

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-

- |                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS    | - Policy                    |
| (Classification  | - Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects)     | - Movements                 |
|                  | - Operations                |
|                  | - Allied Air Activity       |
|                  | - Enemy Air Activity        |
|                  | - Mining                    |
|                  | - Enemy Intelligence        |
|                  | - U-Boats                   |
|                  | - Navigational              |
|                  | - Technical                 |
|                  | - Casualties and Defects    |
|                  | - Shipping and Convoys      |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - North Atlantic            |
| (Classification  | - South Atlantic            |
| by stations)     | - Mediterranean             |
|                  | - East Indies               |
|                  | - America and West Indies   |
|                  | - Australia and New Zealand |
|                  | - U-Boat Campaign           |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

1. BUTTERCUP, corvette, is to be turned over to Royal Norwegian Navy.

2. T.R.H. The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester sailed for Australia in SS. RIMUTAKA, escorted by EURYALUS and two destroyers.

North Sea.

3.(a) R.F.A. WAR DIWAN has been mined, broken in two, and sunk in the Schelde, close northwest of Nieuwe Sluis.

(b) One ground mine has been detonated off Ostend, and one off Hansweerd in the Schelde.

Channel

4. (a) The main sustained movement of the shuttle service from Southampton Harbours to the Far Shore has now been completed, in the course of which over 16,000 railway waggons, 75,000 other vehicles, and 300,000 men have been sent across. C. in C. Portsmouth congratulates all concerned.

(b) Le Havre locks are now working, and the port can take 20 Liberty ships at a time.

(c) One mine has been swept south of the Channel Islands.

Northern Waters.

5. Submarine SLEUTH is patrolling about 100 miles E.N.E. of Kinnaird Head for interception of U-boats from the Skagerrak.

Baltic.

6. Our aircraft laid 82 mines in the Baltic last night.

Foreign Stations.

Mediterranean.

Greece,  
evacuation.

7. (a) The evacuation of British troops from Krionero to Patras (Peloponnese) (see 14th and 15th) carried out under rebel fire and covered by naval close support, was completed by 0400 today. There were no naval casualties. Some delayed details of the evacuation are given by C. in C. Mediterranean in his 192016 December. The naval force consisted of the SAXIFRAGE, corvette, PROTEA, A/S whaler, M.G.B. 661, M.Ls. 469 and 1158, L.C.I. 314, R.C.L. 1323 and 49, and 12 caiques.

/(b)...

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Greece,  
evacuation  
(contd).

(b) Withdrawal has also been ordered from Kavalla, Volos, Kalamata, Leykas, Preveza, North shore of the Gulf of Corinth, and the Ionian Islands. Previous reports had not indicated any increase in tension at these positions.

Aegean

8. Aircraft attacked at 1003, south of Lipso, a 2-masted 50 ton caique which was last seen aground.

9. The destroyer MARNE sunk one assault craft between Leros and Rhodes and captured one caique which was taken to Symi this morning. Prisoners included 22 Germans and 5 Italians.

Riviera

10. In the Gulf of Genoa last night, Allied coastal craft on patrol off Sestri Levante intercepted five enemy F lighters northbound. Two torpedo hits were obtained and a large explosion seen.

11. Between the 13th and 16th, the French destroyer L'ALCYON and America destroyer CHARLES F. HUGHES fired 150 and 408 rounds respectively at troops and gun batteries ashore.

Saboteur,  
Leghorn.

12. An Italian swimming saboteur has been arrested while attempting to leave the port area at Leghorn. His equipment was captured intact.

BERWICK

13. The cruiser BERWICK arrived at Bizerta from Plymouth, and left again for Malta.

East Indies.

Pacific  
Fleet Train.

14. Proposals for the passage to Australia from December 22 onwards of the depot and repair ships and Fleet Train for the British Pacific Fleet are contained in a message from C. in C. East Indies today.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

America & West Indies.

Shipping  
from O.N.  
convoys.

15. In view of the present negligible U-boat threat, the Admiralty propose that, when circumstances permit, British-controlled ships in O.N. convoys with destinations south of 30° N. should break off from convoy between 30° and 35° W. and be provided with appropriate alternative routes. BRIDGELAND PARK and TOBIATIC PARK, both for Panama in O.N. 271, are typical examples in which the saving of ship-days would be considerable. Commander, 10th Fleet Convoys and Routeing, concurred on the 18th in the detachment of these two ships.

Trinidad  
defences.

16. The Admiralty agree that the defences at Trinidad should be removed, and where practicable stored, immediately after the defeat of Germany. Proposals are submitted today by S.B.N.O. Trinidad and S.B.N.O. Western Atlantic for reductions in the local defence flotillas at Trinidad which will save about 600 R.N. personnel.

BUXTON

17. H.M.S. BUXTON, one of the 50 destroyers transferred from the U.S. Navy in 1940, is no longer required as a training vessel by the R.C.N. at Digby, Nova Scotia, and N.S.H.Q. propose she be paid off and declared surplus to the War Assets Corporation for disposal, as in the case of the MANSFIELD and SALISBURY.

Australia & New Zealand.

Philippines.

18 (a). Consolidation of the Mindoro beachhead and perimeter (where a landing was made yesterday) continued without enemy interference except for light air activity over the beach.  
(b) A search Liberator damaged a small coaster off the north-east of Mindoro and hit one sea truck with an incendiary on the west coast of Romblon Island (N.W. Sibuyan Sea) without observing further effects.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Shortage of personnel in higher ratings categories.

VENGEANCE has commissioned short of 1 P.O. Cook (O) and 4 Ldg. Cook (O) apart from other less important shortages. Full details of shortages were reported to D.P.S. by telephone on 26th November. Attempts have been made to commission L.S.Ts. short of supply, cook, electrical ratings, diesel trained E.R.As. and stokers.

(2) The position in regards to Chief and P.O. Telegraphists, all cook (O) ratings, leading stewards and above, electrical artificers and mechanics, chief E.R.A. and E.R.As. is acute and in all these branches I can foresee little hope of improvement. In many rates, men now being drafted have only had 6 months shore duty since the outbreak of war. In the majority of cases there is none of these ratings fit in shore service in the U.K. who can be called in on relief by ratings arriving home from Foreign Service, and home service ships so greatly reduced offer little scope at present for adjustment.

(3) At the present moment it will be impossible to meet the following large commitments in these respects VENGEANCE, MONAB 5, CLEOPATRA, PIONEER, ANSON, SUSSEX and in addition to this there is a large commissioning and adjustment for Foreign Service programme in small ships, followed by heavy commitments for many months. I therefore feel it necessary to draw attention to the fact that Chatham is in a critical position with Senior ratings of many branches and it is estimated that all branches will shortly be in a similar position with regard to higher and all artificer ratings.

(Combrax Chatham 161700A to Admty.)

Movements.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Cancel my 151551 owing to material defects and bad weather NEWFOUNDLAND has been unable to carry out any main armament firing. Intend to postpone sailing until this practice has been done.  
(C. in C. H.F. 161226A to Admty.)

KENT.

Sailed KENT expected time of arrival Hoxa Gate 0715/17th her 132008 refers.  
(N.O.I.C. Lamlash 161245A to C. in C. H.F.)

RAMILLIES.

Request you will sail RAMILLIES to Spithead when ready.  
(2) It is intended to lay a mooring for RAMILLIES at Spithead as soon as practicable.  
(V.C.N.S. 161305 to C. in C. W.A.)

KHEDIVE.

It is essential that KHEDIVE arrive at Belfast not later than 7th January to embark squadron, stores and personnel. Programme is to be adjusted accordingly. Your 141051 and A.M. 061938 para. 1 neither to all refer.  
(D.O.D.(H) 161307A to F.O.I.C. London.)

/LARGS...

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - Contd.

- LARGS. Request you will sail LARGS to join K.M.F. 38 for Mediterranean and onward routing to East Indies Station. A.M. 021713 (not to all) refers. (D.O.D. 161646A to C. in C. Nore, R.A.L.S.C.U.)
- AVONVALE. (1) AVONVALE due Liverpool 17th December with following Naval passengers on board for:- Portsmouth 5, Chatham 3, Devonport 10, ROOKE 2. (2) Request usual disembarkation action be taken. (Head of N. 161833A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)
- BUTTERCUP,  
GODETIA. C. in C. W.A. 182048 November and my 071316 BUTTERCUP is to be handed over forthwith to the Royal Norwegian Navy for service under British operational control. (2) My 071607 GODETIA will be manned with an R.N.P.S. crew. (3) As soon as ships are taken over Section Belge care and maintenance parties should be returned to depot. (1st Lord 162323A to Cs. in C. W.A., Nore.)
- AVONVALE,  
BRECON,  
EGGESFORD. AVONVALE, BRECON and EGGESFORD are now required to return to Mediterranean for refits at an earlier date than was originally anticipated. (2) They will be sent to their home ports to adjust complements and give leave on arrival in U.K. and will return to Mediterranean on completion. (3) My 010050 and 032135 refer. (V.C.N.S. 162352A to C. in C. Nore.)

Operations.

North Sea.

- WAR DIWAN mined in the Schelde. WAR DIWAN apparently part of A.T.M. 14 mined. Believed broke in 2 close northwest of Nieuwe Sluis. Survivors being picked up. (N.C. Force T 161455A to Com. Belgium.) R.F.A. WAR DIWAN is broken in 2 parts and in following position:  
(a) Fore part 051° 25' 45" N. 003° 29' 37" E.  
(b) Aft part 051° 25' 31" N. 003° 27' 21" E. Both visible at all state of tide. Fore part was shelled to settle wreck which was drifting, and both parts are now securely grounded. Have on board 36 survivors including master and pilot all are uninjured. Intend to land them at Ostend tonight one engineer officer and 4 ratings missing. (FRANKLIN 161610A to Admty.)

/Landing...

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea - Contd.

Landing Craft for German Rivers. Your 141213A and 151450A. 14 L.C.M. and a limited number of L.C.V.P. can be made available. Suggest formal request be made through appropriate lend-lease channels. Early information of requirements is essential for planning purposes. Refs. 141213A. A request on Admiralty for British craft to be made available to be manned by 21 Army Group for police work on German rivers during and after hostilities having proved abortive information is requested whether any U.S. L.C.V.(P.) or other craft could be made available for this purpose and under these conditions. 151450A. 21st Army Group require 14 L.C.M. (3) for use as ice breakers on the Meuse and Rhine. They would be converted, manned and maintained by the Army. Admiralty are unable to supply any and no suitable substitute can be found from British sources. Request I may be informed whether any U.S.L.C.M.(3) could be provided for this purpose and if so how many. Arrangements would be made to lift them to Ostend with or immediately after the last batch of L.C.M. for 12th Army Group. (Comnaveu 161721 to A.N.C.X.F.)

Situation Report. Cositintrep No. 256 part 4. Discharge by Sea 15th December.

	Personnel	Vehicles	Stores	Bulk Pol
British				
Antwerp	-	-	6,393	12,345
Ostend	2,734	125	1,461	343
Boulogne	-	-	1,518	-
Dieppe	18	-	3,131	-
Caen	-	-	1,478	-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	2,752	125	13,981	12,688
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
U.S. North.				
Antwerp	-	2	18,955	-
Cherbourg	-	-	6,847	7,253
Le Havre	57	243	4,836	182
Rouen	3,412	1,436	4,209	4,567
Morlaix	-	-	-	-
Granville	-	-	1,542	-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	3,469	1,681	36,389	12,002

(S.H.A.E.F. 161800A to War Office.)

No. 256 part 2 Naval.

- (1) Wreck of SS. FORT MAISON NEUVE is now reported in channel.
- (2) SS. WAR DIWAN mined believed broken in two close northwest of Nieuwe Sluis.
- (3) Captured ports - Le Havre. Trials of locks at Bassin de l'Eure and Bassin Bellot have proved satisfactory and 8 additional liberty berths are now available. This makes a total of 20 liberty berths at this port.

/Cumulative...

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Situation Report. (Contd.) Cumulative figures from 1st - 15th Dec. inclusive. U.S.

Cherbourg	421	-	154,653	19,083
Brittany Ports	-	118	62,775	775
Le Havre	53,688	3,630	94,386	-
Rouen	19,575	7,509	62,105	21,692
Antwerp	255	24	207,411	4,450
<hr/>				
Total	73,939	11,281	581,330	46,000
<hr/>				

(A.N.C.X.F. 162225A to Admty.)

Operations.

Channel.

- Patrols. Intend at 1400 today 16th M.T.Bs. 760 (S.O.), 752, 737 for A/S patrols in accordance with C. in C. Portsmouth 151804.
- (3) Ordered leave patrol when relieved 3 M.T.Bs. sailing from Portland 1400/17th or if weather unsuitable. (N.O.I.C. Portland 161140A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)
- At 1700 be in 50° 10' 01° 40' W. spread north south 2 miles apart in sequence from north LA SURPRISE, BRILLIANT, ANTHONY, WATCHMAN.
- (2) Search 090° to 00° 50' W.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 161230A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)  
Air patrols. My 281728 para. 12. A. Night 16/17th patrol 3 and 4 Leigh Light Liberators. Day 17th patrols 4 and 5 Swordfish 3 Liberators.  
B. 838 Squadron TOS. 842 Squadron SUD.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 161534A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)  
17th day patrols, search areas limits shown:
- (2) M.T.Bs. 01° 40' 01° 55' W. 50° 30' 50° 15'.  
(3) WATCHMAN, ANTHONY 3 miles each side H Channel 49° 55' 50° 15' or if no M.T.Bs. 50° 20'.  
(4) BRILLIANT, LA SURPRISE 01° 55' 01° 30' W. 49° 55' 49° 47'.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 161640A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Forces.)

R/C of Channel Is. for U-Boats. It is felt that the possible sanctuary for U-Boats (Germans) in and around the Channel Is. should be kept more fully under observation.  
(2) Flak prevents coastal command A/C carrying out close patrol.  
(3) It is therefore requested that a frequent visual or P/R may be arranged to find out whether any submarines are present on the surface in the area.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 161434A to Admty.)

/Congratulations...



War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel - Contd.

Congratulations Although Army replacements may be loaded and sailed to Southampton from Southampton for some further time, it may now Hards organisa- be said that the main sustained movement in the tion. shuttle service from the Southampton Hards has been completed.

(2) Approx. 75,000 vehicles, 300,000 men and over 16,000 railway waggons have been sailed from the Southampton Hards to France. Many minor difficulties have had to be resolved in reaching this satisfactory achievement which in my view reflects great credit on all those concerned.

(3) The Allied Armies owe much to your endeavour. Please accept my sincere congratulations, and thanks.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 161818A to SQUID.)

Operations.

Western Approaches.

CAMELLIA.

S.O.C.5 E.G. 162023 and my 161455.

If weather permits CELANDINE fuelling from convoy today 17th, CAMELLIA is to proceed to Londonderry for repairs and CELANDINE is to resume weather reporting duties on completion of fuelling.

(2) If weather unsuitable for fuelling, CELANDINE is to return to base fuelling at Moville en route, and CAMELLIA is to return to weather reporting area.

(3) CELANDINE report intentions as soon as possible.

(C. in C. W.A. 160055A to CELANDINE, CAMELLIA.)

CAMELLIA is to close H.X. 324 at best speed estimated P.C.S. 0800A/16 51.01 N. 19.02 W. 088, 9½, S.O. in EASTVIEW, and endeavour to make good repair.

(2) CELANDINE is to remain in area until further orders. CAMELLIA's 151730 refers.

(C. in C. W.A. 160218A to CAMELLIA, CELANDINE.)

CAMELLIA will R/V with you today Saturday to braze 4 inches flange to 1 inch Copper piping for boiler fan engine. Report whether this work can be carried out.

(C. in C. W.A. 160223A to S.O.E.G. C.6.)

Your 160218A have 34% fuel remaining now. Can maintain present course and speed until 1800A Sunday 17th. Must then return to Moville for fuel. My P.C.S. 052° 57' 020° 09' 071° 4 knots.

(CELANDINE 160358A to C. in C. W.A.)

Your 160218A. Am proceeding to relieve CELANDINE. P.C.S. H.X. 324 makes R/V impossible.

(2) Request R/V with next convoy passing through my patrol area to effect repairs.

(3) My E.T.A. in 053° N. 020° W. 1330A today Saturday.

(CAMELLIA 160858A to C. in C. W.A.)

Your 161252. Am unable to intercept H.X. 324. My 160858A refers.

(CAMELLIA 161735A to C. in C. W.A.)

/Patrols...

War Diary.16.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Western Approaches - Contd.

Patrols. Sailed NYASALAND to R/V E.G. 18 at 1300A. My 152344A refers.  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 160304A to C. in C. W.A.)  
My 152344 sailed HOSTE to R/V E.G. 18 at 2200A today  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 160806A to C. in C. W.A.)

6th E.G. NEW WATERFORD 3 frigates patrol off south west Ireland  
4th E.G. Cape Wrath area. 3rd E.G. in area north of Ireland.  
(C. in C. W.A. 161407 A to Admty.)  
(1) E.G. 26 pass Gate at 0900A tomorrow December 17 and proceed to relieve 21st E.G. as follows:  
2 ships of 26th E.G. relieve CONN, BYRON and DEANE carrying out zig-zag search between positions 090° Bishop Rock 13 and 180° Lizard Head 13. 3 ships of 26th E.G. relieve FITZROY, RUPERT and REDMILL carrying out zig zag search 50.25 N. 05.25 W. and 50.48 N. 04.53 W.  
(2) Further signal will follow to E.G. 21.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 161611A to S.O.E.G. 26, 21.)  
Be prepared to attack U-Boats which have broken off contact from convoy R.A. 62 and may be scattered along "Blue" route.  
(C. in C. H.F. 161813 to E.G. 20.)  
On completion of training p.m. 17th December N.O.I.C. Campbeltown is requested to sail 30th E.G. to Belfast Lough for fuel.  
(2) On completion of fuelling F.O.I.C. N.I. is requested to sail 30th E.G. to patrol area bounded by A. Tuskar Rock, B. St. Davids Head. C. 51° 17' 05" 00'. D. 52° 00' 07" 00'.  
(C. in C. W.A. 162316A to N.O.I.C. Campbeltown, F.O.I.C. N.I.)  
Request you will sail 1st E.G. a.m. 18th Dec. to relieve 6th E.G. and operate in area quoted in my 151118.  
(2) E.T.A. 09° W. to be reported. At that time 1st E.G. assume code word "Skunk" and 6th E.G. leave patrol area and proceed via Q.Z.S. 612 to Milford Haven for fuel and short lay over.  
(C. in C. W.A. 162319A to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven.)

Possible U-Boat. H.X. 324. Consider it possible we are being shadowed by U-Boat. Further unidentified enemy signals intercepted by M/F D/F last night. My 150214 refers.  
(2) Mac ships in company unable to fly off A/C due to weather. Request shore based A/C may be sent if you consider shadowing is likely.  
(3) My P.C.S. 051° 04' N. 016° 55' W. 085° 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  knots. Weather report 4862 0012.  
(S.O.E.G. C.6 161159A to C. in C. W.A.)  
Your 161159. Shore based aircraft not available owing to weather at base. Nothing heard by shore stations to corroborate your report.  
Signal further details of times, frequencies, bearings and nature of signals referred to.  
(C. in C. W.A. 161540A to S.O.E.G. C. 6.)

A.S.V. Mk.XI in Coastal Command. Your 062235. Naval A/U Sqdns. fitted A.S.V. Mk XI which are not embarked in carriers are being lent to H.Q.C.C. as they become available. (2) Air Ministry are now considering the re-equipment of a squadron in Coastal Command with Swordfish III fitted A.S.V. Mk. XI.  
(D.N.A.O. 161957A to C. in C. W.A., H.Q.C.C.)

War Diary.16.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDSOperations.Norway

Patrol. Negative patrol, torpedoes expended. 1800A  
P.C.S. 064° 34', 009° 14' E., 270°, 9.  
(UTSIRA, 161830A to F.O. S/M.)

OperationsNorthern Waters

Return of 9th E.G. less MONNOW detached by C.S.1 for  
E.G. 9 from Greenock. Request confirmation of destination.  
R.A. 62. My P.C.S. 63° N., 2° 40' W., 197°, 10 knots.  
Weather 5381 1446.  
(S.O. E.G.9, 160200A to C. in C. W.A.)  
Your 160200 proceed to Londonderry.  
(C. in C. W.A., 160916A to S.O. E.G.9.)

CASSANDRA. 20th Escort Group sailed 0745A/16th December.  
F.O. 1st C.S. 110855 not to all addressees refers.  
Route adjusted to pass northward of Russian S/M  
area. S. of A. 13½ knots.  
(S.B.N.O. N.Russia, 160815A to Admty.)  
CASSANDRA now alongside at Rosta, examination by divers  
proceeding. Expect to be able to arrange docking and temporary  
repairs sufficient to send ship to U.K. non-operational in  
R.A. 64 or 65.  
(2) Four officers and 60 ratings are being sent home in 20th  
Escort Group.  
(S.B.N.O. N.Russia, 160820A to Admty.)

Patrol. SLEUTH is to proceed direct from position (Y)  
059° 01' N., 001° 35' W. on surface at C.O.  
discretion to (Z) 058° 45' N., 001° 15' E. to  
establish patrol line length 30 miles direction  
000° 180° mid-point (Z).  
(S/M.9, 161301A to SLEUTH.)

Mining.

Deep mining My 151453. Arrived PLOVER, escort CONQUEROR.  
off Hartland (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 160851A to C. in C.  
Point. Plymouth.)

Minesweeping Sitrep.  
in Channel. Negative result from "Link" and other operations.  
Anticipated operation will be completed by  
Monday 18th December. Static pulsing of Passe  
du Nord Ouest Channel between harbour entrance  
and A.6 Buoy commenced 1330/15th Dec. and continued overnight.  
Position of mine reported in my 141033A was 195° Cap de la Heve  
3.2 miles.  
(Capt. M/S. N.F., 160913A to C.T.F. 125.)

/Your ...

War Diary.16.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDSMining

Minesweeping in Channel. (Contd.) Your 151910, para. 1. In view of forthcoming withdrawal of 168 Minesweeping Flotilla regret this cannot be undertaken.  
(C.T.F.125, 160935A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
Static pulsing with special cable has now been carried out from position 4 cables north-east of A.6 Buoy in Passe du Nord Ouest Channel at Havre to a position 2 cables east of Diguenord in the Avant Port for a period of 20 hours. It is intended to sail M.M.S. 1030 to Portsmouth at 0800 tomorrow Sunday to load additional cable in order to complete Static pulsing of the remaining western half of channel.  
(Capt. M/S. N.F., 161743A to C.T.F. 125.)

Minesweeping in East Schelde. Probability is foreseen of small M/S commitments in East Schelde after departure of Force A.  
(2) Propose that F.O.I.C. 1731 should be responsible for such operation with a small force operated by N.O.I.C. 1732.  
(3) If you concur, request you will allocate four M.M.S. to F.O.I.C. 1731 to be based at Terneuzen and to work under Com. Belgium when not required by F.O.I.C. 1731.  
(4) These would be supplemented when required by ships referred to in your 131400, para. 3.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 161213A to C. in C. Nore.)

Minesweeping off Milford Haven. Have cleared in G formation area between following positions to a depth 20 fathoms. All the following positions are N. and W. unless otherwise indicated.  
(1) 051° 37'30", 005° 22'42". (2) 051° 34'30", 005° 22'42". (3) 051° 35'00", 005° 30'54".  
(4) 051° 38'05", 005° 30'54". Negative result. Proceeding Swansea.  
(S.O. M/S.4, 161358A to N.O.I.C. Milford Haven.)

Minesweeping off Ostend. One red ground mine detonated in position 051° 22'10" N., 002° 33'48" E.  
(FLORIZEL, 161401A to C. in C. Nore.)  
(1) Remain in Margate Roads until further orders.  
(2) Proceed to Ostend on Monday 18th December, sweeping LL/SA E.G.M.S. south of central line between N.F.5 and N.F.8 Buoys.  
(3) Use Q.Z.S.584 entering and leaving Ostend, keeping to northern half of channel between O.D.4 and O.D.5 Buoys.  
(4) Speed restrictions in accordance with Q.Z.Y.525.  
(5) Attention is called to C. in C. Nore's 141551 December.  
(6) C. in C. Nore is to be kept informed of progress and of movements.  
(7) In the case of bad weather Flotilla may proceed to Small Downs or Margate Roads for shelter.  
(8) You are not to anchor within one mile of the eastern end of Q.Z.H.450.  
(C. in C. Nore, 161617A to GLEANER.)

/Proceed ...

War Diary.16.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDSMining

Minesweeping off Ostend. (Contd.) Proceed to Small Downs on Monday 18th December. On passage carry out LL/SA E.G.M.S. north side of centre line N.F.8 to N.F.5 Buoys.  
(2) Continue with present sweeping programme tomorrow Sunday unless otherwise ordered.  
(C. in C. Nore, 161725A to FLORIZEL.)

Minesweeping of Schelde. Operation "Calendar".  
(1) Sweep today Saturday 16th December SA/LL.  
(a) N.F.18 to N.F.13 also proposed new channel in accordance with C. in C. Nore's 151630A.  
(b) Hoofdpladt.  
(c) LAA sweep in Ghent Canal Oropesa N.F.18 to N.F.13 also proposed new channel in accordance with C. in C. Nore's 151630A.  
(2) One ground mine by P.P. in Hansweerd entrance on 14th.  
(3) Survey continues. (4) Nil.  
(5) M.M/S. 253, 175, 216, B.Y.M.S. 2051, 2157, 2173, M.F.V. 1027, (and?) 1074.  
(Capt. M/S. F.A., 161810A to C. in C. Nore.)

Mine swept south of Channel Is. South-western 2 miles of Q.Z.X. 1449 cleared. One G.Y. star mine cut in position 48° 53.9' N., 02° 29.6' W. Intend continuing clearance tomorrow 17th December.  
(S.O. M.S.F.14, 162210 to Admty.)

Navigational

Goodwin Sands light vessels. My 062126 to A.C. Dover.  
It is desired to use Kansas and Falcon light vessels for the North and South Goodwin stations as these vessels are ready for immediate service. Do you concur?  
(Director of Navigation, 161259A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Port Facilities

Antwerp. If SKYRACK's engines are unreliable vide A.C.I.C's 151326 she will be of negative value for this important work.  
(Com. Belgium, 161221 to Admty.)  
U.S. ships can now be accepted at the rate of 5 each day.  
(N.O.I.C. Antwerp, 161730A to Com. Z, A.N.C.X.F.)

Casualties and Defects

Lost Battle Practice Target. My 151915A. It has since been ascertained that target was submerged and not adrift. Target has been slipped and has sunk in position 043° 10' N. 009° 34' W. at 0930A. Escorting HESPERIA to Gibraltar. P.C.S. 043° 08' 009° 35', 200°, 12 knots until 1415A thence 180°.  
(KILMINGTON, 160945A to Admty.)

/PRINSES MARIA PIA...

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS

Casualties and Defects - Contd.

PRINSES  
MARIA PIA. It appears from Lloyds that PRINSES MARIA PIA suffered a casualty on 15th December. Request you furnish a report and state when vessel will be ready to sail.  
(D. of S.T., 161738A to D.S.T.O. Belfast.)

FORT MAISON  
NEUVE. C.A.F.O. 2120/1944.  
(A) FORT MAISON NEUVE. (B) British.  
(C) 15th Dec., 1225 G.M.T. (D) 050° N.F.14  
1 mile. (E) Mine. (F) Sunk in position  
51.24.09 N., 03.21.20 E. (G) 37 landed  
Terneuzen, 8 landed Ostend, 12 picked up by MENDIP, 7 picked up by COTTESMORE.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 161826A to Admt.)

JOHAN VAN  
OLDENBARNE-  
VELT. Lost port anchor have no S.B. engine require 4 tugs immediately.  
(JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT, 162118 to Seaforth Radio.)  
We are now ashore on Pluckington Bank. Master.  
(JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT, 162126Z to Seaforth Radio.)  
We are still in 7 fathoms water, but hurry up with tugs.  
Master.  
(JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT, 162144Z to Seaforth Radio.)

Shipping and Convoys

T.A.C.,  
T.A.L.  
Convoys.

Forecast of convoy sailings:-

	<u>T.A.C.</u> 82	<u>T.A.C.</u> 83	<u>T.A.C.</u> 84	<u>T.A.C.</u> 85	<u>T.A.C.</u> 86	<u>T.A.C.</u> 87	<u>T.A.C.</u> 88
Thames Gate	2240/21	1120/22	1220/23	1340/24	1450/25	1550/26	1640/27
Dumpton	0420/22	1700/22	1800/23	1920/24	2030/25	1130/26	2220/27
Ostend	1520/22	0400/23	0500/24	0620/25	0730/26	0830/27	0920/28
	<u>T.A.L.</u> 72	<u>T.A.L.</u> 73	<u>T.A.L.</u> 74	<u>T.A.L.</u> 75	<u>T.A.L.</u> 76	<u>T.A.L.</u> 77	<u>T.A.L.</u> 78
Thames Gate	0420/22	1700/22	1800/23	1920/24	2030/25	2130/26	2220/27
Dumpton	0820/22	2100/22	2200/23	2320/24	0030/26	0130/27	0220/28
Ostend	1520/22	0400/23	0500/24	0620/25	0730/26	0830/27	0920/28

All times are B.S.T.  
Speeds: T.A.C. convoys 6 knots. T.A.L. convoys 9 knots.  
(Com. Southend, 161854A to N.O.I.C. Ostend.)

/Major ...

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

Major Troopship Movements.

Following is summary 69 of major troopships movements in and out of Clyde and Liverpool during period to 15th January, 1945.

<u>Serial</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Convoy</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Due</u>
(A) In -					
(1)	A.T.172A		U.S. WAKEFIELD	Liverpool	19 Dec.
(2)	C.U. 50		As already notified		20 Dec.
(3)	A.T.174		QUEEN ELIZABETH	Clyde	22 Dec.
(4)	A.T.175		MAURETANIA	Liverpool	25 Dec.
(5)	C.U. 51		Ships not yet allocated to ports		28 Dec.
(6)	A.T.176		AQUITANIA	Clyde	28 Dec.
(7)	A.T.177		PASTEUR	Liverpool	30 Dec.
(8)	C.U. 52		Ships not yet allocated to ports		5 Jan.
(9)	M.K.F.37		Ships not yet allocated to ports.		6/7 Jan.
(10)	A.T.179		QUEEN MARY	Clyde	7 Jan.
(11)	A.T.178		NIEUW AMSTERDAM	Clyde	10 Jan.
(12)	A.T.180		QUEEN ELIZANETH	Clyde	14 Jan.
(13)	A.T.179A		U.S. WAKEFIELD	Liverpool	15 Jan.
(B) Out -					<u>Sails</u>
(14)	T.A.170B		U.S. MOUNT VERNON	Liverpool	19 Dec.
(15)	-		ANDES	Liverpool	21 Dec.
(16)	T.A.173		QUEEN MARY	Clyde	21 Dec.
(17)	T.A.172A		U.S. WAKEFIELD	Liverpool	22 Dec.
(18)	U.C. 50A		U.S. ships ex C.U. 50 plus ATHLONE CASTLE ex	Liverpool	24 Dec.
(19)	T.A.174		QUEEN ELIZABETH	Clyde	28 Dec.
(20)	T.A.175		MAURETANIA	Liverpool	31 Dec.
(21)	U.C. 51A		U.S. ships ex C.U.51		1 Jan.
(22)	K.M.S.76		DUNERA	Clyde	2 Jan.
(23)	T.A.176		AQUITANIA	Clyde	3 Jan.
(24)	K.M.F.38		Composition will be notified shortly		5 Jan.
(25)	T.A.177		PASTEUR	Liverpool	5 Jan.
(26)	U.C. 52A		Possibly - RANGITATA, HIGHLAND BRIGADE, HIGHLAND PRINCESS.	Liverpool ) Clyde ) Liverpool )	9 Jan.
(27)	T.A.179		QUEEN MARY	Clyde	13 Jan.
(28)	T.A.178		NIEUW AMSTERDAM	Clyde	14 Jan.

2. The above is for your information and guidance and is liable to alteration during period to 24th December when further signal will be made.

(D. of S.T., 162019A to P.S.T.Os. Clyde, N.W. Ports.)

War Diary.16.12.1944.  
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic.

KILMINGTON KILMINGTON's 151915 (KILMINGTON reported tow parted) and 160945 have been passed to V.A.M. and C. in C. Med.

(F.O.G.M.A., 161507A to Admty. etc).

KILMINGTON's 160945 not to all. H.M.R.T. HESPERIA is to be detached to Freetown as ordered by your A.M. 111357 refers. (D.O.D. (H), 161650A to F.O.G.M.A.)

KILBURNIE, KILBURNIE is to sail (at) 1400A Dec. (16th?) to  
BERGAMOT. relieve BERGAMOT as close escort to Cablesip  
MIRROR in position (S) 037° 4' N., (7009°) (14'?) W.  
(2) MIRROR is repairing Gibraltar/Lisbon number

2 cables in position (S).

(3) Route through Northern half of Straits thence through position

(Q) 035° 59' N., 006° 10' W.

(R) 036° 55' N., 009° 05' W. to (S).

(4) S. of A. 12 knots.

(5) E.T.A. 28th (S) 0800A/Dec. 18th.

(6) BERGAMOT is to arrange R/V if not in position (S).

(7) On relief BERGAMOT is to return Gibraltar through position

(R) thence through position (T) 035° 51' N., 006° 10' W.

(F.O.G.M.A., 161651A to KILBURNIE, BERGAMOT).

Gibraltar Cancel my 231616 Nov. Following organisation of  
Escort Force. Gibraltar Escort Force is intended.

2. 38th Escort Group, LEITH (S.O.) CONVULVULUS,  
ANCHUSA, 39th Escort Group, ENCHANTRESS (S.O.),

SPIRAEA, HYDERABAD, 40th Escort Group, BALINDERRY (S.O.)

BERGAMOT, CYCLAMEN, 41st Escort Group, DELPHINIUM (S.O.), STONECRE  
ALISMA.

3. State escorts JONQUIL, NADA (Y.S.), Ships of 51st Auxiliary  
A/S Group.

4. Should it become necessary to recommence S.L./O.S. convoys,  
it is the intention to employ ships of the 51st Auxiliary A/S  
Group and spare ships as Sheep Dog Escorts whilst employing the  
Escort Groups in para. 2 as Support Groups for O.S., S.L., M.K.S.,  
and K.M.S. convoys in the approaches to Mediterranean.

(F.O.G.M.A., 161805A to Admty).



16.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

C. in C., Visit to Algiers. Visit referred to in my 111838 postponed 24 hours. (C. in C. Med., 160515 to Admty). Dates in my 151821 should now read 17th to 20th December. (C. in C. Med., 160724A to V.A.M. etc).

BERWICK Sail to Malta on completion of disembarkation adjust speed as requisite and arrive 0830A/17th. (2) Route Q.B.B's 215, 338 and basic eastbound entering Malta by Q.B.B. (123?) (C) (3) Codeword "Stockade" 423. (4) C. in C. Med's 132233 refer. (N.O.I.C. Tunisia, 161148A to BERWICK). My 161148 sailed. (F.O. Tunisia, 161745A to V.A. Malta).

Air Cositint- Coastal Air Force. Day 15. Four Beaufighters rep No.524, escorted by four Spitfires scored hits on a 300 part 3. ton steamer and two small vessels in the north Adriatic. (H.Q., M.A.A.F., 161149A).

ATHENE ATHENE is due Gibraltar 18th Dec. Request approval to sail her unescorted to U.K. (C. in C. Med., 161307A to Admty). Reply: Admty. 171417A.

COLOMBO, Acting Captain K.M.L. Robinson R.N. has assumed Zara. command of COLOMBO and duties of S.B.N.O. Zara as from p.m./16th Dec. (COLOMBO, 161747 to Admty).

DROTTNINGHOLM A.M. 062135 and A.M. 141732 (Exchange of German, British, Argentine and Turkish civilians). No objection in the circumstances. (C. in C. Med., 161802A to Admty).

BARLE, Request you will report where BARLE, USK and USK, SHIEL are to be docked and when they should arrive. SHIEL. Para. 1 of A.M. 241720/November, not to all refers. 2. Ships can leave U.K. 28th Dec. (D.O.D.(F) 161817A to C. in C. Med).

Cositintrep Greece. Athens/Piraeus area. Good progress was No.526 part made in clearance operations at Piraeus during 4. 15th Dec. There was local activity only in Athens with some enemy shelling of the city centre during the afternoon. Landing of troops and stores was delayed by bad weather. It is confirmed that the E.L.A.S. attack on small detachment of Indian troops (see Cositintrep no. 525 part 4) took place at Krionero. (A.F.H.Q., 161830A to W.O.)

/GRADISCA...

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

GRADISCA, Your 151756 which has been passed to B.A.D. and  
interception. Cominch. Hague Conventions confer no right to  
impose permanent ban on proposed voyage if for  
legitimate purposes, and predominant allied  
interest in maintaining them in full force makes adoption of  
course (c) undesirable. Deliberate breach of Conventions  
following closely on loss of TEUBINGEN might lead to denunciation  
by German Government.  
2. Therefore while appreciating the advantages of course (c) it  
is necessary that course proposed in your para. 2 (b) should be  
adopted.  
3. You have discretion to intercept and examine GRADISCA on her  
outward voyage and to provide her with route to and from Suda  
clear of minefields.  
4. War Office are considering (a) your para. 4 and (b) whether  
opportunity should be taken to embark German repatriables in  
advance of exchange referred to in Admty. 271918. Further  
instructions will follow.  
5. Request immediate report when GRADISCA is intercepted on her  
return voyage of numbers of cases (a) eligible for repatriation  
(b) requiring more than 6 months treatment and (c) lightly  
wounded, for communication to War Office.  
(Hd. of M. Appd. V.C.N.S., 161903A to C. in C. Med).

Suez Canal (1) Relationships are good and present arrangements  
for working of Suez Canal run very smoothly from  
naval point of view. S.N.O.R.S.C.A. is anxious  
lest any change would result in loss of control.  
(2) Transfer of administration to Paris it is hoped will not  
affect present operational control of canal and company dockyard  
and workshops.  
(3) If Admiralty after transfer will still control (2) above  
no objection is seen to transfer.  
(F.O.L.E.M., 162008B to Admty). *SEL 2007451 EP/95.*

Movements, Arrival 16th Dec. BICESTER, PENTSTEMON, L.S.T.  
Greece. 32, L.S.T. 35, M.L. 1126, MULLET, CAMERONIA,  
TOSCANIA (Hospital Ship) NEWFOUNDLAND.  
Departure. U.S.S. BRADFORD, H.M.S. BICESTER,  
LAMERTON, L.S.Ts. 32, 35, 561, 601, AMENITY, MULLET, BERGENSFIORD.  
(S.B.N.O. Greece, 162200B to Admty).

Situation 1. An Italian swimming Saboteur has been  
Report No. 507. arrested while attempting to leave Port Area at  
Leghorn. His mission was to introduce equipment  
for future operations. Equipment has been  
located and collected intact.  
2. On 14th December British Troops in Missolonghi area were  
subject to unprovoked E.L.A.S. attack. They concentrated at  
Krionero in Kalidhon Bay and evacuation commenced following day.  
H.M.S. RINALDO and H.M.S. BEAUFORT were sent to assist. Evacua-  
tion carried out under rebel fire and covered by naval close  
support fire was completed by 0400 on 16th December. Details not  
yet available except that there were no naval casualties. Army's  
guns reported saved but believed armour and 80 vehicles probably  
abandoned. Situation at Patras very tense.

War Diary.

16.12.1944.  
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- Situation Report No. 507. (contd).
3. Withdrawal from Kavalla, Volos, Kalamata, Leykas, Preveza, north shore gulf of Corinth and Ionian Islands has been ~~stiffened~~<sup>ordered</sup> by 3 Corps. Previous report had not indicated any increase in tension at these positions.
4. At Piraeus bad weather is delaying discharge of reinforcements of troops and vehicles. Progress continues in clearance of Southern Peninsula. Navy again provided close support.
5. Situation at other ports as follows; Salonika. E.L.A.N. in control. Strike in progress. Mitylene. Quiet. Normal work in progress ashore. Samos unsettled.
6. R.H.N.S. IONIA is ashore on Repi Island at Skiathos and may become total loss. A Greek merchantman is also aground in Skiathos Channel. Allied War ships are standing by. (C. in C. Med., 162225A).

War Diary16.12.1944  
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

Flagship Changes. Following transfer of flag effected from dates stated.  
(2) Flag of V.A.3 from LONDON to SUFFOLK, 16th December. Flag F.O.C. A.C. B.B.F. from INDEFATIGABLE to INDOMITABLE, 15th December. (V.A.3, 160325Z to C. in C. E.I. etc.)

U-Boat dispositions. No fresh information scales in all areas remains unchanged.  
(C. in C. E.I. 160406)

V.S.I.S. In view of the progressive increases in personnel numbers foreshadowed in A.M. 091551 November and the delay referred to in para. 4 of A.M. 042308, it is requested that an indication may be given of the dates by which the provision of additional V.S.I.S. and Victualling Carriers will be implemented progressively.  
(2) The limits of the capacity of Ceylon and the Bombay Victualling Depot to handle the necessary quantities of Victualling stores will be reached before the number of personnel reaches the figure foreshadowed for March.  
(3) By that date it appears that only four V.S.I.S. are likely to be available, DEMODOCUS, CITY OF TOKIO, TAI PING and FORT PROVIDENCE, with BALTAZIA and the four carriers promised in A.M. 072220 Oct. It is doubtful whether these ships will be able to cope with the issue and distribution of stores even up to the time when the limit of Ceylon's capacity is reached.  
(4) It will therefore not be possible to lift any supplies from Australia or South Africa in V.S.I.S.  
(5) There appears to be three solutions.  
{A} A large and early increase of V.S.I.S.  
{B} The provision of additional storage in India on a large scale to be supplied direct from overseas by commercial freight. Such storage cannot be started the Autumn of 1945.  
{C} Use of open dumps in India supplied as in (B).  
{6} Immediate clarification of Admiralty intentions is requested.  
(C. in C. E.I. 160456Z to Admty.)

Floating Docks. Ref. para. 2 of Admty. letter DO. 11368/44 dated 7th September, 1944, and further to para.3 of C. in C. E.F.'s 310609 Oct. Propose allocation of third 750 ton dock to Bombay and (?fourth) to Cochin.  
(2) Letter on allocation of floating docks to all ports in East Indies Station follows by air mail.  
(C. in C.E.I.160540Z to Admty.)

B.P.F. auxiliary ships. Onward passage for B.P.F. depot and repair ship and auxiliaries intended as follows.  
All dates are departure Ceylon and apprx.

War Diary16.12.1944  
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

B.P.F. auxiliary ships. (Contd.)

(2) BROWN RANGER, ALLIGATOR, WEAZEL, EMPIRE JOSEPHINE unescorted 22nd Dec. for Fremantle. M.F.V.2046 (A.M. 202116 November refers) to accompany this group. ALLIGATOR, WEAZEL and EMPIRE JOSEPHINE onward to East Coast. BROWN RANGER to remain at Fremantle to assist with fuelling (C. in C. B.P.F.030441 refers) and then for onward passage to Sydney with Fleet train, see para.7.

(3) GUARDIAN independently end December for Fremantle and Sydney.

(4) WAVE KING early January (C. in C. B.P.F. 030441 refers)

(5) STAGPOOL and LARIAT and INTEGRITY towing A.F.D.17 and EMPIRE SAM mid-January for Fremantle and Sydney. Intend to provide escort to Fremantle.

(6) Hospital ship TJITJALENGKA mid-January for Fremantle and Sydney.

(7) Fleet train end January for Fremantle and Sydney calling as necessary for escorts to refuel. Escort 2 Cruisers to Fremantle and 7 minesweepers of 22nd M/S Flotilla throughout. Composition UNICORN, RESOURCE, ARTIFEX, TYNE, MONTCLARE, ADAMANT (unless deferred C. in C. B.P.F.061312 refers) SPRINGDALE and SALVESTOR.

(8) Signals quoted not to all addressees.

(9) C. in C. B.P.F. and C.S. W.P. S.F. are requested to remark. (C. in C. E.I. 160627Z to C. in C. B.P.F. Comsouwespac)

GENERAL POPE. Departure U.S.S. GENERAL POPE escorted by URSA and UNDAUNTED routed in accordance with C. in C. E.I. 050214 A.C.N.B. 090658 and my 140952. Signals quoted not to all addressees.

(2) S. of A. 19 knots.

(3) E.T.A. position (G) 1000Z/19th December, destroyers at Trincomalee 2330Z/21st Dec. GENERAL POPE at Melbourne 0200Z/29th Dec.

(6) Radio distinguishing group XC. (F.O. Bombay, 161009Z to Admty. etc.)

U.S. Transport GENERAL POPE sailed 16th December for U.S.A. via Australia with personnel. (D.S.T.O. Bombay, 161046Z to C. in C. E.I.)

L.C.T(3)'s for India. Request probable date of arrival in India of first flight of L.C.T.(3) fitted with DD ramp extensions our 042020 December and Armindia 131830 December both not to all refer. (C. in C. E.I. 161107Z to Admty.)

BANFORA, CRANE. Anticipate escort available for BANFORA from Persian Gulf to Bombay, your 151948 refers.

(2) This will be subject to the limitations in paras. 2 and 3 of my 091125.

(3) This extra commitment is being met by allocation of CRANE to Aden Escort Force, my 140619 not to all refers.

(4) Basra pass in P/L to P.A.I.C. (C. in C. E.I. 161309Z to Admty.)

/RENOWN ...

War Diary

16.12.1944  
Saturday

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies - Contd.

RENOWN  
Ammunition.

Your 111308Z. Two hundred 15" H.E. only are in transit to Trincomalee. Further requirements for East Indies are being met from new filling when available.

Propose as alternative RENOWN should embark 219 A.P.C. 4 c.r.h. and 501 C.P.C. Shipment of balance of former to U.K. has been suspended. A.M. 122119 to D.D.A.S. E.T. refers.

If you concur in this proposal the C.P.C. requirement can be met from 361 C.P.C. now in South Africa, but ordered to Trincomalee by A.M. 202100 November and 140 C.P.C. at present being loaded in U.K. in EMPIRE WILSON due at Durban within six weeks. Request you will arrange shipment of 219 A.P.C. to Durban if you require these to be embarked there, and to cancel shipment of the 361 C.P.C. ordered in A.M. 202100 November.  
(D.G.D. 161803A to C. in C. E.I.)

War Diary16.12.1944  
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

CAMELLIA CAMELLIA will R/V with you today Saturday to braze 4 inches flange to one inch copper piping for boiler fan engine. Report whether this work can be carried out.  
(C. in C.W.A., 160223A to S.O.E.G.C.6, Info. CAMELLIA, CELANDINE.)

PERTSHIRE In position V.480, Q. at 2325Z/15 starshell fired over ship by unknown craft, evaded action taken, lost Radar contact 8 miles present position 246° 110 Q.  
(PERTSHIRE, 160705Z to Admty. etc.)

BUXTON BUXTON is no longer required as a training vessel by Canadian Naval Service. It is proposed she be paid off and declared surplus to the War Assets Corporation for disposal as in the case of MANSFIELD and SALISBURY and the proceeds credited to Admiralty account. Request Admiralty approval. Admiralty's 251826A and 291930, both of October 1943.  
(N.S.H.Q., 161336Z to C.N.M.O.(R) Admty. etc.)

U-boat dispositions Estimates.  
(N.C.S.O. Ottawa, 161349Z, Cominch 161605Z.)

Reduction of bases. Trinidad. Your 191808 November refers. Following received from S.B.N.O. Trinidad (begins): My 301617 September, this was passed to Admiralty and B.A.D. S.B.N.O. W.A.'s 031940 October and formers dealt only with the reduction of British naval forces on conclusion of German war. There are at present approx. 129 R.N. officers and 804 R.N. ratings in Trinidad Command employed on A/S defence of Gulf of Paria and minesweeping. Merchant ships in all parts of the British Gulf are reduced from daily average of 60 in 1942 to 16 in 1944. I believed U.S. if approached would be willing to be responsible for A/S protection of their own naval ships working now in Gulf.  
(2) In view of above and very slight (?fear) of submarine attack on shipping in Gulf of Paria and inside net at Barbados I advocate following action now.  
(a) Disband 118th H.D.M.L. Flotilla.  
(b) Place indicator loops on care and maintenance and release 30th and 47th M.L. Flotilla.  
(d) Retain only the R.N.V.R. manned A/S yachts and miscellaneous vessels. (c) Release all Brit. M/S and depend on US. Forces at San Juan.  
(3) I believe this would effect a reduction of approx. 600 R.N. personnel. Details of proposal follow by letter. (Ends.)  
I concur in principle with proposed reductions. Request matter be referred to American authorities for early decision. Further proposals will be forwarded separately.  
(S.B.N.O.W.A. 161535 to Admty. (R) B.A.D.)

H.X.322

Average speed 9.25 knots.  
Off Fastnet at 0700Z/7. All arrived.  
(D.T.D., 161654A to Com. Tenth Fleet C. and R., N.S.H.Q.)

/Ships...

16.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies - Contd.

Ships to  
break off  
from O.N.  
Convoys.

In view of present negligible U-boat threat in area concerned, it is proposed subject to your concurrence that when circumstances permit British Controlled ships in O.N. convoys with destination South of 30° N. be broken off from convoy between 30° and 35° W., ships being provided with appropriate alternative route to destination.

(2) Reference would be made to you in respect of each convoy.  
(3) BRIDGELAND PARK and TOBIATIC PARK, both for Panama in O.N.271 are typical examples where saving of ship-days would be considerable.  
(D.T.D., 161831A to Com. 10th Fleet C. and R. Info. B.A.D.)  
Concur para. 3 (B.A.D. 182201Z).  
Concur (Com. 10th Fleet, 182038Z.)

WILLIAM S.  
LADD sunk  
10/12.

B.A.D., N.M.C.J.S. have hand. Admty. give to H.Q.C.C. U.S. Cargo W.S. LADD sunk by enemy action South of Leyte 10th December.  
(Cominch, 162109Z to Admty., for O.I.C.)

Trinidad  
Bermuda  
defences.

Your 231515. In view of appreciation given in Admty. 191808, it is agreed that defences at Trinidad should be removed and where practicable, stored immediately after defeat of Germany.  
(2) As regards Bermuda, pending instructions to American authorities by Cominch and any remarks

by you, you should be guided by A.M. 141944 Sept. and 191808, bearing in mind need for maxim reduction in personnel commitments.

(3) Request your proposals for immediate reductions of British bases may not be held up for consideration of proposals for post-German war period.  
(Hd. of M. Approved by A.C.N.S.(F), 162116A to S.B.N.O.W.A. Info. B.A.D.)

CORSAIR

Further to my 291273 Nov. (CORSAIR on her relief urgently needed in Trinidad from January) CORSAIR being turbo electric, main drive can steam below 13 knots for only very short periods because resisters overheat badly in spite of coolers being fitted. Structural alterations would be necessary to provide accommodation for Chief and P.Os. and accommodation for necessary telegraphist ratings would present considerable difficulty.  
(S.B.N.O.W.A. 162237Z to Admty.)



War Diary16.12.1944  
SaturdayFOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand

Digest 1060 Navy Catalinas (2) bombed Kudat Waterfront (North covering Borneo) early hours blowing up trucks and Lugger Dec. 15th. AUMOTKHDE (sic) also strafed both sides Kudat Strip.

(2) Supported by Battleship, ? Fleet Carrier and Cruiser Task Groups also land based aircraft from Leyte, substantial United States Army Forces landed southwest coast Mindoro Islands (?were at first) unopposed. Shortly after landing air attacks commenced on ships beached and offshore but land forces progressed without interference and by night fall held beach-head extending 15 miles southwards from point 3 miles north of Bugsanga River Mouth: Inward thrust captured San Jose Town and Airdrome, all objectives gained and perimeter defences started. Nil casualties suffered on land.

(3) All types enemy aircraft attacked amphibious craft and other ships off southwest Mindoro also supporting Naval ships further south intermittently throughout day: Effective air cover prevented damage except to few amphibious craft possibly involving one or more suicide crashes although three suicide dive bombers attempted to crash on warships in covering force without success: Fighter cover shot down 17 Japanese planes in day's total, A/A collected four more.

(4) Mindoro Naval Assault Force shelled and set burning enemy destroyer damaged and hiding in cove south coast Mindoro.

(5) Previous day aircraft sighted 11 small craft Tewde Island Passage.

(6) At noon search plane sighted one warship described CUVAONA Class Heavy Cruiser manoeuvring and circling near Tizard Bank (10° 20' N. 114° 30' E.) 8 hours later U.S. S/M sighted one destroyer 100 miles west of Tizard Bank course westerly at 19 knots. May be same ship.

(7) R/C aircraft forenoon-midday sighted shipping off west coast Luzon described thus: - 3 MITSUKI class Destroyers 80 miles southwest Corregidor course southwest at 14 knots: One Light Cruiser, two destroyers, two large Freighter Transports 200 miles northwest of Corregidor course 300° speed 8 knots: 1 Battleship (KONGO Class), two Heavy Cruisers, one destroyer, 135 miles west of Corregidor heading north at 15 knots, followed 25 miles away by one large transport, 1 large Freighter Transport 3 destroyers on course at 10 knots. Battleship and Heavy Cruiser identification not confirmed.

(8) Ref. Battleship force reported Digest 1059 first para., two battleships, two Cruisers, four destroyers, two Torpedo Boats arrived Camran Gulf early afternoon 14th.

(15) Search Liberator destroyed one small coastal freighter off west coast Panay afternoon 14th.

(18) Belated R/C report (?15th) relates that Navy Liberator strafed and damaged one large Tanker one Gunboat in North Channel Balabac Strait: Also saw three Sea Trucks three Floatplanes on water Puerto Princesa.

(Q.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 161110Z.)

War Diary

16.12.1944  
Saturday

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarine  
attack  
and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/16th Dec.  
Para. C. (1) H.M.C.S. EYEBRIGHT escort of  
O.N.S.38 made 7 depth charge attacks prior to  
1227Z/15th December in 55° 20' N. 06° 39' W.  
(D.D.I.C. 161100A.)

U-boat  
dispositions

Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C. 161446A, 161454A)

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

1. On the Western Front a serious enemy offensive has been launched between Treves and Eupen, "staking everything on this operation" which appears as a dangerous gamble.
- North Sea. 2. Antwerp can now accept 5 American ships daily.
- Channel. 3. (a) C. in C. Plymouth asks for a reinforcement of 4 fast escorts (destroyers) for his command.  
(b) 14th Minesweeping Flotilla has swept another mine south of the Channel Islands.
- Western Approaches. 4. LAUZON, frigate and COBOURG, corvette, of Escort Group C.6 are hunting a promising U-boat contact 15 miles east of Queenstown.

Foreign Stations.

Mediterranean.

- Greece 5. (a) At the Piraeus, the capture of Lofos Castello has relieved the Coastal Force base.  
(b) Kalamata was reported evacuated at 0425B today. Evacuation at other ports continued, but H.M. ships are not being withdrawn.
- Adriatic. 6. (a) At Split and Vis, relations with the local partisans remain strained, but at Sibenik the local authorities are helpful and friendly.  
(b) An Allied combined sea and air attack on Lussino Island (eastern side of the Great Quarero channel) was made today. Destroyers released Asino and engaged a motor boat west of Canidole Island. Coastal craft chased two explosive motor boats into Lussinpiccolo through the canal in 44° 32' 45" N., 14° 27' 30" E., and engaged shore targets, a bridge over the canal, and E-boats berthed inside.

/Riviera...

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Riviera,  
coastal  
action.

7. Last night an Allied force of motor trawlers and 16 coastal craft attacked an enemy convoy of 8 ships (one coaster, four armed lighters, three R-boats) near Mesco Point, Gulf of Genoa.

Complete tactical surprise was achieved. Two lighters and one R-boat were seen to blow up, one lighter was seen capsizing, and hits were observed on the coaster. Three of our trawlers were hit, with negligible damage. The C.O. of the TWOSTEP, A/S M/S trawler, was slightly wounded (the only casualty).

East Indies.

U-boat.

8. The British EMPIRE TUDOR, which left Karachi on the 8th for Vizagapatam and Calcutta, made an "S" report at 2311 from 15.46 N., 82.10 E., stating that she had sighted a submarine and torpedo track.

Operation  
"Robson".

9. Force 67, (INDOMITABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS aircraft carriers; NEWCASTLE, ARGONAUT and BLACK PRINCE, cruisers; 7 destroyers of 27th Flotilla, and the R.F.A. WAVE KING), left Trincomalee today under the command of R.A.(A) B.P.F., for Operation "Robson", an air strike on Pangkalan Brandan oil refinery.

SUPERWORKER  
sunk.

10. The dredger SUPERWORKER, in convoy from Aden to Karachi and Bombay, capsized and sunk today in 12.27 N., 45.45 E., in the Gulf of Aden. The convoy returned to Aden, arriving at 0900/18. An inquiry on the 20th found that the loss of the SUPERWORKER was due to a leak, the cause of which could not be determined. All towing arrangements were satisfactory.

Corvettes  
for R.I.N.

11. The corvettes BUGLOSS, BURNET and BETONY are to be transferred on loan to the Royal Indian Navy, but will continue to be at the operational disposal of the C. in C. East Indies, for general service in the war against Japan.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia & New Zealand.

SEA ROVER  
R. of P.

12. The submarine SEA ROVER, which returned to Fremantle today from her 7th Far East patrol, during which she was 36 days at sea, reports having sunk by gunfire a 200-ton coastal vessel on December 7 in the Macassar Strait, taking one Japanese and one native prisoner.

Borneo.

13. A U.S. Liberator on a search north of Borneo damaged three small freighters or sea trucks. Three U.S. Mitchells damaged a small coaster near Soemba Island and left another on fire.

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

AVONVALE,  
BRECON,  
EGGESFORD.

F.Os. i/c Greenock and Liverpool are requested to sail AVONVALE to Devonport BRECON and EGGESFORD to Portsmouth as convenient to give leave and adjust complements. Previous instructions concerning destinations of these ships are cancelled.  
(2) Leave should be given in accordance with A.F.O.

5998/44 in one watch to ratings recommissioning, utilising remainder of ships' companies as Care and Maintenance parties.  
(3) No dockyard work should be undertaken that is not essential to enable ships to reach refitting ports in the Mediterranean.  
(4) On completion of leave ships are to be sailed to Gibraltar for onward routeing as desired by C. in C. Mediterranean.

(5) Refitting ports in Mediterranean will be allocated in due course. C. in C. Med. 052014 not to all refers.

(D.O.D. (H) 170027A to F.Os. i/c Greenock, Liverpool, Cs. in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth.)

E.T.A. 1430. Have following passengers one flying officer R.A.F. one Lieut. R.N.V.R. and 20 naval ratings.

(AVONVALE 171214A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

KENT.

My 220010 Nov. Cancel para. 2. Destination for KENT is Clyde.

(2) On arrival about 21st December, KENT is to be reduced to Reserve Category B at 14 days notice for steaming.

(3) Commanding Officer KENT is requested to forward proposals for reduction, including personnel, in accordance with C.A.F.O. 2331/44.

(4) My 112235 refers.

(A.C.N.S. (H) 170059A to C. in C. H.F., F.O.C.R.F., F.O.I.C. Greenock, KENT.)

Scapa arrival 0635 KENT.

(A.C.O.S. 170731A to N.O.I.C. Lamlash.)

A.M. 170059. If KENT can arrange to arrive Gareloch Narrows at 1600A on 21st December ship will proceed direct to buoy for laying up.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 171226A to C. in C. H.F.)

A.F.D. 37.

Intend to return A.F.D. 37 from Arromanches to U.K. on completion of dismantling and withdrawal of L.C.T.

(2) R.N.O. Arrow is to arrange towage and to report anticipated date. Application is to be made to

A.N.C.X.F. (Cotug) for tow if necessary.

(3) Dockmaster and crew will accompany dock.

(4) Repair dumb barge 75 allocated to dock is to be lifted or towed to U.K. as convenient.

(F.O.B.A.A. 171036A to A.N.C.X.F.)

BUTTERCUP.

A.M. 162323. Intend to effect transfer of BUTTERCUP 0900A/20th December.

(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 171052A to Admty.)

/SPEAKER...

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - Contd.

SPEAKER,  
SLINGER,  
RULER,  
KHEDIVE.

A.M. 052040. Although SPEAKER and SLINGER should be reasonably fit to sail, I am concerned about RULER and KHEDIVE neither of which can be fit by that date.

(2) RULER. Aircraft were hoisted on board on 16th December. Half of Squadron will be on leave until 29th December (my 201708 November refers) ship has now developed vacuum trouble and flying is unlikely before 20th December. Ship was to have docked on 24th December but this has now been put off until 4th January (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 161541 refers) when training will cease. KHEDIVE is not due to arrive at Belfast until January 7th (A.M. 161307 refers.)

(3) I have appreciated that operational requirements have necessitated the departure of these ships from the U.K. in a very elementary state of training consequent on such an abbreviation work-up. I understood however that they are to be given ten days work-up in Eastern Med. prior to proceeding to Far East but it appears that they will now not get this training. I recommend that before they are used operationally they should be given at least ten days working-up, either by delaying departure from U.K. or in quiet waters on passage. The latter is preferable.  
(F.O.C.T. 171246A to Admt.)

As no other docking arrangements can be made, request you will dock RULER as proposed in your 161541. Ship is required to sail from U.K. on 11th January.

(D.O.D.(H) 172208A to F.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

LARGS.

A.M. 161646A. LARGS is not required in Clyde area for training. Request you will arrange for ship to join K.M.F. 38 direct.  
(R.A.L.S.C.U. 171253A to C. in C. Nore.)

Operations.

North Sea.

Clearance of South Beveland Canal.

Operation of passing motor M/Ss through South Beveland Canal entails considerable risk owing to little depth of water and extreme narrowness of channel over wrecks in Hansweerde and Wemeldinge harbour. Unless operation is one of extreme urgency consider dispersal of wrecks or at least a greatly enlarged passage through them essential before safe passage of M.M.S. can be ensured.

Motor Launches are however, being passed through at high water and it is hoped to commence minesweeps and wire sweep a.m. Monday. Your 141715 refers.

(Capt. M/S F.A. 170014A to C. in C. Nore.)

Concur in Capt. M/S Force A 170014 not to N.O.I.C. 1732.

(2) Clearance of channel from South Beveland Canal to Sas Van Goes should be completed by N.O.I.C. 1732 with forces referred to in my 161213 when M.M.S. can safely pass through canal.

(3) C. in C. Nore's 171222 refers.

(A.N.C.X.F. 171817A to C. in C. Nore, Com. Belgium, Capt. M/S Force A, N.O.I.C. 1732.)

/Your...

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Clearance of South Beveland Canal. (Contd.)

Your 152200 not to S.O. Force T. Anticipate L.C.T.(5) will be able to pass through canal Sunday 24th December on which date canal will have been swept by M.Ls. and harbours at Wemel Wemeldings and Hansweert swept by P parties and P.P. units.

(2) (a) Obstructions restrict entrance at Hansweert to 11 feet depth high water springs and 25 feet width and 8 feet depth and 40 feet width.

(3) These obstructions can be flattened to give an extra 4 feet to above depth before 24th December. My 171757 to P.S.V.O. refers.

(4) No obstructions in canal have been located up to date.

(5) Obstruction restricts entrance at Wemeldinge to depth 15 feet high water spring and 120 feet wide.

(6) Other restrictions affecting working of canal are Army Pontoon Bridges which can be opened in under one hour for which (?the) Army prefers 72 hours notice. It has been done at 24 hours notice.

(7) There is no power as yet in any of lock gates and sluices. This makes the locking through process take approx. 2½ hours at each lock.

(8) Hand operating winches on outer Gate are such that they cannot be worked after half tide. Consequently on these restrictions it is virtually impossible to pass ship through canal on one tide.

(b) Anticipate max. depth at high water springs at Hansweert entrance 18 feet after block ship has been removed. Depth in canal 20 feet. Width of lock 52 feet length 450 feet. These figures will be checked when survey of canal by hydrographer is completed.

P.S.V.O. is requested to pass to A.N.C.X.F. a firm estimate of when block ship will be removed.

(N.O.I.C. N.P. 1732 172010A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Landing craft required for German rivers. Comnavu's 161721. There is a firm requirement for 14 L.C.M.(3) for 21 A.G. as many of which as possible it is desired to lift to Ostend about December 23rd. My 151450 refers.

(2) Eighteen L.C.V.P. will be required by 21 A.G. when the Army has crossed the Rhine. My 141213 and 161640 refer.

(3) Request appropriate action be taken. (A.N.C.X.F. 171034A to Admty.)

Distributing Authority on Continent. X.F. No. 1062 of 25th October to C. in C. Nore only. The needs of Force T and the number of British Naval Parties that are likely to remain has led to reconsideration of the proposal to establish a distributing authority on the continent and I withdraw my previous objection.

(2) I recommend that Tempy. Lieutenant (S) A.E. Vaux, R.N.V.R. now acting as D.A. Force T, should become D.A. for N.W. Europe, i.e. for A.N.C.X.F.'s H.Q. and the rapidly dwindling Naval Establishments in France in addition to those in the Low Countries and later Germany.



War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Distributing Authority on Continent. (Contd.) (3) Of the three possible locations, Brussels, Antwerp and Ostend, I propose Ostend observing that it is a port, Lieut. Vaux is already established there and it will probably be necessary to employ W.R.N.S. personnel as staff.  
(4) If you concur, I further propose that Com. Belgium should make recommendations to you in regard to the staff, guards and transport required.  
(5) A number of ranks and ratings, surplus to requirements in France, are in process of discharge to U.K. but it is not the intention to hold any against the requirements in para. 4 above in view of the uncertainty of the commitment.  
(6) A certain amount of transport is expected to be available from the pool now forming in Belgium.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 171050A to C. in C. Nore.)

Situation Report. Military. Operations. Fierce counter offensive launched in German Seventh Army Sector along front in Eifel from lat. Trier to lat. Eupen, both exclusive, on morning 16th December. After heavy artillery preparation German troops crossed River Our and established three bridgeheads on West Bank. Two Panzer Division attack area Vianden (P.95) gained considerable ground for enemy. Enemy troops reported to have occupied Peterskirche (P.8672). Prisoner captured Lutzkampen area (P.8973) stated 156 Panzer Grenadier Regiment, 116 Panzer Division to attack this area. Attack of estimated infantry battalion strength area Heckhuschied (P.9277) locally successful. Enemy advanced to Auw (L.0090) and Manderfeld (L.0093). Heavy enemy attacks along front to north with some penetration being made: Panzer attack with 30 tanks in support reached Hoensfeld and reported turning north. Captured document stated Monschau (K.91) to be taken at all costs. Germans attempted infiltration at Kesternich (F.02) and launched unsuccessful counter attack. Parachutists dropped: strength estimated about 1500.  
West of Duren enemy counter attack repulsed and Berzbuir (F.14) captured by Allies. Heavy enemy attack area Linnich to Lindern (K.96) also beaten off.  
Remainder of front quiet.  
Para. (2). Order of Battle. Divisions in Eifel attacks believed identified from South to North as follows, though picture not entirely clear: 212, 560, 276, 352, 26, 2 Panzer, 116 Panzer, 62, 18, 12, 1, S.S. Panzer, 12 S.S. Panzer, 277, 272, 326. 2 Panzer and 116 Panzer are in areas P.88 and P.89 respectively: a document, not confirmed by contact, places 11 Panzer between them. Comment: 11 Panzer in contact in old sector on 16th December. 1 S.S. and 12 S.S. are south and north of Hoensfeld (P.99). Deserter from 5 Parachute Division area Vianden (P.84). 3 Panzer Grenadier Division reported west of Munstereifel on 15th December but not contacted. 47 Division reported recontacted at Mariaweiler (F.0947) Comment: suggests 3 Parachute possible also freed for employment elsewhere. No identifications of Airborne Parachute troops.  
Para. (3) movements.  
Good source mentions elements of 2 Mountain Division arriving in Denmark from Norway in early December as well as elements of 6 S.S. Mountain Division, 560 Division and 710 Division.

/Rail...

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Situation  
Report.  
Military.  
(Contd.)

Rail and road activity observed on 16th and 17th Dec. in areas behind and leading up to German First Army Sector. Flak indicates troops may be unloading area Kirprich (Q.3488).

Para. (4) Prisoners of War.

Total prisoners captured for 24 hours to 132400 Dec. (G.I figures, not complete): 1625. Accumulative total since D day 782,169.

General. Enemy attacks in Eifel undoubtedly designed initially to spoil opening of expected further Allied offensives and put paid to them for the winter. Two attacks at Arzfeld and Hoensfeld, each headed by at least two refitted Panzer Division with at least one goodish infantry division in the vicinity, are serious and could be exploited if any considerable initial success gained. In order to mount these attacks enemy has refrained from sending necessary infantry reinforcements to Cologne and Saar-Palatinate Battles and has committed a large proportion of his best reserves of armour. This gives the attempt the character of a gamble and, if proceeded with for more than a few days, it must develop into an all out gamble.

Only if considerable advances are made can it be worth the enemy's while to continue to incur losses in taking offensive rather than to fight on defensive in favourable terrain, which it is open to him to do. Captured orders signed by Runstedt, Model and Manteuffel state "we stake everything on this operation." (S.H.A.E.F. 171930 to War Office.)

Operations.

Chanel.

Patrols.

Owing to belated aircrafts report on disappearing radar contact in position 49.55 N., 02.55 W. at 1308A/16 25th E.G. on completion of duty as in my 161501A para. 2, is to carry out A/S sweep through

the following positions. 49.55 N. 04.00 W. 49.55 N. 02.35 W.

180 Portland Bill 16, then resume patrol.

(C. in C. Plymouth 170003A to S.O.E.G.25.)

Night patrol 17/18th. My 141241 not to all. Anti-Snort patrol areas given.

(2) Area X 00° 40' 01° 37' W. 49° 48' 50° 18' divided into three sections by 49° 58' 50° 08'.

(3) Ships take sections from north in sequence ANTHONY, WATCHMAN, LA SURPRISE by 1700 search from N.W. corner to S.W. corner by 0830.

(4) BRILLIANT 49° 42' Q.Z.S. 526 49° 30' Q.Z.S. 640 be at N.W. corner by 0830.

(5) Weather permitting M.T.Bs. search area bounded by Q.Z.S. 629, 623 H Channel, route E 2° 10' W.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 171215A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

18th day patrols. Search areas limits given.

(2) M.T.Bs. 01° 40' 01° 55' W. 50° 30' 50° 15'.

(3) WATCHMAN, ANTHONY 3 miles each side H Channel 49° 55' 50° 15' or if no M.T.Bs. 50° 20'.

(4) BRILLIANT, LA SURPRISE 01° 55' - 01° 13' W. 49° 55' 49° 47'.

(5) HARGOOD relieve WATCHMAN.

(6) SPRAGGE relieve ANTHONY on completion of C. in C. Portsmouth 171558A.

/(7)...

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Channel.Patrols.  
(Contd.)

(7) SPRAGGE inform HARGOOD and ANTHONY of expected time of arrival H.2 Buoy.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 171550A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

My 171550A day patrols 18th. For LA SURPRISE read HOTHAM.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 172129A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

Intend at 0800/18th M.T.B. 733 (S.O.), 747 and 731 for patrol as in your 171550.

(2) Constant watch on 2450 k/cs, Loxo and Cofox.

(3) Ordered to return from patrol when relieved at 1400/18th or if weather unsuitable.

(N.O.I.C. Portland 172129A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Derelict  
barges.

A.S.A. LOTHROP reports losing overboard at 0330 4 L.C.M. barges in position 50° 10' N. 03° 40' W. danger to navigation.

(C. in C. Plymouth 170645A to S. &amp; A. West Channel area.)

Reinforcement  
of 4 fast  
escorts  
desired.

The lack of fast escorts in the Plymouth Command has recently made it difficult to meet commitments. The position is now such that it is necessary to ask for a reinforcement of these ships if delays to the movements of fast shipping through the Command is to be avoided.

(2) Since 1st December some 16 fast escort commitments have had to be provided for.

(3) Fast escorts available comprise:-

(a) 8th D.F. of these, 3 ships are defective with weather damage, (IMPULSIVE, PIORUN and IROQUOIS). 1 has other defects (BLYSKAWICA). 2 have not yet joined (HURON and HAIDA). Of the remaining 3, FAULKNOR, VAN GALEN and TJERK HIDDÉS, the last is in need of immediate refit, and VAN GALEN is awaiting refit.

The present state of this flotilla is inadequate to provide 4 destroyers for escort duties as ordered in para. 3 of A.M. 141217A.

(b) 15th D.F. of the 4 ships, 1 (BRISSENDEN) is refitting till 30th January 1945, while TANATSIDE has sustained collision damage, time for repairs to which is not yet known. This leaves only 2 Hunts (MELBREAK plus ALBRIGHTON temporarily attached) available.

(4) An immediate reinforcement by 4 fast escorts is considered necessary.

(C. in C. Plymouth 171239A to Admty.)

Southampton  
Hard's Shuttle  
Service  
completion.

Your 161818A is deeply appreciated. The warm co-operation and assistance of all Royal Naval Establishments in your command has eased our part in this task and has established a firm and lasting friendship.

(Cousnaab Southampton 171838A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.HOME COMMANDSWest Coast France.French 23rd  
M.T.B.F.  
for Rochefort.Your 101933A approved.  
(V.C.N.S. 172140A to A.N.C.X.F.)Western Approaches.Possible  
U-Boat.

My 161459. Add not suitable. Searched area for 9 hours only 1 A/S contact obtained. 3 Squid 3 depth charges attacks carried out. Classified wreck height 36 feet approx. position 050° 24' N. 009° 35' W. Search (a) average (b) no. Searching north westerly direction. Suitable.  
Weather report 2642 8843.  
(S.O.E.G. 6 170024A to C. in C. W.A.)

Patrols.

My 161611A on being relieved, ships of 21st E.G. are to proceed as follows.  
(1) CONN, BYRON and DEANE carry out A/S sweep through following positions 180 Lizard 13. 49.38 N. 03.13 W. 49.15 N. 04.14 W. Thence to seaward end of Q.Z.S. 601. On completion, enter Plymouth at 0900A/18, speed of A/S sweep to be adjusted accordingly.  
(2) FITZROY, RUPERT and REDMILL proceed to position 180 Lizard 8 then carry out A/S sweep through 49.50 N. 03.35 W. thence to seaward end of Q.Z.S. 607, there to R/V with S.O.E.G. 21 and enter Plymouth. Speed of A/S sweep to be adjusted as requisite. S.O.E.G. 21 arrange time of R/V.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 170028A to S.O.E.G. 21.)  
On convoy crossing lat. 48° N. two escorts are to be detached to return to Liverpool.  
(2) C. in C. W.A. is requested sail JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELDT for Gibraltar escorted by ships in para. 1 as soon as practicable.  
(D.O.D.(H) 171436A to S.O.E.G. 5, C. in C. W.A.)  
C.S. 1 170901. Detach ORIBI and OFFA as necessary to arrive Liverpool a.m. Tuesday 19th December.  
ORIBI and OFFA are required for escort duties temporarily under C. in C. W.A. and will proceed to refit early January.  
(C. in C. H.F. 171456A to D.17.)  
On crossing 047° N. request you will detach 18th E.G. A.M. Q.Z.S. 612 to Greenock.  
(C. in C. W.A. 172259A to EURYALUS.)

CAMELLIA.

S.O.C.5 E.G. 162023 and my 161455.  
If weather permits CELANDINE fuelling from convoy today 17th, CAMELLIA is to proceed to Londonderry for repairs and CELANDINE is to resume weather reporting duties on completion of fuelling.  
(2) If weather unsuitable for fuelling, CELANDINE is to return to base fuelling at Moville en route, and CAMELLIA is to return to weather reporting area.  
(3) CELANDINE report intentions as soon as possible.  
(C. in C. W.A. 170055A to CELANDINE, CAMELLIA.)  
Your 170055A. Intend to R/V and fuel from convoy at 0900A today.  
(CELANDINE 170250A to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches.

CAMELLIA.  
(Contd.)

Evaporator Plant unsatisfactory over past 24 hours. Defect so far untraceable. Evidence also indicates excessive consumption of boiler water. Am steaming on one boiler and due to grave water situation am restricted to speed  $7\frac{1}{2}$  knots. Your

170055 - my E.T.A. Merville 0800 Wednesday, December 20th, if situation does not deteriorate.

(CAMELLIA 171035A to C. in C. W.A.)

My 170055. If CELANDINE has been unable to fuel CAMELLIA is to attempt to effect temporary repair by filing out hole in flange to enable copper pipe to be passed through hole and slightly belled over on inside face. The pipe is then to be soldered to the flange. An extra thick joint will be required. Pipe should be stayed if possible with CAMELLIA reporting result.

(2) CELANDINE is to report forthwith whether efforts to fuel have been successful.

(C. in C. W.A. 171411A to CELANDINE, CAMELLIA.)

Your 170055A and 171411A have been unable to fuel. Proceeding Merville E.T.A. 1300A/18th. Commenced last weather report at 1900A today 17th. W.R. 4581 7973.

(CELANDINE 171459Z to C. in C. W.A.)

Your 171411A and my 171035A. Evaporator plant now functioning. Anticipate second boiler can be flashed up at 2000A Monday December 18th.

Am carrying out temporary repairs as in your 171411A and will report after trial. In case of failure can make speed  $10\frac{1}{2}$  knots with armoured hose now.

My P.C.S.  $052^{\circ} 42' N.$   $017^{\circ} 21' W.$   $270^{\circ} 8$  knots.

(CAMELLIA 172100A to C. in C. W.A.)

CELANDINE 171459 and CAMELLIA 171035. CAMELLIA is to transmit weather reports on passage to Londonderry.

Cdre. (D) W.A. is requested to sail CELANDINE on completion of fuelling to return weather reporting area while CAMELLIA's defects are being made good. CELANDINE commence weather reporting immediately on sailing.

(C. in C. W.A. 172231A to CELANDINE, CAMELLIA, Com. D. W.A.)

Probable  
U-Boat, off  
Queenstown.

LAUZON in form A/S contact with U-Boat in position  $051^{\circ} 40' N.$   $007^{\circ} 55' W.$  COBOURG hunting in company. W.R. 4461 8332 suitable.

(S.O.E.G.C.6 172215Z to C. in C. W.A.)

My 172215Z. 5 attacks carried out. LAUZON 1 hit on confirmed U-Boat and still in contact. Reports sound blowing tanks. COBOURG assisting. Both ships detached weather report 4461 8332 suitable.

(S.O.E.G.C.6 172330Z to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Norway.

Operation  
"Fretsaw"

(? 132004)  
My 132044. Postponed at least 24 hours. Further signal will be made.  
(C. in C. H.F., 171306A to C.S.10)

Enemy Air  
Activity  
off Tromsø.

N.V. 138 aircraft are active from Tromsø.  
(D.D.I.C., 171849A to E.G.20)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Air  
Patrol.

Liberator R/T call sign Branch 46 and 47 W/T call sign 730 P.46 and 47 will patrol area to west and east of Pentland respectively from 1400 today 17th.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 171152A to C. in C. W.A., A.C.O.S., C. in C. H.F.)

Convoy  
troubles at  
Murmansk.

My 151428 para. two.  
Lengthy discussion with Noks, Head of Narkeminwig ending 0030 this morning failed entirely to reveal definite reason for retention of CECIL N. BEAN at Murmansk. She was stopped by obstruction viz. retention ships papers and absence of pilot rather than by definite order, but after being pressed for reason Noks stated that he had telephoned Krutikov in Moscow and the latter when referring to American ships of group 2 said "unload ships at Murmansk to avoid congestion at Archangel". I pointed out disorganisation of return cargoes from Archangel involved and Noks expressed regret and promised to refer discharge to me in future.  
(2) Fully concur in last sentence S.B.N.O. Archangel 131329 not to all addressees. Noks' employment of the word misunderstanding covers a multitude of sins. U.S. representative will now allow CECIL N. BEAN to discharge here "under protest" as only chance of catching R.A. 63.  
(S.B.N.O. N. Russia, 171422A to S.B.N.O. Murmansk).

Norwegian  
civilian  
relief  
stores.

I have not yet approached Russians in accordance with Admiralty message 170025 and suggest that Commodore Askim ex R.A.62 and possibly Lieutenant Commander Jacobsen commanding officer of TUNSBURG CASTLE proceeding to United Kingdom in TAVY be consulted before proceeding further.

2. Your paragraph 3 (A). See no prospect of alteration in maintenance difficulties mentioned in my 061036.
3. Your paragraph 3 (B). One of the corvettes had already been sunk and only three of the M/S trawlers arrived. I do not anticipate the Russians will provide any support. Your paragraph 5 refers.
4. None of Crofter stores ex J.W.62 escorts and tankers have yet left Kola Inlet and have no information about how and when they will go. In view of congestion in Murmansk storage space is unlikely to be obtainable. Definite arrangements for disposal of harbour defence equipment and personnel, if any, should be made before it is shipped. Your paragraph one refers.

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Norwegian  
civilian  
relief  
stores.

5. Same applies to 2,000 tons civil relief stores mentioned in A.M. 211735 November.

6. My personal feeling is that Norwegian ships should have as main object distribution of stores. A.M. 252348 November para. 2 and A.M. 081634 refer.

7. Cover against enemy activity of all sorts must inevitably be meagre until maintenance facilities for an escort force can be provided at a Norwegian Base. We should therefore rely on fishing vessels, M/S A/S trawlers, etc. for the present.

8. Am unable to contact Captain Hostvedt except through Russian Channels and have not done so.  
(S.B.N.O. N. Russia, 171451A to Admty).

Allied Air Activity.

Routes for  
non-operational  
aircraft  
to the  
Continent.

Following received from Air Ministry, Whitehall. Begins - "Notwt A.278. Regulations for routing of aircraft on non-operational missions between United Kingdom and Continent contained in Neugrip (S.D.533) para. 23 provide that such aircraft are whenever possible to be routed along one or other of the approved aircraft corridors.

2. Air Staff S.H.A.E.F. have proposed that this regulation be strengthened so as to make use of corridors obligatory for all aircraft requiring to fly on non-operational missions between U.K. and the Continent. At same time they propose that notification of flights to Movement Sections be dispensed with both by day and night in case of flights across Channel west of line Folkestone - Calais and by day only east of that line.

3. Request your comments. Unless objection received by December 20th propose to issue amendment to Neugrip in accordance with above suggestions. 161505" Ends.

2. Request your early concurrence or remarks.  
(D.O.D. (H), 171246A to A.N.C.X.F., V.A. Dover, Cs. in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth, Nore).

Mining.

M.S.F.138

Your 161213A. Concur.

(2) F.O.I.C. Gt. Yarmouth is requested to sail 138th M.S.F. as soon as convenient to Southend for onward passage to Terneuzen.

(3) 138th M.S.F. is allocated to F.O.I.C. 1731 and will be based at Terneuzen, being operated by N.O.I.C. 1732, when not required by F.O.I.C. 1731 they will work under Com. Belgium.  
(C. in C. Nore, 171222A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Deep mining  
off Hartland  
Pt.

Carry out operation H.Y.A.3 at 1315 December 18th.  
(N.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 171235A to PLOVER)

War Diary.

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. - Contd.

M.S.F.16 Pass Gate at 0930 tomorrow Monday with available ships of 16th M.S.F.  
2. Carry out two laps of a search in double H formation at a depth of 17 fathoms, of Q.Z.D.607 and Q.Z.S.590, between the seaward end of Q.Z.S.601 and Portland Bill.  
3. Anchor as convenient during dark hours.  
4. On arrival at eastern limit of sweep detach one ship to Portsmouth for onward routing to Harwich E.T.A. Needles is to be reported to C. in C. Portsmouth.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 171547A to M.S.F.16)

Minesweeping south of Channel Islands. Cleared area of Q.Z.X.1449 extended northward to line joining following positions: 048° 56.6' N., 002° 31.3' W. and 048° 54' N., 002° 26' W. One further GY star mine cut in position 048° 54.8' N., 002° 29.2' W.  
(S.O.M.S.F.14, 172145 to Admty).

Port Facilities.

Antwerp Antwerp can now accept 5 United States Store Ships a day.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 171005A to N.C.S.O. Ramsgate).

Casualties & Defects.

SS. LOU GEHRIG Salvage Tugs RAMIER and EMPIRE DEMON gone to assistance of LOU GEHRIG ashore on Brambles.  
(N.O.I.C. Cowes, 171100A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

H.M.T. VASCAMA. VASCAMA dragged anchor and drifted on to outer breakwater Holyhead at 2154A/16. She has now been refloated and secured to buoy. Vessel is holed in one bunker, no other damage so far ascertained. She will have to return to Liverpool. Further signal will be made.  
(N.O.I.C. Holyhead, 171155A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool)

R.F.A. WAR DIWAN. C.A.F.O. 2120/44.  
(A) WAR DIWAN (B) British. (C) 1305/16/12.  
(D) Between N.F.15 and N.F.17 buoys. (E) Mine.  
(F) Forward half in 51.25.45 N., 03.29.37 E. After half in 51.25.31 N., 03.27.21 E.  
(G) 37 survivors landed Ostend. 5 missing.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 171420 to Admty).

SS. OOSTERHAVEN. SS. OOSTERHAVEN disabled 1½ mins. south of Beer Head with survivors of ISBJORN on board. Ships addressed are proceeding to assist as follows:-  
ENTICER left Plymouth 1653.  
CONCERTATOR left Dartmouth 1735. AVONSTREAM left Portland 1708.  
M.L.146 left Portland 1643. One ship from E.G.25 closing from Lyme Bay. Exmouth lifeboat sailed 1647.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 171737A to S.O.E.G.25).



406

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects. - Contd.

TANATSIDE Regret to report that TANATSIDE and BYRON were in collision in approx position 50° 08' N., 05° 53' W., at 0240A/16th.

2. Ships sustained following damage:  
 TANATSIDE:- Structural damage to deck and side between 113 and 117 stations and crowns of 4 and 6 oil fuel tanks, also to B gun Zareba and D.C. rack post side aft. Estimated time to repair 2 to 3 weeks, subject to confirmation.  
 BYRON:- Horizontal split from stem to 10 ft. aft on waterline and stem below pushed to port. Considered ship can remain at sea. (C. in C. Plymouth, 171922A to Admty).

H.M.S. SEYMOUR. Regret to report SEYMOUR was in collision with U.S.S. ANTHONY WAYNE at 2030 hours on Friday 15th December in position N.F.6 Buoy. ANTHONY WAYNE not repeated not considered to be at fault. Present whereabouts and owners name not known. Damage believed to be slight. Damage to H.M. Ship consists of 10 feet of shell plating torn off starboard quarter from deck to 4 feet above waterline, adjoining frames torn out and depth charge rails distorted. No underwater damage. Estimate eighteen days required to repair damage. (SEYMOUR, 172030A to Admty).

Shipping & Convoys.

M.K.F. & Admiralty 152000 concur.  
 K.M.F. (C. in C. W.A., 171050A to Admty).  
 convoys.

Sailing of Your 151831 paras. 2 and 3 B concur.  
 coasters from 2. Para. 3 A. Those for Wight area should  
 Far Shore. proceed direct to destination.  
 3. In the unlikely case of ships from Canoe requiring to go to Littlehampton and/or Shoreham, (E.I. the only ports between Wight and Newhaven) it is pointed out that the inshore route has to be used to approach these ports. With daylight, and draught limitations on the use of the Looe passage, and tidal limitations on time of arrival at the two places. Such shipping should therefore proceed to Newhaven for onward routeing. Arrow pass to R.N.O. Canoe. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 171118A to F.O.B.A.A.)

O.C.C./T.B.C. My 161844A December. Paragraph 2 for Z buoy read  
 Convoys. position Z of Q.Z.S. 566.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 171237A to Admty. Cs. in C. Portsmouth, Nore, W.A., C.T.F.125)

Signals N.O.I.C. Calais 151520. Since train ferries  
 retrain normally operate in accordance with pre-arranged  
 ferries. pre-arranged programme, propose sailing and arrival signals be dispensed with altogether.  
 2. All authorities concerned would of course continue to be informed in the event of major departure from programme.  
 (V.A. Dover, 171245A to Admty., A.N.C.X.F., S.H.A.E.F., F.O.B.A.A.)

407

War Diary17.12.1944.  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSNorth AtlanticCITY OF  
LINCOLN

Request approval to sail CITY OF LINCOLN a.m. 19th independently to U.K. speed 16½ knots.  
2. Request destination if approved.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 170942A to Admty.)

ANGUILLA  
(frigate)

Arrived Horta at 0855Z/17th H.M.S. ANGUILLA with defects.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores 171212Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

ATHENE,  
FLEETWOOD

Admiralty 171417. (See Mediterranean).  
A.M.171417 FLEETWOOD sailed for U.K. 1600A Dec. 16th. My 151236 160911 and 161815 none to all refer. Do not intend to recall her, as her speed is only twelve knots.  
2. ATHENE could be sailed (a) escorted by PRIMULA (b) in company with EASTWAY escorted by STORK.  
3. PRIMULA could be held as additional escort if ATHENE is sailed in company with EASTWAY.  
(F.O.G.M.A.171754A to C. in C. Med., Admty.)

GOLDEN  
FLEECE,  
FLYING  
FISH.

GOLDEN FLEECE and FLYING FISH are to proceed to Granton for inspection and M/S work up. C. in C. C.N.A. 151627 not to all refers.  
(D.M.S. 171439A to S.B.N.O. Azores)

HESPERIA,  
KILMINGTON

Detach HESPERIA forthwith to proceed to Freetown routed through (G) 3300 N. 10.00 W. (H) 28.00 N. 13.30 W. (J) 23.20 N. 18.00 W. (K) 12.00 N. 18.00 W. (L) 10.00 N. 16.00 W. thence by current swept channel to Freetown.  
(2) On detaching HESPERIA is to keep W/T watch on 500 KC/S shifting to read B.A.M.S. routine.  
(3) KILMINGTON report (A) HESPERIA P.C.S. (B) Own P.C.S.  
(4) KILMINGTON pass to HESPERIA.  
(5) A.M. 161650 not to all.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 171806A to KILMINGTON)  
Your 171806A acknowledged and passed to HESPERIA. HESPERIA detached in position 036 degs. 39' N. 009 degs. 01' W. at 2200A. Course 193 degs. speed 12 knots.  
My P.C.S. 036 degs. 39' N. 009 degs. 02' W. 109 degs. 14 knots.  
(KILMINGTON 172205A to F.O.G.M.A. etc.)

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Kalamata. Kalamata evacuated. Your 161911B SPHENDONI with N.O.I.C. and British Port Party on board anchored Kalamata Bay. METEOR and M.L.273 in company.  
(N.O.I.C. Kalamata, 170425B to S.B.N.O. Greece.)

C.O.P.P.10. My 141320 groups 33, read C.S.15's 081320 refers.  
(F.O.L.E.M., 171006B to C. in C. Med.)

South Aegean Summary. Up to 0900 hours 17th Dec.  
(1) Shipping. No Ph/R Dec. 16 owing to weather. Shipping strikes. By aircraft 1003 hours Dec. 16 one 2 masted caique 50 ton attacked south of Lipso. Last seen aground. By naval force, one assault craft sunk between Leros and Rhodes and 1 caique captured and taken to Symi a.m./16 Dec. Ground source reports Melos one vessel 60 tons with Red Cross markings but German manned in Adhamas Bay 16 Dec. No Ph/R to confirm this. Also reported supply launch expected again from Crete p.m./16 or 17 Dec. but this not confirmed from other sources. Suspicious vessel in Heraklion area with Red Cross markings being investigated by R.N. a.m./17th Dec.  
(C. in C. M.E., 171215B.)

SAGGAT for Piraeus. Swedish ship SAGGAT is due Piraeus 26th. Do you require ship's arrival to be delayed? If so request you will inform F.O.G.M.A. who should hold ship until called forward by you when you should give a minimum of 3 days notice.  
(2) F.O.G.M.A. is requested to follow similar procedure for informing Swedish Authorities from that in A.M. 212023 October (? 212028 intended). My 221806 and 271134 both October, refer.  
(C. in C. Med., 171223A to S.B.N.O. Greece.)  
Reply: 182027B. See also 232043A.

ARETHUSA. When may ARETHUSA be expected, your 081808.  
(F.O.L.E.M., 171311B to C. in C. Med.)

ATHENE, FLEETWOOD. ATHENE should not be sailed unescorted. C. in C. Med.'s 161307 not to all refers.  
(2) F.O.G.M.A. is requested to sail FLEETWOOD as escort for ATHENE when ready. A.M. 241720 Nov. para. (1) not to all refers.  
(3) Destination of ATHENE is Clyde.  
(A.C.N.S.(H), 171417A to C. in C. Med., F.O.G.M.A.)  
W.D. Note: FLEETWOOD already sailed, see North Atlantic 171754A.  
Para. (2) cancelled (Admty., 191952A.)

MUSKETEER, Volos. Your 162245B. Can do no good at Volos after Italian prisoners of war are embarked. Intend UNST escort convoy to Salonika. G.S. NIKI F.T.24 to Piraeus. MUSKETEER, SEKSERN, M.L.458 based

/Skiathos ...

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONSMediterraneanMUSKETEER,  
Volos.  
(Contd.)

Skiathos to hunt and seize salvage armed launch CYCLOPS and an important E.L.A.N. coaster which escaped from Volos probably now in Sporades. (MUSKETEER, 171648A to S.B.N.O. Greece.)

BIDEFORD.

Request you will sail BIDEFORD on completion of refit to Gibraltar for onward routing to U.K. (2) Admty. is requested to signal destination in U.K. (3) A.M. 241720 Nov. not to all refers. (C. in C. Med., 171731A to F.O.L.E.M.)

WEST POINT  
(to U.S.A.)

Intend to sail U.S.S. WEST POINT at 0800/19 to U.S.A. escorted by U.S.S. MADISON to 9° W. (2) S. of A. 20 knots. (3) Routed in Mediterranean - (O) 35° 53' N., 00° 38' W. (P) 36° 10' N., 03° 00' W. (Q) 36° 04' N., 05° 21' W. thence northern half to Straits of Gibraltar to (R) 35° 59' N., 06° 10' W. (S) 35° 20' N., 18° 15' W. (T) 36° 18' N., 33° 10' W. (U) 36° 30' N., 44° 58' W. (V) 36° 50' N., 57° 20' W. (W) 37° 59' N., 70° 02' W. thence as directed by Com. 10th Fleet (C. and R). (4) E.T.A. position (Q) 1930/19, 9° W. 0430/20, 20° W. 0730/21. "Chop" 1700/21. Position (W) 0800/26. (5) Codeword "Batten", 333. Priority high. (6) Guard NSS F throughout voyage. Gibraltar broadcast to 20° W. (7) All times Z. (8) F.O.G.M.A. is requested to route and return MADISON to Oran upon detachment at 9° W. (Com. N.O.B. Oran, 171732A to Admty., etc.) Amended by 181824A, q.v.

DART,  
EVENLODE.

Request you will sail DART and EVENLODE on completion of refit to Gibraltar for onward routing to U.K. (2) Admty. are requested to signal destination in U.K. (3) Admty. 241720 Nov. not to all refers. (C. in C. Med., 171733A to V.A.M.)

C. in C. to  
visit  
Algiers.

Dates in C. in C. Med. Fleet's 151821 should now read 17th to 19th Dec. C. in C. Med. Fleet's 160724 refers. (C. in C. Med. Fleet (Algiers), 171817A to C. in C. Med., V.A.M., etc.)

Transfer  
of L.S.T.

Report in accordance with your 151151A Dec., para. 2, not to Admty. (A) None. (B) None. (C) 10 L.S.T. will be turned over by 2359/24th Dec. and will be fitted for ferry trips by a.m. 27th Dec. with skeleton U.S. Navy S. ratings

/still ...

17.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Transfer of L.S.T. (Contd.) still embarked. Comphibforce N.W.A.W. 8th Fleet willing to assist in subsequent assault training if required.  
(2) Temporary crews are complete except for following:  
(A) No radar ratings provided.  
(B) Boats crew for L.S.T. 1021 and 394 (4 P.O. or Leading Seamen, 4 Stokers, 4 A.B.) (C) 5 E.A.  
(D) Pontoon ratings for L.S.T. 1021 and 394.  
(E) Deficiency in gun crews will be signalled later.  
(F) Flotilla N.O. and M.O.  
(3) Request confirmation that L.S.T. numbers and signal letters should remain unaltered.  
(4) S.P., vide M.W.C.O.23 para. 6, cannot be supplied from Bizerta.  
(5) In view of inexperience of engine room ratings request 10 patrol service diesel motor mechanics understood to be available at Malta may be forwarded immediately, A/S.E.O.L.C. concurs.  
(6) Skeleton crew in para. (1) (C) each comprise American C.O. one executive and engineer officer plus approx. 15 men who will be attached for 7 to 14 days as required.  
(7) Nominal list will be sent by air to Admty. and V.A.M. and list of Officers to C. in C. (?Med.)  
(N.O.I.C. Tunisia, 171820A to C. in C. Med.)

ALDENHAM, relief. Request relief may be approved for ALDENHAM, my 142107A refers. ALDENHAM was one of the eighteen "Hunts" finally allocated to the station.  
(C. in C. Med., 171826A to Admty.)

Personnel Ships, Alexandria. R.A. Alex. has ruled that during winter months 1 personnel vessel only at any one time will be acceptable in Alexandria and also subject to following conditions:-  
(A) Draft not to exceed 26 feet.  
(B) Length limited to approx. 500 feet.  
(C) Weather conditions may preclude entry and sailing to schedule.  
(D) Vessels must remain berthed alongside during the whole period of stay. Ref. (A) and (B) above, vessel of 11,000 tons envisaged.  
(2) In view of above restriction it will not be possible to accept any vessels at present engaged on Mideast service at Alexandria.  
(3) Request therefore that you arrange to sail vessels so that their arrival at Port Said will not coincide with K.M.F./M.K.F. ships. This will modify para. (2) of my 112024.  
(P.S.T.O.M.E., 171916 to P.S.T.O. Med.)  
Reply; 181100.

Situation Report No. 508. At Split, relations with local partisans remain strained.  
(2) In Sicily there have been demonstrations at Catania and Palermo against mobilisation. At former place an incident occurred on 14th Dec.

/in which ...

411

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Situation Report No. 508. (Contd.) in which 5 police were injured and 100 (?civilians) killed (W.D. Note: Cositintrep 528 to W.O., says 1 killed) and 6 wounded. There was no violence at Palermo. (3) Allied coastal craft on patrol in Gulf of Genoa night of 15th Dec. encountered 5 north-bound enemy F lighters off Sestri Levante. No damage or casualties to our force although shrapnel shell fire heavy. 2 torpedo hits obtained and there was a large explosion. (4) At Piraeus, capture of Lofos Castello has relieved coastal force base. Nothing further of interest to report. (5) Evacuation at ports referred to in situation report number 507 para. (3) now in progress. H.M. Ships will remain after it is completed. (6) Following reports received. Patras: tension increasing. Kalamata: evacuation probably completed. Kavalla: outbreak of hostilities expected when evacuation begins. Salonika: E.L.A.S. reinforcements have arrived by sea. Cyclades: situation satisfactory. Visit from warships raised morale. National enthusiasm high. E.L.A.S. disarmed and awaiting results at Athens. (7) Ref. number 507 para. (6). IONIA hard and fast ashore with heavy list and stern submerged but Fred\* in no immediate danger. (8) MARNE intercepted an assault craft and a caique near Symi and took 22 German and 5 Italian prisoners. (C. in C. Med., 171958A to Admty., etc.)  
\* As received.

HUNTER,  
ATTACKER,  
STALKER,  
ROYALIST.

Extension up to 14 days can now be accepted for the completion of HUNTER, ATTACKER, STALKER. C. in C. Med. 081931 not to all refers. (2) In order to complete tropicalisation of ROYALIST extension of 14 days is approved. Com. E.C. 071715 not to all refers. (D.O.D.(F), Approved A.C.N.S., 172340A to C. in C. Med., Com. E.C.)

Cositintrep  
No. 527,  
part IV.

278437 FX 70192 cipher 17th December. Greece. Athens/Piraeus area. Further progress was made in clearing the Piraeus area during 16th Dec. E.L.A.S. forces continued to shell and mortar the central area of Athens but there were no serious encounters. Advanced elements of 10 Bde. and 12 Bde. (ex 4 British Division) have arrived at Piraeus. The small detachment of Indian troops in Krionero has been evacuated to Patras (Peloponnese). (A.F.H.Q., No T.O.O./17 to W.O.)

War Diary17.12.1944  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

U-Boat  
dispositions. No fresh information scales in all areas remain unchanged.  
(C. in C. E.I. 170350)

ROVER. Departure H.M.S/M ROVER for Trincomalee routed in accordance with S.O.S/Ms Colombo 140921 / and my 161202 / neither to all.  
(2) S. of A. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  knots.  
(3) E.T.A. position "Z" 0200Z/23rd Dec.  
(4) Guard broadcast "V" setting additional watch on 51.0 K/cs 373 2200Z/22nd December.  
(F.O. Bombay, 170434Z to Admty. etc.)  
/ Not identified in War Reg.

Dredger  
sunk. Dredger SUPERWORKER capsized and sunk, all other vessels returning Aden. Further information will be sent as soon as possible.  
(S.C.E. Aden, 171526Z to C.E. in C. Bath, A.C.E. in C. E.T.)

BUGLOSS,  
BURNET,  
BETONY  
(corvettes) Request you will transfer H.M. Ships BUGLOSS, BURNET and BETONY on loan to the Royal Indian Navy. They will continue to be at your operational disposal for general service in war against Japan.  
(2) Arrangements for turn over should be made direct with F.O.C.R.I.N.  
(Hd. of M. Approved by A.C.N.S.(F), 171734A to C. in C. E.I. Info. F.O.C.R.I.N.)

SAVORGNAN  
DE BRAZZA. Refit (Admty. 172310A). See America and West Indies.

EMPIRE  
TUDOR  
"S" report. SSSS 15.46 N. 82.10 E. S/M. sighted and torpedo track.  
(EMPIRE TUDOR, 172311Z)

War Diary.17.12.1944.  
Sunday.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

U.G.S./  
G.U.S.  
Convoys. Sabwa 770. Ref. Sablo 678. U.S. Navy have expressed intention to sail U.G.S./G.U.S. convoys at 5 day intervals beginning with U.G.S. 66 from Hampton Roads on Jan. 3rd and G.U.S. 64 from Oran Jan. 7th provided there is no material change in U-Boat situation. Actual decision will be taken on December 27th.  
(C.S.A.B. Executive Officers, Washington, 170023Z to C.S.A.B. Executive Secretariat, London.)

U-Boat. My 170408 (reporting enemy submarine transmitted Naval enigma bearing 170° etc., circulated to O.I.C. Rm. 41 only). Add P.C.S. at 170300Z, 43.38 N., 61.36 W., 120°, 9.5.  
(BORDER CITIES, 170540Z to C. in C. C.N.A., N.S.H.Q.)

U-Boat dispositions. Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q. 171341Z, Cominch 171541Z.)

S/M attack and sighting summary. No report since my 141428Z. Para. (B) Doubtful asdic contact obtained by MIDDLESEX in 42.28 N., 60.56 W. at 0405Z/12. 2 attacks made with D/Cs. one with H/H, 3 distinct explosions at 75 feet after H/H attack.  
(N.S.H.Q., 171457Z to Admty., Cominch.)

CAMROSE. On completion of working-up about 5th Dec. H.M.C.S. CAMROSE returns to U.K. to resume duties under operational control of Admiralty.  
(2) Request ship be sailed from Bermuda to Horta and after arrival Horta S.B.N.O. Azores is requested to sail ship to U.K. as directed by Admty. S.B.N.O.W.At. pass to CAMROSE.  
(C. in C. C.N.A., 171936Z to S.B.N.O.W.At.)

SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA, refit. Your 282135Z Nov. (not to all). Request you will seek concurrence of Cominch as executive agent of C.C.S. for refit of F.S. SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA at Le Ciotat and subsequent return to East Indies station.

This request should be dealt with as an isolated case. Your para. (2) refers.  
(Hd. of M., Approved by Vice Controller, 172310A to B.A.D.)

Australia and New Zealand

Hospital Ships. MANUNDA. We are experiencing great difficulty in providing sufficient hospital ships to meet all demands in various theatres of war. Shortage is expected to remain acute event after termination of war in Europe.

/(2) ...



War Diary17.12.1944  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New ZealandHospital  
Ships.  
MANUNDA.  
(Contd.)

(2) Would be grateful for information as to whether MANUNDA is at present being employed to maximum possible extent and if not whether consideration could be given to making her available to assist with our commitments in Indian Ocean. If there is any possibility of assistance in this way, indication of length of time for which ship could be spared would be valuable.

(3) Agreed.  
(D.S.T. 170003A to A.C.N.B.)

Digest  
No.1061  
Dec. 16th.

(2) Two Warships described as Cruisers but more probably destroyers or smaller were unsuccessfully bombed by search liberator before dawn 50 miles West of Cubic Bay course south.

(4) Consolidation on Mindoro Beachhead and Perimeter continued without Enemy interference except for light air activity over beach. Nil direct contact on land although friendly natives report small groups Japanese numbering 25 - 30 strong withdrawing Northwards across Island.

(5) Covering Naval Force off Mindoro reported sporadic Enemy air activity during day and detected several small groups Japanese aircraft involving aggregate ten planes in vicinity previous night whereof some attacked beach: A/A shot down 1 plane and air patrol got another at dawn. Preceding day shore A/A shot down 2 Japanese raiders.

(6) Possible Submarine contacted by surface craft off south western Mindoro evening.

(7) Search Liberator saw one large sea truck with one small escort 60 miles west of north-western tip Mindoro heading North at slow speed noon, later straffed and damaged small Coaster off Northeast Mindoro, lastly hit one sea truck with incendiary west coast Romblon Island in North Western Sibuyan Sea without observing further effect. Previous afternoon two small Coasters were straffed off North Western Coast Mindoro.

(8) Advance accelerated on Leyte in Ormoc Corridor: our main force reach point 2300 yards South of Tolikaw abreast Highway and elements of East Flank went further reaching vicinity Lenoy (6500) yards South Amnyol Bay where road block being established. Elimination of Enemy pockets in rear continues with heavy Japanese casualties and much equipment captured.

(9) Northward assault towards Valencia launched from positions North of Ormoc at dawn and Valencia placed under artillery fire. Elimination of Japanese remnants between West Coast Leyte and mountains proceeds with heavy enemy losses.

(12) Forenoon 14th December, 25 Mitchells bombed Zettefield Drome on Polo causing fires in revetments. Same time three Mitchells sweeping Sulu area straffed one float plane offshore and one fighter on beach near Tawi. Next day search Liberator sank one lugger damaged one small freighter off Basilan Island having earlier shot down one Jap plane over South Western (? Morotai).

(13) Navy Catalina bombed straffed and damaged lone 3,000 tons freighter Northbound through Sibbsu passage: later report by Liberator? empty.

(19) Liberator bombed large sea truck during search off North Celebes predawn 14th.

War Diary

17.12.1944  
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Australia and New Zealand

Digest  
No.1061  
Dec. 16th.  
(Contd.)

(21) Four Dutch Mitchells attacked and probably damaged lonely 200 ton ship near Waingapoe on Soemba Island forenoon 15th. Following morning another 4 Dutch Mitchells attacked and probably destroyed same ship.  
(G.H.Q., S.W.P.A. 170840Z.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarine  
attack  
and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z 17th December.  
Para. A.  
(1) E.G.6 attacked contact subsequently classified as wreck at 1359Z 16th Dec. in 50° 23' N. 09° 30' W.  
Para. C.  
(1) A/C F/103 obtained radar contact at 1208Z 16th December in 49° 55' N. 02° 55' W.  
(D.D.I.C. 171116A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U-boat  
dispositions

Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C. 171414A, 171415A.)

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

North Sea.

1. C. in C. Nore announces the discontinuance of naval minewatching in the Rivers Swale and Medway.

Channel.

2(a) A <sup>occurred</sup> picturesque incident of the U-Boat campaign during the forenoon, when U.1209 was so badly mauled by the Wolf Rock itself that she sank incontinent, alongside. MONTREAL and RIBBLE, frigates, summoned by the lighthouse keepers, who had been enjoying a gallery view of the incident, picked up 38 survivors. It is possible that she had been laying mines in the vicinity.

(b) SS. SILVER LAUREL was torpedoed and sunk off the Dodman's in the afternoon, but all hands were rescued and landed at Plymouth.

(c) BRILLIANT, destroyer, carried out a promising hedgehog attack some 60 miles north of le Havre, causing a "heavy explosion".

(d) B.Y.M.S. 2234 was damaged by a near miss whilst minesweeping off le Havre, but was towed into port.

Western Approaches.  
U.400 sunk

3(a) Another promising attack was carried out off Queenstown by NYASALAND, frigate, in addition to yesterday's by LAUZON, which is still being followed up by her and COBOURG.

(b) Loch Ewe is to be closed down as convoy assembly port, thereby releasing 24 small craft for service elsewhere.

Northern Waters.

4. Convoy R.A.62 has been scattered by a gale, but all ships except FORT ROMAINE have now reformed about 100 miles west of the Shetlands.

Baltic.

5. 236 heavy bombers bombed Gdynia, and 15 more laid mines here and at Danzig. Haze and smoke obscured results. Four aircraft are missing.

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

Greece.

6(a) At the Piraeus, the southern peninsula is now completely cleared of E.L.A.S., and sealed off. The road to Athens is reopened. The

/north ...

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Greece.  
(Contd.)

north side of the harbour is still under enemy control.

(b) Evacuation at Volos ended at 1730B. The destroyer MUSKETEER embarked all British personnel and most of the vehicles. The Greek destroyer NIKI and F.T.24 are to leave tomorrow morning for the Piraeus. The MUSKETEER received an ultimatum to leave; but on the 19th it was reported that she had been granted a safe conduct to remain in the Bay.

(c) The recent mining of the ferry EMPIRE DACE and of L.C.T. 328 at Missolonghi is believed to have been caused by E.L.A.N.-laid ground mines.

(d) The local E.L.A.S. in Crete said to be ashamed of the Athens revolt, are behaving admirably and are fully co-operative with the British authorities. The opening of Heraklion continues satisfactorily.

Adriatic.

7. Last night, Ist Island, Gulf of Quarnero, was attacked by four enemy explosive motor boats. One grounded and blew up, the rest were driven off. A similar boat containing a dead German has been towed by a fishing boat into Zara.

Riviera.

8. The French cruiser JEANNE D'ARC fired 100 rounds at shore targets, but her guns, says Comflanfor, have a big dispersion.

East Indies

U-Boats.

9. "S" reports were made at 1640 by the American CHARLES W. WOOSTER, 7176 tons, in 14.46 N., 81.28 E., off Madras; and at 1755 by the American WALTER L. FLEMING, 7176 tons, in 13.43 N., 54.23 E., north of Socotra. The former reported having sighted torpedo tracks; the latter a submarine. Neither appears to have been damaged.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

China

Hankow  
bombed.

10. A large U.S. air force, (84 Super-Fortresses, 33 Liberators and 30 Mitchells) was despatched against targets in the Hankow area, with 89 Mustangs and 60 Kittyhawks as escort. Heavy demolition was caused in the warehouse and dock areas and a large vessel was set on fire.

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines.

11. Eight U.S. Thunderbolts on a sweep of the Sulu Archipelago set one small merchant vessel on fire near Tawi Tawi seaplane base.

U/B sunk.

U.537

12. The U.S. submarine FLOUNDER reports sinking a German U-Boat south of the Kangean Islands, Dutch East Indies, with one observed and one timed torpedo hit on the morning of November 10.

(95)

Canadian  
Ships for  
B.P.F.

13. In reply to a suggestion that Canada should man two general repair ships of the British Pacific Fleet Train, N.S.H.Q. state that this is not intended, but that Canada is prepared to consider manning two escort maintenance ships of the Fleet Train, to be employed principally, but not necessarily exclusively, in servicing Canadian escort vessels.

War Diary18.12.1944  
MondayHOME COMMANDSDefence of United Kingdom

Medway and Swale mine-watching. Intend to discontinue the naval minewatching organisation in Rivers Medway and Swale now. (C. in C. Nore, 181545A to Admty)

Movements

- RAMILLIES. Intend to sail RAMILLIES escorted by PERIM passing Clyde Boom at 1015/19th December to R/V with KEREN at 1300 at Number 8 Buoy thence proceeding in company to R/V with GARDINER and AVONVALE at Clyde lightship at 1400/19th December. Destination of RAMILLIES Portsmouth E.T.A Boom 1500/21st December. KEREN Southampton S. of A. 12 knots.  
(2) N.O.I.C. Liverpool is requested to sail GARDINER and AVONVALE to R/V as in para.(1)  
(3) Escorts will continue to limit of Command or as arranged by C. in C. Plymouth.  
(4) A.M. 161305 and A.M. 152024 neither to all refers. (F.O.I.C.Greenock, 181138A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool)
- EURYALUS. P.C.S. 1200A 048 degs. 43' N. 008 degs. 29' W. 187 degs. 13 knots. 90 miles astern programme due continuous gale. Proceeding best speed.  
Weather report 4480 0765.  
(EURYALUS, 181201A to C. in C. W.A.)
- FLEETWOOD. Onward route F.O.G.M.A.151236 not to C. in C. Portsmouth from O through P 180 degs. Lizard 5 miles thence to Portsmouth.  
(Plot. (O.D.), 181209A to FLEETWOOD)
- M.S.F.13. Reference F.O.G.M.A's 141027. Fuel situation satisfactory am proceeding to Plymouth with 6 ships of M/S Flot.13. E.T.A. 0200A/19th. Request Wolf Rock and Lizard Head lights from dusk to 2200/18th and Eddystone from 2200/18th to 0300/19th (S.O.M.S.F.13, 181417A to C. in C. Plymouth)
- H.N.M.S. MOSS. A.M. 161745A H. Nor. M.S. MOSS cannot be usefully employed in my command without considerable alterations which would not appear justifiable in view of para. 1.  
(2) Request disposal instructions.  
(A.C.O.S.181421A to Admty.)
- NEWFOUNDLAND. On completion practice Tuesday 19th December proceed by Minches and standard route to Greenock arriving Clyde Gate at 0800A/20th December. My 111406 refers.

War Diary

18.12.1944  
Monday

HOME COMMANDS

Movements

NEWFOUNDLAND (Contd.)  
2. S. of A. is to be at least 24 knots from Scapa to 058 degs. N.  
(3) Berth at Greenock Dog 1 buoy.  
(4) Admiralty divert mail to Greenock forthwith. (C. in C. H.F. 181530 to NEWFOUNDLAND)  
NEWFOUNDLAND Route: By standard route B to position J thence through. N. 48.05 N. 08.20 W. O. 43.00 N. 11.00 W. P. 39.02 N. 11.03 W. Q. 36.01 N. 09.45 W. R. 35.51 N. 06.10 W thence to Gibraltar.  
(Plot.(O.D.) 182040A to F.O.I.C.Greenock)

RAVAGER. Request you provide 2 destroyers to R/V RAVAGER off Duncansby Head at 2000 Wednesday 20th December and escort her to Latitude 058 degs. N. in Minches.  
(2) On relief by Western Approaches escort at 058 degs. N. about 0430A./21st December destroyers are to return to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F. 181935A to R.A.D. H.F.)

A.F.D.37. F.O.B.A.A's 171036. Request you will give intended destination and proposed use of A.F.D.37 and expected date of movement. Presume arrangements will be made for air compressor to join dock.  
(D.C.O.M., 182140A to A.N.C.X.F.)  
F.O.B.A.A's 171036. On withdrawal from Arromanches A.F.D.37 can be released from "Overlord".  
(A.N.C.X.F.182243A to Admty.)

Operations

North Sea

Patrols. Patrol for tonight Monday. (1) VIMY.  
(2) BLENCATHRA. (3) EGLINGTON. (4) VERSATILE.  
(5) PUFFIN. (6A) KITTIWAKE. (12) WALPOLE.  
(14) EKINS. (16) BERKELEY CASTLE with coastal forces from Ostend. (18) SHEARWATER. (19) CURZON and SLAZAK (P.S.).  
(3) Escort for T.A.M.22 COWDRAY and FERNIE.  
(4) CAISOS will be carrying out operation "Alphabet".  
(C. in C. Nore, 180955A to Nore Command.)

Situation Report. Cositintrep No.258 Part four discharged by sea - 24 hour period ending 171600A December.

<u>British Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u>	<u>Bulk</u>	<u>Pol</u>
Antwerp	2	489	7916	7277
Ostend	439	248	3247	1018
Boulogne	17	41	780	Nil
Dieppe	Nil	Nil	2874	Nil
Caen	Nil	Nil	1579	Nil
Totals:	458	778	16396	8295

/ U.S....

18.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea

Situation Report. (Contd.)	<u>U.S. North Personnel.</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u>	<u>Bulk</u>	<u>Pol.</u>
	Antwerp	2	Nil	16665	Nil
	Cherbourg	744	396	5658	2585
	Le Havre	539	78	4755	Nil
	Rouen	843	659	6607	606
	Granville	Nil	Nil	1844	Nil
	Totals:	2128	1133	35529	3191

(S.H.A.E.F. 181830A to War Office)

G.2 Summary No.87 Part I.

(5) General. Enemy offensive clearly on as great a scale as he is capable of. Having gone so far it is to be expected that he will now commit everything available, relying on Siegfried Line and Roer River to protect his flanks.

Main thrusts at present via Malmedy towards and due east through Bastogne Liege. If former proved successful then enemy will undoubtedly extend the scope of his operations with view to cutting off whole of Allied position in Aachen sector and regaining Meuse.

Southern half of offensive has not yet disclosed any definite objective but no reason to regard it as a diversion.

(S.H.A.E.F.181900A to War Office)

Strain on Front reflected at Rear.

S. 71426 cipher 18 December.

Cite. S.H.G.B.I. signed Eisenhower.

From Strong for Joint Intelligence Committee, London.

Request that all intelligence visits to S.H.A.E.F. and Army Groups be postponed until further notice. This includes Combined Intelligence Subcommittee. (S.H.A.E.F. No T.O.O/18 to War Office.)

Mining in Schelde.

Cositintrep No.258 Part II Naval.

One ship in T.A.M. Convoy mined in position O47 degs. Zeebrugge 7 miles, ship has sunk but it is not yet known whether ship is in channel.

It is considered probable that recent casualties

in this section of channel are due to minelaying of enemy aircraft on 8th December.

(A.N.C.X.F. 182239A to Admty.)

Operations

Channel

/U-1209

Immediate assistance required submarine washed up on rocks. Can see one man alive. Will let you know more later.

(Wolf Rock Lighthouse, 181030A to Land's End Radio)

S/M has slipped off rocks and is under weigh proceeding westwards painted dark grey one man on conning tower, cannot see any markings on her.

(Wolf Rock Lighthouse, 181033A to Lands End Radio)

/S/M ...



422

War Diary18.12.1944  
MondayHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannelU-1209.  
(Contd.)

S/M moving East now, crew abandoning ship now in a dinghy.

There is a "U" on the float that is all we can see. Ship appears to be sinking fast, crew abandoning ship, several in water, we can't see how many. Standing by to hear from you.

(Wolf Rock Light, 181045 to Land's End Radio)

S/M moved around the tower and is now passing Eastwards and appears to be sinking fast. Crew abandoning ship in a rubber float. Can see letter U-Marked on float. Several of crew in water.

(Wolf Rock Light, 181045A to Land's End Radio)

The S/M has sunk and all the crew are in the water. There are several ships in the vicinity. Can you call any of them up. Have signal flying but they do not seem to take any notice.

(Wolf Rock Light, 181101A to Lands End Radio)

Unidentified S/M reported abandoning ship in close vicinity Wolf Rock at 1045A/18. Investigate and report situation Warwick Aircraft W/T TJT 47 R/T Plainsong 47 co-operating.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 181116A to MONTREAL, RIBBLE.)

Boat in vicinity now picking up the crew.

(Wolf Rock Lt. 181137A to Lands End Radio)

Following survivors picked up from U-28 F.16 (number doubtful), sunk in position 155 degs. 1½ miles Wolf Rock. MONTREAL 18 survivors RIBBLE 18 survivors and one dead.

(3) Further signal follows.

(MONTREAL, 181238A to C. in C. Plymouth)

S/M reported to have foundered in position 1 mile E.S.E. of Wolf Rock. Endeavour to locate and accurately fix the wreck. Having located plaster wreck and endeavour to bring up and collect evidence.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 181250A to MONTREAL, RIBBLE.)

Numerous small echoes may indicate presence of enemy mines in position, my 181238A refers.

(MONTREAL 181318A to C. in C. Plymouth)

(1) Insist on obtaining U-Boat captain's name and U-Boat number. Number given in your 181238A not considered correct.

(2) Comply with my 181250A.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 181538A to MONTREAL)

Your 181408A. Comply with my 181250A then proceed to Plymouth.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 181646A to MONTREAL)

Evidence indicates that U-Boat was U.1209 one P.O.W. who speaks Russian states that Captain's name was Oberleutnant Hülsenbeck.

(MONTREAL, 181715A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Your 181726A. (A) 38 alive 2 dead. (B) 2. Am acting under orders of FAULKNOR. Your 181816.

(MONTREAL, 182125A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Patrols.

Anti-snort Patrol Areas given.

(2) Area X. 01 degs. 20' 00 degs. 20' W. 49 degs. 48' 50 degs. 20' divided into four sections

/ by ...

War Diary

18.12.1944  
Monday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel

- Patrols. by 49 degs. 56' 50 degs. 04' 50 degs. 12'.  
(Contd.) (3) Ships take sections from North in sequence SPRAGGE, HARGOOD, BRILLIANT, HOTHAM by 1800 from North West corner to South West corner by 0830.
- (4) Weather permitting M.T.B's 40 degs. 50' 50 degs. 20' on a line 5 miles west of H channel from 1700 to 0930.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 181246A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)  
If no contact by 1700 adjust course and speed to conform with my 181246A. North East Corner by 1800 South East Corner by 0830.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 181545A to BRILLIANT, HOTHAM.)  
Air Patrols. My 281728 para. 12.
- (A) Night 18th/19th patrol 3 Leigh Light Wellingtons Day 19th patrol 3 Liberators 4 and 5 Swordfish.  
(B) 838 Squadron K.B.C. 842 Squadron S.L.R.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 181642A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

SS. SILVER Proceed with utmost despatch to vicinity Dodman  
LAUREL Point, to investigate reported ship torpedoed.  
sunk off (C. in C. Plymouth, 181713A to MONTREAL, RIBBLE,  
Dodman's. E.G.25.)  
Have found boats position 50 degs. 05' N.  
04 degs. 47' W. based on a Gee fix obtained within  
half-an-hour of 1800 homing H/S.L.  
(A/C TJT50, 181830 to 19 Group)

H.S.L. reports objects sighted were calcium flares on life-belts,  
boats rafts.  
(A/C TJT 50 181925A to 19 Group.)  
Regret to report SS. SILVER LAUREL in B.T.C.10 was torpedoed  
in position 130 degs. Dodman Point 7.5 at 1645 and sank at 1747.  
No casualties. 66 survivors landed at Plymouth.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 182348A to Admty.)

Suspected Carried out Hedgehog attack on asdic contact  
U-Boat position 050 degs. 00' 30". 000 degs. 56' 20"  
60 miles heavy explosion possibly bottomed.  
north of (BRILLIANT, 182035A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Le Havre. Lost contact carrying out observant HOTHAM  
joining me.  
(BRILLIANT, 182043 to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Reference C. in C. Plymouth's 211408A November

A. Nil. B. Good. Course of contact 320 degs. 3 knots.  
C. Good trace. Echo classified doubtful but held throughout  
Hedgehog attack. D. No Evidence. E. Nil. F. Two strong  
Hedgehog explosions.  
My 182035 refers.  
(BRILLIANT, 182131A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Observant completed. No contact. Carrying out Scabbard  
with HOTHAM.  
(BRILLIANT, 182211 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

18.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches

Probable  
 U-boat  
 off  
 Queenstown

Several attacks made by NYASALAND on good contact in position 051° 21' N. 008° 03' W.  
 (2) Hedgehog hits claimed.  
 (3) NYASALAND is making one more attack bottomed target and then rejoining.  
 (S.O.E.G.18, 180015A to C. in C. W.A.)  
 My 180015. First attack was with depth charges after which contact was regained and strong whistle effect heard. Second attack was with Hedgehog.  
 (2) Several explosions heard after 8½ seconds sinking time followed by extremely violet explosion a few seconds later.  
 (3) Reference paragraph (3) of my 180015 this contact was (?group omitted) or disturbance caused by the violet explosion and subsequently faded.  
 (4) Very pungent odour of oil fuel was noticed.  
 (S.O.E.G.18, 181119A to C. in C.W.A.)  
 Your 181609A. 051° 22' N. 008° 03' W.  
 (2) From subsequent fix now estimate position to have been 051° 16' N. 008° 05' W.  
 (S.O.E.G.18, 181705A to C. in C.W.A.)

Second  
 probable  
 U-boat  
 off  
 Queenstown

H.X.324. In view of my 172215Z and unless otherwise ordered, intend EASTVIEW escort Bristol Channel section and TILLSONBURG continue with Irish Sea Section EASTVIEW overtaking if weather permits. My 161915A and my 162343A refer. Acknowledge. W/R 5361 9512 suitable.  
 (S.O.E.G. C.6, 180016Z to C. in C.W.A.)  
 Obtained a definite submarine contact 2140Z/17 in position 51.33.40 N. 8.10.30 W. Submarine heard blowing tanks after second depth charge attack with strong hydrophone effect. Submarine not sighted on surface. Further contact obtained 9 minutes later. Carried out Hedgehog attack which was followed by one explosion 9 seconds after firing. No further contact obtained and no wreckage observed. RXC Radar defective throughout. Continuing hunt with ~~Sebourg~~ COBourg.  
 (LAUZON 180130Z to C. in C. W.A.)  
 My 180130Z. No further contacts obtained. Am rejoining C.6 ~~COBourg~~ in company. My position, course and speed 51.34 N. 008.11 W. 063, 14 knots.  
 (LAUZON 180220Z to C. in C.W.A.)  
 NYASALAND carried out promising attack in 51° 22' N. 08° 03' W. at 0015A/18. On account of urgent operation she was unable to continue the search.  
 LAUZON also carried out an attack in 51° 33' N. 08° 10' W. at 0230A/18. 1st E.G. investigate these positions.  
 (C. in C.W.A. 181634A to S.O.E.G.1.)  
 My 181634A. Amend position of NYASALAND's attack to read 51.16 N. 08.05 W.  
 (C. in C.W.A. 181844A to S.O.E.G.1)

U.400  
 sunk

30th E.G.

Arrived fuelled and sailed 30th E.G. PEVENSEY CASTLE (S.O.) LAUNCESTON CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE, PORCHESTER CASTLE and CAISTOR CASTLE C. in C.W.A.'s 162316 refers. Speed of advance 12 knots.  
 (F.O.I.C. N.I., 180600A to C. in C.W.A., C. in C. Plymouth)

/CAMELLIA...

War Diary18.12.1944  
MondayHOME COMMANDSOperationsWestern Approaches (cont.)

CAMELLIA Have returned area in accordance your 170055A.  
My position course and speed 052° 42' N. 020° 00'  
W. 270° 089° 6 knots.  
Your 172231A. Request final instructions in  
view of my 172100A. Consider I am able to continue reporting  
duties.  
(CAMELLIA 181000A to C. in C.W.A.)  
Your 181000A. Well Done.  
In view of your last para. cancel my 172231 and continue weather  
reporting duties as in my 081048A.  
(2) Report what repairs have been effected and if you consider  
they are good enough to enable you to last out your patrol.  
(C. in C.W.A. 181251A to CAMELLIA)

E.G.1 to C. in C.W.A.'s 162319A.  
relieve Sailed 1st E.G. to comply.  
E.G.6. (F.O.I.C. Milford 181231A to C. in C.W.A.)  
Your 210319A. E.T.A. 009° W. 0430A/19th.  
(S.O.E.G.1, 181447A to C. in C.W.A.)

OperationsNorway

Patrols Positions of submarines at 0800 19th December.  
(a) VENTURER on patrol off Egersund.  
(b) RUBIS on patrol off Skudesnes.  
(C. of W., 181926A to Flag Officers concerned)

OperationsNorthern Waters

Suspected By D/F on 5085 Kc/s at 2307Z/17th U-boat with 40  
U-boat miles of 62.20 N. 20.00 W.  
(D.D.I.C. 180155A to Escorts of U.R.147)

Convoy Scapa arrivals C.S.1 in CAMPANIA with BELLONA,  
R.A.62 NAIRANA. D.6 in CAESAR with CAPRICE, CAMBRIAN,  
ONSLAUGHT.  
(A.C.O.S. 181026 to Admty.)  
R.A.62 was scattered by gale but is now reformed.  
One straggler FORT ROMAINE last seen 6 miles astern convoy  
1500 yesterday. Search has been made with no result.  
Convoy noon position 60° 05' N. 04° 30' W. course 200° speed 7  
knots. Request 18 Group be informed.  
(D.17, 181410A to C. in C.H.F.)  
Destination of MONNOW is Greenock to land P.O.W. then  
Londonderry.  
(2) Hasten reply to paragraph 4 of my 161830 not to all.  
(C. in C.W.A. 182309A to Escorts of R.A.62.)

/Convoy...

426

18.12.1944  
MondayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorthern Waters - Contd.

Convoy J.W.63 Intend holding conference at 1200/20th at Inverary with C.Os. of ten Russian Submarine Chasers, E.O.S.O. Glasgow and others interested. Six chasers to proceed Lamlash after conference to arrive Lamlash before dark 20th.

Remaining four Chasers proceed Lamlash a.m. 21st. Tanker LACKLAN to arrive Lamlash 0900 21st oiling trials with as many Chasers as possible during daylight 21st. Tanker LACKLAN to return Lamlash for night and complete trials with remaining submarine chasers. Commencing 0900 22nd on completion tanker LACKLAN returns to Loch Long and Chasers proceed Greenock to have fresh water tanks converted to fuel tanks. Request necessary Pilots may be arranged. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow, 181221 to F.O.I.C. Greenock, N.O.I.C.'s Inverary, Lamlash.)

My 131734, request one Escort Carrier may be allocated for convoy J.W.63 to arrive Scapa by 27th December. (C. in C.H.F. 181424 to Admty.)

Allied Air Activity

Routes for non-operational aircraft. My 171246A concur. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 181002A to Admty.) A.M.171246A concur. (V.A. Dover, 181220A to Admty.)

Mining

Minesweeping of le Havre Operation "Link" completed with S.A./L.L. 15 actuations. B.Y.M.S. 2234 damaged by near miss mine at 1225 in position 080° HV (?4) buoy 2 miles. Ship towed into Havre. Both engines out of action. (Capt. M/S N.F. 180931A to C.T.F.125.)

Minesweeping in Schelde Cancel my 141715A and para. 6 of my 131400A. Subject to concurrence of Com. Belgium M/S Force A may now return to U.K. on an agreed date leaving behind ships in accordance with paras. 1 to 4 of my 141715A.

(2) Com. Belgium is to be furnished with records of all sweeping carried out by Force A.

(C. in C. Nore, 181053A to Capt. M/S F.A.)

Operation "Calendar".

(1) Sweeping today Monday 18th December S.A. - L.L (A) N.F.13 - 18 E.G. M.S.

(2) North side of channel N.F.13 - N.F.18 E.G. M.S.6 extra actuations between N.F.15 and N.F.17 (C) south side of channel N.F. 13 - N.F. 18 E.G. M.S. (D) Terneuzen to N.F.18 (E) area Bol Van Knock for laying of buoy marking QZH 789 and new Bol buoy (F) S.A. by M.L.221 and Oropesa sweeping By M.Ls. in Ooster Schelde. Details of Channels follow. S.A. - L.L. by M.L.221 off entrance to Wemeldinge.

(G)...

War Diary18.12.1944  
MondayHOME COMMANDSMining

Minesweeping (G) L.A.A. sweeping in Ghent Canal.  
 in Schelde (2) Nil.  
 (Contd.) (3) Nil.  
 (4) Surveying continues.  
 (5) M.M.S. 175, 251, B.Y.M.S.2051, M.F.V.1027,  
 1074.  
 (Capt. M/S. F.A. 181831A to C. in C. Nore.)

Sweeping in accordance with your 171503A has been completed. Double Flag Dan laid as follows Bal Van Knocke, Starboard Flag, Numeral 8. N.F.13 Numeral One, Numeral Four. In view of BEAVER II's 181700A and DISCOVERY II 181540 request operation be postponed till further sweeping has been completed. Your 171220A refers. Further signal will be made.  
 (Capt. M/S F.A. 181856A to C. in C. Nore.)

18th M.S.F. Request you will sail available ships of 18th M.S.F. and HARRIS to Small Downs on Wednesday 20th December.

(2) 18th M.S.F. to proceed to Ostend on Thursday 21st sweeping LL/SA E.G. M.S. south of centre line N.F.5 to N.F.8 buoys on passage.

(3) C. in C. Nore is to be kept informed of movements and progress.

(4) Ships are to anchor off Ostend or in Margate Roads or Small Downs.

(C. in C. Nore, 181554A to F.O.I.C. Harwich.)

1st M.S.F. Intend sailing first M.S. Flotilla from Margate Roads 0700 tomorrow Tuesday 19th carrying out programme in accordance with your 161617\*.  
 (SPEEDWELL 181636A to C. in C. Nore.)

\*Ref. 1st M.S.F. to Ostend.

Port Facilities

Antwerp Further to my 161730. Request 10 U.S. Ships be sailed in T.A.M.23 and ten in T.A.M.24. Thereafter six ships daily.  
 (N.O.I.C. Antwerp 181520A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Loch Ewe A.M. 141656 para. 3, on closing down Loch Ewe as a convoy assembly port the following redistribution of auxiliary vessels and small craft now at Loch Ewe is proposed.

(a) 3 Drifters to Cardiff sub-command for duty at Barry Roads as convoy assembly port. My 111018 refers.  
 (b) 1 M.F.V. to Holyhead to meet an urgent requirement in connection with special training. Two M.F.Vs. are necessary for this duty and so far one only has been provided. My 191737 refers.

(c) Two drifters to remain at Loch Ewe for general duties with ships sent to that port. A.M. quoted para. 2(d) also refers.

(d) One M.F.V. to Milford Haven for duties with reserve fleet ships. My 091737 refers.

None of the above requirements can be met from any other source within the command and all are necessary and outstanding.

18.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Port Facilities

Loch (2) It is further proposed that:-  
 Ewe (a) Two A/S Trawlers of the 23rd auxiliary A/S  
 (Contd.) group should be transferred to Swansea for A/S  
 protection of ships at anchor in Mumbles Area.  
 My 151223 refers.  
 (b) Remaining two Trawlers of 23rd auxiliary A/S  
 group be transferred to Rosyth command. C. in  
 C. Rosyth's 171325 refers.  
 (3) After meeting the requirements in paragraphs 1 and 2 above  
 the following vessels could be relinquished for service  
 elsewhere:-  
 Drifters 7, M.F.Vs. 2, leading in Yachts 4.  
 (C. in C.W.A. 181945A to Admt.)

Casualties and Defects

H.M.S. In collision with merchant ship ANTONY WAYNE.  
 SEYMOUR Merchant ship undamaged. Own damage 6 feet of  
 shell plating above water line torn away on  
 starboard quarter. No under water damage.  
 Am leaving patrol returning Harwich as heavy  
 weather or high speed would flood tiller flat. Intend anchoring  
 Cork Light Vessel. E.T.A. 0300A 16th, TORRINGTON has taken over  
 14 patrol.  
 (SEYMOUR, 180745 to C. in C. Nore.)

FORMIGNY Following message received from N.O.I.C. Swansea  
 refers to FORMIGNY:- Removal of sand ballast  
 will entail a considerable amount of burning and  
 welding also removal of a large number of drums  
 from holds and provision of pumping equipment. Salvage company  
 will assist but are unable to undertake all necessary work.  
 Discharge by sand sucker is being investigated, but local sand  
 sucking vessels are not suitable. Request allocation for  
 necessary work. Vessel can not be docked before Tuesday, as  
 work of refloating must be done in daylight and in fine weather  
 (Ends).  
 Swansea Docks are congested and it is undesirable to take up an  
 urgently wanted berth. Request consideration may be given to  
 towing vessel back to her fitting out port. Salvage officers  
 report vessel is seaworthy and in condition for towing.  
 (F.O.I.C. Cardiff, 181109A to Admiralty.)

SS. ISBJORN Dutch MV OSTERHAVEN arrived in tow of H.M.T.  
 ENTICER with 11 survivors ex Norwegian SS.ISBJORN.  
 OSTERHAVEN sighted wreckage position 50.27 N.  
 03.00 W. at 10.30 17th and rescued survivors from  
 water logged boat and two rafts. Master of ISBJORN amongst  
 survivors who states vessel's cargo shifted ship capsized about  
 0600/17. Written report follows.  
 (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth, 181517A to Admt., C. in C. Plymouth.)

SS. FINLANDE Received from Coastguard Wick.  
 Peterhead Lifeboat launching to go to vessel  
 ashore at entrance to Peterhead North Harbour.  
 (Wick Radio 181922A to "Admiral Lyness")

/Ashore...

18.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Casualties and Defects

SS. FINLANDE Ashore off Peterhead.  
 (Contd.) (FINLANDE No T.O.O. to Wick, Radio.)  
 Received 2003Z.  
 From Coastguard Wick, Peterhead Lifeboat returned  
 to harbour at 2035A/18th with 36 - complete crew  
 of (BFVK) FINLANDE 182050. Ends.  
 (Wick Radio 182104 to A.C.O.S.)

H.M.T. N.O.I.C. Holyhead 171155. It has now been found  
 VASCAMA that VASCAMA was not holed and only damage  
 sustained appears to be to Asdic equipment. As  
 asdics are not essential for her present duties  
 intend retaining her at Holyhead until relieved in normal course  
 when underwater examination and replacement of dome will be  
 required. N.O.I.C. Holyhead concurs.  
 (T.C. Rockabill, 182101A to N.O.I.C. Holyhead.)

Shipping Convoys

Signals re Dover 171245. Concur.  
 train ferries (F.O.B.A.A. 180934A to V.A. Dover.)  
 to cease.

E.R. F.O.I.C. Greenock's 301438 November being passed  
 complements to Admiralty and D.S.T. EMPIRE LIFEGUARD has  
 of Rescue burst a boiler tube. I am much concerned over  
 Ships. the engine room personnel of these rescue ships  
 (ex Castle Class). The boiler room complement  
 which I understand is one Fireman per boiler  
 room would seem inadequate for water tube boilers.  
 Also knowledge of burning oil fuel in these ships would appear  
 in some cases to be poor. Should these vessels break down  
 with a convoy due to machinery troubles, they would be more of an  
 embarrassment than an asset.  
 (2) It is, therefore, for consideration that their engine room  
 complements should be reviewed and in any case given appropriate  
 training before taking these ships to sea on service.  
 (C. in C.W.A. 182357 to Admty.)



War Diary

18.12.1944  
Monday

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

Search for  
Missing  
Aircraft

U.S.S. BOOTH is to abandon search and proceed to Casablanca for fuel and to await further orders. C.T.F. 62 172315 not to all refers.  
(2) WOLVERINE is to sail at 1800A today 18th Dec. S.O.A. 12 knots, to relieve U.S.S. GUNASON in approx. position. (A) 35 degs. 34' N. 12.50 W.  
(3) When relieved GUNASON is to proceed to Azores to fuel unless otherwise ordered. C.T.F. 61. 171012 not to all refers.  
(4) U.S.S. GUNASON and BOOTH searching for possible survivors of Fortress and Ventura aircraft both overdue. Aircraft are Co-operating.  
(5) GUNASON is requested to arrange rv. position direct with WOLVERINE.  
(6) WOLVERINE acknowledge.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 181131A to WOLVERINE U.S.S. BOOTH U.S.S. GUNASON)  
BOOTH departs position 34.40 N. 13.04 W. at 1530Z on course 099. S.O.A. 17. Request C.M.S.F. arrange following logistic requirements (details).  
E.T.A. Casablanca 0900Z 19th Dec. Hold Q.B.A. 137. Guarding Gibraltar Broadcast 2150 and 2014 Voice Call "Greta". F.O.G.M.A.'s 181109 refers.  
(U.S.S. BOOTH 181555Z to C.M.S.F.)

HYDRANGEA

Sailed from Horta at 0850Z/18th HYDRANGEA for Portsmouth routed as in N.O.B. Bermuda. 111546, and Admty. 161810, S.O.A. 13 knots. E.T.A. position (J) 0600Z/22.  
2. Latest messages held QZH.788 L.67 S.653 X.1472.  
3. Request Admty. provide onward route from position (J) as no M.O. charts are held.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores 181300Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

ANGUILLA

Intend sailing when ready ANGUILLA to Bermuda routed through (A) 38.25 N. 35.01 W. (B) 37.40, 43.01, (C) 36.30, 50.01, (D) 34.38, 58.01, (E) 32.38, 64.18 thence by swept channel.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores 181410Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

Flight "A",  
"Appian"

"Appian". Request report on experience gained and recommendations made by Flight "A" on completion of passage to Gibraltar be forwarded to Admiralty by Air Mail.  
2. Reports for subsequent flights are to be rendered as soon as possible after arrival of craft at Gibraltar.  
3. F.O.W.M. 150804, para. 4, not to all. No sailing signal for Flight "A" has been received in Admty. A.M. 141843 refers.  
(D.O.D. (D.C.O.D. concurs) 182046A to F.O.G.M.A.) Reply:191902A

War Diary

18.12.1944  
Monday

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

Freetown  
base,  
policy.

From notes supplied by Admiralty to Resident Minister West Africa it appears that Admty. policy, still adheres to Freetown being at 12 months' notice as escort base and repair and maintenance base on termination of war with Germany. Post German War Policy for Naval Base at Freetown is at a standstill pending reply to proposals made in my 682/1341/23 of 21st June on receipt of proposals referred to in Para. 2 of A.L. 231635 August meanwhile base can only be at 12 months' notice if a floating dock and repair ship are again provided during that notice and then only for Maintenance of escort force of present size and not for requirements laid down in A.L. M.012741/43 of 6th March 1944. (F.O.C.W.A. 181748 to Admty.) Reply: 251052A

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

KELVIN My 161015. (N.T. in W.D.) SS. BANTRIA delayed by headwind. Intend to pass Kinaros first light tomorrow Tuesday. Expected time of arrival Khios 1800B/19th., December. F.O.L.E.M. 172007B and S.O. Force 53's 171946B. Intend to leave Khios so as to (group missed) Mudros 0700B/20th. Return Khios for fuel p.m. 20th.  
(KELVIN, 180924B to S.O. Force 53, S.O. M/S F. 12, (R) F.O.L.E.M. Force 53, S.O. Force 51).

M.L. It is intended  
Flotillas. (A) That the following boats constituting the first division of the 3rd M.L. Flotilla based on West coast of Italy should form the 3rd M.L. Flotilla. M.Ls. 121, 134, 338, 462, 554, 565, 569, 575.  
(B) That the existing second division of the Third Flotilla consisting of M.Ls. 135, 168, 459, 480, 558 and 580 based in the Adriatic should be reformed into a separate Flotilla.  
(2) Admiralty are requested to allocate Flotilla number for boats in Para.1(B).  
(C. in C. Med., 181030 to Admty).

Part three Coastal Air Force. (?Dec. 16-17) 6 Wellingtons  
Air Cositintrep No.526. on armed R/C by night from Maestro Point/Cap Salvore bombed 3 E-boats with unobserved results. By Day, Beaufighters with escorting Spitfires R/C Venice-Trieste, and Spitfires R/C Sestri, Levante without incident. Shipping escorts and minesweeping patrols were flown and 7 air sea rescue searched and patrols one which a pilot was rescued by a Catalina.  
(H.Q., M.A.A.F., 181036A).

Personnel Your 171916 will be complied with as far as  
Ships, operational requirements permit.  
Alexandria. 2. However, vessels employed on inter-Med. service which are required to return to U.K. in M.K.F. convoy or proceed to India with a K.M.F. convoy must perforce coincide with K.M.F./M.K.F. ships.  
(P.S.T.O. Med., 181100 to P.S.T.O.M.E.)

Force 60 (1) Intend ZZ Craft be allocated as follows:  
First Group ZZ one to five Sweepers, ZZ 23 accommodation craft, ZZ 27 stores carrier, ZZ 21 dan layer. Second Group ZZ 6, to ten Sweepers, ZZ 24 accommodation craft, ZZ 28 stores carrier. Third Group ZZ 11 to 15 Sweepers, ZZ 25 accommodation craft, ZZ 29 stores carrier, ZZ 22 dan layer. Fourth Group ZZ 16 to 20 Sweepers, ZZ 26 accommodation craft, ZZ 30 stores carrier.  
(2) First and Second Groups to form Flotilla A, Third and Fourth Groups to form Flotilla B. Request Flotillas A and B be allocated Flotilla numbers.  
(3) The above craft together with H.Q. Satus L.C.T. L.C.I. H.D.M.Ls.? and Gen. Boang when attached to be known as Force 60.  
(F.O.L.E.M., 181208B to C. in C. Med).

433

War Diary.18.12.1944.  
Monday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. - Contd.

URCHIN Request confirmation H.M.S. URCHIN sailed in accordance with N.O.I.C. Liverpool's 151802 (Hush Top. N.T. in W.D.) (C. in C. Med., 181209A to C. in C. W.A.)

DART, V.A.M. is requested to report earliest expected  
EVENLODE. time of arrival Gibraltar of DART and EVENLODE.  
2. Admty. is requested to indicate to F.O.G.M.A. which alternative is preferred. F.O.G.M.A.'s 171754 and 181055 C. in C. Med's 171815, not all to V.A.M. refer.  
(C. in C. Med., 1813151A to V.A.M. Admty, Info, F.O.G.M.A.)  
Earliest E.T.A. Gibraltar of ships in your 181351 is daylight 24th December.  
(V.A. Malta, 182120 to C. in C. Med).

MUSKETEER Your 41?? (incompletely received). CHISWICK,  
(?Volos). FORT COLUMBIA, L.S.T. 602 with men vehicles stores and ammunition hurriedly loaded E.T.A. Salonika 1600/19th escort UNST. CHISWICK short of coal and water, FORT COLUMBIA has coal (?cargo).  
(MUSKETEER, 181518B to S.B.N.O. N. Aegean) See also 182035B.

Transfer of Ref. A.M. 011132 Dec. Request accounting base  
L.S.T.s. for L.S.T's being transferred to R.N. may be communicated immediately. Intend commissioning ships on 25th Dec. repeat 25th Dec.  
(N.O.I.C. Tunisia, 181550A to C. in C. Med).  
Ref. A.M. 011132 Dec. American L.S.Ts. are being transferred with 30 days American provisions on board for which victualling allowance is 75 cents per day. Propose Special victualling allowance of 3 shippings and 9 pence per day be paid to British crews for 30 days and that Americans issuing prices remain unaltered.  
(N.O.I.C. Tunisia, 181558A to C. in C. Med).

SIRIUS Your 161832B not to all (N.T. in W.D.) Intend to proceed to Mitylene a.m. tomorrow Tuesday 19th Dec. with Commander Force 142 on board.  
(SIRIUS, 181610 to F.O.L.E.M.)

BERWICK Sail at 0930/19th S. of A. 25 knots by Q.B.B.123  
(for U.K.) (C)position 278 Q.B.B. 338 positions 19, 92, 89 to pass Gibraltar at 0130 21st for onward routing by F.O.G.M.A. to U.K. E.T.A. Clyde 1600/23rd.  
(2) Codeword "Dragonfly" 364 normal.  
(3) F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to arrange to disembark draft on arrival consisting of 12 Naval Officers approx. 500 ratings and 40 Military other ranks.  
(4) Ship will require 2,000 tons fuel.  
(5) All times A.  
(6) C. in C. Med's 132233A not to all refers.  
(V.A.M., 181651A to BERWICK)

/GLOIRE...

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

GLOIRE S.71434. Return schedule F/S GLOIRE for arrival E.T.O. by 1st January is satisfactory. (S.H.A.E.F. Main (signed Eisenhower 181700A to Cominch).

GAVOTTE, Take FOXTROT under your orders and sail at 0800/20  
FOXTROT. to Bizerta, S. of A. 9 knots by Q.B.B.123 (C) to position 278 thence Q.B.B. 338 215 E.T.A.1200 21st.  
2. Codeword "Metalwork" 812.  
3. Keep constant watch 2150 k/cs.  
4. C. in C. Med's 041825 and my 061059 not to all refer. (V.A. Malta, 181716A to GAVOTTE)

Volos Evacuation is (?over). Intend sailing G.S. NIKI  
Evacuation. and F.T.24 tomorrow morning 19th to Piraeus. E.T.A.1200B/20th December. (N.O.I.C. Volos, 181730B to Greek C. in C., (R) MUSKETEER, F.O.L.E.M., Salonika, C.C.O., S.B.N.O. Greece, F.O.L.E.M. Athens).

WEST POINT Amend my 171734A (?171732A intended).  
(to U.S.A.) Para. 1. Destination Norfolk.  
Para. 2. 21 knots.  
Para. 4. E.T.A. Position (Q) 1900/19 9° W.  
0330/20 20° W. 0500/21 Chop 1430/21 position (W) 0001/26 Norfolk 1400/26.  
9. Latest Q messages held Q.J.A. 286, Q.J.C. 193, Q.J.H.372.  
10. C.E.S.F. is requested to pass our 171734A to Com. 5 and Port Director Norfolk.  
(Com. N.O.B., Oran, 181824A to Admty. etc).

EMILE Marine Paris proposes that postponed visit of  
BERTIN. F.S. EMILE BERTIN to Beyrout should now take place.  
2. Ship would leave Toulon on December 20th and fuel at Port Said before returning to Toulon.  
3. Admiral Auboyneau's flag is flying in ship. (F.O.W.M., 181838A to C. in C. Med).

NEWFOUNDLAND. Request information when NEWFOUNDLAND is expected to sail from U.K. Admty. 031259, Nov. (C. in C. Med., 181923A to Admty).

SAGGAT C. in C. Med's 171223. Request you will hold  
(Relief for SAGGAT until called forward.  
Piraeus) (S.B.N.O. Greece, 182027B to F.O.G.M.A.)

PENTSTEMON, Intend to sail PENTSTEMON and BANFORA with about  
BANFORA. 2,000 Italian ex P.O.Ws. for Taranto at 2300B by standard route position 704 thence by route R.12 and R.10, speed 13 knots. E.T.A. Taranto 0700B/21st Dec. (MUSKETEER, 182035B to F.O.T.A.L.I.)

/Situation...

18.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean - Contd.

Situation  
Report  
No. 509.

- (1) Gulf of Genoa. Night 16th December fore of allied trawlers and coastal craft attacked enemy convoy, 8 ships near Mesco Point. Complete tactical surprise achieved and 3 F lighters sunk.
- (2) Adriatic. At Sibenik local authorities are being helpful and friendly, but situation at Vis is strained. Combined air and sea attack Lussin Island carried out on 17th December. Destroyers released Asino and engaged M/B west Canidole Island. Coastal craft chased 2 explosive M/Bs into Lussin Piccolo through canal in position 044 degs. 32' 45" N. 014 degs. 27' 30" E. and engaged shore targets, bridge over canal and E-Boats berthed inside.
- (3) Tripoli. Demonstrations took place at Scicli in which hand grenades were thrown and 5 civil polic injured.
- (4) Crete. Local E.L.A.S. behaving admirably and said to be ashamed of Athens revolt and other E.L.A.S. incidents. They are fully co-operative with British Authorities. Distribution relief stores continues and is creating a good impression. Gun runners to Island occur spasmodic. Opening of part of Heraklion progresses satisfactorily.
- (5) Piraeus. Southern Peninsula now completely cleared of E.L.A.S. and sealed off. Road to Athens re-opened. North side harbour still enemy control. People of Piraeus have sent public letter with many signatures thanking British and loyal Greek troops for this second liberation. Greek naval reservists being enrolled in number for guard duty and are great success.
- (6) Greece. Evacuation of Kalamata completed. Situation at Kavallo quiet. At Volos H.M.S. MUSKETEER has received ultimatum to leave. Recent (?mining) of EMPIRE DACE and L.C.T. 328 at Missolonghi believed caused by E.L.A.N. laid ground mines. (C. in C. Med. 182207)

Cositintrep  
No. 528  
part IV.

FX/70827 cipher 18th December. 278783.  
Cite F.H.G.C.T. signed Alexander.  
Greece. Small outlying detachments have been called in and our forces are now based on Athens/Piraeus, Salonika and Patras. In the Athens area the main E.L.A.S. concentrations are now in the northern districts and there are indications of thinning out in the southeastern suburbs.  
(A.F.H.Q. T.O.O. Nil/18)

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

- A.F.D. 53. A.F.D. 53 in tow of AIMWELL and INTEGRITY escorted by SMILAX arrived.  
(N.O.I.C. Vizagapatam 180318Z to C. in C. E.I.)
- U/B dis-positions. Area U.P. 1 SS. EMPIRE TUDOR reported sighted a U-Boat and torpedo track in position 015° 46' N. 082° 10' E. on night 17/18th. Scale remains Y.4. All other areas. No fresh information scale. All areas remain unchanged.  
(C. in C. E.I. 180403Z.)
- Dredger SUPERWORKER sunk 17th Dec. Ref. my 170930 (N.T. in W.R.) Naval authorities report SUPERWORKER capsized and sank 12° 27' N. 43° (745° intended) 45' E. Dredger convoy returning Aden PAULINE MOLLER towing HAIFA due Aden today. Further report will be made after arrival.  
(S.S.T.O. Aden 180640Z to D.S.T.)
- Convoy Aden to Karachi/Bombay returned Aden 0901Z/18th Dec. less dredger SUPERWORKER capsized and sunk in 012° 27' N. 045° 45' E. and (?18)40 separated from convoy. My sailing telegram (?101)716\* and F.O. Bombay 160251 (not to all refer.)  
(N.C.S.O. Aden 180927Z to Admty., etc.)  
\*Not yet identified in W.R.
- LYMAN STEWART, After interviewing master of SS. LYMAN STEWART, alleged attack regarding alleged torpedo attack 19th, Aden grade this report D.5.  
(C. in C. E.I. 180902 to Admty.)
- SEA ROVER R. of P. H.M. Submarine SEA ROVER 7th Far East patrol 7th December in Macassar Strait by gunfire sank 200 ton coaster, one Japanese one (Native?) taken prisoner.  
(2) SEA ROVER arrived Fremantle 17th December after 36 days? at sea.  
(C. in C. E.I. 181041Z to Admty.)
- S report. Following has been read from WW2BB (WESG CHARLES W. WOOSTER.) SSSS torpedo tracks sighted, position 81.28 E. 14.46 N.  
(Colombo W/T 181640Z to Admty.)
- My 181640Z. 14 R 46 N. 81 R 28 E., no damage, no further contact since wake sighted.  
(CHARLES W. WOOSTER 181845Z to Colombo W/T.)
- S report. SSSS submarine sighted position 13° 43' N. 54° 23' E.  
(WALTER L. FLEMING, via Colombo 181755Z.)

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies

U/B. Indefinite bearings on preamble at 0006Z and 0108Z on 5650 k/cs to (group missed). Your 180039 possibly within 100 miles of 042° 00' N., 058° 30' W.  
(N.S.H.Q., 180321Z to S.E. H.X. Convoy 326.)  
Inconclusive D/F on preamble on 5650 k/cs at 0006Z and 0108Z indicates U-Boat (German) possibly within 100 miles of 042° 00' N., 058° 30' W.  
(N.S.H.Q., 180334Z to T.A. 171.)

U/B Estimates.  
dispositions. (N.S.H.Q., 181339Z, Cominch, 181538Z.)

S/M attack Para. (C) Canso B/5 4 minute radar contact 42.50  
and sighting N., 59.08 W., 2234Z/17th.  
summary. (N.S.H.Q., 181400Z to Admty., Cominch.)

Italian Your 232355 Nov. Under terms of proposal (A)  
submarines, of your 081517 April (Cominch's acceptance  
disposal. notified in your 181627 April) consider that  
following should be taken as allocated before  
equal share agreement took effect:  
(a) BANDIERA to British.  
(b) JALEA to British in place of GIADA (returned to Italy with  
broken crank shaft and still out of action).  
(c) DA PROCIDA to U.S. in place of JALEA.  
(2) Of first three boats coming available for equal basis  
share-out (your 181627 April, para. (2) (E) refers) two were  
allocated to U.S. and one to British, thus: ATROPO - to U.S.  
MENOTTI - to British. SETTEMBRINI - to U.S.  
(3) Consequently, of second batch of three, two should be  
allocated to British and one to U.S. thus: PLATINO - to British.  
DIASPRO - to U.S. NICHELIO - to British.  
(4) Whilst allocations proposed above are in accordance with  
the agreement reached with Cominch (your 181627 April refers)  
we do not wish to interpret that agreement strictly without  
reference to prevailing conditions and in view of loss of  
SETTEMBRINI and the long delay anticipated before further boats  
become available we should be pleased to offer ZOEA to U.S.  
after refit in addition to DIASPRO.  
(V.C.N.S., 181630A to B.A.D.)

Canadian Ref. M. Branch letter dated 15th Nov. advising  
manned that Dominions Office had asked U.K. High  
Repair Commissioner in Canada to take up with Canadian  
ships for Government the possibility of Canada manning  
B.P.F. two general repair ships of British Pacific  
Fleet train, we are informed by N.S.H.Q. that  
it is not intended to man any fleet repair ships,  
but that Canada is prepared to consider manning  
two escort maintenance ships of British Pacific Fleet train to  
be employed principally but not necessarily exclusively in  
servicing Canadian escort vessels.



War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies

Canadian  
manned  
Repair  
Ships for  
B.P.F.  
(Contd.)

(2) If Admiralty desire the R.C.N. to man two such escort maintenance ships, the personnel will require to be allocated from the 13,000 seagoing personnel approved for the war against Japan, and if the proposal is approved N.S.H.Q. intend to make the necessary personnel available by deleting the 8 "Castle" class corvettes from the proposed R.C.N. Pacific Force. Para. 4 of Aide Memoire C.S. 21 (pp. 20/44) dated

15th November, 1944, on the employment of Canadian Naval forces after the defeat of Germany refers.

(3) Requested that Admty. views on proposal to man two escort maintenance ships may be advised.  
(C.N.M.O., 181730A to Admty.)

Ships to  
break off  
for O.N.  
Convoys.

Your 161831A. Concur.  
(Com. Tenth Fleet, 182038Z to Admty.)  
O.N.271. Com. 10th Fleet (C. and R.) concur  
detachment of BRIDGELAND PARK and TOBIATIC PARK  
to proceed independently to Panama. Your  
161831, para. 3 refers.  
(B.A.D., 182201Z to Admty.)

U/B attack  
and sighting  
summary.

*U.53/sunk*

No report since Cominch 162109.  
Para. (A) U.S.S. FLOUNDER reports sinking German  
U-Boat south of Kangean Islands with one observed  
and one timed torpedo hit morning 10th Nov. (797)  
Para. (B) 172234Z Canso A/C had 4 minute radar  
contact 42.50 N., 59.08 W.  
Admiralty give to H.Q.C.C.  
(Cominch, 182112Z to Admty. for O.I.C.)

JASPER  
(fleet  
minesweeper)

For Granton, JASPER departs Point Iray Bermuda  
1330/19th via positions (K) 35.50, 60.01.  
(L) 42.01, 50.01. (M) 47.30, 40.01. (N) 51.25,  
30.01. (O) 54.01, 20.01. (P) 55.01, 14.01  
thence destination. Times Z. Positions N. and  
W. JASPER holds this message and Q.J.H.375,  
A.286, Q.B.A.140, Q.Z.H.781, S.650, X.1472, Y.532. E.T.A.  
(P) 1100/26th. "Chop" 47 1200/22nd, speed 15 knots.  
Admiralty pass to N.O.I.C. Granton.  
(N.O.B. Bermuda, 182230 to N.O.I.C. Granton, N.S.H.Q.)

War Diary.

18.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Australia and New Zealand

Air/Sea  
Rescue  
Unit.

Request information number and composition of Air/Sea Rescue Unit being formed and (consignment?) details.  
(F.O.(N.A.?)S.A., 180522Z to Admty., Info.  
V.A.(Q) B.P.F., R.N.A.H.Q., Sydney, N.S.W.)

B.P.F.  
Train.

Proposal for two Canadian-manned repair ships.  
(C.N.M.O., 181730A to Admty.)  
See America and West Indies.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M attack  
and sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/18th December.  
Para. (A) (1) NYASALAND attacked good contact at 2315Z/17th Dec. in 51° 22' N., 08° 03' W.  
(2) EMPIRE TUDOR sighted submarine and torpedo track at 2311Z/17th Dec. in 15° 46' N., 82° 10' E.  
(D.D.I.C., 181113A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U/B  
dispositions.

Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C., 181450A, 181507A.)

19.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

North Sea

- 1a. SS. STEEL TRAVELER, 7056 tons, was mined and sunk off the Schelde.
- b. Two groups of 4 E-boats each were detected by radar in the North Sea early this morning, one by SHEARWATER, corvette, and one by WALPOLE, destroyer. Both groups made off before they could be brought to action and it is believed that one at least of them was minelaying in Q.Z.S.596 in about 51° 21' N. 2° 11' E.
- c. The second L.S.T. hard at Calais is now ready for use.
- d. Antwerp can now take six to ten American ships.

Norway

- 2. UTSIRA, returning from patrol, reports that she missed a U-boat steering north, some 30 miles north of Trondheim, with 4 torpedoes on December 14th, but after intercepting an E.T.A. signal on the 15th duly met the arriving U-boat at the same place at 0443 on the 16th, fired 4 torpedoes at her at 1000 yards range and heard 3 loud explosions in rapid succession 99 seconds later.

Northern Waters

- 3. It is proposed to reduce Orkney and Shetland shore batteries by another 17 guns, ranging from 6 in. to 6 pdr.

Mediterranean

Riviera

- 4a. The U.S. destroyer WOOLSEY bombarded a railway station and troop concentration (at points 905 and 856 - location not known in W.D.) expending 93 rounds and making several hits. Return fire after the bombardment was ineffective.
- b. The Army reports that a small submarine, believed to have been a human torpedo of the double torpedo type, was captured intact when the operator lost his bearings and entered Mentone Harbour. The French ship COMETERRE also sank a human double torpedo in a position 9 miles 110° from Cap Ferrat.
- c. From the 16th to 19th, the U.S. destroyer NIBLACK fired 232 rounds at vehicles, barracks and personnel.

\* CIMETERRE intended?

/Greece...

19.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean - Contd.

Greece

- 5a. An armoured force sent to relieve the Garrison at Air H.Q., Greece, at Kifisa found that the rebels had overrun the headquarters and captured most of the personnel. A hundred R.A.F. and Army personnel were rescued, including 30 wounded. Further progress has been made in clearing the area between Phalerum and Athens.
- b. Evacuation at Kavalla is now complete, as well as at Kalamata and Volos. At Kalamata the destroyer METEOR reports that the E.L.A.S. committee is co-operative and at their request liberty men have been landed as proof of mutual confidence. Relief foodstuffs are being distributed by E.A.M.
- c. SIRIUS, cruiser, has arrived at Mitylene, where a general strike was declared yesterday as a protest against events in Athens.

Aegean

6. Mine Baltimores attacked shipping in Mandracchio Harbour, Rhodes.

Shipping  
for Black  
Sea.

7. The Soviet Government are prepared to accept U.S. ships at Odessa. Nine cargo ships and five tankers can be received simultaneously. The first convoy of up to five ships could be accepted towards the end of January.

East Indies

Ferry  
Carrier  
for U.S.

8. The ATHELING, ferry carrier, is to be loaned to the C. in C.U.S. Pacific Fleet, in lieu of the BATTLER, originally proposed, and will be available at Sydney at the end of December.

Port  
Economy.

9. C. in C. East Indies is asked to report whether the ports of Abadan, Addu Atoll, Bandar Shahpur, Bahrein, Basra, Diego Suarez, Mauritius and Seychelles are in use, or necessary for naval purposes, and the size of the staffs maintained. The Admiralty state that it is essential to economise in manpower and outlying commitments should be closed down as far as possible.

/U-boat...

442

19.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies - Contd.

U-boat

10. The U.S. ship MILLEN GRIFFITH, San Francisco to Colombo and Calcutta, which left Fremantle on December 12th, reported sighting what was a probable submarine periscope at 0100 in 19.16 S., 89.50 E. (Indian Ocean, about midway between Mauritius and Australia).

China

Hong Kong  
raid

11. U.S. Mustangs sank a destroyer, two merchant vessels, and a tanker off Hong Kong.

Shanghai  
raid.

12. Thirteen U.S. aircraft bombed the Kiangnan dock at Shanghai, and two others bombed the Pakon railway ferry piers at Nanking.

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines

13a. Four U.S. Thunderbolts set a merchant vessel on fire at Tawi Tawi, Sulu.

b. A U.S. Catalina set on fire a merchant vessel north east of Mindoro.

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of United Kingdom.

Reduction of  
Coast Defence  
Artillery.

Consideration is now being given to dismantling coast artillery batteries which are not, and are not likely to be, required for the defence of the United Kingdom.

(2) It has been suggested that the following batteries in your command should be completely dismantled:

Sullom Voe 2 - 4 inch naval. Deerness 1 - 12 pdr. Galtness 2 - 4.7 inch. Wellington 3 - 6 inch naval. Carness 2 - 12 pdrs. Wasswick 2 - 12 pdrs. Galtness 1 - 6 pdr. Skerry 2 - 12 pdrs. Neb and Gate 2 - 12 pdrs.

(3) Admiralty consider that these proposals can be agreed.

(4) Request your remarks as a matter of urgency, and whether you recommend any further reductions in gun defences.

(V.C.N.S. 191246A to A.C.O.S.)

Movements.

13th M.S.F.

Arrived your 141037A.

(C. in C. Plymouth 190116A to F.O.G.M.A.)

RAMILLIES.

Sailed RAMILLIES escorted by PERIM to R/V KEREN, GARDINER and AVONVALE. My 181138 refers.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 191034A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool, Cs. in C. Portsmouth, Plymouth.)

NAIRANA,  
CAMPANIA.

Intend sailing NAIRANA and CAMPANIA to arrive Greenock p.m. 20th December. It would be much appreciated if these two carriers could be made available for anti-shipping operations on coast of Norway in January. If possible request NAIRANA

arrive Scapa by 30th December and CAMPANIA after giving leave arrive Scapa 14th January.

(C. in C. H.F. 191217A to C. in C. W.A.)

A.F.D. 37.

A.F.D. 37 A.M. 182140, my 182243 refers to release from "Overlord". Expect services of dock in Arrow will not be required after 10th January.

(2) Subject to C. in C. Portsmouth's concurrence destination dock tow will be Portsmouth.

(A.N.C.X.F. 191223A to Admty., C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Estimate A.F.D. 37, will be released about 14th January. Arrangements will be made for towage of dock and removal of attached dumb repair barge No. 75. Air compressor will accompany dock. Your 171036 and Admiralty 182140 refers.

(R.N.O. Arrow 191648 to F.O.B.A.A.)

A.F.D.(B.A.) 2B A.M. 091730A. Dock can be accepted at Lowestoft

(2) Additional labour will be required F.O.I.C. Yarmouth's 111725A refers.

(C. in C. Nore 191235A to Admty.)

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Movements - Contd.A.F.D. 55,  
TEES,  
WHIMBREL.A.M. 141657. (1) Following ships are to form  
escort of A.F.D. 55 from vicinity of Plymouth  
to Gibraltar.

- A. from Greenock, TEES (S)
- B. From Londonderry WHIMBREL.
- C. From Liverpool ST. KENAN.
- D. From Cardiff VIZALMA.

(2) Ships in A. C. and D. are to be sailed to arrive Plymouth by  
a.m. 22nd December to come under orders of C. in C. Plymouth.(3) WHIMBREL is to be sailed as soon as ready on 21st December  
towards Plymouth. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to give R/V in  
due course for WHIMBREL to join escort.(4) On completion of escort duty destinations are A. TEES to rejoin  
F.O.C.W.Af. B. WHIMBREL for onward passage to Eastern Fleet  
after gunnery practices. A.M. 031735 not to all refers.

C. Trawlers to Liverpool.

(C. in C. W.A. 191304A to C. in C. Plymouth, F.O.I.C. Greenock,  
F.O.G.M.A.)Admiralty signal 141657. A.F.D. 55 ready to sail 21st  
December a.m.

(F.O.I.C. London 191458A to C. in C. Nore.)

Since this is the first of her type, it is desirable for  
A.F.D. 55 to be towed into Plymouth for a short inspection by D.  
of D. and D.N.C. prior to resuming passage to Gibraltar, my 141657  
refers.(2) Request E.T.A. Plymouth may be signalled and facilities  
arranged for this inspection.

(D.O.D.(H) 191954A to Cs. in C. Plymouth, Nore.)

LORRAINE,  
DUQUESNE,  
and others.

\*SIMOUN intended?

Request the following ships of the French naval  
Task Force be sailed to Cherbourg for leave and  
rest to arrive there prior to darkness Thursday  
21 December. LORRAINE, DUQUESNE, BASQUE, SIMON,  
HOVA, SOMALI. C.T.F. 125 make arrangements for  
berthing. Estimated stay approx. 15 days. Ships  
will be kept on 48 hours notice with sufficient personnel on  
board at all times to insure proper security. French authorities  
will provide such logistic support as necessary while ships are in  
Cherbourg and will provide such shore patrol parties as required  
by C.T.F. 125. Transportation arrangements for leave parties  
will be made by French authorities.

(Comnavforfrance 191324 to C. in C. Plymouth, C.T.F. 125.)

NEWFOUNDLAND. Scapa departure NEWFOUNDLAND to comply with C. in  
C. H.F.'s 181530.

(A.C.O.S. 191425 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

NEWFOUNDLAND sailed Scapa practice area today  
Wednesday to Minches southbound over 24 knots to 058° N.

(C. in C. W.A. 191639A to Force 32.)

RAVAGER.

PAPUA is to take MOORSOM under his orders and  
proceed passing Clyde Boom at 0930/20th Dec. to  
R/V with RAVAGER in position 58° N. 06° 10" W.  
at 0430A/21st December and escort to Clyde.(2) RAVAGER is requested to pass any amended E.T.A. direct to PAPUA.  
C. in C. H.F.'s 181935 not to all refers.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock 191544A to RAVAGER, PAPUA.)

/C.S.1...

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements - Contd.

- C.S. 1. The flag of C.S. 1 will be transferred from KENT to NORFOLK at 1000 tomorrow Wednesday.  
(C. in C. H.F. 191547 to H.F.)
- KENT. Leave Scapa passing Hoxa at 1700A Wednesday 20th December and proceed by Minches and Standard Route to Gareloch arriving Clyde Gate at 1500A/21st December. Admiralty 170059, F.O.I.C.  
Greenock 171226 and my 191424 refer.  
(2) Speed through water is to be at least 24 knots from Hoxa to 58° N.  
(C. in C. H.F. 191647A to KENT.)
- USK,  
BARLE,  
SHIEL. My 161817. When ready about 1st January USK and BARLE are to be sailed for R/V with SHIEL to proceed to Mediterranean for docking in accordance with C. in C. Med's 181301.  
(2) C. in C. Plymouth is requested to arrange R/V and sail SHIEL accordingly.  
(3) C. in C. Nore is requested to sail BARLE and USK to comply.  
(4) Admiralty will promulgate route.  
(5) On completion of docking C. in C. Med. is requested to sail USK, BARLE and SHIEL to join East Indies Station.  
(D.O.D.(H) 191953A to Cs. in C. Nore, Plymouth, Mediterranean.)
- FARNHAM  
CASTLE. When ready FARNHAM CASTLE should be sailed for Tobermory to work up on conclusion of which she is to join Western Approaches Command.  
(D.O.D.(H) 192033A to A.S.C.B.S.)
- PRINS ALBERT. PRINS ALBERT is to be in all respects ready to sail from Clyde for foreign service on 7th January 1945. A.M. 161528 December, not to all refers.  
(D.C.O.D. 192052A to R.A.L.S.C.U.)

Operations.

North Sea.

- STEEL  
TRAVELER,  
mined off  
Schelde. SS. STEEL TRAVELER in A.T.M. 16 mined and sunk at 1700/18th in position 350° N.F. 14 buoy 1.5 cables.  
(C. in C. Nore 190048A to Admty.)  
STEEL TRAVELER in A.T.M. 16 presumed mined at approx. 1630 in a position 010° N.F. 14 buoy 2 cables. Ship broke in two and sank. 70 survivors in LA COMBATTANTE.  
(N.C. Force T 190930 to Admty.)

/Patrols...



War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea

Patrols. Night dispositions 19/20th December, 1944.  
Humber Force Group 2 Harbour - BLENCATHRA, VIMY.  
Harwich force group 3, patrols - 2 MACKAY, 3  
COTSWOLD, 5 SHEERWATER, 6A KITTIWAKE, 12 STAYNER,  
14 TORRINGTON, 16 EKINS, 18 GUILLEMOT, 19 THORNBOROUGH and SLAZAK.  
Group 4. Harbour - EGLINTON, HAMBLEDON, WALPOLE, CAICOS, CURZON,  
DAKINS, RIOU, RUTHERFORD, MALLARD, PUFFIN, WIDGEON.  
Sheerness force group 5 with TAM 23 LUDLOW, BLEASDALE, patrols - 1  
MIDDLETON. 4 - VOLUNTEER.  
On passage to St. Helens VERSATILE, escort duty N. bound VIVACIOUS.  
Group 6 harbour CROOME, LA COMBATTANTE, PYTCHLEY, ARMERIA,  
DRUMHELLER, KINGCUP.  
At Southend HOLMES. At Antwerp FERNIE. At Ostend COTTESMORE,  
COWDRAY.  
(C. in C. Nore 191523A to Admty.)

Operation "Moonshine". Weather permitting carry out operation "Moonshine"  
ships sailing 1600A/19th December.  
(C. in C. Nore 191533A to F.O.I.C. Humber.)  
Operation "Moonshine". Your 191533A sailing  
postponed on account of fog.  
(F.O.I.C. Humber 191704A to C. in C. Nore.)

Situation report. Cositintrep No. 259 part. 4.  
Discharged by sea 24 hours period ending 181600A  
December.

	Personnel	Vehicles	Stores	Bulk Pol
British				
Antwerp	256	425	7,822	13,487
Ostend	2,058	65	3,943	2,397
Boulogne	-	-	520	-
Dieppe	50	-	3,893	-
Caen	-	-	744	-
Calais	-	2	-	-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	2,364	492	16,922	15,884
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
U.S. North				
Antwerp	-	-	13,887	-
Cherbourg	1,269	675	5,782	4,762
Le Havre	693	37	5,250	379
Rouen	-	-	6,226	781
Granville	-	-	401	1
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	1,962	712	31,546	5,923
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
(S.H.A.E.F. 191730A to Admty.)				

/E-Boat...

447

War Diary.19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.North Sea - Contd.E-Boat  
operations.

Two groups of 4 boats each were detected by radar by destroyer patrol as follows:-  
A. At 0305 by SHEARWATER on patrol 18, in 51° 25' N. 02° 09' E. This group entered Q.Z.S. 596 reduced to about 15 knots and proceeded down the channel to 51° 21' 30" N. 02° 11' E. remaining in the swept channel for some 15 mins. They then altered course to 020°. Increased speed to 35 knots and the plot faded at 0347 in 51° 28' N. 02° 14' E.

B. At 0306 by WALPOLE on patrol 12 in 51° 26' N. 02° 26' E. WALPOLE attempted to close the range while keeping to south and west of the enemy. When range was reduced to about 6000 yards enemy increased to high speed and made off to northwestward and plot faded at 0340 in 51° 35' N. 02° 16' E. when course and speed of E-Boats was 335° 35 knots.

One further fleeting contact was obtained at 0348 in approx. the same position as the final plot from SHEARWATER.

(2) Minelaying is suspected in vicinity of 57° 21' 30" N. 02° 11' 00" E.

Searching sweep has not been possible today owing to fog. (C. in C. Nore 192240A to Admty.)

Operations.Channel.

Patrols.

E.G. 21 negative BYRON pass the Gate at 1000A/19 and proceed to relieve HARGOOD and SPRAGGE on zig-zag search between positions 180 Start 10 miles and 180 Portland 17.

(2) On relief by E.G. 21, HARGOOD and SPRAGGE are to proceed towards vicinity of H.2 buoy shifting to Portsmouth W/T organisation and acting under orders of C. in C. Portsmouth on crossing long. 2.30 W.

(C. in C. Plymouth 190029A to E.G. 21 neg. BYRON.)

Proceed in accordance with para. 2 of my 190029 at 1300A.

E.G. 21 is delayed.

(C. in C. Plymouth 191055A to HAYWOOD, SPRAGGE.)

Carry out patrol in rectangles as follows E.G. 26 sides 222° 25 miles and 132° 16 miles from position 50° 49' N. 05° 08' W.

E.G. 21 sides 077° 43 miles 167° 13 miles from 49.17 N. 03.35 W.

(C. in C. Plymouth 191151A to S.O.E.Gs. 26, 21, neg. MONTREAL, RIBBLE.)

Night patrols 19/20th. Anti snort patrol areas given.

(2) Area X. 00° 20' to 01° 20' W. 50° 00' to 50° 16' divided into 2 sections by 50° 08'.

(3) Ships take sections in sequence from north. BRILLIANT, HOTHAM by 1800 from N.W. corner to S.W. corner 0830.

(4) Area Y 01° 17' to 01° 47' W. 49° 48' to 50° 00' divided into 2 sections by 49° 54'.

(5) Ships take sections in sequence from north HARGOOD, SPRAGGE.

(6) M.T.Bs. acting independently 01° 20' 01° 53' W. 50° 05' 50° 18' from 1700 to 0830.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 191235A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

(1) MONTREAL and RIBBLE proceed to join and act under the orders of MELBREAK hunting in position 160 Dodman Point 8.

(2) MELBREAK if not in contact leave patrol so as to enter

/Plymouth...

448

War Diary.19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Channel.Patrols.  
(Contd.)

Plymouth first light 20th Dec.

(3) Ships addressed form Force 29. MELBREAK S.O.  
On MELBREAK leaving MONTREAL assume S.O.(4) Force 29 patrol in rectangle sides 270° 22 and  
180° 12 from position 50.18 N. 04.20 W.(C. in C. Plymouth 191915A to MONTREAL, RIBBLE,  
MELBREAK.)

Day patrols 20th December. Search areas limits given.

(2) M.T.Bs. 01° 40' 02° 00' 50° 15' 50° 30'.

(3) BRILLIANT, HOTHAM 3 miles each side of Q.Z.S. 636 49° 54'  
to G.1 buoy.

(4) HARGOOD, SPRAGGE 3 miles each side of H Channel 49° 50' 50° 17'

(5) WATCHMAN, LOCH SHIN, RELIEVE, BRILLIANT and HOTHAM.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 191708A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Forces.)

E.G. 1 proceed to relieve E.G. 25 in rectangle as in my 191951.

(2) On relief at about 0700/20 S.O.E.G. 25 is to turn over situation  
to S.O.E.G. 1 then carry out zig zag search towards position 000°  
de la Hague 16 miles. In crossing 2.30 W. assume Portsmouth W/T  
organisation and act under orders of C. in C. Portsmouth.

(C. in C. Plymouth 192047A to S.O.E.G. 1, 25.)

C. in C. W.A. 191051. On passing Longships carry out zig zag  
search through AA. 49.30 N. 05.00 W. BB. 49.42 N. 02.52 W. CC.  
50.00 N. 02.00 W.(2) Report E.T.A. at CC. On passing 02.30 W. act under orders of  
C. in C. Portsmouth.

(C. in C. Plymouth 192201A to S.O.E.G.30.)

Possible  
U-Boat.One possible contact attacked with depth charges.  
Am continuing cross (tide) search.  
(BRILLIANT 190059 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

U.1209.

(1) At about 1030/18 a U-Boat ran on Wolf Rock,  
subsequently got off but sank in position 155 Wolf  
Rock 1 1/2.(2) Following have been picked up - 1 officer dead,  
1 officer, cot case, 1 rating dead and 4 ratings uninjured have  
been landed at Penzance.F.O.I.C. Falmouth's 182114 refers. H.M.C.S. MONTREAL and RIBBLE  
have on board 38 live prisoners of whom 2 are cot cases, also 2  
dead.(3) Evidence indicates U-Boat was U.1209, Captain Oberleutnant  
Hülßenbeck.(4) MONTREAL and RIBBLE's prisoners will be landed p.m. 19th.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 191057A to Admty.)Cessation of  
"F.O.B.A.A."Start of  
"S.N.O.B.O.P.F."Request Admiralty be asked to promulgate following  
as an A.Z. message.(2) Appointment of F.O.B.A.A. will lapse at 0001A/  
1st January, 1945 and duties will be taken over by  
Senior Naval Officer, British operated ports,  
France. All official correspondence for F.O.B.A.A.  
Naval Party 1570 or REDOUBTABLE likely to arrive  
after 30th December should accordingly be  
addressed to S.N.O.B.O.P.F.

/(3)...

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel.

Cessation of  
"F.O.B.A.A".  
Start of  
"S.N.O.B.O.P.F"  
(Contd.)

(3) From 0001A/28th December until 0001A/1st January, 1945, signals are to be addressed to S.N.O.B.O.P.F. for action repeated F.O.B.A.A., so that the latter can take action if necessary. (F.O.B.A.A. 191237A to A.N.C.X.F.) Request F.O.B.A.A. 191237, being passed, be promulgated as an A.Z. message. (A.N.C.X.F. 191807A to Admty.)

Two escort  
groups for  
Plymouth  
Command.

C. in C. W.A. is requested to transfer temporarily to C. in C. Plymouth for operations as arranged by C. in C. Portsmouth and C. in C. Plymouth - (a) one group now; (b) one group when ready for service about 23rd December. (A.C.N.S.(H) 191610A to Cs. in C. W.A. Plymouth, Portsmouth.)

Photographic  
R/C of  
Channel Is.

Your 161434. The outstanding commitments for high priority photographic R/C render it undesirable to divert these aircraft to carry out frequent searches of the Channel Islands, as the chance that a U-Boat may be detected is considered remote. Arrangements will be made, however, to carry out an occasional R/C of the area whenever possible. (A.C.N.S.(H) 191619A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Patrols.

6th E.G. return to Milford Haven for short layover. (C. in C. W.A. 190048A to S.O.E.G. 6.)  
If not in contact leave patrol at 1600 today Tuesday and proceed to the vicinity of Longships thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth to relieve 25th E.G.  
(2) C. in C. Plymouth is requested to sail 25th E.G. on relief at best speed to Londonderry to layover. (C. in C. W.A. 191051A to E.G. 30.)  
Request you will sail 15th E.G. on completion of training today Tuesday to Merville for fuel and thence to relieve 3rd E.G. in North Western Approaches.  
(2) On relief 3rd E.G. return to Belfast to layover. (C. in C. W.A. 191053A to F.O.I.C. N.I.)  
Your 191227. My P.C. at 1415A 50° 59' N. 10° 09' W. 110° S.O.A. 14 knots. E.T.A. vicinity Lands End 0200A/20th. (S.O.E.G. 1 191401A to C. in C. W.A.)

/Probable...

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches - Contd.

Probable  
U-Boats.

Your 181634. Have swept both positions in 2 directions to a depth of 4 miles, ships being spread 1 mile apart. No asdic contact gained and no other results. Am proceeding to patrol area. E.T.A. 09° W. 0700A/19th.  
(2) A. Average. B. No. (3) Suitable.  
(S.O.E.G. 1 190215A to C. in C. W.A.)

MONNOW.

P.C.S. at 0400A 56° 56' N. 07° 08' W. 188° 16 knots. E.T.A. Toward Point 1700A. C. in C. W.A. 182309A\* para. 1 refers.  
(MONNOW 190401A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)  
\* Destination of MONNOW is Greenock to land prisoners of war.

Programme for  
Support Groups

Amend my 031733 as follows:-

Group	Return	Sail
3	Dec. 22	Jan. 10
14	Dec. 18	Dec. 30
17	Dec. 4	Dec. 23
20	Dec. 22	Jan. 5

(C. in C. W.A. 191558A to Cdre. D. W.A. Capt. (D) Liverpool, Capt. (D) Greenock, Capt. (D) Belfast.)

Air/Sea  
Rescue in  
Cardiff  
Sub Command.

(1) As from 0001/1st January 1945, F.O.I.C. Cardiff will assume direct control of all air/sea rescue operations in the Cardiff Sub Command.  
(2) Crash reports and requests for assistance should be made to operations Cardiff (Tel. Cardiff 7924 ext. 192) and not to N.O.I.C. Barry.  
(3) Cardiff area memorandum 013 of 25th January 1944 is in course of amendment.  
(F.O.I.C. Cardiff 191635A to Cardiff Sub Command, C. in C. W.A., Admty.)

451

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDSOperationsNorway

Operation "Sample" off Bredsund. Intend the following operation against enemy shipping on Norwegian coast. Force 5 consisting of BERWICK, NAIRANA, TRUMPETER and six destroyers detailed by Com. (D) sail from Scapa p.m. D day to carry out night air sweep of Norwegian leads route between Sildegabet and Bredsund by Swordfish aircraft from NAIRANA on night D+1/D+2. TRUMPETER will provide fighter cover at first light on D+2. (2) BERWICK is requested to plan the operation in conjunction with NAIRANA and TRUMPETER. NAIRANA is to prepare the air plan.

(3) Codeword and D day follow.

(C. in C. H.F., 191307A to BERWICK, NAIRANA, TRUMPETER, Com. (D) H.F.)

My 191307, para. 3. D day Monday 1st January, 1945.

(C. in C. H.F., 191319A to previous addressees.)

My 191307, para. 3. Codeword "Sample".

(C. in C. H.F., 191327A to previous addressees.)

Operation "Fretsaw" to Stadlandet. My 171306. D day Wednesday 20th December. My 132004, para. 5 delete PREMIER, for DEVONSHIRE read NORFOLK. Para. 8 air operation on Norwegian coast will not be carried out. (C. in C. H.F., 191412A to C.S.10.)

UTSIRA's patrol: probable U-Boat. UTSIRA reports in accordance with I.S.O.H.30. (1) (A) 13th December, 0730. Dived to avoid small patrol vessel burning stern light in position 64° 05' N., 09° 43' E., course and speed of enemy southerly, 11 knots.

(B) 14th December, 0608. P.C.S. of one U-Boat and escort vessel 64° 07' N., 09° 43' E., 035°, 11 knots. Fired four torpedoes at 2000 yards. Torpedoes missed - several exploded on shore.

(C) 16th December, 0443. P.C.S. of escorted U-Boat 64° 06' N., 09° 42' E., 020°, 13 knots. Range 1000 yards, fired four torpedoes. One minute 39 secs. later three large explosions in rapid succession - First Lieut. and lookouts report two large columns of water. One minute after firing escort started challenge. UTSIRA turned away and dived. Escort heard to stop. No H.E. 0523 UTSIRA surfaced and sighted escort sweeping with searchlight on the water about 3000 yards distant. UTSIRA dived again retired deep. 0540 escort heard of asdic and believed to have retired in a southerly direction. No counter attack developed.

(2) No other shipping sighted except M/V burning navigation light far away inside the leads.

(3) On 15th December, 2025. Officer of Watch intercepted a signal passed by light from Vaagsohovedet to Halten 'QZ V 0500' which was interpreted as E.T.A. at Halten of an escorted U-Boat. This was substantiated by subsequent events in para. (1) (C) above. Signal was not acknowledged by UTSIRA. (S.O. S/M. Lerwick, 191730A to F.O. S/M.)

/Operation S.C....

War Diary.19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDSOperationsNorway - Contd.

Operation S.C. Intend sailing S.C. operations from Shetlands.  
 (1) 0100A/21st Dec. from Lerwick.  
 (2) 0910 from Noss Head 12 knots.  
 (3) 1800A/21st Dec.  
 (4) Between 1830A/21st Dec. and 0700A/22nd Dec.  
 (5) 271° to Noss Head 15 knots.  
 (6) p.m./22nd Dec. (7) 091° Noss Head.  
 (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 192015A to A.C.O.S.)  
 My 192015A.  
 (1) 060° 05' N., 005° 00' E. (2) Ramose Vintage.  
 (3) Blank.  
 (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 192017A to A.C.O.S.)

OperationsNorthern Waters

Convoy J.W. 63. Intend sail six S/M chasers in accordance with F.O.I.C. Glasgow's 181221 so as to arrive Lamlash before dark tomorrow 20th.  
 (N.O.I.C. Inverary, 191143A to N.O.I.C. Lamlash)  
 My 181221. Inverary has requested Russian Submarine Chasers be sailed early 20th to arrive Lamlash before dark. F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to sail LACKLAN to Lamlash to arrive before dark 20th December. E.O.S.O. Glasgow will embark in LACKLAN a.m./20th and proceed in her and hold conference with Russian Officers aboard LACKLAN at Lamlash at 1800/20th. Interpreter in Russian to be available.  
 (F.O.I.C. Glasgow, 191451A to F.O.I.C. Greenock, N.O.I.Cs. Inverary, Lamlash.)  
 Request you will plan to include 15 Russian S.Cs. in J.W.63 if weather permits, fuelling in Faroes as previously arranged.  
 (2) All vessels will complete fuelling practice within the next few days and will carry additional fuel in fresh water tanks to provide extra safety margin.  
 (A.C.N.S.(H), 191622A to C. in C. H.F.)

Patrols. It is very undesirable that the operation of 18 Group now patrolling east and west of the Orkneys should be hampered by bombing restrictions and it is proposed that the practice of sending own S/M to working-up patrol area about 058° 45' N., 001° 15' E. should be abandoned for time being.  
 A.M. 181056A refers.  
 (C. in C. Rosyth, 191405A to Admty.)  
 DRURY and PASLEY patrolling Cape Wrath area.  
 S.O. E.G.4 in BENTINCK with CALDER, BYARD, MATCHLESS, CARRON, STANDERTON, ARENDAL, HORTEN search vicinity of 59° 15' N., 03° 24' W.  
 (A.C.O.S., 191712A to Admty.)  
 C. in C. W.A. 191656. A.S.V. contact being investigated by H.F. units. E.G.4 proceed to R/V in 59° 54' N., 05° 11' W.

/thence ...

19.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Northern Waters

Patrols.  
 (Contd.)

thence sweep through 60 degs. 19' N. 04 degs. 00' W. and 60 degs. 20' N. 02 degs. 42' W. and establish Gamma between 59 degs. 35' N. 03 degs 00' W. and 59 degs. 55' N. 04 degs. 08' W. Several U-boats estimated in this area bound south west.  
 (C. in C. Rosyth, 191727A to S.O.E.G.4)

Further Escort Groups desired in Northern Waters.

The anti-U-Boat campaign is under constant examination in the Admiralty, with the object of using available surface forces, and air forces of Coastal Command to the best advantage.  
 C. in C. Rosyth's 121800 and C. in C. Coastal Command's 131130 refer.  
 (2) The views of Cs. in C. are welcome and indeed expected and every endeavour is made by regular meetings and informal conversations to carry out the examination referred to above in co-operation with Cs. in C.  
 (3) The Admiralty fully appreciate and sympathise with the view expressed in the signals referred to and had already balanced this against other claims before making their 111714.  
 (4) Reference para.2 of C. in C. Coastal Command's 131130, no fundamental change of policy is intended and in view of para.2 above, it is not intended to hold a conference as suggested before the change in disposition of forces is made.  
 (1st S.L.191432A to A.O.C. in C. C.C., C. in C. Rosyth)  
 C. in C. Western Approaches is requested to transfer E.G.4 temporarily to the operational control of C. in C. Rosyth now.  
 (A.C.N.S.(H), 191613A to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Rosyth)

Schnorkel obstructors.

Consideration has been given to the use of moored obstructions in order to foul U-Boats when Schnorkelling. In the present stage of the Anti-U-Boat war any scheme which has even a slight chance of causing damage to or embarrassing the enemy is thought to be worthwhile. Furthermore, a damaged Schnorkel, if it does not cause dangerous flooding in the U-Boat, will force it to charge on the surface and thus make it vulnerable to our air searches.  
 (2) Obstruction consisting of 2" F.S.W. jackstay fitted with floatation can be laid by netlayers, for which material is available and could be moored in depths up to 300 fms., in lengths of one to two miles.  
 (3) Request your views on the desirability for implementing this scheme in the main U-Boat transit area to the North of the Shetlands, and if they are favourable, C. in C. Rosyth is requested to propose, after consultation with C. in C. H.F. a position for the first lay, line to be approx. 30 miles long.  
 (4) F.O.S/M. has stated any position West of a line running 030 degs. to 210 degs. through position 61 degs. N. 01 degs. W. would be suitable to him.  
 (D.A.U.C. 191616A to C's in C. Rosyth, H.F.)



War Diary.19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDSAllied Air Activity

Routes for non-operational A/C. A.M. 171246A. Concur.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 191225A to Admty.)  
Your 161505 (passed to Naval addressees). Concur.  
(D.O.D.(H), 191505A to Air Ministry.)

Mining

Deep mining off Hartland Point. My 171235A. Arrived PLOVER, escort CONQUEROR.  
(F.O.I.C. Milford, 190915 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

M.S.F.4. Have swept Q.Z.S.583 from northern limits to 50° 24' N. Negative result. Anchored St.Ives proceeding daylight tomorrow Wed. entering Swansea on completion. (Falmouth pass to N.O.I.C. Penzance.)  
(S.O.M.S.F.4, 191629A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

M.S.F.31. Pass Gate with available ships as requisite, and commencing first light tomorrow, Wednesday 20th Dec., carry out search with double Oropesa in H formation as deep as practicable of route centre line joining positions: (A) 180° Lizard 20. (B) 230° Wolf Rock 5.  
(C) 270° Longships 5.  
(2) On completion carry out exploratory search in vicinity of Wolf Rock till last light, anchoring Mounts Bay on completion.  
(3) At first light on Thursday 21st Dec. carry out search of Q.Z.S.607 from long. 05° 40' W. to seaward end of Q.Z.S. 601, proceeding to Plymouth on completion.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 191638 to M.S.F. 31.)

Mines in East Schelde. According to P.O.W. the area between Schouwen and Nord Beveland west of Zierikzee is heavily mined with acoustic mines. Graded C.O.  
(D.D.I.C., 191641A to C. in C. Nore, V.A. Dover, A.N.C.X.F., Com. Belgium.)

Enemy Intelligence

Military transport to and from Norway. My 151806 following transport movements recently reported from Norway.  
Moss. (A) GIJON Moss December 3rd for Fredrikshavn with 850 troops bound for Western Front. She returned again December 4th in Baltic and left p.m. December 6th with 850 S.S. troops believed bound for Fredrikshavn.  
(B) My 301904 November. MATTHIAS STINNES which arrived Moss November 25th with five locomotives, still lay there December 10th and was expected to load motor vehicles.  
(C) KALIKOLA about 3000 tons arrived Moss December 6th and also discharged locomotives, believed 8 in number.  
(D) BRABANT arrived Moss December 7th with troops from Nordland and left again same night with motor vehicles, tank cars and field kitchens.  
(E) MOLTKEFELS was reported to have arrived Moss p.m./7th Dec. and discharged trailers (?). Her departure was not

/observed ...

455

War Diary19.12.1944  
TuesdayHOME COMMANDSEnemy Intelligence

Military Transport to and from Norway. (Contd.) observed, but she was believed to have loaded tank waggons for air fields. She was again reported to have arrived Moss 9th December with about 100 one Man torpedoes, presumably from another Oslo Fjord Port. She left Moss p.m. December 9th with S.S. troops and Motor vehicles.  
(F) Extra trains disembarked about 1,000 S.S. troops in Moss December 7th. About 1,000 S.S. Troops with full equipment were already there awaiting shipment.  
(2) Arendal. It was reported December 9th that transport carrying war material to Denmark left Arendal regularly with destroyer escort. No further details available.  
(3) Heroya Porsgrunn. DONAU was expected to leave Heroya December 10th on fourth trip to Denmark. No details of cargo reported.  
B.2.  
(N.A. Stockholm, 191257 to Admty.)  
N.I.D. Comment - Probably a good report.

Port Facilities

Ramsgate Owing to shortage of N.C.S. craft at Ramsgate, shipping is being held up in the Downs.  
(2) Craft allocated to V.A. Dover to augment the N.O.S. at Ramsgate are of poor quality and require considerable alterations and repairs.  
(3) It is requested that the provision of suitable and seaworthy craft be accorded the highest priority in order to prevent delay in the turn round of coastal traffic.  
(4) A.C. Dover, 121255A refers.  
(C. in C. Nore, 191703A to Admty.)

Calais, Antwerp. Cositintrep 259 Part II Naval. Calais. Second L.S.T. Hard is now ready. Antwerp. Number of U.S. ships which can be accepted daily is now six to ten.  
(A.N.C.X.F.192355A to Admty.)

Casualties and Defects

FINLANDE. S/T FINLANDE. Ashore off Peterhead at 1919A/18th on passage to Iceland to Hull. Complete crew landed. Salvage operations in progress.  
(N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 191220A to Admty)

SHELL MEX V. Following received from N.O.I.C. Avonmouth:  
"An explosion occurred in the engine room of the small coasting tanker SHELL MEX V at 0100 to-day causing a fire. There were casualties 2 dead and five injured. A preliminary enquiry is being held. 191010A".  
Naval Board of Inquiry will be held Port of Bristol. Authorities have informed Home Office.  
(F.O.I.C. Cardiff, 191617A to Adty.)

/SS. JAN. VAN OLDEN-  
BARNEVELT...

War Diary.19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.HOME COMMANDSCasualties and Defects - Contd.SS. JOHAN  
VAN OLDEN-  
BARNEVELT.

K.M.F. 37A. Intend to sail J.V. OLDENBARNEVELT escorted by GRINDALL and TYLER 1530Z/20th Dec. to comply with C. in C. Western Approaches' 191534. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 191911A to Admty., C. in C. W.A.)

Shipping and Convoys

Calling forward of ships for Cherbourg and Havre.

Due to fact that capabilities port of Cherbourg greatly exceed the shipping available or desired as demonstrated by the fact that less than 15 ships are assigned to the port which can accommodate 45 ships it is requested that in the future O.C.O.T. Com. Z. call forward ships for Cherbourg direct through A.N.C.X.F. (Buco) and U.K. Base S.E.C. Info. C.T.F. 125 and

C.T.G. 125.2 calling forward shipping for Le Havre should continue through this command. (C.T.F. 125, 191201 to H.Q. Com. Z.)

T.A.M./  
A.T.M.,  
T.A.C./  
A.T.C.  
Convoys.

Subject T.A.M./A.T.M. and T.A.C./A.T.C. convoys as from 1200A tomorrow 20th the following procedure is to be brought in force.

(1) Southend sections of convoys are to proceed by Q.Z.S.651.

(2) Downs sections of convoys are to proceed by Q.Z.S.458.

(3) Southend and Downs sections F.O. Convoys

will R/V and part company at S. Falls buoy.

(4) Pilot service to all convoys to be carried out at S. Falls buoy.

(5) On making R/V at S. Falls buoy, Southend section of T.A.M. convoys provide port column and Downs section starboard column.

(6) Southend section of A.T.M. convoys is to be stationed in starboard column and Downs section in port column to facilitate breaking off at S. Falls buoy.

(7) In case of T.A.C./A.T.C. convoys, Downs section is to take station astern of Southend section.

(8) S.O. Escort of T.A.M. convoys is to detail one escort to proceed ahead of Southend section to N.W. Goodwin to R/V with Downs section and lead them by Q.Z.S.548 to make R/V at S. Falls buoy.

(9) Com. Southend, N.O.I.C. Antwerp and N.O.I.C. Ostend are requested to substitute S. Falls buoy for Dumpton in future convoy time-tables.

(C. in C. Nore, 191224 to Com. Southend, N.O.I.Cs. Antwerp, Ostend, N.C.S.O. Ramsgate.)

War Diary19.12.1944  
TuesdayFOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic

BERWICK (Malta to U.K.) V.A.M. 181651 not to all. Onward route from Europa Point at 210130A. Through northern half of Strait ? to (A) All following positions are N. and W. unless otherwise indicated 035° 59', 006° 10'. (B) 036° 40', 009° 20'. (C) 039° 00', 010° 15'. (D) (? 049°) 00'. 010° 15'. thence via QZS 612 and current standard routes and to Q.S. to Portland Rock.  
2. S.O.A. 23 knots until crossing 049° 30' N. thence with all despatch to Clyde.  
(? N.P.) Code word from time of passing Europa Point "Richmond" 297.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 191056A to BERWICK)

U.S.S. NELSON, U.S.S. NELSON and WAINWRIGHT ready to proceed 1600Z today. Request destination and route. Com. Task Group 27.5 151955 Dec. refers.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores 191258Z to Admty.)

Flight "A" Report on Passage of Flight A. forwarded to Admty. by Squadron Commander D., L.C.T. Squadron in his letter number C.1/25 dated 10th Dec. Your 182046 refers.  
"Appian" (F.O.G.M.A. 191902A to Admty.)

BROSEN Ministry of Marine inform me it is proposed to move German Tanker BROSEN from Pasajes to Bilbao where there are better facilities for watching ship. Every precaution will be taken during voyage. Sailing date will be notified later. My 251745 (Re German refugee vessels) refers.  
Pasajes  
j  
(Asst. B.N.A. Madrid 191950A to D.N.I.)

ATHENE, Request you will sail ATHENE for Clyde escorted by PRIMULA etc. PRIMULA.  
2. JOHAN DE WITT should be sailed for U.K. in company with EASTWAY escorted by STORK, EVENLODE and DART when ready. Destination of JOHAN DE WITT is Liverpool.  
3. C. in C. Medn's 181351 and V.A.M.'s 182120 neither to all refer (D.O.D.(H) 191952A to F.O.G.M.A.)

WOLVERINE Have relieved U.S. GUNASON. Intend to patrol within 40 miles of 034° 00' N. 012° 00' W.  
2. U.S. GUNASON reports having searched area 25 miles on either side of line joining positions 035° 35' N. 012° 55' W. and 033° 55' N. 012° 50' W.  
3. Weather report 5581 2133.  
4. Commorseafron pass to C.F.A.W.15.  
(WOLVERINE 192315Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

458

19.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean.

EMILE BERTIN. Request you take action on F.O.W.M.181838, observing that proposal is for (French) EMILE BERTIN to leave Toulon Wednesday 20th December. My 111841 not to F.O.W.M. still holds. Alexandria C.C.O. pass to S.N.O. L.A. (C. in C. Med. 191014A to Admty.)

F.O.W.M's 181838 and your 191014. No political objection is being raised to visit. Foreign Office are however making representations in Paris that instructions should be sent to Auboyneau and local French Authorities in Syria to avoid any provocative action.

(P.A.S.(L), Approved A.C.N.S.(F), 191518A to C, in C. Med.)

Request you will sail F.S. EMILE BERTIN for Beirut tomorrow 20th, as desired by Marine Paris.

(F.O.W.M.191652 to Premar Three, (R) C. in C. Med. Admty.etc.)

PHEASANT, WOODCOCK. This recyphers C. in C. Med. 171117A Dec. (Begins) Addressed as above from C. in C. Med. PHEASANT and WOODCOCK require about one week's intensive A/A Gunnery practice. A.M. 031735 Dec. not to F.O.G.M.A. refers. Request you will arrange.

(Ends.)

(2) Admty. 182109 to Caserta only refers.

(Caserta C.C.O. 191026A to F.O.G.M.A.)

BARFLEUR, QUERCY. Your 091031 December. (French Naval Authorities have agreed to allocation of either BARFLEUR or QUERCY as Armament Store Carriers). BARFLEUR not operating in this area. QUERCY due Naples shortly to be inspected in conjunction with S.A.S.O. A.F.D. Surveyors. Report follows.

(P.S.T.O. Med. 191152A to D.S.T.)

DART, EVENLODE. Intend sailing DART (S.O) and EVENLODE at 1700/20th to Gibraltar.

(2) S. of A. 14 knots. E.T.A. Gibraltar p.m. 23rd to be signalled by DART when known.

(3) Route Q.B.B. 123. (C) position 278 Q.B.B. 338 and positions 19,92 and 89 to Q.B.A.64.

(4) Codeword "Throttle" 795 low.

(5) C. in C. Med.'s 171733 not to all refers.

(6) DART and EVENLODE acknowledge and comply.

(V.A.M. 191220 to F.O.G.M.A.)

Western Area boundary. Details of proposed area boundary, my 191300 para. 3 refers (N.T. in W.D.) would be as follows: Cape Creus 42 degs. 19' N. 03 degs. 19' E. to Cap Rosso 42 degs. 14' N. 08.33' E. thence along Corsican coast line to Aquila Point, 41 degs. 34' N. 08 degs. 47' E. to 40 degs. 50' N. 07 degs. 30' E. to 38 degs. 51' N. 07 degs. 30' E. to border between Algeria and Tunisia.

/(2) ...

459

19.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterraneanWestern Area  
boundary.  
(Contd.)

(2) The retention of clear water under British control round Sardinia is desirable in order to avoid possibility of "Incidents" between the French and Italians. Moreover Almed. would be reluctant to accept a boundary moved east so as to run along the Sardinian coast. A.M. 152236 refers.

(C. in C. Med. 191301 to Admty)

Linrep  
No.214.

Summary of Operations Dec. 14 to 17.  
(A.F.H.Q. 191330A). See Lion copy.

Whalers  
for U.K.

Intend to sail British and Norwegian Whalers to U.K. as they become available for disposal after removal of serviceable M/S equipment.

(2) Request destination and bases to which account should be transferred may be signalled for the following ships. (A) BOREALIS, HAILSTORM, NEBB, CALM, SOIKA, SWONA, SATSA, SAHRA.

(B) NEBULA, NIMBUS and SQUALL reduced to C. and M. at Malta.

(C) STORMWRACK, RAINSTORM and PACKICE reduced to C. and M. at Alexandria.

(3) Ships in (B) and (C) to be sailed as Runner Crews become available.

(C. in C. Med. 191346 to Admty.)

Shipping for  
Black Sea.

Admty. 140335.

Following is gist of (?U.S.) Military Mission's M.22063 of Dec. 18th to Combined Chiefs of Staff.

(A) General Deane informed by Krutikov (Vice Commissar of Soviet Foreign Trade) that Soviet

Govt. prepared to accept U.S. ships at Odessa where nine cargo ships with 28 feet draft and 5 tankers can be received simultaneously.

(B) Traffic exceeding capacity of Odessa could go to Novovossisk and Tuapse. (W.D. Not - Comment of N.L.O. Black Sea 241522).

(C) First convoy up to 5 ships could be accepted at Odessa towards end January.

(D) Soviet Govt. agree to part of Persian Gulf traffic being diverted to Black Sea.

(E) 15,000 to 20,000 tons Manganese per month available at Poti for return cargoes. Bunker oil fuel available at Odessa.

(F) Ship/Shore link would be maintained by Soviet W/T with Soviet operators at Odessa.

(G) U.S. Mission will send two naval officers and two ratings from Moscow to Odessa on January 15th. Office and living accommodation is available.

(H) Soviet Authorities request all cranes and 10 to 12 metal knock-down (?warehouses) for Odessa be included in first convoy.

They also ask two or three tugs for Odessa.

(1) Other details such as navigational aids etc. to be arranged between naval missions and Soviet naval staff.

/ (2) ...

460

War Diary19.12.1944  
TuesdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Shipping for Black Sea. (Contd.) (2) Reference clause (1) above anticipated or minimum situation should now be available shortly. It is obvious that naval staff has been holding back up to date waiting forcing move by Krutikov. Admty. pass C. in C. Med. F.O.L.E.M. and other authorities as necessary. (Adm. Archer, 191415A to Admty)

Cables. Malta - Alex Number 1 repairable in C. in C. Med's O31150 (Programme for Cables ship PACIFIC on return to Malta) has been effected and another break found two miles to Eastward. PACIFIC is working on that now and will proceed to repair B as weather permits on completion. (V.A. Malta, 191427 to C. in C. Med., F.O.L.E.M., Admty.)

WOOLSEY bombardment, (Riviera) Fired one mission at railroad station and troop concentration at 905 856. Expended 93 rounds, area very well covered, several hits. Return fire after mission completed not close. No mines. Situation ashore no change. Army reports small submarine captured intact when operator lost bearings and entered Mentone Harbour. Operator now army prisoner. From description believe it is a human torpedo of double torpedo type. Weather improved toward evening with brisk easterly winds and choppy sea, occasional drizzle. WOOLSEY and ALCYON relieved NIBLACK and GLEAVES. (WOOLSEY, 191902A to Comflanfor, Info: LE FORTUNE)

Situation Report No. 510. (1) Gulf of Genoa. Ref. No. 509 para. 1. Enemy convoy consisted of one coaster, four armed lighters, and three R-Boats and our force of motor trawlers and 16 coastal craft. Interception was made half mile off beach. Trawlers carried out determined gun action ranging to 800 yards despite very heavy fire from ships and shore. Two (?lighters) and one R-Boat seen to blow up one lighter seen capsizing and hits observed on coaster. Three of the trawlers hit with negligible damage. C.O. H.M.S. TWOSTEP slightly wounded, but no other casualty. (2) Adriatic. S.B.N.O. Split has received letter of condolence on loss of ALDENHAM signed by General Cervast. Night of 17th Dec. 1st Island attacked by four explosive M.Bs. One grounded and blew up, remainder were driven off. A similar boat with a dead German on board has been towed into Patras/by a fishing boat. (3) Greece. Evacuation at Kalamata, Kavalla and Volos completed. At former place H.M.S. METEOR report (?having) M/E.L.A.S. Committee Co-operative and at their request liberty men were landed as proof mutual confidence. Relief foodstuffs are being distributed by E.A.M. At Volos H.M.S. MUSKETEER has received safe conduct to remain in bay. H.M.S. SIRIUS has arrived Mitylene (Les Vos) where there is a general strike. A delayed report from Patras gives details of evacuation from Krionero, number 507 para. 2 refers. 802 Officers and men, four guns and Limbers, one armoured car, two Bren gun carriers, five Jeeps and 724 tons

/equipment ...

19.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Situation Report  
No. 510  
(Contd.)

equipment were taken off under heavy mortar fire. Naval Force consisted of H.M.S. SAXIFRAGE, (L) PROTEA, M.G.B. 661, M.L. 469 M.L. 1158, L.C.I. 314 R.C.L. 1323, R.C.L. 49 and 12 caiques. 72 vehicles abandoned.  
(C. in C. Med. 192016) / ? Zara intended.

Aegean Sitrep  
No. 11.

499127.  
(1) Land and Sea Ops. N.T.R.  
(2) Political. Force 142 reports. Mitylene. 24 hour strike 18th December as protest against events in Athens.  
(C. in C. M.E. 192040B to A.F.H.Q.)

ERLANGEN, hospital ship.

Your 161802, not to all. German Government have proposed that hospital ship ERLANGEN should be sent to Lisbon to embark part of the German repatriables and proceed thence to a German port. Subject to your concurrence and French consent being obtained by Foreign Office, it is proposed to inform German Government that there is no objection to the use of ERLANGEN, provided that she returns to the port from which she sails.  
(2) Request route.  
(Hd. of M. Branch, 192238A to C. in C. Med.)

Cositintrep  
No. 529  
Part 4.

Greece. 18th December. Athens/Piraeus. Good progress has been made in Piraeus and the Athens-Faliron and Faliron-Piraeus Roads are now clear. Persistent rebel attacks against air H.Q. Greece at Kifisia have continued on increased scale.  
(A.F.H.Q. No T.O.O/19 to W.O)



# SECRET

461A. Med 6  
IN

19.12.44

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.)

191330A Dec.

Date 19.12.1944

From A.F.H.Q.

Recd. 2220

CYPHER

Addressed The War Office, Linrep Addressees

279210

FX. 71183 cipher 19th December.

Cite. FHGOT

Signed Alexander.

Linrep number 214. Summary of operations

14th December to 17th December.

Para. one. Ground.

Subpara. A. Eighth Army. One Canadian Corps is now half a mile west of the Canale Naviglio northeast of Bagnacavallo. Some progress has also been made south of this town which is still held by the enemy. Five Corps launched an attack directed northwest on 14th Dec. Faenza has been cleared except for the northern outskirts. Advanced elements cut highway 9 at the Senio River crossing 3 miles northwest of Faenza and also reached the river south of the highway. Two Polish Corps attacked on the left of Five Corps at the same time and made good progress. Advanced elements are now 1 mile south of Riolo.

Subpara. B. Fifth Army. There have been no material changes during this period except in the 13 Corps sector where the enemy successes in re-occupying Tossignano.

Subpara. C. AFHQ. Greece. Small outlying detachments of British troops have been called in and our ground forces are now mainly based on Athens/Piraeus Salonika and Patras (Peloponnese). In the Athens area ELAS activity has been generally on a more restricted scale but they continued to shell and mortar the centre of the city. Further progress is being made in clearing Piraeus.

Para. two. Gulf of Genoa. In a night engagement off Sestri Levante Allied coastal craft on patrol intercepted 5 northbound enemy F lighters. Heavy enemy fire but no casualties or damage to our force who obtained 2 torpedo hits and saw a large explosion.

Para. West Italy. An Italian swimming saboteur has been apprehended while attempting to leave port area of Leghorn. His mission was to introduce equipment for future operations. This has been found and collected intact

/Over.

Para. Adriatic. One of our destroyers was mined and sunk in position 44 30 minutes N 14 50 minutes E. Commanding Officer 4 Officers and 58 Ratings have been saved. At split relations with local partisans are again strained after brief easier period during which H.M. Cruiser there gave shore leave without incident.

Para. Greece. In Athens/Piraeus area. Discharge of reinforcements of troops and vehicles although delayed for time by bad weather continues smoothly. Greek Naval Brigade employed for guard duties ashore continues to be great success and is being increased in size. At Repi (or Kipi) Island in the Skiathos (or Skiathes) Channel RHMS IONIA is hard and fast ashore with heavy list and stern submerged and likely to become a total loss. Sweeping of port and bay of Mudros has been completed. Near Symi a destroyer intercepted an assault craft and a caique and took 22 German and 5 Italian prisoners.

Para. three. Air. Improvement in base and route weather enables MAAF strategic heavy bombers to operate on 3 days. Though cloud over targets necessitated bombing by pathfinder technique in the majority of cases. Attacks were made on oil refineries at Brux Blechhammer and Odertal in Germany and Moravska Ostrava Czechoslovakia. Marshalling yards were attacked at Innsbruck Linz Amstettin Villach and Salzburg all in Austria. At Salzburg all lines were temporarily out. Rosenheim Germany was also attacked. The enemy reacted to the attacks on Blechhammer and the bombers destroyed 26 the fighters 22 and we had 21 bombers and 6 fighters missing. No operations were flown by night. Wellingtons and Liberators bombed motor transport on the roads Matesevo to Biocce Yugoslavia on 3 days while other Wellingtons Halifax and Liberators flew personnel ammunition and equipment into Greece.

Tactical Air Force. Light bombers and Beaufighters harassed enemy communications throughout the valley by night. By day medium bombers attacked the bridges at Asti Parma Chivassio and Voghera (or Vogheaa) and also hit ammunition dumps at Cremona and Tortona. Fighters and fighter bombers operated at maximum strength when weather permitted. Attacks were chiefly against close support targets in the Eighth Army sector and communications in the Po Valley on the Brenner route and in the Udine area.

Coastal Air Force flew armed reconnaissance of the North Adriatic scoring hits on one 300 ft steamer 3 barges and 3 E/boats. Minespotting missions were flown off Riviera air sea rescue searches were carried out.

/Balkan

# SECRET

4618.  
IN

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.)

- 3 -

Balkan Air Force. Fighters fighter bombers rocket firing Beaufighters medium and light bombers attacked motor transport in the Matesevo-Bioco area and in co-ordinations with Naval Forces Beaufighters attacked gun position in Lussin Piccolo. Greek based aircraft attacked guns strafed rebel motor transport bombed a railway and the rebel HQ and dropped leaflets as well as flying personnel and equipment from Italy.

Para. four. Enemy. The enemy displays some concern over situation on eastern flank and the last remaining reserve from Bologna has been brought in to relieve a tired armored formation on route 9. Latter is possibly now in immediate reserve but available to meet any new throat. South of route 9 the bulk of the enemy forces are now behind the Senio River while north of Faenza the railway line is being stubbornly defended to cover the withdrawal of units still forward on the Lamone River. Resistance in the Bagnacavallo sector is stiffening. Although no reserves remain the central sector formations defending the approaches to Bologna are believed to be up to strength.

191330

Advance copy passed Colonial Office for retransmission to Resident Minister Achimoto.

Recd. in W.R.1422/21st Dec.  
Circulated by W.O. to W.O. Depts.,  
Admiralty, Air Min., Defence Map  
Room, S.H.A.E.F.

1st Lord  
1st S.L. (3)  
D.F.S.L.  
5th S.L.  
V.C.N.S.  
A.C.N.S. (H)  
A.C.N.S. (F)  
U.W.R.  
Ops. (2)  
Plot  
O.D. (5)  
O.I.C. (3)  
D.N.I. (4)  
M. (2)  
D.P.D.  
C.C.L.S.  
W.D.  
Ad. Blake

104  
LMM

19.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

U-boat 19.16 S. 89.50 E. probable periscope of S/M sighted 19th December 0100Z.  
 (MILLEN GRIFFITH (Received via Perth W.A.) 190200Z to Admty.)

C.T. Your 241131 of November, not to all, ref.  
 Boats M.T.Bs. at Madras and Mandapam for conversion  
 for to C.T. boats for use in Pacific.  
 Pacific (2) 21 out of 22 boats reported as serviceable now but unlikely to remain so for long if kept in reserve in India.  
 (3) Copy of written report by Lend-Lease American Survey Mission of their present state will be forwarded when received.  
 (4) Officer in charge of C.T. boats here could be made available about March, 1945, to assist formation of unit in Australia. Boats require strengthening as well as modification.  
 (5) The future of these boats is under consideration. Are you likely to require any of these boats? They are not required on East Indies Station.  
 (C. in C.E.I., 190211Z to C. in C. B.P.F., Info, EXCELLENT, Admty.)

U-boat No fresh information, scales in all areas  
 dispositions unchanged.  
 (C. in C.E.I., 190431)

Port Request you will report by signal whether  
 Economy following ports are in use or necessary for naval purposes and size of staffs maintained:-  
 Abadan, Addu Atoll, Bandar Shahpur, Bahrein, Basra, Diego Suarez, Mauritius, Seychelles.  
 (2) It is essential to economise in manpower and outlying commitments should be closed down as far as possible.  
 (Sec. to 1st Sea Lord, 191732A to C. in C.E.I.)

463

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Submarine  
attack &  
sighting  
summary.

(C) Lib. Q/10 strong radar contact at 19 miles  
lost three miles 41.41 N. 55.12 W. 0039Z/19th.  
(N.S.H.Q. 191410Z to Admty., Cominch.)

U/B dis-  
positions.

Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q. 191425Z, Cominch 191545Z.)

S/M attack  
and sighting  
summary.

B.A.D. and N.M.C.J.S. have by hand.  
B. 190039Z Liberator had radar contact 41.51 N.  
55.12 W.  
D. 190320Z U.S.S. GUINIVERE sound contact 43.01  
N. 70.04 W.  
(Cominch 192042Z to Admty. for O.I.C.)

C.7 Escort  
Group.

The following allocation is effective to date 19th  
December from new construction to the mid-ocean  
free force for duty with C.7, H.M.C.S. CAP DE LA  
MADELAINE.

(2) Pay accounts to be held in AVALON. Com. (D)  
Western Approaches pass to C.7, Com. 4 pass to COLLINGWOOD.  
(C. in C. C.N.A. 192113Z to N.S.H.Q.)

ATHELING,  
BATTLER.

Your 151609 and A.M. 141421 ATHELING is allocated  
in lieu of BATTLER and will be available at  
Sydney at end of December.  
(V.C.N.S. 192244A to B.A.D.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest.

(First portion corrupt, repetition requested.)  
(16) F.T. boats operating (5 corrupt groups) sank  
3 empty westbound barges off north tip Sebu.  
(17) 19 Liberators escorted by 8 Thunderbolts  
unloaded 57 tons of 500 pounders (Etteloimld Groae on Jolo) noon  
17th destroying 3 planes on ground. Next morning 27 Mitchells  
raided San Roque field near Zamboanga and 8 Thunderbolts sweeping  
(FSLU) Archipelago set 1 small merchant ship afire near seaplane  
base Tawi Tawi.  
(20) Liberator on shipping search north Borneo 17th December  
bombed strafed and damaged 3 small freighters or sea trucks.  
(22) 3 Mitchells attacked and damaged small coaster near Wafnia-  
porfon Soemba Island, noon 17th and left another beached coastal  
craft ablaze nearby.  
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A. 191156Z.)

War Diary.

19.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/19th December.

Para. A. (1) U-Boat struck Wolf Rock at 0929Z/18th December and sank at 1001Z/18th December in approx. 49° 57' N. 05° 47' W.

(2) SILVER LAUREL torpedoed and blew up at 1545Z/18th December in approx. 50° 09' N. 04° 40' W.

(3) Portuguese fishing vessel INVENCIVEL SEGUNDO reported being spoken to by U-Boat at 2300Z/24th October in 34° 41' N. 10° 16' W.

(4) INVENCIVEL SEGUNDO again sighted U-Boat course W. on 10th Nov. in 34° 55' N. 09° 30' W.

Para. B. (1) Dakota A/C sighted semi-submerged U-Boat course N.W. at 1015Z/18th Dec. in approx. 49° 56' N. 00° 00' W. or E.

(2) BRILLIANT attacked asdic contact at 1935Z/18th Dec. in 50° 00' 30" N. 00° 56' 20" W.

(3) BEACON HILL of E.G. 26 obtained disappearing radar contact at 2050Z/18th Dec. in 50° 37' N. 05° 07' W.

(4) CHARLES W. WOOSTER made SSSS torpedo tracks sighted before 1640Z/18th December in 14° 46' N. 81° 28' E.

(5) WALTER L. FLEMING made SSSS submarine sighted before 1755Z/18th December in 13° 43' N. 54° 23' E.

Para. C. (1) F.S. LA SURPRISE made 3 attacks on bottomed contact thought possibly wreck at 0300Z/18th Dec. in 49° 33' N. 00° 41' W. or 00° 47' W.

(D.D.I.C. 191153A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

Attacks on  
U-Boats.

My 221059 July, 1942.

(1) C.S. 1 flying his flag in CAMPANIA with convoy R.A. 62 claims one certain U-Boat sunk and three possibly sunk by air and surface escort. No further details received.

(2) U.1209 grounded on Wolf Rock at 0929/18 and subsequently sank. 38 survivors recovered.

(D.A.U.D. 191740A to Cominch, etc.)

U/B dis-  
positions.

Estimates.

(D.D.I.C. 191414A, 191415A.)

465

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

- Channel. 1. 66th M.T.B. Flotilla, 20 miles south of St. Catherine's, and 1st Escort Group, 40 miles south of Falmouth and to the eastward of this position, have been hunting probable U-Boats, but with no definite results up to date.
- Western Approaches. 2. NYASALAND, frigate, of 18th Escort Group, is following up a rather sketchy U-Boat indication 40 miles off the south coast of Ireland.
- Norway. 3.(a) A Halifax of Coastal Command claims a bomb hit on an 8000 ton merchantman 70 miles north of Trondheim.  
(b) RUBIS, French submarine, has laid 30 mines in the neighbourhood of Stavanger.
- Baltic. 4. Lancasters of Bomber Command last night laid 55 mines in Kiel Bay.

Foreign Stations.

North Atlantic.

- FOGG and L.S.T. torpedoed. 5. The U.S. destroyer FOGG, escorting the special towing convoy to Norfolk, and L.S.T. 359, from this convoy, were torpedoed shortly before noon in 42.03 N. 19.19 W. about 360 miles northeast of San Miguel, Azores. The FOGG which had an acoustic torpedo in the stern, was taken in tow for Horta by the U.S.S. CHINABERRY and L.T. 643, with two destroyers escorting. L.S.T. 359 broke in two at 1752, after the personnel had been removed, and is believed sunk. The S.N.O. considers there are two U-Boats in the vicinity of the attack. (The FOGG arrived at Terceira, Azores, in tow on the 23rd.)

PANGKALAN BRANDON and PANGKALA SOESOE  
(North SUMATRA)

1. On 20th December a task force of the Eastern Fleet carried out a carrier-borne aircraft attack on PANGKALAN BRANDON. Owing to the target being obscured by cloud, the attack was diverted against the harbour, warehouses, railway yards and oil installations at BELAWAN DELI. Observation of results was difficult but one oil tank and one petrol tank were set on fire by fighters. One enemy aircraft was shot down. Our own surface forces were not located by the enemy and no casualties were sustained.

2. There is an important and efficient oil refinery developed by the Royal Dutch Shell Company at PANGKALAN BRANDON, about 50 miles north of MEDAN and 250 miles south-east of SABANG. Crude oil is brought to the refinery by pipe lines from the oil-fields and the refined products exported from PANGKALAN SOESOE, about 8 miles north of the refinery and connected by pipe line. (It is reported that the Japanese have laid a pipe line from the refinery to BELAWAN DELI, the port of MEDAN).

The capacity of the refinery is about 1,110,000 tons a year and there is probably a maximum tankage capacity of about 9½ million gallons available for the Japanese. The tank farm at PANGKALA SOESOE had storage for about 36 million gallons, but the major installations were destroyed when the Dutch carried out pre-arranged demolition plans.

3. Although tankers up to 10,000 tons can enter P. SOESOE, they are hindered by shallow entrances and cannot top up to full capacity. It is for this reason that the Japanese may have built a pipe line to BELAWAN DELI where a deep water outlet exists.

4. It is considered that the oil supplies from the whole of Sumatra produce three-quarters of the total aviation spirit required by Japan and their denial would probably be vital in the long run. From this crude oil it is possible to manufacture by simple distillation about 30 per cent of aviation spirit having an octane number of approximately 91.

5. The total population was probably less than 10,000 (Europeans 300), about one-quarter of whom were employed by the oil company.

-----  
Requests for further information on this subject should be made in writing or by telephone to N.I.D. (4), Telephone Whitehall 9000, Ext. 598.

N.I.D. (4)

(Sgd.) I.M.R. CAMPBELL

D. D. N. I.

23.12.44.

Distribution:

First Lord  
First Sea Lord  
V.C.N.S.  
A.C.N.S. (F)  
A.C.N.S. (A)  
D. of P.  
D.O.D. (F)  
D.T.S.D.  
D.A.W.T.  
F.O. (S/M)  
C.C.O.

C.B.N.I. (E.T.)

D.N.I. Ottawa

D.M.I. War Office

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



20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Shipping.

6. Independent sailings for Gibraltar were ordered at 0933 to cease from December 22, ships being held for inclusion in convoy. This order, however, was altered at 1952 on the 21st, q.v.

Mediterranean.

Greece.

7. The situation at the Piraeus is quiet, and the harbour is again being used to unload cargo. C.S. 15 has taken over control of the naval bombarding forces providing support for the Army in the Piraeus-Athens area.

Aegean.

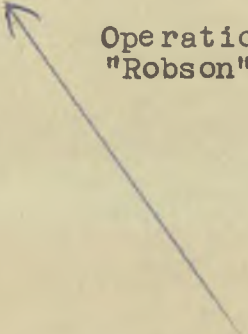
8. Ten Baltimores bombed shipping in Mandracchio Harbour, Rhodes. One ship alongside the eastern mole was hit and bursts were seen on this mole and near the jetties.

Destroyers.

9. LAMERTON, from 57th Destroyer Division, replaces the ALDENHAM (sunk by mine on the 14th) as the ship of Captain (D), 5th Destroyer Flotilla. QUANTOCK, of 57th Division, becomes S.O.s. ship in that Division.

East Indies.

Operation  
"Robson".



10. A strike of 28 Avengers, 16 Hellcats, and 16 Corsairs from Force 67 (see Dec. 17) was flown off from the INDOMITABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS to attack the oil refinery at Pangkalan Brandan, on the north east coast of Sumatra. The target was, however, totally obscured by cloud, and the force attacked warehouses, railway yards and oil installations at Belawan Deli. In the afternoon, fighters attacked airfields in the Sabang area and small craft off the northwest coast of Sumatra. The surface force was undetected by the enemy. No casualties were sustained.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

East Indies - Contd.

- PORPOISE. 11. On her third Far East patrol, the submarine PORPOISE laid 49 mines. On December 10th she sank a large junk by demolition in the North Malacca Strait and took 6 Malay survivors.
- STURDY. 12. On her fourth Far East patrol, the submarine STURDY sank seven ships ranging from a 350 ton coaster carrying oil to a 40 ton rice loaded yawl, between November 25 and December 5. On December 2 she also sank a 300 ton naval auxiliary vessel. The STURDY arrived at Fremantle on the 15th after 33 days at sea.
- TANTIVY. 13. On her eighth Far East patrol, the submarine TANTIVY, during a northward passage through the Lombok Strait on the night of December 2-3, force-dived and was subjected to an accurate but not damaging depth charge attack by three M.Ls. She retired and made the passage on the next night. Defects to her main engine caused her to abandon patrol on the 6th.
- TROMP. 14. The Dutch cruiser TROMP, refitting at Sydney, N.S.W., has been transferred from the 4th Cruiser Squadron and will join the 5th Cruiser Squadron after her return to the East Indies Station.

Australia & New Zealand.

- Philippines. 15. Last night a Catalina attacked two ships described as a medium freighter transport and a destroyer off the N.E. coast of Mindoro. A near miss set the merchant ship on fire.
- Dutch East Indies. 16. Two P.T. boats destroyed four Japanese barges berthed on the N.E. of Halmahera. The barges were camouflaged, armed and armoured, and loaded with ammunition and supplies.
- Moluccas. 17. A 3 ship convoy (1 destroyer, 1 2000 ton freighter and 1 smaller merchantman) 100 miles S. of Amboina, Moluccas, was unsuccessfully attacked by a search Liberator. In the afternoon, three Dutch Mitchells sank the 2000 ton ship, leaving hundreds of Japs. in the water, and strafed the smaller merchantman.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

SERENE SERENE arrived Falmouth.  
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 200236A to S.B.N.O. Azores).

NEWFOUNDLAND Clyde arrival: NEWFOUNDLAND.  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 200818A to C. in C. H.F.)  
Sailed NEWFOUNDLAND. Route in accordance with  
Admiralty message 182040A December. Speed of advance 23 knots  
expected time of arrival Gibraltar 0900Z/23rd December latest  
message Q.B.A.140, Q.B.H.817 less 796 to 816.  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 201938 to Admty. C. in C. W.A., C. in C.  
Med., F.O.G.M.A.)

RAMILLIES My 191440 C. in C. Portsmouth is requested to  
take over escort of RAMILLIES and KEREN in posi-  
tion 180° Portland Bill 20 (para. 1 my 191643  
refers) at 0700A/21st approx.  
2. On relief by Portsmouth escort TJERK HIDDIES, ALBRIGHTON and  
AVONVALE return through 180° Start Point 4 thence by standard  
route to Plymouth.  
3. RAMILLIES pass to ships in company.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 201135A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

REVENGE, With reference to A.L. M. 2451/44 of 3rd November  
RESOLUTION. 1944 (copies sent to Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth  
and IMPERIEUSE with F.O.C.R.F.'s EPP/17/5/5 of  
8th November, 1944) intend that IMPERIEUSE be now  
regarded as under my administration. Any outstanding matters in  
regard to reducing of REVENGE and RESOLUTION to Category "C" will  
be referred to F.O.C.R.F. as requisite.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 201254 to F.O.C.R.F.)

KENT Scapa departure - KENT.  
(A.C.O.S., 201658A to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

LORRAINE, Comnavforfrance's 191324 (not to all).  
DUQUESNE Intend to sail:-  
etc. (a) At 2359A/20th December, F.S. LORRAINE  
escorted by F.S. BASQUE, SOMALI and HOVA to  
Cherbourg. Speed 15 knots. E.T.A. H.10 buoy -  
0900A/21st.  
(b) At 0800A/21st December, F.S. DUQUESNE escorted by MELBREAK  
to Cherbourg. Speed 22 knots. E.T.A. to be reported.  
2. Routed by Q.Z.S. 601, 591 route E of F.N.M. No. 2538 (T)  
of 1944 to H.2 buoy, thence by Q.Z.S. 633 to destination.  
5. On completion of escort duty MELBREAK returns to Plymouth.  
6. Request mails for LORRAINE, DUQUESNE, HOVA, SOMALI and  
BASQUE to be diverted to Cherbourg.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 201812A to C.T.F.125).

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Operation "Moonshine". Weather permitting carry out operation "Moonshine" today 20th sailing as convenient.  
(C. in C. Nore, 201217A to F.O.I.C. Humber).  
"Moonshine". Humber 20th December departure GAY VIKING, HOPEWELL, NONSUCH at 1400.  
(F.O.I.C. Humber 201450 to C. in C. Nore).

Distributing Authority on Continent. Your 171050 para. 4 is concurred in and Com. Belgium is requested to forward proposals as soon as possible. In view of extreme shortage of all types of rating in this Command, it is suggested that as far as possible any required should be transferred from those now in France, and with reference to your para. 5 it is suggested that Cdre. Belgium should give approximate numbers required forthwith.  
(C. in C. Nore, 201305A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Patrols. Night Dispositions 20th/21st December.  
Humber Force. (Group 1) Patrols 1. VIMY, 2. BLENCATHRA.  
(Group 2) Harbour. Returning Harbour MIDDLETON.  
Harwich Force. (Group 3) Patrols 3 MACKAY, 4 COTSWOLD, 5 GUILLEMOT, 12 EKINS, 6A SHEARWATER, 14 THORNBOROUGH, 16 STAYNER, 19 TORRINGTON.  
(Group 4) Harbour. EGLINTON, CAICOS, DAKINS, RUTHERFORD, CURZON, RIOU, MALLARD, PUFFIN, HAMBLEDON, WALPOLE, WIDGEON. Returning to Harbour. KITTIWAKE, SLAZAK.  
Sheerness Force. (Group 5) Returning from Escort - LOOSESTRIFE. With A.T.M. Convoy - COTTESMORE, COWDRAY. For T.A.M. 24 LA COMBATTANTE, LUDLOW.  
(Group 6) Harbour. Returning to Harbour. VOLUNTEER.  
(C. in C. Nore, 201603A to Admty).

Situation Report. Cositintrep No.260 Part 4.  
Discharged by sea - 24 hour period ending 1600A/19th December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u>	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>
Antwerp	7	634	8,542	1,073
Ostend	16	-	3,191	2,257
Boulogne	-	-	892	-
Dieppe	5	-	1,323	-
Caen	-	-	1,858	-
Calais	-	2	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>15,806</b>	<b>3,330</b>

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Situation  
Report.  
(contd).

<u>U.S. North.</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u>	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>
Antwerp	-	-	11,980	-
Cherbourg	2,009	497	5,535	10,630
Le Havre	5,674	38	5,871	2,764
Rouen	904	517	6,471	568
Granville	-	-	651	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,587</b>	<b>1,052</b>	<b>30,508</b>	<b>13,972</b>

(S.H.A.E.F., 201630A to Admty).

G-2 Summary No.89 Part I dated 20th December 1944.

Operations.

Stavelot and Malmedy in Allied hands; fighting continues. Prisoners from 1 S.S. Panzer Division state that Liege expected to fall during present attack.

Prisoners of War. Total prisoners captured for 24 hours at 162400 December: 2,271. Accumulative total since D-day: 789,088.

General. Order from Fuehrer's headquarters dated 31st August states Field-Marshal Kluge committed suicide owing to burden of responsibility for loss of Normandy battle. No further discussion of incident to be made. Army commanders to be informed in suitable manner.

(S.H.A.E.F., 201900A to War Office).

Operations.

Channel.

Possible  
U-boat.

Contact gained in position 188 St. Catherine's Point 20 mile possible submarine contact am carrying out Scabbard in vicinity. Contact now lost.

(M.T.B.737, 200255 to C. in C. Ports).

Have carried out operation Scabbard, M.T.B.752 and 737 continuing search to west from position 50° 18' N., 01° 23' W. M.T.B.750 Asdic defective carrying out Radar patrol between H.3 and H.5.

(S.O. 66, M.T.B.F., 200424A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 200245 no further contact search being extended in accordance with patrol 13 P.43 A. Good 21 obtained. Change of Doppler.

(M.T.B.737, 200535A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

M.T.B.752 has attacked possible S/M in position 50° 15' N. one° 18' 6" W. lost contact. Unit investigating.

(S.O.66 M.T.B.F., 201031A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 201111 join M.T.B.750. Attacking possible S/M contact.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201122A to HARGOOD and SPRAGGE).

M.T.Bs. lost contact and carried out Observant. Am acting in accordance with your 131943. M.T.B. reports contact doubtful no doppler.

(HARGOOD, 201255A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

/Second...

471

War Diary.20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Channel. - Contd.

Second U-boat hunt, 40 miles south of Falmouth. Have swept through marked position in  $49^{\circ} 26' N.$  to  $04^{\circ} 54' W.$  and will sweep back to  $04^{\circ} 30' W.$  through report latitude thereafter sweep North and South 6 miles either side  $49^{\circ} 24' N.$ , between these Meridians.

2. Request appreciation of U-boat movements.

3. (A) Very good. (B) Not applicable.

(S.O.E.G.1, 201015A to C. in C. Plymouth).

Aircraft KAV 57 landed confirms Snort sighted. Estimate probable course  $075^{\circ}$ . Continue search Datum position  $49^{\circ} 24', 04^{\circ} 47'$  at 0645A.

2. Report state of sea and swell.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 201112A to S.O.E.G.1)

Your 201112 para. 2 am sweeping along your estimated line of advance to  $00030 53' W.$  E.T.A.1500A. Intend thereafter sweeping  $345^{\circ} - 165^{\circ}$  6 miles either side of this line shifting sweep to westward toward Saturn.

Amend my 201015 accordingly. Sea calm no swell suitable for Schnorkel. Asdic conditions excellent.

(S.O.E.G.1, 201251A to C. in C. Plymouth).

Your 201251 continue your present sweep to 12 miles west of Datum then proceed to Gamma search between  $49.38 N., 02.50 W.$   $49.58 N., 03.02 W.$

2. Possibility of E-boat operating from Guernsey. Range of Channel Island Batteries estimated 10 miles.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 201829A to E.G.1)

Have bottomed contact in position  $049^{\circ} 34' N., 004^{\circ} 06.8' W.$  giving echo sounder trace 30 feet high 250 feet long with excellent asdic recorder traces. Have attacked it and am continuing to do so.

2. GARLIES and GORE are proceeding in accordance with my 201251A BENTLEY and CAPEL remaining in company with me.

(S.O.E.G.1, 201829A to C. in C. Plymouth).

2nd Division GARLIES, GORE, CAPEL are complying with your 201829A AFFLECK with BENTLEY remain in firm contact with possible submarine on the bottom. My 201829 refers. 5 accurate attacks have been delivered. Intend remaining in contact to seek evidence by daylight.

(S.O.E.G.1, 202007A to C. in C. Plymouth).

Patrols.

Force 26 leave patrol and return to Plymouth forthwith. Reporting E.T.A.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 201039A to Force 26).

Night Patrols 20, 21. Anti-Snort Patrols given.

2. Area X  $00^{\circ} 20', 01^{\circ} 20' W.$   $49^{\circ} 48', 50^{\circ} 06'$  divided into two sections by  $49^{\circ} 57'$ .

3. Ships take sections in sequence from North. WATCHMAN, LOCH SHIN by 1700. North east corner to south east corner by 0830.

4. HARGOOD, SPRAGGE sweep 3 miles south of route E from  $01^{\circ} 15' W.$  to arrive  $180^{\circ}$  Portland Bill 20 at 0630 to rendezvous with RAMILLIES.

5. HARGOOD, SPRAGGE escort RAMILLIES to Portsmouth.

6. M.T.Bs.  $01^{\circ} 20', 01^{\circ} 45' W.$   $50^{\circ} 01', 50^{\circ} 15'$  from 1700 to 0830.

7. E.G. 30 Gamma search on line, joining Cap de la Hague Portland Bill between  $50^{\circ} 00' 50^{\circ} 27'$ .

8. A.I.G. 61, WATCHMAN, LOCH SHIN, PREVENSEY CASTLE. Acknowledge. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 201300A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

/Your...

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel

Patrols. Your 201039A. Force 28 arrived.  
(Contd.) (F.O.I.C. Falmouth, 201316A to C. in C. Plymouth.)  
Search square side 10 miles centre 50° 16',  
01° 30' W.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201450 to Portsmouth A/S  
Patrol Force.)

Take up night patrol as in my 201300 and 201301, neither to  
all. Acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201622A to M.T.Bs. 733, 747, 731.)  
Continue present search HARGOOD, SPRAGGE start search in  
my 201300 at 2300. HARGOOD, BRILLIANT acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201623A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol  
Force.)

Air Patrols. My 281728 para. 12. Night 20/21 patrol 5  
miles each side of 02° 15' W., by Liberator. Day 21 patrol 5  
miles by Swordfish of 842. Another patrol 5 miles each side of  
02° 15' W. by Swordfish of 838. 838 Sqdn. TBM. 842 Sqdn. LHG.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201742A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol  
Force.)

Continue present search until ordered comply with my  
231300 para. 4 not to LA SURPRISE then start west going search  
from 01° 15' W. on line Z Buoy to 180° Portland Bill 20.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 201916A to HARGOOD, SPRAGGE, LA  
SURPRISE.)

Shift patrol carry out Gamma search on line 01° 54' W.  
between 49° 50' and 50° 05' N.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 202135A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol  
Forces.)

E.G. 25. Proceed to Londonderry forthwith. Report why  
you have not complied with my 201121 and my last  
R/T signal.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 201739A to E.G. 25.)

Operations

West Coast France

F.F.I. My 081255 and 081845 both November. Request  
trawler IENA. confirmation that trawler IENA is still at  
Falmouth.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 201540A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Operations

Western Approaches

E.G. 3. C. in C. W.A. 191053.  
Arrived 3rd E.G. H.M. Frigates DUCKWORTH,  
ESSINGTON, BERRY, COOKE, ROWLEY and DOMMETT.  
(F.O.I.C.N.I., 200732A to C. in C. W.A.)

Possible U-Boat. NYASALAND attacked S/M contact at 0756A in  
position 50° 48' N., 08° 33' W. (2) Contact  
lost at 0822A. NYASALAND continuing to hunt.  
(S.O. E.G.18, 200832A to C. in C. W.A.)

/My ...

War Diary

20.12.1944  
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches

Possible  
U-Boat  
(Contd.)

My 200832. Contact regained at 0833A and lost again at 0848A.  
(2) Unless instructed otherwise NYASALAND is continuing search until dark and then proceeding.  
(3) Weather Report, 0854 2553. Unsuitable.  
(S.O. E.G.18, 201151A to C. in C. W.A.)

E.G.20.

F.O.G.M.A.181555.  
(1) Intend allocating for this service Escort Group 20 (comprising one River and five Maritime Frigates.) There are diesels in this group.  
(2) It is hoped to relieve the group periodically and F.O.G.M.A.'s remarks will be borne in mind.  
(C. in C. W.A., 201128A to C. in C. Med.)  
E.T.A. Lough Foyle Buoy 1300A/21st December.  
(S.O.E.G.20, 201130A to Com. D. W.A.)

Patrol.

F.O.I.C.Milford Haven is requested to sail 6th E.G. p.m/21st via Q.Z.S. 613 to patrol in area bounded by parallels 51° 20' N. and 50° 01' N., and meridians 10° 01' W. and 9° 15' W.  
(C. in C. W.A. 201154A to F.O.I.C.Milford Haven)



War Diary.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

Operation  
"Fretsaw"

Scapa departures C.S. 10 in DIADEM with MAURITIUS, MYNGS, SAVAGE, SIOUX and SCOURGE.  
(A.C.O.S. 201500 to Admty., C. in C. H.F.)

Operation  
"Synnove".

Successful. 20 recovered 11 men, 6 women, 3 children. Medical assistance required on arrival for one woman. E.T.A. 1800/21.  
(NARVIK 201530A to N.O.I.C. Lerwick.)

Patrols.

"F.D. 52" completed by RUBIS, who is now clear of area. Amend northern limits of your patrol area to 059° 10' N.  
(S/M 9 202247A to VENTURER.)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Convoy  
J.W. 63.

Your 191622. The Russian submarine chasers who attempted to start with J.S. 62 last month were unable to face the weather experienced on passage to Faroes.

(2) The conditions for the next convoy in January can be expected to be no better.

(3) I am strongly of the opinion that these submarine chasers should not be included in convoy at this time of the year. If however, it is decided by Admiralty that risk should be taken I consider max. number in any one convoy should not exceed 8 also should they become scattered escort cannot be expected to leave convoy to search for them.

(C. in C. H.F. 200954A to Admty.)

Arrived LACKLAN. Your 191451 refers.

(N.O.I.C. Lamdash 201740A to F.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

Schnorkel  
obstructors.

Your 191616 concur.

(2) In view of the proximity of routes used by Home Fleet Forces to the proposed position of the obstruction it is important that it should be securely anchored.

(C. in C. H.F. 201124A to Admty.)

Your 191616A December para. 3. Propose first lay on meridian 01° W. between 61° 12' N. and 61° 42' N.

(C. in C. Rosyth 201326 to Admty.)

Patrols.

SLEUTH now waiting for working up patrol has been recalled and will be sailed for East Indies to work up on arrival. C. in C. Rosyth 191405 refers.

War Diary.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Patrols.  
(Contd.)

(2) I wish to emphasise that the working up patrol for a newly commissioned submarine is not only an item of her intensive three months programme, but it is the culminating period of her training by which the individual officers and men are welded into one close working team. After the patrol the well practised services at submarine 3's disposal carry out any necessary adjustments and repairs and the submarine is then ready in all respects for operations against the enemy. I am therefore opposed to any suggestion that the working up patrol should be carried out away from Home waters.

*Carried S/M*

(3) As an alternative to the present one an area off the Norwegian coast north of 64° N. is suggested though its use may impose greater restrictions on aircraft operations than is now the case. At present there are restrictions east of the Orkneys for two days passage for each patrol apart from which air patrols can operate to a distance of 95 miles east of the Pentland Firth. For the Norwegian coast patrol some six days passage restrictions would be in force on each occasion in addition to the passage and patrol restrictions for operational patrols. As there are eight submarines to work up in the next three months the magnitude of the restrictions across a main enemy route will therefore need careful balancing against those imposed by the area now in use. (F.O. S/M 201302A to Admty.)

Mining.

Deep mining  
off Hartland  
Point.

Carry out operation "H.Y.A. 4" at 1445/21st Dec.  
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 201123A to PLOVER.)

Minesweeping  
of Downs-  
Ostend  
Channel.

Search is completed to depth of 8 fathoms negative result for mines. One very old conical float with 3 cutters attached recovered in my sweep, position cut not known. FROLIC parted sweep approx. position 51° 22' N. 02° 34' E. possibly on another. Proceeding for Small Downs.

Wind light airs sea 11 visibility 1 mile sea temperature 53  
Margate South Falls Buoy.

(FLORIZEL 201322A to C. in C. Nore.)

Your 201322. Weather permitting proceed to Harwich tomorrow  
Thursday reporting E.T.A.

(C. in C. Nore 201659A to FLORIZEL.)

M.S.F. 18.

READY, HOUND, RATTLESNAKE, ONYX, COCKATRICE and HARRIS sail at 0830A tomorrow Thursday via Q.Z.S. 446, 468 to comply with C. in C. Nore's 181554A and 191513A.  
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 201658A to M.S. 18.)

War Diary.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Port Facilities.

Barry Roads. Proposals to meet requirements in para. 3 of F.O.I.C. Cardiff's 101010 are contained in my 181945 para. 1A a.m. 200155 refers.  
(C. in C. W.A. 201513A to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

Routing from Far Shore. Subject to remarks of A.N.C.X.F. as to whether delays in turn round involved can be accepted concur that ocean going ships should return in convoy.  
(2) Coasters should continue to return independently for the present when time would be gained thereby. Situation will be reviewed in the light of experience.  
(A.C.N.S.(U.T.) 201300A to C. in C. Portsmouth, A.N.C.X.F., C.T.F. 125.)

Your 181013A and F.O.B.A.A's 201104A. Pending buoyage Q.Z.S. 648 loaded vessels from Downs for Pasture now proceed independently via J Channel and Q.Z.S. 619. Ships routed by reciprocal suffer little additional risk until U-Boat situation necessitates reintroduction of convoys ships from East Calvados area for Dieppe or Downs should be sailed direct.  
(C.T.F. 201715 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

C. in C. Portsmouth's 191854. Concur that U-Boat threat justifies convoying homeward bound ships from Cherbourg as a temporary measure.

(2) Consider situation should be kept continually under review and independent sailings resumed if threat does not materialise.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 201800 to Admty.)

E.N/W.N. convoys. Additional trawlers asked for in your 171325 are not available. To enable escorts to proceed through to Belfast with every third convoy it is proposed that only six E.N/W.N. convoys should be sailed each month.

(2) Request you will confirm that this programme is acceptable with present number of escorts.  
(D.T.D. 201545A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

T.B.C/  
B.T.C.  
convoys. Amend para. 4 of my 041938A. Commodores and their staffs will be accommodated in the Isle of Wight as arranged by N.C.S.O. Cowes.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 201730 to Admty.)

Army Leave ships sailings. British and U.S. Army leave from N.W. Europe commences as follows:-  
British (a) 1000 men daily from Calais to Folkestone in one ship from 1st January to 3rd January inclusive.  
(b) 3000 men daily from Calais from 4th January onwards in three ships each carrying 1000 men and proceeding to Dover, Folkestone and Harwich. It will, however, be necessary to use two smaller ships for Harwich on occasion.

/ (c) ...

War Diary.

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

- Army Leave (c) U.S. 1000 men daily from 1st January onwards  
ships sailings. in one ship from Havre to Southampton.  
(Contd.) (2) Return trips will be made as follows:-  
(a) Folkestone to Calais 1000 men daily commencing  
10th January.  
(b) Dover to Calais and Harwich to Calais 1000  
men each daily commencing 13th January.  
(c) Southampton to Havre 1200 men daily commencing about 11th  
January.  
(3) The programme of sailings must be governed by:-  
(a) tidal conditions at Calais, (b) tidal conditions at Folkestone,  
(c) the desirability of daylight arrivals at and departures from  
Harwich. To commence with, the Army authorities are making shore  
arrangements to suit arrivals and departures between 0800A and  
1700A.  
(4) Owing to tidal limitations it will be necessary for ships to  
leave Calais both by day and by night. As soon as Masters have had  
sufficient experience of this harbour it is intended that they  
shall also enter Calais by night when necessary in order to maintain  
a daily service.  
(5) Temporary navigational lights will be rigged at Calais before  
the end of December. Dimmed working dock lights will be required  
for assisting in embarkation and disembarkation at all ports  
mentioned in para. 1.  
(6) When leave commences on 1st January a duty service Tilbury  
to Ostend and return with an average lift of 1500 men per day will  
be started leaving Tilbury and Ostend on 1st January. This will  
take the place of existing N.A.P. and A.N.P. convoys.  
(7) U.S. leave ships will sail in company with existing W.V.P.  
and V.W.P. convoys. It is anticipated that the turn round at  
Havre will take 4 to 5 hours. W.V.P. convoys arrive Havre at  
about 1100. It will therefore be necessary to postpone the sailing  
of return V.W.P. convoys to about 1530.  
(8) Naval authorities concerned are requested to make all necessary  
arrangements.  
(A.C.N.S.(H) 201854A to Cs. in C. Portsmouth, Nore, V.A. Dover,  
A.N.C.X.F.)

478

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

GUNASON GUNASON relieved by WOLVERINE at 2300 19th. in 35.30 N. 13.00 W. All times Z. Departs at 18.5 knots for Ponta Delgada. Passes through 36.33 N. 25.31 W. Thence direct. Will require about 66000 gallons Navy special fuel. E.T.A. 1200/21st. Crosses Chop at 0400 21st. Hold Q.B.A. 140. Area searched from 09.30 17th. to 2300 19th. bounded by following points: (A) 35.35 N. 13.25 W. (B) 35.30 N. 12.25 W. (C) 33.55 N. 13.20 W. (D) 33.55 N. 12.20 W. Results negative. F.O.G.M.A. pass to all. (GUNASON 200011Z to Comnavzores, S.B.N.O. Azores)

U/B A.G./A.C. 34, 20 Dec. U/Boat sighted on surface by T/220 8, in 42 degs. 08 N. 19 degs. 51 W. at 0141Z, C.O. 290 degs, 10 knots. (247 200210Z to H.Q.C.C. 15 Group)

Patrol "Sausage", E.G.39 If not in contact leave Patrol Bacon forthwith and proceed to westward to carry out lap abreast A/S Patrol through following positions. All N. and W. unless otherwise indicated: K. 036 degs. 50' 008 degs. 30', F. 036 degs. 50' 009 degs. 00', G.034 degs. 20' 009' 00'. L. 034' 20' 008' 30'.  
2. This patrol will in future be referred to as Patrol "Sausage".  
3. Whilst on patrol the S.O.E.G. is to report as follows:- (A) At 0800A daily percentage of fuel remaining and daily consumption. (B) P.C.S. every 12 hours. (C) Whether state of sea suitable, unsuitable, for Schnorkel. (F.O.G.M.A. 201133A to S.O.E.G. 39)

GOLDEN FLEECE, Re your 171439A/Dec. and C. in C. W.A.'s  
FLYING FISH 151627Z/Dec., request route from Horta. (S.B.N.O. Azores 201212Z to Admty.)

KILMARTIN MIRROR KILMARTIN is being sailed to Casablanca for acid cleaning of evaporators.  
2. On completion KILMARTIN will be available to act as escort for MIRROR.  
3. Request C.M.S.F. will sail MIRROR to Dakar unless otherwise ordered by F.O.C.W.Af.  
4. Request F.O.C.W.Af. will relieve KILMARTIN as escort to MIRROR as soon as possible and C.M.S.F. include order for KILMARTIN to return to Gibraltar on relief.  
5. Following signals not to all refer. A.M. 240227 Nov. 122050 Dec. and C. in C. Med's 140857 Dec. (F.O.G.M.A. 201227A to C.M.S.F., F.O.C.W.A.)

FOGG and L.S.T. 359 torpedoed Following received from U.S.S. FOGG torpedoed with L.S.T. 359 at 42.03 N. 19.19 W. (Ends). T.O.O. 201200Z.  
2. Aircraft now in area and have been ordered to report to Senior Officer Escort. (S.B.N.O. Azores 201231Z to Admty.)

/Task...

20.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

FOGG and  
 L.S.T. 359  
 torpedoed  
 (Contd.)

Task Group 27.5 position at 1240Z 42.03 N. 25.17 W. Can we be of assistance, reference D.681 message 201200? Am proceeding reference position Am not required at Plymouth until about 27th Dec. (C.T.G.27.5, 201309, to S.B.N.O. Azores, Info. F.O.G.M.A.)  
 Your 201309 being passed to all addressees.

2. Affirmative.
3. Unless otherwise ordered by Admiralty proceed with all despatch to carry out hunt.
4. Request you keep me informed of your movements and intentions.
5. Assume Codeword "Corner" 587.
6. Set W/T Watch on Gibfox.
7. Admty. pass to H.Q.C.C.

(F.O.G.M.A. 201817A to T.G.27.5)

Request you sail SALVONIA forthwith to assistance of C.T.G.27.4 aircraft P.G. J.23. 201700Z refers.

(F.O.G.M.A. 201447A to S.B.N.O. Azores)

Returned aircraft reports one L.S.T. torpedoed and sunk by gun fire, one escort vessel torpedoed and in tow S.N.O.'s opinion that there were two U-Boats in vicinity of the attack. My 201231 refers.

(S.B.N.O. Azores 202038Z to Admty., F.O.G.M.A.)

FOGG under two by CHINABERRY proceeding Horta speed 5, L.T. 643 assisting, L.C.I. 419 standing by. Am escorting in LEE FOX.

Have directed JEFFERY join me. On joining she will escort FOGG Group. Unless otherwise directed C.T.G. 27.4 in FOX will rejoin convoy. My 2100Z position 41.49 N. 19.54 W. F.O.G.M.A. 201817A, assume T.G. 27.5 will take over hunt. L.S.T.359 broke in two at 1800Z. Personnel were removed about 1100Z. (sic, ? 1700).

(C.T.G. 27.4, 202140Z, to S.B.N.O. Azores pass to F.O.G.M.A.)

Position 2112Z 42.07 N. 20.48 W. course 109, speed 17. At 0200Z course 049 through 41.50 18 (746) thence 41.36 18.30, 41.23 18.49, 41.37 19.05. Will remain near center of aircraft search area.

(C.T.G. 27.5, 202215Z, to F.O.G.M.A., (R) S.B.N.O. Azores)

Estimate U-boat moving Southeast.

(F.O.G.M.A. 202217A to C.T.G.27.5)

Add T.G. 27.4 as infor addressee to my 201817 to whom signal has been passed. Admty. pass to H.Q.C.C.

(F.O.G.M.A. 202253A)

EURYALUS  
 RIMUTAKA

P.C.S. at 1200Z Dec. 20th 037 degs. 57' N. 010 degs. 27' W. 161 degs. 13.9 knots.

2. E.T.A. Gibraltar breakwater 1300Z 21st Dec.

3. Further signal will be made when I receive H.R.H.'s wishes.

(EURYALUS 201250Z to F.O.G.M.A., (R) C. in C. Med.)

Berth for RIMUTAKA suitable draught 29 feet.

(2) Following for Governor Gib. from Brigadier Schrieber (Begins.)

Regret ship's arrival delayed by bad weather. H.R.H. will disembark 1430 G.M.T. tomorrow Dec. 21st and would like to carry out sight seeing programme. H.R.H. will stay at Malta 4 hours to allow escort to refuel but subject to Naval authority estimated arrival at Malta possibly by 0700A December 25th. He would like to dine ashore with you at 2000 G.M.T. re-embarking approximately 2230 T.O.O. 1317 (Ends.)

(EURYALUS 201450Z to F.O.G.M.A. (R) C. in C. Med.)

War Diary20.12.1944  
WednesdayFOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic - Contd.

WEST POINT Passed East to West 19th 2000 U.S.S. WEST POINT, Norfolk 26th.  
(Gibraltar, 201259A to Admty.)

Portuguese Portuguese Sloop AFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE and Portuguese Sloop BARTOLOMEU DIAS left 20th movements, Funchal December.  
(N.C.S.O. Funchal, 201347 to Admty., for D.N.I. and S.O.'I) Gibraltar.)

ATHENE, Intend to sail ATHENE (S.O.) escorted by PRIMULA PRIMULA. at 1800A December 21st to U.K.  
(2) Route (RS) 35.59 N. 06.10 W.  
(RT) 36.55 N. 09.05 W. (RU) 38.40 N. 09.45 W.  
(RV) 43.20 N. 09.45 W. (RW) 49.00 N. 06.59 W.

Thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth.  
(3) Destinations ATHENE to Clyde, PRIMULA to Portsmouth.  
(4) S. of A. 13 knots.  
(5) Codeword "Newborn" 852.  
(6) Ships shift to Home Station W/T organisations at 1500A Dec. 23rd.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 201657A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

40th E.G. Intend to sail 40th E.G. consisting of BALLINDERRY (S.O.) BERGAMOT and CYCLAMEN as additional escort to M.K.S.72 to approx. 43° N. My 201449 passed to S.B.N.O. Azores and 40th E.G. refers.  
(2) BALLINDERRY will (act?) as S.O. Escort until detached.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 201717A to Admty.)

South Atlantic

Stores, Your letter 20th Nov. No. 803/7/42. Request immediate requirements for stay tubes for ISLES Freetown. and DANCE classes be stated having regard to the generally longer life expected for stay tubes as compared with plain tubes, and disposition of forces referred to in my 152153A December not to Commodore-in-Charge Freetown.  
(Director of Stores, 200353A to F.O.C.W.Af.)

Independent Independent sailings for Gibraltar are to cease Sailings from 22nd December, ships being held for inclusion stopped. in convoy.  
(F.O.C.W.A. 200933Z to Comar Dakar, (R) F.O.G.M.A., Admty.) Sailings resumed, see F.O.C.W.A. 211952Z.

20.12.1944.

Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- UNSWERVING defect. Complete failure lubricating oil pressure port engine. No apparent damage. On restarting engine overloaded at 800 revolutions running light, oil pressure normal. Number 3 bottom end bearing white metal cracked not wiping examination. Continuing. Final result will be signalled. P.C.S. 034° 56' N. 020° 50' E. 103°, 4½.  
(UNSWERVING 200155B to Capt. (S) 1, (R) F.O.L.E.M.)
- GRADISCA. F.O. Telegram number 2355 of 18th December para. 3E Permission for GRADISCA visit Marseilles cannot be granted.  
(C. in C. Med. 201201A to Admty.)
- LAMERTON, QUANTOCK. LAMERTON is to replace ALDENHAM in the S/M (?5th intended) D.F. and becomes Capt. (D) 5th D.F.  
(2) QUANTOCK becomes S.O. 57th Destroyer Division.  
(C. in C. Med. 201454A to F.O.T.A.L.I. (Taranto))
- MUSKETEER, Skiathos. My 082202. Strongly recommend small garrison with minor naval W/T link at Skiathos where E.L.A.S. detachment is very (?weak) and population pro-British to a man.  
(2) E.L.A.S. wish to change lighthouse keeper at Repl but have not yet dared against will of population. Therefore interference improbable to date.  
(3) E.L.A.S. have W/T transmitter Skiathos.  
(MUSKETEER 201620B to S.B.N.O. Greece.)
- NIBLACK. Unless otherwise directed NIBLACK departs Toulon 0800A/22 for Gulf de Napoule arriving 1100A/22. Conflanfor approves.  
(NIBLACK 201709A to WOOLSEY, FORTUNE, Comar Toulon, Premar Three.)
- METEOR, Kalamata. Situation at Kalamata tenses. Leaders of E.A.M. are away and E.L.A.S. is in control.  
(2) Have circumstantial evidence that a reign of terror exists and a purge is in progress. From today leave was stopped, E.L.A.S. reason being they could not control their hot heads. Real reason probably liberty men were becoming too popular. Tried to counteract by opening ship to visitors but E.L.A.S. guard stopped crowd boarding M.L. Purport of preamble 171537 para. 3 has been well (missing groups).  
(METEOR 201722B to S.B.N.O. Greece.)
- Situation report No. 511. (1) Adriatic. Relations at Zara with shore authorities remain unchanged officially but subordinates are being more helpful.  
(2) Greece. At Piraeus situation is quiet. The harbour is again being used to unload cargo which

/has...



482

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Situation has for some time previously been discharged  
report No. 511. (corrupt group) much (?difficulty) despite naval  
(Contd.) bombardment. Population liberated areas has  
expressed relief at elimination of E.L.A.S. and  
thankful for Allied aid. C.S. 15 has taken over  
control of naval bombarding forces providing  
support for Army in Piraeus - Athens area.  
(3) Other reports are as follows: Kalamata very pro-British.  
Salonika quiet. Volo (?Much) easier.  
(C. in C. Med. 201749A.)

SUPERWORKER, Board of enquiry held today found loss of  
(capsized SUPERWORKER to be due to leak the cause of which  
17th Dec.) could not be determined. All towing arrangements  
were satisfactory.  
(2) Intend to sail remainder of vessels in my  
151021 (not to all) about 27th after making good  
minor defects in tugs.  
(Com. Aden 201325Z to C. in C. E.I.)

Cositintrep F.X. 71943 cipher 20th December 279339.  
No. 530 part 4. Greece. 19 Dec. Athens/Piraeus. An armoured  
force sent to relieve the garrison at Air H.Q.  
Greece at Kifisa found that the rebels had over-  
run the H.Q. and captured most of the personnel.  
100 R.A.F. and Army personnel were rescued including 30 wounded.  
Further progress has been made in clearing the area between  
Faliron and Athens.  
(A.F.H.Q. 202034A to W.O.)

War Diary20.12.1944  
WednesdayFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

PORPOISE  
R. of P.                      PORPOISE 3rd Far East Patrol.  
(1) Laid 49 mines.  
(2) 10th Dec. North Malacca Strait sank large junk by demolition. 6 Malay survivors.  
(C. in C. E.I. 200117Z to Admty.)

TANTIVY  
R. of P.                      TANTIVY 8th Far East Patrol.  
(2) During north passage Lombok Strait on night of 2nd/3rd Dec. forced-dived and sustained an accurate but not damaging depth-charge attack by 3 M/Ls. Retired and made passage next night.  
(3) A series of major defects to main engine caused TANTIVY to abandon patrol on 6th Dec. arriving Fremantle 16th.  
(C. in C. E.I. 200118Z to Admty.)

STURDY  
R. of P.                      STURDY 4th Far East patrol.  
(2) 25th Nov. in 003 degs. 38' S. 115 degs. 37' E. disabled by gunfire 350 ton Japanese coaster carrying oil. Later this ship destroyed by demolition.  
(3) 26th Nov. vicinity Bawean Island sank 100 ton schooner and 80 ton trading PRAU by demolition.  
(4) 29th Nov. same vicinity by gunfire sank 2 80 ton armed Luggers  
(5) 1st Dec. missing with 2 torpedoes then sank by gunfire 400 ton coaster carrying coolie labour, in position 169 degs. 34' S. 118 degs. 55' E. 2 Malay survivors.  
(6) 2nd December sunk by gunfire and demolition 300 ton naval auxiliary vessel one Malay survivor.  
(7) 5th Dec. in position 005 degs. 05' S. 119 degs. E. sank by demolition 40 ton rice loaded yawl.  
(8) STURDY arrived Fremantle 15th Dec. after 33 days at sea.  
(C. in C. E.I. 200123Z to Admty.)

ERITREA.                      C. in C. E.I.'s 301114 and C. in C. Med's 021206 neither to B.A.D: ERITREA should return to East Indies station on completion of refit.  
(2) B.A.D. is requested to inform Cominch and F.O.T.A.L.I. to clear with Italian authorities.  
(Hd. of M. Approved A.C.N.S.(F), 200240A to C. in C. E.I. C. in C. Med. B.A.D., F.O.T.A.L.I.)

U-Boat  
dispositions.                Indian Ocean. SS. MILLEN GRIFFITH reported sighting a periscope in 019 degs. 16' S. 089 degs. 50' E. at 0730 F.G/19th.  
Areas V.P.1, V.P.2 and C.B.2 (North of 005 degs N. through East of 080 degs. E.) no fresh information. Reduce scale of X 5 P other areas no change.  
(C. in C. E.I. 200404Z)

RENOWN  
ammunition.                A.M.161803. Concur that RENOWN should embark 501 CPC shells.  
(2) Further signal will be made concerning APC.  
(3) D.D.A.S.E.T. has cancelled shipment of 361 CPC to Ceylon.  
(C. in C. E.I. 200458Z to Admty.) /TROMP...

20.12.1944  
WednesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies - Contd.

TROMP. D.S. TROMP has been transferred from 4th C.S. and will join 5th C.S. after her return to E.I.S.  
 (2) Office of F.O. 5th C.S. is temporarily in abeyance. In the meantime D.S. TROMP will be administered by S.O. 61 Force (R.A. Read).  
 (3) Correspondence and signals should be addressed accordingly.  
 (C. in C. E.I. 201117Z to DS.TROMP)

FRITILLARY. Sailed FRITILLARY to Durban through following positions:  
 (G) 012 degs. 15' S. 047 degs. 05' E.  
 (H) 015 degs. 48' S. 043 degs. 27' E.  
 (J) 016 degs. 49' S. 041 degs. 29' E. (?thence) direct.  
 (2) E.T.A. (706)00Z/24th Dec. S. of A. 13 knots.  
 (3) Shifting to Broadcast S/L 1200Z/22nd Dec.  
 (4) Latest messages held Q.C.B. 278 Q.G.A. 188 missing 187.  
 (5) C. in C. E.I. Station 110604 refers. (N.T. in W.R.)  
 (N.O.I.C. Diego Suarez, 201131 to Admty. etc.)

Landing 200345Z L.S.I.(L) L.S.T. and L.C.T.5 referred to  
 Craft in your T.O.O.282359 Nov. may be required to take  
 Operation. part in an operation shortly after their arrival.  
 Request I be informed state of training of craft crews.  
 (S.A.C.S.E.A. 201145FG to Admty (R) C. in C. E.I.F.) Reply: 222237A.

A.F.D.17. Sailed A.F.D. 17 in tow of LARIAT to Cochin escorted by BUGLOSS at 0900Z/20th to comply with your 131027 (not to all).  
 (2) Routed through following positions:  
 (L) 012 degs. 10' N. 046 degs. 50' E.  
 (M) 013 degs. 05' N. 054 degs. 16' E.  
 (N) 009 degs. 36' N. 072 degs. 10' thence to Cochin.  
 (3) E.T.A. Cochin 0300Z/5th Jan. S. of A. 5 knots.  
 (4) BUGLOSS keeping constant watch on broadcast V and LARIAT 2 Operators period 500 K/cs shifting to read Bams. BUGLOSS reporting P.C.S. and fuel remaining every 48 hours to C. in C. E.I.S. repeated N.O.I.C. Cochin, N.O.I.C.Aden. LARIAT holding recognition signal up to 12th Jan.  
 (5) Last messages Q.C. 119, Q.C.A.414, Q.C.B.278, Q.C.H.197, Q.C.Y.4, W.C.A.149, W.C.B.24, Y.660.  
 (6) Convoy radio distinguishing group 9 E.  
 (N.O.I.C.Aden, 201653Z to C. in C. E.I.)

485

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies.

T.F.65, Task Force 65 dissolved. Task Group 60.1  
T.G.60.1. hereby constituted Capt. Headden in KNIGHT,  
Comdesdiv 6 in SELFRIDGE, Comcortdiv 46 in  
PRIDE, Copadiv 46 McCOOK, UNIONTOWN? Escort  
U.G.S.65 departing New York and Hampton Roads 28th-29th Dec.  
to Europa Point, escorts then to Oran. Task Group 60.1 Capt.  
Headden in KNIGHT, McCOOK, NEWELL, FALGOUT LOWE return  
escorting G.U.S.66 when directed by C. in C.Med. On arrival  
ORAK (?Oran) SELFRIDGE, UNIONTOWN?, PRIDE, MENGES, MOSLEY  
deleted from T.G.60.1 and reconstituted as T.G.60.2. Commander  
Moore in SELFRIDGE return escorting G.U.S.67 when directed by  
C. in C.Med. CHIWAWA will be Bermuda station, tanker  
MATTAFONI Eastern Terminus A.O. C. in C.Lant speed letter 03129  
of 4th November not to all refers. Captain Headden retain  
present communication team.  
(Cinclant, 200247Z to C.T.F.65).

H.X.323. Average speed 9.2 knots. Off Fastnet at  
0600Z/12. All arrived.  
(D.T.D. 201202A to Com.10, N.S.H.Q.).

U-Boat Estimates.  
dispositions. (N.S.H.Q., 201332Z, Cominch 201512Z).

S/M. attack D.(1) Lib. C/10 four disappearing Radar contacts  
and sighting 43.54 N. 58.40 W. 1057 to 1112Z/19th.  
summary. (2) H.M.C.S. GANANOQUE attack on doubtful Asdic  
contact about 47.31 N. 59.19 W. 0940Z/19th.  
(N.S.H.Q., 201401Z to Admty., Cominch).

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M. attack For 24 hours to 0900Z 20th Dec.  
and sighting Para.A.  
summary. (1) CAMPANIA aircraft attacked U-Boat at 1630Z/  
13th December in 70° 43' N. 08° 07' E.  
(2) NYASALAND attacked contact at 0656Z 20th  
December in 50° 48' N. 08° 33' W.  
(3) Aircraft T/407 sighted U-Boat course 085° at 0619Z 20th  
December in 49° 22' N. 04° 42' W.  
(4) P.S. PIORUN attacked contact 1156Z 19th December in 49°  
44' N. 04° 04' W.  
(5) Aircraft K/228 reported possible periscope at 0045A/20th  
December in 49° 15' N. 04° 54' W.  
(6) Aircraft T/220 attacked U-Boat on surface course 290° at  
0141Z/20th December in 42° 08' N. 19° 51' W.  
Para.B.  
(1) A/C T/311 obtained A.S.V. contact at 1048Z/19th December in  
/59°...

20.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M. attack 59° 15' N. 03° 24' W.  
and sighting (2) MILLEN GRIFFITH sighted probable periscope  
summary at 0100Z/19th December in 19° 16' S. 89° 50' E.  
(Contd.) (3) Aircraft P/422 obtained A.S.V. contact at  
1925Z/19th December in 49° 08' N. 04° 38' W.  
(4) M.T.B.737 obtained possible U-Boat contact at  
0155Z 20th December in 50° 15' N. 01° 24' W.

Para.C.

(1) Aircraft B/228 obtained A.S.V. contact at 2220/19th Dec.  
in 49° 42' N. 04° 18' W.  
(2) Aircraft Q/10 obtained A.S.V. contact at 0045Z 19th Dec.  
in 41° 51' N. 55° 12' W.  
(D.D.I.C., 201208A to Cominch N.S.H.Q.).

U-Boat Estimates.  
dispositions. (D.D.I.C., 201416A, 201420A).

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

North Sea.

1. The swept channel from the east coast and Southend to Boulogne is now buoyed and considered fit for use; only the buoy positions are as yet unchecked.

Channel.

2. (a) SS. EMPIRE OSBORNE strayed outside the swept channel off Le Havre and was mined, but was towed into port.  
(b). S.O. First Escort Group is confident that he has mortally hit his U-Boat off Falmouth although he has no physical evidence to shew except a little oil. Later he found another bottomed contact between the Start and Casquets, about which he is hopeful.  
(c) LOCH SHIN has observed a schnorkel 20 miles south of St. Catherines, but although joined by MELBREAK and WATCHMAN lost her contact.  
(d) Dieppe can now handle a personnel ship and a hospital carrier simultaneously.

Foreign Stations.

North Atlantic.

Duke of Gloucester.

3. The cruiser EURYALUS, escorting H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester and party in the RIMUTAKA, arrived at Gibraltar today.

South Atlantic.

Shipping.

4. Independent sailings northward were ordered at 1952 to be resumed. Ships for M.K.S. convoys are to be routed to Casablanca, but given an onward route to Gibraltar to enable them to be diverted at sea if required.

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean.

Greece.

5. (a) During today, further positions astride the Athens-Faliron Road were occupied by our troops, but the road is not yet open for unarmoured vehicles by day (as was previously reported.) There was an increase of enemy mortaring and shelling in the Piraeus. The W/T station was mortared and Navy House, Miaoulis Quay Naval H.Q. and Port Aux Mahones shelled spasmodically, with no material damage. Discharge of cargo continue at an average daily rate of 800 tons but civil labour has deserted. The cruiser AJAX carried out a half hour bombardment.

(b) At Kalamata, British liberty men were becoming so popular ashore that E.L.A.S. asked the METEOR not to give shore leave. A counter measure of opening the ship to visitors failed as E.L.A.S. guards prevented people boarding.

(c) At Mitylene, the situation is easier, following the arrival of the cruiser SIRIUS.

Greek shipping.

6. The situation as regards E.L.A.N. shipping remains confused. Orders still in force direct that it is to be seized and handed over to the Royal Hellenic Navy, but the Flag Officer, Levant and Eastern Mediterranean, says it is inadvisable to put this into operation in certain areas, and enforcement has had to be left to the discretion of the Naval Commander on the spot.

Riviera.

7. Since the 19th, the U.S. destroyer WOOLSEY and French destroyer L'ALCYON have fired at railway stations and bridges. Many direct hits on the targets were observed.

Adriatic.

8. R.P. Beaufighters escorted by Spitfires sank a 100 ft. vessel west of Cape Salvore (Gulf of Trieste), and strafed a stationary tug.

America & West Indies.

SAMTUCKY,  
torpedoed.

9. The British SS. SAMTUCKY, New York for the Downs, in H.H.X. 327, was damaged by an explosion, in No. 4 hold, in 44.22 N. 63.23 W. west of the Sambro Light Vessel, and returned to Halifax. A torpedo attack is considered very probable.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia & New Zealand.

C. in C. B.P.F.10. Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser reports having had most cordial meetings with Admiral Nimitz and his staff. The British Pacific Fleet is to operate normally as a separate task force under Admirals Spruance or Halsey, with a base at Manus. Admiral Nimitz promises its participation in his most advanced operations as soon as it is ready.

Force X.

11. The C. in C. British Pacific Fleet, suggests that Force X (combined operations vessels) should be withdrawn from American control in the Pacific as soon as the agreement for the loan of it expires at the end of the year. It is not being used operationally. The future of the force is being discussed between the Admiralty and Cominch.



War Diary21.12.1944  
ThursdayHOME COMMANDSDefence of United Kingdom

Reduction of Orkney and Shetland gun defences. A.M. 191246 Dec.  
(1) Concur para. 2.  
(2) Para.4. Post War Policy as regards defences has not been promulgated to me. Depending on such decision the following batteries now in care and maintenance should be considered for dismantling.

Scalloway - 2 in number 4" naval. Greenhead - 2 in number 4" naval. Lerwick North - 2 12 pounder H.A. LA.

Lerwick South - 2 12 pounder H.A. L.A.

Merkab of Sound - 2 6 inch naval

Rerwick - 2 6 inch naval. Hoxa - 2 6 inch naval.

The above include all Searchlights except 2 at Merkab of Sound Shetlands. As regards reduction of the above ref. A.M. 011356 October refers.

(3) The 6 pounder and 12 pounder now remaining at Scapa entrance together with their searchlights are essential for the defence of the base against submarines and midgets. The two 6 inch at Stanger and Merkab are desirable for defence against submarines their present manning has already been reduced to a minimum, but if further reductions are essential these guns could be reduced to care and maintenance but the retention of their searchlights is essential.

(A.C.O.S. 221220A to Admty.)

Movements

LORRAINE etc. Sailed F.S. LORRAINE, BASQUE, HOVA and SOMALI.  
(2) My 201812 refers.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 210022A to C.T.F.125)

NEWFOUNDLAND. NEWFOUNDLAND sailed 1938A/20th from Greenock to Gibraltar speed 23 knots. My 201453 refers.  
(C. in C. W.A. 210108A to Admty.)

DUQUESNE. My 201812. Sailed DUQUESNE and MELBREAK.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 210928A to C.T.F.125)

RAVAGER. Port boiler out of action tubes burst. Intend proceeding Rosyth 10 knots. E.T.A. May Island 0900A Friday 22nd.  
(RAVAGER, 211146A to C. in C. Rosyth)

PUNCHER. PUNCHER is expected to complete repairs and re-embark 821 squadron on December 28th. No rate practices either light or with torpedoes have been carried out from PUNCHER. Ship will require further 5 weeks for work up and she will be due for Boiler cleaning at end of that time. Anticipated ready for service date about February 15th.  
(2) State of Squadron with regard to deck landings and other operational requirements from a fully worked up C.V.E. can be signalled about mid-January.  
(F.O.C.T. 211317A to C. in C. H.F.)

War Diary

21.12.1944  
Thursday

HOME COMMANDS

Movements.

KENT. Clyde arrival KENT.  
(F.O.I.C.Greenock, 211436A to A.C.O.S.)

Operations

North Sea

Situation Reports. Cositintrep No.261 Part 4.  
Discharged by sea - 24 hour period ending  
1600A/20th December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (inc. Coal)	<u>Bulk Pol</u>
Antwerp	-	471	7,704	-
Ostend	12	-	1,604	-
Boulogne	106	98	492	-
Dieppe	54	-	3,010	-
Caen	-	-	991	-
Ghent	-	-	80	-
Calais	-	3	-	-
Totals:	172	572	13,881	-

U.S. North

Antwerp	-	-	13,809	-
Cherbourg	2,511	492	5,375	2,710
Le Havre	71	125	6,591	-
Rouen	576	385	4,521	180
Granville	-	-	554	-
Totals:	3,158	1,002	30,850	2,890

(S.H.A.E.F.211315A to Admty.)

150 Panzer Brigade interesting formation completely disguised as American tank unit and intended to seize bridge across Meuse implying intention to cross. Example of dirty methods being used by enemy in final all out effort. Has also used troops in civilian clothes and has been shooting prisoners. (S.H.A.E.F. 211600A to War Office)

Patrols. Nore night dispositions - December 21st to 22nd  
Humber Force Nil.  
Harwich Force. (Group 3) Patrol - 3 RUTHERFORD,  
4 EGLINTON, 5 WIDGEON, 6 AGUILLEMOT, 12 HAMBLEDON,  
14 CURZON, 16 RIOU, 18 PUFFIN, 19 THORNBORO, and WALPOLE.  
Passage to Rosyth - CHARLESTOWN.  
(Group 4) Harbour. COTSWOLD, MACKAY, SLAZAK, CAICOS, EKINS,  
STAYNER, TORRINGTON, KITTIWAKE, MALLARD, SHEARWATER.  
Sheerness Force (Group 5) T.A.M. 25 LA COMBATTANTE, PYTCHLEY,  
A.T.M.17 COTTESMORE, COWDRAY. Patrol 1 MIDDLETON 2 VOLUNTEER.  
(Group 6) Harbour BLEASDALE, BLENCATHREA, VESPER, VIMY, LUDLOW,  
VERSATILE, CUBITT, HOLMES, DRUMHELLER, LOOSESTRIFE, ARMERIA,  
KINGCUP, STATICE. Antwerp, FERNIE.  
(C. in C. Nore, 211531A to Admty)

War Diary

21.12.1944  
Thursday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea - Contd.

S.N.O.B.O.P. (F), for F.O.B.A.A. to be under V.A. Dover only. From 0001/1st January S.N.O.B.O.P.(F) with Headquarters at Calais will assume responsibilities now held by F.O.B.A.A. in France.  
(2) Under present arrangements C. in C. Portsmouth is administratively responsible for ports in France lying opposite the Portsmouth Command, and V.A. Dover for Pas de Calais Ports. My 121151 October refers.  
(3) Whilst this has worked satisfactorily consider it desirable that S.N.O.B.O.P.(F) should have only one administrative authority with whom to deal. Moreover with the reduction of Arrow and Dieppe to R.N.O. status the bulk of naval commitments in France is concentrated in the Pas de Calais area.  
(4) Subject to your concurrence and Admiralty approval propose that V.A. Dover should assume administrative responsibility for all ports in France lying opposite to the Portsmouth and Dover Commands as from 0001/1st January.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 211915A to C. in C. Portsmouth, V.A. Dover)

Small craft for Ramsgate. Your 191703. It must be realised that requisitioned vessels are allocated in view of urgent claims elsewhere on New Construction craft.  
(2) Position is that 8 additional steam drifters, 4 M.F.V's and IXION have arrived, and balance of 3 vessels is due shortly.  
(3) IXION, KIRAB, DELPHIN, DEW, LORD COLLINGWOOD and M.F.V.137 are reputed to be in all respects efficient.  
(D.S.V.P. 212258A to C. in C. Nore.)

Operations

Channel

EMPIRE OSBORNE mined off Havre. EMPIRE OSBORNE mined at 1335/20th December out-bound from Seine River at outer entrance to Channel leading into river. Vessel has been towed into Le Havre. Stem blown off and ship buckled amidships. Casualties, one missing.  
(C.T.F.125, 210955 to A.N.C.X.F.)  
Cositintrep No.261 Part II Naval.  
EMPIRE OSBORNE mined at 1335/20 December outward bound from Seine River at Outer entrance to Channel leading into river. Vessel has been towed into Le Havre. Investigations show ship was mined outside swept channel.  
(A.N.C.X.F.212359A to Admty)

E.G.17. On completion of exercises p.m. December 23rd E.G.17 is to be sailed to Plymouth unless otherwise ordered by C. in C. Plymouth.  
(2) Admty. 191610 para.(B) refers.  
(C. in C. W.A. 211045A to T.C. Rockabill)

/Probable ...

493

21.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

Probable U-Boat. Am abandoning contact reported in my 201829. I have attacked it in daylight and am confident it is mortally hit but can raise no evidence other than traces of oil. It has never shown movement since first found but echo sounder traces have dimension of possible S/M and Asdic evidence is distinctly S/M.

(2) Second division definite no result of sweep, beyond datum and expect to commence Gamma at 1345. Am proceeding to overtake. BENTLEY in company.  
(S.O.E.G.1, 211145A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Patrols. At 1800 ships are to be in positions given.  
(2) SPRAGGE, HARGOOD, WATCHMAN, LOCH SHIN, PEVENSEY CASTLE, LAUNCESTON CASTLE on 01 degs. 54' W. spread 6 miles apart to South of 50 degs. 24' ships taking positions from North in sequence given.  
SPRAGGE at 50 degs. 24'.  
(3) PORTCHESTER CASTLE 49 degs. 48' 01 degs. 48' W.  
(4) KENILWORTH CASTLE 49 degs. 30' 01 degs. 00' W.  
(5) Acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 211246A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)  
Night Anti-Snort patrols 21st/22nd.  
My 051926 patrol areas limits given.  
(2) Start South West corner 1800 work back to North West corner 0830.  
(3) Area "X" 01 degs. 54' 00 degs. 40' W. 50 degs. 30' 49 degs. 54' divided into 6 strips by parallels 6 miles apart.  
(4) Ships take sections from North in sequence given in my 211246 para.2.  
(5) PORTCHESTER CASTLE area limits 01 degs. 48' 00 degs. 45' W. 49 degs. 54' 49 degs. 48'.  
(6) KENILWORTH CASTLE area limits 00 degs. 30' W. Parallels 49 degs. 42' 49 degs. 30' line 330 degs. from 49 degs. 30' 01 degs. 00'.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 211253A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
At 2200A/21 shift Gamma to between 49.47 N. 02.35 W. and 50.09 N. 02.35 W.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 211518A to S.O.E.G.1)  
(1) Estimate 2 L.S.I's Codeword "Barometer" escorted by STOCKHAM will leave Morlaix at 1400/22 proceeding to Le Havre at 14 knots by the following route. Position D. of Q.Z.S.579 49.30 N. 03.10 W. 315 Degs. Casquets 15. 000 degs. Alderney Light 15.  
(2) S.O. E.G.1 Detach 2 ships to R/V Barometer position D to act as additional escort and under orders of STOCKHAM as far as Q.Z.S.512.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 211520 to E.G.1, STOCKHAM)  
22nd Day Patrols. Ships 2 miles apart search areas limits given.  
(2) Area 0 4 miles each side H Channel 49 degs. 48' to 50 degs. 30' divided 3 sections by 50 degs. 00' 50 degs. 15'.

/ (3) ...

21.12.1944  
Thursday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel

Patrols. (Contd.) (3) KENILWORTH CASTLE, LAUGESTON CASTLE, PEVENSEY CASTLE, PORTCHESTER CASTLE, HARGOOD, SPRAGGE in pairs in sequence given, take sections from south.  
 (4) LOCH SHIN, WATCHMAN 02 degs. 10' 01 degs. 49' W. 50 degs. 30' 50 degs. 18'.  
 (5) ANTHONY, CROIX DE LORRAINE, relieve HARGOOD, SPRAGGE.  
 (6) No M.T.B. patrol.  
 (7) All ships anti-Gnat Zig-zag.  
 (C. in C. Portsmouth, 211632A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
 Air Patrols. My 281728 para.12 not to E.G.30.  
 A. Night 21st/22nd. None in Portsmouth Command.  
 Day 22nd. Patrols by Swordfish on 02 degs. 15' W. and east of H Channel. B. 838 Squadron S.R.P. 842 Squadron W.V.H.  
 (C. in C. Portsmouth 211912A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

Possible U-Boat. Observed Snorkel in position 050 degs. 10' 47" 001 degs. 33' W. attacking.  
 (LOCH SHIN, 211437A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
 My 211437 Snorkel bearing 200 degs. S/M dived estimated course 070 degs.  
 (LOCH SHIN, 211445A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
 PEVENSEY CASTLE, PORTCHESTER CASTLE join LOCH SHIN attacking Snort, in position 050 degs. 11' N. 001 degs. 33' W.  
 (C. in C. Portsmouths 211520A to S.O.E.G.30)  
 Hunting S/M reported by LOCH SHIN in position 029 degs.  
 CAP DE LA HAGUE 26.5 LOCH SHIN and WATCHMAN in company evidence promising.  
 (MELBREAK, 211525A to C's in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth)  
 My 211525 not in contact.  
 (MELBREAK, 211534A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
 My 211445 lost contact MELBREAK joined and has assumed S.O.  
 (LOCH SHIN, 211547 to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
 My 211525 Snorkel sighted by LOCH SHIN at 1425 Asdic contact lost, searching area in position 028 Cap de la Hague 27.  
 (MELBREAK, 211624 to C's in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth)  
 LOCH SHIN has lost contact. Am organising box and assumed S.O.  
 (S.O.E.G.30, 211710A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Verification of sunk U-Boat. Moored over position moored by MONTREAL sent diver down to bottom with powerful light at slack water but nothing seen. Diver had difficulties due to tide. Was blown up and is being treated for compressed air illness. Consider tidal conditions at position unsuitable for operation at this depth. Instructed R.M.L.350 to return to Penzance. Am returning to anchorage.  
 (TEDWORTH ?211630, 2111630A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Channel Island batteries. My 201829A para. WM amend range Channel Island batteries. Guernsey 28 miles, Alderney 13 miles.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 211705A to S.O.E.G.1)  
 My 211705A. Amend to read Guernsey 13 miles.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 211819A to S.O.E.G.1)

495

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel - Contd.

Second possible U-Boat. Am in contact with bottomed object in position 49° 53' N., 03° 06.8' W.  
 (2) Echo-sounder traces show height 24 feet, length 180 feet. Asdic recorder traces indifferent.  
 (3) Several attacks have raised oil and CAPEL's sample suggests diesel.  
 (4) Have checked and confirmed that non-submarine number 13 is in position 030° 2.2 miles from my contact.  
 (5) GARLIES with BENTLEY and GORE patrol in accordance with your 211518. Will remain in vicinity with CAPEL during dark hours to seek evidence in daylight.  
 (S.O. E.G.1, 212148A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

OperationsWest Coast France

F.F.I. trawler IENA. Your 201540A. Trawler IENA is at Plymouth.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 211846A to A.N.C.X.F.)

OperationsWestern Approaches

Possible U-Boat. Have submarine contact in position 049° 14' N., 008° 00' W.  
 (PHEASANT, 210039A to C. in C. W.A.)  
 My 210039A. A.C.I. 501, para. 3.  
 (a) PHEASANT, FOWEY.  
 (b) 0020A/21st. (c) Asdic, H.E. and 147 trace.  
 (d) 049° 11' N., 008° 00' W. (e) 4. (f) 0245A contact lost only 2 escorts with convoy. (g) Nil.  
 Weather report 9371 2252.  
 (PHEASANT, 210248A to C. in C. W.A.)

Patrols, and Escorts. BEACON HILL, JONQUIERE and NEW GLASGOW proceed to carry out zig-zag search between (AA) 50.22 N., 05.46 W. (BB) 50.45 N., 05.10 W.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 211220A to E.G.26, Neg. MONTREAL, RIBBLE.)

Situation home section 6th E.G., NEW WATERFORD, 3 frigates sailed Milford Haven p.m./21st to vicinity 051° 01', 009° 30' 15 knots. 15th E.G., LOUIS, 3 frigates patrolling off North Irish coast.

(C. in C. W.A., 211352A to Admty.)  
 C. in C. Western Approaches 201154 sailed NEW WATERFORD, GROU, ANNAN and LOCH MORLICH to comply.  
 (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 211745A to C. in C. W.A.)

/E.G.20 ...

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches

Patrols and Escorts. (Contd.) E.G.20 is allocated for escort to Gibraltar of K.M.F.38 due to sail from U.K. Jan. 5th and will bring back M.K.F.38 due to sail from Gibraltar Jan. 21st.  
(2) In order to maintain the new 20 days K.M.F./M.K.F. cycle using one group only it will be necessary for the E.G.20 to be based at Gibraltar temporarily boiler cleaning and maintenance repairs being effected at that base.  
(3) It is the intention that E.G.20 shall be relieved on this duty by another group in about 2 months time.  
(4) My 211454 not to all addressees refers.  
(C. in C. W.A., 211745A to Com. (D) W.A.)

CAMELLIA. Your 171411A December and my 172100A December. Further temporary repairs now effected, using additional binding of cement. Boiler is now in action and has been tested to 155 revolutions per minute. Consider repairs effective for a speed of 140 revolutions per minute.  
(2) Present available continuous speed still limited 9 knots due to continued shortage of feed water. Estimate 48 hours to make good this shortage. Further report will be made.  
(3) My P.C.S. 050° 10' N., 22° 30' W., 040°, 4½ knots.  
(CAMELLIA, 211710A to C. in C. W.A.)

497

War Diary.21.12.1944.  
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.Norway.

RUBIS.

F.O. S2

RUBIS arrived.

(S.O. S/M Lerwick 211038A to Admty., A.C.O.S.)  
Following from S.O. S/M Lerwick is passed for information. Begins. F.S. RUBIS reports in accordance with I.S.O.H.

- (1) 19th December mines laid as follows, all 150 feet apart:-  
 (a) 1238, 7 mines 080° from 58° 50.6' N. 05° 30.1' E.  
 (b) 1247, 8 mines 050° from 58° 50.7' N. 05° 30.9' E.  
 (c) 1259, 7 mines 300° from 58° 51' N. 05° 31.3' E.  
 (d) 1308, 8 mines 270° from 58° 51.2' N. 05° 30.2' E.  
 (2) 1245 sighted 2 landing barges similar to F-Boats escorted by a C type E-Boat to south of Feisstein Light steering to pass between it and mainland. This convoy passed 200 yards astern of RUBIS whilst group C mines was being laid.  
 (3) No instructions regarding shipping sighted.  
 (4) Very poor visibility experienced.  
 (F.O. S/M 211115A to Admty.)

Operation  
"S.C."

Intend sailing "S.C. 166, 240, 341" from Shetlands.

- (1) 0001A/23rd December from Scalloway.  
 (2) 068° from Sumburgh Head 12 knots.  
 (3) 1800A/23rd December.  
 (4) Between 1830A/23rd December and 0600A/24th December.  
 (5) 250° to Sumburgh Head 14 knots.  
 (6) p.m. 24th December.  
 (7) 070° Sumburgh Head. (8) No.  
 (N.O.I.C. Lerwick 211401A to A.C.O.S.)

Availability  
of aircraft  
for shipping  
strikes.

Admiralty 200018. When IMPLACABLE was withdrawn from the Home Fleet I understood from conversations with the naval staff that:-

- (a) 12 Barracudas from 828 Squadron were to be equipped with Ratog and retained at Hatston, for embarkation in an escort carrier in emergency.  
 (b) 821 Squadron were to be equipped with Barracudas fitted Ratog and embarked in PUNCHER.  
 (c) Arrangements in (a) and (b) were expected to be completed during December.  
 (2) The actual situation differs considerably and so that there shall be no misunderstanding the following is the position as I see it:  
 (a) 821 Squadron in PUNCHER will not be available for service until the middle of February. F.O.C.T's 211317 refers.  
 (b) 12 crews of 828 Squadron have been retained at Hatston. The remainder have been sent on 21 days leave in order to bring them into line with other IMPLACABLE Squadrons (my 092214 repeated to Admiralty refers). First party are due back from leave on January 3rd when remainder would have been sent on leave. The aircraft are not yet fitted with Ratog and no practice has been done.

/(c)...



War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

Availability of aircraft for shipping strikes. (Contd.) (c) In order to implement Admiralty's 200018 it will mean that no torpedo striking force is available in the Home Fleet until the arrival of 821 Squadron in PUNCHER. (3) Until 15th February therefore the only aircraft strike available will be the Avengers armed with bombs only from TRUMPETER and PREMIER. (C. in C. H.F. 212308A to Admty.)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Suspected U-Boat. At 0040Z U-Boat fixed by D/F on 3800 k/cs within 40 miles of 62.30 N. 01.00 E. (D.D.I.C. 210850A to Force 3.)

Schnorkel obstructors. C. in C. Rosyth's 201326. No objection. (C. in C. H.F. 211002A to Admty.)

Patrols. 2000 movement Thursday Section 1. 3 frigates of 4th E.G. on patrol between 04° 00' W. and 05° 00' W. on lat. 59° 15' N. 3 frigates of 4th E.G. searching between 58° 52' N. 02° 28' W. and 58° 24' N. 02° 18' W. NORFOLK, TRUMPETER and 6 destroyers 59° 40' N. 03° 01' W. west of Shetland to northeastward 14. (A.C.O.S. 211222 to Admty.)

While concurring that it is undesirable to hamper the effort of 18 Group east and west of the Orkneys there does not appear to be any grave objection to the patrol position of the submarine in 58° 45' N. 01° 15' E.

(2) It is suggested that submarines be routed to this position by one of two routes:-

(a) from Scapa, through position 59° N. 01° 35' W.

(b) from Lerwick, through position 60° N. 00° 30' E. and position 59° 20' N. 01° 15' E.

Only on few occasions would the use of neither of these routes be desirable.

(3) It is important that submarines should undertake a working up patrol in home waters before proceeding on foreign service, and the position suggested in para. 3 of F.O. S/Ms 201302 would cause more undesirable restrictions still.

(4) You are therefore requested in consultation to make such arrangements on these lines for each patrol as will best meet both requirements. Your 191405 refers.

(A.C.N.S.(H) 212340A to C. in C. Rosyth, F.O. S/M.)

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Disposal of minesweeping craft from and on Far Shore.

(1) Weather permitting intend sailing Saturday 23rd December the following ST. TUDNO, M.Ls. 221, 915, B.Y.M.S. 2188, 2051, VALESCA, FENTONIAN, M.M.S. 109, 216, 19, 113, 1083, 265, 267, 44 to Margate Roads to anchor for the night. All ships in company proceed Sheerness following day except M.L. 915 who will proceed to Harwich and B.Y.M.S. 2188, 2051 to Grimsby.

- (2) Ships remaining from Force A will be:-  
(a) at Terneuzen B.Y.M.S. 2048, 2221, 2213, 2141, M.M.S. 60, 149 and 190, M.L. 217, 255, 141, 919, 203, L.C.P.(L) 273, 275, 278, 283, 284, 296.  
(b) At Antwerp M.F.Vs. 1020, 1025, 1027, 1043, 1074.  
(c) At Zeebrugge M.F.V. 1075.  
(3) Ships remaining previously allocated to Cdre. Belgium:  
(a) At Terneuzen B.Y.M.S. 2173, 2055, M.M.S. (?297), 253, 251, 256, (?248) 112, 191, 281, 224, 225, 228.  
(b) At Antwerp M.M.S. 43, 77, 187, 193.  
(4) Full details of sweeping carried out have been left.  
(5) Cmdr. Dibley and Sub. Lieut. Bateman of my staff are remaining at Terneuzen for a short period (Cdre. Belgium's 151131A refers.)  
(6) Details of actual E.T.As. of groups mentioned in para. 1 will be included in sailing signal from N.O.I.C. Antwerp.  
(7) Cdre. Belgium concurs.  
(Capt. M/S F.A. 211230A to C. in C. Nore.)

Deep mining off Hartland Point.

My 201123A. Sailed PLOVER, escort CONQUEROR. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 211451A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

42nd M.S.F.

Harwich 21st December, arrivals, H.M. ships FLORIZEL, FOAM, FROLIC, STEADFAST, COMBATTANT, STELLA LEONIS. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 211534A to C. in C. Nore.)

14th M.S.F.

Checked search of Q.Z.X. 1449 completed with negative result. Flotilla sailing for Plymouth at 1800/21st for fuel and M/S stores. GUNNER in tow with leaking boiler. E.T.A. 0800/22nd. (S.O. M/S 14 211702A to Admty.)

Navigational.

Channel. East coast to Boulogne.

My 051219. Buoys laid but positions not yet checked minesweeping completed from buoy to buoy. Channel now considered fit for use. (V.A. Dover 211856A to Admty.)

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Port Facilities.

- Dieppe. Cositintrep No. 260 part 2 naval.  
Dieppe. A personnel ship and a hospital carrier can now be handled simultaneously daily if required.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 210005A to Admty.)
- Antwerp. Transfer of Victualling Depot from Meuvaines to Le Treport, completed 15th December. Propose following movements take place to implement your 081435:
- (a) S.O. of Victualling Depot and one stores rating to proceed to Antwerp 7th January to arrange with N.O.I.C. Antwerp the requisitioning of necessary buildings and engaging of civilian labour in preparation for transfer of the Depot to Antwerp.
- (b) Naval store carrier EMPIRE SNOWDROP to arrive Le Treport on 20 January to embark victualling depot stocks, 1 officer, 2 stores ratings and small R.M. guard and sail 23rd January to Antwerp. Lack of suitable accommodation on board can be accepted. Remainder of personnel to proceed to Antwerp in own road transport.
- (2) EMPIRE SNOWDROP is only naval store carrier, as far as is known, which can be accepted at Le Treport owing to shallow draft, and dates given are the most suitable on account of spring tides.
- (3) If these proposals are approved, Admiralty are requested to consign all victualling depot's outstanding demands to Antwerp to be held by naval store transit depot, Antwerp to await collection.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 212048 to Admty.)

Casualties & Defects.

- L.C.V. 663. C.A.F.O. 678/44. L.C.V. 663 reported sunk at moorings during gale at Inveraray.  
(2) Further signal will be made regarding possibility of salvage.  
(R.A.C.O.B.W.A. 211117A to Admty.)
- L.C.A. 948. L.C.A. 948 of 540th Flotilla sank at her moorings. Operations to recover craft are in progress, and circumstances of sinking are being investigated.  
(2) Propose this craft be exchanged with L.C.A. 1049 in O.P.R. at Foliot.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 211640A to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

- Shipping from Far Shore. My 071757 (para. 3) and my 201715. Ships (empty or loaded) for Downs and onward routing may now be sailed independently via Q.Z.S. 648. A.M. 111803A November, A.C. Dover's 051219A and Q.Z.H. 792 refer.  
(C.T.F. 125 211703A to C.T.G. 125.2, 125.15.)
- Disposal of L.C.T.(4)s. S.H.A.E.F. (Main's) 231905A November. Request you will confirm that the 104 L.C.T.(4) required in

/service...

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping and Convoys.

Disposal of L.C.T.(4)s. (Contd.) service by para. 2A are made up as follows:  
(2) 35 for the French, 24 for Force T, 15 for salvage of Whales at Arromanches, and 30 for R.A.F. awkward lifts.  
(3) If the above services are correct the total number required including a serviceability factor will be less than if all craft are needed for the shuttle service. (A.C.N.S.(H) 211912A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Cross Channel Personnel Services. At the end of December British personnel cross-Channel movement from Southampton will cease and the following cross-Channel services will commence from the dates shown:-

Route	Ships	Starting
(a) Calais-Folkestone (leave service)	CANTERBURY	From Calais 1st Jan.
(b) Calais-Dover (leave service)	PRINCESS MAUD	From Calais 4th Jan.
The capacity of the above vessels on these routes has been agreed at 1100. Each vessel should make one crossing in each direction daily.		
(c) Calais-Harwich (leave service)	LAIRDS ISLE, VIKING	From Calais 4th Jan. From Calais 5th Jan.
	PRINSES JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE PRINSES ASTRID	From Calais 6th Jan.
(d) Tilbury-Ostend (Duty service)	LONGFORD, MECKLENBURG PRINSES JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE, PRINSES ASTRID ULSTER MONARCH BIARRITZ	From Tilbury 1st Jan. From Tilbury 2nd Jan. From Tilbury 3rd Jan. From Tilbury 5th Jan.
(On 5th January, PRINSES J. CHARLOTTE and PRINSES ASTRID, see (c) above, should proceed from Tilbury to Calais to run on the Calais-Harwich service from Calais on 6th January.)		
(d) Tilbury-Ostend (Duty service) (Contd.)	LADY OF MANN VICTORIA, ST. HELIER	About 8th January. On release from N.M.S.S.

(2) When BEN MY CHREE is available she will replace PRINSES J. CHARLOTTE and PRINSES ASTRID on the Calais-Harwich run. When LADY OF MANN is available she will release BIARRITZ which will then become reserve for Dover-Folkestone service.  
(3) It is requested that steps may be taken to ensure that vessels are moved to their required stations in time to sail on the dates indicated above.  
(4) To compensate for the withdrawal of ULSTER MONARCH and PRINSES ASTRID from Southampton service SOBIESKI will be made available for U.S. cross-Channel trooping from Southampton.  
Agreed with W.O.  
(D. of S.T. 212039A to Sea Transport Officers concerned.)

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

T.G.27.5                      Estimated 0450Z position 41.22 N., 18.15 W. and  
A/S Patrol.                      0650Z position 40.56 N., 17.46 W. Will patrol a  
20 mile square near centre of aircraft search  
area.

(C.T.G.27.5, 210423Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

Inconclusive D/F bearings on Series 2 Norddeick  
and Series 1 between 0634Z and 0749Z indicate U-boat in area  
within 75 miles of 41.30 N., 17.30 W. U-boat was trying to  
transmit long naval enigma but has not yet been heard by control.  
(D.D.I.C., 211011Z to T.G.27.5, S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.G.M.A.,  
H.Q.C.C., C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. W.A.)

FOGG                              U.S.S. FOGG, D.E.57, received acoustic torpedo in  
(torpedoed                      stern 1151Z/20th December position 42.06 N.,  
20/12).                              19.19 W. All compartments aft of engine spaces  
ruptured and flooded. Bulkhead frame 113  
shored and holding. Propellers gone. Being  
towed by Army tug L.T.643 and U.S.S. A.N.61

destination Horta. P.C. and S. 0900Z/21st. 41.12 N., 20.51 W.  
235 5 knots. If present favourable weather holds expect keep  
ship afloat until destination reached.

Cinclant, 2 C.L.43 refers.

Weather 6581 3122.

(U.S.S. FOGG, 211145Z to Cominch, C.T.G.27.4)

P.C. and S. of FOGG at 0900Z/21st 041° 12' N., 020° 51' W. 235°,  
5 knots, report when met. U.S.S. FOGG is setting R/T watch on  
2410 k/cs. Call sign R.8, C.6.

(F.O.G.M.A., 212040A to SALVONIA)

ERLANGEN                              As ship in A.M. 192238 is now at Sestri Levante,  
(German                              presume it is intended that ship should be  
hospital                              controlled at Gibraltar on both outward and  
ship).                                      return voyages.

(F.O.G.M.A. 211246A to Admty).

WOLVERINE                              Abandon search and proceed as requisite to R/V  
SS. CEPHEE in position (A) 235° Port Bugio Light  
5 miles at 1000A December 23rd.

(2) After ship has been met, escort her to R/V  
convoy M.K.S.72, in position (b) 038° 30' N., 010° 10' W. at  
1400A December 23rd.

(3) M.K.S.72, (?25) ships Cdre. Benson in RELIANT escorted by  
BALINDERRY (S.O.) BERGAMOT, CYCLAMEN and LAVENDER is routed  
through (XJ) all positions N. and W. 03° 59' 006° 10' (XK) 036°  
00' 009° (?00') (XL) (?035°).10' 010° 30' (XM) (?043°) 20' 010°  
30'.

(4) Convoy radio distinguishing group HO.

(5) (corrupt group) codeword "Dish-rag" 377.

(6) Request you report P.C. and S. when proceed to comply.

(F.O.G.M.A., 211634A (amended 221127A) to WOLVERINE)

M.K.S.                              Your 1918104 (Requesting if sufficient Commodores  
Commodores.                              available for M.K.S. convoys). Yes, provided 5  
days is considered sufficient lay over and  
provided no sickness occurs.

(F.O.G.M.A., 211710A to N.C.S.O. Mersey).

/JOHN BANVARD...

War Diary

21.12.1944  
Thursday

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic - Contd.

JOHN BANVARD,  
KIOWA

S.B.N.O. Azores is requested to sail JOHN BANVARD in tow in KIOWA to R/V towing convoy in position.  
(a) 37° 58' N. 27° 10' W. at 1500A/23rd December.  
(2) O.T.G. 27.4 is requested to adjust speed to pass through (a). At this time. S.B.N.O. Azores 211308 not to all refers.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 211756A to S.B.N.O. Azores, C.T.G.27.4.

GOLDEN  
FLEECE,  
FLYING  
FISH

Arrival Horta GOLDEN FLEECE and FLYING FISH.  
(2) Expected time of completion defects GOLDEN FLEECE p.m. 22nd December E.T.C. defects FLYING FISH p.m. 24th December.  
(3) Intend sailing ships in company when ready.  
(4) Your 202050 December refers.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 211838Z to Admty.)

South Atlantic

Independent  
sailings  
resumed.

My 200933 (Independent sailings for Gibraltar are to cease from 22nd December), to Comar Dakar and 191806 to other addressees. Resume independent sailings. Ships for M.K.S. convoys to be routed to Casablanca but are to be given onward route to Gibraltar to enable them to be diverted at sea if required.  
(F.O.C.W.A., 211952Z to N.O.I.C. Lagos, etc.)

21.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Proposed Russian Vessel for Greece Your 111835 (Vessel referred to in C. in C. Med.'s 091103 as Russian, should this be Turkish). No. Request was for a Russian ship. (C. in C. Med. 210927 to B.N.A. Ankara)

WHIMBREL WHIMBREL requires about one week intensive A.A. gunnery practice. Request you will arrange. C. in C.W.A. 191304 refers. (C. in C. Med. 211251A to F.O.G.M.A.)

South Aegean summary G.1/71758 cipher 21st December. Up to 0900 hours, 21st December. Shipping. No photographic R/C 20th December owing to weather. Ground source reports. Rhodes. Reliable source states 157 civilians left Rhodes for Marmaris December 18th. Photographic cover 18th and 19th December shows no craft left Rhodes, therefore, possibility craft already in Marmaris being employed. Shipping (?strike) Rhodes harbour bombed December 20th. Depot ship hit. (C. in C. M.E., 211305B to W.O.)

ARETHUSA ARETHUSA has developed defects in alignment of main shafting, now being investigated. (2) Extent of delay not yet ascertained but further signal will be made. Paragraph 3 of A.M.151934 (not to all) refers. (A.C.N.S.(F) 211609A to C. in C.Med.)

MUSKETEER Leave Volo 0400 22nd to arrive Skiathos 0900 22nd. Leave Skiathos 1730 22nd to arrive Salonika 1330 23rd. 14 members of crew of SS.FORT COLUMBIA take passage. Am retaining Christmas fare for Unst. (MUSKETEER, 211614B to AMBER.)

E.L.A.N. shipping, Aegean. Situation with regard to E.L.A.N. Shipping in Aegean remain somewhat confused. Orders are still in Force that all E.L.A.N. shipping is to be seized and handed over to the R.H.N. but it is inadvisable to put this into operations in certain areas and enforcement has had to be left to Naval Commander on spot. Broad summary of present situation is that in Athens Patras and Voic (?Volo) area where E.L.A.N. is openly hostile all E.L.A.N. shipping is being seized as far as limited forces will allow. In Salonika Kavallo Mitylene and Kalamata area where E.L.A.N. is passive and we are largely dependent on them for running the port no action is being taken against E.L.A.N. shipping. Departure from (?latter) policy would immediately lead to deterioration in situation and probably open hostilities in area concerned. (F.O.L.E.M. 212005B to C. in C. Med.)

War Diary21.12.1944  
ThursdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean - Contd.

Swimming Saboteur at Leghorn Your 162225 December Sitrep. 507, paragraph 1. Requested that one specimen at least of each type of fuze and sabotage charge may be sent forthwith by air to U.K. addressed VERNON (M), West Leigh Cottage, Havant, Hants and details of despatch and E.T.A. signalled.

(2) Activities of swimmers in Continental ports and rivers make this requirement urgent.  
(D.T.M. 212101A to C. in C. Med.)  
Replies 221202 281805A.

Situation Report No. 512. Greece. Presence of warships in Greek ports particularly in those from which troops have been withdrawn is having a marked salutary effect. At Piraeus the W/T Station has been mortared and Navy House, Miaoulis quay, Naval H.Q. and Port Aux Mahones shelled spasmodically with no material result. Discharge of cargo continuous but civil labour deserted.

(2) ?Crete  
Situation remains unchanged.

(3) Adriatic  
Three E-boats approached Zara night 19th December but retired on being engaged by H.D.M.L. patrols.  
(C. in C. Med., 212129A.)

Riviera No change in Front Line since 12th December. From 13th to 16th ALCYON and HUGHES fired 150 and 408 rounds at troops and gun batteries ashore. From 16th to 19th NIBLACK fired 232 rounds at vehicles, barracks and personnel. Since 19th WOOLSEY and ALCYON fired at railway stations and bridges many direct hits upon targets were observed during these operations. On 18th JEANNE D'ARC fired 100 rounds but her guns have a big dispersion. On 19th CIMETERRE sank a human double torpedo at 9 miles bearing 110 from Cap Ferrat. On same day in the afternoon American Army found a human torpedo stranded on the beach in Mentone Harbour. MONTCALM came back from Oran at 0800A/19. During this period American Destroyers MADISON and HUGHES relieved in flank force by WOOLSEY and BENSON before going back home. At the same time 32 mines were sunk by Destroyers and P.C. boats.  
(Comflanfor, 212240A to F.O.N.A.M., Com. Eighth Fleet, C. in C. Mediterranean, Marine Paris, Flanfor, Premar Three.)

Cositintrep 531 Part 4. Greece. The night 19th/20th December was generally quiet in the Athens/Piraeus area. During day 20th December further positions astride the Athens - Faliron road were occupied by our troops but the road is not yet open for unarmoured vehicles by day as previously reported. There was an increase of enemy mortaring and shelling in Piraeus.  
(A.F.H.Q. No T.O.O./21)



21.12.1944  
Thursday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

U-boat  
dispositions

No fresh information. Scales in all areas  
remain unchanged.  
(C. in C.E.I., 210358Z.)

K.M.F.37

List, destinations, number.  
(D.S.T. 211138A to C. in C.E.I. etc.)  
See Lion Copy.

TJITJALENGKA

Owing to complete breakdown of cooling plant in  
hospital ship AMARAPOORA I should like to retain  
TJITJALENGKA at Trincomalee until end of  
February. Para. 6 my 160627 refers. Request  
your concurrence.  
(C. in C. E.I. 211234Z to C. in C. E.I. B.P.F.)

VALIANT

Arrivals VALIANT, FALMOUTH, HONESTY, GENISTA.  
(N.O.I.C. East Africa (Kilindini), 211451Z to  
Admty.)

M.E.I.R.I.

*Amendments. (STA 211944A, 2a page 208)*

506A E.I.

# TOP SECRET

OUT

**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.)

211138A December

Date 21. 12. 44.

To C. in C. East Indies  
C. in C. Mediterranean +  
F.O.L.E.M. +  
F.O.W.M. +  
F.O.N.A.M. +  
F.O.G.M.A. +  
N.O.I.C. Aden  
Repeated F.O.C.R.I.N.  
V.A. Malta +  
S.N.O.R.S.C.A.

K.M.F. 37 - list.

## Naval Cypher (X Plug)

From Director of Sea Transport

IMPORTANT to +

Convoy K.M.F. 37 sailed from United Kingdom on 16/12 comprising the following troop transports:-

<u>Code</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Destination of Personnel on Board</u>	<u>No. of Personnel</u>
F. 2	HIGHLAND MONARCH	15	Naples Malta	276 1187
F. 3	CHITRAL	16	Naples	3292
F. 4	SCYTHIA	15½	Algiers Naples	356 4224
F. 5	SIBAJAK	15	Middle East India	133 1427
F. 6	ALCANTARA	18½	Middle East India	705 2933
F. 7	BATORY	15	India Ceylon	1238 27
F. 8	CILICIA	15.7	Middle East PAIC India E. Africa	2231 83 1 61
F. 9	EMPIRE PRIDE	16½	Middle East India	358 1692
F. 11	NEA HELLAS	15	Middle East India	936 2989

/F. 12

**TOP SECRET****OUT**

**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.)

- 2 -

<u>Code</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Destination of Personnel on Board</u>	<u>No. of Personnel</u>
F.12	QUEEN OF BERMUDA	18	Middle East India	450 3858
F.13	STRATHNAVER	19	Middle East India Aden	160 4327 1
F.14	ORDUNA	14	Middle East India E. Africa N. Zealand	515 2283 6 88
F.15	DURBAN CASTLE	15½	Ceylon	2163

2. JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT Code No. F.10 speed 16 was unable to leave U.K. in Convoy K.M.F.37 and sailed on 20/12 to join convoy from Aden with following personnel on board -

PAIC	9
Middle East	383
India	3105
Aden	5
Ceylon	357

3. Stores were shipped in the following troop transports -

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Destination</u>
CHITRAL	Naples
SCYTHIA	Naples
SIBAJAK	India
ALCANTARA	India
BATORY	India
CILICIA	Middle East
EMPIRE PRIDE	India
JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT	Ceylon
QUEEN OF BERMUDA	India
STRATHNAVER	India
ORDUNA	Middle East
DURBAN CASTLE	Ceylon

4. The following commercial freightships also sailed in Convoy K.M.F.37 -

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Destination</u>
BENLAWERS	15	India
NIGERSTROOM	15	Malta

/BENLAWERS

BENLAWERS is functioning as a rescue ship on the outward run to the Middle East. One set of rescue gear for discharge in the Middle East is loaded in ORDUNA.

5. The destinations of the troop transports are as follows:-

HIGHLAND MONARCH	Malta
CHITRAL )	Naples
SCYTHIA )	
CILICIA	Middle East
JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT	Ceylon/Bombay
DURBAN CASTLE	Ceylon
SIBAJAK	
ALCANTARA	India
BATORY	
EMPIRE PRIDE	
NEA HELLAS	
QUEEN OF BERMUDA	
STRATHNAVER	
ORDUNA	

6. CIRCASSIA and HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN for India will join Convoy at Aden.

7. Disposal of troop transports is as follows:-

(a) HIGHLAND MONARCH and SCYTHIA should return to U.K. with Convoy M.K.F.37.

(b) CHITRAL and CILICIA will be retained for temporary service in the Mediterranean.

(c) ALCANTARA, NEA HELLAS, QUEEN OF BERMUDA, STRATHNAVER, ORDUNA CIRCASSIA and HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN and JOHAN VAN OLDENBARNEVELT from India and DURBAN CASTLE from Ceylon should return to the U.K. in convoy M.K.F.39.

(d) My 192119 not to all refers regarding SIBAJAK and EMPIRE PRIDE and 192051 not to all regarding BATORY.

8. P.S.T.O.s Mediterranean, Middle East and India should arrange as necessary for on-carriage of personnel transhipped within their respective areas.

9. Addressees pass to S.T.O's and Military Authorities concerned.

211138A  
for D. of S.T.  
M.W.T. Ext. 2186

A.C.N.S. (H)  
A.C.N.S. (F)  
U.W.R.  
D.O.D. (F)(2)  
D.O.D. (H)(4)

D.C.  
Plot  
D.D.I.C. (2) S.O.  
D.T.D. (4) Hd. of M. (10)  
D.T.D. (C) N.A. Mails  
D. of S.T. (6)

W.D.  
Admiral Blake  
A.D.O.D. (C.O.)  
D. of P. (2)  
D. of P. (Q)(3)

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

O.21 Your 112132Z and Admty's 241000A Nov. No mail signal yet received. Can programme now be advised please.  
(N.A. (Mails) 211030A to B.A.D.)

U/B Estimates.  
dispositions. (N.S.H.Q., 211347Z, Cominch, 211530Z).

French B.A.D. concurring, Cominch on request of French  
Trawlers. Naval Mission, U.S. authorises sailing of four  
French trawlers ready in Newfoundland about 28th  
December to destinations as follows:-  
(A) To Med. via Casablanca - DUGUAY TROUIN, TEMERAIRE, and  
CAPRICORNE.  
(B) To Havre - CAP FAGNET. Request you will sail above trawlers  
as indicated, arranging details with French Naval C.O. at Saint  
Pierre.  
(Cominch, 211411Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)

FENNEL The following transfer is effective to date 21st  
December from C-2 Group for duty with C-1 group  
H.M.C.S. FENNEL.  
2. Pay accounts to be held in AVALON Comdre. (D)  
W.A. pass to S.O. C.1., S.O. C.2.  
(C. in C. C.N.A., 211417Z to N.S.H.Q.)

H.X.324 Average speed 9.1 knots. Off Fastnet at 2140Z/17.  
All arrived.  
(D.T.D., 211522A to Com. 10, N.S.H.Q.)

TRUCULENT In company H.M.C.S. COLLINGWOOD, my estimated  
(refit, P.C. and S. at 1600Z, 038° 47' N., 070° 24' W.,  
Philadelphia) 270° 8 knots, E.T.A. 1300R/22nd, C. in C. C.N.A.  
pass to B.S.O., Philadelphia, A.O.C., E.A.C.,  
A.O.C. No.1 Group. C. in C. U.S. Fleet pass to  
(U.S.) Cmdr. Submarines, Atlantic Fleet.  
(TRUCULENT, 211614Z to B.A.D. etc).

C.U.50 C.U.50 arrived at following times. Splitting  
point 49.00 N., 7.12 W., at 0815Z/19. Barry  
Roads 0200Z/20. Mersey 1300Z/20. Clyde 2900Z/20  
Cherbourg 0700Z/20. All arrived.  
(D.T.D., 211737A to Com. 10, N.S.H.Q.)

Escort Your 081749 para. 2.  
Carriers, Since A.M. 221546/Nov. the postponement of  
loan to amphibious operations in S.E.A.C. has altered the  
U.S.A. C.V.E. situation.  
2. The Assault C.V.E. Force which we have been  
building up for these operations is planned to  
reach a total of twelve ships by April, 1945 and sixteen ships by  
September, 1945. All the first twelve are equipped and trained  
and are now undergoing final refit.

War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Escort  
Carriers,  
loan to  
U.S.A.  
(contd).

3. The last four ships, PATROLLER, REAPER, RANEE and THANE were to have been taken in hand in January, for A's and A's but these could now be deferred until April and the ships employed in transport duties until then.

4. Of the first twelve ships, it will be necessary to retain some for Fleet duties in Home waters and in the Indian Ocean, but if it will help Cominch's problem we could release by March or April, a force consisting of ROYALIST (F/O Assault Carriers) and four or five C.V.Es. equipped with Hellcats or Corsairs and fully trained for assault operations, to be attached to the British Pacific Fleet and operate with it or independently as required by Admiral Nimitz.

5. You are, therefore, authorised to offer Cominch -  
(a) PATROLLER, REAPER, RANEE and THANE, to act as ferry carriers until April, 1945.

(b) An assault force consisting of ROYALIST and four or five C.V.Es. for operations in the Pacific between April and August.

6. The offer at 5(b) is made on the assumption that the loan of this assault force might assist Cominch by enabling a similar number of American C.V.Es. to be released for ferry duties.

7. It must be made quite clear that we would not agree to this trained Force being relegated to second line ferry duties and the offer is only made on condition that the Force is employed in active operations.

8. Since the deployment of this Force would be slightly in advance of the planned build-up of the British Pacific Fleet, some assistance from the U.S. Navy may be necessary to support these ships at first. We would however, supply our own replacement aircraft and spares.

9. Your 142311 (not to all) will be answered separately.  
(D.O.D. (F) Approved First Sea Lord, on P.D.0222/44 211838A to B.A.D.)

M.E.I.R.I.  
amendments.

What follows is M.E.I.R.I. Amendment No.105.  
Section 1 E, insert new sub. para. (3).

(3) Troop convoys are to be routed to arrive in daylight but are not to reduce speed to avoid a night arrival at following ports: Kilindini, Port Victoria, Aden, Karachi, Bombay, Cochin, Colombo, Trincomalee, Madras and Vizagapatam.

If a night arrival is intended S.O. Escorts should normally give local Flag or Naval Officers in Charge 12 hours notice.  
Amendment No.106 Section 1 J, 12 (B) Add U.S.S. MOUNT VERNON, WAKEFIELD and WESTPOINT.  
(D.T.D., 211944A to Comnav etc).

"General"  
class  
Troopers.

It is necessary from time to time to sail "General" Class Troopers, maximum speed 19, independently to Mediterranean. In such circumstances when there is U-boat threat off Mediterranean approaches Admiralty is requested in practicable cases to provide surface escort through dangerous area and Commorseafron is directed to provide aerial escort.  
(Cominch and C.N.O., 212040Z to Admty. Commorseafron).

/Submarine...

War Diary.21.12.1944.  
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America & West Indies.- Contd.Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.No report since Cominch 192042. Para C.  
210609Z U.S. destroyer escort reported doubtful  
sound contact 41.53 N., 51.31 W.  
(Cominch, 212045Z to Admty for O.I.C.)Pacific  
Fleet,  
policy.Australia & New Zealand.Have had most cordial meetings with Nimitz and  
staff.

2. Main points are:

(A) Logistic situation of United States Fleet is  
such that we can expect little help in that way  
but it is not on account of any unwillingness.(B) Nimitz has obtained concurrence from C. in C. United States  
Fleet for our use of Manus as a base on same basis as his ships.(C) He has promised participation of the British Pacific Fleet  
in his most advanced operations as soon as it is ready to do so.(D) I have decided to turn over to American signalling in the  
British Fleet as it seems the only practical solution. Liaison  
parties and books are provided for every ship.(E) The greatest menace to the Americans is the Japanese air  
which the Navy is now principally occupied in fighting.Consequently we cannot use Highball or X craft at present but  
they will be used as soon as an opportunity presents itself.(F) A Flag Officer will not be required with Nimitz but some  
slight additions in liaison officers. I intend that officers  
now acting as observers should transfer to liaison duties on my  
behalf.(G) A difference of view exists as to who shall be responsible  
for making bulk supplies of oil for use of British Pacific Fleet.  
A separate signal is being made.3. Am returning to Brisbane and Sydney arriving Brisbane 24th  
and Sydney 27th. My further location is not an easy problem.  
Am investigating LOTHIAN as Headquarters ship in which case I  
would take her, if she can be spared, to Manus whence I could fly  
as required to Nimitz at Guam or to Australia. In the absence  
of shorebase facilities there seems no other solution except  
Sydney which is too far back.4. The British Pacific Fleet will operate normally as a separate  
task force under Admirals Spruance or Halsey and I shall keep in  
touch with planning as it proceeds.5. When practicable the Americans will develop Leyte as an  
advanced base which will relieve the overall load on Manus.6. With the vast distances involved and after studying American  
procedure, there is no doubt that our logistic resources are of  
the slenderest nature, and we shall be unable to provide at  
present for any prolonged operations. We shall require the fuel  
supply to be cleared up and more ferry carriers and training  
carriers to keep reserve pilots in training.7. The Americans are using two air groups to each carrier,  
changing them every 4 months as well as replacing casualties.  
More detailed requirements will be forwarded in due course but  
the Australian Government has readily offered Australian pilots  
if we can train them.8. There was a great welcome in Australia and I am afraid  
secrecy became impossible. We shall be able to close down a  
little later when this has worn off.9. It would have been quite hopeless to get the Carriers over  
earlier as neither Australia or the supplies or the training  
facilities would have been ready or available.10. The Australian Government seemed entirely satisfied with  
what we are doing.

11. V.A.Q. pass to Captain of Fleet at Sydney.

(C. in C. B.P.F. via Cincpac, 210351Z to Admty). /Navigation...

510

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia & New Zealand. - Contd.Navigation  
Pacific.

In view of the wide area covered by navigational aids for which officer in charge, Hydrographic Branch is responsible and the consequent necessity for conserving limited supplies of equipment it is intended to proceed with the following modified

lighting scheme which is considered adequate to ensure safe navigation of all classes of ships. Your 061519 not to O.C.H.B. refers. Master of the Fleet British Pacific Fleet has been consulted and agrees.

2. Shore lights to be established on:-

(A) Stephens Island.

(C) Arden Islet.

(F) Bet Island.

(G) Saddle Island.

(H) South east extremity of Double Island instead of East Strait Island.

In addition to the above a light to be established on Ipili Reef and the light now on the North Shore of Goes Island to be removed.

3. Light buoys as follows:-

(A) One in number between Bramble Cay and Dalrymple Island in approximate position 9° 22' S., 143° 34' E.

(C) One south of Alert Rock.

(D) One north of Herald Patches.

(E) One south of Nardana Patches but it is doubtful whether this buoy will watch or retain its position owing to strength of tidal steam.

(G) One south of Harrison Rock.

4. Concur your para. 3. Choice of Channels consequent on completion of sweeping operations.

5. The lights and buoys in the above scheme can be provided and maintained by local resources. Consideration will be given to the provision of more navigational aids if considered necessary when the supply position improves. It is hoped to commence establishment of the above lights mid January 1945.

6. Air mail letter follows.

(A.C.N.B., 210900 to Admty).

Digest 1065,  
20th Dec.

2. Pair P.T. boats utterly destroyed 4 Japanese barges berthed northeastern Halmahera; barges camouflaged armed and armoured loaded with ammunition and supplies but nil personnel seen.

5. Previous night Catalina attacked two ships described as one medium Freighter transport one destroyer off Northeast coast Mindoro; near miss set Merchant ship on fire.

9. 1 Neugh, 3 Lightnings strafed and damaged 8 small boats southern Panay Island morning.

11. One R/C plane saw 5 small Merchant ships Axamboanga afternoon 19th. Same day 4 Thunderbolts strafed and set afire Merchant ship in Tawi anchorage (probably same ship as damaged day before).

19 reports of shipping at Cao Saint Jacques (Saigon) 6 transports, one tanker, 4 escorts departed morning 19th: 4 transports, 2 tankers departed night 19th, 6 transports 2 escorts departed forenoon 20th leaving 2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 5 destroyers still there. Direction of departure generally northeast.

22. R/C North Borneo 18th reports 12 small ships Brunei Bay, 5 Sea trucks, 4 Luggers at or near Jesselton and one sea truck in Marudu Bay: attacks damaged two sea trucks 6 smaller craft.  
(G.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 211024Z).

/Force...



War Diary.

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand. - Contd.

Force X,  
future  
employment.

I have not yet seen Admiral Talbot but I suggest that the future employment of Force X should be reviewed in the light of the following considerations:

- (A) The loan of Force X for operations in this theatre expires at the end of the year.  
(B) Force X is not being used operationally, and Admiral Talbot is now calling on me for repair facilities.  
(C) In S.E.A.C. full operational use could probably be made of the landing ships and craft of Force X.  
(D) A Command ship is a necessity to accommodate me and my staff at the advanced base, and LOTHIAN may be suitable temporarily for this duty.

2. Consequently it is suggested that:

- (A) Force X should be withdrawn from American control in the Pacific as soon as the agreement expires.  
(B) LOTHIAN should be attached to the B.P.F. as my Command ship, if found suitable.  
(C) If C. in C. E.I. concurs, that the landing ships and craft of Force X should be transferred to S.E.A.C.  
3. This question was informally discussed at Pearl Harbour.  
(C. in C. B.P.F., via Cincpac, 212228 to Admty. R.D.O.Hollandia).

ADAMANT

As decision on operating base for ADAMANT and submarines given in para. 2 of A.M. 251111 Nov. cannot yet be made request move may be postponed one month.

- (2) My 061312 refers. Signals quoted not to V.A.  
(Q) S.4 and S.8.  
(C. in C. B.P.F., Cincpac, 212231 to C. in C. E.I.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/21st December.

- (a) 1. E.G.1 attacked bottomed contact at 1729Z/20th Dec. in 49° 34' N., 04° 06' W.  
2. A/C N/179 sighted Schnorkel course 080° at 1850Z/20th Dec. in 49° 55' N., 02° 35' W.  
(b) 1. Nor. S/M UTSIRA fired 4 torpedoes at U-boat which missed at 0508Z/14th Dec. in 64° 07' N., 09° 43' E. At 0343Z/16th Dec. in 64° 06' N., 09° 42' E. fired 4 more torpedoes and heard 3 explosions.  
2. M.T.B. 752 attacked possible U-boat at 0931Z/20th Dec. in 50° 15' N., 01° 18' W.  
3. H.M.S. PHEASANT attacked U-boat contact at 2320Z/20th Dec. in 49° 14' N., 08° 00' W.  
4. A/C X/165 obtained radar contact at 1047Z/20th Dec. in 49° 29' N., 03° 23' W.  
(c) 1. A/C X/105 reported disappearing radar contact at 1106Z/20 Dec. in 49° 05' N., 03° 23' W.

/(d)...

512

21.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.  
(contd).

(d) 1. A/C saw U-boat submerging course N.W. at  
1330Z/20th December in 44° 45' N., 08° 30' W.  
(D.D.I.C., 211100A to Cominch N.S.H.Q.)

U/B  
dispositions.

Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C., 211345A, 211401A).

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

- North Sea. 1(a) A confused action was fought by TORRINGTON, WALPOLE, and some of our M.T.Bs. with half a dozen E-Boats bent, apparently, on mining the Schelde approaches. No casualties are reported on either side, but the E-Boats' manoeuvre was impeded if not frustrated.  
(b) Terneuzen can now take one 22'6" ship and 4 to 6 smaller ones each daylight tide. Ghent has three 25'6", 37 20' to 25'6", and 16 14'7" berths available, but subject to the above mentioned locking limitations at Terneuzen.  
(c) Two moored mines were cut in the Schelde.
- Channel. 2(a) Four possible U-Boat scents were followed up and hunted, but without material results.  
(b) A further cross-Channel petrol-line, "Hais 8", is now in operation between Dungeness and Boulogne.
- Western Approaches. 3. GLACE BAY, frigate, attacked a hopeful contact east of Queenstown, but brought no evidence to the surface.

Foreign Stations

North Atlantic

- EURYALUS,  
RIMUTAKA. 4. The cruiser EURYALUS, escorting H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester and party in the RIMUTAKA, left Gibraltar early this morning for Malta.

Mediterranean

- Greece. 5. The Army's assault on the north side of Piraeus Harbour began today and is proceeding successfully, despite heavy S.A. fire by the rebels.

/Mine ...

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean - Contd.

- Mine Depots. / 6. The Admiralty concur in a proposal from the C. in C. Mediterranean, that Malta Mine Depot can be reduced to a care and maintenance basis and that Haifa Mine Depot be retained for the maintenance of stocks for the East.
- Dardanelles. 7. Minesweeping in the Dardanelles has been delayed by weather, and six day's sweeping is required for its completion.

East Indies

- Operation "Robson". 8. Force 67 (see December 17) returned to Trincomalee today from Operation "Robson", an air strike on the 20th on the harbour, warehouses, railway yards, and oil installations at Belawan Deli (east coast of Sumatra).
- Trincomalee. / 9. Admiral Mountbatten proposes to the Chiefs of Staff that Trincomalee should be developed as a first class naval base. It has grown up on no balanced overall plan, and has many disadvantages.

America and West Indies

- AQUITANIA. 10. The troopship AQUITANIA was unable to sail from New York today as scheduled owing to the action of the local W.S.A. authorities in diverting necessary oil fuel.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Australia and New Zealand

BISHOPDALE.

11. A.C.N.B. reports that the Australian R.F.A. BISHOPDALE was damaged in No. 3 wing tank and had her pump room flooded on December 14 as a result of an enemy aircraft making a suicide crash on her in Leyte Gulf. She had one killed and three injured.

516

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Naval ratings to transfer to Army. An announcement will be made on the 9 o'clock news tonight Friday and in the Press tomorrow to the effect that re-inforcements are being provided for the Army by various measures including a small proportion of transfers from the Navy.  
(2nd S.L. 221913A to Home and Abroad.)

Movements.

DIDO. Intend sailing DIDO p.m. 27th December by searched channel route to Scapa E.T.D. May Island 1800/27th S.O.A. 25 knots. E.T.A. 0045/28th Hoxa Gate 0130/28th.

- (2) DIDO is to request light as required.
- (3) Mails to Scapa after first delivery 27th December.
- (C. in C. Rosyth 221330 to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)

A.F.Ds. 37 and 50. A.N.C.X.F. (Main) 191223 A.F.D. 50 is at present in full use at Southampton and this requirement will continue for some time. A.M. 141910 refers. As it is understood A.F.D. 50 will be required for service abroad (A.M. 011628 November refers) it is proposed that A.F.D. 37 or a similar dock should replace A.F.D. 50 at Southampton. Both docks cannot be accepted at Southampton at the same time.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221535A to Admty.)

SUTTON. SUTTON reduced to reserve category C at Falmouth, today 22nd December.  
(F.O.I.C. Falmouth 221557A to Admty.)

A.F.D. 20, STARLING, MAGPIE. N.O.I.C. Liverpool is requested to sail following ships to arrive Greenock 29th December to form escort of A.F.D. 20 to Gibraltar. STARLING (S.O.) MAGPIE, NORTHERN REWARD, HOME GUARD.  
(2) Destinations on completion of escort are (a) STARLING, MAGPIE on passage to E.F. after gunnery practices. A.M. 031735 refers. (b) Trawlers to Liverpool.  
(3) A.M. 222128 November N.O.I.C. Greenock 221108 refer.  
(C. in C. W.A. 222240A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool, F.O.G.M.A.)

Operations.

North Sea.

Patrols. Patrol tonight Friday 1 LUDLOW, 2 COTSWOLD, 3 VIMY, 4 BLENCATHRA, 5 PUFFIN, 6A WIDGEON.  
(2) 12 TORRINGTON, 14 WALPOLE, 16 CURZON with coastal force from Ostend. 18 KITTIWAKE, 19 RIOU, HAMBLEDON.  
(3) Escort for T.A.M. 26 BLEASDALE and ADMIRAL HASTINGS. <sup>7 Cowdray</sup>  
(4) CAICOS will be carrying out operation "Alphabet."  
(5) Coastal force patrol F.C. 4 2 M.T.B. Z.19. F.C. 5 2 M.T.B. 17

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Patrols.  
(Contd.)

F.C. 6 2 M.T.B. 15. F.C. 7 2 M.T.B. 13. F.C. 8  
2 M.T.B. 11. F.B. 1 2 M.T.B. 9. F.B. 6 2 M.T.B. 3.  
F.B. 7 2 M.L. 53. Buoy F.A. 2, 3, 4 M.T.B. MVLL  
1417. F.C. 1 4 M.T.B. FJWS 3921. F.B. 2 2 M.T.B.  
FJWS 2100. F.A. 8 4 M.T.B. FJWS 2415. F.B. 3 6  
M.T.B. MVZA 2527, WS 5550. F.G. 2, 3, 4 M.T.B.  
Patrol 16.  
(C. in C. Nore 221051A to Nore Command.)

Salvage  
vessels to  
Terneuzen.

N.O.I.C. Antwerp's 071814 and 190830 request salvage  
vessels be sailed to Terneuzen as follows:-  
LIFELINE in B.T.C. 13. FOREMOST 17 in B.T.C. 14.  
FOREMOST 18 in B.T.C. 15.  
Vessels will be in St. Helens Roads at 1400 on  
22nd, 23rd, 24th December respectively.  
(S.O.V.X.F. 221137 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

S.N.O.B.  
O.P. (F) to  
be under V.A.  
Dover only.

Your 211915. Concur.  
(V.A. Dover 221258A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Situation  
report Naval.

Cositintrep No. 262 part 4.  
Discharged by sea - 24 hour period ending 1600A/21  
December:-

British	Personnel	Vehicles	Stores Incl. coal	Bulk Pol
Antwerp	-	43	7,769	113
Ostend	23	-	4,216	8,690
Boulogne	-	-	-	-
Dieppe	-	-	1,103	-
Caen	-	-	756	-
Ghent	-	-	399	-
Calais	-	-	-	-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	23	43	14,243	8,803
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
U.S. North				
Antwerp	-	-	12,532	-
Cherbourg	2,103	657	5,010	1,827
Le Havre	4,067	157	6,836	1,526
Rouen	563	209	6,246	-
Granville	-	-	796	-
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	6,733	1,023	31,420	3,353
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
(S.H.A.E.F. 221425A to Admty.)				

/E-Boat...

518

War Diary22.12.1944.  
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.North Sea - Contd.E-Boat  
sorties.Have surface radar contact bearing 297° 5 miles my  
position 314 Ostend I 4.5 miles.

(WALPOLE 222045A to Nore W/T.)

Plot N.R. L One. Course 000° speed 30 knots.

Am attacking with torpedoes am engaging E-Boats.

(Unit F.L.1 222050 to Nore W/T.)

E-Boats driven off in general Northerly direction.

(WALPOLE 222050 to Nore W/T.)

Plot N.R.I.B. 3 E-Boats in position 325° Ostend 9 miles,  
course 235° speed 30 knots.

(Unit F.G.1 222100 to Nore W/T.)

Plot N.R.L One. Enemy position 320° Ostend 21.5 miles.

Course 000° speed 30 knots. Contact faded.

(Unit F.L.1 222101A to Nore W/T.)

Position of enemy 320° Ostend 20.5 miles course 345° speed  
28 knots.

(WALPOLE 222102A to Nore W/T.)

4 E-Boats in position 330° Ostend 16 miles.

(Unit F.G. 3 222112 to Ostend W/T.)

Plot N.R. 1B. Unit F.G. 3 engaging 5 E-Boats course 300°.

(Unit F.G. 1 222118A to Nore W/T.)

Plot N.R.,H One C. Unit F.G. 2 engaging 3 E-Boats course 330°

(Unit F.G. 1 222130A to Nore W/T.)

Am engaging E-Boats.

(Unit F.G. 1 222148 to Nore W/T.)

Action report night 22/23 December.

Radar contact of 6 E-Boats gained at 2037 course and speed 180°  
20 knots in position 313° Ostend 21.5.E-Boats were illuminated and driven east into WALPOLE who engaged  
closely and drove them off to northward. Furthest south position  
of E-Boats was 112 N.F. 6 buoy 3¼ miles speed 30 knots. Consider  
minelaying impossible.

(TORRINGTON 222258A to C. in C. Nore.)

E-Boats have probably been in channel between N.F. 7 buoy  
and 2° 59' E. and between O.D. 1 and N.F. 8 buoy. Request this  
part of channel may be swept for moored mines and ground mines by  
as many sweepers as can be spared from Ostend as early as possible  
tomorrow Saturday. Traffic is being diverted to northward. 18th  
M.S.F. will also be sweeping in the area.

(C. in C. Nore 222311A to Com. Belgium, N.O.I.C. Ostend.)

Operations.Channel.Dieppe status  
reduced to  
R.N.O.Dieppe reduced to R.N.O. status 0800 today Friday  
22nd December under command of Lt. Cdr. J.J.S. Yorke  
D.S.C., R.N.

(N.O.I.C. Dieppe 220801 to F.O.B.A.A.)

Possible  
U-Boat.Am now investigating a good contact in position  
050° 06' N. 001° 21' 30" W. Retaining MELBREAK,  
LOCH SHIN and PORTCHESTER CASTLE. Detaching re-  
mainder your 220903A.

(E.G. 30 220935A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/PORTCHESTER...



War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel.

Possible U-Boat. (Contd.) PORTCHESTER CASTLE has attacked twice with Squid. My 220935 refers. Traces of oil. (S.O.E.G. 30 221037A to C. in C. Portsmouth.) Contact was lost after MELBREAK attacked with depth charges at 11 hours 08A in 050° 05' 30" N. 001° 22' 30" W. PEVENSEY CASTLE and PORTCHESTER CASTLE hunting. (S.O.E.G. 30 221233A to C. in C. Portsmouth.) My 211437 and 211445, Schnorkel observed projecting 2 ft. above surface by all bridge personnel range 3000 yards. Dived at 2000 asdic contact obtained at 1,600 yards. Consider accurate attack carried out with 6 Squid charges. Last course U-Boat on attack 070° contact held out to 1,400 yards then lost and not regained. No depth was obtained by 147. (LOCH SHIN 221600 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Second possible U-Boat. Situation 1000A/22nd. (1) BENTLEY, GORE patrolling in accordance with your 211518. GARLIES, CAPEL proceeding in accordance with your 211520. AFFLECK in contact. My 212148 refers. (2) Contact giving echo sounder traces probably U-boat. A/S conditions difficult. Continuing attempt to raise evidence other than oil which succeeded every attack. (3) Your 220044A. Non sub. number 13 fix definitely in position 049° 55' 08" N. 003° 04' 46" W. (S.O.E.G. 1 221012A to C. in C. Plymouth.) Have attacked stationary contact with hedgehog in position 49° 56.8' N. 02° 44' W. 1 bomb exploded at 30 feet but indications are that this was a freak premature. Prevailing conditions wind across tide rendered echo sounding runs extremely difficult, but one result obtained suggests wreck on submarine height 60 ft. Am continuing Gamma and intend re-identifying wreck when conditions improve. (2) Your 221731 AFFLECK and BENTLEY will carry out these checks, but GARLIES fitted Q.H. may have re-affirmed my 201829 en route position D today. Further signal will be made. (S.O.E.G. 1 222020A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Third possible U-Boat. Proceed forthwith to investigate disappearing radar contact reported by A/C 49.45 N. 03.12 W. Callsign MFR 80 and "Love you George". Will home on 385 k/cs. (C. in C. Plymouth 221122A to E.G. 1.)

Patrols. My 221234. Act as additional escort to 2 L.S.Is. escort STOCKHAM, codeword "Barometer" from H.8 to 58E Buoy. (2) On arrival 58E Buoy anti-snort patrol areas limits below (3) LOCH SHIN 00° 40' 01° 48' W. 49° 54' 49° 48'.

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel.

Patrols. (4) WATCHMAN 00° 30' W. parallels 49° 42' 49°  
(Contd.) 30' line 330 from 49° 30' 01° 00' W.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221256A to LOCH SHIN,  
WATCHMAN.)  
(A) Night 22/23 patrol 32, 5 miles each side 002°  
15' W. by Sunderlands. Day 23rd patrol between H Channel and  
Kansas Channel by Swordfish and patrol 32 by Liberators.  
(B) 838 Squadron KPW 842 Squadron TRJ  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221718A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)  
Day patrols 23rd. Ships 2 miles apart search area limits  
given.  
(2) Area Q.4 miles each side H Channel 49° 48' to 50° 30' divided  
3 sections by 50° 00' 50° 15'.  
(3) PEVENSEY CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE.  
Q. south. (4) CAISTOR CASTLE, PORTCHESTER CASTLE.  
Q. centre East side. (5) M.T.Bs.  
Ordered Q centre west wide. (6) ANTHONY, CROIX DE LORRAINE.  
Q. north. (7) LOCH SHIN, WATCHMAN.  
02° 10' 01° 49' W. 50° 30' 50° 18'.  
(8) All ships anti-gnat zig-zag.  
(9) Orders for LAUNCESTON CASTLE follow.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221801A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

Cross "Hais eight" line operational and pumping spirit.  
Channel (S.N.O. Pluto 221416 to C. in C. Portsmouth,  
pipe-line. A.N.C.X.F., S.H.A.E.F., Admty.)

E.G. 17. Intend sailing 17th E.G. from Rockabill area to  
Plymouth at about 1700A December 23rd in  
accordance with your 211045A.  
(T.C. Rockabill 221437A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Fourth In contact with submarine in position 50° 09'  
possible 0" N. 02° 02' 06" W. attacking with depth charges.  
U-Boat. (M.T.B. 737 221630 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
Am attacking contact with depth charges position  
50° 02' N. 02° 02' W.  
(M.T.B. 760 221654 to F.O.I.C. Portland.)  
My 221654 contact lost. Am carrying out "Scabbard". Neither  
move nor doppler nor echo sounding trace obtained.  
(66 M.T.B.F. 221800 to N.O.I.C. Portland.)  
My 221630 contact lost in position 50° 7.3' N. 02° 3.7' W.  
Carrying out operation "Scabbard" in company M.T.B. 760 and 752.  
Last known course of submarine north estimated speed 3 knots.  
Not very good trace. Change of doppler depth of submarine 150 ft.  
(M.T.B. 737 221820A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
Have met M.T.Bs. who report not in contact. Contact now  
classified as doubtful intend box search in this area until  
complying with your 221256.  
(LOCH SHIN 221909A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/Termination...

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel - Contd.

Termination  
of N.D.B.S.  
Newhaven-  
Dieppe.

Propose terminating N.D.B.S. between Newhaven and  
Dieppe 0001A/1st January.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 221712A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Possible  
U-Boat.

GLACE BAY in contact in position 51.47 N. 07.20  
W. reports definite movement WHITBY in company.  
GLACE BAY attacked with hedgehog and depth charge.  
(S.O.E.G. C. 4 222218A to C. in C. W.A.)  
My 222218A. GLACE BAY lost contact 2307A after  
three attacks. Reports 1st two attacks marked movement very  
little doppler third attack hardly any movement, slight doppler.  
Ordered to carry out observant and rejoin convoy if contact  
not regained. BOWMANVILLE in company. WHITBY has rejoined convoy.  
(S.O.E.G. C. 222349A to C. in C. W.A.)

19th E.G.

On completion of exercises at Larne p.m. 23rd  
December following are orders for 19th E.G.

(a) Proceed to Bangor Bay for fuel.

(b) Sail as convenient on 24th December towards

Longships, thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth to relieve 1st  
E.G.

(2) S.O. 19th E.G. is to signal R/V for GOODALL and L. INSH to join  
group from Liverpool.

(3) Authorities concerned are requested to sail ships as necessary  
to comply,

(4) On relief by 19th E.G. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to  
sail 1st E.G. to Belfast to lay over.

(C. in C. W.A. 222335A to N.O.I.C. Larne.)

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

Operation "S.C." Ramose Vintage further postponed, E.T.D. now 0100A 23rd December.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 220125A to A.C.O.S.)

S.O.S/M Lerwick to operate northern submarines. Propose to transfer operational control of submarines to S.O. S/Ms Lerwick on 30th December. From this date S.O. S/Ms Lerwick to be responsible for:  
(A) Submarines on patrol to the north and east of British Isles.  
(B) Submarines on passage in Orkneys and Shetlands  
Command Area A.F.O.S. 2/44 para. 17 (A) note 3 and 4.  
S/M Nine to remain responsible for submarines on passage in your 261307 Nov. refers.  
(S/M 9, 221135A to F.O. S/M)

- Operation "V.P." Intend carrying out V.P.77
- (1) 0300A/23rd December.
  - (2) Not later 2100A/23rd December.
  - (3) Not later 0900A/27th December.
  - (4) 278° toward Noss Head not more 20 knots.
  - (5) Not later p.m. 27th December.
  - (6) No.
  - (7) No.
  - (8) 098° Noss Head Bressay.
  - (9) -
- (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221547A to A.C.O.S.)
- (1) 098° from Noss Head not more than 20 knots My 221547A.
  - (2) 059° 41' N., 005° 05' E.
  - (3) Blank.
- (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221549A to A.C.O.S.)  
Intend to carry out V.P.74.
- (1) 0305A/23rd December.
  - (2) Not later than 2100A (?23rd) December.
  - (3) Not later than 09(?00)A/27th December.
  - (4) 238° toward Noss Head not more 20 (?knots).
  - (5) Not later than p.m. 27th December.
  - (6) No.
  - (7) No.
  - (8) 058° Noss Head Bressay.
  - (9) No.
- (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221551A to A.C.O.S.)  
My 221551A. (1) 058° from Noss Head not more than 20 knots.
- (2) 061° 45' N., 004° 43' E.
  - (3) Blank.
- (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221553A to A.C.O.S.)  
Intend carrying out V.P.75.
- (1) 0310A/23rd Dec.
  - (2) Not later than 2100A/23rd December.
  - (3) Not later 0900A/27th Dec.
  - (4) 249° toward Noss Head not more than 20 knots.
  - (5) Not later p.m./27th December.
  - (6) No.
  - (7) No.
  - (8) 069° Noss Head Bressay.
  - (9) No.
- (N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221557A to A.C.O.S.)

523

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

Operation "V.P." (contd). My 221557A. 1. 069° from Noss Head not more than 20 knots.  
2. 061° 10', 004° 30' E. 3. Blank.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 221559A to A.C.O.S.)

Patrol VENTURER is to leave patrol so as to pass through 59° 12' N., 04° 08' E. at about 2359 26th thence by reverse of outward route to Lerwick diving by day until passing 01° E. thereafter on the surface at C.O.'s discretion.  
(S.9, 221603A to VENTURER).

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Convoy J.W.63. Intend following operations conducted by C.S.10  
(1) Object safe passage of convoys J.W.63 and R.A.63 between U.K. and North Russia.  
(2) D-day is day J.W.63 sails from Loch Ewe. Date and route in my 220924. Codeword in my 220916.  
(3) Forces taking part (a) DIADEM and VINDEX (b) Fleet destroyers MYNGS (Capt. (D) 23) SCORPION, SERAPHIS, SCOURGE, SAVAGE, ALGONQUIN, SIOUX, STORD, ZAMBESI ZEBRA. (c) Western Approaches Escort. 7th and 8th Escort Groups total 9 ships.  
(d) Local escort. Russian warship operating from Kola as arranged by S.B.N.O. N. Russia.  
(4) Preliminary movement. S.Os. concerned are requested to order preliminary movements as follows. Escorts proceeding Loch Ewe should arrive in daylight if possible.  
(a) Western Approaches destroyers concerned of 7th and 8th escort groups to arrive Skaalefiord by D-day to fuel.  
(b) Sloops and Corvettes concerned of 7th and 8th escort groups to arrive Loch Ewe by D minus 1.  
(c) C.S.10 in DIADEM to attend convoy conference at Loch Ewe on D-day then return to Scapa.  
(d) Capt. D.23 in MYNGS with 3 other fleet destroyers to arrive Loch Ewe by D minus 1. Destroyers to fuel.  
(5) A.C.O.S. is requested to sail R.F.A. BLUE RANGER to arrive Skaalefiord by a.m. D minus 1.  
(6) J.W.63 is to sail from Loch Ewe p.m. D day escorted by 4 Fleet destroyers and sloops and corvettes of 7th and 8th escort groups under Capt. (D) 23. Route "Red" unless otherwise ordered. All ships should be capable of 10 knots.  
(7) C.S.10 will proceed from Scapa on D plus 1 with DIADEM, VINDEX and remaining 6 Fleet destroyers so as to join convoy J.W.63 about 63° N., a.m. D plus 2.  
(8) Western Approaches destroyers are to proceed as necessary from Faeroes escorting BLUE RANGER and join convoy J.W.63 about 63° N. a.m. D plus 2.  
(9) No.18 Group C.C. is requested to provide A/S air escort as far northwards as practicable for both outward and homeward convoy if situation permits.  
(10) S.B.N.O. N. Russia is requested to sail R.A.63 as soon as practicable after arrival of J.W.63. Route "Blue" unless otherwise ordered.

/(11)...

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

- Convoy J.W.63. (contd). (11) If alterations are necessary to convoy route they will be ordered with reference to lettered positions on route "Red" and "Blue". (12) Attention is drawn to N.R.O.I. article 142 (D) (E) and (F). (13) Movements on completion unless otherwise ordered (a) Western Approaches escorts return to W.A. bases (b) DIADEM, VINDEK and Fleet destroyers return to Scapa. (14) Admiralty inform\*Admiral Archer as necessary. C. in C. Rosyth pass to 18 Group. (C. in C. H.F., 220904A to Admty and authorities concerned). \*No passing action being taken by War Registry. My 220904 para. 2. Codeword "Greystoke". (C. in C. H.F., 220916A to Admty. and authorities concerned). My 220904 para. 2. D day Saturday 30th December.
2. Route Red through positions:  
A. 58° 52' N., 05° 36' W. B. 059° 27' N., 04° 24' W.  
C. 62° 00' N., 04° 20' W. D. 72° 23' N., 09° 10' E.  
E. 73° 17' N., 16° 40' E. F. 73° 07' N., 23° 45' E.  
G. 72° 58' N., 30° 00' E. H. 71° 50' N., 36° 50' E.  
MU 69° 49' N., 35° 34' E.
3. Route Blue from MU through positions:  
J. 71° 45' N., 35° 40' E. F. 73° 07' N. 23° 45' E.  
K. 71° 45' N., 12° 40' E. thence C, B and A as above.  
(C. in C. H.F., 220924A to Admty. and authorities concerned).  
Delete position MU on both routes in my 220924 and substitute position MX 69° 31' N., 35° 40' E.  
(C. in C. H.F., 221224A to Admty. and authorities concerned)
- E.G.4 BENTINCK, BYARD, CALDER leave patrol to arrive Scapa 1600A/23rd for 48 hours stand off, to sail p.m. December 25th. It is anticipated remainder of group will be ordered into Scapa p.m. 24th to sail p.m. December 26th. On arrival ships are to fuel and collect orders from Cmdre. (D) H.F.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 221051A to S.O.E.G.4).
- Norwegian relief craft. Norwegians now request that motor fishing ships may proceed to Kola Inlet.  
(S.B.N.O. N. Russia, 221717A to C. in C. Rosyth).
- Stores discharged from ships in R.A.62. Your 212210. From British controlled ships 26 $\frac{3}{4}$  tons, 17 $\frac{3}{4}$  tons from American controlled ships. Total 44 $\frac{1}{2}$   
(S.B.N.O. N. Russia, 221931A to Admty).
- Convoy J.W.64 FORT CREVECOEUR has been allocated for Sea Transport Service and will load in Manchester for J.W. 64 loading to commence about 8th January completing 28th January.  
(D.S.T., 222154A to P.S.T.O. N.W. Ports).

War Diary.

22.12.1944  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Sweeping in Schelde. Operation "Calendar".  
(1) Sweeping today Friday 22nd December S.A-L.L.  
(A) N.F.13 to N.F.18 E.G. M.S. P.L. N.F.13 to N.F.18 on 10 second pulse. Modify L increasing N.F.13 - N.F. 18 Oropesa.  
(A) N.F. 13 - N.F.18. (B) Area outside channel between N.F.15 and N.F.17.  
(2) 2 moored mines, one north and one south of channel between N.F.15 and 16, 2 cables and 4 cables outside respectively.  
(3) Surveying continued.  
(4) Nil.  
(5) M.M.S.175, B.Y.M.S.2051, M.F.V's 1027, 1074.  
(Capt. M.S.F.A., 221837A to C. in C. Nore).

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy movements in Southern Baltic. Quest December 22nd.  
(A) 1041 cruiser believed NURNBERG accompanied by 4000 ton transport position 55° 31' N., 15.04 E. course 015°.  
(B) 1044 target ship HESSEN course 120° 2 MAAS class destroyers course 201° 55.39 N., 15.18 E. (N.A. Stockholm, 221717 to Admty).  
Para. A. It is possible that vessels may be NURNBERG and a Sperrbrecher. If so NURNBERG may be proceeding to Oslo Fiord to join KOLN and EMDEN or to relieve one of these vessels.

Port Facilities.

Ternuzen and Ghent. Cositintrep No.262 Part II Naval. Terneuzen. Maximum acceptable draught 22' 6" M.H.W.N. 24', M.H.W.S. increasing to 25' 6" at both springs and neaps after dredging. Port has 7 Liberty and 2 coaster berths but is limited in movements by locks to one ship of maximum draught and four to six smaller ships each daylight tide.  
2. Ghent. Subject to locking limitations of Terneuzen, port has three berths at 25' 6" draught. 37 berths between 20' and 25' 6", 10 at 14' 7" and further six at 14' 7" outside military port area.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 222351A to Admty).

Casualties & Defects.

L.C.I.(L) 250. When on passage from Troon to Oban on 14th Dec. L.C.I.(L) 250 grounded on Glaseilan, Sound of Islay.  
2. Craft has been salvaged and towed to Rothesay.  
3. Following is report of known damage;  
(A) Compartments flooded, one forward, one aft, one port side abreast engine room.  
(B) Bottom badly corrugated chine angle slightly damaged.  
(C) All engine room machinery and steering gear have been submerged.  
(D) Craft is floating on bulkheads at 12 and 9' Stations and can be towed in fine weather.  
4. Request repair port be allocated.  
(R.A.L.S.C.U., 221009 to Admty).

/SS...

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects. - Contd.

SS. Sailed 221445 LEOPOLDVILLE with 1210 U.S. Army  
LEOPOLD- troops aboard. Escorted by WALDEGRAVE. Expected  
VILLE. time of arrival Nab 222101 sailed 221439 for  
Portland U.S. L.S.Ts. 54, 372, 356, expected time  
of arrival 230559.  
(Cousnab Havre, 221602 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Shipping & Convoys

Shipping for Reference Number EX 77349. Following analysis of  
Antwerp. vessels nominated for delivery at Antwerp and  
arrivals at that port is brought to the attention  
of all sailing authorities with the object of  
eliminating a source of delay which owing to current bad weather  
conditions is now being reflected in the loss of discharge  
capacity at Antwerp.

<u>A.</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>B.</u> Outstanding Nominations advised to sailing <u>authorities.</u>	<u>C.</u> Number of Ocean Stores ships arrivals for <u>dates stated.</u>	<u>D.</u> Number of Ocean Stores ships <u>present.</u>
6th Dec.	16	6	55
7th Dec.	13	1	56
8th Dec.	11	0	55
9th Dec.	11	0	53
10th Dec.	11	0	52
11th Dec.	23	0	50
12th Dec.	27	0	48
13th Dec.	30	1	47
14th Dec.	32	1	45
15th Dec.	30	3	45
16th Dec.	27	3	45
17th Dec.	22	4	39
18th Dec.	30	1	45
19th Dec.	30	0	39
20th Dec.	30	0	34

It was the understanding of this Headquarters that the number of daily deliveries to Antwerp permitted by the Port Executive Committee would be an average and that deliveries less than this average would be made up on a cumulative basis on succeeding days. This belief, which has been confirmed by the Officer concerned, was shared by the U.S. Army Port Commander. Nominations made by the Chief of Transportation, this Headquarters were calculated to build up the number of Ocean stores ships in the U.S. Sector to a maximum of 60, which is the number believed by this office to be the minimum with which its port operations can be satisfactorily planned, allowing an insurance factor for possible non arrivals owing to unfavourable navigational conditions. Unfortunately, the fears of this office in this connection are materializing, inasmuch as a rapid rate of completion is being realized, at a time when deliveries on a compensating basis are literally impossible. Accordingly, confirmation is requested that all addressees are agreed that clearances for sailings to Antwerp are cumulative insofar as is possible. For ready reference, dispatch of N.O.I.C. Antwerp index 181520A is now quoted as follows:- Further to my 161730. Request 10 U.S. ships be sailed in T.A.M. 3 and 10 in T.A.M. 24, thereafter 6 ships daily. It is requested that immediately weather and other sailing conditions permit as

/many...



22.12.1944.  
Friday

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

Shipping for Antwerp. (contd.) many as possible of the vessels named in the following priority list, each one of which already has been the subject of earlier requests, be delivered at Antwerp,  
JOHN HANSON, CAPE NOME, RAPHAEL SEMMES, JAMES E. HAVILAND, MARK HOPKINS, EDWARD WHITE, EUGENE FIELD, JOHN CROPPER, LLOYD GIBBONS, GEORGE MERRICK, AMELIA EARHART, FLUOR SPAR, RHUSEL ALGER, ALLAN DALE, ALCOA VOYAGER, JAMES WAYNE, GEORGE L. FARLEY, CHARLES HERTY, ROBERT FORBES, F.A.C. MUHLENBERG, JOSHUA CHAMBERLAIN, CHARLES ROBINSON, JOHN COLTHER, GEORGE POPHAM, NOAH WEBSTER, JAMES JOHNSTON, GEORGE PICKETT, LOUIS MCLANE, WILSON KEENE, EMPIRE BARRYE, EMPIRE BLESSING.  
(Etousa, 220606A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Craft for 21 A.G. War Office state that requirement from 21 A.G. for 14 L.C.M. (3) has been met recently by provision of 14 sea mules strengthened and converted as necessary vide 21 cipher S.D.7510 dated 24th November and these craft have been shipped. Request confirmation that this requirement is not duplicated in your 171034A.  
(Head of M., 220654A to A.N.C.X.F.)

EMPIRE CUTLASS. Subject to your concurrence it is intended to withdraw EMPIRE CUTLASS from "Overlord" forces and take her in hand for conversion to White Ensign L.S.I.(L) concurrently with repairs to recent mine damage.  
(Admty., 221300A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Burning of navigation lights in Channel. In view of suspected U-boat activity in English Channel, attention of all Masters is to be called to A.G.M. 948A and 949 A, governing the burning of navigation lights in the English Channel. Failure to comply with these regulations endangers not only the offending ships, but all ships in convoy.  
(C. in C.Nore, 222125A to Com. Southend, N.C.S.Os. Humber, Ramsgate).

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

FOGG (torpedoed 20/12). L.S.T.359 sunk. AG/AC 52/22nd December C/220 left T.G.27.4 at 1912/21st position 39.18 N. 23.45 W. course 246° T speed 7-8 knots. C/220 left U.S.S. FOGG section at 1715/21 position 40.30 N. 21.40 W. course 235° speed 2-3 knots. (247 Group, 220100Z to 15 Group).

Supplementing my 211145Z?, acoustic torpedo struck from starboard side in propellers approx. frame 165. All compartments aft of frame 113 ruptured and flooded. Bulkhead frame 113 holding. No further settling and riding well, but main deck cracking at frame 125 with sections aft of this point working. Stern section may break away. Removing all but skeleton crew to stand by ships. Considered that there is a fair chance of stern section breaking clean if it goes. All possible damage control efforts have been exerted. Jettison bill has been executed aft including removal of all ordnance aft frame 113. Upon arrival Horta will be necessary drydock and cut away or repair stern section before proceeding farther. Considered necessary replace hull ordnance and fitting aft frame 113 before ship can be put back in service. P.C. and S. 0800Z/22 Dec. 40.20 N. 23.18 W. 235, 5.5. Weather 7781 3133.

(U.S.S. FOGG, 221220Z to Cominch, C.T.G.27.4).

R/V. effected with SALVONIA 39.58 N. 24.04 W. 1530Z.

(FOGG, 221800Z to F.O.G.M.A.).

L.S.T.359 torpedoed at 1030Z/20th 42.04 N. 19.08 W.

FOGG torpedoed at 1151Z while proceeding to attack. LEE FOX until 16.48 and IRA JEFFERY until 2035 assisted by planes from Azores conducted search. Results negative then relieved by C.T.G.27.5. L.S.T.359, 2 enlisted missing 98 enlisted including 4 injured and 7 officers survived. FOGG reported 14 missing 4 injured all inlisted. Survivors of L.S.T.359 and 65 enlisted from FOGG including all injured now in Mattele. FOGG now being towed by CHINABERRY and L.T.643. L.C.Ts. 419 and 542 SALVONIA who joined 22nd from Azores in company in case rescue needed. IRA JEFFERY escorting group to Horta. L.S.T.359 broke in two at 1752Z and believed sunk. C.T.G.27.4 in LEE FOX with convoy. Estimate cross 30° west at 1600Z/23rd.

(C.T.G.27.4, 221835Z to S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.G.M.A.).

KIOWA,  
JOHN  
BANVARD,  
KINGSTON  
AGATE.

U.S.S. KIOWA and JOHN BANVARD depart Praia at 0500Z 22 to R/V in accordance with C.T.G. 27.4's 212225. Your 211756 refers.

(2) Ships will be escorted by KINGSTON AGATE call sign "Strawberry" communication constant watch on 2150 kcs. Loudspeaker R/T watch 2410 kcs. (S.B.N.O. Azores, 220130Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

U.S.S. KIOWA towing SS. JOHN BANVARD sailed 220415Z to join special towing convoy en route Norfolk. Your 151210. Skeleton crew of 12 on BANVARD. (Comnav Azores, 221351 to Radio Washington)

At 0500/23 COCOPA breaks off and proceeds Horta from 37.58 N. 28.50 W. via Q.B.A.122 E.T.A. 0800. Requires 35,000 gallons Navy diesel fuel and sludge barge to remove 12,000 gallons B.A.D. fuel. When fuelled she sails rejoin towing convoy whose course 271° speed 6. All times 11. Guards 21 50 kcs and NSS. (C.T.G. 27.4, 221740 to N.O.I.C., Horta, Comnavfor, Admty., F.O.G.M.A. for Info.)

/Flight "C"...

529

22.12.1944.  
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic - Contd.

Flight "C". My 211307A (Flight "C" - L.C.Q.391) sailed. (F.O.I.C.Falmouth, 220915A to F.O.G.M.A.).

T.G.27.5 Your 220930 to F.O.G.M.A. and S.B.N.O. Azores only. Approved to proceed Plymouth. Request you report P.C. and S. and route.  
(2) Thank you for your excellent co-operation, sorry you did not have better luck.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 221203 to C.T.G. 27.5).

Navigation Lights. All merchant ships are normally to burn navigational lights in the Straits of Gibraltar and in the Mediterranean eastward of a line drawn 180° from Tarifa to the Coast of Spanish Morocco, and southward of lines drawn as follows:-  
(A)(1) Coast of Spain in latitude 42° N. to (2) 42° N. 10° E. to (3) 41° N. to 12° E. to (4) Coast of Italy in latitude 41° N.  
(B)(1) Bari (41° 08' N. 16° 52' E.) to (2) Coast of Albania in 41° 08' N.  
(C)(1) Cape Matapan (36° 22' N. 22° 29'. (2) Coast of Albania in 41° 08' N. (3) 34° 30' N. 30° 00' E. to (4) Coast of Turkey in longitude 30° E.  
(2) A.G.M. 2933A of 22nd November is cancelled.  
(3) This is B.A.M.S. lettered message "OY" N.C.S.Os. are to inform Masters of Merchant Ships.  
(4) C.A.M.S.I. 191/43 and W.I.M.S. 1, Article 178 will be amended. (D.T.D., 222150A to A.G.M. Home and Abroad 94A).

ST.MARGARETS Intend to sail Cable ship ST. MARGARETS at 1600/Dec. 23rd to Malta.  
2. (A) 11. 3. Basic Eastbound. 4. 1200/Dec. 27th.  
6. (ROJTHR) (As received) 334. 7. A.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 221711A, to V.A. Malta).

South Atlantic

West Africa Escort Forces. A.M. 152153 and 200353 concerning stay tubes and boiler tube ferrules refer to "probable progressive reduction of West African Escort Forces until end of hostilities with Germany". This is first intimation of this policy which I earnestly hope is not decided upon. Policy here is based on retention of present escort force until the end of hostilities with Germany, anything short of which will entail shipping in these waters being inadequately defended against anticipated resumption of U-Boat activity. The age and wear of some of my escort forces and the expected increasing desperateness of U-Boat tactics as they come to realise their doom will need every effort to keep trade moving above water with present forces available. Assurance is requested that my escort forces will be retained at least at present strength until U-Boat menace is finished and this policy promulgated so that necessary supplies may be kept up. My 051318 also refers.  
(F.O.C.W.Af., 221147Z to Admty.).

/HELFOED...

22.12.1944.  
Friday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic - Contd.

HELFFORD, Sailed HELFFORD, LULWORTH and DERG in company to  
LULWORTH, Kilindini through:-  
DERG. (e) 28° 32' S. 32° 31' E. (f) 24° 52' S.

35° 39' E. (g) 16° 09' S. 41° 10' E. (h) 10°  
01' S. 41° 57' E.

- (2) S. of A. 12.5 knots. (3) E.T.A. Kilindini 0900Z/28th.  
(4) Continuous W/T watch on S.L. shifting to group V at 1400Z  
25th.  
(5) HELFFORD and DERG required to arrive Aden by Jan. 4th.  
Commodore Aden's 150829 not to Admiralty and F.O.E.A. refers.  
(Com. Durban, 221514Z to Admty. etc.).

Frigates  
for  
South  
Africa.

In discussions between First Lord and Union Prime  
Minister in June leading up to gift of three  
frigates to South Africa, it was emphasised that  
Admiralty's action was intended to stimulate  
recruiting of personnel to S.A.N.F. General  
Smuts undertook to second to Royal Navy all naval  
recruits in excess of maintenance requirements

and suggested that a number of trained personnel could be  
released for secondment to Royal Navy by reduction of number of  
small vessels employed for local defence of the Union.

(2) Owing to our acute shortage of manpower and in view of the  
reduction of South African local defence forces, the implementing  
now of General Smuts' suggestion would be most welcome. This  
could best take the form of manning a number of River Class  
frigates which are destined for operations in Eastern Theatre.

(3) Request you will approach South African Government and, if  
this proposal is received favourably, ascertain the number of  
frigates they would wish to man. Also we would like to know the  
state of training of intended personnel and whether it is  
desired to send them to U.K. for courses.

(4) We should prefer that vessels should be lent on terms pro-  
posed in A.L.M.05467/44, but failing this we should be content  
for South Africa to accept liability for pay and allowances only.

(5) In event of South African Government being willing to help  
us in this way request you will report on state of training of  
personnel to be lent, and whether you recommend they should come  
to U.K. for courses.

(6) Please inform High Commissioner.

(Head of M. Approved 1st Lord, 221647A to C. in C.S.A.).

War Diary.22.12.1944.  
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Dardanelles Minesweeping. Following Dardanelles M/S situation. Progress delayed by weather, 6 days sweeping required to complete.  
 (2) Channel 2 miles wide has been swept with centre line from position  $039^{\circ} 44' 30''$  N.,  $025^{\circ} 17' 30''$  E. to  $039^{\circ} 49' 32''$  N.,  $025^{\circ} 51' 50''$  E.  
 (3) If immediate use of Dardanelles is required channel 1 mile wide has been searched with centre line joining following position:- (A)  $039^{\circ} 49' 32''$  N.,  $025^{\circ} 51' 50''$  E. (B)  $039^{\circ} 53' 56''$  N.,  $026^{\circ} 00' 00''$  E. (C)  $039^{\circ} (?53') 56''$  N.,  $026^{\circ} 07' 45''$  E. (D)  $040^{\circ} 01' 10''$  N.,  $026^{\circ} 09' 54''$  E.  
 (4) Q.B.152 has been cleared.  
 (F.O.L.E.M., 221126B to Admty.)

Swimming Saboteur at Leghorn. One specimen your 212101 not to VERNON is being despatched by air and one is being brought by hand of officer.  
 (C. in C. Med., 221202 to Admty.)

BIDEFORD. R.A. Alexandria is requested to sail BIDEFORD as convenient 23rd to Tobruk. N.O.I.C. Tobruk sail BIDEFORD escorting NEBOJSCA Y.S.S. to area limit for onward routing to Malta.  
 N.O.I.C. Tobruk 210936, not to all. Destination of BIDEFORD is U.K. C. in C. Med. 171731 refers.  
 (F.O.L.E.M., 221226B to R.A. Alex., N.O.I.C. Tobruk.)

Linrep No. 215. Summary of Ops., Dec. 18 to 20.  
 (A.F.H.Q., 221345A.)  
 See Lion Copy.

Shipping for Black Sea. My 191415. Following information received from Soviet Naval Staff.  
 (Adm. Archer, 221401A to Admty.)  
 See Lion Copy.

Mine Depots. Concur that Malta Mine Depot can be reduced to C. and M. basis and that Haifa Depot be retained for maintenance of stocks for East. Your 131512 refers.  
 (2) Further signal will be made regarding disposal of surplus stores.  
 (D.D.O.D.(M), 221757A to C. in C. Med.)

Mitylene. Aegean Sitrep No. 14.  
 (2) Political L.O. Reports. Mitylene. 18 Dec., rifles issued E.L.A.S. Reservists.  
 (C. in C. M.E., 222010B to A.F.H.Q.)

/Situation ...

War Diary.22.12.1944.  
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean - Contd.

Situation Report No. 513. (1) Gulf of (?Genoa). Allied warships operating off Franco-Italian border have recently carried several successful bombardments (?of) shore objectives. F.F.S. CIMITERRE sank human torpedo on 19th (?December) off Cape Ferrat and U.S. Army have found another stranded on beach near Menton.

(2) Greece. 21st Dec. was quiet (?at) Piraeus except for half hour bombardment by AJAX. Preparation was being made for an assault on rebel positions north side of harbour. Average daily rate of cargo discharged is 800 tons. Attitude of Kalamata situation is tense. Liberty men were becoming so popular ashore that E.L.A.S. requested METEOR not to give shore leave. Counter-measure of opening ship to visitors failed as E.L.A.S. guards prevented crowds from boarding. A purge is believed to be in progress. Concentration of caiques was reported at Astakos (?and) Dragomesti Bay. PROTEA and coastal craft sent to investigate found nothing but were fired on. Situation at Mitylene is (?easier) due to arrival of SIRIUS and G.S. FRED has been refloated. SS. (?CH)ISWICK is aground at Salonika and AURORA is attempting to tow her off. (C. in C. Med., 222142A.)

Air Cositintrep No. 530, Part III. FX.41585, cipher 22 Dec. Cite FHGCG FHGBI. Signed Alexander. Coastal Air Force. 21st Dec. Spitfires flew R/C Upper Adriatic. R/P Beaufighters escorted by Spitfires sank a hundred foot vessel west of Cape Salvore and strafed a stationary tug. Mine spotting patrols flown off south coast of France. 2 unsuccessful air/sea rescue missions flown in the Adriatic and an uneventful search was carried out off Leghorn for suspected 1-man submarine. (M.A.A.F., No T.O.O./22.)

# SECRET

532A <sup>kes</sup>  
IN

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.)

W1

221345A/December

Date 23.12.44.

From: A.F.H.Q.

Recd. 0130

CIPHER

Addressed: War Office and LINREP addressees

280016

FX 72653 cipher 22nd December Secret.

Cite FHGCT signed Alexander

LINREP number 215. Summary of operations 18th December to 20th December.

1. Ground.
    - A. Eighth Army. 1 Canadian Corps. launched A 2 Brigade attack North of Bagnacavallo on 19th December. Extremely heavy resistance and counter-attacks initially forced the leading elements back to their original positions but slight gains were then made. 5 Corps. completely occupied Faenza and has advanced about one and one half miles to the north along a 2 mile front west of the town. Elements have also crossed the Senio River and made slight gains 2 miles east of Rillo. 2 Polish Corps mopped up in the area northwest of Brisighella and made a slight advance northeast of Casola Valsenio.
    - B. Fifth Army. There have been no changes in position during this period.
    - C. A.F.H.Q. Greece. Good progress has been made in clearing Piraeus and the Athens/Faliron Road. This road, however, is not yet open for unarmoured vehicles by day. E.L.A.S. troops overran air headquarters Greece at Kifisia and captured most of the personnel including 30 wounded.
  2. Naval. Gulf of Genoa. Allied Force of 5 trawlers and 16 Coastal craft intercepted enemy convoy of one Coaster, 4 armed lighters and 3 R boats at night one half mile from shore near Mesco point. Complete tactical surprise achieved despite very heavy fire from ships and shore. Trawlers carried out determined gun action closing range to 800 yards. Two Lighters and 1 R boat blown up. One Lighter seen to capsize and hits obtained on the Coaster. 3 of our trawlers sustained slight damage. Commanding Officer of one wounded. No other casualties.
- Adriatic. Combined sea and air attack carried out at Iussin Island. Asino bombarded by destroyers who also engaged motor boat west of Canidole Island. 2 explosive motor boats chased by coastal craft through Canis into Iussin Picollo shore targets bridge over canal and E boats berthed inside were engaged. Four enemy explosive motor boats have made night attack at Ist Island. One grounded and blew up remainder driven off. Similar boat containing dead German was towed into Zara by fishing boat. Local authorities at Sibenik are being helpful and friendly and at Zaza although official relations are unchanged subordinates proving more helpful. Situation at Vis is strained.  
Crete /....

Asst

Crete. Opening of Port of Heraklion proceeds satisfactory. Local E.L.A.S. are fully co-operative with British authorities and behaving admirably. Distribution of relief stores continues.

Greece. At Kalamata Kavalle and Volos evacuation completed. Presence of warships in ports particularly those from which troops have been withdrawn is having marked salutary effect and such ships report that situation is quiet. Details of evacuation from Krioneri are now available. 802 Officers and men, 4 guns with limbers, 2 Bren Gun Carriers, 5 Jeeps, 1 Armoured car, 150 tons equipment taken off under heavy mortar fire by Naval force of one corvette a whaler, 6 coastal and landing craft, and 12 caiques. 72 vehicles abandoned.

3. Air. Base weather and route weather enabled U.A.A.F. strategic heavy bombers to operate in strength. Target weather necessitated the use of pathfinder technique. Attacks were made on oil refineries at Odertal, Blechhammer N and South, Brux and Regensburg in Germany, Oswiecim in Poland and Moravska, Ostrava in Czechoslovakia. The Pilzen Skoda works was also attacked. Other forces attacked marshalling yards at Vienna, Linz, Rosenheim, Graz Salzburg, Innsbruck, Villach in Austria, Sopron in Hungary, and Maribor in Yugoslavia. R.A.F. heavies and mediums operating by day attacked German motor transport columns in the Biocce Matesevo Kolassin area of Yugoslavia with good results.. Supplies of ammunition and equipment were also flown to Greece each day.

Tactical Air Force was seriously hampered by low cloud and fog at bases. No medium sorties were flown, Fighters and Fighterbombers operated whenever possible giving good support to Eighth Army by attacking communications in the Po Valley and in the Brenner Route - gun positions and communications in the Spezia-Genoa area were also attacked.

Coastal Air Force flew shipping reconnaissance, mine spotting sorties and air sea rescue sorties.

Balkan Air Force. The main objective was enemy transport in the Biocce - Matesevo Kolassin area Yugoslavia which was strafed continuously with cannon and rockets and bombed by light bombers. Due to the congestion and smoke, assessment of results was difficult. At least 150 vehicles were destroyed.

4. Enemy. North of Faenza the enemy is conducting fighting withdrawal from the Lamone River in fair strength while the mobile division which arrived last week forms a strong flank guard on the line of the railway northwest of Faenza. The enemy's sole armoured Division is now out of line and possibly in Army reserve.

General Lemelson, 14 Army Commander at present commands 10 Army in place of Colonel-General Vietinghoff who is presumably deputising for Kesselring.

In rear areas the mixed German-Turcoman Division, previously in the Piacenza area is reported to have departed in a north-easterly direction, while a fresh Italian republican division is believed to have arrived in the vicinity of Parma.



# SECRET

5328.  
IN

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.)

Note by C. 6 Pels. Advance copy has been passed to Colonial Office.

Received in War Reg. at 1526/25.  
Circulated by W.O. to W.O. Depts. and  
Admiralty

Advance copy Ops., O.D.

1st Lord  
1st S.L. (3)  
D.F.S.L.  
5th S.L.  
V.C.N.S.  
A.C.N.S. (H)  
A.C.N.S. (F)  
U.W.R.  
Ops. (2)  
Flot  
O.D. (5)  
O.I.C. (3)  
D.N.I. (4)  
H. (2)  
C.N.I.  
C.C.L.S.  
W.D.  
Ad. Blake

**TOP SECRET**IN

**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.)

221401A/December.

From Admiral Archer.

Date. 23.12.44.

I.D.C. (O.T.P.) by Cable.

Recd. 1123.

Addressed Admiralty.

Repeated: C. in C. Mediterranean, F.O.L.E.M.,  
B.N.L.O. Black Sea.

*Shipping for Black Sea.*

My 191415. Following information received from  
Soviet Naval Staff.

2. Area dangerous to navigation.

- (a) Off Bosphorus bounded on south by parallel of 41 degs. 19' north and on east by meridian of 29 degs. 20' east. Northern and western limits not bounded.
- (b) Off Odessa bounded on south by parallels of 46 degs. 10' north on east by meridian of 31 degs. 25' east and north and west by coast.

3. Route for shipping bound for Odessa.

- (a) On leaving for Bosphorus proceed eastward along coast of Turkey to a point latitude 41 degs. 16' north longitude 29 degs. 25' east thence direct to a position known as approach point in lat. 46 degs. 8.1' north long. 31 degs. 26.2' east thence (?to) area known as waiting area. The limits of which are:  
On the south the parallel of 46 degs. 5' north  
on the east meridian of 31 degs. 45' east  
on the north by Tendra Peninsula and on the west by meridian of 31 degs. 35' east.
- (b) Having embarked pilots ships will proceed from waiting area through swept channel to Odessa or be led in by patrol cutter if weather prevents pilots from embarking. Details of swept channel are being furnished.

4. Aids to navigation.

- (a) Light buoy at approach point. Characteristics - white flash timed period not stated visible four miles.
- (b) Scandrofskaya light position latitude 46 degs. 19.3' north longitude 31 degs. 30.9' east. Fixed white light visible 13 miles.

(c)/

- (c) Radio beacon on Cape Bolshoi Fontan position latitude 46 degs. 22.6' north longitude 30 degs. 45' east. Range 90 miles wavelength 942 metres. Beacon available on demand. Characteristics given.

5. Following information is being sought.

- (a) Routes for shipping bound Tuapse, Poti and Novorossisk in case it is necessary to use these ports.
- (b) Copy of Black Sea pilot corrected to date. Note change of characteristic of Tandrofskaya light. Admiralty Chart 2232 Odessa to Sevastopol refers.
- (c) Period of light buoy in para. 4 (a).
- (d) Characteristic of radio beacon in para. 4 (c).

6. It is being pointed out that in view of proximity of light buoy at approach point to dangerous area given in para. 2 (b) the limited visibility of buoy and difficulty in making it with navigational aids quoted in para. 4 (a) light ship fully equipped with fog signal should be substituted for this light buoy.

7. All action taken in conjunction with U.S. Naval Mission who are informing Washington as above.

Admiralty pass C. in C. Mediterranean, F.O.L.E.M. other authorities as necessary. ✓

221401A.

1st Lord.  
1st S.L. (3)  
D.F.S.L.  
V.C.N.S.  
A.C.N.S. (H)

✓ Passing action being taken by War Registr

✓ Refers to convoys to Odessa.

**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.)

Date: 24.12.44

From: War Registry

Please note the Admiral Archer's 221401 which gives information received from the Soviet Naval Staff about areas dangerous to navigation, has been passed to C. in C. Mediterranean and FOLEM only by War Registry.

1st Lord  
1st S.L. (3)  
D.F.S.L.  
V.C.N.S.

for H.W.R.  
No. 5.

533

22.12.1944  
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.

- U/B dis-positions. No fresh information. Scales in all areas remain unchanged.  
(C. in C. E.I. 220352Z.)
- V.A. 3. Flag of V.A. 3 transferred from SUFFOLK to QUEEN ELIZABETH 20th December 1944.  
(V.A. 3 220703Z to Admty.)
- Operation "Robson". Force 67 consisting of INDOMITABLE, ILLUSTRIOUS, NEWCASTLE, ARGONAUT, BLACK PRINCE, 7 destroyers of 27th destroyer flotilla and R.F.A. WAVE KING left Trincomalee 17th Dec. under command of R.A.A. B.P.F. Object air strike on Pangkalan Brandan oil refinery.
- (2) After detaching WAVE KING 18th Dec. force proceeded to arrive flying off position northward of Diamond Point dawn 20th.
- (3) Strike of 28 Avengers 16 Hellcats and 16 Corsairs found Pangkalan Brandan totally obscured in cloud and therefore attacked harbour warehouses railway yards and oil installations at Belawan Deli.
- (4) Observation of bombing results difficult in low cloud (group missing) but one oil tank (?and) petrol tank set on fire by fighters.
- (5) Surprise achieved. No fighters encountered, flak (?light) one sally was intercepted and shot down over target area.
- (6) p.m. 20th fighters attacked airfields in Sabang area and small craft off Uleelhoe.
- (7) Own surface forces not located by enemy.
- (8) About six twin engine bombers seen Medan airfields. None seen north Sumatra airfields.
- (9) Weather for this operation less favourable than expected and with no promise of early improvement force withdrew to R/V WAVE KING 21st and return Trincomalee 22nd Dec.
- (10) No casualties sustained.
- (11) Press communique is not being issued yet as enemy's knowledge of our strength and dispositions is probably very incomplete.
- (12) C. in C. Pac. pass to Capt. Tufnell.  
(C. in C. E.I. 221214Z to Admty., etc.)

- Trincomalee development. S.E.A.C..O.S. 286 22nd December 1944.  
Following for Chiefs of Staff from Mountbatten.
- (1) Before he relinquished command of the Eastern Fleet Admiral Fraser submitted to me a recommendation that Trincomalee should be developed as a permanent first class naval operating base and that the proposal should be put before the Chiefs of Staff.
- (2) I have discussed the matter also with Admiral Power who strongly supports the recommendation.
- (3) Trincomalee has grown up on no balanced overall plan. It has been developed according to the needs of the moment and consequently has many disadvantages, as it is not at present a first class operating base.

/(4)...

War Diary.

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Trincomalee development. (Contd.) (4) I consider that the present time is appropriate for a detailed examination of the requirements to make the port into a first class operating base.  
(5) The main requirements are:-  
(a) improved loading and unloading facilities for merchant ships and R.F.As. including lighter wharves and berths where ships can unload alongside.  
(b) Increased storage and improved handling facilities for naval and air and victualling stores to make the port self-contained and no longer dependent on Colombo and Galle. This means a great increase in accommodation and amenities.  
(c) Airfield facilities for disembarked F.A.A. squadrons and for repair of aircraft to be available in the immediate vicinity without prejudicing R.A.F. needs for air defence.  
(d) Adequate repair facilities on shore for maintenance of all boats and harbour craft.  
(e) Up to date facilities for harbour training of officers and ratings.  
(6) Fleet repair facilities could be limited to floating docks and repair ships in view of the proximity of a first class repair yard at Singapore, but increased accommodation for repair ratings ashore is necessary.  
(7) I request that I may be given approval in principle to examine the project in detail and to submit a plan for your consideration. (S.A.C.S.E.A. 221613Z as amended 230401Z to A.M.S.S.O.)

11th Flotilla refits. Your 061301. Approved for the remainder of 11th Flotilla to be refitted in South Africa as proposed.  
(2) Ships' complements will be adjusted as far as possible on Station. If it is found that this cannot be arranged without detriment to the manning situation, consideration will be given to effecting it either at home or in the Mediterranean, a division of the Flotilla at a time, during the monsoon period in 1945. (A.C.N.S.(F) 221707A to C. in C. E.I.)

Landing craft operation. S.A.C.S.E.A. 201145 (requesting report of state of training of crews of L.S.I.(L) etc.) Assault flotillas embarked in L.S.I.(L) are composed in the main of personnel with "Overlord" battle experience with some dilution. They have had no operational training in their present L.S.I.(L)  
(2) L.C.T.(5) have experienced crews with some dilution. No operational training has been carried out since craft refitted.  
(3) L.S.I.(L) have been recommissioned prior to leaving U.K. and have had no working up.  
(4) L.S.T.(2) have ships' companies experienced in "Overlord" with certain adjustments for overseas service, they have had very little working up. (D.C.O.D. 222237A to C. in C. E.I.)

/Molcabs...

535

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies - Contd.

Molcabs. Your 140437. As Molcab No. 1 is due to sail from Southampton mid January and No. 2 early February it is most undesirable to postpone movement, para. 5 of A.M. 162209 October, addressed to C. in C. E.F. not to F.O. Force W, refers.

(2) Since the L.S.T. involved are not nominated for immediate operations request you will consider either leaving perishable equipment on board or making extermorised arrangements for temporary storage of perishable equipment.

(3) In view of above intend to proceed with planned programme. (A.C.N.S.(F) 222359A to C. in C. E.I.)

War Diary.22.12.1944.  
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

SAMTUCKY (damaged 21 Dec.) SAMTUCKY returned Halifax 0051Z December 22nd from H.H.X.327, unconfirmed internal explosion. (N.C.S.O. Halifax, 221222Z, 221815Z to Ships escorting H.X.327 for Commodore.)  
SS. SAMTUCKY pts. 14 in H.H.X. 327 damaged by explosion which is believed to have been caused by torpedo, while forming up 500 yards west of Sambro light vessel at 1910Z/2nd December, 1944. Ship returned to Halifax and beached. All hands safe. None injured. (N.C.S.O. Halifax, 221922Z to Admty., etc.)  
Ref. O.R.S. 742.  
(1) SS. SAMTUCKY (Br.) (2) M. of W.T., Mgrs. Prince Line.  
(3) 1910Z/21 Dec. 1944, 500 yards W. of Sambro Lt. Vessel.  
(4), (5), (6) Submarine not seen. (6A) Yes, not streamed.  
(7) Ship damage returned to port and braced. (8) All hands safe. (9) Not known. (10) Torpedo. (11) Safe aboard.  
(N.C.S.O. Halifax, 221926Z to Admty., etc.)

GLOIRE. Sail French cruiser GLOIRE unescorted from New York 23rd December for Cherbourg to arrive by 1st January.  
(Cominch, 221415 to Comeasseafon.)

U/B dispositions. Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q. 221715Z, 222257Z.)

U-Boat Campaign. Points from A.U. Meeting, 19th December, 1944.  
(D.A.U.D., 221936A to B.A.D.)  
See U-Boat Campaign.

AQUITANIA. AQUITANIA unable to sail as scheduled owing action of local W.S.A. authorities in diverting necessary fuel oil.  
(2) Have reported details to B.A.D. Washington for necessary action.  
(B.M.W.T. New York, 221949Z to D. of S.T.)

S/M attack and sighting summary. Para. (A) At 1910Z/21 in 44.22 N., 63.23 W. SS. SAMTUCKY in H.H.X.327 damaged by explosion in number four hold and later beached, torpedo attack considered very probable.  
(N.S.H.Q., 222053Z to Admty., Cominch.)

Frigates for S.E.A.C. Requirement has arisen for conversion of 2 River class frigates to L.S.H.(S) for employment in S.E.A.C. from 1st October next. Ships require to be taken in hand in U.K. by end of April and May respectively, and will be R.N. manned on conversion.

537

22.12.1944.  
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West IndiesFrigates for  
S.E.A.C.  
(Contd.)

(2) While U-Boat menace continues it is not desired to withdraw any of 5 R.N. frigates of this class which are all that remain in Home Commands, as all 5 are being employed as Group leaders. Further, Loch class, being Squid fitted, must be kept as A/S Vessels to deal with fast underwater U-Boat. Captain class are not acceptable as too small.

(3) We should be grateful, therefore, if you would make available 2 River class frigates from the 7 on loan to you, or if you would prefer it, from R.C.N. new construction. In the latter case, suggest terms of loan similar to those agreed for PRINCE HENRY and PRINCE DAVID.  
(V.C.N.S., 222347A to N.S.H.Q.)

Australia and New Zealand

F.O.N.A.S., A.

F.O.N.A.S., A. has now transferred to Sydney. Para. (2) of my 300928.

(2) Signals should be addressed to F.O.N.A.S., A., and correspondence to F.O.N.A.S., A., Sydney.

(3) Admty., is requested to inform all authorities.

(V.A.(Q) B.P.F., 220310Z to Admty.)

Digest  
No. 1066,  
covering  
Dec. 21st.

(13) Search Liberator sighted three ship convoy comprising one each destroyer, 2,000 ton freighter and smaller merchantman 100 miles south of Ambon morning 20th course (?200°), speed 5 knots; attack unsuccessful. 3 Dutch Mitchells attacked convoy that afternoon sinking largest ship leaving hundreds of Japs in water and strafing smaller merchantman.  
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 221038.)

BISHOPDALE.

H.M.A.S. BISHOPDALE was damaged in No. 3 wing tank and flood pump room 14th Dec. as result enemy aircraft suicide crash Leyte Gulf. Casualties, one killed, three injured.  
(A.C.N.B., 221236Z to Admty.)



538

22.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M attack  
and sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/22nd Dec.  
Para. (A) (1) LOCH SHIN sighted Schnorkel,  
course 070° at 1337Z/21st Dec. in 50° 11' N.,  
01° 33' W.  
(2) E.G.1 attacked bottomed contact before  
2048Z/21st Dec. in 49° 53' N., 03° 07' W.  
(D.D.I.C., 221053A to N.S.H.Q., Cominch.)

U/B  
dispositions.

No fresh information in Indian Ocean.  
No U-Boats estimated in Atlantic south of 30° N.  
(D.D.I.C., 221421A.)

A.U.  
Meeting,  
Dec. 19.

Points from Fourth A.U. Meeting of 1944, held  
on 19th Dec.  
(A) Only four merchant ships sunk, but number  
of U-Boats sunk is low and operational number  
increasing.  
(B) 160 U-Boats estimated available for  
operations in European waters and 150 working-up.  
(C) Estimated 40 large and 20 small prefabricated types  
completed. 90 large and 35 small building.  
(D) Major offensive with new types may be withheld until  
larger numbers available, say, another two months.  
(E) Principal U-Boat assembly yards to be attacked with  
marginal bombing effort as and when opportunity offers without  
causing major diversion of effort from main priority targets,  
namely, oil production, needs of the land battle, and  
communication networks. This marginal bombing effort should  
be frequently available in the form of diversionary attacks to  
draw the enemy's defences away from main objectives.  
(V.C.N.S., 221936A to B.A.D.)

539

23.12.1944  
SaturdayWar DiarySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

1. It is proposed to abolish Dover as an independent command and absorb it, under a N.O.I.C., into the Nore Command, whose Western boundary would then be the line Dungeness - Griz Nez.

## North Sea

2a. Last night's action with E-boats continued into today. It would now appear that 4 groups, each of 6 boats, were operating with the Nore-Flushing channel as their objective. Claims by our patrols are of 2 E-boats certainly, and one possibly, sunk, and 6 damaged. We suffered no losses or casualties.

\* W. Boat. See p 543

b. Midget U-boats also attacked the Schelde entrance, probably from Schouwen. They torpedoed S.S. ALLAN ADALE E.S.E. of Flushing. She was beached, but will probably prove to be a total loss. One\* midget was sunk by H.D.M.L. 1465, one by Motor Minesweepers 339 and 251, and one blew up on the beach west of Breskens. A prisoner was taken in each case.

c. The E-boats renewed their attacks in the evening, after 2030 hours. Five of them were seen and engaged by WALPOLE and M.T.Bs. Three were sunk and the other two damaged.

d. Aircraft of 16 Group attacked 3 merchant ships and E-boats off Ymuiden, scoring hits.

e. The initial sweeping of the Schelde and approaches has now been completed. The total bag to date is 241 ground and 39 moored mines.

## Channel

3a. SS. DUMFRIES was damaged off H2 buoy, some 20 miles S.S.W. of the Needles, probably by a mine, and later sank. Escorts, reinforced by thirtieth Escort Group and several M.T.Bs. searched the vicinity for possible U-boats, but without success. SS. SLEMISH was also sunk by mine or torpedo, 3 miles off Cherbourg. Here GENTIAN, escorts, and First Escort Group carried out a U-boat hunt, also without success. GENTIAN is of opinion that this also was a mine.

CAISTOR CASTLE, GARLIES and FITZROY have severally carried out other attacks, but so far also without material results.

b. Le Havre entrance is now 250 ft. wide, and the restriction on length of shipping using the port is withdrawn.

West Coast  
France

4. At Brest, 3 moored mines were swept in the Port du Commerce.

## Norway

5. C.S.10 in DIADEM, with MAURITIUS and "Force 4" has returned from operation "Fretsaw", but they sighted no shipping. "Force 3" was held continuously by enemy Radar for 3 hours.

23.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

Greece

- 6a. British forces at the Piraeus extended their positions today against varying opposition after a rebel counter attack had been repulsed. The Piraeus railway station was occupied after heavy fighting, and further gains made along the Athens - Piraeus road. In Athens, slight gains were made in the area west of the Acropolis.
- b. During the clearance operations at the Piraeus E.L.A.S. have sustained heavy casualties, and prisoners so far number 4,000.
- c. Merchant seamen liberty men from the SS. FORT COLUMBIA at Volos who were captured by E.L.A.S. have been surrendered to the MUSKETEER after a threat of bombardment.
- d. The SAXIFRAGE and PROTEA, with M.G.B.661, sank two E.L.A.N. caiques at Monopetala, near Patras.
- e. While investigating Livadia Bay at Piscopi, the destroyer EXMOOR was fired on by shore batteries.
- f. The Greek SS. FRED has been refloated at Salonika. The British SS. CHISWICK is aground, but the cruiser AURORA is endeavouring to tow her off.

Danube

7. Captain Maund feels confident that the Russians will have to invoke our assistance in clearing the Danube and that we are accordingly in a position to make our own terms both as regards operational control and the subsequent administration of the river.

Beirut

8. The French cruiser EMILE BERTIN arrived at Beirut to spend Christmas.

America and West Indies

GLOIRE

9. The French cruiser GLOIRE sailed unescorted from New York for Cherbourg.

541

23.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines

10a. Five Thunderbolts set ablaze the entire Palompon area (south-east of Luzon Island) with incendiaries after ten Kittyhawks had bombed the port.

Six Mitchells which swept Davao Gulf this forenoon sank three small coasters.

b. P.T. boats last night destroyed one and damaged a second heavily armed barge, heading north east from Halmahera. Yesterday and today, fighters destroyed two and damaged about 15 more barges during coastal sweeps off Northern Halmahera.

Australia and New Zealand

Borneo

11. Three patrol Liberators over Northern Borneo bombed Miri, Labuan and Jesselton, and strafed a small merchant ship in Brunei Bay.

China

12. Two U.S. Liberators on a sweep over the Formosa Strait and East China Sea probably sank one 425 ft. tanker.

War Diary.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Proposed reduction of Dover Command. Consequent on changes in the situation in the Channel and in the southern part of the North Sea, it is under consideration to abolish Dover as an independent Command. A N.O.I.C. would be appointed.

2. In addition to operational and administrative advantages to be gained by dissolving this Command, the reduction of Dover to the status of a N.O.I.C. should afford considerable saving in manpower, in which the need for economy is very urgent.

3. As regards the boundary between Portsmouth and Nore Commands it is considered that Ramsgate and Dover should be within the Nore Command and a line between Dungeness and Cap Gris Nez is suggested as the boundary. The pre-war boundary was a line between South Coast of England in long. 0° 34' E. to Treport (50° 40' N., 1° 22' E).

4. Request your views on the abolition of the Dover Command and suggested boundary line.

5. C. in C. Nore in consultation with A.C. Dover is requested to include an estimate of the saving in manpower.

(Head of M., 230126A to Cs. in C. Nore, Portsmouth, V.A. Dover).

Movements.

SOLENT On 2nd January SOLENT will be ready to sail for East Indies. Request she may be sailed in suitable convoy to Gibraltar.  
(F.O.S/M 231158A to C. in C. W.A.)

ACTIVITY ACTIVITY is required to ferry aircraft to Sydney (N.S.W.) via Suez leaving U.K. early January.  
2. When ready C. in C. Portsmouth is requested to sail ACTIVITY to Belfast to load aircraft.  
3. Sailing arrangements from U.K. will be signalled later.  
4. After discharging aircraft at Sydney ACTIVITY is to proceed to New York to load aircraft for shipment to U.K.  
5. No operational aircraft will be carried.  
(A.C.N.S.(F), 231237A to C. in C. Portsmouth, C. in C. W.A., V.A. Q.B.P.F.)

BERWICK Clyde arrival BERWICK.  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 231458A to V.A.M.)

ARETHUSA Earliest date of departure of ARETHUSA from U.K. now mid January. A.M. 211609 refers.  
(A.C.N.S.(F), 231535A to C. in C. Med.).

DIADEM, MAURITIUS. Scapa arrivals F.O. 10th C.S. in DIADEM with MAURITIUS, MYNGS, SAVAGE, SIOUX, and SCOURGE.  
(A.C.O.S., 231550A to Admt, C. in C. H.F.)

BERWICK Intend to sail BERWICK passing Clyde Boom 0900A/24th Dec. to Scapa expected time of arrival 0315A  
25th Dec. expected time of arrival Hoxa Gate 0345A/25th Dec. C. in C. H.F. 211433 Dec. not to all addressees refers. A.C.O.S. is requested to arrange following lights Group III, IV and V from 0215A till cancelled and anchor beacon

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movement.

BERWICK number 1 to 7 inclusive from 0330A until anchored.  
(contd). (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 232204A to C. in C. H.F.,  
C. in C. W.A.)

Operations.

North Sea.

Actions My 222258 continues. 5 E-boats contacted in  
with position 305 Ostend 20 course 240° speed (30)  
E-boats off knots 0051. E-boats engaged from 0058 until  
Dutch coast. ?0135. Possible Southernmost position reached by  
enemy was 030° N.F.3 buoy 3.25 miles when torpedoes  
were fired and enemy retired North at 30 knots.

They were also engaged at 0125 by KITTIWAKE. Contact was lost at  
0132 in position 305 Ostend 31.

Contact regained at 0146 in position 305 Ostend 27 course and  
speed 090° 25 knots contact lost in position 321 22.3 at 0213  
course and speed 025° 20 knots, WALPOLE in contact 4 miles to the  
South. One E-boat confirmed damaged and only 4 E-boats seen  
after 0112. Consider no mines laid.

(TORRINGTON, 230246A to C. in C. Nore).

E-boat operations last night Friday, enemy reports indicate  
probably 4 groups each of 6 boats operated.

2. 1830 M.T.Bs. intercepted one group off Hook. One E-boat  
possibly sunk 2 damaged.

3. Between 2030 and 2130 2 or possibly 3 groups attacked north  
of N.F.8 buoy and near West Hinder Bank. Patrols 16, 15 and 12  
drove them off. CURZON and C/Fs (patrol 16) sinking one certain  
and badly damaging 3. WALPOLE (patrol 15) sank one certain and  
one probable.

4. West Hinder group did not get within 3½ miles of channel.  
N.F.8 group split, possibly 3 reaching channel between N.F.8 and  
N.F.9 buoys. This is confirmed by Ostend Plot. Minelaying  
possible in this area.

5. 0058 TORRINGTON (patrol 12) and later KITTIWAKE (patrol 18)  
engaged group of 5 N.E. of N.F.3 buoy. Minelaying possible on  
eastern edge of Q.Z.X.1475.

6. This report and claims are subject to amendment when fuller  
reports are received.

(C. in C. Nore, 231152A to Admty).

W-boat  
sinking in  
Schelde.

H.D.M.L. 1465 on Flushing Breskens patrol reports  
sinking at 0830 today, Saturday, one W-boat. One  
prisoner captured. A further signal will be made.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 231011A to C. in C. Nore, See  
Admty. 241208 to N.O.I.C. Ostend).

Midget  
submarines  
in Schelde.

H.D.M.L. 1221 reports at 1021 today Saturday  
submarines submerged vicinity N.F.15 buoy four  
M.T.B. sent to investigate.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 231052A to C. in C. Nore).  
Midget submarine exploded on beach west of  
Breskens at 1020. Am investigating.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 231110A to C. in C. Nore).

544

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Midget  
submarines  
in Schelde.  
(contd).

Army Look-out reports periscope sighted at 1045 today 500 yards off beach at Urouwenpolder, map reference 154393. Periscope was proceeding east and engines reported clearly heard. Later observed to turn north and it is considered from small turning circle that craft was a midget submarine.

(R.N.O. Breskens 231127A to N.O.I.C. Antwerp)

Situation at 1100. One W-boat sunk at 0839 by H.D.M.L. 140 on Breskens - Flushing patrol line. One prisoner landed at Breskens.

(2) One explosives ship struck beach west of Breskens at 1020 blowing large hole in sea wall. Remainder of ship visible. One officer investigating.

(3) At (corrupt group) one other enemy one - man S/M in vicinity of H.F.15 buoy.

(4) All available H.D.M.L. on patrol.

(5) A.S.V. fitted aircraft patrolling area.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 231145A to C. in C. Nore).

My 231145 following additional information. Para. (1) Prisoner is being held on board H.D.M.L. 1465 for interrogation by Naval Security Officer. This vessel reports a second S/M was subsequently sighted and attacked with negative results. Para. (2). This explosion occurred at 0718 and was attributed to a bomb until falling tide revealed object. Three Swordfish fitted A.S.V. have been on patrol since 1150 with negative results.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend (corrupt code time) to C. in C. Nore)

Further to my 231127. Army now reports positive sighting of enemy submarine 500 yards off Domburt. Craft was travelling westward, periscope is quite obvious and craft has surfaced once.

(R.N.O. Beveland, 231235A to N.O.I.C. Antwerp)

Midget submarine was attacked with gunfire by M.M.S. 339 and 251 at 1014 today in the vicinity of N.F.15 Buoy. Hits observed submarine submerged M.L.915 then attacked contact with depth charges. Prisoner picked up. My 231245 refers.

(Capt. M/S F.A., 231301A to C. in C. Nore)

My 231145. Following additional information paragraph.

1. Prisoner is being held on board H.D.M.L. 1465 for interrogation by Naval Security officer. This ship reports a second S/M was subsequently sighted and attacked with negative result. This explosion occurred at 0718 and itself attributed to a bomb until falling tide revealed object. 3 Swordfish fitted with A.S.V. have been on patrol since 1150 negative result.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 231611 to C. in C. Nore).

My 231145 para. (2) and my 231611 para. (2) Officer reports wreckage is remains of 18 inch torpedo normal German pattern probably fired by Midget S/M.

2. Unable to recover torpedo owing to inaccessible position.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 232130A to C. in C. Nore).

Patrols.

Patrols tonight Saturday.

1. COTSWOLD. 2. COTTESMORE. 3. MACKAY.  
4. HOLDERNESS. 5. KITTIWAKE. 6A. PUFFIN.

War Diary.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Patrols. 2. 12. RUTHERFORD. 14. EKINS. 16. STAYNER with  
(contd). Coastal Force from Ostend. 18. SHELDRAKE.  
19. TORRINGTON and P.S. SLAZAK.  
3. Escort for T.A.M. 27 CATTISTOCK, MIDDLETON.  
4. CAICOS will be carrying out operation "Alphabet".  
5. Coastal Force Patrol: F.C.4, Latest information M.T.B. Z.19.  
F.C.5 2 M.T.B.17 F.C.6 2 M.T.B. 15. F.C.7 2 M.T.B. 13.  
F.C.8 2 M.T.B. Z.11. F.B. 1 2 M.T.B. 9. F.B.3 2 M.T.B. 3.  
F.B. 4 2 M.L. 53 Buoy. F.B.5 6 M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 57, 53. F.A.2.  
F.A. 3 M.T.B. M.V. L.L. 14, 17. F.A. 4, 6 M.T.B. F.J. L.L. 40,55  
F.C.1 4 M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 39 21. F.B. 2 2 M.T.B. F.J. W.S.2100  
F.A. 8 4 M.T.B. F.J.W.S. 24, 15. F.G.2. F.G.3 4 M.T.B. Patrol  
16.  
(C. in C. Nore, 231034A to Nore Command).

Situation Cosintintrep No.263 Part 4.  
Report. Discharge by sea - 24 hour period ending 221600A  
December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (incl. coal)	<u>Bulk</u> <u>Pol.</u>
Antwerp	-	-	7,347	8,305
Ostend	1,925	-	2,571	1,514
Boulogne	32	43	190	-
Dieppe	2	-	1,103	-
Caen	-	-	1,060	-
Ghent	-	-	-	-
Calais	-	2	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,959</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>12,271</b>	<b>9,819</b>
<u>U.S. North.</u>				
Antwerp	-	-	13,385	-
Cherbourg	-	-	6,572	11,856
Le Havre	618	211	5,570	-
Rouen	909	364	6,377	-
Granville	-	-	1,019	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>32,923</b>	<b>11,856</b>

(S.H.A.E.F., 231145A to Admty).  
Cositintrep Number 623 Part 2 Naval.

A. Enemy Activity.

1. Coaster SLEMISH was sunk probably by U-boat 340° Cherbourg five miles.
2. Four Groups each of six E-boats operated against Nore Flushing channel between 2000/22 and 0200/23. Three boats crossed channel northwest of Ostend but were probably prevented by patrols from minelaying. Patrols claim 2 certainly sunk, 1 probably sunk, 6 damaged.
3. Midget submarines attacked Schelde entrance a.m. 23rd. Merchant vessel ALLAN ADALE torpedoed east south east Flushing five miles and beached. Probably total loss.

/One...



23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Patrols. One Midget blew up on beach west of Breskens.  
(contd). One sunk by Motor Launch and crew captured. One  
sunk by minesweepers crew captured and stated  
craft had sailed from Schouwen.

B. Captured Ports.

Havre. Corvette previously blocking north side of entrance  
has now been removed, making a gap of 250 feet. In view of  
this the 450 foot length restriction has now been removed. Main  
Channel expected to be open about 1st January when draught  
restriction will also be removed.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 232325A to Admty).

Renewed  
E-boat  
actions.

Contact with a group of E-boats was obtained by  
F.G.1 at 2029 steering about 170° at 2036, 3  
E-boats turned to the northward on being engaged  
by F.G.1 remaining 5 carried on to the southward.  
F.B.2 was vectored to the westwards and F.G.3  
to the south. F.G.1 altered course to the southward to cover  
E-boats, crossed the channel close to the westward of N.F.9 at  
approximately 2046 and altered course at 2050 proceeding in a  
north-westerly direction crossing the channel again close to  
the eastwards of N.F.8.  
During this period minimum speed of E-boats was 22 knots.  
Although "Headache" was heard continuously during this operation  
nothing was heard to indicate minelaying. F.B.2 was stopped  
and F.G.3 vectored round to intercept, F.G.3 making contact with  
5 E-boats at 2106 and opening fire at 2111 at a range of 500 to  
600 yards. The 2 leading E-boats crossed his bow at about 35  
knots. The last 3 were engaged in turn. The leader of these 3  
turned to port and subsequently rejoined the 2 leading boats.  
The fourth and fifth boats were heavily engaged by F.G.3. The  
leader of these two was left burning fiercely and stopped. The  
last boat in the line drew away ahead and made towards WALPOLE  
and was subsequently sunk by her. F.G.1 continued to cover the  
3 leading boats which were making to the north west. F.G.2  
who had already been moved to the westwards made contact with 3  
E-boats and opened fire at approximately 2116. F.G.1 illuminated  
at 2118. The remaining 2 escaped at high speed to the north-  
westwards. F.G.2 continued to fire at the E-boats until 2140.  
At 2140 F.G.1 decided to go in to deliver the "Coup-de-grace"  
the E-boat being practically stopped, F.G.2 being ordered to  
keep clear. As all E-boats were now well clear to the northward  
F.G.1 decided to attempt to board but E-boat was scuttled before  
this could be done. Prisoners and paper were, however, recovered  
It is considered that 3 boats were definitely sunk and two  
damaged.  
(CURZON, 231610 to C. in C. Nore).

Operations.

Channel.

Possible  
U-boat.

Assisting M.T.B. investigate contact. Estimated  
position 050° 08' N., 002° 02'.  
(CAISTOR CASTLE, 230249A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

/Your...

War Diary.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Channel.

Possible  
U-boat.  
(contd).                      Your 221801. Have completed box search round Datum Point. Negative results intend sweep (?box) area before assuming daylight patrol.  
(CAISTOR CASTLE, 230527A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Second  
possible  
U-boat.                      GARLIES and CAPEL rejoined.  
My 222020A para. 2 GARLIES confirmed contact reported in my 201829 in Situ. at 1230A/22nd and carried out 13th Further attack on it. Will proceed with BENTLEY to confirm my 212148 contact at daylight today.  
(S.O.E.G.1, 230618A to C. in C. Plymouth).

SS. DUMFRIES              DUMFRIES mined or torpedoed, am investigating.  
sunk.                      PEARL standing by.  
(BALSAM, 230829 to C. in C. Portsmouth).  
My 230829 ship reports that it was mined.  
(BALSAM, 230837A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Further to my 230829 mine probably confirmed ship struck by the head, no torpedo seen or heard, operation Scabbard carried out without result. PEARL standing by sunk ship.

Boat safe, 6 men still on board.

(BALSAM, 230847A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 230847 ship sinking in position 264° H.2 buoy 1 mile.

Have taken all survivors off ship. PEARL standing by.

(BALSAM, 230855A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

BALSAM 230824 carrying out box search round wreck with CROIX DE LORRAINE.

(ANTHONY, 230929 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Standing by merchant ship with PEARL position by Radar 50° 22' N., 01° 45.5' W.

(LAUNCESTON CASTLE, 231015 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Your 230910\*have left PORCHESTER CASTLE and KENILWORTH CASTLE on patrol. My position course and speed 50° 12' N., 01° 45' 30" W., 015° 15 knots.

(S.O.E.G.30, 231018 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

\*(Former not identified).

Carrying out box search DUMFRIES floating. Request tug.

(S.O.E.G.30, 231103A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

LAUNCESTON CASTLE now standing by DUMFRIES, am proceeding with 59 survivors to Cowes Roads via Needles.

(PEARL, 231115A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Unit at H.2 buoy. Am carrying out expanding box search (?GU) vicinity. Returning to patrol on completion.

(M.T.B.759, 231350A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Shall have completed SCABBARD and box search at 1700. No result as yet wreck still afloat.

(S.O.E.G.30, 231447A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

DUMFRIES still afloat in position 202° Needles 20 miles at 1345 with PEVENSEY CASTLE Group sweeping round her. Endeavoured to tow her without success.

(PEARL 231520 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Have attacked contact in position 50° 28' N., 01° 33' 30" W.

(S.O.E.G.30, 231533A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Damaged unattended merchant vessel badly down by head, through not apparently sinking, in position 113 Portland Bill 8 miles, Unit standing by. Request instructions.

(M.T.B.760, 231546A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

/Consider...

548

War Diary.23.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Channel.

SS. DUMFRIES Consider contact was wreck. Insufficient oil for  
sunk. a sample. Piece of old insulating cork recovered.  
(contd). Continuing box search.

(S.O.E.G.30, 231647A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 231546 - Wreck identified as SS. GRETA FIELD  
now in position 112° Portland Bill 29 miles. Slowly sinking by  
head.

(M.T.B. 760, 231649A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

SS. DUMFRIES finally sunk in position 50° 20' 20" N.,  
01° 43' 20" W. at 1700. Position estimated by Q.H. outfit.  
Unit returning to harbour E.T.A. 1840.

(M.T.B. 760, 231705A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Ship originally shown as SS. GRETA FIELD amended to SS.  
DUMFRIES by M.T.Bs. 760, 231755.

Loss of SS. SLEMISH torpedoes position Cherbourg 340°  
3 miles, am investigating.

(GENTIAN, 230935 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Am attacking contact H.10 buoy 293° 1½ miles.

(GENTIAN, 231010A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Proceed immediately and carry out search vicinity H.10 Buoy.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 231016A to WATCHMAN, LOCH SHIN).

Target is stationary.

(GENTIAN, 231020A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Proceed with despatch to vicinity H.8 buoy and act under  
orders of C. in C. Portsmouth. Shift to Portsmouth W/T  
Organisation.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 231029A to S.O.E.G.1)

My 231010 - contact was non-submarine.

(GENTIAN, 231045 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 230935A SS. SLEMISH sunk by mine or torpedo in position  
49° 45' N., 01° 42' W., survivors picked up by U.S. Patrol  
Vessel. Their view divided, my view ship was mined.

(GENTIAN, 231058A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Ship torpedoed 340 Cherbourg 3 miles.

2. Ships addressed searching vicinity.

3. Organise search by your Group and remainder.

4. U-boat may be trying to escape by keeping close inshore.

5. Report your intentions.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 231253A to S.O.E.G.1, WATCHMAN,

LOCH SHIN, PORTCHESTER CASTLE, HALLOWELL)

LOCH SHIN, S.O., WATCHMAN, KENILWORTH CASTLE, PORTCHESTER  
CASTLE, KINGSTON TURQUOISE, GENTIAN ships spread one mile apart  
carrying out box search. Intend sweeping West then North.

(LOCH SHIN, 231300A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Your 231230A. E.T.A. H.2 buoy 1500.

(S.O.E.G.1, 231413A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

My 231230 was not addressed to 1st Escort Group who are to  
search vicinity H.10 buoy in accordance with my 231253.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 231510A to S.O.E.G.1)

Ref. C. in C's 231253A.

Am sweeping in the vicinity H.8 to H.10 buoy. Ships in  
company as in C. in C's 231253A GENTIAN and KINGSTON TURQUOISE  
have been detached to search inshore.

(LOCH SHIN, 231530A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Your 231253. Intend sweeping through position to coast-  
line and thereafter organising a north south sweep from shore  
to 49° 55' N., between 01° 25' W. to 01° 52' W. ships spread 2  
miles apart. E.T.A. time of arrival 1700A.

War Diary.23.12.1944.  
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Channel.

Loss of SS. SLEMISH. (contd). 2. First E.G. AFFLECK (S.O.), BENTLEY, GARLIES, GORE, CAPEL. (S.O.E.G.1., 231535A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Patrols. Today 23rd at 1400 intend M.T.B. 750 (S.O.) 747, 731 in accordance with para. 5 of your 221801  
2. Ordered to leave patrol 1400 tomorrow 24th without relief, unless in contact.

3. COFOX, LOXO constant watch 2450 k/cs until 0001 24th/25th then 2980 k/cs.

(N.O.I.C. Portland, 231107A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Air Patrols. My 281728 para. 12 not to E.G.30, E.G.1.

(A) Night 23rd/24th patrol 32 by Liberators, Wellingtons, 5 miles each side of 02° 15' W.

Day 24th, patrol between H channel and Kansas Channel by Swordfish, and patrol 32 by Liberators.

(B) 838 Squadron S Z F. 842 Squadron N S V.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 231632A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Forces).

At 1800 Anti Snort Patrol area limits 02° 00' 01° 00' W. Route E to 18 miles South.

2. Each M.T.B. take 6 mile strip.

3. Report dispositions.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 231633A to M.T.Bs. 750, 747, 731).

Possible U-boats. My 230030. Am leaving 2 bottom contacts in position (1) 088° Start Point 22 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles. (2) 090° Start Point 22 miles both contacts heavily depth charged oil traces but no conclusive evidence. RUPERT obtained good echo sound trace on an (corrupt group). Am assuming patrol. (FITZROY, 231430A to C. in C. Plymouth).

?Operation "Nestegg". My 141125 which is passed to C. in C. Portsmouth. Operation postponed indefinitely.

2. F.S. LORRAINE, F.S. DUQUESNE, F.S. BASQUE, F.S. SIMOUN, F.S. HOVA and F.S. SOMALI are

giving leave from Cherbourg estimated stay 15 days. Further movements will be signalled.

3. F.S. CROIX DE LORRAINE and F.S. TONKINOIS have rejoined C. in C. Portsmouth and are due to give leave 19th January to 9th February. These dates will be amended if necessary.

4. Admiralty is requested to hold minesweeping flotilla at 14 days notice reallocation to Task Force with boiler hours less than 150.

5. C. in C. Plymouth is requested to retain A. MOUCHEZ, F.Y.M.S. and M.M/S 1069 for equipment and training with new gear and to signal as early as possible anticipated date of completion of training.

(A.N.C.X.F., 231837A to Admty).

550

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Hoped-for U-boat. BOWMANVILLE attacked firm contact position 194° Tuskar Rock 8 miles at 0356A/23rd. GLACE BAY in company.

(S.O.E.G. C.4, 230420A to C. in C. W.A.)

My 230420A following from BOWMANVILLE begins: remaining in contact. Have definite echo sounder trace. T.O.O. 230344 ends.

(S.O.E.G. C.4, 230508 to C. in C. W.A.)

My 230420A. GLACE BAY reports contact either tide rip round old wreck or small shoal. BOWMANVILLE held firm contact until dawn without further echo sounder trace. Fired 5 Squids pattern WDDA trace of oil. Both ships rejoining.

(S.O.E.G. C.4, 231615A to C. in C. W.A.)

31st E.G. On completion of training today Saturday N.O.I.C. Campbeltown is requested to sail 31st E.G. to Greenock for fuelling and mails.

2. On completion of fuelling F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to sail 31st E.G. to patrol an area bounded by parallels 56° and 57° N., and meridians 07° and 08° W.

3. On arrival in area 31st E.G. will form part of Force 33 S.O. Force 33 in LOUIS.

(C. in C. W.A., 231312A to N.O.I.C. Campbeltown, F.O.I.C. Greenock).

E.G. 31 take ships addressed under your orders and proceed to comply with C. in C. W.A.'s 231312 not to all report time Gate is required and expected time of arrival Patrol Area to F.O.I.C. Greenock before proceeding.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 231946A to S.O.E.G. 31)

Your 231946A. Intend passing Gate at 2245A for Group less LANCASTER CASTLE who will be delayed by defects. Expected time of arrival Patrol area 1000/24th December.

(S.O.E.G., 31 232145A to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

Sailed E.G. 31 in BERKELEY CASTLE with HADLEIGH CASTLE and DUMBARTON CASTLE, E.T.A. patrol area 1000A/24th. My 231946A refers.

2. LANCASTER CASTLE delayed with defects.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 232328A to C. in C. W.A.)

Organisation In order to provide emergency striking forces to for reserves operate against U-boats which may disclose their for operations presence in the Cape Wrath Area, N.W. Approaches, C.E.1, C.E.2, S.W. Approaches, Bristol Channel or Irish Sea, and C.E.3. the following organisation is to be brought into force forthwith:-

A. Action addressees are each to detail 3 ships daily from those exercising in their respective areas or at anchor off their respective ports. In the case of group training the whole group should be detailed.

B. Ships detailed may be ordered by C. in C. Western Approaches to carry out operations C.E.1 2 or 3 in accordance with W.A. 0202/7 dated 11th October 1944 or to operate in the Irish Sea, either independently or in conjunction with forces already on the spot.

C. Ships detailed are to be at 2 hours notice when in harbour.

D. Action addressees are to inform C. in C. Western Approaches daily of names of ships or groups detailed. Senior Officers duties are to be taken from 0800 to 0800.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Organisation for reserves for operations C.E.1, C.E.2, and C.E.3. (contd).

2. Blank reports are required.
3. Support groups which have been brought in for a short rest are not to be used.
4. This supersedes my 281916 March 1944 (not to all) which is cancelled.  
(C. in C. W.A., 231823A to Western Approaches Command).

552

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations

Norway

Operation "Fretsaw". My P.C.S. at 0200 today Saturday 61° 45' N., 01° 00' E., 250°, 20 knots. Intend to alter course 202° at 0600.  
(2) Force 4 return to harbour. TRUMPETER comply C. in C. H.F.'s 221144A. Berths on arrival  
NORFOLK - A.3, TRUMPETER - B.1.  
(C.S.10, 230047A to NORFOLK.)  
Operation "Fretsaw". No shipping sighted. Demonstration also at 1950 Force 3 held by enemy radar continuously for 3 hours.  
(C.S.10, 230051A to C. in C. H.F.)

R.A.T.O.G. Barracudas for Home Fleet. C. in C. H.F.'s 212308, A.M. 200018 and F.O.C.T's 211317.  
It is the intention that a strike of 12 Barracuda R.A.T.O.G. from 828 Squadron should be available at Hatston for C. in C. H.F. until 821 Squadron is available.  
(2) Adverse weather conditions have affected the delivery of R.A.T.O.G. Barracudas but Admiralty records show that 8 are now at Hatston and that 4 more are about to arrive.  
(3) To ensure that conversion of pilots of 828 Squadron to Avengers is completed by 1st February conversion is to be done at Hatston concurrently with Barracuda flying practices.  
(4) F.O.N.A.S. is requested to attach the 6 Avengers and maintenance ratings referred to in para. (2) of A.M. 200018 to 828 Squadron at Hatston for conversion and flying practice and to arrange courses for maintenance ratings.  
(V.C.N.S., 231646A to C. in C. H.F., F.O.N.A.S.)

Operations

Northern Waters

Convoy J.W. 63. Pass to N.C.S.Os. concerned.  
J.W.63. A.M. 131852A from Middlesbrough for EMPIRE ARCHER read SAMARITAN.  
(D.T.D., 231413A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Unidentified vessel off Fair Isle. A.S.V. contact by aircraft V.547 at 0240A/23rd in position 59° 22' N., 01° 35' W. of surface craft which was burning navigation lights and fired correct submarine recognition signals was incorrectly assumed to be F.F.S. RUBIS on passage from Lerwick. It is confirmed from LOCH MONTEITH escort with RUBIS that RUBIS was at time in company in position 170° Sumburgh Head 5 miles.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 231609A to Admty.)

553

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDSAllied Air Activity

Merchant ships attacked off Ymuiden. Nr.1. My 1932. Have attacked enemy with bombs level cannon or machine gunfire. Hits observed position 52° 28' N., 4° 26' (Gee 2000). (A/C WNU 95, 231950 to 16 Group.)

Nr.2. My 1932. 3 M/Vs. being shadow(ed) 52 N., 04.27 E., course reported N.E., speed 5 m.p.h. (A/C WNU 95, 232020A to 16 Group.)

E-Boat off Ymuiden. Nr.4. My 1950, contact lost with enemy last seen position 52° 28' N., 04° 30' E., course E., 30 knots, believed on fire. (A/C WNU 96, 232035A to 16 Group.)

Mining

Deep mining off Hartland Point. Carry out Operation H.Y.A.5 at 1540 December 24th. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, 231105A to FLOVER.)

Minesweeping off Schelde. Unless otherwise ordered continue clearance of Q.Z.X. 1475 tomorrow Sunday.  
(2) It is possible there was a further E-Boat lay on the eastern edge of this area.  
(3) No mine disposal vessel available for tomorrow. Acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Nore, 231910 to M.S.F. 18.)  
Initial sweeping of Schelde and approaches has now been completed. The success of this operation has been much assisted by the interest and advice given by VERNON M/S and their rapid provision of special sweeping gear for the occasion.  
(2) 241 ground mines and 39 moored mines were swept during the operation.  
(C. in C. Nore, 232151A to VERNON.)

Minesweeping at Brest. Sweeping carried out yesterday December 22 at Brest. Three moored mines swept in Port de Commerce by M.L. Flotilla. (Com. Y Sqdn., 232213A to C.T.F. 125.)

Enemy Intelligence

Mining results Norway Oslo Fjord mid-Dec. My 081034. Following results minelaying of Dec. 13th are reported.  
(1) Horten. (A) Inner harbour will be closed for 2 weeks from date of mining.  
(B) 3 mines dropped 40 to 50 metres east of Canal bridge beside canal.  
(C) Mines dropped 150 metres south-west of Canal behind sports ground.  
(D) German barrack huts demolished and Norwegian Villa damaged at Apenes.  
(E) Mines dropped close to House of Representatives, sea mine on Osteya.

/(F) ...



23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Intelligence

Mining results Norway Oslo Fjord mid-Dec. (Contd.)

(F) 2 mines dropped close to sabotaged destroyer. Divers refuse to go down.

(G) Moss/Horten ferry stopped up to Dec. 19th.

(2) Moss. 750 troops with equipment waiting in Moss to embark Dec. 13th had to be sent Dec. 14th to Larvik via Oslo as Moss was closed by mines.

(3) Vaerlebukta. 1000 tons Finnish vessel mines, minesweepers damaged, 5 mines exploded all Dec. 14th.

(4) Langgrunnen. Horten closed for shipping up to Dec. 19th. Was swept Dec. 16th but no mines exploded. B.2. (N.A. Stockholm, 231304 to Admty.)

German Military transport to and from Norway.

My 191257 following are recent movements of military transports reported from Oslo, Moss, Arendal and Frederikstad begins:

Oslo. (a) WINRICH VON KNIPRODE left Oslo December 9th with about 1,200 men including 3 companies fully equipped Alpine troops and 1 S.S. company. In addition she carried 100 Finnish seamen and a few Norwegian and German Prisoners.

(b) STAHLACK left Oslo December 9th for Ferder loaded with military material.

(c) ROLANDSECK arrived Oslo December 13th and left same day with 400 S.S. troops and large quantity of cargo.

(d) MATTHIAS STINES arrived Oslo December 13th from Moss and loaded 290 private cars number of motor cycles, 15 airplane engines, 1 transformer and 8 tractor lorries.

(e) HANSA I lay in Oslo December 16th embarking troops.

(f) ISAR and WINRICH VON KNIPRODE were expected in Oslo December 18th to fetch troops.

Moss. (a) MARS and GIJON embarked about 1,800 men in Moss December 1st and left same day for Fredrikshavn.

(b) BRETAGNE discharged mail at Moss December 2nd and left for Fredrikshavn same day with eight to nine hundred men.

(c) GIJON embarked about 1,300 men in Moss December 6th.

(d) MARS, MOLTKEFELS and LUDWIGSHAFEN left Moss December 14th with troops and equipment from Finland. One 60 ton transformer from Rjukan also left in USHANT.

(3) Arendal. (a) ISAR arrived Arendal December 3rd and disembarked 700 men chiefly older troops. She left Denmark later same day with troops and material especially cars.

(b) ISAR returned Arendal December 7th and left again on Dec. 9th with troops and material.

(c) ISAR made another trip to Arendal December 12th left following day with troops and material.

(d) SUDERAU arrived Arendal December 8th with 150 younger recruits and left December 9th with troops and material.

(e) SUDERAU again arrived Arendal December 13th and loaded troops, horses and materials.

She was expected to leave Denmark December 14th. B.2. (N.A. Stockholm, 231327 to Admty.)

/NURNBERG ...

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Enemy Intelligence - Contd.

NURNBERG. 1041A/22nd December. Cruiser believed NURNBERG accompanied by 4000 ton transport in position 55° 31' N., 15° 04' E., course 015°. Graded B.2.

Comment: P.R.U. shows NURNBERG had left Gdynia between 15th and 21st December. The above report is probably true and 4000 ton transport is probably a sperrbrecher. NURNBERG may be proceeding to Oslo Fjord to join KÜLN and EMDEN or to relieve one of these ships.

(D.D.I.C., 231914A to C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.)

Port Facilities

Le Havre. Corvette on northern side entrance Le Havre has been removed allowing straight approach and entrance to harbour with 250 foot clear channel between Digue du Nord and ship sunk in southern half of entrance. Minimum depth in entrance 20 feet at low water springs. This conforms depth immediately inside harbour. No restrictions on length of ships entering harbour. 30 feet still maximum draft that can be carried in approach channel. On opening main channel about 1st January this restriction will be removed.

(C.T.F. 125, 231453A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Casualties and Defects

CHARLESTOWN. Reference F.O.I.C. Harwich 101615A December. Damage to CHARLESTOWN will necessitate at least three weeks work when a dock is available. In view of ship's age it is not considered justifiable to carry out repairs. It is therefore intended to reduce the ship to category 'C' in accordance with Admiralty Message 162314 Sept. Board to enquire into collision between CHARLESTOWN and FLORIZEL is being convened by F.O.I.C. Harwich on Wednesday 27th December.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 231016 to Admty.)

VANITY/  
APEX  
collision. Following received from VANITY begins: Regret collision with unknown merchant ship while anchoring in thick weather in vicinity of B.1 buoy early this morning. Damage to number 4 starboard oil fuel tank and ship side buckled between number 139 and 142 stations. Request

Dockyard Representative may inspect damage on arrival in Sheerness. 220400. Ends.

Also begins: My 220400. Merchant ship was APEX owner Ward of Goole who reports no apparent damage. 221135A. Ends.

(C. in C. Nore, 231441A to Admty.)

T.I.D. 70. At 1045 today our towing cable exploded a mine cutting T.I.D. Boat No. 30 loose and damaging T.I.D. Boat No. 70 at position 50.02.00 N.,

00.52.50 W. At 1300 T.I.D. Boat No. 70 sank at position 50.28 N., 00.58.00 W.

(U.S. Army L.T. 533, 231630 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

War Diary.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

41 Escort Group. E.G. 41 in DELPHINIUM is to take STONECROP under his orders and sail at 1800A/23rd Dec. to relieve 39th Escort Group.  
(2) 39th Escort Group consisting of ENCHANTRESS (S.O.) and HYDERABAD is carrying out patrol "Sausage" to the west of the Strait as in my 201133 (being passed to 41st Escort Group and 5th Escort Group.)  
(3) ENCHANTRESS is to arrange R/V with DELPHINIUM.  
(4) After R/V has been made 39th Escort Group (is?) to return to Gibraltar.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 231018A to E.G. 41 (negative ALISMA), E.G. 39 (negative SPIREA.)

5 Escort Group. On completion of exercise p.m. 24th Dec. E.G. 5 in AYLMEER is to take BLIGH, KEMPTHORNE and KEATS under his orders and proceed through Strait to westward to hunt southeastbound U-Boat.  
(2) U-Boat last fixed by D/F within 45 miles of 041° 30' N. 017° 30' W. at 0800A/21st Dec.  
(3) Estimated position and course of U-Boat at 0800A/25th 345 within 80 miles of 037° N. 012° W. approx. 120°.  
(4) AYLMEER is requested to keep me fully informed of movements and intentions, reporting on arrival in Athens area whether state of sea suitable for Schnorkel and any subsequent alterations.  
(5) Communication in accordance with M.A.O.P. method 2716 k/cs may be used between S.O. of Groups as required by AYLMEER. Indication call sign of S.O.'s 5th E.G. (corrupt group) APACHE.  
(6) E.G. 5 is to assume S.O. A/S patrol on arrival in the area and is to order E.G. 41 to J.T. as required.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 231052A to E.G. 5.)

NEWFOUNDLAND. Arrival.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 231124A to Admty. etc.)

FOGG (torpedoed 20th Dec.) FOGG under tow CHINABERRY and L.T. 643 will enter Praia Bay Terceira about 2100Z/23 for repairs make FOGG seaworthy. Other vessels in company will proceed Horta for fuel.  
(Alusna Lisbon has action by other means as 231344.)  
(Cominch 231437Z to Alusna Lisbon.)  
Arrived Praia Terceira at 1900Z/23rd U.S.S. FOGG in tow of CHINABERRY and L.T. 643 with H.M.R.T. SALVONIA, U.S.S. IRA, JEFFERY, L.C.I. 419 and L.C.I. 542.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores 232000Z to F.O.G.M.A.)

"General" class Troopers. Following received from Cominch begins:-  
It is necessary from time to time to sail "General" class troopers maximum speed 19, independently to Mediterranean. In such circumstances when there is U-Boat threat off Mediterranean approaches, Admiralty is requested in practicable cases to provide surface escort through dangerous area and Comorseafron is directed to provide aerial escort. T.O.O. 212040Z (Ends.)  
(2) Request you will take action as requisite.  
(D.O.D.(F) 232215A to F.O.G.M.A.)

War Diary.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

VALIANT,  
fuel,  
Capetown.

In the event of VALIANT being unable to berth alongside at Capetown for fuel it seems desirable to have a tanker standing by. Best ship available appears to be NEDERLAND, E.T.A. 26th, which has 4,000 tons gas oil for discharging, remainder of her cargo being petrol.

(2) Request approval to delay sailing of NEDERLAND as necessary in case she is required.

(3) An alternative tanker is ATHOL REGENT E.T.A. 24th with full cargo of furnace oil for discharging after which she has to clean and load molasses at Durban for U.K.

(C. in C. S.A. 231457 to Admty.)

Man-Power  
W.Africa.

Need for economy. (Resident Minister, No T.O.O/  
23, to Governors, etc.)  
See Lion Copy.

537A SA.

# TOP SECRET

IN

**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.)

No T.O.O./23rd December.

From Achimota(Resident Minister)

Date 24.12.44.  
Recd.0025

CYPHER(O.T.P.)

Addressed S. of S. Colonies.

*Man Power, West Africa.*

IMMEDIATE

No.1349.

Addressed Governor Sierra Leone No. 595 (Following for Flag Officer Commanding West Africa No.207 and Air Officer Commanding West Africa No.88 repeated to you for information) and S. of S. for the Colonies (for the Minister of Defence First Lord of the Admiralty, S. of S for War S. of S. for Air.) Repeated Governor Nigeria No.1003 and by savingram to Governor Gold Coast Governor Gambia and G.O.C.in C. West Africa.

There is urgent need for increased man-power for the forces in the European theatre. Recent fighting has made this need more acute than ever.

2. Most drastic steps often of an unpleasant and unconventional nature are being taken at the direction of the Government at home to ensure the greatest impact of man-power against the enemy in the shortest time. West Africa must make its immediate contribution to this need. We must be as bold as those at home.

3. I have no precise figures of the present European strengths of the three Services in West Africa, but estimates submitted in July last in respect of rations required in 1945 for the Army and the R.A.F. were approximately 17,000 in the aggregate. As regards the Navy, figure is understood to be about 9,000. We must see how we can reduce these numbers drastically and at once.

4. There are two ways of doing this. First, contraction of present strategic operational role of the Navy and R.A.F. with consequent return of units to the U.K. or their disbandment locally with release of man-power. Second, a comb out of our existing establishments.

5. As regards the first, I am asking the Minister of Defence if he will agree to the Chiefs of Staff reviewing now the present operational role of the Navy and R.A.F. with a view to a possible reduction of some of their existing commitments.

6. I was informed in the U.K. by the Admiralty that it is planning to reduce to the peace-time scale, after the defeat of Germany, the Naval West African Coastal Base(s). It might be possible to introduce now this reduction wholly, or in part.

**TOP SECRET****IN**

**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 :

7. I was informed ~~by the War Office~~ before my departure from the U.K. that some reduction of G.R. Squadron was under consideration. It might be possible that these reductions could be put into effect now.
8. These strategic issues are, however, matter on which the U.K. Government will have to give decisions.
9. As regards the second way of obtaining economies, I ask that you consider this along the following lines:-
- (a) whether you cannot forthwith impose an over-all cut of a substantial percentage of your forces, accepting the difficulties and inconveniences which such a cut must entail, at any rate at the outset, and until you have had an opportunity of reorganising your command.
- (b) will you look at establishments and numbers of your units to see if some cannot be rolled up, or alternatively some economy achieved by the immediate re-distribution of your forces.
- (c) I ask that special attention be given to H.Q. staffs at Freetown and Naval shore establishments along the coast.
- (d) I ask the A.O.C. to look at once at the numbers and use of man-power at the R.A.F. bases, particularly Takoradi.
- (e) I ask the A.O.C. to communicate at once with the Air Ministry and Transport Command in order to see if a rebate in man-power could not be imposed on staging posts on the Trans African route in the light of reduced traffic.
- (f) I ask the G.O.C. in C. if he will look particularly at his H.Q. staff at Achimota and as to whether the number of European N.C.O's and men at H.Q. and in his area commands could not be lessened, even at some risk to their immediate efficiency.
10. I am sure that I can rely on your approach to this urgent problem with the same enthusiasm and ruthlessness as is being displayed in the U.K.
11. I want to promise substantial man-power help from West Africa by next Saturday. I therefore ask you to set the necessary machinery in motion at once in order that we can have a meeting of the three Service chiefs under my Chairmanship here next Friday 29th December.
12. I am repeating this signal to the Minister of Defence, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretaries of State for War and Air and the Governors.

No T.O.O./23.

Recd. in War Reg. 1715/28.

Circulated by S. of S. Colonies  
to internal depts., S. of S.  
for War, S. of S. for Air,  
War Office, Air Min, W.C.O.  
No. 10 Downing Street and  
Admiralty.

Circulation..

8573

- 1st Lord.
- 1st S.L. (3)
- D.F.S.L. (2)
- 2nd S.L.
- Contr.
- Vice Contr.
- 5th S.L.
- V.C.N.S.
- A.C.N.S. (A)
- A.C.N.S. (H)
- A.C.N.S. (F)
- A.C.N.S. (UT) (2)
- U.W.R.
- Sec.
- Dep. Sec.
- Nav. Sec.
- Parl. Sec.
- P.A.S. (NP)
- P.A.S. (S)
- D.O.D. (H) (4)
- Duty Capt.
- Plot.
- D.N.I.
- D.D.I.C. (2)
- D. of P. (2)
- D. of P. (Q) (3)
- N.A. 2nd S.L. (OD)
- N.A. 2nd S.L.
- A.C.N.P.
- D. of M.
- D.S.V.P.
- M.D.G.
- E.A.P.
- Hd. of C.W.

NOTE.  
Circulated at request of  
Hd. of M. II.

- D.C.N.A.E.
- Hd. of M.
- Ad. Blake.
- D.A./S.W.
- D.T.D. (4)
- D.T.S.D.
- W.D.
- D. of U.D.
- D. of L.D.

MEK/MC.  
(70).

23.12.1944  
SaturdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

BIDEFORD. Delay to BIDEFORD is not acceptable. Your 221226 refers. Ship should be sailed as in my 171731, not to R.A. Alexandria.  
(C. in C. Med. 230837A to F.O.L.E.M.)  
You are not to enter Tobruk. Alternative escort for NEBOJSCA will be arranged.  
(2) Proceed direct position 292 for onward routing by V.A.M. to Gibraltar, report E.T.A. position 292.  
(3) My 221226 and Alexandria's 221853 are amended accordingly C. in C. Med's 230837 refers, no reference to all.  
(F.O.L.E.M. 231555B to BIDEFORD)

Shipping  
for Black  
Sea.

Following is purport of letter from Turkish General Staff with reference to C. in C. Med's 091343 and complete information given in my (137)841, 151858.  
(2) Pilots are only required for passing ships (corrupt group) booms in Dardanelles and Bosphorus.  
(3) Shipping bound for Black Sea ports must (a) embark and (b) disembark pilots at following places:-  
In Dardanelles: (a) Maitos or Nagara, Kalessi or Chanak.  
(b) Bergaz Iskelessi or Saltik Liman.  
In Bosphorus:  
(a) Buyugentlere or Beikos. (b) Buyuk Bay or Kechili Bay.  
The reverse applies to shipping bound from Black Sea ports.  
(4) As shipping may anchor at any of places mentioned in para.3 above, "awaiting anchorage" at Mudros or elsewhere appears unnecessary.  
(5) Ships can pass through the Straits by day or by night and singly or in groups of not more than 4 ships. There are only 4 pilots at Dardanelles and I am informed that this number can not be increased.  
(6) For passing through Straits in groups of 4 ships, pilots are required in each ship in Bosphorus by day and night, and in Dardanelles by night. For the passage of ships through Dardanelles by day a pilot is only required in 1st and 3rd Ships in the group.  
(7) The General Staff confirm that all necessary lights will be lit and shipping will be informed of any change. They will also provide latest information of the presence of floating mines off Bosphorus. They report that these break away from minefield in Northern Black Sea and drift towards Straits. Consider these are not an appreciable menace.  
(8) Names of (?anchorage) para.3 above are taken from Admiralty Chart 2429 and 1198.  
(9) F.O.L.E.M. pass to B.N.L.O. Black Sea. S.A.C. Med. S.B.N.O. Greece, Admty. pass to Admiral Archer B.A.D. and Com. 8th Fleet. (B.N.A. Ankara, 230945C to Admty.)

Danube.

280263. From Captain Maund.  
Ref. Foreign Office telegram 269 Dec. 21st quoting Moscow telegram 3575 Dec. 1st.  
I still feel confident that Russians will have to invoke our assistance in clearing the Danube and that we are accordingly in a position to make our own terms both as regards operational control and subsequent administration of river.  
My 071202 Nov. and para. 4 my NACB/003 (neither to Roumania) refers.  
(A.C.S. Bulgaria, 231158 to Admty). Note by C.A.6: 071202 November and NACB/003 were not distributed in the W.O.  
/Cruiser ...



War Diary

23.12.1944  
Saturday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean - Contd.

Cruiser for Beirut. Following received from F.O.L.E.M.(begins) Lebanese Prime Minister and M.F.A. have requested strongly that a British Cruiser should visit Beirut as soon as possible after EMILE BERTIN leaves (ends) As a visit of this kind appears to be purely a political matter I should be glad of T.L's guidance observing that owing to delay in ARETHUSA sailing it will be necessary in order to fulfil this commitment to withdraw one of my Cruisers at present usefully employed in the Aegean.  
(C. in C. Med. 231210A to Admt) Reply: 241841A.

C.F.B. My 051522 Dec. Request early action be taken to Gibraltar, implement the proposals of C.C.F. Med. in his No. closing. C.F.50 21/15 of 18th Nov. 1944 (not to Admt) regarding closing down of C.F. base Gibraltar, reporting date of reduction in order that paying off order for ISKRA may be issued.

(2) Proposed complement for C.F. Maintenance Party is approved with exception that two shipwrights only and not four are allowed.

(6) C. in C. Med. has no information regarding the previous history of Yachts ISKRA and LORNE.

Request proposals for disposal of these vessels be forwarded by letter.

(C. in C. Med. 231628 to F.O.G.M.A.etc.)

Situation (1) Throughout clearance operation at Piraeus report E.L.A.S. have sustained heavy casualties and No.514. prisoners so far number 4,000.

(2) Army's assault on north side of Piraeus harbour commenced on 22nd December and despite heavy S.A. fire by rebels is proceeding successfully

according to plan.

(3) At Preveza situation is quiet but threatening. Large number of refugees are arriving from other districts.

(4) Merchant seamen Liberty men from SS. FORT COLUMBIA at Volos who were captured by E.L.A.S. have been surrendered to MUSKETEER after threat of bombardment.

(5) SAXIFRAGE and PROTEA with M.G.B.661 sank 2 E.L.A.N. caiques' at Monopetala near Patras.

(6) ROMEO is aground on Thermia Island.

(7) CALEDON has returned to Kavallo from Salonika and reported all appears quiet at the former.

(8) While investigating Livadia Bay at Piscopi H.M.S. EXMOOR was fired on by the shore batteries.

(C. in C. Med. 231746 to Admt. etc.)

SAGGAT for C. in C. Med's 171223. In view of difficulties Piraeus. which arose with Swedes regarding procedure set out in A.M. 212023/Oct. it is preferred that different arrangements should be made.

(2) For purpose of leaving Swedes final word in

/authorising ...

23.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

SAGGAT  
for  
Piræus.  
(Contd.)

authorising sailings of ships held up at Gibraltar, request S.B.N.O. Greece should signal to Admty. (info C. in C. Med, V.A.M. and F.O.G.M.A.) dates vessels can be accepted at Piræus. Admty. will then inform Swedes who will themselves fix sailing date for promulgation by Admty. (Hd. of M.B. Approved A.C.N.S.(F), 232043A to C. in C. Med.)

RICHELIEU.

There is now less urgency for RICHELIEU's return to the East.  
(2) Short extension of refit or practice period can be accepted if desirable.  
(3) Request you will report your intentions.  
(D.O.D.(F), Approved V.C.N.S.(on docket O.D.1307/44) 232205A to C. in C. Med.)

Shipping for  
Black Sea.

M.W.T.R. No T.O.O/23.  
See America and West Indies.

561

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

U/B dis-  
positions.

No fresh information scale in all areas remain unchanged except V.P. one reduced to X.5.  
(C. in C. E.I. 230346.)

Aircraft  
Ferrying.

Request RULER and KHEDIVE be used for ferrying duties as SPEAKER and SLINGER will probably be required for operations on arrival.  
(2) Ref. A.M's 181933 and 221915 refer.  
(3) All 4 carriers to proceed direct to East Indies Station together.  
(C. in C. E.I. 231340Z to Admty.)

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Trinidad base. Request you will ascertain as soon as possible the Navy Dept.'s views on proposals contained in S.B.N.O. W.At.'s 161535.

(2) Release of some 600 R.N. personnel, which acceptance of these proposals will allow, will assist materially in meeting outstanding commitments in East Indies and Pacific Commands.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 230342A to B.A.D.)

GLOIRE. Cominch 221415 directed Comlastseafon to sail French cruiser GLOIRE from New York to Cherbourg on 23 Dec. to arrive by 1 Jan. C.E.S.F. 222101 directed C.T.G. 02.3 sail the GLOIRE on 23 Dec. via following route. "From Point Z thence A. 40 N. 67 W. B. 41 N. 50 W. C. 45 N. 30 W. D. 49 N. 10 W. thence destination" At 1600Z/23 Dec. depart Navy Yard New York proceed to Cherbourg in accordance Cominch and C.E.S.F. directives. (Com. 3 231332Z to GLOIRE.)

U/B dis- Estimates.  
positions. (N.S.H.Q. 231351Z, Cominch 231516Z.)

T.G. 61.1. Task Group 21.4 hereby dissolved. Task Group 61.1 hereby constituted, Captain Benson in WINSLOW. Task Unit 61.1.1. Capt. Benson in WINSLOW C.C.D. 23 in SELLSTROM, RAMSDEN, MILLS, RHODES, SAVAGE. Task Unit 61.1.2 Comdr. Murrell C.C.D. 57 in GARY, BRISTER, FINCH, RICHEY. Task Group 61.1 escort convoy C.U. 53 (TROUNCER included) departing New York 2nd January for U.K. and continent. T.U. 61.1.1 return escorting U.C. 53A T.U. 61.1.2 U.C. 53B when directed by Admiralty. Capt. Benson retain present communication group. (Cinclant 231444Z to C.T.G. 21.4.)

Shipping for S.A.B.W.A. 776 Mossy S.A.B.W.A. 744 Mossby.  
Black Sea. (1) Russians have now agreed to receive up to 9 dry cargo ships and 5 tankers simultaneously in Odessa beginning late in January arrival. Maximum draught on arrival 28 feet. They can provide manganese for homeward loading at Poti.  
(2) Russians agree to W.S.A. Representatives who will be naval members U.S.A. Military Mission.  
(3) Communications will be handled by Soviet Radio operators at Odessa and Naval divisions of U.S.A. Military Mission will maintain contact with Soviet Naval Authorities on pilotage routing etc. in Black Sea.  
(4) Russians ask for all possible cranes and other port equipment in first ships and require 2 or 3 tugs. Possibilities are being examined.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Shipping for  
Black Sea.  
(Contd.)

- (5) W.S.A. are arranging to switch 8 vessels allocated for Russian Aid for January to Persian Gulf to load for Black Sea. First 4 ships will sail in U.G.S. 69 on 18th Jan. next 2 in U.G.S. 71 on 28th Jan. and last 2 in U.G.S. 73 on 7th Feb. Vessels will load cargo which can be discharged by ships gear and all available and suitable cranes which can be discharged by ship's gear.
- (6) First 5 vessels in any case will be bunkered for round voyage. Enquiries are being made about possibilities of bunkering in Black Sea for Russia for later sailings.
- (7) W.S.A. are enquiring about Russian wishes in respect of tankers particularly whether Black Sea discharges could be alternative to North Russia.
- (8) Above arrangements will reduce Russian Aid to Persian Gulf after U.G.S. 66 to one half cargo for balance of January loading.
- (9) Please advise Admiralty.  
(Combined Shipping Adjustment Board Washington via M.W.T.R. New York No T.O.O. to C.S.A.B. London.)

Australia & New Zealand.

Digest 1067,  
Dec. 22nd.

- (3) Two quartets Mitchells searched Flores Sea during nrap\* destroying one barge at Lomblem Island and strafed two more near Koepang.
- (4) R/C Liberator sighted two tankers six escort vessels Camranh Bay noon having earlier seen two possible heavy cruisers three destroyers 135 miles south southeast Camranh Bay course 330° at 17 knots. Latter sighting supported by submarine report eight hours later of five ships believed two heavy cruisers, three destroyers heading east 75 miles south southeast Camranh Bay at 18 knots.
- (13) On 21st December eight Kittyhawks bombed Palompok and strafed small craft destroying six barges or luggers. Same day four Corsairs attacked barge hideout on Pacijan Island in Camotes area.
- (15) Eight Mitchells attacked San Roque airdrome 21st dropping bombs along centre of runway. Next day Mitchells hit Zamboanga waterfront destroying three small coasters.
- (16) Biak based Liberator strafe on Licanan 21st, reported Digest 1066 para. 9 involved 16 planes which destroyed 3 parked aircraft: one destroyer, two freighters, ten sea trucks observed in Davao Harbour.
- (17) Search Liberator attacked and left burning one small coaster in Davao Gulf 60 miles south of Davao (corrupt group) 21st.  
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A. 231016Z to Admty., etc.)
- \* As received.

23.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack &  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/23rd Dec.

- (a) DUMFRIES damaged by explosion probably torpedo at 0729Z/23rd December in vicinity 50° 23' N. 01° 42' W.
- (2) SLEMISH torpedoed at 0835Z/23rd December in 49° 43' N. 01° 44' W.
- (3) SAMTUCKY damaged by explosion probably torpedo at 1910Z/21st December in 44° 22' N. 63° 23' W.
- (c) (1) A/C G/103 obtained A.S.V. contact at 0950Z/22nd December in 49° 45' N. 03° 12' W.
- (2) M.T.B. 737 attacked doubtful contact at 1530Z/22nd December in 50° 09' N. 02° 02' W.
- (3) A/C E/105 obtained A.S.V. contact at 1040Z/22nd December in 49° 42' N. 03° 25' W.
- (4) H.M. ships BOWMANVILLE and GLACE BAY attacked contact from 2118Z/22nd December until 0256Z/23rd December in 51° 47' N. 07° 20' W.
- (b) (1) E.G. 30 attacked contact at 0835Z/22nd and 1008Z/22nd December in 50° 06' N. 01° 21' W.  
(D.D.I.C. 231217A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U/B dis-  
positions.

Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C. 231415A, 231416A.)

565

24.12.1944  
SundayWar DiarySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

1. The German land thrust aiming at the Meuse between Namur and Liege inclusive has made its second start, and they also appear to be massing in Holland between the Waal and Maas rivers.

## North Sea

2(a) Midget U-boats continued to appear: one off West Kapelle at 1220, which abandoned ship and was taken in tow by M.T.Bs., but sank 039° Ostend 21 miles. The one-man crew was captured; another was destroyed by M.L.1402 off N.F.11 buoy and her crew transferred to CA TISTOCK; another was sighted off N.F.12 buoy at 1445 and her crew also recovered after scuttling. A fourth was sighted off Flushing by the R.A.F. at 1020 and 1040.

2(b) 27 midget U-boats at least have been identified on shore by P.R.U. at Wilhelmshaven.

2(c) SS. EMPIRE PATH was mined off N.F.9 buoy, but sank clear of the channel.

E-boats appeared to be on the prowl again off Ostend late tonight.

## Channel

3. SS. LEOPOLDVILLE, carrying American troops, was torpedoed off Cherbourg at 1756. She was still afloat at 2256.

## Norway

4. M.T.Bs. 712 and 722 have returned from a "V.P." operation to Bommel Fjord, where they torpedoed an M class minesweeper or destroyer, which blew up. They also bombarded Slotterö and set a house on fire.

Foreign StationsMediterranean

## Greece

5(a) The situation at the Piraeus, Kavalla Islands and at Heraklion is quiet, but that at Preveza is critical. E.L.A.S here number 14,000, including a high percentage of foreigners. E.D.E.S. are estimated at 9,000, but the morale of many of them is low and there is a scarcity of ammunition. The Greek destroyer THEMISTOCLES, at Preveza, considers that failing naval or air action against the enemy the fall of Preveza appears probable within four weeks. The BRUISER, L.S.T.(1) Alexandria to Taranto, has been diverted to Preveza and is to arrive at 0900B tomorrow.

/(b)...

566

24.12.1944  
SundayWar DiarySITUATION REPORTMediterraneanGreece  
(Contd.)

5(b) At Mitylene, <sup>1</sup>large hostile crowds thronged the quayside when SIRIUS arrived on the 24th to cover a landing of troops. In order to avoid an incident the troopships were withdrawn to Khios.

ChinaHong Kong  
raid.

6. Eighteen Mustangs attacked targets in the Hong Kong area. A 450 ft. tanker was sunk, three freighters and one ferry probably sunk, and one freighter damaged in the harbour.

7. Three Mustangs which attacked a convoy of eight ships in the Formosa Strait sank a tanker of 550 feet.

America and West IndiesCLAYOQUOT  
sunk.

U. 806

? *U-boat*  
(Pink list) →

8. The Canadian CLAYOQUOT (BANGOR class minesweeper) was torpedoed by a U-boat at 1345 in 44.25 N., 63.25 W. (in the Halifax approaches), and sunk. Sixty-four survivors were picked up. The KIRKLAND LAKE, minesweeper, afterwards reported attacking a U-boat in this vicinity.

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines

9. An enemy M.T.B., sighted by a Navy Mariner aircraft near an allied convoy in the Central Mindanao Sea, was sunk by escorting destroyers.

B.P.F.  
Role.

10. The British Pacific Fleet will act as a fast carrier task force under operational control of

/whichever...



567

24.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Australia and New Zealand

B.P.F.  
Role  
(Contd.)

whichever of the Commanders, 3rd or 5th Fleet,  
is conducting operations. Initially this will be  
Admiral Spruence, U.S.N., Commander, 5th Fleet.

ROBERT J.  
WALKER  
torpedoed

11. The American SS. ROBERT J. WALKER, 7180 tons  
was torpedoed by a U-boat at 1655 in 36.05 S.,  
150.43 E., 165 miles S.S.E. of Sydney, N.S.W.,  
but apparently remained afloat.

War Diary

24.12.1944  
Sunday

HOME COMMANDS

Movements

- LEONIAN,  
DEVON CITY. On completion of refits at Leith and Albert Dock request LEONIAN and DEVON CITY respectively may be sailed to Grangemouth to load Boom Defence and Mooring gear for Far East.  
(2) Loading of LEONIAN to take priority A.M. 181957 Dec. not to all addressees refers.  
(3) Details of cargo will be communicated direct to S.B.D. Rosyth and Commanding Officers by the Director or Boom Defences.  
(4) On completion of loading request vessels may be sailed to Milford Haven for onward sailing in K.M.S. Convoy. Destination Cochin.  
(A.C.N.S.(F), 240108A to C's in C. Nore, Rosyth)
- BERWICK. Sailed BERWICK in accordance with my 232204A.  
(F.O.I.C.Greenock, 240914A to C. in C. H.F. A.C.O.S. C. in C. W.A.)
- CAMROSE,  
corvette. CAMROSE is to join the Plymouth Command. C. in C. C.N.A's 171936 which is being passed to C. in C. Plymouth refers.  
(A.C.N.S.(H), 241120A to C. in C. Plymouth. S.B.N.O. W.At.)
- MILNE,  
MATCHLESS. C. in C. H.F. is requested to sail MILNE (D.3) and MATCHLESS to arrive Greenock a.m. 29th December to collect stores and ratings taking passage.  
(2) F.O.I.C.Greenock is requested to sail ships to Gibraltar for onward routing as desired by C. in C. Med.  
(3) Route to Gibraltar will be promulgated by Admiralty.  
(4) A.M. 012342 refers.  
(D.O.D.(H), 241931A to C. in C. H.F., F.O.I.C.Greenock)
- EMPRESS. After loading A/C at Belfast request you will sail EMPRESS in K.M.F.38 about 5th January.  
A.M. 011345 not to all refers.  
(D.O.D.(H), 242130A to C. in C. W.A.)

Operations

North Sea

- Patrols. Patrol tonight Sunday.  
(1) CROOME, 2 MACKAY, 3 VERSATILE, 4 VOLUNTEER, 5 SHELDRAKE, 6A KITTIWAKE.  
(2) 12 THORNBOROUGH, 14 EKINS, 16 DAKINS with Ostend Coastal Force, 18 SHEARWATER, 19 STAYNER and SLAZAK.  
(3) Escort for T.A.M. 28 PYTCHLEY and MENDIP.  
(4) CAICOS will be carrying out operation "Alphabet".  
(5) F.C. Four. Two M.T.B. Z.19. F.C. Two M.T.B. Z.17. F.C. Six two M.T.B. Z.15. F.C. Seven Two M.T.B. Z.13. F.C. Eight Two

569

War Diary24.12.1944  
SundayHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth Sea

Patrols (Contd.) M.T.B. Z.11. F.B. One Two M.T.B. Z.9.  
F.B. Three two M.T.B. Z.3. F.B. Four Two  
M.T.B.53 Buoy. F.A. One, Two, Three, Four  
M.T.B. M.V/L.L. 14, 17. F.A. Four, Five, Eleven,  
Eleven M.T.B. F.J/L.L. 40, 55.  
F.B. Five, Six, Seven, Four M.T.B. F.J/W.S. 39, 21.  
F.B. Two, Two M.T.B. F.J/W.S. 2100. F.A. Eight Four M.T.B.  
F.J. W.S. 24.15. F.G. Two, Three, Four M.T.B. F.J/L.L. 26.54.  
F.C. Three, Two M.T.B. F.J/W.S. 35.25.  
(C. in C. Nore, 241058A to Nore Command)

Midget S/Ms in Schelde. Your 231011A, no W-Boats are operational A.G.M. 220A of 161819B/June and Snips M.P.80C/44 refers. (N.I.D.1 for D.N.I. 241208A to N.O.I.C.Ostend) Following received from R.A.F. West Kapelle at 1220 to-day Sunday begins:  
Small S/M sighted 5½ miles West Kapelle course N.W. and has submerged.

(1) German landed West Kapelle in Rubber Dinghy and taken prisoner ends.

(2) Patrols have been warned accordingly.  
(N.O.I.C.Ostend, 241235A)

Nothing further received until STEEPHOLME reported ALLAN A. DALE torpedoed vicinity Schelde No.6 Buoy at 1620/23. The latter at 1830/23 reported Midget S/M in vicinity Pyne Buoy, but was unable to attack owing to shoal water. All available H.D.M.Ls were ordered to patrol in Schelde, but no further incident was reported during the night. At 1220/24 report referred to in my 241235 was received by telephone from West Kapelle, two M.T.Bs, were ordered to patrol the area and 142 Wing Coastal Command were asked to attack. Further signal will be made.

(N.O.I.C.Ostend, 241658A to C. in C. Nore.)

Following is a report of sinking in vicinity of midget S/Ms after interviewing at Breskens those concerned.

(2) At 0800/23rd H.D.M.L.1465 in Breskens-Flushing patrol got an Asdic contact sighted periscope and engaged with guns. S/M broke surface one hand baled out S/M sank. Survivor a German Lieut. picked up and being sent to Ostend.

(3) During forenoon a periscope sighted on 3 other occasions by patrol depth charges dropped, no definite results, contact lost.

(Com. Belgium, 241711A to A.N.C.X.F., C. in C. Nore, Admty)

Following received from COWDRAY begins: From COWDRAY 241533A. To C. in C. Nore, Info: N.O.I.C.Antwerp. N.O.I.C. Ostend. Have picked up survivor from German one man midget S/M in position 1 mile east of N.F.12 buoy at 1445. Prisoner states that he had just abandoned craft without firing having sailed yesterday. 241553A. Ends.

(C. in C. Nore, 241726A to Admty.)

(1) One midget S/M sighted from shore at 1020/24th Dec. in position 51 degs. 36' N. 03 degs.36' E. Second S/M sighted at 1040/24th December in position 51 degs. 37' N. 03 degs. 50' E. Patrol craft and A/C hunting. No sightings in West Schelde to-day.

/(2) ...

War Diary24.12.1944  
SundayHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth Sea

Midget submarines in Schelde. (Contd.)

(2) U.S. Ship ALAN-A.-DALE torpedoed and on fire at 1630/23rd December now aground in position 51 degs. 21' 36" N. 03 degs. 47' 18" E. out of fairway. Fire not yet extinguished but under control. Salvage report follows.  
(N.O.I.C. Antwerp, 241740A to Com. Belgium)  
Report received that M.L.1402 destroyed a Midget S/M 340 degs. N.F.11 buoy 1 mile. One prisoner transferred to H.M.S. CATTISTOCK.  
(C. in C. Nore, 241848A to Admty.)  
On receipt of N.O.I.C. Ostend, 241225. N.O.I.C. Ostend arranged air strike with 85 Group. The Unit previously individually detailed to form F.C.4 was expedited and proceeded to patrol position eventually after being vectored by A/C. Midget S/M was sighted in a position 290 degs. W.K.P.6 miles. An attempt to tow was made but S/M sank in approx. position 039 degs. Ostend 21. Amplifying report as to nature of S/M following.  
(C.F.M.U.1, 241920A to C. in C. Nore.)  
Prisoner from midget U-Boat type Biber sunk off Breskens 23rd December states: (1) Belonged to Flotilla based Maasluis area.  
(2) Belonged to one group of 12 Biber towed as far as Schouwen.  
(3) Second Group of 16 Biber operated from Hook.  
(4) Object of both sorties to attack shipping off Flushing.  
(5) Prisoner's Biber carried one torpedo and one mine.  
(D.N.I. 241947A to C. in C. Nore.)  
Your 241711. Request confirmation that periscopes were sighted.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 242220A to Com. Belgium)  
Add to my 241658. B.Y.M.S.2173 reports submerged object surfaced twice vicinity N.F.13 at 1020/24.  
H.D.M.L.1402 reports sinking enemy midget S/M vicinity N.F.11 at 1147/24. CATTISTOCK's 241147 not to all refers.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 242223 to C. in C. Nore.)  
Nore 241726A and 241848A CATTISTOCK and COWDRAY arrive Sheerness daylight tomorrow Monday. Request arrangements may be made for escort to collect prisoners.  
(C. in C. Nore, 242259A to Admty.)  
My 241235 this Midget S/M was found abandoned and taken in tow by M.T.Bs from Ostend. It sank later in position 039 degs. Ostend 21 miles which has been marked by buoy. C.F.M.U. One 241930 refers.  
(2) Telephone report from N.L.O. 2nd T.A.F. confirms presence of Midget S/M in Walcheren and East repetition East Schelde area.  
(3) A/C from 142 Wing Coastal Command report sighting S/M referred to in para.1 above. No further report from these A/C.  
(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 242325A to C. in C. Nore)

/Situation ...

24.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea - Contd.

Situation Report.

Cositintrep No.264 Part 4. Discharge by sea - 24 hours period ending 24 hour period ending 231600A December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (Inc. Goal).	<u>Bulk Pol</u>
Antwerp		263	6,258	20,136
Ostend	1,082	39	1,327	-
Boulogne	6	25	-	-
Dieppe	47	-	1,526	-
Caen	-	-	1,395	-
Ghent	-	-	-	-
Calais	3	2	-	-
Totals:	<u>1.138</u>	<u>329</u>	<u>10.506</u>	<u>20.136.</u>
<u>U.S. - North</u>				
Antwerp	-	-	13,428	-
Cherbourg	52	-	6,171	-
Le Havre	3,920	346	5,963	-
Rouen	945	581	3,951	-
Granville	-	-	311	-
	<u>4,917</u>	<u>927</u>	<u>29,824</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>U.S. - South</u>				
Marseilles	3,347	222	10,625	-
Port De Bouc	-	-	1,742	2,274
Toulon	-	-	666	-
	<u>3,347</u>	<u>222</u>	<u>13,033</u>	<u>2,274</u>

(S.H.A.E.F. 241245A to Admty.)

Enemy Panzer Armies now starting on second round with six at least of original eight Panzer Divisions in line. Objectives of advance believed still same, namely River Meuse from well inclusive Namur to inclusive Liege: Fifth Panzer Army still on main axis through Marche, Sixth however now on main axis through Vielsalm. Seems a possibility that stretch on Meuse to be gained may now have to be cut down at Western extremity: undoubtedly Liege is the primary objective rather than Namur. In Holland civilians report arrival of 7,000 to 10,000 troops between Waal and Maas Rivers from Easting D.90 to E.40. Also reports of heavy movements of ferries, build up of bridging material and increase in ammunition stocks. Appears possible enemy may attack between Hedel (E.2953) and Geertruidenberg (E.0149) in conjunction with paratroops, though no good confirmation of reports.

(S.H.A.E.F.241800A to War Office)

EMPIRE PATH mined. EMPIRE PATH mined in position 260 degs. N.F.9 1 mile still afloat but cannot steam. (CATTISTOCK, 241710A to C. in C. Nore.) My 241710. Total crew taken off by B.Y.M.S. and R.A.F. Rescue Launch. 2 slightly injured. B.Y.M.S. both proceeding Ostend ship anchored clear of channel and settling fast. (CATTISTOCK, 241752A to C. in C. Nore)

/ SS. EMPIRE PATH..

24.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea - Contd.

EMPIRE PATH SS. EMPIRE PATH mined in position 260 N.F.9 1 mile  
 mined. at approximately 1700 to-day Sunday.  
 (Contd.) (2) Ship hit in engine room and abandoned in  
 sinking condition.  
 (3) 56 survivors landed at Ostend.  
 (4) Tug EUSTON CROSS sailed to investigate.  
 (5) Further details will be signalled when known.  
 (N.O.I.C.Ostend, 242020A to C. in C. Nore.)

Fishing off Fishing is now permitted in daylight only in the  
 Low Countries. West Schelde and as far to seaward as a line  
 joining West Kapelle and a point 330 degs. 6 miles  
 from Belgian Dutch frontier thence within 6 miles  
 of the Belgian Coast to a line 330 degs. from

La Panne.

(2) Boats will fish in groups of about twelve under authorised  
 leader and at own risk.  
 (3) Admiralty is requested to issue A.Z. message.  
 (Com. Belgium, 241721 to Admty, A.N.C.X.F., C. in C. Nore.)

E-Boat  
 attacks.

My 231152 para.(3). From reports now received  
 three E-Boats were definitely sunk namely one by  
 WALPOLE, one by WALPOLE and M.T.B's and one by  
 CURZON and M.T.B's.

(2) Para. (5) TORRINGTON reports three inch hits  
 on leading E-Boat. This group probably West Hinder group  
 making second attack.

(C. in C. Nore, 241926A to Admty.)

Plot One. Bearing 350 degs. Ostend 13 miles probably E-Boat  
 course 140 degs.

(F.G.1, 241952 to C. in C. Nore).

Surface craft detected by Radar bearing 074 degs. distance  
 3.5 miles, probably E-Boat by position 105 degs. K.B.16.

(F.A.1, 242355 to C. in C. Nore.)

Operations

Channel

Suspected  
 U-Boat.

Situation is: Weather too rough for M.T.B.  
 PEVENSEY CASTLE attacking.

(66 M.T.B.F. 240853A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Contact held for hour. Exact position 50 degs.  
 11' 12" N. 01 degs. 43' 12" consider wreck.

Your 240819 refers. Too rough for M.T.Bs to attack this morning  
 Have attacked with one pattern squid. All ships now proceeding  
 to patrol area.

(S.O.E.G.30, 240911A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Patrols.

Group concentrate at Longships then proceed  
 toward position 049 degs. 19' N. 006 degs. 15'  
 W. Further orders follow.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 240854A to E.G.17)

/AFFLECK ...

573

War Diary

24.12.1944

Sunday

HOME COMMANDSOperations

Patrols.  
(Contd.)

AFFLECK, GORE, BENTLY, Gamma patrol on 01 degs. 53' W. between 49 degs. 47' 49 degs. 56'.  
(2) CAPEL, GARTIES. Return to Patrol.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241312A to S.O.E.G.1)  
E.G.17 carry out zigzag search through following positions: (AA) 49 degs. 17 N. 06.20 W.  
(BB) 49.45 N. 04.32 W. (CC) 49.30 N. 03.15 W. thence towards H.5 Buoy of Q.Z.S. 633 shift to Portsmouth W/T organisation and command on passing 2.30 W.  
(2) E.G.17 is to relieve E.G.1 as ordered by C. in C. Portsmouth who is to sweep back to position BB thence proceed to Belfast.  
(3) S.O. E.G.17 report E.T.A. longitude 2.30 W.  
(4) Enemy batteries Alderney Guernsey have range of 13 miles E-Boat may operate from Guernsey.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 241308A to S.O.E.G's 1, 17)  
Night Patrol 24th-25th. On arrival Cherbourg take patrols.  
(2) BRILLIANT, HOTHAM. Gamma on 01 degs. 47' W. between 50 degs. 00' 50 degs. 05'.  
(3) ANTHONY, CROIX DE LORRAINE. Area limits 01 degs. 20' 01 degs. 55' W. 50 degs. 30' 50 degs. 35'.  
(4) BRILLIANT, ANTHONY acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241542 to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Forces)  
Night Patrols 24-25th. 1st E.G. Gamma on 01 degs. 47' W. between 49 degs. 48' 49 degs. 58' U.S.S. BORUM will be patrolling 01 degs. 50' W. between 49 degs. 44' 49 degs. 52'.  
(2) 30th E.G. Anti-Snort search area limits 01 degs. 25' 02 degs. 05' W. and 50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30' ships 4 miles apart east west courses.  
(3) AFFLECK, PEVENSEY CASTLE acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241610 to S.O.E.G's 1, 17)  
Your 241308. E.T.A. longitude 02 degs. 30' W. 0800/25th.  
(S.O. E.G.17, 241725A to C. in C. Plymouth)  
Air Patrols. My 281728 para.12 not to E.G.30, E.G.1.  
A. Night 24th-25th Patrol 32 5 miles each side of 02 degs. 15' W. by Liberator.  
Day 25th Patrol 32 by Liberator Patrol 5 to east of H Channel by Swordfish.  
B. 838 Squadron TUV. 842 Squadron TFC.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241740A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
Your 241725 confirmed E.T.A. 0800/25.  
(2) Mean S. of A. on zigzag search should not exceed 10 knots.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 241854A to S.O. E.G.17)  
Day Patrols 25th. Search areas limits given.  
(2) M.T.B's line St. Albans Head to St. Catherine's Point and 5 miles south.  
(3) Area "Q" 01 degs. 05' 02 degs. 05' W. 50 degs. 30' 50 degs. 20' N. divided into two sections by H Channel.  
(4) PEVENSEY CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE, LAUNCESTON CASTLE take Q East. (5) CAISTOR CASTLE, PORTCHESTER CASTLE Q West.  
(6) 1st E.G. ANTHONY, CROIX DE LORRAINE continue search for U-Boat. Cherbourg vicinity.  
(7) ANTHONY, CROIX DE LORRAINE required for escort 1030 orders follow. (8) PEVENSEY CASTLE, CAISTOR CASTLE, AFFLECK, ANTHONY acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 242355A to E.Gs. 1, 30, M.T.B. F.66)

/Intend ...

574

War Diary24.12.1944  
SundayHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannelPatrols  
(Contd.)

Intend M.T.Bs 760 S.O.733, 752 at 1000/25th for A/S Patrol in accordance with your 242335.  
(2) Ordered to leave patrol when relieved by 3 M.T.Bs sailing from Portland at 1400/26th or if weather unsuitable.  
(N.O.I.C. Portland, 242357A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Loss of SS.  
SLEMISH.

Coaster SLEMISH sunk in three minutes as result of underwater explosion 0932/23 December in approx. position 300 degs. H.10 buoy distance 2½ miles explosion port side at number 3 hold along side and not under ship. Two British escorts and three U.S. P.Cs. in vicinity took up A/S search. British escort made A/S attack and U.S. P.C. made mouse-trap attack. Both negative. Casualties 15 injured not serious, One known dead, six missing.  
(C.T.F.125, 241013A to A.N.C.X.F.)

Loss of SS.  
LEOPOLDVILLE.

LEOPOLDVILLE torpedoed or mined in position 049 degs. 45' 20" 01 degs. 34' W.  
(BRILLIANT, 241756A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
My 1756 ANTHONY reports sighting torpedo track.  
(BRILLIANT, 241812 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Ship torpedoed concentrate 5 miles N. of Cherbourg.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 241850A to E.G.1)

Escorts employed in rescuing survivors and carrying out observant. One E.G. carrying out hunt.

(BRILLIANT, 241936A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

LEOPOLDVILLE in two tug 2030A. ANTHONY confirms torpedo fired at her 10 minutes after LEOPOLDVILLE was hit. Having landed survivors joining E.G.1 in search.

(BRILLIANT, 242256 to C. in C. Portsmouth)



War Diary.24.12.1944.  
Sunday.HOME COMMANDS.OperationsWestern Approaches.

Patrols. If not in contact sixth E.G. S.O. in NEW WATERFORD join Irish Sea section of U.C. 50A and act under the orders of C.T.G. 21.7 in U.S. destroyer CLARK.  
 (2) 6th E.G. R/V with V.C. 50A in position J on standard route B at 1115A/25th. Convoy is routed from J.N. 50° N. 10° W. to J.O. 46° N. 20° 58' and R/V with English Channel section at 2200A/25th in J.N.  
 (3) Detach on crossing 2° W. and resume patrol.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 241025Z to E.G. 6.)  
 Force 33 15th E.G. LOUIS S.O. 3 frigates and 31st E.G. BERKELEY CASTLE 2 corvettes operating between North Irish coast and Barra Head.  
 (2) 6th E.G. NEW WATERFORD 3 frigates and 10th E.G. HELMSDALE 4 frigates operating in group off south coast of Ireland. 2nd E.G. LOCH RUTHVEN 3 frigates sailed Larne p.m. 24th to vicinity 55° 30' N. 10° 01' W. 14 knots.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 241323A to Western Approaches Command.)

Weather reporting ships. F.O.I.C. Liverpool is requested to sail PRIMROSE and N.GIFT Dec. 29th to relieve CAMELLIA and N.GEM respectively as weather reporting ships.  
 (2) PRIMROSE is to fuel at Londonderry on outward passage.  
 (3) E.T.A. to be reported (a) PRIMROSE in 53 N. 20 W. (b) N. GIFT in 56 N. 17.30 W.  
 (4) Detailed instructions as in my 281216 Aug. and 081654 neither to all.  
 (5) CAMELLIA, N. GEM are to proceed to Liverpool on relief.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 241117A to F.O.I.C. Liverpool, CAMELLIA, NORTHERN GEM.)

M.Ls. for anti Schnorkel patrols. M.Ls. at present attached to PHILANTE are to be transferred forthwith to Commodore D.W.A. for inshore operations. Appendix VIII to operation "C.E." which will be issued shortly refers.  
 (2) Request you will arrange with PHILANTE for the immediate training of these craft with special regard to the detection of Schnorkeling U-Boats, and report as soon as ready to operate.  
 (3) Four additional M.Ls. are being transferred from Portsmouth in the near future to reinforce and will then probably require similar training.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 241152A to Com. D. W.A.)

Operations.Norway.

Operation "Spellbinder" Intend following operation para. 1. Force one consisting of C.S. one in NORFOLK with BELLONA and four destroyers to leave Scapa p.m. D day.

576

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

- Operation "Spellbinder". Q.Z.X. 1452 Force 1 is to proceed to carry out a sweep against enemy shipping off Norwegian coast between Stavanger and Lister.  
(Contd.)
- (2) After passing west of Shetlands and north of Q.Z.X. 1452 Force 1 is to proceed to carry out a sweep against enemy shipping off Norwegian coast between Stavanger and Lister.
  - (3) On completion Force 1 is to return to Scapa.
  - (4) Force 2 consisting of APOLLO and 2 destroyers is to proceed from Scapa in company with Force 1.
  - (5) Force 2 is to be detached as necessary by C.S. 1 inshore reaching lat. of Stavanger to carry out mining operation inside the 100 fathom line west of Karmo keeping south of lat. of Utsire.
  - (6) On completion Force 2 is to return independently to Scapa at high speed.
  - (7) Force 3 consisting of DIDO, PREMIER, TRUMPETER and four destroyers sail from Scapa a.m. D + 1 and proceed west of Shetlands and north of Q.Z.X. 1452 to R/V as arranged by C.S. 1.
  - (8) Force 3 to provide fighter protection for withdrawal of Force 1 from first light D + 2 until detached.
  - (9) If weather is unfavourable for operation when Forces 1 and 2 arrive north of Shetlands on D + 1 they are to proceed to anchor in Sullom Voe and await weather improvements. Sailing of Force 3 from Scapa will be delayed as necessary for later R/V.
  - (10) When released by C.S. 1 Force 3 is to proceed in accordance with my 241016.
  - (11) C.S. 1 is requested to plan the operation.
  - (12) Codeword and D day follow.  
(C. in C. H.F. 241001A to Admty., C.S. 1.)

- Operation "Gratis". Intend following operation on completion of operation "Spellbinder" D day as for "Spellbinder".
- (2) When released by C.S. 1 Force 3 is to proceed west and south of Shetlands to carry out mining strike from flying off position west of Q.Z.X. 1452
- D + 3 (or later if operation "Spellbinder" is postponed.)
- (3) Mining objective is Salhusstrommen 59.22.7 N. 05.18.2 E.
  - (4) If weather is unsuitable mining strike may be postponed up to 24 hours.
  - (5) Force three is to return to Scapa on completion.
  - (6) DIDO is requested to plan this operation and PREMIER to prepare the air plan.
  - (7) Codeword in my 241031.  
(C. in C. H.F. 241016A to Admty., C.S. 1.)
- "Spellbinder" is codeword of my 241001. My 241016 codeword "Gratis."  
(C. in C. H.F. 241031A to Admty., C.S. 1.)  
My 241001. D day Tuesday 9th January.  
(C. in C. H.F. 241036A to C.S. 1, Admty.)

S.O. S/M I have approved S/M 9 221135 which is being passed  
Lerwick to to you.  
operate S/Ms. (F.O. S/M 241114A to Admty.)

/Operation...

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway - Contd.

Operation "S.C." Ramose Parcel. HITRA returned at 1330A/24th Dec.  
(2) Operation successful.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick 241335A to A.C.O.S.)  
Ramosé Vintage. VIGRA returned Lerwick at 1332A/  
24 December.  
(2) Operation successful.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick 241341A to A.C.O.S.)

Operation "V.P." "V.P. 77", M.T.B. 712 and M.T.B. 722 returned at  
1335A today 24th December.  
M class minesweeper or destroyer was hit with two  
torpedoes in Bommel Fjord at 2107A/23rd December  
and subsequently blew up.  
Before leaving coast, force bombarded Slottero and set one house  
on fire.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick 241422A to A.C.O.S.)  
"V.P. 75" M.T.B. 711 and M.T.B. 716 returned at 2210A today  
24th December.  
(2) Weather conditions too bad in Stavfjord to allow of torpedo  
attack and heavy swell in only lurking places forced M.T.Bs. to  
return to base.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick 242233A to A.C.O.S.)

Patrol. Positions of submarines at 0800A/25th and movements  
for following 24 hours.  
A. VENTURER off Egersund.  
(C. of W. 241830A to General.)  
My 221051 if not in contact PASLEY, DRURY and BAZELY leave patrol  
to arrive Scapa 1600A today Sunday.  
(C. in C. Rosyth 240956A to BENTINCK, BYARD, CALDER.)

Un-Identified vessel off Fair Isle. Your 231609. H.M.T. GRAEMSAY was within 5 miles  
of position at time stated.  
(A.C.O.S. 241102A to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Suspected U-Boat. Reference Liberator A/C report of A.S.V. contact,  
Grade 2, in position 059° 26' N. 003° R. at 1710A  
(2) The following action has been taken -  
(a) two trawlers proceeding to investigate due to  
arrive about 2000A. (b) Four trawlers re-  
inforcing leaving Scapa 1900A.  
(A.C.O.S. 241841A to Cs. in C. H.F., Rosyth.)

Mining.

Deep mine-field off Hartland Pt. My 231105. Sailed PLOVER escort CONQUEROR.  
(F.O.I.C. Milford 241543 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Midget U-Boats. A.M. 182204 November\* and 211748 November. Photographic R/C of 23rd December showed at least 27 Midget U-Boats on shore at seaplane base Wilhelmshaven. (D.N.I. 241946A to A.N.C.X.F., C. in C. Nore, Com. Belgium.)  
\* Photographic R/C of 12th Oct. shows about 20 probable midget U-Boats 30 ft. long at Nordeney.

Technical.

Midget U-Boat types. The following is a summary of new small submersible craft which the enemy has used or may be expected to use in the North Sea area.  
(2) Type XXIII short-range U-Boat. Described in W.I.R. No. 242, C.B. 03122 Snip (MP) 114/44 and C.B. 04050/44 (10). 10-15 are fully worked up and may operate soon (B.2)  
(3) One-man midget U-Boat type Biber. Generally described in A.G.M. A.557 of 2.9.44 and illustrated in C.B. 04050/44 (9). Length about 29 ft. Small conning tower with perspex windows. Endurance about 70 miles. Speed 5-6 knots surfaced or submerged. Armed with two torpedoes slung outboard, or with mines type S.G. Has operated.  
(4) Midget U-Boat type MOLCH. Generally described in A.G.M. A.557 of 2.9.44. Particulars graded B.3. Length about 46 ft. Cupola conning tower with perspex windows. Endurance not likely to be above 70 miles. Armed with two torpedoes. Speed surfaced up to 7 knots. May have operated.  
(5) Another type small submersible of which details are not known may exist.  
(6) No W-Boats are operational or likely to operate. (D.D.I.C. 242139A: A Message.)

Casualty.

SS. DUMFRIES. Regret to report loss from M.K.S. 71 of SS. DUMFRIES who sank at 1700 on 23rd December in position 50° 20' N. 01° 43' W. as result of underwater explosion. 59 survivors brought to Southampton and 10 survivors including master brought to Portsmouth. (C. in C. Portsmouth 240025A to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

Cross-Channel Passenger Services. The interest of S.H.A.E.F. in the proposed cross-Channel boat service operated under M.W.T. is the subject:-  
(1) S.H.A.E.F. is concerned only:  
(a) to retain a definite allotment of passages per sailing military purposes.  
(b) To ensure that operation of the service does not interfere with military operational and essential French internal requirements  
(c) That security measures are in accordance with established S.H.A.E.F. policies.

579

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping & Convoys.

Cross-Channel Passenger Services. (Contd.) (2) As regards (a) S.H.A.E.F. daily requirements are 220 places in each direction. As regards (b) route proposed by French railways via Serquex Gournay Beauvais and Persan - Beaumont avoids heavy military traffic and is acceptable and five hour timing has now been agreed. Improvement in this timing is hoped for about March 1st when Pontoise main line bridge is reconstructed to permit use of direct route. French cannot accept arrival time in Paris between 2300 hours and 0600 hours owing lack of transport making reliance on Metre essential but will agree to vary departure times Paris and Dieppe to suit tides subject to Paris limitation above.

(3) As regards (c) above, machinery already exists at ports to deal with security aspect but S.H.A.E.F. cannot undertake screening of passengers at Paris terminus to ensure civilians not possessing necessary security documents obtain tickets.

(4) As regards civilian passengers generally they fall into two categories (a) those in whom S.H.A.E.F. has an interest and who should travel on military permits and (b) those in whom S.H.A.E.F. has no interest and who should travel on British exit permits and French visas d'entree for journeys from U.K. to France and on French visa de sortie and British visa, where necessary for journeys France to the United Kingdom. As regards category (b) S.H.A.E.F. can accept no responsibility for feeding, accommodation or transport anywhere in this theatre.

(5) S.H.A.E.F. cannot undertake allocation of accommodation on return journey Paris-London to passengers in category 4 (b) above but will allocate vacancies from S.H.A.E.F. allotment for category 4 (a) both ways.

(6) S.H.A.E.F. will accept responsibility for covering embarkation and disembarkation at Dieppe only of personnel within allocation. (S.H.A.E.F. 241100 to M.W.T.)

Convoys between N. Foreland & The Downs: Ramsgate requirements. A.M. 212258A and A.C. Dover's 230945A. The following convoys pass through the area N. Foreland to The Downs. Six daily convoys to and from Antwerp or Ostend, T.B.C. and B.T.C., ON and H.X., U.C. and C.U. as well as ships sailing to join F.N. convoys or arriving from F.S. convoys for the south coast. Groups of Landing Craft and tugs and tows are also constantly passing through this area.

(2) The efficient running of these convoys depends on the successful functioning of the Naval Control Service at Ramsgate.

(3) Unless A.C. Dover's demands for serviceable craft are met in full it must be appreciated that serious congestion and delays will occur with this traffic due to the sheer impracticability of delivering routing and sailing instructions.

(C. in C. Nore 241225 to Admty.)

J.W. convoys. A request has been received from M.W.T. that the J.W. convoy cycle should be reduced progressively to 21 days commencing after J.W. 65, due to sail about 11th March, 1945. This would have the effect of releasing some 13 merchant vessels for other purposes.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

J.W. convoys. (2) As the present rate is about one ship per day for these convoys, any closing of the cycle would lead to a corresponding reduction in the number of ships per convoy.  
(3) Although it may not be practicable to meet this request in full, it is considered that some closing of the cycle could be effected from March onwards.  
(4) Request your early remarks.  
(A.C.N.S. (H) 241650A to C. in C. H.F.)

Leave ship arrangements. Following signal received from Admiralty time of origin 201854A addressed C. in C. Portsmouth, C. in C. Nore, A.C. Dover, A.N.C.X.F. repeated other naval addressees passed to you for information and action as necessary. Begins:

British and U.S. Army leave from N.W. Europe commences as follows -  
British (a) 1000 men daily from Calais to Folkestone in one ship from 1st January to 3rd January inclusive.

(b) 3000 men daily from Calais from 4th January onwards in three ships each carrying 1000 men and proceeding to Dover, Folkestone and Harwich. It will, however, be necessary to use two smaller ships for Harwich on occasion.

U.S. (c) 1000 men daily from 1st January onwards in one ship from Havre to Southampton.

(2) Return trips will be made as follows:-

(a) Folkestone to Calais 1000 men daily commencing 10th January.

(b) Dover to Calais and Harwich to Calais 1000 men each daily commencing 13th January.

(c) Southampton to Havre, 1200 men daily commencing about 11th January.

(3) The programme of sailings must be governed by:-

(a) Tidal conditions at Calais.

(b) Tidal conditions at Folkestone.

(c) The desirability of daylight arrivals at and departures from Harwich. To commence with, the Army authorities are making shore arrangements to suit arrivals and departures between 0800A and 1700A.

(4) Owing to tidal limitations it will be necessary for ships to leave Calais both by day and by night. As soon as masters have had sufficient experience of this harbour it is intended that they shall also enter Calais by night when necessary in order to maintain a daily service.

(5) Temporary navigational lights will be rigged at Calais before the end of December. Dimmed working dock lights will be required for assisting in embarkation and disembarkation to all ports mentioned in para. 1.

(6) When leave commences on 1st January a duty service Tilbury to Ostend and return with an average lift of 1500 men per day will be started leaving Tilbury and Ostend on 1st January. This will take the place of existing N.A.P. and A.N.P. convoys.

(7) U.S. leave ships will sail in company with existing W.V.P.

/and...

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys.

- Leave ship and V.W.P. convoys. It is anticipated that the arrangements. turn round at Havre will take 4 to 5 hours.  
(Contd.) W.V.P. convoys arrive Havre at about 1100. It will therefore be necessary to postpone the sailing of return V.W.P. convoys to about 1530.  
(8) Naval authorities concerned are required to make all necessary arrangements. Ends.
- (2) Arrangements for the fighter protection of shipping by day if this is considered necessary should be made in accordance with Fighter Command Operational Instruction No. 4/1944. Requests for Fighter Protection to be initiated by the Naval authorities.
- (3) Request Fighter Command forward to U.S.S.T.A.A.F. and War Office copy of their Operational Instruction No. 4/1944.  
(Air Ministry 241727A to Bomber, Coastal, Fighter Commands.)

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

NEWFOUNDLAND. Intend to sail NEWFOUNDLAND at 1800 Dec. 26th to Alexandria (C. in C. Med's. 051105 Nov. not to all).

(2)(a) 22 knots.

(3) Positions (a) 180° Europa 2 miles thence through (73) (12) (87) (40) (206) (79) War Channel (214) thence as routed by V.A.M. and F.O.L.E.M.

(4) E.T.A. position (214) 0700 Dec. 28th. (6) (338) (7) A. (F.O.G.M.A. 241229A to V.A.M., C.M., F.O.L.E.M.).

South Atlantic

WASTWATER.

Your 230911 not to all. Sailing Dec. 28th for Capetown calling at Recife and Freetown for fuel. B.N.S.O. Rio de Janeiro please pass to WASTWATER. (C. in C.S.A., 241301B to WASTWATER, B.N.S.O. Rio de Janeiro, N.A. Rio de Janeiro, Admty., Cdr. 4th Fleet, F.O.C.W.Af.).



War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Ships from U.K. Arrangements in A.M. 042350 (ships leaving U.K. for Med.) October have now been altered. Your 231245 refers.  
(C. in C. Med. 241014A to F.O.L.E.M.)

Beirut. 23rd Dec. arrivals F.S. EMILE BERTIN. Departures M.L. 1164.  
(S.O. (1) Beirut 241029B to Admty.)

BRUISER for Preveza, BIDEFORD, for U.K. (1) BRUISER, Alex. to Taranto diverted to Preveza speed adjusted to arrive 0900/25th.  
(2) BIDEFORD, Alex. to 292 for onward routing by V.A.M. to Gibraltar by basic westbound route omitting Tobruk, speed 12 knots, all times B.  
(R.A. Alexandria 241123B to Admty. C. in C. Med.)

L.S.T. 6 from U.S. In order to assist planning of future commitments confirmation is requested that the ten L.S.Ts. being transferred from U.S. will remain in Mediterranean or whether para. 2 of A.M. 011132 Dec. still applies.  
(C. in C. Med. 241233 to Admty.)  
Reply: Admty. 271946A.

Shipping for Black Sea. Your 191415, para. B. Submitted that from last view of Novorossisk and Tuapse on passing through six weeks ago I much doubt whether total capacity of both ports together would exceed six ships at a time in January.  
(N.L.O. Black Sea 241522 to Adm. Archer.)

Proposed Operation. In view of S.H.A.E.F. Main 220120 S.719A, 6 S.G. 235 not to F.O.N.A.M. It would be appreciated if D.Es. and D.Ds. earmarked for the operation could be returned to the Mediterranean temporarily as there is need for their services.  
(2)\* F.Y.M.S. now at Gibraltar could be usefully employed off southern France. Propose to allocate them accordingly until you again require them.  
(C. in C. Med. 241628A to A.N.C.X.F. (F) Admty. F.O.N.A.M.)  
\*Para. 2 cancelled (C. in C. Med. 261321A.)  
Reply: A.N.C.X.F. 261258Z.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Visit to Beirut. Your 231210. It is considered that a visit by a British cruiser to Beirut after EMILE BERTIN has left, would have a good effect. It is not however desired that you should withdraw any cruiser from essential duties for this purpose.  
(2) Cruiser NEWFOUNDLAND would appear to offer simplest solution of this problem, and there is no objection to her being employed.  
(V.C.N.S. 241841A to C. in C. Med., Info. F.O.L.E.M.)

/Sibenik...

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Sibenik  
situation  
report 12.

After one month in Sibenik following is the position there.

(2) Local Partisan authorities with whom we deal continue friendly on the surface and have always been helpful but undercurrent of anti British suspicion amongst Partisans is steadily becoming more evident. This is partly in nature of anti-foreign feeling which is result of Yugoslavia for the Partisans movement propaganda which is reaching very great proportions.

(3) Civilians would be very friendly but are frightened by some with whom we became friendly (?who, omitted) have been arrested and questioned for many hours.

(4) Naval personnel have freedom of shops, bars, etc., and box at theatre permanently reserved for officers, but our movements are discreetly watched and reported upon.

(L.C.H. 315,241848 to F.O.T.A.L.I. (R) C. in C. Med. N.L.O. B.A.F. S.B.N.O. Split, S.B.N.O. Zara.)

M/S trawlers. Subsequent on danlaying trawlers, joining their respective M/S Flotilla, C. in C. Med's 061731 not to all refers, S.Os. of M/S Flotillas are to assume responsibility for maintenance with local authorities concerned.

(2) The terms Fifth, Tenth and 22nd Trawler Group will no longer be referred to and these trawlers will be shown as danlayers to their respective M/S Flotilla in part 1 of the Med. station daily statement.

(3) HOYCUR to join the 11th A/S M/S Trawler Group.

(4) FOXTROT, GAVOTTE, PIROUETTE form the 29th A/S M/S Trawler Group (C. in C. Med. 241857A to Med. Station 326B.)

Greece:  
SIRIUS  
report.

Landing of troops at Skira still (?group omitted) owing to determined hostility of natives.

(2) Conference proceeding with E.L.A.S. on shore attempted (?attended) by Cdr. Force 142, O.C. Alwar and staff.

(3) Weather from N.E. bad on arrival, has deteriorated.

(4) Only R.C.L. broken down and fetched ashore, salvage appears possible in better weather.

(5) Future cannot be forecast but result of conference is truce until 0900/25th and we hope we shall have a happy Christmas.

(SIRIUS 241901B to F.O.L.E.M.)

/Situation...

585

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Situation report No. 515. Situation Piraeus, Kavalla and Heraklion is quiet but that at Preveza is critical. No other report of interest received. (C. in C. Med. 241904A.)

Cositintrep 533 part 4. Greece. During 23rd Dec. our forces in Piraeus extended their positions against varying opposition after a rebel counter attack had been repulsed. The Piraeus railroad station was occupied after heavy fighting. Further gains have been made along the Athens/Piraeus road against light opposition. In Athens, slight gains have been made in the area west of the Acropolis. There was no change in the situation elsewhere. (A.F.H.Q. No T.O.O/24.)

Greece. Following for Mid East from Force 142 emergency. Owing to weather M.Ls. for ferrying failed to appear, L.C.R. went aground, great difficulty experienced in berthing ships resulting in loss of surprise and allowed time for large hostile demonstration to collect on quay. Tsigantes ashore stopped landing on strength of E.A.M. assurance that, providing certain conditions were agreed to by me, a peaceable landing could take place, at shore conference E.A.M. agreed but went back on their word leaving it too late to land in daylight. Decision by E.A.M. now postponed till 0900/25th. Unlikely to be favourable. Any landing now likely to be opposed and cause casualties both sides. (N.B.N.L.O. 242140B to F.O.L.E.M.)

Cositintrep no. 535. Part two. At Piraeus, Kavalla and Heraklion situation is quiet but at Preveza it is critical. No other reports of interest received. (C. in C. Med. No T.O.O/24 to W.O.)

THEMISTOCLES, Preveza. Report situation Preveza after talking with Zervas and British Military.  
(2) E.D.E.S. troops cut off by fall of Arta(?po) successfully withdrawn to Philippias which is still held. Proposed hold (?first) line Philippias westward to coast, second line northward of Palaeo Preveza.  
(3) E.L.A.S. number 14,000, high percentage foreigners. Estimate E.D.E.S. now number 9,000, but morale of many of them is low and ammunition is badly needed.  
(4) Impression among both E.D.E.S. and population that British are not supporting them.  
(5) Naval or air action against enemy and his communications would bolster morale, otherwise fall of Preveza appears probable within four weeks.  
(6) To protect ships in anchorage submit immediate (corrupt group) occupation strip of land south of straits including Fort Aktion, which commands (?harbour) and is manned by E.L.A.S. garrison.  
(G.S. THEMISTOCLES 242355B to S.B.N.O. Greece, Info. Greek C. in C. Alex.)

/Part...

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

Part three,  
Air Cositin-  
trep No. 532.

Coastal Air Force (?Day 23 Dec.) 1 Beaufighter  
patrolled Leghorn area without incident and 2 P.39s  
observed for naval bombardment off Pietro Liguri.  
20 P.39s escorted naval vessels.  
(H.Q.M.A.A.F. No T.O.O/24.)

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

U-Boat No fresh information. Scales unchanged.  
dispositions. (C. in C.E.I., 240338Z).

ADMIRAL Anticipated that ROEBUCK and RELENTLESS will be  
BENSON, available about 6th Jan. to escort U.S.S. ADMIRAL  
escort. BENSON. F.O. Bombay is requested to confirm  
date as soon as known and to sail these ships  
accordingly.

(2) Route from Bombay through position: (L) 018° 01' N. 072° 17' E.  
(M) 016° 02' 072° 35'. (N) 011° 02' 074° 46'. (O) 005° 10' S.  
077° 15' E. (P) 016° 10' 079° 10'. (Q) 034° 31' 099° 55' thence  
as ordered by Comsouwestpac.

(3) Cruiser escort will not be provided for ADMIRAL BENSON.

(4) Destroyers are to part company in position (O) 005° 10' S.  
077° 15' E. proceeding to Trincomalee.

(C. in C.E.I., 240359Z to F.O. Bombay).

Watering Your 051857. Request confirmation Chant class  
at tankers will be provided with crews. Further  
Trincomalee. details requested.  
(C.R.(C.J.S.) Ceylon, 240932Z to Admty.).

Troop Understood that U.S. Authorities have under  
Transport, consideration a scheme whereby present U.S.A. -  
U.S.A. - Bombay service of P.2 Class General troopships  
Bombay. would be either replaced by or alternated with a  
service U.S.A. - Calcutta using C .4 Class Generals,  
speed 17.5 knots, troop capacity 3,800.

(2) Should this scheme prove acceptable C. in C. India has  
suggested that to utilise vacant accommodation in returning C.4  
Class to New Zealand and Australia, direct transhipment should  
be effected at Colombo from ship ex A.B.F. convoy.

(3) Request your comments.

(D.O.D.(F), 242133A to C. in C.E.I.).

War Diary

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies

NELSON  
draught.

Following received from A.S. Portsmouth:-

"Request report may be obtained of estimated draughts anticipated on arrival if brought to following conditions:-

(1) with 400 tons O.F. only and all ammunition on board, (ii) with 400 tons O.F. only and no ammunition on board.

(2) Anticipated that provided ship arrives not later than 25th Jan., 1945, docking can take place on 29th but that if arrival is delayed docking between 2nd and 10th Feb. will be impossible due to state of tide. 231028A".

(3) Request you will report estimated draught of NELSON under conditions (i) and (ii) above and possible date of sailing from U.S.A. a.m. 030107 not to all refers.

(D.O.D.(H), 241312A to B.A.D.).

U/B. dis-  
positions.

Estimates.

(N.S.H.Q., 241326Z, Cominch 241555Z).

CLAYOQUOT  
torpedoed,

H.M.C.S. CLAYOQUOT torpedoed 1345Z/24, sinking, Halifax Approaches.

U/B. attacked. (C. in C.C.N.A., 241412 to G.B. 7A, Info. A.I.G.302). Am attacking submarines with hedgehog, Sambro Light Vessel.

(KIRKLAND LAKE, 241507Z to Admty.).

A.C.I.39, para. 5A. 1340Z/24th Dec. No. 2 buoy Halifax.

B. One or more submerged. C. Swept Channel.

D. CLAYOQUOT, 64 survivors. E. Nil.

F. KIRKLAND LAKE, FENNEL, BURLINGTON, TRANSCONA and two M.Ls.

Other ships joining intermittently. G. Nil.

(KIRKLAND LAKE, 241541Z to C. in C.C.N.A.).

One submarine submerged bearing 310 distance 0.1 stopped, position Sambro Light Vessel.

(KIRKLAND LAKE, 241652Z to A.I.G.302, Info. Capt. D. Halifax).

My 241412 CLAYOQUOT sank, 64 survivors have been picked up.

(C. in C.C.N.A., 241730A to G.B. 7A (R) Admty. etc.).

See 301519Z FENNEL to C. in C.C.N.A.

WESTON  
defect.

Following is B.A.D.'s. 221247Q which is being passed to you for Info.

Your 192320. WESTON's gyro compass has broken down. Repair is beyond local resources.

(2) Suggest, therefore, that she sail on proposed date being routed direct to U.K. for necessary parts to be fitted there.

(Bermuda C.C.O., 241519Z to Admty.).

C.S. Bermuda's 221247. Intend to approve.

(S.B.N.O. Western Atlantic, 241520Z to Admty.).

S/M. attack  
and sighting  
summary.

(A). H.M.C.S. CLAYOQUOT torpedoed and sunk in 44.25 N. 63.25 W. at 1345Z/24th.

(N.S.H.Q., 241928Z to Admty., Cominch).

589

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand.

Pacific Fleet, Ref. Admty. 252110 Oct. to A.C.N.B. Result of facilities. recent discussions.  
(V.A. (Q) B.P.F. 240916Z to Admty.)

B.P.F.  
policy.

The B.P.F. will act as fast carrier task force under operational control of whichever of Commanders 3rd or 5th Fleet is conducting operations. Initially this will be Commander 5th Fleet, Admiral Spruance.

(2) The work of B.P.F. will require close co-ordination with that of U.S. Carriers and if directed by C. in C. Pacific, the Fleet may be placed under operational control of Vice Admiral Commanding the carrier of U.S. Fleet operating at the time. Initially this will be Vice Admiral Mitscher.

(3) An immediate requirement exists for appointment of two Commanders or Acting Commanders as Liaison Officers, 1 on each of staffs of Admirals Spruance and Mitscher.

(4) These officers will be required to advise the U.S. Admirals at sea on the capabilities of British ships and aircraft during planning (?and) conduct of operations. From personal experience it is clear they will be working with staffs of high quality and considerable experience and should be well informed on latest British practice and development.

(5) The officer to serve with Admiral Spruance could with advantage be a gunnery or F.A.A. officer. The officer with Admiral Mitsch(er) must be a F.A.A. officer.

(6) Both officers should join my H.Q. at Sydney N.S.W. by air at earliest possible date for a short study of situation thence proceeding from eastward join U.S. fleet at sea.

(7) Cominch is in full agreement with above arrangements.  
(C. in C. B.P.F. 241253Z to Admty.)

Reply Ad. 271311.

Force X,  
policy.

The future of Force X is at present being discussed between Admty. and Cominch: this includes the maintenance thereof. Your 212228 refers.

(2) No approved operation in S.E.A.C. is known of which calls for the employment of these ships and in any case they are required in U.K. for refit when released.  
(3) The question of the use of LOTHIAN as command ship for C. in C. B.P.F. is under consideration and a further signal will be made.  
(V.C.N.S. 241311A to C. in C. B.P.F.)

War Diary.

24.12.1944.  
Sunday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/24th December.

Para. B. (1) M.T.B. 731 attacked bottom contact  
at 0135Z/24th December in 50° 11' N. 01° 41' W.

Para. C. (1) FITZROY depth charged 2 bottom  
contacts from 2230Z/22nd December until 1330Z/  
23rd December in 50° 15' N. 03° 06' W. and 50°  
13' N. 03° 07' W.

(2) H.M.C.S. MONTREAL reported radar contact at 1855Z/23rd  
December in 49° 55' N. 05° 38' W.

(3) A/C V/547 sighted U-Boat at 0140Z/23rd December in 59° 22' N.  
01° 35' W.

(4) A/C O/206 had A.S.V. contact at 1820Z/23rd December in 59°  
08' N. 00° 36' W.

Para. D. (1) A/C obtained A.S.V. contact course 90° at 0012Z/  
24th December in 52° 03' N. 03° 56' E.

Ref. A.M. 221053A para. A (1) now reported that LOCH SHIN  
attacked Snort sighted at 1337Z/21st December.

Ref. A.M. 231217A para. A (2) SLEMISH has sunk.

(D.D.I.C. 241104A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U/B dis-  
positions.

Estimates.

(D.D.I.C. 241458A, 241555A.)



591

25.12.1944.  
Monday.War Diary.SITUATION REPORTHome Commands

1. The German second land-thrust at the Meuse failed to start yesterday, chiefly owing to air attacks. They are still massing in Holland and patrols have crossed the river near Venlo.

North Sea.

2(a) Two groups of E-Boats came across the North Sea from Ymuiden to within 30 miles of the Suffolk coast and crossed the East Coast Swept Channel. They fired several torpedoes and may have laid mines, but were engaged by SHEARWATER, corvette, who twice scored hits on them, and by THORNBOROUGH and EKINS, frigates, and deflected back east.

(b) Midget U-Boats were again detected off the Dutch Coast. No actions are reported from these, but a third prisoner has now been reported from yesterday, who had abandoned his craft 3 miles north of Zeebrugge.

(c) DAKINS, frigate, was mined off N.F.7 buoy, about 14 miles N.W. of Ostend, but is still afloat.

(d) Ghent received its first large ship up the Terneuzen Canal yesterday, the WESTMOOR, 4359 tons.

Channel.

3(a) Attacks on 5 possible U-Boat contacts have been carried out, and AFFLECK sighted a schnorkel some 15 miles N.N.E. of C. de la Hague, but without material results to date.

(b) LEOPOLDVILLE actually sank at 2000 last night, clear of the channel. Some three dozen vessels, and all the Cherbourg harbour craft, carried out rescue work, and saved about 1,500 lives, but the dead and missing number about 970.

*(Amended - p. 66)*

Western Approaches.

4. C. in C. W.A. is asking for 3 more anti-U-Boat deep minefields in St. George's Channel and 2 off Northern Ireland.

Foreign StationsMediterranean

Adriatic.

5. The A/A cruiser DELHI, at Split, where the situation continues strained, gave a successful party to 750 children on Christmas Eve.

/Greece ...

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean - Contd.

- Greece. 6. A garrison and coastal force base was established at Symi today.
- Dodecanese. 7. The Allied destroyer patrol continues. It is reported that German Commandos are training on Leros and Kos.

East Indies

- U/B. 8. The British India SS. SIRSA, Bombay for Colombo and Calcutta, made an "S" report at 0718 from 15.00 N., 82.15 E., north-east of Madras.

America and West Indies

- U/B. 9. A Canadian Liberator attacked a U-Boat at 1412, 80 miles south-east of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Wreckage and oil were reported.
10. The French Naval Mission in the U.S.A. state that the GLOIRE cannot transport all the currency needed for financial operations to be undertaken in France, and they ask that the MONTCALM or GEORGES LEYGUES may be sailed to New York. C. in C. Mediterranean, however, says they cannot be spared for this transport work in present circumstances.

Australia and New Zealand

- Philippines. 11(a) At daybreak today a shore to shore amphibious landing, supported by P.T. Boats, was made north of Palompon (south-east of Luzon Island) against slight opposition.

/(b) ...

War Diary.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines.  
(Contd.)

(b) Six U.S. Mitchells on a sweep of the northern Davao Gulf destroyed two coastal freighters and a barge.

Borneo.

12. U.S. Liberators sank two small freighters and damaged several small craft off the north coast of Borneo.

25. 12.1944.

Monday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Movements

BERWICK. Scapa arrival BERWICK.  
(A.C.O.S., 250349A to F.O.I.C.Greenock).

Corvette Arrived PETERBOROUGH.  
PETERBOROUGH. (Com. D.W.A., 250841A to F.O.N.F.).

Submarine My 231158 for 2nd January read 31st December.  
SOLENT. (F.O. S/M., 251014A to C. in C.W.A.).

UGANDA. (1) Admiralty 041547A not to all. Intend to sail UGANDA to arrive Greenock 0830A Monday first January to embark passengers mails and stores.  
(2) F.O.I.C. Greenock is requested to sail UGANDA to Gibraltar p.m. 1st January.  
(3) Request stores and mails may be diverted accordingly. (C. in C.H.F., 251046A to Admty.).

A.F.D.55. Tug EMPHATIC has defect which anticipated can be made good a.m. 27th December.  
(2) Intend to sail A.F.D.55 in tow of EMPHATIC at 1200 on 27th December to Southend for onward routeing to Plymouth.  
(3) A.M.141657 and 191954 neither to Southend refers. (F.O.I.C. London, 251300 to Admty., C's. in C. Nore, Plymouth).

JASPER, My position course and speed 053° 37' N. 021° 28'  
Fleet W. 070° 15 knots. Request route from position  
Minesweeper. P.  
(Weather report 5470 2156.)  
(JASPER, 252359Z to C. in C.W.A.).

Operations.North Sea.

Midget We must expect attacks by midget submarines and submarine similar types of craft to continue in Schelde counter- Approaches possibly on an increasing scale. measures. Probability that midget submarines are capable of minelaying introduces form of attack which appears particularly difficult to detect and counter.

(2) I suggest that depth charges dropped at irregular intervals in vulnerable areas and in vicinity of convoys may have a great moral effect on attackers. 55th and 66th M.T.B. Flotillas appear suitable for this purpose vide A.D.T.O. 6504/44 dated 8th November, 1944. Request your remarks.

(3) Commodore Belgium report:-  
(A) Can one additional Coastal Force Flotilla be based at Terneuzen?  
(B) How soon can Zeebrugge accept a flotilla?  
(C) Reduction of port capacity which would result from basing another flotilla at Ostend?

/(D)...

War Diary.25.12.1944.  
Monday.HOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth Sea.Midget  
submarine  
counter-  
measures.(D) Is 11th H.D.M.L. Flotilla fitted for one hundred pound depth charges?  
(4) C.F.M.U.2 can be made available.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 251011A to C. in C.Nore, Com. Belgium).E-Boat  
operations.

E-Boat Operations last night 24th/25th December.

(1) 2355 CAICOS on antiflying bomb patrol 20 miles off Southwold detected 4 or 5 E-Boats steering 250°. These turned south eluding CAICOS M.T.Bs. were probably E-Boats referred to in para.2.

(2) 0120 SHEARWATER (Patrol 18) engaged 5 E-Boats near 53F buoy scoring hits and causing explosion in one E-Boat which was temporarily slowed down. Enemy fired torpedoes and crossed Q.Z.S.526 5 miles north of M.F.3 buoy westbound and 5 miles north of 53F buoy eastbound. Speed was nearly 30 knots throughout object possibly torpedo attack on shipping.

(3) 0130 THORNBOROUGH at western end of patrol 12 detached and engaged 6 E-Boats near N.F.5 buoy. Minelaying is suspected about 2½ miles east and N.E. of N.F.5.

(4) 0140 EKINS (Patrol 14) drove off 6 E-Boats 5 miles N.E. of N.F.6 buoy. Minelaying unlikely.

(5) Wellington aircraft successfully shadowed group of E-Boats across North Sea heading 250° from Ijmuiden. At about 0140 when 100 Orfordness 30 E-Boats altered southwards towards SHEARWATER. Shadowing report which showed this alteration was not received in time to warn SHEARWATER.

(6) 0240 SHEARWATER engaged this group of 4 E-Boats near 53 F buoy again scoring hits. E-Boats steered S.W. at high speed and contact was lost at 0300 5 miles N.E. of N.F.1 when E-Boats were steering 200°. This group was not detected again.

(7) Groups mentioned in paras. 1 and 5 may have intended attack in Harwich area as diversion but turned south on detecting CAICOS.  
(C. in C.Nore, 251250A to Admty.).

Midget  
submarines.

One Midget submarine reported by West Kappelle 270 West Kappelle 3 miles at 1120/25. M.T.Bs. ordered to investigate. Aircraft from 142 Wing Coastal Command is also investigating. Schelde H.D.M.L.

Patrols reinforced.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend, 251250A to C. in C. Nore).

My 241930. F.C.4 reports midget submarine 18ft. long 2ft. 6 ins. free board 5 ft. periscope complement one. While on patrol in vicinity Oostergat Whistle buoy at 0200 track of torpedo was seen to pass under the leading boat of the unit. No H.E. effect was heard. At 0545 obtained contact with what was presumed to be similar type of craft proceeding in N.E. direction but contact was lost within a minute and illumination

/failed...

War Diary.25.12.1944.  
Monday.HOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth SeaMidget  
submarines  
(Contd.)

failed to indicate anything on the surface. Photographs were taken of original submarine. (C.F.M.U.1, 251311A to C. in C.Nore). Following is summary of Midget submarine attacks on Schelde Estuary 23/24 December. It is confirmed that Bieber type submarines were used.

It is probable that two 18 inch torpedoes were carried (and there is no evidence that mines were used). Periscopes were definitely seen.

- (2) The first incident was at 0830/23 when H.D.M.L.1465 on Flushing Breskens patrol obtained an asdic contact attacked and sank a midget submarine. One survivor was taken prisoner.
- (3) All available H.D.M.Ls. were sent on patrol. M.T.Bs. from Ostend were sent to search the area and 142 Wing Coastal Command were asked to search the area also.
- (4) One torpedo appears to have been fired at H.D.M.L.1465 and to have run on the beach near Breskens and exploded at 1100/24.
- (5) A further attack with D/Cs. was made by Breskens patrol with negative result and H.D.M.L. 2221 reported submarine in vicinity N.F.15 buoy at 1021.
- (6) Sighting reports were received from Walcheren but no contact was made by aircraft or surface craft.
- (7) At about 1615/23 S.S. ALAN A DALE was torpedoed in the Schelde near Terneuzen and at 1830/23 STEEPHOLM was in contact with midget submarine in the same area. Shoal water made attack impossible. No further incident during the night.
- (8) Sighting reports were received from 4th S.S. Commando Brigade in Walcheren between 1030/24 and 1130/24 and one submarine pilot landed from a rubber dinghy and was captured. One report speaks of hearing an engine.
- (9) H.D.M.L. 1402 sank one Midget submarine near N.F.11 buoy at about 1130/24 and transferred prisoner to CATTISTOCK for immediate passage to U.K. B.Y.M.S.2173 operating near N.F.13 reported submerged object at 1020/24 which surfaced twice.
- (10) Swordfish from 142 Wing sighted a submarine which had been abandoned and vectored M.T.Bs. to investigate. At about 1330 submarine was found and taken to tow in position 290 West Kappelle, 9 miles but later sank in position 039 Ostend 21 miles. It is considered that this submarine was abandoned by the pilot who was captured on Walcheren. Para.8 above refers.
- (11) COWDRAY picked up survivor of a submarine near N.F.12 buoy at 1445/24 this survivor was also from an abandoned submarine.
- (12) It is considered that the above shows 2 Midget submarines were sunk and two abandoned and that there were a number of others operating in the area.
- (13) It is understood that aircraft of 2nd T.A.F. between 1200/24 and 1400/24 operating N.E. of West Kappelle sighted a total of 5 Midget submarines and attacked three of these with uncertain results.
- (N.O.I.C.Ostend, 252217A to Com. Belgium, as amended by his 261500).

Situation  
report.

Discharge by sea 24 hours period ending 241600A  
December.  
Cositintrep No.265 Part 4.

/British...

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations.

North Sea.

Situation  
Report  
(Contd.)

British:-

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> <u>(including</u> <u>coal).</u>	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>
Antwerp	2	281	4876	1550
Ostend	2293	764	5293	1150
Boulogne	16	45	-	-
Dieppe	34	-	2227	-
Caen	-	-	1559	-
Calais	1965	2	-	-
Total	<u>4310</u>	<u>1092</u>	<u>13955</u>	<u>2700</u>
<u>U.S. North:</u>				
Antwerp	-	-	12345	-
Cherbourg	-	-	53191	-
Le Havre	3531	422	4794	4190
Rouen	707	449	3845	4045
Grancliffe	-	-	2469	-
Total	<u>4238</u>	<u>871</u>	<u>28554</u>	<u>8235</u>
<u>U.S. South:</u>				
Marseilles	21	177	17874	4411
Port de Bouc	-	-	576	4548
Toulon	-	-	693	-
Total	<u>21</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>19145</u>	<u>8959</u>

(A.N.C.X.F., 251445A to Admiralty).

Operations:

In Holland enemy patrols crossed river in Venlo area; evidence of enemy regrouping this area. Further evidence that enemy preparing operation; photos show landing strip at Soesterberg (E.39) repaired.

General:

Neither Panzer Army got started on 24th December. II S.S. Panzer Company formed up but was shot up from air, and I S.S. Panzer Corps still licking fairly considerable wounds.

(S.H.A.E.F. 251830 to War Office).

Cositintrep No.265 Part 2 Naval.

(1) Ghent. S.S. WESTMOOR the first large ship to proceed up Terneuzen Canal to Ghent since its capture. Arrived p.m. 24th December.

(2) Troopship LEOPOLDVILLE sunk by torpedo 5 miles north of Cherbourg at 1800/24th December.

(3) Reference Cositintrep No.263 para.3. Object which blew up on beach west of Breskens and was reported to be a midget submarine, now known to have been a torpedo.

Reference Cositintrep No.264 para.1A further midget submarine was attacked by COWDRAY north of Zeebrugge.

(S.H.A.E.F. 252350A to Admty.).

/M.T.B....

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea. - Contd.

M.T.B. Consideration is being given to increasing the reinforcements. strength of short M.T.Bs. in the Nore Command. Request you will advise whether any of the U.S. P.T.-Boats operating from Cherbourg could be re-allocated to Harwich to assist in meeting this possible requirement.  
The number of boats that could be accepted is governed by the accommodation available ashore for crews and maintenance personnel and at present this is limited to 150.  
(A.C.N.S.(H), 251615A to A.N.C.X.F.).

DAKINS Have struck a mine. My position now is 015°  
frigate, N.F.7 buoy 2.5.  
damaged. (DAKINS, 252110 to C. in C.Nore).  
Have struck a mine or been struck by a torpedo.  
Am uncertain which. Forward flooded below  
messdeck level, have 12 casualties 4 serious.  
(DAKINS, 252150A\*to C. in C.Nore).  
Am proceeding to assistance of DAKINS.  
(Unit F.G.1, 252213 to C. in C.Nore).  
\* Request immediate assistance.

E-Boat H.Q.C.C. 011453 and Air Ministry 071821. From  
counter- the scale of E-Boat attack on the nights of 22/  
measures. 23rd and 24th/25th December, it is apparent that  
a large number of operational E-Boats are based  
at Ymuiden and Waalhaven.  
(2) Request bombing of these E-Boat pens may be intensified at  
a very early date.  
(3) It is probable that E-Boats are also operating from Den  
Helder.  
(C. in C.Nore, 252114 to Admty.).

Operations

Channel.

Possible CAISTOR CASTLE and LAUNCESTON CASTLE investigating  
U-Boat. contact in 050° 17' N. 001° 39' 30" W., remainder  
of Group continuing patrol.  
(S.O.E.G.30, 250056A to C. in C. Portsmouth).  
Have attacked 4 times with Squid. Contact still firm.  
Possibly 2 wrecks, intend remaining in the vicinity, holding  
contact until daylight.  
(CAISTOR CASTLE, 250612A to C. in C.Portsmouth).  
Contact lost and not regained after 90 minutes, am  
assuming day patrol.  
(CAISTOR CASTLE, 251022A to C. in C.Portsmouth).

/Loss...



599

25.12.1944  
MondayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

Loss of LEOPOLDVILLE Your 242356, position - 049° 45' 20" N. 001° 34' W., accurate by QH. ANTHONY confirms a torpedo track seen and heard on duplicate HE in second attack. My 241756 refers.

(BRILLIANT 250142A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Your 250050. Intend to sweep either side of H. Channel until relieved.

(2) Ref. my 241948, 242150 and 250237 not to all addresses, following area thoroughly swept by ship 1500 yards apart in perfect asdic condition:-

The coast to 049° 54' N. between 001° 23' W. and 001° 49' W.

(3) If attack was by torpedo consider U-boat must have drifted west among welter of small rescue craft and escaped towards Alderney. Probability area had been thoroughly swept prior incident.

(S.O.E.G.1, 251012A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

LEOPOLDVILLE struck well aft starboard side at 1754 in position 49° 45' 20" N. 01° 34' W. by accurate QH of escort and sank approximately 2000.

Escort BRILLIANT ordered ship to anchor position where struck outside and about 2 miles off H. Channel vicinity of Willard patrol. Escort ANTHONY reports torpedo track sighted and heard about 36 vessels including P.Cs., P.Ts., C.G.Cs., tugs, and all harbour craft used in rescue.

Tentative figures 1500 alive, 200 dead and about 770 presently unaccounted for. Believe 2232 troops and 237 crew aboard when struck. Checking sailing list now.

A/S search instructed but results negative from information available.

O.N. escort ANTHONY made one depth charge attack but remaining escorts and Portsmouth Night Patrols had negative results in search.

Nature of contact of escort unknown.

Ships searching 9 British, 3 U.S. P.Cs. plus regular patrols. (C.T.G.125.2, 251303A to C.T.F.125.)

Second Possible U-boat Made depth charge attack on probable submarine at 50° 20' 30" N. 03° 09' 00" W. at 0056Z/25th Unable to regain contact. Left area on duty assigned.

(DANIELS 250325Z to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Possible U-boat attacked in position 50° 20' 30" N. 03° 09' 00" W. at 0056Z/25th by U.S.S. DANIELS. PATCH BAKER proceed to investigate.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 250604A to E.G.21.)

Third possible U-boat. KENILWORTH CASTLE attacking a stationary bottomed target in position 50° 22' N. 02° 03' W. Am joining to verify position.

(S.O.E.G.30, 250549A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

KENILWORTH CASTLE contact was in 50° 20' 20" N. 02° 02' 54". She attacked twice with Squid.

Both returning to patrol now (consider?) contact non submarine. My 250549A refers.

(S.O.E.G.30, 250734A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/Patrols...

600

25.12.1944  
MondayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel - Contd.

Patrols

My 251012A.

Proceed to carry out A/S sweep through:-

(PP) 49.36 N. 06.16 W.

(QQ) 49.26 N. 03.42 W.

(RR) 49.52 N. 02.41 W.

thence establish Gamma Patrol 346° 10 miles and 166° 10 miles from (RR) report expected time of arrival (RR).

(2) Range of Channel Island batteries 13 miles.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 251049A to E.G.19.)

Your 251049A. E.T.A. (RR) 1300A/26th.

(S.O.E.G.19, 251418 to C. in C. Plymouth.)

Day patrol 26th from 1100 when PORTCHESTER CASTLE sails divide area Q at 01° 35' W.

(2) My 242355 and 251167 refers.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 251840 to S.O.E.G. 30.)

My 281728 para. 12 not to E.G.17.

A. Night 25th/26th patrol 32 5 miles each side of 02° 15' W. by Sunderland and Wellington.

Day 26th patrol south of Portland Bill and patrol 5 East of H. Channel by Swordfish patrol 32 by Liberators.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 251842A Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

Night patrol 25th/26th Area "Q". My 242355 refers.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 251915 to S.O.E.G. 30.)

My 251842. Correct Para. A. to read as follows:-

Day 26th Patrol 5 East of H. Channel.

Patrol 6 S.S.E. of St. Catherines by Swordfish.

Patrol 32 by Liberators.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 252359A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force.)

Fourth possible U-boat

Am in company with M.T.B.760 exact position of contact 50° 31' 30" N. 01° 32' 00" W. where a non S/M. is charted.

(S.O.E.G.30, 251625A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

M.T.Bs. say we were on wrong contact. All

ships lost contact. Am carrying out hunt. My

251625 refers.

(S.O.E.G.30, 251720A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

M.T.Bs. regained contact. Unable to confirm as yet.

(S.O.E.G.30, 251803 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Am still in contact and attacking in position 50° 31' 10" N. 01° 31' 30".

Your 230025 para. 3B,1, 2, 3, 4B classify contact submarine.

(M.T.B. 760 251829 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

My 251803 M.T.Bs. lost contact again. 4 corvettes doing observant around them PORTCHESTER CASTLE inside square helping M.T.Bs.

(S.O.E.G.30, 251832A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

PORTCHESTER CASTLE gained contact on M.T.B.'s contact in position 243° St. Catherines Point 7.5 miles and attacked twice with Squid.

Extent of target and depth recorder indicated minor non-submarine.

Do not intend more attacks but will continue observant until a night patrol signal arrives.

(S.O.E.G.30, 251917 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

/Fifth...

25.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel - Contd.

Fifth  
possible  
U-boat.

ANTHONY and CROIX DE LORRAINE attacking contact  
085° S.C.P. 8 miles had not then joined escort.  
(SPRAGGE, 251830 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Probable  
U-boat

Snorkel sighted, am in asdic contact in position  
49° 54' N. 01° 48' W. sighting reliable first  
contact by H.E.  
(AFFLECK, 252208 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

War Diary.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches.

CAMELLIA.

My 211710A 16 tons feed water now in reserve. My P.C.S. 49° 40' N. 21° 58' W. 060° 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  (CAMELLIA 250930A to C. in C. W.A.)

Convoy  
J.W. 63.

31st E.G. is to R/V J.W. 63 consisting of 34 M.V. in position 000° Altacarry 8' at 1530A/27 and escort to Loch Ewe. Speed 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  knots.  
(2) On completion you are to escort Loch Ewe section of O.N.S. 39 to join main convoy in position 270° Oversay 6' at 1230A/29.  
(C. in C. W.A. 251045 to S.O.E.G. 31.)

Patrol.

At 1400A shift patrol to between Trevoise Head and Lundy Island.  
(2) Carry out occasional sweeps close inshore including Barnstable Bay and Lundy Roads.  
(C. in C. Plymouth 251150A to BEACON HILL, NEW GLASGOW, JONQUIERE.)

Deep mining  
desired.

My 081004 November and Admiralty message 162023 November. On further consideration on mining policy in Western Approaches it is considered desirable to lay deep minefields in the following areas which are shown in their order of priority:

- (1) Along convoy route C between positions 51° 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' N. 07° 30' W. and 188 Tuskar 9.5 miles.
  - (2) Along convoy route B between positions 51° 52.5' N. 06° 15' W. and 51° 34.5' N. 07° 26' W.
  - (3) Between positions 51° 55' N. 05° 50' W. and 51° 38' N. 05° 50' W.
  - (4) Along convoy route between 55° 35' N. 07° 10' W. and 55° 35' N. 08° 00' W.
  - (5) Along convoy route between positions 55° 43' N. 07° 10' W. and 55° 48' N. and 08° 00' W.
- (C. in C. W.A. 251201A to Admty.)

Possible  
U-Boat.

My 251628A. U-Boat may be either outward or home-ward bound.  
(2) Leigh Light Liberator is being sent to co-operate with you. Call sign KWC and should join you about 1900A.  
(3) My 241025Z is cancelled.  
(C. in C. W.A. 251616Z to S.O.E.G. 6.)

Detach 6th E.G. forthwith to hunt U-Boat reported by A/C in 50.56 N. 08.15 W.

(C. in C. W.A. 251628 to C.T.G. 21.7.)

Your 1628. Have carried out 10 miles square search. No results. Intend proceeding a 220° direction for 30 miles alter to north for 30 miles and continuing search in a 30 miles square as arranged about datum. Suitable. Weather report 9060 2300.

(S.O.E.G. 6 252339A to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

Escort carriers The following escort carriers are placed under the operational control of C. in C. H.F.:

Col. 1	Col. 2.	Col. 3.
Name	Present I.E.	Intended I.E.
CAMPANIA	12 Swordfish 8 Wildcats	12 Swordfish 8 Wildcats
NAIRANA	12 Swordfish 4 Wildcats	12 Swordfish 8 Wildcats.
VINDEX	12 Swordfish 8 Wildcats	12 Swordfish 8 Wildcats
TRUMPETER	9 Avengers 8 Wildcats	8 Avengers 8 Wildcats
PREMIER	9 Avengers 8 Wildcats	8 Avengers 8 Wildcats
PUNCHER	12 Barracudas when ready for service.	12 Barracudas 8 Wildcats

(2) Signals allocating any of the above escort carriers to C. in C. W.A. are cancelled.

(3) Should a U-Boat threat develop in the Atlantic or Bay of Biscay it may be necessary to withdraw some of these carriers from C. in C. H.F.

(4) Column 3 is expected to be complete by the end of March.

(5) Swordfish Squadrons from NAIRANA, VINDEX and CAMPANIA, will be withdrawn one at a time, to train them in the use of the Sono Buoy. This will be done so as to cause the least disturbance possible to the Home Fleet.

(6) The administrative control of the above carriers is to be carried out as arranged between C. in C. H.F. and F.O.C.T. (V.C.N.S. 251515A to Cs. in C. H.F., W.A., F.O.C.T.)

Suspected U-Boat. By D/F on 4800 k/cs at 1633Z U-Boat fixed within 30 miles of 59° 40' N. 03° E. (D.D.I.C. 251823A to S/Ms north of 51° N.)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Patrols. Take BYARD and CALDER under your orders and sail at 1700A today Monday.  
(2) Establish Gamma on 59° 15' N. between 04° 00' W. and 05.00 W. and relieve trawlers searching in this area.  
(C. in C. Rosyth 251031 to BENTINCK.)

Convoy J.W. 63. J.W. 63. J.W. 63. (1) W.A. escort CYGNET (S.O.), LAPWING, LARK, KEPPEL, WESTCOTT, WALKER, BEAGLE, ALINGTON CASTLE, BAMBOROUGH CASTLE comprising E.G. 7 for this operation.  
(2) CYGNET, LAPWING, LARK, ALINGTON CASTLE, BAMBOROUGH CASTLE are to arrive Loch Ewe in daylight December 29.  
(3) A. KEPPEL, WESTCOTT, WALKER, BEAGLE are to arrive Skaalefjord December 30th.

/B...

War Diary.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Convoy  
J.W. 63.  
(Contd.)

B. One of U.K. destroyers is to call at Loch Ewe to take convoy orders to BLUE RANGER at Skaalefjord  
(4) Request you will sail ships accordingly.  
(C. in C. W.A. 251137 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)  
It has been decided that Russian S.Cs. will not be sailed in J.W. 63.  
Your 200954 refers.  
(A.C.N.S.(H) 251325A to C. in C. H.F.)

Norwegian  
M.F.Vs. for  
Kola.

S.B.N.O. N. Russia's 221717 and 231815 both received after "Interim" had sailed.  
(2) Attempts by W/T to divert "Interim" to Lerwick for amended route failed but as a result of air and surface search they were contacted and are being brought back to Lerwick.  
(3) N.O.I.C. Lerwick is requested to sail "Interim" as soon as possible after the amended route has been passed to all 4 motor fishing ships and the failure of their W/T communications has been investigated, reporting their time of sailing to all authorities.  
(C. in C. Rosyth 251305A to S.B.N.O. N. Russia, N.O.I.C. Lerwick.)

Mining.

Deep mining  
off Hartland  
Point.

My 231105A. Arrived PLOVER, escort CONQUEROR.  
(F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 250903A to C. in C. Plymouth.)

40th M.S.F.  
to Le Havre.

Proceed at 0530A/26th December with 40th M.S.F. in company to Le Havre.  
(2) Sweep from J Buoy to Kansas Buoy thence to 58E Buoy. Double Oropesa using S.A. gear. Guide to be in centre of formation with only one sweep streamed.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 251105A to CATHERINE.)

Cancel my 251105A.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 252155A to CATHERINE.)

40th and  
31st M.S.Fs.

40th M.S.F. is required to operate under C. in C. Nore. Available ships of flotilla are to be sailed on the 26th December to Harwich.  
(2) 31st M.S.F. is reallocated to C.T.F. 125. Flotilla will continue to operate under C. in C. Plymouth, until called forward by C.T.F. 125.  
(3) 31st M.S.F. is to be available when required in accordance with A.N.C.X.F. 231837 not to all addressees.  
(D.M.S. 251305A to Cs. in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth C.T.F.)  
Pass Spithead Gate 2000A/26th with all available ships of the 40th M.S.F. in company to Harwich.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

40th and  
31st M.S.Fs.  
(Contd.)

(2) Standard convoy route to Dumpton Buoy thence by Q.Z.S. 458, 468, 446 and 263.  
(3) Adjust speed to pass Dumpton Buoy 0700A/27th. E.T.A. 1100A/27th.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 252335A to CATHERINE.)

Sweeping  
in Schelde  
Approaches.

Your 250421A and my 251159 and my 251827(?A)  
(2) Total mines 6, as reported.  
(3) High percentage search in "King" formation carried out to 7 cables south of centre line to depth of 8 fathoms. 62 $\frac{1}{2}$ % search in "How" formation to 5 cables to north of centre line to same depth. One sweep parted on wreck in position 51° 21' N. 02° 26' 5" E. and several on wreckage and shoals near N.F. 6.  
(4) Regret N.F. 5 buoy fouled and cut during sweep - now drifting - replaced by dan buoy showing double flag F over 5 and showing white light - in approx. charted position TY. Flotilla returning Margate Roads. Propose continuing high percentage search of same area to depth of 6 fathoms tomorrow Tuesday sail at 0600A.  
(M.S.F. 42 252003 to C. in C. Nore.)

Port Facilities.

Ghent.

First large ship WESTMOOR arrived Ghent 1530/24th. (Com. Belgium 251151 to A.N.C.X.F.)

Casualties & Defects.

SS. EMPIRE  
PATH.

My 242020 ship now reported firm aground with back broken in position 240° N.F. 9 buoy 2 miles. (N.O.I.C. Ostend 250131 to C. in C. Nore.)

L.C.G. (M) 110. At 1255/24th December, 1944, fishing trawler REMEGIO collided with, and seriously damaged L.C.G. (M) 110 which was at anchor to South Spurn Point, River Humber no casualties in L.C.G. (M) 110 it is assumed that no blame can be attached to H.M. ship as she was at anchor. REMEGIO owned by Sir George F. Slieght, Trustees Cross, St. Grimsby, Port of Registry - Grimsby, joint survey without prejudice is being arranged on both ships.  
(Capt. of Base, Grimsby 251105A to Admty.)

Shipping & Convoys.

Loch Ewe  
to close

The use of Loch Ewe as an ocean convoy assembly port will cease as from 7th January and the proposals contained in A.M. 141656A are to take effect from that date.  
(D.T.D. 251630A to Cs. in C. W.A., H.F., Rosyth.)

606

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

FRITILLARY. Arrived. Colombo pass to C.E.F.E.  
(Care. Durban, 250729Z to Admty., etc.)

Freetown base, policy. Your 181748. Admty. maintains the view that a base at twelve month's notice is necessary to meet requirements given in A.L. M.012741/43 of 6th March, 1944, but in light of remarks in your letter of 21st June, departments are revising their requirements with a view to

leaving intact:

(a) facilities which can be leased to and maintained by the Colonial Government or local firms during peacetime;

(b) other facilities (such as roads, building foundations, jetties and certain minimum accomodation and storage) which must be kept up if a base is to be developed in the time allowed.

(2) It is recognised that the less that can be maintained permanently the more will have to be provided at short notice in an emergency. This applies to docking and repair facilities as to other needs. Revised proposals will be forwarded as soon as possible.

(A.C.N.S.(F), 251052A to F.O.C.W.Af.)



War Diary.

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

EMILE BERTIN, Request you sail French cruiser EMILE BERTIN  
Beirut. a.m. 27th direct to position 292 for onward  
routeing by V.A.M. to Toulon. Your 231013 not to  
all refers.  
(F.O.L.E.M. 251001B to N.O.I.C. Beirut.)  
Amended by 261849B q.v.

BIDEFORD. (1) BIDEFORD Alexandria to Gibraltar by basic  
westbound route at 217, 0900B/25th, speed 12 knots.  
(N.O.I.C. Alexandria 251026B to Admty., etc.)  
E.T.A. Malta 1400A tomorrow 26th.  
(BIDEFORD 251905A to V.A.M.)

Aegean Intelligence report 156, week ending 23rd Dec. 1944  
Intelligence. Aegean, Crete. Distribution of small amount relief  
stores Heraklion completed.  
Dodecanese destroyer patrol continues. Shore  
battery Livadia Bay and Piskopi active on 21st.  
Reported that German Commandos training on Leros and Kos.  
T.O.O. 241726.  
(S.O.(I) E. Mediterranean 251217B to S.O.(I) Istanbul.)

ERNE. Request you will sail ERNE on completion of refit  
to Gibraltar for onward routeing to U.K. A.M.  
241641 Nov. not to all refers.  
(C. in C. Med. 251657A to F.O.L.E.M.)

Situation There is nothing to report from Piraeus or the  
report provincial ports where situation is quiet and  
No. 516. possibly less tense, with exception Preveza,  
where situation is difficult and evacuation of  
refugees and subsequently troops may prove necessary  
(C. in C. Med. 251815 to Admty., etc.)

Cositintrep Greece. During 24 Dec. our forces made slight  
No. 534, part gains in Piraeus. In Neol Faliron our troops  
four. have made steady progress against increasing  
opposition. In Athens further gains have been  
made in the area northwest of the Acropolis and  
we have captured the gas works in this area.  
(A.F.H.Q. No T.O.O/25 to W.O.)

608

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

U/B  
dispositions.

Area V.P.2 and area C.B.2 north of 005° N.  
and east of 080° E. - reduced scale to X.5.  
Area V.P.1 remains X.5. Other areas remain  
W.5.  
(C. in C. E.I., 250524Z.)

SIRSA,  
U/B.

SSSS 15.00 N., 82.15 E., periscope sighted.  
(SIRSA, 250718.)

609

25.12.1944  
MondayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

**Support Group**                      Until further notice maintain at least one DE support group in operations against weather reporting against weather reporting U-boats indicated by Cominch U-boat estimate. C.N.O. serials 0511220 of 27th Sept. and 01819920 of 18th December are (pertinent). (Cominch and C.N.O., 251452 to Cinclant)

**U-boat Dispositions**              Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 251505Z, as amended 251920Z, Cominch 251547.)

**French Cruisers for U.S.A.**              French Naval Mission U.S. states F/S GLOIRE cannot transport all currency needed for financial operations to be undertaken in France with agreement of S.C.A.E.F. Mydis 071930. French, therefore, request F/S MONTCALM or GEORGES LEYGUES be sailed to New York earliest possible to transport additional currency to France, additional currency to France, provided S.C.A.E.F. confirms necessity for above and one of the cruisers can be spared from present duty Admty. is requested issue necessary sailing orders. Admty. pass to S.C.A.E.F. N.S.T. one give to A.N.C.X.F. Radio Paris inform Comnavforfrance. (Cominch, 251517, to Admty., S.C.A.E.F.)

**U-boat attacked**                      Sighting my 251420 (N.T. in W.D.) was of periscope only. Aircraft attacked with depth charges reports oil, bubbles, and wreckage seen. (C. in C. C.N.A., 251638 to Ships in Area D.)

**T.G.27.1.1**                      When ready for sea 26th December T.G.27.1.1, less HAYTER proceed kill Weather Reporter 49° N. 30° W. Insure latest corrections CSP 1774B held by H.F./D.F. equipped ships. Cominch requested advise ships concerned latest radio intelligence operating information. HAYTER to join as soon as ready. Comdeslant supply C.N.O. serials of Cominch 25142Z. (Cinclant, 252331Z to C.T.U. 27.1.1 and HAYTER.)

Australia and New Zealand

**ROBERT J. WALKER torpedoed**              U.S.S. ROBERT J. WALKER torpedoed by S/M in 036° 05' S. 150° 43' at 1655Z 24th. Subsequent information indicate ship is still afloat. (N.R. Melbourne, 250224Z to Admty., etc.)

/Sitrep...

935

25.12.1944  
Monday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Australia and New Zealand - Contd.

Sitrep.  
E (?) 88.

To 1500Z/24.  
Philippines.  
Leyte P.Ts. destroyed barge north Paloma on night Dec. 22nd. Destroyers sank enemy (?) P.T. boat Mindanae sea. P.T. boats destroyed one supply laden barge night December, 22nd. (G.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 250239Z to various)

Digest  
No.1069  
for  
December  
24th.

Navy Mariner sighted enemy M.T.B. near Allied convoy 10 miles west of Qmmiguin Island in Central Mindanao Sea early hours: escorting destroyers sank boat.  
(7) On Leyte our forces advancing westwards across almost entire length of northwestern Peninsula without serious hindrance. Late report states shore to shore amphibious landing supported by P.T. boats conducted day break 25th Omt Mite north of Palompon against slight opposition.  
(8) 5 Thunderbolts set ablaze entire Palompon area with Napalin incendiaries 23rd December after 10 Kittyhawks had bombed Port.  
(12) 6 Mitchells sweeping Davao Gulf forenoon 23rd sank 3 small coasters.  
(14) 3 patrol Liberators over Northern Borneo 23rd December individually bombed Miri Labuan and Jesselton also strafed small Merchant Ship in Brunei Bay.  
(17) 4 Mitchells sweeping Flores Sea 23rd strafed 3 barges, 1 sailing craft along coast southwest from Dilli. Similar sweep next day destroyed 1 barge this area.  
(19) P.T. Boats destroyed 1, damaged second of 2 heavily armed barges heading northeast from further most Halmahera towards western Morotaw night 22nd. On 22nd and 23rd December fighters destroyed 2, damaged about 15 more barges during coastal sweeps northern Halmahera.  
(10) P.T. Boats destroyed 1 southbound barge approaching Palompon night 22nd. (G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 250816Z).

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarine  
attack  
and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/25th Dec.  
Para. A.  
(1) At 1656Z/24th December Belgian LEOPOLDVILLE (11,509 G.R.T.) torpedoed in 49° 45' N. 01° 34' W.  
Para. B.  
(1) At 0957Z 24th Dec. A/C M/110 sighted P/S course North in 49° 48' N. 02° 02' W.  
(2) At 1323Z 24th Dec. A/C P/407 sighted C/T course 135° in 51° 08' N. 04° 44' W.  
Para. C.  
(1) At 0753Z 24th Dec. PEVENSEY CASTLE attacked contact obtained at C.135Z/24th December by M.T.B.731, possibly wreck.

/(2)...

611

25.12.1944.  
Monday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.  
(Contd. )

(2) At 2356Z/24th Dec. CAISTER CASTLE and  
LAUNCESTON CASTLE attacked contact in 50° 17' N.  
01° 39' W.

(3) At 0056Z/25th Dec. U.S.S. DANIELS attacked  
possible U-Boat in 50° 21' N. 03° 09' W.

(4) At 0449Z/25th Dec. KENILWORTH CASTLE attacked  
bottom contact possibly non submarine in 50°  
22' N. 02° 03' W.

(5) At 0610Z/24th Dec. A/C O/206 obtained A.S.V. contact in 59° 26  
mins. N. 03° 46' W.

Para. D. (1) A/C M/110 reported possible U-Boat in Alderney  
Harbour at 1135Z/24th Dec.

(D.D.I.C. 251040A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U/B dis-  
positions.

Estimates.

(D.D.I.C. 251419A, 251420A.)

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

North Sea.

1(a) Midget U-Boats again appeared in the Nore - Schelde channel but achieved nothing. One of them was captured by an H.D.M.L. and taken in tow, but sank, another was rammed and sunk by a minesweeper, and a Typhoon certainly sank one and probably another off Flushing. It is stated by prisoners that the 30 craft concerned in the operations of December 23rd and 24th had been stored in a concrete shelter outside Maasluis. The R.A.F. has been asked to bomb this as well as the E-Boat pens.  
(b) DAKINS has made Harwich on one engine.  
(c) At Antwerp Kruisschens Sluis was used on Friday for the first time to pass out empty Liberty ships.

Channel.

2. AFFLECK, with First and Seventeenth Escort Groups, continued hunting the U-Boat which sank LEOPOLDVILLE, after sighting its schnorkel, for some 12 hours, but shortly after S.O. E.G.1 had decided that the U-Boat had made its getaway amongst the crush of rescue craft, CAPEL was torpedoed and sunk, and a quarter of an hour later AFFLECK herself was hit aft, but struggled into Cherbourg. First and Seventeenth Escort Groups continued the hunt, with renewed vigour and produced a little oil from hedgehog attacks, but no definite proofs. The same or another U-Boat was sighted shortly before midnight off C. de la Hague by aircraft and is being hunted by Tenth and Nineteenth Escort Groups.

Western Approaches.

3. Two possible U-Boat traces are being investigated in Western Approaches, but on slender evidence.

Norway.

4. M.T.Bs. 717 and 627 have returned from their V.P. patrol off Hovden, during which they torpedoed and sank an 1,800 ton merchantman and badly damaged her escort with gunfire, themselves sustaining only superficial damage and no casualties.

Foreign Stations

South Atlantic

Escort Groups.

5. In view of the cessation of trade convoys south of Gibraltar, F.O.C. West Africa is requested by the Admiralty to sail two groups

/of ...

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

South Atlantic

Escort  
Groups.  
(Contd.)

of the 55th, 56th and 57th Escort Groups, less the "Kil" class A/S vessels, to Gibraltar.

Mediterranean

Greece.

6. H.M. Ships have begun evacuating civilians from Preveza to Corfu.

Riviera,  
Collision.

7. The large French destroyers LE MALIN and LE TERRIBLE have been in collision west of Ventotene and are being towed to Naples. LE MALIN is destroyed from her bows to foremost turret, and LE TERRIBLE has water entering her engine and boiler rooms from aft.

Aegean.

8. On the island of Kos, 100 Germans are reported to have completed assault training with the intention of landing on Niseros before further operations.

East Indies

U-Boat.

9. The American SS. CAPE LAMBERT, which left Fremantle for Calcutta on November 30, reported sighting a submarine at 2040 in 05.48 N., 81.50 E., near Trincomalee.

SUBTLE,  
R. of P.

10. The submarine SUBTLE, during her second Far East patrol, sank three junks by demolition in the vicinity of Pulo Penang and Pulo Langkawi between December 12 and 14.

SPITEFUL,  
R. of P.

11. The submarine SPITEFUL, on her fifth Far East patrol, sank a 200 ton coasters by gunfire on December 15 in 05.23 S., 117.20 E., south of the Macassar Straits. The SPITEFUL arrived at Fremantle on December 23 after 38 days at sea.

/SHALIMAR ...

War Diary.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies - Contd.

SHALIMAR,  
R. of P.

12. The submarine SHALIMAR, on her second Far East patrol, sank seven junks and two lighters between December 4 and 15 in the Malacca Strait. On December 6 in an attack on a convoy off Tamiang Point, eight gun hits were scored on a 500 ton coaster before the submarine was forced down by aircraft; and in another attack on a convoy on December 14, one torpedo hit was observed on a 500 ton coaster.

STOIC,  
R. of P.

13. The submarine STOIC, on her sixth Far East patrol, fired 4 torpedoes on December 16 at a 3000 ton merchant ship escorted by one submarine chaser in 05.45 S., 104.43 E., in the Sunda Strait. The ship was considered sunk.

ZWARDFISCH,  
damage.

14. The Dutch submarine ZWARDFISCH, on her third Far East patrol, was damaged in a depth charge attack on the night of December 5/6 whilst northbound in the Lombok Straits, and had to return to Fremantle.

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines.

15(a) Reported that Motor vessel SOMMELSDIJK hit by aircraft today off Samar. Forty casualties.

(b) An enemy force including one battleship, one heavy cruiser, and six light cruisers or destroyers carried out a bombardment on west coast of Mindoro covering a possible landing. Only minor forces however appear to have been involved. Military forces reporting no change in situation. Enemy bombardment destroyed one discharged liberty ship. Only light damage and casualties on shore. P.T. Boats made unsuccessful attacks, but aircraft claim to have set three merchant ships on fire, sunk two destroyers, damaged battleship.

Amboina.

16. One U.S. Liberator and eight U.S. Mitchells attacked and sank two small southbound coasters about 130 miles south of Amboina.



615

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

- MARAUDER,  
rescue tug. Request your estimate of when MARAUDER will be released from operation "Pluto". This tug is urgently required for the Eastern Mediterranean. (D.O.D. 260025A to A.N.C.X.F.)
- MAURITIUS  
cruiser. Intend that MAURITIUS visit the Clyde for bombardment training of Naval Assault Squadrons from Monday 8th January to Friday 12th inclusive, arriving at Greenock about Friday 5th. (C. in C. H.F. 261049A to F.O.C.T.)
- C.S. 10,  
DIADEM to  
BIRMINGHAM  
cruiser. It is intended that the flag of C.S. 10 shall be transferred from DIADEM to D.387 about 1st February. (C. in C. H.F. 261219A to BIRMINGHAM.)
- ACTIVE,  
MILNE,  
MATCHLESS,  
destroyers. On completion of calibration at Falmouth (C. in C. Portsmouth 261048 refers) request you will sail ACTIVE so as to R/V with MILNE and MATCHLESS for onward passage to Gibraltar. (2) A.M. 241931 refers and is being passed to C. in C. Portsmouth and F.O.I.C. Falmouth. (D.O.D.(H) 261952A to C. in C. Plymouth.)
- JASPER  
minesweeper. Your 261204A. E.T.A. 0200A/28, my P.C.S. 55° 04' N. 13° 58' W. 066° 15 knots based on fix. W/R 5380 172. (JASPER 262000A to C. in C. W.A.)
- NESS,  
frigate. NESS 201000 not to C. in C. Portsmouth. It is not intended that NESS should be docked or refitted in U.K. Ship will be docked in Med. during passage to East Indies A.M. 241720 and 292035 November, neither to all refer. (2) NESS is expected to leave U.K. about mid-January C. in C. Med. is requested to report docking port. (3) Supply of stores required for As. and As. referred to is under consideration. (D.O.D. 262308A to Cs. in C. Portsmouth, Med.)

Operations.

North Sea.

- Patrols. Patrols tonight Tuesday.  
(1) CROOME, 2 VERSATILE, 3 COTSWOLD, 4 LA  
COMBATTANTE, 5 GUILLEMOT, 6A SHEARWATER.

/(2)...

War Diary.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Patrols.  
(Contd.)

(2) 15 TORRINGTON with coastal force from BEEHIVE  
16 CURZON with coastal force from Ostend, 18  
EGLINTON, 19 RIOU and HAMBLEDON.

(3) Escort for T.A.M. 30 VIVACIOUS, BLEASDALE.

(4) Coastal force patrol one: 2 M.T.Bs. Z.19, 2 2  
M.T.Bs. 17 3, 2 M.T.Bs. 15, 4 2 M.T.Bs. 13, 5, 2 M.T.Bs. 11, 6, 2  
M.T.Bs. 9, 7, 2 M.T.Bs. 7, 8, 2 M.T.B. 5, 9, 2 M.T.B. 3, 10, 2  
M.T.B. patrol (714) 11, 4 M.T.B. patrol 15, 12, 4 M.T.B. patrol 16  
13, 4 M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 39, 21, 14 2 M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 21, 00, 15, 4  
M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 24, 15, 16, 6 M.T.B. F.J. W.S. 39, 21.

(C. in C. Nore 261009A to Nore Command.)

Unit 6 M.T.B. carrying out patrol on line 305° 4 miles  
either side of A position 051° 40' N. 002° 55' E. Unit to be on  
patrol at 1830A. Unit not to go north of 051° 48' N.

(2) Collective callsign FA4 unit callsigns FA5, FA6.

(3) Communication constant watch on 2333 k/cs and one boat guard  
on 130 k/cs. S.P. 2489 (3) spare group 15. S.P. 02457 (63)  
page 43.

(C. in C. Nore 261057A to BEEHIVE.)

Midget  
U-Boat  
activity.

Midget submarine reported at N.F. 15 at 0946.  
Being engaged by M.S.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend 261012 to C. in C. Nore.)

My 261012, one midget submarine captured by  
H.D.M.L. and one rammed by M.S.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend 261027 to C. in C. Nore.)

My 261027 captured midget submarine sunk.

(2) N.L.O. 84 Group reports Typhoon type sunk 1 submarine and  
probably 1 other 2 miles West Flushing attack continuing.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend 261200A to C. in C. Nore.)

Capture of midget submarines is of utmost importance. If  
towed astern midget submarine will capsize. They should be  
secured alongside.

(N.O.I.C. Ostend 261230A to Breskens C.F.)

Your 251011 para. 2. Agree that additional forces are  
required in order to maintain continuous patrols when weather is  
suitable for enemy small craft and that 66th and 55 Flotillas  
would be excellent for this duty.

(2) If possible should like 66th Flotilla now in Portsmouth Command  
sent to Ostend forthwith to be operated by C.F.M.U. 1 if extra  
berthing required can be arranged.

(3) 55th Flotilla now arming similarly to 66th A.M. 101809 Nov.  
refers.

(4) Have already sent 4 M.Ls. with 100 lb.depth charges from  
Harwich to Ostend.

(C. in C. Nore 261325A to A.N.C.X.F.)

My 252114 and Admiralty message 261302. Request Maassluis  
may also be included with priority. It has been established  
that midget U-Boats are assembling there in large numbers.  
Comment by D.N.I. It is stated (B.2) by prisoners that the 30  
boats of the 261st Flotilla which operated in two groups between  
23rd and 24th December, were stored before operating in a  
concrete shelter on the left on the Maassluis Hook road, about 2  
Kms. outside Maassluis. At least one other flotilla is also  
in Holland.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea.

Midget U-Boat activity. (Contd.) (2) This information will be promulgated to naval and air authorities concerned together with further information now being obtained from prisoners. (C. in C. Nore 261945A to Admty.)

DAKINS mined. DAKINS damaged by mine in position 51° 25' N. 02° 44.5' E. at 2110/25th December. Ship proceeded to Harwich on one engine and will enter harbour when fog clears. (C. in C. Nore 261058 to Admty.)

Situation report. Cositintrep No. 266 part 4. Discharge by sea 24 hour period ending 251600A December.

	Personnel	Vehicles	Stores*	Bulk Pol
British				
Antwerp	23	867	4,887	6,080
Ostend	410	214	4,601	5,657
Boulogne	101	82	-	-
Dieppe	27	-	879	-
Caen	-	-	411	-
Calais	3,237	324	-	-
Ghent	-	-	400	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,798</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>11,178</b>	<b>11,737</b>
U.S. North.				
Antwerp	-	-	11,824	-
Cherbourg	5,194	806	4,045	-
Le Havre	6,430	671	6,880	3,264
Rouen	565	325	1,763	1,477
Granville	-	-	2,567	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,189</b>	<b>1,802</b>	<b>27,079</b>	<b>4,741</b>
U.S. South.				
Marseilles	-	175	16,012	-
Port de Bouc	-	-	683	13,644
Toulon	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>16,695</b>	<b>13,644</b>

(S.H.A.E.F. 261400A to Admty.)

E-Boat activities. C. in C. Nore 252114. Concur. Request priority may be given to these targets. (A.C.N.S. (H) 261302A to Air Ministry.)

/Beveland...

618

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea - Contd.

Beveland  
Canal.

Danger of damage to Lock Gate ?prevents pulsing in middle and west Lock at Hansweert and Wemeldinge. Request these areas be searched by P Party. A mine was detonated today by PP Unit 40 yards outside the entrance to middle Lock Hansweert. Admiralty pass to F.O.N.P. 1731. (R.N.O. Beveland 262216A to N.O.I.C. N.P. 1732.)

Operations.

Channel.

Probable  
U-Boat  
(Schnorkel  
sighted),  
and torpedoing  
of AFFLECK and  
CAPEL during  
hunt.

My 2208 asdic contact not obtained. Submarine held by H.E. until 0001/26 and then lost. Consider (---?) bottomed, am sweeping either side datum position 49° 53.5' N. 01° 47.5' W. BENTLEY and CAPEL in company. GORE, GARLIES carrying out north-south patrol 02' to the west of me. (AFFLECK 260045 to C. in C. Portsmouth.) My 0045. 3 attacks carried out on weak echo (of?) submarines wake and initial sighting close under water was given nearest depth charge thrower. Many scaring charges dropped. No radar contact ever obtained.

17th E.G. arrived and is joining 1st E.G. who is sweeping 1 mile apart 4 miles north and south from datum position. (AFFLECK 260130A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Further to my 252208, 260045 and 260130. FEATHER only sighted by officer of watch who is very reliable. Signalman and lookout claim sight Schnorkel's Mushroom 30 and 213. Consider fairly possible and likely in bright moonlight and calm sea. Hydrophone effect through asdic sweep was first U-Boat indication. While still at periscope depth asdic obtained and held contact but when course was altered toward it was finally lost. Thereafter enemy was held by loud and fast hydrophone effect as he weaved eastwards and lost at 0001/26th when it is considered he bottomed possibly out of asdic range. Am continuing sweep on this assumption.

(S.O.E.G. 1 260400A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

My 260400. Following area combed between 49° 57.5' N. and 49° 49.5' N. and 01° 30' W. and 01° 52' W. no results. Request instructions. C. in C. Plymouth's 241308 refers.

(S.O.E.G. 1 260833A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

Further to my 260833 repetition of last night's hydrophone effect similar to that of U-Boat type audible at present in several positions. New definitely caused by tide rips across irregularities on sea bed. Study of tide conditions at relevant times suggests possibility that previous hydrophone effect was non submarine as steps in sea bed in reported positions were established. Cross examination sighting personnel inconclusive as sea bed now is well covered with wreckage, some with periscopic appearance ex SS. LEOPOLDVILLE.

/These...

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel.

Probable U-Boat (Schnorkel sighted), and torpedoing of AFFLECK and CAPEL during hunt. (Contd.)

These points together with extraordinary behaviour of supposed enemy and lack of any German offensive action or of subsequent asdic contact during sweeps give cause to doubt presence of U-Boat last night.

(S.O.E.G. 1 261030A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
1st E.G. search area limits 01° 52' 01° 56' W. 49° 54' and shore.  
(2) Do not pass west of 01° 56'.  
(3) 17th E.G. search area limits 01° 30' 01° 15' W. 49° 50' and shore.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 261156A to S.O.E.Gs. 1, 17.)

CAPEL torpedoed in position 49° 50' N. 01° 41' W. am carrying out observant.

(AFFLECK (S.O.E.G. 1) 261237 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
AFFLECK and one other ship torpedoed.  
(ASCENSION (17th E.G.) 261252 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
My 261156 on completion search area limits given.  
(2) 1st E.G. H Channel 001° 55' W. 050° 00' and coast.  
(3) 17th E.G. H Channel 001° 25' W. 050° 00' and coast.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 261253A to S.O.E.G. 1, 17.)  
CAPEL was hit forward AFFLECK hit aft suspect torpedoes.  
American minesweepers picking up survivors now CRANSTON and MOORSON attacking good contact BANGOR searching in vicinity 49° 49' N. 01° 46' W.  
(ASCENSION 261329A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
AFFLECK proceeding slowly on one screw to Cherbourg Lieut. Lloyd in command. E.G. 1 has transferred to GARLIES. CAPEL has sunk. Casualties in both ships will be indicated when known.  
S.O.E.G. 17 organising operation "Scabbard".  
(S.O.E.G. 1 261340A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
2 ships torpedoed near H.9 buoy.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 261347A to Portsmouth command.)  
17th E.G. attacking several contacts in area. First E.G. sweeping 8 miles north south from Channel to 01° 15' W.  
(S.O.E.G. 1 261417A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
CAPEL's wreck aground in position 49° 48.5' N. 01° 44.5' W. Stern showing slightly above water and dangerous to navigation.  
(AFFLECK 261440A to N.O.I.C. Cherbourg.)  
Many bottomed contact attacks by E.G. 17 and American small craft during operation "Scabbard" some of them produced small amount of oil but no other evidence. Am continuing square search around area with E.G. 17, BRILLIANT and VANOC. Have sunk half submerged wreck of CAPEL with depth charges in position 49° 45.65' N. 01° 45.5' W.  
(ASCENSION 261602a to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
My 261602. Further report from MOORSOM and CRANSTOUN suggest strongly that contact originally detected by H.E. and attacked 3 times by them was U-Boat which fired torpedoes. Oil produced by hedgehog attack.  
(2) BRILLIANT and VANOC detached for escort duty.  
(3) Continuing hunt in area within 6 miles of 49° 48.30' N. 01° 45.30' W. until further orders.  
(S.O.E.G. 17 261855A to C. in C. Portsmouth.)  
Unless in contact leave patrol 0830. (2) Enter Cherbourg and embark S.O. E.G. 1. (3) S.O.E.G. 1 is to make arrangements for Care and Maintenance Party for AFFLECK remainder of crew

/being...

620

War Diary26.12.1944  
TuesdayHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

Probable U-Boat (Schnorkel sighting), and torpedoing of AFFLECK and CAPEL during hunt. (Contd.)

being embarked in 1st E.G. for passage to Belfast. (4) When ready 1st E.G. is to sail for Belfast by standard route calling at Portland for oil if necessary. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 261918A to S.O. E.G.1) Regret loss whilst on patrol of CAPEL believed to have been torpedoed at 1237 and who finally sank 1602 on 26th December in position 49 degs. 45' 30" N. 01 degs. 45' 30" W. About 60 per cent of ships company saved and taken to Cherbourg. (C. in C. Portsmouth 262153A to Admty.)

Patrols. 10th E.G. pass the gate at 1800A/26 and proceed to relieve 19th E.G. on 20 miles Gamma of centre 49.52 N. 02.41 W. direction 346 degs./166 degs. (2) On relief by 10th E.G. 19th E.G. is to carry out zigzag search towards Wolf Rock further orders will follow. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261018A to S.O.E.G's 10,19.) Amend my 260909 search area limit given H channel 5 miles W. between 050 degs. 00' 050 degs. 10'. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 261252A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force) H.X.A. 326 Lizard Eastbound 1400A/27th. C.U: 51 Lizard Eastbound 1000A/27th. (2) Trail H.X.A. as follows, P.A, Lizard to start all P. Start to Portland P.B., Portland to Z Buoy. (3) P.A. Patrol start to Portland until B returns then both resume original Patrol. (4) P.B. shift to 2980 K/cs when East of Portland and act under orders of C. in C. Portsmouth. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261818A to E.G.21) My 261018A sailed. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261826A to Admty.) Air patrol. My 281728 para.12 not to all addresses. (a) Night 26th/27th patrol 32 5 miles each side 002 degs. 15' W. by Warwicks. Day 27th patrol 5 and 6 between H channel and Kansas channel by Swordfish patrol 32 and patrol 4 South Portland Bill by Liberator. (b) 838 Squadron LWW, 842 Squadron MPY. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 261830A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force) Patrols 26th/27th. Continue present patrols tonight and tomorrow 27th. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 261833A to E.G.30, M.T.B.F.747) CONN has rejoined Patch A. RUPERT proceeding to join Patch B. REDMILL will be detached to arrive Plymouth Gate 0930A/27th. Intend ships of Patch A to exchange patrol with ships of Patch B at 0700A/27th. (S.O.E.G.21, 261855A to C. in C. Plymouth) Further to my 261018. S.O.E.G.19 detail 2 ships to relieve MONTREAL, RIBBLE patrolling between 49.50 N. 05.00 W. and 49.52 N. 06.00 W. Remainder relieve BEACON HILL, JONQUIERE, NEW GLASGOW patrolling between Trevoise Head and Lunday Island. (2) E.G.26 on relief proceed to Londonderry reporting E.T.A. direct. (C. in C. Plymouth, 261903A to S.O.E.G's 19,26) Request 10th E.G. may be ordered R/V H 2 Buoy 1300/27th Dec. to relieve 30th Escort Group. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 261922A to C. in C. Plymouth)

/ (1) 10th E.G...

621

26.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel.

Patrols.  
(Contd.)

(1) 10th E.G. is to leave patrol and sweep towards H.2 buoy of Q.Z.S. 633 so as to arrive 1300A/27 and relieve 30th E.G. as ordered by C. in C. Portsmouth.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 262228A to S.O.E.G.10)

Ships in  
Channel  
to zigzag.

U-Boat attack is to be expected in Central Channel Area and all ships on passage with speed of 12 knots or over are to Zig-Zag whilst in the Portsmouth Command.  
(2) Risk of passing over boundary of swept channels is to be accepted.  
(3) Commands pass to N.C.S.O's concerned.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 261759A to C's in C. Plymouth and W.A., C.T.F.)

Possible  
U-Boat off  
C. de la  
Hague.

(1) E.G.19 searching possible U-Boat attacked by A/C 49.56 N. 02.39 W.  
(2) On arrival of E.G.10, E.G.19 if not in contact is to hand over search to E.G.10 and proceed in accordance with my 261018A and 261903 not to C.T.F.125.  
(3) S.O. E.G.10 and S.O. E.G.19 acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 262347A to S.O.E.G's 10, 19)

622

War Diary26.12.1944  
TuesdayHOME COMMANDSOperationsWestern Approaches

Escort and Patrols. C.U.51. Escorts for Irish Sea Section. Two escorts continue with Bristol Channel Section to Scarweather L/V thence Swansea to fuel thence Cardiff to lay over. One escort continue with STANVAC/ CALCUTTA to Clyde L/V thence to Liverpool on completion. Remaining two escorts including C.T.G.21.8 remain with convoy to Liverpool. (2) All the Irish Sea in area bounded in the south by a line from St. David's Head to Tuskar Rock and in the North by 55 degs. N. is a submarine sanctuary. (C. in C. W.A. 261031Z to Escorts of C.U.51) Loch Ewe section of O.N.S.39 (6 ships) sails Loch Ewe at 1045A/28. Local escort KINGSTON PERIDOT. (C. in C. W.A. 261208A to S.O.E.G.31) (1) If not in contact, shift patrol to area bounded by parallels of 52 degs. N. and 53 degs. N. and meridians of 10 degs. 50' W. and 12 degs. 01' W. (2) Report E.T.A. of crossing 52 degs. N. (C. in C. W.A. 261216A to S.O.E.G.2) Your 261216A. E.T.A. 053 degs. N. 0900/27th. Average. Unsuitable. Weather Report 4582 1655. (S.O.E.G.261429A to C. in C. W.A.) C.U.51. Your 261042Z. In view of U-Boat situation in English Channel detail one additional Escort to join English Channel Section. My 261031Z para.1 last sentence amend to read C.T.G.21.8 remain with convoy to Liverpool. (C. in C. W.A. 261431Z to Escorts of C.U.51)

Possible U-Boat. Intend continuing search in 30 miles square for balance of to-day and throughtout the night. If no result resuming patrol daylight tomorrow. Unable to establish communication with K.W./C.W. 19. Suitable. Weather 9080 2633. (S.O.E.G.6, 261429A to C. in C. W.A.)

Supplementary A/S & M/S Trawlers from Med. A.M. 091122. Unless desired by you it is not intended that the A/S Trawlers allocated to your Commands should re-commission on arrival in the U.K. (2) Foreign service leave in accordance with para. 3 of A.F.O. 5998/44 should however be given at first convenient opportunity. (3) MAN-O-WAR and KING SOL should retain Ocean Escort complements. Remaining Trawlers should be reduced to Coastal Escort complements, redundant ratings after leave to be returned to EUROPA. (4) A.M. 091122 has been passed to EUROPA. (D. of M. 261532A to C. in C. W.A., C. in C. Plymouth, A.C.O.S)

Weather-reporting ships. Intend to sail NORTHERN GIFT 1200A/29th December to comply with C. in C. W.A.'s 241117 S. of A. 10 knots, E.T.A. 56 degs N. 17 degs 30' W. 2000A/31st December. (F.O.I.C.Liverpool, 261850A to C. in C. W.A.)

/second ...



War Diary26.12.1944  
TuesdayHOME COMMANDSOperationsWestern Approaches - Contd.Second  
possible  
U-Boat.By D/F on 8460 k/cs at 1617Z U-Boat within 60  
miles of 52.30 N. 20.30 W. Possibly proceeding  
southwestward.  
(D.D.I.C. 261902A to CAMELLIA)OperationsNorway

Patrol.

S/M position at 0800/27th December and movements  
for following 24 hours times zone A.(A) VENTURER 60 degs. 21' N. 03 degs. 27' E.  
routed through 60 degs. 35' N. 03 degs. 20' E.61 degs. 04' N. 01 degs. 01' E. and 090 degs. Muckle Flugga  
15 miles to Lerwick diving by day 130 miles in 24 hours.  
(F.O.S/M, 261758A to Admt.)Operation  
"V.P."V.P.74. M.T.Bs 717 and 627 returned at 1945A  
to-day 26th December.(2) At 0145A on 26th December East of Hovden,  
one merchant ship about 1800 tons hit with 2  
torpedoes and seen to sink. One escort vesselengaged with gunfire. Many six-pounder hits and a large  
explosion seen.(3) Superficial damage but no casualties to M.T.Bs.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 262001A to A.C.O.S.)OperationsNorthern Waters

Patrol.

Take DRURY and BAZELY under your orders and sail  
from Scapa at 1700A to-day Tuesday.(2) Carry out search as far south as 32 Buoy thence  
sweep back so as to arrive at 36 Buoy at 0900A/27.Thence establish patrol in area between 58 degs. 24' N. and 58  
degs. 52' N. and 02 degs. 18' W. and 02 degs. 38' W.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 261010 to PASLEY)

Probable  
U-Boat  
sighted.Faeroese fishing smack THURID reported having  
sighting unidentified submarine in approx.  
position 61 degs. 40' N. 05 degs. 50' W. at 1500A  
Monday, December 25th.  
(N.O.I.C. Faeroes, 261224 to A.C.O.S.)

J.W. Convoys.

Your 241650. The question of a reduction in J.W.  
convoy cycle from March onwards is subject to the  
following considerations.

(1) Closing of cycle is dependent on the provision

624

26.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorthern Waters

J.W. Convoys. of adequate surface and air escorts which is in  
(Contd.) turn dependent on the scale and method of enemy  
attack. By March new type U-Boats and possibly  
an increase in air attack may affect the problem.  
(2) Unless additional escorts are made available  
to Home Fleet any increase in escorts which may be called for by  
shortening the convoy cycle must be at the expense of offensive  
operations on the Norwegian coast.  
(3) I am anxious to break away from the regular five week cycle  
and will do all I can to reduce it but in view of the uncertainty  
of the future situation and Home Fleet resources I feel that we  
would be ill advised to commit ourselves to any particular cycle  
far in advance.  
(C. in C. H.F. 261339A to Admty.)

J.W. 63 Have informed C. in C. Northern Fleet of sense  
Convoy. of C. in C. H.F. 200954 and been asked to pass  
request from C. in C. Northern Fleet to Admiralty  
that at least some S/M Chasers should be sent  
with J.W.63. He pointed out that similar  
operation was carried out last year and accepts risk.  
(2) A.M. 251325 arrived after above request had been made and has  
now been passed to him.  
(S.B.N.O. North Russia, 261424Z to Admty.)

Mining

Clearance Am anchored Small Downs.  
of Q.Z.X. (2) To-day swept 3 laps and Q.Z.X. 1475 is now  
1475. clear to a width of 2.75 miles from Western  
edge.  
(3) 5 GR mines swept in following position:  
(a) 344 degs. N.F. 3 3.1 miles. Cut and drifted  
into minefield in sinking condition.  
(b) 005 degs. N.F. 3 3.4 miles. Cut and sunk.  
(c) and (d) 006 degs. N.F. 3 3.1. Both cut and sunk.  
(e) 007 degs. N.F. 3 3.15 miles. Detonated (corrupt group) and  
parted sweep.  
(4) Dan Buoys left in (a) and (b) and another 6 (?fathoms),  
Eastern limit of clearance.  
(5) Intend sailing 0645 to continue clearance and commence check  
?sweep if clearance is completed.  
(S.O.M.S.F.18, 261841A to C. in C. Nore.)

Port Facilities

Rouen. Due to continuous shifting of channel over bar  
in Seine Estuary, the draft of ships acceptable  
at Rouen has been materially reduced over past  
weeks. From latest soundings it is necessary  
to subtract 5 feet from height of tide for safe passage.  
Buoys marking channel are shifted as continuous search indicates  
deeper water. Dredger HOFFMAN working in conjunction with  
French authorities in dredging in most critical point in channel.  
(C.T.F. 125, 261019A to O.C.O.T.Com. Z.)

/Downs ...

625

26.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Port Facilities - Contd.

Downs. Nore's 241225 (not to Portsmouth).  
Four new construction 90 ft or 75 ft. M.F.V's are  
to be sailed to Dover forthwith for convoy  
servicing.

They are allocated to Nore Special Pool and lent to A.C. Dover  
temporarily.  
Individual numbers of vessels to be reported.  
On arrival of these and of other vessels allocated Dover and not  
yet arrived, Dover is to state names of inefficient servicing  
craft in detail.  
(D.S.V.P. 261241A to C. in C. Portsmouth, V.A. Dover)

Antwerp. Kruisschans Sluis was used for the first time to  
pass out empty Liberty Ships on Friday December  
22nd.  
(2) Dredging at the entrance to take fully laden  
ships at all states of tides will complete in the middle of  
January. At present such ships can be taken two hours either  
side of H.W.  
(N.O.I.C. Antwerp, 261544A to Com. Belgium)

Casualties and Defects

SS. FORT Received 0437Z North Foreland Radio from FORT ST.  
ST. PAUL. PAUL ashore inside North Shingles Buoy require  
tugs immediately.  
(North Foreland Radio, 260433Z to C. in C. Nore)

Shipping and Convoys

Calais-Dover D. of S.T. 212039. It is considered that  
B.D.B.S. Calais-Dover service should carry despatches etc.  
Services. now carried in Calais-Dover N.D.B.S. releasing  
M.L/M.T.B. service.

(2) Request: (A) Confirmation that security  
arrangements similar to those asked for on  
Newhaven-Dieppe service in my 161458 (being passed to S.H.A.E.F.,  
Dover and Calais) can be made.  
(B) Intended times arrival and departure both shores be signalled  
so that connecting messenger services on Continent can be  
arranged.  
(V) If interruptions to the leave service occur for any reason  
it will be necessary to run N.D.B.S. by M.L/M.T.B. to fill gaps.  
(3) Subject to affirmative reply to para. 2 (A) being given  
propose present N.D.B.S. service should cease after trips on  
4th January, 1945.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 261207 to Admty)

Your 221712. Request service may be continued until  
daily M.W.T. personnel service has started. My 261110 (not  
to S.N.O.B.O.P.(F) or HORNET) refers.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 261817A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

/Coasters ...

War Diary26.12.1944  
TuesdayHOME COMMANDSShipping and ConvoysCoasters  
for  
Rouen.

Coasters arriving Pasture for Rouen will proceed in accordance Admiralty 232154 that is if pilots not available coasters will proceed to Villequier without pilot as soon as tides permit. Similarly coasters will not delay at Villequier for pilot on making passage from Rouen. Action A.D.E.E. take necessary steps to insure smooth operation of this new procedure.  
(C.T.F.125, 261537A to C.T.G.125.15)

L.S.T's for  
U.S.

Intend to sail at 1100A/27th December, U.S. L.S.T. 539, 537, 524, 536, 530 and 564 to New York and U.S. L.S.T's 540, 920, 543, 682, 535 and 982 to Norfolk, Virginia, escorted by C.T.G.27.5 in U.S.S. WAINWRIGHT and U.S.S. NELSON.

(2) Cable ship MARIE LOUISE MACKAY will sail in company to Azores detaching as ordered by Admiralty or S.B.N.O. Azores, to comply with A.M. 221730A not to all.

(3) Routed by Q.Z.S.601, 607 thence in accordance with A.M. 221601 as amended by A.M. 241835 (neither to all addressees).

(4) S. of A. 8 knots. Codeword "Brand!"

(6) Chop is at 1200A/3rd January.

(7) U.S.S. WAINWRIGHT and U.S.S. NELSON will proceed separately to Horta for 50,000 gallons fuel oil respectively as ordered by C.T.G.27.5.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 261609A to C. in C. Lant.)

627

26.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic"Appian"  
Landing  
Craft."Appian". Request information regarding  
L.C.T.(4) 1144 and 1331 of flight "A".  
A.M. 141843 para.2 refers.  
(D.O.D. 261753A to F.O.G.M.A.)

Cables.

Cable ship MARIE LOUISE MACKAY will leave Plymouth  
in U.S. L.S.T. convoy on Dec. 27th to repair  
Commercial Cable Company's Weston-Azores Cable  
in approx. 43 degs. 35' N. 22 degs. 30' W.(2) Request you will arrange for A/S trawler from Azores to R/V  
with convoy and escort MARIE LOUISE MACKAY while work is in pro-  
gress. Time and position of R/V will be signalled later.  
(D.O.D. (H). 261940A to S.B.N.O. Azores)South AtlanticReduction  
of  
Personnel.Your No.207 (N.T. in W.R.). Since my attention  
was drawn to the acute shortage of man-power by  
the First Lord of the Admiralty a year ago I  
have not ceased to seek every possible means to  
release personnel with the result that during this  
year white Naval personnel on this station have  
been reduced by some 150 officers and 1100 men. This is in  
addition to crews of vessels who have left the station altogether  
without replacement.(2) To continue present policy of maintenance of present escort  
force until end of war with Germany I regret I can suggest no  
further cuts other than occasional piecemeal reductions, to  
effect which I am continuing to seek means.(3) I feel convinced that in default of quick collapse of Ger-  
many the U-Boat menace will recur presently with increased vigour  
and intensity and that these waters will get their quota and  
probably a greater one than before.(4) Reduction of escort force with air support as present scale  
would entail inability to keep shipping both moving and afloat  
with consequent curtailment of commodity and shipping movements  
or loss of shipping itself. I cannot therefore advocate re-  
duction.(5) Your paras. 3 and 9. Naval European personnel now numbers  
about 7,000 and base staffs have already been cut to minimum  
required to maintain escort forces.(6) I fully appreciate the present urgent man-power situation  
and deeply regret my inability to alleviate it. I will attend  
meeting at Accra on Friday 29th.

(F.O.W.C.A. 261525Z to Resmin, Info: Admty)

In absence of further instructions intend to substantiate  
at meeting at Accra on Friday 29th views expressed in my

26.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

Reduction  
of  
Personnel.  
(Contd.)

261526 to Resident Minister West Africa which refers to his number 349 to Colonial Office for First Lord of the Admiralty.  
(F.O.C.W.A. 261828Z to Admty. ) Reply. 272029A.

Escort  
Groups  
Withdrawn.

In view of cessation of trade convoys South of Gibraltar F.O.C.W.Af. is requested to sail 2 groups of the 55th, 56th and 57th Escort Groups less Kils to Gibraltar. Instructions regarding their further employment will follow later.

(2) Ref. F.O.C.W.Af's 221147/12 not to all, distribution of escort forces to the various theatres must be adjusted continuously in accordance with the scale of attack.  
(D.O.D.(F), Approved V.C.N.S. 262300A to F.O.C.W.Af., F.O.G.M.A)

War Diary.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

**Volos.** H.M.S. LAMERTON, TAKLIWA left Volos 0800/26th December with 1650 Italians. 2850 remain of which 1000 (?work) outside town. E.L.A.S. instructed to expect next ship about 2nd January. (MUSKETEER, 260935B to F.O.T.A.L.I.)

**Cables** Malta A No.1 My 191427 refers. PACIFIC now awaits weather opportunity for repair "B". (V.A. Malta, 261101A to Admty. etc).

**C.O.N.A.S.** Intend transferring to R.N.A.S. Takali, Malta, first week January. Request this may be promulgated. (C.O.N.A.S. Med., 261133A to Admty).

**South Aegean Summary.** 000689. Up to 0900 hours 26th December.  
1. Shipping. No photographic R/C 25 December (?due) to weather. Ground source reports. Kos. 100 Germans completed assault training with intention landing Niseros before further operations (C. in C. M.E., 261200B).

**NEWFOUNDLAND** NEWFOUNDLAND may be used for purpose in A.M. 241841. Request you will put her in picture before sailing her for Beirut. (C. in C. Med., 261226A to F.O.L.E.M.)

**RIMUTAKA, (Duke of Gloucester).** Request - (a) You arrange transit night 28th/29th for RIMUTAKA, EURYALUS, URCHIN and ULSTER after fuelling and embarking provisions at Port Said. Ships to arrive Suez 1200B/29th.  
(b) You sail ships from Suez at 1300B/29th to Aden to arrive 1220B 2nd January.  
V.A.M. 251210 not to all (Hush, N.T. in W.D.) refers. (F.O.L.E.M., 261244B to S.N.O.R.S.C.A.)

**Proposed Operation.** Your 241628 not to Comnavforfrance. D.Es. and D.Ds. are at present at Cherbourg giving leave which will finish about 6th Jan.  
2. On completion of leave it is desired to carry out bombardment practice with French heavy ships which will necessitate D.Es. and D.Ds. for escort duties. This matter now under consideration.  
3. Although date of operation is indefinite it may still take place early February and in view of uncertainty of situation and remarks in paras. 1 and 2 above it is desired to retain D.Es. and D.Ds. for the present. (A.N.C.X.F., 261258Z to C. in C. Med).

**Proposed Operation.** Please cancel para. 2 of my 241628. (C. in C. Med., 261321A to A.N.C.X.F. Main).

/French...

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. - Contd.

French Cruisers. GEORGES LEYGUES and MONTCALM cannot be spared to transport currency in present circumstances. Cominch 251517 refers. (C. in C. Med., 261602A to Admty).

Landing Craft, etc., for U.S.A. Intend to sail at 281900 U.S. L.S.Ts., 1011, 988, 989, 1010 (S.O.), 548, 550, 655, 656, 659, 665, 691, 47, 230, 690, 1012, 1019. U.S. L.C.I. (L) 517, 513, 514, 515, 516, 522, 521, 523, 524, 525, 526, 552, 527, 528, 529, 551, 400, 409, 410, 554, 555, 557, 948, 945, 563, 946, 42, 43, 19, 190, 192, 195, 234, 196, 46, 2, 17, 4(3?), 220, 233, U.S.Y.M.S.s. 119, 200, 248, 251, 303, 355, LX ATA 125, U.S.S. PLUNKETT, HOLLIS, RUNNELS, SWAY, SWIFT, SYMBOL, THRBAT, PLANTER to U.S.A.

2. S. of A. 9 knots.
3. Routed in Mediterranean (DL) 109, (DM) 93, (DN) 70, (DO) 16, thence Northern half of Straits of Gibraltar to (DP) 35° 59' N. 06° 10' W. thence standard reverse U.G.S. route lettered (DQ) to (DX) thence to destinations as directed by Com. 10th Fleet C. and R.
4. Reverse U.G.S. stragglers route lettered (L) to (S) furnished to ships named in text.
5. E.T.A. position (o.6) 292000. 20° W. 020900 Jan. Chop 030700 Jan. position (DX) 132200 Jan.
6. Codeword "Dickinsod" 508.
7. All times Z.
8. All ships report to Cinclant for duty upon departure Mediterranean.
9. Special Mediterranean publications not held.
10. S.O. is Commander Higgins in L.S.T.1010.
11. Guards N.S.S.F. throughout voyage. Gibraltar broadcast on passing 20° W. (Comnob Oran, 261650 to Admty. etc).

Situation

1. Naples. F.F. Ships LE MALIN and LE TERRIBLE report No.517. were in collision west of Ventotene and are being towed to Naples. Former is destroyed from bows to foremost turret and latter has water entering engine and boiler rooms from aft.
2. Adriatic. DELHI at Split where situation is still strained gave successful party to 750 children on Christmas Eve. At Sibenik relationship with partisans are friendly on the surface but there is an undercurrent of anti-British suspicion.
3. Greece. No report from Piraeus. Situation at Kavalla is quiet. At Salonika salvage operations on SS. CHISWICK continue without delay. H.M.S.s. have commenced evacuating (?civilians) from Preveza (?to) Corfu. (C. in C. Med., 261716A).

Minesweepers FANCY is expected to leave U.K. mid January to join 19th M.S.F.

- (2) On relief as above, it is proposed that ANTARES shall be re-allocated to 5th M.S.F.
- (3) It is important that FANCY and BRAVE shall operate in same flotilla. (D.M.S.261808A to C. in C. Med).

/EMILE...



631

War Diary.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

EMILE BERTIN Approved your 250851 (N.T. in W.D.) Sail EMILE BERTIN by reverse of route in Comar Toulon? 191205. 251001 is amended accordingly. (F.O.L.E.M., 261849B to N.O.I.C. Beirut).

INVER Request you will sail INVER on completion of refit to Gibraltar for onward routing to U.K. A.M. 241641 Nov. not to all refers. (C. in C. Med., 261947A to F.O.T.A.L.I.)

ODZANI Request you will sail ODZANI on completion of refit to U.K. (C. in C. Med., 261949A to F.O.G.M.A.)

Shipping for Black Sea. Para. 6 of Admty. 241500. Consider that if lightship is not available safest route subject to absence of minefields would be for ships to make the west coast of Crimea off Cape Tarkhan before steering for the approach point. (F.O.L.E.M., 261952 to C. in C. Med). Concur (C. in C. Med., 271204).

Aegean Sitrep No. 17. 1. Land and Sea Ops. Mitylene. Ldg Bn. Agwar Inf. delayed by weather, this allowing opposition to be org. by E.L.A.S. Evident no Ldg. then possible without bloodshed. Project abandoned unless later possible without risking clash. Simi. Ldg. Force 281 commenced dawn 25 Dec. Unloading proceeding. (C. in C. M.E., 262020 to W.O.)

Cositintrep No. 535 Part 4. Greece. Location and present position of our Forces in Athens and Piraeus is now as follows:-  
A. 139 Bde. and 5 Indian Bde. have cleared and are holding the main dock area of Piraeus including the railway station.  
B. 4 British Division is holding Faliron, is astride the Faliron-Athens Road, and the Coast Road to Kalamaki Airfield.  
C. 23 Armd. Bde. and 2 Para. Bde. are holding the centre of Athens with 3 Greek Mountain Bde. in the Eastern suburbs. E.L.A.S. opposition to further clearance operations is still considerable especially in the Piraeus. (A.F.H.Q., No T.O.O./26).

632

26.12.1944  
TuesdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

M.E.I.R.I. F.O.N.I.C. (560) pass to N.C.S.O's.  
amendment. M.E.I.R.I. temporary amendment number 44.  
Section XII para. D.  
"Shipping through Bass Strait".  
(1) Eastbound to Port Phillip is to be routed  
through following positions: (U) 039 degs. 08' S. 143 degs. 00' E  
(V) 039 degs. 08' 143 degs. 30'. (Y) 038 degs. 41' 144 degs. 29'.  
(?W) 038 degs. 30' 144 degs. 33'. thence to 197 degs. 2 miles  
from Point Lonsdale.  
(2) Eastbound through Bass Strait to be routed to pass through  
positions (U) and (V) above thence close to starboard of line  
joining position.  
(B) 039 degs. 12' S. 146 degs. 19' E. (C) 038 degs. 57'  
147 degs. 11'.  
(3) M.E.I.R.I. temporary amendment number 43 (F.O.N.I.C.557) is  
cancelled.  
(C. in C. E.I. 260601Z)

SHALIMAR S/M SHALIMAR second Far East Patrol 4th Dec. off  
R. of P. Pulo Langkawi by gunfire sank 20 ton junk.  
5th Dec. off Pulo Penang by gunfire sank 3 junks  
totalling 100 tons.  
6th Dec. off Tamiang Point attacked with four  
torpedoes convoy 5 Coasters, 3 landing craft and 1 M.T.B. in tow  
Two torpedoes seen run under. No explosions no counter-attack  
In subsequent gun action eight hits were obtained on one 500  
ton Coaster before forces dive by A/C.  
10th Dec. off Selangore by gunfire sank 100 ton junk. Next day  
sank 120 ton junk by gunfire off Dingdings Mouth Channel.  
14th Dec. fired four torpedoes at convoy 4 Coasters escorted by  
one M.N. and one A/C. One hit on 500 ton Coaster observed.  
Counter attack depth charges and 38 bombs no damage.  
15th Dec. off Tamiang Point by gunfire sank 40 ton junk and two  
150 ton Lighters. Four prisoners taken.  
(C. in C.E.I. 261132Z to Admty.)

ZWAARDFISCH D.S. ZWAARDFISCH 3rd Far East Patrol. Whilst  
damage. Northbound in Lombok Straits night 5/6th Dec.  
received depth charge damage to periscope and bow  
tube gear necessitating return to Fremantle.  
Other damage several rivets and seams of pressure  
hull in several compartments leaking electric fittings and hull  
fitting shaken loose and torn from hull.  
(C. in C. E.I. 261141Z to Admty.)

SPITEFUL S/M SPITEFUL 5th Far East Patrol 15th Dec. in  
R. of P. 005 degs. 23' S. 117 degs. 20' E. sank by gunfire  
200 ton Coaster. Same day missed with six  
torpedoes 1500 ton merchant vessel escorted by  
small A/S craft.  
(2) SPITEFUL arrived Fremantle 23rd Dec. after 38 days at sea.  
(C. in C. E.I. 261212Z to Admty.)

/STOIC....

26.12.1944  
Tuesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies - Contd.

STOIC  
R. of P.

STOIC 6th Far East Patrol 16th December in position 005 degs. 45' S. 104 degs. 43' E. fired 4 torpedoes at 3000 ton merchant ship escorted by one S/M-chaser. One correctly timed hit, all H.E. stopped. Breaking up noises 1½ hours later. Considered sunk. Ineffective counter attack 16 charges. (C. in C. E.I. 261215 to Admty.)

SUBTLE  
R. of P.

S/M SUBTLE 2nd Far East Patrol. Period 12th to 14th Dec. in vicinity of Pulo Penang and Pulo Langkawi sank three (?junks) totalling 34 tons by demolition. (C. in C. E.I. 261231 to Admty.)

"Q" Report.

Unread ? 819 east suspicious warship not answering challenge 1437Z from FORT NOTTINGHAM. (JALAMANI, 261448Z to Colombo W/T)

CAPE  
LAMBERT,  
U-Boat..

SSSS. 81.50 E. 05.48 N. S/M sighted on port bow. (CAPE LAMBERT, 262020K)  
My (?message) 262040Z S/M surfaced 2000 yards to port (corrupt group) 10 minutes then dropped out of sight or (corrupt group). Present position our ship 005 degs. 57' N. 080 degs. E. speed 16 knots. (CAPE LAMBERT, 262330Z to Admiral Colombo)

634

War Diary.26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

PASTEUR,  
U/B. Suspicious radar contact lost at 0019Z/26th Dec. in 40.56 N., 47.41 W. My position at 0100Z 40.41 N., 47.44 W., course 086, speed 20.5 knots.  
(PASTEUR, 260257Z to C. in C. C.N.A., C. in C. W.A., Info. Admty.)

S/M attack and sighting summary. (A) (1) H.M.C. Ships FENNEL and TRANSCONA each one torpedo explosion astern at 1350 and 1351 respectively 24 vicinity 44.25 N., 63.25 W. Two A/C E/11 attacks periscope course 275° at 1412/25th in 43.29 N., 62.39 W. All times Z. Reported oil and wreckage.  
(C) (1) H.M.C.S. KIRKLAND LAKE and H.M.S. ANTICOSTI series of D/C and H/H attacks on doubtful contact about 1400 to about 5213 24 vicinity 44.22 N., 63.23 W.  
(N.S.H.Q., 260518Z to Admty., Cominch.)

U/B dispositions. Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q., 261424Z, Cominch 261555Z.)

French Trawlers. This recodes my 261439 addressed as above with N.O.I.C. St. Pierre as additional repeated addressee. Propose routeing Trawlers Cominch 211411 para. (A) independently to Azores for onward routeing to Casablanca. Para. (B) direct to U.K. for onward routeing to Havre. Admiralty requested to nominate suitable port in U.K.  
(2) No Armed Trawlers available as escort. C.M.S.F. 111510B/6 refers.  
(3) Trawlers ready to depart about 30th Dec.  
(F.O.N.F., 261501Z to C. in C. C.N.A., (R) C. in C. Med., C.M.S.F., Com. 8th Fleet, Admty., Cominch, N.S.H.Q., S.B.N.O. Azores, F.O.G.M.A.)  
W.R. Note: Request of French Naval Mission U.S. Authorities sailing of 4 French trawlers ready in Newfoundland.

U/B. U.S. weather ship EMPORIA reports sighting periscope position 49.22 N., 52.33 W. at 1430Z/26th.  
(C. in C. C.N.A., 261659Z to G.B. 7A.)

MOLLIE, wreck. Auxiliary schooner MOLLIE, 85 gross tons en route St. Johns N.F. to Twillingate wrecked in Grates Cove (Trinity Bay) N.F. prior to Dec. 21st.  
(N.S.H.Q., 261814Z to Admty.)

S/M attack No report since Cominch 212045, para. (C). 1430Z/26 U.S.S. EMPORIA sighted periscope 49.22 N., 52.33 W. and about 1630Z/26 had radar contact during retiring search.  
Admty. give info. to H.Q.C.C.  
(Cominch, 262037 to Admty. for O.I.C.)

/ S/M ...

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies - Contd.

S/M attack  
and sighting  
summary.

Para. (D) (1) 1030Z/25th 41.21 N., 56.45 W.  
A/C obtained large contact which disappeared  
at 20 miles.  
(2) 0019Z/26th in 40.56 N., 47.41 W. at 1707  
obtained suspicious radar contact.  
(3) 1430Z/26th in 49.22 N., 52.33 W. U.S.  
weather ship EMPORIA sighted periscope.  
(N.S.H.Q., 262201Z to Admty., Cominch.)

Australia and New Zealand

Digest  
1070.

This Digest covers December 25th, bearing  
serial number 1070.  
(12) Six Mitchells swept Davao Gulf forenoon  
24th destroying one sea truck one lugger.  
(17) Delayed report from United States  
submarine indicates successful attack on northbound convoy  
comprising four escorts, 3 tankers, two other merchant ships  
200 miles north off Amranhupo Bay morning 22nd.  
(19) Same date patrol Liberator sank one cargo sea truck, two  
barges off Central east coast (? Borkal Dton) plane on  
similar search 24th sank one sea truck damaged seven barges.  
(23) Enemy submarine attacked merchant ship off New South  
Wales coast 165 miles south-south-east Sydney.  
(G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 261145Z to Admty., etc.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M attack  
and sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/26th December.  
Para. (A) (1) At 0955Z/25th Dec. A/C A/517  
attacked surfaced U-Boat in 51° 20' N., 09°  
42' W.  
(2) At 2108Z/25th Dec. AFFLECK sighted Snort.  
and attacked in 49° 54' N., 01° 48' W.  
(3) At 1055Z/24th Dec. A.M. ROBERT J. WALKER torpedoed in  
36° 05' S., 150° 43' E.  
Para. (B) (1) At 0718Z/25th Dec. SS. SIRSA sighted P/S in 15°  
00' N., 82° 15' E.  
(2) At 0913Z/25th Dec. A/C Q/59 obtained A.S.V. contact in  
54° 34' N., 10° 13' W.  
(3) At 0129Z/26th Dec. A/C B/120 obtained A.S.V. contact in  
50° 46' N., 08° 02' W.

26.12.1944.  
Tuesday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M attack and sighting summary. (Contd.) (4) At 1333Z/24th Dec. A/C L/114 obtained A.S.V. contact in 36° 52' N., 13° 53' W.  
(5) At 1435Z/25th Dec. A/C K/10 attacked U-Boat in 50° 56' N., 08° 15' W.  
(6) At 1256Z/25th Dec. A/C Z/105 obtained A.S.V. contact in 49° 29' N., 03° 05' W.  
Para. (C) (1) At 1802Z/25th Dec. A/C B/172 reported possible U-Boat in 56° 11' N., 10° 17' W. (D.D.I.C., 261200A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U/B dispositions. Estimates. (D.D.I.C., 261401A, 261402A.)

637

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

(1) The American forces isolated in the key town of Bastogne, on the south side of the German irruption, have been relieved, and the German Seventh Army is failing all along the line. Supplies to the Fifth and Sixth Panzer Armies are short and they have suffered considerable casualties.

North  
Sea.

2(a) A rocket-bomb near missed the 150 ton floating sheerlegs at Antwerp, sinking them.  
(b) Admiralty, for C. in C. Nore, has asked Air Ministry to bomb E-Boat and midget U-Boat pens and shelters at Ymuiden, Waalhaven, Den Helder and Maasluis. Air Ministry has passed the request back to S.H.A.E.F. "to be discussed at S.H.A.E.F. conference tomorrow if held." Prisoners state that at least 7 Biber (midget U-Boat) flotillas, each of 30 craft, are operated. Midget U-Boats were suspected this evening in several localities, but without confirmation.  
(c) Coastal Command aircraft have attacked 3 merchantmen and 6 E-Boats off Ymuiden, but the results were unobserved.

Channel.

3(a) C.T.F.125 points out that Alderney sheltered U-Boats are in a good tactical position for attacking shipping for Cherbourg using "H" Channel, near H.10 buoy, and advocate the longer route by Z.K. Channel as long as the favourable Alderney conditions last.  
(b) Two U-Boats were suspected off Cap de la Hague. Neither was confirmed and one, aircraft reported, seems to have been a shoal of porpoises.

Western  
Approaches.

(4) DALE W. PETERSON, U.S. destroyer, reports 3 heavy explosions 4 seconds after her hedgehog had entered the water in an attack some 12 miles S.E. of Queenstown; oil slick and diesel odour followed. 31st Escort Group is also on a hopeful contact off Loch Ewe, and aircraft from \*MIRANDA have "possibly damaged a periscope" 370 miles West of Ushant.

\*MIRALDA?  
(M.A.C. SHIP)

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

KUMANOVO  
sunk.

(5) The Yugoslav KUMANOVO (ex CORFU) 1409 tons,

/sank...

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

KUMANOVO  
sunk.  
(Contd.)

sank due to engine room leaks on Dec. 27th when east of Sicily. There were about 17 casualties.

America and West Indies

Atlantic -  
Mediterranean  
convoys.

(6) U.G.S. and G.U.S. Convoys (see Dec. 9th) are to be sailed at five day intervals.

U-Boat  
sunk.

U.877.

(7) E.G. C.3 with convoy H.X.327 reported sinking U.877 and picking up 54 survivors about 1048/27 approx. 46° 34' N. 35° 36' W. about 475' N.N.W of Azores. Attack made by H.M.C.S. EDMUNDSTON and sunk by ST. THOMAS (corvettes). Most of crew including C.O. picked up.

Bermuda  
Reduction.

(8) Commandant, Naval Operating Base, Bermuda, proposes to release the four British M.Ls. on patrol duty. Their reduction and the closing of the M.L. Base, Bermuda, would release about 10 officers and 75 men.

Australia and New Zealand.

Borneo.

(9) 3 Liberators off North Borneo this morning bombed and left sinking 3 sea trucks and 3 smaller coastal craft, and also bombed oil storage tanks.



Sections on Policy, Movements, and Operations North Sea to  
Western Approaches bound up out of usual order,  
see pages 643-650.

MOST SECRET.

639

War Diary.

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Norway.

- Operation "S.C." (1) 2100A/28th December from Scalloway.  
(2) 053° from Muckle Flugga to 062° 30' N., 003° 30' E. thence 098° 13 knots. Intend to sail S.C. (2238) from Shetlands.
- (3) 1900A/29th December.  
(4) Between 1930A/29th December and 0600A/30th December.  
(5) 243° to Muckle Flugga 15 knots.  
(6) p.m. 30th December.  
(7) 063° Muckle Flugga.  
(8) No.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 271531A to A.C.O.S.)  
My 271531. (1) 62° 23' N., 05° 34' E.  
(2) Ramose Revoke  
(3) CLARK.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 271533A to A.C.O.S.)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

- Patrols 1. A.S.V. 46 grade 2 by aircraft E. 206 R/T call-sign P.37 at 0218A in position 58° 28' N., 00° 42' W.
2. Establish patrol now in area given in para. 2 of my 261010A. (C. in C. Rosyth, 270326A to PASLEY).  
Investigate A.S.V. contact reported by aircraft P.P.25 T.B.M. 65 in position 58° 28' N., 01° 40' W. Homing procedure C keep to westward of Q.Z.X.722.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 271357A to PASLEY).  
If not in contact shift patrol at 1800 today Wednesday to position as in my 251031A para. 2.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 271515A to BENTINCK).  
Your 271357A. Am establishing Gamma patrols between 058° 36' N., 02° 05' W. and 58° 14' N., 01° 45' W. T.B.M. 65B patrol round contact position.  
(PASLEY, 271641A to C. in C. Rosyth).

Convoy J.W.63. Your 251137 not to all. ALNWICK CASTLE will be sailing to Loch Ewe for J.W.63 vice BEAGLE defective.  
(Capt. D. Greenock, 272210 to C. in C. W.A.)

Allied Air Activity.

Enemy merchant ships attacked off Ymuiden. Position course and speed of 3 enemy merchant vessels 52.46 N., 04.32 E., 190° 10 knots. Position based on Gee Fix obtained within half-an-hour of 1934.  
(A.C. WJH 62, 271934 to 16 Group).  
My 1934A - have attacked enemy with bombs level, result of attack unobserved, position 52.41 N., 04.35 E.  
(A/C WJH 62, 272009A to 16 Group).

/E-boats...

640

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Allied Air Activity.- Contd.

E-boats attacked off Ymuiden. Position course and speed of enemy 6 E-boats 52° 39' N., 4° 27' E., based on a Gee fix obtained within half-an-hour of 2100 190° 20 knots. (A/C WJH 70, 272121A to 16 Group)  
My 2134 - have attacked with bombs, no result seen due to weather. Contact lost in position 052° 30' N., 004° 25' E., course 010° speed 25 knots. (A/C WJH 70, 272144A to 16 Group).

Mining.

M.S.F. 31 Cancel your 242105.  
2. Flotilla is to proceed with despatch by standard routes as follows:-  
(A) Four ships to Portsmouth.  
(B) Three ships to Cherbourg, as detailed by M.S. 31.  
3. E.T.A. Needles and Cherbourg and names of ships detailed to be reported.  
4. Detach FARNE for Plymouth.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 271132).  
Your 261825 and Admiralty's 251305. Request 31st M.S.F. may be sailed to Le Havre sweeping Q.Z.S. 588 on passage. (C.T.F.125, 271613 to A.N.C.X.F.)

M.S.F. 40 My 252335A\* sailed 0930A/27th December.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 271136A to F.O.I.C. Harwich, C. in C. Nore).  
\*CATHERINE and available ships of 40th M/S Flot. in company.

Nore-Schelde channel. 6 M/S 2 Danlayers anchored Small Downs.  
2. My 271053 not to all addressees. Fog lap varied far enough East to permit sweeping a lap which was not measured.  
3. One GR mine swept in position 012° N.F. 3 4 miles. This was brushed in sweep which later ran. Oropesa float was sunk and mine then detonated on ?bottom.  
4. 2 day buoys left in A. and B. and another 8 near Eastern limit of clearance.  
5. Intend sailing ?M.V.10 to comply with your 262255. (S.O. M/S F. 18, 271952A to C. in C. Nore).

Enemy Intelligence.

Fast passenger vessels. Your 151047. Photographic Reconnaissance Stettin 22/12 port fully covered large scale photographs except for Free Harbour and S.E. parts seen only on obliques showed only two fast Danish passenger vessels present.  
Your 281609 November and 071224 December reporting German requisitioning fast passenger vessels have you any information of movements?  
(D.N.I., 271025A to N.A. Stockholm).

/German...

641

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Intelligence. - Contd.

German main units. (A) (Corrupt Group) 10, 11 December 23rd cruiser NURNBURG with one ILTIS class torpedo boat and possibly Sperrbrecher position 54° 47' N., 15° 45' E. course 160° B.2.  
(B) December 22nd 2 cruisers believed KÖLN and EMDEN sighted at anchor off Oslo fiord one at Rauoy and other Herfoelge. C.2.  
(N.A. Stockholm, 271707 to Admty).

Casualties & Defects.

SS. PENCHATEAU PENCHATEAU in collision with SAMALNESS. Bad and SAMALNESS. holes carriage floor. Master reports bulkhead holding requires tug at once. Am standing by, my position is 120° 56 B 3 miles.  
(CAMPBELL, 270603A to N.O.I.C. Yarmouth).

JAMAICA Have been in collision and in danger of sinking PLANTER. position 068° breaksea 3 miles 271403Z.  
Acknowledged by Burnham Radio.  
(JAMAICA PLANTER No T.O.O./27th to Burnham Radio, Recd. 1410)

We anchored and taking to boats now.  
(JAMAICA PLANTER No T.O.O. to Burnham Radio, Recd. 1419).  
For Master of JAMAICA PLANTER one life-boat with 13 men 9 women and 2 children has been picked up. Understand 3 remaining life-boats have been picked up by SS. SARNIA. Inform me if any other boat or personnel is missing.  
(F.O.I.C. Cardiff, 271647A to SARNIA).  
Reference E C.A.F.O. 2120/44.

- (A) JAMAICA PLANTER
- (B) British
- (C) 1348 G.M.T. 27th December 1944.
- (D) Approx. 068° Breaksea L/V 3 miles.
- (E) In collision with U.S. Tanker WELLESLEY in dense fog.
- (F) Sunk.
- (G) No casualties. Crew and passengers totalling 78 rescued and landed at Barry.  
(N.O.I.C. Barry, 271904A to Admty).

VOLUNTEER SS. VOLUNTEER W.S.A. ship collided with SS. FOSNA V. at 1914 G.M.T. hole in third plate below deck FOSNA. vessel not leaking anchored at Breaksea Light Whistle. Please advise. Master.  
(VOLUNTEER, 271955Z to U.S. Navy Dept).

Shipping & Convoys.

B.T.C. In order to reduce the number of ships awaiting convoys. In St. Helens Roads, it is proposed that B.T.C. convoys should in future make passage through the Channel without a stop. This will entail convoys arriving in the Downs during dark hours and anchoring until daylight then proceeding to Southend. Request you will report whether this is acceptable.  
(D.T.D., 271303A to V.A. Dover).

/T.A.M...

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys. - Contd.

T.A.M.  
convoys.

The depths of water in the Schelde Approaches do not allow ships drawing 26 ft. or over to be accepted at low water.

(2) During the next three months the short daylight hours will not allow the sailing time of convoys to be adjusted to enable ships to pass over the shallow patches at or near high water.

(3) Diversions of the route from N. Foreland to the Schelde on account of mining has also to be made into shallow water.

(4) In order to avoid delays it is considered that draught of ships allocated to T.A.M. convoys should normally be limited to 25½ feet.

(5) It is hoped to remove this restriction in April.

(C. in C. Nore, 272132A to A.N.C.X.F.)

War Diary

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

HOME COMMANDS

Policy

Boundary of  
Nore-  
Portsmouth  
Commands.

A.M. 230126A and A.N.C.X.F. 211915A not to C. in C. Nore. Consider it most desirable that Boulogne and Calais should be in the same command as Folkestone and Dover. Propose therefore that either the existing boundary as in A.G.M. 408 A.Z. D.T.G. 121917B September be retained or that the Hastings-Le Treport line be substituted.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 271940 to Admty, C. in C. Nore, V.A. Dover.)

Movements

Rescue  
Tug  
MARAUDER.

Your 261247A/. Para. 2 estimated time four months.  
(S.N.O. Pluto, 271145A to A.N.C.X.F.)  
/ Marauder due to release from "Overlord" on completion of "Pluto" operations.

WISHART  
destroyer.

WISHART accepted into reserve category "C" 22nd December.  
(F.O.C.R.F. 271435 to Admty)

CHARLESTOWN  
destroyer.

My 231016 December not to all addressees. Intend to begin reducing CHARLESTOWN to Category C on 3rd January. Anticipated date of completion approx. 30th Jan. Further signal will be made.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 271447 to S.O.R.F.)

CALPE,  
destroyer.

My 261222 leave Sheerness on completion fuelling about 1300 tomorrow 28th and proceed by swept channels in Force Q.Z.S. 518 and 519 and route W. to Plymouth to top up fuel thence to Gib. in accordance with A.M. 271456.

(2) Weather permitting S. of A. is to be 16 knots adjusted to arrived Plymouth at daylight 29th.  
(C. in C. Nore, 272355 to CALPE)

Operations.

North Sea

Situation  
Report.

Cositintrep No.266 Part 11 Naval.  
(1) U-Boats. During action between U-Boats 1st and 17th Escort Groups 5 miles North of Cherbourg Frigates CAPEL and AFFLECK were torpedoed. CAPEL sunk AFFLECK proceeded to Cherbourg.

- (2) Midget Submarines.  
(A) 2 Midgets attacked by Typhoons South of Flushing. 1 certainly sunk 1 probably sunk. 1 Prisoner.  
(B) 2 Midgets sunk by Minesweeper W.S.W. Flushing 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  m. 1 Prisoner.  
(3) Results of actions with Midgets to date -

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea.

Situation Report. (Contd.) 8 certainly sunk, 1 probably sunk 3 attacked by A/C results unknown. 1 Merchant Vessel (ALAN A DALE) torpedoed, probably total loss. Midgets may have laid mines in Channel. (A.N.C.X.F. 270015A to Admty.)  
 Cositintrep No.267 part 4.

Discharge by sea - 24 hours period ending 261600A/December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (Inc. coal)	<u>Bulk</u> <u>Pol.</u>	<u>Ammo.</u>
Antwerp	12	372	5,283	1,706	540
Ostend	1,959	104	2,651	4,157	1,530
Boulogne	-	-	-	-	-
Dieppe	5	-	1,433	-	-
Caen	1	-	244	-	-
Calais	-	-	-	-	-
Ghent	-	-	700	-	-
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>1,977</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>10,311</b>	<b>5,863</b>	<b>2,070</b>
<u>U.S. North</u>					
Antwerp	16	-	12,162	-	-
Cherbourg	3,803	409	5,795	1,173	-
Le Havre	768	327	4,931	570	-
Rouen	-	-	1,924	25	-
Granville	-	-	3,511	-	-
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>4,587</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>27,523</b>	<b>1,768</b>	<b>-</b>
<u>U.S. South</u>					
Marseilles	-	43	16,347	-	4,954
Port De Bouc	-	-	937	7,429	-
Toulon	-	-	269	-	-
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>17,553</b>	<b>7,429</b>	<b>4,954</b>

(S.H.A.E.F.271415A to Admty.)

General: Allied link-up with Bastogne must draw attention of enemy sharply to South: possible he will now divert armour to stop penetrations and if possible capture town while still time. Seventh Army failing all along the line. Position of 5th and 6th Panzer Armies unchanged but time is not on their side. Supplies of all kinds by now short and quite considerable losses suffered.

(S.H.A.E.F. 271850A to War Office)

Cositintrep No.267 Part II. Naval.

(1) Antwerp: 150 ton floating Sheerlegs was sunk alongside by a near miss from a V.2 at 1800 yesterday.

Approx. 8 enemy A/C were over Schelde last night possibly minelaying.

(A.N.C.X.F. 272320A to Admty.)

Fishing off Low Countries.

Your 131735. It is contrary to Admty. policy to disclose the positions of minefields in "sink-at-sight" areas. Communications to authorities concerned should, therefore, be limited to statement of areas in which fishing may be permitted. These areas are to the best of our belief free of mines but all fishing is at fisherman's own risk. (A.C.N.S.(H), 271147A to A.N.C.X.F.)

/Air ...

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea - Contd.

Air Ministry A.X.11 Dec. 27th. For Deputy Supreme Commander  
cunctator. from D.C.A.S.

Following requests have been received from C. in C. and Admiralty for bombing of naval targets in direct support of land battle.

(a) 252114 from C. in C. Nore begins: From the scale of E-Boat attack on the nights of 22/23 and 24/25 December it is apparent that a large number of operational E-Boats are based at Ijmuiden and Waalhaven.

Request bombing of these E-Boat pens may be intensified at a very early date.

It is probable that E-Boats are also operating from Den Helder.  
Ends.

(b) Admiralty signal 261302 concurs in above and requests priority may be given to these targets.

(c) C. in C. Nore's 261945 begins. My 252114 and Admiralty message 261302. Request Maasluis may also be included with priority. It has been established that midget U-Boats are assembling there in large numbers.

(2) These are all requests affecting the battle. Would be glad therefore if you would state importance attached to the execution of these tasks and indicate priority which you wish to be accorded to these targets in relation to your own requests for direct support of the battle and current strategic priorities.

(3) You will remember that at S.H.A.E.F. conference 5th December decision was taken to attack E-Boat pens at Ijmuiden and Waalhaven with special squadrons. Bomber Command have already made "Tallboy" attack on Ijmuiden. In this connection normal bomb loads likely to be more effective against small craft in the open.

(4) Consideration might be given to attacks by Coastal Command Forces on dispersed E-Boats at Den Helder and possibly Ijmuiden.

(5) Suggest this question might usefully be discussed at S.H.A.E.F. conference tomorrow if held.

(Air Ministry, 271530Z to S.H.A.E.F.)

Midget Further to my 241947 not to all addressees.  
U-Boats. Following additional information obtained.

(1) All identified prisoners belonged to 261st Flotilla. Two so far interrogated belonged to 1st group. Remainder not yet interrogated may belong to 2nd group (B.2).

(2) Biber of 261st Flotilla comprising both groups were stored before operation in a concrete shelter on the left of the road from Maasluis to Hook about two kilometres outside Maasluis (B.3)

(3) Biber flotilla comprises 30 boats. (B.2)

(4) First group of 12 Biber was towed from Maasluis to Hellevoetsluis and thence to point north of Schouwen. Two were lost en route leaving 10 to operate. (B.2).

(5) Each Biber of first group carried one 21" torpedo and one mine. My 151947 refers. Torpedoes may not be fired less than 250 yards from target (B.2).

(6) First group ordered to fire torpedoes at ships as convenient and to lay mines as far up the Schelde as possible. One prisoner laid his mine between Flushing and Breskens, and other off Knocke. (B.3).

646

War Diary27.12.1944  
WednesdayHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth SeaMidget  
U-Boats  
(Contd.)

(7) Second group operated from Hook area. No further details yet obtained. (B.2)  
 (8) Biber probably has a periscope between the conning tower hatch and the projector compass. Conning tower rises about two feet above water-line at normal trim and the projector compass rises about 14 inches above the top of the conning tower.

Persicopes probably slightly higher than the projector compass (B.2).

(9) At least 7 Biber Flotillas, including Flotillas 261-266, are operational, of which one possibly more in addition to the 261st is in Holland. (B.2).

(D.N.I. 271542A to C. in C. Nore.)

The following is a summary of enemy Midget S/M activity from 25th December until noon 27th December in the Ostend defence area.

(1) Coastal Forces report a torpedo track vicinity Oostgat whistle buoy at 2220 and hydrophone contact at 0545 negative result.

(2) At 1230/25th report of a Midget S/M 270 West Kapelle three miles was received from 76 A/A Regt. search by M.T.B's and A/C from 142 Wing Coastal Command brought no result. A report was received from R.N.O. Breskens at 1010/26th of Midget S/Ms in vicinity of N.F.17 first reports were confused but the result was one rammed by B.Y.M.S. 2213 and a second rammed and taken in tow by B.Y.M.S. 2141 this one sank in position 075 N.F.18 buoy 150 yards. B.Y.M.S. 2213 recovered one prisoner and landed him at Terneuzen. Surface patrols were alerted and reinforced and N.L.O. 2nd T.A.F. and 142 Wing Coastal Command were asked to co-operate in the search. Typhoons of 2nd T.A.F. report sinking two shortly after midday.

(3) Interesting feature is the recovery by the B.Y.M.S. of part of the S/Ms which strongly resembles a Schnorkel.  
 (4) No further incident during daylight.

(5) During this night Coastal Force patrol reported He. at various times near N.F.13 Buoy negative result.

(6) CURZON attacked probable Midget S/B at 1945/26th 351 Ostend  $11\frac{3}{4}$  miles negative result.

(7) RIOU and HAMBLEDON report torpedoes fired at them in vicinity of 51 degs. 03' 15" N. 03 degs. 06' E. between 2100 and 2300/26th.

(8) No further incident to date.

(9) 142 Wing Coastal Command has been requested to organise a dawn to dusk patrol in Schelde approaches.  
 (N.O.I.C.Ostend, 271939 to Com. Belgium)

Have ordered F.A.8 to attack with depth charges position 054 degs. Ostend 17.25 Miles. Local intelligence indicates S/M probably in area.

(C.F.M.U.1, 272115A to C. in C. Nore)

Suspicious plot suggested that midget S/M might be using Bol Van Knocke and Coastal Force Mobile Unit No.1 was asked to attack with depth charges. This was done. Result uncertain at 2145/27th.

(N.O.I.C.Ostend, 272320A to C. in C. Nore)

/M.T.B....



647

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea - Contd.

M.T.B.  
Reinforce-  
ments.

Your 251615. There are only 9 United States P.T. boats available which are required to maintain 6 operational at Cherbourg. These 6 are required and it is therefore regretted that none can be re-allocated to Harwich.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 271847A to Admty)

Operations

Channel

Possible  
U-Boat off  
Cape de la  
Hague.

(1) In view of present search E.G.10 is to delay carrying out purport of my 262228A until further orders.

(2) S.O. E.G.10 acknowledge.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 270109A to S.O. E.G.10)

Still searching area nothing to report.

Suitable asdic conditions average.

(S.O.E.G.10, 271045A to C. in C. Plymouth)

About 40 dead Porpoises near position of A/C attack. If not in contact by 1600 intend to comply with C. in C. Portsmouth's 261922A.

(S.O.E.G.10, 271320A to C. in C. Plymouth)

My P.C.S. at 1700 50 degs. 02' N. 02 degs. 42' W. 061 degs. 13.5 knots.

(S.O.E.G.10, 271620A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Removal of  
Seine  
blockship.

OLE WEGGER is to be towed down Seine during Spring Tide beginning 29 December by P.S.V.O. under F.O.B.A.A.'s supervision. This movement is to take precedence over routine shipping movements. A.N.C.X.F. despatch 251901A (not to all) refers. Two tugs GROWLER now enroute to

Rouen and EMPIRE JANE now at Rouen furnished for this tow and in addition you are to furnish EMPIRE SILAS. You are directed to co-operate to the fullest with the authorities responsible for the safe passage this tow any unforeseen accident may well close the port of Rouen to all shipping for an indefinite period. On completion of passage of Seine Estuary, about 2 January, EMPIRE SILAS is to return to Rouen.  
(C.T.F.125, 271123 to C.T.U. 125.15.1)

Patrols.

Have established Gamma on 01 degs. 49' W. between 49 degs. 55' N. and Coast.

(S.O.E.G.17, 271513A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Air Patrol. My 281728 para.12.

A. Night 27th/28th patrol 325 miles each side of 02 degs. 15' W. by Wellingtons.

Day 28th Patrol 5 and 6 between H Channel and Kansas Channel by Swordfish.

B. 838 Squadron N D R. 842 Squadron K T P.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 271659A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
Intend patrolling with SPRAGGE as in your 261655 unless otherwise ordered.

(HARGOOD, 271850A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

/Night ...

648

27.12.1944  
WednesdayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

Patrols. Night Patrols 27th/28th.  
(Contd.) Search areas limits given.  
(2) Area X 01 degs. 00' 02 degs. 15' W. 50 degs. 30' 50 degs. 20' divided into 3 section by 01 degs. 25' 01 degs. 50' W.  
(3) Pairs take sections in following sequence from West HARGOOD, SPRAGGE, CAISTOR CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE, PEVENSEY CASTLE, LAUNCESTON CASTLE.  
(4) 17th E.G. search in vicinity of Cherbourg. As you consider best.  
(5) Ships in para. 2 NAB S.O.17th E.G. acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 271938A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
If not in contact patrol rectangle sides 048 degs. 25 miles  
138 12 miles from position 49.47 N. 2 degs. 59' W.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 271942A to E.G.10)

Second 2 unidentified plots in position 49 degs. 44' N.  
Possible 02 degs. 08' W. at 1615 moving 340 degs. 7 knots.  
U-Boat off (C. in C. Portsmouth, 271627A to SPRAGGE, HOTHAM,  
Cape de la E.G.17)  
Hague. Group has attacked 3 separate bottomed contacts in position 49 degs. 44' 30" N. 01 degs. 45' 30" W, intend continuing search as in my 271513A.  
(S.O.E.G.17, 271910A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Suggest Continued use How Channel for shipping en route  
disuse of Cherbourg permits convoys to be under radar  
"H" channel, observation from departure Isle of Wight area and  
Portsmouth with reported high speed S/MS lying vicinity  
to Cherbourg. Alderney facilitates interception near H.10  
Buoy. At this point S/M operating under very  
favourable attack conditions has advance warning  
of traffic approach. Shipping channelized.

Sea conditions very unsatisfactory for Asdic or straight listening attacks by A/S vessels due unevenness bottom numerous wrecks and strong currents. Able to retire protection guns Alderney especially on ebb tides. That A/S vessels are handicapped and at present ineffective shown by loss LEOPOLD-VILLE heavily escorted AFFLECK and CAPEL. This opinion on A/S operating conditions supported by Comdr. E.G.1 and believe other E.G. Comdrs. this area will concur. By using ZK channel, although longer, at least radar observation not possible. Keeping offensive patrol How Channel may prevent deeper penetration Eastward. As long as S/MS able to attack under such favourable conditions it seems only prudent to use such alternative methods to combat new type attacks as are practicable to reduce losses which seem likely to continue under present routing. Above comments are submitted for your serious consideration.  
(C.T.F. 271745A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

649

27.12.1944  
WednesdayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsWest Coast France

Patrol. Carry out operation "Assault".  
 (A) Force 26 - BLYSKAWICA.  
 (B) 1900A/27th December.  
 (C) My most direct route to reach Les Sables D'Olonne about 1200A/28.  
 (D) Patrol Les Sables D'Olonne to Ile d'Yeu daylight 28th.  
 Patrol between Ile d'Yeu and position (Q) 44 degs. 30' N. 1 deg. 30' W. during night 28/29th passing latitude 46 degs. N. about daylight 29th. Patrol Les Sables D'Olonne to Ile d'Yeu during daylight 29th. Leaving as requisite to arrive Plymouth first light 30th.  
 (E) (Communications). (F) C L I N C H.  
 (G) A/S support groups are operating in vicinity of coastal convoy routes.  
 (K) U-Boats are active in the English Channel.  
 (C. in C. Plymouth, 271454A to BLYSKAWICA)

Western Approaches

Escorts and Patrols. If not in contact 15th E.G. proceed forthwith to Moville for fuel and short rest.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 270003 to S.O. E.G.15)  
 Intend sail P.614 towed H.28 escorted by ALECTO from Kames Bay at 2230 Friday 29th December to position 090 degs. Dubh Artach 2 miles E.T.A. 1830/30th.  
 Speed 7 knots.  
 (2) Routed via Q.Z.S.398, (406) (corrupt group) and north of Colonsay.  
 (3) On arrival patrol will be carried out between Dubh Artach and Lismore Point.  
 (4) At 1000/31st, ships will enter Loch Linnhe and continue to Diamond Point.  
 (5) AT 1700/31st, ships will leave Loch Linnhe and carry out patrol as in para.3.  
 (6) At 0900/1st Jan., ships will pass Rudha Mhail and return by reverse of outward route to Kames Bay. E.T.A. 0100/2nd.  
 (Capt. S/M. 12 S/M.E. 270953A to C. in C. W.A.)  
 O.N.S. 39 and S.C.163 will be supported by Force 33 in accordance with operation C.E.2 and is to R/V with O.N.S.39 in position 270 degs. Oversay 6 mins at 1230A/29.  
 (2) Force 33 will consist of 31st E.G. (S.O. BERKELEY CASTLE).  
 (3) Close escort of O.N.S. 39 is C.7 (S.O. LANARK).  
 (4) O.N.S. 39 routed from Oversay to position (QP) 56 N. 10 W. (QQ) 47.48 N. 22.55 W. 7½ knots.  
 (5) Force 33 is to remain with O.N.S.39 until ordered to detach and join S.C.163 in approx. 11 degs. W.  
 (C. in C. W.A. 272230A to S.O.E.G.31)

Probable U-Boat off Kinsale. Attacked Radar contact with Hedgehogs in 51.38. 45 N. 08.05 W. at 0007Z/27th December 3 heavy underwater explosions 4 seconds after projectiles entered water oil slick and diesel (oil observed). At 1245 dropped 12 charges set at 200 feet in same position.  
 (DALE W. PETERSON, 270203A to C. in C. Plymouth)  
 } odour ?

/Possible ...

650

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches

Possible U-Boat. My 261955A/. Am remaining in contact with object on Bishop Rock. Intend resuming attack at daylight. Suitable. (S.O.E.G.31, 270525A to C. in C. W.A.)  
/ Attacking bottomed contact.

Intend to detail HADLEIGH CASTLE to join LANCASTER CASTLE as escort of J.W.63. Am remaining in position of contact until convoy has passed. Resumed attacking. (S.O.E.G.31, 270952A to C. in C. W.A.)  
Still attacking contact. Slight traces of oil appearing. HADLEIGH CASTLE detached at 1030A/27th. to escort J.W.63. Unsuitable. (S.O.E.G.31, 271150A to C. in C. W.A.)

U-Boat 370' W. of Ushant. O.N.274. A/C from \*MIRANDA sighted periscope 10 miles ahead of convoy and attacked with possible damage to periscope. 3 ships searching area. Convoy altered to starboard resuming course at 1115A. Convoy P.C.S. at 1200A 48.17 N. 14.22 W. (S) 239 9.5. Weather 7480 2453. (S.O.E.G. C.2 271221A to C. in C. W.A.)

\*MIRALDA  
M.A.C.SHIP

War Diary

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

HAARLEM, Defects. HAARLEM's boiler tubes have given constant trouble since ship arrived here from Gibraltar. C.O. and B.E.O. now consider HAARLEM unseaworthy until partially retubed which cannot be done at Horta.  
(3) Request instructions whether she should be sent to Gibraltar or U.K.  
(4) If escort is necessary and has to be supplied from Azores force it is probable that the six remaining trawlers will not be sufficient to meet commitments especially in view of Admiralty's 261940A.  
(S.B.N.O. Azores, 271214Z to F.O.G.M.A. (R) Admty)

ODZANI. Anticipated ODZANI will be ready to sail as additional escort for M.K.S. 74 1700A/31st Dec. Your 011259 Dec. refers.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 271456A to C. in C. W.A.)  
W.D. Note: Modified by 281217A q.v.

Trawlers for U.K. Intend to sail STELLA CARINA (S.O) REIGHTON WYKE, KING SOL, MAN-O-WAR at 120<sup>0</sup>A/28th Dec. to U.K. S. of A. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  knots.  
(2) Routed through: (P) 035 degs. 59' N. 006 degs 10' W. (Q) 036 degs. 55' N. 009 degs. 05' W.  
(R) (7038) degs. 40' N. 009 degs. 45' W.  
(S) 043 degs. 30' N. 009 degs. 45' W. (T) 049 degs. 00' N. 006 degs. 59' W. thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth.  
(3) Destinations: STELLA CARINA Falmouth, KING SOL Liverpool. REIGHTON WYKE for Scapa. MAN-O-WAR Liverpool.  
(4) Codeword "Corner" 587.  
(5) Constant guard on Gibraltar broadcast shifting to B N at 2330A/30th December. In the event of ships becoming separated STELLA CARINE, KING SOL keep 2 operator periods. REIGHTON WYKE MAN-O-WAR constant watch.  
(6) A.M. 091122.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 271540A to C. in C. Plymouth etc.)

South Atlantic

FRITILLARY to refit. Sailed FRITILLARY to Port Elizabeth to refit.  
(2) S. of A. 12 knots.  
(3) E.T.A. 1600Z/28th December.  
(4) Continuous W/T on broadcast S.L.  
(Cdre. Durban, 270711Z to Admty. etc.)

E.G.57. E.G.57 Intend to sail LOWESTOFT, BELLWORT 1800Z/  
E.G.55. 28th December speed 12 knots to Gibraltar E.T.A  
2200Z/4th January.

27.12.1944  
Wednesday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

E.G.57. (2) Route S 10.40 N. 17.23 W. T 13.32 N. 17.31 W.  
 E.G.55. U 14.37 N. 17.49 W. V 21.40 N. 17.50 W. W 25.00  
 (Contd.) N. 16.30 W. X 28.10 N. 13.24 W. Y 32.48 09.45 Z.  
 35.51 06.10.

(3) Comar Dakar is requested to sail CROCUS to  
 join E.G.57 at 1400Z/30th December at position  
 U 4 escorts shift to Mediterranean W/T organisation at 0400Z/2nd  
 Jan.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 271303Z to F.O.G.M.A. Comar, Dakar.)

A.M. 2623. 55th E.G. will escort A.F.D. 24 to Gibraltar.  
 Request KILDARY and KILCHATTAN be returned to Freetown and  
 WELLINGTON, WOODRUFF and WILLOWHERB retained.

57th E.G. LOWESTOFT and BELLWORT, who have just completed refit  
 and docking respectively will be sailed from Freetown tomorrow  
 Thursday 28th being joined by CROCUS who completes half yearly  
 docking at Dakar 30th Dec.

(F.O.C.W.Af. 271423 to F.O.G.M.A.).

Note: Received undecypherable and consequently delayed.

A.F.D.24. Intend to sail A.F.D. 24 in tow of HESPERIA,  
 EMPIRE SANDY and EMPIRE JULIA 1700Z/29th December.  
 Route (A) 10.20 N. 17.30 W. (B) 15.00 N. 17.50 W.  
 (C) 21.40 N. 17.50 W. (D) 25.00 N. 16.30 W.  
 (E) 28.10 N. 13.24 W. (F) 32.48 N. 09.45 W. (G) 35.51 N.  
 06.10 W. thence Gibraltar. Estimated speed made good from  
 80 to 100 miles per day.

(2) Escort E.G.55 WELLINGTON (S.O), WILLOWHERB, WOODRUFF, KILD-  
 ARY, KILCHATTAN; WOODRUFF calling Dakar for fuel 3rd or 4th  
 January. Will report estimated position of tow at 1200Z/7th  
 Jan.

(3) Comar Dakar requested to sail E.G.59 ANNAMITE, CHEVREUIL,  
 GAZELLE, LOBELIA, CDR. DROGOU to relieve E.G.55 p.m. 7th Jan.

(4) On relief, E.G. 55 proceed Casablanca to fuel reporting when  
 well clear to F.O.G.M.A. repeated Commorseafron and F.O.C.  
 West Africa. (A) "Chop". (B) E.T.A. Casablanca.

(5) F.O.G.M.A. is requested to sail E.G.55 as requisite to relieve  
 E.G. 59 15th January when E.G. 59 will proceed Casablanca to  
 fuel and return Dakar negative CDT. DROGOU who is to proceed  
 Gibraltar for onward routing to U.K. for refit.

(F.O.C. W.Af. 271852A to F.O.G.M.A. Comar, Dakar.)

Reduction of Personnel. Your 261828/December. Disposition of Escort  
 Forces is under constant review. A.M. 262300  
 refers.

(2) Presume you will draw attention to action  
 being taken to provide West African naval  
 personnel for Far Eastern war in accordance with A.M. 080257/Nov  
 para.5.

(Hd. of M.B. Approved by A.C.N.S. (F), 272029A F.O.C.W.Af.)

653

War Diary27.12.1944  
WednesdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

PRINCE HENRY H.M.C.S. PRINCE HENRY has 10% water and 25% fuel remaining now. Success of evacuating will be jeopardized if she is unable to complete programme laid down in my 262230. Request tanker may be sailed to Preveza(s). (Copreu, 271146B to F.O.T.A.L.I.) (Group missing). My 262040 your 271035 not to all addressees. Return to Preveza with all despatch. (PRINCE HENRY, 271245B to THEMISTOCLES.)

Shipping for Black Sea. F.O.L.E.M.'s 261952 concur. Request possibility of using this alternative route may be investigated. (From C. in C. Med., 271204A to Admty., (R) F.O.L.E.M.)

Part 3 Air Cositintrep 535 2 Spitfires flew weather R/C over North Italy and a Wellington searched without results for a reported Submarine off Cesanatico. 13 A/C participated in air sea rescue searches and patrol from which twelve survivors were rescued successfully. (H.Q., M.A.A.F., 271215A.)

French Cruisers LORRAINE and GLOIRE have had recent operational bombardment experience in Mediterranean and DUQUESNE carried out bombardment practices before leaving for U.K. Your 261250. (2) In view of:  
(a) LE MALIN and LE TERRIBLE having received serious damage in collision.  
(b) Situation in Greece.  
(c) Threatening situation on left flank of 15th Army Group I am short of destroyers and any that you could spare would be welcome. (From C. in C. Mediterranean, 271252, A.N.C.X.F., Admty., F.O.N.A.M., Comnavforfrance.)

Mine sweeping Weather at present gives no indication of being able to resume operations. A further signal will be made when about to recommence. All ships have now left Bashilla Bay. Your 261302 (N.T. in W.R.) refers. (S.O. M/S F. 12, 271709B to B.N.A. Ankara, (R) C. in C. Med., Admty., F.O.L.E.M., S.O. M/S F.5).

Sailing at 1500B Thursday, December 29th, to Beirut for boiler cleaning.  
(2) Route from position 039° 45' N. 025° 17' E. to 038° 34' N. 025° 44' E. to 037° 38' N. 025° 44' E. to Q.B.C.916 to 035° 45' N. 027° 40' E. to 034° 00' N. 032° 16' E. to 034° 00' N. 035° 55' E., thence to Q.B.C.896.  
(3) S. of A. 10 knots, E.T.A. 1330B December 31st. (From, S.O. M/S Flotilla 12, 271805B to HELLISAY, (R) C. in C. Med., F.O.L.E.M.)

654

War Diary27.12.1944  
WednesdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

CHACO CANYON distress. Italian Destroyer transmitter out of order. Destroyer and one tug and one merchant ship also standing by, we have 27 men and 8 women survivors aboard. Vessel in distress still afloat and listing badly to starboard. Unknown number of survivors picked up by Destroyers this afternoon drifting rapidly towards coastline. Request permission to stand out to sea tonight. (CHACO CANYON, 271720Z to Admiral Malta.)  
Your 271720Z. Approved to stand off tonight and close Augusta at daylight.  
(St. George's Malta W/T, No T.O.O., CHACO CANYON.)  
See also 272044A.

French cruisers Comflanfor intends to sail to Naples in MONTCALM. Leaving Marseilles 1700/29th after loading 900 H.E. Shells. Suggests JEANNE D'ARC, thus relieved, should be sailed at the same time to Toulon where she should remain as ready Cruiser. (Comflanfor, 271915A to F.O.N.A.M.)

L.S.Ts. from U.S. Your 241233 December. It is no longer necessary for the ten L.S.T. to reach S.E.A.C. by 15th March and they may be retained by you. (2) They should be refitted in Mediterranean as convenient so as to arrive operationally fit at Bombay towards the end of 1945. (D. of P. (Q). Approved V.C.N.S., 271946A to C. in C. Med.)

Operation "Aintree" P.C.S. 2000A 032° 37' 026° 30' 104° 146 knots. Provisional E.T.A. RIMUTAKA and EURYALUS 1945B 28th. ULSTER and URCHIN being sent on, E.T.A. 1600B 28th, to avoid delay due to fuel it will not be essential to complete EURYALUS to full stowage if this causes delay. Information requested berthing. (H.M.S. EURYALUS, 272005A to N.O.I.C. Port Said.)

Cositintrep No. 536 Part 4 Greece. For the past several days E.L.A.S. Forces have been regrouping and it now appears that the Regular Troops are being withdrawn from the fighting in Athens and Piraeus to positions in the Hills outside the city. Force remaining in the two cities are mostly local troops. During 26th December our forces made small gains in Piraeus and along the Piraeus/Athens road against determined opposition. (A.F.H.Q., No T.O.O. to W.O.)

Preveza mine sweeping M/S Preveza Sitrep No. 3 Channel Preveza to Corfu swept today for moored mines to depth of 10 fathoms now 6 cables wide. (2) Eastern side channel through position (a) 039° 04' 30" N. 020° 37' 24" E. (b) 039° 18' N. 020° 18' 42" E.

/(c)...



War Diary.

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

- Preveza (c) 039° 23' 30" N., 020° 13' E.  
Minesweeping (d) 039° 27' 30" N., 020° 13' E. thence Vido Island  
(contd). Dan buoys laid at intervals 5 miles between  
positions A and D on east side of channel.  
(3) (?1 or 2) unidentified mines cut Sivaut Isle  
Light 090° distance 11 cables.  
(4) F.O.T.A.L.I.'s 261125. Information urgently required if mines  
in Q.B.111 are magnetic.  
(5) Intend widening channel to 9 cables tomorrow.  
(6) B.Y.M.S.2026 arrived. B.Y.M.S.2037 being sailed to Taranto  
A.M./28.  
(Lt. Cdr. M/S B.Y.M.S.2014, 272040B to F.O.T.A.L.I.)

KUMANOVO ?  
KALUMOVO

- Your 271841 (N.T. in W.R.). 19.  
(A) 10. (B) Nil. (C) 9. Augusta 0500/28th.  
2. KALUMOVO considered complete loss (?PA)ITE  
proceeding Syracuse approx. 70 survivors. CHACO, CANYON with  
2 boat loads unknown number and LOUISA M. ALCOT with 18 to  
Augusta.  
(GRANATIERE, 272044A to S.N.O. East Sicily, V.A. Malta).

656

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies.M.E.I.R.I.  
temporary  
amendment  
No.45.

F.O.N.I.C. 561. Pass N.C.S.Os.

Section XII D. Add following para. to temporary  
amendment No.44.(4) Thence for Sydney N.S.W. Newcastle and  
Brisbane through position  $038^{\circ} 57' S.$ ,  $147^{\circ} 36'$   
E.  $037^{\circ} 42' 150^{\circ} 15'$ ,  $036^{\circ} 15'$ ,  $150^{\circ} 32'$ ,  $035^{\circ} 09'$   
 $151^{\circ} 07'$ ,  $034^{\circ} 06'$ ,  $151^{\circ} 38'$  thence Sydney N.S.W.For Newcastle through  $033^{\circ} 48'$ ,  $151^{\circ} 34'$ ,  $033^{\circ} 20'$ ,  $152^{\circ} 01'$ .For Brisbane through  $032^{\circ} 32'$ ,  $152^{\circ} 48'$ ,  $031^{\circ} 30'$ ,  $153^{\circ} 12'$ ,  
 $029^{\circ} 55'$ ,  $153^{\circ} 39'$ ,  $028^{\circ} 37'$ ,  $153^{\circ} 54'$ ,  $027^{\circ} 26'$ ,  $153^{\circ} 49'$ ,  $027^{\circ}$   
 $06' (153^{\circ}) 43'$ .(5) Amend F.O.N.I.C. 488 Navigation lights in areas five A and  
five B are not to be burnt except dimmed in vicinity of Wilson's  
Promontory between  $146^{\circ} E.$  and  $146^{\circ} 50' E.$ (6) Ships of 10 knots and over are to zig-zag in areas five A  
and five B except between longitudes  $120^{\circ}$  and  $130^{\circ}$  east.(7) P.Vs. are to be streamed when within 200 fathom line between  
Freemantle and Brisbane.(8) Suspend M.E.I.R.I. XII C.1 (one) (A) except for ALBANY, all  
other ships are to break W/T silence and report expected time  
of arrival, destination when crossing  $130^{\circ}$  east.

(C. in C. E.I., 271241Z to F.O.I.C. Ceylon etc).

LANDGUARD

Arrived and sailed LANDGUARD for Durban through  
following position (L)  $012^{\circ} 15' S.$ ,  $047^{\circ} 05' E.$ (M)  $015^{\circ} 48' S.$ ,  $043^{\circ} (27'?)$  East (N) ( $016^{\circ}?$ ) $49' S.$ ,  $041^{\circ} 29' E.$  (O)  $028^{\circ} 30' S.$ ,  $033^{\circ} 42' E.$ 

(2) E.T.A. 1600Z Jan. 1st S. of A. 13 knots.

(3) Shifting to Bombay S/L 1900Z Dec. 30th.

(4) Latest message held Q.C.B.198 Q.G.A.24.

(N.O.I.C. Diego Suarez, 271536Z to Admiralty etc).

GUARDIAN

Arrived GUARDIAN, sailed Fleet Tender 18.

(N.O.I.C. Trincomalee, 271612Z to Admty).

657

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies.

U-Boat Contact.                      Attacking under water contact in position 043° 35' N., 060° 45' W. have detached group. (S.O.E.G.27, 270925Z to C. in C.C.N.A.). 4 attacks carried out on, bottomed contact in amended position 043° 28' N., 060° 55' W. Echo sounder traced inconclusively due to weather. Weather report 4571 2077. Unsuitable. (S.O.E.G.27, 271045Z to C. in C.N.W.A.).  
 Contact classified non S/M. My 270925 and 271045 refers. Proceeding in accordance with your 271212 not to info. addressees. (S.O.E.G.27, 271306Z to C. in C.C.N.A.).

U-Boat 877                      (?Submarine) destroyed. Survivors picked up. sunk. My position 046° 34' N., 035° 36' W. (S.O.E.G.C.3, 271040Z to C. in C.W.A.).  
 Your 271806 U-Boat 877 Kapitan-Lieut. Eberhard Findeisen, westbound 5 weeks sea, flushed by H.M.C.S. EDMUNDSTON, sunk by ST. THOMAS, corvette, position 046° 25' N., 035° 36' W. Prisoners Captain, 4 Officers, 49 men, position course and speed 046° 51' N., 034° 17' W. 089° 9½ knots. Weather report 4260 0144. (S.O.E.G.,C.3, 272000Z to C. in C. Western Approaches).

U-Boat dispositions.              Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 271400Z, Cominch, 271618Z).

E.G.25.                          Request we may be informed if it is intended to allocate another frigate to E.G.25 in lieu of JOLIETTE since this ship cannot be completed prior to first week in March at earliest. (C.N.M.O., 271724A to N.S.H.Q.) See 301935Z.

U.G.S.                          U.G.S./G.U.S. convoys are to be sailed at five G.U.S.                          day intervals as indicated my 091308. convoys.                          (Cominch, and C.N.O., 271945Z to Cinclant, Com-eastseafon, C. in C. Med.).

Bermuda                          Following received from Commandant N.O.B. Bermuda M.L. Base,                      (Begins): In view present strategic situation the Reduction.                      four British M.Ls. assigned patrol duty Bermuda may be released. Plan to request use of one Canadian M.L. in case of emergency. 271547/12/44. (Ends.). (2) Reduction of these four Fairmiles and closing M.L. Base Bermuda would release approx. 10 Officers and 75 men. (3) Request approval and instructions for disposal of M.Ls. (S.B.N.O.W.A., 272040Z to Admty.).

Submarine                      Admiralty pass to H.Q.C.C. All times Z. attack and                      (A) 1055/24 ROBERT J. WALKER torpedoed and sunk sighting                      36.05 S., 150.43 E. / Escort group C.3 reported summary.                      sinking U-Boat and picking up survivors about 1048/27th Approx. 46.34 N., 35.36 W. (B) 1229/27th R.C.A.F. Liberator sighted surfaced U-Boat which submerged before attack could be made 43.24 N., 47.38 W. and at 1258/27th and 1356/27th A/C. reported U-Boat sightings in same general area.

/ (D) ...

War Diary.

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.  
(contd).

(D) 0715/27th Fisherman reported sighting surfaced U-boat course North 41.43 N., 68.22 W. About 0025/27th U.S.S. EMPORIA attacked sound contact 48.50 N., 49.30 W. (Cominch, 272122Z to Admty. for O.I.C.)

JASEUR  
and PROMPT.

Our 261501\* anticipate JASEUR and PROMPT will be ready to proceed to U.K. about 29th Dec. Intend sailing these ships via St. Johns Newfoundland. When they will be available as escorts for French Fishing Trawlers if Admiralty concur. (C. in C. C.N.A., 272126Z to F.O.N.F. Admty). \*Sailing of 4 French Trawlers ready in Newfoundland.

Australia & New Zealand.

Convoy  
H.B.1.

Convoy consisting of EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND (?and) GENERAL RANDALL and GENERAL MITCHELL will be known as convoy H.B.1 C. in C. E.F. 201003 Nov. para. 3 refers.

2. GENERAL MITCHELL and GENERAL RANDALL will be diverted to Hobart.
3. N.Z.N.B. is requested to sail EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND to arrive Hobart at daylight 8th January where destroyers will refuel. C. in C. B.P.F. 250750 not to all addressees para. 3 refers.
4. N.O.I.C. Hobart is to sail. SS. EMPRESS OF SCOTLAND, GENERAL RANDALL and MITCHELL escorted by ACHILLES and destroyer routed through position (A) 044° 22' S., 146° 39' E. (B) 037° 45' S., 114° 51' E. (C) 033° 33' S., 108° 54' E. thence as ordered by C. in C. E.I.S. Speed of advance about 18 knots to position C thence 19 knots.
5. N.O.I.C. Fremantle is to sail LONDON as necessary to R/V convoy (?H).B.1 at 0300Z/14th January in position C. When relieved ACHILLES and destroyers proceed Albany.
6. N.O.I.C. Hobart and N.O.I.C. Fremantle repeat back time and position of R/V (?C). (Comsouwstpac, 270315Z to N.O.I.Cs. etc.) Amended by 030448 C.S.N. Pac.

ROBERT J.  
WALKER  
torpedoed  
24 25.12.44.

Ship sank 1700Z/25th December. 4 torpedoes were fired by S/M which was not sighted. Survivors not yet landed. My 250224 refers. (Cdre. S.W. Pacific Sea Fron. 270802Z to Admty. etc).

659

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand - Contd.

- Digest 1071. December 26th.  
Forenoon search Liberator attacked two small Coasters southbound 150 miles south of Ambon. 2 Quartets Mitchells later attacked these ships and combined efforts destroyed both vessels.
2. P.T. boats sank one lugger with rockets, destroyed another lugger by gunfire off east coast Northern Cebu Island early hours
4. Late afternoon enemy Task Group comprising one battleship one heavy cruiser, six destroyers sighted 100 miles west of San Jose (our beach-head on southwestern Mindoro) course east. These ships headed for northwest Mindoro then proceeded along entire (corrupt) towards west coast Mindoro and retired via same route subjecting our shore and inland positions to severe bombardment but details not yet available (see 281046Z). P.T. boats and locally based aircraft attacked enemy units: preliminary report (corrupt) inflicted at least one battleship and 2 destroyers.
6. Reconnaissance Liberator observed seven medium sized freighter transports eleven small merchant ships four escort vessels many small craft anchored off San Fernando afternoon 25th, also two groups each comprising two small ships heading north near entrance Lingayan Gulf. Same plane sighted southbound convoy in two main groups involving aggregate four medium sized freighter transports, seven escort vessels 25 miles southwest of Cape Bolinao (northwestern entrance Lindayan Gulf)
7. Navy Mariner reported one large transport three sizeable freighters one sea truck two old type destroyers anchored (?Arhxhgsol) Bay (near location of ships reported previous paragraph) early hours 26th. Same plane sighted one warship heading North from above concentration and sank one sea truck underway few miles (?south) thereof.
13. Same day 6 Mitchells swept northern Davao Gulf destroying 2 coastal freighters one barge and hitting jetties. 16 Liberators hit Matine Airdrome unopposed 27th December causing fires.
18. 8 Beaufighters attacked Wewak Naggets 25th. (G.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 270820 to Admty. etc).

B.P.F., policy. Your 241253Z para. 3 et seq. Suitable officers are being made available as soon as possible. Pending their arrival would you consider obtaining the concurrence of Cincpac to the temporary loan of Cdr. H.E. Hopkins, R.N. and Acting Cdr. F.H.E. Hopkins R.N. his naval observer, for this duty. (N.A. 2 S.L., 271311A to C. in C. B.P.F.)

27.12.1944.  
Wednesday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarine  
attack and  
sighting  
summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/27th December.

Para. A.

1. At 1137Z/26th December H.M. Ship torpedoed in 49° 50' N., 01° 41' W.
2. Prior to 1152Z/26th December H.M. Ship torpedoed in 49° 50' N., 01° 41' W.
3. At 1152Z/26th December E.G.17 and American small craft attacked bottom contacts in vicinity of torpedoings in 49° 50' W. 01° 41' W.
4. At 1229Z/26th December CRANSTOUN and MOORSOM attacked good contact in 49° 49' N., 01° 46' W.

Para. B.

1. At 1211Z/26th Dec. aircraft H/10 sighted possible P/S in 50° 21' N., 02° 51' W.
2. At 1715Z/26th December Cherbourg reported Radar 2 miles to northward course northwest.
3. At 1745Z/26th December Portsmouth reported Radar in 49° 48' N., 02° 07' W.
4. At 2035Z/26th December aircraft S/461 obtained A.S.V. contact in 50° 30' N., 08° 00' W.
5. At 2106Z/26th December aircraft F/407 sighted snort and attacked in 49° 56' N., 02° 39' W.
6. At 2117Z/26th December two of H.M. Ships had hydrophone effect of torpedo in 50° 08' N., 03° 54' W.
7. At 0007Z/27th December U.S. DALE W. PETERSON attacked Radar contact in 51° 38' N., 08° 05' W.
8. At 0118Z/27th December aircraft E/206 obtained A.S.V. contact in 58° 28' N., 00° 42' W.
9. At 1742Z/26th December E.G.31 attacked contact in 56° 10' N. 07° 12' W.
10. At 1020Z/26th Dec. Am. CAPE LAMBERT sighted submarine in 05° 48' N., 81° 50' E.

Para. C.

1. At 1418Z/25th Dec. aircraft G/53 sighted swirl with wisps of vapour in 60° 28' N., 18° 17' W.
2. At 1400Z/25th Dec. Faeroes Fishing Smack THURLD sighted unidentified submarine in 61° 40' N., 05° 50' W. (D.D.I.C., 271159A).

U/B

Estimates.

Dispositions. (D.D.I.C., 271411A, 271429).

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

1 (a) The number of prisoners captured on the Western Front since D-day now exceeds 800,000.  
(b) No further progress has been made by the Germans in their Salient, where they have turned over to a static defensive, but fresh attacks are expected, especially in Holland and the Aachen sector.

North Sea.

2 (a) Two mines have been detonated in the Inner Zeebrugge area, and two more in the Nore-Schelde Channel.  
(b) Ghent can now take 10 ships of 22 feet draught instead of 14 feet 7 in.

Channel

3 (a) EMPIRE JAVELIN, troopship, was torpedoed 20 miles N.N.E. of Cape Barfleur, but of the 1500 troops on board no more than 6 are missing. Final casualty figures for LEOPOLDVILLE are 264 dead and 538 missing. \* 802  
(b) The draught of ships for Rouen must be reduced to 5 feet less than the height of H.W. shown in Admiralty Tide Tables owing to the continually shifting channel over the Bar in the Seine Estuary.  
(c) Owing to silt in Southampton approaches it will not be practicable to use the port for QUEENS MARY and ELIZABETH before next summer at the earliest.

Foreign Stations.

Mediterranean

Greece.

4. (a) Civilians are being evacuated by H.M. Ships from Preveza to Corfu. The fall of Preveza to E.L.A.S. forces is considered to be inevitable.  
(b) Paxos Island was raided by E.L.A.S. forces last night and the Police disarmed. The (?Greek) Military Commandant is sending 250 troops as garrison in four caiques.  
(c) At Piraeus one rating was killed and 2 wounded during shelling of the Harbour and Naval College - otherwise quiet.

Dodecanese

5. Ten Baltimores bombed shipping at Mandracchio, Rhodes, bursts being observed in the water east of the Mole and in the harbour area.

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Levant.

6. Visit of French cruiser EMILE BERTIN to Beirut passed off without incident. French behaving with absolute correctness. Visit of British cruiser not now desired.

<sup>A</sup>  
KUMQNOVO  
Yugoslav,  
Depot ship  
Loss.

7. Loss reported due to bad weather off Malta. Loss of life as far as can be ascertained is only 2. Later report states that vessel had engine room trouble east of Sicily.

East Indies.

Ceylon.

8. Approval given to appointment of Major General (T/Lt. Gen) H.E. de R. Wetherall as C. in C. Ceylon in succession to Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton who has held the post since March 1942.

Sumatra.

9. H.M. Submarine THULE on patrol off Penang attacked a Japanese U-boat with torpedoes - one hit seen amidships and U-boat believed sunk. Between 16th or 28th December she also sank by gunfire and ramming 20 junks and other small craft between Penang and Langkarvi.

Australia & New Zealand.

Philippines

10. (a) Allied convoy in Central Mindanao was subjected to strongly pressed air attacks at noon today by 10 planes including 4 suicide dive bombers - one missed but the third hit merchant ships causing severe damage. Again at dusk 20-30 planes of all types attacked for 90 minutes - one amphibious craft hit by torpedo.  
(b) Last night 5 Mitchells attacking shipping off San Fernando (Sebu S.E.) hit one medium freighter causing fires and scoring near misses on another similar ship.



War Diary.

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

DIDO,  
cruiser.

Scapa arrival DIDO.  
(A.C.O.S., 280130A to C. in C. Rosyth).

GLOIRE,  
Fr. cruiser.

Your destination is changed to Brest.  
On crossing 20° W. alter course for new positions  
E. 47.30 N., 10.02 W. F. 48.20 N., 05.30 W.  
thence to Brest.  
(Plot (O.D.) 281125A to GLOIRE).

TRUMP,  
TIPTOE,  
submarines.

TRUMP and TIPTOE will be ready to leave Portsmouth  
11th January for Far East. Request rendezvous with  
suitable Gibraltar convoy may be signalled.  
(F.O.S.M., 281127A to C. in C. W.A.)

KENT,  
cruiser.

My 191424A. Propose that the administration of  
KENT should be transferred to F.O.I.C. Greenock  
from 8th January 1945.  
(C. in C. H.F., 281146A to Admty).

Operations.

North Sea.

Administra-  
tive responsi-  
bility for  
French Ports.

As from 0001 1st January administrative  
responsibility for all ports in France lying  
opposite to the Portsmouth and Dover Commands will  
be assumed by A.C. Dover.  
2. Admiralty covering approval to this arrangement  
is requested. My 211915 (not to F.O.B.A.A. or  
S.N.O.B.O.P. (F)) para. 4 refers.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 281055A to S.N.O.B.O.P.F., Admty).

Rebuttal  
of Air  
Ministry's  
suggestion  
for avoidance  
of bombing  
E-boat pens.

A. 898 Dec. 28th. Your 271530 para. 4. Consider  
suggested attacks by Coastal Command Forces on  
dispersed E-boats in Den Helder and Ijmuiden are  
not a practical proposition for the following  
reasons.  
(A) Chances of finding E-boats dispersed in these  
anchorage considered negligible. Experience  
shows that during daylight E-boats tie up along-  
side or shelter in pens and would be virtually  
impossible attack.

(B) These anchorages are very heavily defended and could only  
be attacked in great strength if disproportionate losses are  
to be avoided.

(C) Sufficient forces for such attacks not now available as bulk  
of anti-shipping strike squadrons at present concentrated in  
Scotland for operations off Norwegian coast.

(H.Q.C.C., 281100A to Air Ministry, Admty. S.H.A.E.F.)

/Situation...

6654

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea - Contd.

Situation Report.

Cositintrep No.268 part. 4.  
Discharge by sea - 24 hour period ending 271600A December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (incl.coal)	<u>Bulk</u> <u>Pol.</u>	<u>Ammo</u>
Antwerp	-	227	7,490	10,743	1,085
Ostend	10	-	5,416	443	2,303
Boulogne	18	35	-	-	-
Dieppe	5	-	1,706	-	-
Caen	-	-	799	-	-
Calais	-	-	-	-	-
Ghent	-	-	1,740	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>17,151</b>	<b>11,186</b>	<b>3,388</b>
<u>U. S. North</u>					
Antwerp	2	-	12,869	-	525
Cherbourg	1,603	534	7,161	9,491	2,817
Le Havre	4,461	331	4,933	4,672	1,755
Rouen	838	243	3,954	-	425
Granville	-	-	3,505	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,904</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>32,422</b>	<b>14,163</b>	<b>5,522</b>
<u>U. S. South</u>					
Marseilles	257	48	18,932	-	6,137
Port De Bouc	-	-	1,552	1,163	-
Toulon	-	-	545	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>21,029</b>	<b>1,163</b>	<b>6,137</b>

Signed Eisenhower Cite S.H.G.D.S.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 281445A to Admty).

4. Prisoners of War.

Total prisoners captured for 24 hours to 242400 December 873.  
Accumulative total since D-day: 800,071.  
General.

Crack formations of two Panzer Armies (2 Panzer Divisions and 1 S.S. Panzer Division) have been very severely mauled, each losing a Panzer Grenadier Regiment and great majority of tanks. In both cases lack of petrol and lack of air support against Allied fighter bombers had a lot to do with debacle: large elements were cut off and others finally retreated in something like panic.

Enemy not counter attacking at Bastogne, rather attempting to dig defence positions round salient. Undoubtedly appreciates its importance, and if no more attack in North does not succeed Fifth Panzer Army may be forced to withdraw.

Expected that enemy will stage attacks at other points. In Aachen sector and in Holland suspicious activities pointing this way noticed in last few days.

(S.H.A.E.F., 281845A to War Office).

/Midget...

665

War Diary.28.12.1944.  
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations.North Sea - Contd.Midget  
U-boats.

Further to my 271542, para. 2, following from further interrogation in U.K.

Bibers of 261st Flotilla supplemented by others of another Flotilla previously at Groningen were based before operation at the small basin at Poortershaven on north bank of the Maas two miles north west of Maasluis, map reference GSGS 4427 sheet 2NE 576769. Some under repair lay in concrete shelter with roof about seven feet thick at eastern end of basin. Others lay alongside jetty in the water. Others were stored with trailers under camouflage nearby.

(D.N.I. (839) 282017A to C. in C. Nore).

Comment: The above has been telephoned to N.L.O. Bomber Command.

Operations.Channel.

Patrols.

M.T.Bs. 750, 760 leave Portland 0800/28th patrol area limits 01° 30', 01° 54' W., 50° 30', 50° 20'.

2. On arrival of CAISTOR CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE about 1430 move to night patrol area limits 01° 50', 02° 15' W. 50° 20', 50° 06'.

3. Anti-Snort patrol from 1730 to 0830/29th.

4. M.T.B. 752 join patrol when ready.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 280133A to M.T.B.F.66).

Further orders to my 272329 are as follows.

2. BRILLIANT, HOTHAM, VICTRIX, LA NANTAISE escort to Havre. BRILLIANT, HOTHAM on arrival return Portsmouth.

3. HARGOOD, SPRAGGE detach at 58 E buoy further orders follow.

4. CAISTOR CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE detach at G.1 buoy further orders follow.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 280134A to BRILLIANT, HOTHAM, VICTRIX, LA NANTAISE, 30th E.G.)

My 280134 on being ordered to detach by BRILLIANT proceed to areas limits given.

(2) HARGOOD, SPRAGGE anti-snort patrol 01° 00', 01° 50' W. 50° 20', 50° 08'. HARGOOD north and SPRAGGE south of 50° 14'.

(3) CAISTOR CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE search centre section area X in my 271938.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 280135 to HARGOOD, SPRAGGE, CAISTOR CASTLE, KENILWORTH CASTLE).

N.O.I.C. Campbeltown is requested to sail 14th E.G. on completion of training p.m. 29th to Milford Haven for fuel.

2. On completion of fuelling F.O.I.C. Milford Haven is requested to sail 14th E.G. as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth to relieve 21st E.G.

3. On relief, C. in C. Plymouth is requested to sail 21st E.G. to Belfast for long lay over.

(C. in C. W.A., 281305 to F.O.I.Cs. Campbeltown, Milford Haven, C. in C. Plymouth).

Air Patrols. My 281728 Para. 12 not to all.

A. Night 28th/29th Patrol L.32 on long. 02° 15' by Wellingtons. Day 29th Patrol on long. 02° 15' W. patrol 33 West of H Channel by Liberators. Patrol 5 - 6 between H Channel and Kansas Channel by Swordfish.

B. 838 Squadron RCN. 842 Squadron SXU.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 282359A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

/EMPIRE...

666

War Diary.

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Channel. - Contd.

EMPIRE  
JAVELIN,  
troopship,  
torpedoed  
20' N.N.E.  
of Cape  
Barfleur.

MONOWAI torpedoed or mined in position 335° J  
buoy 2 miles.  
(L'ESCARMOUCHE, 281440A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
For MONOWAI read EMPIRE JAVELIN.  
(L'ESCARMOUCHE 281447A to C. in C. W.A.)  
Have sent MONOWAI ahead, request transport to  
take off EMPIRE JAVELIN 1500 troops.  
(L'ESCARMOUCHE 281500A to C. in C. Portsmouth).  
Your 281521. (not held in W.D.)  
My P.C.S. 50° 18' N., 00° 54' W., 160° 15 E.T.A.  
1645.

(S.O.E.G. 30, 281605 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Second explosion in EMPIRE JAVELIN who has sunk. Carrying  
out observant.

(S.O.E.G. 30, 281722 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Believed all hands taken off EMPIRE JAVELIN except 6  
before second explosion being transferred to L.S.T.(I) 325.  
Carrying out "Scabbard". Ship sank in position 50° 00.5' N.,  
01° 04.5' W.

(S.O.E.G. 30, 281800 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

2nd explosion occurred as ship was sinking stern first  
it occurred right aft. At the time wreck was surrounded on  
three sides by escort and L.S.Ts. It is possible stern struck  
deep mine. L'ESCARMOUCHE returning to Portsmouth damaged. 59  
survivors on board, 7 injured, 5 cot cases, 4 of which are  
serious. Remainder gone Le Havre in L.S.T. Correct position of  
wreck 50° 00' 38" N., 01° 03' 24" W. Ships in company LAUNCESTON  
CASTLE, KENNILWORTH CASTLE, CAISTOR CASTLE, HARGOOD, SPRAGGE,  
CAVALIER.

(S.O.E.G. 30, 281859A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Operations.

West Coast France.

Patrol.

P.C.S. at 2000A/28th 225° Ile D'Yeu 2 miles  
156° 14½ knots. Fuel remaining 0800 28th 75%.  
Intend sweeping south during the night in  
accordance with your 271454 thence north to be at

Sables D'Olonne at 1200A/29th.

Creach Point Light operating with normal characteristics as  
in Admiralty list of Lights.

Permarch closed at 1200 28th but no communication established  
owing to poor visibility.

No traffic whatever, yet observed. Weather report 9070 3623.  
(BLYSKAWICA, 281804A to C. in C. Plymouth).

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Patrols.

If not in contact 6th E.G. proceed forthwith at  
best speed to patrol area bounded by 52° 01' N.,  
52° 20' N., 10° 50' W., 12° 01' W.

2. U-boats are estimated to be southbound.  
(C. in C. W.A., 281230A to S.O.E.G.6).

/N.O.I.C....

667

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches.

Patrols. N.O.I.C. Larne is requested to sail 9th E.G. on  
(contd). completion of training p.m./30th to Belfast for  
fuel and embarkation of Air Ministry representative  
My 231243 not to all refers.  
2. F.O.I.C. N.I. is requested to sail 9th E.G.  
when ready to patrol off South West of Ireland (R). Detailed  
orders to 9th E.G. follow.  
(C. in C. W.A., 281301 to N.O.I.C. Larne, F.O.I.C.N.I.)  
6th Escort Group New Waterford operating south west of  
Ireland.  
2nd E.G. LOCH RUTHVEN, 3 Frigates patrolling off West Irish  
Coast. Add to my 281159.  
(C. in C. W.A., 281428A to Admty).

U.S. escorts In two recent incidents in Severn Area U.S.escorts  
unaware of were not aware of their individual W/T call signs  
their W/T as laid down in para. 23 S.P. 02535. Consequently  
call signs. signals made on local port wave using their call  
signs were disregarded, the ships taking note of  
signals made with delivery group call sign only.  
This may well have contributed to the sinking  
by collision of JAMAICA PLANTER yesterday.  
(F.O.I.C. Cardiff, 281519A to Admty. Comnavu, C. in C. Western  
Approaches, C. in C. Plymouth).  
Your 281519. Request a full report in writing of the  
incidents referred to may be forwarded stating  
(A) Names of U.S. Escorts. Escorts concerned.  
(B) Actual call signs by which they were called.  
(C) Frequency.  
(D) Times (Local) when they were called.  
(E) Actual "Delivery Group" call signs to which you state the  
ships responded.  
(F) The manner in which the failures in communications referred  
to contributed to the sinking by collision of JAMAICA PLANTER.  
(C. in C. W.A., 282342A to F.O.I.C. Cardiff).

Servicing It is intended that the 4 M.Ls. to be transferred  
of Western to Western Approaches, vide A.M. 191325 should  
Approaches be operated and maintained at Londonderry. Major  
M.Ls. overhauls, slipping and engine changing will be  
carried out at Larne.  
2. Request confirmation that a half Flotilla  
Maintenance Staff will accompany the 4 M.Ls. from  
Portsmouth. This party will be required at Londonderry when the  
M.Ls. arrive.  
3. In addition request:-  
(A) 1 Coastal Forces Engineer Officer may be appointed forthwith  
to FERRET for duty with Coastal Forces, and  
(B) 1 H.S.D. and 8 S.D.S. may be drafted to FERRET for duty with  
the 4 M.Ls. of the 18th Flotilla in view of their forthcoming  
operational duties.  
(C. in C. W.A., 281719A to Admty).

/Possible....

668

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Western Approaches. - Contd.

Possible U-boat off Blaskets. Am searching from farthest on position to Southward towards position of attack by aircraft LRCW 25. If unproductive propose to do Gamma patrol between position 52° 32' N., 10° 06' W. and 52° 51' N., 11° 20' W. co-ordinate with E.G.6 patrol in your 281732. Average. Suitable. Weather report 9090 3163.  
(S.O.E.G.2, 281832A to S.O.E.G.6).

Operations.

Norway.

Patrol Arrival VENTURER.  
(S.O. S/M Lerwick, 281729A to Admty. A.C.O.S.)  
VENTURER reports (1) No shipping sighted other than 4 small coasters some patrol boats and hospital ship probably MONTE ROSA.  
Very poor visibility experienced.  
(S.O. S/M Lerwick, 281840 to F.O.S.M.)

Operations.

Northern Waters.

In re U.250 At further meetings with D.C.N.S. the handing over of drawings, documents etc., relating to U.250 was refused as the higher authority had not yet given decision on release. Para. 2 my 210946 refers.

2. With regard to torpedo full co-operation promised but D.C.N.S. stated that visiting specialists would only deal with torpedo.
3. As in the case of the documents etc., the same higher authority had not yet given permission for examination of U-boat and remaining equipment, who this higher authority is I was unable to ascertain, questions on that subject being evaded, but I was informed that the whole matter is now out of the hands of the Soviet Naval Staff.
5. I have requested urgently for the release of the documents etc., ex U.250 pointing out short time factor to catch next mail. I have also asked for wider facilities for visiting party. D.C.N.S. said he would represent these requests at once.
6. Re details of visiting party for the information of the Soviet Naval Staff.  
(Adm. Archer, 281525A to Admty).

Patrols. If not in contact establish Gamma between 58° 52' N., and 58° 22' N., on meridian 02° 24' W. by 2200A today Thursday.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 281843A to PASLEY).

From recent A.S.V. contacts and visual sightings it is apparent that U-boats are on patrol in the immediate vicinity of the Orkneys.

2. R.A.(D) H.F. is requested to operate available destroyers for about 24 hours starting a.m. 30th December on an anti-U-boat

/search...

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Patrols. search in the area enclosed by the following  
(contd). longitudes and parallels.  
59° 05' 58° 30' N., 04° 23', 02° 01' W.  
3. The objects of search are to harass and  
destroy U-boats. From time to time even if no contacts are  
obtained depth charges should be dropped to create the impression  
of intense A/S measures in area.  
4. S.O.N.A.S. Orkney is requested to arrange for a maximum air  
effort in this area during daylight hours on 30th December.  
5. C. in C. Rosyth is requested to inform R.A.(D) H.F. of air  
patrols by 18 Group that may effect this operation.  
(C. in C. H.F., 282248A to R.A.D. H.F., C. in C. Rosyth,  
S.O.N.A.S. Orkney).

Norwegian Following is N.O.I.C. Lerwick's 281921 to  
M.F.Vs. A.C.O.S. Repeated C. in C. Rosyth. Begins:-  
for Kola. C. in C. Rosyth's 251305A. Interim.  
1. Consider M.F.V. STADTHAV unfit to proceed on  
projected operation since.  
(A) Main engine requires overhaul, renewal of  
gudgeon pin, and adjustment of reverse gear.  
(B) Entire electrical installation is in very bad condition and  
batteries require renewal.  
(C) Extensive deck leaks require repair.  
2. This M.F.V. can be made fit to sail to mainland but full  
repairs are beyond resources of Lerwick.  
3. Remaining M.F.Vs. have numerous minor defects. All are in  
hand and should be completed by p.m. 1st January.  
4. Communications.  
(A) (1) All W/T sets were wrongly tuned. (ii) All telegraphists  
are very inexperienced and failed to realise that sets were out of  
tune.  
(B) Intensive instruction is being given and sets have been  
retuned.  
5. Further signal will be made when firm date for sailing can be  
forecast.  
6. Request instructions as to M.F.V. STADTHAV. Ends.  
2. N.O.I.C. Lerwick is being requested to sail M.F.V. STADTHAV  
to Peterhead when made fit for sea, but not to sail remaining  
3 M.F.Vs. of "Interim" without C. in C. H.F.'s approval.  
3. Investigation into state of all ships prior to sailing is  
being carried out.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 282255A to Admt. C. in C. H.F., A.C.O.S.,  
N.O.I.Cs. Aberdeen, Lerwick).

Mining.

Mining Following has been received from N.A. Stockholm  
results in begins:-  
Norway. "Addressed Admiralty. Mining results Norway,  
Oslo Fjord mid-December. See my 081034.  
Following results minelaying of December 13th are  
reported:

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Mining  
results in  
Norway.  
(contd).

1. Horton. (a) Inner Harbour will be closed for 2 weeks from date of mining.
  3. 3 mines dropped 40 to 50 metres East of Canal bridge beside Canal.
  - (c) Mines dropped 150 metres southwest of Canal behind sports ground.
  - (d) German barrack huts demolished and Norwegian Villa damaged at Apenes.
  - (e) Mines dropped close to House of representatives sea mines on Osteya.
  - (f) 2 mines dropped close to sabotaged destroyer. Divers refused to go down.
  - (g) Moss/Horton Ferry stopped up to December 19th.
  2. Moss. 750 troops with equipment waiting in Moss to embark December 13th had to be sent December 14th to Larvik via Oslo as Moss was closed by mines.
  3. Vaerlebukta. 1,000 tons Finnish Vessel mined minesweepers damaged 5 mines exploded all December 14th.
  4. Langgrwnnen. Horten. Closed for shipping up to December 19th. Was swept December 16th but no mines exploded. B.2 repeat B.2. 231304.
- N.I.D. Comment: Mines laid in Oslo Fjord night 13/14th Dec." Ends.  
(D. of Torpedoes and Mining, 281232A to VERNON M).

Situation  
Report.

- Your 252331A and your 262242A. 4 laps swept today in G formation to depth of 6 fathoms to northward of centre line of area.
2. 2 new GR type mines cut and sunk in position 51° 23' N., 02° 32' 6" E. and 51° 23' 2" N., 02° 32' 7" E.
  3. Limit of areas now cleared are as follows:
    - (A) 51° 22' 8" N., 02° 27' 5" E.
    - (B) 51° 23' N., 02° 31' E.
    - (C) 51° 23' 2" N., 02° 34' E.
    - (D) 51° 21' 5" N., 02° 34' E.
    - (E) 51° 21' 3" N., 02° 31' E.
    - (F) 51° 21' 4" N., 02° 27' 5" E.

Dan buoys remaining mark North and South limits.

4. Dan buoys marking approximately position of N.F.5 buoy relit in accordance with your 281300A.
5. Flotillas and danlayers returning Margate Roads. (S.O.M.S.F.42, 281825 to C. in C. Nore).
  - (2) Magnetic mines, one red, one blue, detonated inner Zeebrugge Channel today, M.F.V.1075 L.A.A. sweep. (N.O.I.C. Zeebrugge, 282011A to Com. Belg).

Enemy Intelligence.

German  
transport  
movements.

Recent German Military Transports arriving Denmark from Norway.  
My 231327 following transport movements have been reported from Aarhus.

1. DONAU and ISAR arrived Aarhus from Norway 2200 December 10th with SS. troops. Further details not available as loading and unloading took place at night. They left Aarhus again for Norway 1500 December 12th.
2. MOLTJEFELS, WINRICH VON KNIPRODE, SUDERAU and ROLANDSECK arrived Aarhus in convoy from Norway 1000 December 11th with following troops:-

/(A)...



671

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

German  
transport  
movements.  
(contd).

(A) S.S. troops. Regimental Staff Panzer Grenadiers. Detachment Panzer troops. Staff Artillery Detachment F.P. Number 31419. Gun battery marked with letters F. F.U. and J. Several Infantry Companies. One Pioneer Company. One other Company. Motor and horse transport including staff cars marked with Eidelweiss in circle.

(B) W.H. troops. Regimental Staff 322 (K) and Second Infantry Battalion. MOLTJEFELS, SUDERAU and ROLANDSECK left Aarhus again 0300 December 12th for Norway in ballast. See also my Top Secret 131804 (D).

3. Convoy of DONAU, ISAR and SUDERAU arrived Aarhus 1000 December 16th. Second convoy consisting of MOLTJEFELS and ROLANDSECK arrived same day at 2200. Following troops were disembarked:  
(A) S.S. troops. One Divisional Staff. One Infantry Regiment. One Artillery Detachment Number II. One Artillery Detachment Number I or IV. One A.A. Detachment.

(B) W.H. troops. One Infantry Battalion F.P. Number 27127.

(C) W.L. troops. About 4 Companies G.A.F. DONAU and ISAR left again for Norway p.m. December 17th.

4. Comment. My 161829 of December.

Tonnage employed in withdrawal of military from Oslo ports to Denmark which amount to about 6 medium transports of 40,500 tons and 3 fast transports of 8,000 tons at end November increased during first 18 days of December and is now estimated as follows:

(A) 8 medium troop transports totalling 47,000 tons.

(B) 4 fast troop transports totalling 11000 tons.

(C) At least 4 vessels totalling 18,000 tons employed shipping motor transport and other military material from Oslo ports.

B.2.

(N.A. Stockholm, 281714 to Admty).

N.I.D. Comment. Shipping movements believed correct Para. 4. Transport tonnage approximately correct for the period but tonnage in (C) seems high for the number of vessels given.

Port Facilities.

Rouen,  
Ghent.

Cositintrep No.268. Part II Naval.

1. Rouen. Due to continuous shifting of channel over bar in Seine Estuary, draught of ships acceptable at Rouen has been reduced over past weeks. It is now 5 feet less than height of high water.

2. Ghent. Reference Cositintrep No.262 Part II for "10 at 14'7" read "10 at 22 feet".

(A.N.C.X.F., 282355A to Admty).

Casualties & Defects.

LEOPOLDVILLE At 1754 on 24th in position 49.45.20 N., 01.34 W. SS. LEOPOLDVILLE was damaged well aft starboard side by underwater explosion. Ship sank at 2030. About 36 small craft from Cherbourg assisted in rescue. Personnel figures follow. U.S. Army personnel alive 1433, dead 264, unaccounted for 538. Total 2235. Crew alive 220, unaccounted for 17. Total 237. Escorted by four Destroyers one of which reports torpedo track seen and heard. Negative results search. Several contacts made. Hedgehog

/attack...

672

War Diary.

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

LEOPOLDVILLE attack on 1 H.E. contact brought oil to surface. Submarines may be operating from Alderney Sanctuary and homed on channel shipping by Radar. Coaster SLEMISH sunk on 23rd and escorts AFFLECK and CAPEL damaged and sunk on 25th. All in same general area as transport. One officer of LEOPOLDVILLE reported flame accompanied explosion and that concussion occurred outside ship with smell of sulphur in air. However, no other evidence of mine, and torpedo considered probable cause of explosion. (Com. 12th Fleet, 281731 to Cominch).

?M.F.V.L.1 Regret to state M.F.V. L.1 sunk in position approx 50° 29.9 N., 3° 23.8 W. at 1300 today. TIRADE will be standing by position tomorrow 29th. Request search may be made as soon as convenient to establish exact position. Submit that Asdic search might be effective. White Barrieo buoy has been laid in position stated. (MOUNT STEWART 281926 to N.O.I.C. Dartmouth).

Shipping & Convoys.

RUYS Arrangements should be made for RUYS to be sailed from Clyde to embark in Belfast p.m. on 6th Jan. approximately 2700 military personnel for Liverpool.  
2. This vessel will then be used for the movement from Liverpool to Belfast of approximately 12,000 German Prisoners of War. (D. of S.T., 280001A to P.S.T.Os. Clyde, N.W. Ports, Belfast).

B.T.C. A.M. 271303 concur. (V.A. Dover, 281210A to Admty).  
convoys. Ref. A.M. 271303 and F.O.C. Dover 281220 neither to C. in C. W.A. or N.O.I.C. Ramsgate. Request B.T.C. convoys be sailed direct to the Downs - anchoring and proceed as ordered by N.O.I.C. Ramsgate to arrive Thames 1530.  
2. Joiners from Isle of Wight area will leave St. Helens 0730 to rendezvous at F buoy 0915. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 281923A to Admty).

QUEENS A.M. 102056 November and your 291945 November.  
ELIZABETH As a result of the limitations imposed by the silting of the channel in the approaches to Southampton which would result in a 25% reduction in the number of voyages each ship could make over a given period, it has been decided that the QUEENS should continue to use the Clyde as their terminal port in U.K. at any rate for the present.  
2. It is considered that steps should be taken to put in hand the dredging of the approach channel at an early date. D. of S.T. is taking this up with the appropriate authorities.  
3. It is unlikely that these ships will use Southampton before next summer. (A.C.N.S. (H), 281540A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

War Diary.

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping & Convoys - Contd.

U.R/R.U.  
convoys.

U.R/R.U. convoys will sail to and from Belfast East Coast ships to join and leave at Loch Ewe, as from 7th Jan. 1945. A.Ms. 141656, para. 2 (E) and 251630 refer.  
(D.T.D., 281901A to Cs. in C. W.A., H.F. Rosyth).

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

HAARLEM defects. S.B.N.O. Azores 271214 not to C. in C. Med. Intend HAARLEM proceed to U.K. for refit if ship capable of steaming.  
(2) LORD HOTHAM will be sailed to Azores as soon as boiler cleaning completed approx. 1st Jan.  
(3) The shortage of trawlers at Gibraltar and in Azores is becoming serious.  
(4) Azores require 8 trawlers in order to meet their commitments. (F.O.G.M.A., 281149 to Admty., (R) S.B.N.O. Azores).

BIDEFORD and ODZANI. My 271456 it is now intended that BIDEFORD and ODZANI proceed in company to U.K. sailing p.m. 31st December while FOWEY, GUARDSMAN, NORTHERN PRIDE, and MADELAINE proceed as escort to M.K.S.74. (F.O.G.M.A., 281217A to C. in C.W.A.).

HAARLEM repairs. In view of heavy load on all U.K. refitting ports, request you will carry out necessary repairs to HAARLEM. S.B.N.O. Azores 271214. (D.O.D.(F), 281220A to F.O.G.M.A., Info. S.B.N.O. Azores).  
Comply with A.M. 281220. Cancel my 281725. (F.O.G.M.A., 282309A to S.B.N.O. Azores, Info. Admty.).

A/S search. Request you (?take) E.G.41 and E.G.38 under your orders and carry out combined A/S search of following area:-  
east of 007° 10' W. between the coast and 035° N.  
(2) Ships to patrol:-  
(a) By day at Asdic distance apart. (B) By night Asdic or Radar distance depending upon suitability for Schnorkel.  
(3) If not in contact 5th E.G. is to leave patrol so as to arrive Gibraltar at 1200A December 30th.  
(4) When 5th E.G. parts company patrols will be re-organised. (F.O.G.M.A., 281501A to E.G.5.).

Appian Landing Craft. Appian Flight C as in F.O.I.C. Falmouth's 211307 (L.C.Q. 391 (S.O. L.C.) L.C.T.(4) 1102, 1105, etc.) have arrived escorted by GUARDSMAN, NORTHERN PRIDE, WOODCOCK, LADY MADELEINE. (F.O.G.M.A., 281635Z to Admty. etc.).

South Atlantic

CANTON. Urgently request report on earliest date CANTON can definitely sail from Capetown embarked with Service Personnel for the U.K.

/(2)...

675

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic

CANTON  
(Contd.)

(2) It is probable that if she cannot sail by Jan. 22nd she will be delayed by 40 days.  
(D.S.T., 280040A to P.S.T.O. South Africa, (R) C. in C.S.A.).

Merchant  
ship  
signals.

In view of pending change in Rio de Janeiro intelligence area propose to instruct B.R.L.O. Buenos Aires to originate such signals as mentioned in your 031705 December for sailings from River Plate ports; B.N.S.O. Rio de Janeiro to continue to originate those for sailings from Brazil ports. (B.N.S.O. Rio de Janeiro, 281728Z to Admty.).

CROCUS.

My 271423 (N.T. in W.R.). Delay in completion of CROCUS will prevent her sailing in accordance with my 271303 Comar Dakar 271805 not to all addressees refers.

Comar Dakar is requested to sail CROCUS to Gibraltar as early as possible.  
(F.O.C.W.Af., 281905Z to Comar Dakar, F.O.G.M.A.).

676

28.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterraneanAJAX  
Greece.

It is officially announced that during their visit to Greece, the Prime Minister and Mr Eden stayed on board the cruiser AJAX, Captain J.W. Cuthbert, flying the flag of Rear Admiral J.M. Mansfield. The preliminary meeting with the Archbishop of Athens was held on board H.M.S. AJAX.  
(The Times, 30.12.1944)

Human  
Torpedo  
Mentone.

Ref. WOOLSEY 191902A December to Comlanfor not to C. in C. Med. Small submarine or human torpedo reported captured Menton Harbour. Information requested whether this is midget S/M or human torpedo. If latter has it any additions to permit diving.  
(D.T.M. 281530A to C. in C. Med.) C. in C. Med's Reply 041129A.

A.S. Trawlers.

Sailed H.M.T. STELLA CARINA, REIGHTON WYKE, KING SOL, MAN-O-WAR. My 271540 refers. Vessels hold S.P.02358 and "Q" Messages for West Coast Portsmouth to Cape Wrath last series numbers H (C) 680 L.67 X.1479 Y 537 S.657.  
(From F.O.G.M.A. 281605A to C. in C. Plymouth)

ERLANGEN  
route.

Reference A.M. 192238. Concur. Route from Gulf of Genoa should be through:  
(A) 044 degs. N. 009 degs. E.  
(B) 040 degs. N. 005 degs. E.  
(C) 037 degs. N. 000 degs. and thence direct to

Gibraltar for onward routing by F.O.G.M.A. Return passage should be made by reverse route.  
(C. in C. Med. 281740A to Admty, Info: F.O.W.M., F.O.G.M.A., B.N.A. Lisbon, F.O.N.A.M.)

Preveza  
Evacuation.

H.M.S. BRUISER sailed at 1700 to-day by inshore route carrying for Corfu approx. 40 vehicles 300 of 11th Greek battalion and 300 civilians. E.T.A. 2200 to-day. She should be sailed to Preveza after unloading.

(2) M.L.1023 sailed at 1715 escorting caiques. E.T.A. 0730 tomorrow. She should return to Preveza on arrival.  
(Coprev, 281757B to G.S. THEMISTOCLES)

Leghorn  
Specimen.

Your 212101/ Specimen sent by A.T.C. A/C No.9207 Trip No.2 on 24th December, package No.8/18561.  
(C. in C. Med. 281805A to Admty.)  
Request specimen of each type of fuze and sabotage charge be sent VERNON.

Paxos  
Raid.

Paxos Island has been raided last night by E.L.A.S which disarmed police and took with them one officer. Military Commandant is sending there 250 troops as garrison, in 4 caiques with the

/approval ...

677

War Diary28.12.1944  
ThursdayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Paxos  
Raid.  
(Contd.)

Approval of Hutchison and A.M.M. Your approval if I can use one of the M.L.O. arriving as per your 281447 to cover the operation.  
(THEMISTOCLES G.S. 281831B to Coprev)

Cositintrep  
No.537  
Part IV.

F.X.75466 cipher 28th December, 281243.  
Cite F.H.G.C.T. Signed Alexander.  
Greece. Fighting was on a reduced scale in the Athens/Piraeus area during 27th December.  
Further progress has been made in Athens between the Acropolis and the Athens/Piraeus Road and this area is virtually clear.  
A small E.L.A.S. attack on Kalamaki Airfield, 5 miles South of Athens, was replused.  
(A.F.H.Q. No T.O.O. 28th)

French  
visit to  
Beirut.

Guard. British Minister in Beirut considers that as the visit of F.S. EMILE BERTIN went off so quietly and Auboyneau behaved so correctly it would be advisable not to send a British cruiser to Beirut for about a month. In view of this do not intend to send H.M.S. NEWFOUNDLAND. Your 261226 not to S.N.O. Levant or N.O.I.C. Beirut.  
(F.O.L.E.M. 281908B to C. in C. Med.)

SAVORGNAN  
DE BRAZZA.

F.O.W.M.'s 271226. Provided ship is seaworthy she should operate as an Escort under PREMAR III until decision re refit is made. My 141132 para.3.  
(C. in C. Med, 281920A to F.O.N.A.M. (R) B.A.D. Washington, Admty. F.O.W.M.)

Dardanelles  
Minesweepers.

Intend to operate up to 16 ships in approaches to Dardanelles tomorrow Friday and daily weather permitting. Whole or part of force to use Bashika Bay at night.  
(2) F.O.L.E.M. pass to B.N.A. Ankara.  
(3) U.S. Naval Attache can be (corrupt group) at any time.  
(S.O. M/S Flot.5, 281921 to F.O.L.E.M.)

Greek  
evacuation.

Essential that E.T.A. of L.S.T.76 and 12 be passed me at once as lack of this information prejudices plan military evacuation. Situation rapidly deteriorating and may require considerable British gun support.  
(Coprev in H.M.S. BICESTER, 281947B to S.B.N.O. Greece)

/Situation ...

678

28.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean - Contd.Situation  
Report  
No.519.

Gulf of Genoa. Allied destroyers continuing to carry out periodical bombardments with success near Franco Italian border.

(2) Sicily. R.Y.N.S. ~~KUMANOVA~~ had engine trouble east of Sicily and has sunk. 46 missing but report from one of the ships which stood by not

yet available.

(3) Greece. At Piraeus all is quiet except for shelling of naval establishments. For first time since hostilities started a ship has berthed and discharged at Coal Quay evacuation of Civilians from Preveza continues. At Mitylene where H.M.S. SIRIUS is standing by general strike continues and hostile mob throngs quay and is barricading streets. E.L.A.S. reinforcements have arrived at Skiathos. Greek ship FRED is now beached in harbour there. Further attempt has been made to refloat SS. CHISWICK at Salonika. H.M.Trawler UNDA is aground at Mudros. All quiet at Kavalla.

(4) Crete. Labour demonstration at Heraklion cancelled. Tension has eased considerably.

(C. in C. Med. 282038 Admty etc.)

French  
visit to  
Beirut.

Visit of EMILE BERTIN to Beirut passed off without incident, French behaving with absolute correctness. Visit of British cruiser is not now desired.

(P.A.S.(L), 282309A to C. in C. Med. Info: F.O. L.E.M.)

Duke of  
Gloucester.

Port Said 28th Dec. Arrivals EURYALUS, URCHIN, ULSTER, M.F.A. BRITISH DUCHESS, THORSHAVN, GULFPOINT.

Departures EURYALUS, URCHIN, H.M.S. ULSTER, S/M. SEADOG, M.F.A. DAVID HOLMES, GULFPOINT. (N.O.I.C.Port Said, 282359B to Admty. etc.)



679

War Diary.28.12.1944.  
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies.

- U-Boat dispositions. Area C.B.2. S.S. CAPE LAMBERT reported sighting submarine on the port bow at 0250 F.G.27th in position 005° 48' N. 081° 50' E. (?increase) scale to Y.4P.  
(C. in C.E.I.S., 280430Z to S. and A. E.I. Station).
- STOIC. STOIC leaving Trincomalee for U.K. 31st Dec.  
(S.O. (S/Ms.) E.I. Station, 280504Z to F.O. S/M.).
- Force 61. The following units will form Force 61 as from 1200 F.G.28th December. NEWCASTLE (F.O. Force 61). H.M.S. QUEEN ELIZABETH, H.M.S. KENYA, H.M.S. NIGERIA, H.M.S. PHOEBE, H.M.S. PATHFINDER, H.M.S. RAPID, H.M.S. READER, H.M.S. FLAMINGO, H.M.I.S. KISINA, H.M.S. AMEER carrying 804 Fighter Squadron.  
(2) V.A.3 will continue wearing his flag in H.M.S. QUEEN ELIZABETH for the present. Further signal will be made.  
(3) Appropriate authorities are to inform ships concerned.  
(4) My 070437 December refers.  
(C. in C.E.I., 280520 to Admiralty).
- LEWES. LEWES. Your 192149 (N.T. in W.D.) not to all refers. Ship proved satisfactory working in South Africa and should be suitable for employment from Sydney (N.S.W.). Propose to sail her with B.P.F. train.  
(C. in C.E.Is., 280812Z to Admty.).
- C. in C. Ceylon. Cossea 183. O.Z.7571 28th Dec.  
Following for Admiral Mountbatten from Chiefs of Staff.  
Approval is given to the appointment of Maj. Gen. (T/Lt. Gen.) H.E. de R Wetherall as C. in C. Ceylon on relinquishment of appointment by Adm. Sir Geoffrey Layton. Report date assumption. Retains temporary rank Lt. Gen.  
(A.M.S.S.O., 281250Z to S.A.C.S.E.A., (R) C. in C. India, Info. C. in C. Ceylon).
- Troop transport. Sailing of C.4 troop ships direct between Australia and Calcutta omitting any calls at Colombo would increase escort cycle of boats by (?3) days over that obtained for service between Australia and Bombay by P.2 class troop ships (causes).  
(2) Owing to this increase in escort cycle time interval between sailing of Calcutta bound ships and next succeeding ship for Australia (?whether) bound for Calcutta or Bombay must be increased to 23 days. A Calcutta ship could however be accepted 20 days after the sailing of a Bombay ship.

/(3)...

28.12.1944.  
Thursday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

Troop  
transport  
(Contd.)

(3) Should these ships call at Colombo for Australia and New Zealand troops, ship cycle in para.2 would be increased to 26 days plus the length of time C.4 troop ship had to wait for K.M.F. ships.

(4) Transshipment in Bombay, or failing that embarkation at Calcutta is therefore most strongly urged.

(5) Cruiser escort hitherto always afforded to ships with a large number of Australians. New Zealand personnel embarking cannot be afforded more than once every 40 to 50 days.

(C. in C.E.I.S., 281646Z to Admty. etc.).

See B.A.D. 022015Z to C. in C. E.I.

681

28.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

U.S.S/M missing. New York, Dec. 28th. The Navy Department announced to-day that the S/M SEAWOLF is overdue from patrol and is presumed to be missing. The S/M, a 1,500 ton vessel commissioned in 1939, was commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Albert M. Bontier. She normally carried a crew of 62. (The Times 29.12.1944)

S/M attack and sighting summary. No report since my 262201. (A) (1) Liberator P/10 sights surfaced U-Boat which submerged in 43.24 N. 47.38 W. at 1131/27th. (D) (1) E.G.27 makes four attacks on bottomed contact probably wreck in 43.28 N. 60.55 W. before 1045/27th (all times Z). (2) U.S.C.G. EMPORIA obtains Radar followed by sound contact in 48.50 N. 49.30 W. at 0025/27th, makes attack at 0115. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 281006Z to Admty. Cominch)

U-Boat dispositions. Estimates. (N.S.H.Q. 281351Z, Cominch 281603Z)

NELSON. Your 241312 (not to all). NELSON will not be ready to leave Philadelphia until 12th January earliest. She could therefore be included in C.U.55 arriving in U.K. 29th January. (2) Admty. is requested to state if delayed docking thus imposed can be accepted or if special arrangements are to be made towards providing an escort to enable her to sail independent of convoy. Unlikely that U.S.N. could provide Escort. (3) N.S.H.Q. is requested to comment on possibility of providing Escort from Philadelphia to U.K. on or about 12th January. (4) A separate signal will be made in answer to your para.3. (B.A.D. 281555Z as amended 291401Z. to Admty.) Reply from N.S.H.Q. 291801Z.

E.G.25. C.N.M.O.271724 / being passed. Request you will report when it will be possible to allocate another Frigate to E.G.25 in lieu of JOLIETTE. (N.S.H.Q. 281701Z to C. in C. C.N.A.) / Requesting information if it is intended to allocate another frigate to E.G.25.

T.G.60.4. T.G.60.4 hereby constituted Capt. Markham in PHELPS, DAVISON, CALCATERRA, CHAMBERS, MERRILL. Escort U.G.S.67 departing New York and Hampton Roads 7-8 January to Gibraltar escorts then to Oran. Return escorting G.U.S.69 when directed by C. in C. Mediterranean. PHELPS pass to Captain Markham for action. CHIWAHA Bermuda station tanker MATTAPONI Eastern terminus A O until 31st January, then Chemung. (Cinclant, 281914Z to PHELPS)

/ S/M...

682

28.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies

S/M Attacks and sighting Summary. Para.(c) 271851Z surface craft Radar contact 43.49 N. 62.03 W. (Cominch, 281957 to Admty, for O.I.C.)

A/S Search. Discontinue present search proceed Argentinia with your group less HAYTER when replenished proceed to Ladea about 500 miles North of Azores as given Cominch 271530 not to all and sink S/M. HAYTER will join later. When prudent low limit endurance reached proceed with group to Horta Azores and refuel. (Cinclant, 282029Z to Comtaskunit 27.1.1)

N.S.H.Q. S/M attack and sighting summary Para.C. (1) Doubtful Asdic contact attacked twice with H/H KIRKLAND LAKE in 44.12 N. 63.17 W. at 0148Z/28th. 3 H/H explosive. (2) C.T.U. 27.11 reports disappearing Radar contact in 43.49 N. 62.03 W. at 1851Z/27th. (N.S.H.Q. 282212 to Admty. Cominch)

Australia and New Zealand

Digest 1072 Dec. 27th. (4) December 27th. (4) Reference Navy (Enemy) T.G. bombardment Mindoro reported Digest 1071 para. 4. this Force tracked during withdrawal across China Sea until mid-afternoon nearly 300 miles West of Mindoro course 230 degs. speed 20 knots. Units involved described at this time as one battleship, one heavy cruiser, one light cruiser, 4 destroyers. Probably same force simply described as 6 ships contacted again night hours later 100 miles nearer Camranh Bay still headed West. Air Force reports additional enemy surface force off West Coast Mindoro night 26th/27th probably involving 4 - 6 merchant ships and 5 - 7 escort apparently attempting counter landing. If any such landing achieved believe only minor forces involved as land forces on Mindoro report Nil change ground situation. Nil evidence enemy landing and nil enemy movement reported by patrols or natives beyond our perimeter. Enemy bombardment destroyed one discharged liberty ship but caused extremely light damage and casualties on shore. P.T. boat attacks on enemy surface force were unsuccessful but attacks by Navy Mariners and Catalinas throughout night by Mitchells and Fighter Bombers from Leyte and Mindoro until midnight, set three merchant ships on fire, sank two destroyers, damaged battleship. (15) Liberator attacked and damaged lone Sea truck off South East Celebes noon 26th while another searcher bombed, strafed 3 Coastal craft off Southern Boqroe Island sinking one (?ship, group missing).

683

29.12.1944  
ThursdayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand

Digest (16) Liberator patrolling Molukka sea afternoon  
1072 27th bombed solitary Sea truck anchored Soea  
Dec. 27th. Islands leaving same sinking.  
(17) Two Liberators searching Northeast Borneo  
morning 26th attacked and damaged 2 small merchant  
ships off Tarakan and strafed Ankharm there.  
(19) 2 Mitchells swept Vogelcop Coastline 26th sinking one  
armoured barge off Waigeo Island.  
(G.H.Q. S.W.P.A. 281046Z)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

S/M attack For 24 hours to 0900Z/28th December.  
and (A) (1) At 1040Z/27th Dec. E.G.C.3, escorting  
sighting H.X.327 attacked U-Boat in 46 degs. 25' N. 36  
summary. degs. 36' W.  
(2) At 0615Z/28th Dec. A/C reported U-Boat on  
surface, Co. 180 degs. in 53 degs. 12' N. 11  
degs. 56' W.  
(B) (1) At 1050Z/27th Dec. E.G.31 was continuing attack on  
contact gained at 1745Z/26th Dec. in lat. 56 degs. 10' N. 07  
degs. 12' W.  
(2) At 0930Z/27th Dec. A/C E/282 sighted Snort in 50 degs. 28'  
N. 07 degs. 53' W.  
(C) (1) At 0850Z/27th Dec. M.A.C. A/C of O.N.274 sighted and  
attacked periscope in 48 degs. 28' N. 13 degs. 55' W.  
(2) At 1515Z/27th Dec. Portsmouth had unidentified Radar course  
340 degs. in 49 degs. 44' N. 02 degs. 08' W.  
(3) At 1210Z/27th Dec. A/C D/331 obtained ASV contact in  
58 degs. 28' N. 01 degs. 40' W.  
(D.D.I.C. 281115 to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.)

U-Boat Estimates.  
dispositions. (D.D.I.C. 281349A and 281355A)

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

(1) A further attack with armour is still expected in the north of the German Salient. On Schouwen the garrison has been reinforced, smoke projectors have been installed, and a number of outboard motor boats capable of carrying 20 men imported.

North  
Sea.

2(a) General Eisenhower's Deputy Supreme Commander has replied to Air Ministry's query regarding Admiralty's request for the bombing of E and mid-gut U-Boat pens and shelters (see Situation Report of the 27th) to the effect that he considers their importance below that of land oil or traffic targets, but thinks they might well be attacked by supplementary forces not so employed.

(b) M.T.B.782 was mined and sunk off Ostend and M.T.B.753 damaged in picking up survivors. This leaves Ostend "desperately short of ships" for current commitments.

(c) A midget U-Boat, complete with half-launched torpedo and dead pilot has been recovered by READY, minesweeper, who is towing her to the U.K.

(d) Two ground mines were detonated in the Nore-Schelde Channel.

(e) Channel Q.Z.X. is now considered clear of mined mines.

Channel

3(a) The American ships BLACK HAWK and ARTHUR SEWALL were torpedoed in T.B.C.21 convoy four miles south of Portland Bill at 1435. All available A/S craft closed the neighbourhood, and after rendering assistance combed the area for the U-Boat. M.T.B.733 found a contact 5 miles to the southward three hours after the torpedoing, but without material result.

(b) HOTHAM, BRILLIANT, HELMSDALE and BRAITHWAITE have attacked a likely contact about 30 miles N.E. of Cape Barfleur. After obtaining 5 explosions and an air bubble from a hedgehog attack they turned the target over to the Tenth Escort Group.

(c) Commander in Chief Portsmouth is rearranging both the timing and tracks of cross-Channel convoys to avoid the U-Boat focal areas near H.10 and H.2 buoys during daylight. C.T.F.125 agrees and will accept ships in Cherbourg and le Havre in darkness.

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

- Riviera. (4) Last night targets in Genoa area attacked by 5 Venturas, one E-Boat and one barge probably sunk.
- Greece. 5(a) At Preveza, the Zervas troops have withdrawn to within five miles of the town. The evacuation of civilians continues.  
(b) At Salonika, the S.S. CHISWICK has been refloated.  
(c) The situation at Mitylene is still tense.  
(d) At Kalamata, the METEOR reports that the E.A.M. Government is becoming increasingly unpopular. An E.L.A.S. reinforcement has been sent to Corinth.  
(e) Caique with refugees on board is reported as having been bombarded by enemy from Leros while on way from Lirsa to Patmos.
- Aegean. (6) Post war signal station holding usual recognition signals has been established in the Palace at Symi.
- Duke of Gloucester. (7) H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester and his party in the S.S. RIMUTAKA, escorted by the EURYALUS and destroyers ULSTER and URCHIN, left Suez today.

East Indies

- E-Boat (8) The American S.S. CAPE SPEAR, Los Angeles for Colombo and Calcutta, reports that an unsuccessful attack was made on her by torpedo at 1900 in 03° 15' S. 78° E.

Australia and New Zealand.

- Philippines. 9(a) An Allied convoy approaching Mindoro via Mindanao and Sulu Seas was subjected to several air attacks. No damage is reported and 8 enemy aircraft were destroyed by ships' A/A fire in  
/this...

686

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines  
(Contd.)

this and the previous evening's raids.  
(b) P.T. Boats operating from Ormoc destroyed  
4 barges and probably a 5th along East Coast of  
Cebu tonight.

Indo  
China.

(10) 2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 2 destroyers  
reported as being off Deyo Tee Cap Saint Jacques  
but having only 2 destroyers and 1 freighter  
there next morning.



687

War Diary29.12.1944  
FridayHOME COMMANDSMovements

SCOTT, surveying ship. C. in C. Nore is requested to sail SCOTT to Plymouth on 3rd January to embark Motor Dinghy and for onward routing to Brest.  
(2) On arrival Brest SCOTT is to survey Port and Approaches as required by C.T.G.125.10.  
(3) Expected date of completion of survey is to be reported to A.N.C.X.F. when known.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 291010A to C. in C. Nore, SCOTT)

DIADEM, Cruiser. Arrived C.S.10 in DIADEM.  
(N.O.I.C. Aultbea, 291121A to A.C.O.S.)

KELANTAN, Minesweeper maintenance ship. When ready about 3rd January KELANTAN is to be sailed to Portsmouth to embark stores.  
(2) On completion KELANTAN is to proceed to Falmouth for onward routing in convoy to Mediterranean.  
(D.M.S. 291217A to F.O.I.C.London, C. in C. Portsmouth)

CALPE, ACTIVE, destroyers. CALPE is to pass the gate at 1700A/29th Dec. to R/V at D.1 buoy with ACTIVE at 2000A/29th. On meeting ACTIVE (S.O) and CALPE are to proceed in company to Gibraltar.  
(2) Routed to D 1 buoy thence through positions:  
(C) 180 degs. Lizard 3 miles.  
(D) 43 degs. N. 10 degs. W. (E) 39 N. 10 W.  
(F) 225 degs. Cape St. Vincent 15 miles.  
(G) 35.51 N. 06.10' W. thence to Gibraltar.  
(3) S. of A. 18 knots ACTIVE is to report E.T.A. 6 hours before arrival.  
(5) F.O.I.C.Falmouth is requested to sail ACTIVE to comply.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 291320A to CALPE, ACTIVE, F.O.I.C.Falmouth)

PRINS ALBERT L.S.I.(s). SAUMAREZ, VIRAGO, VIGILANT Destroyers. SAUMAREZ (D.26) and VIRAGO are to be sailed to reach Clyde by a.m. 8th January.  
(2) F.O.I.C.Greenock is requested to sail H.M.S. PRINS ALBERT escorted by SAUMAREZ and VIRAGO on 8th January to rendezvous off Milford Haven with VIGILANT.  
(3) C. in C. Nore is requested to sail VIGILANT from Thames accordingly.  
(4) Ships are then to proceed to Gibraltar at 18½ knots. Route will be promulgated by Admiralty.  
(5) On arrival at Gibraltar PRINS ALBERT is to proceed to East Indies as ordered by C. in C. Med. Further orders for onward routing of destroyers to East Indies follow.  
(D.O.D.(H), 291554A to C. in C. H.F., C. in C. Nore, F.O.I.C. Greenock, F.O.I.C. Tyne, C. in C. Med.)

MILNE, MATCHLESS, destroyers. Sailed Capt. (D) 3 in MILNE and MATCHLESS for Gibraltar route in accordance with A.M. 271506A December. S. of A. 17 knots.  
(F.O.I.C.Greenock, 291706A to Admty. C. in C. W.A. F.O.G.M.A.)

/EMPRESS ...

29.12.1944  
Friday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Movements - Contd.

EMPRESS, Intend to sail EMPRESS at 1130A/31st December to  
escort Belfast in accordance with para. 5 of A.M. 032318  
carrier. not to all addressees escorted to the vicinity  
Lundy Is. Escort to be detailed later.  
(2) Routed by standard route S. of A. 15 knots.  
(3) C. in C. W.A. is requested to provide onward  
escort as considered necessary through W.A. Command E.T.A.  
of arrival Lundy Is. 0001A/1st Jan.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 291843A to F.O.I.C.N.I.)

GLOIRE, E.T.A. Brest entrance swept channel 0800Z/31st  
Fr. Cruiser. Dec.  
(GLOIRE, 292001Z to Admty.)

Operations

North Sea

M.T.B. 782 M.T.B. 782 sunk by mine in position 51 degs. 24'  
mined off N. 03 degs. 27' E. Casualties 3 missing 2 seriously  
Ostend. injured. M.T.B. 753 damaged in collision with  
wreckage whilst picking up survivors.  
M.T.B. 753 returning to Harbour.  
M.T.B. 756 sailed from Ostend to reinforce F.A.6.  
Ostend is now desperately short of ships and cannot meet commit-  
ments for night of 29/30th without reinforcements.  
(C.F.M.U.I, 290602 to C. in C. Nore.)

Naval A.X.157 December 29th.  
bombing Combined Strategic Targets Committee.  
target (1) Air Ministry letter C.M.S. 608/DCAS dated  
priorities. 23rd December to Bomber Command and Air Ministry  
Signal A.X.667 December 21 to U.S. St.A.F.E. (Main)  
a priority list of Naval targets will, in future,  
be issued weekly by the Combined Strategic target  
Committee. This list will be prepared by the Admiralty and will  
give guidance as to the current importance of Naval targets  
including those in enemy U-Boat organisation.  
(2) This list will provide guidance as to those Naval targets  
which can profitably be attacked either specifically with  
marginal effort or incidentally to major strategic operations as  
targets for minor diversions within a major tactical plan  
executed in fulfilment of the main directive or as targets or  
opportunity, when conditions prevent attack of briefed main  
objectives.  
(3) The weekly lists of Naval target priorities will carry the  
codeword "Navtar" as previously, and will be numbered consecu-  
tively as before, and in continuation of the series issued prior  
to "Overlord". The current priorities are as follows:  
(4) "Navtar" No.23. Primary Naval targets arranged in priority  
groups. Targets in each Group are of equal important.

War Diary29.12.1944  
FridayHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorth Sea.

Naval bombing target priorities (Contd.)

Group I - U-Boats. (A) Hamburg, Slips at Blohm and Voss for assembly of Type XXI, slips at Finkenwaerder for assembly of Type XIII. Farge (Nr. Vegesack, covered berths under construction).  
(B) Bremen. Slips at Deschimag for assembly of Type XXI.  
Shelter at Bremen (not roofed).  
(C) Danzig. Slips at Schiechau for assembly of Type XXI. Danziger Werft Shipyard.

Group (2) E-Boat bases. (A) Ymuiden. (B) Waalhaven.  
(C) Den Helder.

(Group 3) - U-Boats. (A) Kiel. Germania assembly slips. Deutsche Werke Shipyard. Howaltz Werke Ships.  
(B) Vegesack Vulkan Werke.  
(Air Ministry, 290900Z to Admty)

S.H.A.E.F. mildly interested in suppression of midget U and E-Boats.

Your 271530. Consider attacks on E-Boat pens and Midget S/M areas below battle area oil and transportations targets. However attacks against these targets are considered highly desirable if attacks can be made by supplementary forces not employed on higher priority targets.  
(S.H.A.E.F. 291315Z to Air Ministry)

Midget U-Boat recovered.

Midget S/M with dead pilot on board and port torpedo still midway found drifting 038 degs. from 4 miles and is now in tow H.M.S. READY escorted by ONYX.  
(2) Submarine is towing astern satisfactorily at short stay at 4 knots. I think it would be damaged towing alongside.  
(3) Reaching Small Downs 0400 tomorrow Saturday.  
(S.O. M.S.F.18, 291601 A to C. in C.Nore)  
Your 291601A. Close entrance to Dover Harbour reporting E.T.A. direct to V.A. Dover.  
(2) V.A. Dover is requested to collect tow from READY and provide berth in harbour.  
(C. in C. Nore, 292149A to S.O.M.S.F.18)  
My 291601. Now intend to proceed Margate Roads. Maximum safe towing speed is 4 knots and tidal stream precludes Small Downs.  
(2) Consider harbour launch would be most suitable craft to take tow.  
(S.O. M.S.F. 18, 292157A to C. in C. Nore)  
My 292149A request tow may be berthed in safe position.  
(2) Admiralty have been asked to send technical officers to be at Dover at 0700 tomorrow Saturday.  
(C. in C. Nore, 292304Z to V.A. Dover)

/Situation ...

29.12.1944  
Friday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea

Situation Report. Cositintrep No.269 Part 4.  
Discharge by sea - 24 hour period ending 1600A/28 December.

<u>British</u>	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> <u>(Incl.coal)</u>	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>	<u>Ammo.</u>
Antwerp	-	-	9,430	-	2,141
Ostend	915	-	964	2,017	-
Boulogne	-	-	-	-	-
Dieppe	-	-	664	-	-
Caen	-	-	1,172	-	-
Calais	-	2	-	-	-
Ghent	-	-	1,940	-	-
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14,170</b>	<b>2,017</b>	<b>2,141</b>
<u>U.S. North</u>					
Antwerp	-	-	15,164	-	484
Cherbourg	220	131	6,877	2,230	2,814
Le Havre	3,227	115	6,195	1,581	2,426
Rouen	198	56	2,499	-	342
Granville	-	-	2,011	-	-
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>3,645</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>32,746</b>	<b>3,811</b>	<b>6,066</b>
<u>U.S. South</u>					
Marseilles	51	58	18,241	-	7,940
Port De Bouc	-	-	1,620	2,326	-
Toulon	No report received				
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>19,861</b>	<b>2,326</b>	<b>7,940</b>

Signed Eisenhower Cite SHGDS.

(S.H.A.E.F. 291700A to Admty)

Operations. From photographs dyke road between Oostvoorne (D.5074) and Hellevoetsluis (D.5164) has been reopened. Good sources report garrison Schouwen increased to 2000 with 500 in Zieriksee (D.3546) at Zype (D.4845) smoke projectors are being installed: number of outboard motorboats each capable of carrying 20 men placed at odd spots on Southern coast of island. (5) General. Battle for Bastogne showing signs of spreading. Believed enemy will be forced eventually to bring up armour though at present trying to stave off crisis by rushing up infantry and Panzer Grenadiers: perhaps hopes to stage one more attack with all his armour in North first. Signs of subsidiary or diversionary attack mounting in West Holland continue.

(S.H.A.E.F. 291815A to War Office)

Operations

Channel

U-Boat threat to mid-Channel shipping. My 281334. In view of present difficulty in locating U-Boats cross-Channel route in my Command must be considered dangerous, the danger decreasing to the eastward.

(2) It is my appreciation the the menace from mines in mid-Channel is less than that from S/MS and the presence of ocean buoys on mid-Channel routes therefore assists the enemy more than ourselves.

(3) U-Boat attacks. It is considered that U-Boats are

/tending ...

29.12.1944  
FridayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

U-Boat  
threat to  
mid-Channel  
shipping.

tending to attack by periscope rather than by hydrophone methods and that therefore they attack in daylight. It must be noted that all attacks in the Portsmouth Command have been made during daylight hours.

(4) Focal points. As regards traffic to Cherbourg the focal area of U-Boat activity is in the vicinity of H.10 buoy with a secondary focal area in the neighbourhood of H.2 buoy. Asdic conditions in the Cherbourg area are known to be bad. These conditions will also be adverse for the use of U-Boat hydrophones and will again tend to force U-Boats to attack by periscope in preference to attacking by hydrophones.

(5) The following immediate steps are being taken to reduce danger from U-Boat attack.

(A) Cross-Channel convoys are being routed to pass through the most dangerous areas in dark hours. This will entail arrival in darkness at Cherbourg and may do so at Pasture.

(B) Disregard of searched channels. It is intended to disregard the searched channels between Z and Kansas buoy and between H.2 and H.10 buoys and to route all ships five miles clear of mid-channel buoys on these routes until these buoys can be removed.

(C) Use of existing routes. The following cross-Channel routes are already in existence: H channel route Z,K and J channels together with Linging channels at their northern and southern extremities. This network allows a certain measure of flexibility and diversionary routeing. It is intended to use these measures whenever circumstances so require.

(D) Wight to Cherbourg route. For the present this passage will be made in both directions during dark hours. Convoys will be routed from a position near A4 buoy by the Pluto route direct to Cherbourg. This route is being adopted for the following reasons.

(1) It avoids the secondary focal area in the vicinity of H.2 buoy. See para. 4. (2) It is the shortest possible route.

(3) The least time is spent in passing through the dangerous area near H.10 Buoy where bad asdic conditions exist.

(E) Wight to Havre. It is intended to adopt alternative routeing by route ZK during dark hours, or if passage cannot be timed to conform to this, by J and Havre-Dieppe channels where the main part of passage can at present be made with reasonable safety in daylight.

(F) Ocean convoys. The question of timing sections breaking off from ocean convoys to conform to the above arrangements is being considered separately and will be forwarded later.

(6) Under present circumstances all vessels allocated to me are fully employed as escorts, leaving the two escort groups for hunting and following up S/M reports. Sudden and unforeseen calls for fast escort vessels cannot always therefore be met.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 290013A to Admty, A.N.C.X.F., C.T.F.125)

Your 290013. Concur generally. Ships can be received Cherbourg and Le Havre in darkness. Request date effective.

(C.T.F.125, 291401 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

/Patrols ...

29.12.1944  
FridayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel - Contd.

- Patrols and escorts. Arrange R/V with E.G.10. Hand over and return SPITHEAD to arrive at first light for 48 hours stand off. Berths will be allocated by Capt. D. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 290104A to E.G.30)  
S.O. E.G.17th reports very loud roaring Hydrophone effect was experienced North Cape De La Hague.
- (2) Source H.E. were located at following position.  
(A) West going tide 49 degs. 53' 01 degs. 52' W. and 49 degs. 46' 36" 01 degs. 55' 12" W.  
(B) East going tide 49 degs. 46' 36" 01 degs. 52' W.  
(3) The effect appears to be caused by strong tidal stream meeting inequalities in sea bed see Charts 1106 and 2675B, Cape Flamanville to St. Marcouf Island, and English Channel middle sheet. (C. in C. Portsmouth 290358A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
On arrival Cherbourg proceed to sweep route direct from H.10 to position RR 50 degs. 26' N. 01 degs. 11' W. so as to R/V at position RR AR 2130 with WEP.6 codeword "Brunette" 6 X Y.  
(2) Escorts CROIX DE LORRAINE, SNOWBERRY.  
(3) Escort convoy to Cherbourg by reverse route. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 291610A to WATCHMAN)  
Patrol off Cherbourg.
- Leave patrol and proceed to sweep route direct from H.10 position RR (50 degs. 26' N. 01 degs. 11' W.) to F buoy so as to R/V with convoy WVP 24 codeword "Monstrous" KA at F buoy at 0300.  
(2) Escorts LA DECOUVERT, L'AVENTURE.  
(3) Escort convoy to Le Havre. Speed 14 knots. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 291638A to VANOC)  
Air Patrols. My 281728 para.12 not to all.
- A. Night 29th-30th. Patrol 32 on long 02 degs. 15' W. by L.L. Wellingtons. Day 30th, Patrol 32 and Patrol 33 West of H Channel by Liberators. Patrols 5 and 6 between H Channel and Kansas Channel by Swordfish.
- B. 838 Squadron NBU. 842 Squadron TKU.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 291710A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)  
Request you will sail 9th E.G. forthwith at best speed and without fuelling to Longships thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth.  
My 281301 not to all is cancelled. (C. in C. W.A. 291958A to T.C. Larne)  
Day Patrol 30th December. Patrol Areas limits given.  
ANTHONY, TONKINOIS 01 degs. 30' 01 degs. 00' W. 50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30' N.  
(2) VANOC, WATCHMAN 01 degs. 30' 02 degs. 00' W. 50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30' N.  
(3) M.T.Bs 02 degs. 25' 02 degs. 00' W. 50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30' N.  
(4) E.G.17 two miles each side H channel. Two ships from H.2 to 50 degs. 02'. Two ships from 50 degs. 02' to H.10 buoy.  
(5) E.G.10 two ships two miles each side of Q.Z.S.636 from Z buoy to 50 degs. 10'. Three ships three miles each side of Q.Z.S.636 from 50 degs. 10' to Kansas.  
(6) E.G.10, E.G.17 report dispositions of ships. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 292254A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

693

29.12.1944  
FridayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel - Contd.

Possible U-Boat 30' N.E. of C. Barfleur. HOTHAM attacking likely contact in position 050 degs. 11' N. 00 degs. 47.8 W. by (?log). BRILLIANT carrying out observant. Request assistance. (BRILLIANT, 291153A to S.O.E.G.10) HOTHAM and HELMSDALE have made Hedgehog attacks on likely contact. HELMSDALE still in contact. (BRILLIANT, 291505 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

S.O. E.G.10 has taken over contact. Am returning to Portsmouth with HOTHAM expect to arrive Nab 1845. (BRILLIANT, 291644A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

My 291153 and 291644. 2nd Hedgehog attack by HOTHAM produced 2 explosions likely a hit. Thence no probable contacts obtained by BRILLIANT or HOTHAM but several continually attacked by HELMSDALE and BRAITHWAITE. Constant investigations and attacking of contacts by all ships resulted in no search other than observant being required. Lack of T.B.S. in BRILLIANT prevented interception of information passing between other ships and operations were turned over to 10th E.G.

(BRILLIANT, 292041A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Contact gained at 2200 yards. Firm contact good trace held to time of firing. No H.E. or whistle effect heard. Slight high doppler. Movement 080 degs. 2 knots no tide. Full pattern Hedgehog fired no explosion, contact regained immediately range opened to 1500 yards and second attack commenced. Contact firm good trace. No H.E. or whistle effect. No doppler. Movement 080 degs. 2 knots tide commencing to ebb. Hedgehog fired 3 explosions air bubble seen to rise and 2 further explosions heard. No further evidence. Contact lost and not regained. Consider this could quite possibly be S/M contact.

(HOTHAM, 292330A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

U-Boat off Portland Bill. T.B.C.21 - 2 ships torpedoed 4 miles 180 degs. Portland Bill, CALGARY carrying out observant, I am standing by both ships. (DAHLIA, 291435A to C. in C. Portsmouth) My 291435A. SS. BLACK HAWK down by stern SS. ARTHUR SEWALL salvageable request tug and medical assistance.

(DAHLIA, 291520A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Close position 4 miles Portland Bill 180 degs. full speed with all ships. Render assistance 2 ships torpedoed.

(N.O.I.C. Portland, 291520A to COMPUTATOR (A/S Trawler))

U-Boat reported position 180 Portland Bill 4 miles at 1435/

29.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 291523A to Ships on Port Wave)

DAHLIA's 291435A. Proceeding with despatch to area with DEANE and BYRON.

(S.O. E.G.21, 291530 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Proceed forthwith to investigate torpedoing 180 Portland Bill 14.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 291536A to S.O. E.G.21)

21st Support Group in vicinity, CALGARY rejoining convoy at best speed, have 68 survivors on board.

(DAHLIA, 291559A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

FITZROY, RUPERT and REDMILL continue hunting. On CONN, BYRON and DEANE joining E.G.21 is to concentrate 21st E.G. on hunt.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 291614A to E.G.21)

/When ...

694

War Diary29.12.1944  
FridayHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel

U-Boat off Portland Bill. (Contd.)

When satisfied that there are sufficient ships to render assistance withdraw all coastal craft and organise A/S search N. and W. of Portland Bill in case S/M seeks shelter in Lyme Bay. Send back to harbour Coastal Craft not required for this.

(N.O.I.C. Portland, 291630 to S.O. M.T.B.F.16)

Search area limits given. Long. of Portland Bill 02 degs. 50' W. 50 degs. 27' N. 50 degs. 37' N.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 291655A to M.T.B.'s 737, 733, 747.)

SS. BLACKHAWK making water but afloat. Ship abandoned. (M.T.B. 750, 291705A to F.O.I.C. Portland)

Two ships of T.B.C.21 torpedoed 180 degs. Portland Bill 4 miles at 1435/29.

Convoy Escorts DAHLIA and CALGARY probably still in area.

(2) At 1709A/29 T.B.C. 21 without Escort plotted in 115 degs. Berry Head 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles on Q.Z.S. 590 proceed to take over Escort.

(3) INCONSTANT ordered to join T.B.C. 21 from Eastwards. (C. in C. Plymouth, 291714A to TJERK HIDDIS, IMPULSIVE)

Am in contact with possible S/M in position 178 degs. Portland Bill 9.4 miles, am attacking. (M.T.B. 733, 291740 to C. in C. Portsmouth)

WHIMBREL (S.O) and MELBREAK join Force 29 and proceed with despatch when ready to carry out A/S search North of a line joining Portland Bill and Berry Head.

(2) Information. Ships torpedoed 180 Portland Bill 4 miles at 1435A/29. E.G.21 S.O. in CONN searching vicinity. M.L's searching within 5 miles of coast between Portland and Lyme Regis.

(3) Report E.T.A. in area to S.O. E.G.21. (C. in C. Plymouth, 291925A to WHIMBREL, MELBREAK)

Unless you have reason to the contrary detach two ships to search in Lyme Bay.

WHIMBREL and MELBREAK delayed by fog. (C. in C. Plymouth, 292136A to S.O. E.G.21)

Possible U-Boat 15' East of Falmouth.

Join CALPE, hunting vicinity 50.07 N. 04.45 W. (C. in C. Plymouth, 292111A to ACTIVE)

OperationsWest Coast France

Patrol. Fuel stocks remaining at 0800/29th 56% no traffic of any kind met. Few French fishing ships vicinity Sables D'Olonne but no Spanish. Information obtained indicates link by U-Boat between St. Nazaire and La Rochelle, 1 U-Boat seen on surface vicinity Sables D'Olonne on 20th November. 3 T.Bs. shelled Pornic on 20th December written report follows. My P.C.S. 2000 46 degs. 55' N. 02 degs. 54' W. 307 degs. 16 $\frac{1}{2}$  knots sweeping to N. Westward during the night. Weather report 9070 3713. (BLYSKAWICA, 291919A to C. in C. Plymouth)



War Diary

29.12.1944  
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches

Patrols.

When ready to-day 29th Commodore (D) W.A. is requested to sail 15th E.G. to pass through position 54 degs. N. 11 degs. W. thence to position 52 degs. 20' N. 12 degs. W.

(2) 2nd E.G. is carrying out Gamma patrol between 52 degs. 32' 10 degs. 06' and 52 degs. 51' 11 degs. 20'.

(3) 6th E.G. is searching area between parallels 52 degs, 00' and 52 degs. 20' and Meridians 10 degs. 50' and 12 degs. 00'.

(4) U-Boats estimated to be Southbound.

(5) Co-operating A/C will use following call signs followed by WILLIAM and a number from 1800.

R/T Taunton. W/T 899.

(C. in C. W.A. 291158A to Com. D. W.A. S.O. E.G.15)

If not in contact proceed forthwith to establish Gamma patrols as follows.

6th E.G. between (A) 51 degs. 31' N. 10 degs. 21' W.

(B) 51 degs. 17' N. 10 degs. 39' W.

2nd E.G. between (B) above and (C) 51 degs. 03' N. 10 degs. 55' W.

15th E.G. between (C) above and (D) 50 degs. 51' N. 11 degs.

10' W. My 291158 is amended accordingly.

(C. in C. W.A. 292148A to S.O.E.G's, 2, 6, 15.)

Operations

Norway

Operation "V.P".

Intend carry out V.P.73. (1) 0300A/30th Dec.

(2) Not later 2100A/30th Dec.

(3) Not later 0900/3rd Jan.

(4) 249 degs. toward Noss Head not more than 20 knots.

(5) Not later p.m. 3rd Jan. (6) No. (7) No.

(8) 069 degs. Noss Head Bressay. (9) No.

(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 291512 to A.C.O.S.)

My 291512A. (1) 069 degs. from Noss Head of more than 20 knots. My 291512A.

(2) 61 degs. 10' N. 04 degs. 30' E. (3) Blank.

(N.O.I.C.Lerwick, 291515A to A.C.O.S.)

Intend to carry out V.P.77. (1) 0310A/30th Dec.

(2) Not later than 2100A/30th Dec.

(3) Not later than 0900/3rd Jan.

(4) 278 degs. toward Noss Head not more than 20 knots.

(5) Not later than p.m. 3rd Jan. (6) No. (7) No.

(8) 098 degs. Noss Head Bressay.

(9) No.

(N.O.I.C.Lerwick, 291521A to A.C.O.S.)

V.P.73 and V.P.77 postponed. E.T.D. now 0300/31st.

(N.O.I.C.Lerwick, 291816A to A.C.O.S.)

Allocation of escort carriers and aircraft in H.F.

I appreciate the difficulties in allocation of escort carriers and aircraft and the following requirements are set out as an attempt to define the target we should aim for in Home Fleet under conditions obtaining at present.

(2) ....

War Diary29.12.1944  
FridayHOME COMMANDSOperationsNorway

Allocation  
of escort  
carriers  
and aircraft  
in H.F.  
(Contd.)

A torpedo strike of 12 A/C capable of being embarked in escort carriers for use against fleet units. This commitment will be met by 12 A/C of 828 squadron. This will be relieved by 821 Squadron in PUNCHER at present working up. Admiralty's 231646 refers.

(3) Escort for Russia convoys. This work is very exacting and each convoy should have at least two escort carriers trained in night A/S work.

CAMPANIA, NAIRANA and VINDEK carry out this duty at present. A fourth carrier similarly equipped is desirable so that they may work in pairs and will be a necessity if the present cycle is reduced one carrier of each pair should carry a flight of night fighters.

(4) Operations on the Norwegian coast, either minelaying or anti-merchant ship strikes. Carriers should work in pairs, therefore three carriers should be available to allow for one away boiler cleaning. TRUMPETER and PREMIER are employed on this duty at present. PUNCHER will join up when ready.

(5) While the disposition of the German Air Force in Norway remains as at present it is necessary when operating off the Norwegian coast to provide fighters on the basis of

(A) For escort of strikes and anti-flak at least three fighters for every two T.B.R.'s. Coastal command put the proportion of fighters higher than this.

(B) Combat air patrol round the force while the strike is airborne.

(C) One flight of night fighters to drive off shadowing A/C. A. and B. are provided from 881 Squadron temporarily allocated to the H.F. C. is not catered for at present.

(6) To summarize; the following are the additions required to achieve the above target on the basis of carrier allocation laid down in Admiralty's 251515.

(A) One escort carrier equipped for night A/S work (see para.3).

(B) The retention of 881 Squadron or another fighter squadron not allocated to a carrier (para. five).

(C) Three flights of night fighters (paras. 3 and 5)

(C. in C. H.F. 291537A to Admty.)

OperationsNorthern Waters

Convoy  
R.A.62

Intend sailing Group 18 from North Dvina fairway buoy at 1200A/31st December consists probably of following 9 ships:

EMPIRE STALWART (special Commodore) BRITISH RESPECT (T) (Vice) EMPIRE GARRICK (T) LONGWOOD (T)

FORT MASSAC, FORT BOISE, EDWARD N. HURLEY, (corrupt groups) LINN BOYD and BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

(2) Radio distinguishing group arrangements for this sailing is XS.

(3) Local Russian escort arranged B.N.L.O. in S.O. escort. (S.B.N.O. Archangel, 290945A to S.B.N.O. N. Russia)

/J.W. ...

War Diary

29.12.1944  
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Northern Waters - Contd.

J.W. Sabwa 780 Mossy.  
Convoys. Reference Sabwa 771 Mossy and Sabwa 689 Mossy.  
Para. 1. W.S.A. has been informed by their  
London Office that it is expected that the cycles  
will be reduced to 30 days after J.W.64 and that  
the expected date of sailing of J.W.65 is 5th March.  
Para.2. W.S.A. is proceeding on this basis and has allocated 16  
ships to load in U.S.A. of which 8 are to berth 20th January for  
H.X.337 and 8 on 25th January for H.X.338. Cargo is now being  
called up. - Please confirm dates of sailing and connections.  
Para.3. W.S.A. is considering question of 30 days cycles and  
will advise their opinion shortly.  
(C.S.A.B. Washington, 291029 to C.S.A.B. London)

Patrol. If not in contact at 1500A to-day Friday leave  
patrol and search to position 60 degs. 20' N. 03  
degs. 08' W. thence search on course of 200 degs.  
to position 59 degs. 50' N. 03 degs. 30' W. thence  
establish Gamma between 59 degs. 45' N. 03 degs. 00' W. and 59  
degs. 54' N. 03 degs. 54' W.  
(2) A/C in area PP 40 N. OP 22.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 291220A to BENTINCK)  
If not in contact at 0930A tomorrow Saturday leave patrol  
and search to the N.N.E. and resume present patrol at 1630A.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 292131A to PASLEY)

Convoy J.W.63 10 knots convoy (A) 1800A/30th.  
J.W:63. (B) Escorted. (C) 36 E.T.A. 280 degs. 20 miles  
Cape Wrath 2330A 30th.  
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 291436A to C. in C. W.A.  
Admty, A.C.O.S., A.C.I.C., C. in C. H.F., C. in C.  
Rosyth, Flag Officers and Capts. (D) H.F.  
S.B.N.O. Archangel, S.B.N.O. North Russia, N.L.O.  
13th Group, H.Q.A.D. G.B., H.Q.C.C.)

Mining

1st and 40th M.S.F. Request you will sail available ships of 1st and  
40th Fleet M/S.F. each with attached danlayers to  
arrive Margate Roads before dark tomorrow Saturday.  
(2) Sweeping orders follow.  
(C. in C. Nore, 291036A to F.O.I.C. Harwich)  
JASON, GLEANER, HALCYON, SEAGULL, LORD ASHFILED, HEYBURNE WYKE  
of 1st M.S.F. and CATHERINE, GRECIAN, GORGON, PIQUE, TATTOO,  
HANNARAY and FAIRWAY of 40th M.S.F. sail tomorrow Saturday  
December 30th via Q.Z.S. 446, 468, 651, to comply with C. in C.  
Nore's 291036A.  
(3) Report E.T.D. and E.T.A.  
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 291521A to S.O's M.S.F. 40 and M.S.F.1)

/M.S.F.42...

698

29.12.1944  
FridayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSMining

- M.S.F.42. Sweeping programme for tomorrow Saturday.
- (1) Conduct 2 further laps in "G" formation on the north side of the area reported in your 281825A.
- (2) Conduct check sweep in "G" formation either side of the centre line N.F.2 to N.F.6 buoy.
- (3) Anchor Margate Roads. Acknowledge.
- (C. in C. Nore, 291155A to M.S.F. 42)  
Your 282338A. Your 271510A complied with.
- (2) E.G. M.S. sweep out throughout area as follows:  
2 actuations to depth of 6 cables either side of centre line N.F.5 to N.F.6. One actuation in remainder of area (?swept) my 2810825A. Amend limit of area Y clear to as follows.
- (?A) 51 degs. 22.8' N. 02 degs. 27.5' E.  
(B) 51 degs. 23' N. 02 degs. 31' E.  
(C) 51 degs. 23.2' N. 02 degs. 34' E.  
(D) 51 degs. 21.2' N. 02 degs. 34' E.  
(E) 51 degs. (721.1') N. 02 degs. 31' E.  
(F) 51 degs. 21.2' (?) N. 02 degs. 27.5' E.
- (4) 2 red ground mines detonated in position 51 degs. 21.9' N. 02 degs. 29.2' E. Both detonated together after 4½ seconds pulse within 50 yards of each other.
- (5) Flotilla returning Margate Road. Intend sailing 0600A tomorrow to comply your 291155A.  
(S.O. M.S.F. 42, 291820A to C. in C. Nore)

- Q.Z.X. Have swept 3½ laps search completed formation and considered check clearance from Eastern limit to A line 1 clear of 8 miles East of Western limit Q.Z.X.1475 and mines. further 8 cables to Westward at Northern End. Negative result. Consider Q.Z.X. is clear moored mines.
- No further sweep on account of encounter reported in my 291601 (see North Sea Section).  
(S.O. M.S.F.18, 291645A to C. in C. Nore)

- Mines off Ostend. One Red Ground mine detonated at 1245 to-day in position 031 degs. N.F.11 buoy 5.5 cables. Explosion observed at 1447/28th close North of wreck of EMPIRE PATH in position 512118 N. 02.51.06 E. probably spontaneous mine no sweepers in vicinity. Explosion reported by M.L. (N.O.I.C.Ostend, 291913 to Admty as amended by his 292356)

War Diary

29.12.1944  
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Technical

Russian-held German equipment. Prime Minister has accepted Stalin's offer to grant facilities to British Specialists to study torpedo on the spot. Stalin has given necessary instructions to appropriate Soviet Military Authority. Your 211400 refers.

(2) Following party has been selected:

(a) Torpedo Specialists. (1) Captain E.F. Collingwood R.N.V.R. born Alnwick, Northumberland, January, 1900.

(2) Mr. J.C.O. Rochester, born Desborough, October 1917 (civilian)

(3) Mr. F.H.C. Crick, born Northampton, June 1916 (civilian).

(b) Radar and W/T Specialist.

(1) Mr. R.A. Yeo, born Portsmouth, August 1904 (civilian).

Total four. Request you apply for visas for above. Application will be made to Soviet Consulate in London 29th December.

(3) No interpreters available from United Kingdom. Can you arrange with those in U.S.S.R?

(4) Party will leave by air as soon as visas granted. Prime Minister's message to Stalin contemplated that they would travel in convoy about to leave. It proved impossible to make passage arrangements in time. You will no doubt arrange direct with Soviet Naval Staff for provision of proper facilities in Russia.

(5) In view of your para.2. presume Soviet Naval Staff will give British experts full opportunity of inspecting U-Boat and equipment and will provide them with information for which you have already asked.

(M. Br. 292005A to Adm. Archer)

Casualties and Defects

EMPIRE JAVELIN, troopship. Regret to report loss of L.S.I. EMPIRE JAVELIN while on passage from Portsmouth to Havre.

(2) Explosion believed to be a torpedo occurred in position 50 degs. 04' N. 01 degs. 00' W. at 1440/28th December and a second explosion occurred shortly before 1722 when ship sank in position 50 degs. 00.5' N. 01 degs. 03.5' W.

(3) Ship was carrying approx. 1480 American troops of whom all but six reported to be saved. No report of any losses among crew.

(4) All survivors with the exception of 17 landed at Le Havre. Latter were landed at Southampton.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 291419A to Admty.)

Tid 44 tug. Tid 44 has been raised and is now berthed at Whites Yard, Itchen. Squid's 051102A of December 5th refers.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 291746A to Admty.)

Shipping and Convoys

T.A.P/A.T.P. Convoys. A.M. 201854A. Commencing January 1st daily personnel convoys will run from Tilbury to Ostend and return. Short title T.A.P. and A.T.P. Convoys will normally consist of two ships with one destroyer escort. S. of A. approx. 15 knots.

(2) T.A.P. convoys are required to arrive Ostend 3 hours before daylight high water and Commodore Southend is requested to

/promulgate ...

700

29.12.1944  
FridayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSShipping and Convoys

T.A.P/A.T.P. promulgate time-table in consultation with Capt.  
Convoys. i/c Tilbury.  
(Contd.) (3) D.21 is requested to detail one destroyer  
daily as escort to T.A.P. returning from Ostend  
with A.T.P. convoys. Destroyer detailed to  
arrive Southend as required by Commodore Southend.  
(4) VESPER and VANQUISHER will be released from N.A.P/A.N.P.  
escort duties and will arrive Sheerness on 31st December and 1st  
January respectively  
(C. in C. Nore, 291215A to Nore Command)

Draught of ships for Antwerp. Your 291106 and my 272132.  
There are normally 8 convoys per day to be phased  
on the Thames Antwerp route besides others for  
the North, and the English Channel and the Western  
Ocean.  
The requirements of minesweeping, the IAZ patrols  
and Oyster mine restrictions on the Antwerp route prohibit  
constant alterations in times of sailing to meet tidal requirements  
under existing short daylight hours. The route for the Antwerp  
traffic is dependent on the mining situation and varies from  
day to day. It is not predictable.  
(2) There will be days when tidal conditions on the route in force  
will allow ships of 30 feet draught to proceed, but as the  
route is dependent on the current mining situation these days  
cannot be forecast more than a few hours ahead. At this time  
of year the situation is aggravated by fog. Thus ships of over  
26 feet draught may have to wait for a week or 10 days until a  
favourable tide occurs.  
(3) If these delays are acceptable ships up to 30 feet draught  
can be taken as opportunity offers but until April 26 feet is  
the maximum acceptable to avoid excessive delays due to draught.  
(4) It is relevant that twice for a period of some days  
convoys have had to be routed over the Oost Dyck Bank and your  
attention is invited to depths of water between N.F.10 and N.F.13  
and on either side.  
(C. in C. Nore, 291836 to A.N.C.X.F.)

701

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

A/S patrol. E.G.38 in LEITH is to slip and proceed at 1600A/29th Dec. to take S.O. A/S patrol to westwards.  
(2) CONVULVULUS is to signal position and time of R/V. with LEITH.  
(3) When R/V has been made E.G.38 is to detach 41 E.G. to carry out patrol "Kidney" inside 100 fathom line to westward of straits between 036° 50' N. and 035° 30' N.  
(4) E.G.38 is then to take 38 Escort vessel under his orders and proceed to carry out A/S. L.C.V. through position (A) (K) (L) and (B) of patrol "Bacon" and "Sausage".  
(F.O.G.M.A., 291142A to E.G.38 in LEITH, CONVULVULUS).

MIRROR, Intend sail Cable Ship MIRROR escorted by  
KILMARTIN. KILMARTIN for Dakar at 1300A/30 route Coastal omitting F.H. and J speed 9.5 Chop 02 0900A, E.T.A. 1830A/5.  
(2) KILMARTIN to return Gibraltar immediately on being relieved by N.O.I.C. Freetown.  
F.O.G.M.As. 201227A refers.  
(Commorseafron, 291611A to F.O.C.W.Af.).

MARIE In view of A.M. 281205 (MARIE LOUISE MACKAY has  
LOUISE missed L.S.T. convoy, C. in C. Plymouth requested  
MACKAY. to sail her with escort to R/V. with K.M.S.75)  
not to all, just received, aspect cancels my  
291226A.  
(2) Comply with A.M. referred to.  
(3) Recall ARCTIC RANGER.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 292150A to S.B.N.O. Azores).

South Atlantic

Man Power From Achimota (Resident Minister) No. 1360 to  
Economy. S. of S. Colonies. (No T.O.O. 29th Dec.)  
See Lion Copy.

701A

# TOP SECRET

IN

**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.)

No T.O.O./29th December.

From Achimota (Resident Minister) Date 30.12.44.  
Recd.1320

CYPHER O.T.P.

Addressed S. of S. Colonies.

*MAN Power West Africa*

No.1360.

Addressed to S. of S.(for First Lord of the Admiralty, S.of S.  
for War, S. of S. for Air).

Repeated by Savingram to West African Governors.

Following for Minister of Defence from the Resident  
Minister. Begins.

I have now held manpower meeting of the three Service  
Chiefs, mentioned in paragraph 11 of my telegram No.1349 of  
23rd December.

2. The following summarises results in respect of each  
service.

3. Navy. First, total present strength is about 6,500 of which  
approximately 2,500 are on shore establishments. This shows  
reduction of 1,250 officers and ratings over the past year and  
does not include crews of vessels which have left the station.

Secondly, any large economy can result only from  
contraction of present operational role of the Navy in this  
area.

Thirdly, Flag Officer Commanding is sending his  
escort vessels to Gibraltar and thus able to increase by 60  
the draft of 800 British ratings about to return to the  
United Kingdom. Flag Officer Commanding states that he cannot  
reduce shore repair facilities, consequent on the departure  
of these six vessels, unless he knows this is permanent.  
A further 40 British ratings will be thrown up, due to the  
departure of the floating dock.

Fourthly, Flag Officer Commanding has kept, and is  
keeping, under constant review his shore establishments. He  
is satisfied that neither at these nor at his Headquarters  
is there any under-employment.

Fifthly. Flag Officer Commanding is pursuing a  
policy of substitution of Africans in all fields where this is  
possible. Six trawlers have two-thirds African crews and this  
policy will continue.

Sixthly, at my request Flag Officer Commanding  
will conduct, under his personal direction, a further review  
in order to see whether manpower economies, which are  
progressively being effected, can be intensified both in  
quantity and speed.



**TOP SECRET**

IN

**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.)

4. Army. First, total war establishment of officers and British other ranks is approximately 6,840. Army has no direct operational role, its primary task is to supply trained African manpower to reinforce two Divisions and A.A. units in India and Burma.

Secondly, any major saving of European manpower must depend on reduction of reinforcement requirements indicated and, even then, the effect of any such reduced demands would not be reflected in saving for several months.

Thirdly, General Officer Commanding has, within the past few months, effected reduction of 590.

Fourthly, there could be a considerable reduction in manpower if the Army could be relieved of responsibility of looking after a very large tonnage of surplus stores held in Command, most of which were intended for use in the event of operations against French West Africa.

Fifthly, at my request, General Officer Commanding has conducted a further special review and now offers a further reduction by 31st March of 600 British ranks over and above the 590 already mentioned.

5. Royal Air Force.

First, total strength of officers and other ranks amounts approximately to 6,670. This shows a reduction of 1,300 officers and airmen over the past year. As in the case of the Navy, any large economy can only result from the contraction of present operational role of the Royal Air Force in this area.

Secondly, I am satisfied, at present, there is considerable under employment at certain stations and, in particular, those on the Trans-African reinforcement route, San, Accra, Kano, Maidugari. Establishments at these stations are based on the flow of 60 aircraft per mensem, whilst actual numbers handled were:-

October	51
November	27

and the latest figures which the Royal Air Force give for December show 10 up to 7th of the month. I feel that manpower (?superfluous) up here should be reviewed. I have asked the Air Officer Commanding to make study of what saving would be effected by supposing that establishments were reduced to 45 aircraft per mensem basis and whether, by extra effort when needed, a reduced establishment could cope with 50 or even more. Air Ministry can (?forecast) future reinforcement traffic over this route.

Thirdly, I have asked Air Officer Commanding to look at Takoradi Base again, where there are some 700 British personnel. /Fourthly

Fourthly, substitution of the West African Air Corps aims to achieve a saving of 1,200 British airmen. Of this total 300 have already been substituted and 150 will be saved within the next month. Of the balance of 750, Air Officer Commanding is unable to give any programme as to the rate and when this substitution will be completed. Air Officer Commanding is pursuing the policy of employing Africans in civilian capacity wherever possible.

Fifthly, he assures me that his Headquarters staffs have been cut to the lowest possible figure.

Sixthly, at my request, Air Officer Commanding, is going to make further special review, under his personal direction, to see if economies, additional to those recommended by Air Ministry Establishments Committee, can be obtained.

6. This summary of my meeting shows that I fear somewhat meagre results, amounting to about 1,350 British ranks plus possible further economies from special reviews. The contraction of operations in this theatre, and of the demand for reinforcements for S.E.A.C. offer the best prospects of effecting further substantial economies.

No T.O.O./29

1st Lord  
1st S.L.(3)  
D.F.S.L.(2)  
2nd S.L.  
Contr.  
Vice Contr.  
5th S.L.  
V.C.N.S.  
A.C.N.S.(A)(2)  
A.C.N.S.(H)  
A.C.N.S.(F)  
A.C.N.S.(UT)(2)  
U.W.R.  
Sec.  
Dep.Sec.  
Nav. Sec.  
Parl. Sec.  
P.A.S.(NP)  
P.A.S.(S)  
D.O.D.(H)(4)  
D.O.D.(F)(2)  
D.C.  
Plot  
D.N.I.(4)  
D.D.I.C.(2)  
D. of P.(2)  
D. of P.(Q)(3)

Received in War Reg. at 2225/1st Jan.

Circulated by Col. Off. to internal Departments and No. 10 Downing Street, Admiralty, W.O., Air Min., W.C.O.

N.A.2nd S.L.(OD)  
N.A.2nd S.L.  
A.C.N.P.  
D. of M.  
D.S.V.P.  
M.D.G.  
E.A.P.  
Hd. of C.W.  
D.C.N.A.E.  
Hd. of M.(2)  
Ad.Blake  
D.A./S.W.  
D.T.D.(4)  
D.T.S.D.  
W.D.  
D.A/U.D.  
D. of L.D.

702

29.12.1944.  
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean

- Greece Situation at midnight. Zervas troops have failed to hold Sinopi line and will be 5 miles North of Harbour by dawn.  
Agree with Mainwaring solution that naval support will be required to stabilise situation while awaiting L.S.Ts. and return of other craft. My 282017 refers. (N.T. in W.D.) (Coprev in BICESTER, 290117B to S.B.N.O. Greece).  
C. in C. Med., pass to Sacmed, S.B.N.O. Greece pass to Greekmil. Mainwaring.  
2. Zervas states he has 500 troops on (?Le)vkas who are now being attacked by superior force. He makes strong request for evacuating troops and civilians, approximately 60(?)00, to Rovigno. I have not committed us to any action, stated my mission completed on evacuation Preveza. Guidance please. (Coprev, 292021B to C. in C. Med., S.B.N.O. Greece) Cositintrep No.538 part 4.
- Greece. In Athens 4 Division made good progress in clearance operations Southeast of the Athens/Faliron Road. Only isolated opposition was encountered. The Ironon district North of the Acropolis has been almost completely cleared by Two Para. Brigade against determined opposition. There has been no material change in Piraeus.  
(A.F.H.Q., No T.O.O. 29 to W.O.)
- Riviera. Comflanfor in MONTCALM sails 1500A/29 from Marseilles to Naples. C.O. FORTUNE becomes Deputy of Comflanfor in Toulon-Golfe Juan area until arrival C.O. JEANNE D'ARC about 1700A/30. (Comflanfor, 290845A to Flanfor, F.O.N.A.M.)
- F.D.T.13 Cancel my 231734A. Intend to sail F.D.T.13 at 1730 Dec. 29 to Gibraltar for onward routing U.K. M.S.C.I.5 refers.  
(9) Admiralty's 091122A and C. in C. Med's 151249A neither to all refer.  
(F.O. Tunisia, 290932A to F.O.G.M.A.)  
My 290932 postponed due to defects.  
(F.O. Tunisia, 271737 to F.O.G.M.A.)
- Linrep 217. Summary of operations 25 - 27 December 1944.  
(A.F.H.Q., 291140A) See Lion Copy.
- NEWFOUNDLAND NEWFOUNDLAND Gibraltar to Alexandria by basic westbound route 309, 0630/30th, speed 22 knots, all times B.  
(R.A. Alexandria, 291156B to Admty. C. in C. Med).
- GLOIRE, Cominch 251517 (GEORGES LEYGUES and MONTCALM not transport available for transport of currency), and C. in C. of currency. Med. 261602. There is no objection to GLOIRE being employed again, but it is understood she cannot in any case transport the balance of currency in one trip. French authorities are at present discussing possibility of shipping it in a merchant ship.  
(A.N.C.X.F., 291203A to Admty).

/KELANTAN...

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

KELANTAN M/S store and repair ship KELANTAN is expected to leave U.K. mid-January.  
2. Until required to join British Pacific Fleet Train KELANTAN is available to maintain mine-sweepers operating in Mediterranean.  
3. KELANTAN is stores for ALGERINE and B.Y.M.S. classes, speed 9 knots endurance 3,000 miles.  
(D.M.S. Approved A.C.N.S. (F), 291214A to C. in C. Med).

<sup>A</sup>  
KUMONNOVO Presume KUMONNOVO sunk. Request early report by (Yugoslav Depot Ship) signal repeated Admiralty for information of Yugoslav Authorities.  
(C. in C. Med., 291256A to V.A. Malta).  
Following from C.O.R.Y.N. Malta begins. Regret to inform total loss of R.Y.N. KUMONNOVO due to bad weather on night of 28th December. Report follows. Ends.  
2. As far as can be ascertained at present loss of life, if any, was small.  
3. A board of enquiry will be held.  
(V.A. Malta, 291829A to C. in C. R.Y.N.)

Duke of Departures (1) EURYALUS. (2) ULSTER. (3) URCHIN. Gloucester. (4) RIMUTAKA.  
(N.O.I.C. Suez, 291437 to Admty).

FORMIDABLE, FORMIDABLE now at Gibraltar will be escorted from SAUMAREZ, Mediterranean to Colombo by SAUMAREZ (D.26), VIRAGO, VIRAGO and VIGILANT.  
VIGILANT. 2. Destroyers will leave U.K. on 8th Jan. in accordance with A.M. 291554 not to all.  
3. On completion of her trials at Gibraltar C. in C. Mediterranean is requested to sail FORMIDABLE to Alexandria to await arrival of destroyers.  
(D.O.D.(F) Approved A.C.N.S.(F) 291600 to Cs. in C Plymouth, H.F., Rosyth, Nore, Mediterranean)  
See also East Indies 291725.

AIRE Request you will sail AIRE on completion of refit to Gibraltar for onward routeing to U.K. A.M. 241641 Nov. not to all refers.  
(C. in C. Med., 291743A to F.O. Tunisia).

Symi No ships or craft are to approach within 2 miles Navigation. of Symi between sunset and sunrise unless:  
(a) they are authorised by ?(F.O.L.E.M.) to do so,  
(b) they are routed to Symi Port to arrive by night, in this case they are not to approach the coast of Symi except to make a landfall at Symi Port at expected time of arrival.  
2. Port war signal station holding usual recognition signals has been established in the Palace see Admty. chart 1669 plan of Port Symi.  
3. Ships disobeying para. one are liable to be fired on without warning by army coast defences.  
(C. in C. Med., 291844A to Med. Stn., 331 B (B.4).)

/Situation...

War Diary.

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean - Contd.

Situation (1) Sicily. Air search for survivors of KUMANOVO  
report number continues. Number of missing has been reduced to  
520 19.

(2) Preveza. Zervas troops have now withdrawn to  
within 5 miles of town. Evacuation of civilians  
continues.

- {3} Kavalla. All quiet.
- {4} Piraeus. No report received.
- {5} Salonika. SS. CHISWICK has been refloated.
- {6} Mitylene. Situation still tense.
- (C. in C. Med., 292041A).

METEOR,  
Kalamata.

E.A.M. Government becoming increasingly unpopular.  
E.L.A.S. reinforcement despatched to Corinth.  
E.L.A.S. mobilisation order has induced population  
to disperse. Boat load arrived alongside after  
dark and volunteered for Greek Navy. I turned  
them over to Fleet Tender 13, Greek Ship.  
(METEOR, 292246B to S.B.N.O. Greece, (R) F.O.L.E.M)

Part Three Coastal Air Force. Night 27/28.  
Air Cositintep Wellingtons and Beaufighters probably damaged 2 of  
No.537. 4 vessels attacked in North Adriatic. Mosquitoes  
and Beaufighters intruded Sarajevo scoring  
several hits on M.T.

Day 28th. Barges and E-boats were attacked by Venturas off Genoa,  
Fighters strafed M.T. Sarajevo area and bridges in Eastern  
Po Valley and bombed road bridge and headquarters in Pigna area.  
(M.A.A.F., No T.O.O. 29th)

# SECRET

704A  
IN

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.)

291140A/December

From A. F. H. Q.

Date 30.12.44.

Recd 0310.

CIPHER

Addressed War Office and Linrep addressees.

281671.

FX75947 cipher 29 Dec.

Cite FHGCT signed Alexander.

Linrep 217.

Summary of operations 25 December to 27 December.

Para. one. Ground.

A. Eighth Army. There has been little change in the Army front except for very small gains by One Canadian Corps in the area southeast of Cotignola and by 5 Corps in the vicinity of S. Andrea. Activity in the remaining sectors was confined to patrolling.

B. Fifth Army. Elements of 4 Corps in the Serchio River valley were attacked on the morning 26 December. At last report the attack was continuing and forward troops have withdrawn some two miles. We now hold a line running generally from Coreglia to Calomini. There have been no material changes on the remainder of the front.

C. AFHQ. Greece. In Piraeus small gains have been made against determined opposition. In Athens further gains have been made in the southwest section of the town and the area between the Acropolis and the Athens/Piraeus road is virtually clear. A small attack on our forces on Kalamaki airfield, five miles south of Athens, was repulsed.

Two. Naval. Naples. Two large French destroyers have been in collision west of Ventotene near Naples and have been towed to latter place.

Greece. At Piraeus harbour has been shelled and Naval College and landing craft hit. Otherwise situation there has been quiet. Evacuation of civilian from Preveza to Corfu in HM ships is proceeding. Naval coastal craft base and army garrison has been established at Symi Island north of Rhodes, and landing of stores progresses.

Three. Air. Improved weather enabled MAAF Strategic Air Force to operate in strength during the period. By night an attack was carried out on Casarsa rail bridge in northeast Italy and supplies were dropped in Yugoslavia on two occasions. By day, heavies with fighter escort attacked five oil refineries. Two in Austria at Brux and Vosendorf, two in Germany, at Blechhammer and Odertal, and one in Poland at Oswiecim. Results varied from poor to excellent. Eight marshalling yards in Austria and one in Yugoslavia were successfully attacked.

/Seven.....

Seven attacks were made upon the Brenner route, cutting the line in several places. Three attacks were made on bridges in northeast Italy at Casarsa, Latisana and Avisio.

Tactical Air Force also operated with maximum effort, by night Mosquitoes, Beaufighters, Bostons and A20's intruded over Po Valley, successfully destroying a number of locomotives, rail cars, and dumps. By day medium bombers and fighter bombers attacked communications on the Brenner route, in the Udine area, and along the Po Valley. Close support targets were also successfully attacked. 29 locomotives, 151 rail cars, 96 motor transport, and 61 buildings were destroyed and 145 rail cuts were affected.

Coastal Air Force fighters intruded over northwest Italy and northern Yugoslavia. Shipping reconnaissance missions and mine spotting patrols were also carried out.

Balkan air force light bombers, fighter bombers and fighters continued to strike at enemy convoys retreating north through Yugoslavia. Attacks were made in the Kolasin-Bijelopolje-Prijepolje areas, and a dump was attacked at Nevesinje.

Four. Enemy. On Adriatic flank the bulk of the enemy's forces are now behind Sava river except in the area south of Bagnacavallo where he continues to resist strongly in small bridgehead east of river. On the central front, enemy action has been of minor character only. There are now fourteen divisions covering the Bologna and Adriatic sectors with one mobile and one infantry division resting in rear of the front available as immediate reserves. In the attack down the Perchio valley the enemy is believed to have employed so far four German battalions. Elements of an Italian division newly arrived in Italy have also been identified in the area. Activity is still localized but evidence of considerable movement of troops towards western Apennines suggests enemy may be encouraged by example of western front to attempt operations on a larger scale. Present known dispositions would allow the enemy to assemble an attacking force of approximately 5 divisions including two Italian divisions. Object of attack on this scale would probably be to cut allied supply route Leghorn-Pistoia-Florence, exploited if successful to cut main lines of communication Florence-Bologna. Even if he failed to secure the main object enemy might well consider the undertaking worthwhile in order to divert allied effort from the Bologna front.

29114.0A

Advance copies Ops. and O. I. C.

Received in War Registry at 1721/31.

Circulated by War Office to War Office Depts. and Admiralty Air Ministry and SIAEF.

1st Lord  
1st S. L. (3)  
D. F. S. L.  
5th S. L.  
V. C. N. S.  
A. C. N. S. (H)  
A. C. N. S. (F)

U. W. R.  
Ops. (2)  
Plot.  
O. D. (5)  
O. I. C. (3)  
D. N. I. (4)  
M. (2)

C. N. I.  
C. C. L. S.  
W. D.  
Admiral Blake.

705

29.12.1944.  
Friday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

F.A.A. Squadrons. A.M. 011345 Dec. not to BEGUM and UNICORN. On relief by EMPRESS intend to return majority of T.B.R. flying personnel of 832 Squadron to U.K. in BEGUM and in addition, the flying and maintenance personnel of 817 Squadron.

(2) Date of leaving U.K. of maintenance personnel of 832 Squadron is March 44 (?45). In view of the extreme shortage of maintenance ratings intend to retain maintenance personnel of 832 Squadron on this station.

(3) Avengers of 832 Squadron will be retained as first line reserves. Barracudas of 817 Squadron will be stored at Sular. (F.O. Air E.I., 290301Z to C. in C.E.I.).

U-Boat dispositions. No fresh information. Scale in all areas remains unchanged.  
Area V.P.1 Scale X.5.  
(2) Area V.P.2 Scale X.5P.  
Area C.B.2 Scale Y.4P. All other areas Scale W.5.  
(C. in C.E.I., 290352Z to S. and A. E.I. Station).

B.P.F. Auxiliary ships. My 160627 para.2 sailed. E.T.A. BROWN RANGER 2200Z/14th Jan. (?comma) (?E.T.A.) remainder 2300Z/18th Jan. N.C.S.O. Colombo 280845 not to all refers.  
(C. in C.E.I., 290428Z to C. in C.B.P.F., Cdr. S.W.P.S., Fron., N.O.I.C. Fremantle).

GOMBROON. A.M. (?08) 1835 Nov. not to all refers. Lloyds Surveyors report this ship is unsuitable for trade but is suitable for retention as Naval Repair and Maintenance Ship.  
Intend, therefore, to retain ship at Bombay. S.O.R.N.E. is requested to allocate ship for base and maintenance duties and report to whom ship is allocated. F.O. Bombay's 1602/43/b/19139 of 15th Dec. and F.O. Bombay's 050958 Dec. not to all also refers.  
(3) Renaming of ship will be required.  
(C. in C.E.I., 291115Z to Admty. etc.). Admty., 051329A.

FORMIDABLE. A.M. 291600. Request you will sail FORMIDABLE to join British Pacific Fleet as required by C. in C.B.P.F.  
(A.C.N.S.(F), 291725A to C. in C.E.I.).  
See also Med. 291600.

CAPE SPEAR, U-Boat attack. Torpedo detector indicated attack lat. 003° 15' S. long. 078° E. attack failed.  
(CAPE SPEAR, 291900Z to Admiral Colombo).



War Diary.

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies.

U-boat D/F of enigma from 0006Z to 0010Z on 5650 k/cs and at 0024Z on 5600 k/cs. Your 290008Z refers indicate U-boat (German) within 90 miles of 049° 00' N., 038° 30' W.  
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 290157Z to S.O.C.1)

LARKSPUR Distress. Dec. 29th - latitude 39.00 N., long. 48.30 W. wind force 6 to 7 S.W., 60 miles off my course. Ship not manoeuvring, would advise return for survey. Danger to navigation. If caught near land with this condition would endanger safety of ship and crew. Please advise. Nielson - Master.  
((KOIM) LARKSPUR, 290900 G.M.T. to Connav, Comeastseafron).  
U.S. Army Hospital Ship LARKSPUR with no patients aboard reports position 290910Z 39° 00' N., 48° 30' W., 60 miles off route wind S.W. 6 - 7 cannot manoeuvre. Request escort from C.U.52 investigate.  
(Com. Tenth Fleet C. and R., 291558Z to C. in C. Lant).  
Comply with Com. Tenth Fleet C. and R. 291558Z.\*  
(C. in C. Lant. Adcomd, 291902Z to C.T.G.21.9).  
\*Position U.S. Hospital ship LARKSPUR. Reports unable to manoeuvre.

NELSON Regret escort cannot be provided by R.C.N. Your 281555 refers.  
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 291801Z to B.A.D.)

A/S Search T.U.27.1.1 Standing out to sea to ride out storm making Argentia entry hazardous. Suggest your 282029Z modified to proceed direct Horta for fuel. Will arrive OQ area ?better condition. If otherwise request N.O.B. Argentia inform me when entry feasible C.P.C.S. 1200Z 46, 29, 55, 28, 110, 15. 73 per cent Cap fuel now aboard. Weather 0832815910.  
(C.T.U. 27.1.1, 291415 to C. in C. Lant Ad. Comd. R.D.O. Washington).  
Your 291415 affirmative. My 282029Z modified accordingly.  
(C. in C. Lant, Adcomd, 291942Z to C.T.U.27.1.1).

U/Boat dispositions. Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 291422Z, Cominch 291423Z).  
Enemy U-boat estimate 1200Z/29.  
3 Estimated within 100 miles 57.00 25.00 by recent D.F.S. One Homebound 49.30 36.45 from D.F.S. between 282330 and 290024Z. Weather reported 49.15 25.00 from D.F.290629Z moving southwest.  
One estimated westbound Area 43.00 51.00. One possibly Homebound south of Sable Island. One unfixed possibly off Halifax by contact. 280148Z.  
(Cominch, 291423Z to all concerned).

WESTON Departing Point X Bermuda 1900/29, WESTON sails B.A.M. Portsmouth via positions J. lat. 41.10 long. 49.01 K. 47.11, 30.01. L. 49.31, 06.00 thence destination. Speed 12 knots. E.T.A.L.0810 hours, Chop 47 W. 03, 40.00 All times Z.  
(N.O.B. Bermuda, 291501 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

War Diary.

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. - Contd.

S.C.162 S.C.162. Average speed 7.28 knots off Oversay at 2200Z/15th Dec. All arrived. (D.T.D., 291550A to N.S.H.Q., Connav).

JASEUR, Departures Halifax 1600Z/29th December. JASEUR, PROMPT. S.O., PROMPT in company to St. Johns Newfoundland. Speed 12 knots routed through -  
(C) 44.50 N., 60.10 W. (D) 46.22 N., 52.42 W.  
(E) 47.32 N., 52.10 W. thence via Q.J.A.252 to destination. E.T.A. 1800Z/31st Dec.

2. W/T constant watch 105 k/cs port waves as requisite.  
3. On arrival St. Johns these ships are available as escorts for French fishing trawlers my 272126\*refers otherwise request they be sailed in company to Azores for onward routing to U.K. (C. in C. C.N.A., 291617Z to F.O.N.F.)

\*Anticipate H.M.S. JASEUR and H.M.S. PROMPT will be ready to proceed to U.K. about 29th December.

My 291939, addressed as above with N.O.I.C. St. Pierre as additional repeated addressee, is recoded herewith begins:-  
TEMERAIRE has defects will not sail. In view C. in C. C.N.A.'s 272126 passed to N.O.I.C. St. Pierre, amend my 261439. Now intend sailing remaining three trawlers escorted by JASEUR and PROMPT to Azores for onward routing to Casablanca and U.K. with one escort allocated to each Group

(F.O.N.F., 292004Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)

Russian J.S.M.475. Ref. C.O.S.(W) 486 (041850).  
Nationals U.S. Chiefs of Staff have informed us that they  
Repatriation. concur in para. 4 of C.O.S.(W) 486. They consider however, that the reduction of British assistance to U.S. troop movement on this account should not exceed 10,000 spaces per month, and that, upon collapse of Germany, further repatriation of Russian nationals should be accomplished overland in view of the heavy demand for troop shipping for redeployment.  
(J.S.M. Washington, 291621Z to A.M.S.S.O.)

VAN Earliest practicable Comeastseafron sail VAN  
KINSBERGEN KINSBERGEN independently New York to Curacao. When vessel ready to depart Curacao Comcaribseafron sail onward to U.K. via Azores. Operational control in accordance M.A.R.I.  
(Cominch, 291645Z to C.E.S.F. Comcaribseafron).

LE Sail French submarine LE CENTAURE when ready about  
CENTAURE. 3rd Jan. under escort to Gibraltar where on arrival LE CENTAURE is to report to C. in C. Med. for duty initial employment LE CENTAURE in Mediterranean designated by Cominch as Executive Agent C.C.S. with B.A.D. concurrence. French Navmis U.S. in agreement.  
(Cominch, 291648Z to C. in C. Lant).

/Routeing...

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies - Contd.

Routeing  
Ex British  
Colombia.

Request ships from British Columbia Ports to South Africa may when requested to Owners be routed via Magellan Straits.

(2) If this is approved N.C.S.O. at Canadian Ports will inform U.S. routeing authorities at intermediate West Coast Ports (if any) and make necessary bunkering arrangements.

(3) N.C.S.O. Vancouver's 282350 not to first three addressees refers.

(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 291952Z to Comtenthfleet C. and R).  
Agreeable to U.S.011822Z.

Submarine  
sighting  
summary.

Para. C. 0148Z/28 H.M.C.S. KIRKLAND LAKE attacked sound contact 44.12 N., 63.17 W.

Para. D. From 2200Z/28 to 0100Z/29 surface craft had possible sound contact area 45.25 N., 54.46 W. Admty. pass Info. to H.Q.C.C.  
(Cominch, 292025Z to Admty. for O.I.C.)

WESTON

At 1645Z H.M.S. WESTON departed Bermuda for Portsmouth. On account of defective Brown's gyro compass ship cannot be considered fully operational (S.B.N.O. W.A., 292108 to Admty. C. in C. C.N.A.)

British  
Pacific  
Fleet.

United States authorities have assured us that they would be vacating considerable storage space in Australia during 6 months starting October. (Latter from Cominch to B.A.D. on about 25 October refers).

2. A.C.N.B. and V.A.(Q) B.P.F. report that the movement of U.S. stores for Australia is proceeding very slowly due to lack of shipping.

3. Lack of storage will prejudice build up of resources of British Fleet.

4. Request you will press U.S. authorities to allocate shipping to clear the storage promised to us.

(1st S.L., 292139A to B.A.D. Washington) Reply 302137Z.

Australia and New Zealand.

Sitrep 891.

See page 709 A.

Australia & New Zealand.

Duke of  
Gloucester.

Your 281041 N.T. in W.D. onward route through position (f) 036° 08' S., 114° 05' E.

(g) 036° 50' S., 116° 19' E. (h) 044° 42' S. 146° 52' E. (j) 042° 45' S., 150° 53' E.

(k) 035° 33' S., 152° 53' E. thence to Sydney.

2. Presume ULSTER and URCHIN will refuel from SUFFOLK and can continue to position (g) repetition (g) where it is proposed British Pacific Fleet destroyers take over escort.

(Cdr. S.W. Pac. Sea Fron, 290136Z to C. in C. E.I.S.)

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand - Contd.

Digest  
1073

December 28th.

(3) Allied convoy in Central Mindanao was subjected to strongly pressed air attacks midday by 10 planes including 4 suicide dive-bombers: one missed but third hit merchant ships causing severe damage. Again at dusk, 20 - 30 planes all types attacked for 90 minutes: one amphibious craft hit by torpedo.

(6) Large convoy consisting 7 transports, 2 whaling factory type ships, 3 tankers with 5 destroyers and one large warship described as battleship escorting convoy seen midday 60 miles southeast Ewator course northwest speed 10 knots. Observing Liberator strafed and damaged tug towing oil barge off Hong Kong and shot down one transport plane off Southern Formosa.

(9) 5 escort vessels 5 small to medium freighters 20 sea trucks 20 smaller craft observed anchored off San Fernando afternoon. Previous night 5 Mitchells attacked shipping off San Fernando hitting 1 medium freighter causing fires, scoring near misses on another similar ship.

(10) Night 27th 2 Liberators tracking enemy Task Group from Mindoro scored several near misses on 2 ships 400 miles West of Giaqjrp?

(17) 3 Liberators patrolling North Western Borneo forenoon 27th strafed and left sinking 3 sea trucks and 3 smaller coastal craft off Jesselton, also bombed air oil storage tanks.

(18) 2 Mitchells sweeping Flores sea 27th strafed 2 camouflaged luggers Lomblem Island and another lugger North Coast Timor. (G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 291106Z).

B.P.F. Organization Number One 25th D.F. is as follows:  
Destroyers. Destroyer Division 49th. 97th Sub. Division  
H.M.S. GRENVILLE, H.M.S. ULSTER. 98th Sub.  
Division H.M.S. UNDINE H.M.S. ULYSSES.  
Destroyer Division 50th. 99th Sub. Division  
H.M.S. URSA, H.M.S. URANIA. 100th Sub. Division H.M.S. UNDAUNTED  
H.M.S. URCHIN.  
(Capt. (D) 25th, 291505Z to C. in C. B.P.F.)

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Sub. attack For 24 hours to 0900Z 29th Dec.  
and sighting Para. A. 1. A/C E/423 attacked U-boat course 230°  
summary. at 1015Z/28th Dec. in 53° 39' N., 10° 24' W.  
2. EMPIRE JAVELIN torpedoed or mined and sunk at  
1340Z/28th in 50° 03' N., 00° 59' W.  
Para. B. 1. A/C G/330 reported wake and swirl  
at 1310Z/28th Dec. in 58° 44' N., 01° 15' W.  
2. A/C K/210 obtained A.S.V. contact at 0545Z/29th Dec. in  
58° 39' N., 00° 46' W.  
3. A/C E/206 reported possible wake and swirl at 0940Z/28th Dec.  
in 59° 34' N., 05° 11' W.

/Para...

709A.

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia & New Zealand - Contd.

Sitrep 891

Secret December 29th 1500Z/28 China Coast.  
1 Battleship, 5 destroyers, 7 large transports,  
2 whaling factory type ships, 3 large tankers  
reported 60 miles south East (Mwaton) heading  
northwest, December 28th.  
7 destroyers, 3 medium freighter transports, 1  
escort vessel observed 50 miles North Aparri  
heading south southwest, 2 medium freighter  
transports, 2 large tankers, 3 destroyers 35  
miles northwest Aparri heading east.  
Destroyer, 4 escorts, 10 freighter transports,  
15 small sea trucks anchored San Fernando. 2  
possible light cruisers 35 miles south west  
Dasol Bay course southeast December 28th.  
Sulu Sea. 10 planes damaged Allied convoy south  
Bohol Island, 1 plane shot down, 3 others  
(?damaged) morning December 28th.  
Weather cancelled strikes from Palau.  
(G.H.Q., S.W.P.A., 290233 to Army Airboard,  
Melbourne).

710

29.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Sub. attack  
and sighting  
summary.  
(contd).

Para. C.

1. Training A/C sighted conning tower at 1349Z 22nd Dec. in 35° 09' S., 19° 47' E.
2. Training A/C sighted wake of possible U-boat at 0845Z 28th Dec. in 34° 36' S., 23° 16' E. (D.D.I.C. 291106A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

U/Boat  
dispositions.

Estimates.

(D.D.I.C., 291416A, 291417A).

711

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

1. The enemy is still expected to make an all-out effort to capture Liege by a mass attack on a narrow front, by the 6th S.S. Panzer Army on the first foul-weather day.

North Sea.

2. (a) READY successfully towed her midget U-Boat across the Channel to Dumpton Buoy, where she turned it over to the great rescue tug LADY BRASSEY, who unfortunately towed it under in Dover Harbour. V.A. Dover has been asked to salve it as soon as possible.

(b) Ten moored and two ground mines were swept in the Nore - Schelde Channel.

Channel.

3. (a) Ninth Escort Group is being transferred from Western Approaches to the Channel. Eleven sloops and three frigates are being held back from passage to the East to reinforce the Channel and Western Approaches anti-U-Boat forces. Deep mining is to be resorted to in the Channel as a further A/U measure. S.O. Tenth Escort Group reports all contacts off Cape Barfleur to be non-submarine. Portland M.T.Bs. optimistically expended 170 depth charges 5 miles West of Portland Bill "without visible result" between 0825 and 2121, when F.O.I.C. Portland called off the hunt. MELBREAK, 4 miles S.E. of Portland Bill was less optimistic over a 1030 contact and abandoned her attack at 1300.

(b) The whale-factory blockship OLE WEGGER in the Seine has been delayed by fog and parting of her towing hawser, and cannot now be cleared before next spring tides.

(c) Two further M.T. and 2 further coaster berths have been cleared at Le Havre.

Norway.

4. Twenty seven aircraft laid 126 mines in the Oslo-Skagerrak-Kattegat area.

Northern waters.

5. (a) U-Boats reported off Sviatinos have caused postponement of the sailing of Group 18 ships from Archangel for the U.K.

(b) Convoy J.W. 63, of 36 ships, sailed from Loch Ewe for North Russia.

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Foreign Stations.

South Atlantic.

Overdue ship. 6. British tanker EGLINTON PARK due Lagos from Trinidad 26th December reported as not having arrived.

Greek Shipping. 7. Political unrest in Greek merchant ships is reported from Mombasa and Lourenco Marques. C. in C. South Atlantic considers it undesirable for ships to be sent Durban and asks if there is any reason against dealing with cases at Kilindini. In reply Commodore East Africa states matter is of a minor nature not calling for force. There are no Greek Consuls at Mombasa and Lourenco Marques.

Mediterranean.

Riviera. 8. Allied destroyers continue their periodical bombardments on Franco-Italian border.

Greece. 9. (a) Good progress was maintained in clearing S.E. Athens during the day. Little opposition was encountered. E.L.A.S. now appear to be in two main groups in northern suburbs of Athens.  
(b) Little change reported from Piraeus, E.L.A.S. resistance continues to be stubborn.  
(c) The evacuation of civilians from Preveza to Corfu in H.M. ships was completed today without incident.  
(d) At Patras uniformed and plain clothes E.L.A.S. have complete freedom of movement within 50 yards of quay. All positions in command of harbour in possession of E.L.A.S. troops. Many buildings adjoining water front strongly held by them with 75 millimetre guns. Local commander confident if fighting starts he can hold out at least for 10 days but casualties may be heavy. Action has been taken to sail all idle shipping with stores which are not needed. Immediate naval requirements to be maintained at Patras are 4 L.C.I.(S), 4 destroyers, 4 B.Y.M.S.



30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

Australia & New Zealand.

American Fleet Organisation. 10. Important signal was received today from Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser regarding organisation of American Fleet and British supply problems. .

Philippines. 11. Two suicide dive bombers hit destroyers off Mindoro.

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Movements

LARGS  
L.S.H.(L) A.M. 161646 and C. in C. Nore 231538.  
LARGS is not to join K.M.F.38.  
(2) Vessel is to be sailed for Falmouth to await further sailing instructions.  
(Admty. 301221A to Cs. in C. Nore, Plymouth, W.A., R.A.L.S.C.U.)

UGANDA,  
Cruiser (1) On completion of practices Sunday 31st, December proceed by Minches and Standard route to Greenock arriving Clyde Gate at 0800A 1st January. My 251046 refers.  
(2) Speed through water from Hoxa to 58° N. should at least 24 knots.  
(C. in C. H.F., 301355A to UGANDA.)

Admiralty Intend sailing A.F.D.20 in tow of EMINENT and  
Floating DESTINY escorted by NORTHERN REWARD passing  
Dock Clyde Boom about 1200A 31st December. SAPPER  
No. 20. (S.O.) AYRSHIRE and HOME GUARD join escort at Clyde light vessel. Route in accordance with A.M. 281722A December codeword "Scurry".  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 301714A to Admty., C. in C.W.A.)

A.F.D.20 cancel route in A.M. 281722 and substitute:  
(a) 293° Trevoise Head 4 miles.  
(b) 360° Round Island 10 miles.  
(c) 270° Bishop Rock 10 miles.  
(d) 48° N. 08° W.  
(e) 43° N. 12° W.  
(f) 37° N. 12° W.  
(g) 35.51 N. 06.10 W. Thence Gibraltar.  
(Plot (OD) 301903A to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Admty. A.M. 141657 and 191954 and my 291225 not to all  
Floating addressees. Intend to sail EMPHATIC towing  
Dock No.55 A.F.D.55 E.T.A. Tilbury 0700 31st December for degaussing treatment. Thence to Southend for onward routing.  
(N.O.I.C. London, 301725A to C. in C. Nore.)

DIADEM Scapa arrival at 1755 C.S.10 in DIADEM.  
Cruiser. (A.C.O.S. 301925A to N.O.I.C. Aultbea.)

BIDEFORD, In view of present U-boat activity it has been  
DEPTFORD, decided that the following ships are to be  
FLEETWOOD, temporarily employed for operations in Home Waters  
MAGPIE, as soon as ready.  
STARLING, (2) a. MAGPIE, STARLING, AMETHYST, HART, PEACOCK,  
AMETHYST, MERMAID, WREN, BLACK SWAN.  
HART, b. NESS, DART, EVENLODE.  
PEACOCK, c. FLEETWOOD, DEPTFORD, BIDEFORD.  
MERMAID, (3) a. Ships in paras. 2(a) and 2(b) are  
WREN, allocated to C. in C.W.A. for use as additional  
BLACK SWAN, support groups.  
sloops; (b) FLEETWOOD and DEPTFORD are allocated to C. in  
NESS, DART, C. Portsmouth.  
EVENLODE, (c) BIDEFORD is allocated to C. in C. Plymouth.  
frigates. / (4)...

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Movements

BIDEFORD etc. (4) Existing leave arrangements for ships in  
(Contd.) paras. 2(b) and 2(c) are to stand. Refits and  
adjustment of complement of all ships affected  
should be completed as soon as practicable in  
order that they can become operational with the

minium delay.

(5) An early report is requested from  
C. in C. Portsmouth and C. in C. Plymouth in accordance with  
A.M. 261859 not to all regarding ships in paras. 2(b) and 2(c).  
(D.O.D.(H), 301937A to C. in C.W.A., F.O.I.C. Humber, F.O.I.C.  
Greenock, N.O.I.C. Leith, C. in C. Nore, C. in C. Rosyth,  
C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. Portsmouth, Combrax, Chatham,  
Combrax, Portsmouth, Combrax, Devonport.)

ETHIOPIAN

Boom

Carrier.

Commodore i/c Southend's 292259 and A.M. 162148  
October, neither to all addressees - Request  
ETHIOPIAN may be routed to Mandapam.  
(Director of Boom Defence, 302113A to F.O.I.C.  
Milford Haven.)

Operations

North Sea

Midget  
U-boat  
recovered;  
and sunk.

Tow has been transferred to LADY BRASSEY, READY  
and KIMBERLEY proceeding to rejoin flotilla.  
(S.O.M.S.F.18, 300701 to C. in C. Nore.)  
C. in C. Nore's 292149 December. German Midget  
S/M which has sunk in Dover Harbour is required  
in operational condition for trials.

- (2) Midget should be raised as soon as possible.  
(3) Torpedoes or mines should be disposed of as directed by  
VERNON Officers.  
(4) Intend Midget should be examined by Admiralty Officers and  
sent to a dockyard for repair prior to trials.  
(5) When raised report major dimensions of Midget.  
(6) When torpedoes and mines have been removed report:  
(a) Any damage which is apparent; (b) Whether Midget can be  
sent by rail.  
(7) F.O.(S/M) is requested to detail an Officer to be associat-  
ed with examination of Midget.  
(A.C.N.S.(W), 301906A to V.A. Dover.)

M.S.18's 291601A. Tug LADY BRASSEY escorted by M.L.104  
took over tow in the vicinity of Dumpton Buoy from READY and  
proceed to Dover. Harbour was entered at approx. 0940 but  
when LADY BRASSEY stopped to turn over tow to harbour launch  
tow started to sink. Speed was increased in an endeavour to  
bring tow to surface again but this failed and tow parted  
between number 3 and number 10 buoy. Search by anti-submarine  
trawler and M.L. with echo has so far failed to locate wreck.  
Intend to recommence operations at daylight tomorrow Sunday.  
(V.A. Dover, 301955A to Admty.)

Anti-Midget  
U-boat  
patrols.

In view of increasing menace by midget S/Ms to  
Antwerp Convoy Route and Schelde Estuary it is  
my intention to carry out following A/S patrols.  
(a) Endless chain patrol to N.W. of Walcheren  
Island day and night.

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea

Anti-Midget U-boat patrols (Contd.)

(b) Patrol in swept channel between N.F.10 and M.F.17 buoys.  
(2) Pursuit resources in Nore Command are insufficient to meet this commitment and it is requested that an additional 8 M.LS. or H.D.M.Ls. may be allocated for these duties.  
(C. inC. Nore, 301137A to Admty.)

Situation Report

Cositintrep No. 270 Part 4.  
Discharge by sea - 24 hour period ending 1600/29th December.

British:

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (incl. coal)	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>	<u>Ammo.</u>
Antwerp	-	-	9,784	-	1,987
Ostend	1,909	132	335	197	-
Boulogne	1	38	50	-	-
Dieppe	4	-	-	-	-
Caen	-	-	1,201	-	-
Calais	958	383	-	-	-
Ghent	-	-	366	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>11,736</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>1,987</b>
<b>U.S. North:</b>					
Antwerp	-	-	15,048	-	146
Cherbourg	2,500	125	5,746	13,524	2,330
Le Havre	3,483	433	7,010	-	68
Rouen	-	-	2,349	-	475
Granville	-	-	685	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,983</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>30,568</b>	<b>13,524</b>	<b>3,019</b>
<b>U.S. South:</b>					
Marseilles	286	88	11,905	6,395	5,375
Port de Bouc	-	-	1,284	-	-
Toulon	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>13,189</b>	<b>6,395</b>	<b>5,375</b>

188 tons stores discharged at Toulon 28th December.  
(S.H.A.E.F. 301300A to Admty.)

General

Consider enemy prepared for his next all out effort to take Liege, with 6 S.S. Panzer Army in a mass attack on a narrow front. Apparently reliable deserter states attack is to take place on first day when weather unfavourable to Allies between Hotton and Grand Mesnil directed on Liege. This seems very plausible since enemy obviously not going to sit down where he is or withdraw at this stage. Prisoner of war further states divisions to be employed are 1 and 12 S.S. Panzer Divisions as spearheads followed by 2, 9 and 10 S.S. Panzer Divisions and 17 S.S. Panzer Grenadier Division. Fuehrer Escort Brigade also to take part.  
(S.H.A.E.F. 301715A to War Office.)

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Channel

Possible U-Boat 30' N.E. of C. Barflour. Following is re-encypherment of S.O. E.G.10's 292215A to C. in C. Portsmouth. Your 291916 FOLEY detailed. All 10th E.G. contacts classified wrecks. Ends. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 300039A to Portsmouth A/S Patrol Force)

Extra Escort Group for Channel. C. in C. W.A. is requested to transfer one additional support group temporarily to C. in C. Plymouth for operations in the Channel as arranged by C. in C. Plymouth, and C. in C. Portsmouth. (A.C.N.S.(H), 300103A to C's. in C. W.A. Plymouth, Portsmouth)

A.M. 300103. 9th Escort Group detailed. My 291958 not to all refers. (C. in C. W.A. 301120A to Admty. C's. in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth)

Patrols. Intend sail M.T.B. 760 S.O. and 752 at 0800 to-day 30th and M.T.B. 757 and 778 in execution of your 292254 para.3. Leaving patrol at 1400/31st or if weather not suitable. (N.O.I.C.Portland, 300447A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Your 290356 multiplicity of wrecks in area within 10 miles of Cherbourg breakwater along with strong tide makes efficient asdic sweeping impossible. It is rarely that some ships of group do not obtain a contact every hour and frequently all ships are in contact at once with different targets. Much time is thus lost in classification and much ammunition wasted. Asdic conditions in other respects variable with skip distance prevalent. (S.O. E.G.17, 300921A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

E.G.14 is to pass boom at Q.1630 to-day Saturday 30th and proceed by standard route to vicinity Longships thence as ordered by C. in C. Plymouth. (F.O.I.C.Milford, 301127A to S.O. E.G.14)

30th Escort group sail so as to pass Gate at 1200/31st Dec. to relieve 17th E.G. Details follow. 17th E.G. leave patrol 1400/31st Dec.proceed to Portsmouth. Berths will be allocated by Capt. (D) One. Collect defects and requirements and signal Capt. (D) one now. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 301542A to S.O. E.G's 30, 17)

Night patrols 30th/31st.

E.G.10 2 ships to patrol Q.Z.S.636 from Z buoy to 50 degs. 10' until 0300 then Anti-Snort patrol. Limits 00 degs. 45' 01 degs. 15' W. 50 degs. 15' 50 degs. 30' ships spread 7 miles apart patrol 270 degs - 090 degs. starting and ending at eastern limit.

(2) E.G.10 3 ships Anti-Snort patrol area limits 00 degs. 30' 01 degs. 20' W. 49 degs. 50' 50 degs. 15' N. ships spread 7 miles apart patrol 270 degs. 090 degs. starting and ending at east limit.

(3) E.G.17 search area north of Cherbourg limits 01 degs. 20' 01 degs. 47' W. 50 degs. 00' N.

(4) E.G.10 report dispositions of ships. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 301645A to S.O. E.G.'s 10, 17)

/Night ...

War Diary

30.12.1944  
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Channel

Patrols. Night patrol 30th/31st December. Anti-Snort  
(Contd.) Patrol Area limits 02 degs. 00' 01 degs. 10' W.  
50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30' N. Ships spread 5  
miles apart. Starting at Western limit.  
Until required for additional escort. Details  
follow.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301701A to ANTHONY, TONKINOIS)

Air Patrol. My 281728 para.12 not to all.  
A. Night 30th-31st patrol 32 on long. 02 degs. 15' W. by  
Sunderlands.  
Day 31st patrols 5 and 6 between H Channel and Kansas Channel  
by Swordfish. Patrol 32 and 33 West of H Channel by Liberators.  
B. 838 Squadron PMV. 842 Squadron KKC.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301900A to ANTHONY, TONKINOIS, Portsmouth  
A/S Patrol Force.)  
Day patrol 31st E.G.10 2 miles each side Q.Z.S.636. 2 ships  
from Z buoy to 50 degs. 10' 2 ships from 50 degs. 10' to Kansas.  
(2) E.G.17 until relieved E.G.30 then E.G.30 2 miles each side  
H channel 2 ships H.2 buoy to 050 degs. 02'. 2 ships from 50  
degs. 02' to H.10 buoy.  
(3) ANTHONY, TONKINOIS Patrol area limit 01 degs. 20' 02 degs. 00'  
W. 50 degs. 20' 50 degs. 30'.  
(4) E.G.30, E.G.17, E.G.10 report disposition target ship.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301932A to ANTHONY, TONKINOIS,  
S.O. E.G's 17,10)

Possible In contact with possible S/M in position 290  
U-Boat PLB 4.2. Have counter-attacked am attempting to  
close west classify.  
of (M.T.B.733, 300825A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Portland. LL Boat attacked possible S/M contact in position  
290 Portland Bill 3.8 still in contact.  
(M.T.B.733, 300850A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Unit proceeding to assistance of M.T.B. 733 with  
her contact.  
(M.T.B.760, 300903A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Attacking good contact in position 50 degs. 32' 20" N. 02  
degs. 32' 04" W. your 230025 para. 4B.  
(1) None. (2) Possibly S.E. cut doubtful.  
(3) Trace good possibly S/M.  
(4) No echo - sounder. Trace contact bottom 19 fathoms.  
(M.T.B.760, 301044 to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Have obtained echo sounder trace in position 50 degs. 35'  
30" N. 02 degs. 33' 10" W. showing bottom at 18 (fathoms) and  
object at 16 (fathoms) (and) ceasing to 14 fathoms. Intend  
continue attacking.  
(M.T.B.760, 301314A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Am continuing to attack contact in position 50 degs. 32'  
20" N. 02 degs. 32' 40" W. Consider contact possible S/M.  
(M.T.B.760 301509A to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
Attacking contact in position 50 degs. 32' 10" N. 02 degs.  
33' W. your 230025 para. 4B.  
(1) Definite hydrophone. (2) Between N.E. (3) S/M.  
(4) Contact bottom 13 fathoms thin oil observed in vicinity.  
(M.T.B.760, 301708 to C. in C. Portsmouth)  
My appreciation of M.T.B. hunt 290 degs. Portland Bill  
5 miles which has been going on since 1044 is that nothing  
further to be gained by depth charging this contact. Approx.

719

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Channel

Possible  
U-Boat close  
west of  
Portland.  
(Contd.)

170 depth charges expended without visible result except large quantity of oil some of which was heavy. Good recorder traces occasional doppler and hydrophone effect but target was stationary throughout. All M.T.Bs have returned for more depth charges and some defects. Propose maintain your inshore patrol with 2 B type M.Ls from now until 1400 when it should be possible to make another 3 M.T.Bs ready for patrol.  
(F.O.I.C. Portland, 302121A to Cs. in C. Plymouth, Portsmouth)

U-Boat  
threat to  
mid-Channel  
shipping.

My 290013 para. 5 (c) Agree that it would be desirable to have an alternative channel as suggested in para. 2 of your 201201.  
(2) Request you will carry out a searching sweep to a width of 6 miles from H.D.2 Buoy to latitude 50 degs. 10' N. Channel North of this latitude will be searched by Portsmouth Minesweeping Forces.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301040 to C.T.F.125)

Improbable  
U-Boat 4'  
S.E. of  
Portland.

Search begun 1030 produced (329?) (?fool) bottom contact in position 138 degs. Portland Bill 4.2 made 3 accurate echo sounder attacks without result. Traces suggest Non-S/M. My 301030 refers. Rejoining WHIMBREL.  
(MELBREAK, 301326A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Rescue tug  
required  
at Portland.

Present U-Boat activity in Channel confirms desirability of stationing a rescue tug at Portland as advocated in Portsmouth O/8604/40 of 30th October, 1944.

(2) After BLACK HAWK and ARTHUR SEWALL had been torpedoed south of Portland on 29th December tug PILOT was sent to assist in rescue work, but this was only possible because weather was calm. Nearest rescue tugs were at Portsmouth and Plymouth respectively.

(3) Cotug/0003 of 14th December 1944 also refers.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 302147 to Admty.)

Operations

Western Approaches

Patrols.

(1) E.G.9 proceed to relieve GOODALL, LOCH INSH and ANTIGUA patrolling between Trevoise Head and Lundy Island.

(2) GOODALL, LOCH INSH and ANTIGUA on relief by E.G. 9 proceed to trail B.T.C. 23 due Lundy Island at 1600A/30 trail as far as Start.

(3) S.O. E.G. 9 and GOODALL acknowledge.  
(C. in C. Plymouth, 301130A to S.O. E.G.'s 9, 19.)

War Diary

30.12.1944  
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Northern Waters

Patrols. My 300650A box search round position covering 16 miles square completed without result am extending sweep to South West then North.  
(PASLEY, 301009 to C. in C. Rosyth)  
If not in contact by 0600A/31st abandon present Gamma Half group resume as in my 281843 remainder carry out coastwise, search through Pentland to Cape Wrath thence establish Gamma on 59 degs. 15' N. between 04 degs. 00' and 05 degs. 00' W.  
(2) Report disposition.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 302355A to BENTINCK.)

Convoy R.A.62. German S/M'S reported off Sviatinos and Taski - Orloff last night. Presume you have this information.  
(2) Sailing of group 18 is postponed. Further signal will be made. Ships will not return to Dvina bar for the present.  
(3) My 290945A refers.  
(S.B.N.O.Archangel, 301030A to S.B.N.O. North Russia)

Norwegian civilian relief ship. Norwegian ship IDEFJORD with stores and provisions for civilian relief in North Norway is being sailed in J.W.63 to Murmansk for onward routeing.  
(2) S.B.N.O. North Russia is requested to arrange to sail IDEFJORD to Kirkenes when U-Boat and mining situation permits, escorted by Norwegian corvette and trawlers.  
(A.C.N.S.(H), 301625A to C. in C. H.F., S.B.N.O. North Russia)

Convoy J.W.63. J.W.63. (A) 1800/30th.  
(B) CYGNET, LAPWING, LARK, KEPPEL, WESTCOTT, WALKER, ALNWICK CASTLE, AALINGTON CASTLE, BAMBOROUGH CASTLE.  
(C) 36. (D) Cdre. R.A. M.W. S. Boucher, D.S.O.

in SAMARITAN.  
(E) Vice Cdre. of convoy Master EMPIRE ARCHER.  
(F) Rear Cdre. Master NACELLA. All ships and escorts hold Out con. 4.  
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 301830A to C. in C. W.A., Admty. A.C.O.S., A.C.I.C., C. in C. H.F., C. in C. Rosyth, Flag Officers and Capts.  
(D) H.F., S.B.N.O. Archangel, S.B.N.O. N. Russia, N.L.O. 13th Group, H.Q.A.D.G.B., H.Q.C.C.)

J.W.63. SAMARITAN, EMPIRE CELIA, LACKLAND, EMPIRE ARCHER, NACELLA, BRITISH PROMISE. Norwegian ships IDEFJORD, NORFJELL. American ships EDMOND FANNING, THOMAS SCOTT, J.D. YEAGER, HENRY VILLARD, FRANCIS C. HARRINGTON, HENRY WYNKOOP, JOSHUA W. ALEXANDER, JOHN A. QUITMAN, GEORGE H. PENDLETON, PHILIP F. THOMAS, HORACE GRAY, LE BARON, RUSSELL BRIGGS, HENRY BACON, JOHN LA FARGE, JOSE MARTI, BERNARD N. BAKER, ALANSON B. HOUGHTON, WARREN DELANO, JOHN IRELAND, BENJAMIN H. HILL, R. NEY MCNEELY, CROSBY S. NOYES, CAESAR RODNEY, CHARLES SCRIBNER, SILAS WEIR MITCHELL, CHARLES M. SCHWAB, PAUL H. HARWOOD, JAMES KERNEY.  
(N.C.S.O. Loch Ewe, 301832A to Admty. C's in C. W.H. H.F.)



War Diary

30.12.1944  
Saturday

HOME COMMANDS

Mining

Deep A/U  
mining in  
Channel.

At conference held at Admiralty on 29th December it was agreed that as a further A/U measure deep minefields should be laid in the vicinity of the following focal points in the order given:

H. 10 Buoy. Z Buoy. K Buoy. H. 2 Buoy.  
C.2A Buoy, J.9 Buoy.

(2) To implement these proposals four M.T.B's of 64th Flotilla are being transferred to Portsmouth forthwith and it is intended to transfer PLOVER from Milford Haven on completion of present Operations about 4th January.

(3) Supply of mines Mark XVII Assembly 39 on Mark XVII Assembly 26 sinkers is being arranged at Frater. These mines take up fixed depth of 30 feet from the bottom and are fitted with hydrostatic safety switches. A skimming sweep is not therefore essential but any surface failures should be sunk by rifle fire.

(4) Except off H.10 buoy it is recommended that mines be laid initially to foul an area about one mile to westward of the buoys named. Tidal conditions in near vicinity of H.10 buoy are too severe and it is recommended that mines be laid along a line extending 225 degs. from position 49 degs. 49' N. 01 degs. 49' W. Spacing in all cases 200 feet.

(5) Request you will issue the necessary orders and arrange details of mine supply direct with Mine Depot.

(A.C.N.S.(H), 301232A to C. in C. Portsmouth)

Nore-Schelde Have complied with para.(A) of your 290005 as channel. follows:

(2) West of centre line to width 7.5 cable 1 actuation.

(3) East of centre line to width 5 cables 2 actuation and further 5 cables 1 actuations.

(4) 1 ground mine detonated in position 322 degs. N.F. 3 5.3 miles 8 cables as M.S/F. proceeding at 14 knots and not sweeping LL or SA and 2.5 miles astern of sweeping formation. Explosive sweep mark 1 was used throughout.

(S.O. M.S.F. 18, 301349A to C. in C. Nore, V.A. Dover.)

Sweeping Report for Saturday 30th December, 1944.

Channel from N.F.18 to N.F.13 swept by three B.Y.M.S. and three M.M.S. LL/SA and H.G.4 cables either side of centre line. 2 actuations. 4 Acoustic and 1 Magnetic mines detonated in

positions 51.25.45 N. 03.25.33 E. 51.24.24 N. 03.22.34 E. 51.24.24 N 03.23.30 E. 51.26.03 N. 03.19.58 E. and 51.24.24 N. 03.22.33 E. respectively. Channel from N.F.18 to Bat swept by 2 M.M.S.

11 and SA 1 Actuation 1 magnetic mine detonated in position 020 degs. Terneuzen west harbour fixed green light 4½ cables.

(Com. M/S Terneuzen, 301655A to N.O.I.C.Antwerp)

Your 291155A. Checked sweep on King Spit carried out to depth of 8 fathoms meridian width 6 cables either side centre line N.F.K.H. to N.F. 6 buoy.

(2) Another lap in G formation to North previous clearance swept to depth of 8 fathoms. Negative result.

(3) Area S/S patrol now as follows:

(A) 51 degs. 22' 5" N. 02 degs. 27' 2" E.

(B) 51 degs. 23' 2" 02 degs. 27' 5".

(C) 51 degs. 23' 5" 02 degs. 31' 5".

(D) 51 degs. 23' 5" 02 degs. 34'.

(E) 51 degs. 21' 2" 02 degs. 34'.

(F) 51 degs. 21' 1" 02 degs. 30'.

(G) 51 degs. 21' 3" 02 degs. 27' 2".

/Total ...

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Mining

Nore-Schelde channel.  
(Contd.) Total mines - moored 10 ground 2. Dans remaining 5 along-side southern limit; 3 alongside and 1½ cables inside northern limit.  
(4) Flotilla returning to Margate Roads.  
(S.O.M.S.F. 42, 301755A to C. in C. Nore.)

Deep mining off Hartland Point. My 291039A.  
Sailed PLOVER, escort CONQUEROR.  
(F.O.I.C.Milford, 301827A to C. in C. Plymouth)

Enemy Intelligence

Interned German Tanker. My 121752 October to Admiralty only.  
Bilbao reports that German Tanker FRINSIA unloaded at the Campsa Depot at Santurce on 23rd December and then returned to her former mooring in Bilbao River.  
(A.B.N.A. Madrid, 301250A to S.O.(I) Gib.)

Port Facilities

Antwerp. Request you will report whether the following ships can be taken in hand at Antwerp.  
(a) Flower Class Corvette PRIMULA for refit forthwith. A.S. Portsmouth's 291114 not to all refers.  
(b) Captain Class Frigate DAKINS for permanent repairs arriving Antwerp about 10th January.  
DAKINS has sustained damage from external explosion and preliminary inspection reveals the following:-  
Hull plating from 86 frame to stem buckled and distorted above and below water-line. Lower compartments from 47 frame to stem flooded up to water line at approximately 1st platform deck. Upper deck at 84 frame buckled and distorted but ship's structure above water-line is not fractured. D.G. is out of action. Shoring as possible is being carried out - ship can proceed forthwith on one boiler at approx. 8 knots. Diver's report not yet available.  
F.O.I.C.Harwich's 281550 not to all refers.  
(2) If DAKINS is placed at Antwerp C. in C. Nore is requested to provide temporary D.G. for passage to Antwerp.  
(D.O.D.(H), 301942A to N.O.I.C.Antwerp, C. in C. Nore.)

Hansweerd, Havre, Rouen. Cositintrep No.270 Part II Naval.  
(1) S. Beveland Canal.  
Obstructions at Hansweerd have been flattened to give a passage 50 feet wide with depth at high water of 14 feet salvage of obstructions is proceeding.

(II) Captured Ports. Havre 2 additional M.T. berths and 2 additional coaster berths have been cleared in the Bassin De Leure.  
Rouen. Whalefactory OLE WEGGER, initially delayed by fog, was further delayed to-day when tow parted whilst manoeuvring for departure. Movement will not now take place this tidal period.  
(A.N.C.X.F. 302350A to Admty.)

723

30.12.1944  
SaturdayWar DiaryHOME COMMANDSShipping and Convoys

Cross-Channel convoys re-routed and timed. My 290013 during period present U-Boat attacks adjoining Channel convoys will leave St. Helens making cross-Channel passage during dark hours in accordance with following time-table.

(2) (A) WEP. 1700 route via Z buoy and position RR 050 degs. 26' N. 001 degs. 11' W. thence direct to H.10 Buoy.  
(B) WEC. 2000 routed as in (A)

(C) WEL. 2200 routed as in (A)  
(D) WVC. 1900 NZ via Z buoy thence 270 degs. G.1 5 miles 270 J 5 miles 270 degs. Kansas 1 mile thence by searched channel.  
(E) WVL. 2200 routed as in (D).  
(F) WVE. 0200 routed as in (D).

(3) Convoy from Portland (A) (?PE)L 1600 routed Q.Z.S. 623 to position (RR) thence H.10 (B) PVL 1400 routed Q.Z.S.623 to position 220 degs. Z buoy 4 miles thence as in para. 2 (D) above.

(4) Ships for Cherbourg in BTC. convoy are to continue St. Helens for onward routeing.

(5) Convoys and shipping from Far Shore are to be similarly sailed so as to cross-channel during dark hours.

(B) Between Kansas and Z buoy such shipping should pass 5 miles to eastward of J and G 1 Buoy.

(C. in C. Portsmouth 300034 Cs. in C. Plymouth, Nore, W.A.)  
My 300034. Cancel para. 3. Amended instructions are being signalled to authorities immediately concerned only.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth 302252A to Cs. in C. Plymouth, Nore, W.A.)  
My 300034 and 302252 L.S.Ts for Cherbourg and Havre should sail as a single P.V.L. Convoy leaving Portland 1600 and routed by Q.Z.S. 623 to position 270 A 3 5 miles thence to position 270 H 8 5 miles thence H 10 buoy.

(2) Cherbourg ships break off at H.10 remainder proceed by eastward S 652, 616, 588 E.T.A. Cherbourg 0030 Pasture 0800.

(3) If the P.V.L. convoy should contain no L.S.T. for Cherbourg it may be alternatively routed 5 miles West of route ZK as in para. 3 (b) of my 300034 depending on U-Boat situation at the time.

(4) Unless U-Boat situation forbids escorts should break off and return to Portland from 58 E buoy.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 302320A to N.O.I.C.Portland.)  
Your 291401. Request these measures be brought into force forthwith.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 301053A to C.T.F.125)

B.T.C.  
Convoys.

Pass to F.Os.in C. N.OsI.C. and N.C.S.Os. concerned.

(1) B.T.C. convoys will be sailed direct to the Downs, where the convoy will anchor and proceed in daylight as ordered by N.O.I.C.Ramsgate to arrive Thames 1530.

(2) Wight joiners led by new Commodore will R/V at "F" Buoy, ships from the west taking station astern.

(3) A.M. 021256A and C. in C. Portsmouth's 041938A are to be amended accordingly.

(4) F.O.I.C.Cardiff is requested to commence the new procedure with B.T.C. convoy sailing on 1st January, 1945.  
(D.T.D. 301753A to C. in C. Nore, A.C. Dover Cs. in C. Portsmouth, Plymouth, C.T.F.125, F.O.B.A.A., F.O.I.C. Cardiff, F.O.I.C. Milford Haven, Commdr. Southend)

/Personnel ...

724

30.12.1944  
Saturday

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping and Convoys - Contd.

Personnel  
sailing in  
L.S.Ts.

Owing to non-availability of escorts and lack of enemy activity it has hitherto been customary to sail groups of L.S.Ts to France without escort. In present situation this practice is unsatisfactory and action is being taken to provide some escort for all loaded L.S.Ts but the scale of escort will be based on the assumption that not more than 200 Officers and men including the ships company are carried in each L.S.T.

(2) Owing to shortage of L.S.Is. the daily lift of troops has recently been carried partly in L.S.Ts but such a procedure alters the character of the convoy and an escort more nearly equivalent to that of a personnel convoy should be provided.

(3) It is therefore requested that not more than 100 troops plus ships company of 100 should be embarked in each L.S.T. unless it has been confirmed beforehand with C. in C. Portsmouth that an adequate escort can be provided. Owing to the acute shortage of escorts as much notice as possible should be given.

(4) Every effort will be made to provide sufficient escort for L.S.T's carrying personnel but when the escort vessels are not available it will be necessary to decide whether to accept higher risks in order to avoid the delay involved in waiting for adequate escorts to become available.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 302148 to A.N.C.X.F.)

War Diary.

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic

Escort Groups. On arrival of 55th and 57th Escort Groups at Gibraltar request you will nominate two escort groups from the 38th - 41st E.G. to return to U.K. where an urgent requirement for A/S. reinforcements has arisen.

(2) Ships will be required for operations immediately on arrival and should as far as possible have recently been boiler cleaned.

(3) This should be explained to ships' companies who should be told that it is hoped to give a short spell of leave later when circumstances allow.

(4) Destinations will be signalled later.

(5) Admty. T.O.O. 300106 refers. (See S. Atlantic).

(A.C.N.S.(F) 300130A amended by 301214A, 2040128A, 311230A).

ODZANI, ODZANI is to take BIDEFORD under his orders and  
BIDEFORD. sail at 0900A Jan. 1st to U.K.

(2) Destinations ODZANI Portsmouth, BIDEFORD Devonport.

(3) S. of A. 12 knots.

(4) Routed through northern half of Straits thence:-

(a) 35.59 N. 06.10 W. (b) 36.55 N. 09.05 W. (c) 38.40 N. 09.45 W.

(d) 43.00 N. 09.45 W. (e) 48.00 N. 06.00 W. (f) 180° Lizard

Head five thence by standard route to destinations.

(5) E.T.A. Eddystone 0300A Jan. 5th.

(6) Communications.

(7) Codeword "Curve" (823).

(F.O.G.M.A., 301143A to C. in C. Plymouth, ODZANI).

HAARLEM Intend to sail ERISKAY at 1200A Dec. 31st to  
relief. Horta Azores.

(2) S. of A. 8½ knots.

(3) Route through Northern Half of Straits to

(all positions north and west):-

(a) 35.59 N. 06.10 W. (b) 36.40 N. 10.00 W. (c) 37.23 N. 15.00 W.

(d) 37.51 N. 20.00 W. (e) 38.08 N. 25.00 W. (f) 38.11 N. 28.30 W.

thence direct to Horta.

(4) E.T.A. daylight January 6th.

(5) Codeword "Potassium" 520.

(6) Communications in accordance with S.1/44 section M.D. also additional watch on 2150 kilocycles when within 400 miles of the Azores.

(7) Your 271214 and my 281149 neither to all refer. ERISKAY sails in lieu of LORD HOTHAM.

(F.O.G.M.A., 301521A to S.B.N.O. Azores, etc.).

PHEASANT. My 271240 not to Admty. It has been necessary to dock PHEASANT to carry out repairs to defective diesel oil tank.

(2) Ships will not now sail until approx. 14th January on completion of repairs and A/A exercises.

(F.O.G.M.A., 301703A to C. in C. Med. etc.).

/ A/S...

726

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic - Contd.

- A/S Patrols. (1) If not in contact 41st E.G. is to leave patrol so as to arrive Gibraltar before dark on 1st January.
- (2) E.G.40 in BALINDERRY is to take CYCLAMEN under his orders and proceed at 1000A<sup>L</sup> Jan. 1st to carry out A/S patrol "Kidney" to westward of Strait or:-
- (3) BERGAMOT will be sailed to join E.G.40 when ready weather permitting.
- (4) 38th E.G. is to continue A/S sweep through position (A) (K) (L) and (B) of opposite "Bacon" and "Sausage".
- (5) E.G.38 is requested to report P.C.S. every 8 hours of the sweep.
- (6) 1 U-Boat now estimated to be patrolling in Med. Approaches. No further information available.
- (7) E.G.40 acknowledge.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 301705A to E.G.38, E.G.40, E.G.41).

South Atlantic

- Escort Groups. Request you will sail 55th and 57th Escort Groups less KILS to Gibraltar with all convenient despatch, making other arrangements for escort of A.F.D. 24.  
Your 271423 and 271857.  
(A.C.N.S.(F), 300106A to F.O.C.W.Af., Info. F.O.G.M.A., C. in C. Med., C. in C.W.A.).
- E.G.55. (1) Detach WOODRUFF daylight 31st to Dakar for fuel.
- (2) KILMALCOM<sup>L</sup> and KILHAMPTON be sailed p.m. 31st to relieve WELLINGTON and WILLOWHERB.
- (3) When relieved WELLINGTON and WILLOWHERB proceed Gibraltar. Speed 12 knots by route given in my 271852.
- (4) After parting company, request Comar Dakar by signal to sail WOODRUFF as requisite to join you off Dakar.  
(F.O.C.W.Af., 301041 to E.G.55).  
Reference my 271852 WELLINGTON, WILLOWHERB and WOODRUFF are required to proceed Gibraltar. My 301041 refers.
- (2) Request you sail Air France 1, 3 and 4 to join A.F.D.24 1200Z 4th Jan. when KILMALCOM and KILHAMPTON will detach to Dakar for docking 5th Jan. as arranged.
- (3) Escort of A.F.D.24 will then be Air France 1, 3 and 4 KILCHATTAN.  
(F.O.C.W.Af., 301202Z to Comar Dakar etc.).
- Enemy mine. German Y type mine destroyed by S.A.N.F. mine disposal squad 29th Dec. near mouth of Great Brak River (position 34° 03' 30" S. 22° 16' E)  
report states mine appeared to have been in water not longer than three months.  
(C. in C.S.A., 301105B).

/Greek...

727

30.12.1944.  
Friday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

South Atlantic - Contd.

Greek shipping, crew trouble. M. of W.T. Representative Mombassa reports to M.W.T.R. Capetown that Greek ship(s) causing trouble and propose to send to Durban should situation worsen. Similarly Consular Shipping Adviser Lourenco Marques reports 2 Greek ships with serious crew unrest due to E.L.A.S. sympathies. Officers ring-leaders. Ridiculous demands. Captains lives threatened. Lourenco Marques also proposes to send to Durban. Consider this most undesirable as it involves Union Government in Greek political affairs. Request information as to reason against dealing with cases at Kilindini.  
(C. in C.S.A., 301111B to Cdre. E. Africa) Reply 311045.

DUGUAY TROUIN. DUGUAY TROUIN sailed at 0800 on 30th Dec. Q.B.A.1 to 128 134 136 137 139. B.Y.1 to 106 108 112 113 B.B.1 to 438 449 453. B.H.-C 1 to 299 322 323.  
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 301252Z to Amiral Oest Afrique).

A.F.D.24. WELLINGTON, WOODRUFF, WILLOWHERB, KILDARY, KILCHATTAN sailed with A.F.D.24 at 1615Z on 29th Dec. Q.T.A. 230 L.F.4 B.H.-C 4 51 229 249 277 317 322 323 329 B.A.64 81 106 126 136 137 139 140 B.Y.104 105.  
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 301456Z to F.O.G.M.A.).

MIRROR. Following is a repetition of F.O.C.W.Afs. 300935 Groups 53 begins:- F.O.G.M.A. Info. C.M.S.F. Comar Dakar, C. in C. Med., Admty., From F.O.C.W.Af., C.M.S.Fs. 291611 MIRROR proceed unescorted from 26° 10' N. F.O.G.M.A. Pass to KILMARTIN.  
T.O.O. Ends.  
(Freetown, C.C.O., 301546Z to F.O.G.M.A.).

VALIANT escort. Sailed WYE and TEST in accordance with Admty's. 1646/23 Nov, para. 4(B) R/V at 1600Z/30th C. in C.S.A's. 181047 para.2 not to Admty. refers.  
(2) DOVEY will be sailed to relieve TEST.  
(Com. Durban, 301630 to Admty., C. in C.S.A.).  
Ship sailed. My 301630 para.2.  
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 301710 to Admty., C. in C.S.A.).

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean

Greece. Sitrep 2. General situation unchanged. Using anything that will float to clear north coast Corfu. Established night caique patrol ridges of R.H.N. 395 in Corfu Channel. Nothing sighted. One fishing boat from Gomenizza with 2 E.L.A.S. agents captured near Lefkero.  
(3) Unloaded BRUISER, L.C.I.(L) 316 and 5 caiques.  
(4) One for Paxos did not sail delayed by Military later by weather.  
(5) Oil barge 72 active.  
(G.S. THEMISTOCLES, 300845B to COPREV).

SALAMIS, Sail 1100B/30th at 27 knots to meet TAKLIWA which  
TAKLIWA. left Taranto 1730 29th en route Piraeus at 13 knots by route R.9, R.11 and Q.B.C.927.  
(2) Route Q.B.C.927 to position 704 thence through R.12 and R.9 until R/V.  
(3) Codeword "Organise" W/T call sign 051 priority low C.O.N. shore.  
(4) Constant watch area broadcast (L.V.).  
(5) On R/V. reverse route and escort TAKLIWA to Piraeus.  
(6) F.O.T.A.L.I. 291515 refers.  
(S.O.I.S. Leghorn, 300901 to G.S. SALAMIS etc.).  
Orders will be that SALAMIS will R/V you at position 036° 39' N. 021° 07' E. at 2000/30th Dec. and escort you to Piraeus.  
(S.B.N.O. Greece, 300941B to TAKLIWA).  
Joined up with TAKLIWA in position 036° 28' N. 021° 20' E. at 1355. E.T.A. 1300.  
(G.S. SALAMIS, 302010 to S.B.N.O. Greece).

Hunt Request you will nominate one of the Hunts of  
class 19th Division released on arrival of MILNE and  
refit. MATCHLESS, to be taken in hand for refit at  
Alex. on the 1st February. Para.3 of A.M. 282326  
to C. in C. Med. only and your 232017 Dec. para.  
2 refer.  
(2) On completion of refit ship should be sailed to U.K. to adjust complement and give leave.  
(A.C.N.S.(F) 300100 to C. in C. Med.) Reply C. in C. Med. 311412.

Cositintrep Coastal Air Force. 5 Wellingtons and 8  
No.538. Beaufighters R/C. Maestra Point/Cape Promontore  
by night and attacked 2 E-Boats scoring near  
misses but no conclusive results.  
5 Venturas on armed R/C. Spezia/Genoa bombed barges and F-Boats probably sinking 1 F-Boat and 1 barge.  
(H.Q. M.A.A.F., 301132A).

INVER Intend sailing INVER at 1330A/3rd Jan. S. of A.  
14 knots to Gibraltar for onward routeing to U.K.  
(2) Routed Q.B.B.246 route D to 47 thence coast-wise to 4 42 positions 38.22 N. 15.34 E. 33, 38, 10 N. 09.45 E, 19 Basic westbound route and Q.B.A.64. E.T.A. p.m. 7th to be signalled by INVER.

/ Codeword "Spruce"



729

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

INVER (Contd.) Codeword "Spruce" 094.  
(3) C. in C. Med's. 261947 not to all refers.  
(F.O.T.A.L.I., 301529A to C. in C. Med.).

Preveza evacuation. Authorised evacuation of Preveza completed without incident. Am proceeding to Corfu. Details follow  
(Coprev, 301605B to S.B.N.O. Greece).

PRINCE HENRY. Sailed Corfu 1630B/30th by Q.B.C.925 to position 040° 05' N. 019° 43' E. through position 039° 40' .9 N. 018° 31' 30" E. thence by Q.B.B.344 to Taranto. E.T.A. 0900B/31st speed of advance 11 knots. My 301130B refers.  
(PRINCE HENRY, 301656B to Cudo).

Situation Report No.521. (1) Gulf of Genoa. Periodical bombardment continues to be carried out by Allied destroyers near Franco Italian border.  
(2) Sicily. Number of missing from R.Y.N.S. KUMANOVO is now only 7.  
(3) Preveza. Final evacuation of Greek troops and civilians was expected to be completed today (?Saturday) without serious interference.  
(4) Levkas. E.L.A.S. have started attack against Levkas and have taken Meganisi. Endeavour (?will be) made to evacuate Zervas troops but not civilians.  
(5) Crete. All quiet at Heraklion.  
(6) Mitylene. (?Sabotage) strike ended and situation improved.  
(7) Symi. Wireless station established. Unloading of stores well ahead of schedule.  
(8) Patras. Situation outwardly (?calm) but tension continues.  
(C. in C. Med., 301950A to Admty. etc.).

Greek Evacuation. Your 291831 and H.M.C.S. PRINCE HENRY 301130 not to all addressees. H.M.C.S. PRINCE HENRY sailed 1645 30th via northern channel to Taranto E.T.A. 0900/31. On H.M.C.S. PRINCE HENRY's decision prisoners retained on board till destination. Your 301049 not to all addressees refers.  
(2) H.M.S. BRUISER sailed 2030 carrying 11th Greek Battalion 530 in number and 4 Italian prisoners. E.T.A. Taranto 0930/31. All times Baker.  
(N.O.I.C. Corfu, 302049B to Coprev).

Patras. From Campbell.  
(1) Situation programme gives no cause for alarm in opinion of local Commander.  
(2) Uniformed and plain clothes E.L.A.S. have complete freedom of movement within 50 yards of quay. All positions in command /of...

730

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Patras  
(Contd.)

of harbour are in possession of E.L.A.S. troops who have at least 75 millimetre guns and many buildings adjoining water front are undoubtedly strongly held by them.

(3) Local Commander is confident that if fighting starts he can maintain bridgehead with force at his disposal for at least 10 days. But casualties will inevitably be heavy and any further must envisage -

(a) reinforcing or (b) evacuating.

(4) Immediate action taken has been to sail idle shipping carrying such surplus requirements of personnel, mechanical transport and stores as are not now needed. Stores and personnel not required ashore are also being loaded when possible without inviting enemy action.

(5) Immediate naval requirements are to be maintained at Patras -

(a) 4 L.C.I.(S), (b) 4 destroyers, (c) 4 B.Y.M.S.

All these 3 have been already requested:-

(d) one personnel ship.

The latter would be evacuated.

(1) Rebels. (2) P.O.W. (3) Classified Greek personnel.

(6) Greek "Mil" plan of evacuation. Should this be decided upon requires no (?naval) addition. Berths for all L.S.Ts. available simultaneously and L.C.Ts. will embark fighting force from the flanks.

(7) Consider evacuation could be undertaken within next 10 days with very slight casualties or loss of valuable stores provided it is carried out on all out in 24 hour basis.

(8) Agreed "Pat" Force.

(B.L.N.O. Patras, 302230B to S.B.N.O. Greece etc.).

731

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

East Indies

ADMIRAL  
BENSON.

Arrival U.S.S. ADMIRAL BENSON, H.M.S. ROEBUCK and  
RELENTLESS.  
(F.O. Bombay, 300234Z to Admty.).

U-Boat  
dispositions.

Estimates.  
(C. in C. E.I.S., 300431Z to S. and A. E.I.S.).

732

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West IndiesKENTVILLE  
search.

Reference your 300212. N.T. in W.D. intend searching area 044° 21' N. 063° 06' W. 044° 31' N. 063° 03' W. My position 0645Z/30 044° 30' N. 063° 03' W. No sign of ASHBY PARK, continuing search.  
(H.M.C.S. KENTVILLE, 300645Z to C. in C.C.N.A.)

LACHUTE

The following allocation is effective to date 30th December from new construction to the mid ocean force for duty with C.5 H.M.C.S. LACHUTE.  
(2) Pay accounts to be held in AVALON.  
(C. in C.C.N.A., 301254Z to N.S.H.Q.)

PROMPT,  
JASEUR  
French  
trawlers.

Routine. Deferred to remainder.  
F.O.N.Fs. 261501 and C. in C.C.N.A. 272126, neither to all, PROMPT and JASEUR should escort French trawlers DUGUAY TROUIN, TEMERAIRE, CAPRICORN and CAP FAGNET until reaching longitude 45° W. Trawlers are then to be detached to proceed unescorted to Azores, escorts proceeding to Londonderry for onward routeing to Granton.  
(2) S.B.N.O. Azores is requested to sail unescorted:  
(a) First three named trawlers to Casablanca.  
(b) CAP FAGNET to Falmouth for onward routeing to Havre.  
(D.O.D.(H), 301309A F.O.N.F., S.B.N.O. Azores). See 041424Z from Admty. to F.O.N.F.

VAN  
KINSBERGEN.

Cominch 291645\*not to all. Your duty under Comeastseafon completed 30th Dec. When ready for sea about 1200Q that date depart New York. Proceed on course 120° true from point Z to 69. 30 W. thence via A 25.01 N. 68.01 W. B. 1755 N. 68.10 W. to Curacao. Speed 17 knots. Arrival report Cafac for further orders. Communications S.P. 02522 and 02523 S.P.2489, 2535, 2536. Major war vessel recognition. Guard Washington primary F throughout voyage and 4155 kc/s additional after 0400Q Jan. 1st. For transmission use 4235 kc series until 01 04 00 Q and 4155 kc/s thereafter. Obtain latest hydrographic information and file departure. Report with C.T.G. 02.3.  
(Comeastseafon, 301321Z to H.N.M.S. VAN KINSBERGEN by hand to C.T.G. 02.9).  
S.P.02522 - Naval Cypher No.7, S.P.02523 - Naval Decypher No.7, S.P.2489 - Delivery Groups and W/T Call signs for Major War Vessels Part 1, S.P.2535 - Delivery Groups and Radio Call Signs for Major War Vessels Part 1 (U.S.), S.P.2536 - Delivery Groups and Radio Call Signs for Major War Vessels Part 11 British - U.S.No.1.  
\* Sailing H.N.M.S. VAN KINSBERGEN to Curacao.  
C.R. No.2708. In compliance Comeastseafon's 301321 and Cominch 291645 not to all VAN KINSBERGEN departs Tompkinsville 1200Q/30 passing point Z 1500Q/30. E.T.A. Curacao 0800Q/4. Holding latest Q.J.H.383 and Q.J.E.180.  
(Navfrom Base Tompkinsville N.Y., 301548 to Com.3.)

U-Boat  
dispositions.

Estimates.  
(N.S.H.Q.Ottawa, 301416Z, Cominch 301538Z).  
/Torpedoing...

733

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies - Contd.

Torpedoing of CLAYOQUOT (24.12.) (A) 1348Z/24/12/44. Position approx. 44.25 N. 63.20 W. Weather - wind westnorthwest Force 4, visibility F.5 sea 31 sea temp 42 F air temp 36 (corrupt group).  
(B) Cat gear was streamed.  
(C)(1) Not in contact. (2) Not in contact.  
(3) 12 to 15 knots. (4) On passing Halifax Gate inward at 1751Z/24th December.  
(D)(1) Nil. (2) Not in contact. Streamed Cat after torpedoing of H.M.C.S. CLAYOQUOT. (3) Explosion dead astern at about 400 yards.  
(E) Only one believed present.  
(F) Not sure explosion due to Gnat. Explosion was very deep and only a heavy boiling appeared on surface. No water spout. S.S. LADY RODNEY has reported similar occurrence off Egg Island to N.C.S.O. Halifax. Track Chart and report of proceedings have already been forwarded to Capt. D. Newfoundland.  
(FENNEL, 301519Z to C. in C.C.N.A., N.S.H.Q.D. Newfoundland).

HAIDA. Anticipate sailing H.M.C.S. HAIDA to U.K. via Azores on 4th January.  
(2) Ship requires Tiu and Panel L.43 and L.37 to be fitted. Request equipment be allocated and destination in U.K. indicated.  
(C. in C.C.N.A., 301626Z to Admty.). see 021502A and 050321Z.  
Departure Halifax 0130Z 5th Jan., H.M.C.S. HAIDA independently to Horta, Azores, my 301626 Dec. not to all, refers. Routed Q.J.A.254 thence through (X).40.40 N. 53.00 W., (Y) 38.50 N. 31.00 W., thence destination via Q.B.A.122.2. S. of A. 20 knots. E.T.A. at Horta 1130Z/8th Jan.  
(4) Chop 1700Z/6th.  
(5) On arrival Horta request HAIDA be fuelled and given onward routeing to Plymouth.  
(C. in C.C.N.A., 050321Z to S.B.N.O. Azores).

CAMROSE. Your 241120. H.M.C.S. CAMROSE delayed with defects E.T.D. will be signalled when known. Admty. pass to C.N.M.O.  
(S.B.N.O. W.At., 301639Z to Admty.).

Tugs for S.Africa. Following from M.W.T.R. Jamaica. Reference proposal, to send 12 tugs via Pernambuco and Freetown instead of via Bermuda and Azores, matter has been fully discussed with Master ATMORE who has had considerable and recent experience with small craft on both routes. Objections to southerly routes are:-  
(1) Considerably increased distance of which whole is in tropical waters, affecting engineers quarters and engine room.  
(2) Number of ports with repairs being found necessary at each, coupled with crew difficulties at those ports.  
(3) Opposing winds and currents between Trinidad and Pernambuco and long drag against wind and current up African coast.  
(4) Necessity of calling at Canaries.  
(5) If mechanical trouble is determining factor then this will be seriously aggravated on longer runs.  
(6) Repair facilities at Bermuda and Jamaica are better. B.R.O. Jamaica fully concurs.  
(C.S.A. Jamaica, 301650Z to S.B.N.O. W. Atlantic).

/LARKSPUR...

734

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAmerica and West Indies - Contd.

LARKSPUR. Advise status of U.S.A.H.S. LARKSPUR. My 291902Z not to all. (Cinclant, Adcond, 301847Z to Comtaskgroup 21.9).

E.G.25. A replacement for JOLIETTE is not available. Your 271724\* refers. (N.S.H.Q., 301905Z to C.N.M.O.).  
\* Is it intended to allocate another frigate to E.G.25.

British Pacific Fleet. I feel it would be unfortunate to approach the Navy Dept, at the present moment on the subject contained in Admty's. 292139.\* The analysis of the overall shipping requirements in relation to shipping facilities available is just getting under way, and there is little doubt that a difficult discussion will subsequently arise as to the extent to which purely military requirements should have precedence over essential civilian supply necessities. (2) It is probable that an approach by us here would only evoke from Cominch a repetition of his earlier recommendation communicated in his 191310/Oct. to the Admiralty for First Sea Lord (my 202009/Oct. also refers). (3) Consequently recommend that this requirement be first further pursued directly between C. in C.B.P.F. and the Commander of the S.W. Pacific Area. (B.A.D., 302137Z to Admiralty).  
\* Movement of U.S. stores from Australia.

Australia and New Zealand

American organisation. The following salient features of the American Naval Organisation in the Central Pacific which may already be known to the Admiralty are relevant to the agreement reached between Fleet Admiral Nimitz and Admiral Fraser at Pearl

Harbour.

(2) All Commandant Americal Naval Forces under Cinpac are organised into one Fleet which is alternatively called Third Fleet when operating under Admiral Halsey or Fifth Fleet when operating under Admiral Spruance. While one of these two Command teams is operating the Fleet the other is planning its next operation.

(3) The Fleet is flexibly divided into a number of Task Forces for example.

(a) A fast carrier Task Force comprising most of the Fleet and Light Fleet Carriers and fast battleships.

(b) A close support Task Force comprising old battleships and assault escort carriers.

(c) An amphibious Assault Task Force.

/(4)...

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand.American  
organisation  
(Contd.)

- (4) Once an operation has been launched the Fleet remains in the combat area (that is within air striking range of the objective) for several weeks on end and is kept supplied there by a service force which brings up fuel, ammunition, fresh provisions and also reserve aircraft and air crews (in escort carriers) from the advanced base.
- (5) An advanced base (such as Ulithy at present) is used for the service and supporting force required for the specific operation in progress for example:-
- (a) For the accommodation of reserve air groups (A/A carrier which has suffered losses may be sent back to exchange her entire air outfit).
- (b) As a terminal for the commercial tankers and bulk supply ships who discharge there into the Fleet tankers and issue ships for forward transport to the Fleet in the combat area.
- (c) As an advanced repair or salvage base.
- (6) Intermediate bases (such as Manus at present) are used for more general uses such as:-
- (a) For advanced training. (b) For mounting operations.
- (c) As a supply dump. (d) For recreation. (e) As a repair base. (f) As a pool for Fleet personnel.
- (7) Conclusion.
- The whole organisation is designed to enable the Fleet to keep the sea in a manner which has not previously been attempted since the advent of steam. This outlook differs greatly from our existing ideas whereby a Fleet returns to a shore base for replenishment of stores, ammunition, etc. Part II the agreement.
- (8) Status and Command.
- (a) The C. in C. B.P.F. will have the same status under C. in C. Pacific as the 3rd and 5th Fleets.
- (b) As the constitution of the combatant portion of the B.P.F. is equivalent to a fast carrier Task Force it will be operated as such, the Third (or Fifth) Fleet will then have two fast carrier Task Forces, one British and one American.
- (c) The Flag Officer operating the B.P.F. at sea will normally do so under Com. Third or Fifth Fleets.
- (9) Bases.
- (a) The Rear Fleet bases will be in Eastern Australia.
- (b) Initially there will be an intermediate base at Manus, Espiritu Santo may also be used if required subsequently the intermediate base will be moved forward as occasion offers.
- (c) Advanced bases (within the meaning of para.5(a)) will be allocated for specific operations.
- (10) The B.P.F. will take part as a fast carrier Task Force in the most advanced operations of the Pacific Fleet initially it will be allotted specific tasks which will necessitate close tactical co-operation with American units the first of these operations will take place shortly after the arrival of the first contingent.
- (11) With the present eclipse of the Japanese Fleet, the principal enemy with the Fleet will contend, is the Japanese shore based Air Force offensively the main objective will be the neutralisation of the enemy Air Forces and airfields. Defensively the main task will be to defeat the suicide bombers. Note: For this purpose the Americans are equipping their Fleet and Light Fleet carriers with a proportion of fighters to T.B.R. and D.B. of two to one.

War Diary30.12.1944.  
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand.American  
Organisation  
(Contd.)

(12) Special weapons whose proper target is the enemy main units will be held in reserve pending a change in the strategic situation. Consideration will also be given to their use against lesser targets.

(13) Minelaying of surface vessels does not form a part of the immediate strategy but is visualised as part of the future strategy of cutting Japan off from the mainland. The fast minelayer will therefore be required at a later date.

(14) It was agreed as a best policy that all British submarines should operate together initially it appeared that the Iwp area would be the most profitable for them and consequently the British submarines have been ordered to Com. Seventh Fleet Group.

(15) Minesweeping requirements will increase as the Allies approach Japan, some minesweepers will be required shortly but it is doubtful whether British ones can be used as they will initially be needed as escorts.

(16) Escorts for supply convoys are required from Manus onwards the recent re-appearance of (?enemy) submarines off the Australian Coast may also make convoys necessary in this area.

Log signal communications:

(17) It was agreed that the B.P.F. should turn over entirely to American signalling methods and procedures and cryptographic systems with the exception of E.C.M. this latter will initially be supplied to Flag Officers only with a special operating team. Adequate American signal staffs are being attached initially to each ship and unit.

Logistic Support:

(18) It is quite evident that logistic support is the limiting factor in the Pacific and not the number of available operational units for this reason it has made abundantly clear that the B.P.F. must be self supporting in every respect.

(19) This does not mean that the Americans would not be prepared to pool resources for the sake of efficiency provided that we were supplying our proper quota nor does it mean that they would withhold essential support to get a unit into operation provided the equivalent British support was available elsewhere.

(20) It does mean however that the Americans are fully occupied with the supply of their own Fleet and have little to spare for us. Part three action required.

(21) I intend to operate the British Pacific Fleet to the best possible effect in the most advanced operations in the Pacific, and Fleet Admiral Nimitz has agreed that I should do so but this will not be possible unless the Fleet has adequate logistic support. Without such support there is no doubt that I cannot carry out prolonged operations and take part in the same manner as the Americans.

(22) From the information available to me I consider that the logistic support already planned is not adequate to meet the new strategic situation involving as it does:

(a) The institution of an intermediate base between Australia and the advanced base (see para.6 above).

(b) Support at sea in advance of the advanced base.

(c) Operations of a considerably more sustained nature than were previously contemplated.

(23) It is requested that these problems should be given further urgent consideration in the Admiralty in the light of the

/strategic...



737

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand.

American strategic situation outlined above and a fresh organisation. estimate of requirements made certain of the (Contd.) more prominent and urgent needs will be signalled as they become apparent. Also any further information that may be required on American methods of operating or on their experience on the scale of operational requirements will be signalled if you need them.

(24) Apart from the actual aspect I believe that a basis of mutual goodwill has been laid and that Cincpac, and his Commanders are prepared to co-operate generously.

(25) V.A.B.P.F. is requested to pass this signal or such parts of it as he considers suitable to ships of the B.P.F. C. in C. B.P.F. will pass to R.A.D.B.P.F.

(26) Admty. pass to F.O.S. C. in C. E.I. pass basegram to V.A.B.P.F., S.4, R.A.A.D. (C. in C. B.P.F., 300330 to Admty., etc.) See 040640. r/20843Z  
/ As received. 110j.

Note: This signal is part eleven and final of 300330Z. F.O.S/M included in circulation.

Carriers My 300330\* in order that British carriers may B.P.F. be capable of operating in a similar manner to the American the following provisions must be made:

(A) Formation of reserve carrier groups based in the forward area. In these reserve groups the highest priority should be given to fighters.

(B) The provision of ferry carriers for transport of -

(1) Reserve aircraft to advanced base (these may be flown off or hoisted out depending on circumstances). (2) Reserve aircraft and air-crew to the carrier in the combat area (these will invariably have to be flown).

(II) It has been calculated here that 4 ferry C.V.Es. rising to 6 will be required. Notwithstanding the existing policy with regard to ferry C.V.E. those in this area must (? all) be provided with air staff adequate for flying and should be of a type capable of catapulting American aircraft as they must be interchangeable and any of (? them) may be required to fly off aircraft.

(III) In addition 2 carriers will be required for D.L.T.2, one for reserve groups in the advanced area and one for training pools in Australia.

(IV) The only C.V.E. at present in British Pacific Fleet are (?STRIKER) and FENCER from both of which all air staff were removed in U.K.

(C. in C. B.P.F., 300340Z to Admty., etc.)

\* Broad outline of American organisation as affecting B.P.F. bases for B.P.F. etc.

In light of my 300330 request you will signal your preliminary remarks on your proposed method of operating including: (a) Operating strength of each fleet carrier. (b) Numbers of spare aircraft and air crews that would be carried. (c) Adequacy of existing flying control personnel for the intensity of operations visualised.

(2) That should be based on following assumptions:

/(A) ...

738

30.12.1944.  
Saturday.War DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand.Carriers  
B.P.F.  
(Contd.)

That operations may be expected to last for periods of at least 3 weeks without returning harbour.

(B) That the remainder the establishment (other than (1) (a) and 1 (b) above) would be held in forward areas with other available reserves ready to be transferred in C.V.Es. to C.Vs. in combat areas.  
(C. in C.B.P.F., 300359Z to R.A.A., B.P.F., Admty., V.A.2., F.O.N.A.S., Australia., V.A.(Q) B.P.F.).

Digest 1074,  
Dec.29th.

(3) Allied convoy approaching Mindoro via Mindanao and Sulu Seas again subjected to several air attacks during morning but nil damage reported.

8 enemy planes destroyed by ships A/A during this and previous evenings raids including suicide divers; report from Mindoro based fighter cover not yet available.

(6) Single Warship described as Battleship sighted 75 miles N.E. Cape Varelli early afternoon course West at 15 knots possibly making for Comranh Bay.

(14) Six Liberators sweeping Western Flores Sea midday 28th bombed Ende Barracks, also small ships and barges off Masemore starting fires one coaster, near misses scored on oil barge. (G.H.Q.S.W.P.A., 301059Z).

V.S.I.S.

An urgent requirement for additional V.S.I.S's. has arisen in S.E.A.C. and Pacific Command. Admiralty signal of today to V.A.Q. refers. After consideration of all problems involved

allocation has been agreed of PRIAM and DENBIGHSHIRE. (Details of transfer).

(6) PRIAM is understood to be available beginning Jan. for loading at Melbourne, DENBIGHSHIRE late Jan. at Sydney.

Vessels will remain on T.99A. Request you agree time and date of transfer and bunkers on board.

(D. of S.T., 301905A to P.S.T.O. Sydney).

Escort  
carriers.

Cominch appreciates the offer of PATROLLER, REAPER, RANEE and THANEMADE in A.M. 211838 and because of urgent requirements he requests the dates of their earliest availability for Ferry duties under operational control of C.in C.P.O.A.

(2) Meanwhile Cominch states that he and C. in C. P.O.A. are making a study of the most advantageous employment of the C.V.E. Assault Force offered and will advise me shortly.

(B.A.D. Washington, 302139Z to Admty.).

739

War Diary.30.12.1944.  
Saturday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarine attack and sighting summary. For 24 hours to 0900Z/30th Dec.  
Para.A.(1) BLACK HAWK and ARTHUR SEWALL torpedoes at 1335Z/29th Dec. in 50° 28' N. 02° 28' W.

*U.772 sunk*—(2) A/C. L/407 attacked U-Boat course 300° at 0113Z/30th Dec. in 50° 05' N. 02° 30' W.

Para.B. (1) A/C. S/202 sighted possible Snort at 0955Z/29th Dec. in 52° 37' N. 10° 58' W.

(2) ROTHAM and HELMSDALE attacked contact at 1053Z/29th Dec. in 50° 11' N. 00° 48' W.

(3) Cherbourg patrol reported contact at 1055Z/29th Dec. in 49° 39' N. 01° 52' W.

(4) M.T.B. 733 attacked possible contact at 1640Z/29th Dec. in 50° 22' N. 02° 27' W.

(5) SKOMER attacked contact at 0205Z/30th Dec. in 49° 25' N. 03° 27' W.

(6) A/C. M/210 attacked possible Snort at 0419Z/30th Dec. in 58° 29' N. 02° 10' W.

Para.C.(1) A/C. E/10 sighted oil patches at 10 yard intervals at 1025Z/29th Dec. in 49° 17' N. 05° 28' W.

(2) A/C. D/114 attacked wake at 0030Z/30th Dec. in 51° 08' N. 08° 15' W.

(3) A/C. F/36 sighted possible Snort course 004° at 0325Z/30th Dec. in 50° 12' N. 02° 53' W.

(4) U.S. A/C. N/625 sighted wake course 90° at 1748Z/29th Dec. in 49° 20' N. 21° 46' W.

(5) U.S.S. CAPE SPEAR reported possible torpedo attack at 1900Z/29th Dec. in 03° 15' S. 78° 00' E.

(D.D.I.C., 301125A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q.).

U-Boat dispositions. Estimates.  
(D.D.I.C., 301422A, 301434A).

31.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

- North Sea 1. Suspected sabotage has seriously injured the Southern lock gates of the Walcheren canal.
- Channel 2. In view of the increase in U-boat activity C. in C. Portsmouth is diverting a number of mine-sweepers from routine sweeping to anti-U-boat duties.  
Le Havre is now considered to be "reasonably clear" of oyster mines.
- West Coast France 3. Three magnetic mines have been detonated at Brest.
- Northern Waters. 4. ZEPHYR, destroyer, was damaged by torpedo or floating mine 20 miles west of Orkney, and returned to Scapa.

Foreign Stations

Mediterranean

- Riviera 5. French destroyer LE FORTUNE reports having bombarded a shore target, but abandoned it after 7 rounds owing to a communication break-down.
- Greece 6(a) Reported today that arrangements are being made to evacuate about 500 Zervas troops at Levkas, western Greece.  
(b) Situation at Patras reported tense but gives no cause for alarm.  
(c) H.M.S. CALEDON is reported as successfully controlling caique traffic at Kavalla. All quiet.  
(d) Mitylene. Situation reported calm. Liberty men landed and had good reception.

East Indies

- C. in C. Ceylon. 7(a) Lieut. General Wetherall will assume appointment on 9th January 1945.

741

31.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies - Contd.

C. in C.  
Ceylon.  
(Contd.)

7(b) S/M THULE on patrol in Malacca Straits was attacked by a single S/M chaser and sustained minor damage

(c) In view of present U-boat activity in home waters, the Admiralty have decided to retain temporarily certain escorts allocated in the Autumn to East Indies Command.

China

8. 8 Mustangs destroyed 2 steamships, set fire to one small tanker and probably sank one merchant vessel and set fire to a second in the Gulf of Tongking.

America and West Indies

S.C. Convoys

9. Revised arrangements are promulgated today by the Admiralty, following closing of Loch Ewe.

Australia and New Zealand

Philippines

10. U.S. P.T. boats operating from Ormoc at night sank 17 small craft off East coast of Cebu Island.

742

31.12.1944  
Sunday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Movements.

- A.F.D. 55 Sailed my 301725.  
(F.O.I.C. London, 310752 to C. in C. Nore, C. in C. Plymouth, C. in C. Portsmouth).
- A.F.D. 20 Sailed A.F.D. 20 in tow of H.M. Tugs EMINENT and DESTINY escorted by NORTHERN REWARD remaining escorts SAPPER (S.O.), AYRSHIRE and HOMEGUARD joining at Clyde light vessel. Routed in accordance with A.M. 301903A Dec.  
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 311124A to Admty., C. in C. W.A., F.O.G.M.A.)
- UGANDA Scapa departures UGANDA to comply with C. in C. cruiser. H.F's 301355A.  
(A.C.O.S., 311514A to F.O.I.C. Greenock).
- HILARY A.M. 301124. On arrival in Clyde area HILARY is L.S.H.(L) to transfer to the general administration of R.A.L.S.C.U.  
(D.C.O.D., 311734A to R.A.L.S.C.U.)
- DEER SOUND, Cancel A.M. 271853. C. in C. Rosyth is requested PERSIMMON, to sail DEER SOUND to arrive Clyde on 4th January. SILVIO, C. in C. W.A. is requested to sail her to L.S.I.(L)s. Gibraltar in K.M.F. 38 for onward routing to British Pacific Fleet.  
2. A.M. 301752 not to all. On dispersal of K.M.F. 38 off Gibraltar PERSIMMON and SILVIO are to proceed in company at best speed to Port Said. F.O.L.E.M. is requested to arrange onward passage as required by C. in C. E.I. (D.O.D. (H), 311952A to C. in C. Rosyth, W.A., F.O.I.C. Greenock, F.O.G.M.A., F.O.L.E.M.)

Operations.North Sea.

- Patrols. Patrol for tonight Sunday.
1. SOUTHDOWN, 2. CROOME, 3. ARENDAL, 4. COTTESMORE, 5. MALLARD. 6.A. WIDGEON.
  2. 12 RUTHERFORD with Coastal Force from BEEHIVE
  - 14 EGLINTON. 16 CURZON with Coastal force from Ostend.
  - 18 PUFFIN, 19. RIOU and WALPOLE Coastal force from Ostend rendezvous CURZON at N.F. 8 at 1730A.
  3. Escort for T.A.M. 35 C.S. ADMIRAL HASTINGS and HOLDERNESS. (My 310949A Part I).
  4. Coastal Force Patrol: - from U.K. Unit F.A. 3 Z 15 Force. Unit F.A. 5 Z 11. F.C. 5 9, F.C. 6 7, F.C. 7 5, F.C. 8 3. F.B. 8 53 buoy force 3 unit F.B. 4 and 5. F.J. LL 40 55. F.L. 2 and 3 F.J. LL 22 25. From Ostend F.C. 1, F.C. 2, F.C. 3, F.J. W.S. 39 21. F.B. 2. F.J. W.S. 21 00. F.A. 8. F.J. W.S. 24 15. F.G. 2 3. F.J. LL 26 54.  
(C. in C. Nore, 310949A to Nore Command).

/Operation...

743

War Diary.

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

North Sea. - Contd.

Operation "Moonshine". Operation "Moonshine".  
If you concur propose sailing 3 motor coasters for Aberdeen on Tuesday 2nd January. Chief Officer Bingham hopes to carry out exercises at sea before sailing for operation on or after Saturday 6th January. Exercises will not involve air co-operation. It is understood that 18 Group C.C. have agreed to act in accordance with Nore Nos. 0517/51 of 2nd Sept. 1944 para. 6 during outward passage. As coasters will return to Humber 16 Group C.C. will provide air co-operation during homeward passage.

3. C. in C. Rosyth is requested to sail convoy in accordance with para. one of Nore memorandum referred to in para. 2.

4. Communications. (1) C. in C. Rosyth is requested to issue necessary amendments to Nore number 0517/51 of 1st Sept. 20th Oct. and 7th Dec. as requisite for outward passage, but to impress upon master that for return voyage they must adhere to Nore's instructions.

(2) C. in C. Nore will forward Nore copy of S.P. 02105 and S.P. 02341 to C. in C. Rosyth. Request these may be returned to Nore immediately on completion of outward voyage.

5. Copies of operation orders are being forwarded to 18 Group C.C. and N.O.I.C. Aberdeen.

(C. in C. Nore, 311100A to C. in C. Rosyth).

Note. Message as decyphered contains no para. 2.

Midget Reference Admiralty 301906A December, para. 3.  
U-boat should be amended to read - Torpedoes should be  
towed to disposed of as directed by D.T.M's officer and  
Dover. mines as directed by VERNON officers.  
(D.T.M., 311111A to V.A. Dover).

Request one of VERNON's A/S E/S Yachts may be lent to assist in search for German Midget submarine sunk in Dover harbour.  
If available request she may be sailed as soon as practicable. (V.A. Dover, 311846A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

A.M. 301906A. Wreck located by Asdic this forenoon but could not be found by diver p.m. today.  
Operations continuing tomorrow Monday will include close Echo Search and Bottom sweep.  
(V.A. Dover, 311926A to Admty).

Damage to Antwerp also for P.S.V.O. Terneuzen for C.I.Z.  
Walcheren Early Friday morning 29th December both doors of  
canal gates. lock at South end of canal through Walcheren fell  
into canal. Dull noise which could not definitely  
be identified as explosion was heard. Both doors  
heavily damaged and further destroyed by current.  
Sentry had seen person in vicinity a few hours earlier.  
Sabotage is feared.  
(N.O.I.C. Flushing, 322215 to F.O.I.C. Holland).

/Situation...

744

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

North Sea.

Situation reports.

Cositintrep No.271 Part 4.

Discharge by sea - 24 hour period ending 301600A December.

British:

	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Vehicles</u>	<u>Stores</u> (incl. coal)	<u>Bulk Pol.</u>	<u>Ammo.</u>
Antwerp	6	154	7288	-	504
Ostend	1734	317	3818	2381	2433
Boulogne	-	44	657	-	-
Dieppe	83	-	30	-	-
Caen	-	-	1697	-	-
Calais	3	2	-	-	-
Ghent	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1826</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>13490</b>	<b>2381</b>	<b>2937</b>
<u>U.S. North.</u>					
Antwerp	-	-	16840	-	-
Cherbourg	1152	334	7661	13141	2311
Le Havre	4197	146	6625	235	319
Rouen	3235	1535	4850	194	1905
Granville	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8584</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>35976</b>	<b>13570</b>	<b>4535</b>
<u>U.S. South.</u>					
Marseilles	22	43	7782	-	357
Port de Bouc	-	-	949	-	-
Toulon	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8731</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>357</b>

Signed Eisenhower Cite S.H.G.D.S.  
(S.H.A.E.F., 311715A to Admty., etc.).

Operations.

In Holland photo cover 28/29th December shows anti-aircraft and artillery build up and general increase in activity area Herwueunen Wijke, Peronboom, Hardinxveld: Civilians report estimated total 28000 troops and much artillery crossed Maas. Enemy shelled Walcheren and North Beveland from Schouwen 28th Dec. All inhabitants reported evacuated from Overflakke. Civilians report all guns on Dordrecht moved to south part of island total troops there estimated at 2500. Troops reported left Siykernisse for attack on Walcheren.

General.

In Ardennes enemy has now lost initiative and becoming doubtful whether projected relaunch of offensive will occur on northern flank until Bastogne position improved for enemy, but capability of launching some sort of attack remains clear.

Threat in Holland increased by apparently reliable reports making 712 Division move along eastwards to join 6 Parachute and 711.

(S.H.A.E.F., 311900A Dec. to War Office etc.).

Operations

Channel.

Patrols.

S.O. E.G.9 detach 2 ships to patrol between /49.52...



745

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.War DiaryHOME COMMANDSOperationsChannel.Patrols  
(Contd.)

49.52 N. 6.05 W. and 49.51 N. 05.11 W. Ships detailed to be known as G.B. remainder as G.A. (C. in C. Plymouth, 311020A to S.O.E.G.9). On completion of my 302154. Search inshore route east of 02° 27' W. R/V with:

(a) Eastbound coastal convoy B.T.C.23 speed 7 knots and form additional escort.  
(b) Codeword "Chancellork.F". (c) Escort MOOSEJAW.  
(d) Inshore coastal route. (e) Escort from 02° 27' W. to St. Helens. (f) Subsequent orders follow.

(2) Convoy E.T.A. 27' W. 0200A/1st January.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 311316A to VIDETTE).

If not in contact proceed forthwith to trail T.B.C.23 due Portland westbound at 1730A. Leave convoy at Eddystone and resume patrol.

(C. in C. Plymouth, 311444A to S.O.E.G.14).

ANTHONY, ANTHONY, TONKINOIS anti-snort Patrol Area limits given 01° 10' W. 02° 00' W. 50° 20' 50° 30' as required to carry out additional escort. Details follow.

(2) E.G.30 search area north of Cherbourg limits 01° 20' 01° 47' W. 50° 00'.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 311506A to E.G.30, ANTHONY, TONKINOIS).  
Night Patrol 31st December 1st January.

E.G.10 2 ships search 2 miles each side of Q.Z.S.636 from 50° 15' to Kansas.

(2) Two ships search 2 miles each side of Q.Z.S.636 618 from 50° 15' to F buoy, so as to R/V at F buoy at 0300 with:-  
(a) convoy W.V.P. 26 speed 14 knots and cover to Le Havre.  
(b) Codeword "Hindhead" 8 C. (c) Escorts CROIX DE LORRAINE, ANTHONY, TONKINOIS. (d) Route Q.Z.S.618, then 5 miles coast of Q.Z.S.636 to Le Havre. (e) Cover from F buoy to 58E buoy.  
(f) On completion rejoin group and take up day patrols.

(3) E.G.10 report ships detached.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 311520A to S.O.E.G.10).

My 311506A. R/V. at Spithead Gate at 0200 with convoy W.V.P.26 and escort to Le Havre. Details follow.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 311545A to ANTHONY, TONKINOIS).  
Day Patrols 1st January.

E.G.30 sweep 2 miles each side H Channel from H.2 to H.10 buoy.

(2) E.G.10 two miles each side of Q.Z.S.636. Two ships from Z buoy to 50° 10' N. Two ships from 50° 10' to Kansas.

(3) E.G.10 report dispositions of ships.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 312146A to S.O.E.Gs. 10, 30).

U-Boat threat to mid-channel shipping.

Your 301040 para.2. Forces are not at present available to undertake this sweep. Request you will either re-allocate ships of 31st M.S.F. at present attached to you to this command or conduct whole search with Portsmouth minesweeping forces.

(C.T.F.125, 311209A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Reference my 302320. Request your concurrence or remarks on these proposed arrangements which are not to be put into execution until these are received.

(2) C.T.F.125 is requested to state firstly whether it will be possible for P.T.-boats from Le Havre to meet P.V.L. convoys at 58E buoy and secondly whether it is intended that L.S.Ts. should

/return...

746

31.12.1944  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Channel.

U-Boat threat to mid-channel shipping. (Contd.) return to England in groups by the new route. (C. in C. Portsmouth, 311328A to A.N.C.X.F., C.T.F.125, N.O.I.C. Portland). In view of increased U-Boat activity in Portsmouth Command and reduction in enemy's minelaying effort it is intended to divert temporarily as many minesweepers as possible from routine sweeping to escort duties. In some cases available M/S trawlers are not asdic fitted.

(2) The following M/S. are to be provided for escort duties.

(a) Ninth M/S. Flotilla after new channel between E.A.5 and H.D.2 B buoy has been swept.

(b) 6 Oropesa trawlers from Portland 3 of which are to be transferred Portsmouth. These will be replaced by 3 A/S trawlers from Portsmouth.

(c) 3 Oropesa trawlers and 1 A/S - M/S trawler from Portsmouth.

(3) Ref. para.1 of my 302148 and 302320, N.O.I.C. Portland is required to provide 1 A/S and 1 Oropesa trawler as escort to these L.S.T. convoys.

(C. in C. Portsmouth, 311330A to N.O.I.C. Portland, Com. M/S.) Request that on completion of Operation H.Y. Serial A.8 PLOVER may be sailed for Portsmouth (for deep minelaying). A.M. 301232 refers. (D.O.D.(H) for A.C.N.S.(H), 311636A to C. in C.W.A.). Your 311328A.

(1) Regret unable to concur. Present U-Boat attack appears to operate from Channel Islands area with fullest use made of Alderney Radar installations to monitor H Channel. Consider proposal to sail five miles to westward of that channel increases risk of losses. L.S.Ts. should be sailed by most easterly track possible and capacity use made of Le Havre, Rouen and ports to eastward to the exclusion of Cherbourg.

(2) Weather encountered in English Channel during winter months has necessitated withdrawal of P.T.-Boats from escort duty. It is intended L.S.Ts. return to England in Groups sailing in darkness routed in accordance with your 300034A or your 301040A. (C.T.F.125, 312141A to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Suspected U-Boat. I am attacking good contact in position 070° A.4 buoy 1½ miles. (TONKINOIS, 312224 to C. in C. Portsmouth). Contact now lost after 3 attacks. Rest appeared to be moving estward continuing search. (TONKINOIS, 312332 to C. in C. Portsmouth).

Operations

West Coast France.

Minesweeping at Brest. Report of sweeping for December 29 and 30 at Brest. L.L. static sweep in Port de Commerce detonated one red magnetic mine. L.L. static search of area front of submarine pens detonated one blue and one red magnetic mine. (Com. Y Squadrons, 312132A to C.T.F.125).

747

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Western Approaches.

Patrols. 15th E.G. and remainder of 6th E.G. not employed as in my 310348 not to all, are to concentrate and patrol area between:  
(a) 51° 00' N. 08° 20' W. (b) 51° 30' N. 08° 45' W.  
(c) 51° 45' N. 08° 00' W. (d) 51° 20' N. 07° 45' W.  
(2) 2nd E.G. proceed to support Irish Sea section of H.X.327 from Splitting point (D.R.) 50° 28' N. 12° 22' W. in accordance with C.E.3 until ordered to detach. E.T.A. convoy splitting point 2300A/31st routed through 180° Fastnet 10 thence standard route C 9½ knots. Escort of Irish Sea Section KOKANEE (S.O. C.3 E.G.) SEACLIFF, ST. THOMAS.  
(C. in C.W.A., 311133A to S.O.E.Gs. 2, 6, 15).  
On passing Tuskar Rock about 2000/1st detach from H.X.327 and proceed to Falmouth for fuel and 48 hours lay over.  
(C. in C.W.A., 312226A to S.O.E.G.2.).  
On arrival of EMPIRE DYNASTY, request you will sail GROU and ANNAN to rejoin 6th E.G. in vicinity of Cape Clear. S.O. 6th E.G. to signal R/V.  
(C. in C.W.A., 312228A to F.O.I.C. Milford Haven).

Possible Investigate contact reported by aircraft in 051°  
U-Boat. 18' N. 010° 15' W.  
(C. in C.W.A., 311428A to S.O.E.Gs. 15, 6).  
My 311428. If not in contact by daylight 1st  
January proceed to comply with para.1 of my 311133.  
(C. in C.W.A., 312237A to S.O.E.Gs.,15,6).

"Gee" fix My 301224A.  
investigations.(1) DOMINICA of the 2nd Escort Group is fitted Q.H.3 and should be at Falmouth from 1200 approx. 2nd Jan. for 48 hours. Subsequently it is planned that 2nd E.G. should operate in the south west approaches for about one week.  
(2) If your representative is able to embark request you communicate direct with F.O.I.C. Falmouth concerning details.  
(C. in C.W.A., 311853A to H.Q. 60 Group).

Operations

Norway.

Operations "V.P.73" and "V.P.77" again postponed E.T.D.  
"V.P." now 0300A 2nd January.  
(N.O.I.C. Lerwick, 311707A to A.C.O.S.).

Operations

Northern Waters.

J.  
C.W.convoys S.A.B.W.A. 782.  
22 day Mossy.  
cycles Reference S.A.B.W.A. 771 Mossy and S.A.B.W.A.  
advocated. 780 Mossy.

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary

HOME COMMANDS

Operations

Northern Waters.

J

Ø.W. convoys  
22 day  
cycles  
advocated  
(Contd.)

(1) W.S.A. has discussed reduction of convoy(s) cycle(s) with Capt. Frankel who states that at Murmansk 12 dry cargo ships can be discharged and loaded or ballasted in 21 days without serious difficulty.

As reported in S.A.B.W.A. 771 Mossy he states that 12 ships from J.W.61 and 62 were handled completely in 22 days.

He likewise estimates that 14 ships can be handled in 25 days.  
(2) W.S.A. has considered large variety (of) lengths of cycles from 35 to 22 days.

Their conclusion is that cycles should either be retained at present figure of 35 days or reduced to about 22 days, which latter course they strongly favour.

(3) W.S.A. consider that controlling factors are:-

(a) Size of convoys and resulting use of White Sea Ports.

(b) Necessity of providing ships in White Sea with sufficient time to discharge and load or ballast without causing excessive turn round time.

(c) Amount of lumber available in White Sea Ports.

(d) Number of sailings required to North and possibility of diverting some vessels to the Black Sea.

(4) W.S.A. concludes that a cycle of about 28 to 30 days would be less advantageous than 35 day cycles. They would probably advocate 16 or 17 ships of which 12 might be handled at Murmansk and balance at Archangel. Of latter one or two would probably be nominated to lie over for full cargoes of lumber but W.S.A. would hope to withdraw remainder in first movement with minimum cargoes chrome and potash.

Past experience indicates that various difficulties would be encountered in loading or ballasting ships within time limit allowed and in getting it through ice. Should it be impossible to withdraw such vessels in first movements average turn round would be longer than at present this cycle therefore has the disadvantage of:-

(A) Excessive turn round for Murmansk ships.

(B) Pressure on Archangel vessels returning in first movement.

(C) Excessive turn round for vessels lying over at Archangel.

(5) With cycle of 22 days W.S.A. would expect to have 13 or 14 ships per convoy of which 11 might go to Murmansk and the remainder to Archangel to and fro lie over for second movement for lumber and  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Average turn round would be about 25 days. 22 days cycle has the following advantage.

(a) Most efficient turn round for Murmansk ships.

(b) No extreme delay for ships lying over in White Sea 44 days period is very desirable for loading lumber cargoes.

(c) No pressure on White Sea ships to return to first outward convoy with consequent problem of loading ballasting and navigation.

(d) Considerable saving of ships time through vessels elimination of congestion present felt at New York account large number of vessels loading at one time and consequent necessity of one or more advance(s) sections.

(e) Elimination of long delays to vessels missing convoys.

(6) In event of sudden closing of White Sea there would under 22 days cycle be congestion at Murmansk which would probably

/prevent...

War Diary.

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

J.  
C.W. convoys prevent three or four ships from making first  
22 day homeward movement.  
cycles W.S.A. believe that such risks should be run and  
advocated any congestion controlled by re-allocation ships  
(contd). to Black Sea on diverting en-route. Should  
White Sea become definitely unpassable W.S.A.  
would re-allocate sufficient ships to Black Sea  
route to bring total British American ships to  
be handled per convoy down to 12.  
(7) W.S.A. therefore desire approx. 22 days cycle which they  
consider will produce maximum efficiency in use of shipping on  
this route. Please discuss with Admty. and advise.  
(C.S.A.B. Washington, 310341 to C.S.A.B. London).  
/Corrupt group correction to follow, received in W.R.1622/2.

Patrols. Nothing found my 310005 refers.  
Your 302355 BENTINCK, BYARD, CALDER eastern  
patrol, PASLEY, DRURY, BAZELY western patrol  
suitable.  
(S.O.E.G.4, 310601 to C. in C. Rosyth).  
Amend my 302355A. If not in contact half group establish  
Gamma between position 58.26 02.50 and 58.46 02.10. Other  
half carry out search as in my 302355A passing position 58.46  
04.00.  
(2) Report disposition.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 310843A to S.O.E.G.4).  
Cancel my 302355A to BENTINCK and my 310843A to E.G.4.  
Carry out search Dunnet Head and Cape Wrath working north as far  
as 59° 05' N.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 311043A to PASLEY).  
If not in contact at 2000A tonight proceed and search close  
inshore from Clythness to Duncansby Head. On completion if  
not in contact re-establish Gamma between 58° 57' N., 02° 30' W.  
and 58° 25' N., 02° 50' W.  
(C. in C. Rosyth, 311750A to BENTINCK).

ZEPHYR ZEPHYR torpedoed or mined at 0330A today 31 Dec.  
torpedoed in position 58° 57' N., 04° 00' W. while carrying  
or mined. out my 282248. Number 2 boiler room flooded.  
Proceeding to Scapa under tow.  
(C. in C. H.F., 310921A to Admty).  
Scapa arrival ZEPHYR C. in C. H.F., 310921 refers.  
(A.C.O.S. 311354A to Admty., C. in C. H.F.)

Convoy Scapa departures C.S.10 in VINDEX with DIADEM  
J.W.63. and SCORPION, ZAMBESI, ALGONQUIN, ZEBRA,  
SCOURGE, SIOUX.  
(A.C.O.S., 311238A to Admty, S.B.N.O. N. Russia).

/Following...

750

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Northern Waters.

Convoy  
J.W. 63  
(contd).

Following extracts from C. in C. Home Fleet's 220904 are passed to you for information.

(2) D-day is day J.W. 63 sails from Loch Ewe.  
(3) Date and route in my 220924. Codeword in my 220916.

(4) Forces taking part:-

(a) VINDEX wearing flag of C.S.10 who will conduct operation and DIADEM.

(b) Fleet Destroyers MYNGS (Capt. (D) 23), SCORPION, SERAPIS, SCOURGE, SAVAGE, ALGONQUIN, SIOUX, STORD, ZAMBESI, and ZEBRA.

(c) Western Approaches Escort, 7th and 8th Escort Groups total 9 ships.

(d) Local escort. Russian warships operating from Kola as arranged by S.B.N.O. North Russia.

(5) Route Red unless otherwise ordered.

(6) S.B.N.O. N. Russia is requested to sail R.A.63 as soon as practicable after arrival of J.W.63. Route Blue unless otherwise ordered.

(7) Signals quoted in para. (3) are being passed to you.

(D.O.D. (H), 311551A to Admiral Archer).

Faroe Islands, departure KEPPEL, WALKER, WESTCOTT with R.F.A. BLUE RANGER.

(N.O.I.C. Faroes, 312002A to Admty. Cs. in C. W.A. Rosyth).

C. in C. H.F., 220904 para. 9 18 Group C.C. will not provide A/S Air Escort tomorrow Jan. 1st.

(C. in C. Rosyth, 312349A to C.S.10).

Mining.

(See also under apposite operational districts).

Deep mining  
off  
Hartland  
Point.

My 301827A. Arrived PLOVER escort CONQUEROR.  
(F.O.I.C. Milford, 310859A to C. in C. W.A.)

Nore-  
Schelde  
Channel.

L.L./S.A. E.G.M.S. carried out with 1 actuation over whole area define in my 301601A. 1 Red mine detonated in position 51° 21' 2" N., 02° 29' 3" E.

(2) 1 further actuation given area with centre line N.F. F.C. to N.F.6 to width of 5 cables northward and 10 cables southward. One Red mine detonated in position 51.21.8 N. 02.29.6 E. This was detonated after 4 actuations had been given. 42 Flotilla returned Harwich.

(S.O. M/S 42, 311745 to C. in C. Nore.)

Port Facilities.

Rouen.

My 261019 is passed to you for information. Height of tide referred to is height at Le Havre as shown in Admty. Tide Tables. Ships of draught eighteen feet can expect quick clearance

from Pasture for Rouen.

(C.T.F.125, 311213A to Admty. Trade Division).

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Port Facilities. - Contd.

Le Havre. Completed sweep main entrance channel le Havre with E.C.4. Channel may be considered reasonably clear of Oyster mines. C.T.G.125.15 will insure ships entering should observe speed restrictions for first three days while empty store ships leaving harbour should proceed at best speed while in Channel. At end of this period channel may be considered free from mines and ships are to enter and leave harbour in normal manner. E.C.4 to remain at le Havre for check sweep main entrance channel and clearance Seine River channel. Admiralty 301204 refers. (C.T.F.125, 311655A to A.N.C.X.F.).

Casualties and Defects

BLACK The following casualties are reported:  
HAWK, S.S. BLACK HAWK torpedoed in position 180° Port-  
ARTHUR land Bill four miles at 1435 December 29th.  
SEWELL. Beached Warbarrow Bay. 68 survivors landed at  
Brixham.  
S.S. ARTHUR SEWELL torpedoed in approx. same  
position and time as above. Ship now anchored Weymouth Bay -  
no casualties reported.  
Both ships ex T.B.C.21.  
(C. in C. Portsmouth, 310430A to Admiralty).

Shipping and Convoys

Navigation 126A.  
lights to Para. 1 of A.G.M. 94A of 22nd December is to be  
be burnt in amended to read "All merchant ships are normally  
Channel. to burn navigation lights at full brilliance,  
etc."  
(2) This is B.A.M.S. lettered Message "P.C."  
N.C.S.Os. are to inform Masters of merchant ships.  
(D.T.D. 310204A General Message).

Antwerp and Cancel my 261109A and 271014A both not to all  
Ostend addressees. All Antwerp and Ostend traffic  
traffic. is to (proceed) by normal searched channel to  
N.F.6 buoy thence by Q.Z.Y.537.  
(2) Ostend traffic is to proceed from 1 mile  
north of N.F.7 buoy to O.D.1 buoy thence by normal searched  
channel and vice versa.  
(3) Ships addressed acknowledge.  
(C. in C.Nore, 311140A to Nore Command).

Deflection Admiralty 302000.  
of Q.Z.S.81 Suggested route is not considered desirable in  
route. view of wrecks known to be in close proximity  
and a heavy cross tide in this area. There is no  
occasion for ships to anchor in this area except  
in fog in which case they will almost certainly  
drift down and anchor on the cable which runs parallel to the  
proposed route.

31.12.1944.  
Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping and Convoys.

Deflection  
of Q.Z.S.81  
route  
(Contd.)

(2) The vast majority of the traffic which crosses this cable is proceeding to or coming from the Downs. It is quite impossible to avoid traffic proceeding from the Downs to Antwerp or from Downs to the Thames and vice versa from crossing this cable.  
(C. in C. Nore, 311212A to Admty.).

Sailing and  
arrival  
signals to  
be  
dispensed  
with.

Since personnel ships and train ferries running between Clais, Dover, Folkestone and Harwich normally operate in accordance with prearranged programme, propose sailing and arrival signal be dispensed with altogether.  
(2) All authorities concerned would of course continue to be informed in the event of major departure from programme.  
(V.A. Dover, 311247A to A.N.C.X.F., C. in C. Nore, Admiralty).

U.R.  
convoys.

U.R.150 will sail from Belfast on 7th Jan. and thereafter on an 8 day cycle.  
(2) Convoys will be routed via Minches. Ships from Loch Ewe joining as requisite.  
(3) F.O.1/c Liverpool is requested to sail escorts to Belfast accordingly.

(C. in C.W.A., 311618 to A.C.I.C, F.O.I.Cs. N.I., Aultbea, Liverpool).

Sailings to  
and from  
Far Shore.

To meet requirement of two L.S.Ts. sailing daily from Cherbourg with casualties for Southampton which cannot be treated as accredited hospital carriers it will be necessary to provide adequate escort vessels.

(2) In accordance with policy outlined in my 300034 and 302148 (neither to all addressees) it is proposed that these vessels should form an E.W.L. convoy leaving Cherbourg nightly at 2000 routed from H.10 buoy to position (RR) 50° 26' N. 01° 11' W. thence 6Z buoy to St. Helens to arrive Southampton about 0800.

(3) It is understood that these hospital fitted L.S.Ts. will be employed in the reverse direction for the transport of a normal load of army vehicles and troops.

(4) In order to economise in escorts it is proposed to suspend the E.W.C. - W.E.C. convoys and to sail M.T. ships capable of 9 knots and over in the W.E.L. - E.W.L. convoys timed and routed as in my 300034 i.e. the W.E.L. convoys weighing from St. Helens at 2200.

(5) Shipping for Cherbourg too slow to sail with the L.S.Ts. will be sailed in W.V.C. convoys with orders to break off and proceed independently from Kansas Light buoy.

(6) Propose first E.W.L. leave Cherbourg 2000 Jan. first escort 2 frigates and 2 trawlers.

(7) Comtaskfor 125 is requested to signal his concurrence or remarks.

(C. in C., Portsmouth, 311840 to C.T.F.125, A.N.C.X:F.).



753

31.12.1944  
SundayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSNorth Atlantic

KILMARTIN, On arrival position (N) Detach MIRROR to  
MIRROR . proceed independently for Dakar route as held.  
(2) KILMARTIN (missing group) proceed  
Gibraltar routed through (Z) 033° 00' 009° 45' W.  
(Y) 035° 51' N. 006° 10' W. reporting (a) P.C.S.

MIRROR. (b) Own P.C.S. (c) W/T Watch and communication  
arrangements for MIRROR.  
(3) N.O.I.C. W.Af. 300935\* not to KILMARTIN.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 311012A to KILMARTIN.)  
\* Cable ship MIRROR proceed unescorted from given position for  
Dakar.

Escort On arrival of 55th and 57th E. G. the 38th and 41st  
Groups. groups will be sailed to U.K. A.M. 300130 and my  
161805 not to C. in C.W.A. refer.  
(F.O.G.M.A. 311212A to Admty.)  
My 300130 re 55th and 57th E.G. Amend para. 5  
to read, Admty. 300106 refers.  
(HWR.No.2, 311230A to F.O.G.M.A., C. in C. Med., C. in C. W.A.,  
F.O.C.W.A.F.)

Search Proceed with all despatch to investigate possible  
E.G.38 aircraft periscope sighting in 035° 52' N. 009° 33'  
W. at 1450A\* today Sunday C.M.S.F. pass to  
C.F.A.W. (?15).  
(F.O.G.M.A., 311520A to E.G.38)  
\* Time amended to 1325A. (F.O.G.M.A. 010004A  
January.)  
Amend position in my 311520\* to read 036° 32' north,  
009° 33' west.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 312218A to E.G.38.)  
\* Proceed with all despatch to investigate possible A/S  
periscope sighting.

BIDEFORD, Arrivals BIDEFORD from East. Fleet tender  
ERIKKAY. number 16 from Oran.  
Departure. ERIKAY for Azores.  
(F.O.G.M.A., 312148A, Admty., C. in C. Med.,  
F.O.W.M.)

South Atlantic

A.F.D.24 P.C.S. of A.F.D.24 at 1800Z/31st Dec. 010° 00' N.  
016° 48' W. 295° 5.5 knots. E.T.A.Dakar 1200Z/1 Jan.  
(H.M.S. WOODRUFF, 311801Z, to F.O.C.W. Africa.)

War Diary31.12.1944  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSMediterranean

Human Torpedo No reply yet received to my 281729, not in W.D.  
 (2) Information also required whether this human torpedo has any additions to permit diving.  
 (3) B.N.L.O. (7 groups omitted)\* two reference Midget submarine type 23 original document sent to Washington and positive microfilm to Admiralty. Plans referred to should be forwarded to S.O.(I) Naples for early inspection by N.I.U.  
 (F.O.N.A.M., 311223A to Comlab. (R) C. in C. Med., Admty.)  
 \*Repetition requested.

South Aegean Summary. G1/74163 Cipher 31 December.  
 Up to 0900 hours 31st December.  
 (1) Shipping.  
 No Ph. cover 30th December owing to weather.  
 Ground source reports - Rhodes - recently captured British Schooner MINLAS would sail for Marmarius with refugees on 30th December.  
 Comment. The capture of a second British Schooner in this area during December can only be regarded with suspicion.  
 (C. in C. Middle East, 311250B to W.O., Usual Addressees.)

HUNT Class Destroyers refits Essential that HUNTS earmarked for Eastern Theatre proceed to U.K. to collect necessary stores for As. and As before being taken in hand for refit in Mediterranean. My 061406 Nov. refers.  
 (2) Unless therefore, it can be guaranteed that stores can be shipped to Alex. to arrive before 1st Feb., following is alternative proposal to that in A.M. 300110 (?300100 intended)  
 (a) BICESTER and OAKLEY to be released on arrival of MILNE and MATCHLESS and sailed to U.K. about 6th Jan.  
 (b) Either FARNDAL, HAYDON or CROOME with necessary stores embarked to be sailed in time to fill refit vacancy at Alex. on 1st Feb.  
 (C. in C. Med., 311412 to Admty.) Reply, Admty. 020017A.)

Trawlers for U.K. My 041822 not to F.O. Tunisia PIROUETTE, GAVOTTE and FOXTROT are allocated. Your 281149 not to all refers.  
 (C. in C. Med., 311814 to F.O.G.M.A. (R) Admty. Capt. M/S Med. V.A.M. F.O. Tunisia.)

BARFLEUR Propose following new programme for BARFLEUR.  
 My 061802 December not to all.  
 (2)a. Sail Oran about 17th January to U.K. with wine and foodstuffs for F.N.G.B. Independence Ships Brest and Cherbourg.  
 (b) Visit Cherbourg 27th/29th and Brest 30th/2nd February.  
 (c) Arrive Toulon 7th February.

/(3)...

755

31.12.1944

SundayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSMediterraneanBARFLEUR  
(Contd.)

(3) If programme approved request unloading port in U.K. may be signalled.  
(F.O.W.M., 311825A to C. in C. Med. (R) C.T.F. 125 Premar 3, F.O.N.A.M., F.O.G.M.A., Commob. Oran, A.N.C.X.F., C. in C. Plymouth, Admty.)

Situation  
report  
No. 522.

(1) Sicily. Ref. No. 521 para. 2. It is now established that only 2 lives were lost. All survivors are now in Malta.  
(2) Preveza. Evacuation completed without incident.  
(3) Patras. Situation is tense but gives no cause for alarm.  
(4) Piraeus. Situation quiet. Clearance operations proceeding satisfactorily.  
(5) Levkas. Arrangements are being made to evacuate about 500 Zervas troops.  
(6) Kavalla. CALEDON is successfully controlling caique traffic. All quiet.  
(7) Kalamata. E.A.M. Government becoming increasingly unpopular.  
(8) Salonika. Nothing to report.  
(9) (?Mitylene). Situation calm. Liberty men have been landed and had good reception.  
(10) Crete. All quiet at Heraklion where E.L.A.S. have been endeavouring to make trouble without success.  
(11) Zara. No change in attitude of local authorities.  
(C. in C., Med., 311850 to F.O.L.E.M., F.O.T.A.L.I., F.O.W.I.etc.)

Patras

Situation report 67. Arrival M.M./S.68 M.L. 469 caiques nil. Departure BEAUFORT, WILTON (corrupt group) SS. MANOULA, AIS GEORGIOS, caiques nil. (Corrupt group) quiet tension continues.  
(B.N.L.O. Patras, 312001B to Greek C. in C. contd.)

Ships at Patras 2000/31st OAKLEY M.G.B.661, M.L.469, M.L.1158, L.C.I.(L) M.M./S. 114, M.M./S.68.  
(B.N.L.O. Patras, 312005B to C. in C. Med.)

NEWFOUNDLAND

Your 051105A November not to C. in C. B.P.F. Propose NEWFOUNDLAND carries out a five week work up at Alexandria.  
(2) Consider this to be a minimum in view of her equipment and bad weather conditions during shake down of two weeks at Scapa.  
(3) Understand that Admty. approval has been given for total period to be seven weeks.  
(F.O.L.E.M., 312013B to C. in C. Med.)  
Concurs (C. in C. Med. 011301)  
No objection. (Admty. 021642A, and C. in C. B.P.F. 040251Z.)

Riviera

Target at 826882 enemy supply depot abandoned after seven rounds owing to temporary breakdown

/of...

756

31.12.1944  
Sunday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

Riviera (Contd.) of communications. Slight accurate counterfire  
No other missions. Fuel 59 per cent ammo. 99.  
Weather excellent. Wind force 2 from west swell  
negligible. Nothing from S.B.L.O.  
(LE FORTUNE, 312045A to Comflanfor.)

Cositintrep .FX. 77310 cipher 31st December.  
No. 540. Cite FHGCT - Signed Alexander.  
Part four. Greece. Athens/Piraeus. Good progress was  
maintained in clearing southeast Athens during  
30th December. Little opposition was encount-  
ered. E.L.A.S. now appear to be in two main  
groups in the northern suburbs of Athens one of which is  
supported by Regular E.L.A.S. troops in the suburb of Peristeri  
about 3 miles from the centre of the city. There was little  
change in Piraeus where E.L.A.S. resistance continues to be  
stubborn.  
(A.F.H.Q., No T.O.O. to W.O.)

757

31.12.1944  
SundayWar DiaryFOREIGN STATIONSEast Indies

Enemy Units Following sightings reported by 20th Bomber Command time 300528Z in harbour St. Jacques Saigon 10° 23' N. 107° 02' E.  
2 Battleships, 2 cruisers, 4 destroyers.  
(C. in C. E.I., 310007 to Admty.)

Greek shipping crew trouble. A. ZEPHYROS. Matter is of a minor nature not calling for force. There are no Greek Consuls at Mombasa or at Lourenco Marques. Ministry of War Transport proposes ship load coal at Durban instead of Lourenco Marques so that Greek Consul there can explain terms of service which are in dispute. No difficulty in sailing ship anticipated and in view of above explanation and minor nature of disturbance intend that ship should proceed to Durban as agreed by owner and proposed by Ministry of War Transport.  
(b) (?Ships) at Lourenco Marques. Presume C.S.A. Lourenco Marques propose other 2 ships go to Durban for same reason namely that Greek Consul can negotiate terms of service with men C. in C.S.A. is requested to pass to Ministry of War Transport Capetown and High Commissioner Pretoria.  
Your 301111B refers.  
(Cdre. East Africa, 311045Z to C. in C.S.A.)

C. in C. Ceylon. Seacos 290. Following for Chiefs of Staff from Mountbatten.  
Lieut. General Wetherall will assume appointment C. in C. Ceylon on 7th January, 1945. Unless I hear to contrary appointment will be released here to Press at 2200 hours F.G. on 2nd January, 1945.  
(S.A.C.S.E.A., 311435Z to A.M.S.S.O.)

Escorts retained in U.K. In view of the present U-boat activity in home waters it has been found necessary to retain temporarily the following escorts allocated to your Command. A.M. 191211 October to C. in C. Eastern Fleet and 241641 November refer.  
A/A Sloops. AMETHYST, BLACK SWAN, HART, MAGPIE, MERMAID, PEACOCK, STARLING, WREN.

Sloops. BIDEFORD, DEPTFORD, FLEETWOOD.

Frigates. DART, EVENLODE, NESS.

(2) The position will be reviewed in early February when further signal will be made.

(3) Following escorts from U.K. should reach you by 15th February, PHEASANT, WOODCOCK, WHIMBREL, BLACKMORE, BARLE, SHIEL, USK.

(D.O.D.(F), 311500A to C. in C. East Indies, (R) C. in C. Med., C. in C. B.P.F.)

758

War Diary

31.12.1944  
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

America and West Indies

Escort report. Obtained bearing of 134 degs. of SS. ASHBY PARK at 0020Z/31st my P.C.S. are 044 degs. 22' N. 062 degs. 58' W. 134 degs. 12.5. Constant D/F watch on 500 K/cs is being maintained. Request ASHBY PARK be instructed to transmit hourly. (S.O. E.G.16, 310020Z to C. in C. C.N.A.)

S.C. Convoys. S.C. Convoys, Loch Ewe is being reduced as an Ocean Convoy Assembly port on 7th January and following arrangements will then come into force:  
(a) Ships for East Coast of U.K. Those for Humber and ports North thereof to be sailed to Loch Ewe for WN convoy, ships for ports South of the Humber to be sailed to Milford Haven or Belfast for onward routing southabout.  
(b) Ships for Iceland (C) U.R. convoys will now run from Belfast and ships should be sailed to join convoy there. (D.T.D. 311150A to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

U-Boat dispositions. 1200Z/31st Dec. one westbound within 90 miles of Q.V. 774 0030 one still patrolling off Halifax or south east bound in area south west of Sable Island one probable off Nova Scotia west of XY or in Gulf of Maine. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 311436Z, Cominch, 311448Z)

T.G.21.10. 10 Jan. T.G. 21.10 constituted Comdr. Scherini in MAYRANT, RHIND and depart that date from New York and Casco for U.K. Return U.S. escorting special L.S.T. Convoy when directed by Com.12th Fleet. R/V lat. 39.N. Long. 60 W. at 121200Z thence proceed in company. Request that Comnavu assign destinations in U.K. Modify my 112059 not to all accordingly. (C. in C. Lant, A.G. Comd. 311833Z to MAYRANT, RHIND etc.) amended by 011629Z q.v. and Cancelled 042232Z.

Australia and New Zealand

Escort Carriers. Your 211838 was not received until after my return from Pearl Harbour and I was told nothing there of British C.V.Es. being loaned to the Americans for ferrying.  
(2) I hope that B.P.F. requirements (outlined in my 300340) may be given preference. (C. in C. B.P.F. 300355Z to Admty.)

/ATHELING ...

759

War Diary31.12.1944  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSAustralia and New Zealand - Contd.

ATHELING. C. in C. P.A.C. 310001 not to Admty. N.O.I.C. Brisbane or Com. 7th Fleet. When ready about 1200 K/1st Jan. proceed to Purvisebay Florida Island, Solomon Group. Route as follows A 33 degs 20' S. 154 degs. 26' E. B. 26.56 156.11. C. 18.30 S. 156 11 E. D. 15.27 161.05 E. 10.35 161.05 F. 09.50 161.05 G. 09.32 160.43 H. 09.25 160.40 thence to destination.  
(N.O.I.C.Sydney, 311231 to ATHELING)

B.P.F. Your 221315Z/Nov. Proposals in paras. 1, 3 and Publicity. 4 are concurred in. Since you left London, Board have approved a step forward in the policy of keeping the work and purpose of the Navy before the public. One of the main purposes of the new policy is that subject to the real needs of security, the work of your Fleet should be fully publicised in the long term interests of the Service generally.  
(C.N.I. Apprd. 1st Lord, 311306A to C. in C. B.P.F.)

Warship Conversion. Admiralty message 021136/42. Following possibilities of warship conversion have been examined.  
(2) "Captain" Class Frigates (Diesel electric). Requirements in your 191037 October could be met with comparatively small amount of conversion except petrol stowage. For safety reasons petrol must be stowed in separate pressure tanks located in tank or compartment which can be flooded. Pipe trunk from petrol tanks to pumping and control compartment situated on weather deck also necessary. Not more than six tons of petrol could be stowed in manner described above without very considerable reduction in endurance and large amount of work. Unless requirement in regard to stowage of petrol is waived "Captains" Class frigates are therefore not suitable for conversion.  
(3) "Flower" Class corvettes. Requirements can be substantially but not entirely met but would involve extensive conversion work including removal of one boiler.  
(4) Request you will say whether you wish further investigation of above alternatives. Lend-lease aspect of "Captains" would of course have to be considered.  
(Admty, 311812A to A.C.N.B.)

C. in C. Admiral Fraser left by air in Liberator for Hollandia and thence to visit General MacArthur.  
(C. in C. B.P.F. 312131K to Cdr. S.W. Pac., V.A.(Q) B.P.F. Melbourne, Admty.)

760

War Diary31.12.1944  
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSU-BOAT CAMPAIGNS/M  
attack  
and sighting  
Summary.

For 24 hours to 0900Z/31st December.

Para. A. (1) H.M. ship damaged by mine or torpedo at 0230Z/31st Dec. in 58 degs. 57' N. 04 degs. 00' W.

Para. C. (1) A/C M/110 investigated wake or swirl at 0910Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 33' N. 05 degs. 22' W.

(2) A/C D/10 investigated suspicious object possible Snort at 0810Z/30th Dec. in 49 degs. 52' N. 08 degs. 02' W.

(3) A/C A/172 reported possible U-Boat at 1633Z/30th Dec. 51 degs. 59' N. 10 degs. 45' W. and obtained A.S.V. contact at 1728Z/30th Dec. in 51 degs. 58' N. 10 degs. 35' W.

(4) A/C L/86 reported possible U-Boat at 2145Z/30th Dec. in 58 degs. 27' N. 01 degs. 30' W.

(5) A/C T/439 attacked partially submerged U-Boat course 160 degs. with torpedo at 1927Z/30th Dec. in 57 degs. 54' N. 06 degs. 30' E.

Para. D. (1) M.T.B. 733 attacked possible U-Boat at 0725Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 32' N. 02 degs. 34' W.

(2) A/C B/110 attacked U-Boat course 312 degs. at 0927Z/30th December in 50 degs. 31' N. 02 degs. 31' W.

(3) M.T.B. 760 attacked contact at 0944Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs 32' N. 02 degs. 32' W.

(4) A/C X/105 reported Sono Buoy contact at 1145Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 17' N. 02 degs. 53' W.

(5) A/C A/228 had A.S.V. contact 1914Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 15' N. 02 degs. 26' W.

(6) MELBREAK attacked U-Boat at 0930Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 27' N. 02 degs. 24' W.

(7) A/C A/228 had ASV contact at 2118Z/30th Dec. in 50 degs. 04' N. 02 degs. 33' W.

(8) Liverpool Radar picked up unidentified S/M course N. at 1304Z/30th Dec. in 53 degs. 26' N. 05 degs. 11' W.

(D.D.I.C. 311206A to Cominch, N.S.H.Q. Ottawa)

U-Boat  
dispositions,  
Estimates.

(D.D.I.C. 311331A and 311332)