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The Destruction of Convoy PQ-17

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operations. Today the United States has nothing comparable. Another point that emerges is the difficulties that terrain and distance imposed upon the fairly extensive Soviet campaign plan.

Moreover, while generally uneven and unsuccessful, hampered by totally ineffective command direction from Teheran, there was an Iranian resistance. Iranian troops in 1941 did reasonably well when they were well-led and in defensive positions. Yet, they could not hold when subjected to artillery and air strikes. In any event, there were not enough of them to make a difference. There also appeared to be no real attempt—based on a fairly widespread dislike of both the Shah's government and his officer corps—to conduct a guerilla resistance movement against the occupying powers. Additionally, one is struck by the very careful and coordinated British political and military moves, including discussions with the U.S. government before they launched their seaborne invasion.

A final point Stewart examines is the role and rights of neutral states in time of war. With his Nazi ties, the Shah was playing a very dangerous game. By 1939 Germany controlled 41 percent of Iran's foreign trade, and whether the agents really were a threat or not, they were seen as such by both Britain and the Soviet Union. For a time these ties may have been effective in keeping Britain and the U.S.S.R. out of Iran. However, as we have seen, it appears as a result of their 1939 pact that the Nazis

would have permitted the Soviets to act in their agreed sphere of interest toward the Persian Gulf. But after June 1941 the Iranian tie to Nazi Germany gave the Soviets the pretext to intervene under the 1921 Iranian-Soviet treaty of nonaggression and it certainly helped motivate an already jittery imperial Great Britain to move to protect India.

This is a well-researched text. The narrative of the military campaign and the political and strategic rationale is rich in detail, especially about British operations and the Iranian reaction to them. Soviet operations are laid out effectively but—probably due to the lack of access to sources—have nowhere near the detail of British operations.

The book is not flawless. Sometimes it is confusing when one has to jump from British to Iranian to Soviet operations and back again. Though, happily, there are several maps, as well as some interesting photographs. Given the level of detail on British operations, a few more on the tactical level would have been useful.

For those interested in World War II history, operations in Southwest Asia, studies in *realpolitik*, and current campaign planning, it is worth the read.

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Irving, David. *The Destruction of Convoy PQ-17*. New York: St. Martins, 1987. 367pp. \$4.95

This first-rate history is an updated version of a best-selling narrative that was published first in 1967 and subsequently involved in a bitter litigation. Legal action led to the book being banned, the author was ordered to pay heavy damages, and the British publishing firm was forced out of business.

For the professional, *The Destruction of Convoy PQ-17* offers a study of political expediency overriding military judgment, faulty command and control, operational intelligence failure, and poor communication. For the historical buff, it is a narration of the best and the worst of ordinary men when faced with certain disaster and probable death.

Thirty-five allied cargo ships departed Iceland with vital war materiel on 27 June 1942, bound for northern Soviet ports. They were accompanied by 19 assorted escorts and were also covered by two separate naval groups, a cruiser force and major elements of the Home Fleet. German land-based air and submarines constituted the major threat for the northern convoys, but for PQ-17 there was the added danger of heavy German surface units, notably the *Tirpitz*, lurking in the fjords of northern Norway. Thinking that the *Tirpitz* had put to sea, the Admiralty ordered the convoy and its escorts to "scatter." Scatter they did and without the benefit of an overall, on-scene

commander, each vessel was on her own, virtually defenseless.

Over the following fortnight there was hell to pay as the convoy's cargo numbers were reduced from 35 to 11. The hopelessness of it all reminds one of the battle of the Somme. Rather than infantry waves, it was cargo ships and their crews, plodding the Barents Sea, being destroyed by enemy aircraft and submarines. There was one exception. Lieutenant Leo Gradwell, skipper of the antisubmarine Trawler, *Ayrshire*, gathered three merchant ships, steamed them into the ice pack, and had the starboard side of each ship painted white to camouflage them from the German Air Force. Waiting out the worst of it, Lieutenant Gradwell then negotiated his charges down the coast of Novaya Zemlya to Matochkin Strait. There, a covering force was dispatched to escort them to Archangel.

Well researched and certainly readable, PQ-17 is an indictment of command. It should be considered a "must" reading for naval officers.

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Sigal, Leon V. *Fighting to a Finish: The Politics of War Termination in the United States and Japan, 1945*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ., 1988. 335pp. \$39.95

On 5 June 1988, a large advertisement for men's wear for Father's Day appeared on page six of the *New York Times*. At the left margin was