



SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 6th of JANUARY, 1948

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

THURSDAY, 8 JANUARY, 1948

THE FINAL STAGES OF THE NAVAL WAR IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE.

The following despatch was submitted to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty on the 4th December, 1945, by Admiral Sir HAROLD M. BURROUGH, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., British Naval Commander-in-Chief, Germany.

*British Naval Commander-in-Chief, Germany,
c/o Admiralty.*

4th December, 1945.

Be pleased to lay before Their Lordships the enclosed copy of my report to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, on the Final Stages of the Naval War in North-West Europe.

2. As explained in my covering letter to the Supreme Commander, the aim of this report is to supplement the detailed information and statistics in the War Diaries and thus to provide a continuous narrative which is brief, but at the same time contains sufficient detail and references to facilitate research into any particular period or episode.

3. Reports of proceedings were rendered at the time in respect of most of the episodes described in the narrative of this period, but no separate report has been rendered on the naval arrangements for the occupation of Germany.

4. I would bring to Their Lordships' notice, the co-operation and assistance received from the Commanders-in-Chief, The Nore, Portsmouth and Plymouth, in regard to the formation of the Naval Parties destined for Germany which were thus able to move to their destinations with far less delay than had been thought possible. The lion's share of the credit for this must go to the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, Admiral of the Fleet Sir John C. Tovey, G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., in whose Command the Parties

for the most vital ports were formed, and who throughout, by his personal interest in the progress of the planning, had done everything possible to make matters go smoothly.

5. The co-operation and assistance received from the Personnel Departments of the Admiralty and from Plans Division (Q), were also notable.

*(Signed) H. M. BURROUGH,
Admiral.*

THE FINAL STAGES OF THE NAVAL WAR IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE.

*Office of Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief,
Expeditionary Force.*

13th July, 1945.

I have the honour to submit the enclosed report, outlining the activities of the Allied Naval Forces under my command from the time of the crossing of the Rhine, to the 13th July, 1945, when your period of command as Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, was terminated.

2. The aim of this report is to supplement the information in the War Diaries, which were rendered periodically from D Day onwards, by a narrative which is of sufficient brevity that a busy man might find time to read it, but which mentions all important events so that the historian may find clues for more detailed research.

3. This was a period of widespread and historical activity for all the Sea, Land and Air Forces under your command. The naval role in these crowning achievements was primarily to ensure the maintenance of the Armies and Air Forces in the field by protecting

their lines of communication where they crossed the sea. This had been their primary role since the 6th June, 1944, but with the supplementary operations undertaken during these months, and the preparation of the naval forces of occupation, the period becomes one of greater naval activity than any since the days of maintenance over the beaches.

4. More than the other Services, the United States and British Navies felt the demands of the Naval War in the Far East during this time, with the resultant considerable withdrawals from the naval strength at my disposal. With many unknown commitments ahead and many plans awaiting fruition, this reduction in our naval strength would have caused me more uneasiness had I not had ample evidence that fortitude and hard work would enable the Allied Navies to accomplish all that was required of them, despite reductions in their strength.

5. In these latter days, the French Navy was rapidly gaining in strength and it was a proud moment when French Naval Forces took part in the operation for the liberation of Bordeaux, the first major operation they had undertaken under my command.

6. But it is to the combined work of the United States and British Navies that the future historian will turn for an example of faultless team work and mutual understanding between nations, that may be equalled in the future but surely never surpassed. Tradition and custom, the parents of procedure, are very deeply rooted in all Navies and when one Navy is placed under the Commander-in-Chief of another nationality, the procedure of his own Service must be paramount in both. No exception occurred in this case, and the United States Navy readily adapted itself to the requirements of a closely knit British Naval organisation.

7. The foundations of this, the most fruitful and harmonious naval combination of all time, were laid by my predecessor, the late Admiral Sir Bertram H. Ramsay, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.V.O., and I am proud to be able to claim that the co-operation between our two Services has grown no less since his passing.

8. As the best expression of my feelings at the time of the termination of our great enterprise, I reproduce the messages made by me on the occasions of the termination of the Supreme Command and the last U.S. Naval Forces leaving the European Theatre of Operations, together with the replies made by yourself and Admiral H. R. Stark, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces in Europe.

(Signed) H. M. BURROUGH,
Admiral.

GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, U.S. Army,
Supreme Commander,
Allied Expeditionary Force.

THE FINAL STAGES OF THE NAVAL WAR IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE.

The direct contribution of the Allied Navies to the crossing of the Rhine was the assistance they provided at the crossing, and to the Armies operating on the western flank in the east Scheldt area.

2. Early in March, 1945, a force of L.C.M.s and L.C.V.(P)s*, known as Force "U" and under the command of Captain P. H. G. James, R.N., was formed to assist the 21st Army Group in crossing the Rhine.

A corresponding force of United States landing craft had been formed the previous winter to assist the American Armies, and both British and U.S. craft were transported overland with their crews and all equipment in tank transporters.

In fact, only L.C.V.(P)s were used on account of their greater manoeuvrability and they proved extremely useful for such jobs as towing sections of pontoon bridges. They also did a certain amount of ferrying, notably in the American sector where they did valiant work under fire in the Remagen Bridge area.

3. At the request of the Allied Armies, small boom and asdic parties were supplied at the Rhine crossing with the object of preventing German midget submarines, explosive boats and saboteur swimmers from interfering with our communications. All were of great assistance as the Germans made some determined but fruitless efforts with these weapons.

4. On the lower Rhine and West Scheldt estuary, the naval Force "T", under Captain A. F. Pugsley, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., continued to be responsible for the protection of the seaward flank of our Armies and carried out a constant succession of Commando raids, mostly by L.C.A.,† on the enemy's positions in the area. These raids were almost uniformly successful.

5. Craft of both Force "T" and Force "U" took part in the final crossings of the Rhine when the Canadian Army was advancing westward into Holland.

Tasks facing the Allied Navies after the Rhine Crossing.

6. With the crossing of the Rhine accomplished, a survey of the wider scene found the Allied Navies charged with the following variety of tasks:—

(a) The provision of specialised seagoing ships and craft required for the maintenance of the Allied Armies in the field, together with the responsibility shared with the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, for the protection of merchant shipping used for the same purpose.

(b) The working of the ports through which the main stream of military imports flowed. Some 10,000 tons of stores on British account and 20,000 tons on U.S. account were passing through Antwerp daily, while the main personnel traffic passed through Ostend and Calais in the British zone and Le Havre in the U.S. zone.

(c) Preparation of Naval Parties to participate in the occupation of Germany including the provision of an operational Port Party to open the port of Hamburg. Arrangements for naval representation on the S.H.A.E.F. Missions to Denmark and Norway.

* Admiralty footnote: L.C.M.—landing craft for mechanised transport.

L.C.V.(P)—landing craft for personnel.

† Admiralty footnote: L.C.A.—landing craft for assaulting troops.

(d) The provision of naval assistance for the reduction of pockets of resistance on the west coast of France. Most of these pockets had only nuisance value to the immediate war effort but importance was attached to the early opening of the port of Bordeaux and operations were in train to this end.

(e) The protection of the Scheldt Approaches.

(f) Naval measures to bring speedy relief to Holland.

(g) The planning of operations to occupy the Channel Islands after surrender, and to occupy Norway under a variety of conditions.

Prospects of Opening a North German Port.

7. Of these widespread problems the first one brought into prominence after the Rhine crossing was the opening of a North German port. This project had long been discussed and in the event of prolonged resistance the opening of such a port might become a vital need, though it was agreed that such an early opening was not in the circumstances, as they then were, an urgent necessity; nor in fact was it a feasible project from the naval point of view to open a port as quickly as Army requirements would prefer, particularly the port most required, Hamburg. It was established that owing to the shortage of minesweepers and the necessity for being prepared to open Dutch ports concurrently for civil relief, only one German port could be opened at a time. Apart from the limitations likely to be imposed by the minesweeping conditions, particularly the difficulties of sweeping our own mines, it was necessary for all resistance to have ceased along the Dutch, and North-West German coasts before minesweeping could be started. The reduction of Heligoland and neutralisation of enemy batteries on Wangerooze* were also essential before the Elbe Approaches could be swept.

8. Subject to these considerations naval plans had always been based on the assumption that Hamburg would be the port to be opened on British account, though recent Army opinion had considered Emden as an alternative if enemy resistance was sustained. The opening of Bremen, with the exception of the mine-sweeping, would be an American responsibility as that port was to work on United States account, and by now the landward and seaward limits of the Bremen enclave had been finally established.

9. Apart from the reduction of Heligoland, which H.M.S. ROBERTS and H.M.S. EREBUS were being held ready to bombard after the major work of neutralisation had been accomplished by Bomber Command, plans were in hand for assaults on the main Frisian Islands on which it was estimated that the German naval personnel alone amounted to over 12,000. With naval assistance, landward assaults were planned as being the more economical and the First Canadian Army was responsible for those on Wangerooze and Alte Mellun, while the Second Army was to be responsible for the reduction of the two islands off the Cuxhaven Peninsula (Neuwerk and Schar-

horn) which was considered necessary to enable minesweeping operations to begin in the Weser- and Elbe Estuaries.

Protection of Shipping.

10. Throughout this period much attention and effort were given to reducing the threats to shipping caused by submarines, E-Boats, midget submarines and mines. Especially in the Scheldt Approaches there were almost daily clashes with the enemy either by the naval forces, which were working under Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, or by the local patrol craft operating under Rear-Admiral F. E. P. Hutton, the Flag Officer, Belgium.

11. Despite efforts for their protection a certain number of merchant ships was damaged and sunk by these attacks and due tribute must be paid to the courage and steadfastness of their crews as well as to the efforts made by the escorting warships to prevent casualties.

Operations on the West Coast of France (Operation "Venerable").

12. Of the German pockets remaining on the west coast of France, most had nuisance value only, but it was considered essential to reduce the pockets astride the Gironde Estuary so that the port of Bordeaux could be opened. Plans for this operation had originally been made the previous November under the code-name "Independence," but the operation had to be postponed on account of the Ardennes push. These were now brought up to date, and it was decided to carry out the operation with a target date of 15th April under the code-name "Venerable."

The naval tasks being:—

(a) Bombardment, primarily in the Ponte de Grave area, of enemy armament which could bear on friendly ground and Air Force:

(b) To remove sunken blockships and scuttled shipping to clear the Channel to Bordeaux; preliminary work had been in progress since October, 1944, by French contractors with the assistance of the U.S. Navy.

(c) The minesweeping necessary to sweep the entrance to the Gironde Estuary and the river.

13. It was later decided that the reduction of the Ile d'Oleron was also essential to the opening of the Estuary and River. A supplementary operation, code-name "Jupiter," was therefore planned to achieve this. It included bombardment of targets on the island and transport of personnel and equipment for the assault.

14. Bordeaux was to be opened by French ground forces under General de l'Arminat. The naval operations were under the command of Commander Task Force 122 (Vice-Admiral A. G. Kirk, U.S.N.) and Contre-Amiral Rue was in command of the French Naval Task Force which consisted of the French ships LORRAINE and DUQUESNE with destroyer and minesweeper support.

15. The bombarding ships arrived in an area to the south-west of Ponte de Grave which had been previously swept for mines, and LORRAINE, DUQUESNE and the destroyers carried out shoots on pre-arranged targets on 15th and 16th April, then withdrawing to Brest.

* Admiralty footnote: Wangerooze—the eastern-most of the East Frisian Islands.

16. It was considered that the submarine menace did not warrant the risk of LORRAINE taking part in Operation "Jupiter," and DUQUESNE and the destroyers only took part. DUQUESNE had previously embarked at Casablanca a full outfit of ammunition for herself and replenishments for the destroyers, and the assault on the Ile d'Oleron was carried out on 30th April with the French ships bombarding gun batteries and other targets throughout the day. Twenty-four L.C.V. (P) were used as lift for assaulting troops and by nightfall all the southern portion of the island was in French hands, and only one of the L.C.V. (P) was lost.

17. The subsequent clearance of the Gironde and Garonne Rivers was carried out by French naval units, assisted by the 31st Minesweeping Flotilla and the 4th Minesweeping M.L. Flotilla, all the naval units continuing under the command of Commander Task Force 122.

Relief of the Channel Islands.

18. Plans for the occupation of the Channel Islands after a German surrender, had been started in June, 1944, under the code-name "Nestegg," the operation being mounted from Plymouth. Early in May, 1945, it seemed that the capitulation of the German garrison in the Channel Islands was imminent and on the 2nd May the Supreme Commander asked for a British warship to be at 24 hours' notice to carry his representatives to accept the German surrender. H.M.S. BULLDOG, escorted by H.M.S. BEAGLE, escorted the Supreme Commander's representatives, headed by Brigadier Snow, to St. Peterport on the 8th May and in the early hours of the 9th May the surrender negotiations were completed on the Quarterdeck of H.M.S. BULLDOG.

19. On 8th May, the "Nestegg" convoy, consisting of 3 L.S.T., 10 L.C.T.*, minesweepers and suitable escort sailed from Plymouth bringing occupational troops and food. Half the convoy went to Jersey and half to Guernsey and a detachment was later sent to Alderney.

20. During the next few days some 22,000 prisoners were evacuated from the Channel Islands in the same ships and craft and on the 16th May naval responsibility for the Islands passed from A.N.C.X.F. to the Admiralty.

The Relief of Holland.

21. The introduction of food supplies to Holland, where by March, 1945, lack of essential food-stuffs was causing both actual starvation and an acute political problem, had long been planned under the code-name "Placket". The Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, and Flag Officer, Holland, under A.N.C.X.F., were mainly responsible for the execution of this project which had to be planned for a variety of circumstances. From the naval aspect, these included the ferrying of food in minor landing craft through the inland waterways, the opening of a route from the Scheldt to Dordrecht by which schuyts and barges could pass, the opening of the main Dutch ports from seaward and the landing of supplies over selected beaches if the enemy concentrated his resistance in

"fortresses" commanding the ports. It was always an essential condition that enemy resistance must have ceased before civil relief could begin, but once this condition was fulfilled, the problem became one of providing food and coal with the least possible delay as the people of West Holland had no reserve whatsoever to fall back on. It was therefore necessary to have a considerable number of minesweeping and landing craft at short notice, and to make provision for the latter to be augmented should it be necessary to land over the beaches, which would also have entailed the use of beach clearance and beach parties. A Port Repair Party for Rotterdam under Captain C. D. Maud, D.S.O., R.N., had been held in readiness in Belgium since the previous autumn, and plans were made to introduce this party with the minimum delay.

22. With the realisation that their defeat was imminent, the Germans showed their willingness towards the end of April to come to some agreement whereby food and other necessary supplies could be introduced into Holland under flag of truce. By the 1st May details of the scheme had been agreed with the Germans, and Allied Air Forces commenced dropping emergency food-stuffs to the Dutch population in ten selected areas. Royal Air Force and United States heavy bombers continued to drop some 1,500 tons of food a day until 8th May, when the first Allied coasters arrived in Dutch waters and were given safe conduct and access to the port of Rotterdam.

Occupation of North German Ports.

23. For several months preparations for the despatch of Naval Parties required for the occupation of North German Ports had been in hand under my Chief of Staff (P.H.)*, Rear-Admiral W. E. Parry, C.B., at his Headquarters in London.

24. As it was not possible to form these Naval Parties in time to enable them to be ready on the Continent to move into their ports when required, extemporised arrangements had to be made for naval representation and advice to be at the disposal of the British and Canadian Army Commanders who would make the advance into the ports.

25. This was done by sending the Naval Officer-in-Charge (designate) to join the Army Formation concerned. Rear-Admiral G. C. Muirhead-Gould, D.S.C. (Flag Officer, Wilhelmshaven (designate)), was appointed temporarily to the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, 21st Army Group. At the same time officers of captain's rank were sent to the Headquarters of the First Canadian and Second British Armies. The officers at these three Headquarters were later relieved by officers appointed specifically as Naval Liaison Officers, Rear-Admiral Muirhead-Gould being relieved on 3rd May by Captain R. S. Warne, C.B.E., R.N.

26. The "Eclipse"† Naval Parties moved across the Channel as soon as they were formed and with little or no training. The stores, which it was essential should arrive in the ports at the same time as the Parties, had been sent

* Admiralty footnote: L.S.T.—landing ship for tanks.

L.C.T.—landing craft for tanks.

* Admiralty footnote: P.H.—"Post Hostilities" Staff.

† Admiralty footnote: Operation "Eclipse"—the occupation of the North German Ports.

ahead to Antwerp together with certain harbour craft, and these were assembled with the personnel of the Parties in an ex-Belgian Cavalry Camp at Burg Leopold. The diary of the movements of these Parties shows how these Parties despite their late formation did, with the unstinted help of the Army, reach their destinations soon enough to take timely control of the situations in their ports.

27. The actual surrender of the North German Ports began on 26th April when a Naval Officer of 30 Advance Unit (the naval unit specially formed for the collection of intelligence) reached the Bremen City Hall at 1030 and accepted the surrender of the city from the acting Bergermeister. U.S. Naval Task Force 126 designated for this port was already on the Continent and the Commander of this force (Rear-Admiral A. G. Robinson, U.S.N.), made a preliminary reconnaissance on the 27th April. He found that there was no apparent damage to docks, quays and other harbour installations but that warehouses were totally destroyed and prisoners-of-war stated that many mines had been sown in the enclosed basins and the adjacent river. The capacity of the port was restricted to some extent by sunken ships and in fact no war or merchant ships were found afloat.

28. On the 3rd May the Hamburg garrison surrendered unconditionally, and Commodore H. T. England, D.S.O., who had gone forward with the occupying Army forces entered the port as Commodore-in-Charge. He found the attitude of the port officials cowed but co-operative. The Port Party for Hamburg was not far behind and entered the port two days later.

29. The 5th May saw the surrender of all German Forces in Germany, Holland and Denmark, including the garrisons of Heligoland and Frisian Islands, and with the cessation of offensive operations all the remaining Naval Parties were able to move into their respective ports to establish control and initiate measures for the disarmament of the German Navy.

30. The two British Flag Officers, who were to be in command of the naval forces occupying the ports in the British zone of North Germany, were then moving in to set up their Headquarters. These Flag Officers were:—

Rear-Admiral H. T. Baillie-Grohman, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., whose title then was Flag Officer, Kiel. His command included the naval forces in the area eastward of the Elbe to the Russian border, and his title was later altered to Flag Officer, Schleswig-Holstein. He set up his Headquarters first at Kiel and later at Plön so as to be within easy reach of 8th Corps Headquarters.

Rear-Admiral G. C. Muirhead-Gould, D.S.C., whose title then was Flag Officer, Wilhelmshaven. This was changed later to Flag Officer, Western Germany, to indicate better the scope of his command, which included all naval forces in the British zone west of the Elbe, and Hamburg. His Headquarters were first established at Sengwarden near Wilhelmshaven and later moved to Buxtehude about 20 miles from Hamburg.

31. These two Flag Officers with the staffs and Naval Parties under their commands lived through some adventurous and difficult times

and the stories of their early days given in their reports of proceedings make interesting and instructive reading.

32. Admiral Baillie-Grohman reports that VE Day was anything but a public holiday for himself and his staff, for on that day, besides interviews with German senior officers, he had to cope with 4,000 troops who landed at Eckernförde from landing craft unaware that the War was over and full of enthusiasm for continuing it. The influx of refugee ships from the Baltic was a constant source of anxiety to him at the time.

33. Admiral Muirhead-Gould landed at Heligoland and accepted its surrender on the 11th May. He found the island devastated by bombing and almost uninhabitable, but left a British Naval Party on the island under the command of a Lieutenant-Commander, who on the next day found himself compelled to place the German Senior Naval Officer under arrest for his obstructive conduct.

Naval Situation in Norway and Denmark at the Time of Surrender.

34. The S.H.A.E.F. Mission to Denmark of which the naval element was headed by Rear-Admiral R. V. Holt, C.B., D.S.O., M.V.O., had arrived in Copenhagen on the 5th May. It was considered important to make an early show of naval strength in Copenhagen and on the 9th May, the cruisers BIRMINGHAM and DIDO with four destroyers arrived there and assisted materially in those early and difficult days which are more fully described by Rear-Admiral Holt in his report. Operation "Crosskeys" was that designed to provide for the early establishment of coastal and mine-sweeping forces in Danish waters and the "Crosskeys" convoy, consisting of H.M.S. TASAJERA carrying Coastal Force Maintenance Unit No. 2 together with two Coastal Force Flotillas, four Minesweeping Flotillas, tankers and other craft carrying stores, arrived in Copenhagen on the 22nd May.

35. In Norway the first members of the S.H.A.E.F. Mission arrived at Oslo on the 8th May and Commodore Askin, Royal Norwegian Navy, as representative of the Allied Naval Commander, opened direct negotiations with representatives of the German Naval High Command in Oslo. The British Flag Officer, Norway (Rear-Admiral J. S. M. Ritchie) sailed from Rosyth in H.M.S. DEVONSHIRE, which was carrying H.R.H. Crown Prince of Norway who landed with his suite on the 13th May after scenes of enthusiasm from boats carrying crowds of cheering Norwegians as the ship steamed up the Oslo Fiord.

36. British Naval Officers-in-Charge designated for the main ports in Norway left England in destroyers on 13th May and settled down in their ports to the primary job of organising minesweeping in the approaches to the ports, which was largely carried out by German minesweepers under German supervision.

The Surrender of the German Navy.

37. The Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief had been present at Rheims on the 7th May when General Jodl and Grand Admiral Friedeberg, the plenipotentiaries of the German High Command signed the unconditional surrender of all the German Land, Sea and Air

Forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Force and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command. The signature was witnessed by Lieutenant-General W. B. Smith on behalf of the Supreme Commander, General Suslparoff on behalf of the Russians and General Sevez on behalf of the provisional Government of France. The Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief signed the orders to the German Navy.

38. In Berlin on the 8th May, soon after midnight, Field-Marshal Keitel, Grand Admiral Friedeberg and General Stumph, the plenipotentiaries of the German High Command, signed the unconditional surrender of all the German Land, Sea and Air Forces to the Allied Nations. The Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief was present at the signature which was witnessed by Air Chief Marshal Tedder, Marshal Zukov, General Spaatz and General de Latre de Tassigny.

39. The orders for the surrender of the German Fleet were contained in "Eclipse" Memo. No. 1 originally issued in July, 1944, and revised and brought up to date since. "Eclipse" Memo. No. 1 contained the Supreme Commander's orders to the German armed forces for the conduct of their surrender when it came, and besides instructions in general terms contained specialised orders to the German Navy and Air Force. The naval section gave detailed instructions as to the conduct of the German Fleet after surrender and its initial provisions may be summarised as follows:—

(a) The immediate despatch of a responsible German Flag Officer to A.N.C.X.F. with details of all minefields in North-West European waters, of the location of all departments and branches of the German Admiralty (Ober Kommando der Kriegsmarine) and details of locations of all service warships down to and including Elbing Class torpedo boats as well as minesweepers and Sperrbrechers. This Flag Officer was to bring with him a Communications Officer able to explain all communications matters including particulars of the codes and cyphers in current use in the Germany Navy.

(b) The despatch of responsible officers to the Commanders-in-Chief, The Nore and Rosyth, with charts of all minefields and other navigational information on the North Sea. Certain other German naval officers were also to be detailed for specialised duties with British naval authorities.

(c) Much more detailed information on the current state of the German Navy was to be supplied by the German High Command to A.N.C.X.F. within 14 days of the surrender.

40. Orders for the surrender of the German U-Boat fleet were issued by the Admiralty and the planning and the co-ordination of the operations necessary to receive the surrender of the U-Boats were the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches.

41. When the surrender occurred the naval special orders (which embodied the basic special orders which had been agreed between the British, United States, Soviet and French Naval Authorities) were issued to the German Admiralty as they stood, and in addition the Admiralty issued orders by signal to German submarines at sea giving them instructions on

how to proceed to surrender. One small adjustment to the naval special orders had to be made to include German naval garrisons in the Mediterranean, which was outside the Supreme Commander's sphere of responsibility. As the orders to Ober Kommando der Wehrmacht in respect of all three services were not actually issued and as the naval special orders only dealt with matters of naval import, no instructions were in fact issued to the German Admiralty (O.K.M.) on such general matters as orders for prisoners-of-war, German responsibility for maintenance of armed forces and so on.

Use of German Codes and Cyphers.

42. On the 10th May S.H.A.E.F. (Forward) gave instructions to O.K.W.* that no codes or cyphers were to be used except in the case of signals to units of the German Fleet, when codes could be used until 2359 on 11th May. It was then realised that the German naval authorities could not issue instructions in plain language to their U-Boats in the Far Eastern waters to comply with the surrender terms because the U-Boats might not believe the authenticity of the message and the Japanese would probably prevent their leaving. Accordingly instructions were given that codes were to be used for this special purpose of giving orders to U-Boats in Far Eastern waters.

Compliance with naval special orders.

43. The German authorities complied with naval special orders as well as circumstances permitted and O.K.W. broadcast an order against scuttling on the 10th May. The naval representatives arrived at the Headquarters of British naval authorities in England as instructed and in such numbers that both the Commanders-in-Chief concerned asked that the duplicate parties for which provision had been made should not be sent.

44. The naval representatives detailed to proceed to the Headquarters of A.N.C.X.F. arrived at Rheims p.m. on the 10th May and were sent under escort to A.N.C.X.F.'s Headquarters. This delegation consisted of Vice-Admiral Ruge, Rear-Admiral Godt (Submarines) with Commander Koltzer as communications officer. These officers proved most co-operative and gave all the information required by the naval special orders except certain hydrographical information which could only be produced by the various sub-commands and certain information about mines on the western seaboard of the Atlantic. These three German officers left A.N.C.X.F.'s Headquarters a.m. on the 14th May with instructions to provide further information; these instructions were complied with to the best of their ability.

Control of O.K.W. and O.K.M.

45. On the 9th May A.N.C.X.F. nominated Captain G. O. Maund, D.S.O., R.N., and Commander H. C. C. Ainslie, D.S.C., R.N.Z.N., as the naval representatives on General Rook's mission to O.K.W. These officers left for Flensburg by air on the 12th May.

46. Captain Sir John M. Alleyne, D.S.O., O.B.E., R.N., was the senior naval representative on the O.K.M. ministerial control party, and he left Versailles for Flensburg on the 14th May. On the 15th May A.N.C.X.F. placed Captain Alleyne in charge of O.K.M.

* Admiralty footnote: O.K.W.—German High Command Headquarters.

47. Captain Maund returned to A.N.C.X.F.'s Headquarters on the 16th May and was then given a directive placing him as A.N.C.X.F.'s representative in charge of the naval element at O.K.W. and of O.K.M.

48. After the dissolution of O.K.W. on the 23rd May and the arrest of Admirals Doenitz and Von Friedeberg amongst a number of other German Senior Naval Officers, command of O.K.M. was assumed by Admiral Backenkohler; he was succeeded on the 25th May by Admiral Warzecha.

49. Captain Alleyne was succeeded on 27th May by Captain E. Hale, R.N., who on Captain Maund's withdrawal became the senior naval representative at O.K.M.

50. The policy for the control of O.K.M. was laid down by the Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief in a message to Captain Maund on the 6th June. The complete dissolution of O.K.M. was envisaged in this message, but during the first phase the main structure of the organisation was to be retained until certain investigations had been completed, transfers of German personnel completed and decisions reached on sailings of War and Merchant ships to the United Kingdom or Allied ports; and arrangements made for the use of facilities in German naval dockyards. When this programme had been completed, it was envisaged that the operational side of O.K.M. should be disbanded completely and the administrative side reduced to four or five departments.

51. This phase was achieved on the 12th July, when the dissolution of O.K.M. was started and a new organisation for the administration of the German minesweeping forces employed on mine clearance was established. The new organisation was brought into force on 21st July, a week after the Supreme Commander had laid down his office.

52. It remains to transfer these German minesweeping forces to the Mine Clearance Board which is being established under civil auspices.

53. Apart from the long term tasks of control of the disarmament of the German Navy and the disbandment of its personnel, there were two immediate naval problems to be dealt with after the surrender. One of these was the opening of the sea routes to the North German Ports and the other the collection of intelligence, particularly that which might have a vital bearing on the prosecution of the War against Japan.

The opening of the sea routes to the North German Ports.

54. This problem had to be tackled with energy, as it was essential to open the North German Ports to traffic soon so that warships and merchant ships required by the Allies could be removed, so that British warships could visit German naval ports and so that the import programme could be started. It was clear that unless imports of food were made soon, a large percentage of the German population would starve before long and apart from humanitarian scruples, starvation of the German population would have an immediate effect on the economic life of the lately occupied countries which it was our first aim to rehabilitate, particularly if famine lowered the output of coal from the Ruhr,

55. With this in mind, minesweeping of the North Sea route to Heligoland had begun well before the surrender and by the 9th May a force of 44 ships was based at Cuxhaven for sweeping the Elbe and its approaches.

56. By this time it was clear that the Ems had been mined at Emden and the Weser above Bremerhaven, before the surrender brought about the cessation of the enemy's policy of fouling all ports before abandoning them. The Weser to Bremerhaven, the Elbe, the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and all the West Baltic Ports were reported clear of enemy mines.

57. It was decided that the risk of enemy mines could be disregarded in order to admit urgent shipping to ports to which reliable intelligence indicated the routes were clear, and urgent traffic was first admitted to Hamburg on the 9th May.

58. British mines had still to be considered but by mid-May, Bremerhaven, Emden and Kiel (via the Canal) were declared open to urgent traffic.

By the 1st June, Hamburg and Kiel (via the Canal) were open to normal traffic and by mid-June Bremerhaven also.

The Collection of Naval Intelligence.

59. Progressively, as the German forces were rolled back, Intelligence objectives were overtaken and exploited until the collapse of the enemy put us in possession of virtually all his naval secrets. The phase was one more of organising the full exploitation of what came into our hands than of seeking the targets themselves, although only the dash and skill of 30 Advance Unit and of the U.S. Naval Technical Mission in Europe saved many of the more important "finds" from destruction. The work of the Royal Naval Field Intelligence Unit also did much to reveal and preserve these targets.

The Removal of A.N.C.X.F.'s Headquarters to German soil.

60. Since late September, 1944, A.N.C.X.F.'s Headquarters had been located at the Chateau d'Hennement, St. Germain, about six miles from Versailles and thus convenient to the main departments of S.H.A.E.F.

61. It was a natural conclusion that A.N.C.X.F. should move to Frankfurt so as to be alongside the Supreme Commander's Headquarters, and early in May arrangements to this end were well in hand.

62. The intention then was that A.N.C.X.F.'s "Post Hostilities" Staff, under Rear-Admiral W. E. Parry, C.B., should move from London to Minden, where this staff would be best located to put into execution the plans for the control and disarmament of the German Navy. At Minden they would be ten miles from Bad Oeynhausen, where 21st Army Group Headquarters was being established, while Lubbecke to which the British Control Commission was shortly to move is eight miles away.

63. But soon after the surrender it seemed likely that the Supreme Allied Command would terminate somewhat sooner than had been envisaged and with this in mind it seemed preferable for A.N.C.X.F.'s Main

Headquarters to go to Minden. It was still necessary, however, for a strong liaison staff to be maintained at Supreme Headquarters and Rear-Admiral Parry was accordingly made head of this staff, which was established at Frankfurt early in June. A.N.G.X.F.'s Main Headquarters opened at Minden on 15th June.

EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES ON THE TERMINATION OF THE SUPREME COMMAND.

The following messages were exchanged on the termination of the Supreme Command:—

From: Admiral Sir H. M. Burrough, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Expeditionary Force.

To: General of the Armies D. D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force.

Tomorrow, for the first time, the United States Ensign will not be flown over my Headquarters, and the hauling down of "Old Glory" tonight will mark the end of one of the happiest associations in a Combined Command which has probably ever existed.

2. It is with great and sincere regret that I myself and the officers and men of the Royal Navy who have had the privilege of serving under your inspiring leadership realise that our association has drawn to a close. For the rest of our lives we shall remember this association with great pride in the fine achievements of the United Team which you have led to Victory in Europe.

3. On behalf of all my Command, and all members of the Royal Navy who have had the privilege of serving under you as Supreme Commander, I wish you continued success, lasting good health and happiness in your future, which we know will be as brilliant as has been your past.

From: General of the Armies D. D. Eisenhower.

To: Admiral Sir H. M. Burrough, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O.

With warm personal regard and appreciation and best wishes for your continued success, I truly appreciate your generous message. While I have already sent out a general expression of gratitude to the entire Command, I think it appropriate to record the deep sense of gratification I have felt towards the Royal Navy because of the unvarying efficiency, loyalty and aggressiveness with which its contingents have served under me during the past three years. Both in the Mediterranean and in this theatre I have found nothing among the personnel of the Royal Navy but cheerful co-operation and a determination to see the job through that have made my association with it one of the truly pleasing experiences of this whole war. I regret our separation which, for my part, is a physical one only. In spirit I shall always remain closely associated with all the elements that have worked so effectively together in the tasks assigned us by the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

Combined Command terminates at midnight, 13th July, 1945, and brings to a close one of the greatest and most successful campaigns ever fought.

History alone will judge the Allied Expeditionary Force in its true perspective, but we, who have worked and struggled together, can feel nothing but pride in the achievements of the men we have been honoured to command, and sadness at having to be parted now. Whatever history may relate about the exploits of this Allied Force, and the memory of man is short and fickle, it is only we, at this time, who can fully appreciate the merit and due worth of the accomplishments of this great Allied team.

These accomplishments are not limited to the defeat of the Nazi hordes in battle—a continent has been liberated from all that is an antipathy to the ideal of democracy which is our common heritage. Above all, we have proved to the whole world that the British and American peoples can forever be united in purpose, in deed and in death for the cause of liberty.

This great experiment of integrated command, whose venture was cavilled at by some and doubted by many, has achieved unqualified success, and this has only been made possible by the sympathetic, unselfish and unwavering support which you and all other commanders have wholeheartedly given me. Your own brilliant performance is already a matter of history.

My gratitude to you is a small token for the magnificent service which you have rendered, and my simple expression of thanks sounds totally inadequate. Time and opportunity prohibit the chance I should like to shake you and your men by the hand, and thank each one of you personally for all you have done. I can do nothing more than assure you of my lasting appreciation, which I would ask you to convey to all those under your command for their exemplary devotion to duty and for the most magnificent loyalty which has ever been shown to a commander.

MESSAGES EXCHANGED BETWEEN A.N.C.X.F. AND COMNAVEU ON THE DEPARTURE OF THE LAST U.S. NAVAL FORCES FROM THE EUROPEAN THEATRE OF OPERATIONS.

From: Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Expeditionary Force.

To: Commander, U.S. Naval Forces in Europe.

The departure on the 9th July of the remaining United States Landing Ships and Craft from the United Kingdom brings to an end the largest combined amphibious force that has yet been assembled. The work of the L.S.T.s and Landing Craft of both nations during the assault and subsequent build-up has been one long record of harmonious co-operation, the ships of each nation in their turn bearing and being glad to bear as much of the burden as their capacity would allow.

Not only have the L.S.T.s carried immense numbers of vehicles of all sorts and descriptions but they have also carried large numbers of men safely across dangerous waters.

I hope you will express the thanks of the Allied Naval Command to the officers and men of all ships now departing from the United Kingdom for the great part they have played in the Liberation of Europe. We are indeed sorry to say good-bye to them.

From: Commander, U.S. Naval Forces in Europe.

To: Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Expeditionary Force.

Thank you for your message of farewell to the officers and men of our amphibious forces

soon due to leave the United Kingdom. It is with real pleasure that I pass it along to COMPHIBCRAFT 12th to be made known to all hands. The close and happy relationships that have grown up between A.N.C.X.F. and the Amphibious Forces of our two nations have been a source of great satisfaction.

There will be many regrets at saying good-bye but there will also be the realisation that the friendships made will be lasting and the hope that in years to come they will often be revived.

LONDON

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