

SECRET

6 DECEMBER 1942

*Complete
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2nd Copy*

From: Commanding Officer.
 To : Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Via : (1) Commander Task Force SIXTY-SEVEN.
 (2) Commander South Pacific Force.
 (3) Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: U.S.S. MINNEAPOLIS Action Report for 30 November -
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Reference: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920, Art. 712.
 (b) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920, Art. 874.

Enclosures: (A) # Track Chart U.S.S. Minneapolis, covering
 engagement of 30 November - 1 December 1942.
 (B) # Report of Radar Officer, U.S.S. Minneapolis.
 (C) Information furnished by Minneapolis aviators.
 (D) Information furnished by Capt. Schierman, USMC.
 (E) Information furnished by Arthur Peltier, S.1c.

(Note: Because of lack of reproduction facilities
 charts are furnished only with the original of
 the report).

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 COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
 PACIFIC FLEET
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1. At 0000, 30 November 1942, the MINNEAPOLIS as guide and flagship of Commander Task Force SIXTY-SEVEN, Rear Admiral C.H. Wright, USN, stood out of the harbor at BUTTON leading the sortie of cruisers of the force. The four destroyers of the task force had preceded the cruisers by about 15 minutes. After passing point Option, T.F. 67 formed column, distance 1,000 yards, in the following order; MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS, PENSACOLA, HONOLULU, NORTHHAMPTON. The four destroyers, PERKINS, DRAYTON, FLETCHER, MAURY took screening stations. Rear Admiral M.S. Tisdale, USN, second in command of T.F. 67, was embarked in the HONOLULU. The sortie from BUTTON at midnight something theretofore not contemplated, was one of the highlights of the entire operation. The speed of the force was set at 27 knots but in view of lack of an accurate speed curve for the actual service displacement of this vessel (some 13,400 tons), to be on the safe side 20 R.P.M. were added to the 27-knot value of the 12,000-ton speed curve of this vessel; the resulting 300 R.P.M. appeared to give an actual speed through the water of about 27.7 knots by Pitometer Log. No engineering difficulties whatsoever were experienced in maintaining this speed.

2. Orders for change of duty of the Minneapolis' previous Executive Officer had previously been received on board and his detachment was carried out at 2230 or only 1½ hours before getting underway for the sortie for this operation. Commander R.G. McCool, until then the Gunnery Officer, was slated to take over duties as Executive Officer but due to the apparent imminence of action it was decided to make maximum employment of his wide gunnery experience. Accordingly, Commander McCool retained his gunnery duties in control

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of the battery until after the ensuing action. Lieut. Comdr. H.W. Chanler, First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer, was detailed to take over Battle Two during the action and did so effectively until the ship retired from the action. Lieut. Comdr. D.C. Melver, Jr., Assistance Damage Control Officer, took charge of Central Station. All other officers functioned in their regularly assigned duties.

3. The preparation of this action report has been repeatedly interrupted and delayed by frequent alerts, by the unusually demanding efforts necessary in keeping this vessel afloat as the result of action damage, and by several crises and setbacks in the salvage efforts. However, while the Commanding Officer feels this report is not as well prepared as it might be under less strenuous circumstances, it is nevertheless believed to contain all important items of information available from Minneapolis observers which might be helpful in the final analysis of the action. Nearly a hundred Minneapolis personnel who were in a wide range of positions have been examined and have contributed information relating to the action. The statement required by reference (a) from the Executive Officer will be forthcoming later as circumstances afford his time for its preparation. Likewise more complete reports concerning damage incurred and report of performance of duty by Minneapolis personnel will be forthcoming as soon as practicable. Present efforts are of basic necessity concentrated on saving the ship and getting her safely to a Navy Yard.

4. The purpose of this operation by T.F. 67 was to intercept and destroy a Jap force estimated to consist of eight or more destroyers and several transports expected to attempt landing of troops and supplies off Tassaforanga on Guadalcanal Island at about 2330 (love) on 30 November; from some of the information despatches it appeared possible that cruisers also might be included in the Jap force. The detailed plan laid down by CTF 67 was to engage the enemy at about 12,000 yards, using radar ranges and bearings. During a recent visit to Pearl Harbor Navy Yard this vessel had been equipped with a Sail George radar which proved of enormous value in opening the engagement with the enemy and for other purposes. The plan contemplated reversing the course if necessary to continue the engagement, and to destroy all enemy forces in the area, closing to kill cripples; destroyers were to launch torpedo attacks if circumstances permitted. Just before dark the four destroyers, in accordance with the plan, took position in column 4,000 yards ahead of the Minneapolis.

5. At 2000 Minneapolis went to general quarters in accordance with the plan. During the day the ship's company was advised of the purpose and nature of the operation.

At 2042 the destroyers Lamson and Lardner joined up and took station astern of the last cruiser.

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At 2145 entered Long Channel on course 270° (T). The sea was calm; the true wind was from the east, velocity ten knots. The sky was overcast, clearing to about seven-tenths cloudy by about 0300 (1 December). The moon, in the last quarter, rose about 0008 but because of the overcast was of almost no effect until well after the action and then only to a minor degree.

At 2223 changed course to 320° (T).

At 2238 changed course to 280° (T), ships turning simultaneously.

At 2305 enemy surface ships first appeared on the radar screen bearing 290° (.), distance 23,900 yards.

At 2306 radar reported at least three enemy ships in the contact bearing 284° (T), distance 23,000 yards; later this was increased to six enemy vessels.

At 2308 ships turned simultaneously to course 320° (T).

At 2314 ships turned simultaneously to course 300° (T).

At 2316 our van destroyers opened star shell fire to illuminate the enemy force. Shortly before this, over the TBS the destroyers had requested and been given permission to fire torpedoes.

At 2319 C.T.F. 67 passed the word over the TBS to stand by to commence firing. All Minneapolis turrets were loaded before "commence firing" was ordered.

6. Numerous individuals who were in position, both high and low, to observe our firing and that of the enemy, have been interviewed as to their observations of the action; the information herein with respect to ensuing own and enemy fire represents a digest of many observations. At 2320, in accordance with the TBS order to CTF 67, Minneapolis main battery opened fire on bearing 260° (T), relative bearing 320°, range 9,200 yards. The port 5" battery followed quickly and fired two salvos of star shells and thereafter fired service ammunition with the exception of one 5" gun which was ordered to continue firing star shells. The 5" battery controlled from Sky Aft, continued to use the same targets as the 8", throughout the engagement. Cruisers astern of the Minneapolis opened fire within one to two minutes after this vessel. The resulting cruisers fire can be described only as voluminous and apparently well controlled. From the bridge it was impracticable to distinguish targets by eye largely because of smoke and splashes in the enemy area, but in several lower positions observation was much more effective at times at least. It is believed that without the Sail George radar, contact with the enemy might have been missed completely. However, the two FC and the one SG radars were totally useless in this situation.

7. All of the Minneapolis fire seemed to be well hunched, well controlled and there were no stray shots observable. The first 8" salvo appears to have been over the target although some thought it was just short; this discrepancy is undoubtedly due to lack of exact information on the part of the various observers as to the ship's exact target and inability of some to get them in view optically. It appears certain that the second 8" salvo from the

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Minneapolis was a direct hit on a transport, described by one observer as having two stacks and a high superstructure. Star shell illumination then began to be effective and individual observers then saw only one stack and the bow of this transport; others saw the transport explode and disappear. The third and fourth 8" salvos straddled the same target. Several rangefinder operators thought that Minneapolis' first target was a destroyer or cruiser but it may have been fire of adjacent ships which they saw going into DD targets. While firing at our first target, one observer observed a one stack DD having one mount forward, a space between the bridge structure and the stack, and one thick stack about midway between the forward and after structure, bearing about 262(T); this could readily have been but majority opinion, however, is that the Minneapolis' first target was a transport; in fact, the Gunnery Officer saw it violently disintegrate from our fire.

8. After our third salvo, to our right, or east of the Jap transport area enemy gunfire was observed pointing in the direction of the Minneapolis but no results were noted.

9. After the fourth salvo, fire was checked and the point of aim shifted to a target bearing 335° relative, distance 10,500 yards and the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth salvos were fired at this target. The majority of opinion of observers is that the Minneapolis' second target was a DD with a single stack raking aft and somewhat of the general appearance of our own late type destroyers. The next cruiser astern, presumably the New Orleans, also appeared to have been firing at this same DD target, as one of her nine-gun salvo was observed practically to merge with a Minneapolis' salvo and hit the target midships. As a result, the destroyer's bow and stern were seen to rise as though the ship had been broken in two, and it then disappeared. It is therefor believed that the Minneapolis and New Orleans sank this destroyer jointly. The Gunnery Officer reports his last range on this target as 6,200 yards.

10. After the eighth main battery salvo, the Minneapolis checked fire and shifted to a third target bearing about 330° relative distant about 9,000 yards, which the Gunnery Officer observed to be firing at us. This target was reported to be a large DD or a cruiser, and was being fired on also by another cruiser, apparently the New Orleans. Minneapolis' 8" salvo number nine was fired at this target, and appeared to be a straddle; after this salvo the target disappeared.

11. At this time, 2327, the Minneapolis was struck on the port side by two torpedoes. The first struck forward of No. 1 turret about abreast the aviation gasoline store room compartment; the second torpedo hit No. 2 fireroom no more than a few seconds later and so shortly after the first that the effect on the ship practically was that of two simultaneous torpedo hits. A fire broke out on the forecastle immediately and sent large sheets of flame high into the air. Tremendous walls of water were thrown up around practically the

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entire port side of the ship from the two torpedo explosions. Burning gasoline fumes were carried all the way aft. Strong fumes and smoke came over the bridge, but no actual flames entered the pilot house or navigating bridge; in fact, the wall of water which drenched the ship seemed generally to have prevented more widespread fire as the water extended well above the bridge and control stations. When it subsided, water on the Navigating bridge was over a foot deep. Some gasoline and oil flames and fumes were carried all the way aft over even the fantail; personnel in sky aft were drenched with oil and water. A wave of water and oil swept over the fantail and there were many burning areas on the surface of the sea. Two men on the port 5" battery were blown overboard, one of these having been rescued from the water after daylight. Most of the personnel burned were around the vicinity of the forward 5" and 20 mm. guns where they were to some extent sheltered from the wall of water which engulfed the ship. The impact of the two torpedoes shook and rolled the ship with great force. Quite a number of persons received severe bruises from being thrown against structural parts of the ship. The position of the Minneapolis on being torpedoed was latitude 09°-14' South, longitude 164°-53' East.

12. After the ship was torpedoed, the 5" battery ceased firing. However, to the surprise and gratification of all hands the turrets quickly opened fire again on the ship's same third target. The way of the Minneapolis being checked rapidly after being struck by the torpedoes, and as learned later the New Orleans(next in column) also having been struck, the yet undamaged Pensacola quickly raced by the Minneapolis to port. Our tenth salvo was observed to pass directly over the Pensacola's stacks, whereupon the Gunnery Officer checked fire momentarily to let her pass and then resumed fire. After the next salvo which was the main battery's eleventh, power was lost on turrets I and II and firing ceased; however, number III could still have fired and all turret guns were loaded for the 12th salvo.

13. All Minneapolis gunfire was executed without any but the most minor troubles. The main battery fired a total of 95 rounds in the eleven salvos; turret III could not bear on the eleventh and a faulty primer made one gun miss one salvo. The 5" - all from the port battery - fired 50 star shells and 90 service rounds. All crews showed the efficiency which results only from continued training.

14. The ship quickly lost way and momentarily steering control. The fire on the forecastle lasted not more than four or five minutes, and in addition to the efforts of repair parties was extinguished partly by the immersion of the bow in the sea. Beginning at about frame #22, the bow section had folded downward at an angle of about 70 degrees but still dangled from the ship. The water level came aft on the upper or forecastle deck practically up to #1 harbette. A report was soon received that firerooms No. 1, 2 and 3 were flooded and completely out of commission. In addition to the bow down inclination, the ship took a list of over 4 degrees to port. Remarkably

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soon, however, by pumping and throwing overboard ready available items of weight, this list was reduced to about 2½ degrees by the time the ship had turned to retire from the scene of action and head for safe territory.

15. After the Minneapolis had ceased firing, five burning ships could be observed to port, distant some 5,000 to 6,000 yards. It is reported by radar operators that as the engagement drew to a close only three unidentified contacts remained on the screen. Another burning ship not in the included above number was an enemy vessel with a tripod mast somewhat like that of the Pensacola class, and enveloped in flames and suffering violent explosions; and a Minneapolis officer reported seeing such a tripod ship sinking off our port quarter just after the action ended and it was ascertained later that this ship was seen by several observers. While the Minneapolis was retiring, a heavily listing transport passed astern of the Minneapolis from starboard to port and not far distant from us and was definitely seen to sink. This could readily be the transport which Peltier, seaman first class, reported that he saw from his location in the water. (See Enclosure E).

16. It seems clear that the Minneapolis was not struck by enemy gun fire unless an inspection of the underwater hull subsequently should reveal it there. The first hasty conclusion was therefore that the Minneapolis had probably not been a target for enemy gun fire; however, it is since entirely evident that the ship had been fired at by the enemy.

17. Immediately upon recovery from the shock of the torpedoes and the forced cessation of turret fire, it was decided to turn back and retire to Lunga Point where, if the ship should have to be abandoned it was hoped it could be beached in our occupied territory of Guadalcanal Island and prevent any chance of Minneapolis personnel falling into Japanese hands. Peace of mind was not helped any when aircraft flares appeared in the sky off Tassaforanga as the action was subsiding, for the only effect observable was excellent illumination of the Minneapolis and it is not believed that flares at this time could have been of any use to our forces whatsoever. It has since been learned that these flares were dropped by Lieut. Mohlman from a New Orleans plane but the Minneapolis had no way of knowing at the time that they were not of Japanese origin. Several vessels were reported on various bearings from time to time throughout the night. The situation seemed rather forlorn for a while, for after the loss of the TBS the impression was that none of TF 67 remained; it had been hoped that our destroyers might decide to stand by our damaged vessels but apparently our DD's knew nothing of our plight and the Minneapolis saw nothing further of our 4 van DD's. Later it was somehow ascertained that the Honolulu and the two rear DD's, Lamson and Lardner, were still active; this knowledge was of considerable comfort.

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18. As the Minneapolis barely gathered way towards Lunga Point some 14 miles away, a rather ineffective searchlight intermittently swept northward from Guadalcanal and across the ship's projected track. No vessel could be seen there but it was felt it could have been an enemy vessel patrolling; recently it was learned this was an American searchlight on the island. About this time it was learned that radio transmission power had been available and that a dispatch had been sent by the Flag announcing the Minneapolis' intention of heading for Lunga Point. As the ship appeared to be making about 3 to 3½ knots through the water and holding her own as regards further sinking, at about 0200, the Commanding Officer decided to seek the safety of Ringbolt then 18 miles distant to its entrance, and set the course accordingly. C.T.F. 67 was requested to try to obtain escort vessels to screen against further attack; C.T.F. 67 sent dispatches and reply was received that the Bobolink and some PT boats would meet the Minneapolis. Previously, while still heading for Lunga the ship seemed drawing inordinately close to the Guadalcanal shoreline; it was then discovered that the forward main gyro compass had failed and the after compass could not be cut in. With an undependable magnetic compass, the ship had to be navigated by cutting radar ranges on prominent land objects such as Savo Island but the results proved satisfactory.

19. Shortly after changing course towards Ringbolt, a wreck was reported dead ahead. An effort was made to back down but sufficient power was lacking, and the sluggish steering made it appear impossible to change course in time. It was feared that our bow might become entangled in the floating wreckage but somehow this was averted, probably by our bow wash as the wreckage passed close aboard to starboard. This derelict was unmistakably a destroyer bow with a lengthy narrow section of other structure attached to it. After thus proceeding precariously, the Minneapolis at about 0445 finally arrived a few miles off the entrance to Tulagi and was met by the Bobolink and a number of PT's. The Bobolink was brought alongside for the remainder of the trip into the harbor and her salvage pump set to work on the Minneapolis at once. The Navigator of the Bobolink acted as pilot into the harbor, an unfamiliar one to the Minneapolis. The Minneapolis proceeded well into the inner harbor and went alongside the beach at Sasapi, port side to, in approximately the same spot previously occupied by the Portland. Mooring lines of necessity are secured to coconut trees and stumps. Nets and foliage were obtained at once from ashore and a serious effort has been made to camouflage or reduce the visibility of the ship, apparently with moderately good results. Recital of the subsequent difficulties is not in order in this report but they have been numerous and varied.

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20. This action report is not considered the proper medium for a full recital of the difficulties encountered by the Minneapolis in retiring from the action and reaching the relative safety of Ringbolt, but certain highlights are nevertheless worthy of mention herein. The ship lost engine power and way almost at once after being struck. Firerooms 1, 2 and 3 were soon reported completely flooded, leaving only #4 usable. Then feed water difficulties developed and it became necessary to operate on salt water for the remainder of the trip. Battle Two had quickly taken over steering control and steered by direction of the bridge for a few minutes; then the bridge regained and kept steering control by normal means and normal power. Some of the telephone circuits remained operative. The TBS transmitter, and later the receiver went out. Power for radio transmission however did not fail. Before long, however, through intelligent and timely efforts, the Engineer Officer was able to report that he could go ahead on all engines at slow speed; this was tried but soon one engine room had to be abandoned on account of the unbearable heat therein. Intermittent boiler and engine troubles were experienced but they were all solved in some way and all engines continued in operation until port was reached.

21. Repair and Damage Control parties had begun to function at once. Pumping was started as well as the jettisoning of many removable heavy weights about the ship. After a few minutes' observation, it seemed that the ship had reached its maximum immersion. However, purely as a precautionary measure life rafts about the topside were cast loose from their securings and made ready to put over. Damage control measures continued and succeeded in reducing the list from over 4° to port down to about 2½° to port. Later it was ascertained that the dangling bow section resulted in a draft of between 36 and 40 feet forward; aft, the draft remained about a normal 24 feet. Soon after beginning retirement, the jettisoning of 6" powder and shells from the forward turrets was begun and by the time Ringbolt was reached, a great part of this weight had gone overboard. Eventually all forward 8" ammunition and some 5" and A.A. ammunition had to be disposed of to keep the ship afloat. An item worthy of mention is a portable, gasoline-driven salvage pump received from the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard just prior to the ship's recent departure therefrom; the subsequent value of this pump during damage control and current salvage operations cannot be overestimated, nor that of the ship's electric submersible pumps.

22. At this point, reading of Enclosure C appears in order.

23. After extensive consideration and study of only the evidence available to him, the Commanding Officer offers what he considers one possible and logical solution of the enemy activity

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in the subject battle. The plan called for arrival off Tasseforenga at 2330; actually T.F. 67 was there about ten minutes earlier. It seems apparent that the Jap transport group had definitely not yet reached the disembarkation point when it came under our fire but was not far from its destination. Just what the whole Jap formation may have been is not clear but it seems apparent that the entire force did not come all the way as a whole. The Jap destroyers on its right flank appear to have sneaked in around Cape Esperance to rendezvous near there and then hugged the shore line at such a time by coincidence they came in line with the Jap transports and the C.T.F. 67 flagship just as the latter opened fire. Sighting of only 6 enemy vessels on the radar screen initially - and these probably all auxiliaries - lends credence to the subsequent arrival of Jap DD's. It seems possible also that Jap vessels - transports and escorts - purely by luck may have been so lined up that some were partially obscured by others and not all appeared on the radar screen at any one time; also the intermittent failures of the Sail George, though but brief may have permitted a number of Jap vessels to escape its beam.

24. Exactly where they came from with respect to the remainder of the Jap formation is of course not clear, but it seems evident also that 3 or possibly 4 other enemy combatant vessels stood out from the vicinity of Cape Esperance directly for the head of our cruiser column, fired a spread of torpedoes, then opened gunfire on our leading cruisers, turned sharply to their own right and attempted to retire. It must have been these Jap torpedoes which struck the Minneapolis and New Orleans. Two of these torpedo detail destroyers may and seem to have been the two attacked and destroyed by the Honolulu as witnessed by Seaman Feltier of the Minneapolis overboard in the water, as indicated in Enclosure E. The wreck of one of these enemy DD's was apparently that which the Minneapolis had to dodge very soon after beginning retirement. The MOGAMI class cruiser said by observers to have been ~~seen~~ in the water not far distant and after the Minneapolis was retiring, may have been the heavy vessel in the Jap torpedoing detail. The observations of the Minneapolis aviators bear out the presence of several enemy vessels between the transports and head of our cruiser column. Closing the Minneapolis (20 knots on course 300°(T)) at thirty knots speed and at an angle of 10° on our bow, the rate of closing would have been about 1,670 yards per minute. The Minneapolis had been firing at targets some 9,000 yards away, with attention accordingly directed there mainly, and the blinding results of our own salvos undoubtedly made it extremely difficult to detect any vessels approaching at close torpedo range and no torpedo tracks were observed. By rough calculation, there would have been just about time for a Jap torpedo

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detail rounding Cape Esperence as our fire on the transports began, to estimate the situation, make the attack decision, begin and execute it in the seven minutes before the Minneapolis was struck.

25. How many enemy vessels escaped it is difficult to say, but even though severe damage and indicated loss of many, some undoubtedly escaped. In the opinion of the Commanding Officer, the failure of air search to sight any fleeing vessels after day-break is not conclusive. It is felt that the Japanese must have some suitable island hide-outs on the order of Ringbolt, scattered along the route to their operating bases. Chart considerations make Russell Island appear a distinct possibility, and if such investigation has not already been made it is suggested that earnest attention be given Russell Island from this standpoint. Fleeing enemy vessels may also have retired around Esperence.

26. It is probably too early to have digested the elements of this battle thoroughly enough to deduce its lessons but certain comments can be made at this time. The outstanding value of a radar installation such as the Sail George was completely established. From the material standpoint it held up in generally excellent fashion and its material weaknesses are considered susceptible of correction. It was obvious at once, however, that too many uses were demanded of it. Rounding Guadalcanal and passing through Lengo Channel in pitch blackness demanded almost continuous navigational use of the Sail George. C.T.F. 67 obviously had to make major and continuous combatant use of it beginning not later than exiting from Lengo Channel; it had also had much continuous use in avoiding another force emerging from Lengo Channel as we entered, and in rendezvousing the Lamson and Lardner at about the same time. The ship's gunnery control officers, unable to make optical or visual contacts were dependent upon what target information they could elicit from time to time from the Sail George. Although maneuvering under direction of the O.T.C., the ship's captain and ship control also would benefit considerably through such knowledge as the radar might impart. Whether more radar sets are required or whether the additional demands could be met by providing a P.P.I. or radar "repeater" for at least each of these officers or stations must be determined by technicians; but certainly the information to be derived from the radar must be instantaneously available to all of these stations at least. Attention is invited to the comments and recommendations of the Minneapolis radar officer, attached hereto as Enclosure B.

27. From questioning many Minneapolis personnel, it is indicated that a low gunnery control station would be of great

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value for night action. Generally speaking, in most cases where positive or near-positive identifications were made, they were from stations considerably lower than the regular gunnery control posts in the masts, merely bearing out the well known advantage of sighting in silhouette. Observation from the regular control stations, particularly aft, was impaired by gun gases and smoke. It is recommended that a study be made of the practicability of additional fire control stations for night use, located at lower levels.

28. The great advantage to be derived from the use of flashless powder seems too obvious for mention but was forcefully emphasized in this action. Very probably, it was the gun flashes which prevented our sighting the three (or more) Jap vessels which closed in to torpedo the Minneapolis and New Orleans.

29. There seems to be no doubt but that the resulting severity of the bow torpedo hit was greatly increased by the explosion of the aviation gasoline supply; but for that, it is conceivable the bow torpedo might have done relatively minor damage. This is a factor which must be weighed in considering the retention of planes in these cruisers.

30. Considering the extent of damage to it, this vessel was singularly fortunate in suffering remarkably few casualties. Two men were blown overboard, one being subsequently rescued in excellent condition. Thirty-six engineers instantly were trapped in the three flooded firerooms and undoubtedly must have perished there; official verification cannot be established however until drydocking of the vessel. No officers or men were killed. Only two officers were injured and both will recover. Only thirty-five enlisted injured had to be transferred to shore hospitals and all these should recover. In general, their injuries were divided between broken bones and burns. Every fracture case requiring casts was set on board as fast as brought in, and no patient transferred from the ship required further handling other than plasma or simple treatment. The medical department as a whole cannot be praised too highly for its performance.

31. It appears to be commonplace to report only in the most laudatory terms the actions and conduct of our naval personnel in actions and times of stress. Judging from what he observed in the subject night action and subsequently, as well as on other occasions, the Commanding Officer considers this high commendation of Minneapolis personnel fully warranted on this occasion also. Aboard the Minneapolis on this occasion there was complete absence of even any indication of hysteria. Universally, the personnel instinctively went about their duties, and in many cases beyond in a calm, fearless, intelligent manner; those who for a moment were without a job sought out things to do. A determination to bring the ship safely into port existed from the first moment of

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difficulty. The highest praise the Commanding Officer can offer is that he cannot conceive of **any** crew doing any more or any better than did the Minneapolis' personnel. This subject will be treated adequately in subsequent correspondence.

C.E. ROSENDAHL

INFORMATION FURNISHED BY MINNEAPOLIS AVIATORS IN BATTLE OF
TASSAFORANGA.

1. The information contained herein has been furnished by Lieut. L.L. Booda and Lieut(jg) R.J. Hauge, Minneapolis aviators, and would appear to be of assistance in piecing together the elements of the battle.

2. In accordance with the plan, two Minneapolis planes piloted by Lieut. Booda and Lieut(jg) Hauge were in the air together with two other cruiser planes, one from the Honolulu piloted by Lt(jg) Bruce, and the other from the New Orleans piloted by Lt. Ganest, and at the time this vessel opened fire (2320) were close aboard our formation on the unengaged (starboard) side. These planes then proceeded at slow speed in a southerly direction toward the island of Guadalcanal, cut in over the shore line just west of Lunga Point, and then turned westerly following the coast line toward Cape Esperance; from that point, after circling for a few minutes to observe, the planes cut across in a northerly direction toward Savo Island, returned again to Cape Esperance, then back to Savo Island again, and from there returned to Ringbolt.

3. Soon after our cruisers opened fire, the aviators observed at least 3 heavy ships, undoubtedly Jap transports, on fire off Tassaforanga, and very quickly these burning ships disappeared, presumably by sinking. The aviators saw a total of 5 and possibly 6 ships in the transport area, and are positive that the Jap transports were too far off the beach to have landed anything.

4. At about the time the Minneapolis was torpedoed, the aviators observed enemy ships firing towards the Minneapolis. These enemy ships were forward of the port beam of the Minneapolis and well to the northward of the Jap transport area. The aviators are positive that these enemy ships were between the Jap transport area and our own battle lines.

5. While proceeding to the shore line of Guadalcanal, these aviators saw a column of 6 DD's, judged to be destroyers from their high speed and their size, heading easterly close in to the shore line, and definitely between the shore line and the wall of star shell illumination being set up in the Jap transport area. (They have surmised that there may have been more than 6 vessels but they definitely saw the 6 DD's). This was just about the time that the main firing of our force had been completed or was dwindling. When the planes were a little better than half way between Cape Esperance and Lunga Point, the planes passed over the 6 DD's, and as they did the column of Jap DD's made a sharp left 180 degree turn, and proceeded westerly at high speed, still between the coast line and the star shell illumination; the turning point of the column was beyond the east end of the illumination.

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INFORMATION FURNISHED BY MINNEAPOLIS AVIATORS IN BATTLE OF
TASSAFORANGA.

6. As the planes proceeded forward toward Cape Esperance, the aviators observed four large orange colored lights about a half mile apart on the beach east of Esperance, the lights being shielded vertically and evidently being intended to guide the Jap force.

7. On their first trip from Cape Esperance to Savo Island, the aviators observed a heavy ship on course 270°, proceeding at an estimated speed of 30 knots. This ship appeared to be undamaged and was a very long ship, in their opinion possibly a heavy cruiser and definitely not one of our own. As far as the aviators know, this vessel escaped undamaged.

8. On the second trip of the planes from Cape Esperance to Savo Island, the aviators observed a heavy ship, smoking badly, proceeding westward at slow speed. The aviators judged this to be an enemy ship of the same size as the one reported in the preceding paragraph proceeding westward at high speed. The aviators believe that neither of these two ships proceeding westerly, from their view of them, could have been an American ship. The smoking ship was about half way between Savo Island and Cape Esperance when sighted. When last seen by our aviators this ship was still steaming westward and smoking.

9. On taking departure from Savo Island to head for Ringbolt, the aviators saw the 4 DD's of our force leaving a point about 4 miles east of Savo Island on course 120°.

10. The aviators state that on leaving Esperance toward Savo Island the second time, they observed a tremendous explosion of a large ship, the ball of flame from which extended over 2,000 feet into the air. The position of this exploding ship is reported as about two miles east of the middle of Savo Island. Lieutenant Booda is of the opinion that the violence of the explosion indicated ammunition rather than fuel oil or gasoline, suggesting that it might have been an ammunition ship.

11. No flares were dropped from this formation of our planes headed by Lieutenant Booda.

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ENC. (C) TO MINNEAPOLIS ACTION REPORT, 30 NOV - 1 DEC. 1942.

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REPORT OF RADAR OFFICER, MINNEAPOLIS, LIEUT. E.C. CALLAHAN,
REGARDING BATTLE OF TASSAFORANGA

(NOTE: Because of lack of reproduction facilities, the two charts belonging to this report are furnished with the original only)

The following is a report of my activities and observations during the recent engagement with the enemy:

My station during the time the ship was at general quarters, and until the ship was in the hands of a pilot from Tulagi, and the ship well on its way into that port, was in radar plot.

1. Fire Control radar equipment:

- a. After FC went out of commission at about 2100 and was of no service during the engagement. The failure was caused by a blown discharge capacitor - the same trouble previously experienced, which was remedied by an emergency transfer from the North Carolina on our way from Pearl Harbor.
- b. The forward FC functioned throughout except for a short period after the torpedo hit, the shock of which jarred loose an interlock switch cutting power off from the equipment until contact in this switch was manually reestablished by the radioman on duty at the transmitter. The effectiveness of this FC was almost nil due to the fact that its screen was confused by land and ship echoes. The main battery director was unable to locate targets on the FC screen designated by the 5G radar. Fire was opened on 36 ranges and bearings.

2. Aircraft search equipment - 5G-1

This equipment was not operated during this engagement.

3. Surface Search equipment - 3G

This radar was the key to the whole battle. The U.S.S. Minneapolis, and all ships of the task force (TF 67) were navigated through Lengo Channel, and into position for the engagement by means of 5G radar bearings and ranges. First contact with the enemy was a radar contact established by this radar. The initial disposition of the enemy was very clearly defined on the P.P.I. screen. Subsequent movements of our own ships, and those of the enemy, were not followed clearly due mainly to (a) three short period during which the 5G failed (as described below), and (b) the fact that the P.P.I. screen pattern produced by the continuously sweeping beam is not present while actually obtaining ranges and bearings for both gunnery and navigational purposes. Had the P.P.I. screen pattern been continuously present at all times except for unavoidable equipment failures, I feel we would now have a quite accurate picture of the whole engagement. This point will be elaborated below.

REPORT OF RADAR OFFICER, MINNEAPOLIS, LIEUT. E.C. CALLAHAN,
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Finally, after this vessel was stopped, or nearly stopped, but still underway, the SG navigated us quite accurately toward Lunga Point and then toward Tulagi.

The following is an attempt to record chronologically the events that took place:

- 2000 Ship went to general quarters.
2100 After FC reported failed due to blown high voltage discharge capacitor.
2230 Completed reporting of ranges and bearings for ship navigation through Lengo Channel. Reported to bridge that no ships were visible on the screen off Tassaforanga beach.
2304 First enemy ship contact visible on screen, appeared on P.I.I. screen as a small wart on Cape Esperance which grew larger and finally detached itself from the outline of the land mass. Admiral Wright and the ship informed. Range at initial contact 26,000 yards.
2315 Other dots appeared on the P.F.I. screen, increasing in number as they came around the cape within range of our radar until the count was positively six, and possibly seven. The Japanese ships proceeded no further east than Minvi River (approx), and, in spite of our confused screen, I am positive that no ships tarried long enough anywhere between these points to discharge either troops or cargo.
2320 Admiral Wright ordered fire opened, range 9,240 yards, bearing 260°(T). At this time, the farthest ship to our right bore 260°(T), while the farthest ship to our left bore 239°(T).
2322 Fire shifted to the right. After fire was opened, the Japanese ships evidently turned 180 degrees, and at 2322 several of their ships had progressed to a position to the right of the bearing upon which fire was opened.
2324 Torpedo hit. Only one explosion was heard; and since we (2327?) suffered two torpedo hits, both must have hit the ship simultaneously. This explosion interrupted DC power to our SG radar. The equipment was placed back in operation on Auxiliary AC immediately after the last salvo, the failure lasting only a matter of minutes.

From this point on we lost track of time. Operation was continued on auxiliary AC for only a few minutes, when it failed leaving the SG entirely out of commission due to lack of power. However, about ten minutes after the auxiliary power failed, the ship's 230 V. DC power came back up, placing the SG back in normal operation.

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Normal operation continued for only a little while when the gyronexcitation failed. Several minutes were then spent trying to rectify this trouble as indications were that the gyro failure may have been local wiring. Efforts to maintain true bearing indications were then abandoned, and our P.P.I. screen switched to relative bearing indication.

At the time of the torpedo hit, this vessel's position was about 10,400 yards southwest to the nearest point on the beach, and about 29,600 yards to Lunga Point. The ship lost way but was turned about 180 degrees immediately after the torpedo hit.

At frequent intervals after the torpedo hit, ranges and bearings to the nearest point on beach and to Lunga point were reported to the Navigator. From this data, he was able to set a course to beach the ship on Lunga Point or on Kukua Beach should this become necessary. We had several anxious minutes when for a time the ship seemed to be drifting toward Tassaforanga Beach.

I have recollection of four different pictures on the SG screen of Japanese ship dispositions, which might have all been blended into one complete picture of all of the Jap ship movements that transpired, had not the radar power failure and the necessity to stop the P.P.I. sweep to take ranges and bearings for the gunnery department interfered.

Several rough charts are attached to picture these Jap ship dispositions approximately. Also shown is what was observed of our own ship movements.

The four screen pictures mentioned above are:

- (a) Initial contact.
- (b) Jap disposition at time fire opened.
- (c) Jap disposition shown on chart 2 when radar restored to DC operation.
- (d) Unknown ship which came on southeasterly course, curved around ahead of us and faded from screen, as if sunk. This happened some time after the torpedo hit, but before we turned toward Tulagi.

The charts describe roughly the details I can remember from observation of the P.P.I. screen.

Summary of SG operation:

This equipment is very rugged and except for power failure operated with 100% efficiency throughout the engagement.

The P.P.I. screen is the answer to night surface engagement. Its effectiveness is reduced when the sweep must be stopped to obtain ranges and bearings. It should be the FC's function to

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obtain ranges and bearings for tracking purposes. Even for fire control radars, it seems almost essential that a P.P.I. screen be combined with the usual range scale to enable the operator to locate the right target. Accurate bearings were obtained from our SG for fire control purposes, and it appears that it is not necessary to have the fire control radar antenna mounted as an integral part of the director. The SG ranges seem to be almost as accurate as the FC when operated with care and skill. The FC ranging system is best, of course, and it would be possible to incorporate the phase-shift range calibration system along with the P.P.I. screen. The gunnery officer should have a continuously sweeping P.P.I. screen in front of him during the engagement, as this will give him a better picture of the ships dispositions than he would have standing on an open bridge in broad daylight.

Of the five cruisers, three had SG radars. When fire was opened the two cruisers who had no SG probably did not know that there was a target to shoot at.

The FC is almost hopelessly lost in a land locked waters.

The suggested radar equipment for successful night action therefore seems to indicate three equipments for control forward, and three equipments for control aft. Each will be equipped with P.P.I. screen. At each place the utilization of equipment will be as follows:

- (a) One radar for continuous surface search.
 - (b) One equipment for fire control ranges and bearings.
 - (c) One radar for gunnery officer, captain and admiral -
- Three P.P.I. screens operating from one antenna, continuously sweeping.

It is essential that every ship in the formation be completely radar equipped so that fire can be properly distributed.

ENCLOSURE (B) TO MINNEAPOLIS ACTION REPORT,
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INFORMATION FURNISHED BY CAPTAIN A.H. SCHIERMAN, U.S.M.C.
RELATING TO THE BATTLE OF TASSAFORANGA

1. Captain Schierman was stationed in Sky Aft and made most of his observations with binoculars.

2. He states that either the second or third main battery salvo of this vessel appeared to make a direct hit on an enemy vessel which immediately broke into flames; to him the vessel appeared to be a cargo ship. At that time, he observed firing from a warship near the enemy group, apparently directing its salvos at our ships astern of the Minneapolis; this enemy firing vessel appeared to be a cruiser.

3. Just before the Minneapolis was hit by torpedoes, Captain Schierman observed another ship of at least cruiser size open fire in the direction of the Minneapolis, from relative bearing about 340°; this ship was somewhat to the right from the rest of the enemy ships and appeared to be considerably closer to us. At about the same time as this enemy vessel opened fire in our direction, and from approximately the same area, what appeared to be two destroyers also opened fire in our direction. It was but shortly thereafter that the Minneapolis was hit by torpedoes.

4. After the Minneapolis had been torpedoed, Captain Schierman saw other cruisers of our force pass on our port side and continue firing, and saw an explosion on the New Orleans and Northampton. After the Minneapolis had ceased firing, Captain Schierman observed four bad separate fires in the enemy group, one of which appeared to be a transport which was listing heavily and appeared ready to capsize at any time.

5. About twenty minutes after the firing had ceased, he saw a ship which appeared to him like a cruiser of the MOGAMI class burning severely and having repeated explosions. It passed astern of the Minneapolis heading in a general direction of Savo Island and crossed in line with the Northampton, thereby providing a good silhouette of itself. After this enemy vessel had passed the retiring Minneapolis, the enemy vessel stopped dead in the water and as we left the area, it suffered several more heavy explosions. Since this vessel was listing considerably when it passed astern of the Minneapolis and since its fires disappeared rather rapidly and he could no longer see its hulk, Captain Schierman is of the opinion that this enemy vessel sank at that time.

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ENCLOSURE (D) TO MINNEAPOLIS ACTION REPORT,
30 NOVEMBER - 1 DECEMBER 1942.