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no cards

Confidential

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THE BATTLE OF GUADALCANAL -- Part I

The Battle of Guadalcanal is the name assigned by the Navy Department to the series of air and surface actions which took place from 11 November to 15 November inclusive in the area around Guadalcanal. The events leading up to the action and certain parts of the narrative of the action will be largely quoted from reports of CinCPac, ^{and} Commander Amphibious Force South APacific, Admiral Turner, and also reports from subordinates and some original comments.

You remember last week we left the Marines ashore on Guadalcanal and Tulagi with insufficient supplies and in a rather precarious condition. That condition existed ~~at that~~ ^{during} the three months that elapsed between that date and the date of the present action which we are going to consider now which were the next major actions, we might say, ^{but} During the interval there were at least three surface actions which have been dignified by individual names and I will throw them on the screen now, one at a time and take a look at what happened.

On August 23rd to 25th, we had what is called the Battle of the Eastern Solomons, and the losses incurred by the two fleets are as shown there. The Enterprise was damaged, the Japs lost ^a quite a few ships, sunk and damaged. On the night of October 11 and 12 - this was another of those night actions, off the western end of Guadalcanal, the losses there were divided, but on the whole it looks as if the Japs got a little the worst end of the deal.

And then on October 26, there was the Battle of Santa Cruz, where we lost the Hornet and ^{the} Porter sunk, the Japs lost ~~not~~ ships but had quite a number damaged ^{all} by aircraft, The Enterprise ^{was} damaged again. Now that battle left us with only one carrier in the South Pacific and that was the Enterprise, which as you can see suffered damage in this action. On the whole, the Japanese got the worst of it during those three actions and their surface forces were whittled down somewhat, but they still had plenty left.

During this same period, both sides were busily engaged in trying to get reinforcements and supplies ashore ^{on} in Guadalcanal. Particularly in the early part of October, our hold there was very ~~small~~ ^{tenuous}. After that night action on October 11 and 12th, our ^{ground} ~~frater~~ batty forces withdrew and naval aviators stationed on the island at ^{that} time stated later on in an

interview at the Navy Department: "If the Japs on October 13th had gone in and followed up their attack they could have taken Guadalcanal. It would have been given to them on a platter for we didn't have any aircraft to stop them," and another aviator, a captain, under the same circumstances, that is, ^{an} interview at the Navy Department, said: "There were at least three occasions when our chances of holding Guadalcanal were not worth five cents." ^{you} can see that the situation was really serious, ^{actually} if not/desperate. ^A During the last half of October, the Japs had been successful in intercepting and retarding our logistic supplies at Guadalcanal, but after the air battle of Santa Cruz on October 26th forced them to retire, we immediately resumed and expanded our supplies. Appreciating that the chance of retaining Guadalcanal and driving the Japanese off the Island lay in getting enough ^{troops and} supplies ashore to sustain an offensive we kept pouring reinforcements in as fast as we could. An additional reinforcement of about 6000 men with ammunition and supplies was scheduled to arrive about the middle of November. During the last part of October, Task Force 42 was organized, consisting of 24 submarines, and during the first half of November, these submarines did operate on the supply lines of the Japanese to the Solomons, and did some damage.

But Almost nightly, the Japs brought troops or supplies, or both, to Guadalcanal by destroyers ^{and by} ~~and~~ small landing craft from neighboring islands. We had a PT squadron based at Tulagi which repeatedly attacked these destroyers, sinking one on the night of 6-7 November, ^{and} damaging others on other nights. Now the enemy was known to be making heavy troop movements through the Rabaul-Buin areas. As I suppose you know, the Buin area ^{was} this area at the southern end of Bougainville Island. That slide on the right doesn't go up that far, it just shows the Guadalcanal area.

Naval surface forces were also concentrating, in that area, and by November 10th the Japs were estimated to have available in the Buin area two aircraft carriers, four battleships, five heavy cruisers, six light cruisers, thirty or more destroyers, at least one division of troops and sufficient transports and cargo vessels to carry that division ^{of troops} with their necessary supplies.

On the 10th of November a coast watcher reported at least sixty ships at anchor in the Buin area. ~~The following moves were expected by~~

The following moves were expected by the Japanese by our Intelligence Service:

air
Daily/attacks on GUADALCANAL beginning the 10th of November.
Transports to leave ~~DILLON(?)~~ ^{BUNN} on the evening of the 11th of November.

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Bombardment of Henderson Field by surface craft during the night of November 11-12.

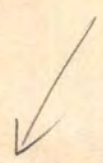
Continuous air attack on Henderson Field by carrier aircraft on the 12th of November, and the landing of reinforcements of this division of troops during the night of November 12th to 13th.

There was a probability that this schedule would be delayed one or two days. As a matter of fact it was delayed one day to start with and the night action of November 12th to 13th forced the Japanese to delay the rest of it another day. ^{So} the first part of their plan was delayed 24 hours, the second part of it 48 hours.

Our situation appeared rather critical. As I told you our only available carrier was the incompletely repaired ~~ENTERPRISE~~ ENTERPRISE not expected to be ready for use until November 21st. Although the October battle had achieved some ~~reduction~~ ^{surface} reduction in Jap ~~service~~ ^{HAD} forces, as you can see they still ~~have~~ a formidable force left down there, very much superior to the forces we had in the southern Pacific at that time. We were inferior in land-based as well as ⁱⁿ carrier-based aircraft. ¶ But now let us see what we were doing about it. A comprehensive plan was drawn up for expediting ~~movement~~ ^{for} movement of supplies and reinforcements to GUADALCANAL and/disorganizing the enemy's operations. We don't have this plan in detail but the substance of it develops as we go along. The operations following were part of the larger plan and involved a movement to Guadalcanal with two groups of transports supported by strong combatant forces. The first group was scheduled to arrive on November 11th and the second on November 12th. These two groups were under the operational control of Rear Admiral Turner as commander of Task Force 67. Now these two groups are as shown. On the slide on the left there you have Admiral Turner's

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Slide 5



Slide 5
later

force. Task Group 62.4 under Admiral Scott was the group scheduled to arrive in Guadalcanal on 11 November. The lower group, 67.1, with Admiral Turner present in the Macawley was ~~in~~ the group scheduled to arrive on November 12th. On the other slide there we have Task Force 16 which will enter into the picture a little later on, but we might as well take a look at it now and see its make-up. It had the ENTERPRISE still not repaired, two battleships, WASHINGTON and SOUTH DAKOTA, two cruisers, NORTHAMPTON and SAN DIEGO, and eight destroyers. Later on the PENSACOLA with the GWINN and PRESTON, ~~were~~ detached from Admiral Turner's force, as is ~~shown~~ shown on the lower left-hand part of that slide, and added to this force. Task Force 64, which is composed of the two battleships plus four of the destroyers, was split off from Task Force 16 later on and formed our force on the second night battle which goes to make up this whole action. That won't occur until next week when I consider the second part of this. I had to split this up into two parts because there's so much of it that it takes a lot of gallopin' to get over it even that way.

Now the essential feature of the plan was the employment of a considerable ~~surface~~ ^{surface} ~~combatant~~ combatant forces listed. They were given as two chief purposes in ~~the~~ assigning the strong combatant force to accompany the transports. First, to provide adequate protection for the ~~reinforcements~~ reinforcements; and second, to make an offensive ~~strike~~ strike against enemy surface forces which might be encountered or which might be drawn to Guadalcanal by our own operations. As the situation developed the second of these proved to have the major importance. We have Admiral Turner's Operation Order 23-42 issued by dispatch, the operation order for ~~this~~ ^{dis} embarkation, and numerous dispatches and letters of instruction. They are most complete and show the greatest amount of foresight and careful planning. Among these was a request from Commander Task Force 63, that's the Air Force South Pacific, ~~for~~ ^{for} certain support beginning on November 10th and until the day after departure from Guadalcanal. And remember here is another one of those cases where Admiral Turner had to request

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from Admiral McCain certain air operations. He requested him to scout to the west ~~XXXXXX~~ and north of Guadalcanal and ^{to} the east of Malaita ~~(2)~~, this island here, so covering both directions as deep as possible against the approach of enemy ships. To conduct early morning and late afternoon scouting with observation of approaches to Guadalcanal ~~for~~ ^{for} enemy submarines and to provide fighter cover, submarine patrol, and bomber striking groups while Task Force 67 was in the Guadalcanal area and to bomb enemy airfields within range of Guadalcanal on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of November in order to prevent air strikes on Task Force 67. This was rather a large order and how much of it was carried out I am not sure.

Then again on the 10th of November Commander Southwest Pacific, General MacArthur, was requested to bomb the shipping in the Buin Area from the 11th to the 14th. Shortage of gas at Guadalcanal prevented staging B-17s from ~~the~~ Espiritu Santo east of Buin via Henderson Field. So we had to call on Southwest Pacific for assistance again.

Another ^{important} ~~interesting~~ item was paragraph 12 of this letter of instruction to Admiral Callahan that I mentioned before to whom command of all combatant ships in the Guadalcanal area devolved upon the departure of Admiral Turner. This letter was dated November 10th at ~~seas~~ sea and was delivered to Admiral Callahan on the morning of November 11th, when the respective forces joined up at sea. I will quote it in full because it has a bearing on the situation:

" You will be expected to strike the enemy during the night of ~~12-13~~ November 12-13 if he is then engaged in attacking or landing on ~~Cactus~~ ^{Cactus or Rainbow}, " which ~~ix~~ are the two code words for Guadalcanal and Tulagi.

Task Group 62.4, Admiral Scott's force, departed ^{FROM} Espiritu Santo on November 9th; ^{it} proceeded north of San Cristobal Island to Guadalcanal, arriving on the morning of November 11th on scheduled time. It took that northern route to evade discovery by long-range air scouts from Buin and also to avoid submarines ~~XXXXXX~~ further westward. Each one of these little cross marks on the chart with

the date alongside/^{of}it is the reported position of a Japanese submarine on those dates. So you can see there were quite a few of them around. However, the enemy about November 9th began basing two or three large ⁸⁻⁴⁰ ~~float~~ ^{surface} seaplanes on the ~~XXXXXX~~ tender up here in the Swallow Islands. Two of these planes picked up this force on its way to Guadalcanal. They arrived off ^{Lunga} ~~Cunder~~ Point about five ~~00~~ o'clock in the morning and commenced unloading. The enemy laid heavy ^{air} attacks on the airfields and transports twice during the forenoon. Several planes were ~~XXXXXX~~ shot down but ~~this island~~ the ZEILIN received one direct hit ~~XXXXXX~~ and was badly flooded ^{AFT} ~~down~~. The vessels continued unloading after the attack ^{but} it became necessary at the end of the day to send ~~this island~~ the ZEILIN back to the Espiritu Santo with the ~~Lardner~~ Lardner escorting. She proceeded under her own power ~~and~~ at 10 knots and arrived safely on the 14th. The remainder of the group retired into Indispensable Straits at sunset and ~~joined~~ joined the other task force on its arrival in the Straits during the night.

Now the four transports of Task Force 67 with the PORTLAND, JUNEAU, O'BANNON, BRATON, and MUNSON left ~~the~~ Noumea (?) on November 8th. Want you to remember these dates as best you can because they have a certain significance. The ~~Shaw~~ ^{Shaw} left Noumea ~~to~~ on the 9th and joined the group on the 11th. The other vessels left Espiritu Santo on the 10th and ~~joined~~ joined the transport group near the eastern end of San Cristobal Island on the morning of the 11th. Joined up in there. And it was ^{at} that time that Admiral Turner sent his letter of instruction over to Admiral Callahan.

The combatant ships dropped back and operated about 25 miles to the rear of the transport group except for four destroyers of the transport, the reason for this arrangement being to reduce chances of detection of the combatant group by enemy aircraft. The PENSACOLA, GWINN, and PRESTON, as I told you, were detached from this task group on the morning of November 10th by ~~the~~ orders of the Commander South Pacific Forces for the purpose of reinforcing Task Force 16. The developing situation caused Commander South Pacific

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~~XXXXX~~ who was down in Noumea to order Task Force 16 to leave Noumea at such time after 2300 that the Task Force Commander might indicate ^{and} ~~to~~ ^{proceed northward} ~~in~~ order for offensive operations against the enemy. It actually did not get underway until noon of Wednesday, November 11th. But now just to check back on ~~the~~ ^{these} dates. Admiral Turner issued his operation order on November the 7th, and also on that date requested the air support from Task Force ~~8~~ ⁶³. On the 8th the transports left Noumea so the plan must have been under consideration ^{and execution} for at least a few days. It was apparently well understood by Cincpac and Admiral Turner and Commander South Pacific that the Japanese were mustering strong forces to the northward and that stiff opposition would be encountered, and battleships were mentioned ^{as being} ~~to be~~ included in enemy forces. Admiral Turner has said that ~~the~~ ^{an} essential feature of the plan was the employment of a considerable surface combatant force, one of its purposes was for offensive operations against enemy forces. And yet this strong task force, consisting of carriers, battleships, and other ships did not leave Noumea until the 11th of November, too late for it to get ^{up} there for the first night action and with orders which effectually prevented any of it from getting into it anyway. And then still more the combatant force on the way up there was weakened ~~from~~ by the detachment of one heavy cruiser and two destroyers. The reasons I don't know. I think very probably we were still safety-minded out there, the ENTERPRISE was the only carrier we had left in the South Pacific and they ~~did not~~ ^{just} want to take any chances with the ENTERPRISE. I now quote a little from Admiral Turner's report. He says "by the afternoon of November the 9th (this was after he had left and was at sea) it became apparent that the ~~the~~ enemy had set in process a very strong amphibious, ^{surface,} and air offensive against GUADALCANAL and that he was already enroute to the attack. It looked like his all-out effort ^{had and} ~~is~~ ^{considerable} ~~created~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ apprehension for the safety of our position in the SOLOMONS. Since intelligence reports had indicated November 13th as the prospective arrival date of the enemy transports at GUADALCANAL, it was apparent we ought to make every

possible effort to land our own troops and equipment on the 12th, and also to make the most of favorable opportunities ~~for~~ for offensive operations against enemy transports and surface vessels. An estimate of the situation including instructions to Rear Admiral Callahan ~~was~~ ^g was ^g by the force commander ~~was~~ drawn up/on the forenoon of November 10th. Since the key to our successful defense of GUADALCANAL was the airfield, ^{it} ~~it~~ was then decided by the Force Commander ~~of~~ ^{that} Task Force 67 with ~~his~~ ^{its} excellent anti-aircraft and torpedo strength must take the risk of serious damage for the sake of inflicting heavy ~~damage~~ ^{loss} on enemy carrier aircraft and on the enemy naval bombardment units. Our GUADALCANAL aircraft and our surface and carrier forces then starting northward might thereafter be unable to drive the enemy back. It had been the intention ~~of~~ to pass Task Force 67 to the north of San Cristobal island; when news was received that Task Group ~~62.4~~ ^g had been sighted by enemy seaplanes on the 10th it was ^{to (?) (change the route)} decided/route the change and pass to the southward of San Cristobal. Information as to this change of route together with ~~appropriate~~ minor modifications in the operating plan was incorporated in the second letter of instruction to Admiral Callahan ^g and these two letters were delivered to him when he joined on the morning of November 11th.

note →

These two letters were in considerable detail and the movements of the forces under Admirals Callahan ^g and Scott in the future were in accordance with them so there's no use in going into them in detail. The plan will unfold as we go along. There were two significant statements, or rather, one statement and one inference, were included. The inference is that ^{at} the time the letter was written Admiral Turner knew nothing of the impending withdrawal of the PENSACOLA and ^{the} two destroyers as he included them in the force he assigned Admiral Callahan ^g. The definite statement is that Task Force 16 was at Noumea and that he had no knowledge of its future movements, although it was actually dispatched the next day. Now this paragraph 12, which is the key to the whole performance, I'll show you again. Note that these instructions given to Admiral Callahan ^g are definite/^{"expected} to strike the enemy/^{during} the night of

November 12th to 13th" but at the same time ^{they} are general enough to give him freedom of action in the situation that was developing from hour to hour. ~~coff! coff!~~

Due to the probability of enemy air attack the unloading plan was changed so as to get all the troops except the unloading details off the ships immediately on arrival. Troops were order^{ed} to carry one unit of fire and two days' rations so they would be valuable to the defense of the island even if some transports were sunk and the equipment and supplies lost. Admiral Turner ~~was~~ ^{had} determined to land all reinforcements and supplies possible no matter what the opposition. He probably remembered ^{pulling out} ~~GORONADO~~ on August 9th with ~~when~~ partially loaded transports leaving the troops ashore incompletely equipped. He also had determined that any risk to protect the ³⁻⁴⁹ security of our ~~op~~ position at Henderson Field by engaging enemy bombardment units. At this time the forces on shore at GUADALCANAL were most in dread of bombardment by naval forces. They didn't seem to mind being bombed by aircraft ^{but} ~~he~~ they ~~certainly~~ hated to have those Jap ships ~~to~~ come in and bombard them at night.

On November 11th, evening air search from GUADALCANAL disclosed no enemy naval forces in the vicinity. However, the scouting report was not considered conclusive as ~~xxxxxxxx~~ in the past enemy forces had ~~xxxxxxxx~~ sometimes been missed by the air scouts. Task Group 67.4 then, in accordance with orders, proceeded at high speed ⁱⁿ and advanced ^{of} to the transports (remember they had been 25 miles in the rear during the day) and that night about 2330 entered SAVO SOUND and made a sweep in search of the enemy. This force consisted of three cruisers and four destroyers, the ~~XXXX~~ SAN FRANCISCO, HELENA, and PORTLAND; the ¹³⁻²² ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{Laffey?}, BUCHANAN, ^{(?) 13-22} STERRETT, and CUSHING. ~~xxxxxx~~

Now the formation was similar to the one that was used on the following night about which there is considerable discussion. In other words, they had two destroyers ¹³⁻²⁸ ~~then~~ the three cruisers and then two more destroyers bringing up ~~to~~ the rear. Entry was made through ~~SEALARK~~ CHANNEL ~~to~~ the outer one of these two

Sealark

channels, Lengo Channel being the closest one in to the beach, and their entry was facilitated by the Marines sending out boats with lanterns and flashlights in them to guide the ships through the channel. ~~Two thorough~~ thorough sweeps were made of Savo Sound but no enemy was found. This groups of ships then remained in Savo Sound until morning and then joined the transport group on ^{its} arrival at dawn. The ~~Four~~ transports were anchored off the landing at Guadalcanal ~~with~~ and the other combatant ships forming ~~an~~ ^{ed} anti-aircraft screen around them.

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1317
About ~~1317~~ Admiral Turner received from Radio Guadalcanal a despatch saying that a coast watcher up the islands had reported a flight of ^{enemy} bombers and fighters passing to the southeastward and that they could arrive ^{at Guadalcanal} ~~over the disposition~~ by 1330 ~~(Z)~~. Orders were at once given to get underway and form anti-aircraft dispositions, which they did as shown on the slide over there on the left and they were underway and in that formation by 1340. The enemy aircraft turned out to be 21 torpedo planes protected by about 12 fighters. These planes approached low behind Florida Island and after coming across they divided into two groups, one coming in that way, and one coming down here, apparently the intention being to attack from two different directions at right angles to each other, simultaneously, so that ships could not maneuver to avoid the torpedo ~~wake~~ wakes. However, this ~~six~~ zigzag line here ~~shown~~ shows the route taken by our force, all changes of course being make simultaneously by ship-turn movement. At the time they came in our disposition was on this line 1403 to 1408, heading ^{ed} away from the incoming flight ~~wake~~ of planes. Task Force Commander ~~Turner~~ turned the ships 90° to the right to put them broadside to the northern group of planes. The idea was to induce this northern group to attack before the eastern group gained its position, ~~this permitting the~~ thus to permit the ships to deal with the groups in succession rather than simultaneously. This ^{scheme} ~~game~~ was successful as the northern group ~~could not~~ ^{with the} resist the temptation to attack ~~the~~ ships ~~with the~~ broadside-on to them although their other group was not yet ready. This other group was perhaps delayed a little bit by some fighters from

Henderson Field which bothered them but ~~which~~ did not interfere with the northern group.

As soon as this northern group got within range, the ships were turned 90° to the left and the enemy torpedoes ran harmlessly parallel to our own force. The eastern group coming in a little later ^{dropped} ~~gave~~ their torpedoes while the ¹⁵⁻¹⁷ ~~Veach (?)~~ ^{ships} was still on that course and with the same result; the ships were parallel to the torpedo tracks and were able to avoid them all. These enemy torpedo planes flew very close to the water ~~and~~ in making their attack. ~~It~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ As a result a number of vessels were struck by defensive gunfire from other ships. The BUCHANAN was hit on ~~deck~~ No. 2 stack by a five inch projectile and one enemy ~~shipXXXXXXXXXX~~ plane, heavily hit and on fire, crashed into the SAN FRANCISCO, destroying Battle 2 in the after control, killing and injuring about 45 officers and men. But they had Battle 2 at least partially in commission by that night. All but one of the enemy torpedo planes were destroyed by ships' gunfire and fighters from GUADALCANAL. Transports returned to the anchorage about half-past three having lost about two hours unloading time.

Now from numerous contacts during the day it was believed that the enemy would attack Task Force 67 or bombard Henderson Field during the night, but as no enemy transports had been sighted that the attempt to land would not be made that night. By late afternoon it was seen that 90% of the material in the transports could be landed but ~~that~~ it would take several days to ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ complete unloading the ¹⁶⁻¹ *Libra* and the ^{Betelgeuse} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, two cargo boats that had come up with the first lot.

X?

In view of the ^{developing} enemy offensive it was decided to withdraw all APs and AKs from the area and to direct Task Group 67.4 to strike the enemy upon his arrival that night. This decision was communicated to Admiral Callahan. Now there were at the disposal of the ^{Task Force} Commander besides his four transports and ^{two} ~~four~~ cargo vessels

he had two heavy cruisers and one light cruiser, two anti-aircraft light cruisers, eleven destroyers and two destroyer ^{mine} ~~handsweepers~~. The decision was made to assign Admiral Callahan all of the cruisers and eight ~~sixteen~~ destroyers, leaving one damaged destroyer, two destroyers with reduced fuel, and the two DMS to escort the transports on their return south. But the chief reason for not assigning ^{all} ~~these~~ ^{seven} destroyers to Task ~~Six~~ Group 67.4 was that during the night action a force of five cruisers and eight destroyers seemed about all that could be ^{effectively} handled in the restricted maneuvering room in INDISPENSABLE STRAIT and SAVO SOUND. That is quoted from Admiral Turner's report. It doesn't seem like a very sound reason considering that the ~~expected~~ ^{expected} enemy force seemed to have more ships in it than that and it ^{seemed to} ~~expected~~ them to be able to maneuver in those waters, and considering ^{that} our forces were going up against heavy odds at the best it seems that we might have been given absolutely all the strength possible. However, Admirals Callahan and Scott were cognizant of these odds and apparently had made no request for additional destroyers that they might have had.

Another quotation from Admiral Turner's report:

"Most careful consideration was given to the tactical situation. There was no questioning that in fire power the enemy force in the vicinity was far ~~superior~~ stronger than our own. In reaching the decision to send Task Group 67.4 to the attack, the Force Commander considered that this action was the only method ^{through} which this major enemy offensive against GUADALCANAL might be stopped. Even ~~if~~ were our own force almost entirely sacrificed, ^{of} bombardment ~~from~~ the airfield would be prevented and enemy losses might ~~prevent~~ ^{complete} permit our remaining air and surface forces to ~~defeat~~ ^{defeat} the ~~attempt~~ of the landing attempt. On the other hand, while greater cruiser fire power would have been desirable, (probably ~~thinking~~ thinking about the PENSACOLA ~~being~~ taken away from them) Task Group 67.4 in a close night engagement

is considered a formidable ~~engagement~~ unit. The event is considered to have justified the decision to order the attack.*

Cincpac
Apparently ~~Cincpac~~ didn't think that Admiral Callahan had all the ships that he could have handled. He says ^g "At this time Task Force 16, ENTERPRISE, two battleships, three ~~xxxx~~ cruisers, and ten destroyers which had left Noumea at noon on November 11th were steaming north to be in ¹⁷⁻²⁸ fly-off position south of GUADALCANAL on the morning of November 13th. It had been dispatched too late for the battleship to support Task Force 67 so ^{that} the only forces available to stop the threatened bombardment that night were the cruisers and destroyers of Task Group 67.4."

Now the following contact had been reported during the day by air scouting. Two battleships or heavy cruisers, one cruiser and six destroyers, at 1035 in the morning, bearing zero zero eight degrees from GUADALCANAL and practically due north and 335 miles distant; five destroyers at 1045 bearing 347, distant 195 miles which would put them up the slot there towards BOUGAINVILLE; two aircraft carriers and two destroyers at 1450 bearing 264 degrees, practically due west, distant 265 miles. It later developed ~~there~~ that these vessels were not carriers but the correction was never sent ~~out~~ out and this false report

caused quite a bit of concern to Task Force 16 ^{as} which ^{we} will see later on. ^g Admirals Callahan and Scott were cognizant of the probable odds against them. A preliminary dispatch, 120133, was sent during the forenoon by Commander Task Force 67 indicating his intentions. ^{And} this was ^{confirmed} ~~xxxxxx~~ and modified somewhat by voice radio in the afternoon. Admiral Turner says ¹¹⁷ that the APs and AKs expected to retire from the area tonight, the 12th, with anti-submarine screen ¹⁸⁻²⁵ plus two of Scott's destroyers SHAW, SOUTHARD, HOVEY,

lowest in fuel.

X
~~(names of destroyers 2)~~. Remainder combatant ships will be under your command. Route of APs and AKs will be via ~~L~~ WINGON CHANNEL ~~←~~ north of Nura ~~IS~~ and passing within seven miles of the western end of San Cristobal. Support Group cover against enemy attack from most probable direction. Send one cruiser and two destroyers 20 miles ahead of the transports to sweep INDISPENSABLE STRAITS between LINGO CHANNEL and Nura Island for enemy ~~xxx~~ ships and then rejoin you. Support Group rendezvous in position to return to CACTUS tonight and strike enemy ships present. "

Now Admiral Callahan's movements up to the time of contact with the enemy that night were in accordance with these general instructions. They were general in nature, merely to sweep INDISPENSABLE STRAITS to strike the enemy ~~if he came~~ that way, if not to return to SAVO SOUND for the purpose of ~~collecting~~ *inspecting* in there.

At 1815 Admiral Turner proceeded eastward out of SAVO SOUND and shoved off for Espiritu Santo where he arrived on November 15th. Now note that this slide gives the position of Task Force 16 coming up from Noumea which got there ^{at 0800} /on the morning of the 13th. This is the following morning after this night party happened.

Admiral Callahan's force made a sweep of INDISPENSABLE STRAITS and then went on in to SAVO SOUND in what he called Battle/Position ^{Dis-} BAKER ONE. Now notice that formation. These four destroyers, then anti-aircraft light cruiser with Admiral Scott in it, then two heavy cruisers, SAN FRANCISCO and PORTLAND, Admiral Callahan being in the SAN FRANCISCO, then another light cruiser and then an anti-aircraft light cruiser, and then bringing up in the rear four more destroyers. This formation was devised by Admiral Callahan but Admiral Turner was cognizant of it and did not make any exception to it. I make this point because the formation has been considerably criticized as not being the best ^{that might have been} /with the ships ^{devised} available. Apparently this battle disposition was sent out about 1800 by Admiral Callahan who was the OTC and that was the only order that ~~waxxxxxxxpxxxxxx~~ the ships received. Nothing

before and nothing after. There was no ~~O~~peration ~~P~~lan, no ~~B~~attle ~~P~~lan. There was not even general information. The Commanding Officer of the AARON WARD said the first ~~indication~~ ~~information~~ indication he had of enemy forces in the vicinity was when the HELENA made radar contact that night about ~~0130~~ ⁰¹³⁰. Finally the ships went to general quarters about 2000. How long the officers and crews had been without rest and sleep is not stated. One surviving officer from the ATLANTA said that he had been practically without sleep for three days. And the navigator of the SAN FRANCISCO told me that ~~max~~ this was their third night at modified general quarters or better.

Now this much discussed formation had been doped out in general ^{leaving} before/Espiritu Santo, and had been discussed with the commanding officers of the ships that ~~max~~ ^{were} there. But remember all the ships were not there, some of them had joined up later on. Single column was chosen on account of the narrowness of the channel. That's probably a perfectly justifiable reason. Of those destroyers only two of them came from the ~~two~~ same division and those two were separated, one was in the van destroyers and one was in the rear. But he had a reason for at least some of the arrangement. The CUSHING was put in the lead because it was the only ship present that had ^{ever} been through LINGO CHANNEL at night. No marines came out with lanterns and flashlight this night to help them in. The LAFFEY ~~was~~ was put in No. 2 because the commanding officer ~~was~~ ⁱⁿ of the LAFFEY had been present at the conferences ~~at~~ Espiritu Santo and the commanding officer of the CUSHING hadn't, nor had the Division Commander who was in the CUSHING. So he was supposed to pass the dope along to him by semaphore and flashlight signal, blinker lights, the best way he could.

Now Admiral Callahan ^{had} figured from his enemy contact reports that for the enemy to arrive in the area before two o'clock in the morning they would have to make 25 knots, and that with old slow battleships ^{THAT} they had with them they could not make 25 knots,

that
so/if the battleships were amongst the enemy they could not arrive before three o'clock. So he had doped out that if the enemy got into SAVO SOUND before 2:00 A.M. there would be no battleships with them. If battleships were ~~were~~ amongst them they couldn't possibly get there until three.

Now it is very difficult to make a narrative of what happened during the night because the confusion ~~was~~ was even greater than it was at the Battle of SAVO ISLAND that I told you about last week. Remember the OTC and his Staff were killed and their records were destroyed. Other ships were sunk and their ~~records~~ records were lost. The times on all the ships didn't exactly agree. It was dark. Before the firing began even the ~~formation~~ formation was thrown into confusion and the ships were backing and going ahead, hard left and hard right rudder to avoid collision with each other. About the only thing that all the ships agreed on ~~was~~ in their reports was that conditions were chaotic. This word appears again and again in different ships' reports. Comdesron TWELVE says in his report that after the battle started it was ~~every ship~~ pretty much a matter of every ship for itself. So Try to visualize the picture - ships going ahead into this SAVO SOUND through narrow Lengo Channel at 18 knots. Neither the OTC nor the subordinate commanders were in ships with SG radars. There were no instructions as to what to do, no pre-arranged plan, no authority for subordinate commanders to take ^{any} action on their own. The only means of communication provided for was the voice radio, which, as in other cases, ~~eventually~~ eventually became a babble of confusion. Over this voice radio the OTC apparently contemplated receiving information from ships having radar and himself controlling all changes of course and speed, opening and ceasing fire, launching torpedoes, everything. It simply couldn't be done. The night was dark, about 8/10 overcast, with wind 10 knots from the southeast, the sea was smooth with a slight swell from the southeast.

At midnight the force entered LENGO CHANNEL speed 15, course 270. At one o'clock the course was changed to 280. Now the times

on here will not always agree with times in the narrative because the times given by the HELENA, and remember she was about in the middle of the formation, so ^{that} ^{of} the changes ~~in~~ course by the head of the column in part were a little bit earlier than her time. And speed was increased to 18 knots at 1 o'clock. At ~~1:22~~⁰¹²⁴ near LUNGA POINT the HELENA SG radar picked up three groups of ships bearing 310 to 312 degrees around about 30,000 yards distant. By 01:30 she had figured the center group was 4 or 5 large ships, and the left ~~in~~ right groups 5 to 8 ships each, a screen of destroyers and a couple of light cruisers in each group. She had plotted their course as 134 degrees speed 20 knots, which events showed was almost exactly right. But she had to report this over ~~the~~^{their} TBS to the OTC who was in the SAN FRANCISCO and the report started a great deal of conversation. About 01:30 the course was changed to 310 which headed the formation directly for the enemy. At 01:37 course was changed by column movement to zero zero zero. Here was the enemy coming in here, here we were coming up here, change course up ~~in~~ here. Now it looked very much - ^{of course} Admiral Callahan isn't here to ask about it - but it looked very much as if he were trying to keep on collision course ^{with} ~~in~~ the enemy. Just why I don't know because he had a pretty soft point at the head of his column. There was no general bearing line given out, no fleet axis. On the left screen there is the set-up as shown by the O'BANNON's radar at about 01:40. They ^{were} heading right into a nest of three groups of enemy ships.

About 01:41 the CUSHING, which was the leading ship, sighted and reported three ships ahead, crossing from port to starboard. These were probably part of the northern group. This caused ^{some} ~~more~~ conversation over the TBS. Commander Destroyer Division TEN started ^{turn to} to left ~~and~~ fire torpedoes. The OTC ordered him to get back on his course. Finally, he asked permission to fire torpedoes which was granted but by that time it was too late as the target had turned away.

This was about 01x43. At this time a change of course to 310 was ordered. They had been on course zero for six minutes. This apparently was not received by the ships at the rear of the formation. Some seemed to think that the new course was 270. The ATLANTA said that the destroyer ahead of her, the O'BANNON, changed course to the left right away - went ships left instead of column left. She ^{sheered} veered left to avoid collision. Anyway, ~~a board of~~ *it brought an* inquiry from the OTC, the ATLANTA, ^{ing} asked her what she was doing ~~and~~ with instructions to get back into formation.

At 01x45 ~~xxxxxxxx~~ the situation was ^{as} shown by the O'BANNON's radar - the O'BANNON was the fourth ship in the column as I remember - and at that time the OTC gave the order to "stand by to fire." At 01x47, after four minutes on the course 310, the course was changed back to zero zero zero. Now these changes of course at the head of the column caused great confusion. The SAN FRANCISCO swung outside the ATLANTA on both turns with the result that the ATLANTA was out on the SAN FRANCISCO's starboard hand ~~with unfortunate~~ ⁰¹⁻³⁹ instead of being ahead of her, ^{with} very unfortunate results later on. The ships down the column didn't know what was going on and jammed up on each other. Now all this was coincident with opening fire and being fired on. The word "chaotic" really seems to describe it.

At 01x48 the OTC gave the order "Odd ships fire to starboard, even to ^{port} ~~quarter~~." Why, nobody knows. There were enemy on both sides. But all ships didn't get this order apparently. Some ships were trained ~~amxxxx~~ on targets and had picked up targets and were waiting orders to fire. Some ships when they got this order thought that to avoid confusion they shouldn't fire on ~~the xxxxxxx~~ the wrong side where they had targets and switched to hunting of targets on the other side. Others disregarded it and opened fire wherever they had targets irrespective of the side. The flag ship itself was one of the ships that disregarded the order and opened fire on the wrong side. All this happened very rapidly in much less time than it takes to tell. It seems definite that the enemy illuminated

with
The searchlights and opened fire first, although some of our ships succeeded in opening fire before they themselves were fired on. Whether ~~where~~ the firing started at the head of the line or in the middle isn't clear. The enemy had certainly opened fire before the order was given at 01X48 as given above. The HELENA says she opened fire about 01X48 without orders a minute or two after being illuminated, fired on, and hit. And yet for a long time this ship had fire control problem solved by radar, ^{had} her guns loaded in full automatic train and elevation, and could have opened fire long before the enemy was ^{with-} in searchlight range.

Now let us go back to the head of the column. The CUSHING lost her chance to fire torpedoes, as I told you before, and pretty soon she was ^{just} mixed up in a mess of enemy ships. An enemy battleship passed her and cut through the column astern of her. Shortly after this she got three hits, was dead in the water, and was fired on from both sides by our own ships she believed. Finally about half past ~~xxxxx~~ two she was abandoned. This battleship which passed the CUSHING cut through the formation astern of the LAFPEY. The LAFPEY fired torpedoes at her but the run was too short for them to arm. She plastered the battleship's bridge with her small calibre guns. That was all she could do; immediately ^{there} ~~afterwards~~ she was hit by ~~xxxx~~ salvos of large calibre projectiles ^{and a} ~~from the~~ torpedo and she was disabled and on fire and order was given to abandon ship. She sank almost immediately. Now this gives you an idea of what was happening at the head of the column.

As They say the O'BANNON had an SG radar and made good use of it. There's her radar screen at about 01X55. She had to maneuver around to avoid collision with the destroyer ahead of her and finally about this time she broke out of ~~xxxx~~ the melee and continued off to the westward where things seemed to be peaceful and quiet ^{and} as that was the course that had been ordered.

She turned around and came back by and by, suffered no casualties, and very little damage.

Now we come to the Atlanta, the first one of the cruisers in the formation.

Her gunnery radars ^{had} picked up and tracked one of the contacts and when the "column left" order was given the Atlanta was forced to turn left almost immediately to avoid collision with a destroyer ahead. And then as I said the Task Group Commander ordered her to get back in formation. About this time she was illuminated by searchlights of ships about 1600 yards away and fire was opened on her. The Atlanta was an odd ship and was ^{ordered} ~~supposed~~ to fire to starboard, but she was being fired on by a ship to port so she had better shoot back at the ship that was firing at her so she fired to port. However, while in this heavy gun-action she received two torpedo hits and immediately lost all power. The gun-action suddenly ceased and the illuminating ship turned off her searchlights. Within a couple of minutes, the ship head having swung around to about south, with no power, on fire forward, she was taken under fire again by a heavy cruiser strongly believed to be one of our own force. One officer at the time identified the firing ship as the San Francisco. She received 19-8" hits, armor-piercing projectiles, green-dye-loaded, Green was the San Francisco's color and apparently the Japanese used no Armor-piercing projectiles that night, their ammunition being entirely of the bombardment type. This ended the party for the Atlanta. She remained afloat until the following day. Admiral Scott was killed, and she sank the following day.

On the San Francisco the records ^{are} compiled from secondary all of the sources, due to the fact that the Admiral and ~~chief~~ key personnel were killed, but it is not much use going into details as to what happened to the individual ship because that same condition of confusion, not knowing who was enemy and who was friend, prevailed all down the line.

The Portland was hit by a torpedo and disabled. The Juneau didn't get into the action very much; she had been hit by a torpedo and apparently they thought that her back was broken. She joined up with the Helena and the San Francisco and a couple of our remaining destroyers about dawn and retired to the southeastward with them and that morning about 1100 she was hit by a torpedo apparently from a submarine, disintegrated, and was lost with all hands, so there was not

very much opportunity to get any story about what happened on the Juneau except from the Medical Officer and a couple of hospital ~~XXXX~~ corpsmen who had been transferred during the morning to the San Francisco to assist in caring for the wounded over there.

The destroyers in the rear seemed to get very few of the orders that were issued from up ahead and they had only a very vague idea of what was going on. The Aaron Ward, which was the leading destroyer of the rear group, followed more or less this general track that is plotted on the chart. Up here at this point she became disabled and was out of control for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Eventually about five o'clock in the morning she was able to get underway and proceeded out to the eastward.

The Fletcher, which was the rear ship in the column, also had a good SG radar which functioned well, but no use was made of the information she obtained. There is ~~xxx~~ the diagram of her radar screen in the early part of the action. That is a little ^{later} on about 0145 and about 0155 she was right in the middle of ~~the~~ things. The Fletcher was about the only ship in our whole formation that ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ suffered no damage or casualties, did not even receive a hit.

Now I know that this account has been rather confusing, but that is exactly the situation as it existed. They were probably *even* more confused than you are. (~~Raff~~)

Now the damage inflicted by our ships was probably greater than that received. We know what losses we suffered. The ships over there in the left-hand column, four of them badly damaged, two slightly damaged, and one, the Fletcher, absolutely undamaged. The estimated damage to the enemy forces is as given there. How many of them got away we do not know because how many were there we do not know. ^{But} in addition to that the force did accomplish its mission which was to prevent the bombardment of Henderson Field.

The enemy ships did not bombard Henderson Field that night. They had enough and they got away, at least all of them that could. One battleship, which I will tell you ^{more} about next week, did not succeed in getting away. ~~and~~ was sunk the next day.

As a matter of fact Henderson Field was bombarded the following night, so they only succeeded in postponing it by one night by this night action. But anyway the immediate mission was carried out. Now this was done in spite of ^{the} lack of plan and ^{the} confusion ^{which} prevailed. It was done because the enemy was surprised and was thrown into even greater confusion than our forces, and was prepared to use only bombardment ammunition.

Now when I told you about our own ships firing into each other, as in the case of the San Francisco and the Atlanta, do not ~~forget~~ forget that the enemy did the same thing. He fired into his own ships too. He was just as confused as we were. And this time we got some lucky breaks. We had better luck than we did in the ^{August} Battle of Savo Island. There is no gain ~~in~~ saying the courage of the commander ⁱⁿ leading his forces unhesitatingly into the face of such heavy odds. But courage and luck cannot take the place of careful planning and SOUND MILITARY DECISION. ^{Plowing} ~~Filing~~ through the darkness at 18 knots into the face of ^{an unknown} the enemy is no place for snap judgements. "GIVE THEM HELL" and "WE WANT THE BIG ONES", those ~~are~~ ^{were} messages sent out ~~xxx~~ over the TBS by the OTC, make much better newspaper headlines than they do ^{Battle Plans}.

I have ~~not~~ ^{it} got time to quote from them, but I don't want you to think that I am the only fellow that paints a rather black picture of events of that night. Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, had quite a number of rather caustic comments to make about it. It is very difficult to say what might have happened - what might have been - if Admiral Callaghan did not make the best of his opportunity, he paid the penalty for his mistake with his life - and so did hundreds of others of his men. ^{Had} ~~Had~~ this formation that he took in there been maneuvered so as to bring ^{its} ~~the~~ broadside bearing on the enemy at a range where gunfire could have been

opened by radar outside of searchlight range with the destroyers on the flank and at liberty to make radar torpedo attack, it is probable that much greater damage could have been inflicted upon the enemy at very much less cost. ~~Remember~~ Remember that Admiral Turner based his decision to risk this force partly on its torpedo power and no use whatsoever was made of ^{that} ~~this~~ power.

^I commented on the fact that the destroyers did not belong to the same organization. There was considerable other ~~impermanence~~ impermanence in our organization out there at the time. We were down pretty close to the bottom of the barrel and we had to use ships as we had them wherever and whenever we had them. Just a month prior to this engagement Admiral Scott was in the SAN FRANCISCO instead of being in the Atlanta as he was this time. I think that Admiral Callahan had been down there something less than a month. As I told you, he ^{had} had no personal contact with a good many of the commanding officers, consequently ~~we~~ had no opportunity to indoctrinate them in any way.

Now that is all there is time for this morning. Next week we will take up the story from here on, beginning with the situation as it existed at dawn in SAVO SOUND the morning after this battle.

END OF PART I

Battle of Guadalcanal - Part I

TITLE OF THE PRESENTATION

Given by Commo. Bowdey

Date 22 August 1945

LEFT SCREEN (FACING STAGE)

RIGHT SCREEN (FACING STAGE)

Box No.	FILE No.	TITLE OF SLIDE	Box No.	FILE No.	TITLE OF SLIDE
		Blank	50	46-419	Eastern Solomons
		Blank	49	46-418	Cape Esperance
		Blank	48	46-420	Santa Cruz
1	42-355	Savo Island Area	2	43-1367	Solomon Is.
1	do	Repeat	3	43-1712	Jap Forces
4	43-1713	T.F. 67	5	43-1714	T.F. 16
		Blank	2	43-1367	Solomon Is.
6	43-1715	Par. 12	2	do	Repeat
4	43-1713	T.F. 67	7	43-1725	Track Chart
6	43-1715	Par. 12	7	do	Repeat
1	42-355	Savo Id. Area	7	do	Repeat
8	43-1722	Formation on Nov. 12	9	43-1726	Day Action Nov. 12
		Blank			Blank
		Blank	2	43-1367	Solomon Is.
1	42-355	Savo Id. Area	10	43-1717	Despatch 120133
1	do	Repeat	11	43-1657	Track Chart
12	43-1721	Battle Disp. B-1			Blank
12	do	Repeat	13	43-1723	Track Helena
14	43-1719	Legend	13	do	Repeat
15	43-1658	O'Bannon Radar 0140	13	do	Repeat
16	43-1659	" " 0145	13	do	Repeat
17	43-1660	" " 0155	13	do	Repeat
		Blank	13	do	Repeat
18	43-1661	Fletcher Radar 0135	13	do	Repeat
19	43-1662	" " 0150	13	do	Repeat
20	43-1663	" " 0155	13	do	Repeat
21	43-1716	Damage			Blank
		Blank			Blank

BOWDEY, G. H.
29 Aug. 45

no cards } ✓

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Aug 45

THE BATTLE OF GUADALCANAL - Part 2

Here is the second part of the Battle of Guadalcanal.

The Savo Sound Area just after the two forces withdrew, the American force to the eastward, what there was left of it, and the Japanese force to the northwestward. This is the situation as it existed in Savo Sound at dawn on the following morning. The legend over there on the left-hand screen explains what the different lettered positions mean. Up at Point M there, north of Savo Island, was the battleship HIYEI (?) which had been badly damaged during the night action, and over at point P was the Aaron Ward. The Hiyei fired a few shots at the Aaron Ward after daylight came but fortunately did not inflict any damage and the Aaron Ward got her propelling plant operating about that time and got out.

Now, after daylight, the aircraft from the Guadalcanal landing field commenced bombing and torpedo attacks on the Hiyei which continued throughout the day, combined with attacks from the Enterprise's planes. Eight torpedo hits and three 1000-lb bomb hits were claimed. These, added to the torpedo and gunfire damage inflicted on the ship during the night action, speaks well for the ability of the /Jap battleships to absorb punishment. When last seen that day she was still afloat with a light cruiser and five destroyers escorting her, apparently rescuing personnel and she sank sometime during the night, but she remained afloat ^{for} 24 hours after the night action subject to continuous air attacks all during that time.

The other damaged battleship that had participated in the night action of the ^{FUSO} ~~FUSHO~~ (%) class was sighted between Florida and St. Isabel islands and was still further damaged by B-17s from ~~the~~ Espiritu Santo, but she was not sunk and she was last seen going to the North.

Now on the 12th, remember the night ~~action~~ ^{is} with Admiral Callaghan's force ~~which~~ ^{was} fought the ~~action~~ ^{night} of the 12th/13th, on the 12th enemy transports with large reinforcements had started from the Buin area for Guadalcanal. Apparently preparing for a landing on the following day, the 13th, with the Japs force having blasted the way open for ~~him~~ ^{THEM}.

But after the defeat of this force during the night the schedule was postponed one day and they retired to Buin. Then during the following night, the night of the 13th-14th, they again got underway for Guadalcanal.

An enemy carrier with a battleship and a number of other warships and several groups were sighted between nine and ten hundred on ~~the~~ ~~night~~ of November 13th, 200 to 250 miles north of Guadalcanal apparently protecting ^{One of} own damaged ships. ~~Whether~~ these forces bombarded Henderson Field from 120 to 240 on the night of November 13th-14th, that is early morning on the 14th, destroying 3 planes and damaging 17 fighters. This bombardment was cut short by a PT boat attack in which six boats fired 17 torpedoes getting one hit. And the next morning five ships were sighted retiring to the northwest, up here in the New Georgia area, one of them trailing oil. But, anyway, in spite of the bombardment Henderson Field was not put out of commission but was used throughout the day, as you will see later on in the narrative. So, during the ^{13th} ~~day~~ each side withdrew its battered forces. As I told you before, the Juneau was ~~struck~~ struck by a submarine at 1100 that morning and the whole ship disintegrated and sank. The only survivors were the doctor and some hospital corpsmen who had been transferred to the San Francisco to assist with the wounded there and a few others. The SOP, fearing ~~further~~ ~~either~~ submarine attack, and thinking nobody had survived the Juneau sinking took his force away, but actually about 60 men were still alive the next day when they were sighted about 1100 by a search plane which dropped a yellow life raft. But contact was not maintained ^{and} ~~but~~ search later on did not prove successful in finding the survivors. However, one raft with ^{seven} ~~seventeen~~ men in ~~it~~ eventually made its way ashore to one of the islands in the Solomons and they were rescued.

Now let us turn to Task Force 16 which, as I told you, left Noumea at noon on November 11th with instructions to proceed to the vicinity of Latitude 14 south, 161-30 east, via ~~the~~ route to the westward ^{of} ~~in~~ New Caledonia and to be prepared to strike enemy targets

in the Guadalcanal area. That is 630 miles from Noumea up to that point and it is 360 miles farther from there to Savo Island by water and about 300 miles by air. After clearing the channel at Noumea, Air Group TEN, composed of 38 fighters, 16 scouts, 15 bombers, and 9 torpedo planes, a total of 78, flew out and landed on board the Enterprise. Due to recent battle damage her No. 1 elevator was still inoperative, reducing considerably her efficiency. Repair crews from the Vestal were still on board and expected to have the elevator operating by the following day. Now note that this Task Force was due at that point at 0800 on the 13th. Task Force 67 was due at Guadalcanal ~~at~~ at dawn on November 12th, so that this force was much too far away to be of any assistance there. It could not have possibly arrived at Guadalcanal in time to ^{have} participated in the night battle that I told you of last week. In addition to the fact of the force being dispatched so late, its orders still kept it under the control of Commander South Pacific at Noumea instead of permitting it to operate on its own initiative.

On the evening of November 12th, the night before they got up to that point, a report was received from Guadalcanal that two enemy carriers and two destroyers at 1450 off ^{to} ~~the~~ the westward. I spoke of that last week, ^(the force was off in there) and it caused the Commander Task Force 16 considerable uneasiness. As a matter of fact, the report was false but it never was corrected so that the Task Force Commander had his worry for nothing.

Now this slide over here on the right shows the activities of this Task Force 16 during the day on November 13th and November 14th. At dawn on the 13th, a search was launched covering this area here, single planes, 200 mile radius. No contacts were made during this search. As the elevator was still not in operative condition, it was decided to fly all the TBFs and six fighters to Guadalcanal to increase the effectiveness of flight operations on board - reduce the number of planes by that much - and also to reinforce Henderson Field.

At 8:10 these planes were launched ^{with orders} ~~and ordered~~ to search

At 1110 on the 13th orders were received from Commander South Pacific down in Noumea to proceed to a northerly position to support the damaged units retiring from Guadalcanal, but to remain south of the parallel 1140 south latitude which was about the ~~latitude~~ latitude of REYNOLDSLAND (?) and also to guard against observation from Reynold Island and Indispensible reefs. Commander South Pacific wanted their whereabouts to remain unknown although, as a matter of fact, the Japs had already spotted them.

Commander Task Force 16 was also ordered to organize his force as he desired. As a matter of fact, he had already organized an attack group, under Admiral Lee, consisting of all the units that he had except his carrier, one anti-aircraft light cruiser, and four destroyers.

At 1653 in the afternoon a dispatch was received from Commander South Pacific directing a striking force to be formed, but specifying that it was to consist of the two battleships, and four destroyers. Now there he took Admiral Kincaid's initiative away from him. Kincaid already had a striking force organized^{and}/ready to push off, consisting of practically everything he had. Commander South Pacific at this distance specified that he could only send two battleships and four destroyers. And they were to proceed only under Commander South Pacific's orders to operate in the vicinity east of Savo Island to intercept ~~an enemy~~ an enemy bombardment force that night. It was anticipated that the field would be bombarded that night and this you will remember I told you a few minutes ago it actually was.

But orders were not received directing Lee to carry out this mission until about 2030 and then he was to go up east of Savo Island to clear the area by daylight. He was down here. He departed to the northward at high speed and ~~Task~~ Task Force 16 went about its business for the night.

Now here ^{was} ~~is~~ an example of a high command at a distance trying to run details based on incomplete information. ^{Lee} ~~He~~ was not close enough to Savo Island to ^{be able to} carry out his orders. Admiral Kincaid had apparently anticipated such a move and organized a striking group

~~XXXX~~

much stronger than the one that was ~~dispatched~~ dispatched and could have sent them off earlier in the day on time to be up there if he had not been held back by the restraining orders placed on him. He was naturally maintaining radio silence so he was only receiving and not sending. However, under the circumstances which now developed he felt that he had to talk so he sent the destroyer MUSTIN (?) 50 miles to the eastward of his force to transmit this information to Commander South Pacific.

Again in compliance with orders from Commander South Pacific received in the evening along about 2100 Task Force 16 change course to 300 degrees and increased speed to 25 knots, so to be up in approximately this position at daylight. Orders were received on the morning of the 14th after he got up there to exploit such targets as offered themselves.

In a dispatch received at 0518 that morning Commander South Pacific direct^{ed}/Task Force 16 to proceed northwesterly to about 100 miles from the Solomons to attack the transports then proceeding towards Guadalcanal from Buin. In another dispatch Lee was ordered to operate along the same general northwesterly course about 50 miles from the Solomon chain. As a matter of fact, however, at dawn Task Force 16 was 200 miles from ~~XXX~~ Guadalcanal instead of 100 miles. Because of rain squalls launching of planes was delayed until after 7:00 o'clock and then ~~they~~ the air patrol and the search were launched.

The search consisted of two single planes, Sector 285 to 315, and four groups of two planes in Sector 315 to 015. This sector here. If Guadalcanal had kept Task Force Commander 16 fully informed, this search /would not have been necessary. He had an air attack groups of VFBS ~~XXX~~ and VFs on deck. Commander of Task Force 16 was not informed again of the night bombardment that ~~was~~ occurred at Henderson Field.

At 0800 one search plane reported ten enemy planes headed towards Task Force 16 from the northward. The Task Force turned south away from the incoming enemy planes. However, the enemy

planes never showed up and nobody really knows whether they were ever there or not. At 9:55 two planes of combat air patrol shot down a four-engined patrol plane that was shadowing the force from the northeastward. The Enterprise broke her radio silence in order to direct those fighter planes.

At 9:15 the first ~~report~~ ^{contact report} of enemy ships was received. And at 9:30 this report was amplified to include two battleships, two heavy cruisers, one XCV, and four destroyers, and gave the position up here at Point H, just south of New Georgia Island. This force was probably the force that had bombarded Henderson Field during the night. Why it was not covering the group of transports which was discovered shortly after that coming down through the slot up there is not known. The Japs have not explained that. But, anyway, the group of transports was discovered shortly after that and the first attack group was ordered to proceed and attack this force and then to land at Guadalcanal. There were many enemy transports, two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and six destroyers reported in that contact north of New Georgia Island. And from then on through the day that group of ships was attacked by planes from the ~~Enterprise~~ Enterprise and from Henderson Field, but did not succeed in turning them back. They kept plugging along.

Along about mid-day the Enterprise with the ships remaining with her passed Point 16, turned south, and retired and do not enter into picture any more. They went on back to Noumea. Total Enterprise casualties were 2 planes lost with 5 officers and 5 enlisted men.

Now the Commander in Chief Pacific listed damage inflicted by the Enterprise air group and the Guadalcanal planes combined on November 14th. All these air attacks that they made on these two groups of ships. ^{The Jap} ~~That~~ ships retiring there - the bombardment group - and the transport group with their escorts coming down as one heavy cruiser, possibly only a light cruiser or destroyer, sunk, two light cruisers reported sunk, one light cruiser and one destroyer damaged, five APs or AKs sunk and seven APs or AKs damaged. Not such a very long list. But in the report submitted by the Enterprise it takes two closely typewritten pages to list all the damage that their

planes inflicted. The Commander in Chief's comment at the time was that our observations from the air continued to be optimistic. The seven APs and AKs reported damaged in that group were eventually destroyed later on.

Now remember Task Force 64 left this group over here on the evening of the 13th and proceeded up towards Guadalcanal, not getting there, however, in time to prevent that bombardment the night before. As a matter of fact at 11:30 on the morning of the 14th they were down in that position. This force consisted of the Washington and the South Dakota with Admiral Lee aboard the Washington and four destroyers, the Walk, Benham, Preston, and Gwinn. They spent the day, on the 14th, just maneuvering around there trying to keep enemy planes from spotting them. I suppose by getting under clouds. But, anyway, they were not successful, the enemy did sight them, and reported the force as consisting of one battleship, one cruiser, and four destroyers. A pretty accurate report and typical of the reports the Japanese seemed able to make/ at that period of the war.

Now during the day, on the 14th, this force received no less than 25 reports of enemy forces. Of course, many of these were duplicates or follow-ups/ reports of the same forces throughout the day. They ~~totalled~~ totaled up, however, to one carrier, four battleships, ten or more cruisers, and numerous destroyers and transports. The most important was the group of 12 APs and AKs ~~which~~ which were under air attack during the day and was preceded or escorted by battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. In addition, there was a force of a carrier, a battleship, and some destroyers sighted up to the northward of Guadalcanal probably covering the north^{ern}~~ward~~ flank of that transport group and at 1700 on the 14th a force of 4 heavy cruisers, one destroyer leader and 10 destroyers was sighted up north of the Solomons headed in that direction. It is possible that this force may have been part of the force that was ~~later on~~ ^{later on} engaged by Lee's force during the night. Now late on the afternoon of the 14th/^{gives its position at 1836} Task Force 64 began its approach up towards the Savo Island area.

It rounded

~~the~~ the western end of Guadalcanal and early in the evening passed between Savo and Russell islands.

Now Admiral Lee apparently had disseminated some kind of a battle plan to his ships and had appointed a rendezvous. He apparently afterwards had some qualms about the propriety of the disposition he had made of his destroyers as he requested the opinion of some other officers on this point. But, anyway, ~~sometime~~ sometime during this approach the force had been formed in column with the destroyers leading in the order ~~Walk~~ Walk, ~~Benham~~ ^{no} Benham, Preston, and Gwinn. Now ~~two~~ two of these destroyers belonged to the same division or had ever operated together before. They had no division commander; they were operating under the Senior Commanding Officer in the Walt. That is just an indication of how close to the bottom of the barrel we were for forces down in the South Pacific at that time. They just had to scratch together anything they could get ~~their~~ their fingers on and make use of them. These destroyers were 300 yards apart in formation. About 4000 yards astern the destroyers came the Washington and 1500 yards behind her the South Dakota. Now these two ships had never operated together before leaving Noumea on the 11th. Their entire experience in division formation consisted of their high-speed run through submarine waters from the time they had left the group down here up to this particular moment. The Washington had fired only two night practices in January, ten months previously. She had had no target practice at all since July except for machine guns. This was her first time in action. The South Dakota had been in action against aircraft but never against surface vessels. The weather conditions were as follows: temperature 83, winds 7 knots from a 170° true, the sea smooth, about 3/10 of the sky covered by clouds, none of them overhead, a half moon, which set about one o'clock in the morning. The visibility was such that permanent landmarks could be ^{seen} a distances as great as 25 miles during moonlight and 12 miles after moonset.

About 2100 the force was in the formation that I have just given you on course 20° true speed 23 knots. Now his idea was to endeavor to head off the bombardment of Guadalcanal which he felt sure ~~was~~ would take place that night in advance of, or in conjunction with, the landing of the reinforcements from the transports and also to break up any such landing.

At ^{word} 2010 they received ~~information~~ that there was an enemy light cruiser and a destroyer in a cove^r in the Savo Islands. Having made no contacts on this course which was about 18 miles from Savo Island out to this track which they ~~was~~ followed. They got up there about 2200, having seen nothing changed course to the east^r to pass them about 10 miles north of Savo Island. During this part of the approach, a friendly search plane sighted them, flashed recognition signals and PT boats from Tulagi sighted them and reported ^{the force} ~~that~~ as an enemy force coming in. To correct these reports the Task Force Commander informed the forces on shore at Guadalcanal by TBS in plain language of his location and course. It was not known whether this was picked up by the enemy, but it might very easily have been. Another instance of our own forces not being informed. The commanding officer at Guadalcanal had not been informed of the approach or the presence of this force.

Still having made no contact about 2245 when due north of Savo Island about ten miles the course was changed to 150^r and at 2330 speed was changed to 17 knots. At that time a dispatch^w as received stating that a heavily escorted convoy was expected to arrive off Savo Island between 0030 and 0230. Still having made no contact about 2355 when due north of Lunga Point course was changed to west. Unbenownst ~~Unbeknownst~~ to each other they had just missed an^r enemy force up here which apparently got into their wake a very few minutes after they had passed through that water, but neither force sighted the other.

But one minute after midnight the Washington's search and fire control radars picked up these targets up here, range about 18,000 yards, but lost them again directly on account of land interference.

At 7 minutes after midnight the South Dakota made visual contacts on three ships up in that direction which were dimly illuminated by the setting moon. Radar gave their range as 18,000 yards. They were east of Savo Island and in the same waters that our ships had just passed through. Their course seems to be rather doubtful. The leading ship was ~~xxxx~~ identified as a battleship or a heavy cruiser, the others probably light cruisers. It is believed that there were probably two groups of ships totaling perhaps eight altogether in this area east of Savo Island.

At 14 minutes after 12 Task Force Commander gave the South Dakota permission to open fire when ready by TBS. And at 16 minutes after midnight the Washington opened fire, followed a minute or so later by the South Dakota, range about 18,000 yards on those ships up to the northward. ^{Both} ~~xxxx~~ range and fire control solutions were accurate, both of the ships hitting the ~~ships~~ ^{targets} and setting them afire on their first or second salvos. And after the 7th or 8th salvos within seven minutes of opening fire both targets were seen to sink.

In the meantime at 20 minutes after 12 course was changed up there to about 300 degrees to pass ~~midway~~ midway between Cape Esperence (?) and Savo Island. The speed was increased again to 23 knots. Now from here on the South Dakota's track and the Washington's track do not agree. The Washington's track is shown in the solid line, the South Dakota's track in the dotted line. The South Dakota sheered out here to avoid our damaged destroyers for they were already damaged so early in the game. ~~xxxx~~ ^{Now you will find} possibly some difference, a few minutes between the times as I give them and the times as they appeared ^{that} on ~~the~~ slides although you probably cannot see them. Because there was the inevitable confusion of night action although not to the extent that had prevailed in the action two nights previously. And while the ships endeavored to keep a chronological record of what happened, you can ^{easily} ~~readily~~ understand why the recorder

does not get everything down in the circumstances such as they are. Targets were appearing both visually and by radar and then disappearing main and secondary batteries were firing and things were happening faster than you can tell about it. But just try to keep in mind the picture. You have got your ~~xxxxxx~~ four destroyers together, 4000 yards ahead of your two battleships, ~~xxxx~~ the South Dakota being 1500 yards astern of the Washington. There were apparently ^{also} some enemy ships coming in to the westward of Savo Island and when these ships opened fire, which they did, they were at first mistaken for batteries on shore.

Now the account given of this action is rather confusing, the times do not agree, and it probably never will be straightened out until ~~xxxx/xxxx~~ ^{somebody} has time to put the whole ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{works} down on our maneuver board up here or some place like that. I do not know of any other place like it, and go through the ~~xxxxxx~~ thing with a fine toothed comb. Dispatches and everything else analyzed one at a time, ~~xxxx~~ and so far there has been absolutely no time or facilities to do any such thing. So this is ^a kind of a ^{synthetic} ~~synthetic~~ narrative built up by combining the stories. ~~xxxxxx~~

Our destroyers ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ apparently opened fire about 2000, I mean 20 minutes after midnight, a few minutes after the battleships did. The battleships were firing main battery ~~xxxx~~ targets at one target and secondary battery targets at other targets up here in the direction of Savo Island.

Then about 12:30 the South Dakota started experiencing electrical difficulties. She lost all power for three minutes and her SG radar went out for 13 minutes. At 0034 speed was increased to 26 knots and this ended the first phase of the action. Although ~~xxxxxx~~ her battleships had been fired ^{at} ~~on~~ neither one of them had been hit. What they ~~xxx~~ considered the enemy bombardment group, this group ^{up} here, ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ which they figured was headed for Henderson Field, for ~~xxxxxxxx~~ bombardment, had been heavily hit and some sunk and it was thought to be thoroughly disorganized.

But our own destroyers had not been quite so fortunate. Let us take a look at them now. The Walt, the leading ship, had a fire control radar but did not have much luck with it. Following opening of ^{gun} fire by the battleships, she opened fire with guns at a target believed to be an enemy light cruiser to starboard which she thought blew up, and then shifted fire to an enemy destroyer. Here is another case of ^{our} ~~a~~ destroyers opening fire with guns before they had made any attempt to do anything with their torpedoes.

At 0037 the Preston, the third ship in the column, astern of the Walt, blew up. About two minutes after that the Walt herself was hit by a torpedo and two or three salvos of shells and her forecastle was blown off and the ship was a total wreck. ^{Orders} to abandon ship were given and about three minutes later the ship sank leaving the detached bow still afloat. The depth charges were apparently not set on safe or had jarred off and several of them exploded killing ~~xx~~ and injuring many of the crew that were in the water. Casualties were very heavy ~~and~~ including the commanding officer.

The Preston, as I said, the third ship in column, had no fire control radar. She opened ^{fire} with her guns to starboard shortly after the Walt did. Star shells were not used because enemy targets could be seen fairly plainly in the moonlight. At 35½ minutes after twelve the Preston was hit on the starboard side by two 6-inch shells, one of which demolished both fire rooms and started several fires including one in the TNT in the torpedo warheads. A few seconds later she was hit from port by which she says was a heavy cruiser which had come in from the direction ~~undiscovered~~ undetected. This salvo completely wrecked the ship aft. Order was given to abandon ship and in about a minute she rolled over and sank. About half of her crew were lost including the commanding officer.

Two of these destroyers report being fired on from port and one of them said that they ^{saw} ^{over there} a cruiser/sunk by our battleship fire, although neither one of the battleships makes any mention of having fired any shots in that direction.

Benham

The ~~STANSON~~, the second ship in column, saw no enemy ships until after the South Dakota had fired several salvos and then she opened fire to starboard as well. She fired no torpedoes as the targets were beyond the range for/intermediate speed for which torpedoes were set. About 38 minutes after twelve the ~~STANSON~~ ^{Benham} was hit on the starboard side about frame 6 by a torpedo which carried away the bow to frame 14 below the main deck and amongst other damage crack/^{ed} or ruptured her main deck in the longitudinal frame 75.

She was slowed to about 5 knots but managed to keep some way on her. She made a complete circle to the right, cleared the Walt and the Preston, the Preston was blown up just about the time she was hit, and apparently this circling around caused the enemy to lose track of her~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ because she was not fired on again. She worked her way in close to the shore of Guadalcanal Island and slowly made her way ~~XXXXXXXX~~ seaward to the westward. She was badly buckled at frame 75 but she reported her damage to the Gwinn and the OTC and proceeded at 8 knots ~~XXXXXX~~ towards the appointed rendezvous.

This leaves only the Gwinn. We have got her separate tracks plotted by her, which is over there on the other screen. She saw the South Dakota's targets when fire was opened about 13 minutes after 12 and prepared to fire her torpedoes but decided the range was too great, although she did fire one tube accidentally due to a short circuit. About 23 minutes after twelve she fired two star shell spreads to illuminate cruisers which were under fire from the battleships, and at 0026 opened fire on some ships apparently on an easterly course south of Savo Island. At 0031 she reports being fired on by a Jap cruiser to port. Just about the time the Preston blew up the Gwinn was hit by a 4.7 inch shell in No. 2 engine room which exploded and did considerable damage. And a minute or so later she was hit again. She was just missed by a torpedo. She had lost sight of the Benham and about 3 minutes later she ceased firing for lack of any targets. She does not say anything from then until about 0048

when she received orders from the OTC for the destroyers to retire. Not knowing the extent of her own damage efforts were concentrated on saving ship. So she retired to the south and about three o'clock in the morning down off the western coast of Guadalcanal she picked up the Benham ~~which~~ and retired in company with her.

Now Admiral Lee, analyzing the situation, considered that the enemy was trying to make a torpedo attack on him from the direction of Savo Island, when he was on his westerly course here, and that the gun action of our destroyers ~~forced~~ forced them to fire their torpedoes prematurely at the destroyers instead of the battleships, and that the fire ~~xxx~~ destroyer/plus the Washington secondary battery drive them off. Now it may be that they were attempting a torpedo attack from that direction. We do not know. But if they did it was certainly an attack of opportunity and not the result of any plan. Because I think it is quite definite that although the enemy may have known of the presence of this force in this general area that they had absolutely no idea of exactly where they were of their position until our two battleships opened fire on this force here about quarter-past twelve. So, as I said before, at the end of the first phase the two battleships were entirely uninjured but the destroyer screen was entirely gone. Now why they considered it necessary to have a destroyer screen, why the destroyers were placed up ahead there, as they were, I do not know. There was nothing for the destroyers to screen them against. They were making speed such that they would have been no protection against submarines and as far as any attack by light surfaces are concerned their own secondary battery would seem to be their best protection. But the same ^{thing} happened which happened in so many of our other actions out there. Destroyers in column in the van and immediately after contact with the enemy finished.

At 0035 course had been changed to 282, to avoid the wreck of one ~~xxxx~~ of our destroyers. And at this time the South Dakota worked out the on her starboard quarter of the Washington and unbeknownst to the OTC as she was in the blind arc of the Washington's SG Radar she remained there for the remainder of the action. Remember the South Dakota's radar went out and stayed out about that time. So that from here on

you have got the Washington following this track and the South Dakota off some undetermined distance. We do not know how far but beyond the range of visibility anyway, out on her starboard ~~xxxx~~ port. The Washington and the OTC did not know about the South Dakota's power failures of ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{xxxxxx} course of which she had a series which greatly complicated her fire and ship control problems.

At 0036 the SG radar on the Washington reported four ships bearing 332 - up in this direction - no I guess it is a little farther back than this, up in here. The plot coached the main battery on and started tracking. At 0054 the ships changed course to the right completing a reversal by 0057. The enemy's probable course was plotted out there. Now, while fire was not opened during all this time is not explained. It is just one of the cases where our advantage of radar was not utilized. They tracked those ships for about 20 minutes and did nothing more about it than track them. In the meantime the South Dakota had reopened fire on the targets on her starboard quarter. At 0045 she ceased firing as she saw no more targets.

The ships tracked by the Washington's radar proved to be three heavy cruisers followed by a Kongo class battleship. At 0059 the second ship in this enemy column turned her searchlights on the South Dakota. The Washington opened fire with her five inch battery on the illuminating ship and with her main battery on the battleship. Hits were made before the enemy opened fire. South Dakota opened with both main and secondary battery, range was about 5000 yards for the South Dakota and 8000 for the Washington. The enemy ships concentrated their fire on the South Dakota which immediately began to be hit. Now the plan had been for these ships to stay outside of 7000 yards of any enemy ship by use of radar. They figured that 7000 yards was about the maximum ^{effective} search light range for the enemy and if they stayed outside of 7000 yards they would have the advantage of their radar fire control and the enemy would not be able to use his search lights. The Washington did stay outside. She was about 8000 yards

from these ships, but as I said the South Dakota had wandered off there some two or three thousand yards on the western starboard quarter and was in about 5000 yards of those ships, her radar being inoperative, having lost track of the Washington and she was within searchlight range and was fired on and hit. There are about 10 or 11 minutes discrepancy in the stories of the two ships about this particular time. Neither one of them seemed to know where the other one was, or just what was going on. It is a very difficult thing to put the thing together. Once we get more time and talent perhaps we can make a little more connected yarn out of it than I have got here, but this is the best that I could do with the disjointed reports that we had to work with.

Anyway, eventually the action broke off and the enemy ships retired; one of them, subsequently identified as a battle ship making a couple of loops up there, corkszrew curves, - that battleship turned out to be the Kurishima and she was apparently damaged enough so that she sank sometime during the night.

The Washington was not hit at all during this action but the South Dakota was. She had, some forty or fifty men killed and corresponding number wounded. Also, all of her radio antennae were shot down, which wasn't discovered right away, but we didn't understand why she wasn't getting any radio communications. But she wasn't for that particular reason. So ^{as} she was out of communication and couldn't get any orders she decided to break off the action and retire down to the southwestward, which she did.

In the meantime the Washington changed course to 340° and stood up in that direction. That was her best guess as to the direction of the enemy supply ships and transports. A number of contacts were made upon what were ~~apparently~~ ^{apparently} enemy destroyers but the enemy transports were not located. About 0133 a division of enemy destroyers on the Washington's starboard bow were reported as laying a smoke screen. About the same time smoke was sighted ahead and slightly fairly close aboard. Washington changed course to right to avoid this smoke and the task force commander ordered the Washington to continue the turn and retire. Again the destroyers they had picked

and tracked by the radar up there were not fired on, for what reason I do not know. Task Force Commander gives as his ~~reason~~ reason in reaching this decision to retire that he considered that the enemy transports and supply ships had been, by this time, sufficiently delayed to prevent them ~~from~~ from arriving at the landing beaches and unloading prior to daylight.

During ~~the~~^{her} retirement the Washington was subjected to two or three torpedo attacks and several torpedoes came uncomfortably close being avoided by skillful ship handling. Just where they ^{torpedoes} came from we do not know. Destroyers ~~probably~~ possibly, motor torpedo boats possibly, submarines possibly. There were submarines around we know because one of them surfaced in the vicinity of the survivors of the Walt while they were in the water about 2:00 in the morning.

The Washington and the South Dakota picked up each other at the appointed rendezvous at ten o'clock in the morning and returned to Noumea. They said the Washington received no damage from the enemy, her planes were damaged by our own gun blasts. The South Dakota received many hits of all calibres. Jap gunnery was good by the projectiles were not. The forward structure received severe damage and all radio communication was out and all her radars but one. The Gwinn and the Benham were ordered to proceed to Espiritu Santo but before arrival there the Benham broke in two and was sunk by gunfire by the Gwinn after unsuccessfully trying four torpedoes.

It was estimated that there were present at the action about eighteen enemy ships, 1 battleship, 5 cruisers, 4 or 5 transports ~~and cargo ships~~ and cargo ships, and 8 destroyers. Most of these were damaged and it was believed that a battleship, 2 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers, and 2 destroyers were sunk. A little more about that in a minute or two.

At about 3:30 in the morning there were beached on Guadalcanal 3 APs and 1 AK. It is probable that their troops got ashore but it is not believed that very many supplies got ashore because about 10 o'clock in the morning the destroyer Meade, which had been over in Tulagi and had not participated in this action at all, destroyed these ships by gunfire.

She also picked out of the water the survivors from the Walt and the Preston. It is certain that another bombardment of Henderson Field was prevented by this night action that had drove off the escorting vessels so that the four transports were left at the mercy of ~~the~~ one sole destroyer the following day.

All the damage to the transport force had been done by aircraft the previous day. This surface force that night did no damage whatsoever to these surface ships. Now in this action the destroyers were not rigidly tied to the battle line as they were ~~two~~ nights previously in Admiral Callaghan's force but they really functioned as light cruisers in the van rather than destroyers because they fired guns but no torpedoes. If they had been headed towards the enemy at top speed, in here, and delivered a torpedo attack, it is possible they would have done a great deal more damage than they did, and they certainly could not have fared very much worse than they did because they lost three out of the four of them. However, they did break up the enemy torpedo attack and probably saved our battleships from torpedo hits.

Now as to ~~actual~~ losses. I ^{have} referred previously to optimistic estimates ~~reports~~ by our aviators. Estimates from surface forces as to planes shot down are apt to be just as optimistic. And estimates ~~axxx~~ of surface ships ~~ins~~ surface action, particularly at night, are apt to be even more so. You will ~~xxxx~~ remember the torpedo/^{plane} attacks on the transports off Guadalcanal on the morning of November 12th before Admiral Turner pulled out and left Admiral Callaghan there to fight his night battle. There were 21 enemy planes involved in that attack, one of which escaped, leaving 20 that did not escape. Nevertheless, there were 59 sure-kills reported by our fighter planes and surface ships, exactly three times as many as there were enemy planes that could be lost.

Now in the two night actions, November 13th and November 15th, the enemy losses are as shown on the slide. The first column includes only those ships which were actually seen to sink by our forces. On the 13th, 1 battleship, 2 heavy cruisers, 3 light cruisers, and 4

destroyers were actually seen to sink by our own ships. By the time that the reports got to CINCPAC and analyzed, he whittled ~~them~~ down to 1 battleship, 1 heavy cruiser, 1 light cruiser, and 4 destroyers and subsequent information from enemy sources and what have you cut the actual loss down to 1 battleship, which was the Hiy^{ei}, which had taken 24 hours air attack later on to sink and during the night action itself what the enemy actually lost was three destroyers.

Now on this night of November 15th our ships actually saw sink a battleship, 2 heavy cruisers, 2 light cruisers, and 2 destroyers. The Commander in Chief whittled that down to 1 battleship, 1 heavy cruiser, 1 light cruiser, and 2 destroyers, and eventual information showed that the actual loss suffered by the enemy was 1 battleship, the ~~TsuxKirishimaKirishima~~ Kirishima, and in all the shootin' going on we sunk 1 destroyer.

Our own losses are as shown there. Now we are not the only ones ^{that} ~~who~~ overestimated our prowess in these night actions. The first column there shows what the Japs claim they sank of ours on the 13th and the 15th and the column on the right shows what we actually lost. I want to give you a couple of extracts from Japanese radio broadcasts, a year subsequent to this action in November of 1943. "The Navy Ministry announced this morning the citation ^{which} ~~that~~ has been granted an Imperial Navy unit and its detached unit for ~~xxxxix~~ distinguished services in leading the Imperial Navy forces to victory in the third naval battle off Savo Island. Yesterday this was brought to the knowledge of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor. It stated that ~~while~~ the Imperial unit while convoying a Japanese fleet was given ~~an~~ orders to bombard the airdrome at Guadalcanal Island. On the night of November 12th the unit set out into the waters off Lunga Bay where it encountered a large enemy fleet. In this ^{encounter} ~~engagement~~ the Japanese unit ~~that~~ sank 5 enemy large cruisers, 2 anti-aircraft defense cruisers, 8 destroyers, and 1 torpedo boat, damaging ² ~~x~~ large cruisers and 1 destroyer. On the night of November 14th it engaged off Savo Island another enemy fleet comprising several of the latest type battleships. This unit sank two enemy battleships, damaged another, and heavily

damaged 2 large cruisers, and 4 destroyers. That is ~~xxxxxx~~ virtually annihilating the entire enemy naval force in that sector."

Now that slide gives the comparative losses on the two nights. On the 13th we lost 3 cruisers, 4 destroyers; the enemy lost 1 battleship and 3 destroyers. On the second night we lost 3 ~~xxxxxx~~ destroyers; the enemy 1 battleship and 1 destroyer.

That concludes the story of the night action over this period of time at Guadalcanal.

~~*****????????????? at liberty to make radar torpedo attack it is probable that much greater damage could have been inflicted on the enemy at very much less cost. Remember that Admiral Turner based his decision to risk this ~~xxxx~~ force partly on its torpedo power and no use whatsoever ~~xxxx~~ was made of that power.~~

~~I commented on the fact that the destroyers did not belong to the same organization.~~

~~Asper~~

