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Australia Station Intelligence Summary



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S E C T I O N I.

R.A.N. AND OTHER COMMONWEALTH NAVIES.

(a) ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

H.M.A.S. BARCOO.

In February H.M.A.S. BARCOO commenced the reconnaissance of a rectangular area 162,000 square miles in extent which has the New South Wales coast as its western limits. The average depth is about 2,500 fathoms in the northern part and there is a complete absence of soundings in the southern portion - an area of some 50,000 square miles of which nothing is known except that it is covered by the sea. Whilst completing one line of soundings three "high seas" were encountered rising as much as 9,000 feet above the sea bed which was previously considered to be generally about 2,500 fathoms deep.

* * * * *

M.W.L.255.

On 14th February, with Lieutenant-Commander T.J.P. O'Byrne R.A.N.V.R., Staff Officer (Intelligence) and Lieutenant-Commander R. McKauge, D.S.C., R.A.N.V.R., embarked, M.W.L.255 sailed from Lombrum for the Western Islands, calling on the way at Sori, a Patrol Post on the western end of Manus Island. The Hermit Islands were visited and it was found that Japanese vessels had been shell-poaching on the reefs; unfortunately they had departed. Longan Island and then Aua Island were visited and at the latter a European engineer was discovered who had been marooned for four weeks. He had been salvaging the engines of a wreck and due to the non-arrival of his transport he had been living on native foods for over three weeks. He was given passage. Wuwulu Island and Sori were called at on the

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return journey and the ship berthed at Lombrum on 21st February.

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H.M.A.S. COOTAMUNDRA.

Lieutenant-Commander T.J.P. O'Byrne, R.A.N.V.R. and Lieutenant-Commander R. McKauge, D.S.C., R.A.N.V.R., were embarked in H.M.A.S. COOTAMUNDRA under the command of Lieutenant-Commander R. Patch R.N., on 9th January and departed Lombrum for Rabaul. From there COOTAMUNDRA sailed for Bougainville to visit Soraken, Kieta and Buin and returned to Manus via Rabaul and Kavieng.

* * * * *

Naval Frogmen.

A team of 10 frogmen was engaged near the Rip in Port Phillip during March recovering components of a test field of dummy mines which were laid some time ago. They had all been trained aboard the diving school in H.M.A.S. PORPOISE moored near Clarke Island, Sydney Harbour, and were the first frogmen team engaged in Victoria.

* * * * *

Naval Medical Study of Whales.

The Medical Director-General is studying the physiological functions and physical capabilities of whales for possible application to underwater warfare of the facts elicited.

A harpooned whale can dive immediately to 500 fathoms and rise again at once. A human diver immediately can ascend "at once" from a depth no greater than 25 fathoms. Should a diver descend deeper than that he must be brought to the surface in stages to

avoid being affected by "diver's bends". If the study of metabolism, heartbeats, general physiology and anatomy of whales could help modify the limitations imposed on frogmen and eliminate some of the time spent in staging, the efficiency of methods used in future underwater warfare would be appreciably increased.

* * * * *

Arrest of Darwin Pearl Lugging.

An aftermath of H.M.A.S. EMU's visit to Entrance Island with two Native Affairs Patrol Officers when three luggers were arrested for taking a vessel into forbidden waters adjacent to a Native Reserve, took place in the Darwin Police Court. Aki Kumamoto, Captain of the Pearl Lugging Lugger "DARWIN", was fined £20. Kumamoto, captained one of the Japanese luggers that fished Australian waters in the 1953 season and he subsequently came to Australia under the scheme for employing Japanese divers in Australian luggers.

* * * * *

New Torpedo/Anti-Submarine School.

The R.A.N. T.A.S. School formerly at H.M.A.S. RUSHCUTTER is now located at H.M.A.S. WATSON. The new buildings are almost completed and are situated at South Head on the slopes overlooking Lady Bay.

When completed the School will be one of the most up-to-date in the British Commonwealth. H.M.A.S. RUSHCUTTER will continue to function as a Reserve Training Establishment.

* * * * *

Far Eastern Exercises.

Five ships of the R.A.N. took part in a large scale ~~sub~~-air exercise held in the South China

Sea during March and April. They were H.M.A. Ships TOBRUK, ANZAC, QUADRANT, QUEENBOROUGH and QUICKMATCH. Other units involved were ships and aircraft of the Far East Fleet, ships of the Royal New Zealand Navy, aircraft of the Royal Air Force based on Singapore and aircraft of the Royal New Zealand Air Force. The Royal Navy aircraft carriers ALBION and CENTAUR also took part in the exercise.

SEATO Exercise.

A full-scale SEATO exercise, "FIRM LINK", took place off Thailand in February. The Australian destroyers ANZAC and TOBRUK, together with a detachment of troops from the 2nd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, Malaya, represented Australia.

Other vessels taking part in the exercise were H.M.S. NEWFOUNDLAND, H.M.S. COMUS and H.M.S. CONSORT. H.M.N.Z.S. PUKAKI and the United States aircraft-carrier U.S.S. PRINCETON, the seaplane tender U.S.S. SALISBURY SOUND, and the destroyers U.S.S. TINGEY and McDERMOTT completed the naval forces. An interesting sidelight on the exercise was the demonstration by the carrier PRINCETON of a ship-to-land airlift when 17 helicopters, maintaining a continuous shuttle service, ferried the Marines ashore. During these flights one helicopter ditched; all personnel were smartly rescued by H.M.A.S. TOBRUK but the only set of bagpipes in the U.S. Marine Corps was lost.

A march-past in Bangkok completed the exercise and the ships sailed after successfully forging "FIRM LINK".

* * * * *

(b) ROYAL NAVY.Royal Navy Estimates 1956-57.

The First Lord of the Admiralty's statement on the R.N. Estimates made in Parliament on 23rd February included the following details :-

- (a) The first two of the 26 Frigates under construction had cost nearly £1½ million each.
- (b) The R.N. strength has been reduced by 5,000 to 128,000.
- (c) The financial estimate was for £401,670,000, which when taking into account various credits, would need £5½ millions more than provided for last year.
- (d) Nuclear power may well become the source of power for both naval and merchant ships and in the first instance the Admiralty's intention is to employ its use in Submarines.
- (e) Four new escorts equipped with ship-to-air guided missiles are being ordered. These escorts will be a new and bigger class of ship embodying the latest advances beyond the most successful "DARING" design.
- (f) Work on the 3 Tiger class Cruisers is progressing, and the design of a new type of cruiser with guided weapons is going forward.
- (g) Only one new carrier (HERMES) is being constructed. Work on two more is being suspended.
- (h) A centralised drafting system has been evolved, doing away with the old Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport divisions.

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(c) PAKISTAN NAVY.Ship Replacements.

Negotiations commenced in late 1955 between Pakistan Naval Headquarters and the Admiralty about Pakistan's need for warships in replacement of existing ships which were becoming obsolescent.

Agreement has now been reached for the sale to Pakistan of two Battle Class Destroyers - GABBARD and CADIZ and two "CR" Class destroyers CRISPIN and CREOLE. Agreement has also been reached for the sale of the Dido Class Cruiser H.M.S. DIADDEM.

* * * * *

(d) ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY.Jet Fighter Squadron.

The Royal Canadian Navy has received its first deliveries of the F2H3 Banshee, described as among the finest single-seat all-weather shipborne fighters in operational use today.

The R.C.N.'s first jet fighter squadron is being armed with the Banshee in preparation for service in the aircraft carrier BONAVENTURE, due to be commissioned late this year.

The cannon-armed Banshee is listed as a 600 m.p.h. twin-jet aircraft with long-range capabilities.

H.M.C.S. BONAVENTURE is being equipped with angled deck, steam catapult and mirror landing aid.

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S E C T I O N I I .NAVAL AND OTHER ARMED FORCES INTELLIGENCE
INCLUDING TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE.U. S. S. R.Nuclear Propulsion for Submarines.

When Admiral Sokolovsky informed a member of the British delegation at Geneva in 1955 that the Soviet had nuclear-powered submarines it may well be that this was a reliable statement.

The advantages attaching to the nuclear-powered submarine would appear to be most attractive to the Soviet. Equipped with long-range underwater detection, and armed with homing torpedoes or guided missiles, both with nuclear warheads, the nuclear-powered submarine is a most effective counter to the nuclear strike from aircraft carriers. It is also most effective for attacking troopships, convoys and ports.

In the field of construction of nuclear power-plants it is known that in addition to the experimental physical reactor using heavy water with a rating up to 600 k.w. which started up in 1949, the Russians built an experimental reactor using enriched uranium moderated by graphite and cooled by water, rated at 10,000 k.w., which was designed particularly to try out heat extraction units for future power reactors. It started up in 1952.

In 1954 they started up an atomic power station with the reactor rated at 30,000 k.w. and power output of 5,000 k.w. Uranium enriched to 5% U235 was used, graphite moderated and cooled by water under pressure. This water is used to boil water at lower pressure in a heat-exchanger and the steam drives turbines.

The Russians expect a 100 m.w. atomic station to start working in 1957. The Moscow and Geneva papers made clear that they have worked on the problems of sodium cooling and beryllium as a moderator. A recent visitor to U.S.S.R. is convinced that they have operated a beryllium moderated reactor.

It is clear, then, that the Soviet has the incentive to develop a nuclear-powered submarine and the requisite knowledge and technique to build a suitable reactor although the problem of shielding would require special research.

* * * * *

JAPAN.

Request for Ships from U.S.A.

It has been reported that Japan will ask the U.S.A. to supply under the Mutual Defence Assistance Programme for the fiscal year 1956, thirty-three ships of the following types :-

- 1 Wooden Coastal Minesweeper of 300 tons
- 3 L.S.S.L's each 250 tons
- 15 P.T. Boats each 16 tons
- 14 M.S.M.L's each 38 tons

Salvage of Submarines.

Attempts are to be made to salvage two submarines, the I-179 (1,833-tons) and the I-363 (2,215-tons). The I-179 sank between Shikoku and Kyushu in 1943, and the I-363 about 12 miles north-east of Miyozaki in 1945 while on passage under Allied orders.

The I-363 was completed in 1944 and was one of Japan's most modern submarines. Both are believed to be undamaged.

* * * * *

COMMUNIST CHINA.Prefabrication of Naval Vessels.

Towards the end of last year prefabricated parts of small naval vessels were seen being unloaded from a Polish or Finnish vessel at Whampoa.

Further information which has since come to hand suggests that in comparison with the railway truck on to which they were loaded each bow section was about 40 feet long. The beam must have been narrow.

The sections appeared to be welded construction - no rivets were noticed - they were floored, and appeared to have at least six feet of headroom. The bilge depth could not be ascertained. The flare was pronounced, and all sections were painted grey.

M.T.B's.

There have been various sightings in the Shanghai area of a new type of M.T.B.

These craft, which are believed to be locally built, are definitely larger than the existing Chinese Communist naval vessels (ex-Russian type, 45 to 55 feet) and are thought to be based on a Soviet design. If such is the case, specifications would probably be as under :-

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| Length | - | Possibly 80 feet. |
| Armament | - | 2 - 21" T.T. 2 - Twin heavy M.G. Depth Charges Radar. |

Ahead-throwing Weapons.

A very reliable report supports the belief that ahead-throwing weapons are fitted on

KRONSTADT class escort vessels. One such vessel was observed in Shanghai on 28th January to have a possible squid-type projector located abaft the for'd gun. It is known from photographs that there is an installation (normally covered) in the position indicated by source.

Flying Boats.

A total of five flying boats has now been sighted at Tsingtao (reference A.S.I.S. No.38). They appear to be the Soviet MADGE type flying boats and are similar in appearance to the U.S. Martin Mariner.

These flying boats are located at an old Japanese-built flying-boat base at Tsingtao.

One flying boat was sighted over Shanghai in January and this may indicate that Chinese Communist Naval Air Force personnel are receiving long-range maritime training.

Chinese Communist Batteries Near Matsui Group.

The Chinese Communists have now established 152 m.m. (6-inch) batteries on the Peiling Peninsula. These are able to range over practically the whole Matsu group of islands.

Sloops-Possible New Construction.

On 28th January, two small vessels were seen under way in the river at Shanghai. They were described as being similar to a Sloop, about 200 feet over-all, with steam propulsion. Each was armed with one gun of approximately 3-inch calibre for'd and several Oerlikons aft.

They are believed to be the first of the frigate type new construction recently reported from Shanghai.

* * * * *

NORTH VIETNAM.Armed River Patrol Boats.

Four armed river patrol boats have been observed at Haiphong. They are between 25 feet and 30 feet in length and carry a pole mast approximately 12 feet in height, set immediately aft of the wheel-house.

They are of steel construction, with flush deck. One gun (calibre not known) with barrel 4-5 ft. in length and without shield is mounted forward.

The crew are Vietminh, wearing a uniform similar to that of the Chinese Communist Navy.

Security Forces.

It is reported that Public Security troops have made their appearance in the ports of Haiphong and Hongay. This is the first indication of the existence of a Special Public Security Force on the same lines as in Communist China and North Korea.

If their function is the same as in China and North Korea, they will carry out frontier control, special guard duties and be responsible for internal security.

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BURMA.Integration of the Armed Forces.

The three Armed Services of Burma have now been integrated under one Chief of Staff, with separate Vice-Chiefs of Staff for the Navy, Army and Air Force.

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INDONESIA.Visit of Naval Delegation to Communist China.

The Indonesian Naval delegation, headed by the Chief of the Naval Staff, which has been on a world-wide tour, arrived in Peking on 26th February.

The delegation has been treated with lavish hospitality, and in his welcoming speech the Chinese Minister of Defence constantly referred to 'Liberation of Taiwan' and 'Restoration of West Irian'. In reply, Admiral Subijakto said that he hoped the visit would promote friendship between the armed forces of the two countries.

* * * * *

U.S.A.Guided-Missile Ships.

The current shipbuilding programme for the U.S.N. includes the following guided-missile ships :-

- One cruiser of about 9,000 tons.
- Four frigates of about 4,000 tons.
- Eight destroyers of about 3,000 tons.

In addition, five light cruisers and one submarine will be converted to guided-missile ships.

In addition to being a guided-missile ship the cruiser of 9,000 tons listed above appears to be the final selection of the U.S.N. as the first surface ship to be nuclear-powered although approval has been given to design a nuclear-powered carrier and carry out planning procurement.

In order to man the guided-missile ships the U.S.N. has commenced courses to qualify career Petty

Officers for change of rate to guided-missilemen.

Beach Discharge Lighter.

A contract has been let in the United States for the construction of a Beach Discharge Lighter (BDL-IX) for the Army Transportation Corps.

The steel hull beach lighter was designed to meet a requirement for transporting larger quantities of vehicular and other type cargoes from ship to ship, beach to ship, ship to beach, and from beach to beach. It will also be capable of transoceanic voyages. The main deck will be used for vehicle and cargo stowage and one partial deck below will be used for messing. The lighter will be powered by two diesel engines and will be fitted with two vertical-axis propellers instead of conventional screw type. It will have a length of 338 feet, beam of 65 feet and a light displacement of 1,549 tons.

A hydraulically operated ramp at the forward end forms the bow section when closed and a landing and loading ramp when lowered. The lighter will retract from the beach under its own power. A hydraulically operated retracting ram to push the lighter off the beach is provided to assist in the retracting operation.

Nuclear Powered Submarines.

The U.S.N. construction programme for 1956/57 makes provision for the building of six nuclear-powered submarines. Including U.S.S. NAUTILUS, the first nuclear-powered submarine, the current U.S.N. programme provides for a total of eight such boats.

* * * * *

FRANCE.Launching of A.A. Cruiser.

The A.A. Cruiser COLBERT, laid down in November 1954, was launched at Brest on 24th March and is due to complete in 1958. Her particulars are :-

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Standard displacement | 8,341 tons |
| Length overall | 590 ft. 6 ins. |
| Beam | 64 ft. 7 ins. |
| Draught | 19 ft. 7 ins. |
| Designed speed | 32 knots |
| Endurance | 4,000 miles at 25 knots |
| Armament | 8 twin 5 in. 12 twin 2.24 in. |
| | (Remote controlled. Trained and laid by Radar). |
| Radar | D.R.B.C. 30 - Control of 5 in. D.R.B.C. 11 - Control of 2.24 in. D.R.B.V. 11 - Early warning air/surface. D.R.B.V. 30 - Surface search. |

She is to be fitted with A/S gear, carry a helicopter, and is to be fitted with guided missiles later.

Naval Construction.

The French Navy has announced that the naval construction budgets for 1955 and 1956 will provide for the following :-

1955 Budget

- 1 CVA CLEMENCEAU Class
- 1 DE COMMANDANT RIVIERE Class
- 3 DE LE CORSE Class
- 3 SSK ARETHUSE Class

1956 Budget.

1 DDE 2,000-ton Class
6 DE COMMANDANT RIVIERE Class
6 PC NATO 174' Class
3 SSK ARETHUSE Class
1 SS POCKET Type
1 LST
3 Tankers.

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S E C T I O N III.EXTERNAL POLITICAL, POLITICO-MILITARY AND
ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE.U.S.S.R.Service Representation on the Central Committee of the
Soviet Communist Party.

At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party, Marshal Zhukov, the Minister of Defence, was elected a candidate member of the new Praesidium of the Central Committee. This is the first time a professional soldier has been so appointed.

The Navy's representation on the Committee has fallen from three to one, the solitary member being Admiral Gorshkov who has relieved the sick Kuznetsov as Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, and Deputy Minister of Defence.

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JAPAN.Loran Transmitters.

The Japanese Maritime Safety Board is to build three Loran transmission stations which will cover an area from the Kamchatka Peninsula to Wake Island.

The stations will be at Nemuro, Miyako and Choshi and are expected to be completed by 1958.

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COMMUNIST CHINA.Strength of the Communist Party.

In a recent broadcast the Chinese Communists announced that Communist party strength had now topped the 9 million mark. This represents about 1.5% of the total population of 605 million. It is interesting to note that the population of China is over 25% of that of the world and is increasing rapidly.

Scientific Development.

Recent statements by Chou En-lai, the Premier of Communist China, and by Kuo Mo-jo, the President of the Academy of Sciences of Communist China, indicate that Communist China is planning a ten-year programme to increase her scientific potential so that by the end of the third Five-Year Plan in 1967 she will approach "the world's most advanced levels" in certain "vital departments".

The proposed plan envisages the provision of one million "highly trained intellectuals" during the period 1956-57 (presumably roughly equivalent to Western university graduates), more efficient employment of scientists, engineers and other qualified persons, and the procurement of adequate equipment and the provision of suitable working facilities. Although the proposed plan envisages visits by groups of experts to the Soviet Union to become acquainted with scientific practice it also proposes that more attention be paid to Western scientific developments and achievements.

The production of one million university graduates within such a period seems theoretically possible, but it is doubtful whether their academic standard would be equal to that of their Western counterparts. Even if a million graduates were turned out, the number would be less than half the total number of graduates at present in Russia and less than one quarter of that in the United States in 1954.

A general impression from the statements of Chou En-lai and Kuo Mo-jo is that although they appreciate the tremendous value of Soviet assistance they are concerned about the possible detrimental effect on Chinese initiative of too much reliance on Soviet advisers. Hence their insistence on China's need to become more self-reliant in the scientific field.

Steel Works Reported at Shanghai.

A large steel works, thought to be a "strip mill", has been observed in operation at Shanghai about four miles inland from Mollers Yard. Railway tracks could be seen leading towards the steel works.

Construction of Oil Barges.

The Chinese press has reported the construction of the seventh oil "bargo" of 3,700 tons by the Dairen Shipbuilding Company. Photographs give the impression of a small coastal tanker. It is thought that these "barges" will be engaged in the shipment of POL southwards from Dairen and Soviet Far Eastern ports.

* * * * *

NORTH VIETNAM.

Increased Facilities at Haiphong.

The Soviet has now transferred to the Vietminh for use in Haiphong two harbour tugs and one dredger capable of re-dredging the bar. All these vessels passed through Singapore recently on their way from Europe.

* * * * *

CAMBODIA.

Deep-water Port at Kompong Som.

The first ship should be able to use the

new deep-water port at Kempong Som in October. Construction of this port has been undertaken by a joint French/U.S. effort, the French having constructed the port and the U.S. the road inland.

* * * * *

MALAYA.

Transfer of Powers.

Tengku Abdul Rahman, Chief Minister of the Federation of Malaya, has concurrently assumed the portfolio of Internal Defence and Security. The assumption of the portfolio by a Malayan Minister was agreed to during the recent talks in London between the United Kingdom Government and a delegation from the Federation of Malaya.

During these talks it was further agreed that, pending the attainment of full self-government by Malaya, all indigenous Malayan forces would be brought under the administrative control of the Malayan Government, through a Federation Armed Forces Council chaired by the Minister of Internal Defence and Security. For the continued prosecution of operations against the Communist insurgents, however, all the armed forces taking part in the Emergency would remain under the operational control of the British Director of Operations. The Director of Operations Committee, which controlled the general conduct of operations, was to be replaced by an Emergency Operations Council, of which the Director of Operations would be a member but which would be chaired by the Minister of Internal Defence and Security. Policy to be followed by the Emergency Operations Council would be laid down by the Federation's Executive Council, of which the U.K. High Commissioner is chairman and Rahman, as Chief Minister, an influential member.

Although in the past Rahman appears to have been in general agreement with the conduct of the

Emergency operations, he will be in a much stronger position under the new arrangements to bring about any changes he may desire to make.

* * * * *

INDIA.

Limitations of R.A.F. Transit Rights.

In a recent report, the U.K. Air Adviser, New Delhi, mentions the fact that R.A.F. transit rights across India and to Car Nicobar are likely to be drastically limited. In future, no transit rights will exist (as heretofore) for any given number of aircraft, and every request for diplomatic clearance of flights will now be considered on its merits.

The Government of India intends exercising its rights to take over the staging post facilities at Car Nicobar ^{before} 1st July 1956, and, accordingly, every aircraft wishing to land on this island, or use the signal facilities available, will have to be cleared diplomatically through New Delhi.

In theory, therefore, India has achieved full control over her air space, and temporarily, at least, controls the Indian Ocean R.A.F. Long Range Reinforcement Route to and from the Far East.

* * * * *

INDONESIA.

President Soekarno to visit U.S.A.

The United States Government has extended an invitation to President Soekarno to visit the United

States.

Soekarno has accepted the invitation, but no date has yet been fixed for the visit.

Abrogation of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union.

The newly-elected Indonesian Government has re-affirmed the decision of the Harahap Government to abrogate the remnants of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union.

Two prongs in the Dutch-Indonesian Government agreement of 1949 - political support in international affairs and military support and liaison, were swept aside by the Protocol of August, 1954. Economic Union in international monetary affairs, the third prong, has, however, been more or less maintained until the present.

Well over one-half of Indonesia's economy is backed by Netherlands capital. Seventy-five percent of the Republic's inter-island and ocean-going shipping is in the hands of the Dutch, while Garuda Indonesia Airways are still in fact a subsidiary of K.L.M.

If the abrogation is fully effective, the Indonesian economy is likely to collapse.

On the other hand, the Netherlands, having reconstructed her economy since the war, is now less dependent on Indonesia than previously. It has been estimated that only 6% of her income, as compared to 14% pre-war, comes from this part of the world.

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S E C T I O N IV.AUSTRALIA STATION INTELLIGENCE.HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.Lucinda (Q).

Representations have been made by the Ingham Chamber of Commerce to the Queensland Department of Harbours and Marine that a channel be dredged from the Lucinda Jetty to the open sea past the southern end of Hinchinbrook Island. This direct route would allow ships arriving from the south to save a distance of approximately 90 miles.

In discussions with the Department of Harbours and Marine on this subject, it was confirmed that such an approach had been made but that no action would be taken for some time. However, when bulk sugar handling facilities are established at Lucinda it is possible that this suggestion may be adopted to allow ships to use the port more economically.

Fremantle.

Good progress is being made in the construction of the new No. 10 Berth, North Wharf, Fremantle. About 440 feet of the 653 feet wharf has been completed. Over 400 concrete piles have been driven and the concrete docking has progressed up to the limit of the piles. All the berth area is still dry land and dredging has been taking place for some time. This berth will be the limit of the possible harbour extension without re-siting the railway bridge at the Eastern end of the harbour.

The first of two radar scanners to assist in the control of shipping in the Fremantle Port area commenced operation on 16th March. This scanner is located on Arthur's Head with the screen in the Harbour

Master's Office. The second set is to be installed in the Signal Station, Cantonment Hill.

Work has already commenced on the modernisation of the Signal Station. Plans provide for a three-storey re-inforced concrete building with signal decks on the two top floors and the mast and radar equipment on the roof. The North, South and West faces of the two top floors will be entirely anti-glare glass.

Port Kembla.

A new jetty, to the northward of No.1 Jetty, and which will be known as Jetty No.6, is under construction at Port Kembla.

It will provide four additional berths, each 500 feet long, and dredging will ensure a minimum depth of 32 feet at the outer berths and 28 feet at the inner berths. Road and railway access will be available.

Seven new cranes each of 7-tons capacity will be installed at Port Kembla. Four of these cranes will be for the new No.6 Jetty and the other three for use on No.3 Jetty to augment the two 20-ton cranes now available there.

CYCLONE DAMAGE TO PORTS ON N.W. COAST OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

A severe cyclonic disturbance which travelled the entire length of the Western Australian coast early in March caused damage to port facilities as follows :-

Port Samson (Roebourne) - Eighty feet of the jetty was lost, as was a large part of the spring fender system. The jetty can still be used but extreme caution is necessary.

Geraldton. - Extensive damage was caused to the wharf and to the vessel "CLIFF ST. DAVID" berthed alongside. The movement of the vessel cracked an extensive area of the concrete surface of the wharf and tore away the whaling pieces. An inspection is yet to be made to determine the damage to piles.

Visit of French Naval Units to Australia.

Two French Naval training vessels, the 9,200-ton cruiser JEANNE D'ARC and the 2,600-ton frigate L. GRANDIERE visited Australia during February and March.

The vessels arrived in Melbourne from New Zealand on 13th February and later visited Sydney and Darwin.

The Captain of JEANNE D'ARC, Capitaine de Vaisseau Burin des Rogiers, was Director of French Naval Intelligence from 1953 to 1955, when he assumed command of JEANNE D'ARC.

JEANNE D'ARC's complement comprised 30 officers, 150 cadets and 500 ratings.

L. GRANDIERE was commanded by Capitaine de Fregate Echinard, who is a Fleet Air Arm pilot, and who was Executive Officer of the French aircraft carrier ARROMANCHES. He speaks English, Spanish and Russian.

U.S.S. ARNEB.

United States Navy - Arctic Ship.

The United States Navy's amphibious attack cargo ship ARNEB visited Melbourne in March on return to the United States via the Mediterranean. She had been operating with an American scientific expedition

which has been taking part in activities in preparation for the International Geophysical Year in 1957.

Besides carrying scientists and members of a mobile construction battalion to the Antarctic towards the end of last year, the ARNEB transported 6,000 tons of supplies and equipment for the main base at Little America and the air operating base at McMurdo Sound. She had a complement of 27 officers and civilians of officer status and 352 enlisted men.

NEW CALEDONIA.

Governor.

M. Grimald has been appointed to succeed M. Rene Hoffer as governor of New Caledonia and High Commissioner for France in the Pacific.

M. Grimald had previously held administrative posts in France's African Colonies.

Air Communications.

A Dragon Rapide aircraft is now operating a three-weekly air service from Noumea (Magenta Airfield) to the Loyalty Islands, with other services to Kounac and Poindinic.

Population Statistics.

The population of New Caledonia (including the Loyalty Islands) in 1954, totalled 64,459, composed as follows:- 22,261 Europeans; 4,242 Tonkinese, 3,450 Indonesians (600 since repatriated) and 34,506 natives.

Noumea is expanding rapidly, its total population now being 20,000, of which 12,500 are Europeans.

DUTCH NEW GUINEA.W/T Station, Biak.

A 5 k.w. Wireless transmitter has now been installed at Biak.

COCOS ISLAND.

The Overseas Telecommunications Commission (Australia) are taking over the operation of the Cocos Island Cable station from Cable and Wireless Limited.

SHIPPING INFORMATION.Australia-China Line.

The Australia-China Line is augmenting its service on the Australia-China run through the addition of "EASTERN ARGOSY", a vessel of 7,000 tons gross launched some months ago at the Dumbarton Yards of William Denny and Bros. Ltd., and the vessel "EASTERN QUEEN" (8,644 tons gross).

The vessels at present engaged in this service are "EASTERN STAR", "EASTERN GLORY", and "EASTERN SAGA".

Western Shipping Co. (W.A.).

The above company, which commenced operating in February, 1955, is about to close down. During the twelve months of its existence the company has operated the 750-ton M.V. "COMAR" and has been mainly engaged in the transport of drilling equipment and stores to Exmouth Gulf on behalf of W.A.P.E.T.

Newcastle and Hunter River Steamship Co. Ltd.

Trading conditions for the Newcastle & Hunter River Steamship Co. Ltd., in five of the six

months ended 31st December, 1955 were favourable. In December, due mainly to industrial troubles, the position, however, deteriorated sharply.

The balance sheet at 31st December showed that the overdraft was reduced from £115,409 (at 30th June) to £81,670.

Directors have announced that consideration is being given to changing the name of the company to Southern Shipping Co. Ltd., and adopting modern Articles of Association.

Vessels owned by the company at present are the "KARUAH" and "MULUBINEA", the "KINDUR" having been sold recently to the International Import & Export Co. Ltd., 6 Duddell Street, Hong Kong.

S E C T I O N V.S P E C I A L A R T I C L E S.

(The Director of Naval Intelligence is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed in Section V of A.S.I.S.).

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S U P P L Y O F S O V I E T B L O C O I L T O T H E F A R E A S T.

The following table shows the seaborne deliveries of petroleum fuels from the Black Sea to the Soviet Far East, Communist China and Viet Minh during the four years ending 1955. No crude oil reached the area by sea, and the few thousand tons of lubricants, paraffin wax, etc., shipped to Communist China from Baltic and Black Sea ports or smuggled into Communist China from Hong Kong or Macao have been excluded. Shipments between the three Far Eastern territories are also omitted.

| <u>Year.</u> | <u>Soviet Far East</u> | <u>Communist China</u> | <u>Vietminh</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1952 | 20 | (Thousand tons) 15 | - | 35 |
| 1953 | 22 | 9 | - | 31 |
| 1954 | 81 | 99 | - | 180 |
| 1955 | 442 | 50 | 11 | 503 |

The estimated breakdown by products for 1955 was as follows :

| <u>Product</u> | <u>Soviet Far East</u> | <u>Communist China</u> | <u>Vietminh</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Gasoline | 43 | (Thousand tons) 28 | 7 | 78 |
| Kerosene(including some jet fuel) | 214 | 13 | 4 | 231 |

(Continued)

| <u>Product</u> | <u>Soviet Far East</u> | <u>Communist China</u> | <u>Vietminh</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Gas oil & diesel oil | 103 | 9 | - | 112 |
| Fuel oil | 62 | - | - | 62 |
| Unknown | 20 | - | - | 20 |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| TOTAL: | 442 | 50 | 11 | 503 |

While the figures in the first table may be accepted as firm, those in the second, although reasonably accurate, should be treated with more reserve. In particular the proportion of jet fuel in the kerosene tonnage is uncertain, but it is not believed to be high.

Apart from 40,000 tons to Communist China carried in Polish vessels, all supplies in 1955 were delivered in Soviet tankers. This, rather than the eventual destination of the oil, probably explains the striking reversal in the proportions between deliveries to Communist China and to the Soviet Far East in 1955 compared to 1954; in 1954 several Soviet tankers delivered oil cargoes to Communist China ports before the Nationalists' seizure of S.S. TUAPSE in the summer, but only one has done so since. In view of the Chinese announcement that sales of kerosene to the public increased by 81% in 1954 and of the acuteness of the need for it to date, the high proportion of kerosene in these cargoes suggests that a large part of the deliveries to Vladivostok was actually destined for Communist China.

The following figures show the increase in the Soviet tanker fleet (excluding vessels under 1,000 g.r.t.) during the past two years :-

| <u>Date</u> | <u>No.</u> | <u>Thousand</u> <u>G.R.T.</u> | <u>Increase</u> <u>(Thousand</u> <u>G.R.T.)</u> |
|-------------------|------------|----------------------------------|---|
| January 31, 1954 | 38 | 159 | - |
| December 31, 1954 | 59 | 261 | 102 |
| November 30, 1955 | 69 | 315 | 54 |

Note:- The Poles have only two ocean-going tankers totalling 12,500 tons, having lost one to the Nationalists in 1953.

As the increase was greater in 1954 than in 1955, it may be asked why there were not correspondingly larger oil deliveries in 1954. The explanation probably lies in the fact that several of the larger new tankers only came into service and sailed for Vladivostok late in 1954 and did not arrive until the beginning of 1955. Since carriage by tanker is clearly the most convenient means of transporting oil from the Black Sea to the Far East, it seems reasonable to suppose that the sharp rise in seaborne deliveries to this area is mainly due to the increase in Soviet tanker tonnage.

(J.I.B. London).

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JAPANESE SHIPBUILDING.

The boom in Japanese shipbuilding continued throughout 1955. Not only did the number of ships on order increase but also their size - the average size of individual ships increased to 23,000 deadweight tons compared with 18,000 tons in 1954.

While the revival is largely due to the great increase in export orders, Government-sponsored domestic shipbuilding is also a contributory factor, including 19 ships of 188,000 tons with local shipowners requiring many more.

This upsurge of Japanese shipbuilding is, of course, connected with the international race to obtain fleets of efficient modern tankers with which to carry the huge traffic resulting from the rapidly expanding world oil industry during the next 20 years. One estimate puts this tanker tonnage as an additional 10,000,000 deadweight tons by 1960.

Accordingly, Japan intends to build two particularly large super-tankers, each of 83,000 deadweight tons. These ships will be built in the Naval Dockyard at Kure and will be by far the world's largest cargo carriers. (Incidentally this yard produced the one-time world's largest battleships, "YAMATO" and "MUSASHI", both of over 70,000 tons displacement).

These huge tankers will be used on the Persial Gulf/United States west coast run, since transit of the Suez Canal will be impracticable.

Another advantage which Japan hopes to gain from her thriving shipbuilding industry is a means of liquidating part of her reparations debts to Burma, the Philippines and Indonesia by supplying them with miscellaneous small craft and coasters. Orders of this nature are doubly welcome, since they ensure full employment for the smaller shipyards. Burma alone is expected to order over 100 craft, including tugs, barges, fire floats, launches and dredgers.

With this rosy picture must come the sobering thought of economic difficulties which lie ahead. Japan secured most of her export orders on the promise of early delivery, fixed contract prices and easy payment terms. With the rapid increase in orders these advantages are becoming more and more difficult to maintain.

Late in 1954, delivery was promised in six

or eight months, but the completion of existing orders will take about thirty months. Until a short time ago contracts did not cover increased cost during building, but this clause is now being included. In the past, most ship-builders accepted only half the contract price on delivery, the balance being paid over five years, but the requirement of funds with which to expand their ship-yards is making this "hire purchase" scheme something of a millstone.

It remains to be seen whether Japan, by measures such as rationalisation of the industry, greater use of prefabrication, after-sales service and technical improvements, can increase, or even maintain, her present portion of world shipbuilding orders.

(C.S.O.(I), Far East).
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UNIFICATION OF WEST PAKISTAN.

The new Province of West Pakistan has now been established. It incorporates the Governor's Provinces of the Punjab, the North-West Frontier and Sind, the Chief Commissioner's Province of Baluchistan and the capital of the Federation (Karachi); the States of Bahawalpur and Khairpur and the Baluchistan States Union; and the Tribal Areas of Baluchistan, the Punjab and the North-West Frontier and the States of Amb, Chitral, Dir and Swat. Karachi will continue to be administered, as at present, by the Central Government. The provincial capital is at Lahore.

For administrative purposes the new Province is divided into 50 districts, grouped into ten divisions headed by a mission. The former seven separate Secretariats have been integrated and a public service commission is to be established.

At first the West Pakistan Legislature will be an interim one only, elected indirectly and function-

ing until the regular Legislature has been elected on the basis of adult suffrage. The interim Legislature will have 310 seats, of which 300 will be for Muslims (including 10 for Muslim women) and 10 will be reserved for non-Muslims.

A West Pakistan Power and Projects Authority will be set up, with responsibility for the planning and execution of major development projects. It will be a semi-autonomous body and will supervise hydro-electric development, irrigation expansion, flood control, inland navigation and reclamation.

On 22nd March Pakistan became a Republic, but still remains within the framework of the British Commonwealth.

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SECRET

Transit List

This document is to be treated as "SECRET." It is to be passed by hand from Officer to Officer and finally returned to the Commanding Officer.

| Name of Officer to be passed to | Initials of Officer read by, and date passed on |
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