

CMH NEWSLETTER

The Official Publication of the Colorado Military Historians

Volume I, Number I

October 1966

Members of the CMH!! This is YOUR newsletter. It will be only as good as YOU make it. Wargame reports are fine but are of interest mainly to those who directly participated in the game. How many books have you read this month? It's probably safe to say a total of 15 to 20 by all members combined, yet our book section is void. Some other things we should have but don't, include information on uniforms, flags, military organization, unit histories, vehicles; planes, artillery and other ordnance, etc., etc., etc., I'm certain the bull sessions before and after our October meeting will be filled with literally hundreds of such interesting items. The problem is that only two or three people will hear your gems of wisdom. Let everyone in on it. Put these things on paper and submit them for inclusion in this letter. This is also your opportunity to express your opinions about club policy and make comments or additions to programs of previous meetings or articles appearing in the newsletters. This letter should be your best and most permanent means of communication to ALL your fellow members. Get with it!

Your Editor & Staff.

Following is a summary of the coming years programs and meeting dates. Mark your calendars and plan to attend them all.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Program By:</u>
Oct.	4	"The Will of Zeus, The Wrath of Jupiter"	500BC-500AD T. Richards
Nov.	1	"When Knighthood Was In Flower"	500AD-1500 M. Kuhis
Dec.	6	"The Flautist General"	1500-1790 R. Black
Jan.	3	"The Sun of Austerlitz"	1790-1815 R. Jones
Feb.	7	"The Industrial Revolution"	1815-1914 R. Moore
Mar.	7	"Goodbye to All That"	1914-1920 E. Meyers
Apr.	7	"Blitzkrieg"	1930-1945 D. Jones
May.	2	"Friend or Foe"	1945-Present To be announced
Jun.	6	"Seminar"	Summary Entire Members.

MOVIES & BOOKS

MOVIE REVIEW BY AUSTIN MOORE

KHARTOUM (Cooper Theater). The movie "Khartoum" is a current Cinema extravaganza about the defense of a city of 30,000 in the Egyptian Sudan by British General Charles Gordon in 1883. The main part is played by Charlton Heston and the villain, The Mahdi is portrayed by Laurence Olivier.

The picture depicts several exciting battle scenes and is a glory to behold for uniform addicts of the Colonial Period. Included are a brief rundown and colorful shots of the Camel Corps, British Infantry, Colonial Infantry and Cavalry.

The British withdrawal from the Sudan after pacification, led to the uprising of a leader that claimed to be in direct communication with Mohammed. When the upper Nile Valley was threatened, General Gordon after an absence of five years, returned to lead his adopted people against the foe. The British government did not want to become involved in a full scale military operation and political foot-dragging and a slow military reaction delayed the relief of Khartoum until after the siege was successful. The movie ends here.

Fifteen years later, the British did mount a strong reprisal that resulted in the extinction of 11,000 followers of the Mahdi including even their descendants.

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MOVIE REVIEW BY ROBERT JONES

BLUE MAX (Esquire Theater). The Blue Max is a medal given to Germans in the first World War very much like our Medal of Honor. The movie is about a certain young German pilot, who comes from humble origins, and sets about acquiring this medal no matter what it takes, by fair means or foul. So armed with a Pfalz D-III, and his steadfast intent, he goes about Blue Max collectin. In the process of getting this medal he responsible for the death of at least a dozen people, claims aircraft "kills" made by others, seduces the General's wife, and in the meantime becomes, by the cynical machinations of certain brass hats, a national hero, a political liability, and number-one man on his fellow pilot's "black-list".

Though the basic story line has some good potential it is never fully realized thanks to some what weak performances from the two leads, George Peppard as the young pilot, Stachel, and Ursula Andress (un-dress?) as the General's wife. There is much about the film; however, that makes it well worth seeing. James Mason, back in a general

uniform, gives a definitive portrayal of the decay of the German General Staff as they frantically struggled to stave off defeat. Jeremy Benthan, as Stachel's squadron leader, gives a very human warmth to his character, attempting to show that many Germans were just and honorable in their actions, and not robots that delight in warfare. Hans Karl Vogler, in the role of a German ace, who Stachel envies and jealously admires because he has received the Blue Max, gives delicious twists of sardonic humor that make his portrayal memorable.

But the high point of the film is undoubtedly the action photography. This reviewer has never seen so many beautiful and exciting aerial shots. By combining ground-based with helicopter-borne cameras, the film has provided the audience with a swirl of color and azure vistas that are superb. The distant tic-tic-tic of machine guns, the towering cumulus clouds, the slow and elegant maneuverings of insect-like aircraft made of canvas and baling wire, and the billowing red explosion of a barrage balloon, truly goggle the viewer.

* * * * *

The World's Greatest Battle with Sharks

by Thomas Herman

From SHARK, Collier Books, New York, 1963.

The USS Indianapolis played a distinctive part in the Second World War. Its most important mission was its speed run across the Pacific to deliver the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The bomb was delivered to the Pacific Island of Tinian and, still under sealed orders, the Indianapolis proceeded alone to Leyte.

Shortly after midnight on June 29, 1945, two Jap torpedoes slammed into the side of the big cruiser, sending her to the bottom in a matter of minutes. Being on a speed run all life boats had been lashed down tightly, and there had been no time to cut them free before the ship sank. Nearly nine hundred men in life jackets went into the water, and about three hundred went down with the ship.

Unknown to the survivors, the mission of the Indianapolis was so secret that no distress message had been sent. Furthermore she was not even listed as overdue for days or even weeks, because the rest of the fleet didn't know she was in the area.

The men were in the water less than an hour when a shark fin cleaving the water's surface was spotted. The crew's fight for survival had just begun.

By sundown of the first day large numbers of sharks were on the scene. There were wounded, and a few dead in the water. Some of the men had cuts and scratches which contributed to the blood in the water.

In the fading light the men watched the sharks cruise about in the area. Hoping there was safety in numbers, the men formed tight groups to hold the sharks at bay. When one of the uninvited guests did come close, the men nearest him would shout and pound the water with their arms. This scheme worked at times and the shark would draw back. More often though, the shark had singled out his victim and no amount of shouts or pounding water would turn him away. There would be a piercing scream and the water would be churned red as the shark ripped his victim apart.

By the next morning the number of survivors had been decreased by about a hundred men. To make things worse, some of the men were beginning to go mad from thirst. One man fancied that a stream of fresh water flowed about twelve feet below the surface of the water. He peeled out of his life jacket and went down for a drink and others followed. Only a few came back to the surface and those that did died of convulsions caused from drinking the salt water. Now and then a man thought he saw an island in the distance and he would start to swim for the imaginary island. Usually he was dragged below the surface by sharks shortly after he left the group.

Always the sharks were there. The constant chafing of clothing and life jacket belts rubbed raw sores on the men's bodies. Sometimes a man appeared to have gone to sleep and when someone would reach over to awaken him, the body would upend and to the horror of the living, it would be out in half just below the waist.

On and on the torture continued. Men were dying of thirst, committing suicide or being devoured by sharks at the rate of about a hundred men in twenty-four hours. High flying patrol bombers passed over the group on rare occasions, but the crew never saw the men of the USS Indianapolis.

On the fifth day the group of men were spotted by a Lockheed Ventura. Late that afternoon a PBY came down out of the sky and began to pick up survivors. It was joined a short while later by the Destroyer Escort, USS Cecil G. Doyle and the rescue for just a few hours short of five days and nights. The rescue was completed near sundown, and there were three hundred and fifty survivors remaining.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTE ON BATTLESHIP CHART

Eleven of the 12 Japanese BB's were sunk during W.W. II, of which 10 were sunk by U.S. Naval Forces. War losses are as follows: Mutsu, Internal Explosion, Inland Sea, 8 June 1943; Hiei and Kirishima, Battle of Guadalcanal, 13-15 November 1943; Fuso, Musashi, and Yamashiro, Battle of Leyte Gulf, 23-26 October 1944; Kongo, East China Sea by Aircraft, 7 April 1945; and Yaruna, Hyuga, and Iso, Kure Naval Base by Carrier Air, 28 July 1945. Nagato, the sole survivor, was used in the U.S. Atomic Bomb Tests at Bikini in 1947.

JAPANESE BATTLESHIPS OF W.W. II by Thomas Herman

Ships	Built	Tonnage (approx.)	Speed	Armament (Guns & Torpedo tubes)	Armour (approx.) Belt	Turret Deck
Yamato & Musashi	1941	72,400	30	9-18.1", 8-6.1", 6-5", 12-3" No tubes	16"	16" 7.5"
Mutsu (Mutsu)	1921	32,500	26	8-16", 20-5.5", 6-5", 4 tubes	13"-12"	14" 3.5"-7"
Nagato	1920	35,000	27	8-16", 20-5.5", 8-5", 4 tubes	13"-12"	14" 3.5"-7"
Hyuga & Ise	1916 1917	29,900	23	12-14", 18-5.5", 8-5", 4 tubes	12"-8"	12" 6.75" (?)*
Fuso (Fuso) & Yamashiro	1915	29,900	22.5	12-14", 16-6", 8-5", 2 tubes	12"-8"	12" 6.75" (?)*
Kirishima, Haruna, Hiei, & Kongo	1915 1913 1914 1913	29,330	26	8-14", 16-6", 8-5", 4 tubes	11"-6"	9" 6.75"

* The Kongo Class (Kirishima, Haruna, Hiei, Kongo) ships had 4" of armour added to the 2.75" deck, when they were modernized. Maybe this was done to all their ships? Because our source indicates a 6.75" deck on all the older ships.

WAR GAME REPORTS

THE DIPLOMACY GAME 13 September 66
by Robert Jones

Country	Diplomat	Number of units at the end of the game
1. Germany	Prince Robert	Nine
2. France	Dauphin Michael	Eight
3. Russia Tie	Tsar Richards	Six
3. Italy Tie	Il Duce Duncan	Six
4. Turkey	Emin Herman	Three
5. England	Sir Winston Freelove	Two
6. Austria-Hungary	Arch Duke Edgar	Nil (Kaput)

This was not a game for the weak of spirit or dull of wit. Almost immediately treaties and counter treaties were filling the air with odor of Guano. Austria-Hungary, that pathetic polyglot empire, flailed about in a frantic manner for some sort of pact with Turkey against Russia or Russia against Turkey. All he got was a mutual non-aggression pact with that friend of the down-trodden, Germany.

All other nations regarded Austria-Hungary as rather much of a Buda-Pest. France and Germany, much to the fury of Great Britain, settled their differences.

But the Diplomatic coup of the Evening was the signing of a mutual non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia. This enabled Russia to concentrate her forces in the Balkans (woe, to Austria-Hungary & Turkey). Russia smiled benignly as Germany gradually absorbed Scandinavia. France and Germany split the Low-land countries of Holland and Belgium, the former to Germany and the latter to France.

Germany seeing the imminent collapse of Austria-Hungary, gobbled up Vienna. After this step in the back by its former ally, Austria-Hungary ceased to exist as a political force. Archduke Edgar, last of the Hapsburgs, said that all the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Hungary-Hungary together again. Italy, under Il Duce Duncan, picked up some of the pieces of the Austrian-Hungarian jig-saw puzzle and also a few chunks of the Balkan Peninsula. Turkey slipped in Greece. Tsar Richards of Russia was occupied with Turkey after being convinced by Robert of Germany, that after all Turkey was the real culprit. It was time for Russia to get it in the back. Instead of the Iron Cross, Prince Robert gave the Tsar the Double Cross. When the smoke cleared, Prince Robert was heard to remark: Sieg Heil! Ein Reich, Ein Volk, Ein Fuehrer! Everyone from St. Petersburg to Belgium and from Vienna to Norway cringed at the thought that Empires are built on such duplicity.

BATTLE OF SAVANGER 11 September 1966
by Thomas Herman

The German destroyers Narvik and Galster were surprised and attacked by two U.S. Destroyers about 30 miles southeast of Savanger, Norway.

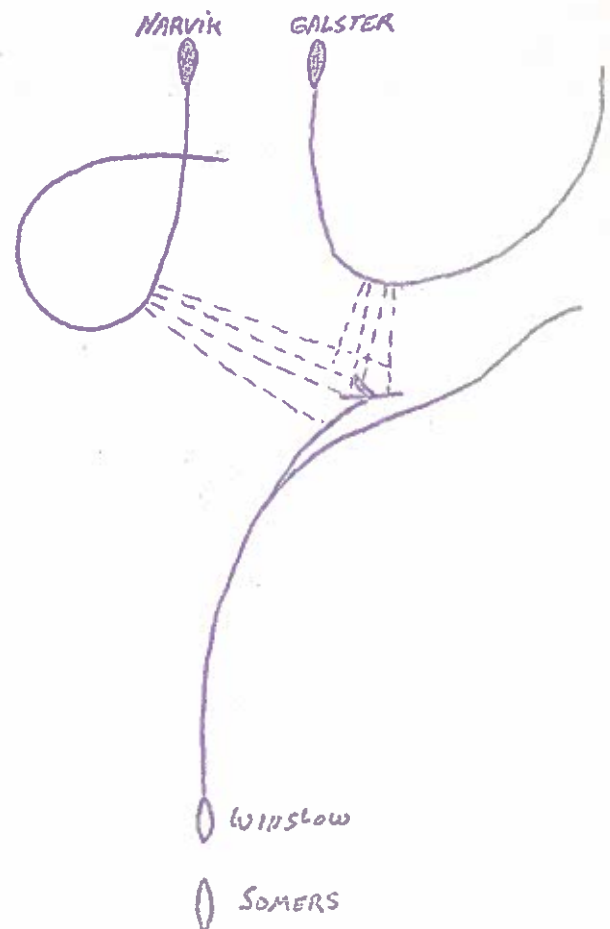
The American commander, Captain T.E. Herman, attacked in column, the USS Winslow leading, followed by the USS Somers. Gross Admiral Kuhls immediately split his force to the left and right catching the Americans in a crossfire of torpedoes. Both the U.S. ships were in danger of being sunk, so Captain Herman sacrificed the Winslow to save the Somers. Six torpedoes slammed into the Winslow.

After the loss of the Winslow, Somers pursued and pounded the 8,500 point Galster with telling 5 inch salvos, inflicting 5,000 points damage.

The Galster undoubtedly would have been sunk, had not the Narvik doubled back and reengaged Somers. After a furious exchange of gunfire in which Narvik lost nearly 4,000 of its 8,050 points, the Germans withdrew from the battle leaving the scared Somers (67%) damaged in possession of the field.

ANALYSIS: The American commander made a tactical blunder that almost cost him two ships. The sacrifice of the Winslow appeared to be the only reasonable solution to the problem. Knowing that the Winslow was going to be sunk, the Winslow should have fired all its remaining torpedoes.

After sinking the Winslow the German ships were in excellent condition, with only minor damage. But after inflicting heavy damage on the Somers, both German ships had lost respectively two and three 5 inch guns, and their maximum speeds were down to 12 & 20 knots. The Germans were mistaken by keeping his force split to fight the surviving ships. With his force split so far apart, the German should have withdrawn from the battle or better yet, regrouped before fighting the lone American in the manner he did, the German ended with only a half victory, if not defeated.



USS ALASKA: The Jolly Green Giant 25 Sept. ,66
By: Richard T Moore

A German Task Force comprising of two 8" gun cruisers, Prinz Eugen and Seydlitz set sail from Brest on a mission of commerce raiding and to panic the thinly spread British Navy. The force was accompanied by the Vichy-French Super (45 knot) Destroyer Fantasque and a "T" type German Torpedo Boat. The German force was surprised by the new 12" gunned battlecruiser USS Alaska which was on a shakedown cruise in Mid-Atlantic. Accompanying the Alaska were the destroyers USS Porter and the USS Sumner.

The Prinz Eugen and Fantasque attempted to get around the left flank of the American force, while the Seydlitz and T-1 made a head on attack. The obvious strategy was to get the Alaska in a cross-fire of torpedoes. The U S Commander, realizing the purpose of this maneuver, dispatched the Sumner to the left on a torpedo attack and directed the fire of the Alaska also to the threatened left flank. The Fantasque was forced to retire from battle almost immediately due to 4" hits.

Prinz Eugen in order to avoid the Sumners torpedoes, turned a hard left. This maneuver allowed the Alaska to cross the "T" of the Eugen and rake it's deck with two full broadsides, sinking it.

While this action was happening on the flank, the Seydlitz was closing the American force from the front, scoring a few points. The T-1 charged the Alaska, but was immediately smothered by 5 inch shells from the destroyers Sumner and Porter.

With the Eugen, Fantasque and T-1 either sinking or fleeing, the Alaska turned her big 12 inchers on the Seydlitz. Kaptain Herman tried to retire but in turning, presented his deck to be raked by the Alaska. In short order the Seydlitz joined Eugen in the deep six.

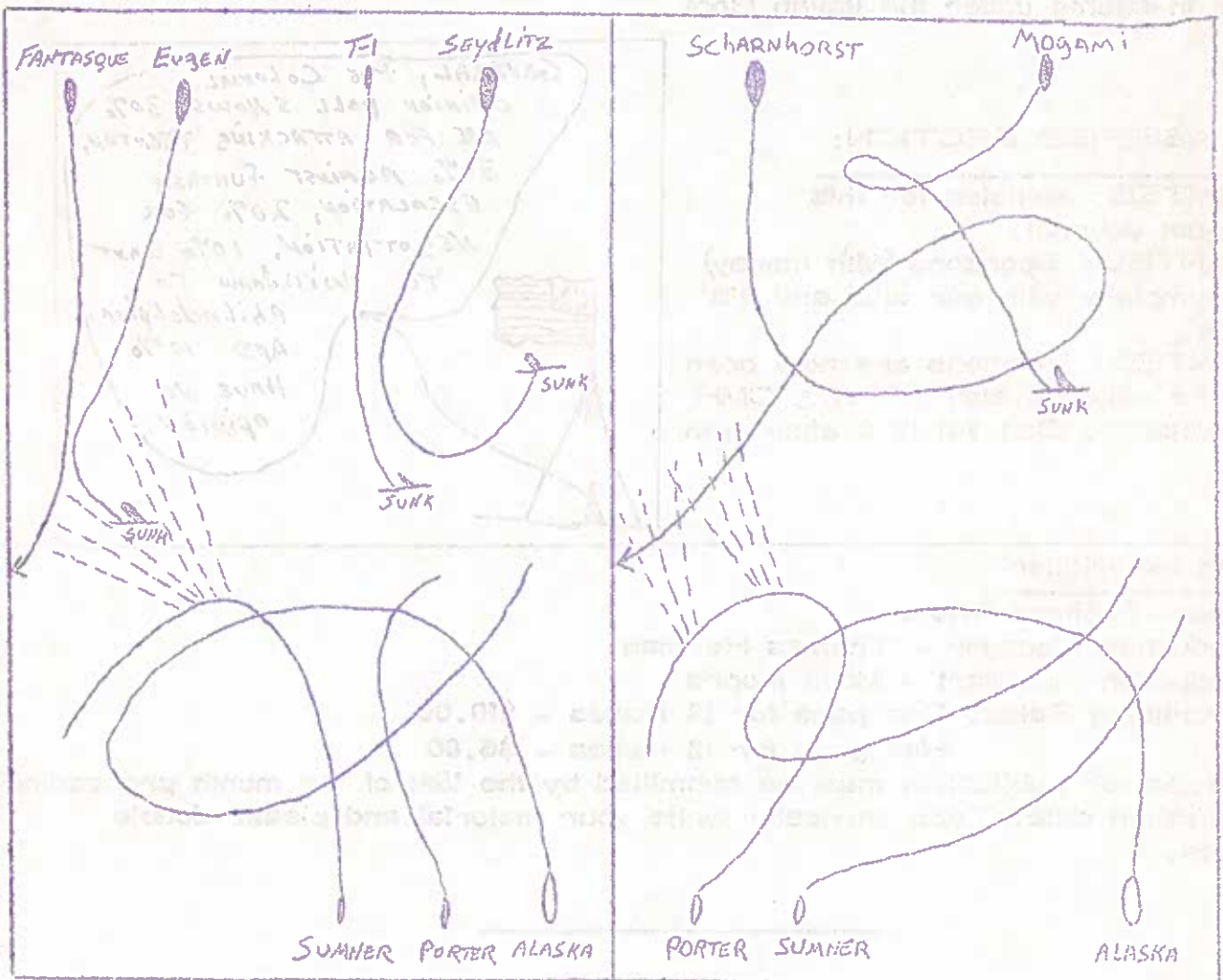
Cross Admiral Raeder on hearing the fate of the Prinz Eugen and Seydlitz insisted for revenge. Immediately he dispatched the pride of the German surface fleet, the heavily armored 11" gunned Scharnhorst in company with the Japanese 8" heavy cruiser Mogami. This rash American, too green to save bannocks worth the name, could not be allowed to escape.

The forces met. Scharnhorst and Alaska kept their distance and traded long shots for a considerable period causing minimal damage. Seeing the Alaska turn away the Scharnhorst bore in to the left flank. This was the opening the American Commander had been waiting for and he directed the Porter to attack with torpedoes. The torpedo spread gave Kaptain Kuhls of Scharnhorst two choices - take at least two torpedoes or turn away and leave the battle. Kuhls retreated leaving the Mogami to face the giant alone. The Mogami made a spirited but futile torpedo attack and was sunk for the effort. Of the twenty four torpedoes launched by the Axis ships, one caught the stern of Alaska causing the only substantial damage of the battle to the

The USS Alaska entered the Atlantic Green and sailed home a giant.
 The Commander emerged a brilliant tactician, dead-eye gunner and was
 heard to shout as he headed for home- Ho.Ho.Ho. what is new!

<u>First Battle</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Points at Start</u>	<u>Points Lost</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Points at Start</u>	<u>Points Lost</u>
	Prinz Eugen	61,000	61,000	Alaska	129,000	129,000
	Seydlitz	61,000	61,000	Porter	10,300	3,200
	Fantasque	10,700	6,000	Sumner	9,900	8,400
	T-1	3,300	3,300			
	Total	136,000	131,300	Total	149,200	24,500

<u>Second Battle</u>	<u>Axis</u>	<u>Points at Start</u>	<u>Points Lost</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Points at Start</u>	<u>Points Lost</u>
	Scharnhorst	163,000	26,000	Alaska	129,000	40,000
	Mogami	39,000	39,000	Porter	10,300	
				Sumner	9,900	2,600
	Total	202,000	65,000	Total	149,200	42,600



OPPONENTS WANTED: { American Navy, Lion & Vanguard Class Battleships need not apply }

From: Italian Naval Ministry

To: British Admiralty

If Duce wishes to challenge the British Naval forces of the Mediterranean to a duel to the death. Because of your failure to appear on 23 August '66, we pledge that our German allies will offer only token assistance by the presence of Baron Von Kuhl, Ensign, (Ret.).

This is your chance to restore your lost honor, AND see the Italian Navy fight. Italy now has a tremendous leader which they borrowed from the Japanese, Tomashiro Hermamoto. He has rekindled the famous Italian fighting spirit, vowing to restore the boundaries of the first Roman Empire.

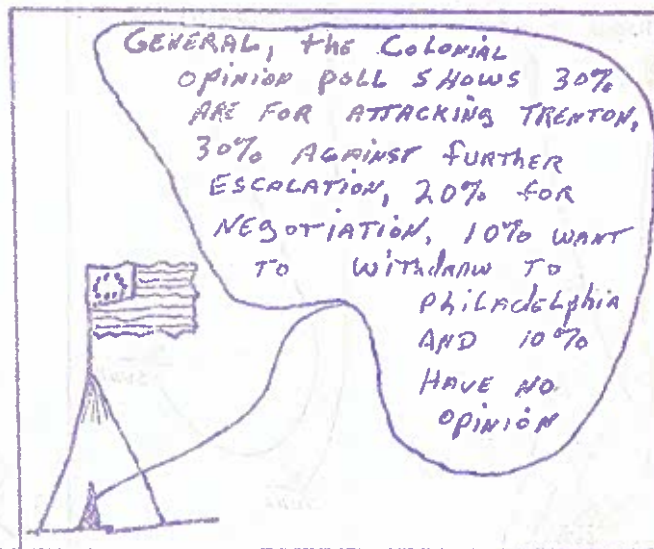
In the past you have had the gall to accuse the Italians of cowardice. Now you must stand and fight in the true British tradition or forever live in shame under the Italian Boot.

CLASSIFIED SECTION:

WANTED: Articles for this August Journal.

WANTED: Sponsors (with money) in sympathy with our club and its aims

WANTED: Positions are now open on the editorial staff of the CMH Newsletter. Call 761-1778 after 5pm



Cmh Newsletter

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Articles for publication must be submitted by the 15th of the month preceeding publication date. Type or neatly write your material and please double space.