

SECRET

Australia Station Intelligence Summary



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S E C R E T

S E C T I O N I.

R.A.N. AND OTHER COMMONWEALTH NAVIES.

(a) ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

H.M.A.S. MELBOURNE.

H.M.A.S. MELBOURNE on her journey to Australia made a memorable call at Naples. A Gala Opera in honour of MELBOURNE's visit was performed at the San Carlo Opera House (rated the second-best in Italy) and on the following day an Audience was given by the Pope in the Vatican in Rome to a party of 200 officers and men.

The people of Naples took a very great interest in the visit and the hospitality offered far exceeded what it was possible to accept. Many tours were arranged and Pompeii, Rome and Capri were visited by most of the Ship's Company. Public transport in Naples was made free to all members of the Ship's Company in uniform. The visit was of value in furthering friendly relations between Australia and Italy.

H.M.A.S. SPRIGHTLY.

On 25th February, H.M.A.S. SPRIGHTLY, with Lieutenant-Commander T. O'Byrne, R.A.N.V.R., Staff Officer (Coast-watching) embarked, departed from Lombrum for southern New Britain. After several calls at outstations SPRIGHTLY sailed for Rabaul, where a report was received concerning the landing of Japanese fishermen on an outlying island.

Two days later SPRIGHTLY sailed for Honiara (B.S.I.P.), calling at the Shortland Islands en route. During the passage to Honiara the ship was diverted in search for the then missing ketch "ARAKARIMOA". The ketch was sighted on Poole Reef south of Guadalcanal. The Trawler Master of the M.V. "MYRTLE", which had approached inside the reef, boarded her and found a body. The remainder of the passengers and crew had previously taken to the water.

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SPRIGHTLY, being unable to render further assistance, departed for Honiara, where she remained for several days before proceeding to Florida Island. Returning to Honiara, the Captain acceded to a request from the Government Secretary to proceed to the south coast of Guadalcanal to pick up the survivors of the "ARAKARIMOA". This accomplished, further calls were made at the Russell Group, Rendova and Gizo in the New Georgia Group, Vella Lavella, the Shortlands Group and Bougainville before returning to Rabaul and Lombrum, where she arrived on 19th March.

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NEW B.W.V. FOR THE R.A.N.

A Boom Working Vessel, H.M.A.S. KIMBLA, built for the R.A.N. by Walkers Ltd., at Maryborough, Queensland, was commissioned there on 26th March under the command of Lieutenant-Commander A. R. Pearson, R.A.N.V.R. On the following day her final sea trials were carried out, after which she was accepted on behalf of the Service by the Minister for the Navy and the Third Naval Member of the Naval Board.

KIMBLA is similar in most respects to the R.A.N.'s other B.W.V's., H.M.A. Ships KOALA, KARANGI and KANGAROO, which have rendered good service over many years. Of 971 tons displacement, KIMBLA has a speed of 11 knots and is fitted with the most up-to-date equipment for her wartime task of boom and net laying and repairing, and her peacetime tasks of laying and maintaining naval and civil aviation moorings.

The completion of this latest addition to the R.A.N. had been delayed by floods in the Mary River area, during the worst of which the fitting-out wharf and the shop in which her boilers were made were both under water. Misfortune dogged KIMBLA, however, as on 29th March, whilst on passage south to Sydney, she developed machinery

defects and had to be towed into Moreton Bay by KOALA (Lieutenant-Commander D. P. Doran, R.N.) for repairs.

KIMBLA arrived in Sydney at 2200K on Saturday, 7th April, and berthed alongside COOTAMUNDRA at the cruiser wharf, Garden Island.

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H.M.S. THOROUGH.

Early in March, H.M.S. THOROUGH carried out a dawn bombardment of an area of the Malayan jungle containing Communist terrorists. THOROUGH, one of the three R.N. submarines based at H.M.A.S. PENGUIN, is commanded by Lieutenant-Commander R. C.H. Mason, R.N., who was formerly S.O.(0) to S.M.4. The bombardment lasted for 120 minutes.

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Fleet Air Arm.

In mid-April four Sea Fury Fighters of the Fleet Air Arm carried out a 2,000-mile training flight from Nowra to Hobart. From there, on the following day, they flew to Adelaide and on to Nowra.

(b) ROYAL NAVY.

Scrapping of Carriers.

The Admiralty has now confirmed that four large carriers in the Reserve Fleet are to be scrapped. The carriers are INDOMITABLE, IMPLACABLE, INDEFATIGABLE and ILLUSTRIOUS.

The ships have been out-dated by post-war developments and it is not thought worthwhile to modernise them.

They range in displacement from 23,000 to 25,000 tons and were completed during the period 1940-44. Their disposal will reduce the Royal Navy's completed carrier strength to three C.V.A's (including one undergoing extensive modernisation), three recently completed C.V.S's and six obsolescent C.V.L's.

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H.M.S. GAMBIA.

H.M.S. GAMBIA, of the East Indies Squadron, visited Massawa in February for a four-day goodwill visit. The visit was at the invitation of His Imperial Highness the Emperor of Ethiopia, who had travelled in the ship on his State visit to the United Kingdom in 1954.

Prince Alexander Desta, grandson to the Emperor, was serving in GAMBIA as a Midshipman.

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(c) PAKISTAN NAVY.

Five H.M. Ships for Pakistan.

Towards the end of last year negotiations were in train between Pakistan Naval Headquarters and the Admiralty concerning Pakistan's need for warships to replace those which are 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 5,25" Dido Class cruiser, DIADEM.

The Pakistan Navy has up to the present comprised :-

- 4 Destroyers
- 4 Frigates
- 6 Minesweepers
- 4 Seaward Defence Launches.

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(d) ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY.

H.M.N.Z.S. LACHLAN.

The visit of H.M.N.Z.S. LACHLAN to Papeete was described by her Commanding Officer (Commander G. S. Ritchie, D.S.C., R.N.) :-

"Heavy rain fell during the night but the atmosphere was clear and visibility exceptional when the fantastic peaks of Moorea were sighted at dawn. I entered the Passe de Papeete at 0830 and berthed alongside. It was a memorable occasion. The noise of the music and the singing of the Tahitians made it almost impossible to pass orders to the wheelhouse when coming alongside, while the phenomenal gyrations of the torsos of the girls dancing the patautu on the wharf made it difficult for the seamen to concentrate on handling the lines. However, the ship was soon secured and an invasion of girls with couronnes (crowns) took place. Soon everyone was in the rig of the day, having a sweet smelling couronne around their necks, each donated with a kiss of welcome."

problem

It is difficult to understand how a recruiting/can possibly exist.

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(e) ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY.

Commissioning of Destroyers.

H.M.C.S. FORT ERIE and H.M.C.S. LANARK (DE) were commissioned in Canada during April and have joined the

Third Escort Squadron replacing PENETANG, PRESTONIAN and TORONTO (DE), which are being lent to the Royal Norwegian Navy. Disposition of ships between the Atlantic and Pacific Commands is now 60 to 40.

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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.Replacement of C-in-C, Soviet Navy.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union, Nikolay G. Kuznetsov, is reported to have been replaced by his deputy, Admiral Sergey G. Gorshkov.

Admiral Kuznetsov is reported to have been in very poor health, which is perhaps supported by the fact that he has made only one public appearance in some 10 months and was conspicuous by his absence during the visit of units of the Royal Navy to Leningrad last October.

Admiral S. G. Gorshkov first became known as Commander of the Danube Flotilla in 1941. He later served as deputy to Admiral Oktyabrskiy, Commander of the Black Sea Fleet, and succeeded to the command of that fleet early in 1949. It is believed that he commanded the Black Sea Fleet until as recently as 1954.

Admiral of the Fleet Kuznetsov, who is 54 years of age, entered the Navy as a lower-deck rating. He was selected for commissioned rank and completed a four-year course at the Naval College, Frunze. His rise in the Navy was rapid and due to Party influence. He held a number of important appointments between 1937 and 1946, when he was made Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. In 1947 he was tried by Court of Honour, relieved of his post and reduced to Rear-Admiral for communicating information to the Allies. In 1951, he was re-promoted to Vice-Admiral and appointed Minister of the Navy.

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NORTH KOREA.Soviet Atomic Artillery.

A Japanese press report states that a Soviet atomic artillery weapon has been moved into North Korea, thus tipping the balance of power more heavily in favour of the Communist forces.

Although, if true, this is a breach of the Korean Armistice Agreement, there is no way of checking such a flow of military equipment due to the ineffectiveness of the International Inspection Teams.

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JAPAN.Destroyer Escorts.

The two Destroyer Escorts newly constructed in Japan have now been accepted by the Maritime Self-Defence Force.

This brings the total of D.E's in Service up to five.

Launching of Minesweepers.

Two wooden-hulled twin-screw 240-ton Auxiliary Minesweepers were launched on 12th March. They are ATADA, launched at Kawasaki and ITSUKI, launched at Yokohama.

Details of ITSUKI are as follows :-

Displacement	-	240 tons
Length (Water level)	-	118'
Breadth	-	21'
Depth (Moulded)	-	12'4"
Draught (Normal)	-	6'2" approx.
Speed	-	13 knots.

Main Engines - Mitsubishi Diesel Type YV 10Z - 2 Sets
Armament - 1 x 20 m.m. MG.
Minesweeping Gear - 1 set.

A further minesweeper of this type is due to be launched.

The method of hull construction is of specially glued plywood boards, with all-metal parts of aluminium, or other non-ferrous metal, wherever possible.

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SOUTH VIETNAM.

Withdrawal of French Expeditionary Force.

The last French combat troops were to leave South Vietnam by 15th April, and the remaining ancillary troops by the end of June. General Jacquot, Commander-in-Chief of the French Expeditionary Force, was due to sail for France on 28th April, by which date the French High Command would be dissolved.

The Vietnamese have asked the French to leave behind a Training Mission consisting of 30 Army Officers, 30 Naval Officers and over 300 Air Force personnel. The French have asked for certain naval and air facilities in return.

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BURMA.

Visit of First Sea Lord to Burma.

During the visit to Burma of the First Sea Lord, the Burmese were offered an ALGERINE Class minesweeper at a greatly reduced price, a Staff Course vacancy for one U.B.N. officer every alternate year commencing in 1956, and the seconding of four Royal Navy instructors to the

Burma Navy.

It has since been reported that the Burma Government has accepted the offer.

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INDONESIA.

Chief of the Naval Staff.

On 12th March the Chief of the Naval Staff, Indonesian Navy, Vice-Admiral Subijakto, returned to Indonesia after a five months world tour, during which he visited India, Pakistan, Italy, Switzerland, France, West Germany, Belgium, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Honolulu, Hong Kong, and Communist China.

In Communist China, Subijakto was shown the Shanghai and Canton shipbuilding yards and naval establishments.

Indonesian Air Force (AURI) Resignations.

With the voluntary resignation of five senior anti-Suryadarma officers (including Air Vice-Commodores Sujono and Ruslan) the way has been paved for a united command in the Indonesian Air Force.

The only officers belonging to the pro-Sujono faction still in the Air Force are junior ones. So it is thought that Air Vice-Marshal Suryadarma, Chief of Staff, AURI, will now probably resign, too, as he can do this without loss of face.

Discontent first became evident in the AURI in October, 1953, when Sujono challenged Suryadarma's power, and it flared up again recently in December, 1955, when officers protested at the attempted installation of Sujono as Deputy-Chief of Air Staff.

The latter crisis was resolved by the Indonesian Cabinet's decision to leave disciplinary action against offenders to the Attorney-General, and the submission of a proposal to solve the affair to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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S E C T I O N I I I .EXTERNAL POLITICAL, POLITICO-MILITARY AND
ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE.U.S.S.R.Soviet Restriction on Salmon Fishing in the North-Western
Pacific.

On 21st March, Moscow Radio announced restrictions on salmon fishing in waters West of 170° 25' East and North of 48° North. This area includes the Western portion of the Bering Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, and extends as far South as a line drawn through Matsu Island in the Northern Kurile Islands. The restrictions limit the salmon catch in these waters to 25 million fish, or 50 million pounds, and apply during the spawning season from 15th May to 15th September.

This is another blow to Japanese fishing interests which are already restricted ~~in~~ these waters.

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JAPAN.Population Increase.

The census held in October, 1955, has revealed that the population of Japan has increased by 6,075,892 to 89,275,528, since the 1950 census.

In recent years Japan has been exploring means of easing her population pressure by large-scale emigration. Suggestions that migrants be absorbed in Australian and Netherlands New Guinea and South America have not met with favourable responses; more recently feelers have been put forward in South East Asia.

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COMMUNIST CHINA.Soviet Assistance in Industrial Development.

Press reports state that a further agreement has been signed in Peking for the supply of equipment and technical assistance to Communist China. Under this agreement the U.S.S.R. will provide goods and services to the value of 2,500 million roubles (£A284 million) for the construction of 55 new industrial enterprises. China will meet the cost of this programme through normal trade exchanges with the U.S.S.R.

It is not at present clear to what extent this arrangement is separate from the agreement reached between these parties in October, 1954, by which the U.S.S.R. was to assist in the construction or development of 156 Chinese industrial enterprises.

Famine Conditions.

The State Council of the Peoples' Republic has admitted that famine conditions exist in certain provinces. Government over-optimism and a blind disregard of the failings to the co-operative agricultural system were described in a Peking broadcast. There are indications of a campaign to find scape-goats. This is the first time that the government has confirmed such difficulties.

Possible Economic Pressure on Hong Kong. *

Communist China is acquiring credits in Hong Kong which increase her capacity to bring about economic pressure on the Colony.

The Hong Kong trading position vis-a-vis Communist China continues to deteriorate, and the trade deficit of £45 million sterling in 1955 was more than double that of 1954. Hong Kong exports are declining and imports from

Communist China increasing.

In 1955 the percentage of the Colony's trade with the Communists was :- Imports, 24 per cent; exports, 7 per cent,

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NORTH VIETNAM.

Haiphong.

The dredger "ZEMLESOS 20" transferred by the Soviet to the Vietminh is now believed to be engaged on the bar at the entrance to Haiphong.

A further two tugs recently arrived from the Black Sea have been turned over to the Vietminh. This brings the total of tugs handed over by the Soviet to the Vietminh to four.

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THAILAND.

Australian Representation.

The Australian Legation in Bangkok has now been raised to the status of an Embassy.

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BURMA.

Trade with the Sino-Soviet Bloc. *

Under various trade agreements with members of the Sino-Soviet Bloc Burma is committed to export 60% of her average yearly exportable surplus of rice to Bloc countries. In return Burma receives industrial and agricultural equipment, technical assistance and assistance in capital works.

Since rice accounts for some three-quarters of Burma's total exports, about one-half of her foreign trade is formally tied to the Sino-Soviet Bloc for at least three years. Moreover, the recent extension of the Burma-U.S.S.R. agreement to five years may well be the forerunner to similar arrangements with the other Bloc countries.

The Sino-Soviet Bloc has thus achieved a commanding position in Burma's trade and is well placed to exercise considerable economic influence over the country. The provision of industrial equipment and the supply of technicians to install it will undoubtedly be important factors in spreading this influence.

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CEYLON.

General Elections Result.

The Ceylon General Elections resulted in an unexpected defeat of Sir John Kotelawala's party. The People's United Front Party of Mr. Bandaranaike gained 50 of the 95 elected seats in the House of Representatives, the remaining 6 seats being nominated by the Governor-General.

Mr. Bandaranaike, who was at Oxford University at the same time as Sir Anthony Eden, is reported as being an able, experienced politician with strong nationalistic tendencies but not avowedly anti-British. His party, however, has marked left-wing sympathies and, as has been indicated in statements since the elections, will almost certainly proclaim a Republic, albeit within the Commonwealth, bring in a programme of nationalisation of the tea, rubber and coconut industries, and demand the return of British bases.

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INDONESIA.Possible Legislation against Foreign Shipping Companies.

It is thought that the Ali Sastramidjojo Government will shortly deprive foreign firms of the right to operate docks and storage facilities in Indonesian ports.

At present almost all harbour facilities are in the hands of foreign companies.

This move is not new, for the previous Government had announced that from March 31st no company could operate at any of the thirty-three listed ports without a new licence, and no foreign companies would in future be granted licences. However, harbour-masters could grant a temporary licence to them during the transition period.

Visit of President Soekarno to U.S.A.

President Soekarno has announced that he will visit the U.S.A. in May or June. He has been invited by the U.S. Government.

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AMSTERDAM ISLAND.

On arrival at Fremantle Captain W. Mesker, Master of the K.P.M. M.V. "VAN CLOON", reported that at dusk on 6th April his vessel was in the vicinity of Amsterdam Island (37° 45' S. - 77° 32' E) and sighted lights. The ship closed to a distance of five miles and called the Island by light. The reply received from the island was "All O.K., Welcome to new American Islands."

As this island is reputedly uninhabited and is listed as a shipwreck and relief station, the Master was reluctant to pass the visible lights. No ships were evident either by sight or by radar.

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S E C T I O N I V .A U S T R A L I A S T A T I O N I N T E L L I G E N C E .V I S I T T O S Y D N E Y O F U . S . D E S T R O Y E R S Q U A D R O N S E V E N T E E N .

The port of Sydney was visited at Easter-time by U.S. Destroyer Squadron 17 (commanded by Captain Madison Hall, Jnr., U.S.N.) and comprising GREGORY (Commander J. P. Rizza, U.S.N.), PORTERFIELD (Commander A.R. Moody, U.S.N.), MARSHALL (Commander J. J. McMullan, U.S.N.) and HALSEY POWELL (Commander Vaughan).

The ships were on their way from the United States to join the Seventh Fleet in the Far East, having departed from their home port of San Diego on 13th March and proceeded via Pearl Harbour and Kwajalein.

All four ships had excellent records in the Second World War. GREGORY took part in the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, was struck by a Japanese Kamikaze plane on 7th April 1945, and participated in the Korean War. PORTERFIELD was present at the invasions of the Marshalls and Marianas and at operations in the Philippines and off the Chinese and Japanese coasts. Since 1945 she has done three tours of operational duty in the Western Pacific. MARSHALL, the junior of the quartet, after service in the Atlantic, served for the last 14 months of the war in the Western Pacific, where she steamed more than 175,000 miles, participated in 30 engagements and 8 major campaigns, rescued 21 Allied airmen and helped to shoot down 5 Japanese aircraft. HALSEY POWELL was, after service in the Atlantic, present at the assaults on Saipan, Tinian and Guam. She was struck by a Japanese Kamikaze plane off Kyushu on 20th March, 1945, and saw much service in the Pacific. As with PORTERFIELD, both MARSHALL and HALSEY POWELL have carried out three

tours of operational duty in the Far East since 1946.

An extensive sporting and entertainment programme had been drawn up for the ships' stay in Sydney, and Officers and ratings were fully occupied on shore seeing the sights and visiting the country, the Royal Agricultural Show and the Races. At a baseball match a New South Wales team defeated one from DESRON 17. The behaviour of the U.S. libertymen on shore was very good.

On 5th April this Squadron sailed for Manus.

B.H.P. CO. LTD'S NEW STEEL ROLLING MILL, NEWCASTLE.

Construction of a new steel rolling mill on order to the Newcastle Steel Works of the B.H.P. Co. Ltd., has commenced.

The mill, which will cost about £4 $\frac{3}{4}$ million and should be completed in 1958, will be primarily engaged in the production of high-quality strip steel for processing into tubes. This type of strip steel is known as ~~skelp~~.

AUSTRALIAN IRON AND STEEL LTD'S STEEL MILL, PORT KEMBLA.

Australian Iron and Steel Limited's new steel mill at Port Kembla will be completed late in 1957 at an estimated cost of £8 $\frac{1}{2}$ million.

It will have a rolling capacity of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ million tons of ingots per annum.

NEW PLASTIC FACTORY FOR BOTANY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

A new £2 $\frac{1}{4}$ million factory to produce for the first time in Australia, the plastic, polythene, is being built at the 130-acre works of Imperial Chemical Industries at Botany, Sydney.

The factory, which will start production near the end of 1957, will produce enough polythene for all Australia's requirements.

The basic raw material, the gas ethylene, will be made from industrial alcohol produced from sugar-cane molasses.

Polythene was used during the war for high-frequency insulation.

Polythene film is used as a wrapping and preserving medium for foodstuffs, chemicals and industrial machinery. In the building trade polythene is being used as a damp-course, for waterproofing and for insulation.

NEW CHEMICAL PLANT FOR NEWCASTLE, NEW SOUTH WALES.

The Newcastle Chemical Co. Pty.Ltd., (owned jointly by the Broken Hill Pty.Co.Ltd., and Imperial Chemical Industries of Aust. & N.Z. Ltd.) is to embark on a major expansion of its plant at Newcastle which will involve an initial outlay of £570,000. The new plant will add considerably to the company's production of phthalic anhydride - a chemical used in the manufacture of plasticisers and of resins for paints, lacquers and varnishes.

The plant, which will be of the latest design, will use as its raw material, naphthalene produced as a by-product in the steelworks at Newcastle and Port Kembla. The added production of the anhydride will mean a substantial saving of overseas exchange.

NORTHERN QUEENSLAND - ELECTRIC POWER.

A contract has been let for the construction of a 132 kilowatt transmission line from Tully Falls to Garbutt (Townsville). The line will be approximately 160 miles long. This will enable the supply systems of the Cairns and Townsville Regional Electricity

Boards to be inter-connected and additional power obtained. It is anticipated that the line will be completed in early 1957. Power from the £13 $\frac{1}{2}$ million Tully Falls Hydro-Electric project is expected to be available in 1956.

PEARLING INDUSTRY - BROOME.

A similar experiment to that carried out in Darwin in 1954 using Greek sponge divers in the pearling industry will be carried out at Broome in the forthcoming season. A complete lugger crew has arrived at Broome from Greece and will join the fleet immediately. The Broome Shellers Association will assist the Greek crew and have made a fully equipped lugger available. The Association is financing the men and is also making advances for the subsistence of their families in Greece.

EDINBURGH AIRFIELD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Additional installations costing about £1m. will be built at the Edinburgh Airfield, near Adelaide, at the U.K.'s expense, as a result of the decision to make the field the main air support base for the Maralinga atomic proving ground.

The first tests at Maralinga, in the far west of S.A., will be held towards the end of this year and work on the Edinburgh installations will be pushed ahead immediately.

GLENELG - NEW BRIDGE AND BOAT HAVEN.

The South Australian Cabinet has approved a plan which includes the conversion of the Patawalonga Creek at Glenelg into a haven for small craft, and the building of a new bridge.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.N.T. WOLFRAM MINING INDUSTRY - HATCHES CREEK.

A new wolfram mining company, the Hatches Creek South Syndicate N.L., has been formed with a nominal capital of £50,000.

The 1952-53 slump in tungsten prices almost stopped wolfram mining at Hatches Creek. Most of the miners left as the freight charges were higher than the value of the wolfram ore.

In 1954 the tungsten prices began to rise. The current price is now over £900 per ton and a sharp increase in the wolfram production at Hatches Creek is expected.

It is reported that the Government battery at the field is now in working condition.

ALL-WEATHER ROAD PROGRAMME.

A statement issued by the Northern Territory Administration reports that the whole of work in the Pine Creek-Goodparala-South Alligator areas for the current financial year has been completed. There is now an all-weather road linking the South Alligator uranium fields with the new Fisher airstrip. An all-weather access road between the Hercules Mine turn-off and Pine Creek has also been completed.

It is understood that the completion of the road between the South Alligator and the Hercules Mine turn-off will be placed on the 1956-57 works programme.

NEW CALEDONIA.Oil Prospecting.

A report in the 'Pacific Islands Monthly' states that the predominantly French Government-owned oil-

prospecting company, SREPMC, which obtained encouraging results in the Bourail district last year, will continue oil prospecting in New Caledonia.

This has been made possible by increasing the capital of the Company by 40 million francs (£A280,000).

Seismic tests will be made at the Bourail site and prospecting followed by seismic tests will be carried out on the Noumea peninsula, which is regarded as a particularly promising area.

Nickel. The Nickel Company which mines and smelts at Thio and Noumea exported 10,680 tons of pure nickel in 1955. This constituted a record.

Chrome. Over 89,000 tons of chrome ore were exported from New Caledonia in 1955.

Iron Ore. The port and loading installations at the Bay of Prony are being developed according to schedule and it is expected that the first shipment of iron ore destined for Broken Hill Proprietary Limited will take place in the near future.

SHIPPING INFORMATION.

N.Y.K. Line's New Vessels for Australian Trade.

The N.Y.K. Line have under construction for their Australian service three motorships aggregating 30,000 dead-weight tons.

These three vessels are being built at Yokohama, Nagasaki and Osaka. "SADO MARU" and "SATSUMA MARU" are sister-ships, each having a trial speed of 20.25 knots and a service speed of 17.8 knots. Although both of these vessels have a deadweight tonnage of 11,000 and accommodation for 12 passengers, "SADO MARU"

has a gross tonnage of 9,400, while the gross tonnage of "SATSUMA MARU" is 9,250. "MIKASA MARU", with a service speed of 12.5 knots, is much smaller than the other two motorships, having a deadweight tonnage of 7,800 only and a gross tonnage of 4,400. "MIKASA MARU", with accommodation for two passengers, was launched during March and carries 10,800 cubic metres of bale space. "SADO MARU" and "SATSUMA MARU" carry general and refrigerated cargo.

These three vessels will replace the four now conducting the N.Y.K. Line's service to Australia - "GINYO MARU", "EIFUKU MARU", "MANTETSU MARU III", and "MANTETSU MARU V". The "MIKASA MARU" was scheduled for completion in March and the "SADO MARU" and "SATSUMA MARU" both in May.

British Phosphate Commission's New Vessel "TRI ELLIS".

Another order for a cargo-passenger motor ship has been placed in the United Kingdom by the British Phosphate Commissioners, Melbourne.

The new vessel, to be built at Harland and Wolff's Clyde yard, will be similar to the "TRIASTER", completed at the same yard for the same owners last October. The "TRIASTER" was of 12,000 tons deadweight. The new ship is to be named "TRI ELLIS", after the late Sir Albert Ellis, described as the "Father" of the Pacific phosphate industry. She will carry phosphate from Nauru and Ocean Island to Australia and New Zealand. She is intended for delivery at the end of 1958.

Knutsen Line.

A little over a year ago the Knutsen Line inaugurated a new regular service connecting Western Australia with Malaya, Hong Kong, Japan and the West Coast of Canada and U.S.A.

The development of trade along this new route has been so encouraging that the Knutsen Line have decided to add to the fleet of vessels engaged in their Western Australian Service M.V. "KRISTIN BAKKE", delivered by the builders in October, 1955 (which will replace M.V. "OGEKA BAKKE") as well as another new sister-ship M.V. "ELLEN BAKKE", both being specially built for the Australian trade.

These two vessels are cargo-liners of the most modern type, 10,460 tons deadweight, having a service speed of 17 knots, equipped with the most modern cargo-handling appliances, and fitted for the carriage of all types of refrigerated, ventilated, and general cargo.

There is luxurious air-conditioned accommodation for twelve passengers in single and two-berth cabins, each having its own bathroom or shower. With the addition of the "KRISTIN BAKKE" in Fremantle in June, and "ELLEN BAKKE" following closely, the Knutsen Line will operate a service giving approximately three-weekly intervals between sailings from Fremantle.

New Swedish M.V. "MILOS".

The Swedish M.V. "MILOS" recently visited Australia on her maiden voyage. "MILOS", her sister-ship "DELOS", and the vessels "AROS" and "CITOS" will maintain a three-weekly service between Australia, Manila, Hong Kong and Japan for the Australia-West Pacific Line. The vessels will normally call at Rabaul, Lae and Madang in New Guinea and on the southbound voyage calls will be made at Honiara and Vanikoro (British Solomon Islands Protectorate), at approximately two-monthly intervals.

"MILOS" is of 6,635 tons deadweight and has a bale capacity of 374,400 cu. ft., which includes 28,760 cu. ft., of refrigerated space in three compartments. There are five cargo hatches, and cargo gear includes one 35-ton, four 10-ton and twelve 5-ton derricks, all electrically operated. All cargo spaces are mechanically ventilated.

Accommodation is provided for twelve passengers.

ULTRASONIC EXPERIMENT.

An experiment has been conducted aboard the P. & O. cargo liner "SOUDAN" with the object of preventing by ultrasonic vibration, the fouling of the hull by barnacles. On the return of the "SOUDAN" from her first voyage to the Far East with the new equipment, she was docked and her hull found clean. At the completion of her second round trip she was again dry-docked and her hull found "promisingly clean".

The vibrations are like sound waves but their frequency is too high to be heard by human beings. The vibrations are imparted to the ship's hull by means of a transducer of the magneto strictive type, of a size a little bigger than a matchbox. The generator is usually situated in the engine-room and the transducer fixed to a small piece of plate which is welded to the side of the ship inboard.

Experiments have shown that it needs no more than a "slight fouling" to increase the resistance of a ship's hull by 30%.

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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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SOVIET ICE-BREAKER "LENA".

On her return from the Soviet Antarctic at Mernij (pronounced 'Merny') the Soviet Ice-breaker "LENA" visited Port Adelaide on 28th March - 12th April for the purpose of loading barley for Continental ports. On 21st April her sister vessel "OB", which had also been employed in the Antarctic, arrived at Port Adelaide to engage in a similar loading.

"LENA" is a stoutly-built, impressive-looking diesel electric vessel of 7,500 tons gross built at Flushing in 1954 to Soviet order. She has a Maierform bow and a cruiser stern. She carries two very heavy steel masts and has a massive bridge superstructure. The funnel is painted black and has a broad blue band, on which there is affixed in metal, the hammer-and-sickle emblem.

The vessel is fitted with two Samson posts immediately forward of the bridge superstructure and two Samson posts aft. She is extremely well equipped with lifting appliances, including two 50ton jumbos. A stoutly-built 33-ton steel diesel craft used for ice-breaking purposes and for towing is carried.

"LENA" has a large fuel capacity (2,000 tons) and 700 tons of diesel oil remained in her tanks on her arrival. Her speed is $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots. Her navigational equipment is very modern and she is fitted with "Neptun" radar.

"LENA" carried a crew of 65 and 81 passengers, consisting mostly of members of the Construction Unit which had been engaged in constructing the Soviet Antarctic base.

In addition to the Master (Captain Vetrov), the ship carried a Second Captain (described as "Double Captain") who takes over the navigation of the vessel as soon as ice is encountered. Only one scientist (Professor Vialov, a top-ranking geologist) was on board.

The crew were for the most part very young in their physique slightly less robust than the average British seaman. About 90 per cent bore tattoo marks, but in most cases the tattooing had been rather crudely executed and the colour was poor. The crew were to a man European in their origins, no Asiatic or semi-Asiatic influences being noticeable in any one case. They looked healthy and seemed contented.

The ship carried six stewardesses. They were rather drably dressed. No facial make-up of any sort was observed and the impression was formed that the six stewardesses had been selected purely on the merits of their professional ability.

Shane!!!

It would be difficult to assess the state of discipline in the ship, but she certainly presented a very clean appearance.

The attitude of the ship's officers was friendly, but any anxiety on their part to please was not overdone. Very few of the ship's staff had any real command of English.

As might be expected, "LENA"'s visit to Port Adelaide aroused considerable public interest, but New Australians were very much in evidence among the sight-seers who visited the ship. No untoward incidents occurred during "LENA"'s visit.

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S E C R E T

THE SOVIET ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION.

The main base for the Soviet Antarctic Expedition is at Mernij on the land mass (Queen Mary Land) and situated approximately one mile to the south of Haswell Island. In their choice of Mernij for a base, the Russians were guided by information contained in Sir Douglas Mawson's book, "The Home of the Blizzard", giving an account of his expedition to the Antarctic in the course of which, in 1912, he discovered Haswell Island and Queen Mary Land.

The Russians chose Mernij for their main base in view of rock faces being in evidence there; also rubble from moraine.

At Mernij there have been installed a power station (having a capacity of 600 kilowatts), living hutments (built of wooden prefabricated sections), a mess, and storehouses. A loading ramp on the moraine rubble has been prepared for the unloading of further stores.

An airfield has been constructed at a distance of one mile from Mernij base and here a hangar (or hangars) has been erected. Already bulldozers have prepared a good road from the base to the airfield.

The number of aircraft which have been landed is not known, but it is believed that "LENA", one of the two ships employed, unloaded at Mernij two helicopters, eight large tractors, and a number of bulldozers and weasels.

"LENA" carried no scientific equipment for the expedition, all such equipment being landed from "OB" (the other vessel employed).

The equipment landed by "OB" included meteorological equipment, sonic depth finders, equipment for measuring sea temperatures, and, in particular, equipment for

sampling the core of seabeds - a field of research in which so far Swedish scientists have been paramount. Samples of fossils, strata layers, etc., to a depth as great as 100 feet are being obtained from long tubes.

The Soviet Antarctic expedition is now busily engaged in establishing an advanced base at what is called the "South Pole of Inaccessibility", situated about 700 miles south of Mernij and within 400 miles of the South Pole itself. This is described as being on the top of an ice dome up to 12,000 feet above sea level. Here it is expected that there will be temperatures as low as minus 80 degrees Centigrade. (Already temperatures of as low as minus 50 degrees Centigrade have been experienced by the expedition at an intermediate base to which equipment was taken by air from Mernij).

Another party will establish itself at the Secondary South Magnetic Pole.

Russian aircraft operating from the airfield close to Mernij have already carried out air reconnaissances extending to the South Pole itself. These reconnaissances have shown that the South Pole would be capable of access by land transport (tractors, etc.), as a "track" has been mapped out in which no crevasses appear as an obstacle to land transport. There is now every expectation that far greater use of land transport than that which had been anticipated will be possible.

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THE STATE OF VIETNAM.

Although the Vietnam Government still has many obstacles to overcome, its strength and authority have greatly improved, even if much remains to be done in strengthening the administration at all levels, in particular the village level.

The Government is making a major effort to combat Communist subversive activities. More publicity is now being given to the arrest of Communist cadres, which is in itself evidence of greater confidence. Six months ago the Government was inclined to play down the presence of Vietminh since it was thought that to publicise it would have been a confession of weakness.

Local Diplomatic Missions (excluding the French) are cautiously optimistic, but foreign business interests are, on the whole, less confident and are apprehensive of trouble breaking out in July.

The strength of Vietminh influence in the South is not known. It is, however, accepted that they have joined forces with the Hoa Hao, and that they are active in the Camau Peninsula and the plateau regions. Provided Diem lives and the Army remains loyal it is difficult to see how the Vietminh will survive in this area.

The Army.

There are at present four light divisions and a number of territorial regiments (approximate strength 40,000) in the south and south-west.

The American training programme is making steady progress. The success of this training is illustrated by the ability of the Government to concentrate and support a large body of troops in the south and south-west. It could not have done this eight months ago.

The United States intends to give financial support to village "auto defence corps". The Vietnamese have already established about a hundred of these units in the villages and several training schools have been set up in the provinces.

Created in April, 1955, the Garde Civile is being slowly built up to its planned strength of about 40,000 men, but it will be a long time yet before the Garde Civile can relieve the Army of its heavy internal security role.

The United States is active in training civil servants. Some results from these programmes should soon be seen. The Government has also established a large school for public health experts who will ultimately work in the provinces. Experts trained abroad are now returning in small numbers and will fill some of the gaps. The establishment of an efficient administration is a long-term job, but a start has been made.

The Sects.

The Binh Xuyen are a spent force. There is dissension between the Cao Dai "Pope" and the Commander-in-Chief of the Cao Dai forces. The latter is for varying reasons (some financial) loyal to the Government. Trouble between the Government and the Cao Dai is not expected. The Hoa Hao forces, as such, are not large, and do not represent a threat to the Government. Under Vietminh direction and with Vietminh support the Hoa Hao could probably control large areas in the south-west. But they still would not be a threat to the Government.

Economic.

Foreign aid is both effective and appreciated. Aid from more countries, particularly from Asian Countries, would do a great deal of good in making the Vietnamese feel that they had Asian support. The Philippines' activities in "Operation Brotherhood" are an excellent example.

Vietnam's economic stability is very largely dependent upon American aid. If Vietnam were deprived of this, and

no other support was forthcoming, it would virtually face economic collapse. It cannot even approach economic self-sufficiency in the foreseeable future. Domestic production of capital goods and consumer goods is practically nil. Exports are confined chiefly to rice, fruit and rubber, and of these, rubber, the most valuable, is suffering from the withdrawal of experienced French planters.

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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