

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

*The Royal Navy and Soviet Seapower, 1930-1950:  
Intelligence, Naval Cooperation and Antagonism*

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in the University of Hull

by

Joseph Francis Ryan, BA (Hons) (Carleton)

January 1996

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father

PATRICK JOSEPH RYAN

(1927-1991)

&

to the members of

the Naval Section of 30 Military Mission

and the Russian Section of the Naval Intelligence Division

# CONTENTS



Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
A Note on the Text	vi
Abbreviations, Acronyms and Foreign Terms	vii
Introduction	xi
I LITERATURE SURVEY	1
II THE MISSING DIMENSION	11
III THE SOVIET NAVY, 1917-1941	23
IV SOVIET SUBMARINE FORCES, 1930-1941	40
V THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST	51
VI THE STRATEGIC SETTING	62
VII THE BRITISH NAVAL MISSION TO THE SOVIET UNION, JUNE 1941 - MAY 1942	71
VIII ADMIRAL MILES TAKES CHARGE, JUNE 1942 - MARCH 1943	97
IX THE SENIOR BRITISH NAVAL OFFICER, NORTH RUSSIA	106
X THE WHITE SEA	125
XI SOVIET NAVAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARCTIC CONVOYS PART I: THE ROUTE TO DISASTER	138
XII SOVIET NAVAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARCTIC CONVOYS PART II: RISING FROM DEFEAT	152
XIII THE BLACK SEA FLEET	178
XIV POST-WAR INTELLIGENCE, 1946-1950	195
XV ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET NAVAL CAPABILITY	213
Bibliography of Works Cited	220
Map 1: North Russia and the Kola Inlet	262
Map 2: The Black Sea	263

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



I would like to thank Professor David N Dilks, my supervisor while I was enrolled at the University of Leeds, who kindly continued to demonstrate an interest in my thesis after becoming Vice-Chancellor at the University of Hull.

After I transferred to Hull, it became necessary to have a new supervisor. Dr Bernard J Porter initially stepped into the gap until he moved to Newcastle University. Thereafter, Mr John Major bore the brunt of reading and commenting on my draft chapters.

My sincere thanks, therefore, to my supervisors, but also to the host of other people who assisted me in the course of my research, including: Dr Richard Aldrich; Professor E Christopher Baughan, CBE; Thomas B Beattie; Colin Bell; Alex D Blair; David T Bradley; Bernard and Mrs Janet Corrie; Mrs Angela Courtney; Baron Denning; Lieutenant-Commander Dickinson, RN (Retd); Timothy J Dymond; Mrs Patricia A East; Stanley A East; Arthur Frewin; Sir Alexander Glen; Kirk Gravestock; Sub-Lieutenant Ian Grey, RANVR (Retd); Rear-Admiral Edward F Gueritz, CB, OBE, DSC; Anthony C Hall; Richard M Harvey; Ms Marilyn Higgs-Goodwin; Dr Norman Hillmer; Professor Sir F Harry Hinsley; Simon Hutchinson; Professor R V Jones; Dr Helen Langley; Michael MccGwire; Commander Robert Mack, DSC, RN (Retd); Captain John Evelyn Moore, RN (Retd); Michael and Vivienne Nash of Marine Books; Dr D John Pay; Richard Pendry; Commander Geoffrey Penn, RN (Retd); Bryan Ranft; G Wyn Rees; Dr Ken Robertson; Anthony W Ryan; Mrs Dorothy M Ryan; Professor Ronald W Shephard; Anthony J Simmonds of Maritime Books; Bradley F Smith; Sydney Sowden; Edward E Thomas; Professor Geoffrey Till; Gwion Trefgarne; and Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Albert J Wilson.

Also, the Master, Fellows and Scholars of Churchill College in the University of Cambridge, and the staff at: the British Library, London; the Conflict Studies Research Centre, Royal Military College, Sandhurst, especially Ms Anne Aldis; Fleet Public Library, Hampshire; Guildford Public Libraries, Surrey; the Imperial War Museum, London; ISO Publications, Westminster; the library of the London School of Economics; the Ministry of Defence, Whitehall; the Ministry of Defence Library, Great Scotland Yard; Motor Books, London; the National Archives of Canada, Ottawa; the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, including the Historic Photographs Section; the Naval Historical Branch of the Ministry of Defence, Great Scotland Yard, especially David Brown, Lieutenant-Commander W J R "Jock" Gardner, RN (Retd) and "Mac" Macloon; P-E International Systems Group, Fleet; the Prince Consort's Army Library, Aldershot; the Public Record Office, Kew; the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, Whitehall; Thomas Thorp, Booksellers, Guildford; World War II Books, Woking; the members of the Study Group on Intelligence; and those who wished to remain anonymous or that I may have inadvertently omitted.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the patience and understanding of my wife and children who, for a very long period, had to live with my studies too.

## ABSTRACT



British estimates of Soviet seapower from 1930 to 1950 covered three main phases. These were primarily characterised by pre-war suspicion of Communism and the Soviet Union, enforced wartime naval cooperation from June 1941 until the end of the Second World War and, finally, a shift towards Cold War antagonism.

It is argued that the Admiralty's Naval Intelligence Division was able to collect sufficient data to maintain a credible intelligence picture of the Soviet Navy's order of battle and war-fighting capabilities, thereby allowing informed decision-making in London. In general, the United Kingdom considered that the Red Navy was poorly equipped and trained, and that it posed little threat to British interests. This was borne out by the Soviet Union's poor employment of seapower during the war.

Knowledge of the Soviet Navy was always difficult to obtain. However, a major finding of this thesis is that the wartime Anglo-Soviet alliance allowed British naval representatives in the USSR unprecedented access to Russian warships, facilities and commanders. Though the basing of a naval mission in Russia was principally intended to assist in the common fight against Nazi Germany and to promote liaison between the Royal and Soviet Navies, especially with regard to the Arctic convoys, the British also took the opportunity to examine the maritime forces of their long-standing Communist rival at close quarters. It is contended, therefore, that improved intelligence on the Soviet Navy was made possible by wartime naval collaboration. To examine this assertion, relevant naval aspects of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 are covered in detail in the thesis.

After 1945, the Red fleets required some time for consolidation before expansion was possible. The Soviet Navy remained an intelligence target, but British wartime assessments largely held good to the end of the decade.

## A NOTE ON THE TEXT



The reader should appreciate that differences occur in the spelling of Russian proper names and terms as they are not transliterated consistently from the Cyrillic into English.

There is a strong echo here of the draft of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, with its Arabic spellings, of which T E Lawrence's editor complained: "Slip 20. Nuri, Emir of the Ruwalla, belongs to the 'chief family of the Rualla'. On Slip 23 'Rualla horse', and Slip 38, 'killed one Rueli'. In all later slips 'Rualla'." In his reply to the criticism, Lawrence stated that he should have "also used Ruwala and Ruala."<sup>1</sup> With this precedent in mind, note in particular that "v" and "f", "y" and "i", and "z" and "s" are often used interchangeably in transliterations of Russian.

Also, the spelling of geographical names has a habit of changing with the passage of time, so that Batum, known previously to the Victorians as Batoum, is today called Batumi. Similarly, Kronshtadt was often rendered as Kronstadt and Vladivostok as Vladivostock. Idiosyncratic spelling can render Polyarnoe as Polyarno (though today perhaps Polyarnyy) and Iokanga as Iokanka or Yokanka. Furthermore, a number of names from the 1930s and 1940s have changed completely. In this case, the original has sometimes been retained as familiar from contemporary records or common English usage, for example, Spitsbergen rather than Svalbard, Seidisfiord rather than Seyðisfjörður (though fjord is generally preferred to fiord), Vaenga rather than Severomorsk, and Bear Island not Bjørnøya.

In the thesis, such inconsistencies only appear within quotations and there should be no variation in the spelling of words in the main body of the text. Similarly, not all material cited will use appropriate accents so, for example, attaché may appear as attache, just as it was in the original.

Books and articles in footnotes are quoted in full when first used. Thereafter, the author's surname is given followed by a short title. However, full details are always available in the bibliography.

---

<sup>1</sup> Preface by A W Lawrence in T E Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1962), p 19.

## ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND FOREIGN TERMS



A/A	Anti-aircraft
ACHQ	Area Combined Headquarters
ACNS	Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff
ADM	Admiralty
Arcos	All-Russian Cooperative Society
Asdic	British detection device to locate submarines
ASW	Anti-submarine warfare
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
<i>Blitzkrieg</i>	Lightning war
BLO	British Liaison Officer
BNLO	British Naval Liaison Officer
"C"	Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service
CAB	Cabinet Office
CAC	Churchill Archives Centre
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
Comintern	Communist International
COS	Chiefs of Staff
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DDNI	Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence
DEFE	Ministry of Defence
DEMS	Defensively-Equipped Merchant Ship
DMI	Director of Military Intelligence
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
DRC	Defence Requirements Sub-Committee
<i>Druzhinas</i>	Armed retinues
FO	Foreign Office

---

GC&CS	Government Code and Cypher School
GCHQ	Government Communications Headquarters
<i>Glavsevmorput</i>	Northern Route Administration
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
GRT	Gross Registered Tons
GRU	Soviet Military Intelligence
Guard ship	A Soviet general purpose patrol or escort vessel
HMS	His Majesty's Ship
Humint	Human intelligence
INS	<i>Intelligence and National Security</i>
IWM	Imperial War Museum
<i>Jeune École</i>	Young School
JIC	Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee
JW	Designator of Russia-bound convoys
Lieut	Lieutenant
Lt	Lieutenant
<i>Luftwaffe</i>	German Air Force
MI	Military Intelligence
MI5	Security Service
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)
<i>MIR</i>	<i>Monthly Intelligence Report</i>
MLBE	Donald McLachlan and Patrick Beesly Papers
MoD	Ministry of Defence
<i>Morskoy Sbornik</i>	<i>Naval Review</i>
MTB	Motor Torpedo Boat
NA	Naval Attaché
NAAFI	Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (canteen for British servicemen)
NAC	National Archives of Canada



---

<i>Narkomindel</i>	People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs
NHB	Naval Historical Branch
NID	Naval Intelligence Division
NID 1	Naval Intelligence Division, Section 1 (post-war section studying Russia)
NID 4a	Naval Intelligence Division, Section 4a (Eastern Section studying Russia from 1940 to July 1941)
NID 11	Naval Intelligence Division, Section 11 (section studying Russia in early 1940)
NID 16	Naval Intelligence Division, Section 16 (wartime section studying Russia from July 1941)
NKVD	People's Commissariat of Interior Affairs (the Secret Police)
NLO	Naval Liaison Officer
NMM	National Maritime Museum
NOIC	Naval Officer in Charge
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence
ORBAT	Order of battle
Osint	Open-source intelligence
<i>Otdyel</i>	Department
<i>Politburo</i>	Political Bureau
PQ	Designator of Russia-bound convoys
PRO	Public Record Office
PRU	Photographic Reconnaissance Unit
QP	Designator of UK-bound convoys
RA	Designator of UK-bound convoys, or Royal Artillery
Radar	Radio Detection and Ranging
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RANVR	Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve
<i>Rapprochement</i>	Resumption of harmonious relations
RDF	Radio Direction Finding

---

Reich	Regime
Retd	Retired
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
RNR	Royal Naval Reserve
RNVR	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies
SBNO	Senior British Naval Officer
Sigint	Signals intelligence
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SLBM	Submarine-launched ballistic missile
<i>SNPN</i>	<i>Summary of Naval and Political News</i>
SO(I)	Staff Officer (Intelligence)
Sonar	Sound Navigation and Ranging
<i>Spetsnaz</i>	Forces of special designation/purpose (from <i>Spetsial'naya naznacheniya</i> ); that is, special forces
SS	Steamship
<i>Stavka</i>	Soviet High Command (literally "tent")
"U"	"Ultra"
U-boat	German submarine (from <i>Unterseeboot</i> )
USN	United States Navy
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VA	Designator of Vladivostok-Arctic convoys
VLF	Very Low Frequency
<i>Wehrmacht</i>	German armed forces
<i>Weltkapital</i>	World capital
<i>WIR</i>	<i>Weekly Intelligence Report</i>
WO	War Office
W/T	Wireless Telegraphy

# INTRODUCTION



*"I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia.  
It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma:  
but perhaps there is a key".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Winston S Churchill)*

The study of intelligence has only gradually become admissible among historians. Until recently, it was felt that the paucity of records on the subject released into the public domain did not allow a comprehensive and balanced picture of past events to be produced. However, although the field has been much neglected, and despite the inherent difficulties, there is now an increasing interest evident among academics.

This thesis examines the efficacy of British intelligence agencies, in particular the Naval Intelligence Division (NID), in estimating the capabilities of Soviet naval forces in the period 1930 to 1950. These assessments were conducted over three main phases, which were characterised by pre-war suspicion of Communism and the Soviet Union, enforced wartime naval cooperation from June 1941 until the end of the Second World War and, finally, a shift towards Cold War antagonism.

The differences between naval intelligence during war and peace can hardly be exaggerated. Robin Barrett, a former member of the NID's Information Section during World War II, stated in 1948 that:

*Intelligence deals with the enemy and the potential enemy. When there is no enemy it languishes and its importance is forgotten ... In wartime the position entirely changes ... War in fact changes the Intelligence Officer from Cinderella to the Princess. To vary the metaphor, Naval Intelligence changes in time of war from a sluggish brook to a raging torrent.<sup>2</sup>*

Reflecting this situation, the emphasis of this thesis is upon the war years, in particular from the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 to the end of the war in August 1945, which is termed by the Russians as the Great Patriotic War. This was the period in which British naval officers served with 30

---

<sup>1</sup> BBC Written Archives, broadcast by Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty (1 October 1939), cited in Martin Gilbert, *The Churchill War Papers: Volume I. At the Admiralty September 1939-May 1940* (London, 1993), pp 191-192.

<sup>2</sup> Imperial War Museum (hereinafter IWM), Vice-Admiral John Henry Godfrey Papers (hereinafter the Godfrey Papers), Box 74/96/1, "The Naval Memoirs of Admiral J. H. Godfrey, Vol. V, 1939-1942, Naval Intelligence Division, Part I" (1965), p 2.

---

Military Mission in Russia and, because of direct naval cooperation with the Soviet Navy, were able to send back an unprecedented supply of information to the NID in London. The chapter on the post-war years rounds out the analysis to 1950 and is largely confined to illustrating the range of naval intelligence still obtainable by the NID on the Soviet Navy. This narrow scope is partly due to the limits imposed on the thesis in terms of length and originality: the final draft had to be reduced by some 30,000 words to meet the maximum allowed and the vast literature on the Cold War if drawn on extensively would only have led to a repetition of the well-known political/strategic picture.

The thesis mainly addresses strategic rather than tactical intelligence on the Soviet Navy. Some eight major components of strategic intelligence can be recognised, including biographic, economic, geographic, scientific and technical, sociological, transportation and telecommunications, and political intelligence. Although some of these are touched upon, the thesis largely examines armed forces or military intelligence, which focuses on "foreign military forces, orders of battle, equipment, combat effectiveness, combat readiness, and doctrine, among other related aspects of foreign military capabilities."<sup>3</sup>

Military capabilities were defined by the contemporary British intelligence community as: "Any courses of action which, at the time indicated, the force or power under consideration has the means to undertake and might conceivably adopt".<sup>4</sup> Such capabilities may be evaluated in two basic ways. The easier of these concerns equipment or *matériel*: defence intelligence organisations seek to assess the armed forces of foreign powers in terms of their intrinsic combat potential as evidenced in numbers and performance of equipment and manpower. This is an important methodology because it lends itself to being quantifiable and objective. However, capability may also be determined by appraisals of how well a country's weapons systems, and human and economic resources are, or could be, deployed and utilised, which is largely a matter of subjective judgement. Estimates of capability, therefore, can be broken down into objective and subjective components. Overall, they are attempts to gauge the ability of armed forces to meet their national security responsibilities, both in peace and war.

---

<sup>3</sup> Stephen J Andriole, "Basic Intelligence" in Gerald W Hopple and Bruce W Watson (eds), *The Military Intelligence Community* (Boulder, 1986), p 100.

<sup>4</sup> Public Record Office (hereinafter PRO), CAB 81/116, "Definition of the Word 'Capabilities'; Note by the Secretary", JIC(43)316 (28 July 1943), SECRET, annex to Combined Secretariat, "Combined Chiefs of Staff; Memorandum for Information No. 117; Definition of the Word 'Capabilities'; Note by the Secretaries" (17 July 1943).

---

Intelligence organisations, however, are tasked with ascertaining not only the military capabilities of foreign states but also their intentions, and information on intention falls into the political rather than the military arena. It turns on knowing the innermost workings of a country's central decision-making apparatus, and the thoughts and plans of its leadership. This is usually only gained by the penetration of high-level communications and the use of agents. The resulting intelligence is most closely guarded, attracts a high security classification,<sup>5</sup> and even decades later evidence of the nature and scope of operations to secure it is rarely available. In the thesis, the security classification of reports, where known, are given as an indication of the relative importance of the material or the sensitivity of the intelligence source.

The British agency which managed the handling of agents overseas was the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), commonly known as MI6, which was responsible to the Foreign Office.<sup>6</sup> The Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS), forerunner of today's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), was under SIS control and sought to intercept, decipher and/or decode and analyse foreign communications traffic.

Although the SIS and GC&CS were able to collect material on both the intentions and the capabilities of other states, the principal agencies responsible for the analysis of information on the military capabilities of foreign countries were the individual intelligence organisations of the Army, Royal Navy (RN) and Royal Air Force (RAF).

Undoubtedly, the premier organisation among the armed services had been the NID which, under Admiral Sir William "Blinker" Hall, wielded enormous power and gained immense prestige during the First World War.<sup>7</sup> However, in the inter-war period the NID languished, as did British intelligence as a

---

<sup>5</sup> Classified documents were graded, in ascending order of secrecy, as RESTRICTED, CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET and MOST SECRET. The system is detailed in PRO, CAB 79/22, "Classification of Secret Documents", JIC(42)295 (Final) (August 1942), ff 280-281, SECRET, attached to COS(42)231 (8 August 1942), SECRET. Later in the war, for consistency and to avoid confusion between the Allies, MOST SECRET was replaced by the American term TOP SECRET. Intelligence of a particularly sensitive nature was indicated by the addition of a codeword, for example "BIGOT" or "ULTRA", and given a limited circulation.

<sup>6</sup> The term "agent" is frequently misunderstood and misused. Intelligence officers are employees of intelligence organisations. However, the people they may recruit or suborn to provide human intelligence (humint) are known as agents, and are typically foreign nationals already possessing the necessary access to the intelligence target.

<sup>7</sup> The standard account of Hall's activities is Sir William James, *The Eyes of the Navy: A Biographical Study of Admiral Sir Reginald Hall* (London, 1953). Some lecture notes on his intelligence experiences can be found in Cambridge at the Churchill Archives Centre (hereinafter CAC), Admiral Sir

whole. The risk posed by a resurgent and revanchist Germany was not generally recognised until after the Nazi accession to power in 1933.<sup>8</sup> Rather, the threat that was often to the forefront of the intelligence community's mind was Russia and its support for Communist subversion.<sup>9</sup> However, it is clear that very little was known about the Soviet Union before the war. Fortunately, the Red Navy was only a small part of British anxiety.<sup>10</sup> In the 1930s, the Soviet Navy was absolutely no match for British naval might.

Although Russia has always been regarded primarily as a land power,<sup>11</sup> its shoreline is extensive.<sup>12</sup> Reflecting this, for over 200 years its navy has been generally the third or fourth largest in the world, although its effectiveness has varied considerably.<sup>13</sup> The Red Navy, therefore, was a force to be watched, but it was not until after World War II that it came slowly to prominence. Before the war, it took a lowly place behind the fleets of the major naval powers, Great Britain and the United States, as well as those of Japan, Germany, France and Italy.<sup>14</sup>

---

William Reginald Hall Papers (hereinafter the Hall Papers), Section 2/1, "Intelligence in Wartime" (undated). On the British Admiralty's successful wartime codebreaking organisation see, for example, Patrick Beesly, *Room 40: British Naval Intelligence 1914-18* (London, 1982); A W Ewing, *The Man of Room 40: The Life of Sir Alfred Ewing* (London, 1939); and Hugh Cleland Hoy, *40, O.B.: or How the War Was Won* (London, 1935).

<sup>8</sup> In 1936, as the threat of war increased, Hall warned that a "nation which starves its armed forces, and also starves its Intelligence Service, deserves the fate it will get"; CAC, Hall Papers, Section 2/1, "R.M.S. Otranto; Rough Notes" (10 January 1936), p 7.

<sup>9</sup> Dr Andrew, for example, states that "by far the chief target of SIS until the early 1930s remained Soviet Russia"; Christopher Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London, 1985), p 285.

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Professor Sir F Harry Hinsley, St John's College, Cambridge (15 October 1990).

<sup>11</sup> For example, a US President said of the Soviet Union that: "They're a land power, primarily, with a great potential enemy on the east. We're primarily, of course, a sea power and our needs, therefore, are different"; Richard M Nixon at a press conference in Los Angeles (31 July 1970), cited in Norman Polmar, *Soviet Naval Power: Challenge for the 1970s* (New York, 1972), p 2. Churchill succinctly told Stalin that: "Russia is a land animal, the British are sea animals"; Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War, Volume Four: The Hinge of Fate* (London, 1954), p 405.

<sup>12</sup> The maritime borders of Russia are "almost twice as long as the coastline of the United States of America and almost 15 times longer than that of France"; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1972), pp 20-32.

<sup>13</sup> Michael MccGwire, "The background to Soviet naval developments", *World Today* (March 1971), p 93.

<sup>14</sup> At the beginning of the period, however, Germany also was not a major naval power, being limited by the Treaty of Versailles. For an understanding of relative maritime strengths at this time, see PRO, ADM 1 8739/44, Admiralty, "London Naval Conference 1930. Statement of Area, Coast Line, Population, External Trade and Entrances of Overseas Shipping into the Ports of each of the Conference Powers and their total Shipping" (4 January 1930), SECRET.

Russian maritime forces, however, were sufficiently important by the summer of 1941 for a separate section in the British Admiralty, NID 16, to be charged with their study.<sup>15</sup> This was headed by Commander C A N Chatwin, DSO.<sup>16</sup> Information was difficult to obtain from Communist, especially Stalinist, Russia. But there were many ways in which British naval intelligence was able to obtain its material and, as the thesis will demonstrate, a basically accurate order of battle (ORBAT) and assessment of the capabilities of the Soviet Navy was maintained, especially after 1941.

Intelligence officers are generally loath to talk about their sources in order to avoid the compromising, and subsequent drying up or denial, of the well-springs of information. Because of this potential, "reliance on one source or one group of sources is an invitation to something like disaster."<sup>17</sup> But, without a knowledge of the sources of intelligence "it is hard to understand either the limitations or the difficulties of the art."<sup>18</sup>

Principal sources of intelligence available to the NID included naval attachés and, in approximate descending order of reliability and importance: the interception, deciphering and reading of high-grade foreign signals; captured documents and communications material taken in wartime from enemy ships and submarines, headquarters or prisoners of war; navigational fixes of ship positions by so-called "Y" Service stations using the process of triangulation from bearings taken on intercepted signals, and the gathering of plain language and low-grade cipher material;<sup>19</sup> images taken by the RAF's special Photographic Reconnaissance Units (PRUs) with subsequent detailed examination by photographic interpreters;<sup>20</sup> the sighting of ships by aircraft crews, either by trained observers during a specific search mission or

---

<sup>15</sup> In early 1940, Section XI was in charge of the USSR, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Romania under Commander P A Berry; PRO, ADM 223/257, NID, "I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (February 1940), p 9. By the end of the year, Section IVa covered the USSR, Afghanistan, Burma, India and the Indian Ocean under Major S C Woolley, RM; *ibid* (December 1940), p 7. However, in July 1941, NID 16 was formed out of NID 4; F H Hinsley with E E Thomas, C F G Ransom and R C Knight, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume Two* (London, 1981), p 651.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 223/257, NID, "I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (October 1941), p 8.

<sup>17</sup> Donald McLachlan, "Naval Intelligence in the Second World War", *RUSI Journal*, vol 112, no 647 (August 1967), p 221.

<sup>18</sup> *Idem*, "Intelligence: the common denominator/I", in Michael Elliott-Bateman (ed), *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare, volume one: Intelligence, Subversion, Resistance* (Manchester, 1970), p 58.

<sup>19</sup> For further information, see Aileen Clayton, *The Enemy is Listening: The Story of the Y Service* (London, 1980).

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Constance Babington Smith, *Evidence in Camera: The Story of Photographic Intelligence in World War II* (London, 1958).

---

incidentally by other airmen; information from allied secret services; the use of agents; interrogation of prisoners of war; deductions made from the volume and pattern of naval wireless traffic; foreign communiqués; monitored propaganda; study of the foreign media; topographical and technical information from open sources or private contacts; friendly and neutral observers; tactical and technical information gained by British and allied shipping during operations at sea; sightings by merchant ships and coastal watchers; reports by survivors at sea; and intelligence from the other armed services on naval matters.<sup>21</sup>

The thesis examines the available historical evidence and demonstrates by numerous examples that estimates produced by the NID on the capabilities of the Soviet Navy were based on such sources. The contemporary ability to utilise the main sources of naval intelligence, and to produce accurate assessments from them, can now be set against our current knowledge of the Soviet Navy in the 1930s and 1940s and its achievement set in an historical perspective.

The timeframe 1930-1950 commenced in a period of peace, although at a moment when relations between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union were tense and guarded. On Britain's part, there was then a phase of transition to a war with Germany in which the USSR was neutral, though potentially either hostile or friendly; several years of war as allies after the German invasion of Russia; a cooling of relations at the war's end; and, finally, the development of the Cold War. The ability of British intelligence to obtain information under successive and diverse conditions is explored in relation to each of these phases.

During 1941-1945, when the British had a military mission in the Soviet Union, it was far easier to obtain intelligence on the Red Navy. Some of this material has survived and is available in the Public Record Office.<sup>22</sup> Outside the period of wartime alliance, however, documentary sources on intelligence

---

<sup>21</sup> The sources of naval intelligence are examined in further detail in Donald McLachlan, *Room 39: Naval Intelligence in Action 1939-45* (London, 1968), pp 19-52. His list of sources was also studied in Russia; D Maclaughlin [sic], *The Secrets of British Intelligence, 1939-1945* [sic], translated from the English (Voyenizdat, 1971), p 40, cited in Captain 1st Rank K Titov, "Naval Intelligence Targets and Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1972), pp 58-62. Also useful is PRO, ADM 223/475, 1940-1947, "NID Volumes; Intelligence collection methods". The system of grading the reliability of sources as of 11 November 1939, and a 1943 revision, is in CAC, Donald McLachlan and Patrick Beesly Papers (MLBE), MLBE 1/16, "Sources" (undated).

<sup>22</sup> This is despite much wartime destruction of material as evidenced, for example, by the following statement: "Owing to the proximity of the enemy's ... land forces, which make ... evacuation at any time, a possibility, I have given instructions ... to destroy all signals more than 3 months old and all papers, future reference to which is not likely to be necessary"; PRO, ADM 199/2492, "North Russia - Sixth Monthly Report - Month of January, 1942" (hereinafter "6th Monthly Report") (4 February 1942), p 5, para 9, SECRET. Fortunately, many of the Admiralty's copies were retained.



are extremely limited. In the United Kingdom, there has always been a reluctance to release intelligence material into the public domain. This was especially so when it related to Britain's Cold War antagonist, Russia. There remains a concern that intelligence sources and methodologies might be compromised. Also, perhaps to avoid giving offence to friendly countries, a pretence has been maintained that intelligence-gathering is only a wartime practice with the British and still would be considered ungentlemanly in peacetime. Therefore, records relating to the pre- and post-war years are extremely difficult to obtain.

From its inception, therefore, the thesis was written partially to determine, and then to demonstrate, the feasibility of producing a documented intelligence study on a difficult subject area. The research required to do this has resembled the slow and painstaking approach necessary to a detective or, indeed, the professional intelligence officer.<sup>23</sup> The problem was never one of abundance of key material but always its scarcity, so that for every relevant document, book or article discovered a hundred others were first examined and discarded.

The result of this combination of factors is that the initial years of the Great Patriotic War are prominent in the thesis. But this should not be too surprising. British intelligence in the 1930s found it difficult to obtain reliable information on the Soviet Navy. However, before the Second World War it was not a high priority, as the threat from Russian warships was minuscule when set against the most powerful navy in the world. It was only when the Royal Navy was at war with its vessels deployed across all the oceans of the globe, and simultaneously attempting to keep the Red Army in the fight by supplying the USSR through the Arctic convoys, that the Soviet Navy really came into the equation at all.

It was at this stage that the Royal Navy, and the British Government, required all possible intelligence on the fighting ships and capabilities of the Soviet Navy. Little information, however, was readily available on the Soviet Pacific Fleet and this sparsity is similarly reflected within current documentary records.<sup>24</sup> The same holds true for the Baltic Fleet.<sup>25</sup> But these were not the most vital

---

<sup>23</sup> As a former Director of Naval Intelligence (DNI) said: "Intelligence is only rarely dramatic: its true basis is research, and the best results are usually obtained from the continuous study of insignificant details which, although singly of little value, are collectively of great importance"; PRO, CAB 81/102, Godfrey, "Security of Intelligence Sources", p 1, para 3 (b) (29 April 1941), annex to "Security of Intelligence Sources; Note by the Secretary", JIC(41)187 (2 May 1941), SECRET.

<sup>24</sup> The Head of 30 Mission held the opinion that "the Russians would not agree to an exchange of military missions in the Far East unless and until hostilities with Japan break out", but the DNI still hoped that the Soviet Union might agree to the sending of a junior naval liaison officer to the Far East; PRO, CAB 81/88, "Naval Liaison Arrangements with Russia in the Far East", in JIC(41)26 (16 September 1941), p 2, para 2, SECRET. In the event, Godfrey was proved wrong.

theatres of British activity. Indeed, the Pacific Fleet was only briefly engaged in amphibious landing operations against northern Korea, South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands when the Soviet Union attacked Japan in the closing days of the Second World War.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the Baltic Fleet was bottled up by German minefields for much of the war so that by 1942, and through 1943, "the Gulf of Finland was a dead sea ... and what was left of the Russian Baltic Fleet did not stir from besieged Leningrad and Kronstadt."<sup>27</sup> It was only with the advance of the Red Army that it was possible for the Soviet Navy to begin its break-out from the Baltic at the beginning of 1944.<sup>28</sup>

Even as late as May 1944, it was reported that the Soviet Navy, "being much circumscribed in the Baltic and Black Sea and being neutral in the Far East, has not shown any great activity".<sup>29</sup> It was in the freezing waters off North Russia "that normal conditions of sea warfare ... prevailed".<sup>30</sup> Here German aircraft, U-boats and surface vessels (including the battleship *Tirpitz*), lay in wait to prey on convoys of war *matériel*. It was in this theatre, therefore, that the Soviet Navy was thrown into the balance to help tilt the scales in favour of the Allies.

The thesis, therefore, mainly examines wartime Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation and the work of the Naval Section of 30 Military Mission, a subject that has never been explored in depth before. In particular, it considers British assessments of the ability and willingness of the Soviet Navy to assist the Royal Navy in the safe passage of the Arctic convoys and, thereby, to further the immediate strategic aims of the Allies. British intelligence on the Soviet Black Sea Fleet is also considered, for it was believed in London that Russian seapower would help to prevent a German advance into the Caucasus and the Persian oilfields by interrupting the necessary logistical support of the *Wehrmacht*.

---

<sup>25</sup> A Soviet writer stated that: "English secret-agent sources were among the most important in observation of enemy shipping in the Baltic Straits zone." If so, this would account for the current sparsity of information, as records of the SIS are not available for public inspection; I Kuz'min, "Intelligence in Blockade Operations at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1978), pp 30-36. A brief history of the Naval Mission to Russia seems to support this view, stating that: "Intelligence from 'our own sources' about German shipping in the Baltic was signalled direct to Moscow"; CAC, MLBE 1/7, "The Naval Mission to Russia 1943-45" (hereinafter "Naval Mission to Russia") (undated), p 11.

<sup>26</sup> Captain 1st Rank G A Ammon, Rear-Admiral Y A Grechko, Captain 1st Rank (Retd) M I Grigoriev and Colonel (Retd) N G Tsyrunikov, *The Soviet Navy in War and Peace*, translated from the Russian by Joseph Shapiro (Moscow, 1981), p 80. A standard text on the Kurile Islands operations is David Rees, *The Soviet Seizure of the Kuriles* (New York, 1985).

<sup>27</sup> David Woodward, *The Russians at Sea* (London, 1965), p 221.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Anthony Courtney Papers, British Naval Mission, Moscow, "Activities of Red Navy 1943" (hereinafter "Activities of Red Navy") (20 May 1944), p 1.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

While it was possible to compile a reasonably accurate ORBAT of the Soviet Navy before 1941, it was only in operational collaboration with the Royal Navy during the war that Russian capability in terms of combat effectiveness could be accurately assessed. Intelligence was gained, therefore, as a by-product of cooperation.

In general, the British assessments made in World War II held good for some time thereafter. A pause for consolidation and restructuring was first on the agenda for the post-war Soviet Navy. Only after some time was this followed by the construction of new vessels. Until the end of the decade, therefore, the NID was well placed to study its slowly evolving intelligence target.

An overview of the literature relevant to the dissertation is provided in the following chapter. It is worth noting first, however, that there is a debate with regard to writing about intelligence or, in fact, on many other subjects of historical inquiry; that is, should a writer stress the implacable forces shaping man's destiny, or ought the emphasis be placed on the rôle of the individual: the "Hero" or "Great Man" in history? While this is an old chestnut of a problem, it has a certain relevance to this topic. Professor Hinsley's magisterial *History of British Intelligence in the Second World War* seemed deliberately to exclude the individual from its volumes. Sir Maurice Oldfield, a wartime intelligence officer and Chief of the SIS ("C") from 1973 to 1979, complained that you "get the impression that the intelligence war was won by committees in Whitehall, rather than by people",<sup>31</sup> and that the book was "written by committees, for committees, about committees".<sup>32</sup> Similarly, in Soviet writings "emphasizing heroes creates problems. It implies that there are other sources of wisdom than the Party and its presidium. It is safer to eliminate the individuals who helped to win the war and talk only about groups and collectives."<sup>33</sup>

It is partly in rejection of this approach, because of individual inclination and belief, that there is a strong element that is personal, particular and occasionally anecdotal in the thesis. This sentiment

---

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Oldfield (13 July 1979), cited in Phillip Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession: The Spy as Bureaucrat, Patriot, Fantasist and Whore* (London, 1986), p 358.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Captain Robert B Bathurst, US Navy (Retd), review of V I Achkasov and N B Pavlovich, *Soviet Naval Operations in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1981), in *Naval War College Review*, vol XXXV, no 6, sequence 294 (November-December 1982), p 96. However, while being faithful to Marxist-Leninist principles, it was still possible to state that: "History is not anonymous. It is made by daringly bold yet circumspect people, people with a passionate heart and a sober mind, people of creative thought and courageous action. This is why there is enormous moral force in a grand tradition which has taken shape in the Navy - the tradition of perpetuating in names of ships and units ... the memory of outstanding individuals"; "Be Proud of a Revolutionary Name", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1988), pp 3-5.

---

should certainly apply to the work performed by the NID. As the first wartime DNI stated, the "efficiency of an intelligence service is derived entirely from the individual merits of the people composing it."<sup>34</sup>

Overall, therefore, this is a study based on the conviction that, in the words of the commander of the wartime Soviet Northern Fleet, "it is men who decide the day."<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> National Maritime Museum (hereinafter NMM), Godfrey Papers, MS81/005, Box A, "Naval Intelligence Papers", Godfrey, "Open letter to N.I.D. staff" (September 1942).

<sup>35</sup> Admiral Arseni G Golovko, *With the Red Fleet: The War Memoirs of the Late Admiral Arseni G. Golovko*, Vice-Admiral Sir Aubrey Mansergh (ed), translated from the Russian by Peter Broomfield (London, 1965), p 35.

# CHAPTER I

## LITERATURE SURVEY



*"Say from whence you owe this  
strange intelligence?"<sup>1</sup>*

*(Macbeth)*

General Sir Kenneth Strong, Dwight D Eisenhower's chief of intelligence during the Second World War, said that there were three kinds of book on the subject of intelligence: spy stories, memoirs and academic studies. Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Armitage, former Chief of Defence Intelligence, added a fourth: investigative journalism.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, among the writings on intelligence it is often hard to distinguish between studies and stories; between fact and fiction. Rather, there is often a twilight world of half-truths so that documentary evidence, while it is very difficult to find, is at a premium.

This chapter surveys the range of primary and secondary sources relating to British intelligence, the Royal Navy and the Soviet Union which have most bearing on the subject of the thesis, and demonstrates the current gaps in the literature. It does not attempt to cover the considerable material relating to the general diplomatic and military history of the 1930s and 1940s.

In brief, there is no single work that examines the subject-matter of the dissertation directly. Indeed, "the entire field of naval intelligence appears sadly neglected."<sup>3</sup> Although there are interesting publications on British intelligence and the NID in the period, they all consider Nazi Germany, to the neglect of the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup>

In 1968, Mitchell complained that the Soviet Navy "has received almost no serious treatment whatever. It is safe to say that less is generally known of the Soviet war record afloat than is known of

---

<sup>1</sup> William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, act I, scene iii, lines 5-6, in William George Clark and William Aldis Wright (eds), *The Works of William Shakespeare* (London, 1953), p 839.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph F Ryan, "Intelligence and National Security: A Guide to Information Sources", in RUSI (ed), *RUSI and Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1990* (London, 1990), p 461.

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan M House, *Military Intelligence 1870-1991: A Research Guide* (Westport, Connecticut, 1993), p 25.

<sup>4</sup> An exception is Bradley F Smith, "Anglo-Soviet intelligence co-operation and roads to the Cold War" in Richard J Aldrich (ed), *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51* (London, 1992), pp 50-64.

any other military service maintained by a major power."<sup>5</sup> Although subsequently some authors have examined the Red Navy, often using German or Russian source material, none has seriously considered Soviet maritime forces at this time from the viewpoint of the British Admiralty. Unfortunately, although there is one interesting account by an assistant naval attaché to Russia from 1942 to 1944, it is written strictly from an American perspective.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, there was no standard reference work which proved of particular value. In fact, a sentence or two of relevant material was typically all that might be gleaned from any specific book or article.

The main primary sources for the study of British intelligence on Soviet naval capability are the documents held in the Public Record Office. The PRO holds a selection of intelligence records from the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry, and some signals intelligence (sigint) is also available. Many of the papers of the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee (JIC), established in 1936 to coordinate the work of the separate intelligence agencies, are particularly relevant. So, too, are the minutes of the Chiefs of Staff (COS) Committee, which was successively accountable to the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID), the War Cabinet and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). For the most part, however, the files of British intelligence and security agencies, as well as material released by them to other government departments, are retained by those organisations under Section 3(4) of the *Public Records Act* of 1958. Access to them, therefore, is denied to the public.<sup>7</sup>

Among the records which are obtainable at the PRO, the "Naval Intelligence Papers 1939-1947" (ADM 223) are of particular relevance. This class is composed of a wide variety of documents from the Second World War relating to the Naval Intelligence Division.<sup>8</sup> The material released to the public, however, does not go beyond 1945.

---

<sup>5</sup> Donald W Mitchell, "The Soviets Against the Germans at Sea: 1941-45", *RUSI Journal*, vol CXIII, no 651 (August 1968), p 237.

<sup>6</sup> Kemp Tolley, *Caviar and Commissars: The Experiences of a U.S. Naval Officer in Stalin's Russia* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1983).

<sup>7</sup> PRO, "Records Information: Intelligence Records in the Public Record Office", No 89 (Kew, Surrey, June 1989).

<sup>8</sup> Joseph F Ryan, "In the Archives (VIII): Naval Intelligence Papers (ADM 223) held at the Public Record Office, Kew", in "Study Group On Intelligence Newsletter", No 4 (Winter 1990/91), pp 2-5.

There are some relevant documents in the Churchill Archives Centre at Churchill College, Cambridge. These include the papers of two notable authors on naval intelligence, Donald McLachlan and Patrick Beesly, and of a number of other people associated with naval or intelligence matters.<sup>9</sup>

In London, the archives at the National Maritime Museum hold some of the papers of Admiral Godfrey, who was DNI between February 1939 and November 1942.<sup>10</sup> However, these contain very limited references to the Russian Section of the NID. Of particular note are the papers and diaries of Admiral Sir Geoffrey John Audley Miles, KCB, KCSI.<sup>11</sup> He served as Head of the British Naval Mission to the Soviet Union and, subsequently, as Head of 30 Military Mission which represented all three of the British armed services.

The Department of Documents at the Imperial War Museum holds the Admiral Godfrey memoirs (the Churchill Archives Centre and the National Maritime Museum have copies too), as well as some additional Godfrey material. In particular, the museum also holds the papers of the first Head of 30 Military Mission, Lieutenant-General Sir Frank Noel Mason-MacFarlane.<sup>12</sup>

The Naval Historical Branch of the MoD has a vital collection of material relating to naval intelligence, which proved especially useful for the pre-war and wartime years. This comprises many of the NID's publications which provide a unique insight into the Admiralty's knowledge of the Soviet Navy throughout the period.<sup>13</sup> The *Weekly Intelligence Report* is of particular interest because of the persistent requests made by the Soviet Union to obtain copies of it during the war. However, the NID was "determined that this valuable production was not going to be emasculated to please our Russian friends.

---

<sup>9</sup> See CAC, "A Guide to the Holdings of the Churchill Archives Centre" (July 1995); and CAC, "Select Classified Guide to the Holdings of the Churchill Archives Centre (June 1994).

<sup>10</sup> The standard guide to the documentary records held at the museum is R J B Knight (ed), *Guide to the Manuscripts in the National Maritime Museum, Volume I: The Personal Collections* (London, 1977); and *idem*, *Guide to the Manuscripts in the National Maritime Museum, Volume 2: Public Records, Business Records and Artificial Collections* (London, 1980).

<sup>11</sup> Hereinafter the Miles Papers.

<sup>12</sup> Hereinafter the Mason-MacFarlane Papers.

<sup>13</sup> NID reports and summaries were published in the *Monthly Intelligence Report (MIR)*, as well as the wartime *Summary of Naval and Political News (SNPN)* and *Weekly Intelligence Report (WIR)*. Of these, the PRO has released only two examples of the pre-war *MIR* in ADM 223/221 (15 May 1938) and ADM 223/222 (15 June 1939). Copies of post-war *MIRs* are available from January 1946 to December 1950 in the sequence ADM 223/223 to ADM 223/232, but the wartime *SNPNs* and *WIRs* have not yet been made available to the public.

If it had been supplied to them an infinitely more cautious and less useful picture could have been given, especially of conditions and trends in Russia."<sup>14</sup>

Other important material remains in private hands. Of interest are the papers of the late Commander Anthony T Courtney, RN. He served in North Russia and Moscow during the war and, in the post-war reorganisation of the NID, became Head of the Russian Section.<sup>15</sup> After his death, most of his papers were given by his widow, Mrs Angela Courtney, to a retired Royal Navy officer, Commander Geoffrey Penn,<sup>16</sup> but she retained some documents herself.<sup>17</sup>

Although most of the senior Royal Navy personnel who served in the Soviet Union during the Second World War are now deceased, some officers who were junior at the time remain and kindly allowed me to interview them, for example Commander Robert Mack, DSC, RN (Retd). Other naval personnel, such as Sub-Lieutenant Ian Grey, RANVR (Retd), had kept some useful diaries and documents.<sup>18</sup>

The range of secondary material on intelligence is expanding rapidly. Fortunately there are a number of useful bibliographies. Constantinides wrote an annotated guide to the literature on intelligence,<sup>19</sup> and also useful is the guide by Blackstock and Schaf.<sup>20</sup> Of particular note are the volumes by Myron J Smith, Jr.<sup>21</sup> Another helpful reference book is Dobson and Payne's dictionary.<sup>22</sup> There is a bibliographic essay on the intelligence literature,<sup>23</sup> and another covering the principal books and articles on intelligence which are available in the library of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies (RUSI) in London.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", pp 25-26.

<sup>15</sup> Commander Anthony Courtney, *Sailor in a Russian Frame* (London, 1968), p 48.

<sup>16</sup> Hereinafter the Courtney Papers.

<sup>17</sup> Hereinafter the Courtney Papers II.

<sup>18</sup> Hereinafter the Grey Papers.

<sup>19</sup> George C Constantinides, *Intelligence and Espionage: An Analytical Bibliography* (Boulder, Colorado, 1983).

<sup>20</sup> Paul W Blackstock and Frank L Schaf, Jr, *Intelligence, Espionage, Counterespionage, and Covert Operations: A Guide to Information Sources* (Detroit, Michigan, 1978).

<sup>21</sup> Myron J Smith, Jr, *The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English, Volume I, Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Resistance Movements, and Secret Operations, 1939-1945* (Santa Barbara, California, 1980), and *idem, The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English, Volume II, Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Covert Operations, 1945-1980* (Santa Barbara, California, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, *The Dictionary of Espionage* (London, 1984).

<sup>23</sup> Robert La Liberté Migneault, "Literature on Intelligence", in Alfred C Maurer, Marion D Tunstall and James M Keagle (eds), *Intelligence: Policy and Process* (Boulder, 1985), pp 357-381.

<sup>24</sup> Ryan, "Intelligence and National Security", pp 461-471.



On the Soviet armed forces, Parrish produced a useful survey of relevant publications,<sup>25</sup> as did Neilson.<sup>26</sup> There is a bibliographic essay on the Red Army,<sup>27</sup> and Myron Smith also compiled a bibliography specifically on the Soviet Navy.<sup>28</sup> Finally, bibliographies on naval subjects include a work by Albion,<sup>29</sup> and by Law on the Royal Navy.<sup>30</sup>

General works on British intelligence include books by Deacon,<sup>31</sup> and, posthumously, by Newman.<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, these are prone to error. It was not until 1985 that a reliable academic work appeared by the Cambridge historian, Christopher Andrew, whose book confirmed that the influence of intelligence on diplomatic history could no longer be ignored.<sup>33</sup>

Deacon also wrote a specific work on naval intelligence but it covers too broad a spectrum, with little mention of the Soviet Navy in the relevant period, though it makes interesting background reading.<sup>34</sup> Writings on the NID tend to concentrate on the Nazi threat and the Second World War,<sup>35</sup> aspects of naval deception,<sup>36</sup> or biographies of some of its more well-known members.<sup>37</sup> Their relevance to the Soviet Navy is, therefore, very limited. The same may be said of the only PhD thesis available on the

---

<sup>25</sup> Michael Parrish, *The Soviet Armed Forces: Books in English, 1950-1967*, Hoover Institution Bibliographical Series: XLVIII (Stanford, California, 1970).

<sup>26</sup> John G Neilson, "Select Checklist of Articles on the Soviet Armed Forces in the Western Military Press", in David R Jones (ed), *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979* (Gulf Breeze, Florida, 1979), pp 346-364.

<sup>27</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel J A English, "Of the Grey-Coat Coming: A Historiographical Exploration of English-Language Sources on Soviet Army Operations", *Military Affairs*, vol 52, no 4 (October 1988), pp 185-191.

<sup>28</sup> Myron J Smith, Jr, *The Soviet Navy, 1941-78: A Guide to Sources in English* (Santa Barbara, California, 1980).

<sup>29</sup> Robert Greenhalgh Albion, *Naval and Maritime History: An Annotated Bibliography*, 4th ed (Newton Abbot, 1973).

<sup>30</sup> Derek G Law, *The Royal Navy in World War Two: An Annotated Bibliography* (London, 1988).

<sup>31</sup> Richard Deacon (pseud of Donald McCormick), *A History of the British Secret Service* (London, 1969).

<sup>32</sup> I O Evans (ed), *Spy and Counter-Spy: Bernard Newman's Story of the British Secret Service* (London, 1970).

<sup>33</sup> Andrew, *Secret Service*.

<sup>34</sup> Richard Deacon, *The Silent War: A History of Western Naval Intelligence*, revised ed (London, 1988).

<sup>35</sup> For example, Wesley K Wark, "Baltic Myths and Submarine Bogeys: British Naval Intelligence and Nazi Germany 1933-1939", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol 6, no 1 (March 1983), pp 60-81; Patrick Beesly, *Very Special Intelligence: The Story of the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre 1939-1945* (London, 1977); and McLachlan, *Room 39*.

<sup>36</sup> Ewen Montagu, *Beyond Top Secret U* (Newton Abbot, Devon, 1978); and *idem*, *The Man Who Never Was* (London, 1953).

<sup>37</sup> Patrick Beesly, *Very Special Admiral: The Life of Admiral J.H. Godfrey, CB* (London, 1980); and Donald McCormick, *17F: The Life of Ian Fleming* (London, 1993). Fleming, of course, became famous as the author of the James Bond novels.

NID.<sup>38</sup> This problem is also evident in the official history of British intelligence in World War II which, despite much naval material offering considerable insight into the workings of the NID, throws little light on the subject of the Soviet Navy.<sup>39</sup>

A brief history of the SIS has been written by Nigel West, but his work is generally regarded in academic circles as unreliable and contains little information on the later stages of the Second World War.<sup>40</sup> West is also the author of a book on GCHQ and its forerunner, the GC&CS.<sup>41</sup> A more dependable text, however, has been published containing memoirs of a selection of people who worked for the GC&CS.<sup>42</sup> In the sigint field, the standard work on cryptology was written by Kahn,<sup>43</sup> but another book of his provides information on German intelligence and the Soviet Union, including collection efforts targeted against the Russian Navy.<sup>44</sup>

One of the most fruitful sources for scholarly research on the British intelligence services is the journal *Intelligence and National Security*.<sup>45</sup> However, despite its wide range of excellent articles, the majority of them do not impinge on the subject of this dissertation. Other specialist journals, such as *Warship*, occasionally publish papers on specific aspects of the Soviet Navy but not on naval intelligence.

There is a "paucity of reliable information" in the West on the history of the Tsarist navy.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, although the Soviet Navy under Admiral of the Fleet Sergei G Gorshkov came to be regarded as a major threat in the course of the Cold War, and was examined in great detail as a result, there is a

---

<sup>38</sup> Anthony Roland Wells, "Studies in British Naval Intelligence, 1880-1945" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1972).

<sup>39</sup> The series comprises: F H Hinsley with E E Thomas, C F G Ransom and R C Knight, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume One* (London, 1979); *ibid, Volume Two* (London, 1981); *ibid, Volume Three, Part I* (London, 1984); F H Hinsley with E E Thomas, C A G Simkins and C F G Ransom, *ibid, Volume 3, Part II* (London, 1988); F H Hinsley and C A G Simkins, *ibid, Volume 4, Security and Counter-Intelligence* (London, 1990); and Michael Howard, *ibid, Volume 5, Strategic Deception* (London, 1990).

<sup>40</sup> Nigel West (pseud of Rupert Allason), *MI6: British Secret Intelligence Service Operations 1909-45* (London, 1983).

<sup>41</sup> *Idem, GCHQ: The Secret Wireless War 1900-86* (London, 1986). It is important to note that the vital rôle in the Second World War of high-grade sigint was not revealed until the publication of F W Winterbotham's *The Ultra Secret* (London, 1974).

<sup>42</sup> F H Hinsley and Alan Stripp (eds), *Codebreakers: The inside story of Bletchley Park* (Oxford, 1993).

<sup>43</sup> David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (London, 1967).

<sup>44</sup> *Idem, Hitler's Spies: German Military Intelligence in World War II* (New York, 1978).

<sup>45</sup> Hereinafter *INS*.

<sup>46</sup> Norman E Saul, "The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars upon Russian Priorities on Naval Development", in William B Cogar (ed), *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Eighth Naval History Symposium* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1989), p 46.

surprising lack of information written in English about its earlier years.<sup>47</sup> However, the main reputable open source for details on the Soviet Navy was *Jane's Fighting Ships* (other similar publications, such as *Brassey's Naval Annual* and *Les Flottes de Combat*, are also available).

There are several Soviet naval memoirs covering the Great Patriotic War that have been translated into English, including those of Ivan S Isakov, former Chief of the Naval Staff,<sup>48</sup> and the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet.<sup>49</sup> On the submarine service, memoirs include those by Ivan Kolyshkin, who was commander of a brigade of submarines under Golovko.<sup>50</sup>

British memoirs touching on the Soviet Navy are usually associated with the Arctic convoys, but offer limited insight into Russian naval capabilities and performance.<sup>51</sup> A recent work by Woodman is valuable, especially in its use of Admiralty papers at the PRO, although the folder ADM 199/2492 containing some of the War Diaries of the British Naval Mission to Moscow and the reports of the Senior British Naval Officer (SBNO), North Russia, was unavailable to him.<sup>52</sup> However, accelerated opening has been allowed and the file's contents are cited in the thesis. Woodman, in any case, failed to realise that many of the diaries and reports are available in other classes.<sup>53</sup>

It is, indeed, surprising that little attention has been paid to these files before by writers on the Arctic convoys. The extensive use of War Diaries and reports in this thesis presents a new view of

---

<sup>47</sup> In Russian, of course, there is a vast literature. For a brief introduction to some of the bibliographic sources see, for example, Captain 1st Rank Yu Tarasyuk and Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) L Filimonov, "Naval Bibliography", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1988), pp 85-87.

<sup>48</sup> Admiral of the Fleet I S Isakov, *The Red Fleet in the Second World War* (London, undated).

<sup>49</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*.

<sup>50</sup> Rear-Admiral I Kolyshkin, *Submarines in Arctic Waters (Memoirs)* (Moscow, 1966).

<sup>51</sup> There is a considerable literature on the Arctic convoys, for example: Georges Blond, *Ordeal Below Zero* (London, 1956); Captain Jack Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter* (London, 1972); Vice-Admiral Sir Ian Campbell and Captain Donald Macintyre, *The Kola Run: A Record of Arctic Convoys 1941-1945* (London, 1958); David Irving, *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17* (London, 1968); Paul Kemp, *Convoy! Drama in Arctic Waters* (London, 1993); S A Kerlake, *Coxswain in the Northern Convoys* (London, 1984); Paul Lund and Harry Ludlam, *PQ 17 - Convoy to Hell: The Survivors' Story* (London, 1968); Frank Pearce, *Running the Gauntlet: The Battles for the Barents Sea* (London, 1989); Dudley Pope, *73 North: The Battle of the Barents Sea* (London, 1958); Signalman Ivor Saul, *Camera in Convoy: Cambridge to Murmansk 1941-1942* (Royston, Herts, 1987); and Godfrey Winn, 'P.Q.17' (London, undated, c 1946). A standard work on the subject, however, is B B Schofield, *The Russian Convoys* (London, 1971).

<sup>52</sup> Richard Woodman, *The Arctic Convoys 1941-1945* (London, 1994), p 490.

<sup>53</sup> For example, PRO ADM 199/1102, 1941-1944, British Naval Mission, Moscow: War Diaries, Case No 8005; ADM 199/1105, 1943-1945, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8008; ADM 199/1106, 1941, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8009; ADM 199/1107, 1941-1942, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8010; and WO 208/1850, June 1944-February 1945, Reports from 30 Military Mission, Moscow and SBNO, Archangel.

wartime maritime operations in North Russia, as well as a unique insight into the Black Sea Fleet and the work of the British Naval Mission, thereby filling an important gap in the present literature. It should be understood that War Diaries were official, not personal, records and were sent back to London, usually on a monthly basis, where they formed part of the intelligence picture on the Soviet Navy.

The official British naval historian for World War II included some intelligence material in his volumes,<sup>54</sup> and Barnett's recent text contains an interesting chapter on the Arctic theatre.<sup>55</sup> Other publications on the Royal Navy form background reading.<sup>56</sup> Some useful works, but from the German viewpoint, are by Friedrich Ruge.<sup>57</sup>

Besides memoirs, other Russian books on Soviet wartime naval forces include works by Ammon,<sup>58</sup> and Achkasov and Pavlovich.<sup>59</sup> However, the principal source of articles by Russian authors used in this dissertation is *Morskoy Sbornik (Naval Review)*,<sup>60</sup> which has been the professional journal of the Russian and Soviet Navies since it was first published in March 1848,<sup>61</sup> and is regarded as "the most authoritative publication in the Russian language on naval affairs".<sup>62</sup> Lacking the necessary language skills myself, I wish to acknowledge the work of others in translating these articles from the Russian.

Although the thesis examines British perceptions of the Red fleets, and offers an essentially Western-orientated view of events, the *Morskoy Sbornik* articles help to provide a counterbalance to any inherent cultural bias. Furthermore, these articles are not widely available in the West. Indeed, most of

---

<sup>54</sup> Captain S W Roskill, DSC, RN, *The War at Sea 1939-1945, Volume I: The Defensive* (London, 1954); *ibid, Volume II: The Period of Balance* (London, 1956); *ibid, Volume III: The Offensive, Part I, 1st June 1943-31st May 1944* (London, 1960); and *ibid, Volume III: The Offensive, Part II, 1st June 1944-14th August 1945* (London, 1961).

<sup>55</sup> Correlli Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely: The Royal Navy in the Second World War* (London, 1991).

<sup>56</sup> For example, Bryan Ranft (ed), *Technical Change and British Naval Policy, 1860-1939* (London, 1977).

<sup>57</sup> Vice-Admiral Ruge, *Sea Warfare 1939-1945: A German Viewpoint*, translated from the German by Commander M G Saunders, RN (London, 1957); and *idem, The Soviets as Naval Opponents 1941-1945* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1979).

<sup>58</sup> Ammon, *The Soviet Navy in War and Peace*.

<sup>59</sup> V I Achkasov and N B Pavlovich, *Soviet Naval Operations in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1981).

<sup>60</sup> The most literal translation would be "Maritime [or Naval] Collection". "Naval Digest" is often used, but incorrectly suggests that its contents are derived or abridged from other sources; hence the preferred translation "Naval Review"; John McDonnell, "Analyzing the Soviet Military Press: *Morskoi Sbornik*, 1963-1975, in Jones (ed), *Soviet Armed Forces*, p 332, n 1.

<sup>61</sup> Captain-Lieutenant V Kondriyanenko, "At the Origins of the Fleet Press", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1988), p 67.

<sup>62</sup> Jacob W Kipp, "Sergei Gorshkov and Naval Advocacy: The Tsarist Heritage", in Jones (ed), *Soviet Armed Forces*, p 225.

them have never been utilised before. They are, therefore, an important contribution to this thesis and the wider literature on the Red Navy. Of course, it must be recognised that much Soviet military literature is allegorical and that in a totalitarian state: "Historical 'fact' is the disguise for hidden meaning ... Oblique argument, in brief, is the art of survival."<sup>63</sup> As such, Soviet writings should never be taken at face value. Rather, what is required is "a cynicism born of experience about the content of published Soviet military histories and an ability to 'read between the lines'".<sup>64</sup>

Many Western authors concentrate on Russian seapower in the Cold War or modern period and usually only offer a scanty history of previous years in their books.<sup>65</sup> There are, of course, many popular publications on the Russian armed forces which contain useful material by leading writers on the Soviet Navy.<sup>66</sup> But perhaps one of the most important reference works is Meister's detailed study of Soviet warships during World War II.<sup>67</sup> Other helpful information is contained in Mitchell's broad study of Russian naval history,<sup>68</sup> Morris's book on the Russian and Soviet Navies,<sup>69</sup> the work of MccGwire,<sup>70</sup> and a collection of essays edited by Saunders.<sup>71</sup> Comprehensive works have also been written by Herrick,<sup>72</sup> and Woodward.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> G Murphy Donovan, "Evidence, Intelligence and the Soviet Threat", *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, vol 1, no 2 (Summer 1986), p 21.

<sup>64</sup> John E Jessup, "The Soviet Armed Forces in The Great Patriotic War, 1941-5", in Allan R Millett and Williamson Murray, *Military Effectiveness, Volume III: The Second World War* (Boston, 1988), p 257.

<sup>65</sup> For example, Siegfried Breyer, *Guide to the Soviet Navy* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1970); Captain John E Moore RN, *Warships of the Soviet Navy* (London, 1981); Polmar, *Soviet Naval Power*; and *idem* (ed), *The Modern Soviet Navy: An Assessment of the U.S.S.R.'s Current Warships, Naval Capabilities and Development* (London, 1979).

<sup>66</sup> For example, Przemyslaw Budzbon, *Soviet Navy at War 1941-1945* (London, 1985); Captain J E Moore, RN, "The Soviet Navy", in Ray Bonds (ed), *The Soviet War Machine: An encyclopedia of Russian military equipment and strategy* (Abingdon, Oxon, 1976), pp 112-127; Antony Preston, "The Russian Navy", in S L Mayer (ed), *The Russian War Machine 1917-1945* (London, 1977), pp 134-153; Anthony J Watts, *Allied Cruisers* (London, 1979); and *idem*, *Allied Submarines* (London, 1977).

<sup>67</sup> Jürg Meister, *Soviet Warships of the Second World War* (London, 1977).

<sup>68</sup> Mairin Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia 848-1948* (London, 1949).

<sup>69</sup> Eric Morris, *The Russian Navy: Myth and Reality* (London, 1977).

<sup>70</sup> Michael MccGwire (ed), *Soviet Naval Developments, Capability and Context: Papers Relating to Russia's Maritime Interests* (New York, 1973); Michael MccGwire and John McDonnell (eds), *Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions* (New York, 1977); and Michael MccGwire, Ken Booth and John McDonnell (eds), *Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints* (New York, 1975).

<sup>71</sup> Commander M G Saunders, RN (ed), *The Soviet Navy* (London, 1958). The Russian review of this book considered that its aim was to diminish the rôle played by the Soviet Navy during the war; CAC, Commander Malcolm George Saunders, RN, Papers, MSAU 3/2, V Katerinich, "Vain Efforts - Messrs Slanderers!", *Sovyetskiy Flot* (1 April 1959).

<sup>72</sup> Commander Robert Waring Herrick, USN (Retd), *Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1968).

<sup>73</sup> Woodward, *The Russians at Sea*.

---

Polmar and Noot wrote the first detailed examination of the development and operations of the Russian and Soviet submarine fleets, commencing with the funding of the first submarine project in Russia by Tsar Peter the Great in 1718. Making extensive use of Russian and German source material, the authors produced an important standard text.<sup>74</sup> Jordan's work is primarily concerned with post-Second World War submarines,<sup>75</sup> but Breemer has useful material from the earlier period.<sup>76</sup>

In summary, there is no single work in the literature that examines British perceptions of Soviet naval capability in the period 1930 to 1950. Indeed, considering the menace posed by its maritime forces during the Cold War, there is little published material on the formative years of the Soviet Navy. Histories of British intelligence in the period, perhaps partly because of the relative abundance of documentary sources, have preferred to concentrate on the Third Reich. This thesis, therefore, stands almost alone in the literature.

The following chapter will examine security and intelligence aspects of Anglo-Soviet relations prior to World War II, so that the naval intelligence collection effort targeted against Russia can be understood within its general context.

---

<sup>74</sup> Norman Polmar and Jurrien Noot, *Submarines of the Russian and Soviet Navies, 1718-1990* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1991).

<sup>75</sup> John Jordan, *Soviet Submarines: 1945 to the present* (London, 1989).

<sup>76</sup> Jan Breemer, *Soviet Submarines: Design, Development and Tactics* (Coulsdon, Surrey, 1989).

CHAPTER II  
THE MISSING DIMENSION



*Intelligence "is the missing dimension of most diplomatic history.  
I am sorry that so much has been published about it all,  
but now that milk is spilt you should use what you can."*<sup>1</sup>

*(Sir Alexander Cadogan)*

This chapter considers the security and intelligence, and the relevant diplomatic, background to Anglo-Soviet relations in the 1930s, so that subsequently the British intelligence effort directed against the Soviet Navy can be understood within its appropriate context.

Because of its Imperial concerns, Great Britain relied greatly on its intelligence services to give advance warning of potential threats. As Churchill said after the First World War, with the world "in its present condition of extreme unrest and changing friendships and antagonisms, and with our greatly reduced and weak military forces, it is more than ever vital to us to have good and timely information."<sup>2</sup> In particular, Britain's intelligence services had always kept a close surveillance on Soviet activities.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the Soviet Union regarded Great Britain as a leading power of *Weltkapital* and its own intelligence services, in turn, were naturally targeted against the arch-imperialist state. Both countries apparently placed a high value on good intelligence.

That the British intelligence services could have a major impact on relations between the two countries became obvious, as they had been "intimately involved" in the breaking of Anglo-Soviet relations two weeks after the raid on the All-Russian Cooperative Society (Arcos) in London on 12 May 1927.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> David Dilks (ed), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, O.M., 1938-1945* (London, 1971), p 21.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill to Lloyd George (19 March 1920), cited in Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession*, p 53.

<sup>3</sup> Constantine Fitzgibbon, *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1976), p 208.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Andrew, "British Intelligence and the Breach with Russia in 1927", *Historical Journal*, vol 25, no 4 (1982), p 957. See, also, Harriette Flory, "The Arcos Raid and the Rupture of Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1927", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 12, no 4 (October 1977), pp 707-723.

In popular imagination, Britain's intelligence services had long held a reputation for "almost uncanny efficiency",<sup>5</sup> and the legend of "a supremely efficient, diabolically clever and utterly ruthless British Secret Service" was still current before the Second World War.<sup>6</sup> However, prior to September 1939, the most extensive means for the gathering of information from abroad was through diplomatic missions, rather than through the intelligence services.

Although it was one of the primary functions of diplomats to obtain political, economic and military information about their host countries without engaging in clandestine methods, it seems clear that the Moscow Embassy was unable to obtain much worthwhile information during the pre-war period. In 1937, the British ambassador had reported that the Russians never visited him. It was noted that "as a result he gets no information and the condition of the country is a mystery to him".<sup>7</sup> Similarly, in October 1938 the ambassador told the Foreign Office that "it is impossible to obtain even an inkling of what is discussed within [the Kremlin's] walls".<sup>8</sup>

In early 1939, a new ambassador was sent to Moscow, which coincided with the Soviet Union urgently seeking effective security against invasion. Now rumours that Germany was interested in reaching an agreement with the USSR were sent back to the Foreign Office, as well as hints from the Soviet leadership that although they had been perturbed by the Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938, they were still seeking *rapprochement* with Great Britain. By this time, however, "such hints and rumours were common currency in Europe".<sup>9</sup> In any case, the embassy in Moscow had concluded by February 1939 that in the event of an European war, the Soviet Union would probably adopt a policy of "nervous neutrality" and would do as much as possible to avoid antagonising Hitler.<sup>10</sup>

Diplomatic reports, however, were not officially considered intelligence as this term was generally understood to refer to information gathered from secret sources.<sup>11</sup> But secret intelligence is of value only when it is considered in the light of evidence obtained through other sources; that is, collateral material in diplomatic reports and so-called open-source intelligence (osint) found, for example, in the foreign

---

<sup>5</sup> Fitzgibbon, *Secret Intelligence*, p 43.

<sup>6</sup> Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, p 281.

<sup>7</sup> Neville Chamberlain Papers, Birmingham University Library, Chamberlain's letters (7 October 1937), cited in Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 46.

<sup>8</sup> FO 371/22289, N5764/97/38, cited in Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 46.

<sup>9</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 46.

<sup>10</sup> Dilks (ed), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, pp 152-153.

<sup>11</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 45.



media and specialist journals sent back to London. Hence, diplomatic reporting was an essential adjunct to successful intelligence analysis.

Although for the most part there was "no reason to doubt that the quality of information gathered by these means, generally through the British missions abroad, was high in the 1930s",<sup>12</sup> it has just been noted that the Moscow Embassy appeared deficient in its reports. As a result of this, the intelligence services could not make up for the lack of:

all but nominal diplomatic contact with Russia. As well as being thwarted by her rigorous security measures, British intelligence about Russia suffered from the fact that since the mid-1930s it had concentrated almost all its efforts against the Axis powers. It was obtaining a trickle of information about Soviet military movements and personalities; but the intelligence available about Russia's industrial war potential was inadequate for an understanding of her capabilities, and virtually no intelligence was available about her political situation or her intentions.<sup>13</sup>

Even when the intelligence services did produce information for the Prime Minister regarding the Soviet Union, the marked anti-Bolshevik prejudices held by Neville Chamberlain may have affected his judgement. What the intelligence services were able to tell Chamberlain is largely unknown, but there is a clear possibility that he saw their reports through the anti-Soviet prism of his mind. This, no doubt, would have compounded the bias inherent in information supplied from White Russian agents, which the SIS often utilised.<sup>14</sup>

Chamberlain, however, had good reason to mistrust the Soviet Union and wrote to his sister about "the Russians stealthily and cunningly pulling the strings behind the scenes to get us involved in war with Germany".<sup>15</sup> There were suggestions from several sources that the Soviet Union was interested in fomenting war in the West. For example, in September 1938, Ambassador Phipps in Paris told Sir Alexander Cadogan, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, that Communists paid from

---

<sup>12</sup> David Dilks, "A question of intelligence", *The Listener*, vol 100, no 2581 (12 October 1978), p 464.

<sup>13</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, pp 450-451.

<sup>14</sup> West, *MI6*, p 45.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Chamberlain to his sister (20 March 1938), cited in David Dilks, "Flashes of Intelligence: The Foreign Office, the SIS and Security Before the Second World War", in Christopher Andrew and David Dilks (eds), *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1984), p 101.

Moscow had been "working for war for months".<sup>16</sup> Indeed, there is little doubt that the Soviet Union hoped that a war between the Western powers would make them vulnerable to the spread of Communism.

That the SIS made an input to high policy at this time is clear from a paper produced by the Secret Service dated 18 September 1938, entitled "What should we do?"<sup>17</sup> The document was written either by Admiral Sir Hugh "Quex" Sinclair, Chief of the SIS, or approved by him. It envisaged that Germany "would aim to recover eventually the lost territory on the eastern or northern frontiers, and to bring about the downfall of the Soviet regime."<sup>18</sup> The memorandum finished with a footnote specifically dealing with Russia: "We can never bank on this country but, to keep on the right side of this devil, we must sup with him to some extent, adapting the length of our spoon to circumstances at any given moment."<sup>19</sup>

At all events, after Munich the memorandum's thesis was supported, as the majority of secret reporting "indicated a drive to the East, rather than the West, by Germany".<sup>20</sup> It was not until January 1939 and the "Holland scare" that Chamberlain was presented with "a basketfull [sic] of secret intelligence reports, many of which indicated that (contrary to the Prime Minister's prior impression) Hitler might well decide to attack first in the west rather than the east, and some of which pointed to the Netherlands as the initial victim".<sup>21</sup> These reports, however, proved false and there were no further indications of a German intention to attack in the west at this time.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the belief in a German attack to the east may have remained uppermost in Chamberlain's mind.

The Soviet Union, very conscious of the threat posed by Hitler, proposed a six-power conference on 21 March 1939. Chamberlain, however, wrote in a private letter five days later that he had to:

confess to the most profound distrust of Russia. I have no belief whatever in her ability to maintain an effective offensive, even if she wanted to. And I distrust her motives, which seem to me to have little connection with our ideas of liberty, and to be concerned only with getting

---

<sup>16</sup> Minutes of "Czechoslovakia Committee" and of the Cabinet (24 September 1938); BD, ser III, vol II, p 570, cited in Dilks (ed), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, p 105.

<sup>17</sup> There is a certain irony in the title as it echoes the work of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* (1902).

<sup>18</sup> Dilks, "Flashes of Intelligence", p 119.

<sup>19</sup> FO 371/21659, memorandum C14471/42/18, Flag G, cited in *ibid*, p 121.

<sup>20</sup> Dilks, "Flashes of Intelligence", pp 122-123.

<sup>21</sup> Telford Taylor, *Munich: The Price of Peace* (Garden City, New York, 1979), p 944.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p 947.

everyone else by the ears. Moreover, she is both hated and suspected by many of the smaller states, notably by Poland, Rumania, and Finland.<sup>23</sup>

On many counts, therefore, the Russian initiative failed and Chamberlain's own proposal, for Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and Poland to issue a declaration of common intent in the event of further German aggression, foundered on the shoals of Polish distrust of the USSR.<sup>24</sup>

Churchill believed that the quality of information obtained by the intelligence services at this time was high, but that the Government was perhaps misinterpreting their findings:

It seems to me that Ministers run the most tremendous risk if they allow the information collected by the Intelligence Department, and sent to them I am sure in good time, to be sifted and coloured and reduced in consequence and importance, and if they ever get themselves into a mood of attaching importance only to those pieces of information which accord with their earnest and honourable desire that the peace of the world shall remain unbroken.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps some of the problem lay in the brief of the SIS, "the interpretation of whose reports was more the responsibility of its customers".<sup>26</sup> Also, coordination of intelligence was still poor in early 1939. For instance, it has been said of this period that "it could hardly be pretended that a Foreign Office without a machinery for the handling of intelligence, or its coordination with the information reaching the service departments, could cope with circumstances so perilous".<sup>27</sup> Some of the blame should also be placed on the SIS as there was "a total lack of co-ordination of the reports of their own agents in many cases, a lack of co-operation between M.I.6 and the N.I.D. and a failure on the part of the hierarchy of the Secret Service to give coherent guidance to the Government."<sup>28</sup>

The Chamberlain Government was not only ill-equipped to handle the information provided by the intelligence services, or to direct them appropriately, but it also appears that many of its important

---

<sup>23</sup> Letter by Chamberlain (26 March 1939), in Keith Feiling, *Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p 403, cited in Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War, Volume One: The Gathering Storm* (Boston, 1948), p 349.

<sup>24</sup> H Montgomery Hyde, *Neville Chamberlain* (London, 1976), p 137.

<sup>25</sup> *Hansard*, House of Commons Debates (13 April 1939), cited in Wesley K Wark, "Something Very Stern: British Political Intelligence, Moralism and Grand Strategy in 1939", *INS*, vol 5, no 1 (January 1990), p 150; and Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, p 352.

<sup>26</sup> D Cameron Watt, "British Intelligence and the Coming of the Second World War in Europe", in Ernest R May (ed), *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1984), p 243.

<sup>27</sup> Dilks, "Flashes of Intelligence", p 123. A year earlier, during the preparation of an intelligence report on the Soviet Union, the Foreign Office complained about the outdated political information provided by the NID and the discovery that the Director of Military Intelligence (DMI) was independently preparing a similar report. It was concluded that "greater co-ordination was desirable in these matters"; PRO, FO 371/22294, Northern Department to the Chancery, British Embassy, Moscow (17 February 1938), ff 153-154.

<sup>28</sup> Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, p 275.

members were already suspicious of Russian motives and unlikely to view the Soviet Union's desire for an alliance dispassionately. For example, Oliver Harvey, Private Secretary to Foreign Secretaries Anthony Eden and Lord Halifax, wrote in his diary for 16 May 1939 that Eden was "very anxious at failure to conclude agreement and had heard that H. [Lord Halifax] took the view that Soviet Russia was anti-Christ. I assured him that this was not the case, though he did mistrust them."<sup>29</sup>

This was also the day that the COS recommended an Anglo-French-Soviet guarantee of mutual assistance. Within four days, however, Chamberlain was privately saying that he would "resign rather than sign an alliance with the Soviet".<sup>30</sup> On 20 May, Harvey recorded in his diary that William Strang, the Head of the Central Department, "says all at No. 10 are anti-Soviet".<sup>31</sup> But, interestingly, on the same day he also wrote that Riesser, the former Head of Chancery at the German Embassy in Paris, "came to see me in Paris to warn me of the importance of clinching matters with Soviet Russia 'as there already were contacts between the Soviets and Germany'".<sup>32</sup>

By 23 May, Chamberlain had reluctantly agreed to proceed with negotiations aimed at an Anglo-French-Soviet alliance.<sup>33</sup> These negotiations were carried out with a great deal of acrimony on both sides. Cadogan felt that the Russians "are impossible. We give them all they want, with both hands, and they merely slap them."<sup>34</sup> But the Anglo-French approach was perceived as half-hearted by the Russians and the way was left clear in Moscow in August 1939 for the winning bid by the Third Reich's foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop.<sup>35</sup> He was able to offer Russia the Baltic States, half of Poland and Bessarabia, and the resulting Nazi-Soviet Pact was "without doubt Ribbentrop's greatest diplomatic triumph."<sup>36</sup>

In relation to the *rapprochement* between Germany and the Soviet Union, it is clear that Great Britain lacked accurate prior knowledge, although the Foreign Office had noted:

---

<sup>29</sup> John Harvey (ed), *The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1937-1940* (London, 1970), p 290.

<sup>30</sup> Taylor, *Munich*, p 976.

<sup>31</sup> Harvey (ed), *The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey*, p 290.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p 291.

<sup>33</sup> Taylor, *Munich*, p 976.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*. For details see PRO, CAB 81/96, "Record of the Anglo-Franco-Russian Staff Conversations in Moscow, August 1939", JIC(40)3 (23 January 1940), SECRET.

<sup>35</sup> Taylor, *Munich*, p 976.

<sup>36</sup> Geoffrey T Waddington, "Ribbentrop and the Soviet Union, 1937-1941", in John Erickson and David Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies* (Edinburgh, 1994), p 7.

in February and March 1939 a change in the tone of the Russian press about Germany, and though Ambassador Henderson had written from Berlin in the summer of 1939 to say he felt instinctively that Germany was getting at the Russians, Britain did not know precisely and in good time what was passing between Germany and Russia that summer.<sup>37</sup>

The intelligence services were not able to better the performance of the diplomats and, though they reported many rumours, they "did not provide hard and timely information about the Nazi-Soviet negotiations".<sup>38</sup> Hence, "neither from the embassy nor from any other source did the British government obtain reliable and timely information about the Russo-German negotiations of the summer of 1939".<sup>39</sup>

It is probable that the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 could not have been prevented by British diplomacy. After all, Hitler was able to offer the Soviet Union large swathes of territory, which were considered vital by the Russians as a security buffer against the West. However, the failure of the intelligence services, combined with Chamberlain's anti-Soviet attitude, did little to help avoid this disaster for British foreign policy and strategy.<sup>40</sup> However, Chamberlain's views were not atypical. For example, at the time of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King declared in his diary that he had "never trusted the Russians",<sup>41</sup> and stated that they were "playing the most treacherous game that has every [*sic*] been played, I believe, by any nation".<sup>42</sup> The Soviet Union was "the most resolute and ruthless player of the game, unhampered by any conviction or ideology, faithful to no one, not even hating anyone consistently".<sup>43</sup>

There is evidence that Chamberlain's Russophobic attitude may, ironically, have been fuelled by one of the little-known pre-war successes of the intelligence services, which was the ability to read some of the messages of the Communist International, or Comintern. In direct consequence of the revelations made in the House of Commons after the Arcos raid, the diplomatic ciphers of the Soviet Union became

<sup>37</sup> Dilks, "A question of intelligence", p 464.

<sup>38</sup> *Idem* (ed), *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan*, p 159.

<sup>39</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 46.

<sup>40</sup> Possible reasons why the intelligence services did not predict this development are explored in D Cameron Watt, "An Intelligence Surprise: The Failure of the Foreign Office to Anticipate the Nazi-Soviet Pact", *INS*, vol 4, no 3 (July 1989), pp 512-534.

<sup>41</sup> Canada, National Archives of Canada (hereinafter NAC), William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers (hereinafter the King Papers), MG 26, J 13, Diary (22 August 1939).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid* (24 August 1939).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid* (29 August 1939), cited in Norman Hillmer, "Canada and the 'Godless Country', 1930-1939", paper presented at the "Canadian-Soviet Conference", Elora Mill, Ontario, Canada (August 1987), p 28.

unreadable after 1927.<sup>44</sup> The Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary had read out in Parliament extracts from decrypted Soviet telegrams.<sup>45</sup> Not surprisingly, a major reform of Soviet codes and ciphers was instigated. By 1930, the Soviet Union was making use of the difficult-to-break one-time pad,<sup>46</sup> and the "blow to the morale of the GC and CS was a heavy one".<sup>47</sup> As a result, in the politically significant period between 1937 and the outbreak of the Second World War, the high-grade Soviet ciphers remained unbroken.<sup>48</sup>

If it had been possible to decrypt high-grade Soviet communications (that is, those that were most likely to carry important diplomatic traffic), then the GC&CS would have eavesdropped on any genuine Russian expressions of desire for a system of collective security against the Nazi menace. But, instead, they achieved "some success with Comintern messages".<sup>49</sup> The result was that the Government received intelligence assessments that were based upon Soviet designs for Comintern-inspired subversion against the United Kingdom and the British Empire which, in turn, increased existing anti-Bolshevik tendencies.<sup>50</sup>

Financial support of the intelligence services was poor in this period. For example, not until the mid-1930s would the staffing level at GC&CS be raised above its 1925 level of 30 officers.<sup>51</sup> In retrospect, it can be seen that "timely expenditure during the thirties might have enabled [GC&CS] ... to eavesdrop on Hitler's and Stalin's political intentions".<sup>52</sup>

With respect to British knowledge of the Russian armed forces, as Soviet military activity expanded in the 1930s there was a corresponding increase in the volume of sigint obtained. From 1932

---

<sup>44</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 52.

<sup>45</sup> Andrew, "British Intelligence and the Breach with Russia", pp 963-964.

<sup>46</sup> Kahn, *The Codebreakers*, p 650.

<sup>47</sup> Christopher M Andrew, "The Mobilization of British Intelligence for the Two World Wars", in N F Dreisziger (ed), *Mobilization for Total War: The Canadian, American and British Experience 1914-1918, 1939-1945* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1981), p 102.

<sup>48</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 53.

<sup>49</sup> Andrew, "British Intelligence and the Breach with Russia", p 964.

<sup>50</sup> The United Kingdom was also interested in the threat of Russian-inspired Communism beyond the confines of the Empire. For example, British warships bombarded positions in China, though sometimes unsure whether they belonged to Communists or bandits: "the so-called Communists were well-organised, well-disciplined, well-paid, and in most cases modelled on the best Russian lines"; PRO, ADM 1/8743/107, Lieutenant J S S Litchfield-Speer, Commanding Officer HMS *Aphis*, "The Communist Occupation of Changsha; July 27 to August 5, 1930".

<sup>51</sup> Andrew, "The Mobilization of British Intelligence", p 102.

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Boyle, *The Climate of Treason: Five Who Spied for Russia* (London, 1979), p 226. For further information on the GC&CS in the inter-war period, see John Ferris, "Whitehall's Black Chamber: British Cryptology and the Government Code and Cypher School, 1919-29", *INS*, vol 2, no 1 (January 1987), pp 54-91; and A G Denniston, "The Government Code and Cypher School Between the Wars", *INS*, vol 1, no 1 (January 1986), pp 48-70.

onwards, there was enough intercepted military wireless traffic to warrant recruitment of two cryptanalysts, who made some progress against the low-grade codes. But, in fact, more was known about Germany's high-grade military ciphers than those of the Soviet Union.<sup>53</sup> In the years leading up to the war, examination of Soviet military codes and ciphers was restricted to a small unit stationed in India and an army sigint unit, No 2 W/T Company, stationed at Sarafand in Palestine.<sup>54</sup> It was not until the conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, that responsibility for this important work passed to the GC&CS.<sup>55</sup>

Having examined the influence on British foreign policy of the intelligence services before the war, it is now possible to examine some of the possible negative influence of Soviet intelligence operations and, by implication, the failure of British counter-intelligence.

It has been said that during "the final years of peace Britain knew fewer of her main rivals' secrets than her rivals knew of hers".<sup>56</sup> Part of the reason for this must be the state of neglect to which the intelligence services were consigned by their political masters and partly it is the fault of the intelligence services themselves. Certainly, for the period 1936 to the end of 1940, recruitment into the SIS was done in a very casual way, with only a superficial investigation into the backgrounds of candidates.<sup>57</sup> Recruits to the SIS during the inter-war period were of poor academic quality, as well as being in short supply, because in "a misguided attempts [*sic*] to preserve itself from Bolshevik contagion, SIS restricted its recruiting drive to men with 'minds untainted by the solvent force of a university education.'"<sup>58</sup> The result was that "Soviet spymasters were to begin recruiting in Oxbridge [Oxford and Cambridge Universities] several years earlier than their British rivals".<sup>59</sup>

More importantly, British counter-espionage failed to prevent a Soviet agent, Captain Herbert King, from working in the Communications Department of the Foreign Office.<sup>60</sup> King was finally

---

<sup>53</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 53.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, p 199.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> Andrew, "The Mobilization of British Intelligence", p 103. Similarly, Britain "knew less about the activities of other powers than they knew about hers"; Dilks, "A question of intelligence", p 464.

<sup>57</sup> Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, p 269.

<sup>58</sup> Andrew, "The Mobilization of British Intelligence", p 102.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>60</sup> D Cameron Watt, "Francis Herbert King: A Soviet Source in the Foreign Office", *INS*, vol 3, no 4 (October 1988), pp 62-82.

arrested in September 1939 on the basis of information supplied by the Soviet defector Walter Krivitsky,<sup>61</sup> who had been debriefed by the Security Service (MI5) sometime in 1938.<sup>62</sup> In the investigation that followed, Foreign Office security was discovered to be so deficient that all the Communications Department staff were replaced.<sup>63</sup> The fact that security was bad is not surprising since before 1939 there was no Foreign Office section specifically concerned with security matters,<sup>64</sup> and there seems to have been "little or no vetting" of personnel in the Foreign Office or in British embassies.<sup>65</sup>

This unhappy situation was capped, moreover, by the success of Soviet intelligence in recruiting a generation of brilliant, but traitorous, intellectuals from Britain's universities, including Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt. Although it is not possible to discover precisely what information the "Cambridge Comintern" supplied to the Soviet Union before the outbreak of war, Nazi documents show that:

on at least two occasions, Germany had accurate intelligence, apparently from a source within the Foreign Office, about what was passing in the Anglo-French talks with Russia in 1939. By then, of course, Donald Maclean, whom we must presume to have been a spy from the outset, was working in the Foreign Office and may have been in a position to supply his masters with something. We know that, in 1939, unbelievable as it seems in view of his record and behaviour, Guy Burgess was hovering on the fringe of the intelligence services.<sup>66</sup>

Pincher says that Burgess "had been actively spying before the war, handing over every scrap of political, economic and strategic information to his Soviet controller".<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Boyle says that Burgess "reported confidently to his Soviet paymasters that Britain was in no mood and no fit state to get embroiled in European quarrels. As Burgess also saw Maclean from time to time, the Foreign Office view fortified his own judgement".<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> Tom Bower, *The Perfect English Spy: Sir Dick White and the Secret War 1935-90* (London, 1995), p 33. Krivitsky wrote of his break from the ranks of Soviet intelligence, and defection to the West, in W G Krivitsky, *I Was Stalin's Agent* (London, 1940).

<sup>62</sup> Watt, "British Intelligence", p 248.

<sup>63</sup> Andrew, "The Mobilization of British Intelligence", p 103.

<sup>64</sup> D Cameron Watt, "Security Procedures in the British Foreign Service", in D Cameron Watt, *Personalities and Policies: Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1965), pp 199-211.

<sup>65</sup> Larry Hannant, "Inter-war Security Screening in Britain, the United States and Canada", *INS*, vol 6, no 4 (October 1991), p 716.

<sup>66</sup> Dilks, "A question of intelligence", p 465.

<sup>67</sup> Chapman Pincher, *Too Secret Too Long: The great betrayal of Britain's crucial secrets and the cover-up* (London, 1984), p 385.

<sup>68</sup> Boyle, *The Climate of Treason*, p 158.



Russia, therefore, succeeded in recruiting agents at British universities, and inserting them into the Foreign Office and intelligence services. The Security Service, however, concentrated on the Communist threat elsewhere. For example, the Head of MI5 thought it necessary to "employ additional staff to deal with the problem of seditious activities by persons amongst and in contact with naval personnel at home ports."<sup>69</sup>

Josef V Stalin, in marked contrast to Prime Ministers Baldwin and Chamberlain, had a "predilection for intelligence material gathered by clandestine methods".<sup>70</sup> As an example of how Soviet intelligence successes militated against British foreign policy, Stalin was in the fortunate position of being able to consider the Anglo-French proposal to form an alliance in the light of knowledge drawn from British sources, as "in the matter of high British policy Stalin could pry into real secrets via the betrayal of top-secret cipher traffic and reportedly access to copies of the papers of the Committee of Imperial Defence".<sup>71</sup> There was certainly a leak of the instructions to the Anglo-French mission to Moscow.<sup>72</sup> This security breach might well have betrayed Chamberlain's obvious reluctance to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union and, thereby, sealed the fate of the talks even before they were properly under way.

In conclusion, not enough resources were allocated to the intelligence services in the pre-war period. Assessments of the USSR were deficient, partly because of poor coordination among the intelligence community and also due to the inability of the GC&CS to break the Soviet high-grade ciphers. However, success in reading Comintern traffic exacerbated a belief in the double-dealing nature of the Soviet regime, which suggested an alliance with Great Britain and France while simultaneously seeking to promote revolution within the capitalist world. Russia, therefore, was seen with great suspicion and remained an important intelligence target.

Paradoxically, the success of Soviet intelligence, and the concomitant failure of the Security Service, in penetrating to the heart of the Foreign Office's communications system probably ruined any chance that had existed for an Anglo-French-Soviet alliance. The additional ability of the Soviet Union

---

<sup>69</sup> PRO, ADM 1/8757/181, V G W Kell to DNI (15 October 1931), SECRET.

<sup>70</sup> Nikolai Tolstoy, *Stalin's Secret War* (London, 1981), p 165.

<sup>71</sup> John Erickson, "Threat Identification and Strategic Appraisal by the Soviet Union, 1930-1941", in May (ed), *Knowing One's Enemies*, p 408.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, n 61.

to recruit Communist sympathizers from the ancient universities of England ensured that their interests would also be served during the Second World War, and beyond.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SOVIET NAVY, 1917-1941



*Any "potentate who has only a land army has one hand,  
but one who also has a navy has both hands".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Peter the Great)*

The Bolshevik Revolution of 7 November 1917 was made possible with the support of seamen of the Baltic Fleet. In particular, the assault on the Winter Palace in Petrograd, the former Russian capital subsequently renamed Leningrad and now, as in former times, St Petersburg, was signalled by a cruiser moored on the Neva River: "the round the *Aurora* fired went down in history, proclaiming the birth of the world's first workers' and peasants' state."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, despite the significant revolutionary rôle of the seamen, the Workers' and Peasants' Red Navy had to wait until 11 February 1918, after the establishment of the Red Army, before Lenin signed a decree bringing it into formal existence.<sup>3</sup>

A new Soviet Navy may have been proclaimed but it did not spring into existence without a Tsarist ancestry, for Russia has a long maritime tradition. In particular, its naval heritage has been inextricably linked with the United Kingdom over many centuries. Indeed, it may be said that the historic links between Great Britain and Russia, while initially "almost wholly commercial",<sup>4</sup> have been predominantly maritime.

Richard Chancellor had opened up the sea route to Muscovy via Archangel in the middle of the sixteenth century, establishing trading and diplomatic relations between England and the Tsar.<sup>5</sup> Thereafter,

---

<sup>1</sup> Foreword to Peter the Great's *Naval Regulations* (1720), cited in Captain 1st Rank B Sheremet'yev, "Precursor of the Russian Navy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1988), pp 60-66.

<sup>2</sup> Anatoly Plekhov, *Guarding the Country's Sea Frontiers* (Moscow, 1978), p 5.

<sup>3</sup> The Russian Navy was traditionally held in lower esteem than the army. For example, in 1814 it was said that the difference of the *esprit de corps* "between the army and navy is obvious ... the latter appear to labour under a feeling of inferiority, as if aware they were only a lower link in the chain of national power"; *A Voyage to St. Petersburg in 1814, with Remarks on the Imperial Navy, by a Surgeon in the British Navy* (London, 1822), p 8, cited in Saul, "The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars", p 52.

<sup>4</sup> K W B Middleton, *Britain and Russia: An Historical Essay* (London, undated [c 1947]), p 9.

<sup>5</sup> Courtney, *Sailor in a Russian Frame*, p 51.

among the presents sent by Queen Elizabeth I to Ivan IV of Russia was a boat.<sup>6</sup> Having lain forgotten in a warehouse for years, it was rediscovered by Peter the Great and used for his first attempts at sailing. Subsequently, this same boat was preserved as a symbol of the single-minded energy by which Peter turned the eyes of Russia towards the oceans of the world.<sup>7</sup> It was he who set in motion the long and chequered development of Russian seapower which, in the latter half of the twentieth century, brought the Soviet Union an immense fleet of warships and submarines, and a vast merchant navy.

Over the four centuries which saw this development, Anglo-Russian maritime contacts were generally of a friendly and mutually beneficial nature. Peter's naval apprenticeship in London's Deptford shipyards eventually led to the employment of British shipwrights at Archangel,<sup>8</sup> Petersburg (later St Petersburg) and Voronezh, and among his warships were vessels called after English placenames, such as *Arundel*, *Devonshire*, *London*, *Portsmouth* and *Richmond*.<sup>9</sup> Russian ships destroyed the Turkish fleet in the eastern Mediterranean at Tchesme in 1770, but it was Scots officers who commanded them. Later, in 1805, a Russian lieutenant was wounded in HMS *Conqueror* at the Battle of Trafalgar.<sup>10</sup> In particular, Anglo-Russian cooperation reached its zenith at the Battle of Navarino in 1827, with French and Russian squadrons operating alongside the ships of Admiral Codrington against the Turks.<sup>11</sup>

This long period of comparative goodwill was, it is true, succeeded by the Crimean War of 1853-1856 which was marked by the bombardment of Russian Baltic and Black Sea ports. Though the Tsar's

---

<sup>6</sup> Vice-Admiral Cyprian A G Bridge (ed), *History of the Russian Fleet During the Reign of Peter the Great by a Contemporary Englishman (1724)* (Publications of the Navy Records Society, Vol XV) (1899), p xi.

<sup>7</sup> Sheremet'yev, "Precursor of the Russian Navy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 60-66.

<sup>8</sup> It was here that the first Russian sea-going cargo ship, the *Svyatoy Pavel (Saint Paul)* was launched by Peter; Vladimir Anufriyev, ITAR-TASS news agency (World Service), Moscow, in Russian 0435 GMT (6 June 1994), cited in BBC Monitoring, "Russia's Regions; Members of Russian royal family arrive in Arkhangelsk; Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 1, Former USSR", Third Series SU/2016 (7 June 1994), p B/2 [8].

<sup>9</sup> Bridge (ed), *History of the Russian Fleet*, pp 130-132.

<sup>10</sup> Two Russians attached to the British at Trafalgar later became prominent: in 1830, Aleksandr Avinov was responsible for the purchase of Russia's first "modern" warship, a steam corvette, from the United States; and Mikhail Lazarev distinguished himself at the Battle of Navarino, and subsequently rose to command and rebuild the Black Sea Fleet in the 1830s and 1840s; Saul, "The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars", pp 54-55 and p 58, n 16.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, C M Woodhouse, *Navarino* (London, 1965).

ships "wisely remained in their harbours",<sup>12</sup> the war saw the first use in naval warfare of the "Russian weapon", a primitive form of mine.<sup>13</sup>

Intelligence on the eve of the Crimean War was almost nil: "Very little is known of the Russian navy in all other countries of Europe, and whatever notions may exist on the subject they are vague and all but delusive".<sup>14</sup> However, the overall impression held of Russian sailors was poor. For example, it was stated that the officers "care very little for the profession, not that they are ignorant ... The Russians are not fond of salt water. The majority of the sailors come from the interior; they are inveterate landrats and never saw the sea until they were enlisted in the navy."<sup>15</sup> The British general Lord Raglan complained that:

neither the English nor the French Admirals have been able to obtain any intelligence on which they can rely with respect to the army which the Russians may destine for operations in the field, or to the number of troops allotted for the defence of Sebastopol; and Marshal St. Arnaud and myself are equally deficient in information upon these all-important questions, and there would seem to be no chance of our acquiring it.<sup>16</sup>

This sorry state of affairs should hardly be surprising for, at this time, the "gathering of knowledge by clandestine means was repulsive to the feelings of an English gentleman."<sup>17</sup>

Partially because of the inadequacies revealed by the Crimean War, a system of improved naval intelligence was considered necessary.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, Russia was one of the targets of Britain's intelligence services during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>19</sup> This held true for the Admiralty and a detailed record was maintained of the ships of the Tsar's fleet. Sources of naval intelligence included: information from naval attachés and embassy staff, maritime and technical journals, the British and Russian press, personal observations, sketches and photographs taken at foreign ports, and reports of

<sup>12</sup> R W Daly, "Russia's Maritime Past", in Saunders (ed), *The Soviet Navy*, p 38.

<sup>13</sup> Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) I Bykhovskiy, "The Use of Submarines to Lay Mines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1977), pp 25-29.

<sup>14</sup> *New York Herald* (18 September 1853), cited in Saul, "The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars", p 45.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pp 45-46.

<sup>16</sup> Lord Raglan to the Duke of Newcastle, cited in Major C B Brackenbury, "The Intelligence Duties of the Staff Abroad and at Home", *RUSI Journal*, vol 19 (1876), p 244.

<sup>17</sup> *Official History of the Crimean War*, cited in John Bruce Lockhart, "The Relationship Between Secret Services and Government in a Modern State", *RUSI Journal*, vol 119, no 2 (June 1974), p 3.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Captain J C R Colomb, "Naval Intelligence and Protection of Commerce in War", *RUSI Journal*, vol XXV, no CXII (1881), pp 553-590.

<sup>19</sup> This was partly due to tensions between the two countries over Central Asia. For a bibliographic survey of papers in the PRO relevant to this subject, see Louise Atherton, *Top Secret: An Interim Guide to Recent Releases of Intelligence Records at the Public Record Office* (London, 1993), pp 16-19.

commanders-in-chief at overseas naval stations. Details of damage to warships incurred during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 were also collected.<sup>20</sup>

It was, curiously enough, in the course of this war that Britain experienced a forewarning of the possible effects of long-range Russian naval power against its seaborne trade. Two armed merchant cruisers, the *Petersburg* and the *Smolensk*, were dispatched in 1904 as commerce-raiders to the Red Sea and East African coast, where their activities occupied the attention of a sizeable portion of the British Fleet. Some 12 battleships, two cruisers, two destroyers and an admiral's yacht made a preparatory move from Malta to Alexandria before the Russians agreed to the withdrawal of their vessels.<sup>21</sup>

Anglo-Russian relations were also severely strained by the "Battle of Dogger Bank". This rather bizarre incident occurred on 22 October 1904 when Russian warships in the North Sea sighted fishing vessels in the fog and, curiously imagining themselves under attack by the Japanese, proceeded to shell the hapless British fishermen,<sup>22</sup> which resulted in three fatalities.<sup>23</sup>

The Tsar's navy was quite capable of producing innovative technical developments. For example, the Russian fleet launched both the world's first armoured cruiser and the first minelayer.<sup>24</sup> In World War I, however, the Navy's performance was lacklustre: "the battle fleet never once passed west of the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, and naval operations were limited to submarines, destroyers and mining operations conducted from Libau and Reval [Tallinn]."<sup>25</sup> There were few opportunities for Anglo-Russian naval cooperation, and the main fleets had not yet recovered their morale after the crushing defeat at Tsushima in 1905 at the hands of the Japanese.

The October Revolution further reduced the effectiveness of Russia's naval forces. At the beginning of 1918, the Navy consisted of the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets. However, to prevent its ships from falling into the hands of the Germans, the Black Sea Fleet was scuttled near Novorossiysk on 18

---

<sup>20</sup> NMM, Foreign Navies: General, AFN/4, section on "Russia" in untitled ledger book (c 1880-1904), pp 283-424.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick J Rollins, "Russian Commerce Raiders in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, 1904", *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1994), pp 86-109.

<sup>22</sup> The standard reference work recording this incident is Richard Hough, *The Fleet That Had to Die* (London, 1957). For a brief description of events, see Gordon Pearson, "Hull and East Coast Fishing" (Kingston upon Hull, 1976), pp 14-15.

<sup>23</sup> The Fisherman's Memorial on Hessle Road, Hull, recalls their deaths "by the action of the Russian Baltic Fleet"; GRB and AJP, "Memorials and Statues" (Hull, 9 December 1991), p 2.

<sup>24</sup> Breyer, *Guide to the Soviet Navy*, p v.

<sup>25</sup> Naval Historical Branch (hereinafter NHB), "The Russian Navy; Its Foundation and Fortunes", *WIR*, no 149 (15 January 1943), p 24, SECRET.

June 1918.<sup>26</sup> In the aftermath of World War I, the Russian Civil War brought further deprivations, including the loss of 40 per cent of the merchant fleet when "White Guardsmen who were expelled from Soviet Russia took with them more than 300 of the best vessels".<sup>27</sup> Similarly, many warships were taken to Bizerta in Tunisia, though by the early 1930s the ships were reported to be "in such a bad condition as to render them quite useless for naval purposes."<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in due course they were sold for scrap.<sup>29</sup>

Little was done after the First World War to provide modern ships for the fledgling Soviet Navy. However, small naval units did operate against the Allied and White Russian forces during the Allied Intervention and the Russian Civil War. The Red Navy fought mainly on inland waterways, giving support to the ground forces, and some 30 river- and lake-flotillas were established for this purpose.<sup>30</sup> The Soviet Navy's manpower, however, was "much diluted" in the purge which followed the Kronshtadt sailors' demands for free elections in February 1921.<sup>31</sup> The suppression of the Kronshtadt naval garrison markedly reduced the influence of the nascent Soviet Navy, which "sank into temporary oblivion".<sup>32</sup>

War damage to shipyards delayed the refitting and building of ships, so that by 1924 the fleet consisted of only two battleships, a cruiser, 18 destroyers and nine submarines.<sup>33</sup> But a strong navy was seen as indispensable and was advocated, for example, by the leading military strategist Mikhail V Frunze, who stated: "We have no grounds to give up naval development. The Revolutionary Military Council

---

<sup>26</sup> Breyer, *Guide to the Soviet Navy*, p 3. This event happened after the signing on 3 March 1918 of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which formally withdrew Russia from the First World War.

<sup>27</sup> V Bakayev, "Sea Transport in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1976), pp 25-29.

<sup>28</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Return to Soviet Authorities of Baron Wrangel's Fleet laid up in Bizerta Harbour", *M.I.R.*, September, 1933, no 172 (15 September 1933), p 35, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>29</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Wrangel's Fleet", *M.I.R.*, September, 1935, no 196 (15 September 1935), p 36, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>30</sup> The use of naval vessels on rivers, lakes and inland seas is not explored in this thesis. For Soviet literature on the subject for the 1930-1950 period see, for example: Colonel-Engineer (Reserves) F Borzhkov, "Engineer Support to River Flotilla Combat Actions", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1984), pp 23-26; Rear-Admiral N Devyaterikov, "Amur Naval Flotilla Actions in the Manchurian Operations", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1985), pp 29-33; Admiral of the Fleet S G Gorshkov, "Soviet Seamen in the Battles to Liberate the Danube States", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1964), pp 3-13; Vice-Admiral (Retired) V Grigor'yev, "Combat Actions of the Danube Naval Flotilla at the Start of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1979), pp 16-21; Admiral of the Fleet N Sergeev, "Combat Actions of the Volga Naval Flotilla During the Battle of Stalingrad", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1982), pp 19-26; and Captain 2nd Rank O Verbovoy, "From the Soviet Navy's Experience with Amphibious Operations on Rivers in the Strategic Operations of 1944-1945", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1984), pp 18-23. For information on the Azov Naval Flotilla see, for example, Captain 1st Rank A V Sverdlov, "The Glorious Combat Activities of the Flotilla", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1964), pp 23-26; and Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) K Vorob'yev, "In the Rush of Combat", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1980), pp 55-62.

<sup>31</sup> Moore, "The Soviet Navy", p 113.

<sup>32</sup> *Idem*, *Warships of the Soviet Navy*, p 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Idem*, "The Soviet Navy", p 113.

stands firmly and immutably on the belief that a navy is absolutely essential to us ... We are confronted with the need to begin building new vessels immediately."<sup>34</sup> Two years later, the Defence Council authorised the construction of 12 submarines, 18 "guard ships",<sup>35</sup> and 36 motor torpedo boats (MTBs).<sup>36</sup> This decision was incorporated into the First Five-Year Plan in 1928.<sup>37</sup> Although generally the 1926 programme "went very slowly",<sup>38</sup> the submarine programme continued at an increased pace.<sup>39</sup>

As the 1920s drew to a close, not a single capital ship - neither battleship nor aircraft carrier - was under construction throughout the entire world, thanks to the "naval holiday" imposed by the Washington Treaty of 1922.<sup>40</sup> However, the possibility of war with Russia still existed and was considered in an Imperial Defence College exercise.<sup>41</sup> The Royal Navy's major effort was envisaged as bringing economic pressure to bear on Russia by the blockade of its ports, thereby also preventing the import of military *matériel*. It was further thought that the Navy could protect British trade and troop movements overseas, divert enemy forces from the principal theatres through making feint seaborne landings, and enable air attacks to be made against Soviet factories.<sup>42</sup> However, the "importance of attacking the Russian Fleet in harbour at the earliest possible moment" was stressed.<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, in Russia it was realised that a strong navy was essential to the defence of the Soviet Union. Dockyards were restored, shipbuilding programmes were implemented and general industrial

---

<sup>34</sup> Speech (17 November 1924), in M V Frunze, *Izbrannyye proizvedeniya* (Selected Works) (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1950), pp 286-287, cited in Rear-Admiral (Retired) G Antonov and Vice-Admiral (Retired) L Korshunov, "At the Dawn of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1988), pp 65-69.

<sup>35</sup> That is, a general purpose patrol or escort vessel. For their design, construction and war record, see Przemyslaw Budzbon and Boris Lemachko, "The Bad Weather Flotilla Part 1", *Warship*, no 22 (undated); *ibid*, "Part 2", *Warship*, no 23 (undated); and *ibid*, "Part 3", *Warship*, no 24 (undated).

<sup>36</sup> For details of the early Soviet MTB programme, see René Greger, "Soviet MTB Design and Development 1919-1939", *Warship*, no 46 (April 1988), pp 2-5; and Przemyslaw Budzbon, "The Beginnings of Soviet Naval Power; G5 Class MTBs", *Warship*, no 8 (October 1978), pp 230-245.

<sup>37</sup> Submarine construction began in the Soviet Union on 5 March 1927, with the first boats reaching completion in October 1931; "Historical Ship Numbers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1987), p 87.

<sup>38</sup> Budzbon, "The Beginnings of Soviet Naval Power", p 234.

<sup>39</sup> Moore, "The Soviet Navy", p 113.

<sup>40</sup> Herrick, *Soviet Naval Strategy*, p 25. On the treaty, see Charles H Fairbanks, Jr, "The Washington Naval Treaty, 1922-1936", in Robert J Art and Kenneth N Waltz (eds), *The Use of Force: International Politics and Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed (London, c 1983), pp 473-477.

<sup>41</sup> PRO, CAB 53/19, "Imperial Defence College. Exercise No.8. (1928). Russia" (undated), ff 199-244, SECRET.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, pp 34-35, ff 239-240.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p 35, f 240. Later, plans were made for air attacks on Russian communications in the Caspian region; see PRO, CAB 53/22, "Plan for Subsidiary Operations Against Russia in the Perso - Iraq Area", COS(259) (11 December 1930), ff 27-93, SECRET.



progress aided the development of the fleet.<sup>44</sup> However, there were insufficient Soviet naval designers and expertise was sought, and monitored by the NID, from countries including Great Britain,<sup>45</sup> France,<sup>46</sup> and Italy.<sup>47</sup>

Italy was responsible for the design of several Soviet vessels,<sup>48</sup> and involved in the building of the *Tashkent*.<sup>49</sup> However, a short while after delivering the vessel to the Soviet Navy, an intelligence report stated that a representative of the Italian shipbuilding firm concerned considered that the vessel's maintenance was "deplorable".<sup>50</sup> The Soviet Union only acknowledged that Italy had provided blueprints

---

<sup>44</sup> Just as Russia was embarking on a course of naval expansion, the NID was reduced in size because of "the urgent necessity for economy"; PRO, ADM 1/8757/181, VWB, "Office Memorandum No.55" (18 August 1928).

<sup>45</sup> The NID noted, for example, the involvement of English firms in turbine construction work for Soviet destroyers; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Disorganization of the U.S.S.R. Naval Shipbuilding Industry", *M.I.R.*, February, 1938, no 225 (15 February 1938), p 49, CONFIDENTIAL. The requirement to collect economic and industrial intelligence had already been realised in the 1920s; Rousseau (pseud), "Economic Intelligence", *RUSI Journal*, vol 70 (1925), pp 701-709. In 1928, the CID considered the establishment of an organisation to study industrial intelligence from overseas; see PRO, CAB 48/1. In due course, it formed a Sub-Committee on Industrial Intelligence in Foreign Countries, with a further Sub-Committee on Technical Aid Contracts with the USSR to ensure that no new or secret designs of war material were provided by a British firm; PRO, CAB 48/6. In 1931, the Industrial Intelligence Centre was formed. Two years later, six British engineers working for Metro-Vickers were arrested in Russia on charges including espionage. The crisis which followed "brought Anglo-Soviet relations to the brink of disaster"; Gordon W Morrell, "Redefining Intelligence and Intelligence-gathering: The Industrial Intelligence Centre and the Metro-Vickers Affair, Moscow 1933", *INS*, vol 9, no 3 (July 1994), p 520. It now "seems clear that the Soviet charge that Metro-Vickers acted as a source for British intelligence on matters related to economic development in the USSR ... had some basis in fact"; *ibid*, p 522.

<sup>46</sup> The NID also monitored Russian contacts with France. See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Visit of Soviet Naval Mission to France", *M.I.R.*, June, 1934, no 181 (15 June 1934), p 30, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "Soviet Union; Reported Order for Eight Warships to be built in France", *M.I.R.*, July, 1934, no 182 (15 July 1934), p 19, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "Soviet Union; New Construction", *M.I.R.*, August, 1934, no 183 (15 August 1934), p 23, CONFIDENTIAL; and NHB, "Soviet Union; Proposed New Construction", *M.I.R.*, November, 1934, no 186 (15 November 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL. There were also reports of assistance in training, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Soviet Fleet Manoeuvres and French Naval Officers as Instructors", *M.I.R.*, November, 1934, no 186 (15 November 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>47</sup> The NID, for example, reported a visit by a Soviet naval mission to Italy in September 1930; NHB, "Soviet Union; Visit of Naval Mission to Italy", *M.I.R.*, November, 1930, no 138 (15 November 1930), p 26, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Construction of Soviet Cruiser according to Italian design", *M.I.R.*, September, 1934, no 184 (15 September 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>49</sup> The launch of the *Tashkent* was noted by the NID in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; New Soviet Warship Launched in Italy", *M.I.R.*, December, 1937, no 223 (15 December 1937), p 46, CONFIDENTIAL. Because of the sinking of Russian cargoes in the Mediterranean during the Spanish Civil War, commercial relations between Italy and the Soviet Union were temporarily disrupted. When relations resumed, the NID noted the forthcoming handing over to the Russians of the vessel in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Light Cruiser 'Tashkent.'", *M.I.R.*, March, 1939, no 238 (15 March 1939), p 28, CONFIDENTIAL; and its arrival in the Black Sea at the end of April 1939; *ibid*, *M.I.R.*, June, 1939, no 241 (15 June 1939), p 24, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>50</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; U.S.S.R. Efficiency", *SNPN*, no 4 (1 December 1939), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL.

of the "hull of the newest cruiser ... and its propulsion plant".<sup>51</sup> Rather than concede a lack of expertise, two Soviet writers attributed this to "certain economic difficulties in the country" and claimed that when the Italians paid "entirely too much attention to finding out about armament characteristics", their assistance was terminated.<sup>52</sup> It is ironic considering their assistance to Soviet cruiser development that by the end of 1936, Italy felt that:

The naval forces of the U.S.S.R. are assuming more and more an offensive character. While under the first five-year plan Russia was limited to remodernizing some of the best units of the old fleet, during the execution of the second plan there are in course of construction or completed numerous cruisers, another up-to-date battleship and a further 100 submarines ...<sup>53</sup>

Russian planners could not agree on the type of navy required. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) decided on a kind of *Jeune École* fleet, which is a navy designed for coastal defence and, therefore, mainly equipped with submarines and torpedo vessels. As Stalin, with his acute sense of political forces, progressively gained control of the Soviet Union, he recognised the possibilities of a strong navy for reinforcing his power base. But he also perceived the technical difficulties involved and, therefore, did not immediately press the issue.

The Second Five-Year Plan of 1933-1937 provided for the construction of six heavy cruisers, a number of large destroyers and at least 50 submarines. But the NID was already aware of Russia's "ambitious naval construction programme".<sup>54</sup> Then, in the CPSU's "Congress of Victors" in 1934, Stalin launched a campaign through a prominent submarine officer for capital ships. In order to construct battleships and carriers, which became part of the Third Five-Year Plan of 1938-1942,<sup>55</sup> the Soviet Union tried to obtain help from the United States. Although President Franklin D Roosevelt and the State Department approved the Soviet requests, US Navy officials successfully frustrated any attempts at

---

<sup>51</sup> A Chernyshev, "The First-Born of the Great Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1988), pp 59-61.

<sup>52</sup> Engineer-Captain 3rd Rank A A Savin and Engineer-Captain 3rd Rank I V Ozimov, "From the History of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding (Cruisers)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1966), pp 16-21.

<sup>53</sup> *Le Forze Armate* (30 November 1936), cited in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Italian Views on the Soviet Navy", *M.I.R.*, January, 1937, no 212 (15 January 1937), p 86, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>54</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Naval Building Programme", *M.I.R.*, July, 1931, no 146 (15 July 1931), p 40, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>55</sup> The Soviet Union attempted unsuccessfully to produce two "Project 69" battle cruisers, which were intended to be "superior in armament and protection to the *Scharnhorst* and fast enough to be able to avoid battle with the *Bismarck*"; V Iu Usov, "The *Kronshtadt* Class Battle Cruisers", translated and with a commentary by Evan Mawdsley, *Warship International*, vol XXVIII, no 4 (1991), p 382. See, also, NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Soviet Views on the New German Battleships", *M.I.R.*, January, 1937, no 212 (15 January 1937), pp 85-86, CONFIDENTIAL.

assistance by utilising "a wide variety of tactics to discourage, delay, and obstruct the various Soviet proposals."<sup>56</sup> This was made possible by the anti-Communist attitude of the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William D Leahy, who allowed his subordinates "a free hand to run the project into the sand."<sup>57</sup>

In the United Kingdom during the 1930s, there was a good overall grasp of Soviet naval strength and capabilities, which was reflected in open-source literature. However, in the pre-war "Russian Fleet" section of the authoritative British publication *Jane's Fighting Ships*, there was always a note stating that it "is extremely difficult to secure accurate information regarding the Russian Navy, but the particulars given in these pages were revised and compared with data from a reliable source". The "reliable source" included naval attachés and, probably, contacts with the NID.

In 1930, the Chief of the Naval Staff was temporarily more concerned about Russian naval air power than the Soviet Navy itself. In particular, it was reported that the Russian Government was possibly about to order 280 flying boats from Italy and that a further 300 might be constructed in the Crimea.<sup>58</sup> Intelligence suggested that these would be an adjunct to the power of the Black Sea Fleet, providing it with "strong air reconnaissance and air offensive power".<sup>59</sup> A report on the matter was submitted for consideration by the CID,<sup>60</sup> and an update on the situation for the COS was made the following year.<sup>61</sup>

In the 1931 edition of *Jane's*, the publishers noted that a number of Russian ships which were believed scrapped had been renovated and put into commission again. The publishers noted ironically that "it is refreshing to find ships forty years old still employed at sea."<sup>62</sup> The NID noted an article in *Red*

---

<sup>56</sup> Thomas R Maddux, "United States-Soviet Naval Relations in the 1930's: The Soviet Union's Efforts to Purchase Naval Vessels", *Naval War College Review*, vol XXIX, no 2, sequence no 261 (Fall 1976), p 29. Soviet attempts to obtain naval guns from the US were reported in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Battleships", *M.I.R.*, May, 1937, no 216 (15 May 1937), p 53, CONFIDENTIAL. Similarly, proposed ordering of equipment is in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Purchase of Naval Equipment in the United States", *M.I.R.*, November, 1937, no 222 (15 November 1937), p 54, CONFIDENTIAL. See also, NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Mission for the U.S.A.", *M.I.R.*, March, 1939, no 238 (15 March 1939), pp 28-29, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>57</sup> John Major, "William Daniel Leahy", in Robert W Love, Jr (ed), *The Chiefs of Naval Operations* (Annapolis, 1980), p 108.

<sup>58</sup> PRO, CAB 53/22, "Russian Flying Boats. Memorandum by the Chief of the Naval Staff", COS(253) (19 November 1930), p 1, f 11, SECRET.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, f 13.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, "Russian Flying Boats; Report", COS(257) (16 December 1930), f 21, SECRET.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, "Russian Flying Boats; Minute from the Chief of the Air Staff", COS(291) (10 November 1931), ff 262-263, SECRET.

<sup>62</sup> Oscar Parkes (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1931* (London, 1931), p vi.

*Star*, which echoed the theme of financial restraint by stating that the high cost of fuel, ammunition and torpedoes demanded that the "utmost care" had to be taken by those arranging Soviet naval exercises.<sup>63</sup>

In early 1931, an article in *Morskoy Sbornik* said that within the last two and a half years, the Soviet Navy had increased "by nine large and many small units. At the same time ten warships of an obsolete type have been paid off."<sup>64</sup> This situation was reflected in *Jane's* in 1932, which felt that naval construction was proceeding "on leisurely lines". Regarding the information made available, the publishers said that "this section is now almost up to the standard aimed at."<sup>65</sup>

One of the methods used by the Admiralty for collecting information on the Soviet Navy was the study of the foreign press. But, ever concerned about its sources of intelligence, the NID warned that the existence of "official translations from foreign papers ... should not be disclosed",<sup>66</sup> especially as the systematic analysis of the foreign media provided much useful information.<sup>67</sup>

The NID also maintained a watch on the Soviet merchant fleet, noting that performance in the shipbuilding yards had "invariably fallen short" of the Five-Year Plan targets.<sup>68</sup> Part of the solution was for Russia to buy merchant vessels from abroad and these purchases were duly noted by the British,<sup>69</sup> as was the chartering of vessels.<sup>70</sup> Similar attempts on behalf of the Red Navy to purchase ships,<sup>71</sup> or equipment,<sup>72</sup> were also monitored by the NID, as were attempts to raise sunken vessels.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Tactical Training", *M.I.R.*, April, 1931, no 143 (15 April 1931), p 32, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>64</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; The Soviet Fleet", *M.I.R.*, May, 1931, no 144 (15 May 1931), p 35, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>65</sup> Oscar Parkes (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1932* (London, 1932), p vi.

<sup>66</sup> NHB, "Extracts from the Press", *M.I.R.*, July, 1931, no 146 (15 July 1931), p 65, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, NHB, "The Baltic Fleets (Translated from the 'Berlingske Tidene' of 4th April, 1931.)", *M.I.R.*, July, 1931, no 146 (15 July 1931), pp 65-66, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>68</sup> NHB, "The Russian Mercantile Marine", *M.I.R.*, August, 1931, no 147 (15 August 1931), p 56, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Mercantile Marine", *M.I.R.*, September, 1931, no 148 (15 September 1931), p 33, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "Soviet Union; Merchant Ship Construction", *M.I.R.*, February, 1932, no 153 (15 February 1932), p 45, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "Soviet Union; Shipping Activity", *M.I.R.*, December, 1932, no 163 (15 December 1932), p 35, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "Soviet Union; Sale of North German Lloyd Vessels to Russia", *M.I.R.*, January, 1933, no 164 (15 January 1933), p 38, CONFIDENTIAL; and NHB, "Soviet Union", *M.I.R.*, February, 1934, no 177 (15 February 1934), p 27, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Shipping Activity", *M.I.R.*, December, 1932, p 35.

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union", *M.I.R.*, August, 1933, no 171 (15 August 1932), p 24, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, orders for main engine blowers for eight submarines in NHB, "Soviet Union; Soviet Submarines", *M.I.R.*, August, 1932, no 159 (15 August 1932), p 33, CONFIDENTIAL.

The expansion of the Russian Navy progressed against a backdrop of perceived threat, with Klementii E Voroshilov warning in 1931 that this "threat of attack becomes ever stronger, and hangs over us in an increasingly definite shape. The observant military worker will recognise ... the shadow of an approaching war."<sup>74</sup> Despite such expressions of xenophobic paranoia, the Soviet Union was prepared to exchange information on their naval armaments with the United Kingdom as part of the international disarmament process.<sup>75</sup> Russia also sometimes supplied data to the League of Nations.<sup>76</sup>

By 1934, the editor of *Jane's* complained that it had not been simple to collect new material on the Soviet Navy. A note of increased respect was also now present: "the pre-War cruisers are being slowly finished and adopted [*sic*] to present day standards as the years pass. Thus the *Krasni Kavkaz* is very different from the earlier *Profintern* ... and it must be acknowledged that the Russians have made quite a formidable ship of her."<sup>77</sup> In general, however, the British largely ignored Soviet seapower. So, for example, when the CID's Defence Requirements Sub-Committee (DRC) considered British naval requisites in the context of capital ship building in 1935, only Germany, Japan, France and Italy were examined.<sup>78</sup>

There was some truth in the statement by Admiral Sir A Ernle Chatfield that: "Air forces can spring up in the night ... The strength of maritime powers lies in that [*sic*] fact that Navies cannot be built in a moment."<sup>79</sup> However, the Red Navy was making great strides forward. In 1936, the size of the Soviet armed forces was officially announced as having increased to 1.3 million personnel,<sup>80</sup> and in the United States the *Washington Star* announced that the Soviet Union was building the "greatest defensive navy in the world."<sup>81</sup> *Jane's*, however, was disinclined to believe the rate of shipbuilding, stating that

---

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Raising of Sunken Submarines", *M.I.R.*, April, 1934, no 179 (15 April 1934), p 25, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>74</sup> NHB, "Training in the Soviet Navy", *M.I.R.*, December, 1931, no 151 (15 December 1931), p 52, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>75</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Information regarding Armaments", *M.I.R.*, January, 1932, no 152 (15 January 1932), p 44, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, NHB, "Soviet Union; Armed Forces", *M.I.R.*, March, 1932, no 154 (15 March 1932), pp 43-44, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>77</sup> Oscar Parkes (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1934* (London, 1934), p vii.

<sup>78</sup> PRO, CAB 16/112, "Naval Defence Requirements", DRC 33 (October 1935), pp 6-8, SECRET.

<sup>79</sup> PRO, CAB 21/434, Chatfield to Sir Warren Fisher, Treasury (16 July 1934), p 4, PERSONAL and SECRET.

<sup>80</sup> PRO, CAB 56/2, "Foreign Armaments; Note by the Secretary; Annex. Extract from Cmd. 5107", JIC(25) (22 January 1937), p 2, para 16, SECRET.

<sup>81</sup> *Washington Star* (22 November 1936), cited in Jan S Breemer, "Soviet Naval Capabilities", *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, vol 1, no 4 (Winter 1986-87), p 119.

there was "little evidence of any considerable amount of new construction. Even in regard to submarines, on which efforts have been chiefly concentrated, there is ground for suspecting some exaggeration".<sup>82</sup>

By 1937, however, *Jane's* began to accept that there was, indeed, a considerable Soviet effort behind their shipbuilding programme: "Much more definite information about new construction in the Soviet Navy has been received this year. Some of the reports that were in circulation have undoubtedly been exaggerated, but that there is a considerable substratum of truth behind them is now certain."<sup>83</sup> It was noted that Russia, "whose sea power has for so long been in abeyance, has announced her intention of beginning at least one battleship in 1938, with materials imported from abroad".<sup>84</sup> In particular, the publishers stated that in the number of MTBs and submarines, Russia appeared "to be making a bid for first place",<sup>85</sup> and the building of sundry vessels was an indication that "with the aid of foreign experts, Russia is endeavouring to regain her old position amongst the naval Powers."<sup>86</sup>

The defence of India against potential Soviet aggression was still a major commitment in 1934 and Russia was "effectively regarded as Britain's third potential enemy" after Germany and Japan.<sup>87</sup> By the end of 1936, it was recommended that the Cabinet should make the assumption, when considering foreign policy and defence, that Germany and Italy were hostile, and France and Belgium would act in cooperation with the United Kingdom. Regarding the Soviet Union, it was stated that the Government should consider Russia "in alternatives, either a neutral or co-operating with us."<sup>88</sup> The Soviet Union, therefore, was no longer automatically perceived as one of Great Britain's likely enemies.

---

<sup>82</sup> Francis E McMurtrie (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1936* (London, 1936), p vii. At this time, the NID probably gained little information from Russian ship visits to England, for example that of the *Oktyabrskaya Revolutsia* to the 1936 Spithead Review. Mack, for example, recalls that the old Soviet battleship was "anchored right at the Western end of the lines, where we could hardly see her from my ship, the 'Valiant', & her crew were not allowed ashore"; Commander R Mack, "The Birth and Development of the Soviet Navy" (paper presented to the Coulsdon Probus Club) (6 January 1983), p 2. However, photographs were taken of Soviet warships on such occasions, for example of the battleship *Marat* which visited the United Kingdom for the Coronation of King George VI in May 1937; NMM, Historic Photographs Section, negative number N5123.

<sup>83</sup> Francis E McMurtrie (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1937* (London, 1937), p vii.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, p v.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p vii.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>87</sup> Peter Bell, "The British Government and the Menace from Germany and Japan: A Study of the First Defence Requirements Enquiry, 1933-1934", PhD thesis, School of History, University of Leeds (January 1989), p 317.

<sup>88</sup> PRO, CAB 53/29, "The Estimated Preparedness for War of Great Britain and Certain Other Powers on 1st May, 1937; Note by the Secretary; Annex. Minutes by the Minister for Co-ordination of Defence", COS(525) (10 November 1936), f 174, MOST SECRET.

When Russia was considered as an ally, the British estimated that 111 Soviet submarines could be available, but that most of these were deployed in the Far East against the perceived Japanese threat. Also, it was thought that Russian assistance for Great Britain and France could lead to Japanese support for Germany and Italy and that this would have "far-reaching effects upon the naval situation."<sup>89</sup>

To complicate intelligence gathering on the Soviet Navy, 26 June 1937 was the last pre-war occasion on which the British Naval Attaché in Moscow, Captain H Clanchy, was allowed to visit a Soviet naval facility.<sup>90</sup>

In 1938, *Jane's* stated that a good deal of fresh material had been assembled for the Russian section, and that further details "of the numerous types of submarines in service have been obtained".<sup>91</sup> Even as the war clouds gathered over Europe in 1938, and despite progress in shipbuilding, it was difficult for the Russians to disguise the obvious faults in their navy. The Soviets were able to boast that:

Within recent years two new fleets have come into being - the Pacific Fleet and the North Fleet. The Baltic and Black Sea Fleets have been strengthened to a considerable extent ... The number of minor warships, naval aeroplanes and submarines, and the amount of anti-aircraft artillery, have increased by several hundred per cent ...<sup>92</sup>

But there were no new battleships, a fact that was not possible to overlook entirely even in their own writings. An implausible claim was made, however, that the Soviet battleships, "though they are of 1914-15 construction, have been thoroughly modernized and are perfectly up-to-date warships."<sup>93</sup>

Starting in October 1936, the Soviet Union provided extensive logistic support to the Spanish Republicans from Black Sea ports.<sup>94</sup> But, in 1937 to 1938, during the Spanish Civil War, Stalin's efforts to help the Communist cause were effectively impeded by a few Italian submarines and Russia was able

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, "Comparison of the Strength of Great Britain with that of Certain Other Nations as at May 1937; Report by the Joint Planning Sub-Committee", COS(539) (JP) (22 December 1936), p 6, f 330, MOST SECRET. See, also, PRO, CAB 53/30, "Comparison of the Strength of Great Britain with that of certain other Nations as at May 1937; Report; Appendix I; Table 'A.' - Comparative Naval Strength 1st May, 1937", COS(551) (9 February 1937), pp 11-12, ff 124-125, MOST SECRET.

<sup>90</sup> FO 371 22296 N3546/36/38 (12 July 1938), cited in Paul W Doerr, "The Changkufeng/Lake Khasan Incident of 1938: British Intelligence on Soviet and Japanese Military Performance", *INS*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), p 187.

<sup>91</sup> Francis E McMurtrie (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1938* (London, 1938), p vi.

<sup>92</sup> A Feshankov, "The Red Army and Defence", in Twenty-eight of the foremost citizens of the U.S.S.R., *The Soviet Comes of Age* (London, 1938), p 252.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Paul H Nitze, Leonard Sullivan, Jr and the Atlantic Council Working Group on Securing the Seas, *Securing the Seas: The Soviet Naval Challenge and Western Alliance Options* (Boulder, Colorado, 1979), p 34.

to do little but protest the sinking of its shipping.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, after August 1937 war supplies in Soviet vessels "virtually stopped coming via the Mediterranean."<sup>96</sup> Although Stalin destroyed the senior officer corps in the purges of the 1930s,<sup>97</sup> this demonstration of the utility of seapower helped determine him to build a massive fleet.<sup>98</sup> In the Supreme Soviet, Premier Molotov declared that nothing but "the most powerful high seas fleet in the world" would meet Soviet aspirations.<sup>99</sup> However, at the end of 1937 the CID considered that the "rebuilding of the Soviet Navy is still in its infancy except so far as submarines are concerned."<sup>100</sup>

In the period January 1939 to January 1943, Stalin intended to build eight battleships, eight battle-cruisers, 13 cruisers, 100 flotilla leaders and destroyers, 200 MTBs, 30 monitors and 180 submarines, as well as planning the construction of the first Soviet aircraft carriers.<sup>101</sup> By 1939, however, the Soviet building programme was seriously behind time.<sup>102</sup> *Jane's* noted that the Russian Navy "continues to be

---

<sup>95</sup> Anthony Eden (the Rt Hon the Earl of Avon), *The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators* (London, 1962), p 462; and Antony Beevor, *The Spanish Civil War* (London, 1982), pp 202-203.

<sup>96</sup> Willard C Frank, Jr, "Politico-Military Deception at Sea in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39", *INS*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), p 105. The Russians had to rely on Spanish-flagged ships instead; *idem*, "Misperception and Incidents at Sea: The *Deutschland* and *Leipzig* Crises, 1937", *Naval War College Review*, vol XLIII, no 2, sequence 330 (Spring 1990), pp 31-32.

<sup>97</sup> The NID monitored their impact upon the Soviet Navy. See, for example, NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Stalin Purge", *M.I.R.*, *September, 1937*, no 220 (15 September 1937), p 52, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Changes in the Higher Naval Commands", *M.I.R.*, *October, 1937*, no 221 (15 October 1937), pp 43-44, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Changes in the Higher Naval Command", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1937*, no 222 (15 November 1937), pp 53-54, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Purge", *M.I.R.*, *March, 1938*, no 226 (15 March 1938), p 49, CONFIDENTIAL; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Naval 'Purge'", *M.I.R.*, *April, 1938*, no 227 (15 April 1938), pp 54-55, CONFIDENTIAL; and NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Purge", *M.I.R.*, *October, 1938*, no 233 (15 October 1938), pp 24-25, CONFIDENTIAL. Also of interest is the American view in David M Glantz, "Attaché Assessments of the Impact of the 1930s Purges on the Red Army", *Journal of Soviet Military Studies*, vol 2, no 3 (September 1989), pp 417-438.

<sup>98</sup> A Soviet writer declared that it was known "from the experiences of the present Spanish war that blockade is still an effective weapon ... we can declare quite confidently that the large scale employment of planes and submarines has in no way weakened that powerful weapon which is known as Sea Power; on the contrary these new auxiliaries have made it stronger than ever"; PRO, FO 371/22296, "Abridged Summary of Article on Naval Strategy, 'Red Fleet' - 28th August 1938", attached to Clanchy to the Right Honourable Viscount Chilston (12 September 1938), ff 53-54. Similarly, it was stated that changes "in the international situation and the events in Spain evoked the need for our Motherland to create a major Navy"; N Kuznetsov, "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization of the Fleets and Their Leadership During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1975), pp 28-33.

<sup>99</sup> A Pukhov, "*Partiino-politicheskaia rabota v voenno-morskoi flote za 20 let*" ("Party-political Work in the Navy for 20 Years)", *Morskoy Sbornik* (February 1938), p 56, cited in Herrick, *Soviet Naval Strategy*, p 29, n 5.

<sup>100</sup> PRO, ADM 205/57, "Comparison of the Strength of Great Britain with that of certain other Nations as at January 1938", COS(639) (12 November 1937), p 10, para 38, MOST SECRET. This report is also at PRO, CAB 53/34, ff 44-57.

<sup>101</sup> Moore, *Warships of the Soviet Navy*, p 7.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*



a difficult problem, very little reliable information being obtainable, but everything goes to suggest that shipbuilding still proceeds at a very slow rate."<sup>103</sup>

In April 1939, the COS again considered the value of the Soviet Union as an ally and felt that the Russian Navy in the Baltic could be useful to contain Nazi naval power, to interfere with the supply of Swedish iron ore to Germany and to make Baltic ports available to the Royal Navy, if required.<sup>104</sup> However, it was realised that these advantages would be greatly minimised because "the Russian Baltic Ports are limited to the Gulf of Finland and are ice-free only for half the year. It is only during this period therefore that a proportion of the German naval strength would be contained."<sup>105</sup>

In the Far East, it was felt that the Soviet Navy would be an "added deterrent" to Japan from undertaking large-scale operations against Singapore, Australia or New Zealand.<sup>106</sup> The size of the Black Sea Fleet was considered sufficient to "ensure the superiority of the Soviet Fleet over any likely combination of enemy forces".<sup>107</sup> No mention of the utility of the Northern Fleet was made, perhaps because its limited range of operations was understood to make it essentially a coastal defence force.<sup>108</sup>

Some Anglo-French planning began in 1939 against the possibility of the Soviet Union proving to be an enemy rather than an ally. The major schemes considered were plans to bomb Russian oilfields and to insert a naval force into the Black Sea to operate against Russian commerce, installations and warships.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, Soviet defence capability was much undervalued. For example, the Chief of the SIS encapsulated the prevalent opinion held among the intelligence agencies when he stated that Russia "could do nothing of real value".<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Clanchy in Moscow reported back to the DNI that "any form of

---

<sup>103</sup> Francis E McMurtrie (ed), *Jane's Fighting Ships 1939* (London, 1939), p vi.

<sup>104</sup> PRO, CAB 53/48, "Military Value of Russia. Report", COS(887) (24 April 1939), p 3, para 9, f 138, SECRET.

<sup>105</sup> PRO, CAB 53/49, "Balance of Strategical Value in War as Between Spain as an Enemy and Russia as an Ally", COS(902) (10 May 1939), p 4, para 14, f 5, SECRET.

<sup>106</sup> PRO, CAB 53/48, "Military Value of Russia. Report", COS(887) (24 April 1939), p 4, para 13, f 139, SECRET.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 11, f 138.

<sup>108</sup> The JIC was directed to consider how Russian forces could best be used in PRO, CAB 56/4, "Military Value and Possible Use of the Russian Forces", JIC(97) (20 April 1939), SECRET.

<sup>109</sup> Brock Millman, "Toward War with Russia: British Naval and Air Planning for Conflict in the Near East, 1939-40", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 29, no 2 (April 1994), pp 261-283.

<sup>110</sup> PRO, FO 371/23061, C3968/3356/18 (29 March 1939), cited in *ibid*, p 264.

active warfare prosecuted on land, in the air, or at sea would bring about a breakdown of the internal economy".<sup>111</sup>

After the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the Red Navy received some naval equipment from Germany,<sup>112</sup> and in February 1940 the unfinished hull of a heavy cruiser, the *Lützow*.<sup>113</sup> Assistance for the Nazis included the establishment in a bay near Murmansk of "Base North" with fuel and repair ships to assist U-boat operations. In the event, the first two German submarines on their way to the base were sunk by the Royal Navy, and the invasion of Norway made its use unnecessary.<sup>114</sup>

It has been stated that in June 1941 among "all the Whitehall departments ... the lack of intelligence about Russia and information from Russia was well-nigh complete."<sup>115</sup> This statement, although certainly it can be applied to political intelligence during the summer of 1941, can not be fairly applied to the NID and its long-term assessments of naval capabilities. While perhaps there can never be a complete picture of an intelligence target, the major Russian warships and their primary characteristics were reasonably well known to the Admiralty,<sup>116</sup> and also to the JIC which considered that the Soviet Navy "save for submarines and a few light craft, is largely obsolete or obsolescent."<sup>117</sup>

Post-war studies confirm that by the time of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Russia possessed an unbalanced fleet which was "poorly commanded, badly run and lacked modern sensors and other equipment".<sup>118</sup> The big ships were not yet ready and further implementation of the Soviet building

---

<sup>111</sup> PRO, ADM 1/9863, "Naval Aspects of the Possibility of a War Between the USSR and Great Britain", Naval Attaché Moscow to DNI (5 November 1939), and Naval Attaché Moscow to DNI (undated, November 1939), cited in Millman, "Toward War with Russia", p 263.

<sup>112</sup> Robert Conquest, *Stalin: Breaker of Nations* (London, 1991), p 225.

<sup>113</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, p 57.

<sup>114</sup> Conquest, *Stalin*, p 225.

<sup>115</sup> F H Hinsley, "British Intelligence and Barbarossa", in Erickson and Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa*, p 72.

<sup>116</sup> Admittedly, the NID considered that in the event of a German invasion of the Soviet Union the "presence of a Naval Mission ... would give us an opportunity to obtain some of the much wanted information regarding the Red Fleet"; PRO, ADM 223/252, NID IVa, "Naval Mission to Russia in the Event of a Russo-German War" (14 June 1941), para 2.

<sup>117</sup> PRO, CAB 81/102, "The Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R.", Appendix A to "The Possible Effect of a German-Soviet War", JIC(41)234 (Revise) (14 June 1941), p 5, para 1 (b), SECRET.

<sup>118</sup> Moore, *Warships of the Soviet Navy*, p 8. The Soviet Union finally admitted to "substantial errors" in the pre-war shipbuilding programme, which "caused a clear disproportion in types of combatant ships: there were not enough special-design minesweepers or of ASW [anti-submarine warfare] forces". Not unexpectedly, because of the large-scale naval infantry support given to the ground forces, "an absence of landing ships" was also bemoaned; Rear-Admiral V Kryukov and Captain 2nd Rank M Kozhevnikov, "Operations Entities in the Russian and Soviet Navy (1905-1941)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1989), pp 15-19.

programme was rendered impossible.<sup>119</sup> However, as war broke out in Europe, the Soviets had the largest submarine fleet in the world with approximately 185 boats.<sup>120</sup> But, as NID wartime assessments would show, the size of Russia's underwater fleet was not an indication of its effectiveness and the British came to the view that the Soviet Union tried to "cover up lack of quality by excessive quantity."<sup>121</sup>

To summarise, up to the Second World War, British intelligence had provided a basically accurate ORBAT of the Soviet Navy, together with estimates of its capability to fight. The necessary information had been gathered from a wide range of sources, as evidenced in regular NID reports on a plethora of subjects relating to the Red Navy.

It has been said that the NID was run down in the inter-war period and, as a consequence of poor intelligence, "defence thinking in the twenty years of peace moved at worst into the realms of misguided fantasy and, at best, into the realms of informed and well-intentioned opinion."<sup>122</sup> However, this thesis argues that NID estimates of the Soviet Navy provided defence and political decision-makers sufficient information when considering the power of the Russian fleets in relation to British national security and strategy.

As war approached, it became more important to take into account the possibility of Russia as a neutral or as an ally, although in general "Soviet military power was greatly underrated up to the hour of the German invasion."<sup>123</sup> However, the NID provided sufficient intelligence for a balanced conclusion to be drawn with respect to Russian seapower (although it was the capability of the Red Army, of course, that was of premier importance). In conclusion, therefore, the NID succeeded in the 1930s in its remit to provide a strategic intelligence picture of the ORBAT and principal capabilities of the Soviet Navy.

---

<sup>119</sup> Moore, *Warships of the Soviet Navy*, pp 7-8. For an NID assessment of the Soviet Navy's ORBAT immediately following the German invasion, see the table in NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *WIR*, no 68 (27 June 1941), facing p 26, SECRET.

<sup>120</sup> Moore, *Warships of the Soviet Navy*, p 8. One Russian source gave the figure as 165 submarines; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1972), pp 14-24.

<sup>121</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 35.

<sup>122</sup> Wells, "Studies in British Naval Intelligence", pp 283-284.

<sup>123</sup> Eden, *Facing the Dictators*, p 99.

CHAPTER IV  
SOVIET SUBMARINE FORCES, 1930-1941



*"The creation of submarines, as we know, was the result of the persistent search for ways in which to approach enemy surface warships and merchant ships secretly".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Rear-Admiral Matveyev)*

Among the most secret and closely-guarded aspects of naval power are submarine capability and operational effectiveness. An examination of the efficacy of the intelligence services in assessing the capabilities of the Soviet submarine forces would thus provide a clear indication of British resourcefulness in information-gathering and their overall analytical expertise. This chapter covers the subject to the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War.

After the First World War, many countries came to believe that the submarine was "a cheap means of countering the Royal Navy's overwhelming superiority in capital ships."<sup>2</sup> In his RUSI Gold Medal Essay for 1932, Sub-Lieutenant Kemp suggested that the preferred strategy for foreign countries at war with the United Kingdom would be the illegal use of submarines, that is the sinking of merchant ships on sight.<sup>3</sup> The DNI considered that it would be "perhaps undesirable" to call attention to such ideas,<sup>4</sup> and it was agreed that circulation of the paper should be limited to a classified naval publication.<sup>5</sup>

In Russia, it was only in 1926 that a definitive policy for the Soviet Navy had been laid down by the Central Committee of the CPSU. On 26 November, a six-year shipbuilding programme was approved which, in addition to various surface vessels, also provided for 12 submarines.<sup>6</sup> Later, in May 1928, the Revolutionary Military Council decided to expand the submarine forces.<sup>7</sup> By 1930, a total of

---

<sup>1</sup> Rear-Admiral V I Matveyev, "Secrecy is the Basis for the Successful Actions by Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1965), pp 19-26.

<sup>2</sup> Ernest Andrade, Jr, "Great Britain, the Submarine, and Naval Limitations", in William R Roberts and Jack Sweetman (eds), *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Ninth Naval History Symposium Held at the United States Naval Academy, 18-20 October 1989* (Annapolis, Maryland, 1991), p 69.

<sup>3</sup> PRO, ADM 1/8760/233, Rear-Admiral C V Usborne, DNI, Minute Sheet No 2 (30 March 1932).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, RUSI to Usborne (9 May 1932).

<sup>6</sup> V Maslennikov, "The First Soviet Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1987), pp 69-72.

<sup>7</sup> David Brown, "The Soviet Surface Fleet 1937-1940", NHB (July 1980), p 1.

14 submarines were in commission in the Soviet Navy.<sup>8</sup> Surprisingly, two submarines which visited Copenhagen in August 1930 were reported by the NID as "open to the public on two days".<sup>9</sup>

In August 1932, the Admiralty made a major assessment of the Soviet Navy, although information on its composition and state of readiness was regarded as "very meagre".<sup>10</sup> It was considered that Russia had no serviceable submarines in the Arctic, but it was noted that they could be transported there via the canal and river system from Leningrad.<sup>11</sup>

In the Baltic, the Admiralty stated that there were nine submarines of 650 tons, each with a surface speed of 10-16 knots, four 18-inch torpedo tubes, two 6-pounder guns and one 1-pounder anti-aircraft (A/A) gun, with one boat carrying 42 mines. The Royal Navy also believed that there might be a further submarine of unknown type, as well as the ex-British *L55*,<sup>12</sup> two newly-constructed vessels and a further two or three building.<sup>13</sup>

In the Black Sea, it was estimated that there were four submarines of 355-375 tons, each with a surface speed of 13 knots, four 18-inch torpedo tubes and one 6-pounder gun. Also, two craft of 650 tons, with a surface speed of 10 knots, four 18-inch torpedo tubes and one 16-pounder gun. Three

---

<sup>8</sup> Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 73.

<sup>9</sup> NHB, "Soviet Union; Movements", *M.I.R.*, September, 1930, no 136 (15 September 1930), p 20, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>10</sup> PRO, ADM 116/3480, "Russian Naval Forces", Enclosure No 3, para 2, in Admiralty, "War with Russia. Naval Appreciation" (hereinafter "War with Russia") (August 1932), MOST SECRET.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* The British noted ongoing developments in Soviet waterways, See, for example, PRO, FO 371/23699, Naval Attaché, Moscow, to DNI, "Development of Inland Waterways of the Soviet Union" (13 June 1939), ff 116-125; and NHB, "U.S.S.R.; U.S.S.R. Inland Waterways", *SNPN*, no 18 (8 March 1940), pp 5-11, CONFIDENTIAL. For an example of NID monitoring of the Soviet media for potential future developments, see NHB, "Soviet Inland Waterways", *WIR*, no 302 (28 December 1945), pp 36-39, SECRET.

<sup>12</sup> The British submarine *L55* was lost in June 1919 in about 100 feet of water in the Gulf of Finland. The NID was warned that the Soviet Union was interested in the vessel. However, no recovery was attempted and, finally, the Russians retrieved the boat and took it into service; Deacon, *The Silent War*, p 133. Details of the operation, and information gained by the Soviet Union from the vessel, are in Przemyslaw Budzbon and Boris V Lemachko, "The Salvage of HM S/M *L55* by the Soviet Navy; The Reason Why", *Warship*, no 45 (January 1988), pp 2-10. The submarine had been sunk in international waters and the NID stated that "it would have been possible for us to have salvaged her had we wished to do so"; NHB, "Soviet Union; L.55", *M.I.R.*, February, 1932, no 153 (15 February 1932), p 46, CONFIDENTIAL. *Morskoy Sbornik* confirmed that *L55* had been raised and reconditioned; NHB, "Soviet Union; The Soviet Fleet", *M.I.R.*, May, 1931, p 35. The NID noted its formal commissioning and acceptance into service with the Red Navy in 1931; NHB, "Soviet Union; 'L.55.'", *M.I.R.*, December, 1931, no 151 (15 December 1931), p 42, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>13</sup> PRO, ADM 116/3480, "Russian Naval Forces", Enclosure No 3, in "War with Russia".

submarines of 370 tons were building, with one nearly complete. The Admiralty paper concluded that there were no submarines in the Russian Far East.<sup>14</sup>

Considering possible Soviet naval operations in the event of war with the United Kingdom, the Admiralty believed that the existing types of Russian submarine were "small and of comparatively low endurance. Those in the BALTIC could reach the British Isles, and those from the BLACK SEA could operate for limited periods on the main traffic route between MALTA and PORT SAID."<sup>15</sup>

Although these submarines could have presented a very restricted threat to British shipping, there was no danger whatever in 1932 from North Russia: "MURMANSK is being developed as a base. Existing submarines, or those small enough to be transported to ARCHANGEL by the canal system, are of such limited endurance, however, as only to be of use for local operations."<sup>16</sup> But, in August 1933, Soviet submarines made their reappearance in Arctic waters with the arrival of the *Dekabrist*-class boats *D-1* and *D-2*. The *D-3* arrived the following month.<sup>17</sup>

The Soviet Union's Second Five-Year Plan of 1933-1938 proposed a more ambitious expansion of the fleets and also envisaged oceangoing submarines being added to the navy.<sup>18</sup> NID foreign liaison included contacts with the Estonian General Staff which, in 1935, stated that their figure for the Soviet submarine strength was about 79 boats.<sup>19</sup> By 1936, the German Admiralty was clearly aware of the dimensions of Russia's construction programme and an official statement from Berlin declared that 96 Soviet submarines were in commission and many were building.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, early that year, during the

---

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, "War with Russia", p 12, para 82.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, para 83. The necessity of a permanent base for a northern fleet had been realised since the time of the First World War; PRO, FO 371/22300, Flagman 1st Rank K Dushenov, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Fleet, "The Defence of the Northern Sea Frontiers of the U.S.S.R.", *Pravda* (29 March 1938), p 1, para 2, f 77, attachment to Clanchy to Chilston (1 April 1938).

<sup>17</sup> Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 111. By 1937, German propaganda was claiming that the small Northern Fleet could "cripple Norway's commerce" and would be a danger to international shipping in its waters; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; 'Red Currents in the Arctic'", *M.I.R.*, April, 1937, no 215 (15 April 1937), p 47, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, "The Soviet Surface Fleet", p 2.

<sup>19</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Soviet Submarines", *M.I.R.*, October, 1935, no 197 (15 October 1935), p 48, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>20</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 372. This figure was released in a German press report, picked up by the NID; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Disposition of the Soviet Fleet at beginning of 1936", *M.I.R.*, July, 1936, no 206 (15 July 1936), p 41, CONFIDENTIAL.

period of building the *Shchuka*-class (or *Shch*-) submarine, the German Admiralty stated that Russia had "secretly built the mightiest submarine armada in the world."<sup>21</sup>

While Russian submarine construction was forging ahead, the three major naval powers of the time - the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan - had pledged in the London Naval Treaty of 1930 to reduce their total submarine tonnage to 52,700 tons by the end of 1936.<sup>22</sup> But, although the Soviet Navy's submarine fleet had grown to be the largest in the world, the majority of their vessels built before 1937 were coastal types, designed for defensive work.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, when *Pravda* claimed that the Soviet Navy should be "capable of attacking and destroying the enemy in their own territorial waters",<sup>24</sup> the Naval Attaché in Moscow stated that such "extravagances need not be taken too seriously".<sup>25</sup>

Details of the size of Russia's programme were readily apparent from open sources, with *Jane's Fighting Ships* for 1937 showing that the Soviet Union had 112 submarines and 37 building.<sup>26</sup> This total corresponded almost exactly with the claim made by the German War Minister that according to "Admiral Orlov, Chief of U.S.S.R. Naval Forces, the Soviet will have 150 submarines including those now on the stocks".<sup>27</sup> However, tactical exercises of the time showed that Russian submarines appeared "quite incapable of attacking any form of screened target."<sup>28</sup> Clearly, as the NID recognised, there is more to capability than sheer force of numbers.

On 17 July 1937, the Anglo-Soviet Naval Agreement was signed in London. Under its terms, no submarine was to exceed 2,000 tons standard displacement, or to carry a gun exceeding 5.1 inches in calibre.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, in the Far East, Japan perceived the expanding Soviet underwater fleet as a threat and complained about "the number of submarines at Vladivostock, apparently discounting the surface

---

<sup>21</sup> The Naval Correspondent, *Daily Telegraph* (16 March 1936), p 21, cited in Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 373.

<sup>22</sup> Andrade, "Great Britain, the Submarine, and Naval Limitations", p 73.

<sup>23</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, pp 335 and 373.

<sup>24</sup> PRO, FO 371/22296, "U.S.S.R. - A Great Naval Power", *Pravda* (17 January 1938), cited in Clanchy to Chilston (17 January 1938), p 4, para 4, f 21.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, Clanchy to Chilston (17 January 1938), p 4, para 4, f 21.

<sup>26</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 372.

<sup>27</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Submarines", *M.I.R.*, May, 1937, no 216 (15 May 1937), p 52, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>28</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Annual Autumn Manoeuvres of the Baltic Fleet", *M.I.R.*, November, 1937, no 222 (15 November 1937), p 52, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>29</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 449. The NID published the main details in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Anglo-Soviet Naval Treaty", *M.I.R.*, August, 1937, no 219 (15 August 1937), pp 53-54, CONFIDENTIAL. See, also, PRO, FO 371/23699, P A Berry, NID, to B E F Gage, Northern Department, Foreign Office (24 April 1939), ff 40-42, CONFIDENTIAL.

threat."<sup>30</sup> The Japanese believed that there were some 50 submarines with the Soviet Pacific Fleet and stated that in view of the "serious damage the German submarines caused to the Allies in the Great War, Japan cannot overlook the fact that such a large number of the latest type Russian submarines are in the Japan Sea."<sup>31</sup>

In the Soviet Union, however, a sudden reversal in naval strategy began, with Stalin advocating the building of an oceangoing surface fleet. The admiral "formerly in command of the naval station at Archangel, was relieved of his command in 1938. He had shown a preference for increasing the number of coastal submarines rather than the building of battleships."<sup>32</sup> The purge of 1938 had commenced and a series of high-ranking naval officers were swept away in the terror that followed, including Orlov, former Commander-in-Chief of the Red Navy.<sup>33</sup> The reason given was that they had "treacherously insisted on building a 'defensive navy,' consisting of submarines and other small units, whereas the U.S.S.R. obviously requires a strong navy capable of offensive operations with big strong battleships and cruisers."<sup>34</sup> Indeed, Stalin personally ordered the "severe punishment" of anyone who opposed heavy cruisers.<sup>35</sup>

The blame for the naval strategy debate was conveniently placed on those who "carrying out the orders of foreign intelligence organisations ... created different schools of thought".<sup>36</sup> The lack of freedom

---

<sup>30</sup> Brown, "The Soviet Surface Fleet", p 5. At this time, the Russian port was being expanded and improved; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Reconstruction of Vladivostok Port", *M.I.R.*, June, 1937 (15 June 1937), p 48, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>31</sup> Translation from pamphlet published by the Publicity Section of the Japanese Ministry of Marine, cited in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Reconstruction of the Soviet Far Eastern Navy", *M.I.R.*, March, 1937, no 214 (15 March 1937), p 49, CONFIDENTIAL. The NID noted an article - "Soviet Submarines in the Far East", *Pacific Affairs* (March 1937) - which stressed the Russian ability to hamper the Japanese sea lines of communication from the Asiatic mainland; NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R.*, July, 1937, no 218 (15 July 1937), pp 55-56, CONFIDENTIAL. Certainly, by early 1940 the NID considered that Soviet submarines "could do serious damage on the Japanese lines of sea communication"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Far Eastern Area", *SNPN*, no 15 (16 February 1940), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>32</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 328.

<sup>33</sup> Because of the purges, it was "necessary to appoint young and completely inexperienced officers to command destroyers"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Exercises", *M.I.R.*, October, 1938, no 233 (15 October 1938), p 25, CONFIDENTIAL. Similar problems were encountered in finding suitably experienced instructors for naval colleges and the work of staff officers was openly criticised, with both of these "presumably brought about by the ravages of the purge"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Training of Personnel", *M.I.R.*, January, 1939, no 236 (15 January 1939), p 25, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>34</sup> PRO, FO 371/22296, "Soviet Navy Purge; Shot Admirals; Every Fleet Loses its Commander", *The Times* (31 August 1938), f 31.

<sup>35</sup> Conquest, *Stalin*, p 225.

<sup>36</sup> PRO, FO 371/22296, "Abridged Summary of Article on Naval Strategy, 'Red Fleet' - 28th August 1938", attached to Clanchy to Chilston (12 September 1938), f 53.



to discuss naval affairs meant that the views of Stalin were preeminent, but "his idea of himself as a naval strategist was one of the worst of his misconceptions about his ability to master any subject."<sup>37</sup>

Despite the twists and turns of Stalin's policies, and the liquidation of many senior officers including eight of the nine most senior admirals,<sup>38</sup> by 1938 it had become "necessary to recognise the incontestable fact that the U.S.S.R. possesses at the present time the most powerful submarine fleet in the world."<sup>39</sup> Also, the NID considered that the submarine service "with the exception of officers of the rank of Captain and above has not really suffered".<sup>40</sup> Therefore, an essential cadre of submarine officers still remained, although they were generally young and relatively inexperienced. Indeed, in early 1939, the NID identified lieutenants of about 25 to 26 years old as submarine commanders.<sup>41</sup> One junior lieutenant, just five years out of naval college, was made commander of a submarine flotilla.<sup>42</sup>

It has been argued that in the period between the ratification of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of July 1937 and the outbreak of the Second World War, the Russians:

contrived to confuse utterly the foreign naval commentators of the day and very little useful intelligence reached the Western navies ... Disinformation was certainly employed and data was accepted by such reputable naval annuals as "Janes" [*sic*], "Flottes de Combat" and Weyer's "Taschenbuch" ... Similarly, deliberate "Peaks" of the size of the submarine arm were widespread, a figure of 200 operational boats being noised abroad in 1938.<sup>43</sup>

However, open-source literature was generally not too inaccurate and had reported the expanding Soviet submarine-building programme and its results, albeit a little tardily. Clanchy had reported from Moscow in September 1937 that it was "more than likely that the actual number of submarines in commission to-

---

<sup>37</sup> Conquest, *Stalin*, p 225.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* The surviving admiral was L M Galler, but in addition to the removal of the Soviet Navy's leaders, "their subordinates fell in scores"; Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment* (London, 1992), p 211.

<sup>39</sup> *Nauticus* (German Admiralty official annual), cited in Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 335.

<sup>40</sup> PRO, FO 371/23696, "The Naval Forces of the U.S.S.R." (hereinafter "Naval Forces"), p 2, f 264, attachment to Berry to L Collier, Northern Department (17 March 1939), CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>41</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Young Commanding Officers", *M.I.R.*, February, 1939, no 237 (15 February 1939), p 26, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>42</sup> David R Jones, "Motives and Consequences of the Red Army Purges, 1937-1938", in Jones (ed), *Soviet Armed Forces*, p 259.

<sup>43</sup> Brown, "The Soviet Surface Fleet", p 6.

day is over the 170 mark".<sup>44</sup> The figure of 200 boats in 1938 was slightly ahead of the construction schedule, but was in the right order of magnitude and correctly reflected Russian intentions.

In March 1939, upon informing the Foreign Office that the Soviet Union had 195 submarines afloat, the NID emphasised that "the figures given of warships built and building are obtained from confidential and secret sources, in particular the number of submarines".<sup>45</sup> The submarine total was presented as a minimum figure and only included boats built after 1932. Expansion on a considerable scale was foreseen, although this was already clear from information supplied to the British in accordance with the Anglo-Soviet Naval Agreement. A total of 40 submarines were believed to be under construction.<sup>46</sup>

For reasons of security, much Soviet submarine construction was transferred east of the Urals before the Second World War,<sup>47</sup> and a "special type of submarine for coastal defence, with a speed of nineteen knots and 21-inch torpedoes, was one of the products of those regions".<sup>48</sup> This was the highly-successful *Malutka*-class submarine.<sup>49</sup> Intelligence, however, was particularly difficult to gain from beyond the Ural mountains. So, in March 1939, the NID was limited to stating that there was no definite information available "in regard to the construction for the Far Eastern Fleet but submarines are being assembled at VLADIVOSTOK and at KOMSOMOLSK on the River Amur."<sup>50</sup>

Although reasonably accurate quantitative information was obtained to construct the Soviet naval ORBAT, it was more difficult to assess the level of training and proficiency of the Russian sailors. While in many countries the military attaché system allowed relatively easy access, the NID complained in March 1939 that during "the last 18 months the Naval Attaché has been afforded no facilities to visit the Fleet or even shore establishments and it is therefore difficult to appraise the present efficiency of the

---

<sup>44</sup> Clanchy to MacKillop (18 September 1937), SECRET, in D Cameron Watt (ed), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print; Part II, From the First to the Second World War; Series A, The Soviet Union, 1917-1939; Volume 14, The Soviet Union, Jan. 1937-Dec. 1938* (1986), p 201.

<sup>45</sup> PRO, FO 371/23696, Berry to Collier (17 March 1939), f 262.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, "Naval Forces", p 3, f 265.

<sup>47</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 406.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p 335.

<sup>49</sup> The submarines were fitted with only "two torpedo tubes, had low surface and submerged speeds, and limited endurance and habitability." If necessary, however, they could be disassembled for transport by rail and moved between fleets; Engineer-Rear Admiral Reserve M A Rudnitskiy, "Soviet Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1967), pp 29-34. They also possessed "excellent submerged manoeuvrability and good rapid diving characteristics"; Pierre Hervieux, "The War Service of the Soviet M Class Submarines", *Warship*, no 21 (undated), p 12.

<sup>50</sup> PRO, FO 371/23696, "Naval Forces", p 4, f 266.

Fleet."<sup>51</sup> However, the overall impression was that the "submarine service is not only strong numerically but in quality it has attained a fairly high standard."<sup>52</sup> The practice of officers being "trained for submarines immediately on entry as cadets" rapidly helped to build a pool of competent personnel.<sup>53</sup>

Just two months before the outbreak of the Second World War, Admiral Ivan S Isakov stated that the Soviet Union was one of the world's leading submarine powers and asserted that, in the event of war, Russia would "beat the enemy in his own waters."<sup>54</sup> However, despite its growing strength, it was not until the Second World War that much information about the Soviet Navy was published in the British press.<sup>55</sup> At the start of World War II, the largest submarine fleet in the world was Russian. Possessing in the order of 165 to 185 boats, it compared with approximately 80 French, 75 American, 65 Japanese, 57 German and 55 British submarines.<sup>56</sup>

Because of the Soviet position under the terms of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, it became even more important on the outbreak of war to assess the military threat posed by the Soviet Union, if it proved an enemy, and the value of Russia, if an ally. As a consequence, the NID produced a timely paper providing the Soviet naval ORBAT on 1 October 1939.

The Baltic Fleet based on Kronshtadt was estimated to possess 53-60 modern submarines. The estimates for the other fleets were: 19-26 modern submarines with the Northern Fleet based on Murmansk,<sup>57</sup> 50 modern submarines with the Black Sea Fleet based on Sevastopol,<sup>58</sup> and 80 modern submarines with the Pacific Fleet based on Vladivostok.<sup>59</sup> This gave a total of between 202 and 216 submarines, as compared to the 165 to 185 submarines now thought to have existed.

---

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p 5, f 267.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, p 7, f 269.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>54</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, pp 372-373. For a brief biography of Isakov, see V Arsen'yev, "Son of the Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1989), pp 83-87.

<sup>55</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 372.

<sup>56</sup> Polmar, *Soviet Naval Power*, p 12.

<sup>57</sup> Four months later, the NID suggested there were 25 submarines, but coyly noted for the *Summary of Naval and Political News* that as "most of the information concerning the Soviet Northern Fleet is obtained from secret sources, it is not possible to give a list of names of vessels believed to compose it"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Northern Fleet", *SNPN*, no 13 (2 February 1940), p 2, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>58</sup> By early 1940, this figure had been reduced to 44 boats; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Black Sea Area", *SNPN*, no 14 (9 February 1940), p 5, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>59</sup> PRO, FO 371/23696, "U.S.S.R. Naval Forces 1.10.39" (hereinafter "Naval Forces 1.10.39"), p 1, f 308, SECRET, attached to DNI to Jebb, Foreign Office (29 September 1939), f 307. In early 1940, the NID confined itself to a broad estimate of 60-80 submarines for the Pacific Fleet; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Far Eastern Area", *SNPN*, no 15 (16 February 1940), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL.

Because of the Baltic-White Sea Canal, it was recognised that some of the larger submarines would probably be transferred in the autumn from the Baltic to the Northern Fleet in order that they could remain in ice-free waters.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, it was reported that the submarine programme was continuing.<sup>61</sup>

Conflict with the Soviet Union remained a possibility at this time because of the close pre-war relations instituted between Germany and Russia by the Nazi-Soviet Pact. In October 1939, there was a scare that 14 Russian submarines had passed through the Kiel Canal with the intention of operating in the North Sea, potentially against British vessels.<sup>62</sup> The following month, the NID produced a report entitled "Naval Aspects of the Possibility of War Between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain". The section which considered potential Russian naval actions against the United Kingdom stated that Soviet "modern surface vessels at present are few in number".<sup>63</sup> As the Russians clearly were not a match for the Royal Navy on the surface, the intelligence assessment recognised that Soviet naval action against the British would have to be confined to the use of submarines. In particular:

The Soviet submarine potential for action in the Atlantic and North Sea was assessed at about 70 boats, operating from Murmansk. The lack of heavy naval forces to defend this base and returning submarines was regarded as being a major weakness. The Black Sea submarines would only be able to operate in the Mediterranean if Turkey entered the war on the Soviet side. The Pacific Fleet boats would be faced with long transits from Vladivostock to the Shanghai and Hong Kong areas and DNI doubted whether Russian submarine captains were "capable of prosecuting an effective submarine war under great difficulties and at considerable distances from their bases."<sup>64</sup>

Therefore, the potential threat from the Soviet Navy to British sea lines of communication was still perceived as limited.

The period between the outbreak of war in September 1939 and June 1941 gave Soviet industry time to increase its production rate.<sup>65</sup> In 1940, there was a "spectacular increase in the building of submarines; nearly three times the number produced for the Russian flotillas in 1939 were added in

---

<sup>60</sup> PRO, FO 371/23696, "Naval Forces 1.10.39", p 1, f 308.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, f 309.

<sup>62</sup> See PRO, FO 371/23701, "Passage of submarines through Kiel Canal" (15 October 1939), ff 114-135.

<sup>63</sup> NHB, "Naval Aspects of the Possibility of War Between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain", *SNPN*, no 3 (15 November 1939), p 8, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>64</sup> Brown, "The Soviet Surface Fleet", p 13, n 25.

<sup>65</sup> For a NID assessment of Soviet submarines built and building at this time, see NHB, "U.S.S.R.; New Construction", *WIR*, no 26 (6 September 1940), pp 19-20, SECRET.

1940."<sup>66</sup> In just over a decade, between November 1930 and June 1941, a total of 210 submarines were delivered.<sup>67</sup>

For Churchill, the "combination against us of Germany, Russia, and Japan was the worst of our fears".<sup>68</sup> Operation Barbarossa, the German onslaught against Russia, brought a different concern: how long could the Soviet Union remain in the fight? British intelligence, therefore, had the task of collecting information on the vessels, equipment and proficiency of Russian naval forces, and assessing the Soviet Navy's combat capability and willingness to endure.

Hitler's "Directive No 21" had envisaged the destruction of the Soviet Baltic Fleet. Although this was not achieved within the opening phase of the campaign as planned, the surprise gained by the invasion still brought Germany immediate naval gains. On the outbreak of war, over 40 Soviet ships, with a combined tonnage of 123,000 gross registered tons (GRT), lay in German ports and were immediately confiscated.<sup>69</sup>

However, by the time of the German invasion, the Soviet Navy had some 218 boats in its submarine ORBAT: there were 65 submarines in the Baltic "Red Banner" Fleet under Vice-Admiral Vladimir F Tributs, 15 submarines in the Northern Fleet under Rear-Admiral Arseni G Golovko, 47 submarines in the Black Sea Fleet under Vice-Admiral Filipp S Oktyabrsky, and 91 submarines in the Pacific Fleet under Vice-Admiral Ivan S Yumashev.<sup>70</sup> Soviet sources also suggest there was a total of 218 submarines on 22 June 1941.<sup>71</sup>

At the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War, there were probably 15 Russian submarines in the Northern Fleet: series I (D3); series X (*Shch*) 401-404 and 421-422; series XII (171-173); series XII-bis

---

<sup>66</sup> Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia*, p 370.

<sup>67</sup> Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 93.

<sup>68</sup> Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War, Volume Two: Their Finest Hour* (London, 1951), p 468.

<sup>69</sup> A Panteleeve, *Morskoi Front* (1965), cited in the foreword to Arkhangel (pseud of Lieutenant-Commander Dickinson, RN (Retd)), "The Contribution of the Soviet Navy to the Successful Conclusion of World War Two", (1986). The GRT value is a ship's tonnage measured in total cubic contents expressed in units of 100 cubic feet/2.83 m<sup>3</sup>. The British assessment of initial Soviet war losses is found in NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *WIR*, no 75 (15 August 1941), pp 34-35; SECRET.

<sup>70</sup> Breemer, *Soviet Submarines*, p 59. In early 1941, the prestige of the Soviet Navy was increased by the election of Yumashev as a Candidate Member of the Central Executive Committee, and Tributs and Oktyabrsky as members of the Central Auditing Committee of the Communist Party; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Authority of Senior Soviet Naval Officers", *WIR*, no 60 (2 May 1941), p 30, SECRET.

<sup>71</sup> Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8, pp 14-24.

(174-176); and series XIV (K1-K2).<sup>72</sup> Ruge, however, believed the number was possibly 21 submarines.<sup>73</sup> This is an overestimate, although it accords with the figures compiled by the NID for 23 June 1941, which showed four "D"-class submarines, one "L"-class submarine, six "M"-class submarines, one "P"-class submarine, and nine *Shch*-class submarines.<sup>74</sup> Submarine totals for the other fleets were given as: 100 (Baltic), 37 (Black Sea) and 96 (Pacific), for an overall figure of 254 boats.<sup>75</sup>

British naval intelligence, therefore, carefully followed the building of Russian submarines throughout the 1930s, as is reflected in contemporary NID reporting. By the time of the Second World War, the NID was tending to overestimate the number of Russian submarines. In June 1941, there was an exaggeration of 36 boats for the Soviet Navy as a whole. Russian submarines, however, were not considered to be a direct and vital threat to British shipping. Instead, their importance to the United Kingdom came to lie in their potential use against Nazi Germany.

---

<sup>72</sup> Meister, *Soviet Warships of the Second World War*, p 171.

<sup>73</sup> Ruge, *The Soviets as Naval Opponents*, p 136.

<sup>74</sup> PRO, FO 371/29504, C R W Lamplough, NID, "U.S.S.R. Naval Forces" (23 June 1941), p 1, f 27, SECRET.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, pp 1-2, ff 27-28.

## CHAPTER V

### THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST



*"Girls and those who cannot stand the smell of the dead,  
Faint when you hear the word 'borders' because  
Borders reek of death."<sup>1</sup>*

*(Velemir Khlebnikov)*

This chapter provides an overview of the earliest days of wartime Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation, and includes information gathered by the NID on the previous period of Russo-German collaboration.

The "white nights" season of Russia, when twilight makes the warm summer days long, was rudely shattered in the early hours of the morning of 22 June 1941. Leading formations of the German *Wehrmacht* advanced into the Soviet Union in a surprise attack, sweeping aside Red Army units stationed on the border between the Russian and German sectors of Poland, which had been determined by the Secret Agreement to the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

Unquestioning obedience and faith in the person of Stalin, a rigidly defensive posture for the armed forces, suspicion of British and American warnings that an invasion was looming, Stalin's failure to accept the reports of his own intelligence services,<sup>2</sup> all combined to produce a military situation not far short of a rout.<sup>3</sup>

In March 1940, Finland had finally been subdued by the Red Army and accepted Russian terms of surrender.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, in the far north there was little operational depth for a Russian defence. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Velemir Khlebnikov, cited in Vladimir Mikushevich, "Borders Reek of Death; Low-income Groups are the Staunchest Defenders of Russian Frontiers", *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (25 September 1992), in *Daily Review: Translations from the Russian Press*, vol XXXVIII, no 186 (10525) (25 September 1992).

<sup>2</sup> The Soviet leader "was receiving a constant stream of dispatches ... about the concentration of the German troops at the frontier. The reports sent to Stalin were based on numerous sources of information, gathered by the secret service and the intelligence units"; Dmitri Volkogonov, "The German Attack, the Soviet Response, Sunday, 22 June 1941", in Erickson and Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa*, pp 80-81.

<sup>3</sup> Over a year before, the War Office had predicted that the Red Army would "prove particularly vulnerable to the effects of surprise, owing to the rigidity of its doctrines and to its inherent inability to provide against the unexpected"; General Staff, War Office (7 March 1940), in NHB, "The Red Army; A War Office Appreciation", *WIR*, no 1 (15 March 1940), p 31, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>4</sup> The conflict with Finland was considered the "first serious test" for the combat training of Russian submariners; Captain 1st Rank D P Sokha, "The Past and Present of Submarine Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 20-29. For the Soviet Navy as a whole, the commencement of hostilities

border demarcation agreed with Hitler's Reich passed east of the Finnish port of Petsamo and cut off part of the Rybachi Peninsula, which separates Finnmark from the approaches to the warm-water ports of Russia's Kola Inlet. On the Russo-Finnish frontier to the south, the line of the border was drawn west of Viipuri (Vyborg). Across the Gulf of Finland, the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were all included within the Soviet orbit and soon held down by Russian forces of occupation. At the southern end of the protracted line partitioning the face of Europe, the Red Army's occupation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina made complete the Soviet Union's hold on Eastern Europe from the Arctic Ocean to the mouth of the Danube on the Black Sea.

The invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler's Operation Barbarossa, was initially set for the middle of May 1941, but the German attack on Yugoslavia caused a delay because of disruption to troop movements.<sup>5</sup> Despite specific warnings from the British Government of the imminence of the German attack,<sup>6</sup> including an accurate prediction of the date of the invasion,<sup>7</sup> the Soviet Union continued to be punctilious in fulfilling its agreement with the Nazis. The Soviets provided Germany with every kind of economic assistance promised in terms of food and raw materials, including vital deliveries of rubber.<sup>8</sup>

---

"immediately highlighted much of what for long years had remained unconsidered, undone, unorganized, and left 'for later'"; Captain 1st Rank M Monakov, "'Flare' Over the Baltic", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1990), pp 24-31. For information on the Navy's air war with Finland, see Colonel V Mel'nikov, "Development of Naval Aviation in the Prewar Period", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1990), pp 44-49.

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of the historical debate over if, and for how long, Barbarossa was delayed by events in Yugoslavia, see Dušan Biber, "The Yugoslav *Coup d'État*, 27 March 1941", in Erickson and Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa*, pp 38-41.

<sup>6</sup> In early June 1941, the JIC had considered that "Germany's aims were mainly economic and that collaboration between the two countries was more likely than war"; PRO, CAB 81/102, "German Intentions Against the U.S.S.R.", JIC(41)218 (Complement) (5 June 1941), p 1, para 1, SECRET. By 10 June, the JIC estimated that "the latter half of June will see either war or agreement"; *ibid*, "Likelihood of a German Attack on Russia. (An Appreciation by General Sikorski)", JIC(41)247 (10 June 1941), p 2, para 3 (c), SECRET. Two days later, it was reiterated that "matters are likely to come to a head during the second half of June"; PRO, CAB 81/103, "German Soviet Relations", JIC(41)252(0) (12 June 1941), p 1, para 3, MOST SECRET. Also, for the first time it was clearly stated that: "Fresh evidence is now at hand that Hitler has made up his mind to have done with Soviet obstruction to Germany and intends to attack her"; *ibid*, para 2.

<sup>7</sup> For example, the Chairman of the JIC, Victor Cavendish-Bentinck, recalled that about "June 10 or so, I spent half-an-hour with Anthony Eden in the latter's room at the Foreign Office trying to convince Maisky [the Soviet Ambassador to London] that the Germans were going to attack and that this attack would take place on either 21/22 June or 28/29 June. I added that I would put money on 22 June. Maisky refused to believe this"; McLachlan, *Room 39*, p 243.

<sup>8</sup> An early assessment of what the Soviet Union could supply Germany had suggested that aid would be limited, mainly because of Russian domestic requirements; NHB, "What Can Russia Give the Reich", *SNPN*, no 1 (16 October 1939), pp 47-51, CONFIDENTIAL. A further limiting factor was transport infrastructure and it was felt that the Russo-German Trade Agreement would "throw a heavy burden on the [Russian] railways which may prove too hard for them to bear unless they have recourse to German help on a considerable scale"; NHB, "Russian Railways", *SNPN*, no 12 (26 January 1940), p



Besides the provision of essential supplies, the Soviet Union also afforded active naval assistance to its German ally.<sup>9</sup> In particular, on 9 July 1940, the German armed merchant raider *Komet* left Bergen in Norway for operations against British shipping in the Pacific, making use of the threat-free waters of the Soviet Northern Sea Route.<sup>10</sup> Sailing northabout, her safe passage through the ice was aided by the presence in the Kara Sea of the icebreakers *Lenin* and *Iosif Stalin* and, further east, the *Lazar Kaganovitch*.<sup>11</sup> In the course of the German ship's cruise in the Pacific and Indian Oceans three merchant ships, totalling 21,378 tons, were sunk. However, the *Komet* shared a further seven ships destroyed with the German raider *Orion*, "so that her total accomplishment may be assessed as six and a half ships of 42,959 tons."<sup>12</sup>

---

40, CONFIDENTIAL. A further study examined the important question of potential oil supplies to Germany; NHB, "Soviet Oil and German Needs", *SNPN*, no 2 (1 November 1939), pp 27-30, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>9</sup> For a recent account, see Tobias R Philbin III, *The Lure of Neptune: German-Soviet Naval Collaboration and Ambitions, 1919-1941* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, pp 279-280. This passage was first navigated by the Swedish explorer Nordenskjöld in 1878-1879, followed by Amundsen in the *Maud* in 1920-1922. Thereafter, until 1991, the voyage of the *Komet* was the last time that a non-Soviet vessel was allowed to navigate the entire route; Benedict Goldsack, "Breaking the Ice", *Geographical*, vol 64, no 2 (February 1992), p 25. The NID was well aware of the Soviet Union's "strategic advantage of being able to transfer naval forces unobserved and free from interference from west to east"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Northern Sea Route", *SNPN*, no 10 (12 January 1940), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL. In 1936, it was reported that the annual number of ships using the route was about 80, but that there were plans to increase this capacity to about 300 vessels; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Northern Sea Route", *M.I.R.*, September, 1936, no 208 (15 September 1936), p 59, CONFIDENTIAL. Although it was not possible to keep the route itself under observation, in 1940 the DNI recommended the provision of a coast watching service from northern Norway and observation of the Bering Strait from Alaska to "keep some kind of watch on its two extremities"; PRO, ADM 223/475, Lieutenant, RNVR, to Colonel Craig, "A Coast Watch on the Extremities of the Northern Route" (16 March 1940), SECRET. It should be noted that the British were able to rely on the Canadian DNI and diplomatic representation in San Francisco for additional intelligence on the Soviet Far East. See, for example, PRO, FO 371/23690, P D Butler, H M Consul-General, San Francisco, to DNI, Ottawa (29 September 1939), ff 196-197. However, information "on the Soviet Far Eastern ports had always been hard to come by and all attempts to have a British N.L.O. [Naval Liaison Officer] appointed to Vladivostok were thwarted by the Russians. D.N.I. Ottawa was able to forward reports on the Far East mostly from the masters of U.S. tankers who continued to carry oil there until the end of 1941 when the war with Japan began"; PRO, ADM 223/107, "Skeleton History of N.I.D. 16" (hereinafter "History of NID 16") (undated), p 3, para 6, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>11</sup> Oliver Walston, *Arktika: Through the North East Passage by Icebreaker* (London, 1994), pp 11-12. Information on Russian icebreakers was culled by the British from the Soviet press; see PRO, WO 208/3100, Ministry of Economic Warfare, "U.S.S.R., Naval, Main Administration of Northern Sea Route (G.U.S.M.P.)" (28 May 1941), SECRET.

<sup>12</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, p 547. One of the shared kills with *Orion* was the British liner *Rangitane* on 27 November 1940; *ibid*, p 283. For diary extracts, reminiscences and photographs by a survivor of the vessel, see CAC, J W Almond Papers, MISC 26. For information on the wartime activities of German auxiliary cruisers generally, see David Woodward, *The Secret Raiders: The Story of the Operations of the German Armed Merchant Raiders in the Second World War*, 2nd ed (London, 1955).

In Moscow there was close cooperation between the People's Commissariat for the Navy and Captain von Baumbach, the German Naval Attaché.<sup>13</sup> Russian facilities were also offered for the German U-boat campaign.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, post-war analysis by the NID of the German Naval Archives showed that in addition to "making use of Russia's considerable natural resources, Germany utilised numerous small harbours in the U.S.S.R. for fueling [*sic*] and equipping of their ships."<sup>15</sup> Right up to the very moment of invasion, all Soviet material assistance and moral support was provided to the Germans.

On the evening of 22 June 1941, Churchill addressed the nation over BBC radio and stated that any "man or state who fights on against Nazidom will have our aid ... That is our policy and that is our declaration. It follows therefore that we shall give whatever help we can to Russia and the Russian people."<sup>16</sup>

The Soviet Government made no direct response to the Prime Minister's speech, other than forwarding a request that the United Kingdom should accept a Soviet Military Mission. This was accepted by the Prime Minister on 7 July in a personal telegram to Marshal Stalin, in which he promised to mount a naval operation in the Arctic at a very early date and expressed the hope that contact would be established between the British and Russian Navies.<sup>17</sup> Three days later, a minute by Churchill developed the theme of naval cooperation: "It seems absolutely necessary to send a small mixed squadron of British

---

<sup>13</sup> The NID was concerned about rumours that assistance might extend to providing Germany some 15-20 submarines in exchange for technical assistance and machinery; NHB, "Soviet-German Naval Co-operation", *SNPN*, no 12 (26 January 1940), pp 4-5, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>14</sup> Reports were received by the NID that Germany intended "to make use of a sheltered anchorage in North Russia as a submarine base, both for refuelling and refitting"; *ibid*, p 5. The DNI, therefore, argued for a special reconnaissance to "determine whether or not there was any foundation for recent reports that Germany was making preparations to operate submarines for [*sic*] North Russian waters"; PRO, CAB 81/87, "Reconnaissance of North Russian Waters", in JIC(40)22 (19 April 1940), p 2, para 2, SECRET. The COS understood that one of the risks involved flying over Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish and Russian territory; PRO, CAB 81/96, "Reconnaissance of North Russian Waters; Memorandum by the Director of Naval Intelligence", JIC(40)30 (8 April 1940), SECRET. The Soviet Union clearly believed that the Royal Navy would be unable to combat the U-boat threat: "At present Germany has over 70 submarines and in a very short time she will be able to build another 70/80 five hundred ton boats. This will enable Germany to maintain at sea a minimum number of 45/50 submarines. Effective war against submarines cannot be successfully waged. This is proved by the small measure of success achieved by the search for and destruction of such vessels"; *Krasni Flot* (6 October 1939) cited in NHB, "A Russian View of Germany's Naval Situation", *SNPN*, no 2 (1 November 1939), p 51, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>15</sup> PRO ADM 223/51, E G N Rushbrooke, DNI, "Russian-German Co-operation from August, 1939 to June, 1941" (31 August 1945), p 10, f 325, SECRET.

<sup>16</sup> Winston S Churchill, *The Second World War, Volume Three: The Grand Alliance* (London, 1952), p 301.

<sup>17</sup> Prime Minister to Stalin (7 July 1941), in *ibid*, pp 307-308.

ships to the Arctic to form [*sic*] contact and operate with the Russian naval forces."<sup>18</sup> He considered that the "effect upon the Russian Navy and upon the general resistance of the Russian Army of the arrival of what would be called a British fleet in the Arctic might be of enormous value".<sup>19</sup>

Beside the promise of overt assistance, the United Kingdom immediately made available high-grade intelligence to the Soviet Union. The NID stated in early July 1941 that the JIC "make a daily Intelligence Signal to Moscow, consisting of information supplied to them by the various Ministries from *all* sources. The signal is approved by "C" before despatch."<sup>20</sup>

Faced with the reality of a fascist enemy driving deeply into Russia, the Soviet political leadership was forced to readjust its strategy overnight, simultaneously halting its condemnation of Britain and laudations of Germany. However, the essentially land-bound quality of Russian military thinking was demonstrated in a telegram from Stalin in which he proposed armed intervention by Britain at two points: in the Arctic and in northern France. Despite the obstacles, which he said he well understood, Stalin believed that a new front in northern France "would be popular with the British Army, as well as with the whole population of Southern England."<sup>21</sup> Russia possessed its own channels of communication with Communist activists in the United Kingdom and, though they were still reeling from the sudden and complete Soviet political *volte face*, it was only a short time before the slogans "Second Front Now" and "Strike Now in the West" were to found daubed on British walls.<sup>22</sup>

In the same telegram, Stalin also expressed his opinion that it would be "still easier to establish a front in the North. Here, on the part of Great Britain, would be necessary only naval and air operations, without the landing of troops or artillery. The Soviet military, naval, and air forces would take part in such an operation."<sup>23</sup> Stalin thus revealed his ignorance of the nature of amphibious warfare; indeed, of military art and strategy as practised beyond continental land frontiers. It was an ignorance which was to recur, at British cost, throughout the following four years of Anglo-Soviet cooperation.

---

<sup>18</sup> Prime Minister to First Lord and First Sea Lord (19 July 1941), in *ibid*, p 308.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>20</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, NID 4A, "British Liaison Mission to U.S.S.R." (9 July 1941), p 2, MOST SECRET. It is clear that the Russians made use of this material, sometimes referring to it when questioning the Royal Navy representatives in the Soviet Union. See, for example, PRO, ADM 199/1102, "British Naval Mission Moscow War Diaries" (hereinafter "War Diary") (15 August 1941), p 1.

<sup>21</sup> Stalin to the Prime Minister (18 July 1941), in Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, pp 309-310.

<sup>22</sup> Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then: A history of everyday life during the Second World War* (London, 1971), p 485.

<sup>23</sup> Stalin to the Prime Minister (18 July 1941), in Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, pp 309-310.

*THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST*

---

In reply, the Prime Minister reminded Stalin that British forces had been fighting alone for more than a year and that a landing in strength in northern France was currently out of the question. However, with regard to the Arctic, Churchill proposed that a detachment of British fighter aircraft should be sent to North Russia and based on Murmansk. Furthermore, he promised a four-part naval initiative. First, Churchill contemplated a naval air strike against German shipping off northern Norway and Finland. Secondly, the Prime Minister proposed to send a force of cruisers and destroyers to Spitsbergen, from where they could operate against German shipping in conjunction with Soviet naval forces. Thirdly, he promised a British flotilla of submarines for the interception of German coastal traffic in the Arctic and, finally, he announced his intention to send a minelayer with important supplies to Archangel.<sup>24</sup>

At the same time, arrangements were in hand for the dispatch of a vast quantity of material of all kinds to Russia.<sup>25</sup> To meet the pressing demands of the Soviet Union, Britain delved into its precious reserves of rubber.<sup>26</sup> Also, tanks and ammunition were promised despite severe shortages of these in the United Kingdom. By the end of July 1941, war supply and transport was geared, as far as possible, to help satisfy the critical requirements of Britain's newest ally.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the swift and positive reaction of Churchill to the invasion of the Soviet Union, both responsible military opinion in Britain and diplomatic circles in Moscow shared the view that Russia could hold out for a period of only three to six weeks against the Germans. Indeed, when a British Military Mission was dispatched to Moscow at the end of June 1941, the prevalent pessimistic attitude of the day was evident in the advice to the Head of Mission, Lieutenant-General Mason-MacFarlane, who was told by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, that: "from all the information at his disposal it seemed unlikely that the Russian Army would stand up to the Germans for more than about six weeks. He finished up by saying that if the worst came to the worst I and my Mission

---

<sup>24</sup> Prime Minister to Stalin (20 July 1941), in *ibid*, pp 310-311.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid* (25 July 1941), p 312.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid* (28 and 31 July 1941).

<sup>27</sup> Although anxious enough at the time to receive them, post-war Soviet writers dismissed the supplies provided to Russia as insignificant. For example, it was noted that "Soviet industry produced 489,000 artillery pieces, and 102,500 tanks and self-propelled artillery mounts during the war years, while foreign deliveries totalled 7,500 guns (or 1.5% of the total) and 9,100 tanks (or 8.9% of the total). Moreover ... during the last year they totalled less than 3% of domestic production"; G S Kravchenko, *Military Economy of the USSR* (Military Publishing Houses, 1963), p 389, cited in Captain 1st Rank S I Filonov, "Armed Conflict and Communications by Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1965), pp 33-41.

*THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST*

---

were to try to keep centres of resistance going in Russia as long as possible".<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the Naval Mission was "expected to impress on the Russians the need to destroy all port facilities, to make them 'unusable' and convince the Soviet navy to either ship the Arctic Fleet to British waters or scuttle it."<sup>29</sup>

From talks with the Soviet Ambassador, Ivan M Maisky, Churchill gained the impression that there was at least some possibility that the Soviet Union might be forced to capitulate and, therefore, have to seek terms for a separate peace with Germany.<sup>30</sup> This understanding reinforced the need, already accepted by the United Kingdom, of supplying Russia with all necessary supplies that could possibly be spared. Accordingly, Lord Beaverbrook and, despite the fact that the United States was not yet at war, presidential representative W Averell Harriman arrived in Moscow at the end of September 1941 with authority to negotiate the supply of an immense quantity of military equipment and raw material.<sup>31</sup>

Although they were initially given a cold reception, the British and American emissaries reached an agreement with their Soviet hosts. The final arrangement caused a considerable dislocation in British military plans, not only because of the ensuing sacrifices from domestic armaments production, but also due to the necessity of foregoing munitions which the United Kingdom was meant to receive from

---

<sup>28</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, "Russian Interlude (draft)" (undated), pp 1-2. It should be noted that folder MM31, "Head of British Military Mission in Russia, 1941", contains a series of draft articles which are mostly untitled and undated, although apparently written after the Second World War.

<sup>29</sup> ADM 1/11158, "Instructions to Naval Section of Military Mission" (23 June 1941), cited in Gabriel Gorodetsky, "An Alliance of Sorts; Allied Strategy in the Wake of Barbarossa", in Erickson and Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa*, p 106.

<sup>30</sup> Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 363. This was a persistent fear in London, but to the Military Mission in Moscow "who got to know something of Russia in war time, it always seemed practically out of the question. It could naturally never be altogether ruled out as at any given moment the Kremlin will always do just what it thinks, maybe for the best, at that moment. Yet the only potential menace to Russia on land in Europe was Germany, and the possibility of Hitler giving Stalin terms which he could accept, or later in the war vice versa, were practically negligible"; IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated). Similarly, Admiral Miles believed that the Russians would fight as long as there was a German on Soviet soil; CAC, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Alfred Dudley Pickham Rogers Pound Papers, DUPO 2/4, comment by Miles in interview about Pound (17 June 1968). Nevertheless, the possibility of a separate peace was examined. From the start, the JIC considered "that the conclusion of an armistice or peace treaty between Germany and Russia is improbable"; PRO, CAB 81/103, "The Effects of a Russian Collapse", JIC(41)290(0) (Final) (31 July 1941), p 1, para A 1, SECRET. The reason given was that Stalin was "unlikely to regard a peace treaty with Germany as compatible with the survival of his own regime"; *ibid*, "The possible course of events in Russia, should the Soviet Army suffer defeat", Appendix to "The Effects of a Russian Collapse", JIC(41)290(0) (Final) (31 July 1941), p 7, para A, SECRET. See also, for example, PRO, CAB 81/117, "Russo-German Peace; Note by the Secretary", JIC(43)351(0) (28 August 1943), MOST SECRET; and PRO, CAB 81/118, "The Strategic Consequences of a Separate Armistice Between Germany and Russia if One Were Signed", JIC(43)421(0) (Draft) (20 October 1943).

<sup>31</sup> For further details, see Anne Chisholm and Michael Davie, *Beaverbrook: A Life* (London, 1992), pp 410-419.

*THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST*

---

America.<sup>32</sup> The supplies for Russia were to be made available at British and United States centres of production and Britain pledged, with America, to give aid to the transportation of these materials to the Soviet Union; but no more. That is, the responsibility for conveying supplies to Russia formally lay with the Red Navy and Soviet merchant marine. All naval assistance by the British was a "goodwill effort".<sup>33</sup>

The problem to be overcome was the safe transfer of the supplies to their intended destination. Access to Russia was available at only three points. The first, across the Pacific Ocean to Vladivostok, was too far removed from the United Kingdom and from the war front, although it proved invaluable when the United States entered the war. The second was via Persia (Iran) to the Caucasus. However, this involved a long sea voyage around the Cape of Good Hope and across "neutral if not hostile Persia, where communications were primitive."<sup>34</sup> The remaining possibility was across the Barents Sea, following the same course as the powder and shot which had been supplied to the armies of Ivan the Terrible four centuries earlier. Indeed, this proved to be by far the most important of the routes available to the British.

Although the mounting and sustaining of the Arctic convoys was about the best that British forces could do for the Soviet Union at this time, on 15 September 1941, the Prime Minister received an exhortation from Stalin to send 25 to 30 divisions to Archangel, or alternatively via Persia to the Caucasus in support of the Red Army.<sup>35</sup> In his memoirs, Churchill reflected that it "seemed hopeless to argue with a man thinking in terms of utter unreality."<sup>36</sup>

It was soon apparent that, despite the Soviet obligation to load cargoes into their own ships at British or American ports, there was insufficient Russian tonnage to carry the very large quantities which the United Kingdom and the United States were prepared to send, and Russia's strategic predicament required. As a result, it became accepted practice that the vast majority of vessels in the Arctic convoys

---

<sup>32</sup> The final agreement provided that Britain would give aircraft and tanks, and the United States oil and petrol, to the Soviet Union. Other Russian requirements met were for the supply of various metals, including aluminium and copper, phosphates, rubber, sugar, wheat, machine tools and army boots. The Soviet Union, in return, offered chrome, magnesite, pitch, potash, canned salmon and timber; Historical Section, Tactical, Torpedo & Staff Duties Division, *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II* (hereinafter *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative*), p 154, para 393.

<sup>33</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p 229.

<sup>34</sup> Patrick Beesly, "Convoy PQ 17: A Study of Intelligence and Decision-Making", *INS*, vol 5, no 2 (April 1990), p 293.

<sup>35</sup> Stalin to Churchill, cited in Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 367.

<sup>36</sup> Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 367.

*THE STORM BREAKS IN THE EAST*

---

would be British and American.<sup>37</sup> With regard to this supply strategy, the Admiralty's viewpoint v hardly taken into account for the overriding consideration was always the political requirement to keep the Soviet Union in the war.

As a consequence of the German invasion, therefore, Britain gained an ally "rich in potential reserves of man power and materials, but needing time for their deployment, and geographically somewhat remote."<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, "co-operation with Russia was to present many new and difficult problems for the Royal Navy without immediate compensating advantages."<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the Russian difficulties were not fully known to the British, who were hoping for a measure of naval cooperation and support from their new allies. It is now possible, however, to understand something of the military situation in Russia as seen through the eyes of the Soviet Naval Staff.

As an illustration of the problems within the Red Navy, a bare month before the German invasion, a committee of inspection from the People's Commissariat of the Navy arrived at Northern Fleet Headquarters at Polyarnoe. It was headed by Admiral Lev M Galler, Chief of the Main Naval Staff, a competent former Tsarist officer with "great practical experience in serving aboard ship."<sup>40</sup> Finding that not a single destroyer was in a fit state to proceed to sea, he reported that the Northern Fleet was "not capable of combat operations".<sup>41</sup> But it was not only in the state of combat readiness of warships that there were problems; operational control was severely circumscribed.

Within the rigid Soviet system of command the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet, Admiral Arseni Grigoriyevich Golovko, came under the direct operational control of the Naval Staff in Moscow, as demonstrated by the order, made on 22 June contrary to his advice, that two *Shch*-class submarines

---

<sup>37</sup> Similarly, at the outbreak of war, "the Soviet merchant marine in the Pacific was obsolescent and badly in need of repairs." As such, the majority of vessels supplying Russia through the trans-Pacific service were American; NHB, "Soviet Shipping in the Pacific (From an article in the O.N.I. Weekly, by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence)", *WIR*, no 192 (12 November 1943), p 66, SECRET.

<sup>38</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p 145, para 383.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> N Kuznetsov, "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization of the Fleets and Their Leadership in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1975), pp 16-22. The NID had reached the same conclusion as Admiral Kuznetsov, stating in early 1940 that Galler was "looked upon as having more sea experience and knowledge than any of the other senior Soviet Naval Officers"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Personalities; Chief of the Naval Staff", *SNPN*, no 18 (8 March 1940), p 5, CONFIDENTIAL. Despite his Tsarist pedigree, he had managed to escape the purges of the 1930s perhaps, as the NID suggested, because his services had become "indispensable"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Appointment of New Head of the Navy", *M.I.R.*, December, 1938, no 235 (15 December 1938), p 29, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>41</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 18.

under his command should be sent to protect the Gourlo, the narrow entrance to the White Sea, in company with the destroyers *Grozny* and *Sokrushitelny*, and a squadron of MBR-2 light naval bombers.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, in matters of A/A defence, and any aspects of land defence, Golovko was subordinate to the Commander of the Leningrad Military District, Lieutenant-General M M Popov based at Leningrad, and the commander of the 14th Army, Lieutenant-General V A Frolov based at Murmansk.<sup>43</sup>

Significantly, operational messages from Moscow were addressed not to the Commander-in-Chief, but to the War Council of the Northern Fleet.<sup>44</sup> This council consisted of Golovko; Brigade Commissar A A Nikolaev, later promoted Rear-Admiral and Deputy Commander-in-Chief; and Rear-Admiral S G Kucherov, the Fleet Chief of Staff.<sup>45</sup> Any important decisions required consensus among the individual members of the War Council before they could be implemented.

It was clear that if Golovko's forces could be reinforced and kept at a high state of seagoing efficiency, the Northern Fleet would be in a position to make a positive and significant contribution in support of the Royal Navy in the hard fighting which lay ahead. This assessment was shared by the British naval representatives in Russia, and by the Admiralty, as soon as the Russian ORBAT in North Russia was confirmed. However, Britain was to learn to its cost that Soviet naval forces had to be judged by different standards than those applied to the Royal Navy. It was for this reason, among others, that the operation of the Arctic convoys was to prove an even more arduous and thankless task than was foreseen; one which would stretch the crews of Britain's warships and merchantmen to the limit.

It was the historic allies of Russia, its harsh winter climate and limitless expanse, coupled with the immense tenacity and resilience of the Russian people, that enabled the nation to stem the German attack before the gates of Moscow and Leningrad. Despite indigenous Soviet industrial output, Britain's ability to project maritime power was necessary for the provision of additional *matériel* to ensure the Red Army's survival and to help finally turn the tide of war against Germany.

---

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p 29.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, pp 22-25; and Alan Clark, *Barbarossa: The Russian-German Conflict, 1941-45* (London, 1995), pp 38-39.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, pp 28-30.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p 18.



The first Arctic convoy sailed from the United Kingdom at the end of August 1941. Between then and 1945, 40 outward-bound convoys comprising 811 merchant ships sailed for North Russia. A total of 715 ships in 37 convoys made the journey to Britain. A hundred ships totalling 60,837 GRT were sunk.<sup>46</sup> In defence of the Arctic convoys, 18 Royal Navy ships were destroyed with a total loss of 1,944 officers and men.<sup>47</sup> One Polish submarine, the *P551/Jastrzab*, was also sunk in error.<sup>48</sup> German losses in operations against the Arctic convoys consisted of the battle-cruiser *Scharnhorst*, three large destroyers, 32 U-boats and numerous aircraft.<sup>49</sup>

The Anglo-Soviet alliance was conceived in a period of duplicity and mistrust, and brought forth at a time of mutual calamity. As the first Head of the British Military Mission to Moscow said, it was "very clear that we had only Hitler to thank for an alliance which was as fortuitous as it was unholy."<sup>50</sup> However, the Soviet Union was to receive military aid on an immense scale, though this fact was "consistently ignored or underestimated by Soviet historians".<sup>51</sup> It is only since the collapse of the Soviet Union that Russians have been able to acknowledge openly the contribution made by the Arctic convoys.<sup>52</sup>

The statistics of supplies delivered show that the United Kingdom carried out its part in good faith.<sup>53</sup> The casualty record confirms that part of the price of keeping the Russians fighting in the war was paid in British sailors' blood. But also, some of the sacrifice was felt in other theatres of operations as much needed supplies and military equipment, for example for the defence of the Malay Peninsula and Malta, were diverted to the aid of Russia.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Schofield, *The Russian Convoys*, Appendix I, p 223.

<sup>47</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 447.

<sup>48</sup> J Rohwer and G Hummelchen, *Chronology of the War at Sea 1939-1945: The Naval History of World War Two*, 2nd ed (London, 1992), p 137.

<sup>49</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 447.

<sup>50</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated).

<sup>51</sup> Dmitri Volkogonov, *Stalin: Triumph & Tragedy*, edited and translated by Harold Shukman (London, 1991), p 485.

<sup>52</sup> See, for example, Stepan A Mikoyan, "Barbarossa and the Soviet Leadership; A Recollection", in Erickson and Dilks (eds), *Barbarossa*, p 130. Similarly, for a recent breakdown and analysis of Lend-Lease supplies to Russia, see Boris V Sokolov, "The Role of Lend-Lease in Soviet Military Efforts, 1941-1945" (translated by Colonel David M Glantz), *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, vol 7, no 3 (September 1994), pp 567-586.

<sup>53</sup> See Schofield, *The Russian Convoys*, Appendix II, p 224.

<sup>54</sup> Fighter aircraft were also supplied to Russia even though it was argued that taking them from the Middle East was simply not possible and their removal from Great Britain would reduce the provision for Home Defence to below the "safety line"; PRO, CAB 79/16, "Assistance to Russia", in COS(41)408 (4 December 1941), p 3, para 4, f 79, SECRET.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE STRATEGIC SETTING



*"The control of the sea is of much importance ...  
If the people possess a long stretch of coast, and are masters of the sea  
or in alliance with a power which controls it,  
their power of resistance is quintupled".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Baron de Jomini)*

Although the probability of German forces striking eastward was considered for some months before June 1941, the effect on British strategy of a German invasion of the Soviet Union had not been clearly gauged by either the COS or the Admiralty.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, government circles considered that the Soviet Union would soon disintegrate under the weight and speed of the German attack. The poor showing of the Russians against Finland "gave that army such a bad reputation that the highest military authorities in London and Washington predicted its early collapse (perhaps three months)".<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Baron de Jomini, *The Art of War*, translated by Captain G H Mendell and Lieutenant W P Craighill (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), p 30, cited in Michael I Handel, *Masters of War: Sun Tzu, Clausewitz and Jomini* (London, 1992), p 70.

<sup>2</sup> Neglect of contingency planning included failing to earmark the 18 naval officers registered as Russian interpreters for liaison duties; PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 1, para 1, CONFIDENTIAL. Instead, the majority of them were "already holding important appointments"; PRO, ADM 223/252, NID IVa, "Naval Mission to Russia in the Event of a Russo-German War" (14 June 1941), p 1, para 3. Sub-Lieutenant Grey, a New Zealander on loan from the Royal Australian Navy, was one of the Russian speakers "grabbed" for liaison duties when the Arctic convoys began; interview with Sub-Lieutenant Ian Grey, RANVR (Retd) (14 April 1990).

<sup>3</sup> IWM, Godfrey Papers, Box 74/96/1, "The Naval Memoirs of Admiral J. H. Godfrey, Vol. V, 1939-1942, Naval Intelligence Division, Part I" (1965), p 95. A low opinion of the Soviet ground forces had been held for some time. Because of the purges, by the end of 1937 the Red Army's value "had sunk to practically zero in western calculations"; Ronald R Rader, "Anglo-French Estimates of the Red Army, 1936-1937", in Jones (ed), *Soviet Armed Forces*, p 274. A study of Red Army operations, under the command of Georgi Zhukov, against the Japanese Kwantung Army along the borders between Russia and Manchuria could have resulted in a more positive assessment of Soviet forces. However, a "minor Far Eastern sideshow at a time of unprecedented tension in Central Europe was not likely to provoke a rethinking of long accepted views"; Doerr, "The Changkufeng/Lake Khasan Incident", p 197. See, also, Christopher D Bellamy and Joseph S Lahnstein, "The New Soviet Defensive Policy: Khalkhin Gol 1939 As Case Study", *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, vol XX, no 3 (September 1990), pp 19-32; and Philip Snow, "Nomonhan - The Unknown Victory", *History Today*, vol 40 (July 1990), pp 22-28. Conflicts closer to home were also inadequately analysed. For the failure of British intelligence (with particular reference to air warfare in the Spanish Civil War and the Sino-Japanese War), see Wesley K Wark, "British Intelligence and Small Wars in the 1930s", *INS*, vol 2, no 4 (October 1987), pp 67-87.

The Russians were completely aware of these expectations and "they rightly suspected that the British incessant quest for intelligence was aimed at evaluating the duration of the 'breathing space'" that the German invasion had given beleaguered Britain.<sup>4</sup> Also, the Russians fully realised that the dispatch of *matériel* to them was dependent on their demonstrable and continued capacity to resist the *Wehrmacht*.<sup>5</sup>

In the aftermath of Barbarossa, responsibility for the operation of the Arctic convoys was given to Admiral Sir John Tovey, Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.<sup>6</sup> The task which faced him was formidable and he considered that "the strategical situation ... was wholly favourable to the enemy".<sup>7</sup> Indeed, more than 2,000 miles separated the point of departure in Britain of the convoys and their destination in North Russia, with hostile air reconnaissance capable of covering the entire sea route. In addition, the German Air Force, from bases in northern Norway, possessed air superiority over the last 1,400 miles.

British land-based maritime air support was limited to operations from the Shetland base at Sullom Voe and from Iceland. Also, evasive routing of the convoys, made difficult enough because of enemy air observation, was further complicated by the southward movement of the Arctic sea ice in March and April each year. This natural obstacle forced convoys to steam to the south of Bear Island, some 250 miles from the Norwegian coast and within easy striking range of German bombers.

Besides the foul weather and freezing conditions encountered while operating in the north, ships and crews also had to cope with the distinctive navigational difficulties associated with the region. A further problem encountered in the Arctic latitudes was the length of daylight. For example, by 1 March each year there are 12 hours of daylight, including twilight. For the three-month interval between early May and August, the sun never sets at all, while for three weeks at either end of this period it remains twilight all through the night.

In these circumstances of ice, bad weather, difficult navigation and long daylight hours, concealment and evasive routing of convoys was very difficult. Similarly, the large distances involved imposed severe tactical impediments on the escorting warships. For example, refuelling was often impracticable, thereby restricting the Royal Navy's counter-offensive response to U-boats harrying a

---

<sup>4</sup> Gorodetsky, "An Alliance of Sorts", p 107.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Admiral of the Fleet Lord Tovey held this appointment from 1940 to 1943.

<sup>7</sup> Tovey, cited in Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 187.

convoy. In particular, lack of fuel frequently prevented escorts from carrying out the "hunt to exhaustion", which often led to a kill and was such a feature of ASW operations in the Atlantic.

In the middle of July 1941, as a direct consequence of one of Churchill's memoranda,<sup>8</sup> Rear-Admiral Philip Vian paid a flying visit to Moscow for talks with the Soviet Naval Staff on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet. At this time, Vian was commander-designate of a naval squadron intended to be based in the north.<sup>9</sup> Accompanied by Rear-Admiral Miles, the recently-appointed Head of the British Naval Mission in Moscow, he made a quick inspection of the facilities and defences at Archangel, Murmansk and Polyarnoe. Vian was concerned that the facilities were not good enough to base British ships in North Russia,<sup>10</sup> and the intelligence gained was forwarded to the DNI by the Naval Attaché, Clanchy,<sup>11</sup> for each service attaché in Moscow acted as "the channel of communication for information between his respective Service Department and the Mission."<sup>12</sup>

Discussions covered the demarcation of operational zones and the possibility of British ships being based on the Kola Inlet. Vian asked Golovko what assistance he would like from the Royal Navy. His reply was that the Russians were short of aircraft, and that they would like the British to attack the German bases at the ports of Kirkenes in northern Norway and Petsamo in Finland.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, in a hastily-mounted operation, an air strike was launched from the carriers *Furious* and *Victorious* on 30 July 1941, but the "results achieved were small",<sup>14</sup> especially for the loss of 15 aircraft.<sup>15</sup> However, under cover of this operation, Captain Grace in the minelayer *Adventure*,<sup>16</sup> with a valuable cargo of 224 magnetic mines, depth charges and other war *matériel*,<sup>17</sup> arrived safely at Archangel.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Prime Minister to First Lord and First Sea Lord (10 July 1941), in Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 308.

<sup>9</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, p 488.

<sup>10</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (19 July 1941).

<sup>11</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (16, 17 and 18 July 1941); and PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Notes on Visit to Archangel, Polyarnoe and Murmansk" (15-18 July 1941), SECRET.

<sup>12</sup> PRO, CAB 81/88, "Transmission of Intelligence to the British Liaison Mission in Moscow", in JIC(41)19 (26 June 1941), p 3, para 3, SECRET.

<sup>13</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 84. In the early stages of the Great Patriotic War, the "struggle for air supremacy took two forms; destroy the enemy in the air and on the ground ... only 20% were destroyed on the airfields. Consequently, at that time the basic form of the struggle ... was the air battle"; Lieutenant-General of Aviation B L Petrov, "The Development of Methods and Tactics for the Use of Soviet Naval Aviation", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1967), pp 36-42.

<sup>14</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, p 486.

<sup>15</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 75.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 223/251, Rear-Admiral N M Kharlamov to Admiral Sir Dudley Pound (17 September 1941).

<sup>17</sup> PRO, ADM 223/250, Naval Staff to Kharlamov (21 July 1941).

The weakness of air defences on the Kola Inlet had also been reported by Vian.<sup>19</sup> An alternative to the Murmansk area, therefore, was most desirable. Although at first the Admiralty said that Spitsbergen was wanted as a refuelling point on the way to Russia, reconnaissance demonstrated that it was unsuitable and, therefore, the Royal Navy stated that it had "no military value to them."<sup>20</sup> As a result, operations were limited to the evacuation of Spitsbergen's Norwegian and Russian inhabitants, and the destruction of its coal installations. This was accomplished by a squadron under Vian at the end of August 1941.<sup>21</sup> A small group of Norwegians would eventually be based on Spitsbergen, being kept supplied by RAF Catalinas, as it was felt that the "sheltered waters of the fjords might provide [the Germans] bases for refuelling escort vessels, while there was a need to prevent the Germans from using landing strips in the territory as bases for attacking the convoys."<sup>22</sup> The British, however, rejected as impracticable the possibility of using Spitsbergen themselves as an advanced naval and air base along the convoy route.

In the absence of a base between Iceland and North Russia, it became clear that Britain would have to accept whatever help and facilities that the Soviet Union was prepared to extend. Therefore, the convoys were wholly dependent on Soviet assistance at the ports of destination, and on the cooperation of Russian naval and air forces. However, the situation looked far from promising. In particular, Admirals Miles and Vian were surprised by the severe lack of suitable dock and repair facilities available under Golovko's command.<sup>23</sup>

Initially, the added burden of the Arctic convoys upon Tovey was not unduly heavy as German forces posed little threat, being mostly engaged in the Atlantic and Mediterranean at this time. But during the summer of 1941, as Army Group North advanced from East Prussia and Finland towards Leningrad, surface forces of the German Navy and a detachment of submarines were deployed in support of the *Wehrmacht's* Baltic flanks. At the same time, the *Luftwaffe* was tasked with attacking Soviet ports and bases in the Baltic and Black Seas. The onset of winter also helped to alleviate the Home Fleet's task, as the shortening daylight hours and worsening weather conditions helped to conceal the convoys from enemy

---

<sup>18</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (31 July and 1 August 1941).

<sup>19</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea: Volume I*, p 488.

<sup>20</sup> Brian Bond (ed), *Chief of Staff: The Diaries of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall, Volume Two, 1940-1944* (London, 1974), p 35.

<sup>21</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, pp 488-489.

<sup>22</sup> Ernest Schofield and Roy Conyers Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen: The RAF in Spitsbergen and North Russia in 1942* (London, 1987), p 67.

<sup>23</sup> Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip Vian, *Action This Day: A War Memoir* (London, 1960), pp 62-73.

surveillance. However, winter offered only a temporary respite, and by the end of the year several new factors were beginning to operate which boded ill for the Arctic convoys in the coming spring.

In the autumn of 1941, Hitler was already concerned for the security of his northern flank. He was "exceptionally sensitive to any Allied threat to Scandinavia",<sup>24</sup> and he became convinced that a major operation against northern Norway would be launched. Fighting on the Leningrad front became stable, and the requirement for German surface forces in the Baltic Sea was reduced as Russian naval forces there were virtually immobilised by the presence of extensive minefields.<sup>25</sup> Then, at the end of January 1942, Hitler transferred all Germany's capital ships to the Norwegian area, which he regarded as a "zone of destiny", together with large numbers of U-boats.<sup>26</sup>

The German Naval Staff made clear that in order for their ships and submarines to achieve success, a corresponding deployment of aircraft was required. Therefore, between February and June 1942, "the most highly trained elements of bomber and torpedo aviation were transferred from fields in southern Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France, to fields in northern Norway to disrupt shipping between English and Soviet ports".<sup>27</sup> So it was that, just as the northern route to Russia became of crucial importance, the measures taken by Hitler primarily for defence against an imaginary threat of invasion resulted in the deployment of strong forces in the most favourable positions for attacking the convoys.

The relocation of German air and naval power to the north coincided with the nadir of British and American fortunes. The British battlefleet was crippled by the sinking of the aircraft-carrier *Ark Royal*, the battleships *Barham*, *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, and by severe damage to the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* at the end of 1941. The Americans were reeling from the Japanese blow inflicted at Pearl Harbor on 7 December and required time to recover. In the Far East, the Japanese were sweeping the British and Americans before them. Malta was under savage air attack and British military reverses in Cyrenaica in

---

<sup>24</sup> Anthony Cave Brown, *Bodyguard of Lies* (New York, 1975), p 462.

<sup>25</sup> For details of German minelaying, see Captain 1st Rank V Achkasov, "Minelaying Operations in the Baltic in the Initial Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1977), pp 19-25. The Soviet Navy only possessed 80 minesweepers on the outbreak of war, with 30 of this total based in the Far East; Commander C A M Parrish, "Naval Aspects of the Soviet Military Reforms of 1924-28" (Sandhurst, October 1991), p 9, para 15. By early 1943, the NID reported that: "Broadly speaking the Soviet Baltic Fleet is no longer capable of acting as a naval force outside the Gulf of Finland, but its larger units have ample gunpower and A.A. defence to act in close support of the Red Army"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Baltic Fleet", *WIR*, no 151 (29 January 1943), p 70, SECRET.

<sup>26</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p 103.

<sup>27</sup> Captain 1st Rank M Ye Stepanov, "The Effect of the Development of Military Technology on the Execution of Combat Missions at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1964), pp 21-27.

North Africa had adverse repercussions for the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet, already seriously weakened by recent casualties. In the Battle of the Atlantic, the United States had failed to institute a convoy system along the American coast and U-boats were "picking off easily-found targets with virtual impunity."<sup>28</sup> It was only in the Soviet Union that the Germans received a check. Their armies, having failed to deal Russia a knockout blow in the autumn, were caught unprepared for the severity of the winter campaign.

While stalled before Leningrad and Moscow, the *Wehrmacht* prepared to launch a summer offensive deep into southern Russia. The Germans, however, were all too aware that the Russians had failed to succumb to the ferocity of the Barbarossa *Blitzkrieg*, and the campaign seemed to be degenerating into a prolonged affair with dreadful historical parallels to Napoleon's adventure of 1812. Furthermore, the increasing flow of British and American supplies was giving noticeable physical and moral support to the embattled Red Army.

During the opening phase of the Arctic convoys, between August 1941 and the end of February 1942, only one merchant ship had been damaged (the *Harmatris*) and one sunk (the *Waziristan*), both by submarine.<sup>29</sup> The *Matabele*, a *Tribal*-class destroyer, was also sunk on 17 January 1942 while on escort duty.<sup>30</sup>

By March 1942, the second and critical period of the struggle in the Arctic theatre was about to begin. Convoys PQ12 and QP8 were the first to sail under the less favourable conditions which had developed.<sup>31</sup> PQ12 sailed from Iceland on 1 March 1942, but was observed by German reconnaissance aircraft shortly thereafter.<sup>32</sup> In consequence, U-boats were instructed to interdict PQ12 and permission was sought from Hitler for a surface force consisting of the *Tirpitz*, flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Otto Ciliax, and a number of destroyers to put to sea and intercept.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Lieutenant Commander W J R Gardner, "The Course of the Battle", Battle of the Atlantic Seminar (Bracknell, 21 October 1991), p 7.

<sup>29</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, pp 53 and 57-59.

<sup>30</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 119.

<sup>31</sup> The letters "PQ" and "QP" were designators indicating convoys going to and from Russia respectively. Simultaneous departures minimised the frequency of deployment of Allied warships and provided the maximum concentration of forces.

<sup>32</sup> Schofield, *The Russian Convoys*, pp 31-32.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p 32.

As always, Hitler's main concern was "to avoid damage to his heavy ships",<sup>34</sup> and the German naval units were ordered to avoid action with superior forces. Ciliax did not take full account of the tremendous difficulties which faced Tovey in deploying covering forces for the Russian convoys. The German Navy tended to assume that such forces were always in the offing, and this must have contributed to the general hesitancy and lack of offensive spirit characteristic of operations by German surface forces in the Arctic theatre.

While the Germans overestimated British capabilities, the Royal Navy was under no illusions as to its true predicament. The strategic situation was entirely advantageous to the Germans, whose heavy ships operated close to the continental shores with the support of air reconnaissance and powerful striking forces of the *Luftwaffe*. It was also possible for a screen of U-boats to be provided in the channels between Spitsbergen and Norway. On the other hand, when British covering forces ventured east of Bear Island, they were 1,000 miles from home, devoid of shore-based air support, and with destroyers too short of fuel to escort damaged ships to harbour.

For Britain's Royal and Merchant Navies, Murmansk and Archangel were not merely names on a chart, but signified the arrival and departure points of convoys whose fate depended on the outcome of the Arctic battle. Murmansk may have been "heaved ... from the bog on the shores of the desolate Kola Peninsula",<sup>35</sup> but the warm-water ports of the Kola Inlet and their associated airfields represented forward Allied naval and air bases of great strategic value. Similarly, though the harbours around Archangel and Molotovsk in the White Sea were afflicted in winter by ice, the aerodromes in the region were well-placed for a major air defence effort in support of the Arctic campaign.

Although the Soviet Union was fighting for its very existence, in the north - at the two points where the *Wehrmacht's* flanks rested on the sea - German operations did not meet with the same success as the armoured thrusts of Army Group Centre and Army Group South. A two-pronged assault on Leningrad was halted and by the end of September 1941 the front was stabilised, with one tenuous link remaining across Lake Ladoga between the besieged city and the rest of Russia.

---

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p 75.

<sup>35</sup> NHB, "Northern Convoy Route; Adapted from a 'British Survey,' published by the British Association for International Understanding", *WIR*, no 120 (26 June 1942), p 56, SECRET.



Further north, the Germans gained two of their strategic objectives. The first was to secure control of points on the Baltic-White Sea Canal, thereby effectively preventing the transfer of ships between the Baltic and Northern Fleets. The second was the cutting of the Kirovsky (Murman) railway, which led south from Murmansk to Petrozavodsk. However, this did not isolate the Kola bases as intended, for the Russians were able to build a second line between Byelomorsk (Soroka) and Obozerskaya which enabled railway communication with Murmansk to be maintained from November 1941 to the end of the war.<sup>36</sup>

At the northern extremity of the German push into the Soviet Union, the Germans failed to achieve a third vital objective. A picked force of German and Austrian mountain troops under Colonel-General Eduard Dietl were set the vital task of capturing the Russian ice-free ports of Polyarnoe, Vaenga and Murmansk in the Kola Inlet, which lay only some 50 miles from the Finnish frontier to the east of Petsamo.

Before the end of June 1941 Golovko evacuated, unescorted, every vessel he could spare from the Kola Inlet to Archangel.<sup>37</sup> He also successfully landed 14th Army reserves at Titovka in the Motovsky Inlet for the support of the Red Army, which was steadily being forced back from the Russo-Finnish border into the Sredni and Rybachi Peninsulas.<sup>38</sup>

Captured German documents indicated that the occupation of Murmansk itself was planned for 29 June,<sup>39</sup> and the military situation was becoming desperate for Russia. It was under these circumstances that General Frolov called for naval support and, on 30 June, the Soviet destroyers *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky* landed reinforcements and shelled German forward troops.<sup>40</sup> The ships withdrew without loss, but Titovka fell to the Germans and the remaining troops withdrew to the Musta Ridge, which covers the neck of the Sredni Peninsula.<sup>41</sup>

With its base under threat from the land, the Northern Fleet awaited its fate. But this was a situation which had occurred before in Russian history, and the Northern Fleet's reaction to the military situation was almost exactly that of the Black Sea Fleet at Sevastopol in 1854 and of the First Pacific

---

<sup>36</sup> The German press "commented on the Soroka-Obozerskaya line in a tone of disappointment, mingled with some admiration for the secrecy with which the Russians managed to surround the construction of the railway"; *ibid*, p 58.

<sup>37</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, pp 37-39.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, p 35.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, pp 38-39.

<sup>40</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 71.

<sup>41</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 44, n 1.

Squadron at Port Arthur half a century later. Within a few days of the defensive stand taken on the Zapadnaya Litsa River and the Musta Ridge, units of hastily-armed Russian sailors were thrown into the front line to support the exhausted remainder of the 14th Army. On 6 July, an amphibious landing was made on the eastern shore of Zapadnaya Litsa Bay to slow the *Wehrmacht's* advance.<sup>42</sup>

The Red Navy's manpower was siphoned away by the transfer of highly-trained men from their proper stations. Destroyer, submarine and coastal-defence ratings, naval aviation specialists and ship-repairers, were all rushed into the gap.<sup>43</sup> But in Russian thinking, the seamen were there to protect the coastal flank of the USSR, if necessary as marines or naval special forces (*spetsnaz*).<sup>44</sup> Even the Red Navy regarded this task with pride, regarding as truly symbolic "the fact that there was a border marker beyond which the Hitlerites were unable to pass precisely in the sector of the front defended by the naval infantry."<sup>45</sup> More in keeping with its intended rôle, on 7 and 14 July the Soviet Navy carried out two further successful amphibious operations against the German seaward flank.<sup>46</sup>

By the end of July 1941, the military situation had stabilised along a front that was to change very little until the Soviet offensive in the Arctic in 1944.<sup>47</sup> It was against this strategic background that Captain Bevan, the newly-appointed SBNO, North Russia, arrived at Polyarnoe hoping to achieve a measure of cooperation with the Soviet Navy.

---

<sup>42</sup> Captain 1st Rank G Ammon, "Naval Landing Parties in the Arctic (First Period of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1975), pp 27-32. See also, Major-General of the Reserve N Kobelev, "Logistic Support of Amphibious Landings (based on the experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1987), pp 23-26.

<sup>43</sup> To help fill the manpower shortages that developed during the war, the Soviet Navy recruited 25,000 women; John Erickson, "Night Witches, Snipers and Laundresses", *History Today*, vol 40 (July 1990), p 33.

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of the latter see, for example, James F Gebhardt and William H Burgess III, "The Far North Origin of Naval Spetsnaz", in Major William H Burgess III (ed), *Inside Spetsnaz: Soviet Special Operations, A Critical Analysis* (Novato, California, 1990), pp 81-112. For a Soviet account of a naval infantryman who took part in many amphibious operations with the Northern Fleet, see M Velichko, "Twice Hero of the Soviet Union V. N. Leonov", translated from the Russian by Major James F Gebhardt (originally published as *Dvazhdy Geroy Sovetskogo Soyuz V. N. Leonov*, Military Press of the Ministry of the Armed Forces of the USSR, 1948).

<sup>45</sup> Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Fleet, Admiral G Yegorov, "The Red Banner Northern Fleet on Watch", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1973), pp 3-9.

<sup>46</sup> Ammon, "Naval Landing Parties", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 27-32.

<sup>47</sup> Soviet writers allowed that holding the Kola Peninsula throughout the entire war "was of great significance for military economics, since it secured communications with British and US ports"; "In the Fire of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1990), pp 15-20.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE BRITISH NAVAL MISSION TO THE SOVIET UNION,

JUNE 1941 - MAY 1942



*An "alliance is not made between arms but between men ...  
The British nation will therefore be considered as the most valuable ally in the world  
as long as it can be counted upon to show that ruthlessness and tenacity ...  
which enables it to carry through to victory any struggle that it once enters upon,  
no matter how long such a struggle may last  
or however great the sacrifice that may be necessary  
or whatever the means that have to be employed ..."*<sup>1</sup>

(Adolf Hitler)

This chapter introduces details from reports sent by the Naval Mission to the NID which illuminate aspects of the Soviet Navy's capabilities and performance. Most of this reporting was made possible only through Royal Navy personnel being based in the Soviet Union and working in close proximity with the Russians. Naval liaison, therefore, was the key to greater knowledge of the Red Navy. It also demonstrates that intelligence was deliberately sought, rather than being incidental to the main task of cooperation against Nazi Germany.

The Soviet Union extended a cautious response to Churchill's radio broadcast of 22 June 1941. However, the Russians did make one specific request; that the British Government should receive a Soviet Military Mission in London.<sup>2</sup>

It was made clear to the Soviets that, in order for military representation to be granted in London, reciprocal British rights would have to be conceded in Moscow. The consequence was that from June 1941 to October 1945, a British mission from the three armed services - 30 Military Mission - was allowed to operate in the Soviet Union. Although based in Moscow, the Mission also had outlying naval stations in North Russia and on the Black Sea. From 8 July, a two-service Soviet Mission was installed in London, under the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army and Director of Soviet Military Intelligence

---

<sup>1</sup> Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, cited in NHB, "The British Spirit - by Hitler", *WIR*, no 48 (7 February 1941), p 52, SECRET.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 307. It should be noted that the activities of the Russian Mission fall outside the scope of this thesis, although an insight can be gained from the files PRO, ADM 223/250 and 223/251.

(GRU), General F I Golikov,<sup>3</sup> with Rear-Admiral Nicholas Kharlamov as Head of the Naval Section.<sup>4</sup> Both British and Soviet Missions carried out various functions relating to the delivery of war supplies to Russia, and administrative and personnel matters such as the processing of escapees and released prisoners of war.<sup>5</sup>

The British Military Mission was charged with other vital functions. From the outset, "Whitehall considered the collection and exchange of intelligence to be one of the primary functions of both the British and Soviet military missions."<sup>6</sup> This intelligence cooperation was aimed against the common enemy, Germany. However, 30 Mission was also specifically ordered to gather intelligence on the Soviet Union:

When the first head of the British military mission to Moscow, Major-General [Lieutenant-General] Noel Mason Macfarlane [*sic*], was appointed in the fourth week of June 1941, his orders specified that he was to act as a conduit for the communication of intelligence to the Soviet General Staff and to acquire all possible information which would help the intelligence agencies in London to assess the Soviet Union's power, her capacity to withstand the German assault, and her ability to inflict serious damage on the invader.<sup>7</sup>

Although his primary task was to prolong Russian resistance, it was stated that reports were "required with regard to the disposition of Russian Naval forces."<sup>8</sup> The authority in London designated to act as the Mission's main point of contact was the office of the DMI.

The former head of Scientific Intelligence, Professor R V Jones, recalled that "we observed a rule handed down to us that we should not spy on allies",<sup>9</sup> and noted that Churchill had ordered that there "should be no espionage against Russia once the German attack in 1941 had brought the Russians into

---

<sup>3</sup> For a short biography, see Gabriel Gorodetsky, "Filip Ivanovich Golikov", in Harold Shukman (ed), *Stalin's Generals* (London, 1993), pp 77-88.

<sup>4</sup> Gorodetsky, "An Alliance of Sorts", p 112; and PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", pp 1-2, para 4, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>5</sup> By November 1942, the Soviet Mission comprised 19 officers; "Soviet Naval Mission in London", in PRO, ADM 223/248, DNI to First Sea Lord, "Soviet Allegations Against British Naval Liaison Officers in the Black Sea in 1941 and 1942" (hereinafter "Soviet Allegations") (1 November 1942), MOST SECRET. For the NID biographic profiles of members of the Soviet Mission, see NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Notes on Soviet Naval Officers", *WIR*, no 129 (28 August 1942), pp 45-46, SECRET.

<sup>6</sup> Smith, "Anglo-Soviet intelligence co-operation", p 51.

<sup>7</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, Folder 31; CIGS instructions for the mission, WO 193/645A, cited in *ibid*, pp 51-52.

<sup>8</sup> PRO, ADM 199/604, "Instructions to the Naval Section of the British Liaison Mission to the U.S.S.R." (undated), p 1, paras 2 (a) and (c), MOST SECRET.

<sup>9</sup> R V Jones, *Reflections on Intelligence* (London, 1989), p 35.

alliance with us."<sup>10</sup> Jones, however, "was not involved with Intelligence concerning the Soviet Navy at any time."<sup>11</sup> The truth was that the COS expected the British Military Mission "to provide intelligence of both Russian and German plans and resources."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, on the naval side, the DNI frequently directly ordered the Royal Navy staff in Russia to obtain intelligence on the Soviet Navy and its facilities.<sup>13</sup> To the Royal Navy personnel with the Naval Mission it may have appeared that any intelligence collection was "wholly incidental",<sup>14</sup> and that the immediate task was "bringing the Russian convoys safely into Kola Inlet and into the White Sea."<sup>15</sup> However, the fact was that: "after so many years of distrust and contention, the gathering of intelligence on Russia changed but little, and this because the Russians themselves were not prepared to divulge the slightest item of information ... which was not absolutely essential for the successful prosecution of the war".<sup>16</sup>

On 26 June 1941, Rear-Admiral Miles, the newly-appointed Head of the British Naval Mission to Russia, set off with a small naval staff by Catalina flying boat from Sullom Voe. Also aboard was the British Ambassador, Sir Stafford Cripps. In another flying boat was the head of the Air Mission, Air Vice-Marshal A Conrad Collier, and the head of 30 Military Mission and his staff.<sup>17</sup>

The appointment of Mason-MacFarlane as Head of 30 Mission was a blunder. The Foreign Office failed to anticipate adverse Soviet reaction to a lieutenant-general who, although he had distinguished himself in the Great War, was until shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War the British Military Attaché to Berlin. The Russians took it for granted that the General was simply an intelligence

---

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* See, also, Bower, *The Perfect English Spy*, p 55. The same ruling applied to the GC&CS, where all work on Soviet codes and cyphers stopped from 22 June 1941; Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 199, n †.

<sup>11</sup> Professor R V Jones to author (29 October 1990).

<sup>12</sup> Sheila Lawlor, "Britain and the Russian entry into the war", in Richard Langhorne (ed), *Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War: Essays in honour of F. H. Hinsley* (Cambridge, 1985), p 181.

<sup>13</sup> For example, DNI signalled the SBNO, North Russia, to provide a "plan of the new waterfront at Rosta ... A sketch, however rough it may be, would be helpful"; PRO, ADM 223/249, Godfrey to Bevan (7 April 1942), para 3, MOST SECRET. Sometimes the reasons for an intelligence task were explained. For example, the NID wrote to the Naval Mission: "Could you ask the Liaison Officers to give us the latest A/A armament of the Soviet Destroyers of 2 pr. [2-pounder calibre] and below? We do not want to ask the Russians direct for this as [the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff] considers it important that details such as this should come direct from them as we are insisting that they produce strategical reasons with their demands for all weapons"; *ibid*, NID to unspecified (16 April 1942), p 1.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Ian Grey.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 3, para 6, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>17</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (10 July 1945), p 1.

officer whose duties were not so much liaison in the interests of a paltry British Army, but rather "spying" on the Soviet armed forces. It was just as Mason-MacFarlane had feared when the task had been pressed on him by the CIGS:

with my Intelligence background I was very uncertain whether my selection for the job was altogether a wise one ... Knowing how deeply suspicious the Russians are of us and particularly of our Intelligence Service, I felt that sending out a specialist in Intelligence as Head of our Mission was hardly a sound move.<sup>18</sup>

Under his leadership, the Mission soon degenerated into "an inglorious battle of wits between two powers supposedly in the position of allies".<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the almost inevitable consequence of his appointment was that Mason-MacFarlane, who had "no previous knowledge" of Russia,<sup>20</sup> was able to accomplish little before his departure in just under a year.

The British Naval Mission was technically the Naval Section of 30 Military Mission and subordinated to Mason-MacFarlane. However, the importance of its duties - which soon included the supervision of Naval Parties at Archangel, Murmansk and Polyarnoe - required independence of action from the General's staff in Moscow.

On 26 June, the British representatives to Russia touched down on the river at Archangel after a long and uncomfortable, but uneventful, flight. Local dignitaries and commanders of the armed forces provided a courteous welcome,<sup>21</sup> and this was followed by a "terrific feast".<sup>22</sup>

The next day, the British party flew in a Russian aircraft to Moscow, where they were met by General Vasilii D Sokolovsky, the Deputy Chief of the Soviet General Staff, and Rear-Admiral Kharlamov, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.<sup>23</sup> It was now officially announced that Cripps had returned to Moscow accompanied by a naval, military and air mission.<sup>24</sup> The following day, the arrival of the Mission was announced in the British press.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, "Russian Interlude (draft)" (undated), p 2. Mason-MacFarlane had been DMI with the British Expeditionary Force in France, in addition to conducting intelligence work in Central Europe and Germany in the 1930s; *ibid* (untitled) (undated), p 2.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Collier, *1941: Armageddon* (London, 1981), p 185.

<sup>20</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated), p 2.

<sup>21</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (26 June 1941).

<sup>22</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, "Russian Interlude (draft)" (undated), p 5.

<sup>23</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p 143, para 381.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 3, P12, MM45, "British 'Brains Trust' in Russia; Cripps Takes Our Army's 'Invisible Man' To Moscow", *Daily Sketch* (28 June 1941); A T Cholerton, Moscow, "British Military Mission Arrives in Moscow; Reception by Molotoff: Sir S. Cripps Returns", *Daily*

The three Heads of Mission were able to move straight into the British Embassy, as the Ambassador and his staff had transferred their offices to the British Consulate. The service staffs of the Mission, however, were based in the former Yugoslav Embassy.<sup>26</sup> By contrast with the accommodation made available to the Naval Parties at Archangel and Polyarnoe, the "Yugoslavsky" - as it came to be known - with its large rooms, high ceilings and parquet floors was well suited to British purposes, and both the Naval Mission and the much larger Military Mission were located there, though the Air Mission subsequently moved to separate quarters.

That same afternoon the Heads of Mission, accompanied by Cripps, called on Vyacheslav M Molotov, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, whom Miles found "a most un-impressive little man with a bloodless appearance and a shifty eye."<sup>27</sup> The final formalities occurred on 28 June. These took the form of a call by the Heads of Mission, accompanied by the three service attachés, on Defence Commissar Marshal S K Timoshenko, who was "friendly and optimistic."<sup>28</sup>

Testifying to the inferior status of seamen in the Soviet military hierarchy, the Russian team at a preliminary meeting of all three services on 28 June was headed by General Zhukov. Although there was a Russian admiral present, he was "not allowed to butt in."<sup>29</sup> At last, on 30 June, a British admiral with operational and technical officers at his side, took his place at a Moscow conference table for the first naval staff discussions with representatives from the Red Navy.<sup>30</sup> Kharlamov, the principal representative of the Soviet Naval Staff, was present. But the course of this first, long meeting set the tone for innumerable confrontations of a similar nature during the succeeding four years. Departure from this general pattern was to occur only in rare instances.

The British attitude on such occasions may be described as a cautious yet whole-hearted effort to cooperate with a strange and, as yet, unknown new ally. It was non-political in its approach and almost

---

*Telegraph* (28 June 1941); "British Mission in USSR", *Daily Mirror* (28 June 1941); "British Mission to Russia; Arrival in Moscow", *The Times* (28 June 1941); "Cripps Arrives In Moscow With His Mission", *Daily Chronicle* (28 June 1941); "Cripps in Moscow in time for breakfast; 'Invisible Man' Flies With Him", *Daily Express* (28 June 1941); and "Cripps In Moscow; Tank Expert Goes With Mission", *Daily Mail* (28 June 1941).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, Box 2, P11, MM31, "Russian Interlude (draft)" (undated), p 6.

<sup>27</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (27 June 1941).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid* (28 June 1941). See, also, IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 3, P12, MM45, "British Officers Impressed", *Daily Telegraph* (2 July 1941); and "Sees Soviet War Chief", *Daily Mirror* (1 July 1941).

<sup>29</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (28 June 1941).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid* (30 June 1941).

completely military in its motivation. By contrast, the Soviet response was almost wholly political and coloured right through by a deep native mistrust of the foreigners who had arrived in such extraordinary circumstances in their midst. It appeared to Miles that the Russians were "at times purposely evasive".<sup>31</sup>

Although at the beginning the members of the Mission were treated "rather coldly",<sup>32</sup> with suspicion the overriding characteristic displayed by the Russians, additional aspects of their attitude towards the British could also be discerned. Russian sailors possessed a traditional admiration and respect for their British counterparts, which was enhanced for several reasons. Firstly, the Russians were eager right from the start to acquire maximum benefit from representatives of a navy known to be much more experienced, and technically better equipped, than their own. In fact, Miles thought that the Russians were "appallingly ignorant".<sup>33</sup>

The Soviet Navy delegates had another reason for seeking close and effective cooperation with the Royal Navy, up to the limits set by their political masters. Between the all-powerful Red Army and the Red Navy, bitter jealousies existed. The Navy had achieved independence from the generals only four years previously, but its autonomy was largely nominal. The Russian sailors, therefore, were determined to use contact with the British to improve the position and influence of their service within the Russian politico-military hierarchy.

Symptomatic of the continuing Russian preoccupation with fixed naval defences, Soviet questions at this first meeting revolved mainly around mines and mining, including mine countermeasures and mine-watching organisation. The British gained the impression that the Russians knew little about magnetic and acoustic minesweeping, or of the process of degaussing by which ships were protected against magnetic mines.<sup>34</sup> Miles immediately offered the services of his minesweeping specialist, Lieutenant Powell, RNVR, who could supply full technical particulars of the British techniques.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, NID 4A, "British Liaison Mission to U.S.S.R." (9 July 1941), p 1, MOST SECRET.

<sup>33</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (30 June 1941).

<sup>34</sup> For a Soviet view, see V A Tkachenko, *Istoriya razmagnichivaniya korablye sovetского VMF* (History of the Degaussing of Ships of the Soviet Navy) (Leningrad: Nauka, 1981), cited in Captain 1st Rank (retired) I Adrianov, "Scientific Activity of Shipboard Electrical Engineers During the War Years", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 79-81.

<sup>35</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (30 June 1941); and PRO, ADM 223/252, NID 4A, "British Liaison Mission to U.S.S.R." (9 July 1941), p 1, MOST SECRET.



This first example of the willingness of the United Kingdom to present the Soviet Union with technical information was a revelation to the Russians. The British openness was at complete variance with the closed and xenophobic world view of Stalin's Russia. Because of this disparity in thought, it is quite possible that the Russians remained convinced throughout the war that the United Kingdom did not provide them with all possible information.<sup>36</sup>

At further meetings with the Admiral and his Chief of Staff Officer and interpreter, Commander (later Captain) Derek B Wyburd, the Soviets put forward many elementary questions about such matters as screening tactics at sea, boom defences and harbour auxiliaries. They were eager to receive details of Asdic (the underwater method of detecting submarines commonly known today by the American term "Sonar") and of the British system of recognition signals.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, when Miles sought information which he considered vital to the organisation of the projected Arctic convoys, the Soviet representatives became evasive. He also told them that intelligence had been received that German mines had already been laid off the Kola Inlet.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, it was essential for Royal Navy minesweepers to proceed to North Russia as soon as possible.<sup>39</sup>

The Russians offered the use of Alexandrovsk, Archangel and Svyatoi Nos. By Alexandrovsk was meant the former Catherine Harbour, which was situated on the west side of the Kola Inlet 20 miles north of Murmansk, and already renamed Polyarnoe to sever ties with Tsarist times. Svyatoi Nos was presumed

---

<sup>36</sup> In part, this was true. All countries have some secrets which they prefer to keep to themselves. However, the Mission adopted an open policy at the start, and offered all possible information and practical assistance to the Russians.

<sup>37</sup> For the Soviet view on Sonar, see Vice-Admiral I Tynyankin and Captain 1st Rank Ye Shoshkov, "Use of Sonar Equipment in World War II", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 71-74.

<sup>38</sup> One of the first actions of the Admiralty was to seek information from the Soviet Navy on German and Russian minefields in the Arctic. See, for example, PRO, ADM 223/250, letter to Kharlamov (13 July 1941). The Russian reply indicated that there were no Soviet minefields in the Murmansk region. Their information on German mining appeared scanty; PRO, ADM 223/251, Kharlamov to Vice-Admiral Phillips (14 July 1941).

<sup>39</sup> In 1941, the "minesweeping and obstacle division of the Northern Fleet main base had only two obsolete minesweepers ... built by the British in 1913. It was impossible to accomplish Fleet antimine defense missions with such forces". Also, there were "no influence sweeps [for mines with magnetic or acoustic fuses] at all". Such deficiencies resulted in "an extremely serious situation in the Northern Fleet"; Captain 1st Rank V Yoltukhovskiy, "As It Was ... (Combat Training of Northern Fleet Minesweeping Forces in the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1990), pp 33-37. It was little wonder, therefore, that British help was sought. In the Black Sea, barge sweeps were developed subsequently to deal with influence mines, and a variety of techniques were used in the Baltic Fleet. These are discussed in Captain 2nd Rank V Yoltukhovskiy, "Development of Influence Sweeps Just Prior to and During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1986), pp 70-72.

to refer to the exposed and unprotected anchorage at Iokanga. Molotovsk, the new White Sea naval base under construction to the west of Archangel, which was subsequently to play an important rôle, was not mentioned.

Finally, the Russians put forward a list of immediate operational requirements for their British allies. These were that the Royal Navy must take naval action to stop the Germans from landing troops on the north shore of the Rybachi Peninsula; a naval bombardment should be carried out against German concentrations near Petsamo and along the coast in the vicinity, and against German concentrations in the Rybachi area; and the British must seek out and destroy German transports supplying Petsamo and Kirkenes in Varangerfjord. The British seamen explained that these operations would be suicidal without fighter cover. However, the Russians declared immediately that air cover would be supplied within a radius of rather more than 60 miles from the airfield at Vaenga, in the Kola Inlet; that is, as far as Petsamo.<sup>40</sup>

A few days later, the Royal Navy representatives were able to inform their allies that the Admiralty would supply the Soviet Union with Asdic and would welcome naval specialists to the United Kingdom for the necessary training. The atmosphere in the meeting was very friendly, which is hardly surprising as the Russians were promised much and not asked for anything in return. It was rapidly apparent to the Mission that the Russians "were determined to tell us and show us as little as possible. It became all too clear that unless they thought they were going to get something of value to their own war effort out of us, they were unprepared to co-operated [*sic*] in any way."<sup>41</sup>

On 6 July 1941, Kharlamov was sent as the naval representative to the Soviet Mission in London.<sup>42</sup> The Mission remained in England until the end of the war, being accorded the facilities,

---

<sup>40</sup> In 1941, Soviet naval aviation "numbered more than 2,500 shore-based aircraft (torpedo bombers, bombers, fighters, and reconnaissance planes), but they were all (with the exception of a few seaplanes) obsolete"; Professor Rear-Admiral K Stalbo, "The Development of the Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1973), pp 16-23.

<sup>41</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated), p 1. Miles called this "the Soviet policy of getting all they can and giving as little as possible back in exchange"; PRO, ADM 223/252, Miles, report on the work of the British Military Mission (31 December 1942), p 6, para 47, SECRET.

<sup>42</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (6 July 1941).

hospitality and trust traditionally extended to the emissaries of a valued ally.<sup>43</sup> Back in Moscow, Kharlamov was succeeded by Rear-Admiral Dolinin,<sup>44</sup> formerly a midshipman in the Tsarist navy.

For the first time, on 9 July, Miles met the People's Commissar for Naval Affairs, Admiral Nicholas G Kuznetsov,<sup>45</sup> who had received his appointment on 1 May 1939 aged 37 years.<sup>46</sup> A former cruiser captain, Kuznetsov's energy and high political standing boded well for Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation at the centre of affairs in Moscow.<sup>47</sup> However, political considerations still affected this meeting, even though it was held within three weeks of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, and the Royal Navy was asked to limit as far as possible the number of technicians required to come to Russia, perhaps to avoid revealing Soviet weaknesses.<sup>48</sup> It was not unusual for these experts to be obstructed by the Soviet authorities, even though the British had naturally sent them to help with the equipment provided: "In many cases they got no further than Archangel, and in others, they were kept weeks or months before being given an opportunity of doing their job."<sup>49</sup>

On 1 August 1941, Miles received a Soviet assurance that all necessary steps had been taken in the Kola Inlet and the White Sea for the sweeping of both magnetic and moored mines.<sup>50</sup> The Soviet pledge seemed designed to avert the impending arrival of a flotilla of British minesweepers, but Miles saw

---

<sup>43</sup> The flow of data to the Russians, however, became more controlled as the war progressed. For example, a letter from Moscow to the DNI stated: "I am thankful you are trying to restrain the Chiefs of Staffs [*sic*] from giving too much away ... It is surely far more undesirable to us that Russia should have a strong and very good navy than a similarly efficient army, and it seems that we should be most careful not to give away more naval information than is absolutely necessary"; PRO, ADM 223/249, Fisher to Rushbrooke (23 June 1943), pp 1-2, para 4.

<sup>44</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (9 and 10 July 1941).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid* (9 July 1941).

<sup>46</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; People's Commissariat for Naval Affairs", *WIR*, no 160 (2 April 1943), p 57, SECRET.

<sup>47</sup> For a short NID personality profile, see NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Personalities; People's Commissar for Naval Affairs Flagman 2nd Rank: Nicholas Gerasimovich Kuznetsov", *SNPN*, no 17 (1 March 1940), p 8, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>48</sup> At this meeting, Kuznetsov said that the Soviet Navy had suffered losses since the outbreak of war due to its suddenness, "but these were not serious"; *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p 154, para 392. However, the reality was that on the outbreak of war 40 Soviet merchant ships, with a combined tonnage of 123,000 GRT, were confiscated in German ports. Also, along the Baltic coast, minefields caused heavy losses among Russian submarines and destroyers. Indeed, in the first three weeks of Barbarossa, naval losses were higher than in any previous Russian war; A Panteleeve, *Morskoi Front* and D W Mitchell, *A History of Russian and Soviet Seapower*, cited in the foreword to Arkhangel, "The Contribution of the Soviet Navy". Four Russian vessels were also interned in Swedish ports; Captain 1st Rank (Retd) A Zamchalov, "The Fleet in the Initial Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1989), pp 13-18.

<sup>49</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated).

<sup>50</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (1 August 1941).

no reason for its cancellation. Consequently, the Russians were presented with an Anglo-Soviet Key Memorandum, thereby initiating a method of recognition signals between surface vessels based on current British practice. However, the system was to be honoured more in the breach than in the observance in the following months as the Russians appeared to assign little value to recognition procedures between ships at sea and, therefore, their knowledge of such matters was rudimentary.

At the end of July 1941, Rear-Admiral Bevan, the newly-appointed SBNO, North Russia, installed his headquarters next to that of the Soviet Northern Fleet at Polyarnoe. It was here that the Soviet Union had agreed to the basing of two British submarines, though it was already clear that British Naval Parties at Archangel and Murmansk would also have an important operational rôle to fulfil.

The SBNO, North Russia, found the situation not very encouraging. He considered that the Naval Staff of the Soviet Northern Fleet was preoccupied with the defensive, especially with its responsibilities for supplying the Red Army at the front and on the Rybachi Peninsula by sea. Air activity was mainly confined to defence, reconnaissance and escort, or support of ground forces. In particular, there was little attempt to mount attacks on German air bases in northern Norway.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the two available Soviet minelaying submarines were not undertaking operations. Russian patrol submarines, however, appeared to be different, with their general air of efficiency and keenness in contrast with that of the surface forces.<sup>52</sup> But their attack instruments and methods were considered elementary.

The Black Sea Fleet had made clear to Powell that the Soviet Union had little to learn from the Royal Navy, and claimed that they were well-acquainted with the latest techniques of minesweeping and degaussing. Paradoxically, and perhaps significantly, the Black Sea naval authorities were anxious not to stop the United Kingdom from sending as many technicians as possible.<sup>53</sup> Miles supported the flow of

---

<sup>51</sup> Analysis of the number of sorties flown shows that the missions can be categorised as follows: defence of sea lines of communication (35.3%), support of ground forces (21.4%), escort of strike and reconnaissance aircraft (18%), aerial reconnaissance (14%), strikes against enemy warships and vessels at sea (5.7%), strikes against naval bases and ports (3.65%). Nearly at the bottom of priorities came strikes against airfields (1.9%), followed by action against enemy rear-area military and economic facilities (0.05%), for a total of 350,758 sorties; Central Naval Archive, Record Group 20, File 17,884, pp 1-5; Record Group 46, File 21,651, pp 4-13; Record Group 60, File 25,480, p 87, cited in Table 1 of Colonel-General of Aviation G Kuznyetsov, "Naval Aviation in Naval Warfare", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1988), pp 19-25.

<sup>52</sup> For information on their war record, see Pierre Hervieux, "Soviet Submarine Operations in the Ar[c]tic", *Warship*, no 40 (October 1986), pp 239-250.

<sup>53</sup> The Black Sea Fleet had problems in a number of areas, including minesweeping. For example, "the Fleet was not properly trained to fight enemy aircraft and magnetic mines, nor had the men been trained to fire at dive bombers before the war"; Vice-Admiral (Retd) I D Yeliseyev, "The Combat

information to the Soviet Navy and believed that the British had little to lose, and possibly much to gain, by a policy of complete frankness. The Black Sea Fleet, however, appeared lukewarm when two Royal Navy liaison officers arrived on 14 August 1941.<sup>54</sup>

The two British officers, Captain G B H Fawkes and Commander G W L Ambrose, accompanied by a naval commissar called Guseev, had been met at Sevastopol by Wyburd. Unfortunately, during dinner together on 21 August, Fawkes and Guseev became involved in a senseless argument about marriage allowances in the Royal Navy, which led to rather serious repercussions. Although the Russian had the grace to apologise at the end of the meal,<sup>55</sup> it soon became evident that the incident was not closed and had been reported to a higher authority.

During the course of a visit by Cripps to Stalin, the Russian leader mentioned "a British officer at Sevastopol having spoken in an anti-Soviet vein to a Soviet naval officer".<sup>56</sup> After a short investigation, Fawkes was identified as the principal person concerned.<sup>57</sup> In fact, although a subsequent board of enquiry exonerated the Royal Navy seamen, the affair resulted in all three officers returning to the United Kingdom at the request of the Russians. Their departure was a lamentable political sacrifice in the supposed interests of allied solidarity.

This was only the first of several incidents which, although trivial in themselves, were to occur at intervals throughout the four years of British service representation in the Soviet Union. These episodes assumed a significance out of all proportion to their individual importance as a result of their subsequent use for political purposes by the Soviet civil authorities. This was an aspect of the Russian mentality which came to be well understood by British personnel in the Soviet Union, but which seemed quite incomprehensible to many in the United Kingdom.

Indeed, perceptions in Britain were initially very different from those held by members of the Mission in Russia. Mason-MacFarlane recalled that he had to send one of his staff to London for a short

---

Operations of a Black Sea Fleet Squadron During the War Years", review of G F Godlevskiy, N M Grechanyuk, V M Kononenko, *Pokhody boyevyye* (Combat Patrols) (Military Publishing House, Voenizdat, 1966), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1966), pp 89-94.

<sup>54</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Fawkes to Miles, "Liaison - Black Sea" (7 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, "Minutes of Enquiry held by A.C.N.S.(H) and D.N.I. 31st October, 1941; Allegations made by Soviet Authorities against Commander Wyburd, R.N., Commander Fawkes, R.N. and Lieut. Commander Powell, R.N.V.R. (Special Branch)", SECRET.

<sup>56</sup> Moscow Tel. No. 1170, 20/9 cited in PRO, ADM 223/248, NID 16, "For C.O.S. Meeting. Notes on the Case of the 3 Naval Officers Recalled from U.S.S.R." (13 October 1941), MOST SECRET.

<sup>57</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Cripps to Foreign Office (30 September 1941), para 8, MOST SECRET.

visit in the autumn and "he told me when he got back that from the Intelligence point of view, every German success was regarded by the German and Russian sections of M.I. [Military Intelligence] as confirmation of the fact that their prognosis had been correct."<sup>58</sup>

Differences also existed between Mason-MacFarlane and London. For example, the General suggested that any intelligence from detached officers in Russia should be "collated and commented upon by No. 30 Military Mission before transmission to London", but the COS decided that such intelligence should be collated in the United Kingdom.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, Mason-MacFarlane was disconcerted to discover that there was a naval receiving station at Murmansk (although its existence was known to Miles) and fired off a telegram to London. The COS approved a War Office reply which stated that the station was part of the normal equipment used in protecting and guiding convoys, and that it was "regretted that Admiralty did not keep you informed."<sup>60</sup>

The cordiality of the reception bestowed upon the different British Naval Parties varied considerably, its warmth generally being in proportion to the Russian estimate of the practical usefulness of the individuals on the spot.

In the capital, the Soviet attitude was at its warmest. The Russians saw in Miles an essential link in the process of channelling desperately needed war supplies to their country. At Polyarnoe, more reserve was in evidence. However, Golovko could recognise that the presence of Bevan, with his small but experienced staff, and the addition of two highly-efficient British "T"-class submarines, was a powerful help in meeting the operational tasks set him by his political masters. At Archangel, the interests of the Soviet Commissariats of Foreign Trade and Foreign Affairs predominated. The atmosphere there was complicated by political considerations, to some extent a leftover from the Allied Intervention of 1918. Even so, the Soviet authorities at Archangel never failed to remember that they were at the receiving end of a supply line which depended on their long-suffering allies. However, to keep this thought uppermost in their minds took all the energies of a strong-minded Irishman, Captain Guy O Maund, RN, who was SBNO Archangel from the end of November 1941 to March 1944.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated), p 1.

<sup>59</sup> PRO, CAB 79/14, "Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd September, 1941, at 10.30 a.m.", COS(41)308 (3 September 1941), p 1, f 88, SECRET.

<sup>60</sup> PRO, CAB 79/18, "Minutes of Meeting held on Friday, 13th February, 1942, at 10.30 a.m.; Annex I", COS(42)49 (13 February 1942), p 8, f 156, SECRET.

<sup>61</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (29 November 1941), SECRET.

In order to fulfil Churchill's undertaking to Stalin, *Adventure*, a fast minelayer with a valuable cargo of war material for the Russians, sailed for Archangel under cover of forces escorting the aircraft carriers *Furious* and *Victorious*, which were tasked to attack Petsamo and Kirkenes. The arrival of *Adventure* off the Gourlo at the beginning of August provided an early example of operational liaison with the Soviet Navy. Her estimated time of arrival at a prearranged rendezvous was communicated by the Admiralty to Kharlamov in London, who passed this information to the Soviet Naval Staff in Moscow. However, although *Adventure* reached the rendezvous, the ship was not met. After an investigation by the Russians, the British were informed that Kharlamov had used local time instead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) in his signal.<sup>62</sup>

By the middle of July 1941, liaison between the British Naval Mission and the Soviet Naval Staff was controlled by a number of restrictions insisted upon by the Russians. For example, it was held to be undesirable for Russian officers to have personal contact with their British opposite numbers. Therefore, whenever possible, technical and operational matters were decided by written answer to questions which had been submitted through the *Otdyel* ("Department") of the service concerned.

The Department of External Communications of the Naval High Command was composed of a small liaison staff of English-speaking officers. They alone were allowed to hold meetings with members of the Naval Mission in a special building separate from the Ministry of the Navy. Theoretically, aside from high-level meetings, no other contact was allowed. Indeed, this arrangement was rigidly adhered to where the Army, and to a lesser extent the RAF, were concerned. But Miles's staff, despite the delays and frustrations inseparable from working with the Russians, found themselves in a better position than that of the other two services.<sup>63</sup>

There were several reasons why the Naval Mission may have been more successful. Firstly, the Royal Navy members of 30 Mission were few in number, partly because administrative matters were handled by the Army Section. In comparison with the other two services, naval representation in Moscow

---

<sup>62</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (7 August 1941).

<sup>63</sup> Miles records that "we - the Navy - later used to go to our meetings in the [Russian] Admiralty ... I think it is [*sic*] an important facet of our liaison. We were the only Service to achieve this; and the army didnt [*sic*] even know where the Russian war office was!"; Courtney Papers, Miles to Courtney (25 January 1968). The Military Section of the Mission "were never allowed near the Front and the utmost contempt for the British Army was expressed and they had no direct contact with the Russian General Staff"; CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 27.

seemed absurdly small. It consisted of an admiral, his secretary, a paymaster lieutenant-commander, a Russian-speaking chief staff officer (initially a captain and later a commander), together with a small clerical and cipher staff. Secondly, apart from the high reputation which the Royal Navy had always possessed in Russian thinking, it also initially represented the one service which was giving tangible assistance to the Soviet war effort. Realisation of this by the Russians enabled the Naval Mission to circumvent the restrictive Soviet bureaucracy to a degree which became the envy of British Army and RAF colleagues.

Kuznetsov's deputy at this time, Rear-Admiral V A Alafuzov, was a large and cheerful individual,<sup>64</sup> and became, with all the qualifications necessary for relations with Russians at this time, a good friend and a firm ally of the British. He had taken over as Acting Chief of Naval Staff in place of Admiral Isakov, who was believed to be in the Baltic. During a meeting, Alafuzov, with some pride, informed the British representatives that the first Soviet raid on Berlin had been carried out by naval aircraft.<sup>65</sup> However, the Russians were somewhat vexed when the BBC broadcast this fact later the same day.<sup>66</sup>

Discussion turned to the Baltic Fleet and to the possibility that its ships might be deployed elsewhere during the winter.<sup>67</sup> The British enquired whether they could be moved north via the White Sea Canal and hence to the United Kingdom. At once a blank wall of suspicion was encountered, similar to that met subsequently whenever questions of such political sensitivity were raised.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> He has been described as "jolly, roly-poly, French-speaking Alafuzov"; Tolley, *Caviar and Commissars*, p 74. The NID depicted him as "a huge man, rather like a rubber ball, talks nineteen to the dozen"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions and Awards", *WIR*, no 238 (29 September 1944), p 65, SECRET.

<sup>65</sup> The mission was flown in August 1941 by airmen of the Baltic Fleet; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S Gorshkov, "The Navy Did its Duty for the Motherland Right to the End", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 8-15.

<sup>66</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (9 August 1941).

<sup>67</sup> For an NID assessment of the Baltic Fleet ORBAT at this time, see NHB, "The Baltic", *WIR*, no 77 (29 August 1941), p 23, SECRET.

<sup>68</sup> In fact, the Swedish Minister in Moscow was already discussing the possibility of the Baltic Fleet proceeding to Swedish ports for internment should Leningrad fall. The NID considered a number of possible outcomes for the Soviet vessels if the city was captured, but felt that the "arrival of the Russian fleet in the Stockholm Skerries would be highly distasteful to the Swedes. Although the Germans would gain little immediate value from the possession of the fleet, it is unlikely that they would agree to allow Sweden, whose neutrality is already only precariously maintained, to give it sanctuary"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Baltic Fleet", *WIR*, no 79 (12 September 1941), p 29, SECRET.



Despite such incidents, the Naval Mission found its initial contacts with the Soviet Naval Staff reassuring. Kuznetsov, and particularly Alafuzov, were men with some naval experience and, therefore, the Royal Navy seamen found it easier to deal with them. Captain Eleazar A Zaitsev, the principal liaison officer, demonstrated an underlying goodwill which seemed to promise a real measure of cooperation in the future. Captain Vorontsov, who had previously served as Soviet Naval Attaché in Berlin, was considered clever but untrustworthy. Kharlamov was regarded as a cold individual, without much professional experience but with political connections.

On 11 September 1941, Miles began a quick tour of the north, where the advance British Naval Parties were settling in at Archangel and Polyarnoe.<sup>69</sup> At Archangel, his Chief of Staff officer was coping almost single-handed with the many problems associated with "Dervish", codename of the first convoy of seven merchant ships which had arrived on the last day of August.<sup>70</sup>

Dolinin had been made Commander of the White Sea Flotilla, but was proving difficult. Although a somewhat bitter and disillusioned officer, he was also proud, reserved and efficient. Dolinin was unwell too. He worked much too hard as he was mistrustful of the capabilities of his staff and therefore tried to do everything himself.<sup>71</sup> He was described as "very grave and pale" and it was noted that he would not smile until he had drunk six vodkas!<sup>72</sup> His professionalism revolted at the revelation of the ineffectiveness of the Soviet Navy after years of isolation and propaganda. Unfortunately, after the fashion the British came to know so well, Dolinin was evasive and secretive about the quantity of fuel oil at Archangel, and similarly reluctant to disclose the precise location of the coastal batteries.<sup>73</sup>

In discussion with Miles, Dolinin was optimistic that the port of Archangel could be kept open by icebreakers throughout the winter of 1941-1942. He was strongly supported in this opinion by the

---

<sup>69</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (11 September 1941).

<sup>70</sup> Commodore J C K Dowding's convoy report is in PRO, ADM 199/72, ff 1-4.

<sup>71</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (12 September 1941).

<sup>72</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. Murmansk to D.N.I." (28 October 1941).

<sup>73</sup> Until the summer of 1939, intelligence on coastal defences was a joint responsibility between the War Office and the Admiralty, except for France, Germany and the Soviet Union which all fell to the latter. At this stage, it was proposed that the Admiralty take over entirely; PRO, CAB 56/4, "Responsibility for Coast Defence Intelligence; Note by the Secretary", JIC(129) (28 July 1939), SECRET. Thereafter, a precise delineation of responsibilities was put forward by the Deputy DMI; *ibid*, "Responsibility for Coast Defence Intelligence; Note by Secretary", JIC(140) (28 August 1939), SECRET.

Arctic explorer Ivan D Papanin, Head of the Northern Route Administration (*Glavsevmorput*),<sup>74</sup> and by Anastas I Mikoyan, the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade.

It is now known that in September 1941 the Germans cut the Kirovsky railway line connecting Murmansk with the rest of Russia. Although the Russians failed to inform the British at the time, Archangel, whether ice-bound or not, had become the only port of entry for Allied war supplies. Lacking confidence in their allies, and nervous of British reaction to the cutting of the railway line out of Murmansk in combination with the likelihood of Archangel's harbour becoming ice-bound, the Russians felt it necessary to express themselves optimistically about ice conditions. In the event, by quite magnificent efforts, the Russians constructed a branch line from Byelomorsk to Obozerskaya, where it joined the main Archangel-Vologda line, so that by November 1941 Murmansk was again connected by rail to the south.

British anger at the Russians simmered just below the surface. On 13 September 1941, Miles found that the aeroplane which was due to take him back to Moscow had been commandeered by Golikov. The Admiral expressed his frustration with "that stinking little brute" and "ill mannered little cur" in his personal diary,<sup>75</sup> but also sent a note of complaint to the Russian Naval Staff.<sup>76</sup> The fact that the Russian was the Chief of Military Intelligence and a Deputy Chief of Staff, and perhaps had a more pressing need for the aeroplane than Miles, seems to have escaped the latter entirely.

Back in Moscow, further thought was given to the possibility of the Russian submarines at Kronshtadt and Leningrad breaking out of the Baltic. However, the Russians finally decided against attempting to break through the German minefields.<sup>77</sup> One of the factors influencing the Soviet Navy in this matter could be detected in the decision not to send any Russian minesweepers to the United Kingdom for the fitting of Asdic. Instead, a request was made for the equipment to be sent out to Archangel or Murmansk. A remark that by this the Soviet Union would be relieving the "weight on British industry"

---

<sup>74</sup> For brief biographical details, see "I D Papanin Awarded S O Makarov Gold Medal", *Vestnik AN ASSR*, no 3 (1985), p 140; and his obituary in "Ivan Dmitriyevich Papanin", *Vestnik AN ASSR*, no 4 (1986), pp 112-113.

<sup>75</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (13 September 1941).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid* (15 September 1941).

<sup>77</sup> This impasse continued. For example, in 1943, the NID recorded that, not forgetting the extensive minefields, it "must be a source of considerable satisfaction to the Germans that ... they are able to contain the whole Baltic Fleet by means of air power, light surface craft and the modern devices of wireless and radiolocation"; NHB, "The Soviet Fleets in the Baltic and Black Sea", *WIR*, no 174 (9 July 1943), pp 23-24, SECRET.

was received with suitable scepticism.<sup>78</sup> It subsequently emerged that the Soviet Mission in London had been promised nine Asdic-fitted trawlers.<sup>79</sup>

It was at this period that the Soviet Naval Staff asked for British help to bring two icebreakers, the *Mikoyan* and the *Torros* (ex-*Makarov*), together with eight laden oil-tankers, out of the Black Sea and into the Mediterranean.<sup>80</sup> The Russians pressed for British protection of the ships but were informed that this was not possible,<sup>81</sup> "owing to Libyan operations".<sup>82</sup> Alafuzov disclosed that there had been naval objections to the tankers making the passage fully laden, but that these had been set aside by the Commissariat for Foreign Trade which seemed to hold the upper hand.<sup>83</sup>

On 28 September 1941, the Beaverbrook-Harriman mission arrived in Moscow. Miles thought that the "Beaver" was the "most repulsive looking individual I ever saw".<sup>84</sup> The Russian reception was a chilly one, and their generals and officials gave the Beaverbrook Mission no information of any kind. As Churchill wrote, it "might almost have been thought that the plight in which the Soviets now found themselves was our fault."<sup>85</sup>

A little over two weeks later, on 15 October 1941, the Naval Mission in Moscow was reminded that not only was it on dry land and subject to the unfamiliar constraints of military affairs, but also that it was many hundreds of miles away from blue water. It had been snowing for a week; Field Marshal Fedor von Bock's Central Army Group had renewed its advance on Moscow; Kalinin (Tver) had fallen; and the *Wehrmacht* had broken through at Mozhaysk, less than 70 miles west of the capital. The Mission, together with the entire Diplomatic Corps in Moscow, was given a few hours to pack some hand luggage before evacuation,<sup>86</sup> being preceded by the Soviet Government itself.<sup>87</sup> With what philosophy they could

---

<sup>78</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (7 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid* (4 November 1941).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid* (10 November 1941).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid* (21 December 1941).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid* (5 December 1941).

<sup>84</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (28 September 1941).

<sup>85</sup> Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 370.

<sup>86</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (15 October 1941).

<sup>87</sup> For an example of British press coverage of this event see, "British Ambassador Leaves Moscow; Soviet Government May Have Transferred", *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* (17 October 1941), in NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 1, "News Cuttings".

muster, the sailors departed that same evening on a railway journey that lasted five days. It was only upon arriving in Kuibyshev on the Volga that the Mission learnt that this was their destination.<sup>88</sup>

The Naval Mission in Kuibyshev re-established communications by wireless telegraphy (W/T) with Archangel and Murmansk on 24 October,<sup>89</sup> and by 27 October with the Soviet Naval Staff in the form of Alafuzov who arrived in Kuibyshev by train.<sup>90</sup> Fortunately, it had already been agreed with the Admiralty that Bevan should assume responsibility at Polyarnoe for the Arctic convoys.<sup>91</sup>

The evacuation of Moscow generated much confusion among the governmental organisations, including the Soviet Admiralty. A skeleton staff, headed by Galler, remained in Moscow.<sup>92</sup> Alafuzov took charge in Kuibyshev,<sup>93</sup> until the arrival of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Isakov, in early November 1941.<sup>94</sup> Other departments of the Soviet Admiralty were dispersed elsewhere, including to Engels and Ulyanovsk.

To some extent, the period of enforced decentralisation which followed revealed the relationship of the Soviet Admiralty to the outlying naval commands. For all practical purposes, the Baltic, Black Sea and Pacific Fleets were seen to be independent of the Soviet Admiralty, which acted as a supply organisation for all three. With the notable exception of the control exercised over the movements of the Northern Fleet, where political considerations were paramount, neither Moscow nor Kuibyshev played a direct rôle in naval operations.

In Kuibyshev, Miles was able to deal directly with Isakov, who was probably the outstanding Russian sailor of his generation. A Tsarist officer who had survived the October Revolution, he attained high rank in both the Red Navy and within the Communist Party. Isakov was "a man of breeding and culture and of a forceful and decisive personality."<sup>95</sup> Although Miles found him "refreshingly direct",<sup>96</sup> he regretted that the Soviet Admiral seemed to feel it his duty to ask for reconsideration of all

---

<sup>88</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (20 October 1941). For accounts of the evacuation by the British Embassy, see PRO, FO 181/962/3, "Evacuation, Moscow".

<sup>89</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (24 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid* (27 October 1941).

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid* (22 October 1941).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid* (27 October 1941).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid* (5 November 1941).

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*.

Kharlamov's requests which had been turned down in London.<sup>97</sup> This was the first indication of a Russian tactic which was to cause much trouble in the years ahead.

At the beginning of November 1941, there was further discussion about attempting to evacuate Soviet tankers from the Black Sea. In Istanbul, the Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy was nominally in charge of negotiations regarding the proposed passage of the Straits. However, in true Soviet fashion, the real business was conducted by Captain Rodionov, the Naval Attaché.<sup>98</sup> Just before Christmas 1941, the first group of tankers sailed for the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, the *Avanesov* was torpedoed on 19 December by *U-562* off the Turkish coast near Cape Baba.<sup>99</sup> As a result, it was planned that the remaining four tankers were to sail independently at intervals and to discharge their oil at Istanbul.<sup>100</sup> In fact, the question of Russian tankers escaping into the Mediterranean was still being debated the following summer.<sup>101</sup>

Discussions with Isakov included the capabilities of the Soviet icebreakers. It was obvious that there was much at stake with regard to their safe and efficient operation in the White Sea during the winter months, and Isakov confirmed that the vessels were equipped with A/A guns. However, he promptly seemed to contradict himself by asking for the immediate supply of 20 3-inch and 56 0.5-inch guns.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, a large amount of ammunition was also requested for the Oerlikon guns being provided under the Beaverbrook agreement.<sup>103</sup>

Initially, the Soviet Military Mission in London was informed that there were no A/A guns available for the Russian icebreakers.<sup>104</sup> Although Isakov's requirements were eventually met, the British often received flat refusals when seeking information from the Russians. The Head of Mission felt that the Russians disliked mere inquisitiveness, but that a "system of barter has been tried and proved to get one nowhere."<sup>105</sup> For example, on one occasion in October 1941, the head of the RAF Mission and Mason-MacFarlane were taken to see a demonstration of an airforce rocket bomb, which was "most

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid* (20 November 1941).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid* (10 November 1941).

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid* (22 and 24 December 1941); and Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 101.

<sup>100</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (27 December 1941), SECRET.

<sup>101</sup> PRO, FO 181/969/25, Eden to Kerr (13 August 1942), no 144, MOST SECRET; and *ibid* (19 August 1942), no 166, MOST SECRET.

<sup>102</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (18 November 1941), SECRET.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid* (13 and 18 January 1942).

<sup>104</sup> PRO, ADM 223/250, Vice-Admiral H R Moore to Kharlamov (22 November 1941), SECRET.

<sup>105</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (28 January 1942), SECRET.

impressive, but the Russians refused to let us have any details, and in 1942 we were still waiting for them."<sup>106</sup> The British, it appears, had accepted a double standard in Russian behaviour regarding information and technology exchanges with the Soviet Union.<sup>107</sup>

Occasional lapses in British security also played into the hands of the Russians. For example, the Soviet Union was interested in an airborne device capable of detecting submerged submarines to which RAF officers at Baku had carelessly referred in conversation. Miles felt that if he denied the existence of the device, he would "undoubtedly be considered a liar", and was angry that his task had been made harder by careless talk.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the generally good relations which now prevailed between the Soviet Naval Staff and the Mission, there were indications from a number of sources of the unreliability and inadequacy of Soviet naval forces. Claims of sinkings in all theatres by the Red Navy were soon regarded as greatly exaggerated. For example, the assertion that a German *Köln*-class cruiser had been sunk off the Baltic island of Ösel (Saaremaa) was subsequently disproved by photographic reconnaissance.<sup>109</sup>

Naval air support was also deficient. For example, Bevan reported insufficient fighter protection for British cruisers in the White Sea: on 7 December 1941, a German reconnaissance was made of Archangel in good weather without a single Russian fighter taking off to intercept.<sup>110</sup> Dudley Pound received a telegram from the SBNO about this matter and the COS were informed that "the Russian air and anti-aircraft defences had seemed ineffective."<sup>111</sup> Pound suggested that air attacks would probably follow and felt that "no time should be lost in representing to the Russians the vital importance of providing adequate air defences."<sup>112</sup> However, shortly afterwards two German air-raids followed the arrival of the first merchant ship, the Soviet vessel *Dekabrist*, to be unloaded at Murmansk.<sup>113</sup> In this

---

<sup>106</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated).

<sup>107</sup> The position was nominally regularised on 30 September 1942 by an agreement on "an Exchange of Information relating to war-like weapons"; PRO, FO 181/971/1, Kerr to Eden (5 October 1942).

<sup>108</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (23 January 1942), SECRET.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid* (29 November 1941).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid* (7 December 1941).

<sup>111</sup> PRO, CAB 79/16, "Supplies for Russia - Defence of Archangel", in COS(41)415 (10 December 1941), p 3, para 3, f 130, SECRET.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>113</sup> The *Dekabrist* arrived on 20 December 1941. In addition to two American bombers, she carried 35,000 drums of octane aviation spirit. On approaching the Kola Inlet, the vessel was hit by two bombs, one of which nicked the edge of three of the fuel drums. Neither of the bombs exploded and they were thrown overboard by the Russian sailors; PRO, ADM 199/1104, "Fifth Monthly Report. Month of December 1941" (hereinafter "5th Monthly Report") (3 January 1942), p 5, para 4, SECRET.

case, Russian fighters had taken off but no interceptions were reported.<sup>114</sup> Plainly the British warnings in December had little impact, and the New Year's greetings sent to the Soviet Chiefs of Staff by their British counterparts probably had about the same effect.<sup>115</sup>

The winter of 1941-1942 was early and harsh, causing the German advance to grind to a temporary halt.<sup>116</sup> Although the onset of snow brought relief to the hard-pressed Red Army, life for the British sailors in the north was rendered more difficult.<sup>117</sup> The optimistic Russian promises to keep the port of Archangel open now proved false. Only with the greatest difficulty was it possible on 4 January 1942 for convoy QP4, consisting of 12 homeward-bound merchant ships, to be broken out of the White Sea by Soviet icebreakers.<sup>118</sup>

The winter conditions helped the Russians to stabilise their defences on the Murmansk front and to the west of Moscow and, on 11 January 1942, the advance party of the British Mission returned to the capital.<sup>119</sup> The Soviet High Command, the *Stavka*, had never left Moscow and it was useful for the Mission to be once more where all major military decision-making was conducted. But this had been made possible only by diplomatic pressure from Eden, who had arrived for a short visit to Moscow in December 1941.<sup>120</sup> The majority of the Soviet Government and the Diplomatic Corps remained in Kuibyshev.

In January 1942, Isakov suggested that concerted Anglo-Soviet naval action was needed against the *Tirpitz*, which had moved north to Trondheim in Norway. In reply, the Admiralty proposed that Soviet destroyer escorts should be provided for convoys, that a Soviet air reconnaissance be made of Narvik,

---

<sup>114</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (22 December 1941), SECRET.

<sup>115</sup> PRO, CAB 79/16, "New Year's Message to Soviet Chiefs of Staff", in COS(41)439 (29 December 1941), p 2, para 5, f 382, SECRET.

<sup>116</sup> For the Soviet naval ORBAT at this time, see NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces, 1st December, 1941", *WIR*, no 91 (5 December 1941), pp 27-30, SECRET.

<sup>117</sup> For an example of conditions in the Arctic theatre during this winter, see NHB, "Life in Polyarnoe; A Letter from S.B.N.O., North Russia, 27th December, 1941", *WIR*, no 98 (23 January 1942), pp 60-62, SECRET. A debunking of the hard conditions is found in NHB, "Child's Guide to North Russia", *WIR*, no 102 (20 February 1942), pp 58-62, SECRET.

<sup>118</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (4 January 1942), SECRET. It was originally intended for QP4 to sail from Archangel about 9 December 1941 but, because of ice and other causes, it did not do so until 26 December. It then took 11 days to reach open water. Furthermore, because of the delay in the White Sea, two vessels had insufficient fuel to reach the United Kingdom and, therefore, were escorted to Murmansk before sailing with the next convoy; PRO, ADM 199/1104, "6th Monthly Report", p 5, para 4. The SBNO recorded: "What with ice to hold up the Archangel convoys and fog to delay the ocean escorts, no time-table seems worth the paper upon which it is written"; NHB, "Life in Polyarnoe", *WIR*, p 61.

<sup>119</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (11 January 1942), SECRET.

<sup>120</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p 219, para 469.

which lies some 400 miles west of Vaenga aerodrome, and that a Soviet submarine patrol be instituted off Røst.<sup>121</sup>

The Chief of the Naval Staff agreed to dispatch two submarines for this patrol, as well as two destroyers for escort duty with convoy QP6 as far as the longitude of Bear Island.<sup>122</sup> Unfortunately, the capability of available Soviet aircraft only allowed reconnaissance to be conducted as far west as Nordkinn, about 200 miles from Vaenga.<sup>123</sup> Three days after this meeting with Isakov, QP6 sailed from Murmansk, but with only one Soviet submarine instead of the two promised.<sup>124</sup>

The British were becoming increasingly exasperated with the performance of the Red Navy and increasing doubts developed as to its effectiveness. For example, despite their own trumpeted competence, the Russian asked for British minesweepers to clear a minefield in the White Sea, a request which was refused.<sup>125</sup> At this time, the size of NID's Section 16, which was devoted only to the study of the USSR and Afghanistan, was an indication of Russia's relative importance in the eyes of the Admiralty. The Head was Commander C A N Chatwin, DSO. Section 16b comprised two civilian assistants: Mr C Fletcher-Cooke, the deputy head of Section 16, and Miss Anne F McKay. There were two naval personnel in Section 16c: an interpreter, Pay-Lieutenant R K F Hutchings, RNVR, and Sub-Lieutenant R D Wyatt, RNVR. Clerical support was provided by Section 16g, which was composed of a clerical officer, Mr T J Long, and a temporary clerk, Miss A M Kelly. Mrs J G Taylor-Smith was the shorthand-typist in Section 16h.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>121</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (22 January 1942), SECRET.

<sup>122</sup> The NID believed that in the Arctic at this time there were six modern destroyers (*Gordy, Gremyashchi, Gromky, Grozny, Grozovoi* and *Sokrushitelny*), four old destroyers (*Karl Liebknecht, Kuibyshev, Uritsky* and *Vorovsky*) and three small "S"-class destroyers; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces; Based on information received up to 1st February, 1942", *WIR*, no 100 (6 February 1942), pp 33-34, SECRET.

<sup>123</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (22 January 1942), SECRET.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid* (27 January 1942).

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid* (7 December 1941).

<sup>126</sup> PRO, ADM 116/4607, "Naval Intelligence Division. I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (March 1942). Chatwin was replaced as Head of Section 16 by Clanchy who was appointed to the NID on 19 October 1942 upon his return from Moscow; *ibid*, p 9, para 17, CONFIDENTIAL; and PRO, ADM 223/257, NID, "I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (April 1943), p 33. Apart from the Naval Attaché, Wyatt was "the first member of N.I.D. to gain access to the U.S.S.R."; PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 5, para 7, CONFIDENTIAL. He was later made Acting Lieutenant-Commander and appointed Head of the section; PRO, ADM 223/257, NID, "I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (November 1944), p 44, CONFIDENTIAL; and *ibid* (October 1945), p 29, CONFIDENTIAL.



The British fear of ice was amply justified. At Molotovsk, ships were trapped by the ice and were forced to remain idle until the spring thaw. Similarly, four British vessels were locked in at Archangel,<sup>127</sup> and convoy QP4 had only just escaped a similar fate. The Russians, finally forced to recognise that their comforting assurances about winter conditions had proved worthless, agreed to the utilisation of Murmansk where the new railway line was in operation.

The problem which now confronted the Admiralty and the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, was the defence of the Arctic convoys in the spring. In February 1942, Miles visited the north and saw Golovko once more. However, it proved impossible to ascertain from him what forces would be available two months ahead.<sup>128</sup> Stepanov at Archangel was as evasive as Golovko at Polyarnoe about the extent to which even light naval forces would be made available.<sup>129</sup> It was known that the icebreaker *Stalin* had been bombed, fortunately after the vessel had broken QP4 out of the White Sea, and was under repair at Molotovsk with seven of its nine boilers out of action. But permission for Miles to visit Molotovsk dockyard was refused.<sup>130</sup> His bleak reception at the hands of the Russians suggested an unpromising outlook for the spring, increasing the anxiety of the British.

On 27 February 1942, Miles and Collier expressed serious misgivings about the situation in North Russia to Isakov and General Korobkov, Chief of the Naval Air Force. Russian single-seater aircraft were inadequate for the task of defending ships at sea, as their pilots lacked the necessary training and were without proper navigational equipment. Therefore, long-range fighter protection was impossible unless two-seater aircraft were made available. The British felt obliged to warn the Russians that, in the absence of adequate air cover, the Admiralty "might even have to consider discontinuing the convoys."<sup>131</sup> As a result of the meeting, the Russians decided to dispatch 20 twin-engined fighters and 30 Soviet Hurricanes to North Russia, and also agreed to accept specialists from Coastal Command to advise them at Vaenga.<sup>132</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (2 February 1942), SECRET.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid* (5 February 1942).

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid* (2 February 1942).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid* (7 February 1942).

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid* (27 February 1942). The importance of air support was well known to Isakov, who once remarked that "not one modern naval operation is conceivable or possible without air forces"; Central State Naval Archives of the USSR, manuscript stack 1678, list 1, file 186, sheets 99-100, cited in Captain 1st Rank A Aristov, "December '40: Prologue of the War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1990), pp 22-27.

<sup>132</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (1 March 1942), SECRET.

In a moment of unusual frankness, Isakov asked Miles to give him a candid criticism of the Soviet Navy in the north. The Russian Admiral got what he asked for, in firm but tactful terms. In return, Isakov promised that two Soviet destroyers would be provided thereafter as additional escort for each incoming convoy.<sup>133</sup>

Communications became a serious problem as the original W/T sets were largely destroyed on the eve of the flight to Kuibyshev. The Russians were suspicious of the number of sets required by the various sections of the Mission and wished to reduce their number.<sup>134</sup> However, well aware of their own technical deficiencies, they were also anxious for both information and assistance.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, the British had good reason for helping the Soviet Union with communications. On several occasions, the Russians warned that information was reaching the Germans about the forthcoming departure of QP convoys. But the British were convinced by their experiences of an Anglo-Soviet surface-ship sweep under Admiral Burrough in November 1941 that this was due to unguarded Soviet W/T traffic.

The British, therefore, decided to develop with the Red Navy an Anglo-Soviet operational cipher, and to institute a visual Anglo-Soviet Tactical Code for use when warships of the two countries were operating together.<sup>136</sup> For this purpose, a close liaison was established between Commander Anthony T Courtney, RN, the new Chief Staff Officer and a signals specialist,<sup>137</sup> the Russian Director of Signals, Rear-Admiral Gavrilov, and his assistant, Major Utrobin.

Miles had always advocated an attitude of complete frankness with the Russians and this now began to pay dividends. Alafuzov, for example, regularly handed over intelligence on Japanese naval dispositions.<sup>138</sup> Reticence, however, was the wisest course in Stalin's Russia and Alafuzov was known to overstep the mark. On one occasion in 1942, gathering together his few words of English as Miles entered his room, Alafuzov said: "Good morning, Admiral, I have to announce this morning a decisive

---

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid* (10 February 1942).

<sup>134</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, Fisher to Rushbrooke (10 April 1943), p 1, SECRET.

<sup>135</sup> It was known, for example, that Russian submariners had no knowledge of submerged W/T reception.

<sup>136</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (18 February 1942), SECRET.

<sup>137</sup> Courtney was regarded as "the right type ... to help in Russia"; PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. Murmansk to D.N.I." (28 October 1941). He arrived in Moscow on 25 January 1942; PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (25 January 1942), SECRET; and NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (25 January 1942).

<sup>138</sup> The supply of Soviet intelligence on Japan diminished in early 1943. See, for example, PRO, ADM 223/249, Nicholls, Admiralty to Miles (20 January 1943), pp 1-2; and *ibid*, Miles to Rushbrooke (6 February 1943), p 1, para 4.

victory over our common enemy ... [the] Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs."<sup>139</sup> Apparently one of the interminable visa quarrels had been settled in favour of the British. But the Soviet Union was riddled with NKVD (secret police) informers. Alafuzov was not careful enough in his daily comments, and he was arrested and tried after the war for his indiscretions.

With the advent of spring, the operational situation became increasingly threatening. At the same time, reports from North Russia of administrative problems began to accumulate. For example, Golovko remained either unable or unwilling to provide a direct telephone line between Naval Headquarters at Polyarnoe and the vital airfield at Vaenga, where the arrival of RAF aircraft had been "a great success."<sup>140</sup> This was despite two British Hurricane squadrons being based at Vaenga,<sup>141</sup> which was also frequently used by other British aircraft. Similarly, a Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) canteen was much needed at Archangel for the use of visiting seamen. However, this proved impossible because of the Russian refusal to give entry visas to the required staff and the personnel "had to come all the way back to England".<sup>142</sup>

Similar difficulties beset Ambrose, the British Liaison Officer (BLO) in the Black Sea. Now based at Tuapse, he was kept at arm's length by the Soviet Naval Staff and therefore remained in ignorance of the local operational situation. Ambrose was also entirely dependent on Russian goodwill for communications and transport.

Although the United Kingdom had been an ally of the Soviet Union from the earliest days, Miles considered that British stock in Moscow was very low, and that if it were found necessary to suspend the Arctic convoys it would be reduced to nothing. Even the Soviet naval staff, who maintained "a great respect for the Royal Navy", had their confidence "greatly shaken" by the daring passage of the English Channel by the German battle-cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, with the cruiser *Prinz Eugen*, on the night of 11 February.<sup>143</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> The incident was recalled after the war in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Trial of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, no 29 (10 June 1948), p 47, SECRET.

<sup>140</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated).

<sup>141</sup> The story of 151 Wing, which was formed from Nos 81 and 134 Squadrons of the RAF, is told in John Golley, *Hurricanes Over Murmansk* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, 1987).

<sup>142</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, Rushbrooke to Miles (14 January 1943), p 1, para 3, SECRET.

<sup>143</sup> IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, untitled (undated), p 1. The details of the German operation are recounted in John Deane Potter, *Fiasco: The Break-out of the German Battleships* (Newton Abbot, Devon, 1971); and Terence Robertson, *Channel Dash: The Drama of Twenty-four Hours of War* (London, 1958).

---

At the end of May 1942, Mason-MacFarlane, frustrated and disappointed,<sup>144</sup> departed from the Soviet Union.<sup>145</sup> He had conducted his work in an atmosphere of suspicion, hostility and discourtesy, and had been quite unable to establish any kind of substantial or meaningful liaison with the Soviet General Staff. A year before in London, the General had been given a 50-dollar bill to keep with him in case of emergency, although he always wondered how much use the American money would have proved in the Pamirs. As he left Moscow, his money unspent, it was clear that Russian resistance would not collapse. Colonel Kenneth G Exham now became head of the Military Section,<sup>146</sup> and the Senior Service, in the form of Admiral Miles, was ordered to take over the operation of 30 Mission.<sup>147</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> In retrospect, the General characterised his time in Russia as "absorbingly interesting"; IWM, Mason-MacFarlane Papers, Box 2, P11, MM31, "Russian Artillery 1941-45 (Some Notes Additional to the Article in the April issue of the R.A. Journal)" (undated), p 2.

<sup>145</sup> His journey out of Russia to Gibraltar via Egypt is described in *ibid*, "Second Pioneer Flight" (undated).

<sup>146</sup> PRO, CAB 79/25, "British Military Mission in Moscow", in JIC(43)25 (Final) (2 February 1943), p 1, para 4, f 281, SECRET.

<sup>147</sup> Miles learnt of this decision on 8 May; NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (8 May 1942).

## CHAPTER VIII

### ADMIRAL MILES TAKES CHARGE,

JUNE 1942 - MARCH 1943



*"It is well known that if you look up at a Russian  
he looks down at you ..."*<sup>1</sup>

*(Rear-Admiral G J A Miles)*

On 5 May 1942, Rear-Admiral Miles, with 10 months' experience of Russian cooperation behind him and soon to be appointed Head of 30 Military Mission,<sup>2</sup> made an assessment of the value of Soviet naval forces for any future combined operations. In general, he was unimpressed:

The personnel come mostly from a common peasant stock with little sea tradition. The Soviet system largely eradicates initiative and inculcates a smug self-satisfaction that their methods and material are superior to those in any foreign navy. Officers and men are watched over by commissars who, although having less sea experience, often exercise greater authority than the captain.<sup>3</sup> The personnel are young, well-disciplined, tough and good fighters. In operations, the spectacular is always preferred to the useful; routine patrols, for example, in protection of convoys are disliked, whilst artillery support of the Red Army or inshore submarine patrols are most popular. In destroyers, seamanship and navigation are far below British standards. Weapon efficiency is probably good under fair weather conditions. Sea time is the exception rather than the rule. Destroyers never refuel on return to harbour and pay little attention to readiness for sea.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (21 February 1943), SECRET.

<sup>2</sup> His appointment is recorded in "Head of a Mission", *Evening News* (20 June 1942), in NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 1, "News Cuttings".

<sup>3</sup> The power of commissars had already been reduced in early 1939 when they were "deprived of the right or duty of discrediting officers in the eyes of their subordinates", which undoubtedly went some way to improve officer morale; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Discipline", *M.I.R.*, April, 1939, no 239 (15 April 1939), p 31, CONFIDENTIAL. See, also, NHB, "U.S.S.R.; New Type of Commissar", *M.I.R.*, May, 1939, no 240 (15 May 1939), p 28, CONFIDENTIAL. The effectiveness and standing of the commissar was further reduced by allowing direct entry for civilians to the Naval Political Schools, rather than from serving seamen as before; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Training", *M.I.R.*, August, 1939, no 243 (15 August 1939), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL. Political commissars were eventually removed altogether, with the influence of the Communist Party being ensured by the appointment of assistant commanders for political matters to all ships and naval institutions. This change was reported in NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *WIR*, no 137 (23 October 1942), p 28, SECRET.

<sup>4</sup> *The War at Sea, Vol III, January-December, 1942: Preliminary Narrative* (London, 1945), p 160, para 705. The Soviet naval ORBAT for this period is found in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces To 17th April, 1942", *WIR*, no 111 (24 April 1942), pp 39-41, SECRET.

The summer of 1942 was not made a pleasant one for the Royal Navy representatives in Moscow, even though Anglo-Soviet cooperation in maritime matters was perhaps at its zenith. Pressure for a "Second Front" was intense.<sup>5</sup> The Russians did not enquire closely as to the feasibility of invading Western Europe, but only clamoured for it to be done at once.<sup>6</sup>

Apparent Soviet lack of concern for the welfare of British seamen was demonstrated by reports received by the Naval Mission of inadequate treatment, bad nursing and poor conditions in Russian hospitals at Archangel and Polyarnoe. In this particular case, it was not malice on the part of the Russians. It was simply that their standards of medical care did not match up to those of the United Kingdom, to which it was felt that British servicemen should have access when in need of attention in an allied country.<sup>7</sup> There was no lack of individual human kindness. Indeed, the Russians treated British seamen as well as, and sometimes better than, their own people. However, the whole question of medical treatment suddenly became acute with the arrival of over 1,000 survivors in Archangel from a single convoy, the ill-fated PQ17.

On 5 July 1942, the Mission in Moscow learnt to their surprise that the Admiralty, believing a German surface attack led by the *Tirpitz* was imminent, had ordered convoy PQ17 to scatter.<sup>8</sup> Both the British and Soviet Naval Staffs were aware of the serious implications of this decision and, as the full extent of the disaster gradually became apparent, Miles remained in close consultation with Admirals Alafuzov and Kuznetsov.

A post-mortem on the tragedy was held in the latter's office on 11 July.<sup>9</sup> Kuznetsov was an impressive figure, with close-cropped greying hair, flat Slavonic features and cold, intelligent blue eyes. He sat at his large, old-fashioned desk beneath a picture, romanticised in the Soviet manner, of the *Potemkin* steaming out of Odessa harbour through the lines of Imperial warships, with the crews cheering

---

<sup>5</sup> Miles, for example, reported the "very bad Soviet press" regarding the lack of a Second Front in Europe; PRO, ADM 223/249, Miles to Godfrey (23 November 1942), p 1, para 2.

<sup>6</sup> Even after the war, the invasion of Europe on 6 June 1944 was regarded as "tardy" and "consciously delayed"; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1972), pp 14-24.

<sup>7</sup> For a report on conditions in a wartime Soviet hospital in the Moscow area, see PRO, ADM 199/1102, Surgeon-Lieutenant G A Robinson, RNVR, to the Head of the British Naval Mission, Moscow (7 May 1943), Appendix I to War Diary (19 May 1943), SECRET.

<sup>8</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (5 July 1942), SECRET.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid* (11 July 1942).

and a vast red flag flying at the fore.<sup>10</sup> Kuznetsov was sympathetic and understanding, saying that the *Tirpitz* "had achieved her object by causing [the] convoy to scatter thus making it defenceless and easy prey for aircraft and submarines".<sup>11</sup> This was the only occasion during the war when the members of the Naval Mission had to admit to the Russians that a grievous professional error had been made. Conscious of their own deficiencies, several senior Russian officers apparently derived a certain satisfaction from this knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

On 12 August 1942, the British Prime Minister arrived in Moscow with an impressive retinue of advisers.<sup>13</sup> The results of Churchill's four-day visit were insignificant from the point of view of military planning. However, for the members of 30 Mission his appearance was a welcome tonic, even though they knew that the Prime Minister's blunt rejection of the Russian demand for a Second Front in 1942 would inevitably have unpleasant consequences for them after he had left.<sup>14</sup>

Two days before Churchill's visit, Miles had formally instructed Kuznetsov of the Admiralty's decision that convoys could no longer be run until the Russian air presence was increased.<sup>15</sup> At a meeting with the Russian Naval Staff a week later, Miles enquired whether the Admiralty's minimum requirement of 60 to 80 long-range bombers and 50 torpedo-bombing aircraft (of which the British would supply 24) would be available for the next convoy. The Russians made a typically evasive reply, saying that it was not possible to keep a permanent force of that size in the area.<sup>16</sup> But it had already been made clear that PQ18 would not sail unless the aircraft were produced beforehand.

---

<sup>10</sup> The *Potemkin* was the battleship whose crew mutinied in Odessa harbour during the revolution of 1905, and was immortalised by Eisenstein in his famous silent film of the same name.

<sup>11</sup> Kuznetsov cited in signal of Miles to Admiralty, MOST SECRET IMMEDIATE, in Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter*, p 226.

<sup>12</sup> For example, Kuznetsov's dignified and helpful attitude, at a time of great misfortune for the British, stands in marked contrast with the account of PQ17 in Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, pp 96-110.

<sup>13</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (12 August 1942).

<sup>14</sup> A brief report by Miles on Churchill's visit is in PRO, ADM 223/249, Miles to Godfrey, p 1, paras 2-4, PERSONAL. Miles also had to contend with the loss of Courtney, who was recalled to the United Kingdom. The Admiral wrote in his diary: "We shall all miss him badly"; NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (19 August 1942).

<sup>15</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (10 August 1942), SECRET. On the naval escort side, an NID assessment showed that the Northern Fleet at this time only possessed four modern destroyers (*Gremyashchi*, *Grozny* and *Sokrushitelny*, with *Gromky* seriously damaged); three old destroyers (*Karl Liebknecht*, *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky*) and four escort vessels (*Groza*, *Matros*, *Rubin* and *Smerch*); NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces To 10th August, 1942", *WIR*, no 128 (21 August 1942), p 37, SECRET.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (17 August 1942), SECRET.

This was the second occasion on which Miles felt it necessary to give the Russians a warning about the suspension of convoys. He was cautious in taking this step as the British Government did not want the Mission to be tough with the Russians, and he was concerned in case the Russians felt inclined to call his bluff. Just under a fortnight later, Alafuzov informed the Naval Mission that only 19 bombers and 10 torpedo-bombers were available in support of the convoy. Miles, therefore, recommended to the Admiralty that PQ18 should be postponed as he believed that the Russians should be made to realize their responsibilities in the protection of the convoys, although he understood that the Soviet Naval Staff was subordinate to the army-minded *Stavka* in Moscow.<sup>17</sup> In the event, he was subsequently informed that 200 fighters and 58 bombers would be made available in North Russia to redeem the situation.<sup>18</sup>

There was more trouble, however, in the north. The inadequate state of medical facilities at Archangel and Murmansk, which were now choked with survivors from PQ17, had led to a classic Anglo-Russian confrontation. The British solution was to organise a fully-equipped hospital unit, which sailed on 2 September for North Russia in the ships of PQ18. But, despite previous unfavourable experiences and many warnings from the Naval Mission, Soviet visas for all the personnel involved were not obtained before departure. Miles considered the whole visa business "ridiculous in war time", but he realised that there was no use protesting the matter while the Russians insisted on it and considered the authorities back in the United Kingdom "incurable".<sup>19</sup>

At Murmansk all went well, as the unit landed in accordance with permission given a fortnight earlier, and a British Auxiliary Hospital was soon established at Vaenga. However, the Archangel contingent was barred entry to the Soviet Union. Having braved the Arctic route to Russia, they were now forced to make the return journey to the United Kingdom without disembarking. Miles felt that at least the incident might serve to remind London that it was always necessary to deal with the Soviet Union according to the letter of the law.

In the matter of medical care, the Mission and its political masters in London had been of one mind. However, for some time it had been clear that the British Government was not willing to offer

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid* (29 August 1942).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid* (10 September 1942).

<sup>19</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (6 September 1942).



support in any situation where the Mission's views conflicted too sharply with those put forward by the Russians in the Soviet Embassy and Military Mission in the United Kingdom.

The "visa war" with *Narkomindel*, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, reached a crucial stage by the end of 1942 as more and more replacements were required for British personnel serving in the Soviet Union. Several outstanding visas for incoming British replacements had been refused. Miles, therefore, urged the adoption of strong measures at the highest level because he felt that unless all the necessary personnel were obtained, it would not be possible to continue running the convoys: "We shall not get anything through unless we are prepared to take a really strong line with a threat of say the stoppage of convoys or the withdrawal of our and their Missions."<sup>20</sup> The Naval Mission took little comfort from an assurance that the visa issue would be raised with the Soviet Government, with Miles stating that he was "very glad to hear this matter is being taken up by the Foreign Office, but I don't expect much from it if they continue to negotiate in their usual spineless way."<sup>21</sup>

Closely linked to the visa problem was that of mail for British personnel serving in the Soviet Union. The Russian civil authorities insisted on censoring all private correspondence, unless the mail bags had been properly sealed and had received a visa from the Soviet Embassy in London. This requirement led to endless delays, losses and distress.

Problems also arose over the creation of an Anglo-Russian cipher. The Soviet Union objected to any American material in the book. This was an unhelpful attitude, although it may have been due to Soviet fear of political repercussions should the book fall into Japanese hands. The Naval Mission pressed the Admiralty to respond with an ultimatum.<sup>22</sup> Miles had made his point, and at a meeting on 2 January 1943 the cipher project was dropped.<sup>23</sup> Within a fortnight, the Russians informed the British that they had discontinued the use of the British Self-Evident Code and the six-figure Aircraft Reporting Code. These two codes had no professional connection and the Soviet gesture was seen as one of pique at the British decision to cancel production of the Anglo-Russian Cipher.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, Miles to Rushbrooke (4 January 1943), p 1, para 6, SECRET.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (17 December 1942), SECRET.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid* (2 January 1943).

<sup>24</sup> Miles felt "certain that we have gained by taking a stand and not pandering to their ridiculous restrictions"; PRO, ADM 223/249, Miles to Rushbrooke (4 January 1943), p 2, para 7, SECRET.

The wives and families of members of the Soviet Mission in London had long been allowed entry to the United Kingdom. On 25 January 1943, Miles received a complaint through the Army *Otdyel* that a Russian woman passenger bound for Sweden had been allocated an unheated cabin aboard the *Empire Archer*. Also, it was alleged that she had been the subject of derogatory remarks and was denied the use of the lavatory. In fact, on investigation it emerged that the woman had been given use of the commodore's cabin and, as Miles considered, she was "probably far better off than in her unheated flat in Moscow."<sup>25</sup> This incident, while minor in itself, was symptomatic of the new trend in Anglo-Soviet political relationships.

Although political links with the Soviet Union were often strained, naval collaboration continued. For example, the British Mission had been informed that the Soviet Union did not wish to continue cooperation over W/T intelligence,<sup>26</sup> which had always been conducted through the Army representatives in Moscow. However, the Soviet Navy made it plain that they lacked experience in this area and expressed "great concern and a strong desire" for cooperation in this field to continue.<sup>27</sup>

Even between the seamen of the two countries, however, problems still emerged. For example, the erection of a RDF (Radio Direction Finding or radar) beacon at the entrance to the Kola Inlet had been proposed and, as the Russian destroyers were fitted with the British Type 286 RDF, this seemed a sensible suggestion.<sup>28</sup> However, the Soviet Naval Staff decided that such a beacon would be superfluous and that existing W/T beacons were quite adequate.<sup>29</sup>

In the autumn of 1942, Clanchy became Head of the Russian Section at the NID.<sup>30</sup> He had been Naval Attaché to Moscow since 1936 and "knew the country and had no illusions about the nature and intentions of [its] people and Government. Where others were suspicious he had a background of firsthand knowledge."<sup>31</sup> So, for example, when the Labour peer Lord Strabolgi wished to make political capital from alleged Russian submarine successes, the NID replied that Russian official communiqués were

---

<sup>25</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (25 January 1943), SECRET.

<sup>26</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (1 December 1942).

<sup>27</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, Miles, report on the work of the British Military Mission (31 December 1942), p 6, para 46, SECRET.

<sup>28</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (19 November 1942), SECRET.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid* (24 November 1942).

<sup>30</sup> Clanchy, assisted by Wyatt, was charged with the study of Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Afghanistan; "Naval Intelligence Division - Telephone Numbers &c." (25 November 1942), in NMM, Godfrey Papers, MS81/005, Box A, "Naval Intelligence Papers".

<sup>31</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 17.

"invariably exaggerated".<sup>32</sup> Also, he was soon reporting that the Russians "are determined to rebuild their Navy and to expand it into a large fleet. This has been their intention since 1937."<sup>33</sup> Clanchy, who had been "deeply disillusioned" by his experiences in Russia,<sup>34</sup> was in an influential position with regard to Soviet naval matters, and was eventually promoted from being Head of Section 16 to become Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence (DDNI).<sup>35</sup>

At a meeting on 31 December 1942, Kuznetsov complained that the minesweeping trawlers constructed in the United Kingdom for the Soviet Navy were "too heavily laden, which gave them only a small metacentric height and freeboard." As tactfully as possible, Miles explained that this misfortune was entirely due to the extra equipment with which the Soviet Naval Staff insisted the trawlers should be equipped against consistent British advice.<sup>36</sup>

Despite any change of policy towards the British that may have occurred at a high political and military level, the New Year's Eve meeting with Kuznetsov showed a friendly relationship still existed between the British representatives and the Soviet Naval Staff, and that the existing level of cooperation would continue as long as it was permitted.

At the end of 1942, open sources suggested that though the Soviet Union was an ally, "little more is known about the Russian Navy than before."<sup>37</sup> But the garnering of intelligence had to be done in a subtle manner. Miles submitted a report on the work of the British Military Mission, which had been 18 months in the Soviet Union, in which he stated: "First of all *intelligence*. There was a natural desire on the part of the Ministeries [*sic*] in London to exploit that [*sic*] fact that at last there was a Mission in Moscow and the 25 years blank gap in Soviet intelligence could now be filled ... No bigger error, however, could have been made".<sup>38</sup> Each time that requests were made for information about Soviet forces or equipment, the Mission "lost more ground and aroused more suspicion."<sup>39</sup> But, notwithstanding

---

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> PRO, ADM 223/251, Clanchy to Rear-Admiral C P Hermon-Hodge (10 March 1943), para (b).

<sup>34</sup> McLachlan, *Room 39*, p 321.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*; and PRO, ADM 223/257, NID, "I. Staff and Distribution of Work. II. Outside Staff" (November 1944), p 1, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>36</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (31 December 1942), SECRET.

<sup>37</sup> Francis E McMurtrie, "Foreign Navies", in Rear-Admiral H G Thursfield (ed), *Brassey's Naval Annual 1942* (London, 1942), p 77.

<sup>38</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, Miles, report on the work of the British Military Mission (31 December 1942), p 5, para 34, SECRET.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

this statement, working as allies had produced a harvest of intelligence on the Soviet Navy's ships and crews, leading naval personalities and operational effectiveness. The fact that the Russians were suspicious of the British did not prevent the latter from having a clear idea of Soviet capabilities. Working together, side by side, an increased knowledge of the Soviet Navy was inevitable.

From his other contacts as Head of 30 Mission, together with increasingly frequent reports of disquieting incidents in North Russia and the Black Sea, Miles was aware that a fundamental change of attitude to the British had taken place. Whatever this might presage, the Admiral's directive remained unchanged: to defer to the Russians to the utmost, consistent with the efficient performance of the Mission's duties, in pursuit of the basic policy of keeping the Soviet Union in the war at all costs.<sup>40</sup> Admiral Miles finally departed the Soviet Union on 22 March 1943.<sup>41</sup>

In South Russia in January 1943, Major-General Friedrich von Paulus was surrounded at Stalingrad and the position of the German 6th Army was hopeless.<sup>42</sup> A tide of confidence was sweeping through Russia and it was recognised that a watershed in the war had been reached. Cooperation with the

---

<sup>40</sup> Miles stated that the Naval Mission "should be allowed to take a firmer line in our dealing with the Soviet Staffs, but we were informed that this was against the policy of His Majesty's Government and this policy, in my opinion, unfortunately remains in force"; PRO, ADM 223/252, Miles, report on the work of the British Military Mission (31 December 1942), p 8, para 63, SECRET. The original directive to the Mission "stated in broad terms 'that they were to give the benefit of their war experience to and help the Soviet Staff to the best of their ability until Russia collapsed. Subsequently they were to bolster up pockets of resistance'"; *ibid*, NID 16, "British Military Mission in the U.S.S.R." (24 May 1945), p 1, para 4. A new directive was given in November 1943, under which the Mission was to "assist the Russians by every means in your power", subject only to restrictions regarding the exchange of information; *ibid*, Admiralty to Fisher (6 November 1943), p 1, para 1 (i), MOST SECRET. There was also a belief in some quarters that it was important to maintain good Anglo-Soviet relations to ensure economic benefits after the war. Indeed, the NID put forward a report suggesting that there was "a prospect that the British Empire would not find it impossible to arrive at a much more satisfactory trade understanding with the Soviet Union than in the past. This might provide normal contacts leading to good general relations, and at the same time result in an export programme for British Empire manufacturers which might well last for twenty years"; NHB, "Russia After the War", *WIR*, no 148 (8 January 1943), p 40, SECRET.

<sup>41</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 4, Diary (22 March 1943). Admiral Douglas B Fisher then became Head of the British Naval Section in Moscow and Admiral E R Archer took over the duties of SBNO, North Russia; CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 8. In 1944, Fisher also became temporary Head of 30 Mission on the departure of Major-General Martell; *ibid*, p 30. In the NID, Godfrey had been replaced by Rear-Admiral (later Vice-Admiral) Edmund Rushbrooke in January 1943 but, after Godfrey's brilliant reign, "found little new to create"; McLachlan, *Room 39*, p 7. Indeed, by August 1942, the NID had "virtually assumed the shape and size which it was to maintain until the end of the war"; Beesly, *Very Special Admiral*, p 228. Succeeding DNIs were Rear-Admiral W E Parry in 1946 and Longley-Cook from 1948 to 1951; McLachlan, *Room 39*, p 379.

<sup>42</sup> The German general was promoted to field marshal on 31 January, but this was "a purely Hitlerian ploy, designed to persuade Paulus to commit suicide, because as everyone knew, no German field marshal had ever surrendered." However, that same day he surrendered to a Russian lieutenant who came to the 6th Army headquarters; Edwin P Hoyt, *199 Days: The Battle for Stalingrad* (London, 1993), p 270.

---

United Kingdom had helped to bring about an improved Russian military situation, but the presence of representatives of the British services in the Soviet Union was increasingly irksome to the *Narkomindel* and to the NKVD.<sup>43</sup>

One of the main reasons for the change in Soviet attitude may have been a growing belief in the USSR that Britain was prepared "to fight to the last Russian". Also, such events as the Red Army Day celebrations in London's Albert Hall may have confirmed an impression in the Soviet Union that their country had established a splendid national image in the United Kingdom, and that they had thereby gained a psychological hold over British public opinion.<sup>44</sup> That is, it may have been thought in Moscow that brave Soviet Russia could do no wrong in British eyes and the voices of the British representatives in Russia were disregarded accordingly. But in London, the intelligence reports of the Naval Mission were now received by an experienced Russia hand, Clanchy, and given their due weight within the NID.

---

<sup>43</sup> The British representatives regarded it as an "unquestionable fact that the N.K.V.D., whose policy must be dictated from the highest quarters, look on us with maximum suspicion"; PRO, WO 208/1850, Captain W B Walker, RN, SBNO, Archangel, "Report of Proceedings" (4 June 1944), p 3, TOP SECRET.

<sup>44</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (20 February 1943), SECRET.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE SENIOR BRITISH NAVAL OFFICER, NORTH RUSSIA



*"Were we allies or  
just two nations fighting a common foe?"<sup>1</sup>*

*(Lieutenant-Commander J P Mosse)*

This chapter examines the work of the British naval representatives in North Russia and especially the degree of cooperation obtained. It also provides examples of the information sent back to the NID in the monthly reports and War Diaries of the Naval Mission.

On 30 July 1941, after a lapse of 23 years, a British officer - Captain R H L Bevan, RN - established his headquarters as SBNO, North Russia, at Polyarnoe.<sup>2</sup> Dick Bevan's predecessor in 1918 had been based at Archangel, the headquarters of the Allied Intervention forces. These troops almost succeeded in achieving Churchill's desire for "the strangling of Bolshevism at its birth".<sup>3</sup> In 1941, the British returned to North Russia as allies of the Communists, intent on helping the Soviet Union survive the German onslaught. However, the Russians remained intensely aware, even to the end of the war, of the earlier disastrous episode in Anglo-Soviet relations.

Bevan was a signals specialist who had left the Royal Navy as a rear-admiral having served as a naval attaché in his last appointment. On the outbreak of war, he returned to duty straight from retirement on his country farm. Bevan disliked his Russian hosts, whom he considered to be uncivilised and uncouth, and temperamentally he was not suited to deal with the problems emerging in North Russia. When Bevan was kept waiting to see Golovko on first arrival at Polyarnoe, he had been "furious, and had quite clearly taken a violent dislike to the Russians and everything to do with them."<sup>4</sup> Although he was

---

<sup>1</sup> Question posed by the commander of the sloop *Mermaid* after three days alongside Polyarnoe naval base without a courtesy call being made by the Russians, cited in Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 404.

<sup>2</sup> Failure to examine the papers of the British Naval Mission has led to some errors in the literature on the Arctic convoys. For example, Woodman incorrectly states that the SBNO was initially based at Murmansk and that "it was 1943 before closer liaison with the Russians could be achieved and the [SBNO] shifted to the Red Navy's base at Polyarnoe"; *ibid*, p 162.

<sup>3</sup> Churchill, House of Commons (26 January 1949), in Robert Rhodes James (ed), *Winston S Churchill, His Complete Speeches 1897-1963: Volume VII, 1943-1949* (New York, 1974), p 7774.

<sup>4</sup> Courtney Papers, Commander G P S Davies, "Russian Interlude" (hereinafter "Russian Interlude") (undated), p 14.

promoted to Acting Rear-Admiral soon after his arrival in the Soviet Union,<sup>5</sup> the Russians never respected Bevan in the same way as the experienced seagoing officers of the Royal Navy who succeeded him. Golovko rather contemptuously commented that Bevan was "an expert on agriculture, who can discuss it till the cows come home".<sup>6</sup>

The British party, led by Bevan, consisted of his Staff Officer (Operations), Commander G P S Davies, who was an experienced submarine officer, and a small but complete administrative, communications and cipher staff, together with interpreters. Despite the beauty of the Arctic summer, it was a depressing scene that greeted them on arrival at their new base. Located on the shores of the ancient ice-free Catherine Harbour,<sup>7</sup> the town of Polyarnoe was built to Soviet standards as a forward operational base and conditions there were extremely austere.<sup>8</sup> The local roads were in an appalling condition and Polyarnoe was virtually cut off from the rest of Russia, except by water. Accommodation was bad and infested with bed-bugs, and the sanitation was indescribable. Amenities were scarce and shops non-existent. Furthermore, air-raids were frequent as the port was less than 50 miles from the front.<sup>9</sup>

Bevan and Davies were given a courteous but restrained welcome by Golovko and Kucherov.<sup>10</sup> During the ensuing discussion, the Russians set the tone of Anglo-Soviet naval relations by declining to disclose the movements of Russian submarines operating against German lines of communication off the Norwegian coast. This secretive attitude was later partially moderated when it was revealed that British naval forces, including submarines, would shortly be operating in the area.<sup>11</sup> However, the British were regarded as little more than spies, and the Soviet reservations at this time are well expressed by Golovko's

---

<sup>5</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (14 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>6</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 67.

<sup>7</sup> The port is situated within the Kola Inlet, where it is "only occasionally, for perhaps three or four days at a time, that ice becomes a hindrance, and then only during a particularly cold winter"; NHB, "Ice Conditions", *WIR*, no 193 (19 November 1943), p 54, SECRET.

<sup>8</sup> The NID had been monitoring its development, having noted in 1938 that "great progress" was being made in building the naval base; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; New Northern Base", *M.I.R.*, January, 1938, no 224 (15 January 1938), p 51, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>9</sup> For initial impressions of Polyarnoe, see NHB, "Naval Life at Polyarnoe; Extracts from a Letter from the Senior British Naval Officer, Murmansk", *WIR*, no 85 (24 October 1941), pp 58-61, SECRET.

<sup>10</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (30 July 1941), SECRET.

<sup>11</sup> Bevan reported back to London that intelligence was "exchanged quite frankly, so far as I can tell, though at first we were kept in the dark about essential movements, when I protested"; PRO, ADM 223/249, Bevan to Godfrey (13 August 1941), p 2, SECRET.

description of Davies as "an energetic and cunning man who was a submariner in the past and is now to all appearances an intelligence officer."<sup>12</sup>

Golovko was faced with a number of heavy responsibilities at this time, set against an extremely difficult military situation. The Northern Fleet, although severely restricted in its activities by a shortage of oil fuel, had concentrated on supporting the Soviet 14th Army. Military responsibility for the defence of the Rybachi and Sredni Peninsulas had been delegated to the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet.<sup>13</sup> On 12 September, 3,000 naval ratings, "the only available reinforcements", were rushed into the front line west of Murmansk to meet a strong attack.<sup>14</sup> Landings were effected behind enemy lines under the direction of Captain V I Platonov of the Northern Fleet staff,<sup>15</sup> and a number of enemy positions bombarded.

German destroyers, however, made two sweeps along the coast and could sink ships off the Kola Inlet with impunity. On the first occasion, five Soviet destroyers were ordered to sea but were far too late to intercept. Thereafter, on 10 August, two *Gorky*-class destroyers sighted three German destroyers but made "no attempt to chase or engage" the enemy.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, on 20 July the destroyer *Stremitelny* was sunk by bombs in the Kola Inlet.<sup>17</sup>

There was a major deficiency of naval air support. The Northern Fleet Air Force was small and obsolescent, much of it consisting of slow MBR-2 seaplanes. Although there were some short-range twin-engined PE-3 bombers and a few Ilyushin-16 fighters, no dive-bombers or torpedo-bomber aircraft were available. Also, support from the Army Air Force was problematical.

In November 1941, after covering the passage of PQ3, Rear-Admiral H M Burrough, commanding the 10th Cruiser Squadron, arrived in the Kola Inlet in the cruiser *Kenya*, which was screened by the destroyers *Bedouin* and *Intrepid*. Through his ancestors, Burrough had a family connection with Russia that had considerable appeal for Golovko and his staff. Not only had one of his Elizabethan predecessors discovered the southern sea passage between Novaya Zemlya and the mainland, known as

---

<sup>12</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 85.

<sup>13</sup> S A Tyushkevich (Chief Author), *The Soviet Armed Forces: A History of Their Organizational Development*, translated by the CIS Multilingual Section, Translation Bureau, Secretary of State Department, Ottawa, Canada (Moscow, 1978), p 324.

<sup>14</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (12 September 1941), SECRET.

<sup>15</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 50.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (10 August 1941), SECRET.

<sup>17</sup> David Brown, *Warship Losses of World War Two* (London, 1990), p 48.



the Kara or Burrough Straits, but his great-grandfather had fought with the joint Anglo-Russian fleet at Navarino in 1827. Making use of his heritage, Burrough persuaded the Russian Admiral to allow two Soviet destroyers to carry out an offensive sweep in company with the British warships. Accordingly, after much combined planning in English and Russian, and considerable W/T traffic arising from the necessity of withdrawing the Russian submarine patrols from the coast, the combined Anglo-Soviet squadron, in line ahead, set sail for North Cape on the night of 24/25 November.<sup>18</sup>

The flotilla formed up in single line ahead in the order *Kenya*, *Bedouin*, *Gremyashchi*, *Gromky* and *Intrepid*.<sup>19</sup> Soviet Captain V A Fokin was second-in-command in the destroyer *Gremyashchi*,<sup>20</sup> which was considered "one of the prides of the Northern Fleet",<sup>21</sup> with Courtney on board as BLO. No German ships were sighted, probably because of the forewarning offered by the extensive Russian W/T traffic.<sup>22</sup> On the return passage, however, the squadron bombarded Vardø in accordance with a special request by Golovko,<sup>23</sup> and the Russians were most impressed by the *Kenya*'s broadside of twelve 6-inch guns.

Although the operation was inconclusive, it nevertheless stands out as one of the few examples of cooperation with the Russians in naval offensive operations during the war.<sup>24</sup> Thereafter, Burrough

<sup>18</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (28 November 1941), SECRET.

<sup>19</sup> PRO, ADM 199/72, Burrough to the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, "Enclosure to Appendix III; Operation 'Ar'" (5 December 1941), f 55, MOST SECRET.

<sup>20</sup> Fokin was made Captain (Destroyers) with the Northern Fleet but was posted to the United Kingdom in the spring of 1944 as Chief of Staff to Vice-Admiral Levchenko; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions and Awards", *WIR*, p 65.

<sup>21</sup> Grey Papers, "Gremyashchi" (undated), p 1.

<sup>22</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. North Russia to D.N.I." (26 November 1941), p 1, SECRET. The NID had noted this habit before the war and, for example, stated that communication departments of Baltic Fleet ships had been "heavily criticised" for their lack of discipline, which was reflected in "numerous cases of unnecessary and many worded signals"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Exercises", *M.I.R.*, November, 1938, no 234 (15 November 1938), p 20, CONFIDENTIAL. During the war, the GC&CS (having penetrated the German Enigma cipher) was able to follow German Naval "Y" Service efforts against the Soviet Navy. It was noted that "the presence at sea of Russian destroyers has occasionally been taken to indicate that a convoy would shortly proceed into port"; PRO, ADM 223/6, Naval Section, "German Naval 'Y' Service Reports on Russian Units at Sea in Northern Waters (1/12 - 26/12/1944)", ULTRA/ZIP/ZG/324 (27 December 1944), p 1, para II, TOP SECRET "U".

<sup>23</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (28 November 1941), SECRET.

<sup>24</sup> Further details of the operation are contained in PRO, ADM 199/72, Burrough to the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, "Appendix III; Period at Kola Inlet - Covering in Particular Operation 'Ar' - with Operation Orders in English and Russian Attached" (5 December 1941), ff 53-54, MOST SECRET.

"constantly urged the Russian naval authorities at Polyarnoe to mount anti-submarine patrols in their own waters and to afford air cover to the convoys".<sup>25</sup>

Golovko had hoped that his force of submarines would be reinforced from the Baltic, but before this could be attempted the Germans had cut the Baltic-White Sea Canal. Fortunately, it was agreed to station two British submarines in North Russia for a limited period to establish liaison with the Soviet submarine forces and to attack the German supply ships supporting Dietl's troops on the Murmansk front.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, HM Submarines *Tigris* (under the command of Commander H F "Boggy" Bone) and *Trident* (Commander G M Sladen) arrived at Polyarnoe on 4 and 10 August respectively.<sup>27</sup>

The arrival of the British boats was "made into a major operation" by the Soviet Naval Staff.<sup>28</sup> *Tigris* had experienced three days of thick weather which prevented the taking of navigational "sights", but her rendezvous with a Soviet destroyer was "exactly on the minute",<sup>29</sup> and only two miles in error, which "greatly impressed" the Russians.<sup>30</sup> That the rendezvous went smoothly was fortunate, as nothing had been arranged about recognition signals.<sup>31</sup> The British submarines spent four months based at Polyarnoe, and in the course of a number of patrols off the Norwegian coast they sank eight ships and damaged two more.<sup>32</sup> The presence of British submariners also paid a very useful dividend in its positive effect on the Russian crews, with whom they established a close liaison.

At this time, the SBNO reported that the Northern Fleet possessed 16 boats, including three large "K"-class, one large "D"-class, six medium *Shch*-class and six small *Malodki* or baby submarines.<sup>33</sup> The British submarine specialists reported favourably on the condition of the Russian boats and the keenness of their crews, but it was noticeable that they lacked any proper attack instruments and were quite ignorant

---

<sup>25</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 67.

<sup>26</sup> During the First World War, British submarines had operated alongside the Russians in the Baltic. For a memoir of these operations, see CAC, Vice-Admiral Leslie Haliburton Ashmore Papers, ASHM 1/1, Ashmore with Captain Donald Macintyre, RN, manuscript describing service in Russia during and after the First World War (1958); and *ibid*, ASHM 1/4/1, Ashmore, "Operations of British Submarines in Baltic 1914-1918", notes on lecture to the Staff College (1932).

<sup>27</sup> Alastair Mars, *British Submarines at War 1939-1945* (London, 1971), p 120; and PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Monthly Report" (hereinafter "Monthly Report") (26 August 1941), p 3, para 8, MOST SECRET.

<sup>28</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, War Diary (11 August 1941).

<sup>29</sup> Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", p 18.

<sup>30</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (4 August 1941), SECRET.

<sup>31</sup> Commander F W Lipscomb, *The British Submarine* (Greenwich, 1975), p 77.

<sup>32</sup> Mars, *British Submarines*, p 120.

<sup>33</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Monthly Report", pp 1-2, para 3.

of salvo firing and time intervals.<sup>34</sup> Davies felt that the Russians had "little idea of how to operate their submarines and still less of how to carry out a submarine attack."<sup>35</sup> The British ideas, therefore, were swiftly introduced to the Russians and from "October 1941 the submarines of the Northern Fleet began to shift from single firings to firings with time intervals".<sup>36</sup>

Claims of sinkings were often "most dubious",<sup>37</sup> and the SBNO reported in December 1941 that considering the number of Soviet submarines operating, results from their patrols were disappointing.<sup>38</sup> He also noted that no night attacks had been performed.<sup>39</sup> By this time, *Tigris* and *Trident* had returned to the United Kingdom having sailed on 20 October and 15 November respectively.<sup>40</sup> But their achievements had raised British prestige in North Russia "considerably".<sup>41</sup>

Lieutenant George R Colvin's *Sealion* and Lieutenant R P Raikes in *Seawolf* arrived as replacements on 6 and 10 November respectively.<sup>42</sup> Both of these boats had "some success; but as winter closed in, conditions became intolerable" and the submarines were withdrawn.<sup>43</sup> Before they departed North Russia, the British boats had managed to effect a small but distinct increase in the efficiency of the Northern Fleet's submarine arm.<sup>44</sup> But it was felt that the achievements of the British submarines also aroused the jealousy of the Russians who, therefore, were probably not sorry when the "T"-class boats finally left Arctic waters.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", pp 24-25. The SBNO reported that the first Russian submarine inspected was a "K"-class boat and that it had no attack instruments; PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Monthly Report", p 2, para 4.

<sup>35</sup> Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", p 19.

<sup>36</sup> Captain 2nd Rank I Kosikov, "Torpedo Weaponry in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1976), pp 72-77.

<sup>37</sup> Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", p 20.

<sup>38</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Fourth Monthly Report; Period 26th October to 30th November" (hereinafter "4th Monthly Report") (3 December 1941), p 3, para 2 (d), SECRET.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Thirdly [sic] Monthly Report" (hereinafter "3rd Monthly Report") (25 October 1941), p 1, para 2 (a); and *ibid.*, "4th Monthly Report", p 1, para 2 (a).

<sup>41</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (3 September 1941), MOST SECRET.

<sup>42</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "4th Monthly Report", p 1, para 2 (a).

<sup>43</sup> Mars, *British Submarines*, pp 120-121.

<sup>44</sup> Knowledge of the British techniques of salvo firing and time intervals later spread: "the know-how of the men of the Northern Fleet in using torpedoes with a time interval and in a fan-shaped pattern in 1943 was also adopted by the Black Sea Fleet"; Admiral of the Fleet N Sergeyev, "Operational Art and Tactics of the Navy in the Second Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 23-31.

<sup>45</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "North Russia - 7th Monthly Report - February, 1942" (hereinafter 7th Monthly Report") (7 March 1942), p 6, para 7, SECRET.

By British standards, the Russian submarine patrol organisation left a good deal to be desired. Typically, time spent in harbour between patrols was very long; sometimes three weeks or more. Similarly, the patrols themselves might be 18 to 21 days in duration, which was too severe an ordeal under winter conditions even for the tough Russian crews.<sup>46</sup> It was perhaps partly for this reason that Bevan found it necessary to report that the majority of submarine attacks were carried out during the comparatively short hours of daylight and, as a result, a large amount of German shipping probably passed safely along the coast during the hours of darkness. Certainly, the German shipping routes were left unpatrolled for long periods.<sup>47</sup>

The JIC considered that the organisation and staff work of the Soviet Navy was poor,<sup>48</sup> and this failure often led to problems. For example, there could have been an awkward incident on 3 October 1941, when the cruiser *London* sighted a submarine in the White Sea during its return trip to Archangel. A bomb attack was made by the British ship's aircraft, but fortunately without result as the boat was Russian. The mistake had resulted from a Soviet failure to notify the British of the presence of a friendly submarine.<sup>49</sup>

At Polyarnoe, personal relations with the Northern Fleet Staff settled down into a correct if unenthusiastic groove. Bevan was by nature unsuited to the task of developing more intimate relations with his Soviet allies and Golovko, who was promoted Vice-Admiral on 18 September,<sup>50</sup> was too conscious of the political delicacy of his position vis-à-vis the British to take any initiative in that direction.

Golovko possessed immense energy and a sunny temperament, but also a considerable native shrewdness which the British found exasperating at times. He was flanked throughout the war by his political deputy, Brigade Commissar (later Rear-Admiral) Nikolaev, a large, overweight, pale-faced individual, commonly referred to by the British as "the Slug".<sup>51</sup> He seemed to possess no professional

---

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, "6th Monthly Report", p 2, para 2 (ii) (b). The reliability of Soviet submarines was a further problem, with their main batteries proving a constant source of trouble; *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* As a result, the percentage of losses among German convoys in the Arctic never exceeded one per cent of the tonnage which got through; Mitchell, "The Soviets Against the Germans at Sea", p 242.

<sup>48</sup> PRO, CAB 81/114, "Russian Strength on 1st March 1943", JIC(43)102 (Final) (12 March 1943), p 8, para 20, SECRET.

<sup>49</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1106, War Diary (5 October 1941), SECRET; and PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (6 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>50</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, War Diary (18 September 1941).

<sup>51</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 11.

knowledge whatsoever, but provided the political check on the Commander-in-Chief required by the Soviet system. The third member of the War Council of the Northern Fleet was the Chief of Staff, Kucherov. He was a rather sinister figure, with the appearance of a Chicago gangster,<sup>52</sup> who seemed to be much feared by his staff among whom he had a reputation for being "a martinet and a bully".<sup>53</sup> The NID, however, stated that the "consensus of British opinion about this officer is that, while he makes little pretension to being a seaman, he is a conscientious and capable administrator, courteous to meet and friendly in his relations with the British".<sup>54</sup>

At Murmansk, the British discovered a friend and ally (as far as this was possible in Stalin's Russia) in the person of Engineer Captain Dubrovin, a jovial and immensely energetic figure who supervised the small repair dockyard at Rosta. Dubrovin was a key figure, and he knew it, for he was probably irreplaceable in his capacity as "a kind of Admiral Superintendent" of the Kola Inlet dockyard and repair facilities.<sup>55</sup> A patriotic Russian of the best type, he allowed no political irrelevancies to interfere with his job of keeping ships in seagoing condition, in which capacity he maintained consistently good relations with the British seamen.<sup>56</sup>

At Vaenga airfield, the British were again fortunate in the officer commanding the Northern Fleet Air Force, Major-General Kuznetsov. A brilliant airman, with a "charming" personality, he was a "spare-built man in his late thirties with close greying hair and had a round humorous face and slightly pointed nose."<sup>57</sup> Kuznetsov combined real leadership skills with great professional ability, and he had a proper Russian sense of hospitality towards the many British airmen who passed through Vaenga.

On 6 September 1941, the old aircraft-carrier *Argus*, escorted by a strong cruiser covering force, flew off 24 Hurricanes, although two of them were badly damaged in landing at Vaenga. Fifteen more crated aircraft were landed from a merchant ship at Archangel, assembled at Keg-Ostrov aerodrome, and

---

<sup>52</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, Maund to DNI (17 May 1944), p 2, para 10, SECRET.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, para 9.

<sup>54</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions", *WIR*, no 280 (20 July 1945), p 62, SECRET.

<sup>55</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "23rd Monthly Report; 1st July to 31st July, 1943" (hereinafter 23rd Monthly Report") (31 July 1943), p 5, para 29, SECRET.

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, *ibid*, Egerton, "Report of Proceedings for May 1944" (27 June 1944), p 1, para 3, TOP SECRET. For information on the Northern Fleet's rear services, see Rear-Admiral A Slavgorodskiy, "Rear Support of Combat Operations of the Northern Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1985), pp 18-22.

<sup>57</sup> Golley, *Hurricanes Over Murmansk*, pp 162-163.

flown across to Vaenga within a week.<sup>58</sup> The two Hurricane squadrons, under the command of Wing Commander H N G Ramsbottom-Isherwood, finally handed their aircraft over to the Russians on 18 October 1941.<sup>59</sup> In the meantime, they had greatly assisted in the air defence of the Kola Inlet, taught the Russians how to fly the Hurricanes and, above all, fostered a spirit of emulation which increased the Russians' own efficiency as Soviet air reinforcements began to arrive in the north.

The British air combat record was 15 German aircraft shot down, with "many others" damaged or destroyed, for one Hurricane lost.<sup>60</sup> It was certainly a shock for the *Luftwaffe*. Reports from captured airmen showed that some of them had been sent to North Russia for a rest after operations against England and, therefore, the last thing that they had expected to meet was Hurricanes.<sup>61</sup> Throughout their stay, the Hurricane pilots were given help and cooperation on a scale which was denied to the other services. This sprang partly from the fact that RAF personnel at Vaenga, and later at Gryaznaya and Lakhta, were considered within the rigid *Narkomindel* classification of foreigners to be "operational", which entitled them to specific privileges. By contrast, Naval Parties 100 and 200 at Polyarnoe and Archangel, which included British warships when in harbour, were classified as belonging to the British Mission. Possessing only a quasi-diplomatic status, this exposed them to many of the frustrations customarily experienced in the Soviet Union by members of the diplomatic community.

Operational collaboration between the British and Russian naval staffs at Polyarnoe suffered from a serious obstacle. This was the complete divergence of views regarding the proper employment of naval submarine, surface and air forces. Golovko's preoccupation with the land front impelled him to request action by British surface forces against German military transports sailing round North Cape. The British, being primarily concerned with the safety of the Arctic convoys, soon commented about the apparent lack of Russian offensive spirit against U-boats operating off the entrance to the White Sea.<sup>62</sup> Because Golovko considered that the primary duty of his submarine force was to disrupt the German inshore supply lines along the Norwegian coast, he was not always able to honour his commitment to station

---

<sup>58</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 37.

<sup>59</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "3rd Monthly Report", p 3, para 6.

<sup>60</sup> Golley, *Hurricanes Over Murmansk*, p 190.

<sup>61</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "3rd Monthly Report", p 3, para 6.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, "Monthly Report", p 1, para 2.

submarines in special patrol positions, which were designed to intercept German surface forces if they emerged from the Norwegian fjords to attack convoy vessels.

By the end of October 1941, the SBNO was reporting that the Russians had little inclination to use their *Shtorm*-class destroyers except for bombardment.<sup>63</sup> But there was now a good spirit among the Russian submarine crews and Bevan noted that the *Malodki*-class submarines had "again shown dash and offensive spirit."<sup>64</sup> In particular, on 2 October, boat 171 ignored orders not to enter Petsamo fjord.<sup>65</sup> Thereafter, having made an unsuccessful attack on a steamer, Captain Starikov's vessel got caught in an anti-submarine net and was repeatedly depth-charged before it finally broke free.<sup>66</sup> Also, submarine D3 claimed to have sunk three steamers and a tanker, being the first to use the British salvo and time-interval method of firing torpedoes.<sup>67</sup> In fact, torpedoes from Captain Konstantinov's boat either missed the targets entirely or exploded against cliffs as Axis records show no losses.<sup>68</sup> While the reports from Russian sources often contained exaggerated claims, the British still came to see the operational effectiveness of the Soviet submarine forces as much superior to their surface units.

There was a significant difference of opinion between the British and Russian naval staffs over the procedure by which Soviet submarines returned to the Kola Inlet after patrol. The Russians could never forecast a time of arrival with any accuracy, and their submarines were accustomed to surface and identify themselves to the signal stations at the entrance, then proceeding unescorted into harbour. However, through harsh experience, the British insisted on a rendezvous for submarines with a surface escort well clear of the entrance, so that all submarines approaching unescorted would be considered hostile. This was made necessary by the inefficient Soviet system of recognition signals, which also hampered routine

---

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, "3rd Monthly Report", p 2, para 2 (b) (i).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, para 2 (b) (ii).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 2 (b) (ii); Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, pp 77-78; and Hervieux, "The War Service of the Soviet M Class Submarines", p 14.

<sup>67</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "3rd Monthly Report", pp 2-3, para 2 (b) (ii).

<sup>68</sup> Hervieux, "Soviet Submarine Operations", p 239. Interestingly, it has been suggested that the Soviet submarine "actually hit nothing belonging to the enemy but there is reason for inferring, from missing correspondence and signals (which the British - presumably in the interests of good relations - destroyed in entirety) that D-3 mistook Allied ships for Germans"; Commander Richard Compton-Hall, MBE, RN (Retd), *The Underwater War 1939-1945* (Poole, Dorset, 1982), p 128.

movements of surface ships. Even as late as June 1942, Bevan reported that the Russians were "still unable to predict with accuracy the times of arrival of their submarines".<sup>69</sup>

Bevan was disappointed by the results obtained from the Soviet submarines equipped as minelayers,<sup>70</sup> especially as the Royal Navy had supplied the Northern Fleet with a considerable number of magnetic mines in July 1941. Davies accordingly devised a scheme to lay a large quantity of mines inside the islands off the Norwegian coast and along the normal route of the German military supply convoys. The British plan was put tactfully to the Northern Fleet staff with the result that before the end of 1941, at great risk to themselves, four Russian "K"-class boats had laid the required mines. Although the resulting minefields were rather widely scattered, and probably not as thickly laid as was desirable, they proved effective and were a notable product of Anglo-Soviet cooperation.<sup>71</sup>

The Russians, pressed into minelaying by the British, seemed strangely reluctant to use the weaponry available to them. For example, it was known from Golovko that some of the Northern Fleet's MBR-2 seaplanes were equipped with circling torpedoes which could be parachuted into the sea, but there was no evidence that they were being used.<sup>72</sup>

In February 1942, there was a sharp drop in the claims of sinkings by Soviet patrol submarines, the figures being the lowest since August 1941.<sup>73</sup> This was partially a result of the abandonment of inshore patrols due to German mining,<sup>74</sup> but the British suspected that the Russians were also unsure of the precise location of their own mines. The Soviet Navy was evidently sensitive on these points for in July 1942, the critical month of the Arctic convoy battle, Bevan reported that the position regarding

---

<sup>69</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "North Russia - 10th Monthly Report - May 1942" (hereinafter "10th Monthly Report") (15 June 1942), p 2, para 2, SECRET.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, "4th Monthly Report", p 3, para 2 (d).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, "5th Monthly Report", pp 2-3, para 2 (b) (ii). For details of Soviet minelaying activity, see Captain 2nd Rank A Kolpakov and Captain 2nd Rank Ye Shubochkin, "Minelaying Actions of Soviet Submarines in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1989), pp 33-37.

<sup>72</sup> PRO, ADM 223/253, "North Russia - Enemy Intelligence Report. 6th - 22nd February, 1942; Section II. Air Activity" (23 February 1942), p 3, para 3, SECRET.

<sup>73</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "7th Monthly Report", p 2, para 2 (ii) (b). The Soviet Union erroneously claimed that between 1941 and 1942 submarines off North Russia sank "a total of 77 enemy transports and 27 warships"; Ammon, *The Soviet Navy in War and Peace*, p 61.

<sup>74</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "7th Monthly Report", p 2, para 2 (ii) (b).



Northern Fleet submarines was "no longer officially to be communicated" to him.<sup>75</sup> This was a blow for operational effectiveness as well as the overall intelligence picture on the Russian boats.<sup>76</sup>

The air situation gave the SBNO continual anxiety and he was able to report little practical response to Miles's urgent representations to the Soviet Naval Staff in Moscow. Russian secretiveness made it difficult to discover even what airfields were employed for convoy protection. Vaenga was known, as was Yagodnik (the naval airfield near Archangel), and Keg-Ostrov (also at Archangel) where the British Hurricanes had been assembled. The seaplane bases at Gryaznaya in the Kola Inlet and Lake Lakhta, near Archangel, had been visited by British Catalina flying boats, while Afrikanda, near Kandalaksha, had been used as a refuelling point for the Hurricanes flying from Keg-Ostrov to Vaenga. Russian fighters were operating from Ponoï, on the northwest side of the Gourlo, while on the opposite side, at Ruchi, there was an unfinished airfield whose intended use was unknown. A landing-ground had been cleared on Kildin Island off the Kola Inlet, and in winter the Russians used a lake at Iokanga for a similar purpose.<sup>77</sup>

All these airfields suffered from the severe climatic conditions prevailing, but they provided a reasonable basis for operations. Yet the critical shortage remained aircraft and, at the end of April 1942, Bevan wrote that unless bombers could be sent, attacks on convoys would continue undeterred and that Axis aerodromes (like Rovaniemi, which was used for attacking Archangel) would be left untouched.<sup>78</sup> Early in June 1942, however, there were some air reinforcements and the SBNO was able to report a little progress in cooperation with the Army Air Force, although he was careful to say that it was not easy to estimate how much reliance could be placed on this assistance.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, to help counter the threat of German surface vessels, the COS approved the deployment of British Hampden torpedo-bombers to North Russia.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, "North Russia - 12th Monthly Report - July 1942" (hereinafter "12th Monthly Report") (26 July 1942), p 1, para I (b), SECRET.

<sup>76</sup> However, the fact that Royal Navy officers were frequently allowed on board Soviet boats ensured that accurate information was widely available to the NID. See, for example, NHB, "Life on Board a Russian Submarine", *WIR*, no 155 (26 February 1943), pp 18-20, SECRET. However, regarding submarines, the Russians were "very secretive about their losses. We weren't allowed to know them"; interview with Ian Grey.

<sup>77</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "North Russia - 9th Monthly Report - April 1942" (hereinafter "9th Monthly Report") (30 April 1942), p 3, para 2, SECRET.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, "10th Monthly Report", p 2, para 3 (b).

<sup>80</sup> PRO, CAB 79/22, "Convoys to Northern Russia", in COS(42) 203 (10 July 1942), p 2, para 1, f 22, SECRET.

At the end of August 1942, in the midst of a difficult period of Anglo-Soviet relations, Rear-Admiral Douglas B Fisher succeeded Bevan at Polyarnoe. Fisher, who until recently had commanded the battleship *Warspite*, struck an excellent note with Golovko who described him in his memoirs as "a sea-dog of real merit, and in my opinion a man quite remote from political intrigue".<sup>81</sup>

The poor standard of medical facilities in North Russia was a vexing problem for the British. Despite the notable individual kindness shown by Russians to sick British personnel, an adverse report on the Soviet medical facilities was made and before he left the Soviet Union, Bevan urged that a hospital ship or unit should be deployed to North Russia.<sup>82</sup> A "damning report" by the commander of HMS *Ashanti* gave ammunition to the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, in his talks with the Admiralty.<sup>83</sup> As a result, on 3 August 1942, it was decided to send a hospital unit out in PQ18.<sup>84</sup> Fisher decided that one-third of the unit should land at Polyarnoe, with the remainder to be installed at Archangel, transferring from there to the Kola Inlet when the White Sea closed for the winter.<sup>85</sup>

The Polyarnoe contingent duly arrived and was allowed to disembark. Despite the acute lack of accommodation, a building was found about two miles from Vaenga airfield, right in the target area for German bombing.<sup>86</sup> However, there was no alternative and within a matter of days the survivors from PQ17, many of them desperately maimed by frostbite,<sup>87</sup> were transferred to the new British Auxiliary Hospital. The Northern Fleet staff, the local authorities and General Kuznetsov at Vaenga were extremely cooperative, and the hospital was surprisingly good considering the conditions. There was also no doubt that the Russians had cooperated fully in helping the British to establish it. Unfortunately, at Archangel there was an entirely different tale. Despite protests at the highest level, the Russians stuck to the letter of the law and the medical unit, which had not received prior permission to enter the Soviet Union, was not allowed to disembark.

---

<sup>81</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 108.

<sup>82</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "10th Monthly Report", p 4, para 6.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, "13th Monthly Report. 26th July to 31st August 1942" (hereinafter "13th Monthly Report") (10 September 1942), p 5, para 25, SECRET.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, para 26.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, para 27.

<sup>87</sup> Frostbite and gangrene were the lot of many survivors of a sinking in Arctic waters. See, for example, NHB, "Misadventures in the Cold", *WIR*, no 178 (6 August 1943), pp 24-27, SECRET.

To their credit, the Northern Fleet tried to solve the problem by offering an accommodation ship in the harbour at Archangel, but this alternative was forbidden by the civil authorities, almost certainly on the instructions of the *Narkomindel* in Moscow. On 12 September 1942, the Russians finally refused permission for the unit to remain and, therefore, Miles ordered it home in QP14.<sup>88</sup>

In strictly bureaucratic terms, the Russian case had been sound. However, on 21 September, Golovko revealed that he had received instructions from Moscow that the hospital at Vaenga should also be closed down.<sup>89</sup> Although this order was subsequently rescinded,<sup>90</sup> it did little to remove the overriding impression of ruthless inhumanity.

The supply of fuel, provisions and stores to British warships visiting the Kola Inlet soon gave Fisher considerable concern.<sup>91</sup> Also, fresh food was in relatively short supply, with the Soviet authorities only providing meat, fish and bread to the British ships.<sup>92</sup> Experience had shown the British how nearly impossible it was to discover the truth about local conditions, so it now became necessary to attach the qualification "or unwilling to supply" to any comment on shortages of this kind.

In early March 1942, Bevan reported that the supply of oil fuel from Russian sources was extremely unreliable and, at that time, almost negligible. There seemed to be no check on the amounts taken from shore tanks by Russian ships.<sup>93</sup> By early November, the situation was that since August 1941 63,000 tons of oil fuel had been supplied by the Russians to British ships. It was also a known fact that in this period 37,000 tons had been received from British tankers.<sup>94</sup> The stated Russian requirement of about 10,000 tons a month was brought by rail from the Caucasus, which was a good illustration of the long and heavy hauls undertaken routinely by the Russian railways.<sup>95</sup> But Fisher was soon reporting that he was experiencing great difficulty in obtaining regular reports of fuel stores from the Russians, and he

---

<sup>88</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "14th Monthly Report. September 1942" (hereinafter "14th Monthly Report") (7 October 1942), p 6, para 29, SECRET. British attempts to obtain permission for a hospital in Archangel continued; see PRO, FO 371/36968, "Hospital units in North Russian ports" (1943).

<sup>89</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "14th Monthly Report", p 6, para 29.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, "15th Monthly Report. October 1942" (hereinafter "15th Monthly Report") (8 November 1942), p 4, para 35, SECRET.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, pp 3-4, paras 20-30.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, "17th Monthly Report. 1st December 1942 to 20th January 1943" (hereinafter "17th Monthly Report") (14 January 1943), p 8, para 47, SECRET.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, "7th Monthly Report", p 4, para 4.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, "15th Monthly Report", p 3, para 22.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*. However, the figure for Russian naval fuel consumption is open to considerable doubt having regard to the inactivity of Soviet warships over long periods.

suspected that there was much oil in storage hidden about the Kola Inlet.<sup>96</sup> As an example, he stated that a British minesweeper had gone alongside a hulk in the harbour to perform boiler cleaning, only to discover during the course of an air-raid that the vessel was crammed full of aviation spirit!<sup>97</sup>

Now that Murmansk was regularly used as an unloading port for the Arctic convoys, it became necessary for local British naval staff to be appointed. With communication by water, it was impracticable for the main naval base at Polyarnoe, 20 miles up the Kola Inlet, to handle convoy affairs. The Murmansk staff eventually consisted of Commander Dickson, the British Naval Officer in Charge (NOIC),<sup>98</sup> a secretary and three interpreters,<sup>99</sup> a small cipher and communications staff, with Sea Transport, Naval Control Service and Ministry of War Transport representatives for work with ships in convoy.

At the outset, a British minesweeper was retained alongside to act as a communications link, but later on a small W/T station and coding office were established to meet this requirement. DEMS (Defensively-Equipped Merchant Ship) and Armament Supply staffs moved as required between Murmansk and Archangel. Army and RAF reception staffs were attached to the NOIC. A small United States Mission arrived in early 1942, but until the end of the war the entire convoy organisation was run by the British.

At Murmansk, just as in Archangel, much authority was wielded by the local police, customs, post office and *Narkomindel* representatives. It was from these organisations rather than from the Soviet Navy that most of the British difficulties arose. The rate of discharge of cargo at the port became very rapid and unloading took place in shifts right through the hours of darkness. However, despite the helpful cooperation of Dubrovin, repairs to ships remained very slow. This situation mainly arose from bureaucratic red tape. Unfortunately, two independent commissariats were involved, one from the Navy and the other from the Merchant Fleet. This reinforced the natural inclination of the Russian officials concerned not to take a decision if they could possibly avoid doing so.

At Polyarnoe, Russian surface forces were reinforced by the *Murman*, a minelayer with two 4-inch guns and good A/A armament. However, the SBNO remarked that there was no reason to suppose

---

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, "17th Monthly Report", p 5, para 28.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>98</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 2.

<sup>99</sup> Sub-Lieutenant Grey recalls that one of his tasks as an interpreter was to read the Soviet press in Murmansk, which consisted of a daily newspaper, the *Northern Star*. But, just as he found later in Moscow while reading *Izvestiya* and *Pravda*, "very little" was revealed; interview with Ian Grey.

that she was actually intended for PQ and QP convoy duties,<sup>100</sup> and so it proved to be. Also, in July 1942, the Soviet destroyer strength had been reduced temporarily by an accident in the *Sokrushitelny*. Apparently, a torpedo was accidentally fired with the torpedo tube in the inboard position, resulting in serious damage and casualties.<sup>101</sup>

Asdic had been fitted in one of the *Shch*-class submarines, and Russian officers and Asdic operators were thereafter taken to sea in British ships for anti-submarine sweeps and exercises.<sup>102</sup> However, the fitting of Soviet ships with Asdic did not go well. The officer in charge was a competent engineer who had completed a relevant course in England. Unfortunately, he was incapable of diverging from his handbooks and instructions in order to take into account the structural differences between Royal Navy and Soviet warships, even when advised by British technical staff.

The Admiralty sent out an Asdic specialist to advise the Russians on the matter. But, of course, he required detailed structural information in order to decide on various points, especially the critical positioning of the Asdic underwater "dome" in each class of ship. The Russians refused point blank to give him the blueprints of their vessels.<sup>103</sup> As a result, the Soviet engineers proceeded independently to fit Asdic domes on their submarines at precisely the same distance from the bow as the British placed their domes in "T"-class submarines, whose dimensions and characteristics were entirely different. As a result, the Asdics worked inefficiently for the Russians, who then felt that the British had provided faulty equipment.

As far as Soviet destroyers at this time are concerned, Admiral Fisher stated that it was obvious that the Russian vessels were not doing even half of the time at sea that British warships were performing. In terms of intelligence, by now details of the Soviet vessels were well known to the NID and, consequently, were "of no very special interest" to the Admiral.<sup>104</sup> Fisher, therefore, wished to know about "morale, discipline and training", rather than the quality of the Russian ships.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "10th Monthly Report", p 1, para 1 (d).

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, "12th Monthly Report", p 1, para I (a).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, "10th Monthly Report", p 1, para 1 (e).

<sup>103</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, Miles, report on the work of the British Military Mission (31 December 1942), p 8, para 59, SECRET.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Ian Grey.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*.

The Soviet obsession with secrecy led to unexpected complications in the north. In reaction to the impunity with which German surface and submarine forces operated in the Barents and Kara Seas, the Russians took the curious decision to change the characteristics of navigational aids, such as lights. This was done without informing their allies, whose safe arrival in North Russian ports depended to a large extent on these aids.<sup>106</sup> When questioned about the matter, Golovko argued that the lights and beacons along the coast were listed in Admiralty publications available to the Germans,<sup>107</sup> and he insisted on a guarantee that the British would not print details of any changes.<sup>108</sup>

Meanwhile, the North Dvina light-vessel had been removed on 12 November without notification, which endangered three British minesweepers.<sup>109</sup> Also, the characteristics of the East Kildin Light at the entrance to the Kola Inlet were changed to those previously used by Rybachi Peninsula Light some 35 miles away.<sup>110</sup> This modern attempt at wrecking was exacerbated by a persistent failure to switch on navigational lights and beacons when requested.<sup>111</sup>

Catalina flying boats from Coastal Command had been operating in North Russia since the end of June 1942 and performed admirable work in rounding up the scattered ships of PQ17. In early September, for the passage of PQ18, they were reinforced to form a search-and-strike force comprising 210 Squadron with Catalinas, four reconnaissance Spitfires and two formations of Hampden torpedo-bombers, 144 Squadron and 455 (RAAF) Squadron. The whole force was under the command of Group Captain F R Hopps.<sup>112</sup> This welcome reinforcement led to the establishment by Fisher of a small Area Combined Headquarters (ACHQ) on 6 September 1942 at Polyarnoe.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "17th Monthly Report", p 6, para 36.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, p 7, para 37.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, para 38.

<sup>109</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1107, War Diary (15 November 1941), SECRET.

<sup>110</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "17th Monthly Report", p 7, para 39. An example of the Soviet bureaucratic approach to navigation was the set of rules laid down for vessels entering Iokanga, which were described by the British as "an absolute farce"; PRO, ADM 223/249, "Rules for the entry into Iokanga [*sic*] Harbour by British Ships" (12 December 1942), SECRET attached to "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. North Russia to D.N.I." (22 January 1942), SECRET. There was, however, a genuine need to change navigational characteristics from time to time as German vessels reported details of Russian beacons. This would have been fully appreciated by the GC&CS from Ultra intelligence; see, for example, PRO, ADM 223/7, Naval Section, "German Naval Communications; Information for 15/3 - 31/3/45", ULTRA/ZIP/ZWTG/108 (15 April 1945), para I (ii) a), f 353, TOP SECRET "U".

<sup>111</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "17th Monthly Report", p 7, para 40.

<sup>112</sup> Schofield and Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen*, pp 191-195.

<sup>113</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 279.

Unfortunately, on the flight to the Soviet Union, one of the Hampdens was shot down by a Russian fighter at the mouth of the Kola Inlet, but "there was an air raid in progress at the time, and the Russians did not recognise the Hampden, which was flying outside the prescribed air corridor."<sup>114</sup> A combination of bad maps and weather, and no wireless, was largely responsible for the incident. However, after over a year of war it seemed that the Russians, with a Military Mission in London for the purpose of liaison, were still incapable of arranging for the safe arrival in their country of an important formation of Allied aircraft.

At the end of 1942, after 18 months of war in North Russian conditions, personnel problems became acute. Bevan had been accurate when he stated in July 1941 that the "somewhat unusual food, which is monotonous in the extreme, and the general low standard of accommodation ... may prove rather a trial over a long period".<sup>115</sup> On the naval side, visas had been definitely refused for several officers and ratings needed as reliefs. It was here that the "Mission" status of the Naval Parties was having its effect, for the RAF personnel, classified by the Russians as "operational", were allowed to come and go as they pleased with no passports, visas or restrictions whatsoever. It was a galling situation for the Royal Navy.

In April 1942, Bevan had written that he hoped that relief of all ratings would take place as they became due; that is, after serving nine to 12 months in North Russia. Although nobody complained, the Admiral knew that equally no one wished to stay.<sup>116</sup> New forms of pressure were gradually introduced by the Russians, and Fisher reported back to London on a series of customs and passport regulations affecting British vessels and personnel which he thought were "noxious and humiliating."<sup>117</sup>

In February 1943, the COS debated the lack of cooperation in North Russia and the sealing by Soviet customs officials of a British wireless station. The COS were "firmly in agreement that the time had come for strong representations to be made to the Russians regarding their general lack of co-operation and mistrust of and interference with actions taken by us for the sole purpose of assisting

---

<sup>114</sup> Schofield and Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen*, p 194.

<sup>115</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, War Diary (1 August 1941).

<sup>116</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "9th Monthly Report", p 4, para 7.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, "18th. Monthly Report. 21st. January to 25th. February, 1943" (hereinafter "18th Monthly Report") (26 February 1943), p 5, para 26, SECRET.

them."<sup>118</sup> It was decided that the Foreign Office should be asked to make these "strong representations".<sup>119</sup>

By the end of March, in the face of increasing frustrations and difficulties in every field of Allied activity in North Russia, Fisher came to the conclusion that the incidents formed a pattern and that it was evident that a change of policy towards the British had been initiated. He thought that the policy had been dictated from a high level, and that the Naval Commander-in-Chief and his Chief of Staff probably had little, if any, say in the matter.<sup>120</sup>

The British Joint Planning Staff had proposed that a force of about 20 squadrons from the Middle East should be sent to the front in South Russia.<sup>121</sup> In London, it seemed strange that the Russians did not react to an Anglo-American offer of a combined air force to support the Red Army on the Soviet southern flank. Churchill probably came nearest to the truth when he wrote that in retrospect it seemed as if Russian behaviour was "in part due to the feeling that if they could survive the winter they could reject any direct military aid from the West, which they regarded as an infecting contact and as a blow to their prestige."<sup>122</sup> Meanwhile, the British representatives in the Soviet Union still had to endeavour to maintain good relations with the Russians and to help keep them in the war against Germany. However, their assessments of the Soviet naval effort indicated that any aid from this direction would probably remain limited.

---

<sup>118</sup> PRO, CAB 79/25, "Air Protection for Convoys to Russia", in COS(43)46 (22 February 1943), p 2, para 2, f 331, SECRET.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "18th Monthly Report", p 6, para 35.

<sup>121</sup> PRO, CAB 79/22, "Air Assistance to Russia", in COS(42) 223 (31 July 1942), p 2, para 2, f 198, SECRET.

<sup>122</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, p 469.



## CHAPTER X

### THE WHITE SEA



*"And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold:  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald."<sup>1</sup>*

*(The Rime of the Ancient Mariner)*

Now that the work of the Royal Navy representatives in the Kola Inlet area of North Russia has been examined, it is time to turn further east and consider in more detail Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation in the White Sea, as well as information provided to the NID on the major ports of Archangel and Molotovsk, and Soviet Navy personalities and operations in the region.

At the end of October 1941, Captain Guy O Maund, RN, took over the duties of NOIC at Archangel. It is from about this time that Anglo-Soviet cooperation in the organisation of the Arctic convoys really took on tangible form. Archangel was a town of some 300,000 people, its wooden houses and pavements sprawling over a considerable distance. Including the wharfage along the Dvina and its delta, Archangel comprised some 40 square miles of docks, divided into widely-separated outlying areas at Bakaritsa, Ekonomiya and Solombala.

Maund, as Commanding Officer of Naval Party 200, was in charge of a small administrative and cipher staff (on the same lines as Naval Party 100 at Polyarnoe) which possessed the necessary W/T equipment to provide independent lines of communication with Polyarnoe, Moscow and London. The Naval Party was housed in three main buildings. Norway House, the former Norwegian Consulate, contained Maund's headquarters and housed the wireless station in an annexe. Karl Marx House was used primarily for the men's living quarters, though the other ranks held a weekly dance there.<sup>2</sup> A small sick quarters was installed in Novy Dom and accommodated those who were not ill enough to require the services of the Russian Military Hospital.

---

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (New York, 1970), Part the First, p 10.

<sup>2</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (7 February 1942).

Maund had rejoined the Senior Service from the Retired List at the outbreak of war. He was an Irishman with a strong extrovert personality, a sense of humour, great energy and a tendency towards the unorthodox. In fact, he was exactly the right man to deal with the Russians. They recognised him as an individual possessing tough qualities, a person whom they could understand and respect. He was assisted by a military Movement Control Section under Lieutenant Colonel Parker, and a small contingent from the RAF which was responsible for the safe consignment of war *matériel* to the Russians. However, the loading and unloading of convoys, together with the problems of berthing and lighterage, were the responsibility of a small staff from the Ministry of War Transport under the Honourable Joseph P Maclay, MP, a shipowner of long experience. Joe Maclay was a man who brought immense application to the work in hand and possessed a quiet, friendly temperament. The Russians undoubtedly placed the greatest confidence in him.

The arrival of Maund coincided with the relief of Dolinin by Rear-Admiral Stepanov as the commander of the newly-formed White Sea Flotilla. Stepanov was actually senior in rank to Golovko. However, the commander at Archangel was subordinate to Golovko in his rôle as Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet. This situation naturally brought about some complications. An ex-Tsarist officer, Stepanov was a "tall spare man with a completely bald head" and prominent eyebrows.<sup>3</sup> Seemingly disinclined by temperament to accept responsibility, he was always under strain. Although Stepanov had commanded the Soviet Naval Academy, he displayed no knowledge whatsoever of operational matters.<sup>4</sup> Though ineffectual, the British found him "always courteous" and "a very good host".<sup>5</sup>

Captain Popov, the Chief of Staff at Archangel, was considered to be "ill-mannered and ignorant",<sup>6</sup> and it was felt that he treated Allied officers with "discourtesy and disdain."<sup>7</sup> However, he was assisted by a very different type of officer, Captain Blinov, an ex-Tsarist cadet with a French mother. Blinov was a strange mixture: excitable and alternatively either incredibly optimistic or "plunged into the

---

<sup>3</sup> This reminiscence appeared after the war in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Trial of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, p 47.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Stepanov opposed the discretionary hunting by A/S patrols of U-boats at night as vessels "might cross the shipping routes and collisions would result"; PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter to D.N.I. from S.B.N.O. North Russia" (12 December 1941), p 1, SECRET.

<sup>5</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, Maund to DNI (17 May 1944), p 1, para 3, SECRET.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, para 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*.

depths of gloom".<sup>8</sup> He was a good man to work with and a stickler for discipline and correctness. Unfortunately, for a Russian, he had an uncharacteristically weak head for alcohol. At the end of 1941, Popov was succeeded by Captain Zozulia who was quick on the uptake, cheerful and, within the prescribed Soviet limits, seemingly anxious to cooperate with the Royal Navy to the best of his ability.<sup>9</sup>

Among the Soviet Naval Staff at Archangel, political relations with the Allies were governed by Lieutenant-Commander Kominsky. Regarded by the British as a highly unpleasant character, he proved to be as dangerous as he was unreliable. Maund's judgement of him held that his knowledge of the sea "was less than that of a dustman."<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Kominsky used his political lines of communication with Moscow to complain about Maund. However, Stepanov detected this move, sent a message to Moscow that "British-Soviet relations were excellent" to forestall Kominsky, and the latter was suspended from duty for a period of four months.<sup>11</sup>

The work of the British at Archangel was made harder by the unpredictable appearances of Papanin, Head of *Glavsevmorput*, whose responsibilities conflicted with those of Golovko and Stepanov. Later made Rear-Admiral, Papanin was described by Soviet propaganda by such terms as "the showpiece of the North" and "the idol of the people".<sup>12</sup> Although he was coarse, crafty, vain and unreliable, it proved impossible for the British not to like him.

Papanin possessed great energy and considerable stamina, not to mention a vast capacity for liquor. But his boisterous behaviour and endless supply of dirty stories failed to hide the fact that it was not possible to place reliance on his promises.<sup>13</sup> For example, it was probably Papanin's wish to please Moscow that led him, against any rational consideration, to maintain that the port of Archangel could be kept open during the winter of 1941. The British reported that Papanin was "the ice King in these regions and responsible for all ice breaking at Archangel during the winter. As such he is, of course, an optimist about convoys using the port".<sup>14</sup> However, it was also an indication of his political standing that he was

---

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 17.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p 1, para 7.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 20.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, para 19.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, para 21.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp 3-4, para 21.

<sup>14</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. Murmansk to D.N.I." (28 October 1941).

allowed to remain in his job after the port was closed by ice and his serious error of judgement had been made all too evident.

The British found the White Sea naval staff apathetic and the *Glavsevmorput* inefficient. In comparison with these, the representatives of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade in Archangel, though frequently as difficult as the Russians could be, gave an impression of efficiency and reliability. Foreign Trade Commissar Mikoyan, an extremely competent administrator, directed the Commissariat from Moscow. The local representative of the Commissariat was Gerasimov, whom Maund considered an excellent organizer who kept his promises and was a good friend to the British.<sup>15</sup>

The main unloading section of the port of Archangel, Bakaritsa, lay to the southeast at the mouth of the Dvina. This could be used for heavy cargoes until the end of November. It was possible to handle nine ships alongside simultaneously and a further three at the neighbouring Timber Wharf where, however, it was necessary to manhandle the cargoes.

To the north, nearer the mouth of the river, lay *Ekonomiya*. This port had to be used from early December, but was only capable of handling eight merchant ships a fortnight. The wharves at *Ekonomiya* were too weak to take tanks, there was no heavy lifting equipment, and the Russians could not use floating cranes and barges during the period of winter ice.<sup>16</sup> Rail transport for clearing the cargoes relied on a track being laid across the ice. There was, therefore, an interim period when the port was virtually closed, lasting until the ice was thick enough to support the railway.

Another port existed to the west. The Russians raised the possibility of using the naval base under construction 20 miles from Archangel at Molotovsk, which was previously shrouded in secrecy and "not marked on the chart".<sup>17</sup> This was a completely new idea and, as no dockside lifting gear was yet available at Molotovsk, heavy-lift ships were essential. It was considered that Molotovsk could take six ships at a time by the end of November 1941 and, like Archangel, that the naval base would be available to shipping through the winter.

---

<sup>15</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, Maund to DNI (17 May 1944), p 4, para 22, SECRET.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. Murmansk to D.N.I." (28 October 1941).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* Molotovsk was not entirely unknown to the West. For example, the Germans knew in 1938 that there was a big shipyard there under construction; PRO, ADM 223/51/Part 3, Rushbrooke, "War Economy of the U.S.S.R. 1938-1941" (1 September 1945), p 35, f 582, SECRET.

The JIC believed that the daily capacity of the port at Murmansk was not less than 3,000 tons per day.<sup>18</sup> The daily capacity at Archangel initially seemed to be about 1,000 tons per day. However, it was realised that the port's potential capacity was very large,<sup>19</sup> and by October 1941 the JIC estimate of its capacity was between 2,000 to 3,000 tons per day, a figure thought likely to be increased by development.<sup>20</sup> Although the port and the railway from it were capable of dealing with "a large volume of traffic", the bottlenecks were felt to be the rate of clearing cargoes from ship to rail and the limited storage facilities.<sup>21</sup> More to the point, it was felt that it was "unlikely that the port of Archangel could be kept open between mid-December and mid-May", although it was recognised that the Russians might succeed in getting some shipments through between mid-December and the end of January.<sup>22</sup>

The British representatives in Russia were somewhat sceptical of Soviet assurances about ice conditions, but at the time were not in a position to question the accuracy of the information they had been given.<sup>23</sup> Lacking precise intelligence to the contrary, they now found it necessary to take some important and far-reaching decisions on the strength of the Soviet statements. However, the official NID position was that communication by sea with Archangel "will usually be stopped between the end of December and the middle of May. Even if possible occasionally to keep the port open, traffic is certain to be very slow and navigation fraught with danger."<sup>24</sup>

By 17 November, the port of Archangel was already beginning to freeze.<sup>25</sup> The Admiralty was anxious about the ice conditions and over the reluctance of the Russians to consider Murmansk as an alternative. At last, on 20 December 1941, the Russians were forced to face facts and the first merchant ships, the *Dekabrist* and *El Mirlo*, were diverted to unload at Murmansk rather than go on to the White

---

<sup>18</sup> PRO, CAB 81/104, "Murmansk", Annex B to "The Northern Supply Route to Russia", (hereinafter "Northern Supply Route") JIC(41)404 (Final) (20 October 1941), p 4, SECRET.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, "The Port of Archangel and the railway serving it", Annex A to "Northern Supply Route", p 4.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, "Northern Supply Route", JIC(41)404 (Supplement) (23 October 1941), p 2, para 4, SECRET.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, JIC(41)404 (Final) (20 October 1941), p 1, para 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> On arriving in Russia, the Royal Navy found that British information on Soviet bases and defences was "largely out of date". This was because "unlike any other country in Europe, the U.S.S.R. had been inaccessible to the traveller and was never visited by the fleet." Any intelligence, therefore, had "for many years been built up on agents [*sic*] reports"; PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 3, para 6, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>24</sup> NHB, "Ice Conditions in the Baltic and North-West Europe", WIR, no 88 (14 November 1941), p 23, SECRET.

<sup>25</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, p 494.

Sea.<sup>26</sup> Golovko complained in his diary on Christmas Day about cargo vessels only going as far as Murmansk, saying: "Now there is no end to our troubles".<sup>27</sup>

Soviet meteorologists had forecast mild weather for 10 days at the beginning of December 1941. Therefore, the opportunity was taken to send the icebreaker *Lenin* to boiler-clean; but the forecast was wrong. The early winter set in with such rigour that the Soviet destroyers at Solombala naval base, and the British minesweepers at Bakaritsa, were frozen in before they could be extricated.

The Russians proposed Iokanga as a convoy assembly- and waiting-point, but this was a very unsuitable and dangerous anchorage for vessels with a shallow draught or merchant ships in ballast. Nevertheless, in good weather conditions it was a useful auxiliary port, being practically free of ice throughout the year. Iokanga was also defended by gun batteries and had a 400-foot timber pier. The port was commanded by Captain Dianov, whom the British found an unpleasant, boastful character. Fortunately, his Chief of Staff, Captain Bogolepov, was a very different type of officer: able, intelligent, good-humoured, well-mannered and cooperative, with a substantial fund of local knowledge.<sup>28</sup>

The convoy plans for the winter had been based on mistaken assumptions regarding the probable ice conditions. The result in the White Sea was that QP4, with 13 ships, seemed increasingly likely to be caught in the ice. Because of the seriousness of the situation, Courtney, who was to succeed Wyburd in Moscow, was sent as BLO in the icebreaker *Lenin*. This ship had been built in the United Kingdom, but was now old. Designed mainly for river work, it was of relatively low endurance.

Convoy QP4 started to move on 20 December 1941, but the next fortnight proved a terrible ordeal. Commanding the *Lenin* was an outstanding Arctic seaman, Captain Khramtsov. For the most part, he was forced to break the merchant ships out of the ice one at a time. This task proceeded round the clock, with forward progress being made very slowly as each ship promptly froze fast again as soon as the *Lenin* went to fetch another vessel. As the icebreaker's fuel became exhausted, coal was ruthlessly commandeered from the British merchant ships, leaving them with barely sufficient to take them to Seidisfiord in Iceland. The oceangoing icebreaker *Stalin* eventually joined the convoy in the Gourlo and, with its assistance, QP4 was reported clear of the ice on 4 January 1942.<sup>29</sup> Thirteen days later, the *Stalin*

---

<sup>26</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 50.

<sup>27</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 86.

<sup>28</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, Maund to DNI (17 May 1944), pp 2-3, para 15, SECRET.

<sup>29</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 55.

was damaged by bomb-attack,<sup>30</sup> which greatly reduced the very small chances that had existed of getting a few more vessels in or out of the White Sea. The Naval Attaché stated that "until this one and only ocean icebreaker is working once again Archangel will be a dead port."<sup>31</sup> This situation gave the Russians a ready-made excuse for their failure to meet their original propositions and, therefore, provided a way of saving face. However, true to form, Papanin still wanted to send ships to Archangel, "in spite of having the STALIN damaged by bombs".<sup>32</sup> The DNI considered that Papanin's continued desire to use Archangel was "simply grotesque",<sup>33</sup> but it was now clear that the White Sea was unusable for the rest of the winter.

Situated on another branch of the Dvina delta, close to the site of the ancient Nikolsky monastery, lay Molotovsk. Its harbour was excellent, and was being developed as the main building and repair base of the Northern Fleet under typical conditions of Soviet secrecy. On visiting Molotovsk, the British representatives observed that although fitting-out basins had not yet been excavated, covered building slips already existed which were capable of taking two large cruiser hulls simultaneously. Provision had also been made for the building and sideways launching of destroyers and smaller craft.<sup>34</sup>

Robert Mack, a Lieutenant-Commander during the war and a Base Engineering Officer, recalls that in the summer of 1943 he made a sketch from the monastery, which overlooked the base, and sent it back to the NID. Mack simply considered it "in the national interest" to do this, although he was never actually given an order to obtain such information. Similarly, when serving on the *Baku* between Archangel and Murmansk he made a report expressing his views of Soviet seamanship. In particular, he had been astonished that with enemy air attacks likely the Russians had not prepared a boat for launching from the side. He also seized an opportunity to observe the engine room when the vessel was apparently doing a full-power trial in the White Sea. Mack recalls, however, that he "never wrote regular reports, nor was I asked to or tasked to."<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Meister, *Soviet Warships*, p 244.

<sup>31</sup> PRO, FO 181/970/1, handwritten note by Clanchy (20 January 1942). The British were given the opportunity of inspecting the bomb damage; NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (7 February 1942).

<sup>32</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter from S.B.N.O. North Russia to D.N.I." (22 January, 1942).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, Godfrey to Bevan (10 February 1942), p 1, para 3, MOST SECRET.

<sup>34</sup> The warship building yards at Molotovsk were "still incomplete" at the end of the war; PRO, CAB 81/128, "Russian Strength on 1st July, 1945", JIC(45)148(0) Final (limited circulation) (8 May 1945), p 14, para 59, TOP SECRET.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Commander Robert Mack, DSC, RN (Retd) (18 October 1992).

At this time, the British were able to obtain their closest contact and best impressions of conditions in the Soviet Union from their observations at Archangel and Molotovsk. The Naval Mission found the atmosphere at Polyarnoe too official and narrow, and Moscow possessed its own peculiar diplomatic climate.

A lieutenant acting as interpreter on Maund's staff, who had lived in pre-Revolutionary Russia and spoke the language fluently, recorded little difference between the Tsarist Russia he had known and the Stalinist regime.<sup>36</sup> Such officers, many of whom came from Anglo-Russian families, provided invaluable service in North Russia. Their understanding of the Russian temperament undoubtedly helped to increase the level of cooperation between the allies. One of the more distinguished of them, Lieutenant Mark Kallin, RNVR, died in the Russian hospital at Archangel on 28 May 1943 after an abdominal operation. He had previously expressed his full confidence in the Russian doctors who were treating him and the Medical Officer from the British hospital at Vaenga confirmed that everything possible had been done for him. Kallin was subsequently buried at sea.<sup>37</sup>

The civil administration of the town of Archangel was in the hands of the Mayor, Yedovin.<sup>38</sup> Aged only 31 years at the outbreak of war, he was an able, simple, pleasant Russian. He was also well-disposed towards the British and did all in his power to assist Anglo-Soviet relations.

Unfortunately, other authorities were able to hamper the work of the British in North Russia in obedience to obscure political directives from Moscow. The most pernicious and effective of these was the *Narkomindel*. Its representative in Archangel was Comrade Scorucov, whose powers extended to control over the mail, visas and the prosecution of foreign offenders. He later appeared wearing the new Soviet diplomatic uniform of "dove grey, tinged with pink, ensemble with shoulder straps complete with numerous stars."<sup>39</sup> According to the SBNO, Scorucov's appearance, coupled with his pronounced American accent, created the impression of a Chicago gangster dressed as a cinema attendant.<sup>40</sup> Sub-Lieutenant Wyatt, of NID 16, finally had the satisfaction in the summer of 1944 of stating that it was "a

---

<sup>36</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "Report and Impressions of Lt. Cossosant, R.N.R. who was at Archangel" (undated), attached to NID 16 to Pay Lieutenant-Commander Fowler (23 February 1942).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, "21st Monthly Report; 1st May to 31st May 1943" (31 May 1943), p 3, para 13, SECRET.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, Egerton, "Report of Proceedings for May 1944" (27 June 1944), p 1, para 9, TOP SECRET.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, "26th Monthly Report (1st October - 21st November)" (hereinafter "26th Monthly Report") (21 November 1943), p 3, para 24, SECRET.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p 4, para 24.



pleasure to record that, as a result of complaints made to the Soviet Naval Staff ... about the attitude of M. Scorucov, who has caused such a pain to the S.B.N.O., Archangel, he has now been relieved from Archangel to 'other spheres of usefulness'.<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, in August 1942, Maund had other problems besides the activities of the *Narkomindel*. There were over 1,000 survivors on his hands in Archangel from the PQ17 convoy alone, many of them casualties.<sup>42</sup> However, the naval and civil authorities in Archangel did their best to help, and accommodation and medical care were arranged by the Soviet Naval Staff.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, food supplies for survivors of the disaster were plentiful and of a far better quality than those given to the crews of visiting British warships.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, a combination of the mail being delayed, a British hospital unit refused permission to land in North Russia, and the "very officious" *Narkomindel* representative,<sup>45</sup> caused Anglo-Soviet naval relations to be under strain.

As a consequence of the PQ17 débâcle, the British discovered that the Russians possessed an operational base in Novaya Zemlya, at Byelushya Bay. It consisted of a fine harbour with a good holding ground in all weathers, protected by coastal and A/A batteries. The base had a 200-foot wharf and a small seaplane base in Samoyede Bay, with a rough airfield for fighters. Had the British known of its existence a year earlier, when Vian was anxiously searching for an advanced base for the Home Fleet in Spitsbergen, it is possible that the geographic difficulties inherent in running the Arctic convoys might have been greatly reduced. Therefore, lack of basic intelligence, or rather Russian refusal to provide it, may have had a profound influence on the British naval effort in North Russia.

In a similar fashion, the British discovered that there were naval facilities at Matochkin Shar, the strait which divides the two halves of Novaya Zemlya. Indeed, the unexpected arrival off Cape Stolbovoi of HMS *Britomart*, followed by several British warships and Allied merchant ships, must have caused something of a panic in the settlement of Lagerni.<sup>46</sup> It was not possible to go through the strait to the Kara Sea because of ice,<sup>47</sup> but the convoy vessels were able to anchor in reasonable safety at its western

---

<sup>41</sup> PRO, WO 208/1850, Wyatt for DNI to DMI (31 August 1944), TOP SECRET.

<sup>42</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, Maund to DNI (Section 16) (2 February 1943), p 1, para 6, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, para 3.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, para 9.

<sup>45</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (28 August 1942).

<sup>46</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 236.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

end. More merchant ships subsequently found their way to Matochkin Shar,<sup>48</sup> and the vessels finally proceeded to Archangel.

These experiences demonstrated that Russian secretiveness had left the British in ignorance of facilities which could have proved useful if Soviet naval cooperation had been more forthcoming a year earlier. However, their secretiveness was not always intended to conceal operational strengths, but rather weaknesses. For example, during the summer of 1942, it became clear to the British that reticence about Soviet defences in the White Sea simply meant that there were no fixed defences worthy of the name in the region.

What defences did exist were supplemented by an extensive radio intelligence network, but reports of U-boats were rarely acted upon by anti-submarine units of the Soviet Navy,<sup>49</sup> and the mass of information passed to the British, which was usually out of date, was more of an embarrassment than a help. On the counter-intelligence side, the British had grave doubts about Soviet W/T security in general. As a result, both the SBNO, North Russia, and Maund continually stressed the necessity for W/T silence at sea, and for controlling the amount of shore radio traffic connected with the arrival and departure of convoys. Indeed, with regard to Russia in general, "radio intercept was the most reliable source of information for Berlin before the war and continued to be until the very end."<sup>50</sup> It has been suggested that the Russians "failed completely in the area of radio communications security."<sup>51</sup>

The Soviet White Sea Flotilla was handed much of the burden for ensuring the safe passage of the Kara Sea convoys. In assuming this responsibility, Stepanov and the Russian Naval Staff at Archangel found themselves in a difficult position vis-à-vis their allies. On the one hand, the standard Soviet policy was to conceal from the British all operational information, except that which was absolutely necessary for the proper functioning of the Arctic convoy organisation. On the other hand, the resources available to the Northern Fleet were quite inadequate to safeguard purely Soviet convoys from the incursions of U-boats into the Kara Sea, and from German minelaying in straits and outside harbour entrances. It was only

---

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p 237.

<sup>49</sup> However, decisions about "preparing a convoy to put to sea were sometimes made on the basis of radio intercepts"; Kuz'min, "Intelligence in Blockade Operations", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 30-36.

<sup>50</sup> "The German Campaign in Russia - Planning and Operations (1940-1942)", Department of the Army pamphlet 20-261a (March 1955), p 42, cited in Jessup, "The Soviet Armed Forces", p 270.

<sup>51</sup> Jessup, "The Soviet Armed Forces", p 270.

in 1943 that the Russians began to sweep the new types of German magnetic and acoustic mines. Until this time, therefore, the Soviet Navy was forced to ask the Royal Navy for assistance.

During the 1942 summer season, when the Northern Sea Route was navigable, a Soviet convoy of four destroyers and a number of merchant ships sailed from Vladivostok on a 7,000-mile passage northabout to the Kola Inlet.<sup>52</sup> The expedition, codenamed Operation EON18, left Vladivostok for Provideniya Bay on 15 July under the command of Captain I V Obukhov. Unfortunately, three days later the destroyer *Revnostny* collided with the freighter *Terney* in the Tartar Sound and had to turn back for repairs. The expedition called at Petropavlovsk on 26 July, then waited at Provideniya Bay for the icebreaker *Mikoyan*, which was on passage from the United States. Accompanied by icebreakers, the convoy then sailed for Tiksi, arriving there on 14 August.<sup>53</sup>

The Soviet vessels were met at Tiksi Bay and refuelled by the British tanker *Hopemount*, which returned with the convoy and arrived at Yugorsky Shar on 11 October.<sup>54</sup> The *Hopemount* was retained by the Russians for refuelling Soviet escort vessels, which were engaged in evacuating the remaining merchant ships from the Kara Sea for the winter. After a spell in Iokanga, she arrived back in the Kola Inlet before returning to the United Kingdom.<sup>55</sup>

It seems probable that the Japanese, who maintained a close watch on Russian naval movements in the Pacific, had kept the Germans fully informed of what was in progress and, as a result, the pocket battleship *Scheer* was sent into the Kara Sea to intercept. It left Narvik on 16 August 1942 and proceeded north of Novaya Zemlya. Although the battleship sailed nearly as far as Cape Chelyskin to the eastward, she failed to find her target.<sup>56</sup> However, on the return passage on 25 August, the German ship intercepted and sank the icebreaker *Sibiryakov*.<sup>57</sup> Two days later, it also bombarded the port of Dikson before returning to base.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Although vessels could be transferred between the Pacific and Northern Fleets, the limitations were that "first, this could only be done once a year, and secondly, this required two to three months"; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1972), pp 13-21.

<sup>53</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 151.

<sup>54</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 173.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p 174.

<sup>56</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 279.

<sup>57</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 156.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*.

On 14 October, after their epic journey, the destroyers *Razumny*, *Razyarennny* and the leader *Baku*,<sup>59</sup> arrived in the Kola Inlet, which was a welcome reinforcement for the Northern Fleet. The Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet, decided to ask for a British escort in the Barents Sea and three corvettes, and the three minesweepers *Halcyon*, *Hazard* and *Sharpshooter*,<sup>60</sup> were sent to meet the Soviet ships to accompany them for the remainder of their journey.

Following the failure of the sortie by the *Scheer*, the Germans embarked on a campaign of intensive minelaying. Accordingly, between August and November 1942, the Germans sent the minelayer *Ulm*, the cruiser *Hipper* and several destroyers to lay mines in the shallow waters off Novaya Zemlya along the Barents Sea route to Spitsbergen.<sup>61</sup> At the outset, the Germans suffered a reverse when the *Ulm* was intercepted and sunk by British destroyers on 25 August 1942.<sup>62</sup> The first Soviet alarm occurred on 11 September, when the patrol vessel *SKR-23/Musson* was mined and sunk at the entrance to the Matochkin Strait and, two days later, Royal Navy assistance was requested.<sup>63</sup> Soon afterwards, a Soviet merchant vessel was sunk off the Yugorsky Strait, and the Russians asked for the British minesweepers *Halcyon*, *Hazard* and *Sharpshooter* to sweep a channel.<sup>64</sup> At Yugorsky Shar, nine acoustic mines were detonated and the *Hazard* was slightly damaged in the process.<sup>65</sup> For good measure, the corvettes *Bluebell* and *Camellia* escorted a number of Soviet merchant vessels from Yugorsky Strait to Archangel.<sup>66</sup>

The Royal Navy, therefore, not only contributed significantly to the safe passage of Allied Arctic convoys, but also to the protection of purely Soviet convoys. In this process, the British came to a clear understanding of the limits of the Soviet Navy, such as its small minesweeping capability. However, there were signs that the Soviet Union was aiming for a powerful navy in the future, for example in the shipbuilding facilities being constructed at Molotovsk.

---

<sup>59</sup> For a detailed report about convoy duty to and from Molotovsk with the *Baku*, see NHB, "In a Soviet Destroyer; Contributed by a Lieutenant R.N.V.R.", *WIR*, no 251 (29 December 1944), pp 19-29, SECRET.

<sup>60</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 173.

<sup>61</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, pp 279-280.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "15th Monthly Report", p 2, para 12.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, para 13.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, para 14.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, para 17.

It is now possible to examine the level of naval assistance the Soviet Union provided to the Arctic convoys, and what influence this had on British assessments of the Soviet Navy's operational effectiveness.

## CHAPTER XI

### SOVIET NAVAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARCTIC CONVOYS

#### PART I: THE ROUTE TO DISASTER



*"This will last out a night in Russia,  
When nights are longest there".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Angelo)*

This chapter examines British perceptions of the potential capability, and the actual nature and efficiency, of Soviet naval assistance to the Arctic convoys to the time of the PQ17 disaster in July 1942. The following chapter will continue the analysis to the end of the war.

By the middle of August 1941 the first Arctic convoy, consisting of six merchant ships, was loaded and ready in Britain. At the same time as the "Dervish" convoy, Operation "Strength" was set in motion to bring two squadrons of Hurricanes to Murmansk. Half of the aeroplanes were flown off the aircraft-carrier *Argus* to Vaenga airfield, while the rest remained crated in a merchant vessel until arrival at Archangel on 31 August. The Hurricanes were in action by 12 September.<sup>2</sup>

Following the arrival of the "Dervish" convoy at Archangel, the merchant vessels remained until the end of September. The escort ships also stayed and, after refuelling and a short rest, were placed at the disposal of the Soviet Navy for minesweeping and anti-submarine operations.<sup>3</sup> Since no other suitable warships were available, Golovko asked for the destroyers to escort some merchant ships from Archangel to Novaya Zemlya and for the minesweepers to clear the entrance to the White Sea in the vicinity of Gorodetski.<sup>4</sup>

On 13 September, it was decided that future convoys between the United Kingdom and North Russia should be designated by a serial number.<sup>5</sup> The next British convoy, therefore, was termed PQ1.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, act 2, scene 1, line 138, in Clark and Wright (eds), *The Works of William Shakespeare*, p 76.

<sup>2</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p.152, para 390.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p 153, para 392.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p 152, para 390.

<sup>6</sup> The PQ convoys ran monthly in the winter along the route United Kingdom-Iceland-Murmansk up to PQ18 in September 1942; Ruge, *Sea Warfare*, p 320.

Conversely, the first convoy from North Russia was QP1, which left Archangel on 28 September and arrived off Dunnet Head, in the far north of Scotland, on 11 October.<sup>7</sup>

Convoy PQ2 departed Scapa on 17 October bound directly for Archangel. Escorted by the cruiser *Norfolk*, the destroyers *Eclipse* and *Icarus*, and three minesweepers, it arrived on 30 October 1941.<sup>8</sup> On 9 November, PQ3 left Iceland escorted by the cruiser *Kenya* and the destroyers *Bedouin* and *Intrepid*. PQ4 departed on 17 November. HMS *London* escorted QP1, the first of the returning convoys from Russia.<sup>9</sup> The British felt that it was "significant, and remarkable in the light of what happened to some of the 1942 convoys, that no loss was incurred in those of 1941."<sup>10</sup> The main reason for this was that Germany did not deploy major air and naval forces against the Arctic convoys until 1942.

The Russians made a number of evasive statements and qualified assurances in respect of Soviet naval assistance to the Arctic convoys, but generally their declared intentions were not put into practice. Perhaps the closest the Soviet Union came during the war to assuming any firm commitment was early in May 1942 when Stalin, in a telegram to Churchill, stated that Soviet naval and air forces "would do their utmost" on the convoy route to the east of longitude 28° East,<sup>11</sup> that is right of a line passing 150 miles to the eastward of Bear Island.

In the event, from the sailing of the first convoy in August 1941 to the departure of RA67 from the Kola Inlet in May 1945, Soviet naval and air assistance did virtually nothing to secure the safe passage of the Arctic convoys and in no way alleviated the burden on the Royal Navy's Home Fleet. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the Soviet naval contribution did not improve noticeably by reason of the ships, equipment or operational advice and experience provided by the British over nearly four years of close contact as allies.

The first and most important destination of the convoys was the White Sea. Although in winter it was usually closed by ice, the White Sea provided the unloading ports of Bakaritsa and Ekonomiya (both at Archangel), and Molotovsk. The second destination consisted of the ice-free ports of the Kola

---

<sup>7</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, pp 152-153, para 390. QP convoys ran monthly in the winter on the Murmansk-Iceland-United Kingdom route until QP 15; Ruge, *Sea Warfare*, p 320.

<sup>8</sup> PRO, ADM 199/72, Rear-Admiral Commanding, First Cruiser Squadron to C-in-C, Home Fleet, "Report of Proceedings - Convoys P.Q.2 and Q.P.2." (13 November 1941), ff 34-35, SECRET.

<sup>9</sup> *The War at Sea: Preliminary Narrative, Vol. II*, p 154, para 393.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p 219, para 469.

<sup>11</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 128.

---

Inlet, the most important of which was Murmansk. From the middle of October 1941, the organisation of the Russian end of the convoy traffic was made the responsibility of the SBNO at Polyarnoe.

Responsibility for the allocation of individual merchant ships to Archangel, Molotovsk and Murmansk, together with their loading and unloading, lay with the small Ministry of War Transport team based at Archangel. They were assisted by British Army Movement Control detachments at the three main unloading ports and they dealt directly with local representatives of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, who were closely controlled by Mikoyan in Moscow.

In operating Soviet forces in support of the Arctic convoys, Golovko worked under a number of serious handicaps. One of the more important of these was the junior status of the Soviet Navy vis-à-vis the Red Army and the indifference, amounting almost to contempt, with which it was treated by many senior officers of the Soviet Army and Army Air Force. As a result, Golovko was starved of aircraft under his direct control and the air defences of the Kola Inlet, including the protection of ships in harbour, were from the outset the responsibility of the Army.

There was also a shortage of suitable operational aerodromes, with the best already occupied by the Army. For assistance from the better-equipped Army Air Force, Golovko had to turn to Lieutenant-General Frolov at Murmansk who was fully preoccupied with his own urgent problems. The principal airfield in the Kola Inlet area, sited at Vaenga, was very military-minded and naval objectives, such as ships or docks, were not its priority.

A second serious handicap affecting Golovko was the rigid degree of control from Moscow. This took the form of operational directives addressed to the War Council of the Northern Fleet by Kuznetsov. These messages, in turn, frequently originated from the *Stavka*, which thought almost exclusively in land-based terms.

Although in August 1941 command of the White Sea Flotilla had been established under Dolinin, in October he was appointed to succeed Kharlamov in Moscow. This brought about a fresh complication as Dolinin's successor at Archangel, Stepanov, was actually senior in rank to Golovko himself.

Further institutional difficulties beset Golovko, whose command (from the spring of 1943) extended from the Finnish frontier to longitude 115° East in the Laptev Sea. Dikson Island, the main port in the Kara Sea, was its easternmost point and the site of Sector Operational Headquarters of the Western



Arctic section of the Northern Sea Route.<sup>12</sup> *Glavsevmorput* was an independent civil organisation which reported directly to Moscow, armed certain of its ships, and organised independent convoy operations in the Kara Sea and further east. Nominally subordinate to Golovko in operational matters, *Glavsevmorput* took advantage of his preoccupations in the west to achieve a position of complete autonomy. At times, this resulted in serious confusion and overlapping of effort.

The British Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, considered that the Soviet Northern Fleet could assist in the safe passage of Arctic convoys in five main ways. First, by making the Kola Inlet and White Sea approaches unusable by U-boats.<sup>13</sup> For this mission the Russians had sufficient local forces available, in the form of destroyers, patrol boats, guard ships, motor launches, trawlers and seaplanes. The British had also provided Asdic to the Russians, as well as the benefit of the Royal Navy's knowledge and long experience of anti-submarine warfare.

Secondly, Soviet submarines could do useful work in special patrol positions off the Norwegian coast. The primary object would be the interception of German surface forces making sorties against Allied convoys whose positions had been reported by U-boats or reconnaissance aircraft. For this assignment, Northern Fleet submarines were normally available at Polyarnoe.

Thirdly, it was essential for both long- and short-range fighter cover to be provided during the final stages of a convoy's passage. This cover was promised by the Russians on a number of occasions, with the long-range cover to operate within a radius of 200 miles from the Kola Inlet and short-range fighters to a distance of 60 miles from their home airfields.

Fourthly, there was a requirement for anti-submarine escort by destroyers, and other Soviet surface forces, as far out from their bases as operational endurance would allow. In particular, it was hoped that Soviet destroyers would be available to take over responsibility for the White Sea section of

---

<sup>12</sup> Transit of the Northern Sea Route was still far from routine. The first voyage by a submarine from west to east had only just been accomplished in 1940; Captain 1st Rank I Chefonov, "Through Fog, Ice and Storms" (In honour of the 50th anniversary of the first transit of the Northern Sea Route by a submarine in history)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1990), pp 71-74.

<sup>13</sup> In his dispatches to the Admiralty, Tovey "pressed for strong and continuous Russian patrol activity off the Kola Inlet, to make that area untenable by U-boats, and for short-range and long-range fighter protection". Also, part of the task given to Burrough while stationed at Murmansk in February 1942 was "to represent these requirements to the Russians"; Courtney Papers, Tovey to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty (20 May 1942), cited in "Supplement to The London Gazette of Friday, 13th October, 1950" (17 October 1950), p 5140, para 6.

---

PQ convoys from the Royal Navy. By Royal Navy standards, the number of Soviet destroyers in commission seemed to allow for three or four to be available for every convoy.

Finally, it was considered essential for bombers to perform interdiction missions against German forward aerodromes in northern Norway and Finland during periods when convoys were within range of air attack. Initially, there were insufficient Soviet bombers available for this task. However, after the PQ17 disaster, it became clear that reinforcements were essential if the convoys were to continue and, therefore, the Soviet Union at last reallocated many sorely-needed bombers from the land campaign to North Russia.

Attempts to gauge the precise extent of Soviet assistance to the Arctic convoys years after the event are beset with many difficulties. Among them are the combination of post-war Soviet secrecy and exaggerated accounts of Northern Fleet activity. Allowance must be made for a considerable amount of routine work by Soviet submarines, surface vessels and naval aircraft, which certainly contributed to the safety of convoys but would have passed largely unnoticed.<sup>14</sup> But on a number of occasions there is sufficient evidence from British sources alone to give a reasonably clear picture of the extent of Soviet assistance. One of the earliest accounts is of the homeward-bound convoy QP6, which sailed from Murmansk on 24 January 1942.

The SBNO, North Russia, had been assured that the Soviet destroyer *Sokrushitelny*, which sailed with the convoy as local escort with the *Gremyashchi*, would remain in company until noon on 27 January. The cruiser escort, *Trinidad*, would be leaving the convoy after dark each evening and, as her precise position would then be uncertain, it was not considered safe for the Soviet destroyer to part company during the night in case of a "blue-on-blue" encounter.<sup>15</sup>

Whenever possible, it was customary to attach a Russian-speaking BLO, together with a signalman and telegraphist, to Soviet destroyers and icebreakers when on convoy escort duty. The Commanding Officer of *Sokrushitelny* was reported by the BLO to have been reluctant to look at the convoy orders, stating that he had received his own orders direct from Captain Fokin (the Divisional Commander) which, however, the liaison officer was not allowed to see. In the early hours of 27 January,

---

<sup>14</sup> However, before the second half of 1943, naval aviation "operated basically against the ground enemy"; Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S Gorshkov, "The Experience of the Great Patriotic War and the Present Stage in the Development of the Naval Art", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 13-22.

<sup>15</sup> Such engagements occur when friendly forces fire on each other by mistake and are quite common in the history of modern warfare.

the BLO on board *Sokrushitelny* noticed that the ship had increased speed. He was given to understand that the senior officer of the local escort in HMS *Bramble* had approved the Commanding Officer's decision to return to harbour. But no such signal had been received by the BLO's own British signallers and no explanation of this disobedience of orders was subsequently forthcoming. The reason for the early return to harbour was given as a fault with one of the ship's boilers.<sup>16</sup>

In early March the SBNO, North Russia, reported that the Soviet destroyers had "again shown inactivity", even allowing for their support of PQ11.<sup>17</sup> As the convoy had neared the Russian coast, local cover was provided by the British cruiser *Nigeria*.<sup>18</sup> Finally, on the last day of the convoy's passage the *Gromky* and *Grozny*, "after somewhat erratic movements", joined the other vessels.<sup>19</sup>

The deleterious effects of past inactivity and the long time spent in harbour were clearly visible. After spending eight hours at sea, the Soviet Divisional Commander in *Grozny* decided that the weather was too bad to continue and signalled that he was turning back, although this did not seem to be justified by the weather conditions. Although the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet, promptly ordered the ships to sea again, after only five hours they once more returned to the shelter of the Kola Inlet. Two days later, the Russians ventured out afresh, but anchored under the lee of Kildin Island until early morning when they eventually sailed and met the convoy 40 miles from the entrance. Officers and men were reported to have been very seasick.<sup>20</sup>

Dudley Pound sent repeated telegrams to Miles to press the Russians to take "a more active part in the protection of the supply convoys on the Northern route".<sup>21</sup> Miles, therefore, continually urged the Soviet Chief of the Naval Staff, Isakov, to provide adequate fighter cover or risk the discontinuing of the convoys.

Eventually, Miles was able to report "that the Russians had agreed to provide some destroyers to assist in the escort of convoys to their Northern ports."<sup>22</sup> Then, in early March 1942, a telegram from the Military Mission informed the COS that the Russians had agreed "to provide 20 twin-engine long-

---

<sup>16</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "6th Monthly Report", p 1, para 2 (ii) (a).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, "7th Monthly Report", p 1, para 2 (2) (a).

<sup>18</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 61.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p 62.

<sup>20</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "7th Monthly Report", p 1, para 2 (2) (a).

<sup>21</sup> PRO, CAB 79/18, "Protection of Convoys to and from Russia", in COS(42)45 (10 February 1942), p 2, para 5, f 124, SECRET.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid* (16 February 1942), p 4, para 6, f 187.

range fighters".<sup>23</sup> At the same time, it was agreed that a number of British Coastal Command specialists would be sent out to advise the Northern Fleet.

The main item of Russian interest in the passage of PQ12 - and of the homeward-bound convoy QP8 which sailed from Murmansk on the same day - concerns a casualty, the Soviet merchant ship *Ijhora*, which straggled from the latter convoy and fell victim to the German destroyer *Friedrich Ihn*. Laden with timber, the vessel refused to sink and was finally finished off by the Germans by dropping a depth charge close to the stricken vessel.<sup>24</sup> Her distress message, though unaccompanied by an accurate position, warned Tovey that German surface forces were in the vicinity.<sup>25</sup>

Bevan then reported that *Gromky*, while returning from escorting QP8, had run out of fuel. She was taken in tow by a Russian tug, and the British minesweepers *Niger* and *Speedwell* provided an anti-submarine screen on the return trip to the Kola Inlet.<sup>26</sup> Russian destroyers had not distinguished themselves escorting QP8, *Gremyashchi* and *Gromky* being considered "more of a hindrance than a help, carrying out independent sweeps, obscuring the *Hazard's* asdic and then asking permission to detach before reaching the prearranged departure point."<sup>27</sup>

The next pair of convoys, PQ13 and QP9, sailed at the end of March. German surface forces were at sea and the Russians were asked to mount a special submarine patrol off the Norwegian coast for a six-day period, to cover an interception line 150 miles long. This arrangement was intended to cover both PQ13/QP9 and the preceding pair of convoys. However, the Northern Fleet was only able to provide three submarines for this purpose. The probable reason for this was given by Bevan, when he reported that the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet, appeared very unwilling to reduce the existing submarine patrols even for a few days, because any reduction in the sinkings of German eastbound traffic was a distinct advantage to the *Wehrmacht*, a matter which was "always uppermost in his mind."<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the requirements of the Soviet land forces still took precedence.

---

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, "Air Protection of Convoys to Russia", in COS(42)70 (3 March 1942), p 5, para 10, f 362, SECRET.

<sup>24</sup> M J Whitley, *German Destroyers of World War Two*, 2nd ed (London, 1991), p 134.

<sup>25</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 74.

<sup>26</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "North Russia - 8th Monthly Report - March 1942" (hereinafter "8th Monthly Report") (4 April 1942), p 1, para 2, SECRET.

<sup>27</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 72.

<sup>28</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "8th Monthly Report", p 2.

The explanation for the lack of precious long-range fighters was the Russian use of them in the rôle of day-bombers. Three attacks were made by Russian Hurricanes on Luostari (Petsamo) aerodrome during March 1942, the last being supported by six PE-3 light-bombers, and a number of German aircraft were claimed as destroyed on the ground.<sup>29</sup> However, attempts by PE-3s to bomb Banak and Kirkenes aerodromes, two of the main areas from which the German air effort against the convoys was mounted, resulted in six Russian planes destroyed. The British feared that "by the time the three Coastal Command officers arrive to give them guidance, there may be no long range fighters or pilots left."<sup>30</sup> In lamenting the absence of any heavy strike action against the German aerodromes, Miles felt that without the use of threats, which were contrary to British policy, the bombers would not be provided. Without modern bombers, it seemed that air attacks on the convoys would "continue undeterred".<sup>31</sup>

In addition to a Russian MTB which was deployed two miles astern of QP9, a screen of motor-launches should have accompanied the convoy past the dangerous approaches to the Kola Inlet, but they failed to materialise because of alleged bad weather conditions. In the event, a Russian destroyer, accompanied by the British destroyer *Oribi* and seven minesweepers, sailed as close escort for QP9.<sup>32</sup> In the thick weather prevailing, contact with the inward-bound convoy, escorted by the cruiser *Trinidad* and the destroyers *Eclipse* and *Fury*, was bound to be difficult and the situation was complicated by politics. In a previous convoy, three officers not in possession of valid Soviet visas had been detained by the Russian authorities on arrival. Hence, minesweepers were ordered to intercept the SS *River Aston* and *Empire Cowper* in order to transfer two officers and a seaman who, had they remained on board, might have suffered the same fate.<sup>33</sup>

Very bad weather conditions led to the dispersal of PQ13, and a series of sharp and confused actions took place against three German destroyers, in which the Z26 was sunk. However, the *Trinidad* and *Eclipse* were seriously damaged.<sup>34</sup> The two Russian destroyers, *Gremyashchi* and *Sokrushitelny*, remained with a section of the convoy throughout the action. The latter "briefly opened fire" on a British

---

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, para 2 (5).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, "9th Monthly Report", p 2.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 2.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, "8th Monthly Report", p 3.

<sup>33</sup> PRO, ADM 234/369, Historical Section, Admiralty, *Naval Staff History, Second World War, Battle Summary No. 22: Arctic Convoys 1941-145* (hereinafter *Battle Summary No 22*), C.B. 3305(4) (December 1954), p 31, n 1, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>34</sup> For an account of the action, see Whitley, *German Destroyers*, pp 135-136.

warship in error and, thereafter, had two salvos fired at her by *Fury* before the Soviet vessel was recognised.<sup>35</sup>

While the British destroyers screened *Trinidad*, the two Russian warships escorted the convoy to the Kola Inlet. *Oribi* claimed to have sunk *U-585* during this final leg of the passage, though it was subsequently credited to *Fury*. The truth, however, was that the U-boat was probably lost later in the German "Bantos" minefield.<sup>36</sup> Despite the appalling weather, Nazi surface, air and U-boat attack had managed to sink five of the 19 ships in the convoy.<sup>37</sup> Despite such losses, "efforts to persuade the Russians to make the air and anti-submarine protection more effective at their end of the route continued to produce 'little response'."<sup>38</sup>

QP10 sailed from Murmansk on 10 April 1942. Bevan reported that no Soviet long-range fighters took off and, as usual, the two Russian escorting destroyers turned back before they should have done. The Russians had further disgraced themselves by using their W/T sets while in company with the convoy. QP11 sailed from the Kola Inlet on 28 April. This was the first homeward-bound convoy for which the Russians were reported to have given quite good protection, which included the escorting destroyers *Gremyashchi* and *Sokrushitelny* with orders to accompany the convoy to longitude 30° East. The escort was stronger than on any previous occasion, but on 30 April the covering cruiser *Edinburgh* was torpedoed by *U-456* and her stern was blown off.<sup>39</sup> The two Russian destroyers, with *Foresight* and *Forester*, joined her as screen and the Germans sent out three destroyers to take advantage of the situation. These made a number of attacks on the convoy, but were beaten off by the British destroyer escort. However, they did sink a Soviet straggler, the freighter *Tsiolkovsky*,<sup>40</sup> and then went in search of the *Edinburgh*, which was almost unmanageable and proceeding at very slow speed towards the Kola Inlet.

At 0600 hours on 1 May, the two Russian destroyers left the damaged cruiser and returned to harbour to fuel. Later the same day, at 1800 hours, *Edinburgh* was joined by the Russian patrol vessel

---

<sup>35</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 95.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p 98; and Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 131. The Germans laid a total of 1,116 moored mines in Soviet Arctic waters between 13 January and 14 October 1942. Furthermore, up to October 1944, many hundreds more were laid further west on either side of North Cape; Courtney Papers, MoD to Courtney (13 March 1968), p 1.

<sup>37</sup> Martin Gilbert, *Road to Victory: Winston S. Churchill 1941-1945* (London, 1986), p 97.

<sup>38</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 127.

<sup>39</sup> John M Young, *Britain's Sea War: A Diary of Ship Losses 1939-1945* (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, 1989), p 143.

<sup>40</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 137.

*Rubin*. At about midnight, a Russian tug and minesweepers from Kola also arrived.<sup>41</sup> During the night, the minesweeper *Niger* was detached to meet the two returning Russian destroyers.<sup>42</sup>

On 3 May, three German destroyers found the *Edinburgh*. In the confused action which followed, the *Z24* torpedoed the cruiser. Also, two British destroyers were severely damaged for the loss of one German vessel, the *Hermann Schoemann*.<sup>43</sup> The "refuelled Russian destroyers failed to materialise",<sup>44</sup> and the absence of the *Gremyashchi* and *Sokrushitelny* from this engagement has never been satisfactorily explained. The Admiralty's *Naval Staff History* confines itself to saying that it was "a matter for regret that the two heavily armed Russian destroyers, which had been ordered to return to the *Edinburgh* after fuelling, did not arrive in time to take part in the action."<sup>45</sup> In fact, there is "little doubt" that the final German attack could have been thwarted if the Soviet destroyers had returned and, therefore, the *Edinburgh* would have stood "a good chance" of surviving to reach harbour.<sup>46</sup> It also seems that no Soviet aircraft put in an appearance in the course of these events.

Convoy PQ15, when two days out from Murmansk, lost three merchant ships in an attack by torpedo aircraft.<sup>47</sup> The promised Soviet air cover was not fully supplied, but Bevan reported that the lack of Russian effort against German-controlled airfields was scarcely surprising, observing that at that time the Northern Fleet had only 17 long-range bombers available. Low visibility enabled the convoy to escape U-boat attack and it arrived without further loss, with *Gromky* and *Sokrushitelny* forming part of the local escort. However, during the course of the convoy, the Polish submarine *P551/Jastrzab* strayed nearly 100 miles from her position and was sunk on 2 May in error.<sup>48</sup>

*Trinidad*, having completed temporary repairs at Murmansk, sailed with an escort of four British destroyers on 13 May 1942. Although undertakings had been given, the "promised Russian fighter escort failed to materialise."<sup>49</sup> On the evening of 14 May air attacks began and *Trinidad* sustained fatal damage.<sup>50</sup> In Moscow, Miles felt that the naval situation in the Arctic was becoming "precarious" and

---

<sup>41</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 131.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p 136.

<sup>43</sup> Young, *Britain's Sea War*, p 143.

<sup>44</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 132.

<sup>45</sup> PRO, ADM 234/369, *Battle Summary No 22*, p 43.

<sup>46</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 136.

<sup>47</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 129.

<sup>48</sup> Schofield, *The Russian Convoys*, pp 49-50.

<sup>49</sup> Campbell and Macintyre, *The Kola Run*, p 60.

<sup>50</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 130.

he doubted whether the Royal Navy could accept losses on such a scale.<sup>51</sup> As a result, he gave the Soviet Naval Staff a "very strong but unofficial warning about their inactivity up north."<sup>52</sup>

Convoy PQ16, of 35 ships, was the largest Arctic convoy that had yet sailed. From 25 May 1942 until its arrival in the Kola Inlet, the convoy was under incessant air attack from torpedo- and dive-bombers. On 27 May, for example, 108 aircraft carried out attacks.<sup>53</sup> Six ships in the convoy were sunk by aircraft and one by U-boat. On 28 May, a welcome addition to the firepower of the escort was furnished by the arrival of the Russian destroyers *Grozny*, *Kuibyshev* and *Sokrushitelny*, whose anti-aircraft firepower was "impressive and timely, for many of the merchant ships were now completely out of ammunition."<sup>54</sup> Finally, following the withdrawal of the last German aeroplanes, Russian Hurricanes arrived to provide air cover prior to entry into the Kola Inlet.<sup>55</sup> Of the Soviet Navy, however, Miles recorded in his diary that "I really think they tried hard this time to give protection to our convoy."<sup>56</sup>

As part of the preparatory measures taken to safeguard the passage of PQ17, the Soviet submarine *K21* was stationed in a special patrol position in the hope of intercepting the German heavy ships, should they decide to sally forth. In the course of his patrol, Captain Nikolai A Lunin of the *K21* fired a salvo of four torpedoes at the *Tirpitz*, claiming two hits.<sup>57</sup> Golovko believed that the "audacity of this attack on the *Tirpitz* stunned the Nazis so completely that they let *K21* get away."<sup>58</sup> In fact, *Tirpitz* was unharmed, although one of her escorting destroyers apparently reported that an enemy submarine was in the vicinity.<sup>59</sup> There is, consequently, no foundation for the claim that *K21*'s torpedoes had "found a

---

<sup>51</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (17 May 1942).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid* (18 May 1942).

<sup>53</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 131.

<sup>54</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 157.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (2 June 1942).

<sup>57</sup> This was immediately announced in the Soviet press; *ibid* (9 July 1942). Interestingly, Lunin "had been arrested at the end of the 1930s, and only returned to the fleet a year later"; Captain 2nd Rank A Andrushchenko, "The Commanding Officer and the Political Officer: Facets of the Relationship", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1988), pp 50-53.

<sup>58</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 105.

<sup>59</sup> The British signalled back to London: "Destroyers escorted 'TIRPITZ' and at 1859C/4th one of these reported the presence of a submarine to Tromso and Wilhelmshaven; at 1305C/5th a second signal was made reporting that the submarine was Russian"; PRO, ADM 223/253, Bevan, "Enemy Intelligence Report No.12. 25th June to 25th July 1942; Section I. Information from Soviet Naval sources", p 1, para 5, SECRET.



vulnerable billet in the enemy battleship",<sup>60</sup> nor that *K21* "blocked the road for the enemy's main forces, compelling them to turn back and thereby saving PQ-17 from complete disaster."<sup>61</sup>

*K21*'s report of *Tirpitz*'s position was, nevertheless, of great value to the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet. However, by the time *K21* sighted the German force,<sup>62</sup> PQ17 had already been given the order to scatter.<sup>63</sup> Golovko immediately dispatched four Soviet destroyers to search the area between 40° and 45° East, as far as latitude 73° North, in order to provide support for individual merchant ships. Unfortunately, the warships remained too far south to be of much use and adhered to the "rigid patrol lines" ordered by the Divisional Commander,<sup>64</sup> who apparently was not prepared to let them use their own discretion for any purpose whatsoever.

Commodore Dowding, RNR, in the tanker *SS River Aston*, was in charge of PQ17 and, after the order to scatter, his ship was among those sunk. However, he was picked up and arrived at Matochkin Shar, where six merchant ships and the majority of the close escort organised themselves into a small convoy for onward passage to Archangel.<sup>65</sup> They were heavily bombed on their journey and two more ships were lost.

---

<sup>60</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 105.

<sup>61</sup> Kolyshkin, *Submarines in Arctic Waters*, p 151.

<sup>62</sup> *K21* sighted the German ships at 1700 hours on 5 July. For a copy of the signal by the SBNO, North Russia, informing the Admiralty, see Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter*, p 220, signal 66, MOST SECRET IMMEDIATE. The German Navy was also aware of the situation: "At 2006 an incoming intelligence report gave the information that the German Fleet had been sighted by an enemy submarine at 1700 in position 71° 30' North-23° 50' East steering 045°"; CAC, MLBE 1/14, "Translation of the final report on Operation 'Rösselsprung (Attack on PQ.17) submitted by Admiral Carls (Gruppe Nord) on the 12.7.1942", NID/X 106/47 (supplied by David Irving), p 3, para 15.

<sup>63</sup> The order was given at 2136 hours on 4 July. A copy of the signal is in Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter*, p 181, signal 49, SECRET MOST IMMEDIATE. Broome, who was Senior Officer of the close escort, was criticised for his decision to leave the convoy in order to join with the covering cruisers and concentrate against the supposed presence of the *Tirpitz* in Irving, *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17*. He subsequently won a libel action against the author. Broome's decision was partially influenced by standing orders: "The safe and timely arrival of the convoy at its destination is the primary object of the escort ... At the same time, it must be borne in mind that if enemy forces are reported or encountered, the escort shares with all other fighting units the duty of destroying enemy ships, provided this duty can be undertaken without undue prejudice to the safety of the convoy"; CAC, Captain John Egerton Broome, DSC, RN, Papers, BRME 1/3, *Western Approaches Convoy Instructions, General: Part 300 - General Instructions for Escorts*, p 1, SECRET, attachment to Miss Day, Naval Home Division, MoD, to Mr Clogg (8 December 1969). Similarly, the "aim of a convoy escort force is the safe and timely arrival of the convoy; the commander must bear in mind, however, the duty he shares with other naval forces of destroying any enemy located, if this can be done without prejudice to the safety of his convoy"; *ibid*, *Naval War Manual*, p 64, para 24, attachment to Day to Clogg (8 December 1969).

<sup>64</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "12th Monthly Report", p 3, para IV (vi).

<sup>65</sup> See SBNO, Archangel, to SBNO, North Russia (0109 hours, 8 July 1942), in Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter*, p 225, signal 72, MOST SECRET IMMEDIATE.

In latitude 71° North, south of Byelushya Bay, the convoy ran into fog and encountered a thick ice barrier. This forced the ships to turn and to call at Iokanga. It is probable that the loss of several ships could have been prevented had the British been aware of the existence of this Southern Ice Barrier. It was obviously well-known to the Germans, whose submarines made full and effective use of it.

In fact, the first information that the SBNO, Archangel, had that *Palomares*, with ships in company, had left Matochkin Shar was when the ships were reported entering Iokanga. The Soviet Northern Fleet had failed completely in its duty of reporting the vitally important local ice conditions. For the British, therefore, lack of information on the weather could be as damaging as any other failure of intelligence.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, it was regarded as so important that "the Russian meteorological cypher was read again for a period beginning in October 1942."<sup>67</sup>

Dowding now returned to Matochkin Shar to collect stragglers but made the passage in the Soviet icebreaker *Murman*,<sup>68</sup> considering it more convenient in the circumstances to handle the convoy from a Russian ship. The subsequent passage to Archangel was full of incident. On 22 July, the convoy was met by the anti-aircraft cruiser *Pozarica*, a British corvette and two minesweepers, and two Russian destroyers, the *Grozny* and *Gremyashchi*.<sup>69</sup> However, no effective fighter protection was provided, even within 20 miles of Archangel. Nevertheless, all of Dowding's charges safely reached their destination. But only 11 merchant ships and two rescue ships out of the original 34 merchant ships and three rescue ships survived the PQ17 disaster.<sup>70</sup>

In retrospect, it would be rather unfair to impugn the performance of the Soviet Northern Fleet during the course of a catastrophe which arose primarily from an independent British decision; that is, the Admiralty's order of 4 July that the "Convoy is to scatter".<sup>71</sup> Kuznetsov was surely right when he said

---

<sup>66</sup> Weather intelligence is a recognised part of the total intelligence picture. For example, a Russian writer records that usually "the commander needs intelligence concerning the composition, status, and the location ... of the enemy's forces, as well as intelligence on the theatre and on the weather"; Captain 1st Rank P I Kuz'min, "Collecting Intelligence on the Situation at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1966), pp 20-25. From the British perspective, the crucial rôle of weather intelligence was clearly demonstrated, for example, in the case of the Normandy landings of June 1944; see J M Stagg, *Forecast for Overlord* (New York, 1972).

<sup>67</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume One*, p 199, n †.

<sup>68</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 252.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Beesly, "Convoy PQ 17", p 292.

<sup>71</sup> Broome, *Convoy is to Scatter*, p 181.

to Miles on 11 July that the *Tirpitz* "had achieved her object" by causing the convoy to disperse.<sup>72</sup> Equally, however, there is little doubt that the calamitous effects of the convoy's dispersal could have been mitigated, perhaps to a considerable extent, had Golovko possessed the requisite professional knowledge and been given the necessary freedom of action to deploy the forces available to him in an all-out effort to retrieve the situation. However, it is uncertain whether even in these circumstances he would have done so, judging from his own summary of the PQ17 calamity: "The British dodged an encounter with the Nazi squadron, abandoned the convoy and doomed it to destruction, whereas the Soviet sailors did the opposite: they went out to meet the Nazi squadron, attacked and damaged its heaviest unit [*Tirpitz* by *K21*] and forced the enemy to retire."<sup>73</sup> According to this account, the Soviet Navy had done all that could have been expected of it. Indeed, according to Golovko, the "torpedoes fired from the forward tubes of *K21* compelled the Nazi squadron to retreat again to the Norwegian skerries and put the *Tirpitz* out of action for three months."<sup>74</sup>

The failure of PQ17 led the COS to recommend "that convoys should not be sent to Northern Russia in present circumstances,"<sup>75</sup> and on 17 July the Prime Minister sent a telegram to Moscow postponing future convoys.<sup>76</sup> The "psychological impact of their cancellation far outweighed their material effect",<sup>77</sup> and no reassurances could alter Stalin's suspicions that the United Kingdom might consider securing a separate peace with Germany.<sup>78</sup>

For the Royal Navy the disaster to PQ17, "a sad, bad business",<sup>79</sup> was to prove the nadir of British fortunes in the Arctic. The future of the convoys looked bleak and it was vital for the Soviet Navy to do more to help. So far, however, the British Mission had been largely unimpressed by Russian naval and air performance.

---

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p 226, signal of Miles to Admiralty, MOST SECRET IMMEDIATE.

<sup>73</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 106.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, p 110.

<sup>75</sup> PRO, CAB 79/22, "Convoys to Northern Russia", in COS(42) 205 (13 July 1942), p 2, para 3, f 57, SECRET.

<sup>76</sup> Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, pp 226-228.

<sup>77</sup> Jonathan Haslam, "Stalin's Fears of a Separate Peace, 1942", *INS*, vol 8, no 4 (October 1993), p 97.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, p 98.

<sup>79</sup> PRO, ADM 223/249, "Private Letter to D.N.I. from S.B.N.O. North Russia" (20 July 1942).

## CHAPTER XII

### SOVIET NAVAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARCTIC CONVOYS

#### PART II: RISING FROM DEFEAT



*A "revolution is worth something  
only if it is able to defend itself".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Vladimir I Lenin)*

On 26 July 1942, Admiral Fisher took over from Bevan as SBNO, North Russia.<sup>2</sup> Despite the failure of PQ17, the basic principle of continuing to supply Russia was maintained. As the JIC advised, Germany was:

determined, if she can, to eliminate Russia from the war this year. Failing that, she plans, by the occupation of Caucasia and by severing Russia's northern supply route, to isolate Russia from her Allies and to exhaust her to such an extent as to make it possible for Germany to withdraw forces from that front during the winter for use elsewhere ...<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, it was considered that if the Nazis were successful in knocking the Soviet Union out of the war in 1942, Germany's position by the spring "would be impregnable to invasion from the west."<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, bitter experience required the Royal Navy to assume that "neither for air cover, nor for minesweeping, nor for escort duties could we rely on the Russians."<sup>5</sup> But, in the wake of the PQ17 tragedy, Fisher's principal and imperative task was to ensure that the Soviet Navy contributed significantly more to the safety of the Arctic convoys. In the United Kingdom, Pound made clear to the Soviet Ambassador that a decision to delay the departure of the next convoy was partly due to inadequate Russian air cover and Maisky agreed to forward the British demands for an improvement to Moscow.<sup>6</sup>

The inadequacy of Soviet air support for the convoys was the reason for the arrival in North Russia in September 1942 of a number of Hampden torpedo-bombers and four PRU Spitfires. Also

---

<sup>1</sup> V I Lenin, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy* (Complete Collected Works), vol 37, p 122, cited in "Always Ready for Action", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1985), pp 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "13th Monthly Report", p 1.

<sup>3</sup> PRO, CAB 81/109, "German Strategy in 1942/43", JIC(42) 265 (Final) (16 July 1942), p 1, para 2, SECRET.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, para 4.

<sup>5</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ivan Maisky, *Memoirs of a Soviet Ambassador: The War 1939-43*, translated from the Russian by Andrew Rothstein (London, 1967), p 312.

deployed were the Coastal Command Catalinas of 210 Squadron, which were destined to operate from Gryaznaya in the Kola Inlet and from Lake Lakhta, southwest of Archangel.<sup>7</sup>

In order to provide the next pair of convoys with maximum protection to the east of Bear Island, it was decided that QP14 should not sail for the United Kingdom until PQ18 had nearly reached its destination. One of the new escort carriers, the *Avenger*, was among the additional forces provided for PQ18, which sailed on 2 September 1942, and was "an especially welcome addition against the expected air assaults".<sup>8</sup>

The Russians assured Miles that the air situation in the north would now be better, and that a force of 200 fighters and 58 bombers was available for convoy protection.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the Russians promised to assist the passage of PQ16 and QP12 by a large-scale air offensive by 200 Army bombers against the German airfields in northern Norway, but in the event it was limited to one raid by 20 aircraft after the main German attacks had already been made.<sup>10</sup>

By the time the first Soviet destroyers, the *Gremyashchi* and *Sokrushitelny*, had joined the convoy on the morning of 17 September,<sup>11</sup> PQ18 had lost nine merchant ships from aircraft attack and three from U-boats. It was then still two days' steaming away from Archangel, at a point about 200 miles north of Kanin Nos.

Golovko ordered a reinforcement by three more Soviet destroyers - *Karl Liebknecht*, *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky* - but, in fact, only two of the destroyers joined the convoy.<sup>12</sup> As the main part of the British naval force had left the convoy to join the homeward-bound convoy QP14, the Russian warships were a welcome supplement to the anti-aircraft firepower of the remaining British escorts, although one more merchant vessel - the American freighter *Kentucky* - was lost off the entrance to the White Sea on 18 September.<sup>13</sup>

The only observed Soviet aerial cover provided for PQ18 comprised two fighter aircraft, but these only arrived "when the battle was over".<sup>14</sup> However, short-range PE-3 fighters were of assistance in

---

<sup>7</sup> Schofield and Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen*, p 197.

<sup>8</sup> Peter C Smith, *Arctic Victory: The Story of Convoy PQ 18* (London, 1994), p 24.

<sup>9</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (10 September 1942), SECRET.

<sup>10</sup> PRO, ADM 234/369, *Battle Summary No 22*, p 47.

<sup>11</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 278.

<sup>12</sup> Smith, *Arctic Victory*, p 160.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp 161-163.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p 170.

beating off a German bomber attack when the convoy was already at anchor in the Modyugski roadstead off Archangel.<sup>15</sup> Post-war Soviet writings concealed the truth of the situation, for example by blandly stating that:

For protecting major convoys in the summer of 1942 the Supreme Command Headquarters subordinated units of ground aircraft to the fleet. These air units inflicted forestalling strikes against the bases and airfields of the enemy, conducted air reconnaissance and search for submarines, and covered convoys 150-200 miles from shore.<sup>16</sup>

Sadly, it was the German High Command, rather than the Russians, that "achieved close coordination of aviation with naval forces, especially submarines ... in Arctic waters."<sup>17</sup> Admittedly, during the war the NID stated that "in the north, Soviet submarines, destroyers and naval aircraft are co-operating with the Royal Navy in convoy protection."<sup>18</sup> But this bald statement for the wide readership of the *Weekly Intelligence Report* disguised the limited nature of the assistance provided by the Soviet Union. Coastal Command's contribution alone to the PQ18 and QP14 convoys comprised over 100 aircraft from 13 squadrons based in the United Kingdom, Iceland and Russia. A total of 269 sorties were performed, requiring 2,320 flying hours. Eight U-boats were observed and two of them attacked.<sup>19</sup>

In the event, the passage of PQ18 and QP14 was the last occasion when the Germans put forward a major air effort against the convoys. This was a consequence of Operation "Torch", the Allied landings in North Africa on 7 November 1942, which prompted the transfer of the German bomber and torpedo striking forces from the north to the Mediterranean theatre.<sup>20</sup> As a result, the air threat to the Arctic convoys was greatly reduced at the end of 1942.

Sub-Lieutenant Ian Grey who served in North Russia as an interpreter, a BLO on Soviet vessels and a "sort of dogsbody intelligence officer" to Fisher,<sup>21</sup> recalled that he "was always expected to report on what I thought was relevant to our relation[s] between the two navies and to the Allied war effort, and

---

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p 175.

<sup>16</sup> Captain 1st Rank G Ammon, "Securing Sea Lanes (Based on the Combat Actions of the Northern Fleet in 1941-45)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1978), pp 26-32.

<sup>17</sup> Captain 1st Rank V Achkasov, "The Second World War and Scandinavia", review of A M Noskov, *Skandinavskiy platsdarm vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne* (The Scandinavian Bridgehead in the Second World War) (Nauka, 1977), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1978), pp 116-117.

<sup>18</sup> NHB, "Work of the Red Navy", *WIR*, no 139 (6 November 1942), p 15, SECRET.

<sup>19</sup> Schofield and Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen*, p 206.

<sup>20</sup> Pearce, *Running the Gauntlet*, p 197.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Ian Grey.

the general Russian management of affairs."<sup>22</sup> However, his contemporary reports displayed a great degree of detail. For example, he recorded the unwillingness of the Soviet Navy to patrol at night and in poor weather conditions.

On 21 October 1942, an attempt was made to rendezvous with Royal Navy ships. Grey was on board *Sokrushitelny*. Inside the Kola Inlet visibility was good, but once clear of Kildin Island the destroyers ran into a heavy fall of snow which lasted for one and a half hours. The wind began to increase and a very thick snowfall limited visibility to 200 yards. The Captain (Destroyers) told Grey that he could search only until 1700 hours since he had orders to return before darkness began to fall. At the appointed hour, he turned back as promised. Grey concluded that the Russians were "very disappointed at not making this rendezvous; at the same time they were reluctant to continue search in the dark with visibility further decreased by snow falls."<sup>23</sup>

On 17 November 1942, QP15 of 28 merchant ships sailed from Archangel taking advantage of the period of almost complete winter darkness to escape detection.<sup>24</sup> It was escorted by the Soviet destroyers *Baku*, which had recently arrived via the Northern Sea Route from the Far East, and *Sokrushitelny*. A third destroyer, the *Razumny*, sailed in company but engine trouble forced her return to harbour.

The convoy soon encountered very heavy weather conditions and on 20 November the remaining two Soviet destroyers independently set course for base. The *Baku* experienced great difficulty in turning and sustained considerable weather damage as a result. The *Sokrushitelny* had similar problems and was pooped as she turned (that is, her stern deck was engulfed in water). *Sokrushitelny* then sent a distress message by W/T, which caused *Baku* to turn back again to her support. At the same time, the Commander-in-Chief, Northern Fleet, ordered *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky* from Iokanga, and *Razumny* from the Kola Inlet, to proceed immediately to her assistance. A further signal indicated that *Sokrushitelny* had broken her back and that the stern section had sunk. As it did so, the ready-use depth charges exploded.

Unable to find *Sokrushitelny* in the appalling conditions, *Baku* returned to harbour to refuel. *Razumny*, according to Golovko, was steaming at over 20 knots in very heavy seas and located the

---

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Grey Papers, Grey, "Journey of Russian Destroyers to meet H.M.S. 'ARGONAUT', 'INTREPID' and 'OBDURATE'" (22 October 1942).

<sup>24</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (17 November 1942), SECRET.

crippled destroyer by RDF.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, it then proved impossible to take the vessel in tow despite several attempts.

Shortly thereafter, *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky* arrived on the scene. They were smaller ships, but better seaboats than the large destroyers. By what must have been excellent seamanship (and using such methods as floating a cable on lifebelts to the crippled ship), *Kuibyshev* was able to transfer all but 15 crew members of the *Sokrushitelny* before shortage of fuel forced both her and *Uritsky* to return to harbour. At this point, Golovko ordered the destroyer *Gromky* to leave Kola Inlet to assist *Sokrushitelny*, but *Gromky* herself ran into difficulties, sustaining damage which resulted in a return to harbour. Meanwhile, two trawlers had also been dispatched from the Kola Inlet and arrived in the area on 25 November. By then the weather had abated, but no trace was found of the stricken *Sokrushitelny* and, after a search, it was assumed that she had sunk.

Two Soviet officers had remained with *Sokrushitelny* and died, but the remainder had taken the opportunity to transfer to *Kuibyshev* and live. However, it was wartime and this was the Soviet Union. Hence, it was considered that the surviving officers had failed gravely in their duty by leaving the ship. As a consequence the navigating officer, signals officer and medical officer were summarily drafted to a penal battalion at the front. The captain, first lieutenant, gunnery officer and one other were court-martialled, their fate unknown.<sup>26</sup>

The sinking of the warship merely confirmed the British representatives in their earlier judgments reported to the NID of the poor sea-going qualities of these Soviet vessels.<sup>27</sup> Quite simply, the Italian-designed destroyers were not able to withstand the Arctic conditions. As such, the ships could not be "worked too hard during the intervals between their constant visits to the dockyards" for repairs.<sup>28</sup>

At the outset of QP15's passage, no Soviet submarines were made available for special patrol against German surface ships, until *K3* sailed very late to carry out this duty. At the same time, it seems likely that no effective reconnaissance had been performed of Altenfjord, 90 miles southwest of North Cape and anchorage of the squadron of German surface ships based in the north, to establish whether

---

<sup>25</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 134.

<sup>26</sup> Golovko devotes a chapter in his memoirs to "The Tragedy of the *Sokrushitelny*"; *ibid*, pp 131-141. The British account of the events is in PRO, ADM 199/1104, "16th Monthly Report. November 1942" (hereinafter "16th Monthly Report") (1 December 1942), pp 4-5, paras 33-37, SECRET.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, PRO, ADM 199/2492, "7th Monthly Report", p 8.

<sup>28</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 34.



enemy forces had sailed. No suitable Soviet aircraft were available, as a result of which the Russians had been "very anxious" to acquire the three remaining PRU Spitfires in North Russia.<sup>29</sup> However, although these had been handed over to the Soviet Union a short while previously, only one remained operational.<sup>30</sup>

It is possible that the continuous Soviet W/T traffic which accompanied the disaster to the *Sokrushitelny* was most fortunate for QP15. Shortly before, four U-boats had been fixed by RDF in its path,<sup>31</sup> but German attention would then have been diverted to the Russians. Convoy QP15 finally reached Loch Ewe with the loss of only two merchant ships to U-boats.<sup>32</sup>

In December 1942, the NID's Section 16 provided two Russian-speakers to act as fighter direction officers for Soviet aircraft covering the Arctic convoys. In the event, "in spite of promises by the Soviet authorities", no Russian planes were sighted on either the outbound or homeward journeys.<sup>33</sup>

Towards the end of 1942, for security reasons, the titles of the PQ and QP convoys were replaced by JW and RA respectively.<sup>34</sup> On 15 December an outward-bound convoy, designated JW51A, sailed from the United Kingdom.<sup>35</sup> It arrived without loss and without incident in Kola Inlet on Christmas Day.

Miles arranged with the Soviet Naval Staff in Moscow for the White Sea portion of convoy JW51A to have a purely Soviet escort on the last leg of its journey. However, as no British ships fitted with RDF were present, the inadequate escort provided - only two Russian destroyers - failed to locate the merchant vessels for some time after they had left the main British escort.<sup>36</sup> The situation was further complicated by the W/T report of a Russian PE-3 aircraft, which gave the position of the Royal Navy's more distant cruiser escort as 60 miles to the north of its true location. This, in turn, caused some

---

<sup>29</sup> Schofield and Nesbit, *Arctic Airmen*, p 195.

<sup>30</sup> It was often difficult, in any case, for the Spitfires to obtain results because of bad weather, even in summer. For example, in June 1944, no flights were possible until the 12th of the month; PRO, WO 208/1850, Egerton to Secretary of the Admiralty, "Report of Proceedings for May 1944" (27 June 1944), p 3, para 27, TOP SECRET.

<sup>31</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "16th Monthly Report", p 4, para 31.

<sup>32</sup> John Winton, *Ultra at Sea* (London, 1988), p 73.

<sup>33</sup> PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 9, para 18, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>34</sup> PRO, CAB 106/350, "Convoys to North Russia, 1942; Supplement to The London Gazette of Friday, 13th October, 1950" (17 October 1950), p 5152, para 14.

<sup>35</sup> Starting in December 1942 with JW51, the convoys ran monthly in the winter on the United Kingdom-Iceland-Murmansk route. These convoys were often divided up, and were therefore given additional letter designations, in this case JW51A. Convoys designated RA ran monthly from Russia in the winter commencing January 1943; Ruge, *Sea Warfare*, p 320.

<sup>36</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "17th Monthly Report", p 1, paras 2-3 (a).

confusion among the close-escort British destroyers. Fisher felt that the incident was interesting mainly because it recorded the "furthest known limit of Russian air reconnaissance over the sea, even considering the extra 60 miles of northing that they claimed."<sup>37</sup>

Grey was BLO aboard the escorting Russian destroyer *Razumny*. His report indicated some of the limitations of Soviet equipment and seamanship. It is also interesting to note the convoy being reformed according to the instructions of a sub-lieutenant attached to the Royal Navy, rather than by the orders of the Soviet captain.

On Christmas Eve 1942, the Russian ships left harbour. In due course, *Razumny* was challenged by the British destroyer *Boadicea*, then asked for her navigational position. This information could not be passed owing to the "limited range" of the Russian signal lamps.<sup>38</sup> When the convoy was met, the merchant ships were: "widely spread, and Capt.(D) (Captain 1st Grade Kolchin) requested that they be brought closer together and so easier to escort; he was uncertain as to the formation he would prefer; I formed the Merchant ships in two columns disposed abeam, extra ship in starboard column, ships two cables apart."<sup>39</sup> Then, in the early hours of Boxing Day, Grey was requested to come to the bridge to inform the merchant vessels that they must alter course immediately:

I explained that the Commodore would need at the very least 1/4 hour to pass the alteration of course to the other four ships, a point readily conceded by the Russian Divisional Captain; nevertheless the Russian officers continued to request 'immediate' alterations of course, without considering the circumstances: in order to make the frequent alterations of course less harassing for the Merchant Ships I explained that the Commodore must have not less than 1/2 hour's notice each time.<sup>40</sup>

The return passage was uneventful until off Toros Island, when very thick fog was encountered. *Kuibyshev* and *Razumny* were making eight knots as they entered the Inlet and *Razumny* went aground on the eastern shore.<sup>41</sup> However, besides a severely-dented stem and a bad shaking, the warship suffered no damage and was soon refloated.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, para 6.

<sup>38</sup> Grey Papers, Grey, "Convoy JW 51 A. Russian Escort to White Sea Section" (hereinafter "Convoy JW 51 A") (c 27 December 1942).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> The SBNO had previously reported that the "worst enemy seems to be the Kola Inlet fog. This low-lying fog rises like steam from the waters of the inlet in southerly and south-westerly winds with a low temperature"; NHB, "Life in Polyarnoe", *WIR*, p 61.

<sup>42</sup> Grey Papers, "Convoy JW 51 A".

In practice, the British found it desirable not to determine in advance who was to be the senior officer of the escort. This meant that the senior British officer was then free to direct the merchant ships and the Russian escort vessels would conform to their movements "without further discussion."<sup>43</sup>

A second convoy of 14 ships, JW51B, sailed on 22 December 1942.<sup>44</sup> However, on New Year's Eve in the Battle of the Barents Sea, Captain R St V Sherbrooke in *Onslow* had to fight a remarkable action against superior German forces to bring JW51B to Russia unscathed. The tactics of the Royal Navy were executed with "initiative, flexibility, and élan",<sup>45</sup> and were in marked contrast with either German or Russian naval performance in the Arctic.

When news of the battle was brought to Hitler, he flew into a rage and stated that the German heavy ships were "a needless drain on men and materials. They will accordingly be paid off and reduced to scrap. Their guns will be mounted on land for coastal defence".<sup>46</sup> A few days later, on 6 January 1943, Grand-Admiral Erich Raeder tendered his resignation to the Führer.<sup>47</sup> In the event his successor, Admiral Karl Dönitz, was able to retain the big ships. The main reason for this was "the classic argument of the fleet 'in being' to tie up the enemy's forces which had been accepted by virtually every inferior fleet throughout the modern history of navies."<sup>48</sup>

Grey's report on the escort of JW51B indicated the usual Soviet disregard for radio silence, the difficult winter conditions and the resulting dangers of navigation. On 2 January 1943, he joined the destroyer *Razyaryonni* in Vaenga Bay: "visibility in Inlet limited to a few yards by fog; proceeded at 2 knots: 0545 RAZYARYONNI went aground, but not severely; oil on water as destroyer went astern suggested a hole in bilge tanks."<sup>49</sup> On 3 January, having found the convoy, Grey was requested "to find out names of merchant ships in company; Russian Staff in Polyarno required them urgently: I pointed out that this meant breaking wireless silence; but the signal from the Staff amounted to an order and [Captain

---

<sup>43</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "19th. Monthly Report; 26th February to 11th April 1943" (hereinafter "19th Monthly Report") (10 April 1943), p 3, para 23, SECRET.

<sup>44</sup> Winton, *Ultra at Sea*, p 73.

<sup>45</sup> Williamson Murray, "British Military Effectiveness in the Second World War", in Millett and Murray, *Military Effectiveness*, p 122.

<sup>46</sup> Hitler speaking to Vice-Admiral Krancke (1 January 1943), cited in Cajus Bekker, *Hitler's Naval War*, translated and edited by Frank Ziegler (London, 1974), p 292.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, pp 293-294; and Anthony Martienssen, *Hitler and His Admirals* (London, 1948), pp 155-156.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Padfield, *Dönitz, The Last Führer: Portrait of a Nazi War Leader* (London, 1984), p 272.

<sup>49</sup> Grey Papers, Grey, "Convoy JW 51 B. Russian Escort to White Sea Section" (c 3 January 1943).

2nd Grade] Sokolov was worrying about delay".<sup>50</sup> Two ships were interrogated before the answer could be discovered. The *Razyaryonni* had been passing through ice for some two hours, with the ice growing thicker, when Sokolov decided to turn back as it was putting too much strain on the vessel. The Soviet destroyer then left the convoy and returned to the Kola Inlet.<sup>51</sup>

During the passage of JW51B from Kildin Island to the Kola Inlet, the Northern Fleet staff reported from W/T intelligence that a U-boat had been ordered to carry out attacks against ships straggling astern of the convoy. This must have caused great anxiety to the British escorts. Fortunately, the concern proved to be unfounded when a later Soviet correction was received substituting the word "aircraft" for "U-boat".<sup>52</sup>

The convoy entered harbour in thick fog, for which a special procedure had been developed with the Russians and incorporated in standing general memoranda for the Kola Inlet. This was put into operation but the Soviet pilot failed to make the required sound signals, so it was ineffective; one merchant ship ran aground.<sup>53</sup> The subsequent British report praised the escorts for guiding the merchant vessels into harbour "despite darkness, very thick fog, and the minimum effective Russian assistance."<sup>54</sup>

A Soviet air reconnaissance was made of Altenfjord on 1 January 1943 and the presence of a battleship, three cruisers and six destroyers was reported. However, from previous experience, the SBNO felt that it was not easy to determine the accuracy of the visual sighting and that it would not be justified to place great reliance on the report.<sup>55</sup>

When convoy JW52 arrived safely in the Kola Inlet on 27 January 1943,<sup>56</sup> there were only two Soviet destroyers available for local escort duties.<sup>57</sup> Fortunately, the convoy was able to take an evasive route to avoid a known concentration of U-boats, which had been fixed by Russian direction finding.<sup>58</sup> Fortunately, the *Luftwaffe* strength had already been reduced in the north. Therefore, the lack of Soviet fighter protection did not bring the dire consequences for the convoys which had been the case in 1942.

---

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "17th Monthly Report", p 3, para 15.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, para 16.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, p 4, para 19.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p 3, para 13.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, "18th Monthly Report", p 1, para 6.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, para 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p 1, para 5.

JW53, which sailed in conditions of rapidly-lengthening daylight hours, ran into particularly heavy weather. Once again, enemy air attacks were light and all ships arrived safely in North Russia.<sup>59</sup> The corresponding homeward-bound convoys, RA52 and RA53, were less lucky and lost four ships to U-boat attack. In RA53, one vessel was also lost to the very heavy weather conditions encountered on passage.<sup>60</sup>

It had been found necessary to warn convoys about the unpredictable habits of Russian aircraft. For example, in connection with JW53, Fisher believed that, as far as was known, the only Russian aircraft to sight the convoy at any considerable distance from the land approached it too closely.<sup>61</sup> Also, the established recognition procedure was not carried out until after three ships in the convoy had opened fire. Furthermore, even after receiving a "Help" message (an urgent call from ships undergoing air attack calling for fighter protection), no aerial assistance was promised apart from the relaying of an assurance from the Russian staff that fighters were flying in the vicinity of the convoy.<sup>62</sup>

On 1 January 1943, the Anglo-Soviet Visual Tactical Code came into force.<sup>63</sup> This code had been devised by the British Naval Mission in Moscow in conjunction with the Soviet Naval Staff and was intended to facilitate the operation of combined escort forces. It supplemented the system by which Russian-speaking BLOs were appointed to Soviet destroyers, together with British naval signalmen and telegraphists, and it completed the framework within which Anglo-Soviet cooperation in escorting convoys was intended to be performed. Had other factors been equal, there seems no reason why this cooperation should not have achieved the same high standards as had long existed between the British and Dutch navies, or British and Free French naval forces, in other theatres of war.

Although the continuation of the Arctic convoys to the Soviet Union still ranked as a high priority with the British Government, a number of factors came together to render it impracticable to dispatch the next pair of convoys, JW54A and JW54B, totalling 32 merchant ships, until the middle of November 1943, many months after their predecessors.

The reasons for this decision were not appreciated by the Russians who were unwilling, or possibly unable, to understand the significance of the maritime factors involved. As a result, the Soviet

---

<sup>59</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, pp 333-335.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, p 336.

<sup>61</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "19th Monthly Report", p 1, para 9.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, para 15.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, "Communication Appendix to 17th Monthly Report" (12 January 1943), p 1, para 1, SECRET.

civil authorities commenced a campaign of obstruction and non-cooperation with the British representatives in Russia. This policy considerably hindered the British effort and, to some extent, must have indirectly reduced the supply of war *matériel* to the Soviet Union. It is certainly significant that the prevailing mood improved considerably with the resumption of convoys in November 1943, subsequent to the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers held in October. In the meantime, British naval forces in the north performed a number of duties in support of their Russian allies.

While awaiting the next homeward-bound convoy, a group of British merchant ships had left Archangel for the Kola Inlet to avoid ice. Unfortunately, in the course of this voyage, one Russian Hurricane was shot down by the *Empire Fortune*. The SBNO considered that it was the "same old story of the fighter escort flying close to and over the convoy during air attack."<sup>64</sup> He remarked at the same time about the Russians not being security conscious in the operational sense of the term and quite unable to keep quiet about forthcoming naval movements. A large number of Russians demanded to know in advance, including port, trade and frontier guard officials. The SBNO went on to contrast this lack of operational security with the general Russian secretiveness and mistrust of their British allies.<sup>65</sup>

The eight British merchant ships left at Archangel pending the resumption of convoys were of considerable assistance to the Russians in transporting stores from Archangel to Murmansk and Polyarnoe. These were known as the "firewood" convoys and they ensured a sufficient supply of fuel against the forthcoming winter.<sup>66</sup> These operations were seriously handicapped by the poor quality of the Russian coal provided, which caused the speed of some of the ships to be reduced to six and a half knots. Finally, it was made clear to the Russians that this assistance would stop unless other fuel was provided and, as a result, better-quality coal was suddenly produced.<sup>67</sup>

In June 1943, the Russians had asked for a British anti-submarine escort to accompany a valuable convoy, consisting of the icebreakers *Krassin*, *Litke* and *Mikoyan*, from Molotovsk to the Kara Strait. It

---

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, "25th Monthly Report (1st September - 30th September)" (3 October 1943), p 1, para 5, SECRET.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, paras 9-12. The British felt that "the Russians had no sense of security and the dates of convoy arrivals and departure were matters of common gossip"; CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 27. It must have been of concern, therefore, when the DNI drew the attention of the JIC to a report that "a Russian naval officer at Archangel had been aware of the date of NEPTUNE D-Day and had disclosed this date in a remark made some seven days before D-Day"; PRO, CAB 81/92, JIC(44)34(0) (18 July 1944), p 4, para 5, TOP SECRET.

<sup>66</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "26th Monthly Report", p 1, para 3.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, "24th Monthly Report; 1st August - 31 August" (7 September 1943), p 2, para 5, SECRET.

was not considered that enemy forces would be encountered further to the east, in the Kara Sea itself. At this time, the Russians at Archangel were delaying the onward dispatch of a consignment of mail destined for the Kola Inlet, which they evidently intended to examine for "anti-Soviet" literature before release. The SBNO therefore ordered the minesweeper *Jason*, which should have sailed on the Kara Sea operation, to remain in harbour and hold on to the mailbags until negotiations had been completed. The Russian Naval Staff were informed, but the SBNO felt that they appeared to have little or no influence with any of the civil authorities.<sup>68</sup> The anti-submarine escort for the operation, therefore, was limited to a single British minesweeper. The subsequent report of the Commanding Officer of *Britomart* gave a clear intelligence picture of a purely Soviet-organised convoy and the efficiency of the accompanying Russian warships.

Apart from *Britomart*, the surface escort consisted of the destroyers *Baku*, *Gremyashchi*, *Grozny*, *Kuibyshev* and *Uritsky*,<sup>69</sup> and a number of smaller vessels.<sup>70</sup> Kucherov, in the destroyer *Uritsky*, sailed in command of the operation.<sup>71</sup> In contrast with the weak air protection customarily provided for British convoys, the continuous air escort included Hurricanes, MBR-2 seaplanes, PE-3s and Russian Catalinas.<sup>72</sup>

*Britomart* acted as an anti-submarine sweep ahead of the convoy. Station-keeping was difficult partly because *Uritsky*, which was acting as guide of convoy, considered it reasonable to change course without signalling and partly because Soviet patrol vessel *No 30* preferred to follow *Britomart*'s fog buoy, trailing in the sea behind the British minesweeper, instead of the guide.<sup>73</sup> *Gremyashchi* was ordered to sink a floating mine and the Commanding Officer received a reprimand for failing to do so despite a "vast

---

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, "22nd Monthly Report; 1st June to 30th June 1943" (30 April [sic] 1943), p 2, paras 9-10, SECRET.

<sup>69</sup> For a report by a British officer who spent some time on the destroyers *Gremyashchi* and *Baku* during September and October 1943, see NHB, "In a Soviet Wardroom", *WIR*, no 205 (11 February 1944), pp 29-32, SECRET.

<sup>70</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, Commanding Officer, HMS *Britomart* to SBNO, Archangel, "Report on Proceedings with Soviet Icebreakers from Molotovsk to the Kara Strait" (hereinafter "Report on Proceedings with Soviet Icebreakers") (23 June 1943), p 1, para 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, para 2.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p 2.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, para 5.

expenditure of ammunition" of every calibre.<sup>74</sup> The standard of Russian signalling was reported as "very low."<sup>75</sup>

Early on the morning of 19 June, one of the escorting MBR-2s was seen to fire two Very lights before the plane alighted on the sea half a mile to port of the convoy. This was interpreted in *Britomart* as a distress signal following the seaplane's engine failure. However, *Gremyashchi* turned and dropped a pattern of depth charges near the aircraft, and was soon joined by *Grozny* and one of the "Hunter" vessels, which also released depth charges. The aeroplane was violently shaken about by the ensuing explosions. But, not content with their initial attack, both Soviet destroyers then opened fire with main, secondary and close-range armament at the depth-charge patches around the aircraft. In due course, shellbursts were observed over *Britomart*, which wisely decided to get well clear. The two Russian signalmen aboard *Britomart* and the Russian liaison officer, Lieutenant-Commander Kominsky, were in too great a state of excitement to read any signals, so the Royal Navy vessel was unable to follow the remainder of the action.<sup>76</sup>

In securing the safety of Russian convoys in the Barents Sea, the Soviet Navy had no hesitation in asking for British help and support, particularly by anti-submarine escorts and by minesweepers for the clearance of fields of non-contact mines. However, this help was seldom requested for operations east of the Kara Strait, undoubtedly for reasons of national pride, but also because of the obsessive Soviet tendency to secrecy.

In over two years of war, during which the Soviet Navy gladly accepted the Asdic and minesweeping equipment and techniques which had been freely supplied to them by the British, the Russians made little practical progress. This was demonstrated by events in the Kara Sea in the late summer of 1943 when, without British assistance, Golovko had to ensure the safe passage to Archangel of a number of Soviet merchant ships which had arrived at Vilkitsky Island from the Far East.

---

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*, p 2. A Soviet account credits *Gremyashchi* with a greater overall competence, claiming that her war record was "90 missions for the high command; steamed 59,850 miles; repelled 112 enemy aircraft attacks, shot down 14 and damaged 23 aircraft. On 11 occasions the destroyer provided gunfire support for Northern Fleet amphibious assaults and the flanks of the Red Army; participated in escorts of 39 Allied and 24 Soviet convoys; and sunk one and damaged two enemy submarines"; Captain 2nd Rank B Tyurin, "The First Soviet Destroyers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1988), pp 50-52.

<sup>75</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "Report on Proceedings with Soviet Icebreakers", p 3.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*, p 1, para 4.



On 28 September, convoy VA18 (Vladivostok-Arctic) sailed from Vilkitsky Island to the westward, escorted by the minelayer *Murman* and three minesweeper-trawlers. The convoy comprised the transports *A Andreev*, *Arkhangelsk*, *Sergei Kirov* and *Mossoviet*. Arrangements had been made for the escort to be reinforced by additional trawlers during the passage, but these were delayed at Dikson.

The convoy ran into heavy weather, and on 30 September 1943 the *Arkhangelsk* was torpedoed and sunk by *U-960* near the Sergeya-Kirova Islands,<sup>77</sup> some 60 miles west of Russkiy Island. By the following morning several U-boats had gathered. A torpedo from the *U-601* missed the *Murman* and the German submarine was shelled, but with their superior surface speed the German boats were able to easily outdistance the Soviet trawlers when they attempted to counterattack. Eventually the *Kirov* was torpedoed and sunk by *U-703* and one of the minesweepers, *T-896*, was sunk by *U-960*.<sup>78</sup>

Due to the slow progress of the convoy, the rendezvous was not made with the escort reinforcement, which proceeded to return to the Izvestii Tsik islands in accordance with orders. There did not seem to be any attempt to discover the cause of the delay to the convoy and, although VA18 was under continuous attack for 48 hours, there is no indication that any air or additional surface support was provided. The remaining ships succeeded in reaching Dikson on 2 October. The loss of half the transports, carrying badly needed supplies, was a particularly severe blow for the Russians.

By the usual combination of Soviet secretiveness and inefficiency, a naval operation carried out without British assistance had met with disaster. The British Mission, which might perhaps have been able to offer some practical assistance, was kept in ignorance. A Russian request for help was finally made, but far too late.

The disaster to VA18 was to have immediate consequences. Golovko was summoned to Moscow where, at a meeting with most of the *Politburo* on 10 October 1943, Stalin interrogated him "very closely on recent mishaps in the Kara Sea and demanded details of naval deployment to protect Allied convoys moving into the Northern Fleet's operational zone."<sup>79</sup> The question to be resolved was why, with the Arctic convoys temporarily discontinued, proper escorts could not be supplied in the northern theatre for purely Soviet convoys. The reasons given included the lack of warship repair facilities and of oil fuel

---

<sup>77</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 225.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> John Erickson, *The Road to Berlin: Stalin's War with Germany Volume 2* (London, 1985), p 175.

depots east of Archangel. This prevented the deployment of Soviet destroyers, with their low endurance, into the Kara Sea. The "land-lubber members of the *Politburo* who joined in the discussion obviously had no idea what the Kara Sea was like; Golovko understandably lost his temper, whereupon Stalin rebuked him sharply".<sup>80</sup> However, Golovko insisted that, apart from the shortcomings of *Glavsevmorput*, the principal fault lay in a lack of anti-submarine escorts and long-range aircraft for convoy protection. After more than two years of war, including much tragic experience with the British-led Arctic convoys, it had taken the disaster to the VA18 convoy to bring this truth home to the Russians. Stalin finally agreed to supply anti-submarine aircraft and naval reinforcement of "various types".<sup>81</sup>

Convoys JW54A and JW54B were the first of the resumed Arctic convoy cycle and arrived without loss in the Kola Inlet on 24 November and 2 December 1943 respectively.<sup>82</sup> Arrangements were made for the White Sea section of JW54A to be met by the British minesweeper *Seagull* in company with two Soviet destroyers and three minesweepers. However, in rather typical fashion, the Northern Fleet staff signalled an alteration of the rendezvous position which was received by the British convoy escort only five minutes before the Russian force was sighted, in thick weather. Apparently, the locational change had been made on the orders of Moscow.<sup>83</sup>

A Soviet aircraft distinguished itself by sighting the convoy, exchanging the correct recognition signals, and then making a W/T report of *enemy* vessels. The British naval staff at Polyarnoe were subsequently informed that the aircraft had been on a reconnaissance mission of the coast of Lapland and that the pilot had been completely off course. The final Soviet comment was that he had been "punished".<sup>84</sup>

Following his meeting with Stalin, Golovko received welcome air reinforcements. When weather conditions allowed, this enabled a number of raids to be carried out against Khebukten, Kirkenes and Luostari aerodromes. Although the German strength in the north was now too weak to carry out mass aerial attacks on the convoys, the Soviet effort against the German airfields was still welcome.

---

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* The JIC considered that, in general, the Soviet High Command had "no real conception of how to use the Navy to best advantage"; PRO, CAB 81/114, "Russian Strength on 1st March 1943", JIC(43)102 (Final) (12 March 1943), p 8, para 20, SECRET.

<sup>81</sup> Erickson, *The Road to Berlin*, p 175.

<sup>82</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "27th Monthly Report (22nd November - 26th December, 1943)" (26 December 1943), p 1, para 2, SECRET.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, "Appendix I to 27th Monthly Report - Operations" (26 December 1943), p 1, SECRET.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

On 8 May 1943, Tovey was succeeded by Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser as Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.<sup>85</sup> The latter "felt very strongly that the 'Scharnhorst' would come out" from its Norwegian lair to attack JW55B,<sup>86</sup> especially because of the successful passage of two Arctic convoys each way without interference. The Russians took no part in the operations which culminated in the sinking of the German battlecruiser on 26 December 1943. In fact, they were not given details of the operational planning leading up to it, which involved a preliminary visit to the Kola Inlet on 16 December by Fraser in the battleship *Duke of York* and a visit to Golovko. Russian naval intelligence sources failed to observe the movements of the German battlecruiser. As a result, the Soviet Naval Staff were not even aware that the *Scharnhorst* had sailed from Altenfjord until informed by the British Mission.<sup>87</sup>

Special Intelligence, that is sigint, played an important part in ensuring that the German ship was brought to battle:

Although none of the German signals affecting *Scharnhorst's* last operation were decrypted completely currently, and many of them were not decrypted at all, B.P. [Bletchley Park, base of the GC&CS] managed to unbutton a sufficient number quickly enough ... to keep Fraser and Burnett [the Vice-Admiral in charge of the covering force] ... clearly informed of their opponent's intentions and moves.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Richard Humble, *Fraser of North Cape: The Life of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fraser [1888-1981]* (London, 1983), p 163.

<sup>86</sup> PRO, ADM 199/913, Fraser to the Secretary of the Admiralty (31 December 1943), p 1, para 4, SECRET.

<sup>87</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 184. Everett states that: "I well remember being in Kola inlet and unbuttoning the signal which told of her readiness for sea ... My recollection is that we sailed without notice to the Russians so that we would not have to tell them why we were doing so ... My impression has always been that we sailed immediately on receipt of the Scharnhorst 'sailed' signal"; CAC, MLBE 2/40, Everett to Beesly (2 August 1977), p 1. Similarly, Beesly considers it doubtful that the Russians knew of *Scharnhorst's* departure, as the British "certainly did not pass Special Intelligence to him [Golovko] in the same way that we did to the Americans or the Canadians"; *ibid*, Beesly to Everett (6 August 1977), p 1. But it is worth noting that not all intelligence was shared with the Americans. For example, the British Mission suggested to London that the Russians "would resent our passing on any information about themselves which they had given us. For example I [Admiral Miles] do not propose to give details of my Makhach Kala visit to American N.A."; 30 Military Mission to War Office (18 July 1942), pp 1-2, MOST SECRET, attached to PRO, CAB 81/109, "American Service Attachés in Moscow; Note by the Secretary", JIC(42)276(0) (19 July 1942), MOST SECRET. Miles visited Makhach Kala on the Caspian Sea in July 1942; NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (15 July 1942).

<sup>88</sup> Beesly, *Very Special Intelligence*, p 210. For the debate about whether the Russians acquired their own sigint on the *Scharnhorst* operation, see Ralph Erskine, "The Soviets and Naval Enigma: Some Comments", *INS*, vol 4, no 3 (July 1989), pp 503-511. On Russian sigint capability in general, see Geoff Jukes, "The Soviets and Ultra", *INS*, vol 3, no 2 (April 1988), pp 233-247; and P S Milner-Barry, "The Soviets and Ultra: A Comment on Jukes' Hypothesis", *INS*, vol 3, no 2 (April 1988), pp 248-250.

However, in the tactical sphere, radar was the prime adjunct to success against the German battlecruiser. In his official report, Fraser concluded that the technical superiority and correct use of British radar "enabled the Home Fleet to find, fix, fight, and finish off the *Scharnhorst*."<sup>89</sup>

It was as well that the British sigint capability was high, for they were disappointed with the performance of the Russian "Radio Reconnaissance" service in analysing aircraft and U-boat W/T traffic,<sup>90</sup> and the SBNO had reported that he was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the Russians would "never be able to maintain even one [interception] line with any degree of reliability."<sup>91</sup>

The SBNO had gleefully reported the Boxing Day "kill" to the Russians and arranged for the British warships to be refuelled on entering harbour. This put an additional strain on the Kola's resources, Golovko recording that about 10,000 tons of oil were required by the British squadron.<sup>92</sup> As a result, the Russian tankers:

had to refill from one or other of the numerous small hulks dotted about the Inlet, a very slow process. Where these hulks are moored has always been kept very dark, also their capacity. Much of this veil of secrecy has now been torn down as willy nilly I [Rear-Admiral Archer] insisted that some of the destroyers must be fuelled from this source.<sup>93</sup>

Rear-Admiral E R Archer, who succeeded Fisher as SBNO, North Russia,<sup>94</sup> concluded by stating that the Russians were "learning slowly the meaning of the word co-operation."<sup>95</sup> But, in this case too, the natural corollary of cooperation was better intelligence on Soviet naval facilities.

---

<sup>89</sup> PRO, ADM 220/204, Radar Bulletin No 6, Report No 1 (December 1943), cited in Derek Howse, *Radar at Sea: The Royal Navy in World War 2* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, 1993), p 190. Further details on the German ship and its end in battle are found in Richard Garrett, *Scharnhorst and Gneisenau: The elusive sisters* (London, 1978); and A J Watts, *The Loss of the Scharnhorst* (London, 1970).

<sup>90</sup> Of course, the Germans made considerable efforts to maintain W/T silence. For example, Ultra intelligence from the GC&CS showed that "Arctic U-boats preparing for operations against RA 60 were reminded on 24/9 (ZTPGU 31785), and 26/9 (ZTPGU 31815 and 31844) to maintain W/T silence, except for major targets or when observed by the enemy. Unjustified use of W/T by U/Eickstedt was condemned on 29/9 (ZTPGU 31938)"; PRO, ADM 223/7, Naval Section, "German Naval Communications; Information for 22/9 - 30/9/44", ULTRA/ZIP/ZWTG/87 (2 October 1944), p 3, para II (ii) (a), f 223, TOP SECRET "U".

<sup>91</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, SBNO, North Russia, to Director of Signal Department, Admiralty (14 October 1942), p 1, para 4, MOST SECRET. The British also maintained a "Y" Service in North Russia. For an example of their reports, see *ibid*, "Monthly Report of 'Y' Unit Polyarnoe - August 1943" (August 1943), SECRET. Another report gives information on the principal Soviet "Y" Service station in the area and warns that British service traffic might be monitored; *ibid*, Archer to Director of the Signal Department, Admiralty, "'Y' Unit Monthly Report" (13 September 1943), MOST SECRET.

<sup>92</sup> Golovko, *With the Red Fleet*, p 187.

<sup>93</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "28th Monthly Report (25th December, 1943 - 31st January, 1944" (hereinafter "28th Monthly Report") (31 January 1944), p 1, para 6, SECRET.

<sup>94</sup> Fisher left Polyarnoe to replace Miles as Head of the Naval Section in Moscow on 12 April 1943; *ibid*, "19th Monthly Report", p 3, para 24.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, "28th Monthly Report", p 1, para 6.

On 22 September 1943, the battleship *Tirpitz* had been disabled by British midget submarines, known as X-craft.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, coupled with the sinking of the *Scharnhorst*, the principal German surface threat to the Arctic convoys was temporarily suspended: "For three months following the sinking of the *Scharnhorst* the Admiralty was able to dispense with battleship cover for the Arctic convoys".<sup>97</sup>

In December 1943, it was arranged that in the future a force of eight Soviet submarines would be provided for special patrol off the Norwegian coast during convoy periods.<sup>98</sup> It is ironic that this essential component of defence against the German surface forces should have been promised by the Russians at the very moment when the threat had been removed.

In the important field of minesweeping, Fisher was irritated by the inadequate Soviet performance, particularly as a number of British minesweepers had been turned over to the Russians. He found the inactivity of these minesweepers particularly unsatisfactory because since their acquisition in full working order he had been asked many times to conduct minesweeping operations in the eastern part of the Barents Sea, from Novaya Zemlya to the White Sea.<sup>99</sup>

Archer tried to persuade the Russians to do more to assist the Arctic convoys, especially with regard to air support, although he felt that the Russians "are not experienced pilots over the sea, their equipment is poor and above all Vaenga airfield and Kola Inlet approaches are liable to be fog bound."<sup>100</sup> However, the ordinary British seaman allowed no excuse for the lack of Soviet assistance. For example, sailors on the *Britomart* were "particularly bitter at the lack of cooperation which the Russians had given" in protecting incoming convoys and echoed the opinion held by Archer that "the handling of their ships was on a par with last war standards."<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> See Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume 3, Part 1*, pp 258-261. For more details of the operation, see Thomas Gallagher, *Against all Odds: Midget Submarines against the Tirpitz* (London, 1971).

<sup>97</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume 3, Part 1*, p 269. For more information on the *Scharnhorst* see, for example, Corvette-Captain Fritz-Otto Busch, *The Drama of the Scharnhorst: A Factual Account from the German Viewpoint*, translated from the German by Eleanor Brockett and Anton Ehrenzweig (London, 1956); and Albert Vulliez and Jacques Mordal, *Battleship Scharnhorst*, translated from the French by George Malcolm (London, 1958).

<sup>98</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, SBNO, North Russia, to Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet (30 December 1943), p 1, para A 1, MOST SECRET.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, "18th Monthly Report", p 4, para 21.

<sup>100</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1104, "29th Monthly Report (1st - 29th February, 1944)" (29 February 1944), p 2, para 12, SECRET.

<sup>101</sup> PRO, FO 181/979/16, "Arrival in Soviet Russia; Enclosure II; Views of ratings of H.M.S. 'Britomart' about the Russians" (c September 1943), p 2, para 3.

In the spring of 1944, Rear-Admiral H Jack Egerton became the fourth and last wartime SBNO, North Russia, taking over from Archer in April.<sup>102</sup> Lieutenant-General Burrows, the newly designated Head of 30 Mission who was soon to replace the current incumbent, General Martell,<sup>103</sup> understood the policy to be adopted by him "was to be a conciliatory one, and that no attempt was to be made to press the Russians to provide us with information."<sup>104</sup> But, it was clear to the COS, with the D-Day invasion looming, that "it would be particularly important to obtain from the Russians during the course of the next few months the greatest amount of intelligence which they could provide." As such, it was suggested that Burrows should be given a directive setting out the policy to be followed in Moscow.<sup>105</sup> In the event, the Russians:

did not get on well with General Burrows ... He had been decorated for his services in the intervention in Russia after the First World War. He didn't like the Soviet Union either - and used to say so in the privacy of the Military Mission. Later, after he left, we found microphones there. They were first found in the Military Mission but later we came across them all over the place. They must have heard everything.<sup>106</sup>

In the light of such occurrences, it should not be too surprising that the Russians were often uncooperative with the British representatives. As Stalin claimed in conversation with Eden, there "would never have been any difficulties put in the way of British Service personnel in Russia but for the patronising manner of the British sailors."<sup>107</sup>

Although "Germany's position began to crumble in January 1944, there was no surface fleet offensive, despite the fact that Russia now had air superiority."<sup>108</sup> But, with the threat from German air and naval forces receding as the Red Army pushed the *Wehrmacht* back, and with the Second Front firmly established in France, the command element of the Northern Fleet at last "took on full responsibility for escorting the White Sea group to Arkhangel'sk after it was separated from convoys proceeding from

---

<sup>102</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "30th Monthly Report (1st - 31st March, 1944)" (31 March 1944), p 4, para 24, SECRET.

<sup>103</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 31.

<sup>104</sup> PRO, CAB 79/70, "No. 30 Military Mission", in COS(44)52 (18 February 1944), p 2, para 4, f 298, MOST SECRET.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> CAC, Baron Thomas Brimelow of Tyldesley, Lancashire, Papers (hereinafter Brimelow Papers), BIMO, Michael Burd, "Notes on Two Conversations with Lord Brimelow" (hereinafter "Notes on Two Conversations") (20-21 April 1982), as revised by Lord Brimelow in May 1982, pp 10-11.

<sup>107</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 28.

<sup>108</sup> Mitchell, *A History of Russian and Soviet Sea Power*, pp 384-404, cited in Bryan Ranft and Geoffrey Till, *The Sea in Soviet Strategy*, 2nd ed (Houndmills, Basingstoke, 1989), p 97.

England."<sup>109</sup> Soviet air support also gradually increased and Northern Fleet planes "provided cover for nine Allied convoys (in both directions) in 1944, and for five convoys in 1945."<sup>110</sup>

In part, the Allied invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944 had helped to wear down the "studied insolence and hostility" which had been evident in 1943.<sup>111</sup> The Soviet Navy, however, still remained unwilling to reveal much information. Up to the end of 1943, the Russians based in the United Kingdom made 430 visits to factories and military establishments in connection with British equipment provided for the Soviet armed forces. Furthermore, no less than 171 visits of direct military interest were arranged. During the same period, only 21 visits of general military interest were arranged for British officers in the Soviet Union.<sup>112</sup> Of these, the Soviet Navy had granted no visits of military interest in 1941, one in 1942 and none in 1943. The army had been allowed a total of 14 visits and the RAF six.<sup>113</sup> Although the British had much to learn from the Red Army, Fisher believed that such information should not be gained in exchange for naval secrets and he was supported in this view by the DDNI, Captain Nichols.<sup>114</sup>

Soviet reticence also extended to the exchange of military intelligence on enemy activities, with the JIC complaining that there "is a continuous flow of information of the highest value and importance from this country regarding the German armed forces, and the similar information we have received from the Russians still remains very scanty."<sup>115</sup>

The COS decided that four submarines should be transferred on loan to the Soviet Union.<sup>116</sup> These boats left Rosyth under the control of their new Russian crews in July 1944 for working up practices. They finally sailed from Lerwick as follows: *Sunfish* (renamed *VI*) on 25 July, followed by *Unbroken* (*V2*), *Unison* (*V3*) and *Ursula* (*V4*) on 26 and 27 July 1944. *VI* was tragically sunk with all hands while *en route* by an RAF Liberator,<sup>117</sup> but the remaining boats arrived without mishap in North

---

<sup>109</sup> Professor Captain 1st Rank V Shlomin, "Combat Operations of the Northern Fleet in 1944", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1974), pp 8-13.

<sup>110</sup> Lieutenant-General of Aviation (Retired) A M Shuginin, "Naval Aviation's Combat Road; Part III, The Third Period of the Great Patriotic War (1944-1945)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1966), pp 21-27.

<sup>111</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 32.

<sup>112</sup> PRO, CAB 81/121, "No. 30 Military Mission", JIC(44)81(0) Final (8 March 1944), p 1, para 2, MOST SECRET.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, Annex I, p 4, para 2 (b).

<sup>114</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 9.

<sup>115</sup> PRO, CAB 81/121, "No. 30 Military Mission", JIC(44)81(0) Final (8 March 1944), p 2, para 3, MOST SECRET.

<sup>116</sup> PRO, CAB 79/70, "Warships for U.S.S.R.", in COS(44)37 (7 February 1944), p 1, para 1, f 96, MOST SECRET.

<sup>117</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 293.

Russian ports. All three surviving "U"-class submarines were eventually returned to Britain after the war and were promptly scrapped.<sup>118</sup>

Soviet submarine action in 1945 was very limited. In the Arctic, the Russians "remained completely passive and no longer participated in the war against German shipping."<sup>119</sup> A well-known submarine kill, however, occurred in the Baltic when the *Wilhelm Gustloff* was sunk in January 1945.<sup>120</sup> This vessel had been engaged in the evacuation of Germans across the Baltic Sea and went down with heavy loss of life: the "Soviet Navy's Red Banner Fleet of 218 submarines, the world's largest and to date the least efficient, had scored their only notable victory."<sup>121</sup>

As the Red Army advanced, three members of the Naval Mission were allowed to visit Leningrad where, "except for one special service army officer", none of the British personnel in Russia had been allowed to travel since the siege of the city had begun in 1941.<sup>122</sup> The Naval Mission in Moscow had reported that there was "little information regarding shipbuilding activities at Leningrad, which contains the largest yards in the U.S.S.R., but work has been reported on one new cruiser and a submarine."<sup>123</sup> So, although a prime reason why they had been allowed into the city by the Russians was to inspect a captured U-boat,<sup>124</sup> one of Sub-Lieutenant Grey's tasks during the visit was "to see how many Soviet ships I could spot and what condition they were in".<sup>125</sup> The subsequent comprehensive report sent by Fisher to the DNI is an excellent example of how much intelligence could be collected by professional Royal Navy officers, even when constantly under the eyes of the Russians.<sup>126</sup>

Between August 1944 and April 1945, U-boats only managed to sink two of the 231 merchant vessels which sailed in nine Russia-bound convoys. The loss incurred was 15,000 tons of cargo, which

---

<sup>118</sup> Admiralty, Historical Section, *Naval Staff History, Second World War, Submarines, Volume I: Operations in Home, Northern and Atlantic Waters (Including the operations of Allied Submarines)*, C.B.3306(1) (London, 1953), p 195, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>119</sup> Meister, *Soviet Warships*, p 173.

<sup>120</sup> See Christopher Dobson, John Miller and Ronald Payne, *The Cruellest Night: Germany's Dunkirk and the sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff* (London, 1979).

<sup>121</sup> Ironic comment in Richard Collier, *The War That Stalin Won: Tehran - Berlin* (London, 1983), pp 236-237.

<sup>122</sup> Grey Papers, "Leningrad. May, 1944; 27th May, 1944", p 1.

<sup>123</sup> Courtney Papers, "Activities of Red Navy", p 1.

<sup>124</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 33.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with Ian Grey.

<sup>126</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, Fisher, "Visit to Leningrad and Kronstadt" (4 June 1944), SECRET.



represented only 0.11 per cent of the 1.3 million tons dispatched from the United Kingdom.<sup>127</sup> The last wartime Arctic convoy, RA67, arrived in the Clyde estuary on 30 May 1945.<sup>128</sup>

The most significant U-boat threat during this period was concentrated in the approaches to the Kola Inlet where, despite the cooperation of Soviet surface forces and aircraft, it was found necessary until the end of the war for British escort groups to be deployed ahead of the convoys to keep the U-boats down. However, submarine kills were not frequent in this area, partly due to the very poor Asdic conditions prevailing.

As regards the German surface threat, the Russian undertaking to provide special submarine patrols off the Norwegian coast during convoy periods was only intermittently honoured. Soviet air reconnaissance coverage of Altenfjord was unreliable and the British finally came to rely on an SIS agent inserted into the area. He reported regularly by W/T, on occasion at two-hourly intervals from his own home to provide weather intelligence prior to air attacks, and at great peril to his life.<sup>129</sup> A plan, however, for a combined Norwegian-Swedish intelligence effort to "penetrate the extreme north of Norway from Sweden" was deflected by the British because, though it would have delivered intelligence on German naval forces, it was believed to be "anti-Russian in flavour".<sup>130</sup>

Soviet bombing operations against the German heavy ships were confined to one unsuccessful raid against the *Tirpitz*. This compared unfavourably with numerous attacks by Fleet Air Arm and RAF aircraft from the beginning of 1942 to the end of 1944.<sup>131</sup> On 12 November 1944, the RAF attacked for the last time. *Tirpitz* was "battered into immobility and finally destroyed while skulking in a Norwegian fiord."<sup>132</sup> Confirmation of the sinking came through an ULTRA intercept, which stated: "From Naval

---

<sup>127</sup> V E Tarrant, *The Last Year of the Kriegsmarine: May 1944-May 1945* (London, 1994), p 154.

<sup>128</sup> Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, p 441.

<sup>129</sup> See PRO, ADM 223/475, "C" to DNI, "2nd Lieutenant Torstein PETTERSEN Royal Norwegian Army" (19 August 1944), TOP SECRET. Pettersen provided detailed intelligence on the *Tirpitz* from November 1943 to May 1944 and "C" considered that he could be "credited with the greatest individual success achieved by any of our agents"; *ibid*, p 2.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, ADNI(F) to DNI (12 May 1944), TOP SECRET.

<sup>131</sup> However, on 15 September 1944 a raid by Lancaster bombers was mounted from Yagodnik, 20 miles south-east of Archangel, and neighbouring airfields in cooperation with the Soviet Air Force; Tarrant, *The Last Year of the Kriegsmarine*, pp 136-137.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, p 144.

Communications Officer Tromsø to Naval Group North, Flag Officer, Norway. *Tirpitz* blown up and capsized. 0946/12/44."<sup>133</sup>

To the end of the war, the long- and short-range fighter cover promised by the Russians remained patchy and largely ineffective in the face of determined German air attacks. Interdiction raids against the German aerodromes in northern Norway were seldom very effective. As the war finally drew to a close, German bases were overrun in northern Norway,<sup>134</sup> and the remaining surface ship and aircraft threat was progressively reduced. As a consequence of the Arctic convoys becoming easier, the longer trans-Pacific route diminished in importance.<sup>135</sup>

As the Red Army advanced, Allied photographic reconnaissance of the German Navy continued, for example in the Baltic ports. However, because of known Soviet sensitivities, missions would normally be "automatically cancelled when targets came within distances varying from 25 to 50 miles of Russian lines."<sup>136</sup> In spite of this ruling, targets of opportunity were photographed, including Soviet vessels spotted at sea.<sup>137</sup> Indeed, Soviet vessels seem to have been photographed at all opportunities, for example in Canada the former US river tug *Kapitan Melekhov* (ex-AG-51), which was provided to the Soviet Union under Lend-Lease and served with the Pacific Fleet.<sup>138</sup>

In May 1945, as the war in Europe came to a close, the Prime Minister approved the appointment of Lieutenant-General Gammell as the new Head of 30 Military Mission.<sup>139</sup> However, NID 16 concluded

---

<sup>133</sup> Ludovic Kennedy, *Menace: The Life and Death of the Tirpitz* (London, 1979), p 162. For further information on the *Tirpitz* see, for example, Jochen Brennecke, *The Tirpitz: The Drama of the 'Lone Queen of the North'*, translated from the German by Frederick Holt (London, 1963); and David Woodward, *The Tirpitz* (London, 1953).

<sup>134</sup> See Major James F Gebhardt, *The Petsamo-Kirkenes Operation: Soviet Breakthrough and Pursuit in the Arctic, October 1944* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1990). For lessons drawn by the Soviet Union from such operations, see C N Donnelly, *et al*, "Soviet Amphibious Operations; Implications for the security of NATO's Northern Flank" (Sandhurst, 1985). See also, Lieutenant General Tonne Huitfeldt, Norwegian Army (Retd), "Great Patriotic War Operations in the North; The Organization and Conduct of Large Scale Operations in the North of the USSR" [Sandhurst] (undated).

<sup>135</sup> This trend was suggested in NHB, "Soviet Shipping in the Pacific; Based on an article in the O.N.I. Weekly, by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence", *WIR*, no 253 (12 January 1945), p 69, SECRET. For further information on the trans-Pacific route, see NHB, "Soviet Pacific Shipping in 1944; From an article in the 'O.N.I. Weekly,' by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence", *WIR*, no 265 (6 April 1945), pp 66-68, SECRET.

<sup>136</sup> PRO, CAB 81/93 (Part I), War Cabinet, JIC(45) 10th Meeting (0) (9 February 1945), p 4, para 6, TOP SECRET.

<sup>137</sup> See, for example, the aerial photography of a Soviet submarine located at 65°05' North 22°50' West in NMM, Historic Photographs Section, negative numbers P39772, P39773 and P39774.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, negative number P23093; and Meister, *Soviet Warships*, p 271-272.

<sup>139</sup> PRO, CAB 79/32, "No. 30 Military Mission", in COS(45)113 (1 May 1945), p 10, para 13, f 320, TOP SECRET.

that the "duties for which a Naval Mission were sent to Moscow to perform have lapsed, or can be merged in the duties of a Naval Attaché."<sup>140</sup> The Foreign Office felt that the Soviet Mission to London should be withdrawn and that liaison should be through attachés "in the ordinary way",<sup>141</sup> and the JIC concurred.<sup>142</sup>

The balance of naval forces between the Allies, and the limited capability of the Soviet Northern Fleet, was clear to see on 13 May 1945 during the "Victory Review" at Murmansk where, excluding 26 MTBs which were "mostly, if not all, of modern American construction - there were 48 ships taking part. Of these 29 had been transferred or lent to the Soviet Navy in the course of the present war. Of the 12 large ships, 10 were built before the end of the last war."<sup>143</sup>

However, the possibility of Russian naval intervention in the war with Japan resulted in a JIC assessment of Soviet seapower in the Far East.<sup>144</sup> But it was felt that judging "by the experience of the Northern, Baltic and Black Sea Fleets, the surface ships of the Russian Pacific Fleet are unlikely to show any offensive spirit in the naval war in the Pacific."<sup>145</sup>

The JIC also noted that the United Kingdom's relations with the Soviet Union over the previous four years had been "governed by the necessity for maintaining Russia's war effort against Germany at the highest possible level."<sup>146</sup> However, with the end of the war in Europe, there was "no longer any need for us to continue to be conciliatory at all costs."<sup>147</sup> Therefore, a new policy was laid down for exchange of information with the Russians, the basis of which was "hard bargaining and strict reciprocity".<sup>148</sup> This approach was supported by the Prime Minister's statement on 17 June, referring

---

<sup>140</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, NID 16, "British Military Mission in the U.S.S.R." (24 May 1945), p 3, para 11 (i).

<sup>141</sup> PRO, CAB 81/130, "Future of No. 30 Military Mission; Note by the Secretary", JIC(45)258(0) (22 August 1945), TOP SECRET.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, "Future of 30 Military Mission", JIC (45)262(0) Final (27 August 1945), TOP SECRET.

<sup>143</sup> NHB, "A Russian Victory Review", *WIR*, no 278 (6 July 1945), p 24, SECRET.

<sup>144</sup> The Pacific Fleet ORBAT was estimated as two cruisers, two flotilla leaders, 11 destroyers, 8 escort vessels, about 100 submarines, about 100 MTBs, about four minelayers, 18 minesweepers and nine icebreakers; PRO, CAB 81/129, "Russian Strength in the Far East", JIC(45)210(0) Final (27 June 1945), p 3, para 10, TOP SECRET.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, para 11. For a complete Soviet Navy ORBAT at this time, see; PRO, CAB 81/128, "Russian Strength on 1st July, 1945", JIC(45)148(0) Final (limited circulation) (8 May 1945), Annex C, pp 19-20, TOP SECRET.

<sup>146</sup> PRO, CAB 81/129, "Relations with the Russians", JIC(45) 163(0) Revised Final (23 May 1945), p 1, para 4, TOP SECRET.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid*, p 2, para 5.

<sup>148</sup> PRO, ADM 223/252, COS, "Future of 30 Military Mission. Aide Memoire Prepared by the War Office" (9 July 1945), p 2, para 6, TOP SECRET.

to technical matters, that the Russians "should be treated as they treat us".<sup>149</sup> In general, the Foreign Office were less inclined than the Admiralty to adopt a tough approach with the Russians, one official recalling that the "members of the Military Mission had an especially frustrating time and tended to recommend a stronger line with the Soviets than did the Northern Department."<sup>150</sup>

Although it is very difficult to estimate the practical worth of Soviet air support to the Arctic convoys, it is possible to make a rough assessment of the Russian contribution to the anti-submarine effort, both by ships and aircraft. In doing this, it should be borne in mind that the majority of all convoy losses occurred east of Bear Island, within what the Soviet authorities considered as the Northern Fleet's zone of operational responsibility.

From the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 until the end of the war, over 30 U-boats were sunk by British forces in the Arctic, practically all of them by Royal Navy escorts to the convoys. In the same period, there were a few Soviet successes; for example *U-639* was sunk on 30 August 1943 in the Kara Sea, off Cape Zhelaniya at the northern end of Novaya Zemlya, by the Soviet submarine *S101* under the command of Lieutenant-Commander Trofimov.<sup>151</sup> Also, on 6 September 1944, *U-362* was sunk by depth charges in the Kara Sea and claimed by the Russian minesweeper *T-116*.<sup>152</sup> Neither of these U-boats was operating against the Arctic convoys, and there is no record from non-Soviet sources of any German submarines threatening the convoys being destroyed by Russian surface forces throughout the whole period of the war.<sup>153</sup> Hence, no Russian escorts "ever scored a success against the German surface ships or U-Boats attacking the convoys."<sup>154</sup> In fact, in all theatres of war, Soviet surface forces "failed to sink a single major warship or merchant vessel of the Axis".<sup>155</sup> Set against this, the Soviet

---

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, para 7.

<sup>150</sup> CAC, Brimelow Papers, BIMO, "Notes on Two Conversations", p 10.

<sup>151</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 225.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 296; and Young, *Britain's Sea War*, p 227.

<sup>153</sup> See Campbell and Macintyre, *The Kola Run*, "Appendix C: German Submarines Sunk in Arctic Convoy Operations", p 240. One Soviet claim, for example, maintained that "Northern Fleet antisubmarine forces destroyed three and damaged at least ten submarines in the four final months of the war alone"; Admiral of the Fleet V Chernavin, "The Soviet Naval Art in the Third Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 15-23.

<sup>154</sup> Jürgen Rohwer, "The Russians as Naval Opponents in Two World Wars", in Saunders (ed), *The Soviet Navy*, p 67.

<sup>155</sup> Mitchell, "The Soviets Against the Germans at Sea", p 243.

Union reported wartime casualties of at least two cruisers, four light cruisers, 33 destroyers, 91 submarines, 12 escort vessels and 5 gunboats.<sup>156</sup>

Despite incurring such losses, the British Official History summarised the contribution of the Soviet Navy to the Arctic convoys by saying that:

Though there are no grounds for suggesting that, within the limits imposed by their somewhat primitive conceptions of maritime war, the Russians did not do what they could with what they had, it is none the less the case that they never relieved the Home Fleet of any appreciable share of the responsibility for defending any Arctic convoy.<sup>157</sup>

This negative view of the Soviet Navy was clearly expressed to the Admiralty at the time. For example, even as late as the summer of 1943, the SBNO reported back to the NID that:

As a result of the experience we have now had of Russian naval co-operation at sea ... it is quite clear that if any serious work is to be undertaken we must do it ourselves. The Russian Navy is keen enough, no doubt, subject to the intention of the high command not to risk its forces if it can possibly be avoided, but the technical and professional abilities of Soviet ships are of a very low standard.<sup>158</sup>

Similarly, the JIC stated that while little was known of Soviet fleet efficiency before the war, "it must have been very backward".<sup>159</sup>

In conclusion, it is possible to recognise the contribution made by the Soviet Navy to the safety of the Arctic convoys. However, it may be said that the vast quantity of war *matériel* delivered safely by sea to North Russia arrived despite the operational failure of the Soviet armed forces, and the hostility and obstructiveness encouraged by Moscow which were shown to British representatives at the ports of arrival. The ships and men of the Soviet Navy were closely observed by Royal Navy officers who served alongside their Russian counterparts, and the Russians were found wanting in most respects bar courage. This impression, and the information supporting it, was relayed to the NID in London where it formed the basis for intelligence assessments of the Soviet Navy's capabilities.

---

<sup>156</sup> Admiralty, Historical Section, Tactical & Staff Duties Division, Naval Staff, *The War at Sea, Vol VI, Part II, January-September, 1945* (London, 1946), Appendix D2, "List of Warship Losses, 1939-1945, excluding Auxiliaries, Arranged Chronologically Under Types of Ship", p 542.

<sup>157</sup> Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume II*, p 128.

<sup>158</sup> PRO, ADM 199/2492, "23rd Monthly Report", p 6, para 33.

<sup>159</sup> PRO, CAB 81/114, "Russian Strength on 1st March 1943", JIC(43)102 (Final) (12 March 1943), p 8, para 20, SECRET.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BLACK SEA FLEET



*A "lack of initiative in sea operations has always been the outstanding weakness of the Russian navy. Although the Russians as a people are imbued with a natural military spirit and are ever valiant in battle, they have always been loth to risk their heavy naval forces."<sup>1</sup>*

*(NID Report, 1943)*

In this chapter, Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation in the Black Sea region, and British intelligence on the capabilities and effectiveness of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, are examined.

Following the German invasion of Russia, the importance of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet in British strategic thinking was indicated by the Prime Minister's statement that the "only other route by which serious attack can fall upon us is through the Caucasus [to the Middle East] and across the Caspian [to India]. This presupposes the mastery of the Black Sea, in which the Russians have at present an overwhelming naval superiority".<sup>2</sup> Although British naval intelligence assessed Soviet seapower as being dominant in the region, it was important to maintain an accurate gauge of the Red Navy's capability. As Churchill reflected, it was not possible to tell "how long the Russians will retain the command of the Black Sea, although with their forces it is inexcusable that they should lose it."<sup>3</sup>

To a maritime power like Great Britain, it was perhaps self-evident that the likelihood for success of a thrust by the *Wehrmacht* through the Ukraine, into the Caucasus and thereafter to the Caspian,<sup>4</sup> or southwards to the Persian oilfields, would be crucially affected by the proper deployment of Russian naval power on the seaward flank of the German advance. Therefore, to assist in the common fight against Nazism, but also to maintain an intelligence watch on Russian naval control of the area, the United Kingdom considered it essential that it should be represented by a British Naval Liaison Officer (BNLO)

---

<sup>1</sup> NHB, "The Russian Navy; Its Foundation and Fortunes", *WIR*, p 25.

<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister to Colonel Hollis, for COS (18 September 1941), cited in Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, p 391.

<sup>3</sup> Prime Minister to General Ismay, for COS (5 November 1941), cited in *ibid*, p 412.

<sup>4</sup> For details of Soviet naval forces in the Caspian, see NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Caucasus", *SNPN*, no 16 (23 February 1940), p 12, CONFIDENTIAL; and NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Caspian", *WIR*, no 21 (2 August 1940), p 2, CONFIDENTIAL.

on the staff of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet.<sup>5</sup> A BNLO was also desirable in case British naval forces were required to intervene in the Black Sea to assist the Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, at one stage, the Prime Minister proposed the deployment of a flotilla of submarines into the Black Sea.<sup>7</sup>

From the start, the Russians were ambivalent regarding the appointment of a Royal Navy officer to the Black Sea Fleet. There was the usual Soviet desire for secrecy and a reluctance to allow foreigners to observe one of their most important areas of naval operations. This was counterbalanced by a desire to attract British specialists in various technical aspects of naval warfare, including Asdic, degaussing and minesweeping. A major deciding factor in favour of the eventual appointment of a BNLO was the principle of reciprocity following the attachment of a Soviet liaison officer, Captain (1st Rank) Egipko, to the British Home Fleet in November 1941.

Although the Black Sea Fleet possessed many submarines, the Soviet Naval Staff were very conscious of their lack of combat experience in this field. The Russians badly needed to catch up with the knowledge and experience gained by their new British allies, who had been at war with Germany for nearly two years. Accordingly, shortly after the Anglo-Soviet Agreement had been signed, Commander Davies was sent south from Moscow to make first contact with the Black Sea submarine command in the Crimea at the main naval base of Sevastopol. That the Russians had agreed to this visit was regarded as "a big step forward".<sup>8</sup>

Unfortunately, Davies became ill shortly after his arrival and was able to see little of Sevastopol during his convalescence.<sup>9</sup> However, he was allowed to visit some of the Soviet submarines. At this time, the Black Sea Fleet had "no modern submarines, and though they were well kept, and very clean, they were somewhat out of date. They had no Asdic equipment and their attack instruments were very primitive."<sup>10</sup> Davies had hoped to go to sea in one of the Russian boats but he was prevented from doing

---

<sup>5</sup> For example, it was stated that the BNLO could "supply information about the Black Sea Fleet itself, as well as general intelligence on the Black Sea theatre of operations"; PRO, ADM 223/248, "Soviet Allegations", para C (ii).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, NID 16, "Black Sea" (16 February 1943), MOST SECRET. See, also, PRO, ADM 199/1921, "Submarine Operations in the Black Sea", ff 276-283, MOST SECRET; and CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", pp 11-12.

<sup>7</sup> Churchill to Foreign Secretary, Telegram Special (Extra) No 171 (29 October 1943), cited in PRO, CAB 79/67, "The Employment of British Submarines in Support of the Russians", in COS(43)264(O) (29 October 1943), p 1, para 3, f 64, MOST SECRET.

<sup>8</sup> Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", p 7.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, pp 9-11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p 11.

so by being ordered to return to Moscow, arriving there on 28 July prior to being sent to North Russia to assist with the arrival at Polyarnoe in August of the British submarines *Tigris* and *Trident*.<sup>11</sup>

On 11 August 1941, the Chief Staff Officer and interpreter for Miles, Commander Wyburd, left Moscow for Sevastopol to make contact with the Commander-in-Chief of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral Oktyabrsky.<sup>12</sup> Wyburd was to prepare the ground for two more naval officers from England: Commander (Acting Captain) G B H Fawkes as the newly-appointed BNLO, Black Sea, and his assistant and interpreter, Commander G W L Ambrose.<sup>13</sup> They arrived at Sevastopol, accompanied by Commissar Gusev, on the evening of 14 August 1941.<sup>14</sup>

Fawkes was an experienced submarine officer who was instructed to stay and advise the Russians for as long as they required his services. Ambrose spoke "excellent Russian" and had "unlimited patience".<sup>15</sup> It was decided that Fawkes would be attached to the submarine brigade based on Sevastopol, while Ambrose was berthed in the destroyer *Bodry* until 2 September, at which time he was transferred to the cruiser *Voroshilov*.<sup>16</sup>

The Black Sea Fleet considered itself to be the élite of the Red Navy and had held this view since Tsarist times. Unlike the Russian fleets in the Arctic, Baltic and Pacific, the warships of the Black Sea were not ice-bound in winter. Furthermore, they possessed unchallenged naval superiority in their theatre of operations. As a result, the main Soviet naval training schools and experimental establishments were situated in this area, and a certain amount of independence from Moscow was enjoyed.

The Russians appeared to have little concept of liaison as understood by the British and it was soon made clear that the Royal Navy officers should not raise operational matters for discussion. Rather, they were made to understand that they were in the Black Sea on sufferance.

---

<sup>11</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (28 July 1941); and Courtney Papers, "Russian Interlude", pp 11-12.

<sup>12</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (11 August 1941). After the war, Wyburd was appointed Head of Naval Mission to Denmark; PRO, ADM 1/19561, Captain Ian Black, RN, Head of British Naval Mission to Norway to Secretary of the Admiralty, "British Naval Mission to Norway - Report No. 5" (3 September 1946), p 5, para 19, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>13</sup> PRO, ADM 223/107, "History of NID 16", p 1, para 3, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>14</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Fawkes to Miles, "Liaison - Black Sea" (7 October 1941), SECRET.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, DNI to War Office M.I.3.C. (and others) (17 November 1942).

<sup>16</sup> Ambrose considered these ships were efficiently kept and run; *ibid*, "Some Conclusions After a Year's Service as Naval Liaison Officer, Black Sea, From August 1941 to September, 1942" (31 August 1942), p 2.



Continually fed a diet of adulatory propaganda, the Black Sea Fleet sailors displayed mixed reactions to the Royal Navy representatives. While the British seamen might be consulted on occasion, the officers of the Black Sea Fleet held too inflated an opinion of their own abilities and efficiency to consider that there was anything of importance to learn from their new allies. At the same time, those on the Soviet technical side were very keen to obtain as much information and equipment as possible from the British.

In the initial period of liaison, as a result of this dichotomous Russian approach, Soviet capability in anti-submarine, degaussing and minesweeping techniques was unclear. However, the British suspected a Russian deficiency in this area.<sup>17</sup> It was only later, and in the light of a demonstrated incapacity, that successive BNLOs confirmed the barrenness of the Soviet Navy's technological resources. In any case, whatever Russia's technical capability, training was often deficient and led to poor performance.<sup>18</sup>

In the middle of August 1941, Nikolayev, the main warship construction yard in the region, fell to the German Army's advance,<sup>19</sup> which meant that there could be no immediate shipbuilding in the Black Sea.<sup>20</sup> The British were informed that the hulls of all vessels being built, including one battleship, had been removed before capture, as well as a large quantity of machinery. The hulls of the *Kuibyshev* (Frunze-class), *Yerivan* (Tashkent-class) and the destroyer *Ozornoï* (Ognyevoi-class) had apparently all been towed away to safety.<sup>21</sup>

Apart from the fall of Nikolayev, the Soviet Navy was faced with several formidable difficulties. In particular, the Black Sea Fleet had to struggle with problems unknown to their British counterparts.

---

<sup>17</sup> In general terms, it was recognised that Russians had been "starved of contact with the outside scientific world, whether by travel, by visiting scientists or by literature"; NHB, "Russia: A Bubble Pricked", *SNPN*, no 13 (2 February 1940), p 33, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>18</sup> For example, there had been a lack of pre-war training for minesweepers because it was "standard at that time to use minesweepers to test new weapons and equipment and to support the combat training of other classes of ships by towing targets for them." Also, the Russians believed that "mines would not, because of the great depths [in the Black Sea], be the main threat to navigation. To some degree this influenced the level and organization of combat training for minesweepers and their use"; Captain 2nd Rank V Yoltukhovskiy, "The Combat Training of Minesweeper Forces of the Black Sea Fleet on the Eve of and in the Initial Phase of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1984), pp 44-47.

<sup>19</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (18 August 1941).

<sup>20</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Building Facilities", *WIR*, no 94 (26 December 1941), p 34, SECRET. However, it later became clear that "some submarines that were being built at Nikolaev have been completed at Tuapse." Therefore, it was felt "probable that the Caucasian ports are much better equipped ... than was supposed" and that the efficiency of the Black Sea Fleet would not be impaired; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *WIR*, no 123 (17 July 1942), p 38, paras 2-3, SECRET.

<sup>21</sup> Early in June 1942, however, it was learnt that two Soviet submarines which had been under construction in Nikolayev had not been sabotaged and were, instead, being completed by the Germans.

Oktyabrsky, for example, was responsible for the military defence of his naval ports. Inter-service rivalry between the Red Army and Navy had erupted over the necessity to defend the mainly commercial port of Odessa, which the Army held to be expendable. The Army, with more political influence, would usually win such arguments. In this particular case, Alafuzov informed the Mission in Moscow that the defence of Odessa was largely mounted by naval infantry from the Black Sea Fleet. He was "particularly delighted" that the Russian sailors had destroyed a squadron of Romanian cavalry.<sup>22</sup>

At this period, in contrast to their tremendous exertions on land, there was little classic naval activity at sea. Typical actions included the bombardment of German and Romanian troop formations west of Odessa by the cruiser *Krasny Krym*, the destroyer leader *Frunze* and other smaller vessels.<sup>23</sup> The Germans, made bolder by Russian inactivity, began to operate coastal convoys to supply their advancing troops, particularly between the ports of Varna and Constanza. Axis oil tankers travelling north from Sulina, at the mouth of the Danube, were a most tempting target. Ambrose, in one of his first acts as Liaison Officer, suggested a destroyer sweep against them. A half-hearted attempt was made to intercept the tankers, but no contact was made with the enemy's forces.

This state of affairs, in which a fleet possessing overwhelming naval superiority allowed enemy traffic to move without hindrance, seemed inconceivable to the British. The Russians appeared mesmerised by the fear of a German seaborne landing, even though the Soviet Navy possessed ample naval superiority to retain command of the Black Sea shoreline.

As in North Russia, the submarine forces in the south made a slightly better impression on the Royal Navy officers than did the surface fleet. Despite Soviet secretiveness, Fawkes was able to see a good deal of the submarines. The Black Sea boats were organised into two flotillas, which were termed "brigades".<sup>24</sup> The brigades functioned quite independently of each other, with separate operational zones. Furthermore, when at sea, their vessels were not controlled from the Black Sea operational headquarters,

---

<sup>22</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1102, War Diary (23 August 1941).

<sup>23</sup> For example, the shelling of Romanian positions near Sverdlovka and Chebanka on 21-22 August 1941; Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 80.

<sup>24</sup> Garwood suggested that the total number of submarines should be given as 43 (amended in manuscript by a person unknown to 42); PRO, ADM 223/248, Garwood to Head of the British Naval Mission, Moscow, "Reports on Visit to Batum, Poti etc.; Enclosure No. 3; Black Sea Fleet" (19 October 1942), SECRET. Soviet sources gave the figure as 44 boats; "In the Fire of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 15-20. Modern Western authorities put the number at 47 boats; Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 121.

which was then based at Sevastopol. Command and control was difficult,<sup>25</sup> especially because W/T communication on long-wave was unreliable. A Russian statement that reception was feasible at periscope depth was not borne out by experience in North Russia.<sup>26</sup> In any case, the Russians apparently had no Very Low Frequency (VLF) transmitters, which are required for this type of communication. A post-war account admits that the "concealment and combat capabilities of submarines were degraded because of the need to come to the surface to receive situation data by radio", but states that extensible periscope antennas became operational at the beginning of 1944.<sup>27</sup> This allowed submarines "to receive information and target designations without surfacing."<sup>28</sup> Also in 1944, direct communications from submarines to aircraft and surface ships was established.<sup>29</sup>

In September 1941, Fawkes was allowed to participate in a patrol off the port of Constanza in the *M34*. The submarine made an attack on 21 September and it was believed that a torpedo hit might have been scored. In reality, it had missed an Italian steamer, the *Tampico*.<sup>30</sup> However, the submarine broke surface after firing, which is a common fault among poorly-trained crews. As a result, *M34* was severely depth-charged and returned damaged to Sevastopol. Ambrose was also allowed to sea, but in the destroyer *Bodry*. He found the ship fast and manoeuvrable, though lightly built and without protection from shell splinters. The vessel had hydrophones, but neither Asdic nor radar.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Soviet post-war analysis showed that when there was one brigade in a theatre, such as in North Russia, "control was exercised more precisely". However, if there was more than one brigade, as in the Black Sea and Baltic Fleets, "it became complicated for several command levels (brigade commanding officers) to carry out control functions". As such, a single operational command was instituted in 1942; Captain 1st Rank Karmenok, "Control of Navy Submarines in Operations on Enemy Sea Lanes", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1983), pp 22-26.

<sup>26</sup> For details of the situation in North Russia, see Captain 1st Rank N Serebryanny, "Organization of Communications with Northern Fleet Submarines in the War Years", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1978), pp 82-85. This makes clear that until early 1944 boats had to surface to receive and transmit messages.

<sup>27</sup> Vice-Admiral M Krylov, "Naval Communications in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 23-28.

<sup>28</sup> Chernavin, "The Soviet Naval Art", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 15-23.

<sup>29</sup> Captain 1st Rank G Afanas'yev and Captain 1st Rank V Solov'yev (Reserves), "Submarine Communications", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1985), pp 28-31.

<sup>30</sup> Rohwer and Hummelchen, *Chronology*, p 85.

<sup>31</sup> In fact, the first Soviet shipborne radar, the REDUT-K, had been installed in the Black Sea Fleet cruiser *Molotov* and tested in May 1941; Rear-Admiral G Popov and Captain 1st Rank A Kuz'menko, "Development and Combat Employment of Radar Facilities (Based on the Experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 75-79. The *Molotov*'s radar "played an important part in the organization of air defence for ships and bases in Sevastopol and later in Novorossiysk"; Rear Admiral-Engineer M Chemeris, "The Electronic Service During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 103-107.

For the Soviet Union, the Black Sea flank fell naturally into a traditional Russian strategic picture. Although it was recognised that the fleet had an important part to play, its rôle was always subordinate to the overall military situation. In the *Stavka's* thinking, the deployment of thousands of Russian sailors as marines to defend Odessa or Sevastopol had real importance, because it compelled the *Wehrmacht* to divert forces to secure capture of the ports, thereby reducing the impetus of the German thrust towards the Caucasus,<sup>32</sup> the "principal oil producing area in Russia"<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Hitler knew the importance of the area too, stating at the start of the Russian campaign that "if we do not capture the oil supplies of the Caucasus by the autumn, then I shall have to face the fact that we cannot win this war."<sup>34</sup>

The *Stavka* was quite unable to understand how to exercise seapower in the Black Sea. As a consequence, the Black Sea Fleet continually had to justify its existence to its political masters to ensure the ongoing provision of all necessary war-fighting materials. But, faced with the predominantly land-based orientation of the *Stavka*, naval strategy was seriously disadvantaged.

Fawkes's contacts at Sevastopol with the submarine brigade commander, Captain (1st Rank) P I Boltunov,<sup>35</sup> and with the Chief of Staff of the Black Sea Fleet, Rear-Admiral Eliseev, had been correct and reasonably close, though not cordial. However, following an altercation with Commissar Gusev, Fawkes was relieved on 7 October as BNLO by Ambrose and shortly thereafter returned, together with Wyburd and Powell, to the United Kingdom.<sup>36</sup> In any case, it is probable that Fawkes had outlived his usefulness to the Russians, for he had given them the full benefit of his not inconsiderable submarine experience.<sup>37</sup> But the BNLO had been virtually ostracised by the Black Sea staff, was not provided with an interpreter during his stay, and had not been allowed inside the Soviet Navy's operational headquarters.

---

<sup>32</sup> For example, the "long, and stubborn, defence of Odessa had great influence on the tempo of the attacks by the Fascist German forces in the coastal area. It hindered these forces in their preparations for decisive operations to capture the Crimea"; Admiral L A Vladimirov, "Operations with the Army", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1965), pp 14-22. Even Gorshkov argued that the defence of Sevastopol "tied up a three-hundred-thousand-man enemy grouping for eight months and did not permit it to engage in the offensive in the south"; Gorshkov, "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10, pp 13-21.

<sup>33</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Caucasus", *SNPN*, p 11, CONFIDENTIAL. This article includes a map of contemporary pipelines, pumping stations, and oilfields.

<sup>34</sup> Clark, *Barbarossa*, p 280.

<sup>35</sup> In February 1943, Boltunov was made Rear-Admiral and chief of submarine operations on the staff of the Black Sea Fleet; Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 124.

<sup>36</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, "Soviet Allegations", para A3.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, para C1.

During his tour of duty, Ambrose was to make at least one significant contribution to the Soviet cause. Aside from the ubiquitous *Otdyel* representatives, the initial main point of contact on the Soviet staff was Colonel Namgaladze, the Chief of Naval Intelligence, Black Sea. The Russians had always expressed a desire to see the establishment of W/T communications between Sevastopol and the Royal Navy's Egyptian base at Alexandria.<sup>38</sup> The British Admiralty, however, wanted a direct link between Sevastopol and London. In the event, the Soviet Union won the argument. But the resulting radio link between Sevastopol and Alexandria also provided Ambrose with good communications with the British Staff Officer (Intelligence), SO(I), at Istanbul.

By this means, Ambrose was able to inform the Russians whenever important Axis troop transports, tankers or supply ships passed north through the Bosphorus. This would allow the Black Sea Fleet time to order the submarine patrol, which was understood to operate just inside the entrance to the Black Sea, or surface ships, to interdict the German inshore lines of communication. However, although the intelligence provided an ideal chance for the exercise of Soviet seapower, such classic opportunities were never properly taken. In return for his valuable information, the Russians offered Ambrose material which was largely concerned with the land campaign, and which was often out of date or inaccurate. It seemed clear that Ambrose was only tolerated on account of Egipko, the Russian on reciprocal secondment in the United Kingdom.

Western sources now indicate that until the end of 1941, the Soviet Black Sea submarines performed 101 sorties. In the course of these missions, the Russians lost six boats to Romanian mines laid off the Bulgarian coast,<sup>39</sup> one boat to an attack by a Romanian destroyer and one by accident. Against these losses, the Black Sea Fleet's record of sinkings was only a dismal six Axis ships totalling 15,698 GRT.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, Diary (15 August 1941).

<sup>39</sup> Many of the mines were of German origin as, in March 1941, Romania was supplied with 2,000 moored mines for siting along the western coastline of the Black Sea in the event of war; N P V'yunenko, *Chernomorskiy flot v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne* (The Black Sea Fleet in the Great Patriotic War) (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1957), p 19, cited in Captain 3rd Rank G Ostashevskiy, "Mine Operations in the Black Sea in 1941-1942", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1984), pp 16-19.

<sup>40</sup> Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 123. A Soviet source claimed only five transports in 103 combat missions, but said that such "relatively low success is explained by the fact that the enemy rarely used large ships for movements here, and the short length of sea lanes permitted enemy ships to make transits from one port to another overnight"; Rear-Admiral A Pushkin, "Soviet Submarines in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1983), pp 24-29. Plainly, as in North Russia, night attacks were not on the Black Sea Fleet's agenda.

On 15 October 1941, Ambrose was very concerned to hear that the British Naval Mission had been withdrawn from Moscow to Kuibyshev, together with the entire Diplomatic Corps and the Soviet Government, which could only mean that the capital was under threat. This sudden evacuation only served to increase the BNLO's sense of isolation. Although given little reliable information, it was clear to Ambrose that things were going very badly for the Russians on their southern front. Nikolayev, with its important naval shipyards, had fallen in mid-August and Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, followed suit on 18 September. Four days later, the Russians landed a naval force at Grigor'yevka, which was behind the enemy forces besieging Odessa.<sup>41</sup> The amphibious operation was supported by naval gunfire from Soviet cruisers and destroyers but, although it may have delayed matters, the port of Odessa had to be evacuated a few weeks later.<sup>42</sup> The ships in the harbour at Sevastopol were now threatened as the German forward airfields steadily advanced. Therefore, at the beginning of October 1941, the Soviet cruisers left for ports on the Caucasian coast. On 16 October, Odessa was finally subdued.<sup>43</sup>

At the beginning of November 1941, the Germans seized Perekop. With the capture of this town, the approaches to the Crimea were finally controlled by the *Wehrmacht*. The German forces now spread out to the southward, seized Simferopol and the Kerch Peninsula, and prepared to lay siege to the naval base of Sevastopol. It was obvious that the entire Black Sea Fleet would have to follow the cruisers and withdraw.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Captain First Rank (Reserves) K F Fakeyev, "The Landing at Grigor'yeva", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 56-59.

<sup>42</sup> A large number of amphibious operations were conducted during the Great Patriotic War in support of the land campaign and, in lieu of any fleet actions, the Soviet literature on these landings is extensive. See, for example, Captain 1st Rank V Achkasov, "Naval Amphibious Actions in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1978), pp 11-16; Captain 1st Rank (Retired) V Gerngross, "SHCHIT Lands an Amphibious Assault", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1977), pp 63-66; Captain 1st Rank (Reserve) V Vorob'yev, "Landing Operations of the Black Sea Fleet in the Great Patriotic War (Questions of Planning and Preparation)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1985), pp 29-33; and Captain 1st Rank N V'yunenko, "Some Questions of Joint Naval and Ground Force Operations in the First Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1977), pp 14-19. Intelligence on aspects of Soviet naval landings was transmitted back to London. See, for example, PRO, ADM 223/248, Miles to Secretary of the Admiralty, "Account of Soviet Combined Operations on the Kerch Peninsular [sic] December 26th to 31st, 1941" (4 May 1942), SECRET. More detailed reports were also made, for example: *ibid*, "Russian Landing Craft Used in Landing on Kerch Peninsula" (15 June 1942), SECRET.

<sup>43</sup> For a Soviet account of the Russian withdrawal, see NHB, "The Battle of Odessa; By an Officer of the Red Army", *WIR*, no 90 (28 November 1941), pp 54-55, SECRET.

<sup>44</sup> The loss of Nikolayev and the evacuation of Sevastopol "greatly decreased" naval repair facilities in the Black Sea; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Repair Facilities", *WIR*, no 94 (26 December 1941), p 34, SECRET.

Almost 100 years before, in 1855, Admiral Nakhimov had defended Sevastopol in magnificent style and, once again, it fell to the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet to defend the city.<sup>45</sup> Considered as "one of the world's great fortresses",<sup>46</sup> Sevastopol held out stubbornly until 1 July 1942 and thereby played an important part in helping to check the German advance.

Among the Black Sea naval staff all was turmoil. This was due to the Soviet decision to evacuate the operational section to Novorossiysk and, because of lack of space, to distribute the less important administrative departments at other points down the Caucasian coast towards Batumi.<sup>47</sup> Ambrose found himself with even less to do than usual, especially as the somewhat spasmodic arrangements for exchanges of intelligence had practically ceased. Therefore, he took the opportunity to fly to Kuibyshev, and then to Moscow, to make a personal report to Miles on conditions in the Black Sea. By the time he arrived at Kuibyshev, the immediate threat to Moscow had abated and he was able to assist in the transfer of the Naval Mission back to the capital.<sup>48</sup>

The Russians were intensely conscious of rank. As in the case of both Davies and Wyburd, Ambrose felt that he had suffered from remaining in a rank lower than his position warranted. Fortunately, Miles was able to secure him the rank of Acting Captain from the Admiralty. Furthermore, in view of the isolation and difficulty of his position, Ambrose was promised a naval assistant, who could provide companionship and act as cipher officer. Ambrose arrived back in the south in the middle of January 1942 to discover that the Soviet Chief of Staff had decided to base him at Tuapse owing to a purported lack of accommodation at the new fleet base in Novorossiysk.

Among the Black Sea Fleet, Ambrose now found a depressing atmosphere of inertia, with apathetic Russian staff able to think of nothing but the inevitable German attack upon Novorossiysk. Also, according to the usual Soviet inter-service custom, the Red Army made it clear that it did not intend to

---

<sup>45</sup> Oktyabrsky would subsequently be awarded the Order of Nakhimov, 1st class, "a new order instituted on 3rd March, 1944, to commemorate the name of the famous Czarist admiral who distinguished himself in the Crimean War"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions and Awards", *WIR*, p 65.

<sup>46</sup> NHB, "Review of Military Operations in Russia", *WIR*, no 216 (28 April 1944), p 24, SECRET.

<sup>47</sup> The NID considered that the only ports capable of accommodating the Russian fleet were Novorossiysk, Tuapse, Poti and Batumi; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Possible Future Bases for the Soviet Black Sea Fleet", *WIR*, no 89 (21 November 1941), p 27, SECRET. Later, the open roadstead at Ochemchiri was noted, though it was considered "dangerous in the winter months"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *WIR*, no 123, p 38, para 6.

<sup>48</sup> For a general report on conditions in Russia at this time, based mostly on life in Sevastopol, see NHB, "Impressions in the U.S.S.R.", *WIR*, no 92 (12 December 1941), pp 49-50, SECRET.

accept responsibility for the defence of yet another naval base. Once more, the Black Sea Fleet found itself without military support.<sup>49</sup> But while the Commander-in-Chief seemed transfixed by the thought of a forthcoming attack on Novorossiysk, it did not seem to occur to him that, if he wished, his fleet could still establish a position of naval superiority and interfere with, if not entirely prevent, the steady stream of supplies which were underpinning the advancing right flank of the *Wehrmacht*.

In April 1942, Ambrose was joined by the promised cipher officer, Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant R Hugh Veysey, RNVR. Although he could speak hardly any Russian, Veysey was still a welcome support for Ambrose.

In early 1942, the DNI was "reasonably satisfied" with the exchange of intelligence on the German Navy with the Soviet Union.<sup>50</sup> In January, for example, the Black Sea command had supplied useful information on the German magnetic mine and further information was received in June.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, the Soviet Navy still did not make full use of the British intelligence provided.

At the end of July 1942, Rostov fell and the threat to Novorossiysk became an urgent reality. Unfortunately, shortly afterwards both Ambrose and Veysey succumbed to illness. They were well treated in Abasha at the Russian naval hospital, which had a good reputation. In the meantime, however, the office of BNLO had been transferred to Sukhumi, and it was at this rather chaotic moment that Ambrose was relieved by a former submarine commander, Captain Garwood.<sup>52</sup> On 1 September 1942, Garwood became the new BNLO, Black Sea; 10 days later Novorossiysk fell.

Axis reinforcements had been brought by sea from the Crimea, and no attempt seems to have been made by the Black Sea Fleet to prevent these landings from taking place. On the credit side, the Soviet fleet had been able to evacuate most of the men and *matériel* from Novorossiysk. At the same time, German troops were being transported by sea to the Taman Peninsula and Anapa, but there does not appear to have been much active opposition to German movements.

---

<sup>49</sup> Even for the defence of Sevastopol, there had been "no unified headquarters directing questions of the defence." When one was formed, because of the dominance of the Red Army, "questions of defending the city from the land side were in fact not within its jurisdiction"; Vice-Admiral V Selivanov, "The Work of Control Organs in Combat Operations on Coastal Axes (From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 1 (1989), pp 22-28.

<sup>50</sup> C Morgan, *NID History 1939-1942*, p 109, cited in Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume Two*, p 61.

<sup>51</sup> PRO, ADM 223/107, Black Sea Diary, pp 4-5, cited in Hinsley, *British Intelligence, Volume Two*, p 61.

<sup>52</sup> PRO, ADM 223/464, Morgan, "Naval Intelligence 1939-1942" (undated), p 110.



In September and October 1942, Soviet surface forces displayed slightly greater activity, and provided escorts for inshore convoys along the dwindling strip of coastline still held by Russian forces. At the beginning of November, Captain Zhukovsky, the Acting Chief of Staff, informed the BNLO that a surface raid was being considered. It was subsequently reported that Soviet surface forces, on 1 and 13 December, had attacked enemy convoys along the Bulgarian coast and off Sulina. Coastal positions were also briefly bombarded. The NID reported that the operations were "praiseworthy, since the Russian Navy has always in the past lacked the offensive spirit, and this failing had been most striking in the Black Sea waters".<sup>53</sup>

Garwood became increasingly frustrated as he was prevented from visiting the Soviet Naval Staff. In particular, he was marooned at Sukhumi where the Russian staff were incapable of answering his questions or finding out information without referring to the Chief of Staff at Tuapse.<sup>54</sup> Garwood considered that his lack of direct contact with the naval staff was very worrying. In particular, he felt that the Russians were receiving constant, and undoubtedly helpful, intelligence via himself from the SO(I) Istanbul and SO(I) Mediterranean Fleet at Alexandria, but that they were giving very little in return. In fact, the intelligence seemed to be taken for granted and Garwood was allowed "the minimum of facilities to see Naval establishments and ships."<sup>55</sup> The other reason, however, for keeping him at arm's length was that the Black Sea Fleet was in very poor condition: "Many of the ships had been damaged, as a Fleet it had no fighting spirit and the base at Batum was a sink of lethargic inefficiency."<sup>56</sup>

On 10 December 1942, Veysey had left without replacement at the request of the Russians. Through no fault of his own, he had been involved in an incident rather similar to that which had led to the departure of three valuable British officers a year before. Miles remarked about the Veysey affair that the Russians "always have the whipland and will win in the end."<sup>57</sup> Once more, a BNLO was left isolated in the Black Sea.<sup>58</sup> Dependent on the Russians for all material support, while being denied all

---

<sup>53</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *WIR*, no 149 (15 January 1943), p 60, SECRET.

<sup>54</sup> The NID stated that the "C.-in-C. of the Black Sea Fleet had his headquarters at Poti until quite recently, but it was reported on the 5th January that the Naval Staff was moving back to Tuapse"; *ibid*, p 62.

<sup>55</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 11.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>57</sup> NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 3, *Diary* (29 October 1942).

<sup>58</sup> After the war, Miles wrote: "What a rotten time our chaps in the Black Sea had." He continued: "I never met Veysey. I dont [*sic*] think he was anything very startling, but at least he was a companion to the S.B.N.L.O. ... I tried in Moscow to be-little [*sic*] the blow-up at the end, and stalled as much as I

facilities to witness operations,<sup>59</sup> Garwood's presence was tolerated by the Soviet Union only as a necessary link with the British allies, who seemed prepared to give everything asked of them without requiring anything of substance in return.<sup>60</sup>

At the end of 1942, the Black Sea naval staff remained scattered in ports along the Caucasian coast. The main operations staff, with the submarine command, were based at Poti. The intelligence staff were in Sukhumi along with the BNLO. The Soviet vice-admiral commanding the cruisers was at Batumi and the Commander-in-Chief, with his Chief Intelligence Officer and a small operations staff, were at Gelendzhik (near Novorossiysk).

Early in 1943, the Russians stopped providing Garwood with operations summaries and their relatively valueless intelligence summaries became sporadic.<sup>61</sup> In Sukhumi, there was a general shortage of supplies. In particular, food was "extremely difficult to obtain" and prices rose incessantly.<sup>62</sup> The BNLO tried hard to move out of the town and nearer to the centre of naval affairs, asking to go to Tuapse if possible or to Sochi if accommodation was available there. However, Garwood found a seemingly insurmountable wall of obstruction and evasiveness regarding his proposed arrangements.

---

could when he was asked to leave. I think Alafusov [*sic*] was sympathetic as Veysey remained on for some months and I was beginning to hope the Narkomindel had forgotten about him. But no good! They remembered and he had to go"; Courtney Papers II, Miles to Courtney (9 November 1967).

<sup>59</sup> Courtney Papers, "Activities of Red Navy", p 1.

<sup>60</sup> Garwood was retained by using "extreme caution" in the British reply to the Soviet protest; PRO, ADM 223/464, Morgan, "Naval Intelligence 1939-1942" (undated), p 110. The Russians had made clear that they disliked the attempts made by both Veysey and Garwood to obtain information; PRO, ADM 223/248, Alafuzov to Miles (30 October 1942), in Miles to DNI (26 November 1942), Enclosure "C", SECRET AND PERSONAL. In this respect, the following remark by the Head of the British Naval Mission is illuminating: "I would submit that in the long run it is far more important for British officers in the Soviet Union to cultivate good relations and to try and break down the barrier of suspicion that at present exists than to jeopardise all this for the problematical acquisition of intelligence"; *ibid*, Miles to DNI (26 November 1942), para 5, SECRET AND PERSONAL. But the DNI had another opinion: "I attach great importance to the retention of B.N.L.O. Black Sea in his post as it is our only source of intelligence for the eastern basin of the Black Sea"; PRO, ADM 223/249, Rushbrooke to Miles (22 December 1942), SECRET AND PERSONAL.

<sup>61</sup> For an example of the limited information given by the Russians, see "Notes on Black Sea Ports" and "List of Axis Vessels Sunk by the Russians in the Black Sea - Up to 1st November 1942", in PRO, ADM 223/248, Miles to DNI, "War Diary and Intelligence Summary of the British Naval Liaison Officer, Black Sea" (17 December 1942), SECRET.

<sup>62</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Miles to DNI, "War Diary and Intelligence Summary of the British Naval Liaison Officer, Black Sea" (17 December 1942), SECRET.

In April 1943, Garwood reported that Russian submarine activity had been very disappointing. Convoy traffic from Romania to Crimean ports had greatly increased but, despite a steady flow of accurate intelligence regarding Axis ship movements, not a single attack had been executed.<sup>63</sup>

The majority of the Russian naval staff were transferred in April to Makopse, near Tuapse, and Oktyabrsky was succeeded as Commander-in-Chief by Vice-Admiral Vladimirsky, who had previously been in charge of the cruisers. At the end of June 1943, Garwood was given the unexpected opportunity of a visit to Poti to lunch with the new Commander-in-Chief on board the cruiser *Krazny Kavkaz*. The BNLO was impressed by Vladimirsky, who was aged 40 and appeared a "very energetic and able officer".<sup>64</sup> The Admiral appeared to know little of Garwood's work and seemed unaware of his line of communication with Istanbul and Alexandria. In the harbour, Garwood observed the ageing battleship *Sevastopol*, surrounded by torpedo nets, the cruiser *Molotov*, which had been damaged by aerial attack in 1941, the destroyer *Boiky* and the submarine depot ship *Volga*. Also present were the hulls of the uncompleted cruisers *Frunze* and *Kuibyshev*.<sup>65</sup>

In July 1943, it seemed that the Soviet Navy was at last maintaining a patrol of submarines off the Crimea.<sup>66</sup> But their presence gave poor return, and the enemy convoys seemed to move between Romania and the Crimea almost unmolested. The following month, however, the BNLO was slightly more optimistic as the Russians were attacking enemy vessels in the Kerch and Taman areas, and apparently were also having some success in stopping troops and supplies getting through to the Novorossiysk front.<sup>67</sup> Although Garwood did not realise it, this was part of the Soviet plan for an assault on

---

<sup>63</sup> A few months earlier, the NID had said that Soviet submarines were operating successfully in the western Black Sea, but suggested that "suitable targets are difficult to come by, as Axis shipping is routed well inshore along the Bulgarian and Roumanian coasts under cover of shore-based aircraft"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *WIR*, no 149, p 60.

<sup>64</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Garwood, "Visit to Poti - Sunday 27th June, 1943" (2 July 1943), p 1, SECRET.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, pp 1-2. Garwood provided a naval ORBAT for the Black Sea Fleet on 1 July 1943, but noted that the information had been given to him in the previous October and that although losses might have occurred, he had "not heard of any"; *ibid*, Garwood, "Black Sea Fleet - July 1st 1943", SECRET.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, Garwood, "Intelligence Summary; War Diary; July 3rd 1943" (17 July 1943), p 6, SECRET.

<sup>67</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1105, War Diary (12 August 1943), SECRET. For an account of the Soviet submarine campaign at this time, see Captain 1st Rank V Vorob'yev, "Submarine Operations of the Black Sea Fleet Against the Enemy's Lines of Communications in 1943", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1987), pp 19-22.

Novorossiysk, which was recaptured by the Russians on 16 September 1943.<sup>68</sup> However, despite "considerable naval and air opposition" from the Soviet Union, the Axis powers continued to supply their remaining troops in South Russia.<sup>69</sup> At this time, Ultra intelligence showed that Russian submarines had increased their attacks with some effect on German supply ships to the Crimea.<sup>70</sup>

In October 1943, the Soviet Navy suffered a major setback when a destroyer group of three vessels was sunk by the German Air Force, which was Germany's "biggest victory over the Soviet Navy in the Black Sea."<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, the disaster, "instead of leading the Soviets to perfect their air cover operations, confirmed them in the already strong tendency not to risk their ships."<sup>72</sup> The large warships were left in harbour, while their crews were dispersed to help in the land fighting.<sup>73</sup>

On 7 November 1943, the BNLO remarked that he was "still without operational reports and intelligence summaries."<sup>74</sup> Then, on 17 November, after being hindered for months, he was at last allowed to leave Sukhumi for Sochi.<sup>75</sup> The following month, the BNLO was also able to visit a number of other towns.<sup>76</sup> However, Garwood was about to be replaced, and some of his pent-up feelings were expressed in his War Diary entries.<sup>77</sup> Certainly, the Russians in the Black Sea had proved to be difficult allies.

---

<sup>68</sup> For a Soviet view of the port's recapture, see ADM 223/248, "The Landings at Novorossisk for the Final Attack (Resume [sic] of articles in Krasnyi Flot Sep. 17th [1943])" (undated). The importance of the recovery of Nikolayev at the end of March 1944 is considered in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Recapture of Nikolaev", *WIR*, no 213 (7 April 1944), pp 58-59, SECRET.

<sup>69</sup> NHB, "Review of Military Operations in Russia", *WIR*, no 184 (17 September 1943), p 23, SECRET.

<sup>70</sup> PRO, ADM 223/47, Naval Section, "Summary of Black Sea Intelligence 28/10 - 8/11/43", ZIP/ZGR/4 (12 December 1943), p 2, para I, MOST SECRET. This very secret information could be used to check on Soviet claims of sinkings and, therefore, to help assess the effectiveness of the Red Navy.

<sup>71</sup> Pierre Hervieux, "Air Power; Soviet Destroyers v the Luftwaffe 6 October 1943", *Warship*, no 46 (April 1988), p 27.

<sup>72</sup> Mitchell, "The Soviets Against the Germans at Sea", p 240.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1105, War Diary (7 November 1943), SECRET. The NID estimated the number of Soviet submarines at this time to be about 40, but noted that "in spite of their comparatively large numbers, Russian submarines have scored conspicuously few successes against Axis shipping in the Black Sea in the past"; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Possible German Evacuation of the Crimea", *WIR*, no 192 (12 November 1943), p 63, SECRET.

<sup>75</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1105, War Diary (17 November 1943), SECRET.

<sup>76</sup> PRO, ADM 223/248, Garwood, "Report on a Visit to Tuapse, Gelendjik, Novorossisk and Anapa (23/12/43 to 27/12/43)" (undated).

<sup>77</sup> For example, frustrated by evasive replies to his questions about the failure of his furniture to follow him to Sochi, Garwood wrote: "After practically a year of nothing but Russian Society I cannot refrain from remarking how wonderful it would be if 'Russians' could learn to tell the truth?"; PRO, ADM 199/1105, War Diary (3 December 1943), SECRET.

Commander W S Lea, RN, arrived at Sochi from Moscow on 15 January 1944 to take over from Garwood.<sup>78</sup> The latter, having not spoken English for more than a year, "found it quite difficult to do so at first."<sup>79</sup> Lea's arrival coincided with a move of the Black Sea naval staff from Makopse to Gelendzhik, which only made them even less accessible to the BNLO than before.<sup>80</sup>

It is clear that the Soviet Navy continued to enjoy numerical primacy in the Black Sea, but failed to capitalise on its advantage. Russian writers even agreed with the Germans that "sea supremacy was in the hands of the Russians in the Crimean campaign of 1941-1942",<sup>81</sup> and yet their preponderance in seapower was not utilised effectively. Even taking into account the danger from aircraft and mines, the Soviet Navy could have been utilised to better effect.<sup>82</sup> At the beginning of 1944, according to Soviet sources, the Black Sea Fleet "outnumbered the enemy naval forces as before".<sup>83</sup> Similarly, it was stated that "even after the Black Sea Fleet shifted its bases to Tuapse, Poti and Batumi, it maintained its superiority in the theatre of operations, both in surface ships and in submarines until the end of the war."<sup>84</sup>

Even as the Red Army pushed the Germans back in 1943-1944, the Soviet Navy was little involved in logistical support of the ground forces. For example, in August 1944 the NID stated that:

It may be said that from a military point of view, the Black Sea to-day is significantly unimportant where the South Russian front is concerned. All supplies from the front are transported by rail and road from the back areas, and no attempt has so far been made to use shipping for this purpose since the Germans were driven from the recaptured Russian Black Sea ports.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> Lea was already briefly acquainted with Russia from an earlier pre-war visit; NHB, Lieutenant-Commander W S Lea, "A Visit to U.S.S.R. in May, 1936", *M.I.R.*, September, 1936, no 208 (15 September 1936), pp 60-68, CONFIDENTIAL.

<sup>79</sup> PRO, ADM 199/1105, War Diary (15 January 1944), SECRET.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid* (24 January 1944).

<sup>81</sup> E Manstein, *Uteryannyye Pobedy* (Victories Lost) (Voyenizdat, 1957), p 190, cited in Captain 1st Rank Yu Bystrov, "Winning Sea Supremacy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1977), pp 15-20.

<sup>82</sup> In one Russian squadron, a single ship was lost to a magnetic mine during the war and three "hit moored mines and sank because the crews failed to follow regulations ... when operating in areas where danger of mines existed"; Yeliseyev, "The Combat Operations of a Black Sea Fleet Squadron", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 89-94.

<sup>83</sup> Professor Rear-Admiral K Stalbo, "The Black Sea Fleet in Offensive Operations of 1944", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1974), pp 22-27.

<sup>84</sup> Vladimirskiy, "Operations with the Army", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 14-22.

<sup>85</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Recaptured Black Sea Ports", *WIR*, no 233 (25 August 1944), p 59, SECRET.

---

The British Naval Mission summarised the performance of the Soviet Navy during 1943 by stating that "the heavier surface ships have been kept in harbour either at Batum or Poti by the threat of air and submarine attack, and by the lack of repair facilities".<sup>86</sup> Submarines, MTBs and naval aircraft were considered to have been only "moderately active in harassing enemy supply ships".<sup>87</sup>

A particular problem in making assessments was the Soviet exaggeration of claims for sinkings. But the British Mission was aware of this tendency and, for example, on one occasion stated that "recently the claims amount to more than the total amount of shipping known to be available to the enemy."<sup>88</sup> Similarly, by way of an example, it was recounted that a report had been received that "a submarine commander was decorated for sinking a certain ship which was later stated by the Staff Officer (Intelligence) Istanbul, to have arrived safely back in harbour undamaged."<sup>89</sup>

In conclusion, the Russians received a regular supply of good intelligence from the British, but did not use it effectively. On the other hand, the British received from the Russians poor and irregular intelligence. However, despite the low level of naval cooperation, the British officers did manage to acquaint themselves with various vessels in the Black Sea, and their modes of employment, reporting back to the NID in London their impressions of the Red Navy's ample numerical capability, but poor operational performance. In particular, by allowing the Axis powers free rein along the coasts of the Black Sea, it was very clear that the Soviet Navy had little idea how to employ seapower to effect.

---

<sup>86</sup> Courtney Papers, "Activities of Red Navy", p 1.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER XIV

### POST-WAR INTELLIGENCE, 1946-1950



*"We have weaned a number of mighty powers from making war against us, but we cannot guarantee this for a long time. It is necessary to be ready for the fact that the imperialist plunderers will again come after us in the case of the slightest change in the situation."<sup>1</sup>*

*(Vladimir I Lenin)*

The NID continued to monitor the Soviet Navy after the war and this chapter provides examples of the Russian Section's reporting which clearly show the wide-ranging nature of the intelligence watch maintained by the Admiralty. That watch became even closer as the world moved into the era of the Cold War, when the former allies soon became enemies and when the Soviet fleet, while negligible at this stage, presented a long-term potential challenge to Britain and its senior partner, the United States.

According to Russian writings, by "the annihilation of tens of thousands of Japanese, the imperialists of the United States showed the whole world their 'atomic trump'" and, within months of the conclusion of the war, had revealed their basic hostility to the USSR. The Soviet leadership, therefore, began to take "appropriate measures to further strengthen the defence of the Homeland" against the Western powers, including expansion of the Navy.<sup>2</sup>

Even during the Russo-German war, it was clear to the NID that the conflict had brought about "a disastrous effect on Soviet naval and merchant shipping aspirations",<sup>3</sup> with the USSR incurring substantial ship losses.<sup>4</sup> In 1946, therefore, the Russians commenced a 20-year shipbuilding programme,

---

<sup>1</sup> V I Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), vol 42, p 136, cited in "Guarding the Sea Frontiers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1985), pp 3-9.

<sup>2</sup> Admiral V Chernavin, in "Staunch Guardian of the Northern Borders", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1983), pp 9-13.

<sup>3</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Shipping Position After the War", *WIR*, no 159 (26 March 1943), p 51, SECRET.

<sup>4</sup> The NID assessment of Soviet losses and additions, including the naval ORBAT in 1941 and 1945, is contained in NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Strength of the Fleets, 1941-1945", *WIR*, no 289 (28 September 1945), pp 52-53, SECRET. For a summary covering losses of the main units of the Soviet Navy, see Brown, *Warship Losses*, pp 199-201.

although even before the end of the Great Patriotic War "military and civilian departments were charged with determining the prospects for postwar shipbuilding."<sup>5</sup>

The war also had been a crucible for considerable technological invention and innovation, and it was necessary for the Russians to develop and apply the major scientific advances that had been made in naval warfare by both the Axis and Allied powers. In essence, the obsolescent Soviet Navy had to be rebuilt virtually from scratch.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, for reasons of national security - that is, the Russian perception of threat from the Western powers - the imperative was to produce a credible modern navy as swiftly as possible.<sup>7</sup> Although the Russian geostrategic position had improved with the advance of the Red Army into Europe, "the maritime flanks were still extremely exposed and for Stalin the Western threat from the sea must have appeared very real".<sup>8</sup>

It was clear even during the war that the Soviet Union wished to expand its naval forces. The inquisitive nature of the Soviet Mission to London led the DNI to warn that the Russian Admiralty was seeking information with the long-term aim of building up its fleets and merchant marine "by the simple process of picking British brains."<sup>9</sup> Also, in March 1945, Russia denounced the Russo-Turkish treaty of 1925 and proceeded to renew its historical attempts to gain access to the Mediterranean by demanding bases on Turkish territory to secure the right of passage for Soviet warships through the Dardanelles.<sup>10</sup>

In early 1946, the JIC cautioned that any study of the Soviet Union's strategic interests and intentions "must be speculative, as we have little evidence to show what view Russia herself takes of her strategic interests, or what policy she intends to pursue."<sup>11</sup> However, it was estimated that Russia intended to construct "a large modern navy and mercantile marine that will be commensurate with her status as a first-class Power."<sup>12</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow held a similar opinion and reported

---

<sup>5</sup> Adrianov, "Scientific Activity", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 79-81.

<sup>6</sup> For example, regarding the underwater fleet, by 1945 many of the Russian submarines "were worn out; indeed, technically speaking, they were already not able to meet the increased demands"; "From the History of the Development of our Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 26-29.

<sup>7</sup> Michael McCwire, "Soviet Naval Procurement" in Royal United Service Institution, *The Soviet Union in Europe and the Near East: Her Capabilities and Intentions* (London, 1970), p 76.

<sup>8</sup> Morris, *The Russian Navy*, p 30.

<sup>9</sup> CAC, MLBE 1/7, "Naval Mission to Russia", p 21.

<sup>10</sup> Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume IV* (London, 1975), pp 206-210. See, also, Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton, 1973), pp 315-318.

<sup>11</sup> PRO, CAB 81/132, "Russia's Strategic Interests and Intentions", JIC(46)1(0) Final (1 March 1946), p 1, para 3, TOP SECRET.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p 9, para 19.



that the Soviet Union, "again a first-class power with world-wide interests, would make great efforts to increase her naval strength",<sup>13</sup> and that "it would be unwise to overlook the possible implications of the re-emergence of Russia as a great naval power with a big sea-going and ocean-going fleet and suitably disposed bases."<sup>14</sup>

The JIC had assessed that the Soviet Union would emerge from the war "as the strongest land power in the world and one of the three strongest air powers".<sup>15</sup> But Soviet seapower was not considered in the same light, although it was felt that Russia's "eagerness to secure additions to her Navy from the resources of her Allies and enemies indicates her intention to continue the development of her fleet after the war."<sup>16</sup> In fact, it was considered that Russia would wish to increase her fleet "substantially",<sup>17</sup> but the JIC assessment was that "though she may acquire heavy ships from other nations in the course of the Peace Settlement, Russia is scarcely capable of developing within the immediate post war decade a navy powerful enough to threaten the British Commonwealth."<sup>18</sup> Also, it was stated that while Russian manpower:

is virtually unlimited, it suffers severely from lack of sea-sense, and the actual maritime population of Russia is comparatively small. This is reflected both in Naval Staff work and in the handling of ships at sea. The Soviet Navy, being a very junior partner to the Soviet Army, has suffered and will continue to suffer, by being considered as a kind of floating auxiliary to land operations.<sup>19</sup>

The Soviet Twenty-Year Programme progressed in a staged development, marked by clear-cut delivery periods and design characteristics for each generation of vessel. In terms of dates by which ships were delivered to the Soviet Navy, the preparatory period of the naval programme lasted from 1946 to

---

<sup>13</sup> PRO, FO 371/56834, Frank K Roberts to Ernest Bevin (26 August 1946), p 1, para 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, para 4.

<sup>15</sup> PRO, CAB 81/120, "Probable Post-War Tendencies in Soviet Foreign Policy as Affecting British Interests", p 2, para 8, annex to "Soviet Foreign Policy After the War; Note by the Secretary", JIC(44)60(0) (11 February 1944), MOST SECRET.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, CAB 81/126, "Russia's Strategic Interests and Intentions from the Point of View of her Security", JIC(44)467(0) Final (18 December 1944), p 13, para 64, TOP SECRET. The report was given "for obvious reasons, a very restricted circulation", but was considered worthy enough to be recirculated a year later as the main arguments and conclusions still held good; *ibid*, "Note by the Secretary" (12 November 1945), TOP SECRET.

<sup>17</sup> PRO, CAB 81/124, "Russian Capabilities in Relation to the Strategic Interests of the British Commonwealth", JIC(44)366(0) Final (limited circulation) (22 August 1944), p 2, para 4, TOP SECRET.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p 5, para 14.

<sup>19</sup> PRO, CAB 81/134, "Probable Strength and Nature of the Soviet Armed Forces and of Those of Her Satellites in 1956", JIC(46)96(0) (29 October 1946), p 5, para 22, TOP SECRET.

about the end of the decade. At the beginning, the groundwork required to introduce new naval technology, and to catch up with rival powers, included repair of damaged vessels; the resurrection of the pre-war building programmes; incorporation of improved weapons and equipment readily at hand, such as close-range A/A guns, depth-charge racks and communications equipment; restoration of devastated shipyards and equipment plants; and the development of modern, expanded shipyard and manufacturing capacity.<sup>20</sup>

The preparatory period of the Twenty-Year Programme involved the completion of the *Kirov*- and *Chapayev*-class of cruisers, the *Otlichny* fleet destroyers, three *Bird* escort ships and the *Artillerist*-class submarine chasers. Submarine construction included the completion of the pre-war designed *Shchuka IV* medium, and *M V* small, submarines. At the end of the 1940s, construction of a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) was commenced,<sup>21</sup> and a new rationale for the underseas fleet, that of carrying nuclear-armed missiles, was conceived.

In the post-war era, the Soviet Union came to be regarded "as the principal threat to British security because it was perceived to have the capability and the intention to damage UK interests."<sup>22</sup> But, even before the end of the war, anti-Communist feelings were rising. For example, the Prime Minister in April 1944 stated that the British were "weeding out remorselessly every single known Communist from all our secret organizations."<sup>23</sup> Also, on 5 September 1945, Igor Sergeievich Gouzenko, a Russian cipher clerk with the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, decided to defect. The Canadian Prime Minister noted in his diary that a man from the Russian Embassy claimed that he had in his possession documents that would "disclose that Russia had her spies and secret service people in Canada and the U.S. and was practising a species of espionage ... he said that he had enough evidence there to prove that instead of being friends, the Russians were really enemies."<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> MccGwire, "Soviet Naval Procurement", pp 76-77.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p 77.

<sup>22</sup> Wyn Rees, "Continuity and Change in British Threat Assessments 1945-1960", *Sandhurst Journal of Military Studies*, no 1 (1990), p 48.

<sup>23</sup> Churchill Papers, 20/161, Prime Minister's Personal Telegram, T.730/4, no 324 to Algiers (6 April 1944), PERSONAL AND MOST SECRET, cited in Gilbert, *Road to Victory*, p 729. For an earlier warning from the Security Service about the continued dangers of Communism, see Sheila Kerr, "Roger Hollis and the Dangers of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942", *INS*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), pp 148-157.

<sup>24</sup> NAC, King Papers, MG 26, J 13, Diary (6 September 1945). The details of the Gouzenko affair are in Canada, *The Report of the Royal Commission: To Investigate the Facts Relating to and the Circumstances Surrounding the Communication, by Public Officials and Other Persons in Positions of Trust of Secret and Confidential Information to Agents of a Foreign Power* [Kellock-Taschereau Royal

Gouzenko's defection marked the outbreak in Canada of the Cold War, but his revelations also had a marked impact among the security-intelligence services throughout the West, although publicly the "responsible" British press was initially quite free from anti-Soviet comment. Later, however, the Soviet Union was criticized for interpreting the Canadian investigation into Gouzenko's revelations so as to further anti-British propaganda, rather than for their espionage activities as such.<sup>25</sup> The British Security Service responded to Gouzenko's information and this led to the arrest of Dr Alan Nunn May, the atomic scientist.<sup>26</sup> The loyalties of suspect civil servants were also investigated.<sup>27</sup>

The intelligence agencies also began to regard the Soviet Union as a legitimate target once more. GCHQ, however, had a handicap with regard to the Soviet Union: "Whereas the Americans had all the Soviet radio traffic passing to and from the USA during and after the war, in Britain Churchill ordered all anti-Soviet intelligence work to cease during the wartime alliance, and GCHQ did not begin taking the traffic again until the very end of the war."<sup>28</sup> The result of this policy was that there was less past Soviet traffic to analyze in order to break the codes and ciphers. Also, in the SIS, as the Soviet Union was increasingly seen as a potential enemy, "any ideas of a sudden dispersal of agents became unthinkable".<sup>29</sup>

In the post-war reorganisation of the NID, "a new look and a new importance were to be given to the Russian Section".<sup>30</sup> Renumbered from Section 16 to Section 1, it was placed in charge of Commander Courtney in January 1946. At this time, the Russian Section "like Janus, faced two ways".<sup>31</sup> On the one hand, it incorporated the mechanisms for Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation which had developed after the arrival of the Soviet Naval Mission under Kharlamov in 1941. On the other hand, "it had become

---

Commission] (Ottawa, 1946).

<sup>25</sup> NAC, Department of External Affairs, MG 30, E 151, vol 4, file 60, "Reaction Outside of Canada to the Investigation Concerning Breaches of the Official Secrets Act", p 3.

<sup>26</sup> Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession*, p 272.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p 273.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Wright, *Spycatcher: The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer* (Toronto, 1987), p 182. However, for a critical examination of Wright's book, see Noël Annan, "Betrayal", *New York Review of Books*, vol 34, no 14 (September 24, 1987), pp 47-53.

<sup>29</sup> Deacon, *A History of the British Secret Service*, p 389. Little changed among the management of the SIS either. Muggeridge disparagingly recorded some years after the war that he was "amused to learn that all the worst dead-beats were still firmly entrenched. Said afterwards ... naming four of them, that it would be difficult to find any organization, private or public, directed by four so essentially incompetent people. In view of the nature of the organization in question, this is particularly grotesque"; *Diary* (26 August 1948), in John Bright-Holmes (ed), *Like It Was: The Diaries of Malcolm Muggeridge* (London, 1981), p 295.

<sup>30</sup> Courtney, *Sailor in a Russian Frame*, p 48.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*.

clear that, with the elimination of Germany and Japan, plans concerning the 'potential enemy' of the future must already be orientated towards Soviet Russia".<sup>32</sup> Indeed, less than two weeks after the Japanese surrender, the Joint Staff Planners in the United States had already identified the Soviet Union "as a major antagonist".<sup>33</sup> Therefore, although at the end of the Second World War, "an effective monopoly of naval power lay with the Anglo-American alliance, and Russia's naval capability caused them little concern",<sup>34</sup> the Soviet Navy became a prime intelligence target in lieu of other potential major adversaries.<sup>35</sup>

The emphasis on the Soviet fleet is reflected throughout the 1946-1950 period in the NID's *Monthly Intelligence Report*. Using this source as an indication of the intelligence available to the NID, the following provides an overview of some of the main subject areas that were examined by British naval intelligence in the post-war era, and demonstrates the degree to which it was possible to continue to obtain information on the Soviet Navy.

In early 1946, the People's Commissariat for the Navy was absorbed into the People's Commissariat for the Armed Forces of the USSR, which incorporated all the services into one organisation. This was viewed by the Royal Navy as a setback for the independence of the Soviet Navy, given the historical Russian emphasis on land power, and the NID stated that the reorganisation "can be expected to retard effective development of the Soviet Fleet" and that it "can be interpreted as a serious defeat to the senior officers of the Russian Navy and to the few Government officials in Russia who have some appreciation of the true meaning of sea-power." But, the NID concluded that the "declared intention to *build* a large ocean-going Fleet, however, stands; this programme will not be retarded, and may even be accelerated."<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Michael A Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy: American Naval Strategy in the First Postwar Decade* (Washington, DC, 1988), p 13.

<sup>34</sup> Michael MccGwire, "East-West interaction at sea", *Navy International* (December 1974), p 8.

<sup>35</sup> The German Naval Archives became an additional source of intelligence for the NID at this time. See, for example, PRO, ADM 223/51/Part 3, Rushbrooke, "Inland Waterways of the U.S.S.R." (28 August 1945), ff 547-550, CONFIDENTIAL, the contents of which were derived from material obtained by the Nazi naval attaché to Moscow between 1939-1941 and the use of German secret agents. See, also, *ibid.*, "War Economy of the U.S.S.R. 1938-1941" (1 September 1945), ff 551-586, SECRET, which was based on information obtained by the Germans in Russia in 1938.

<sup>36</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Reorganization of High Command", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1946*, no 3 (10 April 1946), pp 20-21, SECRET.

As part of war reparations, the Soviet Union was entitled to a number of ex-German vessels and these were monitored by the NID.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, they sometimes conveniently docked in British ports *en route* to their final Russian destinations. For example, it was noted that a group of naval auxiliaries intended for the Soviet Black Sea Fleet was due to leave the Baltic about 20 June and arrive at Falmouth about 26 June 1946.<sup>38</sup> The progress of the ships was followed and the date they docked in Malta was duly reported. The vessels comprised four tugs, one netlayer, eight trawlers and 10 minesweepers, which were assessed as "a welcome reinforcement to the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, which has been deficient in minesweepers and in small craft."<sup>39</sup> Similarly, on 24 August 1946, a group of seven Russian auxiliary vessels was noted leaving Kiel, the destination again being the Black Sea by way of Falmouth. Also, two American-built Soviet tugs arrived at Falmouth *en route* for the Baltic, and two similar vessels were reported at Gibraltar destined for the Black Sea.<sup>40</sup>

From monitoring of Moscow radio, it was learnt that the Baltic-White Sea (Stalin) Canal would be open to ships by 25 July 1946. As such, it was known that communication between the Baltic and Northern Fleets would be re-established through Soviet territory. The NID noted that in early 1941, fleet destroyers of 1,800 tons standard displacement, and large submarines of 1,200 tons displacement, had been able to pass through the canal.<sup>41</sup> Similar radio monitoring revealed that the Dnieper-Bug Canal had been re-opened to shipping.<sup>42</sup>

In July 1946, a sighting was made by an American Army aircraft of a possible Soviet submarine off Greenland's Cape Farewell. This was followed in August by a sighting off the west coast of Greenland of another boat. The NID's conclusion was that the Soviet submarine reconnaissance was made partly to

---

<sup>37</sup> Other Axis countries also forfeited ships. For example, the NID reported that Finland would hand over 34 merchantmen totalling 74,117 tons, two icebreakers, two small tankers, 26 tugs, 15 motor-lighters and 20 small passenger boats; NHB, "Finnish Ships for Russia", *WIR*, no 259 (23 February 1945), p 64, SECRET.

<sup>38</sup> NHB, "Russia", *M.I.R. for JUNE 1946*, no 6 (10 July 1946), p 10, SECRET.

<sup>39</sup> NHB, "Russia; Black Sea Reinforcements", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), pp 21-22, SECRET.

<sup>40</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Ship Movements", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1946*, no 8 (10 September 1946), p 20, SECRET.

<sup>41</sup> NHB, "Russia; Baltic White Sea Canal", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), p 22, SECRET.

<sup>42</sup> NHB, "Russia; Dnieper-Bug Canal", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), p 22, SECRET.

investigate the development of American airfields in the area, "a question in which the Russians are particularly interested just now."<sup>43</sup>

In September 1946, it was reported that the British Admiralty had been asked to arrange for five Soviet icebreakers to be refitted in the United Kingdom, comprising *Kaganovich* from the Kola Inlet; *Lenin*, *Litke* and *Selov* from Archangel; and *Yermak* from the Baltic. It was possible for the Archangel ships to be placed with private yards, but not the other two vessels. The Russians, therefore, asked for *Kaganovich* and *Yermak* to be refitted in British naval dockyards. With such an arrangement, there would not have been a detail that was not known to the Royal Navy about these vessels although, of course, there was less to hide with regard to icebreakers than with warships. The NID assessment, however, initially fastened on the fact that the Russians had to ask for the ships to be refitted in the United Kingdom, which indicated that "Russian shipyards are not yet capable of carrying out major work. An additional pointer in the same direction is that Russian submarines are refitting in Finnish yards."<sup>44</sup> Naval intelligence estimates for when Russian shipyards would be able to undertake major work on warships was about two years in the Baltic, two-three years in North Russia, and not less than four years in the Black Sea.<sup>45</sup>

As such, the JIC felt that the reconstruction of the Soviet Navy would be "a task of immense difficulty, since battleship construction has been put back for years, and the U.S.S.R. has never possessed an aircraft carrier."<sup>46</sup> With regard to the latter, the Soviet Union made an unofficial approach to the Admiralty regarding the possible purchase of an aircraft-carrier, either already built or still building.<sup>47</sup> In retrospect, such approaches during the early Cold War seem almost incredible but clearly demonstrate the parlous state of the post-war Russian shipyards.

In March 1946, the JIC had estimated that the Soviet Navy possessed approximately 210 submarines, including 10 ex-Nazi boats. It was felt at this time that German assistance and methods,

---

<sup>43</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Russian Submarines in Davis Strait", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1946*, no 11 (10 December 1946), pp 18-19, SECRET.

<sup>44</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Icebreakers", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1946*, no 8 (10 September 1946), p 18, SECRET.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p 19.

<sup>46</sup> PRO, CAB 81/132, "Russia's Strategic Interests and Intentions", JIC(46)1(0) Final (1 March 1946), p 9, para 23, TOP SECRET.

<sup>47</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; British Carrier Wanted", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1947*, no 13 (10 February 1947), p 20, SECRET.

"particularly in connection with pre-fabricated submarines", would enable Russia to construct a "formidable" submarine force in a relatively short time.<sup>48</sup>

In October 1946, however, the Russian Section produced an assessment on the Red Navy which downplayed the advantages gained by the Soviet Union from captured Nazi equipment and personnel. Although it was felt that the Germans could teach the Russians much, this would "require time for absorption and training, just as time will be required for the production of a really modern type of Russian submarine."<sup>49</sup> It was thought "improbable that they will be able either to perfect one of the German types in a suitable form for large scale production, or to produce a new type of their own before 1949."<sup>50</sup> Courtney's assessment was accepted by the JIC which, by the end of the year, stated that "significant numbers of the most modern designs [of submarines] could not be produced before 1949".<sup>51</sup>

Also, looking ahead 10 years, the JIC considered that sheer numbers would not necessarily offset problems in Soviet performance and stated that by 1956, Russia could "dispose of a very large fleet of submarines, having all the most modern improvements, but which would probably operate with an efficiency considerably below that of a corresponding British or German submarine fleet."<sup>52</sup> In spite of accepting the conclusions of the Russian Section's report, the COS and JIC continued to monitor the available information on Soviet recruitment of "former members of the German armed forces for service in Russia or Russian occupied territory".<sup>53</sup>

In October 1946, six more Soviet auxiliary vessels were reported to have arrived at Gibraltar on their voyage from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Also, an unconfirmed report suggested that six large "K"-class oceangoing submarines had been transferred from the Baltic to the Kola Inlet. It was considered that the boats might have gone north via the recently reopened Stalin Canal. Furthermore, there was a report

---

<sup>48</sup> PRO, CAB 81/132, "Russia's Strategic Interests and Intentions", JIC(46)1(0) Final (1 March 1946), p 9, para 24, TOP SECRET.

<sup>49</sup> PRO, ADM 1/20030, ATC [Anthony Courtney], "Russian Naval Tactics" (10 October 1946), p 2, para 7, SECRET.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, p 1, para 5. The existing submarine ORBAT showed there were 32 boats in the Northern Fleet, 52 in the Baltic Fleet, 32 in the Black Sea Fleet and about 100 in the Pacific Fleet; "Strength of Soviet Navy Operational at end of September, 1946", p 1, annex to *ibid*.

<sup>51</sup> PRO, CAB 81/134, "Soviet Union - Preparedness for War", JIC(46)84(0) Final (13 December 1946), p 7, para 24, TOP SECRET.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, "Probable Strength and Nature of the Soviet Armed Forces and of Those of Her Satellites in 1956", JIC(46)96(0) (29 October 1946), p 5, para 18, TOP SECRET.

<sup>53</sup> JIC(47)(47)(0) (Final), noted in PRO, DEFE 4/7, COS(47)115 (3 September 1947), p 3, para 5, f 20, TOP SECRET.

of an urgent request for dredging operations at Nikolaevsk in the Russian Far East. The NID considered that this was a possible indication that a vessel of large tonnage had been completed at Komsomolsk, and that it was necessary for the ship to be towed from Nikolaevsk to Vladivostok before the close of navigation for the winter.<sup>54</sup>

There was further concern about Russian attempts to utilise German expertise to improve the capabilities of the Soviet armed forces.<sup>55</sup> For example, at the end of 1946 it was learnt that three former German flag officers were assisting the Soviet Navy. One German admiral was engaged as an instructor, and two others as teachers, at the Russian Naval Academy in Moscow.<sup>56</sup> This was part of a larger concern of British intelligence, for it was considered that the Russians in Germany had "systematically disregarded the clauses of the Potsdam Agreement relating to the elimination of the German armament industry, the destruction of ships, arms and ammunition, and the non-employment of German officers and armament experts."<sup>57</sup> In other words, the Soviet Union had been trying "by every possible means to harness German science and technique to their own military and civil needs."<sup>58</sup> Similar charges were made by the Soviet Union against the Western powers. For example, it was alleged that in "the construction of new submarines, the USA widely used German patents and ... copied actual models of submarines built in Germany, and moreover, enlisted Fascist specialists for their development".<sup>59</sup> Indeed, there was "bitter competition between the Allied and Soviet Intelligence services to identify and recruit German scientists and specialists".<sup>60</sup> RNVR Staff Officers (Intelligence and Security) were fully engaged

---

<sup>54</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R. for SEPTEMBER 1946*, no 9 (10 October 1946), p 22, SECRET.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, PRO, CAB 81/132, "Disposal of German Scientists and Russian Activities in Connection Therewith", JIC(46)8(0) (T of R) (18 January 1946), TOP SECRET; PRO, CAB 81/133, "Russian Attempts to Entice German Scientists and Technicians from the British Zone of Germany", JIC(46)51(0) Revise (2 July 1946), TOP SECRET; and PRO, CAB 81/134, "Russian Enticement of German Scientists and Technicians", JIC(46)79(0) Final (21 August 1946), TOP SECRET.

<sup>56</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R. for OCTOBER 1946*, no 10 (10 November 1946), p 27, SECRET.

<sup>57</sup> NHB, "German Science and the Russian Navy", *M.I.R. for OCTOBER 1946*, no 10 (10 November 1946), p 33, SECRET.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Captain 1st Rank N V'yunenko, "The Development of Submarine Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 1 (1975), pp 26-37.

<sup>60</sup> C C Anderson, "A Dagger in our Cloak", *Naval Review*, vol 75, no 3 (July 1987), pp 242-243. For further information on the recruitment of German scientists, see Tom Bower, *The Paperclip Conspiracy: The Battle for the Spoils and Secrets of Nazi Germany* (London, 1987).



in this matter (the best known of them being management "guru" John Harvey-Jones), and the Navy also provided cover in this way for some members of the SIS (including the traitor Blake).<sup>61</sup>

A JIC report in the summer of 1947 "showed clearly that the Soviet Union intended to achieve her immediate aims by peaceful methods if possible. There was no doubt, however, that from the long-term point of view a threat of war remained."<sup>62</sup> However, the main intelligence gap was not on the Soviet armed forces. Rather, the report "emphasised the extreme importance of obtaining more economic intelligence on Russia."<sup>63</sup>

The master of a British merchant ship that docked in Vladivostok for a week reported on the warships, men and a coastal battery which he had observed.<sup>64</sup> A subsequent report said that although there was a large number of merchant ships in the port, most of them were under repair or laid up, with only a few in good condition. Vladivostok was apparently in a dilapidated state, with equipment badly maintained and lighting inadequate. The methods employed for dealing with cargo were described as "slipshod and unsatisfactory". Furthermore, there was no evidence of any kind of shipbuilding.<sup>65</sup>

Soon after the war's conclusion, the Russians had taken over a number of former Axis vessels as part of war reparations. Although these helped to swell Russian numbers, the result was to unbalance further the composition of the fleets. The NID's ORBAT of the Soviet Navy in early 1948 showed that the Russians possessed: four old battleships, seven new large cruisers, one ex-Italian large cruiser,<sup>66</sup> one ex-German cruiser, three old cruisers, five modern leaders, 31 modern destroyers, five ex-German

---

<sup>61</sup> Anderson, "A Dagger in our Cloak", pp 242 and 245. For his memoir of working for the SIS, see George Blake, *No Other Choice: An Autobiography* (London, 1990). For a critical assessment of this work, see Oleg Gordievsky, "Defective justifications", in *Sunday Times* "Books" (4 November 1990), p 11.

<sup>62</sup> JIC(47)7, noted in PRO, DEFE 4/6, "Soviet Interests, Intentions and Capabilities" (hereinafter "Soviet Interests"), p 1, confidential annex (limited circulation) to COS(47)111 (27 August 1947), TOP SECRET.

<sup>63</sup> PRO, DEFE 4/6, "Soviet Interests", p 2.

<sup>64</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Vladivostok", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1948*, no 25 (10 February 1948), p 38, SECRET.

<sup>65</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Vladivostok", *M.I.R. for JULY 1948*, no 31 (10 August 1948), p 50, SECRET.

<sup>66</sup> In 1943, at the Moscow Conference, the Russians had made a claim "for a share of the Italian Fleet and Mercantile Marine"; PRO, CAB 79/67, "Russian Request for Italian Naval Vessels", in COS(43)261(O) (27 October 1943), p 4, para 9, f 16, MOST SECRET. The Foreign Secretary was "most anxious" that the COS should agree "to the principle of the Russians being allotted a portion of the Italian Fleet" and felt that "the requests that they had made in this respect were reasonable"; *ibid*, "Russian Request for Italian Naval Vessels", in COS(43)264(O) (29 October 1943), p 1, para 1, f 64, MOST SECRET. This was duly allowed.

destroyers, three ex-Italian destroyers, two ex-Japanese destroyers, 17 old destroyers, 19 escort torpedo boats, 10 small escort vessels, 28 ex-American frigates and 258 submarines of all types.<sup>67</sup>

The seven Russian-built cruisers, armed with 7.1-inch guns, were considered "the most formidable units possessed by the Russian Navy".<sup>68</sup> However, these were divided between the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and Pacific Fleets. Also, their endurance was less than corresponding British types, which was also true of the Russian destroyers.<sup>69</sup> Other aspects of the Soviet Navy came in for criticism. For example, although during the war the Russians had "considerable opportunities" to observe British convoy technique and naval control organisation, "it was evident that the Russian staff never absorbed the lessons of convoy work."<sup>70</sup>

Most praise was reserved for the submarine service, which was described as the "strongest single arm of the Russian Navy".<sup>71</sup> In fact, in 1948 a Soviet admiral mentioned the possibility of a submarine force of 1,200 boats.<sup>72</sup> This figure, of course, excluded Russia's top secret nuclear project.<sup>73</sup>

In May 1948, the trial and sentencing of four senior Soviet naval officers was reported. Admiral of the Fleet Kuznetsov was reduced to the rank of Rear-Admiral; the other three, Admirals Alafuzov, Galler and Stepanov were imprisoned. The latter two were among the last Tsarist naval officers still serving in the Soviet Navy. Galler was to die in prison,<sup>74</sup> and the purge itself represented "a victory for the more politically minded and less seamanlike elements" in the Red Fleet.<sup>75</sup> The charges were that during the war the officers had shown, or allowed to have been shown, certain maps of the Pacific theatre to representatives of the Allied military missions, and that in 1943 they had permitted British and American officers in Moscow and Murmansk to have information relating to the German electric torpedo of the type used to sink the *Ark Royal* in November 1941. All the officers were known personally to the

---

<sup>67</sup> NHB, "The Soviet Navy", *M.I.R. for FEBRUARY 1948*, no 26 (10 March 1948), p 52, SECRET.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, p 50.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>72</sup> Polmar and Noot, *Submarines*, p 142. The post-war naval construction programme had a heavy emphasis on submarines and, indeed, by 1948 a programme was agreed for the construction of 1,200 boats between 1950 and 1965, with deliveries at 78 units a year in the initial period; K J Moore, Mark Flanigan and Robert D Helsel, "Developments in Submarine Systems, 1956-76", in MccGwire and McDonnell (eds), *Soviet Naval Influence*, p 151.

<sup>73</sup> MccGwire, "Soviet Naval Procurement", p 78, n 9.

<sup>74</sup> Conquest, *Stalin*, p 272.

<sup>75</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Purge of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for APRIL 1948*, no 28 (10 May 1948), p 22, SECRET.

wartime British naval representatives in Moscow and North Russia and all of the Russians "had a reputation, in varying degrees, for co-operating genuinely with the Royal Navy in so far as they were permitted."<sup>76</sup>

Information on Soviet ships and naval exercises off Murmansk in April were later reported by British trawlers, although one of them was ringed round with a smokescreen by Russian warships "as a precaution against undue curiosity on her part."<sup>77</sup> Sightings included an *Ordzhonikidze*-class Soviet destroyer, eight 80-foot MTBs, an S-class submarine and various destroyers.<sup>78</sup>

In the *Monthly Intelligence Report* for May 1948, reports of long-distance voyages by Soviet submarines were accompanied by a request for any further information on the subject to be sent to the DNI.<sup>79</sup> Another request for information to be sent to the Director was made in the following spring. This time it was about submarine colour schemes, which were believed to be dark green for Soviet boats in the Northern Fleet, medium grey in the Baltic, medium or light grey in the Black Sea, and silver grey or dark grey in the Pacific.<sup>80</sup>

At the end of July 1948, a "fairly reliable" report covering the Kola Inlet area and Archangel stated that the *Arkhangelsk* (ex-Royal *Sovereign*) was lying off Rosta in an unpainted and unkempt condition, and with a list of about five degrees.<sup>81</sup> Such information was most likely to have come from an agent.

Reading of the Soviet press in 1948 revealed an article stressing the necessity for the maintenance of a "mighty" fleet because two-thirds of the Soviet Union was enclosed by sea. The author observed that the current Five-Year Plan called for double the Russian naval strength of 1940 and referred to the need for the construction of new bases. The NID comment noted that the Nikolayev yards in the Black Sea had

---

<sup>76</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Trial of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, p 46. The NID's intelligence on the court martial was drawn from "a Russian Naval deserter of Captain's rank, who has recently come into our hands"; Ted Parry, NID, to Miles (4 May 1948), TOP SECRET, in NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 2, "Moscow June 1941 - March 1943". Miles supplied comments on the report; "Remarks on the enclosure to N.I.D. letter P.279/4080 dated 4th May 1948", TOP SECRET, in *ibid*.

<sup>77</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Naval Exercises Off Murmansk", *M.I.R. for JUNE 1948*, no 30 (10 July 1948), p 26, SECRET.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, pp 26-27.

<sup>79</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Submarines", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, no 29 (10 June 1948), p 25, SECRET.

<sup>80</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Submarine Colours", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1949*, no 39 (10 April 1949), p 29, SECRET.

<sup>81</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; The Kola Inlet and Archangel", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), p 26, SECRET.

been rebuilt,<sup>82</sup> and that great efforts were being made to increase the facilities available at Nakhodka and Petropavlovsk in the Far East, and to complete Molotovsk in the White Sea.<sup>83</sup> Later reports on Molotovsk revealed that work on the shipbuilding yard was "proceeding steadily".<sup>84</sup>

In commemoration of Navy Day on 15 August, an article in *Pravda*, after setting out the great deeds that Stalin was reputed to have done for the Soviet Navy, stated that Russia had "shattered the plans of the German strategists at sea just as our Army smashed them on land - in fierce fighting almost single-handed - and it emerged from the war still more powerful, enriched by experience and with improved fighting skill." The NID commented that the line taken by the media on this occasion "suggested that the Navy is very much under the control of the Army, and the Russians are still ignorant of the nature of sea power and have no idea of what happened at sea between 1939 and 1945."<sup>85</sup>

In September 1948, the Joint Intelligence Bureau at the Ministry of Defence produced a major study describing the Soviet mode of government, political structure, economic resources and industries, military geography and communications. As regards the Soviet naval programme, it was noted that:

Two battleships have been lying partially completed in yards at Leningrad and Nikolayev since before the war, but there is no prospect of their being finished; nor, as far as is known, are any aircraft carriers being built. Everything indicates that the Navy will concentrate on submarines and fast surface craft not larger than light cruisers.<sup>86</sup>

This was in keeping with earlier assessments by the JIC, which felt that it was unlikely that Russia intended to build aircraft carriers, as the Soviet Union probably realised that:

by the time her shattered shipbuilding industry is capable of building this class of ship, the range of modern aircraft will enable her to operate with land-based aircraft in any theatre in which she may have to make war. It is most unlikely that Russia will embark on a programme of large battleship building, as she probably considers this type of ship will also be out of date by the time she is able to build any.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> This was faster than had been estimated in 1946, when the NID stated that it would take "not less than four years" for Russian shipyards in the Black Sea to be in a position to undertake major work on warships; NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Icebreakers", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1946*, p 19.

<sup>83</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; A Mighty Fleet", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), p 47, SECRET.

<sup>84</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Molotovsk", *M.I.R. for NOVEMBER 1948*, no 35 (10 December 1948), p 44, SECRET.

<sup>85</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Navy Day", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), p 48, SECRET.

<sup>86</sup> PRO, WO 208/4111, Joint Intelligence Bureau, MoD, "British Intelligence Survey U.S.S.R.; Part I, General Survey" (September 1948), p 82, SECRET.

<sup>87</sup> PRO, CAB 81/134, "Probable Strength and Nature of the Soviet Armed Forces and of Those of Her Satellites in 1956", JIC(46)96(0) (29 October 1946), p 5, para 17, TOP SECRET.

The NID account of the refitting of the *Maxim Gorki* and the *Kirov* at Lepaya, Latvia, gave details of the technical troubles encountered. The NID also mentioned one particular difficulty for the Russians not previously known to the Royal Navy: "electrical contacts are repeatedly damaged because members of ships' companies make them arc so that they can light their cigarettes without wasting matches!"<sup>88</sup>

*Jane's Fighting Ships* met with Russian criticism for allegedly distorting the strength of the Soviet Navy. An article in *Red Star* objected to the inclusion of icebreakers, which were claimed to perform "an entirely economic rôle in no way connected with fighting duties."<sup>89</sup> Also, the listing of all Axis vessels transferred to the Soviet Union after the war, and the large increase in submarines that had been added within the last year, were said to maximise Soviet strength at the same time as American and British additions to their fleets had been overlooked.<sup>90</sup>

In the summer of 1949, an up-to-date appreciation was made of the Soviet Navy and its capabilities. In particular, the possibility of Russian submarine warfare was considered, and a comparison was made between the performance of German U-boats in the war and the likely effectiveness of Soviet boats against Western shipping. Many factors which might influence Russian capability were considered, including the efficiency of the sailors and dockyards in carrying out repairs and refits. However, the assessment pointed out that at the beginning of the Second World War, Germany only had 26 oceangoing submarines and 30 coastal vessels, whereas the NID estimated that there were now 160 oceangoing and 130 coastal submarines in the Soviet Navy.<sup>91</sup> Although split between four fleets, the Soviet Union obviously had a tremendous underwater capability.

In North Russia, the ORBAT comprised one brigade based at Polyarnoe consisting of some 30 large oceangoing submarines of the "K"-, "L"- and "S"-classes, two medium oceangoing *Shch*-class and about 12 coastal class. In the Baltic, there were believed to be two brigades based on Baltiysk and Tallinn consisting of some 20 large oceangoing submarines of the "D"-, "K"-, "L"-, "P"- and "S"-classes, some

---

<sup>88</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Refitting of 'Maxim Gorki' and 'Kirov'", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1948*, no 36 (10 January 1949), p 30, SECRET.

<sup>89</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; Criticism of 'Jane's Fighting Ships': A Propaganda Line", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1949*, no 39 (10 April 1949), p 48, SECRET.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, pp 48-49.

<sup>91</sup> NHB, "The Soviet Navy", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1949*, no 44 (10 September 1949), p 34, SECRET.

25 medium oceangoing *Shch*-class and approximately 30 coastal "M"-class.<sup>92</sup> There were also 10 U-boats allocated to the Russians as their share of the wartime German fleet,<sup>93</sup> at least 10 further U-boats captured by Soviet forces, and up to 40 more were salvaged or taken in an unfinished state to Russian Baltic yards.

In the Black Sea, there were probably two brigades based on Balaclava, Poti and Sevastopol, consisting of some 10 large oceangoing submarines of the "D"-, "L"- and "S"-classes, six medium oceangoing of the *Shch*-class, and some 30 coastal "M"-class. Finally, in the Far East it was thought that there were probably five brigades based on Petropavlovsk, Port Arthur, Sovietskaya Gavan, Ulysses Bay and Vladivostok. There were some 20 large oceangoing submarines of the "L"- and "S"-classes, 40 medium oceangoing *Shch*-class, and 50 coastal "M"-class.

Details were given of the performance of the various submarine types, and of shipyards and construction.<sup>94</sup> In particular, it was stated that it could be assumed that "at present there are no warships larger than cruisers under construction in the U.S.S.R."<sup>95</sup>

At the end of 1949, the NID reported that at Archangel a new type of destroyer had been seen which they believed was called, unsurprisingly, the *Stalin*.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, at the dawn of the new decade, the editor of *Monthly Intelligence Report* commented that Stalinism was replacing Communism and that the "Supreme Being", Stalin, was the "God of the New Religion".<sup>97</sup> But, in spite of the growing "Cult of Individual" surrounding Stalin, at the end of the 1940s it was still considered that the ultimate aim of Soviet policy was: "to establish Communism, directed from Moscow, throughout the world. The Soviet leaders will try to achieve this by political methods, but should they appreciate that their ultimate object

---

<sup>92</sup> Baltiysk is on the Gulf of Danzig. It gave the Soviet Navy an ice-free, deep-water port and soon became the headquarters of the Red Navy Baltic Fleet; Morris, *The Russian Navy*, p 29.

<sup>93</sup> For a list of all German warships apportioned to the Soviet Union, see NMM, Miles Papers, MS81/187, Box 1, "Report of the Tripartite Naval Commission Recommending the Allocation of the German Surface Navy and the German Submarine Fleet to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of the United States of America", Berlin (6 December 1945), Appendix 1, p 25, TOP SECRET. For background details leading to the report, see *ibid*, Box 2, "Tripartite Naval Commission, Berlin, 1945".

<sup>94</sup> NHB, "The Soviet Navy", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1949*, pp 34-40.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p 40.

<sup>96</sup> NHB, "U.S.S.R.; New Construction; Destroyer for the Northern Fleet", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1949*, no 48 (10 January 1950), pp 24-25, SECRET.

<sup>97</sup> NHB, "Editorial Commentary; Sovietization of Eastern Europe", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1950*, no 49 (10 February 1950), p 1, SECRET.

cannot be achieved except by war, they are likely to provoke a conflict as soon as they consider themselves ready."<sup>98</sup> However, if this was the case, the Soviet Navy was far from being ready for war. Summarising the position of Russian maritime forces in 1950, Eisenhower's former Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Bedell Smith, who had served as American Ambassador in Moscow between 1946 and 1949, wrote that "Soviet naval strength is not vast by our standards" and that Russia's surface fleet:

is weak, unbalanced and largely obsolete, except for the modern units obtained in the form of reparations and war prizes. But these have not added materially to Soviet naval strength. Russia has enormous natural resources to support a great shipbuilding programme, however, and when her industrial potential is adequately developed, she may, if she wishes, develop a powerful Navy and merchant fleet. This will take time - a good many years, in fact.<sup>99</sup>

The sentiments contained in this comment had been echoed in successive NID reports.

Stalin lived until March 1953, by which time the Soviet naval construction programme was well under way. In the West, however, the Russians were still seen "in terms of their indifferent performance during the Second World War."<sup>100</sup> At no time did the Soviet Navy pose any credible threat in the minds of Western naval strategists, who continued to plan for many years secure in the knowledge that they had a huge degree of maritime superiority over the Russians.<sup>101</sup> Until the mid-1950s, "as in the prewar years, the Navy remained a fleet of coastal operations",<sup>102</sup> and was unable to threaten Western sea lines of communication. It was not until the second post-war decade that Nikita S Khrushchev would cancel Stalin's "massive" quantitative naval expansion programme and replace it with an attempt at a qualitative "great leap forward in naval technology - based on nuclear weapons, guided missiles, nuclear propulsion, exotic materials and platform configurations".<sup>103</sup>

The NID, therefore, continued to draw upon a wide range of intelligence sources to monitor and appraise the Red Navy in the post-war period to 1950, and found Soviet naval capabilities wanting in a

---

<sup>98</sup> PRO, DEFE 4/22, "Overall Strategic Concept for War in 1957", JP(48)59 (Final - Second Revise), p 2, para 1, annex to COS(49)97 (6 July 1949), TOP SECRET.

<sup>99</sup> Lieutenant-General Walter Bedell Smith, *Moscow Mission 1946-1949* (London, 1950), pp 311-312.

<sup>100</sup> Morris, *The Russian Navy*, p 32.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Captain 2nd Rank V Dotsenko, "Soviet Art of Naval Warfare in the Postwar Period", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1989), pp 22-28.

<sup>103</sup> Robert G Weinland, "The Main Features and Phases of the Evolution of the Soviet Navy Since World War II", presentation to the Ditchley Foundation's Conference on the Challenge of Soviet Maritime Activity (Ditchley Park, 27-29 April 1984), p 2. British concern over advances in Soviet ship design led to the SIS surreptitiously examining the hull of the cruiser *Sverdlov* in October 1955, as well as the disastrous attempt to inspect the *Ordzhonikidze* in Portsmouth Harbour in April 1956 which resulted in the death of frogman "Buster" Crabb; Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession*, p 287.

majority of respects. Wartime naval cooperation was replaced by Cold War antagonism and a Russian maritime threat was perceived, but its reality was only a spectre of the future.



## CHAPTER XV

### ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET NAVAL CAPABILITY



*"Time passes swiftly, shoving into the past the days  
when the final shots of the last war died away.  
But the lessons of history stand before us in greater relief".<sup>1</sup>*

*(Admiral S G Gorshkov)*

This chapter draws together some of the main arguments and findings of the thesis, summarising the key aspects of Anglo-Soviet naval cooperation and British intelligence assessments of Russian seapower in the 1930-1950 period.

Although it is possible that the SIS and the GC&CS may have gathered important information on the Soviet Union by penetrating targets in its armed forces and associated communications systems, details of their successes and failures is largely unknown, and is likely to remain so because of the sensitivity surrounding such intelligence-gathering operations. However, more information is available about the work of the defence intelligence organisations of the British armed services. In particular, records of 30 Military Mission, the NID and naval attaché reports to the Foreign Office together provide a comprehensive survey of Russian capabilities, both in terms of the Soviet naval ORBAT and the performance of its ships. Furthermore, especially during the Second World War, there was much evidence available on the level of seamanship displayed by the Russian sailors, the combat effectiveness of their warships, and the strategic rôle of the Soviet Navy as realised by the Soviet leadership.

Before the war, it is clear that security and intelligence considerations profoundly influenced Anglo-Soviet relations. These factors often exacerbated existing prejudices against the Soviet Union. It is within this context of mutual hostility and continuous intelligence activity that the NID's interest in the Soviet Navy should be understood.

---

<sup>1</sup> Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S Gorshkov, "Remember the War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1984), pp 5-11.

---

Although a German regime under the Nazis was considered as the "ultimate potential enemy" as early as 1934,<sup>2</sup> Russia was still considered by many in the British establishment to be a risk, if only because of the threat of Communist subversion. Throughout the 1930s, however, the Soviet Union was no match for the Royal Navy at sea and a direct threat to the United Kingdom from any of Russia's armed forces was inconceivable.

So, while the Soviet Union remained an important intelligence target, the Red Navy by itself was not a high priority. But it was still necessary to maintain an intelligence watch, especially when the Soviet Navy began to expand rapidly in the 1930s. Indeed, when the USSR became a wartime ally, it became critical to make accurate assessments of its ability to engage Germany's surface fleet and, in particular, its U-boats. Also, to report on Russian competence to interrupt the *Wehrmacht's* logistical supply lines on its seaward flanks in North Russia and the Black Sea, and to assist the Allies in safeguarding the Arctic convoys.

The main aim of the British Naval Mission in Russia was not to gain intelligence on the Soviet Union. Rather, intelligence-gathering on Russian, as opposed to German, forces was incidental to the main task of cooperation with the Soviet Navy in the strategic aim of defeating the common enemy. The four-year period as allies was not an aberration when seen in the historical context of four centuries of Anglo-Russian maritime contacts and trade. However, it was the period of the most sustained joint military effort.

A study of British intelligence on Soviet submarines during 1930-1941 shows that the NID succeeded in maintaining a good understanding of Russia's capabilities in this category. Because of the secrecy which surrounds submarines and their operations, the level of British knowledge demonstrates the resourcefulness of the NID in achieving its intelligence goals. Although it can be argued that the large increase in Soviet submarine building in the 1930s was not immediately recognised, the NID did not underestimate the Russian submarine ORBAT on the eve of the Second World War.

Following the German invasion of Russia, British assistance to the Soviet Union could only take a limited form. It was in the naval sphere that Great Britain, as a maritime power, could do most to help. Any doubts about the combat effectiveness of the Russian Navy were more than realised in practice.

---

<sup>2</sup> PRO, CAB 16/110, CP 64(34), "Imperial Defence Policy: Report of the DRC" (28 February 1934), cited in Wesley K Wark, *The Ultimate Enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1933-1939* (London, 1985), p 17.

---

Although possessing adequate ships, major units were not deployed regularly and then only for limited periods. The net effect was that the major burden of operating and protecting the Arctic convoys fell on the Royal Navy, which was already overtaxed by its responsibilities in the Battle of the Atlantic and in other theatres of war.

In the first few months of the Great Patriotic War, many of the Soviet Navy's personnel were drawn away to act as marines in a desperate attempt to stem the German advance.<sup>3</sup> Ships were utilised as floating gun platforms and naval aviation deployed in support of land forces. For the Russians, the requirement to "combine the efforts of all branches of the armed forces to solve key strategic problems largely determined the principal mission of the navy - to assist the troops of the Soviet Army in defensive, and then later offensive operations".<sup>4</sup> This pattern was to persist throughout the war and demonstrated the inadequate understanding of seapower among the Soviet High Command.<sup>5</sup>

One of the primary tasks of the British Military Mission was the collection of intelligence that would indicate the Soviet Union's ability to absorb the German assault and, in turn, the Red Navy's power to inflict serious damage on Nazi naval forces and supply convoys. The Russians, however, refused to allow unfettered access to information on their navy and resented attempts at intelligence-gathering. Although many Russian seamen were quite open and cooperative with their British allies, Communist political control and interference caused unnecessary difficulties and impeded the smooth running of the convoy system. Often, when the British had to rely solely on Russian sources of information, for example in regard to ice conditions or the availability of air support, serious complications arose. British intelligence, therefore, had a vital rôle in shaping proper decision-making.

---

<sup>3</sup> Eventually, some 100,000 naval infantrymen were utilised to help defend naval bases and islands, and to take part in amphibious assaults; Major-General P Mel'nikov, "Surrounded by Legends", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 50-54. During the war, the Soviet Navy made a total of 113 amphibious landings of varying scale, excluding several reconnaissance landings. On average, therefore, "one amphibious landing was made every two weeks"; Admiral V Sysoyev, "The Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1979), pp 11-15.

<sup>4</sup> Rear-Admiral N V'yunenkov and Captain 1st Rank (Retired) K Penzin, "Navies in World War II", review of *Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945* (History of World War II of 1939-1945), 12 volumes (Voenizdat, 1973-1982), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1983), pp 89-91.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the Black Sea Fleet destroyer *Soobrzitel'nyy* sank no vessels during the war, but was credited with the destruction of 30 tanks, a rather dubious honour for a warship; Engineer-Colonel A T Il'ichev, "From the History of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding (Destroyers)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1967), pp 18-22.

Despite the regular harassment endured by British personnel, the naval representatives in the Soviet Union were able to report back to London a comprehensive understanding of the Red Navy. Current literature on the Soviet armed forces confirms the general picture as given in the contemporary, and timely, NID assessments. That is, naval intelligence was generally accurate, and more than adequate to inform British strategy.

The Soviet Union was anxious to dispense with British aid, and the associated personnel necessary for its support and administration. As the passage of time showed that the USSR could survive and, indeed, was pushing the *Wehrmacht* back, cooperation with the Royal Navy gradually diminished. In fact, the frustration experienced by the members of the Naval Mission in Russia was also reflected in the United Kingdom. Before the Second Front was launched, the British public considered that the Soviet Union was making the biggest sacrifices in the war. But there was a marked "countervailing irritation at Russian unwillingness to acknowledge the extent of British help, and especially the strain and losses involved in the Arctic convoys."<sup>6</sup>

The Royal Navy had hoped for major Soviet assistance in providing ships and aircraft for the protection of the Arctic convoys. In the event, cooperation was minimal. The disaster which befell PQ17 underlined the precarious nature of the sea lines of communication to North Russia, but subsequent Russian air and naval reinforcements remained patchy for the rest of the war. It was particularly galling that the majority of losses on this sea route from enemy action occurred within the operational range of Soviet air and naval forces. For the period of the Second World War, it was "an inescapable fact that the Russians lacked all flair for naval warfare ... The success of the Arctic convoys owed almost nothing to the efforts of those for whose benefit they were run."<sup>7</sup>

The seamen and ships of the Soviet Navy were observed closely by the British personnel who served in Russia and they were not impressed by what they saw, other than perhaps by the courage of the Russians. The poor impressions formed by the Royal Navy officers were sent back to London, where they formed a large part of the NID's assessments of the Soviet Navy.

---

<sup>6</sup> PRO, INF 1 series, Ministry of Information, Home Intelligence Reports 150-152 (10-31 August 1943), cited in P M H Bell, *John Bull and the Bear: British Public Opinion, Foreign Policy and the Soviet Union 1941-1945* (London, 1990), p 97.

<sup>7</sup> Campbell and Macintyre, *The Kola Run*, p 222.

In the Black Sea, the British felt that the Soviet Navy should have retained command of the sea. However, successive BNLOs to the region were dismayed by the Russian failure to grasp the opportunities offered for the exercise of seapower: German convoys were allowed to travel unhindered, oil tankers resupplied the enemy forces and troops leapfrogged along the Black Sea coastline scarcely without check. The overall assessment was one of ample Soviet capability in terms of ships and men, but very poor performance in terms of execution.

The reasons for the failure of the Soviet Navy are manifold. Within the ORBAT of the Soviet Navy in 1941, there were still 25 battleships, cruisers and destroyers built in Tsarist times. Their obsolescence, however, was not a remarkable excuse, as the majority of Axis warships deployed in eastern waters were also somewhat decrepit. Indeed, the Russians seemed to have problems with their modern and sophisticated vessels, which were more prone to breakdowns.

The purges of the 1930s also seriously affected the quality of the officer corps, with many high-ranking Soviet naval officers being removed in the period 1937-1939 ostensibly for disagreeing with Stalin's desire to build a "blue-water", oceangoing fleet (but, more likely, for political reasons). By 1941, the majority of the senior officers had been rapidly promoted, with very few former Imperial Navy officers still surviving. Therefore, the Soviet Navy at the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War was "more politically reliable than professionally capable."<sup>8</sup> Thrown on the defensive by the German attack, ships' companies were reduced by their use as naval infantry.<sup>9</sup> The result was heavy casualties and a lack of sea training, although the marines fought many heroic actions.

In each theatre of operation, the inherent capabilities of the Soviet Navy were superior to those of the Axis fleets.<sup>10</sup> But Russia's major warships were never engaged in prolonged surface action and, therefore, none of these units was lost to gunfire. Rather, half of Soviet surface ship losses were due to

---

<sup>8</sup> Jürg Meister, *The Soviet Navy, Volume One* (Navies of the Second World War) (London, 1972), p 19.

<sup>9</sup> This seems to be almost a throw-back to the days of the ancient Russian state, when the military "were not divided into ground and naval forces" and the *druzhinas* (armed retinues) of princes "fought both on land and at sea"; Captain 3rd Rank S Yakimov, "From the History of Fleet Pay and Allowances", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1989), pp 78-82.

<sup>10</sup> See Professor Rear-Admiral K Stalbo, "Losses of the Fascist German Navy During the Period of the Great Patriotic War. What Do They Tell Us?", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 108-116.

aircraft with "most of the remainder to mines, many air-dropped."<sup>11</sup> In terms of operational capability, the Russians "were brave, but lacked the experience and initiative to conduct major naval operations."<sup>12</sup>

The fact is that in all of Russia's wars from 1854 to 1945 there is "not one example of a successful offensive use of seapower."<sup>13</sup> In the Soviet view, although surface ships "concentrate within themselves great fire power, only submarines and aviation are capable of imparting a deep scope to an operation and providing for penetration into the depth of enemy positions."<sup>14</sup> Nelson's last signal to his warships, to "Engage the enemy more closely",<sup>15</sup> does not seem to have had a Soviet equivalent. Rather, for the Soviet Union, Russian combat experience "confirmed the correctness of our pre-war conceptions, in which submarines were viewed as our principal weapon in the struggle along lines of communication."<sup>16</sup> As such, the "results of the actions of surface ships against enemy ships and on his lines of communication were modest",<sup>17</sup> being only 8.6% of the total number of combatants and auxiliaries destroyed and 2.8% of the transports.<sup>18</sup> However, the story of the Soviet submarine arm is one of costly endeavour for poor recompense. The Germans, in the process of destroying 14,215,300 tons of shipping, lost 777 submarines; that is, on average, each U-boat was responsible for sinking some 18,295 tons. The Russians, on the other hand, sank 280,000 tons for the loss of 80 submarines, or only 3,500 tons per boat lost.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps the best that can be said of the Soviet Navy is that it "performed competently within its limitations of small size, largely obsolete equipment, and total subordination to army priorities, scoring no major victories, but avoiding major disasters."<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Steven Zaloga, "Soviet Military Developments; Soviet Naval Shield Reflects WWII Experience", *Armed Forces Journal International*, vol 126, no 12, whole no 5734 (July 1989), p 24.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Lambert, "Soviet Seapower; The Element of Strategic Continuity", *Warship*, no 43 (July 1987), p 153.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 151.

<sup>14</sup> Captain 1st Rank V Vorob'yev, "The Development and Employment of Surface Ships (1926-1945)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1980), pp 70-75.

<sup>15</sup> David Howarth and Stephen Howarth, *Nelson: The Immortal Memory* (London, 1988), p 325.

<sup>16</sup> Admiral of the Fleet N Smirnov, "Studying Assiduously the Experience of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1979), pp 3-7.

<sup>17</sup> Vorob'yev, "The Development and Employment of Surface Ships", *Morskoy Sbornik*, pp 70-75.

<sup>18</sup> Stalbo, "Losses of the Fascist German Navy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, Table 4.

<sup>19</sup> James F Dunnigan (ed), *The Russian Front: Germany's War in the East, 1941-45* (London, 1978), p 157.

<sup>20</sup> Geoffrey Jukes, "Nikolai Gerasimovich Kuznetsov", in Shukman (ed), *Stalin's Generals*, pp 112-113.

---

After the war, the Russians were faced with a massive task of reorganising and updating their navy, which was largely composed of obsolescent vessels. Although a naval construction programme was started, it is clear that there was initially a severe post-war shortage of shipyard facilities and expertise. Indeed, even though the Cold War had begun, Russia was desperate enough to approach the British Admiralty to arrange for ship repairs and the possible purchase of vessels.

By the end of the 1940s, the NID knew that the Russian fleets were unbalanced and largely out of date: a hotchpotch of pre-war vessels, ships that were foreign-designed or purchased from abroad, and prizes of war scattered among the output of domestic production. Furthermore, the failure to utilise the Red Navy adequately in 1941-1945 had demonstrated beyond doubt the inherent lack of strategic understanding among the Soviet leadership about the correct deployment and utilisation of seapower.

To achieve its task of maintaining an intelligence picture of the Soviet Navy, the NID made use of a wide variety of intelligence sources. British intelligence assessments before the war provided reasonably accurate information on the Soviet naval ORBAT. During the course of the war, with Royal Navy representatives working in North Russia and the Black Sea as part of Anglo-Soviet naval collaboration, a clear understanding of Russian naval capabilities and seamanship was obtained. In general terms, the assessments made in wartime held good for several years thereafter, as the Soviet Union required a period of consolidation and restructuring following the massive devastation and dislocation of the war.

Finally, it was considered that although the Soviet Navy was inherently imposing in terms of size, its many manifest faults and deficiencies made it capable of presenting little immediate danger. Perhaps able to perform a limited coastal defence rôle, it was not a threat to the Western powers and their sea lines of communication and, correctly, it was considered that it would not be so for some time to come.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED



### PRIMARY SOURCES

Unpublished Documents, Canada

#### National Archives of Canada, Ottawa

Department of External Affairs.

MG 30, E 151, vol 4, file 60.

William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers.

MG 26, J 13, Diary.

Unpublished Documents, United Kingdom

#### Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge

J W Almond Papers.

MISC 26, Photographs by J W Almond, 3rd Electrician on RMS *Rangitane*, of British prisoners captured by German cruiser *Komet* disembarked on Emirau Island in Bismarck Archipelago December 1940. Also "Diary extracts" and "Reminiscences".

Vice-Admiral Leslie Haliburton Ashmore Papers.

ASHM 1/1, Memoirs of Vice-Admiral Leslie Ashmore, CB, DSO. Xerox copy of MS describing service in Russia during and after First World War (163 pp).

ASHM 1/4/1, Vice-Admiral L H Ashmore, notes on lecture to the Staff College in 1932; "Operations of British Submarines in Baltic 1914-1918".

Baron Thomas Brimelow of Tyldesley, Lancashire, Papers.

BIMO, Typescript of interview (with Michael Burd) of his experiences in Russian Section of Foreign Office 1945-47; of Anglo-Soviet relations and senior Foreign Office officials.

Captain John Egerton Broome, DSC, RN, Papers.

BRME 1/3, Letters exchanged with those "who either sailed in or were in some way concerned with PQ17" or with Captain Broome's case, 1968-72.



Vice-Admiral John Henry Godfrey Papers.

GDFY 1/1-1/11, 1964-1967, Naval memoirs.

Admiral Sir William Reginald Hall Papers.

Section 2: Various Papers.

HALL 2/1, Papers by Hall on intelligence, 7-page typescript (10 January 1936); and Intelligence in wartime, 9-page typescript (undated).

Donald McLachlan and Patrick Beesly Papers.

Section 1: McLachlan - "Room 39" Papers.

MLBE 1/7, Paper (45 pages) "The Naval Mission to Russia 1943-45", anon. Possibly by Admiral Sir Geoffrey Miles.

MLBE 1/14, Convoy PQ 17 Disaster, July 1942. German operation "Knight's Move".

MLBE 1/16, Miscellany; Paper on grading of sources, 1939 and 1943, probably by McLachlan.

Section 2: Beesly - "Very Special Intelligence Papers".

MLBE 2/40, Small collections of letters; J C K Everett re experience in North Russia.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Alfred Dudley Pickham Rogers Pound Papers.

DUPO 2/4, 1967-1968, Reminiscences of Pound from: Admiral Miles.

Commander Malcolm George Saunders, RN, Papers.

MSAU 3/2, Correspondence, papers re other naval personnel and historians.

**Imperial War Museum, London**

Vice-Admiral John Henry Godfrey Papers.

Box 74/96/1, "The Naval Memoirs of Admiral J. H. Godfrey, Vol. V, 1939-1942, Naval Intelligence Division, Part I", 1965.

Lieutenant-General Sir F Noel Mason-MacFarlane Papers.

Box 2, P11, MM31, "Head of British Military Mission in Russia, 1941".

Box 3, P12, MM45, Press cuttings.

---

**National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London**

Vice-Admiral John Henry Godfrey Papers.

MS81/005, Box A, "Naval Intelligence Papers".

Admiral Sir Geoffrey John Audley Miles, KCB, KCSI, Papers, 1906-1947.

MS81/187, Box 1, "News Cuttings".

MS81/187, Box 2, "Moscow June 1941 - March 1943".

MS81/187, Box 2, "Tripartite Naval Commission, Berlin, 1945.

MS81/187, Box 3, Diary, 1941.

MS81/187, Box 3, Diary, 1942.

MS81/187, Box 4, Diary, 1943.

Foreign Navies: General.

AFN/4, c 1880-1904, Foreign Navies; Law and Administration; List of French, Russian and German ships, MS 9797.

Historic Photographs Section.

Negative number N5123: *Marat*.

Negative number P23093: *Kapitan Melekov*.

Negative numbers P39772, P39773 and P39774: Soviet submarine.

**Naval Historical Branch, Ministry of Defence, Great Scotland Yard, London**

*Monthly Intelligence Report, 1930-1939:*

"Extracts from the Press", *M.I.R.*, July, 1931, no 146 (15 July 1931), p 65, CONFIDENTIAL.

Lea, Lieutenant-Commander W S. "A Visit to U.S.S.R. in May, 1936", *M.I.R.*, September, 1936, no 208 (15 September 1936), pp 60-68, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet Union", *M.I.R.*, February, 1934, no 177 (15 February 1934), p 27, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet Union", *M.I.R.*, August, 1933, no 171 (15 August 1932), p 24, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet Union; Armed Forces", *M.I.R.*, March, 1932, no 154 (15 March 1932), pp 43-44, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet Union; Construction of Soviet Cruiser according to Italian design", *M.I.R.*, September, 1934, no 184 (15 September 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.

- 
- "Soviet Union; Information regarding Armaments", *M.I.R.*, *January, 1932*, no 152 (15 January 1932), p 44, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; 'L.55.'", *M.I.R.*, *December, 1931*, no 151 (15 December 1931), p 42, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; L.55", *M.I.R.*, *February, 1932*, no 153 (15 February 1932), p 46, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Mercantile Marine", *M.I.R.*, *September, 1931*, no 148 (15 September 1931), p 33, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Merchant Ship Construction", *M.I.R.*, *February, 1932*, no 153 (15 February 1932), p 45, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Movements", *M.I.R.*, *September, 1930*, no 136 (15 September 1930), p 20, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Naval Building Programme", *M.I.R.*, *July, 1931* (15 July 1931), no 146, pp 40-41, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; New Construction", *M.I.R.*, *August, 1934*, no 183 (15 August 1934), p 23, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Proposed New Construction", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1934*, no 186 (15 November 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Raising of Sunken Submarines", *M.I.R.*, *April, 1934*, no 179 (15 April 1934), p 25, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Reported Order for Eight Warships to be built in France", *M.I.R.*, *July, 1934*, no 182 (15 July 1934), p 19, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Return to Soviet Authorities of Baron Wrangel's Fleet laid up in Bizerta Harbour", *M.I.R.*, *September, 1933*, no 172 (15 September 1933), pp 34-35, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Sale of North German Lloyd Vessels to Russia", *M.I.R.*, *January, 1933*, no 164 (15 January 1933), p 38, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Shipping Activity", *M.I.R.*, *December, 1932*, no 163 (15 December 1932), p 35, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Soviet Fleet Manoeuvres and French Naval Officers as Instructors", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1934*, no 186 (15 November 1934), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Soviet Submarines", *M.I.R.*, *August, 1932*, no 159 (15 August 1932), p 33, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Tactical Training", *M.I.R.*, *April, 1931*, no 143, (15 April 1931), p 32, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; The Soviet Fleet", *M.I.R.*, *May, 1931*, no 144 (15 May 1931), p 35, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Visit of Naval Mission to Italy", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1930*, no 138 (15 November 1930), p 26, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Soviet Union; Visit of Soviet Naval Mission to France", *M.I.R.*, *June, 1934*, no 181 (15 June 1934), p 30, CONFIDENTIAL.

- "Soviet Union; Wrangel's Fleet", *M.I.R.*, *September, 1935*, no 196 (15 September 1935), pp 36-37, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "The Baltic Fleets (Translated from the 'Berlingske Tidene' of 4th April, 1931.)", *M.I.R.*, *July, 1931*, no 146 (15 July 1931), pp 65-66, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "The Russian Mercantile Marine", *M.I.R.*, *August, 1931*, no 147 (15 August 1931), pp 56-59, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "Training in the Soviet Navy", *M.I.R.*, *December, 1931*, no 151 (15 December 1931), pp 52-54, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R.*, *July, 1937*, no 218 (15 July 1937), pp 55-56, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Anglo-Soviet Naval Treaty", *M.I.R.*, *August, 1937*, no 219 (15 August 1937), pp 53-54, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Annual Autumn Manoeuvres of the Baltic Fleet", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1937*, no 222 (15 November 1937), pp 51-53, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Appointment of New Head of the Navy", *M.I.R.*, *December, 1938*, no 235 (15 December 1938), p 29, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Battleships", *M.I.R.*, *May, 1937*, no 216 (15 May 1937), p 53, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Changes in the Higher Naval Command", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1937*, no 222 (15 November 1937), pp 53-54, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Changes in the Higher Naval Commands", *M.I.R.*, *October, 1937*, no 221 (15 October 1937), pp 43-44, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Discipline", *M.I.R.*, *April, 1939*, no 239 (15 April 1939), p 31, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Disorganization of the U.S.S.R. Naval Shipbuilding Industry", *M.I.R.*, *February, 1938*, no 225 (15 February 1938), pp 48-49, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Disposition of the Soviet Fleet at beginning of 1936", *M.I.R.*, *July, 1936*, no 206 (15 July 1936), p 41, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Exercises", *M.I.R.*, *October, 1938*, no 233 (15 October 1938), p 25, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Exercises", *M.I.R.*, *November, 1938*, no 234 (15 November 1938), p 20, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Italian Views on the Soviet Navy", *M.I.R.*, *January, 1937*, no 212 (15 January 1937), p 86, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Light Cruiser 'Tashkent.'", *M.I.R.*, *March, 1939*, no 238 (15 March 1939), p 28, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Light Cruiser 'Tashkent.'", *M.I.R.*, *June, 1939*, no 241 (15 June 1939), p 24, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Naval Mission for the U.S.A.", *M.I.R.*, *March, 1939*, no 238 (15 March 1939), pp 28-29, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; New Northern Base", *M.I.R.*, *January, 1938*, no 224 (15 January 1938), p 51, CONFIDENTIAL.

- "U.S.S.R.; New Soviet Warship Launched in Italy", *M.I.R.*, December, 1937, no 223 (15 December 1937), p 46, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; New Type of Commissar", *M.I.R.*, May, 1939, no 240 (15 May 1939), p 28, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Northern Sea Route", *M.I.R.*, September, 1936, no 208 (15 September 1936), p 59, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Purchase of Naval Equipment in the United States", *M.I.R.*, November, 1937, no 222 (15 November 1937), p 54, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Reconstruction of the Soviet Far Eastern Navy", *M.I.R.*, March, 1937, no 214 (15 March 1937), pp 49-50, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Reconstruction of Vladivostok Port", *M.I.R.*, June, 1937 (15 June 1937), p 48, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; 'Red Currents in the Arctic'", *M.I.R.*, April, 1937, no 215 (15 April 1937), pp 46-48, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Soviet Submarines", *M.I.R.*, October, 1935, no 197 (15 October 1935), p 48, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Soviet Views on the New German Battleships", *M.I.R.*, January, 1937, no 212 (15 January 1937), pp 85-86, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Submarines", *M.I.R.*, May, 1937, no 216 (15 May 1937), pp 52-53, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Naval 'Purge'", *M.I.R.*, April, 1938, no 227 (15 April 1938), pp 54-55, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Purge", *M.I.R.*, March, 1938, no 226 (15 March 1938), p 49, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Purge", *M.I.R.*, October, 1938, no 233 (15 October 1938), pp 24-25, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Stalin Purge", *M.I.R.*, September, 1937, no 220 (15 September 1937), p 52, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Training", *M.I.R.*, August, 1939, no 243 (15 August 1939), p 21, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Training of Personnel", *M.I.R.*, January, 1939, no 236 (15 January 1939), pp 25-26, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Young Commanding Officers", *M.I.R.*, February, 1939, no 237 (15 February 1939), p 26, CONFIDENTIAL.

*Monthly Intelligence Report, 1946-1950:*

- "Editorial Commentary; Sovietization of Eastern Europe", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1950*, no 49 (10 February 1950), pp 1-2, SECRET.
- "German Science and the Russian Navy", *M.I.R. for OCTOBER 1946*, no 10 (10 November 1946), pp 33-36, SECRET.
- "Russia", *M.I.R. for JUNE 1946*, no 6 (10 July 1946), p 10, SECRET.
- "Russia; Baltic White Sea Canal", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), p 22, SECRET.

- "Russia; Black Sea Reinforcements", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), pp 21-22, SECRET.
- "Russia; Dnieper-Bug Canal", *M.I.R. for JULY 1946*, no 7 (10 August 1946), p 22, SECRET.
- "The Soviet Navy", *M.I.R. for FEBRUARY 1948*, no 26 (10 March 1948), pp 47-52, SECRET.
- "The Soviet Navy", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1949*, no 44 (10 September 1949), pp 31-41, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R. for SEPTEMBER 1946*, no 9 (10 October 1946), p 22, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.", *M.I.R. for OCTOBER 1946*, no 10 (10 November 1946), p 27, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; A Mighty Fleet", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), p 47, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; British Carrier Wanted", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1947*, no 13 (10 February 1947), p 20, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Criticism of 'Jane's Fighting Ships': A Propaganda Line", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1949*, no 39 (10 April 1949), pp 48-49, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Icebreakers", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1946*, no 8 (10 September 1946), pp 18-19, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Molotovsk", *M.I.R. for NOVEMBER 1948*, no 35 (10 December 1948), p 44, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Naval Exercises Off Murmansk", *M.I.R. for JUNE 1948*, no 30 (10 July 1948), pp 26-27, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Navy Day", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), pp 47-48, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; New Construction; Destroyer for the Northern Fleet", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1949*, no 48 (10 January 1950), pp 24-25, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Purge of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for APRIL 1948*, no 28 (10 May 1948), p 22, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Refitting of 'Maxim Gorki' and 'Kirov'", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1948*, no 36 (10 January 1949), p 30, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Reorganization of High Command", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1946*, no 3 (10 April 1946), pp 19-21, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Russian Submarines in Davis Strait", *M.I.R. for DECEMBER 1946*, no 11 (10 December 1946), pp 18-19, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Ship Movements", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1946*, no 8 (10 September 1946), p 20, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Submarine Colours", *M.I.R. for MARCH 1949*, no 39 (10 April 1949), p 29, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Submarines", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, no 29 (10 June 1948), p 25, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Kola Inlet and Archangel", *M.I.R. for AUGUST 1948*, no 32 (10 September 1948), p 26, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Trial of Senior Naval Officers", *M.I.R. for MAY 1948*, no 29 (10 June 1948), pp 45-48, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Vladivostok", *M.I.R. for JANUARY 1948*, no 25 (10 February 1948), p 38, SECRET.

"U.S.S.R.; Vladivostok", *M.I.R. for JULY 1948*, no 31 (10 August 1948), p 50, SECRET.

*Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 1 (16 October 1939) to no 18 (8 March 1940):

"A Russian View of Germany's Naval Situation", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 2 (1 November 1939), pp 51-52, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Naval Aspects of the Possibility of War Between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 3 (15 November 1939), pp 7-10, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Russia: A Bubble Pricked", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 13 (2 February 1940), pp 32-33, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Russian Railways", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 12 (26 January 1940), pp 38-40, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet-German Naval Co-operation", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 12 (26 January 1940), pp 4-5, CONFIDENTIAL.

"Soviet Oil and German Needs", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 2 (1 November 1939), pp 27-30, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Black Sea Area", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 14 (9 February 1940), pp 4-5, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Far Eastern Area", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 15 (16 February 1940), pp 6-7, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Naval Personalities; Chief of the Naval Staff", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 18 (8 March 1940), p 5, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Northern Fleet", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 13 (2 February 1940), p 2, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Northern Sea Route", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 10 (12 January 1940), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; Personalities; People's Commissar for Naval Affairs Flagman 2nd Rank: Nicholas Gerasimovich Kuznetsov", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 17 (1 March 1940), p 8, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; The Caucasus", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 16 (23 February 1940), pp 11-12, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; U.S.S.R. Efficiency", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 4 (1 December 1939), p 7, CONFIDENTIAL.

"U.S.S.R.; U.S.S.R. Inland Waterways", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 18 (8 March 1940), pp 5-11, CONFIDENTIAL.

"What Can Russia Give the Reich", *Summary of Naval and Political News*, no 1 (16 October 1939), pp 47-51, CONFIDENTIAL.

- Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 1 (15 March 1940) to no 302 (28 December 1945):
- "A Russian Victory Review", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 278 (6 July 1945), pp 23-25, SECRET.
- "Child's Guide to North Russia", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 102 (20 February 1942), pp 58-62, SECRET.
- "Finnish Ships for Russia", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 259 (23 February 1945), p 64, SECRET.
- "Ice Conditions", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 193 (19 November 1943), pp 54-55, SECRET.
- "Ice Conditions in the Baltic and North-West Europe", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 88 (14 November 1941), pp 22-23, SECRET.
- "Impressions in the U.S.S.R.", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 92 (12 December 1941), pp 49-50, SECRET.
- "In a Soviet Destroyer; Contributed by a Lieutenant R.N.V.R.", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 251 (29 December 1944), pp 19-29, SECRET.
- "In a Soviet Wardroom", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 205 (11 February 1944), pp 29-32, SECRET.
- "Life in Polyarnoe; A Letter from S.B.N.O., North Russia, 27th December, 1941", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 98 (23 January 1942), pp 60-62, SECRET.
- "Life on Board a Russian Submarine", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 155 (26 February 1943), pp 18-20, SECRET.
- "Misadventures in the Cold", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 178 (6 August 1943), pp 24-27, SECRET.
- "Naval Life at Polyarnoe; Extracts from a Letter from the Senior British Naval Officer, Murmansk", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 85 (24 October 1941), pp 58-61, SECRET.
- "Northern Convoy Route; Adapted from a 'British Survey,' published by the British Association for International Understanding", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 120 (26 June 1942), pp 55-61, SECRET.
- "Review of Military Operations in Russia", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 184 (17 September 1943), pp 21-23, SECRET.
- "Review of Military Operations in Russia", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 216 (28 April 1944), pp 22-24, SECRET.
- "Russia After the War", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 148 (8 January 1943), pp 31-40, SECRET.
- "Soviet Inland Waterways", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 302 (28 December 1945), pp 36-39, SECRET.
- "Soviet Pacific Shipping in 1944; From an article in the 'O.N.I. Weekly,' by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 265 (6 April 1945), pp 66-68, SECRET.
- "Soviet Shipping in the Pacific; Based on an article in the O.N.I. Weekly, by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 253 (12 January 1945), pp 69-70, SECRET.
- "Soviet Shipping in the Pacific (From an article in the O.N.I. Weekly, by courtesy of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence)", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 192 (12 November 1943), pp 66-68, SECRET.



- "The Baltic", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 77 (29 August 1941), p 23, SECRET.
- "The Battle of Odessa; By an Officer of the Red Army", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 90 (28 November 1941), pp 54-55, SECRET.
- "The British Spirit - by Hitler", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 48 (7 February 1941), p 52, SECRET.
- "The Red Army; A War Office Appreciation", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 1 (15 March 1940), pp 27-31, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "The Russian Navy; Its Foundation and Fortunes", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 149 (15 January 1943), pp 22-26, SECRET.
- "The Soviet Fleets in the Baltic and Black Sea", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 174 (9 July 1943), pp 23-24, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 68 (27 June 1941), facing p 26, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 75 (15 August 1941), pp 34-35, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 137 (23 October 1942), pp 28-29, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Authority of Senior Soviet Naval Officers", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 60 (2 May 1941), p 30, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Caspian", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 21 (2 August 1940), p 2, CONFIDENTIAL.
- "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces, 1st December, 1941", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 91 (5 December 1941), pp 27-30, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces; Based on information received up to 1st February, 1942", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 100 (6 February 1942), pp 33-34, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces To 17th April, 1942", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 111 (24 April 1942), pp 39-41, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Distribution of Naval Forces To 10th August, 1942", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 128 (21 August 1942), pp 37-38, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Naval Building Facilities", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 94 (26 December 1941), p 34, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 280 (20 July 1945), p 62, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Naval Promotions and Awards", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 238 (29 September 1944), pp 64-66, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; New Construction", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 26 (6 September 1940), pp 19-20, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Notes on Soviet Naval Officers", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 129 (28 August 1942), pp 43-46, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; People's Commissariat for Naval Affairs", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 160 (2 April 1943), pp 56-57, SECRET.

- "U.S.S.R.; Possible Future Bases for the Soviet Black Sea Fleet", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 89 (21 November 1941), p 27, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Possible German Evacuation of the Crimea", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 192 (12 November 1943), pp 62-63, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Recaptured Black Sea Ports", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 233 (25 August 1944), pp 59-60, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Repair Facilities", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 94 (26 December 1941), pp 34-35, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Shipping Position After the War", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 159 (26 March 1943), pp 51-52, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; Strength of the Fleets, 1941-1945", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 289 (28 September 1945), pp 52-53, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Baltic Fleet", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 79 (12 September 1941), p 29, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Baltic Fleet", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 151 (29 January 1943), p 70, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 123 (17 July 1942), pp 37-38, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Black Sea Fleet", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 149 (15 January 1943), pp 60-62, SECRET.
- "U.S.S.R.; The Recapture of Nikolaev", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 213 (7 April 1944), pp 58-59, SECRET.
- "Work of the Red Navy", *Weekly Intelligence Report*, no 139 (6 November 1942), p 15, SECRET.

**Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey**

**Admiralty**

ADM 1, Admiralty and Secretariat Papers.

- ADM 1/8739/44, 1930, London Naval Conference, 1930. Statement on each of the conference powers as to area, population, entry into their ports of overseas vessels and total shipping.
- ADM 1/8743/107, 1930, Intelligence report of Lt J S Litchfield Speer on the Communist occupation of Changsha.
- ADM 1/8757/181, 1932, Appointment of an officer from the Naval Intelligence Division as Security Liaison Officer to MI5 to deal with seditious activities at the Home Ports, and reorganization of the Naval and Marine complement of the Intelligence Division.
- ADM 1/8760/233, 1932, Journal of the Royal United Services Institution. Admiralty refuse permission for the gold medal award essay of 1932 to be published.
- ADM 1, Series II. ADM 1/19561, 1946, British Naval Mission to Norway: report of proceedings for August, Ref No M02410/1946.

---

ADM 1, Series II. ADM 1/20030, 1946-1947, Russian naval tactics: proposed counter measures to Russian naval threat, Ref No TSD247/1946.

ADM 116, Admiralty and Secretariat Cases.

ADM 116/3480, 1932, War with Russia: naval appreciation, Case No 00245.

ADM 116/4607, 1933-1942, Admiralty (5), Staff and distribution of work of Naval Intelligence Division: Admiralty office instructions and organisation of naval staff, Case No Cabinet 404.

ADM 199, War History Cases and Papers.

ADM 199/72, 1942, North Russia convoys "Dervish", PQ and QP: reports, Case No 7059.

ADM 199/604, 1942, Military co-operation with Russia: reports, Case No 7552.

ADM 199/913, 1943, Sinking of SCHARNHORST, Case No 7826.

ADM 199/1102, 1941-1944, British Naval Mission, Moscow: War Diaries, Case No 8005.

ADM 199/1104, 1941-1945, North Russia: reports by Senior British Officer, Case No 8007.

ADM 199/1105, 1943-1945, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8008.

ADM 199/1106, 1941, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8009.

ADM 199/1107, 1941-1942, British Naval Mission, Moscow, and Liaison Officer, Black Sea: War Diaries and reports, Case No 8010.

ADM 199/1921, 1939-1945, Y Cases; Admiral Submarines: Dutch, Greek, Russian and US Submarines, allied submarine reports, operations, etc, Case No Y157.

ADM 199/2492, 1941-1945, War Diaries: British Naval Mission Moscow, Case No WH 8006.

ADM 205, First Sea Lord Papers.

ADM 205/57, Nov 1937-Aug 1945, Comparison of strength of armed forces in Great Britain with that of certain other countries in 1938, Case 00261, vol 66.

ADM 223, Naval Intelligence Papers 1939-1947.

ADM 223/6, 1944, Admiralty Intelligence Papers, German Y service reports on Russian units at sea in northern waters, Ref No ZIP/ZG/324.

ADM 223/7, 15-31 Mar 1945, German Naval Communications, Papers based on information from Z sources, Ref No ULTRA/ZIP/ZWTG/108.

- ADM 223/7, 22-30 Sep 1944, German Naval Communications, Papers based on information from Z sources, Ref No ULTRA/ZIP/ZWTG/87.
- ADM 223/47, 1943, Operational Intelligence Centre, Special Intelligence Summaries; Summary of Black Sea intelligence October to November, Ref No ZIP/ZGR/4.
- ADM 223/51, Naval Intelligence Division Reports, 1945, Russian-German co-operation August 1939 to June 1941, Ref No NID24/T39/45.
- ADM 223/51/Part 3, Naval Intelligence Division Reports, 1945, Inland waterways of USSR, Ref No NID24/T62/45.
- ADM 223/51/Part 3, Naval Intelligence Division Reports, 1945, War economy of USSR 1938-1941, Ref No NID24/T63/45.
- ADM 223/107, 1941-1946, Photocopies of Papers Cited in History of Intelligence 1939-1945 Vol 2.
- ADM 223/221, 15 May 1938, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/222, 15 Jun 1939, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/223, Jan-Jun 1946, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/224, Jul-Dec 1946, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/225, Jan-Jun 1947, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/226, Jul-Dec 1947, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/227, Jan-Jun 1948, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/228, Jul-Dec 1948, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/229, Jan-Jun 1949, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/230, Jul-Dec 1949, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/231, Jan-Jun 1950, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/232, Jul-Dec 1950, Admiralty Monthly Intelligence Reports.
- ADM 223/248, 1941-1944, British Naval Mission to Moscow; Black Sea Area: correspondence.
- ADM 223/249, 1941-1945, British Naval Mission to Moscow; Correspondence with Director of Naval Intelligence.
- ADM 223/250, 1941-1945, British Naval Mission to Moscow; Letters to Soviet Military Mission in London.
- ADM 223/251, 1941-1946, British Naval Mission to Moscow; Letters from Soviet Military Mission in London.
- ADM 223/252, 1942-1945, British Naval Mission to Moscow; 30 Military Mission, Moscow: final report.
- ADM 223/253, 1942-1945, British Naval Mission to Moscow; North Russia: Vol 2.
- ADM 223/257, 1940-1945, Naval Intelligence Division: staff and duties, former ref R69-SXI.

ADM 223/464, 1939-1942, NID Volumes; History of NID.

ADM 223/475, 1940-1947, NID Volumes; Intelligence collection methods, former ref 16.

ADM 234, Navy Reference Books: BR Series.

ADM 234/369, 1954, Naval Staff History - Second World War - Battle Summaries, No 22: Arctic convoys 1941-1945, Former Ref BR 1736(44).

#### Cabinet Office

CAB 16, Committee of Imperial Defence Ad-Hoc Sub-Committees of Enquiry: Proceedings and Memoranda.

CAB 16/112, 1935, Defence Requirements; Meetings 13-26, Memoranda 22-43.

CAB 21, Cabinet Office: Registered Files.

CAB 21/434, 1936, Defence Requirements: CID Committee on. Former ref ID/K/35.

CAB 48, Committee of Imperial Defence: Industrial Intelligence in Foreign Countries.

CAB 48/1, 9 Aug 1928-21 Feb 1929, Ministerial Committee, Reports, proceedings and memoranda, Series IFC.

CAB 48/6, May-Jun 1932, Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee, Soviet Russia: Technical Aid contracts, Series FCI(TA).

CAB 53, Committee of Imperial Defence, Chiefs of Staff Committee.

CAB 53/19, 27 Feb 1929, Enclosures to paper COS 186, Vol 2.

CAB 53/22, 20 Oct 1930-10 Dec 1932, Memoranda nos 251-300 (JP).

CAB 53/29, 1 Sep 1936-5 Jan 1937, Memoranda nos 511-540 (DC).

CAB 53/30, 6 Jan 1937-24 Mar 1937, Memoranda nos 541-570.

CAB 53/34, 26 Oct 1937-16 Dec 1937, Memoranda nos 636-652.

CAB 53/48, 18 Apr 1939-8 May 1939, Memoranda nos 879-901 (JP).

CAB 53/49, 10 May 1939-13 Jun 1939, Memoranda nos 902-915 (JP).

---

CAB 56, Committee of Imperial Defence, Joint Intelligence Subcommittee: Records.

CAB 56/2, Jun 1936-May 1937, Papers: nos 1-35.

CAB 56/4, Jun 1938-Aug 1939, Papers: nos 71-140.

CAB 79, War Cabinet, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Minutes.

CAB 79/14, 28 Aug 1941-12 Oct 1941, Minutes of meetings nos 301-350.

CAB 79/16, 28 Nov 1941-31 Dec 1941, Minutes of meetings nos 401-443.

CAB 79/18, 31 Jan 1942-3 Mar 1942, Minutes of meetings nos 34-70.

CAB 79/22, 8 Jul 1942-8 Aug 1942, Minutes of meetings nos 201-250.

CAB 79/25, 1 Jan 1943-25 Feb 1943, Minutes of meetings nos 1-50.

CAB 79/32, 16 Apr 1945-1 May 1945, Minutes of meetings nos 98-114.

CAB 79/67, 27 Oct 1943-27 Nov 1943, Minutes of meetings nos 261-290.

CAB 79/70, 2 Feb 1944-25 Feb 1944, Minutes of meetings nos 31-60.

CAB 81, War Cabinet, Chiefs of Staff Committees and Sub-Committees; Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee.

CAB 81/87, Sep 1939-Dec 1939, Meetings: 1-18; Jan 1940-Dec 1940, Meetings 1-70.

CAB 81/88, Dec 1940, Meetings: 71-75; Jan 1941-Dec 1941, Meetings: 1-40.

CAB 81/92, Jan 1944-Dec 1944, Meetings: 1(0)-75(0).

CAB 81/93, Jan 1945-Dec 1945, Meetings: 1(0)-83(0).

CAB 81/96, Jan 1940-May 1940, Papers: 1-70.

CAB 81/102, Apr 1941-Jun 1941, Papers: 164-250.

CAB 81/103, Jun 1941-Aug 1941, Papers: 251-327.

CAB 81/104, Aug 1941-Oct 1941, Papers: 328-405.

CAB 81/109, Jul 1942-Aug 1942, Papers: 256(0)-320(0).

CAB 81/114, Mar 1943-May 1943, Papers: 101(0)-200(0).

CAB 81/116, Jul 1943-Aug 1943, Papers: 286(0)-350(0).

CAB 81/117, Aug 1943-Oct 1943, Papers: 351(0)-410.

CAB 81/118, Oct 1943-Nov 1943, Papers: 411-470.

- 
- CAB 81/120, Jan 1944-Feb 1944, Papers: 1(0)-70(0).  
CAB 81/121, Feb 1944-Apr 1944, Papers: 71(0)-150(0).  
CAB 81/124, Jul 1944-Aug 1944, Papers: 301(0)-375.  
CAB 81/126, Oct 1944-Dec 1944, Papers: 451(0)-519(0).  
CAB 81/128, Mar 1945-Apr 1945, Papers: 76(0)-150.  
CAB 81/129, May 1945-Jul 1945, Papers: 151(0)-215.  
CAB 81/130, Jul 1945-Sep 1945, Papers: 216-280.  
CAB 81/132, Jan 1946-Apr 1946, Papers: 1(0)-40(0).  
CAB 81/133, Apr 1946-Oct 1946, Papers: 41-75(0).  
CAB 81/134, Nov 1946-Dec 1946, Papers: 76(0)-110(0).

CAB 106, Cabinet Office; Historical Section: Archivist and Librarian Files (AL Series).

- CAB 106/350, War of 1939-1945; Maritime operations: 1950, Extracts from despatches on convoys to North Russia 1942, by Admiral Sir John C. Tovey, Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet (supplement to London Gazette 39041) (H.M. Stationery Office 1950), Reference AL 1148.

**Foreign Office**

FO 181, Embassy and Consular Archives; Russia: Correspondence.

- FO 181/962/3, 1941, Kuibyshev; Evacuation, Moscow, Old File No 16.  
FO 181/969/25, 1942, Moscow; Russian Fleet, Old File No 28.  
FO 181/970/1, 1942, Moscow (Commercial), Archangel, Murmansk Port Facilities, Old File No 5.  
FO 181/971/1, 1942, Moscow (Commercial), Information, Agreement on Exchange of, Old File No 27.  
FO 181/979/16, 1943, Moscow, Northern Ports, Old File No 297.

FO 371, Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906.

- FO 371/22294, 1938, Political (Northern), Soviet Union, Intelligence Report on Soviet Union, File 220.  
FO 371/22296, 1938, Political (Northern), Soviet Union, Soviet navy, File 360.  
FO 371/22300, 1938, Political (Northern), Soviet Union, Soviet defence, File 1763.  
FO 371/23690, 1939, Northern, Soviet Union, Soviet fleet at Libau, File 518.  
FO 371/23696, 1939, Northern, Soviet Union, Soviet navy, File 1012.

---

FO 371/23699, 1939, Northern, Soviet Union, Intelligence Report on Soviet Union and Far East, File 2166.

FO 371/23701, 1939, Northern, Soviet Union, Passage of submarines through Kiel Canal, File 5461.

FO 371/29504, 1941, Northern, Soviet Union, Soviet warships in Black Sea, File 169.

FO 371/36968, 1943, Hospital units in North Russian ports, File 144.

FO 371/56834, Political (Northern - N); Soviet Union (38); 1946, Soviet Foreign Policy: strategic interests and intentions, File 605 (pp 8832-11288).

### **Ministry of Defence**

DEFE 4, Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes of Meetings.

DEFE 4/6, 30 Jul 1947-1 Sep 1947, Nos 97-113, Former Ref Vol 6/19.

DEFE 4/7, 2 Sep 1947-21 Oct 1947, Nos 114-129, Former Ref Vol 7/20.

DEFE 4/22, 23 May 1949-13 Jul 1949, Nos 76-100, Former Ref Vol 4/35.

### **War Office**

WO 208, Directorate of Military Intelligence.

WO 208/1850, Jun 1944-Feb 1945, Reports from 30 Military Mission, Moscow and Senior British Naval Officer, Archangel.

WO 208/3100, May 1941, Main administration of the northern sea routes.

WO 208/4111, Sep 1948, Russia, British intelligence survey of USSR.

Private Papers

### **Personal Archive**

Courtney, Commander Anthony. Personal papers in the possession of Commander Geoffrey Penn, RN (Retd).

Courtney, Commander Anthony. Personal papers in the possession of his widow, Mrs Angela Courtney.

Grey, Sub-Lieutenant Ian, RANVR (Retd). Diary and various contemporary documents.



## Published Documents, Canada

Canada. *The Report of the Royal Commission: To Investigate the Facts Relating to and the Circumstances Surrounding the Communication, by Public Officials and Other Persons in Positions of Trust of Secret and Confidential Information to Agents of a Foreign Power* [Kellock-Taschereau Royal Commission]. Ottawa, 1946.

## Published Documents and Speeches, United Kingdom

Gilbert, Martin. *The Churchill War Papers, Volume I: At the Admiralty September 1939-May 1940*. London: Heinemann, 1993.

James, Robert Rhodes, ed. *Winston S Churchill, His Complete Speeches 1897-1963, Volume VII: 1943-1949*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers in association with R R Bowker Company, 1974.

Watt, D Cameron, ed. *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, From the First to the Second World War, Series A, The Soviet Union, 1917-1939, Volume 14: The Soviet Union, Jan. 1937-Dec. 1938*. University Publications of America, 1986.

## Interviews

Grey, Sub-Lieutenant Ian, RANVR (Retd), Chiswick, London, 14 April 1990.

Hinsley, Professor Sir F Harry, St John's College, Cambridge, 15 October 1990.

Mack, Commander Robert, DSC, RN (Retd), Coulsdon, Surrey, 18 October 1992.

## Correspondence

Professor R V Jones to author, 29 October 1990.

## Diaries and Memoirs

Blake, George. *No Other Choice: An Autobiography*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1990.

Bond, Brian, ed. *Chief of Staff: The Diaries of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall, Volume Two, 1940-1944*. London: Leo Cooper, 1974.

- Bright-Holmes, John, ed. *Like It Was: The Diaries of Malcolm Muggeridge*. London: Collins, 1981.
- Broome, Captain Jack. *Convoy is to Scatter*. London: William Kimber, 1972.
- Churchill, Winston S. *The Second World War, Volume One: The Gathering Storm*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948.
- Churchill, Winston S. *The Second World War, Volume Two: Their Finest Hour*. London: The Reprint Society, 1951.
- Churchill, Winston S. *The Second World War, Volume Three: The Grand Alliance*. London: The Reprint Society, 1952.
- Churchill, Winston S. *The Second World War, Volume Four: The Hinge of Fate*. London: The Reprint Society, 1954.
- Courtney, Commander Anthony. *Sailor in a Russian Frame*. London: Johnson, 1968.
- Dilks, David, ed. *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, O.M., 1938-1945*. London: Cassell and Company Ltd, 1971.
- Eden, Anthony (the Rt Hon the Earl of Avon). *The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators*. London: Cassell, 1962.
- Golovko, Admiral Arseni G. *With the Red Fleet: The War Memoirs of the Late Admiral Arseni G. Golovko*. Vice-Admiral Sir Aubrey Mansergh, ed. Translated from the Russian by Peter Broomfield. London: Putnam & Co Ltd, 1965.
- Harvey, John, ed. *The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1937-1940*. London: Collins, 1970.
- Hinsley, F H and Alan Stripp, eds. *Codebreakers: The inside story of Bletchley Park*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Isakov, Admiral of the Fleet I S. *The Red Fleet in the Second World War*. London: Hutchinson and Co, undated.
- Kerslake, S A. *Coxswain in the Northern Convoys*. London: William Kimber, 1984.
- Kolyshkin, Rear-Admiral I. *Submarines in Arctic Waters (Memoirs)*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966.
- Krivitsky, W G. *I Was Stalin's Agent*. London: The Right Book Club, 1940.
- Lawrence, T E. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1962.
- Maisky, Ivan. *Memoirs of a Soviet Ambassador: The War 1939-43*. Translated from the Russian by Andrew Rothstein. London: Hutchinson of London, 1967.
- Montagu, Ewen. *Beyond Top Secret U*. Newton Abbot, Devon: Readers Union Group of Book Clubs, 1978.
- Montagu, Ewen. *The Man Who Never Was*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1953.
- Saul, Signalman Ivor. *Camera in Convoy: Cambridge to Murmansk 1941-1942*. Royston, Herts: Ellisons' Editions, 1987.
- Smith, Lieutenant-General Walter Bedell. *Moscow Mission 1946-1949*. London: William Heinemann Limited, 1950.

- Tolley, Kemp. *Caviar and Commissars: The Experiences of a U.S. Naval Officer in Stalin's Russia*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1983.
- Vian, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip. *Action This Day: A War Memoir*. London: Frederick Muller Limited, 1960.
- Walston, Oliver. *Arktika: Through the North East Passage by Icebreaker*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994.
- Winterbotham, F W. *The Ultra Secret*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974.
- Wright, Peter. *Spycatcher: The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co Limited, 1987.

Contemporary Publications - Monographs

- Bridge, Vice-Admiral Cyprian A G, ed. *History of the Russian Fleet During the Reign of Peter the Great by a Contemporary Englishman (1724)*. Publications of the Navy Records Society, Vol XV (1899).
- Hoy, Hugh Cleland. *40, O.B.: or How the War Was Won*. London: Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd, 1935.
- Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich. *What Is To Be Done?* 1902.
- McMurtrie, Francis E, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1936*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1936.
- McMurtrie, Francis E, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1937*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1937.
- McMurtrie, Francis E, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1938*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1938.
- McMurtrie, Francis E, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1939*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1939.
- Middleton, K W B. *Britain and Russia: An Historical Essay*. London: Hutchinson & Co (Publishers), Ltd, undated [c 1947].
- Parkes, Oscar, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1931*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1931.
- Parkes, Oscar, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1932*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1932.
- Parkes, Oscar, ed. *Jane's Fighting Ships 1934*. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co Ltd, 1934.
- Thursfield, Rear-Admiral H G, ed. *Brassey's Naval Annual 1942*. London: William Clowes, 1942.
- Twenty-eight of the foremost citizens of the U.S.S.R. *The Soviet Comes of Age*. London: William Hodge and Company, Limited, 1938.
- Velichko, M. "Twice Hero of the Soviet Union V. N. Leonov". Translated from the Russian by Major James F Gebhardt. Originally published as *Dvazhdy Geroy Sovetskogo Soyuzu V. N. Leonov*. Military Press of the Ministry of the Armed Forces of the USSR, 1948.

## Contemporary Publications - Articles

- Brackenbury, Major C B. "The Intelligence Duties of the Staff Abroad and at Home", *RUSI Journal*, vol 19 (1876), pp 242-267.
- Colomb, Captain J C R. "Naval Intelligence and Protection of Commerce in War", *RUSI Journal*, vol XXV, no CXII (1881), pp 553-590.
- Feshankov, A. "The Red Army and Defence". In Twenty-eight of the foremost citizens of the U.S.S.R. *The Soviet Comes of Age*. London: William Hodge and Company, Limited, 1938, pp 247-261.
- McMurtrie, Francis E. "Foreign Navies". In Rear-Admiral H G Thursfield, ed. *Brassey's Naval Annual 1942*. London: William Clowes, 1942, pp 60-82.
- Rousseau, pseud. "Economic Intelligence", *RUSI Journal*, vol 70 (1925), pp 701-709.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

## Official Histories

- Admiralty, Historical Section. *Naval Staff History, Second World War, Submarines, Volume I: Operations in Home, Northern and Atlantic Waters (Including the operations of Allied Submarines)*. C.B.3306(1). London: Admiralty, 1953, CONFIDENTIAL.
- Admiralty, Historical Section, Tactical, Torpedo & Staff Duties Division, Naval Staff. *The War at Sea, Vol. II, January-December, 1941: Preliminary Narrative (PRO, ADM 199/2378)*. London: Admiralty, 1944, SECRET.
- Admiralty, Historical Section, Tactical & Staff Duties Division, Naval Staff. *The War at Sea, Vol. III, January-December, 1942: Preliminary Narrative (PRO at ADM 199/2379)*. London: Admiralty, 1945.
- Admiralty, Historical Section, Tactical & Staff Duties Division, Naval Staff. *The War at Sea, Vol VI, Part II, January-September, 1945*. London: Admiralty, 1946.
- Hinsley, F H with E E Thomas, C F G Ransom and R C Knight. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume One*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1979.
- Hinsley, F H with E E Thomas, C F G Ransom and R C Knight. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume Two*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1981.
- Hinsley, F H with E E Thomas, C F G Ransom and R C Knight. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume Three, Part I*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1984.
- Hinsley, F H with E E Thomas, C A G Simkins and C F G Ransom. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume Three, Part II*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1988.

- Hinsley, F H and C A G Simkins. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume 4, Security and Counter-Intelligence*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1990.
- Howard, Michael. *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume 5, Strategic Deception*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1990.
- Roskill, DSC, RN, Captain S W. *The War at Sea 1939-1945, Volume I: The Defensive*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1954.
- Roskill, DSC, RN, Captain S W. *The War at Sea 1939-1945, Volume II: The Period of Balance*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956.
- Roskill, DSC, RN, Captain S W. *The War at Sea 1939-1945, Volume III: The Offensive, Part I, 1st June 1943-31st May 1944*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960.
- Roskill, DSC, RN, Captain S W. *The War at Sea 1939-1945, Volume III: The Offensive, Part II, 1st June 1944-14th August 1945*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1961.
- Woodward, Sir Llewellyn. *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War, Volume IV*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975.

Bibliographies, Dictionaries, Literary and Reference Works

- Albion, Robert Greenhalgh. *Naval and Maritime History: An Annotated Bibliography*, 4th edition. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1973.
- Atherton, Louise. *Top Secret: An Interim Guide to Recent Releases of Intelligence Records at the Public Record Office*. London: PRO Publications, 1993.
- Blackstock, Paul W and Frank L Schaf, Jr. *Intelligence, Espionage, Counterespionage, and Covert Operations: A Guide to Information Sources*. Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research Company, 1978.
- Churchill Archives Centre. "A Guide to the Holdings of the Churchill Archives Centre", July 1995.
- Churchill Archives Centre. "Select Classified Guide to the Holdings of the Churchill Archives Centre, June 1994.
- Clark, William George and William Aldis Wright, eds. *The Works of William Shakespeare*. London: Macmillan and Co, Limited, 1953.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 1970.
- Constantinides, George C. *Intelligence and Espionage: An Analytical Bibliography*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983.
- Dobson, Christopher and Ronald Payne. *The Dictionary of Espionage*. London: Harrap, 1984.
- English, Lieutenant-Colonel J A. "Of the Grey-Coat Coming: A Historiographical Exploration of English-Language Sources on Soviet Army Operations", *Military Affairs*, vol 52, no 4 (October 1988), pp 185-191.

- House, Jonathan M. *Military Intelligence 1870-1991: A Research Guide*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993.
- Jonson, Ben. "On Spies", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 8, no 4 (October 1993), p vii.
- Knight, R J B, ed. *Guide to the Manuscripts in the National Maritime Museum, Volume I: The Personal Collections*. London: Mansell, 1977.
- Knight, R J B, ed. *Guide to the Manuscripts in the National Maritime Museum, Volume 2: Public Records, Business Records and Artificial Collections*. London: Mansell Publishing, 1980.
- Law, Derek G. *The Royal Navy in World War Two: An Annotated Bibliography*. London: Greenhill Books, 1988.
- Migneault, Robert La Liberté. "Literature on Intelligence". In Alfred C Maurer, Marion D Tunstall and James M Keagle, eds. *Intelligence: Policy and Process*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1985, pp 357-381.
- Neilson, John G. "Select Checklist of Articles on the Soviet Armed Forces in the Western Military Press". In David R Jones, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979, pp 346-364.
- Parrish, Michael. *The Soviet Armed Forces: Books in English, 1950-1967*. Hoover Institution Bibliographical Series: XLVIII. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1970.
- Public Record Office, "Records Information; Intelligence Records in the Public Record Office", No 89. Kew, Surrey: Public Record Office, June 1989.
- Ryan, Joseph F. "Intelligence and National Security: A Guide to Information Sources". In Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, eds. *Defence Yearbook 1990*. London: Brassey's (UK), 1990, pp 461-471.
- Ryan, Joseph F. "In the Archives (VIII); Naval Intelligence Papers (ADM 223) held at the Public Record Office, Kew". In "Study Group On Intelligence Newsletter", No 4 (Winter 1990/91), pp 2-5.
- Smith, Jr, Myron J. *The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English, Volume I, Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Resistance Movements, and Secret Operations, 1939-1945*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-Clio, 1980.
- Smith, Jr, Myron J. *The Secret Wars: A Guide to Sources in English, Volume II, Intelligence, Propaganda and Psychological Warfare, Covert Operations, 1945-1980*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-Clio, 1981.
- Smith, Jr, Myron J. *The Soviet Navy, 1941-78: A Guide to Sources in English*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-Clio, 1980.
- The Times Atlas of the World*, 8th edition. London: Times Books in collaboration with Bartholomew, 1990.

Biographies

- Beesly, Patrick. *Very Special Admiral: The Life of Admiral J.H. Godfrey, CB*. London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1980.

- Bower, Tom. *The Perfect English Spy: Sir Dick White and the Secret War 1935-90*. London: Heinemann, 1995.
- Chisholm, Anne and Michael Davie. *Beaverbrook: A Life*. London: Hutchinson, 1992.
- Conquest, Robert. *Stalin: Breaker of Nations*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991.
- Ewing, A W. *The Man of Room 40: The Life of Sir Alfred Ewing*. London: Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd, 1939.
- Gilbert, Martin. *Road to Victory: Winston S. Churchill 1941-1945*. London: Heinemann, 1986.
- Howarth, David and Stephen Howarth. *Nelson: The Immortal Memory*. London: J M Dent & Sons Ltd, 1988.
- Humble, Richard. *Fraser of North Cape: The Life of Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fraser [1888-1981]*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983.
- Hyde, H Montgomery. *Neville Chamberlain*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976.
- James, Sir William. *The Eyes of the Navy: A Biographical Study of Admiral Sir Reginald Hall*. London: Methuen, 1953.
- McCormick, Donald. *17F: The Life of Ian Fleming*. London: Peter Owen, 1993.
- Padfield, Peter. *Dönitz, The Last Führer: Portrait of a Nazi War Leader*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1984.
- Shukman, Harold, ed. *Stalin's Generals*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993.
- Volkogonov, Dmitri. *Stalin: Triumph & Tragedy*. Edited and translated by Harold Shukman. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991.

## Monographs - Russian/Soviet Authors

- Achkasov, V I and N B Pavlovich. *Soviet Naval Operations in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1981.
- Ammon, Captain 1st Rank G A, Rear-Admiral Y A Grechko, Captain 1st Rank (Retd) M I Grigoriev and Colonel (Retd) N G Tsyurulnikov. *The Soviet Navy in War and Peace*. Translated from the Russian by Joseph Shapiro. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981.
- Plekhov, Anatoly. *Guarding the Country's Sea Frontiers*. Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1978.
- Tyushkevich, S A (Chief Author). *The Soviet Armed Forces: A History of Their Organizational Development*. Translated by the CIS Multilingual Section, Translation Bureau, Secretary of State Department, Ottawa, Canada. Moscow, 1978.

## Monographs - Western Authors

- Aldrich, Richard J, ed. *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Andrew, Christopher. *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community*. London: Heinemann, 1985.
- Andrew, Christopher and David Dilks, eds. *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1984.
- Art, Robert J and Kenneth N Waltz, eds. *The Use of Force: International Politics and Foreign Policy*, 2nd edition. London: University Press of America, undated [c 1983].
- Barnett, Correlli. *Engage the Enemy More Closely: The Royal Navy in the Second World War*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991.
- Beesly, Patrick. *Room 40: British Naval Intelligence 1914-18*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1982.
- Beesly, Patrick. *Very Special Intelligence: The Story of the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre 1939-1945*. London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1977.
- Beevor, Antony. *The Spanish Civil War*. London: Orbis Publishing, 1982.
- Bekker, Cajus. *Hitler's Naval War*. Translated and edited by Frank Ziegler. London: Macdonald, 1974.
- Bell, P M H. *John Bull and the Bear: British Public Opinion, Foreign Policy and the Soviet Union 1941-1945*. London: Edward Arnold, 1990.
- Blond, Georges. *Ordeal Below Zero*. London: Souvenir Press, 1956.
- Bonds, Ray, ed. *The Soviet War Machine: An encyclopedia of Russian military equipment and strategy*. Abingdon, Oxon: Purnell Book Services Limited, 1976.
- Bower, Tom. *The Paperclip Conspiracy: The Battle for the Spoils and Secrets of Nazi Germany*. London: Michael Joseph, 1987.
- Boyle, Andrew. *The Climate of Treason: Five Who Spied for Russia*. London, Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd, 1979.
- Breemer, Jan. *Soviet Submarines: Design, Development and Tactics*. Coulsdon, Surrey: Jane's Information Group, 1989.
- Brennecke, Jochen. *The Tirpitz: The Drama of the 'Lone Queen of the North'*. Translated from the German by Frederick Holt. London: Robert Hale Limited, 1963.
- Breyer, Siegfried. *Guide to the Soviet Navy*. Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1970.
- Brown, Anthony Cave. *Bodyguard of Lies*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc, 1975.
- Brown, David. *Warship Losses of World War Two*. London: Arms and Armour, 1990.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw. *Soviet Navy at War 1941-1945*. London: Arms and Armour, 1985.
- Burgess, III, Major William H, ed. *Inside Spetsnaz: Soviet Special Operations, A Critical Analysis*. Novato, California: Presidio Press, 1990.



- Busch, Corvette-Captain Fritz-Otto. *The Drama of the Scharnhorst: A Factual Account from the German Viewpoint*. Translated from the German by Eleanor Brockett and Anton Ehrenzweig. London: Robert Hale Limited, 1956.
- Campbell, Vice-Admiral Sir Ian and Captain Donald Macintyre. *The Kola Run: A Record of Arctic Convoys 1941-1945*. London: Frederick Muller Ltd, 1958.
- Clark, Alan. *Barbarossa: The Russian-German Conflict, 1941-45*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1995.
- Clayton, Aileen. *The Enemy is Listening: The Story of the Y Service*. London: Hutchinson, 1980.
- Cogar, William B, ed. *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Eighth Naval History Symposium*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1989.
- Collier, Richard. *1941: Armageddon*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981.
- Collier, Richard. *The War That Stalin Won: Tehran - Berlin*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983.
- Compton-Hall, MBE, RN (Retd), Commander Richard. *The Underwater War 1939-1945*. Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1982.
- Conquest, Robert. *The Great Terror: A Reassessment*. London: Pimlico, 1992.
- Deacon, Richard, pseud of Donald McCormick. *A History of the British Secret Service*. London: Frederick Muller Ltd, 1969.
- Deacon, Richard, pseud of Donald McCormick. *The Silent War: A History of Western Naval Intelligence*, revised edition. London: Grafton Books, 1988.
- Dobson, Christopher, John Miller and Ronald Payne. *The Cruellest Night: Germany's Dunkirk and the sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979.
- Dreisziger, N F, ed. *Mobilization for Total War: The Canadian, American and British Experience 1914-1918, 1939-1945*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1981.
- Dunnigan, James F, ed. *The Russian Front: Germany's War in the East, 1941-45*. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1978.
- Elliott-Bateman, Michael, ed. *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare, volume one: Intelligence, Subversion, Resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970.
- Erickson, John. *The Road to Berlin: Stalin's War with Germany Volume 2*. London: Grafton Books, 1985.
- Erickson, John and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994.
- Evans, I O, ed. *Spy and Counter-Spy: Bernard Newman's Story of the British Secret Service*. London: Robert Hale, 1970.
- Fitzgibbon, Constantine. *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*. London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon Ltd, 1976.
- Gallagher, Thomas. *Against all Odds: Midget Submarines against the Tirpitz*. London: Macdonald, 1971.
- Garrett, Richard. *Scharnhorst and Gneisenau: The elusive sisters*. London: David & Charles, 1978.

- Gebhardt, Major James F. *The Petsamo-Kirkenes Operation: Soviet Breakthrough and Pursuit in the Arctic, October 1944*. Leavenworth Papers Number 17. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1990.
- Golley, John. *Hurricanes Over Murmansk*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Patrick Stephens, 1987.
- Handel, Michael I. *Masters of War: Sun Tzu, Clausewitz and Jomini*. London: Frank Cass, 1992.
- Herrick, USN (Retd), Commander Robert Waring. *Soviet Naval Strategy: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice*. Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1968.
- Hopple, Gerald W and Bruce W Watson, eds. *The Military Intelligence Community*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1986.
- Hough, Richard. *The Fleet That Had to Die*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957.
- Howse, Derek. *Radar at Sea: The Royal Navy in World War 2*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993.
- Hoyt, Edwin P. *199 Days: The Battle for Stalingrad*. London: Robson Books, 1993.
- Irving, David. *The Destruction of Convoy PQ17*. London: Cassell, 1968.
- Jones, David R, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979.
- Jones, R V. *Reflections on Intelligence*. London: Heinemann, 1989.
- Jordan, John. *Soviet Submarines: 1945 to the present*. London: Arms & Armour Press, 1989.
- Kahn, David. *Hitler's Spies: German Military Intelligence in World War II*. New York: Collier Books, 1978.
- Kahn, David. *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967.
- Kemp, Paul. *Convoy! Drama in Arctic Waters*. London: Arms and Armour, 1993.
- Kennedy, Ludovic. *Menace: The Life and Death of the Tirpitz*. London: Book Club Associates, 1979.
- Knightley, Phillip. *The Second Oldest Profession: The Spy as Bureaucrat, Patriot, Fantasist and Whore*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1986.
- Langhorne, Richard, ed. *Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War: Essays in honour of F. H. Hinsley*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Lipscomb, Commander F W. *The British Submarine*. Greenwich: Conway Maritime Press, 1975.
- Longmate, Norman. *How We Lived Then: A history of everyday life during the Second World War*. London: Arrow Book, 1971.
- Love, Jr, Robert W, ed. *The Chiefs of Naval Operations*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980.
- Lund, Paul and Harry Ludlam. *PQ 17 - Convoy to Hell: The Survivors' Story*. London: W Foulsham & Co Ltd, 1968.
- McCWire, Michael, ed. *Soviet Naval Developments, Capability and Context: Papers Relating to Russia's Maritime Interests*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973.

- MccGwire, Michael and John McDonnell, eds. *Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977.
- MccGwire, Michael, Ken Booth and John McDonnell, eds. *Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975.
- McLachlan, Donald. *Room 39: Naval Intelligence in Action 1939-45*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968.
- Mars, Alastair. *British Submarines at War 1939-1945*. London: William Kimber, 1971.
- Martienssen, Anthony. *Hitler and His Admirals*. London: Secker and Warburg, 1948.
- Maurer, Alfred C, Marion D Tunstall and James M Keagle, eds. *Intelligence: Policy and Process*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1985.
- May, Ernest R, ed. *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Mayer, S L, ed. *The Russian War Machine 1917-1945*. London: Bison Books, 1977.
- Meister, Jürg. *Soviet Warships of the Second World War*. London: Macdonalds and Jane's (Publishers) Ltd, 1977.
- Meister, Jürg. *The Soviet Navy, Volume One (Navies of the Second World War)*. London: Macdonald, 1972.
- Millett, Allan R and Williamson Murray. *Military Effectiveness, Volume III: The Second World War*. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988.
- Mitchell, Mairin. *The Maritime History of Russia 848-1948*. London: Sidgwick, 1949.
- Moore, RN, Captain John E. *Warships of the Soviet Navy*. London: Jane's Publishing Company Limited, 1981.
- Morris, Eric. *The Russian Navy: Myth and Reality*. London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1977.
- Nitze, Paul H, Leonard Sullivan, Jr and the Atlantic Council Working Group on Securing the Seas. *Securing the Seas: The Soviet Naval Challenge and Western Alliance Options*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979.
- Palmer, Michael A. *Origins of the Maritime Strategy: American Naval Strategy in the First Postwar Decade*. Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, 1988.
- Pearce, Frank. *Running the Gauntlet: The Battles for the Barents Sea*. London: Fontana, 1989.
- Philbin III, Tobias R. *The Lure of Neptune: German-Soviet Naval Collaboration and Ambitions, 1919-1941*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1994.
- Pincher, Chapman. *Too Secret Too Long: The great betrayal of Britain's crucial secrets and the cover-up*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd, 1984.
- Polmar, Norman. *Soviet Naval Power: Challenge for the 1970s*. Strategy Papers No 13. New York: National Strategy Information Center, Inc, 1972.
- Polmar, Norman, ed. *The Modern Soviet Navy: An Assessment of the U.S.S.R.'s Current Warships, Naval Capabilities and Development*. London: Arms and Armour Press, 1979.

- Polmar, Norman and Jurrien Noot. *Submarines of the Russian and Soviet Navies, 1718-1990*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1991.
- Pope, Dudley. *73 North: The Battle of the Barents Sea*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958.
- Potter, John Deane. *Fiasco: The Break-out of the German Battleships*. Newton Abbot, Devon: Readers Union, 1971.
- Ranft, Bryan, ed. *Technical Change and British Naval Policy, 1860-1939*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.
- Ranft, Bryan and Geoffrey Till. *The Sea in Soviet Strategy*, 2nd edition. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1989.
- Rees, David. *The Soviet Seizure of the Kuriles*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1985.
- Roberts, William R and Jack Sweetman, eds. *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Ninth Naval History Symposium Held at the United States Naval Academy, 18-20 October 1989*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1991.
- Robertson, Terence. *Channel Dash: The Drama of Twenty-four Hours of War*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1958.
- Rohwer, J and G Hummelchen. *Chronology of the War at Sea 1939-1945: The Naval History of World War Two*, 2nd edition. London: Greenhill Books, 1992.
- Royal United Service Institution. *The Soviet Union in Europe and the Near East: Her Capabilities and Intentions*. London: Royal United Service Institution, 1970.
- Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, eds. *Defence Yearbook 1990*. London: Brassey's (UK), 1990.
- Ruge, Vice-Admiral. *Sea Warfare 1939-1945: A German Viewpoint*. Translated from the German by Commander M G Saunders, RN. London: Cassell & Company Ltd, 1957.
- Ruge, Vice Admiral Friedrich. *The Soviets as Naval Opponents 1941-1945*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1979.
- Saunders, RN, Commander M G, ed. *The Soviet Navy*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958.
- Schofield, B B. *The Russian Convoys*. London: Pan Books Ltd, 1971.
- Schofield, Ernest and Roy Conyers Nesbit. *Arctic Airmen: The RAF in Spitsbergen and North Russia in 1942*. London: William Kimber, 1987.
- Smith, Constance Babington. *Evidence in Camera: The Story of Photographic Intelligence in World War II*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1958.
- Smith, Peter C. *Arctic Victory: The Story of Convoy PQ 18*. London: Crecy Books, 1994.
- Stagg, J M. *Forecast for Overlord*. New York: Norton, 1972.
- Tarrant, V E. *The Last Year of the Kriegsmarine: May 1944-May 1945*. London: Arms and Armour, 1994.
- Taylor, Telford. *Munich: The Price of Peace*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1979.
- Tolstoy, Nikolai. *Stalin's Secret War*. London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1981.

- Vulliez, Albert and Jacques Mordal. *Battleship Scharnhorst*. Translated from the French by George Malcolm. London: Hutchinson of London, 1958.
- Wark, Wesley K. *The Ultimate Enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1933-1939*. London: I B Tauris & Co Ltd, 1985.
- Watt, D Cameron. *Personalities and Policies: Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*. London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1965.
- Watts, A J. *The Loss of the Scharnhorst*. London: Ian Allen, 1970.
- Watts, Anthony J. *Allied Cruisers*. London: Jane's Publishing Company, 1979.
- Watts, Anthony J. *Allied Submarines*. London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1977.
- Weisband, Edward. *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.
- West, Nigel, pseud of Rupert Allason. *GCHQ: The Secret Wireless War 1900-86*. London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson, Ltd, 1986.
- West, Nigel, pseud of Rupert Allason. *MI6: British Secret Intelligence Operations 1909-45*. London: George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983.
- Whitley, M J. *German Destroyers of World War Two*, 2nd edition. London: Arms and Armour, 1991.
- Winn, Godfrey. 'P.Q.17'. London: Hutchinson & Co (Publishers) Ltd, undated [c 1946].
- Winton, John. *Ultra at Sea*. London: Leo Cooper, 1988.
- Woodhouse, C M. *Navarino*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1965.
- Woodman, Richard. *The Arctic Convoys 1941-1945*. London: John Murray, 1994.
- Woodward, David. *The Russians at Sea*. London: William Kimber and Co Ltd, 1965.
- Woodward, David. *The Secret Raiders: The Story of the Operations of the German Armed Merchant Raiders in the Second World War*, 2nd edition. London: William Kimber, 1955.
- Woodward, David. *The Tirpitz*. London: William Kimber, 1953.
- Young, John M. *Britain's Sea War: A Diary of Ship Losses 1939-1945*. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: Patrick Stephens Limited, 1989.

## Articles - Russian/Soviet Authors

- Achkasov, Captain 1st Rank V. "Minelaying Operations in the Baltic in the Initial Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1977), pp 19-25.
- Achkasov, Captain 1st Rank V. "Naval Amphibious Actions in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1978), pp 11-16.

- Achkasov, Captain 1st Rank V. "The Second World War and Scandinavia". Review of A M Noskov, *Skandinavskiy platsdarm vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne* (The Scandinavian Bridgehead in the Second World War) (Nauka, 1977), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1978), pp 116-117.
- Adrianov, Captain 1st Rank (retired) I. "Scientific Activity of Shipboard Electrical Engineers During the War Years", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 79-81.
- Afnas'yev, Captain 1st Rank G and Captain 1st Rank V Solov'yev (Reserves). "Submarine Communications", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1985), pp 28-31.
- "Always Ready for Action", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1985), pp 6-10.
- Ammon, Captain 1st Rank G. "Naval Landing Parties in the Arctic (First Period of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1975), pp 27-32.
- Ammon, Captain 1st Rank G. "Securing Sea Lanes (Based on the Combat Actions of the Northern Fleet in 1941-45)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1978), pp 26-32.
- Andrushchyenko, Captain 2nd Rank A. "The Commanding Officer and the Political Officer: Facets of the Relationship", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1988), pp 50-53.
- Antonov, Rear-Admiral (Retired) G and Vice-Admiral (Retired) L Korshunov. "At the Dawn of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1988), pp 65-69.
- Aristov, Captain 1st Rank A. "December '40: Prologue of the War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1990), pp 22-27.
- Arsen'yev, V. "Son of the Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1989), pp 83-87.
- Bakayev, V. "Sea Transport in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1976), pp 25-29.
- "Be Proud of a Revolutionary Name", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1988), pp 3-5.
- Borzhkov, Colonel-Engineer (Reserves) F. "Engineer Support to River Flotilla Combat Actions", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1984), pp 23-26.
- Bykhovskiy, Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) I. "The Use of Submarines to Lay Mines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1977), pp 25-29.
- Bystrov, Captain 1st Rank Yu. "Winning Sea Supremacy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1977), pp 15-20.
- Chefonov, Captain 1st Rank I. "Through Fog, Ice and Storms (In honour of the 50th anniversary of the first transit of the Northern Sea Route by a submarine in history)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1990), pp 71-74.
- Chemeris, Rear Admiral-Engineer M. "The Electronic Service During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 103-107.
- Chernavin, Admiral of the Fleet V. "The Soviet Naval Art in the Third Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 15-23.
- Chernyshev, A. "The First-Born of the Great Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1988), pp 59-61.
- Devyaterikov, Rear-Admiral N. "Amur Naval Flotilla Actions in the Manchurian Operations", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1985), pp 29-33.

- Dotsenko, Captain 2nd Rank V. "Soviet Art of Naval Warfare in the Postwar Period", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1989), pp 22-28.
- Fakeyev, Captain First Rank (Reserves) K F. "The Landing at Grigor'yeva", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 56-59.
- Filonov, Captain 1st Rank S I. "Armed Conflict and Communications by Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1965), pp 33-41.
- "From the History of the Development of our Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 26-29.
- Gerngross, Captain 1st Rank (Retired) V. "SHCHIT Lands an Amphibious Assault", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1977), pp 63-66.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G. "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1972), pp 20-32.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G. "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1972), pp 14-24.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G. "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1972), pp 14-24.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S G. "Navies in War and in Peace", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1972), pp 13-21.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S. "Remember the War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1984), pp 5-11.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet S G. "Soviet Seamen in the Battles to Liberate the Danube States", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1964), pp 3-13.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S. "The Experience of the Great Patriotic War and the Present Stage in the Development of the Naval Art", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 13-22.
- Gorshkov, Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S. "The Navy Did its Duty for the Motherland Right to the End", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 8-15.
- Grigor'yev, Vice-Admiral (Retired) V. "Combat Actions of the Danube Naval Flotilla at the Start of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1979), pp 16-21.
- "Guarding the Sea Frontiers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1985), pp 3-9.
- "Historical Ship Numbers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1987), p 87.
- "I D Papanin Awarded S O Makarov Gold Medal", *Vestnik AN ASSR*, no 3 (1985), p 140.
- Il'ichev, Engineer-Colonel A T. "From the History of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding (Destroyers)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1967), pp 18-22.
- "In the Fire of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1990), pp 15-20.
- "Ivan Dmitriyevich Papanin", *Vestnik AN ASSR*, no 4 (1986), pp 112-113.
- Karmenok, Captain 1st Rank. "Control of Navy Submarines in Operations on Enemy Sea Lanes", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1983), pp 22-26.

- Kobelev, Major-General of the Reserve N. "Logistic Support of Amphibious Landings (based on the experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1987), pp 23-26.
- Kolpakov, Captain 2nd Rank A and Captain 2nd Rank Ye Shubochkin. "Minelaying Actions of Soviet Submarines in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1989), pp 33-37.
- Kondriyanenko, Captain-Lieutenant V. "At the Origins of the Fleet Press", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1988), p 67.
- Kosikov, Captain 2nd Rank I. "Torpedo Weaponry in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1976), pp 72-77.
- Krylov, Vice-Admiral M. "Naval Communications in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 23-28.
- Kryukov, Rear-Admiral V and Captain 2nd Rank M Kozhevnikov. "Operations Entities in the Russian and Soviet Navy (1905-1941)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1989), pp 15-19.
- Kuz'min, Captain 1st Rank P I. "Collecting Intelligence on the Situation at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1966), pp 20-25.
- Kuz'min, I. "Intelligence in Blockade Operations at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1978), pp 30-36.
- Kuznetsov, N. "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization of the Fleets and Their Leadership During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1975), pp 28-33.
- Kuznetsov, N. "Certain Questions Concerning the Organization of the Fleets and Their Leadership in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1975), pp 16-22.
- Kuznyetsov, Colonel-General of Aviation G. "Naval Aviation in Naval Warfare", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1988), pp 19-25.
- Maslennikov, V. "The First Soviet Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1987), pp 69-72.
- Matveyev, Rear-Admiral V I. "Secrecy is the Basis for the Successful Actions by Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1965), pp 19-26.
- Mel'nikov, Colonel V. "Development of Naval Aviation in the Prewar Period", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1990), pp 44-49.
- Mel'nikov, Major-General P. "Surrounded by Legends", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 50-54.
- Mikoyan, Stepan A. "Barbarossa and the Soviet Leadership; A Recollection". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 123-133.
- Mikushevich, Vladimir. "Borders Reek of Death; Low-income Groups are the Staunchest Defenders of Russian Frontiers", *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (25 September 1992). In *Daily Review: Translations from the Russian Press*, vol XXXVIII, no 186 (10525) (25 September 1992).
- Monakov, Captain 1st Rank M. "'Flare' Over the Baltic", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1990), pp 24-31.
- Ostashevskiy, Captain 3rd Rank G. "Mine Operations in the Black Sea in 1941-1942", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1984), pp 16-19.
- Petrov, Lieutenant-General of Aviation B L. "The Development of Methods and Tactics for the Use of Soviet Naval Aviation", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1967), pp 36-42.



- Popov, Rear-Admiral G and Captain 1st Rank A Kuz'menko. "Development and Combat Employment of Radar Facilities (Based on the Experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 75-79.
- Pushkin, Rear-Admiral A. "Soviet Submarines in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1983), pp 24-29.
- Rudnitskiy, Engineer-Rear Admiral Reserve M A. "Soviet Submarines", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 7 (1967), pp 29-34.
- Savin, Engineer-Captain 3rd Rank A A and Engineer-Captain 3rd Rank I V Ozimov, "From the History of Soviet Naval Shipbuilding (Cruisers)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1966), pp 16-21.
- Selivanov, Vice-Admiral V. "The Work of Control Organs in Combat Operations on Coastal Axes (From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 1 (1989), pp 22-28.
- Serebryanyy, Captain 1st Rank N. "Organization of Communications with Northern Fleet Submarines in the War Years", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1978), pp 82-85.
- Sergeyev, Admiral of the Fleet N. "Combat Actions of the Volga Naval Flotilla During the Battle of Stalingrad", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1982), pp 19-26.
- Sergeyev, Admiral of the Fleet N. "Operational Art and Tactics of the Navy in the Second Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1985), pp 23-31.
- Sheremet'yev, Captain 1st Rank B. "Precursor of the Russian Navy", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1988), pp 60-66.
- Shlomin, Professor Captain 1st Rank V. "Combat Operations of the Northern Fleet in 1944", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1974), pp 8-13.
- Shuginin, Lieutenant-General of Aviation (Retired) A M. "Naval Aviation's Combat Road; Part III, The Third Period of the Great Patriotic War (1944-1945)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1966), pp 21-27.
- Slavgorodskiy, Rear-Admiral A. "Rear Support of Combat Operations of the Northern Fleet", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1985), pp 18-22.
- Smirnov, Admiral of the Fleet N. "Studying Assiduously the Experience of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1979), pp 3-7.
- Sokha, Captain 1st Rank D P. "The Past and Present of Submarine Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1971), pp 20-29.
- Sokolov, Boris V. "The Role of Lend-Lease in Soviet Military Efforts, 1941-1945" (translated by Colonel David M Glantz), *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, vol 7, no 3 (September 1994), pp 567-586.
- Stalbo, Professor Rear-Admiral K. "Losses of the Fascist German Navy During the Period of the Great Patriotic War. What Do They Tell Us?", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1975), pp 108-116.
- Stalbo, Professor Rear-Admiral K. "The Black Sea Fleet in Offensive Operations of 1944", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1974), pp 22-27.
- Stalbo, Professor Rear-Admiral K. "The Development of the Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1973), pp 16-23.
- "Staunch Guardian of the Northern Borders", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1983), pp 9-13.

- Stepanov, Captain 1st Rank M Ye. "The Effect of the Development of Military Technology on the Execution of Combat Missions at Sea", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 8 (1964), pp 21-27.
- Sverdlov, Captain 1st Rank A V. "The Glorious Combat Activities of the Flotilla", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 4 (1964), pp 23-26.
- Sysoyev, Admiral V. "The Soviet Naval Art in the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1979), pp 11-15.
- Tarasyuk, Captain 1st Rank Yu and Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) L Filimonov. "Naval Bibliography", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1988), pp 85-87.
- Titov, Captain 1st Rank K. "Naval Intelligence Targets and Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1972), pp 58-62.
- Tynyankin, Vice-Admiral I and Captain 1st Rank Ye Shoshkov. "Use of Sonar Equipment in World War II", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1985), pp 71-74.
- Tyurin, Captain 2nd Rank B. "The First Soviet Destroyers", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1988), pp 50-52.
- Usov, V Iu. "The *Kronshtadt* Class Battle Cruisers", translated and with a commentary by Evan Mawdsley, *Warship International*, vol XXVIII, no 4 (1991), pp 380-386.
- Verbovoy, Captain 2nd Rank O. "From the Soviet Navy's Experience with Amphibious Operations on Rivers in the Strategic Operations of 1944-1945", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1984), pp 18-23.
- Vladimirskiy, Admiral L A. "Operations with the Army", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1965), pp 14-22.
- Volkogonov, Dmitri. "The German Attack, the Soviet Response, Sunday, 22 June 1941". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 76-94.
- Vorob'yev, Captain 1st Rank (Reserves) K. "In the Rush of Combat", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1980), pp 55-62.
- Vorob'yev, Captain 1st Rank (Reserve) V. "Landing Operations of the Black Sea Fleet in the Great Patriotic War (Questions of Planning and Preparation)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 3 (1985), pp 29-33.
- Vorob'yev, Captain 1st Rank V. "Submarine Operations of the Black Sea Fleet Against the Enemy's Lines of Communications in 1943", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 5 (1987), pp 19-22.
- Vorob'yev, Captain 1st Rank V. "The Development and Employment of Surface Ships (1926-1945)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 2 (1980), pp 70-75.
- V'yunenکو, Captain 1st Rank N. "Some Questions of Joint Naval and Ground Force Operations in the First Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1977), pp 14-19.
- V'yunenکو, Captain 1st Rank N. "The Development of Submarine Forces", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 1 (1975), pp 26-37.
- V'yunenکو, Rear-Admiral N and Captain 1st Rank (Retired) K Penzin. "Navies in World War II". Review of *Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945* (History of World War II of 1939-1945), 12 volumes (Voenizdat, 1973-1982), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1983), pp 89-91.
- Yakimov, Captain 3rd Rank S. "From the History of Fleet Pay and Allowances", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 12 (1989), pp 78-82.

- Yegorov, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Fleet, Admiral G. "The Red Banner Northern Fleet on Watch", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1973), pp 3-9.
- Yeliseyev, Vice-Admiral (Retd) I D. "The Combat Operations of a Black Sea Fleet Squadron During the War Years". Review of G F Godlevskiy, N M Grechanyuk, V M Kononenko, *Pokhody boyevyye* (Combat Patrols) (Military Publishing House, Voenizdat, 1966), *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 10 (1966), pp 89-94.
- Yoltukhovskiy, Captain 1st Rank V. "As It Was ... (Combat Training of Northern Fleet Minesweeping Forces in the Great Patriotic War)", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1990), pp 33-37.
- Yoltukhovskiy, Captain 2nd Rank V. "Development of Influence Sweeps Just Prior to and During the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 9 (1986), pp 70-72.
- Yoltukhovskiy, Captain 2nd Rank V. "The Combat Training of Minesweeper Forces of the Black Sea Fleet on the Eve of and in the Initial Phase of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 11 (1984), pp 44-47.
- Zamchalov, Captain 1st Rank (Retd) A. "The Fleet in the Initial Period of the Great Patriotic War", *Morskoy Sbornik*, no 6 (1989), pp 13-18.

## Articles - Western Authors

- Anderson, C C. "A Dagger in our Cloak", *Naval Review*, vol 75, no 3 (July 1987), pp 242-245.
- Andrade, Jr, Ernest. "Great Britain, the Submarine, and Naval Limitations". In William R Roberts and Jack Sweetman, eds. *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Ninth Naval History Symposium Held at the United States Naval Academy, 18-20 October 1989*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1991, pp 67-79.
- Andrew, Christopher. "British Intelligence and the Breach with Russia in 1927", *Historical Journal*, vol 25, no 4 (1982), pp 957-964.
- Andrew, Christopher M. "The Mobilization of British Intelligence for the Two World Wars". In N F Dreisziger, ed. *Mobilization for Total War: The Canadian, American and British Experience 1914-1918, 1939-1945*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1981, pp 89-110.
- Andriole, Stephen J. "Basic Intelligence". In Gerald W Hopple and Bruce W Watson, eds. *The Military Intelligence Community*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1986, pp 99-116.
- Annan, Noël. "Betrayal", *New York Review of Books*, vol 34, no 14 (24 September 1987), pp 47-53.
- Bathurst, Captain Robert B, US Navy (Retd). Review of V I Achkasov and N B Pavlovich. *Soviet Naval Operations in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1981. In *Naval War College Review*, vol XXXV, no 6, sequence 294 (November-December 1982), pp 93-97.
- Beesly, Patrick. "Convoy PQ 17: A Study of Intelligence and Decision-Making", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 5, no 2 (April 1990), pp 292-322.
- Bellamy, Christopher D and Joseph S Lahnstein. "The New Soviet Defensive Policy: Khalkhin Gol 1939 As Case Study", *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly*, vol XX, no 3 (September 1990), pp 19-32.

- Biber, Dušan. "The Yugoslav *Coup d'État*, 27 March 1941". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 34-42.
- Breemer, Jan S. "Soviet Naval Capabilities", *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, vol 1, no 4 (Winter 1986-87), pp 119-132.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw. "The Beginnings of Soviet Naval Power; G5 Class MTBs", *Warship*, no 8 (October 1978), pp 230-245.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw and Boris Lemachko. "The Bad Weather Flotilla Part 1", *Warship*, no 22, undated.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw and Boris Lemachko. "The Bad Weather Flotilla Part 2", *Warship*, no 23, undated.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw and Boris Lemachko. "The Bad Weather Flotilla Part 3", *Warship*, no 24, undated.
- Budzbon, Przemyslaw and Boris V Lemachko. "The Salvage of HM S/M L55 by the Soviet Navy; The Reason Why", *Warship*, no 45 (January 1988), pp 2-10.
- Daly, R W. "Russia's Maritime Past". In Commander M G Saunders, RN, ed. *The Soviet Navy*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958, pp 23-43.
- Denniston, A G. "The Government Code and Cypher School Between the Wars", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 1, no 1 (January 1986), pp 48-70.
- Dilks, David. "A question of intelligence", *The Listener*, vol 100, no 2581 (12 October 1978), pp 464-465.
- Dilks, David. "Flashes of Intelligence: The Foreign Office, the SIS and Security Before the Second World War". In Christopher Andrew and David Dilks, eds. *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1984, pp 101-125.
- Doerr, Paul W. "The Changkufeng/Lake Khasan Incident of 1938: British Intelligence on Soviet and Japanese Military Performance", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), pp 184-199.
- Donovan, G Murphy. "Evidence, Intelligence and the Soviet Threat", *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, vol 1, no 2 (Summer 1986), pp 1-28.
- Erickson, John. "Night Witches, Snipers and Laundresses", *History Today*, vol 40 (July 1990), pp 29-35.
- Erickson, John. "Threat Identification and Strategic Appraisal by the Soviet Union, 1930-1941". In Ernest R May, ed. *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp 375-423.
- Erskine, Ralph. "The Soviets and Naval Enigma: Some Comments", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 4, no 3 (July 1989), pp 503-511.
- Fairbanks, Jr, Charles H. "The Washington Naval Treaty, 1922-1936". In Robert J Art and Kenneth N Waltz, eds. *The Use of Force: International Politics and Foreign Policy*, 2nd edition. London: University Press of America, undated [c 1983], pp 473-477.
- Ferris, John. "Whitehall's Black Chamber: British Cryptology and the Government Code and Cypher School, 1919-29", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 2, no 1 (January 1987), pp 54-91.
- Flory, Harriette. "The Arcos Raid and the Rupture of Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1927", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 12, no 4 (October 1977), pp 707-723.

- Frank, Jr, Willard C. "Misperception and Incidents at Sea: The *Deutschland* and *Leipzig* Crises, 1937", *Naval War College Review*, vol XLIII, no 2, sequence 330 (Spring 1990), pp 31-46.
- Frank, Jr, Willard C. "Politico-Military Deception at Sea in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-39", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), pp 84-112.
- Gebhardt, James F and William H Burgess III. "The Far North Origin of Naval Spetsnaz". In Major William H Burgess III, ed. *Inside Spetsnaz: Soviet Special Operations, A Critical Analysis*. Novato, California: Presidio Press, 1990, pp 81-112.
- Glantz, David M. "Attaché Assessments of the Impact of the 1930s Purges on the Red Army", *Journal of Soviet Military Studies*, vol 2, no 3 (September 1989), pp 417-438.
- Goldsack, Benedict. "Breaking the Ice", *Geographical*, vol 64, no 2 (February 1992), pp 22-27.
- Gordievsky, Oleg. "Defective justifications". Review of George Blake, *No Other Choice: An Autobiography*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1990. In "Books", *Sunday Times* (4 November 1990), p 11.
- Gorodetsky, Gabriel. "An Alliance of Sorts; Allied Strategy in the Wake of Barbarossa". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 101-122.
- Gorodetsky, Gabriel. "Filip Ivanovich Golikov". In Harold Shukman, ed. *Stalin's Generals*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993, pp 77-88.
- Greger, René. "Soviet MTB Design and Development 1919-1939", *Warship*, no 46 (April 1988), pp 2-5.
- Hannant, Larry. "Inter-war Security Screening in Britain, the United States and Canada", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 6, no 4 (October 1991), pp 711-735.
- Haslam, Jonathan. "Stalin's Fears of a Separate Peace, 1942", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 8, no 4 (October 1993), pp 97-99.
- Hervieux, Pierre. "Air Power; Soviet Destroyers v the Luftwaffe 6 October 1943", *Warship*, no 46 (April 1988), pp 27-30.
- Hervieux, Pierre. "Soviet Submarine Operations in the Arctic", *Warship*, no 40 (October 1986), pp 239-250.
- Hervieux, Pierre. "The War Service of the Soviet M Class Submarines", *Warship*, no 21 (undated), pp 12-17.
- Hinsley, F H. "British Intelligence and Barbarossa". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 43-75.
- Jessup, John E. "The Soviet Armed Forces in The Great Patriotic War, 1941-5". In Allan R Millett and Williamson Murray. *Military Effectiveness, Volume III: The Second World War*. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988, pp 256-276.
- Jones, David R. "Motives and Consequences of the Red Army Purges, 1937-1938". In David R Jones, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979.
- Jukes, Geoff. "The Soviets and Ultra", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 3, no 2 (April 1988), pp 233-247.

- Jukes, Geoffrey. "Nikolai Gerasimovich Kuznetsov". In Harold Shukman, ed. *Stalin's Generals*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993, pp 109-115.
- Kerr, Sheila. "Roger Hollis and the Dangers of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 5, no 3 (July 1990), pp 148-157.
- Kipp, Jacob W. "Sergei Gorshkov and Naval Advocacy: The Tsarist Heritage". In David R Jones, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979, pp 225-239.
- Lambert, Andrew. "Soviet Seapower; The Element of Strategic Continuity", *Warship*, no 43 (July 1987), pp 150-156.
- Lawlor, Sheila. "Britain and the Russian entry into the war". In Richard Langhorne, ed. *Diplomacy and Intelligence during the Second World War: Essays in honour of F. H. Hinsley*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp 168-183 and 303-306.
- Lockhart, John Bruce. "The Relationship Between Secret Services and Government in a Modern State", *RUSI Journal*, vol 119, no 2 (June 1974), pp 3-8.
- MccGwire, Michael. "East-West interaction at sea", *Navy International* (December 1974), pp 8-13.
- MccGwire, Michael. "Soviet Naval Procurement". In Royal United Service Institution. *The Soviet Union in Europe and the Near East: Her Capabilities and Intentions*. London: Royal United Service Institution, 1970, pp 74-87.
- MccGwire, Michael. "The background to Soviet naval developments", *World Today* (March 1971), pp 93-103.
- McDonnell, John. "Analyzing the Soviet Military Press: *Morskoi Sbornik*, 1963-1975. In David R Jones, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979, pp 316-346.
- McLachlan, Donald. "Intelligence: the common denominator/I". In Michael Elliott-Bateman, ed. *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare, volume one: Intelligence, Subversion, Resistance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970, pp 52-82.
- McLachlan, Donald. "Naval Intelligence in the Second World War", *RUSI Journal*, vol 112, no 647 (August 1967), pp 221-228.
- Maddux, Thomas R. "United States-Soviet Naval Relations in the 1930's: The Soviet Union's Efforts to Purchase Naval Vessels", *Naval War College Review*, vol XXIX, no 2, sequence no 261 (Fall 1976), pp 28-37.
- Major, John. "William Daniel Leahy". In Robert W Love, Jr, ed. *The Chiefs of Naval Operations*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980, pp 101-117.
- Millman, Brock. "Toward War with Russia: British Naval and Air Planning for Conflict in the Near East, 1939-40", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 29, no 2 (April 1994), pp 261-283.
- Milner-Barry, P S. "The Soviets and Ultra: A Comment on Jukes' Hypothesis", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 3, no 2 (April 1988), pp 248-250.
- Mitchell, Donald W. "The Soviets Against the Germans at Sea: 1941-45", *RUSI Journal*, vol CXIII, no 651 (August 1968), pp 237-243.

- Moore, Captain J E, RN. "The Soviet Navy". In Ray Bonds, ed. *The Soviet War Machine: An encyclopedia of Russian military equipment and strategy*. Abingdon, Oxon: Purnell Book Services Limited, 1976, pp 112-127.
- Moore, K J, Mark Flanigan and Robert D Helsel. "Developments in Submarine Systems, 1956-76". In Michael MccGwire and John McDonnell, eds. *Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977, pp 151-184.
- Morrell, Gordon W. "Redefining Intelligence and Intelligence-gathering: The Industrial Intelligence Centre and the Metro-Vickers Affair, Moscow 1933", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 9, no 3 (July 1994), pp 520-533.
- Murray, Williamson. "British Military Effectiveness in the Second World War". In Allan R Millett and Williamson Murray. *Military Effectiveness, Volume III: The Second World War*. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1988, pp 90-135.
- Preston, Antony. "The Russian Navy". In S L Mayer, ed. *The Russian War Machine 1917-1945*. London: Bison Books, 1977, pp 134-153.
- Rader, Ronald R. "Anglo-French Estimates of the Red Army, 1936-1937". In David R Jones, ed. *Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual: Volume 3, 1979*. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1979, pp 265-280.
- Rees, Wyn. "Continuity and Change in British Threat Assessments 1945-1960", *Sandhurst Journal of Military Studies*, no 1 (1990), pp 47-58.
- Rohwer, Jürgen. "The Russians as Naval Opponents in Two World Wars". In Commander M G Saunders, RN, ed. *The Soviet Navy*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958, pp 44-74.
- Rollins, Patrick J. "Russian Commerce Raiders in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, 1904", *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1994), pp 86-109.
- Saul, Norman E. "The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars upon Russian Priorities on Naval Development". In William B Cogar, ed. *New Interpretations in Naval History: Selected Papers from the Eighth Naval History Symposium*. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1989, pp 45-60.
- Smith, Bradley F. "Anglo-Soviet intelligence co-operation and roads to the Cold War". In Richard J Aldrich, ed. *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51*. London: Routledge, 1992, pp 50-64.
- Snow, Philip. "Nomonhan - The Unknown Victory", *History Today*, vol 40 (July 1990), pp 22-28.
- Waddington, Geoffrey T. "Ribbentrop and the Soviet Union, 1937-1941". In John Erickson and David Dilks, eds. *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994, pp 7-33.
- Wark, Wesley K. "Baltic Myths and Submarine Bogeys: British Naval Intelligence and Nazi Germany 1933-1939", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol 6, no 1 (March 1983), pp 60-81.
- Wark, Wesley K. "British Intelligence and Small Wars in the 1930s", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 2, no 4 (October 1987), pp 67-87.
- Wark, Wesley K. "Something Very Stern: British Political Intelligence, Moralism and Grand Strategy in 1939", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 5, no 1 (January 1990), pp 150-170.
- Watt, D Cameron. "An Intelligence Surprise: The Failure of the Foreign Office to Anticipate the Nazi-Soviet Pact", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 4, no 3 (July 1989), pp 512-534.

- Watt, D Cameron. "British Intelligence and the Coming of the Second World War in Europe". In Ernest R May, ed. *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp 237-270.
- Watt, D Cameron. "Francis Herbert King: A Soviet Source in the Foreign Office", *Intelligence and National Security*, vol 3, no 4 (October 1988), pp 62-82.
- Watt, D Cameron. "Security Procedures in the British Foreign Service". In D Cameron Watt. *Personalities and Policies: Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*. London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1965, pp 199-211.
- Zaloga, Steven. "Soviet Military Developments; Soviet Naval Shield Reflects WWII Experience", *Armed Forces Journal International*, vol 126, no 12, whole no 5734 (July 1989), pp 24-26.

## Academic Papers

- Arkhangel, pseud of Lieutenant-Commander Dickinson, RN (Retd). "The Contribution of the Soviet Navy to the Successful Conclusion of World War Two". Submission for the Naval History Prize 1986.
- Brown, David. "The Soviet Surface Fleet 1937-1940". London: Naval Historical Branch, Ministry of Defence, July 1980.
- Donnelly, C N, C E Chojecki, C T Fearn, M E Kelly, M J Orr, E P Takle and P H Vigor. "Soviet Amphibious Operations; Implications for the security of NATO's Northern Flank". SHAPE Technical Centre, Consultant Report STC CR-57. Sandhurst: Soviet Studies Research Centre, Royal Military Academy, 1985, NATO UNCLASSIFIED.
- Gardner, Lieutenant Commander W J R. "The Course of the Battle". Battle of the Atlantic Seminar. Bracknell: Royal Air Force Historical Society, Royal Air Force Staff College, 21 October 1991.
- Hillmer, Norman. "Canada and the 'Godless Country', 1930-1939". Paper presented at the "Canadian-Soviet Conference", Elora Mill, Ontario, Canada, August 1987.
- Huitfeldt, Lieutenant General Tonne, Norwegian Army (Retd). "Great Patriotic War Operations in the North; The Organization and Conduct of Large Scale Operations in the North of the USSR". [Sandhurst: Soviet Studies Research Centre, Royal Military Academy], undated.
- Parrish, Commander C A M. "Naval Aspects of the Soviet Military Reforms of 1924-28". Sandhurst: Soviet Studies Research Centre, Royal Military Academy, October 1991.
- Weinland, Robert G. "The Main Features and Phases of the Evolution of the Soviet Navy Since World War II". Presentation to the Ditchley Foundation's Conference on the Challenge of Soviet Maritime Activity. Ditchley Park, 27-29 April 1984.

## PhD Dissertations

- Bell, Peter. "The British Government and the Menace from Germany and Japan: A Study of the First Defence Requirements Enquiry, 1933-1934". PhD thesis, School of History, University of Leeds, January 1989.



---

Wells, Anthony Roland. "Studies in British Naval Intelligence, 1880-1945". PhD thesis, University of London, 1972.

## Other Sources

Anufriyev, Vladimir. ITAR-TASS news agency (World Service), Moscow, in Russian 0435 GMT (6 June 1994). Cited in BBC Monitoring, "Russia's Regions; Members of Russian royal family arrive in Arkhangelsk; Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 1, Former USSR", Third Series SU/2016 (7 June 1994), p B/2 [8].

*Daily Review: Translations from the Russian Press*, vol XXXVIII, no 186 (10525) (25 September 1992).

GRB and AJP. "Memorials and Statues". Hull: Hull City Information Service, 9 December 1991.

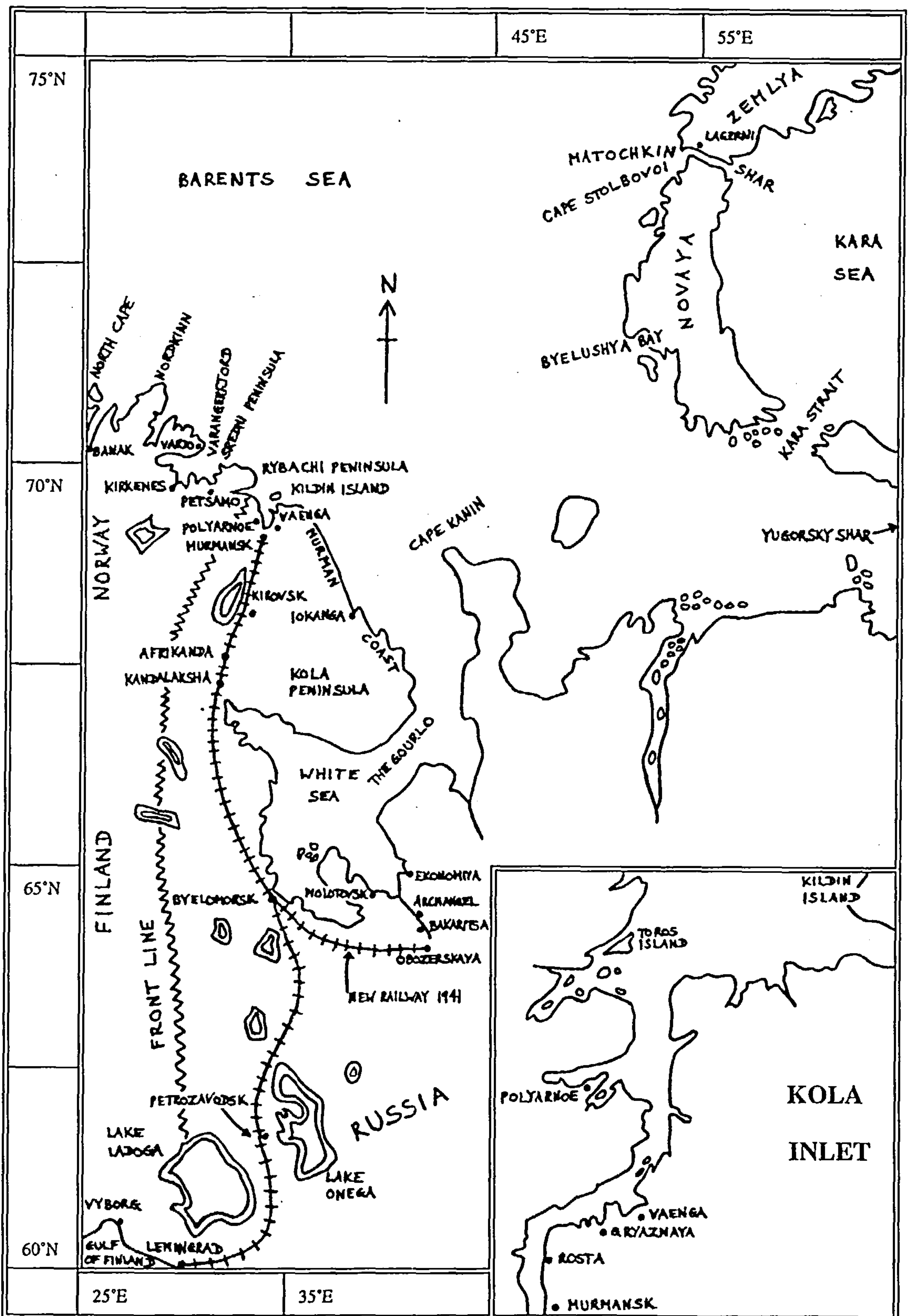
Mack, Commander R. "The Birth and Development of the Soviet Navy". Paper presented to the Coulsdon Probus Club, 6 January 1983.

Pearson, Gordon. "Hull and East Coast Fishing". Kingston upon Hull: City of Kingston upon Hull Museums and Art Galleries, Town Docks Museum, 1976.

*"Spies, you are lights in state, but of base stuffe,  
Who, when you have burnt your selves down to the snuffe,  
Stinke, and are throwne away. End faire enough."*

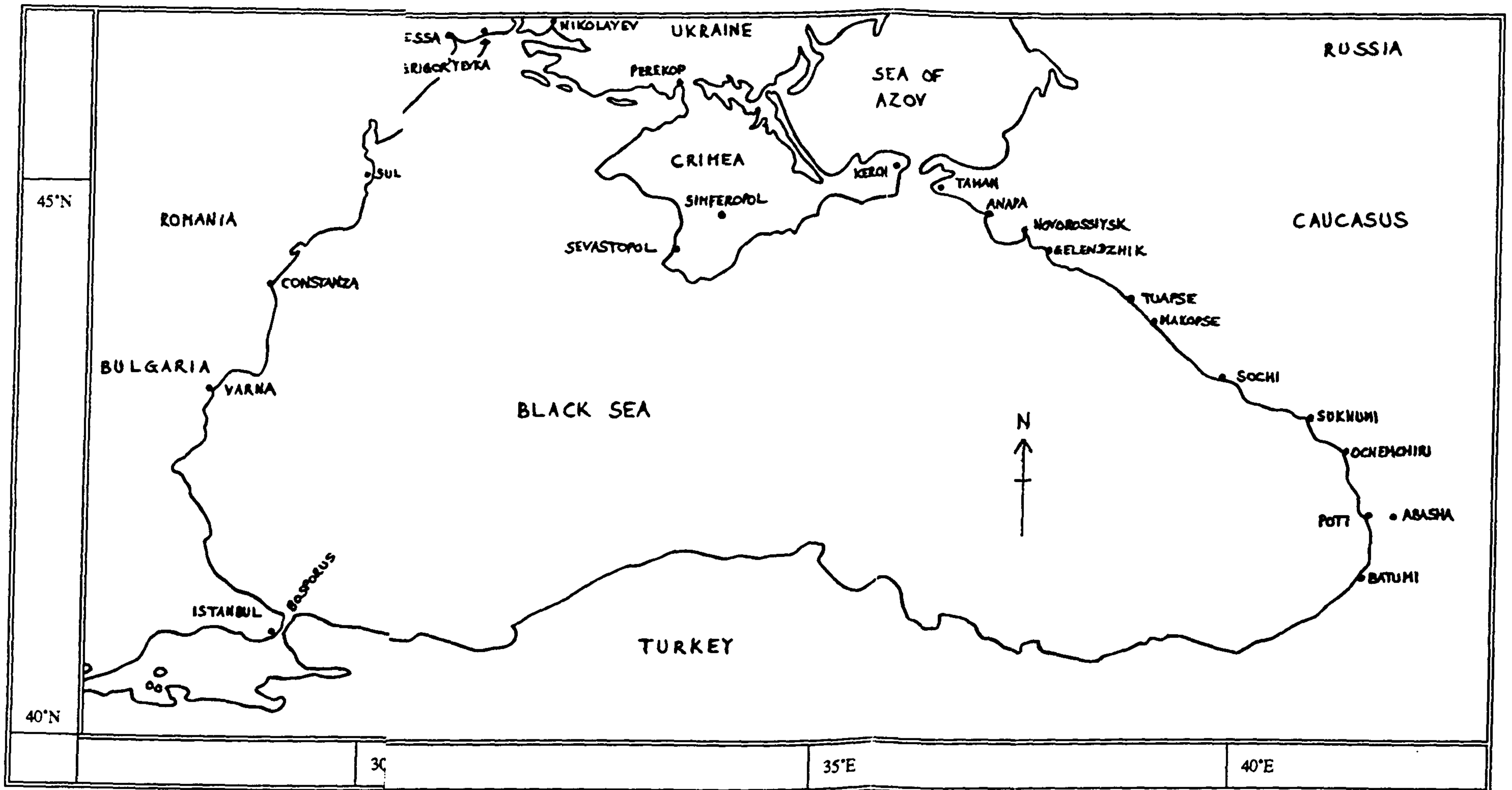
*(Ben Jonson)*

MAP 1  
NORTH RUSSIA



Source: Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, Map 3, "Arctic convoys: North Cape to Kolguev Island", p xxiii, and Map 4, "North Russia and the Polar Coast", p xxiv; CAB 81/104, Geographical Section, General Staff, map: "Finland & North-Western U.S.S.R." (1941); and *The Times Atlas of the World*, 8th ed (London, 1990).

MAP 2  
THE BLACK SEA



Source: Hinsley, *British Intelligence; Volume Three, Part I*, map: "The Russian Campaign", front end paper; and *The Times Atlas of the World*, plate 46.