

# CANADA'S BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC



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TO: NAVAL SERVICE H.Q.  
 REPEAT - ADMIRALTY

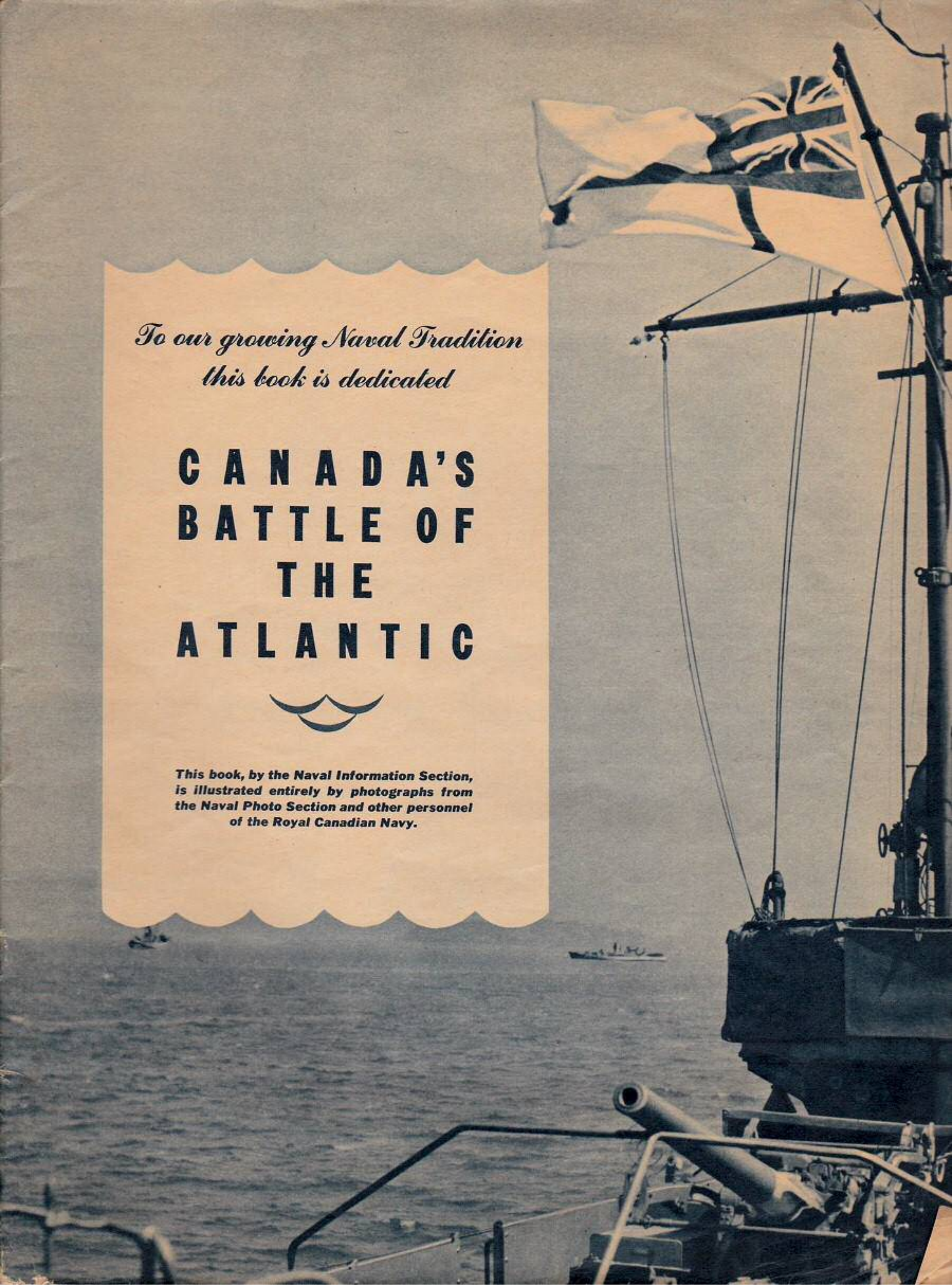
OTTAWA  
 LONDON  
**IMPORTANT**

From: C.O.A.C.

THE FOLLOWING VESSELS SAILED AT \_\_\_\_\_ HOURS TODAY \_\_\_\_\_

S. S. EMPIRE WAVE	7463 TONS	(BR)	MACHINERY TO U.K.
D. S. TANKER DAN FLOENTING	12842 TONS	(BR)	GAS OIL TO U.K.
D. S. T. O. D. VENTURE	3222 TONS	(BR)	GENERAL RUNIFONE
M. V. SILVER CEDAR	4184 TONS	(BR)	
H. V. TANKER HARPON	2732 TONS	(BR)	
H. V. HENCK KAM	6058 TONS	(NOB)	
D. S. TANKER TEAGLE	1087 TONS	(NEB)	
H. B. J. J. J. J. J.			
H. V. GLEN MAC			



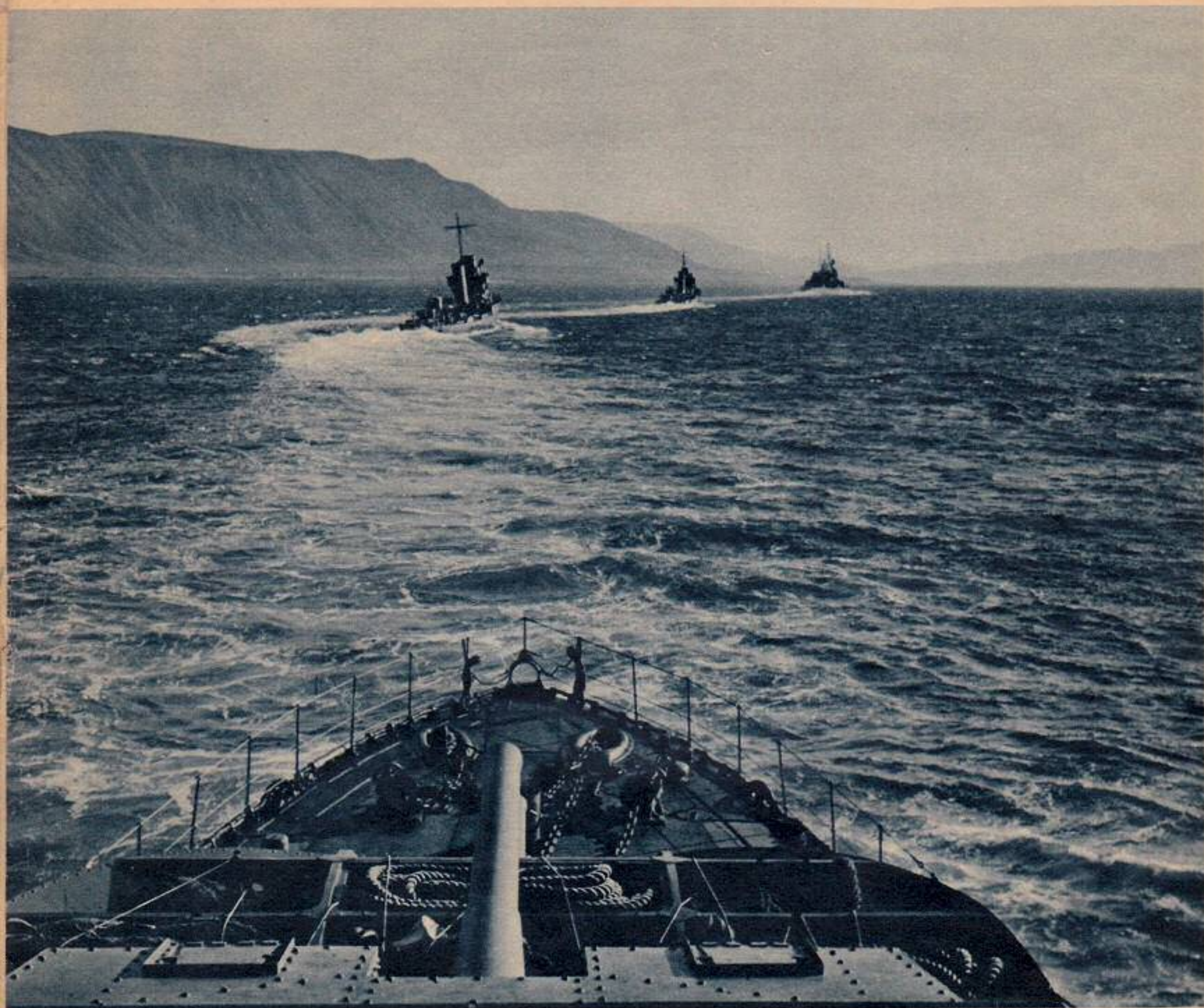


*To our growing Naval Tradition  
this book is dedicated*

**CANADA'S  
BATTLE OF  
THE  
ATLANTIC**



***This book, by the Naval Information Section,  
is illustrated entirely by photographs from  
the Naval Photo Section and other personnel  
of the Royal Canadian Navy.***



**IN THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC, THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY SHARES FULL PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROYAL NAVY AND THE UNITED STATES NAVY. DIVISION OF DUTIES MAY NOT BE MADE PUBLIC, BUT IN ALL QUESTIONS OF POLICY COMPLETE HARMONY PREVAILS.**

# R C N

"CANADA'S BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC" IS A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIVES AND WORK OF THE MEN OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY AND THE CANADIAN MERCHANT NAVY. NECESSARILY INCOMPLETE, FOR THERE IS MUCH WHICH MAY NOT BE SAID OF THE "SILENT SERVICE", THIS GRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF THE PART CANADIANS ARE PLAYING IN KEEPING OPEN THE SEA-LANES OF THE ATLANTIC AND IN TRANSPORTING VITAL SUPPLIES WILL NEVERTHELESS, I AM SURE, INSPIRE IN YOU, AS IT DOES IN ME, DEEP ADMIRATION AND KEEN APPRECIATION.

*August L. P. [Signature]*

Minister for Naval Services.

CONVOY ESCORTING IS A DIFFICULT AND OFTEN EXASPERATING TASK CALLING FOR SEAMANSHIP OF THE HIGHEST ORDER. EVERY ELEMENT COMBINES AGAINST OUR CORVETTES AND DESTROYERS TO TRY THEIR CREW'S ENDURANCE. IN THE FACE OF ALL THESE THE WORK IS BEING DONE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE DONE UNTIL WE'VE MADE IT SAFE FOR MERCHANT SHIPS TO TRAVEL WHERE AND WHEN THEY PLEASE. THAT WILL BE WHEN WE'VE WON THE WAR.

*[Signature]*

Chief of Naval Staff.



**A**S THIS is written Germany has a greater force of submarines operating against the United Nations than at any time in the war. It is estimated that there are now over 200 enemy U-boats engaged in unrestricted undersea warfare. The sinkings inflicted by this force are rising steadily after a Summer (1941) when his successes fell to a low figure. The danger will be met, but only at a price of human lives and treasure that calls for much thought, staunch hearts. The Canadian part in this struggle is to equip and operate a growing fleet; a Navy of which we hear little and see less, but feel in a practical fashion through the safe operation of the Atlantic life-line.

During the last summer thousands of young Canadians were trained in the mysteries of seamanship, gunnery, torpedoes and detection apparatus, together with many more modern weapons, and are now using them aboard the new corvettes. There have already been battles with U-boats and some have been successful.

Many more will come before this year is past. Because there will be weeks and months when little may be made public of what these young Canadians are doing the following pages have been prepared. As the days stretch out and news is scarce Canada might well look again at these pages and ponder . . .

The greatest weapon against U-boats is without doubt the convoy system. Convoys escorted by destroyers, corvettes, battleships when necessary. There aren't many secrets in its operation, though merchant skippers carry to sea with them lengthy official books which might intimidate the novice at the game. These books appear to be secret by the very weight of lead in which they are encased, lead to make them sink if necessary, rather than fall into the hands of the enemy. In them are to be found many patterns of zig-zag designs on the ocean's face, many heartening words about the vulnerable points in the belly of a Focke-Wulf.

The main thing to be remembered by all is to do the same thing at the same time — and not to fall behind. To achieve this a conference is held a day or so before sailing date. There the skippers, British, U.S., Norwegian and many others, meet their prospective commodore and learn the speed they will travel, what place each is to have in the caravan, what to do in emergencies. At the same time rendezvous are charted by the officers of the escort vessels. Most skippers these days have made the trip many times, smile patronisingly at reminders to keep strict blackout and wireless silence. Conference over, each hustles aboard his ship, has a good long sleep. Beginning next day it will be tough going.





**DEPTH CHARGES**, corvettes' chief weapon. Beyond them a confused heap of foodstuffs.

**FUSING SHELLS**. Usually kept in separate store, delay-action detonators are screwed into projectiles in sufficient numbers for sudden emergencies.



**CARLEY FLOATS**, life-saving rafts, often more useful than boats, must be stored with water, canned meat, milk tablets, brandy, to cheat disaster.

(Next Page.) Merchant ships must be inspected for seaworthiness, possible sabotage. Few delay-action bombs have exploded at sea this war, many during the last.

## *Stores, Ammunition, Go Aboard*

SAILING-TIME means Navy vessel's oil-fuel, ammunition, and food stocks replenished; minor repairs completed. Dockyard's efficiency means quick turn-around, often depends on experience going back to the last war.



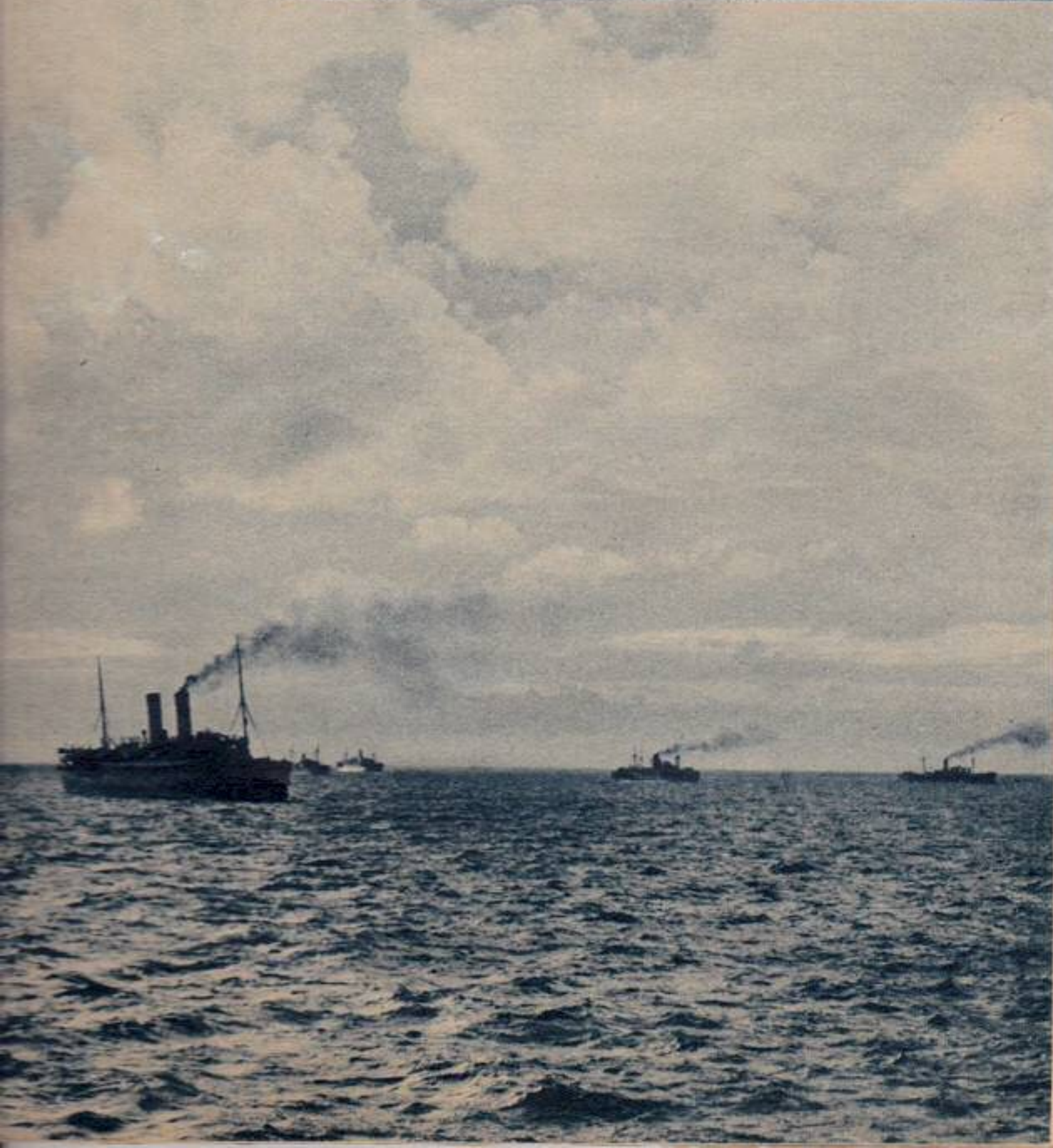
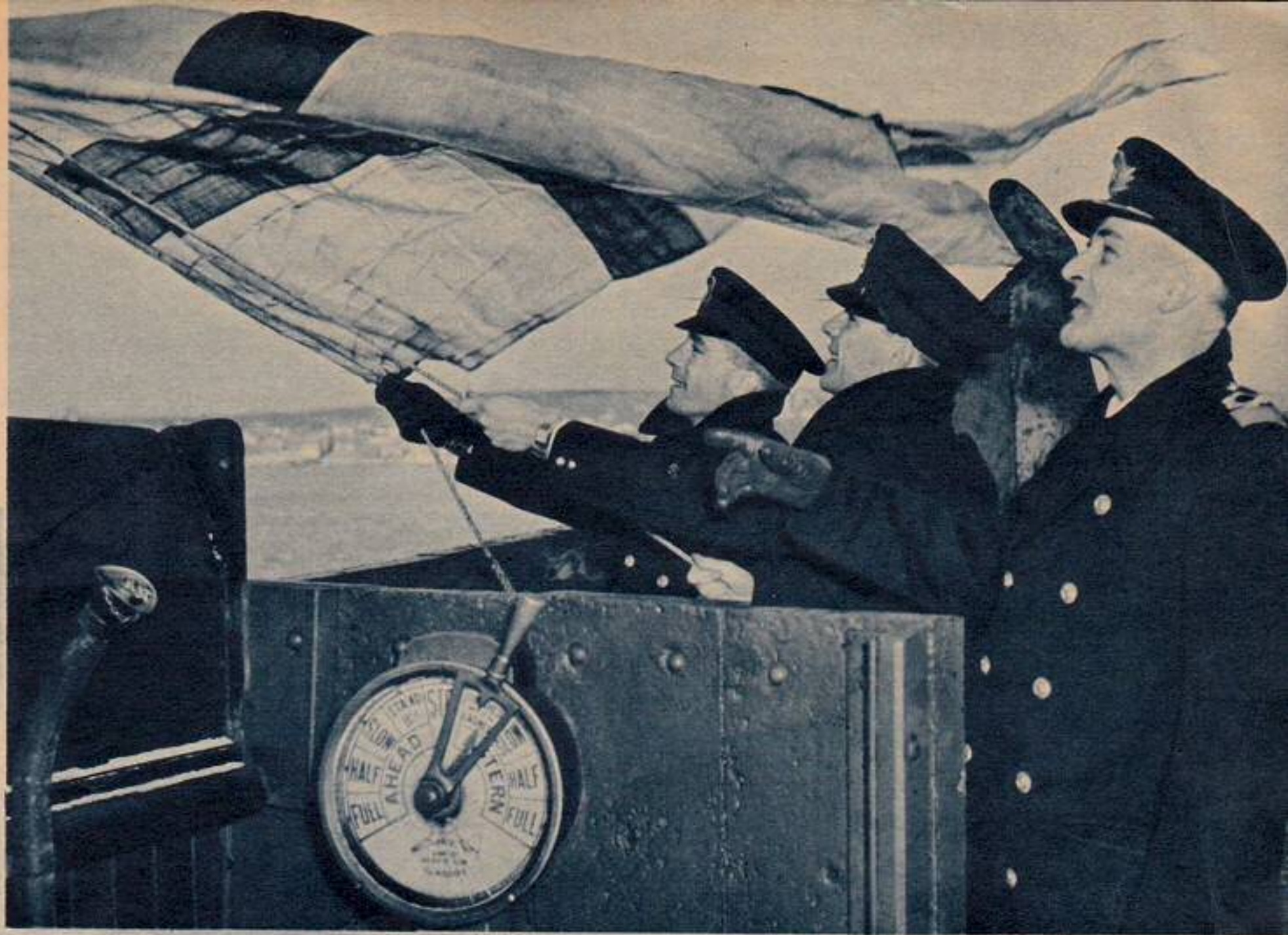




*The  
Commodore  
Goes Aboard  
and the  
Convoy Sails*

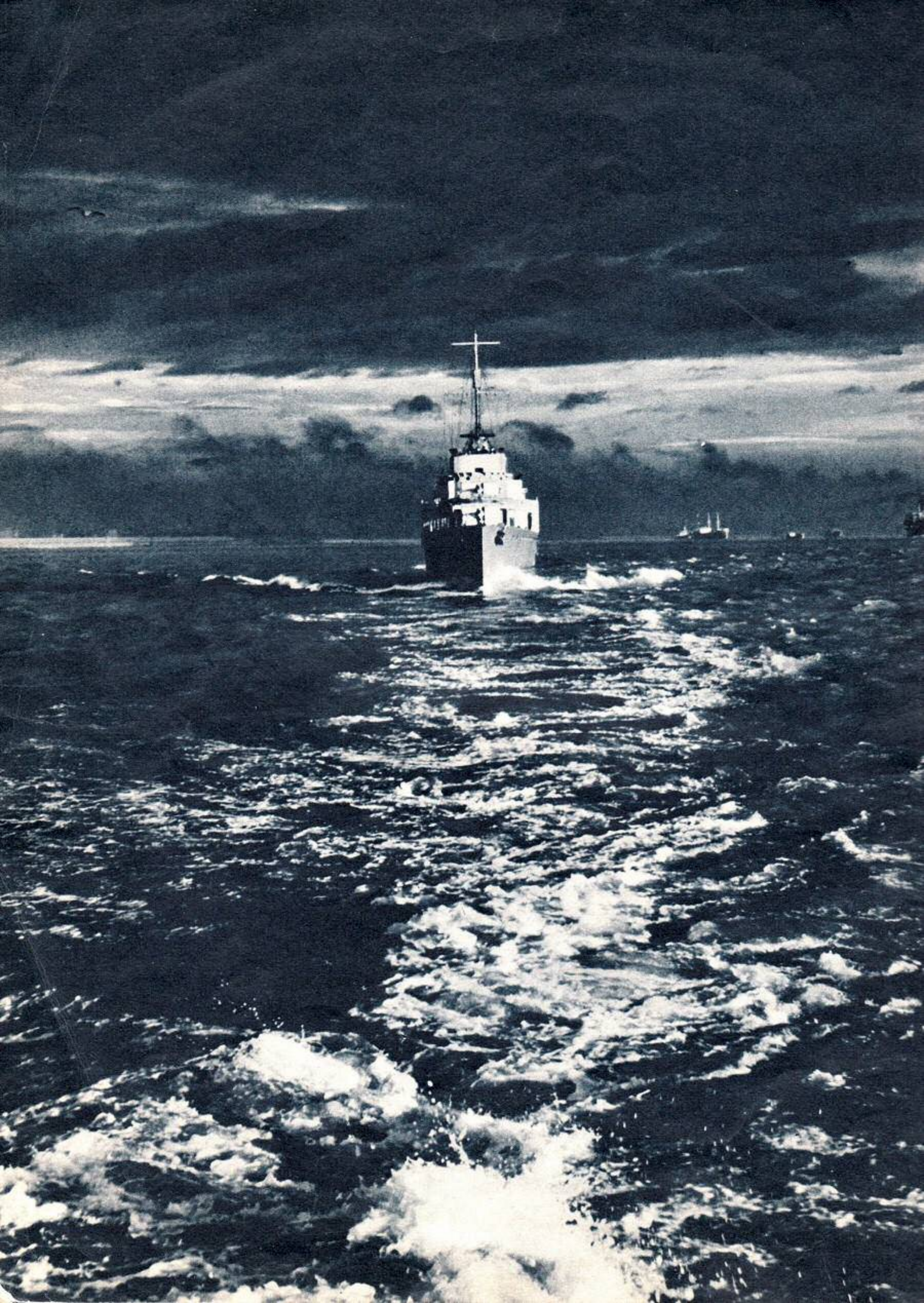
The success of the convoy system depends somewhat upon the supply of retired admirals. England, whose existence has so long depended on the Navy, has produced them from county and shire in astonishing numbers. Oldish, seawise, not standing on their dignity,

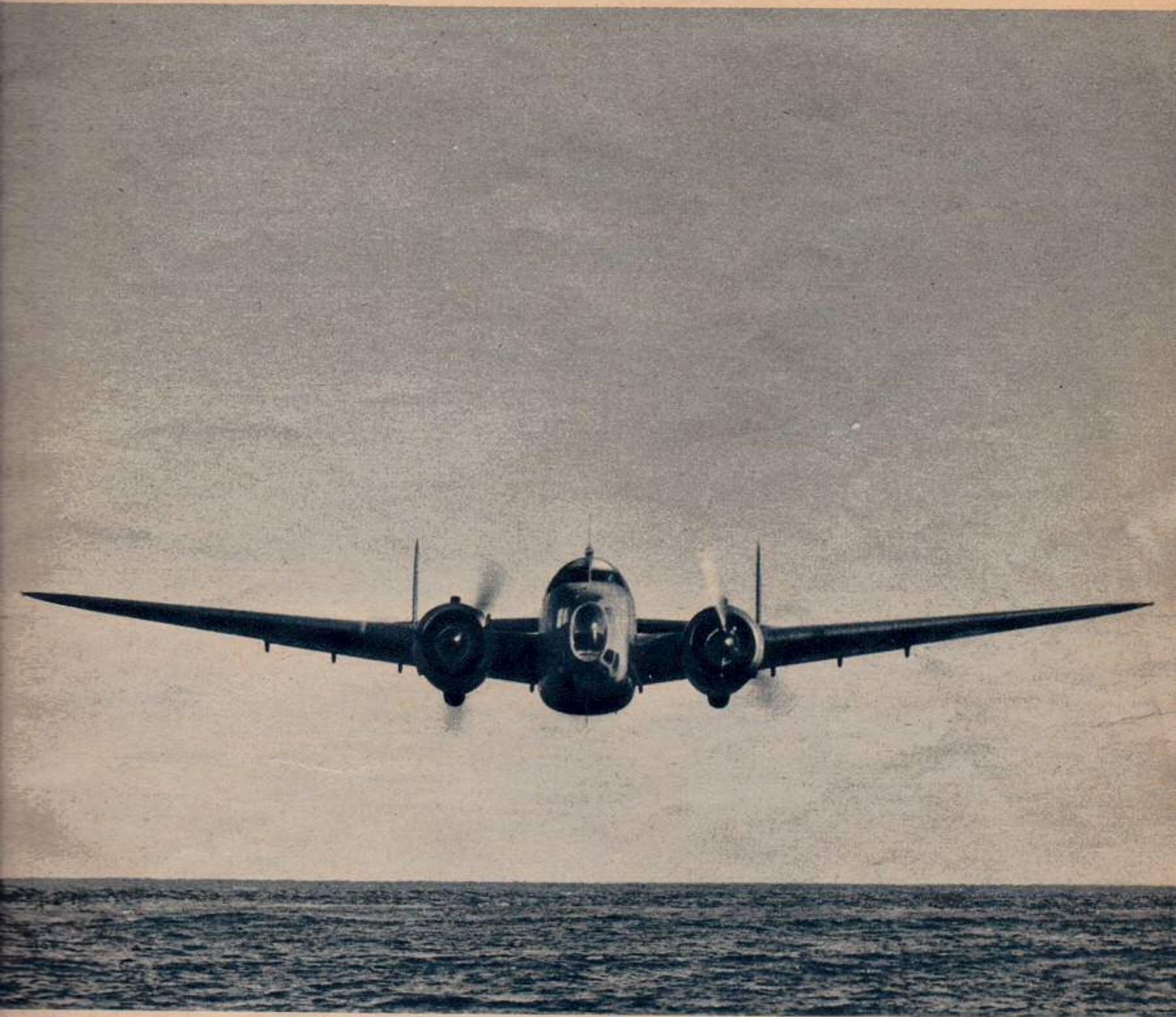




each convoy carries one aboard a centrally placed merchant ship. At sea he becomes the nerve centre of the thirty, fifty or seventy vessels; he may at moments think back to his one-time command of battle fleets.

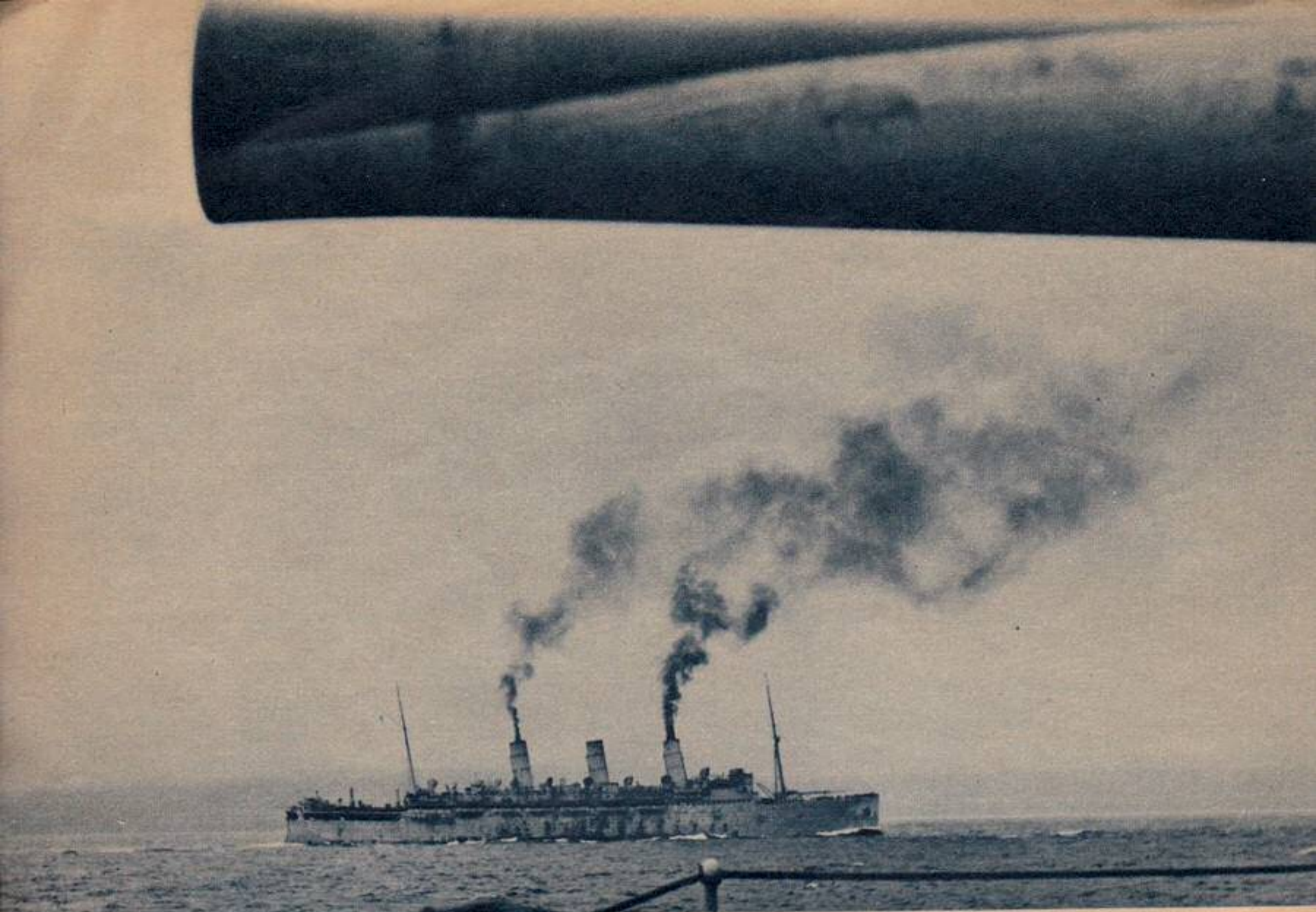
On peaceful days at sea there is little for commodores to do, but at the first sign of attack by U-boat, theirs is the authority to order changes in course for the whole company. Twisting and turning across the face of the ocean like an agonized beast of burden, the convoy's movements to avoid torpedoing are the problem of these sailors—returned—to—the-sea.





THE ENTRANCES TO EASTERN HARBOURS are ideal spots for ambush, as billions of dollars of war materials stream out to sea. Lest this happen, a routine of search is carried out by ship and plane to discourage any such U-boat ambition. In the early dawn destroyers file out through the entrance-guarding net to join the minesweepers, on duty many hours earlier. Beyond them planes push back the horizon to make an area safe for the convoy form-up. Soon after the freighters put out, an occasional drift of black smoke streaming from their funnels before fires become adjusted to give invisible, less-betraying vapour. Once formed-up with Navy guarded flanks, the trans-Atlantic passage begins, planes accompanying for many miles.

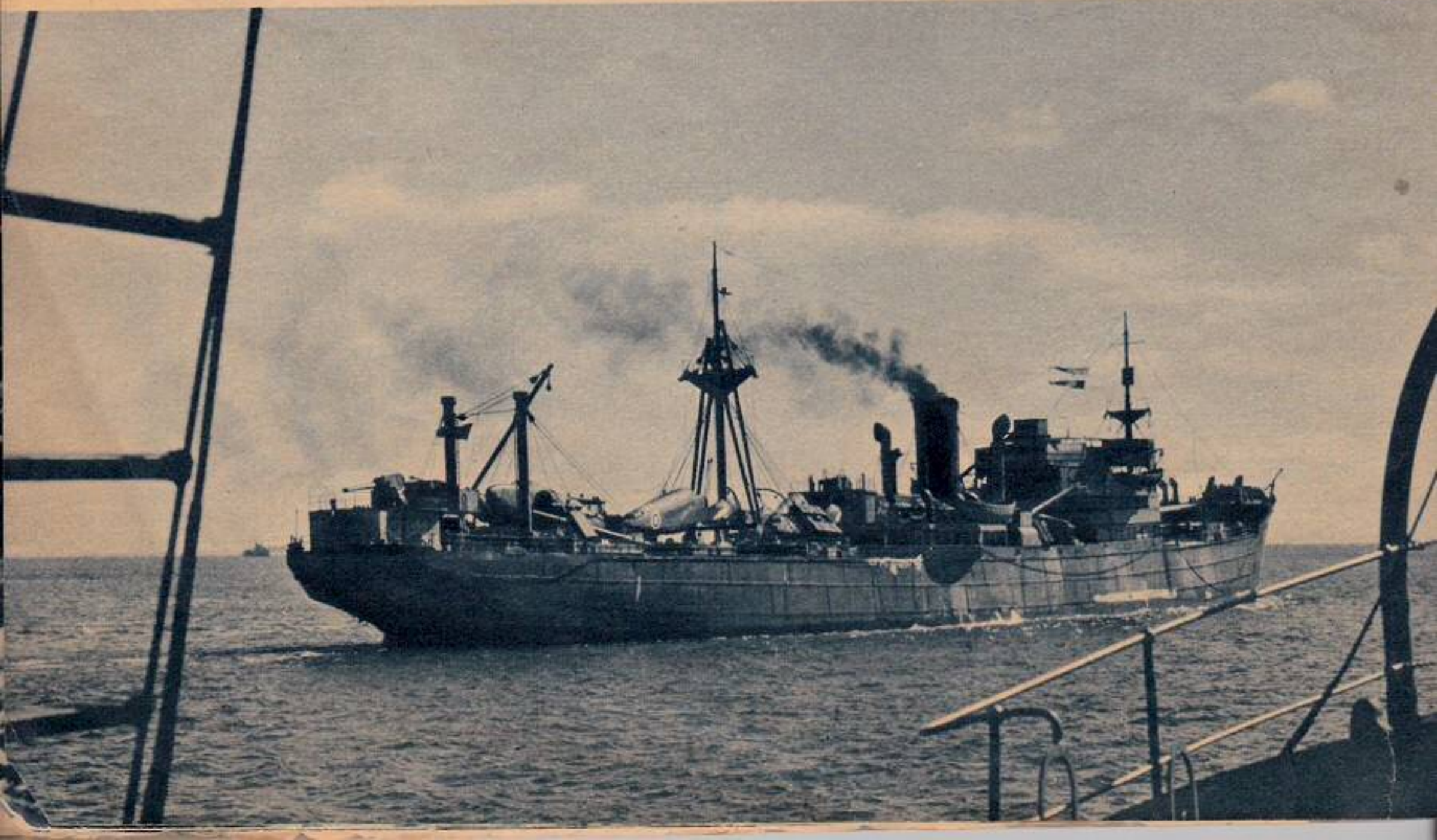




An elderly "Empress", her white-painted cruise-ship days a distant memory, shuttles troops to England, Near East, wherever needed. Aboard, troops share watch with crew, may mass their tommy-guns against enemy planes in British waters, danger point of trip.



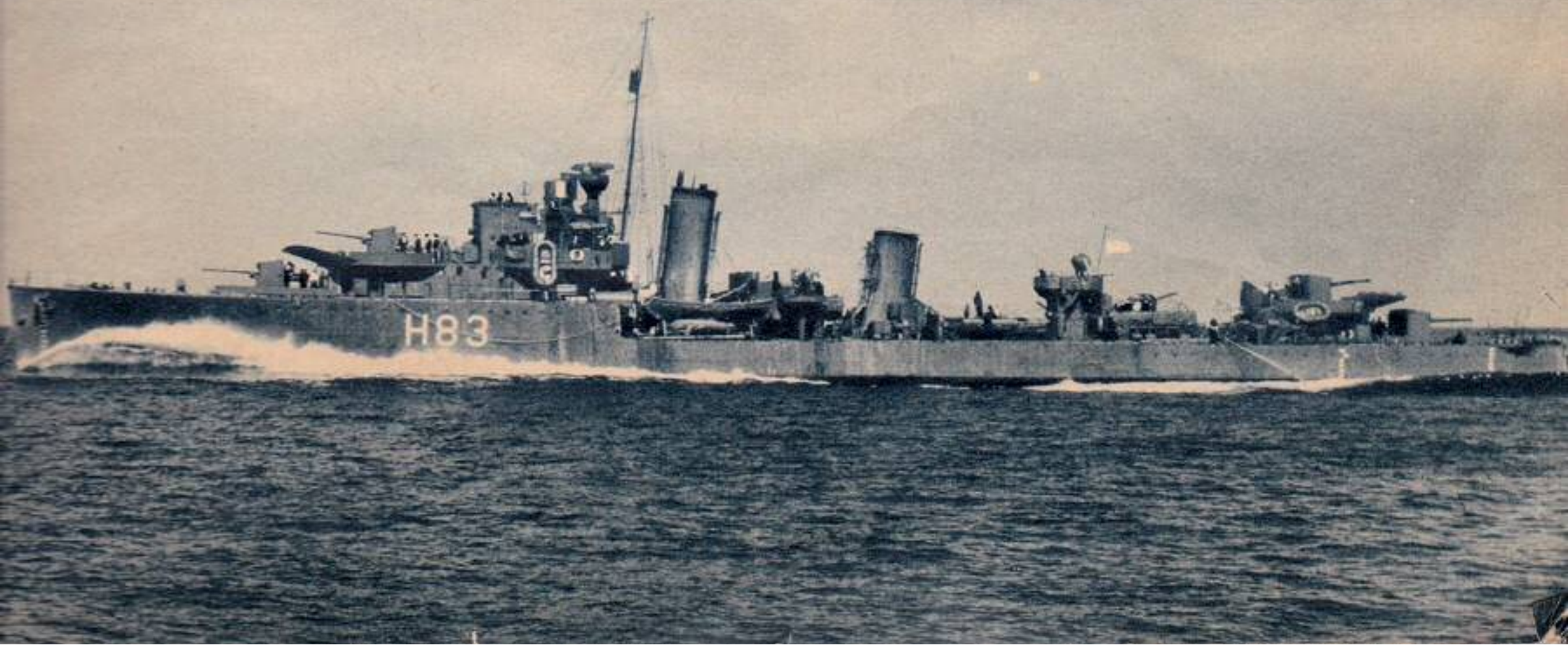
Typical sight in convoy, a 7,000 ton middle-aged British freighter. Two and a half years of crisis-operation finds her run-down, still reliable. Cargo listed as "general" may be shells, motor-transport, food, with planes on deck. Value: \$2,500,000.00 as is.

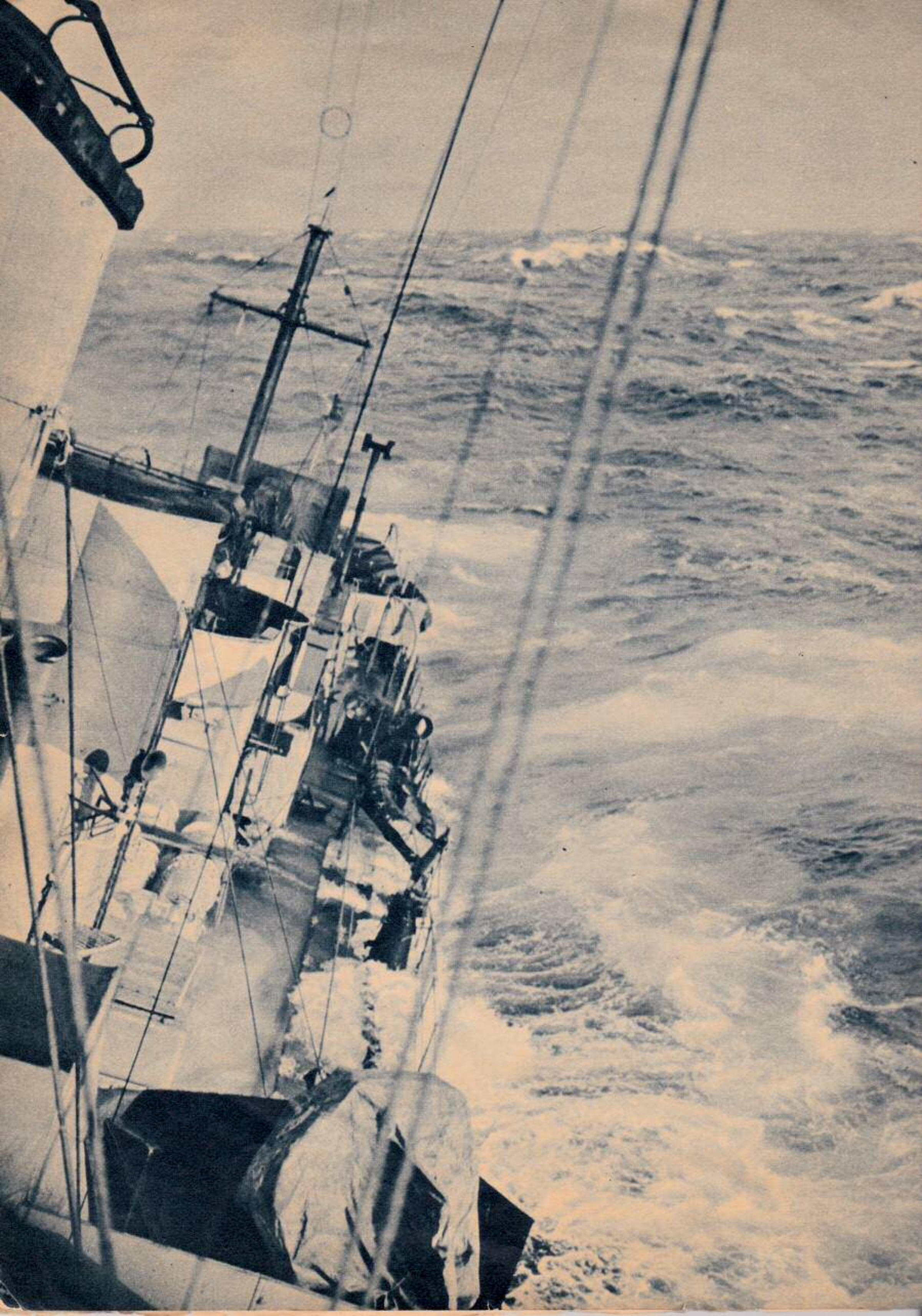




↑ "Battleford", one of more than fifty Canadian corvettes on escort duty. May be a week out from her base, have three more weeks of seetime before returning. Meanwhile hard work, little philosophy for her crew.

↓ In fighting trim, guns, torpedoes and rangefinder manned, the destroyer "St. Laurent" proceeding at half speed. Expensive but efficient, many more are needed like her. First "TRIBALS", now building, will be bigger, more expensive, more efficient.

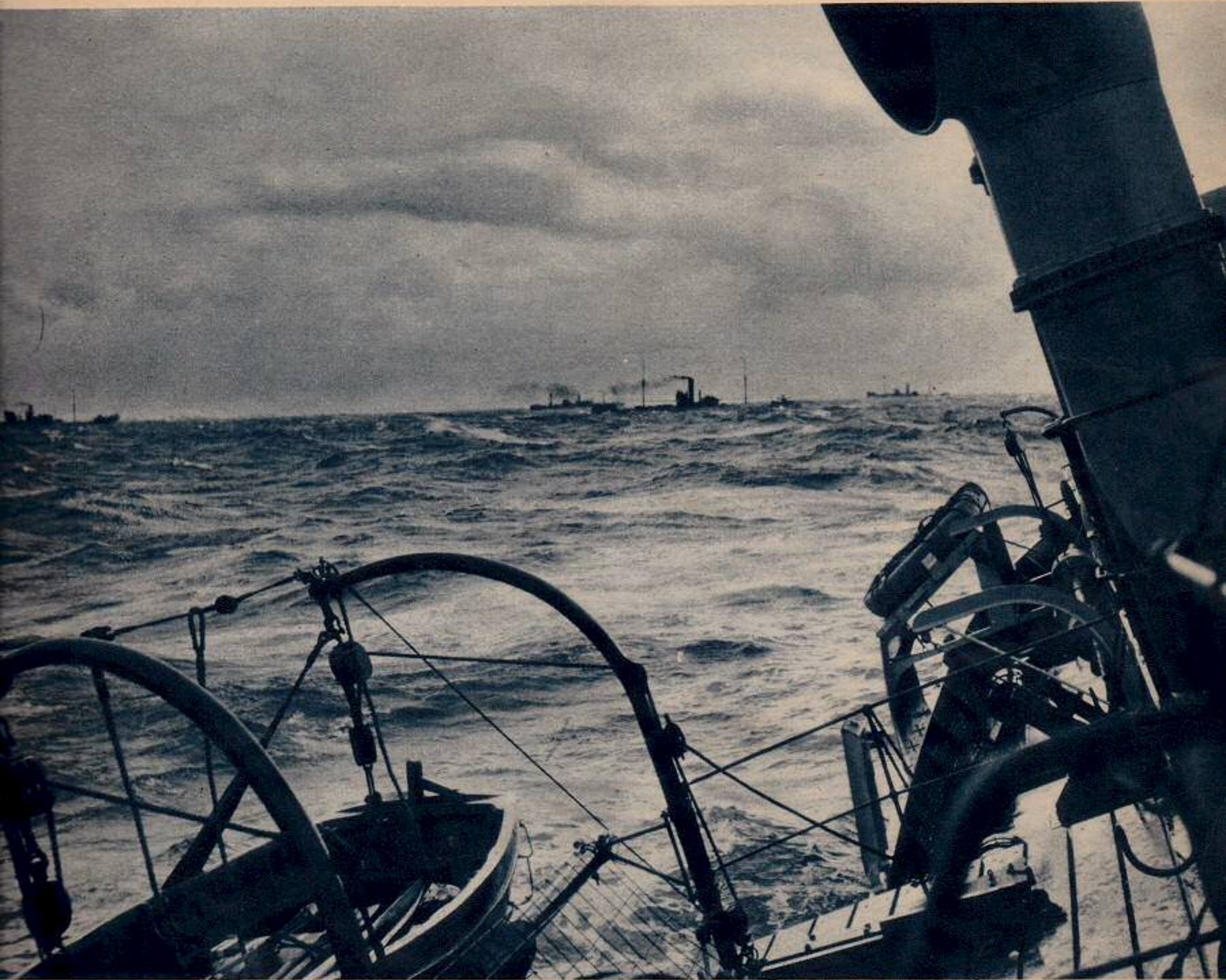






## At Sea

TIME at sea is a long grind for merchantmen and escorts. For the former, station-keeping in fair and foul weather becomes engrossing task. At night faint lights at rear point way for next astern. Rigid orders to obey sailing instructions found skippers willing, if sometimes bewildered. They now approach Navy standards of precision and do wonders with often balky vessels.

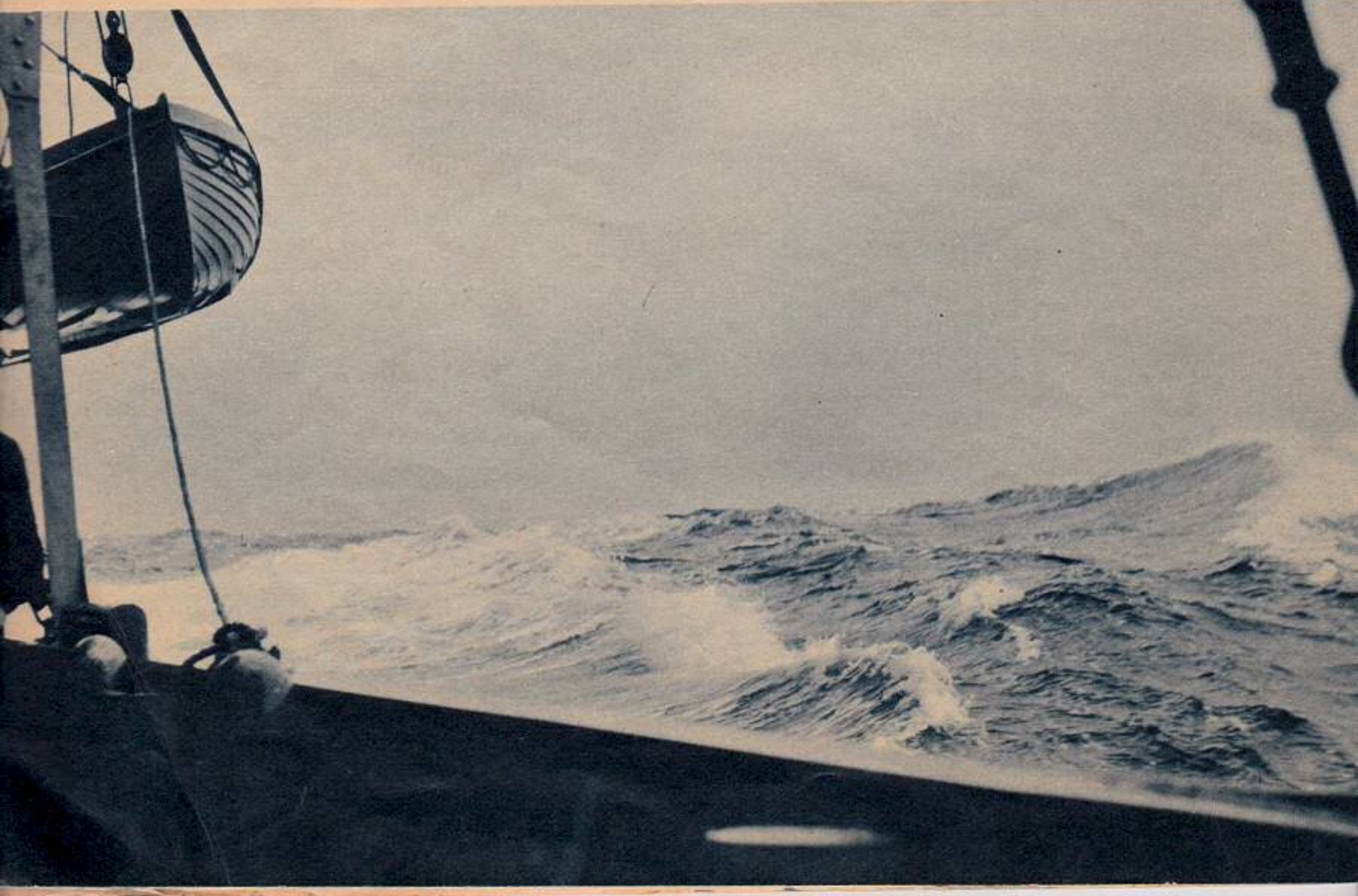


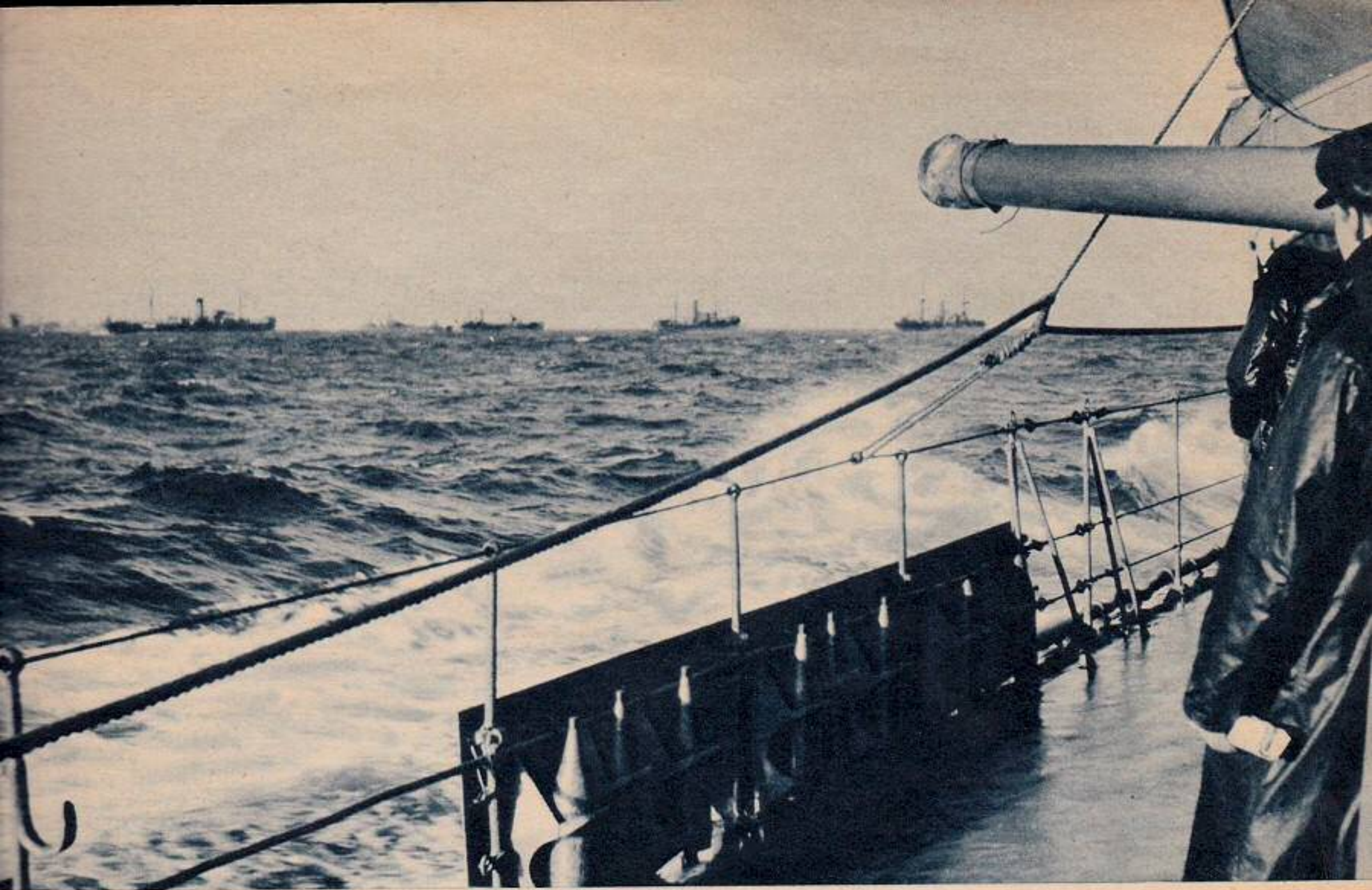
(Opposite Page.) The middle of the Atlantic looks barren and immense. Now that planes are sometimes seen overhead it has lost some of its isolation, although the Navy still feels it is master here. With distances commonly measured in days rather than

miles, this destroyer will brood over her convoy for some time to come. Lifelines strung above steel decks are a necessity as the cold sea sweeps along it, hungrily licking the mountings of guns, torpedo tubes and the occasional passing sailor.



**MILLIONS OF DOLLARS MOVE ACROSS THE OCEAN, ITS PROGRESS CHARTED ON OPERATIONS BOARDS AT OTTAWA, WASHINGTON, LONDON; MAYBE BERLIN.**

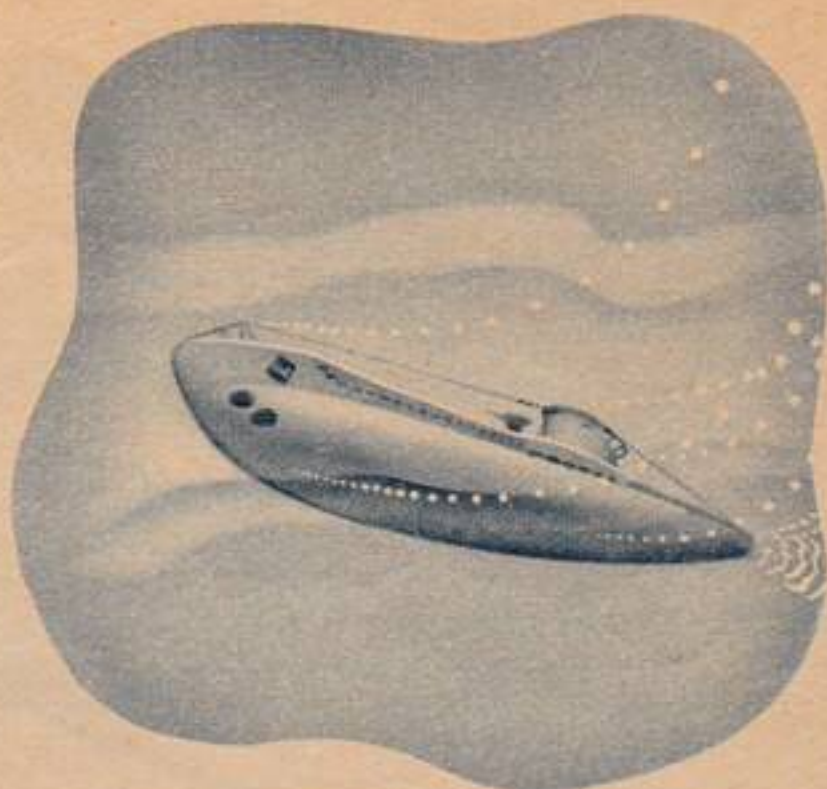




**ENEMY SUBMARINES YEARN FOR SUCH A TARGET: A DRIFT OF SMOKE MAY TELL THE TALE. 'TILL THEN SUSPENSE, HOPE, OFTEN SUCCESS.**



To avoid greatly improved listening devices used today, submerged submarines must not only shut off all their main motors, but also all auxiliary machinery. They cannot, however, float in mid water without use of motors for more than five to seven minutes. At the end of this time, the submarine will either slowly rise to the surface, or sink to the bottom, according to the state of her trim.



**THE LISTENERS: IF THERE IS A SUBMARINE ABOUT THEY WILL PROBABLY KNOW IT—SO WILL SUB.**

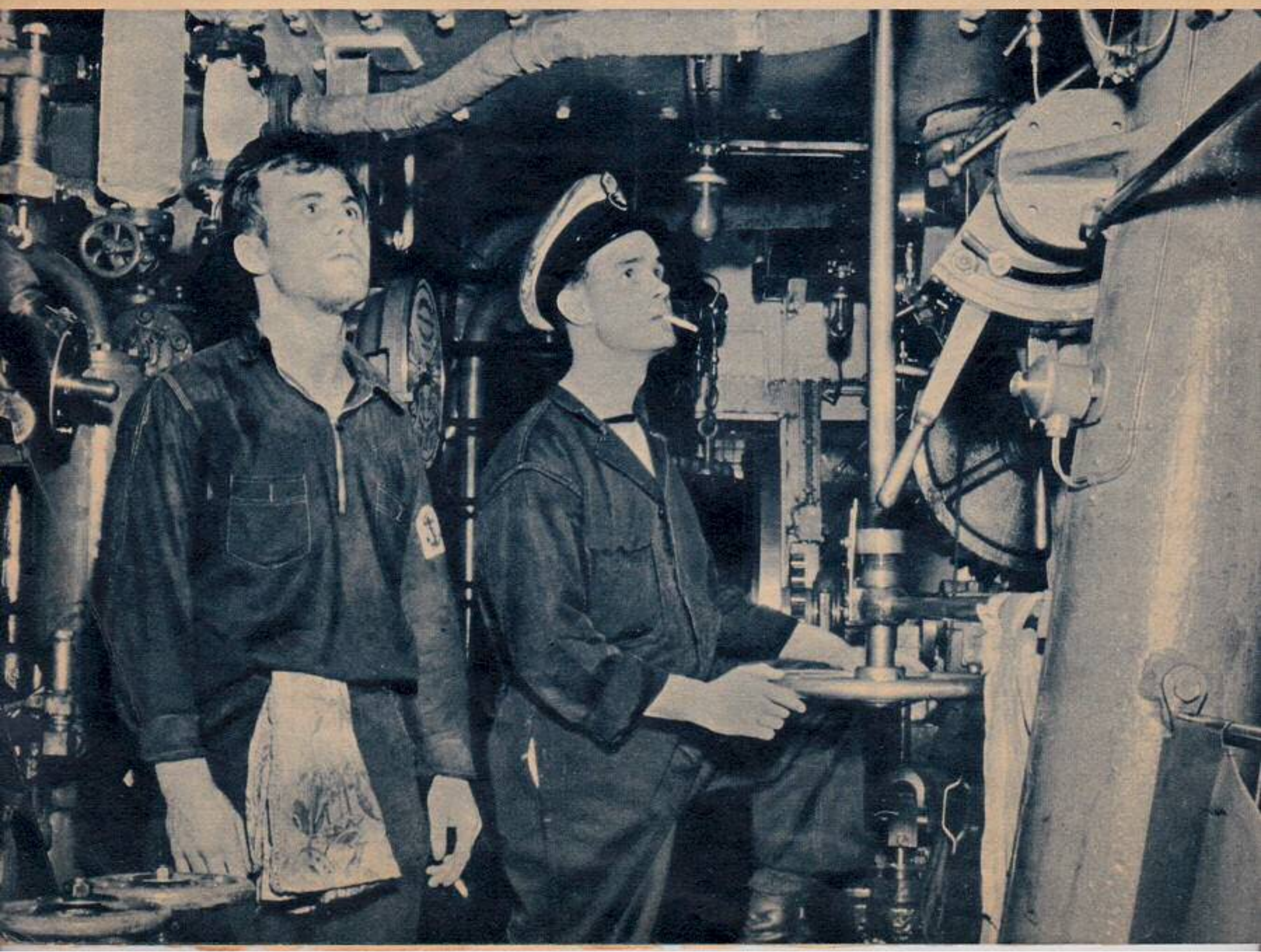


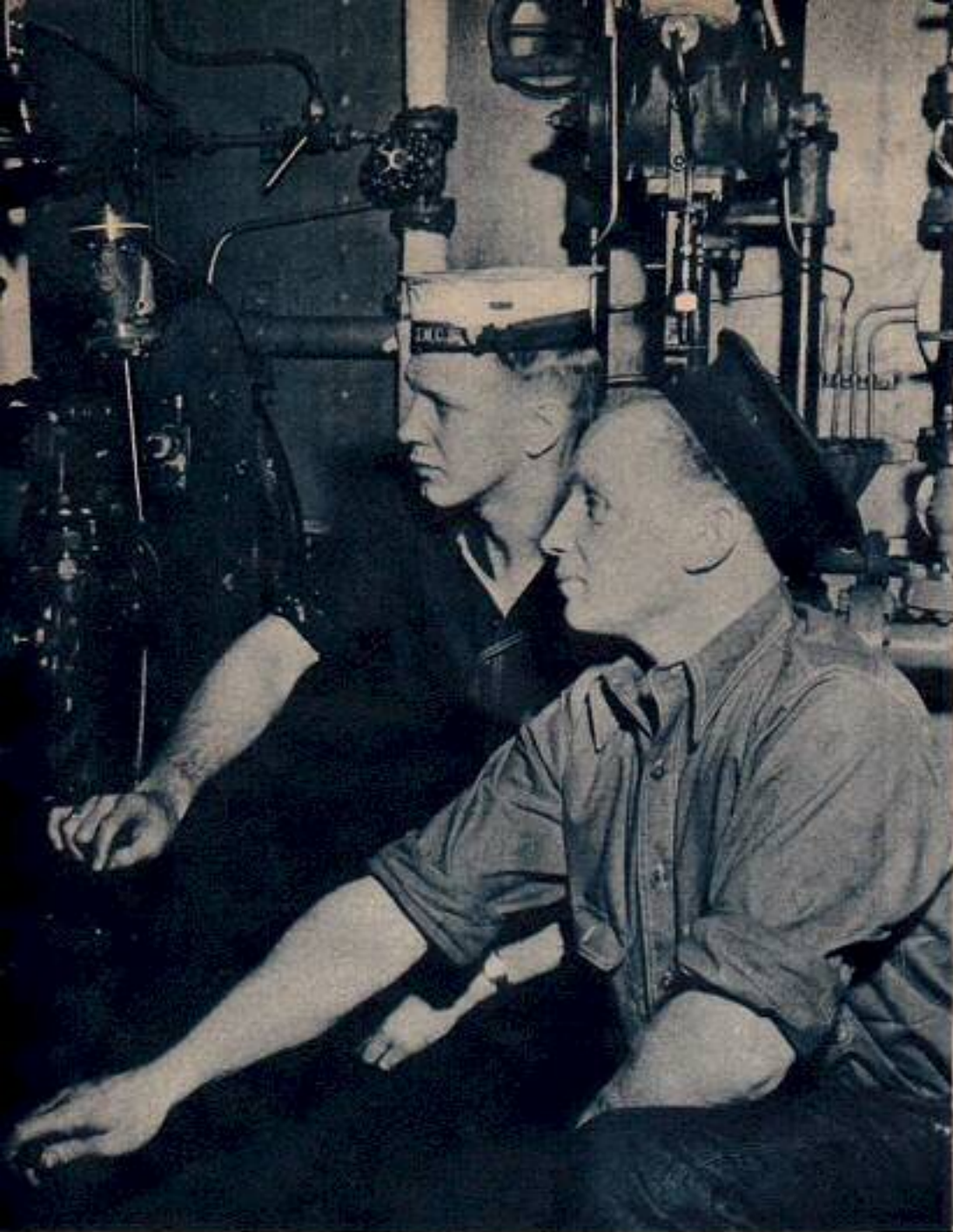


## *Watch at Sea*

ABOARD DESTROYERS AND CORVETTES constant movement on flanks of the convoy calls for frequent signalling: usually visual with lamps or flags, to preserve wireless silence. Station-keeping calls for experience, much use of precision instruments. Reports of suspected U-boat dispositions received by escort are passed to commodore, may mean changes of course for all. The life is healthy, but exhausting. Both ships and men become tired, need time away from continual alert. When home on leave the Navy finds it hard to convey truthful description of their way of life, usually shrug it off with faraway smile.



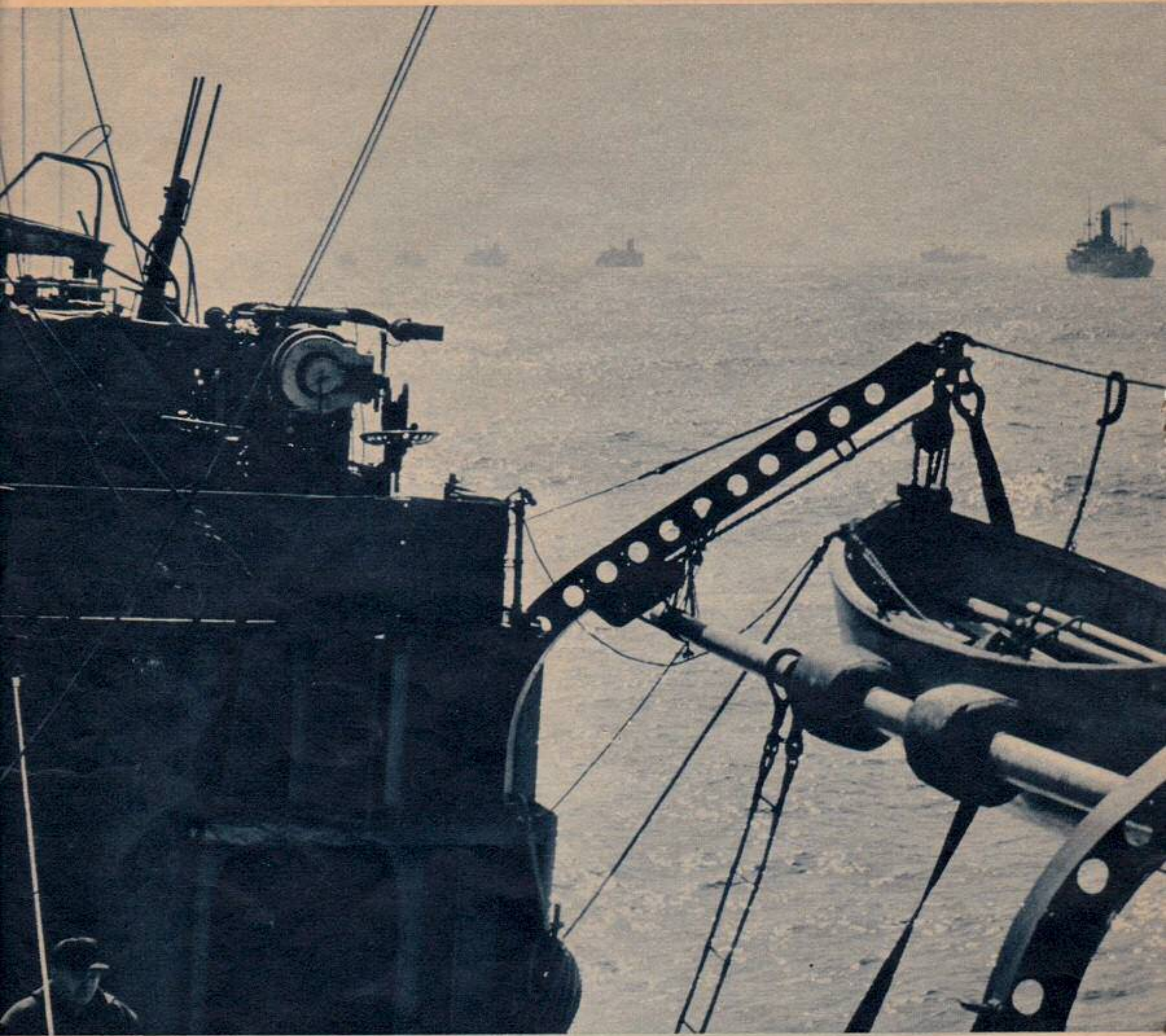




ABOARD CORVETTES AND DESTROYERS constant watch finds men at work twenty-four hours each day. Engine room, always electric-lighted and warm, with flickering gauges listing ship's power and endurance. In boiler rooms, forced draft presses on the ears of men sealed in by heavy doors above. Red pin points from furnaces reflect off complex machinery of stoker's hot heaven.

Above all, the ship's weapons receive loving attention. Depth-charges wait on ever-wet corvette decks.





**CONVOY: SUREST PROTECTION AGAINST**

**TYPES OF**



**COASTAL TYPE** — Length 136 feet; 250 to 330 tons displacement. Armament 1 — 1-lb. anti-aircraft gun, 2 or 4 torpedo tubes.



**OCEAN-GOING TYPE** — displacement. Armament 1 at bow, 2 torpedoes.





## AGAINST UNRESTRICTED U-BOAT WARFARE

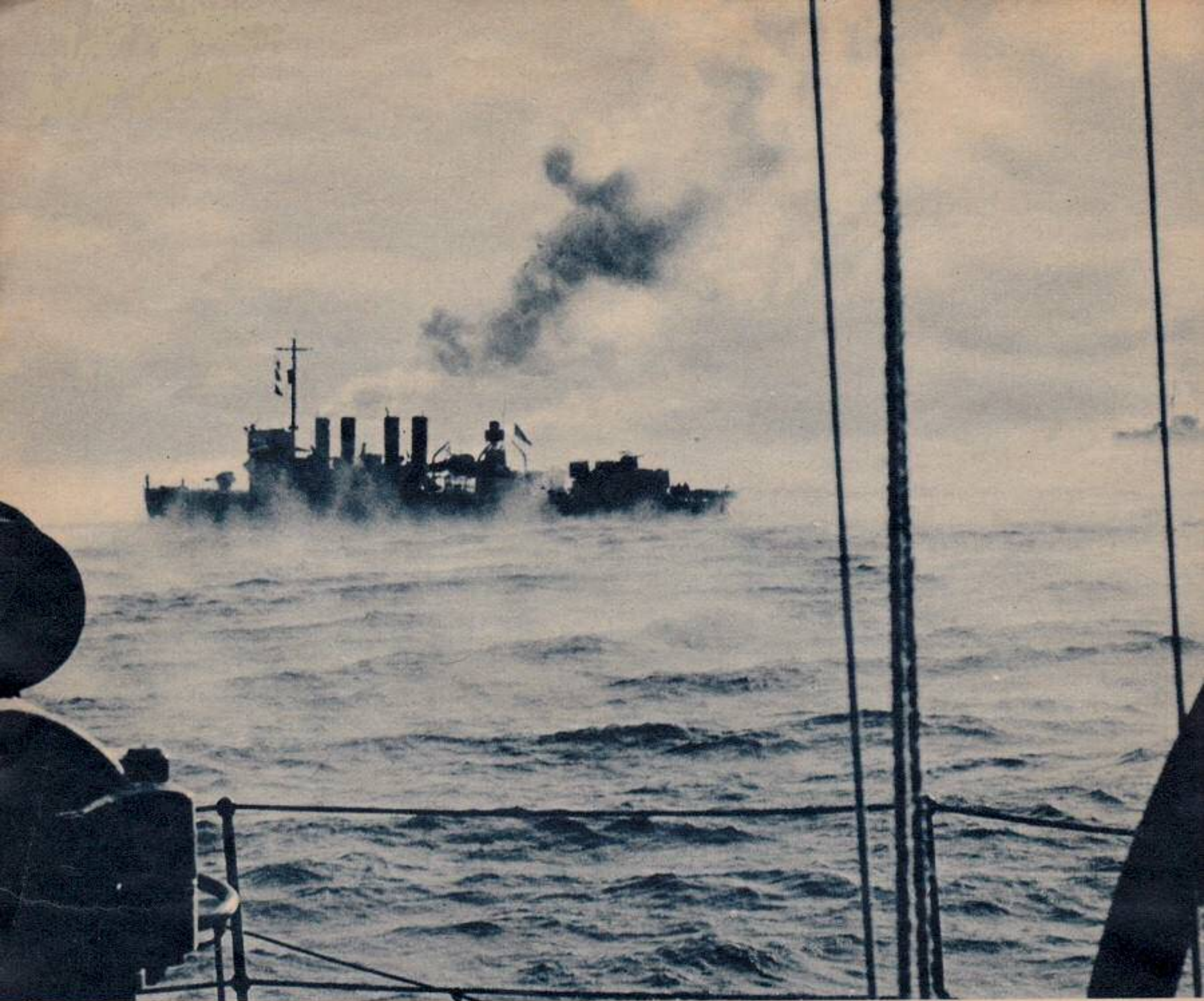
### TYPES OF U-BOATS



**TYPE E** — Length 275 feet; 1,060 tons displacement. Armament 1 — 4.1 inch gun, 4 torpedo tubes at bow, 1 torpedo tube at stern.



**SEA-GOING TYPE** — Length 230 feet; 517 tons displacement. Armament 1 — 3.5 inch gun, 1 anti-aircraft gun, 4 torpedo tubes at bow, 1 torpedo tube at stern.



*At 10 degrees below zero, land-breezes draw vapor off sea-water. Destroyer, once American, has had mainmast removed and foremast shortened to improve stability, allow operation in North Atlantic where twenty-ton loads of ice are common-place.*

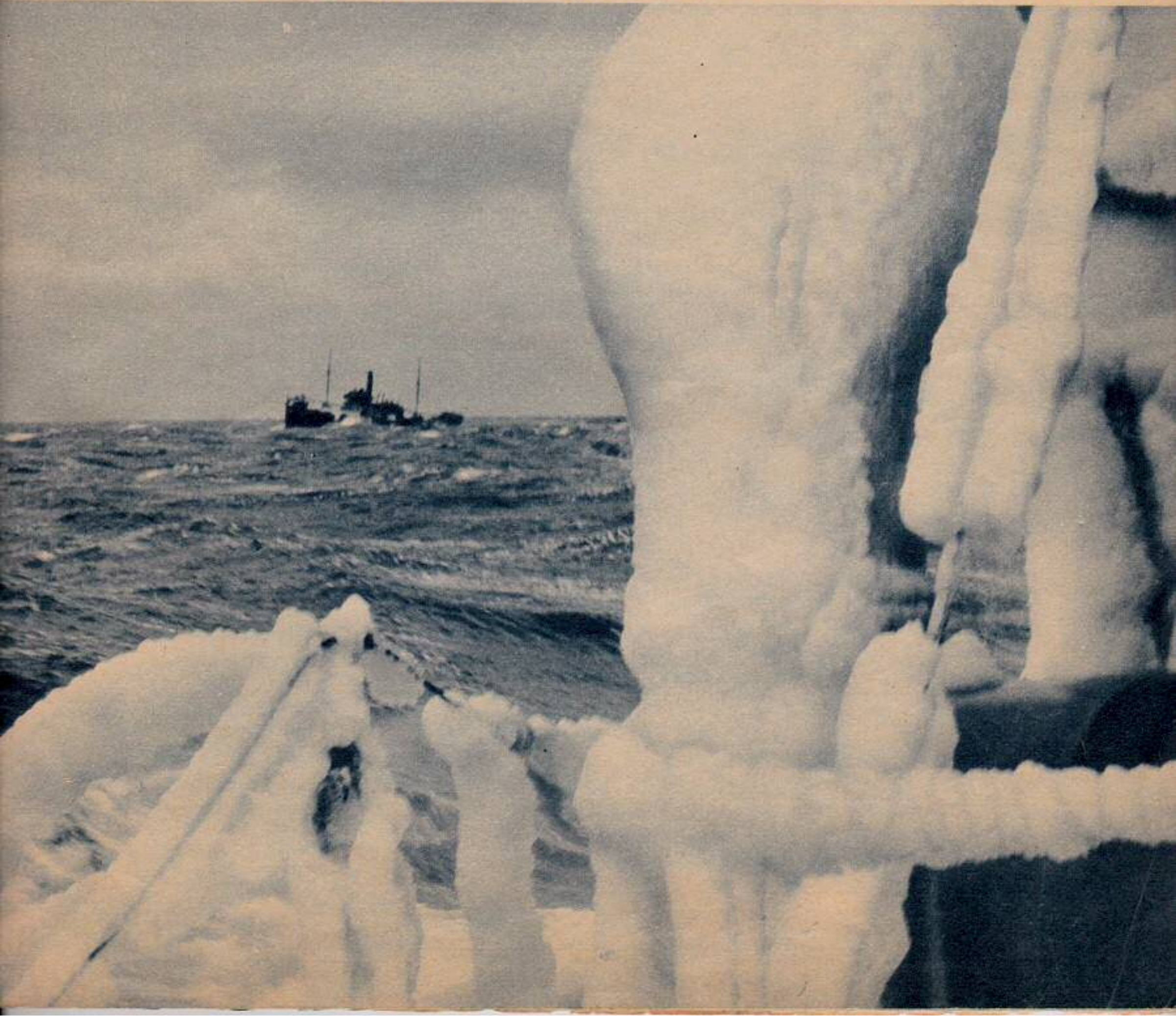


*Lifted from near-freezing sea by even colder storm-winds, spray remains aboard ship as unwelcome top-hammer.*

# Ice

At one time it was thought that icing conditions would prevent U-boat attacks in waters between Canada and Greenland in winter time. Theory was that ice forming on hatches of German subs as they surfaced at night for necessary battery-charging would prevent proper closing. It was also supposed that periscopes would soon become coated, useless. Attacks this winter throughout this area have proved that the ingenious enemy has licked a technical problem of great magnitude, made much hard work for Navy. Winter helps no one.

**ONE PHOTOGRAPH SUMS UP EPIC STRUGGLE BETWEEN SMALL TRAMP AND HOSTILE ATLANTIC.**



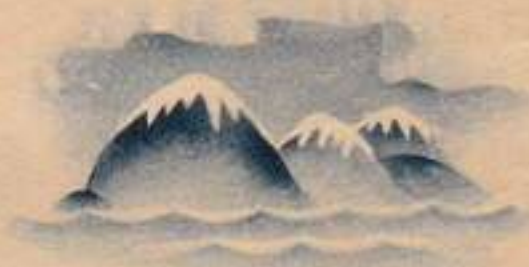


## *Keep on Knitting, Girls!*

**W**HEN PROVIDED WITH ENOUGH ARCTIC CLOTHING Navy finds winter sailing not so bad. Without it, long watches become impossible, efficiency and morale drop. Manufacturers have at last caught up with demand for



yellow wool-felt duffle-coats. For a time it was largely due to women across Canada, mothers, wives and girl friends, knitting with heartening enthusiasm, that gap in production was filled. For their reward, the Navy's thanks; when leave comes, love and kisses. In the meantime keep on knitting, comforts bring needed home atmosphere, are always welcome.





**A**LL work and no play would make Jack a dull boy, even in these strenuous days. Jack Navy fills in his leisure in many ways . . . he may want to go fishing . . . he may catch a fish. Personal requests are dealt with by ship's executive officer.

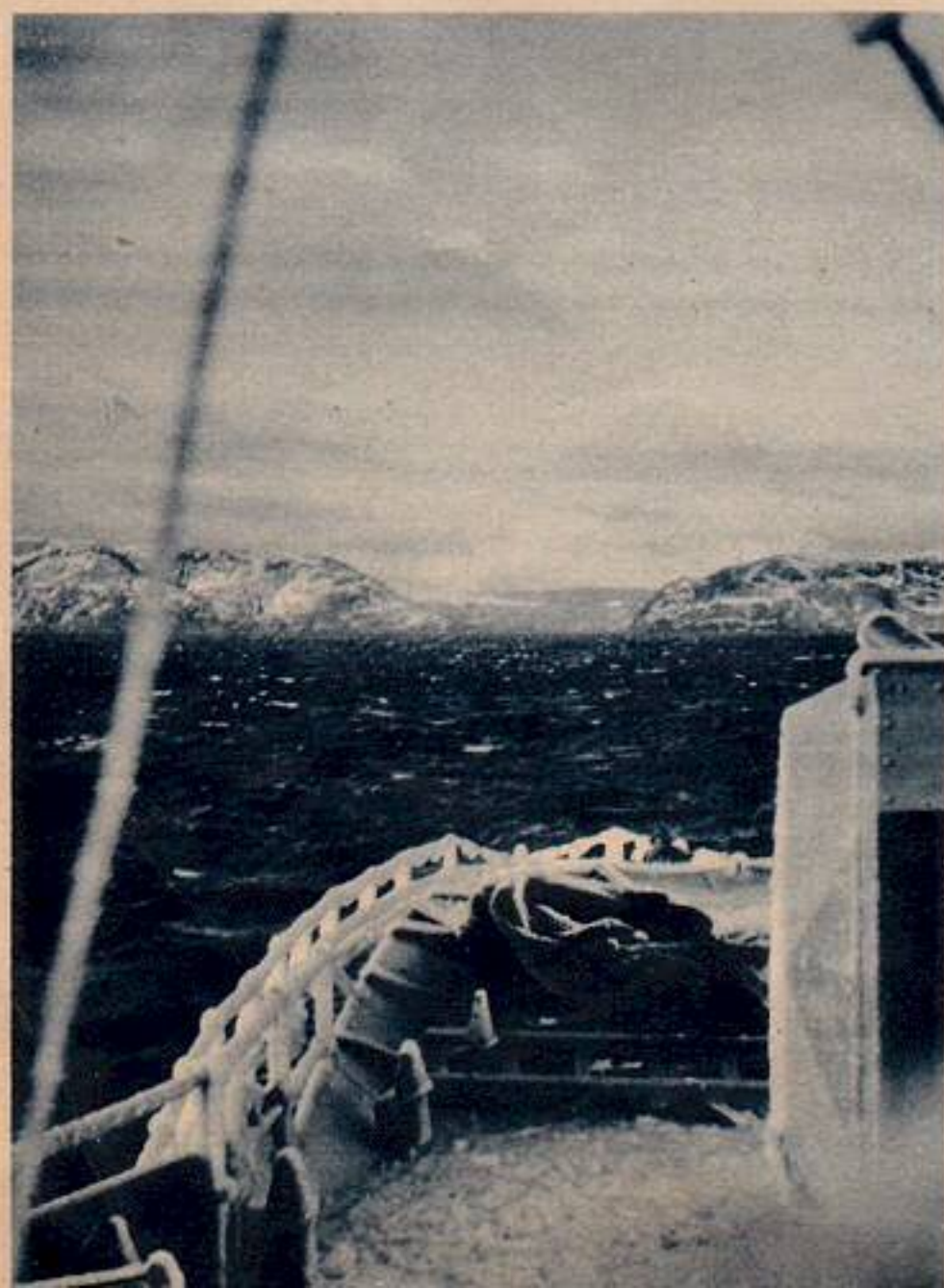


Since the ship is not rolling for the first time in three weeks, he may indulge in one of his favourite pastimes, writing home. Letters from family and friends have a special significance to those on active service, and the mail boat is looked to with an eagerness that only sailors know. Fleet Mail Officers work daily miracles in tracking down ever-changing addresses.





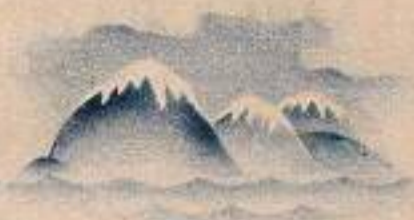
THOSE NORTHERN BASES, Newfoundland, Iceland, offer much for ship repairing and refuelling, little for ship's company. In the day or two allowed at anchor Navy tradition fills day with a mixture of ritual and freedom. Divine Service is held on destroyer quarter-deck with crew standing among depth charges under 4.7 inch gun. Grim snowy shores surround. Seamanship must be good in these waters or ships may be cast away with little chance of rescue or repair.





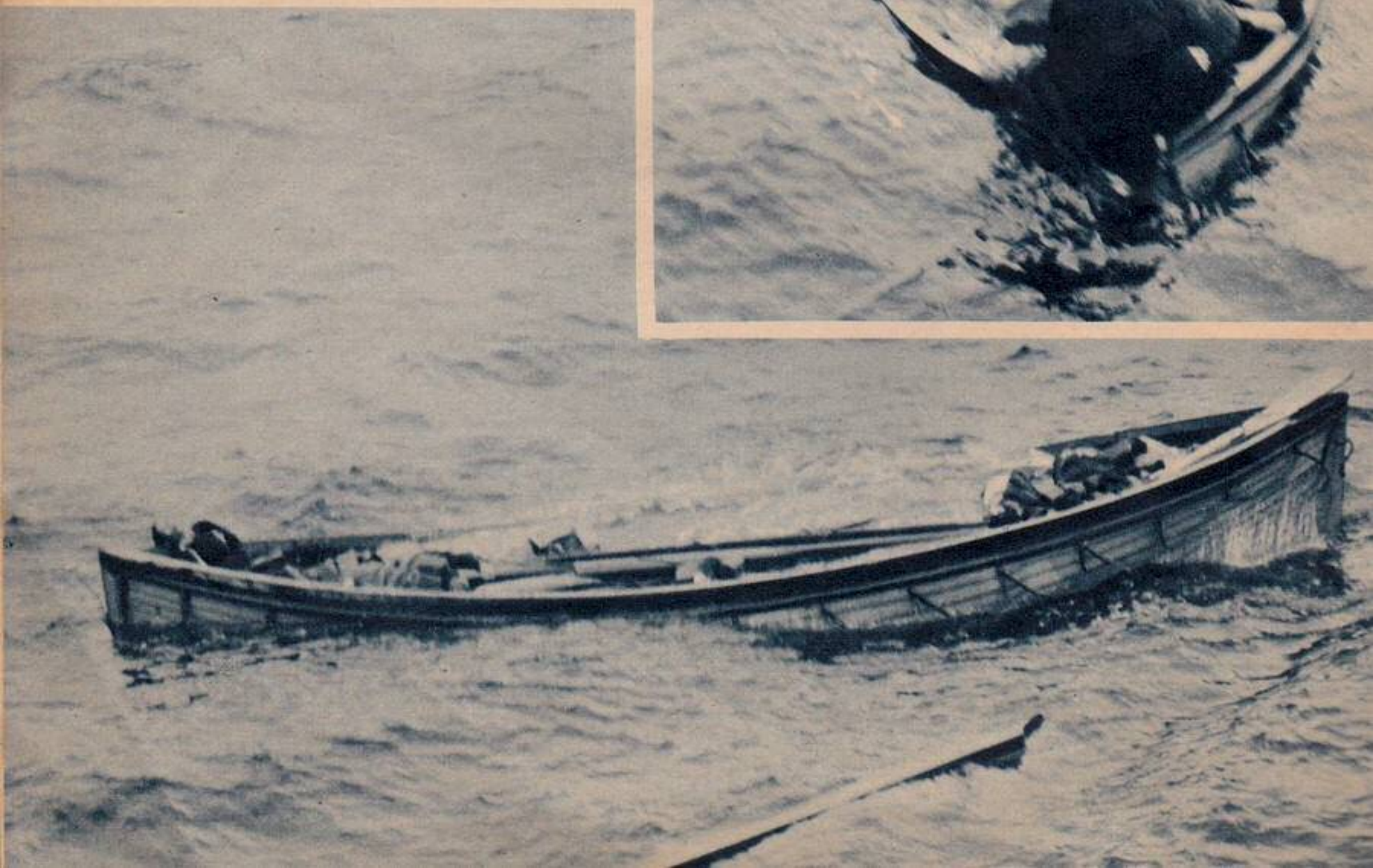
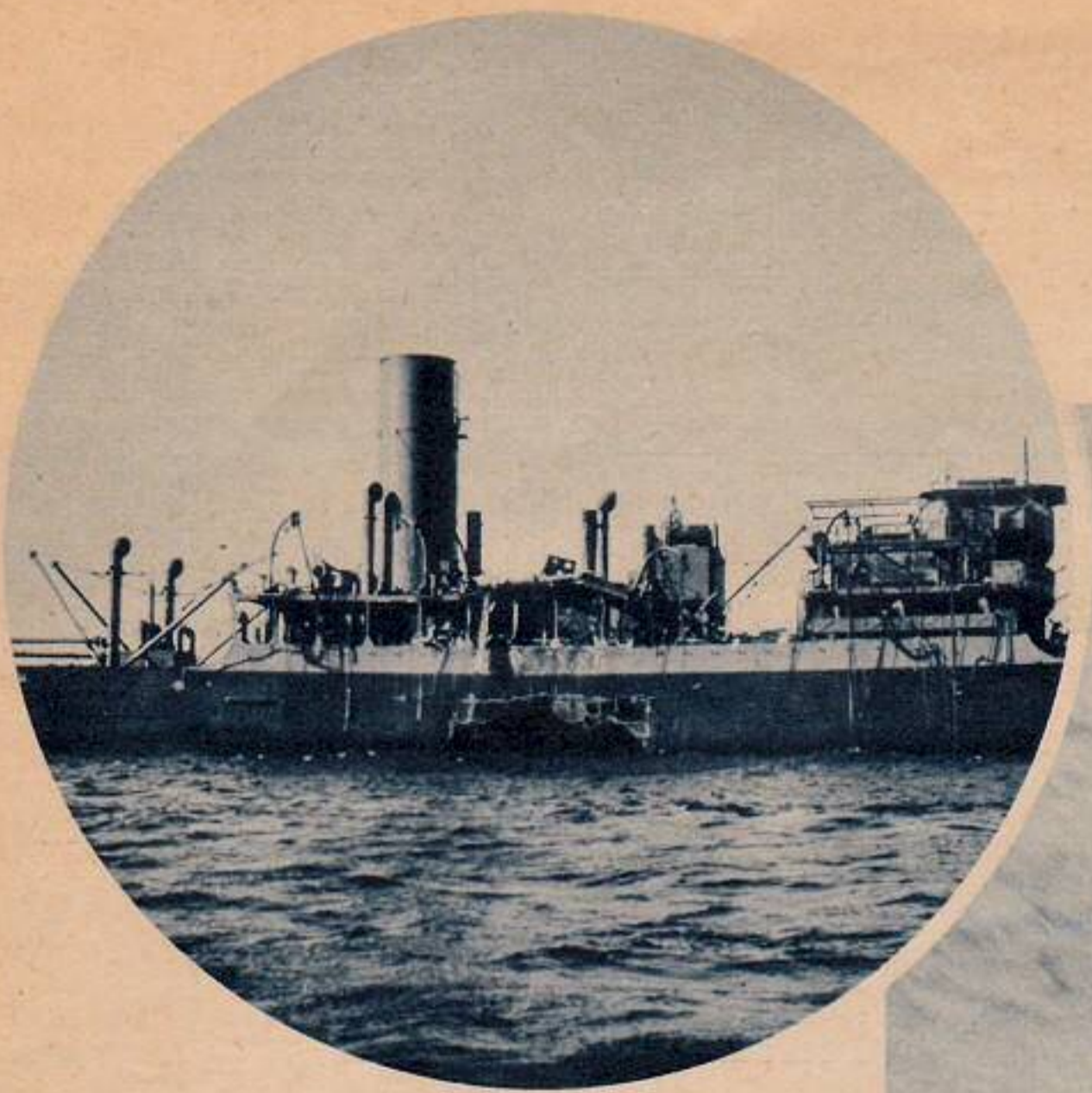


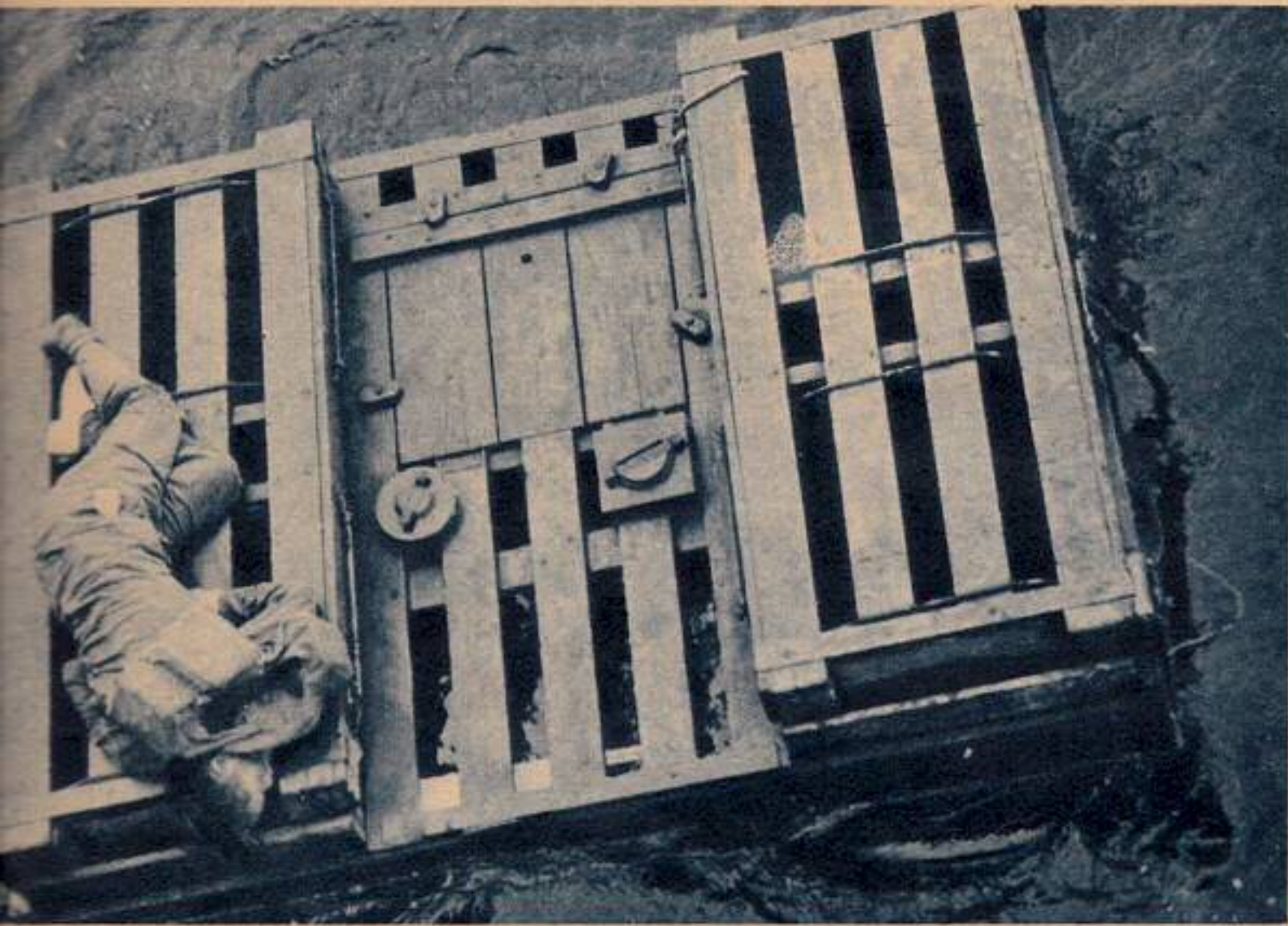
## *Iceland*



ICELAND is by no means unknown to our escort vessels. Snow-covered hills may see dozen corvettes one day, none next. The same bleak hills often see stricken merchant vessels, tankers, towed into temporary safety. Later they will be taken to other ports for repair.







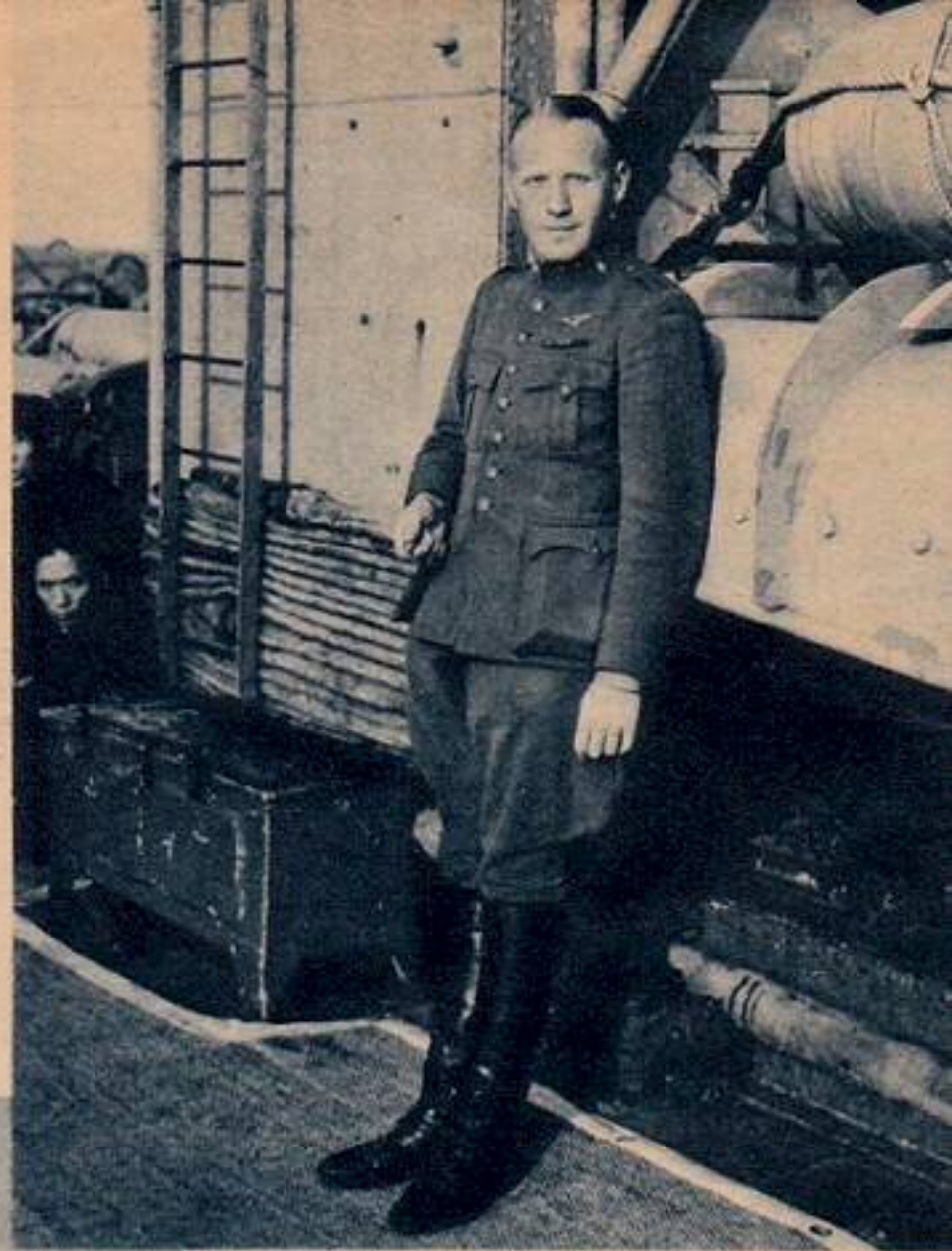
*"In the face  
of this . . ."*

U-BOAT WARFARE means many sinkings of merchantmen despite Navy efforts to protect them. Each sinking brings death and destruction in the train of the one, two or three torpedoes fired. In the face of this merchant sailors come forward, never create problem of enlistment. This contrasts comfortingly with difficulties of the smaller U-boat service which must draft



(Continued from previous page)

members, nowadays with little training. Individual merchant captains have been sunk three and four times, seen original crew dwindle from machine gunning and burning, from drowning, freezing and exposure; still they return. Civilians ashore know little of their devotion, are too perfunctory in praise.



Occasionally destroyers and corvettes play host to interesting torpedo victims. The Netherlands airman (above) was persuaded to tell of trip around world to get back into fight, kept himself trim for the day: said Mr. Churchill "... the valiant, stout-hearted Dutch who still stand forth as a strong-living partner in the struggle . . ."

Mermaid (left) still looked pretty in seaman's slacks and heavy sweater, had firsthand experience of German chivalry.



# The Corvette



**B**ORN OF THE WHALING FLEETS, redesigned by warshipwise British Admiralty Corps of Constructors, the corvette was first World War II secret weapon. The name will surely be written on the heart of Grand-Admiral Raeder. Their great advantage lay in low cost, short building-time and phenomenal seaworthiness. While one intricate destroyer was in hand, four or six corvettes slid down the ways to join the fleet. Originally planned to cost some \$600,000, a

corvette in fighting trim today can be had for a cool million, no less. Canada's more than fifty represent a small proportion of the national wealth. More are needed.

Two and a half years of U-boat construction find the undersea-boats faster than ever, more vicious. To counter them, corvette designs are always being modified in the light of experience and improvements added as ships are laid down and building.





**THEY ARE FOUND ALL OVER THE NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN CARRYING**





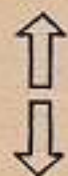
**NAMES OF CANADIAN CITIES AND TOWNS AGAINST THE ENEMY.**



**W**HILE the U-boat remains the commonest barrier to the Atlantic life-line, there are more formidable raiders which cause grim faces, anxious moments. A German cruiser or pocket battleship escaping from Brest or the Baltic Sea can wreak havoc among convoys, sneak back home. To prevent it there are kept in readiness British, U.S. battleships and aircraft-carriers to even score. Destroyers and corvettes feel happier, hope for scrap when big brothers appear over horizon.







A battleship must be screened constantly by destroyers against U-boats, can handle larger enemies single-handed.

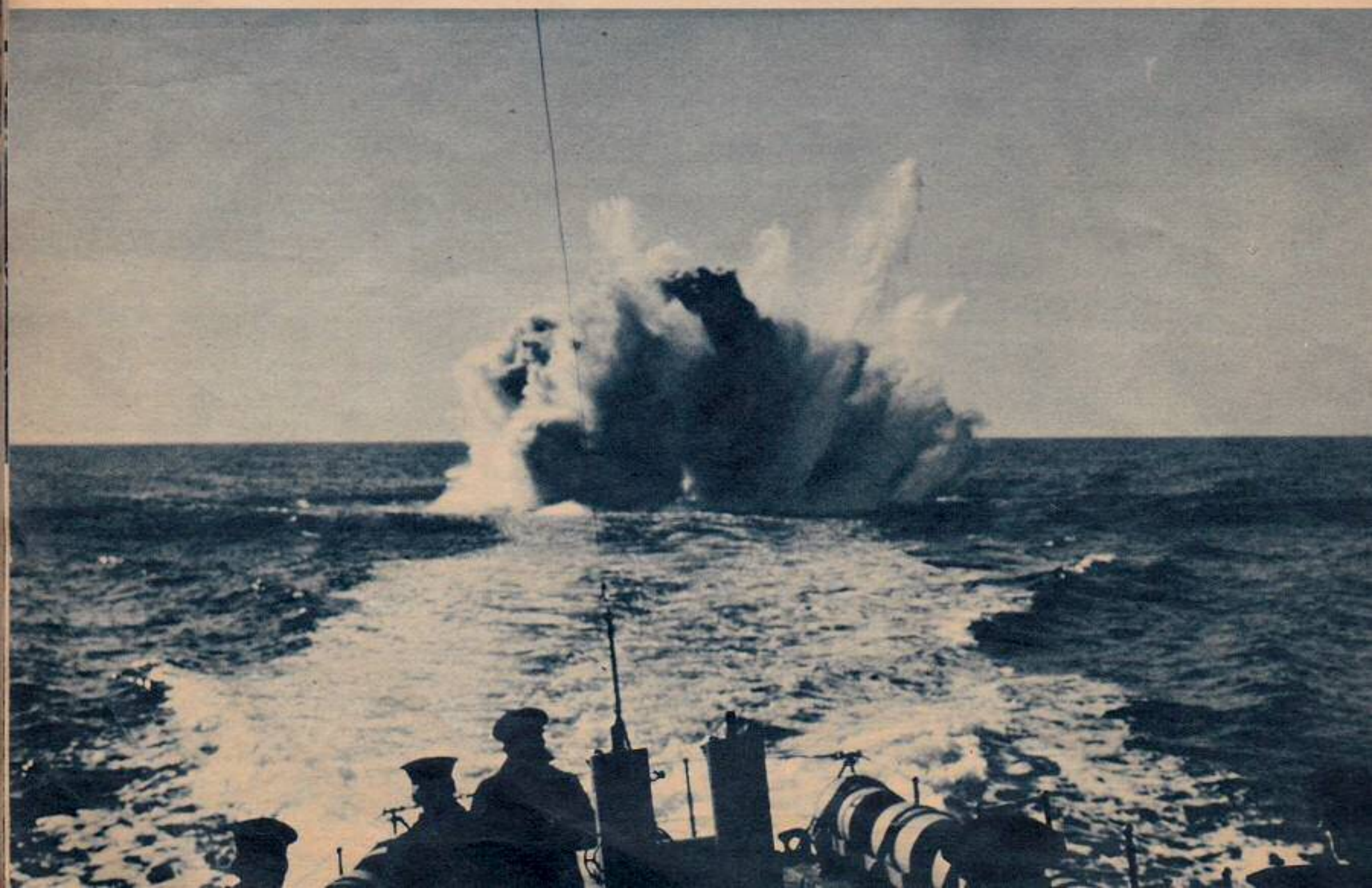


Coming abreast of destroyers in heavy fog, battleship flashes message by lamp, may not break wireless silence.



## *Practice*


Not satisfied with the supply of enemy submarines, the Navy spends a lot of time practising with borrowed ones, British, U.S., Netherlands. Manoeuvres to confuse and discomfort the enemy are tried out, give feeling of confidence when real attack comes. Practice smoke screens, depth charging, gun-fire, all make for smooth action. Sub on opposite page is Dutch and enables R.C.A.F. planes to make dummy bombing runs.



# *A Word about* **RECRUITING**


YOU'VE probably heard that the R.C.N. has a waiting list. This is true for some categories, but in others, particularly the Artificer branches, there is a ready welcome for prospective Navy men. Cooks and Sick Berth ratings are also needed.

## *what to do about it:*

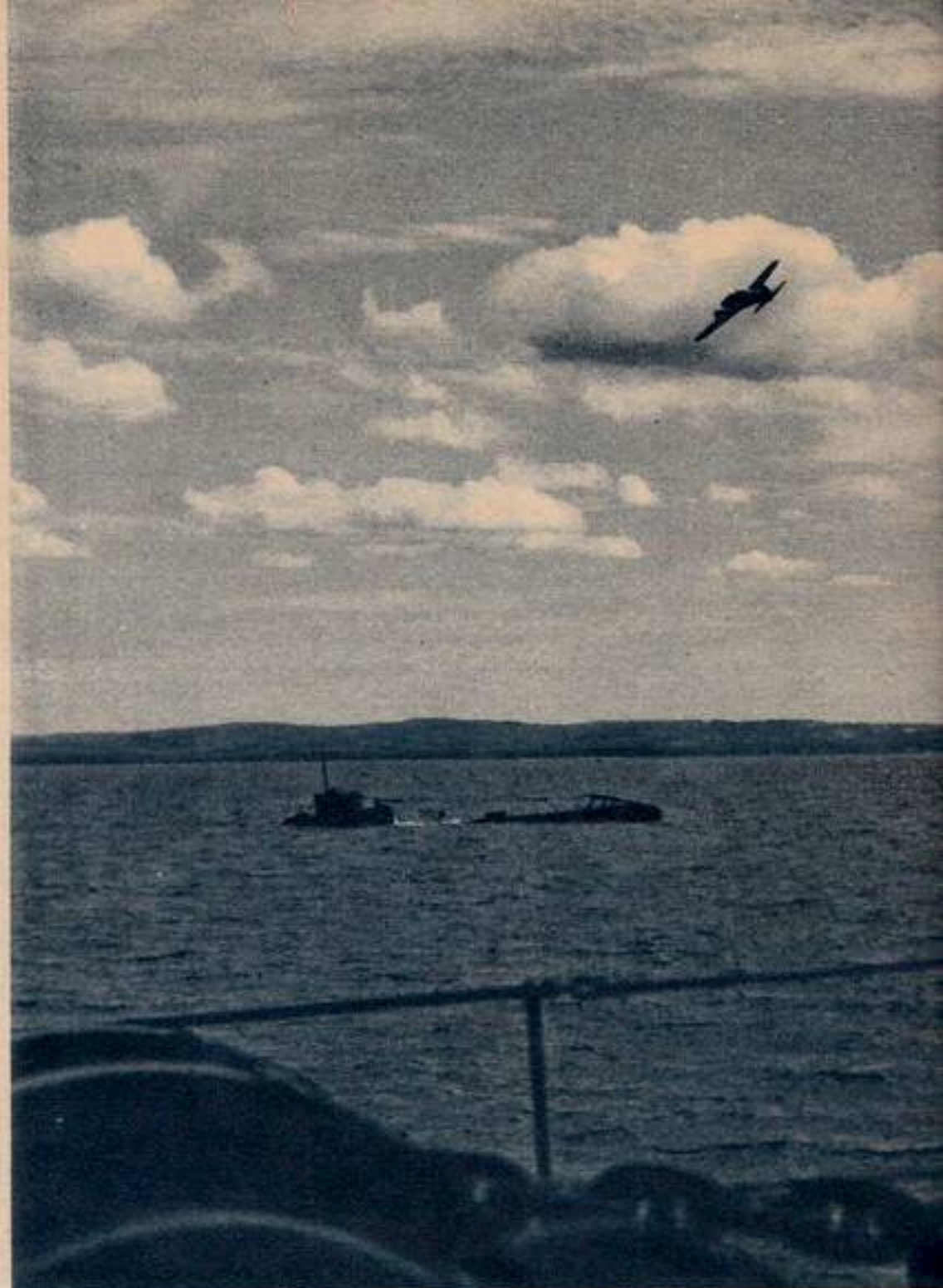
-  **1.** Write to the Commanding Officer, R.C.N.V.R. Barracks at the nearest city in the following list:

Charlottetown	<i>Simms Building</i>
Saint John	<i>221/23 Prince William St.</i>
Quebec	<i>30 Laurier Avenue</i>
Montreal	<i>1464 Mountain Street</i>
Ottawa	<i>453 Rideau Street</i>
Kingston	<i>Richardson Bldg., Princess St.</i>
Toronto	<i>Exhibition Park</i>
Hamilton	<i>Cor. Stuart &amp; McNab Streets</i>
London	<i>433 Richmond Street</i>
Windsor	<i>2462 Howard Avenue</i>
Port Arthur	<i>232 Cooke Street</i>
Winnipeg	<i>583 Ellice Avenue</i>
Regina	<i>The New Armouries</i>
Saskatoon	<i>1st Ave. &amp; 25th Street</i>
Edmonton	<i>9722 - 102nd Street</i>
Calgary	<i>337 - 7th Avenue</i>
Vancouver	<i>408 Marine Building</i>

or to the R.C.N. Barracks at Halifax or Esquimalt.

-  **2.** Ask for information sheet and application form.

**DO NOT WRITE TO HEADQUARTERS  
IN OTTAWA**

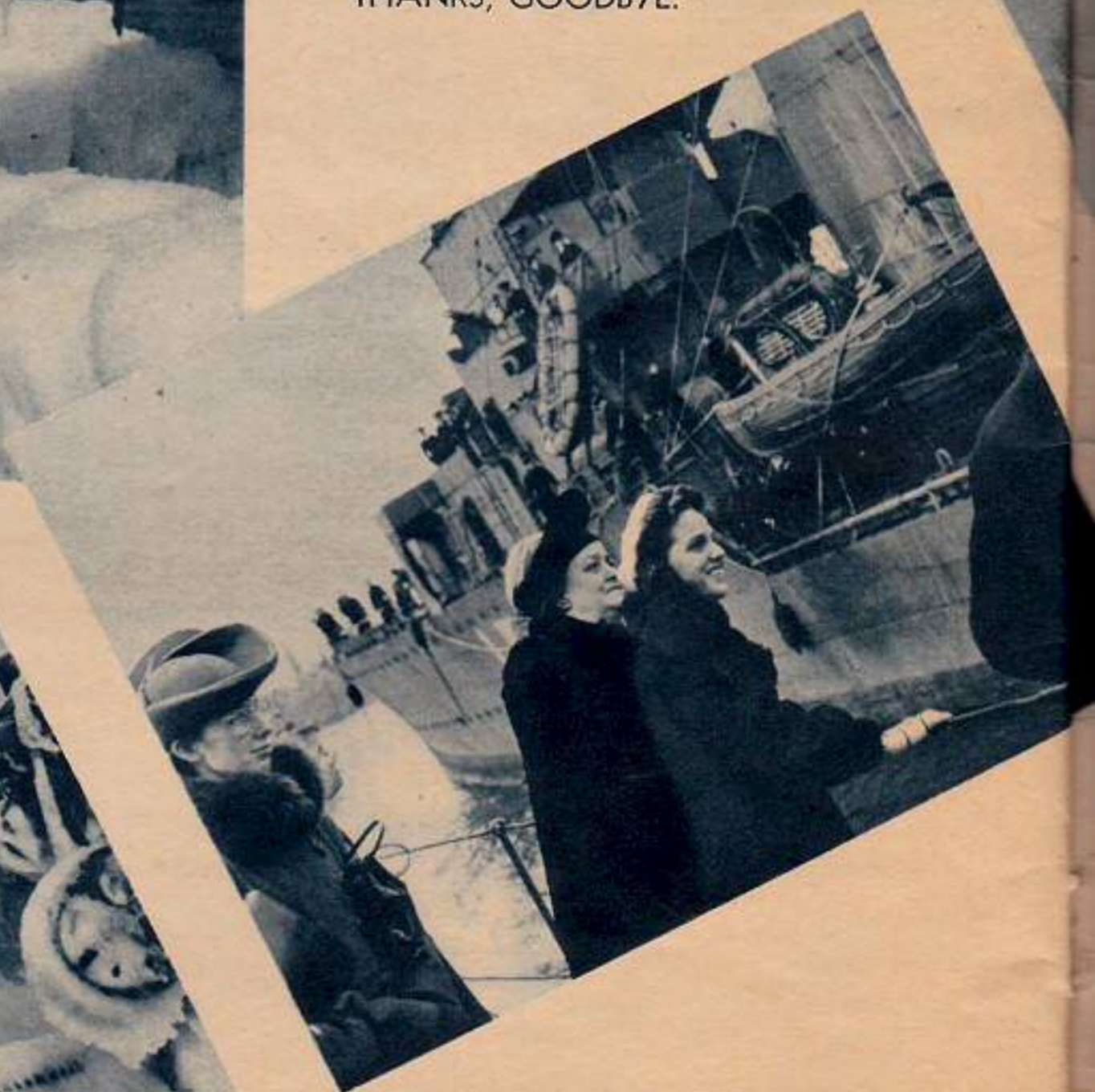


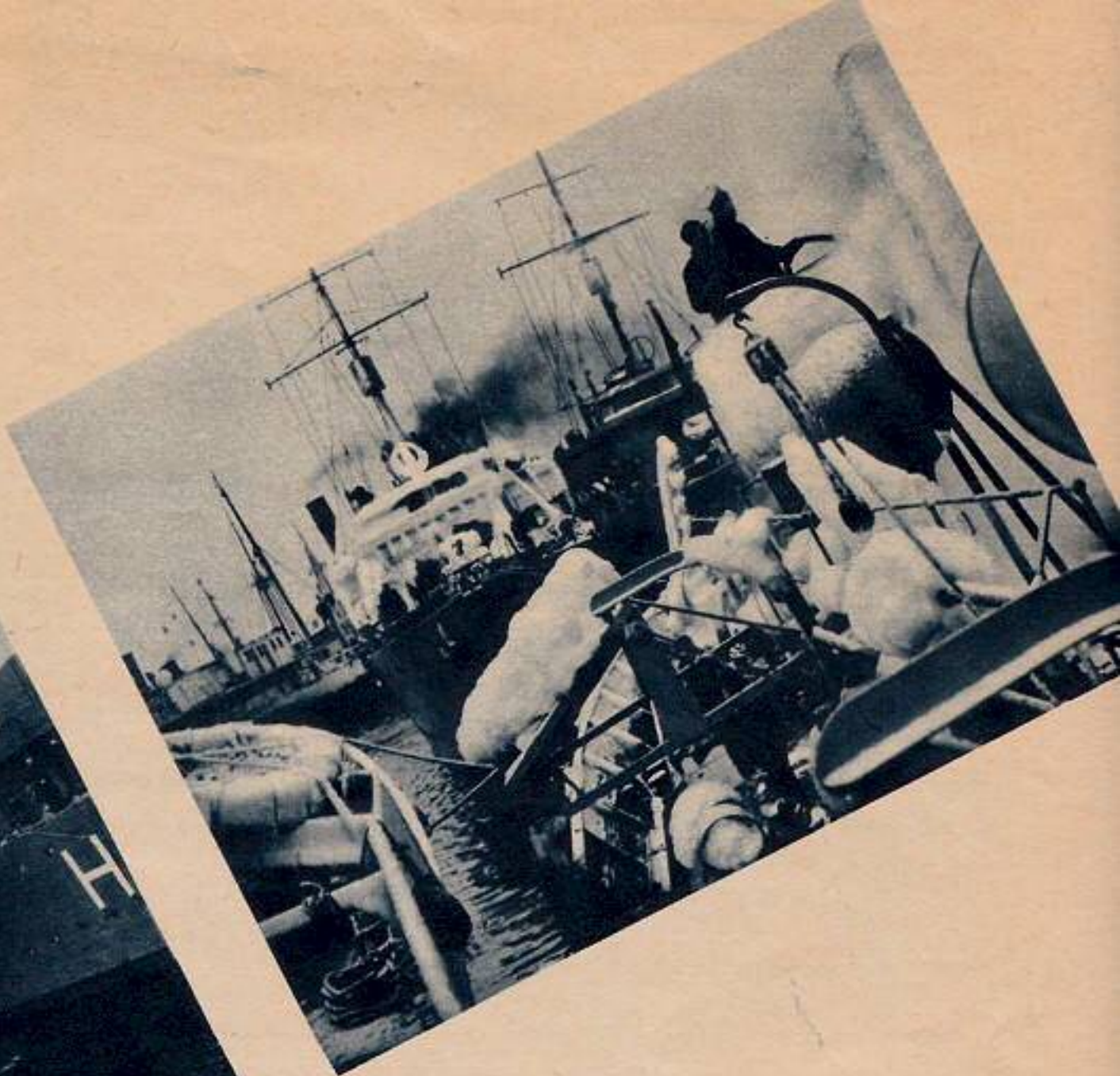
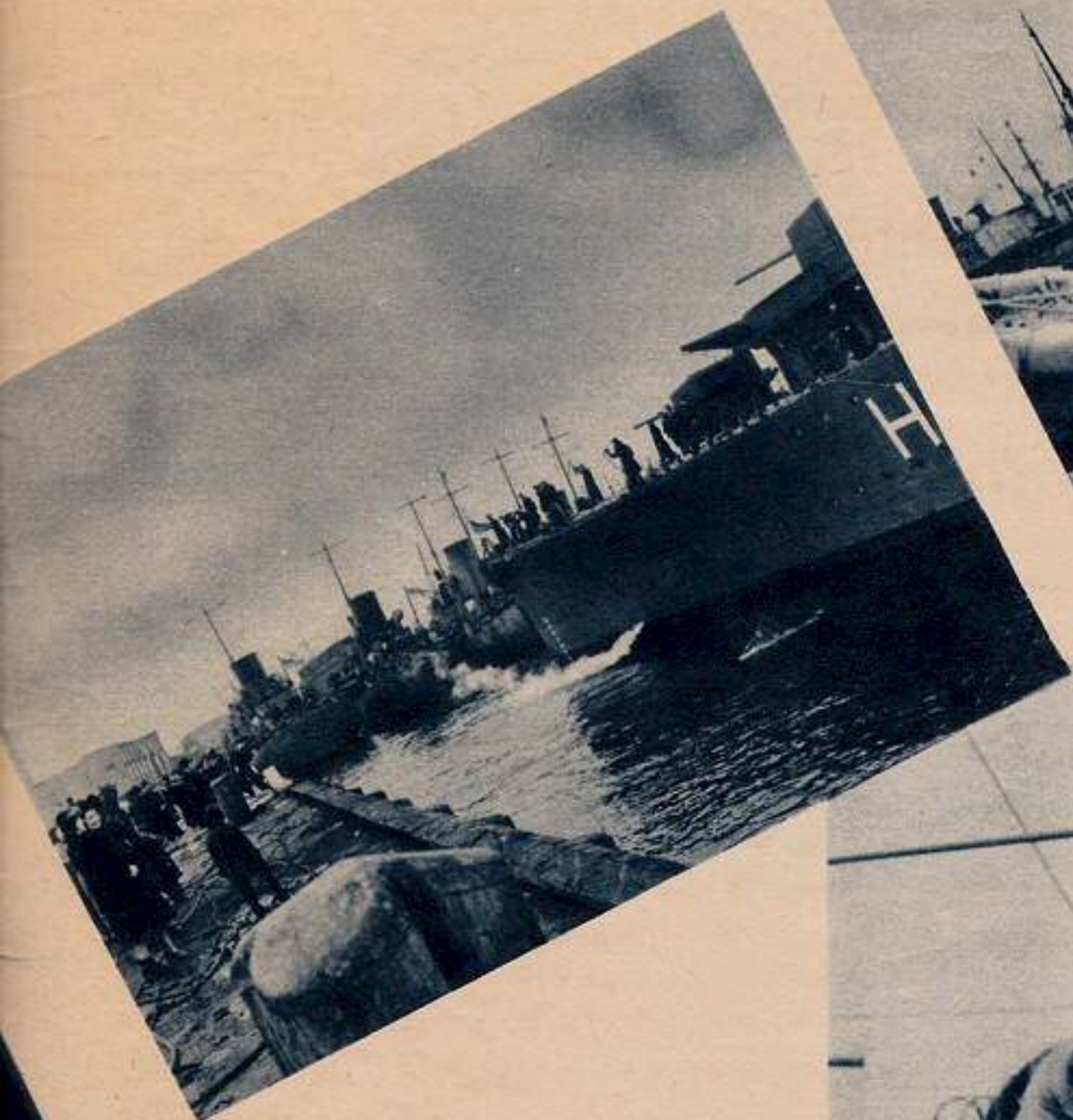


## *Return to Bases*

FAR ACROSS THE ATLANTIC Canada's responsibility ceases as R.N. escort vessels appear on the horizon. Twice at least this has happened while a U-boat attack was in exasperating progress, the temporary reinforcement saving a difficult situation. Mostly it is a meeting of slight formality. Signals the senior Canadian:

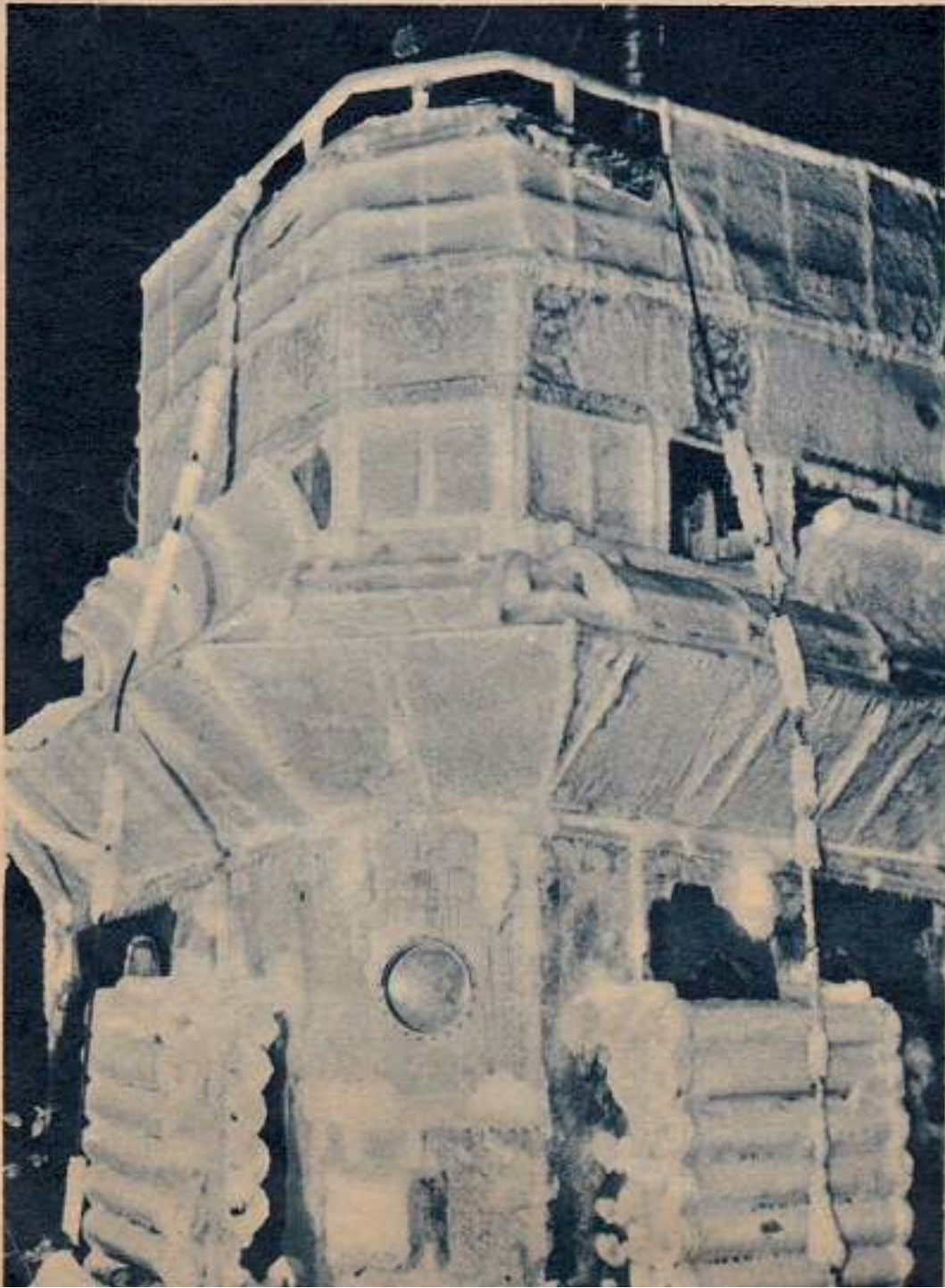
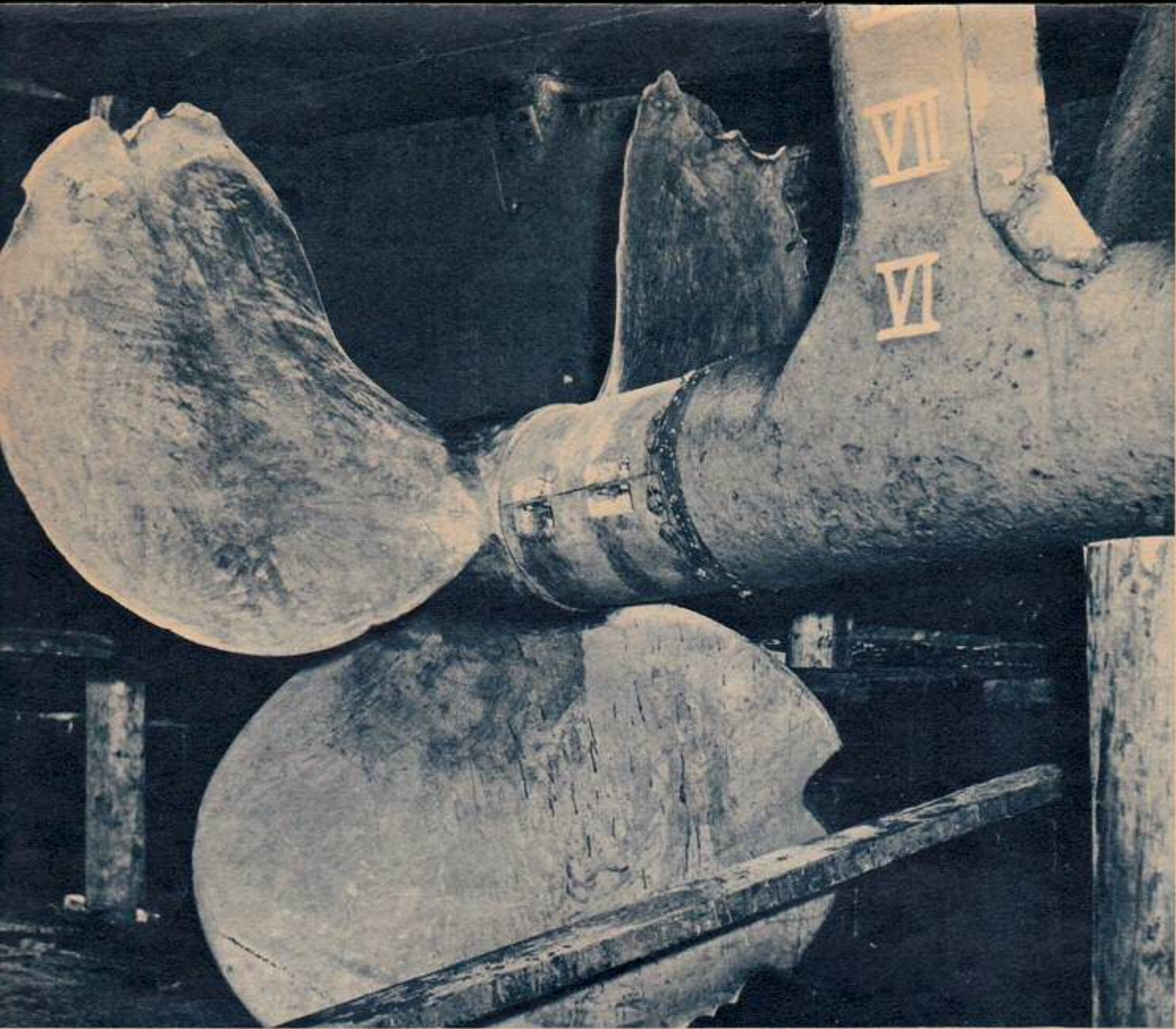
"THIRTY-EIGHT PRESENT TWO STRAGGLERS ESTIMATED NINETY-FIVE MILES ASTERN ONE OF WHICH SAYS HE HAS BEEN SUNK. GOOD HUNTING." Replies the Britisher: "THANKS, GOODBYE."





There follow one or two days in which refueling is carried out at the nearest overseas base, followed by the pick up of a west-bound caravan, its mostly empty vessels riding awkwardly high, and its slow return passage to North American waters. Home, the wharves and jetties of eastern bases bear smiling faces, beckon the brine-drenched corvettes, battered destroyers. For a few days the exacting North Atlantic and its convoys forgotten, men and ships rest.





During short harbour stays repairs must be made, ships readied for next bout. Berthed in dry dock, examination often reveals wear and tear of battle with both elements and enemy. Photo above shows punishment to destroyer propeller by high-speed operation in debris-strewn waters. In winter ice must also be stripped off.





**The Naval College pays dividends with graduates of its first class (1911) commanding the sea forces in Canada's Battle of the Atlantic.**

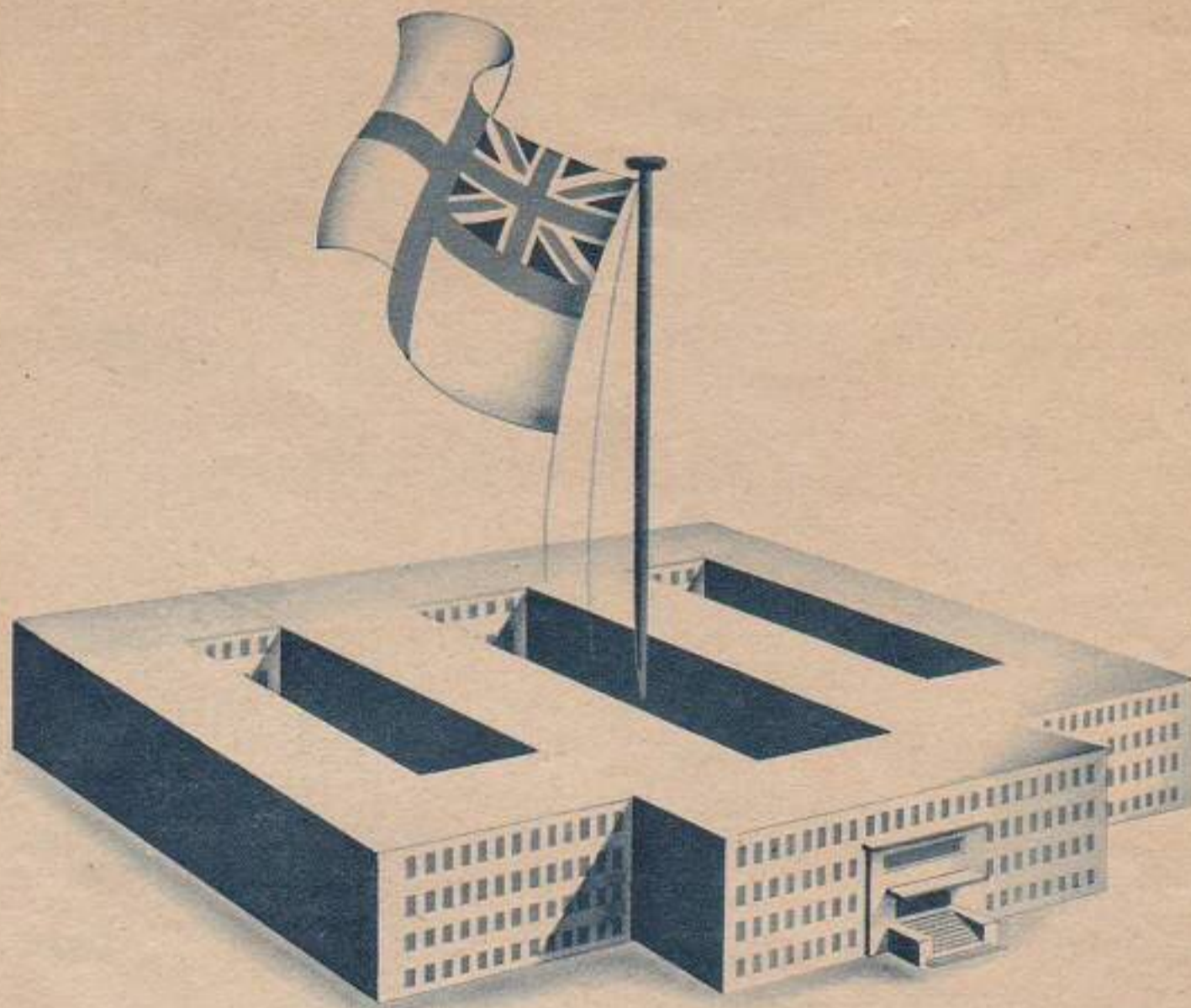


**GEORGE C. JONES:** Rear Admiral, Commanding Officer Atlantic Coast. At 47 he has immediate direction of the sea warfare off Canadian east coasts.



**LEONARD W. MURRAY:** Rear Admiral, Flag Officer Newfoundland Force. At 45, he is in command of Canada's naval forces in Newfoundland.





## *New Naval Headquarters*

which are rapidly approaching completion in Ottawa, the largest building of its kind in Canada. From here will radiate the orders necessary to keep the Navy in active service against a wide-spread and resourceful enemy.

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