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SEPT., OCT. 1946

NAVY SUB-COMMISSION - MONTHLY REPORT FOR OCT 1946.

I. SUPPLY.

With reference to sub paragraph 3 of paragraph 1 of the Navy Sub-Commission's report for August, 1946, Admiralty's decision has now been received confirming previous instructions to the effect that the Italian Government should supply the necessary funds, in Egyptian currency, to cover the expenses of the Italian Battleships in the Bitter Lakes and Italian warships and auxiliaries visiting Egyptian ports and passing through the Suez Canal. The Ministry of Marine were therefore informed accordingly and requested to make appropriate arrangements. In the meantime payments due the Battleships at the end of September and October have been made from British sources, in exceptional circumstances, on Admiralty approval, pending arrangements by the Ministry of Marine which are expected to be completed by the end of November. In order to reduce the consumption of foreign exchange the battleships will be supplied to the fullest possible extent from Italy and ships in transit will be provisioned to capacity.

On 3rd October, 1946, Pantelleria was revisited by representatives of the Committee on demilitarization of the Island, including Lieutenant (S) H.A.V. Hall, R.N.V.R., from the Navy Sub-Commission. The process of demilitarizing the island is being carried out satisfactorily under the command of Captain S. Amato, Italian Navy, in spite of the very limited means at his disposal. A total of 1500 tons of warlike stores mostly composed of guns and ammunition have been removed to date. The party returned to home the same day accompanied by Captain Amato who, as a result of a visit to the Ministry of Marine, was successful in obtaining an allocation of more suitable ships to remove the material from the islands, and better transportation and equipment. It is hoped that the work will now be expedited.

A quantity of captured enemy material of naval origin, located in the Bologna area, has been turned over to the Ministry of Marine for the maintenance of the Italian Navy, in accordance with the directives in force.

4006

II. MINESWEEPING.

1. On the 28th October Italian minesweepers from Venice began to clear an area inshore off PORTO LIGURIO. This operation is being carried out to enable craft that have been built on the STILIA estuary to reach the sea. Other Italian M/S groups have continued routine clearance operations. The sweepers which have completed their check sweep at the Northern entrance to the Strait of Messina have proceeded to TRAPANI and PALERMO to begin operations off western Sicily.

III. MERCHANT SHIPPING.

1. The Italian Navy has arranged for pilotage and tugs in the port of Leghorn to be available to conduct Merchant Shipping from that port to La Spezia through heavily mined areas. Several merchant ships have not made use of this service which is essential if mines are to be avoided. This situation has been brought to the attention of the Maritime Commission in order that Merchant Ship Masters may be more fully informed and casualties from inadvertently passing through mine fields avoided.

- 2 -

The Commander in Chief, Mediterranean Station has approved the transfer of an Italian tanker, now under construction at the Ansaldo Sestri Yards, to the Norwegian Government in exchange for two dry cargo vessels. The dry cargo vessels are not to be over 20 years of age, and must be from 7000 to 9000 tons deadweight.

IV. ITALIAN FLEET MOVEMENTS.

The Italian cruisers Abruzzi, Montecuccoli, Scipione Africano and Attilio Regolo have completed the lifting of Italian P.O.W. from Egypt.

4005

NAVY SUB-COMMISSION -- MONTHLY REPORT FOR OCT 1946

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4004

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