

PSF

Navy Dept.

July - Dec. 1942

PSF Navy Folder
File
confidential

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Memo for President 7/1/42

Please note attached

Very resp

John McCaw

[Faint typed text from the original document, including phrases like "The above figures represent boats to be delivered to the Government, whereas the first list covered boats ordered at the contractor's yard." and "Captain Seaway will give you a complete list of the finished boats on July 14th."]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 1, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NAVAL AIDE

Captain Swasey expects to have ^{completed} in his next 60 day period ending July 13th, at midnight, 100 PC boats and YMS (Motor Minesweepers), divided as follows:

28 - 173 footers
37 - YMS
35 - 110 footers

The above are not cumulative totals but represent a new batch.

He may fall down on one or two but does not think so.

The above figures represent boats to be delivered to the Government, whereas his first list covered those finished at the contractor's yard.

Captain Swasey will give you a complete list of the finished boats on July 14th.

Captain Swasey pointed out that the YMS's (Motor Minesweepers) can be used very effectively as submarine chasers by adding depth charge racks.

F J T

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

*file
Personal
Navy Folder*

July 7, 1942.

MEMORANDUM for the President:

Subject: Report on Enlisted Personnel, United States Navy.

1. The estimated number of enlisted men in active service on June 30, 1942, is as indicated below. For basis of comparison, the actual number in active service on May 31, 1942, is also included:

	<u>June 30, 1942</u>	<u>May 31, 1942</u>	<u>Net Gain For Month</u>
Regular	268,500	262,759	5,741
Retired	7,283	6,800	483
Fleet Reserve	9,378	9,400	(-) 22
Other Reserve	<u>270,000</u>	<u>237,000</u>	<u>33,000</u>
	555,161	515,959	39,202

Very respectfully,

Frank Knox

The President
The White House

Navy folder - 1942



8th July, 1942.

My dear Admiral,

In view of the attention which is being paid to the appearance of divergence between the policy of the Navy Department and that of the Admiralty on the publication of shipping losses I thought it might be useful if I gave you the Admiralty views on this subject.

We started, as you know with a policy of complete frankness, giving regular and carefully checked figures of sinkings in terms of tonnage. As time went on however, the wisdom of this practice became more and more doubtful. Clearly the enemy regarded our sea communications as a fundamental object for their attack and equally clearly precise information of the degree of success they were achieving was - and is - of the greatest value to them. How valuable can be judged merely by considering what it would be worth to us to know accurately the shipping losses in tonnage of the Japs - and our strategy is more dependent on shipping even than theirs. None of our enemies have at any time made statements of any significance about their own shipping losses. For these reasons we finally decided entirely to stop publishing our losses when a favourable opportunity occurred last year. There is now a further reason against publication, since it looks from the global German claims as if they have genuinely overestimated the amount of damage they have done since we ceased giving out our figures. We know from our own experience how hard it is for pilots of aircraft and captains of submarines to determine correctly the results of their attacks. It would seem highly advantageous that the enemy should be left to give themselves credit for this margin between what they really have sunk and what they think they have.

As we understand it, the policy of the U.S.

Admiral H.R. Stark, U.S.N.

/Authorities

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J.C.S.

Memo 1-12-73

Name

RT

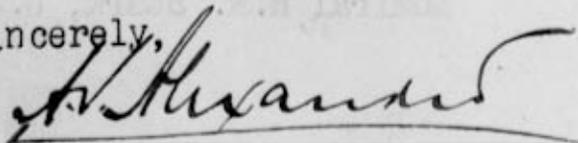
Date

APR 13 1973

Authorities is to tell the Press of individual sinkings, without the tonnage, in each case where the Press are likely to be aware of the loss either through contact with survivors or through interception of distress messages. After the way in which our own policy has evolved, we can sympathise with the Navy Department in this attitude, and I can assure you that we have a very ready comprehension of the difficulty of restraining the Press on such matters. Indeed, as you have no doubt noticed, there is at present a considerable agitation in Press and Parliament over here for the resumption of publication of shipping losses. The supporters of this campaign are of course making great play with the announcements which have been and are being made in the U.S.A. Although these tactics ignore that the Navy Department statements deal only with numbers and then only partially, they will of course provide a talking point for those who are seeking to change the policy of H.M. Government. We do not intend to make a change for the weighty reasons I have mentioned above and because the people would not be getting a true picture of the situation unless they knew also the amount of replacement being achieved, which we have never given in public. Nevertheless it seems likely that the pressure for disclosures over here will continue so long as publicity continues to be given to losses on a fairly large scale in the U.S.A. as at present.

If therefore you agree that the enemy gain more than we do from publicity about our shipping position it would be of the greatest assistance in maintaining our policy if you would use your influence, whenever suitable occasions occur, to urge the Navy Department in the direction of restriction rather than expansion of the information which they give out on this subject. Similar considerations apply of course to announcements about the rate of new building but I am not sure how far the Navy Department is concerned in that.

Yours sincerely,



C O P Y -- LONGHAND SENT

Navy Folder

**THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON**

July 10, 1942.

KING

To get me a report on weather
for next 3 or 4 months in Alaska,
Aleutians, Siberia, Kamschatka,
etc. Ask Reichelderfer.

F. D. R.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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DOD DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

Date- 3-9-59

Signature-

Carl L. Spicer

Memo to the President:

Navy Folder

SECRET

*Herewith a summary
of my report on the sub. situation
in the Atlantic area - JK*

*file
Confidential*

Tuesday, 14 July. The Secretary of the Navy and the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Commander in Chief flew to Boston and inspected the District Headquarters, the Inshore Patrol, the Section Base and the Air Station at Squantum. Later, at New York, they inspected the Frontier Headquarters, the Section Base at Staten Island and Floyd Bennett Field.

Wednesday, 15 July. They inspected Cape May Section Base, the Naval Air Station and District Operating Headquarters. Later, at Norfolk, they inspected the District Headquarters, the Section Base at Little Creek and the Naval Air Station. Thence to the Air Station, Cherry Point and then proceeded to Charleston Navy Yard, District Headquarters, the Section Base and the Port Captain's office.

Thursday, 16 July. At Miami, they inspected Frontier Headquarters, the Submarine Chaser School and the Naval Air Station at Opa Locka. Later, at Key West, the Sound School, Convoy Center, Convoy Anchorage, Submarine Base and Naval Station.

Command of Anti-Submarine Operations

The anti-submarine command is well organized and working well at all places, except Charleston. Charleston has no Army Air Corps controller in the Headquarters office, and is also suffering from lack of direct communication with and direct control over some of the Army air fields in the district. The various command activities are scattered, some being at the Navy Yard, others at various places in the city of Charleston. The Commandant, who reported a few weeks ago, is fully aware of the defects and is taking corrective steps. The Charleston command is the least active of any, because that district is not a stopping point in the convoy system. The principal activity is passing convoys through the District under protection of local air and small vessels.

Defects of Anti-Submarine Vessels

Submarine chasers require an excessive amount of time between delivery and employment in active operations. This is due principally to the poor condition in which they are turned over to the Government. To give an example: PC-662 at Boston, turned over on 9 June with the main engines out of line was not able to run until 15 July. This condition is being improved as the ship builders gain experience.

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- 2 -

The sound gear for the 110-foot sub-chasers is not coming out as fast as the boats and many of them are now operating with no sound gear at all. The reason is that the original design was poor and after about 100 sets were turned out, it was found necessary to go to a new type which is not yet in quantity production. The output of sound gear will catch up with the output of chasers late in the fall.

Types of Anti-Submarine Vessels

The 173-foot chasers are excellent, but we have yet to find out whether or not they are tough enough to stand winter weather in the North Atlantic.

The 110-foot chaser is an excellent vessel in moderate weather but will not stand winter weather north of Hatteras.

The 83-foot Coast Guard boat is good for work in the Gulf and in some sheltered places, but can only stay out about two days.

Motor boats smaller than 83-foot are condemned by all who have used them for any service except lookout at sea in exceptionally good weather and for harbor defense duties. The large number of small motor boats in use are deficient not only in size, but also in ruggedness, with the exception of a few that have been specially built for deep sea fishing.

Convoy System

The convoy system that runs from Canada to Key West has been extremely effective in protecting ships. Losses have been very few. The weaknesses of the convoy system as at present constituted are as follows:

(A) Many small chasers are used to reinforce the few large vessels available. These small craft cannot be used in the northern areas after winter weather sets in, at which time there is some doubt as to whether there will be enough larger vessels to fill the needs. Even at present, the escorts are too weak to deal with a determined attack.

SECRET

- 3 -

(B) There are many ships too slow for the convoys. These are moved from port to port, in daylight only, under escort of small boats. So far, the system has worked very well but the escorts are dangerously weak.

(C) The escorts absorb virtually all vessels suitable for anti-submarine work, leaving very little to hunt down submarines that are located by direction finders and other means. These "killer" operations are now conducted mostly by aircraft.

(D) The aviation available for anti-submarine work throughout the entire east coast and the Gulf and Caribbean areas is far below the strength necessary for efficient work against submarines.

Civil Air Patrol

The Civil Air Patrol is being operated under Army discipline and Army command. So far, it has accomplished virtually nothing but it promises in time to become a very effective element in anti-submarine work as the pilots gain experience.

Intensity of Operations

The standard aimed at is to keep every vessel at sea at least two thirds of the time. This standard is not at present being met, except in the case of larger vessels, (destroyer and corvette type), for the following reasons:

(A) Newly commissioned sub-chasers spend far too much time under repair, due partly to the defects incident to hasty construction and partly to lack of experience of the crews.

(B) Lack of spare parts and special repair facilities for new types of engines unduly prolong repair periods. For example: General Motors has set up at Key West a repair force of its own to teach Naval personnel how to overhaul the pancake engine. Within the last few days, the head of this unit has stated that he could do no more work at Key West until he got some special tools and jigs from the General Motors Factory.

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- 4 -

It should be added that the aim is for every vessel to average two-thirds of the time at sea. The number at sea fluctuates from day to day. Every boat that can move goes out when submarines are active. When submarine activity diminishes, vessels are withdrawn to port for overhaul.

Submarine Activities

The number of German submarines operating in the Western Atlantic has risen steadily since January, when the average number was 18, to about 48 at the present time, and it is still going up. The decrease in sinkings in coastal waters is in no way due to lack of effort on the part of the Germans but to improvement in our own forces. This brings up the question of convoy routes. At the present time, the convoy lanes are kept to seaward of the 100-fathom curve in the Atlantic as much as possible. The reasons for this are to keep out of the waters that can easily be mined, to keep from running ships close to well defined points (such as Hatteras) where submarines can lie in wait, and to keep northbound and southbound lanes separated by at least 25 miles in order to prevent collisions. Care is taken, however, to keep the convoy routes well within the area that can be covered by shore based aircraft.

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During the two month period ending 14 July, sinkings in coastal convoys averaged one ship out of each 550, which is a higher degree of security than was attained in convoys in the world war when more escorts were available. This indicates that the routing scheme is sound. All officers concerned feel sure that losses would increase if convoy lanes were moved closer to the coast.

The situation is different in the Gulf, where wide stretches of very shallow water exist and the possibility of mining is slight. In the Gulf, shipping is being routed as much as possible inside the 10-fathom curve, and it is intended to follow this practice even when escorts become available for Gulf shipping.

Shipping is being routed in convoys wherever the number of anti-submarine ships available permits formation of convoys. However, it is not yet possible to get all shipping under escort for the following reasons:

(A) There are some essential routes, such as those to Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, British Honduras, Venezuela, and points in South America where it is not yet possible to supply escorts. Effort is made in these areas to give air protection to the unescorted vessels.

(B) Cargo ships and tankers that can make 15 knots or more usually move independently. This is because the factor of safety is about as high for such vessels moving alone as it would be where they slowed down at convoy speeds, which are never in excess of 10 knots.

(C) There are many ships that can make only 7 knots or less. These are moved (wherever possible by daylight) close in to shore, with small motor boats to protect them. But some necessarily have to be employed in areas where they can be given no protection at all. The aim of the Navy is eventually to get all ships, regardless of speed, under escort. This will require three convoy classes on each route, viz., 15 knot convoys, 10 knot convoys and 6 knot convoys.

TRAINING

The submarine training school which is working in extemporized quarters on a dock at Miami, is an outstanding success. The students are intensely interested and work very hard. At the present time the student body consists of 400 officers and 1200 men. Both officers and men are very high type. Unfortunately, the training has to be hurried to an undesirable extent at the present time to keep up with the output of submarine chasers. The school will catch up in the near future, at which time the course will be lengthened to some extent and selected graduates will move on to a 5 weeks post graduate schooling in the sound classes before going to sea.

~~SECRET~~

SUBMARINE SINKINGS

The number of probable submarine sinkings has increased to a marked extent in recent weeks. The principal reason is that pilots of anti-submarine aircraft are becoming more skilled in making the very quick attack necessary to catch a submarine before it can dive. In some sections of the coast, particularly off Norfolk, it seems to be a custom of the submarines to go far to seaward to rest on the surface in daylight, and the air forces have had marked success in running patrols to catch these submarines. Ultimately, when air and surface forces are expanded sufficiently it is the plan to keep hunting groups in operation throughout all areas where submarines are likely to be found. These areas can be determined fairly accurately by study of bearings taken by direction finding stations on shore.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

(A) Tests of the so-called "mouse trap" were witnessed at Key West. This device employs small depth charges which are propelled on the rocket principle. The advantage is that there is no kick when the thing fires, and the mouse trap can therefore be installed on very small vessels that cannot carry Y-guns. The mouse trap fires 8 depth charges at a time. They do not explode unless they come in actual contact with the submarine. The advantage is that it is not necessary to guess the depth of the submarine. As compared with the use of a single depth charge, the mouse trap uses the shot gun principle as compared to shooting birds with a rifle.

(B) The hedge hog was inspected on board a British corvette. The hedge hog consists of twenty-eight projectors which shoot small depth charges of the same size as used in the mouse trap. It is a super shot gun and promises to be the most effective anti-submarine weapon ever developed. It can only be installed on corvettes and larger craft.

Both the hedge hog and the mouse trap are being built in quantity for our ships. It is hoped to keep this development in a super-secret status as a surprise for the Germans.

CORVETTES

A British single screw corvette was inspected at Key West. It is the most elementary type of ship imaginable. It is simply a rough hull that carries propulsion gear and very heavy anti-submarine armament. It is totally lacking in comforts. It is not as fast as could be desired. However, the corvette can be kept at sea in any weather, and it is believed that 100 or so could be used to great advantage in our anti-submarine operations. It would appear from this casual inspection that the corvette could be built faster than any other type suitable for anti-submarine operations in bad weather.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the anti-submarine command is working hard and has solved some of its problems. There are still defects in organization, in materiel, and in efficiency in the cases of some individuals. Officers of the various commands and subcommands as a general rule realize their shortcomings and are seeking to correct them.

However, the basic weakness at the moment is shortage of aircraft and shortage of suitable anti-submarine ships.

Frank Knox

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*PSE
Navy*

July 22, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

What are you doing about
this?

F. D. R.

Copy of confidential letter to Knox from Ickes July 16th re investigation by Sen. Lydings and Gen. Holcomb of Marine by the name of Hinshaw who used to work at Interior also smearing articles being run by Cissy Patterson, etc.

File
Personal

max

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Noted NATHAN

Dear Mr. President:

Answering your query about the Hinshaw affair. Immediately upon receipt of Harold Icke's letter I got in touch in Gen. Holcomb who told me that Iydings has asked for Hinshaw as a witness in a matter relating to income tax evasion. Holcomb sent for Hinshaw and Hinshaw came to Washington and testified. It was wholly an investigation of some activities of Drew Pearson in connection with some Irish propaganda in which Hinshaw had been employed by Pearson prior to Hinshaw's entrance into the service. I also called Iydings and he told me the same thing, insisting that Icke was in no way concerned. Icke's name so both Hinshaw and Iydings say was never mentioned. The case, according to Iydings in no way involves any government official. Holcomb has called Hinshaw back to Washington and has been provided with a stenographic report of Hinshaw's testimony. I have not seen this yet.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Pearson after repeated efforts saw Hinshaw last night, and according to Holcomb, took a threatening pose with Hinshaw, saying he would get him ordered to Alaska or some remote undesirable post.

I have already issued orders that no Navy officer can be ordered to appear before any Senator or Congressman for cross-examination without your prior approval.

I attach a wire I received this morning from Sydneys which confirms what he had told me over the phone.

Yours sincerely
JK.

I wouldn't be surprised if this was one phase of the fight now in progress between Pearson and Cressy Patterson. If so I hope they are both successful!

JK

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UNION

Navy Folder

MAIL ROOM
SUPERVISOR

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UNION

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CHICAGO ILL 22

COLONEL FRANK KNOX, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

NAVY DEPT WASHDC

MY SECRETARY MISS BARGER WILL DELIVER TO YOU A COPY OF
HENSHAW STATEMENT STOP THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL AND FOR YOU ONLY
SO AS TO SUBSTANTIATE MY STATEMENT THAT MATTERS CONCERNS
ONLY VIOLATIONS GAMBLING LAWS AND INCOME TAX EVASION OF AN
INDIVIDUAL STOP THIS INDIVIDUAL FEARFUL OF EXPOSURE IS
THREATENING HENSHAW AND TELLING HIS HIGH UP ACQUAINTANCES
THAT HENSHAW'S STATEMENT CONCERNS THEM WHICH IT DOES NOT STOP
THIS TECHNIQUE IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF HAVING THEM SCARE
HENSHAW WHO HAS MENTIONED NO NAMES EXCEPT THAT OF P STOP
THIS IS ONLY ONE OF THE CRIMINAL ACTS OF P AND I HAVE OTHER

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AFFIDAVITS TO SUBSTANTIATE OTHER MATTERS STOP QUITE FRANKLY
IF HENSHAW IS TO BE PUNISHED IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR
AIDING AND ENFORCING THE LAWS OF HIS COUNTRY I WILL FEEL
COMPELLED TO COME PUBLICLY TO HIS DEFENSE IN THE INTEREST
OF SIMPLE TRUTH AND JUSTICE STOP PLEASE ASSURE SECRETARY
ICKES HIS NAME NOT MENTIONED BY HENSHAW TO ME STOP I TRUST
HENSHAW WILL NOT BE PUNISHED FOR TELLING TRUTH ABOUT MATTER
CONCERNING US GOVERNMENT STOP PEOPLE IN ADMINISTRATION ARE
LETTING PEARSON USE THEM WHEN IT IS NOT THEY BUT PEARSON WHO
IS IN TROUBLE

WESTERN
UNION

MILLARD E TYDINGS.

100AM...

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ON

1012 JUL 23 5 07

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DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

Navy Folder
file

MEMORANDUM for the President:

Subject: Report on Enlisted Personnel, United States Navy.

1. The estimated number of enlisted men in active service on July 31, 1942, is as indicated below. For basis of comparison the actual number in active service on June 30, 1942, is also included:

	<u>July 31, 1942</u>	<u>June 30, 1942</u>	<u>Net Gain For Month</u>
Regular	275,262	269,001	+ 6,261
Retired	7,378	7,342	+ 36
Fleet Reserve	9,287	9,300	- 13
Other Reserve	<u>31,536</u>	<u>272,935</u>	<u>+ 58,601</u>
Total	623,463	558,578	+ 64,885

Very Respectfully,

Frank Knox

The President
The White House

BF Navy Folder

August 12, 1942.

Dear Ernie:

You will remember "the sweet young thing" whom I told about Douglas MacArthur rowing his family from Corregidor to Australia -- and later told about Shangri-La as the take-off place for the Tokio bombers.

Well, she came in to dinner last night and this time she told me something.

She said "We are going to win this war. The Navy is tough. And the toughest man in the Navy -- Admiral King -- proves it. He shaves every morning with a blowtorch".

Glad to know you!

As ever yours,

s/ Franklin D. Roosevelt

Admiral Ernest J. King,
Chief of Naval Operations,
Navy Department,
Washington, D. C.

P.S. I am trying to verify another rumor -- that you cut your toenails with a torpedo net cutter.

See: Anecdote Folder - 4/2/42
for complete corres. re above.

BF Navy Folder
2-42

August 21, 1942.

Dear Adolphus:

Thank you for your letter. It seems clear that we cannot do anything further about Georges Bank. Perhaps the action of ^{nature} ~~entry~~ alone ^a in ~~the~~ hundred years may either create an island or remove the shoal.

I am glad the convoys seem to be working out all right.

Very sincerely yours,

Rear Admiral Adolphus Andrews,
Commander, Eastern Sea Frontier,
90 Church Street,
New York, N. Y.

DECLASSIFIED

COMMANDER EASTERN SEA FRONTIER
90 CHURCH STREET
NEW YORK

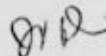
FD 57h. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

14 August, 1942

Date-

4-8-70

Signature-


PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Mr. President:

Pursuant to your instructions we have explored the possibilities of drill testing Georges Shoal for the purpose of locating rock on which a permanent station can be erected.

I have been advised that such drill test could be made only at great cost and with considerable difficulty, due not only to the exposed location of the shoal, but to the fact that there is no slack water period in the currents flowing over the shoal.

From information obtained from the Coast and Geodetic Survey and from the Woods Hole Institute of Oceanography it appears certain that rock will not be found present in the shoal at any level less than 300 feet through the sand. Consequently, it is the opinion here that the great cost and time involved in making drill tests would not be warranted unless of course you direct otherwise.

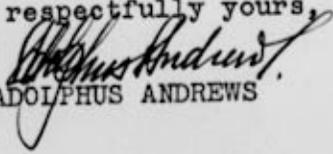
It seems that these ridges of sand are constantly shifting and the depth shown on the chart is usually less than that actually existing in order to emphasize the danger of this shoal to passing ships.

I am happy to report that for the last four weeks there have been no sinkings of merchant vessels of any kind by enemy submarines on the Eastern Sea Frontier.

We have been planning a convoy system from here North and other convoys South to the Caribbean. This plan is being rushed and should be in operation within the next few weeks. This should give greater security to merchant shipping and reduce sinkings. Of course the escorts for these convoys will not be entirely adequate but with additional ships which should be delivered to this Frontier in the future I hope that we may meet with success.

With renewed assurances of my highest regard and with best wishes,

Very respectfully yours,


ADOLPHUS ANDREWS

The President,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

Navy Folder
IN REPLY ADDRESS
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
AND REFER TO NO.

file personal
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

(50) 48-5/29

CONFIDENTIAL

AUG 24 1942

My dear Senator Murray:

With reference to your letter of July 22, 1942, regarding the charges of graft, corruption and misconduct at Dutch Harbor made by one Dale Blyberg, of Hamilton, Montana, the President has requested that I make the necessary investigation and reply to you.

Over the period of the past few months there have been cases in which discharged or disgruntled former employees of the Alaskan contractors have made similar charges. In each case a thorough investigation has been made and the charges, without exception, have been found to be groundless. An investigation of Mr. Blyberg's charges has been conducted by the Commandant of the Thirteenth Naval District and have definitely been found to have no basis of fact whatsoever.

The work on the bases in Alaska has been conducted under extreme handicaps of bad weather, rocky, rugged terrain and monotony. In spite of these obstacles a tremendous amount of work has been accomplished in a commendable way.

Loose, sensational statements such as those made by Mr. Blyberg are but an additional handicap to the rapid completion of the important construction projects in Alaska which are so vital to our war effort.

Sincerely yours,

RAULF A. BIRD

Acting

Hon. James E. Murray,
United States Senate.

CC - The President, ←
The White House.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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DOD DIR. 5200.9 (9/27/58)

Date- 3-9-59

Signature- *Carl S. Spicer*