

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. Ships ANZAC and TOBRUK - William Adams Memorial Ceremony.

On 13th - 18th April, H.M.A. Ships ANZAC and TOBRUK paid a visit to Yokosuka.

On 14th April, the annual memorial ceremony in honour of William Adams was attended. The ceremony was held at a Shrine on Tsukayama Hill, where William Adams is buried, and a guard was mounted by TOBRUK.

William Adams, an English trader working with the Dutch, was shipwrecked in Japan in 1602. He taught the Japanese the elements of shipbuilding, made Japanese trade treaties with Holland and England, and is generally recognised as the prime mover in the successful development of Japanese maritime power.

Several thousand Japanese attended the ceremony, which was preceded by an exhibition of Japanese dancing and a fireworks display.

A report of the ceremony which appeared in the London 'Times' contained the following :-

"A feature of yesterday's ceremony was the Guard of Honour of sailors from H.M.A.S. TOBRUK, which is now on a visit to Japan, who remained impassively to attention in a strong gale of dust and wind."

\* \* \* \* \*

S E C R E T

U.S. Hydrophonic Farm, Tokyo.

During TOBRUK's stay at Tokyo several of her officers visited the Hydrophonic Farm run by the United States Army for the supply of fresh fruit and vegetables to the U.S. Forces in Japan, Korea and Okinawa.

Last year 14 $\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds weight of vegetables were produced. Fifty-six acres are farmed by the hydrophonic method, five acres being under glass. The basic principle of this type of farming is the growing of plants in a solution of water and those chemicals necessary to produce the growth of the plant concerned. Pebbles are used to hold the plants in place.

Anzac Day Ceremony, Hagoyama Cemetery, Yokohama.

During the stay of TOBRUK at Tokyo, a representative body from the ship's company attended the Anzac Day ceremony at the Australian Memorial in Hagoyama Cemetery, where a combined Guard of Honour, consisting of 30 ratings from TOBRUK and 30 Army other ranks commanded by the Squadron Gunnery officer was mounted

The cemetery, situated in a secluded and picturesque valley near Yokohama, is a most appropriate site for a war cemetery. The surrounding grounds are kept in perfect order.

\* \* \* \* \*

H.M.A.S. ANZAC - Visit to Nagoya.

H.M.A.S. ANZAC visited Nagoya on 28th-30th April.

At 1130 28th April a Japanese Minesweeping Flotilla consisting of nine ex-U.S.Y.M.S. berthed in Nagoya Harbour. A large number of ratings and some officers from this flotilla were shown around the upper deck of ANZAC.

ANZAC, in company with the Japanese minesweepers, dressed overall on 29th April in honour of the birthday of Emperor Hirohito.

\* \* \* \* \*

H.M.A.S. TOBRUK'S Visit to Hiroshima.

Captain (D) has given the following description of TOBRUK's visit to Hiroshima :-

"The Naval Officer-in-Charge, Kure, proved a very able guide on an interesting tour round Hiroshima on Wednesday, 2nd May. After a pleasant drive round a good coast road, we reached the city, now in the final stages of complete reconstruction. The impressive museum shows exhibits of the effects of the first atom bomb, in the best organised and presented display I have ever seen in any museum anywhere. Needless to say, some of the exhibits are rather gory. The reconstruction that has taken place in the city is quite remarkable, and it has been almost completely rebuilt in 11 years. An example of this was the new Hiroshima Hotel, better than any we have in Australia, and with the addition of far better service. Regardless of this reconstruction, the roads in Japan are, nevertheless, almost all atrocious, and Hiroshima is no exception. It is amazing that in a country with such a vast cheap labour force, they have allowed their major form of transportation on land to become so slow and inefficient."

\* \* \* \* \*

H.M.A.S. FREMANTLE in the Monte Bellos.

Now that "Operation Mosaic" has been successfully completed, with the explosion of a second atomic device, the following incident, in which H.M.A.S. FREMANTLE was involved, serves to remind us that even busy scientists have a sense of humour.

During H.M.A.S. FREMANTLE's visit to Monte Bello in April, the 1948 Olympic Games flame torch disappeared from the trophy cabinet on board H.M.S. NARVIK.

Late in April FREMANTLE's officers were hosts to all Officers of the ships in company. During the evening the

trophy was displayed, lashed to a bulkhead. A high-tension wire connected to a fuse box with a suitable notice warning guests of the subsequent consequences of touching a circuit with 220 volts passing through it, and a hand grenade, live in appearance, wired to the pin and the trophy, should have been sufficient deterrent. However, no thought had been given to the activities of the Scientific guests who apparently had no knowledge of simple electronics, high explosives or of the word "Caution". The trophy was found to be not as difficult a problem to remove as was anticipated, and once more reposes in NARVIK's trophy cabinet.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### H.M.A.S. ARUNTA - Visit to Hollandia and Biak.

On 21st March H.M.A.S. ARUNTA, with S.O.(I), N.E.A. embarked, berthed at Hollandia, the capital of Dutch New Guinea.

Social and sporting fixtures had been arranged and in the few days of their stay the Ship's Company were able to enjoy a great deal of hospitality and to see something of the conditions in a country of which so little is known to Australians.

After a short stay ARUNTA departed for Biak in the Schouten Islands, where the Dutch have a naval base. ARUNTA anchored in Sorido Lagoon.

Throughout the visit the Dutch displayed interest in Australia and her political feelings as regards them, and the friendly visit of the ARUNTA has helped to cement the trust between the two nations. (Intelligence obtained by S.O.(I), N.E.A. is contained in Section IV of this issue of A.S.I.S.)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### H.M.A.S. EMU.

H.M.A.S. EMU (Lieutenant-Commander J.E.A. Toulouse, R.A.N.V.R. in command) sailed from Darwin on the 30th April for Sydney,



calling at Cairns en route, for her annual refit which is expected to take 3 months. During the refit H.M.A.S. EMU will be fitted with echo-sounder and her steering arrangements will be modernised.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### H.M.A.S. SPRIGHTLY.

After having experienced a spell of tropical conditions in northern waters from the middle of February until her arrival in Sydney early in April, H.M.A.S. SPRIGHTLY departed Sydney for Melbourne on 11th of that month - her sailing being delayed by a defect in the port propulsion motor.

Watchkeepers on board found the sudden transition from tropic nights to Victorian autumn quite a rude shock to the system. The Canteen experienced an upsurge in the demand for soups and various brands of body-builders.

On 16th April SPRIGHTLY sailed for Sydney with H.M.A.S. COLIC in tow, and after a pleasantly fine voyage, arrived there on the 25th. Memories of Victoria's bleak weather were soon erased when SPRIGHTLY sailed from Sydney for Manus, via Brisbane on the 28th April.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Clearance Diving.

During March H.M.A.S. WATSON's Clearance Diving Team which had been accommodated in G.P.V. 962, carried out, in conjunction with H.M.A.S. WARRAMUNGA, an interesting beach landing exercise in Jervis Bay.

WARRAMUNGA requested the services of a Clearance Diver to do a preliminary survey of the beach. In addition to providing her with the advance surveying party, the diving team also provided, unknown at the time to WARRAMUNGA, some stiff opposition from the beach.

The following is an extract from the report by the Clearance Diving Officer, WATSON :-

"An area of the beach was marked by flags to indicate where the landing was restricted to and a trench 3 feet wide and 6 feet deep was dug the entire length of the beach and then covered with foliage and sand to provide camouflage. To the seaward of this a barrier some 15 feet high and 300 yards long was erected with whatever trees could be chopped down from the adjoining bush. The whole beach was then 'mined' as it would be in actual practice, except that for this ~~exercise~~ Electric Fuzes Mark IV No.14 were used; 40 of these were placed irregularly over the beach and covered with sand. Firing would be electrically from a central firing point where it could be completely controlled if an 'enemy' should venture too near one of the "mines". Four Pill Boxes were erected in camouflaged positions where a defence would be enacted by the firing of Verey lights, rockets and flares. The stage was now set for the exercise which was due to commence 0600 next morning. To safeguard against any civilian intruders, two sentries were left overnight to watch over our interests. Judging by their bites the next morning, I would quite believe their story of mosquitoes queuing up outside a small hole in the tent in an endeavour to get in for their blood.

There was an hour to wait for WARRAMUNGA to arrive, so the team spent a very profitable time spearfishing. One stingray measured 5'10" across the tips and provided steaks for two meals for the twelve members of the Team. Leather jackets, blackfish and bream were in bountiful supply.

0500 Tuesday 6th saw us setting up our position as the enemy on the beach and at 0600 WARRAMUNGA commenced her landing. A party of Clearance Divers had been lent to WARRAMUNGA to clear a safe path through the beach "minefield". They had no idea where the mines were as they were left behind in the G.P.V. at the original "setting of the stage". "

The landing party suffered "severe" casualties as they

crawled up the beach in a bunch through the one "safe path" that had been cleared.

Both the beach landing party and the "frogmen" learned valuable lessons from the exercise.

On 14th March, after having undertaken a thorough inspection of the underwater sections of Matilda Light and the A/S Target, the Clearance Divers were exercised in 82 feet of water. The Clearance Diving Officer, WATSON, describes this as follows :-

"I chose an area directly under Point Perpendicular Light where one felt you could put a head rope on the towering cliffs about you. This dive proved to be one of the most awe-inspiring spectacles ever observed by the C.D's. The bottom was a crystal-clear sand and shell with a visibility of a good 60 feet. At this distance each looked like a Lilliputian who had intruded into a strange world of inquisitive stingrays "flying" ever so gracefully around you. We were able to walk right up to the cliff edge and venture into caves which were breathtakingly magnificent in their splendour of colour and underwater stalactites and stalagmites. Schools of black-fish and the odd 12-foot shark would investigate these new "denizens" of the deep and then proceed on their leisurely way. One can't but help think how very easy and simple the Clearance Divers 'lot' would be in war if an enemy decided to carry out a mining campaign in Jervis Bay. This one factor may prove of some strategic value for future reference."

Location by H.M.A.S. QUADRANT of a Wreck in Darwin Harbour.

On 19th May H.M.A.S. QUADRANT located, by Asdic Type 162, in Darwin Harbour in position 146 degrees ~~Every~~ Point 15½ cables in 14 fathoms a wreck which is possibly that of the U.S. destroyer PEARY which was sunk, with the loss of 84 men, in Darwin Harbour during an air attack carried out by the Japanese on 19th February, 1942.

A report that there was bullion on board PEARY at the time

she was sunk is not supported by the records of the United States Department of the Navy.

Provided that the wreck does not constitute a danger to navigation, the United States Navy wishes it to remain undisturbed.

\* \* \* \* \*

(b) ROYAL NAVY.

WHITBY Class A/S Frigate.

H.M.S. TORQUAY, the first ship of the Whitby Class of A/S frigates to be completed, was provisionally accepted at Belfast on 8th May.

An all-welded ship, H.M.S. TORQUAY has twin screws and twin rudders and is powered by geared turbines. The frigate is armed with a twin 4.5" gun mounting and a twin-barrelled 40 m.m. A.A. gun. The A/S armament consists of two three-barrelled mortars which can be trained over a wider area than any previous types of A/S mortars. Two twin and eight single torpedo tubes are installed.

The dimensions of the ship are :-

Extreme length, 370 feet;  
Length B.P. 360;  
Beam 41 feet.

The peace-time complement is 9 officers and 180 men.

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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.Movement of Soviet Naval Vessels from Baltic to Northern  
Fleet Area.

In June a SVERDLOV-class cruiser, three or four RIGA-class destroyer-escorts, four W-class submarines and two 3,000-ton auxiliaries left the Baltic in three separate groups and proceeded north, presumably for the Northern Fleet area.

It is interesting to recall that at about this time last year a group of Soviet Naval vessels including two SVERDLOV's, some destroyer-escorts and submarines proceeded from the Baltic to the Northern Fleet area and subsequently made the passage of the Northern Sea Route to join the Soviet Pacific Fleet.

Contact on Possible Soviet Submarine during Exercise "MONSOON".

During exercise "MONSOON", held in the South China Sea in March/April, a number of unidentified submarine contacts were made, but one made by H.M. Submarine TELEMACHUS is of particular interest.

Firm Asdic contact by both HE and echo was obtained by TELEMACHUS in position 07° 09'N, 107° 02'E, (approximately 240 miles due South of Saigon) at 1135Z on 1st April. Contact was held and tracked for some six hours. During this time the submarine was tracked on various courses and at speeds which were at times high. On two occasions turbine noises, similar to those made when an H.T.P. turbine is started, were heard on the hydrophone. A rev.-count indicated 300-350 revolutions per minute.

The performance indicated by the plot is compatible with

that of the Soviet 'W' Class, excepting that until now there has been no evidence that any Soviet submarine has been fitted with an H.T.P. turbine boost.

### Destroyers for Egypt.

Two ex-Soviet SKORY-class destroyers were handed over to Egypt during June. For the delivery voyage they flew Polish ensigns, although Poland is not known to have had any SKORY-class ship.

\* \* \* \* \*

### J A P A N,

### Salvaged Destroyer to be Re-Commissioned.

The destroyer NASHI which was bombed and sunk in the Inland Sea during the war has been salvaged and completely overhauled. She is to be re-named WAKABE and commissioned as a Training Ship in the Maritime Self-Defence Force.

### Evacuation of U.S. Troops.

It has been stated in the Japanese List that 7,000 U.S. servicemen (3,000 Marines and 4,000 Air Force personnel) would be withdrawn from Japan by the end of 1956. As at the end of 1955 U.S. troops in Japan comprised :-

Army, 42,000; Navy, 6,500; and Air Force, 50,000.

### Weapons Production.

Japan is expected to start the manufacture, with U.S. financial assistance, of 14 different defence weapons of her own design. These weapons include 300-ton submarines, with an underwater speed of approximately  $15\frac{1}{2}$  knots, a 35-ton diesel tank with an air-cooled system, 105 m.m. recoil-less guns, torpedoes, airborne radar and pressure-gas turbines.

Equipment from the United Kingdom.

The Japanese firm of Nozaki, which recently purchased from the U.K. a Saunders-Roe M.T.B., has approached the British Embassy in Tokyo regarding the possibility of obtaining from Britain a diesel engine and schnorkel for a projected 1,000-ton submarine to be built for the Maritime Self-Defence Force.

The M.S.D.F. was considering the installation of a "M.A.N."-type German diesel, but Nozaki considers them to be out-of-date. Japanese-made schnorkel equipment has not proved satisfactory because of exhaust inefficiency.

The M.S.D.F. is also reported to have purchased a limited quantity of Asdic and Squid equipment from the U.K. for use in Japan's new naval construction.

\* \* \* \* \*

COMMUNIST CHINA.Destroyer-Escort Constructed at Shanghai.

It has been confirmed that the hull launched at Mollers Yard, Shanghai, in April is that of a Soviet RIGA-class destroyer-escort.

The vessel was fitted out to the extent of her guns, director and radar/radio arrays, etc., before launching, so it should not be long before she is operational. A second vessel, probably of the same class, is also building at this yard and it is thought that its construction is about three months behind the one launched.

The construction of a vessel of this type in less than 12 months and its successful launching in an advanced state of fitting-out is considered a pronounced warship-building development for Communist China, and obviously pre-fabrication and Russian assistance have played their part.

Visit of Soviet Warships.

In response to an invitation from the Chinese Peoples Republic, three warships from the Soviet Pacific Fleet arrived in Shanghai on 20th June for a five-day visit.

The ships comprised the SVERDLOV-class cruiser DMITRI POZHARSKY and the two SKORY-class destroyers VDUMCHIVY and VRUZUMITELNY.

DMITRI POZHARSKY wore the flag of the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Pacific Fleet, Vice-Admiral V. A. Chokurov.

\* \* \* \* \*

I N D O - C H I N A .Strength of French Forces.

The strengths of French Forces in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as at the end of May were as follows :-

Vietnam	...	Army	...	1,808		
		Navy	...	2,638		
		Air	...	2,159		
Laos	...	Army	...	690	(Military Mission)	
Cambodia	...	Army	...	426	"	"
				<u>7,721</u>		

\* \* \* \* \*

T H A I L A N D .Development of Naval and Air Bases under U.S. Aid.

It is proposed that the R.T.N. base at Sattahib be



developed at a cost of between 5 and 6 million dollars under the U.S. Aid programme.

The project will entail the dredging of 2 million cubic metres of material which will be poured behind a coffer dam. Concrete jetties are to be built and the depth of the anchorage is to be maintained at a minimum of 22 feet.

Airfields are also scheduled for development and the first four will be Ta Khli, Koke Thiem, Korat and Phitsanulok.

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### B U R M A.

#### New Ships for Navy.

The first of five M.T.B's/M.G.B's which are being built by Saunders Roe Limited for the Burma Navy, and 100 tons of spare parts, are expected to arrive in Rangoon on 3rd July in S.S. "BENALBANACH".

It is expected that the remaining four will be delivered as follows :-

September / October	-	2
November / December	-	2

These ships are fitted with two 2,500 h.p. high-speed marine Napier Deltic engines, and have a special aluminium hull for service in the Tropics.

#### Purchase of Helicopters.

The Burma Air Force has decided to purchase six helicopters (Kawasaki-Bell helicopters, Model 47G) from Japan. Delivery is expected by ship in June/July.

Four officers and four other ranks recently returned from the Royal Thai Air Force helicopter courses of three

months duration. An additional four officers and four other ranks are at present under training in Thailand.

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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 Merchant Shipbuilding Plans.

In the new Soviet Five-Year Plan (1956-1960) it was announced that the production of ocean-going dry-freight vessels and tankers is to be increased by over 30% and that there will be greater emphasis on speed and freight-carrying capacity. This means more cargo vessels of 5,000-10,000 d.w.t. capacity and the building of tankers with a 20,000-25,000 deadweight tonnage.

There should be little difficulty in achieving the planned increase with existing facilities and without significant reduction in naval ship-building, because in 1955 only one cargo vessel and 10 tankers totalling 105,000 d.w.t. were completed, so, to fulfil the plan, yearly production of these types would need to increase only by some 30,000 to 35,000 d.w.t. by 1960. This raises the question of what will be done with the Soviet's large naval shipbuilding capacity now that the cruiser-building programme appears to be nearing completion. It seems possible that a new programme to build guided-missile ships and atomic-powered naval vessels may be developed. Also, some of this capacity might be used to build merchant vessels for sale abroad, particularly to Middle East and Asian countries.

It is interesting to compare the Soviet planned completion of 126,000 d.w.t. (equivalent to about 90,000 gross registered tons) with production in United Kingdom and West-German yards. In 1955 tankers and freighters totalling 1,155,000 g.r.t. were launched from United Kingdom yards and about 900,000 g.r.t. from West German yards.

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Release of Some Official Statistics.

According to press reports from Moscow, the Soviet has recently released some official statistics in a 262-page volume called "The National Economy of the U.S.S.R.". The figures quoted include an official estimate of the population of the Soviet Union, which is 200,200,000 or about 20 millions less than recent Western estimates.

The birth-rate for 1940 is given as 31.7 per 1,000, for 1953 as 24.9 and for last year 25.6. The population of Moscow is 4,839,000; Greater Leningrad is the second largest city with a population of 3,176,000.

The report states that by 1960 heavy industry will have expanded by 66 times over the 1928 figure and light industry by 14 times.

The number of specialists with higher or secondary education employed by the State rose from 2,400,000 in 1941 to 5,500,000 in 1955.

Last year there were 85,700 collective farms and 5,134 Government-run State farms in the Soviet Union.

\* \* \* \* \*

K O R E A .Neutral Nations Inspection Teams.

The United Nations Command in Korea has deported to the de-militarised zone the Czech and Polish members of the Neutral Nations Inspection Teams in South Korea because of their continued frustration of the work of the Armistice Commission.

These members have consistently refused to co-operate with the other members of the Teams (the Swiss and the Swedes)

and in doing so have permitted the North Koreans to re-inforce their Air Forces and import strategic material through ports that they refused to inspect. At the same time they are accused of engaging in espionage in the South and of continued obstructionist tactics.

\* \* \* \* \*

### J A P A N .

#### Shipbuilding.

A visit to the Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Works at Nagasaki reveals that the Works are fully occupied with both Commercial and Naval construction with about one million dead-weight tons of ships on their books. A big percentage of this tonnage are tankers. Use is made of the firm's test tank for research into naval construction and it is currently engaged in the construction of seven 400-ton Submarine Chasers for the M.S.D.F., one of which will be a triple-screw twin-rudder ship powered by two diesels with a gas turbine on the main shaft. It is believed that the other six will not be fitted with the gas turbine.

The test tank in use at the Works is approximately 850 feet in length and the testing trolley can reach a speed of 40 feet per second (17.7 knots). Models for testing in the tank are all made to a length of 7 metres (23 feet), irrespective of the actual dimensions of the final hull.

It is probable that these Works will be given an order for two further DD's similar to the 1,070-ton HIRUKAZE and both may be fitted with a pentad torpedo mounting.

#### Fisheries Agreement with the U.S.S.R.

In the negotiations which followed the restrictions imposed by the Soviet on the activities of Japanese fishermen in the North-West Pacific, the Japanese were able to obtain Soviet.

approval for a catch this season limited to less than half of the catch of last season.

In return for this the Japanese were obliged to negotiate with the Soviet a ten-year treaty covering the entire North-West Pacific, on the lines of the U.S./Canada/Japan Agreement wherein the signatories set the limits of the annual catch each year, with the owners of the spawning rivers having the last word on conservation. However, the treaty can only come into force concurrently with a Peace Treaty between the two countries or on the day the two Governments resume diplomatic relations.

It is evident that the Soviet has achieved one more bargaining point in her Peace Treaty negotiations for retention of South Sakhalin, the Kuriles and the Shikotan and Habomai Islands. Japan cannot afford to do less than agree to the resumption of diplomatic relations before next fishing season.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### COMMUNIST CHINA.

##### Shipbuilding at Dairen.

On 22nd May the China News Service reported that the Dairen Shipyards Company in Dairen will start building passenger and cargo vessels of 4,500 tons or above. This statement was made by Li Shui, Officer-in-Charge of the Shipyards Office, to a group of overseas Chinese from Vietnam and Indonesia who were on a visit to China.

##### Regular Shipping Service Between Dairen and Shanghai.

A news report from Peking states that the Ministry of Communications has decided to open a regular passenger service between Shanghai and Dairen calling at Tsingtao, as from 1st June.

Two vessels, the "MIN CHU No.9" and the "CHUNG HSING No.9", will operate the service and, between them, will make six return trips a month.

#### Dock Construction at Back Reach, Canton.

It is reported that excavations for the construction of a dry dock are being carried out in position  $23^{\circ}4.6' N.$ ,  $113^{\circ}14.85' E.$ , at Back Reach, Canton.

Approximately 1,000 labourers are said to be working by day, and at night about 200 work under floodlights.

A stone embankment has been built extending approximately 200 yards up-river. Two gaps, each of 50 feet, have been left in the embankment, presumably for dock gates.

#### Development of Fort Bayard (Tsamkong).

It has been apparent for some time that the Chinese Communists are keen to open up a deep-water port south of the Pearl River. Fort Bayard (Tsamkong), north of Hainan Island, now has a railway completed to the hinterland and dredging and harbour development is in progress.

A recent Chinese press report stated that the port is now partially open to shipping and it is probable that ocean-going vessels will soon be using the port.

#### Aircraft Manufacture in Communist China.

An Indian Professor of Science who recently returned from Communist China stated that she will soon be manufacturing aircraft of her own design.

While in China he toured several aeronautical colleges and at one newly-built institute saw four wind tunnels for testing aircraft. This same institute had some 2,000 students in training as aeronautical engineers and an annual intake of new students of 900.

The Chinese told him that they aimed to train 6,000 aeronautical engineers for their aircraft industry, which is being developed under the first Five-Year Plan.

Since September 1954, when China announced the first flights of three aircraft of Chinese manufacture, there have been a good many indications that she intends to develop an aircraft industry, no doubt with the aid of Soviet specialists. To build aircraft of her own design other than elementary types seems very ambitious for China for some time to come. Probably what will happen is that Soviet aircraft, with which the Chinese Communist Air Force is almost completely equipped, will be built in China under licence.

There is a large Institute of Aviation at Peking and it possibly has offshoots in other parts of the country.

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#### NORTH VIETNAM.

##### Chinese Aid.

Two new 300-ton motor vessels named "PEACE" and "CHINA" respectively arrived at Haiphong on 21st June as gifts from the Chinese Communists.

It would appear that China's aid in the Haiphong area is taking the form of harbour craft and the development of port facilities. It has already been reported that Chinese play a major part in the handling of Port affairs.

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#### I N D O N E S I A .

##### West Irian Province.

Four Ministers left Djakarta by air for Macassar on 30th May en route for Tidore, in the Halmaheras. Vice-Premier



Roem said he was visiting a part of the Moluccas which later will be included in the West Irian Province (which would embrace Dutch New Guinea).

At one time Dutch New Guinea came under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Tidore. In 1714 the Dutch claimed it as part of a cession from the Sultan, and England officially recognised the Dutch claims in 1824.

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### B U R M A.

#### New Prime Minister.

U Ba Swe, who has succeeded U Nu as Prime Minister, is a Socialist, but any suggestion that he is pro-Communist appears to be unfounded. He is an able Party boss, a good organiser and an impressive type. In addition to the Prime Ministership, he will continue to hold the Defence portfolio.

There is increasing support for the view that U Nu resigned as a result of his failure on the neutralist policy. He is reported to have been extremely disillusioned by the subversive activities of the Soviet and Chinese Embassies in his country. At the recent elections his opponents were rendered lavish financial help by a foreign Embassy.

#### Services Attache to Australia.

It is reported that Lieutenant-Commander Tin Thane Lu is to be appointed Services Attache in Australia. He is expected to take up duty before September.

#### Overseas Visit of Chief of Staff of Defence Services.

The Chief of Staff, Defence Services, General Ne Win, who left Rangoon on 16th May on a visit to Japan, United States, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia and Israel, is due back in Rangoon at the end of July.

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P A K I S T A N .Soviet Economic Offensive.

The Soviet and Communist Chinese economic offensives which have been evident in the Middle East and South East Asia are now appearing in Pakistan, from where it has been reported that Pakistan has accepted a Soviet gift of 20,000 tons of rice and wheat for famine areas.

In addition a Soviet trade delegation led by a Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade has visited Karachi, where offers have been made of agricultural and other machinery, tractors, cars, electric generators and complete factories, supplied either under normal trade arrangements or as economic assistance. A late report indicates that agreement has been reached towards this end.

These developments follow general offers of trade and economic assistance made by Bulganin and Mikoyan. Bulganin said the U.S.S.R. was prepared to share with Pakistan her knowledge of the peaceful applications of atomic energy.

The U.S.S.R. has recently supplied some equipment to Pakistan under United Nations auspices, but otherwise there has been very little trade since 1952.

China, which has made substantial but sporadic purchases of Pakistani cotton over the last few years, recently concluded a new agreement to buy more cotton and jute in exchange for coal.

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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 .S I G H T I N G   A N D   D E S T R U C T I O N   O F   M I N E   O F F   N E W   S O U T H   W A L E S   C O A S T

On 11th June the collier "STEPHEN BROWN", en route from Sydney to Newcastle, sighted a floating mine east from Barrenjoey Point and requested the vessel "EASTERN", which was in the area, and bound for Sydney to radio a warning to the Deputy Director of Navigation. This was done and two Firefly aircraft from H.M.A.S. ALBATROSS and a Neptune bomber from the R.A.A.F. Station at Richmond proceeded to the area. H.M.A.S. WALRUS, which had prepared for sea and was under weigh within half an hour, arrived in the area and sighted the mine which had been found by the Fireflies. After identification, the mine was sunk by rifle fire.

\* \* \* \* \*

P O R T   R E G U L A T I O N S   -   B O T A N Y   B A Y .

With the growth of the bulk oil trade at Botany Bay, special regulations have been issued by the N.S.W. Maritime Services Board to control the operations of oil tankers and the movement of all vessels in the section of that port used for tanker traffic. Vessels are prohibited from anchoring in the entrance channel or turning basin of the refinery jetty within 300 ft. of that jetty or 350 ft. of any tanker mooring buoy or in certain other defined areas in Botany Bay.

Special requirements are prescribed in regard to oil tankers berthed or moored in the port, including the keeping of main engines in readiness for immediate use and ensuring the availability of personnel, communication services and other special equipment.

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DEVELOPMENT OF SYDNEY HARBOUR.

The Maritime Services Board of New South Wales has completed the first stage of a major plan to extend deep-sea shipping facilities in Sydney Harbour.

The plan (which is long-range) provides for the demolition of Glebe Island Bridge, deepening of Blackwattle and Rozelle Bays, and removal of large timber yards from these bays to Homebush Bay.

Oil storages on the harbour foreshores will also be removed to Homebush Bay.

The Board has reclaimed 94 acres of land at Homebush Bay as new sites for the timber yards and other harbour industries.

It will ultimately reclaim about 400 acres of what is now swampland.

\* \* \* \* \*

NORTHERN TERRITORY.Mineral Sands, Bathurst Island.

Dowsett Engineering (Australia) Limited, a subsidiary of Dowsett Holdings, London, have taken out a lease on Bathurst Island for the purpose of obtaining mineral sands. Valuable deposits of the titanium-bearing ores, rutile and ilmenite have been discovered on the island.

The Company will send a new type of suction dredge (shortly to be constructed in England) to Bathurst Island. The dredge will have a displacement of about 500 tons.

Japanese Pearling Fleet.

The Japanese pearling fleet arrived at Boucaut Bay on 6th June.

A move prompted by Darwin commercial interests, is on foot to obtain permission for the shell catch of the Japanese pearling fleet to be marketed through Darwin and thus avoid a long delay. It is understood that the Darwin Master Pearlery Association favour the idea, but the attitude of the Japanese towards the proposal is not yet known.

#### Main Wharf, Darwin.

On 7th April H.M.A.S ARUNTA was the first ship to berth at the new main wharf at Darwin. Although fuel and power lines are not yet completed, permission was granted for H.M.A.S. ARUNTA to berth at the wharf in order to solve the boat problem for libertymen. Since this date H.M.A.S. QUADRANT, Northern Waters Patrol vessel, uses the berth regularly.

Information has been received from sources which are usually reliable that the new main wharf, which is expected to be completed by September will be the centre of possible arguments between N.W.U. and the N.T.A. over the following points :-

(a) The existing practice is for the motor truck owners to transport cargoes from the ships to the wharf shed situated about 1 mile from the wharves. The new practice will be to unload the ships direct into the new wharf shed situated on the wharf and then load into rail trucks for transshipment inland. This new procedure will result in the truck owners losing a large amount of business.

(b) The N.T.A. will insist on the gangs on the wharf working during the whole period of their shift, whereas at present, although the whole gang is paid for a shift, the gang is divided into 2 halves and they work half at a time - 2 hours "on" and 2 hours "off".

#### Rice Project.

Mr. Allan Chase, an American multi-millionaire, visited the Territory Rice Project in April and plans to back the project

with millions of dollars. At present it is planned to turn the 500,000 acres of subcoastal swamp lands into one of the world's most concentrated rice bowls.

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### DUTCH NEW GUINEA.

The following information concerning Hollandia and Biak has been summarised from a report by S.O.(I), N.E.A., who accompanied H.M.A.S. ARUNTA on her visit to Dutch New Guinea during March.

\* \* \* \* \*

### HOLLANDIA.

#### Wharfage.

H.M.A.S. ARUNTA berthed at what is known as the K.P.M. Wharf and is shown on Australian Chart O71 as N.S.D.No.2 Wharf. This structure is in a poor state, as are the Customs and Storage Sheds.

The only other wharves in use are Navy Wharf No.2, Destroyer Wharf, and a T-shaped Wharf north of the town - all of which are in poor condition.

A dredger has recently been employed to give a depth of approximately 30 feet alongside the main berths. The old Destroyer Wharf is being used as a small craft base.

#### Oil Installations.

There is now a new fuel installation consisting of one large tank and three small tanks, close to the water's edge near where No.8 Wharf stood in Imbi Bay. One tank is reserved for Naval use.

Electric Power.

A new Power House, supplying 220-240 A.C. 50 cycle current, has been built on the roadside between Navy Wharf No.1 and the town.

Security.

All Marine guards and native police sighted were well armed with either carbine, sub-machine gun or pistol and looked very efficient. The native police were dressed in Army-type uniform. All important points such as wharves, Storage sheds, Wireless Stations, Power House and Service installations were under a continuous armed guard.

The Town.

The town is divided into two separate sections - commercial and residential. Between 4,000 and 5,000 civilians (many of them Indos) are employed in Hollandia by private enterprise and the Administration.

Considerable residential construction is being carried out on the northern slopes of Hollandia Bay. The houses are made of local bricks, with either iron or tile roofs.

Within the town area quonset huts are being replaced with modern-looking stores built of local coral bricks and concrete.

Air Communications.

Hollandia is serviced by the war-time air strip near Lake Sentani as follows :-

Qantas.	D.C.3 from Lae (Fortnightly)
K.L.M.	D.C.3 from Biak and outstations (Twice-weekly)
Fleet Air Arm Catalina.	From Biak and outstations (Twice weekly)

W/T.

Three separate radio installations were observed in the vicinity of Hollandia and were identified as Naval, Commercial and Aeradio. The naval station is situated on high ground close to the town. Commercial inter-island traffic is also controlled from this station. Radio Hollandia, which operates daily, with restricted times for transmission, is situated on the north-eastern arm of Hollandia Bay. The remaining installation is situated near the Governor's week-end cottage overlooking Lake Sentani.

General.

The local population appear to regard Indonesia's claims to Dutch New Guinea with contempt and are not worried about any military action from that quarter.

There is criticism of the Administration on the score of taxation. Class-consciousness is very evident. The natives are lazy and there is a shortage of servants. There is discontent among the 'Indos' (Eurasians) owing to the lack of suitable employment.

B I A K.Wharfage.

ARUNTA secured to the wharf at Wanpenor in Sorido Lagoon, but owing to its poor state and to the likelihood of sudden squalls, ships are required to hold themselves off with lines to buoys.

Five fuel lines (four 12" approx. and one 6" approx) run on to the wharf from the Western end and the supply points are about one-third of the way along the wharf from the Western end. The residue in the vicinity indicated that three were F.F.O., 1 Diesel, 1 Petrol.



Oil Installation.

The oil installation, consisting of six small and one large tanks, is situated close to the foreshore near the Western end of the wharf and appears to be in excellent condition. All tanks are painted silver and drum dumps are stacked neatly around the compound.

Air Strip.

Two air strips are in use: Mokmer by Civil aviation and Borokoe by the R.N.N. Fleet Air Arm.

The Mokmer strip, which is used by international aircraft, is in excellent condition with a bitumenised surface. New construction work on the runway is in progress at the eastern end. Airport buildings and the control tower are of modern construction. For the convenience of passengers, a modern hotel, erected at a cost of £130,000, is situated opposite the control tower.

A runway for amphibians is under construction near the eastern end of the Mokmer airstrip.

The Borokoe airstrip is also in good condition. 12 Fireflies Mk.V, 5 Catalinas, and two Martin Mariner amphibians were sighted.

Power Supply.

The Power House is a 4 Diesel unit, with an estimated output of 60 KV. per unit. Another unit is under construction.

W/T.

The W/T Station is situated on the foreshore near the Mokmer air strip. There are 15 masts supporting at least 20 aerials.

A new W/T Station is to be built on a ridge inland from the settlement. It was hoped to have it in operation by the end of 1956, but so far only clearing work has been carried out.

Naval Establishment. New quarters are under construction.

Civilian Population. There are between 300 and 400 civilians living in Biak and the housing is very much of the same style as at Hollandia. Water is an ever-constant problem, as most natural sources are very hard and brackish.

Oil Production.

It has now become clear that the oilfields in the Vogelkop Peninsula have not come up to expectations. Having spent a total of £40 million since 1935, the yield of only £10 million to the Dutch New Guinea Petroleum Company since crude oil production commenced in 1950 is disappointing.

Developmental drilling in the Vogelkop has now ended and the Sorong-Klamono road which connected the Klamono field to the port of Sorong has been allowed fall in to disrepair. All communications are now being carried on by helicopter, although the pipeline is still operative. For six years a production of about 4,700 barrels a day had been maintained at Klamono, but the oil accumulation was smaller than expected and production has fallen rapidly.

The Wasian-Mogoi fields are similarly affected and their production fell by two-thirds in one year, with a further decline expected.

The Dutch New Guinea Petroleum Company has now decided to extend its search into other areas of Western New Guinea and has applied for extension of its concession to cover approximately 67,300 square miles.

Should the Company fail to discover oil in quantity this

could seriously affect the budgetary position in Dutch New Guinea, as the taxes levied on the Dutch New Guinea Oil Company are a major source of local revenue.

### Order of Battle.

The order of battle of Dutch forces in New Guinea is as follows :-

#### Naval

Destroyer	"KORTENAER"
Frigates	"J.M. VAN NASSAU"
	"JAN VAN BRAKEL"
Survey Vessel	"SNELLIUS"
L.C.T's	( 1208, 1209.
	( 9607, 9608.
Patrol Craft	"SCHOUTEN"

#### Naval Air

Catalinas	7	Squadron 321 (To be replaced by Martin Mariners)
Firefly Aircraft	12	No.7 Squadron.
Martin Mariners	15	(Not yet all delivered from U.S.A., via Holland).

#### Personnel.

Hollandia:	2,700 Marines (approx.) 300 Naval (approx)
Biak:	Approximately 1,000 Naval and Marine personnel.

Frequent patrols are carried out along the south coast of Dutch New Guinea by naval and air units. Marine detachments are stationed at Merauke, Sorong, Fak Fak, Kaimana and Manokwari.

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NEW CALEDONIA .Slipway, Ile Nou, Noumea Harbour.

Further details are now available in regard to the new 1,000-ton slipway referred to in A.S.I.S. Serial No. 42.

The slipway is being constructed at East Camp, Ile Nou. The length of the rolling track of the cradle is 538 feet; draught of water in forward section, 6 feet 6 inches, and rear section 13 feet. The haulage is undertaken by two winches driven by an 80 c.v. electric motor.

The slipway consists of an inclined plane carrying four Burbach rails. The cradle, of metal reinforced woodwork, is 200 feet long, mounted on 100 central rollers and 28 lateral rollers, and carries on its central position blocks on which the keel of the vessel comes to rest; also a gangway 14 feet long, fixed laterally, acts as a mobile platform which facilitates the movements necessary to place the vessel in the cradle.

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SHIPPING INFORMATION.H.C.S. Coasters Limited- Purchase of New Cargo Vessel.

H.C.S. Coasters Ltd. - an associated company of H.C. Sleigh Ltd. - is to buy a new £400,000 cargo vessel for the Australian-New Zealand run.

Nominal capital of the Company has been increased from £150,000 to £750,000 for this purpose.

H.C. Sleigh Ltd. have a minority share interest in the company and also act as Managing Agents.

Delivery of the new vessel - a diesel-powered unit of 3,340 tons - is expected from the Burntisland Ship Building

Co., Scotland, towards the end of 1957.

New Vessel for McIlwraith, McEachran Ltd.

An order has been placed by McIlwraith McEachran, Limited with the Grangemouth Dockyard Co. Limited, of Grangemouth, Scotland, for a 3,450-tons deadweight motor cargo vessel for the Australian coastal trade.

The vessel is to be of the raised quarter deck type, with topgallant forecastle, raked stem and cruiser stern. Her dimensions are :

Length B.P. 290 feet, breadth (moulded) 45 feet, and Depth (moulded) 25 ft. 4 ins., to the raised quarter-deck. She will carry 3,450 tons on a draught of 18 ft. 10 inches.

The propelling machinery, placed amidships, will consist of a six-cylinder Atlas Polar Engine of the latest 'T' type, developing 2,000 b.h.p. at 200 r.p.m. All auxiliary machinery will be electrically-driven, and four Ruston Hornsby 100 kw. generating sets are to be fitted for supplying power and lighting, and a 30 kw. generating set for shutdown duties in port.

It is anticipated that the ship will have a trial trip<sup>speed</sup> of at least 12 knots. The new vessel should be available in Australia in approximately two year's time, and will be used for the carriage of all classes of cargo, including steel, lead, pig-iron, bulk gypsum, coal and general cargo.

Sale of Australian Vessels to Far East Interests.

The C.S.R. vessel "RONA", which was sold recently to the Cambay Prince S.S.Co. of Hong Kong, departed Sydney on 19th April for Kobe via Newcastle and Noumea. The vessel has since been renamed "SUVA BREEZE".

The vessel "LANENA", recently towed from Melbourne to Hong Kong by the tug "CABRILLA", is shown in Lloyds Shipping

Index as having been sold to Hong Kong shipbreakers.

"BIDEILLA", which was sold during 1955 to the Caribbean and St. Laurance Navigation Co., S.A., has been renamed "JUNO" and is trading at present in the Far East.

Sale of S.S. "NGAIO".

The cargo and passenger vessel "NGAIO" (3,566 t.g.), owned by Anchor Shipping & Foundry Co. Ltd., Nelson, N.Z., has been sold to Gulf Steamships Ltd., Karachi. Built in 1929 by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, with engines by the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, she was formerly named "HUALALAI", carries 1,848 tons d.w., and has been renamed "MOIZ".

M.V. "WHARANUI".

The single-screw cargo vessel "WHARANUI", a sister-ship of the "WHAKATANE", launched from the shipyard of Messrs. John Brown & Co. (Clydebank) Limited on 10th May, is the twenty-seventh ship to be constructed at Clydebank for the associated lines of the New Zealand Shipping Co., Ltd., and the Federal Steam Navigation Co., Ltd.

Her principal dimensions are :-

Length overall, 471 ft. 9 ins.; length b.p. 439 ft. 4 ins.; breadth (moulded), 62 ft. 9 in. ;; depth (moulded) 39ft. 6 ins.; gross tonnage, about 8,700.

The new ship will be fitted with a six-cylinder Brown-Doxford Diesel engine giving a service speed of 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  knots.

Designed for the carriage of refrigerated and general cargo, this new addition to the New Zealand Shipping Company's fleet will have an insulated capacity of 92,000 cubic feet, in addition to 423,000 cubic feet of general cargo. The "WHARANUI" will operate in the Montreal-Australia-New Zealand service.

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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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S O V I E T A N T A R C T I C B A S E.

With reference to A.S.I.S. Serial No.41, further particulars concerning Merny, the Soviet Antarctic base, are contained in a report by an Australian Army Officer who was a member of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition on board the vessel "KISTA DAN", which made contact with the Soviet expedition whilst en route to Mawson, the Australian Antarctic Base.

Extracts from his report, made available by J.I.B., Melbourne, are appended :-

General.

Merny is situated on scattered rock outcrops on the edge of the Antarctic Continent, in the Haswell Island area on the Knox Coast.

Two ships were present at the base, 7,000 ton diesel-electric "OB" and sister ship "LENA", cargo-icebreakers built in Holland.

A roadway, leading to the camp area from the sea ice, had been cut into 80 ft. high ice cliffs, and a corrugated surface formed by logs.

Stores were being unloaded from "LENA"'s holds on to awaiting sleds on the sea ice. Sled trains of two to three

sleds were than drawn by tracked mechanical ice vehicles to the base.

### Buildings.

The building of approximately eight huts was in progress.

All were oblong, flat-roofed types, sizes ranging from approximately 20' x 15' to 40' x 20'. There was a minimum of window space, mainly two-foot square of four to six per building. Windows at that stage had not been fitted. All buildings were only partly completed. No prefabricated types were seen.

All buildings were timber. The framework appeared of conventional structure. Flooring insulation appeared effected by placing floorboards one on top of the other to the depth of approximately four. Wall-boards were placed on diagonally, and not overlapped. No evidence of insulating material was seen, nor were buildings, at that stage, secured by means of guy ropes.

All buildings were erected on rock. No extensive levelling of the surface appeared to have taken place. Steel girders, approximately three feet in length, and tower stacked in twos, were used as foundations. Minimum height from the ground was one foot. They did not appear to be secured to the rock.

### Trucks.

Approximately 15 wheeled vehicles of the following types were seen :-

- (a) One 4 x 4 quarter-ton.
- (b) Two 6 x 6 mobile crane vehicles.
- (c) Seven 6 x 6 three-ton trucks.
- (d) Seven 4 x 4 three-ton vehicles.



The two mobile crane vehicles were in operation at the camp site. Both were heavy-duty civilian types. Despite ice, slushy conditions, and lack of tyre chains, road performance was reasonably effective.

The remaining vehicles were not in operation and appeared to have been brought to the camp site on sleds. In design they resembled a combination of G.M.C. and International makes. All were locked, and the engines not seen. Plywood material enclosed the cargo space of the vehicles, making them caravans rather than load-carrying vehicles. There were small chimney-stacks on the roofs. The trucks were khaki in colour, and similar to Army combat vehicles.

Some vehicles were fitted with bar-tread tyres, others with normal civilian types. No tyre chains were seen.

### Tractors.

Approximately eight tractors were seen at the base, most fitted with eight-foot dozer blades. All were Russian-built. Others were being unloaded from "LENA"'s holds, including two small makes with three-foot dozer blades.

### Ice Vehicles.

Tracked ice vehicles were being used extensively towing sleds and as taxi transport. Four of these, painted bright red and obviously new, were seen. The vehicles had the following characteristics :-

- (a) Steel tracks approximately 18 inches wide and bogey wheels the same diameter;
- (b) Watertight hull, making amphibious operation possible;
- (c) Speeds from ~~20~~ 25 m.p.h. on ice;

- (d) Capable of carrying one ton and speed of four knots in water (Russian claim);
- (e) Wooden seats along the sides of the cargo tray seating four each side.

The vehicles were open, apart from windscreen, cabin roof, and part of the rear of the cabin. A canvas cover was placed over a connecting doorway between the driving cabin and the rear of the vehicle. There were flimsy  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch canopy bows in the rear but no canopies were seen.

#### Planes.

Five planes were seen at the site, three resembling Dakotas, one bi-plane, and a large helicopter. Another helicopter was said to be in a packing case.

#### Boats.

Approximately ten wooden, whaleboat-type craft were seen. They had no means of mechanical propulsion.

Dogs. Approximately 30 huskies were on board "LENA".

#### Personnel.

Personnel appeared a medley of racial types. Clean-shaven, they contrasted from fair hair and blue eyes, to high cheekbones, almost slit eyes, and dark, yellow complexions.

Issue clothing of apparently rubberised-leather knee boots, rough cloth, padded trousers and jackets, rough cloth mittens, bearskin caps and snow glasses, was predominant among what appeared to be the Labour Force. Many of the scientists and attached personnel, however, wore normal clothing, even lounge suits complete with collar and tie. Ship's officers wore uniform.

The majority of the personnel were openly friendly on first meeting. Throughout the time spent ashore we were submitted to a barrage of cameras. A Russian newsreel cameraman must have taken thousands of feet of film. Individual shots were taken with abandon, at times two or three snaps of the same person. On board "LENA" flashlights were used by a newspaperman for posed photographs of individuals and groups.

Russians entertained on board "KISTA DAN" arrived with vodka, tinned crab and fish, tobacco and cigarettes, which were freely handed out amid cries of "Russian". (This and other instances of showing Russian products, whether a believed "We-produce-the-best-in-the-world" fixation, or purely national pride as exhibited by all races, would be hard to determine). Musical instruments were also brought and a highly successful evening was had by all. Souvenirs of stamps, coins and other small items were exchanged. The remarkable discipline of the Russians was shown when all stood and left as one man on the word of their apparent leader.

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#### SPRATLEY ISLANDS (TU'AN SHA ARCHIPELAGO).

In view of the recent flare-up of the long-standing dispute over the sovereignty of the Paracel Islands, it is not surprising that the spotlight has now turned on the Spratley Islands. Throughout the century this group has been linked with the Paracels and Pratas Island, forming a bone of contention between China, Japan and France. Two additional contenders, however, have contested the sovereignty of the Spratley Islands - the United Kingdom and the Philippines Republic.

The Tu'an Sha Archipelago is a group of coral reefs, atolls, sandbanks and islands lying in the South China Sea, between  $9^{\circ}40'$  -  $11^{\circ}30'$  N; and  $114^{\circ}$  -  $116^{\circ}$  E.

The Chinese were the first to claim the islands, declaring that Chinese fishermen had 'discovered' and 'settled' on

the islands. It is thought, however, that these 'settlements' were temporary ones, for use during the fishing season. No Chinese administration was ever established here.

In 1917 a Japanese expedition visited the islands and soon after the Government began to exploit the phosphate deposits in the Archipelago. During the Economic Depression, 1929-1932, however, the mining ceased and the Japanese workers returned home, leaving the islands uninhabited again.

In July, 1933, two warships claimed the territory for France, which action aroused the wrath of the Chinese Government and non-recognition of the occupation by the Japanese.

In March 1939 Japanese economic exploitation of the islands was given political backing by their occupation of Itu Aba (the largest island), which was renamed and placed under the jurisdiction of the Governor-General of Formosa.

After the return of Taiwan to the Chinese at the close of the Second World War, the Government reiterated their claim, and sent a party to the main island in December, 1946.

The United Kingdom, having never formally abandoned her claim to the Archipelago, refused to recognise any of these occupations, but conceded that, as the French claim to sovereignty would hold good in law, she would not contest it.

After the war the Philippines showed interest in the islands, but proximity seems to be the only grounds to support their claim.

In 1947 a party of three Filipinos was reported to be on Itu Aba by a visiting British ship, and fishermen of all nationalities are believed to use it during expeditions. Fishermen from Hainan, for instance, were known to stay there every year from December to January.

Following an expedition to this area several weeks ago

by a Filipino named Cloma, his brother, Tomas Cloma, President of the Philippine Maritime Institute's Nautical school, filed a claim to the islands. This resulted in an uproar in the Nationalist and Communist China camps. Although last year the Philippine Government was contemplating the establishment of a radar station on one of the islands in the Sprately group, it has neither openly supported nor repudiated the claim, but Nationalist China has now sent two destroyer-escorts and a platoon of marines to the area and the Communist Chinese Government has officially assented its sole right to the Paracels and Spratley Islands.

The Tu'an Sha Archipelago has not much to offer except its position.

It consists of a group of lagoons, surrounded by shoals, over which the depths are irregular, and by reefs which dry out. Typhoons are not unusual. As a result, navigation can be hazardous. The average temperature is about 87.8°F., January to March being the dry season, and April to August being the rainy period.

There are thirteen islands in the Spratley Group, the largest being Nan Sha (or Itu Aba), which lies on the North-western end of Lizard Bank.

Though all the islands are covered in scrub and small trees, and water is available, large-scale agriculture is not possible. A certain quantity of wild fruits and edible plants, such as coconuts, paw paw and sweet potatoes are, however, found here. The sand cays make an ideal breeding-ground for birds and they are covered in guano phosphate, the export of which was profitably carried on by the Japanese earlier in the century.

On Nan Sha the Japanese began to build up a base prior to 1942, but most of the buildings were destroyed during the war. However, a concrete jetty still exists on the south-western end of the island, and a gun-proof concrete building on the other end.

DISSOLUTION OF THE COMINFORM.

In spite of Mr. Khrushchev's defence of the Cominform (the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties) in his speech to the Supreme Soviet on December 29, the gesture of dissolving it and discontinuing publication of the Cominform journal has been offered to the free world. It was made on the eve of the arrival of the Soviet leaders in Britain.

The Cominform, whose membership originally included the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, the East European satellites, Yugoslavia, France and Italy, was established in Belgrade in October, 1947, at the time of the launching of the Marshall Plan, marked the opening stages of the cold war against the West. The Cominform, with headquarters in Bucharest after Yugoslavia's expulsion in 1948, had little practical significance. Its main function seemed to be to give ideological guidance to the Communist Parties through the Cominform journal, "For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy !" It remained, however, the symbol of Soviet hostility to the West and of the strategy to disrupt the free world through subversion. It was identified with the condemnation of President Tito in 1948 when it expelled the Yugoslav Party from its ranks.

As a gesture to the West, to Yugoslavia and to Mr. Nehru, who had raised the question of the Cominform during the Soviet leaders' visit to India, the Cominform journal of April 17 announced the dissolution of the organisation in a communique which declared :

"Neither in its composition nor in the contents of its activities does the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties any longer correspond to the new conditions that have developed.

"Each Party or group of Parties.....developing its activities consonant with the general aims of Marxist-Leninist

Parties and the national peculiarities and conditions of the countries, will find new useful forms for the establishment of ties and contacts among themselves."

A Pravda editorial of April 18, while reiterating the theme of the possibility of different roads to Socialism, acknowledged the error of the only action ever taken by the Cominform - the condemnation of Tito and of his natural road to Socialism in 1948. In an interview published in Unita on April 18, Signor Togliatti, Secretary-General of the Italian Communist Party, declared that the Cominform "made a mistake when in 1948 and 1949 it interfered in the internal affairs of the Yugoslav Party." His complaint that the "methods of the Eastern Communist Parties, who had been in power for ten years, have little in common with those of France and Italy" suggests that the Italian Communist Party also has had cause for resentment against Cominform interference.

The communique also declared that in future Workers' Parties "will consider questions of co-operation with parties and trends tending towards Socialism", thus following the latest Soviet initiative for co-operation with Socialists. Pravda commented that "special tasks confront the Communist Parties in eliminating the split in the workers' movement and creating the unity of the working class." The dissolution of the Cominform may be aimed at persuading Socialists (and others) that international Communism no longer has subversive aims.

But the "ties and contacts", urged upon Communist Parties in the communique, already exist in the form of Front Organizations which are now making tremendous efforts to extend their activities, including subversion, in the uncommitted and under-developed countries. Of these the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) is the most important. Its present activities are :-

- (a) The "united action" campaign designed to break down the resistance of the non-WFTU unions by

inveigling them into common activities.

- (b) The "anti-productivity" campaign aimed at crippling the economics of the free countries, by opposing all methods of raising productivity, and promoting strikes.
- (c) The "anti-colonial" campaign designed to eliminate Western influence in Asia, Africa and Latin America and facilitate Soviet penetration of these areas.
- (d) The "peace" campaign which supports the World Peace Council in demanding an end to conscription and defence measures, including NATO and other defensive pacts.

(The Interpreter).

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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.

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