MR 203(16), Sec. 3-C -- SUMMARY OF NAVY DEPARTMENT DISPATCHES (Pacific)

1 August 1943 - 30 November 1943

(Pages 469 - 673)

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter, 5-3-72

MR 203(16), Sec. 3-C,-- SUMMARY OF NAVY DEPARTMENT DISPATCHES (Pacific)

1 Aug 43 - 30 Nov 43

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 30 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

AIR Bomg

On 29 November, at 1315 p.m., thirty-eight Avengers, covered by nine Airacobras, bombed and strafed the MOSIGETTA AREA, just east of MOTUPENA POINT, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Eight large and twenty small buildings were destroyed. One large tin warehouse was damaged and several fires were started.

AIR Bomg

On 29 November, between 10:00 and 11:30 a.m., eighteen Mitchell bombers, escorted by twelve fighters, bombed and strafed TINPUTS HARBOR AREA, in northeast BOUGAINVILLE, the NUMA NUMA and KIETA areas. Incomplete reports state that considerable damage was caused. The only antiaircraft fire received came from KIETA where the flak downed one of the Mitchells near PUK PUK ISLAND, east of KIETA.

AIR Bomg

A preliminary report states that Liberators also struck KIETA during 29 November.

AIR Bomg

On 29 November, at 1:45 p.m., seventeen Dauntless dive bombers and later in the afternoon at 4:00 p.m., twelve Dauntless dive bombers bombed and strafed the JABA RIVER-KOIARIS AREAS, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY AREA, in support of ground troops. Only light antiaircraft fire was received.

AIR Bomg

Air patrols of the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY sector strafed PORTON PLANTATION, near CHABAI, northwest BOUGAINVILLE, also GAZELLE HARBOR, and gun positions south of TOROKINA.

SAP Bomg

On the morning of 29 November, Japanese artillery dumped nine live and eighteen dud shells on the beach east of TOROKINA. A fuel dump was ignited, one gun was damaged, and three small landing craft were sunk. No personnel casualties were received.

65

The battalion that we landed during the night of 28-29 November, in the area between the REINI and SAVA RIVERS, was evacuated by destroyers on 29 November by 8:30 p.m. Casualties suffered, if any, are undetermined.

68 Ground Bomg

In the northeast sector of TOROKINA our ground forces made a slight advance and captured one Japanese.

68 Ground Bomg

On the morning of 29 November, work was begun on the bomber strip on TREASURY ISLAND. It is also reported that one Japanese was killed north of MALSI.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 30 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

One of our Task Forces in the CENTRAL PACIFIC reports that on the afternoon of 26 November their air cover over MAKIN shot down one enemy medium bomber. Their combat air patrol accounted for a medium bomber on 29 November at 12:50 p.m. During the night of 29 November the Task Force's antiaircraft fire destroyed one medium bomber and probably another one, because the latter when last seen was burning on the horizon.

SITUATION ON TARAWA

The occupation of TARAWA continues. The entire ATOLL is cleared of the enemy except an estimated sixty which remain at the extreme north end and a few snipers on BITITU. In addition to BITITU, three other islands of the ATOLL have been fully occupied. Antiaircraft and coastal defense guns have been set up and are in firing position on BITITU. At this writing it appears that eighty percent of the ground defenses are completed. There are now forty-three fighter planes operating from the BITITU air strip. Sixteen sorties have already been flown from it. It is stated that approximately ninety-five percent of the unloading from transports is completed.

A preliminary report of our casualties for the entire operation, to date, are estimated at one thousand killed and missing, and twenty-five hundred wounded.

The occupation of APEMAMA is proceeding according to plan.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 29 November 1943

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

65

At noon 28 November eleven Army Liberators, plus two photo planes, from NANOMEA, in the ELLICE group, bombed NAURU ISLAND from 11,000 feet. Eighteen tons of bombs were dropped. Several fires were started and smoke was visible for thirty miles. No air opposition was met but moderate antiaircraft fire damaged one plane. All our planes returned.

With regards to the sinking of the U.S. destroyer PERKINS, it is indicated she was rammed on her port side abreast of Number 2 fire room by the Australian troop ship DUNTROON on 29 November at 2:00 a.m. After twenty-five minutes, the ship broke in two and sank in seventy fathoms of water about one and one-half miles northeast of CAPE VOGEL on WARD HUNT STRAIT, southern NEW GUINEA.

63

The submarine RASHER, returning from her first war patrol in the SOUTHWEST PACIFIC, reports sinking three ships of 13,760 tons, probably sinking one of 7,500 tons and damaging two of 14,000 tons. Her war patrol was conducted in the BANDA SEA, MOLUCCA PASSAGE, CELEBES SEA and MAKASSAR STRAIT Areas.

The attacks took place as follows:

9 October, north of MANIPA STRAIT, between BURU and SERANG ISLAND, sank the KOGANE MARU.

13 October, off AMBON, BANDA SEA, sank the KENKOKU MARU and damaged a second Maru.

31 October, north of CAPE BENAR, MENADO ISLAND, sank a SYOYO type tanker.

8 November, in the afternoon off NORTH WATCHER, MENADO ISLAND, STRAITS OF MAKASSAR, probably sank a SOGYO type tanker.

9 November, during the early morning in the STRAITS of MAKASSAR, one of a two-ship escorted convoy was believed to be hit.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 29 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

59 During the night of 28-29 November, the United States Destroyer PERKINS, collided with a merchant ship and sank while enroute to MILNE BAY, NEW GUINEA. Two hundred and thirty survivors have been recovered. A search continues for eight missing. Further details are not at present available.

The submarine SCAMP, returning from patrol, reported as follows: November 4, scored one hit on a MARU, one hundred and seventy-five miles west of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. November 10, scored a hit on one transport two hundred and ninety-five miles northwest of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. The target sank later. November 12, scored two hits on an enemy cruiser of the AGAMA class (8,500 tons).

59

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 29 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Our troops are engaging the remaining Japanese at the north end of TARAWA ATOLL. About one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and seventy-five of the enemy have been killed. Our casualties, three officers and twenty-five enlisted men killed in action and two officers, sixteen men wounded in action. The occupation of TARAWA by our troops continues.

At 10:00 a.m., 28 November, six Mitchells without escort bombed and strafed the MOTUPENA AREA, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results were unobserved.

At about the same time fourteen Warhawks strafed the TINPUTS HARBOR AREA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Numerous huts and buildings were hit and possibly set on fire. No enemy planes nor antiaircraft fire was encountered.

At 2:00 p.m., 28 November, four Airacobras strafed enemy barges in TONOLEI HARBOR, SHORTLAND AREA. The results were unobserved. No enemy planes but antiaircraft fire was encountered.

On 28 November, our EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY air patrol strafed the west coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND and set on fire huts and buildings.

Aircraft in support of ground operations bombed enemy positions in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY AREA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

On 28 November, an unreported number of Liberators attacked KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Details are not at present available.

In all air operations of 27-28 November, two Corsairs were lost due to enemy antiaircraft fire, but the pilots were rescued. No enemy planes were encountered.

Apparently, during the night of 28 November, a battalion of our troops landed in the area between the REINI and SAUA RIVERS, north EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, and encountered superior enemy forces. The commanding general of the FIRST MARINE AMPHIBIOUS CORPS has requested the assistance of two destroyers in order to withdraw our troops from this area.

During the night of 28 November, our motor torpedo boats, in cooperation with a reconnaissance plane which provided illumination, severely damaged or destroyed a heavily loaded enemy barge ashore in the vicinity of KAKURUAI, SOUTHWEST BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 28 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 3:25 p.m. 27 November, three Venturas bombed a radio station at MOTUPENA, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Later on the same afternoon, two Mitchells dropped bombs on huts in the vicinity of the MOBIA RIVER. Results were not reported.

On the early morning of 28 November, a GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane attacked and possibly sank a JAPANESE submarine off CAPE HANPAN, north BUKA.

At 8:30 a.m. 28 November, another reconnaissance plane bombed a JAPANESE submarine fifty-five miles west of BUKA ISLAND with unreported results. At 10:03 a.m., another reconnaissance plane bombed a possible submerged submarine trailing oil about sixty miles west of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 5:30 p.m. 27 November, about thirty to forty enemy planes launched a torpedo attack against Task Group 50.2 (SARATOGA (CV), PRINCETON (CVL), MASSACHUSETTS (BB), INDIANA (BB), NORTH CAROLINA (BB) and eight destroyers) operating in the GILBERT ISLAND Area. Our ships escaped damage and the enemy planes were driven off after our night fighters shot down two and disorganized the attack. Four torpedo wakes were sighted. About eight or ten enemy medium bombers were shot down, plus an undetermined number of other planes. Further details are not at present available.

At 10:40 a.m. 28 November, eight Liberators, operating from NUKU FETAU, struck MILI, MARSHALL ISLANDS. Ninety-five percent of the bombs fell in the target area. One enemy fighter intercepted and medium antiaircraft fire was encountered. All of our planes returned.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 28 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 3:00 p.m. 26 November, a Mitchell bomber dropped bombs on the runway and revetments on BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND Area. Results were not reported.

At 5:19 p.m. 26 November, five Mitchells, escorted by eight Corsairs, attacked BUKA and BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of grounded enemy aircraft were apparently damaged. Trucks and personnel working on the BUKA airstrip were thoroughly strafed. No enemy antiaircraft fire nor planes were encountered.

Enemy installations in the MOSIGETTA-MAWARAKA-MOTUPENA Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, were attacked on the morning of 27 November by sixty dive bombers, thirty-seven torpedo dive bombers and eight fighters. About fifteen fires were started in the MOSIGETTA Area, an ammunition dump exploded and numerous small buildings were destroyed. A large fire was started in the encampment area at MAWARAKA. Light and ineffective antiaircraft fire was encountered.

At 9:40 a.m. 27 November, five Mitchells, escorted by eight fighters, bombed and strafed the QUEEN CAROLA HARBOR Area, northwest BUKA ISLAND. A pier was damaged and several buildings were destroyed.

Later that morning, at 10:05 a.m., twenty-three Mitchells, escorted by twenty-four fighters, attacked BUKA. Many hits were scored on the runway and its vicinity. Antiaircraft fire damaged four of our planes, but apparently all of the planes returned. The east coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, between CAPE AVERDY and CAPE FRIENDSHIP was strafed, but results were unobserved.

During 27 November, nineteen Liberators, in a run around BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, bombed and strafed KIETA and set on fire a number of barges in the CHABAI Area. All of the planes returned.

In the early afternoon of 27 November, a reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL attacked KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. Results of the attack were not reported. At about the same time, another reconnaissance plane strafed four enemy barges in the channel between FENI and AMBITTE ISLANDS, east of NEW IRELAND. Another reconnaissance plane bombed and strafed GREEN ISLAND, north of BUKA. A large building was probably destroyed.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 28 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the early morning of 25 November, motor torpedo boats, operating from TREASURY ISLAND, south of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, forced three enemy barges ashore on southwest BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, west of the MOBIAI RIVER.

The United States Destroyer RADFORD depth charged and probably sank a JAPANESE submarine fifty miles west of MAKIN, GILBERT ISLANDS, at 11:12 p.m., 25 November. After the last attack, a strong odor of oil was prevelant in the area and a large amount of wood and cork debris was observed.

At 7:06 p.m., 25 November, TASK GROUP 50.1 (YORKTOWN (CV), LEXINGTON (CV), COWPENS (CVL), WASHINGTON (BB), SOUTH DAKOTA (BB), ALABAMA (BB) and six destroyers), operating in the GILBERT ISLAND area was approached by about twelve enemy torpedo planes. One enemy plane was definitely shot down and another possibly shot down. It is believed that the enemy planes retired without dropping bombs or torpedoes.

Our antiaircraft batteries engaged an unreported number of enemy planes over STERLING ISLAND (south of TREASURY ISLAND), between 9:38 and 9:58 a.m, 26 November. The enemy planes apparently jettisoned their bombs into the sea.

At 3:00 p.m., 26 November, twenty-three Mitchell bombers attacked BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results of the attack were not reported.

At 5:15 p.m., 26 November, a night fighter strafed enemy artillery positions shelling our troops in the TOROKINA area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 9:35 p.m., 26 November, one enemy bomb was dropped on our positions on STERLING ISLAND and damaged communication installations.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 27 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 2:20 p.m., 26 November, four Venturas bombed and strafed the bivouac and supply areas on GREEN ISLAND (north of BUKA ISLAND). One enemy barge was sunk and enemy installations damaged. All of our planes returned. No antiaircraft fire nor enemy planes were encountered.

At 3:10 p.m., 26 November, fifty-seven dive bombers and thirty-seven torpedo bombers, escorted by eight fighters, attacked KARA, MALABITA and KANGU HILLS, south BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored on the air strip and gun emplacements in KANGU and MALABITA HILLS. Photographs taken after the attack showed the air strip at KARA to be unserviceable. All of our planes returned.

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

On 25 November, our troops in the northeast sector of the TOROKINA defense perimeter, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY AREA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, advanced eight hundred yards against prepared enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun positions. Although not definitely determined enemy casualties are reported high. Our casualties amounted to about three hundred.

On the same day an infantry patrol encountered about one hundred Japanese near KURAIO MISSION, north of CAPE MOLTKE, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Our patrol withdrew after two of its members were wounded. A total of one thousand one hundred and forty-six Japanese have thus far been killed in the TOROKINA operation.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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SECRET

9 a.m. 27 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

On 24 November, air patrols over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, strafed and destroyed a large enemy barge concentration in GAZELLE HARBOR, south EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. In addition, three buildings were set on fire in the ARAWA BAY Area, east coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

The air field on TARAWA began receiving our fighter planes flown from escort aircraft carriers at 1:30 p.m., 25 November.

During 25 November, the south shore of the APEMAMA ATOLL and about two miles of the east shore have been mopped up. Light enemy resistance was encountered and about seventy more Korean prisoners have been taken.

On 25 November, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, bombed and strafed enemy installations on KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. A radio station was destroyed and a number of grounded enemy planes damaged. Antiaircraft fire was silenced. Our plane received some damage.

At 2:31 a.m., 26 November, a GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane bombed BALLALE ISLAND. Results were unobserved.

A reconnaissance plane, on 26 November, dropped three depth charges on a submarine off the north tip of BUKA ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported. Another reconnaissance plane strafed a resurfacing submarine which crash-dived and left members of its crew in the water. A large oil slick was observed. The submarine was probably damaged and possibly sunk.

On the morning of 26 November, our fighter planes strafed enemy installations and set on fire a fuel dump and sank an enemy barge in the SORAKEN AREA, northwest BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 11:52 a.m., 26 November, twenty-four Liberators bombed enemy installations on BUKA ISLAND. Hits were scored on the air strip and in the general vicinity of the air strip. All of our planes returned.

On the same day at 5:30 p.m., three Mitchells bombed BUKA and two more attacked BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results were not reported. Later at 3:00 p.m., twenty-four Mitchells bombed BONIS. Results of this attack were not reported.

Regraded Unclassified

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 26 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The following additional details have been received in connection with the loss of the escort aircraft carrier LISCOMBE BAY, reported in the morning's summary of 25 November:

At 5:10 a.m. 25 November, a torpedo hit the LISCOMBE BAY between the engine rooms. A second heavy explosion followed, the origin of which has not been definitely determined, but believed to have been another torpedo or torpedoes. Power and interior communications were lost and large fires burned throughout the ship. Many minor explosions occurred aboard the vessel, and planes loaded with bombs burned on the flight deck. A burning plane blown over the side ignited the surface oil, which spread over a large area. The ship sank at 5:33 a.m., following a heavy final explosion.

Fifty-four officers and six hundred and forty-eight enlisted men were lost of an estimated total on board of one hundred and seven officers and eight hundred and fifty-two enlisted men. Among those lost was Rear Admiral Mullinix, the Commanding Officer Captain Wiltse, and the ship's executive officer. Although severely burned, Captain Crommelin was rescued. Among the survivors, forty-one of the ship's personnel seriously burned and numerous others less seriously burned are enroute to PEARL HARBOR.

Our Marines ashore on APEMAMA, GILBERT ISLANDS, reported that all JAPANESE are dead. The enemy was liquidated by the Marines, assisted by gunfire from the submarine NAUTILUS, and possibly a number committed suicide.

At 10:30 a.m. 24 November, fourteen Liberators bombed the CHABAI Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and started fires in the supply dump and other installations. At about the same time, nine Liberators dropped bombs on BUKA, but results were not observed. All of our planes returned.

On 25 November, the fighter cover over Destroyer Squadron 23, returning from a successful morning engagement, strafed the TENEKAU Area, CENTRAL NORTHEAST COAST BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, the SORANKEN plantation and TIAOF ISLAND, MATCHIN BAY Area, with unobserved results. A loaded enemy barge in the PURIATA RIVER, SOUTHWEST COAST of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was destroyed.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 26 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the night of 23-24 November, enemy planes dropped bombs on the area, one mile inland of the LARUMA RIVER MOUTH, and apparently started fires among their own installations.(EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND).

On the morning of 23 November, two United States Destroyers bombarded possible Japanese gun emplacements on MAGINE ISLAND, east of TOROKINA, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

On 25 November, a reconnaissance plane attacked and probably damaged an enemy submarine forty miles west of the north tip of BUKA ISLAND. After the attack a large oil slick and debris was observed.

At noon, 24 November, twenty Liberators operating from NANOMEA, ELLICE ISLANDS, attacked TAROA, MALOELAP ATOLL, MARSHALL ISLANDS. A number of fires were started among enemy installations and a freighter was probably sunk. Numerous enemy planes were seen on the air field.

A reconnaissance plane on 25 November strafed about one hundred or one hundred and fifty enemy survivors, thirty miles west northwest from the north end of BUKA ISLAND. A large oil slick was observed in the area. These survivors were probably from the destroyer surface engagement on the morning of 25 November.

During the early morning of 26 November, a reconnaissance plane dropped bombs on BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA, with unobserved results.

On 25 November, the submarine SEARAVEN scored two or three torpedo hits and probably sank a ten thousand ton enemy tanker about eighty-five miles north northeast of PONAPE.

The following preliminary report has been received of our casualties in the MAKIN ISLAND operation:

Killed in action	- 63
Wounded in action	- 119
Accidental injuries	- 22

NAVY AND COAST GURAD PERSONNEL

Killed in action	- 2
Wounded in action	- 1

Two Japanese and one hundred and three KOREANS are being transported from MAKIN ISLAND to PEARL HARBOR.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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Prior to 6-8-78
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SECRET

4 p.m. 25 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

White 41

During the period 19 November to 24 November, our carrier based aircraft operating in the GILBERT ISLANDS completed numerous attacks against MILI and JALUIT, MARSHALL ISLANDS. In addition, twenty-five enemy fighters, seven medium bombers, three heavy bombers, two dive bombers and nine observation float planes were shot down. We lost one fighter in combat, two fighters and one torpedo bomber in the MILI attacks.

Omit 43

Before dawn on 25 November an enemy plane strafed BETIO ISLAND, TARAWA, but caused no damage.

Embarked in transports returning to PEARL HARBOR from TARAWA are seven hundred and eighty-two U.S. wounded and one hundred and twenty-six prisoners of war, mostly Coreans. An additional two hundred and twenty wounded have been sent to hospital ships.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 25 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 10:00 a.m. 24 November, fifty-seven dive bombers and thirty-seven torpedo bombers, covered by forty-eight fighters, struck the CHABAI Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Numerous fires were started and houses and other enemy installations were destroyed. Intense antiaircraft fire was encountered, but all of our planes returned.

At about noon 24 November, six Liberators, operating from NUKU FETAU, GILBERT ISLANDS, bombed EMIDJ, JALUIT, MARSHALL ISLANDS. No enemy planes intercepted, but antiaircraft fire damaged one of our planes, which was destroyed by fire when landing upon its return.

At 10:20 a.m. 24 November, twenty-Mitchells bombed KAHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and started a number of fires. Heavy antiaircraft was encountered, and one of the Mitchells was damaged and forced down into the water, but the crew was recovered.

On the morning of 24 November, one Avenger bombed KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and started a fire. The plane returned undamaged.

Enemy installations at MONTUPENA POINT and GAZELLE HARBOR, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, were bombed and strafed by six Mitchells at 2:20 p.m. 24 November. No antiaircraft fire nor plane interception was encountered and all of our planes returned.

During 24 November, nine enemy barges were sighted and sunk in GAZELLE HARBOR, and a schooner was set on fire in CAROLA HARBOR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. These attacks were probably made by our air patrol over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 25 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The following additonal details have been received in connection with the surface engagement of Destroyer Squadron 23, reported in yesterday afternoon's summary:

Our destroyers picked up the six enemy ships, probably destroyers, in two groups of three on a course 285, speed twenty-five knots. Two of the first group of enemy ships were struck by our torpedoes, exploded and sank. The third enemy ship was sunk by gun fire and torpedoes.

After a lengthy pursuit, one enemy ship in the second group was sunk by gunfire and another damaged. The engagement was discontinued at about 4:10 a.m. 25 November, after four enemy ships were sunk, another damaged, which probably sank, and only succeeded in escaping unscathed.

It is estimated that the mopping up of TARAWA, GILBERT ISLANDS, will be completed on 27 November. The airstrip on BITITU ISLAND will probably receive fighter planes on the afternoon of 25 November. Transport unloading has been completed.

The escort aircraft carrier LISCOMBE BAY blew up and sank at 5:16 a.m. 25 November in the vicinity of MAKIN, GILBERT ISLANDS. The vessel was probably hit by a submarine torpedo, although there was some indication of a gasoline explosion. About sixty percent of the crew survived and have been recovered.

One of the prisoners recovered from the Japanese submarine sunk in the vicinity of TARAWA on 23 November informed that the submarine was the RO-35. The characteristics of this submarine are not known, but it is known that the RO-34 is a vessel of seven hundred tons surface displacement and is probably similar to the RO-35.

At 11:46 a.m. 23 November, sixteen Liberators, without escort, bombed BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of fires were started in the vicinity of the runway and the south revetment area.

At about the same time, three Liberators bombed BUKA, and two Liberators bombed CHABAI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results of these two attacks were unobserved. All of our planes returned.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
USD Letter 5-2-78

4:00 p.m. 24 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Incomplete reports indicate that an unreported number of destroyers attached to Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-THREE intercepted and attacked about five enemy ships, (type unknown), at 1:05 a.m., 25 November. By about 3:32 a.m., four enemy ships were sunk and the pursuit continued due west from a position about sixty miles northwest of BUKA ISLAND. Further details are not at present available.

At 9:15 a.m., 23 November, twenty-three Mitchells and six Venturas, covered by twenty-four Corsairs, bombed CHABAI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and started a number of large fires. Heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered but no planes intercepted. One Mitchell fell into MATCHIN BAY, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

Our air patrol over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY did not encounter any enemy planes on 23 November but strafed KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, started two fires and in addition set on fire three enemy barges.

Enemy planes on 23 November dropped fourteen bombs in the TOROKINA area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and destroyed several houses.

During 23 November, the east coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND was bombed and strafed by four Mitchells with unobserved results.

At 1:40 p.m., 24 November, a reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL strafed two enemy landing barges northeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND.

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

Our positions, in the northeast sector of the TOROKINA defense perimeter, were attacked by Japanese armed with automatic weapons. At least one hundred and four Japanese were killed. Our casualties were not reported. However, some casualties and damage were sustained due to enemy artillery fire.

The submarine GUDGEON, returning from patrol off the CHINA COAST, reported sinking one tanker of ten thousand tons, a transport of about eleven thousand tons, and one destroyer of the ASASHIO class (1,500 tons), during the period 18 November to 22 November.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED OSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 24 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

On the night of 23 November, Japanese forces on BITITU ISLAND, TARAWA ATOLL, launched a heavy counter attack, which was decisively defeated by the SECOND MARINE DIVISION. The bulk of the enemy resistance was broken and BITITU ISLAND fell at 1:30 p.m., 24 November.

At 11:00 p.m., 23 November, the submarine NAUTILUS reported that she had established communication with the Marine shore party on APEMAMA and succeeded in landing all stores and ammunition. About twenty-five Japanese are entrenched on the Atoll. There have been no Marine casualties.

During the morning of 23 November, eleven Liberators operating from CANTON ISLAND, struck MILI, MARSHALL ISLANDS. Thirteen tons of bombs were dropped. Twelve enemy fighters intercepted and of these, two were definitely shot down and two more possibly shot down. Light antiaircraft fire damaged one Liberator.

On 23 November, LST 447, unloading supplies in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was shelled by an enemy shore battery. Three of the personnel were killed and nine wounded.

An incomplete report indicates that on 23 November, a plane attached to the SOUTH PACIFIC FORCES, scored a direct hit on a Japanese submarine one hundred miles west of BUKA ISLAND.

Photographs taken on 23 November showed the BALLALE, KAHILI, KARA and BONIS runways unserviceable. The BUKA runway possibly serviceable.

The following additional details have been received in connection with the Japanese submarine (I-52 type, 1,390 tons), reported sunk on 22 November in yesterday afternoon's summary: During the twilight of 23 November, in the vicinity of TARAWA, the Destroyer MEADE depth-charged and forced the submarine to the surface where the Destroyer FRAZIER sank the submarine by ramming. Three injured prisoners were taken.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED OSD SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 23 November 1943

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Moderate antiaircraft fire was encountered but no enemy planes intercepted.

Two dive bombers engaged in liaison and as artillery spotters, over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, were fired on by antiaircraft batteries. This is the first evidence of enemy antiaricraft installations in the area.

A later report indicates that the GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane sank two enemy barges on 22 November in ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL instead of two sampans as previously reported.

BOUGAINVILLE GROUND SITUATION

Our defense perimeter has been extended on all fronts about twelve hundred yards and now measures nine thousand yards in width and seven thousand yards in depth, which includes the entire PIVA airfield site. Strong enemy resistance to the northeast was overcome with artillery support. Seventy-five Japanese were killed.

During the night of 21-22 November, between thirty to thirty-five bombs were dropped on our ground forces at TOROKINA, but caused no damages or casualties.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 23 November 1943.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The commander of the SOUTHERN ATTACK FORCE reported at 9:15 p.m., 23 November, that mopping up operations and the capture of TARAWA are progressing slowly against stubborn resistance. Our casualties are heavy, but the amount has not been determined. About one hundred and fifty Japanese are at known locations. The remainder surviving the original garrison of about four thousand five hundred are scattered throughout the Atoll. A reconnaissance of MAIANA ISLAND, south of TARAWA, disclosed no evidence of JAPANESE.

Although capture of TARAWA seems to be assured, the complete occupation will take about five days with the assistance of continuous air and gunfire support. Due to reef conditions and several enemy machine gun nests, which have not as yet been neutralized, unloading is difficult and slow.

The destroyers DASHIELL, HEERMANN and RINGGOLD, operating in the vicinity of TARAWA, sustained minor damage after touching a coral reef. Damage to the destroyer SCHROEDER, previously reported, was in error.

Apparently MILLI, MARSHALL ISLANDS, was successfully attacked by U.S. carrier-borne aircraft on 22 November. Details are not at present available.

On 22 November, a Japanese submarine (I-52 type, 1,390 tons) was hunted down, brought to the surface and destroyed by gunfire in the transport area of TARAWA. One prisoner was captured.

The U. S. submarine PLUNGER, while engaged in the rescue of a downed aviator about thirty-five miles southeast of MILLI, MARSHALL ISLANDS, was strafed by a Japanese fighter plane, sustained slight damage, and six of her crew were wounded.

At 8:15 a.m. 22 November, eight Kittyhawks, on patrol over the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area, engaged about thirty of forty Japanese fighter planes ten miles northeast of MUTUPINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Five enemy planes were shot down. All of our planes returned.

Eight Lightnings strafed the CHABAI Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, on the afternoon of 22 November. Three enemy barges and a number of camouflaged installations were set on fire.

At noon 22 November, twenty-four Mitchells and five Venturas, covered by eight Corsairs and eight Lightnings, attacked BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Many hits were scored and fires started along taxiways and the runway.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED OSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 23 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

MAKIN ISLAND has been captured and the TWENTY-SEVENTH DIVISION, United States Army, has taken command ashore. A few scattered enemy snipers are being mopped up.

At 2:15 p.m., 23 November, the United States submarine NAUTILUS, reported that she had not established communication with the Marines ashore at APEMAMA since five p.m., 22 November. Stores or ammunition for the shore party have not as yet been landed.

A number of enemy medium bombers were over the TARAWA area without effect the evening twilight of 21 November and the morning twilight 22 November.

The western half of TARAWA has been occupied by the SECOND MARINE DIVISION, but isolated points of enemy resistance in the form of pill boxes, block houses and emplacements remain. Our casualties were reported heavy with about five hundred wounded.

The destroyers SCHROEDER and DASHIELL, operating in the vicinity of TARAWA, sustained minor damage after touching a coral reef.

During the afternoon of 21 November, six Liberators, operating from NANOMEA, ELLICE ISLANDS and ten Liberators, from FUNAFUTI, attacked NAURU ISLAND. Photographs taken after the attacks indicated both runways on the island unserviceable. All of our planes returned.

At 1:20 p.m., 22 November, seven reconnaissance planes attacked and sank two enemy barges about thirty miles north northeast of RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN.

At 2:45 p.m., 22 November, fifty-two dive bombers and twenty-four torpedo bombers, covered by sixteen Corsairs, attacked KAHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Fires were started and a number of hits were scored on taxiways and the runway. Nine of the planes were damaged by antiaircraft fire, but all returned.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED OSD letter, 7-8

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 22 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The United States submarine NAUTILUS reported that she succeeded in landing Marines on APEMAMA, and that a visual signal received by her at 5 p.m. 22 November indicated that the situation ashore was satisfactory. The NAUTILUS is unable to land stores and ammunition due to the presence of an enemy submarine which was contacted in the area at 10 p.m. 22 November.

Due to damage sustained by gunfire from an unidentified ship four miles west of MAIANA ISLAND, GILBERT ISLANDS, during the night of 20-21 November, the NAUTILUS cannot dive for more than a few minutes.

W. 30

During 22 November, our landing force on MAKIN, GILBERT ISLANDS, successfully advanced against enemy dugouts and pillboxes. A few enemy snipers remained in the occupied areas. Enemy losses were heavy. Our losses were light.

The transports are about sixty percent unloaded under bad beach unloading conditions. A task group of garrison troops, T.G. 54.6, has arrived at MAKIN. In the day's operations, one Avenger was shot down and another was lost but is considered an operational casualty.

At 6:15 a.m. 21 November, one enemy plane ineffectively bombed three of our motor torpedo boats and one LCI in the vicinity of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 1:30 p.m. 22 November, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, reported sinking a sampan and attacking another in ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL between NEW BRITAIN and NEW IRELAND.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 22 November 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Photographs taken on 20 November show all air fields on BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND unserviceable. The west side of the air strip at KARA was being repaired.

At dawn, 21 November, three Mitchells strafed the KIETA area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with unobserved results.

At 5:35 a.m., 21 November, air patrols over the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, contacted seven enemy fighters. All of the enemy planes were shot down. None of our planes were lost.

At 10:30 a.m., 21 November, thirty Liberators attacked NAURU ISLAND. A number of bombs fell on the runway. Heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered but no enemy planes intercepted. All of our planes returned.

At 2:00 p.m., 21 November, fifty-eight dive bombers and thirty-five torpedo bombers, escorted by sixteen Corsairs, attacked KARA, MALABETA and the KANGU HILLS area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A large oil fire was started between the POROREI RIVER and KANGU. In addition, gun positions on top of KANGU HILLS were hit. No enemy planes were encountered. All of our planes returned.

During 21 November, two Dauntless dive bombers, while engaged in liaison and artillery spotting over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, strafed enemy huts at MAWARAKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

On 21 November, a reconnaissance plane dropped bombs on NAURU and OCEAN ISLANDS. No enemy planes were in the air over NAURU ISLAND nor were any observed on the runways. Heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered. Heavy antiaircraft fire was also encountered at OCEAN ISLAND. Our plane returned without damage.

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

In the east sector of our positions in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY area our troops found sixteen Japanese dead and the enemy position abandoned after being subjected to our artillery fire.

The submarine HARDER sank an enemy freighter and an escort vessel in addition to damaging the three freighters reported in the morning summary of 20 November.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

SECURITY INFORMATION

OSD LABEL

9 a.m. 22 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The following details have been received in connection with the landing operations on TARAWA: Our approach was undetected. Air support, although thirty-five minutes late, was effective. Gunfire preparation was very effective and permitted the landing of LVT's with small personnel casualties. Throughout the day tide conditions did not permit any boats to land on the beach.

Damage to the LVT's was heavy, resulting in considerable difficulty in the handling of reinforcements and supplies. Enemy opposition inshore prevented the establishments of deeper beachheads. Up to 9:57 p.m., 21 November, no artillery or supplies were ashore. Two combat teams were engaged in the operation. However, a late intercepted message, from an unknown originator, indicated that the situation on TARAWA ISLAND turned favorable at about 11:45 a.m., 22 November.

The following additional information has been received in connection with the torpedoing of the aircraft carrier INDEPENDENCE, on 21 November: The carrier was attacked by fifteen Japanese medium bombers about forty miles west of TARAWA, during evening twilight. The enemy planes came in very low over the water and were not detected by Radar until visually observed.

The enemy attack was vigorously executed in the face of heavy antiaircraft fire and fighter protection. It is estimated that six of the enemy planes were shot down.

Late reports indicate that the INDEPENDENCE was able to get underway and is proceeding at fifteen knots towards FUNAFUTI, ELLICE ISLANDS.

LCI 22 was strafed by two enemy fighters in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, at 6:30 a.m., 20 November. Eleven men were wounded.

On 20 November, air patrols over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, shot down a Japanese medium bomber west of TOROKINA. These planes then strafed enemy installations near MOMOITU MISSION, southwest BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

During 20 November, enemy planes dropped from fifty to sixty bombs in the TOROKINA area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The bombs fell on a fuel and small arms dump and on the air strip under construction. Five men were killed and eighteen wounded. Of three Japanese planes which strafed the area our antiaircraft fire probably destroyed two.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED OSD Letter

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 21 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 3:50 p.m., 20 November, thirty-one Avengers, fifty-seven Dauntless, escorted by eight Corsairs, bombed and strafed enemy concentrations and supply lines from MAWRAKA to MIBO RIVER, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of fires were started. All of our planes returned.

At 11:00 a.m., 20 November, thirty Mitchells and Venturas, covered by fifteen Lightnings, bombed BONIS with good results. One building was destroyed, a number damaged and fifteen hits scored on the runway. No enemy interception was encountered and all of our planes returned.

The aircraft carrier INDEPENDENCE (CVL) was torpedoed at about 6:15 p.m., 21 November, by enemy aircraft approximately forty miles west of TARAWA. The vessel's engine room is flooded and she is under tow by the cruiser PENSACOLA and two destroyers towards FUNAFUTI, ELLICE ISLANDS.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 21 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the late afternoon, 19 November, nineteen Liberators effectively bombed TARAWA, GILBERT ISLANDS. All of our planes returned.

During the same afternoon, twelve Liberators, operating from NONOMEA, ELLICE ISLANDS, struck at MAKIN, GILBERT ISLANDS. A number of fires were started. One of the bombers crashed and burned upon its return and another landed on the water near its base and sank.

At 8:30 a.m., 21 November, amphibious forces, under command of Rear Admiral Turner, (Task Force 52), landed on the west side of BUTARITARI ISLAND, MAKIN ATOLL, against small mortar fire and machine gun fire. The opposition ceased after our troops landed.

Landings on the northeast side of BUTARITARI ISLAND commenced at 10:43 a.m., against heavy machine gun fire which was soon reduced by medium tanks. A later report indicated that one-half of BUTARITARI ISLAND was in our hands. Enemy resistance continued to the eastward. Our casualties were light.

The amphibious forces, under Rear Admiral Hill, (Task Force 53) landed its first wave on TARAWA at 0913 a.m., 21 November. By 10:37 a.m., five waves were ashore with the sixth ready to land tanks. Enemy resistance was encountered and continues.

During the operation, the United States destroyer RINGGOLD, while unloading inside of the lagoon at TARAWA, was hit, apparently by enemy artillery and one engine is reported out of commission. This is the only naval casualty reported.

During 21 November, the ignition of a powder charge in the center gun of Turret Number TWO on the U.S.S. MISSISSIPPI, started a powder fire which killed one officer and thirty-nine enlisted men and injured nine enlisted men.

During the afternoon, 20 November, three Mitchells bombed and strafed the coastal villages from RURI BAY to LULUAI POINT, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with unobserved results.

Regraded Unclassified

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OSD Letter 12-28
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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 20 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

On 18 November, aircraft from Task Force 50.4 (SARATOGA (CV), PRINCETON (CVL), SAN DIEGO (CL), SAN JUAN (CL) and four destroyers) attacked NAURU three times in support of the operation for the capture of MAKIN, TARAWA, and APAMAMA, GILBERT ISLANDS. Ninety tons of bombs were dropped and a number of fires started. A one-hundred foot enemy freighter was strafed and burned. Three of four grounded medium bombers were strafed and burned. Seven enemy fighters were airborne at the time of our second and third attack. Two were shot down by our fighters. Enemy antiaircraft fire slightly damaged six of our planes, but all planes returned.

The submarine HARDER reported attacking an enemy convoy of three freighters about three hundred and seventy-five miles southeast of CHICHI JIMA on or about 19 November with the following results: One probably sunk, one badly crippled and the third damaged and under tow by destroyer.

The submarine BALAO, returning from patrol north and west of the BISMARKS, reported as follows:

23 October - sank a 4,500 ton Maru and damaged a 5,500 ton Maru about two hundred and seventy-five miles north northwest of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 6-3-76 OSD Letter

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 19 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

An incomplete report indicates that part of Task Force 54 (LST's and garrison groups), taking part in the operation for the capture of MAKIN, TARAWA and APAMAMA, GILBERT ISLANDS, was sighted by a JAPANESE four-engined flying boat one hundred and forty-eight miles east of TARAWA. The enemy plane was driven off by gun fire.

In connection with this operation, TARAWA was attacked according to plan on 18 November by aircraft of Task Group 50.3 (ESSEX (CV), BUNKER HILL (CV), INDEPENDENCE (CVL), CHESTER (CA), PENSACOLA (CA), SALT LAKE CITY (CA) and five destroyers). Further details are not at present available.

At noon 18 November, one squadron of Liberators attacked KARA and another squadron struck BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored along the entire length of the BUKA runway and in the south dispersal area. One twin-engine grounded enemy bomber was probably destroyed. Results of the attack on KARA have not been reported. No enemy planes were encountered and all of our planes returned.

At 12:11 p.m. 18 November, one Liberator bombed the southwest shore line of POPORANG ISLAND, SHORTLAND Area. Results were not reported.

At 3:20 p.m. 17 November, three Mitchells attacked the KIETA Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Two buildings were probably destroyed.

A later report indicates that three enemy planes were destroyed during the 17 November night bombing attack on our beached LST's in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. This action was reported in the morning summary of 18 November.

BOUGAINVILLE AND CHOISEUL ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

Limited patrol activity continues in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area. Our positions are being organized and consolidated.

A coast watcher on CHOISEUL ISLAND reported that all of the JAPANESE have moved from the southwest central section of the island to the northwest. The entire coast between LUTI CREEK and WARRIOR RIVER is clear of the enemy. The equipment left behind by our paratroop battalion, which evacuated the area on 3 November, has been recovered, in addition to JAPANESE equipment and food. The booby traps left by our troops at VOZA caused many enemy casualties and probably accelerated the rapid evacuation of the JAPANESE. Isolated JAPANESE in the bush are being hunted by the natives.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

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DECL OSD Letter, 3-19-73

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 19 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

After sunset 17 November, nine Liberators, operating from CANTON ISLAND, attacked MALOELAP, MARSHALL ISLANDS. An unreported number of enemy fighters intercepted, and two of our Liberators were severely damaged. Moderate antiaircraft fire was encountered. All of our planes returned, but one bomber cracked up on land.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

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DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter,
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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 19 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the night of 16-17 November, our aircraft successfully completed mining operations at the east end of BUKA PASSAGE.

Between 1:25 a.m. and 5:25 a.m. 17 November, four Liberators bombed BUKA ISLAND and BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. In addition, a night fighter strafed BONIS and started a fire and damaged a barge in BUKA PASSAGE.

At 2:27 a.m. 17 November, eight Mitchels bombed the coast line on both sides of BUKA PASSAGE, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Later, eight more Mitchells attacked the area and started fires and explosions.

At 5:12 a.m., three Mitchells strafed BUKA ISLAND with unobserved results. KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was then bombed by these planes with unobserved results.

Allied air patrols over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, contacted about thirty-five enemy fighters, dive and torpedo bombers at about 8:00 a.m. 17 November. Sixteen enemy planes were shot down. We lost two Corsairs.

At 8:00 a.m. 17 November, forty-eight dive bombers, thirty torpedo bombers, escorted by thirty-six fighters, attacked BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Large fires were started in the supply area and near the north strip. A number of hits were scored in or near gun positions and other installations. Only one of three enemy fighters attempted to intercept, and one enemy dive bomber fired at our planes. Two of the enemy fighters were shot down. One of our torpedo bombers failed to return.

On 17 November, twelve Mitchells and eight Corsairs bombed BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on the air strip. Four enemy fighters were airborne but did not attack.

At noon 17 November, three Liberators bombed and strafed the air field area on TARAWA, GILBERT ISLANDS. No enemy planes were seen, but weak antiaircraft fire was encountered.

At 2:15 p.m. 17 November, nine Liberators, operating from FUNAFUTI, GILBERT ISLANDS, attacked the runways and the barrack area on MILLI, MARSHALL ISLANDS. Intense antiaircraft fire was encountered, but no enemy planes intercepted.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 18 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

On 16 November, nine Liberators, operating from NUKU FETAU, set out to attack MALOELAP, MARSHALL ISLANDS. The weather turned back three of the bombers. The remaining six were attacked by about seven to fifteen Zeros over MALOELAP. The bombers probably shot down one enemy fighter but were forced to jettison their bombs. A search is being conducted for one bomber down north of NUKU FETAU ISLAND.

On 17 November, from 3: 18 a.m., to 4:07 a.m., about twelve enemy bombers attacked FUNAFUTI, GILBERT ISLANDS. About seventy to eighty bombs were dropped which destroyed a grounded Liberator, one sky train, and damaged a number of other planes. The Army radio receiver station was demolished. A number of bombs fell on the runway. One man was killed.

The submarine KINGFISH, returning from patrol, of the CELEBES and the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES, reported as follows:

	SANK
October 1, by gunfire	225 ton sail boat
October 9, HYUTOMA MARU	14,050 tons
October 20, freighter	5,000 tons
TOTAL	19,275 tons

The Fifth Echelon of reinforcements and supplies completed unloading at EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, during the night of 17 November. The following day the tug PAWNEE and beached LST's were ineffectively bombed by twelve enemy dive bombers. One enemy plane was brought down by barrage balloons.

The latest report of survivors from the high speed transport McKEAN, suhk on 17 November: Eight officers and eighty men from the McKEAN, nine officers and one hundred eighteen men of the Marines embarked in the vessel - Total 215.

Army and Navy Liberators bombed JALUIT, MARSHALL ISLANDS, at noon, 16 November. Large fires were started. A number of enemy float planes intercepted and one was probably shot down. One of our planes reached KAWAJELIN and dropped a number of bombs with unreported results. All of our planes returned.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 18 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

After sunset, on 15 November, eight Liberators, operating from CANTON ISLAND, attacked MILLE, MARSHALL ISLANDS, and MAKIN, GILBERT ISLANDS. Large fires were started on MILLE. No enemy planes were encountered. All planes returned.

At 3:35 a.m., 16 November, eight Mitchells bombed and strafed the BUKA PASSAGE and SOHANA ISLAND area. Later, at 4:03 a.m., eight Mitchells attacked this area and again at 4:15 a.m., four more Mitchells attacked. One fire was started. Five of our planes received minor damage from antiaircraft fire but all returned.

On the same morning, between 3:25 a.m., and 4:30 a.m., four Liberators bombed BUKA and BONIS and started a fire in the BUKA dispersal area and four fires along the shoreline of BUKA PASSAGE.

Between 8:35 a.m., and 9:45 a.m., 16 November, eighteen dive bombers effectively bombed the enemy in the vicinity of the JABA RIVER. All planes returned.

At 6:00 a.m., 16 November, eight Corsairs attacked and damaged a barge off TENEKAU, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and destroyed a large building one mile inland from CHABAI, MATCHIN BAY area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

An unreported number of United States destroyers bombarded BUKA between 4:15 a.m., and 4:58 a.m., 16 November.

Photographs taken on November 16, showed the BONIS air strip serviceable, the KARA strip partially serviceable, and the BALLALE, KAHILI, and BUKA air strips serviceable.

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

Our forces in the TOROKINA area, have extended their defense perimeter about one thousand yards on all fronts. The beachhead is now eight thousand yards wide and five thousand five hundred yards deep. This includes two thirds of the air field site.

Enemy activity continues in the JABA RIVER area. Total enemy casualties to date, eight hundred and twelve dead, six prisoners. Allied casualties one hundred and seventeen dead, four hundred and eleven wounded, eighty-seven missing.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 17 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The submarine THRESHER sank a medium-sized freighter with three torpedo hits on 12 November north of TRUK.

On the morning of 17 November, from 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., a Task Group of eight LST's, eight APD's, escorted by six destroyers, was attacked by enemy planes off the west coast of BOUGAINVILLE in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area. Two enemy planes were destroyed. As has been previously reported, the high speed transport (ex-DD) McKEAN was struck by an aerial torpedo and sunk.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter 6-8-78

9 a.m. 17 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At noon on 15 November, twenty unescorted Liberators bombed BUKA. It is reported good coverage was obtained and several fires started. While this action was going on, a single Liberator also bombed KAHILI. No enemy air interception was met. All our planes returned.

Liberators from FUNAFUTI, in the afternoon of 15 November, made a surprise strike on JALUIT ISLAND of the MARSHALL ISLAND group. Bombs were dropped from heights of fourteen thousand to two thousand feet. No enemy antiaircraft fire was received on the first run and during the attack no enemy air interception was met. Despite the fact that it was very cloudy over the target, good photographs were taken. It is reported that at JABOR, at the northern end of JALUIT ISLAND, there were five large AK's, perhaps one light cruiser and many barges in the harbor. One of these AK's was left burning and three were probably damaged. Many fires were started at JABOR among the hangars, shops and oil stores. Six seaplanes were seen, but none were destroyed. No casualties occurred in this flight.

Early on the morning of 16 November a night fighter bombed personnel and supply areas between KONGU HILL and KAHILI.

At 1:00 p.m., 16 November, three Mitchells bombed and strafed the east coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. They destroyed three barges north of KIETA. The villages from KIETA to TINPUTS HARBOR were well strafed. Light, but fairly accurate antiaircraft fire was received at KIETA. All our planes returned with minor damage but with no injury to personnel.

At dusk, 16 November, destroyers of DesRon 23 made a contact with a surfaced submarine thirty-seven miles west southwest of MUTUPINA POINT, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Fire was opened by our forces at 4,000 yards, and it is reported several hits were made. When the submarine was brought under illumination, it submerged. The engagement lasted for twelve minutes.

At 4:00, 17 November, the auxiliary high speed destroyer McKEAN was sunk by an aerial torpedo from a low flying plane, twenty miles southwest of CAPE TOROKINA, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. The McKEAN was the rear guard of an LST formation approaching the bay. She was hit aft on the starboard side and the explosion started oil fires which spread and exploded her magazine, sinking her. A preliminary count of those rescued indicates that eighty-eight of the ship's personnel of which eight were officers, including the commanding officer, were saved. There also have been rescued one hundred and twenty-seven marines, including nine officers.

Regraded Unclassified

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DECLASSIFIED QSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 17 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 10:49 a.m. 14 November, one Liberator bombed KAHILI, SHORTLANDS Area, while another one bombed SHORTLAND ISLAND. Results were unobserved in both cases. Intense antiaircraft fire was received and one of the Liberators is missing.

At 1:00 a.m. 15 November, a Ventura harassed KARA and KAHILI. The result of the damage inflicted has not been reported.

At 3:15 a.m. 15 November, one night fighter bombed the SHORTLAND-FAISI area, destroying one float plane and two barges by strafing. The intense antiaircraft fire damaged the plane, but no injuries were received by the personnel.

At 3:30 a.m. 15 November, Lightnings bombed BUKA and strafed the MATCHIN BAY area near BUKA. The results have not been reported.

At 11:40 a.m. 15 November, fifty-one Dauntless, twenty-six Avengers, covered by sixteen Corsairs, bombed KARA and scored hits on the runway and antiaircraft positions. One direct hit was made on a building in the supply area. The antiaircraft fire was slight. There was no air interception. All our planes returned.

During 15 November, a GUADALCANAL snooper strafed huts, the pier and one small craft and two piles of stores at KIETA.

Presumably during daylight, 15 November, our EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY air patrols, failing to find any enemy planes, staged a field day up and down the coastal areas around BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. This activity resulted in the destroyal of eight barges, the damaging of one small AK and several other barges, the setting on fire of eight buildings and numerous huts, and the destroying of two fuel dumps at TONELEI. In their journeys, they encountered very slight antiaircraft fire in the MATCHIN BAY area but received intense fire at BONIS and TONELEI. Over Kieta and ARAWA BAY light antiaircraft fire was received. All our planes returned.

During the morning of 15 November, four Mitchells searched the coast off BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND up to BUKA. They damaged a small freighter at CAPE DUNGANON, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE, and destroyed one barge and supplies on the shore at LEUSS (TINPUTS HARBOR Area).

Regraded Unclassified

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DECLASSIFIED 6-3-
OSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 16 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Further details on the bombing of TARAWA, GILBERT ISLANDS, on the afternoon of 14 November, indicates that nine Liberators attacked it. During the same afternoon nine additional Liberators struck at MILLE ATOLL of the MARSHALL GROUP. No air opposition was offered there but light and heavy antiaircraft fire was encountered. Bombs which were dropped from nine thousand to one thousand feet, started fires and created explosions. It is reported that no casualties were suffered in both of these flights.

During the night of 14-15 November, motor torpedo boats operating from LAMBU LAMBU, northern VELLA LAVELLA ISLAND, attacked three empty Japanese barges on the beach at REDMAN ISLAND, northwest CHOISEUL. Although hits were observed, the extent of the damage was not determined.

Photographs taken on 15 November of the enemy's air field on BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND indicate that the BONIS runway is serviceable and those at BALLALE, KARA, KAHILI and BUKA are unserviceable.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4:00 p.m. 15 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

GROUND SITUATION -
EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND

On 13 November, the First Battalion of the Third Marine Division advanced to occupy the trail junction, which is three thousand yards north of PIVA and northeast of TOROKINA. Here the enemy was attacked in their prepared positions. In the ensuing engagement, thirteen Marines were killed and sixty-five were wounded. During the evening, some sniping was reported. A BLUE patrol also contacted a small party of Japs with two light machine guns about six hundred yards east of the mouth of the LARUMA RIVER, just northwest of TOROKINA. Intermittent fighting occured during the afternoon, with our casualties totaling one killed and one wounded. No estimate has been reported of the Jap losses in either engagement.

The U.S. light cruiser DENVER, which had her engineering spaces flooded by an aerial torpedo at 5:00 a.m. 13 November, arrived safely at PURVIS HARBOR, FLORIDA ISLAND at 9:00 a.m. 15 November.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 15 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

A preliminary report indicated that on 14 November, between 4:27 p.m., and 7:00 p.m., eighteen Liberators, operating from FUNAFUTI, attacked the enemy runway, dispersal and storage area on TARAWA, GILBERT ISLANDS. Four large fires, near the runway, were started. No enemy planes were encountered. One of our bombers is missing.

A delayed report indicates that during the night of 11-12 November, seven enemy planes bombed the vicinity of PURUATA ISLAND and CAPE TOROKINA causing some damage.

The Steamship CAPE SAN JUAN torpedoed one hundred and fifty miles southwest of TONGATABU and reported in the summary of 13 November, sank at 5:08 a.m., 14 November. An estimated one thousand and one hundred and eighty survivors have been rescued.

On 14 November, a reconnaissance plane attacked and damaged an eight or ten thousand ton enemy freighter, escorted by two corvettes in the northern part of ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL. The vessel was subsequently beached in the area.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE
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DECLASSIFIED
OAD Letter 2-8-46

9 a.m. 15 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Six Mitchell bombers strafed BUKA at 3 a.m., 13 November, with unobserved results. Two of the planes were slightly damaged but all returned.

At 11:15 a.m., 13 November, sixteen Airacobras strafed buildings at TARLENA, northwest BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of the buildings were left smoking.

The MATCHIN BAY area, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was attacked by six Mitchells at noon, 13 November. Results were not observed.

On 13 November, between 1:23 p.m., and 2:50 p.m., a GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane bombed and strafed camouflaged grounded enemy planes and buildings on KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. Five enemy float reconnaissance planes were destroyed and a number of fires started.

At 4:35 a.m., 13 November, a Lightning night fighter strafed BONIS, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND and destroyed four enemy single-engined planes on the ground and damaged another. A barge loaded with Japanese was also believed to have been destroyed.

During the night of November 13-14, a Douglas night fighter harassed enemy positions on SHORTLAND ISLAND and KAHILI. Four of five enemy searchlights were shot out.

On 14 November, twenty Avengers bombed the vicinity of CAPE TOROKINA. The area was well covered. No antiaircraft fire or enemy planes were encountered. All of our planes returned.

At 12:15 p.m., 14 November forty-nine dive bombers and eight torpedo bombers, covered by sixteen Corsairs, bombed enemy installations on BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. A number of hits were scored on the runway. Intense antiaircraft fire was encountered but all planes returned.

On 14 November the north coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, including KIETA was strafed by four fighters. Results were not observed.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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OSD LOCKET

4 p.m. 14 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 11:26 a.m. 13 November, seventeen Liberators bombed BONIS, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on antiaircraft gun positions, taxiways and in dispersal areas.

At 12:15 a.m. 14 October, a motor torpedo boat, operating from TREASURY ISLAND, was struck by a three-inch enemy shell, one mile off SIRUKIA POINT, SOUTH SHORTLAND ISLAND. One officer and one enlisted were killed and six others wounded.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 14 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

On 11 November between 7:45 p.m., and 8:15 p.m., seven enemy torpedo and bomber planes ineffectively attacked Task Force 39 (MONTPELIER, DENVER, COLUMBIA, CLEVELAND, and seven destroyers), south of GANONGGA ISLAND. One enemy plane was shot down and the remainder were driven off without releasing their torpedoes.

At 2:10 p.m., 12 November, twenty-seven torpedo bombers and forty-five dive bombers escorted by ten Corsairs attacked KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored on the runway and fires were started in the supply and personnel areas near the strip. No enemy antiaircraft fire or planes were encountered.

During the afternoon of 12 November, eight Lightnings strafed the revetment area at BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Upon their return these planes strafed the northeast area of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND including KIETA HARBOR with unobserved results.

Preliminary reports indicate that eighteen Mitchell bombers effectively attacked TARIENA VILLAGE, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND during the morning of 12 November.

On 13 November between 10:45 p.m., and 10:55 p.m., six enemy bombers attacked FUNAFUTI, ELLICE ISLANDS. About twenty-four to thirty-six bombs were dropped which wounded two of our personnel, set on fire and destroyed one Liberator, one Catalina and one Corsair. A five hundred gallon gasoline dump was hit and burned and the main radio transmitter was struck by bombs. No enemy planes were shot down.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED; DOD Letter; SECRET

13 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 9:40 a.m. 11 November, forty-two Liberators attacked enemy shipping in RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN. Two squadrons of Liberators bombed a heavy or light cruiser in the outer SIMPSON HARBOR. Two squadrons bombed another heavy or light cruiser and a freighter in TAHILI BAY. No hits were scored. About twelve or fifteen enemy fighters intercepted and of these five were shot down. One Liberator was badly damaged, one slightly damaged and another landed in the water near GANONGGA ISLAND. The remainder of our planes returned.

Three Liberators, escorted by fighters, after an unsuccessful search for enemy shipping in NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, on 11 November, bombed and strafed enemy barges and installations between TARLENA and CHABAI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The fighter escort strafed four enemy barges with unobserved results. One fighter plane was forced down in the water off BARAKOMA, SOUTHEAST VELLA LAVELLA, but the pilot was rescued.

A reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, engaged five enemy fighters twenty miles east of NAURU ISLAND during the morning of 11 November. The enemy broke off the attack after two of their planes appeared to be set on fire.

During the night of 11 November, about twelve enemy bombers dropped between fifty to sixty bombs on NANOMEA, ELLICE ISLANDS. Preliminary reports indicate one killed and two wounded and a number of small fires were started in the ammunition dump. One enemy plane was shot down by antiaircraft fire.

with 1200 troops aboard

At 4:00 a.m. 12 November, the S.S. CAPE SAN JUAN was torpedoed about one hundred and fifty miles southwest of TONGATABU and reported sinking.

At 5:00 a.m. 13 November, the U.S. light cruiser DENVER was attacked by enemy aircraft forty-three miles southwest of CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and hit by an aerial torpedo on the port side aft, which flooded the engineering spaces and put all but one shaft out of commission. The DENVER is returning to port at a speed of about five knots.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

9 a.m. 12 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 9:05 a.m. 11 November, aircraft of Task Force 50.3 (ESSEX (CV), BUNKER HILL (CV), INDEPENDENCE (CVL) and ten destroyers) commenced an attack on enemy ships at RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN. The attack was completed at 9:35 a.m., with the following results:

Sunk - one light cruiser, and two destroyers.
Damaged - two heavy cruisers, one light cruiser and eight destroyers.
In addition, twenty-four enemy fighters were shot down. We lost four planes in combat.

Later that morning, enemy torpedo bombers and dive bombers attacked the carriers four times. In these engagements, sixty-four enemy planes were shot down. We lost one dive bomber and two torpedo bombers. The enemy scored a number of near misses, but the surface units retired without material damage.

The results of these attacks are indicated on the attached tabulation.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

ENEMY LOSSES AT RABAUL ATTACK (0905 to 0930, 11 NOV.)

SURFACE						AIR
CA		CL		DD		
SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED	SUNK	DAMAGED	
0	2	1	1	2	8	24

U.S. LOSSES AT RABAUL ATTACK

	VF		VT		VB		PERSONNEL	
	OPERA.	COMBAT	OPERA.	COMBAT	OPERA.	COMBAT	OFF.	ENL.
ESSEX	1	1	-	-	3	-	2	1
BUNKER HILL	-	1	-	2	-	-	3	2
INDEPENDENCE	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
TOTAL:	2	2	-	2	3	-	7	3

ENEMY LOSSES WHEN TF 50.3 WAS ATTACKED

VF	VB	DB	TB	MB
3	-	32	27	2

U.S. LOSSES WHEN TF 50.3 WAS ATTACKED

VF	VB	VT
-	1	2

NUMBER OF U.S. AIRCRAFT IN RABAUL ATTACK

	VF	VT	VB
ESSEX	29	19	28
BUNKER HILL	27	18	23
INDEPENDENCE	15	9	-
TOTAL:	71	46	51

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 12 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC(Cont'd.)

BOUGAINVILLE AND TREASURY ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

To date, a total of 26,700 personnel and 19,000 tons of cargo and equipment have been landed at TOROKINA.

7,700 personnel and 5,800 tons of cargo and equipment have been transported to TREASURY ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECLASSIFIED OSD Letter, 3 Sep

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9 a.m. 12 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 8:10 a.m. 10 November, fifty-five dive bombers and thirty-four torpedo bombers, escorted by fifty-four fighters, attacked the BUKA and BONIS airfields, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Fires were started on both fields, and it is believed an ammunition dump at BUKA was destroyed. Moderate antiaircraft fire was encountered, but no enemy planes intercepted. One of our dive bombers was reported missing.

At 11:00 a.m. 10 November, twelve unescorted Mitchells bombed the BALLALE ISLAND runway, SHORTLAND AREA. Results of this attack were not reported.

On 10 November, eleven unescorted Mitchells bombed KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on the runway and a large fire was started. No antiaircraft fire nor enemy planes were encountered.

All of the enemy air fields on BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND were reported unserviceable on the night of 10 November.

At 6:00 p.m. 10 November, three Mitchells attacked and sank a two hundred foot enemy freighter in MATCHIN BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Enemy installations were strafed and two barges sunk, between TAROLENA and CHABAI, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. All of our planes returned.

BOUGAINVILLE AND TREASURY ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

On 10 November, seventeen dive bombers and twelve torpedo bombers attacked enemy positions along the PIVA and JABA RIVERS in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY AREA. A number of fires were started and half of PIVA VILLAGE was destroyed. This attack was coordinated with the forward movement of our troops in the TOROKINA AREA.

PIVA was occupied by our ground forces on 10 November. Quantities of ammunition, other supplies and equipment were found abandoned in the bivouac area along the PIVA-NUMA NUMA trail.

Our ground forces in the TOROKINA AREA continued to expand their positions in all directions and work on the airstrip began on 9 November. It is estimated that the strip will be completed in about thirty days.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

4 p.m. 11 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Information obtained from a prisoner of war indicates that the Japanese battleship MUTSU was sunk by an explosion in the INLAND SEA sometime in July. A battleship of the Yamato class was undergoing conversion to an aircraft carrier.

At 9 a.m. 11 November, twenty-five Avenger torpedo bombers and twenty-one Dauntless dive bombers, attached to Task Force 38 (SARATOGA (CV), PRINCETON (CVL), SAN DIEGO (CL), SAN JUAN (CL) and seven destroyers), covered by fifty-five Hellcats, attacked five enemy destroyers outside of RABAUL HARBOR, NEW BRITAIN. The harbor itself was closed in by weather. Dive bombing conditions were unfavorable.

Two bomb hits were scored, and two probable torpedo hits on a large destroyer identified by photographs as of the Teratsuki class. Several near misses were observed on the other destroyers and one probable and two possible torpedo hits.

About thirty to forty enemy planes were airborne. Our planes shot down one enemy fighter and one dive bomber. One Avenger is reported missing, and a Hellcat was lost, although the pilot was rescued.

A preliminary report indicates that a large Japanese transport was damaged with two torpedo hits on 11 November by one of our submarines (name unknown) in a position about four hundred and fifty miles northeast of GUAM.

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

On 11 November, our ground forces in the TOROKINA area lost contact with the enemy on the west flank. Marine raiders attacked along the PIVA trail and advanced about five hundred yards. It was estimated that about three hundred Japanese were killed in the PIVA Area during the action of 8-9 November.

Regraded Unclassified

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DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.6
NSC Letter 11-3-98

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 11 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Intercepted messages indicate that the aircraft carrier ESSEX taking part in the strike against RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN, scheduled for 9:30 a.m. 11 November was under enemy air attack four times. Apparently, only minor damage was inflicted on the carrier. Further details are not at present available.

The KARA airfield on BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND was attacked by thirty-three dive bombers and seventeen torpedo bombers, escorted by sixteen Airacobras at 11:10 a.m. 9 November. A number of hits were scored on the runway in the supply and gun position areas. The fighter escort strafed the southeast coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND and other enemy positions in the SHORTLAND Area with unobserved results.

At noon, 9 November, thirty-five dive bombers and eighteen torpedo bombers, escorted by eight Airacobras, attacked the BALLALE airfield and started a number of fires. A direct hit was scored on an ammunition dump.

During the afternoon of 9 November, an unreported number of Mitchells strafed the bivouac area on BUKA ISLAND. No shipping targets were seen in the area.

Photographs taken of the southern BOUGAINVILLE air fields after the air attack of 9 November show these fields to be unserviceable.

BOUGAINVILLE AND TREASURY ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

Enemy concentrations at the mouth of the LARUMA RIVER, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, were strafed at 7:00 a.m. 9 November by six Mitchell bombers. Results were not observed.

An estimated three hundred Japanese landed on the west flank of our positions in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY on 7-8 November. They were immediately engaged and about one-half of the enemy force was wiped out. Allied casualties amounted to about fifty or sixty wounded. Our positions along the entire front in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area are reported secure.

Enemy planes were over TREASURY ISLAND during the night 8-9 November and apparently dropped some bombs without damage.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

10 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

An Allied battalion, equipped with artillery and tanks, less one company, engaged the enemy reinforcements which landed from barges near the LARUMA RIVER and ATSINIMA BAY, during the night of 6 or 7 November. It is estimated that the enemy force consisted of two reinforced companies equipped with mortars and machine guns. Our troops suffered sixty casualties. The outpost at LARUMA was withdrawn after thirty Japanese were killed. Enemy snipers are active.

On 8 November, an enemy outpost at the PIVA TRAIL, east TOROKINA was attacked by an Allied company and eight Japanese were killed. Two of our troops were wounded. Another enemy patrol was encountered in this area and two of our troops were killed.

A large concentration of the enemy has been reported in the CHABAI-TABUT area, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

One of our submarines as yet unidentified sank an entire enemy convoy consisting of two tankers, one large transport, two cargo vessels and one unidentified ship on or about 8 November, two hundred and ninety miles west northwest of MANILA.

The submarine CABRILLA reported scoring two torpedo hits on a seventeen thousand ton auxiliary aircraft carrier on 24 September two hundred and forty miles northeast of CHICHIJIMA.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

10 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC(Cont'd.)

At 11:17 a.m., 7 November, a reconnaissance plane sighted and attacked three enemy cargo vessels, escorted by two destroyers and two planes, fifty miles north of MUSSAU ISLAND. A near miss was scored on the largest cargo vessel and one of the enemy planes appeared to have been damaged.

At 11:19 a.m., 7 November, twenty-one Liberators bombed the BUKA air field. Results of this attack were not reported. No enemy planes were encountered.

At 11:55 a.m., 7 November, one Liberator bombed with unreported results the revetment area at KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. No enemy planes were encountered.

During the morning of 8 November, six Mitchells, escorted by fighters, bombed KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Seven of the escorting Corsairs shot down an enemy medium bomber and destroyed a grounded fighter in addition to killing about twenty-five Japanese on the field at BUKA.

On the same day, three Venturas attacked enemy gun positions in the LARUMA RIVER area northwest of CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with unobserved results.

At noon, 8 November, air patrols over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY intercepted about sixty enemy planes and shot down thirteen enemy fighters, thirteen dive bombers and probably shot down four more fighters and three dive bombers. We lost four Warhawks, one Corsair, one Lightning and one Hellcat. Other Allied patrols over the area strafed about ten or twelve enemy barges near the mouth of the LARUMA RIVER and set a number of them on fire.

At noon, 9 November, a reconnaissance plane operating from GUADALCANAL shot down one of four attacking planes in the vicinity of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND.

BOUGAINVILLE GROUND SITUATION

Enemy planes attacked the CAPE TOROKINA area during the night of 6-7 November and dropped about fifty bombs which killed two and wounded ten of the personnel.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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OSD Letter

9 a.m. 9 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND - GROUND SITUATION

An Allied reconnaissance party ashore in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY area was attacked on 5 November. Eight of the enemy were killed. Allied losses: one killed, three wounded.

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Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 9 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

A delayed report indicates that during the night of 1-2 November, enemy planes dropped bombs on MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. Two men were killed and some material was destroyed or damaged.

During the night of 5-6 November, enemy planes dropped bombs without effect into EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The following night a Japanese plane attacked and caused some casualties.

At noon 7 November, three Venturas, during a search for enemy shipping, strafed enemy personnel at MUSSI POINT and bombed KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results of these attacks were unobserved.

At 1:30 p.m. 7 November, eighteen dive bombers and fourteen torpedo bombers bombed enemy gun positions, the supply and bivouac areas at the mouth of the JABA RIVER, EAST EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. No antiaircraft fire nor air interception was encountered.

At 1:55 p.m. three Venturas, escorted by twenty-four fighters, bombed and strafed enemy positions and barges in ATSINIMA BAY, northwest of CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of barges were destroyed or damaged. Later, at 2:00 p.m., this area was again attacked by eight Mitchells with unobserved results.

During 7 November, four dive bombers, patroling EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, strafed about twenty or twenty-five enemy barges at the mouth of the LARUMA RIVER and set on fire several huts at the mouth of the ATSINIMA RIVER, northwest of CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

A reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, at 1:20 a.m. 8 November, attacked an enemy heavy cruiser and two cargo vessels about thirty miles west southwest of BUKA PASSAGE, north of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

At about 7:10 p.m. 8 November, Cruiser Division 13 (SANTA FE (CL), BIRMINGHAM (CL), MOBILE (CL)), supporting the reinforcement of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was attacked by thirty or forty enemy aircraft. Seven of the enemy planes were reported shot down.

A preliminary report indicates that the BIRMINGHAM was damaged by bombs and will require re-gunning and docking. The vessel's engineering plant was not damaged. Personnel casualties - one killed, forty-two wounded.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 8 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Our positions at EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY are being consolidated. Minor patrol activity continued throughout 6 November, and three Japanese were killed.

During the night of 6 November and 7 November, about twenty-one enemy barges landed on the west flank of our positions in the vicinity of the LARUMA RIVER and ATSINIMA BAY. Our forces engaged the enemy troops and patrol activity continued inland. Two destroyers have been ordered to CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, in order to intercept any further enemy barge operations.

Our troops have completed patrols around all of TREASURY ISLAND.

A preliminary report received indicates that a dive bombing and torpedo attack was launched by enemy planes on 8 November against a transport group in the EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY Area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

It is reported that the transport FULLER was hit by two bombs and suffered five killed and twenty wounded. The transport JACKSON was struck by a dud bomb which caused no casualties. Other vessels in the group did not suffer any casualties. Further details are not available at present.

Preliminary reports indicate as follows:

The submarine TAUTOG, returning from an unreported area in the PACIFIC, reported sinking or damaging one freighter.

The submarine HALIBUT scored three hits on an aircraft carrier and sank one freighter and damaged another in the vicinity of BUNGO SUIDO, JAPANESE EMPIRE.

The submarine SEA WOLF, returning from an unreported area in the PACIFIC, reported sinking one mine layer and a large freighter.

The submarine HADDOCK, returning from the TRUK Area, reported sinking one destroyer and two tankers, totaling 21,500 tons. This is in addition to the 11,000 tons she previously reported sunk.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 8 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Of the twelve enemy dive bombers which attacked the LCI gunboat on the night of 5 November, the LCI shot down four of the enemy planes, and the motor torpedo boat shot down one. This attack was reported in the afternoon summary of 6 November.

At 7:45 a.m. 6 November, an unreported number of Mitchell bombers, escorted by fighters, strafed at low level a one hundred and fifty and a three hundred foot enemy freighter, both loaded with antiaircraft ammunition and escorted by a corvette off the SOUTHWEST COAST of BUKA ISLAND. All three of the enemy ships were sunk.

After the attack, our bombers were intercepted by eight enemy Zeros. One Zero was shot down. Although damaged, all of our planes returned. The fighter escort of eight Corsairs shot down an enemy bomber ten miles off CAPE MOLTKE, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 12:15 p.m. 6 November, twenty-four Mitchells attacked the KARA airfield, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND and started a number of fires.

During 6 November, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY air patrols strafed the KIETA runway and other enemy installations at MABIRI, northeast CENTRAL BOUGAINVILLE, and the bivouac area from the MARIRICI RIVER to two miles east of MAMAREGU, SOUTH EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. Results of these attacks were not observed.

At noon 6 November, an unreported number of Liberators attacked BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A preliminary report indicates that the runway was well covered by bombs.

At 1:00 p.m. 6 November, two Lightnings shot down an enemy plane believed to be a photo reconnaissance plane, southeast of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

During the afternoon of 6 November, two enemy planes ineffectively dropped bombs into the water in the MUNDA AREA, NEW GEORGIA.

A GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane at 12:52 p.m. 7 November, attacked three enemy tankers, escorted by two small vessels, about sixty-three miles northeast of MUSSAU ISLAND. A near miss was scored on one of the tankers.

BOUGAINVILLE AND TREASURY ISLAND
GROUND SITUATION

Photographs taken on 6 November, showed the KARA, KIETA, BALLALE, KIHILI and BUKA runways unserviceable.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 7 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Photographs taken at the time of attack by TASK FORCE 38, 5 November, show the following type of enemy vessels in RABAUL HARBOR, NEW BRITAIN: Eight heavy cruisers, including two MOGAMI, two NACHI, three ATAGO and one TONE class. Three light cruisers, including one SENDAI, one YUBARI, one NATORI class. Fourteen destroyers.

Although the photographs show a number of bomb hits, they are not complete as they were taken during the attack and not after the attack was completed.

Subsequent evaluation adds three more enemy fighters definitely shot down, for a total of twenty.

During the morning of 6 November, a Mitchell bomber attacked and sank two enemy barges in TIMPUTS HARBOR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and bombed KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with unobserved results.

At noon 6 November, forty-four dive bombers and seventeen torpedo bombers, covered by thirty-two fighters, attacked enemy installations at KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on a building and on what may have been a radio tower. The fighter escort destroyed one barge and set an unreported number on fire. One dive bomber is missing.

KARA is reported to appear deserted with few guns in emplacements.

At 12:15 p.m., twenty-four bombers (type unreported) escorted by Corsairs, again bombed KARA and started a number of fires.

At 2:10 p.m., 6 November, four Mitchell bombers sank two enemy barges, three small freighters and strafed about twenty or twenty-five enemy barges in the MATCHIN BAY area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. No enemy interception was encountered.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 6 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 12:28 p.m. 5 November, an unreported number of Liberators, attached to the SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AIR FORCE, attacked RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN shortly after the strike by TASK FORCE 38. Bombs were dropped on enemy installations and in the wharf area.

Photographs showed six heavy cruisers, ten or fourteen destroyers, cargo vessels, freighters, tankers and one hospital ship.

During the night of 5 November, an LCI gunboat, while escorting an LCT, in company with a motor torpedo boat, was attacked by twelve enemy dive bombers, between TREASURY ISLAND and EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

The LCI was struck by a torpedo, which entered the engine room but did not explode. The convoy returned to EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, where a bomb disposal unit will salvage the torpedo.

Enemy planes were over TREASURY ISLAND during the night of 4-5 November and dropped three bombs without damage.

GROUND SITUATION

No report has been received regarding the ground situation at EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

Patrol activity on TREASURY ISLAND continues. An Allied patrol on 5 November, between PULAPU and SOANTOTALU, TREASURY ISLAND, encountered ten Japanese, killed eight and captured one. Two unarmed Japanese were captured in the vicinity of MALSI.

It is believed that not more than twenty Japanese now remain on TREASURY ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

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9 a.m. 6 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The submarine GUARDFISH returned from patrol of the TRUK - NEW HANOVER traffic routes and reported the following results:

8 October - sank one freighter of a four-ship escorted convoy.

9-10 October - sank an escorted freighter.

Total enemy tons sunk - 13,050.

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Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 6 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 11:30 a.m. 5 November, air craft of Task Force 38 (SARATOGA (CV), PRINCETON (CVL), SAN DIEGO (CL), SAN JUAN (CL) and nine destroyers) struck enemy shipping in RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN. Upwards of twenty-three Avenger torpedo bombers and twenty-two Dauntless dive bombers, covered by fifty-two Hellcats, launched twenty-three torpedoes and dropped twenty-two half-ton bombs.

Of the six enemy heavy cruisers observed, five of them were hit with both torpedoes and bombs, and one blew up. The sixth heavy cruiser was torpedoed. Of the two light cruisers observed, one was hit by torpedoes and bombs and the other by bombs. Two destroyers, out of approximately fifteen to twenty seen in the harbor, were torpedoed. Most of the remainder were strafed.

About seventy-two to one hundred enemy fighters and medium bombers were in the air over the area, and of these our planes definitely shot down seventeen fighters, possibly twenty-one. Eight enemy fighters were damaged. Six fighters and one medium bomber, apparently float planes in the harbor, were reported sunk and one bomber probably sunk. The enemy antiaircraft fire encountered was concentrated and fairly accurate.

We lost one dive bomber, which was shot down and two Avengers, which landed on the water when they returned. Five Hellcats and two Avengers are missing. Sixteen Hellcats, eight Avengers and eight Dauntless received minor damage. Personnel casualties - three killed, eight wounded.

During 5 November, six Mitchells struck enemy shipping along the northeast coast of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with the following results: Exploded one one-hundred and fifty foot cargo vessel, set on fire a three-hundred foot cargo vessel, damaged a one-hundred foot cargo vessel, strafed twelve barges and dropped bombs in the bivouac area of the KIETA airfield, where a number of fires were started.

At 4:11 p.m. 5 November one of our reconnaissance planes ineffectively attacked a two-hundred and fifty foot destroyer tender escorted by two small ships twenty-miles northwest of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 5 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

BOUGAINVILLE, TREASURY AND CHOISEUL ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

Allied forces on the north of TREASURY ISLAND were attacked by an estimated one hundred Japanese. The attack was repulsed and sixty of the enemy were killed. Allied losses amounted to two killed and nine wounded.

As a result of the Allied paratroop raid on CHOISEUL ISLAND, one hundred and forty-three Japanese dead were counted. The number of enemy wounded is unknown, but is believed to be considerable. One hundred and eighty tons of supplies and equipment were destroyed in addition to the camp at SANGIGAI. On GUPPY ISLAND, a fuel dump was set on fire and other fires started. Two enemy barges were sunk.

During the successful paratroop withdrawal, booby traps and mine fields set by our troops were heard exploding, accompanied by enemy screams indicating additional Jap casualties.

Allied losses amounted to nine dead and sixteen wounded. It was reported that the enemy used dumdums and explosive bullets.

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4 p.m. 5 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 11:00 a.m. 4 November, fifty-seven dive bombers and nineteen torpedo bombers, escorted by fighters, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored on the runway and in the surrounding area. One torpedo bomber was shot down by enemy antiaircraft fire but the crew bailed out. Three torpedo bombers and one dive bomber were damaged by antiaircraft fire. No enemy planes were encountered.

The fighter escort, after the attack, strafed the north of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND and set on fire a small freighter near MABIRI, northeast BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. In addition, these planes probably set on fire two schooners between MABIRI and CAPE FRIENDSHIP. Three barges were sunk and two small vessels set on fire in MATCHIN BAY, north BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

Air patrols over EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, did not encounter any enemy planes during 4 November but attacked small surface craft and enemy gun positions in the MATCHIN BAY area.

At 7:20 p.m. 4 November, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked three large enemy cargo vessels, escorted by three destroyers, about one hundred and forty-five miles west of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

During the same day, another reconnaissance plane succeeded in shooting down one of eight enemy float planes, which attacked in the vicinity of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND.

A preliminary report indicates that the submarine TRIGGER, operating in the EAST CHINA SEA, on about 3 November, attacked an enemy convoy, and in an all night battle sank two freighters, one tanker and damaged one freighter.

The submarine SEA HORSE, which attacked the same convoy at the same time, sank one large tanker, one large and one small freighter.

BOUGAINVILLE, TREASURY AND CHOISEUL
ISLAND GROUND SITUATION

During 4 November, in the CAPE TOROKINA area, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, small groups of the enemy attempted to infiltrate our lines, and some Japanese sniper fire was encountered. Mopping operations of off-shore islands continued.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

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OSD letter,

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9 a.m. 5 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 9:35 a.m. 3 November, nineteen Liberators attacked a convoy of three enemy freighters protected by three destroyers one hundred and ten miles off the northeast central coast of NEW IRELAND. One freighter was seriously damaged and left in a sinking condition. Another freighter was also damaged.

About ten or twenty enemy fighters and observation planes attacked our bombers. Four of the enemy planes were definitely destroyed and three possibly destroyed. One Liberator was disabled and crash-landed at MUNDA, and another was forced down on the water. A number of our bombers received minor damage from antiaircraft fire.

At 12:10 p.m. 3 November, eight Corsairs were attacked by twenty Zeros over CAPE MOLTKE, west BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of the enemy planes were damaged. Two of our planes went down in flames and are reported missing.

At 7:30 a.m. 4 November, another reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL attacked two large enemy cargo vessels and set one on fire about one hundred and fifteen miles northeast of MUSSAU ISLAND.

At 10:50 a.m. 4 November, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, bombed and scored a direct hit on an enemy tanker escorted by a destroyer one hundred and sixty-eight miles north of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 4 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the night surface action of 1-2 November, the United States destroyer THATCHER, while approaching for a torpedo attack, collided broadside with the United States destroyer SPENCE at thirty-four knots. The vessel received severe structural damage, but continued in action following the collision, and at times succeeded in making thirty-four knots.

The damage to the THATCHER was mentioned in the morning summary of 3 November, which at that time reported that the damage was possibly received from an enemy air attack.

A preliminary report indicates that at 11:30 p.m. 4 November, one of our heavy bombers attacked and destroyed an enemy heavy or light cruiser one hundred miles north northwest of RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN.

Choiseul paratroopers have been withdrawn successfully leaving land mines and booby traps in area.

Regraded Unclassified

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 4 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 8:00 a.m. 2 November, a reconnaissance plane ineffectively bombed a surfaced enemy submarine ninety miles southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. Later, this plane attacked an enemy freighter seventy miles southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE and scored a direct bomb hit. The vessel is believed to have been sunk.

At 12:15 p.m. 2 November, another reconnaissance plane attacked and sank a 1,000 ton enemy freighter thirty miles southwest of OCEAN ISLAND. This plane was badly damaged and a number of her personnel were wounded.

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Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 3 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The following air actions on November 1 are additional to those previously reported:

At 7:05 a.m., eight Lightnings on a shipping reconnaissance destroyed one enemy bomber, thirty miles east of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. All our planes returned.

At 8:10 a.m., eight Lightnings, while on a patrol of the southwest coast of BOUGAINVILLE, engaged fifteen to twenty Zeros. Seven of the Zeros were shot down with three more probably destroyed. All our planes returned.

Later in the morning, twenty-one Liberators bombed KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA, scoring excellent hits southwest of the runway and in the dispersal areas. Very heavy antiaircraft fire was received by our planes but they all returned safely.

On November 2, at 8:00 a.m., thirty-two Allied fighters intercepted thirty-five to forty Zeros and several bombers forty miles west of CAPE TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Seven enemy fighters and one bomber were shot down. All our planes returned.

A little later in the morning, at 9:50 a.m., twenty unescorted Liberators bombed KIHILI, SHORTLANDS AREA. It is reported that the targets were excellently covered. All our planes returned.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 3 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

but it is reported that the damage to her is not serious. Our other ships received minor damage but few casualties and can be ready for action again within a few hours.

The expected air attack materialized at 8:10 a.m. The full effect of damage incurred by our forces, if any, cannot be reported herewith because of a garbled text. It is stated, however, that the light cruiser MONTPELIER received hits on her starboard catapult which resulted in the seriously wounding of nine of her personnel. Eight others were also wounded.

Regraded Unclassified

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 3 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Some details are now available of Task Force 39's surface action with the enemy during the night of November 1-2 and the Japs ensuing air attack on it the following morning. It would appear that the scene of the surface action took place approximately thirty-five miles West Northwest of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 2:27 a.m., initial surface contact was made at a range of 36,000 yards with the Jap forces disposed in three groups, the advance one being of four destroyers, the second group of four heavier units, followed by the third group numbering four ships. The distant interval between these groups was 6,000 yards. They were steaming on course 120° with a speed of twenty-seven knots.

Reports indicate that our forces deployed on course North and "beautifully" T'd the enemy with DESDIV 45 in the van, followed by the light cruisers and DESDIV 46 in the rear. As DESDIV 45 launched a torpedo attack on the advance group, our cruisers reversed to the South and DESDIV 46 went in with their torpedoes on the second enemy group. Four minutes after DESDIV 45 torpedoes were "seen" in the water, our light cruisers commenced firing.

Reports indicate that the main battle took place between 8,000 and 20,000 yards with our destroyers battling both groups of the enemy force. The destroyer squadron commander claims that DESDIV 45 made three torpedo hits and that DESDIV 46 got two.

The main battle continued until 3:55 a.m., when the remainder of the enemy fled to the westward. The mopping action and pursuit by our forces continued until 5:40 a.m., when the last Jap vessel remaining in the battle area was overtaken and sunk by our destroyers. No time was spent in picking up enemy survivors because it was feared that a hostile air attack would be made at dawn. It was also necessary to speedily gather our dispersed ships and assist the damaged destroyer FOOTE to clear the action zone.

A preliminary report indicates that the Japs lost one cruiser and four destroyers by sinking and two cruisers and two destroyers are believed to have been damaged. As has been previously indicated the destroyer FOOTE, in this action, was hit in the stern by a torpedo. The light cruiser DENVER was also struck with four eight inch shells

A 17056

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 3 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Task Force 39 was later attacked at 8:00 a.m., by a formation of seventy enemy planes. It would appear that the Destroyer THATCHER received severe structural damage during this bombardment, but reports indicate that she is underway and proceeding slowly to HATHORN SOUND, NEW GEORGIA ISLAND, for temporary repairs. Thirty-two of our fighter planes intercepted the enemy and shot down eight planes with no loss to themselves. The surface ships of Task Force 39 claims that they have destroyed ten to twelve planes.

During the night of 2-3 November a Liberator patrol plane attacked a Jap sub thirty-five miles east of KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The results were unobserved. At midnight the same plane bombed a Japanese freighter sixty miles west of BUKA. The results were unreported.

Eight motor torpedo boats will move up to a base at TOROKINA, EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, on the night of 3 November.

GROUND SITUATION TREASURY ISLAND

The ground situation on TREASURY ISLAND is progressing satisfactorily.

GROUND SITUATION CHOISEUL

On 1 November, at 5:00 p.m. in the afternoon, it was reported that the Japs on CHOISEUL ISLAND were continuing to move towards the northwestern end.

During the night of 3 November, the paratroop battalion which was landed on CHOISEUL, as a diversionary feint will be withdrawn on three LCI's, covered by eight motor torpedo boats.

A 17056

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 3 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Further details are now available covering the initial operation for the Allied seizure and occupation of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

Prior to the landing of the first assualt waves at 7:30 a.m. on 1 November, thirty-one Avengers bombed and strafed and seven Dauntless dive bombers dropped smoke bombs on the beaches. An average of thirty-four of our fighter planes covered the assualt waves as they landed. Despite attempts of an enemy bomber to drop mines off shore, the landings were conducted with no losses in surface ships.

It is reported a total of fourteen thousand three hundred men and sixty-two hundred tons of equipment and supplies were landed by the first echelon in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE. The troop and cargo attack vessels of the first echelon have arrived back at GUADALCANAL without incident on their return trip.

The TOROKINA ground troops have gained their first phase line without encountering enemy in strength, after the initial landing. Approximately three hundred casualties and fifty-five dead resulted from our landing and first day's operations. The Jap casualties are at least one hundred and thirty-five killed with no prisoners taken.

It is now reported that in the two successful air attacks made by Task Force 38 on the air fields on BUKA and BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, on 1 November, our only losses were two fighter planes.

On 2 November, at 2:48 a.m., surface Task Force 39 attacked an enemy force, stated as being in three groups, approximately thirty-five miles west northwest of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. No present information as yet has been received as to the damage inflicted or sustained in this engagement save that the Destroyer FOOTE had been torpedoed and was being towed clear. She was previously reported as having been damaged during an air attack on 2 November at 7:55 a.m. It is reported that the enemy's undamaged units withdrew to the westward at 4:44 a.m. A Blue air strike was ordered to intercept the enemy's flight but no contact was made. Although the FOOTE's draft forward is six feet and the main deck aft is awash the chances appear excellent that the seagoing tug SIOUX will be able to get her into to TULAGI.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 2 November 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

BOUGAINVILLE GROUND SITUATION

It is reported that landings in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND continue to be successful. The 3rd Marine Division landed against opposition and generally have obtained their first objective. By night fall of 1 November, they were still in contact with the enemy, but the action had been reduced to sporadic firing. The division has had casualties of two hundred and sixty, with an estimate of fifty killed. It is reported one hundred and thirty-five Japs have been killed with no prisoners taken.

Reports from the natives state that the Japs are in the vicinity of JABA RIVER with a force larger than that in the TOROKINA REGION.

TREASURY ISLANDS GROUND SITUATION

By the evening of 1 November, LST's carrying the second echelon to the TREASURY ISLANDS have completed unloading and departed.

Regraded Unclassified

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

immediate danger of sinking and is able to make a maximum speed of about four knots. Later reports indicate that the ocean-going tug, SIOUX, has the FOOTE in tow and both are now on the way back to port, making nine knots.

CHOISEUL GROUND SITUATION

During 30 October, Allied ground forces attacked SANGIGAI from the northwest and east and killed seventy-two Japs. Ammunition dumps, communication facilities, medical supplies, weapons and a new barge were destroyed. The enemy camp was burned. About forty Japs escaped towards LUTI, to the southeast. Documents were captured giving important information on barge routes and mine fields. Our preliminary casualties indicate four dead and nine wounded.

TREASURY ISLANDS GROUND SITUATION

Enemy activity is decreasing on the left flank of the FALAMAI perimeter, where our forces repulsed an attempted penetration during the night of 29-30 October. One infantry company has reached MALSI, on the northeastern side of MONO ISLAND, without having contacted any of the enemy. A preliminary report of the enemy dead now totals forty-four. About one hundred Japs remain on MONO ISLAND in the jungle. The indicated bulk of the enemy appears to be in the area two miles north of SAVEKE in the southern part of the island. One Jap 40mm mountain gun and its ammunition have been captured on the western side of the SAVEKE RIVER.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 2 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

A photo reconnaissance of the BUKA-BONIS Area, at 7:30 a.m., indicated that the BUKA runway was heavily pitted with craters. A large fire from a fuel dump on the southwest shore end of the BUKA runway was still blazing. Planes were burning in the northwest dispersal area, and three fires were seen in the southeast end of that area. One large three-decked transport was burning fiercely and lying abandoned five miles west of MADEHAS ISLAND in the western end of BUKA PASSAGE. A number of barges were rescuing survivors. The BUKA runway appeared unserviceable. Two large fires were seen near the northeast end of the BONIS strip. A third attack on BUKA was completed at 7:40 a.m. on 2 November by TASK FORCE 38. The results of the strike have not been indicated as yet, but twenty-eight tons of bombs were dropped.

At 8:00 a.m. eight Kittyhawks on patrol in the vicinity of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, intercepted thirty south-bound Zeros at 16,000 feet. Seven Zeros were destroyed with the probability of another one. All our planes returned.

At 9:07 a.m. twelve enemy bombers attacked our TASK FORCE in EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Our ships put to sea when the raid started and returned one-and-one-half hours later with no apparent damage.

On the same day, eight Corsairs, on patrol over the west coast of BOUGAINVILLE, contacted thirty to forty southbound Zeros acting as an escort for twelve to sixteen bombers. The fight took place at two thousand feet, and the attack was broken up. Three Zeros were destroyed with the probability of another. One enemy bomber was probably destroyed. The Zeros tried to avoid a fight and scattered. The bombers made no apparent attack on our ships. All of our planes returned.

On the same day, another group of eight Corsairs on patrol contacted six enemy fighters at ten thousand feet. One Zero was destroyed and four were damaged.

At approximately two o'clock in the afternoon, two groups of Corsairs, eight planes each, engaged respectively twelve Zeros over CENTRAL BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and seven Zeros north of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY. One Zero of the first group was destroyed, and of the second group one was damaged with the formation being broken up.

On 2 November, at 7:55 a.m., in a position about fifty miles west of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, the destroyer FOOTE was damaged during an air attack. Preliminary reports indicate that she is in no

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 2 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 3:10 p.m. twenty-four Corsairs and twelve Airacobras strafed shipping in TONOLEI HARBOR, SHORTLAND Area. One small freighter was left smoking and in a sinking condition, one barge was sunk, one barge was burned, and five others were damaged. Two small craft and anti-aircraft positions on the east side of the harbor were strafed. Anti-aircraft fire was received from the west side of the harbor, also from the southwest side of LAKE LAHALA. One damaged Airacobra got home safely and the pilot of another one, which landed in the water, was rescued.

31 October 1943

34
24
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16
106

At an unreported time, nineteen unescorted Liberators bombed KARA airfield, covering the runway with many bombs. On the same morning, at 9:00 a.m., thirty-four Dauntless dive bombers, twenty-four Avengers, sixteen Corsairs, sixteen Kittyhawks and sixteen Airacobras hit KARA again. Hits were made on the edges of the runway, the antiaircraft positions and on one building. One of the bombs fell in the taxi loop and caused a large explosion and fire. Two Avengers were slightly damaged by light antiaircraft fire. No Jap planes were seen on the ground nor any in the air.

49

Ten minutes later, the KARA runway and nearby areas were blasted by twenty-three Mitchell medium bombers and sixteen Corsairs. Several buildings were destroyed and innumerous craters on the field left it unserviceable. Photographs taken after the strike showed that the entire length of the KARA airfield is covered by eighty-three bomb craters. Photographs taken of the other SOUTHERN BOUGAINVILLE fields show them unserviceable with very little repairing done at the KIHILI and BALLALE fields.

1 November 1943

Preliminary reports of TASK FORCE 39's surface bombardment of the BUKA-BONIS airfields, NORTHERN BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, during the night of 31 October - 1 November indicatedthat two large fires were started on BUKA and one on BONIS. Unidentified aircraft harassed a fighting surface ship with flares during the engagement.

The bombing attack carried out by TASK FORCE 38, consisting of the aircraft carriers SARATOGA and PRINCETON, the light cruisers SAN JUAN and SAN DIEGO, and nine escorting destroyers, on the airfields at BUKA and BONIS was completed at 8:25 a.m. Ten to twelve enemy planes were shot down with no serious casualties to our force.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 2 November 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the night of 30-31 October, five motor torpedo boats from LAMBU LAMBU, northern VELLA LAVELLA, operated along the northwest CHOISEUL COAST from ZINOA to CHOISEUL BAY. No surface contacts were made, but the ship received machine gun fire from the beach just north of MOLI, CHOISEUL.

30 October 1943

At 6:55 a.m. nine Avengers, eight Corsairs and eight Kittyhawks bombed and strafed the area one-quarter mile north of SANGIGAI, CENTRAL SOUTHWESTERN CHOISEUL. This was done at the request of BLUE ground troops operating in that area. The bombs landed in the jungle and among buildings on the border. While strafing the area, the air fighters received ineffective light machine gun fire.

At 9:37 a.m., sixteen unescorted Liberators bombed the KARA Airfield, SHORTLAND AREA, with unobserved results. One plane was damaged by heavy anti-aircraft fire. No Jap planes intercepted this flight.

Eight minutes later, KARA was bombed and strafed by sixty-eight Dauntless dive bombers, twenty-seven Avengers, twenty-two Corsairs, sixteen Airacobras and eight Warhawks. Hits were made on the runway, antiaircraft positions and contiguous areas. Smoke from explosions was seen in the vicinity of the antiaircraft positions near the field and from an ammunition dump. The Corsairs strafed TONOLEI HARBOR, the piers and the shipping. There were about one hundred small craft in the harbor. Prior to this strike, the KARA field was in operation. The KIHILI field, in the same area, is definitely inoperative. No Jap planes were seen.

In the afternoon, at 2:05 p.m., four New Zealand Venturas and twelve Airacobras strafed KIETA field, in the EAST CENTRAL part of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored on and alongside the runway, which was reported inoperative, with vegetation growing in the bomb craters and ditches on and near the field. Six Mitchell medium bombers and thirty-two Corsairs bombed and strafed KIETA at the same time from tree-top height, hitting the runway and adjacent areas. Corsairs strafed and burned three small freighters in nearby ROROWANA BAY. Two barges in KIETA HARBOR and one on BANARU REEF were strafed. Antiaircraft fire from ships in ARAWA BAY wounded one of the Corsair pilots, who bailed out over BARAKOMA in SOUTHEASTERN VELLA LAVELLA. Another Corsair pilot landed in the water twenty miles north of VELLA LAVELLA. Both of these pilots were rescued, but a third CORSAIR pilot, who went down eight miles off KIETA HARBOR, was not saved.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 1 November 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

A preliminary report indicates that operations for the Allied seizure and occupation of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, are proceeding according to plan.

The first assault waves landed at 7:30 a.m. 1 November. Our transports ~~in the area~~ were forced to withdraw due to danger of air attack. They were ordered, however, to resume unloading at 9:20 a.m.

Unloading resumed at 9:2.

~~During the morning of~~ 1 November, TASK FORCE 39, probably consisting of the light cruisers MONTPELIER, CLEVELAND, COLUMBIA, DENVER and seven destroyers, bombarded Japanese airfield installations and personnel at BUKA and BONIS, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

A number of fires were started, one of which was visible for sixty miles two hours after the bombardment. Considerable but inaccurate enemy fire from shore batteries was encountered, together with ineffective air and motor torpedo boat attacks. ~~The~~ TASK FORCE was harassed all night by snooper planes dropping flares and float lights.

Later, a bombardment of the SHORTLAND Area was carried out by this TASK FORCE. A persistent and fairly accurate return fire from enemy shore batteries was received. Many enemy guns were silenced. Minor material damage was sustained ~~and some personnel were wounded by shrapnel, but no loss of life was suffered.~~

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 31 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 8:25 a.m. 29 October, eight Mitchells, escorted by twenty-three Corsairs, bombed and strafed the BONIS airdrome, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored on buildings, gun positions, and a grounded bomber in the area was destroyed. Two explosions and several fires were started. In addition, eleven barges were strafed, one of which was subsequently beached. Two enemy float planes and a fishing boat in BUKA PASSAGE were also strafed. No enemy planes intercepted the attack, and all of our planes returned, with the exception of one Corsair, which landed in the water off the northeast coast of VELLA LAVELLA, and a Mitchell, which crash-landed on MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA.

At 8:37 a.m. 29 October, nine Mitchells attacked BUKA and started two fires. Two grounded enemy bombers and several float planes were strafed. In addition, a number of buildings were damaged.

Again at 9:55 a.m. seventeen Army and four Navy Liberators attacked BUKA. Bombs were dropped on the runway, revetment and dispersal areas, and one building was destroyed. Three grounded enemy planes were believed to have been hit. At about the same time, twelve Venturas and one Mitchell attacked BONIS. Numerous hits were scored on the runway, revetment and personnel areas. Both of these attacks were covered by twenty-four Corsairs. All of our planes returned.

At 3:35 p.m. 29 October, twelve torpedo bombers and fifteen dive bombers, escorted by twenty-four fighters, attacked KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were made on the runway and adjacent installations.

During the afternoon of 30 October, Allied forces commenced a ground attack against the Japanese in the SANGIGAI Area, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL. It is reported that the enemy is apparently moving from the northwest and the southeast on our positions. Considerable barge traffic, during the night of 29-30 October, was reported between KAKASA and SANGIGAI.

During 29 October, on TREASURY ISLAND, five Japanese snipers were killed inside of our defense perimeter. Enemy mortar and gun positions were captured. Allied anti-aircraft guns on the island shot down an enemy plane during the night of 28-29 October.

The United States submarine GATO returned from patrol of the SOLOMON ISLANDS and reported damaging two enemy freighters on 19 October. Total tonnage damaged - 15,500.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 30 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 7:33 a.m. 28 October, twenty-nine dive bombers and nineteen torpedo bombers, escorted by forty-six fighters, bombed and strafed KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored along the runway, in the revetment area and on anti-aircraft batteries. One torpedo bomber was seen to crash. All other planes returned, but three of the torpedo bombers were damaged by anti-aircraft fire. No enemy planes were seen in the air or on the ground. Prior to the attack, the airstrip appeared patched and operational.

At 9:32 a.m. 28 October, nineteen Liberators, without escort, attacked the KARA runway.

Later, between 12:45 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., thirty-eight dive bombers and twenty-one torpedo dive bombers, escorted by forty-eight fighters, bombed and strafed BALLALE ISLAND. Hits were scored on the strip, among anti-aircraft gun positions and in the revetment area. Three fires were started on the strip. Five torpedo bombers and six dive bombers were damaged by anti-aircraft fire, but all planes returned. No enemy planes were seen in the air or on the ground.

At 4:30 p.m. 29 October, sixteen Corsairs strafed about ten or twelve small troop-laden freighters and many barges in or near TONOLEI HARBOUR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. One freighter exploded and three others probably burned. One barge was destroyed and three set on fire.

Allied forces advancing on CHOISEUL ISLAND, towards SANGIGAI during the evening of 29 October, encountered a strong Japanese force advancing northwest between VAGARA and VOZA. Results of this encounter were not reported.

Reported in morning news.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

30 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

and, in addition, attacked a small cargo vessel five miles north of NUMA NUMA, northeast BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

At 9:10 a.m. 29 October, a GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane strafed and set on fire a SAMPAN loaded with enemy troops in GREEN ISLAND lagoon, northwest BUKA ISLAND.

During the night of 27 and 28 October, the EIGHTH NEW ZEALAND BRIGADE on TREASURY ISLAND received a series of small bombing raids and some mortar fire, which caused light damage.

During 28 October, patrol activity on TREASURY ISLAND continued with the general disposition unchanged and the situation well in hand. The enemy continued its withdrawal towards MALSI, northeast TREASURY ISLAND.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

30 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During the morning of 28 October, the SECOND PARACHUTE BATTALION landed unopposed on the SOUTHWEST COAST of CHOISEUL ISLAND, near VOZA. One enemy plane dropped bombs near a screening destroyer, but caused no damage.

The Japanese on CHOISEUL ISLAND were reported withdrawing on 29 October, north of the WARRIOR RIVER. A number of the enemy were guarding the SANGIGAI barge station. About one thousand Japanese are in dispersed positions between LUTI and KAKASA, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND.

During the night of 27 October, LST 399 was slightly damaged by two bombs dropped near the vessel while she was retiring from TREASURY ISLAND. Japanese reconnaissance planes harassed other retiring LST'S by dropping flood lights and colored flares.

At 11:00 27 October, seventeen unescorted Liberators bombed KARA and KIHILI airfields. A number of hits were scored on the runway. Our planes encountered no interception and all of them returned to their base.

The attack in which the United States destroyer CONY was damaged was made by twenty-five Zero type torpedo dive bombers at 3:40 p.m. 27 October, fifteen miles north of TREASURY ISLAND. Lightnings covering the vessel shot down seven of the enemy planes, Kittyhawks destroyed two, Warhawks downed two, and Airacobras shot down one.

At 4:15 p.m. 27 October, four Kittyhawks were attacked by nine Zeros out of seventy seen over KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The Kittyhawks shot down three.

A number of enemy planes ineffectively dropped bombs on GUADALCANAL between 7:20 and 9:25 p.m. 28 October.

During the night of 28 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, strafed three small enemy craft off the southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND. This same plane then strafed eight other small craft eight miles south of CHOISEUL BAY, CHOISEUL ISLAND, between 9:52 and 10:40 p.m.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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29 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 3:30 p.m. 26 October, five unescorted Venturas bombed and strafed the south shore of TREASURY ISLAND and started a large fire, in addition to demolishing huts on FALAMAI.

At 2:45 p.m. 26 October, eight Lightnings strafed enemy positions at BUKA and destroyed five fighters and one bomber on the field. Two large fires were started. One auxiliary craft, with considerable personnel and cargo, was also attacked and destroyed.

At 3:40 p.m. 26 October, six Mitchells, escorted by fifteen Lightnings, bombed and strafed enemy positions on BUKA ISLAND. One grounded medium bomber was destroyed and four other planes on the field were strafed and probably damaged. No interception was encountered. All of our planes returned.

These planes then attacked BONIS, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and killed over two-hundred Japanese of an estimated two-thousand five-hundred working on the runway. Installations in the area were also damaged.

Photographs taken of the fieldsin SOUTHERN BOUGAINVILLE after the 26 October attack showed them to be unserviceable.

At 2:00 p.m. 27 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked, with unreported results, two enemy barges about twenty-eight miles northeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. On the same afternoon, another reconnaissance plane attacked two enemy convoys twenty-five miles west of GREEN ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

TREASURY ISLAND OPERATIONS

Later reports indicate that the 8th Brigade of the 3rd New Zealand Division, reinforced, landed on TREASURY ISLAND at 6:26 a.m. 27 October. By 3:40 p.m. perimeter defenses were established. The Japanese were reported withdrawing towards MALSI, NORTHEAST TREASURY ISLAND. It is estimated that Allied troops suffered about seventy-five casualties.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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29 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The United States submarine PUFFER returned from patrol of the MOLUKKA SEA and MAKASSAR STRAIT Area and reported as follows:

17 September, sank a 5,346 ton cargo vessel in a two-ship convoy off AMBON, CERAM.

Damaged a 7,500 ton auxiliary off MANGKAIHAT, east BORNEO (Date not reported).

9 October, damaged an auxiliary cargo transport of 7,500 tons. (Locality not reported).

Total enemy tonnage destroyed - 5,346. Damaged - 15,000 tons.

The PUFFER was damaged by depth charges when counter-attacked by a CHIDORI torpedo boat on 9 October.

At 4:45 a.m. 26 October, two Hellcats strafed BALLALE with unobserved results.

At 9:00 a.m. 26 October, forty-nine dive bombers and thirty-six torpedo dive bombers, followed by twenty-two Mitchells, escorted by sixty-nine fighters, bombed and strafed KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored on the runway and on a beached ship.

Heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered, but no enemy planes intercepted. One of our torpedo dive bombers crashed into the sea near KIHILI. All other planes returned, although four torpedo bombers and five dive bombers were damaged. Personnel in four of the Mitchell bombers were injured by anti-aircraft fire.

Later, at 10:30 a.m. twenty Army and seven Navy Liberators, covered by sixteen Lightnings, again attacked KIHILI and scored many hits on the runway. Heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire was encountered, but no planes arose to intercept.

At 3:55 p.m. 26 October, thirty dive bombers and eighteen torpedo dive bombers, escorted by forty-two fighters, attacked KARA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Hits were scored on anti-aircraft gun positions, buildings and on the runway. Three fires were started. Although heavy and light anti-aircraft fire was encountered, all our planes returned. One air-borne Zero was observed, but this plane did not attempt to attack. The airstrip was left in an unserviceable condition.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 28 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 9:43 a.m. 26 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked three small enemy cargo vessels northwest of BUKA ISLAND. Two of the ships were left on fire and the third was beached. One enemy plane dropped explosives in the path of our plane, caused slight damage to the plane and injured the co-pilot.

In landing operations on TREASURY ISLAND during the night of 26 and 27 October, LST 399 received four hits from mortar fire, which killed two men and wounded eighteen. Two hits were scored on LST 485, and twelve men were wounded. The enemy fire was subsequently silenced.

There are indications that the Japanese began evacuating CHOISEUL ISLAND on 20 October. There are, however, many Japs in the CHOISEUL BAY Area.

As a result of repeated air strikes, the air strips at Kihili and Ballale were unservicable on the 27th, although repairs were almost completed at Ballale.

1 Gunboat and 4 PT's are now operating from Blanche Harbor, Treasury Island, covering the northern approaches to the island.

A small party has been landed on Choiseul at Zinca, 10 miles south of Choiseul Bay on the west side of the island, for the purpose of establishing a radar station.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 27 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

Preliminary reports indicate eight destroyer transports (APD's) and ten LST's landed allied troops on TREASURY ISLAND (MONO ISLAND) south of SHORTLAND AREA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and STERLING ISLAND, south of TREASURY ISLAND, at seven am., 27 October.

A barrage was laid on FALAMAI, and landings were made on the beach west of FALAMAI POINTS, south coast of TREASURY ISLAND, on the northern coast near SOANTALU and on three places on the northern coast of STERLING ISLAND. Further details are not at present available.

An intercepted message from the U.S.S. Destroyer CONY, supporting TREASURY and STERLING ISLAND landing operations, indicates that the vessel was struck by enemy bombs on the port and starboard side of the after deck house.

Personnel casualties and material damage were sustained but the ship was apparently able to make at least twelve knots.

It is reported that the United States submarines BARB, GRAYBACK, and SHAD celebrated Navy Day by executing a coordinated attack against three large enemy transports in the EAST CHINA SEA.

It is believed that all three enemy ships were sunk but exact results will not be known until complete reports are received.

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 27 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC

Intercepted messages indicate that landing and occupation operations on TREASURY ISLAND (MONO ISLAND), south of the SHORTLAND AREA, are proceeding according to plan.

Apparently some enemy opposition has been encountered, the extent of which is not at present known. Further details are not available.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 26 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

During 23 October, six Venturas strafed KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. The pier at the mouth of MULAMBULI RIVER, NORTHWEST CHOISEUL ISLAND, was also attacked.

At 9:05 a.m. 24 October, nineteen Liberators, escorted by ten Corsairs and four Lightnings, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on the runway and its vicinity.

Later that morning, forty-seven dive bombers and twenty-two torpedo dive bombers, covered by twenty-eight fighters again attacked KIHILI. Numerous hits were scored on the runway and on anti-aircraft gun positions. Bombs fell among five grounded enemy planes at the south end of the runway. A large fire was seen in the vicinity of KANGU HILL and another south of the strip. All of our bombers returned.

Later on the same morning, at 11:25, thirty-six Mitchells, escorted by four Warhawks and twenty-four Kittyhawks, attacked KIHILI again. Numerous fires and craters from previous attacks were visible on the runway. Enemy anti-aircraft scored hits on at least three of our planes.

At 6:00 p.m. 24 October, three Venturas, bombed FALAMAI VILLAGE on the south coast of TREASURY ISLAND. No Japanese were seen on the southwest coast of the island.

At 10:10 a.m. 25 October, thirty-one dive bombers and eighteen torpedo dive bombers, covered by twelve Kittyhawks and twenty-eight Corsairs, attacked BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. Hits were scored on the runway, anti-aircraft positions and a grounded enemy bomber. One enemy grounded fighter plane was strafed and burned. Several fires were visible in the revetment area. Numerous enemy casualties were seen on the ground. The partially repaired strip was reported as again being unserviceable. All of our planes returned, although one dive bomber was damaged by anti-aircraft fire and another by colliding with a bomb, dropped by one of our planes.

At 2:00 a.m. 26 October, a direct hit was scored on one of two enemy destroyers by a reconnaissance plane about fifteen miles east of TROP HARBOR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

In all the foregoing attacks, no enemy planes were encountered.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 25 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

The submarine BONEFISH returned from patrol in the Central SOUTH CHINA SEA and reported the following successes:

25 September sank a 9,205 ton tanker west of DANGEROUS GROUND, SOUTH CHINA SEA.

6 October, east of CAPE PADARAN, FRENCH INDO-CHINA, sank a 9,908 ton troop transport, a 4,003 ton cargo vessel and a 3,944 ton freighter. In addition, damaged a 5,864 ton freighter.

10 October, off CAPE VERELLA, FRENCH INDO-CHINA, sank a 9,192 ton transport and another transport of 3,900 tons.

14 October sank a ten-ton schooner by gunfire.

Total enemy tonnaged destroyed - 40,162. Damaged - 5,864.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 25 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC (Cont'd.)

At 9:15 a.m. 23 October, twenty-four dive bombers and eighteen torpedo dive bombers, escorted by sixty fighters, bombed KARA airfield, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of hits were scored on the runway and on anti-aircraft gun positions. No enemy planes were seen on the field or in revetments.

This area was again attacked at 4:00 p.m. by twenty-four dive bombers and eighteen torpedo dive bombers, covered by thirty-five fighters. Hits were scored on anti-aircraft gun positions and an ammunition dump exploded. Hits were observed in the center of the runway and in the dispersal area. One of our dive bombers was destroyed by enemy anti-aircraft fire, which was heavy at KANGU, TONOLEI HARBOR, and the east end of the KARA strip.

During the early morning of 23 October, eleven Hellcats strafed eleven enemy barges between WUNGAI POINT and CHOISEUL BAY, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Four of the barges were left smoking heavily.

At 9:48 a.m. 23 October, eleven Liberators, escorted by sixteen Lightnings, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Bombs were dropped on the northeast portion of the runway.

Later that day, at 11:32 a.m., six Liberators, with eight Hellcats and eight Corsairs, again attacked KIHILI. The runway was marked with craters, and the surrounding area appeared burned.

No enemy fighter opposition was encountered throughout the day.

At 11:20 p.m. 23 October, a reconnaissance plane bombed and possibly damaged an enemy barge eight miles northeast of TEOP HARBOR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

A reconnaissance plane attacked two ships and a number of barges at 10:55 p.m. 24 October about forty-five miles to the north of CAPE HENPAN, BUKA ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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4 p.m. 24 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

A Japanese troop-laden transport was attacked by a reconnaissance plane three-hundred and twenty miles northeast of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

At 11:35 23 October, another reconnaissance plane bombed and strafed a small enemy cargo vessel or tender unloading in a lagoon on the southwest side of KAPINGAMARANGI ISLAND (about three-hundred and seventy miles north northeast of RABAUL). The vessel was left smoking. Two of the plane crew were wounded by anti-aircraft fire.

The submarine PETO returned from her third war patrol and reported the following results:

On 1 October, attacked a convoy of three ships, three-hundred and eighty-five miles southwest of PULWAT ISLAND, CAROLINE ISLANDS group, and sank one 6,500 ton cargo vessel and damaged another of 5,300 tons.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DEC OSD Letter

SECRET

4 p.m. 24 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On 7 October an explosion occurred aboard the light cruiser CONCORD, while off NUKUHIVA ISLAND, MAZUESAS ISLANDS.

The cause of the explosion was attributed to a leaking gasoline tank, located in the after part of the ship. One officer and twenty-three enlisted men were lost. The strength and water-tight integrity of the ship were not impaired.

"Cook" Book

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter,

SECRET

4 p.m. 24 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 9:30 a.m. 22 October, ten Liberators, covered by twenty-three Hellcats, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, with unobserved results. Eighteen Zeros unsuccessfully followed our planes to KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At 10:45 a.m. nine Liberators, escorted by twelve Corsairs, struck at POROPORA, NORTH CHOISEUL ISLAND. The fighter escort engaged twelve Zeros without results.

Later at 11:42 a.m. 22 October, the Southwest Central Coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND was bombed by nine Liberators, escorted by eight Hellcats. Results of this attack were unobserved. The Hellcats engaged about ten enemy fighter planes and shot down one. One Hellcat is missing; another was damaged and subsequently crash-landed.

At noon 22 October, twelve Liberators, covered by sixteen Warhawks, attacked EBERYS LEASE in the vicinity of KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. After the attack our fighters encountered about nine Zeros and damaged one. One Warhawk was damaged and later crash-landed.

KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, was subjected to another attack by forty-eight dive bombers and twenty-four torpedo dive bombers, escorted by sixty-eight fighters, at 12:50 p.m. A number of hits were scored on the runway. Explosions, fire and smoke were observed in the supply area east of KANGU HILL. Two grounded enemy bombers, a tower and several enemy anti-aircraft gun positions were destroyed. The dive bombers strafed two grounded Zeros and a barge load of Japanese, killing two. Warhawks, in the fighter escort, strafed a converted yacht off KANGU, BUIN Area, and shot down a Zero.

At 1:20 p.m. 22 October, eight Corsairs, covered by sixteen Corsairs, strafed KARA FIELD, BUIN Area. Sixteen grounded enemy planes were destroyed out of the thirty seen on the strip. Eleven fires were observed, one of which was visible for twenty miles.

Photos taken during the afternoon of 22 October showed the KIHILI airfield unserviceable.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED 5-3-78
SECRET

4 p.m. 23 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 11:30 a.m. 20 October, twenty-four Corsairs in a sweep over KAHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, encountered twenty Zeros and shot down three. One of the Corsairs was damaged. In addition, two other Corsairs sustained damage from anti-aircraft fire.

Later that day, twenty-four Warhawks on a sweep over KAHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, were unsuccessful in developing any contacts, but on their return, encountered three Zeros over SHORTLAND ISLAND. The enemy planes made one ineffective attack but further action did not develop.

At 5:00 p.m. 20 October, seventeen dive bombers, escorted by eight Corsairs and eight Warhawks, attacked KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. A number of hits were scored and two explosions, accompanied by much smoke, were observed. The accompanying Corsairs strafed the area.

At 11:35 a.m. 21 October, three Venturas bombed and strafed KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Although no Japanese were seen, our planes encountered some rifle fire.

Four enemy subs were sighted approximately thirteen miles northwest of CAPE QUEEN CHARLOTTE, NEW CALEDONIA, at 9:00 a.m. 22 October. Prior to that time, at 2:35 a.m., gun flashes from a surfaced submarine were reported about two-hundred and fifty miles southwest NOUMEA, NEW CALEDONIA.

During the night of 21-22 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, strafed twenty-four barges off PAPARA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. At about 1:20 a.m., this plane bombed and strafed a Japanese corvette or a small cargo vessel off the north end of CHOISEUL ISLAND. After the attack, the vessel was observed to be settling by the stern.

At 1:33 a.m. 22 October, another reconnaissance plane attacked a four-ship convoy about thirty-five miles west of BUKA ISLAND. A hit was scored on a vessel reported by the pilot to be a carrier.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12958
OSD Letter 6-5-11

SECRET

9 a.m. 21 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Another reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL bombed what was believed to be a destroyer thirty miles south of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND, at 10:05 p.m. 19 October. Another possible destroyer was bombed twenty-two miles northeast of CAPE ORFORD, NEW BRITAIN, at 11:10 p.m. In the last attack, it was believed that the target was sunk.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

Coast watcher reports on 19 October indicate that enemy camps between SANGIGAI and CHOISEUL BAY, southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND, hold a minimum of three thousand Japanese. The Japanese live in dispersed huts, roam the bush and loot gardens, and are apparently short of rations. There are indications of an impending movement by the enemy.

There are no Japanese south of SANGIGAI, except at KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter 6 Jan 73-72

SECRET

9 a.m. 21 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 4:25 a.m. 19 October, four Ventura medium bombers attacked BALLALE ISLAND. Four explosions and fires visible for twenty miles were observed. Our planes returned without damage.

At 4:20 a.m. 19 October, four Ventura medium bombers bombed huts, and the revetment area on KARA FIELD, BUIN AREA. One explosion and a fire was observed. One of the planes failed to return.

Later that day, at 11:30 a.m., twelve torpedo bombers and twenty-nine dive bombers, escorted by twelve Corsairs and eight Warhawks, attacked KARA field again and scored a number of hits on the runway and on anti-aircraft gun positions. No enemy planes or anti-aircraft fire were encountered.

During the afternoon of the same day, two Corsairs strafed KARA again and set on fire five enemy planes on the runway. Heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered from the west tip of SHORTLAND ISLAND.

At 11:20 a.m. 19 October, twenty-four Liberators, covered by fourteen Lightnings, bombed the runway at KIHILI, BUIN AREA. Five fires were started and a hit was scored on an anti-aircraft gun position. About fifteen-twenty Zeros intercepted our bombers over TONOLEI HARBOR. In the ensuing engagement, the bombers shot down five Zeros. The Lightnings engaged ten-fifteen Zeros and shot down one. Two of the Lightnings were lost in this action due to a mid-air collision.

At 11:33 a.m. 19 October, three Ventura medium bombers bombed and strafed enemy concentrations at KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Results of this attack were unobserved.

The following morning, at 7:50 a.m., four Ventura medium bombers, bombed and strafed KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Considerable smoke and one explosion was observed. The area was again bombed by two Ventura medium bombers at 2:30 p.m. Pilots reported that the village was well destroyed by the previous raids.

At 7:30 a.m. 20 October, four Ventura medium bombers bombed the islands in the CHOISEUL BAY AREA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Hits were scored on buildings and supply stacks. Three barges were also strafed. No anti-aircraft fire was encountered. All of our planes returned.

At about 3:05 p.m. 20 October, four reconnaissance planes, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked a convoy of three or four ships, north of EAST CAPE NEW IRELAND. A hit was scored on one of the vessels.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 6-8-72 OSD LETTER

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 20 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At about five o'clock in the afternoon of October 18, 12 Corsairs from MUNDA and 7 from BARAKOMA, in VELLA LAVELLA, made a fighter sweep over KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. They engaged fifteen to twenty Zeros and destroyed eight of them and damaged two. One of our Corsairs failed to return. Apparently new antiaircraft defenses have been installed at KARA and to the northeast of KIHILI because our sweep received intense fire from these spots.

Around 6:00 p.m. on October 18, Japanese concentrations at KAKASA, in SOUTHERN CHOISEUL, were strafed and bombed by a flight of 18 Dauntless, 11 Hellcats and 14 Lightnings. Much black smoke appeared from the village and tent areas.

Towards midnight on October 18, one of our GUADALCANAL patrol planes made two attacks on four small enemy surface craft about thirty-four miles southwest of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. One of the craft disappeared after the first attack and the remaining three scattered after the plane's second run.

During the night of October 18-19, our motor torpedo boats from LAMBU LAMBU, VELLA LAVELLA, looking for enemy barges, operated in CHOISEUL BAY, CHOISEUL ISLAND. They did not make any contact but were bombed six times.

On the morning of October 19, a GUADALCANAL patrol plane bombed and strafed KAKASA, in SOUTHERN CHOISEUL. The results were not observed.

Towards midnight of October 19, one of our GUADALCANAL patrol planes reports completing an attack on an enemy ship thirty-five miles south southwest CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. The same plane, an hour later, also attacked a second ship forty miles southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE. No results have been reported as yet.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECL
WSD Letter,
SECRET

9 a.m. 19 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At nine o'clock on the morning of 17 October, twenty-one of our Corsairs from MUNDA hit the KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA, airfield. In the process of doing this, they ran into thirty to forty enemy fighters of various types over BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. Score at the end of the contact showed fourteen enemy fighters destroyed and two damaged. All of our planes returned, though one was forced to make a belly landing, but the pilot was uninjured.

In the forenoon of 18 October, twenty-eight Liberators, thirty-two Dauntless and twelve Avengers, covered by a fifty-six plane fighter escort, heavily bombed BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. Pictures taken during the attack indicate that the area was well bombed and that many direct hits were made on the runway, the revetment and dispersal sections. A great deal of black smoke was seen, several explosions were heard and the field appeared pitted with large craters. From two to fifteen Zeros intercepted, but did not appear willing to engage our planes and followed the flight down to VELLA LAVELLA. While in the SHORTLAND AREA, one of our Lightnings destroyed a Zero and one Corsair took on seven Zeros and got two of them over FAURO ISLAND. Anti-aircraft fire wounded two of a crew of one Liberator.

In the afternoon of 18 October, one of our patrol planes out of GUADALCANAL attacked a surfaced enemy submarine about four-hundred and twenty miles north northwest of NAURU ISLAND. Bombs were dropped from a low altitude, and it is reported that a direct hit or near miss was registered; however, the damage is undetermined. Submerging under the attack, the submarine lost one of its men overboard.

Around noon of 18 October, another enemy submarine was attacked about one-hundred and forty-two miles southwest of NAURU. No report has been received on the damage inflicted.

Around midnight 17 October, an unidentified plane approached OAHU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS. It was tracked in from the southwest about one-hundred miles out by means of radar. At 12:30 a.m., it was picked up and illuminated by search lights at BARBERS POINT. The plane then made a steep dive to a low altitude, headed south and was tracked out on a southwesterly corse for one-hundred miles by radar. A night fighter tried to close the plane, but without success. It is stated that the plane, which probably came from an enemy submarine, was a twin float low or mid-winged monoplane, and was attempting a reconnaissance. The plane dropped neither bombs nor flares. It is felt its reconnaissance was unsuccessful.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

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Per Letter,
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SECRET

9 a.m. 18 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 12:05 p.m. 17 October, a reconnaissance plane attacked a convoy of one small cargo vessel and one transport, escorted by a destroyer, eighty miles east northeast of MUSSAU ISLAND. One hit was scored on the transport, which was left smoking heavily and settling by the bow. Although the plane encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire, it returned without damage.

At 2:50 p.m. 17 October, another reconnaissance plane bombed and strafed three enemy barges fifteen miles south of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Two of the barges were beached after the attack.

At 10:15 p.m. 17 October, a CATALINA attacked six enemy barges thirty miles west of BUKA PASSAGE (between BUKA ISLAND and BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND). The results of this attack were not reported.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASS E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.5 NND Letter 6-5

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 17 October 1943

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

Reports received from a coast watcher indicate that the SAMBI AREA, southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND, is free of Japanese.

Considerable abandoned equipment and a number of dead Japanese were found on LITUNI ISLAND and ZOGA, south CHOISEUL ISLAND.

On 14 October, eight Japanese landed at BOE BOE, CHOISEUL ISLAND, were ambushed and killed by natives.

Many Japanese were reported on the southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND at SANGIGAI, between SANGIGAI and the VAGARA RIVER and between VOZA and MOLI. It is believed that these Japanese are awaiting the wane of the moon in order to evacuate these places which are accessible by barge.

Regraded Unclassified

DEC OSD Letter SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED OSD Letter SECRET

4 p.m. 17 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 10:30 p.m. 15 October, a reconnaissance plane bombed two one-hundred foot enemy barges and a small corvette about forty-five miles south southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

During the night of 15-16 October, enemy planes attacked without effect a number of our motor torpedo boats on the northwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At 4:40 a.m. 16 October, six Mitchells bombed BALLALE ISLAND and started one fire.

At 9:37 a.m., 16 October, eight Army Liberators, escorted by fifteen Lightnings and eight Corsairs, attacked KARA FIELD, BUIN AREA. A large explosion was observed.

In the early afternoon of 16 October, a Navy Corsair strafed two enemy barges in TONOLEI HARBOR, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. One of the barges carrying twenty-five or thirty troops was sunk. This plane then attacked and set on fire a fifty-foot junk. A large tug was also strafed but results were not observed.

The submarine TUNA returned from patrol and reported damaging a 4,000 ton Maru with one torpedo hit two-hundred and ten miles north northeast of SINGAPORE.

The following additional information has been received in connection with the steamships JOHN COUCH and GEORGE HIMES, torpedoed off KOLI POINT, GUADALCANAL, and reported in the morning summary of 12 October:

Holds 2 and 3 of the steamship COUCH were set on fire and the vessel was subsequently beached between KOLI POINT and TENARU, GUADALCANAL. While attempts were being made to extinguish the fires, the ship rolled over on her beam with the forward part under water. This vessel is considered a total loss.

The steamship HIMES is beached in the same area with her engine room and Holds 4 and 5 flooded. It is intended to patch and refloat this vessel.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 5-8-75

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 16 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The submarine BOWFIN returned from patrol of the PHILIPPINE ISLANDS and the east coast of FRENCH INDO-CHINA and reported the following results:

On 25 August, attacked a convoy in the vicinity of PULO CECIR DE MER and sank the KONO MARU (8,572 tons), a 6,000 ton transport and a tanker, the RIKKO MARU, (9,181 tons).

On 13 September, sank, by gunfire, a seventy-five ton Diesel barge in the SULU SEA.

On 2 October, sank, by gunfire, a fifty ton schooner in the MAKASSAR STRAIT.

Total tonnage of enemy shipping destroyed - 23,878.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 16 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 12:05 p.m. 15 October, twenty-one Army Liberators, escorted by sixteen Navy Corsairs, and twelve Army Lightnings, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Large explosions and fires, visible from VELLA LAVELLA and CHOISEUL ISLAND, were started in the personnel and supply areas.

Four of the escorting Corsairs engaged ten or fifteen Zeros between KIHILI and BALLALE ISLAND. Six of the Zeros were shot down. All of our planes returned.

At 10:12 p.m. 15 October, five Mitchells attacked enemy positions on BUKA ISLAND. A number of fires, visible for forty miles, were started.

At 11:25 p.m. 15 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked two enemy ships out of a convoy of eleven about forty miles southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

The following information was obtained from the Japanese pilot captured by motor torpedo boats on 14 October:

The prisoner of war stated that about ten thousand Japanese occupied KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND before they evacuated to Choiseul with instructions to proceed along the west coast for evacuation to the BUIN AREA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The remainder, he believed, were evacuated by destroyers.

The prisoner further stated that VELLA LAVELLA ISLAND was evacuated during the night 6-7 October. Three destroyers stood off shore while small craft ferried the troops. He further informed that enemy troops in the SHORTLAND AREA were told by a Japanese officer that the SOLOMONS AREA, west of a line 156-20E, would not be abandoned.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter 6-8-72

SECRET

9 a.m. 15 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of 11-12 October, low flying enemy planes harassed our positions along the northwest coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Although many bombs were dropped, no casualties or damages were sustained.

Our motor torpedo boats, operating off the southwest coast of VELLA LAVELLA, were bombed by a Japanese plane during the night of 13-14 October. No casualties were sustained, but one of the boats was slightly damaged by two near misses.

At 3:30 a.m. 14 October, motor torpedo boats shot down a Japanese plane ten miles west of MOLI, NORTHWEST CHOISEUL ISLAND. The Japanese pilot, a Naval petty officer, was captured.

At 1:45 p.m. 14 October, two Navy Corsairs shot down one enemy medium bomber and damaged another over northwest VELLA LAVELLA.

During the night of 14 October, an enemy plane flew over ESPIRITU SANTO, dropped one flare, but no bombs.

The submarine BILLFISH returned from patrol and reported as follows:

On 8 September attacked a convoy eighty-five miles east southeast of CAPE PADERAN, FRENCH INDO-CHINA, and damaged with one torpedo hit the CHILE MARU (5,860 tons).

On 25 September damaged with one torpedo hit a 6,000 ton cargo vessel about one hundred miles east of PULO CECIR DE MER.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

During the period 3-9 October, about 3,000 - 4,000 Japanese have passed BAMBATANA, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND. The area between LUTI and SAKGIGAI is clear of the enemy.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DoD Letter, 5 Apr 72

SECRET

4 p.m. 14 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Analysis of the damage sustained by the United States destroyer SELFRIDGE in the night surface engagement of 6 October, indicates that the vessel was hit by two torpedoes (one on each bow), fired by a torpedo boat.

On 13 October, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked four enemy barges and scored a hit on one ten miles west of BUKA PASSAGE, NORTH BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 13 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the morning of 10 October, a search plane operating from GUADALCANAL attacked and probably damaged an enemy submarine two hundred and thirty-five miles East Southeast of NUKUORO ISLAND (Lat. 3 - 50N - Long 154-56E).

At 9:32 a.m., 11 October, twenty-two Army Liberators, eighteen torpedo dive bombers and fifteen dive bombers, escorted by seventy-two fighters, attacked KIHILI, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The Liberators scored hits in the supply and personnel areas, started fires and exploded fuel dumps.

The dive bombers and torpedo dive bombers attacked gun positions on KANGU HILL and in JAKOHINA VILLAGE, silencing three of four guns and in addition started a number of fires. The bridge connecting KANGU and JAKOHINA is believed to have been destroyed. A number of buildings in JAKOHINA VILLAGE were either damaged or destroyed. A direct hit was scored on a barge at the mouth of the UGIMO RIVER.

About twenty or twenty-five enemy planes were encountered. In the ensuing engagements the Liberators shot down two Zeros and the fighters accounted for ten more planes. One of our fighters was damaged.

During the night of 11-12 October, two Mitchells attacked two large enemy cargo vessels in MATCHIN BAY, North BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Both vessels were badly damaged and believed to have been left in a sinking condition. Final results were not observed due to antiaircraft fire.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

ROPA ISLAND and BERE POINT on the South Coast CHOISEUL ISLAND are reported clear of Japanese.

It is estimated that about two thousand Japanese are along the central southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND with concentrations at towns and barge staging points.

No gun positions along CHOISEUL BAY and BOUGAINVILLE STRAIT are apparent except for possible machine guns on the island. CHOISEUL BAY is only used by barges.

There is evidence that strong Japanese defenses along the Northeast coast of GIZO ISLAND have been evacuated.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

9 a.m. 12 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

boat was damaged.

At 1:50 a.m. 11 October, the steamships JOHN COUCH and GEORGE HIMES, while unloading off KOLI POINT, GUADALCANAL, was hit by aerial torpedoes launched by two Japanese planes. The steamship COUCH was set on fire and the HIMES, hit aft, was settling astern. Another torpedo missed HMNZS TUI.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
DoD Letter, 6-8-72

SECRET

9 a.m. 12 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 10:00 a.m. 9 October, eight Airacobras, escorted by sixteen Corsairs, strafed and set on fire enemy installations on POPORANG ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. In addition, three 20mm gun positions were silenced. Buildings and tents on MORGUSIAI ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA, were also strafed, but results were unobserved. On their return flight, the Corsairs strafed and set on fire two enemy barges off KUBOKUBO, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND.

During the evening of 9 October, six Mitchells, escorted by fourteen Warhawks, bombed and strafed enemy barge concentrations on the SOUTHWEST COAST of CHOISEUL ISLAND. One barge was reported sunk.

At 11:25 a.m. 10 October, twenty-four heavy bombers, eighteen dive bombers and twelve torpedo bombers, escorted by seventy-seven fighters, heavily damaged the KIHILI airfield and the surrounding area. Many fires were started and a fuel dump blew up. Two of our heavy bombers were slightly damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

Shortly after this attack, the Liberators were engaged by twenty-three enemy fighters. One Liberator was shot down over BOUGAINVILLE STRAIT and five men of the crew bailed out. The enemy planes strafed the parachutes. Another Liberator, attempting to protect the bailed-out crew, was badly damaged by the Zeros and crashed on ONDONGA ISLAND. The pilot and co-pilot were killed and six of the crew injured.

In this engagement, the Liberators destroyed ten enemy planes, Lightnings shot down four, and the Corsairs destroyed one. Another Japanese fighter plane was observed to crash and burn on an attempted take-off from KARA FIELD, SHORTLAND AREA. One of our torpedo bombers, due to engine trouble, landed in the water off the RUSSEL ISLANDS.

During the afternoon of 10 October, eleven Lightnings, covering a rescue plane, engaged ten Zeros northeast of KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Six Zeros were shot down. One of our planes crashed in the water off MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA.

During the early evening of 10 October, a number of our motor torpedo boats were bombed north of DOVELI COVE, VELLA LAVELLA. One boat was damaged.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter

S E C R E T

4:00 p.m. 11 October 1943

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

On 9 October, a number of our small boat patrols circum-navigated KOLOMBANGARA and landed in principal coves without being fired on.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~
DEC OSD Letter,
SECRET

4:00 p.m. 11 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Interrogation of Japanese petty officers, survivors of the destroyer action on the night of 6 October, indicates six or nine Japanese destroyers took part in the engagement. The prisoners insisted that no light cruiser was present and disclaim knowledge of any other ship sunk but the YUGUMO. Apparently these survivors were from the YUGUMO. They stated that their ship fired six torpedoes, scoring hits on one of our vessels.

The leading destroyer YUGUMO (1,500 tons) was sunk by a torpedo. Other enemy destroyers identified were the flag ship KAZEGUMO (1,500 tons), AKIGUMO (1,500 tons), KAMIKAZE (1,315 tons), SHIGURE (1,368 tons), FUMIKAZE (probably 1,500 tons) and the ISOKAZE (1,500 tons). The last of these three destroyers were serving as transports and some carried barges for the evacuation of VELLA LAVELLA.

The air attack on KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA, mentioned in the morning summary of 9 October, was executed by twenty-four Mitchells, instead of Liberators as previously reported.

On 9 October, a GUADALCANAL reconnaissance plane strafed eight or more Japanese near KUKU, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL, and also attacked a motor boat off ROB ROY ISLAND.

About eighteen Japanese planes were over MUNDA during the period between 7:48 p.m. and 9:33 p.m. 8 October. Two of these planes dropped six bombs without damage in the vicinity of the northwest strip. Early the following morning, four enemy planes dropped five bombs without damage on ONDANGO ISLAND, MUNDA AREA, and six bombs without damage on BAIROKO, NEW GEORGIA.

On 9 October, an unknown number of enemy planes, believed to be medium bombers, dropped a number of bombs without effect in the water off southeast VELLA LAVELLA. A little later, four bombs struck the beach near the north strip, but caused no damage nor casualties.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

All enemy resistance on VELLA LAVELLA has been eliminated. There were indications that some Japanese escaped from the island.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 11 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The following communique is quoted for information:

"Supplementing Pacific Ocean Areas Communique Number 14, the following information is available concerning our operations against WAKE ISLAND:

The initial heavy and protracted attack made by carrier aircraft and ship bombardment, beginning at dawn on 5 October, west longitude date, was followed late the same afternoon by an attack by a group of Navy Liberator bombers led by Commander John Tare Hayward, U. S. Navy, and on the morning of 6 October by a further carrier attack bombing by the force commanded by Rear Admiral Alfred Easy Montgomery, U. S. Navy. In the extended attacks our planes dropped three-hundred and twenty tons of bombs.

An intensive bombardment by the ships combined to inflict considerable damage to enemy installations on WAKE, PEALE and WILKES ISLANDS. Enemy defenses were so neutralized in the initial bombardment that the heavy bombers encountered only weak and ineffective anti-aircraft fire and no air opposition in their low altitude bombing attack in the late afternoon of 5 October.

Our forces destroyed thirty or more enemy planes in the air and thirty-one on the ground. Many fires were started in the plane dispersal areas, shops, barracks and storage areas throughout the three islands. Two small vessels, one loaded with gasoline, were destroyed.

Damage by enemy action to our ships and our ships' personnel was negligible. We lost thirteen planes in combat."

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter
SECRET

4 p.m. 10 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The following details have been received in connection with the WAKE ISLAND raid on October 6th and 7th.

The island was well worked over. Three-hundred and twenty tons of bombs were dropped. Forty enemy planes were shot down, and, in addition, thirty-one grounded planes were destroyed. Some of the grounded planes may have been dummies.

None of our ships suffered any battle damage. We lost twenty-seven planes, fourteen of these were considered operational losses. The aircraft carrier, BELLEAU WOOD, had some of her armament damaged due to a burning crash on deck.

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COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter 5-

SECRET

9 a.m. 10 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On 8 October, motor torpedo boats intercepted twenty-nine Japanese attempting to evacuate KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND by canoe.

At 7:30 a.m. 8 October, four Liberators, escorted by eight Warhawks, sank an enemy barge at SASA POINT, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND.

On 8 October, two Lightnings shot down a Japanese medium bomber ninety-six miles southwest of CAPE HUNTER, GUADALCANAL. One Lightning was damaged.

At 1:50 p.m. 8 October, one of our reconnaissance planes engaged a Japanese bomber one-hundred and eighty-five miles northeast of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. The enemy plane was forced down to the water and subsequently set on fire by strafing. Our plane sustained some damage.

At about midnight 9 October, a reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL attacked an enemy vessel about ten miles west of BUKA ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DoD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 9 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the afternoon of 7 October, another reconnaissance plane shot down an enemy bomber about one hundred and seventy-five miles southwest of NAURU ISLAND.

The United States submarine DRUM, returned from patrol and reported as follows:

On the night of 27 August, sank two 5,000 ton cargo vessels out of a five-ship enemy convoy in the vicinity of MUSSAU ISLAND. On 8 September, sank a 2,900 ton freighter off WEWAK, NEW GUINEA.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

Coast watcher patrols reported that the BAMBERI HARBOR AREA, SOUTHWEST KOLOMBANGARA, has been cleared of the enemy. It was also reported there are no Japanese in the BOE BOE, ROBROY ISLAND (VELAIVIRU ISLAND), MANNING STRAIT AREA, south of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
SSD Letter, 6/6/6

9 a.m. 9 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

A later report on the destroyer action 6 October states that our three destroyers engaged eight or nine enemy destroyers instead of four as previously reported. One of the enemy vessels may have been a light cruiser or a new type of destroyer. The enemy ships were escorting many small craft accompanied by motor torpedo boats, which were not engaged.

The Japanese losses, as now reported, are three or four destroyers sunk, one of which may have been the light cruiser previously mentioned. In addition, two or three of the enemy ships were damaged by gun fire.

Our losses remain as previously reported. The personnel casualties for the CHEVALIER are one officer, fifty-two men dead or missing, and twenty-five men wounded. No report has been received regarding the casualties for the SELFRIDGE. No casualties were suffered by the O'BANNON. Our motor torpedo boats brought in seventy-eight Japanese survivors.

During the afternoon of 6 October, eight Navy Corsairs and eight Airacobras strafed and set on fire an enemy barge near SASAMUGA, SOUTHWEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND. Four other enemy barges, previously damaged, were strafed by these planes in the vicinity of SASA POINT.

At 6:47 p.m. 6 October, twenty-four Liberators, escorted by fourteen Lightnings, attacked KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Numerous hits were scored in the vicinity of the runway, on grounded enemy planes and on anti-aircraft gun positions. Although damage assessment has not been determined, it is believed to be heavy. One Liberator is missing. A Liberator and a Lightning crash-landed in the water. Three other Liberators were damaged. The bombers, while enroute to the target area, sighted and were fired upon by four enemy light cruisers or destroyers, east of FAURO BAY, SHORTLAND AREA.

During the morning of 7 October, four Lightnings and three Corsairs, out on a search for enemy shipping, north of VELLA LAVELLA, engaged twelve or fifteen Zeros. One Zero was shot down. One Lightning was damaged and crash-landed on MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA.

At 12:25 p.m. 7 October, a search plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked, with unreported results, three enemy cargo vessels, escorted by three destroyers, thirty-seven miles north of NEW HANOVER ISLAND. An undetermined number of enemy fighters attacked our plane and shot out one engine, but the plane was able to escape and return to its base.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter dated

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 8 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The following and more complete details have been received in connection with the night surface engagement of October 6:

At 10:55 p.m., the United States destroyers O'BANNON, CHEVALIER, and SELFRIDGE, engaged a Japanese force of four destroyers and one possible Yubari type light cruiser fifteen miles northwest of VELLA LAVELLA.

As previously reported, two Japanese ships blew up, one of these believed to be the light cruiser. Torpedoes sank another Japanese destroyer and gun fire possibly damaged two more.

A second group of four enemy destroyers and a third group of numerous small craft were not engaged as they retired from the area at high speed.

During the action, the CHEVALIER received a torpedo hit which blew off her bow, and threw her across the course of the O'BANNON, causing a collision. The CHEVALIER broke in two and sank. Twelve of the fourteen officers and eighty-five percent of the crew were taken aboard the O'BANNON.

The SELFRIDGE received a torpedo hit which blew off her bow, but this vessel was able to retire under her own power. The torpedoed vessels also received damage from enemy gun fire.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

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SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 8 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ATION (Cont'd.)

On the early morning of October 6, a Catalina strafed four enemy barges in the BUIN-FAISI area. One barge may have been set on fire.

During the morning of October 6, a Liberator strafed twelve camouflaged enemy barges and store dumps along the southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND to NUKIKI. Two of the barges were set on fire and others are believed to have been damaged.

At 2:55 p.m. October 6, a reconnaissance plane attacked and destroyed a Japanese bomber ninety miles northeast of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

A reconnaissance plane sighted and attacked, at 10:45 p.m. October 6, a convoy of two enemy cargo vessels, escorted by a destroyer and a destroyer escort vessel, about seventy miles northeast of MUSSAU ISLAND. An enemy dive bomber intercepted, but was driven off. The results of this attack are unknown.

At 10:50 p.m. October 6, a reconnaissance plane attacked five enemy barges fifteen miles east of NUMA NUMA, EAST CENTRAL BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results of this attack have not been reported.

At 2:00 a.m. October 7, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked five enemy vessels thirty-two miles southeast of EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. The results of this attack have not been reported.

Salvage attempts on the small coastal transport (APC 35, one-hundred and sixty-five tons), which grounded on 22 September off TETIPARI ISLAND, NEW GEORGIA group, have been abandoned. Considerable equipment and all of the personnel have been removed.

The submarine, BLUEFISH, returning from patrol, reported as follows:

Sank - one transport, one freighter, one small freighter, and one Otori torpedo boat, for a total of 16,109 tons, and damaged one freighter of 5,860 tons. In addition, a beached enemy tanker was shelled and fifteen hits were scored.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE
SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD LETTER

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 7 October 1943.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd)

Our forces on Northwest VELLA LAVELLA continued their advance and disposed of enemy machine gun nests with artillery fire. Fifty-one Japanese, previously cut off in the vicinity of MARQUANA, were evacuated by sea during the night of October 2-3. Our casualties amount to six dead, one missing.

The following details have been received in connection with the October 6th night surface engagement:

Anticipating an enemy evacuation force in the vicinity of North VELLA LAVELLA, a Task Force of six United States destroyers was dispatched to intercept and destroy the enemy.

Our ships were tracked by enemy aircraft and at about 10:55 p.m., engaged the enemy force composed of one group of four destroyers, one of these ships believed to be a YUBARI class cruiser (2,890 tons), and a second group of four additional destroyers. A third group of smaller enemy vessels was not engaged.

As a result of this engagement, two enemy ships blew up, including the YUBARI class cruiser. Another enemy destroyer was sunk by torpedoes and possibly two or three others were damaged by gun fire. The remainder of the enemy was dispersed and fled the area.

Details of our damage are not complete, but it is known that the destroyer, CHEVALIER, had her bow completely blown off by torpedoes, and apparently the destroyer, O'BANNON, collided with the CHEVALIER.

The O'BANNON is enroute to TULAGI at a speed of thirteen knots, and has on board twelve officers and eighty-five per cent of the crew from the CHEVALIER.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED 6-3-72
OSD LETTER
SECRET

9 a.m. 7 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of October 3-4, our destroyers, operating in VELLA GULF, sank an abandoned sixty-five ton enemy gunboat fifteen miles south of LUTI, CHOISEUL ISLAND.

On the afternoon of October 3, eight Army Airacobras strafed four or six enemy barges, previously damaged, but recently camouflaged, off the southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

On October 4, four Navy Corsairs and four Army Airacobras strafed and destroyed sixteen enemy barges between WEST CAPE and PORO ISLAND, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Four other Navy Corsairs sank two more enemy barges in this area.

At 1:30 p.m., October 4, twenty-three Army Liberators, escorted by sixteen Lightnings and six Corsairs, bombed KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. An undetermined number of grounded enemy planes were destroyed. In addition, several fires in the vicinity of the air strip were started. Two of our bombers were damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

This bombing attack was intercepted by twenty or thirty enemy fighters, which followed our bombers to VELLA LAVELLA. The enemy planes dropped four aerial bombs without damage. The Liberators shot down four Zeros and our fighters accounted for five more.

On October 5, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, was attacked by six enemy fighters over CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND. One enemy plane was shot down in flames, and another probably damaged.

At 1:36 p.m., October 5, a reconnaissance plane attacked and shot down a Japanese medium bomber about one hundred and fifty miles northeast of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. After the enemy plane crash-landed in the water, it was strafed and left sinking.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

At 9:25 p.m. October 5, a coast watcher patrol found the VILA-STAMMORE area, SOUTH KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, completely evacuated by the enemy.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
JCS Ltr. 3-19-76

SECRET

9 a.m. 6 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At dawn on October 6, east longitude date, a Task Force, comprising the aircraft carrier YORKTOWN, LEXINGTON and ESSEX, the small aircraft carriers INDEPENDENCE, BELLEAU WOOD and COWPENS, the heavy cruisers MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS and SAN FRANCISCO, the light cruisers SANTA FE, BIRMINGHAM, MOBILE and NASHVILLE, and twenty-four destroyers attacked WAKE ISLAND by air and surface bombardment.

A preliminary report indicates that the operation is proceeding satisfactorily. At the close of the first bombardment phase, in the South group, numerous fires had been started on the beach. As a landfall was made on the island, large plumes of smoke were seen. Minor caliber gun fire has been encountered, but has been silenced. No aircraft opposition has been met except two Zeros, who unfortunately shot down one of our observation planes. Our North group has silenced the land batteries in their sector, and is systematically giving a work-over to their area. Our ships have suffered no casualties.

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On the afternoon of October 4, four Airacobras strafed a large barge at REDMAN ISLAND, off the northwest coast of CHOISEUL. The barge probably exploded, as evidenced by the large amount of black smoke seen.

On the same afternoon, two Corsairs strafed a boat on a sand bar near TABARATO, north central coast of CHOISEUL. What appears to be a possible radio station was sighted near the bar.

On October 5th, at 6:30 in the evening, the badly damaged LST 448, which was being towed from VELLA LAVELLA, by the mine sweeper, BOBOLINK, floundered and sank four miles west of GIZO ISLAND, just west of KOLOMBANGARA. No personnel were lost.

GROUND SITUATION - KOLOMBANGARA

An officer patrol, which returned from KOLOMBANGARA on October 4, reports that the Japs evacuated VOTUNA, DULO, and HUNDA, all on the southwest coast of that island on September 26-27. The road from VILA to BAMBERI indicated heavy foot travel from east to west up to September 26. Many Jap helmets and rifles were found strewn along the pathway.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

4 p.m. 5 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Just a little later that night, around 11:30 p.m., three enemy planes dropped eleven bombs at the northern end of the BARAKOMA airfield on VELLA LAVELLA. No damage nor casualties resulted.

During the night of October 3 - 4, a preliminary report states that five of our destroyers sank and burned two enemy barges five miles northwest of TUKI POINT, northern KOLOMBANGARA.

GROUND SITUATION - VELLA LAVELLA

On the morning of October 2nd, enemy dive bombers and fighters attacked the advanced brigade headquarters of the NEW ZEALAND forces in northwestern VELLA LAVELLA. No material damage occurred. The 35th NEW ZEALAND combat team is still in contact with the enemy in the UMOMO AREA. They are eliminating known machine gun positions in conjunction with artillery support.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
QSD Letter
SECRET

4 p.m. 5 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On the afternoon of October 1st, a Corsair strafed and burned two barges; one at VERU POINT and the other at MONGA BAY, western KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

On October 2nd, at 4:20 p.m., a flight of Douglas and Dauntless dive bombers, which was followed around 5:00 p.m. by six Mitchell medium bombers, bombed and strafed an enemy barge hide-out at HAMBERI COVE, western KOLOMBANGARA. The attacks started three fires south of the cove, and, as evidenced by a large column of gray smoke, another one at the southeastern end of HIRAHIRAPA ISLAND. Two of our Dauntless planes were slightly damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

At 8:06 a.m. on the morning of October 3rd, seven Corsairs, while on BARAKOMA patrol, engaged forty to fifty Zeros high over KUMDURUMBANGARA POINT, eastern VELLA LAVELLA. Six Zeros were shot down. One Corsair pilot was rescued after a water landing.

Around 11:45 a.m. the same day, four Corsairs strafed and destroyed one barge in REI COVE, northern KOLOMBANGARA and another one at TOMBULU, northwestern KOLOMBANGARA.

Later in the day at 4:00 p.m., one of our GUADALCANAL searching planes strafed several barges off southwest CENTRAL CHOISEUL.

During the night of October 2nd and 3rd, a single Jap plane dropped eight bombs near the landing strip and BIBILO HILL, MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. Around ten o'clock that night, two delayed action bombs, evidently dropped by this plane, exploded near BIBILO HILL without damage or casualties.

SEGI POINT, NEW GEORGIA, was raided by two or three planes between seven and eight p.m. on the night of October 2nd. All of the bombs dropped in the water.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE
SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
DSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 4 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

Shortly after midnight on October 2, a PBY bombed a medium sized ship and four enemy barges, fifty miles east of CAPE SAINT GEORGE, on NEW IRELAND. One direct hit was made on a barge. A little later another PBY blasted one enemy destroyer and two other ships in approximately the same position. It is reported that a probable direct hit was made on a destroyer because there was a large explosion heard.

At about 5:45, in the afternoon of October 2, another GUADALCANAL PBY had a running fight with five Zeros but sustained no damage.

On the morning of October 2, between 7:35 a.m., and 8:23 a.m., twenty-five enemy bombers and Zeros were over Central and Western VELLA LAVELLA. Apparently this flight was out looking for shipping because no bombs were dropped.

During the night of October 2-3, a Blue destroyer force held a field day on some twenty large and innumerable small enemy barges North of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. It is believed that all of the large barges were sunk and many of the small ones were disposed of. This same destroyer force also hit a formation of about seven enemy gun boats or torpedo boats with torpedoes. It is believed our torpedoes ran under the formation. We in turn had torpedoes thrown at us and one definitely was seen to miss the stern of the destroyer TERRY. Our targets were maneuvering rapidly at high speed so our destroyers opened up the range to about 8,000 yards and then closed in bringing them under gunfire. One of the targets was sunk and many hits were registered on the others as evidenced by the appearance of much smoke. It is probable that the targets were not destroyers but rather torpedo or gun boats. Towards the closing round of the engagement, three definitely recognized Jap destroyers appeared from the Northwest but on viewing the carnage being inflicted, they hastily withdrew. A trip through the battle area around four thirty in the morning, showed many small gasoline or oil slicks marking the end of some Jap unit.

During the night of 30th September - 1 October, the motor torpedo boat No. 68, grounded on VINCKE POINT, HUON PENINSULA, in Northeast NEW GUINEA. No personnel casualties were suffered. The ship was destroyed by her crew to prevent falling into the hands of the enemy.

On October the 3rd at 6:15 p.m., the destroyer REID reported that the destroyer HENLEY was torpedoed and sunk in HERCULES BAY, an arm of the HUON GULF in Northeast NEW GUINEA. A search is being carried out for the submarine and the ship's survivors.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
SECRET
OSD Letter

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 4 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

On October 1, at 11:13 p.m., a PBY plane from GUADALCANAL made contact with four enemy ships, thirty-five miles West of BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, scoring a hit or near miss on the largest ship.

At 8:37 a.m., October 1, twenty-four Liberators, without escort, bombed the stores and bivouac areas North of VILA air field. One fire was started at the Northwestern end of the runway. The runway itself was also hit. The flight was not subjected to any antiaircraft fire.

At 3:00, in the afternoon of October 1, a flight of Mitchell's, Dauntless and Avenger planes, escorted by Lightnings, blasted the KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND, barge concentration. A large fire was seen and an explosion occurred in the clearing South of the village.

On the morning of October 1, at 6:45 a.m., a Corsair coming off the BARAKOMA patrol because of engine difficulties, strafed and burned an enemy barge at OKOBO RIVER, and another one near WAUGH ROCK, Eastern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Between 7:39 p.m., and a quarter to nine p.m., on October 1, four Japanese planes dropped nineteen bombs in the water in the MUNDA area. Two bombs fell on the beach. No damage was sustained from the attack.

During the night of October 1 and 2, our destroyers patrolling in NEW GEORGIA SOUND, ran into five different enemy groups, comprising four to eight barges each in the waters between VILA and KULA GULFS, North of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. These barges were headed on a Northwesterly course. It is reported that thirty-five of these barges were picked up and as a result of the engagement, twenty were sunk or badly damaged. While the fight was going on, Japanese snooper planes dropped pilot lights and flares. The destroyer SAUFLEY was bombed by three near misses by a plane approaching from her stern at about five thousand feet. As a result eighteen men were wounded, two of which are in serious condition.

Although it is not definitely reported as a part of this engagement it is stated that the destroyer EATON definitely sunk a Japanese submarine by gunfire.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter, [illegible]

9 a.m. 4 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

On October 1, the NEW ZEALAND ground forces in Northwest VELLA LAVELLA, after shelling enemy positions in the vicinity of UMOMO ISLAND, advanced Northward of TIMBALA BAY. It is estimated that about five hundred well armed Japanese are in the TIMBALA BAY-MARQUAND BAY area.

The submarine SCAMP, returning from a war patrol in the BISMARK ARCHIPELAGO, reports as follows:

(1) On arriving at her patrol area September 14, she was detected and heavily depth charged by an enemy destroyer while seeking to press home a torpedo attack.

(2) In the forenoon of September 18, she got one torpedo hit in one of two escorted ships which stopped the ship. In the afternoon of the same day she fired two at this damaged ship but missed. Towards dusk she finished off the 8,600 ton damaged transport with one torpedo and also hit the 500 ton escort ship, which was never seen again. During the night of September 21, in an escorted convoy, she was able to get two and possibly three hits into a 6,500 ton freighter which later sank. An attempt was made to polish off the remaining ships of the convoy but counter attack measures by escort again caused severe damage to the SCAMP. The extensive damage suffered by the SCAMP will require a full refit period.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DEC OSD LOCKET

9 a.m. 3 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

At 11:30 a.m., 30 September, a reconnaisance plane operating from GUADALCANAL engaged nine Zeros in a running fight fifteen miles north of NAURU ISLAND. One Zero was shot down.

During the night of 30 September--1 October, our destroyers attacked twelve small enemy barges, of which they sank six, thirteen miles north of TUKI POINT, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

A 17056

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

OSD SECRET

9 a.m. 3 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

On 28 September Japanese planes bombed MUNDI MUNDI, southwest VELLA LAVELLA ISLAND, and dropped containers of food by parachute in the JAVA area, north coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Ten of these parachute containers were recovered by natives.

On the morning of 29 September, motor torpedo boats destroyed two enemy barges and badly damaged two others off the northeast coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

At 9:15 a.m., 29 September, seventeen Navy dive bombers and twelve torpedo dive bombers bombed and strafed the enemy barge depot at KAKASA, central southwest CHOISEUL ISLAND. Two fires were started and about seven buildings destroyed.

During the morning of 29 September, twenty-eight Liberators, returning from a search for enemy shipping north of BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, were attacked by fifteen Zeros. In the running engagement one Liberator was damaged. All of our planes returned.

At 5:30 p.m., 29 September, twelve Navy Corsairs strafed two barges off MOLI ISLAND, northwest CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At 11:24 p.m., 29 September, our destroyers operating in VELLA GULF intercepted and turned back six or nine enemy barges which were enroute from CHOISEUL ISLAND to KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. One large and possibly several small barges are believed to have been destroyed. During this action, enemy planes harassed our destroyers by dropping flares. One enemy plane was shot down.

During the early morning of 30 September, a Catalina dropped bombs and leaflets on VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

At 1:58 p.m., 30 September, six medium bombers attacked the KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND, barge center. After the attack only three buildings remained standing.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 2 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

During the night of September 27-28, Japanese artillery shelled our positions on ONDONGO ISLAND without damage. Enemy positions at VILA KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND continued to be harassed by our mortar and artillery fire.

The 35th NEW ZEALAND combat team surrounded about two hundred and fifty to three hundred Japanese on UMOMO ISLAND and the adjoining mainland. The enemy suffered considerable casualties in an attempt to escape. Their positions on UMOMO were shelled by our artillery during the morning of September 28. Our casualties were reported light.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 2 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Con't'd)

off TARO ISLAND, WEST CENTRAL CHOISEUL ISLAND. That evening eight more Hellcats attacked and sank a one hundred foot enemy vessel loaded with Japanese off SASAMUGA, CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At 3:04 p.m., September 28, two Navy Corsairs killed or wounded about twelve or fifteen Japanese in a boat off KAPE HARBOR, SOUTHEAST KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

During the evening of September 28, Japanese planes dropped eight bombs northwest of the MUNDA strip, killed two men and wounded six. No material damage was sustained.

At 8:49 a.m., September 29, a search plane operating from Guadalcanal shot down an enemy bomber off EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY, WEST BOUGAINVILLE.

Eight Army Warhawks strafed and destroyed an enemy barge off SAMBI HEAD, SOUTHWEST CHOISEUL during the afternoon of September 29.

The submarine chaser 751 which grounded June 22, on a reef in EXMOUTH GULF, WEST COAST OF AUSTRALIA, sank on September 16, after being refloated and taken in tow by the patrol vessel CHANTICLEER. Heavy swells caused the vessel to sink but it is reported that the majority of salvageable equipment was removed from the vessel during refloating operations.

Our submarines operating against enemy shipping in the Pacific report the following successes:

(1) The SARGO reported sinking a 10,000 tanker and a freighter. In addition a 9,500 passenger vessel was damaged with two torpedo hits.

(2) The GUDGEON sank two enemy ships totaling 15,000 tons and damaged another of 8,000 tons. In addition a sub-chaser was damaged by gunfire.

(3) The POGY damaged and probably sank a 6,000 ton freighter.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD LETTER

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 2 October 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

At 12:20 p.m., September 27, twenty-seven Liberators escorted by thirty-six fighters, struck at KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Hits were scored on a number of buildings and six fires started. About twenty-five to thirty-five Zeros interfered with this attack and followed our planes to VELLA LAVELLA. In the running engagement the bombers shot down five Zeros and our fighters destroyed seven more and damaged another. One Corsair is missing and another of our fighters crash-landed.

At 9:35 a.m., September 28, eighteen medium bombers, forty-eight dive bombers and twenty-six torpedo dive bombers attacked enemy gun positions and bivouac areas at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. A number of fires were started.

At 1:05 p.m., September 28, a Guadalcanal reconnaissance plane sighted an enemy formation of eight destroyers about sixty miles North of BUKA ISLAND. This force was covered by eight Zeros three of which attacked our reconnaissance plane. Two Zeros were shot down and another was believed to have been destroyed.

At 7:22 p.m., September 28, an eleven ship enemy convoy was attacked by reconnaissance Liberators eleven miles northwest of CHOISEUL BAY. Two direct hits were scored on the stern of a large ship. A straggler from this convoy was later attacked and two hits amidships set the vessel on fire which was visible for twenty miles.

At 8:34 p.m., September 28, thirty miles East of KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, three or four direct bomb hits were scored on a vessel which appeared to be a two stack enemy destroyer. During this attack a considerable amount of antiaircraft fire was encountered and one Liberator suffered damage. Later, at 8:43 p.m, one or more hits were scored on a vessel about twenty miles East of KIETA. The ship was observed to turn over on its side and sink.

Three Navy Corsairs strafed and sank a loaded barge three miles off REI COVE, NORTH KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND at 7:30 a.m., September 29. Later that afternoon eight Hellcats destroyed two barges anchored

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
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9 a.m. 1 October 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd)

At about 11:30 p.m. September 29th, the United States destroyers, PATTERSON and McCALLA, collided twenty-nine miles north northeast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. The McCALLA'S bow was cut off forward of frame 25. No casualties were suffered. The PATTERSON lost her bow forward of frame 23. Three men are missing from this ship, and one was injured. Both vessels are proceeding towards TULAGI at five knots, accompanied by the destroyer RALPH TALBOT and the auxiliary tug, PAWNEE.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED 6-5-74
OSD Letter
SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 30 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

An unreported number of our destroyers, operating in northeast VELLA GULF, during the night of September 27-28, sank three and possibly four enemy barges. Japanese SNOOPER planes harassed our destroyers and dropped a number of flares during the action.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 5-3-71
OSD Letter

SECRET

4 p.m. 30 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 2:30 p.m. September 26th, eighteen Navy dive bombers and fifteen torpedo dive bombers bombed the enemy barge depot at RINGI COVE, SOUTH KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Two fires were started.

Four Navy Corsairs of the MUNDA patrol strafed docks and houses on southeast GIZO ISLAND at 5:30 a.m. September 24th. The same area was again strafed at 4:00 p.m. by eight Corsairs and a number of grass huts and wooden houses were ignited.

At 7:05 p.m. September 26th, enemy planes were over MUNDA and dropped a number of bombs without damage. Later, between 11:22 p.m. and 11:45 p.m., Japanese planes bombed KUNDURUMBANGARA POINT, northwest VELLA LAVELLA without damage.

On September 26th, at about 2:10 p.m., twenty-one Army Liberators, twenty-four Navy dive bombers and twelve torpedo dive bombers, escorted by seventy-nine fighters, bombed and strafed the KIHILI AREA. A number of buildings were demolished, fires started and hits were scored on gun positions and in the bivouac supply and hanger areas.

The heavy bombers were intercepted by thirty enemy fighters. One Zero was shot down and one of our bombers slightly damaged. Nineteen of our fighters engaged about twenty or thirty Zeros over KANGU, BUIN AREA. One Zero was destroyed. One of our fighters crash-landed at MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA, and another landed on the water northwest of the RUSSELL ISLANDS.

At 10:00 p.m. September 27th, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL strafed ten enemy barges off northwest CHOISEUL ISLAND. These barges were later observed beached north of VOZA, CENTRAL SOUTHWEST CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At 11:10 a.m. September 27th, another reconnaissance plane from GUADALCANAL engaged five Zeros ten miles east of NAURU ISLAND. One Zero was destroyed and another probably shot down.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED Letter 5-3-72 OSD
SECRET

9 a.m. 28 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the morning of September 25th, ten medium bombers, nineteen torpedo dive bombers and nine dive bombers, escorted by fighters, attacked enemy gun positions at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. A number of hits were scored in the vicinity of the strip and west DISAPPOINTMENT COVE. One fire was started.

Later that morning, an enemy formation of eighteen torpedo dive bombers, escorted by twenty Zeros, in an attack on an Allied convoy east of BARAKOMA, VELLA LAVELLA, was intercepted by eight Hellcats. Most of the dive bombers were driven off and one Zero was shot down. However, three of the enemy bombers succeeded in breaking through and set on fire the LST reported in yesterday's summary. Three other enemy dive bombers started a large fire at KUNDURUMBANGARA, northeast VELLA LAVELLA. Four Zeros strafed the BILOA area, south VELLA LAVELLA.

A BLUE task force, operating in VELLA GULF, was unsuccessfully attacked by enemy submarines during the morning of September 26th.

At 12:45 p.m. September 26, a reconnaissance plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, attacked and set on fire a 2,500 ton enemy freighter, one hundred and seventy miles north northwest of NARU ISLAND.

The submarine, ALBACORE, returning from patrol, reported as follows:

Sank one freighter. (Tonnage not reported).
Damaged one freighter. (Tonnage not reported).

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

On September 26, a NEW ZEALAND combat team moved from MUNDI MUNDI RIVER to MATU SOROTO, northwest VELLA LAVELLA. No enemy was encountered.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED Letter, 5-3-72
OSD

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 27 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 25, enemy planes bombed and set on fire a United States L.S.T. in the vicinity of RURAVAI, east coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Two officers and ten men were killed.

On September 25, an Allied motor torpedo boat base was established in LAMBU LAMBU COVE, northeast VELLA LAVELLA.

During the afternoon of September 25, one of our search planes bombed and strafed two enemy barges off WEST CAPE CHOISEUL ISLAND. Later, this plane attacked and left sinking a small enemy supply SAMPAN off LUTI plantation, south central coast CHOISEUL ISLAND.

The United States submarine, HADDOCK, probably operating in the TRUK area, reported as follows:

On September 15, damaged one freighter.

On September 20, sank a convoy, consisting of two transports. On the same day, attacked and sank a loaded tanker.

Although details are not complete, an estimate based on the reports received, indicates that the submarine, SNOOK, achieved the following successes:

1. Sank one freighter of 3,500 tons.

2. Seriously damaged and probably sank another freighter, which was last seen sinking and being abandoned.

3. Scored hits on a multiple target, the identity of which has not been reported.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED Letter, [illegible]

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 26 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA SITUATION

A conservative estimate indicates that about five-hundred to six-hundred Japanese have been knocked out of action on ARUNDEL ISLAND. Three hundred and forty-five enemy dead were counted.

Japanese artillery shelled, without damage, ONDONGA ISLAND, west NEW GEORGIA, during the night of September 23-24.

The NEW ZEALAND patrol at PARASO, north VELLA LAVELLA, has moved its base to DOVELI COVE, after being unsuccessfully bombed by enemy planes during the night of September 23-24.

Regraded Unclassified

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COMINCH FILE

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OSD Letter,

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 26 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 9:35 a.m. September 23rd, twenty-three heavy bombers, twenty-two dive bombers and twelve torpedo bombers, escorted by about fifty fighters, attacked enemy positions in the vicinity of KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. A number of fires were started and several buildings were destroyed. In addition, our dive bombers attacked several enemy barges at the mouth of the UGUIMO RIVER (one-half mile northeast of BUIN) with unobserved results.

About fifty to sixty enemy fighters attacked our planes. Nine Zeros were shot down. We lost two fighters and one crash-landed in southeast VELLA LAVELLA.

Later that day, twenty-one of our planes attacked enemy positions, at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Results were not observed.

The following day, between 3:40 p.m. and 4:20 p.m., four medium bombers, thirty dive bombers and eighteen torpedo bombers again struck the VILA AREA. A number of fires were started at RINGI COVE, and a direct hit was scored on a gun position in this area. In addition, it is believed that two enemy barges were destroyed on the west shore of RINGI COVE.

During the afternoon of September 23, four Navy Corsairs destroyed a seventy-foot enemy launch off the southern tip of FAISI, SHORTLAND AREA.

On the same afternoon, eight Airacobras attacked and probably destroyed two enemy oil-laden barges off the west coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

The submarine, CABRILLA, reported scoring two torpedo hits into an auxiliary aircraft carrier on September 23rd.

The target was last seen on course 250, speed 10. Subsequent attempts by the submarine to locate the target were unsuccessful. Apparently, the attack was made east of CHICHI JIMA.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12958 5-3-7
OSD Letter 5-3-7

S E C R E T

9 a.m. 25 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 2:10 a.m. September 23rd, one of our reconnaissance planes attacked two Japanese barges off CAPE ALEXANDER, CHOISEUL ISLAND. The barges were subsequently beached and may have burned.

Another reconnaissance plane attacked three medium-sized enemy cargo vessels, twenty miles west northwest of BUKA ISLAND. The result of this attack has not been reported.

The submarine, BARGO, returning from EAST CHINA SEA area, reported sinking 27,000 tons of enemy shipping. In addition, a 9,500 ton passenger vessel was damaged.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
DoD Directive 5200.9
S E C R E T

9 a.m. 24 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 21-22, PBY patrol planes from GUADALCANAL attacked an enemy freighter south of ST. GEORGE CHANNEL, in the NEW BRITAIN-NEW IRELAND area. The same flight also attacked another enemy freighter just off the west coast of north BOUGAINVILLE.

At approximately midnight on September 23, a PBY attacked an enemy force thirty miles southeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE. One of the units was believed to be a light cruiser.

The results of these attacks have been unreported.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

Organized enemy resistance on ARUNDEL ISLAND ceased at 3:45 p.m. on September 21st. However, the hunt continues for straying Japs.

Jap prisoners report that their unit on ARUNDEL, the 13th Infantry, has suffered very heavy casualties. They also state that anti-aircraft ammunition was dropped on VILA, KOLOMBANGARA, during the night of September 17-18, and that the garrison there is mainly supplied by submarines and float planes. On September 21, two groups each of twenty-five NEW ZEALAND troups were landed at PARASO, north VELLA LAVELLA, and MUNDI BAY, northwest VELLA LAVELLA. They report they are in contact with the enemy.

The submarine, TRIGGER, returning from a war patrol in east CHINA SEA, reports as follows:

Sunk - two loaded tankers and two freighters for a total of 33,000 tons.

Damaged - a 7,000 ton freighter, which, when last seen, had her forecastle awash.

The submarine, HADDOCK, reported sinking three ships. Further details are not at present available.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
OSD letter,

SECRET

SECRET

9 a.m. 23 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 4:30 p.m. September 21st, twenty-eight Navy fighters strafed KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. About six or eight enemy Zeros, on the air strip, were either destroyed or damaged. Two of our planes were damaged by anti-aircraft fire. One of these planes was forced down into the water, but the other returned safely.

Eight Navy Corsairs, at 5:10 p.m. September 20th, attacked eight JAPANESE barges off the central coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND. Three of the barges were burned and the remainder damaged. Earlier that morning, another enemy barge was strafed and burned off the west central coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND by six Navy Corsairs. These planes then attacked and set on fire a one-hundred and seventy foot enemy cargo vessel off north CHOISEUL ISLAND.

During the early morning of September 21st, approximately twelve or sixteen enemy bombers bombed the GUADALCANAL airdrome. One grounded Navy Corsair was destroyed and five others damaged. Two men were killed and seventeen FIJI workmen injured. Two of the enemy bombers were shot down by a Lightning night fighter.

During the early morning of September 21st, enemy planes over MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA, dropped a number of bombs and caused minor damage, but no casualties.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

During the night of September 19-20, enemy artillery heavily shelled our positions on ARUNDEL ISLAND. Our casualties were light.

Considerable enemy barge activity between VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND and ARUNDEL ISLAND was noted during the night of September 19-20.

On ARUNDEL, SAGAKARASA ISLAND, JAPANESE have been cleaned up and our operations are continuing.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter 6-3-78

9 a.m. 23 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At APAMAMA ISLAND, enemy camp installations were heavily hit.

At NAURU, Army and Navy Liberators scored hits along the runways, the dispersal area and in the vicinity of the radio station and a phosphate plant.

In addition to destroying the previously mentioned grounded enemy aircraft, our forces shot down six Zeros, two medium bombers, probably destroyed four more fighters and possibly damaged eight.

Although our planes encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire and interception by day and night fighters, only four of our planes were lost.

At 6:10 a.m. September 20th, an unidentified enemy bomber shot down a patroling Navy Corsair off the west coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. The pilot was recovered.

At 10:15 a.m. September 20th, thirty-six Navy dive bombers and torpedo planes, covered by fighters, attacked enemy gun positions on PARAPATU POINT, southeast KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Two of our planes were struck by anti-aircraft fire and made forced landings in the water. The crews of both planes were recovered.

At 11:00 a.m. September 20th, a GUADALCANAL search plane bombed a small enemy cargo vessel three-hundred and thirty miles north northeast of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND. The vessel was left abandoned and sinking.

At 11:05 a.m. of the same day, twenty-three unescorted Army Liberators bombed the revetment area and the runway at BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. A number of fires were started, and it is believed that several enemy planes burned. About fifteen or eighteen JAPANESE fighters intercepted. Two of these were shot down. One of our bombers was damaged, but returned to its base.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 23 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On the night of September 19-20, our motor torpedo boats, while patroling off the east coast of VELLA LAVELLA, shot down a Japanese float plane.

On the early morning of September 20, six Japanese planes over GUADALCANAL bombed the area in the vicinity of the CARNEY air strip. Two gasoline trucks and a filling station were damaged. One Navy Liberator was destroyed and a number of other grounded planes sustained damage.

During the morning of September 19-20, a number of enemy planes were over our positions on ARUNDEL ISLAND and MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. Only two bombs were dropped and no casualties or damages were sustained.

Although not complete, the following details have been received in connection with our operations against enemy installations in the GILBERT ISLAND region:

TASK FORCE 15, commanded by Rear Admiral Pownall, and composed of the aircraft carriers LEXINGTON, BELLEAU WOOD, PRINCETON, the cruisers SANTA FE, BIRMINGHAM and MOBILE, plus destroyers, operated on September 19th against the enemy in the GILBERT AREA. The task force was assisted by land-based Army and Navy aircraft, staging from CANTON ISLAND and FUNAFUTI.

More than two hundred sorties were carried out by our planes against TARAWA, MAKIN and APAMAMA ISLANDS, in the northern GILBERTS and NAURU ISLAND, west of the GILBERT group.

At TARAWA, our forces destroyed eight enemy bombers on the runway, sank a small vessel and damaged enemy installations on the island.

At MAKIN, the airbase was damaged, three enemy four-engine sea planes destroyed, and, in addition, an unidentified patrol plane was destroyed.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter,

SECRET

9 a.m. 22 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The submarine TROUT, returning from a war patrol in the Southeastern Philippines, reports as follows:

August 25 -- Destroyed a 36 ton fisherman in MOLUKKA PASSAGE.

September 9 -- Probably sunk an enemy I-62 class submarine in SURIGAO STRAIT.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter, 1972

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 21 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 18-19, one Jap plane dropped two bombs on ARUNDEL ISLAND and two additional ones on the northern end of the MUNDA landing field. No casualties or damage have been reported.

Regraded Unclassified

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 19, just after noon, a lone Jap plane bombed a BLUE convoy about ninety miles east of SAN CRISTOBAL. Fortunately, the bombs missed their target.

On September 18, between 12:45 and 1:00 p.m., a flight of seventeen Corsairs and four Warhawks took on thirty enemy dive bombers, and twenty Zero fighters over BARAKOMA, southeastern VELLA LAVELLA. Our planes destroyed twelve dive bombers and five Zeros. The anti-aircraft at BARAKOMA accounted for one dive bomber. One of our aircraft boats, despite being subjected to twenty-one near misses from small anti-personal bombs, accounted for two more dive bombers. The score for the afternoon was: enemy planes destroyed - fifteen dive bombers, five Zeros. One Corsair was lost and two others are missing.

On September 19, around 2:00 in the afternoon, twenty-eight Dauntless dive bombers, fourteen Avengers and ten Mitchells blasted gun positions in the coves around VILA, southern KOLOMBANGARA. Hits were registered on gun positions in Northwest cove; a large fire was started northeast of the landing strip; what appeared to be an ammunition dump in Northwest cove exploded and a direct hit was made on the causeway crossing the cove. Heavy accurate anti-aircraft fire damaged one of the Avengers and wounded one of the gunners.

Our ground operations on ARUNDEL ISLAND continue in spite of strong enemy resistance. During the night of September 16-17, five enemy barges, with reinforcements, attempted to land in the northern part of the island. Because of our fire power, it is reported only two were able to do so.

On September 19, at 2:30 in the morning; two or three enemy planes made a return visit to GUADALCANAL. One-hundred pound anti-personal bombs were dropped in the officers' area and two officers and one enlisted man were seriously wounded, while fifteen others were slightly injured. An enemy bulls-eye completely destroyed a tank containing 29,000 gallons of aviation gas.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter,

SECRET

9 a.m. 20 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 18th, early in the morning, a PBY bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

On September 18th, around one o'clock in the afternoon, Douglas dive bombers and Avengers bombed defensive positions at BAMBARI HARBOR, in southeast KOLOMBANGARA, causing a large explosion. Several houses were also destroyed. This flight also strafed defensive positions at PARAPATU POINT, KOLOMBANGARA, and started a large fire. The fighter patrol from MUNDA provided cover for these operations. Incidentally, no anti-aircraft fire was received from the targets.

A preliminary report indicates that shortly after noon on September 18th, an enemy dive bombing attack was successfully thwarted off VELLA LAVELLA.

During the night of September 17-18, twelve enemy planes dropped on MUNDA 35 x 100 pound bombs. Sixteen fell on the landing strip, with the balance falling in the water. No casualties occured and very little damage was received.

The enemy also hit, during the same night, BARAKOMA, southeastern VELLA LAVELLA. Five bombs fell near the landing strip, but no damage has been reported.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter,

9:00 a.m. 19 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 16-17, our motor torpedo boats, operating in south KULA GULF, exchanged fire with enemy shore batteries on the north side of BAMBARI HARBOR. The northwest coast of VELLA LAVELLA and the area southwest of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND werepatrolled by torpedo boats during the same night.

At 11:35 p.m. September 15th, five Venturas attacked BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. A number of bombs were observed to fall in the vicinity of the runway. A Japanese twin-engine night fighter, attempting to intercept, was unable to overhaul our bombers. One Ventura did not return to its base.

At 2:50 p.m. September 16th, thirty Dauntless dive bombers and twenty-four Avengers, covered by seventy-three fighters, attacked enemy positions on BALLALE ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored on gun enplacements, revetment, supply and camp areas. A number of fires were started and an unidentified vessel off the south end of the strip was observed burning after the attack. Two of the Avengers failed to return.

The fighter cover encountered about fifty or sixty enemy fighters over the SHORTLAND AREA. In a twenty-five minute engagement, fourteen enemy planes were shot down. We lost four fighter planes, but three of the pilots were rescued.

A Warhawk on patrol over VELLA LAVELLA shot down one enemy plane.

At 12:20 p.m. September 16th, a search plane, operating from GUADALCANAL, bombed an enemy cargo vessel and a destroyer escort ninety miles east of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND. Near misses started a small fire aboard the cargo vessel.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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~~S E C R E T~~

OSD Letter 6-5

4:00 p.m. 18 September 1943

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 15-16, MUNDA was raided by enemy planes three times. Bombs started a fire in an ammunition dump and injured three of the personnel.

An enemy plane dropped bombs on GUADALCANAL at 11:51 p.m. September 15th. Some minor damage was sustained and one man was injured.

Regraded Unclassified

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DECLASSIFIED 5-3-76 OSD Letter

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 18 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Attacks against this area continued throughout the night of September 15-16, when medium bombers attacked twice. Preliminary reports indicate these attacks to have been successful.

On September 15th, at 5:45 a.m., one Mitchell bomber attacked VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Later that morning five Liberators bombed PARAPATU POINT, southeast KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, with unobserved results.

The revetment area and runway at BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE, was thoroughly bombed on the morning of September 15th. Results of this attack have not been reported.

The enemy has re-acted to the recent bombings of BOUGAINVILLE by reinforcing his air units in that area. Although he has suffered in the destruction of airborn fighters in addition to an undetermined number of planes destroyed on the ground, his concentration of aircraft on BOUGAINVILLE fields has increased.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

Enemy positions in northeast ARUNDEL ISLAND have been reinforced by four barges on the night of September 14-15. An attack on our positions was repulsed and thirty-three of the enemy were killed. Our preparations have been completed for a coordinated attack scheduled for the morning of September 17th. Enemy attempts to again reinforce their positions on the night of September 15-16 were prevented by artillery and mortar fire.

On VELLA LAVELLA our forces attacked VALAPATAI on September 14th. Fifteen Japanese were killed by our artillery fire. Reports indicate that the Japanese are moving towards the northwest coast.

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 6-3-77 OSD Dept.

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 18 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 4:00 p.m. September 14th, six Venturas (medium bombers) strafed enemy gun positions east of the VILA runway, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Results were unobserved.

At 11:30 p.m. September 14th, six Venturas attacked enemy positions on BALLALE ISLAND. Results of this attack have not been reported.

Four enemy planes raided the LUNGA AREA (probably NEW GEORGIA AREA), on the early morning of September 15th. One grounded dive bomber was destroyed and other planes were damaged slightly. Two men were killed and six were injured.

At 11:15 a.m. September 15th, thirty-one dive bombers and twenty-four torpedo bombers, covered by forty-two fighters, bombed and strafed enemy positions on BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. Hits were scored in the target areas and on runway gun positions. A hit was observed in a six plane revetment area and among trucks parked on the runway. A plane was left on fire and a number of other fires started.

The fighter cover engaged fifty intercepting Zeros and shot down fourteen. We lost one Hellcat and another was forced down into the water.

On the night of September 14-15, about forty to sixty Japanese planes bombed the MUNDA-BARACOMA AREA. One grounded Hellcat was destroyed and five damaged. Seven of the personnel were killed and twenty-eight wounded.

Stepped-up air attacks against BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND continued throughout September 15th. At 4:55 a.m., six Mitchell bombers strafed the KARA airfield, BUIN area, and started a fire. At about the same time, a formation of five Mitchell bombers attacked KIHILI and started a number of fires and explosions.

Later, at 11:30 a.m., sixteen Army Liberators, escorted by twenty-six fighters, bombed KIHILI and started a number of fires in the vicinity of the runway. Strong anti-aircraft fire damaged two of the bombers.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter, 5-3-78

SECRET

4 p.m. 17 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The following details have been received in connection with the KIHILI and BALLALE, SHORTLAND AREA, air attacks on September 14th:

At 1:35 p.m., forty-seven Army and Navy Liberators, escorted by seventy-six Navy Corsairs and Army Warhawks, attacked KIHILI in four waves. Bombs were dropped on the strip and the surrounding installations. About seventy Zeros intercepted. Our bombers shot down two Zeros and our fighters destroyed six more. Two Warhawks failed to return and another crash landed. In addition, five Corsairs were damaged by anti-aircraft fire.

At about 1:00 p.m., September 14th, three Navy Corsairs strafed BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA, and destroyed a Zero, and damaged a Zero and a bomber on the strip. A number of fires were started in the area. Later, at 1:13 p.m., twenty-four torpedo dive bombers and thirty-four dive bombers, escorted by fifteen Airacobras and twenty-six Hellcats, again bombed and strafed BALLALE ISLAND. This attack started a number of fires and possibly blew up an ammunition dump. An unidentified grounded plane was also destroyed. Twenty-one enemy fighters intercepted and in the ensuing engagement our fighters shot down eight Zeros. In addition to four torpedo bombers being damaged by anti-aircraft fire, one Hellcat was forced to crash land and another landed in the water.

On September 14th, our motor torpedo boats, in a day hunt off northern VELLA LAVELLA, destroyed five enemy barges. In addition, these boats strafed small buildings and other shore installations on the northern coast of the island.

On September 15th, a Japanese submarine was probably destroyed one hundred and ten miles east southeast of SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND by depth charges and gun fire in a co-ordinated attack by a Catalina and a destroyer.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED DoD Dir. 5-3-74

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

S E C R E T

9 a.m. 16 September 1943

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION (Cont'd.)

Our artillery fire continues to harrass enemy positions at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 16 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the early morning of September 14th, three Mitchell bombers attacked VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, with unobserved results.

At 11:30 a.m. September 13th, a small Japanese cargo vessel was unsuccessfully attacked by a search plane about one-hundred and eighty miles northeast of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.

On the night of September 13-14, enemy planes dropped bombs on the LUNGA POINT Area, GUADALCANAL. Some minor damage was sustained. On the same night, a Japanese bomber bombed the camp area near the north strip, RUSSELL ISLAND, but caused no damage. A number of bombs were also dropped by two enemy planes in the vicinity of BIBOLO HILL, MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. Two grounded Corsairs were damaged. No personnel casualties resulted from any of the foregoing raids.

The submarine, SUNFISH, reports sinking a 10,000 ton enemy transport and, in addition, probably sinking another of 7,000 tons.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

Our artillery continues to bombard Japanese positions in northeast VELLA LAVELLA. Three Japanese planes attacked the LAMBU LAMBU area without damage. In this vicinity, our patrols have encountered heavy machine gun and knee-motor fire.

It is reported that a Japanese party has reached UMOMO ISLAND, northwest VELLA LAVELLA, increasing the number in that area to one-hundred. Other groups of the enemy are on the northeast side of TIMBALA BAY and on the mainland east of UMOMO ISLAND.

On ARUNDEL ISLAND operations continue satisfactorily. Some of our troops have advanced eastward on BAMBOE VILLAGE Peninsula and other troops facing the west continue to hold their positions. Between these two forces, an undetermined number of the enemy has been pocketed.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 16 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 5 p.m. September 12th, four Navy Corsairs strafed KIHILI, SHORTLAND Area. Three enemy barges were also attacked and one was set on fire. One grounded enemy plane was left burning.

A search plane bombing attack on a six-ship convoy at 11:50 p.m. September 12th, fifteen miles east of KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, netted a direct hit on the bridge of a Japanese destroyer. A heavy explosion followed. The search plane was unsuccessfully pursued by six or seven Zeros.

Our motor torpedo boats continued to operate in southern KULA GULF during the night of September 12-13, but made no enemy surface contacts. Our boats exchanged fire with enemy shore positions in the vicinity of PARAPATU POINT, southeast KOLOMBANGARA, and with positions in the BAMBARI HARBOR Area.

At 7:46 a.m. September 13th, seven Navy Corsairs engaged fifteen Zeros over BAGA ISLAND, west of VELLA LAVELLA. Three enemy planes were destroyed. One Corsair is missing, and is believed to have been shot down by anti-aircraft fire over northeast VELLA LAVELLA.

On the night of September 13-14, one of our night fighters attacked, with unreported results, a Japanese float plane, which attempted to bomb a motor torpedo boat off southeast KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. The Japanese plane dropped a bomb near the boat, which wounded one officer, but caused no material damage. Other motor torpedo boats were unsuccessfully attacked by enemy float planes in the vicinity of FERGUSON PASSAGE (between ARUNDEL and GIZO ISLANDS).

Throughout September 14th, one-hundred and two heavy bombers, torpedo bombers and dive bombers, covered by one-hundred and twenty-seven fighters, attacked enemy airfields on south BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Early reports indicate the attacks to have been highly successful.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 6-5
OSD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 15 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Our motor torpedo boats operated during the night of September 11th off the west coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND and the east coast of VELLA LAVELLA. These boats were bombed and strafed by enemy float planes for two hours.

At 12:15 a.m. September 11th, twenty-five Liberators, escorted by upwards of twenty-two fighters, bombed enemy installations at KIHILI, SHORTLAND area. A number of fires were started. Navy Corsairs in the fighter escort engaged about fifteen to twenty Zeros and shot down six. Hellcats engaged seven Zeros and destroyed one. One of our fighters failed to return.

Later, at 6:50 p.m. September 11th, four Navy Corsairs strafed KIHILI. Seven unidentified planes were probably destroyed on the ground. One of the Corsairs strafed a Japanese destroyer. Numerous hits were observed on the vessel.

During the early morning of September 11th, two Liberators bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Results of this attack were unobserved.

On the night of September 11th, three Liberators bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Results were unobserved. The following day at 7:45 a.m. nine Kittyhawks and seven Airacobras attacked BAMBARI HARBOR, southeast KOLOMBANGARA. The bombs fell among Japanese gun positions on the north side of the harbor.

Shortly after midnight on September 12th, a Catalina unsuccessfully bombed several small enemy ships thirty miles northeast of CAPE ST. GEORGE, NEW IRELAND. Another Catalina bombed, without results, four Japanese barges five miles off EAST CAPE NEW IRELAND.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

4 p.m. 14 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 10th, our motor torpedo boats, operating in southern KULA GULF, engaged five enemy barges enroute from VILA to BAMBARI HARBOR in southeastern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Two of the enemy barges were partially disabled and took shelter in KAPE HARBOR. The remainder, although hit many times, succeeded in reaching VILA. Our boats were subjected to enemy shore fire, in addition to the heavy fire from the JAPANESE barges. The motor torpedo boats sustained numerous hits, but the damage was minor.

On September 11th fifty-seven Allied planes (medium bombers, dive bombers and torpedo bombers) bombed and strafed enemy positions on the southeastern coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. A number of fires and explosions were observed. The southwest coast was swept by four Navy Corsairs, which set on fire one Japanese barge and a fuel dump at VANGAVANGA, southwest KOLOMBANGARA. From these operations, one Avenger failed to return.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED 5-3-76 OSD PPSC

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 12 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 1:33 a.m. September 10th a night search plane attacked three small enemy ships forty miles east northeast of CAPE SAINT GEORGE, south NEW IRELAND. Five minutes after the attack an explosion and smoke was observed.

During the morning of September 10th, a Mitchell bomber, escorted by four Corsairs, strafed two enemy barges and five houses on northern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

At 12:23 a.m. September 9th, a four-engine enemy flying boat was destroyed by a Navy air combat patrol about fifty miles southeast of BAKER ISLAND.

The submarine NARWHAL reports scoring one torpedo hit into an enemy transport or cargo vessel of about six thousand tons, five miles northwest of NAURU ISLAND. The vessel was set on fire.

The submarine SWORDFISH reports scoring four hits into a 6,900 ton enemy cargo vessel, three hundred twenty miles northwest of the ADMIRALTY ISLANDS. It is believed that the enemy vessel sank.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

Contact is being maintained with the enemy on ARUNDEL ISLAND. Preparations are in progress for a final assault on the Japanese.

On northeast VELLA LAVELLA our troops captured quantities of supplies, equipment and ammunition. Reconnaissance to the westward is being pushed.

Other NEW GEORGIA fronts are quiet.

Reconnaissance revealed no Japanese on SIMBO ISLAND and no Japanese on the eastern and southern coast of GIZO ISLAND, except for GIZO anchorage and SAGEHAGIA. It is estimated that a total of four hundred Japanese are located on northern VELLA LAVELLA.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET
DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter
SECRET

9 a.m. 14 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 8:27 p.m. September 13th, fifteen enemy planes in five flights, dropped seventy bombs on FUNAFUTI, ELLICE ISLANDS. One plane was shot down by anti-aircraft fire. Two of our medium bombers burned on the ground and other material damage sustained was slight. Three men were injured.

The United States tug, NAVAJO, sank about one-hundred and seventy miles east southeast of ESPIRTU SANTO as a result of an unknown explosion.

The United States submarine, PERMIT, on patrol in the MARSHALLS ISLAND area, reports the destruction of a convoy consisting of two enemy freighters and a tanker. In addition, a SENDAI class Japanese cruiser (5,190 tons), which arrived on the scene to assist, was also torpedoed. It is believed that the cruiser either sank or retired from the area as she was not seen by the PERMIT after the attack. The PERMIT sank about 27,000 tons of shipping and damaged 14,000.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

4 p.m. 12 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 7:45 p.m. September 8th our motor torpedo boats disabled or destroyed an emeny barge north of PARAPATU POINT, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. At 11:30 p.m. two enemy barges were attacked near TUKI COVE, northern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. One barge was forced aground and subsequently destroyed the following day.

VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND was bombed by sixty-five medium bombers, torpedo bombers and dive bombers. Numerous hits destroyed three guns, damaged a bridge and killed a number of Japanese. One of our torpedo bombers was damaged by anti-aircraft fire and eventually crash landed.

During the night of September 8th, a CATALINA scored a direct hit on a five-hundred foot enemy cargo vessel, fifteen miles west of VELLA LAVELLA.

A search plane operating from GUADALCANAL shot down a twin-engine enemy bomber one hundred seventy-five miles northeast of KAVIENG on September 9th.

Motor torpedo boats were again active around KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND during the night of September 9th-10th. An enemy barge was attacked one mile from ROPA POINT. An enemy barge was prevented from departing CAPE HARBOR southeastern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. During these operations, our boats were subjected to fire from enemy shore batteries and, in addition, were bombed and strafed by enemy float planes off the west coast of VELLA LAVELLA.

At 12:52 p.m. September 10th sixteen Mitchells attacked the enemy barge depot and bivouac areas east of DULO COVE, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Later twenty dive bombers bombed and strafed the same area. In both attacks many bomb hits were scored and a possible ammunition dump was destroyed.

On September 9th, four Navy Corsairs destroyed an enemy barge in BLACKETT STRAIT. Later that day four other Corsairs set on fire five barges in the WARAMBARI BAY area northeast VELLA LAVELLA. Three enemy barges were left smoking off western KOLOMBANGARA after an attack by two Corsairs.

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Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter, 5-5-72

9 a.m. 12 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

photographic reconnaissance.

At 2:04 p.m. September 8th, twelve Japanese planes again attacked NANUMEA. No casualties or damage have been reported.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

During the night of September 8th, our forces on ARUNDEL ISLAND repulsed an enemy attempt to land at BOMBOE VILLAGE, northeast ARUNDEL ISLAND. Our troops have advanced about two hundred yards against enemy resistance. Seven Japanese were killed.

Regraded Unclassified

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 12 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the morning of September 8th, motor torpedo boats, operating along the north coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, destroyed a camouflaged enemy barge in the vicinity of ROPA POINT.

Later that day, another barge was strafed by Corsairs off the northeastern coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Again at 5 p.m. four Corsairs attacked and set on fire an enemy barge on the western coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Twelve Mitchell bombers attacked the VILA strip during the same afternoon.

On the morning of September 9th, eighteen Liberators bombed KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA, and started a number of fires. Photographs showed that hits were scored on a fuel dump, runway, buildings and two coastal guns. Ten enemy planes, attempting to intercept, were attacked by twenty-eight Allied fighters and one enemy plane was destroyed. One of our fighters is missing. In the same area, twenty-nine other Allied fighters engaged twenty-three enemy fighters and destroyed two. One of our fighters failed to return to its base.

On September 7th, carrier type planes operated from the field on BAKER ISLAND where a five thousand foot strip is usable. It is estimated that fighters can commence operations at about noon September 11th. Unloading of stores and supplies continued although slowed by the narrow beach and frequent casualties to boats.

On September 8th an enemy plane in the vicinity of BAKER ISLAND was reported damaged by a Liberator bomber. The destroyer RADFORD claimed to have shot down an enemy plane which may have been the same one that engaged the LIBERATOR.

On September 7th at 1:45 p.m. an enemy bomber strafed our positions without damage on NANUMEA, ELLICE ISLANDS. Later, between 3:08 and 4:40 p.m., approximately ten twin engine bombers, approached singly and by threes and made numerous runs over the island. Although twenty bombs were dropped, causing slight material damage and personnel casualties, it is believed that the enemys mission was

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

Declassified
OSD Letter,
SECRET

9 a.m. 9 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 1st, MARCUS ISLAND in the Central Pacific Area, was attacked by a Task Force consisting of the Aircraft Carriers ESSEX, YORKTOWN, and INDEPENDENCE, the Battleship INDIANA, the Light Cruisers NASHVILLE and MOBILE and their escort group, DESTROYER SQUADRON 25.

The first attack was launched at 3:40 a.m. with incendiaries and, apparently, took the enemy by surprise. The island was again hit at 5:03 a.m. and again at 6:00 a.m. From there on until about two o'clock in the afternoon, intermittent attacks continued.

Initially anti-aircraft fire was heavy but lessened to zero as the morning wore on. Seven medium bombers, the island's total, were destroyed on the ground. A small tanker was sunk and it is reported that eighty per cent of the island's military installations were destroyed. The radio station was silenced but apparently repairs were effected because at twenty minutes to one in the afternoon a new, or auxiliary transmitter, was heard broadcasting.

We lost three planes from the YORKTOWN - an Avenger and two Hellcats.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
SD Letter, 6-5-72

4 p.m. 8 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Our troops on VELLA LAVELLA have met enemy resistance at BOKO MISSION, on the northeastern end of the Island.

In the dusk of the evening of September 6th, Corsairs strafed and badly damaged one barge in RINGI COVE and another one in WEBSTER COVE, both in the southern part of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. After the attack, fires were observed at RINGI.

During the forenoon of September 6th, two Corsairs strafed a barge and left it on fire at KUNDU KUNDU which is on the western side of KOLOMBANGARA.

On September 7th at 0230, four PT boats attacked three barges off TAMBAMA situated at the northwestern tip of VELLA LAVELLA. Two PT boats were lost when they grounded on a reef doing 26 knots.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

DECL... OADR Letter ...

~~SECRET~~

4 p.m. 8 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of September 4th and 5th, a snooping Liberator made contact with two ships in BOUGAINVILLE STRAITS AREA. One of the vessels was possibly sunk.

At eleven o'clock on September 5th, Dauntless Dive-bombers and Avengers with a fighter escort blasted enemy positions on PARAPATU POINT north-east of VILA, from which place the enemy has been shelling BAEROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA ISLAND. Many direct hits were observed in the target area and a possible ammunition dump was exploded.

In the early afternoon of September 5th, twenty-four Liberators bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

On September 5th at two-thirty in the afternoon, Corsairs strafed a new Jap position at ZOGA which is about eight miles southeast of KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. A church was set on fire which was believed to be housing the enemy. A village which was thought to be a bivouac center for three hundred troops was thoroughly strafed.

On September 6th, just a little after noontime, MORGUSAIA ISLAND, SHORTLANDS AREA, was bombed and strafed by Avengers, Airacobras, Hellcats and Corsairs. These flights were intercepted over the target area by twenty to twenty-five Zero fighters, some of which just harmlessly dropped aerial bombs. Five Zeros were shot down; two of our Airacobras are missing.

On September 6th, Mitchell bombers blasted defensive positions and shore installations at KAKASA, CHOISEUL ISLAND. Three fires were started.

On September 6th, one of two Jap forces on the northeastern shore of ARUNDEL ISLAND is partially surrounded by our ground forces.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DoD Directive

SECRET

9 a.m. 8 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 6, in the vicinity of SOSORUANA ISLAND located in the northern part of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, PT boats stymied the several attempts by three Jap barges to make for the sea. When the PT's closed for action, the enemy beached their ships.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter 6-B

SECRET

4 p.m. 7 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On September 4th, sixty miles west of BAKER ISLAND, CENTRAL PACIFIC Area, a carrier-based Hellcat (F6F Graumman fighter) destroyed a Japanese four-engine flying boat.

The SS "HALIBUT", returning from a war patrol in the CENTRAL PACIFIC Area, reports sinking two freighters totaling 9,700 tons and damaging one DD.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 6 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On the same night, our destroyers sank three enemy barges north of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND instead of two as previously reported.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

During September 4th, our ground forces encountered enemy resistance in the form of machine gun and light mortar fire in the northeastern sector of ARUNDEL ISLAND. In another locality on the same island, two Japanese were killed.

On the south shore of BAIROKO HARBOR our troops were subjected to intermittent enemy artillery fire.

In the vicinity of BOKO VILLAGE, northeastern VELLA LAVELLA, our troops killed twelve Japanese, including one officer. Captured documents indicate an organized enemy position in the BOKO MISSION - KOROLOPE BAY AREA. Two more Japanese survivors of the August 6th Naval action in VELLA GULF have been captured on VELLA LAVELLA ISLAND.

Our patrols report the Japanese as having evacuated the mainland of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. A quantity of food stuffs and munitions were left by the enemy.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

9 a.m. 6 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

As a diversion to the heavy bombing of KAHILI on the afternoon of September 2nd, eighty-seven Mitchells, Dauntless and Avengers struck at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Numerous fires were started. Although six of our planes were damaged, all planes returned to their base.

During the afternoon of September 2nd, a Navy Corsair shot down an enemy bomber in the vicinity of RENNELL ISLAND.

On the night of September 2nd, a reconnaissance Liberator sank two large enemy barges off the southwest coast of CHOISEUL ISLAND.

At about noon, September 3rd, twenty-three Fortresses, covered by sixty-one fighters, bombed KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Our fighters engaged twenty enemy Zeros and shot down one. An unknown number of Zeros were shot down by our bombers. One of our fighters failed to return.

At 6:45 p.m. September 3rd, five Avengers bombed the VILA runway on KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Prior to noon on September 4th, nine Liberators, escorted by forty-one fighters, bombed BALLALE ISLAND, SHORTLAND AREA. Many bombs were seen to fall along the runway and the fighter strip. Several fires and explosions were started.

At 12:51 p.m. September 4th, nine Navy Liberators attacked the enemy bivouac area in the vicinity of DULO COVE on southern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. As a result of this attack five fires were started. Later that afternoon, eighty-one medium bombers, dive bombers and torpedo bombers attacked the same area and, in addition, VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. One of our dive bombers was shot down by anti-aircraft fire but the crew was recovered.

Motor torpedo boats damaged and possibly destroyed two enemy barges in VELLA GULF on the night of September 3rd-4th. In this operation our motor torpedo boats were attacked by enemy float planes and one boat sustained some damage.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Directive

S E C R E T

4 p.m. 5 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On the morning of September 1st, the initial landing was made in the occupation of BAKER ISLAND. Due to weather and a material casualty on the U.S.S. ASHLAND (landing ship dock), which prevented the launching of six of the fourteen LCM's, the unloading of supplies has been prolonged. The fighter strip is reported well under way.

On the afternoon of September 2nd, four squadrons of Liberators attacked KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Numerous hits were scored on bridges, searchlight positions and beach installations. Three enemy planes on the ground were observed burning as a result of the attack.

About thirty to thirty-five Zeros attacked our bombers and dropped three aerial bombs. The enemy attack was weakly executed. Our Corsairs shot down five of the enemy planes. We lost two fighters. Hellcats (F6F) operated for the first time in this area and assisted as cover for the bombers.

The following day, KAHILI was strafed by Corsairs and four grounded planes were seen to explode.

On September 3rd, two Liberators bombed VILA and RINGI COVE, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Late on September 3rd, four Mitchells, escorted by fighters, attacked WEBSTER COVE, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND in the hope of destroying a barge concentration and a small cargo vessel reported in the vicinity. Other medium bombers struck the same area at 6:45 p.m. but the details of these attacks have not been received.

During the night of September 3rd-4th, two of our destroyers sank two enemy barges north of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

It is reported that one of our destroyers attacked and possibly sank a Japanese submarine during the night of September 3rd, north northwest of ESPIRITU SANTO.

One of our transports were unsuccessfully attacked by a single Japanese bomber east of SAN CHRISTOPHER ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 5 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

On August 31st - September 1st, The First Battalion 35th U. S. Infantry advanced north to the NIAROVAI AREA, east coast of VELLA LAVELLA. No enemy was contacted by patrols operating in the vicinity of RURAVAI, east coast of VELLA LAVELLA.

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DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.5
OSD Letter 8-5

4 p.m. September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The United States submarine SNOOK, apparently on reconnaissance in the vicinity of MARCUS ISLAND, reported that our task force attack effectively destroyed nine-tenths of the surface construction. The radio and radar towers are still standing. Planes were not visible in the air or on the island, and surface vessels were not seen. Photographs have been taken prior to and after the attack.

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9 a.m. 3 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the morning of August 31st, twenty-two Mitchells, sixteen Avengers and thirty-four Dauntless dive bombers attacked VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored on gun emplacements, including a five-inch coastal battery. In addition, a barge was seen to explode. Throughout the day our artillery continued the bombardment of VILA.

On August 31st, an unreported number of our destroyers, while protecting retiring landing craft, were attacked off VELLA LAVELLA by six enemy Zeros and twelve dive bombers. Four Warhawks intercepted the enemy planes and shot down five dive bombers. None of our planes were lost.

In five enemy raids on VELLA LAVELLA during August 31st, our anti-aircraft batteries report shooting down four enemy planes.

Groups of Japanese reported on the northeast coast of VELLA LAVELLA are being hunted down by our troops.

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4 p.m. 2 September 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 29th, an unreported number of Navy Corsairs attacked and set on fire two enemy barges and a small steam vessel in the vicinity of northeastern VELLA LAVELLA.

On the early morning of August 30th, motor torpedo boats sank a seventy-foot loaded enemy barge north of BAKA BAKA, east coast of VELLA LAVELLA. That night other torpedo boats damaged two barges off the northern coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

A Navy Corsair shot down an enemy fighter plane south of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND on August 30th.

At 6:30 p.m. August 30th, twenty-four Liberators dropped hundreds of bombs along the runway at KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. Poor visibility prevented observation of results. About fifty to sixty Japanese planes attacked our bombers and, in a running engagement as far as GANONGGA ISLAND, thirty-six enemy planes were shot down. We lost one bomber and five fighters.

Two other Liberators failed to reach the KAHILI target area and, as an alternative, bombed REKATA BAY. No anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Reports from a coast watcher tend to substantiate the possibility that this area was evacuated by the enemy.

NEW GEORGIA AREA GROUND SITUATION

On Monday, August 30th, our forces continued their unopposed advance on ARUNDEL ISLAND and made preparations to shell VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND with 155 mm guns.

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9 a. m. 1 September, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 29, one of our reconnaissance planes engaged a Japanese bomber west of NEW GEORGIA. Both planes were damaged.

On August 30, a number of Liberators contacted five enemy ships to the north of BOUGAINVILLE STRAIT. A bomb hit was scored on one of the enemy vessels.

The following successes have been reported by our submarines. Details at present are not available.

The PADDLE reported sinking one enemy ship. This submarine operated off the Japanese Coast.

The FINBACK completed a patrol in the PHILIPPINES where she sank 16,000 tons and damaged 14,000 tons of enemy shipping.

The PIKE operating in the CAROLINE ISLANDS reported one tanker sunk, one carrier and two freighters damaged.

The SNAPPER sank an 8,600 ton ship moored in APRA HARBOR, GUAM.

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NND Letter 6-5-74

9 a.m. 31 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the afternoon of August 27th, Navy Corsairs set on fire two enemy barges and damaged a third, west of the VILA RIVER MOUTH, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. On the same day, Army Airacobras strafed enemy barges hidden in RINGI COVE, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

During the early morning of August 28th, a Navy Corsair, covered by two other Corsairs, strafed the parking area at KAHILI airfield, SHORTLAND AREA. Eight enemy planes were seen burning on the field as a result of this attack. Explosions and fires visible for twenty miles were started.

On the early afternoon of August 28th, twelve Army Mitchells bombed enemy positions in the northwestern part of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. Eighteen fighters destroyed a number of enemy barges and, in addition, strafed huts and a possible radio station.

A search plane operating from GUADALCANAL on the early afternoon of August 28th, damaged an enemy gunboat north of NEW IRELAND.

On August 29th, a Liberator bombed an enemy vessel twelve miles north of KIETA, BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND. Results were unobserved.

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9a.m. 30 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of August 27th-28th, a number of our motor torpedo boats were unsuccessfully attacked by enemy planes south of GANONGGA ISLAND.

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9 a.m. 29 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Enemy air attacked our forces on VELLA LAVELLA six times on the 25th of August, resulting in a loss of one killed, eleven wounded. Marine AA gunners in that area report shooting down ten and possibly twelve enemy planes since our forces occupied the island.

On the afternoon of the 25th, three enemy small craft, possibly MTB's, were destroyed by two Kittyhawks off the coast of CHOISEUL.

On the afternoon of the 26th, a hundred-foot steamer and two motor boats were set afire off northern GONONGGA ISLAND by two Kittyhawks.

Late on the afternoon of August 26th, nine Navy Liberators, in an attack on one of three enemy destroyers, scored a direct hit with a five hundred pound bomb. This action took place northeast of BUKA. The vessel was last seen under way at fifteen knots.

At about the same time, KAHILI, BOUGAINVILLE, was bombed by fifteen Liberators. Thirty Zeros attacked the formation over the target and followed our bombers as far as KOLOMBANGARA during their return flight. Twelve Zeros were destroyed during the action, all U.S. planes returning. REKATA BAY was attacked by seven Liberators, a large explosion and fire was observed.

Enemy landing barges in the southern KOLOMBANGARA AREA were bombed and strafed for the third successive day on the 26th.

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9 a.m. 27 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 24th, four Airacobras strafed KAKASA on the southwest coast of CHOISEUL. Three small fires were started, one barge was sunk and another damaged.

On August 25th, Mitchells, Avengers and Dauntless planes carried on their attacks on enemy barge centers and defensive positions in WEBSTER and ELLIOT COVES in southern KOLOMBANGARA. Three large fires were started.

During the afternoon of August 25th, Corsairs, Warhawks and Kittyhawks covered six Liberators in a smash at the runways at KAHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. On the return trip our flight was pursued by fifty to sixty enemy fighters. The Corsairs destroyed four of them.

During the same afternoon, Liberators blasted SUAVANAU POINT, REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

On August 26th, the fourth echelon arrived at BARAKOMA, VELLA LAVELLA without suffering casualties, despite a bombing in GIZO STRAIT while enroute.

During the night of August 25th-26th, our PT boats, while operating in the southern end of KULA GULF, came upon evidence of damage inflicted upon the enemy in very recent engagements. A large barge was observed nearly submerged off TUNGUIRILI POINT on the northern shore of KOLOMBANGARA, and another was found on the beach at BAIROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

The resistance of the enemy on the island of NEW GEORGIA has completely collapsed. We have occupied both sides of BAEROKO HARBOR. Prepared positions were left intact on DRAGON PENINSULA. Large quantities of food were captured as also were twenty large trucks.

On ARUNDEL ISLAND, just west of NEW GEORGIA ISLAND, the strength of the enemy has not yet been determined, however, the islands to the south of it and to the west of BAANGA ISLAND have been taken over without resistance.

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SECRET

9 a.m. 26 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of August 23rd-24th, PT boats from RENDOVA conducted various scouting tasks in the waters surrounding the southern part of VELLA LAVELLA and the western side of KOLOMBANGARA. One group of four PT's landed passengers at BILOA, VELLA LAVELLA. On their return trip, they were bombed and strafed without casualties or damage.

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SECRET

9 a.m. 25 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 23, a little after noontime and again about five P.M., our fighter planes intercepted the enemy over VELLA LAVELLA. We destroyed nine of them and damaged an additional two. No casualties were suffered by us.

At the dawn of August 23, fifteen enemy planes attempted a strike at MUNDA but turned tail. However, two additional planes managed to sneak in and drop two bombs. No personnel casualties were received but a Corsair was badly damaged.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

Parts of the 25th Division have extended their advance through PIRU PLANTATION to a point over three quarters of a mile north of CUTTER POINT. Very little enemy opposition was met. A few of our artillery guns are now within range of BAEROKO HARBOR. The muddy condition of the roads has slowed up the advance of additional guns. On BAANGA ISLAND the 43rd Division continues advancing its patrol. No enemy opposition has been met in the last few days.

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9 a.m. 24 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During 21 August enemy air force made three attacks on our LST's and surface screen at BARAKOMA, VELLA LAVELLA. Some damage occurred to our forces from near misses.

On 22 August, 8 PT's made a daylight reconnaissance of coves in southern KOLOMBANGARA. In ELLIOTT COVE they attacked six enemy barges. No assessment of damage could be made due to the heavy combined fire from the barges and shore. Other Coves scouted were HUNDA and SAMBIRA. One of our PT's was badly damaged from shore fire and three of its personnel were killed and seven wounded.

During the afternoon of 22 August, Avengers and Mitchells bombed suspected enemy staging points at OULA and SUPATO on the southwest coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Target areas were thoroughly blasted.

SUBMARINE SINKINGS:

The submarine POMPON returning from her first war patrol in the Southwest Pacific reports sinking a 6600 ton freighter on 21 July with three hits out of four torpedos fired. On the same occasion she also damaged a 5700 ton freighter with two hits out of four torpedos fired. Both of these attacks were at night.

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9 a.m. 23 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 21st, in the morning, eight PT's operating out of RENDOVA HARBOR, attacked and burned a fifty foot enemy barge at TUROVILU ISLAND, which is off the west coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Enemy personnel abandoned the craft.

During the morning of August 21st, a flight of U.S. Mitchells, U.S. Airacobras and Warhawks, piloted by New Zealand pilots, strafed enemy barges in MARQUANA BAY in northern VELLA LAVELLA, TINPUTS HARBOR in northern BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, and TIMBALA BAY in northern VELLA LAVELLA. They also strafed a wrecked barge in DOVELI COVE and two old barges in PARASO BAY, both places in VELLA LAVELLA. The results were not reported.

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Other search planes sighted enemy barges, landing on BAANGA ISLAND, which is just west of MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA.

On August 22nd, PT's attacked eleven enemy barges entering or leaving BAIROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA ISLAND. In spite of heavy fire from the barges and shore batteries, many hits were made on the enemy vessels. Two of the barges were reported damaged and one turned back.

Returning news 8/23 - WA 118

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

The south end of BAANGA ISLAND has been occupied by our forces. Two enemy five-inch guns, located at the south tip of the island, have been captured.

Our patrols have met no opposition in their movement to the southwest shore of BAIROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA ISLAND. These patrol lines are being extended to the harbor mouth. Our heavy guns are being moved up, five of our 155 Howitzers are now in the vicinity of ZIETA.

On VELLA LAVELLA, improvement of defenses continues and patrol activities are being extended.

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DECLASSIFIED OPD Letter

9 a.m. 22 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On the night of August 20th at 8:20 p.m., seven motor torpedo boats engaged six enemy barges enroute from BAIROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA to VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. One enemy barge was sunk, others were damaged.

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9 a.m. 21 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 18th, two Navy Corsairs encountered six Zeros over KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA, and shot down two. All of our planes returned without damage.

During the afternoon of August 18th, eight Army Mitchells, in a sweep over VELLA LAVELLA and CHOISEUL ISLAND, bombed and sank a hundred-foot barge at KAKASA, south central CHOISEUL ISLAND. A landing craft was damaged at PARASO BAY, northeastern VELLA LAVELLA, and other barges were strafed in the vicinity of TIMBALA BAY, northwest VELLA LAVELLA.

During the late afternoon of August 19th, our aircraft sank the Japanese submarine I-17 (2,180 tons), fifty-five miles south-southeast of AMADEE LIGHT, NOUMEA, NEW CALEDONIA. The submarine was previously depth charged by a New Zealand Corvette. Six enemy survivors have been recovered.

During the night of August 19th-20th, four of our destroyers, in a sweep of the waters surrounding VELLA LAVELLA ISLAND and GIZO STRAIT, attacked a surfaced enemy submarine with unknown results, west of RENDOVA ISLAND. In addition, two small, fast craft were sunk by gunfire off DOVELI, northeastern VELLA LAVELLA. During this operation our destroyers were intermittently bombed by enemy aircraft but suffered no damage.

In connection with the August 18th night destroyer engagement mentioned in the summary of August 19th, a coast watcher reports having seen three Japanese ships sink off northern VELLA LAVELLA on the early morning of August 18th. It is believed that survivors of these ships are on the north coast of the island.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

On August 18th, the 43rd Division pushed ahead about four hundred yards on their right flank. The following day this division advanced one battalion around enemy resistance and moved six hundred yards to the south.

The 25th Division reported no contact with the enemy. The attack against BAIROKO HARBOR by the 25th Division is scheduled for August 21st, providing the weather is favorable.

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DECLASSIFIED DOD Letter 3/22/78

9 a.m. 19 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Upon information received from a patrol plane, four of our destroyers intercepted an equal number of enemy destroyers escorting a number of enemy barges off VELLA GULF. In a twenty-nine minute engagement, which began at fifty-eight minutes past midnight August 18th, our destroyers seriously damaged two enemy destroyers, one of which probably sank. The third destroyer was also hit.

Due to the necessity of destroying the dispersing enemy barges, our ships were unable to concentrate on the destruction of the destroyers. It is probable that a number of these barges landed on the northeast coast of VELLA LAVELLA. Although the enemy surface units were aided by eight planes which dropped bombs during the action, our ships did not suffer any damage or casualties.

During the same night, three additional destroyers, one patrol craft and three LSTs, while retiring south from BARAKOMA, were heavily attacked by enemy planes with bombs and torpedoes. Two of the destroyers collided while engaged in laying a smoke screen. One vessel suffered moderate damage to the bow. One LST burned and was lost. Damage to the enemy has not as yet been determined.

On the afternoon of August 17th, dive bombers and torpedo planes attacked probable enemy gun emplacements on BAANGA ISLAND and other nearby islands in an attempt to destroy these batteries which were intermittently shelling our positions in the vicinity of MUNDA.

At 2:45 a.m. two of our motor torpedo boats attacked three large and five smaller enemy barges one mile southeast of VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. Results of this engagement were undetermined.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND SITUATION

There is no appreciable change in the ground situation. Coordinated air and ground operations are in progress to locate and destroy enemy guns on BAANGA ISLAND and vicinity where no ground progress has been made. Patrols of the 25th Division are patrolling and other units are operating against the road north of BAIROKO HARBOR.

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4 p.m. 18 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS.

On August 15, elements of the 25th division pushed forward to the shore line of HATHORN SOUND near the PIRU Plantation without encountering serious enemy resistance. The 43rd Division encountered strong opposition at BAANGA ISLAND.

Late on August 16th, a number of shells fired by enemy artillery emplaced on BAANGA ISLAND and other nearby islands fell in the vicinity of MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. The enemy positions were taken under fire by our guns.

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OSD Letter, 4-3-72

S E C R E T

4 p.m. 18 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On August 15, 4,600 troops including 700 Naval personnel and 2300 tons of equipment and supplies were landed at BARAKOMA, VELLA LAVELLA. Throughout the day enemy dive bombers and fighter planes attacked our beachheads intermittently. Our fighters intercepted three of the enemy formations and shot down seventeen Zeros and ten dive bombers. We lost two planes but the pilot of one was recovered.

At 6:15 p.m., August 15, 8 Corsairs intercepted at KIHILI, SHORTLAND Area, 20 enemy planes returning from VELLA LAVELLA and shot down 5 fighters and 2 dive bombers. One Corsair failed to return. During the same afternoon, 11 Mitchells bombed REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND and started two fires in enemy supply dumps.

At 8:54 p.m. on August 15, while retiring from VELLA LAVELLA, 4 of our destroyers and 12 LCT's were attacked by an unknown number of Japanese torpedo bombers. Although a number of torpedos and bombs were dropped, our ships did not suffer any damage. One enemy plane was shot down.

A Liberator bombed the air strip, dispersal and supply area at the BUKA Airfield during the early morning of August 16th. Later that morning, 9 Liberators attacked REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

That night 6 Navy Avengers attacked REKATA BAY and HAYCOCK ISLAND in MANNING STRAIT, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

On the afternoon of August 16, heavy medium and dive bombers covered by fighter planes attacked enemy anti-aircraft defense positions and supply areas at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. The KAPE HARBOR installations (northeast of VILA) were also attacked.

Prisoners captured on VELLA LAVELLA identified three of the destroyers sunk in VELLA GULF in the surface engagement on the night of August 6-7: KAWAKAZE, ARASHI, and HAGIKAZE. A fourth unidentified destroyer was also believed sunk.

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9 a.m. 18 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 1 a.m. August 17, seven motor torpedo boats engaged four enemy barges and shore batteries off BAIROKO Harbor, NEW GEORGIA, with undetermined results.

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OSD Letter

17 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 11:14 a.m. August 16th, a Ventura medium bomber engaged a new type four-engine Japanese flying boat in the vicinity of VAITUPU ISLAND, ELLICE ISLAND GROUP.

In the engagement that followed our plane was considerably shot up. Damage to the enemy plane was not determined.

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9 a.m. 16 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The liberty ship, M. E. DeYoung, was torpedoed forty miles south of TONGATABU. Assistance has been despatched in order to tow the vessel to port.

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OSD Letter 15-3-73

S E C R E T

9 a.m. 15 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

14th, twelve Avengers, in pairs, bombed various targets in the REKATA BAY AREA.

Our motor torpedo boats, engaged in transporting one company of Army troops to VELLA LAVELLA, sustained a severe bombing and strafing attack by enemy planes. Two boats were damaged and some casualties suffered.

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OSD Letter

9 a.m. 15 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 10:07 a.m. August 13th, twelve Army Mitchells attacked REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. Due to poor visibility, results of the attack were unobserved.

At about the same time, twenty-two Navy Avengers and thirty-one dive bombers, together with nine Flying Fortresses, bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. All our planes returned, although seven were slightly damaged by enemy aircraft fire.

Late in the afternoon of August 13th, thirteen of our fighters intercepted thirty Zeros over MUNDA. One Zero was shot down. All of our planes returned.

At 7:13 p.m. August 13th, eight Army Liberators bombed enemy positions on the south side of BALLALE ISLAND with unobserved results. Our bombers were attacked several times by two enemy night fighters, one of which was possibly shot down.

During the same evening, three Army Liberators bombed enemy positions in the REKATA BAY AREA, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND, and VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, with unobserved results.

At 7:20 p.m. August 13th, thirteen Army Liberators bombed the south end of the KIHILI strip, SHORTLAND AREA. Results of this attack were unobserved. Four of our bombers exchanged fire with two enemy night fighters. No damage was sustained.

A Navy patrol plane (PBY) encountered a four-engine bomber over HOWLAND ISLAND at 11:45 p.m. August 13th. Although our plane was damaged, it succeeded in returning to its base.

On the night of August 13th, enemy planes came in behind a flight of our bombers returning to GUADALCANAL and sank the naval transport, JOHN PENN, with bombs and torpedo.

During the night and early morning of August 13th-

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9 a.m. 14 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

The left flank of the Twenty-Fifth Division, advancing against BAIROKO, overcame immediate enemy resistance and advanced fifteen hundred yards. The right flank is in position southeast of BAIROKO.

A patrol from the Forty-Third Division was repulsed after encountering heavy enemy fire on BAANGA ISLAND, just northwest of MUNDA POINT.

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9 a.m. 14 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of August 10th, our motor torpedo boats probably sank one of two small enemy auxiliaries encountered close to the shoreline of southwestern KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Five Army Liberators bombed enemy positions in the REKATA BAY AREA, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND on August 11th.

On the same day, seven Liberators bombed and strafed two small enemy cargo vessels north of NEW IRELAND. A number of bombs were observed to fall close to one of these ships.

On August 11th, the SS MATHEW LYONS was torpedoed by an enemy submarine seventy miles off CAPE CUMBERLAND, ESPIRITU SANTO. The vessel was able to reach port the following day.

During the night of August 11th-12th, our motor torpedo boats attacked a large enemy barge off southeast VELLA LAVELLA. The barge was left beached with no apparent signs of life aboard.

At 12:15 p.m. August 12th, twenty-five Army Liberators, escorted by thirty fighters, attacked the KIHILI airdrome (SHORTLAND AREA). Considerable damage was shown by photographs taken during the attack. Twenty enemy planes were observed burning on the ground and eight others in the vicinity probably damaged.

Our planes, retiring after the attack, were set upon by thirty enemy fighters. In the ensuing engagement, eleven enemy planes were shot down. We lost two planes but one pilot was recovered.

At dusk, August 12th, three squadrons of Army Liberators attacked KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA.

Enemy positions in the REKATA BAY AREA, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND, were harassed throughout the morning and night of August 12th-13th, by half-hourly bombing attacks.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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9 a.m. 12 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the night of August 7th-8th, the United States destroyer, BUCHANAN, attacked and probably sank an enemy submarine north of ESPIRITU SANTO ISLAND.

On the night of August 9th-10th, United States destroyers, on a sweep of VELLA GULF, contacted four Japanese barges close to the shore and sank two of them.

On the morning of August 9th, twenty-two Army Liberators heavily bombed VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. A large fire was started in the vicinity of the landing strip. Later that morning, ten Army Mitchells again bombed VILA.

On the morning of August 9th, thirty-five Navy dive bombers, escorted by Wildcats, attacked BAIROKO, NEW GEORGIA.

At 3:30 p.m. August 10th, fourteen of our fighters intercepted an enemy force of about fifty fighters and low level bombers over the RENDOVA-NEW GEORGIA AREA. Two Zeros were shot down. We lost one plane but the pilot was recovered.

In the forenoon of August 11th, five Army Liberators bombed the REKATA BAY AREA, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. Numerous hits were scored among enemy installations.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

Our troops advancing from the south towards BAIROKO, have contacted elements of our forces operating from ENOGAI.

The left flank of our advance from the south is seven thousand yards north northwest of MUNDA and has encountered frontal resistance. The right flank has reached the BAIROKO RIVER, four thousand yards southeast of BAIROKO HARBOR.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

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DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter, 0

9 a.m. 11 March, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The submarine SCAMP, returning from patrol in the BISMARCK ARCHIPELAGO area reports sinking an enemy submarine of the I class on July 27th. On July 26th a large tanker was damaged.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

4 p.m. 10 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Early on the morning of August 8th, twenty-four Dauntless and twelve Avengers, covered by thirty-one Corsairs, bombed enemy positions at VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

Hits were observed on targets. There was intense anti-aircraft fire, as a result of which, one plane was hit. All our planes returned.

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DECLASSIFIED
DSD Letter

9 a.m. 10 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

A force of twelve Avengers and eighteen Dauntless planes, on the afternoon of August 8th, attacked enemy positions in the VILA AREA of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, followed by a flight of Mitchells escorted by a large force of Corsairs, Lightnings and Airacobras. Numerous hits were reported.

Twelve of the Corsairs strafed a fuel dump at REKATA BAY on the return flight, setting it afire. No U.S. planes were lost.

Regraded Unclassified

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

4 p.m. 9 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On 7 August, in the morning, a flight of Warhawks, Corsairs and bombers bombed the harbor entrance and contiguous waters at BAIROKO HARBOR, NEW GEORGIA ISLAND. Fires were started and anti-aircraft batteries were silenced. No attempt was made to intercept our planes. One dive bomber was lost on the return flight.

On the afternoon of 7 August, thirty to sixty Zeros and bombers were over RENDOVA ISLAND, NEW GEORGIA. A number of bombs were dropped on LUMBARI, KOKORANA and BARABUNI ISLANDS. On the enemy's last run, we lost five men and one Jap prisoner when bombs fell on the 17th Field Hospital.

Our anti-aircraft defenses destroyed three bombers.

Eight Warhawks, four of which were piloted by the Royal New Zealand Air Force, and four U.S. Army Kittyhawks, intercepted the Zeros.

The Warhawks destroyed three of the Zeros. All our planes returned safely.

Regraded Unclassified

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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SECRET

OSD Letter

9 a.m. 9 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

On 6 August, during the afternoon, a force of Flying Fortresses, Liberators, Mitchells, Avengers, Dauntless and Corsairs bombed enemy bases at REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

Hits were scored on the camp and dump areas on PAPATURA FA ISLAND, PAPATURA ITE ISLAND and on SIKATUA FAIS.

It is reported that the anti-aircraft installations were completely knocked out. One of our Dauntless planes, enroute to the target, was reported missing off the south tip of SANTA ISABEL ISLAND.

Regraded Unclassified

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

9 a.m. 8 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 11:35 p.m. August 6th, a task group of six United States destroyers engaged an enemy group of one light cruiser and three destroyers in VELLA GULF, NEW GEORGIA.

In an action which lasted one hour, our destroyers attacked with torpedoes and gunfire and definitely sank three of the enemy ships, including the cruiser. There is a possibility that all four of the enemy ships were sunk. Our force did not suffer any casualties.

Regraded Unclassified

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

SECRET

9 a.m. 7 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

Our motor torpedo boats have been active in the restricted waters of central NEW GEORGIA. A number of Japanese barges have been attacked and at least two were sunk northwest of MUNDA on the night of August 3rd and 4th. In addition, a ninety or one hundred foot enemy vessel was sunk by motor torpedo boats south of VANGA VANGA (west coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND).

On August 5th, ten Army Liberators attacked REKATA BAY, SANTA ISABEL ISLAND. Results of this attack were not reported.

At 5:15 p.m. August 5th, seven Army Mitchells, escorted by sixteen Navy Corsairs, attacked possible enemy barges on the northwest coast of GIZO ISLAND. In addition, targets along the shoreline were strafed and light caliber fire was silenced.

Later, at 5:30 p.m. these planes attacked the WEBSTER COVE AREA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND and strafed two enemy barges. Results were unobserved.

The submarine, PETO, returning from patrol of the NEW BRITAIN AREA, reports as follows:

> On June 23rd, sank a two thousand ton Naval auxiliary two hundred and eighty-five miles north northeast of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.
>
> On July 7th, damaged a ten thousand ton escorted enemy tanker, two hundred and seventy-five miles northwest of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.

— dispatch Amp 1,000 tons —

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

9 a.m. 6 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

MUNDA was captured by our troops at 3:00 p.m. August 5th. Cleaning up of isolated pockets of resistance to the north continues. Contact is expected with larger enemy forces to the north of MUNDA. To date, one thousand six hundred and seventy-one Japanese are known to have been killed and twenty-eight captured.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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SECRET

4 p.m. 5 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 10:05 a.m. August 4th, sixteen Navy Corsairs attacked the POPORANG CHANNEL AREA (southeast coast of SHORTLAND ISLAND). Seven enemy float planes were destroyed, two barges set on fire, one barge damaged, and a small boat sunk. In addition, eight fires were started in the dock and supply area on the POPORANG side of the channel.

Between 11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. August 4th, twelve out of eighteen enemy Zeros were destroyed over RENDOVA, NEW GEORGIA in engagements with Navy Corsairs, Wildcats and Army Warhawks. One Warhawk alone accounted for four enemy planes. We lost two Wildcats.

During the morning of August 4th, strong formations of Army Mitchells and Navy dive bombers, supported by Army and Navy fighters, attacked enemy positions in the GURASAI-KINDA AREA, northwest of MUNDA. A number of large and small fires were observed in the target area. No U.S. losses were sustained.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

SECRET

9 a.m. 5 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

By August 4th, our right flank advanced to the waters' edge, six hundred yards north of GURASAI, and completed the encirclement of the enemy at MUNDA. Japanese resistance was desperate. Many of the enemy were killed.

Troops to the north have been alerted to prevent an enemy break through and retreat.

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SECRET

SECRET

4 p.m. 4 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The submarine GUARDFISH reports sinking on 13 June a 4,000 ton enemy cargo vessel eighty-five miles north, northwest of RABAUL, NEW BRITAIN.

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECLASS Letter 6-5-72

SECRET

9 a.m. 4 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

On August 2nd, the left flank of the 43rd Division reached the eastern end of the Munda airfield while the right flank occupied the north-eastern part of Biblo Hill.

The 37th Division in position on the north side of our Munda line advanced along the entire front. Enemy opposition stiffened progressively during the day.

Our forces operating in the Enogai Area will attempt to prevent the enemy's escape by closing the northern exit from Munda.

Regraded Unclassified

MUNDA FORCE

43RD DIVISION
103
169
172

37TH DIVISION
145
148
129

25TH DIVISION
27
35
161

Cook Book

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UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
OSD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 3 August 1943.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS (Cont'd.)

right of the Division moved ahead about five hundred yards.

The 37TH DIVISION in position on the right, or north end of our MUNDA line, advanced its left about two hundred yards, while the right moved up five hundred yards.

Considerable material has been captured and enemy resistance is notably less. In view of indications of a possible withdrawal by the enemy, our troops prepared for a vigorous attack along the entire line on August 2nd.

Regraded Unclassified

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter 8-5-77

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

During the morning of August 2nd, twelve Army Mitchells and six Army Fortresses, escorted by twenty-nine fighters, bombed the BAIROKO HARBOR AREA. A large explosion and a number of fires were started.

During the afternoon of August 1st, eighteen Navy Avengers and eleven Navy dive bombers, covered by fifty-five fighters, attacked enemy shipping at KIHILI, SHORTLAND AREA. One large enemy cargo vessel, or transport, was set on fire and a tanker damaged. In addition, eight enemy barges were sunk.

Upon the return flight, the fighter escort was attacked by about twenty-five to thirty Zeros. One Zero was shot down and one of our fighter planes is missing.

At about the same time that our dive bombers were attacking enemy shipping, twenty Army Liberators, escorted by thirty-two fighters, heavily bombed the KAHILI airdrome. Six fires were started. Photographs showed a number of planes damaged.

During the evening of July 31st, two enemy planes raided, without damage, RENDOVA, NEW GEORGIA. One raider was shot down.

The following morning, a number of enemy dive bombers again attacked our positions at RENDOVA, NEW GEORGIA without damage. Two of the dive bombers were shot down. The following afternoon dive bombers, escorted by Zeros, dropped bombs over RENDOVA HARBOR. One enemy dive bomber was seen to crash. Damage to our installations, if any, has not been reported.

During the afternoon of August 2nd, twelve Army Mitchells and eight Army Liberators, with fighter escort, bombed enemy supply dumps at WEBSTER COVE, south coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND. A number of fires were started.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

The left flank, or southern end of our MUNDA line, is manned by the 43rd DIVISION. This Division pushed forward on its left about twelve hundred yards to within approximately two hundred yards of the air strip. The

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECLASSIFIED
DSD Letter

SECRET

9 a.m. 2 August, 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 7:55 a.m. July 31st, thirty-four Navy Avengers, escorted by fifty-one fighters, bombed enemy positions on MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. A direct hit was scored on a 40 mm gun position. Thirty Zeros attempted to intercept, and, in the ensuing engagement, two of our fighters were shot down. One pilot was recovered.

During the afternoon of July 31st, formations of Army Fortresses, Navy Avengers and Navy Dauntless dive bombers, escorted by sixty-four fighters, subjected VILA, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND to a heavy bombing. Bombs were dropped in the bivouac area north of the VILA landing strip and in the STANMORE PLANTATION AREA. All of our planes returned.

At 9:45 a.m. August 1st, eighteen Navy Dauntless dive bombers and eighteen Navy Avengers, escorted by twelve Army Warhawks and sixteen Navy Corsairs, attacked MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. A munitions dump was blown up and a gun silenced. No U.S. losses were sustained.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Letter 5-8-72

4 p.m. 1 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

The submarine, GROUPER, reported that she was damaged by friendly aircraft, in a position about one hundred and eighty-five miles southwest of the RUSSEL ISLANDS, at 0620K 30 July. This, apparently, is the same attack as that which was reported in this morning's summary.

The GROUPER sustained damage to her torpedo tubes and sound gear and is, at present, enroute to her base.

The submarine, ALBACORE, returned from patrol and reported as follows:

> July 12th, possibly damaged a 3,700 ton cargo vessel three hundred and fifteen miles northwest of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.
>
> July 19th, damaged a 4,500 ton transport two hundred and twenty miles north northwest of KAVIENG, NEW IRELAND.

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

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PSD Letter 6-3-14

SECRET

9 a.m. 1 August 1943.

SOUTH PACIFIC ACTION (Cont'd.)

At 7:22 a.m. July 30th, one of our search planes sighted, attacked and probably damaged a submarine one hundred and eighty-five miles southwest of the RUSSEL ISLANDS.

At 2:30 p.m. July 30th, thirty-six Navy Avengers, escorted by sixteen Navy Wildcats, attacked enemy positions on MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA. A number of hits were scored.

During the same afternoon, nine Army Liberators, escorted by sixty-two fighters, bombed BALLALE ISLAND and started a number of fires along the runway.

During the night of July 30th and 31st, motor torpedo boats sank a hundred foot auxiliary vessel off the southwestern coast of KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND.

NEW GEORGIA GROUND OPERATIONS

On the MUNDA front during July 30th, some progress was made by our troops along the south flank and in the center of the line. Apparently, Japanese reinforcements have arrived in this area. During July 30th, no advance was made on the north flank.

Reports from our forces operating in the ENOGAI AREA indicate that our troops have commenced aggressive patroling to determine enemy dispositions and routes to the BAIROKO-MUNDA trail. It is further reported that the enemy has adopted a passive defense in that area, showing no inclination to counter-attack.

There are indications that the Japanese have concentrated forces in considerable strength at VORI on the north tip of GANONGGA ISLAND.

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