



SUPPLEMENT

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET TO THE ASSAULT ON OKINAWA, 1945.

The following Despatch was submitted to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty on the 7th June, 1945, by Admiral Sir Bruce A. Fraser, G.C.B., K.B.E., Commander-in-Chief, British Pacific Fleet.

*Office of the Commander-in-Chief,
British Pacific Fleet.
7th June, 1945.*

"ICEBERG"—REPORT.

Be pleased to lay before Their Lordships a report on the actions fought by the British Pacific Fleet during the first phases of Operation "Iceberg."

2. It is impossible yet to judge the effect of these operations on the conquest of Okinawa, but I consider that we have successfully carried out our undertakings, employing a method of sea warfare with which we were previously unfamiliar.

3. It is not less than was expected, since all had turned their minds to it, but the credit must go to Vice-Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings, K.C.B., O.B.E., whose inspiring leadership, resolution and fine judgment were responsible.

4. Doubt as to our ability to operate in the Pacific manner was somewhat naturally in American minds. This, however, was soon changed. The toll taken by the suicide bomber of the more lightly armoured American carriers led to an increase in the proportionate effort provided by our carriers, and the evidence of American eyes that we could support ourselves logistically, relieved their anxieties on that score. We have now, I am sure, become not only welcome but necessary in Central Pacific operations.

5. Despite their doubts, the Americans put their trust in us unstintedly, and the generosity

and help of all were invaluable to our success, a result which I know is most satisfactory to them.

6. We shall not, however, be able to play our full part until sufficient forces are available to form a second task group, since the effort of one, alternatively striking and re-fuelling, must necessarily be discontinuous and uneconomical of force.

7. The British Pacific Fleet have been making British naval history by operating off the enemy coast for periods up to 30 days each, but it is well to remember that similar American task groups are doing the same thing for twice as long. When we have mastered the technique of ammunitioning and storing at sea, we shall also be able to do this. These are matters receiving close attention.

8. In this connection, I wish to commend most whole-heartedly the work of Rear-Admiral D. B. Fisher, C.B., C.B.E., whose successful servicing of the Fleet at sea and in harbour has been the admiration of all.

(Signed) BRUCE FRASER,
Admiral.

*Office of the Vice-Admiral,
Second-in-Command,
British Pacific Fleet.
9th May, 1945.*

SIR,

I have the honour to forward for your information reports of proceedings from the ships of the British Pacific Fleet which participated in the initial stages of Operation "Iceberg" for the period from 26th March until 20th April, together with a general narrative of events for this period.* This latter duplicates inevitably

Admiralty footnote :—

* Reports of proceedings of individual ships are not being reproduced.