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COMMENT OF RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN

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PART VI

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN

1. Units of mixed types are generally weaker than their theoretical fighting strength indicates. This applies to battle lines made up of battleships and battle cruisers, as well as to cruiser engagements where heavy cruisers and light cruisers have been used together in the same formation. If the ships with light protection are concentrated on and quickly wiped out, the reduction in damage to the heavier type from being under lighter gunfire does not compensate for this loss.
  
2. There is need for a careful estimate of information which should be obtained and a careful plan for obtaining it. This would seem to be a case where economy of force might well be a guiding principle. It always costs something to get information. In this problem ORANGE deprived himself of the offensive use of his submarines in order to get information. He got the same information from his air scouts plus much more than the submarines furnished. If there was reason to doubt the ability of the air craft to get this information, he might have been justified in this, but there appears to be no reason for him to have had this doubt in this problem.
  
3. Where the nature of a plan is primarily dependent on the time element, the execution of the plan cannot be postponed without disastrous results. In this problem ORANGE was under the necessity of closing through unfavorable range bands quickly. Hence, when he met the BLUE submarine attacks he had no choice but between pushing on, chancing what damage he would receive, and changing his plan. To delay, spoiled his plan. It seems impossible to change the plan at that stage, so the only logical thing was to pursue it with inflexible determination.

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4. Where enemy objectives are in close proximity and adequate scouting forces are in the air, it is practicable to launch air attack formations before the objective has been located.
5. In the air, inadequate defense forces would be more effectively employed on the offense. Nevertheless, a force adequate to prevent strafing may greatly augment anti-aircraft fire by protecting the anti-aircraft battery.
6. Carriers near the battle line are almost sure to suffer serious damage.
7. Light forces which venture within range of enemy capital ships while protected by the gunfire of their own battle line are likely to lose that protection very suddenly by the interruption of battle line gunfire from smoke or other cause. An O.T.C. who orders smoke for this purpose should understand how it will affect his own light forces, and how he can use it against enemy light forces.