

I

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC  
VOLUME II

U-BOAT OPERATIONS

(Dec. 1942 - Jun. 1945)

NSA/CSS Control Number SRH-008

ABBREVIATIONS

U/B	U-Boat
M/V	Merchant Vessel
C.I.	Possibly Communication Intelligence
D/F	Direction Finding
GC&CS	Government Code & Cipher School
A/S	Antisubmarine
A/C	Aircraft
C.O.	Commanding Officer
WW	Weather
GRT	Gross ? Tonnage
R/V	Rendezvous
RI	Radio Intelligence
D/C	Depth Charge
DD	Destroyer
CVE	Aircraft Carrier
A/A	Antiaircraft
VL/R A/C	Very Long Range Aircraft
S/T	(Not yet determined)
VL/F	Very Low Frequency
LR A/C	Long Range Aircraft
D/R	Dead Reckoning
P/W	Prisoner of War
R/T	Radio (Telephone)
JNA	Japanese Naval Attache
GNA	German Naval Attache
P/L	Plain Language
W/T	Wireless Telegraph
SBT	(Not yet determined)
R/S	Radio Signal ?
B/R	Blockade Runner
cbm	Cubic Meter(s), e.g., of diesel fuel

#### A NOTE TO THE READER

In accordance with Presidential and Department of Defense direction, sections of the U.S. Navy's World War II OP-20-G Final Report Series on the Battle of the Atlantic are being declassified. Volume II of the series, herewith released, treats the convoy struggle with the U-boat from December 1942 to the end of the war. Although the author apparently completed this work in its present form in May 1945, he may have intended reissuing his study. Evidence exists throughout the text in the form of handwritten emendations and deletions that a more finished version was intended.

The reader should also be aware that time/date references in the declassified material (e.g., 1020/24=1020 on the 24th) sometimes bear a zone letter and sometimes do not. Further, the reader will not always be certain whether the time specified means time of origin, time of intercept, time of receipt, or time of action. Future research may lead to a determination on a case-by-case basis. Meantime, this factor does not necessarily confuse the narrative nor disrupt the coverage of events.

Deletions have been made and material withheld in accordance with current Executive Branch and statutory authorities. A list of abbreviations with their expansions, where known, is appended.

NSA/CSS Declassification Staff/DY

VOLUME XI

U-BOAT OPERATIONS

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PART A

U-BOAT OFFENSIVE AGAINST CONVOYS

Dec. 1942 - May 1943

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CHAPTER I

THE OPENING OF THE CONVOY BATTLE.

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THE OPENING OF THE CONVOY BATTLE  
December 1942 .

1.  
General Situation  
as seen through  
U/B Traffic of  
early December.\*

The beginning of December was fairly quiet. A sizeable group of U/B's (WESTWALL) patrolled the US-Gibraltar lane in the area of the Azores while individual U/B's kept stations in the Gibraltar approaches as well as along the Northwest African coast (Casablanca, Freetown). On the North Atlantic convoy lanes Group PANZER lay in wait for EK 217; Group BRAUFGÄNGER (9 subs) was reforming to block an ON convoy. A concentration of both inbound and outbound subs searched for survivors of the Italian Blockade Runner Cortellazzo, sunk 1 December some 500 miles west of Cape Finisterre. With the exception of one U/B (U-183), Schaefer, off Sable Island, the remaining U/B's were in the southern areas that had proved so profitable after the shut-down in American coastal waters. Trinidad, Guiana, and Brazil were well attended. The St. Paul Rocks area was particularly infested. No less than 23 subs were in these South American areas during the month. From the Capetown and Madagascar

\*Note: This summary of December operations is based on U/B traffic which for the most part was read subsequent to those operations. Toward the end of the month, traffic was being read with a lag of only two or three days.

areas, three U-Cruisers were beginning their long homeward voyages, among them the famous Lueth of U-181.

2.  
Convoy Battle  
Circuits.

The introduction of two convoy battle circuits, Hubertus and Diana, in December gave indication of increasingly serious attention to improvements in convoy assaults. It is of interest to note that Hubertus was the name of the Christian Saint of the Hunt and Diana that of the Pagan Goddess of the Hunt.

3.  
Group Pattern.

It is a noteworthy factor that Group formations at the beginning of December 1942 showed equal interest in westbound and eastbound convoys. The group pattern was simple, 2 basic groups, one at either end of the North Atlantic convoy lanes: PANZER at the western awaiting the eastbound HX 217 and DRAUFGANGIGER at the eastern end preparing to block an ON convoy. The two groups together did not number more than 20 boats. The encirclement maneuver which was so obviously and effectively a part of group operations in March 1943 was already foreshadowed, for when PANZER obtained contact on HX 217, DRAUFGANGIGER was ordered to close from ahead rather than wait for a westbound convoy. The initial arrangement in December suggested that groups stationed at the two ends of a convoy lane could merely



exchange positions as the result of convoy operations. This exchange could keep up as long as replacements were made as planned. Actual group operations, however, while they approximated this exchange never displayed it in its pure form.

4.  
Poor Beginning  
PANZER-DRAUGAENGER,  
HX 217, 6 December.

Despite five good contacts during December, group operations netted less than individual operations against independents. When Group PANZER established contact on HX 217, 6 December, there seemed every reason to expect a brilliant operation, for Group DRUGAENGER was ordered to close the convoy from ahead. This they did, joining on 8 December in 55 N - 33 W. The U/B's were reminded that convoy escorts were weakened by the North African invasion and that American escorts were inexperienced. Hanscock (U-753) torpedoed 3 ships (2 sank) but in general the operation consisted of a series of shadowers, no one of which could hold on long enough to home the groups.

5.  
BUFFEL-UNGERSTUEN  
and HX 218.

A like opportunity was offered on 13 December against

EX 218. At this time the rhythm of U/B group operations had not been restored after the disruption due to EX 217. On the 13th there was neither a group in ambush off Newfoundland nor one lined up west of Ireland. When Loeser (U-373), enroute from supply sub Schnoor (U-460), made contact in 53 N - 42 W, Comsubs added the only two other available U/B's in the area to form group BUEFFEL as a shadowing group until he could make up UNGESTUEN from ex-PANZER and DRUEGANNBER as a reception group just to the west of 30° W. The following morning, Groups BUEFFEL and UNGESTUEN began to guard circuit Eubertus. Diana was being guarded by new Group RAUMBOLD, then forming with 14 subs for<sup>a</sup> southwest convoy about 450 miles west of Ireland. Use of Eubertus in the general area west of 30° W and of Diana east of 30° W proved of great value to radio intelligence on subsequent occasions. Although UNGESTUEN reached its assigned area on time it never found the convoy, which had been diverted.

6.  
North Atlantic Operations  
shift to Southwest-bound  
Convoys, ON 153 and 154.

Following the abortive operation on EX 218 by Groups BUEFFEL and UNGESTUEN, which was very similar in pattern to the operation on EX 217, no further groups were stationed off Newfoundland for nearly three weeks. Interest

was concentrated instead on ON convoys which were proceeding on a southerly route. Such an arrangement may have been in part accidental, a result of two eastbound operations without any compensating west bound operations. It is true that Group UNGESTUEM had operated briefly against ON 152 after it had failed to find HK 218, but the operation had not carried it much beyond 35 W. In the absence of a supply sub it was more reasonable to reform UNGESTUEM as a backfield for a westbound convoy. The second half of December is remarkable for the only two premeditated and carefully planned assaults on ON convoys during the course of the entire winter offensive; the RAUFELD operation on ON 153 and the SPIEL-UNGESTUEM operation on ON 154 concentrated practically all available North Atlantic U/B's. The Germans undoubtedly had assurance that these convoys would take the southerly route which was sufficiently reliable to warrant this concentration.\*

7.  
RAUFELD - ON 153,  
15-18 December.

Rudloff (U-609) made first contact on ON 153 for the 14 U/B's that were lined up from 55 to 52 N, 26 to 21 W. The accuracy of the U/B patrol line is indicated by the position of the first contact, 53.27 N - 23.05 W. The operation which ensued might have been disastrous for the convoy had it not been for bad weather, which seemed an excuse to the U/B's

even though Comsubs was positive that it gave them the advantage -- "...torpedoes will run in the foulest weather" (2053/16). Four merchantmen and the senior officer escort were lost, the latter sunk by Haise (U-211). Claims from the U/B's themselves were much more impressive.

6.  
Refueling Situation  
Strained. Mid-December.

The attempt to carry out an offensive simultaneously on the Gibraltar-US lane and in distant coastal areas had its effect on the North Atlantic offensive in the shortage of supply subs. Three U-tankers had been working during the first half of the month but only two were available for the latter part and one of these (Wilamowitz, U-459) was engaged on a long haul into the South Atlantic to service Capetown subs. As Comsubs had already announced, the provisioning situation was strained due to bad weather as well as to the lack of tankers. Hence subs in North Atlantic groups were not permitted to accumulate from one operation to the next and were available only for brief operations before dropping out one by one and heading for France.

9.  
U/B Success:  
SPITZ-UNGESTUM -- ON 154.

Before RAUFOLD's operation against ON 153 had been discontinued, fresh U/B's were already enroute from port to line up as Group SPITZ in approximately the same area which

RAUFELD had occupied. The subsequent disposition of Ex-RAUFELD U/B's indicated that the operation was very carefully planned. On the 22nd, a few hours before SPITZ U/B's were to take up their positions officially, three Ex-RAUFELD U/B's were added to SPITZ, not to extend the patrol line but to form a backing OZ<sup>o</sup> to the south and west of SPITZ. Nine minutes later the remaining Ex-RAUFELD were reformed with Group UNGSTUM in the area 49 N - 31 W in order to "surround" the convoy. The convoy's "expected" position for the 23rd was given. Thus a total of 22 U/B's was brought into position for an encirclement maneuver. A two day gap in traffic obscures the events immediately prior to contact, but it is clear from the position of Graef's (U-664) first contact on the 26th that Comubs had further shaped and modified his SPITZ line to conform with the convoy as she tried to evade the area by extending her southerly route. Sure of his convoy, Comubs quickly calmed the waiting UNGSTUM with word that the convoy contacted in 43.15 N - 23.55 W would soon leave its southerly course and turn west. During the night of 26-27 December the remainder of the group SPITZ came into action reporting the convoy's course first as 150, then as 210, and finally, on the afternoon of the 27th, as 260. The following morning UNGSTUM joined. Although ON 153 had been assisted by rough weather in discouraging RAUFELD's attack, ON 154 was not so fortunate and lost 1/3 of her company. Once caught, ON 154

was helpless before the additional attack of UNGERSHUM. A total of 22 U/B's had attacked a convoy of 45 ships pursuing it to 43 N - 34 W, sinking 14 ships and torpedoing one. Weather conditions probably saved the convoy from even greater loss. The U/B's came out relatively unscathed. By the 29th Comsubs was highly elated and boldly aggressive. He declared that the convoy was routed and ordered the U/B's to "kill the rest of the convoy!" (1005/29). Not even one straggler should escape. Boats low on fuel could still search for damaged ships and plans for refueling were rushed so that no boat need hold back for fear of running short. In an outburst of confidence, Comsubs ordered his men to pay no attention to their own search receivers. Enemy radar was declared ineffective and the statement was documented with reports from U/B's on the spot. "The enemy can attack only what he first sees.....rely on yourselves and think only of attack" (1012/28). With an almost morbid curiosity, Comsubs probed Leinkushler's (U-225) report of a Q-ship sinking and Strelow's (U-435) report of 300-400 survivors on rafts. When the operation was discontinued on New Year's Eve, U-Tanker 117 (Neumann) was already refueling those who had dropped behind and Comsubs was hurrying his men to reform off Newfoundland for a return trip on an IEX or SC convoy. Meanwhile a fresh group PALMS was forming off Ireland. In his New Year's Eve message, Admiral Doeritz called his men "unsparing, hard, and courageous to death." (1005/31). To the U/B's that had

fought ON 154 he sent this message: "You have fought bravely and achieved beautiful results." (1153/1/1/43).

10.  
The Gibraltar Lane  
Unsuccessfully Guarded.

Throughout December, Group WESTWALL guarded the Gibraltar lane without much success. On the 22nd the group was stationed off Portugal to block the England-Gibraltar lane as its last gesture before returning to Biscay. Group WESTWALL's replacement in the Azores area was already at sea and had taken up its position by the 29th as Group DELPHIN.

11.  
"Baldrian" procedure.  
Blockade-runner and U/B  
escorts.

Between 1 December and 1 January, three blockade runners were sunk in U/B areas and constituted an interruption and a nuisance to U/B operations, not only because of the great care which had to be exercised in their protection but also because of the necessity for searching for survivors after they had been sunk. The sinking of the "Cortollazzo" on 1 December has already been mentioned. On 13 December an Offizier message bearing a code word "Baldrian" was intercepted but its inner text not read. It was later learned from traffic that "Baldrian" stood for a short signal procedure to be used by U/B escorts for blockade runners and

in this case had concerned the tanker "Germania," whose scuttling in area 45 N - 15 W was announced by Comsubs on the afternoon of 15 December with orders to five U/B's to proceed to the place of sinking. On 26 December, the day contact was made on ON 154, a series of Officer messages began for three U/B's detailed to meet and escort the inbound "Rhakotis" from area 42.30 N - 32.00 W. Getting the "Rhakotis" clear of the convoy operation was a matter of some concern, but was accomplished by bringing her around to the north of the combat area. It was not until the 29th that Comsubs dared to lift temporary ban on attacks against independents. The sinking of the "Rhakotis" in 45.10 N - 10.50 W by HMS Scylla on 1 January came too late to spoil the elation of the SPITZ success, but the U/B escorts were called to account and Sturm (U-410) was apparently relieved of his command.

12.  
"Seehund" and "Wisbaer";  
Capetown U/B's.

A mention of "Seehund Order" in a message to Wuerdemann (U-506) on 17 December, followed on the 25th by orders for the returning Ibbeken (U-176) to R/V Clausen (U-162) and deliver "Wisbaer," was of value in giving assurance that Wuerdemann and Clausen were replacements for the Capetown area. The orders presumably contained details of the enemy situation and emergency procedures for their operational area. There is



no reason to believe that they bore any similarity to the  
Monsun orders of summer 1943, which provided for Japanese  
cooperation.

CHAPTER II

TRANSITION. JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1943

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CHAPTER II

TRANSITION. JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1943.

1.

Comment on RI for this period.

The first part of January showed no great change either in the number of U/B's at sea or in their general arrangement. There was, however, a marked change in the Allied camp. Barely underway in December, the reading of U/B traffic was sufficiently current to effect successful convoy diversions and thus contribute to the sharp decrease in M/V losses for January. Unfortunately, the reading of traffic dropped behind towards the end of the month. The lag prevented RI from having a clear and timely picture of the change in U/B pattern just at the critical moment which preceded contact and operation against convoys HX 224 and SC 118.

2.

Groups FALKE and JAGUAR waited in vain for expected convoys.

The reading of December traffic was helpful in appreciating the possibilities of the U/B situation for early January. With the formation of FALKE in the RAUFELD-SPITZ area for another southwest convoy, and of group JAGUAR north of Flemish Cap for a resumption of attacks on eastbound convoys, the pattern of early December was restored. With good convoy intelligence this system might have worked, for only reliable knowledge of convoy routes could

offset the small number of patrolling boats, in themselves inadequate to cover the entire arc of possible diversions. Current radio intelligence was able to follow the wind-up of the SPIETZ-UNGESTUM operation against ON 154 as well as the plans to set up group JAGUAR off Newfoundland. It was also known that continued bad weather at the Neumann (U-117) refueling R/V was constituting a serious delay in building up JAGUAR to battle strength. At the same time the first patrol line of FALKE had been accurately deciphered and, although it was not possible to follow all of the details of its reconnaissance maneuvers, the area of this activity was sufficiently well known. Once the convoys got clear of these outer barriers they had the mid-ocean more or less to themselves. Allied radio intelligence was making itself felt. For the greater part of January U/B groups swept and reswept, made course and reversed course, and found nothing. German intelligence continued to supply the lines with the dates and even speeds of the expected convoys but the rhythm was stalled and no boat came out. "You can count on announced convoy" (1624/13), but still no contact.

3.

A new pattern begins to evolve.

Fully aware that convoys were going around his lines, Comsubs became stricter about breaches of radio silence and more vocal in his fears of Allied radar. U/B lines were far from idle and

were shifting in an effort to close the convoy escapes. FALKE was sent north and, with the addition of more and more U/B's, eventually covered all routes from 61.30 N. to 53.27 N. at 26 W. Meanwhile Group JAGUAR was going through a similar evolution although smaller in scale and by 18 January was testing the assumption that eastbound convoys were heading due north along the Newfoundland coast before putting out to sea. As a result of these shifts, it was appreciated by mid January that FALKE was in a position to operate on east or westbound convoys, to close eastbound convoys picked up off Newfoundland by JAGUAR or to support operations on southwestbound convoys contacted by Group HABICHT, a new group known then to be forming to the southeast of FALKE for a convoy expected on the 16th. HABICHT's convoy was successfully diverted. By 20 January there were 23 U/B's lined up just east of 30° W., HABICHT's 9 having joined on to the south end of FALKE. Two important elements were still lacking in this transitional arrangement. First, the pattern had yet to move as it began to do when HAUDEGEN (ex-FALKE) started its sweep west and second, the group assigned to block southwest convoys had yet to turn its attention to the west and join in the general sweep.

4.

Success on Gibraltar  
lane. DELPHIN-TM 1.

The peculiar lull in the N. Atlantic offensive must have

been something of a worry in Berlin, where the Navy was surely receiving the most urgent commands to relieve the Eastern Front. To offset the failure of group operations in the north there was the destruction of tanker convoy TM-1 by Group DELPHIN. First sighted by Auffermann (U-514), who was en route to the Trinidad area, the convoy had been shadowed from 20.27 N. - 45.33 W. into the arms of approaching Group DELPHIN. The sinking of 13 out of 15 tankers (actually 7 out of 9) was recognized as a most important blow for the African Front. Grand Admiral Raeder called the operation a "brilliant joint success of the well planned leadership on the part of Comsubs and the smart attack of the subs Group DELPHIN" (2139/10). The Allies likewise had their appreciation of the TM 1 action. Results of January in the North Atlantic were so hopeful that complacency was feared and anti-submarine authorities felt obliged to point to the TM 1 operation as indicative of what was still to be expected of the U/B on the North Atlantic lanes. January was a "lucky" month, the crisis was yet to come.

5.

The new pattern begins  
to move.

The group pattern which began to show at the end of January and which remained more or less constant for the remainder of the winter offensive was in part the natural result of shifts

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made to improve reconnaissance during the weeks of failure. The use of the term 'pattern' should not be misleading and should not obscure the fact that group arrangements were conditioned and altered by circumstances, accidents, and a vigorous measure of opportunism. The new pattern began to function in part on about 20-21 January with the conversion of FALKE into the westerly fan sweep of HAUDEGEN. On the same day (23 January) that JAGUAR confirmed the extreme northerly diversion of SC 117 by contact in 53 N. - 51 W., HAUDEGEN caught EX 223 in its net at 53 N. - 41 W. Although both operations were frustrated by the weather plague, resumption of contact on convoys must have been encouraging. One group, however, still remained as a reminder of the earlier arrangements. When HAUDEGEN began its sweep to the west, a new group LANDSKNECHT (20 U/B's) was formed from 55 to 50 N. - 26 to 24 W. to operate on southwestbound convoys, thus continuing the block which had been represented in the past by RAUFOLD, SPITZ, FALKE, HASCHET. When LANDSKNECHT was disbanded 28 January after failure to contact an expected southwestbound convoy, the U/B's were ordered to cruise west.

6.

The new pattern receives its final touch. Ex-LANDSKNECHT, EX 224.

U/B attacks on EX 224 and SC 118 seem to have been the results of accident, an accident which probably clinched the new

pattern.. Ex-LANDBRECHT subs were not in formation as they proceeded west but were merely heading for an area off Newfoundland, there presumably to reform. It was apparently planned to surround the American convoy exit and to negate initial convoy diversion at its source. HAUDEGEN's continued lack of success in the Newfoundland-Greenland area had not dissuaded Comsubs from the belief that EX - SC convoys were hugging the coast of Greenland and Iceland. He thought that HAUDEGEN would intercept EX 224 and SC 118. Even after U-456's accidental contact on EX 224 in 53.09 N. - 30.55 W. on 1 Feb., Comsubs still believed that its SC sister convoy might be taking the extreme northerly route, hence his concern to establish the nature of the convoy which had been picked up by HAUDEGEN on 2 Feb. No chances were taken, however, and before HAUDEGEN (NORDSTERN) had settled the issue by reporting that its convoy was the "smaller Greenland convoy" and not the England convoy, LANDBRECHT subs were being formed as new Group PFIL to seize the second convoy "suspected to be on about the same route as Taichert's (U-456)" (2131/1/2/43). As PFIL swept carefully towards SC 118, Taichert's convoy was being pursued to 17 W. The attack on SC 118 will be singled out for special comment. It was the first major success against an eastbound convoy during the winter offensive. It was the first major success against any North Atlantic convoy since the operation against CM 154 at the end of December. The convoy's escort was strong and the



greater part of the losses was suffered after VL/R aircraft had arrived over the convoy.

7.  
PFEIL - SC 118. "Be  
hard and ruthless in  
action. Think of the East  
Front". (2254/5/2/43).

Contact was made at dawn 4 Feb. in 50.09 N. - 37.05 W. when the Norwegian ship "Annik" fired a snowflake by mistake. The bridge watch of U-137 saw it and investigated. By 1048/4 Muennich, the commanding officer, finally got through to Control with his report of a very large convoy. The prompt sinking of Muennich and the convoy's alteration of course left the U/B's confused. Comsubs came in to demand shadowers' reports and to assure the U/B's that refueling was planned. Rudloff's (U-609) report of star shells about midnight in 51.33 N. - 35.55 W. (2323/4) led to his immediate appointment as shadower, for Comsubs believed that "star shells are unquestionably over convoy" (2345/4). But Rudloff had been following the erring port wing of the convoy which had failed to alter course. Rudloff found the main convoy on the afternoon of the 5th, Comsubs instructed his men as follows:

"The first night does not show a thing. Experience shows the great blow does not come until later, when the enemy has been softened by the continued attacks, when he has no more depth charges left and when he can no longer cope with the great number of subs. Therefore: always keep pursuing and attacking". (1521/5).

Hoping to come to the attack that night Comsubs signalled at 2254/5

"1. With all your means try to begin contact. The convoy must not be lost again. Favorable weather situation. The defense is powerless in that weather. Location devices are greatly hindered above and under water..."

Nevertheless only 3 U/B's were in a position to attack at this time, and they were discouraged by the strong defense. Rudloff lost contact the morning of the 6th. At 0940/6 Comsubs complained that "more subs should have gone at it on Rudloff's reports", urged them to make sweeping runs at high speed and use their hydrophones. Hydrophone bearings had apparently brought U-454 (Zacklaender) to attack during the morning on what he believed was the provisioning ship for the convoy escorts. The attack failed, "since enemy used radar and escaped". (1015/6). On the afternoon of the 6th the indefatigable Rudloff again had contact. By this time all of Group PFSIL had caught up with SC 113 but instead of sighting and sinking reports they were sending A/C reports. Land-based aircraft were now covering the convoy. Two subs were temporarily put out of action and at 1600/6 Comsubs ordered: "Further reports about A/C are superfluous". Nevertheless, in the next 2 hours he received signals from 4 more U/B's that had been subjected to A/C attacks. It was A/C that forced Rudloff to dive and lose his contact late on the 6th. (2130/6. This was the last transmission ever sent by U-609). The U/B's seemed firmly under Allied control. Hence it was something of a shock when,

during the night of 6-7 Feb., 7 ships were sunk within 3 hours from the midst of the convoy. These successful attacks were the work of 2 men who had gotten inside of the convoy defenses: Baron von Forstner (U-402) who claimed six ships and U-262 (Franks) who claimed one sunk and one hit. Comsubs continued to urge Forstner on through the night of 8-9 February. The action was discontinued on the morning of the 9th.

8.

Comsubs not satisfied with  
SC 118 action.

If the SC 118 action served as a reminder to the Allies that the U/B crisis was still to come, it also served the German Navy as a stimulus to greater effort. The action was still going on when Command announced the great victory to all U/B's:

"1. Despite strong air ((protection)) on Feb. 6 ((U/B's)) kept contact tenaciously - until early today - on large convoy bound for England. ((First)) seized on Feb. 4 in RD 1190. While only 1 tanker and 2 stragglers were sunk by evening 6 Feb., during the past night a total of 9 ships of almost 70,000 tons were sunk. During this action the following distinguished themselves particularly: Forstner ((402)) by sinking 6 ((ships)); Franks ((262)) by sinking 3; Endloff ((609)) by keeping contact tenaciously. Operation continues. Last position AL 44". (1533/7).

Baron von Forstner went home to receive the Knights Cross and the congratulations of High Command. Privately, U/B Command prepared to study the operation in great detail. FEEL U/B's were ordered

"to make up for report exact route, chart of convoy operation with own route and enemy route on basis of shadower report on which you operated. Draw on tracing paper. Charts 1837 large and 1872 large. All dives, surfacings, airplane attacks, etc. are to be drawn in." (1849/9)."

Although "recognition" was sent to PFEIL "for tenacious and hard fighting" with special mention for Forstner, Rudloff and Franke, Comsubs judgment was: "But still more subs ought to have come against so numerous a group" (0103/10). One might allow that there had not been sufficient time for a grand scale preparation. The contact which set the thing off, Teichert on RK 224, had come at a time when the 30° W. area was denuded of U/B's, HAUBER having gone on west, and its replacement formation (NEPTUN-RITTER) not yet on hand for a massed attack. Furthermore, the attempt to exploit the RK 224 opportunity, at the moment the only bird in hand, had drawn off several of the Ex-LANDSMARBECHT subs. In fact only 9 U/B's actually came to grips with SC 118. Against these 9 the convoy had 12 escorts plus VL/R A/C to protect its 65 ships. For 10 ships sunk the cost was excessive. Of the 9 U/B's three were sunk, including the two shadowers, Huennich and Rudloff. Of the remaining 6 U/B's, 5 were damaged, 3 so seriously that they were forced to return.

\*The request mentioned above in 1849/9 seems a little surprising in that it comes so late in the U/B war. In part it was merely a re-emphasis of something which had been carried on U/B books since early in the war. Standing War Order #501 in the edition carried in 1941 mentions "sketches of battle situations (attacks on convoys, shadowing, etc.)" as one among many supplements to be prepared for submission with the War diary. Whether or not this particular supplement had been overlooked in the past is not known but it is apparent that the PFEIL operation on SC 118 recalled it to mind. On 23 February 1943 the request for convoy battle charts was specifically issued as Order #333 (0949/23/2/43). The request was then incorporated in the 24 April '43 edition of Standing War Order 501, after the opportunity for its greatest usefulness had passed.

9.

Lapse of Offensive against  
Eastbound convoys as U/B's turn  
against Westbound convoys, ON 165-  
166-167. 9 Feb. to 6 Mar.

From 5 to 28 February U/B traffic was read steadily with an average time lag of little more than a day, which was well within the limit of operational use for the normal cases of group lines and convoys but not a guarantee against stray contacts or against last minute German intelligence. Following the SC 118 operation U/B's achieved no further action of any significance against eastbound convoys for more than 3 weeks. HAUDEGEN continued to sweep west but gave no return on the large investment it represented. By 10 February, HAUDEGEN was forming an arc from Belle Isle to Flemish Cap. Low on fuel, it had to be disbanded on 15 Feb. For more than 3 weeks it had slowly cruised westward, had "expected" no less than 7 convoys, and had achieved no results other than a few contacts which were cancelled by bad weather. As HAUDEGEN broke up, 6 to return to western France, the rest to proceed to supply sub U-460 (Schnoor), first RIFTER and then NEPTUN were beginning to retrace the U/B line along 30° W. from 60 to 50 N.; from there the westward sweep for "the NE convoy" was to begin again, this time on course 235 for convoy BX 226. By 16 Feb. it was apparently believed that the convoy was ahead of the U/B schedule and RIFTER-NEPTUN boats, now 26 in number, were put through rapid paces in preparation. Although set for an eastbound convoy the new trap was to be sprung by west convoys. A series of

unforeseen events threw the majority of North Atlantic U/B's into a hubbub of action against 3 successive ON convoys (165-166-167), two contacted by accident and one as a result of last minute intelligence.

10.  
Ex-HAUDEGEN and TAIFUN: ON 165.

En route home Ex-HAUDEGEN U/B's ran into ON 165. When sighted by U-69 (Crac?) in 51.15 N. - 40.45 W., Comsubs insisted on aggressive action to the very limit of fuel as a last opportunity to make up for HAUDEGEN's long and enforced inactivity. The U/B's destined for the refueler were called "TAIFUN" and, together with the subs going home, were to strike the convoy with the force of nature.

1. "Continue to operate as long as fuel supply permits. In view of weather situation, count on lower enemy speed and on scattered single ships. Torpedoes do their work even in very bad weather.
2. Time discontinuation so that provisioning square will be reached with 6 to 8 cbn." (1801/18)

Again at 1910/18, after U-403's (Clausen) contact, Comsubs ordered his men to stick at it to the very end since "torpedoes do their work even in bad weather, destroyers are powerless". By 0749/19 it was just plain: "Attack, Attack!" The actual loss of 3 ships from convoy could not in itself have been impressive, but, before the action had ended, Comsubs attention was diverted to a saving prospect: ON 166.

11.  
RITTER-KNAPPEN: ON 166. "A  
run of the mill success".

Before RITTER and NEPTUN could execute the last of the series of adjustments designed for RK 226, all orders were cancelled late in the afternoon of 18 February for a westbound convoy, expected 2 days later. Comsubs issued 3 orders within 27 minutes, late on 18 February. He reformed NEPTUN and RITTER to line from 59.45 N. to 52.45 N. along 30 W. to sweep east southeast, while a new group of 4 U/B's, KNAPPEN, formed from 53 to 52 N. and 23 to 27 W. to sweep due east. As in the case of ON 154, the convoy attempted to clear the area by continued diversion to the south but was caught by the southeastern extension (KNAPPEN), which thereby fulfilled its purpose with precision. At 1055/20 Hoeltring (U-604) in KNAPPEN reported "possibly convoy screws in 040 true; wide band, very soft". Putting NEPTUN on course 260 to maintain the sweeping block against NE convoys, Comsubs released RITTER to operate, once Hoeltring's hydrophones had been confirmed by sightings. During the night Hoeltring was driven off by destroyers but, by the following afternoon, RITTER had closed the convoy and claims of sinkings began to appear in traffic. As the day wore on Ex-HAUDEGEN U/B's began to join from ahead. Subs which had to drop out were instructed to wait for ON 167 which was now being shadowed by outbound U/B's. The Schnoor refueling R/V had to be moved out of the way and Vowe (U-462) was hurried to the general area to assist Schnoor in the task of general refueling which could be anticipated. By the afternoon of the 22nd some 20 U/B's were on

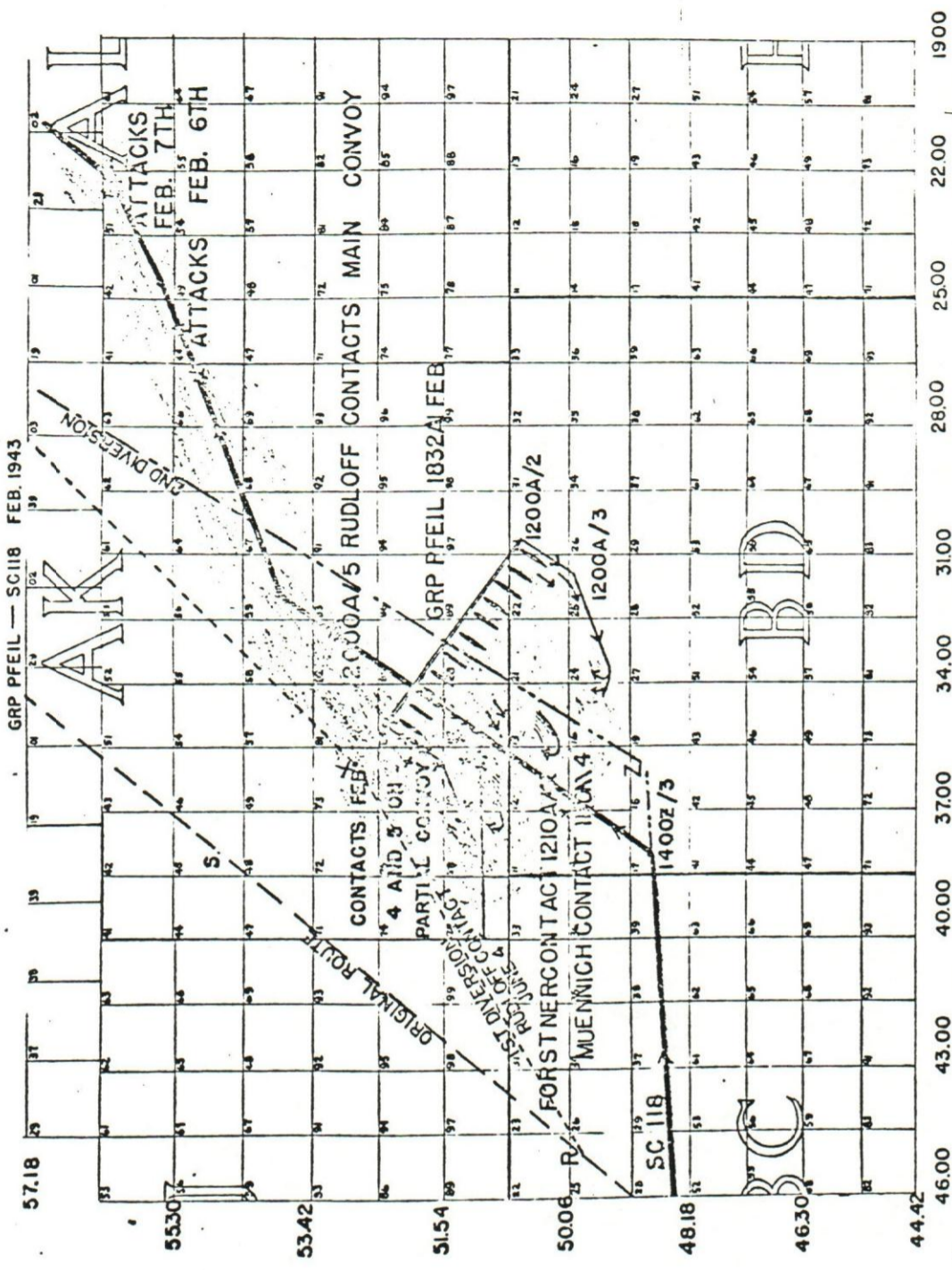
the convoy, many of them low on fuel. Sinking reports were now streaming in. Having explained refueling plans, Comsubs ordered "continue to operate accordingly without regard to fuel consumption. Your one aim is to get at the convoy again and again as quickly as possible." (1753/23). It was a good day, so good that U/B's were reminded to adhere strictly to St. W.O. 509 (concerning the assessment of damage done) and to report faithfully if another sub had had a hand in the torpedoing. "Don't let go. We must get the rest!" (2021/23). The U/B's dogged every attempt to throw them off and attacked the convoy all the way to 45 N. - 45 W. On the morning of 26 Feb., the score was counted and U/B's commended "for exceptionally stubborn and energetic fighting during 6 day pursuit." (1024/26). 23 ships were claimed sunk and 7 torpedoed. Of the 19 subs officially assigned to this task 13 had "a direct share in the great success" (Ibid). The whole operation was summed up as follows: "For us a run of the mill success, for Tommy one of the greatest of convoy catastrophes". (Ibid).

12.  
Operation on ON 167.

The attack on convoy ON 167, like that on ON 165, was the result of accidental contact and like the operation on ON 166 offered an opportunity for a full run across the North Atlantic in a latitude most favorable to the U/B and unfavorable for convoy defense.



The result, however, was nothing like the OM 166 success, for the operation had not been planned and U/B's were unable to exploit the early contact despite a long effort which involved the diversion of fresh U/B's bound for the BURGRAF formation against eastbound convoys. At the time of U-664's (Graef) contact on 21/2 in 50.49 N. - 24.15 W. the operation against OM 166 was in full swing. Prospects may have been too exciting with a tendency to assume that the self-evident superiority of the German U/B would make all things possible. It was something of a let-down when the convoy could not be found again after Group STURMBOCK had been hurriedly formed to continue the operation.



GRP PFEIL — SC118 FEB. 1943

57.18

55.30

53.42

51.54

50.06

48.18

46.30

44.42

1900

2200

2500

2800

3100

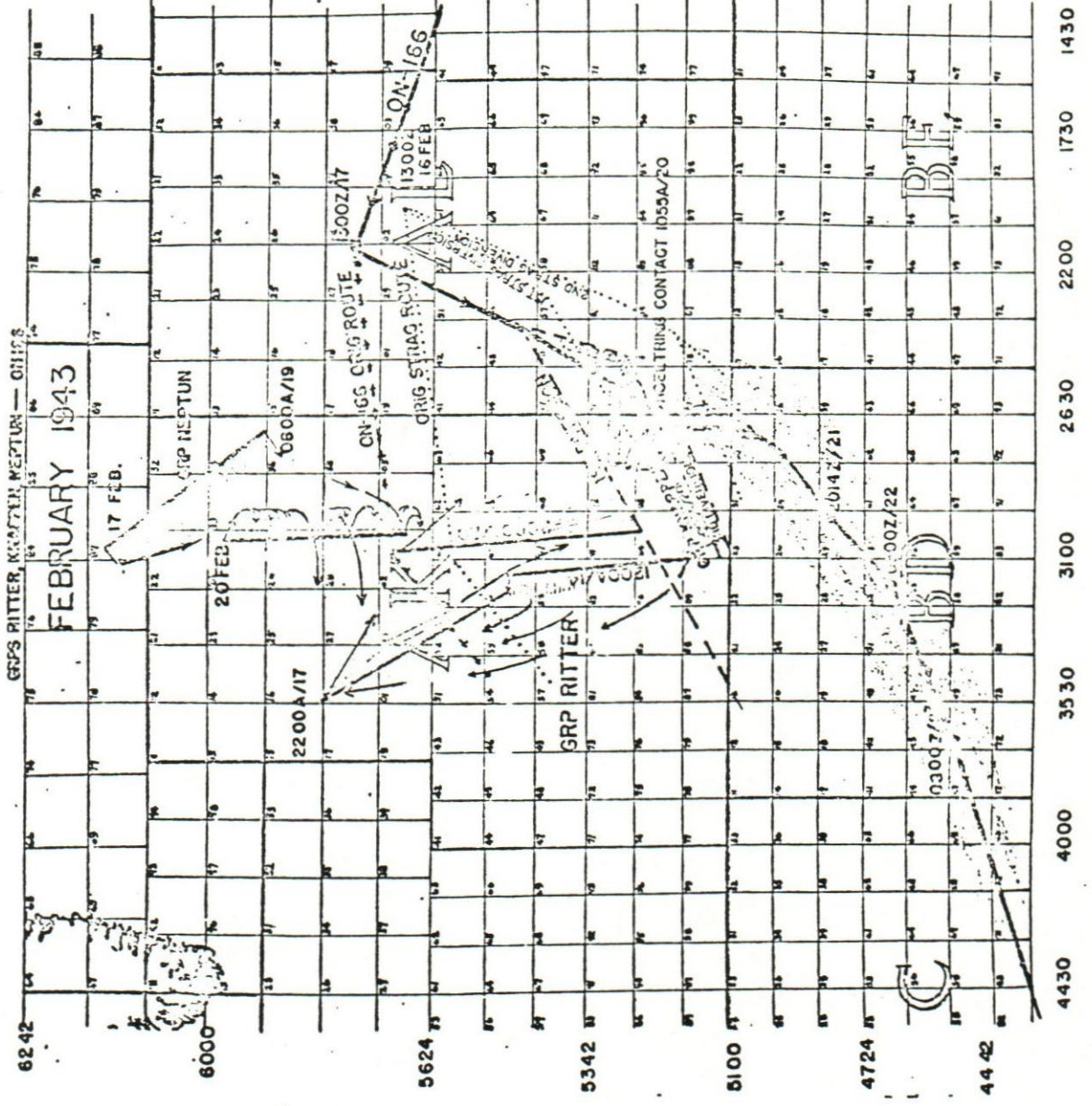
3400

3700

4000

4300

4600



CHAPTER III

CRISIS OF NORTH ATLANTIC OFFENSIVE  
March 1943.

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CRISIS OF NORTH ATLANTIC OFFENSIVE  
March 1943.

1.  
Restoration of Group  
Pattern for Eastbound  
Convoys.

The operations on ON convoys had actually netted twenty ships. They had further served to mass U/B's off Newfoundland, many of them, however, in need of fuel. In addition to the U/B's from the ON operations there were the two groups which had completed their western sweeps from 30° W: NEPTUN and BURGGRAF. In the course of NEPTUN's cruise, HX 227 was expected on 26/2 and promptly sighted in 56.27 N - 45.48 W by Friedrich (U-759). Bad weather prevented a successful follow-up. The situation was further confused by the sighting of ON 168 on 1 March. Group NEPTUN was finally ordered to attack individually according to the more favorable target. The result was the dispersal of Group NEPTUN in an unsuccessful attempt against two convoys at the same time. While U/B's from the ON 167 action reformed as Group WILDRANG on 26/2, the line so arranged as to join NEPTUN upon completion of the latter's sweep, Group BURGGRAF was cruising from 56 to 53 N - 28 to 26 W on course 235, having been delayed until replacements for the originally assigned boats could get into position. With the dispersal of NEPTUN it was BURGGRAF which completed the long line off Newfoundland by 4 March. In all, 30 U/B's were

in position from 55 N - 50 W to 50 N - 39 W. Ex-NEPTUN subs were now coming up from the rear to support the WILDFANG-HERCGRAF line. Meanwhile the sweep replacement group, new Group NEWLAND, was forming with 18 U/B's to proceed on course 240, beginning at a line from 54.45 N - 27.15 W to 50.57 N - 23.45 W. The exact positions of the line off Newfoundland were read in traffic - but twenty-four hours after U/B's had made contact on SC 121.

2.  
WESTMARK - OSTMARK:  
Encirclement of SC 121.

(a) Delayed contact.

Expected by the U/B's on the afternoon of 4 March, convoy SC 121 had somehow passed through the long WILDFANG-HERCGRAF line at approximately the point where the two groups supposedly came together. It was first sighted by an ex-NEPTUN boat, U-1405 (Hopmann), on 6 March in 54.57 N - 40.15 W:

"Enemy reported is a convoy in naval square AJ 6658." (1056/6).

Possibly skeptical, Comsubs replied an hour later:

"Report convoy course and speed at once.  
No reports have come in to us so far." (1150/6).

Hopmann had been causing trouble for nearly a week. As one of the NEPTUN U/B's that had gone off on his own in search of HX 227, Hopmann had added to the confusion by reporting a steamer and three destroyers in a grid position that did not exist. Then he suspected a U/B trap, whereupon he laid claim

to sinkings which prompted this message from Conzubs:

"To Hopmann: Your reports afford no clear picture. State again the number and size of ships, including position and time."  
(2240/2/3).

Hopmann's reply was no improvement, involving successive positions more appropriate for a speed boat, but meanwhile he was assigned to a 6x6 mile waiting area behind the WILDFANG-BURGGRAF line. It was this square from which he reported the convoy on 6 March.

(b) Encircling groups formed.

Apparently this report was considered reliable, for half of WILDFANG and BURGGRAF were dispatched to the area at top speed while Hopmann was ordered to shadow; "keeping contact is of greatest importance on account of disposition of other subs." (1335/6). Ten U/B's were detached from NEULAND, as new Group OSTMARK, to operate on SC 121 from ahead. The U/B's coming up from behind were formed as WESTMARK. Remaining WILDFANG-BURGGRAF U/B's came together as Group RAUCGRAF and waited for the next convoy, HX 228.

(c) Convoy scattered.

Hopmann (U-405) maintained contact with SC 121 until 2322/6 when he was driven off by D/C. The weather combined with escort activity to make sustained contact impossible. However, the unfavorable weather also proved an advantage to the U/B's in that the convoy was widely scattered, making defense difficult.

(d) OSTMARK.

The only successful attack reported up to 7 March was that of Zetsche (U-591) who claimed a munitions steamer left sinking in 57.03 N - 36.12 W. Not realizing how widely the convoy had scattered, Comsubs planned to intercept it the following day by shifting OSTMARK to a line from 59.39 N - 34.24 W to 57.51 N - 31.43 W, with the reservation that if certain contact was made during the night, the group was to operate directly on the convoy, disregarding the ordered line. By noon of the 9th, U/B's were finding the defense stiff. Comsubs forced his men with such orders as this to Hopmann:

"Attack and sink. Give no thought to fuel." (1805/9).

Hopmann replied:

"Order carried out. Two subs sank one steamer apiece." (2240/9).

(e) Conclusion of operation.

Loss of contact for several hours caused Comsubs to order OSTMARK and WESTMARK to "continue sweep in easterly direction. There are still further chances of striking both the convoy and independent ships." (2215/9). There followed only occasional, brief contacts so that by noon of 10 March, U/B's in a favorable position were instructed to remain in the vicinity of the convoy in order to utilize the last chance for attack; those in an unpromising position were to set off to the west, searching for stragglers in the convoy lane. Schetelig (U-229) found SC 121 again in 59.03 N - 20.12 W, where he claimed



to have sunk two steamers. At 1900/10 Bruening (U-462) contacted the remnants of the convoy momentarily but the operation was discontinued shortly afterward. Command was forced to be content with the 13 ships torpedoed in SC 121.

3.  
NEULAND - EX 228.

EX 228 had passed safely to the south of RAUBERF when she sailed into the NEULAND area, Ranger (U-336), who had been ordered on the 7th to join the southeast end of NEULAND, sighted the convoy at 1355/10 in 50.27 N. - 31.15 W. NEULAND was immediately ordered to operate at maximum speed. On 13 March, when the operation was discontinued, the score stood at 4 to 2, the U/B's having sunk 4 ships, one of which was HMS Harvester. Harvester sank U-444 (Langfeld) before she was sent down by U-432 (Eckhardt), which in turn was sunk by USS Aconit.

4.  
RI Difficulties and Comment.

Group NEULAND's contact on EX 228 is a good example of RI difficulties at this time - the Germans having introduced a stiff cipher change on 1 March. On the basis of past U/B behavior as seen in traffic read, a message of 27 February ordering 8 fresh U/B's to head for 56 N. - 27 W. had been interpreted to mean that a new group was forming in this area. This information was on hand

by 2 March and was incorporated in a memorandum of that date to COMINCH with the statement that the new group would probably form by 5 March from approximately 56 N. - 29 W. to 53 N. - 26 W. By 6 March it was known from traffic read that many additional fresh subs had been given heading points in the same area and it was assumed that the line was being extended. The general arrangement was clear: a long westerly sweep group forming in mid Atlantic to support WILDFANG-BURGRAS, whose composition and general location off Newfoundland were known. Actually NEWLAND U/B's with a total then of 17 members were ordered on 3 March to form by noon of the 7th from 54.45 N. - 27.15 W. to 51 N. - 23.45 W. As further additions arrived the line was extended southward to 49.45 N. as well as northward. Contact on SC 121 by Popmann had drawn off the northern half of the group before the U/B's could get in line. It was certainly reasonable to assume, as was done, that some of the U/B's, the northerly ones, in the mid-Atlantic concentration would close SC 121 and that the southern members would hold their line and carry out a westerly sweep. This split had taken place before. But it was not possible to fix the exact lines. Past experience had shown, however, that at this time no route north of 50° N. could be regarded as safe unless every U/B could be accounted for day by day and unless every patrol line was known to the last second of position and knot of sweeping speed. With the U/B group pattern that was made clear in February, Command could cover every lane north of 50° N. with

his staggered sweeps. Even so he got contacts he had not counted on, for there was no way on either side of allowing for the element of chance. As it was, the convoy HX 228 almost cleared the NEULAND concentration, and the escorts gave the U/B's some rough treatment.

5.  
RAUBGRAF-STUERMER-DRAEGER.  
convoys HX 229, SC 122 surrounded.

The attack on HX 229 - SC 122 marks the high point of March convoy operations - in terms of number of U/B's, number of ship's sunk, and last but not least, in terms of German exploitation of their intelligence on convoys.

(a) U/B Group arrangement prior to contact.

Eleven NEULAND U/B's turned back westward from their pursuit of HX 228 with orders to take up a reconnaissance line from 53.45 N. - 37.55 W. to 50.33 N. - 36.15 W. as Group DRAEGER. At the same time the U/B's to the north (approximately 25) including many from port, were forming as Group STUERMER just west of 30° W. and running from about 60 N. down to the latitude of DRAEGER. With RAUBGRAF off Newfoundland the pattern was complete. Disappointed of HX 228, RAUBGRAF had turned its attention to OH 170 during the pause while the U/B's waited for the next eastbound convoy. Expected

on 10 March, ON 170 had been delayed by bad weather and was not sighted until the 13th, when Bertelmann (U-803) reported the convoy in 54.03 N. - 44.25 W. The operation failed, contact not being maintained for any one period long enough to permit successful attack. As the U/B's moved SW looking for ON 170 they were informed of their next assignment: to form on the 15th across the route of a northeastbound convoy, EX 229. The timing and the location of the line were excellent.

(b) RI comment.

By March 13, RAUBGRAF's intentions against ON 170 were known from traffic. That the U/B's were moving southwest could be seen from D/E's as they attempted to operate. Hence the convoy diversion of 13 March was sound. The exact locations of SEUFNER and HERRIGER U/B's were not known but it was appreciated, again from headings of outbound U/B's and past behavior, that a powerful concentration was building up in the mid Atlantic north of 50° N. What no one was prepared for at the moment was the sudden intrusion of German convoy intelligence which put RAUBGRAF at high speed on an interception course.

(c) Contact established after extensive maneuvers.

At 1847A/14, before RAUBGRAF could take up the line ordered for the 15th, they were sent east southeast at high speed. The U/B's actually stopped short of intercepting EX 229 and were a little too far behind SC 122. They knew the convoy was there, but it

was not until Feiler (U-653) ran into the convoy as he headed for a refueler off to the southeast that U/B's began to move with a final degree of assurance. Before Feiler found HX 229, a new RAUBGRAF line of 9 U/B's was set up, to be in position by 1200/15 from 51.15 N. - 42.05 W. to 49.27 N. - 40.55 W. "for an eastbound convoy to which further groups can later also be detailed".

(1920/14). The line was shifted eastward slightly and, in order to make the search as comprehensive as possible, even damaged subs were by every means possible to arrive in positions. "The convoy must be found." (0143/15). At noon the line was moved southward, patrolling on a SE course, reversing to EB at 1000/16 if no contact was made. As a result of Walkerling's (U-91) report of a destroyer and "suspected convoy" in 49.33 N. - 40.35 W., three other U/B's were detailed to search with him, the remainder of the group moving eastward to form a new patrol line the following day from 51.15 N. - 38.55 W. to 49.21 N. - 37.45 W. The first actual contact was that made in 49.27 N. - 37.25 W. by Feiler (U-653), who was directed to shadow until other RAUBGRAF U/B's could close in for the attack.

(d) U/B's close from all directions.

An additional three U/B's were assigned to the convoy upon completion of refueling and the eleven U/B's which comprised the southern half of STURMER were ordered to operate immediately, while the northern part of the group proceeded on a southeasterly course to circumvent any possible diversion. The 20 U/B's already operating

searched for 7 hours and found only an occasional steamer until Zarmuchlen (U-600) located the whole convoy again at 1506/16. However, he was immediately driven off by an escort. With so many U/B's in the vicinity of the convoy it was inevitable that contact should be resumed at once, this time by Kapitzky (U-605) who sent beacon signals until midnight. RAUBGRAF was reminded that

"a good fix in that area is of the greatest importance because of the highly irregular currents at the junction of the Gulf stream and the Labrador current. For that reason always report a new fix." (1623/16).

The accuracy of Kapitzky's sighting reports and his beacon signals succeeded in homing about a dozen U/B's on IX 229 for the critical first night attack. Although four escort vessels had held the attackers at bay from the first sightings until darkness set in, they were hopelessly outnumbered thereafter; the wide convoy formation described by Feiler demanded an omnipresent escort, which was patently impossible.

(e) U/B's run out of torpedoes. "The beginning was first class."

Bertelsmann (U-603) claimed to have made the first attack and when Walkerling (U-91) reported the sinking of two freighters he also reported that the convoy's defenses were apparently weak. After 0400/17 attack and success reports followed hard upon one another with Hanseck (U-758) claiming 4, Strelow (U-435) a probable 3, and Zarmuchlen (U-600) "left a 5,000 tonner burning briskly and sinking" (0630/17) after which he retired temporarily in order to send

beacon signals. At 0905/17 Walkerling (U-91) reported from 50.51 N. - 34.25 W. "3 hits on 2 damaged ships. Still 3 large damaged ships remaining. Request ((another))sub. Have no torpedoes left." Zertelsmann (U-603) was in the same plight an hour later, 2 damaged ships in sight and no torpedoes. To forestall any illusion that the success achieved thus far was all that would be required of the U/B's, Comsubs sent the following message: "The beginning was first-class. Contact must not be allowed to be lost. Report immediately. At the same time report who has observations on composition and size of convoy..." (1005/17).

(f) SC 122.

Previously, Kinsel (U-338) had reported a convoy in 51.57 N. - 32.45 W. His insistence on the accuracy of the fix led Comsubs to order the northern half of SEUFMER to operate at maximum speed, on the assumption that this was a faster group detached from BX 229, later recognized as a second convoy.

(g) U/B saturation point.

With the battle in full swing a number of other U/B's, outbound to form SEUFEL, offered to join the slaughter but were told to continue their cruise, unless they stumbled on something too good to miss. A dispatch from Command at 1810/17 indicated that the U/B's already operating needed no assistance. Things were going very well indeed. "Out of a convoy bound for England which was apprehended on 16 March in naval square BD 10, up to now 12 ships of 77,500 tons have been sunk and 6 other ships torpedoed."

(h) Convoy defense.

Bahr's (U-305) sighting of a convoy in 52.21 N. - 30.55 W. at 1428/17 altered the previous assumption of a detachment from EK 229 to that of another convoy, which indeed it was - SC 122. In addition to the northern STURMER U/B's which had been ordered to operate on Einzel's report, a similar part of DRÄNGER was assigned. By this time however, VL/R A/C was available to provide some measure of protection for both convoys and its contribution was evident in the decreased number of attacks.

(i) U/B Command complains; U/B's begin to lag.

The 7 escort vessels attached to SC 122 doubtless had some foreknowledge of the approaching situation, though they were unable to divert the convoy in time to prevent an attack. Consequently, the second night was by no means as fruitful as the first for the U/B's, so that Comsubs admonished both groups:

"What is happening to the shadower reports? With such a large number of subs contact must not be broken off. Sweep further at top speed." (0402/18).

Freyberg (U-510) located EK 229 again and sent beacon signals for RAUBGRAF, proceeding at top speed, but, before the group arrived on the scene, he was forced under by a destroyer. A straggler from the group, Schug (U-86), was criticized sharply: - - -

"Your position 120 miles behind the convoy without enemy action can be explained only as absolute faulty operation. Pursue at top speed." (1757/18).

The order was reiterated in the next message to RAUBGRAF and STURMER:



"Every sub is expected to pursue at maximum speed in order to reach convoy. Search in long sweeps depending on condition of sea. With such a large number of subs, more subs should get there. We still have to give this convoy a drubbing." (1851/18).

(j) Wind up of the operation.

Until dusk on 18 March contacts were few and then chiefly with escort vessels. By 1951 when Brosin (U-134) reported a slow convoy in wide formation in 53.27 N. - 27.55 W. the U/B's were running low on fuel and, in order to squeeze the last measure of success from this golden opportunity, Comsubs directed them to

"continue operation long enough so that tanker ((Wolfbauer (483) in 48.57 N. - 33.15 W.)) will be reached with 5 cbm. of fuel remaining. Subs which are very low in fuel and in especially good attack position use opportunities to the full. In case of necessity rendezvous will be moved north or another sub will be appointed to transfer its fuel to others." (2115/18).

With renewed vigor the U/B's resumed the attack, but after Trojer (U-221) had sunk two ships, types "Clan Mac Dougal" and "Salacia", he reported that the wide and close escort had somehow become stronger in the interim. Again at 2240/18 Brosin sighted about 20 ships in 53.39 N. - 27.35 W., speed 8, course 65; however, the bright moonlight made it difficult for him to do more than shadow. The excellent visibility proved an advantage to the convoys for the U/B's were unable to maintain sustained contact during the rest of the night and by noon of the following day, the surface

escort once more was supplemented by A/C, the presence of which caused Comsubs to say:

"In spite of A/C try absolutely to get ahead, in order to be near the convoy when darkness falls. Take advantage of last chance tonight, since operation will be discontinued tomorrow at dawn." (1738/19).

The attempts of the U/B's to comply were futile: Tippelskirch (U-439) reported asdic pursuit and D/C for 8 hours, Loeser (U-373) complained that he was constantly being forced under by A/C, Uhlig (U-527) echoed this complaint and Wintermeyer (U-190) suffered asdic and D/C pursuit for 9 hours. Although all U/B's were instructed to

"utilize chance for submerged day attack on morning of 20. Thereafter break up and sweep for single ships in large area to SW on path of convoy." (2232/19),

they had already fallen too far behind both convoys to permit further operations. As one U/B after another reported the convoy out of reach, by tacit consent activity gradually ceased.

(k) Conclusion: "despite strong air and surface defense", the "greatest success".

During the course of the 3-day attack on EA 229 and SC 122, the majority of the U/B's in the North Atlantic participated. Their disposition before the first sighting and the extent of the battle as regards time and area made it possible for approximately 40 U/B's to engage in the operation. They were available in sufficient numbers at the right time and place. After one group had attacked and fallen behind, the next group was in a position

to take up the battle. Furthermore, as the convoy advanced, the inadequacy of its escort forced it to abandon damaged ships, leaving them like so many sitting ducks for the U/B's which had fallen behind. The escorts were outnumbered 2 to 1, as they had been in the case of SC 121 and HX 228. Due to the factors already mentioned plus weather, advantageous to U/B operations, the toll of ships sunk was 21, 13 from HX 229 and 8 from SC 122. In consequence, U/B's received the following commendation:

"Appreciation and recognition for the greatest success yet achieved against a convoy. After the extraordinarily successful surprise blow on the first night, tough and energetic pursuit, despite strong air and surface defense, brought splendid successes to the subs in their attacks both by night and day." (1036/21).

6.  
SEBOLF, SEBOLD, HX 230,  
and a hurricane.

Despite the 40 odd U/B's that attempted an attack on HX 230 in the closing days of March the operation was a complete failure. Only one convoy straggler was sunk. The attempt was certainly affected by a severe hurricane, but whether the weather alone can account for the change in U/B fortunes seems questionable, for this disadvantage was equally distributed. The operation, or the attempt, is of particular interest in view of its contrast with the successful attacks which preceded it in March and in view of the ineffectiveness which marked U/B attempts against North Atlantic convoys from that time on.

(a) The Group formation.

The successive runs on Eastbound convoys in March had their effect in draining the Newfoundland area of U/B's. Further, in Command's effort to destroy the convoys he had thrown all of his mid-Atlantic subs into the battle. In consequence, there had been no westerly sweep group to arrive off Newfoundland as FAUCONRAF's relief after the manner of MAUDSLAH and NEPTUN, WILDFANG and BURGRAF. It may have been his anxiety to hasten new groups into the area west of 30° W. that led him to forbid fresh U/B's from joining in the action against EX 229 and SC 122. As the fresh U/B's were reinforced by those putting back west after the EX 229 - SC 122 action, 6 U/B's (WOELFCHEN) were ordered on ahead to make contact on the next EB convoy while Command could get his other boats organized for attack. Command was being pressed in his effort to maintain the March tempo. Shadowing group WOELFCHEN was low on fuel and was to head off to a refueler as soon as it had delivered the convoy. The attacking group "SEEWOLF", with 19 U/B's, was moving to take up a line on the 25th from 55.35 N. - 39.45 W. to 50.27 N. - 35.15 W., there to expect EX 230.

Meanwhile SEETEFEL had already been formed to cover the northerly routes from 61 N. to 57 N. along 28 W. On the basis of detailed convoy intelligence which is believed to have been decryption but has never been identified, SEETEFEL was distracted by expectations of a Westbound convoy. It began to sweep west,

however, as new U/E's were added, on a course that would make connection with the northwest end of SEEWOLF. The results would be one line of more than 40 U/E's from Cape Farwell to 49 N. - 34 W. It will be noted that this was a simplified group pattern.

(b) RI comment.

Traffic at this time was being read with a lag of about 2 days. The positions of both groups were known several days in advance.

(c) SENTINEL and the aircraft carrier. ("Bogue").

In the course of her SW sweep to join SEEWOLF, SENTINEL had some obscure skirmishes with a SW convoy during which there was much to do over an iceberg that looked like a whaling ship. One event, however, deserves particular notice. At 2023/26 Schmid (U-663) reported an aircraft carrier from 57.45 N. - 40.00 W. The carrier must have been the "Bogue" which had left Argentina 20 March to join Convoy SC.123. Comauze informed SENTINEL that

"The sinking of the aircraft carrier is particularly important for the progress of the convoy operation. Do not on that account, however, let any other chances slip." (2143/26/3/43).

He did not seem unduly alarmed.

(d) Operation on EX 230.

The expected convoy, EX 230, was first sighted at 1450/27 by Bahr (U-305) in 56.39 N. - 40.24 W. Upon receipt of his report Comsubs ordered SEPTENTRION to discontinue its operation on the SW convoy and to operate at maximum speed with SEEWOLF on EX 230. By noon of the 26th not one of the U/B's had been able to maintain contact on the convoy. The numerous U/B reports of being forced off by D/C are evidence of the efficiency of the support group which had been detached from SC 123 on the previous day and detailed to protect EX 230 when the first sighting reports were intercepted. The increasingly bad weather conditions had, by afternoon of the 26th, reached the proportions of a hurricane, blowing from the southwest. This prompted Comsubs to instruct all U/B's to

"use the worst weather situation well in order to run ahead at top speed. Subs may under no circumstance be behind the convoy. Forward again and again at top speed in order to thrust upon the convoy from ahead". (1223/26).

As a consequence of this order, Comsubs was rewarded with sighting reports from 13 U/B's which reported single steamers and destroyers, or groups of 3 to 4 ships, all in about 56 N. and at intervals along a line from 38 to 31 W. The possibility that German blockade runners might be in the area added to the confusion of the U/B's, causing those which sighted independents to ask Comsubs in each case "Shall I sink her?" until Comsubs instructed them to establish identity of the ships and ask no more questions. He concluded that

the convoy might be in the area of single ships reported and ordered U/B's to

"try to gain ground in heavy weather, in order to be near the convoy when the weather improves. In case contact with independents is made, stay doggedly with them so that you can sink them when better weather comes." (1739/28).

Beginning about 1700/28 there was an increase in the number of complaints that U/B's were being forced to submerge because of A/C (VL/R A/C patrol). The only attack reported from the onset of the operation to this time was Heide's (U-415) miss with 2 torpedoes on a single freighter in 56 N. - 33 W., followed by two unexplained detonations after which the steamer was lost in a hail squall.

(e) Consubs yields to the weather.

With no further satisfactory activity on the part of the U/B's, Consubs assumed that

"during the hurricane, the convoy was completely broken up. Ships will attempt independently to head for North Channel on due east course. Count on these ships proceeding at a speed of 9 knots. When the weather improves, all U/B's must be ahead of ships so that they cannot get through the large group of U/B's to the east. (1133/29). Even in heavy seas, take advantage of all chances for attack." (1152/29).

Zetecho (U-591) gained momentary contact with a convoy group shortly aftersard;

"about 7 ships, 5 destroyers in full circle. Large straggler behind. Submerged because of flying boat. Lost contact." (1158/29).

Due to the severity of the weather, Comsubs exhibited unusual tolerance as regards the continued lack of success, advising 3 U/B's to catch up since they were too far behind and reassuring the others that

"If the weather improves, U/B's will have good chances of success with the large number of independents. Course of the ships is certain to go south of Rockall Bank into the North Channel." (1658/29).

Shortly after midnight Zitzewitz (U-706) reported little improvement in the weather, and, in view of the strong air patrol, did not consider it advisable to continue the operation. Comsubs arrived at the same conclusion and ordered both groups to

"discontinue operation on convoy insofar as there is no contact with convoy or single ships. Move off westward in convoy lane and count on single ships. Stay tenaciously with these until they are sunk." (1048/30).

Aside from an occasional sighting report, the combined efforts of some 40 U/B's produced no tangible results save for Freyberg's (U-610) spread of 3 several times on a 10,000 ton steamer and his claim to have sunk the "Wm. Fryedat" at 2340/29 in 56 N. - 24 W. The following day Schug (U-26) reported a probable sinking in 55 N. - 25 W., after a hit on a 5,000 ton steamer. One of these claims is substantiated by the fact that EX 230 arrived at its destination minus one straggler.

7.  
Comment on March U/B Operations.

March recorded the highest monthly total of ships lost



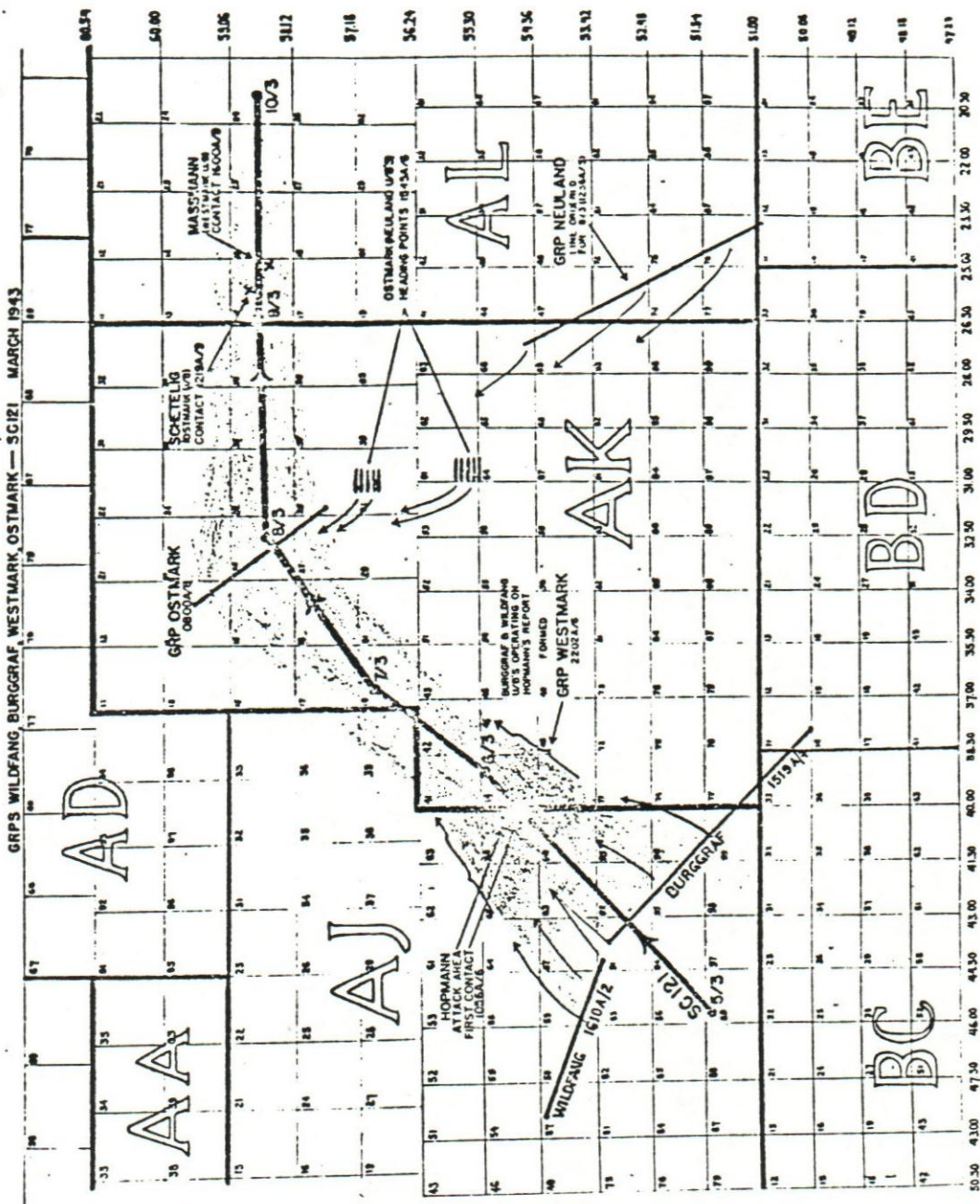
in convoy since the war's beginning. It should be remembered, however, that more than twice as many ships were convoyed in March as in February. March also recorded the highest number of U/B's in the Atlantic (including outbound and inbound subs). The strain of the winter offensive, however, was telling on the U/B Navy. The number of subs giving battle decreased only slightly from February to March, but in April, the number dropped from about 120 to 90. New U/B's had come out in great numbers during February - almost one a day - but U/B losses and damages had pruned the growth in operating strength. Not until May did U/B Command again attain the strength at sea which characterized February and March. And then it was too late.

Certain additional comments should be noted here:

(a) The U/B Navy reached its peak late.

~~(b) The introduction of new cipher tables on 1 March and the consequent delays in reading traffic undoubtedly cost us ships in the first week of March.~~

(b) German R.I. probably cost us the worst convoy defeat, or at least played an important part in obtaining contact. (EX 229 - SC 122).



GRPS WILDFANG, BURGGRAF, WESTMARK, OSTMARK - SC121 MARCH 1943

AD

AA

AJ

AL

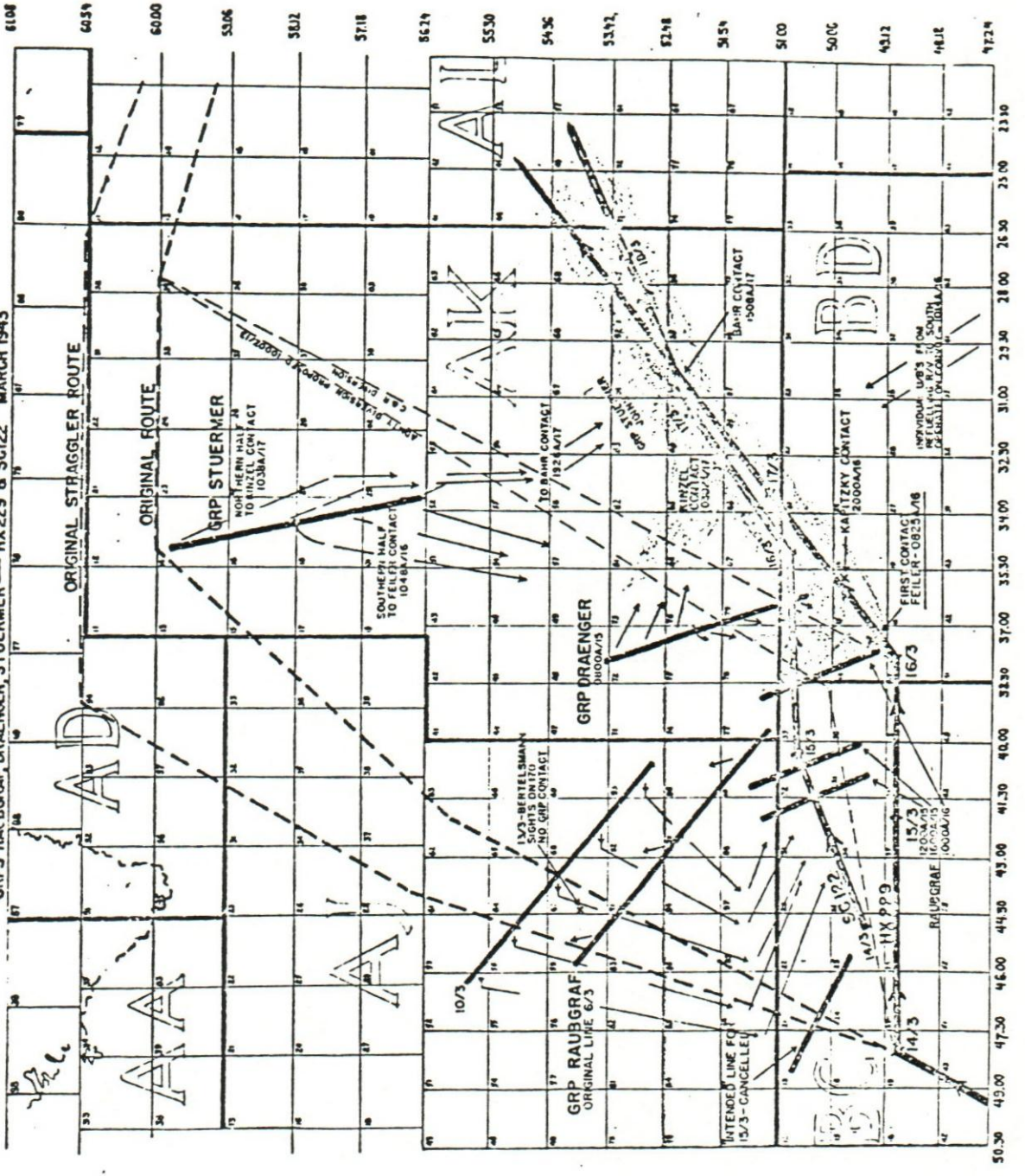
AK

BD

BC

BE

GRPS RAUBGRAF, DRAENGER, STUERMER — HX 229 & SC122 MARCH 1943



W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

OH 170

9/3: RAUEGRAF expect SM convoy 10/3. U/B's informed of delay in convoy arrival because of weather.

HX 228

RAUEGRAF, as WESTMARK was detached from WILHELM-BORGESRAF the remaining 15 U/B's from the ends moved in to close the gap and maintain the block off Newfoundland.

7/3: RAUEGRAF expect HE convoy beginning a.m. 8/3 (Presumably HX 228, which went south of RAUEGRAF but was met by NEULAND).

10/3: NEULAND, augmented by refuelled subs, continued cruise W., now on course 265. At 1355 HUNGLER (U-336) reported convoy in 50.27 N. - 31.15 W. course 80. Operation continued to noon 13/3. 4 ships lost.

13/3: Bertelsmann (U-603) made contact on SW convoy in 54.03 N. - 44.25 W. but contact could not be maintained.

14/3: Interest changed to a HE convoy.

13/3: DRANGIER (11 U/B's) ex NEULAND returns westward to reform a.m. 15/3 from 53.45 N. - 37.55 W. to 50.33 N. - 36.15 W. To scout on course 260.

14/3: RAUEGRAF to reform for NE convoy by 15/3. Line to run NE-SE across 50 N. in longitude of Virgin Rocks - Flesish Cap. 6 hours after order to reform RAUEGRAF was sent at high speed toward 50 N. - 42 W. to get hold of E-convoy. (Search info. probably decryption intelligence, although this is not confirmed). Contact was made by Walkerling (U-91) late on 14/3 but convoy escorts were successful in keeping subs down. For next 30 hours U/B's endeavored to get into favorable sweep lines for contact and were constantly hampered at by U/B Command's "Convoy must be found! (U/B's were a few miles too far to berth.)"

STUBBINS (approx. 25 U/B's) forming just W. of 30 W. and running from ca. 60 N. down to latitude of DRANGIER.

HX 229  
SC 122

1/1

M-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

F-BOUND

SEEWOLF (19 U/B's, most of them moving back west after operation on SC 122 and IX 229) to line by a.m. 25/3 from 55.15 N., 39.15 W. to 49.51 N., 34.45 W. for NE convoy expected on or after 25/3. WOELFCHER thus absorbed by SEEWOLF.

24/3: SEETUFEEL (16 U/B's) containing Westerbk sweep. By 26/3 to reach line running SE from Cape Farewell, thus joining on to SEEWOLF line.

On 25/3 U/B's at north end of SEETUFEEL caused a prolonged confusion contacting what later proved to be an iceberg formation. Since, the target's speed was reported as slow and its size as big. Comsubs was at first irritated because the subs didn't sink it.

26/3: Fiddler (U-564) in SEETUFEEL, contacted a SW convoy in 57.33 N. - 40.12 W. at 1850. (apparently ICS - 1). Operation was discontinued when IX 230 was found the next day in same area.

IX 230

471

27/3: Behr (U-305) in SEEWOLF discovered convoy in 56.39 N. - 40.24 W. at 1450. Approximately 27 U/B's (from SEEWOLF-SEETUFEEL plus a few new ones which were added later) tried to operate for 3 days. Severe hurricane made conditions difficult for U/B's as well as for convoy. 1 ship was sunk.

31/3: U/B's in NW Atlantic informed to expect NZ convoy beginning 31/3 between 54.10 N., 46.45 W. and 53.15 N., 42.15 W.

IX 231

471

2/4 (approx.): LOEWENHERZ (14 U/B's, principally ex SEEWOLF-SEETUFEEL) had returned to area of SEETUFEEL line. By a.m. 5/4 to line from 59.57 N., 38.36 W. to 55.39 N., 36.45 W. NZ convoy expected.

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

16/3: Contact on convoy established by Feller (U-653, RAUDGERAF) at 0627 in 49.27 N. - 37.25 W. course 70, 7 knots. Feller had just been released from group and was en route to refueler off to south when he discovered the convoy.

STURMER northern half ordered on interception course 160 at 11 knots (1040/16). "11 southern-most subs" of STURMER ordered to operate on Feller convoy at maximum speed.

IRAEGER ordered to head convoy off and join in RAUDGERAF operation.

17/3: Kinzel (U-338) of STURMER ran into convoy (EX 229) at 0302 in 51.57 N. - 32.45 W. By end of day Comsubs recognized that 2 convoys were involved. Northern parts of STURMER and DRA WERT detailed to attack the second convoy, now being shadowed by Zahr (U-305). Operation against convoys continues to 20/3 and involved practically every U/B in North Atlantic. 21 ships were lost and Moenitz called it "the greatest success yet achieved against convoy". (1036/21).

20/3: WOLFFHEI (6 U/B's) to take up line by 22. 25/3 from 50.45 N., 35.35 W. to 49.27 N., 34.05 W. To contact a NE convoy (A "shadowing" group of U/B's fairly low on fuel who were to pick up the convoy and turn it over to other U/B's before going to refueler.) (Presumably HX 230 - 3C 123).

17/3: SEETEFEL (8 U/B's, mostly on lat cruise out from North) to form a.m. 21/3 from 60.45 N., 29.48 W. to 58.15 N., 28.12 W.

20/3: SEETEFEL (increased to 14 U/B's) shift by a.m. 22/3. New line from 61.15 N., 28.52 W. to 57.39 N., 27.00 W. W-convoy expected a.m. 22/3. (on basis of Allied cipher compromise, precise source not known. The line moved westward beginning 22/3 apparently to catch convoy, as it came down from an assumed Northerly diversion. Convoy escaped. SEETEFEL's interest turned to E-convoys.

OM 173

645 1

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

E-BOUND

4/4: Lenge (U-530) sighted convoy at 1224 in 55.03 in 56.45 W., course 060. Convoy pursued across N. Atlantic. Comdubs reprimanding U/B's for failure to take "advantage of the rare opportunity of assaulting a convoy". (1030/6) 5 ships lost.

5/4: ADLER (9U/B's) to form a.m. 7/4 from 54.35 N. to 53.57 N., 33.55 W. NE convoy expected beginning 7/4.

OH 176

X 1/3

10/4: Buelow (U-104) in ADLER made contact on convoy at 1335 in 53.51 N. - 38.55 W. Action continued for 2 days. Several ships torpedoed.

HX 232

X 7/0

10/4: LECKE (10 U/B's, ex-LOHMEIER) forming in a hurry from 54.39 N., 34.35 W. to 51.45 N., 32.05 W. Convoy sighted 11/4 by Deicke (U-524) in 53.39 N. - 33.35 W. Group operated for 2 days. 3 ships lost.

10/4: MEISE (7 U/B's). Disruption of ADLER by OH 176 operation necessitated speedy replacement of line for NE convoys. A few ADLER boats were held in place and formed up with new arrivals from 52.09 N., 37.05 W. to 49.51 N., 35.25 W. (MEISE line was farther south than ADLER's had been)

11/4: Uphoff (U-84) taken from ADLER operation against OH 176 and ordered to area 53.15 N. - 45.45 W., to transmit several messages of different types (using different operators) "to give the impression that several subs are en route to that point". (2158/11). (Clearly designed to force NE convoy on to route blocked by MEISE, which at the moment was not sufficiently long to cover area effectively.)

HX 233  
SC 126

12/4: MEISE (9 U/B's) shifted to 51. 57 a.m. 13/4 to be from 50.09 N., 40.15 W. to 47.45 N., 38.35 W. NE convoy expected beginning 13/4. DELTICES arriving.

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

13/4: HEISE (18 U/B's) by a.m. 14/4 from 51.03 N., 44.14 W. to 46.51 N., 38.55 W. via 43.15 N., 41.05 W.

15/4: HEISE (24 U/B's) 6 more U/B's to extend line to the N. "Another W-BOUND convoy is expected beginning tonight". (1927/15). Between 15 and 17/4 HEISE U/B's reported signal strengths of convoy voice intercepts and Comsubs was led to believe that his expected HE-convoy was still west of the line. (Actually the U/B's were hearing CNS 3; SO 126 and HX 233 had been successfully diverted to the south but were contacted in area 45 N. - 26 W. on 16/4 by U/B's outbound from Bleary.) 6 U/B's operated. At least 1 ship lost.

HX 234

224

17/4: HEISE (now 26 U/B's) new line for a.m. 19/4 from 53.45 N., 46.15 W. via 52.09 N., 43.25 W. via 51.03 N., 41.45 W. to 49.45 N., 39.55 W. HE convoy expected beginning 19/4.

CNS 3  
ON 178

20-21/4: N.W. end of HEISE made contact, HEISE (U-415) apparently on CNS 3 during night 20-21/4 in 54.10 N. - 46.45 W. where he claimed to have sunk 2 ships. By noon 21/4 Sitsewitz (U-706) reported a convoy which Comsubs recognized as a 2nd SW convoy proceeding about 80 miles behind the first. Meanwhile operation against HX 234 had already begun. A few U/B's were permitted to press the attack against SW convoys while all others were put on HX 234.

20/4: SPECHT (15 U/B's, a few ex ADLER and HEISE subs that had operated on SW convoys plus subs from port). Expecting E-convoy 22/4 in latitude of 46.05 N. at about 39.15 W. By 22/4 moon line to be from 48.51 N., 37.45 W. to 44.15 N., 37.45 W. (Probably influenced by southern route taken by HX 223 and SO 126, as established by contact in 45 N. - 26 W. on 16/4. Designated for SO 1271)

21/4: Trotha (U-306) sighted convoy (HX 234) at 0924 in 56.39 N. - 42.24 W., course N. Recognizing that huge group HEISE had at last found a HE convoy, Comsubs ordered: "Now go after it and see red!" (1001/21). 5 new U/B's on cruise out from N. were ordered to intercept. Later others were put



W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

E-BOUND

U/B's

ONS 4  
ON 179

22/4: Carlsson (U-732), one of the new U/B's ordered to operate on Trotha's convoy (IX 234), ran into a SM convoy in 57.45 N., 33.48 W. at 1008. (Convoy was first reported on course 1EO, hence presumably trying to clear area of Trotha's convoy.)

22/4

AMSEL (11 U/B's from port) to form by e.m. 25/4 from 56.51 N., 32.00 W. to 53.45 N., 29.35 W., on course 260 for E-convoy. (IX 235?)

on the convoy. The operation lasted until 25/4 and constituted what Comubs recognized as a brilliant job of shadowing on U-306's part. U-306 had also put a few torpedoes into the convoy. But despite exhortations the rest of the boats lagged behind.

23/4: SPEKTT (17 U/B's) ordered to take up new line by 25/4 from 54.15 N., 43.15 W. to 51.15 N., 38.55 W., scouting course 010, to operate on Carlsson's convoys. 2 other new U/B's had been assigned as shadowers to assist Carlsson. The situation was thus set for a head on attack.

25/4: Convoys reached area of SPEKTT, operation started, during which Buelow (U-404) ascertained that he had sunk an A/C carrier in 54.21 N. - 38.55 W. at 0817/25. German Command announced that Buelow had sunk the RAMMER and called Buelow home at once to receive the Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross.

25/4

NEISE reformed (16 U/B's) in line from 59.15 N., 32.36 W. to 56.45 N., 28.12 W. in expectation of a "slow HE convoy" beginning 26/4. (Presumably SC 127).

(Traffic Exp 26/4 - 1/5)

1/5: SPEKTT, after attempt to operate on 4 convoys, ONS 4 and ON 179, had reportedly remained in area just to North of Virgin Rocks - Flomish Cap.

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

E-BOUND

STAR (ex WEISE subs) had presumably been formed at conclusion of WEISE's unsuccessful line up on 25-26/4 for a "slow NE convoy" and had moved SW to support SPECHT. On the way they had made contact of some sort for they were being ordered to discontinue search on 1/5.

AMSEL likewise must have continued its cruise the West but with a more southerly course to bring it to area just E. of Fletcher Cap. Both AMSEL and SPECHT were expecting a convoy (presumably E-bound) on 1/5 but the convoy was already overdue. (EX 236 - SC 128). Later on 1/5 Kasenschar (U-533) in group SPECHT reported smoke clouds in 50.51 N. - 45.45 W. (2029/1). Comsubs ordered all to operate if the smoke proved to come from a NE convoy, otherwise as opportunity offered.

50128  
\* 2/4

2/5: Kasenschar's convoy confirmed as NE. All SPECHT and STAR were ordered to operate (total of 31 U/B's). Contact was lost. Comsubs replied "Convoy must be found again.... Something can and must be accomplished." (2215/2). (Presumably, SC 128).

3/5: SPECHT-STAR to form at maximum speed from 56.21 N., 44.35 W. to 54.57 N., 39.35 W. via 55.51 N., 41.15 W., to find NE convoy by scouting on course 205.

AMSEL (23 U/B's) broken up into 4 parts as follows:  
AMSEL I: from 51.51 N., 49.05 W. to 51.39 N., 46.25 W.  
" II: " 51.33 N., 43.25 W. to 50.27 N., 41.25 W.  
" III: " 48.45 N., 41.45 W. to 47.03 N., 41.25 W.  
" IV: " 45.57 N., 39.35 W. to 44.15 N., 39.35 W.

W-BOUND

Convoys

U/B's

Convoys

E-BOUND

U/B's

ONS 5

A 30

4/5: FINK (27 ex SPECHT-STAR) to be <sup>in</sup> line  
 a.m. 5/5 from 56.45 N.. 47.12 W. to 54.09 N.,  
 36.55 W. SW convoy expected beginning 5/5.  
 Before subs could get into new line  
 Hansschar (U-628) discovered convoy in  
 55.45 N. - 42.55 W. at 2017. All SPECHT-  
 STAR subs to operate as group FINK, "your  
 position is favorable as never before"  
 (2050/4). (It is not clear whether Comsubs  
 thought U-628 had found a NE or a SW convoy.  
 There was some confusion at first as to  
 whether U-628 had reported a N or a S course).  
 By 2213/4, however, Comsubs was ordering  
 complete destruction of the convoy which was  
 then recognized as proceeding S.).

AMSEL I and II ordered to close Hansschar's  
 convoy.

5/5: Comsubs estimated that 40 U/B's were  
 attacking the convoy and called for most  
 decisive and immediate action in view of  
 limited time and area for operation. The  
 attack was pressed vigorously and 11 ships  
 were sunk out of a convoy of 42 before  
 action ceased on 6/5. Comsubs was very  
 pleased.

Changes were made on 4/5 in line positions:  
 AMSEL II: shifted to NE  
 " III: " to E  
 " IV: " to SW

4/5: 3 DD's were sighted by SPECHT-STAR but  
 convoy situation remained obscure.

HX 237  
 SO 129

7/5: RUMIN (12 U/B's, ex AMSEL III and IV) to line  
 up by a.m. 8/5 from 47.33 N., 40.55 W. to 43.57 N.,  
 40.05 W. in expectation of E-convoys, "one fast  
 and one slow".  
 FINE (17 U/B's, ex AMSEL I and II and FINK) to  
 line up by a.m. 8/5 from 52.45 N., 43.55 W. to  
 47.51 N., 41.05 W. (Cipher compromise was respon-  
 sible for these formations as well as for the  
 sudden changes in scouting courses which defeated  
 convoy diversion to S. of the lines.)

W-BOUND

CONVOYS

U/B'sConvoysU/B'sE-BOUND

9/5: Foerster (U-359) in RHEIN made contact at 1306/9 in 41.09 N. - 36.54 W. (HX 237).

DROSSEL (7 U/B's) which had been operating off Cape Finisterre against England-Gibraltar convoys ordered to discontinue and head for Foerster's convoy at high speed.

Contact was lost on HX 237, then regained by Clausen (U-405), who was to shadow for DROSSEL. Meanwhile RHEIN-ELBE were reforming for SC 129 as ELBE I and II. DROSSEL met HX 237 at 1908/11 in 44.15 N. - 27.25 W. (Sobloke J-456). (Again cipher compromise played a decisive part.) Contact on SC 129 by ELBE was also made on same day in 41.39 N. - 33.58 W.

Operation was discontinued on 14/5. Comsubs had initially believed the opportunity a most favorable one, for the convoy had been found in an area "where only very slight air protection can reach it" (1655/9). But the attack proved more costly to the U/B's than it did to the convoy. 4 stragglers and 2 ships from SC 129 were lost.

10/5: ISAR (4 new U/B's) forming from 58.33 N., 41.00 W. to 57.27 N., 39.24 W.  
LECH (4 U/B's) forming from 56.39 N., 38.48 W. to 55.51 N., 37.45 W.

11/5: INN (4 U/B's) forming from 56.39 N., 42.24 W. to 55.45 N., 41.25 W.  
ILLER (6 U/B's) forming from 56.21 N., 34.45 W. to 55.03 N., 32.55 W.

12/5: HAN (6 U/B's) forming from 52.21 N., 37.45 W. to 50.57 N., 36.15 W. (Above new groups were reformed 13/5 because of ISAR's contact on "convoy, q.v.")

W-BOUND

Convoys

ONS 7

U/B's

13/5: W-convoy sighted by outbound Hagel (U-640) in 60.39 N. - 23.48 W. ISAR and IRR reformed as DONAU I. LECH and MAD reformed as DONAU II. ILLER shifted to N., thus forming a long line with the 2 DONAUS, running from approx. 61 N., 40 W. to 56.30 N., 34.30 W. No group operation. Hope of Hagel's convoy given up 17/5. 1 ship lost.

Convoys

SO 130

U/B's

17/5: DONAU I to form by p.m. 18/5 from 56.03 N., 37.55 W. to 53.21 N., 35.25 W. DONAU II to form by p.m. 18/5 from 53.09 N., 35.15 to 50.33 N., 33.35 W. ODER to form by p.m. 18/5 from 50.21 N., 33.21 to 48.39 N., 32.35 W. (ILLER now joined to DONAU I, forming northern part of DONAU I line.) Expecting NE convoy 18/5 at 2000 speed 7.5. Koch (U-304) in DONAU I sighted early (SO 130) at 0018/19 in 54.45 N. - 36.45 W., E course, speed 7. 20 U/B's (all of DONAU I and part of DONAU II) ordered to operate on Koch's convoy. Remaining DONAU II subs ordered to join ODER. Operation discontinued 20/5.

HX 239

19/5: ROSEL (22 U/B's) to form by p.m. 21/5 from 55.15 N., 44.25 W. to 52.09 N., 37.15 W. NE convoy expected beginning 2000/21. ODER U/B's absorbed in ROSEL line.

21/5: ROSEL line shifted to ESE at high speed (on basis of information from decryption intelligence). Following a storm message in which U/B's were reminded of their recent lack of success and of their "high responsibility", Comsubs ordered new line in accordance with information on convoy.

E-SOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoys

U/B's

22/5: Contacts on escorts in area 51.10 N., 34.50 W. DOWRY subu ordered to join in search for the convoy.

23/5: Convoy defense encountered in area 51.45 N., 30.00 W. Operation discontinue. U/B's suffered heavy losses.

24/5: Withdrawal from North Atlantic.

## CHAPTER IV

### DEFEAT IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC.

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## DEFEAT IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC

1.  
The Tables Turn. The U/B  
seeks Evasive Action in  
Attacking.

The exertion of March brought a drop in U/B's at sea during April, but there was no relaxation of Command's insistence upon the most vigorous prosecution of the war against eastbound convoys. In May, the number of U/B's patrolling the convoy lanes again reached the high mark of March. Some hard battles were fought but after weeks of the heaviest losses, U/B Command admitted defeat. Available figures for U/B's sunk in North Atlantic convoy operations during these months show well enough what was happening, even though the figures are approximate. Neither Allied RI nor Comsubs knew what had become of them in every case, except that failure to report was taken as final.

<u>Month</u>	<u>U/B's lost in attacks on US-UK Convoys</u>
March	4
April	8
May	18

The U/B had been decisively beaten on its own field of battle. It could no longer select the condition under which it would attack but was forced at every turn. It will be seen again and again in the following account of April-May that as A/C defense increased and as A/C-surface escort cooperation improved, the

plight of the U/B became more and more hopeless. Prospect of success was relentlessly narrowed to the brief period of a quick, surprise attack, which presupposed contact under very favorable conditions. The chances of favorable contacts, however, were considerably reduced by convoy routing which benefited from RI. In an effort to increase his contacts, Comsubs once more permitted his group arrangements for eastbound convoys to be disturbed by attempts to exploit westbound convoys. ~~Rather than let go or rest content with a short operation on each favorable contact, U/B Command's policy was to exhaust the U/B's fighting strength in fruitless chasing.~~ U/B's were ordered to get ahead of the convoy by sweeping around outside of the A/C patrol range and come in at the convoy again from ahead. This meant submerged attacks by day if the night had been consumed in the effort to get ahead. The preliminary task of getting into favorable attack position involved exposure to surprise from the air. U/B's were intimidated and Command could offer no consistent solution for their problem. Demanding Attack, Attack! he tried to dismiss A/C as something which could be warded off as a man would brush away a fly.

## 2.

### A Contemporary Appreciation of U/B Situation in April 1943.

Before proceeding with the U/B narrative it will be helpful to review the situation as it appeared in April to both

Admiralty and B.d.W. Admiralty noted how increasingly concerned the U/B was with its own evasive action. In Comsub's messages of mid-April, two things stand out: fear and A/C; fear not of A/C alone, but fear of surface escorts, too, as they followed up the A/C.

In the British A/S Bulletin for April 1943 the following comments are presented: (underscoring ours)

"Morale and efficiency are delicate and may wither rapidly if no longer nourished by rich success.... individual U/B's seem to have pressed home their attacks far less effectively than in previous months. Possibly this indicates a decline in their fighting spirit, as well as some reduction in efficiency. It seems that merely to detect the U/B's coming in to attack is to have the battle half won. All their efforts appear to tend to the avoidance of detection and once it is apparent that they have failed in this endeavor they seldom press home their attack."

Comsubs inclined toward a similar view.

Fear

"...we may assume that the enemy, after his first passage over the sub and after throwing his D/C, throws out one or several buoys which are provided with a timing device to drop more D/C after the lapse of half an hour or an hour. This is to make the submerged sub think that the sub-chasing forces are still present. In other words, bluff. Always remember that the crackling alone indicates no immediate threat. The enemy has to a large extent directed his defense against our morale, and whoever lets his healthy warrior and hunter instincts get confused and tricked is not much good in the face of the enemy's actual defense, nor is such a man able to attack, but he feels hunted and pursued wherever he is. That is the idea of the enemy's defense and propaganda in the U/B war." (1453/1526/11).

Shortly afterward he discussed another phase of A/S warfare:

"The airplane is still the most dangerous foe of the sub. In the future we must count on air power everywhere

A/C

and learn to fight against it. Defense against A/C while on the surface has succeeded well in many cases and is becoming more and more promising with increased improvement of A/A weapons. The decision whether to submerge or to remain on the surface is a question of the success in choice of the C.O. Success or failure determines here too the correctness of the measure in each case. (2245/16).

It should be noted that Comsub was trying to reduce the situation, as far as possible, to psychological terms. Confronted with the fact of surprise attack by A/C, however, he could not formulate any consistent policy of defense and ended by reducing it, too, to the psychological realm of the C.O. To be informed that "success or failure determines....the correctness of the measure in each case" would be of little concrete assistance to a C.O. Unable to meet the situation with anything more and recognizing that good judgment and a daring spirit alone would not win the U/B war, Comsub showed his concern by requesting "magic eye" and oscillograph experiences. The necessity for these reports was urgent in the development of anti-radar defense.

3.  
U/B's must surprise to  
succeed. LOEWENHERZ - HK 231.

Somewhat battered, the subs that had chased EX 230 returned west for the next Eastbound convoy. Current RI was available for the end of March and it was possible to follow the refueling task of Wolfbauer and the temporary assignments of U/B's

waiting for the next group formations. It was the usual thing: fresh U/B's and U/B's not needing fuel heading for the areas where new groups were planned. On April 1, it was known that four U/B's were to wait north of Finnish Cap and others from 55 to 59 N. in mid ocean.

(a) The first night most favorable.

The actual assignment of LOEWENHERZ was not known when U-530 (Lange) sighted HA 231 at 1224/4 in area 55 N. - 36 W. Comsubs at once warned that LOEWENHERZ must

"try to come to the attack without question tonight at the beginning of darkness. Evaluation of the last great battle has proved that as a consequence of surprise and unwatchfulness of the escort the first night is always the most favorable." (1602/4).

In February, after its initial failure with SC 118, Comsubs had told Group PFELL that the first night meant nothing. U/B chances were more promising after the escort had been exhausted by the constant effort to keep the U/B's down. Apparently U/B's too could be exhausted by this process.

(b) Operation does not measure up. Experiments.

With the flurry of sighting reports that followed Lange's contact came frequent references to escort activity. The escorts were charging, as witness the report of Kummetat (U-572):

"Submerged at 1819 from destroyer. Ramméd during attack...." (2045/4).

Despite the constant intervention of the convoy defense and the coverage by VL/R A/C, U/B's succeeded in maintaining contact and

getting in to attack. To Comsubs, however, IOWENBERG was talking too much.

"Apart from shadower reports, you are using the radio much too much and for messages of too great detail." (0543/6).

A tendency on the part of several U/B's to go after the same straggler brought the following reprimand and exhortation:

"Despite favorable weather conditions, the results so far achieved against the convoy are completely unsatisfactory. It is not necessary for several subs to chase one unprotected ship. The convoy is the main objective, and you must operate against it at the highest possible speed. If today during daylight there is air protection with the convoy and if contact has been made, then with utmost strength sweep around ahead of the convoy, keeping off at a distance of 30 to 40 miles, in order to thrust against the convoy from ahead in either a day or a night attack. Be more energetic and show more toughness in taking advantage of the rare opportunity of assaulting a convoy." (1030/6).

Whatever renewed activity this message may have inspired in the U/B's was summarily dealt with by the joint A/C-surface escorts, although Otto (U-270) later claimed 2 freighters and Karpf (U-632) a destroyer. The last small flare of effort followed upon Karpf's location of the convoy in 57.45 N. - 26.48 W., but, low on fuel and with periscopes and torpedo tubes inoperative because of D/C and A/C bomb detonations, the U/B's could not capitalize on this opportunity. The total of seven ships sunk from a convoy of 61 ships was hardly commensurate with the amount of effort expended or the number of U/B's involved.

4.  
ADLER awaits NE convoy but  
operates on SW convoy.

It had been appreciated since 1 April that a group was in preparation for the Newfoundland assignment and that they would take their positions in area 51 N. - 41 W. Hence, when ADLER's official order (1853/5) was read early on the 7th, "be in line 0800/7 from 54.51 N. - 44.35 W. to 52.57 N. - 39.55 W. for NE convoy expected on the 7th", there was no surprise. ADLER did not find its convoy. Instead ADLER took advantage of Buelow's (U-404) contact on ON 176 at 1400/10 in 54.03 N. - 38.45 W. The attack on ON 176 was the first operation against a westbound convoy since the end of February to achieve even a semblance of success. U/B's met with obstinate D/C pursuit in the Newfoundland fog and Comsubs harangued his men for losing the convoy.

"...enemy position should have been included at once in the first report concerning taking over of contact. Report it at once." (2103/10).

Three U/B's came through and reported but the convoy slipped away again and the operation was discontinued at 2157/12. Claims for seven ships torpedoed went in for evaluation.

5.  
Rapid shifting to reset lines  
for NE convoys. LARCHE and REISE.

As ADLER was permitted to turn against a SW convoy, no time could be lost in rushing up replacements for blocking NE convoys.

Twenty-eight minutes after Zuelow's contact, ten U/B's were ordered at top speed to close the gap by lining as Group LERCHE from 54.39 N. - 34.35 W. to 51.45 N. - 32.05 W. (1428/10). A little later, at 1558/10, new Group MEISE was ordered to join with a few ADLER subs that had been left to peg the southern end of the ADLER line and with them to form by 0800/11 from 52.09 N. - 37.05 W. to 49.51 N. - 35.25 W. MEISE was to grow and grow, but at this time it counted only seven U/B's. Both the LERCHE and MEISE orders were in CONNOR's hands the following day, 11 April.

(a) LERCHE - HX 232.

LERCHE's line was well chosen. HX 232 met the U/B's head on, Deecke (U-584) reporting the convoy at 1010/11 in 53.45 N. - 33.15 W. With more reminders that U/B's must take advantage of the surprise element on the first night U/B's were ordered to:

"Get ahead at top speed. If A/C is too strong, sweep around the convoy in an arc. Since strong air protection is to be expected tomorrow, every sub must try by all means to be in position to attack tonight." (1707/12).

Contact was maintained during the following day but the weather deteriorated and at 1044/13 the order to discontinue the operation was sent. HX 232 lost 3 ships.

6.

Extra precautions, deceptions, and shipboard intercepts fail. MEISE and HX 233 - SC 126.

(a) Radio deception and radio silence.

The MEISE line which replaced ADLER on 11 April was

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farther to the south than its predecessor. Apparently hoping to assure contact for HEISE by preventing a convoy routing that would head north and pass to the west of the current operation on OJ 176, Comsubs detached Uphoff (U-84) from ADLER and sent him to area 53.15 N. - 46.45 W. En route Uphoff was to transmit different kinds of messages

"...to give the impression that several U/B's are en route to that point". (2158/11). BX 233 and SC 126, however, were steering clear of HEISE by a southerly routing and the successive measures taken to assure contact were all in vain. By the 15th HEISE had grown to 24 U/B's and had moved in to the west. Lest any inkling be given of the true location of the line strict radio silence was enjoined, except for the necessary contact and shadowing reports. Even here, however, U/B's were sharply criticized for the slow and drawn out way in which they usually sent short signals. Not only did this manner of sending hinder accurate reception, but it provided the enemy with too many D/F bearings.

(b) Convoy voice interception.

On the 15th HEISE was still expecting at least one NE convoy. To assist in making contact U/B's were ordered to set watch on convoy voice (2410 kcs) and report all observations. U/B's reported signal strengths of convoy voice interceptions until the 17th, and apparently contributed thereby to Comsubs impression that his NE convoy was still west of the HEISE line. What actually

happened is not altogether clear but the U/B's must have been intercepting transmissions from a SW convoy. EK 233 and SC 126 were not met until they had reached the area of 47 N. - 22 W. where some outbound U/B's ran into them.

7.  
MEISE divided by SW  
convoys. ONS 3, OH 178.

In addition to following the preceding adjustments and reinforcements of Group MEISE, RI made available on 19 April the latest composition and last line assignment of MEISE ordered on 17 April in preparation for EK 234 on the 19th. It was known that 26 U/B's were patrolling from 53.45 N. - 46.15 W. to 49.45 N. - 39.55 W. and that they had been thoroughly warned to

"...keep radio silence from now on except for reports of tactical importance. Allow yourselves neither to be seen nor to be located by A/C." (1343/17).

EK 234 was proceeding around the Northwestern end of this line. During the night of 20-21 April convoys ONS 3 and OH 178 were apparently forced to cut in too closely and one of them was picked up by U/B's at the northwestern end of MEISE. The convoy was attacked at once. By noon of the following day, 21 April, a second SW convoy had been contacted about 30 miles behind the first. Meanwhile, however, this churning at the end of the line had led to contact at 0924/21 on EK 234 in 56.39 N. - 42.24 W. With three

convoys on his hands Comsubs permitted U/B's in the immediate vicinity to operate according to the most favorable target. As a result some 9 or 10 HEISE subs went off to search in a snowstorm. Having permitted this dispersal Comsubs was forced to follow up with such orders as

"search at high speed and in big sweeps.  
Convoy must be found again." (2343/22).

The convoys had lost two ships and one escort.

8.

Persistent shadowing but no attack. Trotha, HEISE, and HI 234.

A few minutes after Trotha (U-306) reported a convoy on course east at 0924/21 in 56.39 N. - 42.24 W. Comsubs had ordered HEISE to operate. After 10 days without finding the "expected" NE convoys HEISE was now addressed in this fashion:

"Now go after it and see red!" (1001/21).

The contact was not exactly favorable in view of the U/B disposition, but U/B's were relieved of any concern with fuel by the assurance that a supply sub would be stationed in 51.25 N. - 30.15 W. They were not to break off the chase until they were down so low that the refueling station could be reached with only a margin of 5 cbm.

(a) Trotha's brilliant shadowing. A one-man operation.

Trotha lost contact temporarily when he was driven off by a destroyer, but regained it 6 hours later and, except for brief interruptions, maintained it until the operation was discontinued

on the 25th. In the course of Trotha's shadowing U/B Command tried everything he could to mass U/B's on the convoy. Outbound U/B's were put on interception courses. In commending Trotha the others were rebuked.

"Trotha's good shadowing must not be left without results... This convoy must be plucked!" (1250/23).

And again, when the others still held back

"Subs are depending too much on Trotha's shadowing reports. According to Permanent Order #2, another sub must constantly report..." (2230/23).

Ordered to make submerged attacks during the day and to come in from ahead for "joint attacks" on the surface at night, the U/B's either would not or could not join Trotha. In fact, it was Trotha himself who finally fired at the convoy, although normally he should have waited until there was another shadower before attacking. U/B complaints that they were being held continually under water were met with a recommendation that

"...commanders prepare themselves increasingly to make attacks by day. In so doing, remember the 'Bold' procedure which in recent times has been used almost invariably with success." (1531/24).

(NOTE: 'Bold' procedure was SEP).

The operation was summed up with the obvious

"The best shadowing, without attacking results, is worthless." (ibid).

(b) Comsubs seeks Trotha's opinion on the failure: (underscoring ours).

"Send brief situation report on following points:

1. Last night: weather conditions, circumstances of

attack, protection.

2. Conditions for underwater attacks during the day. A/C situation is known here. Explanation of failure to strike despite the fact that there are 12 subs operating on convoy." (1639/24)

To this Trotha replied:

"Ref. 1: hail, fog, rain, snow squalls, very changeable visibility. In my opinion enemy has taken ideal advantage of this by at least 3 zigzags....Columns are about 10 steamers long. Destroyers or escort-vessels are in the gaps....

Ref. 2....in my opinion, good.  
(b) no opinion." (0411/25).

By 25/4 most U/B's which reported at all, stated that they could not reach the convoy because of the weather and before noon the operation was discontinued. HX 234 had lost a total of 2 ships, both stragglers. Three U/B's were sunk.

9.  
"Sinking" of the "RANGER".  
Group SPECT and Duelow.

Pressing hard, Consuba was now sending U/B's fresh from port to form new groups west of 30° W. While MEISE trailed HX 234 and searched for ONS 3 and ON 178, the formation of SPECT was followed in current traffic, as it lined up with 17 U/B's east of Flemish Cap in expectation of SC 127. SPECT's was the first line in the NW Atlantic to go as far south as 44° North. Its position had probably been influenced by reconstruction of the route taken by HX 233 and SC 126 after those convoys had been contacted

by boats outbound from Biscay. At the same time 11 U/B's from port were gathering North and East of SPECHT as Group AMSML.

During the course of the run with EX 234, KRISE reinforcements in the form of new U/B's outbound from the north had crossed ONS 4 and ON 179. Disappointed by SC 127 Comsubs ordered that the Westbound convoy be followed and hastily moved SPECHT North and East to intercept. SPECHT's new position was known and the convoys evaded the line but not without an engagement of arms. Buelow (U-404) came upon an aircraft carrier. At 0817/25 he claimed to have heard 4 hits and several heavy explosions. "Ranger possible." The jubilant Comsubs immediately replied "Good! Good! Report whether in your opinion A/C carrier was sunk." (1423/24) to which Buelow said "Sinking assumed." (1819/25). Buelow was promptly awarded the Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross and called home.

10.

New and improved pattern  
for Eastbound convoys.

As though rededicated to the one thing necessary - the destruction of eastbound convoys - U/B's were arranged early in May in the most striking pattern yet seen in the North Atlantic. It was the most inclusive in its coverage of outbound routes. There was no lack of U/B's and all of them were in formation West of 37° W. Beginning in the area south of Greenland Command

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6'

had crossed the northerly routes with a combined SPECHT-STAR line of 31 U/B's, slanting from 56.30 N. - 47.15 W. to 54 N. - 37 W. AMSEL, 23 in all, was broken into 4 parts: I. north of Virgin Rocks, II. north and a little east of Flemish Cap to cut off routes that might miss SPECHT-STAR, III. east of and IV. southeast of Flemish Cap. Realizing that convoys had been escaping his W Atlantic concentrations by southerly routing, he had now set things right and plugged every hole. Exact positions were not known but on the basis of available information and an appreciation of the new pattern it was estimated on 1 May that by 3 May all routes would be blocked from 53 N. - 48 W. around to 46 N. - 38 W.

(a) Only Eastbound convoys acceptable.

When Hasenschar (U-628) sighted smoke clouds in 51 N. - 45.45 W. on 1 May, U/B's were to hold off unless the convoy course proved to be east. When this proved to be the case both SPECHT and STAR were ordered to attack. Comsubs refused to believe that contact could be lost and demanded:

"as soon as weather improves, all subs must get at convoy as fast as possible. With 31 subs, something can and must be accomplished." (2215/2).

However, nothing was accomplished. Interest suddenly shifted to the opposite direction.

11.

But Westbound Convoys are Taken.  
FINZ-ONS 5. The "sound of kettle drums".

SPECHT and STAR were combined into a new group FINZ -

27 U/B's stretching from 56.45 N. - 47.12 W. to 54.09 N. - 36.55 W. in expectation of a S<sup>w</sup> convoy. Again Hasenschar made the first contact in 55.45 N. - 42.55 W. but reported the convoy on a northerly course at 2018/4. An hour later Gretschel (U-707) assumed that he had sighted the same convoy but was certain that its course was south. Hasenschar's next report confirmed this fact and Comsubs, convinced that they had the expected convoy, OMS 5, urged the whole group on:

"I am sure that you will fight with the toughest action. Do not overestimate the enemy, but strike him dead..." (2213/4).

The attacking force was increased by ANSEL I and II which were moved up from the south. Contact was maintained and reported with almost no lapses throughout the ~~long and~~ harsh battle.

By noon of 5 May, 5 U/B's claimed to have sunk 9 ships. After weeks of patrolling distinguished only by very minor successes, Comsubs at last had reason to hope for a victory.

"Immediately after nightfall the sound of the kettle drums must begin. Hurray. Otherwise there will be nothing left of the convoy for the 40 subs. The battle will not last long because of the short sea area which is left. Therefore, use to the full every chance with all your energy." (1034/5).

As a further precaution,

"two subs which have contact at about 2300 are independently to send beacon signals, so that all subs in the vicinity of the convoy may be led to it. All must utilize this great opportunity tonight." (1916/5).

"Tonight's opportunity must in no event be allowed to be spoiled by A/C before the beginning of darkness.



Subs whose A/A armament is clear, remain on surface in the presence of A/C, and shoot. When the plane will soon stop attacking." (2035/5) (Underacoring ours).

Subsequent contact with independents and small groups led to the conclusion that the convoy might possibly have broken up. It must have been a source of no small satisfaction to Comsubs to be able at this time to transmit the order:

"If there are no more steamers to shoot at, then sink escort vessels, using magnetic fuses." (2333/5).

If ONS 5 suffered heavy losses - 11 ships sunk out of 42 - the attacking groups also sustained a considerable amount of damage. Out of 40 U/B's 6 were sunk. Two U/B's were rammed, one fatally, and numerous others were forced to discontinue operation in order to repair damages resulting from D/C and A/C bombs. Comsubs did not yet know the price he had paid when he signalled his review of the battle.

"This convoy battle has once again proved that conditions ((for action)) on the convoy are always most favorable at the beginning. He who uses fully the moment of surprise in the first night and pursues the attack with all his means, finds success. After the first blow it is always more difficult, and in addition the uncertainty of the weather comes into the picture, as in this case in which the fog frustrated the great opportunity of the second night. My appreciation for the hard fight, especially in the second night. Hasenschar is king of the marksmen." (1041/7).

12.

Ideal Situation for renewed attack on Eastbound convoys.

(a) German and Allied RI.

Undecided about disposition of the ex-FINA subs after the

CNS 5 operation, Command's mind was suddenly made up by intelligence on an outbound pair of East convoys, "one fast and one slow", EX 237 and SC 129. Available FINE subs were formed with ANSEL I and II as ELBE while ANSEL III and IV as Group RHEIN held their former position. 29 U/B's were in line from 52.45 N. to 43.57 N. east of Flemish Cap. Conditions had never been more ideal for U/B Command and he apparently expected much from the operation which followed. U/B's were even taken off the England Gibraltar lane (Group DROSSEL) to take advantage of the excellent opportunity which had been offered by German CI. No U/B group operation of which we have any record was so evidently guided by continuing intelligence of the convoy movements. With 36 U/B's, including DROSSEL, the convoys should have been enveloped in mid ocean south of 45° N. in a destructive force like that of March.

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The <sup>Amstel</sup>~~Amstel~~ line was known through Allied RI and the convoys were being diverted well to the south when German RI discovered the diversion in time to effect an interception. When Foerster (U-359) made first contact on EX 237 in 41.09 N. - 36.54 W. Comsubs ordered RHEIN to

"Go to it like Bluecher". (1328/9).

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(b) Comsubs not aware of carrier defense?  
(EIS Biter)

Loss of contact on the afternoon of the 9th brought a message from Comsubs which is of particular interest because of its implication as to the convoy's defense:

Convoy... "bound for England. Later courses must be more north than east. You must intercept and attack the convoy as quickly as possible in this area where only slight air protection can reach it. In succeeding days it will be harder and harder." (1855/9).

If Comsubs had assumed that the convoy would not have effective carrier A/C defense, he was corrected when Ecklaender (U-454) reported a carrier plane in 42.03 N. - 32.30 W.

(c) The operation and its results.

As U/B's fell behind EK 237, U/B Command reorganized ELBE to intercept SC 129, leaving EK 237 to DROSSEL, which was to intercept at the straggler R/V points known to the Germans from decryption. Interception was made but the attack was abandoned on 14 May. The double operation cost the convoys 9 ships, of which 7 were stragglers. But the U/B's had been outfought. At least 3 U/B's were sunk. U/B's had had to pull off in search of their own damaged members.

13.

Her evasion pattern in the Northwest.

During the course of the RHINE-ELBE-DROSSEL operation, strange things were happening in the old hunting ground south of

Greenland. A confusion of small groups was formed: ILLER, LECH, ISAR, ILL, NAB. Containing many inexperienced U/B's, the groups did not seem to know quite what was expected of them. An attempt to combine them in Groups DONAU I and II for an operation on OMS 7 failed, possibly because the shadower, a U/B coming out on its first cruise, was sunk too soon. The purpose of the small formations was evident as a means of evading detection, but once reformed for operation the U/B's seemed helpless.

14.

Adm. Roenitz explains lack of success: Radar or Allied "wiles and technical innovations".

"By use of his radar, the enemy has now once more gained a few lengths on us in his effort to deprive the U/B of its most important attribute, its invisibility. I am fully cognizant of what this has meant for you in your difficult battle with enemy escort and defense. Be assured that with all my strength as Commander in Chief I have undertaken and shall undertake every means at all possible to alter this situation as soon as I can.

Experimental stations in and out of the Navy are working to improve your arms and instrument equipment. I expect of you that you will continue your determined fight against the enemy, and that against his wiles and technical innovations you will pit your ingenuity, your ability and your obdurate will to dispose of him no matter what he does. In the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic, commanders have proved that the enemy even today has weaknesses at every turn and that his auxiliary devices are in many instances by no means so effective as they at first appear to be, provided that one is determined to achieve something in spite of them. I believe that I shall soon be able to give you better weapons for

this hard battle of yours." (2258/18),  
(0206/0621/19).

15.  
Groups DONAU I and II  
and Group ODER. SC 130.

Two further attempts were necessary before Doenitz was convinced that even "determination to achieve something" would not make up for the U/B's lack of invisibility. With DONAU I - II and ODER, 33 U/B's were in position to receive SC 130 on 18 May. After Koch (U-304) had established contact in 54.45 N. - 36.45 W. Command hinted at a further reason for the U/B's decline, in-experienced captains:

"Since observations concerning the nature of defense and conditions for attack are of particular importance for the other subs, the experienced older commanders must report immediately any new data, so that command can give pointers." (1150/19)

The "pointers" came in this fashion:

"Because of the current absence of shadowing reports, it is assumed by Command that it is impossible to keep contact with convoy on account of aircraft. Therefore as soon as a sub has determined for itself the position of the enemy, move off and, remaining beyond the close air-escort.....sweep around ahead of convoy at top speed, in order to submerge ahead of convoy for a daylight attack. If during the time sub is sweeping around convoy there continue to be no shadower's reports for a period of more than 2 hours, then zig briefly up to convoy and report." (1900/19)..

Gretschel's (U-707) report is typical of transmissions during the operation: "Continuously forced under." (1945/19). By 0438/20 when Foel (U-413) reported land-based A/C and most of

the U/B's were trailing far behind the convoy, further operation was considered hopeless. Thereafter all U/B's were cautioned to observe strict radio silence so that Maessenhausen's (U-253) transmission of dummy traffic on his voyage home would simulate a stream of returning U/B's. A line had already been set up for EX 239. Maessenhausen, however, had already been sunk.

16.  
Last Challenge

(a) Group formation and convoy intelligence.

While 20 of DCMU's subs attempted feebly to follow SC 130, all remaining subs in the NW Atlantic (22) were formed as MOSEL from 54.45 E. - 43.15 W. to 51.45 N. - 36.25 W. in anticipation of EX 239 beginning 2000/21. Two more returning U/B's were ordered to send dummy traffic. EX 239 was being routed to the south of the MOSEL line when German decryption recovered a straggler B/V dispatch for the first diversion route. MOSEL was rushed east southeast to intercept.

(b) Comsubs will not admit defeat.

There was no evidence of defeatism in Comsubs' message to MOSEL before the coming operation, but rather a refusal to admit the possibility of defeat:

"With the last two North Atlantic convoys we have gotten nowhere and in the case of the last one the full moon was a very important factor. Now if there is anyone who thinks that combatting convoys is therefore no

longer possible, he is a weakling and no true U/B captain. The battle in the Atlantic is getting harder but it is the determining element in the waging of the war. Keep yourselves aware of your high responsibility and do not fail to understand that you must answer for your actions. Do your best with this convoy. We must smash it to bits. If the circumstances permit, do not submerge from A/C. Shoot and ward them off. Make surface escape from DD whenever possible. Be tough, get ahead and attack. I believe in you." (1910/21).

(c) U/B's are called off to prevent their slaughter.

Bahr (U-305) contacted a destroyer at 1045/22 in 51.09 N. - 34.55 W. but was bombed by A/C and suffered heavy damages. Johannsen (U-569) was continually forced under by A/C. Becker (U-218) located the convoy in 50.45 N. - 32.35 W., but only by means of hydrophone, and reported continuous asdic and crack gear. Shamong (U-468) was bombed and later pursued with D/C. Although both ROSEL and DONAU were now in the vicinity of the convoy, the operation was called off at 1043/23 despite the fact that the majority of U/B's reported a sufficient amount of fuel and all torpedoes and the convoy was still in sight. It is possible that Hangershausen's (U-91) report of the rescuing <sup>of</sup> survivors from U-752 (Schroeter) may have influenced the decision. 8 U/B's had been sunk in the attempts on SC 130 and EX 239.

17.

Doenitz admits defeat.

The immediate effect of the EX 239 operation was apparent in the withdrawal of U/B's from the North Atlantic on the following

day, 24 May. In a series of messages to all U/B's, the Grand

Admiral explained:

1. Our heavy submarine losses in the last month are to be traced back predominantly to the present superiority of enemy location instruments and the surprise from the air which is possible because of that. More than half of all losses have occurred through this surprise, and indeed on advances and returns as well as in the operational area in attack dispositions. The losses in battle against the convoys themselves were in comparison slight except for one case, in which particularly unfavorable conditions prevailed. A part of these losses, too, resulted from A/C.

2. The momentary situation as concerns enemy A/C and enemy radar must be bridged over by special precautionary measures en route and in the waiting disposition, meanwhile making the best of other disadvantages. Orders for this have been issued. In that connection I will bring about further results in the choice of the attack areas.

3. My whole energy is engaged in the improvement of our own ortung, defense against ortung, and A/A arms. This task is being worked on with maximum application at all our stations. Practical results will come forth in a very short time. The time until then must be passed with cunning and caution on cruise and while waiting, but with your old inexorable severity in the battle itself. # (1753/1842/2032/23).

NOTE: "ortung" literally means location but in U/B traffic normally referred to radar.



	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun.</u>	<u>Jul.</u>	<u>Aug.</u>	<u>Sept.</u>
Total Subs at Sea	148	169	179	156	179	119	127	81	90
Operational Subs	87	122	119	90	121	62	71	40	45
Operated on North Atlantic Convoys	64	74	71	63	81	0	0	0	26
Operated on Convoys on Gibraltar Lane	6	28	25	0	7	15	16	0	0
Subs in Distant Areas	7	10	12	14	15	19	37	24	3
No. American Coast	0	0	0	3	7	5	5	2	1
Caribbean	2	3	5	3	0	1	6	4	0
So. American Coast	4	2	2	1	2	6	13	7	2
W. African Coast	1	0	0	3	4	7	13	11	0
Capetown	0	5	5	4	5	0	0	0	0
Refuelers	3	5	4	4	6	3	1	0	1
Subs Refueled	23	39	31	32	54	33	6	0	9

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOYS AND U/B GROUPS, December 1942 - May 1943.W-BOUNDConvoyU/B'sConvoyU/B's

ON 1/12

DEAUFGÄNGER (9 U/B's) moving H. after operation in BD. To form by 2000/5/12 from 58 to 55.30 N. along 25 W. To operate on SF convoy beginning 6/12.

HK 217 3/12

On 7/12 ordered westward to close

HK 217

ONS 152

(UNGESTUM, see under HK 218)

HK 218 13/12

ON 153 15/12  
PAUFOLD (14 U/B's, some ex-Panzer, others fresh from port) 13/12 ordered to form from 55.03 N., 25.55 W. - 51.51 N., 20.55 W. Rudloff (U-603) made contact in 53.27 N. - 25.05 W. at 1400/15. Operation continued to 18/12, broken off because of bad weather. 4 M/V's and 1 escort sunk from convoy.

ON 154 22/12  
SPITZ (8 fresh from port) to form by 0000/23 from 54.09 N. 24.45 W. to 52.27 N., 21.55 W. for SF convoy expected noon 23rd. 3 ex-Raufbold ordered 22/12 to form a wing backing up SPITZ to SW of main line. Convoy pos. for 23rd given U/B's.

22/12 UNGESTUM to reform for SF convoy by 0800/25 from 50.21 N., 32.15 W. to 48.09 N., 29.55 W., thus to "surround convoy". Total of 22 U/B's set for convoy.

26/12  
 Contact by Graef (U-604) in 42.15 N. - 23.55 W. at 1755. (Graef was southernmost boat of SPITZ wingback).

28/12  
UNGESTUM entered operation which continued to 43 L. - 34 W., resulting in sinking of 14 ships (including 1 torpedoed) out of 45 in convoy.

E-BOUND

PAUFER. Formed before 3/12, N. of Flemish Cap. Expecting convoy beginning e.m. 4/12. Contact on 1223/6/12, after 2 days of patrol line shifting which followed U-524's (Steinacker) intercept of a convoy voice transmission.

Combined PAUFER-DEAUFGÄNGER action continued into AL. 2 M/V's sunk from convoy.

Contracted by Loeber (U-373), 1353/13/12 in 53.09 42.25 W. (U-373 was ex-Draufgänger but had not joined group after Nov. operation in BD).  
 1415/13: BURFALL formed (5 U/B's, only two other besides U-373 being in the vicinity).

1934/13: UNGESTUM (9 U/B's, ex-Panzer-Draufgänger) ordered West to area 57 N. - 33 W. close HK-218 from ahead. Could not find HK-218 but picked up ONS 152, which lost 1 ship from the action.

UNGESTUM reformed to operate on ON-154, q.v.

W-BOUND

Convoy

DN 31/12 29/12

FALKE forming; by 3/1 13 U/B's, nearly all fresh from Blacey ports or from Norway, in line from 50.45 N., 26.35 W. to 48.09 N., 22.35 W.

4/1: reforming for line from 58 N., 26.45 W. to 54 N., 26.45 W. to be occupied by 1600/7. 2 new U/B's added from North; 1 ex-Falke ordered to refuel from U-117 and then support JAGUAR. (FALKE had evidently been dis-appointed in initial expectation of a SW convoy and was shifting N for W-convoy.)

FALKE: expect W-convoy from p.m. 7 to 9/1. (No contact).

8/1: 4 fresh U/B's being added to FALKE.

10/1: HABICHT forming (9 U/B's) to extend FALKE line southward to 51 N. Line to be reached by 16/1.

ONS 16/1 14/1

FALKE expect W-convoy on 16/1. (no contact)  
17/1: FALKE-HABICHT line shifted to N., now to extend from 61.30 N. to 53.27 N. along 26 W.

20/1 (approx): FALKE-HABICHT dissolved.

The above sequence due to successful convoy diversions.

COMMENT: By 15 Jan. 32 U/B's had been involved in this attempt to block ON-ONS convoys. About 28 were still in line when the groups were dissolved. Originally formed in anticipation of another SW convoy, to be caught like ON 154 beyond A/C coverage, FALKE was shifted N. when it became evident that ON-ONS convoys were evading the patrol line. Then HABICHT was formed lest the convoys were proceeding on southerly route after all. Finally the entire line was shifted still farther to the N. lest the convoys be using the eastern North-western route.

E-BOUND

U/B's

2/1

JAGUAR, forming "to seize Am.-Eng. convoy" in area 51.30 N. - 45.15 W. Actual formation delayed until about 10/1 as result of weather interference with Neumann (U-117) refuelling R/V which was supplying ex-Splitz subs to join the 5 that were waiting for Newfoundland area from port. By 16/1 JAGUAR consisted of only 8 U/B's.

JAGUAR: expect 9 knot convoy on 12/1. (Shifts to 13/1. (distance). (Patrol 11)

13/1: "you can count on announced convoy". (No contact).

JAGUAR: 2 ME convoys expected, 1 beginning a.m. 20/1, the other a.m. 21/1. Line to be from 51.45 N., 50.15 W. to 50.51 N., 46.15 W. (8 U/B's)

COMMENT: As in the eastern part of the N. Atl., in the western part, convoy diversion had succeeded fully foxed the U/B's. JAGUAR's line had been successively changed so that by 21/1. It had wheeled from a NW-SE line NE of Iceland to an almost W-E line N. of Virgin Islets. It was expected that Comsubs believed him E-bound convoys were evading his lines by proceeding due North along the Newfoundland-Canadian Coast. When, however, U-96 (Heilriegel) en route from JAGUAR to the 2nd sector of a convoy (later transferred to A/S Green)

Convoy

2/1

HX 12/1, KB 10/1

SC

18/1

X-9

14/1

Convoy

M-BOUND

U/B's

20/1 (approx.): LANDSKNECHT (approx. 20 U/B's) formed from ex-WALKER-HABICHT and subs fresh from port along line from about 54 W. to 50.45 W., 24.30 N. (To continue block against SW convoys after disbanding of HABICHT).

Convoy

M-BOUND

U/B's

on 22/1 in 52.45 N. - 39.15 W., U/B Command presumed "that expected convoys went south of Group JAGUAR". (1818/22/1).

20-21/1 HALDORP (20 U/B's) formed from ex-WALKER-HABICHT which had by this time moved to W. of 30 W. Hindered by bad weather, HALDORP began slow cruise to west which developed into a fun-avoider plying on area 52 N. - 35 W. and crossing Cape Farwell as the northern end came around.

22/1: Grarf (U-69) (HAUDSEER) had hydrophone contact in area 55 N. - 41 W. Northward HAUDSEER U/B's went in search. No luck. Rest of HAUDSEER ordered to line from 56.21 N., 36.35 W. to 52.51 N., 32.05 W., then to sweep on course 235.

23/1: Pool (U-113), Group JAGUAR, contacted convoy escorts in 53.09 N. - 50.55 W. JAGUAR unable to maintain effective contact. HAUDSEER lines shifted to east of area from Cape Farwell to point approx. 450 miles SSE. Operation failed completely. Given up on 27/1.

27/1: JAGUAR departed area for refueling. HAUDSEER to reform by 30/1 from 58 W., 47 N. to 53.39 N., 38.45 W. for convoy op. on 30/1.

begin.

The maneuver succeeded in that it ran into convoys (SC 118 and IX 224) which were proceeding south of U/B concentration in Greenland-Newfoundland pocket.

24/1

LANDSKNECHT: Expect convoy beginning today. (No luck).

SC 117

#3

28/1

LANDSKNECHT dissolved.

10 U/B's to proceed westward, heading for area 46.45 N. - 50.33 W.; thus to catch E-convoys before effective evasion could begin.

4 U/B's to hold their stations in LANDSKNECHT area. (i.e. SW convoy line)

W-BOUND

CONVOY

U/B's

Convoy

3/1

U/B's

HAUDEGEN. Before 2/2 expect 3 convoys steering H. or H2 and 1 SM.  
Line for 2/2: 56.51 N., 48.42 W. to 52.45 N., 40.05 W.  
Line for 3/3: 55.45 N., 49.55 W. to 51.51 N., 41.25 W.

COMMENT: Two of the above convoys were HI 224 and SC 118 which evaded HAUDEGEN but were caught by ex-LANDESKNECHT.

1/2: Teichert (U-456) ex-LANDESKNECHT on cruise West ran into convoy escort in 53.09 N. - 30.55 W. By 1401/1 U-456 had found the convoy and began to shadow for former LANDESKNECHT subs and others in area, who were ordered to attack. Convoy was pursued to 17 W. where operation was discontinued 4/2. Subs turned back to meet SC 118. (2 ships sunk from IX 224).

IX 224  
44

1/2: PFIL (11 U/B's, 7 of them ex-LANDESKNECHT) to sweep West from a line 52.45 N., 34.55 W. to 50.51 N. 29.35 W. to seize a second North bound convoy, suspected to be on about the same route as Teichert's. (i.e. IX 224) (2131/1/2). Contact was made 4/2 in 50.09 N. - 37.05 W. After 2 days of shadowing U/B's penetrated the strong defense and sank 7 ships in 3 hours. 3 additional ships were lost. Action was discontinued on 9/2, the U/B's heading for refuelling in area 51 N. - 32 W.

SC 118  
46

2/2: Waechter (U-223), HAUDEGEN, contacted convoy in 56.57 N. - 49.24 W.  
NORDBREM (5 subs) formed from northern HAUDEGEN subs to operate on what proved to be the "smaller Greenland convoy" rather than "the larger England convoy".

"Greenland  
Convoy"  
45

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

4/2: HAUDEGEN to continue sweep S of line from 52.15 N., 50.35 W. to 49.39 N., 44.25 W. Then to break into individual attack areas running from virgin rocks NE to Newfoundland coast.

9/2: ex-KORDSTUEN rejoining HAUDEGEN.

10/2: NE convoy expected in HAUDEGEN area beginning 11/2: HAUDEGEN line pulled back and arched from Flemish Cap to Pelle Islo.

11/2: RITTER (11 U/B's, increased to 15 by 14/2) forming for 14/2 from 55.03 N., 31.25 W. to 51.51 N. 30.55 W. to scout on course 235.

13/2: HAUDEGEN expect NE convoy beginning 14th. "Don't weaken".

15/2: NEPTUN (10 U/B's) forming for 16/2 from 61.33 N., 30.38 W. to 59.09 N., 27.00 W. To scout on course 235.

HAUDEGEN dissolved.

16/2: RITTER line successively ordered to shift to E. in a hurry. (thus to close gap between RITTER and proposed NEPTUN line). NE convoy expected that night.

17/2: NEPTUN ordered to take its position in line at once.

OR 165

17/2: Contacted accidentally by U-69 (Graef, ex-HAUDEGEN, on return) in 51.15 N., 40.45 W. TALEPH formed with ex-HAUDEGEN subs. U/B's already low on fuel, could operate for 2 days only. They were ordered to go as low as 5-6 cbm. fuel, since supply sub was en route. 3 ships lost. Ex-HAUDEGEN U/B's returned W. France after refuelling.

EX 226

16/2

W-BOUND

Convoy

ON 166

& 10

U/B's

18/2: RITTER-NEPTUN to form continuous line by a.m. 20/2 from 59.45 N. to 52.45 N. along 30 W. To sweep S3.

KRAPPEM (4 U/B's) formed to extend above line sharply to SE from south end. To sweep E.

20/2: Eccltring (U-604) in KRAPPEM made contact at 1055. Operation continued for 5 days to area S. of Virgin Rocks. 15 ships lost. NEPTUN did not operate.

ON 167

21/2: Graef (U-664), enroute from Discey to form with BURGRAF, ran across convoy at 1850 in 50.49 N. - 24.15 W. Other Biscay boats heading for BURGRAF were ordered to join attack. By 22/2 straggler U/B's from RITTER operation on ON 166 were ordered to turn back E. and close convoy.

STURMBOCKs all subs operating on this convoy, to which were added 3 ex-HAUDEBELL subs on 23/2. Contact was lost. STURMBOCK (11 U/B's), 24/2, ordered to line from 49.57 N., 38.35 W. to 46.21 N., 38.45 W. for a further attempt but the action was not resumed for lack of the convoy. (2 ships sunk from ON 167).

26/2: STURMBOCK dissolved. 5 to refueller, 6 to form WILDFANG.

E-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

18/2: RITTER-NEPTUN orders cancelled (due to good intelligence on ON 166). See Under ON 166.

20/2

NEPTUN held its line and returned to SE sweep course beginning a fan sweep similar to that of HAUDEBELL.

21/2: BURGRAF (9 U/B's, fresh or near) to form 24/2 from 56.09 N., 28.25 W. to 53.21 N., 26.15 W. To scout on course 235. Delayed in forming.

26/2: WILDFANG from 51.27 N., 42.05 W. to 49.45 N., 40.15 W. (BURGRAF's delay in getting started may have determined the formation of WILDFANG, whose line was such as would join on to NEPTUN by 27/2, thus leaving no gap in the long line across the northern route from Newfoundland.)  
26/2: NEPTUN expect SE convoy today. Sighted by

EX 227

7/13

W-BOUND

Convoy

OX 163

1/3: sighted by Struckmeier (U-608) of NERTUN at 1312 in 59.45 N. - 36.24 W. After some confusion, NERTUN boats were ordered to operate on 4/3. Convoy not damaged. Search ended on 4/3.

U/B's

Convoy

E-BOUND

U/E's

Friedrich (U-759) at 0432 in 56.27 N. - 44.43 W. Pursued by NEPTUN subs until 2/3. 1 ship sunk. In course of operation NEPTUN ran into OX 163.

NEPTUN absorbed by other groups following this combined operation.

3/3: NEJLAND (12 U/B's, half now from Karth, half from BISCAY north). To form by noon 7/3 from 54.45 N., 27.15 W. to 50.57 N., 23.45 W. To scout on course 240.

SC 121

4/3: WILDANG-EURCCRAF now constituting a single line of about 30 U/B's from 55 N., 20 W. to 50 N., 39 W., WILDANGS having moved to NW to isolate NEPTUN, now engaged in Greenland - Iceland area, and EURCCRAF having completed its 54 subs to effect union with WILDANG. Both groups reinforced by subs as they refuelled following OX 165 - 166 actions. At same time ex-NEPTUN subs moving SW to back up WILDANG-EURCCRAF line. Speed 14 convoy with speed 7, p.m. 4/3.

6/3: Hopman (U-405), ex NEPTUN, contacted SC 121 at 1056 in 54.57 N. - 40.15 W., apparently behind the WILDANG-EURCCRAF line. Now the convoy east through the line is not clear unless the two groups had failed to join up as ordered. 15 U/B's were at once pulled from middle of WILDANG-EURCCRAF line to pursue, together with all available unattached subs in area. Those called WILDANG for this operation.

The 10 northern subs from NEJLAND were at once detached as OSINARK to complete the encirclement of SC 121. Action continued to 11/3 in Rockall area. 13 ships torpedoed.



APPENDIX B TO PART A

U/B GROUP OPERATIONS AGAINST US AND  
BRITISH CONVOYS BOUND TO OR FROM  
NORTH AFRICA. Nov. 1942 - Apr. 1943.

(In view of the special interest which attaches to the opening of the Allied North African offensive with the landings in Nov., 1942, a summary of available relevant November '42 U/B traffic is included, although this traffic was not read until December '42.)

First word of the Allied invasion went out on U/B circuits at 0710B/8 November: "Americans have landed in Morocco and Algiers on large scale". At the same time 15 U/B's at sea in the Atlantic were ordered to the landing beach at high speed. That the U/B Navy was caught off guard seems beyond dispute. At 1528/8 nine U/B's were taken from a North Atlantic convoy operation and ordered to the Gibraltar approaches. As additional U/B's were rushed to the Gibraltar area, some of them on into the Mediterranean to support the concentration of Mediterranean U/B's, Comsubs admitted at 2212/8 that the situation was "obscure". On the following morning Adm. Doenitz repeated Hitler's order to Mediterranean U/B's: "I expect the most ruthless victorious attack", and added the following for Atlantic U/B's;

"I expect the same kind of attack from the subs stationed off Morocco and Gibraltar. Without reserve we must put our insatiable, forceful will

to attack, into this task set by der Fuehrer. Speedy sinking of a transport can have the greatest importance with regard to the American attacks and the French defence."

- 9/11/42: SCHLAGTOT formed (8 U/B's) with attack area off NW coast of Africa to attack allied landing forces. U-572 (Eirsacher) sighted about 20 transports. Comsubs ordered group to attack, even in shallow water, but DD and A/C patrols were too strong.
- 12/11 Group moved to patrol line off Gibraltar. U-173 (Schweichel) sighted and attacked strongly patrolled E-bound convoy. Reported that, despite several hours' chase at top speed inside DD rear guard, no success because enemy speed was too high.
- 20/11: U-103 (Janssen) sighted convoy off Lisbon. No contact. U-519 (Eppen) sighted and attacked convoy of 9 steamers, 4 DD's in 35.51 N. - 11.50 W. Course E. U-413 (Poel) reported convoy of 6 ships, course S. altering to E.
- 21/11: These sightings hastened formation of WESTWALL (15 U/B's), 5 U/B's operating off Lisbon (SCHLAGTOT) were joined by 7 from the Gibraltar area, plus 3 others. Line: 35.03, 37.51 N. - 15.02, 12.14 W.

.....

Dec. 1942 - April 1943

Convoy

U/B Group

- E-bound 6/12: WESTWALL moved west to block US-Gibraltar lane. Line: 37.57, 42.33 N. - 41.10 W. Here U-515 (Henke) sighted 2 troop transports, course SE and claimed sinking of "Ceramic".
- 7/12: U-155 (Fiening) claimed freighter and U-185 (Kaus) a steamer from the same convoy.
- 15/12: U-103 (Janssen) sank "Henry Stanley" in 41.57 N. - 40.14 W. WESTWALL cruising eastward, low on fuel. To tarry off Portugal before putting in to Biscay.
- S-bound 16/12: 6-10 steamer convoy (probably Gibraltar bound) reported 49.33 N. - 11.45 W. WESTWALL U/B's for whom no provisioning was planned were to avoid the convoy; 18/12: remainder of the group plus outgoing U/B's in the area to operate on it. Apparently U/B's were unable to make contact and, after sweeping back and forth, discontinued the operation.

Convoy

U/B Group

22/12: New WESTWALL (3 U/B's, 5 U/B's from the former group plus 3 others) assigned attack areas across UK-Gib. lane west of Portugal. After an unsuccessful patrol of the Gibraltar route, 5 U/B's returned to port and the remaining 3 joined other groups or operated individually.

29/12: DELPHIN formed: 6 U/B's all fresh from port, to occupy a patrol line 32 to 35 N., 22.54 W., to scout on westerly course.

2/1: Group ordered to turn south, proceeding between 35 and 42 W. Supply sub U-463 (Wolfbauer) in company.

TH-1

3/1: U-514 (Auffermann) outbound for Trinidad sighted TH-1 in 20.27 N. - 45.33 W. Course E. He was ordered to shadow until DELPHIN, now on course 170 at high speed, could arrive. Simultaneously, U-182 (Clausen) reported a convoy of 11-15 steamers in 32 N. - 25 W., Course W. DELPHIN was diverted to attack, since it could reach this convoy's position sooner. U-182, however, lost contact, having been driven off by shell fire and D/C.

W-bound

5/1: U-514 and U-125 (Folkers) join DELPHIN with orders to operate independently on TH-1. They sank 1 tanker. If DELPHIN had no contact on the westbound convoy by 2000, it was to break off the operation and take positions in a patrol line from 35.33 N. - 30.17 W. to 35.39 N. - 33.38 W., course SE.

6/1: U-514 lost contact and made no report because of transmitter breakdown. Consequently, U-125, hindered by a lack of shadower's reports, also gave up the chase.

7/1: New DELPHIN formed: 8 U/B's, i.e. the former group plus U-514 and U-125. Subsequent addition of 2 more brought the total to 10 U/B's on the look-out for TH-1. Line: 28.21 N., 30.54 W. to 25.39 N., 29.27 W., course SW. If no contact made by 2030, reverse course.

8/1: U-381 (Pueckler) sighted convoy in 27.51 N. - 29.02 W. The order for DELPHIN to attack contained the reminder that the operation was of the utmost importance for the success of the African campaign. "Be hard in attack. Help your comrades in Tunis". (1841/8/1/43).

TH-1

8/1: 2 other U/B's in the area join the attack. Day's bag: 2 ships.

Convoy

U/B Group

9/1: It was presumed that the two parts of the convoy came together in 30.15 N. - 30.38 W. 3 more hit and 3 sunk. The group claimed 13 of 15 tankers in convoy sunk. Commander in Chief (Grand Adm. Raeder) congratulated all for this relief to the Tunisian front and called it "a brilliant joint success of the well-planned leadership on the part of Comsubs and the smart attack of the subs Group DELPHIN". (2139/10/1 all series).  
EM-1 lost 7 out of 9 tankers.

E-bound 10/1: U-571 (Wohlmann) sighted convoy of 23 tankers 29.57 N. - 21.18 W. Course W. Attached and sank one.

12/1: R/V underway for provisioning DELPHIN from Wolfenher.

E-bound 16/1: 10 U/B's of DELPHIN ordered to take up positions in patrol line 32 to 36 N., 31.02 W., course W. for convoy expected on the 16th. U/B's to be in position by 1100A, without fail.

18/1: Patrol line advanced to the area 33 to 37 N., 34 W.

27/1: After fruitless sweeping, DELPHIN patrol line was extended from 31 to 37 N. and moved eastward to 31 W. Group ROCHER (5 U/B's which had been moving in towards Cape Blanco) formed to intercept U-S convoy traffic and fast single ships, all of which were important to the African front. To move up African Coast from area Cape Blanco and block inner passage between Canaries and mainland.

28/1: DELPHIN, still unsuccessful, moved eastward as fuel decreased, to form a new patrol line from 36.39 N., 22.38 W. to 29.27 N., 18.22 W. U-514 to watch off Ponta Delgada.

1/2: Comsubs reported 2 convoys in ROCHER's area to prove that there is traffic, subtly criticizing the group's inactivity.

2/2: ROCHER in Canary passages. HARTBERG (12 U/B's) formed of incoming and outgoing U/B's in expectation of south bound convoy. Area 46.27 N. - 13.45 W.

S-bound

ConvoyU/B Group

- 3/2: A/C scouting for HARTHERZ convoy.
- 4/2: English steamer reported attack in 46.51 N. - 16.55 W.  
2nd steamer sighted by A/C in 47.39 N. - 14.55 W.  
U-753 (Mannstein) reported corvette and A/C in 46.21 N. - 17.15 W., course S. However, there is no indication from reports of HARTHERZ U/B's that the results of their operations were anything but negative.
- N-bound 7/2: HARTHERZ dissolved.  
U-218 (Becker) in ROCHER finally reported a convoy in 23.15 N. - 15.58 W., course 45, whereupon Comsubs ordered combined operations by DELPHIN and ROCHER but the joint attempt was unsuccessful.
- N-bound 8/2: DELPHIN, after an order to discontinue the operation, moved northeastward, forming a line from 39 N. - 12 W. to 36 N. - 15 W. in expectation of a northbound convoy due in the area on 10/2.
- 9/2: ROCHER to take up new line from 31 N. to 34.45 N., 16.22 W., course W.
- W-bound 10/2: U-108 (Wolfram) in ROCHER reported convoy in 32.34 N. - 16.09 W. but lost contact due to A/C and asdic pursuit. Other ROCHER subs followed up, but without success.
- 11/2: 5 ROCHER U/B's proceeding to area 32 to 36 N., 21 to 23.30 W. and the remaining 5 to U-tanker.
- S-bound 12/2: DELPHIN breaking up into attack areas ranging from 37 to 42 N., 12 to 15 W. Ordered to attack southbound convoy sighted by outbound (U-569) Johannsen in 43.39 N. - 14.15 W. Despite the addition of 2 ex-HARTHERZ U/B's, the operation was unsuccessful. All but 3 of the group began their return to port.
- UGS 5 14/2: ROCHER by noon 16/2 to be in patrol line from 32.15 N. to 36.45 N., - 30.06 W. in expectation of an eastbound convoy due on 17/2. Group to be augmented as refuelled subs arrive.
- 15/2: ROBBE, 3 ex-DELPHIN U/B's and 5 U/B's fresh from port, formed to assist ROCHER in intercepting UGS 5. Patrol line from 39.27 N. - 27.57 W. to 42.21 N. - 28.14 W., course 280.  
COMMENT: This preparation for UGS 5 consisted of two groups, one sweeping on 280° north of the Azores, the other sweeping west to the south of the Azores. UGS 5 not contacted.

ConvoyU/B Group

- UGF 5 17/2: U-522 (Schneider) sighted convoy 37.45 N. - 21.02 W. ROBBE ordered not to operate when it became clear that convoy was on SE course. Schneider pursued. Contact lost.
- 20/2: 3 U/B's detached from ROCHEN to escort "Hohenfriedburg". Remainder of group ordered to proceed on SE course to 34.21 N. 26.30 W. for refuelling.
- 21/2: ROBBE returning east to take up individual attack areas in Gibraltar approaches.
- 22/2: U-107 (Gelhaus) in Group ROBBE sank "Roxburgh Castle" 38.09 N. - 26.14 W.
- UC-1 U-522 (Schneider) having refuelled from U-tanker on 21/2, sighted UC-1 in 34.21 N. - 22.30 W., course SW. ROCHEN ordered to attack at top speed, assisted by 3 U/B's from ROBBE. All subs operating on UC-1, combined into one group i.e. ROCHEN. To press attack without regard for fuel, since U-tanker was detailed to bring up the rear. After initial successes by Schneider, action began to lag. On 24/2 Comsubs demanded more vigorous attack; "The convoy must be destroyed". (1903/24). Subs were reminded again on 25/2 that a refueller was behind them and exhorted in stronger language in view of the exceptional opportunity. Operation discontinued 27/2. 2 ships from the convoy and 1 straggler were sunk. Comsubs claimed 1 DD and 8 ships sunk, other units damaged. "The battle was hard but it will get easier." (2211/27/3/43).
- GUS 4 27/2: 6 Ex-ROCHEN U/B's formed group TUEMLER to operate on a slow westbound convoy in area of 28 N., 36 W. Convoy's pos. 2000/26 given. (German decryption of Allied msg.)  
After failure to contact expected convoy, TUEMLER cruised east and disbanded.
- H-bound 1/3: U-511 (Schneewind) sighted convoy 36.33 N. - 10.22 W., and was forced off by asdic pursuit. ROBBE U/B's, capable of approaching by night, ordered to attack. Results nil.
- XK 2 5/3: U-130 (Keller) sighted a convoy in 43.21 N. - 14.55 W., course E. All outgoing and returning U/B's directed to operate. Keller lost contact after 5 hits but 4 ships were sunk.
- KMS 10 6/3: U-107 (Gelhaus) reported convoy 37.21 N. - 10.38 W., course SE. A/C patrol forced him to submerge.

ConvoyU/B Group

N-bound 9/3: ROBBE moved northwest to 41 N., - 13 to 16 W. During the cruise U-107 (Gelhaus) reported a convoy in 36.57 N. - 10.54 W. Attempt to operate unsuccessful. U/B's continued to assigned line.

UGS 6 Five 740 ton U/B's, (Emmermann U-172, Henke U-515, Rueggeberg U-513, Sturm U-167, and Keller U-130) in mid Atlantic enroute U.S. waters for operation ("Seewolf"). Orders cancelled and U/B's headed south for area 33.25 N. - 40.55 W., where U-106 (Pasch), ex-TURNER, was waiting. These U/B's told on 10/3 to form by 1000/12 from 37 N. - 40 W. to 43 N. - 41 W. for eastbound convoy, expected beginning 12/3. To scout on course 270. (German info. presumably derived from decryption).

12/3: Keller (U-130) sighted convoy. UGS 5 sank him. Convoy altered course to N. of Azores, temporarily shaking off the U/B's. Contact again on 13/3 by Rueggeberg (U-513) and Emmermann (U-172).

14/3: UNVERZAGT and WOHLGEMUT (12 U/B's) operating on UGS 6. COMMENT: UNVERZAGT apparently applied to the original 6 U/B's and WOHLGEMUT to 6 more that were farther to the east. All 12 were united as UNVERZAGT by noon 14/3. All 12 were 740 tonners.

By morning of 14/3 good contact had not been made and held. Hence U/B's were ordered to form a receiving line from 39.27 N. - 36.06 W. via 38 N. - 35.10 W. to 36.27 N. - 35.26 W., thus blocking routes through or to North of Azores. Continuous contact began by noon 14/3. U/B's pursued and attacked until 19/3, area 15 W. having been supported by ROBBE subs which came in to operate briefly before dropping out with just enough fuel to return home. The battle was hard and Comsubs recognized that convoy defense had been very strong. U/B's were congratulated for their "total success" and its contribution to the Tunisian campaign. (1012/20/3/4). Actually 3 ships were sunk, a few others torpedoed. U/B claims were excessive.

21/3: Since no tanker U/B was available, R/V's were arranged for fuel adjustments. One U/B from port sacrificed its cruise to refuel the group. Upon completion of the operation, 3 of the 14 U/B's which comprised the group at that time, moved south to form SELFAUBER and operate.

Convoy

U/B Group

25/3: SEBRAEUBER formed (8 U/B's - 6 ex-UNVERZACT plus 2 from port) to intercept slow south bound convoy expected on 26/3. Op area 26 to 27 N., 14 to 15 W.

27/3: No contact. SEBRAEUBER began to work down the African coast.

RS-3

28/3: U-167 (Sturm) reported contact in 25.51 N. - 15.15 W. and the group had orders to attack accordingly.

29/3: U-105 (Eissen) sighted convoy again 22.27 N. - 17.09 W. was abandoned

30/3: By the end of the month the group patrol and only 2 U/B's remained in the area to intercept African coastal convoys.

\* \* \* \* \*

Group patrol of Gibraltar convoy lanes temporarily abandoned. Interest in UK-Gibraltar lane was resumed in May '43 with group BROSSPL. In June '43 attempt was made to block the US-Gibraltar lane by the U/B's that had been forced to withdraw from the North Atlantic (Group TRUTZ).



JANUARY, 1943

DISTANT PATROL AREAS

No. American Coast      Caribbean      So. Amer. Coast      W. African Coast      Canetown

REEDER U-214  
No successes

NISSEN U-105  
1 ship claimed  
sunk

MOHR U-124  
5 ships claimed  
sunk. Contacted  
and attacked by  
A/C.

REICHEIBACH U-217  
No successes.  
Attacked by A/C

FECHNER U-164  
Neutral Swede sunk.  
SUNK 6 Jan. in  
02 S., 39 W.

SCHACHT U-507  
2 ships claimed  
sunk. SUNK 13  
Jan. in 02 S.,  
40 W.

BRUNS U-175  
1 ship claimed sunk.  
Defenses "starved  
out" sub. Heavily  
damaged by A/C  
attack.

REFUELLINGS

3 Refuelers provisioned  
23 subs.

WOLBRAUER U-463 fueled  
6 subs of Group DELPHIN,  
operating on Gibraltar  
Isle, on 11 Jan. in 23 N.-  
41 W.

WILAMOWITZ U-459 fueled 3  
subs of Group SEHUND, to  
operate off Canetown, on  
27 Jan. in 26 S., 01 W.

2 DD discovered at  
WILAMOWITZ - CACCHI (Ital.  
U/B) provisioning place on  
12 Jan. in 01 N., 24 W.  
(1849/12). Sub fueled on  
13 Jan. in 01 N., 21 W.

NEUMANN U-117 fueled 7 subs  
of Group SPITZ for further op-  
erations on 4-5 Jan. in 44 N.,  
29 W. British unit believed to  
have been detailed to patrol the  
R/V area, "to chaso subs on the  
basis of D/Fs from the numerous  
messages sent by NEUMANN's pro-  
visioning group." (1108/7).

NEUMANN U-117 fueled 3 subs on  
12-13 Jan. in 43 N., 38 W. for  
further convoy operations.

SPECIAL TASKS (Misc)

MARKWORTH U-66 landed  
3 agents near Port  
Etienne, Fr. W. Afr.  
Task completed by 23  
Jan. One agent re-  
turned to sub; other  
2 captured by French

Mo. Amer. Coast      DISTANT PATROL AREAS      So. Amer. Coast      FEBRUARY, 1943      W. Afr. Coast

Caribbean

LAURENIS U-68  
No report.

SCHAEFER U-183  
No report.

HARTENSTEIN U-156  
Very strong A/C patrol off Port of Spain. Accurate attacks. Impossible to operate against convoys.

NEITZEL U-510  
No traffic.  
Little air recce.

WISSMANN U-518  
2 ships claimed sunk.  
Strong systematic A/C patrol off Bahia.

REFUELLINGS

Capetown

LASSEN U-160  
1 ship claimed sunk. Strong A/C patrol and radar from Durban.

WIBBE U-516  
5 ships claimed sunk. Day and night A/C patrol with radar.

5 refuelers provisioned 39 subs.

STIEBLER U-461 fueled 6 subs of Group ROCHEN on 25-28 Feb. In 30 N.-35 W. for further operations.

SPECIAL TASKS (Misc)

BLIGER U-87. KOCH U-304. LOOKS U-284, and LAMBY U-437 to escort B/R HARBORG home on 20 Feb. B/I sunk 26 Feb.

CZYGAN U-118 placed mines off Tangier 2 Feb.

ZELK U-119 reported on enemy radar, air scouting and surface patrol in Denmark Straits for benefit of B/R returning to Germany. *Said to be off Cape Agulhas, 25/2.*

CLAUSEN U-182  
1 ship claimed sunk.

CZYGAN U-118 fueled 3 subs enroute distant patrol areas on 7 Feb. in 30 N., 23 W.

WITTE II U-509  
1 ship claimed sunk. No night A/C patrol. Good coordination of land and sea activity. Minos and patrol prevented getting in close to harbor.

SCHNOOR U-460 fueled 10 subs of Group HAUDEGAN on 11-12 Feb. in 51 N., 32 W. Subs then became Group TAIFUN.

SCHNOOR U-460 fueled 5 subs of Group STURMBOCK on 22-25 Feb. in 47 N., 37 W.

VOME U-462 fueled 16 subs of North Atlantic Groups for further operations on 25 Feb. in 45 N., 38 W.

WUERDEMANN U-506  
Many instances of radar from shore. No successes.

MARCH, 1943

SPECIAL TASKS (Misc)

REFUELINGS

DISTANT PATROL AREAS

<u>No. American Coast</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>So. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>W. Afr. Coast</u>	<u>Capetown</u>
LAUZEMIS U-68 2 ships claimed sunk. A/C and D2 forced him to sub- merge, attacked with D/C.	NEITZEL U-510 7 ships claimed sunk. Damaged by artillery fire.	WISSMANN U-518 2 ships claimed sunk. Forced to submerge by con- stant A/C patrol. No prospects in pursuit.	LASSEN U-160 7 ships claim- ed sunk. Report- ed no contact with ships on account of radar.	ACHILLES U-161 E/V A B/R RECHTSBUEG on 24 Mar. and B/R FIETRO OHSBOLD on 26 Mar.
SCHAEFER U-183 Nothing but neutrals. Day A/C patrol, no radar, no sea patrol.	WURTDEMANN U-506. 2 ships claimed sunk.	HARTENSTEIN U-156 SUNK 8 Mar. in 13 N., 55 W.	WITBE U-516 1 ship claim- ed sunk. Day and night A/C with radar.	GRANDFELD U-171 to R/V B/R LARIN on 26 Mar. to deliver op. orders. Ship had been sunk.
PIENING U-155. No traffic in Gulf of Mexico.	WOLFEBAUER U-463 ships claimed sunk. Forced under by convoy escort. Damaged by D/C's from DD. Bombed by air ship. Patrol reinforced off Cuba.	WURTDEMANN U-506. 2 ships claimed sunk.	CLAUSEN U-182 1 ship claim- ed sunk.	PAULHAUS U-634, HORNACHEL U-565, FRIEDRICH U-759, and FIFEN U-191 to report on enemy radar, air and sea search patrol groups in Denmark Straits for benefit of home-ward bound E/R's.
MAUS U-185. 2 ships claimed sunk. Forced under by convoy escort. Damaged by D/C's from DD. Bombed by air ship. Patrol reinforced off Cuba.	WITTE II U-509. Constantly forced under by A/C radar.	WURTDEMANN U-506. 2 ships claimed sunk.	ZECH U-119 fueled 8 subs of Group NEULAND for return on 12-18 Mar. in 49 N., 29 W.	4 refuelers provisioned 31 subs.
			CZYGAN U-118 fueled 6 subs of Group UNVERZACT on 13-14 Mar. in 35 N., 18 W. Subs became Group SEERAFUEBER.	VOME U-462 fueled 8 subs from Groups WILDFANG and BURGGRAF for further operations in other groups and for return on 2-3 Mar. in 47 N., 37 W.
			WOLFEBAUER U-463 fueled 11 subs of North Atlantic groups for further operations and return on 15-24 Mar. in 49 N., 33 W.	At the same time, fueled MUSENBERG U-180 for trip to Indian Ocean to meet Jap sub.
			WOLFEBAUER U-463 fueled 17 subs of North Atlantic groups for further operations and return on 30 Mar. in 51 N., 31 W.	

APRIL, 1943

DISTANT PATROL AREAS

REFUELINGS

SPECIAL MESSAGES (Misc)

<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>So. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>W. Afr. Coast</u>	<u>Cape town</u>	
ACHILLE U-161 No successes. After being sighted, very strong A/C and surface patrol. No freedom of action off coast. Forced to submerge by day.	PIERING U-155 No report. MAUS U-185. No report. SCHLAETER U-183 No traffic in central Caribbean.	STEINERT U-128 No report.	HISSEN U-105 No report. SCHROETER U-123 1 ship claimed sunk. HEIKE U-515. 1 ship claimed sunk. Constant day A/C patrol, land radar at night. Inexperienced patrol.	LASSEN U-160 No report. Clausson U-182 1 ship claimed sunk. WIEBE U-516 No report. WITTE II, U-509. No report.	FRANKE U-262 laid mines off Halifax into Apr., early May. UPHOFF U-34 transmitted dummy messages to simulate several subs heading for 53 N., 47 W. on 12-13 April. NEUMANN U-117 laid mines off Tangier early Apr. GRANDENFELD U-174 R/V'd B/R IRENE 6 Apr., delivered on orders, received mail. PICKER U-215 laid mines off Londo End late Apr., early May. KURRER U-289 set out automatic weather reporting buoys in mid North Atlantic early Apr.
CRANDWELD U-174 No successes. Not much patrol until 2 days before passing of convoy. SUNK 27 Apr. in 44 N., 58 W. WITT U-129. 1 ship claimed sunk. Extensive sea defense off Bermuda, A/C defense, land radar.					WONE U-462 fueled 12 subs returning from group operations and outbound subs forming Group ADLER on 8-14 Apr. in 50 N., 30 W. NEUMANN U-117 fueled 6 subs returning from operations in distant patrol areas on 16-24 Apr. in 28 to 30 N., 23 to 29 W. NETZ U-487 fueled 4 subs from Group LERCHE on 19-26 Apr. in 48 N., 34 W. Subs then joined Group HEISE.
					DIRKSEN U-176, STEINERT U-128, MAUS U-376 and IRANING U-262, met B/R IRENE to escort her through Bay of Biscay 10 April. Ship was sunk.

MAY, 1943

SPECIAL TASKS (Misc)

REFUELINGS

DISTANT PATROL AREAS

<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>So. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>W. Afr. Coast</u>	<u>Connetown</u>	
ACHILLES U-161. A/C patrol too strong.		AUSCH U-154 7 ships claimed sunk. Forced off by A/C. Hit on ship; ship opened fire.	MISSIE U-105. 1 ship claimed sunk. PRESUMED SUNK after having been provisioned on 19 May in 02 N., 23 W.	DOMES U-178 Contacted and damaged by A/O with radar.	6 refuelers provisioned 54 subs. KAMECKE U-119 laid mines off Halifax end of May. SUNK while returning
WITT U-129. 1 ship claimed sunk. Strong A/C patrol by day. 2 searchers for 25 hours. No attack.		STEINERT U-128 No successes. SUNK 17 May in 11 S. 36 W. while pursuing convoy.	SCHROETER U-123. 2 ships claimed sunk.	GYSAE U-177. 3 ships claimed sunk.	Fueled 7 subs from Group ANSEL for return on 9-11 May in 51N., 34 W. U-217 laid mines off
DIJKSEN U-176. SUNK 15 May in 23 N., 80 W.		MARKNORTH U-66. No successes reported.	HEMKE U-515. 3 ships claimed sunk. Strong A/C patrol.	KENTRAT U-196. 3 ships claimed sunk.	Fueled 4 subs for further group operations on 13-15 May in 50N., 30 W. Lands 2nd mid May.
BARGSTEN U-521. SUNK 3 June after having been in area only about a week.		WINTERMEYER U-190. No successes reported.	KIETZ U-126. 1 ship claimed sunk. No air or sea patrol.	HARTMANN U-198. 3 ships claimed sunk. Attacked by A/C.	SERRICKE U-436 on task "Cruiser". (Unidentified task).
VELLIO U-520. No successes.				BUCHHOLZ U-195. No report.	SCHROOR U-460 fueled 5 subs returning from distant patrol areas on 17-22 May in 02 N.; 24 W.
				Fueled SCHNEEVIND U-511 (SATSUKI I) for trip to Japan on 25 May in 02N., 24 W.	KAMECKE U-119 fueled 6 subs from Groups ILLER and KOSEL for return on 8-14 May in 45 to 50 N., 33 to 36 W.
				NEUMANN U-117 gave remaining fuel to SCHROOR U-460 on 4 May.	SCHROOR U-460 on 4 May.
				WOLFAUER U-463 SUNK 15 May in 45 N., 10 W. while outbound for fuelling operations.	10 W. while outbound for fuelling operations.
				All provisioning groups told to keep special look-out for carrier planes and search groups.	All provisioning groups told to keep special look-out for carrier planes and search groups.

APPENDIX C 1) TO PART A

DISRUPT PATROL AREAS  
January to May 1943

The North American coast was left unguarded temporarily while the attempt was being made to sink US shipping between Newfoundland and UK by U/B's in groups. At the end of February orders were issued to 5 U/B's for special task "Seewolf", later identified as a patrol of US waters. However, information on UGS 6, presumably derived from decryption,\* resulted in cancellation of the orders, and the U/B's joined Group UEWIRZAGT for the convoy operation. By April it appeared that it might be profitable to attack US convoys shortly after they had left US ports. Three U/B's operated between Bermuda and Halifax during April, with discouraging results. In payment for the one ship sunk, one U/B was sunk, an uneven exchange from the German point of view. But this set-back did not deter the assignment of even more U/B's to the area, and 5 more appeared off our coast in May. However, the same story was repeated. The same U/B which sank the ship in April sank another in May, and again a U/B was eliminated in payment. A sub for a ship was the score for June as well. The strength of A/S defenses in North American waters was evident, and this fact, plus the absence of any but neutral traffic in some of the attack areas to which U/B's had been assigned, was reported to Comsubs with each transmission. The U/B's were held down, and their movements restricted to such an extent,

particularly between New York and Halifax, that the skippers gloomily reported that operations were impossible. To add to U/B difficulties, many promising attacks were foiled by the extremely bad weather.

The results of the campaign in the Caribbean were a little more impressive. Ten ships were sunk by the 7 subs which occupied attack areas in the Caribbean from January to May. The concentration reached its height in March and April, when 5 U/B's were in the area and 4 ships were sunk each month. Only 6 of the 7 U/B's managed to return to France, as one was sunk in March just after starting for home. By the middle of April, the Caribbean was free of U/B's and remained so throughout May. US A/S defenses were evident in the pessimistic reports sent to Comsubs. Operations against convoys in the Trinidad area were declared to be impossible because of the constant A/C patrol, accurate attacks by A/C even without searchlights, and a "new kind of radar", against which German search receivers seemed useless. Several of the U/B's were forced to remain submerged and were pursued, heavily attacked and damaged by sea and A/C patrol.

The South American coast from the Guianas to Brazil was the scene of considerable activity. Eight U/B's operated in that area and sank 13 ships. Two convoys were hit heavily in January and March. Two U/B's were sunk in January, one by convoy escorts, and the other by USN A/C a few days after it had sunk a



neutral ship. Another was sunk in May while unsuccessfully pursuing a convoy. Other subs were damaged by D/C attacks and forced away from targets by the A/C patrol which was described as "constant", "systematic" and "strong". "Pursuit", said one C.O., "is without prospects."

Only one ship was sunk off the West African coast before the serious effort against shipping in that area was begun in April. Possibly discouraged by the report sent back by the one sub off Freetown in January, the Germans gave this area a wide berth for the next two months. The C.O. reported that he had been forced under water by persistent A/C attacks, bombs, searchlights and radar; his sub had been "starved out" by systematic A/C patrol and had no freedom of movement. He was severely damaged by a D/C attack, which caused him to lose great quantities of fuel. The comments of the 4 U/B's that operated in the Dakar-Freetown-Monrovia area during April and May were less forcibly expressed, but intimated that the A/S defenses had not weakened. They, however, were able to sink 10 ships in that period. One sub was sunk, probably after having been refueled in the South Atlantic in May.

By far the most rewarding distant patrol area for U/B's during the period from January to May was the Capetown area. Here Group SEWARD operated from February to April, sinking 22 ships. The SEWARD U/B's did not remain in the Atlantic waters around Capetown, but operated also in the southern Indian Ocean



as far north as Inhambane. Although their record of ships sunk was good, and no sub was sunk the Capetown area, they did not find themselves entirely unhindered by A/S defenses. From time to time they were forced to submerge by strong day A/C patrol, and radar from land and night A/C prevented them from getting in close to the main harbor. The good coordination of land radar and sea activity was especially apparent. No sub seems to have been damaged by A/C attack from February to April, but the 5 U/B's which occupied this area in May were not so fortunate. They sank 7 ships, but 2 of their number were attacked and damaged by A/C, and one was sunk when it was half-way home.

Subs en route Indian Ocean attack areas also sank some ships in the Capetown area, taking advantage of favorable opportunities as they presented themselves.

The shipping loss figures presented above were compiled from a consideration of German traffic claims and information available from Allied sources.

APPENDIX C 2) TO PART A

REFUELINGS  
January to May 1943

Although the fleet of U/B tankers was at its greatest strength at the time of the great North Atlantic offensive in the spring of 1943, it was nonetheless inadequate for the sizeable task at hand. The refueling system was strained to the limit and operated at great expense because of the necessity for simultaneous supply of North Atlantic groups, concentrations on the Gibraltar lane, and U/B's operating in distant waters.

The deployment of refuelers during this period reflects the general pattern of the Atlantic offensive. The scale of group warfare against the North Atlantic convoys shows a gradual increase which reaches its peak in March, the month of greatest success for the U/B fleet; then a withdrawal in April; and finally a last, all-out attempt in May. The scale of refueling R/V's was, of necessity, the same. In January and April there were two major refueling R/V's in the North Atlantic, while in March there were five, and in May, seven. With about 70% of the operational U/B fleet diverted to these vital convoy lanes, it was necessary to use 90% (8 out of 9) of the active supply boats at one time or another in order to keep the U/B's at sea as long as possible.

In March came also the end of a two months' concentration in force on the Gibraltar convoy lane, necessitating the diversion of three refuelers to provision these subs for continued operations,

or for their return home. Since more could not be spared from other refueling grounds, inbound and outbound subs had to help out.

These operations against convoys bringing supplies to England, Russia and Africa were of the utmost concern to Germany; hence the U/B's were ordered to operate with no regard to fuel, until they had only 5 cbn. left, just enough to get to the refuelers. To insure the provisioning of these subs, the U-tankers were forced to make two cruises in five months, thereby spending much less than the normal two months in port between cruises. The situation became so strained at times that it was necessary to divert a few operational subs from their cruises in order that they might supply the fuel required for the important convoy operations from their own stock.

In addition to the heavy duties in the North Atlantic, four supply boats were required to undertake cruises solely for the purpose of refueling U/B's returning from patrols in distant areas. The supply was still inadequate, however, and several operational subs were forced to share their fuel with returning U/B's. In order to relieve the supply situation, U/B's in distant areas were ordered to discontinue their operations in time to reach France without provisioning, or, in other cases, to take on a bare two weeks' supply. However, the cruise of a supply U/B in January to the South Atlantic for the purpose of giving maximum fuel advantage to the subs of Group SEERUNED, operating off Capetown, demonstrated the importance still attached to distant operations; for the boat was not available for use in the critical battles in

the North Atlantic until May.

The disposition of refuelers during this period was known through RI, and the advantage of eliminating them was obvious, but unfortunately the physical facilities for doing so were lacking. Not until the late spring of 1943 did USS CVE's appear in the Atlantic. By May it became evident that the Atlantic would soon cease to be the untroubled refueling ground it had been.

APPENDIX C 3) TO PART A

SPECIAL TASKS (MISCELLANEOUS)  
January to May 1943

Various special tasks were carried out by 24 U/B's during the first five months of 1943. All of these U/B's performed other more common operations prior to or subsequent to their special tasks. Twenty of them were 500 and 750-tonners, the former normally used for group operations against convoys in the North Atlantic, and the latter for patrols in distant areas. Three combination supply boats and minelayers were employed for both types of operations, and another refueler was given the incidental task of reporting the enemy A/S situation in the Denmark Straits on his outward passage from the north. The tasks carried out by the U/B's not especially designed for them were assigned as expediency dictated or as adjuncts to the desperate, final spring attack on North Atlantic convoys.

Rendezvous with Blockade Runners were arranged for 10 U/B's. As the time grew near for the arrival in France of such of these ships as were enroute from the Far East, single U/B's were sent to R/V them and deliver operations orders, instructions, personnel, and to take off mail. As they approached the dangerous waters of the Bay of Biscay, groups of inbound or outbound U/B's in that area were assigned to escort these valuable ships to port. On 20 February, the HERBORG being expected, four U/B's were ordered to provide protection for her Biscay cruise. They met the ship, but could not prevent her being sunk on 26

February, after which the U/B's continued their cruises, operating on convoys in the Gibraltar lane. One E/R to be met late in March, however, had been scuttled in the South Atlantic two weeks before the proposed R/V, and the U/B concerned went on to meet the IRENE on 6 April. This accomplished, the U/B proceeded to his attack area off New York, where he was sunk, and the B/R, continuing its trip to France, was also sunk on 10 April, the day after four U/B's had been detailed to provide A/A protection for her. Having failed in this mission, the U/B's went on to complete their cruises, two of them to the North and South American coasts, where they were both sunk, and the other two to convoy operations.

A U/B bound for the North American operational area first R/V'd two B/R's in the last week of March. One, the PIETRO ORSEOLO, made port in France. The other, the REGENSEURG, was carrying a cargo described by P's/W as the most valuable ever carried by a B/R. Because of this the U/B supplied her with special routing orders which were to take her through the Denmark Straits to Germany instead of through the hazardous Biscay waters. Ironically, the ship was sunk in the very waters which had been considered safe.

The Denmark Straits were investigated for A/S defenses by U/B's coming out of the north in February and March, solely for the purpose of routing B/R's through waters less perilous than those of the Bay of Biscay. Several U/B's were diverted from the "Rosengarten" passage, between Iceland and the Faeroes, and ordered to enter the Atlantic between Iceland and Greenland,

seldom used as an outbound passage route. Special attention was to be paid to air and sea search groups, and the use made of radar. This intelligence was duly sent back to Germany, and the REGENSBURG was routed accordingly in the hope of escaping Allied surveillance, with results as described above.

Six U/B's laid mines in February, April, and May. Three were of the 1600-ton supply ship - minelaying type, and three were small 500-ton short-range operational subs. This type of operation was normal for the former type, but the use of the latter type indicated that all means, however extreme, were being employed to sink Allied ships in the North Atlantic. After their mine-laying cruises, one to Halifax and two to Lands End, the 500-tonners had to participate in group operations against convoys. Problems of stowage and refueling are evident in such double-purpose cruises and this fact, together with the sacrifice of three supply ships, greatly needed for refueling operations at that time, for one mining operation off Halifax and two off Tangier, emphasizes the demands which were being made on each U/B to operate to more than maximum capacity.

In January, three agents were sent ashore near Port Etienne, French West Africa, from a U/B. One returned to the U/B, but the other two gave themselves up to the French police when their means of returning to the U/B was lost. The U/B then joined in operations against convoys on the Gibraltar Lane.

Another U/B was given the taxing assignment of pretending to be several U/B's heading for a point in the North Atlantic by

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transmitting dummy messages, each sent by a different operator, in the faint hope of deceiving the Allies as to the strength of U/B's concentrated at that point.

Automatic weather buoys were set out in mid North Atlantic by a U/B in April, and in the same month, a U/B filled in time before joining a group by operating in accordance with task "Cruiser," an operation as yet unidentified.



PART B

U-BOAT DEFENSIVE AND  
US ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTIVITIES

May 1943 - May 1944

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Note: Part B departs from the predominantly chronological narrative style, used in Part A and resumed in Part C, in order to permit a discussion of the refueling fleet and its activities.

CHAPTER V

THE SHIFT TO THE MIDDLE AND SOUTH ATLANTIC

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## THE SHIFT TO THE MIDDLE AND SOUTH ATLANTIC.

### 1. Withdrawal from the North Atlantic.

By the end of May 1943, convoy warfare in the North Atlantic had been abandoned by German U/B Command, not to be renewed - and then on a much reduced scale - until September. The power of the wolf-pack had been broken. Not only had the tonnage sunk declined markedly from March to April and again from April to May, but the rate of U/B killings for the month of May had shown a startling and decisive increase. 42 were destroyed in the Atlantic area during May, as against 13 in April and 15 in March. The fruits of convoy warfare were no longer worth the investment.

#### (a) Review of causes of German loss of the initiative.

In this victory over the wolf-pack, innumerable causes, including at certain decisive moments, weather and doubtless plain luck, had played their part. But the manifest prime reason is the growing superiority of the Allies in equipment and technique, and here the increased number and range of A/S aircraft, the outstripping of the Germans in radar, and the success of  radio intelligence may be set down as perhaps the leading factors. German U/B Command, in his attempt to find alternative uses for his U/B's after abandoning North Atlantic convoy operations, would continue to be harassed by his inability to compensate for Allied superiority in these respects. From now on the conduct of the U/B war, once so

boldly offensive, takes on increasingly the character of makeshift and evasion, the search for counter measures and counter tactics. The initiative in the Battle of the Atlantic has passed to the Allies.

(b) The German date: 23 May 1943.

As has been seen in the preceding section, several points in the period March - May 1943 might be singled out to punctuate the gradual defeat of the wolf-pack. The sharp decrease in convoy tonnage sunk during the last 10 days of March as compared with the extremely heavy losses of March 1 - 20, marks one turning point. Perhaps the successful defense on 5 - 6 May of convoy ONS 5 against the large disposition (about 40 units in all) of U/B's that attacked it, with at first considerable prospect of doing serious damage, marks another. But the process of driving the packs out of the North Atlantic was after all a continuous and cumulative one. No single moment can be taken as absolutely decisive. In the light of RI, however, the point of terminus at least is definite. By 23 May, Command had made his decision to fish in less troubled waters.

(c) "The present superiority of enemy radar..."

Command's important general message (Offizier 1753/23 May) addressed "To All Commanding Officers of U/B's", has been quoted in full at the end of Chapter IV. There, it has been seen, Doenitz surveys the unfavorable U/B situation, traces it primarily to "the present superiority of enemy radar instruments and the surprise from the air thus made possible", asserts that his whole energy is

engaged in the improvement of German radar, search-receiving and A/A defense, and meanwhile promises suitable changes in the choice of attack areas. The latter promise was put promptly into effect. In Offizier 1106/24 May, 16 U.B's - comprising the majority of the survivors of the month's convoy operations - were ordered to proceed to positions within a radius of 30 miles of 35.15 N. - 42.05 W. This, as later developments made clear, was the sign of the decisive shift in strategy that was demanded by the failure of the May campaign. By the beginning of June large scale operations on the US - England convoy routes had been suspended, and the attempt to transfer group tactics to the Middle Atlantic - the first of a series of expedients to keep the U/B in some degree effective - had begun.

2.

Attempt to continue group tactics  
in Mid Atlantic. May 24 - July 1943.

(a) Influence of German R.I.

17 U/B's, including most of those addressed in 1106/24 May, were ordered in 1656/26 to form Group TRUTZ, and to place themselves by 0800/1 June in a patrol line extending from 38.45 N. - 43.26 W. to 32.03 N. - 43.26 W. This, German U/B Command's first attempt since March to cut the U.S. Gibraltar convoy route by a group formation, had both an immediate and a more general motive. There is evidence that not only the exact time and position ordered for the patrol line, but the original order (1106/24) to head for the area, were the result of German knowledge by cipher compromise of the route of Flight 10

and possibly also of GUS 7A. In 1832/27 May the expected passage of a West-East convoy, presumably to be identified as Flight 10, is announced to Group TRUTZ; in 1021/1 June the group is instructed to be ready from noon of that date for a Westbound convoy also - presumably GUS 7A. The fact of German intelligence of these convoys is established.

(b) Considerations of Allied defense.

But while the exact timing and location of Group TRUTZ's patrol line were undoubtedly determined by Command's radio intelligence, the basic fact of the shift itself grows out of the strategic situation in the Atlantic, outlined above. A U/B group operating in the Middle Atlantic would be beyond the range of shore-based aircraft, hitherto the U/B's greatest enemy. True, the operation against SC 129 and HX 237 in the middle of May had demonstrated that these convoys which were beyond land-based coverage in the North Atlantic could now be effectively protected by auxiliary carriers.\* Command may well have supposed, however, that the surprise move of drawing up a patrol line across the US - Gibraltar route in mid-Atlantic would find the anticipated convoys (as all previous convoys on this lane had been) without CVE protection. It is notable that

\*Actually the "Ranger" and the "Bogue" had operated in the North Atlantic since March 1943; but whether because of heavy weather, inexperience or poor luck, they appear to have made little impression on the U/B's.

Current Order Nr. 11 ('Atlantic Defense Situation', later Current Order Nr. 21), including a warning against surprise by carrier A/C in the middle as well as the North Atlantic, was not promulgated until August 1943. Command's apparent failure to foresee the extension of Allied airpower - primarily in the form of CVE task groups - is in fact one of the essential weaknesses of his conduct of the U/B war from May through July of 1943. This failure is particularly evident in the neutralizing of Group TRUTZ by carrier A/C and in immediately subsequent U/B disasters in the Middle Atlantic brought on by carrier airpower.

(c) Allied R.I.

In the direction of this power against Group TRUTZ - itself drawn up on the basis of German RI - Allied RI played an initially decisive role. Though 1656/26, the message actually forming the group, was not read until 7 June, the general position, and the number of U/B's ordered to head for it, were known from 1106/24 May, which had been read currently. In consequence carrier task group 21.12 was ordered to operate against submarine concentrations in the area 35 N. - 45 W. in support of convoys UGS 9, GUS 7A and Flight 10. GUS 7A was diverted south of the TRUTZ line; on the evening of 4 June, Flight 10 was approaching the line at the point where, according to 1832/29 May, the Germans were expecting it. Before TRUTZ could make contact, A/C from the USS 'Bogue' had found the southern end of the line and bombed it. Three U/B's were attacked in rapid succession, 2 with promising results. A gap in German traffic road, (1-4 June) makes it impossible to say exactly what was the effect of these attacks

from the U/B's point of view. One U/B, Reichenbach (U-217), was evidently sunk; others must have been forced to take avoiding action or to remain submerged for extended periods, for there is no evidence that TRUTZ ever made contact,\* much less fired a shot, on Flight 10.

(d) Failure of TRUTZ.

At 2306/5 the TRUTZ patrol line was cancelled and the subs ordered to head north for refueling R/V's in 37.03 N. - 40.54 W. and 37.57 N. - 44.30 W. This signified the abandonment of the convoy operations originally planned. Despite Command's prompt action on excellent intelligence, his attempt to shift group tactics to the Middle Atlantic started with failure. This failure was to continue during Group TRUTZ's existence through June and early July. During this time Group TRUTZ was re-formed and its position several times shifted, but there is no record in traffic read of its fighting a single convoy operation, or, in fact, making a single contact with Allied shipping. After the failure of Group TRUTZ, the attempt to carry on convoy warfare was abandoned for the rest of the summer. No further group was formed in any area of the Atlantic until September.

\*There are several D/F's on unread transmissions from the TRUTZ area during the night of 4 June. It seems probable that these are reports of A/C attacks rather than of contact with convoy. Had contact been made, there would almost surely have been some indication of the fact in the traffic from 12003/5 June on, which was read. Furthermore U/B's had been instructed in 1832/29/5 not to report sighting of Flight 10 but to operate independently on what offered.



3.  
Dispersal of U/B's to Distant  
Areas.

Meanwhile Command was developing other expedients to compensate for his withdrawal of wolf-packs from the North Atlantic. Individual U/B's coming out from Norway into the North Atlantic were on several occasions ordered to simulate group activity with dummy radio traffic (Witzendorff and Schroeteler, 2212/9, 1547/23 June; Epp and Ehrich, 1143/17 June). The majority of U/B's sailing from the Biscay bases, however, were ordered to distant waters - the Caribbean area and the coasts of Florida, Brazil and various points along western Africa being the favorite headings. Distant cruises by independent U/B's were of course a familiar element in Command's overall strategy; but in the summer of 1943, ~~they~~ they absorb<sup>ed</sup> the major strength of the U/B arm. A policy of dispersal has been substituted for one of concentrated attack. Command must have regarded this policy, even on the extensive scale on which it was executed in the summer of 1943, as a diversion rather than a main blow. It was a method of harrassing enemy shipping and tying down enemy defenses in remote coastal areas, pending the production of the equipment which would permit the renewal of convoy warfare in the North Atlantic.

4.  
Vulnerable points: Areas of  
Transit and Refueling R/V's.

This dispersive strategy avoided the risk of collective destruction such as had been visited upon certain North Atlantic

groups in May. There remained, however, two points at which individual U/B's were brought together within a limited area, and so presented a concentration of targets which invited attack. The first was the area of transit to and from port, particularly the Bay of Biscay. The second was the refueling R/V's on which most cruises to distant areas were dependent. These vulnerable points offered the openings through which the Allies drove home their successful A/S offensive in the summer and fall of 1943.

(a) The Biscay Offensive.

In June 1943 the British inaugurated what they called the Biscay Offensive: The cessation of convoy warfare in the North Atlantic had liberated considerable forces which had been absorbed in escort duties during the winter and spring. An increased number of A/C and surface units could thus be assigned to the patrol of the restricted area through which the great majority of Atlantic U/B's had to pass both in cruising out to sea and in approaching port. Intensive training in A/S tactics was carried out, and new methods were developed. The Biscay Offensive was a notable success. U/B kills in the Biscay area were consistently high throughout the summer months of 1943, reaching a peak of 18 in July, and accounting for a large proportion of the total number of U/B's sunk in all areas between May and September.

(b) The Refueling Stations, their necessity and destruction.

The Biscay Offensive was essentially a British enterprise, though U.S. aircraft participated. The attacks on refueling R/V's in

the Middle and South Atlantic during the summer and fall of 1943 were in the hands of the U.S. Navy, being chiefly the work of CVE task groups. These attacks, though less significant in actual numbers of kills than the Biscay Offensive at the latter's peak, had as one of their effects the reduction of German Command's all-important fleet of supply U/B's and, consequently, the continuous disruption of his refueling plans for the entire Middle and South Atlantic. Moreover, the attacks on supply R/V's were in a number of instances directly determined by radio intelligence passed by OP-20-G. For these reasons the A/S activity of carrier task groups, centering in attacks on refueling operations, will receive the chief emphasis in the present study.

(1) Necessity for U/B Refueling Stations: Command's policy, during the summer of 1943, of dispersing his U/B's to distant areas required continuous and extensive refueling in the Middle Atlantic. This requirement was increased by the fact that there were not enough 750 ton U/B's available to meet the demands, and 500 tonners - originally intended for operation in the relatively near waters of the North Atlantic - had to be used for most of the distant cruises ordered. Even the 750 ton IXC boats, with a cruising range at 10 knots of about 12,700 miles, required some refueling if they were to operate for an effective period in distant waters. The requirements of the 500 ton type VII C, with a range at the same speed of about 8,400 miles, were correspondingly greater. Thus, owing to

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the necessity of frequent refueling R/V's, the strategy of dispersal turned out to be subject to the very danger which it was designed to avoid - attack by A/C on U/B concentrations.

(ii) Destruction of the U-tanker system: Here again Command failed to anticipate the extension and offensive application of carrier-borne air power. The first display of the latter's effectiveness against refueling operations followed closely on the frustration by carrier A/C of Command's attempt to shift group tactics from the North to the Middle Atlantic. CTG 21.12, the very same task group that had broken up the southern end of Group TRUTZ on 5 June, moved on to do serious damage in an offensive sweep eastward of the TRUTZ position, culminating in the sinking on 12 June of the U/B tanker Czygan. This was the first of a mounting number of refueler sinkings which, as will be seen below, not only kept Command's plans throughout the summer in a constant state of uncertainty, but permanently wrecked the supply system on which his strategy was based.



CHAPTER VI

GROWTH, SIGNIFICANCE, AND DECLINE OF U/B REFUELING FLEET

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GROWTH, SIGNIFICANCE AND DECLINE OF THE  
U/B REFUELING FLEET.

1.

Significance of Refueler  
Sinkings, Summer and Fall 1943.

(a) Sharp increases in rate of loss, beginning June 1943.

The loss of Czygan on 12 June 1943 marked the beginning of a series of disasters to Command's refueling fleet whose significance in the history of the U/B war it is difficult to overstate. A study of Table I will show how sharply the rate of refueler sinkings increases with the assignment in June 1943 of carrier task groups to offensive operations. Prior to that time, in the thirteen months that had passed since the first refuelers began operating, the Germans had put 12 tankers into the Atlantic, of which 3 had been lost. During this time, in other words, Command had built up his U-Tanker fleet from nothing to an effective total of 9. The contrast with the next seven months is striking. In the period from June to December 1943, while three refuelers were added to the operating fleet, no fewer than ten were sunk, for a net loss of seven. This left only two refuelers at the end of the year.

(b) Permanent character of losses sustained.

The fleet of refueling boats was never to recover from this reduction. The Germans added two more in May 1944, but in turn lost three in the four months April to July of that year.

TABLE I

## U/B REFUELING FLEET: MONTHLY ADDITIONS AND LOSSES

Month	Total No. Previously Completed	1942		No. Sunk as of Last Day of Month (running total)	Total No. Available for Operation at End of Month
		No. added to Operating Fleet during Month	No. Sunk during Month		
April	0	2*	0	0	2
May	2	0	0	0	2
June	2	1	0	0	3
July	3	1	0	0	4
Aug.	4	2	1	1	5
Sept.	6	2	0	1	7
Oct.	8	1	0	1	8
Nov.	9	0	0	1	8
Dec.	9	0	1**	2	7
<u>1943</u>					
Jan.	9	0	0	2	7
Feb.	9	1	0	2	8
Mar.	10	1	0	2	9
Apr.	11	0	0	2	9
May	11	1	1	3	9
June	12	0	2	5	7
July	12	1	4	9	4
Aug.	13	0	2	11	2
Sept.	13	1	0	11	3
Oct.	14	1	2	13	2
Nov.	15	0	0	13	2
Dec.	15	0	0	13	2
<u>1944***</u>					
Apr.	15	0	1	14	1
May	15	2	0	14	3
June	17	0	1	15	2
July	17	0	1	16	1

\* For the sake of convenience, U-116 and U-~~117~~<sup>459</sup>, the two first refuelers completed, are considered to have begun operations at approximately the same time. The actual date of U-116's first war cruise is not known, but must have been during spring of 1942.

\*\* The loss of U-116 is arbitrarily assigned to December 1942 on the basis of unconfirmed statements by P/W from another U/B, though it is not referred to in traffic read for November and December.

\*\*\* In 1944 all sinkings and all additions to the refueling fleet happened to occur in the 4 months April to July. Therefore, only figures for these months are given. In April 1945, one supply U/B, U-234, the last known to have been completed, began its first war cruise, destination Djakarta. On this cruise, however, U-234 was to transport cargo and personnel to the Far East. U-234 has thus never acted as a refueler, and from the point of view of operations does not belong in the above table.



This left the Atlantic Fleet completely stripped, with U-219 in the Far East the sole survivor of seventeen refuelers launched since the spring of 1942.

(c) Importance of refueler losses to U/B war as a whole.

A brief glance at the history of the refueling fleet will suggest the decisive importance of these losses in the decline of the U/B's effectiveness. The fleet was entirely the creation of the war years. Its period of growth, from April 1942 to March 1943, marks the most active and successful phase of the U/B war. Its period of decline, beginning in June 1943, marks the contraction of the U/B's striking power. The connection is, of course, partly fortuitous. It was not until the spring of 1943 that the resources of the Allies in the Battle of the Atlantic began to overtake those of the Germans; as more and more U/B's of all types were sunk, it was inevitable that an increasing number of refuelers should be among them. But there is also a causal connection. In concentrating on refueling R/V's in the summer of 1943, Allied airpower was in truth striking at the heart of Doenitz' system. For without refuelers, neither prolonged independent cruises nor extended convoy operations were possible to the 500 and 740 tonners that made up the vast majority of the U/B fleet. By the end of 1943 the U/B had been in large measure reduced to the meagre ranges that had limited its effectiveness at the beginning of the war.

2.

Review of Refueling  
Problem in early stage  
of War.

- (a) No U/B refuelers active before spring 1942;  
brief cruises without refueling; surface refueling.

The construction of the refueling fleet probably signalizes the increasing ascendancy of Admiral Doenitz, with his grandiose ideas for the role of the U/B, in the war councils of Nazi Germany. At the beginning of the war the active U/B's consisted mostly of 250 and 300 tonners. These operated in relatively near waters, chiefly the North Sea and the Western approaches to the British Isles. As late as September 1940, even after the conquest of France had made the Biscay ports available to U/B Command, it was considered a new departure that U/B's were operating as far west as 20.00 W. This restriction of operating areas permitted brief war cruises, which could be accomplished even by small U/B's without refueling. By the early part of 1941, the standard 500-ton type VII-C U/B had begun to appear in some numbers, bringing with it an increase in cruising range. In the spring of that year, as the area invaded by the U/B was extended west of 40.00 W, the Germans began to use surface supply ships for refueling. This must, however, have been viewed as a temporary expedient, even at this period, when British naval power in the Atlantic was inadequate to its tasks. Surface refueling in Atlantic waters was apparently abandoned sometime early in 1942,\* after several supply ships had

\*In the Indian Ocean surface tankers were used for refueling U/B's until the sinking of "Brake" and "Schliemann" in February and March 1944.

been sunk (accurate information is not available because of the failure to read traffic). Meantime the first underwater refuelers, U-116 and U-459, had been laid down (probably in the fall of 1940) and commissioned in the fall of 1941. They were ready for their first war cruise in the spring of 1942, and a new phase of the U/B war began.

(b) Operations off U.S. Eastern Seaboard before appearance of U-Tankers, winter and spring 1942.

It is true that as early as January 1942— several months before the first U-Tanker was ready for active service -- German U/B's had been operating in considerable numbers and with great success off the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S. Since U/B radio traffic for that period was not read, details are lacking as to the manner in which the fuel problem was handled during these operations. Possibly surface refuelers were still being used to some extent. P/W reports give some instances of fuel picked up in mid-Atlantic by America-bound boats from other combat U/B's, the latter presumably assigned to less distant areas. Even this assistance was probably unnecessary in most cases, in the special conditions then prevailing. The feeble state of American A/S defenses at the time, which permitted U/B's to lie at their ease on coastal shipping lanes waiting for traffic, made fuel consumption vastly less than in later periods when stronger defense required of the U/B's extensive detours, maneuvers of evasion and costly pursuit of traffic sighted from a distance.

The plentiful and easy targets available off the U.S. coast in early 1942 would often allow a U/B Commander to expend his torpedoes with profit in an extremely short operating period, whereas later, held off by aircraft and surface forces, he might have to search for weeks before even making contact with a possible target. Thus for roughly the first half of 1942, it was possible for 740 and even 500 ton U/B's to operate successfully on the further side of the Atlantic without any regular provision for refueling.

3.  
Growth of Refueling Fleet,  
May 1942 to June 1943.

- (a) Operations in Caribbean and South Atlantic made possible by introduction of refuelers, spring and summer 1942.

As American coastal defenses began to tighten, Command fenced for weak spots and stretched Allied resources by extending the operation of his boats to yet more distant waters. This could not be accomplished without refueling. It is no accident that May 1942 is the first month in which U/B's operated to an important extent in the Caribbean and entered the Gulf of Mexico; for (according to P/W reports) the task assigned to U-459 on her first cruise, March to May 1942, was to refuel U/B's on the outskirts of this area. Further evidence of the work of the refuelers that now began to be added with some regularity to the operating fleet, is seen in the increased number of U/B's active in the South Atlantic and the increase in tonnage sunk there through the summer and fall

of 1942. By the end of 1942, the U/B, once confined to a small area around the British Isles and Norway, had taken the entire Atlantic as its hunting ground.

(b) Refueling at Peak: North Atlantic Offensive 1942-3.

During the great winter and spring offensive of 1942-1943, the refueling fleet reached its peak in numbers and played its most important role. In addition to the heavy assault on the North Atlantic convoy lanes, the Germans kept U/B groups active in the Gibraltar lane and continued to send independent U/B's to operate in distant areas. This ambitious program was only possible because of the rapid expansion and slight losses of the refueler fleet since the spring of 1942.

By February 1943, the first two series of refuelers had been completed, and all units in the series, except for two that had been sunk, were in operation (see Table II). The first series completed, U-459 to U-464, consisted of six 1600-ton type XIV supply boats; the second, U-116 to U-119, of four 1600-ton type XB combined minelayers and supply boats. In March 1943, the first boat of a second series of type XIV (U-487 to U-490) began operating bringing the total of active refuelers to nine, a number that was to be maintained (with one loss and one replacement in May), until a precipitous downward curve began with the sinking of *Czygan* in June.

(c) Refueling facilities strained even with tanker fleet at top strength.

Even with the supply fleet at its top strength, however,

TABLE II

## U/B REFUELERS BY SERIES

	<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Name of C.O.</u>	<u>Month Comm.</u>	<u>Month of First Operation</u>	<u>Month Sunk</u>
Series 116-119 Type XB	116	Kuno Schmidt	Fall 41	Spring 42	Dec. 42
	117	Neumann		Oct. 42	Aug. 43
	118	Czygan	Dec. 41	Sept. 42	June 43
	119	Zech, *Kamaecke		Feb. 43	June 43
Series 219-220 Type XB	219	Burghagen		Oct. 43	Active
	220	Barber		Sept. 43	Oct. 43
Series 233-234 Type XB	233	Steen	Sept. 43	May 44	July 44
	234	Fehler	Spring 44 <sup>†</sup>	Apr. 45	Active
Series 459-464 Type XIV	459	Wilamowitz- Moellendorf	Nov. 41	Apr. 42	July 43
	460	Schnoor	Nov. 41	July 42	Oct. 43
	461	Stiebler	Jan. 42	June 42	July 43
	462	Vowe	Mar. 42	Sept. 42	July 43
	463	Wolfbauer	Mar. 42	Aug. 42	May 43
	464	Harms	Apr. 42	Aug. 42	Aug. 42
Series 487-490 Type XIV	487	Metz	Dec. 42	Mar. 43	July 43
	488	Bartke			
		*Studt	Oct. 41	May 43	Apr. 44
	489	Schmandt	Mar. 43	July 43	Aug. 43
	490	Gerlach	Mar. 43	May 44	June 44

\*C.O. at time of sinking.

NOTE on Types:

Type XB. Combined minelayer and supply boat.  
2 torpedo tubes. Fuel capacity about 426 cbm.

Type XIV. For supply purposes only. No torpedo tubes;  
no mines carried. Fuel capacity about 740 cbm.

Command found his refueling resources strained to the utmost in the extensive operations of December 1942 to May 1943. A brief analysis of the distribution of available U-Tankers over the various areas of operations has already been given. It has been shown that as the scale of North Atlantic operations was stepped up in the late winter and spring of 1943 the proportion of refuelers devoted to the North Atlantic had to be increased at the expense of the other areas. During this period 3 or 4 refuelers were normally in active operation at a given time, the others being either in port for servicing or enroute to or from their assigned stations at sea. In December 1942, only 1 of the 4 tankers that delivered fuel served the North Atlantic groups, the others being assigned to U/B's operating in the South Atlantic, the Trinidad-Brazil area, and the Gibraltar lane. Roughly the same proportion continued in January and February 1943. During these months there were instances of U/B groups being disbanded and called back to port because of inadequate facilities. In March (up to then the month of heaviest action in the North Atlantic), three of the four refuelers that delivered fuel operated in the North Atlantic, a ratio that was repeated in April. This favoring of the North Atlantic, though obviously demanded by the strategic situation, necessarily meant a further reduction in the numbers and duration of independent cruises to other areas. Even so, the margin in the North Atlantic itself remained too close for comfort. Quite apart from other sources of strain, the scale of operations undertaken by Command could hardly be maintained with the refueling facilities available

to him, favorable as these were compared to what they had been a year before and were to be a year later.

The sinkings of the summer of 1943 take on added significance when one realizes on how slim a margin Command had been operating before that time even with nine out of eleven refuelers launched still in operation. It seems clear that the U-Tankers still under construction or in training were regarded primarily as needed additions to the fleet, not as replacements to meet an anticipated increase in losses.

(d) Precautions for guarding refuelers.

Refuelers were presumably much more costly to construct than combat U/B's, and in 1943, with building resources and facilities strained, the rate of new construction and commissioning for refuelers did not rise with that for the combat fleet as a whole. Command had evidently committed himself to the idea of a relatively small refueling fleet which would be protected with infinite care. The strictest precaution surrounded the operation of the refuelers. References in radio traffic to refueling R/V positions were made as secret as possible by the use of Offizier messages.

The positions themselves were carefully chosen, being placed in mid-ocean away from known convoy routes\* and beyond the range of shore-based aircraft. Radio silence was enjoined on all U/B's approaching or participating in a refueling R/V. Combat U/B's were to regard themselves as expendable in

\*In some instances, owing to carelessness or ignorance, the Germans failed to follow this condition. (See Volume III, Chapter III, para.6.)



protecting the refueler and covering his dive in the event of surprise attack.

- (c) Up to June 1943, Command's policy on the whole successful in protecting refueling R/V's.

These precautions must have seemed to Command, at the end of the first year of refueler activity, to have achieved their desired effect. During the heavy convoy operations of the winter and spring of 1942-43, numerous refueling R/V's had been successfully executed without the loss of a single supply U/E. Before the sinking of Czygan, in fact, there is no evidence that a supply boat had been lost at a R/V in any area. The manner of U-~~260~~<sup>1116's</sup> sinking is not known; both U-464 (in August 1942) and U-463 (in May 1943) had been found and sunk by aircraft while on passage from port to their area of operations. Command must therefore have begun his extensive program of refueling R/V's in the Middle Atlantic in the summer of 1943 with some confidence.

4.  
Decline of Refueling Fleet, from  
June 1943

- (a) Offensive resources at disposal of Allies in summer of 1943: RI and CVE task groups.

Command's confidence was in fact baseless because of two offensive resources at the disposal of the Allies of which the first, decryption intelligence, was evidently not even suspected by Command, and of which the second, the increasing activity of Allied air power in general and of CVE task groups in particular, he grossly underestimated. These two resources were in fact interdependent in operation, for the first guided the second,

the second implemented the first. Circumstances combined to make their joint effectiveness in the summer of 1943 far greater than it could have been at any previous period.

(b) Reason for failure to use RI in attacking R/V's before June 1943.

(1) Inadequate forces.

It is obvious that radio intelligence is without offensive value unless there are adequate forces available to operate on its findings. From the point of view of refueler sinkings, it seems at first sight a paradox that current reading of U/B traffic was actually less consistent during the summer than during the winter and spring of 1943. In the earlier period, the times and positions of a large number of refueling R/V's were known well in advance by  RI. Yet, as far as is known, no R/V was ever attacked during this period on the basis of the intelligence available.\* The main reason is not far to seek. All available US-British forces were required for essentially defensive purposes. The pressure of the U/B offensive on convoy routes was constant and heavy, and the naval forces of the Allies were barely sufficient to bring the necessary tonnage through. In addition, Blockade Runners were trying to get through the Atlantic in the early months of 1943. The few carriers in service in the Atlantic were needed for escort duty or surface Blockade Runner patrol.\*\*

\*There is a possible case in January 1943. At least, Offizier 110S/7/1/43 states that "an English unit was detailed on 3 January to patrol Heumann's last provisioning area."

\*\*The "Santee" occupied with Blockade Runner patrol in the winter and spring, was assigned to A/S operations in July 1943.

(ii) Possible fear of compromising Allied RI.

It is possible that fear of compromising the fact of Allied decryption of U/B traffic, at a period when the most valuable use of decryption intelligence was in the diversion of convoys away from known U/B concentrations, played some part in the decision not to attack refueling R/V's before June 1943. But this consideration, if it had a certain influence, was probably secondary to the simple fact of inadequate forces.

(c) Increase in number of CVE's available for A/S duties.

By June 1943, the pressure on the convoy routes had been greatly reduced, Blockade Runners had disappeared from the Atlantic until late December, and the number of escort carriers available for A/S operations had substantially increased. As against one CV and one CVE, both presumably inexperienced, assigned to A/S duties in the Atlantic in the spring of 1943, no less than five CVE's, growing constantly more expert, were in action during the summer and fall. For the first time it was possible to deploy CVE task groups not merely for protective but for offensive operations, and therefore to take advantage of current intelligence, when available, on the U/B R/V's.

(d) Effectiveness of RI despite lags in decryption.

The fact that the reading of U/B traffic was irregular during the summer of 1943, though on certain occasions it prevented valuable targets from being located, did not have as great an effect in reducing the value of available intelligence as might be expected. In the first place, refueling R/V's were normally announced in

traffic some days -- sometimes as much as two weeks -- ahead of time. Thus decryption of traffic could be far from current and still give precise information on a R/V in time to organize an attack against it. In the second place, even where precise information was not available, more general knowledge based primarily on RI -- the identification of certain U/S's as refuelers, for example, and the determination of favorite areas for refueling R/V's -- permitted imperfect data (such as the knowledge of a refueler's heading point) to be interpreted with sufficient accuracy to warrant the assignment of a task group. In the following sections the contribution of RI to various sinkings of refuelers by CVE groups will be examined. It will be seen that while luck and above all the initiative of the task groups played a great part, the influence of RI, direct and indirect, had a decisive effect on the great majority of the operations.

(c) Relative importance of CVE and land-based A/C in attack on refuelers.

To the combination of RI and CVE task groups must be added the increasing number and effectiveness of shore-based aircraft assigned to A/S operations in the summer of 1943. In July and August no fewer than four refuelers were sunk by land A/C, three (U-459, 461, 462) in the Biscay area and one (U-489) midway between Scotland and Iceland. All were on passage from or into port. These sinkings, like that of U-119 by surface units on 24 June, were the result of the intensified patrols, part of the Biscay Offensive, instituted in the early summer of

1943.

Land-based A/C, however, could not reach the mid-ocean locations of refueling E/V's. For this the mobility of the carrier task groups was required. In the twelve months beginning in June 1943, CVE groups sank seven, land-based A/C four, and surface ships unassisted by A/C two, of the total of thirteen refuelers destroyed. The relative importance of the CVE's contribution, however, is not adequately represented by those figures, for most sinkings by CVE groups were accomplished at or near E/V's, and were accompanied by the sinking or damaging of other U/B's beside the refueler.

(f) Summary of elements combining to reduce refueling fleet.

In the effectiveness of the attacks made by both land-based and carrier A/C, the improved Allied radar of which Admiral Doenitz was so painfully conscious doubtless played a decisive part. Further, the tactics and technique of bombing and strafing attacks on U/B's by one or more planes were being constantly studied and improved. It must be observed, however, that the success of the CVE task groups did not depend solely on aircraft. The task group remained a naval unit. The destroyers that accompanied the carrier had an important role, making underwater searches, and in several instances finishing off the kills of U/B's that had first been sighted or damaged from the air. When the history of the A/S tactics of carrier task groups comes to be written by those who participated in them, a story of increasingly expert cooperation between the surface and the air will undoubtedly be revealed.

It was, then, the offensive use of radio intelligence, the increased numbers and the perfected technique and teamwork of carrier task groups, and the greater effectiveness through the improved radar and extended ranges of land-based A/C that accounted for the destruction of the German refueling fleet in the year beginning in June 1943.

(g) Increased precautions by Command.

Surprised by the force and skill put into action against him, German Command was never able to devise effective counter-measures. U/B radio traffic for the summer and fall of 1943 is full of supplements and revisions to the precautionary rules already in effect for the protection of refuelers. For example, prior to 5 June, though radio silence had been required of U/B's participating in a refueling R/V, combat U/B's had as a matter of routine been guided to the refueler by the latter's beacon signals. In 2306/5 June this procedure is prohibited, combat boats being ordered not to request B/S until after two days' unsuccessful search for the supplier. In September and October 1943, after the disastrous losses of the summer, Command broadcast orders intended to increase the protection afforded the refueler by fighting boats in the event of air attack (1202/16 Sept., 1640/7 Oct.); and on 11 October issued elaborate instructions designed to keep R/V's from being discovered (supply boats and boats to be supplied to proceed submerged on day of R/V, to make contact two hours before sunset, to carry out refueling in general only at night, taking particular care with lights. Current Order Nr. 24, 1035/11 Oct.).

(h) Fruitlessness of attempts to save refueling system.

These belated attempts to salvage the refueling system were ineffectual. Not only could they not bring back the eight refuelers already sunk between June and September 1943, they could not prevent further reduction of the dwindling fleet. In October 1943, the month of two of the newly issued orders, two supply U/B's (U-220 and U-460) were sunk by carrier A/C at refueling B/V's. After this, Command's refueling fleet was in effect finished. It remained only to sweep up the fragments.

(1) Effects of destruction:

- (1) Shrinking of independent operations from June 1944 on.

The whittling down of the refueling fleet is, of course, only one aspect of the reduction of the U/B menace in general during the period June 1943 to June 1944. Its particular effects can none the less be observed. Throughout the German reverses of 1944-45 Comubs tried valiantly to keep the U/B arm in effective operation, introducing new types and new devices, and actually increasing the number of active U/B's in the months from January to April 1945. In spite of this stubbornness, the areas threatened by U/B attack continued to shrink. During the summer of 1944 (after D Day, June 6), a total of only five U/B's — apart from the 1200-ton cruisers enroute to the Far East — were sent out to distant operational areas. All were 750-ton IX-C boats, four operated off the American coast, and one in the Caribbean. This is to be contrasted with the forty-four independent cruises to

distant areas in the South Atlantic undertaken in the summer of 1943. In the winter of 1944-45, an occasional 750-tonner continued to operate off Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Northeastern States. But the scale of these operations was too slight to have more than nuisance value; and there was no U/B activity whatever south of 40.00 N. The total absence of refuelers was undoubtedly decisive not only in restricting these operations to 750-ton U/B's but in limiting the range and duration of the distant cruises that were attempted.

- (ii) Virtual disappearance of group operations after March 1944.

Further, though by the end of 1943 the state of Allied A/S defense had doubtless made the resumption of group warfare against convoys unprofitable, the lack of refuelers made it all but impossible after the spring of 1944 (Group PRUSSIAN, March 1944, was the last to operate).\* As the winter of 1942-43 had demonstrated, vigorous and sustained convoy operations were absolutely dependent on refueling at sea.

- (iii) <sup>Disruption</sup> ~~Disruption~~ of Command's operational plans caused by loss of individual refuelers.

From the long term point of view, the physical destruction of the supply fleet is the most important single result of the A/S operations of June to October 1943. From the point of;

\*An eleventh hour attempt to reintroduce convoy warfare in a limited form was made in April 1945 with Group SEMOLE, consisting of 6 750-ton U/B's.



view of week to week U/B activity, however, the havoc wrought in Command's plans by the loss of individual refuelers -- requiring the curtailment of planned cruises to distant areas, the conversion of combat U/B's to emergency refuelers, the reorganization of orders for whole groups of boats -- had an equally depressing effect on the conduct of the U/B war. In the sections that follow the immediate effects of certain refueler sinkings on U/B situation as a whole will be studied in some detail.

CHAPTER VII.

U.S. A/S CVE TASK GROUPS  
The critical refueling R/V's June,  
July and August.

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U. S. A/S CVE TASK GROUPS  
The critical refueling R/V's June,  
July and August.

- A. The Attack on Hanseck (U-756), 8 June, and the sinking of Czegan (U-115), 12 June.

1.

One attack could alter whole refueler network of interdependencies.

The necessity of supplying U/B's bound for or returning from distant areas meant that an elaborate network of interdependencies, with the refueler at the center, was developed between the U/B's on passage through the Middle Atlantic area at any given time. This network would collapse with the loss of the refueler. It could also be seriously disturbed by a successful attack on any of the U/B's in the group; for this could draw the refueler and perhaps other boats aside for the relief and protection of a damaged U/B, thus upsetting the sequence not only of scheduled provisionings but of other planned movements as well. The manner in which one misfortune could involve Command's whole plan for the Middle Atlantic in confusion is seen in the complicated series of events that preceded and followed the sinking of the refueler <sup>113</sup> Czegan on 12 June. This series of events was set in motion by the bombing of the 500 tonner Hanseck on 8 June by A/C from CGO 21.12.

2.  
Manseck damaged by "Bogue".

Manseck, cruising alone with his new quadruple A/A and destined after refueling for operations in the Trinidad area, had accidentally come upon UGS 9 in the area 29 N. - 33 W., on the afternoon of 8 June.

The Bogue judged that a sighting of UGS 9 had been signalled. Four planes were dispatched to attack, found Manseck and inflicted heavy damage.

3.  
Confusion begins.

CTG 21.12 believed that the U/B whose transmission it had heard was shadowing UGS 9 for a wolfpack. German U/B traffic was not being read currently on 8 June, so information on the actual situation was not available. Actually - as later became evident - there was no U/B group in the area and no operation against UGS 9 had been planned (Group TRUTZ, the only wolfpack in the Middle Atlantic, was far to the West). The circumstances were such, however, that the bombing of Manseck caused more confusion than if he had in fact been shadowing for an attacking group. He was part of an intricate pattern of plans involving several other U/B's, including the two refuelers SCHEWOR (U-460)

and CZYGAN, and his distress caused the entire pattern to be shifted and revised.

#### 4. Refueling Plans

In order to make possible his operation in the Trinidad area, Manseck was to pick up fuel from Czygan in 30.45 N. - 33.40 W., according to plans announced in traffic on 31 May. Two other U/B's intended for operations in distant areas, Cremer (U-333) and Born (U-592) were likewise to R/V with Czygan, who was ordered to be in position beginning 10 June. Meanwhile, however, SCHNOOR, after refueling 7 South Atlantic U/B's, was coming up from the St. Paul Rocks area with more fuel than he needed for his return. (This was in part owing to the fact that one U/B, Steinert (U-123) had been sunk off Brazil before receiving fuel from Schnoor as planned). On 5 June, therefore, Command changed his plans for Manseck, who was now to refuel not from Czygan but from Schnoor in 28.21 N. - 33.42 W. on 9 June. Schnoor was then to proceed to Czygan's R/V position for Cremer and Born (30.45 N. - 33.40 W.) and give any remaining fuel to Czygan before proceeding homeward. (At this period there were frequent lags in the reading of U/B traffic. The above information, though historically valuable in showing the detailed structure of Command's plans, was not available in time to be of operational importance.)

5.

Immediate Results of Manseck's Distress.

(a) RI information made available to Allies.

The bombing of Manseck necessitated further changes in Command's plans. Schnoor and Czygan were at once ordered to Manseck's rescue. As a result of this move, valuable information became available to Allied radio intelligence. None of the several messages giving Czygan's R/V position had been decrypted up to this time. But Command's order to Schnoor and Czygan (2116/8) containing the position at which they were to look for Manseck, was read on 11 June, as was a later message (0707/9) acknowledging a position \_\_\_\_\_ from Czygan. This was the first precise information on Czygan's whereabouts. In addition, since Schnoor and Czygan had some difficulty in finding Manseck, there were several other transmissions on 9 and 10 June from the 3 U/B's involved. These were not read until 13 June, but the D/F's secured gave immediate evidence of U/B movements in the area that on 12 June was to be searched by the Rogue's A/C.

(b) Change in Czygan's assignment.

Czygan found Manseck on the afternoon of the 9th. Schnoor met them on the 10th, gave Czygan his extra fuel, and took charge of Manseck. Czygan then proceeded to his R/V station, 30.45 N. - 33.40 W., but not to carry out his original assignment. A minelaying U/B, Stock (U-214) returning with extra fuel from the completion of a task, had been pressed into service as a refueler for Cremer, originally assigned to Czygan. Born, the remaining U/B

from the original Czygan assignment, had been held up in the North Atlantic by the distress of Boehne (U-450), a new U/B that had gotten through the Iceland passage only to be nearly sunk by A/C in the NE Atlantic. Thus Czygan was free for the new assignment of refueling four further outbound U/B's - Lange (U-530), Emmermann (U-172), Kummstat (U-572) and Friedrich (U-759) - which he was to carry out between 12 and 18 June in his original R/V station, 30.45 N. - 33.40 W.

6.  
The Bogus Returns.

Meanwhile CTG 21.12, fearing that Manseck's transmission on 8 June might herald a large scale attack on UGS 9, remained with the convoy until Africa-based A/C appeared on the evening of 10 June. The task group then put about and proceeded westward along the 30th parallel to continue its offensive against the U/B concentrations believed, partly on the basis of D/F's on the messages transmitted in connection with the relief of Manseck, to be in the vicinity. Instead of the patrol line it expected, the task group ran into Czygan's refueling R/V for U/B's bound for distant operational areas.

7.  
Czygan is Sunk.

It seems clear that the offensive character of the task group's assignment was not grasped by German U/B Command. After the



attacks on Group TRUTZ on the evening of 4 June, Command was of course aware that Flight 10 was under the protection of carrier A/C. In 2259/5 Czygan was instructed to 'count on an Eastbound convoy with air escort from about 7 June on'. Again in 2146/8, Schmoor and Czygan were warned: 'Manseck's sightings probably an Eastbound convoy. Watch for carrier A/C'. Whether or not German Command had by this time distinguished between Flight 10 and UG3 9 (the latter running parallel to the former but somewhat to the south and about a day behind) is not clear. It is clear, however, both from the messages just quoted and from his failure to alter the position of Czygan's R/V, that Command thought of the carrier A/C as having the strictly defensive task of protecting one or more eastbound convoys, and did not take into account the possibility of an independent offensive sweep. In 2358/12 Emmermann, one of the 4 U/B's newly assigned to Czygan for refueling, complained that there was continual carrier A/C patrol at the R/V, asserting that the position was not suitable and that he was moving off to the south. Not until the next morning did Command order Czygan's provisioning group to move 100 miles to the south. By that time, however, Czygan himself had been sunk. U-118 had been sighted by Eogue A/C at 1347Z/12 June and, under attack from 9 planes, blew up in 25 minutes after 5 accurate hits with D/C. Once again German Command had failed to adjust his orders rapidly enough to the expanding range of American airpower.

8.  
Makeshift.

The combined effect of Manneck's distress and Czygan's loss on the U/B situation in the Middle Atlantic was considerable. Manseck did reach port safely under Schnoor's escort, though in a damaged condition. But the attack he suffered interrupted his war cruise before he had reached his area of operations or inflicted any damage on enemy shipping, forced Schnoor and Czygan to expend fuel in coming to his rescue, and disrupted Czygan's original R/V, and as has been seen above, made valuable RI material available to the U.S. Navy. There was a further complication, Manseck had been ordered to take on a Metox (GSR) from Czygan for delivery to Mueller-Stoeckheim (U-67). After the damaging of Manseck and the sinking of Czygan the plans for getting a Metox to Mueller-Stoeckheim had of course to be completely re-drawn. The task of delivery was given to Krummetat, who after the loss of Czygan was ordered to get an extra Metox from Lange. This latter point illustrates Command's fear of Allied radar and consequent insistence on supplying operating U/B's with search receiving equipment at all costs; it illustrates also, once again, the intricately interrelated character of Command's plans and the extent to which these could be disorganized by the failure of a single U/B.

9.  
Repercussions.

The loss of Czygan was of course far more serious than the

damaging of Manseck. First of all, there was the permanent loss of one of Command's limited fleet of U/B tankers. More immediate was the effect on the refueling situation in the Middle Atlantic during the period directly following Czygan's sinking. Czygan carried about 426 cbm. of fuel; this, allowing for his own consumption, left him with well over 300 cbm. for delivery to combat U/B's. In addition, he had taken on some fuel from the returning Schnoor. At the time he was sunk, Czygan had made no deliveries. The plan for him was to give 30 cbm. each to Kummstat, Lange, Hamermann and Friedrich. This would have left at least 200 cbm. for further delivery. The additional U/B's, (besides the four just mentioned) that Command had intended to refuel from Czygan, had not been identified in traffic up to the time of the latter's sinking. But they must have included a number of those subsequently refueled by Bartke (U-488) which meant in turn that the refuelings originally planned for Bartke had to be reduced. Thus a process of borrowing from the future was begun, which was to continue at an increasing rate throughout the summer as further refuelers were lost.

10.  
Reconstruction of Events.

More immediate still was the problem of providing for Kummstat, Lange, Hamermann and Friedrich, who could continue their

cruises to their areas of operations if the fuel they had been counting on from Czygan could be supplied from elsewhere. German U/B traffic from 1200B/13 to 1200B/15 June was not read, so Command's manner of meeting this problem can only be determined indirectly. Fortunately the combination of later traffic with OMI's 'Report on the Interrogation of Survivors from U-172' (commanded by Hoffmann at time of sinking, 13 December 1943, but by Hammermann during summer of 1943) gives a fairly clear picture of Command's reaction to Czygan's loss. According to Pq/W reports, Hammermann<sup>172</sup> arrived at his R/V with Czygan (12 June) and dived as an A/C was spotted. While submerged, Hammermann heard explosions indicating a heavy attack, and on resurfacing could not find Czygan. He presumed Czygan lost and signalled (presumably during the afternoon of 13 June) to this effect to Command. He was thereupon ordered to search until the following evening (14 June) for Czygan, and to signal 'Negative' if the search was fruitless. This proved to be the case and the signal was sent.

11.  
The cost to U/B Operations

At some time between the reception of Hammermann's negative report and 1200B/15 June (when OP-20-G started reading German U/B traffic again) Command evidently ordered Lange, (U-530) - one of the four U/B's scheduled for refueling from Czygan between 12 and 18 June - to abandon his assigned operation, to proceed some distance southward

with the other 3 boats, and after refueling them, to return. This fact is nowhere clearly stated, but is to be inferred from the following: According to the Report on the Interrogation of Survivors from U-172, Zamermann was refueled by Lange somewhere below the Azores and above the Dulge of Brazil. Friedrich and Kummstat, despite the disappearance of Caygan, went on to distant operational areas, (Friedrich around the coast of Cuba, Kummstat off the NE coast of Brazil), which would have been impossible had not a substitute refueling been effected.\* Further, from message 2253/6 June, in which Kummstat is ordered to take on a second Meteor from Lange, it is evident that an R/V between the 2 U/B's was already scheduled.

The task must have been the provisioning of Zamermann, Kummstat and Friedrich. Thus the first effect of Caygan's sinking was the discontinuance of Lange's war cruise, in other words, the neutralizing of one U/B's fighting effectiveness for a period of several months. This effect is of interest not merely in itself but as an indication of what was to come. As further U-tankers were sunk in the course of the summer, the stop-gap procedure of cutting short operational plans for combat U/B's for the sake of emergency refuelings had to be called on more

\*There is no P/W report on Friedrich and Kummstat, since both were sunk with no survivors - Friedrich on 15 July and Kummstat on 3 August, Lange's U/B, 530, was off our own coast at the end of the war. (C.O. Wermuth).

and more frequently. The net result, over and above the permanent loss by actual sinkings, was to reduce the fighting power of the U/B fleet at sea by a considerable margin.

12.

The U/B's that reached their operational areas.

The fortunes of those combat U/B's that survived the refueling R/V's of the summer and managed to reach their assigned areas of operation, will be treated as a general topic in the next chapter. It is worth noting here, however, that of the 4 U/B's assigned to refuel from Czygan, only one, Immermann, actually completed his operations as planned and returned safely to port. Lange, it has been seen, returned without operating. Kummstat was sunk (presumably) on 3 August in 11.33 N. - 54.05 W. by a U.S. Navy PBM, Friedrich on 15 July in 15.58 N. - 73.44 W. by the same type of aircraft. RI made available the essential information for locating and sinking both U/B's. It is interesting to observe that both U/B's were followed in traffic, though at a certain distance because of lags in decryption, from their assigned R/V with Czygan out to their respective op areas, where D/T's supplemented the information derived from traffic and narrowed the extent of the search required to find and sink them.

13.  
Refueling R/V as a center from  
which combat U/B's could be  
tracked.

These instances illustrate a certain pattern that recurs with some frequency in the summer of 1943. The refueling R/V was a kind of center from which combat U/B's could be tracked to their attack areas on the edges of the ocean. Command's refueling system, added to his policy of announcing op areas to U/B's at approximately the time of their refueling, required him to pass extensive advance information in traffic. Even if this was not decrypted in time to permit an attack on the R/V itself, it offered a valuable starting point for the study of the movements of individual U/B's.

B. Refueler Losses in July 1943.

1.  
German Achievements,  
June-July 1943.

Despite the failure of Trutz and the confusions following the sinking of Coygan, it should, of course, not be assumed that the Germans felt their summer campaign to have proved fruitless by the end of June. German U/B Command had many resources left and the resilience to use them. New A/A armament and new tactics appeared. As far as refueling is concerned, the feat of <sup>USS</sup> Bartke in successfully supplying 22 U/B's in June showed that the delicate operation of rendezvousing with large numbers of U/B's in mid-ocean could still be carried out without disaster. Some of these boats went on to operate successfully in the next month. Allied tonnage sunk during July showed a considerable increase over both May and June, proving that despite the difficulties that attended them, the distant war cruises in which so many U/B's had been risked were still capable of achieving their purpose.

2.  
U/B Losses in July.

Despite these successes, however, it is probable that from the point of view of losses, suffered July was the most expensive month of the summer for the U/B. The total number of U/B's lost in July is higher than for any other month, except



May 1943, in the entire course of the war. Of the more than thirty U/B's sunk, four were refuelers, of which three were lost in the Biscay approaches.

3.  
Inauguration of Biscay  
"Joint Cruise."

In 2231/16 June and its continuations, Command promulgated Permanent Order No. 14, subject "Joint Group Returns Through Bay of Biscay." This order, according to which U/B's were to proceed through the dangerous Biscay area in groups of two or three, originally applied to return cruises only, but was later extended to include outbound cruises as well. The main purpose was to make the combined A/A fire of several subs available for common defense in the event of surprise from the air. There were supposed to be collateral advantages: the possibility of mutual aid in case of damage, the increased number of lookouts and GSR operators whose observations could be communicated and shared by all members of the group, etc.

4.  
Failure of Joint Cruise

- (a) Early appearance of success; loss of two refuelers on 30 July.

At first the group cruise seemed to justify itself. The case of Piening (U-155) is interesting and has a certain representative value. In 2137/11 July Piening, outbound, reported: "Joint Cruise is good. One sees, and especially one hears, more." Other commanders reported favorably on the new tactics. Meantime,

however, the British had been organizing a special offensive directed precisely against the groups of U/B's cruising together. It turned out that the hazard brought about by the bunching of targets more than balanced the advantage of increased A/A fire and mutual assistance in other respects. The joint cruise was decisively tested and found wanting in a single action on 30 July, when a group of three U/B's cruising together -- including two of the valuable type XIV refuelers -- were all sunk within 24 hours by British A/C assisted by surface forces. The two refuelers were U-461 (Stiebler) and U-462 (Towe), the latter of whom had already been forced back to port by A/C damages earlier in the month.

(b) Piening's Lane.

Within a little over three days of the costly losses of 30 July, Command had decided to try a new method for moving his U/B's in and out of the aircraft-infested approaches to the French bases. The first step was to order all groups to break up "because of the present situation in the Bay of Biscay" (1155/2 August). The next step was to attempt a new route. In 1831/2 August, four returning U/B's, including Piening despite his earlier enthusiasm for the joint cruise through the open Biscay, are ordered to proceed (singly) close inshore along the northwest and north Spanish coast, not troubling themselves to remain clear of territorial waters. The new route applied to outbound U/B's also. In 1211/2 August, the sailing orders of four U/B's are canceled, and they are told to cruise separately under the Spanish coast. The high coastal bluffs and the numerous fishing vessels were expected

to interfere with Allied airborne radar. Piening's report on his successful cruise over this route was given by Command in 1092/14 August. The approach to the Biscay bases along the Spanish coast was thereafter referred to as "Piening's Lane." In 1960/19 August, all returning U/B's are ordered until further notice, to cruise along Piening's Lane. The use of this route, in permitting which Spain violated her official neutrality, was kept as secret as possible. It was discovered with the aid of RL and A/C and surface vessels were assigned to patrol it. Though the Germans did to some extent reduce their losses in the Biscay approaches by means of this subterfuge, Command did not long enjoy a sense of security with regard to it. In 1733/24 August — five days after the general order to all returning boats to proceed along the Spanish coast — U/B's returning in Piening's Lane are authorized to change their cruising route if patrol near the coast "seems too strong."

5.  
The Sinking of Metz  
at R/V, July 13, 1943.

In addition to U-461 and U-462, U-453 (Wilamowitz) had been sunk off the French coast by A/C on 24 July. These three losses added up to a heavy toll on the refueling fleet. But from the point of view of the confusion produced in Command's immediate and distant plans, the greatest single blow in July suffered by the supply system was undoubtedly the sinking of Metz (U-487) by A/C from the USS CORE on 13 July. This sinking occurred at a refueling R/V and directly affected plans for more than a dozen U/B's.

(a) Metz and the Monsun Undertaking.

The sinking of Metz will be discussed in relation to the MONSUN venture - which involved the projected sending of 11 large U/B's to the Far East in the summer of 1943 - in Chapter XIV, Part E, Volume II. The MONSUN undertaking was the most ambitious of Command's attempts to exploit the opportunities offered by relatively undefended distant waters, of which the Indian Ocean had at various times in the past proved to be one of the most fruitful. The loss of Metz, added to the sinking of several combat U/B's, caused this large-scale project (which included the strengthening of the German U-base at Penang) to be largely reorganized and drastically reduced.

(b) Combat U/B's pressed into Refueling Service.

The function of RI in the sinking of Metz will be considered in the section already referred to. In the present connection, it remains only to observe in one or two interesting particulars how the pattern of disruption already noticed in the case of Crygan is repeated in that of Metz.

(i) Damaging of Vowe.

From 1820/13 July it is evident that Vowe had been planned as the refueler for the MONSUN U/B's. Vowe, outbound, was damaged by A/C on 2 July and forced to return to port. Metz was, therefore, diverted from completing his original refueling assignment (not known in detail) to take Vowe's place.

(ii) Apologies to Combat U/B's.

Penner's Echo. Metz had already refueled

several U/B's, and required replenishment himself if the MONSUN refueling was to be adequately taken care of. This meant that the now familiar device of curtailing a combat U/B's war cruise had to be applied once more. By this time Command was evidently beginning to feel embarrassed at the frequency with which he had to call on his fighting boats to abandon their operations. In 1820/13 Pommer Esche is told that he must turn over his entire fuel and food supply to Metz for the MONSUN boats, saving only enough to return. He is promised a quadruple mount A/A and an improved tower on returning. He is, moreover, offered a grain of hope for carrying out his war cruise, for Command continues: "If next tanker puts out to sea in time, however, complete replenishment of fuel and food is intended." The next tanker would doubtless have been Wilamowitz (sunk 24 July) or possibly Vowe or Stiebler (sunk 30 July). This consideration, however, is strictly academic, for Pommer Esche had already been sunk before 13 July, though Command did not become aware of this fact until nearly a week later.

Piening. Command became convinced of Metz's loss by ~~18~~ 18 July. In 1258/18, Piening and Pommer Esche (still believed afloat)\* are ordered to take over Metz's assignment, refueling the MONSUN U/B's directly, returning to port immediately afterwards. In 1635/18 Piening protested this order: "We do not feel like returning. Request exchange with MONSUN

\*When Command became aware of Pommer Esche's loss, a third Combat U/B, Tillessen, was ordered to take his place as an emergency refueler.

boat." In 2109/15 Command explains to Picning: "No other solution possible. Carry out refueling." A month later, when the 1200-ton cruiser Kuppisch had totake over the refueling assignment left vacant by the sinking of Maunann, and his substitute Drowitz, Command knew enough to anticipate the objection and to state in his original order, "No other solution is possible." (0437/19 August). It is obvious that not the least of the effects of the continuous disruption of Command's refueling plans was the lowering of the morale, as well as the cancellation of the fighting effectiveness, of the U/B's that found themselves called upon to act as emergency refuelers.

C. Refueler Losses in August 1943:  
The Sinking of Neumann and Ruppisch.

1.

State of Refueling Fleet  
at beginning of August 1943.

Despite the addition of a new U/B tanker, (U-489) in July, the active refueling fleet had been reduced to four boats by the end of the costly experience of that month. This meant that a net loss of five had been sustained since the first of June. To increase Command's difficulties in supplying the U/B's at sea in August, U-489, commanded by Schmandt, was sunk on 4 August by aircraft in 61.18 N - 14.36 W only fourteen days out of Kiel on her first patrol. This left three refuelers still afloat: U-460 (Schnoor), U-488 (Bartke), and U-117 (Neumann). Of these, Schnoor and Bartke, having completed long refueling cruises in late June and early July respectively, were in port for overhauling. Neumann was thus the only refueler available for actual supplying operations in August.

2.

Importance of Neumann's Cruise.

There were still a large number of U/B's in the Middle and South Atlantic in early August. Command must have had extensive provisioning plans for keeping these U/B's at sea, for in the last week of July, no less than five supply boats left port. It has been seen that three of these (Milanowitz, Fove, and Stiebler) were sunk in the Biscay area before the end of the month; the

loss of Schmandt on 4 August meant that in Neumann Command had only one refueler left to do the work of the five he had expected to have at sea during August. Thus, well before the sinking of Neumann himself on 7 August, the strained provisioning situation, with the usual effect of the cancellation of war cruises, shows itself in traffic. In 1320/4 August, Graef is ordered to turn over his fuel to Franke and Blum and then to come home. It must be remembered that the U-Tankers acted not only as refuelers but also as general supply ships, particularly for heavy pieces of machinery. In 1145/4 August, Cremer is told that "the intended delivery of a Junkers compressor is impossible because no tanker available"; he is to patch up a compressor as best he can by trading parts with another combat U/B, U-571 (Luessow). These are instances of the collapsing supply system. It was no longer to any important degree a question of refueling U/B's for continued operations. It was simply a question of providing the means to get them back to port. Command's dependence on Neumann for this purpose is shown in 1925/7 August, where "all returning subs that need refueling" are ordered to head for a square to which Neuman is likewise ordered. "In an area of 400 miles around this square, radio silence is ordered for all subs except if making reports important for tactics."

3.

Part played by RI in Sinking of Neumann.

Actually Neumann had signaled an A/C attack at 12213/7, seven hours before the time of origin of the message quoted just



above. This attack, by planes from the USS CARD, proved fatal to U-117. FI had played an essential part in making this decisive sinking possible. In 2301/30 July, read 1 August, Neumann had been ordered to 'stand by' in an area within 100 miles of 38.50 N - 37.20 W. In 0146/1 August, read on the date of origin, Neumann was given a more precise heading near 37.57 N - 38.30 W; in 1135/1 August, likewise read currently, Neumann was told to provision Markworth at that position "on or after 3 August" and after completion to "wait in that area." This R/V was actually not effected because of Markworth's failure to find Neumann, and Command ordered a new R/V for <sup>the</sup> ~~two~~ U/B's in 38.51 N - 38.14 W (0535/6), which was finally effected, though not at the exact position ordered, on the morning of 7 August. The latter message was not read until 14 August, but enough information was available to establish the fact that a R/V between a tanker and a combat U/B was to take place within an area which could be limited with sufficient definiteness to make a successful A/C search possible. That the attack occurred during the process of provisioning appears from Markworth's message 0017/3 August. Markworth himself, who had suffered a damaging A/C attack at an earlier date, escaped without damage on this occasion. But the loss of Neumann was a blow that caused extensive repercussions. As Command (still in ignorance of his refueler's loss) remarked in 0720/10 August: "Neumann is urgently needed for further provisioning."

4.  
Neumann's fueling assignment  
passed to Drewitz and Harpe.

The loss of Neumann, when Command became convinced of it on 14 August, resulted in a series of emergency messages whose pattern by this time had become so ~~well~~ <sup>well established</sup> as to be almost classical. The first step was to call on outbound combat U/B's, in this case two 750-ton type IX-C boats, U-525 and U-129, to act as substitute refuelers. "The strained fuel situation brought about by the loss of a tanker necessitates using Drewitz and Harpe as tankers" (1222/14 August). Six U/B's are listed which are to provision from the two emergency refuelers "only for economical return." Harpe completed his refueling task and made a successful return voyage.

5.  
The Loss of Drewitz.

With Drewitz, Command repeated his unhappy experience of the previous month with Pommer Esche. Drewitz had already been sunk (presumably) on 11 August by A/C from the CARD in approximately 42 N - 39 W, though Command was not persuaded of this fact until 19 August when Drewitz failed to answer an order to report his position. Because of lags in decryption, RI played no part in this sinking, except in the wide sense that U/B's could be presumed to be concentrated in this general area because of the previously determined heading of the refueler Neumann. Actually Drewitz and Harpe were, as far as is known, the only outbound U/B's scheduled to refuel from Neumann for further operations. This is to be contrasted with the extensive refueling R/7's undertaken in June

and July for offensive purposes.

6.

The Substitution of Kuppisch.

In early August, Lt. Kuppisch, in command of the 1200-ton cruiser U-847, was outbound in mid-Atlantic, headed for Penang, where he is said by P's/W to have been scheduled to become the C.O. of the German Far Eastern U-Flotilla. Kuppisch was the last of the 11 large U/B's, the MONSUN boats, that left Europe in the summer of 1943 for the Indian Ocean and Far East. As has been seen in the preceding part of this chapter, the earlier MONSUN boats had run into one misfortune after another, one of the most serious being the sinking of Metz, their refueler. Since Command was most eager to get large U/B's, especially type IX-D cruisers such as that commanded by Kuppisch, safely to the Far East, Kuppisch's cruise is one that would not lightly be interrupted. The large fuel capacity of the type IX-D boats made it possible for them to supply a smaller combat U/B or two with a limited quantity of diesel oil in passing; and the fact that Kuppisch was called on in 0929/14 August to refuel the patient Markworth (who had been vainly trying to find Heumann for a week) with 15-20 cbm. did not interfere with his cruise. But by 19 August, with the loss of Drewitz known, the refueling situation of a large number of middle Atlantic U/B's had become desperate. In 0437/19 August, Kuppisch is ordered to take over Drewitz's provisioning assignment. This meant that yet another Monsun boat was not to reach the Far East. As Command put it, "There is no other solution."

7.  
The Role of RI in  
Sinking of Kuppisch.

As has been shown in preceding paragraphs, refueling R/V's were planned sufficiently well in advance so that a decryption lag of several days did not seriously affect the accuracy of the information which RI was able to provide. An order to Kuppisch at 1138/18 (read here on the 21st) gave as his heading point the area 29.50 N - 38.30 W. An amplifying order at 0437/19 (also read on the 21st) directed four U/B's -- Dahlhaus (U-634), Siegmann (U-230), Feiler (U-653), and Heide (U-415) -- to arrive at the R/V beginning 23 August in order to provision for a most economical return. Past experience was certainly responsible for the warning to send no beacon signals. It was planned that Kuppisch should also refuel five other U/B's likewise enroute home from distant areas -- Staats (U-506), Rahe (U-257), Manké (U-358), Emmernann (U-172), and Maus (U-185). However, circumstances combined to reduce the <sup>total</sup> number of U/B's requiring refueling to a mere five; Manké had sufficient fuel on board, Siegmann took on enough from Dahlhaus so that he could make port, and Dahlhaus and Maus were sunk enroute to the R/V by A/C from USS COKE on 24 August -- the former in 28 N - 38 W, the latter in 27 N - 37.06 W. Three days later Kuppisch himself was sunk in 29 N - 37 W by planes from USS CARD.

8.  
Effect of Loss of Kuppisch.

The five U/B's which had refueled from Kuppisch before

he was sunk had taken on only enough fuel for a most economical return. Since U-847 was the only 1200-tonner available at the time, Comsubs may have restricted the amount given to each of the nine U/B's originally planned for, in order to reserve a surplus ~~either for emergency refueling or~~ to permit Kuppisch to continue his cruise to the Far East. At the time of his sinking it is likely that he still had about 300 cbm. Whatever reasons lay behind the rationing, there was no possibility that the 7 homeward bound U/B's could capitalize on any opportunities for attack which might arise, due to the necessity for taking the shortest possible route and the certainty that there would be no other refueler available.

9.  
Results of Losses  
of Refuelers.

By the end of August, the effect of the loss of refuelers on operations was even more disastrous than in previous months. There were only forty operational U/B's at sea as compared with ~~seventy-one~~ in July. Of these the majority were homeward bound, their cruises having been shortened because there was no provisioner in the area, or outward bound for operations limited by the amount of fuel which each U/B could carry. Of the 24 subs in distant areas at the beginning of the month, only 3 remained to continue their patrols. There were, of course, no operations on the convoy lanes.

10.  
State of Refueling Fleet  
at End of August 1943.

It was fortunate for Command that two refuelers, Schnoor (U-460) and Bartke (U-488) had been confined to port during August, for they were the sole remaining members of the once efficient refueling fleet. The situation was temporarily relieved by the addition of Barber (U-220) in September and of Burghagen (U-219) in October, but only temporarily since both Schnoor and Barber were sunk in October. Thus Command was faced with the resumption of offensive U/B warfare crippled by a lack of supply ships.

CHAPTER VIII

INDEPENDENT PATROLS IN DISTANT AREAS  
SUMMER 1943

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INDEPENDENT PATROLS IN DISTANT AREAS  
SUMMER 1943.

1.  
A/C with radar everywhere.

The summer of 1943 is the only period in U/B traffic read here in which individual station patrols of distant coastal areas occupied the major strength of the U/B Navy. 1942 U/B traffic, if and when read, should offer an interesting contrast, for in 1942 these distant patrols in American waters ran up some of the highest sinking records in the entire war. But in the summer of 1943 U/B's in distant coastal waters encountered the same treatment that had just driven them out of the North Atlantic.

2.  
U/B reaction.

On 17 July Command announced in Current Order #39

that:

"Lately, especially in the Bay of Biscay, U/B's have been lost without any clue as to the cause, place, and time of their loss..."

Special code groups were added to the short signal book for quick reporting of various kinds of A/C attacks and of the subsequent condition of the U/B.

On 21 July the situation in Biscay necessitated the following warning:



"During cruise through Bay of Biscay the guiding thought of the C.O. must be: Get the boat through safe and sound. Do not take any risks, thinking that you will get by, or hoping to save time..." (Admonition msg. 1921/21/7/43)

Having gotten through Biscay alive and having escaped the refueling R/V traps, the U/B which reached its distant area was met with the same thing all over again.

Enacter's (U-466) complaint, signaled from the area north of the Amazon mouth, was characteristic:

"Air patrol as in Bay of Biscay. Radar day and night on 130 to 160 cm....." (0915/28/7/43)

There was no escape, for the return voyage meant carrier A/C at the R/V's and once more the dangerous passage of Biscay.

3.

Recommendations for U/B's:  
When surprised, don't dive.

The U/B was urged to stay up and fight off the A/C, training A/A guns on the plane's motors rather than on the better protected cockpit. Above all, the C.O. was to keep his head and not dive at the last minute, thus putting himself completely at the mercy of the A/C. It was necessary to send out admonition messages such as this:

"During a surprise aircraft attack on a group of 3 subs, one sub again made the mistake of submerging. It was bombed while diving. Its loss may be expected. The surface defense of the others was successful. Moral: When surprised, stay upstairs and shoot. Diving is death." (1246/20/7/43)

Submerged cruising became more and more mandatory, thus increasing the necessity for surfacing to charge batteries. Many messages

were devoted to defining the favorable times and areas for battery charging and ventilation. The habits and tactics of A/S A/C were studied. Strict orders were issued about the maintenance of look-outs and the manning of A/A guns. The deck could no longer be used for "strength through joy" activities.

4.

The result as seen in the summer campaign.

Forty-eight U/B's were sent out to occupy patrol areas off the North American, South American, and West African coasts. As has been previously stated, this scattering was a defensive as well as an offensive move. It failed in both respects. During the four months in which they operated these 48 U/B's sank only 35 ships, no insignificant number to the Allies, but representing only a fraction of a ship sunk per U/B engaged. The German cost was high: 13 subs sunk in their operational areas (12 of them in American waters); at least 8 more subs never finished their homeward cruises; and 5 were forced to retire from their areas because of damages sustained.

5.

RI Comment.

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It was at least fortunate that the manner of U/B warfare during this period was such as to offset in part the failure of ready decryption intelligence.

In the various ways already mentioned, RI was able to furnish the essential information despite lags in reading, because of the correspondingly slower tempo of the U/B war. Even with time delays of two and three weeks, one could still learn what U/B's were going where, before they could arrive in their assigned areas. Decryption in relation to the refueling R/V's has already been discussed. The essential information for plotting was usually at hand. Once in its assigned area, of course, the U/B observed a fairly general radio silence.

6.

North American Coast.

The North American coast continued to be an unproductive and dangerous patrol area. A/S forces were, as in the spring, constantly in evidence except, as several C.O.'s reported, in the Gulf of Mexico. The defenses of the tanker ports of Texas were shrugged off as "inexperienced and slight". No shipping was sunk in this area, however. Along the Atlantic seaboard, hold-down tactics restricted U/B movement, and convoy protection was strong and alert, ready at first contact to hunt the U/B to destruction. The fact that only one U/B was sunk off the North American coast was probably due more to U/B caution than to A/S failures. Only two ships were torpedoed, and one sunk during this period, indicating the inability of the U/B's to maneuver freely for attack. Five of the eleven U/B's which operated off our coast concluded their unsuccessful patrols by failing to survive their homeward voyage.

7.  
Caribbean.

Eight U/B's were scheduled to operate in the Caribbean Sea, only seven of which arrived there. Their efforts ended in almost total failure. In four months, only three ships are known to have been sunk, while three U/B's were sunk in the area. Moreover, only two of the remaining four U/B's arrived in France to give further reports of the A/C and surface defenses which had been described, in transmissions from the Caribbean, as "strong and continuous", with extensive use being made of radar.

8.  
South America.

Again, as in the spring, the coast of South America, from Trinidad to southern Brazil, was the only really successful U/B attack area. Twenty-five ships (including 3 Swedish ships), or better than 70% of all of the shipping sunk in the operations discussed in this chapter, were sunk by the 16 U/B's which appeared off the South American coast. From C.O.'s reports, the A/S defenses seem to have been less regular, but very persistent once ships had been damaged or sunk. This would account for the higher shipping losses, and also for the high U/B losses. Half of the 16 U/B's which operated were sunk, plus another on his way home. (An account of emergency R/V's in South American waters which were necessitated by damages from A/C attacks appears in Vol. III, Chapter VII, para. 3).

9.  
West Africa.

From all aspects, operations off the west coast of Africa were dull. Possibly 5 ships were sunk by the 17 U/B's which infested the waters from Dakar to Lagos, and only one U/B was sunk there. A/C and surface patrol was obviously expert in keeping U/B's out of firing range, and it was admitted by two skippers that they had left the Freetown area because chances for operation were poor. In the area north of Monrovia, one U/B had encountered a "very expert DD", which used a "new kind of radar", which was possibly the same radar, beyond the range of Metox, which had been reported from the Caribbean in the spring. Command tried to nullify this threat by ordering U/B's to expose themselves to detection by radar to send only the most important of messages.<sup>[sic]</sup>\* Further difficulties arose when several U/B's seemed to lose their incentive, and had to be forced on to attack by Command. The situation continued to deteriorate, however, and by the end of August all boats had started for home, leaving this area free from U/B danger throughout September.

10.  
Capetown.

After May, there was no planned activity off Capetown, the only sinkings which occurred being the work of U/B's passing through, en route operational areas in the Indian Ocean. (This phase of independent operations is discussed in Chapter XIV of this volume.)

\* SIC EMPLACED BY EDITOR

## DISRUPT PATROL AREAS

JUNE 1943

RESEARCH R/714

SP-214, 21403

No. Amer. Coast	Caribbean	No. Amer. Coast	W. Afr. Coast
<p><b>LIBERTY U-67</b> Prompt defense after plan on ship south of Bermuda. Struck at by ship.</p> <p><b>BARSTON U-521</b> SUNK 3 June after being seen in area about week.</p> <p><b>UNDA U-527</b> No surface patrol in Straits of Florida. Index-performed A/C with radar. Off Miami Trinidad route pursuit by DD. Hasdon was not to strike ships but to report on sightings, defenses, etc.</p> <p><b>SUN in July at fueling R/V by ZOGAN A/C.</b></p> <p><b>MARSHALL U-66</b> Combatant A/C patrol off Charleston area. Radar only at night. 1 ship claimed sunk.</p> <p><b>WINTERBURN U-190</b> Continuous radar by day in whole Norfolk area.</p>	<p><b>FREDERICK U-759</b> 1 sailing freighter claimed sunk.</p>	<p><b>TRICK U-510</b> Arrived British Guiana coast late June.</p> <p><b>KUNDEPAT U-572</b> Arrived Trinidad - Georgetown area late June.</p> <p><b>EMERSON U-172</b> 1 ship claimed sunk off Brazil coast.</p> <p><b>IRVING U-199</b> 1300-tonner.</p> <p><b>GUGENHEIMER U-513</b> 1 ship claimed sunk off Brazil coast. No sea patrol; land-based A/C</p> <p><b>KOSCH U-154</b> Left British Guiana area early June. Motor out of order.</p>	<p><b>CHITEN U-214</b> Pursued by DD off Freetown, forced under.</p> <p><b>THOMAS U-306</b> No report.</p> <p><b>STUART U-305</b> Arrived Freetown - Lagos area late June.</p> <p><b>MURPHY U-571</b> Arrived Monrovia area late June.</p> <p><b>KIRBY U-125</b> Left Freetown area mid June. SUNK in Biscay early July.</p> <p><b>HEATH U-515</b> Left Monrovia area mid June. Reported very expert DD with new kind of radar north of Monrovia. Numerous untraced escorts with convoys.</p> <p><b>ZWISBURNER U-600</b> Arrived Freetown area late June.</p>
			<p>3 refuelers provisioned 33 U/B's</p> <p><b>HANLEY U-483</b> Fueled 14 subs of Group Traits on 8-11 June in 29 W, 29 W to 37 W, 41 W, for further operations.</p> <p>Fueled 4 subs outbound for distant operations on 18-19 June in 35 W, 33 W.</p> <p>Fueled 4 subs outbound for operations in distant areas on 25 June in 37 W, 32 W. Had to take fuel from 3 subs outbound from the north to do so.</p> <p>Fueled 4 subs outbound for distant operations on 26 June in 38 W, 32 W, from his own stocks.</p> <p><b>KANSACK U-119</b>, returning from Leying since off Halifax, fueled 2 subs on 21 June in 45 W, 17 W.</p> <p><b>SCHROOR U-460</b>, returning from fueling R/V off coast of W. Africa, fueled 2 inbound subs on 10-11 June, and turned over remaining fuel to <b>CYGAN U-118</b> on 10 June in 29 W, 35 W.</p> <p><b>REINHARTS SUKAI</b> <b>CYGAN U-118</b>, 12 June at fueling R/V by A/C from USS <b>DOGUE</b>. <b>KANSACK U-119</b>, 24 June, in Biscay.</p>
			<p><b>KANSACK U-119</b> Completed laying mines off Halifax; begun in Bay.</p> <p><b>STOK U-214</b> Laid mines off Dakar.</p> <p><b>WINTERBURN U-650</b> and <b>SCHROOR U-667</b> Sent duty exchanges to eliminate a pre-arranging group in the area of 57 W, 37 to 40 W.</p>

DISCREET PATROL AREAS

JULY 1943

DEPARTING R/V's

SP. MAIL BOATS

<u>In. Area. Const</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>So. Amer. Const</u>	<u>W. Afr. Const</u>
<p>IRVING U-67 Sunk enroute France.</p> <p>WADSWORTH U-66 1 ship claimed sunk S. of Bermuda. Damaged by artil- lery fire from ship. Heavily damaged at fueling R/V.</p> <p>WINTERBURN U-190 Returned from Norfolk area end July.</p> <p>UDENBY U-64 Slight and inexperienced A/C without radar in Florida Straits. In Lucayan straits heavy A/C without radar.</p> <p>BROOKLYN U-134 Shot down blimp in Florida Straits after blimp had badly damaged him. Attacked twice day later by A/C. Had to leave to repair. SUNK in August.</p>	<p>FRIDBERG U-759 2 ships claimed sunk. SUNK in area.</p> <p>KAPITZER U-615 1 ship claimed sunk.</p> <p>HEIDE U-445 Strong patrol. radar defenses everywhere in Trinidad area.</p> <p>DANBAUS U-634 Forced to leave San Juan area because of continuous night A/C with radar after having been detected.</p> <p>CANTSEIN U-732 In Cuban area, weak night A/C; shore radar.</p>	<p>TRAVENCO U-466 Left op area after week because of men wounded in 2 A/C attacks. A/C hit.</p> <p>FRILBER U-653 Slight day A/C off Br. Guiana coast. Attacked by A/C plane hit.</p> <p>DIERICH U-406 Attacked twice by A/C.</p> <p>RICK U-510 Strong day and night A/C, strong radar 150 miles from Br. Guiana coast. 1 ship claimed sunk.</p> <p>FRANK U-590 SUNK in op area. 1 ship claimed sunk.</p>	<p>CHERRY U-333 Chances of success in FreeTown area poor.</p> <p>TROTTA U-306 Violent attacks by A/C and surface forces off Dakar. 4 ships claimed sunk.</p> <p>SWATE U-502 3 ships claimed sunk from convoy.</p> <p>LUESSEN U-571 Twice attacked, damaged off Yonrovia.</p> <p>ZURHEIMEN U-600 No report.</p> <p>SCHEG U-26 Arrived late July.</p> <p>SEHAWONG U-468 Arrived late July.</p> <p>PAUL U-257 Not to transmit from area (Cape Palmas).</p> <p>PAUL U-358 Solitary operations unfavorable in Trinidad area after full moon.</p> <p>DEWIS U-757 Forced off from steamer by IM.</p> <p>BAKING U-618 No report.</p>
			<p>1 refueler provisioned 6 subs.</p> <p>HEIZ U-487 fueled 6 subs outbound for distant areas from 7 to 11 July in about 30 W, 36 W.</p> <p>5 KOKOSH boats provisioned and fuelled by 2 outbound U's after sinking of 2 refuelers. One R/V on 22 July in 21 W, 33 W another on 25-26 July.</p> <p>REFUELERS SUNK: WILKOVITZ U-459 - outbound in Disney. STIKLER U-461 - outbound in Disney. VOSE U-462 - outbound in Disney. HEIZ U-486 - At R/V by CORE A/C</p> <p>FORNELL U-566 Laid mines off Hullfax.</p> <p>SIRSWANT U-230 Laid mines off Hullfax late July, early August.</p> <p>LOREN U-373, JESCHONOWICZ U-607, FORNELL U-613 were to lay mines off Kingston and Hull, according to R/V Informa- tion. LOREN badly damaged, returned. Other two sunk.</p>

DISTANT PACIFIC AREAS

JULY 19/43 (cont'd.)

REMIANTO R/718

21011, 12003

<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>V. Afr. Coast</u>
		EMERSON U-172 3 ships claimed sunk. After firing at ship, was forced off by defense.	KLAUS U-340 No report. KOCH U-382 No report.
		KRIUS U-199 SUNK in op area. 2 ships claimed sunk.	
		GUGENHEIMER U-513 SUNK in op area. Unreported A/C only after being observed.	
		IMUS U-185 Convoy escorts not trained. After observed, day and night A/C. 4 ships claimed sunk.	
		ZIMMER U-591 SUNK just after having reached area.	
		HOLFRING U-604 Badly damaged, CO wounded in A/C attack. Sub neutralized.	
		KOHLER U-598 SUNK day after reaching Brazil Coast.	



DISTANT PATROL AREAS

AUGUST 1943

REUELING R/V's

GENERAL CASES

<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>No. Amer. Coast</u>	<u>W. Afr. Coast</u>
HERFORD U-566 After fishing op. in New York area. 1 TD claimed sunk. Unable to dive after A/C attack. A/C shot down.	KOPITZKY U-615 SUNK in area.	FEITZER U-653 Left Br. Guinea area early August.	SELMERS U-508 Left Freetown area early August.
	HEIDE U-115 Returned because of D/C damage.	DIERICHT; U-106 Hunted for 12 hours without result.	ZURMUEHLEN U-600 Left Freetown area early Aug.
	DALLMANS U-634 SUNK at fuel- Aug R/V.	KUMMERAY U-572 SUNK in area.	SCHUG U-36 Left Monrovia area mid Aug.
UPHOFF U-54 Left via Florida Straits early Aug. SUNK at R/V.	CANNON U-732 1 ship claimed sunk.	ESTERHANI U-172 Suspected sweep groups in area of R/V with 2 other U/S's. R/V bombed.	SCHEWONG U-168 SUNK Freetown area August.
		KAUS U-185 2 ships claimed sunk off Brazil. Twice bombed. A/C shot down. Divided crew of HOLLERING with FLETCHER. SUNK at fueling R/V.	RAHE U-257 Left Cape Palmas area Aug.
		HOLLERING U-604 So badly damaged by bombs and D/C that he had to be scuttled.	FRANI U-115 Left Cape Palmas late Aug. after three weeks in area because no refueling was possible.
		ACHILLERS U-161 Arrived Pernambuco area late August.	HAIRK U-358 Left Freetown area early Aug.
			DREYER U-757 1 ship claimed sunk. Urged to continue operations, but left late Aug.
			DAWING U-618 Left Monrovia area early Aug.
			KLAUS U-340 Left Freetown area mid Aug.
			KOCH U-382 Left Liborian coast early Aug.

No regular refuelers active.

KUPPISCH U-547, enroute Far East, forced to fuel 6 subs homeward bound from distant areas for most economical return on 14 Aug. In 42 W - 23 W, and on 23 Aug. In 28 W - 36 W. KUPPISCH SUNK at R/V by A/C from USS CARL.

HAFER U-129, outbound for operations, forced to fuel 5 subs homeward bound from distant areas for most economical return on 17 Aug. In 39 W - 35 W, and on 19 Aug. In 27 W - 33 W.

REUELINGERS SUNK:  
HEUWANT U-117 - at R/V by A/C from USS CARL.

ACHILLERS U-161 met Jap sub I-8 (MIDNER) on 30 Aug. In about 39 W - 23 W to transfer German pilot, instructions, etc.  
ACHILLERS went on to operate off Brazil. ELEGANT U-230 completed refueling off Halifax early August.

SEPTEMBER 1943

DISSENT PATROL AREAS

Ho. Amer. Const

Caribbean

So. Amer. Const

W. Afr. Const

MISSISSIPPI U-518  
Arrived Florida,  
Straita end of  
September.

SCHROEDER U-123  
Left return from  
Georgetown -  
Paranaribo area  
without refueling.  
Constant A/C with  
convoy. Forced  
under by A/C.

ACHILLES U-161  
2 ships claimed  
sunk.  
SUNK late Sept.  
off Brazil coast.

REFUELING R/V's

SPECIAL FACTS

1 refueler provisioned 9 subs.

SCHROEDER U-460 fueled 5 subs  
outbound to join Group Leathon  
on 10 September in 45 N - 29 W.

Fueled 1 sub outbound to  
distant area on 16 September  
in 43 N - 32 W.

Fueled 3 subs outbound to join  
Group Rosbech on 25 September  
in 46 N - 29 W.

SILVERBUCHER U-107  
Special task  
(Ministry?)  
in Cape Henry.  
Cape Hatteras area  
early September.

STOCK U-214  
Laid mine off the  
Panama Canal late  
September.

SRH-998, Vol. II  
(? Part II?)

PART C

RESUMPTION OF OFFENSIVE  
AGAINST MAJOR CONVOYS  
Sept. 1943 - March 1944

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CHAPTER IX

U/B'S DEFEAT MADE EMPHATIC

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## U/B'S DEFEAT MADE EMPHATIC

1.  
Renewal of  
North Atlantic Offensive  
was doomed.

The resumption of attacks against North Atlantic convoys by U/B groups began in September 1943 with high talk of victory. Its failure became apparent after a brief success. It so happened that the renewal of the U/B offensive was approximately timed with the current and solid reading of U/B traffic which characterized the remainder of the war. After several months of difficulty in the summer of 1943, the German system had been mastered. Following the initial four days of ~~LUOWEN~~'S success, U/B dispositions, areas to be patrolled, and every shift of the lines could be anticipated by RI. And, unlike the situation which prevailed during the Spring Offensive of 1943, war vessels and A/C were available for direction to the scene of impending operations to meet the U/B's as they searched for their targets. The convoys in question were being regularly diverted away from danger.

2.  
Nullification of  
U/B Counter-devices.

This offensive never had a chance, notwithstanding the new and improved U/B counter-devices, innovations in tactics, and the special services which had been prepared during the summer to overcome the superior Allied measures which were believed to have been the cause of defeat in the spring of 1943. Great things were expected of the new acoustic torpedo, the "Zaunkoenig," which

was to clear out the escort so that U/B's might get at the merchant men. A number of escort vessels were sunk by this torpedo, but knowledge of the torpedo's limitations and the streaming of "foxer" gear tended to ward off its destructive power. The new radar search receivers failed to protect against surprise attack from the air.

3.

Problem of the elusive convoys and the over-present A/C.

The convoys could not be found, in spite of the use of every possible boat, including some hardly sea-worthy, of Very Long Range A/C operating as far as 20°W from Norwegian and French air fields, of intelligence gleaned from analysis of convoy voice traffic by special B-Dienst personnel aboard the U/B's, and from an occasional decrypted convoy routing dispatch. Instead of finding the convoy, the U/B's were themselves found by Allied forces. Command continued to repeat his

"Founded assumption....that the enemy air reconnaissance, using location methods which in part we have not yet been able to pick up, has contacted our line arrangements...." (1903/13/11/43)

as his explanation of the U/B's loss of invisibility. To reduce the possibility of being spotted by the ubiquitous radar equipped A/C, U/B's were ordered to keep radio silence except for messages of the utmost tactical importance, to refrain from using beacon signals, and to cease the use of the GSR equipment by which they attempted to determine whether or not they were being contacted by radar. It was feared that GSR was giving off radiations which in turn were being intercepted by Allied receivers, and being used to

locate U/B's.

4.

Change in Group pattern:  
the crescent-shaped formation.

These measures proved of no avail. A major change in group formation was introduced. Instead of concentrating all U/B's of a group in an unbroken line, the new plan called for a crescent-shaped formation, the U/B's being grouped in several short lines with considerable gaps between lines. Single scouting subs were placed further west, opposite the gaps, while a refueler, behind the lines, backed up the whole complex. Three purposes were served by this arrangement. First, every possible convoy lane in a given area was covered. Second, the majority of the group was protected somewhat from attack if one or two U/B's of one short line were discovered. In such an event, the Allies would presumably be led to believe that they had located the main body, and the remaining short lines would remain undetected. Third, the presence of a refueling U/B behind the lines (in itself an indication of the importance attached to these operations since refuelers were at a premium), obviated long trips for refueling, to the delay of operations, and allowed the U/B's to remain in patrol positions for a longer time.

5.

Convoy escorts and  
new U/B tactics.

Not only A/C but surface vessels became a force to be reckoned with in the fight for survival of the U/B. With the increase of escort vessels and anti-sub groups, the U/B was forced

under water and held there, if not destroyed. Frequently compelled to strike blind, unable to surface in the midst of a convoy and sink the cargo-carrying merchant ships as they passed in line before him, the U/B was ordered by Command to change tactics. U/B's, operating in pairs, were first to dispose of the escorts, and then to attack the heart of the convoy. One U/B was to draw the attention of the escorts away from the ships they were guarding, while the other made his way into the unprotected convoy. The acoustic torpedo was especially designed for use against pursuing escort ships, since as the ship weaved back and forth, the torpedo followed.

6.  
The Onset: Group LEUTHEM -  
ON 202-ONS 18.

By the middle of September, 21 U/B's had been assembled to form the first group of the renewed offensive, Group LEUTHEM. The group was to be ready for action by 2000/20 September, in a line from 59.45 N, 29.00 W, to 54.25 N, 26.00 W to operate on westbound convoys only. Contact was made at 0400 on the 20th as expected, and considerable success was achieved. Acting on instructions to attack first the escort vessels, by the afternoon of the 21st, the U/B's claimed the sinking of 7 DD's. (From records available, 4 escort vessels are known to have been sunk in this action.) Contact was gradually lost during the 21st but regained in time for intensive operations during the 22nd and 23rd. The convoys were now prepared, however, and, with a thinning of a fog which had prevailed, A/C were brought into action so that the subs did not



achieve the full success against the merchant ships which they had anticipated. In the late morning of 23 September, Command ordered Group LEUTHEN to cease operations and withdraw eastward. The action was considered a great victory, a vindication of the U/B. From 10 to 15 DD's and 8 merchant ships were claimed sunk. Actually, it is believed that 4 escorts and 7 merchant ships were the total casualties. Three U/B's were sunk in the course of the engagement.

Success for the Germans ended with this operation. The continuation of group action against North Atlantic convoys brought them only disaster.

#### 7. The Relapse.

##### a) Disappointing records of Groups ROSSBACH and SCHLIEFFEN.

Attempting to repeat his previous success, Command formed Group ROSSBACH on 26 September. The expected convoy was diverted to the north, and escaped completely. Despite further northern shifts of the line, each succeeding convoy passed unscathed. On 9 October, the group was disbanded, having failed to accomplish the task set for it by Command, who had ordered: "Smash the destroyers, sink the ships. Make up for your long wait."

The results achieved by Group SCHLIEFFEN, the last mid North Atlantic group in the old style, were even more disappointing. Placed, on 16 October, directly across the routes of two convoys, the group gained good contact with one, but managed to sink only one merchant ship.

##### b) Formation and failure of Groups SIEGFRIED, KORNER, and JAHN.

Innovations, later to become more marked, may be seen in

the disposition of the next groups formed, Groups SIEGFRIED, KOEHLER, and JAHN. Instead of lying across the paths of convoys in the area of 30° W, exposed to strong A/C patrols based on Iceland and Greenland, these groups were set up for eastbound convoys off Newfoundland. On 24 October, Group SIEGFRIED was formed in the old style, but in the new position. The German's sources of information failed them, however, and the awaited convoy passed far to the south.

c) Group TIRPITZ and the crescent arrangement.

Late in October, considerable Anglo-American convoy traffic off Canada was routed in two lanes, one running due east approximately along the 41st parallel, the other in a roughly northeasterly direction from Virgin Rocks. To intercept this traffic Consubs disbanded Group SIEGFRIED and formed Groups KOEHLER and JAHN on the last day of the month. Three days later these were replaced by Group TIRPITZ, a crescent arrangement of five short lines with single scouting subs opposite the gaps. This marks the first appearance of the new type formation. Although designed to facilitate the location of convoys, traffic passed successfully north or south of these groups, and on 7 November, the whole pack was withdrawn. The A/C patrol was too strong.

d) Group EISENHART and the eastward withdrawal of U/B Groups.

The eastward withdrawal of U/B groups which was to continue until groups were stationed to the east of Rockall began with the formation of Group EISENHART on 9 November. Small groups formed three lines in a checkerboard pattern that covered a great band of the North Atlantic. The new grouping of U/B's was now completely

evident, and again failed in its purpose. Convoys slipped around to the south. With this move the offensive against Anglo-American convoys which had been in progress since late September was temporarily abandoned.

e) Two refuelers lost.

The attempt to operate groups once more in the mid North Atlantic cost the U/B Navy two U-Tankers, both sunk at R/V's in October by USN CVE's. The number of supply subs was again reduced to two, the number which had been available at the end of August.

CHAPTER X

LAST CHALLENGE OF THE PREL-SCHNORCHEL U/B

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## LAST CHALLENGE OF THE PRE-SCHMIDT U/B

### 1. The U/B War Contracts.

With the second evacuation of the Northwest Atlantic in November 1943 any hope of reviving the existing U/B fleet as the first line of German defense was buried. There was no dispersal this time. Even had dispersal been possible, the hour was growing late. Instead U/B's were drawn back toward the homeland and concentrated off the British Western Approaches and along the UK-Gibraltar lane, where they were left to attempt a modified form of group warfare. Throughout the winter they fought their stubborn, holding action with occasional flashes of offensive spirit and continuing losses. The groups were characterized by long life submerged, by slowness, and silence. The Grand Admiral turned his attention to the construction of a new fleet, but persisted in demanding that the most be made of the one at sea.

### 2. Renewal of activities against Gibraltar-England convoys: Groups SCHILL and WEDDIGER.

In conjunction with the operations against convoys in the North Atlantic, action had been taken up against convoys on the Gibraltar-England lane, in the area northeast of the Azores. The operations of Group SCHILL and its successor, Group WEDDIGER, extended from late October to early December. Due to the fact that there was less area in which to maneuver and to the ability of the Germans to make considerable use of reconnaissance A/C,

some of these convoys were not able to avoid the patrol lines altogether. However, in half a dozen operations, the Germans did not achieve any great success. Comsubs himself justified the operations only because they forced the British to cut down on A/S activities in the Bay of Biscay.

3.  
Group CORONEL and successors:  
Groups SILE, ALBUM and FOMER.

After two weeks of inactivity in the North Atlantic, Group CORONEL was set up on 2 December to operate on a convoy from a position closer to the Western Approaches than any previous group. CORONEL was set up fairly well south, across an approximate great circle route. The convoy however, made its run through the northern end of the line almost unnoticed. CORONEL continued to have no success whatsoever in intercepting "expected" convoys, although the lines were shifted almost daily.

Three new and short-lived groups were formed from CORONEL U/B's, Groups SILE, ALBUM and FOMER, on 15 December. Of the three, Group FOMER was the most promising. It was told to cruise on the surface even during the day. The order to carry out so daring an action was soon rescinded. The problem of finding the convoys was getting desperate, else U/B's would never have been ordered to offer such fine targets for attack. The only convoy which was contacted was let go, at Comsubs' order.

The total operations of Group CORONEL and its successors extended over 17 days. During this time some 20 U/B's had swept back and forth across an area 5 degrees in latitude and 12 degrees

in longitude. They were assigned at least 13 distinct positions, yet of the 7 convoys which they were to intercept, only two were contacted.

4.

Striking characteristics of Group  
HUNGER; individual U/B aggressiveness  
and observation of convoy movements.

a) "Make determined use of chances for attack."

Group HUNGER, formed 24 December, had two striking characteristics. It was patterned on the type of Group ROBERTS, small units over a considerable area. To be successful against convoys, such a disposition demanded great aggressiveness on the part of the individual commanders. They were exhorted to: "Make determined use of chances for attack, since, owing to the small number of boats, the period of fighting is bound to be short." (1252/22) Such aggressiveness was just the quality which had been lacking. HUNGER may have been organized less with a view to sinking a large number of ships than in the hope of providing Comsubs with much-needed information as to the convoy routes.

b) Imobility of Group HUNGER.

The essentially informative function of Group HUNGER is brought out by its second characteristic - a peculiarity which became ever more marked as time went on - its lack of movement. As in the case of CORNHILL the area it covered remained constant, and the submarines were back and forth across their assigned positions. But in contrast to the restlessness of CORNHILL, the

U/B's of Group EUBANK were moved only seldom from one assigned position to another. The U/B's were assigned only 9 different positions within the first month of the group's 5-week existence. As a result, less refueling was necessary, and the 500 ton subs in the group were able to remain active for unusually long periods without being refueled.

c) New developments in tactical handling.

This change in the function of the group necessitated a corresponding change in tactical handling. Comsubs sent out relatively few reports of convoys to be expected. Although quite a few convoys were contacted, even during the remaining days of December, Comsubs rarely ordered any section of Group EUBANK to operate on such reports. The individual U/B's were expected to do this of their own accord. Add to this the fact that all unit transmissions except the tactically essential ones were discouraged, and it becomes evident that Group EUBANK represented an increase in responsibility for the U/B commander at the expense of Control. It was as though Comsubs had nothing more to give his boats in the way of aid. With Group EUBANK the general method of procedure which had for so long obtained with regard to U/B's on station patrol in distant areas began to be adapted to North Atlantic convoy activities.

The total accomplishment of the 5 weeks of the existence of this group was one merchant ship sunk. The position of the German High Command with regard to the present-state of the submarine warfare was matched only by its optimism when it



considered the future. Its confidence was still based upon the hope of perfecting a variety of technical devices which would enable the U/B's to "catch up with the enemy's lead." The hope was not without reason, for the first Schermerhal equipped U/B appeared in the Atlantic in January.

5.

Appearance of Weather boats.

It was in this period, beginning on 31 December, that a new type of operation began in the North Atlantic. Within specially designated areas in the central North Atlantic, U/B's reported the state of the weather to Control twice a day. This task was their only duty, but was of the utmost importance. The U/B was now being used in an attempt to forecast the Allied Invasion.

6.

Group BOREUM engagements with  
US Task Groups: TG 21.14 and  
TG 21.16

After a lapse of nearly a fortnight, action against Gibraltar-England convoys was resumed during the last few days of December. On the 18th, Group BOREUM was formed. On the 23rd, BOREUM was advised of an "enemy carrier and cruiser" in the neighborhood. Contact was made on TG 21.14, the USS GARD and 4 DD's. A battle ensued which lasted two days. The Germans claimed 4 DD's sunk, and the task group claimed one U/B sunk. But the U/B's seem to have had the best of it, sinking one DD, while one U/B was slightly damaged. Meanwhile, the convoy expected had dodged to the west. It was chased, but to no avail.

During the night of 31 December, various boats of Group BORNUM located part of TG 21.16, the USS BLOCK ISLAND and 4 DE's, but the action was inconclusive and the group turned toward a southbound convoy. A/C reconnaissance was not available, but Comsubs hoped to compensate for this by having the U/B's remain on the surface. Since nine subs in the group were equipped with the new 3.7 automatic A/A gun, Comsubs expected them to fight it out with any A/C they might meet.

Group BORNUM lasted for 25 days. During this time Comsubs had hoped they would intercept 6 convoys. Yet, constantly worried and held under by carrier and land-based A/C and by DE's of task groups, they never made substantial contact with any of the convoys. The campaign on the Gibraltar lane ended with this group. Its misance value was great, but as an offensive weapon it was no more effective than its counterpart on the US-UK lanes.

7.  
Groups STUBBER and HINEIN.

Groups STUBBER and HINEIN were formed on 26 and 27 January, 1944. The former surrounded the island of Rockall, and the latter took up its position a short distance to the west of southern Ireland. U/B groups had never before operated so close to the United Kingdom.

Despite the favorable position for convoy contact and Command's evident corrections of his convoy plot, successful convoy evasion continued. Days of fruitless searching preceded the disbanding of the two groups on 3 February.

8.  
Failure of Group IGEL and  
abandonment of "individual  
initiative" plan by Command.

Group IGEL was formed immediately thereafter, and accomplished nothing for the two weeks of its life except the expenditure of a considerable amount of precious fuel oil. After the Group HESSEN fiasco, in which each commander was expected to use his own initiative in attacking, this method of handling was evidently reconsidered and abandoned. Group IGEL was given every possible assistance. The first convoy slipped through their fingers nonetheless, as did the other two on which operation was intended.

Just before this unfortunate group was converted into Group HAI, long messages of encouragement and admonition were sent. "The coming operation is to be fought with all available forces, in order to fight a convoy battle in the old style," with the qualification that "the first night must produce the main blow from all subs, since further operation during day is questionable because of carrier A/C." (2236/17) A final sentence, indicating the vital need of a successful action against a convoy, warns: "This long-prepared action must succeed. Do your best."

9.  
Group PRUSSEN: the last  
"wolf pack" before the  
Invasion.

Group PRUSSEN was formed 22 February, considerably to the southwest of recent groups, and was ordered to watch for an

eastbound convoy. It waited in vain, for the convoy had passed to the south. During March, Comsubs sent no messages to PRUSOM informing them of the arrival of convoys. After long inactivity the group was disbanded on 22 March, and the boats scattered over the North Atlantic in free maneuver areas. The last "wolf pack" in the history of the old style German U/B had vanished in failure.

10.

Net results of the offensive.

The tabulation of the results of the 7 months' group operations shows a sharp contrast between the cost of the undertaking and its meager returns. An average of 60 U/B's a month lay across convoy paths in the North Atlantic and off convoy gathering and dispersal points. After the 11 ships sunk by Group LUSHEM in September and October, only 8 more can be credited to the Germans, a total of 19 ships. A heavy toll was exacted for these few successes, for 50 U/B's were sunk, plus 2 refuelers sunk at R/V's.

The last concerted attempt to sever Allied supply lines before the Invasion was ended. With unswerving devotion to one single purpose, the campaign was fought in the face of great Allied superiority in ships, men, A/C, and location devices, including RI. Even after the first few months, when defeat must have been plainly seen by the Germans, there was no yielding. Only when the obvious imminence of invasion forced German Command to begin hurried readjustments in the disposal of the German Navy did the effort cease.

April and May, 1944, were months of waiting. Weather reporters continued active in the central North Atlantic, and U/B's were given free maneuver in the entire North Atlantic area. A few boats continued their operations in distant patrol stations, but the majority of boats were held in French ports, waiting for whatever was to come.

	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	<u>May</u>
Total Subs at Sea	124	102	98	107	94	98	85	63
Operational Subs	86	68	59	61	58	56	33	31
Subs Operating on North Atlantic Convoys	53	29	27	37	36	23	0	0
Subs Operating on Convoys on Gibraltar Lane	8	38	24	8	0	0	0	0
Subs in Distant Areas	6	11	6	3	4	8	8	9
No. American Coast	3	2	1	1	2	4	3	3
Caribbean	0	2	3	1	1	2	2	0
So. American Coast	2	4	1	0	0	0	1	1
West African Coast	1	3	1	1	1	2	2	5
Refuelers	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	0
Subs Refueled	6	7	2	0	0	2	0	0

APPENDIX A TO PART C

NORTH ATLANTIC CONVOYS AND U/B GROUPS, September 1943 - March 1944.

W-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

ONS 18 20/9 LEUTHEM formed 2000A (21 U/B's from waiting areas) from 59 N. - 29 W. to 54 N. - 26 W. To operate on W-bound convoys only. Kept informed of convoys progress. Operated successfully 20-23/9. 4 DD's and 7 merchant's sunk.

HX 256

16/9

LEUTHEM not to operate "If E-bound convoy sighted". (HX 256 was in area 18-19/9).

ON 203 26/9 ROSSBACH formed from 12 ex-LEUTHEM U/B's, plus 8 others, from 58 N.-34 W. to 54 N.-31 W. To operate 26/9 on ON 203. Convoy diverted to N.

HX 257

23/9

LEUTHEM to operate. Plans abandoned. Group dissolved.

ONS 19 26/9 ROSSBACH informed. Expected 29th, then 1/10, then 3rd, with ON 204. Line shifted to N. and W. on 30/9, but offensive contact not made.

HX 258

1/10

To ROSSBACH: "If E-bound convoy sighted, do not operate on 1t."

ONS 20 11/10 Ex-ROSSBACH U/B's heading for area of attack planned for 16/10.

SC 143  
HX 259

4/10

To ROSSBACH: To operate 8/10 on E-bound convoy. On 7/10 U/B's told of "another" (SC 143) "by D/W". U/B's found only DD's of SC 143.

13/10 SCHLEIFER formed from these U/B's. To be in line 16/10 across route of ON 206 and ONS 20. ON 206 diverted to N., ONS 20 contacted, operation fizzled.

HX 261

19/10

U/B's informed of HX 261 noon position for 20/10. No operation. (Cipher compromise presumed).

HX 262

18/10  
20/10  
22/10

U/B disposition planned for 24/10. Lined up for 24/10 operation. SINGRIED formed from 19 U/B's ex-ROSSBACH, from 52 N.-41 W. to 49 N.-39 W.

26/10

Operation discontinued. Convoy presumed to be already to E. (Had proceeded via S. corner)

ONS 21 30/10  
ON 208

KOENIGER and JAIN, formed from ex-SINGRIED boats,

SO 145

30/10

SINGRIED disbanded after failing to contact

W-BOUNDConvoyU/B's

From 52 N.-42 W. to 42 N.-40 W.; informed. Convoy traffic passed to K.

ON 210 7/11

U/B's which were to become EISENHART informed.

SC 146  
HX 265

7/11

TRIPITZ disbanded. U/B's heading for new type lines: small, scattered.

ON 213 25/11

Radio silence imposed on U/B's in AL because of intended operation.

9/11

EISENHART formed; 30 U/B's from 60 N.-45 W. to 45 N.-25 W. Lines shifted on 12/11 and 14/11 to SE because of "persistent avoiding action of convoys". Contact made too late for operation. (Cipher compromise presumed).

26/11

Temporary attack areas for pre-CORONEL boats.

30/11

U/B's informed of expected convoy.

SC 147  
HX 267

30/11

U/B's which were to become CORONEL informed.

ONS 24 2/12

CORONEL formed of 16 U/B's from waiting areas SSE of Iceland, in mid N. Atlantic, closer to UK. To operate on slow W-bound convoy 5/12.

HX 268

5/12

CORONEL to operate evening of 7/12, expecting shift to K.

COMMENT: German Command indicates awareness that CONVOY was proceeding on N. route. Longitudinal estimate was good.

COMMENT: (HX 268 passed to K. 7-8/12)

ON 214

See England - Gibraltar Section.

SC 148  
HX 2698/12  
12/12

CORONEL to operate on 13/12. Declining this evening, passage of 2 E-bound convoys.

ON 215 13/12

CORONEL grown to 25 boats. Split into 3 sections. ON 215 was sighted SE of line. Convoy was steering W. 10 U/B's, CORONEL III, detached and sent SW to catch ON 215, now steering SW.

COMMENT: Convoys had passed far to S.

16/12

D/R plotting of convoy sent to OSORNO and ALSTRAUTER blockade runners. CORONEL III found nothing; withdrawn to E.

HX 270

16/12

D/R plot given OSORNO and ALSTRAUTER.

E-BOUNDConvoyU/B's

SC 145. KORNER - JANN formed for EX 263 evening 31/10.

KORNER - JANN disbanded. TRIPITZ formed to operate 5/11, from 51 N.-46 W. to 42 N.-43 W. Convoy passed to S.

TRIPITZ disbanded. U/B's heading for new type lines: small, scattered.

EISENHART formed; 30 U/B's from 60 N.-45 W. to 45 N.-25 W. Lines shifted on 12/11 and 14/11 to SE because of "persistent avoiding action of convoys". Contact made too late for operation. (Cipher compromise presumed).



Convoy

W-BOUND

U/B's

ONS 25

18/12

GEIDER U-761 to count on SW convoy in ED 10, 20.50 on 21/12.

COMMENT: The Germans were right in believing that these convoys were proceeding on S route, although they were behind Command's schedule.

Convoy

E-BOUND

U/B's

22/12

RUEBEL formed of 18 U/B's ex-CORONEL in 6 lines to the E. and S. of CORONEL.

24/12

Command counting on RUEBEL operation by this date. HX 270 had cleared RUEBEL area by 23/12.

SC 149

16/12

D/R plot of SC 149 given to OSORBO and ALSTERUER.

ON 217

27/12

To RUEBEL: Count on 1 W-bound convoy in vicinity of group at present. No info as to H. of S. routing.

HX 271

27/12

To RUEBEL: Count on 2 E-bound convoys in vicinity of group at present. No information as to H. or S. routing.

COMMENT:

Unlike SC 149 and HX 271, ON 217 was a good 24 hours E. of RUEBEL. RUEBEL lines were well placed, however, for S. convoys on much different routes.

COMMENT: These convoys were near the group.

30/12

2 U/B's of northernmost section of RUEBEL stumbled on ON 217. 1 ship sunk. Remainder of U/B's pursued, but no further successes.

ON 219

8/1

To RUEBEL at 2000A: Expect 1 W-bound convoy. Keep good lookout.

HX 273  
SC 150

8/1

To RUEBEL at 2000A: Expect 2 E-bound convoys. Keep good lookout.

COMMENT:

At this time RUEBEL was approx. 20° W. ON 219 seems the only W-bound convoy to which Command could refer. On A.M. 10/1 ON 219 was 56-25 N., 13.02 W. (Admty). at 111 2 days away. Had the old cycle been observed, ON 219 would have sailed 4 days earlier, in which case RUEBEL's convoy warning, coming on the actual day of sailing, would not seem unusual.

CEAR estimates for 2000Z/8:  
SC 150: 49.23 N. - 32.57 W.  
HX 273: 50.04 N. - 33.12 W.  
These convoys were 2 full days W. and S. of RUEBEL P.M. 8/1.

ONS 27  
ON 220

15/1

To RUEBEL: Count on 2 W-bound convoys today.

HX 274

15/1

To RUEBEL: Count on 1 E-bound convoy today.

M-BOUND

E-BOUND

Convoy

U/B's

Convoy

U/B's

COMMENT: By the 15th, RUEBEN had shifted to the E., so that concentration was along 190 W. EX 274 was 43 N.-30 W. at 2000Z/15, just before altering course sharply to NE. Had she sailed 2 days earlier and followed more of a great circle route she might have hit RUEBEN's area on 15-16/1. ONS 27 passed through area 15 to 19 W. on 17/1, ON 220 on 18/1, hence were being plotted ahead of time, although not quite as much as would have resulted from a strict German observance of the earlier cycle.

17-19/1 ON 220 contacted by U/B and A/O. No orders to operate issued.

21/1 ON 220 out of danger because of shift of RUEBEN to E. on 19/1. SC 151 HK 275

18/1 ON 221 19/1 21/1 TO RUEBEN: W-convoy in about 55.03 N.-18.15 W., night of 20-21/1. 13 remaining RUEBEN boats brought further east. W-convoy expected.

COMMENT: Convoy not due in area until 26/1. CONVOY: Convoy did not appear until 25/1, day before RUEBEN was disbanded. If HK 275 was the convoy meant, SC 151 was meant, the plot was wrong, since she was 4 days behind the old schedule, and would not have appeared until 26/1.

26/1 TO RUEBEN at 0900A: W-convoy tonight. 26/1 TO STUBBER: E-convoy tonight. STUBBER formed of ex-RUEBEN boats. Surrounded island of Rockall. 26/1 TO STUBBER at 2100A: W-convoy tonight.

COMMENT: The above suggests that the Germans may have corrected their plotting for W-convoys at this time - on the assumption that when Command says W-convoy he still meant an ON or ONS convoy as he did in the past. The situation is somewhat puzzling, including the shifting of STUBBER to area from 13 to 15 W., where U/B's would not have operated in winter of 1942-1943. A clarification of the convoy situation might have been forthcoming from G.A.F.'s sighting of ON 221 and Command's erroneous directions to now Group HININ (formed 27/1 from ex-RUEBEN boats a short distance W. of southern Ireland), under the impression apparently that ON 221 was KNS 40 (Eng-61b). This needed clarification was forgotten, however, in the invasion scare of 29 Jan.

ONS 28 31/1 TO STUBBER and HININ: Expect W-convoy today. HK 276 31/1 TO STUBBER and HININ: Beginning tomorrow E-convoy also.

COMMENT: The expectation of ONS 28 would seem to indicate that Command now had the cycle straightened out for W-convoys, but this does not seem to apply to HK 276. To expect HK 276 on 1/2 in area 14 W. would necessitate its having sailed not later than 17/1, the date according to the old cycle, instead of 21/1, as it actually did.

W-BOUND

Convoys

U/B's

ON 222 1/2

To STUERMER: Tonight count also on W-bound convoy.

4/2

To BREMEN U-764: Convoy in 51.09 N.-17.15 W., course

4/2

220.  
Convoy presumed American, course SW, 8-9.  
Count on speed 9, SW course.

COMMENT: Speed 9 suggests Command was sure  
BREMEN's convoy was an ON.

E-BOUND

Convoys

U/B's

EX 277 :  
SC 152

3/2

IGEL I and II formed of the 20 remaining  
STUERMER boats, from 62 N.-12 W. to 48N.-12W.

7/2

To IGEL II: E-convoy sighted by TILLESSEN  
U-516 at 0758A/7 in 44.09 N.-23.25 W. May  
be expected evening 9/2 at speed 9, fore-  
noon 10/2 at speed 7.

COMMENT: Command was not sure who-  
TILLESSEN had sighted an UK or  
SC convoy.

ONS 29 12/2

To IGEL I and II: Beginning 16/2 operation preceded  
by G.A.F. recon planned against outbound convoy.

HX 278

10/2

To IGEL: Operation planned on Am.-Eng.  
convoy with G.A.F. on 16/2.

COMMENT: IGEL I shifted farther W. to about 240 miles  
W. of Rockall. IGEL II between 20° - 25° W.  
and 48° - 50° N.

COMMENT: This operation apparently given up  
in favor of ONS 29. Plotting  
seems fairly accurate.

14/2

Convoy sighted by A/C 1800A in 55.21 N.-10.35 W.,  
course 200. IGEL I and II distributed for inter-  
ception from 54 N. - 25 W. to 48 N. - 20 W.

15/2

IGEL I proceeding farther S. to intercept.  
At 2103A Lines A and B formed, based on A/C sighting  
at 1730A in 54.39 N.-13.05 W., course 230, speed 5,  
operation presumably not before R/M 18/2.

17/2

From REISENER U-608: At 0300 was passed  
over by a fast E-bound convoy. Last hydro-  
phone bearing 60° T., 50.15 N.-22.45 W.

16/2

To IGEL at 1913A: A/C sighting 1610 in 52.39 N.-15.35 W.,  
course 180. Presumably deceptive course. Speed 6-6.5.  
To IGEL at 1536A: Cruise under water 125°.

17/2

CONVOY

N-BOUND

U/B's

CONVOY

E-BOUND

U/B's

17/2

To IGEL, at 1633A: Convoy sighted 1530, 51.51 N.-18.45 W., course 270°. IGEL I not to advance south of 51 N. IGEL II, cruise under water 340°.

COMMENT: The two groups were to converge on convoy course.

17/2

HAI formed from 15 U/B's ex-IGEL for 1800/13 across convoy course 270°. 2 lines, the forward line with wings to catch diversions from route, with a S/W diversion anticipated.

COMMENT: During night of 17-18 Command sent a series of messages to Groups HAI from which one can gather that he felt the stage had been carefully set and a vigorous operation assured. "This long prepared operation must succeed". (0105/18).

18/2

To HAI at 1351A: Move both patrol lines 20 miles in direction 150° by 2000.

COMMENT: There had been no A/C recon during night of 17-18. According to Command's 1048/18 A/C scouting would begin at 2000A/18. At 2000Z/18 CEN plotted OMS 29 at 48.35 N.-23.32 W. The southern end of the forward HAI line was 48.57 N.-23.15 W., hence by moving 20 miles on 150° HAI should have intercepted the convoy.

18/2

LOOKS (264) encountered sweep group in 49.03 N.-22.55 W. COMMENT: This was apparently sufficient confirmation of Command's anticipation that the convoy was cutting under his line, for at 2021

18/2

HAI I and II were ordered on course 180, speed 11.

18/2

To HAI II at 2208A: Course E., speed 12.

COMMENT: Presumably in an effort to mass his subs for a night operation.

18/2

To HAI I and II at 2219A: Speed 13, course E. No result from A/C recon yet.

COMMENT: Throughout the night the U/B's attempted to get at the convoy with the aid of GAF but without success.

They may have been confused by OH 224 which was some 75 miles farther east and proceeding on a more southerly course.

Convoy

W-BOUND

U/B's

Convoy

E-BOUND

U/B's

ON 225

25/2

25/2

22/2

To PREUSSSEN at 1655A: Beginning afternoon 27/2 SW convoy expected. Distribution of subs between 45 - 50 N.,

22 - 27 W.

COMMENT: The concentration was thus across Standard Route C.

GREYER added to PREUSSSEN; SW convoy expected tomorrow evening.

26/2

To PREUSSSEN at 1504A: Beginning tonight cruise to new positions.

COMMENT: These new attack areas maintained a less concentrated coverage of Route C while distributing some boats as

far north as 53°. Meanwhile ON 225 had proceeded on Route B instead of Route C.

28/2

To PREUSSSEN at 1740A: 1504/28 cancelled. Remain in your present area.

COMMENT: This suggests that Command's hopes for ON 225 were revived. It is possible that the D/F he reported in 1638/28 may have suggested that ON 225 was out-

maneuvering him by an extreme swing to south.

29/2

To PREUSSSEN at 1004A: Convoy no longer to be expected. Occupy areas ordered in 1504/28.

PREUSSSEN formed of 18 boats to SF of former groups, from 53 N.-30 W. to 44 N.-22 W.

To PREUSSSEN at 1530A: E-bound convoy expected beginning today.

COMMENT: The only E-bound convoy to which Command could have referred was

either SC 153 or HX 279, both of which passed through PREUSSSEN's assigned area on the 27th and

24th. Command may have realized this when he shifted his attention

so quickly to ON 225.

ENGLAND - GIBRALTAR CONVOYS AND U/B GROUPS, October 1944<sup>43</sup> - January 1945<sup>44</sup>.

Convoy

N-BOUND

U/B's

Convoy

S-BOUND

U/B's

SL 138/NKS 28 26/10  
28/10

28/10

SCHILL formed of 8 boats in area 44 N.-20 W.  
To SCHILL at 1604; Convoy of landing boats was in approx.  
42.27 N. - 15.18 W. at 1230A. Do not operate on it.  
Make use of attack opportunities as they are offered.  
COMMENT: This was possibly SL 140/NKS 31.  
To SCHILL at 1800A: According to A/C recon, expected  
convoy ((SL 138/NKS 28)) was in 36.39 N. - 18.22 W. at  
1300A 27/10, and in 39.39 N. - 18.54 W. at 1100A 28/10,  
course H., speed 8. Composition 54 ships, 1 CL and 5 escorts,  
of which 2 are DD. Convoy is running in 11 columns of  
5 ships each. Surface 1800A/29/10.  
COMMENT: Strength of convoy and escorts grossly under-  
estimated.

29/10  
29/10:

Count on convoys passing tonight.  
At 2338: Operate at maximum speed on hydrophone bearing  
reported by Franke U-262.

30/10

In view of Franke's hydrophone bearing Comsubs assumes  
that convoy is on N. course, speed around 8. Continue  
search in NW direction, spreading apart.  
COMMENT: Convoy had continued on N. course, but the  
speed had been incorrectly estimated on 28/10.

Speed then was only 5.3 knots, and was not in-  
creased to 8 knots until dawn 31/10. U/B's were  
therefore spread too far ahead to carry out con-  
centrated night attack.

30/10

At 1040A today A/C spotted in 44.21 N.-20.15 W. the convoy  
which had been expected yesterday, course 355 or 000, speed  
6. 50 ships, 1 CL, 5 escorts. Operate at maximum speed.  
In case no contact on D/D R/V, sweep in large area for  
convoy with speed from 6 to 8, course 10. Something must  
be gotten out of this convoy tonight.

31/10

COMMENT: Command must have been anticipating an  
alternate avoiding action to the NE.  
At 0651: Go 1t on Franke's report.  
COMMENT: Convoy course was altered to EHW after  
it became known that sighting report had  
been made. 15 minutes later, course was  
altered to NW. Few minutes later merchant ship was sunk.

NKS 31

31/10

To SCHILL: Intended that group E3 into action  
about evening 3/11 on S. convoy in area  
44 N. - 18 W.

CONVOY

N-BOUND

U/B's

CONVOY

S-BOUND

U/B's

31/10

At 2012: Set off to W.

KMS 25

2/11

FO SCHILL at 0010: The convoy sighted by Harbach U-953 is a fast convoy of troop-transports bound for England, speed 13 knots. Subs that can reach convoy tonight operate on it. Otherwise continue cruise.

KMS 31

1/11

SCHILL move to area 44 N. - 20 W.

3/11

Expected convoy not picked up by A/C today. New patrol line 44 N. - 20 to 23 W.

4/11

Air recon without results. Convoy still expected. Line moved to W.

KMS 29

5/11

During night of 7/11 or 8/11 action against N-bound convoy is intended.

5/11

S-bound convoy no longer expected. COMMENT: KMS 31 was a good 30 miles S. of the SCHILL line on 4/11.

7/11

COMMENT: Group moved E. and S. to pick up convoy. Convoy sighted by A/C considerably to SE of line. Line moved to E., anticipating easterly diversion.

8/11

When no contact made, Command evidently feared he had underestimated speed of convoy, and that route had changed to W. Line moved to SW.

9/11

At 1910A, convoy reported by A/C close to center of patrol line.

COMMENT: Convoy had proceeded on westerly diversion course, and shift of line on 9/11 was correct.

9/11

Contact made by 3 U/B's with sweep group only. 1 DD claimed sunk.

10/11

U/B's in position to continue attack were to do so. Others to move off to W.

11/11

Operation on N-bound convoy during night of 13/11 is intended.

16/11

SCHILL I formed of 9 SCHILL U/B's in area 40 N.-20 W. Operation intended on N-convoy sighted today in 36 N.-14 W.

17/11

Convoy sighted by V/C S. of line on westerly course. Line moved accordingly.

18/11

According to B-report, convoy in 38 N.-19 W. at 1000A. After dark, contact keeping A/C will throw a "Lux" light with bright white light behind convoy in direction of its course.

18/11

COMMENT: This arrangement was for deceptive purposes, and also to avoid the use of homing beacon signals, keeping radio activity to a minimum.

Convoy

E-BOUND

U/B's

Convoy

S-BOUND

U/B's

18/11 SCHILL II formed of 9 ex-ESSEX U/B's to take part in action on MKS 30.  
 18/11 At 1309A Hunkle U-515 reported convoy in 39.45 N.-19.42 W. which coincides with Franke's bearing at 2017A. Go 1t on Henke's report.  
 19/11 Contact lost after several U/D's had attacked and been attacked by sweep groups attached to convoy.

COMMENT: After reassembly of group, line was moved N., but convoy had gotten past. Not until 21/11 did Command realize that the convoy had escaped.

MKS 33 22/11

23/11

MKS 31 24/11

24/11

WEDIGER in new line NE, closer to port, boats having been out a long time. Operation is intended on next H-bound convoy.

WEDIGER formed for operation on H-bound convoy; 16 U/B's from SCHILL in line from 43 N. - 22 W. to 43 N. - 19 W.  
 Air recos today without results. Convoy is presumably farther west. Line to move tonight 90 miles W.  
 No clues about S-convoy. Probably passed line by moving out farther to W.  
COMMENT: Command was exactly right.

26/11

27/11

Air scouting planned to improve convoy position and to help subs find it. At 1345A air recce sighted expected convoy 30 E. of the line, heading W. Line moved so as to be in position to advance to E. and meet convoy.

COMMENT: Convoy, however, was on a deceptive course, for on 27/11 it was discovered by A/C to have reverted to N. course, hence was still farther E. than was supposed, as reported by Command later in the day.

27/11

Night of 27/11, subs were spread in fan-shaped arrangement to operate on all possible courses from 290 to 350. A/C discovered course to be still northerly.

COMMENT: The reports sent to Command during the search for this convoy indicated that the convoy, after the short deceptive maneuver, continued on a course far to the E. He was evidently loathe to act on this information until



Convoy

N-BOUND

U/B's

just before the operation was ended on 28/11, because past experience with N-bound convoys indicated that they had formerly taken a more westerly route, and until the end he seemed convinced that this convoy would do the same.

Convoy

S-BOUND

U/B's

KMS 34 29/11  
30/11

WEDDIGEN, now reduced to 9 U/B's, to operate on S-bound convoy.

Reconnaissance line directly across route KMS 34 would take.

COMMENT: Command, at this point, seems to have become confused as to the convoy his U/B's were to intercept. Having placed them in a line which, had they maintained it, would have caught KMS 34 on 2-3/12.

He appears to have believed that a convoy which was heading S. but to the W. of the line, was the original convoy on a westerly diversion. Therefore on, WEDDIGEN to sweep for convoy, to the NW.

COMMENT: This sweep headed the group for ON 214, a U.K. to U.S. convoy which had been diverted S. to avoid group WEDDIGEN.

U/B at extreme S. end of line sighted a DJ belonging to KMS 34, but the group kept on its way.

In new line, 49 to 47 N. - 25 to 25 W. Harfinger U-269, returning U/B, sighted convoy far to W. of line. The line was then pulled to the NE, heading for the area of the sighting.

COMMENT: Convoy slipped by to S. without being contacted.

U/B's not in pursuing position discontinue. WEDDIGEN dissolved.

Besides expected N-bound convoy, count on S-bound convoy.

KMS 33 20/12

20/12  
21/12

BORKUM formed of 8 ex-CORONET boats and 5 from visiting areas, from 47 N.-21 W. to 47 N.-17 W. N-bound convoy expected beginning evening of 20/12. Morning scouting had no results. Air recce without results.

KMS 36 21/12

7/12

ON 214 2-3/12

3/12  
6/12

Convoys

N-BOUND

U/B's

Convoys

S-BOUND

U/B's

21/12  
22/12  
23/12

At 1900A, surface and move line to 1SW.  
Move line to SW.  
Line again moved to SW.

23/12

Convoy was ahead of Command's schedule, and considerably to SW on 20/12. Convoy stayed on W. diversion route, and when it was not sighted on 22/12, Command must have realized that KMS 33 was well away, and so once more he moved HORKUM to the SW hoping to catch KMS 36.  
Enemy carrier & cruiser in 47 N.-19W. Course 235. speed 17. Take course 30 at highest speed weather will permit.

24/12

Group HORKUM operate on Bahr's U-305 report at maximum speed. Sink it.  
COMMENT: TG 21.14 (USS CABD).

24/12

Occupied patrol line 45 N.-24 W. to 45 N.-20 W.  
COMMENT: Line moved north, approaching IUS 36. Departure of the expected S-bound convoy has been delayed because of fog. You can count on 2 more days before its arrival in the line.  
COMMENT: Whatever the source of Command's information it appears to have been wrong, since the convoy passed through the western end of the line 24-25/12.

25/12

Remain in patrol line. The passage of the convoy may still be expected.

26/12

Operate on surface even after dawn. SW advance.  
COMMENT: One U/B had contacted the convoy, but his attack miscarried. Pursuit was ordered, but to no avail.

27/12

A/O spotted enemy sweep group in 47 N.-26 W. (far to N. of line). Possibly S-bound convoy.  
COMMENT: No S-bound convoy in this vicinity. Sat off from patrol line.

KMS 34

28/12  
29/12  
30/12  
30/12

Operation on N-bound convoy planned for 30/12. Start today for new line 44 N.-21 W. to 44 N.-18 W. Air recce on expected N-bound convoy. Yesterday's recce without results. Air recce today again without results. Group to remain in line.

31/12

Passage of convoy may still be expected.  
COMMENT: Convoy passed through W. end of line 30/12. Engagement with TG 21.16 (USS BLOCK ISLAND).

31/12

CONVOY

N-BOUND

U/B's

CONVOY

S-BOUND

U/B's

NKS 35 3/1

3/1

On 7/1 and 8/1 operation is intended against N-bound Gibraltar convoy.

BORKUM I 45 N.-22 W. to 45 N.-21 W.  
BORKUM II 45 N.-20 W. to 45 N.-19 W.  
BORKUM III 46 N.-18 W. to 46 N.-17 W.

BORKUM divided into BORKUM I, II and III.

6/1

Operation against N-bound convoy not expected to take place before 10/1. Move patrol line 90 miles to S.

8/1

Air scouting today without results.  
Air recce discovered convoy at 1330A in 37 N-16 W. course not ascertained.

9/1

COMMENT: Command had overestimated the speed of NKS 35. It was running about 2 days slower than he had figured. Line moved S. to 41 N.-20 W. to 42 N.-17 W. to meet convoy, Air scouting without results.

10/1

Air scouting without results.  
Bahr U-305 sighted steamer in 41.30 N.-20.30 W. Go to it on basis of Bahr's report. Course presumably north.

11/1

COMMENT: Contact was maintained for 1 1/2 hours by Bahr, until he was sighted and forced off. No other U/B made contact.

13/1

BORKUM dissolved.

KMS 37 2/1/44

S-bound convoy expected. No air recce available. COMMENT: Had A/C reconnaissance been used, it might have been discovered that KMS 37 was far to the W. of the line set up, and was never in any danger of being contacted.

APPENDIX B TO PART C

INDEPENDENT PATROLS  
IN DISTANT AREAS  
October 1943 - May 1944

From October, 1943 to May, 1944, 54 U/S's made independent cruises to distant patrol areas. They were all 750 tonners. In the 8 months of operations, only 28 ships were claimed sunk in all areas. Although only two U/S's were sunk in their attack areas, reports sent home by returning boats give sufficient indication that A/S forces were almost everywhere in evidence. From the Caribbean: "Complete A/C patrol over Caribbean Sea." From the coast of South America: "Dense A/C, PT boats with flares, D/C's." From the Halifax area: "Strong day and night A/C with radar; terror bombs." Surface patrol in some parts of the North American coastal waters and in the Caribbean seems to have been rather weak, and was described as "slight, inexperienced." Also instrumental in reducing the strength of operations off Allied shores was the scarcity of refueling facilities, which caused cruises to be limited to little more than one month.

PART D

FROM THE INVASION OF FRANCE  
TO THE END OF THE WAR

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CHAPTER XI

THE U/B AND THE ALLIED INVASION OF FRANCE

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THE U/B AND THE ALLIED INVASION OF FRANCE.

1.

Existing U/B Fleet was not suited for defensive mission and could not offer effective resistance.

In keeping with his conception of the U/B as an offensive weapon Admiral Doenitz had so concentrated his efforts on convoy warfare in the open sea that by mid 1943 his Fleet was composed solely of ocean going operational types:

500 ton class, for convoy operations in the North Atlantic. Principal strength of the Fleet.

740 ton class, for middle Atlantic and Caribbean operations.

1200 ton class, for South Atlantic and Indian Ocean operations.

The 240 ton class had been driven from British coastal waters early in the war and had been discontinued. With the crisis of summer, 1943, it became clear that a new type submarine was necessary. Plans included a small type (XXIII, 228 tons) and a large type (XXI, 1600 tons), both capable of high underwater speed. The omission of a 500 ton type aroused speculation as to possible future abandonment of mid-ocean convoy battle and a return to coastal ambush or attacks on convoy meeting points. Meanwhile, however, the 500 ton U/B did not yield the open sea

without a struggle and every effort was made to improve the existing fleet for North Atlantic operations long after they had ceased to pay. This persistence was no doubt natural in view of the strategic justification for the U/B's existence. Considerations of invasion defense, which became evident early in 1944, seem to have been corollary rather than primary in B.d.U's planning. The new types did not presage any change in strategy, but merely an adjustment of means to the one end of destroying the enemy's sea transport. The new type small sub, designed for a resumption of U/B operations in European coastal waters, or even experienced 500 ton Schnorchelers might have proved formidable defensive weapons. But the invasion came too soon. The U/B branch had not effected its basic readjustment to a problem long recognized as acute. B.d.U was forced to commit his fleet of outmoded 500 tonners, hastily equipped with Schnorchel, in a battle for which they had not been intended and from which they might hope for honor but not victory. The U/B was not in the Channel on D-Day and once there proved powerless to impede the flow of ships. By the end of August the attempt was abandoned and all energies turned to saving the U/B's still afloat in French waters. With skill and tenacity the crippled fleet was withdrawn in good order to Norway and Baltic ports. Morale was maintained and the one end of resuming the naval offensive was not for a moment lost from view.



2.  
Pre-invasion scrutiny of  
traffic.

The invasion of North Africa had found the U/B wanting, but in this case the German Navy had been taken by surprise.\* Before the invasion of western Europe close watch was kept on the following:

- a) Any indication in U/B traffic of U/B preparations and counterplans.
- b) Any suggestion in traffic that Germans might have detailed knowledge of Allied plans.

In connection with (b) the reading of Jap. Nav. Att. traffic was helpful, despite lack of assurance that the Japanese would be fully informed of German intelligence on so vital a matter as the invasion of western Europe. Along with many conflicting rumors and predictions as to when and how the invasion would take place, the JNA did furnish valuable and timely information on the organization and disposition of German coastal defenses. This was first hand, for the Germans gave the Japanese a tour of fortress Atlantic in May.

3.  
U/B Reaction to an Invasion  
Scare of 29 Jan., '44.

As early as January 1944 U/B traffic gave clear indication that

\*This statement is confirmed by Nov. 1942 U/B traffic, which was read December 1942.

the U/B would be used in a major attempt to prevent landings on the European coast - whether properly equipped for this task or not. According to a "very trustworthy agent" in England, the end of January was the earliest possible time at which an invasion could be attempted. In the early morning hours of 29 January a neutral tuna fishing fleet of 13 vessels in the Bay of Biscay was reported by German aircraft as 200 to 300 landing craft. The alarm continued for 8 - 9 hours. Orders issued during this time were marked by a sweeping disregard of ordinary caution. The 22 U/B's patrolling the western approaches were told to ignore their greatest enemy, Allied aircraft, and to cruise for Biscay at maximum speed on the surface. Outbound and inbound U/B's were equally affected. It is interesting to note that this false invasion caused more drastic measures to be taken by U/B's than were immediately evidenced on 6 June.

4.  
Preparation by U/B Navy for  
Invasion.

In addition to the evidence of counter-invasion intentions furnished by the scare of January, the following U/B activities were appreciated in their bearing on the coming crisis.

(a) Weather Reporting:

Beginning on 31 December, 1943, with the assignment of weather reporting areas to three U/B's in the central North Atlantic,

U/B Command maintained U/B weather stations in the North Atlantic throughout the following months. Although U/B's in the past had been given special weather-reporting tasks, this function had hitherto been subordinated to U/B operational ends or to blockade running. The function of the 1944 weather U/B's, however, was clearly subordinated to the defensive plans of the Wehrmacht as a whole. During the period from 1 January to 13 May, 1944, 29 U/B's worked as weather stations. Of this number only 2 were sunk.

The urgency attached to these U/B weather transmissions was shown many times in Command's instructions and reprimands to the boats. On 4 May weather boats were told:

"Reports are of the utmost importance for the entire conduct of the war - judgment as to air situation, invasion, etc." (1416/4).

Again on 10 May:

"Omission of weather reports is of great disadvantage to whole waging of the war." (1242/10).

Among the first messages sent after the invasion began was an order to four U/B's in the mid-Atlantic, not regular weather reporters, to "send a supplementary weather report today. Urgently needed."

(b) Assembly of 500 tonners in Biscay.

In March it was noted that 500 tonners were being recalled to French ports. At the same time new 500 tonners were again being released from the North after a lull in

January and February but were being sent straight to Biscay without any intermediate operation. During the last half of May no 500 ton U/B's left French ports, with the exception of a few Schnorchel U/B's (Group Dragoner) and they were recalled from the channel on 25 May. On D-Day there were 61 U/B's in Biscay ports of which 49 were 500 tonners. If the figure 61 seems small, one needs to be reminded that the total Atlantic operational fleet had not exceeded 100 U/B's (approx.) for some months prior to the invasion. Additions to the fleet from the North in April and May were offset by current losses in the Atlantic. The significant change in the Atlantic fleet had been the decline in the number of U/B's at sea. Between 31 March and 6 June the ratio of U/B's at sea to U/B's in Biscay ports had changed from approximately 6/4 to 4/6.

(c) Schnorchel and Group Dragoner: It is not suggested that Schnorchel was developed solely with the invasion in mind, but the possibility of using Schnorchel-fitted 500 tonners in the channel was obvious. The imminence of the invasion had emphasized top priority of Schnorchel production and installation. From 20 - 25 May a few Schnorchel U/B's were put in the Channel between Brest and Cherbourg, apparently as a test of the new device in enemy coastal waters. Called 'Group Dragoner' (though not more than 3 U/B's seem to have operated at any one time) they received orders to surface and submerge upon changes

in the enemy situation. Enemy-sightings were regularly reported to the Group on a special circuit. In 0118/25 May, Command concluded that Schnorchel was being located by Allied aircraft. At 1232/25 May the Group was signalled, "Because of enemy situation, which at the moment promises no further success, all Dragoon U/B's return to Brest." No 'success' is known that could have been achieved by these tentative operations.

5.  
German Intelligence and  
Evaluation of the Invasion,  
both before and after 6 June.

Available evidence from all traffic seen here strongly suggests that the Germans were unable to formulate any clear and detailed idea of Allied intentions. They may have known beyond much question that the invasion was coming but exactly where and when it would strike was apparently revealed only after the fact. Information from Jap. Nav. Att. traffic, then being read with a lag of 2-3 days, tends to confirm German uncertainty not only during the pre-invasion period but also during the critical period between the landing in Normandy and the break-through at Avranches in August.

(a) Up to D-Day.

As early as 17 April Admiral Doenitz proclaimed to the

Navy that Allied preparations were complete and that invasion was imminent. "...this invasion will be decisive for the issue of the war, and for the existence of the German people." The Navy was to attack..." without thought for the preservation of the ship, without hesitation against even the most unfavorable odds". The German Air Force thought 26 April the invasion date. As May approached Nazi surface units were increasingly engaged in channel mine laying, using such cover names as "Schranke" ("barrier"). The locations of German minefields were of course made available by German traffic. On 8 May Luftflotte 3 deduced from Allied aerial behavior that "...landing is planned in the area Havre-Cherbourg", an appreciation which Luftflotte 3 had "...already often expressed".

Yet on 27 May, Luftflotte 3 regarded the Dieppe-Seine Bay area as the probable landing target.

Hitler's own version of Allied plans, as interpreted by Ambassador Oshima on 28 May after an interview with the Fuehrer, is perhaps the most interesting of the conflicting rumors and predictions which were picked up in German circles and relayed to Tokyo in Japanese Attache and diplomatic traffic. The Fuehrer expected:

- 1st: Diversionary actions against Norway, Denmark, Southern Biscay, French Mediterranean, etc.
- 2nd: Bridgeheads on Normandy and Brittany as "tests".
- 3rd: All-out second front in area of Straits of Dover. (Jap. Dip. #511, 28 May).

Hitler expressed a limited willingness to wait. "I will give them two or three months more time, but if they don't come then, Germany will take the offensive" (i.e. against Russia). The source of Hitler's appreciation of Allied intentions is not known but there is evidence that German High Command continued to share his impressions.

(b) From D-Day to August.

The Germans undoubtedly tried to prepare for any eventuality. It is known from traffic that the Navy had taken special precautions in anticipation of a Northern thrust via the North Sea. Group Middle U/B's, mostly drawn from the Baltic, had been standing guard off southern Norway and were receiving on the same radio circuit (Coastal) which served U/B's in the Biscay area. The organization of U/B Group Middle under a separate command, Comsubs Middle, had been perfected for many months under catchword "Wallenstein". In addition to Group Dragoner, U/B's in Biscay ports were apparently waiting to sail against invasion armadas under catchword "Landwirt". The sequence of events of early 6 June as they affected U/B's is known only for Group Middle, since these U/B's were at sea and they as well as U/B authorities in Norway were reached by radio. No special significance may be attached to the fact that the Norwegian authorities and Group Middle were alerted first (at 0343E/6) according to traffic read here:

"Immediate readiness. Indications for beginning of invasion". The omission of "on Channel Coast", added at 0410B/6, may have been an oversight on the part of an excited drafter. At the same time it was clear that the possibility of a Norwegian landing could not be disregarded, for fifteen hours after all U/B's at sea had been informed of "Enemy landing Bay of the Seine", Group Middle subs were ordered to "report immediately all enemy movements which give evidence of landing intentions and take full offensive action at the same time" (1821B/6). It was appreciated at 1832B/6 that the landing between Le Havre and Barfleur was a "major operation", but U/B command could not concentrate his forces against it for fear of landings elsewhere. "No tangible data" were at hand concerning Allied objectives; "we must expect surprise attacks, and covering fairly extensive areas too". (ibid.). The majority of the U/B's that put to sea from France on 6 June went to positions in Biscay and not into the Channel. Early on 9 June waiting areas for Biscay U/B's were shifted so that "...in the event of enemy landings in Biscay, (U/B's) can get to landing area faster". (0250B/9). A few minutes later it was announced that "The main attack area of the English-American invasion has continued to be the Bay of the Seine triangle between Cherbourg and Le Havre". (0301B/9). Not until 12 June were non-Schnorchel



Biscay U/B's (21) ordered back in port, and they were withdrawn because of the Allied A/S activity. The Mediterranean area was likewise a realm for fear. On 8 June OKW (Armed Forces High Command) brought Southern Naval authorities to the "very highest degree of alertness", since there were "clear indications of imminent operation in Eastern Mediterranean" against which U/B's would be put into action. (0447/8 ). If U/B traffic ceased to reflect any major uncertainties after 12 June, it was perhaps due to a local situation which was so far out of hand as to discourage further speculation afield. Yet the uncertainty was apparently not removed. On 30 June the Navy (non-U/B) ordered increased vigilance for landings in the eastern part of the Channel and on the coast of Flanders.

If one may believe the reports to Tokyo from Japanese representatives in Berlin, the Wehrmacht could not muster an all-out counter-offensive against Normandy because throughout June and July it anticipated a landing by "Patton's army" in the Dieppe-Calais area.

On 2 August, when the American Army had penetrated to Avranches, German Command was still worried about the landing target for Patton's Army.

6.  
Disposition of U/B's, D-Day  
to D-Day plus 2.

(a) U/B's in Invasion Area: Within 48 hours after the first landings on Normandy 36 U/B's (500 tonners) left French ports, 30 of them to patrol Biscay approaches and 6 (Schnorchel boats) to attack invasion convoys in the Channel. Of U/B's off southern Norway, 6 (Group Middle) were ordered to remain in waiting areas about 30 miles from the Norwegian coast and to report all enemy movements that would indicate landing intentions. (0351B, 1821B, 1823B/6). One was ordered to a station off Malin Head and another to the Minch. Four Schnorchel U/B's on cruise out from the North were to "...head for Western France at highest maintainable speed. Proceed submerged during day, heed ordered precautionary measures." (0532B/6). By 8 June the only two type VII D minelayers, U-214 and U-218, were ordered to carry out minelays along the invasion lane. (0522B/8).

(b) U/B's in distant areas were not immediately affected by the invasion. These included the usual 3 weather reporters in the North Central Atlantic, the customary sprinkling of independents off Nova Scotia, in the Caribbean, and along the Gold Coast, and 3 in the North Atlantic proceeding to the Indian Ocean. The Japanese I-52 was in the South Atlantic, headed for Biscay. U-530 (Lenge) was outbound from France to E/V the I-52 before operating off Trinidad.

7.  
U/B attack could not get  
underway against superior  
Allied Defense.

Less than half of the available U/B's were Schnorchel equipped and these had been divided between Biscay and the Channel. But with or without Schnorchel if the U/B succeeded in getting out to sea, once there it was practically immobilized. Reports from U/B's consisted largely of a series of short-signals telling where and when they had been attacked by A/C. For example, on 7 June Boddenberg (U-963) reported 3 attacks in less than 2 hours. (0137B, 0223B, 0325B/7). On 11 June it was announced that the Schnorchel U/B's, which were supposed to operate as far east as Cape Barfleur, were "...proceeding very slowly because of enemy interference" and were still west of the Cherbourg peninsula. (1150B/11). Messages to U/B's made up a series of exhortations to attack offset by warnings on the Allied Defense situation. An early attempt was made to strengthen the Channel group by shifting boats from the Biscay patrol, but the inadequacy of the U/B for its task tended to confine plans to paper work and dispatches. On 10 June non-Schnorchel U/B's were expressly forbidden to engage in Channel operations and on 12 June even Biscay U/B's without Schnorchel were ordered back into port (approx. 21 subs), there to be fitted as rapidly as possible.

The "Holzbein" ("wooden leg") series of messages to Schnorchel U/B's entering the Channel summarized the sacrifice as follows:

"...the U/B which inflicts losses on the enemy during his landing has fulfilled its supreme task and has justified its existence, even if it accomplishes nothing more." (2337/11).

But this stirring bit of moral philosophy assumed that the U/B could penetrate to the landing area.

8.  
Breakdown of German Land  
Communications.

On 8 June (1547/8 ) Comsubs West's Communications officer (at Angers) informed BdU by emergency radio circuit that all landline connections with Berlin, Kiel, Wilhelmshaven, Paris, Brest, Aix, La Rochelle were out of order due to enemy action. One line to Paris was in limited working condition, and by the 10th of June it was gone too. With this wholesale breakdown of landline communications emergency radio circuits were put into operation for traffic between Comsubs, flotillas, and other shore authorities. As a result, traffic to be processed by the Atlantic Section fully tripled in volume. The inner workings of the administrative, supply, and Command structures of the U/B Navy were opened for direct and current inspection. It became possible to follow U/B operational orders, reports, controversies, confusions, and troubles of all sorts from one end of the Naval hierarchy to the other and back again.

9.  
Increasing Difficulties;  
Preparations for Withdrawal,  
June - July, '44.

12  
By the end of June, <sup>12</sup>U/B's had been sunk - with very little to show for their sacrifices. The anticipated withdrawal to Norway began to show in orders to 8 U/B's in the Atlantic that they should leave their operational areas with sufficient fuel to reach Bergen. (23123/12 June). The Channel operation continued - rather the attempt to operate, for the greatest difficulty lay in actually reaching the landing areas. C.O.'s were ordered to make unconditional effort to reach the area north of the Seine Bay, where "...prospects of success are the greatest and most effective for easing the land situation". (1824/19). In addition to the problem of getting into offensive position at sea, formidable for relatively inexperienced C.O.'s worried with constant enemy defense above water and with Schnorchel and Channel navigation under water, problems ashore multiplied until the major concern of the Navy was to hold itself together. It should be remarked, however, that despite the difficulty of meeting the demands of the moment, plans for the future resumption of the Naval offensive were being carried out. Late in June the officers and crews of 5 old 500 tonners (Type VII C), were to leave France for Germany to commission new Type XXI U/B's in the Baltic. (1459/24).

Problems of supply and administration.

(a) More suitable bases for Channel operation: To eliminate the necessity of rounding the Breton and Normandy peninsulas before being able to operate, an unsuccessful attempt was made to utilize La Havre, Boulogne, and the Channel Islands as emergency U/B ports. The U/B's could not reach these ports with ease and the Navy could not equip the ports with necessary U/B supplies.

(b) Supply and Transportation: As the Northern Biscay U/B bases (Brest, Nazaire, and Lorient) were cut off from inland communications, U/B's from Bordeaux had to assume tasks of supply. At one point U/B's were also carrying ammunition to besieged Cherbourg and St. Malo. These tasks had to be abandoned with the rapid deterioration of the land situation.

— Meanwhile, the complete disruption of transportation systems from Germany to Paris and from Paris to Biscay ports turned the shipment of supplies and the transfer of personnel into a matter for frenzy. The shore organization was paralyzed or reduced to chaos. Yet there was little evidence of hysteria, although an abundance of temper and harsh words over such things as trucks requisitioned by one command and stolen by another.

(c) Schnorchel Installation.

No one problem illustrated the Naval crisis in its entirety more completely than did that of Schnorchel installation.

Every Command was involved and countless messages went back and forth probing, querying, demanding, protesting, and reporting every aspect of Schnorchel and its installation from parts lost en route to last minute adjustments and breakdowns on board. Everything possible was subordinated to the task of installation. The date of Schnorchel completion for an individual boat was practically its war-readiness date. Disagreements between dockyard officials and operational commands were aired vigorously. On 11 July Comsubs West informed Commanding Admiral U/B's (Adm. von Friedeburg at Kiel, in charge of U/B Administration) that the "Stubborn attitude of construction committee with respect to Front demands is intolerable in the present situation". (1802/11). Even the installation of a compressed air WC on a Schnorchel boat could become a major problem between commands. The 9th U-Flotilla complained to Comsubs West that the dockyards "pig-headed refusal" to go ahead with the installation without a directive from OEM was causing ill-will. (2020/7 July).

(d) The Attempt on Hitler's life, July 20.

By the 20th of July, Admiral Doenitz was primarily concerned with the U/B Navy's chances of returning to fight another day. The collapse of the entire command structure which threatened with the execution of the assassination plot was successfully met by swift action and decrees from Doenitz himself.

10.  
Retreat to Southern Biscay  
ports, early August, 1944.

Quite apart from the military necessity for denying use of ports to the Allies, the holding of Brest, Nazaire, and Lorient was essential for the immediate safety and future effectiveness of the U/B arm though operational prospects in the Channel area were negligible. The bulk of the U/B fleet had been based on Brittany. To save the remaining U/B's it was of the utmost importance to equip them with Schnorchel before they <sup>sh</sup> could abandon the U/B pens. Hence, as the Allied armies closed in on the Brittany ports, Admiral Doenitz ordered "by direction of the Fuehrer" that U/B repairs and especially Schnorchel installation were to be carried out despite the presence of Allied armies at the fortress gates. (1127B/8 Aug.). U/B's at sea were given Bordeaux and La Pallice as homeing ports but were cautioned to keep their fuel supply adequate for a return to Norway should the situation in France require an order to that effect. As U/B's were made ready for sea, those with experienced crews were still sent into the Channel, prepared to make Norway, while others were assigned the task of transporting essential personnel, fuel, torpedoes, and Zaunkoenig testing units to the south. The remaining U/B personnel with one Flotilla C.O. were to join the Naval shore units and army in resisting to the end. By 8 August Comsub West (Captain Boesing) had moved from Angers to La Rochelle.



11.  
Operation in the Channel  
ends. 26 August.

During the counter-invasion operations Comsubs West had assumed control of Channel U/B's, a control carried out in close consultation with Naval Group Command West (Admiral Krancke in Paris) and with B.d.U. in Germany. To free Comsubs West for the task of salvage, B.d.U. took over the operational command on 14 August. On the 15th, Channel U/B's were ordered to head for Norway after completing their missions. Ever mindful of morale and of the U/B offensive, even when a full retreat was under way, Doenitz signalled his few front boats on 21 August as follows:

"In the stern battle against the enemy storming us from the West you are in the foremost line now as before. ...your full operation is necessary to relieve the land front. ...you can do it with a single torpedo hit... But I know that you, my U/B warriors, carried on by the old spirit of attack think only of destroying the enemy. Be assured that I follow your battle continually and that you are always in my thoughts." (1914B/21).

On 26 August came the official order to send no more U/B's into the landing area. U/B's were henceforth to be equipped for operations in English coastal waters. (1757B/26).

12.  
The Destruction of Bordeaux,  
26 August.

Any plans which the Germans may have had to support the U/B fleet even temporarily by means of Bordeaux became untenable with

the Allied invasion of the French Riviera on 15 August. On 17 August seaworthy U/B's at Bordeaux were ordered to be ready for sailing at a moment's notice while continuing the task of loading equipment. U/B's under repair were put on 24 hours readiness. The Fuehrer gave unconditional orders that the port be held until installation of the last Schnorchel was completed. The estimate of 5 September for this work was too long. Work was rushed. The last U/B to leave sailed on the 25th. Three 1200 tonners had to be blown up, but three others succeeded in clearing for the Far East with a part of the cargo stored in Bordeaux for Japan and Penang. On the 26th all military installations of the U/B base together with confidential and cipher material were destroyed and the harbor rendered useless. Naval personnel remaining were divided between the Gironde fortresses.

13.  
Withdrawal to Norway.

The crisis which destroyed Bordeaux on the 26th was communicated on the same day to the remaining U/B bases in a dispatch from Admiral Doenitz:

"The military situation has made it necessary to prepare all U/B's at bases as quickly as possible for combat operation or transfer to Norway. This task has so far been mastered very well by the Flotillas and dockyards and will surely be completed. The U/B war will continue with the old spirit and new measures. I have therefore ordered that as many U/B personnel as possible, including Comsubs West, return to Germany by land or sea in order that they may be used in continuing the U/B war. The task of

those attached to Flotillas who are left behind is to defend the bases to the last man and the last cartridge, under command of the senior Flotilla chief and in cooperation with the other soldiers of all branches of the Wehrmacht, risking all with the steadfast heart of the front U/B warriors; thus to deprive the enemy of the harbors as long as possible. I am certain that this task, necessary for the defense of the Fatherland will also be completely fulfilled. It goes without saying that I am with you wholeheartedly day and night". (1934B/26).

At 0300B the following morning the office of Comsubs West ceased. Before leaving for Germany, Captain Roeding took "leave of the troops to whom all my thoughts belong" in full confidence that they would do their duty as before. U/B's at sea which were forced back after Bordeaux had been discontinued could still find a haven in the pens at Pallice or Mazaire. While the R.A.F. worried the Germans with a special monster of a bomb, designed for these pens among other things, no U/B inside was seriously damaged, despite direct hits which scattered considerable reinforced concrete through the interior of the pens. Reaching the pens was a different matter. Allied A/S measures were too severe for the maintenance of any escort system. By the 1st of September U/B's were forbidden to attempt entry to Pallice. Departures from the pens were kept extremely secret in an effort to get the U/B out and under the water before attracting attention. U/B's headed for Norway received an average of 55 cubic meters of fuel and 31 days' provisions, together with a warning that A/S operations would naturally shift from Biscay to the Norwegian approaches.

The last U/B left Brest on the 3rd of September, Lorient on the 9th, Pallice on the 10th, and Nazaire on the 23rd. (One U/B, U-255, was held at Nazaire until certain parts could be flown or brought by sea from Germany. In May 1945 Comdr. Fiening delivered the U-255 to the British.)

14.

Conclusion of the Invasion Period.  
The U/B Fleet ready to resume the  
Naval offensive from Norway and Baltic.

Before the last U/B sailed from France, Comsub West had completed his reorganization and had established himself at Bergen, (18 Sept.), where he awaited his flotillas returning from their three year stay in France. In November, the transfer operation was regarded as completed and it was announced to all that of the 35 U/B's that had attempted the passage from France to Norway only 4 had failed to make port in Norway or Germany. On the whole the counter invasion effort had exacted an extremely high price. Of 48 U/B's that attempted Channel operations during June, July and August, 32 were sunk. And, yet, despite the high losses, the meager successes, the desperate circumstances both in France and in Germany, the U/B organization did not forget its end. Throughout this trying period the future policy was being shaped. The last straggler from Biscay had hardly reached Norway before U/B Command was issuing full orders for the "Total Underwater Warfare" already beginning in British coastal waters.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XI

THE U/B AND THE ALLIED INVASION OF FRANCE

U/B's involved in Invasion Area (Channel and Biscay)  
from 6 June, 1944 to German withdrawal in August and September, 1944.

1. Statistics

	<u>Sunk</u>	<u>OG</u>	<u>Disposition.</u>		<u>Left in France</u>	<u>Total</u>
			<u>Arrived Norw.-Ger.</u>	<u>Arrived Far East</u>		
(a) <u>U/B's in French ports on D-Day</u>						
500 tonners.....49	25	1	22	--	1	
Larger types.....12	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>=</u>	
TOTAL	61	27	4	27	2	61
(b) U/B's entering invasion area after D-Day						
(i) en route on D-Day						
Returning from Atl.... 7	1	2	4			
Outbound from Nor.... 4	3	-	1*			
Japanese I-52..... 1	<u>1</u>	<u>=</u>	<u>=</u>			
	12	5	2	5		12
(ii) en route after D-Day						
From Nor....13	11		2*			
Returning from Atl... 9	<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>			
	22	15	7			22
	<u>Sunk</u>	<u>OG</u>	<u>Arrived Norw.-Ger.</u>	<u>Arrived Far East</u>	<u>Left in France</u>	<u>Total</u>
TOTAL U/B's involved....95	47***	6	39**	2	1	95

- \* 1 U/B put back in Norw. port after starting out for invasion area.
- \*\* Includes 6 large U/B's which left France after D-Day for operations in distant areas and which returned safely to Norway.
- \*\*\* Includes U/B's sunk outside invasion area.

CHAPTER XII

NEW CHALLENGE.

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## NEW CHALLENGE

1.  
Persistent effort to  
regain the initiative.

The last months of the war with Germany were marked by the persistent effort of the U/B Navy to regain the initiative at sea. On paper the attack was to be launched with a new fleet of high underwater speed U/B's which might have altered the war situation, had conditions on the land and air fronts given the necessary support and protection to the rebirth of the Navy. The new fleet did not sail. Instead, the existing fleet, equipped with Schnorchel, approximated a fulfillment of plans against Allied chipping by a gradual increase of pressure, which mounted steadily to the very day of enforced surrender.

2.  
U-Boat Operational Fleet Expanded.

On 16 December 1944 the last German land offensive began in the West. It was stopped in the Ardennes and at Bastogne. In mid-January 1945 the Russians began the great drive that reached the Oder 40 miles east of Berlin by February. To the accompaniment of these omens of disaster, and in spite of repeated heavy bombings of his U/B bases, Admiral Doenitz continued his program of renewing the U/B fleet at sea. Before the last U/B had reported in Norway from France, operational boats entered the Atlantic from Norwegian bases and increased in numbers from November on. That increase is readily measured. On 1 January 1945 the U/B's composing the

Atlantic fleet numbered 98, with 35 at sea. By 1 May 1945 the fleet had expanded to 167, with approximately 90\* at sea. During this period over 100 U/B's were transferred from the Baltic to the Atlantic command. Although approximately 50 U/B's were sunk, additions continued to outnumber losses.

3.  
"Total Underwater Warfare".

The U/B fleet which offered the new challenge was distinguished primarily by Schnorchel, the device which almost restored to the U-Boat its invisibility against the searching eyes of patrols and radar. As the U/B's invisibility returned, its effectiveness increased. Along with Schnorchel came other devices through which German skill pointed toward new ways of conducting submarine warfare.

a) Schnorchel.

By November 1944 the experiments with Schnorchel which began in January 1944 had been successfully concluded. The Schnorchel U/B could cruise in areas heavily patrolled by A/C, even extending its realm to shallow coastal waters. Command could observe that operation in areas such as the Channel, North-Channel-Minch, and the east coast of Scotland, could be successfully carried out, that losses had appreciably lessened, and that a total Schnorchel war cruise of up to 70 days could be and had been completed. Freed from fear of surprise A/C attack, crews were able to go about

\*This figure includes U/B's en route Norway from Kiel.





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4.  
Threat of New Types.

The potentialities displayed by the remodeled U/B Navy were formidable in themselves but in the background there remained an additional and more powerful threat, the new type XXI and XXIII U/B's, which would have eliminated the principal weakness of the older types, namely their low underwater speed. Through Jap Naval Attache traffic it was possible to follow the progress and the delays in the new type U/B program.

The specifications and trials together with the postponements and changes in plans for the new types were radicalized by the Jap Naval Attache to Tokyo. Allied aerial bombardment caused numerous delays. The original date for the operational appearance of the new types was October 1944. An estimated date of November 1944 was then made. Mid-winter was named, then January 1945. In March 1945 operations on a large scale were planned for May and June. Command had made so many references to the renewed U/B war, with new models, that the German Naval Attache in Tokyo was addressed by Doenitz in what must have been a rather embarrassing bluff. The type XXI, upon which so many hopes had been based, had failed to stand final tests, and Doenitz explained to Wenneker that all of the talk about a sudden increase in new U/B's was mere enemy propaganda, that actually the promised renewal of the U/B war was already a fact. He pointed to the undeniable increase of old types, operating with Schnorchel, and claimed

them as his new fleet.

A few of the new types made an appearance. From 23 January 1945 to 1 May 1945 there were references in

U/B traffic to 18 of the new type XXIII; only four of these, however, made war cruises. Even so, these cruises were enough to demonstrate the success of the small type. The high underwater speed 1600 tonner - type XXI - never proved itself on a war cruise. On 3 May U-2511 (Schnee) departed on a war cruise that was cut short by the surrender; he was the only type XII to get underway on an operational cruise.

The Russian offensive in the East played a large part in delaying the appearance of the new U/B's.

5.  
Attempt to blockade the  
United Kingdom.

The remodeled fleet threatened to start the war all over again, putting its greatest emphasis on a close-in blockade of the British Isles. The coastal waters of UK had been abandoned early in the war, but with Schnorchel it was possible to operate 500 ton U/B's in shallow coastal waters. Areas of special concentration included the Minch, North Channel, Bristol Channel, English Channel and Irish Sea.

Returning U/B's were repeatedly ordered to report the situation, for these reports were of utmost importance to Command in selecting lanes and evaluating areas for further U/B activity. In return, outbound U/B's were provided with detailed information on cruising lanes, mines and Allied shipping. German Naval

intelligence and Z-Service activities were marked. Sighting reports of Allied shipping off Cherbourg and the Channel Islands were regularly supplied. Lack of initiative was reproached severely. The hesitation of two U/B C.O.'s, Schwarting (U-905) and Dohrn (U-325) led to the following reprimand:

"In the all-out push to destroy the enemy ((the C.O.'s should have)) gone into an area where the enemy is to be encountered with certainty (therefore into the Channel or the Irish Sea)." (0302/19 Feb.)

In this final phase of the Battle of the Atlantic there was a conspicuous effort on the part of Command to whip up the spirits of untried commanding officers.

a) Irish Sea.

Thomsen (U-1202) was one of the first ordered into the Irish Sea where he claimed the sinking of four steamers. The operation was reported in great detail. His initiative was promptly recognized by the award of the Knight's Cross "for his outstandingly performed war cruise..." (0523/5 January 1945)

Thomsen's success prompted Comsubs to send other U/B's to this area and an average of 3 to 4 a month was maintained. Provided with detailed information on lanes, traffic and defense, these U/B's claimed other successes. During January alone, 6 ships were torpedoed and 4 others attacked in the Irish Sea. This area remained profitable to the end. Five ships were sunk or torpedoed here in April.

b) English Channel.

The renewed aggressiveness of the German U/B's also brought results in the English Channel, where the greater number

operated.

Pulst (U-978), who operated in the Channel from 4/11 to 25/11, claimed the sinking of 3 steamers and declared the Channel a "very rewarding op area with good prospects for success." (0606/18 December 1914). He, too, was promptly awarded the Knight's Cross "for his distinguished execution of a channel war cruise...." (2231/28). Just after 16 December, when the German Army's counter-attack began, Channel U/B's were told: "Sinkings are of the greatest military importance right now." (1555/18 December). Between the 15th and 29th of December, a large number of attacks were reported by Allied vessels and a total of 7 merchant ships and 2 escorts were torpedoed. Although the cross-channel supply lines of the Allies were not seriously threatened the U/B was more than a mere nuisance. During the 6 weeks prior to the end of the war, approximately 18 ships were sunk or torpedoed there.

c) Thames.

A new experiment was tried late in January when U-245 (Schumann-Hindenberg) operated in Thames estuary.

Schumann returned to Helgoland on the 16th of February having claimed the sinking of one ship and the torpedoing of a second. In April, he reentered the area, this time with U-2322 (Reckel), a type XIII U/B. Schumann claimed two successes and Reckel one.

d) East coast of Scotland; operations by type XIII.

U-2324 (Easa) operated in the Firth of Forth area during the end of January but had no success. He was followed in February by U-2322 (Heckel) who claimed the sinking of a 6,000 ton steamer. U-2321 (Berschke) operating there in March claimed a 2,000 ton steamer and U-2323 (Schlott) claimed a freighter off Aberdeen in April. U-2324 (von Rappard) had no success during the same month.

5 Of four type XIII war cruises made off the east coast of Scotland three had been successful and no losses had been suffered. The potentiality of this type was thus demonstrated before the end of the war.

e) SW Approaches.

During the end of March a couple of U/B's operated for the first time in many months in the SW approaches to the British Isles. On 21 March U-1202 (Thomsen) reported sinking a DD from an eastbound convoy and 10 days later claimed sinking two more ships from another eastbound convoy. He sent detailed reports on the convoy traffic situation. By the end of April a total of 22 U/B's had been ordered to this area. They were given individual attack areas and performed a north-south shuttle in an effort to discover "convoy evasion routes." Successes, however, numbered only four ships, either sunk or torpedoed. At the time of the surrender a large number of U/B's were still there.

f) Conclusion.

The last attempt to blockade the United Kingdom was more formidable in intention than in results. Allied knowledge

of U/B dispositions interfered with the most elaborate attempt to block the approaches, but the U/B remained a serious threat to the end.

"The monthly total ((for December)) both as to merchant vessels ~~(lost)~~ and gross tons due to submarine action was the largest of any month since August, 1944. The total of submarines sunk or probably sunk was the smallest reported since April 1942." (U.S. A/S Bulletin, January 1945).

The last few weeks of the war showed a marked increase in sinkings despite the hopeless situation in the German homeland and in the Baltic; approximately 30 ships were sunk or torpedoed between the middle of March and the first of May.

#### 6.

#### The Biscay and Channel Pockets.

Through the reading of U/B traffic it was possible to follow the fortunes of the besieged German bases on the Biscay coast and on the Channel Islands which remained after the liberation of France. Garrisons were left at the once great U/B bases of St. Nazaire, Lorient, Pallice and at La Rochelle on the Biscay coast. It was intended to meet the problem of supply by A/O and transport U/B. The former soon proved unable to meet the needs, but a few U/B's were regularly sent from Germany. The first to arrive was U-773 (Zaldus) who reached St. Nazaire on 13 November and was followed shortly by U-772 (Reiners). By January it was Comduba's intention to send a 750 ton U/B every month. U-263 (Turra) arrived in February and U-576 (Radic) in March. Both were ordered to bring back materials critically



needed in the Homeland. U-516 (Petran) was on his way in May when the surrender came.

During this period Spanish coasters brought in fresh food on at least two occasions. By February the food situation had become so acute that the garrisons on the Gironde declared that if this means of provisioning fell through it would bring serious consequences. For diplomatic reasons, however, Command was unwilling to approach the Spanish government on such a subject while Germany was weakening.

In March the problem of fitting returning Monsun boats with Schnorchel, if and when they arrived, caused considerable discussion between commands. Mick (U-510) arrived just before the surrender. The possibility of using the bases as ports of call for operational U/B's requiring fuel and repairs was aired and rejected, since the plan would require an uneconomical use of IX-C U/B's engaged in the transport of supplies.

German soldiers left on the Channel Islands made a commando raid on Granville, damaging harbor facilities and capturing the SS Eskwood, a 790 ton freighter. Slight as this raid was, Von Rundstedt and Doenitz both congratulated Lt. Gen. von Schroetter on the achievement. Documents taken from the Eskwood were requested by Command for speedy evaluation in the hope that they would give information on the enemy and convoy situation in the English Channel.

In April an attack by the Allies on the Gironde fortresses gave Comdr. Piening, in command at St. Estaire, the

opportunity to put to sea on U-255, looking for a target among the enemy forces in the Bay of Biscay. Piening had strongly urged incidental operation in the Biscay area by U-255 and other U/B's to be brought from Norway. His foray was without results. He left St. Nazaire for the last time on the 8th of May, surrendering the U-255 on 14 May.

From these notes it can be seen how barren of advantage to the Germans were the Biscay and Channel spots to which they so insistently clung. If they could have held Cherbourg or Brest Allied embarrassment would have been achieved. The Germans allowed upwards of 100,000 men to lie idle in spite of a shortage of manpower.

#### 7. Distant Operations.

##### a) Gibraltar approaches.

While no activity occurred in the Middle and South Atlantic during this period, 750-tonners were dispatched to Gibraltar where operations had been abandoned eight months before. In October 1944 Altmeyer (U-1227) reported Gibraltar a very promising area. Hechler (U-870) proved this by sinking two ships northeast of the Azores on 20 December, and three others off the straits of Gibraltar between the third and tenth of January. He claimed nine successes which Doenitz immediately acknowledged with "Very well done" (1118/21 January 1945), and Hitler promptly awarded him the Knight's Cross. On 22 February, Hein (U-300), who had followed Hechler, was sunk by two British mineweepers but not before he had managed to sink two ships. Petersen (U-541) was enroute this area just before the

surrender.

b) Iceland.

Another area that continued to pay dividends was Iceland, with concentration off Reykjavik, although only one U/B at a time operated there. Meermeier (U-979) in September reported "A very favorable attack area...." (2205/18 October). Hein (U-300) on 10 November attacked and sank three ships within the space of seven hours. In February and March, a recurrence of activity appeared and Ernst (U-1022) sank two ships off Reykjavik. Meermeier was again in the area at the end of the war.

c) North American Coast.

The policy of keeping one or two 750-ton U/B's off the North American Coast, particularly in the Nova Scotia--Newfoundland area, continued throughout the winter. With spring the number rose sharply. From mid-March to the end of the war, 18 U/B's were either in or headed for the coastal waters between Hatteras and Halifax. U/B's repeatedly reported weak and inexperienced defense. Comsubs in March appraised the defense as follows:

"The usual American patrol, unwatchful and relatively unpracticed, consisting of destroyers, corvettes, and PC-Boats. Temporarily strengthened when ((U/B is)) noticed. A/C irregular." (1914/15 March).

Kneip (U-1223), who operated off the mouth of the St. Lawrence during October, had reported "Op area promising." (2132/25 December). Altmeyer (U-1222), operating off Nova Scotia in November, said, "Successes may be expected only directly off Halifax." (2051/22 December). January proved to be a favorable month. Dobrats (U-1272), before returning on the 14th, struck at two convoys (SH 194, EX 141) off Halifax on the 4th and 14th respectively, and sank a total of 226

five ships. Admiral Doenitz personally proposed to Hitler the Knight's Cross for Tobratz and his successes were cited as an example of what the Schnorchel U/B must do. One incident of particular interest was the penetration of Frenchman's Bay by Hilbig (U-1230), who succeeded in landing two agents, Colepaugh and Gimpel, on the coast of Maine during the night of 27 November 1944. As in the case of the 500-tonners, detailed information was requested from the C.O.'s on the situation. The remarkable increase at the very end of the war was due in part to the last attempt at convoy warfare in the open Atlantic (see para. 8 below). It should be noted, however, that of the 18 U/B's referred to above, 10 or 11\* had been sunk in American waters by the day of surrender.

U.S. task forces were able to achieve a number of U/B sinkings before hostilities ceased. On the 18th of March, USS LOWE, a member of Task Group 22.14, made a sure kill on a U/B off Sable Island. This was probably U-866 (Rogowsky). Besides the four U/B's presumed sunk in the operation against Group SEEWOLF (see para. 8), three others were attacked in April. The USS GUSTAFSON made contact on the 6th off Cape Cod and sank U-857 (Prenauer). The USS BUCKLEY (TG 22.10) achieved a kill on the 19th in 42 N - 62 W and 10 days later the USS NATCHEZ (TG 02.10) made a good attack off Hatteras. On the 5th of the following month, U-853 (Froensdorf) sank an American freighter off Rhode Island, and on the following day was contacted and sunk by USS ABERDEEN (OTG 60.7).

d) Note on rumor that U/B would fire V-bombs at New York:

Late in January 1945, rumors spread to the effect that

\*U-861, Frischke, has not yet been accounted for as of 25 May 1945.

German U/B's would soon launch rocket projectiles into the cities of the Atlantic seaboard. Speer, director of German manufacturing, stated in a broadcast that the so-called V-1 and V-2 bombs would fall upon New York by 1 February 1945. The American public, no longer believing in the likelihood of enemy air raids, began to indulge in new apprehensions of war at home. High officials acknowledged that it could happen. Reliable agents reported observing U/B's in Norway that looked as if V-rails were being laid on deck. In view of the fact that nothing came of all this, that even after the surrender no such evidence was revealed, it may be noted here that there was never any evidence of such preparations in German Naval radio traffic.

8.

Last Attempt at Convoy Warfare  
in Open Atlantic. SEEWOLF.

There was a final weak attempt to resume convoy warfare in the Atlantic. On April 2, six IX-C (750-ton) U/B's that had been given a previous heading of 46.57N - 25.00W, were ordered in a series of \_\_\_\_\_ Officers to form a reconnaissance line in the area 49.30 N - 25.00 W and sweep WSW along the US-UK convoy lane.

"For almost 1 1/2 years the enemy has experienced no surface attacks on convoys and is prepared for only underwater U/B operations....attack ruthlessly and with determination." (0335/3 April).

On 9 April the U/B's were told to form Group SEEWOLF. Twelve successive standing lines were ordered in the course of the westerly sweep. The general latitude chosen was in keeping

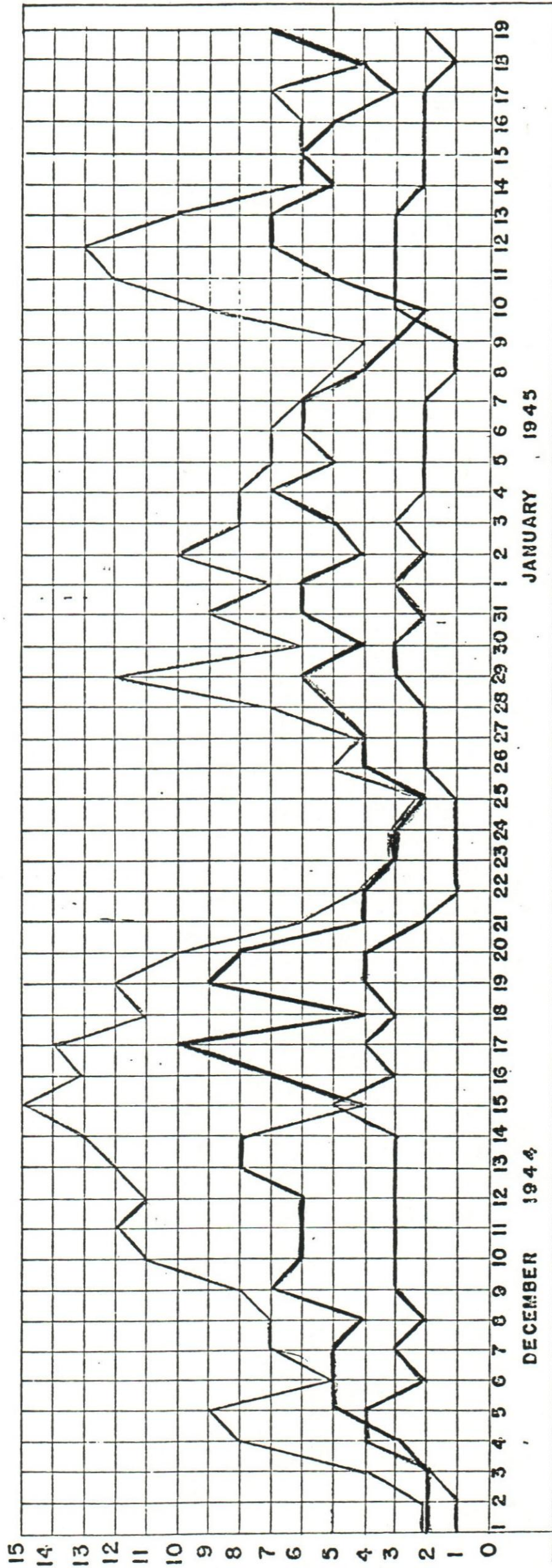
with the main transatlantic convoy lane, although a little too far to the north. Convoys were "expected" somewhat after the familiar fashion of earlier U/B days. In the course of the sweep, the line even achieved a better approximation of the actual convoy routes by a shift to the south. Four USN task groups, (MISSION EAT, 22.1, ROGUE, 22.3, CORE, 22.4, and CROATAN, 22.5) plus four DE groups were sent out to meet SEEWOLF. On 16 April CTG 22.5 (USS CROATAN) attacked contacts in vicinity 47.57 N - 30.30 W and two U/B's were believed destroyed. Six days later the same task group claimed sinking a U/B in 43.26 N - 38.23 W. On the 24th of April, U-546 (Just) was destroyed after sighting by A/C from the USS ROGUE. Earlier on the same day this U/B had torpedoed and sunk a DE <sup>DE</sup> (USS F.C.DAVIS), the only success of the group. Without having made a contact on any convoy, SEEWOLF was disbanded on the 24th of April; the southern members of the line (U-880 Schoetzau, U-518 Offermann, U-858 Bode) were ordered to maneuver freely in the Halifax-Gulf of Maine area, and the northern members (U-805 Bernadelli, U-1235 Barsch, U-546 Just) in area from New York to the South. This last gesture at convoy operations was probably experimental. Following the sweep against the convoy lane "release for occupation by boats individually to attack area in American coastal region" was intended. (2030/2 April).

9.

U/B Weather Reporting.

The policy of sending U/B's to report weather from the North Central Atlantic was continued to the end. An average of two U/B's reported during November and this was increased to three in December

WEATHER TRANSMISSIONS  
AND THE GERMAN COUNTERATTACK



LEGEND

- TOTAL NUMBER OF WEATHERS TRANSMITTED BY U/S
- NUMBER OF WEATHERS RECEIVED FOR BY CONTROL
- NUMBER OF U/S THAT TRANSMITTED WEATHERS

and January. The graph of U/B weather reports shows a decided jump just before the German counter-attack on 16 December. Weather data was highly important for planning a counter-attack and U/B's on weather patrol were reminded of the importance of their task during this period. On 19 December, Lange (U-1053), Lohrutz (U-1232), Hechler (U-810), and Marienfeld (U-1228) were told

"Your recent WW reports contributed decisively to determining the beginning of our great offensive in the west on 16/12." (1930/19 December).

Transmissions remained at a high level during the rest of December and the beginning of January but by February there was a decided decline. A US destroyer escort task group (22.8) left the Azores in early January to operate against the U/B weather station; the USS OTHAR sank Loos (U-243), a regular weather reporter, on the 16th. During April only one U/B reported; his last WW was sent at 1713 on 5 May 1945.

#### 10.

#### U/B's in the Far East.

U/B activity in the Far East remained at a decidedly low level. In spite of Japanese proposals in September and December that U/B's be sent in large numbers to operate against Allied shipping, the Germans were determined to concentrate their major effort in the Atlantic. Tinn (U-862), already in the Far East, left Batavia in November to operate off Australia and New Zealand and succeeded in sinking two freighters. Earlier in the same month while on a submerged patrol south of Kangeor Islands in the Java Sea, USS FLOUNDER (SS-251) succeeded in sinking Schrewe (U-537) who had





these only Freiwald was ordered to return to Europe; the other U/B's were to be turned over to the Japanese. (1127/7 May). The Japanese got them all, Freiwald included.

11.  
The Baltic.

Meanwhile, in the Baltic, the working center of the U/B Navy was being paralyzed by a succession of military disasters on land. The Russians advanced so rapidly that by February plans were made to shift the U/B's in the Baltic to the North Sea. As of 17 February, a total of 157 U/B's had been evacuated from East Baltic ports to Western Baltic and North Sea ports. As the situation grew steadily worse, U/B's were evacuated by all possible means including the towing of those disabled and half constructed. By 25 March 1945, the entire U/B arm, including many unfinished Type XXI U/B's, was removed from the Danzig-Gdynia area. The resultant overcrowding of west Baltic and North Sea ports was greeted by intense A/C bombardment which damaged many and sank more than could be reported accurately in the increasing German confusion. On 20 April, most U/B's had been evacuated from Bremen; three days later the base was declared ready for demolition. In Hamburg the night of 21-22 April was set as the deadline for departures. On 24 April, U-base Helgoland had practically ceased to function. By 26 April immediate suspension of work on a large number of U/B's was ordered, the crews to be sent to other bases or used for local defense. To the very last, however, there appeared no sign of a serious collapse in the German Naval organization. U/B's were rushed for front-

line operation in spite of everything. As at the time of the Biscay evacuation, the German Navy maintained a disciplined organization throughout the confusion of events.

12  
Collapse in the Homeland.

The German Navy, as we have seen, had been able to recover its losses and renew with vigor the U/B war even in the midst of breakdown at home. On the last day of the war the Atlantic U/B fleet at sea was larger than it had been for many months, and the sinking of Allied shipping was beginning to show an upward trend. Command's promise to renew the convoy war had not been unfulfilled.

Had the renewal program been begun a year earlier, a serious threat might have materialized. As it was, the collapse of the homeland forced the undersea fleet into sudden surrender.

The surrender, as seen through German Naval messages, presented

a limited and even distorted picture of events on the continent. There were false starts, hesitations, then sweeping orders as policies changed in the highest circles of command, and finally the simple fact of necessary surrender was given to the U/B's.

During the closing days of April 1945, when the Soviet <sup>+</sup> armies encircled and penetrated Berlin where the German leaders were waiting under the Chancellery, when American and Soviet troops linked at the Elbe and in the south, the U-Boats, apparently unaffected, continued their routines of war. Their supplies in Norway were sufficient for about six weeks of further operations. Even on the morning of 4 May, when all Northern Germany surrendered, two U/B's, Schmeckel and Lauth, left Bergen for war cruises.

It may safely be presumed that 74 U/B's operating at sea constituted a significant card for the Germans in their bargaining with the Allies. Upon Hitler's dropping out, and the failure of Himmler's attempt to negotiate a surrender, the man to whom the U/B arm owed allegiance was chosen as Fuehrer. Grand Admiral Doenitz followed the policy of the Party in attempting to play the Western Allies against Russia. He at least had the partial satisfaction of surrendering to the British and Americans, the forces with which he most closely identified himself.

Not until 29 April 1945 was there any sign in U/B radio traffic of the impending surrender. The regular news services, of course, had kept the U/B's informed of the war's movement; but the false VE Day of 28 April, which was silenced only by the White House, was not referred to. In Penang and Batavia, however, the creature rumor received such credence among the Japanese that they visited the

German commander of the area with condolences and intentions of seizing his ships.

It was characteristic of the confusion of surrender week that after the German news broadcasts on 30 April had announced Hitler's death, a U/B message of 1530/30 stated, "The Fuehrer is present at the fateful battle in Berlin."\*

Comsubs West (Commandant Bergen) was ordered in 0945/30 April to take command of all U/B's. This presaged the shifts in high command preliminary to surrender.

An administrative circuit [redacted] carried a message at 1546/1 May in which Doenitz quoted his authorization from Martin Bormann, the Nazi Party chief, "Instead of former Reichsmarschall Goering, the Fuehrer has named you, Grand Admiral, as his successor....." Immediately Doenitz assured the U/B's that "the battle still goes on." From time to time, as surrender negotiations proceeded, the U/B's were reassured, "the battle is being continued." But an explanation was felt to be required. "In order to save hundreds of thousands of Germans from annihilation and slavery, carry on with your old rigor." (1149/2).

Doenitz, no longer Cominch and Comsubs, appointed General Admiral von Friedeburg as Navy Chief and sent him with Marshal Keitel and General Jodl to talk terms of surrender. Friedeburg technically assumed command of U/B's in 1305/2 May, and on the 3rd and 4th of May repeated that the U/B war was being continued;

\*The first news of Hitler's death to appear in U/B traffic came on 2 May, when C.O. 2nd Defense Group sent a message (0011/2 May 1945) to all boats in his command: "Inform crews immediately of the death of the Fuehrer and of the transfer of command to Doenitz..."

but Consubs West again took over the U/B command in 0447/4 May.

First fruits of the negotiations appeared in 1113/4 May:  
"Cominch forbids destruction of German merchant ships when enemy action threatens, except in case of action by Bolshevik forces."  
Then in 1614/4 May, Doenitz himself, in a special message, ordered all U/B's to cease all warlike activity and secretly begin return to Norway.\* A few hours later, a prod: "No one is more under oath to him (Doenitz) than the Navy...." (2311/4). A "Flash" message at 0134/5 declared the situation had changed, all U/B's in German and Danish ports and bays were to scuttle. Only eight minutes later, under Keitel's signature, all were informed that the surrender of North Germany to Montgomery would go into effect at 0800B: "no scuttling or demolition to be performed." (0142/5.

At 2153/5 May Doenitz to all U/B men:

"Six years of U/B warfare lie behind us. You have fought like lions. An overwhelming superiority in materiel has forced us into a very narrow space. From this small basis a continuation of our battle is no longer possible....U/B men, unbroken and unashamed, you are laying down your arms....Keep your U/B spirit, with which you have fought bravely.... Long live Germany."

In view of the professed German motive of surrendering to the Anglo-Americans in order to save something from the Russians, it must have been hard to send out the message on ciphers at 1204/2: "\_\_\_\_\_ cipher data are being handed over to the Anglo-Americans and Russians...." Plain

\*1614/4 was not read until 16 May; hence the first actual proof that Doenitz had issued orders to U/B's to cease hostilities and return was in a fragmentary plain text message intercepted at 1745Z on 5 May which referred to 1614/4. At 1/5 May all U/B's were ordered to cease operations against England and America immediately. (Read on 7 May.)

language orders followed, canceling the return to Norway, giving orders to surrender according to Allied instructions. (2026/8; 2034/8)

It should be borne in mind that the U/B arm was not, in May 1945, defeated at sea. The pre-Schnorchel U/B had been decisively swept from the Atlantic in the summer of 1943; but the loss was made good and the U/B reappeared in force. The power of this fact in the imagination and memory of a possible future German Navy will not be easy to estimate.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XII

Although 91 Atlantic U/B's were presumably at sea on the day of the surrender only 74 could be regarded as in, or possibly in, operational areas, and thus had to be accounted for. The remaining 17 U/B's were in German controlled waters between Kiel and Norway. U/B records as of the day of the surrender showed that of the 74 operating U/B's:

21	had been sunk or presumed sunk during March and April
1	was sunk after 1 May
8	came into German ports during April and after the surrender
<u>28</u>	came into Allied ports after the surrender.
58	
<u>+16</u>	U/B's are still unaccounted for as of 27 May 1945.
74	Total



PART E

BLOCKADE RUNNERS: SURFACE AND SUBMARINES.

GERMAN NAVAL OPERATIONS

IN THE FAR EAST AND INDIAN OCEAN.

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German Naval Operations in the Far East and Indian Ocean  
which have received only incidental mention in the preceding  
chapters, are here discussed as a separate phase of the U/D  
war.

CHAPTER XIII.

SURFACE BLOCKADE RUNNERS.

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## SURFACE BLOCKADE RUNNERS.

### A. Organization.

#### 1. Primary objectives in Establishing.

The exclusion of the Axis powers from the various sources of supply formerly available to them, after the entry of the U.S. into the global conflict, emphasized the necessity for more complete collaboration between the eastern and western members of the alliance in all phases of the war effort. The combining of all resources and the exchange of vital materials became an essential factor in waging the war against the Allies, a factor which Germany, in particular, was quick to appreciate and which Japan, as the struggle developed, advocated unceasingly.

#### (a) Requirements of Axis Nations.

Germany's principal deficiencies consisted mainly in raw materials. Rubber, tin, wolfram, molybdenum, hemp, hides and vegetable oils were all possessed in abundance by Japan and her newly conquered territories. By contrast, Japan was poor in certain essential metals, manufactured articles and technical processes, which Germany and, to a lesser degree, Italy possessed.

#### 2. Information on Blockade Runner Program Revealed by Allied Radio Intelligence sources.

The accomplishment of this exchange program was dependent

upon a sizeable fleet of merchant ships which only Germany was in any position to provide. At the outbreak of hostilities and over the ensuing period of months there was little information available to U.S. Naval authorities on the location and movement of ships engaged in blockade running. From aerial photographic reconnaissance had come useful reports and this source provided a particularly effective means during the fall of 1942 for obtaining an inventory of the ships and their movements along the west coast of France and in the Bay of Biscay.

The first R.I. on B/R's became available about the middle of 1942. Although the sources were at first rather limited and the information was frequently not current, it contained valuable intelligence. Confined mainly to decrypted diplomatic and naval or naval attache messages it divulged names and movements of ships, cargoes loaded and forecasts of loading and sailing dates.

With the decryption of the German naval enigma cipher late in 1942, the most reliable and important source of information on blockade runners became available, and by the early part of 1943, when the cipher was read almost currently, decryption intelligence could contribute to the closing of the Atlantic to enemy blockade runners.

### 3.

#### Development of B/R Program

##### (a) German Initiative.

The initiative in developing a closer material collaboration

by the Axis was assumed by Germany. The ships used as blockade runners were, with few exceptions, either of German registry or German prizes of war. The exceptions were a few Italian ships put into service, and these were under German control. Japan's limited amount of shipping prohibited the assignment of any of her merchantmen for running the blockade.

Operation of blockade runners was the responsibility of German Admiralty. The control of Sunda Strait by the Japanese shortened the length of cruises, enabling ships to make the trip via the Indian Ocean without intermediate refuelings, and opened the back-door to Japan's storehouse. Depending on lack of Allied intelligence of ship movements, and evasive routings and tactics to escape interception, the success of the plan seemed promising.

German commercial representatives arrived in the Far East to arrange the purchase and shipment of materials from the ports of the new Japanese southern empire.

(b) Japanese reluctance.

That Japan did not at first manifest complete cooperation with her occidental allies became apparent from R.I. sources. In September 1942 a Jap. diplomatic message stated that the German commercial attache in Tokyo had broached certain complaints to the Japanese. \_\_\_\_\_ He pointed out that: (1) because Japan was slow in concluding a pact to supply Germany with rubber, loading of Yanagi (B/R) ships would probably be delayed; (2) Japan

did not permit the presence of Germans at the loading of Yanagi ships at Singapore; (3) Japan's offer to supply fuel oil to the ships was not working out smoothly; and (4) Japan had proposed substitution of copra in place of coconut oil which was originally promised, and which German tankers had been expressly sent to load.

In addition the Japanese exhibited a certain skepticism over the possibilities of successfully running the blockade. A message of 21 August 1942, addressed to the German Naval Attache in Japan, stated:

"According to the interpretation of Admiral Nomura, the Jap Navy considers that the naval B/R traffic is much too unfavorable. Clarification of this issue is to be effected. Excerpts from cruise reports of incoming ships can be given to the Jap Navy as explanation of the slight traffic in the Oceans."  
(Diplogerma 0427/21/8/42).

(c) Commercial and operational difficulties.

While skeptical of the success of the operations and uncooperative in the negotiations concerning them, R.I. revealed further that the Japanese were at the same time making energetic efforts to secure for themselves as many benefits from the program as possible. They called upon the Germans in September 1942 to supply them with 1,000,000 tons of steel as well as an unspecified amount of aluminum. Also, an attempt was made to supplement the Jap merchant marine by pressing the Germans for more ships.

To these various demands the Germans made concessions,

where possible, and tactfully negotiated with Jap purchasing commissions in an effort to work out the agreements and operational difficulties as quickly and as satisfactorily as possible. To the million-ton steel request the Germans replied that such a large order could not possibly be exported with available shipping facilities and that in the face of increased Allied air strength the necessary expansion of the German Luftwaffe precluded the shipment of any aluminum to Japan. As for the release of ships to Japan, it was stated that in order to maintain the expeditionary army in Africa, Germany had barely enough ships to meet her own needs. Further, that of twelve German ships in the Far East, four had been sold outright to Japan, seven others had been leased to her by charter, and that in spite of such a ship shortage all "Yanagi" transportation between Europe and the Orient was being carried on by means of German ships exclusively.

In the meantime several ships were on actual cruises and by mid-summer of 1942 various reports indicated that at least nine ships had arrived in Axis-controlled European ports. - Another B/R, the German SPREWALD had been sunk off the Azores during January 1942 apparently by an Italian submarine.



B. Failure of Surface Blockade Runner Program.

1.  
Number of Trips.

(a) Winter of 1942-1943.

At the beginning of the winter of 1942-43 there were known to be at least twenty-six ships distributed between Europe and the Far East which were serviceable as blockade runners. Beginning in November, and during the following weeks, fourteen of them set sail of which ten were sunk.

The first four departures from western France were those of the KARIN, ANHELESE ESSBERGER, CORTELLAZZO, and GERMANIA. The KARIN was the only one to elude interception. As a result of these losses, German Admiralty abandoned plans to send out any more ships during the months of December and January.

Although R.I. had given no assistance in forecasting the attempted break-through of any of the four ships mentioned, definite information concerning plans for resumption of sailings early in 1943 did become available. A new schedule called for the sailing of eight ships beginning about the middle of February. They were to transport 75,000 tons out of the large stocks accumulated by Japan in Europe.

Meanwhile the Germans lost two more ships during January and February of those returning from the Orient. These losses caused

further postponement in the shipping program. A Jap. Dip. message announced the new delay early in March, stating the number of ships to leave had been reduced to four and the tonnage to be carried had dropped from 75,000 to 20,000 tons.

The four which finally sailed were the PORTLAND, OSORNO, ALSTERUFER and HIMALAYA. Of these the PORTLAND was sunk and the HIMALAYA was forced to turn back. The other two made port in the Far East.

Returning from Japan during this same season were seven blockade runners, as follows: RHAKOTIS, HOHENFRIEDBERG, DOGGERBANK, KARIN (sunk while attempting to complete a round trip during the winter season), REGENSBERG, IRENE and PIETRO ORSIOLO. Six of them were sunk, the PIETRO ORSIOLO being the sole exception. Oddly enough, the DOGGERBANK was probably sunk by a German submarine.

(b) Winter of 1943-1944.

After the losses incurred in the Atlantic by the Germans during the previous winter, the blockade runner operations were considerably curtailed. A new plan called for the use of submarines to run the blockade and during the winter of 1943-44 not one ship left Europe for the Far East.

There were, however, five ships which attempted to reach Europe from Japan. The ships involved were the ALSTERUFER, BURGENLAND, OSORNO, RIO GRANDE, and the WESERLAND. Four of them were sunk en route. The fifth, OSORNO, barely reached the haven of the

Gironde estuary where she was beached as a result of severe bomb damages from attacking British aircraft.

This season wrote the final chapter in the German-Japanese attempts to use surface vessels for exchanging the vital commodities of war, a chapter in which R.I. contributed materially to the complete breakdown of the surface blockade runner program.

## 2. Role of Allied Radio Intelligence.

The decryption of German U-boat traffic was a significant development contributing to the failure of the German operation of surface blockade runners. Prior to the winter of 1942-1943, the Germans had suffered few losses of surface ships between Europe and the Far East. Making capital of the lack of Allied intelligence of their ship movements, the plans for engaging as many ships in the blockade runner traffic as could be made available appeared to be entirely plausible.

With the reading of U-boat traffic came the explicit information to U/B's about the movements of German surface ships. As far as possible, Command gave estimated positions and cruising speeds of the ships in question; described various disguises and recognitions used by individual ships; blocked off prohibited areas in the Atlantic Ocean in which subs were allowed to operate only with special permission; and, generally passed such information

to U-boats in plenty of time to allow for the arrival of the blockade runner in question.

The first blockade runner on which almost complete information was available currently from U-boat traffic was the HOHENFRIEDBERG. Thereafter the information available to German Admiralty which was passed on to U-boats became available through R.I. to the Allied naval commands.

C. Blockade Runners, winter 1942-1943 -  
Europe to Japan.

1.

Ships available.

With the approach of the winter season of 1942-43, an increased tempo of movements by blockade-runners, both inbound and outbound, was anticipated. At least ten ships, which had been engaged in this traffic were known to be in Western French ports during the summer of 1942: ANNELISE ESSBERGER, CORTELLAEDO, ELSA ESSBERGER, FUSIJAMA, GERMANIA, HIMALAYA, KARIE, KUMSTERLAND, OSORNO, and PORTLAND. The arrival of the DRESDEN, TANNENFELS and KUMERLAND from Japan during November gave Germany a sizeable fleet of cargo ships and tankers for shipments to the Orient.

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2.

KARIE and ANNELISE ESSBERGER.  
(One sunk).

Aerial photographic reconnaissance was the most effective means during the early period of the 1942-1943 season for obtaining an inventory of the movements and locations of the various ships involved, and the first winter departures from Europe were located and reported by this means. When outward bound through

the Bay of Biscay, the KARIN (ex-KOTA KOPAN) and ANNELEISE ESSBERGER, the first E/R's of the season, were spotted by aircraft on 6 and 7 November 1942. This information led to the scuttling of the ANNELEISE ESSBERGER on 21 November 1942, after interception by U.S. forces at 00.54 N. - 22.34 W. The KARIN escaped further compromising encounters with Allied forces and continued passage to the Far East.

3.  
CORTELLAZZO and GERMANIA.  
(Both sunk).

The CORTELLAZZO sailed from Bordeaux on 29 November, and the GERMANIA probably on 11 or 12 December 1942. Both ships met with the same fate as the ANNELEISE ESSBERGER, the CORTELLAZZO being sunk by British convoy escorts on 1 December about 500 miles west of Finisterre; and the GERMANIA scuttling when intercepted on 15 December by a British sloop at 45.05 N. - 15.30 W.

4.  
Temporary cessation of sailings.

Although ignorant of the fate of the ANNELEISE ESSBERGER, the German Admiralty was well aware of the loss of the other two east-bound runners. The sinkings of the CORTELLAZZO and GERMANIA were announced in U/B traffic with orders to search for survivors. The disastrous results of these attempts to break through the North

Atlantic were followed by the decision to postpone further departures for Japan. A message to Tokyo from the Jap. Naval Attache in Rome, dated 22 December, stated:

"Certain things have arisen making it necessary to cut out the return Tanagi shipments for a while..." ( 22 Dec. '42).

5.  
Resumption of B/R Schedule.

During January 1943, there were no sailings from Europe. Resumption of activities was planned for the middle of February, however, and R.I. revealed plans to sail 8 ships carrying 75,000 tons of cargo to the Far East during February and March. All were scheduled to sail from Bordeaux where facilities provided for the loading of only two such ships simultaneously. Eight blockade-runners were known to be in French ports at this time; i.e., PORTLAND, ALSTERUFER, OSORNO, HIMALAYA, FUSIJAMA, DRESDEN, TANNENFELS and KULMERLAND.

By March, it had been decided to sail only 4 ships. The Jap. Naval Attache in Berlin advised Tokyo on 8 March that these 4 ships (carrying 20,000 tons of cargo) would sail for Asia at the end of March, their protection to be increased by the use of both aircraft and submarines as escorts.

6.  
PORTLAND, OSORNO, ALSTERUFER,  
HIMALAYA (One sunk, one put back).

One of the four ships was the PORTLAND, which sailed from Bordeaux in company with OSORNO and a third ship (ALSTERUFER)

escorted by three destroyers, seven torpedo boats and one submarine. The PORTLAND succeeded in passing through the danger areas and, by 2 April, reached 43.33 N. - 32.55 W., where she was encountered by the German U-174 (Grandefeld), who reported the meeting in a message on 7 April. Grandefeld had apparently mistaken the PORTLAND for an inbound runner, since he was impatiently waiting for KARIN and IRENE.

After this report, no further R.I. was available until 22 May, when a message dated 14 May announced the course the PORTLAND was to follow via Sunda Strait prior to her arrival in Batavia about 27 May. This information was superfluous, however, for Grandefeld's report of 7 April (read on that date) had made it possible to plot the PORTLAND's course by dead reckoning, and on 13 April she was sunk by a Fighting French cruiser at 05 H. - 22 W.

The OSORNO and the ALSTERUFER successfully completed the run to Asia. Beyond an Offizier message addressed to four U-boat commanders on 31 March, relating to the movements of a blockade-runner, no accurate intelligence was available on either ship. This message, which became available on 7 April, told the U-boat commanders to count on meeting (U-901) at the northern edge of Lane 'A'. 'U-901' was the covername for either PORTLAND, ALSTERUFER or OSORNO. The information was passed to Cinclant in 081221 April 1945.

The HIMALAYA was not so fortunate. In trying to leave



the Bay of Biscay on 9 April 1943, on what proved to be the last attempt of the season, she was attacked by a British aircraft and apparently turned back to port. The HMS ADVENTURE moved to intercept HIMALAYA and, although failing in this, did locate and sink an inbound ship, the IRENE, on 10 April.

D. B/R's, Winter 1942-1943 - Japan to Europe.

1.  
The REAKOTIS

That the Japanese were making energetic efforts to increase "Yanagi", or blockade-runner transportation during the 1942-43 season was revealed by R.I. available early in October 1942. They were pressing the Germans to charter or sell to them more ships to be engaged in the blockade running trade. In reply to these proposals the Germans stated it would be impossible to furnish more ships; that the number of ships available was insufficient to meet Germany's own needs; and that four out of twelve German ships in the Far East had already been sold to the Japanese, while seven others had been chartered to them.

In the latter part of September 1942, under protection of winter weather, the first of the Yanagi's to sail for Europe began its return cruise from Yokohama. This was the REAKOTIS, the information having been revealed in a Japanese message dated 19 November. She arrived Singapore on 15 October and took aboard a cargo of tin, rubber, zinc ore, lard, rice, tea, quinine bark, cocoanut oil and pearls valued at 50,000 yen. From Singapore she proceeded to Batavia and departed for Europe on 5 November.

After sailing around the Cape of Good Hope into the Atlantic, she was approaching the end of her voyage when, on

1 January 1943, she was scuttled in position 45 N. - 11 W., upon interception by the HMS SCILLA.

2.  
U/B traffic and "Lane A".

Through U/B traffic radio intelligence afforded a somewhat clearer outline of the movements of the next series of blockade runners to leave Japan en route Europe beginning with the HERBORG, re-named HOHENFRIEDBERG, which left Batavia in December 1942. The decryption of U/B traffic assumed an additional importance. Comsubs gave the Allies valuable information on B/R movements by defining for U/B's the areas of the B/R lane, or "Lane A". "Lane A" was a 200 mile wide strip running from the coast of France west to approximately 30° W., thence south to about 05 S. It was sub-divided into four sectors, the closing of any one of which signified the immediate presence, or forecast the imminent arrival of a B/R within the area. Although intelligence from this source was not always current during this period, in those instances when it was, the information was used to good effect in tracking and, in several cases, contributed to the sinking of blockade-running ships.

3.  
HOHENFRIEDBERG (sunk).

This source divulged important information concerning the HOHENFRIEDBERG's approach to Europe in the Atlantic. The first

information definitely indicating a northbound runner was contained in a message to commanders of U/B's on 13 February 1943. It gave the order forbidding attacks on single ships within the sector of "Lane A" from 10 N. to 35 N., up to and including 23 February. From 35 N. to the north and east, no attacks were to be permitted after 19 February. Another message of earlier date, which became available on 17 February, made possible the positive identification of the approaching ship. (1246/3/2/43). This message ordered the closing of the southernmost sector of "Lane A", identified the ship expected as the "HOHENFRIEDBERG, formerly HERZOG, disguised as HERZAND, call-sign LIYG, armament one 7.5, four 2-cm. guns, and four machine guns". All this information was passed to Cinclant in 151555 and 181651 February.

That the German Admiralty was adopting unusually strong protective measures to insure the HOHENFRIEDBERG's safety became evident as the blockade-runner approached the Bay of Biscay. On 20 February 4 U/B C.O.'s were ordered to head for area 42 N. - 32 W. to meet and escort an important blockade-runner home. On the 22nd two further messages were sent to commanders in the area of the inbound ship, instructing them to approach and inform the vessel's captain of their escort assignment, to inquire the ship's speed, and when rendezvous had been accomplished to report. The first of these two messages had described identification markings of the E/R, i.e., "scaffolding around funnel", in addition to the

customary recognition signals for cargo ships (1023/20/2/43).  
Cinclant was informed of the intelligence contained in these two  
messages in 211552 and 231247 February.

In spite of the security measures and escorting forces,  
the HOHENFRIEDBURG was not to escape. She was located and sunk by  
Allied forces, and Comsubs was informed of the sinking in an Offizier  
message from U-264 (2110/26 Feb.), as follows:

"Object-to-be-protected was sunk by heavy cruiser,  
LONDON class, at 1750A in 41.57 N. - 27.10 W. I  
have complete crew on board. Missed spread shot of  
four on heavy cruiser. Am starting return."

4.  
Four B/R's sunk in less than two  
months, DOGGERBANK, KARIN, REPARSBERG,  
IRENE.

The third departure from the Far East was that of the ill-  
fated DOGGERBANK (ex-SPEYBANK) which left the Empire area about  
20 December en route Saigon where she was scheduled to load 3,200 tons  
of rubber. The exact date of her sailing was unknown, and further  
information of her voyage was not available until a survivor was  
rescued on 29 March, at 16 N. - 51 W. This man reported that  
the DOGGERBANK was sunk by an unidentified submarine on 3 March  
at approximately 31 N. - 37 W.

The DOGGERBANK was probably sunk by a German submarine.  
The mistake was apparently due to the combined circumstances of  
self-imposed radio silence for security and higher speed en route

than German naval authorities had anticipated. Following the HOHENFRIEDBURG's passage through "Lane A", the ban on attacks on single ships north of 15 N. had been lifted, and no further prohibitions against attacks in the Lane were ordered for U/B's until 1 March. On 1 March "Lane A" was closed from 05 S. to 15 N., effective 1-20 March, and from 15 N. to 30 W., effective 5 to 26 March.

An Offizier message on 15 March made it clear that the Germans had no knowledge of the DOGGEBANK's sinking on 3 March. At that time subs were advised that because of the approach of the "U-905", the sea area 100 miles north and south of a line extending from approximately 35 N. - 30 W. to 42 N. - 10 W. was closed to attack on independent ships. "U-905" was almost unquestionably the DOGGEBANK.

Following close upon the sinking of the DOGGEBANK came that of the fourth inbound blockade-runner, the KARIN, (ex-KOTA KOPAN) on 10 March 1943. The KARIN was on the last leg of a round trip, having left Bordeaux outbound about 6 November 1942, as stated earlier. She was sunk by her own scuttling charges at about 07 S. - 21 W. after having been sighted and stopped by the USS EBELI.

No intelligence was available concerning the KARIN's return trip to Europe, and it was not until after her sinking that U/B traffic divulged her anticipated arrival in Europe. German Admiralty had no detailed information. On 27 March U/B's were told

to "count on meeting, besides the REGENSBURG, the former KOTA NOPAN during the next days in the 200 mile wide strip whose middle line runs from 42.25 N. - 37.20 W. to 59.33 N. - 25.36 W." (1457/27/3/43). Instructions to U-174 (Grandefeld) constitute further evidence of the inadequate information possessed by Berlin. On 30 March U-174 was told to continue to stand by the rendezvous area for delivery to "U-915" (ex-KOTA NOPAN) of "1 Op Order". (1035/30/3/43). U-174's final rendezvous report stated that the KARIN had not been met.

The "Op Order" to be delivered by U-174 provided detailed instructions on a new extension of the blockade-runner lane. It was opened as a result of the HOHENFRIEDBERG sinking and followed a northern course to Germany (Stettin), via Denmark Strait and to the north of Iceland. U-191 (Ficht) had previously been assigned the task of reconnoitering the ice boundary in Denmark Strait for the benefit of ships heading through that area. It was in this new sector of "Lane A" that the REGENSBURG was sunk.

The REGENSBURG first attempted to leave the Far East in the fall of 1942, but was torpedoed by the USS SEABAVEN in Sunda Strait on 13 October 1942. She was able to reach a Japanese port where she was subsequently repaired for the voyage to Europe. The date of her final departure was unknown. The first of a series of messages concerning the approaching REGENSBURG was addressed to the commander of U-161 (Achilles) who was ordered to rendezvous with the blockade-runner on 20 March. As recognition markings, the REGENSBURG was to string a yard line with laundry from mizzenmast to stern during good

weather, and during bad weather fire hoses were to be hung on the mizzenmast.

Bad weather delayed the rendezvous, but on 24 March, U-161 reported execution of the task and stated that the REGENSBERG desired information on ice conditions and "announcement of her own plans". (2247/24/3/43).

After her rendezvous with the German U/B and while proceeding toward Denmark Strait, the REGENSBERG was scuttled at 63.37 N. - 26.52 W., when sighted by the British cruiser HMS GLASGOW on March 30, 1943.

The approach of the sixth B/R of the season, the IRENE (ex-Norwegian SILVA PLANA), toward Western Europe had not been anticipated, no previous intelligence having been received indicating her use as a blockade-runner. U/B communications were, therefore, the only source of information concerning this ship.

On 30 March U-174 (Grandfeld) was advised to stand by the rendezvous point to which he had been ordered some days earlier to meet U-915 (identified as the KARIN) and possibly U-916 (IRENE). To these ships he was to deliver special orders and charts.

On 6 April the IRENE met U-174 at the rendezvous point (43.31 N. - 32.58 W.), receiving from the U/B instruments, orders and personnel. An account of the meeting was given to Command by U-174 in which it was stated that the IRENE was disguised as the BOEGH SILVER STAR or REINHOLT. Grandfeld reported the IRENE



sufficiently supplied to remain at sea for 38 days and gave her speed as 11.5 knots.

The reference to the IRENE's maximum sea endurance was apparently in contemplation of following the northerly course attempted by the REGENSBURG, on the strength of which Cinclant was advised in 071221 April of the possible approach toward Denmark Strait of the inbound runner. However, probably as a result of the REGENSBURG disaster, she was routed directly to western France.

Submarine side escorts were provided for the IRENE in two messages directed to U/B's on 9 April. The four U/B's assigned this task were given the routing to be followed by the B/R; were ordered to remain on the surface as much as possible to provide anti-aircraft protection, and to employ all weapons against any attacking forces. They were further advised that German aircraft would provide added protection on the 10th of April, and that destroyers would pick up the IRENE at 1800B at 44.27 N. - 13.25 W. The destroyer escorts were recalled, Command explaining that Allied strength prevented their rendezvous with the blockade runner.

On 10 April the IRENE was located by the HMS ADVENTURE, which was moving to intercept the outbound HIMALAYA, and scuttled herself at 43.18 N. - 14.26 W.

Upon sinking of the IRENE, German Naval Command removed attack prohibitions in sections A, B, and C of the blockade runner lane, indicating no further inbound or outbound ships were to be

expected until further notification to U/B commanders.

5.  
The last B/R of the season:  
PIETRO ORSEOLO.

The PIETRO ORSEOLO was the only one of the blockade runners to complete a round trip during the 1942-43 season. She had sailed from Biscay in the fall of 1942, and by 20 November was reported in Batavia.

No advance information was available concerning her return to Europe, and although certain information on an unidentified ship heading for Europe was obtained it was not immediately associated with the PIETRO ORSEOLO.

A message from the U-161 (Achilles), available 30 March, 1942, reported completion of a rendezvous with a blockade runner, presumably at about 41.04 N. - 38.00 W. An earlier message addressed by Command to U-161, which did not become available in sufficient time to be of value, identified the ship in question as the ORSEOLO and gave directions for the meeting on 26 March, 1942.

From the meeting with U-161, the PIETRO ORSEOLO seems to have headed directly eastward for western France and by 2 April had reached Bordeaux.

6.  
Change to submarine transport proposed.

The sinking of six of the seven returning B/R's had a great effect on German Far Eastern plans. The departure from

Batavia of two B/R's had been cancelled as soon as Berlin learned of the loss of the HOHENFRIEDBURG, three others which had put out before 10 April were ordered to return to port.

More important still was the revolution effected in the means of cargo transportation. Because of the tremendous losses of ships suffered by the Axis partners a new plan for delivering the raw materials vitally necessary for military purposes was proposed. The German Navy and Office of Economic Warfare of the Ministry of Defense decided to inaugurate special submarine transportation, utilizing initially nine Italian submarines which were to be rebuilt for such operations.

E. The final phase - Winter, 1943-1944 - Japan to Europe.

1.

Preparations in the Far East and speculations in the RI Units.

Despite indications of a shift to submarines for cargo transportation, it was believed that the Axis would attempt further westbound surface runs with the beginning of winter weather in the North Atlantic. It was known that a half-dozen suitable ships were in oriental ports and that loadings were planned or underway. On 5 October information was at hand indicating that three German ships were leaving Japan that week, two for Singapore (one correctly identified as the ALSTERBUFER, the other as either BURGENLAND or WESERLAND), and one, the USORHO, for Bangkok. By 17 October, the "RIO GRANDE" had been added to ships recently arrived in Singapore, undoubtedly in preparation for a run to Europe. On 4 November it was known that the WESERLAND had left Yokohama on 26 October to arrive in Singapore 8 November.

Definite information on departures for Europe was not available until 24 November when the following came to light: RIO GRANDE to depart (Surabaya?) via Sunda Strait 29 October; WESERLAND to depart Batavia via Sunda Strait 22 November; BURGENLAND to depart Batavia via Sunda Strait by 25 November. The above information, however, was incomplete and led to the assumption that the RIO GRANDE had not only sailed first but would also be the first to receive

attention in the Atlantic. In fact, however, the RIO GRANDE was the last to turn up. According to prisoners she had waited four weeks in area 48 S. - 25 W. before risking the run up into the Atlantic. Meanwhile the OSORNO and ALSTERUFER had gone on.

2.  
Information from U/B Traffic.

Past experience had proved U/B traffic the most valuable source of specific information on surface runners, and it was realized that when B/R's were expected by German Admiralty in U/B areas the usual warnings would have to go on the air. Hence U-849 (Schultze) was watched with considerable interest, for he was entering the South Atlantic at this time bound for the Indian Ocean. At 1343A/15 November, a message in Offizier setting was addressed to Schultze. Schultze was forbidden to attack independents west of a line from 02.51 N. - 21.15 W. to 04.51 S. - 15.15 W. to 10.39 S. - 15.15 W. to 44.51 S. - 09.06 E. This information was available late on 16 November, 8 days before definite knowledge of any actual departures came to hand, except for reports of eastbound departures from Bordeaux. (See below on eastbound B/R's). Cinclant was informed in 171342 November, the reports of eastbound departures were discounted, and attention directed to westbound runners, with ALSTERUFER, OSORNO, RIO GRANDE, and WESERLAND listed as the most probable. SCHLIEMANN and ZURGELAND

were listed as less probable. British Admiralty added BRAKE, MADRONO, and HAVELLAND for consideration.

3.  
The OSORNO sneaks home.

The official closing of "Lane A" was not sent to U/B's until 25 November. Beginning 1 December U/B's were forbidden to attack independents in the area from 05 S. to 15 N. between longitudes 29 W. to 45 W. because of passage of type "U-913" ships. When last used, in September, "U-913" had applied to the tanker CHARLOTTE SCHLIMANN, but in this case it was assumed to refer to B/R's in general rather than to tankers. Cinclant was informed of the official closing in 261930 November.

On 5 December it was learned that beginning 6 December and until further notice the area from 15 to 40 N. of "Lane A" was closed. It was evident that German Admiralty's plot showed at least one ship to be northbound probably in the area just north of the Equator.

Strict observance of radio silence by the B/R's made it possible for plotters to do more than anticipate by dead reckoning the period when B/R's could be expected in the South Atlantic narrows. Thus the weekly B/R Bulletin, issued through December and January 1944, assumed that the suspicious ship sighted by a Liberator on 8 December in 05.22 S. - 23.18 W. was the RIO GRANDE rather than the OSORNO. The luck which enabled the OSORNO to escape

this sighting characterized the rest of her voyage into Biscay, for by chance a second vessel, the neutral LEONIDAS; had engaged attention along with the OSORNO, and the latter's attempt to pass as a British merchantman (the PROME) proved successful. The German version was as follows:

"Alle 96. OSORNO deceived enemy planes by the following behavior: In spite of being ordered to stop, she continued to go. She set the distinguishing signal for a disguised ship, ((raised)) English flag on gaff, English cockade on hatch 1. She answered challenge with incomprehensible Morse signal. Extra crew were under cover, officers signaling on bridge."  
(2003/7 Dec. 1943).

On 13 December Admiralty informed Cominch that the PROME was in Bombay at the time of the sighting, and on the 16th that the Master of the LEONIDAS reported having been circled by A/C at 1100 ship's time 8 December in 06.30 S. - 26.03 W. But it had already been recognized that a B/R had gotten away. Extensive search was made on 9 December for the suspicious ship, and any doubts that might have remained were eliminated when U-510 (Eick) reported having sighted a ship of ANTILLA type in 01.21 S. - 24.03 W., on 9 December. In accordance with previous instructions, U-510 added a description of Allied war units observed to be searching in the general area.

That the OSORNO was behind her plotted schedule was shown by the 6 December closing of "Lane A" from 15 N. - to 40 N., for the OSORNO is now known to have been in 04.50 N. - 26.06 W. on 10 December. In lieu of definite information on the position of the OSORNO, the 22 December closing of the outer Biscay area to U/B attack on

independents served as a warning that the OSORNO was expected to make port shortly. On that date all U/E's were told:

"Own blockade runner OSORNO homeward bound today in area ((between 11.30 W. and 38.50 W. at about 45 N.)). Ship presumably disguised. In the event of meeting her, send report immediately after getting out of sight. Cover name U-1534... Count on deceptive courses of all kinds. Attention is urgently called to prohibition of attacks on unescorted independents....It is your duty to keep ((presence of runner)) absolutely secret even from crews." (1239/22 Dec. 1943).

A/C from the USS CARD contacted the B/R on 23 December in 47.42 N. - 18.53 W., course 110, speed 10, but the CARD was unable to take further action owing to its fuel situation. Destroyer escorts were likewise spotted by carrier planes.

Rendezvous was made successfully, and late on 25 December, the OSORNO entered the Gironde River where she was located and bombed by British planes. The Eighth Destroyer Flotilla, which had furnished her escort, reported that she was anchored in shallow water as a result of A/C attacks. Two destroyers from the Flotilla were assigned as A/A protection for the ship, which by this time had been beached. The B/R's skipper, Captain Hellman, was promptly awarded the Knights Cross to the Iron Cross, and the arrival of the OSORNO with her valuable war cargo was proclaimed throughout the fleet as a great victory.

4.  
The ALSTERUFER (Sunk).

Other than the fact that ALSTERUFER was plainly one of the B/R's at sea, practically nothing was known of her whereabouts



until 18 December, and then only a broad hint. On 18 December a message of the 13th addressed to OSORNO and ALSTERUFER was read, which contained communications instructions, frequencies, etc., for the area east of 30° W., in other words for the last part of the voyage. From this it appeared that German Admiralty was plotting ALSTERUFER along with OSORNO. Radio silence together with evasive measures had enabled the ALSTERUFER to pass through the South and Middle Atlantic without being seen. By 22 December the Atlantic R.I. Section could state merely that the ALSTERUFER was at sea, probably in the North Atlantic within the boundaries of "Lane A". It was U/B traffic which gave the decisive opening a few days later.

(a) U/B traffic locates ALSTERUFER.

With the closing of the last section of "LANE A" on 22 December, U/B's in outer Biscay - and there were many - set close watch for the inbound runners. It was known here that U/B's had already been specifically warned of the OSORNO's approach. On 25 December U/B's were informed that the ALSTERUFER was expected in outer Biscay beginning the 26th. Meanwhile U-305 had sighted the "U-1534" (covername assigned to OSORNO) in 45.15 N. - 23.05 W., at 1230A/25, course 180, speed 5, and reported the sighting in Officer setting late that afternoon. Within an hour after the transmission the message had been read. Any possible confusion between the ALSTERUFER and the OSORNO was promptly clarified by German Admiralty, who informed U-305 that OSORNO ("U-1534") was already in Biscay and asked the U/B if her

sighting had not been ALSTERUFER. This information was available to the Allies before midnight the same day.

On the 27th A/C located and sank ALSTERUFER in 46.32 N. - 18.55 W. The intended escort force of eleven destroyers was sought and found near the assigned B/V point in 46.15 N. - 11.45 W., where it was attacked by British sea and air forces with good results. Three German units were sunk including the T-25, whose Captain and 33 of whose men were rescued by the German submarine U-505 (later, the USS MEO). The Irish ship KERLOGUE and the Spanish DD's JORGE JUAN and SANCHEZ BARCAIZTEGUI picked up other survivors and brought them in to neutral ports.

(b) Comment on German Intercept service.

It is evident that German intercept and R.I. service (B-Dienst) was covering the Allied circuits involved in the B/R search and that German Admiralty was making constant use of this information in its instructions to the B/R's and to their intended escorts. In the case of the OSOREO German Admiralty had used an Allied A/C shadower's report for determining the date when OSOREO would make her escort B/V. In ALSTERUFER's case, however, German B-service was cut off just before the ship was sunk, and German Admiralty remained in ignorance of her loss until the 28th, when the B/R failed to answer requests for position. An explanation is suggested by the following interesting message sent by Naval Group Command West to "Trave" (covername for ALSTERUFER) at 1938A/27, two hours after

the ship had gone down:

"Constant vigorous A/C activity in Biscay since noon. Last ((enemy)) shadower report that could be read by us was received at 1140A, since then there have been 5 transmissions by A/C and 20 by land stations which we could not read. Shadower of 1140A reports position at 1650A in BS 34 ((49.39 N. - 15.15 W. 'b')): thus presumably on return flight." ( 1938/27 Dec. 1943).

(c) U/B's to send PPP signals as deception.

Early on the 28th U/B Command ordered U-415 (Heide), returning from Group BORKUM operation in area 45 N. - 21 W., and U-309 (Habrholz) in 47 N. - 18 W. to:

"send a S/S immediately according to following pattern on basic frequency of a wave on Norddeich short range service; Introductory signal: 'P' three times. Then six 3-letter groups of which the first and last must be the same. Use IC transmission." (0314/28 December).

While neither signal, if sent, was noted by Allied intercept activities, the attempt to assist ALSTERUFER by radio deception was obvious. At the same time, the nature of PPP signals was clarified. Of particular interest is the role which PPP signals played a week later in the identifications of remaining runners.

5.

WESERLAND and BUEGELAND  
(both sunk) - PPP signals.

The voyages of the WESERLAND and BUEGELAND lacked any sensational element. They plotted nicely and appeared agreeably in the South Atlantic narrows approximately at the time anticipated. The

WESERLAND was sunk by the USS SOMERS early on 3 January in 14.55 S. - 21.39 W., and the BURGENLAND by the USS OMAHA and JOUETT in 07 S. - 26 W., after having been located by US A/C. The prompt evaluation of a PPP signal led directly to the sinking of the BURGENLAND.

By 1 January the acknowledgments of signals sent by OSORNO and ALSTERUFER on 23 and 27 December respectively had been read, and it became possible to give a more complete appraisal of PPP signals. OSORNO had apparently sent one on the 23rd but only the receipt was heard by Chatham. OSORNO had presumably used an "off" frequency. The ALSTERUFER, however, transmitted on 8460 kcs and was copied as well as D/F'd. The D/F fix was good and it was possible to identify the signal as probably from ALSTERUFER

With the order to U/B's of 28 December to send PPP signals, as described above, it seemed likely that these signals

were used for sighting reports.

Hence when a PPP signal with time of origin 2208A was heard

on 1 January, it was concluded that the originator was a B/R informing German Admiralty of the sighting made by a B-12 at 012050Z in 10.19 S. - 22.48 W. (Reported in COM.FOURTH FLEET 020439). The WESERLAND cleared another PPP signal shortly before being sunk, but only the receipt was heard by

The direct part played by PPP signals in the sinking of the BURGENLAND on 5 January is best told in the words of

C.O. South Atlantic Strategic D/F net:

"On 3 January 1944, Navy Department Communication Intelligence informed the C.O. South Atlantic Strategic D/F Net, that German Blockade Runners when sighted had previously used a type of message commencing with the letters "PPP". These messages had been noticed one or two days prior to this, when a blockade runner was sunk. Although the type of message was noticed and studied to a certain extent, the significance of it was not realized until the information was received from Washington.

On 5 January the Fourth Fleet Operations Officer informed that a strange vessel, not on the merchant ship plot, had been sighted by a cruiser plane. A special extra watch was immediately put on \_\_\_\_\_, with instructions to listen for this particular type of message, commencing with PPP, and to inform the watch officer or commanding officer immediately if he received such a message. Approximately twenty minutes later this type of message was noticed being transmitted to Germany. The commanding officer immediately called the Fleet Operations Officer and informed him that in all probability the vessel sighted was a German blockade runner.

Acting on this information, orders were sent to a cruiser at sea to intercept the vessel."

6.

The last B/R - RIO GRANDE  
(Sunk).

If RIO GRANDE was a mystery to Allied Intelligence throughout December she was no less of a mystery to the Germans throughout January. Although she had sailed with ALSTERUFER and OSORIO and was of comparable speed, she was sunk south of the Equator one day after the WESERLAND sinking in spite of the fact that she had sailed 24 days ahead of the WESERLAND.

The possibility that RIO GRANDE had headed into the North

Atlantic, as the REGENSBURG had done, could not be overlooked, especially in view of the special weather assignments given to North Atlantic U/B's at the end of December. At the same time it was recognized that she might have turned back.

It is now known from survivors that the RIO GRANDE had waited four weeks in the South Atlantic. When she did undertake the run northward it was only to be sighted (while lying to) and identified as a B/R. Her name was not known when the USS OMAHA and JOUETT sank her by gunfire.

(a) CSP 953.

On being intercepted RIO GRANDE had tried to send an RTR distress signal. The signal was jammed by OMAHA but not before noting that the ship had used the encoded callsign of SS JAMES LYKES, a ship that did not appear on the day's plot. That RIO GRANDE had acted on instructions was clear from a [redacted] dispatch of 9 December (read 21 December), which outlined the challenge and answer procedure [redacted] Paragraph 3 of the dispatch stated:

"Use international call signs of assigned covership. In case scuttling is unavoidable, when transmitting distress signals use enemy secret call sign assigned by W/T." ( 0203/9/12/1943).

20-G was able to confirm the suspicion of compromise voiced by COM 4th FLEET.

(b) German Admiralty ignorant of RIO GRANDE's loss.

The jamming of RIO GRANDE's distress signal left German

Admiralty in ignorance of her fate. Provisions for her passage continued to be made until 3 February. RIO GRANDE was apparently instructed to proceed via Denmark Strait rather than face the alert in Biscay. At appropriate intervals throughout January successive sections of a lane running up via Denmark Strait to Norway were closed to U/B's. That the Germans were very vague about the RIO GRANDE was shown by the fact that after 21 January a lane from 15 E. all the way to Norway via Denmark Strait remained closed to U/B attack on independents.

German Admiralty's concern for the RIO GRANDE affected nearly all their naval activities in the North Atlantic during January. It was necessary to send special warnings to U/B's returning from the western Atlantic and the Caribbean as well as to U/B's setting out for the Indian Ocean. Weather and ice reconnaissance in northern areas had to be carried out. Long reports on weather in Denmark Strait and adjacent areas were addressed to RIO GRANDE. U-257 was dispatched to a B/V position for the delivery of northern charts. Here the U/B waited in vain from 23 to 28 January while German intercept stations were guarding international distress frequencies for every possible clue. U-960, engaged on a weather reporting task in area 52.30 N. - 33.45 W., sank an unidentified (C-3) steamer and thereby precipitated a series of urgent requests for reassurance necessitating a special sweep of

the sinking area in order that German Admiralty might continue to hope for the survival of the RIO GRANDE. Finally on 3 February all B/R lane closings were cancelled and the Germans gave the RIO GRANDE up for lost.



F. Eastbound Blockade Runners, Winter 1943 - 1944.

1.  
German intentions.

By mid-July 1943 it was clear that renewed outbound activity could be expected in October or November when the days had become shorter in the North Atlantic. In April Ambassador Oshima in Berlin had informed Tokyo that surface runners would not operate until November, and in June Tokyo was informed that preparations for loading would commence in August. It was further noted that arrangements had been made to use at least 9 submarines as transport boats, obviously because of the high rate of loss of surface vessels.

At Cinclant's request a summary of this R.I. information was passed to him in July to acquaint him with the situation.

As early as 20 July it became evident that ships in Biscay ports were being readied for some operation, presumably the run to the Far East. British air reconnaissance made it possible to keep track of these ships and to note their evasive movements. This information was used by 20-3 in interpreting R.I. material which was then passed to the forces afloat via Cinclant and to Cominch in the form of a weekly summary.

Of the ships in the various Biscay ports, 8 were considered potential blockade runners:

DRASDEN	(5567 tons, 15 knots).
ELBA ESSBERGER	(6103 tons, 13 knots)

FUSIJAMA	(6244 tons, 13 knots)
HIMALAYA	(6240 tons, 13 knots)
KULMERLAND	(7363 tons )
MUNSTERLAND	(6408 tons, 11 knots)
PIETRO ORSEOLO	(6344 tons, 14 knots)
TANNENFELS	(7840 tons, 16 knots)

2.

Difficulties and Ambassador  
Oshima's pessimism.

The difficulties of the operation were apparent to Ambassador Oshima. The Germans had originally planned to send 50,000 tons of cargo. But increased air patrols made it necessary to reduce the tonnage to 42,000 tons in favor of increased A/A protection. Further, one of the so-called YAMAGI ships (the KULMERLAND) was disabled in September (probably by bombing), and this reduced the cargo to 35,000 tons. Oshima, however, seemed convinced that no more than 32,000 tons would actually be sent. This further confused the situation by making it necessary to re-consider the whole question of what should be given priority.

It is now certain that the Germans were preparing to sail the blockade runners in October 1943. On 10 November Oshima reported that he had visited Bordeaux on 20 October and had seen the BRESDAN and TANNENBERG (undoubtedly he meant TANNENFELS) loaded with steel, aluminum and formic acid, awaiting sailing orders. He was told by the two captains that other runners had already left for the Far East, but either <sup>he</sup> was misinformed or the ships had merely changed anchorage for purposes of deception - a common maneuver at this time.

This information was passed to Cinclant on 14 November.

Oshima's pessimism was particularly marked in this report. He expressed grave doubts as to whether the ships would ever reach Japan, or even leave Biscay, and therefore recommended that the captains be decorated by Japan before they attempted the trip.

The 35,000 tons of cargo was reduced to 29,000 early in November when one vessel was damaged so severely that it had to be withdrawn. This was probably the DRESDEN, which struck a mine on 6 November while on its way down the Gironde. Still another ship, not identified, was damaged by aerial torpedoes at Bordeaux, leaving only 5 ships available to run the blockade.

### 3.

Final preparations for sailing.

The final flurry of activity commenced on 25 November. On that date it was noticed that a special radio circuit had been inaugurated in the Bay of Biscay area for communication with blockade runners. Ships were addressed by cover names, five in number, and it was thus evident that at least five ships were ready for use: ELSA, ESSBERGER, FUSIJAMA, HIMALAYA, PIETRO ORSOLO and TANNENFELS.

Traffic indicates that the immediate departure of at least some of the ships was expected. Three - HIMALAYA, PIETRO ORSOLO and TANNENFELS - were given aircraft recognition signals on 10 December. The same ships were ordered to refuel and stock up by the 17th. Postponement was necessitated, however, by the approach of two

homebound runners, OSORNO and ALSTERUFER.

By the time the way was clear for the departure of the five runners, the Germans had had enough. Only one inbound runner had arrived, and part of her cargo seems to have disappeared after she was beached. The PIETRO ORSINO had been put out of commission by bombing on 18 December, further reducing the number of available ships.

4.

All sailings cancelled.

On 19 January the remaining four were told that the task was cancelled because the risk was too great. They were ordered to unload their cargo with the greatest secrecy so as to avoid lowering the morale of those in the area.

Ambassador Oshima, his predictions fulfilled, reported to Tokyo that since only submarine transport remained, and that was unsuitable for heavy cargo, the only thing to do was to arrange for an exchange of patent rights.

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BLOCKADE RUNNING SHIPS, 1942 - 1945

<u>No. Ships Used</u>	<u>Runs Attempted</u>	<u>Successful Runs to Far East</u>	<u>Successful Runs to Europe</u>	<u>Sunk Enroute Far East</u>
23	34	6	4	4
<u>Sunk Enroute Europe</u>	<u>Damaged in France or made port in France damaged</u>	<u>Sunk in</u>	<u>Departure Cancelled</u>	
10	5	1	8	

NOTE: Includes those 5 ships which were loaded and ready to sail from France in January, 1944, but whose departure was cancelled.

SURFACE SHIPS USED TO REFUEL U/B's IN INDIAN OCEAN, 1943-1944

<u>No. ships Used</u>	<u>R/V's Proposed</u>	<u>R/V Successful</u>	<u>R/V's partially Successful</u>
3	8	5	1
<u>R/V's Un-successful</u>	<u>Ships sunk</u>	<u>Total subs Fueled</u>	
2	2	15 (plus 2 partially)	

BLOCKADE RUNNING SHIPS BETWEEN  
EUROPE AND FAR EAST  
1942 - 1945

WINTER, 1942-1943

<u>SHIP</u>	<u>EUROPE</u>	<u>FAR EAST</u>
1. WESSERLAND 6528 GRT ex-ERNLAND	Sailed Bordeaux 17 Aug. 1942	Arrived Saigon 17 Jan. 1943.
2. PIETRO ORSOLO 6344 GRT	Sailed Biscay 2 Oct. 1942	Arrived Batavia mid Nov. 1942
3. BURGENDLAND 7320 GRT	Departed Bordeaux about 4 Oct. 1942	Arrived Singapore 6 Dec. 1942. Departure from Batavia for Europe cancelled 1 Mar. 1943.
4. IRESDEN 5567 GRT	Arrived France early in Nov. '42. Severely damaged by mine in the Gironde River on 6 Nov. 1943. Later sank.	Departed Saigon 8 Sept. 1942
5. TANNENFELS 7840 GRT	Arrived Bordeaux a few days before 6 Nov. '42	Departed Far East August 1942
6. KULMERLAND 7363 GRT	Arrived Gironde River about 7 Nov. 1942. Dis- abled in port by bombing on 23 Sept. 1943	Departed Dairen 26 Aug. 1942
7. KARIN 7322 GRT ex-KOTA HOPAN	Departed French port about 1 Nov. 1942	Arrived Far East Jan. 1943

SHIPEUROPEFAR EAST

- |     |  |  |   |                                       |
|-----|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 8.  | ANHELEISE<br>ESSBERGER<br>5173 GRT<br>YAMAGI 'E' | Departed French port:<br>about 1 Nov. 1942 | Scuttled 21 Nov. 1942 in<br>01 N., 23 W. upon inter-<br>ception by USS MILWAUKEE                      |                                       |
| 9.  | RHAKOTIS<br>6753 GRT                             |  | Sunk on 1 Jan. 1943 in<br>45 N., 11 W. by HMS SCYLLA  | Departed Batavia 5<br>Nov. 1942       |
| 10. | CORTELLAZZO<br>5292 GRT<br>YAMAGI 'M'            | Departed Bordeaux<br>29 Nov. 1942          | Sunk on 1 Dec. 1942 in<br>44 N., 20 W. by British<br>convoy escorts.                                  |                                       |
| 11. | GERMANIA<br>9851 GRT                             | Departed French port<br>about 11 Dec. 1942 | Scuttled on 15 Dec. 1942<br>in 45 N., 16 W. upon inter-<br>ception by British sloop.                  |                                       |
| 12. | HOHENFRIEDBERG<br>7892 GRT<br>ex-HERBORG         |  | Sunk on 26 Feb. 1942 in<br>42 N., 21 W. by British<br>cruiser.  | Departed Batavia<br>end of Dec. 1942  |
| 13. | REGENSBURG<br>8068 GRT<br>U-910                  |  | Scuttled on 30 Mar. 1943<br>in 64 N., 27 W. upon inter-<br>ception by British cruiser                 | Departed Far East<br>Dec. 1942        |
| 14. | DOGGERDANK<br>5154 GRT<br>ex-SPAYBANK<br>U-905   |  | Sunk on 3 Mar. 1943 in<br>31 N., 37 W., apparently by<br>a German U-Boat                              | Departed Singapore<br>early Jan. 1943 |
| 15. | IRENE<br>4793 GRT<br>ex-SILVA PLANA<br>U-916     |  | Scuttled on 10 Apr. 1943 in<br>43 N., 14 W. upon interception<br>by HMS ADVENTURER. 146<br>survivors. | Departed Far East<br>early Jan. 1943  |



FAR EAST

Departed Far East  
late Jan. 1943

Departed Far East  
end Jan 1943

Departed Batavia early  
Feb. 1943

Departed Batavia 6  
Feb. 1943

Departed Batavia (1)  
25 Feb. 1943

Arrived Singapore  
about 25 May, 1943

Arrived Batavia about  
27 May, 1943

EUROPE

Scuttled on 10 Mar. 1943  
in 07 S., 21 W. with  
boarding party from USS  
EBERLE aboard

Ordered to return to  
Batavia on 1 Mar. 1943.  
Sunk near Kobe by enemy  
sub. 7 May 1944.

Ordered to return to  
Batavia on 1 Mar. 1943.

Ordered to return to  
Batavia on 1 Mar. 1943

Sunk on 13 Apr. 1943 by  
French cruiser GEORGES  
LENGUES in 05 N., 22 W.

Attacked by British A/C on 9  
April '43 in Bay of Biscay. One  
hit estimated. Returned to  
Pallice.

16. KARIN  
7322 GRT  
ex-KOTA NOPAN  
U-915

Arrived Bordeaux by  
2 April 1943

18. ROSSEBACH  
7000 GRT  
Ex-MADRONO

19. WESSERLAND  
6528 GRT  
ex-ERNILAND

20. RIO GRANDE  
6062 GRT

Departed Bordeaux  
25/26 Mar. 1943

22. HIMALAYA  
6240 GRT

Departed Pallice  
8 April 1943

23. OSORNO  
6951 GRT  
U-901

Departed Bordeaux  
25/26 Mar. 1943

24. ALSTERUFER  
2729 GRT  
U-901

Departed Bordeaux  
28/29 Mar. 1943

WINTER 1943-1944

SHIP

EUROPE

FAR EAST

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. RIO GRANDE<br>6062 GRT              | Sunk on 4 Jan. 1944 in<br>07 S., 26 W. by USS OMAHA<br>& JOUETT                         | Departed Soerabaya<br>about 29 Oct. 1943                             |
| 2. OSORNO<br>6951 GRT                  | Beached off Le Verdon<br>in sinking condition.<br>25 Dec. 1943                          | Departed Batavia 31(?)<br>Oct. 1943                                  |
| 3. ALSTERUFER<br>2729 GRT              | Sunk on 27 Dec. 1943 in<br>47 N., 19 W. by A/C  | Departed Far East end<br>Oct. 1943                                   |
| 4. WESSERLAND<br>6528 GRT<br>ex-IRLAND | Sunk on 2 Jan. 1944 by USS<br>SOMERS in 15 S., 22 W. 134<br>survivors.                  | Departed Batavia<br>22 Nov. 1943                                     |
| 5. BURG-ENLAND<br>7320 GRT             | Scuttled on 5 Jan. 1944 in<br>07 S., 26 W. upon interception<br>by USS JOUETT & SOMERS. | Departed Batavia about<br>25 Nov. 1943                               |
| 6. ELSA ESSBERGER<br>6103 GRT          | Loaded and ready to<br>depart France in<br>Dec. 1943                                    | Sailing cancelled when blockade<br>running suspended in Jan. 1944.   |
| 7. FUSIJAMA<br>6244 GRT                | Loaded and ready to<br>depart France in Dec.<br>1943.                                   | Sailing cancelled when blockade<br>running suspended in Jan. '44.    |
| 8. HIMALAYA<br>6240 GRT                | Loaded and ready to<br>depart France in Dec.<br>1943.                                   | Sailing cancelled when blockade<br>running was suspended in Jan. '44 |
| 9. PIETRO ORSEOLO<br>6344 GRT          | Loaded and ready to<br>depart France in Dec.<br>1943.                                   | Badly damaged by bombing in port<br>on 18 Dec. 1943.                 |

SHIPEUROPEFAR EAST

10. TANTHIEFELS  
7840 GRT

Loaded and ready to  
depart France in  
Dec. '43

Sailing cancelled when  
blockade running was sus-  
pended in Jan. '44.

SURFACE SHIPS USED TO REFUEL SUBMARINES  
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN  
1943 - 1944

SHIPSDEPARTED FAR EASTOPERATIONSARRIVED FAR EAST

1. CHARLOTTE  
SCHLIMMANN  
7747 GRT

Singapore, 4 June  
1943

Fueled 6 U/B's on 22  
June in about 30 S.,  
48 E.

Soerabaja, 13 July  
1943

Batavia, about 12  
Jan. 1944

Fueled 1 U/B on 26 Jan. in  
24 S., 68 E. SUNK on 12  
Feb. '44 in 23 S., 75 E. by  
HMS RELENTLESS. 3 more U/B's  
to have been refueled.

2. BOGOTA  
1230 GRT

Batavia, mid June '43

Fueled Jap sub (I-87) engaged  
in transportation operations  
to Germany

Balikpapan, 11 July '43

Singapore(?), end Nov.  
1943

Jap sub to be fueled, the I-34  
(MOKI), having been sunk,  
failed to appear at R/V  
planned for about 25 Nov.

Singapore, about 3-4  
Dec., 1943

Sunda Straits, 18 Dec.

Fueled Jap sub I-29 (MATSU,  
KIEFER) early in Jan. '44

Djarkarta, 17 Jan. '44

**SURFACE SHIPS USED TO REFUEL SUBMARINES IN  
THE INDIAN OCEAN.**

1943 - 1944

<u>SHIP</u>	<u>DEPARTED FAR EAST</u>	<u>OPERATIONS</u>	<u>ARRIVED FAR EAST</u>
3. BRAKE 9925 ORT	Balikpapan, end Aug. 1943	Fueled 5 U/B's on about 8 Sept., S or SE of Madagascar	Batavia, before 14 Oct. 1943
	Singapore (?) about 29 Feb. 1944	Fueled 3 U/B's on 11 Mar. 1944 in 32 S., 74 E., only 1 completely filled. Scuttled on 12 Mar. 1944 in 32 S., 72 E. after attack by cruiser and destroyer.	

CHAPTER XIV

U-BOAT OPERATIONS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN  
AND THE FAR EAST.

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U-BOAT OPERATIONS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN  
AND THE FAR EAST

A. Organization and Background.

1.

German interest in these operations and lack of Japanese cooperation.

Although German and Japanese Naval Attache traffic for 1942 is scarce, it appears that as early as August 1942, the Germans had begun negotiations for the use of a base on the Malay Peninsula where they could supply and repair U/B's operating in the Indian Ocean.

There were many reasons for the decision to undertake extensive operations in the Indian Ocean. In 1942 Germany appeared to be winning the Battle of the Atlantic and could afford to divert part of the U/B fleet to new and fertile fields. Allied A/S measures around South Africa were primitive as compared to those in the Atlantic, and with the tightening of the A/S defenses off the South American coast, the Freetown area and in other areas previously considered "soft spots", the planning of operations in waters less well patrolled was considered urgent.

As Germany's war situation deteriorated new reasons for Indian Ocean operations appeared. The Germans had expected to take the Suez Canal and to sweep through the Caucasus to meet

the Japanese in India. But in the latter part of 1942, the German drive in North Africa was halted, and Rommel was forced into full retreat. The sinking of Allied supply ships became even more important, and the Persian Gulf and Red Sea supply routes to Russia and to the British forces in Egypt became priority targets.

Even after the Germans had been chased out of Africa, and the Mediterranean was opened to Allied use, the Indian Ocean was considered important by the Germans. With the reverse in North Africa came also the defeat of the U/B's in the Battle of the Atlantic, spring 1943. The U/B packs were withdrawn from the North Atlantic and large numbers of unemployed subs were sent to patrol distant areas where shipping was plentiful and A/S defenses less dangerous. Until the U/B Command could devise new weapons and defenses to meet Allied A/S tactics some shipping successes were demanded to support morale and propaganda warfare.

A Far Eastern base of operations was clearly required if German plans were to reach fruition. A base required supplies, and the smashing of surface blockade runner traffic threw the burden on operational U/B's, a burden made back-breaking by the necessity for using subs to carry cargo vitally needed by Germany. This phase of U/B operation will be discussed separately in Section B of this Chapter.

Cooperation between the Germans and Japanese in the planning and execution of this program was thoroughly unsatisfactory.



and results achieved by the Germans were brought about in great part in spite of, rather than by reason of, joint negotiations.

When it had become clear that the German and Japanese armies would not meet in India, the Japanese lost interest in plans for a German base in the Far East. Japanese apathy continued until 1944. They seemed to believe that the tonnage sunk in the Indian Ocean would be of greater benefit to the Germans than to themselves, and that German U/B's would be using supplies which they could well use themselves. Furthermore, German exploitation of Japanese-influenced waters was distasteful to them. Whether they did not wish to be too closely associated with an ally whose changing fortunes of war were likely to make her a burden to the Japs, or whether it was merely their innate and traditional distrust of foreigners, it was evident that they were not enthusiastic.

Germany persisted in its attempts to build up the Far Eastern flotilla until the Allied threat to the homeland became too great. By that time the Japanese had decided that it would be well to have a large submarine fleet to help in their fight. It was then too late. Each nation attempted to use the other for its own advantage. Each in its turn had been rebuffed.

2.

The development of U-base  
Penang. German difficulties.

As mentioned above, negotiations for a German base in

Malaya had begun in 1942. The German-Japanese Naval Communications Agreement had been under discussion since early 1942, and by August of that year the joint correspondence had reached the phase of assigning spheres of operations. The message from the German Naval Attache in Tokyo referring to this question is interesting, not only because it is the earliest evidence that negotiations were underway, but also because the dissensions and misunderstandings which characterized all succeeding attempts at collaboration are here clearly shown to have hindered the planning at its inception. The CIA said:

"Interpreter was given to understand that ((Germany's)) penetrating into ((Japan's)) own operation area is not favored. Propose ((that question)) be brought up again..." ( [redacted] 27 Aug., 1942).

The final assignment of spheres of operation was not made until September 1943, German U/B's being restricted to the area west of 70° E. As will appear later, this agreement was never obeyed and probably was discarded with the tacit consent of both parties, Japan having become increasingly unable to conduct offensive operations in the Indian Ocean.

In September 1942, the choice of a person "to look after the Naval Attache's affairs and for supervising the south area" ( [redacted] 4 Sept., 1942) was under discussion, and Captain Vermeiren was chosen, being more acceptable to the Japanese than other candidates mentioned. Thereafter Vermeiren retained

general control of all Far Eastern activities, although direct control of the Penang-Batavia area was maintained by C.O. Southern Area. The site of the main sub base was chosen in December, Penang being favored by the Japanese because of its suitable naval equipment. The fact that the Jap Comsubs was also located there may have been a deciding factor, for possibly the Japs wished to keep a high-ranking eye on the situation. Singapore was named as the port for major repairs and docking.

The first German U/B to dock at Penang, in July 1943, was U-511. Schneewind, its commander, took temporary charge of the base when his sub was presented to Japan. The first regular C.O. was Dommes, who arrived in August 1943, in U-178.

Innumerable difficulties were placed in the way of the Germans. Services and supplies were of poor quality; bases were never well equipped with personnel or supplies; and it was reported that "everything must be begged in protracted discussions from Japanese stations." ( [redacted] 20 Oct. 1944). U/B and blockade runner crews had to load, unload and repair their own vessels, while the few Japanese workers seemed to spend their time spying on new German equipment. No torpedo house was available, and the U/B's were forced to stow torpedoes in a building used by the Japs. U/B's had to go to Japan proper to change worn out batteries.

The greatest difficulties were encountered with regard to Japanese fuel and A/S patrol in the straits leading to the bases. There was a good bit of duplicity on the part of the Japanese in

representing the quality of the fuel and lubricating oil with which they supplied the Germans. They affably agreed to provide oil of the quality required by German subs, but unofficially spoke of the fact that the oil would not come up to standards. Samples of proper quality were provided, but when quantities were delivered the promises and samples were found to be merely promises and samples. Diesel oil was particularly unsatisfactory, and caused so much damage to U/B diesels that the Germans were finally forced to conduct their own purification experiments. These seem to have been fairly successful.

Even in 1943, when the Japanese would seem to have been most able to furnish a sufficient number of well-equipped A/S patrol vessels for escort purposes, their activity in this respect was so weak and resulted in the loss of or damage to so many subs that the Germans were forced to protest strongly. When no improvement was forthcoming they found it necessary to enforce radio silence in the vicinity of the bases in order, as they thought, to deceive the ever-lurking Allied subs. In fact, timely and accurate RI enabled the Allies to deploy their submarines with a view to economical destruction of enemy craft. Only after Japan was faced with the threat of disrupted supply lines, after Germany began to lose interest in Far Eastern adventures, were steps taken to increase and improve the patrol vessels.

Not even personnel matters were removed from the

no-man's-land of quarrels. The Japanese Comsubs in the Southern Area was an Admiral. The German commander was a Lieut. Comdr., and was therefore unable to deal on an equal footing with the Japs. Although Vernshren in Tokyo was a Captain, Japanese organization made it impossible for him to deal effectively with the Japanese Staff in Tokyo, which automatically referred all questions to the local office. In order to improve the situation Naval Attache Wennaker suggested that a Captain or Admiral be made C.O. Southern Area. This suggestion was not followed, although Berlin did promote Dommes, the C.O., to Commander.

Even more disastrous difficulties confronted U-base Penang. The first supplies sent to the new base were carried by 11 U/B's which left Biscay in June and July 1943. By the end of August, 5 had been sunk in the Atlantic, partly as a result of RI fore-knowledge of R/V points, and one had been forced to return to port.

This misfortune also deprived Penang of the man slated to become its first C.O., Kuppisch. It was necessary to relieve Dommes of the command of U-175 to become C.O. Penang.

The whole history of the bases in the Far East is a history of improvisations to meet problems posed by Allied interference with German routine. Two U/B's, slated to carry cargo between Germany and Penang, were pressed into the cargo run between the south and Japan and finally immobilized by decrepitude in Kobe.

The problem of sending supplies from Germany was never solved. Plans to use old Italian subs failed; a program of cargo boat construction was cancelled; operational U/E's were forced to carry cargo and consequently lost much of their offensive efficiency. In short, when it became clear in 1944 that U/E's were more needed in the Atlantic, there was no great urge to continue building up the Far Eastern fleet.

3.  
Decline of the German effort.  
Japanese press for cooperation.

In October 1944, it became apparent that Penang was no longer a suitable base. Allied submarines prowled the Malacca Straits constantly and often lay just outside Penang harbor, so inept were Jap A/S defenses. The concentration of the British Fleet at Ceylon, the Burma Campaign, and attacks on the Nicobar Islands also endangered the base. Further, the Germans were convinced that part of their troubles were caused by British D/F stations which concentrated on Penang. Even the Japs were dissatisfied and the Japanese Comsubs was planning to shift his base.

Accordingly, on 25 October orders were issued making Batavia the main homing port, Penang being used only in urgent cases. On 15 November this order was expanded, Surabaya becoming a major repair base in addition to Singapore. For all practical purposes Penang was evacuated, the last U/E (U-843) leaving before

1 December. On 1 January 1945, Dommes was promoted from C.O. Penang to C.O. Southern Area in recognition of his increased duties.

No great problems, other than those concerned with transferring supplies and personnel, were involved in the change of bases. Surface blockade runners had used both Batavia and Surabaya, and an organization was already in existence. There had also been German seaplane bases at both ports. The change was not destined, however, to improve Germany's Far Eastern fortunes.

German desires and intentions concerning the Far Eastern venture are nowhere more in evidence than in the statistics showing the number of German U/B's sent out. In 1943, 8 subs were sent to the Far East. From 1 January 1944 until the invasion of France on 6 June, 15 subs had commenced the trip. During the remainder of the year only 5 were sent, none of them putting out after August. In 1945, two departed Norway, and at the time of the surrender there were no plans to send more. Indeed, those based in the Far East were to be sent home.

The disintegration of the German effort in the Far East was made even more apparent by the growth of Japan's interest in strengthening that effort. Formerly an unwelcome burden, the German U/B's became weapons to be desired. In September 1944, began a series of requests for more submarines for joint operations in the Pacific. Every possible assistance was promised if this were brought about, and work was actually started on the long-promised

A/S defenses. The Japs put forward many reasons why the transfer of more and more U/B's would be of benefit to both countries. The loss of French bases had forced the subs to Norwegian and German waters where they would be particularly vulnerable to Allied A/C. Since Allied radar had sharply curtailed successes in European waters, it would be far better to operate in the Pacific where Allied A/S measures were less advanced and attack opportunities were good. It was further argued that such operations would stimulate German morale, which would need a stimulus if the fuel shortage in Europe forced many U/B's to remain idle.

But Germany now showed as little enthusiasm for this plan as Japan had shown two years before. Japan was thanked politely and informed that an intensification of Far Eastern operations was to be desired; but there was a limit to what could be done, since the German war situation demanded full use of the U/B fleet. Grand Admiral Doenitz said that the old-type subs, which Japan claimed were too weak defensively to operate in the Atlantic, had on the contrary almost never been discovered by the Allies since the advent of Schnorchel. With Schnorchel they were equal to the most difficult patrols off the English coast. However, something might be done if the Japanese Navy would show its good-will by making better arrangements for A/S measures in the entrances to the southern bases.

Jap pressure was not relaxed, and being aware of German misgivings, they proposed in September 1944, the establishment of



a combined command under Admiral Nomura, a man well thought of by the Germans when he was the special representative of the Japanese Navy in Berlin. Nothing came of this scheme, however.

Germany made only two tangible efforts to cooperate. In December 1944, one U/B operated off southern Australia with moderate success. In January 1945, it was announced that a German Vice Admiral would reveal a concrete plan for carrying out operations of German subs in the Philippine area after consultation with the Japanese. One U/B left Batavia en route the Philippines late in April, but is believed to have been sunk by a U.S. sub when only two days out of port.

The last Japanese attempt to lure more U/B's to the East was made in April 1945. Doenitz' excuses were: defense of the homeland and lack of fuel for the long trip. Japan's neat circumvention of the latter excuse by offering to refuel any U/B's south of Capetown came too late, for the next news from Germany was of the surrender. Dozmes, C.O. Southern Area, had promised on 29 April to continue operations with the Japanese; and on 7 May Berlin ordered Dozmes and Attache Wenneker to turn over to the Japanese all but one U/B, that one to carry selected personnel back to Germany. Japan, however, seems not to have depended on these formalities. As of 1 June 1945, it appears that the 6 remaining German U/B's in Far Eastern ports as well as all facilities were seized as early as 7 May.

## B. Blockade-Running Submarines.

### 1.

#### Plans and preparations.

Germany's relatively acute shortage of rubber, tin, tungsten and molybdenum forced that nation to attach great importance to blockade running. Surface vessels were used until January 1944, but the rate of attrition made it clear to the Axis almost a year earlier that some other means of transportation must be found to supplement, if not to replace, those ships. The German solution involved transport submarines. Fortunately, from the Axis point of view, conditions seemed favorable for the speedy development of such a system. Germany had been planning for some time to extend its area of operations to the Indian Ocean and in 1942 had arranged for a supply base at Penang. In addition, the long cruise between Europe and the Far East had been successfully completed by German and Jap U-boats by early 1943, so that the scheme was not wholly untested. It is also significant that during 1943 the U-boat began to lose its effectiveness as an offensive weapon in the Atlantic Ocean. There were, therefore, more subs available to serve as undersea freighters, at least until the German High Command could devise new weapons to meet Allied A/S warfare.

In April 1943 the Atlantic RI Section became aware of the elaborate plans for submarine blockade running through a report

from Ambassador Oshima dated 31 March 1943. This mentioned a plan to convert some old Mediterranean U-boats to carry rubber and other materials. No German subs used as cargo carriers fit such a description, and probably the reference was to nine Italian "AKIRA" submarines, first mentioned by name in April 1943. The Germans evidently desired to put their program into immediate operation; and, pending readiness of their own subs, they took over nine Italian boats for use beginning in May. General outlines of this plan were revealed in traffic read during May, but complete details were lacking until after the surrender of Italy. The U-boats (covernames: AKIRA and MERCATOR) ranged around 1,000 tons, and the plan was to have them make two round trips yearly, carrying 150 tons of cargo per trip.

In the meantime Germany was to build 30 transport subs which eventually were to handle the bulk of the traffic. These were to be ready for operation late in 1944, but plans for their construction were cancelled early in 1944, because they were "unsuited to the present enemy situation" ( [redacted] 17 Jan., 1944).

2.  
Achievement.

Whether by accident or intent, the burden of carrying out this supply program fell almost entirely on German submarines sent to operate in the Indian Ocean. The disastrous failure of the AKIRA plan,

the cancellation of plans for 30 transport boats, and the poor record of Jap U/B transport made this inevitable. During 1943, most of the subs used were 750 tonners which had previously operated in the Atlantic. During 1944, however, most of the U/B's sent out were of the 1200 ton class, and it is clear that this class was to have been standard unless and until a more efficient new type was developed. At one time it had been planned to use the high speed type XII U/B's in this traffic, but this plan was dropped when the situation in the German homeland became desperate.

The most important cargoes to be brought from the Far East have already been mentioned. In return, Germany shipped lead, mercury, aluminum and special steels in bulk. Of far more strategic importance, however, were the secret offensive and defensive weapons and special devices which were sent to Japan. The list includes acoustic torpedoes, radar gear and edgma cipher machines. The plan to transport materials to Japan was never carried out fully, however, because the maintenance of the U-bases at Penang, Batavia, etc., made it necessary to use almost all available cargo space for supplies to those bases.

Submarines were also used to transport key personnel. Vice Admiral Homura (Chief of the Japanese Army-Navy Military Inspection Group which toured Europe in 1941), Rear Admiral Koshima, German Ambassador to Hanking Woermann, and Subhas Chandra Bose were transported by this means, as were many civilian and

military technicians. The last U/B to leave Germany for the Far East carried the newly appointed Air Attache to Tokyo, General Kessler. His trip was interrupted in May 1945, and he landed at Portsmouth, N.H.

Fortunately - and partly because of the nature of the subject - current information was available during almost all of the cruises, and experience gained during the period of surface blockade running enabled the Atlantic RI Section to cover this traffic without additional difficulties. It is interesting to note that of the 56 cargo-carrying submarines sailing to or from the Far East since 1942, 29 were sunk by Allied action while outbound; 1 was interned in the US shortly after sailing for Asia; and 3 were forced to cancel their trips. Of the 23 that managed to complete half the round trip only 5 managed to return to the homeland; 9 were sunk while returning or while operating in the Far East; 1 was given to Japan by Germany; 6 German and ex-Italian U/B's were seized by the Japanese; and 2 were interned by the Allies while returning to Germany

### 3. Japanese U/B's.

Four Japanese subs - all of approximately 2,600 tons - sailed for Europe. Only one completed the round trip without mishap. Two returned to the Far East but were sunk before the voyage ended. The fourth, carrying about 270 tons of tin, rubber,

tungsten, molybdenum, and gold, as well as at least 14 technicians and diplomatic officials, was sunk in the Atlantic before reaching Europe.

Japanese suba, therefore, brought only about 250 tons of rubber, tungsten and gold to Europe, and carried only some machinery back to Japan--so far as is known. Of approximately 100 passengers carried, about 90 reached their destination (including an entire crew for a submarine given to Japan by Germany).

4.  
"SATSUKI" U/B's given to  
Japan.

Two 750-ton German U-boats ("SATSUKI") were given to Japan. One cruised safely to Japan manned by a German crew and carrying two important passengers. What its cargo was, if any, is not known. The other left Germany with a Japanese crew. It was equipped with all the latest U/B gear (ca. March 1944) and carried about 85 tons of cargo, probably lead and mercury, as well as about 12 passengers. It was sunk en route.

5.  
Ex-Italian "AKIRA" U/B's.

Nine Italian submarines ("AKIRA"), ranging from 950 to 1,300 tons, were converted to transports in 1943. The plan to carry 150 tons on 2 yearly round-trips was a complete failure. One boat remained in Bordeaux, and was finally destroyed in August, 1944.

Five left Europe but were sunk before reaching the Far East. Three reached Singapore in 1943 with a cargo of aluminum, ammunition, machinery and medicines. The main purpose of the voyages - to return to Europe with vital cargoes - was not carried out, and the Germans were forced to abandon their plan. One of the three was sunk off Penang; and the last two, after vain attempts to return, were given the job of carrying cargo between Singapore and Japan, and of refueling other submarines in the Far East. They were presumably seized by the Japs in May 1945.

At most, Japan received 450 tons of aluminum and assorted medicines and machinery on the AKIRA subs. Germany gained experience and perhaps good will.

6.  
German U/B's.

Forty-one German U/B's attempted the cruise to the Far East. Two were forced to cancel their trips, one was interned in the US after Germany surrendered, and twenty-two were sunk while outbound. Only sixteen, of 39%, reached the Far East. Of this number four completed the round trip, six were sunk while operating in Asiatic waters or returning, four were seized by the Japanese, and two were taken by the Allies while attempting to return to Germany.

Two 1,100 ton, type VII-F subs were sent to Penang early in 1944, with torpedo stocks for that base. Each carried

about 25 torpedoes, but information on additional cargo is not available. It is probable that total cargo capacity was about 150 tons. One of these U/B's was sunk while still in the Atlantic. The second reached Penang but was sunk in the Atlantic while returning with a cargo of wolfram.

Three subs of the second special class were sent out. These were type X3 U/B's, 1600 ton minelaying and refueling craft. The first such sub was sunk in mid Atlantic in June 1944; but the second was able to reach Penang, after conducting a refueling operation en route, landing 8,552 bars of aluminum, 263 bars of lead, 990 bottles of mercury and 61 boxes of crude glass for the Japanese. It was seized in Batavia in May 1945. The third of this type left Norway in April 1945, and was forced by the surrender of Germany to put into Portsmouth with a valuable cargo of documents and General Kessler, now German Air Attache to Tokyo.

The remaining subs were the so-called MONSOON boats, operational U/B's, forced by necessity to act as cargo carriers even though the dual role lowered their effectiveness in carrying out either task.

During 1943, 750 ton, type IV-C boats were most commonly used. They were able to carry about 110 tons of cargo and to operate en route if refueled. Fourteen of this



type left Europe between June 1943 and March 1944, carrying supplies to Penang. One was forced to put back into port; six were sunk while outbound to or returning from the Far East. Of the seven which managed to reach port unscathed, three were sunk while operating in the Far East. Only one of the remaining four is known to have been completely successful in his round trip, bringing 29 tons of tungsten and about 80 tons of tin, quinine, opium and vitamins to Germany. Still another returned to Norway but was sunk while en route Kiel. The other two returned too late, and were seized by the British.

Late in 1943 it was obvious that 750 ton boats were not sufficiently effective, their cargo capacity and offensive abilities being too greatly weakened. The inability to refuel without Allied interference was one important reason for this, and the actual cargo record bears out this belief. In two years, the 750 ton subs delivered only about 110 tons of cargo to Germany, and carried no more than 750 tons of lead, mercury, etc. to Japan.

Accordingly, the new 1,200 ton, IX-D U/B's were used exclusively after March 1944. This class was able to carry a cargo of 200 - 250 tons and to operate en route without refueling. Only about 110 tons were carried on the outbound cruise, additional fuel and weapons for patrolling

probably being responsible for the smaller cargo. Most of the cargo carried to the Far East consisted of lead, mercury, aluminum, platinum, special steels and optical glass, as well as supplies for Penang. More important, however, was the relatively light-weight cargo of secret weapons, special devices and important documents. It is also probable that passengers were carried on most of the trips.

About 50% of the 200 - 250 ton return cargo was rubber. Approximately 60 tons of tin were carried in the keel, with some 40 tons of wolfram and molybdenum and 10 tons of vitamin concentrates, bismuth, iodine, selenium and quartz crystals completing the cargo.

Twenty-two type IX-D subs attempted the trip to Asia. One was forced by A/C damage to cancel its trip while still in the Baltic. Only three completed round trips (and one of these was sunk while outbound for the second time). These trips netted Germany about 153 tons of tin, 83 tons of rubber, and 67 tons of wolfram.

Fifteen of these boats went down between ports. The last three were preparing to return to Germany when they were seized by Japan in May 1945.

Thus, in spite of the greater efficiency of these U/B's, they failed to remedy Germany's desperate supply shortage and failed also to keep the Asiatic bases properly supplied. Only about 400 tons of cargo were carried to Germany on the 1,200 ton subs, while the Japs, although faring better, received only approximately

600 tons of special metals, finished products and secret devices.

7.  
Summary.

To summarize: the U/B blockade running system was in operation about two years. During that time Germany received only about 700 tons of raw materials, some gold (to bolster Japanese credit) and a few blueprints and weapons. Japan received some 1800 tons of metal and secret devices. The utter and ignominious failure of this plan is nowhere more clearly portrayed than in this one comparison: one surface B/R, the WESERLAND, was carrying about 10,000 tons of cargo to Germany when it was sunk in January, 1944.

It was clear to the Germans as early as September 1944, that the plan was not a success. Vice Admiral Abe, speaking on 15 October 1943, stated that Germany's minimum tungsten requirement by the end of that year was 3,000 tons but that transportation had been arranged for no more than 700 tons. By 1 May 1945, no more than 300 tons had been received. And while a few such trips were necessary for vital commodities and for morale purposes, the will to succeed in the Far Eastern adventure gradually died.

Submarine blockade runners did not solve Germany's supply problem, but they have perhaps created a new problem for the Allies in the Pacific. The secret weapons, special devices and cipher equipment transferred to Japan may noticeably increase the fighting potential of that nation. In spite of themselves the Japanese have benefitted from the program.

### C. U/B Chronology.

The following section presents an outline of some of the war cruises in the Far East. Only highlights of the more important cruises have been given. For a complete outline of all cruises, see Appendix A to this chapter.

#### 1.

First German U/B Operations  
in the Indian Ocean Area,  
October to December 1942.

In the month preceding the invasion of North Africa in November 1942, what were apparently the first German U/B's to operate in this area appeared off Capetown. Perhaps a half-dozen reached the area around the middle of October and in November passed to the eastward and operated in the southern part of the Indian Ocean as far north as Lourenco Marques. The names of but four come to light from traffic: Lueth (U-181), Witte (U-159), Ibbeken (U-178), and Gysae (U-177). Little traffic was read for this period, and it is not possible to state how many ships were claimed sunk by this group. Suffice it to say that shipping losses in the Indian Ocean began to rise. All the subs known to have operated returned safely to port.

#### 2.

Group SEEHUND Operations,  
February to March 1943.

The operational campaign was resumed in the first week of February 1943, when Group SEEHUND, consisting of Lassen (U-160), Wiebe (U-516), Clamsen (U-182), Wuerdemann (U-506), and Witte II

(U-519), arrived off Southern Africa. Capetown became the main area of concentration, with two subs going north along the eastern coast of Africa as far as Inhambane. Having been refueled before beginning operations, the U/B's were able to stay in their attack areas until the first week in April. As far as can be learned from traffic, 22 ships, of about 148,000 GRT, were claimed sunk as a result of this operation. The sub skippers were all impressed with shore and A/C radar, which often forced them to submerge and prevented them from approaching closely to the main ports and to ships and convoys. An important part of this group's work seems to have been the supplying of information to Command concerning convoy gathering points and independent shipping routes.

3.

The exchange of  
Subhas Chandra Bose.

The first Indian Ocean cruise not undertaken primarily for offensive purposes involved the transportation of Subhas Chandra Bose, former president of the All-India Congress and an agitator of pro-Japanese persuasion, from Germany to Japan so as to enable him to enter India at the heels of the victorious Japanese army. Bose was embarked on the U-180 (Mosenberg) and left Germany on 9 February 1943. During the cruise information of Indian activities was passed to Bose by means of Special                      messages. These messages provided the first clue to the existence and then to the identity of the passenger. They were also of great value in analyzing the workings of the Free India Movement and in identifying

the participants.

Undismayed by the presence of such "distinguished" supercargo, Musenberg attempted offensive action during the outbound cruise, managing to sink one ship.

Bose was transferred to a Japanese sub at a R/V in the Indian Ocean late in April. In addition, German torpedoes and mail were exchanged for Jap inventions, apparatus, gold, quinine, and Japanese naval technical personnel. After unproductive patrolling along the Southeast African coast, Musenberg returned to the Bay of Biscay. In order to prove to the Japs the comparative safety of U/B transport operations, Musenberg and his crew were instructed to "dispel the fears already entertained by the Japanese Command in regard to the Biscay cruise....by appropriate attitude and conduct of your whole crew....under no circumstances is the attention of the Japanese to be drawn to any special endangerment of the Bay of Biscay." (1304/24/6/43). Nevertheless, the Japs' attention was forcibly called to this condition by Allied A/C which attacked U-180 the day before it reached port, 1 July 1943. A record of this trip, kept by the W.O. on U-180, was among the documents taken from U-505, whose skipper, Lange, was that W.O.

4.  
Gift of U/B's to the  
Emperor of Japan.

Part of the German attempt to improve relations with Japan involved the gift of two U/B's to Hirohito. This gesture of goodwill was to be completed by the presentation of two Jap subs

to Germany. Japan had requested two large U/B's, 1100 and 1350 tons, but only 750-tonners were sent. The Germans, therefore, were in no position to complain when the Jap gift turned out to be three old ex-Italian boats which the Germans themselves had repaired.

As usual, misunderstandings plagued the exchange. The German Navy demanded payment, evidently not having been informed that the subs were gifts, and the personal intervention of Hitler was required to straighten matters out.

The first German sub left Europe in April 1943, under the command of Schneewind (U-511). On board were Admiral Nomura, former special Naval representative in Germany, and Woermann, German Ambassador to Hanking. As was the case with Muesenberg, Schneewind did not hesitate to engage in operations along the way, with no more success than the former.

On 14 July 1943, U-511 reached Penang, the first German U/B to touch at a Far Eastern port. The U/B was officially turned over to the Japanese Navy at Kobe on 16 September. Schneewind became S.O. U-Base Penang.

The Japanese officers and crew to man the second gift sub were brought from Japan on the Jap sub I-6 in the fall of 1943. After several months of training and study, they took over U-1224, and on 30 March 1944, departed Kiel for Japan. As an instrument of German goodwill, U-1224 was a failure. The course and approximate daily positions of the sub were known by R.I. and enabled TG 22.2 to meet U-1224 on course at about 18 N - 33 W and to sink it, probably on 13 May 1943.

5.

Independent operations,  
May to August 1943.

During the summer of 1943, seven U/B's operated independently in the Indian Ocean: Kentrat (U-196), Hartmann (U-198), Buchholz (U-195), Lueth (U-181), Gysae (U-177), Domnes (U-178) and Bartels (U-197). They were concentrated mainly around Durban, Lourenco Marques, south of Madagascar and off Mozambique. Capetown and Mauritius were also patrolled. According to claims reported in their messages, operations were highly successful. 36 ships, of about 235,000 GRT, were claimed sunk, 9 of them by Lueth, who was awarded the highest German decoration for his successes.

On 22 June all of these U/B's were refueled by the CHARLOTTE SCHELMANN south of Madagascar, the first refueling of its kind in the Indian Ocean. Five of the seven returned to Europe. Bartels was sunk while operating off Madagascar, and Domnes was ordered to make Penang his homing port and operational base. U-178 was, therefore, the first U/B assigned to U-base Penang.

6.

The MONSIEUR venture.

The operational culmination of negotiations begun in 1942 for the use of German U/B's in the Far East came in mid 1943, when the MONSIEUR boats left France. The role of these subs as



cargo carriers has already been discussed; in addition, they were also expected to patrol assigned attack areas before continuing on to Penang. This scheme was said by P/W to have been the idea of Lieut. Kuppisch, who commanded MOXSUE boat, U-847, and, according to P/W information, was destined to be the first C.O. Base Penang.

Pich (U-168) and Luedden (U-188), the first MOXSUE boats to sail, left France about 30 June 1943. Tillesen (U-516), Wuerdemann (U-506), Auffermann (U-514), Hennig (U-533), Schaefer (U-183), Junker (U-532) and Witte (U-509) left between 5 and 8 July. Pietzsch (U-523) also left at this time, but was forced back to port with engine trouble and did not leave until 16 August. Kuppisch (U-847) left the end of July. By the end of August, of the eleven MOXSUE boats which had sailed from France, five had been sunk in the Middle Atlantic, and one had been forced to drop out of the operation.

Behind the disaster lay one of the most important reasons for the eventual replacement of the 750 ton U/B's by 1,200 ton U/B's in MOXSUE traffic. In order to make the long trip and to operate on the way it was necessary to refuel 750 ton subs, and the mortality rate at refueling R/V's was staggering.

In the instant case the R/V area, 27 N. - 37 W., was infested as never before with USN CVE's. The CORE, Santee, ROGUE and CARD were in the area, and the CORE and Santee, escorting

UGS convoys, were detached on about 10 July 1943, to operate against submarines in this vicinity.

The appearance of the CVE's at the scene of the E/V was not by chance. The following information from RI sources was available. Several U/B's were known to be outbound and were thought to be headed for the Far East. Metz (U-487), known to be a supply U/B, was ordered to head for the area of 36 N. - 30 W. It was customary for subs to be refueled before beginning a long cruise, and RI experience had proved that the area SSW of the Azores was a popular E/V area. The bits of information fell into place, and the approximate date and position of a large refueling operation could be determined, in spite of the fact that at the time traffic was not being read currently.

The original German plan had been for Vowe (U-462) to fuel the MOHSUN subs. He, however, when only a few days out of port, was forced back by A/C damages. Metz was then the only regular refueler available, and since he did not have sufficient supplies, Pommer-Esche (U-160) was ordered to turn over his provisions and extra fuel as a supplement. Unknown to Consubs, Pommer-Esche had been sunk earlier. Metz arrived at the E/V by 13 July and was promptly sunk by CORE A/C. By 18 July, Consubs realized that Metz had been sunk and ordered direct fueling from Pommer-Esche, still believed active, and Piening (U-155), an outbound operational U/B. When Consubs became aware of the sinking of the former, Tilleessen, a

MONSUN boat, was substituted. He fueled Schaefer, Pich, Hennig, Junker and Luedden, the only remaining MONSUN subs, Witte having been sunk by A/C from the SAMPAN, and Anfferman and Wuerdemann while en route to the R/V.

The sinking of a refueler was always important, but this USN action had even more far-reaching consequences. The whole MONSUN plan required revision. Having received so little fuel from the make-shift provisioners, the U/B's had to break off operations in the Indian Ocean and refuel for the second time, from a surface tanker sent out from the Far East. Valuable supplies for Penang were lost or carried back to France, and efforts had to be concentrated on the Penang supply problem.

With the sinking of Metz is connected the loss of another important MONSUN boat, Kuppisch (U-347). Three other active refuelers besides Metz had been sunk in July 1943, and Kuppisch was one of the several operational U/B's forced to act as refuelers pro tem. On his way to the Far East in July, he was ordered to refuel 6 subs. While standing by in the R/V area, (which RI had spotted several days in advance) he was attacked by CARD A/C and sunk on about 27 August. Not only the sub but the man possibly destined to be the first C.O. Penang was lost.

7.  
Operations of MONSUN subs on  
outward voyage.

Five U/B's finally reached the Indian Ocean for operations:

533 183 168 432 186  
Hennig, Schaefer, Pich, Junker, and Luedden. They were fueled by the BRAKE on 8 September, SE of Madagascar, before cruising to their attack area. Each skipper was allowed to use his own judgment to some extent in choosing his attack area, and from September to November 1943, the northern Indian Ocean was well patrolled. The main areas of concentration were the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, and the Laccadive Maldiva Islands. Operations were also conducted off Mombassa, Calcutta and Bombay.

The operations on which so much time, fuel and work had been expended were extremely unproductive. Only three ships, of about 19,000 GRT, were claimed sunk, and the loss of Hennig on 16 October reduced the MONSUN fleet to four subs. A note of desperation may be heard in Comsubs' message to Schaefer: "This undertaking ought to lead to something." ( 1246/12/10/43). The four remaining MONSUN boats reached Penang by November 1943.

8.

Second cruise of the MONSUN  
subs - Far East to Germany.

The return cruise of the MONSUN subs was even more ill-fated than the first. It was a most important transport operation, and the subs were ready to sail only after two months of intensive preparations. They had been stripped to the hull in order to carry the greatest possible cargo load, torpedoes and armament

being sacrificed to this end. Interim operations in the Indian Ocean were planned, but they were incidental to the main objective.

Schneewind, who took over U-183 after Schaefer's death in Penang, Pich (U-168), Junker (U-532), Luedden (U-188), and Spahr, who replaced Dommes in U-178, left Penang at intervals from 29 November 1943 to 1 February 1944. During January and February, patrols were maintained from Ceylon to the Gulf of Aden and around Mauritius Island. Contrary to plans this was the most productive phase of the entire operation, the U/B's claiming 21 sinkings, totaling about 119,000 GRT.

9.  
The sinking of the CHARLOTTE  
SCHLIEHMANN and the BRAKE.

The MONSUN return voyage went well until it became necessary to refuel the subs, and the disaster accompanying this operation may well be credited to RI.

The refueling expeditions of the tankers CHARLOTTE Schliezmann (7,447 GRT) and the BRAKE (9,925 GRT) from January to March of 1944, while not the first of their kind, were the first that the Atlantic RI Section had been able to follow currently. Both ships had refueled subs in 1943, but in neither case was the traffic read in time to lead to the destruction of the participants.

In the case of the last R/V's, however, the traffic con-

taining the three crucial messages was broken by 20-G and was available well before the meetings were to take place, although the positions were at first incorrectly estimated. It is pertinent that both expeditions ended in the loss of the supply ship and a warning of compromise by the C.O. of one of the subs involved.

In early January 1944, it became evident that the SCHLIEMANN was scheduled to refuel U/B's in the Indian Ocean. It had arrived Singapore from the China Sea area on about 24 December 1943, and on 13 January the Atlantic RI Section learned that it was to deliver supplies to homebound subs.

Besides the MONSUN boats two others required provisioning: Eick (U-510), an Atlantic boat entering the Indian Ocean for operations and U-IR-24 (Pahls) an ex-Italian cargo sub returning to Europe. The SCHLIEMANN's first task was to supply Eick and the MONSUN boat Spahr, and a R/V was ordered beginning on 26 January at approximately 23.57 S.-63.

The SCHLIEMANN left Singapore for Batavia on 8 January carrying 400 units of fuel oil, arriving on the 11th. On 22 January it was learned by 20-G that the R/V had been shifted to a new position, later determined to be 24.03 S.-67.52 E. The meeting was to take place at noon or after the 26th, the supply vessel pulling off at night. To avoid the sinking of the ship by German subs; attack on independents was forbidden south and east of 20.15 S. - 64.33 E.

The R/V was successful and uneventful, Spahr receiving cipher devices, provisions, 19 tons of rubber, fuel and a new fireman 2/c. The SCHLIEMANN was left with provisions for 6 subs, 1,477 cbm. fuel oil, 455 cbm. Tarakag oil for AXIRA subs, and 101 cbm. lubricating oil. It

was now possible to supply the other MONSUN boats, and a message translated on 3 February ordered Junker to proceed to 22.30 S. - 73.00 E. for provisioning commencing the 11th. U-IT-24 was to be filled up on the 23rd at 31.03 S. - 55.12 E., and Luedden on the 26th at about 31 S. - 58 E.

Junker met the SCHLIEMANN on 11 February, but the weather forced them to cruise south before fueling. Junker sighted a Catalina and submerged. When he surfaced he saw nothing but a Catalina on the 12th at 25.09 S. - 72.55 E. After waiting two days he sent his report. He was ordered to wait two more days; but when he reported failure on the 22nd, Comsubs was forced to change all plans and send the BRAKE to carry out the mission.

The CHARLOTTE SCHLIEMANN was sunk by HMS RELENTLESS on 12 February in position 23.23 S. - 74.37 E.

The BRAKE, which had also been told in December that it would supply homeward bound submarines, seems to have been kept in reserve, Comsubs evidently thinking that the SCHLIEMANN could take care of all demands in the January - March period. It had been reported in Batavia from 14 October to 25 November 1943, leaving on the latter date for Singapore to load 7,000 kilotons of #2 fuel oil. On 21 December and again on 13 January 1944, the vessel was reported at Singapore.

The BRAKE's inactivity was ended suddenly by the sinking of the SCHLIEMANN, leaving Junker, Luedden, Pich, Schneewind, and U-IT-24 short of fuel and provisions; and it left port on about 29 February en route a new B/V.

On the day following Junker's final report on his failure to meet the SCHLIEMANN, a message was read ordering him, as well as

Luedden and Pich, to meet the ERAKE in approximately 26.57 S. - 63 E., on the 10th of March or shortly thereafter. Schneewind was to meet the supply ship about 9 days later at 34.57 S. - 63 E.

Final orders were given Junker, Luedden, and Pich in a message read by the Atlantic RI Section on 6 March. They were to E/V at noon on the 11th in position 31.57 S. - 73.00 E. The fate of the SCHLIZMAEH was still in Comsub's mind, for an intensive preliminary scouting of the E/V area was ordered, strict watch to be kept for A/C, warships or heavy traffic. For this purpose Junker was stationed at the E/V point, Pich west of it and Luedden north.

The confusion incident upon the destruction of the ERAKE is reflected in the inconsistent reports made by the subs present. But analysis of these reports gives the following picture. The ERAKE met Junker, Luedden and Pich on 11 March at 31.57 S. - 73.04 E. Luedden was filled up, Junker received all but lubricating oil and Pich got part of his fuel but no lubricating oil. Bad weather then intervened, and the ships headed southwest in company. At 1056/P, in position 31.39 S. - 72.32 E., a plane was sighted on the port beam. At 31.45 S. - 72.24 E., thirty-two minutes later, two more A/C were sighted on the port beam. In seven minutes a flying boat appeared aft. Trails of smoke, with two A/C above, bearing 140 T from 31.45 S. - 72.24 E., were noted at 1210A. This was followed nine minutes later by artillery fire from the direction of the smoke. At 1320A/12 March, in position 31.45 S. - 72.16 E., the ERAKE sank. According to Pich, who rescued all but 4 of the



BRAKE's crew, the vessel scuttled after being attacked by a cruiser and destroyer. The planes were reported as Albacore-type carrier A/C.

Consubs made no further attempts to refill his boats. Luedden was ordered to return to Europe, and the others, including Schneewind and U-17-24, were forced to carry their valuable cargoes back to their Far East bases.

Two strategically invaluable supply ships had been sunk, one a month after the other. Both were caught almost exactly on the assigned R/V point after sightings by flying boats or carrier A/C. It is significant that Junker, who had been present at both disasters, was of the opinion that "provisionings have been systematically compromised". ( [redacted] 1809/12 March). No further submarine-surface vessel R/V's were attempted. Of the eleven original MONSUN boats, only one returned to Germany.

APPENDIX A TO CHAPTER XIV

B/R U-BOATS

U/B's	Cruises Attempted		Cruises Completed		Sunk before reaching Far East		Sunk before reaching Europe		Successful voyage to Far East		Successful voyage to Europe		Successful round trip		Now in Far East		Seized by Allies	
German	65	33	20	5	3*	14**	3**	3**	3**	4	3							
Japanese	7	4		1	2	1	3	1	1									
SATSUKI (Germ-Jap)	2	1	1							1								
AKIRA (Italian)	8	3	5		1	3				2								

\*One may not be sunk  
 \*\*Includes only B/R subs

Operational U/B's (Indian Ocean Area):

- Cruises attempted - 12
- Cruises completed - 13
- Sunk enroute to or from Op.Area - 4
- Sunk in Op.Area - 1

CARGO CARRYING U/B's

U/B's	Sunk enroute to or from Far East		Trip cancelled		Cruised to Far East		Sunk in Far East		Cruised to Europe		Round Trip		Seized by Allies		Still in Far East	
German: 36	21	1	15	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4				
Jap: 4	3				2	1										
SATSUKI: 2	1		1													
AKIRA: 8	5		3	1												
Total: 50	30	1	19	4	6	5	3	7	6	5	3	7				

GERMAN SUBMARINES

(Scheduled to return to France after Indian Ocean Operations)

SUB	TYPE	LEFT	REMARKS ON CRUISE	ARRIVED
1. U-181 (Lueth)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Bordeaux, early Sept. ? '42	Operated off Lourenco Marques. At least 2 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 18 Jan. '43
		Bordeaux, mid Mar. '43	Operated off Lourenco Marques. 9 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 14 Oct. '43
2. U-159 (Witte I)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, early Sept. ? '42	Operated off Capetown. At least 3 ships claimed sunk	Lorient, 5 Jan. '43
3. U-178 (Ibbeken)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Bordeaux, early Sept. ? '42	Operated off Capetown and in S. Indian Ocean. At least 2 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 9 Jan. '43. (Dommes became C.O.)
4. U-177 (Gysae)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Bordeaux, early Sept. ? '42	Operated off Capetown and in S. Indian Ocean. At least 4 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 21 Jan. '43
		Bordeaux, late Mar. '43	Experimented with "Bachstelze" (captive helicopter). Operated off Madagascar. 7 ships claimed sunk.	Bordeaux, 2 Oct. '43 (Buchholz became C.O.)
5. U-506 (Wuerdemann)	IX-C 740 tons	Lorient, early Dec. '42	SETHUND cruise. Operated off Capetown. 2 ships claimed sunk.	Lorient, 11 May '43
6. U-509 (Witte II)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, mid Dec. '42	SETHUND cruise. Operated off Capetown. No successes reported.	Lorient, 11 May '43
7. U-516 (Wiebe)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 27 Dec. '42	SETHUND cruise. Operated off Durban. 6 ships claimed sunk.	Lorient, 4 May '43 (Tillessen became C.O.)
8. U-182 (Clausen)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient? Nov. ? '42	Added to SETHUND operations 27 Dec. '42. Operated off Durban. 2 ships claimed sunk. SUNK, 16 May '43, in 34 N. - 20' W.	

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to return to France after Indian Ocean operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	REMARKS ON CRUISE	ARRIVED
9. U-160 (Lassen)	IX-C 750 tons	Bordeaux, 6 Jan. '43	SEERUND cruise. Operated off Durban. 10 ships claimed sunk.	Bordeaux, 9 May '43.
10. U-180 (Musenberg)	IX-D-1 1200 tons	Kiel, 9 Feb. '43	Transferred Subhns Chandra Bose & Sec'y. to Jan. sub I-29* in Indian Ocean on 27 Apr. Operated along the way. Sank 2 ships, shot down 1 A/C. [*Identity of U/B according to Harold Lange's log of voyage]	Bordeaux, 1 July '43. ✓
<p><u>CARGO</u></p> <p>I-199 Recv. from Jap. sub: 3 air torpedoes; 2 tons gold; 1.3 tons Jap inventions; 0.6 tons additional Germ. cargo (mail, drawings), quinino. Total: 5 tons excluding torpedoes. Given to Jan sub; mail for Raider 28, 3 torpedoes, drawings.</p> <p><u>PASSENGERS for Eurons</u> Comdr. Tatsu Siro Emi Lt. Comdr. Tomonaga</p>				
11. U-196 (Kentrat)	IX-D 1200 tons	Germany, early Mar. '43	Operated off Madagascar. 5 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 23 Oct. '43
12. U-198 (Hartmann)	IX-D 1200 tons	Baltic, 10 Mar. '43	Operated off Durban. 8 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 24 Sept. '43
13. U-195 (Buchholz)	IX-D 1200 tons	Bordeaux, mid Mar. '43	Operated off Capetown. 3 ships claimed sunk	Bordeaux, 23 July '43
14. U-178 (Dommes)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Bordeaux, 28 Mar. '43	Operated off Pt. Elizabeth, Madagascar. 5 ships claimed sunk. Started return to France, but was sent to Penang. Dommes became CO Base Penang. <i>Submarine and passengers to Penang.</i>	Penang, about 27 Aug. '43
15. U-197 (Bartels)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Germany, Apr. '43	Operated off Durban, Madagascar. 2 ships claimed sunk. SUNK on 20 Aug. '43 in 29 S.-43 E.	

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
1. U-188 (Luedden)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 30 June 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Penang, about 2 Nov. 1943	MONSUN cruise. Operated in Gulf of Oman. 2 ships claimed sunk.
2. U-168 (Pich)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, end June, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Penang, early Nov. 1943	MONSUN cruise. Operated off Bombay Gulf of Oman, Malive-Laccadive Is. area. 1 ship claimed sunk.
3. U-532 (Junker)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 6 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Penang, early Nov. 1943	MONSUN cruise. Operated in Maldive Is. area. No successes reported.
4. U-514 (Auffermann)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 5-6 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. SUNK about 8 July, 1943 in 44 N. - 09 W.
5. U-183 (Schaefer)	IX-C 740 tons	Lorient, 5-6 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Penang early-Nov. 1943. (Schaefer died in Penang. Schneovind became C.O.)	MONSUN cruise. Operated off Kilindini. No successes. <i>Schneovind relieved Schaefer as C.O.</i>
6. U-506 (Wuerdemann)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 6 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. SUNK on 12 July, 1943 in 42 N. - 10 W. <i>13 1943</i>
7. U-509 (Witte II)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 5-5 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. SUNK on 15 July, 1943 in 35 N. - 25 W. by A/C from USS <i>34 26</i>
8. U-516 (Fillesen)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 7-8 July, 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Lorient, late Aug. 1943	MONSUN cruise. Forced to fuel other MONSUN subs on failure of regular refueler, and return to France. Fueler, Hets sunk by A/C from USS-CORE.
9. U-533 (Heinig)	IX-C 740 tons	Lorient, 8 July '43	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. Operated in Gulf of Oman and Aden. No successes reported. SUNK on 16 Oct. '43 in 25 N. - 57 E.

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
10. U-847 (Kuppisch)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Bergen, <sup>29</sup> 31 July '43	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. (Presence of MONSUN venture, according to P/W info; to have been CO base Penang.) SUNK 27 Aug. '43 in 29 N.-37 W. by A/C. from USS CARD 58
11. U-523 (Pietzsch)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, mid Aug. 1943	Supplies for Base Penang		MONSUN cruise. SUNK in 42 N. - 17 W. on 25 Aug. 1943 by HMS <del>WANDERER</del>
12. U-510 (Eick)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 3 Nov. 1943	Supplies for Base Penang	Penang, 5 Apr. '44	Operated off Durbin, Gulf of Aden. Claimed by ships sunk. Fueled by SCHLIESSEN. 71 <del>W. 10. 35 N.</del>
13. U-1062 (Albrecht)	VII-F 1100 tons	Norway, about 1 Jan. 1944	22 torpedoes for Penang, cipher material, radio supplies	Penang, 19 Apr. '44	No operations
14. U-177 (Buchholz)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Pallise, 2 Jan. '44	Supplies for Base Penang	10.358	SUNK by USN A/C on 6 Feb. '44 in 11 S.-23 W. Slatid to operate in Indian Ocean, then Penang.
15. U-852 (Zek)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel, 18 Jan. '44	Supplies for Base Penang Mail.		Operated off Canstern. SUNK on May '44 off Cape Guardafui. 1-5-44 claimed sunk. <del>by USS WARD</del>
16. U-1059 (Leupold)	VII-F 1100 tons	<sup>Bergen</sup> Kristiansund about 5 Feb., 1944	25 torpedoes for Base Penang, machine parts, cipher material and mail.		SUNK by USN A/C on 19 Apr. '44 in 13 N. - 34 W. Slatid to operate in Indian Ocean. by USS <del>WARD</del>
17. U-843 (Herwartz)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, mid Feb. 1944	Supplies for Base Penang including 1 spare propeller	Batavia, about 12 June, 1944	Operated in Atlantic Ocean.

U-510  
U-719

U-1062  
U-1062

in paper  
classified  
also from

1/1/46

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
18. U-851 (Weingaertner)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Baltic, 26 Feb. '44	Cargo: 1,878 bottles mercury, 75 (tons?); 696 bars lead - 29.5 tons. Supplies: consumable stores for U/B's & U/B shops, spare motor parts, parts for Junkers compressors, 500 batteries, 2 Vlak 38's with ammunition, lubricating oil 170 kg. Courier mail, radio equipment for Germ. Embassy in Tokyo, cipher material.		Presumed Sunk, in E. Atlantic by April 1944 <i>Sunk off land</i> <i>Passer &amp; Alcock</i>
19. U-196 (Kentrat)	IX-D-1 1200 tons	<i>Pallice</i> Bordeaux, mid March, 1944	Cargo: 2,197 bottles mercury - 84.6 (tons?). Supplies: spare parts and consumable stores for U/B's, 1 starboard and 1 port propeller, radio equipment, 14 torpedoes for Base Penang.	Penang, 10 Aug. '44. Kentrat relieved of Command. Striegler became CO.	Operated in Gulf of Aden, Maldive-Laccadive Is. area. 1 ship claimed sunk.
20. U-181 (Freiwald)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Pallice, mid March, 1944	Cipher material. Supplies for base Penang?	Penang, 8 Aug. 1944	Operated off Lourenco Marques, Gulf of Aden, Maldive-Laccadive Is. 2 ships claimed sunk.
21. U-537 (Schrewe)	IX-C 715 tons	<i>ie 25 March</i> Lorient, 3-Apr. 1944	Supplies for Base Penang including 1 D/F receiver, 1 spare propeller, 3 sets of Fumberta (GSR) and 1 Fliege (GSR) set.	Batavia, 2 Aug. 1944	Operated off Laccadive Is. 4 ships claimed sunk. Sunk on 9 Nov. 1944. Soerabaja during diving trials preparatory to operations in Austr. waters.
22. U-859 (Jebesen)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	<i>Kiel</i> Baltic, 7-Apr. '44	Cargo for Jap Navy: 1959 bottles mercury - 77.34 tons; 624 bars lead - 25.58 tons. Supplies for base: 1 set FUMB (GSR) supplies 147 cases comm. equipment, supplies of consumable stores and machinery replacement parts for U/B and U/B workshops, navigation equipment, 4 Fliege (GSR) sets, ammunition, 176 kg. lubricating oil.		Sunk on 23 Sept. '44 while entering Penang. Date of cargo not known. <i>by HMS Tigris</i>

GERRARD SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after operations.

(Note: The following 4 U/B's should be inserted on the preceding page. All were sunk before leaving the Atlantic.)

SUPS	TYPE	LEFT	REMARKS ON CRUISE	ARRIVED
U-843 (Rollman)	IX-D-2 1200-tons	Biscay, late Sept. '43 Kiel 18th Sept	Operated in N. Atlantic. -- Heading 7-Oct. 42.10.8 - 12.00 P. Claimed to have sunk freighter 5 Nov. / Damaged by A/C in 10.03 S. - 17.57 W. ✓ SUNK by VEH A/C in 10.05 S - 18.00 W 5 Nov.	
U-849 (Schultze)	IX-D-2 1200-tons	Kiel 2 Oct. (late) Biscay, about 1-Oct. '43	Heading for operations around Mauritius and Reunion Isles. SUNK off Ascension Is. by VEH A/C ca. 25 Nov. 30 30 S. 0140 W.	
U-850 (Everth)	IX-D-2 1200-tons	Kiel 18th Nov. Biscay, mid-Nov. '43	Operated in N. Atlantic. -- Believed heading for Capetown. Cargo included 6 crates of Borkum and Maxos. Attached by A/C in 32.51 N - 37.18 W. 20 Dec. ✓ SUNK by A/C from USS DOGUE in 32.54 N - 37.01 W. -	
U-172 (Hoffman)	IX-C 750-tons	Bayreuth 22 Sept Biscay, mid-Nov. '43	Carried Borkum, GSR, for delivery. SUNK by USS BOGUE Task Group in 26.19 N - 29.58 W., 13 Dec. ✓	



GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East After Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
23. U-860 (Buechel)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel Baltic, 12 Apr. '44	For Jap Navy: 2610 bars lead- 104.38 tons. Supplies for Base Penang: Communications equipment, 7 cases; replacement parts and tools for U/B repair shops, FUMBERTA (GSR) supplies and FUMBERTA (GSR) apparatus, 2 Flak 38's and ammunition, navigation instruments		SUNK by A/C from USS Solomons on 15 June, 1944 in 26° S. - 05 W. / Slated to operate in Indian Ocean.
24. U-198 (Waldegg)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Pallise, 20 Apr. '44	Cargo for Jap Army and Navy. Supplies for base: consumable stores for U/B's & U/B workshops, torpedo apparatuses and re- placement parts, machine, electric and artillery parts, radio equipment, sea charts and grid charts, lubricating oil. FUMBERTA apparatuses, FLIEGE (GSR) sets.		SUNK on 12 Aug. '44 in 04 S. - Operated from Capstern to Mozambique Channel: 3 ships claimed sunk.
25. U-861 (Oosten)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel Bergem, about 6 May, 1944	Cargo for Jap Navy: 109.84 tons of lead. Supplies: set of supplies for U/B workshop, spare parts for Junkers compressor, bilge pumps, motors. Navigation instruments. Two 2 cm. Flak 38's with accessories, A/C ammunition.		Operated off-Brazilian coast, off Durban and Komboaia. 5 ships claimed sunk.
26. U-490 (Gerlach)	XIV 1600 tons	Kiel Bergem, 7 May '44	727.12 cbm. fuel oil and 19.52 cbm. lub. oil to refuel subs enroute		SUNK by A/C from USS CROATAS on 12 June, 1944 in 47° N. - 40 W. To have returned with cargo.
27. U-862 (Timm)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel Baltic, 21 May '44	Supplies for base including FUMBERTA (GSR) apparatuses, FLIEGE (GSR) set, and TUMIS (GSR aerial) set.		Operated off Lourinco Marques - and Madagascar. 5 ships claimed sunk. Operated in Australian water Dec. '44 and Jan. '45. Sunk by Japanese Navy I-502.
28. U-863 (Esch)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel Norway, early Aug. 1944	Supplies for Base Penang? Courier post, 2 trunks of Jap. Nav. Att. dispatches for Jap Admiralty.		SUNK by USN A/C on 29 Sept. in 11° 26 W. Was to have operated in Indian Ocean.

by HMS FINDHORN and  
HMS GODWIN

dispatched 26 July 1944

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
29. U-180 (Rieser)	IX-D-1 ✓ 1200 tons	Bordeaux, 21 Aug. 1944 ✓	Cargo for Jap Army & Navy: 6669 bars aluminum-1843 bottles mercury-67390 Kg., steel-6020 Kg., 100 brass raw glass-6800 kg. 12 engine machines, cipher data for 1945, torpedoes, spare parts for Junkers compressor, auxiliary engine, electric compressor, tools and implements, radio instruments and spare parts, medical equipment.		<i>of 1944 Aug.</i> PRESUMED SUNK in Sept. 1944 in North Atlantic. Sailing delayed to supply besieged French ports.
30. U-195 (Steinfeld)	IX-D-1 ✓ 1200 tons	Bordeaux, 21 Aug. 1944	Spare parts as on U-180 (Rieser), including diesel engine parts. Engine parts for HAVELSTADT, HAVELLAND, BOGOTA & QUITO. Radio gear, navigation gear, medical supplies, ammunition. Cargo for Jap Army & Navy: 1404 bottles mercury, 54,400 kg;- 9100 bars aluminum - 31000 kg; 57 bars steel - 14700 kg; 112 boxes glass- 7850 kg; 157 bars lead-6437 kg.	Djarkarta, 28 Dec. 1944	No-operations. <sup>required</sup> Repairs will require U-195 to be in drydock until about May, 1945 where it was taken by Japanese. Bismarck I-506
31. U-219 (Borghagen)	X-B ✓ 1600 tons	Bordeaux, 23 Aug. 1944 ✓	Cargo for Jap Army & Navy: 991 bottles mercury-39 tons; 868 bars lead-37 tons; 8507 pigs aluminum- 25.5 tons; 62 boxes raw optical glass- 4.234 tons. Supplies as on U-180 (Rieser) but in greater quantity, including 2 complete Junkers compressors. Spare parts for BOGOTA. 17 barrels disulgen. 21 boxes A/C bombs for Arado seaplanes. Medical supplies, navigational gear, grid charts, radio sets, receivers, converters, communication equipment.	Djarkarta 11 Dec. 1944 ✓	Mine-layer/supply sub converted cargo carrier. No operations. Sunk by Japs in Batavia at time of surrender of Germany. Bureau J-505.

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Scheduled to make Far East after Operations.

SUBS	TYPE	LEAVE	CARGO	REMARKS
32. U-871 (Ganzer)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Trondheim, 31 August, 1944	Supplies for Base Penang including GER detectors, spare parts for main motors. Courier post, films, books, Armed Forces Welfare material.	PREVIOUSLY SUNK in Jan. '45 in Gulf of Aden. Presumably operated in Gulf of Aden.
33. U-864 (Wolfram)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Kiel, 5 Dec. '44 / Bergen early Feb., 1945	Drawings for gears of EGGOTA, Nautical year books for 1945. 1 set plans. 1 set parts for rocket plane. Contracts for manufacturing rights of the ME-163 and 262. Parts for these A/C, and for the JU-1 to 6. Plans for Caproni sub, 1 set of Zaunkoenig (acoustic torpedo) measuring device, plans for Campini A/C, and Siemens Co. radar, plans for SATSUKI type sub. 1857 flasks mercury.	by HNS Kienbauer SUNK off Bergen 10-11 Feb., 1945, Departure delayed 2 months because of Schnorchel trouble and running aground. ✓
34. U-234 (Fehler)	IX-B 1600 tons	To leave Mar. '45 ✓ (FPB-43). Left mid-Feb. from Norway (UNDA-131). Returned Christiansand S. 6 Apr. Left Christiansand 16 Apr.	Lead - 67,104 kg Mercury - 24,112 kg Caffeine - 3453 kg Steel - 10724 kg Optical glass - 6646 kg Brass - ...38 kg Instruments, arms, munitions, med. supplies, drawings, including production drawings for A/C types - 38,876 kg 3.7 cm ammun. - 3530 kg 2 cm ammun. - 900 kg Small arms and ammun. for seaplane unit-342 kg. Munition equip. of all kinds for bases except for ordnance and navig. - 5435 kg Mail and films - 589 kg Courier post about 450 kg.	Klingsberg (Messerschmidt Co.) Schomers (engineers) Yamato (technical expert of Mitsubishi Co.) Bringewald (Messerschmidt mass-production engr.) ----- (Junkers "TL" power equipment assembly engr.)
35. U-876 (Eahn)	IX-D-2 1200 tons			Only 8-torpedoes for ex-entente. ✓ Passed by A/C 19 Apr in Baltic. ✓ Cruiser cancelled.

*Returned by pilot on 31.3.*

Only 8-torpedoes for ex-entente. ✓  
Passed by A/C 19 Apr in Baltic. ✓  
Cruiser cancelled.

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Operations-out-of Far Eastern-bases an-cargo-transportation Far East to Germany.

SUB	TYPE	DEPT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
L. U-178 (Spahr)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Penang, Dec-24 <sup>th</sup> 1943	27,335 kg. rubber, 110,000 kg. tin 2,000 kg. wolfram ore	Bordeaux, 24 May, 1944	One-third-of-ammunition-taken-off-U/B to lighten-it for cargo-carrying. Operated in Indian Ocean. No success reported. Provisioned by SCHELIEMANN. Blown up at Bordeaux, 25 Aug. '44.
2. U-532 (Junker)	IX-C 750 tons	Penang, 14 Jan. '44	500 kg. quinine; 200 kg. opium; 111 tons tin; 85 tons crude rubber; 11.1 tons wolfram	Penang, 19 Apr. '44	Return-MONSUN-cruises. One-third-of-ammunition-removed-to lighten U/B for cargo-carrying. Operated in Laccadive Maldive Is. area. Ship claimed sunk. Forced to return Penang by sinking of BRAKES-SCHLIEMANN, no other fueling possible. For 9-months-undertaken-repairs, change of batteries, etc. No operations this cruise. Arrived Loch Eriboll 13 May '45.
3. U-188 (Luedden)	IX-C 750 tons	Djakarta, 13 Jan. 1945	110,788 kg. tin bars; 100 kg. quinine; 200 kg. opium 9228 kg. tungsten ore; 3372 kg. molybdenum; 10010 kg. rubber; 1062 kg. loose skins for stoving; 182 kg. selenium; 120 kg. rock crystal	Bordeaux 1944 Lorient, about 20 June, 1944	Return-NONSUN cruises: One-third of ammunition removed to lighten U/B for cargo carrying. Operated in Gulf of Aden. 14 ships claimed sunk. Provisioned by BRAKE. Blown up in Bordeaux 25 Aug. '44.
4. U-183 (Schneewind)	IX-C 750 tons	Penang about 1-Feb., 1944	9484 kg. rubber; 21033 kg. tungsten; 102,520 kg. tin; 250 kg. opium; 500 kg. quinine.	Penang, 19 March, '44	Return-MONSUN cruises: Operated in Laccadive-Maldive Is. area. 2 ships claimed sunk. Forced to return Penang because of sinking of fuelers BRAKE & SCHELIEMANN. Believed SUNK by USS-BESUGO off Australia, May '45. To return to Germany with cargo but could not because of low catterri operated in Maldive-Laccadive Is. area. 1 ship claimed sunk.

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Operations out-of-Far-Eastern bases and cargo-transportation Far East to Germany.

SUBS	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	ARRIVED	REMARKS
5. U-168 (Fisch)	IX-C 750 tons	Penang, about 9 Feb. 1944	Keel load of tin; 29 tons tungsten ore in magazine. Also opium, quinine and vitamins.	Ratavia, 24 Mar. 1944	Received new batteries. Plans for return to Germany abandoned. Scheduled to operate in the Pacific (Philippines) (Apr 1-1945). SUNK US S. RESCUE 23 Apr 1945 04.57 S. 112.53 E.
6. U-1062 (Albrecht)	VII-F 1100 tons	Penang, 15 July 1944	Believed to have carried about 110 tons cargo in keel, 50 tons being wolfram.		Return MOESUE-cruise. Operated-off Ceylon-3-ships-claimed-sunk. Forced to return to Far-East with crew of BROKE. Sidel to operate off Australia. SUNK on 6 Oct. off Java.
7. U-181 (Freivald)	IX-D-2 1200 tons	Djarkarta, 19 Oct.. 1944	Cargo in keel: 45532 kg. wolfram; 46922 kg. tin; 6332 kg. rubber; in pressure hull: 4851 kg. molybdenum; 13412 kg. wolfram; 14151 kg. tin; 3060 kg. opium; 2700 kg. quinine; 134 kg. caffeine. In diving tanks: 79661 kg. rubber.	Djarkarta, 16 Jan. 1945	No operations. SUNK by A/O-from USS MISSION BAY on 4 Oct. in 12 N.-35 W.
8. U-510 (Eick)	IX-C 750 tons	Djarkarta, 11 Jan. 1945	Cargo in keel: 45402 kg. wolfram ore; 970 tin plates - 15,753 kg.; 523 pieces raw rubber - 3,245 kg. In pressure hull: 438 kg. molybdenum ore; 63,659 kg. Wolframore; 5100 kg. raw rubber; 2113 kg. caffeine; 120 kg. rock crystal. Above board: 17,000 kg. raw rubber.		Forced to return Batavia on account damage to engines caused by impure oil. Repairs require U-161 to be in dry-dock until about June, 1945.
9. U-196 (Striegler)	IX-D-1 314 1200 tons	Djarkarta, 30 Nov. 1944	Presumably cargo of tin, wolfram, molybdenum, rubber, etc.		To Put in to St. Nazaire to have Schnorchel fitted. Still at St. Nazaire, May 1945.

Sailed 21 Apr. 1945

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Sunk during first week of Dec. 1944. Sunk shortly after having left port.

GERMAN SUBMARINES, Operations out-of-Far-Eastern bases and Cargo Transportations Far East to Germany.

<u>SUBS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>LEFT</u>	<u>CARGO</u>	<u>ARRIVED</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
10. U-843 (Herwartz)	IX-0 / 750 tons	Djarkarta, 10 Dec. 1944	Cargo: 49743 kg. wolfram ore; 4500 kg. molybdenum; 1300 kg. opium; 142 kg. caffeine; 57206 kg. tin; 30808 kg. rubber; 300 kg. quinine <i>(total 144,000 kg. - 144,000 kg. - 144,000 kg.)</i>	<i>Left on 3rd April</i> Kristiansand; 7-April: 1945	Left Kristiansand 8 April 1945 for Germany. SUEA on 9 April 1945 in 58 N. - 11 E.
11. U-861 (Oesten)	IX-D-2 / 1200 tons	<i>Somalia</i> Djarkarta, 14 Jan. 1945	Cargo: 61293 kg. tin; 59826 kg. wolfram; 3246 kg. quinine; 120 kg. rock crystals; 577 kg. iodine; 48439 kg. rubber; 900 kg. molybdenum <i>747-47</i>	<i>Handwritten</i> 18 April 45.	No operations.

GERMAN SUBMARINES Given to Japan.

SUB	TYPE	LEFT	CARGO	PASSENGERS	ARRIVED	REMARKS
U-511 (Schneewind) C.O. Marco Polo I SATSUKI #1 (RO-500)	IX-C 750 tons	Lorient, 10 April, 1943 May	Small black bottles resembling compressed air bottles in place of ballast. (P/W report)	V. Adm. Nomura, Amb. Woermann, German technicians, Capt. (Mod.) Sugita <i>(in handwriting)</i>	Penang, 21 July 1943. Kuro, 7 August 1943	Sank - chip-off Madefiscar. Presented to the Emperor as a personal gift from Hitler.
U-1224 SATSUKI #2 (RO-501)	IX-C 750 tons	Kiel, 30 March, 1944	Equipped with latest U/B gear, including FUMB and FUM3. 85 tons --- ballast cargo. -12-Kg. of cargo 1074E.	11 German technicians		Last heard from on 10 May when sub was at 37 W. SUNK about 13.00. <i>Sunk 13 May by USS R. ...</i>

JAPANESE SUBMARINES

SUB	TONNAGE	LEFT	CARGO	PASSENGERS	ARRIVED	REMARKS
I-30 (Kirschblueten)	2600	Far East, May or June, 1942	Weapons, materials, secret documents.		Biscay port, Sept. 1942	
I-8 (Flieder) (Frezza)	2600	Biscay port, Sept. 1942 Far East, 27 June, 1943 Brest, 6 Oct. 1943	Rubber Plans for turbines and suction and condenser pumps. Torpedo boat engine.	Crew of SATSUKI #2 Yamada, Nakatani, Shimozata and other technicians	Brest, about 1 Sept. 1943 Far East, about 23 Nov. 1943	Struck mine and sank a few days before 22 Oct. 1942. Some cargo lost. <i>M.T. R/V'd by U-161 (Achille) about 20 E/43 in area 39 N.-23 W. Took on navigation officer.</i>
I-29 (Matsu) (Kiefer)	2600	Far East, 17 Dec. 1943	Dispatches and documents, 30 tons tungsten, 2 tons gold bullion.	R. Adm. Koshima, technicians, personnel for Attache's office.	Lorient, 15 March, 1944	I-29 had met U-130 in April '43. R/V'd by U-518 (Offermann) mid Feb. in area 28 N. - 30.30 W. Took on GSR.

JAPANESE SUBMARINES

en route Japan

<u>SUB</u>	<u>TOUNAGE</u>	<u>LEFT</u>	<u>CARGO</u>	<u>PASSINGERS</u>	<u>ARRIVED</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
I-52 (Momi) (Tanne) (Foehre) (Ginnmatsu)	2583	Singapore, about 20 April, 1944	Special weapons and devices, such as FUHO (radar), Wuerzburg (land radar), Abwurfsender (radar interference), BOLD (radar decoy SET) D enigma machines. Plans for S-56 class sub and for special batteries. Acoustic and magnetic torpedoes. Material on (front?) Heinkel Co. Plans for BV-246 glider bomb. Influenza virus.	4 Germans for German Embassy. 15 (?) Jap observers.	Singapore, 14 July, 1944	SUNK by US Navy Lanzon Strait Manila on 25 July, 1944. Cargo lost; passengers not aboard.
			Indian Ocean weather data for German Navy. 146 bars gold bullion, 2 tons gold, 228 tons tin, molybdenum and tungsten; 2.88 tons opium, 3 tons quinine; 54 tons raw rubber. Documents.	14 technicians; possibly a diplomat. Germans: Lieut. Schaefer, Radlomen 2cl. Schulze and Behrendt		SUNK on 24 June, 1944 in 15 N.-39 N. by USS BOGUE. The Germans were transferred to the I-52 from I-530 (Lango) at a R/V the day before I-52 was sunk.

40

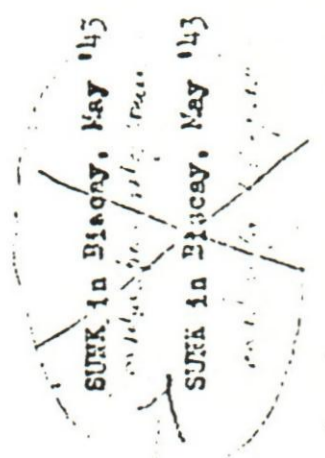
US Navy

1117



EX-ITALIAN SUBMARINES, Europe to Far East.

<u>SUBMARINE</u>	<u>TONNAGE</u>	<u>DEPARTED</u>	<u>CARGO</u>	<u>PASSENGERS</u>	<u>ARRIVED</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
AKIRA #1 (Tasoli)	1331	Bordeaux, 16 May, 1943	Aluminum bars and wood- en cases, possibly munitions, machinery and medicine. Capacity 200-250 tons. (P/W info)	Col. Kihara		Believed SUNK in Biscay while outbound. Loss officially recognized by Germany, 15 Sept. '44
AKIRA #2 (Ex-Giuliani)	1031	Bordeaux, May 1943	Probably similar to that of AKIRA #1.		Sabang, late July, 1943	Became U-IT-23 (-St. Flicler).
AKIRA #3 (Ex-Cappellini)	951	Bordeaux, May 1943	Same as AKIRA #1.		Sabang, 11 July, 1943	Became U-IT-24 (Fahls)
AKIRA #4 (U-IT-21) (ex-Finzi)	1331	Due to depart Bordeaux early in '44. Voyage cancelled due to engine trouble.		Was to have carried at least 4 men		Destroyed at Bordeaux 27 August, 1944.
AKIRA #5 (ex-Barbarigo)	941	Bordeaux, 16 June, 1943	Probably similar to that of AKIRA #1	Col. Gondo Lt. Col. Miura (Med)		Probably sunk June off Cape SUNK enroute. Loss officially recognized by Germany, 15 Sept. '44
AKIRA #6 (Ex-Torelli)	1036	Bordeaux, June 1943	For Jap Army: 471 boxes special steel; 3740 boxes aluminum; 165 boxes ammunition. Total 116,034 kg. For Jap Navy: 232 bottles mercury; 11 boxes mines; 5 boxes ball bearings; 1 (?) box instruments, misc.	3 Italians. Lt. (J.G.) (Staff) Kimzisatake, Engr. Heinrich Foders, Adm. Nomura was to have been a passenger.	Singapore, about 30 Aug. '43	Became U-IT-25
AKIRA #7 (Ex-Archimede)	880	Sunk 15 April '43 by USN A/C VP-83 in 04.08 S 31.20 W on log operational cruise.				SUNK in Biscay, May '43
AKIRA #8 (Ex-da Vinci)	1036	Sunk 23 May '43 by HMS ACTIVE and NESS in 42:10 N 15.42 W				SUNK in Biscay, May '43



Ex-ITALIAN SUBMARINES, Europe to Far East.

SUB	TOURNAOE	LEFT	CARGO	PASSNGERS	ARRIVED	REMARKS
AEIRA #9 C.O. U-IT-22 (Kunderlich) (Ex-Bagnolini)	1031	Bordeaux, mid Jan. 1944	517 bottles mercury- 20,362 Kg. of misc. luggage			SUNK on 11 Mar. 1944 in 41 S.-18 E., at E/V with U-178 (Spahr) by Japanese A/C

Ex-ITALIAN SUBMARINES, Far East to Europe.

U-IT-23  
(Striegler)  
(Ex-Giuliani,  
AKIFA #2)

Planned to depart  
Penang for Europe  
about Feb. 1944

U-IT-24  
(Pahls)  
(Ex-Cappellini,  
AKIRA #3)

Penang, first week  
Feb., 1944  
(activity but not date)

U-IT-25  
(Striegler)  
(Ex-Torelli,  
AKIFA #6)

Penang, March  
1944

6288 Kg. tin; 54,802  
kg. tungsten; 93,197 Kg.  
rubber; 2,000 Kg. quinine;  
2,000 Kg. opium

Torpedoed and SUNK  
off Penang, 15 Feb.  
1944. C.O. rescued.  
by P. T. K. 6

Forced to return Penang  
from Indian Ocean after  
sinking of fueler  
SCHELMANN. U/B needed  
many repairs because of  
old age. Not to return to  
Germany. Is being used as  
supply boat between  
Japan and southern bases

Returned to Penang.  
Is being used as supply  
subship between Japan and  
southern bases. Seized  
by Japanese Navy after  
German surrender;  
became I-504.

Penang, 3<sup>rd</sup> April  
1944

Penang, 3 April  
1944

Is used as cargo sub between  
Singapore and Japan. In  
Japan at time of German  
surrender. Seized by  
Japanese Navy; became  
I-503

APPENDIX I to VOLUME II.

U/B'S SUNK BY U.S. FORCES WITH AID OF RADIO INTELLIGENCE.

<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Chart No.*</u>	<u>Date Sunk</u>	<u>By</u>
43	750 T.	45	30/7/43	SANTEE (21.11)
66	750 T.	68	6/5/44	USS BLOCK ISLAND
67	750 T.	52	16/7/43	USS CORE (21.15)
68	750 T.	49	10/4/44	GUADALCANAL
69	500 T.	2	17/2/43	TU 24.1.4
84	500 T.	57	27/8/43	USS CARD
86	500 T.	39	29/11/43	USS BOGUE
117	1600 T.	38	7/8/43	USS CARD
118	1600 T.	54	12/6/43	USS BOGUE
128	750 T.	87	17/5/43	USS MOFFETT and JOUETT
154	750 T.	47	3/7/44	USS CROATAN
156	750 T.	75	8/3/43	USN A/C
159	750 T.	70	15/7/43	A/ C US?
160	750 T.	48	14/7/43	SANTEE (21.11)
161	750 T.	90	11/10/43	Bras. A/C ?
164	750 T.	81	6/1/43	USN PEY
172	750 T.	61	13/12/43	USS BOGUE, A/C & CLEMSON, OSMOND, INGRAM, G.D. RADGER.
174	750 T.	20	27/4/43	US A/C

\* NOTE: Positions of U/B sinkings shown on charts by numbered dots, reading from left to right.

<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Chart No.</u>	<u>Date Sunk</u>	<u>By</u>
176	750 T.	63	15/5/43	D/C's Cuban SC 13
177	1200 T.	89	6/2/44	USH A/G from Ascension
183	750 T.	95	23/4/45	US sub Besugo
185	750 T.	59	24/8/43	USS CORE (21.15)
197	1200 T.	94	20/8/43	Catalina A/C - H/265
199	1200 T.	91	31/7/43	Braz. A/C - V/74
217	500 T.	53	5/6/43	USS BOGUE
220	1600 T.	9	28/10/43	USS BLOCK ISLAND
233	1600 T.	28	5/7/44	USS CARD
248	500 T.	16	16/1/45	CTG 22.8
359	500 T.	71	28/7/43	PBM
378	500 T.	15	20/10/43	USS CORE (21.15)
389	500 T.	1	5/10/43	USH A/C - J/269
402	500 T.	11	13/10/43	USS CARD
405	500 T.	10	1/11/43	USS CARD, rammed by BORIE.
422	500 T.	24	4/10/43	USS CARD
460	1600 T.	25	4/10/43	USS CARD
487	1600 T.	60	13/7/43	USS CORE (21.15)
488	1600 T.	67	26/4/44	USS CROATAN
490	1600 T.	30	12/6/44	USS CROATAN
505	750 T.	64	4/6/44	GUADALCANAL (Captured)
507	750 T.	80	13/1/43	TU 23.6.1 A/C
509	750 T.	46	15/7/43	SANTEE (21.11)
513	750 T.	93	19/7/43	USH A/C

<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Chart No.</u>	<u>Date Sunk</u>	<u>By</u>
515	750 T.	43	9/4/44	GUADALCANAL
518	750 T.	23	22/4/45	USS CARTER (22.13)
521	750 T.	40	2/6/43	PC 565
524	750 T.	55	22/3/43	USA B-24
525	750 T.	32	11/8/43	USS CARD
527	750 T.	42	23/7/43	USS BOGUE
537	750 T.	96	10/11/44	US Sub FLOUNDER
543	750 T.	62	2/7/44	USS WAKE ISLAND
544	750 T.	35	16/1/44	GUADALCANAL
546	750 T.	22	20/4/45	USS BOGUE, CORE, 22.8, 22.7.1
548	750 T.	27	19/4/45	USS GUSTAFSON
549	750 T.	51	29/5/43	USS BLOCK ISLAND (DE - ELMORE)
550	750 T.	33	16/4/44	TG 21.5
569	500 T.	3	22/5/43	USS BOGUE
572	500 T.	76	3/8/43	USN PEM
575	500 T.	17	12/3/44	USS BOGUE (HMCS PRINCE RUPERT- ON-227 -
584	500 T.	5	31/10/43	USS CARD
590	500 T.	79	9/7/43	USN PBY
591	500 T.	85	30/7/43	US A/C - VB/127
598	500 T.	82	23/7/43	US A/C - Bomron 107
603	500 T.	12	1/3/44	USS BLOCK ISLAND
604	500 T.	83	11/8/43	Scuttled after A/C attacks

<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Chart No.</u>	<u>Date Sunk</u>	<u>By</u>
613	500 T.	41	23/7/43	USS BOGUE
615	500 T.	74	7/8/43	USN PEM's
623	500 T.	7	10/2/43	USA Liberator
634	500 T.	58	24/8/43	USS CORE (21.15)
645	500 T.	18	24/12/43	USS CARD (USS SCHENCK)
662	500 T.	78	21/7/43	USN Catalina, VP 44 Sq.
664	500 T.	36	9/8/43	USS CARD
681	500 T.	8	11/3/45	USN A/C, N/103, PB4Y-1
707	500 T.	37	9/11/43	US A/C, J-220
709	500 T.	6	29/2/44	USS BLOCK ISLAND
759	500 T.	65	26/7/43	USN A/C
801	750 T.	69	17/3/44	USS BLOCK ISLAND (Corry & Bronstein)
847	1200 T.	56	27/8/43	USS CARD
848	1200 T.	86	5/11/43	4 Navy, 2 Army Planes
849	1200 T.	84	25/11/43	PB4 Y of VB-107 Sq.
850	1200 T.	50	20/12/43	USS BOGUE
853	750 T.	31	6/5/45	CTG 60.7
856	750 T.	34	7/4/44	USS CROATAN
857	750 T.	26	6/4/45	USS GUSTAFSON
860	1200 T.	92	15/6/44	USS SOLOMONS
863	1200 T.	88	29/9/44	USN A/C - VB-107
866	750 T.	19	18/3/45	USS LOWE, CTG 22.14
869	750 T.	44	26/2/45	CTG 60.11

<u>U/B No.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Chart No.</u>	<u>Date Sunk</u>	<u>By</u>
880	750 T.	13	16/4/45	USS STANTON, FROST (22.5)
881	750 T.	21	6/5/45	CTG 22.1
986	500 T.	24	17/4/44	USS MOFFETT & others
1059	1100 T.	73	19/3/44	USS BLOCK ISLAND
1062	1100 T.	77	30/9/44	USS MISSION BAY (PESSENDER)
1224	750 T.	66	13/5/44	USS BOGUE
1228	750 T.	29	20/8/44	USS BOGUE
1235	750 T.	14	16/4/45	USS MISSION BAY, CROATAN; 22.22.14
I-52	2583 T.	72	24/6/44	USS BOGUE

