles S.W. of Azores.)

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Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

K.M.F.
Convoys.

5. The proposal that Naples should be the port of turn-round for K.M.F. convoys, which was made by C. in C. Med. on 11th inst. (q.v.) has been approved by the Admiralty and it is proposed to commence with K.M.F.28, leaving U.K. on 14th Jan.

Adriatic.

6. Destroyers patrolled off the Yugoslav coast north of Split last night. No activity is reported.

Aegean.

7. 2 Wellingtons successfully mined Salamis harbour last night. Diversionary bombing was carried out and bursts were seen in the dockyard area.

China.

8. In the South China Sea last night U.S. Mitchells made direct hits on a freighter which was left listing heavily; a tanker was also left listing. In Tonking Gulf a large schooner was damaged.

Australia & New Zealand.

9. U.S. destroyers with aircraft spotting today bombarded reported Japanese concentrations at Tinpuī in the north-east part of Bougainville.

10. An attempted landing by the enemy last night in the Arawe area of New Britain was frustrated by Allied patrol craft.

20.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

JAMAICA, LONDON. A.M. 221214/November para.6 and C. in C.H.F. 242328/November para.1. It has been decided that JAMAICA is to remain in your command.
2. LONDON is allocated to Eastern Fleet and should be ready to sail on or about 1st February.
(V.C.N.S. 200019A to C. in C.H.F.)

Four A/A Sloops for Med. Admiralty 191751. Para.3. Ships nominated are PHEASANT (S.O.) AMETHYST, BLACK SWAN, ERNE.
(C. in C.W.A. 201045A to Admty.)

LARGS, HILARY. Request LARGS on completion may be allocated to Force S. and that HILARY on arrival in U.K. may be taken in hand for refit in the Portsmouth area if possible and subsequently allocated to Force J.
(A.N.C.X.F. 201825A to Admty.)

Movements.

KING GEORGE V. F.W.200 aircraft are active from Bordeaux and may be in your vicinity.
(D.D.I.C. 201154A to KING GEORGE V, Escorts S.L.142 /M.K.S.33.)

S/M. movements. Positions of S/Ms. at 0800A/21 and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 201556, 201814A, 201938A, 202338A, 211714A)

ENTERPRISE. Proceed to Plymouth pass Hoxa Gate at 1730A/21st. to arrive Gate 1430A/23rd. (2) Route via Minches and War Channel. S.O.A. 17 knots. (3) On arrival act as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth. Ref. A.M. 190205A.
(C.S.1. 201619A to ENTERPRISE.)

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". My 191401. L.C.T.372 reports:- (a) that she was illuminated by aircraft flare at about 0245A/18th and took evasive action by altering course and stopping engine. (B) that at about 0400/18th in position estimated by her as 049° 30' N. 009° 06' W. she was illuminated and attacked by aircraft. L.C.T. opened fire on aircraft after recognition signals had been ignored. (2) Consider therefore that L.C.T. was ship mistaken for Westbound blockade Breaker by aircraft and that there remains no evidence that an outward-bound blockade Breaker is at sea.
(C. in C. Plymouth 200002A to Admty.)
The instructions in my 190852 are suspended. 2. My 110040 remains in force.
(A.C.N.S.H. 200209A to H.Q.C.C.)

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Monday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". (Contd.) GAMBIA is leaving Horta at 1200A tomorrow and proceeding taking up patrol (G) within 50 miles each side of line joining position LL. 042° 15' N. 030° 10' W. and MM. 049° 10' N. 032° 52' W. Northern half of the patrol line is the more important. 2. GLASGOW is leaving patrol (F) as necessary to arrive Horta at 1400A/22nd. 3. GLASGOW 162158 to C. in C. Plymouth only. R/V for throwing off fire will be arranged at later date if circumstances permit. (C. in C. Plymouth 201846A to GLASGOW, GAMBIA.)

Extension of air patrols for operation "Stonewall" to northwards to distance of about 700 miles from Azores is considered desirable. (2) Alternatives appear to be (a) Operation of carrier in vicinity 048° N. 034° W. to extend distance now covered by air from Terceira. (b) Operation V.L.R. A/C. from Azores if facilities permit and aircraft are available. (3) Alternative. (B) preferred. (C. in C. Plymouth 201856A to Admty., H.Q.C.C.)

Vessels (un) 43? 42 N. 10.25 W. (?140°) unknown. (A/C. Duty E. 202111A to 19 Group.) 140° 08' unrecognised. (A/C. Duty E. 202245A to 19 Group.)

Your 151337. Group 2. arrive Kola Inlet. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 200103A to S.B.N.O. Archangel.) Following incompletely received. T.O.O. 200001 addressed S.B.N.O. North Russia (R) A.I.G.47. From C. in C.H.F. My 070943 para.7 and R.A (D) H.F. 191022. Request you will sail R.A.55A on day plus 10 ends. (A.C.O.S. 200858A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

Position at 202000. ONSLAUGHT, 6 Destroyers 059° 24' N. 004° 11' W. to Skaalefiord, 18. (A.C.O.S. 201146A to Admty.)

Unless ordered to the contrary on completion of duty referred to in C. in C.H.F.'s 101132 para.2 and when released by C. in C. H.F., HARRIER proceed to Scapa, LOYALTY to Skaalefiord. (R.A.D. 201429A to HARRIER, LOYALTY.)

Sailed ONSLAUGHT, ORWELL, IMPULSIVE, SCOURGE, IROQUOIS, HURON HAIDA to Skaalefiord. E.T.A. 0900A/21st. (R.A.D. H.F. 201707A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

E.T.A. practice area 1000A/23rd. December. (BERMUDA 201719 to C. in C.H.F.)

J.W.55B. (A) 1700/20th. (B) H.M. Ships GLEANER, WHITEHALL, WRESTLER, OXLIP, HONEYSUCKLE, HOUND, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE. (C) 19. HYDRA will sail to overtake. (N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe 201720 to C. in C.W.A.)

J.W.55B. FORT KULLYSPELL, FORT NAKASLEY, OCEAN PRIDE, FORT MERCHERES, BRITISH STATESMAN, OCEAN VALOUR, OCEAN MESSENGER, OCEAN VICEROY, OCEAN GIPSY. United States of America Ships. BERNARD N. BAKER, CARDINAL GIBBONS, THOMAS W. WALTER, JOHN WANAMAKER, JOHN J. ABEL, BROCKHOLST, LIVINGSTONE, HAROLD WINSLOW, JOHN VINING, WILL ROGER, Panamanian ship NORLYS. (N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe 201722A to C. in C.W.A.)

Akureyri arrival, HARRIER, LOYALTY. (A.C.I.C. 201836A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

R.A.55A will now sail 1000A/22, speed 9½ knots, probably 23 ships. A.C.O.S. 200858 refer. (S.B.N.O. North Russia 202019A to Admty.)

Operation
F.V.

/At...

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Monday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation F.V. "Stonewall".
(Contd.)

At 201158 in 50° 17' N. 07° 04' W. dropped radio Sono buoy No.1 Green. 1200 picked up strong U/B. sounds on first Sono buoy Green. 1207 dropped No.2 red Sono buoy. 1212 slight S/M. noises on 2 red Sono buoy for one minute, then stopped, very weak signal. 1230 dropped No.3 blue Sono buoy. Immediate results. 1245 dropped No.4 yellow Sono buoy. Due to 25 kts. wind unable to mark position of buoys by slick or smoke floats. No.1 Green buoy was still reading strong and immediate pick up received on No.4 yellow. 1330 picked up S/M. noises on No.3 Blue Sono buoy. Slight on Green No.1 nothing on yellow No.4 and Red No.2 buoys. 1400 still receiving S/M. noises on Blue No.3 buoy ?heard at 1405.
(A/C. Dunkeswell 202200A to 19 Group.)
Sailed H.M.S. HYDRA to overtake. S. of A. 14 knots.
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea 202335A to R.A.D. H.F.)

S/M. Patrols. SATYR is to proceed through 090° Muckle Flugga 10 to arrive Lerwick a.m. 21st.
(F.O.S. 200609 to S/Ms.)
(1) Add to my 071931 para.1. (Q) STRATAGEM 31st. December. 14th January. (2) Add to my 071934.
(J) STRATAGEM HH. F. and A.
(F.O.S. 201146A to Capt.S.3, S.9.)

Request you will sail TAKU at 1200A/21st. through 090° Muckle Flugga 5 miles and route Black to 070° 27' thence direct to patrol position T.7 proceeding on the surface at C.O.'s discretion until within 50 miles of Norwegian coast thence diving by day. TAKU is to remain W. of T.7 until 0100A/25th. when she is to maintain patrol in accordance with F.O.(S) 181722.

(Capt.S.9. 201531A to S.O. S/M. Lerwick.)

Positions of S/Ms. at 0800A/21st and movements for following 24 hours. (A) SIRDAR, VENTURER, O.15, as in my 161734.
(B) STUBBORN on patrol off Folde Fiord leaves patrol p.m. 21st to pass through 64° 05' N. 3° 44' E. at 2200/22. Thence to Lerwick.
(F.O.S. 201556 to Admty.) (C. of W.E. 201739A to A.I.G.25.)

Operations "Manacle" and "Hardwick" will not take place tonight.
(V.A. Dover 201027A to Admty.)

Operations "Manacle" and "Hardtack".

Coastal Force Patrols. 1. Orders for night 20th/21st December.
(A). 2 Chasseurs Anti-E-Boat Patrol on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35' W. and 00° 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A. (B) M.L.291 short notice St.Helens.
(C) BLEASDALE, GLAISDALE short notice Yarmouth.
(D) 3 M.G.Bs. from Portland Anti-E-Boat Patrol on 50° 20' N. between 02° 00' W. and 02° 35' W.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 201337A.)
M.G.Bs. 41 and 40 at No.7 buoy E.T.D. 1755. M.Ls.573 and 125 at Bullock Bank E.T.D. 1745.
(V.A. Dover 201520A to Admty.)

War Diary.

20.12.1943.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Allied Air Activity.

PIETRO
ORSEOLO.

Congratulations on the successful attack on
PIETRO ORSEOLO.
(V.C.N.S. 201158A to H.Q.C.C.)

Enemy Air Activity.

Chatham
bombed.

Following report on bomb dropped 0550/20th. approx.
20 yards N. of railway by South Gate of Chattenden
Magazine area. Damage to war effort. One laborat-
ory room temporarily out of action through broken
windows. Serious damage nil.
(A.S. Chatham 201945A to C. in C. Nore.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Trawlers.

Position of enemy 6 trawlers 180 tons, one 190 tons
65° 44' N. 24° 25' W.
(A/C. TNXC 201635A to Artunshofdi.)

MONTE ROSA.

My 141636. MONTE ROSA sighted Alta Fiord Dec.10th.
Graded C.3.
(N.A. Stockholm 201747 to Admty.) Comment by O.I.O
This ship passed Sonja Northward bound on 26th Nov.

Technical.

Anti
"Gnat"
tactics.

A.G.M.687A, para.5. add S/M. para. (C) as follows:-
(C) For self-protection of escorts against Gnats
fired by undetected U/Bs. the following tactics are
recommended when Foxer is not streamed. Details.
(A.C.N.S.W. 201813A, A.G.M. 192A, B.2.)

Shipping & Convoys.

D.F.17.

Sailed TORDENSKJOLD, in accordance with my 161626A.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 200116A to C. in C.W.A.)

QUEEN
ELIZABETH.

Arrived at 0816.
(D.S.T.O. Greenock 200820A.)

T.U.5.

(1) 2300Z/20th. (2) C.T.F.69. (3) 2 Specials
and one Tanker.
(N.C.S.O. Belfast 201015A to Admty.)
Sailed U.S. destroyer DORAN. My 191200A refers.
(N.O.I.C. Belfast 201024.)

Intend sailing at 1730/20th CANYON CREEK (U.S.)
15 knots to R/V with T.U.5 in 055° 41' N. 008° 02' W. at 1100/21st.
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe 201352A.)

Clyde, U.S.S. DORAN.

(N.O.I.C. Greenock 201516A to N.O.I.C. Belfast.)

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Monday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.

- T.U.5.
(Contd.) My 191130 sailed GEORGIA, POWDER RIVER at 1525, FORT LARAMIE at 1800, to overtake.
(N.O.I.C. Liverpool 201842A to C. in C.W.A.)
Sailed Clyde portion in accordance with my 181234A. SHAWNEE sailing to overtake.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 202248A to Admty.)
My 190925A. Delete U.S.S. EARLE. Intend sailing EARLE to meet SHAWNEE as C. in C.W.A. 201654Z.
(N.O.I.C. Belfast 202315A to C. in C.W.A.)
- O.N.215. HADLEIGH CASTLE detached to proceed St.John's at best speed with case of suspected T.B. Meningitis (C.4. 201059Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- U.C.8. (A) 0900Z/19th. (B) 24/12. (C) Task Group 21.6, LAWRENCE, GRIFFIN, DONNELL, SIMMS, HOPPING S.O. (D) 18.
(C. in C.W.A. 201645Z to A.I.G.356.)
- DEIDO,
BARON SCOTT,
SYRIAN PRINCE. (A) DEIDO. (B) Returned from K.M.S.36.
(C) Heavy weather main injection pipe fractured.
(A) BARON SCOTT. (B) Returned from O.N.S.O.25.
(C) Heavy weather no damage. (A) SYRIAN PRINCE.
(B) Returning from O.N.S.25. (C) Reason will be signalled when known.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde 201820A to C. in C.W.A.)
- U.G.S.28. U.S.Escort Carrier MISSION BAY will escort U.G.S.28 sailing Hampton Roads 25th December. Ship may leave convoy as appropriate to act against S/Ms. (D.O.D.H. 201827A to C. in C.W.A.)
- E.G.7. Following ships are to form 7th Group based on Greenock. PELICAN (S.O.) CRANE, CYGNET, WHIMBRELL, WOODCOCK, HART.
(C. in C.W.A. 201845A to Cdre. D.W.A.)
- M.K.S.34. Request you will sail WINDRUSH a.m. 23rd toward 040° N. 020° W. passing through 049° N. 019° W.
2. Intention is for WINDRUSH to join B.3 E.G. escorting M.K.S.34.
(C. in C.W.A. 202211Z to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

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20.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

X.K.13. A.M. 191237. Intend to sail X.K.13 p.m. 21st escorted by SCOTTISH, LORD NUFFIELD and KINGSTON AGATE. My 181841 refers. (F.O.I.C. Gib. 201015A.)

K.M.F.27 R/V K.M.F.27 in position 042° 07' N. 024° 00' W. at 1800A 21st and escort MALOJA and OTRANTO to Algiers.
2. K.M.F.27. Escorts BENTINCK, S.O. BYARD, CALDER, BAZELY, BURGESS, DRURY and PRINCE ROBERT. (F.O.C. Gib. 201145A, to ULSTER, ROCKET, GRENVILLE.)

Italian Merchant ships in Spanish ports. Min.F.A. have approved supply fuel and oil to LAVORO. My 06203 and 151215 para. .1 refers.
2. CESENA expected to be ready to sail under own steam about Dec. 27th. Speed 9 to 10 knots.
3. When visas granted crews should proceed Madrid en route for Cartagena and Barcelona. My 161904 refers.
4. Request I be informed if they will be escorted. Submit this is desirable particularly in lapse of CESENA.
5. Request route instructions.
6. EDERA expected ready for sea under own steam about Jan. 5th.
7. Some of crew of FULGOR who refused to sail have now changed their minds. One deck officer and 7 others could be sent to LUCIA C.
8. Ministry of Marine have been requested to tow GAETA to Cadiz where she could be picked up by tug from Gib. as was done with FULGOR.
9. Spaniards will not (?allow) crews for Canary Islands to travel in Spanish ships at present but may change their minds before ships ready for sea. (A.B.N.A. Madrid 201155A.)

Italian personnel in Spain. C. in C. Med. 161244.
1. Agree to allow a considerable number of interned Italian naval personnel to leave Spain in batches.
2. If Ministry of Foreign Affairs approves it is proposed to start by evacuating about 90 from Vivaldi now interned in Cartagena.
3. Personnel from It. Battleship ROMA etc. will follow when they have been moved from Balearic Islands to concentration camp in Gerona.
4. If scheme progresses it is anticipated that 100 to 120 persons should arrive in Gibraltar toward middle January.
5. Requirements of further personnel for merchant ships, if any, will be passed to you as soon as possible. (Asst. B.N.A. Madrid, 201316A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) C. in C. Med., N.O. Gibraltar, Admty.)

SUFFREN. Sailed as in my 191831A. (C.M.H.F.F., 201316A to Comar Dakar.)

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Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - Contd.

U.S.
Movements.

U.S.S. HOWARD, FISKE, HILL, WINOOSKI.
(C.M.S.F. 201400Z.)

EMPIRE
SAMSON.

Your 192232* Date of undocking 0800/21st.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 201537Z to F.O.C. Gib.)
*(No trace in W.R.)

CEVENNES,
ST. LOUIS.

My 1918(?)7A* sailing delayed by 24 hours.
(C.M.S.F. 201645A to Comar Dakar.)
* Intend to sail to Dakar merchant ships
escorts.

URCHIN
damaged.

2. URCHIN dome and oscillator damaged beyond
repair at sea. Request destination.
(S.O.E.G.4., 201728Z to F.O.C. Gibraltar (R)
S.E.C. K.M.F.27.)

FORMOSA
Safe
conduct.

Not to be molested this voyage.
Sailed Gib. 1715/20 for Piraeus.
(F.O.C. Gib., 201750A to 10th S/M F. PROTEE,
French CURIE, CASABIANCA (R) Capt. S.10.)

LUGANO,
Safe
conduct.

Not to be molested this voyage. Sailed Gib.
1720/20th for Marseilles.
(F.O.C. Gib. 201758A to 10th S/M F. PROTEE,
CURIE, CASABIANCA, (R) Capt. S.10.)

APOLO.

Spanish SS. APOLO from Buenos Aires due Las
Palmas for orders 24th will probably proceed
into Med. in which case send her in for search.
2. Americans report reliably two kg. of
platinum on board. (Persons implicated)
(D.E.W.D., 201805A, C.C.S.O. Gib.)

EMPIRE
JOHN,
L.C.T.
372.

The unexpected appearance of tug EMPIRE JOHN and
L.C.T.372 in Plymouth area endangered lives and
the success of operations - C. in C. Plymouth's
181400, 191345, 191401, 200002 etc. refer.
2. As no vessels were reported missing it was
assumed from your 171820 that all had, in fact,
returned safely though no arrival signal of
Flight Q on return to Gibraltar has been received in Admiralty.
(D.O.D.(H), 202005A to F.O. Gibraltar, Info. C. in C. Med.,
C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C.)

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20.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic.PHEMIUS
torpedoed
19th Dec.Following has been received at 2320Z/19 Dec.
SSSS DE SS. MAYCREST (GNBV) 05.01 N. 01.17 W.
torpedoed.(Freetown, W/T No T.O.O.) W.R. Note: Various
W/T stations have picked up this signal, some
of which state that the ship is SS. MAYCREST
and other state the ship to be PHEMIUS.A. SS. PHEMIUS. B. British. C. 19th 2310.
D. 05° 01' N. 000° 17' W. E. Torpedoed. F. 92.
(N.C.S.O. Takoradi, 202049Z)PHEMIUS
torpedoed
19th.
Kingswood
presumed
torpedoed,
date
unknown.PHEMIUS torpedoed in 05.01 N. 00.17 W. at
2320Z/19th. KINGSWOOD presumed torpedoed, date
and position unknown since 48 survivors landed 30
miles west of Kotonu p.m. 19th. Independent
sailings between Lagos and Takoradi were
cancelled a.m. 17th on receipt of PICT's
reported contacts endeavours were made to recall
PHEMIUS and EEMLAND to Takoradi and KINGSWOOD
to Lagos. If contacts reported on 17th were a
submarine she could not have torpedoed both
KINGSWOOD and PHEMIUS. It is, therefore, stillthought these were on sub. unless there were two submarines
which is considered improbable. T.S.55 will remain in
Takoradi till situation is clearer. Search for EEMLAND, PHEMIUS
and submarine is being conducted by available escorts and air.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 200225Z to Admty.)

C.R.48.

Sailed 18th for Aden. E.T.A. p.m. 31st.
Personnel on board.
(S.T.O. Durban, 190706Z.)CITY OF
BARODA
torpedoed
2nd April
1943.Loss of CITY OF BARODA following details refutes
suggestion that shore organisation was inadequate
to ensure prompt action.
2. Ship was torpedoed in thick fog. C. in C.
S.A. received report that she was still afloat
at 1304Z/3 April. At 1409Z/3 C. in C.S.A.
ordered tug to be sent from Luderitz. At
1435Z/3, C. in C. S.A. ordered NORTHERN CHIEF
to proceed to CITY OF BARODA and attempt to tow
her to Luderitz. Air cover was arranged. During afternoon of
3rd April it was ascertained that seagoing tug was available
at Capetown but in view of distance 400 miles through dangerous
waters C. in C. decided escort was necessary. No escort was
available until arrival at Cape Town of COMMANDANT D'ESTIENNE
D'ORVES 0550Z/4. At 0953Z/4 latter ship and tug T.H.
OATERMEYER were ordered to sail and did so at 1200Z/4.
3. Following factors prevented successful salvage.
A. CAPE WARWICK lost touch with CITY OF BARODA while picking
up survivors and fog prevented regaining contact.
B. Aircraft failed to locate derelict owing to poor
visibility.C. Unexpectedly large drift of derelict. Your 151744* refers
(C. in C.S.A. 201204 to Admty.)* Re proceedings of Court of Enquiry into stranding of CITY OF
BARODA.

/S.T.L.8...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. - Contd.

S.T.L.8. F.O.C.W.Af's 181444Z sailed.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 201216Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi
(R) N.O.I.C. Lagos, Admty.)

A.M.C.s. As from 0001 23rd British A.M.Cs. will patrol
patrol in new area XV WY enclosed by line joining
areas. position 005° N. 026° 005' N. 020° (?W.)
equator 015° W. equator 021° 30' W. area to be
divided into XV WY N. and XY WY S. by parallel
of 002° 30' N.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 201637Z to (U.S.) Cdr. 4th U.S.
Fleet, Comar Dakar, N.O.I.C. Durban (R) Admty.)

U/B COPINSAY attacking submarine in 03° 50' N. 00° 42'
attacked W.
by COPINSAY. (F.O.C.W.Af., 201836Z to Admty.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- PENN patrol report. One small partisan craft only (?met). Owing to bad visibility on coast did not bombard Druvnik (?Dubrovnik). Oil fuel remaining 0800/20th 73%. (PENN 200659A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) N.C.I.C. Brindisi, TEAZER.)
- UNTIRING Patrol report. 1. Naval auxiliary, probably minelayer, of 1,000 tons torpedoed in Monaco Harbour at 1556/14 from range of 500 yards.
2. At 1432/17 fired three torpedoes at 500 ton coaster which disintegrated.
3. At 1541/17 fired one torpedo at similar coaster which had been beached. Vessel blown in two. (S.10, 200855.)
- U.S. Move-ments. Plan to sail in BROOKLYN with EDISON and NIBLACK Algiers to Malta 201800A. C. in C.Med. requested to furnish routeing. Will operate cruiser planes during daylight. (C.T.F. 86 200900A to U.S.T.F. 86.)
- Use of V.H/F R/T between ships to fighter A/C. There are no restrictions on use of V.H/F R/T between ships and fighter aircraft and fighter sector H.Q. in area within 50 miles of North African coast between 003° W. and 012° E.
2. In above area R/T touch is to be established with every fighter section escorting a convoy or fleet unit and with appropriate fighter sector H.Q. Failure to communicate with fighters is to be reported at once by R/T to sector H.Q.
3. The method of answering "see you" by V/S as laid down in M.J.A. 0.45 para. 4 is to continue but reply by R/T is also to be made.
4. Sector headquarters will pass blue warnings by R/T as well as W/T.
5. V.H/F R/T silence in area in para. 1 may be ordered by C. in C.Med. to cover the movements of special units. (C. in C.Med. 200943 to Med. Station, Levant Station 405B, (R) M.A.C.N.A.C.A.F.)
- M.O.R.U. Situation Report 161. Sat. 19th (ex DALMACIJA, Yugoslav). 36 Light Bombers attacked 4 ships at South East end of Pasman Island one believed to be German Cruiser DALMATIA. Near misses only claimed. (N.L.O. No. 1 M.O.R.U. 201012A.)
- V.N.13. Sailed 1600/20th 4 ships for Naples. Escorts LAMERTON (S.O.), LIDDESDALE. (S.N.O. East Sicily 201042A 201717A to F.O.W.It.)
- Air reports. A.304 21st. Daily Opsum 237. 19th 3 Baltimores (A.30) offensive shipping R/C S.W.Aegean. 1 100 tons caique attacked in Syml Harbour from high level Bombs overshoot and landed in sea. 3 x 250 lb. and an A.A. post was silenced by M/G fire.

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Mediterranean.

Air reports. 19th/20th 2 Wellingtons successfully mined Salamis Harbour (Greece) 2 Liberators were unsuccessful on similar mission. 1 failed to locate target owing to navigational instruments becoming un-serviceable, and the mines of 1 hung up. 4 Liberators, 7 Halifaxes provided diversionary bombing on searchlight and AA posts. Bursts were seen in the dockyard area. Leros Island. 72 x 500 lbs. observation was made difficult by glare from accurate searchlight.
(H.Q.R.A.F.M.E. 201059Z.)

M.S. 24219. A.F. 302 20th N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 302.
N.W.A.T.A.F. 19th 12 Bostons 24 Baltimores 2 Naval Units and small motor vessel reported off Pasman Island South Zara. 58 x 500 88 x 250. Several near misses claimed 1 Naval Unit and motor vessel.

23. U.S. Warhawks escort 18 U.S. Thunderbolts armed R/C coastal area Yugoslavia. 23 x 500 attacked 2 stationary motor vessels S.W. Split. Claim direct hit and near misses 1 vessel left smoking. Near misses vessel near Trogia.
(H.Q.N.A.A.F. 201359A.)

UPROAR. Intend sailing P.31 (UPROAR) at 1100/23rd routed Q.B.B. 301 thence through 042° 07' 008° 08' at 0001/24th, 043° 49' 008° 29' at 0001/25th to patrol in zone SN., proceeding to submerge by day, except in Q.B.B. 301.
(Capt. S.10 201150 to C. in C.Med. (R) 10th S/M F. S.O.I.S. P.67 (LE CURIE) N.O.I.C. Algiers, PROTEE, CASABIANCA, F.O.C.Gib.)

N.V.12B. Request you will sail convoy at 1000A/21st to Augusta. 8. FAULKNER, ECHO. 9A. FAULKNER detach so as to arrive Malta by dark.
(F.O.W.It. 201305A, 201729A to N.O.I.C. Naples.)

Joint Army 394475 I/49899 20th 24 hours to 1000/20, all times
R.A.F. Intel. G.M.T. 1. Ph. R/C enemy shipping in Aegean 19th
Appreciation. (Details).

3. Reference para. three appreciation 15th C.X. confirms sinking tug and also one caique. Second caique escaped. (W.D.Note. M.T.Bs. in Trianda Bay, Rhodes, night 13/14 Dec.) German casualties reported same source reports 2 caiques and 2 lighters under repair Port Mandracchio (Rhodes). 17th. C.X. 14th reports German intention salvage damaged ex-British tanker ELEONORA MAERSK (10,700 tons) now lying Suda Bay.

6. Arrival Swedish Relief ship Candia indicates port now considered clear mines. Departure SS. LIVENZA and TANAIIS and arrival from Suda APRILIA must therefore be expected earliest. Sailing further troop/supply convoy (probably including DRACHE) Piraeus to Samos and/or Dodecanese still considered imminent. Caique supply traffic Piraeus-Dodecanese continues. Detailed study

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Joint Army Ph. R/C Rhodes shows considerable increase caique
R.A.F. Intel. traffic Nov. over Oct. which still maintained Dec.
Appreciation. Further indications enemy intensified repair and
(Contd.) salvage activity to redress shipping shortage.
Appreciation Kastelorizo unchanged.
(C. in C.M.E. 201330B.)

Allocation It is now probable that all seven submarines
of Italian allocated for A/S training outside Med. will be re-
S/Ms. quired to sail from Gib: as early as possible in
Jan. B.A.D. 181937.
2. Request you will make firm arrangements with
Ministry of Marine for all these S/Ms to be ready
to sail from Taranto on 1st Jan. with Italian surface escort as
far as Gib. MAREA to complete Adriatic patrol as in your 191915.
(N.T. in W.D.)

3. Request you will inform Minister of Marine that it is probable
majority of S/Ms in para. one will be required to go to Bermuda.
Confirmatory signal will be made later.
(C. in C.Med. 201425A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) Admty.)

In view of B.A.D. 181937* action has been suspended on
A.M. 171245 (N.T. in W.D.)

MAREA is committed to Adriatic patrol until 28th.

2. MOTAI has been requested to make firm arrangements for 7
Italian submarines to leave Taranto on 1st Jan. for Gib. in view
of experience to date on mechanical condition of Italians consider
firm date of arrival Bermuda requested in B.A.D. 181937 is un-
likely to be before 1st Feb.

(C. in C.Med. 201427A to Admty. (R) B.A.D. F.O.C.W.Af.
F.O.T.A.G.)

* re U.S. and U.K A/S Training Submarine requirements.

A.H.14. Sails 1200/22nd. 8. MULLET as liaison ship with
Italian escort group ex H.A.13 to Taranto.
(S.N.C.E. Sicily 201547A to F.O.T.A.L.I.)

SUTLEJ. D-parted.
(Com. Aden 201633Z.)

Use of Additional details requested in A.M. 151932 ob-
"Gnats" by tained since my 141818 not to all. All bearings are
U/Bs. Inves- true.
tigation of A. CUCKMERE initial contact at 1312 bearing 110°
torpedoing of at 1700 yds. courses as follows 1307 course 040°
CUCKMERE, 1310 course 090° 1312 course 110° torpedo hit
HOLCOMBE, approx. at 1313 speed 12 knots throughout.
WAINWRIGHT. B. HOLCOMBE course 340° altering to 290° one min.
before explosion speed 16 knots throughout.
C. WAINWRIGHT streamed lashup "Foxyer" at 1316 but
hailed again at 1330.

2. Asdic trace of CUCKMERE is blank advance copies of Asdic
records or WAINWRIGHT and CALPE being forwarded by air mail.
3. Lashup "Foxyer" gear in WAINWRIGHT now known to consist of
single P.N.M. not intended to forward report as this gear did not
affect enemy use of "Gnat" and does not include any novel features
(C. in C.Med. 201650A to Admty. (R) C. in C. Levant, Comnavnew,
C. in C.W.A.)

/S.N.F.10...

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- S.N.F.10. Sailed as in F.O.W.It. 192209.
(N.O.I.C. Naples 201727.)
- German A/C Varna. My 191210 (N.F. in W.R. C.2 that 50 Me.. 323 transport aircraft arrived Varna. 19th with large quantities of medical supplies. Source Bulgarian Consul here. Comment: Aircraft presumably for evacuating wounded from Crimea.
(S.O.I. Istanbul 201805C to C.O.I.S. Alex. please pass to D.N.I.)
- N.I.D.Comment: This may possibly be the explanation of the "curfew" at Varna reported in C.O.I.S. Alexandria's 191631B Dec.
- Attacks by German "Gnat" torpedoes, information required. In the event of actual or suspected attack of "Gnat" torpedoes in the Mediterranean following information is to be signalled both to C. in C. Med. and C. in C. Levant at first opportunity.
2. A. Time range and relative position of initial contact.
B. Nature of contact and whether confirmed by sighting.
C. Movements of U-Boats stating whether known or estimated.
D. Action taken by escort vessels including changes in and course speed.
E. Use of any form of decoy by U-Boats.
F. Time and position of "Gnat" explosion relative to ship.
G. Whether "Foxers" were in operation.
H. Visibility and weather conditions.
I. General circumstances of attack i.e. escort screening searching or hunting etc.
J. Was some contact gained by other ships in company.
K. Were other U-Boats knowingly or suspected to be in the vicinity.
L. Any relevant information not covered in above.
3. In the event of a ship being sunk S.O. of Group should signal information available to him and Naval Authority at port where survivors are landed should obtain and signal information from survivors.
4. For Med. Station outside the Med. signal should be made to F.O.C. Gibraltar and C. in C. Med.
(C. in C. Med. 201825A to Med. Station. Levant Station 408B, (R) Adinty. Comnavnaw.)
- Landing Craft. Your 041418. Regret no L.S.G. will be available from U.K.
2. Can DERWENTDALE be made fit for craft ferrying duties.
(D. of P.(Q) 201835A to C. in C. Med.)
- BALKAN. My 171112C. Reported C.40.4 BALKAN will return Istanbul after discharging present cargo to load chrome for Bourgas.
(S.O.I. Istanbul 201912C to C. in C. Levant, (R) Capt. S.1, D.N.I.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

5th and 22nd D.F. reorgani- 5th D/F and 22nd D/F have been reorganised as sation. follows: 5th D/F ALDENHAM (S.O.), BELVOIR, BEAUFORT, G.S. CRETE, G.S. PINDOS, G.S. KANARIS. 22nd D/F TETCOTT, CROOME, ROCKWOOD, G.S. THEMISTOCLES, EXMOOR, G.S. MIAOULES. (C. in C.Med. 201937A to Med. Station, Levant Station 409B (R) Admty.)

WOOLWICH, Your 200011*. Following is a repetition of my ALDENHAM, 181329* (begins): PINDOS, A.I.G.76. Intend sailing WOOLWICH escorted by BETONY. ALDENHAM, PINDOS and BETONY. E.T.D. 1530/19th to Port Said. ALDENHAM is to detach at 0630 and return to position 309. WOOLWICH and BETONY for onward routeing to E.F. N.O.I.C. Port Said is requested to sail PINDOS to arrive Alexandria a.m. 21st. 181329B (Ends.) (R.A.Alexandria 202020B to C. in C.E.F.) * N.T. in W.R.

Med. Situa- 1. 4 U.S.Torpedo Boats on patrol between Caprai tion report and Bastia report attacking with torpedo 2 enemy No. 254. destroyers at 0030/19. Enemy turned away but were intercepted by other coastal forces north of Elba and engaged with guns and torpedo. 2 possible torpedo hits on destroyer. 2. During night 18th/19th Dec. TYRIAN and TEAZER patrolled between San Benedetto and Ancona but sighted nothing. 3. Same night M.G.B. 637 and M.T.B. 297 operating off Vis report sinking 1 Siebel Ferry, 1 escort vessel and 2 I.E. or I.Boats. Slight damage to M.G.B. [See Q.D. 505] (C. in C.Med. 202109A.)

K.M.F. M.K.F. Your 111925. It is approved that Naples should be NAPLES. ~~Melta~~ turn- port of turn-round for K.M.F. convoys and that the round. necessary W.A. escorts should continue to that port 2. It is proposed to commence with K.M.F.28, leaving U.K. on 15th Jan. 3. It is noted that proposals will entail a full troopship ex West Africa being held at Gib. for some 11 days each cycle. Although clearly undesirable, this appears unavoidable. Request your remarks. 4. In view of A. need to ensure that ships for Bombay have time to catch next M.K.F. from Port Said. B. possibilities of delays through longer routeing between U.K. and Gib. C. shortage of turn-round of escorts in U.K. Admiralty would prefer a 37 day cycle Request your remarks, and estimated date of arrival of K.M.F. at Port Said under new proposals. 5. We are asuming that M.K.F. would leave Port Said 7 days after K.M.F. leaves U.K. Request confirmation in order that authorities outside Med. who are responsible for connecting convoys may be informed. 6. W.O. and D. of S.T. agree. (V.C.N.S. 202245A, 211149A to C. in C.Med. (R) F.O.W.It. Com. Algiers, C. in C.W.A. C.in C.Levant, P.S.T.O.Med. F.O.I.C. Gib.)

Brindisi Arrival TEAZER. Departure TYRIAN. Movements. (N.O.I.C. Brindisi 202356A.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U/B dis-
position.

(C. in C.E.F. 200304Z to E.F. 459Y.)

P.314
(TACTICIAN.)

P.314 (TACTICIAN) patrolling 27th Nov. to 20th Dec. 1. Both special operations unsuccessful no contact made with (?parties) ashore. 2. Patrols report blank.
(Capt. S.4 200832Z to F.O.S. (?C. in C.E.F.) (S.E.A.C).)

S.E.A.Air
Report.

A.C. 7 20 Dec. Daily Opsum No. 645.
14th U.S.A.A.F. 18 Dec. U.S. Mitchells (B.25) south China Sea. Direct hits (Betium?) freighter listing heavily. Tanker also left listing. 2 U.S.Mitchells (B.25) Tongking Gulf. Large schooner damaged.
(S.E.A.A.C. 200900Z to Air Min.)

ERITREA.

The Italian Sloop ERITREA is now employed in the E.F. under the administration of Capt. S.4 and normally employed for escort duties and for exercises with submarines.
(C. in C.E.F. 201132Z to All concerned on E.I.Stn.)

A.B.24.

Arrived escorted by ROCKROSE, THYME.
(N.C.S.O.Bombay 201225Z.)

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- SS. SUFFOLK Your 181931 U.S. Collier SUFFOLK left Norfolk
Reported 9th for Boston via coastal route outside Long
foundered Island and Cape Cod Canal. Full cargo 5200
11th Dec. coal. Reported foundering position 40.33 N.
71.58 W. First distress message received
1141Q/11 and nothing further seen or heard
after last message 1201/11.
(N.S.H.Q. 200042Z to Admty.)
- L.27. Intend sailing L.27 surfaced throughout speed
10 knots escorted by KING HAAKON VII departing
Galveston 1900Z/23rd (route), to Cape Cod
Canal for Philadelphia.
(2) Request total bombing and attack restrictions 40 miles
ahead and astern and 15 miles either side of track.
(3) C. in C. (U.S.) Fleet is requested to furnish onward
escort and route from Cape Cod to Philadelphia.
(C. in C. C.N.A. 200106Z to C. in C. U.S. Fleet, A.O.C. Air
Command.)
Comply para. 3 C. in C. C.N.A. 200106Z.
(Cominch, 201930 to C.E.S.F.)
- D.E.275. Boston arrived DE 275 from Bermuda.
(N.S.H.Q. 200926Z to Admty.)
- Sub.attack A.M.181035Z/para. C.(3) is regraded A.
and sighting H.M.T.PICT was also concerned in this series of
summary. attacks.
(D.D.I.C. 201009Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)
✓ Daily Sub-sighting and attack report.
- B.E.C.9. Sailed B.E.C.9, U.S.D. SOMERS, B.E.C.10 1130Z/
SOMERS, 20th for Casco Bay route.
B.E.C.10. (C. in C. C.N.A. 201154Z to S.O.P.A.)
- Stragglers Stragglers arrived week ending Dec.18 Dec.16th
Report. DWIGHT W. MORROW (U.S.) ND O.N.214 engine
defects.
(N.C.S.O. St. Johns N.F. 201215Z to Admty.)
- O.N.215. (1) "Westomp" 043 degs. 58' N. 049 degs. 43' W.
at 1100Z/22nd when you will be received by
W.9 SAULT STE MARIE S.O. NORANDA, MILLTOWN.
(2) Upon relief proceed to St. Johns ALGOMA
comply with my 171223.
(3) W.O.N.215 2 ships escort BURLINGTON junction 043 degs.
53' N. 050 degs. 47' W. 1600Z/22nd.
(4) "Chop" 1100Z/21st.
(F.O.N.F. 201318Z, 202329 to Ships escorting O.N.215.)
amended F.O.N.F. 210210Z.

BRAITHWAITE /...

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BRAITHWAITE (B.D.E.77.) Via direct route to Casco, BRAITHWAITE (B.D.E. 77) departed Boston Gate 1130Q/20th. (C.T.G. 02.1, 201410 to (U.S.) S.O.P.A.Casco)

QUEEN MARY (T.A.78). Arrived New York, 1231Z/20 Dec. (P.D. New York, 201410Z)

B.X.88. Sailing telegram part 1. December 21. 1800Z Task Unit W.6. TIMMONS (S.O) COBALT, TRAIL. (P.D.Boston, 201443 to Com. 10th Fleet C. & R.)

N.S.H.Q. S/M Estimate. 1200Z/20th Dec. No sign of any U-Boat activity in area. (N.S.H.Q. 201509Z)

Liaison between Allied C. in C, C. in C. Med. and Cominch. OZ 4162. 20th. Following from C. of S. C.O.S.(W) 1001. Reference J.S.M. 1342 and N.A.F. 55. It can be assumed that the Allied Commander will be consulted by C. in C. Med. on any matters of principle, and received information copies of communications between C. in C. Med. and Cominch. He will thus be fully conversant with the situation & in a position to give guidance when necessary. (2) The suggested delegation of authority will, therefore, only expedite decisions and free communications without in any detracting from the final responsibility of the Allied Commander. Direct communication between C. in C. Med. and Cominch on purely naval matters already takes place through signals to Admty. or B.A.D., repeated to Cominch. New machinery would do little more than rationalise and extend this procedure. (Air Min. 201605Z to Britman, Washington) / 271743/11 (N.T. in W.D.)

U.S.S/M. Estimate. (Cominch, 201630)

O.24. Following is repetition of C. in C. E.F. 190344Z. (D.O.D.(F), 201650A to B.A.D. Info: C. in C. E.F.)

B.E.C.9. B.E.C.10. Departure B.E.C.9, B.E.C. 10 to Casco Bay. (A/G OP Halifax, 201750Z)

Zig-zagging /...

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War Diary.20.12.1943.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.

Zig-Zagging. C. in C. S.A's 0711430 and Admty. 162319A.
Para. 1. Do not concur that local Commanders should control zig-zagging in their area but propose following.
(A) Instructions contained in C.A.M.S.I. be revised to prescribe zig-zagging based on the B.A.M.S. Areas in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.
(B) If submarine situation intensifies or lessens in any particular area, Com. 10th Fleet C. & R. or Admty. may issue B.A.M.S. numbered or lettered message instructing vessels to commence or to discontinue zig-zagging as case may be.
In U.S. portion of Atlantic propose that vessels should zig-zagging in all B.A.M.S. areas for the present. Further propose that no change in zig-zagging in Pacific be made and current directives as contained in my 211708 Oct. be incorporated in C.A.M.S.I. Concur discontinuance of zig-zagging area 3 B beginning 1st Jan.
(Com. 10th Fleet C. & R. 201828Z to Admty.)

BLOCK ISLAND. U.S. BLOCK ISLAND at 191200Z 35 degs. 30' N. 56 degs. 50' W. course 071 degs. speed 15 knots to 38 degs. 30' N. 45 degs. W. Thence course 056 degs. to longitude 30 degs. W. thence eastward following submarine concentrations returning to vicinity Chaucer Bank or Lee of Azores as necessary to fuel destroyers.
(D.O.D.(H), 201830A to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth, S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.Gib., H.Q.C.C.)

B.Y.M.S. Include British Y.M.S. 234 My 162140 (Sailing of B.Y.M.S's to Bermuda).
(Cominch, 201936Z to C.E.S.F., N.O.B.Bermuda)

O.N.214. Arrivals New York 20th. Total 35 ships (list)
(B.R.L.O. New York, 201949Z)

Helicopters. Present situation.
(B.A.C. 202000Z to Min. A.C. Production.)

Sub.attack and sighting summary. All times Z.
Para.A. SUFFOLK U.S. cargo presumed sunk marine cause about 40.43 N. 71.58 W. on 11th.
U-Boat reported sunk by BOGUE aircraft 32.54 N. 37.01 W. 201539. Ventura attacked Sub. on surface course 045 speed 18 knots 14.20 N.

66.59 W. 191630.
Para. C. Sub. sighted 12.33 N. 68.31 W. 201548.
Para. D. Army B.25 sighted Sub. submerging course 130 06.45 S. 26.40 W. 201115. Commercial plane sighted surfacing sub. course 110 25.35 N. 79.32 W. 191850.
(Cominch, 202101 to Admty.)

C.T.G./...

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War Diary.20.12.1943.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. - Contd.

C.T.G.21.16. Refer to this as 201659 from C.T.G. 21.16 to C.T.G.21.15 for action and also for action to C. in C. Lant, Admty., Comnavu, Cominch, C. in C. Med. I propose maintaining aircraft search line between Milne Bank and 42 N. 34.30 W. retiring at 15 knots during night and non-flying weather commencing daylight on 22nd until sunset on 24th. Suggest you extend line to Southeast. WX (As received) 4 7 5 6 1 7 5 8. This refers your 191845 (N.T. in W.R.) (Comnavu, 202116 to Admty.)

SEARCHER, Amend by 162327. SEARCHER will now return to
EMPEROR. U.K. EMPEROR has been delayed and no arrangements will be made at present for a screen for her.
(2) Request, therefore, three Frigates be sailed to arrive Norfolk by 4th Jan. to screen SEARCHER to U.K. (B.A.D. 202117Z to S.B.N.O. W.At. Info: Admty.)

SHAH. It is proposed to sail SHAH completely manned operationally when loaded with Aircraft which she is to ferry to Far East.
(2) She has been modified at Vancouver and will have had her low power turbine changed.
(3) Except for the fact that she carries no operational aircraft and has done no working up with aircraft this ship is in operational condition.
(4) Request confirmation that Policy in (1) is approved observing that existing shortage of personnel here is in T.124 Engine Room and not Upper Deck Ratings and in view of the long passage involved it is not considered desirable to reduce the former. It is further requested that her movements subsequent to discharge of aircraft may be indicated for forwarding of spares etc.
(5) Ship is due to sail on 7th Jan. from San Francisco and early reply is therefore requested.
(B.A.M.R. 202126Z to Admty. (R) SHAH, B.A.D.R., P.C. C. in C. E.F.)

HADLEIGH Following received from S.O. C.4 group (Begins)
CASTLE. From experience at sea and impression gathered whilst transferring M.O. consider investigation into discipline and efficiency of HADLEIGH CASTLE most desirable in view of ships present service 201431 (Ends.)

Understand ship may be diverted to St. Johns N.F. on account of quarantine. If this occurs request you will carry out investigation requested and inform all concerned as requisite. (B.A.R.M. 202301Z to Capt.(D) Argentia (R) F.O.N.F., C. in C. W.A., S.O. C.4.Group)
Request you will inform me as soon as you can how C.4's 201059 will affect programme in my 011903 being passed to you. (B.A.D. 202305Z to F.O.N.F. Info. C. in C. C.N.A. C. in C. W.A., N.S.H.Q., Admty. Cominch)

Movements/...

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20.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. - Contd.Movements,
Bermuda.French destroyer LE MALIN arrived Bermuda
GOODSON departed.
(S.B.N.O. W.At. 202303Z)O.N. and
O.N.S.
Convoys.
Methods of
Saving
Ship's time.

Full consideration has been given to Admty. 152305. Whilst fully sympathising with need to save ships' time it is felt generally undesirable to have a number of independent ships proceeding through waters and into harbour approaches in which there are also considerable local convoy movements.

(2) An alternative would be to split convoys and escort each portion but this would virtually entail abandonment of practical A/S escort and reduce escort vessels duty to that of shepherd.

(3) Greatest loss of time occurs to ships not loading at ocean convoy terminal ports. It is therefore proposed that C. in C. C.N.A. be given discretion to order detachment of ships bound for ports other than Halifax or New York (which would include Boston and Portland Maine.)

(4) C. in C. would instruct Commodore of times of detachment and routes to be followed and inform C.E.S.F. and Com. 10 as necessary.
(N.S.H.Q. 202359Z to B.A.D. (R) N.M.C.S. Admty. C. in C. C.N.A. C. in C. W.A.)

Australia and New Zealand.Digest
Serial
No.699
Dec.19th.

(5) Afternoon R/C Liberator unsuccessfully bombed four ship convoy described as 2 cruisers or destroyers, 2 medium merchantmen 85 miles west new Hanover course east.

(6) Forty minutes later another Liberator attacked 9 ship convoy including 2 large Transports 3 medium, 2 small freighters, 2 escort vessels 40 miles southwest Kavieng heading southeast. 1000 pound bomb burst within 50 feet of medium freighter. Four Zeros, 1 Floatplane intercepted whereof 1 fighter probably destroyed.

(7) Two Bostons, 3 Beaufighters strafed and destroyed 1 launch, 2 barges, 1 boat during afternoon sweep Wide Bay - Cape Orford Coast.

(10) /...

20.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest Serial No.699 Dec.19th. (Contd.)

(10) 12 Bostons nine Mitchells bombed straffed Camp areas tracks and barge base north-eastern coastline Huon Peninsula forenoon with effective coverage. Meanwhile 4 Aircobras straffed 2 camouflaged barges same locality.

(11) During night 18th-19th Allied M.T.B's sunk or destroyed 10 barges along this sector of coastline. Six of these were empty north-bound off Reiss Point.

(12) Previous day 7 Aircobras on forenoon sweep probably destroyed 4 barges near Sio and another 7 Cobras shot down lone Jap plane encountered same Area.

(15) R/C Aircraft observed possibly 15 ships including 3 or 4 large in Kavieng anchorage forenoon 19th.

(16) Photo Rabaul forenoon 17th disclose 4 destroyers, 4 subs. 10 trawlers, 15 smaller ships, 250 barges plus 18 Floatplanes 3 flying boats in harbour.

(17) Night 17th - 18th Allied M.T.B's destroyed 2 barges Buka Passage. Ineffective return fire received also bombs from floatplane. Other boats straffed and bombarded Coast Central Augusta Bay without meeting opposition.

(18) Same time three Jap bombers raided anchorage Torokina causing slight damage and casualties.

(21) Noon 18th 19 Liberators bombed Matchin Bay Waterfront while 5 hit Bois, 10 attacking Kahili and 3 Kieti. (G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 200814)

Anti-U-Boat Warfare, Atlantic Convoy Instructions.

South-west Pacific Anti-Submarine Reports for June, July and August have now been received in Admiralty and read with great interest. Approval is requested to publish extracts from time to time in C.B.04050/43 series.

(2) Operational instructions additional to Atlantic Convoy Instructions and specially applicable to the case of small Convoys subjected to attack by single U-Boat, have recently been issued by C.in C. E.F. and C. in C. S.A. Station, as a result of visits by Admiralty Anti-U-Boat Warfare Adviser with operational experience both at sea and at Control H.Q's.

(3) Should you require copies of these instructions suggest application direct to C's in C. concerned. (A.C.N.S.(U.T.) 202225A to A.C.N.B. Info: C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 201455A, 201456A)

War Diary.

20.12.1943.
Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked.

Sub.
Attack and
sighting
Summary to
0900Z/20th.

Para. A. (1) SS. PHEMIUS torpedoed 05.01' N.
01 degs. 17' W. at 2320Z/19th.

(2) Survivors from SS. KINGSWOOD landed near
Takoradi p.m. 19th.

(3) U.S. Transit Aircraft sighted U-Boat course
224 degs. in 05.28' N. 00.08' W. at 0308Z/18th.

Para. C. Aircraft sighted probable P/S track
42.38' N. 15.38' E. at 1226Z/19th.

Para. D. (1) C.T.G.21.6 reported attacking doubtful contact
in 55.46' N. 07.48' W. at 1800Z/19th.

(2) Aircraft sighted possible periscope course 360 degs. in
35.19' N. 09.09' W. at 0805Z/19th.

(D.D.I.C. 200924Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

27

Operation
F.V.

1(a) C. in C. Home Fleet with Force Z (DUKE OF YORK, JAMAICA and 4 destroyers) arrived at Akureyri at 1250A today from Kola Inlet.
(b) The Murmansk section of J.W.55A (12 ships and M.M.S.1005 and 1023) in company with the 3rd D.F. and through escort were reported by S.B.N.O. North Russia (Polyarnoe) at 210256A to have arrived. Local escort met the White Sea section (7 ships) at 1130A yesterday, and they are expected to arrive at the Dvina Bar at 0200A tomorrow.

Weather:
3 vessels
lost.

2(a) The S/M RORQUAL, on passage from Portland to Portsmouth escorted by CHASSEUR V, reported at 1030A today that her escort had capsized in 50.35 N. 01.50 W. Six survivors were picked up, and other members of the crew were reported alive inside the hull which sank later.
(b) Stormy weather caused some dislocation of shipping and convoys to-day. L.C.A.645 and 646 were lost in heavy seas off the Eddystone.

SS. NORHAUK.

3. SS. NORHAUK in Convoy F.S.5 was mined and sunk at 1425A to-day in 51.50.12 N. 01.33.14 E. off Harwich.

4. Bomber Command laid 122 mines last night off the Frisian Isles.

South Atlantic.

U-Boat
attacked.

5. COPINSAY attacked a U-Boat yesterday afternoon about 130 miles south of Takoradi. This morning AMARANTHUS and early this afternoon PICT also attacked a U-Boat about 120 miles S.S.W. of Takoradi, after which aircraft reported an oil patch 12 miles long in the vicinity. The hunt continues tonight with 14 surface vessels and air co-operation.

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Air Attack
on
G.U.S.25.

6. Convoy G.U.S.25 was attacked by enemy aircraft 1648 and 1707 to-day in 35.16 N. 16.58 E (90 miles E.S.E. of Malta), and at 2009A S.O. 50th Escort Group reported that SS. ALPIERAT had been sunk by a near miss. No other ship was damaged. Two Mosquitos covering the convoy attacked and claim to have damaged two Ju.88's.

Aegean.

7(a) The Admiralty to-day informed C. in C. Levant that the Cabinet attach great importance to the continuance of Greek relief ship traffic, and he must either arrange to ensure as far as is practicable the safety of relief vessels in Greek harbours, or discontinue minelaying in ports visited by Swedish relief traffic (c.f. 7 Dec.) The bombing of Greek harbours is to continue, but every effort is to be made to avoid damage to relief vessels. (b) SOKOL reports that she sank a 4500 ton merchant ship on 11th, a convoy of 4 schooners on 12th and a caique on 15th. On 17th she made two hits on a 4000 ton merchant ship, believed to be SS. BALKAN, and probably sank the vessel. All these incidents occurred at night off Cape Irene (S.E. coast of Lemnos). SOKOL has 7 German soldiers and 2 Greek on board

Australia and New Zealand.

8. A Naval Catalina last night bombed and set on fire a large ship off the North-west part of Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. In the early hours of to-day an Army Liberator saw a 7000 ton transport blazing fiercely in the neighbourhood of the Catalina's attack. In company was a medium freighter which the Liberator sank with a 2000 lb bomb.

21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

JAMAICA,
LONDON.

It is stated in A.M. 200019A Dec. that JAMAICA is remaining in H.F. and that LONDON is allocated to E.F. to sail about 1st Feb.

2. It is understood from Admiralty however that LONDON can be retained until completion of Jan. Russian convoy cycle.

(C.S.1 211214A to C. in C.H.F.)

D.E.M.S.
arming
policy.

Pass to D.E.M.S. Staff Officers. To economise labour and personnel the following adjustments to existing D.E.M.S. arming policy have been approved.

(Controller 211919 to A.I.G. 18 and 12.)

PHEASANT,
BLACK SWAN,
AMETHYST,
ERNE.

PHEASANT, BLACK SWAN, AMETHYST, ERNE are now allocated to Mediterranean. My 301010 October para. A. is cancelled.

(C. in C.W.A. 212213A to Capt. D.Greenock.)

Frigates
for Foreign
Service.

Admiralty 191751 para. 4.

1. It will not be possible to have eight frigates ready to sail for foreign service by February 1st in addition to AVON, PARRETT, LOSSIE, SHIEL.

2. Following are probable dates of readiness:

A. AVON, PARRETT December 29th.

B. LOSSIE, ROTHER, SPEY, WEAR, FINDHORN February 1st.

C. SHIEL, TAPP, NADDER, JED. Mid-February.

D. EVENLODE Mid-March.

3. Date for SHIEL must be considered highly problematical in view of previous experience with Canadian-built ships.

(C. in C.W.A. 212307A to Admty.)

Movements.

RORQUAL.

My 201739 Para. H. amend to read leaves Portland 0715/21st for Portsmouth, E.T.A. Needles 1030/21st.
(Admty. 210030A to A.I.G. 25.)

T.G.28.8

Departing Reykjavik 1430/22. Route. E.T.A. Norfolk 1730/29th.
(Comnaveu 210628 to Admty.)

KING GEORGE V. Amend route from E. to new G. 56° N. 19° W. thence to F.

(D.O.D.H. 211053A to KING GEORGE V, LONDON.)

Attention is called to my 211211. Position of unescorted ZEEHOND is approximate.

(C. in C.W.A. 211625A to KING GEORGE V.)

S/M Move-
ments.

Positions of S/Ms at 0800/22 and movements for following 24 hours.

(F.O.S. 211703A, 212307, 221208A, 221408A.)

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - Contd.

ENTERPRISE.

Scapa departure ENTERPRISE.
(A.C.O.S. 211736A to C. in C.Plymouth.)

TRUMPETER.

TRUMPETER is required to ferry to U.K. U.S. Army aircraft together with such R.N. aircraft as may be ready.

3. C. in C.W.A. is requested to sail TRUMPETER to U.S. in U.C.9.

4. B.A.D. is requested to sail TRUMPETER again to U.K. when ready.
(D.O.D.H. 211759A to C. in C.W.A.)

P.71.

Request you will sail Greek Submarine P.71 about 4th January for Gibraltar for onward passage to Beirut.
(F.O.S. 212136A to Capt. S.3.)

Operations.

Operation
F.V.

J.W.55A. Murmansk Section of 12 ships and motor minesweepers 1005 and 1023 in company with 3rd D.F. and through escort arrived Kola Inlet. White Sea Section 7 ships met by local escort 1130A/20 and proceed E.T.A. Dvina Bar 0200A/22. (S.B.N.O.N.Russia 210256A to H.F.)

Faroes arrival ONSLOW, ONSLAUGHT, ORWELL, IMPULSIVE, SCOURGE, IROQUOIS, HURON, HAIDA.

(N.O.I.C. Faroes 210943A to R.A.D.)

My 091428. Force 2 arrived 16th and left 18th December.

Believed presence was undetected. Good weather prevailed enabling a full programme of visits to be carried out.

2. An excellent liaison was established between ourselves and Admiral Golovko and his staff who gave us a warm welcome and every hospitality.

3. From my personal observation confirmed by S.B.N.O.Polyarnoe and Admirel Fisher, the visit was a great success.

4. I was extremely pleased also to have the opportunity of seeing the S.B.N.O.North Russia (Polyarnoe) and S.B.N.O.Murmansk and their staffs and to observe conditions at Polyarnoe at first hand and all the good work they do. To my regret time did not allow me to visit Murmansk.

(C. in C.H.F. 211114 to Admty.)

A.M. 191405. Request you will ask maximum Russian Submarine co-operation off Altenfjord during passage of J.W.55B and R.A.55A and B between 23rd December and 3rd January.

(C. in C.H.F. 211237A to S.B.N.O.N.Russia.)

Your 101132. Amended E.T.A. Akureyri Force 2 was passed to me at 0030A today. HARRIER and LOYALTY swept channel 60% 3½ cables either side of centre line from position C to lat. 066° 06' N. where sweep was abandoned in (?blizzard) to clear the front ship Force 2 entering harbour. Negative result.

(M/3 1 211251A to C. in C.H.F.)

Position at 212000. J.W.55B HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE, WHITEHALL, WRESTLER, HONEYSUCKLE, OXLIP, GLEANER 061° 54' N. 005° 40' W. to northward, 9½.

(A.C.O.S. 211309 to Ships.)

/My...

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation My 191414. Unsuccessful today.
 F.V. (Contd.) (S.B.N.O. North Russia 211415A to Admty.)
 Akureyri arrival at 1250A C. in C.H.F. with Force 2
 (A.C.I.C. 211606A to H.F.)
 Request Naval Stores and provisions for North
 Russia be shipped in escorts in future to facilitate waits and
 disposal. My 211701A refers.
 (S.B.N.O. North Russia 211717A to Admty.)
 R/C aircraft received from S.O. Escort position of J.W.55B
 at 1500A today as 060° 50' N. 004° 57' W. and also his estimated
 position at 0800A/22nd as 063° 18' N. 005° 10' W.
 (C. in C. Rosyth 211738 to H.F.)
 One Sunderland detailed for A/S escort from first to last
 light tomorrow.
 (C. in C. Rosyth 212157A to Escorts J.W.55B.)

Operation GLASGOW is leaving present patrol forthwith and
 "Stonewall". sweeping through position PP. 045° 20' N. 029°
 18' W. and thence arrive Horta at 1400A/22nd as
 previously ordered keeping (?East of) GAMBIA on
 patrol G. My 201846A refers.
 (C. in C. Plymouth 210341A to GLASGOW, (R) GAMBIA.)
 U.S. BLOCK ISLAND has signalled that he proposes maintaining
 aircraft search line between Milne Bank and 42° N. 34° 30' W.
 retiring at 15 knots during the night and non-flying weather
 commencing daylight on 22nd until sunset on 24th.
 2. BLOCK ISLAND has suggested to U.S.S. CORE that the latter
 extends this line to the South East.
 (D.O.D.H. 211507A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. Plymouth.)
 Anti-blockade runner air and surface patrols are being
 maintained by cruisers and aircraft from the Azores in area
 roughly 50 miles either side of: 42° 15' N. 49° 10' N. 30°
 10' W. 32° 52' W.
 2. C. in C. Plymouth will keep authorities in the address informed
 of any changes.
 (D.O.D.H. 211934Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q. C. in C.C.N.A.)
 2 American Escort Carriers may operate in your vicinity.
 (C. in C.W.A. 211943A to Escorts S.C.149, GAMBIA, C.U.9.)

S/M Patrols. TAKU leaves Lerwick at 1200A/21st. proceeding on
 the surface at C.O. discretion by route "Black" to
 070° 27' thence to patrol position T.7 remaining
 west of T.7 until 0100A/25th.
 VENTURER is to maintain patrol to westward of route "Pink" from
 0400A/22nd to 0600A/23rd Dec.
 (Capt. S.9. 210925A to S/Ms.)
 Arrival SATYR.
 (S.O.S/M Lerwick 210935A to Admty.)
 1. SYRTIS is to be sailed as soon as ready to patrol T.7 and
 T.8 instead of TAKU.
 2. SIRDAR is to remain on patrol until relieved by SYRTIS.
 (F.O.S. 211509A to Capt. S.9.)
 Positions of submarines at 0800/22nd and movements for
 following 24 hours.
 A. SIRDAR, VENTURER and O.15 as in my 161734.
 B. STUBBORN approx. 64° 30' N. 06° 01' E. probably on surface to
 pass through 64° 05' N. 05° 44' E. at 2200/22nd, thence to Lerwick
 speed 10 knots.
 (F.O.S. 211703A to Admty.)

/My...

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

S/M Patrols. My 210925. For TAKU read SYRTIS and amend time of sailing to 1800A/22nd. SYRTIS will remain west of T.7 until 2000A/26th. VENTURER is to remain West of route "Pink" from 0700A/23rd to 0800A/24th. (Capt. S.9 211807A to S/Ms.)
F.O.S. 211509. Request you sail SYRTIS at 1800A/22nd routed as in my 201531. SYRTIS is to remain west of T.7 until 2000A/26th. (Capt. S.9 211809A to S.O. S/M Lerwick.)

Coastal Force Patrols. 1. Orders for night 21st/22nd December. Weather permitting following anti E-Boat patrols 1900A to 0700A.
A. 2 CHASSEURS on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35' W. and 00° 48' W.
B. 3 M.Ls. from Portland on 50° 18' N. between 01° 45' W. and 02° 35' W.
2. M.L. 292 short notice St. Helens.
3. BLEASDALE short notice Yarmouth. (C. in C.Portsmouth 211326A.)
Harwich minesweepers and Auxiliary Patrols remaining in harbour owing to weather. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 211732 to C. in C.Nore.)

Exercises.

Exercise "Duck". Exercise "Duck" is due to begin on the night of 2nd/3rd Jan. 1944 and may last 2 days. It is intended if possible to provide close escort by 4 Hunts of 15th Flotilla and A/S trawlers. The Hunts will also participate in the exercise by providing shore bombardment.
3. In addition to close escort, prudence demands a covering force against the potential threat from enemy destroyers and T.B. based in N.W..France. A force of 4 destroyers is suggested. It cannot be provided from Plymouth Command.
4. The coastal force also requires strengthening to give better protection against possible attack from E-Boats during these large scale exercises.
5. It is understood that no escorting or covering of U.S.Naval Forces will be available at any rate for exercise "Duck" and it is requested that this matter of reinforcements may be given urgent consideration. (C. in C.Plymouth 211752A to Admty.)

Mining.

NORHAUK (Nor.) 6068 tons sunk in convoy F.S.5. NORHAUK (N.S.) mined and sinking aground in 051° 43' 5" N. 001° 35'.5 E. (LANCASTER 211455 to C. in C.Nore.)
SUPERMAN and another tug from Harwich being sent to assist damaged ship near 51 buoy..Also SANDOWN diverted from B.8. (C. in C.Nore 211458A to WINCHESTER, LANCASTER.)

/My...

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

NORHAUK (Nor.) My 211455. NORHAUK. B. Suspected mine C. nearly 6086 tons, sunk in attempt to tow clear of channel. D. LANCASTER 8 including master, one injured. EMPIRE BROOK 8, one injured has proceeded. GASRAY number unknown. Has proceeded. Tug SUPERMAN 13 non injured. Position of NORHAUK when mined 051° 50' 04" N. 001° 32' E.

(LANCASTER 211645A to C. in C.Nore.)

Intend to proceed to Sheerness at first light tomorrow. Request water transport for one cot case and 7 survivors.

(LANCASTER 212145A to C. in C.Nore.)

LANCASTER proceed Sheerness at daylight to land survivors.

(C. in C.Nore 212214A to WESTMINSTER, LANCASTER.)

1. December 21st 1425A. 2. NORHAUK. 3. 6086 tons.
4. 51.50.12 N. 01.33.14 E. 5. S. by W. 7½ knots. 6. Midships.
7. 13 survivors brought to Harwich by SUPERMAN. Of these 13 only one British who could give little information. No serious casualties, two minor.

(F.O.I.C. Harwich 212319A and 231244A to Admty.)

NORHAUK mined at 1425A today. Positions reported by Sunk and Rough forts. Mined in 51.50.12 N. 01.33.14 E. sank in 51.50.18 N. 01.33.06 E. at approx. 1500A. Salvage Officer reports back broken, no possibility of salvage. Bow, stern, and three feet of funnel showing 2 hours before H.W.

(F.O.I.C. Harwich 212321A to C. in C.Nore.)

Skagerrack.

The following area within German declared area in Skagerrack is known to contain mines.

A. 57° 21' N. 08° 03' E. B. 57° 19' N. 08° 05' E.
C. 57° 15' N. 07° 58' E. D. 57° 17' N. 07° 55' E.

(D.D.I.C. 211709A to C. in C.H.F. V.A.2.)

Enemy Intelligence.

JACQUELINE.

Departure December 19th enemy-controlled JACQUELINE Bayonne (?with) F SPAR (Gijon 211145A to Admty.)

Technical.

RICHELIEU.

Trials of loading arrangements in RICHELIEU with British 6 inch and 15 inch shells have proved unsuccessful owing principally to relative shortness of British shells and tapered rear end of French shells.

(C.S.1 210950A to Admty.)

Navigational.

North
Russia.

The winter this year is approx. 5 weeks late and general forecast is that moderately light ice conditions will prevail in White Sea, the general density being one - two tenths less than normal.

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Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Navigational.

North
Russia.
(Contd.)

2. There will probably be clear water in Gorlo until end of January after which wind becomes governing factor north easterly wind being the most unfavourable packing the Gorlo ice against the Terski Coast and making navigation extremely difficult. This wind also brings down the ice from Novaya Zemlya and east Barent Sea.

3. The late and moderate season will not materially ease the conditions in Dvina and Molotovsk approaches as northerly wind packs the ice very heavily in Dvina Gulf.

4. To sum up having regard to icebreakers strength fairly easy conditions should prevail outside Dvina Gulf until end of Jan. but there after only small groups of ships can be passed through White Sea.

(S.B.N.C. Archangel 210913A to S.B.N.O.N. Russia.)

Wreck off
Humber.

Beaufighter M.K.X Q/236 at 210822 in 53° 15' N. 04° 45' E. sighted wreck on Port Bow, investigated, and identified bow out of water heading landward with light mast and bridge superstructure, then gap of 100 - 120 ft. then stern and M.W. superstructure. Impression was of tanker or tanker-type 300/350 ft. with back broken, no heavy masts seen.
(North Coates 211017A to 16 Group.)

Casualties & Defects.

CHASER 5
sunk.

My 201527. Sailed at 0738 (CHASER 5 escorting RORQUAL).
(F.C.I.C. Portland 210930A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)
Escort has capsized in 050° 35' N. 001° 50' W.
(RORQUAL 211030A to N.O.I.C. Portland.)

Have picked up 3 survivors. Swanage life boat has also picked up 3. Some trapped alive inside hull, rapid drift toward shore. Tug could tow. Shall stand by until further orders. Sea and swell 4 3.

(RORQUAL 211145A to Capt. S.5.)

CHASER 5 stranded in position 076° Darleston Castle 9 cables S.O.A. 12 knots, passing Needles at 1340.

(RORQUAL 211235A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

CHASER 5 whilst escorting RORQUAL from Portland to Needles capsized at approximately 1020 in approx. 099° Anvil Point 2 miles. Three survivors rescued by RORQUAL and three by Swanage life boat. CHASER remained afloat bottom up and was last seen at 1235 by Swanage coastguard, later reported by Polish destroyer BLYSKAWICA as having sunk.

(F.O.I.C. Portland 211521 to Admt.)

LADY BERYL.

My 201918. Owing to collision damage, sailing of LADY BERYL is cancelled. Probable duration 7 - 10 days.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 211114A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

/LADY BERYL...

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Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

- LADY BERYL. (Contd.) LADY BERYL has been in collision on the Clyde a.m. today with SS. FREDRICK.
2. LADY BERYL has received damage which will necessitate approximately 10 days delay and repairs are being taken in hand.
(Capt. D.Greenock 211750A to Admty.)
- LOYALTY. When leaving main quay Akureyri about 0445 hrs. today LOYALTY grounded aft close to eastward quay. Ship was being blown to leeward at moment of grounding and was towed clear by HARRIER. No apparent damage.
(M/S 1 211257A to C. in C.H.F.)
- PRINCE LEO. Balloon trawler PRINCE LEO ashore on Hunda. Is holed and partially flooded. Salvage will take several days and is dependent on weather. S/V BERTHA is in attendance.
(C.S.V.O.Lyness 211452 to A.S.Orkney.)
- ZEEHOND. E.T.A. Lough Foyle 0930A/22nd. 2 ratings require hospital treatment on arrival.
(ZEEHOND 211609A to F.O.S.)
ARCTURUS will leave Lough Foyle to R/V with you in 055° 29' N. 007° 31' W. at 0630A tomorrow as escort to Merville.
(Cdre. D.W.A. 212221A to ZEEHOND.)
- RATTLESNAKE. Intend sailing RATTLESNAKE by searched channels and Minches to Glasgow at 0900/22nd.
(A.C.O.S. 211711A to F.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

Shipping & Convoys.

- T.U.5. Sailed C.T.F. 69 in NEVADA and NELSON, GLENNON, JEFFERS and RHIND.
(F.O.I.C.N.I. 2110045A to C. in C.W.A.)
Following sailed for T.U.5 BUTLER, HERNDON, GHERARDI and QUICK.
(U.S.E.C.Londonderry 210700⁴ to C. in C.W.A.)
SHAWNEE is not to be sailed to overtake convoy T.U.5. C.T.F. 69 201756 not to all addresses refers.
2. F.O.I.C. Belfast is requested to sail EARLE to join convoy T.U.5 F.O.I.C. Belfast 202315 refers.
(D.O.D.H. 210710A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)
T.U.5 cancel my 202315A.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 210845A to C. in C.W.A.)
Sailed EARLE to overtake.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 211041A to C. in C.W.A.)
T.U.5. Sailed convoy composed and escorted as in A.M. 151635A and 182007A December with following amendments. Add CANYON CREEK delete SHAWNEE routed as in Admiralty message 152115A
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 211044A to Admty.)

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Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys - Contd.

- U.C.8. U.S. Combat Loaders, OBERON, ANDROMEDA, CHARLES CARROLL, PROCYON, BARNETT and ARCTURUS sailed from U.K. 19/12 in convoy U.C.8 for New York with no British personnel on board. 2. Agreed. (.D.S.T. 210140A to B.A.D. Washington.)
- A.T.81. Arrived SS. MAURETANIA.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 210200Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- P.W.449. P.W.449 postponed 24 hours owing to weather.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 210938A.)
- O.S.62/
K.M.S.36,
O.N.216 &
O.N.S.25. All stragglers from your respective convoys have been ordered to return to U.K. if unable to rejoin by dark tonight.
(C. in C.W.A. 211050Z to Escorts.)
All stragglers unable to rejoin convoy by dark tonight return to U.K.
(C. in C.W.A. 211051Z to Stragglers O.N.216.)
Unable to rejoin convoy by dark tonight. All stragglers return to U.K.
(C. in C.W.A. 211102Z to Stragglers O.S.62/K.M.S.36.)
O.N.216. NK. alter course forthwith for AT. 052° 00' N. 023° 00' W. thence to AR. No amendment to stragglers route.
(C. in C.W.A. 211218Z to Escorts O.N.216.)
O.N.S.25. Alter course to pass through YN. 050° 35' 022° 00' thence to YM. No amendment to stragglers route.
(C. in C.W.A. 211225Z to Escorts O.N.S.25.)
O.S.62. All escorts except KISTNA and MOYOLA in company with 39 merchant ships. GODAVARI and 2 also MOYOLA and B.Y.M.3. expected to join tomorrow. KISTNA and 7 ships are 15 miles astern overtaking. Weather moderating. My P.C. and S. 51.59, 17.32, 248 5 knots.
(E.G.40 211701Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- H.X.270. Am being shadowed by 1 enemy aircraft bearing 030° height unknown. Position 49.54 N. 24.00 W. course 077° 9 knots.
(ASSINIBOINE 211130Z to Whitehall W/T.)
Proceed forthwith at best speed consistent with weather to join and support H.X.270. Estimated position at 2000 tonight 050° 50' N. 023° 06' W. 050° 9 knots.
(C. in C.W.A. 211215Z to B.1.)
Correct my 211130. P.C. and S. at 1500Z 49° 41' N. 23° 27' W. 019° 9 knots. Previous course in accordance with C. in C.W.A.'s 210809.
(C.1 211225Z to C. in C.W.A.)
H.X.270. Onward route as in my 211228.
2. S.O.C.1 ASSINIBOINE, additional escort TRACKER. 62 ships.
3. Rescue ship MELROSE ABBEY, A/S trawler COLDESTREAMER.
4. Escort oiler HERBRAND.
(C. in C.W.A. 211538A to B.1.)

/Stragglers...

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Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys - Contd.

Stragglers. Stragglers return week ending 091521
EMPIRE CHIEF ex O.N.C.215 steering gear damage 1
week's repair. FAGERFJELL ex O.N.C.216 damaged
propeller. BRITISH HONOUR ex O.N.S.25 steering
gear damage heavy weather. MERCHANT ROYAL ex
O.S.M. 62/K.M.S.36 heavy weather. Burst steam pipes. BARON
SCOTT ex O.N.S.0.25 full gale unable to keep up with convoy.
DEIDO ex O.S.62/K.M.S.36 Heavy weather and main injection pipe
fractured. SYRIAN PRINCE ex O.N.S.25 heavy weather electrical
and mechanical defects. STEPHEN B.ELKINS ex O.N.M.216 heavy
weather. Ballast shifted listed.
(N.C.S.O.Clyde 211217A to Admty.)
Straggler ex S.L.141, M.K.S.32, RECORDER boiler, CLAN
CAMERON weather. Ex H.X. 269 RABY CASTLE steering.
(N.C.S.O.Mersey 211230A to Admty.)
STEPHEN B.ELKINS return from O.N.M.216, ballast shifted.
STAR OF CAIRO return from O.N.S.U.25, heavy weather. Lost 2
life boats. FLYINGDALE return from O.S.M. 62/K.M.S.36, heavy
weather unable to maintain speed.
(N.C.S.O.Clyde 211330A to C. in C.W.A.)

S.L.142/
M.K.S.33. NK. and NU. amended route. From DT. 048° 00' N.
023° 00' W. to DQ. omitting DS. No amendment to
stragglers route.
(C. in C.W.A. 211315A to Escorts.)

E.N.20. EMPIRE MOORHEN not arrived.
(N.C.S.O. Oban 211446A to A.I.G. 191.)

T.A.79. Intend to sail AQUITANIA passing Clyde boom 2359A/
22nd to comply with Admiralty 201115A Dec. S.O.A.
19½ knots. E.T.A. Ambrose Light Vessel 0300Z/30th
Dec.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 211626A to Admty.)

F.D.17. Intend sailing MORIALTA escorted by HAMLET at 1900A/
22nd to Aberdeen. Route. S.O.A. 9, E.T.A. 1000A/24.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes 211648A to N.O.I.C. Aberdeen.)

F.S.6. Negative sailing owing to stress of weather.
(N.C.S.O. Humber 211732A to Admty.)

K.M.F.27. Convoy K.M.F.27 sailed from U.K. 16th Dec. compri-
sing the following 12 troop transports. Names
and destinations.
2. Stores etc. were shipped in troop transports as
follows. Details. 3. Following commercial freightships also
sailed from U.K. in convoy K.M.F.27 for India, CHYEBASSA, PEGU,
TAI SHAN. Also following freightships which will be detached
before convoy arrives Gibraltar, PERTSHIRE, PORT JACKSON. 5.
Destinations of troop transports are as follows.

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Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

K.M.F.27.
(Contd.)

7. Convoy will call at Algiers to enable SCYTHIA and ORONTES to embark to capacity for Middle East.
11. DUNNOTTAR CASTLE will join convoy K.M.F.27 at Gibraltar from West Africa for Bombay.
(D.S.T. 211853A to F.O.I.C. Gibraltar.)

K.M.F.28.

Following is provisional composition of convoy K.M.F.28. Embarkation of personnel will take place between 11/1 and 14/1 inclusive. 17 ships, names.
(D.S.T. 212240A.)

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Tuesday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

URCHIN. Remain with convoy and enter Gib. on passing Carnero Point.
(F.O.C. Gib. 211200A to E. of C. K.M.F.27. (R) C. in C. Med.)

Italian Merchant ships in Spanish ports. B.N.A. Madrid's 201155A. Request C. in C. Med. will reply to para.4 so far as CESENA is concerned suggest Spanish authorities might be asked to provide escort for this ship as far as Cartagena to ensure no interference from enemy while ship is in territorial waters.
(Second part indecypherable). Repetition requested (F.O. Gib. 211223A to C. in C. Med., B.N.A. Madrid (R) Admty., F.O.T.A.L.I.)

Axis shipping. (55) SCHARLACHBERGER in Outer Harbour fully loaded ready for sea.
(H.M. Consul Bilbao 211225 to M.E.W.)

Convoy X.K.13. Flight Q. Intend to sail WHITEHAVEN, RYE and BOSTON at 1800A/22nd to Ponta Delgada routed through:-
(D) 036° 00' N. 010° 00' W. (E) 037° 30' N. 025° 00' W. S. of A. 11, codeword "Drain".
2. A.M. 191809 refers.
(F.O. Gib. 211718A to S.B.N.O. Azores (R) Admty., C. in C. Med., N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, San Miguel.)

ULSTER, GRENVILLE, ROCKET. Your 211030A (N.T. in W.R.) para. (VII) ULSTER, GRENVILLE, ROCKET are still at Horta. No sailing orders received request instructions. Gibraltar broadcast has been maintained continuously.
(ULSTER 211725A to F.O. Gib.)
ULSTER, GRENVILLE, ROCKET, sailed from Horta 1816. 21st.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 212041Z to F.O. Gibraltar.)

GEORGETOWN, LINCOLN. Arrival Horta of GEORGETOWN, LINCOLN 1416/21st.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 211746Z to F.O. Gib. (R) Admty., C. in C. W.A.)

K.M.S.35. Arrival. 20. Ships (list).
(F.O. Gib. 211801 to Admty.)

S.R.8. Arrived.
(F.O. Gib. 212030A to F.O.C.W.Af.)

21.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

U/B Periscope sighted 067 05 bearing 180° 1005 yards,
attacked. attacked with depth charges, contact lost through
A/S breakdown. COPINSAY, HYDRANGEA and A/C. co-
operating.
(Ship at Sea (name unknown) 210715Z to Freetown
W/T.)

AMARANTHUS sighted periscope 0715/21. Attacked with depth
charges contact lost through A/S. break. Position 03° 10' N. 01°
10' W.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 210838 to Admty.)

AMARANTHUS made a further attack at 0800/21 in 03° 30' N. 01°
01' W. two heavy underwater explosions were subsequently heard.
Continuing to search area.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 211209Z to Admty.)

PICT made depth charge attack at 1150Z/21st in 03° 30' N. 01°
01' W. and reports subsequent underwater explosion. Aircraft
report oil patch twelve miles long in 03° 20' N. 01° 13' W. at
1601Z/21st.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 211801Z to Admty.)

Arrivals 21st COPINSAY. Departures 0430Z F.F.S. COMMANDANT
DROGOU A/S. search.

(N.O.I.C. Takoradi 212119Z to F.O.C.W.Af., Admty., N.O.I.C.
Lagos.)

Amplification of my 201836Z. COPINSAY reports 4 attacks
carried out between 1330Z and 1415/20. 50 feet of S/M. seen for
about 30 seconds after third attack. Oil appeared on surface
before fourth attack after which contact lost. (2) Hunt
continues tonight with 14 surface vessels and air co-operation.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 212201Z to Admty.)

S.L.144. Intend to sail S.L.144 at 1230/22nd. Escorts
BALLINDERRY, CYCLAMEN, AUBRETIA additional
COMDT. D'ESTIENNE D'ORVES for U.K. COMDT. D'ESTIENNE
D'ORVES will be detached as convenient to escort
Casablanca section. Commorseafron is requested to
sail local escort to meet to enable COMDT D'ESTIENNE D'ORVES to
refuel and rejoin convoy. F.O.C. Gib. is requested to arrange R/V
with M.K.S.35, escorts negative D'ESTIENNE D'ORVES to escort
TORDENE and Fleet Tenders for Gib.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 211342Z.) Sailed(S.O.1. Freetown 211357Z.)

Italian D'AOSTA patrolling area C.D.E. 20th to 25th.
cruiser (F.O.C.W.Af. 211600Z to Com.4th U.S. Fleet, Comar
patrols. Dakar (R) Admty.)

M.L.226. Your 211202Z (N.T. in W.R.) not received yet
position 211800Z 02.52 N. 01.24 W.
(M.L.226 211812Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi.)

Sabotage of A case has occurred in which a foreign body was
depth charge. inserted in the primer tube of a depth charge in
one of H.M.T. apparently by saboteurs.
2. (Corrupt group) to fact that depth charges on
upper deck stowages lend themselves to sabotage
and (?can) arrangements be made for an inspection
once a watch to ensure they have not been tampered with.
(C. in C. South Atlantic 211837C to South Atlantic Station 744G.)
/CILICIA...

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

CILICIA.

Intend to sail CILICIA at 21700/23rd to patrol in XV (WY?) N. My 201637 refers. CILICIA leaves patrol 10th Jan. 1944.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 211912Z to Italian (C) EMANUELE FILBERTO DUCA D'AOSTA (R) Cdr. 4th U.S. Fleet, Comar Dakar, Admty.)

Operation
"Tabarin".

Reference A.M. 071856. HIGHLAND MONARCH speed 15 knots code number F.2. sailed from U.K. 16 Dec. with 1818 personnel on board for Falkland Islands and 17 for South Georgia. 2. Following stores were also shipped for Falkland Islands:- Stores, 3 jolly boats, motor boat and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ tons petrol. (D. of S.T. 211927A to N.A. Montevideo, N.O.I.C. Falkland Island.)

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Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

- VINDICTIVE. It is intended that VINDICTIVE should be stationed at Malta.
2. Request you will sail her to arrive Malta by 3rd Jan.
(C. in C. Med., 211056A to N.O.I.C. Bizerta.)
- Re-organisation of 5th D.F. and 22nd D.F. Amend 409B by exchanging G.S.CRETE and G.S. MIAOULES.
(C. in C. Med., 211205A to Med. Station Levant Station 410B (R) Admty.)
- F.T.14. Your 180436 F.T.14 at Port Said entered Canal 20th for E.F.
(C. in C. Levant, 211218B to Admty. (R) C, in C. Med. F.O. Ceylon, C. in C.E.F.)
- Italian M/Vs in Spanish ports. B.N.A. Madrid's 201155A. Request C. in C. Med. will reply to para. 4 so far as CESENA is concerned suggest Spanish authorities might be asked to provide escort for this ship as far as Cartagena to ensure no interference from enemy while ship is in territorial waters.
(F.O. Gibraltar, 211223A to C. in C. Med., B.N.A. Madrid, (R) Admty., F.O.T.A.L.I.) See 220853Z.
- U/B. Nr. 1. Submarine sighted 37.17 N. 11.05 E. 1217Z - 17° Cape Bond 59 miles.
(A/C HUKQ 211211Z.)
- Mining and bombing Greek harbours. Your 071209 Cabinet attach great importance to continuance of relief. Sinking of relief ships by mines in Greek harbours might have serious repercussions and result in indefinite suspension of relief traffic.
2. It is therefore highly important to ensure as far as is practicable the safety of relief vessels in harbour. Accordingly, unless you can suggest suitable alternative such as laying mines with a suitable limited life, which would achieve this end, you should discontinue mine laying in ports visited by Swedish relief traffic.
3. With regard to bombing of Greek harbours, it is appreciated that from time to time relief vessels may suffer from effects of bombing of nearby objectives. In view of the importance of matter, however, request you will consult air authorities concerned and endeavour to arrange that aircraft will make every effort to avoid deliberate attacks on relief vessels (which are by their distinctive markings readily distinguishable) when bombing Greek harbours.
4. Alexandria pass to H.Q.R.A.F. M.E. 201 Group.
(V.C.N.S. 211235A to C. in C. Levant, Info. C. in C. Med., H.Q.R.A.F. M.E. 201 Group.)

/Fiume...

21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

<p>Fiume. Torpedo works.</p>	<p>Output. 2. I have drawn attention of Air C. in C. to this target and he has referred the matter to London in order to assess the relative value of the target against other commitments. If facts in para. 1 are correct Admiralty may wish to press for bombing attack accordingly. The Fiume torpedo works appear to be in an exposed and destructive position which should make them fairly easy to destroy. (C. in C. Med. 211253 to Admty.) <i>Reply: 302305.</i></p>
<p>M.L.126 paid off 4th Dec.</p>	<p>M.L.126 paid off at Ischia (Naples) 4th due to extensive damage received from striking an explosive object believed to be a circling torpedo. (C.C.F.Med., 211426 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med., HORNET, B.A.O. ST. ANGELO, C.F.B. Malta.)</p>
<p>Censorship regulations for Italian ships.</p>	<p>To be brought into force on receipt of this signal. (C. in C. Med., 211541 to F.Os.i/c & N.Os.i/c Med. F.O.C. W.Af., C. in C. Levant., Admty.)</p>
<p>Gib. garrison.</p>	<p>183029. 17327 cipher 21st. Signed Eisenhower. For British Cs. of S. We assume that plan to reduce garrison Gib. is based on appreciation by Joint Intelligence Committee that danger of German attack through Spain is now greatly diminished in which view we agree, but obviously full information is not in our possession. Your OZ.4104 refers. We assume further that you appreciate fully the importance of Gibraltar as guard to our lines of communication and that in your view the forces to be left are adequate for the scale of threat. Detailed information on which to base an opinion as to forces now required is not available here. We do not therefore offer any objection to the plan. (A.F.H.Q., Algiers, 211545 W.O.)</p>
<p>Italian Hospital ships.</p>	<p>A.M. 271256 Nov. and my 081625. F.O.T.A.L.I. reports Minister of Marine agrees verbally and understands points in A.M. 271256 Nov. para. 4. Formal acceptance in writing waits approval of Italian Government being hastened. 2. My 081625 para. 3 PRINCIPESSA GIOVANNA estimated not ready for passage for further three weeks. (C. in C. Med. 211547A to Admty. (R) F.O.T.A.L.I.)</p>
<p>Air attack on G.U.S.25.</p>	<p>"Molly"* being attacked by enemy A/C 35.16 N. 16.58 E. 309 8. (STORK 211648.) *G.U.S.25. My 1648. Am being attacked by 4 aeroplanes at 1707. (STORK, 211707.)</p>

21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Air
attack
on G.U.S.25.
(Contd.)

ALPHERAT No. 102 sunk by near miss no casualties all survivors on board SAXIFRAGE. Intend transferring survivors to U.K. bound ship when weather permits. No other ship damaged.
(S.O.5th E.G.212009A.)

Italian and
French
training
S/Ms.

Reply to B.A.D. 181937.
(V.C.N.S. 211659A.)

ROSEBAY.

E.T.A. 1100B/22. Have defective Plummer block. Estimate ship's staff will take 3 days to make defect good.
(ROSEBAY, 211750B to N.O.I.C. Aden.)

U/B.

BARLE detached at 2005 in 031° 44' 032° 02' hunting good submarine contact. Have been instructed to report to you.
(BERGAMOT 212040B to C. in C. Levant.)

My 212040. BARLE reports contact doubtful. Is rejoining.
(BERGAMOT, 212129.)

Situation
report
No.255.

1. 2 German Schooners were captured by an M.T.B. operating North of Hvar on 19th and brought into Bari. 12 prisoners.
2. TEAZER and PENN patrolled off Yugoslavian coast off Rogoznica during night 19th/20th. No incidents reports.
(C. in C. Med. 212146A.)

SOKOL,
patrol
report.

4,500 ton merchant ship on 11th, convoy of (?4) Schooners on 12th one Caique on 15th, all sunk. 2 hits on 4,000 ton merchant ship believed SS. BALKAN on 17th probably sunk. All at night off Cape Irene. 30 Germans drowned. Have 7 German soldiers and 2 Greek on board.
(SOKOL, 212234B.)

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

- P.B. 66A escorts. CARNATIC unable to sail owing to defects both condensers. Escort P.B.66A WOOLONGONG only. (S.N.O. Persian Gulf, 210245Z.)
- B.M. 70. Sailing telegram. 13 ships. (2) 0300Z/21st. Escorts KHYBER, BARODA. (N.C.S.O. Bombay, 210317Z.)
- U/B disposition. (C. in C. E.F., 210324Z to E.F. 461 Y.)
- A.K.D. 9. Arrived 21st Kilindini portion comprising FORT CHAMBLY, CITY OF KHIOS escorted by LANDGUARD, SENNEN. (N.C.S.O. Kilindini, 210603 to Admty.)
- S.E.A. Air Report. 21st Dec. Daily Opsum. No. 646. A.C.9. 21st Dec. 0235FG Chittagong. 1 aircraft dropped 2 bombs in dock area. 3 casualties. No material damage reported. (S.E.A.A.C., 210900Z to Air Min.)
- DAISY MOLLER torpedoesd 14th Dec., report. (A) DAISY MOLLER. (B) 016° 20' N. 082° 13' E. 0420 I.S.T. Dec. 14th. (C) S/M Japanese probably class (I) (1) to (corrupt group) (4). (D) Torpedoed between 1 and 2 (? p.m., vessel sank in about 12 minutes. (E) Circuit. (F) 16 survivors from 3 rafts and one damage (? boat). (G) Boats rammed and machine gunned after vessel sank. (H) Yes - SSSS. (J) Books sank with vessel. (K) as in J. (M) Risk nil. (N) Master and W/T operation. (P) (? No) special book carried. (N.C.S.O. Vizagapatam, 210958Z to Admty., (R) C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.), S.O.(I) Colombo, S.O.(I) Bombay.)
- WOOLWICH. R.A.L. 202020. Request you will sail WOOLWICH escorted by Cdre. (D) in NAPIER with NIZAM and BETONY as soon as convenient after arrival of NAPIER and NIZAM and report E.T.A. at destinations below.
(2) Route is as follows. By "Gas" through 8 degree channel thence keeping 30 miles off Ceylon coast to Trincomalee.
(3) BETONY to be detached in 077° E. to proceed to Colombo.
(4) Escorts to fuel at sea as requisite from WOOLWICH.
(C. in C. E.F., 211042Z to N.O.I.C. Aden, (R) Cdre. (D), F.O. Ceylon, N.O.I.C. Trincomalee, WOOLWICH.)
- X.C.(?13) Sailing telegram. (2) 1215Z/21st. (6) SCOUT, SONAVATI. (N.O.I.C. Addu Atoll, 211219Z to Admty.)

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.

- GOODSON. This is N.O.B. Bermuda 201927. N.O.B. Argentinia, GOODSON departs Bermuda for Argentinia 202200Z. (Radio Washington, 210025.)
- O.N.215. Amend my 101318 as follows. Cancel para. 3. BURLINGTON will join with W.9. New Westomp established in 043° 45' N. 051° 27' W. at 1100Z/22nd. Weather forecast 2359/20 to 2359/21. (F.O.N.F., 210210Z to Ships escorting O.N.215.)
- QUEEN MARY. New York arrived 20th. (N.S.H.Q., 211251Z.)
- C.T.G. 21.15. Consider this 201823 from Cinclant to C.T.G.21.15 for action. "Stop operations in your area in time to arrive Casablanca 25th Dec. unless logistics require earlier arrivals. When directed by Commorseafron depart therefrom about 28th Dec. in support G.U.S.25 until appropriate to operate against any reported concentration or refueller. Further orders to come". (Comnaveu, 211356 to Admty.)
- GRECIAN,
GORE. Request GRECIAN and GORE be sailed to St. Johns p.m./22nd to arrive a.m./23rd. 2. Intend sailing these ships to U.K. with Group C.4 additional for H.X.272. (F.O.N.F., 211325Z to Capt. D. Argentinia, (R) C. in C. C.N.A., N.S.H.Q., C.T.F.24, C. in C. W.A., GRECIAN, GORE, Admty.)
- N.S.H.Q.
S/M
Estimate. (N.S.H.Q., 211515Z.)
- LE MALIN. Departing Bermuda 1930Z/21 French light cruiser LE MALIN for Azores. (N.O.B. Bermuda, 211558 to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) Cominch, C. in C. Lant, C. in C. Med., Commorseafron, Comnavnaw, Admty., C.T.F.69, C.T.F.66 North African French Naval Mission (Glassford), Naval France (Algiers), French Naval Mission Washington, S.B.N.O.W.At.)
- REDMILL
(B.D.E.89) REDMILL (B.D.E.89) departs Boston Gate 0900Q/22nd en route Casco Bay. (C.T.G. 02.1, 211610 to (U.S.) S.O.P.A. Casco Bay.)
- U.S. S/M
Estimate. (Cominch, 211623.)

/ANGUILLA ...

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Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.

ANGUILLA (P.F.72) Departs Boston Gate 1400Z/22nd en route Bermuda. (C.T.G. 02.1, 211810 to N.O.B. Bermuda.)

BALFOUR. Departs Bermuda for Argentina 212130Z. (N.O.B. Bermuda, 211858 to N.O.B. Argentina.)

H.X. 272. (1) Sailing despatch part 1 and 2. 65 ships.
(2) Position E at 1830Z/22nd.
(6) Task Unit W.2 MULGRAVE S.O., SHERBROOKE, VILLE DE QUEBEC, GUYSBOROUGH. (P.D. New York, 211946Z, 221756 to Admty.)

Re-assignment of French ships. Com. 3rd Fleet, Comwestseafron have for action by other means. Cincpac, Cinclant, Compaseafron, Commorseafron, B.A.D., French Naval Mission, N.Z.N.B., C.C.S. also have for information by other means. On request of Chief of French Naval Mission the following re-assignments of certain

French ships are authorised by Cominch as executive agent C.C.S. with concurrence of B.A.D.

(A) CHEVREUIL assigned F.O.C. West Africa as placement for LA GRANDIERE. Comwestseafron sail her when ready about end Jan. to Dakar via Canal Zone and Norfolk.

(B) LA GRANDIERE assigned Third Fleet. C. in C. Med. is requested to sail ship for Noumea when ready about 1st Feb.

(C) SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA assigned temporary duty Third Fleet until relieved by LA GRANDIERE.

C. in C. E.F. is requested to sail her to Noumea at earliest convenience.

(X) Vessels are available as escorts en route.

(Cominch, 212031Z to C. in C. E.F., C. in C. Med., F.O.C. West Africa, (R) Admty.)

Sub. attack and sighting summary. Para. D. All times Z. U.S.S. FRANKFORD attacks sound contact 12.33 N. 68.28 W. about 202100. K.53 Radar contact 23.42 N. 82.21 W. about 210253. Chantilly sights wakes 29.20 N. 77.20 W. 211300 and 29.09 N. 77.32 W. 211410. Dutch aircraft sights sub. approx. 12.15 N. 68.28 W. about 211557. (Cominch, 212040 to Admty.)

Escort oilers in H.X. Convoys. B.R.L.O. New York proposes in future to promulgate names of escort oilers sailing in H.X. Convoys whose hose has been re-rigged for fuelling without use of a steadying line these ships will possess necessary instructions for procedure.

2. As a temporary measure pending confirmation by Admty. it is requested that escorts be instructed to fuel from such named escort oilers as first preference using no steadying line.

(N.S.H.Q., 212045Z to F.O.N.F., (R) C. in C. C.N.A., Admty., C. in C. W.A., B.A.D., B.R.L.O. New York.)

/C. in C. ...

21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

C. in C. Med. J.S.M. Washington, 212215Z.
as See Lion Copy.
Eisenhower's
Executive
Agent in
Naval
Matters.

BALFOUR, Departed Bermuda.
LE MALIN. (S.B.N.O.W.At., 212245A.)

A.M.Cs. Your 191556. It appears probable that if the
acceleration U.S.N. is willing to berth the ships, which is
of not yet confirmed, they will have to lie in
withdrawal. Hampton Roads.
2. This will entail a considerable crew and
maintenance party remaining on board, and as
that will result in the crew not being available
for C.V.Es., it is requested that the merchant navy crew
referred to in para. 4 may be instructed to take over the ships
as soon as possible after their arrival.
(B.A.M.R., 212252Z to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest 3. 24 Mitchells struck barge base Orgeh Bay
Serial midday with 25 tons 300 lb. bombs also strafing
No. 700 from minimum height. 22 Liberators followed half
Dec. 20th. hour later dropping 88 tons of (corrupt) Colf
pounders from medium altitude. Results generally
unobserved.
5. Strong evidence Japanese party landed near
Arawe from about 7 barges night 19th. Nil contact yet reported.
Ground situation this area unchanged. Consolidate continue
with patrols active.
10. Twelve Kittyhawks three Beaufighters strafed targets
along coast south-east New Britain afternoon destroying 15
small boats near Cape Orford.
13. Afternoon 11 Aircobras two Boomerangs strafed 7 beached
barges this location.
15. Night 19th/20th effective air patrols Eastern Bismarck Sea
contacted about 15 enemy ships in small groups possibly forming
dispersed convoy off south-west coast New Ireland believed
heading towards Rabaul. Five Navy Catalinas participated
scoring hits one or possibly two ships of 6000 tons and another
of 8000 tons. One ship believed sunk. Two Army Liberators
also attacked shipping this area including two or three possible
destroyers before midnight without success. Sopac Liberator
also claimed sinking one transport ?same area and ? time.

Lion AWI
4884

MOST SECRET

WARNING : This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher or confidential code message, and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.

(*NOTE : Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad :
"O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

Cin C Mediterranean as General
Eisenhower's Executive Agent
in Naval matters.

MOST SECRET. M E S S A G E. 212215Z/December. IN.
From. J.S.M. Washington. Date. 22.12.45.
Recd. 0250Z.

C Y P H E R.

Addressed. W.C.O. London.

IZ. 4864. JSM. 1361. 21st December, 1943.

C.O.S.(W) 1001. U.S. Chiefs of Staff have today tabled a paper as follows.

2. Begins: In NAF 530 27th November/ 1943, General Eisenhower has recommended that in order to expedite action and simplify communications in matters pertaining to the French Navy, C. in C. Mediterranean as Naval Commander of N.A.T.O. be designated as General Eisenhower's executive agent in matters of purely naval concern and that C. in C. Med. be authorized direct communication with COMINCH on such matters with information copies to A.F.H.Q.

(ii) The United States Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion that the principal subjects pertaining to the French Navy on which C. in C. Med. would communicate with COMINCH are those pertaining to Naval rearmament repairs and supplies.

(iii) The United States Chiefs of Staff consider that it is desirable that Allied policy in supply matters pertaining to French Naval, Army and Air Forces be co-ordinated and consolidated under one agency and that the present situation does not warrant a change in the procedure outlined in CCS 358 (Revised) ... Ends.

3. They propose the following reply to General Eisenhower.

Begins: Reference your NAF 530 in view of necessity for unified policies in matters of French Naval Air and Military rearmament it is desired for present that French Naval matters within authority of A.F.H.Q. continue under the general direction of C. in C. Med. as theater commander as prescribed by CCS 358 (Revised). As covered in FAN 272 "there is no objection to C. in C. Med. representing you in matters of employment of forces and policy in your theater. However all matters of policy maintenance and supply must be in agreement with C.C.S. directive" Ends.

4. In our opinion J.S.M. 1342 para 2 is the reason for this Paper and the Americans consider that FAN 272 gives C. in C. Med. the necessary latitude.

5. The Americans have after all implemented a very large and expensive rearmament programme for the French forces and have found the present arrangements satisfactory. We suggest we should defer to their wishes and we therefore intend to accept the American paper unless we hear by Friday 24th.

212215Z.

Received in War Registry at 1830/22.
Circulated by W.C.O. to
Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Sec.
First Sea Lord.
C.6. Tels.
A.M.C.S. (C).

✓ 271743, YDT. (minwD)

1st Lord.
1st S.L. (2)
D.F.S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (W)
N.A. 1st S.L.
P.M.S. (S)
D.O.D. (F) (2)
D.O.D. (H) (4)
D.N.I. (1)
N.A. Mails.
D. of P. (2)
D.C.
D.D.I.C. (2)
D. of P. (Q) (3)
Hd. of M. (2)
I.P. (2)
W.D.
ad. Blake.
D.C.O.D. (2).

vs

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21.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No. 700
Dec. 20th.
(Contd.)

16. Transportation Echelon ? with surface escorts returning Arawe to Huon Peninsula reported after arrival being attacked forenoon 17th by 40 to 50 Japanese dive-bombers and fighters mixed. One small ship sunk others damaged. A/A shot down 14 planes plus 6 probables.
17. Early hours 19th Navy Catalinas unsuccessfully depth charged submarine 15 miles east Long

Island.

18. Single Japanese bomber ineffectively attacked convoy noon 29th Eastern Arafure Sea.

19. 32 Dauntless, 35 Avengers attacked Loeta ? Harbour in two waves about noon 19th. Effective hits scored destroying one bridge, warehouses hit.

21. Afternoon same date 16 Liberators bombed shipping Rabaul. One merchantman exploded another burning. 50 fighters escorted encountering approx. equal number Japanese fighters whereof four destroyed. Two Corsairs lost two Kittyhawks collided. Photos show one submarine one small craft blanketed by bombs. Observations include one destroyer 12 merchantmen usual barges small craft.

(G.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 210630Z.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 211405A, 211407A.)

Submarines Attacked.

Submarine
attack and
sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/21st.

Para. A. (1) COPINSAY attacked U-Boat at about 1800/20 in 03° 50' N. 00° 42' W.
(D.D.I.C., 210920Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.Operation
F.V.

1(a) The White Sea section of Convoy J.W.55A escorted by HUSSAR, HALCYON and 3 Russian Minesweepers arrived at the Dvina Bar this morning.
(b) Convoy J.W.55B was about 60 miles N.N.E. of the Faroes at 0800 today, and Capt. D.17 in ONSLOW with 7 other destroyers left the Faroes at 0015A to relieve HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER and BORAGE as Escorts to the Convoy.
(c) Convoy R.A.55A, consisting of 20 M/Vs., 2 tankers, and 1 rescue ship, escorted by Capt. D.3 in MILNE with 7 other destroyers and by 2 destroyers, 1 corvette, and 1 minesweeper of the Through Escort, left the Kola Inlet for the U.K. at 1002 today.

Operation
"Stonewall".

2(a) The Admiralty consider that, during the present dark period, inward and outward bound blockade runners may be met north and west of the Azores and in the Biscay approaches. The U.S. A/C Carrier CARD is in the western Biscay area today; and 9 Torpedo A/C of 254 Squadron have been sent to reinforce the A/C of 19 Group which, with A/C of 247 Group, have searched the area continuously during the last ten days.
(b) An unknown M/V was attacked without observed result by an A/C of 311 Squadron at 0457A today about 180 miles W.S.W. of Lands End.

Home Fleet.

3. BERMUDA left the Clyde at 1246 for Scapa; and KING GEORGE V with LONDON and 2 destroyers arrived in the Clyde at 1818 from Gibraltar.

GODAVARI
damaged.

4. The sloop GODAVARI, escorting Convoy O.S.62/K.M.S.36, collided with the SS. MANCHESTER PROGRESS at about 2156Z today and was damaged but is in no danger of sinking.

South Atlantic.

5. The French corvette CDT. DROGOU attacked a U-Boat contact at 1642 today in 03.40 N. 02.04 W. (about 100 miles S.W. of Takoradi). At 8 a.m. on 23rd an aircraft sighted an oil streak 3 miles long and 100 yards wide in the same area, and 3 corvettes were ordered to continue the hunt.

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22.12.1943.

Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Adriatic.

6. Last night, M.T.Bs. carried out a successful torpedo attack on the flak ship DALMATIA (ex-Yugoslav light cruiser DALMACIJA) aground off Silba Island.

Aegean.

7. Several small troop carrying and supply caiques and barges were sunk or damaged by air attack in the south-eastern Aegean today.

China.

8. Two Chinese/American Mitchells sank a 400 ft. freighter during a sweep south of Hong Kong. today.

Australia and New Zealand.

9. Two Mitchells attacked shipping in Wewak Harbour, New Guinea, this morning during a heavy attack on neighbouring airfields. Direct hits were made on two medium freighters and another smaller vessel; the latter ship and one of the two former were left sinking.

10. Allied M.T.Bs. last night unsuccessfully engaged three barges heading towards Cape Gloucester, New Britain from the direction of Saker Island. Shore batteries and a Japanese aircraft attacked the Allied M.T.Bs. Other units sank two barges and damaged three others, all southbound off the north-east coast of Huon Peninsula.

11. In the early hours of today M.T.Bs. operating off the south-east coast of Bougainville sank a solitary barge encountered.

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Six
Trawlers for
Azores.

1. It is necessary to provide six additional trawlers at the Azores. Four of these are required there by about mid-January to cover unloading of U.S. ships. 2. Request you will state if this can be arranged stating dates when vessels would arrive if sailed independently. (A.C.N.S.H. 221545A to C. in C.W.A.)

Movements.

BERMUDA.

Intend sailing BERMUDA at 1230A/22nd to Scapa, E.T.A. Scapa practice area 1000A/23rd. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 220148A to C. in C.H.F.) Sailed BERMUDA in accordance with my 220148. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 221246A to C. in C.H.F.)

T.G.28-8.

ALBEMARLE, BARRY, GOFF Reykjavik departures. N.O.B. Iceland's 202107 refers. (A.C.I.C. 221538A to Admty.)

S/M.
movements.

Positions of S/Ms. at 0759/23 and movements for following 24 hours. (F.O.S. 221643A, 222146A, 231017A.)

KING GEORGE V,
LONDON.

Clyde arrivals KING GEORGE V, LONDON, TERMAGANT, and KEMPENFELT. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 221818A to C. in C.W.A.) Intend sailing LONDON at 0900A/23rd December for Rosyth, E.T.A. May Island 0900A/24th. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 222118A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Operations.

Operation
F.V.

Faroes departure ONSLOW, ONSLAUGHT, ORWELL, IMPULSIVE, SCOURGE, IROQUOIS, HAIDA, HURON. (N.O.I.C. Faroes 220015A to R.A.D.) Kola Inlet sailed R.A.55A 23 ships including tanker (group missed) (?SAN) ADOLFO with 1700 tons of O.F. cargo and rescue ship RATHLIN. Escorted by 3rd

D.F. and through escort as ordered for operation F.V. Speed 9½ knots.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia 221002 to N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe.)

Operation F.V. para.6. (E). Force 2 will return to Scapa through 068° N. 000° 01' E. and not through position given.

(C. in C. H.F. 221107A to R.A.D.)

Position at 222000. HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE, approach Faroes from North 12.

(A.C.O.S. 221258.)

Admiralty 191405. Paras.2 and 3 confirmed by C. in C. Northern Fleet. 2. C. in C.H.F. 211237. 4 Soviet S/Ms. now in areas 3, 4, 4A and 5 to be reinforced on 24th December by a 5th S/M. 2 other S/Ms. will reach area 2A on 25th December. One S/M. now off Varanger Fiord, making a total of 8.

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
F.V.
(contd.)

3. It is intended one of the S/Ms. detailed for area 2A will first lay mines off Northern entrance Alten Fiord in the vicinity of Kvor Island.

4. Russians would appreciate any information available from British S/Ms. as to enemy patrols, convoy movements, etc. which may be expected in area 2A. 5. Passed to C.S.10 by hand.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia 221301A to Admty.)

White Sea Section J.W.55A plus FORT MISSANABIE with HUSSAR, HALCYON and 3 Russian M/S arrived Dvina Bar a.m. to-day.

(2) Group 3 sailed for Kola 1325A to-day with same escort. My 191536 refers. E.T.A. Tores Island 0900A/24th.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel 221441A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

Operation
"Stonewall".

P.C.S. of enemy. One Merchant vessel 48.57 N.

10.12 W. 0250, 060° speed unknown, 5000 tons.

(A/C. Duty C. 220407A to 19 Group.)

Going into attack, type depth charge. No results seen due to evasive action, bearing lett(?)er) EB?

(A/C.311 Sq. Duty C. 220457A to 19 Group).

U.S. CARD position at 1754Z/21 46° 56' N. 20° 38' W. proceeding to 49° 30' N. 23° 50' W. thence westerly.

(D.O.D.H. 221349A to C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Plymouth.)

C. in C. Lant has ordered CORE to stop operations in time to arrive Casablanca 25th December unless logistics require earlier arrival. 2. CORE will sail about 28th December to support G.U.S.25 operating against any submarine concentrations as required.

(D.O.D.H. 221350A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Propose S/Ms. should operate in area between positions:-

051° 03' 007° 43', 050° 57' 009° 17', 050° 37' 009° 13', 050° 43' 007° 39'. Should be based Plymouth. Your 121314 refers.

(C. in C. Plymouth 221422A to F.O.S.)

A.M. 110040A placed operation "Stonewall" in a priority above all coastal command operations with the exception of threatened convoys. From information now received it appears that both inward and outward bound blockade runners may be expected any time now. All 19 and 247 groups A/C. are available and searches for these ships have been carried out during these past 10 days at the expense of A/S. operations. In addition 9 torpedo A/C. of 254 Squadron have been sent to reinforce 19 Group. Am most anxious to return 19 and 247 groups to A/S. operations and return 254 group to its home station. In view of fact that only surface forces allotted to this operation are 2 cruisers based on the Azores is it still considered of sufficient importance to divert all this A/S. effort? If so we will continue to do our best to find and sink blockade runners but doubt our ability to do so without more surface co-operation.

(H.Q.C.C. 221750A to Admty.)

Admiralty appreciate that inward and outward bound blockade-runners may be encountered during the present dark period in an area N. and W. of the Azores and in the approaches to the Bay of Biscay. 2. Admiralty will keep ships informed of independent merchant ships likely to be in this vicinity. 3. Sailing authorities are to warn H.M. ships accordingly.

(D.O.D.H. 221945A to Ships, C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Plymouth.)

The penultimate sentence in your 221750 is confirmed.

(D.O.D.H. 222309A to A.O.C. in C.C.C.)

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations - Contd.

Coastal Force Patrols. 1. Orders for night, 22nd/23rd December.
(A) 3 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven anti-E-Boat patrol 10 miles S. of convoy route between Eastern limit of Command and longitude 00° 20' W. abreast C.W.233 from 0001A to 0700A. From 1830A to 2230A off C.2 A. Buoy. (B) Available M.T.Bs. from Newhaven offensive patrol for torpedo targets only between 125° VV.12 and 251° VV.10. Proceed and return by Passage 4 passing 4 N. 2015A and returning within 20 miles of own coast by 0700A.
(C) 2 Chasseurs anti-E-Boat patrol on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35' W. and 00° 48' W. from 1830A to 0700A. (D) M.L.291 short notice St.Helens. (E) MELBREAK short notice Yarmouth. (F) 3 M.G.Bs. from Portland anti-E-Boat patrol on 50° 20' N. between 02° W. and 02° 35' W.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221258A.)
M.T.Bs. 204, 235, and 229 at No.7 Buoy, E.T.D. 1750, E.T.R. 0810/23. M.Ls. 143 and 141 at Bullock Bank.
(V.A. Dover 221631A.)

S/M. Patrols. Positions of submarines at 0759/23rd December and movements for following 24 hours:-
(A) O.15, SIRDAR, VENTURER as in my 161734.
(B) SYRTIS 62° 13' N. 000° 25' E. course 030° on surface 10 knots. (C) STUBBORN (P.238) 62° 38' N. 01° 50' E. on surface passing through 61° 59' N. 01° 02' E. to Lerwick 9 knots, E.T.A. a.m.24th.
(F.O.S. 221643A to Admty.)

Operation "Bombardon". Tug EMPIRE HENCHMAN is allocated for Operation "Bombardon" forthwith under direction of C. in C. Portsmouth. 2. Two more 1000 H.P. tugs will be provided by 20th January.
(D. of P.Q. 222001A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Mining.

Q.Z.S.441. C. in C. Portsmouth's 211104A and M/S. 16211743A. Request you will instruct M/S 16 to search Q.Z.S. 441 to 3° W. and 442 to 180°. Start Point 4 miles thence steaming to Plymouth. Search to be carried out in H. formation at maximum depth practicable.
(C. in C. Plymouth 221518 to F.O.I.C. Portland.)
1. Intend sailing SHIPPIGAN, WEDGEPORT, and QUALICUM at 0745 tomorrow for Plymouth carrying out instructions contained in C. in C. Plymouth's 221518A on passage.
(F.O.I.C. Portland 221757A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

NORHAUK (Mined 21st December.) My 212321A S.O.H. Yarmouth in VALESCA reports position of wreck 51.50.23 N. 01.33.09 E.
(2) T.H. Superintendent Harwich reports position as 51.50.06 N. 01.32.54 E. (3) Wreck shows two masts at all states of tide. (4) In prevailing unfavourable weather conditions consider Sunk and Rough forts position probably most accurate.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 221619A to C. in C. Nore.)

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy Convoy. Nr. 1. 2 Destroyers, 5 medium vessels, position 58.05 N. 06.55 E. course 320, speed 8 knots. (A/C. 333 Sq. Duty R. 221034 to 18 Group.)

Casualties & Defects.

ZEEHOND. My 212221A. ARCTURUS sailed at 0315A/22. (Cdre. D.W.A. 220340A to ZEEHOND.) Message following has been made as Cmdre.(D) W.A. 221020A begins:- ZEEHOND arrived Lough Foyle. T.O.O. 221020A. Ends. (Capt. S.7. 221337A to B.D.Z.)

RATTLESNAKE. Scapa departure RATTLESNAKE at 0901. E.T.A. 2300/23. (A.C.O.S. 221046 to F.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

GLASGOW. Port 21 inch T.R. Torpedo Tube mark 4 (2 stars) dismantled by sea 18th December and unserviceable until repaired by dockyard labour. (GLASGOW 221102A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

B.V.42 sunk. *(Barrage Vessel)* As result of two petrol explosions H.M.B.V.42 sank in West Old Dock Leith this morning. As far as can be ascertained at present five or six men were trapped in ship and must be presumed dead. (N.O.I.C. Leith 221255 to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoy.

O.S.62/
K.M.S.36.
GODAVARI
damaged. Inform Cdr. BARON DOUGLAS returning Clyde. (C. in C.W.A. 220723A to Escorts.) All stragglers unable to rejoin Convoy by dark tonight return to U.K. (C. in C.W.A. 221117Z to O.S.62/K.M.S.36.) H.M.I.S. GODAVARI reported in collision with merchant ship, number 2 magazine and C.P.Os mess flooded. Not in danger of sinking. No immediate action can be taken as full gale with low visibility and high sea. Convoy hove to. (E.G.40 222156Z to C. in C.W.A.)

O.N.S.25. Inform Cdre. BONAIRE returning Clyde. (C. in C.W.A. 220729A to Escorts O.N.S.25.)

P.S.22.
S.P.22. P.S.22 and S.P.22 cancelled. (C. in C. Portsmouth 221006A.)

O.N.S.25. All Stragglers unable to rejoin convoy by dark tonight return to U.K. (C. in C.W.A. 221106Z to O.N.S.25.)

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys - Contd.

- O.N.216. All stragglers unable to rejoin convoy by dark tonight return to U.K.
(C. in C.W.A. 221112Z to O.N.216.)
- Balloons in Coasters. All Coasters included in P.W. convoys and proceeding North of Milford Haven are to sail without balloons thus obviating the call at Milford Haven. 2. Coasters sailing from ports North of Milford Haven and included in W.P. convoys should continue to embark balloons at Milford Haven. 3. Cancel A.M.271922 Nov.
(D.T.D. 221206A to C. in C. Portsmouth, C. in C. Plymouth.)
- T.A.80. Intend sailing (SS) QUEEN ELIZABETH passing Clyde Boom 2359A/23rd to comply with A.M. 221200 Dec. S.O.A. 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ kts. E.T.A. Ambrose L.V., 0800Z/29.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 221604A to Admty.)
- Position Numbers. A.M.041640. Following series are to be brought into force commencing 0001Z/1st January.
(D.T.D. 221610A to C. in C.W.A.)
- F.D.17. Sailed. My 211648 refers.
(N.O.I.C. Faroes 221907A to F.O.I.C. Aberdeen.)
- S.L.142/
M.K.S.33. Cancel my 190846A.
(C. in C.W.A. 221949 to Escorts)

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Italian M/Vs. in Spanish ports. Following is repetition of section (2) of my *211223A (Begins). Escort for ships from Cartagena to Gibraltar is not considered necessary. (2) Para. 5. Ships should be sailed through territorial waters to Gibraltar. (3) Para. 7. Consider these men must be suspect and therefore unwise to use them. (4) Para. 8. Can pressure be exerted on Spanish authorities to have this ship docked and repaired at Cadiz. Docking facilities are already overburdened at Gibraltar. If necessary tug could be sent to tow her to Gibraltar. (Ends). (F.O. Gib., 220853Z to C. in C. Med., Admty., F.O.T.A.L.I.) * Originally received corrupt.

Patrol. 80%. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 220955Z to GAMBIA, C. in C. Plymouth, (R) F.O.C. Gibraltar.) Reference my 220955Z. Areas 150 miles either side of line H is being swept simultaneously from 0930. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 221139Z to GAMBIA, C. in C. Plymouth, (R) F.O.C. Gibraltar.)

T.G. 66.9. On completion of fuelling at Horta request you will sail T.G. 66.9 consisting of U.S.S. PARTRIDGE, SWIVEL and Y.M.S. 346 to 352 inclusive to Falmouth.

2. Route. (D.O.D.(H), 221555A to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.I.C. Falmouth, F.O.I.C. Gibraltar, Task Group 66.9.)

Operation "Stonewall". Bombing of EMPIRE JOHN & L.C.T.372. Para. 1 of A.M. 202005. The appearance of EMPIRE JOHN in Plymouth area was completely unexpected by me. EMPIRE JOHN was detached to assist L.C.T.372 which straggled in 36° 27' N. 09° 50' W. and both should therefore have returned to Gib. in accordance with my sailing orders which directed all craft straggling south of 40° N. to return to Gib.

2. Para. 2 of A.M. 202005 is not understood. The return of Flight "Q" less L.C.T.372 to Gib. was reported in my 181852 addressed Admty., (R) C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Med., S.B.N.O. Azores, C.M.S.F.F., and F.O.I.C. Milford Haven. 3. My 181852 also enumerated the ships of the escort and one tug which had returned but made no mention of EMPIRE JOHN. It should have been clear from my 181852, 121637 and 091754 that L.C.T.372 and EMPIRE JOHN had not returned to Gib. 221652. 4. When my 181852 was made it was still not clear whether EMPIRE JOHN and L.C.T.372 were returning to Gib. in accordance with sailing orders and my 142117 addressed S.O.E. of Flight "Q" (R) Admty., C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. Med., C. in C. W.A. 5. EMPIRE JOHN was ordered in my 171152 to report P.C. and S. but no reply was received. C. in C. Plymouth was informed of this in my 191208 (R) Admty. 6. In view of foregoing it is clear that I had no more knowledge of the movements of EMPIRE JOHN and L.C.T.372 than had the Admty. and C. in C. Plymouth. (F.O.C. Gib., 221652A to Admty.)

/CHANTICLEER ...

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic - Contd.

CHANTICLEER. Admiralty's 151526. Portuguese agree to conversion of CHANTICLEER. Have informed them dismantling of armaments etc. will be undertaken by S.B.N.O. Horta.
(N.A. Lisbon, 221905 to Admt.)
151526 - Repetition of A.M. 151405.
151405 - Re CHANTICLEER to be held as Base ship Horta.

South Atlantic.

S.L.144. Escorts BALINDERRY, CYCLAMEN, AUBRETIA and F.S. D'ESTIENNE D'ORVES.
(N.C.S.O. Freetown, 221057Z, 221246Z, 231354Z.)

Atlantic Narrows Patrol. Your 180320. The basis of your system of patrols is appreciated but in view of the inadequate air cover available your dispositions have the following disadvantages:-
(a) Outward bound blockade runners are unlikely to be sighted by aircraft until too late for interception by surface forces.
(b) The cruiser patrols are not co-ordinated so that full use is made of their potentialities for searching as well as for intercepting.
2. Request you will concert with Com. 4th Fleet a system of combined patrols or searches utilising your and his available ships on the general line Freetown Recife in the area through which it is expected the blockade runners will pass. It is thought you should be able to maintain three French or Italian cruisers continuously on patrol.
(V.C.N.S., 221127A to F.O.C.W.Af., (R) F.O. Gibraltar.)

CORFU, CILICIA. Your 191556. CORFU can be made available to sail from Freetown from Dec. 30th and CILICIA from Jan. 15th or earlier by cancelling next patrol. This will render chances of catching blockade runners passing through my area very slender as neither French or Italian cruisers can provide efficient R/C and Radar is in most cases ineffectual. Request ports of destination be communicated and dates for sailing taking into consideration situation re blockade runners.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 221159Z to Admt.)

/PHEMIUS ...

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

PHEMIUS
sunk 19th
Dec.1943.

My 200145. PHEMIUS sunk in 05° 01' N. 00° 17' W. by 2 torpedoes at 2310/19th. U/B German 740 ton type. Senior W/T operator taken aboard U-Boat as prisoners. 92 survivors landed at Takoradi. (F.O.C.W.A., 221235Z to Admty.)

Arrangements
to counter
U/B
approaching
South Africa.

A U-Boat is now approaching South Africa from the Atlantic. It may be on passage but may be going to operate off these coasts.
(2) In latter case D.C. - C.D. convoys will have to be re-instituted. Available escorts will be unable to undertake this commitment and at same time continue previous scale of escorts between Durban and Kilindini.

(3) To meet the present threat intend to withdraw one? trawler group now at Durban and sail it for Capetown. My 221445* refers.
(4) I consider that, when a single U-Boat is known to be approaching South Africa two destroyers or frigates should be available to meet it off the Cape to hunt it offensively with air support and be ready to follow it up if it leaves the station to the East or North.
5. Request your remarks.
(C. in C. S.A., 221447C to C. in C. E.F.(S.E.A.C.), (R) Admty., F.O.E.A.) * N.T. in W.D.

DAVIS.

Intend to sail U.S.S. DAVIS at 1000Z/23rd to 005° 00' S. 014° 00' W. thence to patrol in accordance with (? your 211944.)
(F.O.C.W.Af., 221630Z to Cdr. 4th Fleet, (R) Admty., N.O.I.C. Durban.)

U/B report.

COMMANDANT DROGOU reported attacking good contact in 03.40 N. 02.04 W. Proceeding with HYDRANGEA and AMARANTHUS (? to) join.
(FOLKESTONE, 221642Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi, (R) F.O.C.W.Af.)

Acknowledge your 221727*, 221635Z*, 221718*, and 221224Z*. Contact non-conclusive. Visibility at time of contact one cable. FOLKESTONE subsequently sighted in area. Intend to comply with your 221224Z. MORRIS DANCE in company.

E.T.A. Takoradi D.
(KELT, 221900Z to N.O.I.C. Takoradi, (R) FOLKESTONE.)
* N.T. in W.D.

Departed 22nd COPINSAY A/S search.
(N.O.I.C. Takoradi, 222230Z.)

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

NICOLINE
MAERSK. Latest information is that NICOLINE MAERSK will finish loading 23rd but consider she may sail for Sete without completing.
(R.O.Valencia, 220850 to C. in C. Med, F.O.Gib.
(R) Admty.)

K.M.F.
M.K.F.
Convoys. A.M.202245 para. 3 agree it is undesirable but no alternative can be seen.
(2) Para. 4. 37 day cycle is agreed. Assuming normal routeing K.M.F.28 will arrive Port Said 29th Jan.
(3) Para. 5. If it is necessary to run an X.I.F. convoy concurrently with M.K.F. convoy must leave Port Said five days after K.M.F. leaves U.K. if this is not necessary then M.K.F. need not leave until ten days after K.M.F. Decision depends on whether total lift ex Middle East to Taranto can be met by two lifts between M.K.F. cycle.
(4) Allied Force H.Q. and P.S.T.O. Med. agree.
(C. in C. Med. 220918A to Admty.(R) F.O.W.I.T. Com. Algeria, C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Levant, P.S.T.O. Med., F.O.I.C. Gib)

SOKOL. Congratulating SOKOL.
(Capt.(S) 1, 220923B to SOKOL, (R) C. in C. Levant, 1st S/M.F. S.O. 5th C.S.)

ULTOR
Enemy
Barge sunk. Reports at 1528/18 in 043 degs. 03' 005 degs. 48' fired two torpedoes at 250 ton barge.
One hit vessel sank.
(S.I.O. 221059 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, V.A. Malta, Capt.(S) 1, Capt.(S) 10, F.O.C. Gib. (R) F.O.S/M, Admty. R.A. Alex.)

STONEHENGE. STONEHENGE (P.232) sails to arrive Port Said a.m. 24th for docking as soon as can be arranged she should be ready for onward passage to the far East by 27th.
(2) Request F.O.R.S.C.A. arrange onward route in accordance with my 201747B.
(3) Propose transferring STONEHENGE to 4th S/M.F. as from p.m. 24th.
(S.1, 221200B to S.4, (R) F.O. R.S.C.A., C. in C. Levant, C. in C. E.F., F.O.S. F.O. Ceylon.)

BORDE. To sail to Gib. via Malta for onward routeing to U.K.
(C. in C. Med. 221209A)

ORPHEE /...

War Diary.

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

ORPHEE. Intend sailing at 1800/26th on surface through 038 degs. 40' 002 degs. 30' at 1000/27th thence diving by day through 039 degs. 32' 001 degs. 41' at 2200/27th to 041 degs. 10' 002 degs. 06' at 1800/28th to carry out special mission on night 28th/29th.
(2) Return route through (049 degs. 084 degs. 041 degs. 027 degs.) 10' 002 degs. 06' at 0200/29th diving through 039 degs. 32' 001 degs. 41' at 2100/30th.
Thence on surface, through 038 degs. 40' 002 degs. 30' at 0430/30th to R/V escort for Algiers in 037 degs. 00' 003 degs. 02' at 1630/30th.
(3) Surface speed 9 knots. All time zone minus P. All positions North and East.
(N.O.I.C. Algiers, 221230 to C. in C. Med. Capt.(S) 10, (R) 10th S/M.F., F.O.C. Gib. PROTEE, CASABIANCA, LE CURIE)
Para. 2 cancelled and new return route ordered N.O.I.C. Algiers 261603.

Information re L/C in Med. for Prime Minister. The Prime Minister urgently requires a report about the condition and employment of landing craft of all types in Med.
(2) Please signal urgently information under the following headings:-
(a) A full return of all landing craft, British and American, at present in Med.
(b) A statement of their condition.
(c) Broad particulars of the present employment of these craft under three headings:-
(i) Training and preparation for assault or raiding operations.
(ii) Build-up and administrative employment.
(iii) Refits and repairs.
(First Sea Lord, 221235A to C. in C. Med.)

Question of Including Massawa in the East Indies Station. Should not boundary in Red Sea read 18 degs. N. in view of A.M.062011 Nov. Para. 2 and C. in C. E.F. 091015. A.M. 202316 (N.T. in W.D.) para.6 refers.
(C. in C. Levant, 221242B to Admt. (R) C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.F.(S.E.A.C.))

Orders to S/Ms. (1) LE CURIE is to leave patrol to pass 042 degs. 39' 006 degs. 41' at 0600/25 to R/V in position 240 degs. Monachi Rock Light 5 miles at 1200/26.
(2) UNIVERSAL leaves patrol to pass 043 degs. 36' 008 degs. 36' at 0200/26, 041 degs. 59' 008 degs. 18' at 0100/27 thence to R/V as above at 1200/27.
(3) UNSEEN leaving through 043 degs. 07' 007 degs. 30' at 0400/26, 041 degs. 44' 008 degs. 02' at 0300/27, 041 degs. 38', 008 degs. 38' at 0700/27 thence to R/V with UNIVERSAL and escort at 1200/27.
(4) CASABIANCA shifting to zone ST. at 0800/25.
(5) F.S. PROTEE shifting to zone SU at 0800/25.
(Capt.(S) 10, 221245A to UNIVERSAL, UNSEEN, LE CURIE, PROTEE, CASABIANCA, (R) C. in C. Med. N.O.I.C. Algiers, F.O.C. Gib.)

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22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

SICKLE,
Operation
"Headsman".

Leave Samos area forthwith and proceed Euboea to carry out operation "Headsman".
(2) On completion withdraw to northward and report. Include brief report of Samos patrol.
(3) Then patrol north east approach to Doro Channel.
(Capt.(S) 1, 221300B, 221815B, 222012B to SICKLE ,
(R) C. in C. Levant, 1st S/M. F.)

Disposition
of Italian
S/Ms.

I.S/Ms.My 201425 para.3 confirmed that destination required for 7 Italian S/Ms for A/S training is Bermuda.

(2) Request you will inform Minister of Marine accordingly and confirm.

(A) S/Ms selected are MAREA, VORTICE, DANDOLO

SPERI, MAMELI, GIADA, AXUM if BRIN not ready.

(B) Sailing date from Taranto will be 1st Jan. (?02) as early as practicable in Jan.

(3) S/Ms are urgently required at Bermuda to release Allied S/Ms for other duties.

(C. in C. Med. 221301A to F.O.T.A.L.I.(R) Admty. F.O.C.Gib. B.A.D.)

Joint
Army

395225. For D.M.I. 24 hours to 1000/22nd.
All times G.M.T.

R.A.F. Int.
Appreciation.

(1) Ph. R/C. enemy shipping in Aegean 21st
Details.

(3) Reference para. 3 appreciation 18th.
Reliable source reports SS. BALKAN after dis-
charging present cargo (report as coal) will

return Istanbul to load chrome for Bourgas. Comment.
This vessel not yet located by ph. R/C since her arrival Aegean.
Destination stated to be Salonika (see para. 3) appreciation
16th.

(5) G.A.F. activity. 21st. At least 8 Ju.88 active during
afternoon and early evening apparently shadowing allied convoy
(sighted (?earlier) by Meteorological aircraft) approx.
300 miles north northwest Benghazi. No reports of attacks.

(6) Conclusions. Further evidence use heavily protected
fast naval convoys for transportation troops. Further troops
movements to Samos and/or Leros by heavy convoys and from Leros
to Rhodes by smaller craft to be expected. Movement smaller
craft noted Mirabella Bay possibly connected traffic Crete-
Scarpanto-Rhodes, Kastelorizo. Appreciation unchanged.

(C. in C. M.E. 221340B)

Air Report.

M.S. 24346. 4 Ju.88's attacked convoy 140 miles
south east Malta. Mosquitoes damaged 2 Ju. 88's
no report of damage to convoy.
(H.Q. N.A.A.F. 221358Z)

Italian /...

503

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.Italian
Merchant
Ships in
Spanish
Ports.

Your 201155 N.O.I.C. Gibraltar is requested to issue route for LAVORO. Route for CESENA should be coastwise to Cape Palos thence direct 036 degs. 38' N. 001 degs. 18' E. thence coastwise Algiers. It will not be possible to provide escort to wait off Ports concerned but if available escort will be sent as soon as it is known that ships have sailed.

(C. in C. Med. 221604A to B.N.A. Madrid, (R) Admty. F.O.T.A.L.I., N.O.I.C.Gib.)

S/Ms for
A/S
Training.

A.M. 211659 and B.A.D. 181937. French Admiralty expect CENTAURE will be ready to leave Dakar for Bermuda about 8th January ATALANTE completes end of Dec. being sailed to Dakar early Jan.

(2) B.A.D. 181937 para.4. MARSOUIN expected to complete 1st Feb. provisionally allocated U.S.

French training Casablanca until otherwise directed. ANTILOPE operational inside Med. 1st Feb. AMPHITRITE (sic) and VESTALE very bad state, doubtful if ever available. CERES and PALLAS undergoing large repairs completion uncertain but not before July 1944.

(3) A.M. 211659 para.7. See my 201427 para.2.

(C. in C. Med. 221840A, 261228A to Admty. (R) B.A.D., F.O.C.W.Af.)

SPORTSMAN.

Leaving patrol 1830/24th to pass A. 035 degs. 06' 026 degs. 44' at 1830/26th and thence proceed on the surface by day through 034 degs. 25' 029 degs. 59' arriving Beirut 1430/28th.

(Capt. 1st S/F. 221845B to SPORTSMAN (R) 1st S.F. C. in C. Levant.)

1st S/M.F.

1200B/22nd. (A) refitting. NEBOJSCA, SEVERN, STONEHENGE, UNRULY (in dock) MATROLOS and NEREUS (both working up).

(B) Operational at Beirut. UNSPARING, DZIK,

DOLFIJN, TRUCULENT, SIBYL.

(C) On patrol. SURF returning to Beirut. SOKOL returning to Beirut. SPORTSMAN North Aegean. SICKLE North of Samos. TORBAY North of Crete.

Italians. ALAGI Alex. A/S training. ZOEIA, GALATEA, CAGNI at Haifa.

(C. in C. Levant, 221912B to C. in C. Med. Info: Admty. S.G.Rs (?S/M.Fts) 1,8,10.)

Med.

(1) Convoy G.U.S.25 was attacked by aircraft in Situation 035 degs. 16' N. 016 degs. 58' E. at 1648/21st. Report No.256. SS. ALPHERAT was seriously damaged by near miss and later sank, there were no casualties. 2 Mosquito's covering convoy attacked and claim damage to 2 Ju.88.

(2) Area in which FELIXSTOWE was mined on 18th has been cleared. (?Six) mines cut.

(C. in C. Med. 221945A)

Rocket /...

504

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

Rocket firing Weapons.

Request any information available on possibilities of using Rocket firing weapons against surface targets with a view to mounting them in Hunts for use against E-Boats or in coastal craft versus caiques.
(C. in C. Levant, 221948B to Admty. (R) C. in C. Med.)

UNRULY.

Leaves Port Said 1228B/23rd by the reverse of your route.
(Capt.(S) 1, 222015B to P.55 (UNSPARING)).

Status of Tobruk.

Request following B message.
On 1st Jan. Tobruk will be reduced in status to a minor port with a resident Naval Officer. At the same time the R.N.O. will be withdrawn from Derna. Coal oil fuel and small stocks of ammunition for Coastal Forces and depth charges will continue to be available at Tobruk.
(C. in C. Levant, 222019B to C. in C. Med. (R) 201 Group, Admty.)

M.E. Balkan Sitrep No.36.

395342 O/50969 22nd.
(1) Int. Albania. Germans reported preparing coastal defns. incl. trenches and gun positions sector Split-Mararska.
(2) Nil.
(4) Sea Ops. Adv. H.Q. Force 133 report. 19 Dec. 37 tons sups incl. clothing amn. delivered by sea to Yugoslavia from South Italy. Brit. L.O. reports. Partisan landings continue in area between Primosten WU.54 and Rogoznica WU.54 with object of infiltrating Partisan forces behind German posn. in Split WU.93 area. Partisans landed fresh forces on Dugi Otok Island.
(C. in C. M.E. 222030B)

505

22.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U/B Dispositions. (C. in C.E.F., 220342 to E.F. 462Y.)

RAMILLIES. Request you will sail not later than 28th to comply with 191200.
2. NORMAN, RACEHORSE and REDOUBT are to escort RAMILLIES to Aden and are available as local escort for RAMILLIES from Aden as may be required by C. in C. Levant.
(C. in C.E.F. 220457 to F.O.E.A. (R) C. in C. Levant, C. in C. Med., F.O.R.S.C.A., Admty. Com. i/c Aden.)

Report of U/Bs.

1. Suspected U/Boat in 007° 59' N. 050° 26' E. at 1500Z 22nd.
2. U/Boat sighted in 014° 50' N. 050° 45' E. course South westerly.
(C. in C.E.F., 221802Z to S. & A., E.I.S. (R) Admty., 246 Wing Air H.Q. E. Africa, Air H.Q. Aden.)

War Diary.22.12.1943.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.

- HADLEIGH CASTLE. B.A.D's 202305. Request departure HADLEIGH CASTLE be expedited and ship sailed direct to New London to arrive if possible 26th.
(C. in C.C.N.A. 220254Z to F.O.N.F. (R) N.S.H.Q. B.A.D. Cominch, C. in C.W.A. Admty.)
Your 202301Z intend holding HADLEIGH CASTLE until S.O.C.4 arrives. Ship has defects, discipline is unsatisfactory, change of officers appears necessary and X-ray of ships company highly desirable. Strongly recommend ship be given work up by Halifax before visiting a U.S. port. Hope to provide officers from C.4 Group. Further signal will be made.
(F.O.N.F. 221721Z to B.A.R.M. (R) Admty. N.S.H.Q. C. in C.C. N.A. C. in C.W.A. Capt. D. Halifax, S.O.C.4.)
- CHEVREUIL. This is Cominch and C.N.O's 212032. My 072147 cancel.
(Comnaveu 220549Z to Admty.)
- SALISBURY, LOCKEPORT. Am alongside SALISBURY. No tug present. Request further instructions approx. position 45° 10' 60" 43'.
(LOCKEPORT 221308Z to C. in C.C.N.A. (R) Capt. D. Halifax.)
- Sailing dates of U.T. convoys. Follow U.T.7 18th Jan. U.T.8 11th Feb. U.T.9 27th Feb. U.T.10 23rd March, U.T.11 8th April, U.T.12 2nd May.
(Cominch 221440Z to Cinclant, Comeastseafon.)
- C.T.G.21.14. C.T.G.21.14. Proceeding 49.30 N. 23.50 W. thence westerly position 211754Z 46.56 N. 20.38 W.
(Comnaveu 221804 to Admty.)
- TRUMPETER. Your 211759. TRUMPETER is required at New York for loading U.S. Army aircraft. 2. No R.N. aircraft will be embarked. 3. It is intended to sail her again in U.T.7.
(B.A.D. 221821Z to Admty. C. in C.W.A. Info. F.O.I.C. Greenock, F.O.C.T. F.O.N.A.S. R.A.N.A.S. (N), TRUMPETER.)
- MONTGOMERY, LEAMINGTON. At 1830Z/22nd sailed MONTGOMERY, LEAMINGTON route speed and W/T in accordance with my 161537 not to all addressees "Chop" 0630Z/25th, E.T.A. Horta 1830Z/27th. 2. Request you sail ships to U.K. (C. in C.C.N.A. 221857Z to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) B.A.D. Admty. C. in C.W.A. F.O.N.F. N.S.H.Q. B.A.M.R.)
Departed for U.K. via Azores.
((corrupt group) Halifax 222219Z to C. in C.W.A.)

/EMILE...

22.12.1943.
Wednesday

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies - Contd.

EMILE BERTIN. Sail F.C. EMILE BERTIN when ready Fort de France to Casablanca. Direct vessel on arrival report to C. in C.Med. for further orders. Advise time of departure, route, S.O.A.
(Cominch 221946Z to Comcaribseafon.)

Air-sea co- Consider ends intended para. two your 280124 can operation be- be more simply attained by application of prin- between British ciple you made in para. three i.e. nationality & U.S. forces. of escort determines type of procedure. Concur except for following suggestion. (Details).
(Cominch 222055Z to Admty.)

Sub. attack Para. D. C.G.R. 7007 attacked Sub. 25.45 N. & sighting 79.24 W. 211745Z. P.C. 1245 attacked sound contact summary. 25.33 N. 83.07 W. 221251Z.
(Cominch 222056Z to Admty.)

Classifica- Proposed classifications for planning purposes tion of Escort in A.M. 091814 (N.T. in W.D.) have been passed to Vessels. Navy Department who comment as follows:-
"Experience since last Feb. has indicated that British and U.S. use of a common classification of escort vessels has been limited almost entirely to the preparation of 'Reports of vessels suitable for escort duty' which were formerly interchanged in accordance with Atlantic convoy conference report A.C.C. 2 Annex "B". Since this interchange of reports has now been found to be unnecessary and has been discontinued, no classification of U.S. escort vessels which would attempt to group various types into the same class is proposed".
2. Ref. para. 4 of A.M. 091814. No remarks.
(B.A.D. 222123Z to Admty.)

AMEER, Norfolk departed 21st to New York for U.K.
ATHELING. (N.S.H.Q. 222302Z.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest serial Paras. 18 to end cover S. Pacific Forces.
701 Dec. 21. Midday R/C Liberator claimed near miss thousand pound bomb single northbound destroyer 220 miles North Mussau Island.
5. Six Aircobras strafed two cargo laden barges during forenoon coastal sweep west of Arawe.
9. Night 20th Navy Catalina hit large ship 30 miles north of northwestern Gazelle Peninsula with light bomb. Ship still burning two hours later. Meanwhile Catalina unsuccessfully

/attacked.

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22.12.1943.

Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest serial 701 Dec. 21. (Contd.) attacked single vessel southern end Gazelle Channel 10. Early hours 21st Army Liberator saw one transport 7000 tons blazing fiercely in vicinity of Catalinas earlier attack, refer previous part. In company was one medium freighter which received 2000 pound bomb hits keeled over and sank. In addition Liberators observed single vessel southbound off Northern extremity Willaumez Peninsula also eight unidentified type ships (three small craft in two (as recd.) groups of five) one single in area 60 to (?150) miles southwest Kavieng all heading north east.

18. U.S. destroyers bombarded reported Jap concentrations Tinian area north east Bougainville 20th. Spotting aircraft reported good coverages.

Encyphered by C.C.O. Port Moresby.
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A. 220820Z.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 221410A, 221415A.)

Submarines Attacked.

Sub. attack & sighting summary for 24 hrs. to 0900Z/22nd.

- Para. A. 1. AMARANTHUS attacked U-Boat with depth charges at 0715/21 and 0800/21 in positions 03° 10' N. 01° 10' W. and 03° 30' N. 01° 01' W. Two underwater explosions heard.
2. PICT attacked U-Boat with depth charges at 1150/21 in 03° 31' N. 01° 01' W. Underwater explosion heard. Aircraft report oil slick 12 miles long in 03° 20' N. 01° 13' W. at 1601/21.
3. Aircraft sighted U-Boat at 1217/21 in 37° 17' N. 11° 05' E.
(D.D.I.C. 221109A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.

1(a) Convoy R.A.55A, consisting of 20 merchant ships, 2 tankers, and 1 rescue ship, left the Kola Inlet yesterday for the U.K., and C.S.10 in BELFAST with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD (Force 1) left the Kola Inlet at 0258A today to cover the Convoy in the Barents Sea. The Convoy is escorted by Capt. D.3 in MILNE with 7 other destroyers and by 2 destroyers, 1 corvette, and 1 minesweeper of the Through Escort. One M/V has returned to the Kola Inlet today.

(b) C. in C. Home Fleet in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA and 4 destroyers sailed from Akureyri at 11 p.m. to cover J.W.55B.

(c) Convoy J.W.55B, consisting of 19 M/Vs. escorted by Capt. D.17 in ONSLOW with 7 other destroyers, was about 180 miles S.E. of Jan Mayen Island at 2301 today, steering 037° at 9 knots, and had been shadowed by 2 Dornier 217 A/C from 1100 until 2305.

Operation
"Stonewall".

2(a) The search for possible blockade breakers in the Biscay approaches continues. At 1439Z an A/C was seen by Task Group 21.14 (CARD) to circle a M/V steering 110° about 700 miles West of Lorient at 10 knots, the vessel, which made no reply to challenge is suspected of being an incoming blockade runner; and between 2025A and 2345 today our A/C of 19 Group made six sightings of a group of M/Vs variously estimated at from 5 to 12 vessels steering N.W. about 70 miles N. by W. of Gijon. The U.S. A/C Carriers CORE and CARD are in the Biscay area and CARD may shortly be joined there by the U.S. A/C Carrier BLOCK ISLAND who is due at the Azores today.

(b) GLASGOW is to leave Horta at 1100A tomorrow to relieve GAMBIA on the "Stonewall" Patrol.

3. On completion of the withdrawal of the V.B.128 which is now in progress no U.S. aircraft will remain in Iceland (C).

WORCESTER
mined.

4. WORCESTER struck a mine near Smith's Knoll tonight. She was towed to Yarmouth (arrived a.m./24th.)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

"Avalanche".

5. An Italian L.C.T. was mined in Bastia harbour today and sank later.

Adriatic.

c/
6. TYRIAN and TEAZER patrolled between Drvenik and Zirje Island last night, and FARNDALE and BRECON from south of Korçula Island to Mljet. Both patrols were blank.

East Indies.

7. C. in C. Eastern Fleet points out that after the relief of SUSSEX and the withdrawal of CHITRAL and ALAUNIA (see 19th December) he will be 4 short-legged station cruisers short of requirements, unless cruisers at present earmarked for fleet operations are used to augment those permanently employed on escort duty.

8. SS. PESHAWUR in Convoy J.C.30 was torpedoed and sunk at 0640Z today about 50 miles S.E. of Pondicherry. Aircraft reported a U-Boat near the position at 1000Z. IPSWICH is in the vicinity, and QUALITY and QUIBERON are proceeding from Trincomalee to hunt the U-Boat with air co-operation.

9. The U.S. tanker RIVER RAISIN reported at 2245Z today that she had sighted a possible submarine in 24.22 N. 58.49 E. in the Gulf of Oman. At 0010Z/24 she reported being pursued, and at 0014Z attacked by a U-Boat in 24.00 N. 59.12 E.; later she reported that she had been near missed but was unhit.

China.

10. 2 U.S. Mitchells sank a 200 ft. gunboat off Amoy today.

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia and New Zealand.

11. Allied coastal patrol craft today encountered two Japanese craft 55 miles S.E. of Kaukenau, they set one on fire and damaged the other with light casualties to themselves.

12. In the early hours of today U.S. M.T.Bs. bombarded coastal positions near Cape Mpltké (central west coast of Bougainville).

War Diary.

23.12.1943.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

SERAPIS. SERAPIS accepted from Scotts Shipbuilding and Engineering Company at 1530 today. Minor defects will be completed by p.m. 27th. (SERAPIS 231531 to A.S.C.B.S.)

Movements.

KING GEORGE V. Intend sail KING GEORGE V escorted by OBDURATE to Scapa at 1130A/23rd. E.T.A. 0845/24th. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 230214A to C. in C.H.F.) Sailed KING GEORGE V escorted by OBDURATE in accordance with my 230214. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 231156A to C. in C.H.F.)

ILLUSTRIOUS, My 201436 and 210948 and B.S.Is. 211715. Request UNICORN. you will arrange to sail ILLUSTRIOUS, UNICORN, TERMAGANT, (AVON), (LOSSIE), (PARRETT), KEMPENFELT and 2 W.A. escorts, 3 W.A. escorts, E.T.A. Scapa a.m. 29th. R/V will be signalled on 28th December on arrival of B.S.1 at Scapa. (C.S.1 231152A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

BERMUDA. Scapa arrival BERMUDA. (A.C.O.S. 231350 to N.O.I.C. Greenock.)

ENTERPRISE. Your 201619A. Arrived ENTERPRISE. (C. in C.Plymouth 231528A to C. in C.H.F.)

CUMBERLAND. Rosyth departure CUMBERLAND, E.T.A. 0330A. (C. in C.Rosyth 231602 to A.C.O.S.)

S/M Move- Positions of S/Ms at 0800/24 and movements for ments. following 24 hours. (F.O.S. 231719A, 231936, 232311A, 242322A.)

Group A ESSINGTON, DOMETT, BLACKWOOD are to be sailed so as Escorts. to arrive Scapa a.m. 29th. On arrival ships will come under order of F.O.1st C.S. for escort of Group A leaving Scapa 29th. 2. DUCKWORTH, BERRY, COOKE, PARRETT are to be sailed to R/V with Group A a.m. 30th off Skerryvore. 3. Destination of PARRETT is Eastern Fleet remainder of W.A. Escorts destination Port Said and then return. (C. in C.W.A. 231830A to N.O.I.C. Belfast, Liverpool.)

Operations.

Operation By D/F at 2219Z/22 U-Boat bearing as in my 221715A. F.V. Both reliable. VARDO rebroadcast message from this U-Boat at 0033A. (S.B.N.O.North Russia 230038A to Admty.)

/Kola...

23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation Kola Inlet sailed Force One.
 F.V. (S.B.N.O.Polyarno 230258A to H.F.)
 (Contd.) At 1600A/22nd J.W.55B P.C. and S. 065° 02' N. 003° 54' W. 017° 9½ knots. At 1059A in 064° 20' N. 004° 21' W. GLEANER reported aircraft passing astern of convoy course 090° which might have been Do.217. My P.C.&S. at 0400A/23, 063° 18' N. 005° 25' W. 201° 11 knots. HYDRA, BORAGE, and WALLFLOWER in company weather 2472 8622 (HOUND 230903A to H.F.)

Russians have asked for shipment of 38 tons Bullion to U.K.
 2. Intend that this be embarked in force 2. C.S.10 concurs.
 (S.B.N.O.N.Russia 230909A to Admty.)
 A. Sailed convoy R.A.55A. 20 M/Vs. Names.
 B. Tankers, SAN ADOLPHO and MYDRECHT.
 C. Rescue Ship RATHLIN.
 D. JAMES GORDON BENNETT, completed but did not sail owing to structural defects: repairs in hand and will proceed first opportunity.

Cargo in tons dead weight or ballast. Details.
 (S.B.N.O.Murmansk 230920A to Admty.)
 J.W.55B P.C. and S. at 1200A, 063° 12' N. 001° 29' W. 017°, 9½. Being shadowed (?by) 2 Dorniers 217. 2. Weather 4772 9432.
 (Capt. D.17 231145A to H.F.)

At completion sweeping force 2 out of harbour HARRIER sail for Scapa. LOYALTY is to proceed to Reykjavik. A.C.I.C. 221802 refers. A.C.I.C. is requested to sail LOYALTY to Skaalefjord for embarkation of passengers.
 (C. in C.H.F. 231145A to M/S 1, LOYALTY.)
 F.V. Para. 6D, (2). Intend on sailing to proceed in DUKE OF YORK with Force 2 passing Hrisey Island at 0001A/24th.
 (C. in C.H.F. 231155A to H.F.)
 Faroes arrivals. HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE.
 (N.O.I.C. Faroes 231256A to C. in C.Rosyth.)
 Your 221301A para. 4.

There are no known permanent patrols actually in area 2A, the nearest being
 A. from the eastern end of Soroy Sund through Rolvsoy Sund (covering the approaches to Hammerfest) and thence on to Brei Sund
 B. in the vicinity of Maasoy Island (71° 00' N. 25° 00' E.) covering Brei Sund and Maasoy Sund and
 C. in the entrance to Porsanger Fjord covering the approaches to Honningsvaag.

Such patrols are by armed trawlers.
 2. Regular meteorological flights, presumed to be daily, from Banak out to Spitzbergen area. Aircraft from Tromso may also cover this area in the event of suspected activity. Frequent air A/S patrols are carried out between Altenfjord and the Nordkyn area.
 3. Convoys use the inner lead route south of Mageroy and do not pass through the area.
 (D.D.I.C. 231326A to S.B.N.O.N.Russia.)
 THOMAS KEARNS (?) returned Kola Inlet. My 171432A and 222029A refer. My 222029A delete WRESTLER.
 (S.B.N.O.Murmansk 231831A to H.F.)
 E.T.A. Reykjavik via westerly route 0400Z/25th.
 (LOYALTY 232115 to A.C.I.C.)
 A.C.I.C.'s 221802. Unless you have already left Akureyri proceed to Reykjavik and embark passengers as ordered by A.C.I.C. thence proceeding to Skaalefjord.
 (R.A.D. 232147A to LOYALTY.)

/Expect...

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War Diary.23.12.1943.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation F.V. (Contd.) Expect A/S escort by one Catalina during daylight hours tomorrow.
(C. in C. Rosyth 232242A to Escort J.W. 55B.)
0001A/24th P.C. and S. of J.W. 55B, 069° 44' N. 000° 25' E. 037° 9', altering to 057° at 0700.
1 shadowing A/C in contact until 2305, homing on 527 k/cs. Weather 3562 0013.
(Capt. D.17 232315A to H.F.)

Operation "Stonewall". Have obtained A.S.V. contact. Attack abandoned.
(A/C Duty J 230614 to 19 Group.)
Enemy M/Vs. sighted. Following from U.S.S. CORE. T.O.O. 221800:
1200Z/22 P.C. and S. 46.56 N. 17.40 W. 225, 15.
En route Casablanca via 45 N. 20 W. and 35 N. 10 W. Estimate arrive 251200Z.
(D.O.D.H. 231150A to C. in C.W.A.)

Cinclant has ordered U.S. CARD to operate between 44° and 47° N. and 18° and 24° W. as practicable in view of fuel situation.
(D.O.D.H. 231210A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. Plymouth.)
U.S. BLOCK ISLAND reports that she is proceeding to fuel lee of Azores. Heavy seas. No flying.
(D.O.D.H. 231211A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. Plymouth.)
Following is a repetition of Task Group 21.14 message 231632 begins: Plane circled merchantman at 047° 42' N. 018° 53' W. 1439Z, on course 110° speed 10. Flies GFBN. Making no response to OE. Request identification. Ends. Request you will take necessary action.
(F.O.C. Gibraltar 231738A to Admty.)
A.M. 231210. CARD is proceeding vicinity of Azores to refuel. Position at 221629Z, 49° 35' N. 24° 32' W.
(D.O.D.H. 231851A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. Plymouth.)
A.M. 231211. U.S. BLOCK ISLAND expects to fuel destroyers W. of Azores 23rd and to arrive 48° N. 34° W. 25th December. Thence group will proceed to area 44° N. to 47° N. 18° W. to 24° W.
(D.O.D.H. 231900A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C. Plymouth.)
Your 231632. Nothing known in position 047° 42' N. 018° 53' W. Probably homeward-bound blockade-breaker.
(D.C. 231905Z to C.T.G. 21.14.)
GLASGOW is to leave Horta at 1100A tomorrow and is to proceed to carry out patrol G. as laid down in my 201846A December.
2. During the night 24th/25th GLASGOW is to keep West of lines LL. to MM. Importance is attached to watching northern portion of patrol line.
3. GAMBIA is to discontinue patrol G. as necessary to arrive Horta 1300A/26th keeping east of line MM. to LL.
(C. in C. Plymouth 231911A to GLASGOW, GAMBIA.)
Have A.S.V. contact position 45.38 N. 06.18 W. probably surface vessel, request instructions.
(A/C Duty B 232010A to 19 Group.)
12 M/Vs. posn. 45° 38' N. 06° 18' W. course N.W.
(A/C Duty B 232025A to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 46° 55' N. 07° 42' W.
Probably a S/M.
(A/C Duty Q 232054A to 19 Group.)

/Shadowing...

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23.12.1943.

Thursday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Shadowing 12 M/Vs. Enemy previously reported position 45° 24' N. 06° 28' W. course N.W. speed 20 knots. (A/C Duty B 232055A to 19 Group.)
 Enemy M/Vs. sighted. 45.18 N. 06.37 W. 6, 270° 10 knots. (A/C Duty Q 232107A to 19 Group.)
 (Contd.) 45.27 N. 06.04 W. vessels, A/A fire. Wait instructions. (A/C Duty J 232110A to 19 Group.)

A.M. 231905. C.T.G. 21.14 was 100 miles distant proceeding Azores for fuel. Cannot re-establish contact. Suggest shore-bound aircraft investigate unknown vessel.
 (C.T.G. 21.14 232115 to Admty.)
 Vessels (Un.) 45° 10' N. 06° 20' W. 290°.
 (A/C Duty C 232125 to 19 Group.)
 45.04 N. 07.34 W. 2° 5' 0° 16 knots.
 (A/C Duty Q 232330 to 19 Group.)
 Have A.S.V. contact position 45° 55' N. 07° 03' W. type 5 M/Vs. course N.W., speed 20 knots.
 (A/C Duty B 232345A to 19 Group.)

S/M Patrols. Request you sail S/Ms from Lerwick as follows:
 1. SEADOG at 1600A/24th through 090° Muckle Flugga 10 and 062° 11' N. 004° 10' E. to patrol in accordance with S.M. 04318/XJ.
 2. SCEPTRE at 1800A/24th through 090° Muckle Flugga 5 miles and route "Orange" to 064° 03' thence direct 064° 38' N. 008° 42' E. to patrol in accordance with S.M. 04318/494.
 3. ULA at 1200/25th December through 090° Muckle Flugga 20 X. 061° 16' 001° 49' E. Y. 060° 37' 003° 11' E. Z. 059° 06' 003° 32' E. to patrol in accordance with S.M. 04318/494.
 (Capt. S.9 231001A to S.O. S/M Lerwick.)
 S/Ms are to leave patrol for Lerwick as follows:
 1. O.15 as requisite to pass through 060° 49' 003° 51' at 1600A/27th December, thence through 061° 37' 002° 01' E. and 090° Muckle Flugga 20.
 2. SIRDAR at 2000A/26th through 071° 21' N. 020° 00' E. 070° 49' N. 014° 00' E. and route "Pink".
 3. VENTURER at 0100A/26th by route "Pink".
 4. S/Ms are to proceed on the surface at C.O. discretion as follows: VENTURER when south of 062°, O.15 and SIRDAR when 50 miles clear Norwegian Coast.
 (Capt. S.9 231353A to S/Ms.)
 Positions of submarines at 0800/24th December and movements for following 24 hours.
 A. SIRDAR, VENTURER, O.15 as in my 161734.
 B. SYRTIS 65° 38' N. 04° 59' E. passing through 68° 59' N. 09° 58' E. towards 70° 27' N. 14° 02' E. probably on the surface 10 knots.
 C. STUBBORN (P.238) arriving Lerwick from the north east.
 (F.O.S. 231719A to Admty.)

Coastal Force Patrols. Intend sailing M.G.B. 502 at 1645/23 to the southward returning 0930/24.
 (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 231119A to C. in C.Plymouth.)

/Intend...

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Coastal Force Patrols. (Contd.) Intend to sail M.G.B. 318 at 1615 to the southward returning 0900/24th.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 231445A to C. in C.Plymouth.)
A. Force 116. M.T.Bs. 415 (3.O.) 413, 431, 416.
B. 1930A/23. C. 115 Start 15. D. Vicinity of C.
F. 0700A/24.
(C. in C.Plymouth 231557A.)
M.Is. 138 and 137 at Bullock Bank.
M.Is. 104, 107, 125, 213, 128, 573 and M.T.Bs. 221, 209 and 229, carrying out operation N.L. 113. E.T.D. 1625. E.T.R. 2300.
Route via number one, U. and V. Buoys each way.
M.T.Bs. 212, 211, 205 and M.A.S.Bs. 24 and 32 at number 7 buoy.
E.T.D. 1750.
M.T.Bs. 204, 235, 208, 705 and 700 patrolling in vicinity of West Dyck Bank. E.T.D. 1745.
M.T.Bs. 354, 418, 437 and 436 operating off Gravelines, route via Dumpton and V. Buoys each way. E.T.D. 2215. E.T.R. 0730/24.
(V.A.Dover 231605A to Admty.)

Operation "Hardtack 11". Following is a repetition of my 231204. Carry out operation "Hardtack 11" tonight.
(V.A.Dover 231555A to M.T.B. 354, Commando 10.)

Mining.

Operation "Hostile XVI". Intend carrying out operation "Hostile XVI" to-night 23/24 December.
2. Force "Hostile XVI" is sailing from Plymouth to pass Gate at 1730A/23rd. Codeword "Arena."
(C. in C.Plymouth 231031A.)
My 231031. Support force TANATSIDE, S.O., BRISSENDEN is to sail from Plymouth to pass through position AA. at 1930A/23rd proceeding thence at 13 knots to position YY. 049° 05' N. 003° 55' W.
2. Destroyers are to patrol in vicinity of YY. and are to support force "Hostile XVI" if required.
3. Destroyers are to leave YY. at 0300A/24th and return at 20 knots through position ZZ. 212° Eddystone 11 miles to Plymouth.
4. Codeword "Arena 1".
(C. in C.Plymouth 231502A.)
My 231031A and 231502A. Postponed further signal will be made
(C. in C.Plymouth 231606A.)

WORCESTER mined. Have struck a mine. My position is 070° 54 D 4 miles.
(WORCESTER 232255.)
Sending tug CHAMPION to assist WORCESTER.
(C. in C.Nore 232310A.)

23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Blockade Runners. A.M. 131557. PIETRO ORSEOLO damaged by air attack on 18th Dec. and unlikely to sail for Far East at present. ELSA ESSBERGER reported (graded B.2) to have left Bordeaux loaded 12th Dec. presumably for another Biscay port. Departures of this ship and TANNENFELS and HIMALAYA may coincide with arrivals from Far East and may be imminent. Arrivals likely to include any of RIO GRANDE, OSORNO, ALSTERUFER, BURGENLAND, WESERLAND ex ERMLAND, HAVELLAND.
2. Poor D/F bearings on 23rd Dec. indicate north-bound German blockade runner in approx. lat. of Dakar.
(D.D.I.C. 231208A.)

TIRPITZ, Russian visual R/C at 1010A/23. Made from 8000
SCHARNHORST. feet no cloud. Kaafjord battleship presumed ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ with repair vessel alongside. Welding in progress on deck of battleship. Langfjord battleship presumed battle cruiser
SCHARNHORST. 2 destroyers, usual removals auxiliary dock anchorages. No photographs. Admiralty pass to H.Q.C.C.
(S.B.N.O.N.Russia 231735A.)

U-Boats.

U-Boat Am over enemy submarine in 56° 50' N. 23° 43' W.
attacked. Submarine was sighted on surface and observed to submerge, when first sighted was on course 240° estimated speed 10 knots.
(A/C BNNL 231510 to Artunshofdi.)
Have attacked U-Boat with depth charge. U-Boat has dived position 56.50 N. 23.43 W. Cannot remain over U-Boat, weather.
(A/C BMNL 231515A to Artunshofdi.)

U-Boat Am over enemy submarine in 57.20 N. 23.24 W. Flak.
reported. (?Origin 231510A.)
Am over enemy submarine in 57.20 23.24. Flak.
(?Origin 231533 to Artunshofdi.)
1. U-Boat attacked with depth charges by O/120 at 1515A and has dived in 56.50 N. 23.43 W. Aircraft cannot remain over U-Boat weather.
2. U-Boat sighted by unknown aircraft at 1510A in position 57.20 N. 23.24 W. Flak.
(R.A.F.Iceland 231615A to H.Q.C.C.)

U.536 We congratulate CALGARY and SNOWBERRY and NENE on
sunk on the destruction of U.536 on 20th November, 1943.
20th Nov. (1st S.L. 232000^A to NENE, CALGARY, SNOWBERRY.)

Casualties & Defects.

GODAVARI. E.G.40's 230756. Am cut right down waterline and unless weather moderates do not expect to make more than 4 knots. Escort is essential as should bulkhead in P.O's mess deck give way ship will

/founder...

War Diary.23.12.1943.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.

- GODAVARI. founder. Can you provide escort till I join
(Contd.) HIGHLANDER after which one from his group will be necessary. My position $050^{\circ} 06' 021^{\circ} 11'$ (corrupt group) repair damage.
(GODAVARI 230901Z to C. in C.W.A. E.G.40.)
- GODAVARI 230901Z. Detach one escort forthwith to meet GODAVARI and escort to Londonderry.
2. Any escort from E.G.40 now with GODAVARI should rejoin group on relief by escort from B.4.
(C. in C.W.A. 231345A to B.4.)
GODAVARI 230901 and my 231345. Escort from E.G.40 is to stand by GODAVARI until relieved by escort from B.4. E.G.
(C. in C.W.A. 231459A to E.G.40.)
GODAVARI and CLOVER at 2000Z $050^{\circ} 30' 019^{\circ} 50'$ course 062° until 0800Z then 055° speed 6.5. Weather 9361 2773.
(GODAVARI 232001Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- L.B.V. 455. L.B.V. 455 sank at her moorings in Langstone Harbour at 0835Z/19th in about 16 feet at low water. Request arrangements for salvage may be made.
(C., in C.Portsmouth 231202A to Admt.)
- CAPE MOHICAN. My 151837. Intend to sail at 1400/24th. Tugs EMPIRE TORCH and EMPIRE RUPERT towing SS. CAPE MOHICAN with tug ROODE ZEE. accompanying escorted by DERBY COUNTY in continuation of voyage to Loch Ewe by standard route. Speed approximates 6 knots.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 231315 to N.O.I.C. Aultbea.)
- LONDON. LONDON now has further defects and Admiralty consider it advisable for her to continue her docking and not return H.F. In view of good progress made by BERWICK consider LONDON can be spared and have so informed Admiralty. My 211214 not to C.S.10 refers.
(C.S.1 231310A to C. in C.H.F.)
- ZEEHOND. KIHNA sails at 11 knots from Rothesay 0800A/26th by searched channels and normal route to Lough Foyle to R/V ZEEHOND off Magilligan Point at 1730A thence escorting ZEEHOND by reverse route at 9 knots to Rothesay, E.T.A. 0400A/27th.
(Capt. S.7 231416A to F.O.S.)
- JED. To complete extensive main engine defects ship will require to be in hand for 12 weeks.
(C.C. Corpach 231707A to Admt.)
- L.C.A.645. L.C.A.645 and 646 of 509 Flotilla lost in heavy
L.C.A.646. seas off Eddystone on December 21st report follows.
(F.O. Force J 231945A to Admt.)

War Diary.

23.12.1943.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects - Contd.

- RATTLESNAKE. Clyde arrival RATTLESNAKE.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 232048A to A.C.O.S.)
- NORHAUK. My 221619A. VALESCA reports wreck to be position
51.50.15 N. 01.33.07 E. Position considered ac-
curate.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 232229A to C. in C.Nore.)
- M.T.B. 685. Your 232055. You should not leave the mainland
until you are in all respects operationally fit.
Arrangements have been made for Aberdeen to repair
wireless defects upon your arrival.
(A.C.O.S. 232322A to M.T.B. 685.)

Shipping & Convoys.

- T.A.79. Sailed at 2359/22nd.
(AQUITANIA.) (D.S.T.O.Greenock 230010A.)
- S.L.142/
M.K.S.33. Heave to steering northward with wind on port
quarter until dawn.
(C. in C.W.A. 230512Z to Convoy.)
All stragglers have been ordered to proceed to
destinations and to report on crossing 15° W.
(C. in C.W.A. 231012A to Escorts S.L.142/M.K.S.33.)
- Your 231012A. Am in touch with about 30 scattered ships. Am
endeavouring to form convoy. Am not considering them as stragglers
(B.4 231315Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- O.N.S.25 O.N.S.25. My 230230Z. German U-Boat made sighting
O.S.62. report at 0719Z. My P.C. and S. 050° 30' N. 022°
48' W. 230° 5.
(HESPERUS 230749Z to C. in C.W.A.)
D/F bearings at 1009Z/23 indicate that U-Boat is
probably in contact with convoy O.S.62 or O.N.S.25.
(D.D.I.C. 231130A to Escorts O.N.S.25, O.S.62.)
Inform Commodore ALLERTON, KANA, EMPIRE WATERHEN are returning
(C. in C.W.A. 231250A to Escorts O.S.62/K.M.S.36.)
- T.U.5. By D/F at 1221Z U-Boat in vicinity of convoy.
(D.D.I.C. 231354A to Escorts T.U.5.)
Ships capable of 13 knots are to proceed independ-
ently to destinations from dusk tonight.
(C. in C.W.A. 231518A to H.X.270.)
- K.M.S.36. Cdre. STRIKER, escort oiler, and 35 ships in com-
pany. About 5 not far astern and overtaking
PIMPERNEL absent.
2. B.Y.M.S. 24 in company reported returning to U.K.
insufficient fuel.

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

- K.M.S.36.
(Contd.)
3. GODAVARI collided MANCHESTER PROGRESS who proceeds.
5. My position, course and speed 49.10, 21.50, 218 6 knots.
(E.G.40, 231701Z to C. in C.W.A.).
- Stragglers.
- INGERTRE returned from 0562, K.M.S.36.
BONAIRE returned from O.N.S.M. 25.
BELGIQUE returned from O.N.S.O. 25.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 232130 to C. in C.W.A.).
- C.U.9.
- Cmdre. D.W.A. is requested to sail ARCTURUS to R/V C.U.9. estimated to reach position A. at approx. 1600Z/25th December, and escort to Barry Roads.
(C. in C.W.A., 232329Z to Cmdre. D.W.A.).
- T.A.80.
- Sailed QUEEN ELIZABETH in accordance with my 221604A.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 232354A to Admty.).

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

ATALANTE,
LE CENTAURE.

C.M.S.F. sail ATALANTE when ready to Dakar, to report to F.O.C.W.Af. for A/S training duty as relief for LE CENTAURE. LE CENTAURE then to be sailed to Bermuda for A/S training duty.
(C. in C. U.S. Fleet, 230301Z)

C.T.G.21.16.

This is C.T.G.21.16's 222346.
Proceeding to fuel lee of Azores. Heavy seas, no flying. W.X. 78723024.
(Comnaveu, 230451 to Admt.)

This is Cinclant's 230440 to C.T.G. 21.16.

As permitted by fuel considerations accomplish my 230127.
Your 222346.

(Comnaveu, 230617Z).

Note. 230127 passed to Admt. as Comnaveu 230319 (N.T. in W.D.) and 222346 as 230451.

WHITEHAVEN,
RYE,
BOSTON.

RYE and BOSTON not in touch. My estimated position 035 degs. 59' N. 008 degs. 15' W. course 275 degs. S. of A. 10.7. Intermittent mist and showers visibility varying. Request instructions. (WHITEHAVEN, 230900A to Gib. (R) RYE, BOSTON.)
Estimate you in 036 degs. 08' N. 010 degs. 43'

W. making good course 277 degs. S. of A. 11 knots. WHITEHAVEN in 036 degs. 08' N. 010 degs. 48' W. on same course has reduced to 200 revolutions to be in 036 degs. 23' N. 013 degs. 32' W. at 1200Z Friday. R/V with me there.

(WHITEHAVEN, 231900Z to RYE, BOSTON (R) F.O.C.Gib.?)

Your 231646A (N.T. in W.R.) Seagoing efficiency (?affected) if H.S. were to be used in heavy weather. Damage is above waterline. Speed reduced to 8 knots at 1700/23rd for 12 hours owing to condenser trouble in BOSTON.

(RYE, 231925A to F.O.C.Gib. (R) WHITEHAVEN, BOSTON.)

C.T.F.
21.14.

This is C.T.F. 21.14's 2221737. Hail and heavy seas at 24.32 W. 49.35 N. 221629Z. Proceeding vicinity Azores to refuel.
(Comnaveu, 230936)

BIDEFORD,
Convoy
Escorts.

My 221940 (N.T. in W.D.) U.S. Escorts not arrived. Cannot contact them by W/T so unlikely they can join before dark. Both Casablanca ships carrying troops and DUNKERQUE has only two days endurance. Propose keeping them in convoy and detaching of F.D. a.m. Friday escorted by ODZANI or by P.C's if they can be hailed up. Request instruction
Visibility variable down 3 miles. Moderate North West swell. My position 034 degs. 32' N. 009 degs. 23' W. 037 degs. 7½.
(BIDEFORD, 231000Z to F.O.C.Gib. (R) C.M.S.F.)

NORTHERN WAVE /...

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. - Contd.NORTHERN
WAVE.

Reference C. in C. W.'s 221227A/. Request R/V for NORTHERN WAVE with S.L.143/M.K.S.34. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 231325Z to F.O.C.Gib.)
/ Re NORTHERN WAVE to be sailed to join S.L.143/M.K.S.34.

C.T.G.27.4.
Unidentified
Ship.

Sighted large steamer in 31.55 N. 35.00 W. at 230730.
Refer to this as 231220A from C.T.G.27.4 action S.B.N.O. Azores.
Approx. course 015 speed 10 showing all lights. Presumed Swedish GOTHENBURG but I hold no specific information.
(Comnaveu, 231947 to Admt.)

T.F.65.

This is C.M.S.F. 221411. Arrived T.F.65. U.S.S. LIVERMORE, ERICSSON, BLAKEFLY (Sic), FESSENDEN, JOYCE, EBERLE, FARQUHAR, PETERSON from U.G.S.26.
(Comnaveu, 232037Z)

PRINCE
ROBERT.

A.M. 031837 Para. (2).
If you consider PRINCE ROBERT will have had sufficient time in harbour request you will sail her as A/A escort for M.K.F. 27 leaving Gib.28th to operate under the orders of C. in C. W.A.
(2) F.O.I.C.Gib. is requested to signal his intentions.
(D.O.D.(H) 232310A to F.O.I.C.Gib. (R) C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth)

South Atlantic.Operation
"Tabarin".

Your 191234Z full set of charts for the Antarctic is carried by Marchesi.
(Head of M.1, 231049A to N.O.I.C.Falklands)

U-Boat
Attacked
21.12.43.

My 212201Z para. 2 aircraft report oil patch one miles long at 0614Z/22 in position 03 degs. 40' N. 01 degs. 30' W. COMMANDANT DROGOU collecting oil samples and searching 03 degs. 38' N. 01 degs. 18' W. at 1125Z/22 later reported attacking good contact in 03 degs. 40' N. 02 degs. 14' W. at 1642Z/22. Aircraft sighted oil streak spreading to southwest 3 miles long 100 yards wide in 03 degs. 29' N. 02 degs. 21' W. at 0700/23. Possibility that submarine in damaged condition may be endeavouring to escape to westward. Intend to keep 3 Corvettes hunting and release remainder for escort duties.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 231118Z to Admt.)

GILICIA /...

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

CILICIA
(patrol)

F.O.C.W.Af's 211912Z sailed.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 231700Z to Com. 4th Fleet.(R)
Admty. Comar Dakar.)

Atlantic
Narrow
Patrol.

Your 221127/para. 2 I am making proposals to Com. 4th Fleet accordingly. He may wish to maintain patrols on line Recife-Ascension-Cape Palmas as this appears only practicable way of using his air to best advantage which entails use of Ascension. Suggest you make known your wishes to concentrate on Freetown-Recife line to Washington as owing to very short endurance of French Cruisers cannot maintain patrol South of mean line Casamance to Natal without transferring French cruisers to Freetown which is highly undesirable. (F.O.C.W.Af. 231748 to Admty.)

✓ Re combined patrols to intercept blockade runners.

Admty. instructs me to concert with you combined system of patrols or searches on general line Freetown-Recife in area through which blockade runners may be expected to pass. Armed merchant cruisers are leaving my command. Anticipate force at my disposal will amount to a maximum of 3 French or Italian cruisers continuously on patrol. They are weak in air and Radar. Propose following dispositions:

French and Italian cruisers to patrol in area enclosed by line joining - all following positions are north and west unless otherwise indicated - 010 degs. 024 degs. 007 degs. 021 degs. 003 degs. 026 degs. 006 degs. 029 degs. Northerly trend of area is necessary due to small endurance of French cruiser which it is desirable should be based on Dakar. Suggest you consider re-organizing BR and patrol north east of (?Ascension) and concentration filling necessary gap south west of my proposed patrols.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 232105Z to (U.S.) Cdr. 4th U.S. Fleet, (R) Admty)

Demilitari-
zation
Freetown
Port.

Arrangements well advanced.
(M.W.T.R. Sierra Leone, N.T.O.O/23rd)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

French refugees. 6th evacuation of about 1600 French refugees from Malaga for Casablanca will take place on 29th using SIDI BRAHIM and LE PINE and French escort COMMANDANT DETROYAT and French Sloop M/S COMMANDANT DELAGE, F.O.C. Gib., is requested to supply one British escort in accordance with my 261841 Nov. (C. in C. Med., 230910 to F.O.C. Gib., B.N.A. Madrid, (R) Admty. Commorseafront, Naval F.R.O.)

ARIADNE. Request you will sail at 1500A 24th to Gib. (C. in C. Med. 230943A to Com. Algeria.)

Air Reports. M.S.24397. A.309 23rd. Daily Opsum 239. Details of large number of successful air attacks on small Troop and Supply craft in Aegean 22nd December. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 231028Z.)
M.S. 24403. A.F.270 23rd. N.W.A.A.F. Opsum 305 N.W. Af. S.A.F. (H.Q.N.A.A.F., 231415A.)

UPROAR. Postpone my 20115* 24 hours. (Capt. S.10, 231142 to C. in C. Med. (R) N.O.I.C. Algiers, 10th S/M.F. F.O.C. Gib., LE CURIE, CASABIANCA, PROTEE.)* 201150 intended.

Izmir, Izmid. In order to avoid confusion propose that Izmir and Izmid be referred to in all correspondence and signals as Izmir (R) and Izmid (D) respectively. Use of name Smyrna is not acceptable to Turks. (C. in C. Levant, 231249B to Admty., (R) C. in C. Med. B.N.A. Ankara.)

P.52 DZIK. Leaves Beirut 1630/23rd by standard route to Kaso Strait E.T.A. 2300 25th. Thence close west of Makila nisi to patrol south of Milo, Cape Malea, East Coast of Morea. (Capt. S.1. 231330B to C. in C. Levant, 1st S.M.)

COMMANDANT DELAGE U/B. COMMANDANT DELAGE dropped 34 depth charges on S/M contact in 036° 56' N. 002° 19' E. then left area. Am carrying out square search North and West of data position. COMMANDANT DELAGE's 230430 to N.O.I.C. Algiers (N.T. in W.D) refers. (TETCOTT, 231410A to C. in C. Med., N.O.I.C. Algiers.)

RAMILLIES. Request you will arrange onward passage to Port Said. 2. Destroyers in C. in C. E.F.'s 220457 should escort as far as 013° N. (C. in C. Levant, 231717B to F.O.R.S.C.A. etc.) /Italian...

23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Italian Hospital Ships. Your 211547. Full agreement now reached regarding transfer. (F.O.T.A.L.I., 231847 to C. in C. Med. (R) Admty.)

Inquiry into loss of SANTA RYSA, FELIXSTOWE. Arrangements for Board of Inquiry to be held to investigate the loss of M/Ss SANTA RYSA and FELIXSTOWE. My 231425. (N.T. in W.D.) (C. in C. Med., 231847A, 231848A.)

Report of condition and employment of landing craft in Med. for Prime Minister. Details. (C. in C. Med., 231910A Admty.)

NICOLINE, MAERSK. Has completed loading and is expected to sail any hour now. (R.O. Valencia, 231927 to C. in C. Med., F.O.I.C. Gib., Admty.)
Consular Office message. Danish SS. NICOLINE, MAERSK loaded at Valencia and is reported to be sailing for Sete at any hour. Ship is 4194 tons and is working for German interests, and may be flying German flag. Maximum speed estimated to be 12 knots.
2. Sailing forthwith proceed as necessary to intercept. Ships sailing hour from Valencia will be signalled as soon as known.
3. Essential that this interception should take place outside territorial waters.
4. Ship is to be escorted to Gib.
6. Weather forecast.
7. For information. Swiss SS. CALANDA (description) routed to Marseilles may be encountered but should not be molested.
(C. in C. Med., 232154 to LE FANTASQUE (R) Navale France Cmdre. Algiers, Admty., B.N.A. Madrid, F.O.C. Gib.)

M.K.F., K.M.F. Convoys. Your 220918 para. 3. Proposal to sail M.K.F. and X.I.F. convoys concurrently five days after K.M.F. leaves U.K. allows only 28 days for K.M.F. ships for India to reach Bombay and return to Port Said for inclusion in M.K.F.
2. This will allow of no delay and it is considered that 30 days is the practicable minimum.
3. It appears to Admty. that sailing convoys from Port Said seven days after K.M.F. leaves U.K. should allow enough time to connect with Naples section without delaying the latter.
4. It would be of great assistance if you could signal intended programme of M.K.F. from time of leaving Port Said to time of passing Gibraltar.
(D.O.D.(F) 231931A to C. in C. Med., Info. F.O.W.It., Com. Algeria, C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Levant, F.O.I.C. Gib., P.S.T.O. Med.)
/Operation...

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23.12.1943.

Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Operation
by SICKLE.

REFRESHMAN?

destroyers.

3. Weather report.

(P.224 (SICKLE) 232204B to Capt. (S) 1, (R) C. in C. Levant,
1st S/M F.)

Operation completed.

2. 20th night, attack on F/Boat failed due
to premature C.C.R. Pistol explosion.

21st dawn, DRACHE and 2 destroyers arrived
Kalavasi. p.m. was accurately hunted by

Operation
"Stonewall".

Request you will place one cruiser under orders
of F.O.C. Gib. forthwith, for Anti-blockade
runner duties.

(D.O.D.(H) 232340A to C. in C. Med., (R)
C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.C.Gib., S.B.N.O. Azores,
H.Q.C.C., Cominch, C. in C. Lant.)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Staff organisation. (C. in C.E.F. 230336Z.) See lion copy.

Bi-weekly U/B. dispositions No.11. Area A. report graded D.4 of U/Bs. sighted by A/C. 5 miles S. of Ormara 0530Z/22nd December scale air escort W. Area B. no fresh information air escort W. Area C. 1. Report graded by originator as C.2. of U/Bs. sighted by aircraft in 014° 50' N. 050° 45' E. at 0350Z/22nd December. 2. Suspected Radar contact by A/C. of U/B. in position 007° 59' N. 050° 26' E. at 1500Z/22 scale (?escort) X. Area D. no further news suspect Japanese U/Bs. attacked by F.S.SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA 13th December but if not destroyed as claimed, may still be in the area scale escort X. Areas E. and G. no news of whereabouts of U/B. last plot by D/F off Madras 14th December but maybe in these areas. Scala escort Y. Area F. no recent news any U/B. activity. Air escort X. (C. in C.E.F. 230401Z.)

PESHAWUR . At 0640Z/23rd SS. PESHAWUR was torpedoed in 011° torpedoed. 25' N. 080° 30' E. (C. in C.E.F. 230730Z to S. & A.E.I.Station, 222 Group, 225 Group, A.H.Q. Bengal.) PESHAWUR torpedoed in convoy J.C.30 at 0640Z/23 in 11° 25' N. 080° 30' E. and has sunk. (2) Aircraft reported over U/B. near this position at 1000Z. (3) IPSWICH is in vicinity and QUALITY and QUIBERON are proceeding from Trincomalee to hunt U/B with air co-operation. (C. in C.E.F. 231054Z to Admty. (R) C. in C.E.F. (S.E.A.C.))

F.Ts.18 and 14. Fleet Tenders 18 and 14. A.M. 181436 (?180436 intended) refers. Request passage to Ceylon may be hastened as these tenders are urgently required. (C. in C.E.F. 231053Z to C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant (R) Admty., F.O. Gibraltar, F.O. Malta.)

Ocean escort on E.I. Station. After relief of SUSSEX and withdrawal of CHITRAL and ALAUNIA, only 5 old cruisers and CANTON are at present nominated for station duties. Admty. 191556 refers. 2. The minimum requirements of cruisers and A.M.Cs. to provide ocean escort for convoys and fast transports is as follows:-
(A) Between Aden and South Africa, 3 short legged cruisers.
(B) Between Australia and India one short legged cruiser working from Freemantle and 4 short legged cruisers for upper leg of passage. 1 additional cruiser must be allowed for refitting. For purposes of Australia to India route, HAWKINS and FROBISHER must be considered short legged cruisers. 3. Excluding CANTON which is to be used for Naval trooping, Admiralty 051817 refers, the total requirements is 9 old cruisers. Admiralty 171551 Sept. and my 250825 Sept. refer. 4. Unless cruisers at present ear-

/marked...

East Indies

23.12.43.
Thursday

MOST SECRET

527A.

WARNING : This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher or confidential code message, and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.

(*NOTE : Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad :
"O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

M E S S A G E 230336Z/December
MOST SECRET IN

From C. in C. Eastern Fleet Date 23/12/43
Time 1232

NAVAL CYPHER (X) PLUG BY W/T

Addressed Admiralty

Organisation of staff. It is evident from A.M. 090036 December that the functioning of the Eastern Fleet Staff is not fully understood in the Admiralty.

(2) The conception of two staffs working separately as suggested in paragraphs two and three is incorrect. The staffs at Delhi and Colombo function in fact as one staff responsible to me interchanging papers on subjects which concern both and dealing direct with matters on which only one side is concerned.

(3) The staff at Colombo is principally concerned with the Fleet and shipping communications safety of shipping and station matters outside India whilst that at Delhi concentrates on amphibious operations and matters which concern S.E.A.C. G.H.Q. India and the Indian Government.

(4) In this way the duties of the Deputy C. in C. in Colombo and the Deputy Naval Commander I. at Delhi divide themselves respectively into responsibility to me for sea communications and the station on the one side and for amphibious operations and matters concerning S.E.A.C and India on the other. In other words the staff at Colombo assist me in fulfilling my responsibilities to Admiralty whilst that at Delhi assists me to fulfill my responsibilities to the Supreme Allied Commander S.E.A. It is appropriate therefore that matters concerning the landing craft organisation should be referred to the Deputy Naval Commander at Delhi rather than the Deputy Commander in Chief at Colombo.

(5) Many of the duties carried out by the staffs at Delhi and Colombo however are inter-related and very close co-operation is necessary and has been generally achieved. I am free to pay frequent visits to each H.Q. with my Chief of Staff and a small operational staff and am thus able to ensure that policy is co-ordinated and that overlapping does not occur.

(6) When the Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander move to Kandy in the spring this co-ordination and relationship will become simpler and closer. R.A.L.C.B.

(7) The maintenance and organisation of landing ships and craft in the Sub. continent of India and in this theatre present a problem vastly different from that in the U.K. it is

/ necessary

necessary to base the landing craft at several holding ports of limited capacity separated by great distances. F.O.C.R.I.N. has made it quite clear that the officers now in charge of his various ports are not only unable but in some cases unsuitable to undertake any further responsibilities or commitments and in time therefore it will be necessary to appoint a number of R.N. officers to certain Indian ports to undertake these additional duties.

(8) This establishment of bases in India will call for the closest liaison with the Indian Military, Naval and Government Authorities and for the most careful co-ordination of policy between the various R.N. detachments. This liaison and co-ordination will be even more necessary when the H.Q. of the Supreme Allied Commander move out of India into Ceylon.

(9) After careful consideration of all sides of the question and with a full knowledge of local conditions obtaining in India, I was convinced that a Flag Officer would be necessary to co-ordinate the activity of these forces and establishments and I still hold this view. Para. 10. I the meantime I have been compelled to instruct S.R.N.O. Bombay to undertake these duties in order that co-ordination may be attained. This however, is unsatisfactory as a permanent arrangement, as his duties as S.R.N.O. Bombay do not allow him to leave that port to visit the other bases concerned.

Move of Supreme Allied H.Q. to Ceylon.

(11) Some re-organisation of my staff will be necessary when the S.E.A.C. move to Rangoon. A small staff will be required to remain at Delhi with the rear echelon of S.E.A.C. and for Liaison duties with G.H.Q. India. The duties of this staff will comprise many of those now carried out by Com. 'Q' together with a proportion of those undertaken in the past by the Flag Liaison Officer R.A.(Q).

(12) R.A.(Q) is responsible to me for future administrative planning and will normally be at Colombo where he will have available the assistance of technical and administrative staff officers and of the representatives of civilian departments. He is represented at Delhi on the P.A.O's Committee by Com. (Q). Para. 8 of A.M. 090036 refers. Staff.

(13) A list of staff is being prepared and will be forwarded by airmail at an early date. D.C.O.(I).

(14) Para. 10 of A.M. 090036 is confirmed.

Conclusion.

(15) Amplifying letter referred to in para. 11 of your signal has not yet been received. It is requested however

/ that

MOST SECRET

WARNING : This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher or confidential code message, and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.

(*NOTE : Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad :
"O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

that this question should be reconsidered in the light of the above and with particular reference to the appointment at an early date of an R.A.L.C.D.

(to be in the T. F. 230336Z to Admiralty)

1st Lord
1st S.L. (2)
D.F. S.L.
2nd S.L.
3rd S.L.
Viced Controller
4th S.L.
5th S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (W)
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (UT) (2)
Sec.
Nav. Soc.
R.A.S. (S)
D. of P. (2)
D.T.S.D.
D.N.I. (4)
D.S.D.
D.O.D. (F) (2)
D.O.D. (H) (4)
D. of P. (C) (2)
D. of L.D.
D.R.O. (C.O.) (2)
D.P.S.
Hd. of C.W.
N.A. 2nd S.L.
C.C.O. (2)
D.C.O.M. (4)
D.N.A.C.
D.T.D. (4)
Hd. of M. II (M. 07921/43) (2)
Admiral Blako (4)
I.P. (2)
W.D.

Reply: Admiralty 21 22 13A January.

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Ocean escort
on E.I.
Station.
(contd.)

marked for fleet operations are used to augment those permanently employed on escort duty, the present allocation of station cruisers is 4 short legged short of requirements.
(C. in C.E.F. 231200Z to Admty. (R) C.S.4. C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.)).

U/Bs.
estimated
positions.

No further report of German U/B estimated to be off S.W. coast of India or between Maldives and Ceylon. One Japanese in Bay of Bengal unfixed since D/F of 15th. One Japanese unfixed since it was attacked on 13th in 11° 20' S. 56° 50' E. when probably Westbound. Possibly one Japanese off Aden Protectorate from sighting reported in C. in C.E.F. 221802. (D.D.I.C. 231209A to C. in C.E.F. (S.E.A.C.) A.C.N.B.)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

LORD KELVIN. St. Johns N.F. 22nd. Departures ESQUIMALT escorting LORD KELVIN to effect cable repairs vicinity Cape St. Francis. (N.O.I.C. St. Johns, 230250Z to Admty.)

O. 24. A.M. 291958A Nov. and C. in C. E.F. 010446Z. Can U.S. authorities accept O.24 and if so where. (D.O.D.(F), 231220A to B.A.D.)

Explosives. Cr. No.522. This is C.N.O. 221239. Stowed contrary to shipping regulations are some salvage explosives shipped in U.S.A. vessels from combat areas. Request these conditions be corrected. (Comnaveu, 231343 to Admty., War Shipping Administration, Etouse, M.E.A.)

N.S.H.Q. S/M Estimate. (N.S.H.Q., 231430Z.)

Homing of "Monsters". Ref. C. in C. C.N.A. 191646. Following amplifies Mydis 181823. It is intended that homing procedure be ordered only by C.E.S.F. for aircraft under his command and only by F.O.N.F. or C. in C. C.N.A. for Canadian aircraft. U.S. sailing authorities will be instructed to direct Masters of "Monsters" to comply with orders to make homing signals. (Com. 10th Fleet, 231556.)

HADLEIGH CASTLE. Concur with F.O.N.F. 221721. Request Halifax programme is carried out as at present arranged from about 4th Jan. and on completion HADLEIGH CASTLE proceeds to New London. Navy Dept. is being informed to this effect. Request ? you signal probable date of arrival at New London as soon as known. (B.A.D., 231655Z to N.S.H.Q., (R) Admty., F.O.N.F., C. in C. C.N.A., C. in C. W.A.) Cominch agrees with proposal made in my 231655. (B.A.D., 232217Z to N.S.H.Q., Info. F.O.N.F., C. in C. C.N.A., C. in C. W.A., Admty.)

Withdrawal of U.S. Naval aircraft from Iceland (C). A copy of Cominch Serial 002799 of 20th Dec. to Cinclant has been received in which Cominch states that it has been determined to withdraw U.S. Naval aircraft from Iceland (C).
2. On completion of the withdrawal of the V.B.128 which is now in progress no U.S. aircraft will remain in Iceland (C).
3. Cinclant has been instructed to turn over to the British Authorities any existing facilities on the stipulation that they should be returned to the U.S. Navy control on 60 days notice. (B.A.D., 231659Z to Admty., (R) A.C.I.C.)

/Stragglers ...

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

Stragglers Report No. 32. 3 arrived Halifax 18th from O.N.214 WILLIAM PENN (U.S.) engine defects. ROGER WILLIAMS (U.S.) to land sick man. CONRAD D. WHITE (U.S.) straggled. One arrived St. Johns N.F. 16th from O.N.214 DWIGHT L. MORROW (U.S.) engine defects. One arrived Halifax 17th from S.C.149 HJELMAREN S.W. engine defects. 5 arrived Halifax 17th from O.N.S.24 NEW YORK CITY, SALEN S.W., OREGON I and GREY COUNTY (Nor.) all lost convoy heavy weather. TAHCHEE straggler engine defects. (N.S.H.Q., 231936Z.)

LINCOLN II sunk) SHULAMITE collision. Motor vessel LINCOLN II 77 gross tons Nfld. Registry in collision 21st with SHULAMITE (at harbour entrance). LINCOLN II sunk. No casualties. No apparent damage to SHULAMITE. (N.S.H.Q., 231945Z to Admty.)

U/B attack and sighting summary. Para. D. P.B.M. Radar contact and wake sighted 16.42 N. 68.28 W. 1900Z/22. (Cominch, 232047Z to Admty.)

L. 27 KING HAAKON VII. My 200106. L.27 with defects and KING HAAKON VII sailing delayed. Further signal will be made. (C. in C. C.N.A., 232118Z.)

C.V.Es., Manning Situation. Following personal for 2nd and 5th Sea Lords. I urgently request that I may be given some forecast of the action which I hope is being taken on my 171802.
2. The sailing of C.V.E. with which the ferrying of Lend Lease aircraft is irredeemably involved is now entirely dependent on the provision of the few engine room ratings required in these ships.
3. RANEE, PREMIER, SPEAKER and QUEEN are my immediate problems and with the exception of a few ratings for RANEE no engine room ratings whatsoever have so far arrived and it is impossible for plans to be made regarding work up and the trials and the embarkation of squadrons on completion of their working up unless I know definitely when personnel may be expected.
4. The transfer of A.M.Cs. to trade referred to in A.M. 191556 will not as I see it assist me for at least 2 to 3 months and the question of the 4 ships which I have named above must I consider be dealt with as an urgent requirement from the U.K. (B.A.M.R., 232302Z to Admty.)

U.S. personnel for airfield Terceira. U.S. Navy will sail in U.G.S.29, two L.S.T. and the U.S. Army one Liberty ship in each U.G.S.29, 30 and 31. These vessels will carry stores and U.S. personnel for airfield project at Terceira. U.S. Navy will be responsible for their escort to limit of Portuguese territorial waters. They wish to confirm that R.N. will provide escort inside territorial waters and A/S protection for the ships while they unload. (B.A.D., 232319Z to Admty., (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, Cominch.)

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23.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia and New Zealand.Digest
Serial
No. 702,
Dec. 22nd.

15. Night 21st/22nd Allied M.T.Bs. unsuccessfully engaged 3 barges heading towards Cape Gloucester from direction Saker Island. Shore batteries and 1 Japanese plane attacked our craft. Other units sank 2 barges damaged another 3 all southbound off north-east coast Huon Peninsula.

17. Weather prevented air operations Solomons 21st but early hours 22nd M.T.Bs. operating off south-east coast Bougainville sank solitary barge encountered.
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 230610Z.)Alleged
attack by
A/C on 6th
Sept.1943
on AMERICA
MARU
(Hospital
ship).Japanese Government allege that Hospital Ship AMERICA MARU was attacked by four consolidated aircraft on 6th Sept. at 11 hours 29 minutes in 1° 37' S. 149° 19' E. It is alleged that four bombs were dropped causing damage. Request you will signal any available information regarding this incident stating whether attacking forces were British, Australian or American.
(Head of M.I., 231048A to A.C.N.B.)U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 231400A, 231405A.)Submarines Attacked.Submarine
attack and
sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/23rd.

Para. A. (1) A Beaufighter A/C attacked with gunfire a surfaced U-Boat, course 280° in 58° 00' N. 06° 50' E. at 1030/22.

(2) FF. CDT. DROGOU attacked contact at 1642/22 in 03° 40' N. 02° 04' W.

Para. D. (1) A/C sighted U-Boat at periscope depth at 0950/21 in 16° 18' N. 53° 10' E.

(2) At 1500/22 a suspected U-Boat in 07° 59' N. 50° 26' E.

(3) U-Boat sighted course S.W. before 1802/22 in 14° 50' N. 50° 45' E.

(D.D.I.C., 231031Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.

1(a) Convoy J.W.55B was ordered by C. in C. H.F. at 1325A to reverse its course until 1700A. The convoy was shadowed by enemy A/C from 1220 until 1626 today; and at 1800A was about 250 miles E. by S. of Jan Mayen Island steering 057° at 8 knots.

(b) C. in C. H.F. in DUKE OF YORK, with JAMAICA, SAVAGE, STORD, SAUMAREZ, and SCORPION (forming Force 2) left Akureyri at 2300A on the 23rd to cover the convoy.

Engagement
off Dunkirk.
4 M.T.Bs.
damaged.
Coastal
batteries
engaged.

2(a) 13 M.T.Bs. disposed in 4 forces; and 6 M.Ls. with 3 more M.T.Bs. to lay mines, left Dover last night to attack an enemy vessel, possibly M.23, which left Boulogne with 8 escorts at 1930. Three of the four forces were heavily engaged by the escorts off Dunkirk and severe damage is claimed to have been inflicted on one or more R-Boats. M.T.B.357 was damaged and 1 Officer and 1 rating were wounded; M.T.B.700 was heavily damaged and 1 Officer and 11 ratings were wounded and 4 ratings killed; M.T.B.705 was seriously damaged in collision with M.T.B.700; M.T.B.437 was heavily damaged, her First Lieutenant killed and 1 rating wounded; and the C.O. of M.T.B.436 and 2 ratings were wounded.

(b) From 2011 till 2115 our coastal batteries engaged the enemy with 56 rounds of 15-inch and 24 of 9.2-inch; Force C of 3 M.T.Bs. was straddled by enemy shore batteries off Wissant without damage; and enemy batteries in the Gris Nez area replied with about 40 rounds of which one fell in Dover town, six in Folkestone, and two in Deal causing damage to houses and one civilian casualty but no naval casualty or damage.

Operation
"Stonewall".
LEARY and
HURRICANE
sunk.
OSORNO
beached.

3(a) A group of 12 enemy ships, constantly sighted by our A/C during today in the Biscay area apparently consisting of one blockade breaker escorted by 11 destroyers which had gone out to bring the ship in, altered course from West to East at about 1300 when about 450 miles due West of La Rochelle and was then thought probably to have been joined by an inward-bound blockade breaker located by A/C at 1225. (it was subsequently thought that only one blockade runner was involved.)

(b) From 1526 until 1915 the group was attacked 7 times by our aircraft, once with torpedoes, and in a bomb attack at 1810 one direct hit is claimed and at 1915 a very near miss probably damaging one 8000 ton M/V. This was apparently the OSORNO, which was photographed on 28th Dec. at Le Verdon (Gironde) apparently beached.

/(c) ...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
"Stonewall".
LEARY and
HURRICANE
sunk.
OSORNO
beached.
(Contd.)

- (c) The Cruiser ENTERPRISE left Plymouth at 0200 today to patrol in 015° W. between 46° 50' and 46° 01' N. until 0630A tomorrow; and GAMBIA and GLASGOW were patrolling in the western Biscay area during today.
- (d) At 0504Z the U.S. Destroyer LEARY with Task Group 21.14 in 45° N. 22° W. (about 420 miles N.N.E. of the Azores) was torpedoed and sunk by one of several U-Boats of which the U.S. destroyer SCHENCK attacked 5 and claims to have probably sunk 2. 56 survivors from LEARY were rescued by SCHENCK.
- (e) At 0758Z HURRICANE and GLENARM of Escort Group B.1 were ordered by C. in C. W.A. to proceed to assist T.G. 21.14; and at 2001Z HURRICANE reported that she had been torpedoed in 45° 10' N. 22° 05' W. She is unable to steam but is in no danger of sinking; WATCHMAN is proceeding to assist her; and GLENARM is screening her till WATCHMAN arrives. HURRICANE who had one rating killed, 2 missing, and 9 injured, had subsequently to be sunk by our own forces.
- (f) 2 U-Boats were sighted by A/C during today about 90 miles W. by S. of Lands End.

WORCESTER.

4. The destroyer WORCESTER, mined yesterday off Smiths Knoll, has been towed into Yarmouth Roads where she anchored at 1136A today.

E/R Boats.

5. A number of E-Boats were operating off St. Albans Head between 0200 and 0430 this morning.

North Atlantic.

Operation
"Stonewall".

6. Blockade running is now in full swing, and the Admiralty on 23rd December instructed C. in C. Med. to place one cruiser under the orders of F.O.C. Gibraltar forthwith, for anti-blockade runner duties. MAURITIUS was detailed. Today the Admiralty sent a message that two cruisers were required, one to proceed to Horta, the other to Gibraltar as standby; and C. in C. Med. ordered PENELOPE to proceed to Gibraltar with despatch, and MAURITIUS was ordered to the Azores area. In the event, MAURITIUS was immobilised at Gibraltar with boiler defects until early on 27th December.

/C.T.G. ...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

Operation
"Stonewall"
(Contd.)

C.T.G. 21.16 (U.S.S. BLOCK ISLAND with aircraft) .
was ordered on 25th December to operate in
approx. 45 N. 22 W., and Task Group 21.14 to
return to U.S.A.

South Atlantic.

7. M.V. DUMANA was torpedoed and sunk at
2030 G.M.T. today in 04.27 N. 06.58 W. (or 07.05 W.)
(about 50 miles east of Cape Palmas).

Mediterranean.

"Avalanche"

8. P.T. boats operating off Porto Fino
encountered a small coaster escorted by 2 R-boats
at 0100 today. Torpedo attack was unsuccessful.

M.V.
NICOLINE
MAERSK.

9. The French light cruiser LE FANTASQUE today
intercepted the Danish M.V. NICOLINE MAERSK,
which is working for German interests and sailed
from Valencia in the early hours of today with
a cargo of iron ore which it is reported was
due to be delivered at a port in the south of
France. Interception took place outside Spanish
territorial waters. The ship paid no attention
to signalled orders to stop nor to 2 shots fired
across her bows; but she held on, and grounded
at 1400 in 40.34 N. 00.42 E., at Ponta de la
Bann, near San Carlos de la Rapita.
LE FANTASQUE left the area at 1730 when NICOLINE
MAERSK was flying the German flag and was down
by the stern. Later LE FANTASQUE reported that he
saw a column of smoke probably caused by a
demolition charge issuing from the ships stern
shortly after she went ashore.
The Captain and officers are reported to be
German and the remainder of the crew French.

Adriatic

10 (a) Advanced H.Q. Force 133 reports that
German forces have landed at Raciste on Korčula
Island and established a small bridgehead.

/ (b) TYRIAN...

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24.12.1943.

Friday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Adriatic
(Contd.)

10(b) TYRIAN and TEAZER on patrol last night between Drvenik and Zirje sank a caique and shelled Drvenik.

Aegean

11(a) C. in C. Levant reports the following operations by S/Ms. on Aegean patrol:-
UNRULY sank a caique off Levitha on 2nd and at 0534/13 she secured one possible hit with torpedoes on a destroyer escorting a merchant ship, in 37.52 N. 26.53 E.
(b) SURF sank an unescorted 3000 ton merchant ship in 39.43 N. 25.33 E. at 1858/9.
(c) The enemy is making great efforts to supply the Dodecanese and Aegean Islands under his control.
(d) Further successful attacks were made today by aircraft on small troop and supply carrying vessels and a naval auxiliary in the southern Aegean.

Australia and New Zealand.

12 M.T.Bs. in the early hours of today destroyed, 5 miles east of Sio (Papua), a barge and a boat and a small submarine which appeared specially constructed for transportation work.

13. A Naval Catalina last night attacked a convoy of 10 to 12 ships southbound off the central south-west coast of New Ireland and hit with a 500 lb. bomb a large transport.

14. At the same time another Catalina attacked two destroyers 8 miles east of Garove and making for the island; one direct hit was made, whereupon the destroyers reversed course.

15. A force of U.S. cruisers and destroyers bombarded the Bulex Aonis area last night with 7500 rounds of 6 inch and 5 inch shells.

* Buika and Bonis airfields,

North Bougainville ?

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

EMPIRE
HALBERD.

EMPIRE HALBERD allocated G.S.2. Propose transfer to my command today.
(F.O. Force "S" 241151A to S.O.L.S.U.)

Explosives
at Tilbury.

Subject to the following conditions explosives may be loaded for export at Tilbury Docks up to a limit of 1200 tons nett weight per ship.
Details.
(A.C.N.S. (U.T.) 242204A to C. in C. Nore.)

Movements.

CUMBERLAND.

Scapa arrival at 0536A CUMBERLAND.
(A.C.O.S. 240721A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

KING
GEORGE V.

Scapa arrivals KING GEORGE V escorted by OBDURATE.
(A.C.O.S. 240931 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

RENOWN.

F.O. 1st B.S. is requested to proceed in RENOWN to Scapa by searched channel as convenient after degaussing trials on 27th December.
(2) C. in C. H.F. is requested to arrange destroyer escort if available from Eyebroughy buoy otherwise it is intended to sail RENOWN unescorted.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 241245 to B.S.1, C. in C. H.F.)

Group A.

C. in C. W.A.'s 231830A para.2. R/V for Group A. at 1000A/30th. 270 degs. Skerryvore 20 miles.
(2) Cancel para. 2 of my 231152A.
(C.S.1, 241540 to Admty.)

FENCER.

In view of FENCER's 231629Z, my 221127 is cancelled.
(2) C. in C. W.A. is requested to divert FENCER to Clyde.
A/C are not to be disembarked.
(F.O.C.T. 241601A to C. in C. W.A.)

S/M
Movements.

Positions of S/M's at 0801/25 and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 241747.)

AJAX.

Intend to sail AJAX from Needles 0830/26th for Scapa. Route.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 241918A to A.C.O.S.)

War Diary.24.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operations "Hardtack" Operation "Hardtack" eleven abandoned.
(V.A. Dover, 240020 to Admty.)
Carry out operations "Hardtack" 11 and 23 tonight.
(V.A. Dover, 241129A to M.T.B 25, M.T.B.24,
Commando 10)

Will be carried out "Hardtack" No.4 and "Hardtack" No.13 tonight.
(N.O.I.C.Newhaven, 241414A to C. in C. Portsmouth)
My 241129. "Hardtack" 23 postponed.
(V.A.Dover, 241848A to Commando 10)
"Hardtack" No.4 and "Hardtack" No.13 postponed due to weather.
(N.O.I.C.Newhaven, 242131A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Operation "Stonewall". P.C.S. of 7 unknown, 45 degs. 48' N. 08 degs. 00'
W. 270, 18.
LEARY (A/C 240025 to 19 Group)
sunk. P.C.S. of 5 enemy destroyers 45 degs. 48' N. 07
2 U-Boats degs. 25' W. 270 degs, 18 knots, German.
Claimed (Position based on an estimated position)
Probably (A/C Duty R. 240026 to 19 Group)
Sunk by A/C from CARD report 1 M/S in 047 degs. 45' N.
SCHENCK. 018 degs. 53' W. at 1539A/23rd, course 110 degs.
HURRICANE. 10 knots. Possible blockade runner.
Damaged. (2) Other aircraft reports indicate 12 units
probably destroyers and 1 or more blockade-breakers
in 045 degs. 32' N. 006 degs. 22' W. course
westerly, at 2030A/23rd.

(3) Proceed forthwith through position EA 180 degs. Bishop Rock
10 and thence 258 degs. at 25 knots. Further orders will be
signalled.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 240028A to ENTERPRISE)
Inward bound blockade-runner, class one target, sighted by
aircraft from CARD in 47.42 N. 18.53 W. course 110, speed 10 at
1539A/23.
(H.Q.C.C. 240055A to Air Ministry)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 45 degs. 00' N. 07 degs. 00'
W. probably a surface vessel at 0305A. Position is uncertain.
(A/C Duty E. No.T.O.O. to 19 Group, Recd. 240317)
Contact lost with surface vessel last seen 45 degs. 19' N.
07 degs. 25' W. 18 knots.
(A/C Duty R, 240215 to 19 Group)
Have obtained A/S.V. contact in 46 degs. 12' N. 09 degs. 46'
W. probably surface vessel.
(A/C Duty C. No.T.O.O. to 19 Group, Recd. 240357).
Aircraft from CARD (C.T.G.21.14) sighted unidentified
merchant ship probably inward-bound blockade-runner in 47 degs.
42' N. 18 degs. 53' W. course 110, speed 10 knots. CARD was
unable to take further action owing to fuel situation.
(2) Shore-based aircraft sighted 12 vessels probably one or more
outward-bound blockade-runners escorted by NARVIK-Class destroyers
and torpedo boats in 45 degs. 38' N. 06 degs. 18' W. course
westerly, speed 12 to 16 knots, at 2025/23rd.
(3) Reports from shadowing aircraft indicate that above outward-
bound force may have later split into two portions on courses 250
and 270 degs. respectively.
(4) Search continues.
(D.C. 240240A to Ships, C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth)

Enemy /...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Enemy previously reported a re 3 M/Vs, 46 degs. 37' N. 09 degs. 22' W. course 270.
LEARY sunk. (A/C Duty C. 240420 to 19 Group)
2 U-Boats Contact regained with enemy 45 degs. 42' N.
Claimed 08 degs. 39' W. 290 degs. 18 knots.
Probably (A/C. Duty R, 240421 to 19 Group)
Sunk by My 0215. One M/V, 6 destroyers 45 degs. 56' N.
SCHENCK. 08 degs. 42' W. 317 degs. 18 knots.
HURRICANE (Posn. considered reasonably accurate).
Damaged. (A/C Duty R, 240438 to 19 Group)
(Contd.) U.S. Destroyer LEARY torpedoed and sunk 045 degs.

N. 022 degs. W. 240504Z. Request surface assistance. 4 U-Boats present.
(C.T.G. 21.14, 240616Z to Admty.)

P.C.S. of enemy, 5, 45 degs. 52' N. 09 degs. 29' W.
(A/C Duty K. 240620 to 19 Group)

My 231911 and 240028. On leaving Horta GLASGOW is to proceed through (PP) 045 degs. 02' N. 026 degs. 40' W. and thence establish patrol (J) on longitude 024 degs. 30' W. between 046 degs. 12' N. and 047 degs. 50' N. by 1000A/25th.

(2) GAMBIA is to establish patrol (K) on longitude 023 degs. 50' W. between 048 degs. 12' N. and 049 degs. 12' N. by 1000A/25th.

(3) If no information GLASGOW at 1900A/25th and GAMBIA at 2000A/25th are to proceed to establish patrol (L) within 60 miles each side of line joining (QQ) 043 degs. 10' N. 030 degs. 00' W. and (RR) 049 degs. 50' N. 030 degs. 00' W. by daylight 26th.

GAMBIA to patrol South of 046 degs. 30' N. and GLASGOW North of 046 degs. 30' N.

(4) Amended Air Patrol will be requested.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 240648A to GAMBIA, GLASGOW)

(?Shadowing) destroyers, 4, (position undecypherable), 75 degs. speed 15 knots.

(A/C Duty H, 240700 to 19 Group)

Nr.1. Have met convoy with Radar (Position undecypherable)

(A/C. Duty P, 240745 to 19 Group)

LEARY torpedoed and sunk 045 degs. N. 022 degs. W. at 240504Z. 4 U-Boats present. Proceed at best speed to this position, further instructions following.

(C. in C. W.A. 240758Z to B.1, WATCHMAN)

Nr.1. Enemy previously reported position 45 degs. 05' N.

10. 05' W. course 280 degs. speed 12 knots. Request instruction

(A/C Duty K, 240800A to 19 Group)

Contact regained with destroyers 44 degs. 28' N. 07 degs. 52' W. course 255 degs. speed 15 knots.

(A/C Duty H, 240802 to 19 Group)

Request you will take appropriate action to provide assistance required by C.T.G. 21.14. His 240616 refers.

(D.C. 240812A to C. in C. W.A.)

Admiralty 211934. Anti blockade-runner surface patrol by GAMBIA and GLASGOW will be moved to approx. longitude 024 degs. W. between 046 degs. N. and 050 degs. N. for 25th December with air patrol to Eastward.

(2) /...

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War Diary.24.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". (2) On 26th December intention is for surface and air patrol prefix Sat on longitude 030 degs. W. LEARY sunk. between 043 degs. N. and 050 degs. N.
2 U-Boats (3) ENTERPRISE left Plymouth 0200 today to Claimed Westward.
Probably (C. in C. Plymouth, 240814A to C. in C. U.S. Fleet)
Sunk by Have A.S.V. contact position 0815 45 degs. 23' N. SCHENCK. 10 degs. 47' W. probably surface vessel.
HURRICANE (A/C Duty Q. 240820A to 19 Group)
Damaged. P.C.S. of 2 enemy destroyers estimated 44 degs. (Contd.) 22' N. 07 degs. 49' W. 138 degs. 18 knots.
(A/C Duty H, 240852 to 19 Group)
Returning to base to fuel. Position 44 degs. 04' N.08 degs. W.
(A/C Duty H. 240910 to Fort Southwick)

Still in touch with enemy previously reported, course 270 degs. 7 M/Vs, 4 destroyers, speed 20 knots.
(A/C Duty R, 240910 to 19 Group)
Enemy previously reported are 9 destroyers, 2 unknown vessels
ALTMARK -(?Class). 1 multi-engine bomber type C position (?45 degs. N? 12') 10 degs. 54' W. 16 knots.
(A/C Duty Q. 240940A to 19 Group)
Your 240616. B.1 E.G. consisting of HURRICANE and GLENARM has been ordered to proceed to your assistance at best speed and should reach position given about 1700Z/24th. WATCHMAN rejoining B.1 group should reach position about 0100Z/25th.
(2) If you are remaining in area request you will take B.1 E.G. under your orders and issue necessary instructions for the operation.
If you are not remaining in area and do not require close support intend B.1 E.G. to carry out U-Boat (German) search in vicinity 045 degs. N. 022 degs. W.
(3) B.1 E.G. will be required in any case to support O.S.62/K.M.S.36 from about 1200Z/25th.
(4) Request you will inform me of your intention.
(C. in C. W.A. 240956Z to C.T.G.21.14)
45 degs. 48' N. Speed 20 knots, course 270 degs.
(A/C NKO/R 241000A to 19 Group)
Have gained contact.
Position of enemy 9 Destroyers 45 degs. 35' N. 11 degs. 00' W.
(A/C Duty T. 241109 to 19 Group)
Contact regained with enemy force position 45 degs. 38' N. 10 degs. 58' W. course 270 degs. 20 knots.
(A/C Duty G, 241114A to 19 Group)
11 Destroyers, 210 degs. 15 knots.
My course 270 degs. (estimated) 45 degs. 53' N. 10 degs. 43' W.
(A/C. Duty T.241115 to 19 Group)
Situation estimate. At 0940A today 9 enemy destroyers with 2 merchant ships possibly tankers in 045 degs. 32' N. 010 degs. 56' W. steering 270 degs. 15 knots.
(2) 2 destroyers in vicinity Cape Ortegal eastbound.
(3) Inward-bound blockade-Breaker not yet located today.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 241127A to Admty.)
My position 0900Z/24th 048 degs. 56' N. 023 degs. (grp.omitted)
W. course 46 degs. speed 17 knots. CHELSEA in company. Weather 4762 2755.
(CALDWELL, 241130Z to C. in C. W.A.)

Contact /...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Contact lost making square search.
 (A/C NKO/R 241130A to 19 Group)
 LEARY sunk. My 1115A. P.C.S. of enemy 45 degs. 39' N.
 2 U-Boats 10 degs. 53' W. 280 degs. 15 knots.
 Claimed (A/C Duty T. 241135A to 19 Group)
 Probably 9 Destroyers, 2 unidentified vessels, 320 degs.
 Sunk by 12 knots. My course 280 degs. 45 degs. 30' N.
 SCHENCK. 11 degs. 00' W. estimated.
 HURRICANE (A/C Duty U, 241135A to 19 Group)
 Damaged. Enemy previously reported position 45 degs. 30' N.
 (Contd.) 11 degs. 05' W. 280 degs. 15 knots.
 (A/C Duty U, 241135 to 19 Group)
 11 destroyers, course 270 degs. 2 knots.
 My course 270 degs. 45 degs. 50' N. (long. indecipherable).

(A/C Duty C. 241140 to 19 Group)
 Enemy previously reported position 45 degs. 40' N. 11 degs.
 140' W. 280 degs. 18 knots.
 (A/C Duty U, 241215A to 19 Group)
 3 destroyers, 4 merchant vessels, 090 degs. 3 knots, 4556 N.
 11.38 W.
 (A/C Duty N. 241220A to 19 Group)
 P.C.S. of enemy, 1 merchant vessel, 45 degs. 42' N. 11 degs.
 14' W. estimated, 090 degs. 12 knots.
 (A/C Duty T. 241225A to 19 Group)
 46 degs. 08' N. 12 degs. 48' W. uncertain course 265, speed
 20 knots, unable to check composition, reached limit of endurance.
 (A/C Duty R, 241245 to 19 Group)
 After passing 009 degs. 30' W. steer for 046 degs. 20' N.
 015 degs. 40' W.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 241254A to ENTERPRISE)
 7 Medium vessels, 5 destroyers, 090 degs. 45 degs. 45' N.
 11 degs. 30' W. based on a fix obtained within half an hour.
 (A/C Duty P. 241300A to 19 Group)
 My 1220B. Enemy has altered course to 090 degs. approx.
 Enemy is accompanied by 3 unknown vessels. P.C.S. 45 degs. 56' N.
 11 degs. 38' W. 090 degs. 15 knots.
 (A/C. Duty N. 241310B to 19 Group)
 Enemy has altered course to 09 degs. (corrupt), 20 knots.
 (A/C Duty U, 241310A to 19 Group)
 My 1300A. 7 Merchant vessels, 5 destroyers, course 180 degs
 speed 10 knots, 090 degs. 45 degs. 55' N. 11 degs. 30' W. (position
 uncertain.)
 (A/C Duty P. 241410A to 19 Group)
 Shadowing 12 vessels type unknown, position 44 degs. 42' N.
 12 degs. W. speed 16 knots.
 (A/C TBU/L, 241420 to 19 Group)
 Enemy previously reported is in 45 degs. 21' N. 11 degs. 38'
 W. 090 degs. 12 knots. A/A.
 (A/C Duty U, 241422A to 19 Group)
 An over enemy S/E in 49 degs. 30' N. 09 degs. 58' W. (estim-
 ated). S/M was sighted on surface and observed to submerge.
 When first sighted was on course 060 degs. speed 5 knots.
 (A/C Duty F. 241428A to 19 Group)

Proceeding /...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Proceeding vicinity Horta. U.S. Destroyer SCHENCK attacked 5 and probably sank 2 submarines. At LEARY sunk. least 6 submarines still in vicinity. My 240616. 2 U-Boats Have 56 survivors from LEARY. Believe all others Claimed lost. Probably (C.T.G. 21.14, 241430Z to C. in C. Lant.) Sunk by P.C.S. of enemy sighted 12 vessels at 1435, course SCHENCK. 090 degs. speed 16 knots, position 44 degs. 42' N. HURRICANE 12 degs. 13' W. Damaged. (A/C Duty L, 241457 to 19 Group) (Contd.) Enemy previously reported are 5 destroyers, 7 M/Vs. P.C.S. 45 degs. 21' N. 11 degs. 38' W. 180 degs. 12 knots. (A/C Duty U, 241500 to 19 Group)

Am over enemy submarine in 48 degs. 55' N. 10 degs. 40' W. Enemy was sighted on surface and observed to submerge. When first sighted was stationary. (A/C Duty F. 241505 to 19 Group)

Disposition at 242000.
ENTERPRISE 046 degs. 52' N. 013 degs. 20' W. to 046 degs. 20' N. 015 degs. 40' W. 25 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth, 241514A to Ships)

Your 240956. My P.C.S. at 1600Z 046 degs. 05' N. 022 degs. 11' W. 173 degs. 18 knots. E.T.A. in position 1940Z. Weather 7471 3345. (B.I., 24534Z to C. in C. W.A.) P.C.S. of enemy 45 degs. 27' N. 11 degs. 19' W. 12 knots. Small merchant vessel and destroyer 090 degs. 20 knots. (A/C Duty M, 241540A to 19 Group)

Have attacked enemy with torpedoes 45 degs. 37' N. 11 degs. 19' W. 1526. (A/C Duty M. 241557A to 19 Group)

Your 240956 and my 241430. Am proceeding with U.S. Destroyer MOFFETT. (C.T.G. 21.14, 241600Z to C. in C. W.A.) Have attacked M/V with bombs. No results seen due to evasive action. (A/C Duty M, 241620A to 19 Group)

Para. (4) of my 240648A. Request air search at maximum density be carried out during daylight tomorrow as follows: in place of air patrol (H) given in my 210339A. (2) Search. Between 018 degs. 45' W. and 022 degs. 55' W. and South of 050 degs. N. as far towards 042 degs. N as resources permit, northernmost part area being most important. (3) On 26th Dec. request following air patrol (L) be carried out and maintained daily between position (QQ) 043 degs. 10' N. 030 degs. 00' W. (RR) 049 degs. 50' N. 030 degs. 00' W. (C. in C. Plymouth, 231624A to H.Q.C.C.) 5 destroyers, 7 M/V course 090 degs. speed 18 knots, 45 degs. 20' N. 10 degs. 50' W. (A/C Duty M, 241640A to 19 Group)

Still in touch with enemy previously reported type 5 destroyer 2 M/Vs, 5 unknown, 1700, 44 degs. 40' N. 11 degs. 19' W. course 110 degs. speed 16 knots. (A/C Duty L, 241705 to 19 Group)

Have attacked M/Vs with bombs. (A/C Duty D. 241707 to 19 Group)

Have /...

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Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Have attacked M/Vs with bombs.
(A/C MDME, 241725 to 19 Group)

LEARY sunk. Have attacked M/Vs with bombs. No results seen
2 U-Boats due to evasive action.
Claimed (A/C MDMA, 241750A to 19 Group)

Probably Have attacked (?6)000 ton with bombs, one direct
Sunk by hit.
SCHENCK. (A/C. Duty L, 241810 to 19 Group)

HURRICANE No results seen due to evasive action.
(Contd.) (A/C Duty T. 241815Z to 19 Group)

My 241127. Estimate inward-bound blockade-runner
located in 045 degs. 42' N. 011 degs. 45' W. at
1225 and joined remaining enemy force at Z time.

(2) 12 enemy vessels altered course to eastward about 1300 in
approx. 045 degs. 35' N. 012 degs. 08' W.

(3) Consider all enemy vessels are now eastbound though possibil-
ity exists that any outward-bound blockade-breakers in company
may again turn to westward after dark today.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 241837A and 242154A to Admty.)
A.M. 241651 para (c) T.G.21.14 cancel on patrol and substitute
proceeding to vicinity of Horta.
(C. of W. 241842A to S.B.N.O. Azores.)

Enemy previously reported are 2 M/Vs. 5 escorts, 45 degs.
36' N. 10 degs. 34' W. East, 12 knots. Attacked one M/V 8000
tons very near miss astern probably damage.
(A/C Duty O, 241915A to 19 Group.)

5 surface vessels 45 degs. 17' N. 10 degs. 45' W.
(A/C Duty C, 241920 to 19 Group)

Torpedoed aft, position 045 degs. 10' N. 022 degs. 05' W.
(HURRICANE 242001Z to C. in C. W.A.)

Join HURRICANE at full speed in 045 degs. 10' N. 022 degs.
05' W.
(C. in C. W.A. 242004 to WATCHMAN.)

My 241254. Patrol on longitude 015 degs. W. between 046
degs. 50' N. 046 degs. 01' N. 0630A/25th, then proceed to position
EB 047 degs. 50' N. 019 degs. 01' W. and patrol in this vicinity.

(2) If no further orders are received leave patrol at last
light 25th and return to Plymouth through position (EA).
(C. in C. Plymouth, 242012A and 242103A to ENTERPRISE)

Over one merchant vessel, slow 5 miles astern enemy force,
one escort-vessel.
(A/C Duty L, 242015 to 19 Group)

My 1920. 7 surface vessels.
(A/C Duty C. 242017 to 19 Group)

By D/F at 2007Z/24 U-Boat estimated within 100 miles of
45 degs. 30' N. 21 degs. 30' W. possibly reporting B.1.
(D.D.I.C. 242200A to B.1, WATCHMAN)

Join HURRICANE at full speed in 45 degs. 10' N. 22 degs. 05'
W.
(C. in C. W.A. 242204 to WATCHMAN)

If HURRICANE is in no danger of sinking GLENARM is to screen
until WATCHMAN arrives. Then if HURRICANE is unable to steam
crew should be taken off and ship sunk, one escort providing
screen during operation.
(C. in C. W.A. 242214Z to B.1, WATCHMAN)

Your /...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". LEARY sunk. 2 U-Boats Claimed Probably Sunk by SCHEENCK. HURRICANE. (Contd.)

Your 242214. No danger of sinking but unable to steam. Casualties one killed, 2 missing and 9 injured. (One dangerously). Weather suitable for towing should decision to sink ship be changed. (B.1, 242240Z to C. in C. W.A.)
9 vessels 45 degs. 15' N. 09 degs. 05' W.
(A/C Duty T, 242254A to 19 Group)
Attention is called to Admty's 241430.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 242304A to ENTERPRISE, GAMBIA, GLASGOW)

Operation ~~V.F.~~ fX Akureyri departure C. in C. H.F. in DUKE OF YORK with Force 2 at 2300A/23rd. (A.C.I.C. 240216A to H.F.)
Akureyri departures HARRIER and LOYALTY 2000A/23rd. (A.C.I.C. 240230A to C. in C. H.F.)

Following is a repetition my 240246. Break W/T silence and report weather conditions. (F.O.S. 240302A to SIRDAR)

Kola Inlet arrivals Group 3 escorted by HUSSAR and HALCYON. S.B.N.O. Archangel's 191536 refers.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 240625A to S.B.N.O. Archangel)

The following ships of J.W.(?B) can be accepted at White Sea Ports:- (A) Destination Economica. FORT NAKASLEY, OCEAN PRIDE and OCEAN VALOUR.

(B) Destination Molotovsk. THOMAS U. WALTER, JOHN J. ABEL, HAROLD WINSLOW, OCEAN GIPSY, OCEAN MESSENGER, and Spirit Tanker BRITISH STATESMAN.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 240958 to H.F.)

My 232242A. A/C returning to base on account of weather.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 240735A to Escorts J.W.55B)

Request merchant ships arriving in White Sea be warned before sailing that sharp look-out for V/S from icebreakers must be kept on arrival at ice edge. Failure to do this has occasioned much delay in bringing in ships of last 2 (corrupt group).

(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 241012A to Admty.)

As situation develops will you consider diverting RA 55A to northward after passing Bear Island and the transfer of up to four fleet destroyers from Capt. D.3 to Capt. D.17 should opportunity arise.

(2) My P.C.S. 067 degs. 42' N. 013 degs. 22' W. 060 degs. 19 knots Weather 8362 9237.

(C. in C. H.F. 241201A to R.A.D. H.F.)

Reverse your course until 1700A/24th.

(C. in C. H.F. 241325A to Escorts J.W. 55B.)

C. in C. H.F. 231148. I intend to proceed in NELSON.

(R.A.D. H.F. 241421A to C. in C. H.F.)

P.C.S. of J.W. 55 B. 071 degs. 07' N. 005 degs. 22' E. 057 degs. 8.

Shadowed from 1220 until 1626. Weather 4665 0412.

(Capt. (D) 17, 241800A to H.F.)

* Damage now repaired. My 231831A from N.C.S.O. refers.

(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 241851A to H.F.)*THOMAS KEARNS.

M/V's /...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations. - Contd.

M/V's

attacked by
STUBBORN
on 18th
and 19th
December.

Report from STUBBORN.

(1) 18th December 1145, position 064 degs. 35' N. 010 degs. 33' E. attacked ship of 3000 tons in convoy with 3 others escorted by 2 trawlers. Fired 4 torpedoes range 3500 missed. Escort appeared to investigate but carried out no counter attack. 1 torpedo exploded on a rock. 19th December 1235 commenced to attack 2000 ton merchant ship but target disappeared probably into Namsø Fiord.
(S.O.S/M Lerwick, 241140A to F.O.S.)

Engagement
off Dunkirk.
M.T.B.353,
M.T.B.357,
M.T.B.700,
M.T.B.437
damaged.
M.T.B.705
damaged by
collision.
Coastal
Batteries
Engagement.

Yesterday A/C located a 400 foot vessel, possibly M.23 in Boulogne and the following dispositions were made to attack her should she continue her passage eastward.
Force C. M.T.Bs 212, 211 and 205 to attack off Wissant under cover of fire from our coastal batteries.
Force X, M.T.Bs 204, 235 and 208 and Force Y, M.T.Bs 705, and 700 to carry out synchronised attack with Albacore A/C off Gravelines, but weather conditions prevented A/C co-operating.
Force A, M.T.Bs 353 and 357 supported by M.T.Bs 418 437 and 436 to attack off Dunkirk.
(2) In addition 6 M.Ls and three M.T.Bs were sailed to lay mines in the enemy shipping route 4 miles north east of Calais.

(3) Shore based Radar detected the vessel leaving Boulogne at 1930. She was joined off the entrance by at least eight escorts which had sailed previously.

(4) Coastal batteries engaged the enemy from 2011 to 2115, firing 56 rounds of 15 inch and 24 rounds of 9.2 inch. Staddles but no hits are claimed. Owing to low visibility and Radar in M.T.B. 212 becoming defective Force C failed to sight the enemy and this attack was abandoned at 2110. Force C was engaged and straddled by enemy shore batteries but incurred neither damage nor casualties.

(5) At 2142 the enemy convoy was plotted across the minefield, (N.L.113) laid at 1955 by the M.Ls and M.T.B's and the plot indicated that one of the escorts was probably damaged by a mine.

(6) At 2158 near Dunkirk B.W. buoy, Force X crossed the stern wake of what was probably one of the escorts, but visibility was less than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and the main target was not sighted and the attack was abandoned.

(7) Force Y engaged the escorts at close range in low visibility but was driven off before sighting the main target. M.T.B.700 sustained heavy damage and casualties. Force Y claims to have inflicted severe damage to one or more R-Boats.

(8) /...

War Diary.

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Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Engagements off Dunkirk. (8) Forces A and B were sighted and heavily engaged by seven or more R-Boats while lying in wait 1 mile north of Dunkirk and were forced to withdraw.
M.T.B.353,
M.T.B.357,
M.T.B.700,
M.T.B.437
damaged. (9) Our forces sustained damage and casualties as follows:-
M.T.B.353 - S.O. M.T.Bs and 2 ratings wounded. Slight damage to hull.
M.T.B. 357 - 1st Lieutenant seriously wounded, 1 rating wounded. Considerable damage in wardroom due to fire and some damage in engine room.
M.T.B.705 damaged by collision. M.T.B.700 - 4 ratings killed. 1 officer and 11 ratings wounded.
Coastal Batteries Engagement. M.T.B.705 - Seriously damaged by M.T.B.700 when latter was entering harbour not under control, owing to engine room telegraphs having been shot away.
(Contd.)

M.T.B. 436 - Commanding Officer and 2 ratings wounded. Slight damage.
M.T.B.418 - Slight damage, no casualties.
M.T.B.437 - 1st Lieutenant killed and one rating wounded. Heavy damage.
(10) Batteries in the Gis Nez Area, probably A.3 and A.6, replied with about 40 rounds of which 1 fell Dover town, and 9 in the harbour, 6 in Folkestone, 2 in Deal and the remainder to seaward. Considerable damage to house property in Folkestone and some in Dover and Deal, but only one civilian casualty reported. No damage reported to naval property and no service casualties.
(11) A/C have, this morning located one 5,000 ton vessel in Dunkirk. This may possibly be M.23 but has not been definitely identified.
(V.A. Dover, 241249A to Admty.)

Coastal Force Patrols. (A) 2 CHASSEURS Anti E-Boat patrol on 50 degs. 24' N. between 00 degs. 35' W. and 00 degs. 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A.
(B) M.L.344 short notice St.Helens.
(C) LA COMBATTANTE short notice at Yarmouth.
(D) 3 M.G.Bs from Portland anti E-Boat patrol on 50 degs. 20' N. between 02 degs. W. and 02 degs. 35' W.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241446A)
M.L's 257 and 275 at Bullock Bank.
M.L's 107 and 104 at No.7 Buoy, E.T.D. 1745 E.T.R. 0815/25.
M.G.B's S 2, 40 and 42 from Ramsgate at V buoy. E.T.D. 1715 E.T.R. 0845/25.
M.T.Bs 25, 212, 205 and 209 operating off La Panne. Route via V buoy E.T.D. 2300, E.T.R. 0840/25.)
(V.A. Dover, 241611A)
My 241611A. Add: M.T.Bs 231, 240, 202, 417 and 418 at Nieupoort Bank. E.T.D. 2000. E.T.R. 0530/25, Route via U and V buoys.
(V.A. Dover, 241942 to Admty.)
(A) Force 113, M.T.Bs 415 (S.O) 413. (B) 1930A/24.
(C) 080 Start 20. (D) Vicinity of (C). (F) 0700A/25.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 241650A)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

S/M
Patrols. SCEPTRE left Lerwick 1616A/24th unescorted and on surface at C.O's discretion till within 60 miles of Norwegian coast through 090 degs. Muckle Flugga 5 then by route Orange to 064 degs. 03', thence through 064 degs. 39' 008 degs. 42' E. to patrol off Folden Fiord.
(S.O.S/M. Lerwick, 241655A to S/M's)
All times zone A. Positions of submarines at 0801/25th and movements for following 24 hours.
(A) SIRDAR and O.15 as in my 161734.
(B) SYRTIS 69 degs. 08' N. 10 degs. 22' E. passing through 70 degs. 27' N. 14 degs. 02' E. probably on surface 10 knots to patrol-position off Soroy.
(C) VENTURER on patrol 63 degs. 30' N. 01 degs. 10' E. leaves patrol 0100/26th for Lerwick, passing through 62 degs. 02' N. 01 degs. 20' E. speed 9 knots on surface. Dived by day north of 62 degs. N.
(D) SCEPTRE 62 degs. 10' N. 01 degs. 10' E. passing through 64 degs. 03' N. 03 degs. 40' E. towards 64 degs. 38' N. 08 degs. 42' E. probably on surface, speed 10 knots.
(G) ULA leaves Lerwick 1201/25th through 090 Muckle Flugga 20 thence through 61 degs. 16' N. 01 degs. 49' E. and 60 degs. 37' N. 03 degs. 11' E.
(F.O.S.241747 to Admty.)
Add to my 241747. Para.(H) SEADOG 61 degs. 10' N. 00 degs. 38' E. proceeding through 62 degs. 11' N. 04 degs. 10' E. to patrol off Stadlandet diving by day when within 60 miles of Norwegian Coast. Speed on surface 10 knots.
F.O.S. 242324A to Admty.)
Routed through 090 degs. Muckle Flugga 10 and 062 degs. 11' 004 degs. 10' E. SEADOG left Lerwick 2358A/24th to patrol off Statlandet. Proceeding unescorted and on the surface at C.O's discretion till within 60 miles of Norwegian coast.
(S.O.S/M. Lerwick, 242359A to S/M's)

Exercises.

Moray
Firth
Exercise. Intend to carry out large scale exercise in Moray Firth as far East as meridian 003 degs. W. p.m. Dec. 30th to p.m. 31st. The 4 days following are spare days. Request merchant shipping affected be warned accordingly.
(S.O. Force "S", 241658A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Allied Air Activity.

Dunkirk
R/C. Request P.R.U. of Dunkirk on December 25th to locate enemy shipping.
(D.D.I.C. 242325A to A.D.I. Ph.)

Mining.

WORCESTER
(Mined
23rd
December) WORCESTER is to proceed to Yarmouth Roads.
(C. in C. Nore, 240025A to WORCESTER, QUORN, CHAMPION, KROOMAN).

Gt. Yarmouth/...

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Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

WORCESTER (Mined 23rd December) (Contd.)

Gt. Yarmouth Departure 23rd December Tug KROOMAN with Chief Salvage Officer aboard at 2340. Tug DIVERSION at 240005. Both to assist WORCESTER. (F.O.I.C.Gt. Yarmouth, 240053A to C. in C. Nore) At 54 G buoy. Stern filled abaft 131 bulkhead which is holding at present. In tow of tug CHAMPION make 5 knots. Tugs KROOMAN and DIVERSION standing by. Will secure them when swell moderates. (WORCESTER, 240600A to C. in C. Nore.)

WORCESTER in tow of CHAMPION and DIVERSION, escorted by CATTISTOCK and KROOMAN arrived and anchored in Roads. (F.O.I.C.Gt. Yarmouth, 241136A to C. in C. Nore.)

Request you will sail WORCESTER in daylight hours tomorrow in tow of CHAMPION and KROOMAN or DIVERSION to Harwich by inshore route.

(2) On completion of patrol WIDGEON proceed to Yarmouth and escort WORCESTER to Harwich. (C. in C. Nore, 241524A to F.O.I.C. Yarmouth)

Operation "Hostile".

Reference number 4112 Plymouth 01487 of 30th November. (A) XVIII. (B) North-West of Triagoz Bank - not 5 nights either side of full Moon. (C) 2 M.T.B., 8 M.L., M.T.B.678 (S.O)

(E) (A A) 090 degs. Eddystone 2 (BB) 280 degs. Triagoz light 6. (F) (BB). (G) Continuous from 288 degs. Triagoz 5.4 miles on course-degrees 20. (L) 0145. (J) 0430. (K) (AA). (L) 213 Start 30. (M) Operation may be carried out without support. (N) To leave (AA) at 1930, thence 13 knots to (YY) 049 degs. 05' N. 004 degs. 05' W. (P) (YY). (Q) Outside 17 miles from Ile de Bas. (R) 0300. 20 knots. (S) (ZZ) 210 degs. Eddystone 12 and (AA). (T) XVIII. 3 R.M.T. support 3 O.A.M. Senior Officer 52 M.T.B. Flotilla 3 X.B.T. Senior Officer 10th M.L. Flotilla 3 C.B.A. (C. in C. Plymouth, 241600A to DEFIANCE)

ROBRIX. My 151042A. Cancel all up to "Vessel will be slipped" am informed by Capt. M/S Sheerness that information has been found to be erroneous. (F.O.I.C.Harwich, 241654 to C. in C. Nore.)

Enemy Intelligence.

TIRPITZ, SCHARNHORST. Russian visual R/C reports TIRPITZ in Kaafiord and SCHARNHORST in Lang Fiord at 1010/23. (D.D.I.C. 240545A to A.I.G.21, A.I.G.47)

E-Boats in Channel. Enemy shipping plotted by Portsmouth Radar night 23/24th. A number of craft operating South of St.Alban's Head between 0200/24th and 0430/24th at speeds varying between 20 and 30 knots. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 241752A to Admty.)

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HOME COMMANDS.

U-Boats.

U-Boat ZB O/120 at 231510 in 56 degs. 50' N. 23 degs.
Attacked. 42' W. sighted vis surfaced U-Boat estimated 517
 tons, bearing 005T 23 miles. At 1512 attacked
 surfaced U-Boat from ahead 30 degs. to course of
 U-Boat with 4 x 250 CS Torpex from 75 ft. Esti-
mated overshoot by 40 - 50 yards. Second attack from astern
45 degs. estimated position of U-Boat 30 seconds after submerging
with 4 x 250 D/Cs. D/Cs estimated 300 feet ahead of swirl.
Bomb sight not used. Also attacked U-Boat with M/GD. Much
light flak from U-Boat during first attack. No apparent damage
to A/C, OK U-Boat.
(R.A.F. Iceland, 240243A to H.Q.C.C.)

Technical.

S.A.Type C. It appears probable that both HOLDERNESS and
Gear in WORCESTER were damaged by Acoustic Mines.
Destroyers. Request very early consideration may be given to
 reintroducing the use of S.A. tpe C. by destroyers.
 (C. in C. Nore, 241517A to Admty.)

"Gamma"
Search. The following scheme of asdic search to be issued
 in A.C.I.'s in due course. Short Title "Gamma
 Search". Applicable when U-Boat's M.L.A. can be
 estimated within certain limits.
 (A.C.N.S. U.T. 241918A to C's in C.)

Casualties and Defects.

M.T.B.36. My 240045. Unable to refloat.
 (N.O.I.C. Oban, 240931A to F.O.I.C.Greenock)
 My 240931. Vessel refloated and beached at Oban.
 (N.O.I.C. Oban, 241645A to F.O.I.C.Greenock)
My 241645. Temporary repairs will be carried out by Messrs
Hemsly Bell.
(N.O.I.C. Oban, 241745A to F.O.I.C.Greenock.)

LONDON. Arrived LONDON.
 (C. in C. Rosyth, 241025 to N.O.I.C.Greenock)

GODAVARI. My 091057. GODAVARI returning damaged to
Londonderry after collision with Merchant Ship
in K.M.S.36.
(C. in C. W.A. 241229A to F.O.C.R.I.N.)

P.C.S. at 2000Z, 052 degs. 19' 015 degs. 47' 054 degs. 10.
Temporary repairs and good weather render increased speed
possible. CLOVER in company.
(GODAVARI, 242054Z to C. in C. W.A.)

NORTH DEVON. Return Aberdeen and tow SS. NORTH DEVON in
Aberdeen Bay to Dundee.
(F.O.I.C. Aberdeen, 241245A to GOLIATH)

War Diary.24.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects - Contd.

CAPE MOHICAN. Tugs EMPIRE LARCH and EMPIRE RUPERT towing SS. CAPE MOHICAN with Tug ROODE ZEE in attendance sailed 1430/24th.
(S.T.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 241445A to D.S.T.O. Tyne)
My 231215. Sailed.
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 241615A to Admty.)

REBOUNDO. My 231820. REBOUNDO developed further defects. Anticipate she will now sail on 27th.
(F.O. Humber, 242145A to N.O.I.C. Leith.)

Shipping and Convoys.

QUEEN Sailed at 2352/23rd.
ELIZABETH. (D.S.T.O. Greenock, 240002A)

O.S.62/
K.M.S.36. BLAIRDEVON and INGETRE have returned.
(C. in C. W.A. 241029A to Escorts.)
KANA returned from K.M.S.36.
Heavy weather unable to keep up.
My 230130A, INGESTRE, heavy weather, unable to keep up.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 241035A to C. in C. W.A.)
EMPIRE WATERHEN returned from O.S.M.62/K.M.S.36. Boiler trouble one life-boat lost.
BARON DOUGLAS, returned from O.S.M.62/K.M.S.36. Heavy weather, lost convoy.
ALLERTON returned from K.M.S.36, heavy weather, one life-boat lost. Lost convoy.
My 232130A. BONAIRE, heavy weather defective main fuel pumps.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 241925A to C. in C. W.A.)

S.L.142/
M.K.S.33. Detach FENCER and ships capable of 13 knots at dusk tonight with two escorts to 007 degs. W. thence independently. FENCER to proceed to Stranraer in accordance with F.O.C.T. 221127A.
(C. in C. W.A. 241058A to Escorts.)
C. in C. W.A. 241058A. FENCER, TROILUS, SILVER LAUREL, FORDSDALE detached 1700Z, escorted by WALKER, ABELIA.
S.L.142 P.C.S. 052 degs. 21' 016 degs. 45' 045 degs. 7 knots.
(B.4, 241659Z to C. in C. W.A.)
A.C.I.417. DEBRETT, FORDSDALE, SILVER LAUREL detached in 052 degs. 25' N. 017 degs. 00' W. S.O.A. 13½. FENCER and ABELIA in company.
(WALKER, 241700Z to Admty.)

S.C.149. State Y is to be assumed on receipt of this signal.
(C. in C. W.A. 241232A to Escorts S.C.149.)

War Diary.

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Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys. - Contd.

- E.G.6. Request you will sail 6th E.G. a.m. tomorrow for 052 degs. N. 019 degs. W. making good 12 knots weather permitting.
(C. in C. W.A. 241246A to Cdre. D. W.A.)
- H.X.270. In absence of orders to the contrary intend leaving convoy in 055 degs. 46' N. 008 degs. 18' W. at 1530Z in accordance with A.C.I.410 para.7 amended by 839N.
COLDSTREAMER escorting FUME portion.
(C.1, 241247A to C. in C. W.A.)
- AMARAPOORA. Intend sailing Hospital Ship AMARAPOORA at 1700A/25. Route to Gibraltar for orders. Speed 11.3 knots.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 241738A to Admt.)
- P.S.25, P.S.25 and S.P.25 cancelled.
S.P.25. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 241809)
- K.M.S.(M) 37. 7 ships. Names and Destinations.
(N.O.I.C.Milford Haven, 241828A to C. in C. W.A)
- W.N.19. Escort reports that U.S. AMERICAN PRESS broke
AMERICAN away from convoy W.N.19 about 2000/17th, failed
PRESS. to answer signals, and proceeded independently to Methil.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 241909A to Admt.)
- Troopships. Following is Summary No.19 of major troopship movements in and out of Clyde and Liverpool during period to 9th January. Details.
(D.S.T. 242059A)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.General.

Net defence. B.A.M.S. instructions to ships to stream nets are to be repeated or summarised to Admty. A.M. 161355 Nov. refers.
2. These signals may be combined with repetitions of diversions etc., as convenient.
(D.T.D., 241941A to C. in C. Med., C. in C. E.F., C. in C. S.A., C. in C. Levant, C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.C. Gib., F.O.C.W.Af., N.S.H.Q., Info. B.A.D., Connav, C. in C. W.A., Comnav.)

North Atlantic.

K.M.F. 27. HIGHLAND MONARCH, LEOPOLDVILLE, H.M.C.S. PRINCE ROBERT are to be detached forthwith to proceed Gibraltar at best speed escorted by URCHIN and GARLAND.
2. Remainder of convoy to manoeuvre as necessary to pass Europa point at 0030A/25th when DUNNOTTAR CASTLE (destination India) and H.M.S. DELHI join.
3. E.T.A. DD 1700A/25th.
(F.O.C. Gibraltar, 241131A to Escorts K.M.F.27.)
Intend to sail HIGHLAND MONARCH and LEOPOLDVILLE escorted by DOUGLAS, WOLVERINE and GARLAND at 0800A/26th for Freetown.
(2) Route.
(F.O.C. Gibraltar, 241621A, 261601A to F.O.C.W.Af.)
Arrivals HIGHLAND MONARCH, LEOPOLDVILLE.
(F.O.I.C. Gibraltar, 241715.)
Arrivals PRINCE ROBERT, URCHIN, GARLAND.
(F.O.C. Gib., 241917A.)

NICOLINE MAERSK. Swiss controlled NICOLINE MAERSK 4194 g.t., sailed Valencia 0025/24th destination believed to be Sete. Estimate max. speed 12 knots.
(F.O.C. Gib., 241206A to 10th S/M.F., PROTEE, CASBIANCA, LE CURIE, (R) Capt. (S) 10.)

Evacuation of Italians. Admty. pass to C. in C. Med. and F.O.T.A.L.I. there are about 30 Italian service and Embassy personnel to be evacuated. Captain Guirati suggests (? destroyer) be sent to Gibraltar and I concur your 161244 refers.
(A.B.N.A. Madrid, 241901.)
(Reply from C. in C. Med. 281619A.)

T.G. 66.9. T.G. 66.9 consisting of PARTRIDGE, SYMBOL, Y.M.S. 346 - 352 inclusive. T.G. Cdr. Lieut. A.N.Caldin U.S.N.R. in PARTRIDGE detached from T.F.66 at 252100Z position 33.23 N. 32.34 W., E.T.A. Horta 271300Z.
(Comnav, 252141.)

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Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

CILICIA,
CORFU.

Your 221159.
CILICIA should be sailed for U.S.A. 15th Jan.
and CORFU 30th Dec. Ports of destination will
be signalled later.
(V.C.N.S., 241316A to F.O.C.W.Af., Info. B.A.M.R.)

DUCA DEGLI
ABRUZZI.

Intend to sail DUCA DEGLI ABRUZZI at 1100Z/26th
to patrol in area C, D, E. Arrange leave patrol
p.m./3rd.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 241405Z to CILICIA, EMANUELE
FILBERTO DUCA D'AOSTA, (R) Com. 4th Fleet, Comar
Dakar, Admty.)

M.V. DUMANA
torpedoed.

SOUTHERN PRIDE reports DUMANA was torpedoed at
2045/24th in 004° 27' N. 006° 58' W.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 242225Z to Admty.)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

NICOLINE
MAERSK. Sailed 0025 local time.
(R.O. Valencia 240045 to C. in C. Med. F.O.I.C.Gib.)
My 232154. NICOLINE MAERSK sailed from Valencia
at 0025/24th. Report when interception has been
completed and action taken.
(C. in C. Med. 240153 to F.C. LE FANTASQUE (R)
F.O.C. Gib., Admty.)

LE FANTASQUE reports NICOLINE MAERSK aground in 040° (?) 34'
N. 000° 42' E. with crew abandoning ship. 2. LE FANTASQUE has
been instructed to take no offensive action and has been ordered
to Algiers.
(C. in C. Med. 241702A to Admty., B.N.A. Madrid, F.O.C. Gib.)

Operation "Stonewall"
MAURITIUS,
PENELOPE. N.O.I.C. Malta is requested to sail MAURITIUS forth-
with with despatch to Gib., to come under orders of
F.O.I.C. Gib., for anti-blockade runner duties.
(2) F.O.15th C.S. is requested to shift flag as
convenient. A.M. 232340 refers.
(C. in C. Med. 240221A to N.O.I.C. Malta, F.O.15th
C.S. (R) A.O.C. in C.C.C., C. in C. Plymouth,
Admty. (U.S.) Comdr. in C. U.S. Fleet, E.O.I.C.
Gib., (U.S.) C. in C.U.S. Atlantic Fleet, S.B.N.O.
Azores.)

Flag of F.O. 15th C.S. will be shifted to PENELOPE 24th.
C. in C. Med. Fleet 240221 (N.T. in W.D.) refers.
(C.S.15 240549 to V.A. Malta, C. in C. Med. Fleet, 15th C/S.)
Blockade running is in full swing. 2. A.M. 232340. Request
you will sail this cruiser to Azores with despatch and replace her
at Gibraltar with another cruiser.
(D.O.D. (H) 241108A to C. in C. Med., Info. C. in C. Plymouth,
F.O.I.C. Gib., S.B.N.O. Azores, H.Q.C.C., Cominch, C. in C. Lant.)
A.M. 232340. Two cruisers are now required, one to proceed to
Horta, the other to Gibraltar as standby.
(V.C.N.S. 241258A to C. in C. Med., Info. C. in C. Plymouth,
F.O.I.C. Gib., S.B.N.O. Azores, H.Q.C.C., Cominch, C. in C. Lant.)
Proceed at best speed to Gib. to fuel. On completion F.O.I.C.
Gib. is requested to sail MAURITIUS to Azores area with despatch
Admiralty's 241108.
(C. in C. Med. 241308A to MAURITIUS (R) S.B.N.O. Azores,
C. in C.U.S.Fleet, F.O.I.C. Gib., Admty., V.A. Malta, C.S.15,
H.Q.C.C., C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C.W.A.)
Request you sail in PENELOPE with despatch to Gib.
(C. in C. Med. 241310A to C.S.15 (R) V.A. Malta, F.O.C. Gib.,
Admty., PENELOPE.)
Intend sailing PENELOPE at 2100/24th. S. of A. 24 knots,
E.T.A. Gib. 1300A/26. Your 241310 refers.
(C.S.15 241730A to C. in C. Med. (R) V.A. Malta, F.O.C. Gib.,
Admiralty, PENELOPE.)
Cancel A.M. 241258. A.M.241108 remains in force.
(D.O.D. (F) 242136A to C. in C. Med. Info. C. in C. Plymouth,
F.O.I.C. Gib., S.B.N.O. Azores, H.Q.C.C., Cominch, C. in C.Lant.)
24th. Departures MAURITIUS, PENELOPE.
(V.A. Malta 242359.)

/SPORTSMAN...

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War Diary.24.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

SPORTSMAN, P.229 (SPORTSMAN) is to leave patrol as in my
SICKLE, 221845B pass to Eastward of Strati.
TORBAY. (2) P.224 (SICKLE) is to proceed to patrol in
Lemnos area leaving present area at dusk 24th pass-
ing W. of Skyros and Strati. Object destruction
of Piraeus, Dardanelles traffic.
(Capt. (S) 1 240917B to P.229 SPORTSMAN, 224 SICKLE
(R) 1st S/M.F. C. in C. Levant.)

Proceed with all despatch to patrol as follows:-

(A) P.229 (SPORTSMAN) within 5 miles of $037^{\circ} 10' 026^{\circ} 25'$ P.224
(SICKLE) latitude $037^{\circ} 31' 194^{\circ}$ Cape Papas and Mykoni. (2) You
may meet on way. (3) TORBAY keep to eastward of $025^{\circ} 01'$ within
your patrol area.

(Capt. (S) 1 242207B to P,224 (SICKLE) P.229 (SPORTSMAN) (R)
C. in C. Levant, 1st S/M.F.)

K.M.F.27. Additional escorts. (A) Gib. to Bizerta DELHI, to
Malta FURY. (B) Oran to Bizerta U.S.S. JONES,
U.S.S. DAVIS, HAYDON. (C) Algiers to Levant,
ANTWERP S.O., U.S.S. ERICSSON, CROOME, EXMOOR,
TETCOTT, THEMISTOCLES.
(C. in C. Med. 240925A, S.E.C., K.M.F.27.)

Information Re conveyance of notes on passage through Med. to
for Group A. and French Cruiser ALBATROSS and H.M.S.
Group A. UNICORN.
(C. in C. Med. 240942A to F.O.C. Gib.) W.D. Note.
Group A. QUEEN ELIZABETH, VALIANT, ILLUSTRIOUS, on
passage to join Eastern Fleet.)

SEA ROVER. (1) Part company with K.M.S.35 in $035^{\circ} 34' 016^{\circ} 04'$
at about 0600/28th and proceed on mean course 102°
on surface at 11 knots until dawn 29th thence diving
by day to pass $034^{\circ} 01' 025^{\circ} 06'$ at dusk 30th thence
to Beirut as ordered by Capt. (S) 1. (2) 201 Group requested
arrange total and submerged bombing restrictions in accordance with
M.J.A.O.24 for above route. (3) Enemy S/M. operating up to 60
miles N. of African Coast between 020° and 025° E.
(S.O. S/Ms. Malta 241150A to P.218 (SEA ROVER) (R) N. and A.A.
Western Desert, (?S.N.O. Augusta) 201 Naval Co-operation Group,
M.E., DART, S.E.C. K.M.S.35, C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, V.A.
Malta, Capt. (S) 10, Capt. (S) 1, Admty., R.A. Alexandria, F.O.I.C.
Gibraltar.)

ARIADNE. Sail at 1500A/24th to comply with C. in C. Med's.
230943.
(Com. Algeria 241226 to ARIADNE (R) Admty., C. in C.
Med., Comnob, Oran, F.O.C. Gib.)

CESENA, F.O.C. Gib. 211223 and your 221604. Spanish
GAETA. authorities should not be requested to escort CESENA
a.m. 181314 Nov. refers. 2. We prefer that GAETA
should not dock at Cadiz. It is desirable that
Italian vessels should be removed from Spanish ports
as soon as possible in case M.F.A. change their
attitude and obstruct release.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 241526A to C. in C. Med. Info. F.O.C.
Gib., F.O.T.A.L.I.)

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

HELFDORD. Departed.
(Com. Aden 241559Z.) (W.D. Note. To join Eastern Fleet.)

Yugoslav ships operated by Partisans. Further reports from F.O.T.A.L.I. indicate my O11738 para.5 was somewhat misleading.
2. Although LUBIANA is the only ex Yugo Slav ship which has been deliberately transferred to the Partisans with my full knowledge and approval, the 17 miscellaneous small craft referred to in para.5 undoubtedly include vessels of Yugoslav ownership which are now manned by Partisans and fly partisan flag.
3. Partisans now operate ten steamships ranging from 80 to 440 tons 12 auxiliary Schooners and seven fishing vessels. Of these one Steamship was captured from Germans. Three small Steamships found in Heel ports on our arrival were taken over from Italians and registered by N.A.S.B.O. representative with consent of F.O.T.A.L.I. as being at disposal of C. in C. Allied Forces. Remainder were ex Yugo Slav ships in Adriatic waters at armistice taken over by Partisans and joined Allies. (C. in C. Med. 241831 to Admty. (R) F.O.T.A.L.I., C. in C. Levant.)

X.I.F. Convoys. (5) It has been agreed with A.F.H.Q. that after the arrival of the Eastern Fast Group in K.M.F.28 it will not be necessary to run an X.I.F. convoy with M.K.F.29. Thus M.K.F.29 and subsequent M.K.F. convoys will sail from Port Said 10 days after the corresponding K.M.F. convoy leaves U.K. (C. in C. Med. 241838 to Admty. (R) F.O.W.I.T., Com. Algeria, C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Levant, P.S.T.O. Med., F.O.I.C. Gib.)

GUARDIAN. On completion of refit F.O.T.A.L.I. is to sail GUARDIAN to Malta V.A.M. is to sail GUARDIAN to Alexandria for onward routing to E.F. My 231606 Nov. refers.
(C. in C. Med. 241842 to F.O.T.A.L.I., V.A.M. (R) C. in C.E.F. Admty., GUARDIAN, C. in C. Levant, C. in C.E.F., S.E.A.C.)

Italian S/Ms. for A/S training. A.M. 121834 and F.O.T.A.L.I.s.222020. Request you will arrange with Minister of Marine for following allocations:- (A) PISANI to V.A.M. for area Malta and Augusta. (B) BRIN to Gib. in place of AXUM if it is necessary to include AXUM in S/Ms. being sent Bermuda my 221301. Para.2. (A) Bermuda requirement having priority. (C. in C. Med. 241900A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) V.A.M., F.O.C. Gib., S.N.O.E.S.Y., Admty.)
S/M. situation has deteriorated since my 101945 (N.T. in W.D.) MARIO, VORTICE, DANDOLO and SPERI will be ready 1st Jan. MAMELI not until 10th Jan. BRIN and GIADA probably ready by 10th Feb. Intend to sail first four on 1st Jan. with Destroyer escort. (F.O.T.A.L.I. 241941 to C. in C. Med. (R) Admty., B.A.D., F.O.C. Gib.)

/M.E...

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

M.E. Balkan (4) Sea Ops. Adv. H.Q. Force 133 report. German
Sitrep No. 38. Forces have landed at Raciste R.E.49 on Korcula
Island and established small bridgehead. A
landing at Korcula Town R.E.59 is considered
probable. 22nd.
(C. in C.M.E. 241930B.)

SALVESTOR. A.M. 150128. Italian naval and naval reserve
crew joined 16th. No question of transfer.
(C. in C. Med. 242007A to Admty. (R) Com. Algeria,
F.O.W.It. SALVESTOR, M.W.T.R. Med.)

Levant. Up to 1800B/24th UNRULY ^{on} Aegean patrol sank by
Situation gunfire a 50 ton Caique, south of Levitha at
Report 0700/2nd and at 0534/13th she secured one possible
No.121.. hit with torpedoes on destroyer escorting M.V. in
37° 52' N. 26° 53' E. 2. SOKOL from Aegean
patrol reports 4,500 ton M.V. on 11th, convoy of
4 schooners on 12th, one Caique on 15th, all sunk.
Two hits on 4,000 tons M.V. on 17th probably sunk. All off
Cape Irene. 3. SURF on Aegean patrol missed escorted 3500 ton
M.V. westbound in 37° 45' N. 25° 33' E. at 1017/8th, but possible
hit one escort. At 1858/9th she sank unescorted 3,000 ton M.V.
in 39° 43' N. 25° 33' E. 4. Aircraft laid mines in Portolago
Leros, night 15th/16th, Chalcis, night 16th/17th, Salamis, night
19th/20th.
(C. in C. Levant 242040.)

Med. (1) During night 21st/22nd M.T.Bs. carried out
Situation successful torpedo attack, cruiser DALMACIJA
Report aground off Silba Island. (2) TYRIAN and TEAZER
No.257. patrolled between Drvenik and Zirje Island during
night 22nd/23rd and FARNDALE and BRECON patrolling
from southward Korcula to Mlit both patrols blank.
(3) Italian L.C.T. mined in Bastia harbour on
23rd and subsequently sank. Sweeping operations in progress.
(4) The P.T. boats operating off Porto Fino encountered one
small coaster escorted by 2 R boat 0100/24th torpedo attack
unsuccessful.
(C. in C. Med. 242120A.)

Massawa to Your 221242. In view of SEXTANT decisions it was
remain considered preferable for Massawa to remain in Med.
in Med. Command.
Command. (S.C.N.S. (F) 242209A to C. in C. Levant, Info.,
C. in C. Med., C. in C.E.F. (S.E.A.C.)

Yugoslav A.M. 181125. H.M. Ambassador has replied that he
ships would prefer not to pass Allied C. in Cs. directive
and volunt- to Yugoslav Gov. for the present as:-
eers. (a) political crisis is in progress which may, it
is hoped, result in a government willing to assist
all Yugoslav resistance movements.
(b) he understands ships already handed over to

/Yugoslav...

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War Diary.

24.12.1943.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Yugoslav
ships
and
volunteers .
(contd.)

Yugoslav Navy will not be in a condition for operations for some time yet.
2. Action to implement Allied C. in Cs. directive can still proceed as in your 141224. Request confirmation that you see no objection to H.M. Ambassador with-holding directive from Yugoslav Government.
(A.C.N.S. (F) 242230A to C. in C. Med., Info., C. in C. Levant, F.O.T.A.L.I.)

R.A. Frolov
and
Russians.

Reply to C. in C. Med. 172203. (Information which they may be given.)
(V.C.N.S. 242242A, 242253A to C. in C. Med.)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.

RIVER RAISIN Apparent attack by S/M surfaced 22 hours 35 mins.
 attacked by G.M.T. Took extreme evasive steering action.
 U/B. Proceeding on course evasive steering. WX 0800
 nought (as received).
 (RIVER RAISIN, 240030Z to Admty.)
 Position 24° N. 59° 12' E., am being pursued by
 submarine - WX 08000 -.
 (RIVER RAISIN, 240100Z to S.S.S.S.)
 Correct W 3 S/M torpedoed.
 (RIVER RAISIN, No T.O.O./24, recd. 240528.)
 No hit scored near miss. Twice sighted submarine. No
 sight since daylight. Proceeding on course with evasion.
 (RIVER RAISIN, 240630Z to Adm. Colombo via Aden W/T.)

U/B Ref. U-Boat disposition signal No.11. Area A.
 dispositions. Indication by D/F of a Japanese U-Boat off
 Bombay 0012/24th Dec. Scale of air escort X.
 Area B. U.S. Ship RIVER RAISIN reports U-Boat
 attack in 024° 00' N. 059° 12' E. 0014Z/24th.
 Scale of air escort Y. Area C. U.S. Ship MARGARET BRENT reports
 sighting periscope in 017° 25' N. 051° 30' E. 0030Z/24th Dec.
 Scale of air escort X. Area F. SS. PESHAWUR was torpedoed
 0640Z/23rd in 011° 25' N. 080° 30' E.
 Indication Japanese U-Boat by D/F to be in the vicinity of
 Madras 1725Z/23rd Dec. Scale of air escort Y. Other areas -
 no change in air escort.
 (C. in C. E.F., 240404Z.)

PESHAWUR, C. in C. E.F.'s E.F.716 H/71 para. 12.
 sunk 23rd (A) PESHAWUR. (B) 011° 11' N. 080° 10' E. 23rd.
 December. (?C) (? 10). (D) Torpedoed and sunk. (E) 2.
 (F) 134 complete crew saved. (G) No. (H) Yes
 on emergency at 0611Z. (I) No track of torpedo
 observed before or after explosion and ship was
 not hit but torpedo exploded underneath number 6 hold and
 columns of water observed on both ships explosion was extremely
 violent. Master excludes possibility of dea(?) mine and believes
 torpedoes were of magnetic acoustic type. Degaussing was
 switched off at time of attack. (J) Thrown overboard except
 B.R.637 aircraft recognition and convoy instructions which were
 handed over by Master to C.O. IPSWICH. (K) Thrown overboard.
 (L) Yes. Over 100 fathoms. (M) No. (N) Master and W/T operator.
 (N.C.S.O. Madras, 240523Z to Admty., C. in C. E.F., F.O.C.R.I.N.,
 S.O.(I) Colombo, S.O.(I) Bombay.)
 Note. Above is a complete version of N.C.S.O. Madras' 240523,
 part of which was circulated under T.O.O. 240516.

HELVIG. Reference A.M. 222336A Oct. The sailing of
 HELVIG to join the Eastern Fleet has been postponed
 indefinitely.
 (D.O.D.(F), 242335A to C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.),
 (R) F.O. Ceylon.)

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

SHAH, B.A.M.R. 202126.
EMPRESS. SHAH may be allocated as A/S carrier to Eastern Fleet on completion of her ferry trip.
2. In this case it will be necessary to embark 850 Squadron before she leaves Vancouver. Fighters will be made available on the station.
3. Request you will report if this can be arranged and what effect it will have on the ferry programme.
(D.O.D.(H), 240030A to B.A.D.)
850 Squadron is already embarked and working up in EMPRESS and it is not desired to disturb this A.M. 240030 refers. 851 Squadron would be available to embark in SHAH at San Francisco without delaying her sailing or materially affecting number of aircraft being ferried. Propose to embark 851 Squadron accordingly. It is pointed out that no torpedoes can be made available in time.
Request very early reply.
(B.A.D., 241541Z to Admty.)

Convoys, Procedure in para. 2 of N.S.H.Q's 202359 is normally carried out in the case of H.X. and methods of saving of ships' time. S.C. convoys when U/B situation in north western approaches permits and results in considerable saving of ship's time.
2. Concur with para. (3) and (4). It is presumed that this would apply to all ships bound for ports for which they have approach instructions vide M.A.R.I. Section II, paras. 2 and 5.
3. Prefer that procedure both in para. 2 and 3 should be adopted and if N.S.H.Q. agrees B.A.D. is requested to obtain Connav's concurrence.
(D.T.D., 240332A to N.S.H.Q., B.A.D., Info. C. in C. W.A., C. in C. N.A., N.M.C.S.)

BIRMINGHAM Following is reported damage to BIRMINGHAM damage (details).
repairs. 2. Temporary repairs to enable the ship to proceed to refitting port will be carried out at Alexandria and Gibraltar, but permanent repairs cannot be carried out either in the Mediterranean or in U.K. without interfering with other high priority work. Request you will report whether BIRMINGHAM could be accepted for permanent repairs at a U.S. dockyard about mid March.
(D.O.D.(F), 241143A to B.A.M.R., Info. C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, F.O.I.C. Gibraltar.)

S/M (N.S.H.Q., 241449Z.)
Estimates. (Cominch, 241637.)

L. 27 Refer my 232118. Intend sailing L.27 and KING
KING HAAKON VII 1900Z/26 in accordance with my 200106
VII. and 220036 amended E.T.A. Cape Cod Canal 1100Z/
28th.

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24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

L. 27,
KING HAAKON
VII.
(Contd.)

(2) Request total bombing and attack restrictions be reinstated.
(C. in C. C.N.A., 241454Z to Cominch, A.O.C. in C. E.A.C.)

WARSPITE.

Re modernisation in U.S.A.
(B.A.M.R., 241954Z, 241956 to Admty.)

Sub. attack
and sighting
summary.

Para. A. U.S.S. SCHENCK reports 5 U-Boats attacked two probably sunk area 45 N. 22 W. a.m./24th.

Para. D. P.C1245 attacked sound contact 29.03 N. 89 W., 231320Z.
(Cominch, 242032 to Admty.)

STANTON,
LYON,
FLORENCE
NIGHTINGALE.

Navy Dept. plans to sail three U.S. A.Ps. STANTON, LYON and FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE in convoy U.T.9 to U.K. and then to Mediterranean in convoy K.M.F.30. Request confirmation they can be included in K.M.F.30.
(B.A.D., 242237Z to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No. 703,
Dec. 23rd.

(24) Continued enemy R/C shipping lanes north of Gulf Carpentaria shown by indications planes this area morning afternoon 22nd again following morning.

(25) Allied Coastal Patrol Craft 55 miles S.E. Kaukenau encountered 2 Jap. craft 23rd setting 1 afire and damaging other, our casualties light.

(31) Aircraft sighted Jap. submarine off Empress Augusta Bay afternoon 22nd.
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 240648.)

Anti-U-Boat
Warfare,
S.W.Pacific.

Your 202225A, para. 1.
No objection to reprinting extracts of A.C.B. 0233 series as required.
(A.C.N.B., 241035 to Admty.)

24.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Attack 0616Z/24th and considerable D/F activity between 2328Z/23rd and 0828Z/24th indicates about a dozen between 44° 30' N. and 45° 30' N. and 20° 00' W. and 25° 00' W.
Other estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 241430A, 241437A.)

Submarines Attacked.

Submarine
attack and
sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/24th.

Para. A. 1. Br. PESHAWUR torpedoed and sunk at 0640/23 in 11° 25' N. 80° 30' E.
2. U.S.S. LEARY attacked by a U-Boat at 0504/24 in 45° N. 22° W.
3. Halifax aircraft J/158 on weather flight was fired on by U-Boat at 0850/23 in 25° 54' N. 22° 17' W.
4. Aircraft O/120 attacked U-Boat with depth charges at 1410/23 in 56° 50' N. 23° 43' W.

5. Unknown aircraft sighted U-Boat flak no further details at 1410/23 in 57° 20' N. 23° 24' W.

Para. B. 1. Aircraft Q/19 obtained A.S.V. contact at 1954/23 in 46° 55' N. 07° 42' W.

2. Am. RIVER RAISIN reported apparent attack by submarine at 2245/23 in 24° 22' N. 58° 49' E.

3. F.F.S. COMMANDANT DELAGE attacked U-Boat contact with depth charges at 1310/23 in 36° 56' N. 002° 19' E.

Para. Ac. 1. Am. MARGARET BRENT reported periscope sighted at 0031/24 in 17° 25' N. 57° 30' E.

(D.D.I.C., 241040Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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25.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.Operation
V.F.

1. Convoy J.W.55B reached longitude 15 degs. 35' E. at 2100 to-day, and at 1250 the Destroyers MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO joined the Destroyer Escort. The convoy was shadowed by one Dornier 18 A/C from 1115 until 1440 to-day, and one U-Boat was believed by the Escort at 2110A to be shadowing it astern.

Operation
"Stonewall"

2(a) Admiralty considers to-day that no outward-bound Blockade-breaker has probably yet begun her voyage from any Biscay Port, but that the 11 or 12 Enemy Destroyers sighted yesterday in the Bay probably took over the escort of one inward-bound M/V at about 1300A yesterday about 200 miles N.W. of Cape Ortegal. This force, which appears to be steering for the Gironde was repeatedly sighted from midnight until 1020 to-day by our A/C and was attacked 8 times with bombs without observed result.

(b) ENTERPRISE was ordered to return to Plymouth at 1223A and at 1255A GAMBIA was ordered to leave patrol and proceed to Horta to fuel with despatch. At 1732A GLASGOW was ordered to discontinue Patrol J and to establish Patrol M between 20 degs. and 22 degs. 30' W. by 1400A to-morrow, when A/C will continue to co-operate.

(c) At 1301Z the Destroyer HURRICANE, torpedoed yesterday by a U-Boat and unable to steam, was sunk by WATCHMAN of E.G.B.1 about 980 miles due West of the Gironde.

(d) The U.S. Task Group 21.16 has been ordered to operate in about 45 degs. N. 22 degs. W; but Task Group 21.14 has been ordered to return to the U.S.A.

Engagement
with
E-Boats.

3. E-Boats were operating in 2 or 3 groups between Portland and St. Albans Head early this morning apparently to attack Convoy W.P.250 which passed Portland at 0145A and was then diverted into Weymouth Bay. GREY WOLF and GREY SHARK, covering the Convoy, opened fire upon 2 of the E-Boats at 0145A about 17 miles S.E. by E. of Portland Bill; and BLEASDALE and GLAISDALE, escorting the Convoy, made several contacts with the enemy between 0215A and 0345A when the enemy withdrew. No damage was sustained on either side.

KINGSTON
BERYL
Lost.

4. H.M.T. KINGSTON BERYL whilst escorting the Loch Ewe section of Convoy O.N.217 in company with CALGARY is presumed to have been lost with all hands due to a mine in 56.12 N. 07.30 W. (about 10 miles south-west of Skerryvore) at 0445Z to-day. At the time KINGSTON BERYL was about 3000 yards ahead of the convoy.

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25.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands. -Contd.

5. Bomber Command aircraft laid 91 mines off the Frisian Isles last night.

Mediterranean.

Adriatic.

6. PENN and TEAZER swept from Ancona to Benedetto last night, but sighted nothing.

China.

7. 2 U.S. Mitchells attacked and probably sank a 300 ft. passenger steamer in the Bias Bay area North-east of Hong Kong, to-day.

Australia and New Zealand.

Air Attack
on Kavieng.

8. Carrier based aircraft attacked Kavieng harbour, New Ireland to-day, sinking a destroyer, two large merchant ships, and 3 barges and severely damaging another destroyer, several small freighters, many barges and an M.T.B. The Task Force was heavily attacked at dusk by 18 Japanese medium bombers, but suffered no damage.

Landing at
Cape
Gloucester.

9. See 26 December.

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25.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

R.A.E.C.E.F. Information upon which the disposition of Escort Carriers can be planned is expected to be available 28th December.
2. Request you will hold yourself in readiness to visit Admiralty on or after 29th.
(V.C.N.S. 252040A to R.A.E.C.E.F.)

Movements.

K.14. K.14 will sail to join E.F. on 27th December.
(Capt. S.3 251019A to B.D.Z.)

S/M Move- Positions of S/Ms at 0800/26 and movements for
ments. following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 251712A.)

DIADEM. C. in C.H.F's 231759. Concur.
(C. in C.Rosyth 251715 to DIADEM.)

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". P.C. and S. of enemy 2 destroyers 44° 40' N. 08° 35' W. 220° 25 knots.
HURRICANE (A/C Duty G 250055A to 19 Group.)
sunk. P.C. and S. 7 destroyers 44° 40' N. 08° 04' W. 000, 25.
(A/C Duty G 250100 to 19 Group.)
Have attacked enemy force with bombs 45° 05' N. 07° 57' W. Have fuel for 0630 left. Request instructions.
(A/C Duty O 250115 to 19 Group.)
Bombs dropped on enemy force 45° 00' N. 08° 09' W. Request instructions.
(A/C Duty G 250130A to 19 Group.)
Have attacked with bombs enemy 45.10 N. 08.12 W.
(A/C Duty H 250150Z to 19 Group.)
P.C. and S. 44.59 N. 08.18 W. 090° 28 knots.
(A/C Duty G 250150A to 19 Group.)
Three destroyers, 5 unknown vessels, 44.42 N. 08.22 W. (?9)0°
15. One destroyer, unknown vessel, possibly submarine 20 miles astern (?9)0° 12.
(A/C Duty F 250154A to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 45° 24' N. 07° 27' W.
(A/C LDOE to 19 Group. T.O.R. 250227.)
Shadowing 2 destroyers, position 45° 13' N. 08° 22' W.
(A/C 612 Sqdn. Duty E. 250230A to 19 Group.)
(Corrupt group) destroyers (?5) vessels 45° 22' N. 08° 22' W. course 090° speed 15 knots. Have attacked with bombs. One destroyer, one vessel, and possibly submarine 050 miles (corrupt group) 090° 12 knots.
(A/C Duty F 250254A to 19 Group.)
My 0230. Contact lost with destroyers last seen in 45.13 N. 08.22 E. 090° 10 knots.
(A/C Duty E, 612 Sqdn. 250259 to 19 Group.)
My 242214Z is to be complied with and GLENARM and WATCHMAN should join convoy as soon as possible. Your 240240Z refers.
(C. in C.W.A. 250310 to E.G.B.1.)

/Unknown...

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War Diary.25.12.1943.
SaturdayHOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" HURRICANE sunk. (Contd.)

Unknown light sighted on the surface position 48.13 N. 09.43 W.
(A/C Duty A 250330A to 19 Group.)
Have attacked type surface vessel with bombs. No results seen due to evasive action.
(A/C Duty M 250338 to 19 Group.)
Enemy previously reported position 45.18 N. 07.29 W. 110° 20 knots.
(A/C Duty O 250340 to 19 Group.)
Enemy previously reported position 45° 18' N. 07° 29' W. course (?110°) speed 20 knots.
(A/C Duty O 250345 to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 44° 16' N. 06° 47' W.
Position uncertain.
(A/C Duty Q 250352A to 19 Group.)
P.C. and S. of enemy (medium merchant vessel) 44° 43' N. 07° 44' W. 090° 20 knots, 0350.
(A/C Duty M 250358 to 19 Group.)
Have attacked destroyers with bombs. No results soon due to evasive action.
(A/C Duty G 250400A to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 44° 38' N. 07° 38' W.
(A/C Duty B 250405 to 19 Group.)
(Corrupt group) from surface ships position 46° 54' N. 10° 00 mins. W.
(A/C Duty A 250410A to 19 Group.)
Have attacked with bombs 09.(?26 W.) No results seen due to evasive action.
(A/C Duty Q 250418 to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in position 45° 09' N. 06° 59' W.
(A/C Duty E 250433 to 19 Group.)
P.C. and S. of enemy 6 merchant vessels, 5 destroyers, 44° 57 mins. N. 07° 31' W. 070° 12 knots.
(A/C Duty B 250440 to 19 Group.)
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in position 44° 43' N. 07° 44' W.
(A/C Duty K to 19 Group T.O.R. 250515.)
P.C. and S. of enemy 6 destroyers, 5 merchant vessels, 44° 40' N. 07° 26' W. 090° 10 knots.
(A/C Duty K 250525 to 19 Group.)
Have attacked merchant vessels with bombs. No results seen due to evasive action. Position 45° 24' N. 07° 38' W.
(A/C Duty B 250530 to 19 Group.)
Contact lost with surface vessel last seen position 44.40 N. 07 (15' or 19') W. course East, speed 10 knots.
(A/C Duty K 250655 to 19 Group.)
Contact lost 45° 00' N. 07° 30' W.
(A/C Duty L 250716A to 19 Group.)
P.C. and S. of 11 enemy is 45° 17' N. 06° 16' W. 070° 11 kts.
(A/C Duty E 250825 to 19 Group.)
Position of enemy 45° 16' N. 05° 30' W. Considered reasonably accurate.
(A/C Duty A 250937A to 19 Group.)
P.L.E. 8 D.D. 3 M.S. 1 M/V 100° 11 knots 45° 18' N. 05° 40' W.
(A/C Duty E 251033A to 19 Group.)

/Contact...

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25.12.1943.
Saturday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" HURRICANE sunk. (Contd.)

Contact lost with 10 destroyers, large M/V. M/V last seen 45° 17' N. 04° 57' W. course 090° 14 knots at 1020.
(A/C Duty A 251130 to 19 Group.)
Return Plymouth forthwith passing through position EC. 049° 02' N. 013° 59' W. and EA. 180° Bishop Rock 10. Keep west of Lizard Head during dark hrs.
(C. in C.Plymouth 251223A and 251558A to ENTERPRISE (R) WINDRUSH.)

GAMBIA proceed forthwith to arrive Horta before dark tomorrow to fuel with despatch.

2. Unless otherwise ordered GLASGOW is to leave Northern end of patrol J. at 2000A today for patrol L. north of 046° 30' N. My 240648 refers.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251255A to GLASGOW, GAMBIA, (R) C.S.10.)
Your 242214. Operation completed. My position, course and speed at 1300Z 045° 40' N. 021° 43' W. 257° 15. Weather.
(B.1 251301Z to C. in C.W.A.)

In order to guard against possibility of second inward bound blockade-runner having passed 30° W. during 25th December I attach great importance to an air search in the area between 50° N. and 46° N. and 19° W. and 22° W. on 26th December.

2. To ensure early air sighting if enemy does not pass 30° W. on 25th and to allow for interception by surface vessels as far to westward as possible it is considered essential that patrol L should also be flown tomorrow 26th and daily thereafter. Portion north of 46° 30' N. is the more important.

3. As positions of surface vessels are intimately related to the air patrols in force very early confirmation is requested whether above requirements can be met.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251359 to H.Q.C.C.)
ENTERPRISE 048° 45' N. 015° 20' W. through 049° 02' N. 013° 59' W. and 18° Bishop Rock 10, bound Plymouth, 25 knots.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251440A to Ships.)
Approximate positions (U.S.S.) BLOCK ISLAND T.G. 21.16 048° 00', 030° 25' to Eastward 15 with 3 U.S. Destroyers. My 251245 refers. GLASGOW 047° 22' 024° 30' to patrol between 046° 30' N. 029° 58' W. and 049° 51' N. 030° W.

(C. in C.W.A. 251446A.)
Cinquant has ordered T.G. 21.14 to return to U.S.
2. T.G. 21.16 has been ordered to operate in approx. 45° N. 22° W. (D.O.D.H. 251530A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C.Plymouth.)

Plymouth's 251359A. 15 Gp. will have available 2 Liberators and 2 Sunderlands surplus to "Stipple A" requirements and will patrol area between 50° N. and 46° 30' N. and 19° W. and 22° W. starting from dawn.

247 Gp. to carry out L. patrol on 30° W. from 46° 30' N. to 50° N. Any A/C available after this patrol and "Stipple A" commitments have been met should carry out patrol between 43° N. to 46° 30' N. and 19° W. to 22° W.

(H.Q.C.C. 251640A to 15 Group, 247 Group, (R) 19 Group.)
Am being shadowed by one enemy aircraft. My P.C. and S. 48° (?mins.) N. 16° 02' W. 055°, 27 knots.
(ENTERPRISE 251645 to Whitehall W/T.)

/A.M....

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25.12.1943.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". HURRICANE sunk.
(Contd.)

A.M. 231208. TANNENFELS seen by P.R.U. at La Pallice, ELSA ESSBERGER in Gironde, and FUSIYAMA at Bordeaux on 24th December. HIMALAYA not seen at Brest but most of the port not covered.

2. A force of 11 or 12 Narvik and Elbing destroyers was sighted westbound in Biscay on 24th December. In view of Para. 1 and speeds made good it appears doubtful whether any outward blockade-runner was concerned in this operation but destroyers appear to have taken over escort of inward-bound blockade-runner about 1300A/24th. in about 45.30 N. 12 W.

(D.D.I.C. 251721A to A.I.G. 13, F.O.S. C. in C.Plymouth, C. in C.W.A.)

Cancel para. 2 of my 251255.

At dark today GLASGOW discontinue patrol J. and establish patrol M. between 047° 25' N. and 048° 05' N. and between 020° W. and 022° 30' W.

2. GLASGOW is to be at Eastern end of patrol M. at about 1400A/26 and is to leave Western end of patrol line at dark 26th to commence patrol L North of 046° 31' N. at daylight 27th.

3. On 26th aircraft will be searching between 050° N. and 046° 30' N. and between 019° W. and 022° W. and will also fly patrol L north of 046° 30' N. on 26th and subsequent days.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251732A to GLASGOW.)

D/F bearings at 1630Z/25 indicate that a U-Boat may have reported you.

(D.D.I.C. 251807A to WATCHMAN, GLENARM.)

Cancel para. 2 of my 240814.

2. On 26th GLASGOW will patrol in the vicinity position 048° N. 021° W. Air patrol will operate between 046° N. and 050° N. and between 019° W. and 022° W. and also on long. 030° W. between 046° N. and 050° N.

3. On 27th GLASGOW will patrol on long. 030° W. between 046° N. & 050° N. Air patrol will operate in this vicinity. Eastern air patrol in para. 2 will be discontinued.

4. GAMBIA is on passage to Horta.

5. ENTERPRISE is returning Plymouth.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251825 to Cominch.)

My 241837A. Estimate enemy blockade-runner escorted by destroyers will reach grid after dark today.

2. No indications that any outward-bound blockade-breaker has commenced voyage.

(C. in C.Plymouth 251832A to Admt.)

Operation Reykjavik arrival LOYALTY.

V.F. 2. Intend sailing LOYALTY to Skaalefjord at 1100A/25th. Route.

(A.C.I.C. 250656A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

D/F of transmission at 0901Z/25 indicates that convoy J.W.55B has probably been reported by a U-Boat.

(D.D.I.C. 251025A to A.I.G. 47.)

C. in C.H.F. 101128. Force 3 for SCOURGE read OBDURATE.

(R.A.D.H.F. 251112A to H.F.)

/R/C...

War Diary.

25.12.1943.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation V.F. (Contd.) R/C of Surgten Fjord will be made as soon weather permits, none possible 25th. Routine R/C Barents Sea Sector up to 075° (S) flown 25th, nothing sighted, no ice. 10/10th cloud at 700 feet, medium visibility, sea slight.
(S.B.N.O.N.Russia 251332A to Admty.)
D/F bearings at 1647Z/25 and 1658Z/25 indicate U-Boats still in contact with convoy.
(D.D.I.C. 251826A to A.I.G. 47.)

J.W.55B, P.C. and S. at 2100 (corrupt) 10' N. 015° 35' E. 070° 7.5. Alteration to 097° postponed until 1000/26th due to weather. Shadowed by one Dornier 18 from 1115 until 1440 homing on 446 k/cs. H/F D/F bearings indicate one U-Boat shadowing astern. MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE, VIRAGO joined at 1250. Weather. (Capt. D.17 252110A to H.F.)

"Hardtack" and "Manacle" Operations. Operation "Hardtack 11". E. for Easy, Zero, Zero, Zero.
(V.A.Dover 250717A to Admty. C.C.O. A.N.C.X.F.)
Operations "Hardtack" and "Manacle" will not be carried out tonight. My 251247 refers.
(V.A.Dover 251245A to Admty.)

My 250717. M.T.B. 24 slipped Dory in position KK. in apparently perfect weather condition at 0215. Military party touching down at 0230 in accordance with plan. At 0315 Boatkeepers returned to M.T.B. in waterlogged Dory which was hoisted and baled out. All efforts to restart engine were unsuccessful. At 0500 faint Walkie-Talkie reported military party assembled for re-embarking, blue light being observed flashing as arranged. Accordingly M.T.B. closed shore as near as depth of water allowed and slipped Dory at 0521 paddled by 2 Boatkeepers and signaller. At 0535 further flashing with bluelight thought to be from Dory was seen followed by shouting. 3 or 4 persons were seen in the water, indicating Dory had been swamped in surf estimated at 3 feet. Several attempts to rescue survivors were frustrated by shallow depth of water and M.T.B. 24 was forced to withdraw at 0603. Weather prevented search by aircraft a.m. today. Rescue operations in accordance with Dover 00638.

A. Para. 16 will be attempted tonight. No enemy reaction was observed by M.T.B. up to time of leaving, indicating that our forces were undetected.
(V.A.Dover 251247A and 252217A to Admty.)
Intend carrying out "Hardtack No. 4" tonight.
(N.O.I.C. Newhaven 251448A to C. in C.Portsmouth.)
My 251448. "Hardtack No. 4" will not be carried out tonight.
(N.O.I.C. Newhaven 251741 to C. in C.Portsmouth.)

Operation "Bellpush A". Intend to carry out "Bellpush A" tonight.
(F.O.Force J 251003A to C. in C.Portsmouth.)

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Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations - Contd.

Coastal Force Patrols. Intend to sail M.G.B. 318 at 1600 to southward returning 1000/26.
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 251300A to C. in C.Plymouth.)
1. Orders for night 25th/26th December.
A. 3 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven anti E-Boat patrol 10 miles south of convoy route between Eastern limit of command and $00^{\circ} 25' W.$ abreast C.W. 234 from 2230A to 0600A.
B. 5 M.T.Bs. from Newhaven offensive patrol for torpedo targets only between $140^{\circ} UU.$ 7 miles and $200^{\circ} UU.$ 17 miles.
Proceed and return by passage 2 passing two N. at 2130A and returning within 20 miles of own coast by 0700A. Under no circumstances is the force to proceed west of long. $00^{\circ} 05' W.$
C. 2 CHASSEURS anti E-Boat patrol on $50^{\circ} 24' N.$ between $00^{\circ} 35' W.$ and $00^{\circ} 48' W.$ from 1830A to 0700A.
D. BLEASDALE short notice St. Helens.
E. M.L. 344 short notice St. Helens.
F. 2 S.G.Bs. from Portland anti E-Boat patrol on $50^{\circ} 18' N.$ between $01^{\circ} 45' W.$ and $02^{\circ} 35' W.$ from 1900A to 0700A covering W.P. 451 until convoy arrives Portland.
(C. in C.Portsmouth 251342A.)

S/M Patrols. Proceed unescorted and on surface at C.O. discretion till within 60 miles of Norwegian coast.
ULA left Lerwick 1330A/25th routed through 090° Muckle Flugga \varnothing thence through $061^{\circ} 16' N.$ $001^{\circ} 49' E.$ $060^{\circ} 37' N.$ $003^{\circ} 11' E.$ and $059^{\circ} 06' N.$ $003^{\circ} 32' E.$ thence direct to patrol off Skudesnes.
(S.O. S/M Lerwick 251332A to S/MS.)
ULA will pass through position Y. $060^{\circ} 37' N.$ $003^{\circ} 11' E.$ approx. 1000/26th and position Z. $059^{\circ} 06' N.$ $003^{\circ} 32' E.$ 0200/27. 0.15 to keep clear.
(Capt. S.9 251557A to 0.15, ULA.)
Own submarine positions 0800/26th and movements in succeeding 24 hours paras.
A. SYRTIS approximately $70^{\circ} 45' N.$ $19^{\circ} 55' E.$ proceeding to patrol in vicinity $70^{\circ} 47' N.$ $21^{\circ} 35' E.$
B. SIRDAR $70^{\circ} 50' N.$ $21^{\circ} 40' E.$ leaves patrol 2001/26th through $71^{\circ} 21' N.$ $020^{\circ} 01' E.$ and $70^{\circ} 49' N.$ $13^{\circ} 59' E.$ to Lerwick on surface 10 knots.
C. 0.15 on patrol off Skudesnes Fjord, leaving p.m. 26th to pass $60^{\circ} 49' N.$ $03^{\circ} 51' E.$ at 1600/27th, diving by day until 60 miles from Norway.
D. SCEPTRE $64^{\circ} 34' N.$ $08^{\circ} 15' E.$ passing through $64^{\circ} 38' N.$ $08^{\circ} 42' E.$ diving by day to patrol off Kya.
E. SEADOG patrolling off Stadlandet.
F. ULA $60^{\circ} 37' N.$ $03^{\circ} 11' E.$ diving by day to $59^{\circ} 06' N.$ $03^{\circ} 32' E.$ then to patrol off Skudesnes 110 miles in 24 hours on passage.
G. VENTURER $62^{\circ} 41' N.$ $00^{\circ} 10' E.$ diving by day to $62^{\circ} 01' N.$ $00^{\circ} 38' W.$ then on surface 9 knots to Lerwick.
(F.O.S. 251712A to Adnty.)

Engagements with E-Boats. At 0145A/24th December 2 E-Boats were sighted by GREY WOLF in 148° Portland Bill 17 miles. GREY WOLF and GREY SHARK which were covering W.P.450 convoy, challenged and opened fire, but contact was lost almost immediately.

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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

- Engagements with E-Boats. (Contd.)
2. W.P.450 escorted by BLEASDALE and GLAISDALE was then passing Portland Bill and F.O.I.C. Portland diverted it into Weymouth Bay.
 3. The E-Boats, operating in two or three groups, proceeded towards St. Albans Head and crossed Q.Z.S. 424 on both sides of its junction with Q.Z.S. 399.
 4. BLEASDALE and GLAISDALE made contact with enemy at various times between 0215A and 0345A when enemy withdrew. No hits are claimed, but if attack on convoy was enemy's object it was effectively frustrated by the destroyers.
 5. Albacores were unsuccessful in attacking enemy on retirement.
 6. Owing to doubt regarding real objective of the enemy a dangerous area has been declared as a precautionary measure - see my 241343A. If no mines are found in or near Q.Z.S. 424 it is considered that area can be cancelled.
 - 7.. No damage or casualties were sustained by our forces. (C. in C.Portsmouth 252214A to Admty.)

Exercises.

- Exercise "Duck".
- C. in C.Plymouth's 211752.
It is regretted that no destroyers can be made available to assist C. in C.Plymouth in this exercise.
2. C. in C.Plymouth is requested to arrange with C. in C.Portsmouth for such assistance from coastal forces including those of Force J as can be spared.
 3. A.N.C.X.F. is requested to adjust the scale of the exercise in accordance with the forces which can be provided.
 4. The subsequent reinforcement of Plymouth Command for commitments such as this and others is now under consideration. (V.C.N.S. 250055A to A.N.C.X.F.)
- The following areas will be closed to all shipping not engaged in exercise "Duck" from January 1st 1944 until further notice enclosed by line joining A. Dartmouth Castle, B. Dart Buoy, C. Start Point Q.Z.S. 440 and 416 are not affected. (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 250951A to C. in C.Plymouth.)

Allied Air Activity.

- P.R.U. of Brest. Request P.R.U. of Brest earliest possible December 25th to locate blockade breaker. (D.D.I.C. 250045A to A.D.I.Ph.)

Mining.

- KINGSTON BERYL lost. 2 unknown explosions occurred 3000 yards ahead O.N.U. 217 in 056° 12' N. 007° 28' W. at 0445. (CALGARY 250515Z to Cdre. D.W.A.) My 250515Z cannot locate KINGSTON BERYL by V/S or R/T. (CALGARY 250840Z to Cdre. D.W.A.)

/Your...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

KINGSTON
BERYL
lost..
(Contd.)

Your 250840. Report position and time when KINGSTON BERYL was last seen and your position now. (C. in C.W.A. 251145A to CALGARY.)
Your 251145. KINGSTON BERYL last seen approx. 3000 yards in from Port column of convoy approx. position 056° 12' 007° 30' at 0535Z. Cdre. D.W.A.'s 250730. My position Moville at present landing cot cases.
(CALGARY 251230Z to C. in C.W.A.)

KINGSTON BERYL was probably lost as a result of an explosion in 56° 12' N. 07° 30' W. at 0435A today.

2. Request you will sail suitable escort vessels to commence search at daylight for survivors and wreckage to leeward of position quoted.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 251714A to Cdre. W.I.)

Your 251230. Confirm that KINGSTON BERYL was last seen 50' after explosions referred to in your 250515. If not, did you carry out any search for her at time of explosions or subsequently. When replying report state of weather at time of incident including visibility and any other information which would be of assistance in ascertaining what has occurred.

(C. in C.W.A. 251745A to CALGARY.)

My 250515Z. KINGSTON BERYL's navigation lights were last seen at approx. 0435Z by Officer of Watch and ship picked up by R.D.F. My 251230Z gives approximate time as 0535A or 0435Z. After explosion R.D.F. held an echo taken to be hers extending over a period of some (?3) minutes and range was close to 900 yards. R.D.F. continued to report an echo taken to be hers until first (?light). Only then, when it was possible to see that she was not there, did we become concerned and try to locate her by V/3 and R/T, reference my 250840Z. By this time main portion of O.N.217 had been met off Oversay. Visibility C.3 - 4, wind force 4. When explosion occurred navigation lights were turned off by ourselves and apparently by many of convoy. It was assumed she had done likewise.

(CALGARY 252130Z to C. in C.W.A.)

Operation "Hostile 17". My 231031 and 231606. Intend carrying out operation tonight without support force.
(C. in C.Plymouth 251020A to DEFIANCE.)

Navigational.

Brightlingsea. Port closed owing to fog.
(N.O.I.C. Brightlingsea 250930A.)
Port now open.
(N.O.I.C. Brightlingsea 251130.)

Casualties & Defects.

FREDERICK
BARTHOLDI.

S.O.S. position 57.44.30 N. 06.26.00 W. aground on Fladdach Namrocks in immediate danger. Ship on lee shore pounding badly need help. 250700Z.
(FREDERICK BARTHOLDI 250716 G.M.T. to Lands End Radio.)

/Proceed...

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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

- FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.
(Contd.)
- Proceed immediately to assist FREDERICK BARTHOLDI in 057° 44' 30" N. 006° 26' W.
(C. in C.W.A. 250852A to MAZURKA.)
Sailed NEIL MACKAY to investigate ship reported in danger.
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea 250857A to Admty.)
- Two trawlers are on their way to assist.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 250905A to FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.)
Arrived and sailed VELETA to assist vessel in danger.
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea 250913A to Admty.)
Aground on Fladdachnak Rocks in immediate danger. Main engine sitting on rock afraid breaking in half. Please let us know when to expect help.
(FREDERICK BARTHOLDI No T.O.O. Recd. 250948.)
Sailed POLKA to assist FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea 251051A to Admty.)
Four trawlers now proceeding to your assistance should arrive 1300A. Lifeboat also on the way.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 251247A to FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.)
Arrived MAZURKA with 56 crew and 2 passenger survivors of FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea 252315A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)
- WORCESTER. Departure for Harwich at 0800 WORCESTER in tow of tugs CHAMPION and KROOMAN accompanied by Salvage Vessel DAPPER and escorted by WIDGEON.
(F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth 251116A to C. in C.Nore.)
- ULYSSES. Arrived ULYSSES with defects.
(F.O.I.C. N.I. 251205A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)
- PHILIP P. BARBOUR. Intercept 1233 G.M.T. 500 k/cs from PHILIP P. BARBOUR. We have been aground. Are not in danger. Our double-bottoms are leaking fuel but our inner-bottoms are sound.
(PHILIP P. BARBOUR 251334.)
- L.C.18. L.C.18 has now been refloated and berthed in Dartmouth Harbour.
(N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 251515A to C. in C.Plymouth.)
- EMPEROR. Sabotage suspected. Your 241311. Estimated date of completion 31st December. Belt approximately 2" diameter found in Sump which has obviously passed through gears. Sabotage suspected. N.I.D. Admiralty informed.
(F.O.C.T. 251649 to Admty.)
- JACOBA. JACOBA refloated and now alongside Hayle Quay.
(Sabotage Officer, Falmouth 251700A to F.O.I.C. Falmouth.)

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Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

- O.N.S.25. Inform Commodore BEAUREGARD returning Clyde.
(C. in C.W.A. 250104A to Escorts O.N.S.25.)
- O.N. 217. KOOTENAY, ARVIDA, DAUPHIN, DIANTHUS, ROSTHERN,
DUNVER, GROWLER, FISULIER, sailed for O.N.217.
(Cdre. D.W.A., 250905A to Admty.)
- U.R.103. Sailing of U.R.103 is to be postponed 24 hours.
(C. in C.W.A. 251007A to N.O.I.C. Aultbea.)
- O.S.63/
K.M.S.37. 13 ships. Names and destinations.
(N.C.S.O.Mersey 251208 to Admty.)
12 ships names and L.S.T. 35. Destinations.
Did not sail EMPIRE USK, loading not completed.
BARON DOUGLAS, repairs not complete and crew
trouble.
(N.C.S.O.Clyde 252237A to A.I.G. 288.)
- E.G.6. E.G.6 sailed to comply with your 241240A.
(Cdre. D.W.A. 251237A to C. in C.W.A.)
- AMARAPOORA. My 241738A. AMARAPOORA sailed. E.T.A. 2359A/31.
(N.C.S.O.Clyde 251701A to Admty.)
- T.A.81 A.M. 232155. Route to New York.
(MAURETANIA.) (D.O.D.H. 251837A to C. in C.W.A.)
- P.S.26. P.S.26 and S.P.26 cancelled.
S.P.26. (C. in C.Portsmouth 252143A.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Air
Patrols.

Ref. C. in C. Plymouth 241618A patrols for 25th are being flown as ordered.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 251124Z to GLASGOW, GAMBIA, C. in C. Plymouth (R) F.O.C. Gib.)

ARIADNE.

Intend to sail for U.K. at 0800A/26th.
2. Route.
(F.O.C. Gib. 251136Z.)

U.G.S.28.

Escorts T.F.61 EVARTS, WYFFELS, BARBER, DOBLER, SMARTT, W.S.BROWN, POOLE, STRAUB, KIRKPATRICK, LEOPOLD, S.C.1346. CHEPACHET. T.G.21.11 MISSION BAY, LEA, GREER, TARBEL, UPSHUR.
(C.M.S.F. 251412 to Com.10th Fleet C. & R., F.O.C. Gibraltar.)

T.F.66.

C.T.F.66 251554 T.G.66.9 consisting of PARTRIDGE, SWIVEL, Y.M.S.346-352 inclusive, Cdr.Lieut.A.M. Caldin, U.S.N.R. in PARTRIDGE, detached from T.F. 66 at 252100Z. E.T.A. Horta 271300Z.
(Cominch 252020Z to S.B.N.O. Horta.)

IRISH
CEDAR
disabled.

A/C. sighted SS. IRISH CEDAR 044° 48' N. 023° 17' W. at 1130Z/25th. Merchant ship signalled disabled proceeding San Miguel E.T.A. a.m. 27th.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 252318Z to Admty.)

JAUNTY,
NORTHERN
WAVE.
M.K.S.34.

Your 251300. (N.T. in W.D.) Intend sail JAUNTY and NORTHERN WAVE only to join M.K.S.34. CLUMBERHALL and IERE unable reach Convoy in time. Air cover not available. Propose retaining until ships referred to in your 211718 arrived Ponta Delgada and can escort.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 252332Z to F.O.C. Gib.)

South Atlantic.

Cruiser and
air patrols
in Atlantic
Narrows.

Here is my 241625 re-encyphered. Your 232105Z. My cruiser air radius so limited that all consideration my B.R. plan given to shore based air sweeps for sure search method with cruisers disposed as support to intercept. My air patrol now not leaving any gap except off African Coast. For combined system patrols in view weakness air and

/Radar...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Cruiser and
air patrols
in Atlantic
Narrows.
(contd.)

Radar your cruisers can you not use R.A.F. air from your coast to meet my patrol from N.E. Ascension supporting this with one cruiser and then backing up with other available surface (?craft) one suggested past experience shows excellent result contacting all ships traversing area. One regrettable incident entirely due communications failure. (Com.Fleet D.O.U.B. 250309 to F.O.W.A. (R) Cominch.)

DUMANA
torpedoed.

Take all action on following message which was received at 0540. Addressed:- Freetown W/T from ISEP (undecypherable). 080. P.A.441 SS.DUMANA torpedoed.
(No T.O.O. Recd. 250540.)

CORFU,
CILICIA.

Your 221159. In view of blockade runner situation urgently request permission to retain CORFU as patrol in area contained by lines joining 5 N. 30 W. 5 N. 26 W. 3 N. 24 W. 3 N. 29 W. until Jan. 8th and thence direct to Trinidad for fuel with CORFU's and CILICIA's aircraft this should present a very favourable opportunity.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 251435Z to Admty.)

PORTSDOWN,
ALSACE.

Cable repairs completed 1630B/25th. Course 126° speed 10 knots E.T.A. Pointe Noire 1200B/16th.
(PORTSDOWN 251759Z to B.N.L.O. Pointe Noire (R) F.O.C.W.Af.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

CURIE

Fired at 2 tank landing craft and missed both times. 3 Torpedoes expended. Nothing else seen. Generator insulation are 500000 and 60000 Ohms. (P.67) CURIE, 250035A to Capt.(S) 10, (R) C. in C. Med. N.O.i/c Algiers).

PENELOPE

Proceeding at best speed. (C. in C. Med. 250955A to F.O.C.S.15 (R) PENELOPE, F.O.C. Gib., Admty., N.O.B. Oran, N.A.C.A.F., 242 Group, C. in C. Med., N.O.i/c Algiers, N.O.i/c Bone, N.O.i/c Jijelli, N.O.i/c Bizerta, F.O.I.S. Capt. (S) 8).

DZIK,
SPORTSMAN.

P.52 (DZIK) proceed with all despatch passing westward Ophidusa thence between Amorgos and Kinaros to patrol within 5 miles of 037 degs. 11' 026 degs. 01' until 0300/27th. Then proceed to patrol within 5 miles of 037 degs. 12' 026 degs. 19'.

(2) P.229 (SPORTSMAN) leave patrol at 0200/27th between Amorgos and Kinaros East of Tria Nisia thence as routed in my 221845B to arrive Beirut at 1600/29th.

(Capt.(S) 1st, 251053B to P.52 (DZIK), P.229 (SPORTSMAN) (R) C. in C. Levant, 1st S/M.F.).
Cancelled Capt.(S) 1, 262347B.

Air
Report.

Daily Opsum 241 Dec. 24th. Details of further successful attacks on troop and supply craft in Aegean.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 251102B).

M.E. Balkan
Sitrep
No.39.

1. Int. Yugoslav. 22 Dec. Germans landed Kercula and by 2100 hrs. held area Racisto - Jorcula at N.E. end of Island.
A. Greece. Recently sabotage party of 3 Greeks landed safely coast of Greece from submarine.
B. Yugoslavia. Brit. L.O. reports 23 Dec. enemy cruiser DALMACIJA sunk by M.T.B. action off Split. Note this cruiser was recently reported sunk by bombing but was later reported to be active off coast of north Dalmatia. Adv. H.Q. Force 133 report 23rd Dec. two ships reached Yugoslavia from South Italy with 78 tons arms amm. clothing and stores.
(C. in C.M.E. 251925B).

Red flare
seen by
AMRA.

Intercept 1918Z. DEGNNX Hospital ship AMRA 1818 G.M.T. 3318 N. 22.46 E. sighted red flare in water A.P.1855 sighted presumed aircraft flares, circled spot until 1910 G.M.T. with ship and motor lifeboat, remainder unread. Controlling station Malta radio. (British ship).
(North Foreland, 252018A to R.A.F. 11th Group Uxbridge, Admiral Chatham, F.O.I.C. Dover).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

R.A.N.A.S. (2) Recent fires in Colombo and explosion at
Station, R.N.A.S. Station possibly due to sabotage.
Trincomalee. (C. in C. Ceylon 250157?)

U-Boat Ref. my 240404 as amended aircraft R/C Radar
Dispositions. contacts followed by hydrophone and whistle
effects counter attacked by ditto in 017 degs.
40' N. 063 degs. 36' E. at 0100/26th. No
visible results.

(2) No other information. No change in scale of air escort
any area.
(C. in C. E.F. 250526Z)

O.21.

Passage to U.K.?

Intend to sail Dutch S/M O.21 unescorted on
the surface on 30th for Aden for Abadan to Bizerta
for refit, S. of A. 11 knots, E.T.A. Aden 8th
Jan.

(2) Route to Aden follows.

(S.O.(S) Colombo, 250539Z to C. in C. E.F. Cmdre.
i/c Aden, (R) Admty. F.O. Ceylon F.O.S., C. in C.
Netherlands Forces in the East (B.S.O.)
F.O.R.S.C.A., C. in C. Levant, C. in C. Med.
Capt. (S) 1, Capt.(S) 4)

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EMILE BERTIN. Modify my 221946Z. French Cruiser EMILE BERTIN is to be sailed when ready Fort de France to Casablanca via Dakar for fuel. Refer to this as 242030 from Cominch action Com. Carib Sea. (Comnaveu, 250052 to Admty.)

S/M. Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 251320Z)

Convoy U.G.S.28. Sailing telegram. (P.D. Norfolk, 251412, 251420)

H.X.272, ROBERT E. PERRY, CHARLES CARROLL, collision. ROBERT E. PERRY and CHARLES CARROLL in collision. Am towing ROBERT E. PERRY to Halifax, CHARLES CARROLL proceeding Halifax escorted by ATHOLL. My P.C.S. 043 degs. 07' 060 degs. 42' 303 degs 3 knots. Request Tug. Weather report 3571 3272. (GUYSBOROUGH, 251501Z, 251825 to C. in C. C.N.A.)

?U/B. U.S. Plane reports doubtful S/M. sighting 1208Z/25th in 012 degs. 08' N. 069 degs. 08' W. (S.O.(I) Jamaica, 251515R to Admty.)

PRINCE DAVID, PRINCE HENRY. N.S.H.Q. 141942. Destination of PRINCE DAVID and PRINCE HENRY in U.K. is Portsmouth. (2) Request they may be sailed in first available U.T. Convoy. (D.O.D.(H), 251708A to Cominch, C. in C. Portsmouth Info. S.O. Force 'J', B.A.D., S.C.N.O. London, N.S.H.Q., C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth)

S/M. attack and sighting summary. Para.D. R.A.F. Plane sights S/M. 23.30 N. 71.47 W. 251448. S/M attacked 12.08 N. 69.08 W. 251208. Panam. plane sighted submerging conning tower 34.30 N. 67.05 W. 241820. Surface craft attacked sound contact 33.29 N. 43.23 W. 241312 to 241615. All times Z. (Cominch 252003 to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest Serial No.704. Dec.24th. (3) Early hours M.T.Bs destroyed 1 barge, 1 boat 5 miles E. of Sio also 1 small S/M. which appeared specially constructed for transportation jobs. (6) Jap submarine sighted off Finschhafen coast morning and again afternoon. (14) U.S. Cruiser Destroyer Force bombarded Buka Aonis area with 7500 rounds 6" 5" shells night 23rd. Many fires started explosions continued long after action ceased. (G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 250800Z)

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Torpedoing 2045Z/24th and D/F 2219Z/24th indicate U/B from Takoradi area is now within 60 miles of 04° 00' N. 08° 00' W.

Other estimated positions.

(D.D.I.C. 251410A.)

Attack by U/B at 2001Z/24th together with several D/Fs. confirms presence of 10 or 12 U/Bs. within 90 miles E. and W. of 45° 10' N. 22° 05' W. Other estimated positions.

(D.D.I.C. 251411A.)

Submarines Attacked.

S/M. attack and sighting summary for 24 hours to 0900Z/25th. Para.A. 1. H.M. Ship attacked at 2001/24th in 45° 10' N. 22° 05' W. 2. Br. DUMANA torpedoed at 2045 24th in 04° 27' N. 06° 58' W. Para.B. 1. Br. SAMNESSE made SSSS, periscope sighted at 0344/25th in 10° 05' N. 63° 33' E. 2. Ship in convoy J.C.30 sighted periscope at 0510/25th in 16° 00' N. 82° 07' E. Para.D. 1. A/C. F/502 sighted U/B. course 060 at 1328/24 in 49° 30' N. 09° 58' W. 2. A/C. E/502 sighted U/B. at 1403/24 in 48° 55' N. 10° 40' W. (D.D.I.C. 251055A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

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Sunday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.
Sinking of
SCHARNHORST.

1.(a). C.S.10 (Rear-Admiral R.L.Burnett) flying his flag in BELFAST, with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD in company, constituting Force 1 covering convoy J.W. 55B made Radar contact with SCHARNHORST at 0844A today at 16 miles, about 80 miles south-east of Bear Island. At 0936 the enemy was in sight and Force 1 opened fire; SCHARNHORST turned away, and steaming 30 knots was soon out of contact. Force 1 proceeded to the convoy.

(b). The latter had already been diverted to the northward at 0401A to gain time whilst Force 2 (C. in C.Home Fleet in DUKE OF YORK, with JAMAICA, SAVAGE, STORD, SAUMAREZ and SCORPION), constituting the Battleship Covering Force, was steering towards the Norwegian coast, to cut off SCHARNHORST's return.

(c). At 1213A SCHARNHORST again endeavoured to find the convoy and was for the second time driven off by Force 1. NORFOLK received one hit, putting X turret out of action. Force 1, joined by 4 destroyers from the convoy escort effectively shadowed SCHARNHORST until 1651A when the Battleship Covering Force, which, acting on Admiral Burnett's reports had steered to intercept, came into action.

(d). At 1645, when the range was 18000 yards DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA in close support turned to open A arcs and the screening destroyers were released to take up position for torpedo attack. At 1651 the DUKE OF YORK, having fired star shell over SCHARNHORST opened fire at 11900 yards.

(e). It appears that a hit which was obtained at 1806 at a range of approximately 17000 yards damaged the enemy below the waterline and reduced her speed to 20 knots. From 1900 onwards, when the range had closed to 10000 yards, DUKE OF YORK obtained many hits.

(f). Attacks were made at 1845 by the destroyers of DUKE OF YORK's screen, followed by one by MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO who had joined the convoy escort from Kola Inlet after taking J.W.55A. During the attacks DUKE OF YORK heard three underwater explosions.

(g). SCHARNHORST was finally sunk between 1935 and 1940 by torpedo fire from the 36th Destroyer Division and probably JAMAICA and BELFAST.

(h). Throughout the action DUKE OF YORK was SCHARNHORST's main target, but although shells fell all round the ship the only hits reported were on the foremast and main mast.

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SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.
Sinking of
SCHARNHORST.
(Contd.)

1. (i) Enemy destroyers may have been present when first contact was made, but were not seen subsequently.

(j). The presence of U-Boats in DUKE OF YORK's area between 1500 and 1700 caused considerable uneasiness.

(k). There were no casualties except in NORFOLK and SAUMAREZ, and STORD lost one man overboard during torpedo attack. 36 survivors of the SCHARNHORST were picked up. *(Interrogation, see CB.04051 (98))*

(l). After sinking the SCHARNHORST Force 1 and Force 2 proceeded to Kola Inlet with MATCHLESS, MUSKETEER, OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO, arriving at 272159A.

(m). Russian R/C of Altenfjord today was unsuccessful on account of the weather.

Weather.

2. The ports of Harwich, Lowestoft and Brightlingsea were closed this morning on account of fog, Lowestoft was reopened at 1243A but Harwich remained closed until 270649A.

North Atlantic.

Operation
"Stonewall".

3. (a). The French Light Cruiser LE MALIN, which arrived at Horta from Boston today, was placed under the orders of C. in C. Plymouth for the current operations against blockade runners; and she sailed from Horta on the afternoon of 27th.

(b). Task Group 21.15, consisting of U.S.S. CORE and 4 destroyers left Casablanca at 1700A today, to search the area 36 N. 19 W.

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SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

4. An aircraft sighted a submarine on the surface at 1154 today in 04.35 N. 06.50 W. steering an easterly course.

East Indies.

Diego
Suarez.

5. The transfer of responsibility for the defence of North African ports to the French is proceeding rapidly, and the Admiralty wish trial to be made at Diego Suarez, where a French office is to be set up under the N.O.I.C.

6.(a). SS. ASIAN was sunk this evening in collision with a merchant ship from convoy M.B.59 in approx. 07.45 N. 77.40 E. (off Cape Comorin.)

(b). SS. JOSE NAVARRO was torpedoed at 2330Z today in 08.20 N. 73.35 E. (in the 8 Degrees Channel (about 200 miles S.W. of Cochin) and was sunk.

7. There was an air raid on Chittagong this morning. Damage was very slight.

Organisation
of command
on station.

8. C. in C. Eastern Fleet has two H.Qs. one at Colombo and one at New Delhi. At the former is Vice-Admiral Danckwerts (Deputy C. in C. Eastern Fleet); and at New Delhi is Rear-Admiral Miles (Deputy Naval Comdr. South East Asia Command.) The Colombo H.Q. deals with the Fleet shipping, communications, safety of shipping and station matters outside India. The New Delhi H.Q. deals with amphibious operations, naval assault force and matters which concern the S.E.A. Command, G.H.Q. India, and the Indian Government.

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SITUATION REPORT.

America & West Indies.

9. The U.S. tanker CHAPULTEPEC was hit in the port bow by a torpedo or mine (probably the former) in 10.30 N. 78.58 W. (60 miles north of Colon) at 0751R today, but arrived safely at Cristobal today. (c.f. 29th December.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Landing at
Cape Gloucester.

10. (a). At dawn today (2045Z/25) U.S. Marines landed in strength at two beaches at Cape Gloucester (New Britain), south-west and south-east of the cape respectively. Prior to the landing, bombardment by U.S. cruisers and destroyers, and heavy air attack by Liberators and Mitchells were carried out. There was no opposition to the original landings but air attacks developed later. At least 61 enemy aircraft were destroyed. Four U.S. fighters are missing.

(b). Another small party landed successfully on Long Island (north-west New Georgia) during the early hours.

11. Catalinas bombed Kavieng, New Ireland, last night for the sixth successive night.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

KING
GEORGE V. C.S. One is requested to report whether KING
GEORGE V is capable of being used operationally.
(D.O.D.H. 261056A to C.S.1.).
Ship is not operational and requires docking to
effect repairs.
Your 261056A refers.
(C.S.1, 261811 to Admty.).

Trawlers
for
Azores. Admiralty 221545. The provision of six suitable
trawlers for this commitment will have to be at
the expense of rescue services on the O.N.S./S.C.
convoy routes. This is considered most
undesirable particularly in view of the present
shortage of support groups and I would prefer not
to relinquish any of these ships before mid February when
support groups should again be up to strength.
(2) If, however, the Azores commitment must have priority four
trawlers can be provided to arrive destination by mid January.
The further two trawlers could not be provided until after the
return of the trawlers about to leave Canada for United Kingdom.
(C. in C.W.A., 261315A to Admty.).

LONDON for
Eastern
Fleet. C. in C.H.F. 081906.
Since this signal was made it has been decided
that LONDON is to proceed to Eastern Fleet as
early as practicable on completion of essential
defects.
(2) Request you will take this ship in hand and
report as early as possible time required for this work.
(V.C.N.S., 261327A to C. in C. Rosyth).

Movements.

AJAX AJAX sailed Needles 0845A/26. My 241918A refers.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 260913A to A.C.O.S.).

ATHENE My 220924. Sailed ATHENE at 0740A.
(F.O.I.C. N.I. 261002A to C. in C.W.A.).

S/M
movements. Positions of S/Ms. at 0800/27 and movements for
following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 261748A, 270006A, 271754A, 280024).

HARRIER Scapa arrival HARRIER.
(A.C.O.S. 261915A to A.C.I.C.).

Operations.

Operations
"Hardtack". Para. six of my 251247. Operation unsuccessful.
No communication established. Rescue party back.
(V.A. Dover, 260214 to Admty.)

/Carry...

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War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations.

Operations "Hardtack" (Contd.) Carry out operation "Hardtack 5" tonight. Only one M.T.B. will be used. (V.A. Dover, 261134A to M.T.B. 25, Commando 4). Intend repeating Operation "Hardtack 7" at first opportunity. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261431A to Admty.).

My 261134. Two M.T.Bs. will now be used. (V.A. Dover, 261555A to S.O. M.T.Bs.).

My 261431A. Preparative raiders. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261831A to N.O.i/c Dartmouth).

Operation "F.V." Admiralty appreciate SCHARNHORST is probably at sea. SCHARNHORST sunk. (A.C.N.S.H., 260319A to Capt.(D) 17, C. in C.H.F., C.S.10). NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD and SAUMAREZ slightly damaged. Capt.(D) 17 steer North. C.S.10 (indicate) your position. My P.C.S. 071 degs. 07' N. 010 degs. 48' E. 080 degs. 24. (C. in C.H.F., 260401A to Capt.(D) 17, C.S.10). My P.C.S. 073 degs. 38' N. 026 degs. 00' E. 235 degs. 18 knots., 0762, 9046. (C.S.10, 260540A to C. in C.H.F., (R) D.17). Convoy steer 045 degs. F.O. 10th C.S. close for mutual support. (C. in C.H.F., 260628A to Capt.(D) 17, C.S.10). Indicate you P.C.S. (C. in C.H.F. 260632A to Capt.(D) 17). My P.C.S. 0800A, 073 degs. 47', 020 degs. 25' E. 045 degs.

8. Position estimated. (Capt.(D) 17, 260730A to C. in C.H.F.). Enemy in sight bearing 190 degs., distant 11 miles. (NORFOLK to Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 260936). Enemy in sight bearing 222 degs. (C.S.10 to Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 260937). Send 4 destroyers to join C.S.10. (C. in C.H.F., 260937A to Capt.(D) 17, (R) C.S.10). Enemy in sight bearing 222 degs. (C.S. 10 to Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 260941). Enemy speed is 28 knots. (C.S.10 to Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 261003). Enemy course is 040 degs. (C.S.10 to C. in C.H.F., T.O.R. 261005). Are you still in touch. My P.C.S. 071 degs. 53' N. 018 degs. 50' E. 080 degs. 25½ knots. (C. in C.H.F., 261040A to C.S.10). Unless touch (2 groups missed) by (group missed) Unit (group missed) chance my finding enemy. (C. in C.H.F., 261058A to Scapa W/T). One unknown bearing 149, distant 12 miles, course 140, 205 LXXX 22. (C.S. 10, 261134A to Scapa W/T). One unknown vessel bearing 094 degs. distant 7 miles, course 270 degs. position 036 LXAP 19. (C.S.10, 271223A to Scapa W/T).

/Enemy...

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Operation "F.V." Enemy course is 135 degs. (C.S.10, 261223A to Scapa W/T).
 SCHARNHORST sunk. Enemy in sight bearing 087 degs. distant 8 miles. (C.S.10 to Cruisers in company, T.O.R. 261224).
 NORFOLK, Enemy insight bearing 090 degs. SHEFFIELD (C.S.10 to Whitehall W/T, T.O.R. 261226).
 and NORFOLK hit aft.
 SAUMAREZ (NORFOLK 261237 to Whitehall W/T).
 slightly damaged. Enemy course and speed 120 degs. 30 knots. (C.S.10 to Whitehall W/T, T.O.R. 261238).
 (Contd.) Enemy's course and speed 115 degs. 28 knots. My P.C.S. 013 degs. LXXX 13. Am shadowing enemy. (C.S.10, 261248A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 071 degs. 59' N. 021 degs. 08' E. 080 degs. 22½ knots. One shadow. (C. in C.H.F., 261300A to H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 043 degs. LXXX 12, 155 degs. 28 knots. (C.S.10, 261300A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My 1223A. Enemy course 180 degs. (C.S.10 to C. in C.H.F., T.O.R. 261301).
 Enemy course and speed 165, 28 knots. (C.S.10 to C. in C.H.F., T.O.R. 261312).
 Your 1319A. One heavy ship. (C.S. 10 to C. in C.H.F., T.O.R. 261325).
 Enemy bearing 160 degs., 7 miles. Enemy course and speed 150 degs. 28 knots. My P.C.S. 096 degs. LXXX 9?69 or 94) 150 degs. 28 knots. (C.S.10, 261328A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 113 degs. LXXX 19, 155 degs. 26 knots. Enemy bearing 165 degs. 7 miles, course 165 degs. 26 knots. Enemy activity has developed in Northern Waters. Special Fleet R/C must now take precedence over trade protection. (D.O.D.H., 261356A to A.O.C. in C.C.C.).
 Russian R/C of Altenfiord 26th December, unsuccessful owing to weather condition. (S.B.N.O. North Russia, 261401A to Admty. (R) C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 34 degs. MGXX 42, 165 degs. 28 knots. Enemy bearing 159 degs. 7½ miles, 165 degs. 28 knots. (C.S.10, 261425A to C. in C.H.F.).
 C.S.10 in 074 degs. 10' N. 023 degs. 25' E. at 1300A, course 150 degs. 28 knots in contact with and chasing one enemy main unit bearing 160 degs. 7 miles, course 150 degs. 28 knots. (F.O.S. 261439A to SIRDAR, SYRTIS, (R) C. in C.H.F., C.S.10).
 If practicable intend to engage from the West on a southerly and similar course. (C. in C.H.F., 261441A to C.S.10).
 Enemy bearing 140 degs. 7½ miles, course 165 degs., 28 knots. My position 044 degs. MGXX 36. (C.S.10, 261445A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 056 degs. MGXX 34, 145 degs. 28 knots. Enemy's course and speed 155 degs. 28 knots. (C.S.10, 261500A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 001 degs. MGCS 13, 135 degs. 27 knots. Enemy bearing 170 degs., speed 28 knots. (C.S.10, 261520A to C. in C.H.F.).
 My P.C.S. 052 degs. MGCS 8, 145 degs. 27 knots. Enemy bearing 175 degs. 8 miles, course 160 degs. 25 knots. (C.S.10, 261540A to C. in C.H.F.).

/ P.C.S....

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Operation "F.V." SCHARNHORST sunk. NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD and SAUMAREZ slightly damaged. (Contd.).

P.C.S. of one enemy main unit 073 degs. 12' N. 024 degs. 50' E. 165 degs. 28 knots. (F.O.S. 261548A to SIRDAR, SYRTIS (R) C. in C. H.F., C.S.10).
Enemy course 150 degs. (C.S.10 to C. in C.H.F., T.O.R. 261558).
My P.C.S. (groups missed) MGCS (?11) (3 groups missed) enemy heavily engaged, 170 degs. 19 knots. (C.S.10, 261600A to C. in C.H.F.).
Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 020, distance 33 miles, position 350 TVCS 22. (C. in C.H.F., 261617 to C.S.10).
My P.C.S. 128 degs. MGCS 19, 165 degs. 27 knots. Enemy bearing 160 degs. 9 miles. Enemy course 150 degs. 27 knots. By myself. (C.S.10, 261620A to C. in C.H.F.).
One surface craft detected by Radar bearing 124, distance 20 miles. (C. in C.H.F. 261623 to C.S.10).
Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 034 degs. distance 20 miles. (C. in C.H.F., 261623 to C.S.10).
Prepare to fire starshell over enemy. (C. in C.H.F. 261635 to C.S.10).
Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 020 degs., distance 13 miles. (C. in C.H.F., 261636 to C.S.10).
Surface craft detected by R.D.F. bearing 016 degs. distance 8 miles. (C. in C.H.F., 261643 to C.S.10).
Course 130 degs. (C. in C.H.F., 261647 to C.S.10).
Enemy in sight bearing 020. (C. in C.H.F. to Scapa, T.O.R. 261650).
One Battle cruiser, course 020, distance 6 miles, 120, 020 degs. 072 degs. 27' N. 025 degs. 08' E. (C. in C.H.F., 261651 to Scapa).
My 1650. Enemy course 040 degs. speed 28 knots. (C. in C.H.F., 261655 to Admt.).
My 1651. Enemy course and speed 040 degs., 28 knots. (C. in C.H.F. 261655 to Scapa).
Open fire with starshell. (C. in C.H.F. to C.S.10, T.O.R. 261656).
Enemy course 001 degs. (C. in C.H.F. 261656 to Scapa W/T).
My course is 000 degs. (C. in C.H.F., 261656 to C.S.10).
My 1650. Enemy is altering course to starboard 075 degs. (C. in C.H.F., 261701 to Scapa).
Admiralty 261356A. Long-range A/C of 18 Group and Iceland Command are to be reserved for special fleet R/C forthwith. (H.Q.C.C. 261705A to 18 Group).
Any further news. (C. in C.H.F. to C.S.10, No T.C.O.(R) 261705).
Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 046 degs. distance 7.5 miles, course 190 degs. (C. in C.H.F., 261709 to Whitehall W/T).

/My...

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Operation "F.V." My course is 080 degs.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261709 to C.S.10).
 SCHARNHORST sunk. Enemy is altering course to starboard 130 degs.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261714 to Whitehall W/T).
 NORFOLK, Enemy is altering course to Port 065 degs.
 SHEFFIELD (C. in C.H.F. 261717 to Whitehall W/T).
 and Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 055 degs.
 SAUMAREZ distance 7.5 miles.
 slightly (C. in C.H.F., 261719 to Whitehall W/T).
 damaged. My course 110 degs.
 (Contd.). (C. in C.H.F. 261726 to C.S.10).
 Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 060 degs.
 distance 7 miles, 030 degs. 072 degs. 34' N.
 025 degs. 08' E.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261726. to Scapa W/T).
 My course 090 degs.
 (C. in C.H.F. 271633 to C.S.10).
 Surface craft detached by Radar bearing 066 degs. distance
 8.5 miles, course 090 degs.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261740 to Scapa W/T).
 Join me. My P.C.S. 040 degs. 072 degs. N. 025 degs. E.
 38, 090 degs. 27 knots.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261743 to JAMAICA, NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD,
 BELFAST).
 Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 067 degs. distance
 8.5 miles, course 090 degs. speed 28 knots.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261748 to Scapa).
 Cruisers remain to the north of target and engage when
 possible.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261755 to JAMAICA, BELFAST, NORFOLK).
 Surface craft detected by R.D.F. bearing 070 degs. distant
 9 miles, course 100 degs.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261801 to Scapa W/T).
 Can you report my fall of shot.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261810 to Scapa W/T).
 Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 069 degs. distance
 10 miles, 003 degs. 072 degs. N. 027 degs. E. 26.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261819 to Scapa W/T).
 My P.C.S. 024 degs. 072 degs. N. 027 degs. E. (?28), (?040
 degs.), 27 knots.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261840A to C.S.10).
 Enemy in sight bearing 345 degs. distance 5.5 miles.
 (SCORPION to Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 261855).
 My P.C.S. 26 degs. 072 degs. N. 027 degs. E. 33, 90
 degs., 27 knots. SCHARNHORST bearing (315 degs. or ?228 degs.
 or 331 degs. or 072 degs. or 203 degs.) 10 miles.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261902 to Scapa W/T).
 Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 093 degs. distance
 5 miles, 032 degs. 072 degs. N. 027 degs. E. 32.
 (C. in C.H.F., 261903 to C. in C.H.F.(Sic).
 Fire a star shell.
 (C. in C.H.F. to C.S.10, T.O.R. 261922).
 Enemy turned westward.
 (C. in C.H.F. 261910 to Scapa W/T).
 My position 40 degs. 072 degs. N. 027 degs. E. 36.
 SCHARNHORST bearing 295 degs. 3. Damaged enemy on fire and

/nearly...

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War Diary

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "F.V." SCHARNHORST sunk. NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD and SAUMAREZ slightly damaged. (Contd.).	nearly stopped. (C. in C.H.F. 261929 to Admty. (R) H.F.). Clear the area of the target except for those ships with torpedoes and one destroyer with searchlight. (C. in C.H.F., 261952 to H.F. in company). <u>SCHARNHORST sunk.</u> (C. in C.H.F. 262035 to Admty.). My 262035. My destination is Kola. (C. in C.H.F. 262046A to MUSKETEER, SAVAGE, STORD, MATCHLESS, SCORPION, (R) C.S.10).
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Proceeding to finish covering convoy with Force 1. NORFOLK has X turret out of action and X magazine flooded due to fire. SHEFFIELD has one shaft out of action and her speed reduced to 23 knots.

(C.S.10, 262053A to C. in C.H.F. (R) NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD, Capt.(D) 17).

My 262059. In transit. Am proceeding at 25 knots. Follow me at your best speed.

(C. in C.H.F., 262120A to JAMAICA, MUSKETEER, SCORPION, SAVAGE, MATCHLESS, DUKE OF YORK, STORD, S.B.N.O. North Russia).

Your 262053. Grand, well done.

(V.C.N.S. 262136A to C. in C.H.F. Info. C.S.10).

C.S.10 (Admiral Burnett) in BELFAST with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD, while covering a North Russian convoy, made contact with SCHARNHORST about 80 miles S.E. of Bear Island.

(2) Enemy made to the southward at high speed shadowed by C.S.10 and was intercepted by C. in C. H.F. in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA and destroyers about 60 miles, north of North Cape.

(3) After a chase to eastward SCHARNHORST was sunk at 2035 on 26th December.

(4) No information of damage or casualties to our forces is yet available except that NORFOLK was hit aft.

(V.C.N.S. 262303Z to Cominch).

Following from H.M. The King.

Well done DUKE OF YORK and all of you. I am proud of you. George R.I.

(D.C., 262323A to C. in C.H.F.).

Intend proceed in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA, MUSKETEER, SCORPION, SAVAGE, STORD, MATCHLESS to Kola Inlet. E.T.A. Toros Island 1000A/27th.

(2) Force 1 is also to proceed Kola with OPPORTUNE, VIRAGO, SAUMAREZ.

(C. in C.H.F., 262327A to H.F.).

After Force 1 had twice with their usual pugnacity driven and later shadowed SCHARNHORST, she was finally brought to action and sunk at 1945A/26th December, having been engaged by Force 1 and 2 and Destroyers of convoy escort. The night action lasted 3½ hours.

(2) At about 1830 it seemed that SCHARNHORST with her speed was escaping and in a very gallant action SAVAGE, SAUMAREZ, SCORPION and STORD succeeded in inflicting torpedo damage which enabled DUKE OF YORK to engage again. The main gun action between DUKE OF YORK assisted by cruisers of Force 1 and 2 and SCHARNHORST was prolonged, fought as it was in darkness and at constantly increasing ranges. DUKE OF YORK fired 45 rounds per gun.

Summary

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Sunday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "F.V." SCHARNHORST sunk. NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD and SAUMAREZ slightly damaged. (Contd.).

(3) NORFOLK and SAUMAREZ slightly damaged. NORFOLK hit aft casualties unknown. SAUMAREZ reduced to 8 knots casualties 20.

(4) Some survivors from SCHARNHORST were picked up by our destroyers. [Interrogation, see CP.04051 (98)] (C. in C.H.F. 262335A to Admty.). See also C. in C.H.F. 270804A to Admty.).

D/F bearings at 0843Z/26 and 0914Z/26 indicate that U-boats are probably still in contact with Convoy J.W.55 B. (D.D.I.C. 261042A to A.I.G. 47). S.B.N.O. Archangel requests that ships for White Sea be warned before sailing to keep a sharp lookout for V/S from icebreakers on arrival at ice edge. Failure to do this has caused much delay. (D.T.D., 261411A to C. in C.W.A.).

Operation "Stonewall"

One U-boat sighted by Swordfish in 044 degs. 09' N. 025 degs. 54' W. (E.G.40, 260830 to C. in C.W.A.). U.S.S. BLOCK ISLAND with aircraft is operating in vicinity of 045 degs. N. 022 degs. W. (C. in C.W.A., 261009Z to Escorts O.S.62/K.M.S.36).

Consequent on aircraft sighting of U-boat near O.S.62 it is presumed U-boats are likely to attempt to close convoy. Estimated P.C.S. of O.S. 62/K.M.S.36 at 1100Z, 44 degs. 20' N. 25 degs. 45' W. 180 degs. 6 knots., altering course on crossing 43 N. to 125 degs. (C. in C.W.A., 261111Z to BLOCK ISLAND).

It is intended that as soon as O.S.62/K.M.S.36 ceases to be threatened GLENARM shall be detached to Azores and that crew of HURRICANE at present in GLENARM shall be transferred to LEAMINGTON and MONTGOMERY for passage to U.K.

(2) It is requested therefore that LEAMINGTON and MONTGOMERY may be held at Azores until GLENARM arrives and that above transfer may be effected. (C. in C.W.A., 261415A to F.O.C. Gibraltar). Arrival ENTERPRISE. My 251223 refers. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261427 to Admty.). My 251255 and 251732.

GAMBIA is to leave Horta as soon as fuelled and proceed at about 22 knots to carry out patrol (L) north of 046 degs. 31' N.

(2) GAMBIA is to leave copy of memorandum of operation dated 24th September 1943 and particulars of current disposition surface and air patrol at Horta for delivery to MAURITIUS on arrival unless supply has already been made F.O.I.C. Gib.

(3) At (?dusk) today GLASGOW is to search westward along 047 degs. 30' N. and is to establish patrol (N) between 046 degs., 40' N. and 047 degs. 20' N. and between 023 degs. 04' W. and 026 degs. 02' W. at daylight tomorrow.

(4) Air search to eastward of patrol (N) requested for 27th as well for patrol (L) already arranged. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261614A to GAMBIA, GLASGOW. (R) MAURITIUS, ENTERPRISE, ARIADNE).

/ENTERPRISE...

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War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" (Contd.) ENTERPRISE is to pass Gate at 2200A/26th and to proceed through position (E.A.) 180 degs. Bishop Rock 10 towards (E.B.) 048 degs. 26' N. 015 degs. 01' W. at S.O.A. 21 knots.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 261626A to ENTERPRISE).

While the threat of inward-bound blockade-breakers exists I continue to attach the greatest importance to locating them as far west as possible. For this purpose I hope that patrol L from the Azores will be continued daily until the position becomes clear.

(2) It appears possible however that the second inbound blockade-runner has already passed patrol L without being sighted and it is therefore requested that the air patrol in the approximate area 50 degs. N. to 46½ N. and 19 degs. W. to 22 degs. W. may be repeated tomorrow. Any extension to the southward which is possible would be welcome.

(3) My 251359A refers.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 261630A to H.Q.C.C.).

At daylight 27th GLASGOW will commence patrol in vicinity of 047 degs. N. 024 degs. 30' W. Air patrol as in para.2 of my 251825 will be continued. Para.3. of my 251825 is cancelled.

(2) GAMBIA will leave Horta A.M. 27th Dec. to patrol on longitude 030 degs. W. between 046 degs. 30' N. and 050 degs. N.

(3) ENTERPRISE will leave Plymouth 2200A/26th for position 048 degs. 26' N. 015 degs. 01' W.

(4) MAURITIUS is on passage from Gibraltar to Horta.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 261827A to C. in C.U.S. Fleet).

GAMBIA arrived Horta 1803Z/26th.

(S.B.N.O. Azores, 261936Z to C. in C. Plymouth).

My 261626A. Sailed ENTERPRISE.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 262222A to Admty.).

S/M SIRDAR occupy T.8 and remain on patrol until further directions.

SYRTIS occupy T.7. forthwith. Estimate 0800A/26th position British Force, C. in C. H.F. 071 degs. 35' N. 015 degs. 40' E., 070 degs. 24.

R.A. 10th C.S. approximately 073 degs. 30' N. 024 degs. 05' E. 18 knots. closing Capt.(D) 17th with J.W.55B at 0800, probably about 25 miles S.S.W. of Bere Island, steering 045 degs. 9 knots. (F.O.S., 260952A to S/MS.).

Position of submarines at 0800/27 and estimated movements for following 24 hours.

(A) SYRTIS and SIRDAR on patrol off Soroy.

(B) SCEPTRE on patrol off Foldenfjord.

(C) SEADOG patrolling off Stadlandet.

(D) ULA on patrol off Skudesnes.

(E) O.15, 60 degs. 32' N. 03 degs. 58' E. passing through 60 degs. 49' N. 03 degs. 51' E. thence 61 degs. 37' N. 02 degs. 01' E. and 090 degs. Muckle Flugga 20 miles to Lerwick. Diving by day whilst within 60 miles of Norwegian Coast.

(F) VENTURER (P.68) approaching Lerwick from North.
(F.O.S., 261748A to Admty.).

/Intend...

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patrols
(Contd.)

Intend to sail SEANYMPH from Lunna Voe 0830A/28th routed through 091 degs. Muckle Flugga 10 thence by route Orange to 065 degs. 30' N. thence through 066 degs. 40' N. 010 degs. 40' E. to operate in accordance with S.M. 04318/808. (S.O. S/M Lerwick 261910A to F.O.S.).

Coastal
Force
Patrols.

(A) Force 114. M.T.Bs. 96 (S.O.), 90, 91, 227, 239. (B) 1545A/26. (C) (AA) 048 degs. Sept. Isles 8 20 knots. (D) (AA) to (BB) 034 Grand Lejon 14 thence between (BB) and (CC) 090 Roches Douvres 8.
(E) Destruction of Enemy shipping.
(F) 0430 (CC). (G) (DD) 230 Les Hanois 15.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 261158A to M.T.Bs., N.O.i/c Dartmouth).

1. (A) Force 115. M.T.B.677. (B) 1930A/26. (C) 180 Eddystone 8. (D) Vicinity of (C). (F) 0700A/27.

2. (A) Force 116. M.T.Bs. 416 (S.O.), 413, 431. (B) 1930A/26. (C) 080 Start 20. (D) Vicinity of (C). (F) 0700A/27.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 261342A to M.T.Bs., N.O.i/c Dartmouth).

Night of 25th/26th December. 5 M.T.B. patrolling in accordance with my 251342 were fired on from shore when in position 230 degs. Cap D'Antifer 12 miles and withdrew. No damage or casualties.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 261445A to Admty.).

(1) Orders for night 26th/27th December.

A. 3 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven Anti-E-boat patrol 10 miles south of Convoy route longitude 00 degs. 20' W. and eastern limit of command abreast C.E. 232 from 1830A to 0100A. Then off C.2. A Buoy until 0730A.

B. 2 Chasseurs Anti-E-boat patrol on 50 degs. 24' N. between 00 degs. 35' W. and 00 degs. 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A.

C. M.L. 291 short notice St. Helens.

D. GLAISDALE short notice Yarmouth.

(E) 3 M.G.B. from Portland patrolling 50 degs. 20' N. between 02 degs. 00' W. and 02 degs. 35' W.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 261452A and 262134A).

My 261426A add: 6 M.T.B. 677 sails Dartmouth 1800 patrolling 180 Eddystone 8 returning 0830.

7. M.T.B. 416, 314, 431 sailed Dartmouth 1830 patrolling 080 Start 20 returning 0800.

Cancel para. 2.

(C. in C Plymouth, 261551A to Admty.).

M.T.Bs. 25 and 24 with M.T.Bs. 205 and 212 E.T.D. 1850 and M.Ls. 104 and 107 E.T.D. 1800 and M.Ls. 128 and 125 E.T.D. 1900 operating Southward of The Bullock Bank.

M.Ls. 138 and 203 at Bullock Bank.

M.G.Bs. 40 and 42 at No.7. Buoy E.T.D. 1715.

M.T.Bs. 240, 231 and 202 E.T.D. 2045 and M.T.Bs. 418 and S.4, E.T.D. Ramsgate 2100 at Nieuport Bank. Route via U and V Buoys respectively.

(V.A. Dover, 261649A).

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HOME COMMANDS.

Navigational.

Harwich Port closed owing to fog.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 260947A).

Lowestoft. Port closed owing to fog.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft, 260932A).
My 260932A. Port now open.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft, 261243A).

Brightlingsea Port closed owing to fog.
(N.O.I.C. Brightlingsea, 260900).

Casualties and Defects.

GODAVARI Arrived GODAVARI. C. in C.W.A. 241229 refers.
(Cdre. D.W.A., 260726A to C. in C.W.A.).

ZEEHOND My 231416. Sailed (KIHNA).
(Capt.(S) 7, 260810A to Cdre. D.W.A.).
KIHNA and ZEEHOND sailed in accordance with
S.7's 231416A.
(Cdre. D.W.A., 261716A to F.O.S.).

WORCESTER Salvage Officer, Harwich reports mine damage to
WORCESTER on extreme stern. Ship flooded from
aft to 131 station. Stern sagging badly, decks
and shell plating buckled and fractured shaft
after gun. Two 6 inch pumps are keeping water
in check.
(F.O.i/c Harwich, 261025A to C. in C. Nbre).

FREDERICK BARTHOLDI. Salvage vessel RANGER arrives Oban today Sunday
to embark Mr Thomas of Liverpool and Glasgow
Salvage Association proceeding thence to SS
FREDERICK BARTHOLDI E.T.A. daylight Monday. POLKA
inform Master accordingly.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 261027A to N.O.i/c Aultbea).

CROCUS My 051639. CROCUS unable to sail owing to
defective stay tubes.
(C. in C.W.A., 261047 to F.O.W.Af.).

GLASGOW Following from GLASGOW begins:- My 221101.
Rollers and cage with Association Racer will
require to be renewed. 232210 ends.
(A.S. Devonport, 261215A to A.S. Portsmouth).

VIRGINIA Hit St. Governs Showal. Forward tanks leaking
badly, proceeding slow speed Helwick Light
Vessel. Advise anchoring in Swansea Bay. Arrive
Helwick 1500Z. Request Pilot. 1340Z/26.
(VIRGINIA, 261448 to N.O.i/c Swansea).

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- O.S.62 U-boat has been homing on 310 kc/s. MOYOLA and support group laid on.
(E.G.40, 260150Z to C. in C.W.A.).
See also E.G.40 271906Z.
- O.S./
K.M.S.27. Sailed ROCHESTER, LONDONDERRY, GERANIUM, MIGNONETTE, WOODRUFF, TAVY, NORTHERN SKY, LANCER and H.M. Rescue Tug SAUCY for O.S./K.M.S.37.
QBB 304, QBA117, QB 254, QBH 121 MONKSHOOD will sail four hours late.
(Cdre. D.W.A., 261446A and 271915A to C. in C.W.A.).
- H.X.271 D.F. bearings at 0511 indicate U-boat may have reported you.
(D.D.I.C., 260635A to Escorts H.X.271).
Admiralty 260635. Confirmed all escorts short of fuel. No stragglers. My P.C.S. 054 degs. 40', 023 degs. 00' 038 degs. 10 knots.
(C.2, 260636Z to C. in C.W.A.).
Your 261109. Number of days endurance at 12 knots. Details. FRIENDSHIP, LIGHTFOOT, CHILLIWACK radar unserviceable. FRIENDSHIP detached for Merville. No attack. Probably one straggler, position uncertain, course (052 degs. 195 degs. or 271 degs.) 10 knots.
(C.2, 261233Z to C. in C.W.A.).
- O.S.62/
K.M.S.36. Report (A) whether PIMPERNEL has rejoined (B) names of merchant ships not present excluding those reported to you as returning to U.K.
(C. in C.W.A., 260957A to Escorts).
If convoy not threatened detach SERULA at dawn tomorrow escorted by HUGH WALPOLE, CAPE COMORIN.
(C. in C.W.A., 261120^A to Escorts).
K.M.S.36. My 171513A. Cancel KANA, ~~FLYING~~^{FLYING} DALE, BARON DOUGLAS, MERCHANT ROYAL, GUJARAT, EMPIRE WATERHEN, SRECA, BLAIR-DEVON, INGERTRE.
2. Add SAN TIRSO escort oiler for Gibraltar.
(C. in C.W.A., 261421A to F.O. Gibraltar).
Amend stragglers route. From (R) to (S) which is 135 miles 180 from (R), thence to (F).
(C. in C.W.A., 261715Z to O.S.62/K.M.S.36).
- S.L.143/
M.K.S.34. Request you will arrange WINDRUSH to rendezvous with convoy. My 202211 refers.
(C. in C.W.A., 261251A to F.O.C. Gibraltar).
- R.U.102 My 251216A. TOMSK returned owing to weather.
(N.C.S.O. Iceland, 261410A to N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe).
- U.R.103 (A) 1245/36. (B) MAZURKA (VELETA will sail to overtake). (C) 3.
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 261430A to Admty.).

/My...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

U.R.103
(Contd.)

My 261430A. VELETA sailed to overtake.
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 261648 to Admty.).

O.N. 217

(A) 0900Z/25 (B) C 5, KOOTENAY, DUNVER, DIANTHUS,
DAUPHIN, CALGARY, ROSTHERN, ARVIDA. Additional
A/S escort and for rescue duties FUSILIER. Rescue
tug GROWLER. Rescue ship GOODWIN, CAIRNESK,

RANGITIKI M.A.C. ship EMPIRE MACKAY. (C) 80.
(C. in C.W.A., 261751Z to A.I.G. 334).

Names of ships

(C. in C.W.A. 261715Z to Admty.).

Commodore's R/V for 1200Z/27, 192 miles 354 degs. from E.E.

For 1200Z/28, 58 miles 090 degs. from P.P.

(C. in C.W.A., 261756Z to O.N.217).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

- R.S.13. Sailed escorts DOUGLAS, WOLVERINE, GARLAND.
(F.O.C. Gib. 260926A to F.O.C.W.Af.)
- ARIADNE. Sailed. (W.D.Note. Force K.)
(F.O.C. Gib. 260928A.)
- M.K.S.34. NORTHERN WAVE sailed from Horta 1954Z/26th in
accordance with your 251300*. (N.T. in W.D.)
(S.B.N.O. Azores 261045Z F.O.I.C. Gib.)
WHITEHAVEN, RYE, BOSTON arrived Ponta Delgada
1400 G.M.T.26th.
(N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 261225.)
Your 252332Z. Comply with my 261109. (N.T. in W.D.)
(F.O.C. Gib. 261333A to S.B.N.O. Azores.)
- M.K.F.27 A.M. 232310. Intend to sail PRINCE ROBERT as A/A
PRINCE ROBERT. escort to M.K.F.27.
(F.O.C. Gib. 261153A to Admty.)
- Italian Your 211525 (N.T. in W.D.) hopeful of obtaining
merchant escort to Cartagena. (2) Para.3 both Giurati and
ships in Tucci who have seen men are satisfied they are
Spanish reliable and only left FULGER under threats. I
Ports. propose sending them to Lucia. (3) Para. 4 dock
at Cadiz probably not available for a considerable
time and ship has not got spare propeller.
Ships stay in Cadiz would be long and repairs
expensive with danger of sabotage. (4) As there is no ocean
going tug in Cadiz or Huelva I have asked Ministry of Marine to
get one from Cartagena to? tow to? Cape Roca. (5) LAVORO and
CESENA ready for sea when crew arrive.
(B.N.A. Madrid 261201 to F.O.C. Gib. (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.T.A.LI
Admty.)
- TUDOR Was reported to have sailed with convoy and is not
PRINCE. now at Gibraltar. Can you account for her absence
from convoy.
(F.O.C. Gib. 261317A to S.E.C., M.K.S.34 (R)
Admty.)
- Operation Arrived Horta 1240Z/26th.
"Stonewall" (S.B.N.O. Azores 261340Z.)
LE MALIN. Ref. C. in C. Med's 261248. Am billeted LE
MALIN until further instructions received.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 261916Z to F.O.C. Gib. (R)
C. in C. Plymouth, Admty.)
GAMBIA arrived Horta 1803Z/26th.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 261936Z to C. in C. Plymouth,
F.O.C. Gibraltar, GLASGOW (R) C. in C.W.A.,Admty.)
- Sailed PENELOPE.
(F.O.C. Gib. 261952A. to S.B.N.O. Azores (R) Admty., C. in C.
Med., C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C., C. in C.W.A.)

/T.G.21.15...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

T.G.21.15. Accordance C. in C. Lant 201828 intend sail T.G.
21.15 U.S.S. CORE, KEARNY, BELKNAP, GREENE,
GOLDSBOROUGH depart Casablanca swept channel
261700A, S. of A. 15 knots to search vicinity
36.00 N. 19.00 W. This is 261411 from C.M.S.F. addressed F.O.I.C.
Gib. for action.
(Commaveu 261609 to Admt.)

South Atlantic.

CORFU,
CILICIA.

Your 251435 approved.
(V.C.N.S. 261152A to F.O.C.W.Af.)

U/B.
attacked
21st Dec.

My 231118Z a number of oil streaks one of bubbling
oil reported where it is thought there is no
submarine in vicinity suggest possibility of S/M.
having left behind some form of delay action
decoy. This area abound with non sub. echoes and
hunting craft have experienced Hydrophone effect
from schools of fish.
(F.O.C. W.Af. 261225Z to Admt.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Mediterranean A.X.256. My A.X. 268 December 13th. Consequent on change of name of headquarters, M.A.C. to Headquarters Air Commands. M.A.A.F. H.Q. M.A.C. and N.A.A.F. have been amalgamated with effect from 10th December, 1943. Administrative and operational functions of N.A.A.F. have ceased.

Part II. Name North West Africa is no longer to be used in conjunction with title of subordinate Commands E.G. North West African Coastal Air Forces becomes Mediterranean Coastal Air Forces.

Part III. H.Q. M.A.A.F. has assumed Administrative Control of North West Africa, Malta and Central Mediterranean. Later it will also assume Administrative control of Headquarters R.A.F.M.E. until this time functions of M.A.A.F. will be performed by an advanced and rear Headquarters.
(Air Min. 261010Z)

K.M.F.27. Main convoy arrived.
(Com. Algiers, 261039)

SIBYL. Do not carry out operation "Clapper". Remain in vicinity Yannathi Bay until further directions. Do not compromise your position.
(Capt.(S) 1, 261047B to SIBYL (R) C. in C. Levant)
Proceed with all despatch to patrol 3 miles south of Cape Alupo passing west of Rhodes. Object destruction of Merchant Shipping to Rhodes.
(2) M.T.B's have been ordered to patrol approach route to Rhodes south of Piskopi tonight.
(Capt.(S) 1, 261951B to H.M. S/M. P.217 (SIBYL))

CANADA. Ship for the evacuation of French wounded from Italy.
(2) French Admty. propose to bring CANADA into Med. for this purpose. Question of her recognition by the German Government is being handled by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. My 191702 July refers.
(C. in C. Med. 261048A to Admty.)

CAGNI. C. in C. Med. 271804 November, CAGNI has been inspected at Haifa.
(2) Is very suitable for ocean patrol and store carrying but is not recommended for offensive patrol in Med. because of her size.
(3) Refit of main engine essential.
(7) Propose CAGNI be sailed requisite for Taranto now, proceed independently diving by day between 025 degs. E. and 020 degs.E.
(Capt.(S) 1, 261236B to C. in C. Levant (R) Admty. C. in C. Med. F.O.T.A.L.I., S.O.(S) Haifa.)

LE MALIN. Arrives Horta 1200Z today N.O.B. Bermuda's 211558 refers. French Admty. suggest she might be used for current operations against blockade runners.
(C. in C. Med. 261248A to Admty. (R) C. in C. Plymouth, Navale France, S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.C. Gib.)

Your /...

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

LE MALIN
(Contd.)

Your 261248A. French Admty's suggestion concurred in.

(2) Request you will arrange for LE MALIN to be placed under the orders of C. in C. Plymouth forthwith.

(D.O.D.(H), 261946A to C. in C. Med. (R) C. in C. Plymouth, Navale France, S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.I.C. Gib.)

D.S. O.24.

(2) U.S. Authorities have provisionally agreed to accept O.24 for refit at Navy Yard, Philadelphia.

(3) C. in C. Med. is requested to arrange onward route accordingly and programme for arrival at destination about 1st March, 1944.

(D.O.D.(F), 261328A)

TORBAY,
DOLFIJN,
SICKLE.

TORBAY proceed with all despatch patrol close to Cape Krio.

(2) (P.47) DOLFIJN proceed to patrol between Lemnos and Tenedos.

(3) (P.224) SICKLE remains on patrol until further directions as in my 242207 keeping to

Eastward of 025 degs. 42' during night 28th, 29th.

(4) TORBAY may encounter (P.47) DOLFIJN about 0400/27th.
(Capt.(S) 1, 261419B to 1st S/M.F. (R) C. in C. Levant.)

ORPHEE.

Cancel para. 2 of my 221230.

(2) Substitute return route through 041 degs.

10' 002 degs. 06' at 0001/29th, remaining in 040 degs. 32' 000 degs. 44' from 0800 to 1800/30th.

thence through 039 degs. 32' 001 degs. 41' at 0230/31st. 038 degs

40' 002 degs. 30' at 1700/31st thence to R/V Algiers escort

037 degs. 00' 003 degs. 02' at 0730 Jan.1st.

(N.O.I.C. Algiers, 261603 to C. in C. Med. Capt.(S) 10th (R) S.F., F.O.I.C.Gib. PROTEE, CASABIANCA, P.67.)

(Cancelled N.O.I.C. Algiers 282115A)

Yugoslav
Warships.

No naval objection to H.M. Ambassador withholding directive of C. in C. Allied Forces for the present. Your 242230.

(2) Arrangements in accordance with my 141224 para. 3. are proceeding at Malta. It may how-

ever shortly become evident to Yugoslav naval representatives at Malta that we are withholding permission to transfer vessels such as QUARANEROLO in accordance with directions of C. in C. Allied Forces. It is therefore possible Ygoslav Government will hear of this ban through their Malta naval representatives. Suggest H.M. Ambassador reconsider the position in say fortnights time.

(C. in C. Med. 261606 to Admty. (R) C. in C. Levant, V.A. Malta, F.O.T.A.L.I.)

ARETHUSE /...

6500

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- ARETHUSE. Intend sailing at 1600/29th on surface through (038 degs.) 11' 006 degs. 06' at 1200/30th. 040 degs. 00' 006 degs. 06' at 0100/31st thence as ordered by Capt.(S) 10, to patrol in SU.
(2) All positions North and East all times zone minus 1.
(N.O.I.C. Algiers, 261606A to C. in C. Med. Capt.(S) 10th. (R) 10th S/M.F. PROTEE, ORPHEE, CASABIANCA)
- HYDERABAD Defects. Returning to Port Said with A/S defects.
(S.O.E.M.B.A. 261722 to C. in C. Levant (R) N.O.I.C. Port Said, R.A. Alex.)
- MAURITIUS. Boiler defects will be made good by 0400/27th and ship at usual notice for steam by then.
(C.S.15, 261725A to C. in C. Med. (R) F.O.C.N.A, Admty. MAURITIUS, C. in C. Plymouth)
- K.M.F.28. K.M.F. 28 will leave U.K. on 15th Jan.
M.K.F.28. Expected composition.
(2) C. in C. Med. is requested to promulgate sailing dates for M.K.F.28 to authorities concerned as soon as new cycle is finally settled.
(D.O.D.(F) 261728A to C. in C. Med., F.O.Gib., F.O.C.W.Af., C. in C. W.A.)
- Flag of C.S.15. Unless MAURITIUS is likely to be defective for some time request you transfer your flag to SPARTAN on arrival. F.O.C.Gib. 261315 and your 261330 refers (C. in C. Med. 261758A to C.S.15 (R) F.O.C.Gib. SPARTAN, MAURITIUS, Admty.)
- NICOLINE MAERSK. Further to my 241702. French Light Cruiser LE FANTASQUE reports that NICOLINE MAERSK steered towards territorial waters on being sighted paid no attention to signalled orders to stop nor to 2 shots fired across bows. Ship grounded at 1400/24th. At no time did LE FANTASQUE enter territorial waters.
(2) LE FANTASQUE returned at 1730 when Merchant Ship was flying German flag and was down by stern. It could not be seen whether ship was still aground.
(C. in C. Med. 261802 to Admty. (R) B.N.A. Madrid.)
- Ex Monte- video Floating Dock. It is intended that centre portion of ex Montevideo Dock should continue passage as soon as possible.
(2) The end portions are expected to complete repairs at Taranto about 10th Feb.
(C. in C. Med. 261815A)

Med /...

6501

26.12.1943.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.

Med. Situation Report No.258. (1) TYRIAN and TEAZER on patrol night 23rd/24th between Drvenik and Zirje sank one caique and shelled Drvenik. (2) PENN and TEAZER swept from Ancona to Benedetto during the night 24th/25th but sighted nothing. (C. in C. Med. 261840A)

Mideast Balkan Sitrep No.40. 26th. 396403. Yugoslavia. German landing force reported occupied all Korcula Island East of North South line through Smokvica R.E.29 by 24 Dec. (C. in C. M.E. 261845B)

LEOPARDI. P.R.U. shows LEOPARDI had sailed from Piraeus by 0920/26th destination unknown, possibly Dodecanese. (Capt.(S) 1st, 261857B to 1st S/M.F.)

Command of mixed Allied Escorts. A.M. 021759 Nov. and Med. Station 368B. Information received from French Admty. that Admiral Lemonnier wishes to discuss command of mixed allied escorts during his London visit. (2) Controversial point apparently being command of groups of three or more allies of which it was understood from A.M. 021759 Nov. that French authorities in U.K. had been informed. (C. in C. Med. 261917 to Admty.)

SPORTSMAN, DZIK. P.229 (SPORTSMAN) proceed forthwith to patrol in vicinity 037 degs. 19' 026 degs. 20'. P.52 (DZIK) proceed with all despatch to patrol in vicinity 037 degs. 05' 026 degs. 01'. (Capt. (S) 1st, 261942B to P.229 (SPORTSMAN) P.52 (DZIK) (R) P.224 (SICKLE) P.47 (DOLFIJN) C. in C. Levant.)

CURIE. CURIE reports in approx. 43 degs. 10' N. 06 degs. 45' E. (1) at 1141/23 fired two torpedoes at L.C.T. Missed. (2) at 1129/24 fired one torpedo at L.C.T. missed. (S.10, 262017 to C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, V.A. Malta, Capt. (S) 1, Capt.(S) 10, F.O.C.Gib. (R) F.O.S.Admty. R.A. Alexandria.)

K.M.S.35. SEA ROVER. Bombing restrictions arranged allowing for you detaching in 035 degs. 34' N. 016 degs. 04' E. at 0600A/28th. (C. in C. Levant, 262032A to SEA ROVER, (R) S.O. S/Ms Malta. S.E.C. K.M.S.36, Capt. (S) 1, M.H.Q. Palestine.)

German /...

6502

26.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

K.M.S.35.
SEA ROVER.
(Contd.)

German U-Boat was in the vicinity 036 degs. 01'
021 degs. 30' at 0315/26th.
(Capt.(S) 1, 262352B to P.218 (SEA ROVER)).

6503

War Diary.26.12.1943.
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.

- M.B.59. Sailing telegram. (2) 0050Z/26th.
(6) RAJPUTANA, AGRA, BERAR, DIPAVATI.
RAJPUTANA escorts Aden portion to 009 degs. 30' N.
070 degs. 00' E. AGRA becomes S.O. Escort after
passing Cochin.
(N.C.S.O. Colombo, 260050Z to Admty.)
- C. in C. E.F. H.Q.'s, Division of duties. C. in C. E.F. has 2 H.Q.s. 1 at Colombo and 1 at New Delhi. The Officers serving at both H.Q.s are on the staff of the C. in C. The Senior Resident Officer at the Colombo H.Q. is V.A. Danckwerts with the title of the Dept. C. in C. E.F. and at the New Delhi H.Q. is R.A. Miles with the title of Dept. Naval Cmdr. S.E.A.C.
- (2) The Colombo H.Q. deals with the Fleet, shipping communications safety of shipping and station matters outside India. The New Delhi H.Q. deals with Amphibious operations, Naval assault force etc. and matters which concern the S.E.A.C., G.H.Q. India and the Indian Government.
- (5) The title Dept. C. in C. E.F. and title Naval Commander S.E.A.C. are not to be used either in the address of signals or correspondence.
- (C. in C. E.F. 260304 to E.F. General Message No.543C. (R) Admty.
C. in C. S.A., S.A.C.S.E.A., A.C.N.B., C. in C. Med., N.Z.N.B.,
C. in C. Levant.)
- U-Boat Dispositions. Ref.my 250526/25 area C Coast Watcher reports U-Boat on surface 2 miles off shore 1630Z/24 in 009 degs. 17' N. 050 degs. 45' E. Grade C.4. Area F. periscope reported sighted by convoy in A position 016 degs. 00' N. 082 degs. 07' E.
at 0220Z/25.
(2) No change in scale of air effort in any area.
(C. in C. E.F. 260336Z to S. & A's E.I. Station)
- J.S.30. Arrival IPSWICH ORISSA escorting J.S.30.
(N.O.I.C. Vizagapatam, 260501Z)
- B.M.79. Arrived Colombo portion escorted by BATHURST, KYBER, BARODA.
(N.C.S.O. Colombo, 260530Z to Admty.)
- S.E.A. Air Report. A.C.22. Dec. 26 Daily Opsum No.651.
Dec. 23 14th U.S.A.A.F. 2 U.S. Mitchells (B.25) sea sweep off Amoy 1 200 ft. gun boat sunk.
(H.Q. S.E.A.A.C. 260616Z)

Aden /...

6 504

26.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - Contd.

Aden, As from 0001/28th the boundary of the East Indies
Transfer to Station to the North West will be parallel of
E.I. Station 15 degs. North in the Red Sea.
28th Dec. (2) From this date Cdre. I.C. Aden will be
1943. responsible to the C. in C. E.F. for (A) the
routine administration at Aden, Perim and
associated anchorage in the Gulf of Aden and Red
Sea South of 15 degs. North. (B) The protection
and operational control of convoys and shipping in the Gulf of
Aden along the Southern Coast of Arabia and in the Gulf of Oman.
(C) The operation and administration of local Naval (?Defence)
Force at Aden.
(3) The responsibility of S.N.O. Persian Gulf for the ordering
and routing of convoys in the Gulf Portion will cease from the
above date.
(4) S.N.O. Persian Gulf will retain his present responsibility
and political contact on the shores of the Gulf Portion and
continue in administrative and operational control of the Hormuz
Patrol.
(5) N.O.I.C. Hormuz remains under the administrative command
of S.N.O. Persian Gulf but will operate convoys in the Gulf
Portion in accordance with the instructions of Cdre. I.C. Aden.
(C. in C. E.F. 261507Z to E.I. Station Message 545C. (R) Admty.
C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, Cdre. I/C. Aden.)

As from 0001/28th Dec. N.O.I.C. Aden will assume responsibility
for passing warning to shipping in the gulf portion
hitherto undertaken by S.N.O. Persian Gulf. East Indies
Station message 405C para. 3 refers.

(C. in C. E.F. 261523Z to E.I. Stn. 546C (R) Admty.)

ASIAN, ASIAN sunk in collision 07 degs. 45' N. 77 degs.
sunk in 40' E. 13 survivors. One ship in convoy damaged.
collision. Will report details of damage when known.
(RAJPUTANA, 261733Z to C. in C. E.F.)

Command at Your 130902. Formal discussions concerning
Madagascar. Madagascar Agreement may not take place for some
time to come. Meanwhile, French have made official
request through diplomatic channels that
Capitaine de Gregate Richard should be allowed
to set up his headquarters in Diego Suarez.
(2) Transfer of responsibility for defence on North African ports
to the French is proceeding rapidly, and it is important that
we should, so far as local conditions permit, maintain a consistent
policy towards the French in all areas.
(3) It is desired that Richard should be given a trial and
allowed to establish his office in Diego Suarez as soon as
convenient to N.O.I.C., C. in C. Med. and Admiralty should be
informed of arrangements so that French may issue amended
instructions to Richard.
(Head of M.I, Approved 1st Lord, 261844A to C. in C. E.F.
(R) C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant.)

6505

26.12.1943.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

M.M.S. 238, 239. M.M.S. 238. M.M.S. 239. Returned St. Johns with defects. My 241145Z refers. (F.O.N.F. 260051Z to S.B.N.O. Azores.)

CHAPULTEPEC "S" Report. Intercepted 1135 G.M.T. from CHAPULTEPEC SSSS torpedoed 1030 N. 78.58 W. (Kingston Radio, 260751R to Admty.) Ref. my 260751R. B.R.L.O. Balboa reports U.S. Tanker CHAPULTEPEC now proceeding Cristobal at full speed with flooded forecandle. (S.O.I. Jamaica, 261525R to Admty.)

HADLEIGH CASTLE. C.O. HADLEIGH CASTLE has now been discharged to hospital and new First Lieut. is sick on board. My 240012Z. Intend appointing Lieut A.C.D. Leach R.N. present C.O. of CHURCHILL to HADLEIGH CASTLE temporarily in Command. In view of special need for new Officers to familiarize themselves with the problems of the ship intend deferring sailing of HADLEIGH CASTLE until 1230Z/27. Lt. J.H. Millar present First Lieut. of CHURCHILL will be appointed CHURCHILL in Command temporarily. (F.O.N.F. 261341Z to B.A.N.P. (R) Admty., C. in C.C.N.A., C. in C.W.A., Cdre. (D) A.S.O., C.4., CHURCHILL.)

S/M Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 261401Z)
(Cominch 261634.)

AKKA YARRAWANGA, Safe conduct. Swedish Government intimate safe conduct vessels AKKA and YARRAWANGA will sail from St. John (NB) for Piraeus by standard route at 0700 hours 31st.
2. Request you will inform Air and other authorities concerned.
(Head of M.Br.I, 261415A to N.S.H.Q., C. in C. C.N.A., Comnav, C. in C. Med., C. in C. Levant, F.O. Gibraltar, S.B.N.O. Azores.)

Spanish Coal burning Trawlers. Re bunkering of 2 Spanish coal burning trawlers who wish to visit Newfoundland Banks.*
(A.C.N.S.(H) 261848A to N.S.H.Q.)
* Request early remarks.

KING HAAKON VII. The following transfer to date 23rd from the Newfoundland Defence Force to Norwegian Naval Service New York KING HAAKON VII a.m. 201807 . refers.
(C. in C.C.N.A. 261920Z to N.S.H.Q. (R) Admty., F.O.N.F., C. STAD, B.A.D., Norg. Naval Service N.Y.)

6506

26.12.1943
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

L.27
KING
HAAKON VII.

Sail L.27 and KING HAAKON VII 261900Z in accordance with my 241454.
2. Cdr. Eastsea Frontier 232133 not to all addressees has been passed to L.27 and KING HAAKON VII.
(C. in C. C.N.A. 261929Z to C. in C.U.S. Fleet, A.O.C.E.A.C.)

Sub. attack
and sighting
summary.

All times Z. A. CHAPULTEPEC torpedoed 1030 N. 78.58 W. about 1130/26.
D. CG 83 46 60 sound contact 41.15 N. 70.50 W. 1715/26. PC 14.14 attacks sound contact area 42.05 N. 70.32 W. 1529/26. GOODSON Radar contact area 47.05 N. 54.15 W. 2355/25.
(Cominch, 261957.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No.705
Dec.25th.

14. Two Liberators located Convoy off central southwest coast Nwov? Ireland reported, Digest 703 Para. 4 and Digest 704 Para. 9 early hours 24th damaging 1 Escort Vessel with 1,000 lb near miss.
19. Early hours 23rd U.S.M.T.Bs. bombarded Coastal positions near Cape Mpltkc (Central West Coast Bougainville) using guns and mortars encountering slight return fire.
(End of Parts 1 to 3. No trace of Part 4.)
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 260735Z.)

U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 261404A, 261406A.)

Submarines attacked.

S/M attack and
sighting
Summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/26. Nothing to report.
(D.D.I.C. 260946Z.)

6507

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Force 1
and 2.

1. C. in C.H.F. in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA and 4 destroyers in company; and C.S.10 in BELFAST with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD and 4 destroyers in company arrived at Kola Inlet today.

Operation
"Stonewall"
ALSTERUFER
sunk.

2. (a) At 1015A today aircraft of 19 Group reported a merchant vessel steering a northerly course (altered a few minutes later to an easterly course) about $46\frac{1}{2}$ N. $19\frac{1}{2}$ W. (about 500 miles W.N.W. of Finisterre). C. in C.Plymouth at once directed ENTERPRISE, who had sailed from Plymouth at 2222 yesterday, and GLASGOW towards a position to intercept this evident blockade runner, now known to have been the ALSTERUFER. About an hour later, GAMBIA and PENELOPE were also ordered to steer to intercept and at 1241A the minelayer ARIADNE, proceeding from the Mediterranean to Plymouth, was also laid on and was placed by the Admiralty under the orders of C. in C.Plymouth. The four ships first named constituted Force 3.

(b). The first and second attacks by aircraft failed to stop the ship; but at 1615A a third attack set the enemy on fire and at 1800A another aircraft reported her sinking in 46.32 N. 18.55 W. (A.M. 300001A gives position 46.25 N. 17.40 W.) Seventy four German survivors ex blockade runner were picked up at 1700/29 in 46.06 N. 19.10 W. by E.G.6 and the minesweeper SEAHAM picked up 62 on 31st December.

(c). From previous experience C. in C.Plymouth estimated that the enemy might have sent 5 or 6 Narvik (5.9 inch) destroyers and about 6 Elbings to rendezvous possibly before daylight with the blockade runner, and he disposed GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE in position to engage them at daylight if they should not have turned back previously. Aircraft were also sent to patrol on the enemy's line of retirement.

(d). The French light cruiser LE FANTASQUE, which was to have worked up with LE MALIN, has also been offered by the French Admiralty for Operation "Stonewall". The ship is on her way to Gibraltar, whence she sailed for Horta, arriving on the afternoon of 31st.

(e). The minelayer ARIADNE, proceeding from the Mediterranean to Plymouth was today placed under the orders of C. in C.Plymouth for the anti blockade runner operations.

6508

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Atlantic
Narrows
Patrol.

3.(a) F.O.C.W.Africa intends to establish 3 cruiser patrol lines running N.W. and S.E. to northward of the gap which exists between the U.S.Ascension patrol and the African coast. The patrol will be maintained by French and Italian cruisers. Com. 4th Fleet had suggested (24th December) that the gap should be closed by air patrols, but F.O.C.W. Af. prefers to use his limited air forces for protection of shipping against submarines and in conjunction with his patrols.

(b). On 30th December. C. in C.Med. asked F.O.C. W.Africa to retain the French cruiser EMILE BERTIN under his orders for the present, until the situation has clarified.

Mediterranean.

F.O.E.M.

4.(a) The Flag of Vice-Admiral H.B.Rawlings C.B., O.B.E., was hoisted at 1600 today as F.O.Eastern Med.

(b). The Flag of Vice-Admiral Sir ^{A. U.} ~~W. V.~~ Willis, K.C.B., D.S.O., as C. in C.Levant will be struck at Combined H.Q. Alexandria at 0800 tomorrow, when the appointment and title of C. in C.Levant will lapse.

5. 47 U.S.Invaders in three missions attacked the harbour and railway yards at Civitavecchia today and report hits on a 250 ft. vessel at the north quay, which was left on fire.

Adriatic.

6.(a) The destroyers WHADDON and LAUDERDALE patrolled last night south of Korcula Island and TYRIAN and PENN between San Benedetto and Ancona, but sighted nothing.

(b). The weather hampered coastal force operations.

(c). 24 U.S.Mitchells attacked shipping at Zara today and near missed a vessel of 3000 to 10000 tons

(d). It was reported on 30th December that 2000 Partisans and 5000 civilians were successfully evacuated from Korcula Island by today. The island is now in German hands (c.f. 24th December). 600 refugees and 250 wounded reached south Italy from Yugoslavia today.

/(e)...

6509

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Adriatic.
(Contd.)

6.(e). Enemy aircraft sank a Partisan vessel at Hvar today.

East Indies.

7. Norwegian M/V TAI YIN reported at about 1745 today being chased by a submarine in 06.15 N. 79.30 E. She reported all clear at 281600Z.

Force Fx
constituted.

8. The Broad Pendant of Cdre. Douglas-Pennant as S.O. Force F was hoisted in ROYAL SCOTSMAN today. Force F consists of landing ships and craft.

China.

9. In the Yochow area 10 U.S. Kittyhawks sank a 200 ft. freighter today.

Australia & New Zealand.

10. A U.S. Force of cruisers and destroyers carried out a heavy bombardment of targets in the Kieta area (Bougainville) this evening.

6510

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

- Group A. A.M.142300 para.4 and C.S.I.210948 and 241540 December. Group A. Route as follows. R/V. in position P.270° Skerryvore 20 miles at 1000A/30. (D.O.D.H. 271536A to C.S.1, B.S.1.)
- S/M. Positions of S/Ms. at 0800/28 and movements for movements. following 24 hours. (F.O.S. 271721A, 280024.)
- ANSON. C. in C.H.F. 151716A Nov. V.A.2 H.F. is requested to proceed in ANSON to Scapa by searched channel passing Oxcars Gate at 1545/31st S.O.A. 18 knots. 2. C. in C.H.F. is requested to arrange destroyer screen from Eyebroughy buoy at 1700. If no destroyers are available it is intended to sail ANSON unescorted. (C. in C. Rosyth 271737 to V.A.2, C. in C.H.F.)
- RENOWN. Departure RENOWN, VERULAM. E.T.A. Hoxa 0530A/28th. (C. in C. Rosyth 271800A to A.C.O.S.)

Operations.

- Operation F.V. *Sinking of SCHARNHORST 26/12.* C.S.10 (Admiral Burnett) in BELFAST with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD, while covering a North Russian Convoy, made contact with SCHARNHORST about 80 miles S.E. of Bear Island. 2. Enemy made to the Southward at high speed shadowed by C.S.10 and was intercepted by C. in C.H.F. in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA and Destroyers about 60 miles N. of North Cape. 3. After a chase to Eastward SCHARNHORST was sunk at 2035 on 26th December. 4. No information of damage or casualties to our own forces is yet available except that NORFOLK was hit aft. (V.C.N.S. 270004A to all Cs. in C.) E.T.A. Toros Island 1030A/27th. (STORD 270130C to S.B.N.O. North Russia.) D.F.H.F. extend to their C. in C. their warmest congratulations. (R.A.D. H.F. 270640A to C. in C.H.F.) 1. My 262335. Following account not yet discussed with other Flag and Commanding Officers. 2. At 0844A Force 1 made Radar contact with the enemy at 16 miles, latter steering S.W. and between the convoy bearing N.W. and Force 1. Fire was opened, NORFOLK claiming one hit. SCHARNHORST turned away, subsequently turning to N.E. at 30 knots contact being lost. Force 1 proceeded to convoy taking station well ahead. 3. Prior to this, convoy had been diverted to northward to gain time while Force 2 from position 71° 7' N. 10° 48' E. at 0400A was steering towards the Norwegian coast to cut off SCHARNHORST's return. 4. At 1213A SCHARNHORST, again endeavouring to find convoy, was detected and for the second time driven off by Force 1, NORFOLK receiving one hit putting X turret out of action. Force one's determination undoubtedly saved the convoy. 5. Force 1 joined by 4 destroyers from convoy escort effectively shadowed SCHARNHORST until engaged by Force 2 at 1650A.

6511

27.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
F.V.
(contd.)

6. Meanwhile, acting on these reports, Force 2 was steering to intercept. Intention was to engage on similar courses opening fire at about 13,000 yards, JAMAICA in support, destroyers of screen detached to make torpedo attack.

Intention carried out, DUKE OF YORK opening fire at 13,000 yards which apparently surprised the enemy. SCHARNHORST's tactics were to fire a broadside and turn end on away until ready to fire the next. DUKE OF YORK obtained a hit in the third salvo and, although herself straddled with many near-misses, was not actually hit. The good handling of DUKE OF YORK was probably the reason. Enemy fire particularly accurate at 17 to 20 thousand yards. At this time when it seemed possible that SCHARNHORST might escape, Force 2's screen, which had been creeping ahead, attacked with torpedoes gallantly and practically unsupported, probably obtaining 3 hits.

7. DUKE OF YORK was then able to close and the action was quickly over, JAMAICA delivering a final torpedo attack at 1940 claiming two hits, after which SCHARNHORST sank.

8. Enemy destroyers may have been present when first contact was made, but were not seen subsequently.

9. The presence of U/Bs. in DUKE OF YORK's area between 1500 and 1700 caused considerable uneasiness.

(C. in C.H.F. 270804A to Admty.)

My 262335. No casualties except in NORFOLK and SAUMAREZ, whose reports are being made, and STORD who lost one man overboard during torpedo attack.

(C. in C.H.F. 272221A to Admty.)

E.T.A. Heardros Island 1300A. NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD in company. NORFOLK has 12 serious cases for hospital.

(C.S.10 270815A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

So far as Iceland concerned cancel my 261705.

(H.Q.C.C. 271000A to R.A.F. Iceland.)

Ships are to proceed to destinations as follows:-

1. Molotovsk. THOMAS V. WALTER, JOHN J. ABEL, HAROLD WINSLOW, OCEAN GIPSY, OCEAN MESSENGER and BRITISH STATESMAN. 6 Ships.

2. 3 ships Economica. FORT NAKASLEY, OCEAN PRIDE and OCEAN VALOUR. 3. Remainder to Kola Inlet for Murmansk.

(D.T.D. 271049Z to H.I.D.1, H.J.D.3.)

Thank you very much. Your message is much appreciated.

(C. in C.H.F. 271119A to C.S.1.)

Cancel a.m. 261356.

(D.O.D.H. 271206A to A.O.C. in C. C.C.)

Suggest for your consideration available destroyers including any that can be spared from J.W. escorts should be employed offensively against U/Bs. which may possibly be searching for survivors of SCHARNHORST.

(V.C.N.S. 271255A to C. in C.H.F.) (Reply: 271800A)

R.A.55 B. will not sail before 31st December. S.B.N.O. North Russia is requested to confirm date as soon as known.

2. Force One is to sail from Kola Inlet about 36 hours after R.A. 55 B. portion by C.S.10. Destination of Force One Scapa.

3. Force Three is to proceed in accordance with operation F.V. para.6. (E).

(C. in C.H.F. 271753 to R.A.D., C.S.10.)

/A.M...

6512

27.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation F.V. (contd.) A.M. 271255. In view of weather conditions and time that has elapsed do not consider this practicable.
(C. in C.H.F. 271800A to Admty.)
Intend to proceed (?Scapa) in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA, MUSKETEER, SAVAGE, STORD, SCORPION, MATCHLESS, OPORTUNE, VIRAGO passing Toros Island at 1730(?A) 28th December. Force will be Force 4. 2. Route through position (AA) 072° 10' N. 036° 30' E. (BB) 073° 34' N. 031° 30' E thence as necessary to (CC) 068° 01' N. 000° 01' E. then X.A. S.O.A. 17 knots to position BB, then 21 knots to longitude 8° E. then 17 knots. 3. Request A/S air escort during daylight hours when South of 067° N.
(C. in C.H.F. 271921A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)
One Sunderland detailed for A/S escort during daylight hours tomorrow.
(C. in C. Rosyth 272157A to Escort R.A.55A.)
Kola Inlet arrivals. Force 1, Force 2. MATCHLESS, MUSKETEER, OPPORTUNE, VIRAGO.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia 272159A to Admty.)
My 271753. Cancel para. 2 and substitute following.
"In view of repairs required to cruisers C.S.10 is requested sail Force 1 for Scapa when convenient reporting his intentions".
Ends.
(C. in C.H.F. 272243A to R.A.D., C.S.10.)

Operation "Stonewall". 1 medium merchant-vessel, course 120° speed 5 knots bearing 120° from 46.40 N. 19.30 W.
ALSTERUFER (A/C M.F.D.J. 271015A to 19 Group.)
sunk by A/C. Going to look in direction 46° 40' N. 19° 30' W.
Request instructions.
(A/C. Duty V. 271015A to 19 Group.)
One medium merchant-vessel on course 335° speed 8 knots (?My course 120°) position 46.37 N. 20.05 W.
(A/C. Duty Q. 271015A to 19 Group.)
Enemy previously reported position 46.50 N. (?Q.L=20 W.) ?19.25 W. course 090° speed 15 knots.
(A/C. Duty T. 271030A to 19 Group.)
Steer towards position 45° N. 15° W. at best speed.
(C. in C. Plymouth 271036A to ENTERPRISE, GLASGOW.)
D/F bearings at 0917Z indicate blockade-breaker within 60' of 46.30 N. 19 W.
(D.D.I.C. 271100A to Ships.)
Steer at best speed toward 045° N. 015° W. GAMBIA keeping S. of 042° N. until East of 020° W. (2) Report P.C.S.
(C. in C. Plymouth 271124A to GAMBIA, PENELOPE, (R) GLASGOW, ARIADNE, ENTERPRISE.)
May we attack. Conditions ideal.
(A/C. M.F.D.T. 271130A to 19 Group.)
1 medium M/V on course 355° 8 knots (? my course 050°) 47° 15' N. (?20°) 10' W. Estimated.
(A/C. Duty U. 271140 to 19 Group.)
My 1140. P.C.S. of enemy 47.12 N. 20.00 W. 138° 25 knots.
(A/C. Duty U. 271149 to 15 Group.)
Shore based aircraft report blockade-runner in 46° 50' N. 19° 35' W. course 090° 15 knots at 1015/27. D/F confirms.
2. Own shore-based aircraft liable to close down owing to weather.
3. ENTERPRISE and GLASGOW are concentrating in 45° N. 15° W.

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Operation "Stonewall".
ALSTERUFER sunk by A/C.
(Contd.)

4. Request C.T.G.21.16 may co-operate and attack if opportunity offers.
(V.C.N.S. 271206A, 271234Z to Cominch.)
Ship firing with heavy flak. May we attack.
P.L.E. 1230.
(A/C. Duty T. 271210A to 19 Group.)
My 1149 still in touch with enemy previously reported. Request instructions.
(A/C. Duty U. 271220A to 19 Group.)

Have attacked type with bombs. Established 0 hits. Aircraft all lightly damaged flak. No casualties.
(A/C. Duty Q. 271230A to 15 Group.)

Intercept and sink enemy merchant ship probably ALSTERUFER reported by aircraft at 1030A today in 046° 50' N. 019° 25' W. steering 090° 15 knots. (2) Act on latest information from aircraft report. (3) British A/C. shadowing and homing on 385 kc/s.
(C. in C. Plymouth 271241A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE, (R) GAMBIA, PENELOPE, ARIADNE, T.G.21.16.)
(?Objective) reached, may we attack. Reply or not.
(A/C. Duty T. 271245 to 15 Group.)
ARIADNE is placed under orders of C. in C. Plymouth.)
(V.C.N.S. 271254A to C. in C. Plymouth, ARIADNE.)
My P.C.S. at 1300A 041° 50' N. 029° 25' W. 090° 27 knots.

Weather 6570 2434.
(GAMBIA 271315A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
Ships addressed will form Force 3 under direction of C. in C. Plymouth for anti Blockade Breaker Operation "Stonewall".
(2) Order of seniority as in address.
(C. in C. Plymouth 271317A to GAMBIA, GLASGOW, PENELOPE, ENTERPRISE.)
Going into attack.
(A/C. Duty D. 271321 to 15 Group.)
Result of attack near miss.
(A/C. V.Z.Q.S. 271335Z to 7 W.M.)
Your 271124A. P.C.S. 036° 31' N. 013° 25' W. 352, 16 knots.

Fuel remaining 80% (?).
(PENELOPE 271341A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
Am being attacked by enemy A/C in 46.40 N. 18.30 W.
(A/C. Duty F. T.O.R. 271343.)
A/C. previously reported last seen 47° 10' N. 17° 22' W. course S. height 3000 feet, B.V.222.
(A/C. Duty F. 271400 to 19 Group.)
Attack M/V. at P.L.E.
(H.Q.15 Group 271400A to A/C.Duty U.)
Have A.S.V. contact position 49° 51' N. 06° 40' W. Probably

U/B.
(A/C. Duty R. 271405 to 19 Group.)
PENELOPE is placed under orders of C. in C. Plymouth.
(V.C.N.S. 271420A to C. in C. Med., C. in C. Plymouth, PENELOPE.)
Disposition at 272000. 1. ENTERPRISE vicinity 045° N. 015° W. 28 knots. 2. ARIADNE 039° 55' N. 017° 27' W. through 040° 01' N. 017° 30' W. thence 000° 20 knots. 3. AMARAPOORA 049° 14' N. 012° W. 180° 11.3 knots. 4. Hospital ship LLANDOVERY CASTLE 046° 14' N. 017° 22' W. 018° 13 knots.
(C. in C. Plymouth 271500A to ships.)
M/V position 46° 39' N. 18° 10' W. course 115° speed 24 knots
(A/C. Duty U. 271515A to 15 Group.)

/Estimate...

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Operation "Stonewall" ALSTERUFER sunk by A/C. (contd.) Estimate enemy at 1500A in 046° 50' N. 018° 14' W. mean course 115° 15½ knots maximum. (C. in C. Plymouth 271554A to Force 3 (R) ARIADNE, T.G.21.16.) From previous experience estimate enemy may have sent 5 or 6 Narvik destroyers and about 6 Elbings to R/V. possibly before daylight 28th with Blockade Runner. (2) On 24th December enemy destroyers steering 270° met inward ship in approx. 045° 40' N. 012° 00' W. (C. in C. Plymouth 271612A to Force 3, ARIADNE. (R) T.G.21.16.) Have attacked M/V. with bombs, position 46° 30' N. 30° 10' W. Ships aft on fire. Returning to base, engine trouble. (A/C. Duty H. 271615A to 19 Group.) A.M. 271120Z refers. Amend GAMBIA and GLASGOW P.C.S. to read GAMBIA 41½° N. 24½° W. 090° 28 knots. GLASGOW 46° N. 20° W. 107° 28 knots. (D.O.D.F. 271625A to Opanv.) Objective reached. One M/V. sinking 46° 32' N. 18° 55' W. 70 survivors in 4 lifeboats. R/B. E.T.A. 2140. (A/C. Duty Q. 271800A to 19 Group.) Continue present sweep. Orders follow. (C. in C. Plymouth 271817A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.) If convoy is not threatened GLENARM and WATCHMAN are to detach at dawn tomorrow and proceed to Horta to carry out transfer as in my 261415. (2) S.O.E.G.B.1 and Staff are to return to U.K. with remainder of survivors. (3) F.O.C. Gibraltar is requested to sail LEAMINGTON and MONTGOMERY to Londonderry on completion of transfer. (C. in C.W.A. 271819A to F.O.I.C. Gibraltar, GLENARM, WATCHMAN.) Distress pyrotechnics positions 49° 50' N. 07° 20' W. (A/C. Duty D. 271846A to 19 Group.) Reduce speed at your discretion to save fuel. (C. in C. Plymouth 271904A to ENTERPRISE (R) GLASGOW.) Blockade-runner bombed and reported sinking. 2. GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE are to R/V in position (SS) 045° 14' N. 015° 23' W. at approx. 0200A/28th and are to leave (SS) at 0300 and sweep 105° to latitude 045° N. thence 090° to reach 012° W. at 0900A/28th. 3. At 0900 if no information sweep 000° to 045° 30' N. thence 270°. 4. My intention is to engage enemy Destroyers in daylight if they have not turned back previously. (C. in C. Plymouth 271926A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE. (R) Force 3, ARIADNE, C.T.G.21.16.) Have A.S.V. contact position 45.48 N. 45.13 W. 30' probably U/B. (A/C. Duty T. 271930A to 19 Group.) My 271124A. Reduce speed of advance to 23 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth 271945 to GAMBIA (R) Force 3, ARIADNE.) Refer to this as 271634 from C.T.G.21.16 addressed Cinclant Info. to Admiralty. Pass to all concerned. W.X.4882 2924. Available aircraft searching since noon. Admty. 271206A. Will maintain Fighter Spot. Tomorrow Avenger search. Meridian 080 distance 300 from 45 N. 17 W. Floating torpedo 42 N. 22.10 W. (Comnavu 271948 to Admty.) What is maximum speed of which you are capable and is your endurance as shown in C.B.04150 affected? (C. in C. Plymouth 272000A to PENELOPE.) Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 45.59 N. 16.28 W. (A/C. Duty S.272035 to 19 Group.)

/Suspicious...

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Operation "Stonewall". ALSTERUFER sunk by A/C. (Contd.)

Suspicious object previously reported is Cruiser(s) position 45° 59' N. 16° 28' W. course 090 speed 30 knots. (A/C. Duty S. 272055A to 19 Group.) Joint on boiler. Have drawn fire and hope to effect repairs within 4 hours. My positions 041° 15' N. 025° 40' W. HUGH WALPOLE is screening me. (COTILLION 272130Z to C. in C.W.A.)

Para. 2 of my 271926A. If met early have a sweep early to save fuel. Time of reaching 012° W. to remain unaltered. (C. in C. Plymouth 272156A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.) 30 (?knots). Your 272000 refers. Endurance in book re-entering not affected. Percentage of fuel remaining 76. P.C.S. 038° 50' N. 013° 32' W. 350° 19 knots. Weather report 6482 2125. (PENELOPE 272215 to C. in C. Plymouth.) 19 Group aircraft will patrol on about 010° W. from 0001 to 0800/28th to intercept destroyers. (C. in C. Plymouth 272300A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE (R) Force 3, C.T.G. 21.16.) My 272130. Repairs effected. Raised steam and proceeded in company HUGH WALPOLE. Speed 10½ knots. (COTILLION 272325Z to C. in C.W.A.) Steer to pass through 041° 20' N. 020° 59' W. thence as previously ordered. (C. in C. Plymouth 272326A to GAMBIA (R) Escorts O.S. 62.) Probable inward-bound blockade-runner sighted by A/C. in 47.20 N. 38.15 W. at 1030Z/27, course 135°. (D.O.D.H. 272359A to Force 3.) Note. Cancelled by Admty. 290201A. Vessel was friendly.

Operation "Manacle 8".

Carry out operation "Manacle 8" tonight. (V.A. Dover 271052 to S.O. L.C.I.S. Commando 4.) My 271052. Operation abandoned. (V.A. Dover 272204A to Admty.)

Operations "Hardtack".

"Hardtack" 4 carried out night of 26/27. Result partially successful. Military force was not engaged on land and was successfully withdrawn, no prisoners, no casualties. "Hardtack" 21 carried out night of 26/27. Result successful. Military force not engaged on land and was successfully withdrawn no prisoners taken, no casualties. (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 271101A to C. in C. Portsmouth.) Hardtack 13 will be carried out tonight. (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 271127A to C. in C. Portsmouth.) My 261831. Executive 7. (C. in C. Plymouth 271145A to N.O.I.C. Dartmouth, No. 10 Group, CICALA.) Your 271145A. Intend sailing M.G.B. 329 as Force 114 at 1530 today and Force 115 consisting of M.T.Bs. 431, S.O. 416, and 434 at 1630 today. (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 271435A to C. in C. Plymouth.) My 271127A. "Hardtack 13" will not be carried out tonight. (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 271725A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/S/M...

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27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations - Contd.

Submarine SIRDAR leaving patrol and returning to Lerwick
Patrols. as routed by Capt. (S) 9. SYRTIS patrolling T.7
and T.8.

(F.O.S. 271417A to SYRTIS, SIRDAR.)

Request you sail SPITEFUL at 0900A/29th. routed
090° Muckle Flugga 5 miles through 062° N. 001° 25' W. by route
Black to patrol position EE. Object F. and A.
(Capt. S.9. 271523A to S.O. S/M. Lerwick.)

SIRDAR is leaving patrol so as to pass through 071° 21' N.
020° 00' E. at 0100A/28th. Thence through 070° 50' N. 014° 00'
E. and by route 'Pink' to Lerwick.

(Capt. S.9. 271537A to S/MS.)

Positions of S/MS. at 0800/28th and movements for following
24 hours. (A) SYRTIS on patrol off Soroy. (B) SCEPTRE on patrol
off Fiorden Fjord. (C) SEADOG on patrol off Stadtlandet.
(D) ULA on patrol off Skegness. (E) 0.15 61° 10' N. 00° 45' E.
probably on the surface, speed 10 knots, through 090° Muckle
Flugga 20 miles to Lerwick. (L) SEANYMPH leaves Lunna Voe
0830/28th through 090° Muckle Flugga 10 miles and 62° 01' N. 01°
01' E., thence course 030° probably on the surface speed 10 knots
(M) SIRDAR 71° 03' N. 17° 27' E. probably on the surface speed
10 knots through 70° 50' N. 14° 01' E. and 69° 01' N. 09° 02' E.
thence course 210°.

(F.O.S. 271721A to Admty.)

Request withdraw SYRTIS from present patrol to anti-U/B.
patrol line GG. 2. SYRTIS to be withdrawn from patrol to
arrive Lerwick 8th January. 3. Object F. and A.

(F.O.S. 272159 to Capt. S.9.)

Coastal (1) Orders for Night 27th/28th December.
Force (A) 3 M.Ls from Newhaven anti E-Boat patrol off
Patrols. C.2 A Buoy as cover to L.S.I. at anchor.
(B) 2 CHASSEURS anti E-Boat patrol on 50 degs.
24' N. between 00 degs. 35' W. and 00 degs. 48'
W. from 1800A to 0700A.

(C) M.L.343 short notice St. Helens.

(D) 2 S.G.Bs from Portland patrolling 50 degs. 18' N. between
02 degs. W. and 02 degs. 35' W. from 1900A to 0700A.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 271521A)

M.T.B's 240, 231, 204, 229, 436 and 418 operating southward of
Bullock Bank E.T.D. 1610.

M.L's 573 and 213 operating southward of Bullock Bank E.T.D.
1800 E.T.R. 0530/28.

L.C.I.(S) 518 and 527 operating southward of Bullock Bank E.T.R.
0530/28.

M.G.B's S 2 and 40 at number seven buoy. E.T.D. Ramsgate 1715
E.T.R. 0845/28.

Two M.L's 2 miles south of D Buoy.

(V.A. Dover, 271521A to Admty.)

Mining.

M/S.9. M.S.9's 261958. Sailed 0814.
(F.O.I.C.Portland, 270958)

Operation /...

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. - Contd.

Operation "Hostile 18". Intend to carry "Hostile XVIII" tonight without support force.
(2) Force "Hostile XVIII" is to sail from plymouth to pass Galveston at 1730A/27th.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 271037A to DEFIANCE)

Nore Command. Weekly report of mines rendered safe in Nore Command for week ended 25th December.
One British Mk. XVII mine.
(R.M.S.O. Yarmouth, 271100A to C. in C.Nore.)

KINGSTON BERYL. KINGSTON BERYL is presumed to have been lost with all hands due to an explosion in 56 degs. 12' N. 07 degs. 30' W. at 0445Z/25th. At the time KINGSTON BERYL and CALGARY were escorting the Loch Ewe Section of O.N.217 from Loch Ewe to the R/V at 1000A/25th in 270 degs. Oversay 6 miles. As the Loch Ewe section consisted of 30 ships CALGARY had been sent to reinforce the escort which would normally have consisted of KINGSTON BERYL only. CALGARY, is, therefore, an essential witness at an inquiry.
(2) As CALGARY is now proceeding to Canada request you will convene a Board of Enquiry on her arrival to investigate the loss of KINGSTON BERYL.
(C. in C. W.A. 271440A to C. in C. C.N.A.)
KINGSTON BERYL in company with CALGARY presumed lost with all hands at 0445Z/25th. At the time KINGSTON BERYL was in position approximately 3000 yards ahead of Convoy.
(2) During course of voyage request you will ascertain from ships of Loch Ewe Section whether any of them observed incident or have any information that might assist a Board of Enquiry, also whether any ships sighted floating mines.
(C. in C. W.A. 271801A to C.5)

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy Convoys. 2 ships 8,000 tons, 1 ship 3,000 tons, all loaded, probably escorted by 2 armed trawlers, reported leaving Egersund 0600Z/27th Northbound.
(F.O.S. 270004A to ULA)
1 medium merchant vessel, 2 small merchant vessels and 2 minesweepers position 58 degs. 41' N. 05 degs. 20' E. course 180 degs. speed 6 knots.
(A/C SPC/J, 271106A to 19 Group)
P.C.S. of 7 medium vessels, 7 escort vessels 58.25 N. 05.56 E. 360 degs. 6 knots.
(A/C. Duty K. 271535A to 18 Group)

Navigational.

Harwich. My 260947. Port now open.
(F.O.I.C.Harwich, 270649A to C. in C. Nore.)

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27.12.1943.
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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties and Defects.

- ZEEHOND. My 231416 and 260810. Arrived.
(Capt.(S) 7, 270203 to Cdre.(D) W.A.)
- M.L.1388. 241945A from N.O.I.C. Tees. M.L.1388 was refloated but sank again in position one cable S.S.E. from Hartlepool breakwater clear of channel (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 271005A to Admty.)
- N.A.T.59. N.A.T. 59 was sunk in collision off the Coaling Arm Portland on the night of 24/25 December. Request local Admiralty Salvage Department may assist in salvage.
(F.O.I.C.Portland, 271519A to Ad. Salvage Dept.)
- CAPE MOHICAN. Arrived CAPE MOHICAN towed by gus EMPIRE LARCH, EMPIRE RUPERT, accompanied by tug ROODE ZEE and escorted by DERBY COUNTY.
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 271530A to F.O.I.C.Milford Haven.)
- FREDERICK BARTHOLDI. Sailed YORK CITY to relieve POLKA now standing by SS. FREDERICK BARTHOLDI.
(N.O.I.C. Aulbea 271919A to F.O.I.C. Greenock)
- WORCESTER. Salvage Officer Harwich reports it is anticipated that strapping of WORCESTER will be completed by p.m. 29th and ship will be fit to move to docking port.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 272155A to C. in C. Nore.)

Shipping and Convoys.

- H.X. 271. KENTUCKIAN straggled during alteration of course at 0630Z/26th.in 054 degs. 25' N. 023 degs. 55' W. EMPIRE TAMAR dropped astern at 1630Z making good 8.5 knots with boiler defects. While convoy altered to northward A.M.26th shadowing U-Boat was put down by escorts and lost touch. Undetected due to weather. Intend to detach GOZO and LIGHTFOOT for Moville at 1000Z today. My P.C.S. at 0935Z. 055 degs. 56' N. 016 degs. 42' W. 099 degs. 10 knots.
(C.2, 270931Z to C. in C. W.A.)
- O.S.62/
K.M.S.36.
S.L.143/
M.K.S.34. STRIKER is to detach from O.S.62/K.M.S.36 at dusk tomorrow escorted by CAUVERY and KISTNA and proceed to R/V S.L.143/M.K.S.34 at 1400A/29th in 040 degs. 30' 018 degs. 30'.
S.L.143/M.K.S.34 routed through (EM) 039 degs. 00' 018 degs. 30'. (EN) 050 degs. 10' 018 degs. 30' 7 knots. S.O.B.3 in TOWY.
(3) CAUVERY and KISTNA are to rejoin O.S.62/K.M.S.36 after R/V has been effected.
(C. in C. W.A. 271228A to Escorts.)

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27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys. - Contd.

T.A.81.

A.M. 232155. Intend sailing MAURETANIA
1200Z/28th. S.O.A.19 knots.
"Chop" 0800Z/2nd January 47 degs. W. E.T.A.
Ambrose light vessel 1215Z/5th.
(C. in C. W.A. 271314Z to Admty.).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

RYE. RYE has been granted 5 days to effect temporary repairs.
(N.C.S.O.Ponta Delgada 270845 to S.B.N.O.Horta.)

Operation "Stonewall". Departure GAMBIA from Horta 2344Z/26.
(S.B.N.O.Azores 271026Z to C. in C.Plymouth, GLASGOW, (R) F.O.C.Gib. Admty. C. in C.W.A.)
Patrol L 30%. Patrol in an area 400 miles east of line L between Line 043° N. and 046° 50' N. 180 miles wide.
(S.B.N.O.Azores 271114Z to GLASGOW, GAMBIA, C. in C.Plymouth, (R) F.O.C.Gib. Admty.)

A.M. 261536 (N.T. in W.D.) Propose PENELOPE be transferred to operational control of C. in C.Plymouth.

2. Copy of operation "Stonewall" and necessary intelligence has been given to PENELOPE.

3. Intend retaining MAURITIUS at Gibraltar at two hours notice until receipt of further intelligence.

(F.O.C.Gib. 271214A to Admty. C. in C.Plymouth, (R) C. in C. Med. C. in C.W.A.)

Leave Horta forthwith to establish anti blockade-runner patrol L within 60 miles each side of line joining position QQ. 043° 10' N. 030° 00' W. RR. 049° 50' N. 030° 00' W. and north of 046° 30' N Fuel economy is important.

2. Before sailing obtain from S.B.N.O.Horta copy of orders for operation "Stonewall" not now required for delivery to MAURITIUS.

3. Aircraft from Azores will search on patrol L during daylight.

(C. in C.Plymouth 271220 to LE MALIN, (R) ARIADNE, S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C.W.A. Admty. PENELOPE, F.O.C.Gib. H.Q.C.C. ENTERPRISE, C. in C.Med. GAMBIA, Navale France, GLASGOW.)

C. in C.Plymouth 261614 para. 2 "Stonewall" memo 3189/1 Y 01487 (less appendix one) and all relevant intelligence passed PENELOPE before sailing.

(F.O.C.Gib. 271232A to GAMBIA, (R) PENELOPE, C. in C.Plymouth S.B.N.O.Azores, Admty.)

T.G.21.15. T.G.21.15, U.S.S. CORE and 4 destroyers left Casablanca 261700A, S.O.A. 15 knots to search vicinity 36° N. 19° W.
(D.O.D.(H) 271056A to C. in C.Plymouth, C. in C. W.A. S.B.N.O.Azores, H.Q.C.C.)

O.S.62/
K.M.S.36
GLENARM. Request you comply with C. in C.W.A. 261415* para. 2 (?reporting) when transfer has been completed.
(F.O.C.Gib. 271212A to S.B.N.O.Azores, F.Os. H.F. A.C.I.C. R.A.W.Af. F.O.N.F. C. in C.S.At. C. in C.C.N.A. Connav, S.B.N.O.W.At. N.S.H.Q. A.C.O.S. GLENARK, MONTGOMERY, LEAMINGTON, C. in C. Rosyth, C. in C.Plymouth, C. in C.W.A. Admty. C. in C.Med.)
* When O.S.62/K.M.S.36 ceases to be threatened GLENARM shall be detached to Azores.

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Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. - Contd.

- M.K.S. 34. 1. TUDOR PRINCE joined. 2. MALAYAN PRINCE escorted by LADY MADELEINE stopped 50 miles astern. Expect to get one engine available by 1800 today giving 8 knots. Have ordered ship to Gibraltar. LADY MADELEINE to rejoin me.
3. PASS OF MELFORT out of touch since dawn SAPPER searching astern now.
4. My P.C. and S. at 1800Z 036° 32' 015° 39' 318° 6½.
5. Weather report.
(S.O.E.G.B. 3 271710Z, 271911Z to F.O.C.Gib.)
Return to Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.Gib. 272218 to PASS OF MELFORT.)

SHAKESPEARE. Intend to sail 0800/28th for U.K. routed P. 35° 49', 06° 06.5' at 1200/28. R. 35.53, 06.15 1250/28th S. 36.37 (707).24 1950/28th. T. 36.51 09.13 0450/29th G. 43.01, 12.54 2150/30th thence as ordered by F.O.S. shifting W/T watch at 2150/30th.
(F.O.C.Gib. 271242 to Admty. F.O.S. (R) C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C.W.A. C. in C.Med. Ss. 3, 5, 10, C.M.S.F. Cominch, SHAKESPEARE.)

U/B. S/M reported at 0200 yesterday one mile off bar at Oporto on the surface. Grade A.
(B.N.A.Lisbon 271540 to Admty. (R) S.O.I. Gib.)

O.S. 62. My P.C. and S. S. at 2130Z 041° 18' 025° 12' 120° 7. Azores section with COTILLION who is short of coal detached at 1800. Cancel my 260150 to C. in C.W.A. now discovered not true. Weather report.
(S.O.40th E.G. 271906Z to F.O.C.Gib. C. in C.W.A. (R) S.B.N.O.Azores.)
* U-Boat homing report.

South Atlantic.

ALSACE, PORTSDOWN. My 261415. Following is programme for Cable Ship ALSACE. Departure Pointe Noire p.m. 31st. Thence to Cotonou where repairs will take about 2 days. Thence (?Takoradi). Propose to retain PORTSDOWN as escort to Takoradi in accordance with this programme. Do you concur.
(B.N.L.O.Pointe Noire 271105A to F.O.C.W.Af. (R) Admty. etc.)

/Cruiser...

War Diary.27.12.1943.
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic - Contd.

Cruiser and
air patrols
in Atlantic
Narrows.
Plan "Freecar"

It is intended to establish 3 cruiser patrol lines running N.W. and S.E. in an area contained by positions: all positions north and west unless otherwise indicated A. 010° 024° B. 007° 021° C. 003° 026° D. 006° 029°. to be maintained by French and Italian cruisers. It will not be possible to occupy all three lines continuous and programme will be arranged according to ship and information available commencing January 1st. Searches within this area will also be carried out by Liberators operating from Gambia.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 271225Z to Admty. (R) Comar Dakar, Com. 4th Fleet, R.A.8, CILICIA, CORFU.) See 271626Z.

Your 241625 (received T.O.O. 250309) air patrol could be established to close gap between your Ascension Patrol and African coast but with no indication of blockade runners passing through this gap it is preferred to use limited air forces for protection of shipping against submarines and in conjunction with my patrols further north which are being established in accordance with Admty. instructions referred to in my 232105 (N.T. in W.D.)

(F.O.C.W.Af. 271232Z to Com. 4th Fleet, (R) Admty.)

1. Ref. my T.O.O. 271225 patrol lines established EF. 009° N. 025° W. 007° N. 023° W. GH. 007° 30' N. 026° 30' W. 005° 30' N. 024° 30' W. JK. 006° N. 028° W. 004° N. 026° W.
 2. Ships at sea are to be at the following positions at 0600Z/1st Jan. CILICIA position K. to patrol mean line JK. leaving patrol 8th Jan. DUCA DEGLI ABRUZZI position H. to patrol mean line GH. leaving patrol p.m. 3rd Jan. F.C. SUFFREN position F. to patrol mean line EF. leaving patrol p.m. 2nd January.
 3. SUFFREN to adjust speed forthwith so as to remain on patrol until p.m. 2nd Jan.
 4. Liberators from Yundum will carry out sweeps in the area daily.
 5. Intention is that cruisers shall work in 2 groups. A. ABRUZZI (I.S.) F.C. MONTCALM, F.C. GEORGES LEYGUES. B. F.C. GLOIRE, SUFFREN, It. C. DUCA D'AOSTA. Group A. will normally patrol line (?EF) or JK. (?and) speed must be adjusted to maintain 6 days on patrol. Group B will normally patrol line EF. and are to adjust speed to maintain 4 days on patrol.
 6. The cycle will then be group A 10 days at sea and 8 days in harbour, Group B. 8 days at sea and 4 in harbour.
 7. F.C. DUQUESNE and F.C. TOURVILLE to be used by Comar Dakar as necessary to maintain constant patrol when other ships either French or Italian are making good defects.
 8. DUCA D'AOSTA will sail 1st Jan. to relieve SUFFREN on patrol EF. p.m. 2nd Jan.
- Comar Dakar is requested to sail a cruiser from Group A to relieve ABRUZZI on patrol GH. p.m. 3rd Jan. and a cruiser from Group B. to relieve DUCA D'AOSTA on patrol EF. p.m. 6th Jan.
- In addition to above CORFU will be on patrol between 004° 30' N. 030° 00' W. and 002° 30' N. 028° 00' W. from 2nd to 8th Jan. To intercept outward blockade runners ship should patrol to N.W. during daylight commencing at positions F. H. and K. and returning to S.E. during the night. This will be known as patrol outward.

/To...

6523

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Cruiser and
air patrols
in Atlantic
Narrows.
Plan "Freecar"
(Contd.)

To intercept in bound blockade runners reverse procedure commencing at positions EG. or J. this to be designated patrol inwards. Patrol commencing 1st Jan. is patrol outward, F.O.C.W.Af. will signal change of direction of future patrol. Plan related above is to be referred to as "Freecar". (F.O.C.W.Af. 271626Z to Comar Dakar, F.C. SUFFREN, CILICIA, DUCA DEGLI ABRUZZI, CORFU, (R) Admty. Cdr. 4th Fleet, R.A.8.)
See 301024.

Your 221127 endurance of French and Italian cruisers combined with distance of patrol area from harbour time for defects and boiler cleaning will not permit of three cruisers being constantly on patrol. Hope however to maintain programme as in my 271626.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 271657Z to Admty.)

6524

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

CONSTANTINOS, Following special service Schooners may be
ST. JOHN. encountered. CONSTANTINOS (description)
proceeding from Cape Aspromitas to Symion 25th
and returning by reverse route. ST. JOHN
(description) leaving Cape Aspromitas p.m. 26th.
Lying in daylight 27th at Saria thence to Apela Bay, Scarpanto
night 27th 28th return by reverse route.
2. Current recognition procedure carried.
(Capt. S.1., 270001B to P.217 (SIBYL) TORBAY.)

Operation Proceed forthwith to Horta.
"Stonewall" (C. in C. Med., 270736, 270831A to LE MALIN (R)
LE MALIN, F.O.C. Gib., C. in C. Plymouth, S.B.N.O. Horta.)
LE FANTASQUE. LE FANTASQUE arrives Gib., 0800 28th as it was
intended to work up LE MALIN with her.
2. French Admty., now offer LE FANTASQUE for
operation "Stonewall".
(C. in C. Med., 271232A to Admty., (R) Navale
France, S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C. Plymouth,
F.O.C. Gib.)

Have received following (Begins). Addressed LE MALIN (R)
C. in C. Med. for Admty., C. in C. Plymouth, S.B.N.O. Azores,
F.O.C. Gib., from C. in C. French Navy. In agreement with
British Admty. LE MALIN is temporarily placed under orders of
C. in C. Plymouth for operations against blockade runners.
You are to make contact with S.B.N.O. Azores. FANTASQUE is
proceeding towards Gib. on the same mission. (Ends.) No
date time received.

(C. in C. Med., 271520A to Admty., C. in C. Plymouth,
S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.C., Gib.)
LE FANTASQUE departed.
(Com. Algeria, 272031A.)

K.M.F.27. Escorts ANTWERP S.O. CRETE, CROOME, TETCOTT,
THEMISTOCLES, EXMOOR.
(C. in C. Levant, 272035B.)

SPORTSMAN, SPORTSMAN leaving patrol at dusk 27th passing
DOLFIJN, close west of Kinaros and West of Kandeliusa to
DZIK. arrive at 035° 39' 028° 01' at 1800/28th.
Through 034° 18' 031° 29' to arrive Beirut
0700/29th.

DOLFIJN may be encountered tonight in the
vicinity Kináros.
2. DZIK proceed to 037° 01' 025° 51' at once leaving this
position at 0301/28, to patrol in the vicinity 037° 02' 026° 10'
(Capt. S.1, 271041B to SPORTSMAN, DZIK, (R) DOLFIJN, SICKLE,
C. in C. Levant.)

SEA ROVER. From 034° 01' 025° 06' at 1900B/30th proceed on
the surface at 11½ knots to 033° 57' 035° 30'
at 1500 1st, to arrive Beirut 1530 1st.
2. Total bombing restrictions arranged.
(Capt. S.1, 271152B to SEA ROVER, (R) N.A.A.
E. of Alexandria, S.O. S/Ms Malta, N.A.A.
Western Desert, N.O.I.C. Tripoli, Cdr., Coastal
Forces Eastern Med.)

/V.N.14...

6525

27.12.1943.

Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.

- V.N.14. MSC/22. Sailing 0630 29th (30 ships). Escorts LIDDESDALE as liaison ship with Italian SAGITTARIO, SIRIO, MINERVA, ANIMOSO, SPINGE. (S.N.O.E.Sy, 271402A, 271432A to F.O.W.I.T.)
- Use of V H/F R/T between ships and fighter aircraft and fighter sector H.Q. Add to para. one of 405 B, T.O.O. 200945. Within 100 miles of Malta and within 50 miles of the coasts of Cyrenaica, Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Cyprus. (C. in C. Med. 271423A to Med. Station, Levant Station 420 B, (R) M.A.C., N.A.C.A.F.)
- CAGNI. MJ AO 24. (A). Total. (B) CAGNI (I.S.) (C) Passage. (D) End of Haifa searched channel at 1700B 28th on surface, course 277° to 033° 57' N. 025° 00' E. 1800B 30th thence to 034° 15' N. 021° 55' E. 1400B 31st diving by day between parallels 25 and 20 East. (E) 11 knots F.O.T.A.L.I. is requested to arrange onward route and bombing restrictions to Taranto. (S. O.S./M.S. Haifa, 271532B to 201 Naval Co-operation Group, F.O.T.A.L.I., (R) ALL S.A.C. and above operating off the coast between Alexandria and 20° E., C. in C. Levant.)
- UNSEEN, UNIVERSAL. UNSEEN patrol report blank. 2. UNIVERSAL reports at 1130/18 in 44° 15' N. 00° 20' E. fired four torpedoes at 5,000 ton westbound tanker half laden. Two hit vessel sank. (S.10, 271825.) W.D. Note: Position incorrect. Should be in Gulf of Genoa.
- RANCHI. My 091003B. Master now refuses to sail until all armatures repaired reason given is no spare available and if one fails unable ventilate troopdecks. Repairs third armature in hand and vessel expected ready to sail ex. Alexandria 8th. Jan. (S.T.O.M.E., 271831B to D. of S. T.)
- MALINES. Intend to use MALINES for combined operations training Kabret. 2. Ship will remain under Naval Administration and C. and M. (C. in C. Levant, 271833B to Admty. D. of S.T. (R) F.O.C. Red Sea, M. of W.T. Alexandria, SAUNDERS.)
- F.O.E.M. replaces C. in C. Levant. T.L. having appointed V.A. H.B. Rawlings, C.B., O.B.E., as F.O. Eastern Med., his flag is to be hoisted in MAIDSTONE at 1600 27th and transferred /to...

Extract from V.A., Levant and Eastern Mediterranean,
War Diary, December, 1943. T.S.D. 5268/43.

Dec. 28. Unification of Mediterranean Command.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff having decided to place operations in the Mediterranean Theatre under one supreme commander, the Mediterranean and Levant Stations were merged into a single command, containing the following Sub-Commands:

- (a) Flag Officer Gibraltar and Mediterranean Approaches
- (b) Flag Officer Western Mediterranean at Algiers
- (c) Vice-Admiral Malta and Flag Officer Central Mediterranean
- (d) Flag Officer Levant and Eastern Mediterranean, the Flag Officer Red Sea and Canal Area being replaced by a Senior Naval Officer.

Aden was transferred to Eastern Fleet Command.

6526

27.12.1943.

Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

F.O.E.M.
replaces
C, in C.
Levant.
(Contd.)

to combined H.Q., Alexandria at 0800 28th.
2. The flag of V.A. Sir A.U. Willis, K.C.B.,
D.S.O., as C. in C. Levant is to be struck at
combined H.Q. at 0800 28th when the appointment
and title of C. in C. Levant will lapse.
C. in C. Levant, 271850B to Levant Station,
(R) Admty., C. in C. Med. C. in C.E.F., M.W.T.R.,
C. in C.S. Atlantic Station, V.A. Malta,
B.N.A. Ankara, P.S.T.O. Mid. East, S.O. Force
"P", F.O.G.M.A.)

NICOLINE
MAERSK.

I have been informed that ship has been beached
Punta De La Bana near San Carlos De La Rapita
after torpedo attack by S/M or destroyer on
night 24th.
Captain and Officers are German, remainder of

crew French.
Cargo consists of iron ore in transit from Valencia or Segunta
to a French Port.
(Barcelona, 271919.)

6527

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATION.

East Indies.

JOSE NAVARRO Torpedoed 26th. JOSE NAVARRO reports being torpedoed in 008 degs. 20' N. 073 degs. 35' E. at 2330Z/26th. (C. in C. E.F. 270038Z to S. and A's E.I. (R) Admty. 222 Group, 225 Group., JOSE NAVARRO No. T.O.O.)
Have previously abandoned ship and just returned. (JOSE NAVARRO No. T.O.O./27th recd. 270355 to Colombo W/T.)
08 R 20 N. 73 R 35 E. torpedoed down by the head but still afloat (JOSE NAVARRO, 270800 to Colombo.)

P.B.66 B. Arrived escorted by CESSNOCK, CARNATIC. (N.C.S.O. Bombay, 270253Z)

U/B Dispositions. Ref. my T.O.O.260336Z December ASIAN sunk off Cape Comorin approx. 007 degs. 45' N. 077 degs. 40' E. time unknown but believe night 26th/27th. (2) SS. JOSE NAVARRO torpedoed in 008 degs. 20' N. 073 degs. 35' E. at 2330Z/26th.
(3) Scale of air escort all areas remains unchanged except B which is reduced to X. (C. in C. E.F. 270615)

C.J.9(A) Arrived escorted by WILLEM VAN DER ZAAAN, QUIBERON, KALAVATI. (N.C.S.O. Colombo, 270700Z to Admty.)

C.J.10. Vizagapatam portion arrived escorted by IRRAWADI. (N.O.I.C. Vizagapatam, 270801Z to Admty.)

Force F. composition. The broad pendant of Cdre. Douglas - Pennant as S.O. Force F will be hoisted in ROYAL SCOTSMAN on the 27th.
(2) Force F will comprise;
(a) L.S. (?I) ROYAL SCOTSMAN, KEREN, DUNERA, DILWARA.
(b) L.S.C. EMPIRE ELAINE. (c) L.S.T. (I) BOXER, BRUISER, THRUSTER. (d) M.T. Ships FORT STAGER, OCEAN WANDERER, SAMPLER, FORT BUCKINGHAM. (e) 12th Flotilla. L.C.I.(L). (f) 14 L.C.T. (5).
(3) Further additions will be made as the situation requires. (C. in C. E.F. 270905Z to F.O.C.R.I.N., C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.) S.O. Force F., S.R.N.O. Bombay, SALSETTE, Com. R.I.N., S.O. Assault Ships and Craft I, N.O.I.C. Calcutta., D/SO Assault ships. Craft I. S.O. Force G. P.S.T.O. Bombay, A.P.S.T.O. Bombay, (R) Admty.)

TRESPASSER /...

6528

War Diary.

27.12.1943.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. - Contd.

TRESPASSER,
TAURUS.

Programmes should be planned on assumption that TRESPASSER and TAURUS leave Ceylon in time to arrive U.K. by 1st June, 1944. Your 180514 and F.O.S.19144 refer.
(C. in C. E.F. 271001Z to S.4 (R) F.O.S.)

S.E.A. Air
Report.

A.C.24. 27th Dec. Daily Opsum No.652.
23/24th December, 1 Catalina A/S search area North Negapatam empty Lifeboats sighted.
S/E indication possible Submarine. No sightings.
(S.E.A.A.C. 271011Z)

TAI YIN
"S" Report.

Following recd. from TAI YIN:
SSSS position 6 degs. 15' N. 79 degs. 30' E.
Chased by submarine.
(Colombo W/T No T.O.O/27 Recd. 271745)

6529

27.12.1943.
Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.

- Suspicious Ship. 35.00 N. 67.00 W. suspicious craft does not identify properly.
(ESSO LITTLE ROCK (via Florida Radio), 270415Z) Informing addressees.
(C. in C. C.N.A. 270448 G.M.T. to Connav, Admty. A.C.I.C., C. in C. W.A., N.S.H.Q., F.O.N.F., H.Q.C.C., Cmdr. (D) Argentia, Cmdre. (D).W.A.)
- C.U.9. Off Oversay at 1715Z/25. All arrived.
(D.T.D. 271111A to Connav, N.S.H.Q.)
- H.X.272. Relieved by C.4 at 271100Z. P.C.S. of H.X.272 044 degs. 55' N. 050 degs. 30' W. 076 degs. 9.5.
(W.2, 271430Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)
- DAGHESTAN helicopters. It is expected that DAGHESTAN operating two Helicopters will sail in H.X.274 to U.K. Written operation instructions are being forwarded to the Authorities concerned.
(2) Confirmation of the inclusion of this Ship in the above convoy will be confirmed by Signal.
(B.A.D. 271435Z to Admty. C. in C. W.A., C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.N.F., Cominch, Info. B.R.L.O. New York.)
- Patron 63. This is Comfairwing 7's 271132. In accordance with ref. Patron 63 having been detached from Atlantic Fleet reported to Fairwing 15 on Dec. 26th. Comfairwing 15 took over administration of Patrol 63 on the 27th.
(Connaveu, 271451Z to Admty.)
- S/M. Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 271503Z, Cominch 271629)
- Russian A.M. and S.C. Cancel Itinerary my serial 001359 (N.T. at I.P) of 7th July not to all. Last group consist of 3 Russian A.M. and 3 Russian S.C. will sail Miami late December or early January via Bermuda and Horta, Azores. Comgulfseafron sail accordingly when ready. After fuelling N.O.B. Bermuda route onward to Horta. Admiralty is requested to provide onward routeing from Azores to Murmansk. B.A.D. concurs.
(Cominch, 271737Z)
- O.N.216. W.3. C.3. Westomp 044 degs. 508 N. 047 degs. 38' W. at 1200Z/29th when you will be relieved by W.3 SHAWINIGAN S.O., BRANTFORD, GRANBY.
(2) Upon relief C.3 proceeds St. Johns N.F. negative Pictou who (corrupt group) is remaining (corrupt group) W.O.N. Section 4 ships escort BROCKVILLE joins 1500Z/30th Pictou then proceeds Halifax. Destroyers C.3 proceed St. Johns N.F. with despatch from Westomp.
(F.O.N.F. 271859Z to Ships Escorting Convoy O.N.216.)

Sub./...

6530

27.12.1943.
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. - Contd.

Sub.attack and Sighting Summary.	Para. C. Sub. sighted 23.03 N. 74.37 W. 271433Z. Para. D. Blimp Radar contact 19.51 N. 74.05 W. 270520Z. (Cominch, 272121 to Admty.)
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ROBERT E. PEARY. homing tug. Weather report. (GUYSBOROUGH, 272210Z to C. in C. C.N.A. (R) N.S.H.Q.)	Your 271857 (N.T. in W.R.). ROBERT E. PEARY in no danger of sinking. Will not give U.S. Anchor (?cable) or rig jury rudder. Have to stop to rig complicated gear for every shift of wind in order to steer. 2 days fuel remaining. Am Position is 043 degs. 32' N. 060 degs. 50' W.
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BENTLEY.	Departure from Bermuda. (S.B.N.O.W.At. 272246Z to Admty.) (W.D. Note: for U.K.)
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EMILE BERTIN.	Have Z times throughout. French cruiser EMILE BERTIN departed Martinique 1350/27 for Casablanca. Has been directed report C. in C. Med. on arrival for further orders. (Comcaribseafon, 272345 to Cominch)
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Australia and New Zealand.

Digest Serial No.706 Dec.26th.	For sixth successive night R.A.A.F. Catalinas hit Kavieng. Five aircraft bombed airfield about midnight 25th/26th. starting fires. (2) U.S. Marines landed in strength two beaches Cape Gloucester 7 miles to southwest other western shore Borgen Bay dawn. Cruiser destroyer Task Force bombarded both beaches for 55 minutes prior landing while 42 Liberators, 52 Mitchells with escort dropped 142 tons bombs varying from 1,000 pounders to light phosphorous bombs besides heavily straffing beaches and inland gun positions. No opposition original landings but 2 hours later small formation enemy planes attacked landing craft Borgen Bay beach. Throughout day until evening when bad weather intervened our heavy, medium and attack bombers involving additional 64 Liberators, 51 Mitchells, 32 Bostons with fighters escorting attacked enemy positions with 265 tons bombs also straffing. Mid afternoon Japanese aircraft including estimated 40 dive bombers, 60 fighters, 20 medium bombers attacked beachheads and ships offshore. Damage suffered but insufficient to effect operations.
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Lightnings/...

6531

War Diary.

27.12.1943.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No.707
Dec.26th.
(Contd.)

Lightnings, Thunderbolts engaged Jap planes destroying 14 medium, 22 dive bombers, 25 fighters certain plus one medium, 2 dive bombers, 7 fighters probable. 4 of our fighters missing. (3) Another small party landed successfully Long Island during early hours. (5) 2 Destroyers observed daybreak heading north-east out of Statin Bay.

(6) R/C Liberator observed, 2 freighters, 2 warships described, 1 light cruiser, 1 destroyer 70 miles northeast Lorengau course 310 degs. Single floatplane intercepted without effect. (14) Carrier based A/C hit Havieng harbour 25th where 2 destroyers 2 large, 1 medium, 8 small freighters about 30 barges present. One destroyer, 2 large merchant vessels, 3 barges sunk plus 1 destroyer, several small freighters, many barges, 1 M.T.B. severely damaged. 8 planes strafed on water. Combat patrol shot down 1 flying boat 2 medium bombers Kkrinj Oas. 18 Jap. medium bombers heavily attacked Task Force at dusk without inflicting damage. 1 Avenger made water-landing, several other Allied planes damaged by A/A.
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 270755)

Cape Gloucester Landing 25th Dec. J.S.M.1371 27th Dec. Following is paraphrased version of report from S.W.P.A. dated 26th. (Begins). Unopposed landing at Cape Gloucester 2045Z/25 was effected by amphibious force. A 53 minute bombardment by Allied warships and attacks by medium and heavy bombers preceded the landing. Landing points - 1 mile North Silimati Point (7½ miles South East Cape Gloucester) on Borgen Bay and 3½ miles North Lagoon Point (10½ miles South West Cape Gloucester) (Ends.) (J.S.M. 271617Z to W.C.O.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 271449A, 271450A)

Submarines Attacked.

S/M attack and sighting Summary for 24 hours to 0900Z/27th. Para. A. (1) Am. JOSE NAVARRO torpedoed at 2330/26 in 008 degs. 20' N. 73 degs. 35' E. Para. C. (1) U.S. A/C sighted U-Boat at 1154/26 in 004 degs. 35' N. 006 degs. 50' W. (2) A/C (Swordfish) sighted U-Boat at 0830/26 in 44 degs. 09' N. 25 degs. 54' W. (D.D.I.C. 271043Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

632

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
"F.V."

- 1(a) C. in C.H.F. in DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA and 7 Destroyers, constituting Force 4 left the Kola Inlet at 1730A to-day for Scapa.
- (b) Convoy R.A.55A was about 260 miles E.N.E. of Seidisfiord at 0800. It was scattered by a gale on the 26th., when BEAGLE and ATHABASKAN were detached to the Faeroes with defects; but the Escorts were then still in company.
- (c) Convoy J.W.55B was about 170 miles N.N.E. of the Kola Inlet at 0800 to-day.

Convoy
J.W.56

2. S.B.N.O. North Russia has asked that Convoy J.W.56 may be postponed for 7 days owing to the failure of the Russian Port Authorities to implement their undertaking with regard to the discharge of the vessels of J.W.55A.

Home
Fleet

3. RENOWN arrived at Scapa this morning from Rosyth, and AJAX from Portsmouth.

Operation
"Stonewall"
3 German
Destroyers
sunk.*

(T.25,
T.26,
Z.27)

- 4.(a) GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE on a sweep in the Bay of Biscay today received reports at 1100 from Coastal Command aircraft that a force of ten German destroyers was to seaward of the cruisers and that they were on an easterly course, position 46.48 N. 11.57 W. (about 270 miles south-west of Ushant).
- (b) Course was shaped to cut them off and at 1334 their masts were sighted to the south-west. GLASGOW opened fire 12 minutes later followed shortly afterwards by ENTERPRISE.
- (c) The task of the cruisers at this stage was to prevent any of the destroyers closing to short range. With ten targets to compete with, some destroyers were bound to be unfired at and could thus be expected to develop accurate fire.
- (d) After about an hour during which time the cruisers were also attacked by aircraft with glider bombs, some of the destroyers evidently decided that it was for those who could to get away. This they did after firing torpedoes which the cruisers successfully avoided. Some destroyers were badly damaged during this phase but none were seen to sink.
- (e) There were then four destroyers left. These were fairly well spread out. Three of them (reported as two NARVIKS and one ELBING) were sunk but the fourth though hit got away whilst the others were engaged. This phase ended at 1615.
- (f) GLASGOW expended nearly all her ammunition. ENTERPRISE had her electrical system out of action and had expended all her percussion tubes.

* T.25 (ELBING class destroyer). *Interrogation of survivors.*
C/S.04051 (96).

/(g) Each...

War Diary28.12.1943.
Tuesday.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.

Operation
"Stonewall"
3 German
Destroyers
sunk.
(Contd.)

(g) Each cruiser suffered one hit from destroyers shell fire, but the total casualty list was only two killed and seven injured, none dangerously and the fighting efficiency of the cruisers was almost unimpaired.

(h) Single enemy aircraft made frequent air attacks, but our own fighter aircraft protection prevented any formation attack. Enemy aircraft attacked the cruisers at nightfall as they were retiring to the westward, but all guns were still firing and the attacks were abortive.

(i) 17 U.S.N. Liberators and 4 Halifaxes were despatched this afternoon to attack the enemy destroyers. Six of the Liberators attacked between 1810 and 1848 with 350 lb. bombs and a number of near misses were seen.

(j) The small Irish M.V. KERLOUE, Lisbon to Fishguard picked up 167 German survivors from the action (said to be from one destroyer and 2 motor torpedo boats: †Three survivors died on the voyage) and landed them at Cork on 1st Jan; and Spanish destroyers were sent out from Ferrol and picked up 4 more.

Cruiser and
destroyer
striking
force at
Plymouth.

5 (a) It is intended to establish at Plymouth a force of ultimate strength of two 6" and two 5.25" cruisers and 8 heavily gunned Fleet destroyers with the object of destroying enemy surface forces in the Channel and Bay areas, protection of convoys and craft engaged in amphibious exercises, and to intercept blockade runners.

(b) Consequent on the sinking of the SCHARNHORST the Admiralty consider that it should be possible to reduce the Russian convoy escorts, and they directed C. in C.H.F. today to sail four Tribals to Plymouth and to consider how much more he can do to meet the full destroyer requirement. C. in C. Home Fleet, however, considers that as it appears probable that the U-boat threat to the Russians convoys will increase and as no air cover is possible in winter he is unable to reduce the size of the A/S escort (2nd Jan.) He is transferring to Plymouth ATHABASKAN and ASHANTI (sail 6th Jan.), and IROQUOIS, HAIDA and HURON (sail about 10th Jan.) now with R.A.55B; and he suggested (3rd Jan.) that as the situation in the Bay had improved (as the result of the action of the GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE no doubt) that the requirement of 8 destroyers should be reduced to 5.

6. Off Statland (S.W. Norway) this afternoon Beaufighters of Coastal Command seriously damaged with R.P. a 2000 ton merchant ship, and damaged with R.P. or cannon fire the 3 vessels escorting her.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

7. The submarine SHAKESPEARE (Levant Station) sailed from Gibraltar today for the U.K. to refit.

Mediterranean.

"Avalanche"

8(a) Allied troops completed the occupation of Ortona today. Considerable damage is reported to the quays.

(b) 28 U.S. Invaders attacked Civitavecchia today. The dock area and railway tracks were hit, and 4 possible F-boats moving out of harbour were near missed.

(c) Warhawks bombed and hit the docks at Nettuno and mole at Anzio today.

Greece

9(a) An Italian submarine which was attempting to evacuate Allied personnel from Greece ran aground last night at the point of evacuation and was abandoned by her crew. The British Liaison Officer who was supervising the shore arrangements intends to blow up the submarine tomorrow night. Nothing further is known, but see 1st Jan. 1944.

(b) Recently a caique successfully evacuated 23 Allied personnel from Greece.

Force P

10. The Flag of Rear Admiral T.H. Troubridge D.S.O., Senior Officer Force P, was hoisted in ENDEAVOUR at Suez today.

East Indies.

Station
boundary.

11(a). From 0001 today the boundary of the East Indies Station to the North-West will be the parallel of 15 degs. N. in the Red Sea.

(b) From this date, Cdre. i/c Aden will be responsible to C. in C. Eastern Fleet for the protection and operational control of convoys

/and...

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28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

Station
boundary
(Contd.)

and shipping in the Gulf of Aden, along the southern coast of Arabia, and in the Gulf of Oman. The responsibility of S.N.O. Persian Gulf for the ordering and routeing of convoys in the Gulf portion will cease and will be taken over by N.O.I.C. Hormuz in accordance with the instructions of Cdre. i/c Aden.

(c) S.N.O. Persian Gulf will continue in administration and operational control of the Hormuz Patrol.

12. SS ROBERT F. HOKE, Abadan to Mobasa independently, was reported torpedoed at 0342Z today in 20.06 N. 59.25 E. (about 45 miles north-east of Masira, east coast of Arabia). The ship was abandoned, but later was taken in tow by EMPIRE BOMBARDIER, 20 miles east of Ras Madraka. On the arrival of H.M. Tug MASTERFUL the tow was transferred to her, and the ship was successfully beached on 5th Jan. near Jazirat Sharma (14.49 N. 49.27 E.).

China

13. In an attack on shipping in the Yangste today by U.S. Mitchells escorted by Mustangs one merchant ship was sunk, 2 set on fire, and one badly damaged at Chinchow.

Australia and New Zealand.

14. A destroyer today bombarded Japanese coastal defence positions outside the eastern sector of Torokina perimeter, Bougainville.

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28.12.1943.
Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.Four
destroyers
for
Plymouth.

It is intended to establish a force of ultimate strength of two 6" cruisers, two 5.25" cruisers and 8 heavily-gunned Fleet destroyers at Plymouth with the object of destroying enemy surface forces in the Channel and Bay areas, protection of convoys and craft engaged in amphibious exercises, and to intercept blockade-runners.

2. Consequent on sinking of SCHARNHORST a reduction in your escort requirements for Russian convoys should be possible. It is requested therefore as a first step you will sail four "Tribals" to Plymouth as soon as practicable and after re-appreciating your future plans state how much more you can do to meet the full destroyer requirement.
(V.C.N.S., 281410A to C. in C. H.F.)

Group A.1.

Your 151629 and my 171709. As ACTIVITY is leaving Liverpool later than anticipated Group A.1 will not have completed training until about January 23rd.
(F.O.C.T., 281451A to C. in C. W.A.)

FURIOUS.

It appears unlikely that FURIOUS will be relieved as Home Fleet Carrier before May 1944.
(A.C.N.S.H., 281745A to C. in C. H.F.)

NENE,
TWEED,
ETTRICK.

N.S.H.Q.'s 111530 para. 4. C. in C. W.A. is requested to arrange with N.S.H.Q. for NENE, TWEED, and ETTRICK to be paid off in Canada when mutually convenient before being commissioned by the R.C.N.
(D.O.D.H., 281959A to C. in C. W.A.)

Movements.

RENOWN.

Scapa arrival R.A. 1 B.C.S. in RENOWN escorted by VERULAM.
(A.C.O.S., 280540 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

AJAX.

Scapa arrival AJAX.
(A.C.O.S., 281106 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Group A.

A.M. 271536. Amend R/V in position P to read 270° Skerryvore 45.
(D.O.D.H., 281247A to C.S.1, B.S.1.)

Group A.
Escorts.

C. in C. W.A.'s 231830A.
1. ESSINGTON defective. Intend to sail BERRY in lieu at 1800/28th to Scapa.
2. Anticipate sailing ESSINGTON in lieu of BERRY as in C. in C. W.A.'s 231830A, para. (2).
(N.O.I.C. Belfast, 281555A to A.C.O.S.)

/C. in C. ...

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War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.

Group A. Escorts. (Contd.) C. in C. W.A. 231830. Intend sailing DUCKWORTH and COOKE 1600A/29th to R/V with ESSINGTON, DOMETT, BLACKWOOD, BERRY and GARRETT in 270° Skerryvore 45 miles at 1000A/30th, thence in accordance with A.M. 271536. F.O. 1st C.S. 241540 and 271516 also refers. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 281631A to Admty.)

S/M Movements. Positions of S/Ms at 0800/29 and movements for following 24 hours. (F.O.(S), 281746, 281847.)

SHAKESPEARE. From position (G) in F.O.C. Gibraltar's 271242 SHAKESPEARE proceed dived by day via route "Green" to rendezvous in 180° Bishop 10 miles at 1630/3rd. (F.O.(S), 281928A to Capt. (S) 5, SHAKESPEARE.)

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". 3 enemy destroyers sunk by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE. (T.25, T.26, Z.27) Following is re-encipherment of C.T.G.21.16 272144 from Cominch to Admty. who also passes to Force Three. Begins. Avengers found blockade-runner burning, sinking. On return one plane forged ahead formation disappeared. Made water landing vicinity 44.00 N. 21.00 W. Will operate against ?sub. concentration. Retiring from area on 30th to fuel destroyers. Ends. (C.T.G. 21.16, 280020Z to Cinclant.)
In hope of engaging enemy destroyers it is my intention that risk of air attack on our cruisers during daylight today shall be accepted subject to following - (A) If no news of enemy by 1200A cruisers to withdraw to westward without further orders. (B) If in contact with enemy decision whether and when to break off action will rest with S.O. present taking into consideration hours of daylight remaining, conditions for A/C, and prospect of achieving decisive result.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 280045A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE, (R) Force 3.)
Am over enemy submarine in 44.15 N. 22.05 W. Submarine was on surface and when first sighted was on course 140°, estimated speed 10 knots.
(A/C Duty 'S', 280055A to 19 Group.)
MAURITIUS is placed under the Command of C. in C. Plymouth for Operation "Stonewall".
(V.C.N.S., 280108A to C. in C. Med., MAURITIUS.)
Plymouth at best speed for fuel passing through position (PA) 048° 10' N. 015° 10' W. (PB) 180° Bishop Rock 10. (PC) 180° the Lizard 3.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 280226A to PENELOPE.)
From H/172, 465 followed by 472, 1 4 course 310, 10 knots, position 44.00 N. 22.05 W. Have attacked 0105/28.
(247 Group, 280230Z to H.Q.C.C.)
Request you will sail MAURITIUS forthwith to carry out operation "Stonewall" to (? reach) position (NN) 046° 01' N. 025° 30' W. by 1200A/30th.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 280309A to F.O.C. Gibraltar.)

/Proceed ...

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28.12.1943.
Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Proceed at best speed.
 3 enemy destroyers sunk by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE. (Contd.)
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 280317A to GAMBIA.)
 Refer to this as 272247A from Commorseafon to C.T.G. 21.15 for action and C.T.G. 21.16 for Info. Also 280123 from Cominch to Admty. and N.O.B. Londonderry for Info. From 19 Group received following. Blockade-runner set afire by bombing and sinking at 1615A/27th in 46.32 N. 18.55 W. 19 Group ordered A/C U-Boat hunt in vicinity of sinking. Seventy survivors at 1800A/27th Dec. in 4 lifeboats.
 (Comnavu, 280359 to Admty.)

My A.C.250. Amend position to 43.57 N. 24.04 W. Good attack.
 (247 Group, 280645Z to H.Q.C.C.)
 This is C.T.G. 21.16 280655 relayed by C. in C. U.S. Fleet. C. in C. Plymouth's 280344A (repetition of C. in C. Plymouth 271124) received 0620Z. Destroyers now attacking 3 sound contacts 43.30 21.45 says C.T.G. 21.16.
 (C. in C. U.S. Fleet, 280756Z to C. in C. Plymouth.)
 Estimated P.C.S. at 0900A/28th. PENELOPE 042° 28' N. 014° 14' W., 353°, 22 knots.
 ARIADNE patrolling vicinity 045° N. 015° W. till 1200, then 342° 20 knots.
 GAMBIA 042° 42' N. 018° 45' W., 050°, 27 knots.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 280838A to Force 3, ARIADNE.)
 Two or three homeward bound U-Boats estimated 1200Z/28th within 90 miles of 45° 00' N. 17° 00' W.
 (D.D.I.C., 280906A to ARIADNE.)
 When action is joined take ARIADNE under your orders.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 280932A to GLASGOW.)
 3 enemy ships, course 270°, position 46° 48' N. 11° 57' W.
 (A/C Duty 'V', 280940 to 19 Group.)
 Reference positions for enemy reports (XX) 45° N. 15° W.
 (YY) 45° N. 10° W.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 280955A to Force 3, ARIADNE.)
 4 more destroyer S.W.
 (A/C Duty 'V', 281018 to 19 Group.)
 Proceed to patrol vicinity of 045° 12' N. 013° 20' W.
 Primary object R/C and shadowing.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 281031A to ARIADNE.)
 Request you will sail French (C) LE FANTASQUE as soon as ready towards Horta.
 (2) Request endurance figures for LE MALIN and LE FANTASQUE at 15, 20 and 25 knots.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 281038A to F.O.C. Gibraltar.)
 4 destroyers position 46° 48' N. 11° 57' W., reversed course 15 joined by 2 further destroyers. Total 10 destroyers German.
 (A/C Duty 'V', 281100 to 19 Group.)
 Have A.S.V. contact, 47° 07' N. 19° 45' W.
 (A/C Duty 'Q', 281103 to 19 Group.)
 1 enemy destroyer position 46° 33' N. 12° 30' W., course 090°, speed 20 knots.
 (A/C Duty 'Q', 281120A to 19 Group.)
 By D/F at 0928Z unknown enemy unit, probably destroyer or torpedo boat, estimated within 60 miles of 46° 30' N. 12° 30' W.
 (D.D.I.C., 281130A to A.I.G.62, H.Q.C.C.)
 Destroyers line abreast, opened fire, small M.V. same position course, speed unknown, enemy A/C cover. Contact lost with above due to evasive.
 (A/C Duty 'Q', 281140 to A/C PMPQ.)

/Beaufighter ...

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War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall".
3 enemy destroyers sunk by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE.
(Contd.)

Beaufighter and Mosquito aircraft of 19 Group will R/V with GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE in vicinity 046° 32' N. 010° 28' W. at about 1400A. GLASGOW is acting as fighter directing ship, ENTERPRISE standing by F.D.S.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281152A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.)
Estimated 10 enemy destroyers in 046° 33' N. 012° 30' W., at 1120, steering 090°, 20 knots.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281155A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.)

(1) Steer towards 046° N. 013° W.
(2) On completion operation intend PENELOPE to refuel at Gibraltar.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281215A to GAMBIA, PENELOPE.)
Am being attacked by one enemy A/C position 46.45 N. 13.05 W. at 1220.
(A/C Duty 'L', 281225 to 19 Group.)
11 ships position 47° 05' N. 12° 40' W., 140°, 14 knots.
(A/C Duty 'X', 281230 to 19 Group.)
If no further information and nothing sighted sweep to north-west at 1430 (my 281155).
(2) Estimate your position at that time 046° 31' N. 010° 38' W.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281244A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.)
Course 11 ships, 105°.
(A/C Duty 'X', 281305 to 19 Group.)
My 281031. Shift patrol to vicinity 046° 15' N. 012° 15' W.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281306A to ARIADNE.)
Course 11 ships, 17(?)°.
(A/C Duty 'X', 281320 to 19 Group.)
Enemy in sight bearing 240°, distant 12.5 miles. My position 325 YY 118.
(GLASGOW, 281335 to Whitehall W/T.)
Course 11 ships, 150°.
(A/C Duty 'X', 281340A to 19 Group.)
4 destroyers bearing 230°, distance 11 miles, course 130°.
My position 324 YY 119. (GLASGOW, 281342 to Whitehall W/T).
Nr.7. 02 destroyers 46° 30' N. 11° 20' W., course 245, speed 18, escorted by 2 A/C.
(A/C Duty 'V', 281345 to 19 Group.)
My P.C.S. 043° 30' N. 016° 34' W., 054°, 20 knots.
(ARIADNE, 281400 to C. in C. Plymouth.)
My 1335A. 10 destroyers bearing 204° to 224°, range 8 miles, course 150°, position 46.29 N. 11.45 W. based on fix obtained within half an hour.
(GLASGOW, 281402 to Whitehall W/T.)
Close the enemy.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281431A to Force 3, ARIADNE.)
My P.C.S. 46.20 N. 11.35 W., 340°, 30 knots. Enemy has split into 2 or 3 small groups. Narviks steering North. Some hits have been scored on both sides. No sinking observed.
(GLASGOW, 281447 to C. in C. Plymouth.)
Expect 19 friendly bombers in area about 1630. Liberators and Halifaxes.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 281449A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.)
6 destroyers leaving action, course 125°, speed 20 knots.
(A/C Duty 'X', 281455 to 19 Group.)

War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". 4 Narvik class destroyers being engaged by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE. 1 damaged and stopped. 3 enemy destroyers sunk by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE. (Contd.)

2 other(s) hit(s), 1 intact. My P.C.S. 46° 16' N. 11° 49' W., 260°, 30 knots. (GLASGOW, 281521A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

GLASGOW ammunition nearly expended. ENTERPRISE electrical gun circuits defective and percussion tube expended.

Enemy destroyers divided. One stopped and disabled. I am engaging southbound destroyers. 2 northbound destroyers may have got away, but not undamaged. My P.C.S. 46° 10' N. 11° 50' W., 260°, 30 knots. (GLASGOW, 281555A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Disposition at 282000.

(1) Hospital ship LLANDOVERY CASTLE 049° 58' N. 013° 20' W., 062°, 13 knots.

(2) Hospital ship LADY NELSON off Trevoze Head 1700, 280°, 13½ knots.

(3) Hospital ship AMARAPOORA 044° 20' N. 012° 00' W., 180°, 11.3 knots.

(5) ARIADNE vicinity 046° 15' N, 012° 15' W.

(6) GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE, PENELOPE, GAMBIA vicinity 046° 30' N. 011° 00' W. (C. in C. Plymouth, 281559A to Admty.)

My P.C.S. 043° 54' N. 015° 50' W., 032°, 20 knots. (ARIADNE, 281600 to GLASGOW.)

My number 02, number 03 reported 3 destroyers, 1 motor vessel.

(A/C Duty 'Q', 281605A to 19 Group.)

Nr.1. Position of one destroyer 46.22 N. 11.58 W. (A/C Duty 'G', 281615 to 19 Group.)

Destroyers position 46° 22' N. 11° 18' W., course 290°, speed 25. Enemy has altered course to (704)5°.

(A/C Duty 'J', 281625 to 19 Group.)

My P.C.S. 044° 32' N. 013° 30' W., 045°, 22. (PENELOPE, 281630 to GLASGOW.)

Enemy previously reported course 090°, speed 14 knots. (A/C Duty 'G', 281630 to 19 Group.)

Enemy has altered course to 090°.

(A/C Duty 'J', 281640A to 19 Group.)

My 1630. Still in touch with enemy previously reported. (A/C Duty 'G', 281645 to 19 Group.)

Result of action. 2 Narvik and 1 Elbing class sunk. Regret 7 got away with some damage. GLASGOW casualties 2 killed, 6 slight injured, some minor damage. ENTERPRISE minor damage, no casualties. My P.C.S. 46° 24' N. 12° 02' W., 270°, 25 knots. ENTERPRISE in company. (GLASGOW, 281659A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

12 unknown destroyers in vicinity. (A/C Duty 'G', 281700 to 19 Group.)

RMRG's 1615. This destroyer has been sunk (corrupt group). (GLASGOW, 281706A to A.O.C. 19 Group.)

Still in touch with enemy previously reported in 46° 25' N. 10° 55' W. (A/C Duty 'J', 281710A to 19 Group.)

Position of 2 enemy destroyers 46.03 N. 12.31 W., course 085°, speed 25 knots. (A/C Duty 'A', 281715A to 19 Group.)

/2 destroyers ...

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall".	2 destroyers, 1 M/V, position 46° 20' N., course 105°, 18 knots. 2 destroyers 46° 45' N. 10° 12' W. (2 groups corrupt) 20 knots.
3 enemy destroyers sunk by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE.	(A/C Duty 'S', 281715 to 19 Group.) Shadowing escaping enemy destroyer. (A/C Duty 'G', 281720 to 19 Group.)
(Contd.)	Speed in knots. Endurance in miles
	15 3150
	20 2550
	25 1600
	30 1300

Maximum speed 39.5. Maximum cruising speed for 24 hours 36.
Best high cruising speed 27 knots. Economic speed 16.
Your 281038 refers.

(F.O.G.M.A., 281721A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Enemy joined by 3 more 46° 22' N. 11° (?) 55' W.

(A/C Duty 'G', 281730 to 19 Group.)

My P.C.S. 044° 53' N. 015° 08' W., 052°, 27 knots.

(GAMBIA, 281731A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Nr.2. Enemy has altered course to 270°.

(A/C Duty 'A', 281740 to 19 Group.)

Enemy has altered course to ? (4 or 12) 5°.

(A/C Duty 'J', 281745A to 19 Group.)

Indicate your P.C.S. at 1800A and endurance remaining at revolutions for 22 knots.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 281753A to ARIADNE.)

Nr.1. Large oil slick. Many survivors in life-rafts position (046°) 30' N. 011° 40' W. Friendly cruisers bearing 270°, distance 27 miles.

(A/C Duty 'C', 281758 to 19 Group.)

P.C.S., 044° 26' N. 015° 14' W., 052°, 20 knots.

(ARIADNE, 281800A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Withdraw to westward of 14° W., thence northwards.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 281808A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE.)

Position of 6 enemy destroyers 46.23 N. 10.49 W.

(A/C Duty 'U', 281810 to 19 Group.)

Enemy previously reported position 46° 20' N. 10° 56' W., 090°, 15 knots.

(A/C Duty 'G', 281810 to 19 Group.)

Have attacked destroyer STRALLEDWE with bombs. Damaged.

Returning to base.

(A/C Duty 'L', 281815 to 19 Group.)

Ammunition and fuel report. GLASGOW main armament ammunition remaining shells 15% mainly H.E., 4 inch 90%, 40% fuel.

ENTERPRISE 50% ammunition, 45% fuel. Main armament 80% efficient, 3 torpedoes remaining. Intend both ships return to Plymouth.

(GLASGOW, 281816A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Proceed south-westward till west of 015° W., thence Gibraltar as ordered by F.O.C. Gibraltar.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 281816A to PENELOPE.)

LE FANTASQUE sailed for Horta at 1745A/28th.

2. Route (A) 35.30 N. 10.00 E. (B) 37 N. 20 W. (C) 38 N. 25 W. S.O.A. 18 knots.

4. FANTASQUE holds "Stonewall" orders and all relevant intelligence.

(F.O.G.M.A., 281821A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Proceed Plymouth by route ordered in A.M. 271239A.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 281825A to ARIADNE.)

/Enemy ...

War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS:Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" Enemy ships being attacked by aircraft.
 3 enemy destroyers (A/C Duty 'G', 281830 to 19 Group).
 sunk by Going into attack 6 destroyers 46.23 N. 10.49 W.
 GLASGOW and (A/C Duty 'V', 281830A to 19 Group).
 ENTERPRISE. Over raft, 9 aboard, position 46.17 N. 11.37 W.
 (Contd.). (A/C Duty 'N', 281840 to 19 Group).
 4 destroyers reported in 46° 45' N. 09° 43' E.
 (?should be "West"?) course 105°, 20 knots.
 (A/C Duty 'S', 281845 to 19 Group).
 Nr. 10. Enemy previously reported 46° (700') N.
 10° 26' W., course 090°, (?18) knots.
 (A/C Duty "G", 281850 to 19 Group).
 2 destroyers previously reported 45.51 N. 13.02 W., course
 180°, speed 20.
 (A/C Duty 'A', 281850 to 19 Group).
 Proceed forthwith to 048° 30' N. 025° 00' W. at normal
 cruisers speed. Orders for patrol follow. Report fuel situation.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 281857A to GAMBIA).
 An excellent day's work.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 281902A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE).
 Hasten reply to my 280055A.
 (C. in C.W.A., 281922A to C.3.).
 Your 281659. Well done.
 (V.C.N.S., 281925A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE).
 Contact lost. Last seen 46° 35' N. 10° 35' W., course 130°
 speed 20 knots. Reached P.L.E. Returning.
 (A/C Duty 'J', 281925 to 19 Group).
 2 destroyers, 1 (corrupt group), heavy gunfire, 46° 02' N.
 12° 48' W.
 (A/C Duty 'N', 281930A to 19 Group).
 R/B fuel. Position 46° 07' N. 10° 10' W. Enemy previously
 reported position 46° 17' N. 10° 14' W., 090°, speed 20 knots.
 (A/C Duty 'G', 281937 to 19 Group).
 Naval gunfire seen position 46° 34' N. 13° (grp. missing) W.
 (A/C Duty 'N', 281930 to 19 Group).
 My 281809A. Proceed Plymouth through positions (GA) 048°
 59' N. 014° 00' W. (GB) 050° 10' N. 011° 34' W. and (GC) 34°
 Wolf Rock 18.
 (2) 2 submarines leaving vicinity of Bishop Rock westbound
 a.m./29th.
 (3) 3 Hunt destroyers will be sent to meet you a.m./29th if
 you require them.. Request immediate reply.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 281938A to GLASGOW, ENTERPRISE).
 Attacked enemy destroyers position 46.(717') N. 11.55 W.
 course 250°, speed 25 knots. Negative damage, operations
 completed. Am returning.
 (A/C Duty 'P', 281938A to 19 Group).
 Have A.S.V. contact, position 46° 40' N. 09° W., probably
 4 S/Vs.
 (A/C Duty 'H', 282003 to 19 Group).
 Ref. my 261630A December it seems likely that a 3rd inward
 bound blockade runner will pass 30° W. on 29th or 30th Dec.
 and that she may be a slightly slower ship than the first.
 2. It is requested that on 30th December and subsequent days
 until the position becomes clear an air patrol about 180 miles
 eastward of patrol L details of which will be signalled, and
 a second patrol in the approx. area 50° N. to 46° N. and 17° W.
 to 20 W. may be established. Any extension to the southward of
 the latter area found possible is desirable.
 3. Patrol L to be discontinued after tomorrow.
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 282023A to H.Q.C.C.).

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War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". 2 destroyers position 46.12 N. 09.44 W., course 210°, 25 knots.
3 enemy destroyers (A/C Duty 'C', 282024 to 19 Group.)
sunk by Your 281922, para. 3. No thank you.
GLASGOW and (GLASGOW, 282124A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
ENTERPRISE. Dropped flare. Nil seen but A.S.V. contact
(Contd.) maintained type unknown position 46° 40' N. 08° 20' W., 090°, 20. Visibility is 800 yards.
(A/C Duty 'H', 282140 to 19 Group.)
Fuel remaining 63%. My P.C.S. 045° 56' N. 015° 52' W., 293°, 18 knots. Weather 5562 3023.
(GAMBIA, 282303A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
Nr. 3. Still in touch with enemy previously reported, type unknown, position 46° 29' N. 07° 36' W., course 100°?, speed 18.
(A/C Duty 'H', 282319 to 19 Group.)
Surface vessel detected by R.D.F. bearing 253°, six miles, position 265° 46 N. 16 W., 4 miles.
(GAMBIA, 282358A to Whitehall W/T.)
(Note: This was ARIADNE. ~~7~~ (P. 664))

Operation F.V. SPEEDWELL (S.O.), HUSSAR, HALCYON, 3 Russian destroyers and 4 Russian minesweepers sailed local escort duties.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 280705A to H.F.)
(SCHARNHORST sunk 26/12) My 171531. Local authorities state completion of vessels at Murmansk of J.W.55A and B 20th January. First 7 days daily average discharge J.W.55A 200 tons i.e. considerably worse than J.W.54 despite promises made. Port Authorities assert ability for future average daily discharge 500 tons with accompanying port clearance, promising additional and skilled labour available in near future. Apparent limitations of port will be strained to utmost to approach this output. Therefore request J.W.56 be postponed 7 days. Further signals will be made should extension of postponement be considered necessary.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 281235A to Admty.)
For N.C.S.O. Murmansk. Ships mentioned in para. 5 of your 260826 will not be ready to sail in R.A.55B. S.B.N.O. Polyarnoe's and my 241042 refer.
(S.B.N.O. Archangel, 281258A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)
SAUMAREZ is to join escort of R.A. 55B.
(C. in C. H.F., 281039A to R.A.D., SAUMAREZ, Capt. D.17.)
1. P.C.S. R.A. 55A at 1100/26th was 074° 00' N. 009° 05' E. 216°, 5 knots. Scattered by gale: escort still in company.
BEAGLE, ATHABASKAN detached to Faroes for fuel and defect. Other destroyers may also be detached unless weather moderates.
2. Defects as follows: ATHABASKAN condenser trouble and Radar all types out of action. BEAGLE steaming on one boiler with 40 hours endurance remaining. Defective distilling plant: temporary repairs doubtful.
3. My P.C.S. 2000A/28th, 066° 12' N. 002° 10' W., 204°, 7 knots. Weather 7444 1696.
(BEAGLE, 282001A to C. in C. H.F.)
Comply with para. 3 C. in C. H.F. 271921A.
(H.Q.C.C., 281433A to 18 Group.)
Kola Inlet sailed Force 4.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 281730A to H.F.)
Kola Inlet arrival HAIDA with HURON and IROQUOIS in company.
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 282155A to Capt. D.17.)

/ S/M ...

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations - Contd.

S/M SEANYMPH sailed 0830A/28th routed through 089°
 Patrols. Muckle Flugga 10, then by route "Orange" to 065°
 30', thence through 066° 40', 010° 40' to patrol
 vicinity Tenholm Fiord unescorted and on the
 surface at C.O. discretion till within 60 miles
 of Norwegian coast.
 (S.O. S/M Lerwick, 280931A to S/MS.)
 My 071934 para. (G). For EE substitute patrol line LL mid
 position 062° 10' N. 002° 40' E. running 070° and 250°, length
 40 miles.
 (F.O.(S), 281139A to Capts. (S) 3, (S) 9.)
 Cancel my 271523.
 Request you sail SPITEFUL at 1600A/29th routed through 090°
 Muckle Flugga 5 miles, thence direct position LL. Object F and
 A.
 (Capt. (S) 9, 281245A to S.O. S/M Lerwick.)
 Times Zone A. Own submarines positions 0800/29th and
 movements in following 24 hours.
 (A) SYRTIS 68° 40' N. 09° 20' E. on surface to 64° 01' N.
 02° 45' E., 10 knots.
 (B) SIRDAR 68° 52' N. 08° 32' E. on surface to 62° 02' N. 000°
 38' W., 10 knots.
 (C) SEADOG off Stadtlandet. (D) SCEPTRE off Kya.
 (E) SEANYMPH 63° 41' N. 03° 15' E. on surface 10 knots to 65°
 30' N. 05° 43' E. then through 66° 40' N. 10° 40' E. to operate
 in vicinity 67° 02' N. 11° 59' E. diving when within 60 miles
 of Norway.
 (F) ULA off Skudesnes.
 (F.O.(S), 281746 to Admty.)

Operation Intend to carry out "Bellpush B" tonight.
 "Bellpush B". (F.O. Force "J", 281022 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Operations Carry out Operation "Manacle 8" and "Hardtack 23"
 "Manacle" tonight.
 and (V.A. Dover, 281024A to S.O. L.C.I.(S), T.T.B.25,
 "Hardtack". Commandos 4 and 10.)
 My 281024. Both operations abandoned tonight
 Tuesday.
 (V.A. Dover, 282304A to Admty.)

Coastal 1. Orders for night 28th/29th December.
 Force A. 4 M.T.Bs. from Newhaven offensive patrol for
 Patrols. torpedo targets off enemy waters coast North of
 49° 35' N. East of 00° 00' and West of 00° 35' E.
 Proceed and return by passage two passing 2 S at
 2200A and returning to within 20 miles of own
 coast by 0800A. On no account to proceed West of 00° 00'.
 B. 2 Chasseurs anti E-Boat patrol on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35'
 W. and 00° 48' W. from 1800A to 0700A.
 C. M.L.291 short notice St. Helens.
 D. LA COMBATTANTE short notice Yarmouth.
 E. 2 M.G.Bs. from Portland patrolling 50° 20' N. between 02°
 00' and 02° 35' W.

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Coastal Force Patrols. (Contd.) F. 2 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven covering eastbound inshore movement of merchant vessels from 2100A to 0100A. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 281306A and 281510A.) M.T.Bs. 204, 231, 229, 417 and S.4. E.T.D. 1640 and L.C.I.(S) 518 and 527 E.T.D. 1505, E.T.R. 0600/29 and M.Ls. 573 and 213 E.T.D. 1830, E.T.R. 0500/29, all operating south of Bullock Bank. M.G.Bs. 43 and 40 from Ramsgate at No.7 Buoy, E.T.D. 1715, E.T.R. 0845/29. M.Ls. 142 and 141 two miles south of B Buoy. M.Ls. 104 and 107 E.T.D. 1630, E.T.R. 0400/29 and M.T.B.25 from Dover E.T.D. 1640 and M.T.B. 436 from Ramsgate E.T.D. 1650, all operating eastward of V Buoy. E.T.R. 0200/29. (V.A. Dover, 281621A.)

Three enemy M/Vs. torpedoed by O. 15 on 26th December. O.15 reports. At 261230 fired 3 torpedoes, individually aimed, at the 3 last ships of a convoy of 6 escorted by 1 trawler. Targets 2500 - 3500 tons. All torpedoes hit. P.C. and S. of enemy 059° 01' N. 005° 26' E., 120°, 6 knots. Range 1100 yards. O.15 went deep on firing. On diving to periscope depth escort was lying stopped in position of attack. No other ships were in sight. Escort was fitted with Asdic but apparently had no depth charges. She seemed to search for O.15 and pass directly overhead approximately 5 minutes after firings. Swell made periscope observation difficult throughout. (S.O. S/M Lerwick, 281530A to F.O.S.)

Mining.

M/S. 16. C. in C. Portsmouth 271656. Request you will sail ships to Plymouth tomorrow. They are to sweep Q.Z.S.441 to 3° W. and Q.Z.S.442 to 180° Start Point 4 miles in H formation at maximum depth practicable thence steam to Plymouth by Q.Z.S. 416 and 443. (C. in C. Plymouth, 281333 to F.O.I.C. Portland.) Your 281333A. 1. Intend sailing TADOUSSAC, BEAUMARIS, and PARRSBORO at 0800 tomorrow for Plymouth carrying out sweeping as instructed in your 281333 on passage. (F.O.I.C. Portland; 281806 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

KINGSTON BERYL. Your 271440A. Concur. (C. in C. C.N.A., 281450Z to C. in C. W.A., (R) Admty., F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

M/S. 9. Your 240951A and 261530A. 1. No moored mines north of line joining positions: (A) 50° 27.3' N. 01° 12.8' W. (B) 50° 27.4' N. 02° 04.0' W. (C) 50° 28.9' N. 01° 52.4' W. (M/S.9, 282125A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Possible Blockade runner. Your 271316. It is possible that vessel encountered was an inward bound blockade runner. A.M. 221945 refers. Report forthwith a description of the ship and whether the correct recognition procedure was carried out. (C. in C. W.A., 280053A to C.3.)

Enemy M/V. Aircraft reported unidentified 3 island type 6,000 tons merchant ship in 060° 27' N. 018° 33' W., steering 120°, 10 knots at 1819A/27th. (C. in C. W.A., 280119A to Escorts O.N.217.)

Enemy Convoy. P.C.S. 6 medium vessels, 1 escort vessel, 61.56 N. 05.00 E., 350, 10. (A/C Duty 'P', 281009A to 18 Group.)

U-Boats.

U-Boats sunk on 6th Nov. We congratulate STARLING, WOODCOCK, KITE and WILD GOOSE on the following A/S hunts which have been assessed as "known sunk".
(a) 0400Z/6th November by STARLING, WOODCOCK and KITE.
(b) 1555Z/6th November by STARLING and WILD GOOSE. (1st S.L., 281949A to STARLING, KITE, WOODCOCK, WILD GOOSE.)

Casualties and Defects.

FREDERICK BARTHOLDI. On arrival YORK CITY return to Loch Ewe. Signal number of survivors on board if any. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea, 280931A to POLKA.)

CHILLIWACK. E.T.A. Merville 1700Z. Important defect Radar and leaking condenser. (CHILLIWACK, 281216A to C. in C. W.A.)

EMPIRE FAITH. SS. EMPIRE FAITH went aground on entering harbour at 2100/27th off Fisher Point, Loch Ewe. Efforts are being made to refloat on flood tide tonight after unsuccessful attempt this morning with aid of four tugs. If unsuccessful by noon on 29th Salvage Vessel may be required. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea, 281751 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

ALEKSANDAR I. Ashore on Ridire Island 1855. Need immediate tug. Forepeak and number 1 bilge leaking. (ALEKSANDAR I, 281845Z to N.O.I.C. Greenock.)
ALEKSANDAR I grounded on Eilean Rudha an Ridire Sound of Mull. Tug EMPIRE ARIEL and SOUTHERN STAR standing by. (N.O.I.C. Oban, 282345A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

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Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties and Defects - Contd.

M.T.B. 357. During night of 24th/25th engine room of M.T.B. 357 became flooded while vessel was shifting berth in Dover Harbour. After being taken in tow by tug, M.T.B.357 sank in the vicinity of number 1 buoy before she could be beached. It is hoped to lift her tomorrow. Cause of flooding not established. Torpedoes and depth charges were embarked and set to safe. (V.A. Dover, 281851A to Admty.)

Shipping and Convoys.

Stragglers. Admiralty's O41340B May. Stragglers return week ending 0915/28th December.

O.N.S.25:

BEAUREGARD	- Ballast shifted.
STAR OF EGYPT	- 2 lifeboats lost, unable to keep up.
BONAIRE	- Defective main fuel pumps, unable to overtake.
BELGIQUE	- 2 lifeboats smashed and rudder damaged.
BERING	- Lost convoy (mis-directed)
O.N.M. 217:	
WILLIAM MACKINLEY	- Ballast shifted.
O.S.62/K.M.S.36:	
FYLINGDALE	- Heavy weather unable to keep up.
KANA	- Heavy weather unable to keep up.
INGERTRE	- Heavy weather unable to keep up.
EMPIRE WATERHEN	- 1 lifeboat lost. Boiler trouble.
ALLERTON	- 1 lifeboat lost - lost convoy.
BARON DOUGLAS	- Accommodation damage and bulkheads leaking - unable to overtake.
BLAIRDEVON	- 2 rafts lost, decks strained and leaking.
GUJARAT	- Cargo shifted, 3 lifeboats lost.
SRECA	- Unable to keep up.
EMPIRE PEACOCK	- Oil cooling pipe broken.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 280915A to Admty.)	

S.L.143/
M.K.S.34.
STRIKER. Reported P.C.S. 1800Z/27th, 036° 32' N. 015° 39' W., 318°, 6½ knots. STRIKER is to leave O.S.62/K.M.S.36 as in my 271228 joining S.L.143/M.K.S.34 as convenient.
(C. in C. W.A., 280958A to STRIKER.)

O.N. 217. Noon P.C.S. 060° 26' N. 018° 17' W., 306°, 6 knots. Carry out procedure H homing at 1500Z.
(KOOTENAY, 281156Z to DUNVER.)

T.A. 81. MAURETANIA sailed 1225/28th.
(P.S.T.O. N.W.Ports, 281528A to D.S.T.)

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Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys. - Contd.

R.U. 102. Your 271706. GLOXINIA was reported not in company. CAPE PALLISER 261100 refers. Request she be ordered to Loch Ewe.
(A.C.I.C., 281651A to C. in C. W.A.)

M.A.C. ships. In order to distribute M.A.C. ships as evenly as possible following allocations in addition to those already signalled are proposed for January and February. Ships should as far as possible be sailed to comply.

2. To avoid congestion during loading and discharge only one grain ship should sail with each fast convoy and to prevent bunching it is requested that special arrangements may be made at Halifax to sail EMPIRE MACCABE, EMPIRE MACALLUM and EMPIRE MACALPINE with H.X.277, H.X.278, and H.X.279 respectively.

3. When two M.A.C. ships have been allocated, M.A.C. tankers which have completed loading or discharge may if their aircraft are serviceable be sailed to join an earlier convoy provided one tanker M.A.C. ship is available for the next slow convoy.
(D.T.D., 281806 to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.C.T.)

K.M.S. 34, Failed to contact convoy K.M.S.34. Proceeding
JAUNTY. U.K. independently.
(JAUNTY, 282100A to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.28.12.1943.
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.

Operation "Stonewall". After transfer of Flag of F.O.15th C.S. proceed so as to comply with C. in C.Plymouth's 280309. Communications as for operation "Stonewall" keeping guard on Gib. broadcast while in area X. (F.O.C.Gib. 280632A to MAURITIUS, (R) C. in C.Med. C. in C.W.A. Admty. C. in C.Plymouth, Force 3, H.Q.C.C. S.B.N.O.Azores, F.O.15th C.S. LE MALIN.)

Sailed MAURITIUS.

(F.O.G.M.A. 280938A to C. in C.Plymouth, (R) Admty. C. in C.Med. C. in C.W.A. S.B.N.O.Azores, H.Q.C.C.)

Departure LE MALIN Horta 0015Z/28th.

(S.B.N.O.Azores 281001Z to C. in C.Plymouth, (R) Admty. C. in C.W.A. F.O.G.M.A. C. in C.Med. GAMBIA, GLASGOW.)

Following received from LE MALIN (begins)

En route (as recd.) for operation "Stonewall". Request using with me British French code. No possession "Checkmate" procedure neither 19 group recognition wave neither document identification M/ship. Shall return Horta 31st, am requesting fuel and navigation document for 1944. Please pass to all authorities C. in C.Plymouth's 271220 (?) refers T.O.O. 272355 (ends.)

(S.B.N.O.Azores 281011Z to C. in C.Plymouth, (R) F.O.G.M.A. Admty.)

Arrived LE FANTASQUE from Algiers.

(F.O.G.M.A. 282055A.)

SHAKESPEARE.

Sailed, my 271242 refers.

(F.O.G.M.A. 280914A to Admty. F.O.S. (R) C. in C. Plymouth, Cinc W.A. C. in C.Medn. S.3, 5 (E.O.F.F?) Cominch, S.10.)

W.D.Note For U.K. to refit.

M.K.S. 34.

TUDOR PRINCE
& STANHOPE.

Both loaded Seville.

Routine underwater search was not completely carried out at Gib.

2. Retain close touch with these two vessels.

(F.O.G.M.A. 281143 to S.E.C. M.K.S.34, (R) Admty.)

S.L.143

/M.K.S.34.
WATCHMAN,
GLENARM.

My 271819 para. 4. Request you will sail at best speed to join and support S.L.143/M.K.S.34 immediately on completion of oiling and transfer of survivors.

(C. in C.W.A. 281149A to F.O.G.M.A. (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, S.O.E.G.B.3, Admty. C. in C.Plymouth, STRIKER, E.G.6.)

On completion of fuelling proceed to support S.L.143.

2. Convoy escorted by B.3 in TOWY, NARCISSUS, ORCHIS, LOBELIA, ACONITE, BURZA, ROSELYS, SAPPER, LADY MADELEINE and rescue tug ASSIDUOUS.

3. Estimated position at 2000A/29th 040° 45' N. 019° 30' W.

4. Report on sailing A. P.C. and S. B. estimated R/V.

(F.O.G.M.A. 281545A to WATCHMAN, GLENARM, (R) C. in C.Plymouth, S.B.N.O.Azores, S.E.Convoy S.L.143, C. in C.W.A. E.G.6, Admty. H.Q.C.C.)

/Request...

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

S.L.143/
M.K.S.34.
WATCHMAN,
GLENARM.
(Contd.) Request instructions for GLENARM and WATCHMAN, probable E.T.A. Horta 0900/29th. Propose sailing ships to Ponta Delgada to fuel as soon as transfer of survivors has taken place owing to congestion at Horta. Stay of 24 hours only permissible at Ponta Delgada.
(S.B.N.O.Azores 281656Z to C. in C.W.A. (R) F.O.G.M.A.)

S.L.143/M.K.S.34. GLENARM reports defects requiring 24 hours work by ships staff. Request WATCHMAN be sailed as in my 281149 and GLENARM when ready.
(C. in C.W.A. 282310A to F.O.G.M.A. (R) Admty. S.B.N.O. Azores, STRIKER, C. in C.Plymouth, S.O.E.G.B.3, E.G.6th.)

CESENA. Re no instructions for release given by Spanish M.F.A.
(B.N.A.Madrid 281306A.)

LUGANO and GENEROSO. Leave Marseilles for Gib. about 31st Dec. and 1st Jan. respectively.
(D.E.W.D. 291415A to F.O.G.M.A. Info. C. in C.Med.)

BOTHNIA. Arrived Ponta Delgada 27th straggler from O.S.62 with heavy weather damage. Survey held today estimate requires 21 days to effect tempy. repairs.
(N.C.S.O.Ponta Delgada 281524 to Admty. (R) N.C.S.O.Lisbon, B.S.N.O.Azores.)

WHITEHAVEN,
BOSTON. F.O.C.Gib.'s 271742 (N.T. in W.D.) and 272202. Anticipate that relief escort should not be necessary on route given in F.O.C.Gib.'s 271800 (N.T. in W.D.)
2. If on account of weather or other cause endurance of escorts should prove insufficient they are to proceed to Falmouth at P.L.E. informing C. in C.Plymouth of intentions in advance.
(D.O.D.(H) 281739A to F.O.G.M.A. S.O.14th M/S F. (WHITEHAVEN) Info. S.B.N.O.Azores, C. in C.Plymouth, C. in C.W.A.)

South Atlantic.

DUMANA sunk 24th Dec. Re C.A.F.O.97. A. M.V. DUMANA. B. British. C. 24th, 2030 G.M.T. D. 04° 27' N. 07° 05' W. E. Sunk. G. 130.
(N.C.S.O.Takoradi 281110Z to D. of T.D. (R) F.O.C.W.Af.)

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.- Contd.

HIGHLAND
MONARCH.

Your 071715 not to N.O.I.C. Ascension confirm escort will be provided. Propose loading 150 tons stores for Ascension in HIGHLAND MONARCH, and ship calling at Ascension on passage from Falkland Is. to Freetown.

Escorts will meet at Ascension to screen during unloading. N.O.I.C. Falkland Is. is requested to signal expected time of arrival Ascension as soon as known.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 281234Z to Admty. N.O.I.C. Falkland Islands, (R) C. in C.S.A. N.O.I.C. Ascension.

F.T.1.

Fleet tender 1 left Natal 24th for Rio de Janeiro for repair to hull estimated to require 2 months. She arrived Bahia 27th and is expected to leave 30th in convoy for Rio de Janeiro.
(B.N.S.O.Rio de Janeiro 281501Z to Admty.)

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- P.52 (DZIK.) Shifting patrol forthwith to within 5 miles of 037° 16' 026° 23'.
(Capt. S.1 280032B to P.52 (DZIK), (R) P.224 (SICKLE), P.47 (DOLFIJN) C. in C.Levant.)
- Air reports. A.F. 282 28th, M.A.A.F. Opsum 310. M.A.C.A.F. 27th 2 Beaufighters searched for found and photographed grounded German ship Spanish coast South of Tortosa.
(H.Q.M.A.A.F. 281243A.)
W.D.Note. C. in C.M.E. 291915B gives Saseno Island.
- PROTEE. Following is a repetition of my 271925 (N.T. in W.D.) begins: Addressed as above. Leave patrol to pass 042° 30' 006° 06' at 0400/1st 039° 59' 006° 27' at 0700/2nd; 038° 06' 006° 27' at 1700/2nd, to R/V at 0900/3rd in 036° 56' 003° 04' proceeding on surface except for daylight 1st Jan. Ends.
(Capt. S.10th, 281020 to PROTEE, (R) ARETHUSE, CASABIANCA, 10th S/M F. C. in C.Med. N.O.I.C.Algiers)
- UPROAR. Aircraft report one merchant ship 800 tons in 043° 12' N. 006° 45' E. at 1245A course 45° at 6 knots.
(C. in C.Med. 281302A to UPROAR.)
- SICKLE, TORBAY. It may be necessary to keep SICKLE and TORBAY on patrol until p.m. 30th and 3rd Jan. respectively.
(Capt. S.1 281201B to TORBAY, SICKLE, (R) C. in C. Levant.)
- M.K.F./K.M.F. convoy programme. Para. 6 of my 241838. Following is intended programme of through and internal Med. personnel convoys on a 37 day cycle commencing with K.M.F.29. Details.
(C. in C.Med. 281515 to Admty.)
- Evacuation of Italians. It is undesirable that any Italian personnel other than bona fide naval survivors from warships be evacuated from Spain in Italian ships. F.O.T.A.L.I. 271753 (N.T. in W.D.) and B.N.A.Madrid 241901 refer. 2. F.O.G.M.A. in consultation with B.N.A.Madrid is requested to report number of civilians is (?in) Military and air personnel to be evacuated and date when they will be ready. A.F.H.Q. have instructed D.S.O.Gib. and F.A.T.I.M.A. in sense of para. 1.
(C. in C.Med. 281619A to F.O.T.A.L.I. F.O.G.M.A. (R) B.N.A.Madrid, Admty.)
- ?Enemy ship. Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 31.47 N. 25.02 E. Probably surface vessel.
(A/C 912A 281745Z.)

/BRONZO...

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

BRONZO.

B.A.D. 182119 I am still of the opinion that this S/M should go to the French and am not disturbed at likelihood of political trouble. Request however that Admty. will decide in this matter. (C. in C.Med. 281850 to Admty. (R) B.A.D.)

M.K.S.36.

N.O.I.C. Port Said sail M.K.S.36 31st to Alex. Escorts DELPHINIUM (E.G.47), SAKTOURIS, APOSTOLIS, SOUTHERN SEAS. INVER join as ordered by S.N.O.C. (F.O.Eastern Med. 281934B, 292110B.)

War Diary.

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

ROBERT F. HOKE torpedoed. Ship torpedoed 20.06 N. 59.25 E. at 0342Z/28. (Bombay W/T 280428Z to Admty.) Aircraft reports ship torpedoed in 020° 06' N. 059° 25' E. at 280342Z. (C. in C.E.F. 280525Z to S. and A. E.I. Station, (R) Admty. C. in C.S.A. 215 Group, A.H.Q. Aden.)
SSSS Torpedoed position 20° N. 59° 25' E. (ROBERT F. HOKE (via Colombo W/T) T.O.R. 280815.)

Bi-weekly U-Boat dis- position No. 12. Areas AC. and D. No real evidence that U-Boats are in these areas but not considered impossible. Scale of air escort X. Area B. Aircraft report vessel torpedoed in 020° 06' N. 059° 25' E. at 0428Z/28th. Scale of air escort Y. Area E. 1 possible U-Boat reported attacked by BERAR in 009° 14' N. 076° 10' E. at 1035Z/27th. Scale of air escort Y. Area F. No news since reported sighting of periscope south of Vizagapatam 25th December but U-Boat may still be operating off this coast. Scale of air escort Y. Area G. One U-Boat in the vicinity 8° Channel by torpedoing of JOSE NAVARRO 2300Z/26th. Possibly another off West Coast Ceylon by report received from TAI YIN at 1627/27th being chased by U-Boat in 006° 15' N. 079° 30' E.
Reference my T.O.O. 270615 ASIAN was sunk in collision with ship in convoy M.B.59. Scale of air escort Y. (C. in C.E.F. 280524.)

Landing Craft Bases. Admty. 090036 para. 4 re arrangements for Landing Craft bases. Government of India approves. (F.O.C.R.I.N. 281152Z to C. in C.E.F. (S.E.A.C.) (R) Admty.)

(5) Force G. Force G consisting of BULOLO, GLENGYLE, ASCANIA, CIRCASSIA, WINCHESTER CASTLE and SOBIESKI escorted by BATTLER, ROTHERHAM, Capt. D.11 ROEBUCK, RAPID, KALE, DERG routed from Bombay between "Gan" and "Gas" will arrive off Aden about 0300Z on 1st Jan. S.O.A. 12½ kts.
2. Force G has instructions to proceed direct to Suez without calling at Aden.
3. N.O.I.C. Aden is requested to provide onward route and to instruct A/S escort to continue as far as he considers necessary.
4. BATTLER and A/S escort will proceed to Aden on completion of this duty.
5. A second force consisting of L.S.Ts. 80 and 239 escorted by TULIP will arrive off Aden about 1000Z on 2nd Jan. with route and instructions as for Force G. S.O.A. 10¼ knots.
6. N.O.I.C. Aden is requested to onward route this force as for Force G. (C. in C.E.F. 281206Z to N.O.I.C. Aden, (R) Capt. D.11, F.O.E.M. S.O. Force G, TULIP.)

/RAJPUTANA...

War Diary.

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - Contd.

RAJPUTANA. Amended E.T.A. 0430 G.M.T. 29th. My 280820* refers
2. 167 American survivors on board.
(RAJPUTANA 281333Z to N.O.I.C. Cochin.)
* Not received in W.R.

AIMWELL. Your 281824Z (N.T. in W.R.) E.T.A. Colombo correct.
At 280210 F.G. sighted green rocket on port beam
at 280225 F.G. sighted another green rocket on
starboard quarter suspicious. P.C. and S. at
280400 007° 35' N. 074° 46' E. 104° 12 knots.
(AIMWELL 282140Z to C. in C.E.F. (R) F.O.Ceylon.)

Command at 52642 cipher (M.O.4) 28 Dec.
Madagascar. My 99517 of 17 Dec. para. 3. Following is para-
phrase of Admty. signal 261844A to C. in C.Eastern
Fleet.

French have made official request through diploma-
tic channels that Capitaine Richard should be allowed to set up
his headquarters in Diego Suarez.
As formal discussions concerning Madagascar Agreement may not
take place for some time and as transfer of responsibility for
defence of North African ports to the French is proceeding rapidly
it is desired in order maintain consistent policy towards French
in all areas that Richard should be given a trial and allowed to
establish his office in Diego Suarez as soon as convenient to
N.O.I.C.

C. in C.Med. and Admty. should be informed of arrangements so
that French may issue amended instructions to Richard.
(W.O. 281535A to G.O.C. in C.East Africa (R) 20 Mil. Mission
Tananarive.)

M/V TAI YIN. All clear submarine.
(TAI YIN 281600Z to Colombo W/T.)

ENTERPRISE. C. in C.E.F. 270251. ENTERPRISE is not now
expected to join your Command.
2. Resulting from Sextant decisions world wide
dispositions of forces are under consideration.
3. Comprehensive signal will be made in a few
days time.
(V.C.N.S. 281755A to C. in C.E.F. (S.E.A.C).)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

BENTLEY This is substitute for my 272029.
BENTLEY departs Bermuda for Argentia 2200Z/27.
S.B.N.O.W.At. 131529/Oct.
(N.O.B. Bermuda, 280327 to N.O.B. Argentia).

T.F.62 This is 271945 from C. in C. Lant to Com. Fleet
re-established Optra Com. Lant for action.
Re-established Task Force 62 as Capt. Winecoff
in H.P. JONES. This ship for eastward passage
only. Comcortdiv 15 in AMICK, Cortdiv 15,
Comcortdiv 4 in PILLSBURY, Cortdiv 4 less FREDERICK C. DAVIS.
NIOBRARA plus several other craft listed separately. Escort
U.G.S. 29 to North Africa departing Chesapeake Bay 4 Jan.
returning escorting G.U.S.28 when directed by Commorseafron.
Orders for several other craft in later dispatch. Comdres will
issue orders to H.P. JONES to proceed Hampton Roads to arrive
not later than noon Jan. 3rd.
(Comnaveu 280646 to Admty.).

This is Cinclant's 272218 addressed to Cotclant and Com.
12th Fleet.
P.C.S. 552, 553, 1225, L.C.I.(L) 490-3-502 inclusive are other
craft sailing as part of T.F.62. My 271845 C.T.F.62 at
appropriate point near Azores direct this group proceed Horta.
This group then constituted T.G.62.9 Lt. Comdr. Patrick Comdr. L.
C.I. Group 31 in 499. Upon arrival Azores T.G.62.9 dissolved.
Upon arrival Horta report to Com. 12th Fleet as follows:
Landing craft for duty, P.C.S. for temporary duty.
(Comnaveu, 280916 to Admty.).

Task Group This is Cinclant's 272214 addressed to U.S.S.
21.12 GUADALCANAL.
established. This established Task Group 21.12 Capt. Gallery
in GUADALCANAL Comdesron 29 in WHIPPLE Desdiv 57.
Depart Hampton Roads Jan 4th and operate against
submarine activities giving priority to those that
might menace U.G.S. G.U.S. convoys. Comdesron 29 report with
his division to Guadalcanal by noon Jan 3rd for this duty. Fuel
at Bermuda or from U.G.S. or G.U.S. Tankers as necessary.
Further orders later.
(Comnaveu, 281039Z to Admty.).

S/M (N.S.H.Q., 281410Z, Cominch 281557Z).
Estimates.

U.T.6. Sailing telegram.
(2) E.T.D. Galveston Boston 291900Z.
(Corrupt group) escort Comdr. Boston section
in U.S.S. J.D. EDWARDS. U.S.S. QUEENS FERRY,
U.S.S. NEUNZER, U.S.S. ALDENX 8 ships.
(P.D. Boston, 281421).

/ LORD MIDDLETON...

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

LORD
MIDDLETON,
ST. KENAN,
PAYNTER,
CAPE
MARIATO,
CAPE
ARGONA.

Departures 1430Z/28 LORD MIDDLETON, ST. KENAN, PAYNTER, CAPE MARIATO, CAPE ARGONA for St. Johns Nfld. for onward routeing to Liverpool with S.C.150. (N.O.I.C. Sydney, 282353, 281457Z to N.O.i/c St. Johns Nfld., (R) Admty., N.S.H.Q., C. in C.W.A., C. in C.C.N.A., B.A.T.M., B.A.M.R., F.O.N.F., EAGLET, CANADA, B.A.D. pass to B.A.T.M. and B.A.M.R.).

W.10,
U-boat
search.

MATANE, ST. LAURENT, MONTREAL, STORMONT, SWANSEA, NIAGARA, COLUMBIA, GOODSON, BALFOUR will be hunting U-boats in 044 degs. 15' N. to 046 degs. 00' N. 044 degs. 00' W. to 048 degs. 00' W. on passage convoys through this area. Vide N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 272225. (F.O.N.F., 281503Z to S.E.C. O.N.S.No.25., S.E.C. O.N. No.216, (R) C. in C.C.N.A., Connav., A.C.I.C., C. in C.W.A., N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, F.O.N.F. H.Q.C.C., W.8., W.3., W.10., VESPER, Cdr.(D) Argentia, Cdre.(D) W.A.).
/ See 290109Z.

O.N. and
O.N.S.
Convoys,
methods of
saving ships'
time.

Views of Cominch on your 152305 follow in the form of commentary on N.S.H.Q. 202359. Para 1. Concur. Para.2. Considered undesirable. Para.3. Concur for ports north of New York. Para. 4. Concur as far as it applies to para.3. (B.A.D., 281551Z to Admty. (R) N.S.H.Q.).

GOODALL,
AYLMER.

Sail GOODALL and AYLMEER upon completion availability about 30th New York direct to Argentia for onward sailing by C. in C.C.N.A. to U.K. as additional convoy escorts. Need not be sailed in company. Advise routeing instructions. (Cominch, 281640 to C.E.S.F.).

KING
HAAKON VII.

Cominch intends subject to Admiralty concurrence to employ KING HAAKON VII on completion of overhaul in one of the Atlantic Sea Frontier commands where the urgency for escorts is acute. She will return to Northwest Atlantic in the late Spring. Request decision by signal in view of A.M. 201807, B.A.M.R. 222230 refers. (B.A.D. 281715Z to Admty. N.S.H.Q., C. in C.C.N.A., Norwegian Naval Service N.Y.).
Norwegian Naval A's agree (D.O.D. (H), 302027A).

O.N.S.25
W.8.

(1) Westomp 044 degs. 38' N. 047 degs. 51' W. 1200Z/30th when you will be relieved by W.8. SHEDIAC (S.O.), KENOGAMI, KENORA, ESQUIMALT.
(2) Upon relief proceed with despatch to Argentia.
(F.O.N.F., 281732Z to Ships escorting convoy O.N.S.25 (R) C. in C.C.N.A., C. in C.W.A. etc.).

/CUBITT...

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Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies - Contd.

CUBITT,
CURZON. Recommend CUBITT and CURZON be diverted to 036 degs. 00' N. 064 degs. 18' W. thence point R 032 degs. 16' 064 degs. 18' W. to avoid R-15 and be directed to report 291200Z position. Local control T.G. 02. 1/023.
(N.O.B. Bermuda, 281910Z to Cinclant.).

W.10 W.10 P.C. and S at 1900Z 045 degs. 50' N. 047 degs. 50' 180 degs. 15 altering course in 045 degs. 10' N. to 090 degs.
BALFOUR and GOODALL (group missed) NIAGARA parted en route St. Johns N.F. fuel required.
Weather 8280 1535.
(COLUMBIA, 281935Z to F.O.N.F. (R) Capt.(D) N.F.,C. in C.C.N.A.).

EMILE
BERTIN. Martinique 271350 for Casablanca further routing to Casablanca E.T.A. Dakar 012300. Has been directed report C. in C. Med. upon arrival for further orders.
(Radio Washington, 282020Z to F.O.C.W.Af.,C. in C. Med.,F.O.C.Gibraltar, Commorseafron, Admty.).

AKKA,
YARRAWONGA St. John N.B. 1900Z Dec. 31st AKKA and YARRAWONGA Swedish safe conduct ships Piraeus via Gibraltar 13th knots 12.5 ships to follow standard route to position 350 degs. 5 miles from Cape Spartel thence Spanish territorial waters to position 180 degs. 5 miles from Canara Point thence contact guard ship Q.B.A.117.
(N.C.S.O. St. John, 282025Z to Admty.).

U.T.6. (1) Sailing dispatch. Part 1.
(2) 1600Z/29th. Point Z seaward end swept channel.
(6) Task Force 60. U.S.S. TEXAS S.O.,U.S.S. DAVISON, MERVINE, TILLMAN, PARKER, LAUB, KENDRICK, MACKENZIE, MCLANAHAN, BOYLE, CHAMPLIN, NIELDS, ORDRONAU, MERRIMACK.
(P.D. New York, 282050).

Sub. attack
and sighting
summary. Para.B. Surface craft attack three sound contacts 43.30 N. 21.45 W. 280655. All times Z.
Para.D. Nats Pilot sights sub 19.20 N. 74.00 W. 182325.
(Cominch, 282110 to Admty.);

Convoy
C.K.1. Comeastseafron sail as convoy C.K.1 leaving Charleston 20th Jan. for U.K. via Bermuda and Horta the following Army small craft.
6 tugs, 12 tankers. C. in C. Lant provide escort. Com. 10th Fleet will specify routing.
(Cominch, 282114 to Comnavu pass Info. Comtaskfor 122).

/Working...

28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies - Contd.

Working up
programme
Nova Scotian
bases.

Ref. N.S.H.Qs. 022100 Sept. is has been found that winter conditions are hampering working up programme at Nova Scotian bases especially harbour drills.

(2) It is for your consideration whether anchorage might be provided for groups of four or five ships at Bermuda for periods of not more than 14 days with intervals at sea under the following conditions:

(a) Necessary training officers would accompany the ships and no demands made on Bermuda working up base for training facilities.

(b) A.S.Ps. will have been carried out at Halifax and there would be no request for use of S/Ms.

(c) No stores would be required other than oil fuel occasionally.

(d) Only emergency repairs would be asked for.

(3) Request your decision be signalled.

(N.S.H.Q., 282150Z to S.B.N.O.W.At., (R) Admty., C. in C.C.N.A., MALABAR, B.A.D.).

PRINCE
DAVID,
PRINCE
HENRY.

Admiralty's 251708 not to C.O.P.C. PRINCE DAVID left Esquimalt 23rd and should make junction with U.T. convoy to arrive U.K. in accordance with requirements of your 061838.

(2) PRINCE HENRY completes at Vancouver 5th Jan. 1944 and may not therefore arrive 1st Feb. 1944 unless sailed direct. It is for consideration whether you may wish to amend your 251708 in her case.

(N.S.H.Q., 282151 to Admty. (R) Cominch, C. in C. Portsmouth, S.O.J. Force, C.O.P.C., B.A.D., S.C.N.O. London, C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Plymouth).

Spanish
Coal burning
trawlers,
bunkerage.

(1) Your 261848 we would prefer not to have these additional neutral ships in waters traversed by convoys on grounds of general security.

(3) If considered essential then we concur with your proposal.

(N.S.H.Q. 282203Z to Admty. (R) S.C.N.O. Halifax, F.O.N.F., N.A. Madrid).

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial No.
707 Dec. 27th.

Preceded by morning bombing straffing at defence positions on coast Huon Peninsula by 18 Mitchells 12 Bostons Australian troops passed Agoand captured Walingai (4 miles northwest Wanookal). Nil opposition encountered but evidence noted of hurried evacuation. Allied

/surface...

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28.12.1943.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No. 707
Dec. 27th
(Contd.).

surface craft patrolled coast to F.O. in daylight observing nil movement anywhere.
(3) 22 Mitchells with Aircobras escorting struck jetty area near Mogadjim morning starting fires.
(6) Sai forces Bergen? Bay beachhead repulsed constant enemy pressure southeast flank.
(10) 27th approx. 30 mixed five bombers fighters attacked Allied M.T. boats off Arawe. Nil damage suffered but four dive bombers destroyed.
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 280455, 280514, 280521Z).

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 281419A, 281420A).

Submarine
attack and
sighting
summary
for 24 hours
to 0900Z/28th
December.

Para.A. (1) Am. ROBERT F. HOKE torpedoed at 0342/28 in 20 degs. 06' N. 59 degs. 35' E.
(2) Aircraft S sighted U-boat on surface at 2355/27 Co. 140, 10 knots, and aircraft H attacked at 0105/28 in 43 degs. 57' N. 24 degs. 04' W.
Para.B. (1) Norwegian M.V. TAI YIN chased by a U-boat a.m./27th in 06 degs. 15' N. 79 degs. 30' E.
Para.D. (1) A U-boat was reported on the surface in 41 degs. 10' N. 08 degs. 40' W.
(2) A coast watcher reported a surfaced U-boat at 1630/26 in 09 degs. 17' N. 50 degs. 40' E.
(D.D.I.C., 281135A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.).

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Operation
F.V.

1(a) 10 ships of the Murmansk section of Convoy J.W.55B escorted by Capt. D.17 and GLEANER arrived at the Kola Inlet at 1806A today, and one straggler has arrived at Iokanka. The remaining 8 ships are proceeding to Archangel.
(b) Convoy R.A.55A was about 300 miles N. by E. of the Faroes at 0800; and HOUND, HYDRA, BORAGE and WALLFLOWER of the Local Escort left the Faroes at 2014A to relieve the Destroyer Escort under Capt. (D) 3.
(c) C.S.10 in BELFAST with NORFOLK and SHEFFIELD left the Kola Inlet at 2323A for Scapa.

Operation
"Stonewall".

2(a) At 0133 today about 470 miles N.W. of Cape Finisterre the Frigate TWEED of E.G.6 depth charged and disabled a U-Boat which was again attacked by an A/C at 0810Z. At 0948 TWEED and WASKESIU were detached from E.G.6 to hunt the U-Boat, and at noon C.T.G. 21.15 sent the U.S. KEARNY to assist.
(b) A single enemy destroyer sighted by A/C at 0952 off Cape Finisterre and apparently bound for the Gironde was repeatedly sighted by A/C during today and was attacked with bombs at 1430.
(c) 65 survivors from the German ALSTERUFER, sunk by A/C on the 27th December, were picked up by E.G.6 at 1700 today.
(d) GAMBIA, MAURITIUS and the French light cruisers LE MALIN and LE FANTASQUE were on patrol in the western Biscay area today; and at 2004 GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE arrived at Plymouth.

STORM.

3. The S/M STORM sailed from Rothesay today to join the Eastern Fleet.

Mediterranean.

"Avalanche".

4. P.T. Boats patrolled in the Gulf of Genoa last night but sighted nothing.

Adriatic.

5. Aircraft today attacked two merchant ships off Lake Skradin (Dalmatian coast). One of them was hit and the other near missed. The British Liaison Officer reports that 4 Me.s gunned Partisan ships at Starigrad and Hvar today, damaging 12 ships and sinking two.

/CAMELIA ...

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

CAMELIA.

6. The Swedish Red Cross relief ship CAMELIA is reported to have been mined off Salonika today and beached in Salonika roadstead.

China.

7. 3 U.S. Mitchells escorted by 3 U.S. Mustangs attacked river shipping in the Chinchow area of the Yangste today and sank two 200 ft. vessels and damaged another.

America and West Indies.

8. ESSO BUFFALO reported being missed by two torpedoes at 1130 today in 10.40 N. 78.25 W., near the position where CHAPULTEPEC was torpedoed on 26th inst.

Australia and New Zealand.

9. A Naval Catalina attacked two destroyers off Cape Hoskins last night. A 500 lb. bomb fell within 30 ft. but other results were not seen on account of intense A/A fire.

10. Allied M.T.Bs. intercepted 3 laden enemy barges south-east of Bougainville in the early hours of today and sank two and drove the third ashore.

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Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Policy.

EMINENT. Cancel references to EMINENT in A.M. 082056 and C. in C.E.F. 130804. EMINENT will remain in U.K. for the present under orders of C. in C.W.A. and based Campbeltown.
(Capt. Rescue Tugs 290044A to C. in C.W.A.)

VANESSA, Capt. D. Liverpool's 211729. Propose that VANESSA GARLIES. should be paid off now and replaced in service by GARLIES. See my 222258.
(C. in C.W.A. 291249A to Admty.)

Movements.

ILLUSTRIOUS, Intend sailing R.A.(A) Eastern Fleet in ILLUSTRIOUS UNICORN, TERMAGANT, TENACIOUS and KEMPENFELT Group A. passing Clyde Boom 2150A/29th to R/V with group A in 270° Skerryvore 45 miles at 1000A/30th December.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 291048A to Admty.)
Weather prohibits sailing today. Intend to defer departure 24 hours. Request all arrangements for fighter protection destroyers may be altered accordingly.
(B.S.1 291201A to C. in C.W.A.)

K.14. My 091159. Sailed 1100/29th.
(F.O.S. 291201 to C. in C.E.F.)

N.Atlantic Dispositions. Disposition of operational units in North Atlantic:
1. In Northern Waters: DUKE OF YORK, BELFAST, JAMAICA, NORFOLK, SHEFFIELD, 20 destroyers.
Scapa: NELSON, RICHELIEU, RODNEY, FURIOUS, AJAX, BERMUDA, CUMBERLAND, KENT, 5 destroyers.
Biscay Area: ENTERPRISE, GLASGOW, GAMBIA, PENELOPE, MAURITIUS.
2. Disposition of escort carriers: FENCER, TRACKER Clyde.
STRIKER Biscay Area, SEARCHER with convoy to U.S.A.
(D.O.D.H. 291220Z to C. in C.U.S.Fleet.)

ANSON. C. in C.Rosyth's 271727 para. 2. SWIFT detailed.
(R.A.D.H.F. 291241A to V.A.2.)
Cancel my 291241. Request OFFA may be sailed to arrive off Eyebroughy Buoy, at 1700A/31st to R/V with ANSON and provide escort to Scapa.
(R.A.D. 292153A to N.O.I.C. Humber.)

S/M Move- Positions of S/Ms at 0800/30 and movements for ments. following 24 hours.
(F.O.S. 291727A, 292221.)

664

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" U-Boat attacked by TWEED. My 282358. Ship reported is ARIADNE. (GAMBIA 290045A to C. in C.Plymouth.) S/M observed to dive in 047° 01' N. 019° 02' W. (E.G.6 290133Z to C. in C.W.A.) Cancel A.M. 272359. Vessel is friendly. (D.O.D.H. 290201A to Force 3.) Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 43.48 N. 10.15 W. (A/C Duty B 290435A to 19 Group.)

Have attacked U-Boat with depth charge. U-Boat on surface position 44.04 N. 22.38 W. apparently disabled. (A/C Duty C 290810Z to S.H.9.) Detach WASKESIU and TWEED at best speed to hunt U-Boat reported disabled by A/C in 044° 04' N. 022° 38' W. at 0810Z/29th. (C. in C.W.A. 290948Z to E.G.6.) One destroyer 050 10 050, in 43.23 N. 09.03 W. (A/C TBFO 290952 to A.H.Q.Gibraltar.) P.C. and S. of enemy, one destroyer, 43.50 N. 08.20 W. 065° 20 knots. (A/C Duty U 290952A to 19 Group.) My 0952. P.C. and S. of enemy, one destroyer 43.29 N. 08.52 W. 050° 18 knots. (A/C TBFO 290958A to S.H.9.) Lost touch with U-Boat last seen position 44.04 N. 22.38 W. (A/C PCQC 291015 to S.H.9.) U-Boat previously reported course 240°, speed 15 knots. First sighted in 43° 55' N. 22° 58' W. 08(?)05. (A/C CPQC 291045 to S.H.9.) My 0958. Still in touch with enemy previously reported. Enemy position 43° 35' N. 08° 43' W. 050° 25 knots. (A/C Duty O 291045A to Gibraltar.) Contact lost with German destroyers. Returning to base. (A/C Duty U 291045 to 19 Group.) By D/F at 0910Z/29 and 0928Z/29. Position of German unit, probably surface vessel, was 46° 30' N. 06° 30' W. (D.D.I.C. 291050A to C. in C.Plymouth, H.Q.C.C.) Over dinghy with 3 aircrew position 045° 48' N. 009° 26' W. (A/C Duty M 291103 to 19 Group.) My 1103. Dinghy drifting west 3 knots. Request instructions. (A/C Duty M 291122 to 19 Group.) F.W.200 aircraft are operating in your vicinity. (D.D.I.C. 291138A to Escorts X.K.13, E.G.6, Escorts S.L.143.) My 1045. Type destroyer position 43.49 N. 07.40 W. course 050 speed 25 knots, appears very hostile. Cannot close range. A/A fire. (A/C Duty O 291200 to 19 Group.) A. TWEED. B. 0125/29th. C. Radar. Range 3000 yards. D. 047° 01' N. 019° 02' W. E. One depth charge attack carried out by TWEED at 0133 30 seconds after U-Boat had dived 300 yards ahead. EDMUNDSTON faint intermittent contact between 0141 and 0159, then faded out. Underwater explosion at 0141. Light oil slick in vicinity. F. 1015. To comply with your 282236A and 290948Z. Weather 2872 3224. (E.G.6 291227Z to C. in C.W.A.)

/During...

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" U-Boat attacked by TWEED. (Contd.)

During present period of enemy blockade running it is highly important that every merchant ship sighted should be interrogated and her identity verified. Identification procedure is referred to in W.A.G.M. 870 N. of 28th December amplified by W.A.G.M. 871 N of 28th December.

2. When circumstances permit and U-Boat threat to a convoy is negligible Escort Carrier and M.A.Cs. should fly anti blockade runner patrol to maximum depth from Carrier when between 040° and 050° N. and east of 050° W (C. in C.W.A. 291251A to S.O. Escort Groups.)

Cancel my 271317.
(C. in C.Plymouth 291315A to GAMBIA, GLASGOW, PENELOPE, ENTERPRISE.)

P.C. and S. of one enemy destroyer 44.52 N. 07.48 W. course 050°, speed 25 knots.
(A/C Duty M 291343 to 19 Group.)

Have attacked destroyers with bombs, estimated no hits. Type Elbing. Position 44.50 N. 08.45 W. course S.W. speed (?15) knots.
(A/C Duty M 291430 to 19 Group.)

P.C. and S. of enemy, one destroyer 43.39 N. 07.10 W. 085° 30 knots.
(A/C Duty B 291505 to 19 Group.)

BLYTH take PETERHEAD under his orders and pass the Gate at 1630A/29th. Proceed through position BA. 180° Lizard Head 03' BB. 049° 14' N. 007° 24' W. BC. 049° 05' N. 009° 18' W. BD. 048° 53' N. 010° 27' W. and thence 180° to search aircraft dinghy containing 3 air crew reported by aircraft in 045° 48' N. 009° 26' W. at 1103A/29th.

2. Aircraft will co-operate in search.

5. S/M K.14 left 180° Bishop Rock 10 at 1100A/29th for 049° 10' N. 009° 01' W. thence (incomplete group) advance 178 miles per day diving by day.
(C. in C.Plymouth 291521A to BLYTH, PETERHEAD.)

Shadowing one destroyer enemy previously reported, position 9 miles north Estaca Point, course 080° speed 18 knots.
(A/C Duty M 291530 to 19 Group.)

French Light Cruiser LE MALIN 044° 02' N. 029° 59' W. to patrol between 046° 30' N. and 049° 50' N. in 030° W.
(C. in C.W.A. 281538A to Ships.)

Add to my 291247. LE MALIN vicinity 049° 10' N. 030° 09' W.
(C. in C.W.A. 291552A to Ships.)

Dispositions at 292000.

1. ARIADNE 050° 10' N. 011° 30' W. through 340° Round Island 18, bound Plymouth 20 knots.

2. K.14 049° 45' N., 007° 01' W. through 049° 50' N. 009° 01' W. thence 270° daily advance 178 miles.

3. STORM 049° 34' N. 007° 01' W. through 049° 10' N. 009° 01' W. thence 270° daily advance 173 miles.
(C. in C.Plymouth 291558A to Admty.)

P.C. and S. of enemy, one destroyer, 43.50 N. 05.53 W. 110° 20 knots.
(A/C Duty H 291605A to 19 Group.)

Returning to base, fuel. Position 43° 45' N. 07° 20' W. E.T.A 2300. Liberator arrived but cannot contact destroyer position 43° 40' N. 06° 05' W. at 1551A, course 075° speed 20 knots. One Ju. 88 escort.
(A/C Duty O 291615A to 19 Group.)

/To...

War Diary.29.12.1943.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" U-Boat attacked by TWEED. (Contd.)

To avoid U-Boat proceed through 045° 01' N. 019° 30' W. and thence to patrol (P) as in my 292000A.

2. Estimate you will be in the vicinity of S.L.143 northbound and Escort Group 6 southbound during dark tonight.

(C. in C.Plymouth 291705A and 292010A to MAURITIUS.)

Attention is drawn to positions of BLOCK ISLAND and CORE as given in my 291547.

(C. in C.W.A. 291804A to E.G.6, MAURITIUS.)

If no further reports of this U-Boat are received on arrival in 044° 04' N. 022° 38' W. carry out an A/S sweep on course of 090° making good 14 knots until noon tomorrow. If nothing is sighted then join convoy at 16 knots. My 290948 refers.

(C. in C.W.A. 291843Z to WASKESIU, TWEED.)

65 German survivors ex blockade runner picked up in position 046° 06' N. 019° 10' W. at 1700.

S.O.B.3 is requested to home using procedure "Hat" 0700/30th. (E.G.6 291905Z to C. in C.W.A.)

My 282023A para. 2.

Request following air patrol for operation "Stonewall" be flown tomorrow. Patrol O within 50 miles each side of line within positions TT. 46.30 N. 26.25 W. and UU. 49.59 N. 25.00 W.

2. Commencing on 31st December and on subsequent days patrol P within 50 miles each side of line joining positions WW. 45.30 N. 19.20 W. ZZ. 49.30 N. 17.20 W.

3. If patrol O is not found possible request instead a night patrol of same type may be flown midway between patrol O and patrol P on the night of 30/31st.

(C. in C.Plymouth 291910A to H.Q.C.C.)

U.S.Task Group 21.12 consisting of Escort Carrier GUADALCANAL and one destroyer division will sail Hampton Roads 4th January to operate against submarines giving priority to these that might menace U.G.S. and G.U.S.convoys.

(D.O.D.H. 291955A to C. in C.W.A. C. in C.Plymouth, F.O.I.C. Gibraltar, H.Q.C.C.)

1. Patrol P is established within lines 50 miles each side of line joining positions WW. 045° 20' N. 019° 20' W. ZZ. 049° 30' N. 017° 20' W.

2. MAURITIUS and GAMBIA are to take up patrol in above area by dark tomorrow.

3. During dark hours on 30th/31st ships are to patrol in vicinity of western limit of patrol. MAURITIUS is to keep southward and GAMBIA to northward throughout.

(C. in C.Plymouth 292000A to MAURITIUS, GAMBIA.)

Arrived GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE.

(C. in C.Plymouth 292004 to Admty.)

With your "Stipple A" commitments no "Stonewall" patrols are required by you tomorrow.

(H.Q.C.C. 292015A to 247 Group.)

This is C.T.G. 21.15's 291647. KEARNY sent at 30 knots from 42.30 N. 19.40 W. at noon Z 29th to search vicinity 44.04 N. 22.38 W. Ordered to rejoin CORE Group 0900Z/30th lat. 44 long. 22.

(Comnavu 292103Z to Admty.)

Refer to this as 291929 from C.T.G. 21.16 to C. in C.Lant.

Recovered crew missing Avenger 44.11 N. 23.14 W. Destroyers attacking sub. sound contact 42.22 N. 21.16 W.

(Comnavu 292252 to Admty.)

My 291843Z. Amend position to read 043° 55' N. 022° 38' W.

(C. in C.W.A. 292304Z to WAKESIU, TWEED.)

/Operation...

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29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations. - Contd.

Operation My P.C. and S. 063° 38' N. 003° 01' W. 227° 10
F.V. knots. E.T.A. 2300A/29th. ATHABASKAN in company.
Weather 1561 8168.
(BEAGLE 290931A to N.O.I.C. Faroes.)

Further information shows that the DUKE OF YORK
fire was most effective and that an underwater hit slowed up
SCHARNHORST enabling destroyers to attack.

2. MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE and VIRAGO attacked after
SAVAGE's force.

(C. in C.H.F. 290937 to Admty.)

Intend to sail Group 4 consisting of LUCERNA (T), DALDORCH,
and possibly HORACE GREY 1800A/30th to R/V. E.T.A. position H.
1000A/1st. Escorts 3 British, 2 Russian minesweepers.
Your 280015C refer.

(S.B.N.O. Archangel 291311A to S.B.N.O.N. Russia.)

Intend to proceed with Force one to Scapa at 2300B/29th.
Routed through FF. 073° 01' N. 029° 59' E. GG. 072° 59' N. 020°
01' E. HH. 070° 00' N. 005° 00' E. thence to Scapa. S.O.A. 22
knots.

(C.S.10 291403A to S.B.N.O.N. Russia.)

Murmansk Section J.W.55B, 10 ships together with destroyer
and through escorts and GLEANER S.O. Capt. D.17 arrived Kola
Inlet. White Sea Section 8 ships met by local escort, E.T.A.
Dvina Bar 1800A/30th. One straggler OCEAN GYPSY has arrived
Iokanka.

(S.B.N.O.N. Russia 291806A to Admty.)

It is anticipated that the following work on SAUMAREZ will be
completed by 2359/5th January and that ship will then be able to
steam at full speed.

1. 18 in number splinter holes on starboard side above waterline
patched.
2. Forced lubrication oil return pipe on starboard engine repaired.
3. All main engine bearings and thrust blocks examined.
4. Lubricating oil renewed.
2. Intend retaining SCOURGE to return in company with SAUMAREZ
and to assist ships staff with (corrupt group) fire mains.
3. C.S.10 and Capt. D.17th concur.
4. R.A.(D) H.F. 291003 refers.

(S.B.N.O.N. Russia 291818A to Admty.)

Faroes departure at 2000 HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE.

(N.O.I.C. Faroes 292014A to Capt. D.3.)

A/S escort will be provided by 1 Catalina from 1201A till
last light on December 30.

(C. in C.Rosyth 292150A to Escort R.A.55A.)

Faroes arrival BEAGLE and ATHABASKAN.

(N.O.I.C. Faroes 292223A to Capt. D.3.)

Kola Inlet sailed Force 1.

(S.B.N.O.N. Russia 292323A to H.F.)

Operations Carry out operations "Manacle 8" and "Hardtack 23"
"Manacle" tonight.
and (V.A. Dover 291121 to L.C.I.(S), M.T.B.25.)
"Hardtack". "Hardtack 9" and "Hardtack 13" will be carried out
tonight. "Hardtack 13" will return through passage
two.
(N.O.I.C. Newhaven 291229A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/My...

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War Diary.29.12.1943.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operations My 291121. "Manacle 8" abandoned.
 "Manacle" (V.A.Dover 291830A to Admty.)
 and My 291229A. "Hardtack 9" will not be carried out
 "Hardtack". tonight.
 (Contd.) (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 291903A to C. in C.Portsmouth.)
 Returned to harbour. (My 291229A "Hardtack 9".)
 Weather unsuitable to carry out operation.
 (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 292031A to C. in C.Portsmouth.)
 My 291121A. "Hardtack 23" abandoned.
 (V.A.Dover 292240A to Admty.)

S/M Patrols. My 071931 para. 1, add TAKU 1st January, 15th Jan.
 2. My 071934, add K. TAKU EE. objects F. and A.
 (F.O.S. 291203 to Cpts. S.3, S.9.)

Times Zone A. Own submarine positions 0800/30th
 and movement in following 24 hours.

A. SIRDAR 65° 22' N. 03° 33' E. probably on surface through 62°
 01' N. 00° 37' W. for Lerwick. Speed 10 knots.
 B. SYRTIS 65° 11' N. 04° 11' E. probably on surface, speed 10
 knots, to 64° 01' N. 02° 42' E. thence to patrol in vicinity of
 62° 49' N. 02° 28' E.
 C. SEANYMPH 66° 14' N. 08° 46' E. probably on surface, speed 10
 knots, to patrol in vicinity of 67° N. 12° E.
 D. SCEPTRE on patrol off Kya.
 E. SEADOG on patrol off Stadlandet.
 F. ULA on patrol off Skudesnes.
 G. SPITEFUL arriving on patrol in vicinity of 62° 11' N. 02° 39' E.
 M. K.14 49° 48' N. 10° 45' W. dived by day through 49° 47' N.
 12° 28' W. thence 49° 11' N. 13° 19' W. thence course 180° 178
 miles per day.
 N. STORM 49° 11' N. 10° 29' W. dived by day through 49° 12' N. 12°
 28' W. thence course 180° 178 miles per day.
 O. SHAKESPEARE arrives 43° 01' N. 12° 54' W. 2150/30th, dived by
 day, course North, daily advance 160 miles.
 (F.O.S. 291727A to Admty.)

F.O.S. 291203. Request you sail TAKU at 0900A/1st January,
 routed through 090° Muckle Flugga 5 miles thence through 061° 59'
 N. 001° 25' W. and route "Grey" to patrol zone EE. ?Object F.
 and A.

(Capt. S.9 291727A to S.O. S/M Lerwick.)

Coastal Force Patrols. 1. A. Force 114. M.T.Bs. 416 (S.O.) 413, 431, 434
 B. 1600A/29. C. AA. 000° Les Heaux 4 miles. D.
 From AA. through BB. 340 Cap Frehel 14 to CC. 065
 Cape Frehel 5 thence between CC. BB. and DD. 265
 La Corbiere 11. E. Destruction of enemy shipping.
 F. 0500A/30 from DD. G. EE. 230 Les Hanois 15.
 2. A. Force 115. M.G.B. 329 (S.O.) M.T.B. 677. B. 2000A/29.
 C. 140 Start 15. D. Vicinity of C. E. 0700A/30.
 (C. in C.Plymouth 291309A to M.T.Bs.)

1. Orders for night 29/30th. A. 3 M.G.Bs. from Newhaven
 anti E-Boat patrol 10 miles south of convoy route between eastern
 limit of command and 00° 20' W. between 2300A and 0600A abreast
 C.W.236. From 1900A to 2130A off C.2A Buoy.

/B...

War Diary.

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Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Coastal Force Patrols. (Contd.)
B. 2 CHASSEURS anti E-Boat patrol on 50° 24' N. between 00° 35' W. and 00° 48' W. from 1830A to 0700A.
C. GLAISDALE, M.L. 343 short notice St. Helens.
D. 2 S.G.Bs. from Portland Patrol 50° 18' N. between 02° 00' W. and 02° 35' W.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 291332A.)
M.Ls. 138, 137 two miles south of D. Buoy.
M.G.Bs. 41, 43 at No. 7 Buoy, E.T.D. Ramsgate 1715, E.T.R. 0845/30
M.T.Bs. 205, 202, 418 and S.4, E.T.D. 1710, E.T.R. 0900/30.
M.Ls. 573 and 213, E.T.D. 1900 all operating south of Bullock Bank.
M.T.B. 24, E.T.D. 2000 E.T.R. 0640/30, M.T.Bs. 417 E.T.D. Ramsgate 2000 E.T.R. 0600/30, and M.Ls. 104 and 107 E.T.D. Dover 1915 E.T.R. 0700/30 all operating eastward of V. Buoy.
M.M.S. 79, 259, and 59 sweeping to the westward, E.T.D. 0700/30.
(V.A. Dover 291506A.)

Operation "Bellpush B". Operation "Bellpush B" complete. Result successful. Indications that craft were heard.
(F.O. Force J 291346A to AN.C. X.F. C. in C. Portsmouth)

Allied Air Activity.

OSORNO. Request OSORNO may be granted 1st priority over other naval targets for daylight bombing.
2. In view of this ship's position clear of all built up areas request consideration be given to the use of blind bombing technique on this occasion.
(A.C.N.S.H. 291517A to Air Ministry.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Convoys from Stavanger. Following sailings from Stavanger expected at 0600A/29th. A. 1 cargo ship, 5000 to 7500 tons and 2 of 2500 to 5000 tons all loaded, escorts unknown, southbound.
B. 3 loaded cargo vessels 2500 to 5000 tons, escort not known, northbound. Graded B.2.
(F.O.S. 290008 to ULA.)

HOCHHEIMER. Arrived 2045/28th. 59 sailed 2205/28th.
(Consul Bilbao 291135 to M.E.W.)

U-Boats.

U-Boat reported. 1. Beaufighter 25 lb. R.P. and 1 Anson to carry out search forthwith for U/B reported to have dived at 1029A/29 in 254° 15 miles Tor-Ness, Orkney.
(18 Group 291240A to Wick H.Q.C.C.)

War Diary.

29.12.1943.

Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Technical."Gamma"
Search.

The following scheme of Asdic search will be issued in A.C.I. in due course. Short title "Gamma" search. Applicable when German U-Boats M.L.A. can be estimated within certain limits. Details. (C. in C.W.A. 291133A to 872 N.)

Casualties & Defects.

ARIADNE.

ARIADNE is required for service with full outfit of mines by mid January. 2. Request necessary priority may be given to complete any defects. (V.C.N.S. 290056A to C. in C.Plymouth.)

NARCISSUS.

NARCISSUS Radar out of action. No spares carried. 2. Could spares be dropped by escorting aircraft at first opportunity. 3. P.C. and S. at 0800Z 039° 54' 019° 06' 337° 7½. 5. Weather 4881 2614. (B.3 290935Z to C. in C.W.A. F.O.G.M.A.)

B.3 290935. As convenient after joining S.L.143/M.K.S.34 instruct TWEED to pass spare Pulse Transformer pattern W 3974 to NARCISSUS to repair defective R.D.F. type 271.

(C. in C.W.A. 291813A to E.G.6.)

Regret this cannot (?be done) from Gib. Your 290935 refers. 2. Air escort while in Med. Approaches is being supplied by Azores who have no Radar Spare(s).

(F.O.G.M.A. 201900A to B.3.)

CAIRNGORM.

My 290329A. Coaster CAIRNGORM refloated and appears undamaged. (N.O.I.C. Isle of Man 291223A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool)

ALEKSANDAR I.

My 282345. Ship is leaking in Fore Peak and No. 1 Hold. All details known given to Salvage Authorities Rothsey. (N.O.I.C. Oban 291225A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

OSCAR
CHAPPELL,
EMPIRE FAITH.

OSCAR CHAPPELL (U.S.) in collision with CHARLES C. JONES (U.S.) outside Ewe Buoy 0800 today. OSCAR CHAPPELL damaged aft and is being beached. 2. My 281751A. EMPIRE FAITH is now refloated and at anchor. (N.O.I.C. Aultbea 291225 to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

A.T.82.

QUEEN MARY arrived Clyde. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 291044A to Connav.)

D.S.48.

Intend sailing EMPRESS OF RUSSIA passing Clyde Boom 0030A/31st to R/V with SALADIN (S.O.) and SKATE in 270° Oversay 6 miles at 0930A/31st, thence by Standard D.S. route to Reykjavik. E.T.A. 2130Z/2nd. (N.O.I.C. Greenock 291106A to A.C.O.S.)

/Straggler..:

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War Diary.

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Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.- Contd.

Straggler.

BELNOR returned from O.S.63/K.M.S. Main engine trouble.
(N.C.S.O.Clyde 291632A to C. in C.W.A.)

War Diary.

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Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

S.L. 143/
M.K.S.34.

My 281545. WATCHMAN is to sail on completion of fuelling and GLENARM as soon as defects (corrupt group) repaired.
(F.O.G.M.A., 290430A to GLENARM, WATCHMAN. (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C. W.A. (Liverpool), H.Q.Q.C., S.E.C. S.L.143, C. in C. Plymouth, Admty.)
Arrived Horta 0846/29th GLENARM.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 291102Z to F.O. Gibraltar.)

LUGANO and
GENEROSO
safe
conduct.

Not to be molested this voyage. Expected to leave Marseilles for Gibraltar about 31st Dec. and 1st Jan. respectively.
(F.O.C. Gib., 291112A to 10th (S) Flotilla, PROTEE, ORPHEE, CURIE, (R) CASABIANCA, Capt. S.10.)

PENELOPE.

C. in C. Plymouth 281816 not to all addressees proceed Gibraltar through (A) 036° N. 012° W. and Q.B.A.87.
2. P.Vs. are to be streamed as convenient before crossing 007° W.
(F.O.G.M.A., 291248A to PENELOPE, (R) Admty., C.S.15, C. in C. Med., C. in C. Plymouth.)

M.K.F.27.

AB. Recommend diversion (details).
(D.O.D.(H), 291316A to F.O.G.M.A., (R) C. in C. W.A., Escorts of M.K.F.27, S.B.N.O. Azores.)
Comply with Admty.'s 291316.
(F.O.G.M.A., 291706A to Escorts of M.K.F.27.)

WHITEHAVEN,
BOSTON.

Your 272202. WHITEHAVEN and BOSTON are still at Horta, my 271145 (N.T. in W.R.) refers. Propose sailing convoy when RYE is fit for sea.
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 291411Z to F.O.G.M.A., (R) Admty.)

As my 272202A has not been complied with your 291114Z (291411Z intended) is approved. Request you investigate and report why my 272202A addressed to M.S.14 has not been complied with.
(F.O.G.M.A., 291812A to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) Admty.)

H.M. Ships
arriving
without
previous
notification.

WISHART entered Ponta Delgada today 0830.
WATCHMAN also entered at 1445. Am also informed GLENARM is to enter this evening at about 1800.
In no case has prior advice been received by Portuguese Naval Authority.
I cannot hold myself responsible for preserving good relations with Portuguese S.N.O. Azores (who has been as helpful as if he were an Allied Naval Officer) if these breaches of international courtesy continue.
Your 251900 Oct. (para. 2.) my 270901 Oct. etc. all refer.
(H.M. Consul Ponta Delgada, 291635 to Admty., (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.G.M.A., B.N.A. Lisbon.)

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

CORFU.

Intend to sail CORFU at 1430/29th to patrol mean line joining 4° 30' N. 30° 00' W. and 2° 30' N. 28° 00' W. Leave patrol last light 8th Jan. and proceed direct Trinidad S. of A. 16 knots.

CORFU will guard broadcast FT whilst on patrol and shift to Washington broadcast at 2000Z/8th Jan, when CORFU will be chopped to Cominch, who is requested to inform U.S. Authorities concerned.

(F.O.C.W.Af., 291229Z to Cominch, S.B.N.O. Trinidad, (R) Admty., Com. 4th Fleet, S.B.N.O.W.At., CORFU, Comcaribseafon.)

Sailed F.O.C.W.Af.'s 291229Z refers.

(S.O.(I) Freetown, 291445Z to Admty.)

HIGHLAND
MONARCH.

Regret proposal in your 281234 cannot be approved (reasons).

2. Request therefore you will detach her from R.S.13 as in A.M. 071716, para. 2.

(D.O.D.(F), 292000A to F.O.C.W.Af., (R) N.O.I.C. Falkland Islands, C. in C. S.A., N.O.I.C. Ascension.)

War Diary.

29.12.1943.

Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

BROOK Ex. German Vessel BROOK raised and beached Mersa Matruh 21st. (P.S.V.O. Levant, 291047B to F.O.E.M. (R) Admty.)

NICOLINE, MAERSK. Further to my 261802 LE FANTASQUE reports that he saw a column of smoke probably caused by a demolition charge issuing from stern of NICOLINE MAERSK shortly after ship went ashore. 2. Rapid photographs show NICOLINE MAERSK to be scuttled and aground with her stern awash about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off shore. (C. in C. Med. 291114A to Admty. (R) B.N.A. Madrid, F.O.C.Gib.)

TRUCULENT, STONEHENGE, (for Eastern Fleet.) Suez December 29th departed. (S.N.O.R.S.C.A., 291131B.)

Rocket firing weapons. Your 221948B. In Hunt class 4" gun is considered superior to rockets. Investigations into provision of rocket and other weapons in Coastal forces have been proceeding for 18 months without success. Principal difficulties are that due to inherent inaccuracy of rockets multiple projector must be used which involves low rate of fire and considerable weight of outfit of ammunition but work is continuing. (A.C.N.S.(W) 291154A to F.O.E.M., Info. C. in C. Med.)

ULTOR, UNTIRING. Intend sailing P.53 ULTOR and P.59 UNTIRING at 1100 31st. P.53 ULTOR from Q.B.B.301 through 041° 27' 008° 23' 2000 31st, 042° 51' 007° 04' at 2000 1st to patrol in zone ST. P.59 UNTIRING from Q.B.B.301 through 042° 16' 008° 08' at 0100 1st and 043° 31' 008° 51' at 2300 1st to patrol in zones SO and SN. (Capt. S.10, 291227 to C. in C. Med. (R) 10th S/M. F. N.O.I.C. Algiers, PROTEE, CASABIANCA, ARETHUSE.)

Joint Army R.A.F. intelligenc appreciation. 29th. 24 hours to 1000, 28th. All times G.M.T. 6. Conclusions. Importance shuttle service Leros-Rhodes carrying troop reinforcements and evacuating Italian prisoners war again emphasised. (C. in C.M.E., 291320B.)

U/B. One submarine submerged 38.10 N. 6.56 E. (TEMPETE, 291455A to Algiers W/T.)

/SICKLE...

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

SICKLE. (? Leaving) patrol at 2359 30th passing to westward Buey Rock and Kinaros and close to west of Kandeliusa to arrive in 035° 39' 028° 01' at 1st Jan. Thence through 034° 18' 031° 29' to arrive Beirut 1501/2nd Jan.
(Capt. (S) 1, 291517B, to P.224 SICKLE (R) F.O. E.M., 1st S.M./F.)

Enemy Aircraft report 6000 tons merchant ship lying
Vessel at 200/300 yards off eastern shore of cove at
Trapanj. eastern side of Trapanj, ship sighted at 0800 and
1230 today.
(N.L.O.No.1 M.O.R.U. 291546A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R)
LAUDERDALE WHADDON, C.F.W. Capt. (U) 24, N.L.O.
8th Army Tripoli.)

DOLFIJN Port diesel damaged beyond repair. Details
damaged. follow. Pending instructions am returning by
reverse of outward route passing 038° 46' 024°
51' at 0200 29th. S. of A. 90 miles diving by
day surface speed 6 knots.
(P.47 DOLFIJN, 291745B to Capt. S.1, (R) C. in C.
Levant, 1st S/M F.)

Your 291745 and 291746 (N.T. in W.D.). Pass West of Buey
Rock and Kinaros and close west of Kandeliusa. Thence to
035° 39' 027° 59' through 034° 18' 031° 29' to Beirut.
Permanent bombing restrictions in force in this route.
(Capt. S.1st 292344B to DOLFIJN (R) F.O. E.M. 1st S/M.F.)

Med. 1. During night 26/27 TYRIAN and PENN carried
Situation out uneventful sweep from San Benedetto to
report Ancona and WHADDON and LAUDERDALE patrolling
No. 259. south of Korcula sighted nothing.
2. Coastal force operations in the Adriatic
hampered by weather.
(C. in C. Med. 291853A.)

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29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Streaming of Nets. Until further orders ships leaving the Persian Gulf fitted with A.N.D. gear are to be instructed to stream nets as follows after passing Hormuz.
(A) Bound Aden till destination is reached.
(B) Bound Kilindini and Australia till latitude of 18° N. is passed.
(C) Bound Indian Ports and Colombo till crossing 62° E.
(C. in C. E.F., 290347Z to S.N.O. Persian Gulf, (R) N.C.S.O. Bahrein, Admty., N.O.I.C. Hormuz, Cdre. i/c Aden.)

U/B dispositions. Ref. U-Boat disposition 4712 area D. Scale of air escort reduced to W. Area G. In addition to U-Boat which torpedoed JOSE NAVARRO in 8° channel 26th and which is probably still in area, there is slight possibility that another U-Boat may be in 1½ channel from suspicious object attacked by Catalina 28th. Scale of air escort remains Y. Other areas - no change.
(C. in C. E.F., 290355Z to S. & A. E. Indies Station.)

One German considered to have attacked SS. JOSE NAVARRO on 27th but not since located.
One Japanese possibly still in Vizagapatam area from report of periscope on 25th may have followed convoy J.C.30 after torpedoing SS. PESHAWUR.
Report of SS. TAI YIN not corroborated but may indicate another Japanese to westward of Colombo.
Japanese D/F on 24th reported as off Bombay in C. in C. E.F.'s 240404 does not fit any other position unless this U-Boat was further west and the same as the one which attacked SS. RIVER RAISIN and SS. ROBERT F. HOKE, latter on 28th off Masira.
Absence of any report since 22nd from Gulf of Aden or east coast of Africa suggests doubt whether any U-Boat is now in these areas.
(D.D.I.C., 291351A to C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.), A.C.N.B.)

Force G. For information route for Force G and TULIP is through following positions.
3. DERBYSHIRE is to be added to composition of Force G.
4. C. in C. E.F. 281206 refers.
6. After passing 015° N. in Red Sea S.O. Force G intends detaching fast ships WINCHESTER CASTLE and GLENGYLE under orders Vice Cdre. K.C. Lees, R.N. in CIRCASSIA to proceed arriving Suez 20 hours in advance to facilitate berthing.
(C. in C. E.F., 290532Z to N.O.I.C. Aden, (R) S.O. Force G, Capt. (D) 11th, F.O.E.M., TULIP.)

ROBERT F. HOKE (1) ROBERT F. HOKE abandoned in 020° 00' N. 059° 20' E. at 0600Z/28th. Vessel reported to be still afloat at 0850Z on same day.
torpedoed & abandoned, (2) My 270615. ASIAN sunk in collision with HARMATRIS. 14 survivors. HARMATRIS damaged (collision) proceeding to Bombay. JOSE NAVARRO sunk entire crew 167 survivors safe.
JOSE NAVARRO torpedoed. (C. in C. E.F., 290650Z to Admty.)

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - Contd.

- B.N. 80. Sailing telegram. (2) 1030Z/29th. (6) LAUNCESTON
CAIRNS.
(N.C.S.O. Bombay, 291051Z to Admty.)
- CILICIA, A.M. 191556. Destination is Hampton Roads.
CORFU, (D.O.D.(F), 291621A to C. in C. E.F. (S.E.A.C.),
CHITRAL. F.O.C.W.Af., Info. B.A.M.R., C. in C. S.A.)
- U/B. By D/F at 1440Z/29th position of a German U-Boat
was to west of Maldiva Island.
(C. in C. E.F., 291758Z to S. & A. E. Indies
Station.)

War Diary.29.12.1943.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.U.S. Navy
V.L.R.
Squadron
for Azores.

At a preliminary meeting with Captain Hughes he requested confirmation first that we agree a U.S. Navy V.L.R. squadron should be sent to the Azores, and second, that it should be operational on the 15th Jan. 2. It is confirmed that a V.L.R. squadron will be very welcome in the Azores under British operational control as stated in Cominch Hicom 241546. 3. It is understood that Captain Hughes has arranged with the S.B.O. Azores that the U.S.N. will make all arrangements to disembark and establish equipment in Azores so that squadron can be operational by the 15th Jan. This is entirely satisfactory to Admiralty and Air Min. 4. There appears to be some difference of opinion in the British and U.S. interpretations of the term "operational control" and a further message will be sent on this subject. 5. It will not be possible to provide additional vessels for local protection for ships unloading before 15th Jan. consequently propose escorts which bring Liberty ship to Azores remain for this purpose.
(1st S.L. 290034A to Cominch.)

W.10,
U/B.
search.

Ships named known as W.10. Read all signals addressed. My 281503 refers.
(F.O.N.F. 290109Z to S.E.C. O.N.216, S.E.C. O.N.S.2, W.8., W.3., C. in C. C.N.A., Connav., Admty., A.C.I.C., C. in C.W.A., N.S.H.Q., H.Q.C.C., Cmdr. D. Argentia., Cmdr. D.W.A., W.10. VESPER.)

CUBITT,
CURZON.

Diversion orders to avoid friendly S/Ms.
((U.S.) Cdr. 10th U.S. Fleet C. & R. 290140Z to CUBITT, CURZON.)

Italian
S/Ms.
allocation.

Ref. F.O.T.A.L.I.'s 241941. As it is expected that 4 Italian Submarines will be leaving for Bermuda about Jan. 1st. and that 2 of these will be available for U.S. training and 2 for our own, it is not proposed to sail ZEEHOND for Bermuda but to retain her to augment our requirements at home.
2. B.A.D. is requested to confirm that Cominch agrees with the above proposed allocation of Italians.
(D.A/S.W. 291200A to S.B.N.O. W.At., B.A.D., Info. F.O. (S).)

ST. ALBANS,
ROXBOROUGH.

Departure ST.ALBANS and ROXBOROUGH to U.K. via Azores.
(C.O. P.Halifax 291240Z to Admty.)

ICARUS.

At 1500/29th sailed ICARUS to Londonderry great circle 18 knots. E.T.A. p.m. 2nd January rejoining C.2.
(F.O.N.F. 291509Z to C. in C.W.A.)

War Diary.29.12.1943.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies - Contd.

O.N. and
O.N.S.
convoys,
detachment
of ships. Propose that C. in C. C.N.A. be given discretion to order detachment of ships bound ports N. of New York when convoy is west of Westomp.
(2) C. in C. C.N.A. to instruct Cdre. as to time of detachment and routes to be followed and inform C.E.S.F. and Com.10th Fleet C. & R. as necessary.
(3) If Com.10th Fleet C. & R. and N.S.H.Q. concur request directives may be issued.
(D.T.D. 291517Z to Connav, N.S.H.Q., Info., C. in C. C.N.A., B.A.D., C. in C.W.A.) Concur (Com.10th Fleet C. & R. 301450Z) N.S.H.Q. 302301Z.

S/M.
Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 201520Z, Cominch 291605Z.)

U.T.6. Escort U.S.S. TEXAS U.S. U.S.S. MERRIMACK, U.S.S. ANNE ARUNDEL. Sailing with convoy AMEER, ATHELING Inop. planes stores. Total 17 ships sailed (list). (P.D. New York 291540Z, 291600Z.)

O.N.216. C.3 relieved by W.3 at 1800Z in 044° 18' N. 049° 43' W. Convoy course and speed 244° 9. (C.3 292001Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)

H.X.273. (1) Sailing dispatch. (2) Part 1 is MYDIS 281936 and 291942. Total 34 ships sailed (list). (P.D. New York 291942, 292038 to Admty.)

ARETHUSA. Expected departure 2400Z/30th. ARETHUSA. Clyde via Bermuda. Horta Azores. Routed according to Cominch 231847Z. Speed 20. E.T.A. Bermuda 1200Z/1st (P.D. NORVA 292000 to Cominch C.E.S.F., N.O.B. Bermuda, S.B.N.O. W.A., S.B.N.O. Azores, Admty., F.O. Gibraltar, C. in C.W.A.)

B.Y.M.S.
253,279,
234 and
280. My 282043 advance all times 24 hours due to weather. (Com.6 292023.)

S/M. attack
and
sighting
summary. Para.D. P.B.Ms. Radar contacts 1904 N. 7423 W. 280430Z and 280740Z. (Cominch 292111 to Admty.)

RETALICK. Modify my 241909. When released by British Training Officer Casco Bay after about seven days shakedown sailing RETALICK to Boston for Logistics

War Diary.

29.12.1943.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

RETALICK.
(contd.)

Spares Books thence without a workup direct to Argentina to be sailed by C. in C. C.N.A. to U.K. with a Convoy Escort. Advise routing instructions. (Cominch 292135 to C.E.S.F.)

GUYSBOROUGH.

Weather improving am remaining until 0300Z/30 position at 2300Z/29 043° 50' 062° 00' 290° speed 2 knots. GUYSBOROUGH E.T.A. 301 (?100)Z boiler hours, defects. (GUYSBOROUGH 292310Z to C. in C. C.N.A. (R) D. Halifax, MEDICINE HAT.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest
Serial No.
708
Dec.28th.

(7) Small submarine possibly new supply type previously reported sighted by aircraft off Rottok Bay forenoon. (11) Enemy S/M. reported off shore near Arawe Air Airfield evening 27th. (15) L.H.2 Mogami Class cruisers, 2 destroyers reported 210 miles South Truk afternoon 27th proceeding North Refer Digest 707 para.17. (18) U.S. Cruiser, Destroyer Force heavily bombarded targets Kieta area evening 27th. (G.H.Q., S.W.P.A. 290701, 290800.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 291430A, 291441A.)

Submarines Attacked.

S/M. attack and sighting summary for 24 hours to 0900Z/29th.

Para.A. 1. U/B. sighting by E.G.6 at 0133A/29 in 47° 01' N. 19° 02' W. Para.B. 1. A/C obtained contact at 0335A/29 in 43° 48' N. 10° 15' W. (D.D.I.C. 290956Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

- Operation F.V. 1. As only 5 ships are in Convoy R.A.55B C. in C. H.F. proposes that Battleship cover for the convoy should be dispensed with.
- B.S.1. 2. F.O.1st Battle Squadron in RENOWN, with QUEEN ELIZABETH and VALIANT, escorted by 4 destroyers sailed from Scapa this evening to join the Eastern Fleet, ILLUSTRIOUS and UNICORN left the Clyde later, to join them.
- Operation "Stonewall". 3.(a). The inward-bound Blockade-runner sighted by A/C on the 24th December is now believed to have been the 7000 ton German OSORNO which was photographed on 28th December at Le Verdon (Gironde) apparently beached. On 7th January a report was received from Bilbao, apparently referring to this ship, stating that the vessel was a Japanese blockade runner with a very valuable cargo of minerals which the Germans were unloading by night.
- (b). D/F bearings reported during last night are considered by Admiralty to indicate a group of up to 10 U-Boats between 44° and 44° 30' N. in long. between 19° and 22° W.
- (c). GAMBIA was ordered today to leave patrol in the western Bay Approaches at noon tomorrow for Plymouth; but MAURITIUS is to take over patrol P at 47° 30' N. at first light tomorrow, and PENELOPE is at Gibraltar at two hours notice.
- (d). The minesweepers SEAHAM, ROMNEY and POOLE, escorting convoy X.K.13, will search early tomorrow morning about 470 miles west of La Rochelle for a lifeboat sighted by A/C containing 35 survivors from German destroyers.

North Atlantic.

- U/B sunk. 4. The U.S. destroyers PARROTT and BULMER with U.S. escort carrier BLOCK ISLAND commenced a series of attacks on a U-Boat which they slightly damaged yesterday evening in about 42.22 N. 21.16 W. (about 300 miles N.E. of San Miguel, Azores.)

/C.T.G....

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

U/B sunk.
(Contd.)

C.T.G. 21.16 reported this afternoon that the slightly damaged U-Boat had been sunk by PARROTT and BULMER.

Operation
"Stonewall".

5. PENELOPE arrived at Gibraltar this afternoon from patrol.

Mediterranean.

"Avalanche".

6. (a) The 9th Commando was landed last night north of the mouth of the Garigliano in a "Leapfrog" operation. There were no naval casualties.

(b). Last night, two P.T.Boats attacked and it is believed damaged small trawlers in the Gulf of Genoa. A stationery ship was also attacked and torpedoed, an explosion being seen.

Adriatic.

7. (a) The destroyers TYRIAN and TEAZER patrolled last night between San Benedetto and Ancona and WHADDON and LAUDERDALE between Kotor and Dubrovnik, but sighted nothing. A searchlight position on Locrum Island was shelled by the two latter destroyers.

(b). 24 B.25s attacked Zara Harbour today; some ships were near missed and a large explosion was caused when 75 to 100 mines were detonated south-east of the quay.

China.

8. 4 U.S.Mitchells attacked shipping the Yangtze today; they sank 4 merchant ships, including a troop transport and damaged 2 gunboats.

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30.12.1943.

Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

VERITY. VERITY is to proceed Gibraltar with K.M.S.38 for onward routing to rejoin the Flag of F.O.C. W.Af.. (C. in C.W.A. 300948A to Cdre. D.W.A.)

Force "J". Your 041303A October and my 161536A October. 1 ST. S.G.B. Flotilla is to be temporarily transferred to the operational control of F.O.I.C. Portland on 1st January, 1944. M.G.Bs. of the 1st Coastal Force Flotilla will be transferred to force J on that date. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 301832A to F.O. Force "J".)

Movements.

ARIADNE. Arrived ARIADNE 301112A. (C. in C. Plymouth, 301157A to F.O.G.M.A.)

INDEFATIGABLE. On completion of full-power trial in Irish Sea INDEFATIGABLE will pass through 240° Mull of Galloway 9 miles at 1700A/2nd proceeding at 18 knots via Minches to Rosyth.

4. Ship will have no Radar or A/S equipment. Some close range weapons will be available and one type 86 V.H/F. (N.O.I.C. Greenock, 301615A to C. in C. H.F.)

Group A. Scapa departure F.O. 1st B.S. in RENOWN with QUEEN ELIZABETH, VALIANT, TUSCAN, BLACKWOOD, QUEEN BERRY, DOMETT. (A.C.O.S. 301743 to Admty.)
ELIZABETH, Sailed R.A.A.E.F. in ILLUSTRIOUS, UNICORN, VALIANT, TERMAGANT, TENACIOUS, and KEMPENFELT in ILLUSTRIOUS, accordance with my 291048A, 24 hours late. UNICORN. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 302244A to Admty.)

EMPEROR. When ready C. in C.W.A. is requested to sail EMPEROR in convoy to U.S.A. to change rotors.
2. EMPEROR can be accepted in U.C.10.
3. B.A.D. is requested to sail EMPEROR to U.K. on completion. (Admty. 302040A to C. in C.W.A.)

Operations.

Operation A.M. 251721. Inward-bound blockade runner is "Stonewall". now presumed to be OSORNO which was photographed on 28th December at Le Verdon (Gironde) apparently beached.
2. On 28th December a force of 11 Narvik and Elbing destroyers was sighted westbound in Biscay. These destroyers proceeded to about 46° 30' N. 13° W. presumably to rendezvous inwardbound ALSTERUFER which had however been left

/in...

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30.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". in a sinking condition after aircraft attack at 1615A/27th in 46° 25' N. 17° 40' W.
(Contd.) Destroyers subsequently engaged by GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE who report sinking three destroyers.
(D.D.I.C. 300001A to A.I.G.13.)

My 291843. Abandon sweep in time to join convoy at 1200A/30th.

(C. in C.W.A. 300346Z to WASKESIU, TWEED.)

This is 292206 from C. in C. Lant to C.T.G.2116 for action. Unless logistics require otherwise, cease operations your area in time arrive Casablanca about January 4th. Depart therefrom when directed by Commorseafron about January 7th and operate offensively against Submarine activities giving priority to those that might menace U.G.S. - G.U.S. convoys. Further orders later. Fuel as necessary from U.G.S. - G.U.S. tankers.
(Commaveu, 300733 to Admty.)

Light on the surface position of dinghy, waiting daylight.
(A/C T J T 46 300800 to 19 Group.)

GLASGOW and ENTERPRISE on a sweep in the Bay of Biscay on 28th December received reports in the forenoon from Coastal Command aircraft that a force of ten German destroyers was to seaward of the cruisers and that they were on an easterly course.

2. Course was shaped to cut them off and at 1334 their masts were sighted to the southwest. GLASGOW opened fire 12 minutes later followed shortly afterwards by ENTERPRISE.
3. The task of the cruisers at this stage was to prevent any of the destroyers closing to short range. With ten targets to compete with some destroyers were bound to be unfired at and could thus be expected to develop accurate fire.
4. After about an hour during which time the cruisers were also attacked by aircraft with glider bombs, some of the destroyers evidently decided that it was for those who could to get away. This they did after firing torpedoes which the cruisers successfully avoided. Some destroyers were badly damaged during this phase but none were seen to sink.
5. There were then four destroyers left. These were fairly well spread out. Three of them were sunk but the fourth though hit got away whilst the others were engaged. This phase ended at 1615.
6. There were frequent air attacks by single enemy aircraft but our own fighter aircraft protection prevented any formation attack.
7. Each cruiser suffered one hit from destroyers shell fire, but fortunately the total casualty list was only two killed and seven injured, none dangerously and the fighting efficiency of the cruisers was almost unimpaired.
8. Enemy aircraft attacked the cruisers at nightfall as they were retiring to the westward, but all guns were still firing and the attacks were abortive.

(GLASGOW, 300922 to Admty.)

Am being shadowed by one enemy aircraft, 090° 2,000 feet.
My position 46° 12' N. 14° 49' W. course 000° speed 6 knots.
(KINGSTON, AGATE, 301052 to Whitehall W/T.)

/ D/F ...

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30.12.1943.

Thursday.

War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". (Contd.) D/F bearings of several U/Boat transmissions during night 29th/30th December are considered to indicate a group of up to 10 U/Boats between latitudes $44^{\circ} 00' N.$ and $44^{\circ} 30' N.$ and between longitudes $19^{\circ} 00' W.$ and $22^{\circ} 00' W.$ (D.D.I.C. 301055A to MAURITIUS, (R) GAMBIA.)

A homeward bound U/B is estimated at 1200Z/30th within 50 miles of $49^{\circ} 00' N.$ $18^{\circ} 00' W.$

(D.D.I.C. 301140A to GAMBIA.)

F.W.200 aircraft are operating in your vicinity.

(D.D.I.C. 301300A to Escorts M.K.F.27, O.S.162.)

Request you will fuel PENELOPE with despatch and sail her on completion to $043^{\circ} N.$ $015^{\circ} W.$ at S.O.A. 20 knots. Object operation "Stonewall".

(C. in C. Plymouth, 301335A to F.O.G.M.A.)

Following from International Red Cross Committee.

Begins: German Government have made following communication to International Committee. "In area within $46.26 N., 12.25 W.$ and $46.04 N., 11.45 W.$ and $46.27 N., 11.35 W.,$ a number of shipwrecked German sailors are drifting in rubber dinghies. On December 28th at 16.12 o'clock German air patrols sighted a hospital ship of unknown nationality of 8,000 tons gross on course 120° at a distance of approximately 100 sea miles from the above described area.

It would be greatly appreciated if the hospital ship be informed of the position of the shipwrecked men in order that she may participate in rescue operations. Ends. Copied to Berne.

(Mr. Livingston, Geneva, 301400, to Foreign Office.)

Lifeboat 35 survivors $46^{\circ} 25' N.$ $12^{\circ} 40' W.$

(A/C 461 Sq. Duty B. 301405A to 19 Group.)

1. At 302000 BLYTH, PETERHEAD $048^{\circ} 40' N.$ $010^{\circ} 27' W.$ to vicinity $045^{\circ} 45' N.$ $010^{\circ} 27' W.$ on air-sea rescue 12 knots.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 301451A to Ships.)

Situation at 302000. T.G.21.1.6 $040^{\circ} 33' N.$ $024^{\circ} 29' W.$

South westward 15. My 301314A refers.

(C. in C.W.A. 301622A to Ships.)

Aircraft reports indicate lifeboat believed with survivors from German Destroyers in approx. $46.45 N.$ $12^{\circ} 33' W.$ at 1000A today.

2. If within 120 miles of this position and fuel permits, proceed to search for lifeboat until 1200/31.

3. Spanish Destroyers may be in the vicinity and are not to be attacked.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 301655A to SEAHAM, ROMNEY, POOLE.)

Cancel my 301335A.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 301720A to V.A. Gibraltar.)

P.C.S. 1800Z/30th, $038^{\circ} 50' N.$ $028^{\circ} 32' W.$ 030° 16 knots.

E.T.A. 0700Z/1st.

(GLENARM 301810Z to C. in C.W.A.)

Keep steam at 2 hours notice.

(F.O.G.M.A. 301947A to PENELOPE.)

MAURITIUS is to pass $047^{\circ} 30' N.$ at 1st light tomorrow

and is to take over patrol (P) keeping north of $047^{\circ} 30' N.$

2. Unless fuel necessitates leaving earlier GAMBIA is to leave patrol at 1200A tomorrow passing through ZZ $049^{\circ} 30' N.$ $017^{\circ} 20' W.$ ZA 180° . Bishops Rock 10, and thence to Plymouth

keeping West of Lizard Head during dark hours.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 301955A to MAURITIUS, GAMBIA.)

/Will...

War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation "Stonewall". Will be in vicinity 0500A, tomorrow in accordance with your 301655A. (Contd.) (SEAHAM, 302002A to C. in C. Plymouth.) PENELOPE arrived 1540. (F.O.G.M.A. 302007A to C. in C. Plymouth.) Investigating. Have A.S.V. contact position (group omitted) 49° 37' N. 21° 20' W. probably surface vessel. (A/C Duty X. 302150 to 19 Group.) By D/F at 2135Z/30. U/Boat estimated within 75 miles of 44° 30' N. 12° 30' W. (D.D.I.C. 302320A to S/Ms.)

Operation "FV". As only 5 ships are proceeding in R.A.55B battleship cover should be dispensed with unless there is a further change in the situation. (C. in C.H.F. 300358 to R.A.D., H.F., C.S.10.) Cancel my 292150A. Weather. (C. in C. Rosyth, 300817A to Escorts R.A.55A.)

Faeroes arrival ASHANTI. (N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 300959A to Capt. D.3.) Intend to proceed 1600A. E.T.A. Scapa 1000A/31st. ATHABASKAN delayed 24 hours by defective condensor. (ASHANTI, 301205A to N.O.I.C. Faeroes.) My 230909. 19 tons silver only embarked in BELFAST. (S.B.N.O. North Russia, 301231A to Admty.) J.W.56A. 1. Close escort. KEPPEL S.O., CYGNET, INCONSTANT, CAMELLIA.

2. Local escort. WALLFLOWER, BORAGE.

3. Ships are to arrive Loch Ewe p.m. 8th and are to come under orders of C. in C.H.F. on arrival. (C. in C.W.A. 301452A to C. in C.H.F.) Faeroes departure ASHANTI. (N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 301631A to R.A.D.) E.T.A. Scapa 0915/31st. METEOR follows. (Capt. D.3. 301705A to to A.C.O.S.) My 301802A. E.T.A. Skaalefiord 1000A/31st. (WESTCOTT, 302051A to N.O.I.C. Faeroes.) My 291311. Sailed 2200 (A) (4?) hours late. Negative HORACE GREY. (Group 4). (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 302252A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.) Arrival Dvina 31st/1900A. 8 ships. Names. (?OCEAN) (?GIPSY) (?and) (?COLUMBIAN) will be escorted by 2 Russian Minesweepers to Molotovsk.

2. SPEEDWELL, HUSSAR, HALCYON and 2 Russian Minesweepers escorting DALDORCH and LUCERNA to position (?H). My 302252 refers. (S.B.N.O. Archangel 302359A to S.B.N.O. North Russia.)

Coastal Force Patrols. 1. Orders for night 30/31 December. A. 3 M.G.B. from Newhaven anti-E/Boat patrol 10 miles S. of Convoy Route from Longitude of E.A. 5 Buoy to Eastern limit of Command between 1830A and 0200A abreast C.E.233. B. 3 S.G.B. from Portland anti-E/Boat patrol on patrol line A 50° 25' N. between 01° 20' W. and 01° 00' W. from 1900A to 0600A, They may be moved by Signal to patrol line, B 50° 25' N. between 00° 30' W. and 00° 10' W.

/C ...

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Thursday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Coastal Force Patrols. (Contd.)

C. M.L.343 short notice St. Helens.
D. LA COMBATTANTE short notice Yarmouth.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301419A.)
M.Ls. 128 and 125 at No.7 Buoy, E.T.D. 1745, E.T.R. 0815/31. M.Ls. 139 and 143 at Bullock Bank.
(V.A. Dover, 301624A.)
My 301419A para. 1, add sub. para. (E) 1. M.L. 1. R.M.L. from Portland anti-E/Boat patrol on line 50° 18' N. between 02° 00' W. and 02° 35' W. leaving patrol at 0700A.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301751A.)

Operations "Postage A" and K.J.H.

Operation "Postage A" will not be carried out during the present dark period. It is intended to use another method, operation K.J.H., orders for which are being issued.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301910A to Admty.)

Mining.

Q.Z.X.1172.

Your 282125A. On completion of Q.Z.X.1197 proceed as necessary to continue clearance of Q.Z.X.1172 working Southward from line joining following positions.
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301242A to M/S 9.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Dieppe.

Sortie 1220A/30th shows:- Dieppe:
Naval units present comprise one patrol ship 205' seven T.L.C. type III, fourteen E/R boats, five auxiliaries and one naval launch showing no change since 1130A this morning. M/V 460' MINSTERLAND M.28 remains berthed at Quax Henri Quatre. Le Treport.
(R.A.F. Medmenham, 301930A to Admty.)

Shipping and Convoys.

Troopships.

Following is summary No.20 of major troopship movements in and out of Clyde and Liverpool during period to 19/1.
(D.S.T. 300130A.)

M.K.F.27.

Convoy M.K.F.27 is due U.K. 4/1 comprising the following 11 troop transports. Names.
(D.S.T. 300205A.)

O.N.217.

Inconclusive D/F bearings at 0826Z indicate U/B possibly in vicinity of O.N.217.
(D.D.I.C. 301014Z to O.N.217.)

/O.N.217...

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30.12.1943.
Thursday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping and Convoys.

- O.N.217. (Contd.) O.N.217. U/Boat in contact astern. 44 ships in company. All escorts in company negative DAUPHIN. FUSILIER on GROWLER. DUNVAR Radar defective. P.C.S. at 2100Z 060° 03' N. 026° 37' W. 234° 9 knots. Weather. (KOOTENAY, 302111Z to C. in C.W.A.)
- S.L.143 M.K.S.34. Numerous D/Fs during night indicate a group of about 10 U/Boats which may be encountered about dusk tonight. Air cover will be provided during night and attention is called to W.A.G.M.831 N. Leigh light aircraft will be operating.
2. U.S.S. BLOCK ISLAND and CORE are also operating in your vicinity.
(C. in C.W.A. 301237 to Convoy S.L.143/M.K.S.34.)
Admiralty appreciation.
- Numerous D/Fs. during night 29th/30th indicate that a group of probably about 10 U/Boats is likely to be encountered about dusk today.
- It is not anticipated that any large scale attack will continue after daylight tomorrow unless weather conditions are such as seriously to curtail the operation of our own aircraft. It is probable that a further group of U/Boats may operate against the convoy to northward of about latitude 49° 00' N. Above may be passed to escorts of S.L.143.
(V.C.N.S. 301343A to C. in C.W.A.)
- My 301237. It is not anticipated that any large-scale attack will continue after daylight tomorrow although it is probable that a further group of U/Boats may operate against convoy north of latitude 049° N.
2. It is left to your discretion, therefore, when you consider you have obtained the measure of enemy unit to order escorts of B.3 or 6th group in contact with enemy to continue their hunt to a conclusion. There should not, however, be less than a total of 6 escorts with Convoy at daylight of which one should be S.O.Escort Group B.3.
3. It is the intention that Escorts so detached should continue to hunt in the area for about 12 hours until they must leave to rejoin the convoy before it crosses 049° N.
4. My 142141 refers.
(C. in C.W.A. 301757A to B.3.)
On reaching convoy WATCHMAN is to join B.3.
2. B.3 to decode B.N.061.
(C. in C.W.A. 302009A to Escorts S.L.143, M.K.S.34.)
- P.S.31. Cancel P.S. and S.P.31.
(C. in C.Portsmouth, 301620A.)
- H.X.272. Ships which straggle and do not rejoin before reaching 28° W. are being ordered to proceed to Horta.
(C. in C.W.A. 301751A to Escorts H.X.272.)
- T.A.82. A.M. 281945. Route through Q. 270° Oversay 6 miles at 2100A/2nd to New York.
(D.O.D. 302054A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.

GLASGOW's
engagement
of 28th Dec.
in Bay.
Spanish
destroyers
search for
survivors.

Minister of Marine informed me at 0015 2 Spanish destroyers will sail from Ferrol at 0430 to-day to search for floats with shipwreck Germans in 046° 27' N. 011° 35' W. and 046° 04' N. 011° 45' W. They have been instructed to keep outside danger area if possible. Although I intimated that they will almost certainly be attacked he accepts full responsibility.

(A.B.N.A. Madrid 300217A to Admty. (R) F.O.G.M.A.) Information has been received that 2 Spanish destroyers left Ferrol at 0430 to-day to search for German survivors in 46° 27' N. 11° 35' W. and 46° 4' N. 11° 45' W. 2. These ships should not be attacked. (Admty. 300757A to F.O.G.M.A., C. in C. Plymouth, H.Q.C.C., Escorts of X.K.13, Escorts of S.L.143, MAURITIUS, GAMBIA, BLYTH, PETERHEAD.)

A/C.
sighting.

Following received from C.M.S.F. A/C. sighting at 1135A/28. Heavily laden freighter with red/white/blue or possibly green marking in 43° 38' N. 10° 42' W. on a course of 040° speed 7 knots. Not considered to be Irish CITY OF DUBLIN that was sighted at 0930A/28 in 43° 32' N. 11° 51' W. course 000 6 knots. (F.O.G.M.A. 300253A to Admty., C. in C. Plymouth.)

Your 300253A vessel sighted was probably Irish KERLOGUE. No enemy ship likely to have been concerned.

(D.D.I.C. 301118A to F.O.G.M.A. Info., C. in C. Plymouth.)

WHITEHAVEN,
BOSTON,
RYE.

Your 291841 (N.T. in W.D.) does not affect your 291411 approval to which was given in my 291812. (F.O.G.M.A. 300510A to S.B.N.O. Azores (R) Admty.) Your 272202 was passed to me for information and not a reply to my 271145 (N.T. in W.D.) Message as received reported the sailing of WHITEHAVEN and

BOSTON which was not correct and your direct instructions to us? were awaited. All available information regarding the position and movements of these two ships was passed to you as soon as received. Message was passed to WHITEHAVEN as requested. Your 291812* refers. No signal 291114 was originated by me presume you refer to my 291411.

(S.B.N.O. Azores 301235Z to F.O.C. Gib. (R) Admty.) * Requested investigation and report why F.O.G.M.A.'s 272202 not complied with. WHITEHAVEN and BOSTON sailed 1657/0/30th.

(S.B.N.O. Azores 302123Z to F.O.C. Gib.)

(G) Tare diverted to dinghy search area 45.50 N. 08.00 W. then to search for destroyers area 43.35 N. 0.34 W. 3 Cruisers 1133 50.15 N. 8.40 W. 080 15 H.110 Narvik class destroyer 1604 TZFJ. 4515 indecipherable 110 20 no suitable opportunity for attack H.110 1 Narvik class destroyer first signalled by 0/202 at 0952 43.23 N. 09.03 W. COW050 18 destroyer opened fire immediately A/C. shadowed until 1551 leaving destroyer on Co.075 20 knots.

(A.C.H.Q. Gib. 300600A.) / H.M.S. RYE will be fit for sea 30th. / Convoy to sail when RYE fit for sea.

/Percussion...

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War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

Percussion
area U/B.
sunk by
BULMER and
PARROTT.

Since noon 29th 2 destroyers hold down tactics 44.22 N. 21.16 W. Four night Radar contacts followed by sound contact vicinity 45 N. 22 W. Single DD unable to hold down. Also Radar contact only same area. Suspected U/B. Radar ground search signal intercepted 600 Megs. P.R.F. about 2000 C.P.S. W.X.5882 3625. Will proceed vicinity

Azores at sunset to refuel. Refer to this as 300909 from C.T.G. 21.16.

(Comnaveu 301222 to Admty.)

This is C.T.G. 21.16's 301659. A S/M. was sighted by a plane 44.08 N. 19.15 at 1600Z. It submerged immediately no attack, it passed T.G. 21.15 headed westerly 44.30 N. 21.18. Re my 291929 and 300909 PARROTT and BLUMER sank previously slightly damaged S/M. Request new A/C. frequencies be assigned due to extreme British and German interference. W.S.5883 3625.

(Comnaveu 302129Z to Admty.)

All times Z. (A) U.S.S. PARROTT and U.S.S. BULMER delivered a series of attacks on U/B. commencing about 291929 in area 4222 N. 21.16 W. which they report sinking on 30th. U.S.S. BLOCK ISLAND plane sights S/M. 44.08 N. 19.15 W. 30 1600.

(B) BLOCK ISLAND Radar and Sound contacts vicinity 45 even N. 22 even W. p.m. 29th. (D) P.B.M. sights wake 1945 N. 73.48 W. 300430 S/M. contact 16.42 N. 73.47 W. 301720. The following answers Admty. 301042. S/M. attack and sighting summary. CHAPULTEPEC hit Port Bow by either mine or torpedo with evidence to date favouring latter. ESSO BUFFALO reported two wakes and functioning torpedo alaip indicator followed by explosion astern 10.40 N. 78.25 W. 29 1130. Both ships arrived port.

(Cominch 302115 to Admty. for O.I.C. (R) Cds. All Navdist Lant Cdrs. all Seafron Lant. Cdrs. All T.F. Lant, N.O.B. Guantanamo, Cinclant, N.O.B. Bermuda, N.O.B. Trinidad, N.S.H.Q., Cafac, S.C.I. Jamaica, Comnaveu, H.Q.C.C., B.A.D., N.M.C.J.S.)

H.M. Ships
arriving
Ponta
Delgada
without
previous
notification.

Your 291635. S.B.N.O. Azores 291539 (N.T. in WD.) informing me of arrival of WATCHMAN only received at 1935 on 29th Ministry of Marine was then informed. 2. No notice was received about GLENARM. Ministry was informed on receipt of your signal at 0030 on 30th. 3. It was understood from S.B.N.O. Azores 281045 (N.T. in W.D.) that WISHART was to R/V SS. LINGE outside harbour. 4. An official note has been presented to the Ministry apologizing for the failure to inform

them in advance of B.N.L.O.

(N.A. Lisbon 301301 to H.M. Consul Ponta Delgada (R) B.S.N.O., Azores, Admty.)

Attention is drawn to para.2 of your 121230/Nov.

2. It is essential for good co-operation that you ensure the necessary steps are taken. H.M. Consul Ponta Delgada's 291635 your 291046 and 281656 all refer.

(D.QD. (H) 301542A to S.B.N.O. Azores, Info., F.O.G.M.A., N.A. Lisbon, H.M. Consul, Ponta Delgada.)

/APOLO...

War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.APOLO,
CABO
ESPARTEL.Your 201805. Spanish APOLO and Spanish CABO
ESPARTEL from South America intercepted and sent
in yesterday. Visitors watched examination
ship released today.
(C.C.S.O. Gib. 301515A to Admty.)S.L.143/
M.K.S.34
GLENARM.GLENARM sailed 1419Z/30th from Horta in accord-
ance with your 290430Z.
(S.B.N.O. Azores 301759Z to F.O.G.M.A. (R) Admty.
C. in C.W.A.)Unidentified
Portuguese
vessel.Following from C.M.S.F. A/C. sighted unidentified
Portuguese vessel at 0957/29 in 43° 25' N. 09°
04' W. C. 070 S.10 to 12 knots.
(F.O.G.M.A. 301953A to Admty., C. in C.Plymouth.)

BLOCK ISLAND.

Cinclant has ordered BLOCK ISLAND to cease
operations in time to arrive Casablanca about 4th
January. 2. She will sail from Casablanca about
7th January and operate offensively against S/Ms.
giving priority to those that might menace U.G.S/G.U.S. convoys.
(D.O.D. (H) 302130A to C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.G.M.A.
S.B.N.O. Azores, H.Q.C.C.)South Atlantic.Cruiser
patrols.
Plan
"Freecar".Add to my 271626 "Freecar" new para.9. Following
air patrol established. Inward. All positions
N. and W. unless otherwise stated.(Read in 3 columns) Position, Bowler, Batsman.
(1) 008° 35' 019° 00' 009° 21' 019° 38'.
(2) 004° 10' 026° 08' 004° 56' 026° 45'.
(3) 003° 22' 025° 55' 005° 43' 027° 23'.
(4) 009° 21' 019° 38' 010° 54' 020° 54'.Outward. (Read in 3 columns). Position, Keeper, Stumper. All
positions N. and W. unless otherwise indicated.(1) 011° 57' 021° 40' 011° 05' 021° 02'.
(2) 009° 53' 024° 31' 005° 06' 026° 53'.
(3) 006° 40' 028° 10' 004° 19' 026° 15'.
(4) 011° 05' 021° 02' 009° 47' 019° 45' patrols will start 31st
details of aircraft on patrol will be signalled.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 301024 to Comardakar, CORFU, SUFFREN, CILICIA,
DUCA DEGLI ABRUZZI (R) Admty., EMANUELE FILBERTO, DUCA D'AOSTA.)

O.S.61.

Arrival 0720Z/29th LEITH, SANDWICH, ANCHUSA,
GAZELLE with O.S.61.
(S.O. (I) Freetown 301121Z.)

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30.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic - Contd.

CORFU. My 291229 destination of CORFU Hampton Roads for orders.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 301225Z to Cominch, CORFU, S.B.N.O. Trinidad (R) S.B.N.O.W.At., Admty.)

EMANUELE Intend to sail It/Cr. EMANUELE FILBERTO, DUCA
FILBERTO, D'AOSTA 0715Z/1st Jan. to relieve on patrol E.F.,
DUCA E.T.A. position F. dusk 2nd Jan. leave patrol p.m.
D'AOSTA. 6th Jan. for Freetown.
(F.O.C.W.Af. 301347Z to Comar Dakar, Fr/Cr. SUFFREN
(R)*Com. 4th Fleet, Admiralty, CILICIA, CORFU,
DUCADEGLI, ABRUZZI (I.S.) It/Cr. EMANUELE
FILBERTO, DUCA D'AOSTA.)* DUCA DEGLI.

HIGHLAND A.M. 071856 HIGHLAND MONARCH will now arrive about
MONARCH. 11th Jan. and must sail on 25th Jan.
(D.O.D. (F) 301634A to N.A. Montevideo, Info.,
N.O.I.C. Falkland Islands.)
Arrived 1550 Convoy R.S.13 and Escort. Intend to
sail 0400Z/31st routed through (X) 1005 N. 1730 W.
where HIGHLAND MONARCH detached S. of A. 15 knots to (X) thence
15½ E.T.A. 1600Z/1st. F.O.C.W.Af's 301245 to Comar Dakar refers.
(Comar Dakar 301826Z to F.O.C.W.Af., V.A. Gibraltar, C.M.S.F.,
Admty., C. in C. Med., DOUGLAS.)

K.M.F. K.M.F.28 will leave U.K. on 15th Jan and 37 day
Convoy cycle be carried out thence forward.
Cycles. 2. The following will be the approx. programme
for West African ships, S day being date of sailing
of K.M.F. from U.K.

Arrive	Port	Sail.
	U.K.	S.
S+7	Gibraltar	S+8
S+15	Freetown	S+36
S+43	Gibraltar	

3. Ships for passage through Mediterranean will then join K.M.F.
passing Gibraltar on S+44, ships for U.K. join M.K.F. on S+54.
4. The necessary amendments should be made to A.M. 111553/July
not to Commorseafon.
(D.O.D. (F) 301726A to F.O.C.W.Af., Info., F.O.G.M.A., D.S.T.O.
W.Af., C. in C. Med., P.S.T.O. Med., Commorseafon, C. in C.S.A.)

Operation A.M. 071715. Amend para.2 to read:-
Tabarin. Arrive Port Sail Remarks.
11th Jan. Montevideo 25th Jan. Loads meat.
28th Jan. Falklands 2nd Feb. Disembarks
198 personnel
and embarks
1630 troops.
17th Feb. Freetown 20th Feb. In S.R.convoy
to Gib.
thence in
M.K.F. to U.K.

2. N.A. Montevideo is being separately informed.
(D.O.D. (F) 301735A to F.O.C.W.Af., Info.,N.O.I.C.
Falklands Islands,F.O.G.M.A., C. in C.S.A.,Connav.,
C. in C. Med.)

War Diary.

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

U.G./G.U. This is 291628 from Connav to C. in C. Med. for
convoys. action. To those now given ships sailing in
Instructions. U.G./G.U. convoys for diversion purposes request
entrance instructions for Narragansett Bay be
added.
(Comnaveu, 300331 to Admty.).

Daily Asking for a daily movement signal to be made
movement giving 2000 positions of all warships, corvettes
signals. and above convoys and their escorts, and
important independents at sea in Mediterranean and
East Indies Commands.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 301224A to C. in C. Med., C. in C.E.F.,
Info. F.O.E.M., V.A. Malta).

EMILE Request you will retain EMILE BERTIN temporarily
BERTIN. under your orders for anti blockade runner
duties until present situation has clarified.
(2) She is required at Algiers when she can be
spared.
(3) Navale France agree. B.A.D. pass to Cominch.
(C. in C. Med., 301253A to F.O.C.W.Af. (R)
Navale France, Admty., F.O.C. Gib., B.A.D., B.N.L.O.
Dakar).

X.T.13. 8 ships.
(2) 1215B/30. Escorts as in my 282135 less
ISLAY.
(R.A. Alexandria, 301655B).

Joint Army, 24 hours to 1000 hours 30th. All times G.M.T.
R.A.F. Para.6. Enemy clearly speeding up shuttle
Intelligence service Leros- Rhodes with supplies and rein-
Appreciation. forcements and evacuating Italians.
(C. in C.M.E., 301700B).

S/M P.224 (SICKLE) leaves patrol forthwith passing
patrols. west of Ophidusa and through Scarpanto Strait
then proceeding in accordance with my 291517.
(2) P.52 (DZIK) leaves present area at 2200/30th
passing close west of Cape Papas to patrol close
south and south west of Tenedos. Object destruction Dardanelles
Piraeus traffic.
(3) P.47 does not cross latitude 037 degs. 40' N. until 0001/31.
(4) TORBAY leaves present area at 2200/30 passing close west
of Kinaros and east Buoy Rock to patrol between Stapodia and
Nikaria. Object destruction of Piraeus-Leros-Rhodes traffic.
(Capt.(S) One, 301804B to 1st S/M. F. (R) F.O.E.M.).

SEA My position 034 degs. 01' 025 degs. 17'. Am
ROVER. proceeding on course 91 degs. diving by day at 165
miles per day pending instructions request
submerged bombing restrictions.
(P.218 SEA ROVER, 301900B to Capt.(S) 1 etc.).
/Your...

War Diary

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean.

SEA ROVER (Contd.). Your 301900B. Proceed on surface to 033 degs. 57' 035 degs. 30' speed 11½ knots to arrive Beirut at 1530/1st Jan. (2) Total bombing restrictions arranged. My 271152 December refers. (Capt.(S) 1, 302123B to P.218 (SEA ROVER), (R) F.O.E.M.).

Garigliano landing. Cositintrep No.174 to 1200 hrs/30th Dec. Fifth Army. 9 Commando was landed last night in the Argente M. 7992 area North of the mouth of the Garigliano. No reports of this operation have been received. (15th Army Group, 302015A).

Fiume torpedo works. Your 211253. Output of Fiume factory believed about 1740 a year. Mostly aircraft torpedoes. In addition to supply about 70% of aircraft torpedoes used by Germans the factory is of great importance since it can be used for making component parts of German torpedoes. Its priority for bombing now under consideration by the Air Ministry. (2) Request report as to action taken or being taken as result of your representations to Air C. in C. (V.C.N.S. 302305A to C. in C. Med.).

Fleet destroyer dispositions. The following are intended:- Mediterranean. 14th Flotilla JERVIS, JANUS, JAVELIN, KELVIN, KIMBERLEY, LAFOREY, LOOKOUT, LOYAL. 24th Flotilla TROUBRIDGE 6 "T" Class and KEMPENFELT till relieved by TERPSICHORE. 25th Flotilla GRENVILLE and 7 "U" Class. Temporarily attached to Med. Fleet:- 15th Division of 8th Flotilla FAULKNER, ECHO, FURY, INGLEFIELD, ISIS. Eastern Fleet 4th D.F. QUILLIAM and 5 "Q" class. 7th D.F. NAPIER and 5 "N" class including VAN GALEN and TJERK HIDDES. 11th D.F. ROTHERHAM and 7 "R" class. 16th Division PATHFINDER, PALADIN, PENN, PETARD. (2) Movement signals to achieve these dispositions will be made by Admiralty. (D.O.D.(F), 302331A).

M.E. Balkan Sitrep No.44. B. Yugoslavia. Brit. L.O. reports. 21st Dec. partisans held islands of Iz, Ist, Olib, Silba, Premuda, Rad and Dugi Otok. Germans have intensified sea and air patrols between Olib and Silba Islands. Adv. H.Q. Force 133 reports. Partisans claim heavy German casualties during fighting on Korcula Island and state their own losses heavy. During attack Germans landed 7 light tanks., 3 of which were destroyed. (4) Sea. Ops. A. Greece night 27/28 Italian S/M. attempting evacuation Allied personnel from Greece ran aground at evacuation point and has been

/abandoned...

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30.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean.

M.E. Balkan
Sitrep No.44.
(Contd.)

abandoned by crew. Brit. L.O. who was supervising shore arrangements intended to blow up submarine night 28/29th. To date there has been no enemy interference and no news whether demolition successful. Recently a caique successfully evacuated 23 Allied personnel from Greece. Yugoslavia. Adv. H.Q. Force 133 report. 2,000 partisans 5,000 civilians successfully evacuated from Korcula Island by 27th Dec. 600 refugees and 250 wounded reached South Italy from Yugoslavia on 27th Dec.
(C. in C.M.E., No T.O.O.).

War Diary.

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Sextant
Divisions.

I am awaiting signal referred to in your 281755 before replying to A.M. 291550 (Hush M.S.) as at present I have no information regarding Sextant divisions.
(C. in C.E.F. 300330Z to Admty.)

U/B dis-
position.

Reference my T.O.O. 0355Z/29th Area G. U-Boat was plotted by D/F to be to the westward of Maldive Is. 1440Z/29th. Poor Fix. She is probably the U-Boat which sank JOSE NOVARRO. Air escort Y. Other areas: no fresh information. No change in scale of air escort.
(C. in C.E.F. 300345Z to S. & A.E. Indies Station.)

ROBERT F.
HOKE
torpedoed
28th.

Following particulars forwarded in accordance with E.F. 716/71/27.
A. ROBERT F.HOKE. B. 20° 5' N. 59° 25' E. 28th 0355Z. C. Submarine. D. Torpedo, ship still afloat. E. One torpedo hit port side aft inside streamed net defence. F. 70 survivors none missing H. SSSS made and received. G. Periscope sighted after attack ship opened fire at about 2000 yards fired five rounds nil result.
(?Suez (?Com. Aden) 301453Z to Admty. (R) C. in C.E.F. S.E.A.C. S.N.O.P.G. Com. Aden.)
(?Have) torpedoed ship abandoned in tow 019° 10' N. 058° 11' E.
(EMPIRE BOMBARDIER 301640Z to C. in C.E.F.)

A.B.25B.

Arrived escorted by HELFORD.
(N.C.S.O.Bombay 301540Z.)

GODAVARI.

C. in C.W.A. 091057. GODAVARI has returned to U.K. after suffering collision damage.
2. She is being taken in hand for repairs, and a further signal will be made on completion.
(D.O.D.(H) 302026A to F.O.C.R.I.N. Info. C. in C. Med. F.O.L.E.M.C. in C.E.F. F.O.G.M.A. C.in C.W.A.)

War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.

PIQUE. If time permits request PIQUE be sailed to U.K. as additional escort of H.X.273 joining B.2. U.S. C. in C. U.S. Fleet 272011 refers. (C. in C. C.N.W.A., 300159Z to F.O.N.F.)

O.N.S. 25, D/F of 20 group enigma message at 0031Z and at U/B. 0205Z indicate U-Boats within 60 miles of 046° 30' N. 046° 30' W. (N.S.H.Q., 300315Z to Escorts O.N.S.25, (R) Escorts O.N.216, VESPER, C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.N.F. A.O.C. in C. E.A.C., No.1 Group St. Johns N.F., Admty., Cominch, S.B.N.O.W.At., A.F.H.Q.) Am in 046° 30' N. 046° 30' W. GOODSON in company. Intend to carry out search in this. N.S.H.Q. Ottawa's 300319Z (300315Z intended) refers. (BALFOUR, 300800Z to C. in C. C.N.A., F.O.N.F., (R) MATANE, Capt. (D) Argentia.)

S/M (N.S.H.Q., 301429Z; Cominch 301546Z.)
Estimates.

O.N. and Admiralty 291517 concur.
O.N.S. (Com. 10th Fleet (C. and R.), 301450Z to Admty.,
Convoys, (R) N.S.H.Q., C. in C. C.N.A., C. in C. W.A.)
detachment Concur in your 291517, directive will be issued.
of ships. (N.S.H.Q., 302301Z to Admty., (R) Com. 10th Fleet
(C. & R.), B.A.D., C. in C. C.N.A., C. in C. W.A.)

SHAH. Your 241541 to Admiralty only, approved for SHAH to embark 851 Tarpon Squadron and to join the Eastern Fleet as A/S Carrier on conclusion of her ferry trip which she is doing vice RANEE. (D.O.D.(H), 301531A to B.A.D., Info. C. in C. E.F. F.O.C.T., R.A.N.A.S.I.O.)

Z.G. 54. Sailing telegram. (2) 2100 G.M.T./30th. (6) U.S. S.P.Cs. 1253, 462, 464, 470, 12.3. (B.R.L.O. Cristobal, 301535R to Admty.)

S.C. 150. Sailing telegram (19 ships). (2) Gate 1300Z/30. (6) W.6. (N.C.S.O. Halifax, 301551Z, 301553 to Admty.)

Italian Re allocation, and employment for A/S training
S/Ms at Bermuda.
(S.B.N.O.W.At., 301717Z; S.B.N.O.W.At. 301719Z; B.A.D. 302153Z.)

/Working ...

698

30.12.1943.
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies - Contd.

Working up
programme
Nova Scotia
Bases.

We are suffering from considerable congestion at Bermuda particularly in dockyard if any repairs are required. Your 282150 refers. There is also shortage of transport.

2. Have you considered Jamaica. Except for distance it is very suitable. There are limited repair facilities and oil fuel is available. (S.B.N.O.W.At., 301720Z to N.S.H.Q., (R) Admty., C. in C. C.N.A., B.A.D.)

SEARCHER,
screen.

BLIGH, BULLEN and BICKERTON detailed. Your 202117 para. 2 refers. They will leave Bermuda 31st.

(S.B.N.O.W.At., 301721Z to B.A.D., (R) Admty.)

GOODALL,
AYLMER.

GOODALL (B.D.E.275) and AYLMEY (B.D.E.72) depart Boston Gate in company 1500Q/31st.

(C.T.G. 02.1, 302355 to (U.S.) C.T.G.24.)

M.M.S.257,
252, 256,
B.Y.M.S.
2069.

At 1700Z/30th sailed M.M.S.257, 252, 256 and B.Y.M.S. 2069, to Horta route.

(2) Request ships be sailed in company to U.K. (C. in C. C.N.A., 301924Z to S.B.N.O. Azores, (R) C. in C. Plymouth, Patrol Lowestoft, Admty., N.S.H.Q., B.A.T.M., B.A.D., B.A.M.R.)

Russian
A.M. and
S.C.

Understand from U.S.S.R. Naval Attache Washington arrangements have been made between Moscow and London for the next group of three Russian A.M. and three Russian S.C. to proceed to Murmansk via Northern route. This appears to have crossed Cominch 271737. Is there any objection to this

group proceeding by Southern route as arranged by Cominch. 2. Request early information as they are due to sail very shortly.

(B.A.D., 302149Z to Admty.)

S.C. 150.

Departure WINNIPEG, TIMMINS, COBALT, TRAIL escorting S.C.150.

(C.O.P. Halifax, 302215Z to Admty.)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
709, Dec.
29th.

Three Liberators conducting midday armed R/C north-west New Guinea - Banda area unsuccessfully attacked 3 small ships at Manokwari also bombed jetty area Geser off south-eastern extremity

/Ceram ...

War Diary.30.12.1943.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia and New Zealand.Digest
Serial
709, Dec.
29th.
(Contd.)Ceram starting large fire and strafed sea truck nearby leaving ship blazing. About five each fighters float-planes intercepted over Manokwari and two fighters two float-planes destroyed.
(2) Small Australian ships ineffectively attacked by enemy aircraft midday 55 miles south Merauke.
(9) Navy Catalina attacked 2 destroyers off Cape Hoskins night 28th reported Digest 707, para. 2.

One 500 pound bomb fell within 30 feet other results unobserved due intense A/A.

(16) Single destroyer bombarded Jap. coastal defence positions outside south-eastern sector Torokina perimeter 28th.

(20) Allied M.T.Bs. contacted 3 laden barges off south-east Bougainville early hours 29th sinking 2, driving 3 ashore damaged.

(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 300830.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Submarines Reported.Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C., 301354A, 301402A.)Submarines Attacked.Submarine
attack and
sighting
summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/30th.

Para. A. Aircraft attacked U-Boat at 0810Z/29th in 44° 04' N. 22° 38' W.

Para. B. F.S. TEMPETE reported submerged U-Boat at 1355Z/29th in 38° 10' N. 06° 56' E.

Ref. A.M. 290956Z, para. A.1 U-Boat was attacked by TWEED.

*Ref. Cominch 261957 request information whether CHAPULTEPEC was actually torpedoed and whether there is any confirmation that this ship and

ESSO BUFFALO were actually attacked.

(D.D.I.C., 301042Z to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

* Reply - see Cominch 302115 to Admty. North Atlantic.

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.SITUATION REPORT.

1. It has been decided to lay up certain ships now in commission, and in order to provide for their maintenance the appointment of F.O.C. Reserve Fleet (F.O.C.R.F.) is being re-introduced with effect from 15th January, 1944.

Home Commands.Operation
F.V.

2(a) Convoy R.A.55A was 115 miles W. by S. of Muckle Flugga (Shetlands at 1400A to-day steering 168 degs. with 19 ships in company at 8 knots.

(b) 6 Merchant Ships of convoy R.A.55B escorted by Capt.(D) 17 in ONSLOW with 6 other destroyers, and by WHITEHALL and 3 Corvettes of the Through Escort, left Murmansk at 1901A to-day for the U.K. They will be joined at 1000A to-morrow by two more M/V's from Archangel.

(c) C. in C. H.F. has sent to the Admiralty to-day a further and more detailed account of the engagement on 26th December with SCHARNHORST.

Operation
"Stonewall".

3(a) BLYTH, PETERHEAD and LORD NUFFIELD were searching for survivors to-day in the Western Biscay area; and the minesweeper SEAHAM with 5 German Officers and 57 German ratings rescued from a life-boat at 0630 was ordered at 1314A to proceed with ROMNEY and POOLE to Falmouth.

(b) The U.S. A/C Carrier CORE of T.G.21.15 with 3 U.S. Destroyers were operating in the western area to-day; and at 2102 MAURITIUS was ordered to leave her patrol forthwith for Gibraltar or Plymouth for fuel.

(c) At 0015A C. in C. Plymouth requested FOGMA to sail PENELOPE at 20 knots to patrol in 43 degs. N. 15 degs. W; but at 2201A Admiralty ordered that PENELOPE is to be returned to C. in C. Med.

VIVACIOUS
and
KEPPEL
Damaged.

4. At 1900A today VIVACIOUS, escorting Convoy F.S.16, collided with KEPPEL off the Humber. Both ships were damaged and they are proceeding in company to the Humber.

Convoy
O.N.217.
EMPIRE
HOUSMAN
Torpedoed.

5. At 0140Z to-day in 60 degs. 30' N. 024 degs. 35' W. the British EMPIRE HOUSMAN, 7360 tons, in convoy O.N.217 was torpedoed and damaged. She was not in company with the Convoy at that time; and 2 tugs have been sent from Iceland to assist her.

6. Aircraft of Bomber Command laid 97 mines last night South of the Texel and off the North and West coast of France.

War Diary.

31.12.1943.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

North Atlantic.

7. LE MALIN and LE FANTASQUE arrived at Horta to-day, the former from operation "Stonewall".

Mediterranean.

Sabotage in
M.V. HARLES-
DEN.

8. It is reported that 3 bombs exploded in the holds of the British M.V. HARLESDEN at Valencia to-day. After the explosion of the third the discharge of the cargo was commenced.

Adriatic.

9(a) Last night TEAZER and PENN operated between San Benedetto and Ancona. They damaged a schooner by gunfire and drove it ashore.
(b) GRENVILLE and ULSTER patrolled off the coast of Yugoslavia without incident.

CLACTON
mined.

10. The Fleet Minesweeper CLACTON was mined and sunk and L.S.T.411 was damaged, whilst on passage from Maddalena to Bastia today.

Sicilian
ports
Bombed.

11. Enemy aircraft bombed Catania and Augusta p.m. to-day. No naval damage was caused and A/A claim to have destroyed two of the enemy.

East Indies.

12. The British tanker TORNUS (Aden for Abadan independently) made a distress message at 1428Z to-day, and later reported that she had been torpedoed near 20.45 N. 59.41 E. (about 70 miles north-east of Masira, off the east coast of Arabia). The ship reached Karachi at 030406Z, escorted by H.M.I.S. KUMAON.

Escort
vessels.

13. C. in C. Eastern Fleet reports that the general standard of performance of escort vessels

on /...

War Diary.

31.12.1943.
Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies.

Escort
Vessels.
(Contd.)

on the East Indies Station falls far below that required to ensure the defeat of the U-Boats. Until the urgent need for base ships with maintenance facilities, training submarines, and additional staffs is met no substantial improvement is to be expected.

703

31.12.1943.
Friday.War DiaryHOME COMMANDSPolicy.

F.O.C.R.F. It has been decided to lay up certain ships now in commission, and in order to provide for their maintenance the appointment of F.O.C. Reserve Fleet (short title F.O.C.R.F.) is being re-introduced with effect from January 15th 1944.

(2) Rear-Admiral C.F. Harris has been selected for this appointment. He will be accommodated in Vintry House, Queen Street Place, London, E.C.4.

(3) The F.O.C.R.F. will be an independent Flag Officer and will communicate direct with the Admiralty and with other naval authorities.

(Head of M.II, 311530A to A.G.M. 250A).

Movements.

Group A On crossing longitude 10 degs. W. steer for new positions V 53.30 N. 14.58 W., W 51.01 N. 17.28 W., X 45.59 N. 23.29 W., Y 42.02 N. 23.27' W., thence to T.
(D.O.D.(H), 311114A to B.S.1.).

**S/M.
movements.**

Positions of S/M's. at 0800A/1st., and movements for following 24 hours.
(F.O.S., 311634A).

ANSON

Sailed V.A. (2) H.F. in ANSON escorted by OFFA passing May Island 1745A.
(C. in C. Rosyth, 311755 to A.C.O.S.).

Operations.Operation
"F.V"

Sailed 0001 for Scapa.
(ATHABASKAN, 310005A to R.A.D.).
Following received begins Admiralty from C. in C.H.F. My 290737. Grateful if this could be announced T.O.O. 302302 ends.
(A.C.O.S., 310135 to Admty.).

Scapa arrivals. ASHANTI.
(A.C.O.S. 310933A to S.B.N.O. North Russia).

Faeroes arrival WESTCOTT.
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 311015A to A.C.O.S.).

When released in vicinity position A destination of escort as follows HOUND, HYDRA, WALLFLOWER, BORAGE, to Skaalefiord. SEAGULL to Scapa. Remainder as ordered by C. in C.W.A.

(R.A.D.H.F., 311038A to HOUND).
Position at 312000.

Fleet Unit, JAMAICA, MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, SAVAGE, STORD, SCORPION, VIRAGO, OPPORTUNE 063 degs. 10' N. 002 degs. 05' W. to Scapa 17.

R.A.55A, HOUND S.O., 060 degs. 55' W. 005 degs. 10' W. to Loch Ewe, 7½.

(A.C.O.S., 311201A to Admty.).

/Intend...

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Operation
~~"F.V"~~ "F.V"
(Contd.)

Intend sailing from Skaalefiord at 1500A/31st at 18 knots for 061° (700') N. 005° 15' W. thence along route Red to overtake R.A.55A. (WESTCOTT, 311229A to C. in C.H.F.) Convoy R.A.55A. Have 19 ships in company. Estimated P.C.S. at 1400A/31st., 60° 22' N. 05° 22' W. 168° 8. (SEAGULL, 311405A to A.C.O.S.).

Scapa arrivals MILNE at 1018, METEOR at 1236, ATHABASKAN at 1350.

(A.C.O.S. 311433A to H.F.).
My 301452.

CYGNET has been included in the close escort of J.W.56A as WALKER is defective and no other arcticised ship was available to make up my quota of four. CYGNET belongs to one of my Atlantic support groups of which I am disturbingly short at a time when they are particularly needed. If you felt that you could do without her on this occasion I should be exceedingly grateful.

(C. in C.W.A. 311459A to C. in C.H.F.).

E.T.A. Force 4 0830/1st. OPPORTUNE at present not in company probably to North East. Request Hoxa Gate 0930.

(3) H.M.S. DUKE OF YORK has all boats unserviceable. Request 2 M.F.V's may attend on her.

(C. in C.H.F. 311712A to A.C.O.S.).

Faeroes departure WESTCOTT.

(N.O.I.C. Faeroes 311723A to C. in C.H.F.).

Kola Inlet sailed Murmansk (?section) 6 ships of R.A.55B. escorted by 17th D.F. less SCOURGE and through escort. S.O.A. 9½ knots. 2 ships from White Sea join at position H 1st Jan.

(S.B.N.O. Polyarno, 311901A to Admty.).

My 311038. Amend destination of WALLFLOWER, BORAGE to Loch

Ewe.

(2) These ships are allocated for J.W.56 A.

(R.A.D. H.F., 312026A to HOUND, C. in C.W.A.).

(1) R.A.55B. (2) Toros Island 1900A/31st December.

(3) S.B.N.O. Archangel 302252A at position (H).

(4) 9½ knots. (5) Route. (6) Capt. (D) 17 in ONSLOW, ONSLAUGHT, ORWELL, IROQUOIS, IMPULSIVE, HAIDA, HURON, WHITEHALL, WRESTLER, OXLIP, HONEYSUCKLE, RHODODENDRON. (7) 2222.

(16) SAN AMBROSIO 1280 tons.

(S.B.N.O. Murmansk, 312105 to H.F.).

My 270804. A more accurate account of the battle follows.

During the approach D/F bearings were taken of SCHARNHORST to eliminate any errors of position and BELFAST was told to be prepared to fire starshell. MUSKETEER, MATCHLESS, OPPORTUNE, VIRAGO (Destroyer Division 36) whose whereabouts were uncertain was ordered the westward in case SCHARNHORST should turn in that direction.

At 1645 and when range was 18 thousand yards DUKE OF YORK with JAMAICA in close support turned to open "a" arcs. Screening destroyers having been formed in sub division were released to take up position for torpedo attack. BELFAST was told to fire starshell. BELFAST's starshell were short but DUKE OF YORK's were effective and at 1651 the first broadside was fired in direct fire at 11,900 yards.

8 Broadside were fired, the enemy turning away; probably five straddles were obtained.

31.12.1943.
Friday.War DiaryHOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Operation ~~"F.V."~~ "F.V"
(Contd.)

At 1713 with the range at 14,000 yards firing was continued in T.S. control about 44 broadsides being fired with Radar spotting, until range was 22,000 yards.

Hits were difficult to see but one which was thought to have occurred at 1806, range approx. 17,000 confirms prisoners of war statements, Radar plot, and destroyers reports as causing a reduction of speed to 20 knots. Destroyer attacks followed at 1845 during which DUKE OF YORK heard 3 underwater explosions.

At 1900 the range having again closed to 10,000 yards direct fire was again opened. 25 Broadships were fired, 21 straddled and many hits being reported. Many flashes of exploding ammunition and fires were seen.

SCHARNHORST was finally finished at between 1935 and 1940 by torpedo fire from 36th Destroyer Div. and probably JAMAICA and BELFAST. Due to the melee and smoke, observation was impossible and there can be no certain allocation of hits until final analysis.

Throughout action DUKE OF YORK was SCHARNHORST's main target, shells falling all round ship, foremast and main mast both being hit by 11 inch shells. DUKE OF YORK fought hard and well and won the gun action against SCHARNHORST.

All times are A.
(C. in C.H.F., 312151A to Admty.).
R.A.55B. 8 ships. Names.
(12) Loch Ewe. (A) Joiners S.B.N.O. Archangel 302252A.
(S.B.N.O. Murmansk, 312157A to H.F.).

Operation "Stonewall" Cancel my 301720A Dec. Request you will sail PENELOPE in accordance with my 301335A.
(C. in C. Plymouth, 310015A to F.O.G.M.A.).
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 48.25 N. 18.50 W.
(A/C. Duty C., 310415 to 19 Group).
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 46.16 N. 12.10 W.
(A/C Duty S, 310418 to 19 Group).
A.S.V. contact with about 14 ships position 48.15 N. 20.23 W.
Should we drop flares.
(A/C Duty V, 310420A to 1 H.O.).
Two ships lighted, course N.W., position 46.03 N. 12.21 W.
(A/C Duty S, 310423A to 19 Group).
Have obtained A.S.V. contact in 46.31 N. 12.30 W.
(A/C Duty L, 310441 to 19 Group).
By D/F at 0452Z/31 U-boat estimated within 75 miles of 45 degs. 00' N. 21 degs. 00' W.
(D.D.I.C., 310645A to Escorts S.L.143/M.K.S.34, E.G.6, WASKESIU, TWEED, GLENARM, WATCHMAN).
Your 301655. Lifeboats found at 0630. Have 5 Officers and 57 ratings German, 3 wounded 1 serious.
My P.C.S. at 1000, 046 degs. 18' N. 013 degs. 00' W., 290, 11 knots, altering to 000 degs. at 1400 in 046 degs. 36' N. 014 degs. 00' W. ROMNEY, POOLE in company.
Request route to Falmouth from position KD.
(SEAHAM, 310902A to C. in C. Plymouth).

/Dinghy...

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31.12.1943.
Friday.War DiaryHOME COMMANDS.Operations.

- Operation "Stonewall" (Contd.). Dinghy with six own aircrew in 48 degs. 25' N. 13 degs. 22' W. at 0930A. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311026A to Escorts X.K.13). Aircraft report dinghy with 6 aircrew in 48 degs. 25' N. 13 degs. 22' W. at 0930A today.
- (2) Detach LORD NUFFIELD and SCOTTISH to search.
- (3) Sunderland will assist and will transmit homing signal when over dinghy.
- (5) At 1600 LORD NUFFIELD is to report P.C.S.
- (6) Dutch S/M K.14 southbound is in the vicinity diving by day.
- (C. in C. Plymouth, 311053A to KINGSTON AGATE).
Dinghy reported in 45 degs. 35' N. 9 degs. 55' W. at 1030A/31st. A/C is homing you on 333 k/cs.
- (C. in C. Plymouth, 311119A to BLYTH, PETERHEAD).
Following patrols are to be flown daily until further notice by the squadrons as detailed below. In addition Pembroke Dock and Mt. Batten are to have one aircraft each standing by from first light day. These two aircraft will be released if it is apparent that they will not be required. The primary role on these patrols is anti-shipping but all submarines located are to be reported and attacked. Aircraft which have located and are shadowing enemy surface craft are not to attack before P.L.E.
- (19 Group 311158A to Pembroke Dock, Mt. Batten, St. Eval, Beaulieu, Dunkeswell).
There are indications the H.E. 177 are active over the Bay area.
- (D.D.I.C., 311230 to SEAHAM, Escorts H.X.13).
LORD NUFFIELD, SCOTTISH proceeding in accordance with your 311053.
- (KINGSTON AGATE, 311236 to C. in C. Plymouth).
Your 310902A. Route to Falmouth from 46 degs. 36' N. 14 degs. 00' W.
- (C. in C. Plymouth, 311314A to SEAHAM).
3 small destroyers or corvettes. Course 000, speed 15 knots, 46.36 N. 14.43 W.
- (A/C Duty J, 311345 to 19 Group).
Add to my 311249A, French ship LE MALIN vicinity 047 degs. 59' N. 030 degs. 05' W.
- (C. in C.W.A., 311401A to N.O.I.C. Aultbea).
Approx. positions. T.G. 21.15 CORE, 3 U.S. Destroyers 044 degs. 01' N. 021 degs. 59' W., my 311242A refers. MAURITIUS 048 degs. 01' N. 018 degs. 03' W.
- (C. in C.W.A., 311406A to Ships).
Ships previously reported are trawlers but still unidentified.
- (A/C Duty J, 311415 to 19 Group).
Sighted 2 minesweepers 46 degs. 05' N. 09 degs. 30' W. at 1400. Dinghy position sent.
- (A/C Duty P, 311500 to 19 Group).
Disposition at 312000.
- (3) BLYTH, PETERHEAD on air-sea rescue vicinity 045 degs. 35' N. 009 degs. 55' W.
- (4) SEAHAM, ROMNEY, POOLE 047 degs. 42' N. 014 degs. 00' W. through 048 degs. 58' N. 014 degs. 01' W., 080 degs. 11 knots.

/ (5) LORD...

31.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Operation "Stonewall" (Contd.) (5) LORD NUFFIELD on air sea rescue vicinity 048 degs. 25' N. 013 degs. 22' W. (9) GAMBIA 049 degs. 35' N. 013 degs. 12' W. 088 degs. 20 knots. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311537A to Admty.). LORD NUFFIELD, SCOTTISH after crossing latitude 048 degs. N. steer to pass through position of dinghy given in my 311053 and thence 045 degs. to rejoin route previously ordered.

(2) Anticipate LORD NUFFIELD and SCOTTISH will be searching in the vicinity of dinghy. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311830A to SEAHAM). After fuelling remain at Horta at 4 hours notice. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311859A to LE MALIN, LE FANTASQUE). Contact surface vessel and Sunderland, but dinghy no trace. Still searching. (A/C TJT5, 311900A to 19 Group). Over dinghy with aircrew in 48.07 N. (?13) 20 W. C.19. (A/C TJT 48, 311934A to 19 Group). Proceed to Gibraltar forthwith passing through position (MA) 046 degs. 01' N. 022 degs. 30' W., (M.B) 042 degs. 59' N. 022 degs. 30' W. and thence as ordered by F.O.G.M.A. (2) Pass astern S.L.143 estimated in 046 degs. 52' N. 020 degs. 42' W. at 2000A to-day, steer 004, 7½ knots. Also keep north of 047 degs. N. until west of 020 degs. W. (C. in C. Plymouth, 312104A to MAURITIUS). Surface vessel (unknown type?) (?attempting) to reach dinghy. Returning to base to fuel. Position 47 degs. 44' N. 13 degs. 25' W. (A/C TJT 50, 312155A to 19 Group). Cancel A.M. 271420. PENELOPE is to be returned to C. in C. Med. (D.O.D.H., 312201A to C. in C. Plymouth). Your 312158. If unable to comply with my 312104A proceed Plymouth for fuel passing through position:- (MQ) 049 degs. 02' N. 014 degs. 58' W. (MR) 180 degs. Bishop Rock 10 and (MS) 180 degs. Lizard Head 3 and QZS 410 and 443 and keeping west of Lizard Head during dark hours. (C. in C. Plymouth, 312339A to MAURITIUS).

Operation "K.J.H." Intend to carry out operation "K.J.H." tonight. My number 0850/19 dated 30th December refers. (F.O. Force "J", 311052A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Operation "V.P." (1) Patrol A.H. (2) V.P.58 A and 107 A. (3) A.M. 3rd January or 1st suitable day thereafter. (4) One. (5) No. (6) No. (7) 065 degs. Bressay. (8) Yes. (A.C.O.S., 311057A to Admty.).

Coastal Force Patrols. M.Ls. 257 and 275 at Bullock Bank. M.Ls. 573 and 213 at No.7 buoy. E.T.D. 1745, E.T.R. 0815/1. (V.A. Dover, 311620A to Admty.).

31.12.1943.
Friday.War DiaryHOME COMMANDS.Operations.

Coastal Force Patrols. (Contd.).

A.(1) Portsmouth M.L.S.187, 230 exercise south of I.O.W. thence proceeding on anti E-boat patrol 50 degs. 24' N. between 00 degs. 35' W. and 00 degs. 48' W.

(2) Newhaven. M.T.Bs. 252, 250, 257, 255 offensive patrol off French Coast.

(3) Portland. GREY SHARK, GREY GOOSE patrol 50 degs. 18' N. between 02 degs. and 02 degs. 35' W. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 311941A to Admty.).

S/M Patrols.

Positions of submarines at 0800A/1st and movements for following 24 hours.

(A) SYRTIS, SEANYMPH, SCEPTRE, SEADOG, ULA, SPITEFUL, SUNFISH as in my 301722. (F.O.S., 311634A to Admty.).

Search for Dinghy.

M.T.Bs. 678 (S.O.), 677, joining force 111 are to sail from Plymouth and Dartmouth so as to R/V in 180 Start Point 4' at 2100A/31st.

(2) They are then to proceed at reduced speed towards 49 degs. 40' N. 02 degs. 48' W. to search during darkness for crew of Fortress aircraft reported in the sea in this position at 1535A/31. Force 111 is to leave area by 0500A/1.

(5) M.T.Bs. are to return through 180 degs. Start Point 4' to ports of departure on completion of search or earlier if weather or enemy action necessitates. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311734A to DEFIANCE).

Exercises.

Exercise "Duck"

Orders and particulars. (C. in C. Plymouth, 312225A).

Allied Air Activity.

A/C in STRIKER

Your 310039A. 7 Swordfish, 6 Hurricanes serviceable. 2 Swordfish category 3. (STRIKER, 310601Z to C. in C.W.A.).

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy M/V's.

P.C.S. of one small merchant vessel 61.45 N. 05.10 E., 360 degs. 10 knots. (A/C Duty 0, 311245A to 19 Group).

At 1155Z 2 merchant ships escort 1 patrol vessel ahead passed Skorpen northbound 8 knots. Report graded D.2. At 0945Z 1 small merchant ship sighted by aircraft in 061 degs. 45' N. 005 degs. 10' W. 000 degs., 10 knots. (F.O.S., 311521A to S/Ms.).

/The...

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence.Enemy
M/V's.
(Contd.)

The following information received by interrogation of air crew of Liberator 764 from U.S.A.A.F. Seething. Forced landed here 1730 shortage fuel. Four large merchantmen observed at 1418 hours from 12000 feet in 49.52 N. 02.10 W. course 260 speed 20/25 knots.
(Worthy Down 312120A to H.Q.B.C.)

U-Boats.U-Boat
reported.

By D/F at 0655Z/31 U-Boat, probably bound for Bergen, estimated within 45 miles of 62° 30' N. 04° 30' E.
(D.D.I.C. 310904A to S/Ms.)
A.M. 310904A. Further bearings of this transmission indicate better position within 40 miles of 63° 20' N. 02° 20' E.
(D.D.I.C. 311140A to S/Ms.)

Technical."Hedgerow"
Mk.II" gear.

1. Results of series of user trials of Hedgerow Mk.II so far as follows. Details.
(C.C.O. 311651A to Admty.)

Casualties & Defects.TOURMALINE,
STRENUOUS.

Since receipt of your 301231 information has been received from B.A.D. Washington that TOURMALINE and STRENUOUS require complete overhaul of 6 cylinders of each main engine, and all cylinders of Auxiliary Generators. 2. Propose so that ships be placed at extended notice until Admiralty decision is given as to their future.
(Capt. D. Greenock 311648A to C. in C.W.A.)

M.L.1388.

My 271005A. Salvage Officer reports Hull of M.L. 1388 considered a total loss but possibility exists of salvaging machinery.
(F.O.I.C. Tyne 311740A to Admty.)

EMPIRE
LIVINGSTONE.

Following received from Niton Radio. Following received at 1634 G.M.T. S.O.S. from EMPIRE LIVINGSTONE. Ashore.
(C. in C. Portsmouth to Admty. T.O.R. 311746.)

WORCESTER.

F.O.I.C. Harwich 272155. 1. Arrangements can be made for WORCESTER to be docked at Chatham for examination and removal of damaged structure. 2. As there is no prospect of taking ship in hand for permanent repairs for some months, either at Chatham or elsewhere, it is proposed she be suitably berthed on completion of removal of damaged structure.
(D.O.D.H. 311812A to C. in C. Nore.)

/Temporary...

War Diary.

31.12.1943.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

WORCESTER
(contd.) Temporary repairs to WORCESTER completed and ship ready to sail to docking port. Request instructions.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 312111A to Admty.)

VIVACIOUS and KEPPPEL (collision.) Have been in collision with KEPPPEL. Am flooded between 126 stage and 136 stage. Am proceeding to Humber. Position H.2.
(VIVACIOUS 311900A to C. in C. Nore.)
Have been in collision with H.M.S. VIVACIOUS off H.2 ? Buoy. KEPPPEL suspected damaged stem. VIVACIOUS holed Starboard quarter. KEPPPEL escorting VIVACIOUS into Humber.
(KEPPPEL 311905 to Admty.)
Immingham departure at 2040 tug IRISHMAN to assist VIVACIOUS and KEPPPEL.
(F.O. Humber 312050 to C. in C. Nore.)
KEPPPEL has been in collision with VIVACIOUS at 1900A at H.2 Buoy. Both ships proceeding Humber.
(C. in C. Nore 312237A to C. in C.W.A.)

EMPIRE DEED. 157° Class 1 distress bearing.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 312000Z to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

O.N.217, GROWLER damaged. EMPIRE HOUSMAN. GROWLER damaged in collision night of 29th arrived Reykjavik escorted by FUSILIER. Collided with REZALA (?abaft).
(A.C.I.C. 310036A to C. in C.W.A.)
Approx. position 060° 30' N. 024° 35' W. torpedoed stern post. Tunnel partially flooded but vessel otherwise dry. Main engine and steering-gear out of action. Consider towage to Reykjavik definitely possible. Require immediate assistance.

Weather moderate.
(EMPIRE HOUSMAN 310140Z to A.C.I.C.)
EMPIRE HOUSMAN reports torpedoed in T.D. 060° 30' N. 024° 35' W. Ship was not in company, tunnel only flooded, requiring assistance. Cannot give any.
(KOOTENAY 310209Z to C. in C.W.A.)
KOOTENAY's 310209. Request you will take action if possible. FUSILIER is at your disposal if required. Your 310036 refers.
(C. in C.W.A. 310504A to A.C.I.C.)
Rescue Tug EARNER with H.M.Tug ELM is proceeding to your assistance. Should arrive A.M. 1st January.
(A.C.I.C. 311113Z to EMPIRE HOUSMAN.)
Your 310509. Request tug EARNER escorted by ELM proceeding to assist EMPIRE HOUSMAN.
(A.C.I.C. 311211A to C. in C.W.A.)
No U/Bs. in contact. DAUPHIN rejoined with 3 stragglers. All escorts refuelled. Have 49 ships in company. Aircraft report 8 ships in 059° 23' N. 028° 35' W. at 1200. Convoy P.C.S. at

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War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.

- O.N.217.
GROWLER
damaged.
EMPIRE
HOUSMAN, .
- (?20)00 058° 32' N. 031° 41' W. 234° 9 knots.
Weather 3862 1253.
(KOOTENAY 311926Z to C. in C.W.A.)
My 311211. A/C. spoke to EMPIRE HOUSMAN at 1706A
and left her at 1817A/31st December in vicinity
of position given in KOOTENAY's 310209.
(A.C.I.C. 312351A to C. in C.W.A.)
- D.S.48.
- Sailed EMPRESS OF RUSSIA in accordance with my
291106A.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 310046A to C. in C.W.A.)
- O.S.63/
K.M.S.37.
STRIKER,
S.L.143/
M.K.S.34.
- STRIKER is to detach at dusk tonight escorted by
WATCHMAN and one Frigate of E.G.6 and proceed to
join O.S.63/K.M.S.37. Estimated P.C.S. of O.S.63/
K.M.S.37, 2000A/31st 048° 03' N. 020° 57' W.
routed through (MN) 047° N. 023° W. thence 194°
7½ knots. State Y for "Yoke". (2) When junction
has been effected escorts are to rejoin S.L.143/
M.K.S.34 at best speed.
(C. in C.W.A. 311207A to Escorts S.L.143/M.K.S.34
and STRIKER.)
Request Homing 010700Z. P.C.S. 045° 36' N. 023° 20' W. 032°
12' 312300Z.
(GLENARM 312311Z to B.3.)
- K.X.13.
- Convoy K.X.13 will leave Milford Haven on 5th Jan.
2. F.O.I.C. Milford Haven is requested to sail
convoy as requisite to Gibraltar as routed by
Admty. 3. Composition SS. INGESTRE destination
Sicily. SS MALPLAQUET destination Naples. SS. LUCIEN GOUGY dest-
ination Algiers. SS. PORJUS destination Huelva. SS. EMPIRE
WATERHEN destination Oran. 4. Speed of slowest ship 7 knots.
5. Escorted by WILLOWHERB, BURNETT and MEADOWSWEET proceeding to
Eastern Fleet. ARCTIC RANGER and ST.NECTAN to Gibraltar.
6. C. in C.W.A. is requested to sail escorts to Milford Haven
as requisite. 7. C. in C. Med. is requested to arrange onward
passage from Gibraltar.
(D.O.D.H. 311315A to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven.)
- M.K.F.27.
- 12 ships. Names and destinations.
(D.T.D. 311930A to C. in C.W.A.)
- U.C.9.
TRUMPETER.
- Sailed TRUMPETER in U.C.9 in accordance with
Admiralty 211759A.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock 312324A to Admty.)

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31.12.1943.

Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.

Operation "Stonewall" PENELOPE, LE FANTASQUE, LE MALIN. Sailed at 0300A/31. C. in C. Plymouth 310015A refers. Route. All positions N. and W. (VA) 035° 45' 006° 30'. (VB) 036° 30' 010° (VC) 043° 015°. (F.O.C. Gib., 310222A, 310459A to PENELOPE (R) C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C.W.A., F.O.S., H.Q.C.C. Admty., C.S.15, GAMBIA, MAURITIUS, C. in C. Med.) My 310015.* PENELOPE is not now required and is returning to Gib. forthwith. F.O.C.Gib. is requested to signal route.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 311548A to F.O.C.Gib., PENELOPE, (R) Admty., MAURITIUS, F.O. 15th C.S., C. in C.W.A., F.O. (S) C. in C. Med., H.Q.C.C.) * Re request PENELOPE be sailed.

Route.

(F.O.G.M.A., 311806 to PENELOPE.)

Arrived Horta. Awaiting instructions.

(LE FANTASQUE, 311318Z to C. in C. Plymouth (R) Admty., F.O.G.M.A., S.B.N.O. Azores.)

Admty. from C. in C. From C. in C. Plymouth. Message begins:- After fuelling remain at Horta at 4 hours notice.

(Navale France, 311859A to LE MALIN, LE FANTASQUE (R) S.B.N.O. Azores, C. in C.E.A., V.A. Gib., C. in C. Med.)

Arrival at Horta 1715Z 31st LE MALIN.

(S.B.N.O. Azores, 311910Z to C. in C. Plymouth (R) Admty., F.O.G.M.A., C. in C. Med., C. in C.W.A.)

LE MALIN joined my flag in Horta. Both ships ready for sea. LE MALIN only carrying Anglo-French code.

(LE FANTASQUE, 312135Z to C. in C. Plymouth, (R) F.O.G.M.A., Naval (2 corrupt groups), C. in C. Med., S.B.N.O. Azores.)

COTILLION defects. LUCULUS. COTILLION has serious boiler room defects proceeding Ponta Delgada for repairs. Request tug and medical assistance on arrival off harbour. Report as soon as possible duration repairs.

(B.S.N.O. Azores, 311512Z to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada (R) Admty., B.N.A. Lisbon, F.O.G.M.A., B.S.N.O., Fayal.)

Your 311735Z (repeated under T.O.O. 021153Z.) No tug in Ponta Delgada. Am sending LUCULUS to assistance but owing to heavy seas she will be unable to take off injured man specially in the dark. LUCULUS has ordered pilot and Doctor for 0400Z in order to be on spot by daybreak. Portuguese S.N.O. offers to send patrol boat but this can save only men and not ship. Request you will inform me forthwith which alternative you wish me to accept.

(N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 311915 to B.S.N.O. Azores, B.S.N.O. Fayal (R) Admty.)

Your 311915. CAPE COMORIN being sent from Angra to assist COTILLION.

LUCULUS is to comply my 312030Z to you.

(S.B.N.O. Azores, 312135Z to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada (R) Admty., F.O.G.M.A.)

/A/S...

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31.12.1943.
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.A/S
operations.

P.C.473 sailed at 1300 to conduct A/S search in area 034° 20' N. to 035° 40' N. to seaward 60 miles from coast line.
(C.M.S.F. 311530A to F.O.C.Gib.(R) Admty. Cdr. U.S.Naval Forces in N.W. African Waters, Comtask 66, S.E.C. O.S.62. S.E.C. S.L.144, Comfairwing 15.)

HARLESDEN.

Valencia report as follows: (begins) 2 bombs first at 1010B, and 2 at early afternoon in number 2 hold to British H.M. Ship HARLESDEN ship undamaged. One of crew hurt by second explosion H.M. Ambassador and P.C.O. informed.
(A.B.N.A. Madrid, 311716A to D. of N.I.)
My 311716. I have been informed third bomb exploded about 1500 hours. Cargo now being discharged.
(Madrid, 312009A to Admty. for D.N.I.)

Tankers
for
M.K.S./
K.M.S.
Convoys.

It is intended to operate tankers SCOTTISH AMERICAN and SAN TIRSO from Gib. and to sail them with each alternate M.K.S. convoy, transferring at sea to the corresponding K.M.S. 2. Anticipated programme is as follows.
(Details).
(C. in C.W.A. 311728A, F.O.G.M.A.)

STORM
K.14.

After crossing 043° N. at 0200/2nd STORM P.233 is to proceed through following positions at times stated:
R. 036° 51' 009° 13' at 2230/5th.
S. 036° 37' 007° 24' at 0630/6th.
T. 035° 53' 006° 15' at 1300/6th.
P. 035° 49' 006° 06' 30" at 1340/6th.
Thence by Q.B.A.87 to arrive Gib. at 1710/6th S. of A. diving by day 105 miles per day. After passing Dodecanese (sic) proceeding on the surface at discretion at 11 knots.
2. K.14 after crossing 043° N. at 0500/2nd is proceeding through the positions given in para. 1 at following times:
R. At 1600/6th. S. 0100/7th. T. 0800/7th.
P. 0850/7th thence by Q.B.A.87 to arrive at 1250/7th Daily advance diving by day 96 miles. After passing R. proceed on the surface at discretion at 10 knots.
3. For STORM and K.14 submerged bombing restrictions arranged until passing position R. thereafter total bombing restrictions 10 miles either side of your routes from 35 miles ahead to 35 miles astern of your estimated positions. Report if unable to keep within your bombing restrictions by signal prefixed immediate.
(F.O.G.M.A. 311744A to (P.No.233) STORM, K.14, (R) C. in C.U.S. Fleet, C. in C.W.A., C.M.S.F., Admty., F.O.S. Capt. S.3rd S/M F., C. in C. Med., C. in C. Plymouth, Capt. S.10th S/M. F.)

/Air...

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic - Contd.

Air operational control boundaries. A.X. 672 31st December. Reference your Marcus 1239 (N.T. in W.R.) 1st, boundaries of area under operational control A.O.C. Gib. are latitude 43° N. to 26° N. longitude 02° 13' W. extending westward to "Chop" line. Since no documentary evidence of boundaries of M.S.F. is available M.A.A.F. were signalled for their interpretation. They have replied that area under operational control of M.S.F. is latitude 35° N. to 26° 10' N. extending westward to "Chop" Line. (Air operations in these areas are co-ordination is however rendered difficult by the American policy of giving all American convoys air escort regardless of whether they are threatened or not. This point is now under consideration and will probably be taken up with Cominch in the near future. (Air Min. 311920A to R.A.F.D.E.L. Webber, W., 1693, (R) A.H.Q. Gib., Coastal Command.)

South Atlantic.

Indications of German blockade runner. Request frequency and identity of transmission referred to in A.M. 231208A. (F.O.C.W.At. 311059Z to Admty. for D.N.I.)

T.S.55. Arrivals p.m.30 Dec. FOLKESTONE, TOTLAND, ABERDEEN, MORRIS DANCE, SOUTHERN PRIDE, PICT, KELT with T.S.55. (S.O.I. Freetown, 311131Z to Admty.)

S.L.145. 1. Intend to sail S.L.145 at 0800Z 1st Jan. escorted by LEITH, SANDWICH, ANCHUSA and SOUTHERN PRIDE. (Arrangements).
7. F.O.G.M.A. is requested to arrange for R/V with M.K.S.36 and detachment of escorts to Gibraltar.
(F.O.C.W.Af., 311608Z, 312245Z to C. in C.W.A., F.O.G.M.A., Commorseafon; Comar Dakar, (R) Admty., C. in C. Med., Escorts S.L.145.)

Tanker movements security. Measures to tighten security of tanker movements. (F.O.C.W.Af., 311711Z to Admty.)

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

- SIBYL. My 302236/(N.T. in W.D.) Leave Kastelorizo as soon as party correctly disembarked and proceed diving by day North of Rhodes to patrol between Cape Alupo and Cape Krio.
(2) C.F.B. Kastelorizo is requested to report P.217 arrival and departure to Capt.(S) 1st S/F.
(Capt.(S) 1st S/F, 310931B to P.217 SIBYL (R) C. in C. Levant, C.F.B. Kastelorizo.)
(See also Capt.(S) 1, 010944B Jan.) / Re sailing of H.M. S/M (P.217) SIBYL to Kastelorizo.
- CASIABANCA. Proceed through 042 degs. 30' 006 degs. 03' at 0400/3rd 039 degs. 59' 006 degs. 27' at 0700/4th 038 degs. 06' 006 degs. 27' at 1700/4th and R/V in 036 degs. 56' 003 degs. 04' at 0900/5th.
Proceed except for day 3rd on surface.
(Capt. (S) 10th, 311110A to CASABIANCA (R) 10th S/M.F. C. in C. Med. N.O.I.C. Algiers, ARETHUSE)
- Flag of Force P. Flag of R.A. T.H. Troubridge D.S.O. R.N. Senior Officer Force P was hoisted in ENDEAVOUR at Suez 0800/28th (Ends.)
(F.O. E.M. 311137B to Admty.)
- PETARD, PATHFINDER. In vicinity Kaso Strait night 31st/1st.
(Capt.(S) 1, 311416B to 1st S/M. F.)
- Operations and "Speedometer" and "Layshaft". Weather unsuitable for operation "Speedometer" and "Layshaft" tonight. These operations are now postponed until further notice during unsuitable (corrupt group) period. M/S 61 returns Manfredonia.
(S.N.O.L.E. 311436 to F.O.T.A.L.I.)
- LE CURIE, M.L.232. M.L.232 is unable to carry on due to heavy N.N.W. sea request instructions. Meantime am taking shelter in Gulf of Orosei.
(P.67 (CURIE,) 311440A to N.O.I.C.Maddalena, (R) C. in C. Med. S.O.S/Ms Malta, V.A. Malta.)
Have altered course 140 degs. and am running before sea.
(LE CURIE, 311706A to N.O.I.C. Maddalena)
Do not get separated from M.L. If she is in danger heave to and assist her with the use of oil.
(Capt.(S) 10th, 311910 to LE CURIE)
Have lost escort and have been obliged to heave to in approx. 040 degs. 10' 010 degs. 05' course 015 degs. speed 2 knots. Sea not yet abating.
(LE CURIE, 312359A to Capt.(S) 10th S/M.F.)
- Air Reports. A.F.290 31st. N.A.A.F. Opsum 313 part 1.
(H.Q.N.A.A.F.(Adv.), 311550A/A.
Part 2 N.A.A.F. Adv. Opsum 313.
(H.Q.N.A.A.F.(Adv.31550A)
- CORONA. CORONA at Tobruk, raised 1600/21st.
(P.S.V.O. Levant, 311631B to F.O.E.M.Info: Admty.
R.A.Alexandria, S.O.S.A.S.)

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean - Contd.BIRMINGHAM,
ADINDA.

Re repairs to BIRMINGHAM will be out of action for 12 months or more intend to take ADINDA in hand before BIRMINGHAM.
(F.O.E.M. 311743B to Admty. (R) C. in C.Med. B.A.M.R. BIRMINGHAM, A.S.Alexandria, F.O.I.C. Gib.)

K.M.F.27.

Arrived less Alexandria portion detached.
(N.C.S.O.Port Said 211758B.)

BRITTANY,
Net layers.

My 071213A (N.T. in W.D.) In view of Sextant decisions BRITTANY will be retained in Med.
2. It is desirable that net layers should not be employed on duties other than those for which they are designed unless the risk of damage is negligible.
(A.C.N.S.(F) 311826A to C. in C.Med. Info. C. in C.E.F.)

TORBAY.

Proceed forthwith with all despatch to patrol between Nisero and Piskopi.
(Capt. S.1 311834B to TORBAY, (R) SIBYL, DOLFIJN, F.O.E.M.)

S.N.F.11.

Request you will sail as in C. in C.Med. 281324 (N.T. in W.D.) at 0900/2nd Jan. Escorts (U.S.) Cmdre. D.Squad. 13 in U.S. WOOLSEY S.O., U.S. MAYO, U.S. BENSON, U.S. GLEAVES, U.S. EDISON, U.S.S. SYMBOL, (corrupt group) A/A Escort DELHI.
(F.O.W.It. 311914A to N.O.I.C. Naples.)
Sailing postponed 24 hours.
(F.O.W.It. 021542A.)

Balkan
Sitrep No.45.

31st. 4. Sea Ops. Brig. L.O. reports. Partisans on Dugi Otok Island confirm enemy cruiser DALMATIA torpedoed and now total wreck.
Adv. H.Q. Force 133 Report. 27 Dec. 5 Stukas, 6 Mes. raided Hvar sinking one Partisan Vessel. Later 3 Mes. ineffectively strafed the harbour. 6 Mes. raided Supetar W.Q. 02 on Brac causing some civilian casualties.
(C. in C.M.E. 312000B.)

X.I.F.7.

N.O.I.C. Port Said sail X.I.F.7 p.m. 3rd Jan. inshore route to Alexandria. Escorts ALDENHAM, S.O. BELVOIR, MIAOULES, ANTWERP, PINDOS, all from Alex. 9. N.O.I.C. Alexandria requested to sail KANARIS to escort Port Said ships as far as 309.
(C. in C.Levant 312031B.)

/Med...

717

31.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Med. Situa-
tion report.
No. 260.

1. P.T.Boats patrolled in Gulf of Genoa during night 28th/29th but sighted nothing.
2. Number 9955 was successfully landed during night 29th/30th in a "Leapfrog" operation across the river Garigliano. No naval casualties.
3. Night 29th/30th 2 P.T.Boats attacked and believe damaged small t trawlers in Gulf of Genoa. Stationary ship was also attacked torpedoed and explosion seen.
4. During night 30th/31st TEAZER and PENN operated between San Benedetto and Ancona damaged a schooner by gunfire and drove it ashore same laid mines. GRENVILLE and ULSTER patrolled Rex (?) Dubrovnik and Kotor without incident.
5. CLACTON was mined and sunk on 31st and L.S.T. 411 damaged whilst on passage from Maddalena to Bastia. 47 survivors including C.O. from CLACTON.
(C. in C.Med. 312344A.)

Salvage abandoned - (p. 14, January 1944)

31.12.1943.
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Bi-Weekly
U-Boat dis-
position No.
13.

No new evidence.
(C. in C.E.F. 310444Z to S. & A.E. Indies Station.)

BOXER,
BRUISER,
THRUSTER.

BOXER, BRUISER and THRUSTER are being sailed forth-
with from Bombay to Suez calling at Aden.
2. Comdre. Aden is requested to onward route them
to Suez at best speed after refuelling at Aden and
to provide escort as far as he considers necessary.
3. Dates of arrival will be signalled later.
(C. in C.E.F. 310456Z to Comdre. Aden, (R) F.O.E.M.
S.N.O.R.S.C.A.)

C.M.48.

Arrived escorted by NAPIER (Com. D.) NIZAM.
(N.C.S.O. Aden 311120Z, Com. Aden 311643Z.)

M.B. Convoys
Aden Section
routeing.

F.O.N.I.C. (305). Pass to N.C.S.Os. Alternative
routeing for Aden section of M.B. convoys. F.O.N.I.
C. 299 (re routeing of ships for Colombo) 18th Dec.
refers.
1. If U-Boat situation renders it necessary, the
Aden Section of M.B. convoy will remain with the
convoy until reaching lat. 014° 00' N.
2. Aden section may then either A. be dispersed to proceed inde-
pendently to destination. B. Be detached with escort as far as
long. 070° 00' E. before being dispersed.
3. C. in C.E.F. will inform sailing authorities which forming of
routeing is to be employed before each M.B. convoy sails.
(C. in C.E.F. 311141Z to F.O.N.I.C. (R) Admty. F.O.E. Med.)

A.S. escorts
maintenance
and training
facilities.

The general standard of performance of escort ves-
sels on the East Indies Station falls far below
that required to assure the defeat of the U-Boats.
2. It is clear that until the urgent needs for
base ships with maintenance facilities training
submarines and additional staffs are met no sub-
stantial improvement is to be expected.
3. Of these needs the provision of base ships and training sub-
marines at Aden and Colombo are the most important.
4, 5. Early information of the decisions to implement proposals
given in any messages timed 040602, 100533 and 20958 (sic) Nov.
and 170748 Dec. is requested.
(C. in C.E.F. 311639Z to Admty.)

TORNUS
torpedoed.

Following has been intercepted at 1713 G.M.T. from
Mombasa W/T to all ships. Addressed (?M.U.G?) from
NXRU (undecypherable W.R.) We need help are re-
turning position 10 miles N.E. Cape Verina trying to
get behind Cape.
(Lands End Radio (via C. in C. Plymouth 311815A to
Admty.)

/Following...

War Diary.

31.12.1943.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

TORNUS
torpedoed.
(Contd.)

Following received To Adm. Portsmouth, From Niton
Radio. Intercept 1923 G.M.T. All ships from
Mombasa W/T. Addressed NXRU (undecypherable)
from (N.U.G?) request further information as to
your condition tug en route for you. (Ends.)
(C. in C.Portsmouth 312023 to Admty.)

Ref. my distress message 311428Z. Torpedoed endeavouring reach
Karachi, P.C. and S. 20.45 N. 59.41 E. 035° 9 knots. Request
route and escort.

(TORNUS 312200Z to C. in C.E.F.* (R) Admty.)

720

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies.

F.T.I. Repairs. A/S.O.(I) Recife informs me F.T.I is proceeding Rio de Janeiro for repairs to damage to hull sustained when ship stranded on 10th Oct. and that Lloyds Agent Surveyors estimated 2 months required in Dry Dock.
(B.A.D. 310051Z to Admt. (R) C. in C. E.F., B.S.N.O. Rio de Janeiro.)

ARETHUSA, U/B. Preliminary interpretation of D/F Bearings at 0003Z/31 indicates U-Boat within 100 miles of 35 degs. 30' N. 72 degs. 30' W.
(D.D.I.C. 310300A to ARETHUSA, Info: S.B.N.O. W.A.)
A.M. 310300A. Final interpretation gives reliable fix within 45 miles of 34 degs. 30' N. 72 degs. 30' W.
(D.D.I.C. 310505A to ARETHUSA, Info: S.B.N.O. W.A.)

ROBERT E. PEARY. H.X.272. ROBERT E. PEARY (U.S.) arrived Halifax 30th Dec. Collision damage.
(N.C.S.O. Halifax, 311336Z to Admt.)

Stragglers report No.33. One arrived New York from H.X. 272 GEORGE P. LARRISON, U.S. 25 Dec. engine defect.
One arrived Halifax from H.X. 272 CHARLES CARROLL U.S. 26 Dec. Collision damage.
One arrived Halifax from N.215 WALTER AINES PAGE U.S. 26 Dec. Hull defects.
(N.S.H.Q. 311420Z to Admt.)

S/M Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 311450Z to Cominch 311535)

BRONZO, allocation. Reply to B.A.D. 182119.
It is out of the question to repair her in French port and then give her to another Ally for manning.
(2) She is regarded as a prize etc.
(1st S.L.311610A to B.A.D., Info: C. in C. Med. V.A. Malta.)

CYRUS FIELD. 1200Z 1st Jan CYRUS FIELD (cable ship) cable ground, thence via Long Island Sound to New York for Key West 1500Z/2nd (Cable ground) (Route).
Vessel expected to be approx. 2 days in vicinity position (B) 042 degs. 39' N. 068 degs. 05' W. repairing cable escorted to Cape Cod Canal by BAYFIELD.
(Halifax, 311839Z)

War Diary.31.12.1943.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. - Contd.

- ANGOULEME,
EMPIRE CITY
Collision. SS. ANGOULEME (French) and EMPIRE CITY collided near Fenwick Island Shoal Buoy 24th December. Both damaged bows. EMPIRE CITY arrived Norfolk 24th December. ANGOULEME understood to have proceeded to Philadelphia. (N.S.H.Q. 311920Z to Admty.)
- PATROCLUS. Upon completion fitting out about 5 Jan. Cdr. Gulf Sea Fron sail PATROCLUS New Orleans to Bermuda. N.O.B. Bermuda sail onward direct to Gibraltar. Ultimate destination Med. (Cominch, 312020Z to U.S. Cdr. Gulf Sea Fron., N.O.B. Bermuda.)
- H.X.270. Average speed not reported. Off Oversay at 2115Z/24. FREDERICK BARTHOLDI ashore Skye, Salvage prospects poor. Remainder arrived. (D.T.D. 312022A to Connnav, N.S.H.Q.)
- 5 Trawlers. Your 181622 S.C.150, 5 trawlers returning to U.K. vide para. 1 N.O.I.C. Sydney 281457. (F.O.N.F. 312032Z to C. in C. C.N.A. (R) Admty. C. in C. W.A., N.S.H.Q.) As amended F.O.N.F. 011456Z.
- Sub.attack
and
sighting
summary. Para. D. U.S.S. KNAVE makes series of attacks on sound contact 34.16 N. 76.24 W. 310100Z to 310655Z. (Cominch, 312040Z to Admty.)
- Russian
A.M. and
S.C. Your 302149. Ships will proceed to Horta as arranged by Cominch, thence to Scapa. (D.O.D.(H), 312115A to B.A.D.)
Your 271737 not to all addressees. Onward route for Russian A.M. and S.C. to Scapa. All positions are North and West:
C. in C. H.F. is requested to meet these vessels at AY and escort them into harbour.
(D.O.D.(H), 312126A to Cominch, Info: C. in C. H.F. Comgulfseafron, N.O.B. Bermuda, (Senior Member Mine Warfare Mission to U.S.S.R.) Cinclant, C. in C. W.A., F.O.N.F., S.B.N.O. W.At. Alusna Moscow, S.B.N.O. Azores, N.O.B. Iceland. C. in C. C.N.A. Comeastseafron, F.O.G.M.A., B.A.D.)
- W.3,
W.5. Relieved by W.5 at 1800Z in 042 degs. 03' N. 058 degs. 57' W. 265 degs. 9 knots. 042 degs. 26' N. 056 degs. 37' W. (?weather) 4852 2274. (W.3, 312200Z to N.S.H.Q., Connnav.)

War Diary.

31.12.1943.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. - Contd.

H.H.X. 273.

Departure LOCKEPORT, GODERICH escorting
H.H.X. 273.
(C.O.P. Halifax, 312205Z)

Movements
Bermuda.

31st CURZON arrived.
Departed BICKERTON, BULLEN, BLIGH for Norfolk.
KEATS Boston and KEMPTHORNE Argentina.
(S.B.N.O. W.At. 312246A)

Australia and New Zealand.

Digest
Serial
No. 710
Dec. 30th.

(21) Japanese submarine reported 35 miles west
Treasury Islands heading thereto forenoon 30th.
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A., 310800Z)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

Estimated positions.
(D.D.I.C. 311405A, 311411A)

Submarines Attacked.

Submarine
Attack and
Sighting
Summary for
24 hours to
0900Z/31st.

Para. A. (1) British EMPIRE HOUSMAN Straggler
from convoy torpedoed prior 0209/31 in 60 degs.
30' N. 24 degs. 35' W.
(D.D.I.C. 311150A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)