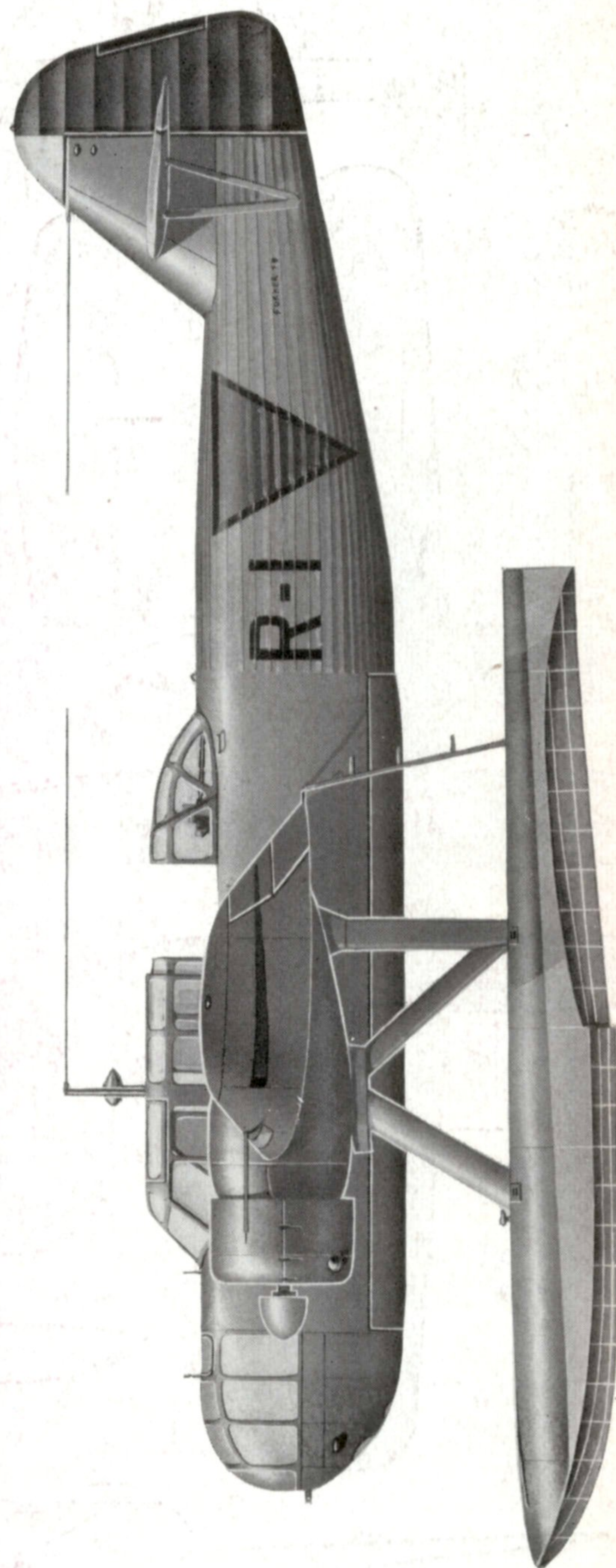


**PROFILE
PUBLICATIONS**

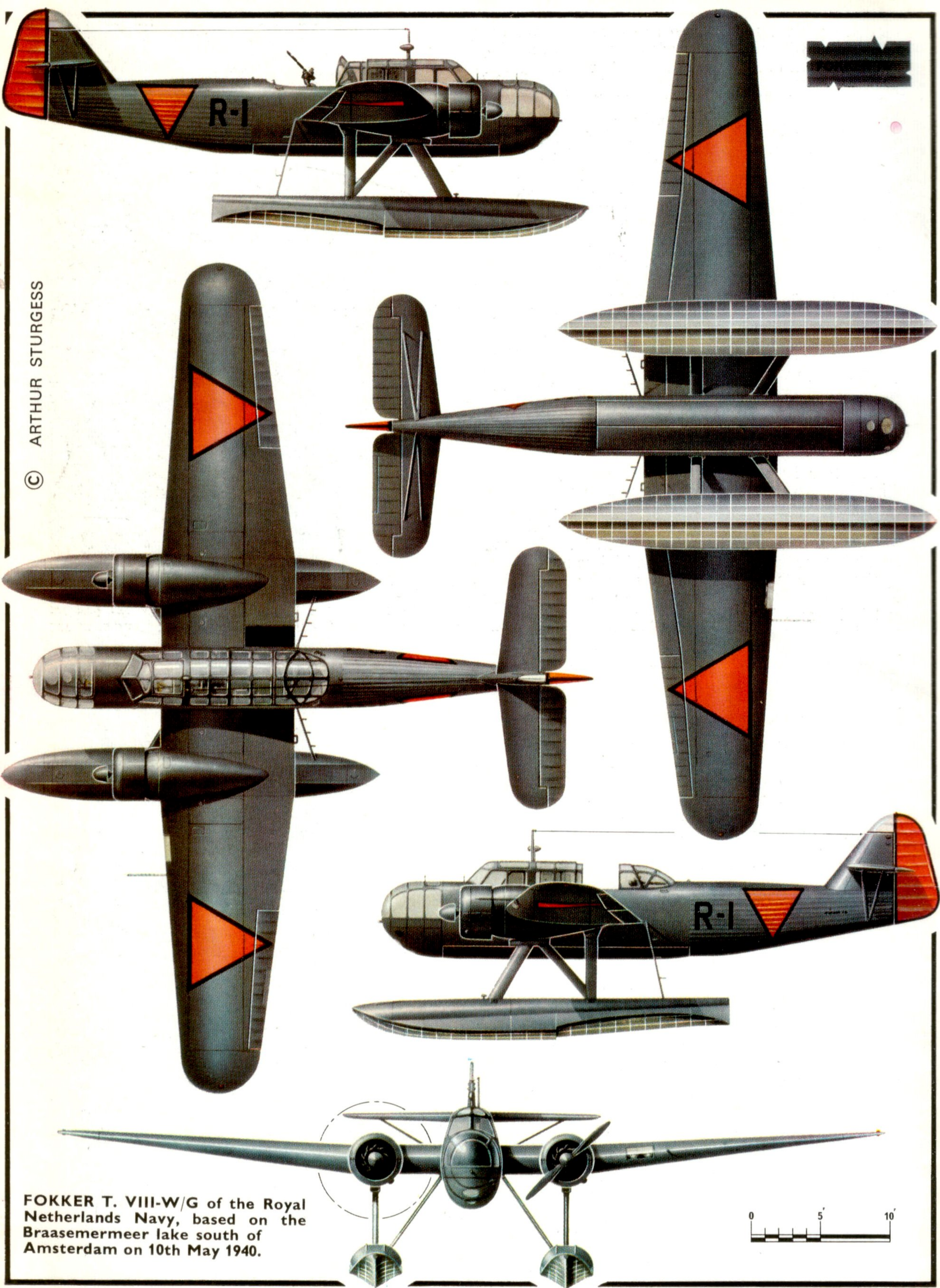
The
Fokker
T.VIII

NUMBER

176

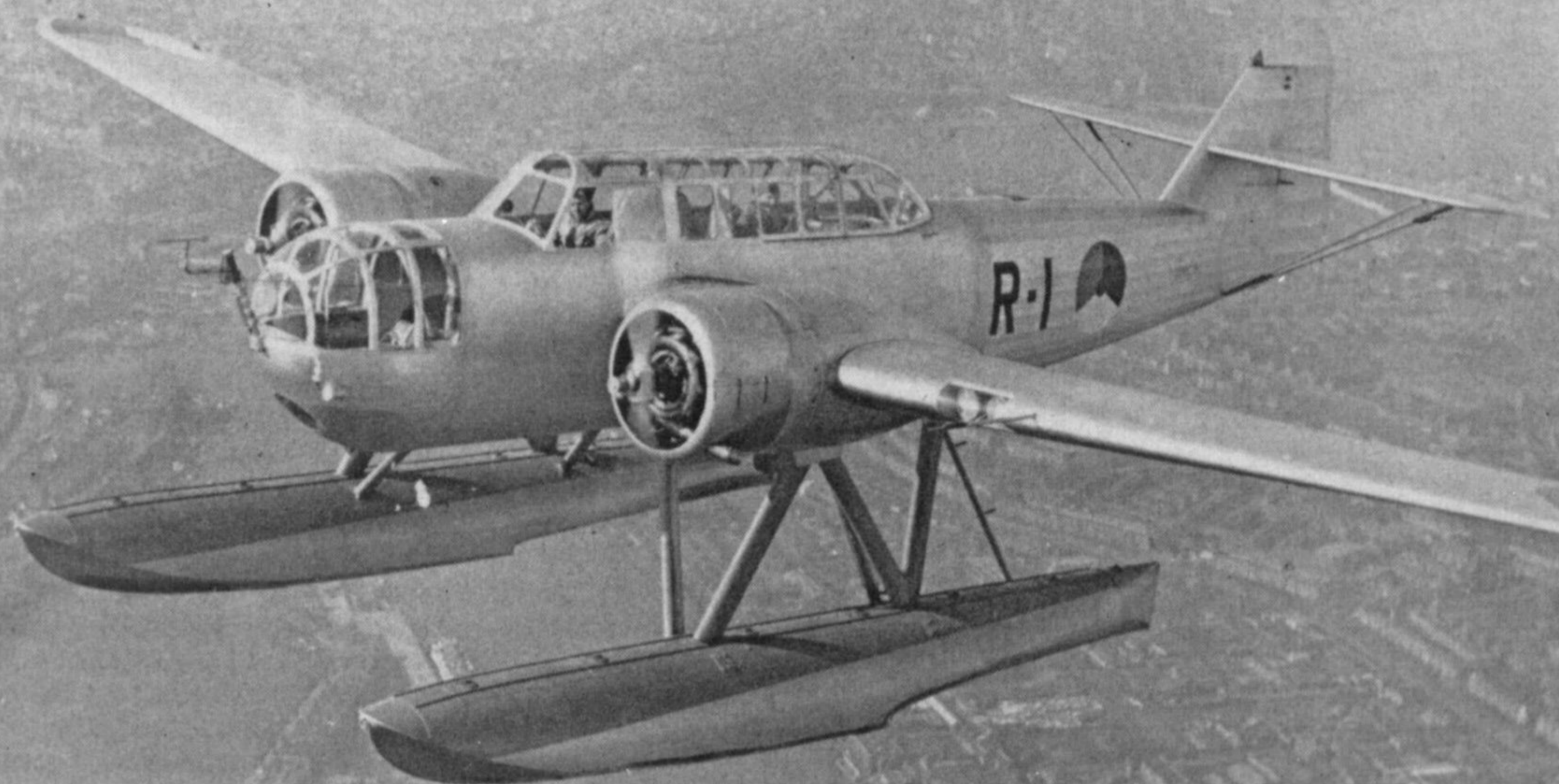


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FOKKER T. VIII-W/G of the Royal Netherlands Navy, based on the Braasemermeer lake south of Amsterdam on 10th May 1940.

The Fokker T.VIII



by B. van der Klaauw

The first T.VIII-W in flight over Amsterdam; the excrescence on the nose houses test instrumentation. (Unless otherwise stated all photographs in this Profile are from the Thijs Postma collection).

In the early thirties the growing world crisis had its repercussions on many aspects of life in the Netherlands—as in almost every country in the world—and defence was one of them. Each year only very limited funds were made available for military procurement because some groups in Parliament, especially the Socialist Party, fiercely opposed any increase in defence spending, considering these unjustified under the very arduous economic conditions prevailing at that time. Consequently, all Dutch military forces had to carry on with their already obsolete equipment, the funds allocated being just sufficient for the acquisition of the necessary spare parts and a very limited number of modernisations.

This situation was particularly serious for the air components of the Army and Navy, the replacement of quickly deteriorating equipment being necessary but at the same time almost impossible. But in those same years something was going on beyond the Eastern frontier that would finally change the situation and create a much more favourable climate in the Dutch Parliament. Hitler seized power in Germany and almost at once started building up strong military forces. Although initially many people in Holland simply would not believe that all this would lead to a

new World War, they gradually changed their minds and more money ultimately became available for the procurement of military equipment, especially for new aircraft.

At that time one of the requirements of the Dutch Navy was for a coastal defence and reconnaissance aircraft on floats, carrying bombs or a torpedo. Although torpedoes were in the pre-war days always considered too much of a luxury and only wooden dummies were made available for test drops, there was a considerable interest in this kind of weapon after initial launching tests with a Fokker C.V. landplane had yielded very successful results. (The so-called torpedo-carrying aircraft, the twin-engined Fokker T.IV, of which 24 were built which were mostly used in the Dutch East Indies, never actually carried any torpedo armament.) However, in 1937 the Dutch naval staff considered that the time had come to order a new twin-engined floatplane from Fokker which could carry a torpedo internally, eventually to be replaced by a number of bombs. This order was placed in 1938 and the aircraft received the Fokker designation T.VIII-W.

The initial order was for five aircraft and the specification stated that the aircraft was in the first place intended for coastal defence. For that purpose

R-1, the first production machine, was delivered to the Dutch Navy after serving as the series prototype. When the German invasion of the Netherlands began on 10th May it was flown to Scheveningen to pick up members of the Dutch Government and fly them to safety in England. During the flight the floats were damaged by gunfire from a German aircraft and although R-1 landed safely a cross-Channel flight was out of the question. Rapidly repaired at the Fokker plant, it was flown with other T.VIII-W aircraft in the early hours of 14th May to Boulogne, and later to Cherbourg. On the collapse of France it finally made the flight to England; allotted the serial AV958 it served from Pembroke Dock with No. 320 (Dutch) Sqn., R.A.F. until the autumn of 1940. It was eventually destroyed in a forced landing near Sudbury in Suffolk after running out of fuel on a patrol flight.



Two further views of R-1 during evaluation early in 1939; the lower photo is of interest in showing the Dutch polder landscape to advantage.



it was to have a high speed and great range, enabling it to fly far out over the sea to meet the enemy and to make long reconnaissance flights. Moreover it was to have a large payload capacity for the carriage of the torpedo or the bomb load. A crew of three was specified and two engines of 400-700 h.p. were to give it a maximum speed of 175 m.p.h.

The first T.VIII-W was ready to make its test flights early in 1939 and the entire batch of five was completed by 1st June of that year. Although there proved to be some "teething" troubles the Navy was so satisfied with the aircraft that a further batch of 26 was ordered. Most of these were intended for service



On the outbreak of the Second World War, the T.VIII-W's were painted grey overall. (Above) R-2 wearing the Dutch roundel and (below) moored on the Braasemermeer with a sister machine. The orange triangle marking has been painted over the roundel.



in the East Indies as replacement for the old T.IV aircraft but none of them ever reached the Far East. In September 1939, war broke out in Europe.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE T.VIII-W

The T.VIII-W was built in two versions. In the late thirties Fokker was about to change from its well-known mixed construction to all-metal construction and a new type of bomber had been developed for the Netherlands East Indies Army, to replace the 120-odd Martin bombers. This bomber, the T.IX, was built entirely of metal but because of the war did not proceed beyond the prototype stage. This also applied to the revolutionary D.XXIII fighter, which was also of all-metal construction. Thus it was logical to suppose that the new torpedo aircraft should be of metal construction, but at that time Fokker was not yet in a position to build up a production line for large metal aircraft within the desired time limits; thus it was decided that the initial batches of the new aircraft should be built in the old way and that a switch to all-metal production should be made at a later stage.

Consequently, the first aircraft had a fuselage built in three parts. The front part was a dural monocoque construction. The central part was of all-wooden construction and built as one unit with the wing, which was also built entirely of wood. Much care was taken to make the wing entirely watertight. The rear part of the fuselage was built of steel tubes and fabric covered, as were the tailplanes. Finally, the floats were made of dural and consisted of six watertight compartments.

The fuselage nose, which featured large plexiglass windows, accommodated the observer, who had a bomb aiming panel in the floor in front of him. Behind him was the cockpit in which the pilot sat on the left side, almost in line with the wing leading edge and just behind the line of the airscrews. Immediately behind him sat the wireless operator who also could man the movable rear gun on a retractable mounting. A second machine-gun was mounted in a fixed position on the port side of the fuselage and operated by the pilot. The torpedo or the bombs were carried in a hold below the wing centre section, which had hydraulically operated doors. A total bomb load of 1,330 lbs. could be carried. Fuel tanks with a total capacity of 1,000 litres were placed in the wing between the two main spars, the oil tanks being placed behind the firewalls within the engine mountings. The engines were 425 h.p. Wright Whirlwind radials, driving two-bladed airscrews.

The version of the T.VIII-W described above, which received the full designation T.VIII-W/G (from the Dutch word "Gemengd", "Mixed"), was produced in a quantity of 19 aircraft for the Royal Netherlands Navy, and these were allocated the serial numbers R-1 to R-19. They were followed on the production line by a second version, which was of all-metal construction and was designated T.VIII-W/M ("Metal"). Of this version the Dutch Navy ordered twelve aircraft which were intended for service in the Dutch East Indies, whereas the initial version was to stay in the Netherlands. However, as already mentioned, things took a different turn in 1939. The all-metal version had the same dimensions, engines and equipment as the mixed-construction version, but it was somewhat heavier. Serial numbers R-20 to R-31 were allocated to this batch of twelve

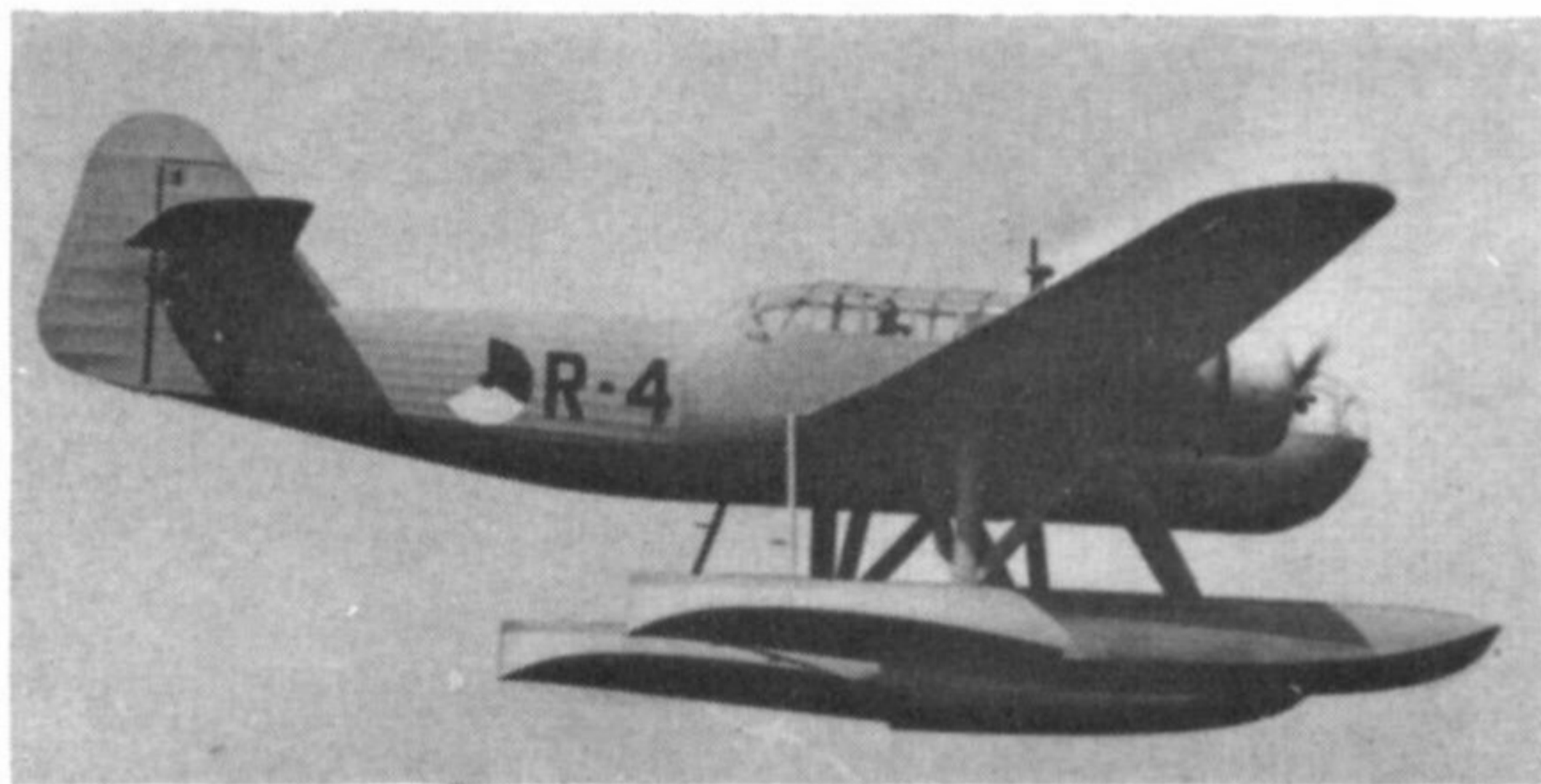
aircraft but they never carried them as they left the Fokker works with German black crosses instead of the Dutch roundel: but more of this below.

When the Second World War broke out in September 1939 the first five aircraft were based at the floatplane base of De Mok on the island of Texel. They were used there for test flying and experiments, including trials with dummy torpedos. Navy crews were trained in the operation of the new aircraft. With the outbreak of war it became necessary to make the T.VIII-W's available for patrol flights over Dutch territorial waters, to guard against violations of Dutch neutrality, which at that time it was still hoped to maintain. This became particularly urgent when the Dutch cruiser "Sumatra", charged with the escort of merchant ships, suddenly had to be withdrawn for repairs. These patrols led to the loss of one of the T.VIII-W's on 13th September; on that date *R-5* was attacked by a German Dornier Do-18 seaplane near the island of Ameland. The pilot tried to land his damaged aircraft on the water but it capsized on landing and was destroyed. The crew of three escaped with slight injuries and was rescued by their German opponents who brought them to a hospital on the German island of Norderney—there still was some chivalry in the air in those days—from which they could later return home. Anyhow, this incident led to the replacement of the Dutch red, white and blue roundel by an orange triangle with a black edge, as the German crew had stated that they had mistaken the Dutch roundel for a British or French one, a confusion that certainly could not arise with the triangle.

In the spring of 1940 the first aircraft of the second batch became available and these were delivered as quick as possible, sometimes with their paint hardly dry. Thus aircraft *R-6* to *R-10* had reached Dutch naval units on the day (10th May 1940) that German troops invaded the Netherlands, while another one (*R-11*) was completed and flown out to Britain during the five days of war. On 7th May the naval staff had already decided to disperse the T.VIII-W aircraft as there were indications of an impending German attack; so five aircraft went to the Westeinderplas, a lake near Schiphol Airport, making a small village called Kudelstaart their base. Three others moved to the Braasemermeer, another lake which is slightly further to the south; one aircraft finally remained at De Mok.

FIVE DAYS OF WAR

During the five war days the T.VIII-W's, or R-aircraft as they were called by the navy, were very active. On 10th May three of the Kudelstaart aircraft left for a reconnaissance and bombing mission to Stavoren in the Province of Friesland, to discover that the enemy had not yet advanced that far. All three aircraft returned safely. They did not meet any German fighters and that was their luck, every aircraft having to fly on its own as formation flying with the R-aircraft had not been practised at that stage. Another problem was that the machine guns had the unpleasant habit of jamming after some ten rounds had been fired, an evil that was only remedied in R.A.F. service later that year. On the third day of war the Kudelstaart aircraft made another reconnaissance flight to the Ysselmeer and again all aircraft returned safely, not having met any enemy opposition. But meanwhile the overwhelming German air superiority had made operations so dangerous that the



R-4, seen here in flight, was destroyed by German fighters on the beach near Scheveningen on 10th May 1940.

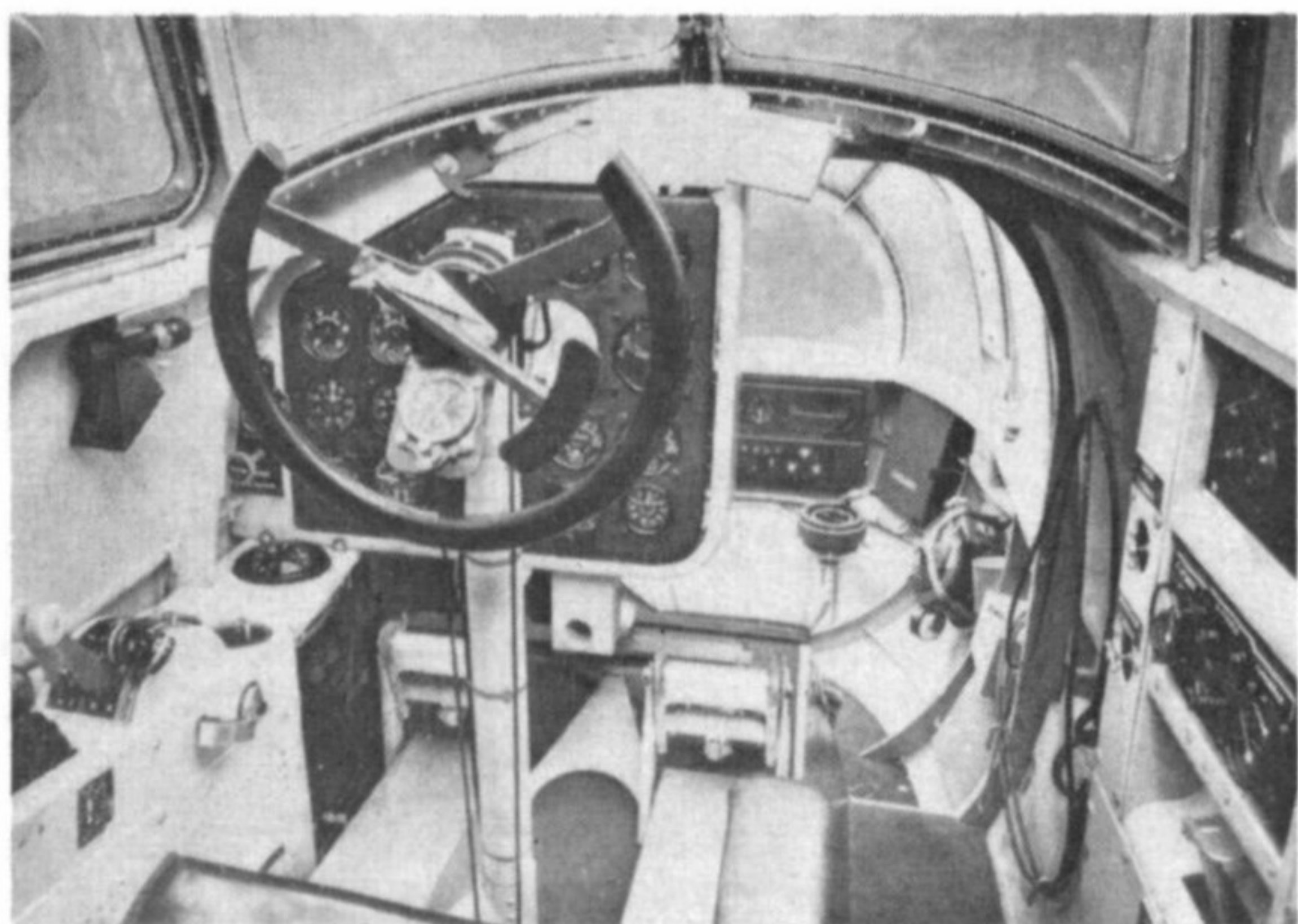
Dutch naval staff refrained from further operational flights with the R-aircraft.

The three aircraft based at the Braasemermeer had meanwhile had a much more exciting time. In the early morning hours of 10th May *R-3* had taken off for a reconnaissance flight along the coast between the Hook of Holland and Ymuiden. The aircraft returned after one hour and when it taxied back to its moorings it was suddenly attacked by a Messerschmitt Bf 110. Navy anti-aircraft gunners, hidden with their guns in the bushes along the edge of the lake, received the attacking German aircraft with such a hail of bullets that one minute later it was a burning wreck in one of the surrounding *polders*. Then an order was received that all three aircraft should be transferred to Scheveningen and moored on the sea, where the aircraft from De Mok (*R-4*) was to join them. Their task would be to take members of the government on board and fly them to Britain. *R-3*, which had meanwhile refuelled, was the first aircraft to leave, which it did at 7.30 in the morning. It landed on the sea somewhere south of Scheveningen and took two members of the Dutch cabinet on board as passengers; then it took off again and reached Britain without any harm. But the others were not so lucky. *R-1* took off half an hour after *R-3*, but on its way to Scheveningen it was attacked by a German aircraft which pierced its floats with bullets. Although the aircraft succeeded in making a landing at the predetermined point on the sea off Scheveningen the damage sustained did not allow it to make the crossing to Britain. Thirty minutes later the aircraft



(Above and below). *R-6 moored near the Fokker factory in the north of Amsterdam. It was delivered to the Royal Dutch Navy early in 1940.*



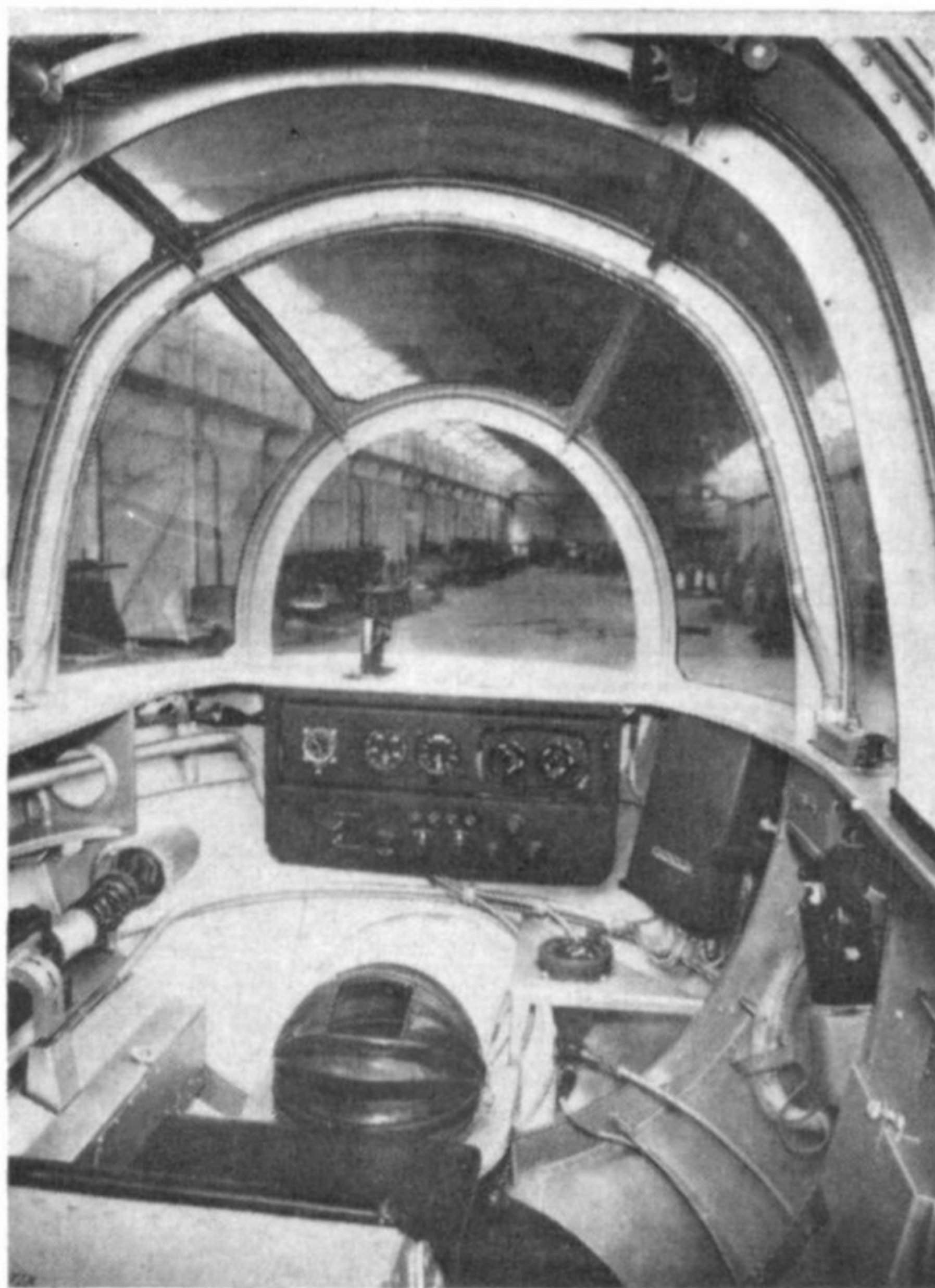


The pilot's controls of the T.VIII-W.

from De Mok, *R-4*, arrived at the stage, but by now German aircraft were out there in force. After the aircraft had landed and taxied to the beach a Messerschmitt Bf 109 made a head-on attack with its machine guns and killed two of its crew members. The aircraft itself ran onto the beach and was later set on fire by other German aircraft.

R-2 was the last aircraft to leave the Braasemermeer base and it was almost immediately attacked by two German fighters which caused some damage, but the rear gunner succeeded in chasing them off. The aircraft landed safely at Scheveningen but with so many German aircraft overhead and both *R-1* and *R-2* damaged and *R-4* destroyed, the transfer of further passengers to Britain was cancelled. It was decided that *R-1* should be flown to Fokker for the necessary repairs and that *R-2* should return to its base. *R-1* safely reached its destination in the north of Amsterdam but *R-2* saw the shortest route to its base cut off by German aircraft, and therefore its commander decided to fly around The Hague. But luck once more was against him; south of the town German aircraft were launching an attack against a Dutch secondary airfield and consequently the aircraft had to go further south. Near the Hook of Holland it suddenly ran into a swarm of German fighters which attacked at once. Although they fiercely opposed their attackers they hardly had a chance and finally the pilot put his badly damaged aircraft down on the Nieuwe Waterweg, taxiing it to the shores of the island of Rozenburg. But there they discovered that two Junkers Ju 52 aircraft had just landed in a meadow to disembark some 40 heavily armed airborne soldiers; in the meantime German fighters were still overhead, firing their guns at the now

(Left) The navigator's position in the fuselage nose; the fixed forward-firing gun is visible on the left. (Right) The view aft from the navigator's position (from the lettering on the plate in the foreground, this machine was in German hands.)



harmless Dutch floatplane. A desperate situation for the Dutch crew then took a favourable turn with the arrival of a Dutch patrol boat; while its crew kept the Germans at a distance with their guns the crew members of *R-2* set fire to their aircraft, and got aboard the patrol vessel in safety.

On 14th May, the war in Holland was over. The Dutch armed forces capitulated and surrendered to the Germans. But the night before the remaining five T.VIII-W aircraft at the Kudelstaart base and two others (*R-1* repaired by Fokker and *R-11* delivered during the brief conflict) were ordered to take-off and move to bases outside the country. They were not allowed to take the easiest route and fly straight across to the British Isles; they had to go south to carry on their fighting from French bases. So in the early morning of 14th May the *R*-aircraft left their bases and their country, which many of the crews would never see again.

After they had arrived at French naval bases they found so much confusion there that it proved to be impossible to have the Dutch aircraft integrated into the Allied air forces. They first arrived at Boulogne and later moved further south, to Cherbourg. Finally, when the capitulation of the French forces was imminent, they received an order telling them to cross the Channel and fly to Calshot immediately. There seven *R*-aircraft assembled and received a warm welcome from British Fleet Air Arm personnel.

IN R.A.F. SERVICE

The intention was that the Dutch crews should continue the war against the enemy with their aircraft and so, after they had enjoyed some rest, plans were laid out to bring the eight aircraft (the seven from Calshot and *R-3* which had already arrived in Britain on the 10th) together in a special Dutch unit which was to be incorporated into R.A.F. Coastal Command. On 1st June 1940 No. 320 (Dutch) Squadron was formed and based at Pembroke Dock on the south-western coast of Wales. The eight aircraft (*R-1*, *R-3* and *R-6* to *R-11*) now got an R.A.F. camouflage paint scheme instead of their all-grey Dutch colour scheme; they were also given R.A.F.

A T.VIII-W in R.A.F. hands carrying a small Dutch orange triangle just aft of the navigator's position. The serial number and code-letters have not yet been applied. (Photo: Imp. War Mus.)

serial numbers AV958-AV965. To indicate their service with a Dutch unit they received a small black-edged orange triangle on their nose.

No. 320 Squadron (code letters TD) was assigned the job of escorting convoys entering or leaving the Bristol Channel, patrols eventually extending to the Irish Sea, to meet ships coming from Glasgow and Liverpool and steaming southward. These ships had to be protected against attacks by U-boats as well as German long range bombers. Usually such flights were rather dull and uneventful and meetings with the enemy were rare. But on 13th July one of the T.VIII-W's sighted the periscope of a German U-boat and attacked it with bombs, unfortunately with no visible results.

On another occasion a T.VIII-W, coming in to relieve a fellow aircraft from its patrol, discovered that this aircraft was under attack by a Ju 88. The pilot of the second aircraft succeeded in making his presence known to the enemy who then at once turned to his new adversary. But, although slower, the Fokker floatplane proved to be much more versatile than its German opponent and the rear gunner also contributed his part in keeping the German at a respectful distance. Moreover he apparently feared that the two Dutch aircraft might have alerted one or more R.A.F. fighter stations; after a short while he gave up and disappeared.

Nevertheless, No. 320 Squadron's operations with the T.VIII-W did not pass without losses. On 26th July AV964 was lost on patrol; the relieving aircraft had just arrived at the spot to take over and saw AV964 make a steep turn to get back to the coast. But suddenly the aircraft plunged down into the sea from an altitude of some 300 feet, with the loss of all aboard. One month later, on 26th August, AV963 did not return from a patrol over the Irish Sea. After these two crashes an investigation was made in order to determine the possible causes; then British experts discovered that the rudder surfaces of the T.VIII-W were too small, with the result that insufficient rudder pressure was available to pull the aircraft out of certain manoeuvres under certain loading conditions.

In October 1940 one of the T.VIII-W's was assigned to a very special mission. It was to fly to the occupied Dutch homeland to pick up four secret agents from a lake in the Province of Friesland, called Tjeukemeer. On this mission the aircraft was under the command of Lt. H. Schaper, later Chief of the Dutch Air Staff and Secretary of State for Defence (Air). The first attempt to pick up the agents was unsuccessful as no contact could be made with the Dutch party on the lake. A second attempt was made several nights afterwards; this time a small boat approached the aircraft after it had landed, which was according to plan, but when it came near the Fokker it suddenly opened fire on the aircraft with machine guns. The

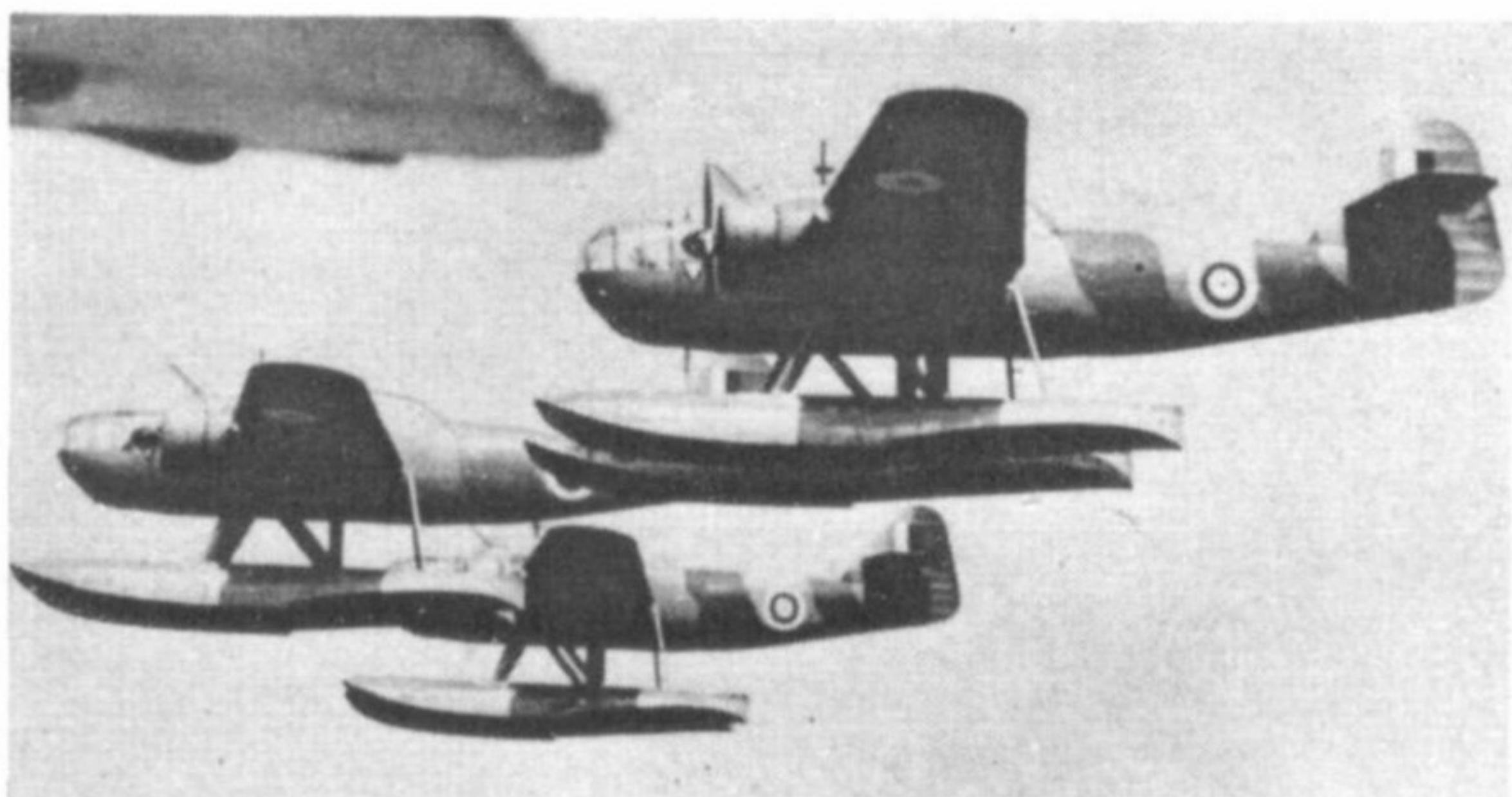


rear gunner of the T.VIII-W at once returned the fire and put the guns in the boat out of action, while the pilot turned the aircraft and started its take-off run. While searchlights flashed on around the lake the T.VIII-W got into the air and headed back to its base which it reached safely. In some way the operation had been betrayed and the agents had been arrested; the Germans were waiting for the Dutch floatplane in their place.

Meanwhile, the situation within the squadron had gradually deteriorated. As no spare parts for the T.VIII-W aircraft were available it had been necessary to cannibalize two of them in order to keep the remaining four in the air. Moreover the first aircraft, AV958 (ex R-1), was lost when it ran out of fuel during a patrol flight and had to crash-land somewhere near Sudbury in Suffolk. Making a safe landing on solid ground with an already war-weary floatplane was too much to ask, and the aircraft became a total loss. Replacement aircraft were thus urgently needed. The Dutch naval air staff in London had meanwhile decided that No. 320 Squadron should play a more active part in the war and change to an attacking rôle, although the British advised their Dutch colleagues to refrain from this as operations

Underside view of an R.A.F. machine showing the overpainted Dutch marking below the wings. (Photo: Imp. War Mus.)





A formation of three R.A.F. T.VIII-W's.

would no doubt result in heavier losses and while sufficient aircraft could quite easily be made available this was not so with manpower. Nevertheless the Dutch persisted and ordered a number of Lockheed Hudson bombers in the United States as new equipment for No. 320 Squadron, which also was to move to a new base, in this case Leuchars on the east coast of Scotland. The remaining T.VIII-W aircraft were transferred to Felixstowe for storage, having played their part in full in the Allied cause.

UNDER A THIRD FLAG

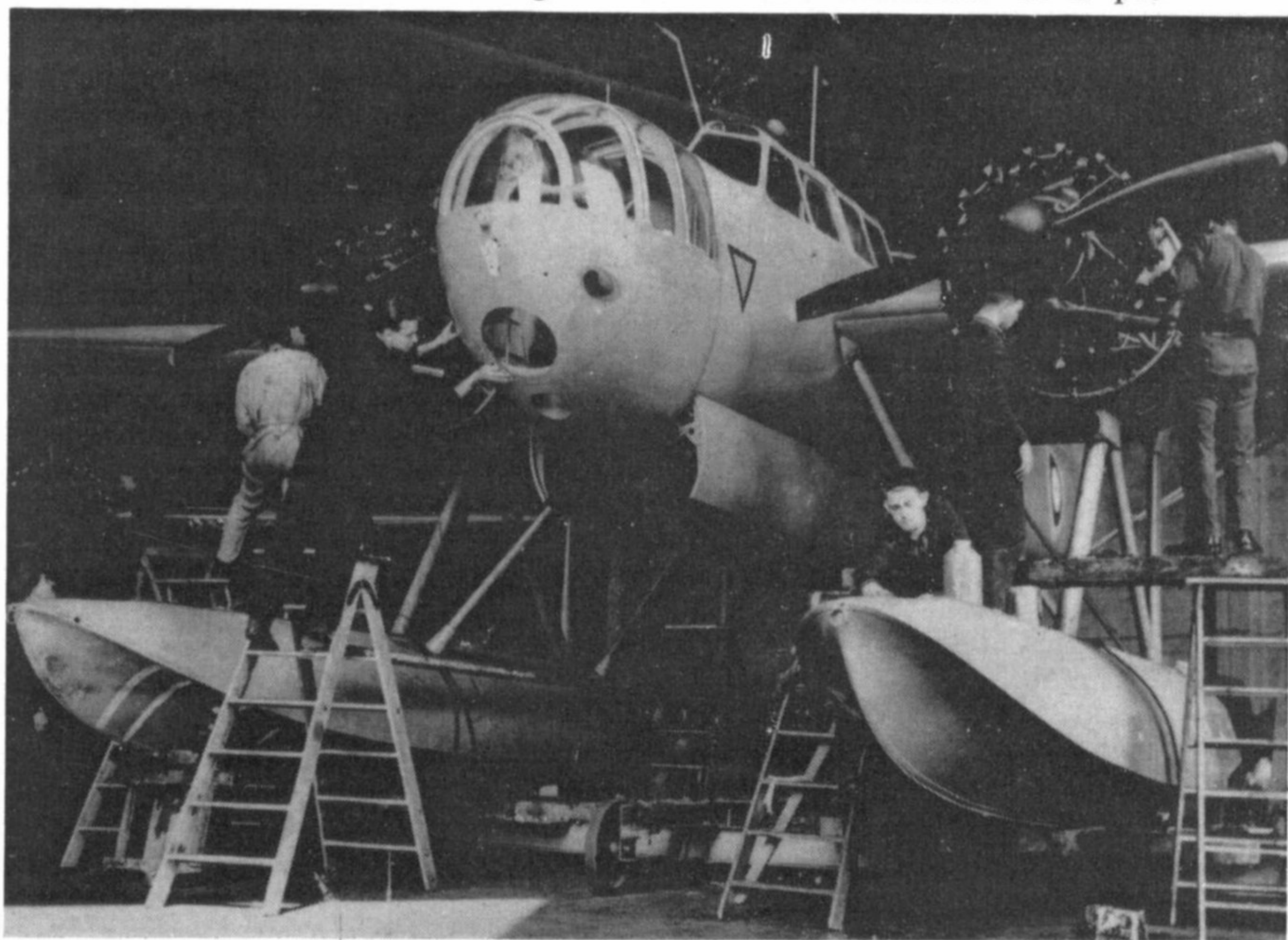
The German Navy operated the T.VIII-W also. When, after the capitulation of the Dutch forces, the Germans occupied the Fokker works they found there, among others, the remainder of the batch of 19 "mixed" T.VIII-W's in the final stages of construction while work was in progress on the batch of twelve aircraft of all-metal construction. They ordered the completion of both batches and after they had been test-flown from the naval base of Schellingwoude, north of Amsterdam they were transferred to Germany. The German Navy used them mostly for patrol flights in the Mediterranean area but one of them was seized almost under their eyes by a Dutch pilot and flown to Britain.

It happened in May 1941. A demobilized Dutch fighter pilot, Lieutenant Steen, learned from friends about the escape of two other Dutch pilots who flew a G-1 aircraft to Britain (see *Profile* No. 134). Then he remembered that T.VIII-W aircraft intended for delivery to the German Navy were lying in the water north of Amsterdam during their pre-delivery test flying period. With three of his friends he did some investigating and discovered that one aircraft was still there. There were indications that the Germans would soon tighten their security measures and reinforce their guards, so they would have to act quickly. Although Steen, as an army fighter pilot, had never flown a floatplane this was, under the given circumstances, considered of little importance. The following night the four men hid themselves in the grass near

the aircraft's mooring place after the official curfew at 8.00 p.m. After it had grown dark they started searching round and after some three hours one of them discovered a rubber dinghy. Their plan was favoured by extreme darkness, and in addition rain had started to fall. With the dinghy they rowed to the aircraft and succeeded in getting aboard unnoticed. Then they had to wait till early in the morning in order to take-off at first light. They meanwhile used the darkness to get some sleep and to remove the covers from the engines. When at last the critical moment had come one of the engines would not start; but as they simply could not afford to wait Lieutenant Steen started taxiing the aircraft out, a tricky manoeuvre in a floatplane with only one engine running and under the command of an inexperienced pilot. But suddenly the second engine came to life; Steen reacted at once, taking off at full speed and climbing with his aircraft into the low rain clouds that still covered the awakening Dutch coastline.

The flight was successful and Steen put his aircraft down on the sea near Broadstairs on the British south coast. Here again luck was with him; he happened to land his aircraft, which carried German markings, just in the dead angle between two coastal batteries which otherwise certainly would have opened fire. Maybe the fact that one of the four occupants was wearing a bowler hat sufficiently persuaded the British Home Guard, which set out to meet them, that these four men were definitely not Germans. Steen joined the R.A.F. and became a Spitfire pilot; he was shot down over France in 1944.

The aircraft they brought with them was transferred to Felixstowe and stored there with the other T.VIII-W's. But in March 1943 this aircraft, which was in perfect condition, was prepared for another mission to occupied Dutch territory in order to pick up two important agents. It would be a more or less similar mission to the one made by Lt. Schaper in 1940; Lt. Elias was to be in command. The flight was to be made during a dark and rainy afternoon and after having landed on the Ysselmeer at a pre-



Dutch personnel maintaining a T.VIII-W in England—note the sailor wearing a cap working on the float.

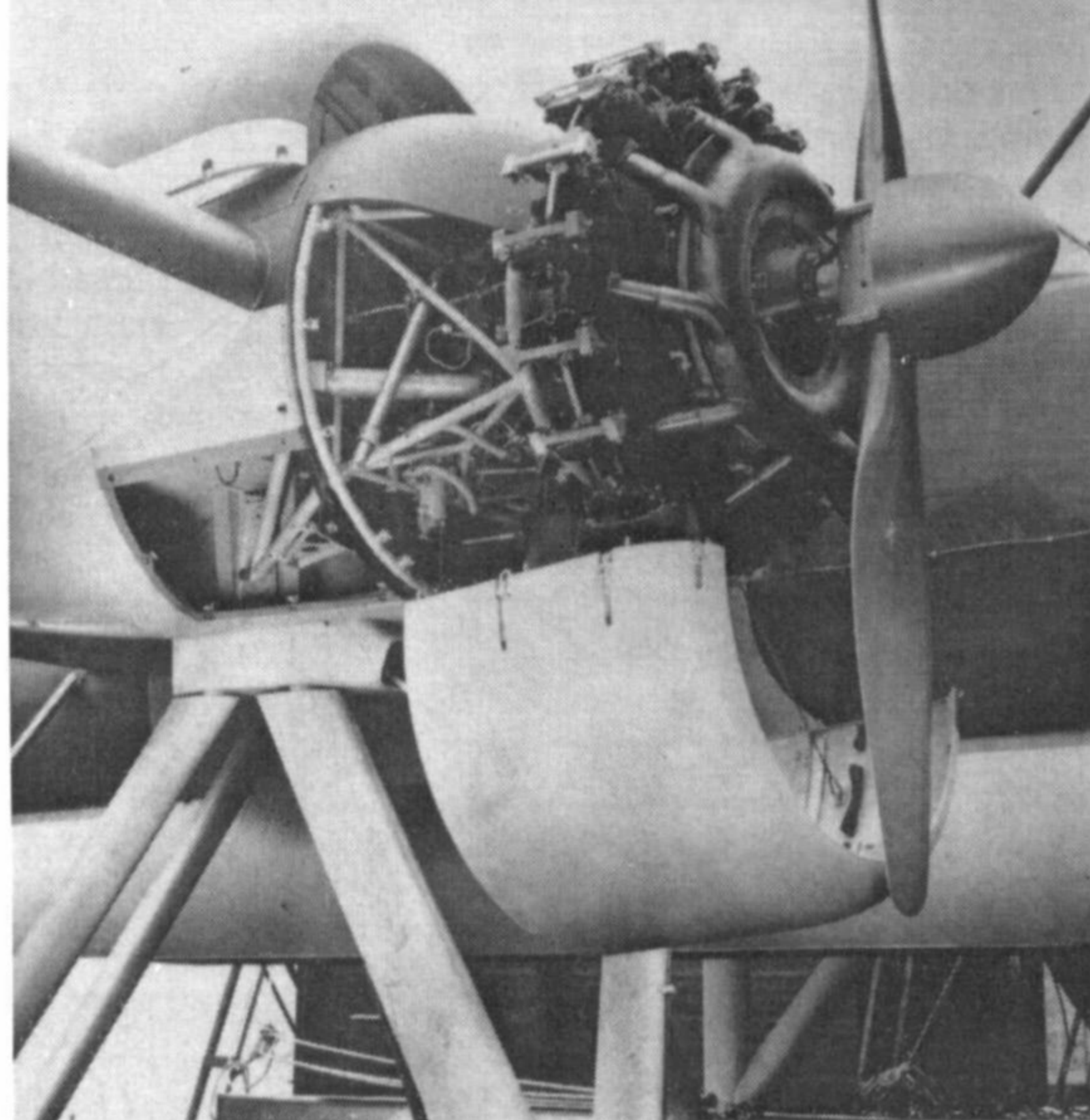
determined place the two agents would be taken aboard quickly and the aircraft takeoff again. The crew made several training flights and with some volunteers exercised in taking aboard two men in the quickest possible time. But when the flight was about to be made radio contact with the Dutch underground forces was broken and the operation was cancelled. Thus the T.VIII-W once again disappeared into the Felixstowe hangars, this time to remain there.

NEW ENGINES, NEW UNDERCARRIAGE

The Fokker T.VIII-W attracted the attention of foreign governments; and one of these was the Finnish government which early in 1939 had a requirement for a new type of floatplane as replacement for its Blackburn Ripons. The Finnish requirement called for considerably higher performance and load carrying capacity and to meet these requirements Fokker designed a somewhat larger and heavier version of the T.VIII-W, in which the Swedish government later also showed some interest. This version featured a six foot longer fuselage while wing span and area would be increased by six feet seven inches and 86 sq. feet respectively. The manufacturers proposed three variants to the Finns, which only differed in power plant; these were the T.VIII-W/A (2 Bristol Mercury VI); the T.VIII-W/B (2 Bristol Pegasus XXIV); and the T.VIII-W/C (2 Bristol Mercury XI).

The Finnish government selected the last-mentioned version and in 1939 an order for five of these aircraft was placed. These too were under construction when the Germans took over control of the Fokker Works and they ordered these to be completed as well.

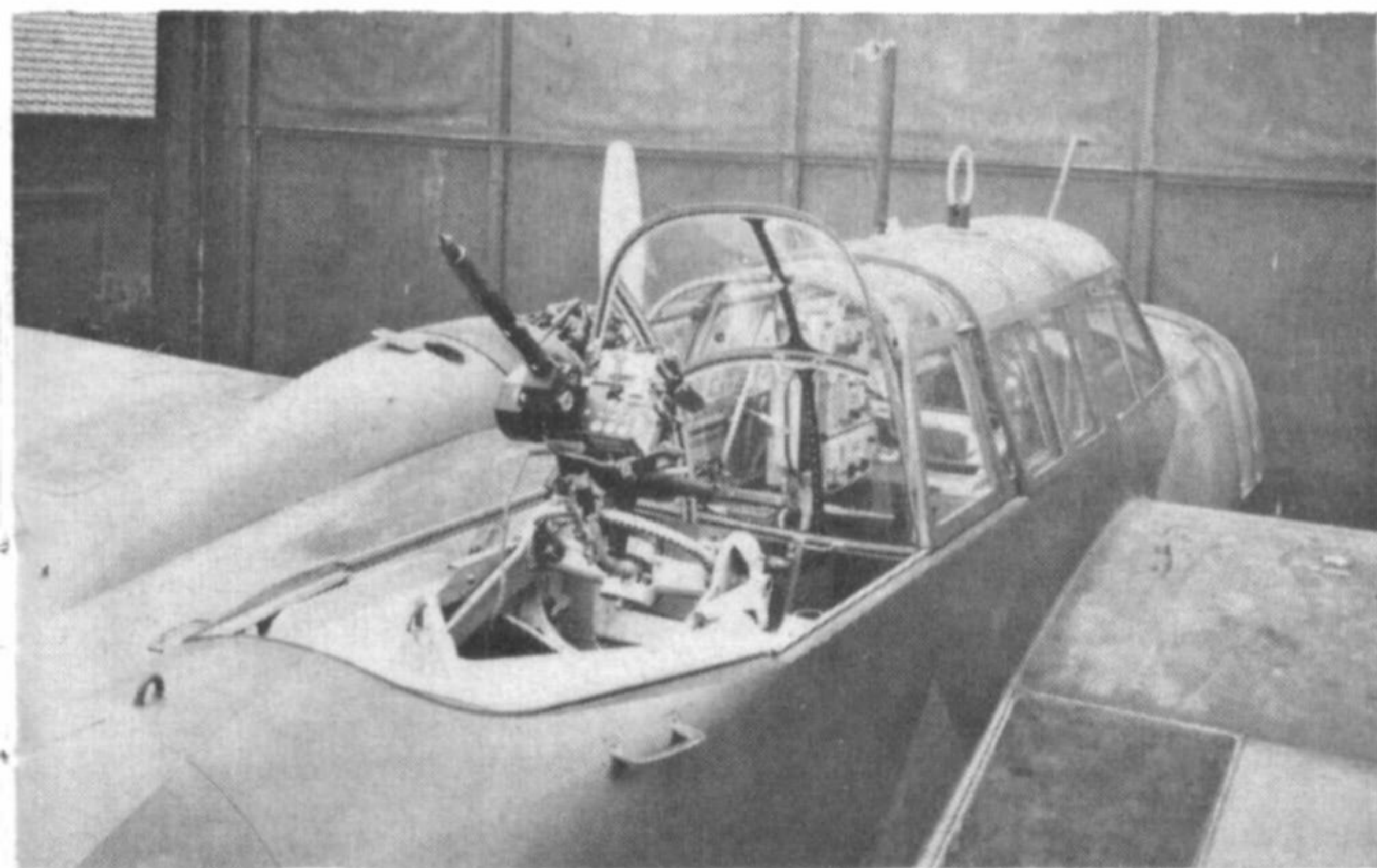
This Finnish order also led to the construction of what was probably the most remarkable version of this Fokker design: the landplane which was dubbed T.VIII-L. One of the requirements in the Finnish specification was that the aircraft should have an



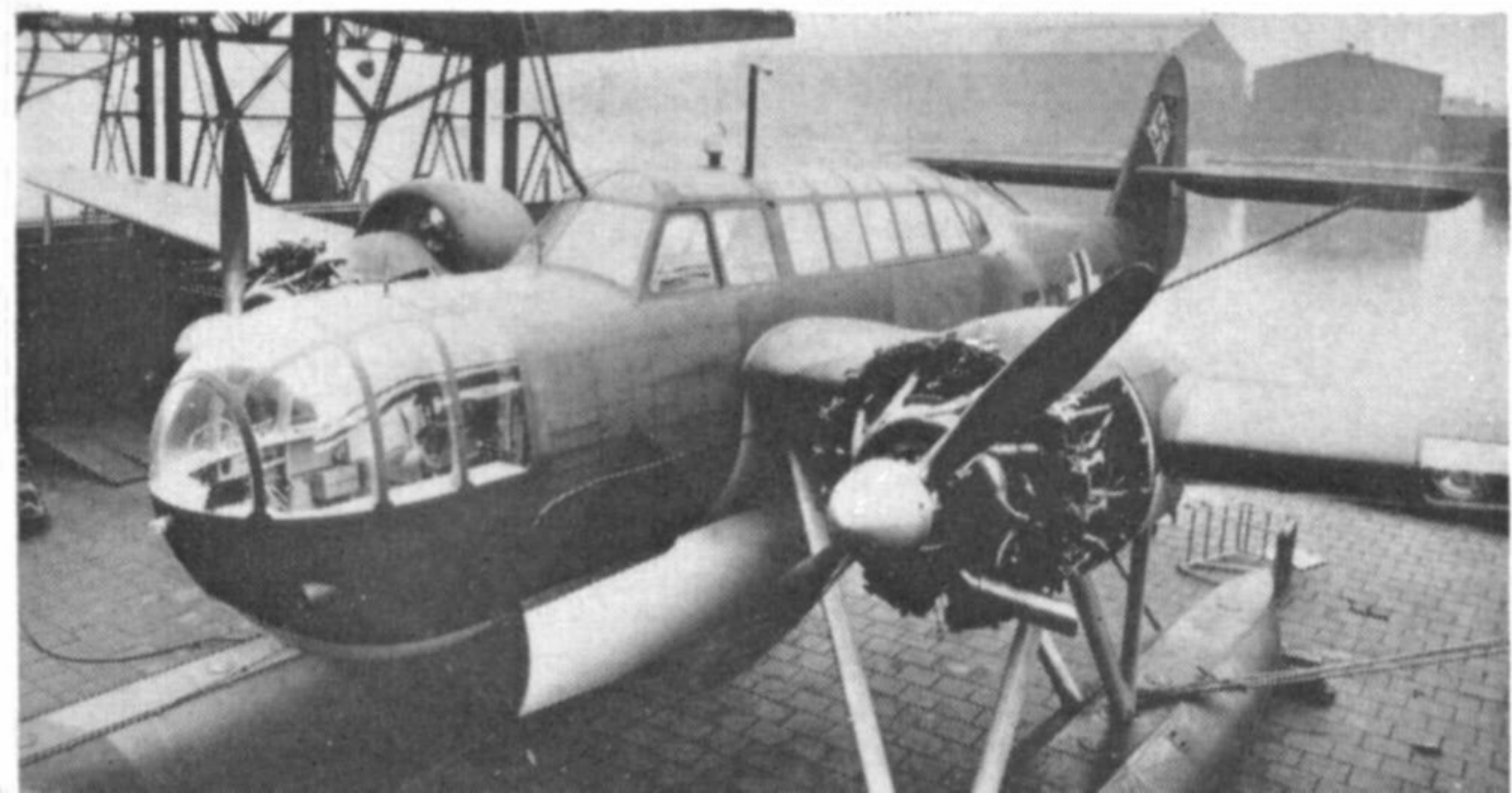
Close-up of the starboard Wright Whirlwind radial of a German T.VIII-W.

interchangeable float/wheel/ski undercarriage and consequently the Finns specified that one of their aircraft should be delivered in landplane configuration. But it was not just this Finnish requirement that led to the construction of a landplane version; Fokker had made design studies for such a version from the very beginning and it is not generally known that the Dutch Army Air Corps had been seriously interested in this version. The Army Air Corps experts studied Fokker's T.VIII-W design in 1937 and Fokker later offered them specifications of a more detailed design. But whereas several aircraft types of the same capacity and performance and of all-metal construction were already offered by manufacturers from abroad the Air Corps showed some hesitation with regard to the eventual acquisition of the mainly wooden T.VIII bomber.

By 1939 the situation had changed, in the first place because the aircraft already delivered to the Navy proved to have surprisingly good performances, and in the second place because Fokker had meanwhile started the construction of the all-metal version. Moreover, with the basic aircraft already a proven type and in production Fokker could offer quick deliveries, to start about four or five months after an order had been received. So Fokker made a new offer to the Army Air Corps, this time for an advanced crew trainer version. This aircraft, the manufacturers stated, could be used for the training of air gunners in nose and tail turrets; the training of observers, seated in the aircraft's nose, in navigation, photography, bombing, etc.; advanced pilot training; and the training of wireless operators. Moreover, the Fokker specification continued, the aircraft could very well be used for certain operational duties, which would give the T.VIII a certain combat value. The specification mentioned two Wright Whirlwind engines as power plants, but as an alternative two Pratt & Whitney Wasp Jr. engines could be fitted. Flying qualities of the aircraft would very closely approach those of other Fokker types already in production for the Army Air Corps, such as the T.V, the D.XXI and the G.I, and consequently there would be a smooth and gradual transition from the trainer to these types of combat aircraft. Fokker had



Two views of a German-operated machine; note (above) the machine-gun mounting and (below) the engine installation. The float supports and bracing are of interest.



in mind to push the T.VIII as an alternative to the Focke-Wulf *Weihe*, which was a specialised crew trainer without any operational value, but which was highly favoured by some circles in the Army Air Corps for the training rôle as it would enable the training of complete crews and not of separate crew members.

However, as good as Fokker's arguments might have been, the final decision was in favour of the Focke-Wulf *Weihe*, of which three were ordered in 1939. As a consequence the Fokker T.VIII design for the Dutch Army Air Corps did not go beyond the drawing board stage and the T.VIII landplane was only revived when it was decided to build the single T.VIII-L landplane for the Finnish Air Force, which, contrary to the Dutch Army version, had a fixed landing gear. Like the four Finnish T.VIII-W/C floatplanes this aircraft went to Germany after completion, carrying serial letters KD+GH. Nothing more was heard of it.

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T.VIII VARIANTS

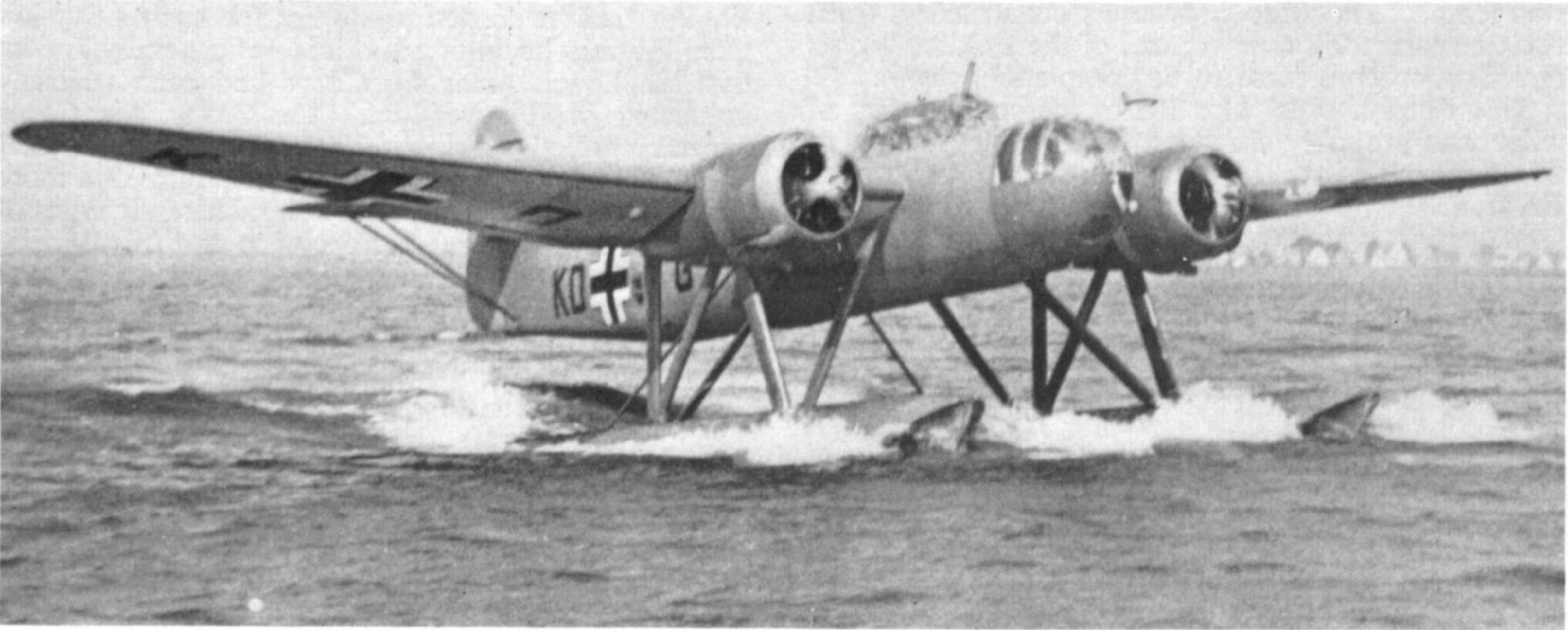
T.VIII	Dutch Army Air Corps	not built.
T.VIII-L	Finnish Air Force	1 built
T.VIII-W/A	Finnish Air Force	not built
T.VIII-W/B	Finnish Air Force	not built
T.VIII-W/C	Finnish Air Force	4 built— to Germany.
T.VIII-W/G	Dutch Navy	19 built— 8 to Germany.

T.VIII VARIANTS

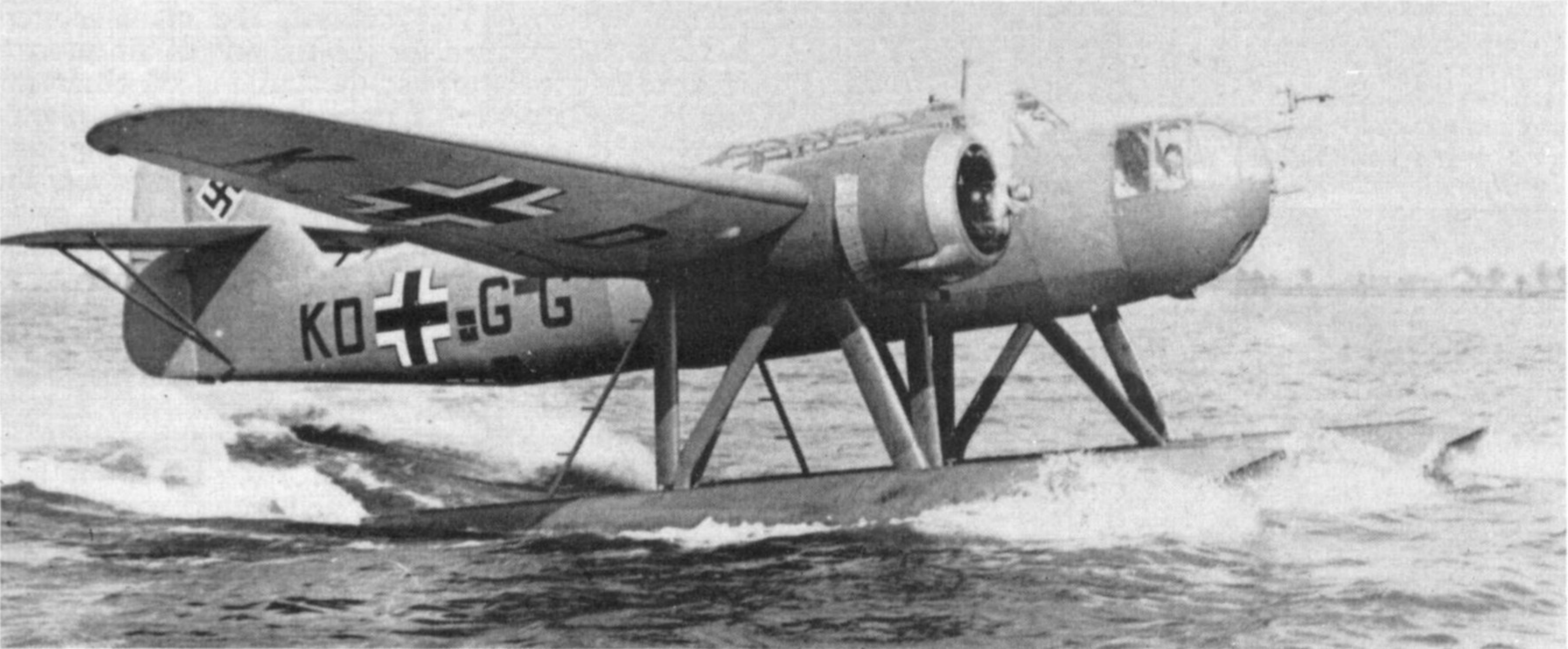
T.VIII-W/M	Dutch Navy	12 built— to Germany.
Total		36 built

FOKKER T.VIII-W—Specifications

	T.VIII-W/G	T.VIII-W/C
Power plant	2 Wright Whirlwind R-975-E-3 450 h.p.	2 Bristol Mercury XI 890 h.p.
Crew	Three	Three
Dimensions:		
Wing span	59 ft.	65 ft. 7 in.
Length	42 ft. 8 in.	48 ft. 8 in.
Height... ..	16 ft. 5 in.	17 ft. 8½ in.
Wing area	473.6 sq. ft.	560 sq. ft.
Weights:		
Empty	6,834 lbs.	10,000 lbs.
Loaded	11,030 lbs.	15,430 lbs.
Performances:		
Maximum speed ...	177 m.p.h.	222 m.p.h.
Cruising speed ...	137 m.p.h.	166 m.p.h.
Range: 264 Imp. gall.	1,305 miles	1,056 miles
Range: 352 Imp. gall.	1,710 miles	—
Service ceiling ...	22,300 feet	19,030 feet

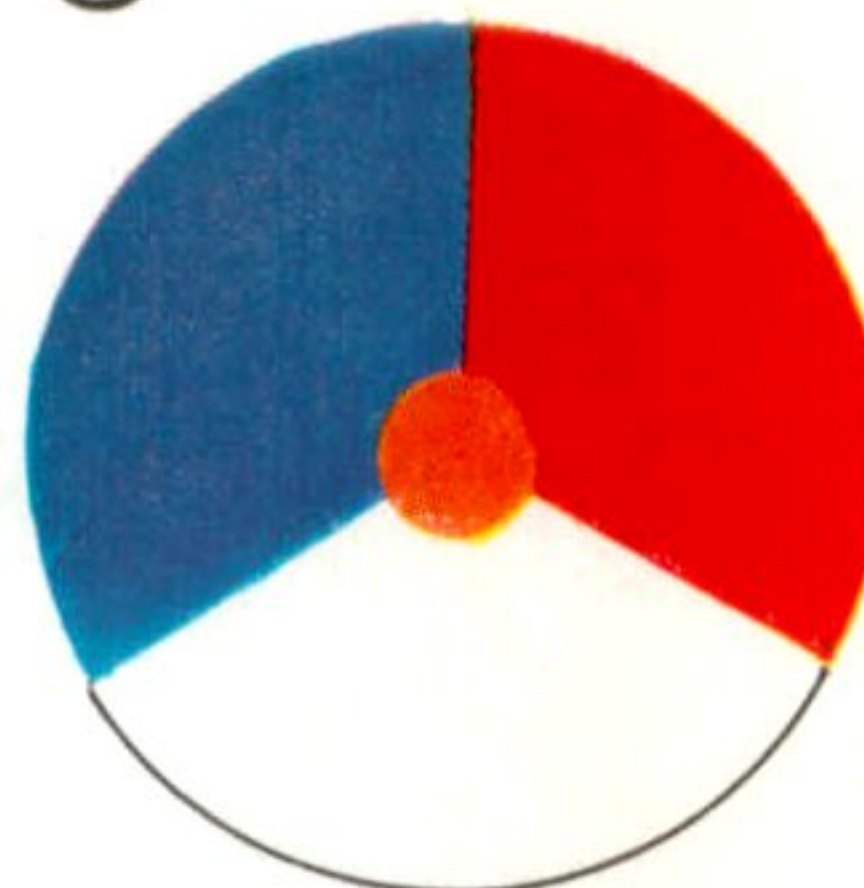


The last T.VIII-W (actually a T.VIII-W/C originally ordered by Finland but taken over by the Luftwaffe), seen here during taxiing trials; the gentleman in the nose position is M. Beeling, a director of the Fokker factory after the war.



Fokker T.VIII-W, of Royal Dutch Navy based at De Mok; shot down by Do 18 flying boat on 13th September 1939.

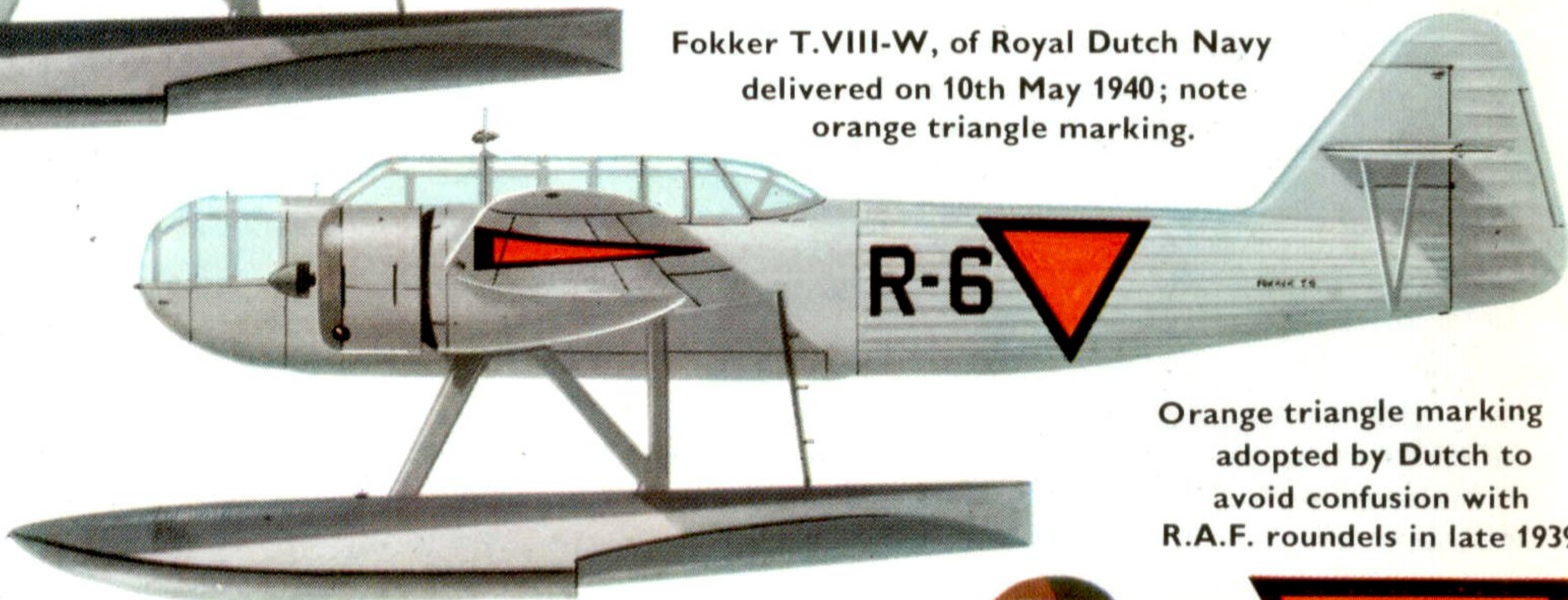
© WARD



Dutch roundel until late 1939.

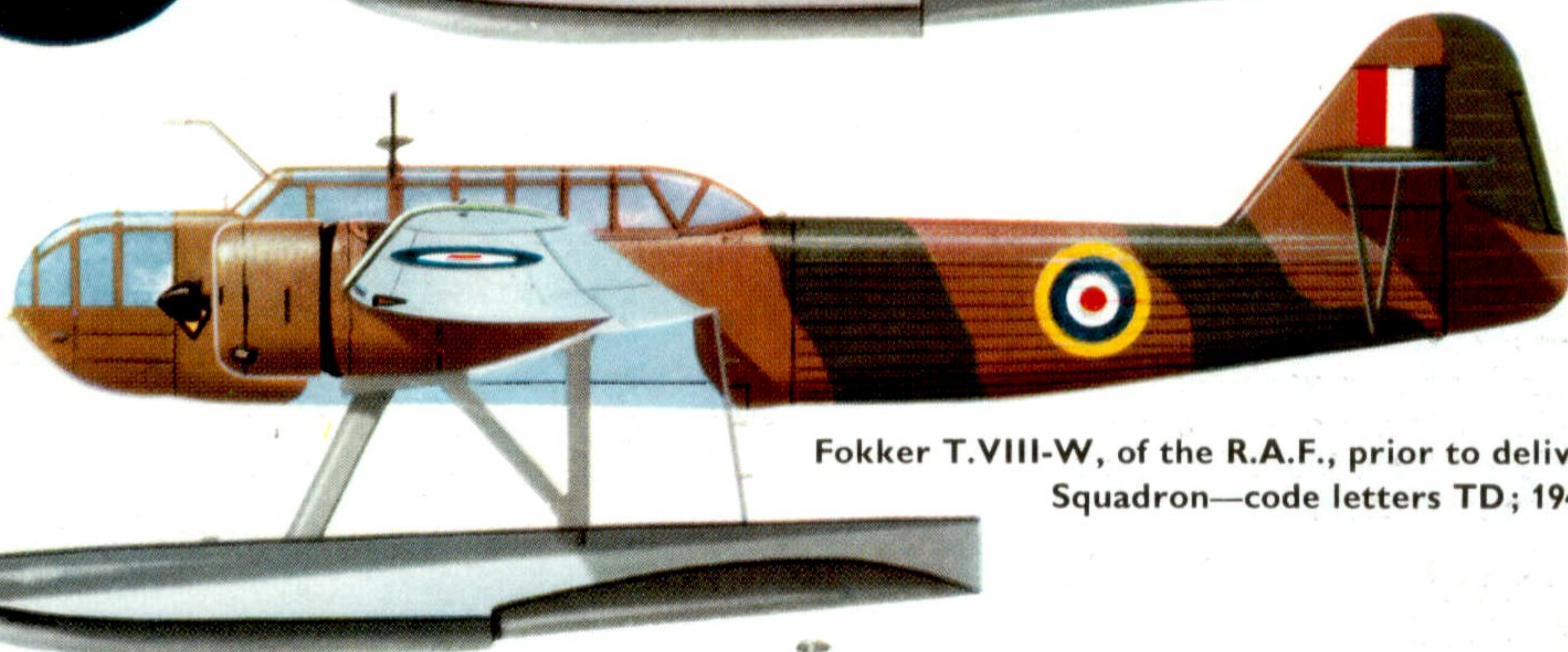


Fokker T.VIII-W, of Royal Dutch Navy delivered on 10th May 1940; note orange triangle marking.

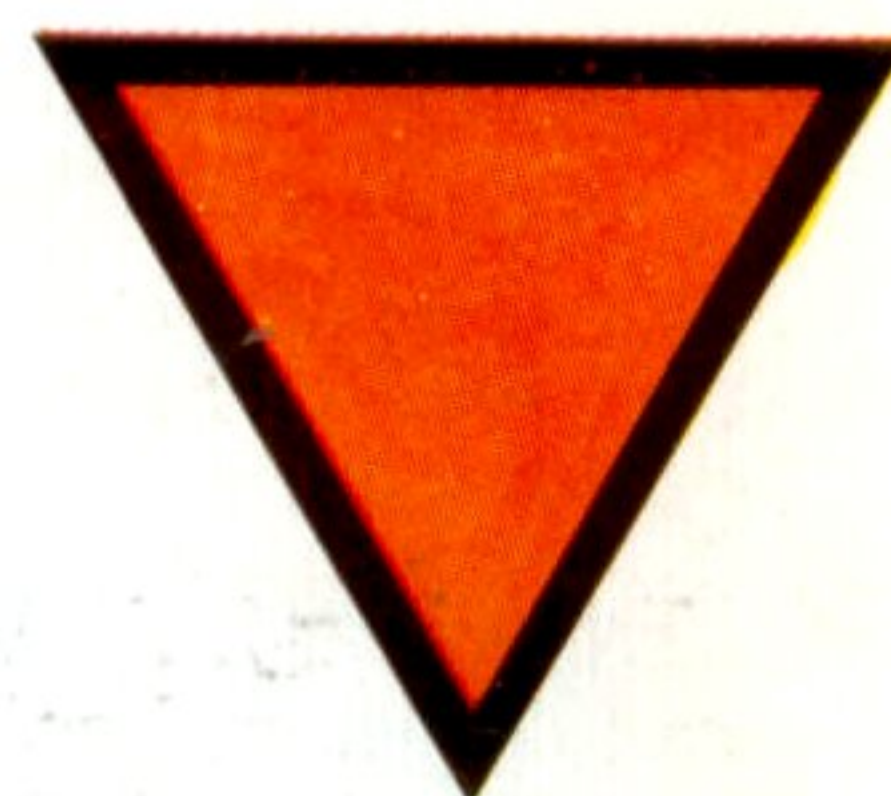


Orange triangle marking adopted by Dutch to avoid confusion with R.A.F. roundels in late 1939.

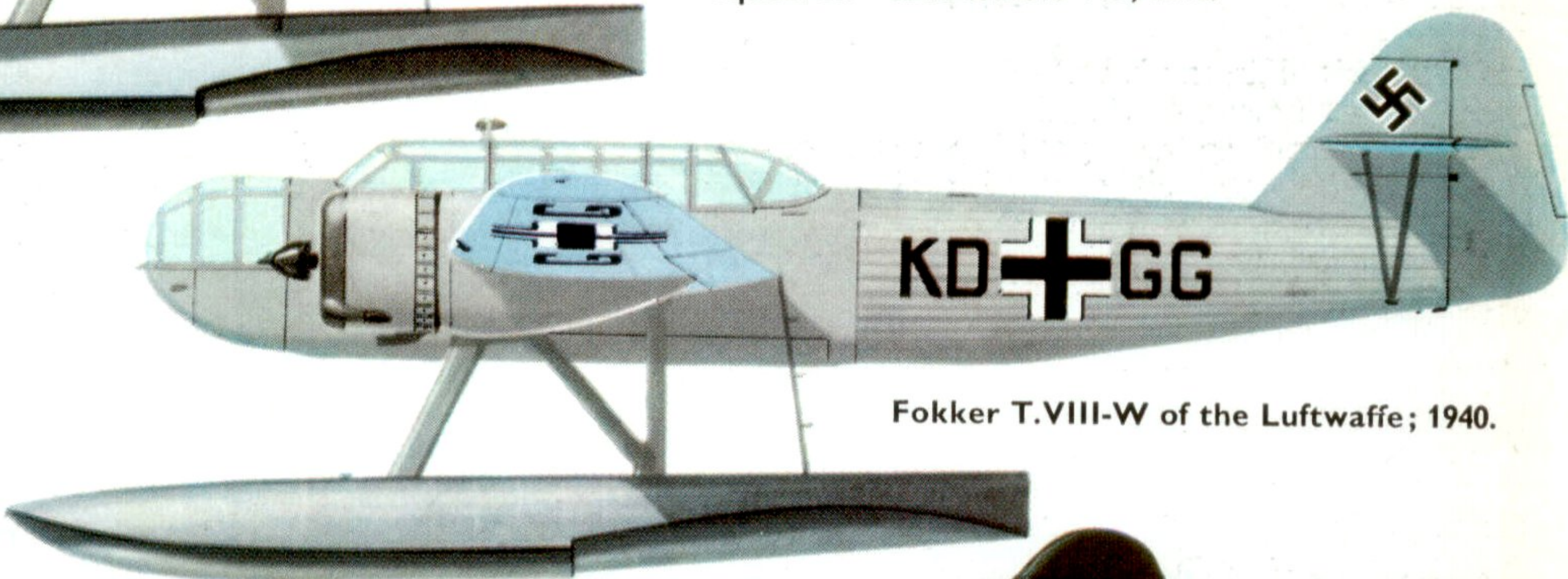
R.A.F. roundel upper wing surfaces.



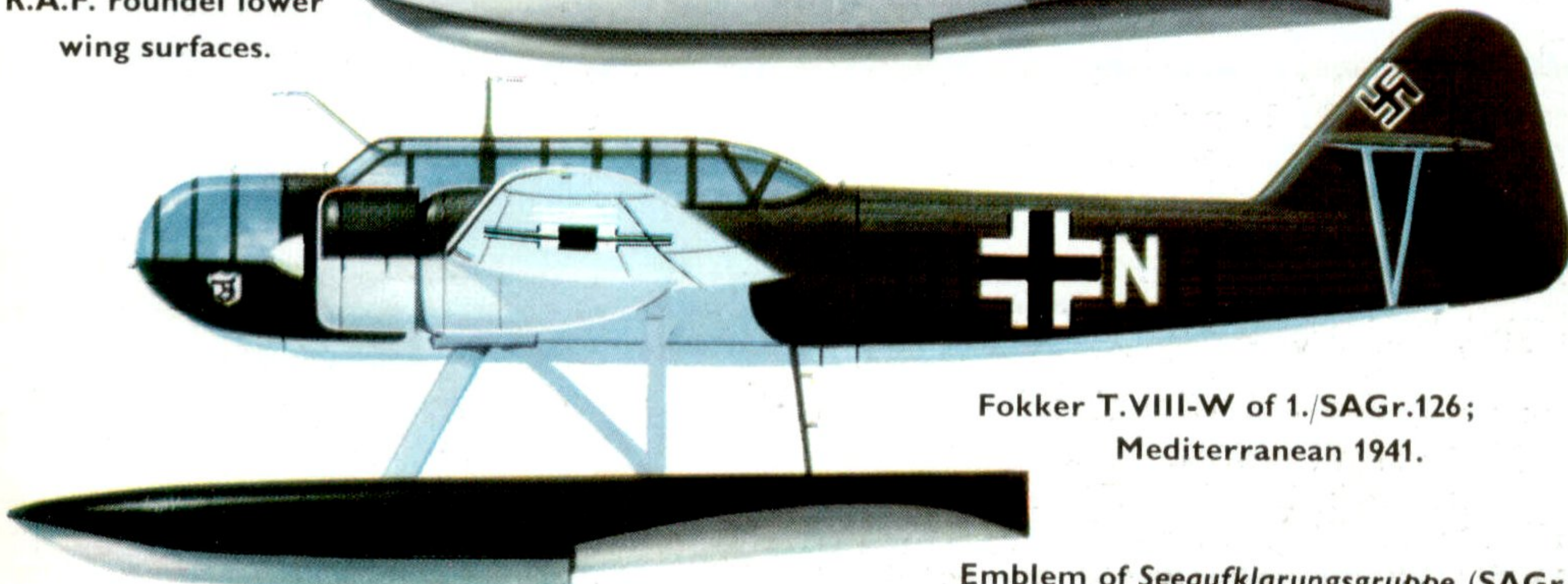
Fokker T.VIII-W, of the R.A.F., prior to delivery to No. 320 (Dutch) Squadron—code letters TD; 1940.



R.A.F. roundel lower wing surfaces.



Fokker T.VIII-W of the Luftwaffe; 1940.



Fokker T.VIII-W of 1./SAGr.126; Mediterranean 1941.



Emblem of Seeaufklarungsgruppe (SAGr.) 126.



Two views of the sole T.VIII-L ordered by Finland but taken over by the Germans. Note the fixed undercarriage and, in the lower view, the bomb-doors.

