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14 June 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: USS LIBERTY

1. In accordance with your instructions this morning that the Temporary Mid-East Information Group be deactivated (or put in a state of semi-activation) rather than being disestablished, I shall resume my duties as Chief, A04 subject to call from LCDR Koczak. Additionally, I will check with him every morning and evening on whether or not my services are required.

2. I believe that there will be a continuing requirement for assembling information and that it will be necessary to answer questions put to NSA by various investigative bodies from a central point. I do not believe that NSA is out of the woods yet.

3. I would anticipate the possibility of our being challenged on the following points:

- the requirement for placing the LIBERTY in the Mediterranean. Were the intelligence requirements that compelling?
- the requirement for the close-in OPAREAS specified by NSA. While we are not responsible for the safety of the vessel, we cannot absolve ourselves totally from the considerations of safety. Presumably the party who is responsible for the safety of the ship must weightthe criticality of the need specified by NSA against the risk involved in the OPAREA. We may have to demonstrate that the need is not established frivolously or by personnel who are inexperienced in seaborne operations in a military theater or who are unconcerned with safety considerations because they have no responsibilities in this area.
- relationships with the LIBERTY. Do we keep constant track of her in order to insure that the mission is being fulfilled or do we just send her out to do whatever she can? Are we concerned if she fails to communicate over a certain period? to pass her daily TECSUMS or to send out product? were we keeping track of her communications?

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Declassified and approved for
release by NSA on 11-17-2006
pursuant to E.O. 12958, as
amended. ST Case 51671

- NSA's handling of the JCS 080110Z message. While there were much more grievous errors by others and several circumstances mitigating our error, nevertheless we erred. I believe we will hear more on this.

4. At the moment there are three investigative bodies: the JCS Fact-Finding Team, the CINCUSNAVEUR Court of Inquiry; and the Special Committee of the NSC. The JCS Team and the NSC Committee have a copy of our report and both have outstanding questions posed to us. Those of the JCS Fact-Finding team are:

- a. Does NSA receive and plot situation reports? Does NSA keep the track?
- b. Why was an OPCOM circuit not established?
- c. Were there any communications problems during the transit?
- d. Did NSA fail to receive any TECSUMs which indicated communications difficulties? Product? Other?
- e. Was there any departure from normal command relationships in the handling of the LIBERTY's cruise? (Preliminary answers to these questions from K are attached - they are inadequate and K and G are obtaining more information).

Questions still outstanding from the Special Committee of the NSC (Mr. Coyne) are:

- a. What information was received from the LIBERTY from time on station to the incident?
- b. Were there any SIGINT reflections of the Israeli attack? (G is currently reviewing air defense tracking and other SIGINT).
- c. Would we review all of our SIGINT holdings relating to the incident?

5. Other actions that should be undertaken include:

- a. Interviewing Blalock upon his return. This should be done by the Temporary Mid-East Group after assembling all of the pertinent questions.

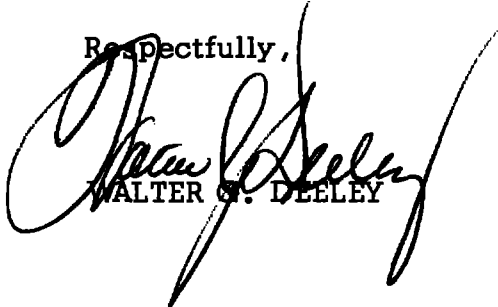
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b. Furnishing the list of materials aboard the LIBERTY for the subsequent damage assessment. This could be transferred to someone else for action.

6. Finally, the Director requested that the LIBERTY chronology be brought up to the time she arrives at Malta.

Respectfully,



WALTER S. DEELEY

Incl:
a/s

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*Need more info before
we can do anything.*

1. Question: Does NSA receive and plot situation reports? Do we keep the track?

Answer: K12 receives the situation reports and plots them routinely. We also receive ship locations from their daily electrical informal technical summaries.

2. Question: Why wasn't OFSCOMM circuit established?

Answer: There was no reason to establish an OFSCOMM circuit and none had been planned. NSA (G6 and K12 personnel) established a TELECON with USN-855 (LCDR Lewis and LT Bennett) approximately one hour after the LIBERTY's arrival at Rota on 01 June. The purpose of the TELECON was to confirm the arrival of some equip, personnel and technical support.

3. Question: Were there any communication overloads during the transit?

Answer: Based on discussion with T1 personnel, some backlog did exist at times, however, we are unable to confirm any serious difficulties. The LIBERTY's TRSSCOMM system experienced outage prior to its arrival, Rota and after departure Rota. T1 advised that USN-855 communicated with [redacted] on a non-interference basis with SIGINT operations. The last established schedule that T1 can confirm between [redacted] and USN-855 is one during the period 060750Z-061140Z. The LIBERTY also had the capability to send items off line and no record is immediately available on what items they may have passed by this means. T1 is checking further, but G has confirmed the receipt of at least four end product reports originated by USN-855 after the communication schedule which terminated 061140Z.

EO 1.4.(c)

4. Question: Did we receive any TECSUMS which indicated communication difficulties?

Answer: No.

5. Question: Was there any departure from normal command relationships in the handling of the LIBERTY's cruise?

Answer: No. The only difference was the involvement of a different command, namely CINCEUR.

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11 June 1967

END-PRODUCT FROM USN-855

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|
| 1. O 060229Z | 2X [] [] R01-67 * (sic - classification was <u>secret savin</u>) | P.L. 86-36 |
| 2. O 060909Z | 2 [] [] R03-67 (sic)
(Probably a garble for 2 [] [] R01-67) | |
| 3. O 061751Z | Follow-up NR 1 to [] Critic NR 03-67 | EO 1.4.(c) |
| 4. Z 061921Z ** | 2 [] [] R02-67 * (sic - classification was <u>secret larum</u>) | |
| 5. P 061923Z ** | 2 [] [] R01-67 | |
| 6. O 080927Z ** | 2X [] [] R03-67 * | |

* Either (a) USN-855 was combining Cat 2X with Cat 2 [] reports and using one-up numbering, or (b) 86 did not receive all end-product.

** USN-855 requested that DISNSA pass end-product to all addres.