

S E C R E T

W A R D I A R Y

N O R T H E R N G R O U P

Task Group 02.1
of the
Eastern Sea Frontier Force

A P R I L - 1 9 4 4

Original To: Commander in Chief,
United States Fleet

Via: Commander Eastern Sea Frontier

SECRET

WAR DIARY - NORTHERN GROUP

APRIL 1944

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter I - <u>ORGANIZATION OF GROUP.</u>	1
A. Composition of Group.	1
B. Operation Plans.	1
Chapter II - <u>ENEMY ACTIVITY - SUSPICIOUS EVENTS.</u>	
April 3 - Radar Contact by PBY from Quonset.	3
5 - Sound Contact by CAPTOR.	3
9 - Contacts and Sightings by Blimps.	4
15 - Sound Contact by MACOMB (DD).	5
16 - Torpedoing of S.S. PAN-PENNSYLVANIA and Subsequent Sinking of U-boat.	5
19 - Sub Sighting at Sandwich.	6
22-23 - A Series of Queer Incidents.	6
30 - Sound Contact by FIERCE.	8
Chapter III - <u>OPERATIONS OF GROUP TASK UNITS.</u>	
A. Northern Ship Lane Patrol - 02.1.1.	
1. Operations in General.	9
2. Areas of Operation.	10
3. Ships Assigned and April Operating Schedule.	10
B. Naval Local Defense Force - 02.1.2.	
1. Boston Section.	11
(a) General.	11
(b) Boston Frontier Base.	12
(c) HECP Boston - Fort Dawes.	13
(d) HECP Portsmouth.	14
(e) LRS's East Point, Nahant; Strawberry Point; Portsmouth, N.H.	14
2. Portland Section.	15
(a) General.	15
(b) Portland Frontier Base.	16
(c) HECP Portland (Fort Williams).	17
(d) LRS's Bailey Island, Cape Elizabeth, Fort Williams.	17
(e) Naval Net Depot - South Portland.	18
3. Rockland Section.	19
(a) General.	19
(b) Ammunition Expended in Training.	19
(c) Ships Assigned and April Operating Schedule.	19
4. Bar Harbor Section.	20
(a) General.	20
(b) Bar Harbor Section Base.	20
(c) Ships Assigned and April Operating Schedule.	20

SECRET

WAR DIARY - NORTHERN GROUP

APRIL 1944

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

C. Northern Air Group - 02.1.3.	
1. Operations in General.	21
2. Patrols Maintained.	21
3. Squadron Operations.	23
(a) VS-31 Squadron; Squantum; Mass., Brunswick, Maine.	23
(b) Salem Coast Guard Squadron, Salem, Mass.	23
(c) ZP-11 Blimp Patrol Squadron, South Weymouth, Mass.	25
D. Control Force Cape Cod Canal (Coast Guard) - 02.1.5.	27
E. Coastal Guards - 02.1.6.	29

ANNEXES

- I-A. Recommendations of Navy Manpower Survey Committee Regarding Northern Group.
- I-B. Comments on Report of Navy Manpower Survey Committee by Units of Northern Group.
- III-A. Report of Training Given to NSLP Vessels by ASW Unit.
- III-B. Mine Disposal Activities.
- III-C. Defects in Communication Training.
- III-D. Internal Security Survey of Naval Unit #8, Navy Yard, Portsmouth.
- III-E. Army Mine Fields.
- III-F. Internal Security Resurvey of U. S. Naval Frontier Base, Portland.
- III-G. Security and Patrolling of U.S. Navy Property on Bailey Island.
- III-H. Inspections Made During April.
- III-I. Report on Liaison with Canadian Activities.
- III-J. Briefing at Sanford and Rockland.
- III-K. Anti-Submarine Warfare Doctrine for Scouting Squadron 31.
- III-L. Reduction of Coast Guard Beach Patrol.

SECRET

ABBREVIATIONS

ANO-JANO-JOO: Joint Army Navy Operations Office; adjoining the Headquarters of the Sub-Commander, Northern Group and those of the (Naval) Task Unit Commanders of the Northern Group, 11th floor, 150 Causeway St., Boston, Mass.

CESF-COMEASTSEAFRON: Commander Eastern Sea Frontier Force, Task Force 02.

CNG-COMNORGROUP: Commander Northern Group, Task Group 02.1 of the Eastern Sea Frontier Force.

SNG: Sub-Commander Northern Group.

HECP: Harbor Entrance Control Post. Those in the Northern Group are located at Deer Island (Boston), Portsmouth, N.H., and Fort Williams (Portland, Me.), and operate under Commander Naval Local Defense Force, 1ND.

LRS: Loop Receiving Station. Those in the Northern Group are located at East Point, Nahant, Mass., Strawberry Point, Mass. (Boston Section); Isle of Shoals (Portsmouth, N.H., Sub-Section); Bailey Island, Cape Elizabeth, Ft. Williams (Portland, Me., Section) and operate under Commander Naval Local Defense Force, 1ND.

NAG-CNAG: (Commander) Northern Air Group, Task Unit 02.1.3 of the Northern Group.

NLDF-CNLDF-LDF: (Commander) Naval Local Defense Force, 1ND, Task Unit 02.1.2 of the Northern Group.

NSLP-CNSLP: (Commander) Northern Ship Lane Patrol, Task Unit 02.1.1 of the Northern Group.

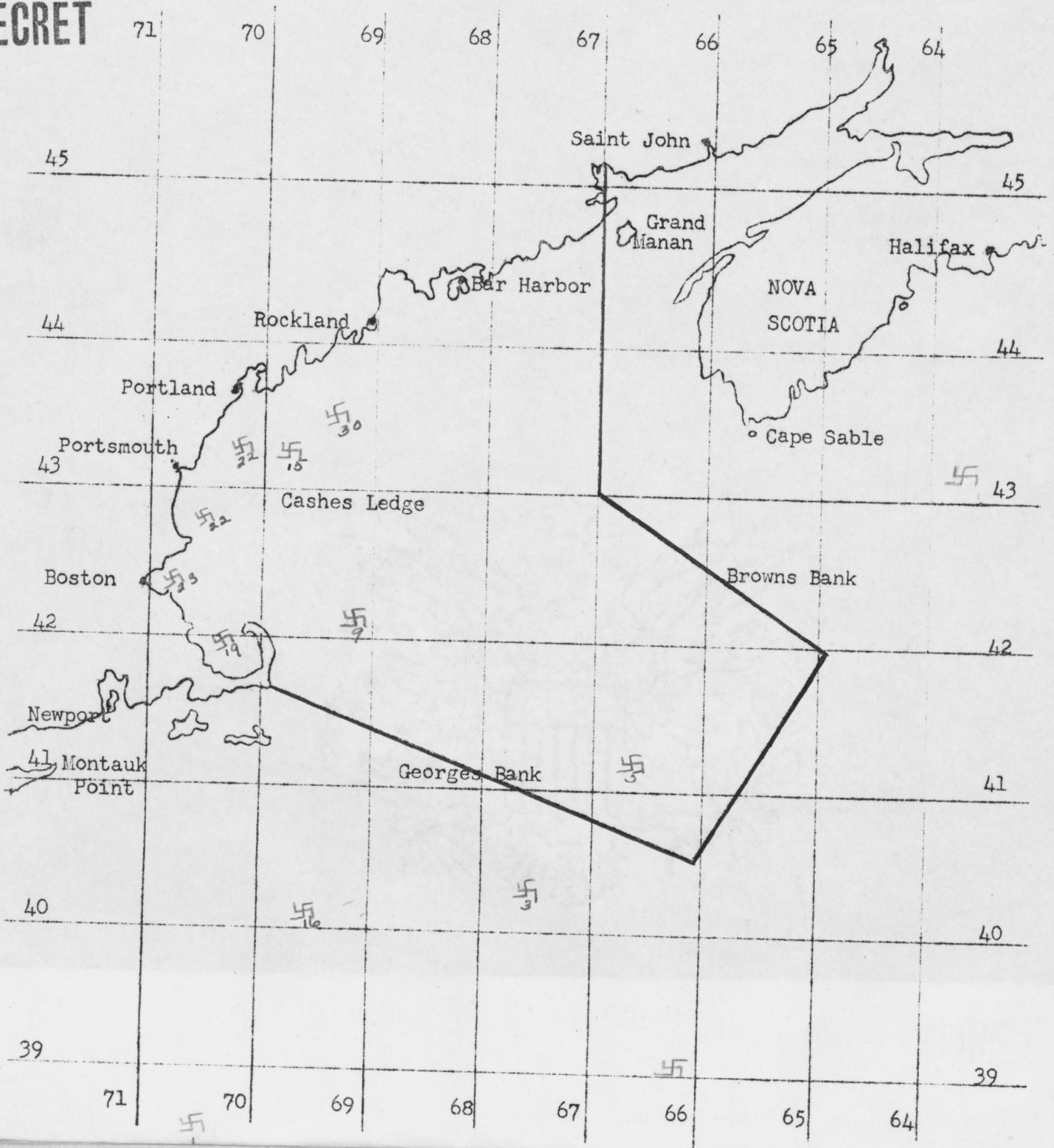
DCO: District Communications Officer.

DCGO: District Coast Guard Officer.

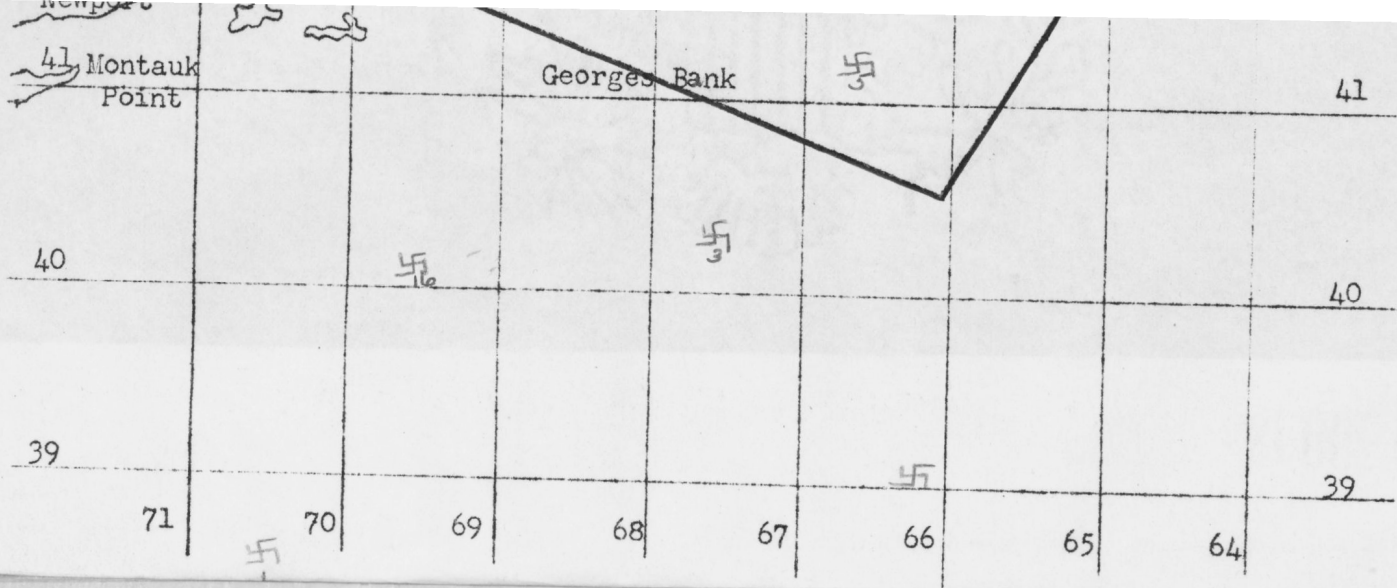
DIO: District Intelligence Officer.

SECRET

SECRET



NORTHERN GROUP CONTACTS, SIGHTINGS, ETC. (Red)



NORTHERN GROUP CONTACTS, SIGHTINGS, ETC. (Red)

(Number corresponds with date.
Evaluation given when available.)

- April 3 - 40-37N, 67-37W - Radar Contact by PEY from Quonset.
 5 - 41-25N, 66-40W - Sound Contact by CAPTOR.
 9 - 42-17N, 69-06W - Contacts & Sightings by Blimps.
 15 - 43-26N, 69-50W - Sound Contact by DD MACOMB.
 16 - 40-07N, 69-24W - Torpedoing of SS PAN-PENNSYLVANIA &
 Subsequent Sinking of U-boat.
 19 - Sub Sighting at Sandwich.
 22 - Sub Sighting off Ipswich .
 - 43-23N, 70-15W - Mousetrap Attack by FIRM (AM-98).
 23 - Boiling Patch of Water Sighted by KINGBIRD.
 30 - 43-41N, 69-30W - Sound Contact by U.S.S. FIERCE.

B-8 DAILY SUBMARINE ESTIMATE. (Blue)

April - Four Enemy U-boats.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - NORTHERN GROUP

APRIL 1944

CHAPTER II

ENEMY ACTIVITY - SUSPICIOUS EVENTS

SECRET

The following events pointing towards the possibility of enemy activity are compiled from the B-8 Daily Submarine Estimates 1ND, the operational intelligence reports of Northern Group Ships, the "Mike" reports of aircraft, the weekly reports submitted by the several Northern Group Task Units, the logs of the Air and Surface Controllers in the Joint Army Navy Operations Office, 150 Causeway Street, Boston, and Enemy Contact Reports whenever such action occurs.

April 3 - Radar Contact by PBY from Quonset.

At 0606 on April 3 a PBY from Quonset reported a radar contact in position 40-37N, 67-37W. The contact which was of a 45 second duration was lost as the craft turned and approached the target. As it was before sunrise, it was rather dark and the visibility was only about 5 miles.

Ships from ZP-11 in Weymouth were airborne around 0830 and a plane from Salem was ordered on a special patrol east of George's Bank.

Since there was no further entry in the Log, it is assumed that the incident didn't develop into anything serious.

April 5 - Sound Contact by CAPTOR.

The CAPTOR, (PYC-40), a vessel attached to the Northern Ship Lane Patrol reported a sound contact in position 41-25N, 66-40W at 1104 on April 5. The echo was solid and metallic and wholly distinct.

Per order of SNG at 1127, Salem had a PBM take off at once to proceed to the area. Her orders were to contact the CAPTOR and then commence a Box and Gambit search.

The following attacks were made by the CAPTOR on good targets:

- 051055 - Contact made - echo solid and metallic - wholly distinct.
- 051100 - Port and starboard K guns fired. #2 impulse charges used. D/C's 300 lb. type. Set for 200 ft. Dropped in 44 fathoms of water. Exploded simultaneously.
- 051107 - Two D/C's dropped.
- 051112 - Two D/C's dropped. Engines stopped to listen for props. Negative.
- 051123 - Two D/C's dropped.
- 051158 - Two D/C's dropped. #3 impulse charges used. Settings changed to 250 ft. Both D/C's failed to explode. It was later found that the depth of water in the particular spot was 34 fathoms.

Following the expenditure of depth charges, continuous runs were made over the target which remained stationary. A sample was taken of oil which had appeared on the surface. In addition, a buoy marker, consisting of two floats, batteries, bulbs, a flag, and heavy anchor, was rigged.

CHAPTER II - ENEMY ACTIVITY - SUSPICIOUS EVENTS. (Continued)

On SNG's order, Surface Controller at 1241 suggested to CESF that they send anything passing by to the assistance of the CAPTOR. CESF stated that nothing but the BUCKLEY was near. Moreover, CESF was unwilling to issue orders until more complete data was forthcoming.

After receiving a dispatch that the CAPTOR had only 2 D/C's left, the FITCH (DD-462) was diverted to the scene at 1450. She arrived at 2350. On the following morning the FITCH was made ComSur. The K-38, CAPTOR, and HARRIET LANE were to assist her in developing the contact.

At 0600 on the 6th a dispatch was released to the FITCH ordering her to drop a pattern to attempt bringing some trace of wreckage to the surface for definite evaluation. The following five patterns were dropped by the DD-462:

- 060700 - Pattern dropped by DD-462.
- 060710 - Pattern dropped by DD-462.
- 070810 - Pattern dropped by DD-462.
- 060820 - Pattern dropped by DD-462.
- 060850 - Pattern dropped by DD-462.

After these patterns were dropped; considerable oil, which was distinctly fuel and not diesel, was brought to the surface. The FITCH was certain that the target was a wreck.

At 0935 the FITCH was released from her duties at the scene of contact and the CAPTOR was made ComSur. At 1503 the K-38 reported "Results all contacts negat - positive wreck - CAPTOR no longer needs us."

Not only the considerable amounts of fuel oil that came to the surface after patterns were dropped indicated a wreck. In addition there was no doppler or hydrophone effect and the echoes were sharp with well defined cut-ons on a stationary target. In several runs fathometer readings over the target were 11 fathoms less than the readings on either side.

The wreck may be that of the SS ALEXANDER MACOMB, torpedoed and sunk in this general area on 3 July 1942. Previous efforts to locate this wreck in its listed position (41-40N, 66-52W) had been unsuccessful.

April 9 - Contacts and Sightings by Blimps.

Between 0830 and 1400 9 April a series of MAD contacts, radar contacts, and possible sighting of an enemy submarine periscope occurred in the vicinity of 42-17N, 69-06W. The details are as follows:

At 0830, the K-11, while escorting the KAWEAH had a fair MAD contact at 42-30N, 69-10W. After four runs the K-11 evaluated its contact as doubtful. At 0920 the K-11 had another contact at 42-35N, 68-46W. This time the craft reported that the contact was developed further. At 1350 on SNG's orders the K-11 resumed her escort. Upon the return of this ship to South Weymouth, the civilian MAD expert studied the scrolls and evaluated both contacts as geological signals.

CHAPTER II - ENEMY ACTIVITY - SUSPICIOUS EVENTS. (Continued)

The K-42 was diverted from the Victor Patrol to develop the K-11's first MAD contact and had negative results. The K-42 reported many whales in the area.

The K-38 on the Oboe Patrol was diverted and instituted a search of the area. This ship reported, "Observed slicks 42-23N, 68-57W - am searching - no contact." At 1358 the Aviation Machinist's Mate, First Class, on the K-38 sighted a small, black cylindrical object 6 to 8 " high above the water and 2 to 3" in diameter. He claimed that the object appeared to be a periscope in as much as he has seen friendly periscopes quite often. He called the pilot's attention to the object, but it disappeared behind the starboard engine before the pilot or any other member of the crew could see it. No motion or wake was observed and no MAD signal was received at the time. The K-38 commenced a clover-leaf MAD search but still had no MAD signal.

At 1700 the K-38 had a radar contact at 42-18N, 69-07W, estimated at 8 miles on the scale. This contact was held four minutes until distance closed to five miles. Upon arrival nothing was found. Visibility varied from one to three miles.

The CAPTOR, GUINEVERE, the SC-686, and YMS-354 with the CAPTOR as ComSur were ordered to the scene and conducted a night search of the area. Results were negative.

A PBM from Salem was sent out on patrol after the sighting, but sighted nothing.

Three DD's: the TRIPPE, RHIND, and WAINWRIGHT searched the area. They had intercepted the message of the periscope sighting and were tracking it down.

At 1310 10 April ZP-11 was allowed to recall all ships because of the high winds. At the same time ESF was also informed of the discontinuance of the sub search by all surface craft.

April 15 - Sound Contact by MACOMB (DD).

At 1010 on 15 April the DD MACOMB had an echo-ranging sound contact in position 43-26N, 69-50W. The MACOMB made two attacks on the contact. SOPA Casco advised that all requisite action had been taken and Comdeslant advised that no assistance was needed from Northern Air Group.

A PV from Hedron #9 in Brunswick was diverted to the scene. Also the FIRM and FIERCE which were two miles west of Monhegan Island were notified.

At 1400 SOPA Casco advised that the sub search had been secured. The incident was evaluated as the S-17 from the Casco area operating in M-2.

April 16 - Torpedoing of SS PAN-PENNSYLVANIA and Subsequent Sinking of U-Boat.

At 0816 16 April the SS PAN-PENNSYLVANIA, 11,017 gross ton U.S. TANKER was torpedoed in position 40-07N, 69-24W while in Convoy CU-21. The tanker, hit in the fire room, subsequently caught fire and

was abandoned. Sixty survivors were reported picked up by the convoy's escort vessels.

Three destroyers escorting the convoy attacked the sub at 1000 in the area of the torpedoing. One destroyer escort, the U.S.S. GANDY, rammed and sank the U-boat. The Captain, two officers, and five men were picked up and made prisoners.

The SAGAMORE, HAZEL, GENERAL GREEN, SC-1338, RESCUE, and HARRIET LANE were sent to the area when the chances for salvage seemed good. A blimp was also diverted to the scene to assist the surface craft.

At 0855 on the 17th these rescue vessels reported that, still burning, the tanker had rolled over with approximately 100 feet of the bow of the tanker still remaining ten feet above water. New York granted permission to sink the capsized PAN PENN by gun fire.

The submarine which torpedoed the tanker and was later sunk is believed to be the submarine which had previously been estimated westbound in the area of 38-00N, 67-30W. Subsequent contacts by surface craft in the vicinity of the sinkings, although evaluated negative, may indicate the presence of a second U-boat patrolling in this area.

April 19 - Sub Sighting at Sandwich.

On April 19 at 0552 the Coast Guard at Sandwich reported an object on the surface some 15 to 20 miles north of Sandwich. The Coast Guard evaluation was a submarine since three signalmen and an Army officer had seen subs and felt certain that the object sighted was a submarine.

A check revealed that no friendly subs were operating in the area. However, the K-10 was diverted to the scene to investigate and make an MAD search. Two planes from Squantum were also sent to assist. The results of all searches were negative and the incident was evaluated as very doubtful. It was thought likely that the object seen was one of the 83-footers on her regular patrol as it could resemble a sub at a distance of 15 miles.

April 22-23 - A Series of Queer Incidents.

An observer from the Ipswich Coast Guard Station reported to DIO at 2000 that he had sighted a tanker about 12 miles northeast of Ipswich. He also saw a sub surfacing at 1925 and again at 1945. He saw it for about five minutes before a plane appeared at which time the sub submerged. Gunfire was noticed and after the submerging of the sub, the observer heard sounds similar to depth charges and the gunfiring continued.

Strangely enough there was no report of either a tanker or a plane in the area. Portsmouth reported only one sub out operating in areas A and B and not firing. The area was investigated by a blimp and the SC-686, but all results were negative.

CHAPTER II - ENEMY ACTIVITY - SUSPICIOUS EVENTS. (Continued)

At 2212 the FIRM (AM-98) sent in a message that she had fired eight mouse traps 8 miles due east of Cape Porpoise and nine miles from the swept channel entrance to Casco. Since the dispatch was sent in plain language, it was assumed that she was attacking her contact. The FIERCE (AM-97) was sent to investigate the area. When further contacts were made the EXPLOIT (AM-95) at the Frontier Base was ordered to the area and Comdeslant despatched the DD-404 RHIND shortly after midnight. At 0800 the following morning 23 April two additional destroyers, the DD-403 TRIPPE and DD-419 WAINWRIGHT were sent to assist in the search. Several contacts were made during the night and all attacks were made by the FIRM with negative results. A summarization of the attacks is listed below:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time (Queen)</u>	<u>No., Type & Settings</u>	<u>Results</u>	<u>Area</u>
Apr. 22	2149	8 - 7.2 Rockets	4 exploded after 6 sec. sinking (approx.)	43-23N 70-15W
Apr. 22	2319	4 - MK VI Depth Charges (2-250; 1-200; 1-100)	All exploded	43-23N 70-12W
Apr. 22	2349	5 - MK VI Depth Charges (2-250; 1-200; 1-150; 1-100)	All exploded	43-23N 70-10W
Apr. 23	0008	4 - MK VI Depth Charges (2-250; 1-200; 1-100)	All exploded	43-23N 70-10W
Apr. 23	0201	6 - MK VI Depth Charges (2-250; 2-200; 1-150; 1-100)	Two exploded	43-21.5N 70-15W

The information relative to the unexploded charges has been forwarded to the Hydrographic Office.

During at least one of the first three attacks doppler effect was noted and good traces were obtained on several runs. Four of the eight rockets launched in the first attack detonated, and during the morning of 23 April, while searching the area, the FIRM launched a second pattern of eight rockets in the same estimated position that the first attack was made, but none of this pattern detonated.

The three destroyers secured from the search at approximately 1400 on 23 April. The Elephant Plan was put into effect and the FIRM and the FIERCE continued to operate in the area with a blimp also searching in the vicinity. Portland had no explanation for the gunfire that was reported by the Coast Guard at Damariscove Island. This gunfire was observed about 20 miles to the Southwest and near Biddeford, gunfire and flares were observed about 15 miles to

the southeast. The search was abandoned at 1000 on 24 April since no further contacts had been made.

In view of all information concerning the patterns dropped and their detonations, the state of the moon and weather conditions, the FIRM's contacts were evaluated as doubtful to possible.

At 0945 on 23 April a report was received from the CG-38696 which reported sighting alternating red, green, and white lights at 2225 the night before coming from a light about six feet in diameter. This light was observed for twenty minutes during which time the colors reversed to white, green, and red. The boat secured a fix on the light. Search revealed nothing.

At 0900 on 23 April a boiling patch of water about 15' in diameter was reported by the KINGBIRD. This patch which was between Graves Light and the Exam Vessel lasted for two minutes. There were no reports from hydrophones, sound buoys, or loops. Investigation disclosed no sewerage exit and the Commanding Officer of the KINGBIRD claimed it was not a school of fish.

At the same time HECF was ordered to close the gate, 1008, the station was also ordered to divert the nearest loop ships to the scene to conduct a sound search. When informed, SNG ordered a plane followed by a blimp to the scene at once. As the Nut Island Gate was ordered closed, the AMb-1 and YP-409 were ordered to the area. The Army reported that the 90 MM batteries at Fort Dawes and Fort Revere had been alerted.

A thorough search by all units sent to the scene showed nothing suspicious in the area. HECF reopened the gate at 1315.

April 30 - Sound Contact by FIERCE.

The AM-97 FIERCE patrolling Sectors one and two reported a doubtful sound contact at 1510 on 30 April, position given as Lat. 43°41N, Long. 69°30W, 10 miles southwest of Monhegan Island. The vessel continued to search the area for several hours but no further contacts were made.

In the Canadian coastal area a U-boat is currently estimated in each of these positions:

1. Homeward bound east of Sable Island.
2. Possibility patrolling between Cape Sable and Sable Island.
3. Near 39-00N, 66-00W bound southwest.
4. Homeward bound near 36-00N, 70-00W.