

~~TOP SECRET~~

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BRIDE

B15

USSR

From: WASHINGTON

To: MOSCOW

No: 182[a]

27 Jan. 43

[66 groups unrecovered]

up to 11,000 men. Towards the end of December American reconnaissance [RAZYEDKA] observed at RABAUL 20 destroyers [MINONOSETS] and [1 group garbled] transports. On 2nd January 1943 there were in the same place 18 warships, 53 transports and 6 flying boats. On 5th January 1943 87 vessels were there. The allied air forces bombed these concentrations, sinking up to January 1943 about 50,000 tons, and during January about 27 vessels were sunk or damaged. However, these operations were not as decisive as they should have been and the enemy was not liquidated. It is becoming plain that the U.S. Navy, being well equipped for [B% air -] and [Q% ship-borne radio] reconnaissance, is avoiding contact with the enemy, in view of its experience in previous engagements and its heavy losses due to enemy air action. The growth of its air arm, and in particular the possibility of basing Flying Fortresses on GUADA... [1]

[23 groups unrecovered]

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Note: [a] Re-sent as no. 222 of 1 February 1943.

Comment: [1] GUADA... : Probably GUADALCANAL.

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