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The Russian Convoys 1941-1945.

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liners should remember, only God sees all things in one, and the devil's in the details.

WAYNE HUGHES
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Kemp, Paul. *The Russian Convoys 1941-1945*. England: Arms and Armour; dist. New York: Sterling, 1987. 64pp. \$7.95

Surface warfare officers and naval aviators who seek a preview of the conditions under which they might have to fight a world war III between NATO and the Soviet Union can get just that from a brief look at the photos in this thin paperback picture book.

"The Russian Convoys" were those that sailed, laden with the goods of war, from North America or Britain for the Soviet port of Murmansk. Those cargoes which survived the voyage were shipped down a long one-track railroad to Leningrad for redistribution thereafter to the fighting fronts.

At the time, Germany was the foe; the Soviet Union was a major ally; and northern Norway was in the hands, not of friends, but of enemies. Now West Germany, by far the larger of the two parts into which Germany is split, is a friend; Norway is healthy, reasonably well-armed, and in full possession of her territory; and the only potential foe in the far north is our former ally. While politics and political geography have changed since World War II, neither geography itself nor the weather

have changed at all since the end of that war, and neither is likely to.

This little book shows graphically what war in the far north is like for those who attempt to wage it with ships or with aircraft launched from ships. The ice-covered 14-inch guns of the battleship *Duke of York* shown at the top of page 14 and the view on the bottom of the page of the same ship, with water cascading off the forecastle as it rises from one wave, and cascading onto the fantail as it sinks into the next, should raise questions in the minds of those responsible for keeping a modern frigate's missile launcher ready for firing. How well can it be done?

Indeed, a view on page 40, taken from the bridge of a 10,000-ton cruiser, in which one has to look *up* to see the crest of the next wave, ought to raise some more questions in the minds of those who someday might find themselves there. So ought the caption, which tells us that soon thereafter, "one wave struck 'B' turret a terrific blow, removing the roof and hurling it over the side." B turret of that cruiser, shielding three 6-inch guns, was on the 02 level and the armored roof was, of course, higher than that.

Viewing the icy flight decks shown in several photos, naval aviators might wonder what it would be like to return to a ship pitching into seas such as removed that cruiser's turret roof. They might also wonder how many snow shovels or snow blowers are apt to be found in their carrier today.

People survived such conditions and, as other photos show, there were flat calms, too. Whatever the weather, people fought whenever the enemy came within range. That those on both sides were successful is evident from the toll. Among ships alone, the Germans lost 37 warships, the Allies 29 warships and 98 merchantmen.

FRANK UHLIG, JR.
Naval War College

Schofield, William and Carisella, P.J. *Frogmen: First Battles*. Boston: Branden Publishing, 1987. 191pp. \$15.95

Admiral Charles E. Morgan, Royal Navy, pinned the Italian Gold Medal for Valor on the tunic of Italian Navy Lieutenant Luigi Durand de la Penne in March 1945. The citation? Lieutenant de la Penne, steering a two-man torpedo and wearing a frogman outfit, had sunk the British battleship HMS *Valiant* in December 1941 when Morgan was her skipper!

Five warships, seven tankers, twenty cargo ships, two subs, and some small craft—that was the box score of ships, mostly British, sunk by the Italian 10th Light Flotilla. The scene of action was the Mediterranean and the Straits of Gibraltar, between March 1941 and August 1943. The sailors were career seamen of the Italian Navy, augmented by a specially recruited levy of competitive swimmers serving in the wartime army.

Authors Schofield and Carisella have interviewed survivors and participants to reconstruct this chapter of naval warfare in World War II. They tell how Italian engineers produced the E-boat, a speedboat that was half bomb and half engine, and the two-man submarine whose crew rode astride the torpedo-rigged hull wearing wet suits and oxygen tanks. Less than fifty of these frogmen challenged the mighty Royal Navy for command of the Mediterranean, culminating with the midnight raid on Alexandria that left the battleships HMS *Queen Elizabeth* and HMS *Valiant* out of action for months.

In April 1942, Prime Minister Winston Churchill told the Parliament in closed session how the Royal Navy had not one operational capital ship in the Mediterranean. He lauded the valiant Italian frogmen. Two months later, Italian Navy Commander (Prince) Valerio Borghese briefed Admiral Karl Dönitz, Commander in Chief of the German Submarine Fleet, on his plans for another frogman attack that also would have strategic consequences. What target was proposed by the commander of Italy's 10th Light Flotilla? New York Harbor. The means of attack? Two-man subs, mounted to the decks of Italian and German U-boats for the transatlantic journey.

Allied antisubmarine war-fighting measures became effective just in time to prevent the 10th Light Flotilla from trying out their plan. And frogman operations went over