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22 Sep 1943

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT:

1. Originally six destroyers were to be equipped to launch and recover aircraft. Putting on this equipment results in the loss of:

- 1 5-inch 38 calibre gun.
- 1 quintuple torpedo tube.
- 2 40 MM twin mounts.
- 3 20 MM guns.

2. The launching and recovery gear for these destroyers, after the first test, had to be redesigned. For that reason the first three destroyers of the class were sent to the Pacific without the gear but with their original armament. Of the next three, the STEVENS and HALFORD have the gear on board and have operated in the Pacific with it, and the LEUTZE, the last ship, is scheduled to be delivered in March, 1944.

3. The STEVENS and HALFORD have been given operational tests and training in the Pacific under Commander Aircraft Pacific, who has recommended that launching and recovery gear be removed from these destroyers and their offensive armament reinstalled. The Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet has approved this recommendation.

4. The unsatisfactory performance of these aircraft carrying destroyers arises from these facts:

- (a) A plane can be catapulted only to starboard and recovered by cast method only to port. This definitely restricts the operation of the destroyer.
- (b) A destroyer does not have sufficient bulk to make a slick of long enough duration to permit a satisfactory cast recovery.

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Subject: Aircraft on Destroyers - Removal of.

- (c) Because a destroyer rolls heavily in a seaway it is necessary for it to head into the sea and this in most instances requires the plane to approach the ship across wind.
- (d) The value of the plane is not commensurate with the armament lost.

5. In view of the above and to increase the offensive power of the destroyers in the Pacific Theater I recommend that aircraft and launching and recovery gear be removed from the STEVENS and HALFORD and not be installed on the LEUTZE and that in lieu thereof the guns and torpedo tubes be installed and that the other three ships of this class continue to carry their present armament.

E. J. KING.

*x18-R*

September 27, 1943.

O.K.

F.D.R.

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