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קונסוליה כללית של ישראל  
בוסטון

17 July 1980

Msgr. John J. Grant  
Editor  
The Pilot  
49 Franklin St.  
Boston, MA 02110

Sir,

The "Pilot" carried, on July 4, 1980, a book review by Mr. McDonnell concerning the 1967 "Liberty" incident.

I do not doubt the pain and frustration felt by the author of the book, Mr. Ennes, who was on the Liberty when it came under fire by a friendly Air Force and saw 34 of his fellow crew members killed. Yet he is very wrong when he tries to ascribe, as he does, some dark intentions and violent machinations to the Israelis. As Mr. Ennes well knows, accidents happen during wars. I might add that, unfortunately, more than 34 Israeli soldiers were killed by our own troops in the various wars since 1948, including the Six Day War.

Your readers might be interested in the following excerpt from the recently published memoirs of Mr. I. Rabin, former Prime Minister of Israel and at the time, Israel's Army Chief of Staff:

I was seated in my office at the GHQ command post when I received a message that sounded odd: explosions had been reported in the El Arish area. By that time, El Arish was in our hands and our forces had advanced fifty or sixty miles beyond it along the northern route. An initial guess was that the Egyptians might be coming in from the sea to attack our units in the town, so I ordered the navy and air force to look into the matter. A second report, which arrived an hour later, led to a change in our assessment. A ship had been sighted opposite El Arish. Following standing orders to attack any unidentified vessel near the shore (after appropriate attempts had been made to ascertain its identity), our air force and navy zeroed in on the vessel and damaged

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it. But they still could not tell us whose ship it was. Then a third message removed all doubts, but it sent our anxieties skyrocketing. Our forces had attacked a Soviet spy vessel! I reported to Eshkol and Dayan and called in the senior GHQ commanders for consultation. It was vital to make preparations, but no one wanted to articulate exactly for what. We did not dare put our fears into words, but the question that hung over the room like a giant saber was obvious: Are we facing massive Soviet intervention in the fighting?

Throughout the period of tension that commenced on May 15 and after the outbreak of war, the Soviet navy had reinforced its fleet in the Mediterranean up to a total of seventy vessels (to some extent the U.S. navy had done so as well). Now that the Egyptian and Jordanian armies had been routed and the fighting on two fronts had essentially been decided, would the Soviets take advantage of this incident to join the war and tip the balance in the Arabs' favor? While we were discussing the matter, a fourth report came in and finally clarified the situation. The vessel was American -- amazing but true. Four of our planes flew over it at a low altitude in an attempt to identify the ship, but they were unable to make out any markings and therefore concluded that it must be Egyptian. They notified the navy of their attack, and one of our ships finished the task by firing off torpedoes at the *Liberty*, leaving the vessel heavily damaged.

I must admit I had mixed feelings about the news -- profound regret at having attacked our friends and a tremendous sense of relief stemming from the assumption that one can talk with friends and render explanations and apologies. The frightful prospect of a violent Soviet reprisal had disappeared. After consultation with the prime minister and the defense minister, we reported the mishap to the American embassy, offered the Americans a helicopter to fly out to the ship, and promised all the necessary help in evacuating casualties and salvaging the vessel. The Americans immediately accepted our offer, and one of our helicopters took their naval attaché to the ship.

The scene aboard the *Liberty* was dismal. There were many wounded and some thirty-two dead, including a number of American Jews serving in the crew because of their command of Hebrew. The vessel's task was to monitor the IDF's signals networks and a rapid follow-up of events on the battlefield by tracking messages transmitted between the various headquarters. The Sixth Fleet declined our services, evacuated their own wounded, and towed the vessel to Naples (one of its home ports) for repairs.

It was only later, while serving as Israel's ambassador to the United States, that I learned further details that cast light on the tragic episode from an American viewpoint. With the outbreak of the fighting on June 5, we notified the American naval attaché in Israel that we intended to protect our shores from Egyptian naval attacks by employing a combination of naval and air units. In the

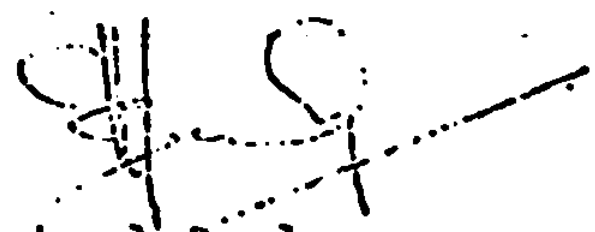
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event that Egyptian vessels approached our shores, we would not be able to delay our response. We therefore asked that American ships be removed from the vicinity of the Israeli shore or that the Americans notify us of their precise location in the area near our coast. In the storm of battle, there was no time to check whether or not our request had been fulfilled. During my term as ambassador, however, I learned that Washington had indeed instructed the Sixth Fleet to move its vessels away from the Israeli coastline, but due to a bureaucratic blunder the order failed to reach the *Liberty*.

What we at GHIQ could not have known during those tension-filled moments was that this local misunderstanding might easily have set off a far more wide-ranging war. Just as our pilots had failed to identify the markings of the ship (and at one point tentatively surmised that it was Russian), the Americans had failed to identify the planes that had attacked them, and their initial impression was that Soviet aircraft were assaulting a unit of the Sixth Fleet! In his autobiography, President Johnson depicted the incident as one of the most critical moments in his life, for he faced the awesome decision of ordering U.S. aircraft to attack the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean. I encountered a fascinating parallel: just as we were relieved to learn that the ship was American, rather than Soviet, Johnson and the heads of the American armed forces were reassured upon hearing that the attackers were Israelis. This in no way detracts from the pain of the human tragedy involved, but at least we were not plunged into a third world war.

In any event, to express our goodwill and humanitarian concern, the Israeli government paid thirteen million dollars in compensation to the families of the Americans killed or wounded in the attack. Yet despite repeated pressure, we refused to bear the cost of repairing the vessel, since we did not consider ourselves responsible for the chain of errors. Regrettably, the Americans remained somewhat resentful about the affair, at least for the duration of the Johnson administration.

These are the facts - tragic and painful enough. There is surely no need for any unnecessary and false accusations of a premeditated plan.

  
Michael Daviy  
Consul General of Israel

In recent weeks several articles have appeared in the Washington Post about James Ennes' book "Assault on the Liberty" which treats the Israeli attack on the United States intelligence-gathering ship USS Liberty during the Six-Day War in 1967.

Ennes, Israel and the United States Naval Court of Inquiry all agree that the USS Liberty was attacked on June 8th by Israeli planes and motor torpedo boats. While the Israeli and the U.S. Navy Courts of Inquiry concluded that the attack was a mistake, (Israel believed the Liberty was an Egyptian vessel) Ennes claims the attack was deliberate.

However, when one examines the military facts and the political situation, it becomes clear that Ennes' conclusions do not tally with the facts.

1. If Israel had planned in advance to sink the Liberty, Israel's Air Force would have sent in airplanes loaded with heavy bombs which is the effective way to sink a ship. Instead, the Liberty was attacked by airplanes - diverted from other missions - armed with rockets and guns used in group support actions. It was also attacked by motor torpedo boats which would have been totally unnecessary in a pre-planned attack. These facts confirm the U.S.-Israeli conclusion that the attack was a spontaneous unplanned assault on what was assumed to be an Egyptian ship.

What occurred on June 8th was that military headquarters had received reports from ground troops that Israeli positions were being shelled from the sea. (It later turned out that the explosions which were the source of these reports were due to other causes). Two Mirage planes were then diverted from the ground support action to seek out



the ship. By the color, antennae and guns they identified a war ship and requested permission to attack. The attack began and the planes were later joined by torpedo boats. Since Israel had no idea that the Liberty was in Sinai waters, and since all foreign shipping was avoiding the war zone, it is more than understandable that Israel assumed the Liberty was an Egyptian war ship.

2. This leads us to the obvious question: Why should Israel deliberately attack an American ship? Friendship with the United States is the cornerstone of Israel's foreign policy and in 1967 Israel had excellent relations with the United States. It would require an extremely strong provocation for Israel to risk making an enemy of the United States.

Ennes advances the very weak suggestion that Israel attacked the Liberty so that the United States would not learn about the forthcoming operation against Syria in the Golan Heights and thus prevent the attack. The only fear that Israel had about the Golan attack was Soviet intervention. It was natural that Israel would not want the Soviets or the Syrians to know of the Golan operation. What the United States knew or did not know made little difference. In fact, Israel counted on U.S. pressure on the Soviets to keep them out of the conflict should the U.S.S.R. decide to intervene. It is illogical to imagine that Israel would risk making an enemy of the United States without any real motive. It should also be noted that if the Liberty was interested in the Syrian front, she should have been sailing off the Lebanese coast and not off the Sinai coast over one hundred miles away.

3. One could also ask if indeed the aim was to sink the Liberty, why did Israel terminate the attack before achieving its goal. Israel had enough airplanes, torpedoes and bombs to be able to sink the ship, yet the attack was stopped.

Since Ennes' conclusions are contradicted by the military facts and the illogicality of his suggested motive, we need only to examine a few of the details he presents in his book.

4. To bolster his argument, Ennes writes that the American flag was clearly displayed and since there were a series of reconnaissance flights, Israel must have been able to identify the ship.

A series of reconnaissance flights? If Israel had identified the ship as Ennes claims, and then planned to sink it, it would have been extremely unwise to keep sending reconnaissance flights which could only serve to warn the Liberty of an impending attack. In fact, there were no reconnaissance flights. What Ennes might have taken for reconnaissance flights were cargo and troop transport planes flying between Israel and Sinai. The Liberty steamed under one of the flight corridors of the Israeli Air Force.

The only reconnaissance was done briefly by the two fast-flying Mirage attack planes. Even if, as Ennes claims, the flag was flying, a flag seen from the air is a very narrow strip. Flags are intended to be seen by surface vessels and not from the air by fast-flying jets. When the motor torpedo boats arrived later, the ship was already surrounded by smoke.

5. Ennes states that an Israeli jet radioed its headquarters that it had sighted an American ship. There is no record in the entire air force of such a report.

6. In an article in the Post Ennes asserts that Israel jammed the Liberty's transmitter to prevent her from calling for help. Anyone who possesses a minimum knowledge of electronic warfare knows that one does not jam transmitters but jams the ability to receive a clear signal. For Israel to have prevented messages from the Liberty being received, it would have been necessary to jam the entire sixth fleet,

if not the entire world. To say that such jamming equipment existed on a fighter plane is a grave error.

7. If indeed Israel was listening to the Liberty's wire channels, and if the Israeli plan was to destroy the ship and its crew to keep the attack secret as Ennes implies, why did Israel not stop the attack when the American ship Saratoga acknowledged receipt of the Liberty's call for help at 14:09 which meant that Israel's supposed secret attack had failed? Once again, Ennes thesis is contradicted by the facts.

8. In an attempt to make the Israeli attack seem more bloodthirsty, Ennes describes the appearance of 2 Israeli troop-laden helicopters, apparently sent to finish off the survivors. While there is no mystery regarding the arrival of the two helicopters, what is a mystery is how the author knows they were carrying armed troops and were not there for rescue. No military officer would dream of sinking a ship by sending armed troops in helicopters in broad daylight. Nor does one attempt to sink life boats before sinking the ship itself.

Ennes also claims that the torpedo boats fired on the life rafts. One wonders how he could draw such a conclusion since anyone with torpedo boat experience knows that even with the best care shells are spread over a thousand-yard area. Why does Ennes assume the shots were aimed at the life boats when they could just as easily been aimed at the ship, which in fact was the case. The truth of the matter is that as soon as Israel Defence Forces headquarters realized that a mistake had been made, the torpedo boats offered their assistance, two helicopters were sent with medical aid and a tugboat was ordered out of Ashdod to help the Liberty. It should also be mentioned that the Prime Minister of Israel sent a personal message of sympathy to President Johnson after the incident.

It should be clear by now that what occurred on June 8 was a tragic mistake. If the Israelis had the same 20/20 hindsight as Ennes does and had the time to leisurly contemplate matters, the attack could not have taken place. However, as those who have been in battle know, under the stress of battle conditions, snap decisions must be made with the best available data. This history of war, let alone naval war, is full of incredible incidents involving mistaken identity that under normal peaceful conditions would never had occurred.

It is perhaps understandable that a person who was wounded in this unfortunate incident, as Ennes was, should seek to impute the worst motivation to the attacker. This may be the reason that Ennes allows his evident rancor and subjectivity to override objective analysis. The reason he attributes to Israel for staging a premeditated attack on an American ship is illogical and unrealistic, while the military facts clearly show that the attack could not have been planned. The attack on the Liberty was a case of mistaken identity, and when the mistake was noticed, all practical steps were taken to assist the ship.





Information Background

October 18, 1977

THE U.S.S. LIBERTY INCIDENT

Periodically the mistaken Israeli attack on the U.S.S. Liberty during the Six Day War, is brought up by Arab sympathizers in letters to the editor, paid advertisements, etc. It seems clearly to be an orchestrated campaign and therefore we would like to provide the following information:

1. On September 19, 1977, C.I.A. Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner, said the following in an interview with ABC's Steve Ball on "Good Morning America":

Steve Ball: "A group of Palestinian supporters in the U.S. has taken out ads in the New York Times which use raw C.I.A. data gained from the F.O.I. (Freedom of Information Act). The accusation is made that Moshe Dayan specifically ordered the attack on the U.S.S. Liberty in the 1967 Middle East War. Can you give us the enlightenment on that?"

Adm. Turner: "I certainly can, and I am glad, Steve, that you emphasized the words raw intelligence data. We are required under the F.O.I. Act to produce to those who ask for it, intelligence documents which can be unclassified. In those which we released there were several which indicated a possibility that the Israeli Government knew about the U.S.S. Liberty before the attack. Also, we released an evaluated over-all document which said very clearly that it was our considered opinion that the Israeli Government had no such knowledge at that time."

2. Israel has paid full compensation to all the families affected.
3. While the Liberty incident was an unfortunate case of mistaken identity in the heat of the War, Palestinian terrorists, aided by Arab Governments, have murdered in a cold-blooded premeditated way two American Ambassadors in the Sudan and Lebanon and scores of other innocent American civilians in such massacres as the hijacking of a TWA plane from Los Angeles to Damascus (August 1969) and the machine-gunning of 27 Puerto Rican tourists at Lod Airport (May 1972).

*I have made a follow up request for the apparently missing pages on this background sheet.*



# NEWS RELEASE

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PLEASE NOTE DATE

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June 28, 1967

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Attached is a summary of the proceedings of the U. S.

Navy Court of Inquiry convened June 10, 1967, to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) on June 8, 1967.

Attached also is the unclassified transcript of the testimony before the Court by the Commanding Officer of the USS LIBERTY, Commander William L. McGonagle, USN.

- E N D -

*James M. Ennes Jr. Research Papers*  
*Jim I didn't copy the remaining pages of this news release summary which I assume you have already. If not let me know and I'll copy the remaining 27 pages.*

# Myths and Facts 1982

A Concise Record of the  
Arab-Israeli Conflict

**NEAR  
EAST  
REPORT**

Edited by Leonard J. Davis  
and Moshe Decter

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# Myths and Facts 1982

A Concise Record of  
the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Edited by Leonard J. Davis  
and Moshe Decter

**NEAR  
EAST  
REPORT**

Washington, D.C.



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Washington letter  
on American policy  
in the Middle East

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#### Preface

April 25, 1982. The day Israel completed its final withdrawal from the Sinai, in conformity with the terms of the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty.

A memorable date that brought to a close a historic epoch in Middle East politics, initiated on that other day in November 1977 when Prime Minister Menachem Begin welcomed President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem. The profound significance of that five-year period lay in the simple fact of peace: the sole instance of an Arab nation whose leadership found within itself the moral and psychological strength to accept Israel's legitimate right in the region.

Israel's exodus was marked by an ambience of anguish and hope. Wars had been fought over the Sinai. Many casualties had been suffered, on both sides. Israel was giving up an enormous investment valued at \$17 billion—in military and geographical security, in innovative communal living, in large scale construction, in agricultural creative effort, that, as so often in the history of Jewish development in Palestine and Israel, turned a patch of desert into a garden.

It was a trauma justified for Israel only by the hope of permanent peace with Egypt. That hope was decisive because, aside from Egypt, Israel remained embattled, beleaguered, the only country in the world whose fundamental right to exist is rejected by all the surrounding Arab regimes, which consider all of its land to be "occupied territory," and which unabashedly intend, by a variety of means, to extirpate it.

The approaching period will be perhaps the time of highest tension in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a period when the most intractable of the problems will be uppermost on the agenda of that conflict: the ultimate disposition of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank of the Jordan River), the negotiations for Palestinian Arab autonomy, the unity of Jerusalem. These are not intrinsically insurmountable problems; in the end, they can be resolved in the same way that the Sinai matter was eliminated from contention—by the Arab acceptance of Israel's steadily outstretched hand in peace.

This volume, *Myths and Facts*, is the most recent in a series that began 15 years ago, as a special supplement of

*Near East Report.* This edition is dedicated, not to an individual, but to the hope for peace fervently embraced in Israel and, it is to be hoped, in Egypt and eventually in all other parts of the Arab world. We hope that this book will help people gain a surer comprehension of the issues that remain before that hope can be realized.

This book was measurably enhanced by the efforts of Lori Bierman, Joan Dine, Joyce Miller, Minette Perler, David Silverberg, Kenneth Toltz and Frandee Woolf. Two individuals deserve special appreciation: Sue Werman, for her creative editing; and Lisa Schneider, for her masterful coordination of the enterprise.

Leonard J. Davis  
Director of Information and Research  
American Israel Public Affairs Committee  
Moshe Decter  
Editor  
*Near East Report*

Washington, D.C.  
May 1982

## 1

### The Right To Exist

#### MYTH

*"Israel is an artificial entity created by the United Nations and has no right to exist."*

#### FACT

Arab rhetoric invariably begins by claiming that Israel has no right to exist as a sovereign Jewish state.

Israel, in fact, has a marginal and continuous history more ancient than that of most other nations. Its international "birth certificate" was validated by the promise of the Bible: uninterrupted Jewish settlement from the time of Joshua onward; the British Balfour Declaration of 1917; the League of Nations Mandate, which incorporated the Balfour Declaration; the UN partition resolution of 1947; Israel's admission to the UN in 1949; the recognition of Israel by most other states; and the society created by Israel's people in decades of thriving, dynamic national existence.

The Jewish people have maintained ties to their historic homeland for more than 3,700 years. A national language and a distinct civilization have been maintained. The return to Israel has continued throughout the centuries, and 78 years of nation-building, beginning in 1870, culminated with the reestablishment of a Jewish state.

#### Abba Eban on the right to exist:

"Nobody does Israel any service by proclaiming its 'right to exist'."

"Israel's right to exist, like that of the United States, Saudi Arabia and 152 other states, is axiomatic and unserved. Israel's legitimacy is not suspended in midair awaiting acknowledgement. . . ."

"There is certainly no other state, big or small, young or old, that would consider mere recognition of its 'right to exist' a favor, or a negotiable concession. . . ."

—The New York Times, November 15, 1981



by Arab forces... bears out Ben Gurion's fear that Israel could yet find herself in the vise of a nutcracker."

Nasser tightened the noose around Israel on June 4, when he persuaded Iraq to join the alliance.

On May 31, President Aref of Iraq declared:

"The existence of Israel is an error which must be rectified. This is our opportunity to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948. Our goal is clear—to wipe Israel off the map."

Israel faced a dual threat: She was surrounded by armies which would be able to use Soviet weapons on all frontiers (and U.S. and British weapons on one of them). Her window to the Orient, to the Indian Ocean and to the east coast of Africa was closed. The blockade was the first act of war.

#### \* MYTH

"Israel deliberately attacked an American ship, the U.S.S. *Liberty*, in the Mediterranean."

#### FACT

The attack on the *Liberty* was a tragic mistake. But it must be recalled that the incident occurred in the midst of a full-scale war.

None of Israel's accusers has been able adequately to explain why Israel would have needed or wanted to attack an American ship. A foul-up in a long line of communications in a tense atmosphere is a more probable and logical explanation. As a former high-ranking Israeli naval officer, Shlomo Erell, told the *Associated Press* (June 5, 1977), "No one would ever have dreamt that an American ship would be there. Even the United States didn't know where its ship was. We were advised by the proper authorities that there was no American ship within 100 miles." Former Israeli air force chief, Mordechai Hod, told the *Associated Press* that no Israeli aircraft had been sent on reconnaissance of the ship before the attack, and that the Americans must have seen low-flying Israeli aircraft on bombing missions to Egypt. He added that Israeli planes were diverted from other missions after the Israeli navy, which identified the ship as an enemy vessel, called them in to attack. Is-

raeli torpedo boat commander Limor, explained that "the high masts and many weird antennas showed that this was a warship... I suspected it was a Russian intelligence ship...."

Former U.S. Ambassador Walworth Barbour, who served in Tel Aviv during the Six-Day War, stated in an interview that the attack was "just a mix-up."

A notorious proponent of the theory that Israel deliberately attacked the *Liberty* is Anthony Pearson, a British writer, whose propaganda was published in a book, *Conspiracy of Silence*, and in an article in *Penthouse* magazine in 1976. Pearson erroneously asserts that American pilots flew in the Israeli air force (a charge even the Syrians had dropped by 1976) and that Israel had tampered with Egyptian-Jordanian communications during the war, leading the Egyptians to believe that the Jordanian army was making a successful attack on Hebron, a city that was in Jordanian hands at the time. Much of Pearson's "findings" are a rewrite of charges published by former Rep. James Rarick of Louisiana, once described by the *Almanac of American Politics* as the "most rabidly right-wing member of Congress (who) regularly inserts [into the Congressional Record] the most vitriolic kind of far-right, sometimes anti-Semitic propaganda."

The facts are as follows. On June 8, 1967, the third day of the war, Israeli planes and vessels mistook the *Liberty*, which was 14 miles off the Sinai coast, for an Egyptian vessel. They attacked, killing 34 of the *Liberty's* crew.

The misidentification of the *Liberty* as an Egyptian vessel was understandable. The ship was far from the Sixth Fleet, to which it belonged. That morning, an Egyptian vessel had fired on Israeli positions in El Arish. The *Liberty* was first reported to be cruising at 22 knots, a rate usually maintained only by warships (the speed estimate turned out to be wrong). The *Liberty's* flag, according to testimony of crew members, may not have been discernible because there was little wind and the flag was knocked down after the first assault. Also after the first assault, the *Liberty's* commander refused an Israeli request that the ship identify itself. And according to testimony of its own crew, the *Liberty* bore at least a surface resemblance to the *El Quseir*, an Egyptian ship.

In 1980, one of the ship's officers, former Lieutenant James M. Ennes, Jr. charged in his book, *Assault on the*



*Liberty*, that Israel deliberately attacked the ship to prevent it from monitoring the intended Israeli attack on Syria. He does not, however, explain why, if the *Liberty* was monitoring the Israel-Syrian border, the boat was not situated in a northern location, or at least a more central location, rather than off the Egyptian-Israeli border, as it was. Also, it is inconceivable that the Israelis, who were defending themselves against massive Arab armies on two fronts already, would feel any need to hide their self-defense in the face of Syrian aggression.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told Congress on July 26, 1967, "It was the conclusion of the investigatory body, headed by an admiral of the navy in whom we have great confidence, that the attack was not intentional." Israel apologized for the attack and paid nearly \$13 million in reparations to the United States and to the families of the victims. The last payment was received in December 1980, when the U.S. officially closed the books on the matter.

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## Between The Wars 1967-1969

### MYTH

"After the 1967 war, Israel refused to negotiate a settlement with the Arabs."

### FACT

After its victory in the Six Day War, Israel hoped that the Arab states would finally recognize the reality of its existence and enter into peace negotiations. Israel signalled to the Arab states its willingness to relinquish virtually all of the occupied territories in exchange for a genuine peace.

But these hopes were dashed in August 1967 when Arab leaders meeting in Khartoum adopted a formula of three "no's":

"Kings and presidents have agreed to unified efforts at international and diplomatic levels to eliminate the consequences of aggression and to assure the withdrawal of the aggressor forces of Israel from Arab lands, but within the limits to which Arab states are committed: no peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel and maintenance of the rights of Palestinian people in their nation."

### MYTH

"Israel refused to implement Security Council Resolution 242, adopted in November 1967."

### FACT

On Nov. 22, 1967, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution establishing the principles which were to guide the negotiations for a settlement. Both Arabs and Israelis contend that they have accepted this resolution. But there has always been sharp disagreement over its real meaning.

The Arabs point to the statement of principles calling for Israeli withdrawal but are quick to ignore the other

12

~~TOP SECRET~~

8 June 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BOSTON

MR. BUNNY

MR. SMITH

SUBJECT: Why the USS LIBERTY Was Where It Was

Attachment 1 shows the JIC forecast for June with the approved mission of the USS LIBERTY.

This was changed by a routine submission on 7 June. These are normally noted by Jenson for the White House, McAfee for State, and Chapin for CIA. Being proposed by BOD, it is assumed this had full Pentagon approval, in this case Vance.

Routine changes without specific indication as to number of nautical miles off shore are merely noted and entered in the book.

It would seem to have been unnecessary at the time to submit this particular track change to the principals at the date submitted.

Let me make myself clear. There is no doubt in my mind that JIC is complete, in the clear, having submitted this change in plans in good faith and on a timely basis.

Whether the actual nautical distance of the USS LIBERTY from the UAE coast on 8 June was unwise in view of the hostilities or whether this should be gauged as an accident of war is for others to judge.

Attachments (4)

*[Signature]*  
Robert Jenson

SENT

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James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers

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USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER

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James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers

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# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



8 JUNE 1987

• • • THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER • • •  
MARCH 1986

## **JIM MILLER WINS COURT APPEAL BUT GOVERNMENT APPEALS TO A STILL-HIGHER COURT**

By Jim Miller

As readers of these pages know, I have for almost four years sought scores of documents that Jim Ennes originally asked for in a suit filed in 1978 while doing research for his book. Although the government certified to Ennes that he had received all USS Liberty documents in State Department files and persuaded him on that basis to cease further action, my less-broad but more tenacious suit forced the Department to release hundreds of documents including the critically important Salans Report.

Under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, when a citizen "substantially prevails," as we feel we did in this case, the government is required to pay his legal fees. The theory is that he would have had no fees if the government had obeyed the law by providing the documents administratively in the first place as required by law instead of forcing the citizen to enforce his basic rights through the courts.

In 1985 the court heard our case, denied access to further materials, found that we had not "substantially prevailed" (even though our suit had forced loose hundreds of new documents), and denied our request for legal fees.

We appealed.

On December 30, 1985, a three judge panel of the Eighth Circuit Appeals Court issued a

unanimous decision reversing the District Court's decision concerning payment of my legal expenses, while finding with the government and against me with regard to my request for review and release of additional documents. This partial victory, however, is vitally important both to me personally and for the precedent it establishes, since my legal expenses which I hope to recover now come to approximately \$25,000--most of which has come from my personal, household funds.

Said the Court (page 7): "...the conclusion seems inescapable that but for the plaintiff's persistent prosecution of his claim he would not have received the documents he did."

(page 22): "The FOIA does not contain a statutory exception for administrative inefficiency. When a private citizen is obliged to seek legal services in order to wrest from the government information which the government had no legal reason to withhold from him, he is entitled under the Act to be reimbursed for the cost to which he has been put."

"We hold that Mr. Miller substantially prevailed...because his vigorous prosecution of this lawsuit compelled the Department to take his request seriously. Having prevailed, Miller was eligible to recover attorneys' fees and the costs of his suit. We conclude that the District Court abused its discretion...and we therefore remand to the District Court for a determination of the proper amount of fees to be awarded."

Unfortunately, the government, through its appellate staff in the Department of Justice, has

Remember the USS Liberty

filed a petition for a rehearing before the full eleven member District Court of Appeals. This is particularly interesting, since appeals to the full court are specifically restricted to "compelling and important issues." Personally, I think the government's resources could be better spent prosecuting criminals.

I will keep you informed. Meanwhile, my attorney believes that the government's case is as weak as it has ever been.

#### ADMIRAL MOORER HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE ON USS LIBERTY ATTACK

On December 11 Admiral Moorer conducted a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., to discuss the similarities between the government's handling of the Pollard espionage affair and the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty. There is a danger, Admiral Moorer complained, that the Pollard case will be swept aside without a proper examination just as the Liberty case has been. Moorer was flanked by Liberty crewmen Jim Ennes, Stan White and Joe Lentini. Also in attendance was crewman Ernie Gallo.

Moorer's remarks and his renewed call for a Congressional investigation of the Liberty matter brought an article by Tom Burgess in the 30 December Navy Times, and an article and photograph in the 23 December issue of the Spotlight, followed by a fine letter to the editor by Stan White on January 6. Several references to the Liberty by columnists and news writers in December may have been inspired by the news conference.

#### USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

##### Spy Case Renews Interest in the USS LIBERTY

In November, Navy counter-intelligence analyst Jonathan Jay Pollard was caught near the Israeli Embassy in Washington trying to defect to Israel soon after FBI agents had discovered that Pollard had for two years been a paid spy for the Israeli government. According to news reports, Pollard phoned his "contact" at the embassy and was told to come in if he could do so without being seen by the Americans. Instead, he and his wife drove openly into the embassy grounds in plain sight of agents who were following him. Under the circumstances, the Israelis refused asylum and returned the Pollards to the street, where Mr. Pollard was promptly placed under arrest. Two days later Mrs. Pollard was also arrested.

The New York Times was among the first to relate the USS Liberty to the Pollard case. In somewhat twisted reasoning, the Times on November 23 ran a front page article by Stephen Engleberg entitled "Spying on Allies Common." To support his thesis, Engleberg mentioned a number of incidents including the Liberty attack and an incident in which a senior U.S. official, one Stephen Bryen, was overheard offering to supply classified information to the Israelis. "...Today the United States has barred spying against Israel," Engleberg writes, citing former

Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders as his source.

The Times article concludes: "In 1967, the United States dispatched a ship [unnamed] with sophisticated listening devices into the Gulf of Sinai in Israel's six day war with Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The ship was equipped to monitor radio transmissions by both sides and was bombed by Israel, which said the attack was an accident.

"The Navy later concluded that the ship was in international waters and properly marked. James Ennis [sic], a retired Navy officer who was a cryptanalyst [sic] on the vessel, has charged in a book [unnamed] that the attack was deliberate."

Stan White advised Times editors by letter that Jim Ennes is not the only person to charge that the attack was deliberate, but the newspaper could not find room to print Stan's letter.

A Washington, D.C., radio talk show on November 26 asked Israeli journalist Wolf Blitzer to comment on the USS Liberty. Blitzer ignored the Liberty question and answered instead a question about terrorism.

Soon the Liberty was being mentioned regularly in newspaper articles, letters to the editor, nationally broadcast radio and even almost unprecedented discussion on national commercial television broadcasts.

A Washington Post editorial on November 27 cited the Liberty as one of several incidents that have strained America-Israeli relations. Jim Ennes advised the Post by letter that one cannot reasonably compare the Liberty's mission, conducted openly from international waters, with the activities of paid goons masquerading as loyal American citizens. This letter, too, could find no room in print.

A letter to the editor of the Post on December 12 asked why American journalists seem to downplay incidents such as the Pollard case and the USS Liberty.

A powerful letter by Liberty supporter Colonel J.M. Bradley in the International Herald Tribune criticized the Washington Post for referring to the Liberty as having been merely "shot up" by the Israelis and for suggesting that spying by Pollard somehow balances earlier spying by the USS Liberty.

Ted Koppel's ABC NIGHTLINE on November 27 conducted an extended discussion of Israeli espionage and similar activities against the United States, including the attack on the USS Liberty.

Commentator Bob Zelnick: "...in the midst of the six-day war, Israeli planes attacked the American spy ship Liberty, killing 34 sailors and wounding 171. The vessel had been buzzed by Israeli aircraft for six hours and attacked for two hours, but in the end President Lyndon Johnson accepted Israel's claims that her pilots thought the ship was Egyptian."

James Bamford, intelligence expert [and author of The Puzzle Palace]: "The United States never conducted any intensive congressional hearings into it; the administration at the time seemed to try to hide the whole



incident under the rug because of the embarrassment. ...I think it could have been pursued a lot more vigorously than it was."

This nationally broadcast television discussion show *The McLaughlin Hour* on December 1 featured Jimmie Carter's former press secretary, Hodding Carter, and columnist Robert Novak. Asked about the probable impact of the Pollard case on American-Israeli relations, Carter told a national audience that since Israel had easily escaped official criticism for killing 34 sailors during the attack on the USS *Liberty* in 1967, they would just as easily get away with spying. Novak agreed, adding that the *Liberty* attack had taught the Israelis that they can do anything they want with no fear of American reaction.

An *Associated Press* story filed in Tel Aviv on December 1 also cited the *Yediot Ashronot* article by Yaakov Caroz. Here the main point is the United States also spies on Israel, and gives the USS *Liberty* case as an example.

Gannett newspaper columnist David Rossie mentioned the *Liberty* in a column otherwise devoted to the Pollard case. Rossie's column mentioned the uncharacteristic quickness of the "normally cautious *New York Times*" and other newspapers and politicians to assert loudly and long on little apparent evidence that the attack was "mistaken." Rossie's newspaper, the *Binghamton, New York, Press & Sun-Bulletin*, soon found the paper deluged by a campaign of organized complaints, including a bitter denunciation by a local Israeli spokesman who complained in a letter to the editor that Rossie had given "a slanted and inaccurate version of a tragic event which occurred [sic] more than 18 years ago."

We responded with a letter-to-the-editor recommending that the nay sayers read the Salans Report and the Court of Inquiry transcript instead of relying exclusively and uncritically upon the unsubstantiated excuses of the Israeli attackers.

Columnist Pat Murphy in *The Arizona Republic* wrote that, rather than criticizing Israel, Americans should marvel at Israeli ability to reap rewards with a world-banned policy. The USS *Liberty*, Murphy writes, is but one of many examples of Israeli duplicity.

The *Seattle Times-Intelligencer*, which usually ignores wire service stories about the *Liberty*, cited the *Liberty* attack editorially on December 1 as one of several incidents that have strained Israeli-American relations.

Mary McGarry, in a nationally syndicated column that appeared in the *Washington Post* and elsewhere on December 3 wrote: "Even when the Israelis bombed our spy-ship, the USS *Liberty*, we forgave them. The Israelis have every reason to think they can do no wrong."

C. Patrick Quilan, writing in the *Minneapolis Star & Tribune* on December 4 cited the USS *Liberty* as one of several cases in which "Israel's perceptions of its security needs sometimes outweigh considerations of friendship and common interests."

The *Washington Times*, in a peculiar editorial on December 4, reasoned that "even such exacerbations as Israel's attack on the USS *Liberty*—for which apologies and reparations were made—are mere bygones until such gaffes as the Pollard case resurrect them."

National Public Radio on a nationally broadcast morning news show on December 5 interviewed George Carver, a former special assistant to three CIA directors and now with the Georgetown University Center for Strategic Studies. In a discussion of other unfriendly acts by Israel, Carver described the *Liberty* attack in some detail, including the heavy preattack reconnaissance, the extended attack itself, the loss of the ship and the many deaths and injuries. The attack, said Carver, was deliberately conducted for the purpose of preventing the United States from detecting Israeli preparations for the invasion of Syria.

According to correspondents, the same statements were made by Mr. Carver in a television interview on evangelist Pat Robertson's 700 Club on December 4.

*Middle East International* in a wire service story on December 6 described the *Liberty* in some detail. The Israeli excuse, says UPI, was "contradicted by the fact Israeli planes flew over the American ship for a day at low altitude and likely saw the huge U.S. flag. The subsequent investigation and a book by one crewman concluded the Israelis attacked the ship because it heard radio traffic revealing the Israeli army was about to make a surprise attack on Syrian forces in the Golan Heights."

Daoud Kuttab in *Middle East International* writing from East Jerusalem on December 6 reported that a number of Israeli analysts consider the Pollard case more harmful to Israel than the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*.

*Navy Times* on December 9 ran a 1/3 page special commentary by Navy writer Ron Fraser in which Fraser aptly called the USS *Liberty* "a symbol of government secrecy."

Comparing the ship with the Statue of Liberty, Fraser said: "As craftsmen restore the weather-worn statue, other Americans struggle, under the USS *Liberty* banner, to shore-up a government accountable to its people."

"...while [Chalman Lee] Iacocca already has pryed tens of millions of dollars out of corporate America, including millions from large veterans' groups, [Liberty Veterans Association President Joe] Meadors has not yet found a lever to pry the truth from his government."

"What has been denied these simple sailors for 18 years? What do they want?"

"They want to know why their government abandoned them under fire when a U.S. carrier battle group, with fighters on hot catapults, was just minutes away? They want to know why the White House ordered American warplanes—already en route to help their stricken ship—to return to their carrier?"

"Liberty survivors are simply calling on their direct representatives in the Congress to bring the executive branch to account for its actions in this affair. Is that too much to ask?"

"...Is it not their right to ask the reason why and to receive a decent reply?"

Syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer wrote a powerful December 10 column (*The Houston Post*, among others) which put the blame squarely on American officials. "I refer to those congressmen who are bought off by Israeli campaign contributions and those diplomats and Pentagon officials who have in effect allowed what are commonly called the 'Israel Firsters' to supply Israel with everything it needs from inside American intelligence and policy making. Everybody knows this—except the American people who, of course, pay the bills."

As examples, she mentions the Stephen Bryen case and the *Liberty* attack. "No less a military man than Adm. Thomas Moorer says it was a [deliberate] attack."

Two letters in the *Los Angeles Times* on December 13 mention the *Liberty* case in connection with the Pollard affair: "...Now we can expect to hear the usual professions of 'friendship' by both sides as this, like [the *Liberty* and] other incidents, is quietly swept away."

Alexander Cockburn writing in *The Nation* on December 14 wondered why, after years of tolerating or ignoring Israeli espionage against this country, the government suddenly made an arrest. "Maybe," wrote Cockburn, "because Pollard was allegedly taking secrets from the U.S. Navy, an institution with a memory long enough to stretch back to the USS *Liberty*."

A 2/3 page elaborately illustrated article by Jonathan Broder on December 15 ran in several newspapers including the *St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch* and *Chicago Tribune* and as an editorial opinion in the *San Diego Union*. The article mentioned the *Liberty* along with several little-known incidents, such as a case in 1978 when the United States supposedly bugged rooms at Camp David used by Israeli leaders. The point of the article is to argue that both sides gain from the relationship despite the "occasional" problems. American leaders since 1967, Broder writes, "have never allowed the [Liberty] incident to strain U.S.-Israeli ties."

An Associated Press wire service story on December 16 by Bryan Brunley, printed in the *San Diego Union* and other papers, quoted former deputy CIA director George Carver and Admiral Thomas Moorer as both calling the attack on the *Liberty* deliberate. "Any

nation that would do that would not hesitate to swipe a few documents," Carver and Moorer are quoted as saying.

A letter to the editor of the *Dallas Morning News* on December 18 mentioned the *Liberty* and asked why everything is so quickly forgiven once Israel offers an apology.

A letter in the *Kansas City Times* on December 19 asks, "When are we going to indict [Israel] for the murder of 34 U.S. Navy men on the USS *Liberty*?"

A letter to the editor in the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* on December 20 cited the USS *Liberty* along with the Pollard spy case as examples of behavior that the United States should not tolerate.

*Washington Inquirer* magazine in a December 20 article by Allan C. Brownfeld mentioned the *Liberty* along with Pollard and the little known Stephen Bryen case. In this peculiar incident, a Senate aide was overheard offering classified documents to Israeli military officers. Despite a Justice Department finding that Bryen might have been disclosing information to Israel for years and despite a recommendation that the case be further investigated with a view toward possible prosecution for espionage, the case has not been prosecuted. Instead, Bryen was promoted to a top position at the Pentagon. Like the *Liberty*, the evidence was ignored.

Ruth Sinai, writing in the *Saudi Gazette*, quoted Y.akov Caroz, deputy chief of Israel's Mossad intelligence service writing in the Israeli daily newspaper *Yediot Ahronot* about the *Liberty* along with mention of Israeli bugging of the American military attaches home, bribing of marine guards, bombing of American installations in Egypt, and faking a pregnancy in order to extort secrets from a U.S. Embassy employee. Caroz, according to journalist Sinai, wrote that Israel can and does spy upon her allies.

New York Times News Service story by David K. Shieler in the *Dallas Morning News* and other newspapers on December 26 describes several cases of espionage against the United States by Israel. Shieler writes, "The military's annoyance at Israel has other roots as well, including remaining anger of the Israeli sinking [sic] of the USS *Liberty* . . ."

Finally our own Stan White, in a letter to *Navy Times* published in the issue of January 6, wrote that the Navy has never addressed or even acknowledged the awful truth about the *Liberty* and refuses to inquire about why Sixth Fleet aircraft were forbidden to come to the ship's defense while she was under fire. "The USS *Liberty* Veterans Association is still searching for the truth," Stan wrote. "There must be at least one person in our government with the courage, curiosity, and patriotic spirit to help us find it."



Our shipmates continue to work to tell the truth and to uncover more truth about the Liberty.

In the past few weeks John Hrankowski has written to his Congressman and both New York senators, has written to eight other members of Congress, managed to get on the air by telephone on three nationally heard radio talkshows (Ray Breen, Larry King and C-Span), and on several Rochester area talkshows. His approach is to call when he hears the Liberty mentioned and to say, "I was aboard the ship during the attack and here is the way it really was. . ." John says most hosts let him have his say without rebuttal, but that they usually change the subject as quickly as possible.

John gave a talk about the Liberty to the Rochester Vietnam Vets chapter in January and collected signatures from all 75 veterans on a petition in support of a Congressional investigation.

John met with the editorial board of the Rochester newspaper. He says the newspapermen were interested and asked many questions, but did not write about the Liberty as he had hoped.

The *Sheridan Press* in Wyoming interviewed Ron Kukal for a fine article by Bruce Moats that ran in the November 7 edition. In addition to a graphic account of Kukal's experiences, the article described in some detail the Liberty Veterans Association's efforts to tell the story and to correct the official record, and the considerable support survivors have received from national leaders of the era.

"Kukal remembers well the silent airport that greeted the crew upon their return to New York. 'I think that the 34 fellows who died deserve a little more recognition than they've received. . . we just want fairness.'"

Stan White had an article printed in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* on December 13 which outlined the efforts to renew the Liberty investigation. One reader reacted by sending Stan a copy of the article by Israeli journalists Zeev Schiff and Hirsch Goodman that appeared in the September, 1984, *Atlantic Monthly* and suggested that this piece, drawn exclusively from Israeli sources, would answer any question Stan might want to ask. Stan sent the reader a copy of the Salans report (the official State Department report which calls the Israeli excuse untrue) and suggested he try to explain the discrepancies between the Israeli and American descriptions of what happened to the Liberty.

Jim Ennes had a letter to the editor published in the *Binghamton (NY) Press* after a local reader published an account, straight from the Anti-Defamation League "Fact Book" which asserts not only that the attack was an accident, but that the Liberty crew agrees that it was an accident. Ennes referred to the Salans report and other factual material in American files to set the record straight.

According to callers, a member of the audience interviewed on the Phil Donahue Show on location in southern Florida in the first week of February identified himself as a survivor of the Israeli attack on the Liberty. So far, we have not been able to identify that person.

## OTHER NEWS

The *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* printed in their December issue an article by Jim Ennes discussing some of the discrepancies in the September, 1984, *Atlantic Monthly* article on the Liberty.

The *American-Arab Affairs Journal* has scheduled for Spring publication a very comprehensive analysis by Jim Ennes of the *Atlantic's* September, 1984, treatment of the USS Liberty story. The article will run to more than 7,000 words and will be supported by reproduction for the first time in any publication of the complete State Department analysis of the Israeli excuse (known as "the Salans report"). The *Journal* is a bound publication designed for permanent storage on library shelves. Single soft-cover copies are available for \$5.00 by calling 202 296-6766; for hard bound copies call 1 800 828-7571.

The *Spotlight* printed a picture of several Liberty crewmen taken in during the Liberty Forum in September.

A letter in the *Milwaukee Journal* on October 24 asked why the extended uproar over the Achille Lauro hijacking when the USS Liberty attack, which killed 34 men, got almost no reaction at all—either in the press, diplomatically or militarily.

A letter in the Trenton, New Jersey, *Times* challenged letter-writer E.J. Toner for lacking "perspective" by his presumably ill-considered mention of the USS Liberty. Toner replied on November 4 if we had "perspective" the Liberty would be heard from more often.

The *Christian Defense League* Report for December reprinted without permission Jim Ennes's article on the Liberty from the June, 1985, issue of *The Retired Officer*.

A letter to the *Tampa Tribune* by newsletter subscriber Tom Ditzes mentioning the Liberty was promptly followed by an angry letter from Tampa Rabbi Steven Kaplan who chastised Ditzes for mentioning "the ship struck by Israeli fire." Rabbi Kaplan complains that Ditzes' statement that the attack occurred "on a clear day with the American flag displayed" pretends to know "more than even our own intelligence did" about the attack. Kaplan's complaint apparently went unchallenged.



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? By Bob Waltz

Dennis Ellsberry now lives in Amherst, Ohio, with his wife, Donna, and two sons, Aaren and Duane. He is Supervisor for Financial Analysis for Alltel Corporation, attended the 1982 reunion, and is looking forward to attending in 1987.

Joe Bankert retired from the Navy as a Chief Petty Officer three years ago and works in Petersburg, West Virginia, as a paramedic. He lives with his wife, Sharon, and son, Michael. Joe was stationed in Alaska during the 1982 reunion, but says he definitely will attend in 1987.

Maurice Shaffer is the owner of Blazer Associates, manufacturers representatives for office supplies in Marietta, Georgia. The firm has a sales force of 11 people and covers seven southeast states. Maurice lives with his wife, Donna, and two sons, Jeff and Patrick. He attended the 1982 reunion and says he will definitely attend in 1987.

### MOVIES AND TELEVISION FOR THE LIBERTY STORY?

Several former crewmen have heard by now from a British motion picture producer who expects to start work this spring on a one hour Liberty special for British television. The producer tells us that funding is committed for the film and that American independent stations are showing interest in the product.

The producer met with several of us in Washington in September, and has been in touch with several others by mail. We believe he deserves our support and cooperation. If you are contacted and have questions about this project, please call any LVA officer for assurance.

Meanwhile, a major American television producer is presently doing some very serious research into possibly going ahead with a Liberty television story. White, Ennes, Lentini and Ernie Gallo spent several hours with this producer in Washington, D.C., in December and have been in frequent contact with him since. It is too early to know whether he will decide to go ahead with our story.

The South Pasadena promoter who has contacted several of us in the past now seems to be out of the picture. His last overture was in October when he promised to make a serious offer for motion picture rights within seven to ten days. However, he has not yet been able to perform on that promise or apparently to convince any established motion picture studio of his ability to put together a Liberty package. In February, he reverted to another direct-mail fundraising campaign, attempting to raise funds from small investors—an approach which has proven useless in the past.



### LIBERTY MAILBAG

Here is my membership application and check. I was aboard the Liberty from November '65 to November '66 and have a lot of fond memories of that ship. I met Gary Barton when I first came aboard and we became very close friends. In fact, it was Gary who introduced me to my wife.

I was shocked and heartbroken to learn of the attack and the loss of so many friends. I kept up with all news about the ship, but in about one week there was no further news to be had. I've often wondered why the attack on an American ship by Israel was hushed up so quickly. Now I know why. It was a cover up!

I just discovered the Liberty Veterans Association through Gary Barton and I will do all I can to help bring this cover-up out into the open.

/s/ Alan Sutes



### CONGRESS REPLIES TO LIBERTY QUESTIONS

Some things never change. We have come across a State Department letter of August 25, 1977, addressed to then-Senator Adlai Stevenson III in reply to the senator's questions about payment for damages to the USS Liberty and his questions about continued support for Israel in the face of Israeli intransigence. The department used language identical to that being routinely sent to Member of Congress today, and concluded: "Our support for Israel derives from our commitment to freedom and democracy in the world. U.S. assistance to Israel is of direct importance to the United States in avoiding the outbreak of another war in the Middle East."

Hundreds of people are writing to their Congressmen about the USS Liberty. Most of the replies we have seen are astounding. In fact, the mail we see is typically so disingenuous and shockingly evasive as to make one wonder seriously about the quality of leadership in Washington.

For instance, Senator Patrick Moynihan of New York, after publicly declaring in the wake of the Pollard case that "It is time to start pulling finger nails," turned predictably into a matzoh ball when asked about the Liberty. Said Moynihan: "I will remember your views if this matter comes to the Senate floor for a vote." If Moynihan pulls fingernails, you can bet they won't be Israeli fingernails.

The next issue of this newsletter will reproduce a generous sample of the Congressional mail. Meanwhile, please send us all replies you receive from Congressmen and administration leaders. If you have not written and would like to see a suggested sample letter, send a self addressed, stamped envelope to Bob Waltz, 1081 Barone Drive, Weirton, WV 26062.



## CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE STRIKES OUT!

Members of Congress, when asked about the USS *Liberty*, frequently consult the Congressional Research Service—an arm of the Library of Congress—for information.

A typical package received by a Member of Congress consists of five items: A 1967 Pentagon press release which calls the attack an accident, Dr. Richard K. Smith's fair but incomplete 1978 article in *Naval Institute Proceedings*, a 1980 review of *Assault on the Liberty* by Taylor Walsh from the defunct *Washington Star*, a 1980 *Washington Post* editorial, and the full 10,000 word 1984 apologia by two Israeli journalists in *Atlantic Monthly*. Hardly a balanced or up-to-date account, particularly when the only article published within the last six years is an undocumented fairy tale drawn straight from the official Israeli excuse with no American input whatsoever.

We suggested to the Congressional Research Service in October that a balanced account should include the published remarks of Thomas Moorer, Richard Helms, Louis Tordella, Dean Rusk or *Liberty* survivors. We suggested that any balanced account should include a copy of the official State Department analysis of the Israeli version of the attack (the same version told in the *Atlantic*) and any of several published accounts of interviews with survivors and other American participants. We sent copies and asked for acknowledgement.

There has been no reply. We wrote again in December. Still no reply.

Is the esteemed Congressional Research Service unable to treat this subject fairly?

We hope readers will ask their Congressmen to pursue this thorny issue.



### HELO PILOT RECALLS LIBERTY by Bob Hamel

I flew the first UH-2A rescue helicopter after the attack. We launched from the carrier *America* at first light and were vectored to the *Liberty* by a radar picket aircraft. The seas were dead calm and the sun had yet to rise when we spotted the shattered hulk—that is what she looked like, a shattered hulk trailing oil.

I couldn't land, so with the able direction of my crew chief, I "hovered" with one wheel on the deck edge, near a holed gun tub. I will never forget the quantity of blood in that gun tub, since that was my point of reference as I held the chopper in a semi-hover.

We took aboard several of your wounded, and I recall that your part of the operation was handled remarkably well by a young 2nd class (I think) P.O. The wounded could talk and my crew and I got an earful all the way back to the *America*.

I have no doubts whatsoever that the USS *Liberty* was deliberately attacked in a coordinated attack designed to destroy her. Speculation as to why might be debated, but that it was deliberate there can be no doubt.

The rage and frustration displayed by our fighter and attack pilots, who were recalled from their [counter-attack or rescue] mission, rivalled the rage and frustration during our restrictions in Vietnam. Believe me, they desperately wanted to avenge you, but the phony "apology" came remarkably fast.

One of your wounded men told me over the intercom that most *Liberty* crewmen not on duty were sunbathing on deck. They had been watching Israeli aircraft c and recce their ship for quite some time and that it was like an air show back home." Suddenly all hell broke loose when the aircraft began strafing the ship. That image will always remain with me.

## CLASSIFIED/CLASSIFIED/CLASSIFIED/CLASSIFIED

Taxes, abortion, Middle East, whatever: your opinion are what make up *The Seeker*. National Monthly. \$15 Annually. POB 1742, Spring Valley, California 92077.

### National Leaders Agree that the Attack was Deliberate

Past interviews and correspondence with government agency heads and other key government leaders from 1967 bring almost unanimous agreement that the attack on the USS *Liberty* was deliberate and planned in advance, and that the Israeli excuse for the attack is untrue.

We find it ironic indeed that every known member of the present administration adheres precisely to the official claim that the attack was accidental, while past officials tend to agree that it was deliberate.

Concurring statements have been provided to newsmen and others by former Secretary of State Dean Rusk, former CIA director Richard Helms, former NSA Deputy Director Dr. Louis Tordella, and former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Thomas Moorer. White House Press Secretary George Christian has told us that "no one in the White House really considered the attack to be entirely accidental."

Other key individuals whose recollections and insights might be helpful, claim to have no recollection of the *Liberty* whatsoever. For instance, former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara is widely noted for his near-photograph memory. According to a key witness and other evidence it was McNamara who personally gave the order to withhold air support that might have saved the *Liberty* from the torpedo attack. Yet, McNamara now claims to have total amnesia concerning this one portion of his tenure in government.

Clark Clifford, who was directed by President Johnson to investigate the matter for the president and who can be seen with the president in White House Situation Room photographs taken during the crisis, claims not to remember being present or to have ever prepared any report on the subject—even though his now-missing report is cited as a source in other government reports on the subject.

Gene Rostow, who received the official excuse from the Israeli government, recalls almost nothing.

Admiral William Martin, whose aircraft were forbidden to go to the Liberty's aid, now claims to recall nothing between Liberty's initial call for help and the Sixth Fleet's second launch of aircraft almost two hours later. Although Sixth Fleet messages and Court of Inquiry files show clearly that Admiral Martin was the USS Liberty's operational commander on June 8, 1967, Admiral Martin now insists that he had no operational responsibilities for the Liberty, was unaware that the ship was in the Mediterranean until he received her call for help, and was in no way responsible for the ship's safety.

So there is a persistent pattern in which government leaders of the era either support us or claim quite inexplicably to have achieved selective amnesia.

Recently we learned of another leader who has gone on record officially stating that he considered the attack was deliberate—and, like the others, this leader was in a position to know. General Marshall Carter, who was Director of the National Security Agency during the attack, has never agreed to be interviewed for publication, citing security and other considerations. However, we have now confirmed that General Carter did testify in 1967 before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations. Relatively brief hearings on the Liberty were conducted in 1967 by the Intelligence Working Group of the Defense Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations chaired by George H. Mahon of Texas. Other members were Robert L.F. Sikes of Florida, Jamie L. Whitten of Mississippi, Frank T. Bow of Ohio, and Glenard P. Lipscomb of California.

General Carter, we have learned, testified under oath before this House committee working group that he considered the attack to have been deliberate. According to author Stephen Green (*Taking Sides, Morrow*) this is the same working group which received CIA testimony that the attack was deliberate and that the United States learned 24 hours in advance of the Israeli decision to attack the USS Liberty.

Several attempts have been made to declassify and release the official report of those hearings. Even after 18 years, the report is classified top secret. Still, members of Congress—who are exempt from Freedom of Information regulations which govern other branches of government—have ignored all requests for release of the committee's report. The only member of the group still in the Congress, Representative Jamie L. Whitten, does not answer mail on this subject.

#### Chaplain's Corner By Chaplain Mike Simpson

Several of our shipmates have mentioned the need for a Liberty Association Chaplain. Shipmate Mike Simpson, a practicing clergyman, has volunteered to help with that task. The following is Mike's first contribution:

Bible Trivia: When was a Navy first mentioned in the Bible?

Answer: 1 Kings 9:26-28 - "And King Solomon made a navy of ships." KJV  
King Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived.

and he knew that it was easier and safer to send ships to collect his gold than to travel across land. Because even with all his wisdom and gold he still had enemies. He also stirred up God's anger against him. So much so that God removed all but one of the tribes of Israel from his kingdom.

But through all this, God gave Solomon a promise, one I believe each of us can apply in the midst of our own troubles today. 1 Kings 11:38 says, "If thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in My ways and do that is right in My sight—I will be with thee and build thee a sure house." KJV

Today, place your name in the place of "Thousand Thee." God promises to be with you. Claim that promise today!

Your shipmate,  
Chaplain Mike

#### Liberty joins the international FIDO network

The Liberty Veterans Association has for some time been directly accessible by computer through the courtesy of Tom Chambers of Bothell, Washington, who has dedicated a generous portion of his private computer bulletin board to Liberty files and messages. Now Tom has upgraded his system to IBM compatible computer equipment and a FIDO bulletin board system. FIDO is an international computerized message network with terminals in major cities almost everywhere. To read or download back issues of the Liberty newsletter, simply have your computer call 206 481-6549. If you only want to send a message to the association, call any member bulletin board in your area and leave a message for Jim Ennes, Fido Net/node 138/26. The message will be sent automatically to the Liberty section of Tom's computer, usually for a charge to you of only 25 cents. For the phone number of your local FIDO node, send a self addressed postal card to the Liberty Newsletter.

#### LIBERTY BELLES

##### To the Wives of the Liberty Crewmen

Have you ever seen women who have met days before cry when they have to say goodbye? Have you ever seen women not want to go, because they have to say farewell for another year or two? What is it that makes a group of women, who have never met before feel like they belong to a special family? I don't know, but whatever it is, it's a very special feeling and it's what the wives who came to the 1982 reunion and to the September 1985 meeting felt.

So this is an open letter inviting all of you to come to the 1987 reunion. If you have to drag your husband along, do so, but be sure to come.

Not only do you get to meet some of your husband's old buddies, but you get to hear some great stories about how they act when you're not around, or how they were before you were around.

The reunion isn't all Navy stories and B.S. We wives have some good times too—shopping, sightseeing,



1

talking. Occasionally we do invite the husbands. We give them a chance to rehash some old memories without (and with) us around. So please plan on coming to the 1987 reunion, and become a part of our family.

/s/ Jean Meadors (Joe's wife)

#### Grandpa's Chocolate Chip Cookies From Jean's Kitchen

Blend 1st - 4 sticks of butter  
1 1/2 cup white sugar  
1 1/2 cup brown sugar

Then add - 4 eggs  
2 tsp. soda  
4 1/2 cups flour  
4 cups oatmeal  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 pkg. choc. chips

(The bigger the bag of chips, the more chocolate in the cookie.) Drop on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degree for 8 to 10 minutes. This makes a big batch of chewy chip cookies.

#### Assault on the Liberty Reprinted Again

Random House in January ordered a fifth printing of *Assault on the Liberty*, out of print since September. The new edition will retail for \$14.95, a one dollar increase over the previous edition but considerably less of a jump than the \$6.00 increase that had been expected. The more reasonable price is possible because of several very large orders that have made possible a larger printing. With this printing, 55,000 copies of *Assault on the Liberty* are in print.

The new books are expected to be available by late March and can be ordered from any bookstore or, postage paid, for \$16 from Terry's Bookstore, POB 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.

Very late word is that there may be some further delay, because Random House has lost the artwork for the dust cover, which will have to be redone.

#### MORE ABOUT SPYMASTERS OF ISRAEL

We mentioned in the December issue that "Spymasters of Israel" (MacMillan, 1980) by Stewart Steven claims that the Liberty was attacked deliberately by Israel only after the Israeli generals learned that the ship had discovered that Israel was blocking, changing and then forwarding doctored versions of Arab military messages. According to Steven, Israel broadcast a message "making it plain to the Liberty that it had been spotted and that unless it sailed instantly the Israelis would have to take action." When the ship did not move, according to Steven, Israeli

fighters with orders to disable the ship rather than to sink it "launched three strikes" against the Liberty. President Johnson realized that Israel had called America's bluff. So the official Israeli version, though the Americans knew it to be absolutely untrue, was publicly accepted and written into the historical records.

Steven writes: "The USS Liberty, said Israeli negotiators, had sailed knowingly into a war zone, had spied upon the combatants, and had suffered the consequences. The responsibility for that, said the Israelis, lay fairly and squarely with the Americans." That, though in somewhat more diplomatic language, was precisely the Israeli position during damage settlement negotiations. The rest, we are convinced, is far off the mark.

Twice we have written to Mr. Steven to explain that, except for the deliberateness of the attack, his account does not square with with other provable facts. For example, Liberty was nowhere near the coast when the war started, as Steven claims, and could not possibly have intercepted the messages described by Mr. Steven. Nor were messages ever directed to the ship by Israel. Nor was the Liberty stationed "fifteen miles north of the Sinai" on June 7 in a position to intercept tactical battlefield communications on June 5 as claimed by Steven.

At last we have received a reply from Stewart Steven. Says Mr. Steven: "I accept entirely all you say in your letter, but as I know the nature and quality of those who told me about all these events I remain convinced that a concealed hand was at work which you may not have been aware of. . . you may find some interesting material. . . in the unpublished records of negotiations. . . which led to the Israeli offer of compensation. I have, of course, read [Assault on the Liberty] which I thought admirable though I found myself unable to believe it."

So much for Mr. Stevens. He cannot provide sources or other evidence and sticks doggedly by his assertion that the Liberty was off the coast and intercepting key Israeli battlefield communications as early as June 5 and received messages directly from the Israeli government ordering the ship to move.

For those who may wonder, we do have a complete file of messages dealing with damage negotiations, for deaths and injuries as well as the more extended negotiations for damage to the ship. The only additional light they shed on the subject is the many Israeli efforts to avoid responsibility for the attack.

#### BUMPER STICKERS

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., have printed an additional 5,000 beautiful 3-3/4" by 15" Remember the Liberty bumper stickers. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, made with a silk-screen process. Send one dollar and a self-addressed, stamped (22 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, to Bob Casale, Liberty Veterans Association, 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Bob and Ted also offer Liberty T-shirts, tote bags, key chains, rubber stamps, Liberty brochures and other items. For information, call Bob or Ted at 516 681-2221, or write to them at 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801.

### Fresh Air

Your Dec. article by Ronald Fraser about the 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty is a breath of fresh air.

Survivors continue to amass clear evidence that the attack was deliberate, that our government knows it was deliberate, and that both countries are still lying about it.

More important than Israeli culpability, however, is the question that asks: "Why were Sixth Fleet aircraft forbidden to come to Liberty's defense while the ship was under fire?" At least 25 men died unnecessarily because rescue aircraft were recalled prematurely. Adm. Max Morris, then navigator of USS Saratoga, remembers hearing Liberty radio operators calling frantically for help after Saratoga's aircraft were turned back by White House orders. Capt. Joseph Tully, Saratoga's skipper, confirms the story. So do radio logs and recollections of crewmen.

Yet the Navy has never addressed or even acknowledged that awful truth and refuses to inquire into why it happened — despite appeals from two retired Chiefs of Naval Operations, Adm. Arleigh Burke and Adm. Thomas Moorer, for answers. The Department of State refuses to ask questions for fear the answers would embarrass an ally. The United States Congress, which has investigated every other such event since the sinking of the Maine, refuses to ask about the Liberty because such questions are politically dangerous.

So, important questions go unanswered and vital lessons are not learned.

The USS Liberty Veterans Association is still searching for the truth. There must be at least one person in our government with the courage, curiosity, and patriotic spirit to help us find it.

STANLEY W. WINE [united]  
CHIEF, U.S. (Ret.)  
Cape Cod, MA

Navy Times  
January 6, 1986

### IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription was paid through the last issue of Volume III. Paid up subscribers have labels reading B4 or higher. B9 denotes a gratis copy. A1 and A3 designate former crewmembers. A2 identifies family members. E82 identifies those who attended the 1982 reunion. H1 identifies voting members (former crewmembers) and H2 identifies associate members. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Joyce Casale, USS Liberty Veterans Association, 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801. Contributions in excess of subscriptions and membership are tax deductible. If we are to survive, we must have your financial support.

### ELECTRONIC LIBERTY

For computer mail, the preferred method is MCI MAIL, addressed to MCI account 247-4070. For TELEX, address mail to TELEX account 650-2474070. For COMPU SERVE E-MAIL, address account 72366.2277. For Fido Mail, address mail to Jim Ennes, Fido 138/26. For direct computer connection, call 206 481-6549 and ask for a password, then call back the next day. Back issues of the newsletter are available by computer. Ask.

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The USS Liberty Newsletter is the official journal of the USS Liberty Veterans Association, a California non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. Association Officers are Stan White, Chairman of the Board and President Emeritus, Box 169, Cavour, SD 57324; Joe Meadors, President, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 or (for direct mail) c/o ARAMCO, PO Box 1168, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Joyce Casale, Secretary/Treasurer; Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. Legal counsel is Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (phone 415 424-0160). The mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association for subscriptions, donations, bumper stickers, brochures and souvenirs, is 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801. Send editorial material to USS Liberty Newsletter, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.



## **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



8 June 1987

... VOLUME IV, Issue #2 ...  
December, 1985



Liberty Veterans Association Chairman Stan White addresses audience during the USS Liberty Forum in Washington, D.C., on September 7. Seated (left to right) are David Lucas, Jim Ennes, and forum moderator Admiral Thomas H. Moorer. Admiral Moorer called for a Congressional investigation to settle unanswered questions in the Liberty matter, and accused both Israel and the United States of a cover-up.

REMEMBER THE USS LIBERTY



### THE USS LIBERTY FORUM

The USS Liberty Forum, held at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., on September 7, 1985, drew a crowd of more than 300 people and was described by many as a highlight of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee Convention.

Moderated by Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, the forum provided Liberty crewmen with an opportunity to tell the story of the attack to a standing-room-only audience in the hotel's Jefferson Room.

The discussion opened with a brief talk by Admiral Moorer who described the affair as a daylight attack upon a clearly marked ship under circumstances that can only have been deliberate. He accused both Israel and the United States of covering up the facts about the attack, and called upon the Congress to "once and for all clear up the uncertainties, speculation and unanswered questions surrounding this tragedy, which is still thought by many to be a deliberate cover-up on the part of the government of Israel as well as the government of the United States."

Moorer was followed by survivors of the attack who reported their personal experiences. Jim Ennes described the scene on the ship's bridge up to the start of the air attack. Joe Meadors described the air attack, including the clear presence of the American flag before and throughout the action. Dave Lucas described the approach of the torpedo boats and the torpedo explosion and other action as seen from the bridge. Bob Schnell told the awed crowd of his experiences as he crawled, dripping wet, from the flooded compartment and went on to help with damage control and treatment of the wounded. Rick Ametti told of the activities of the forward repair parties, the launching of liferafts which were quickly fired upon by the motor torpedo boatmen, the approach of Israeli helicopters and the "are there casualties?" message dropped by the Naval Attache. Stan White gave an overall account of the heroism and bravery displayed by men throughout the battle as seen from his battle station in the Research Department spaces. Captain Joseph Tully, skipper of the aircraft carrier USS *Smolton*, told of his dismay and frustration when aircraft he sent to defend the Liberty were recalled and held for more than an hour while the ship was still under attack and calling for help. And Bob Casale told of the activities of the USS Liberty Veterans Association and the continued efforts to tell the story, to correct the official record, and to find other survivors.

Despite short notice and long distances involved, seventeen Liberty crewmen came to Washington for the forum. In addition to the seven crewmen on the panel, the affair was attended by Gary Barton, Bill Casper, Ernie Gato, John Hrankowski, George Koromah, Mark Kram, Lloyd Painter, Phil Tourney, Larry Thorn and Bob Woltz. Wayne Smith had been scheduled as a panelist, but was diverted by a family emergency.

The personal accounts were followed by an active question period lasting more than 40 minutes.

**Moorer Presents Award:** Following the forum, at a luncheon attended by more than 1,000 people in the main ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel, Admiral Moorer presented Liberty crewmen an award for "service in

defense of liberty." Later, similar individual awards were presented to all 17 crewmen who attended.

**Forum is Widely Reported:** An Associated Press story reported the forum and Admiral Moorer's remarks in an account that appeared in newspapers worldwide, including the popular Long Island daily *NEWSDAY*, the military daily newspaper *Stars and Stripes*, and many other newspapers. Typically, the story was not used in New York City or Washington, D.C.

**500 Letters to Congress:** Following the Liberty Forum and an author's forum on Sunday, the public was urged to write letters to their congressmen seeking an explanation of the government's attitude toward the Liberty attack and cover-up. By early Sunday afternoon, over 500 letters were mailed.

**Reception for Crewmen:** On September 4, preceding the Liberty Forum, columnist Max Bruzonsky hosted a reception and cocktail party for Liberty crewmen. Bruzonsky, a noted Jewish columnist, is a former Washington Associate of both the American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress. The reception gave Liberty crewmen a rare opportunity to exchange views with such noted and diverse people as, for example, former Reagan staff member Les Janka, Pulitzer winning journalist Seymour Mersh, long-time American Ambassador Robert Norrman, and Arab League Ambassador Clovis Makroubi.

**End of the USS Liberty:** A highlight of the weekend was a tape recording of two songs about the USS Liberty written by shipmate Larry Thorn. The songs are in the folk-song style of Joan Baez and are sung and played by a skilled female singer and a guitarist. After receiving requests for copies from almost everyone who heard the tape, Larry agreed to make and sell copies at his cost. The tapes will be recorded on standard 120 minute cassettes and will include, at no extra cost, the full 90 minute USS Liberty forum, including Admiral Moorer's remarks and the question period that followed. For a copy, send \$6.00 before January 1st to Larry Thorn, Route One, Staples, Minnesota 56479.

### USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

Admiral Moorer's call for a Congressional investigation of the USS Liberty affair brought an important Associated Press story that was widely printed around the world, often with headlines proclaiming "Retired Admiral Accuses U.S. and Israel of Cover-up in Ship Attack." Although typically boycotted by New York City and Washington, D.C., newspapers, the story did appear in important newspapers worldwide on September 8, often as a front page story. One paper, the *Charleston Evening Post*, buried it on the obituary page, although most papers that used it gave the story prominent play.

The *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, in Liberty's home port, followed the story a week later with an editorial supporting Admiral Moorer and calling anew for a Congressional inquiry.



Other newspapers and magazines report regularly on the Liberty. In recent months, for instance, several articles about the Liberty have appeared in newspapers and magazines in Saudi Arabia, Denmark, and even in Israel. Most recently, a four page article by journalist and university history teacher Torben Retbøll appeared in the June/July issue of *CHAUFFEUR*. *NYTS* illustrated with a reproduction of the "Remember the USS Liberty" bumper sticker.

According to listeners, the Liberty is mentioned regularly by callers to the nationally broadcast Larry King Show and to King's stand-in, Jim Bohannon. King is usually courteous; Bohannon usually terminates the conversation whenever the Liberty is mentioned.

Readers report that the Liberty is discussed regularly on numerous other talkshows, including stations in Dallas and the powerful KGO station in San Francisco.

Paul Findley quotes national talkshow host Ray Briem as having said that the Liberty is mentioned on his show almost daily. Briem's show, originating from KABC in Los Angeles, is broadcast over 60 stations nationwide, including large audiences in Boston and New York.

#### LIBERTY CREWMEN ON THE MARCH

Our shipmates have been increasingly active in the past several weeks.

Dick Carlson, who has spoken to numerous luncheon and business groups near his home in Maine, routinely carries the USS Liberty brochure with him when he travels. He leaves copies on airplane seats, supermarket bulletin boards and in Gideon bibles.

Within a week of the Liberty Forum, Dave Lucas and Jim O'Connor gave a USS Liberty slide show and talk at the Kiwanis Club in Severna Park, Maryland.

George Golden gave an interview to the *Virginia Post* in Norfolk.

Bill Casper gave an interview to the *Times-Tribune* in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Bob Waltz wrote to his congressman and gave an interview to the *Wheeling West Virginia Intelligencer* which was published 14 October. At the request of another newspaper, he is writing an original article about the Liberty.

Phil Tourney wrote letters to his congressman and various government officials and wrote an article about the Liberty Forum for publication in the Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association magazine, *CRYPTOLOG*.

Larry Thorn met personally with Minnesota Senator David Durenberger to discuss the Liberty. Although Durenberger could not be persuaded to support renewed hearings, he did agree that the attack was much more severe and the facts much more compelling than Members of Congress are generally aware.

Larry Thorn and Gary Barton drove to Lexington, Kentucky, on October 5 to participate in a "Remember the Liberty" program at the Lexington Public Library, sponsored by Liberty supporters John Tabor and Shirley Paulette. Both men had attended the Liberty Forum in Washington four weeks earlier, and they played a tape of the forum. Their presentation was reported in a 45 column-inch story with two photographs in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* on 6 October and a column in the *Lexington Citizen-Gazette*. The event was also covered on the local six o'clock news and on WKYC-TV in Lexington, and in interviews on WHAS radio in Louisville. Mary Barton reports that the affair was a huge success and the crowd receptive, although one protester destroyed a sign advertising the Liberty meeting.

George Wilson gave an interview to Ricardo Blumle of radio station WAUS in Berrien Springs, Michigan, following an on-the-air reading of *Assault on the Liberty*.

Ron Kukal wrote a letter-to-the-editor which was published in Wyoming thanking his newspaper for reporting Admiral Moorer's call for a Congressional investigation. Write Ron: "By far the deepest emotional hurt was not being able to talk about all this. I have had to keep my mouth closed. I have been put down and told the story is closed. I hope readers will seek out the truth of this horrible nightmare." Ron's letter resulted in interviews by two local newspapers and a radio station, and an interview request from a television station.

Chuck Smith in Florida distributes brochures and writes to his congressman. He pins brochures on the bulletin board of VFW Post 2500 where he is a member, but finds them mysteriously removed within moments. Chuck has designed his own USS Liberty T-shirt which he wears regularly. Recently Chuck phoned and also wrote a letter to Miami radio station WGBS talkshow host David Gold after he heard Gold hang up on a caller who asked on the air about the USS Liberty.



Bob Casale collected several thousand signatures and letters from people calling for a congressional investigation. He forwarded those to selected members of Congress and is awaiting replies. Bob continues to maintain a USS Liberty museum in the entryway of his plumbing supply house, Liberty Plumbing and Heating Supply, where he distributes Liberty bumper stickers, T-shirts and other memorabilia. Bob reports that Liberty inquiries and memorabilia sales have become so heavy that he has hired a helper.

Joe Meadors writes letters to government leaders seeking resolution of Liberty issues and has filed a number of new Freedom of Information requests. In September, Joe met with a State Department representative to discuss the State Department's unwarranted practice of asserting to interested members of Congress and to the public that the Liberty attack was a mistake, while failing to inform those same congressmen of the abundance of material which indicates the attack was deliberate and that the official Israeli excuse has been judged untrue by our government. Joe is presently appealing to the Navy Judge Advocate General to acknowledge and correct discrepancies in the Navy Court of Inquiry Report. In September, the San Antonio Express-News (daily circ. 80,000) published Joe's Letter-to-the-Editor. In October, Joe gave a talk to the Chamber of Commerce in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, and was asked to give a similar talk to the Businessmen's Association.

Bob Waltz and Phil Tourney are spearheading a campaign to try to find the remaining Liberty crewmen. About 135 Liberty survivors have not yet been heard from.

Jim Ennes continues to write letters and articles and maintains a 20,000 page research library whose contents he makes available to legitimate researchers, authors and scholars. His article in the June issue of The Retired Officer continues to draw mail. That article was reprinted in the JUNE 1985 issue of MILITARY magazine and in the September 1985 issue of The Soldier. Military has agreed to Ennes' suggestion that the magazine feature Captain McGee in its monthly column on Medal of Honor winners. (For a subscription send \$10 to Military, 2122 28th St., Sacramento, California 95818.) An earlier article by Ennes was reprinted in a book published in Canada. Another article is scheduled in The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs.

#### THE RESCUE OF THE USS LIBERTY

By Captain Joseph M. Tully, Jr.  
USN (retired)

As Commanding Officer of the USS Saratoga, I had a unique view from the carrier's bridge of Sixth Fleet efforts to come to the aid of the USS Liberty. It was an exciting experience which still troubles me almost 20 years later.

I had assumed command of the Saratoga in October, 1966, relieving Captain H. F. Lang. At that time I was already an experienced shipboard officer, having spent 2-1/2 years in the South Pacific, a year as Executive Officer aboard the Navy's first "super carrier," the USS Forrestal, and a year in command of the USS Neosho with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.



After an overhaul in the United States, "Sara" returned to the Mediterranean just in time for the start of the hostilities that preceded the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War. Anticipating that the Sixth Fleet would be concentrated to the east, I recalled all aircraft and proceeded on an easterly course.

The Sixth Fleet carrier force was eventually ordered to operate in the vicinity of Crete, where we assumed a typical self defense formation. Sixth Fleet Commander, Vice Admiral William E. Martin, assumed tactical command (OTC), and began maneuvering the fleet in typical formation.

On June 8 while conducting these maneuvers, my communication officer came to the bridge with an urgent message from the USS Liberty: "Under attack by unidentified air and surface units. Request immediate assistance."

I specifically asked my communication officer if he had verified the authenticity of the message, and he assured me that he had.

Because I knew Admiral Martin was on the bridge of his flagship, I personally passed Liberty's message in plain language voice over the primary tactical maneuvering circuit, "PRI-TAC." Then I directed my communication officer to pass it to all U.S. high commands in the European area, plus to the Chief of Naval Operations. Then, again on the PRI-Tac voice circuit, I sent personally the following message to Commander Sixth Fleet: "UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED WILL LAUNCH MY READY STRIKE GROUP IN SUPPORT OF LIBERTY."

This Ready Strike Group consisted of 4 F4 fighters, 4 A4 fighter bombers and 4 A1 fighter bombers, all conventionally armed. To support this group I also launched 4 A4 tankers.

COMSIXTHFLEET as OTC approved my decision and ordered the other carrier, USS America, to launch also, and turned the Force into the wind. Saratoga launched on time. To my surprise, USS America did not launch!

Saratoga's Strike Group had barely reached the horizon when Commander Carrier Division 4, who had meanwhile assumed or been made Officer in Tactical Command (OTC), ordered all aircraft returned. He then ordered both Saratoga and America to ready similar strike groups to be launched in support of Liberty in 90 minutes.

This was done, and both carriers launched on time. But to my surprise, both groups were again recalled about the time they reached the horizon.

I was never informed of the reasons for the two orders recalling aircraft intended to aid the Liberty. I did hear that a Court of Inquiry was conducted by then-Rear Admiral Isaac Kidd, but I was not asked to testify and have never seen the official report.

## THE AMERICAN LEGION TURNS TO JELLY

The attitude of the American Legion toward the USS Liberty has long been puzzling.

Readers will recall that the Legion was among the first national organizations to speak out in favor of the Liberty when, in 1967, the Legion passed a national resolution rejecting the findings of the Navy Court of Inquiry and calling publicly for an open Congressional investigation.

Unfortunately, Jewish veterans organizations charged that the resolution was anti-Semitic, and the Legion promptly withdrew it. The Legion has not faced the issue again.

As readers know, late in 1984, after the *American Monthly* published the Israeli version of the attack, the Legion magazine commissioned Jim Ennes to write an article about the Liberty for Legion members. Thus started a peculiar struggle that continues today.

The magazine rejected the completed article calling any article on the Liberty inconsistent with "the magazine's approach." Asked to comment further, the magazine wrote that the article had been cancelled because the Legion "no longer has a position on the USS Liberty." Later, when a Legion member wrote to propose an article on the same subject he was told that the Legion already had an abundance of material on the Liberty. Yet when that same Legionaire asked specifically what had been published, he was told that most submissions had been "too political" or had presented "too many questions without answers and too much speculation on the events surrounding the incident." However, said the editor, the magazine would consider using Liberty material "should complete facts be known in the future."

We then reminded the Legion that our original 1,200 word submission was accompanied by over 100 pages of documentation and that we are fully prepared to support every statement with sworn eyewitness testimony and official U.S. government records.

Instead of replying to the substance of our letter, Legion editors replied again that the Legion "has no position on the USS Liberty."

**The Truth Comes Out:** Throughout this peculiar exchange, other Legion members have worked through their local posts to discover just what the Legion is trying to say.

As this is written, we have just received a revealing call from a retired senior military officer whose Michigan Legion post discussed the Legion's Liberty blackout with a member of the American Legion's national board.

"The 'real' reason for the Legion's jellylike support of the Liberty, according to this board member, is that the Legion was asked by spokesmen for Israel to avoid any mention of the USS Liberty because, said the Israeli, to mention the Liberty would 'play into the hands of Nazis and others who would encourage the tide of anti-Semitism that is now sweeping the country.'"

That same cry has been used for 18 years to squelch almost every serious discussion of this important story.

We think that is silly.

We think its basis is untrue.

We think that is a cowardly charge used to intimidate weak editors.

Among other things, a new book by Jewish author Charles Silberman reports a study of anti-Semitism in the United States which concludes that anti-Semitism is almost nonexistent in 1985, and that most Americans find such prejudices abhorrent—as we do. Yet those who would squelch this story never hesitate to resurrect the ghost.

The fact is, the USS Liberty story has nothing to do with racial or ethnic prejudice of any kind. We deplore all such prejudices and we reject any suggestion that we are motivated by such things. Honest, patriotic American Jews contribute generously to this association and many of the reporters who write honestly and fairly about it are Jewish.

## USS Liberty

Source: Statement  
Department

**Michael D. LaBorde**, editor, The American Legion Magazine (in letter explaining cancellation of commissioned article): "The American Legion no longer has a position on this subject."

**Charles Gilling**, American Mensa Limited (in a letter explaining decertification of Liberty Special Interest Group): "Neither I nor Mensa holds any opinion [on this subject]."

**Assistant Secretary of State William L. Ball, III** in a letter to Senator Wendell H. Ford: "The Department has no information that would corroborate these allegations [that the attack was deliberate]. ... The Israeli Government ... found that it was the result of error and had not been deliberate."

**Acting Secretary of the Navy James F. Goodrich** in a letter to Congressman Charles E. Bennett: "The Navy Court of Inquiry made a full investigation in 1967. We have no plans to reopen this investigation."

**Senator Mitch McConnell**: "(Although Israeli tenacity) may be admirable in the defense of her boundaries it is not acceptable when it takes the form of an offensive act against a neutral ship in international waters, especially one of our own. (However), it does not serve any purpose now to cause tension in our relationship."

**Congressman Bill Nichols** (in letter to Congressman Larry Hopkins): "In view of (past investigations) and the passage of 18 years since the attack, I do not believe that an armed forces subcommittee inquiry would be appropriate."

**Congressman Larry Hopkins** (in reply to constituent): "As you can see, the Chairman has decided not to pursue the matter..."



Director Philip C. Wilcox, Jr., State Department Office of Israeli and Arab-Israeli Affairs (in letter explaining government attitude toward conflicts between Israel excuse and sworn testimony of eyewitnesses: "The duty of the [Navy Court of Inquiry] was to consider all available information and evaluate all facts available, drawing its conclusions from those facts. ...therefore, the U.S. Navy Court made as specific a resolution of the conflicting evidence in the case as was possible." (Mr. Wilcox overlooks the fact that the conflicting Israeli report, which he tells us was evaluated by the Court of Inquiry, did not exist when the Court of Inquiry was in session and therefore could not possibly have been evaluated by the Court.)

Assistant Secretary of the Navy Chase Untchewer (responding to a letter addressed to the White House): "We do not consider the conclusions of this Court of Inquiry to be conflicting or contradictory."

Congressman Buddy Mackay (in a letter to a constituent): "To accurately determine whether or not the attack on the USS Liberty was intentional or accidental is virtually impossible. There are too many contradictions in stories. For example, the question of whether or not the Liberty was flying a flag which remains a major point of contention. I am afraid that the mystery behind the attack on the USS Liberty will always remain."

Congressman Buddy Mackay (in a followup letter after his constituent found that reply unsatisfactory): "I understand your frustration with the uncertainty of events...on an issue that is subject to circumstantial evidence. ...The American justice system...precludes us from condemning the Israelis."

Two Israeli journalists (in reply to a request that they release evidence supporting their widely-publicized claim that the attack was accidental): "...we cannot release our documents for reasons to do with Israeli censorship laws."



#### 30th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

Reunion questionnaires are still coming in as this is written. So far, the overwhelming majority is in favor of Washington, D.C., as the reunion site. One man appealed for a different date, because of a schedule conflict, but the desire to reunite on the anniversary of the attack is otherwise universal. Consequently, barring dramatic changes, the next reunion will be held in Washington on the weekend of 5, 6 and 7, 1987.

So far, everyone answering the questionnaire plans to attend. If you have not yet returned the questionnaire, please do so whether you plan to attend or not. If you have other preferences for date or place, please use the questionnaire to let us know. This is your association, and we need feedback from everyone.

#### WHERE TO BUY BOOKS —a very special price—

American Educational Trust in Washington, D.C., now offers *Assault on the Liberty*. Pay the retail price for one copy, and AET will send two copies. AET will ship the second copy to you or to anyone of your choice, such as a congressman or a public library.

AET also offers *They Dare to Speak Out* by Paul Findley, *Taking Sides* by Stephen Green, and several other titles. To order, call toll free 800 368-5788 and charge your MasterCard or Visa.



#### THE MARSHALL GROUP

While Liberty Association members were assembled in Washington for the Liberty Forum, The Marshall Group held a special meeting at the Reserve Officers Association Building to honor the USS Liberty and to discuss the cover-up.

The Marshall Group is an association of former military and government leaders who work together to support national interests. Their officers are largely well-known military and government leaders such as Melvin Laird, Horacio Rivero, Milnor Roberts, Talcott Soelke, Arthur Trudeau and others equally well known and respected.

During the meeting a State Department official who served in the State Department intelligence section during the Liberty attack told Liberty survivors that the attack was certainly deliberate. "Everyone in government who has ever looked into the Liberty affair," he said, "knows that the attack was deliberate."

The problem, he explained, is that an unwise decision was made in 1967 to go along with the Israeli excuse for the sake of expediency. If the United States had formally rejected the excuse at the time, even while maintaining good relations with Israel, the Liberty issue would have gone away. But because the United States still pretends officially that the attack was an error, people all over the world remain agitated and the Liberty remains a hot item even in 1985.

"Would the Liberty Veterans Association be satisfied," we were asked, "if the United States, even now, were to state publicly and officially that the Israeli excuse is not satisfactory and that the attack is officially regarded as having been deliberate?"

"That would satisfy a major concern," we said, "although we would also like to know why our ship was not defended while under fire and we will continue to seek answers to that question."

An important result of the Marshall Group meeting was an agreement among members to support publicly the call for a Congressional investigation and to issue a press release announcing that support.



## WRITE TO YOUR CONGRESSMAN?

—What to say?—

Momentum is building. If there ever was a time when your letter to Congress will be noticed, this is the time. By now most members of Congress must have received at least one letter asking about the Liberty. Those letters are becoming harder to ignore.

Letters should be short and to the point, asking the congressman why the USS Liberty was not protected while under fire, why certain official "findings of fact" in the Navy report are unsupported by evidence, and asking him to support an inquiry into the circumstances of the attack.

If you wish to write, but aren't quite sure what to say, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Bob Waltz, 1081 Barone St., Weirton, West Virginia 26062. Bob will send you a sample letter which you can either use for ideas, or sign and send as your own.

When the congressman replies, please send a copy of the reply to Bob. In a future issue we will describe some of the replies.

## ALEX ODEH MURDERED

On October 10, Alex Odeh, Southern California Coordinator for the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, submitted to an interview on Los Angeles television. Alex told viewers that many Arabs, including Palestinians and PLO leaders, seek peace.

The next morning a package delivered to Alex's office exploded as he opened it, killing Alex and injuring eight others.

Alex Odeh was a respected, mild-mannered man with three very young children who taught political science at Coastline Community College and worked hard to achieve better understanding of ethnic and practical issues in the Middle East. Over the past five years he has helped to arrange several radio interviews and speaking engagements for Liberty survivors in the Los Angeles area. He attended the USS Liberty Forum in September where he met several Liberty crewmen.

Although Alex was a mild-mannered, non-violent man, his death has been publicly applauded by President Irv Rubin of the Jewish Defense League.

We identify even more closely with Alex when we realize that in recent weeks Stan White and Larry Thorn have been warned ominously by strangers that their own lives and livelihoods could be in danger if they continue to speak out about the Liberty.

Alex was a friend of the USS Liberty. He was a threat to no one. He will be missed.

## MILLER vs DEPARTMENT OF STATE

By James Miller

As regular readers know, I have been engaged for more than three years in a series of legal actions to force the Department of State to release USS Liberty documents under the Freedom of Information Act.

One major success was the release in 1983, under threat of a court order, of a previously withheld official State Department analysis of the Israeli excuse for attacking the Liberty. That analysis—known as "The Salans Report" after its author, State Department Legal Advisor Carl Salans—refutes the Israeli excuse point-by-point and demonstrates clearly that the Israeli excuse is untrue. The Salans Report is among the strongest single pieces of evidence available to prove that the government has known at the highest levels since 1967 that the Israeli excuse is untrue in every key detail.

However, despite the fact that my suit was successful in most respects, I was denied certain documents and was also denied payment of my legal fees as authorized in such cases. The denial was surprising, since the law requires payment of fees when the citizen "substantially prevails," and we seem clearly to have prevailed. The Court, however, did not agree. Hence, the appeal.

At the September appeal hearing, my lawyer, Gary Weisman, argued that this was a clear case of a private citizen having to go to court to force a government agency to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, which is federal law. He showed that 350 unique USS Liberty documents were forced out by my suit, which is far more than anyone has obtained before either administratively or through the courts. He showed that 40 of these documents were forced out after the State Department had certified to the Court that all documents had already located and released. He showed that it has taken more than three years for State to release documents that should have come out immediately and voluntarily under the administrative provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

State's behavior has been peculiar and, I think, unethical. For instance, they claimed that Jim Ennes's 1977 suit which obtained only 163 documents has no relation to this case because Ennes's suit, they claim, was a Privacy Act request, not a FOIA request. Not so! Ennes's suit was very clearly a Freedom of Information suit. State certified in Ennes's case that they had identified and released all Liberty documents except a very few that were exempt from release, yet when I pursued the matter further State was forced to produce 350 documents. Meanwhile, we have identified 92 additional documents, mostly diplomatic notes and congressional correspondence which are required to be maintained as permanent records, but which State claims to be unable to locate.

The Appeals Court panel consisted of Judges Ross, McMillan and Arnold. We hope to convince at least two of the three that the additional documents should be released and that our legal costs should be paid—inasmuch as we would have had no legal costs if the government had complied with the law and released the documents voluntarily without forcing us to take action through the courts.

Editor's note: Mr. Miller, a family man of moderate means, has now spent more than \$20,000 on this suit, assisted only by about \$1,200 in contributions, mostly from Liberty survivors and supporters. Further contributions may be forwarded to Mr. Miller through this association and will be returned if he wins the suit. Mr. Miller has a 90 minute cassette recording of the September appeal hearing which is available for three dollars.

## LIBERTY BELIES By Mary J. Barton

During the Liberty Veterans Association meeting in Washington, D.C., we wives decided to add a Liberty Belies column to the newsletter for the women of the USS Liberty.

The column will cover everything from recipes to home-making tips to letters about what we were doing at home during and after the attack.

Just this year Gary and I learned of the Liberty Veterans Association. We attended the forum in Washington and got reacquainted with several crewmembers and their wives. Now we are looking forward to the next reunion.

Gary L. Barton, former CS2, is now the owner of Gary's Pest Control in Harriman, Tennessee. We have two sons, Gary Jr. age 17 and Bill age 14. I also work in the business as a route person and part-time secretary. We shall soon celebrate our 8th anniversary in the business.

At the Washington meeting we saw several photos and slides of former crewmen having cookouts on the fantail, and saw a video tape of the first reunion. As one member put it, "It's as if time stood still. We see each other as we were back then, never noticing the gray or the lines." (I hope I got the quote right.)

Please send material for this column to Mary J. Barton, POB 1026, Harriman, Tennessee 37748.

A special hello from Gary and me.

Mary J. Barton



## LIBERTY MAILBOX

The entire Liberty team in Washington was an immense credit to themselves and to the Navy. Besides your panel presentations, you all appeared with great dignity and distinction at the final evening. It gave me special pride to have known this story beforehand and to have met some of you earlier. I also thought Admiral Moorer was tremendous as an example of an American officer, and Captain Tully of the Saratoga was a superb and articulate panelist. My faith in you all is stronger than ever.

/s/ George Waller

(George Waller is a Pulitzer prizewinning journalist of world renown who reports from Rome.)

I got a nice thank you note from MCPO Stan White Saturday. My God, do all Liberty crewmen write and speak with the confidence and dignity of directors of major corporations? The respect and consideration I have received from Liberty personnel and their wives has been impressive and pleasant! From their performance on the panel, I should not be surprised by anything these men do. No wonder the ship didn't sink!

/s/ Captain Joseph Tully, USN, retired

(Captain Tully was commanding officer of the carrier USS Saratoga at the time of the Liberty attack. His article describing his experiences can be found on page 4.)

Please send me everything I can purchase to remind me of the Liberty.

/s/ Tony Quintero

It is encouraging to receive the newsletter and to see the progress being made. It appears slow, but there is a determination to achieve the goal, and I support that. I always carry 100 or more Liberty brochures in my briefcase, because I never know when I will be talking with someone about the ship or have a chance to distribute some literature.

/s/ Dick Carlson

Lisa and I were heartwarmed by the trip to Washington. We had a marvelous time and enjoyed seeing everyone. We feel very dedicated and will do all we can to support the Liberty Veterans Association and to help tell our story. In the next few weeks I will be calling some of our shipmates to try to renew old ties. We are very proud to be part of this great organization.

/s/ Phil Townsend

Phil called me yesterday. It sounds like you all had a great reunion in Washington. You seem to be making real progress. I think the time and efforts of our shipmates will finally pay off and the coverup will be brought to the surface. I was married in August and am living quietly on a farm with my new family, an old Appaloosa horse, five geese and three dogs. We will be attending the next reunion and want to become more active in the association.

/s/ George Vanderpool

## MENSA DROPS LIBERTY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

For almost a year, Joe Meadors has conducted a "USS Liberty Special Interest Group" sponsored by Mensa, the international round table group operating from New York. Members and non-members of Mensa have paid \$6.00 annually for the privilege of exchanging and publishing information and views about the USS Liberty.

Several weeks ago Joe was advised by Mensa International that his certification as a Mensa Special Interest Group was being withdrawn because his group was considered "political."

Joe and the Liberty Veterans Association protested that decision vigorously. We pointed out that no activity of the group falls within any dictionary definition of "political" and that, in any case, some warning of guidelines supposedly violated should have been issued before certification was summarily revoked. Indeed, we suggested that Mensa's decision appears political; we asked who in Mensa's New York office suggested the decertification; and we suggested that this summary revocation reflects poorly upon the Mensa organization—whose members are supposedly noted for their ability to weigh complex issues objectively. More than a month has passed and Mensa has not responded to these questions.

## NEW BOOK OF HEROES FEATURES CAPTAIN MCGONAGLE

**Above and Beyond:** A History of the Medal of Honor from the Civil War to Vietnam, is a new coffee table book now being featured in bookstores and book clubs. **Above and Beyond** describes the Medal of Honor winning performances of military heroes since the civil war, including on page two an original narrative description of Captain McGonagle's action aboard the *Liberty*. The account is not done with great care. For instance, the story describes a rendezvous with the "USS *Jefferson Davis*." The only USS *Jefferson Davis* we can find was a Confederate frigate captured by the Union during the Civil War. We think *Liberty* rendezvoused with the USS *Dan* (DD-937). And this account seems to accept Anthony Pearson's mistaken guess that the man in charge was "a civilian NSA supervisor" who was killed. However, the article does give a fairly straightforward account of the action, and one that makes no unwarranted assertion that the attack was accidental. "Anxious to avoid embarrassing an ally," the account says, "the U.S. finally accepted the Israeli apology—but rejected the explanation. The navy was willing to recognize courage, regardless of the political situation. ... In a muted ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard, Captain William McGonagle received the Medal of Honor for his 'superb professionalism, courageous fighting spirit, and valiant leadership.'"

## VIDEO TAPE OF 1982 REUNION

We still have a few VHS video tapes of the speeches, question period and interviews from the 1982 *Liberty* reunion in Washington. Speeches by Admiral Hopper and Philip Geyelin are memorable and deserve a place in everyone's tape library. Also included on the two hour tape are interviews of four *Liberty* crewmen conducted on New York cable television in 1981. When these are gone, no more will be made. For your copy, send \$20 to Bob Casale to cover copying costs. Two tapes are available for 10 day loan. To borrow a tape, send \$2.00 to Bob or Jim to cover postage.



## DID YOU GET ALL YOUR MEDALS? By Stan White

During the Forum in Washington, D.C., in September I discovered that several of you got out of the Navy before you received your Combat Action Ribbons or Presidential Unit Citations. So I asked Navy Times what to do. Navy Times suggests you write to National Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri 63132, Attn: Navy Liaison Officer. Describe the dates you served on the *Liberty*, the medal you failed to receive and, if possible, send a copy of your separation document, form DD214.

## Let's have a poetry contest! Forgotten Warriors: An Ode to the Men of the *Liberty* By: Ron Kukal

'Twas a clear blue day in the year 67,  
When death and destruction flew out of the heaven,  
The *Liberty* was there on that fateful date,  
A meeting with destiny, and she dare not be late;

A purposeful mission the torpedo boats had,  
To sink the *Liberty*, and that wouldn't be bad;  
She was only an American spyship you know,  
A wreckless and easy, unformidable foe;

Let's sink her, let's break her, and her down to the deep,  
Send her down to the bottom in one great big heap;  
And after the deed of malice is done,  
We'll call it a mistake and take off on the run;

Then God took a hand on that terrible day,  
And though they tried, they were held back at bay;  
'Twas a stormy time for the men dressed in blue;  
One half of a ship, both Captain and crew;

We've held back our story for many a year,  
Although it's been told with apprehension and fear;  
The ensign was flying, the hull clearly marked,  
One could tell who we were, wherever embarked;

Not a man on this ship need hang down his head,  
We've a story to tell,  
and it's true now you see,  
We've one half of a crew from the old "*Liberty*."

## USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801

Stan White - Chairman & President Emeritus  
Joe Meadors - President  
Bob Casale - Vice President  
Joyce Casale - Treasurer  
Jim Ennes - Editor/Historian  
Phil Tourney - Public Affairs Officer

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For a one year subscription mail this coupon with \$10 to:  
Treasurer, The USS *Liberty* Veterans Association, 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Noncrewmembers are eligible for associate membership for an additional \$5. Contributions are welcome. Contributions in excess of the subscription fee are fully tax deductible.

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## "Spymasters of Israel" Misreads USS Liberty

"The Spymasters of Israel" by Stewart Steven and published by MacMillan in 1980 repeats the old canard which says that Israel attacked the Liberty because the ship had discovered that Israel was intercepting, changing and forwarding Arab military communications. If Liberty could learn that much, Steven tells us, she could read other military communications, and that could not be tolerated. According to Mr. Steven, Israel broadcast a message informing the ship that "it had been spotted and that unless it sailed instantly the Israelis would have to take action." Says Steven, "...the Israelis felt they had no option but to attack. The Americans had been warned and chose to ignore the warning."

Although his account is widely quoted and even embellished by other authors, we think Mr. Steven is mistaken. Among other things, the USS Liberty was three days sailing from Israel and far beyond VHF/UHF radio range when Mr. Steven says the ship received and forwarded the Israeli radio transmissions that brought the Israeli decision to attack. We have twice asked for the source of his account, but Mr. Steven has not replied.

## USS LIBERTY AND THE WORLD ALMANAC

Reader Hugh Bates points out an interesting history of USS Liberty listings in the World Almanac.

The 1969 World Almanac devoted a generous ten column-lines to a description of Captain McGonagle's Medal of Honor while other MOH winners received less than two lines. But the Liberty and McGonagle were both dropped the next year. In 1971 the World Almanac had a new editor and that year Liberty suddenly appeared as a six-line item in "Memorable Dates," remaining until 1977.

In 1977, the World Almanac had another new editor and Liberty disappeared again and has remained unmentioned ever since. Throughout this 18 year period a companion-incident, the USS Pueblo capture, has been consistently mentioned every year both in text and in the index. USS Liberty has never been listed in the index.

One must wonder if any other historical incident comes and goes from the history books according to the apparent whim of editors.

Page A18 Saturday, September 14, 1985

## The Virginian-Pilot

### Editorials

## Liberty's untold story

Retired Adm. Thomas Moorer correctly accuses the United States and Israel of deliberately obscuring the particulars of the 1967 attack by Israeli warplanes and torpedo boats on the U.S. intelligence-gathering ship Liberty in which 34 U.S. Navy men were killed and 171 wounded. We second Admiral Moorer's motion that Congress set the record straight "once and for all [to] clear up the uncertainties, speculation and unanswered questions surrounding this tragedy."

If Admiral Moorer, who is a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is still angry about the Liberty massacre, he has cause. Israel's story, that Liberty was mistaken by the attackers for an Egyptian ship, was and remains unbelievable and contemptible. The vessel was cruising in international waters 15 miles off the Sinai Peninsula at the time of the Six-Day War, but its flag and markings were unmistakably American and the murderous onslaught occurred in clear weather.

The admiral's conjecture about motive — that the Israelis attacked Liberty to prevent Washington from being forewarned about an Israeli military push into Syria the next day — almost certainly is on the mark. President Johnson reportedly had sternly cautioned Israel against just such a move.

Israel paid reparations following the attack. But that does not satisfy the continuing passion for truth about the death and destruction wreaked on Liberty on June 7, 1967. Was Liberty warned by U.S. authorities? If not, why not? Were U.S. fighters dispatched to defend Liberty, only to be recalled on orders from Washington? If so, what could possibly justify intentional failure to protect virtually defenseless U.S. military personnel under attack from any quarter?

Admiral Moorer says the public should have the facts. Agreed.



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## *The* **USS Liberty** **Newsletter**



JUNE 1987

... VOLUME IV, Issue #1 ...  
September, 1985

### USS LIBERTY FORUM WASHINGTON, D.C. SEPTEMBER 7, 1985

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USA (Retired) will serve as moderator of a USS Liberty panel discussion to be held at 10:45 A.M., Saturday, September 7, 1985, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Liberty crewmen Rick Aimetti, Bob Castle, Russell David, Jim Ennes, Joe Meadors, Bob Schnell, Wayne Smith and Stan White will participate, as will Captain Joseph Tully, USA (Ret.), who was skipper of the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga during the attack. Several other survivors and family members have promised to be in the audience.

The USS Liberty Forum is being arranged by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, which is headed by former United States Senator James Abourezk, and will be a part of the 1985 AAADC convention.

The purpose of the discussion will be to provide a forum for survivors and others close to the attack to tell their stories and to be publicly questioned by newsmen, members of the public, and skeptics.

For information, reservations or hotel accommodations, call Christine Hammond, Ann Mooney or Claire Brandabur in Washington, D.C., at 202 797-7662.

### USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

**KGO RADIO:** On June 19, Liberty supporter Ann Jones of San Diego sparked a lively discussion by calling talkshow host Ray Taliaferro during his latenight show on station KGO in San Francisco and asking about the Liberty. Ray answered that he had previously interviewed Ennes and was convinced that the attack was deliberate. This brought further calls, mostly supportive, that kept the topic alive for more than twenty minutes. Station KGO boosts its power after 9:00 P.M., and reaches about twelve states plus parts of Canada and Mexico. Several listeners wrote to say they had heard the broadcast.

**WAUS RADIO:** On June 28, WAUS Radio in Berrien Springs, Michigan, started daily readings of *Assault on the Liberty*. WAUS, a National Public Radio affiliate station, is about the 45th radio station in the nation to read the book on the air. In 1981, coast-to-coast listeners of the syndicated Radio Reader program heard similar readings via about 44 stations nationally, including stations in San Francisco, Chicago, Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, and many other major metropolitan areas (but not in Washington, D.C., or New York state).

**CBS TELEVISION:** On July 31, CBS national television broadcast a special program called "Hiroshima +40" in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the first atomic bomb which exploded in Hiroshima, Japan. The program described

COME TO THE USS LIBERTY FORUM

several historical "close calls" since 1945 which could have led to nuclear war. One such close call, according to the commentator, was the "mistaken attack by Israel on the communications ship USS Liberty." A brief view of the torpedoed and badly listing Liberty was shown while a commentator described how aircraft sent to the ship's rescue were recalled, apparently to avoid alarming the Soviet Union.

**THE RETIRED OFFICER:** The article "The Israeli Assault on the USS Liberty" in the June issue of *The Retired Officer* magazine continues to draw attention and favorable response. The same article was rejected as "too controversial" by *Veterans of Foreign Wars* magazine, *American Legion Magazine* and *Disabled American Veterans* magazine before finding a home with *The Retired Officer*. Meanwhile, it was accepted as a reprint by *Purple Heart* magazine, but the magazine has apparently had a change of heart as it has not been published. *Veterans United for a Strong America* similarly found the Liberty story "too controversial" for its sensitive members. The story has, however, been accepted for reprint in *MILITARY* magazine (formerly *Military History* magazine).

According to an editor of *The Retired Officer*, the magazine received an avalanche of very favorable mail and only one unfriendly letter from a writer who complained that the article was "only a reprint" of a previous article by Ennes, and that Ennes had failed to point out that Israel had paid restitution for the deaths and injuries. Several friendly letters and the one critical letter were scheduled for publication in the August issue, according to the editor who called, but none of the letters appeared in that issue.

#### AMERICANS FOR WHAT?

Many of you have asked, "What is this magazine *THE LINK*, published by *Americans for Middle East Understanding*?" Most Liberty Newsletter readers have received gratis copies of *THE LINK* since their June 1984 issue was devoted to the Liberty story.

Please look carefully at the back cover of the magazine where you will find a list of directors and board members. You will recognize many of the names as noted scholars, business leaders, career diplomats, retired government officials and clergy.

*Americans for Middle East Understanding* is a respected source of information about the Middle East that produces a bi-monthly magazine and distributes books and other literature on the Middle East. AMEU adheres to rigid academic standards of accuracy.

#### HISTORY OF THE U S NAVY

A new "coffee table" *History of the U S Navy* by James M. Morris is published recently by Bison Books, a division of Simon and Schuster. Page 196 contains one remarkable paragraph on the USS Liberty. Although the author is clearly skeptical of Israeli claims that the attack was accidental, he presents a strange account. According to Morris, "Had the ship been under the command of the Sixth Fleet, it would have been pulled back and the incident and loss of lives would never have occurred. The Navy pointed this out to McNamara, who apparently missed the point completely."

According to Navy records, the ship was under Sixth Fleet control even though its orders were coming from the JCS via C6F. We have asked Mr. Morris for the source of his information, but he has not replied. Also interesting is the fact that the otherwise thorough index fails to list the Liberty section.

#### LIBERTY MAILBAG

I was a CTSN aboard the Liberty and just learned of the Liberty Veterans Association when I wrote to Stan after seeing Jim's article in the June *Retired Officer* magazine. I can't tell you what a relief it is to have others of you to talk to after keeping the story to myself for 18 years.

I was one of several Liberty survivors sent to San Juan, Puerto Rico, from the ship, and I will never forget how we were treated. We arrived in uniform, proudly wearing our USS Liberty name patches on our shoulders--proud of our ship as any sailor is. Almost immediately we were called aside by an officer and asked, "How come you are wearing USS Liberty patches? Weren't you told to remove them? They were supposed to have been removed before you got here. Take them off immediately! Don't talk about the attack with anyone and don't mention the name of the USS Liberty. You are not to talk about the attack and no one is to know that you are from the Liberty."

We had saved our ship and we were proud of it, and now we were being treated like we had done something wrong.

Well, I'm not keeping the story to myself any longer. I've read Jim's book, I have given copies to several friends and I have distributed about 50 "Remember the Liberty" bumper stickers here in West Virginia. I'm glad to be an active member of the Liberty Veterans Association.

/s/ Bob Waltz

I am writing to wish good luck to those who can attend the Liberty Forum in September. I wish I could come or even see it on television, but so far I have missed all the times anyone from the ship was on the tube.



I am in the process of having my films from the ship put on videotape. Many of these are just films of the crew on liberty, shark fishing and the like, including some excellent pictures of the captain, Commander Lewis and Mr. Golden. I have been showing them to people here in Sheridan and people are always interested in hearing about the *Liberty*. When the videotaping is done I plan to show them at social functions or anywhere else that I can get my foot in the door.

/s/ Ron Kukal

## A LETTER FROM JOY AIMETTI

To all the shipmates, families and friends of the USS *Liberty*:

I am Americo (Rick) Aimetti's wife, Joy. I thought it might be nice for all of you and especially the men who did not attend the last reunion to hear a shipmate's wife's view of the first reunion.

When Rick and I first heard about Jim Enner's book we bought and read it. Rick then called Jim, who told him about the reunion, and we immediately made plans to attend. When we arrived at the Hotel Washington we were met by quite a few of you in the lobby. We were each given a pin with a picture of the ship and our names on it. I will never forget the first few hours watching the men greet each other. There were handshakes, hugs and tears. These men who last saw each other in the aftermath of battle and who didn't know who had lived, who had died or what would happen to them, embraced each other as they would a long lost brother. The apprehension that each one felt before coming to the reunion vanished at that moment. I know you were all told never to discuss the incident, but when all of you were together and everyone finally got to talk about their experiences with someone else who had been there, I actually saw an enormous burden lifted off your shoulders.

The next day, Saturday, we all boarded buses to go to Arlington Cemetery to honor your shipmates who had been buried there. Our first stop was at the mass grave-site. We all gathered around the headstone. Rain started to fall as taps were being played. I will never forget the feeling we had at that moment. It was as if the rain were the tears of your shipmates from heaven. It was as if they all knew that we had gathered to honor them and that they were not forgotten. Each raindrop was another tear of happiness from them to all of you. We visited each of the separate graves of your shipmates and, like the evening before, a sense of peacefulness came over everyone. It continued to rain but no one seemed to mind. I will always think of it as a happiness rain for, as we left Arlington Cemetery, the rain stopped.

Saturday evening we attended the banquet. We had wonderful guest speakers. Every man acted with the greatest dignity and honor of being a proud crew member of the USS *Liberty*. The

banquet was wonderful and by the time it ended we all, including the wives and guests, had a feeling of kinship. All the pressures that had been on our men and their families for years seemed to have vanished.

Sunday we all gathered again to share breakfast together. Afterwards it was time for people to start on their journeys home. Everyone hated to say good-bye. People put off leaving for as long as they could. There were hugs, kisses and tears for no one wanted the reunion to end. At this point we all felt we were a family and no one wanted to part.

To all of you who did not attend for feeling and fears you still have because of the *Liberty* incident, you truly missed something beautiful. Don't worry about bringing these feelings out into the open. Please come and talk about it. If you don't think you could bring yourself to talk about your experience, please come and join with us and just listen to those around you. I assure you that you will never regret that you came. Those who attended the first reunion now have a sense of peace about the incident. Please come and join with us at the second reunion. Come and see your friends again for they all want to see you. Please don't stay away because you didn't come to the first reunion. Come and be with your family of shipmates again.

To all of you whom I met at the first reunion and to those I shall meet at the next reunion, I look forward to meeting you.

Until then my love and prayers are with all of you because, although I did not know Rick at the time of the incident, we have talked and shared his feelings and fears about it and I feel I understand how you and your families feel, especially now since we shared with you in the first reunion.

/s/ Joy Aimetti

## DON'T MENTION THE USS LIBERTY ON CBS NEWS, EITHER!

During the TWA-847 hostage crisis in June, CBS all-news radio station WEEI in Boston hired author Wilbur Crane 'Bill' Eveland as a background consultant. Eveland has spent many years in the Middle East as an oil company executive and CIA contract operative, and is author of *Ropes of Sand* (Norton) and another book due out late this year.

Bill was installed in a hotel near the station and was called in to provide background information whenever the hostages were mentioned on the air. His participation was popular with the public, and ultimately resulted in 29 hours of broadcasting on this powerful station which boasts a listening audience of over a million people.

But the ghost of the USS *Liberty* abruptly ended Eveland's brief career in broadcasting when Bill was asked to comment on president Reagan's call to bring to justice the killers of hostage Stetham.

Eveland agreed that Stetham's killers should be brought to justice. Then he remarked that the

world is also waiting eighteen years later to bring to justice the killer's of 34 American sailors aboard the USS *Liberty* when the ship was attacked by Israel in 1967.

Moments later Mr. Eveland was informed that his services were no longer desired.

Eveland tells us that if his mention of the *Liberty* had not ended his affiliation with the station, his next broadcast surely would have. He had done some independent research into the history of airline hijacking and intended to inform his listeners that the world's first such hijacking was conducted by the same people who attacked the *Liberty*.

The first commercial aircraft hijacking in history--indeed, the precedent for all such hijackings that have occurred since--was conducted December 12, 1954, when Israeli military jets forced a civilian airliner from Syrian air space to Lydda airport in Israel. Passengers were held hostage by Israeli military authorities in an effort to bring pressure against the Syrian government to release five Israeli soldiers who were captured inside Syrian territory while tapping the Syrian telephone network.

The passengers were released two days later, only because of heavy American pressure and the intervention of Israeli Prime Minister Moshe Sharett, who was widely criticized in Israel for being moderate.

Said Sharett: "What shocks and worries me is that [Israeli military leaders] seem to presume that the State of Israel may--or even must--behave in the realm of international relations according to the laws of the jungle." (Source: Moshe Sharett's published diaries, entry dated 12/22/54, page 607.)

One must wonder what Sharett, who died in 1965, would have said about the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*.

## CRYPTOLOG TO USE LIBERTY LOGO

--Revision 1-3 September--

The U.S. Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association, which is not afraid of the USS *Liberty*, has asked and has been granted permission to reproduce the official Liberty Veterans Association "Remember the Liberty" logo in its publication, *CRYPTOLOG*, from time to time.

NCVA and *CRYPTOLOG* have long been good friends and solid supporters of the Liberty Veterans Association and routinely keeps its 1,800 members informed of *Liberty* activities. Last year *CRYPTOLOG* devoted an entire issue to reproduction of the declassified National Security Agency report on the USS *Liberty* affair.

The NCVA will hold its annual convention at the Hyatt-Regency Hotel in Baltimore on 1, 2 and 3 September, just before the Liberty Forum scheduled for September 7. Stan White will be present, representing the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association, and plans to distribute *Liberty* bumper

stickers and information about the ship.

## TRIVIAL PURSUIT AGAIN

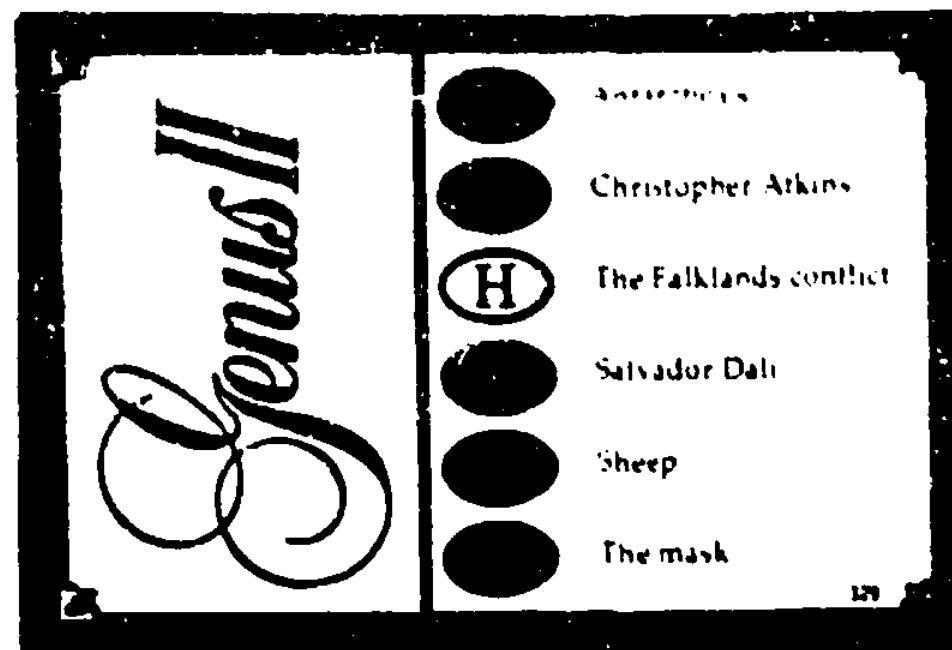
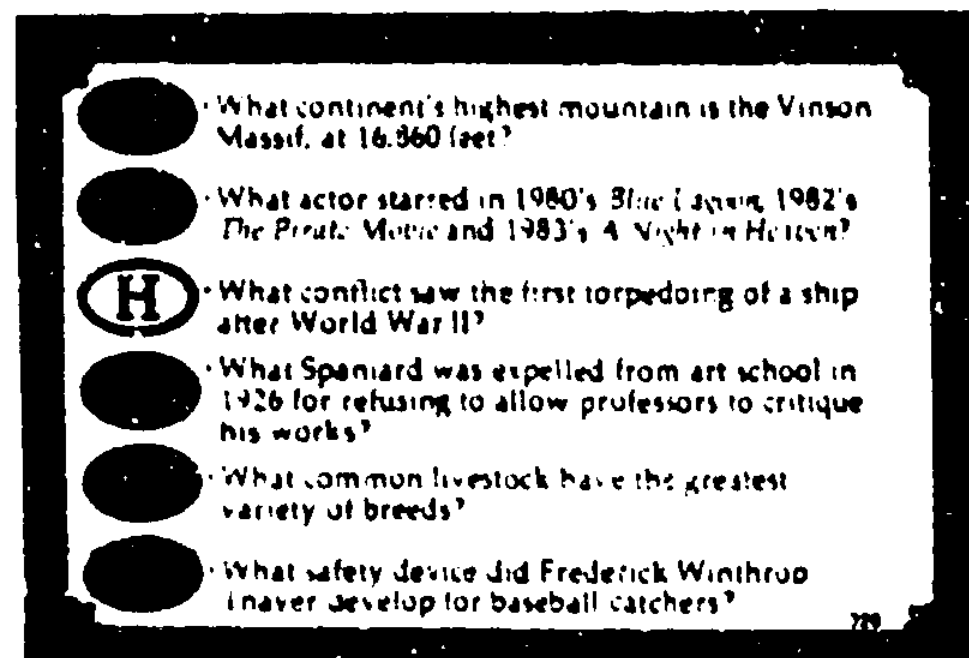
--almost--

In our previous issue we reported that the "Baby Boomer Edition" of the popular quiz game "Trivial Pursuit" contains a question about the USS *Liberty*. "What country strafed the *Liberty*?" "Israel" is provided as the correct answer.

Now Trivial Pursuit has almost done it again, but they missed the boat. The question: "What conflict saw the first torpedoing of a ship after World War II?" Trivial Pursuit's answer: "The Falklands conflict."

Trivial Pursuit is wrong, of course. The sinking of Argentine cruiser General Belgrano on May 2, 1982, may have been the first **sinking** by torpedo since World War II, but USS *Liberty* was the first ship to be torpedoed. As we all know, due to superb damage control and an exceptional state of training and readiness, *Liberty* did not sink.

Joe Meadors has written to the manufacturers of Trivial Pursuit on behalf of the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association to point out the error and request that the card be corrected in future editions.



### CONTRIBUTIONS

If we are to produce a more timely newsletter with professional editing and bulk-mailing services, prompt subscription renewals and contributions from supporters will be more important than ever. They will be vital. Many of our members and supporting members regularly contribute \$100 to \$300 to support the association. Those contributions are now tax deductible. We appreciate your financial support, as without it we cannot function.

### NEW LIBERTY BROCHURES ARE NOW ON HAND!

In response to numerous requests from members, we have printed an additional 5,000 USS Liberty brochures. The single sheet, four page brochure in blue ink gives the background, goals and mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association, a brief description of the attack, names of officers, and a subscription coupon. The brochures are useful for people who wish to help tell our story and to solicit new members and subscribers, or simply to tell friends and relatives what the USS Liberty Veterans Association is all about.

The brochures cost us \$2.65 per hundred to print. First Class postage costs 22 cents for each five brochures or \$2.40 for from 100 to 200 brochures. Fourth Class postage is 9 cents for up to 200 brochures, 94 cents for 400, \$1.94 for 800. Approximately 1,000 brochures can be sent by UPS for \$6.00 UPS charge (plus \$26.50 printing cost).

For brochures, send a donation to the Liberty Veterans Association sufficient to cover the printing and mailing cost for the number of brochures required.

### FIRST ANNIVERSARY VIDEOTAPE FOUND

As this newsletter was going to press, our new president, Joe Meadors, has unearthed a videotape taken during the 1982 Liberty Reunion including banquet speeches by Admiral Moorer and other events from the reunion.

This is an unedited professional videotape copied on VHS format, and is rather poor picture quality, apparently from having been copied several times, but it is nevertheless exciting to watch. The tape is about 90 minutes long and covers Admiral Moorer's and Philip Geyelin's speeches at the banquet, portions of the question and answer period that followed, and interviews with Admiral Moorer, Joe Meadors and Jim Ennes.

The film can be commercially copied and mailed for \$20 per copy. Anyone interested in obtaining copies should send \$20 to Bob Casale at the Hicksville address. After several orders accumulate, we will arrange to have copies made.



USS LIBERTY  
VETERANS  
ASSOCIATION

3 Burns Avenue  
Hicksville, NY 11801

Stan White - Chairman & President Emeritus  
Joe Meadors - President  
Bob Casale - Vice President  
Joyce Casale - Treasurer  
Jim Ennes - Editor/Historian

### SUBSCRIBE TO THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER

The Official Publication of  
The USS Liberty Veterans Association

The Liberty story, with 34 men dead, rivals Watergate as a national scandal, but the story is widely suppressed. **Assault on the Liberty** (Random House, 1980, by James Ennes) is unavailable through most bookstores despite four printings and strong demand. Read this newsletter and learn why and how this story is suppressed and what the Liberty crew is doing about it.

THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER, published quarterly by crewmen of the USS Liberty, provides a forum for the exchange of information about the attack and subsequent coverup.

For a one year subscription mail this coupon with \$10 to: Treasurer, The USS Liberty Veterans Association, 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Noncrewmembers are eligible for associate membership for an additional \$5. Contributions are welcome. For supporting membership, send \$100 or more. Since we are a small group without outside support, contributions are necessary to support our public relations program. Contributions in excess of the subscription fee are fully tax deductible.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



## REMEMBER THE HOROWITZ?

### Remember The HOROWITZ!



Our active Vice President, Bob Casale, is becoming quite well known in Hicksville, New York, for his support of the Liberty. Among other things, the "Remember the Liberty" bumper stickers distributed through the Liberty Plumbing and Heating Supply Company are becoming a common sight in Hicksville and indeed in New York City. Bob's bumper stickers were one of the things mentioned by Israeli writers Zeev Schiff and Hirsch Goodman as having inspired them to write about the Liberty in the September 1984 *Atlantic* magazine.

Recently Bob got some good natured kidding from a Jewish friend who asked, "When are you going to remember the Horowitz?" "The Horowitz?" Bob asked, "What is the Horowitz?" "I don't know," his friend replied, "but I think you should remember it anyway."

So Bob Casale, always one for fair play, created several new bumper stickers reading, "REMEMBER THE HOROWITZ." The date, 15 May 1985, commemorates the date Bob and his teammates sank his friend's baseball team.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY MENTIONS USS LIBERTY

The Spring, 1985, issue of *International Security* contains an article by Sean M. Lynn-Jones entitled *Quiet Success for Arms Control*. Mr. Lynn-Jones devotes about a third of page 167 to the USS Liberty where he cites incidents at sea, such as the USS Liberty attack, which he says are particularly dangerous because information about such attacks can easily be misinterpreted.

According to Mr. Lynn-Jones (who cites Phil Gooding in *Confirm or Deny* as his source), the first

reaction of then Secretary Robert McNamara was to consider the possibility that the Soviet Union was responsible and to plan retaliation against Soviet forces in the area. Fortunately, says Mr. Lynn-Jones, the United States soon concluded that a Soviet attack was unlikely and used the *Lib Line* to reassure the Soviets.

We and others have sought to interview Mr. McNamara concerning his actions during the Liberty crisis, but to no avail. Secretary McNamara, otherwise known for his crystal clear memory, reports that he has no recollection whatsoever of anything concerning the USS Liberty affair.

## LIBERTY MENTIONED IN SPY FICTION

*RUBICON ONE*, a novel by Dennis Jones published by Beaufort Books in 1983 and in paperback by Jove Books in 1985, devotes several paragraphs (pages 21 and 22 of the Jove edition) to the USS Liberty. In this fictional account, Jones has an Israeli character, Stein, mention the Liberty to an American as an example of Israel's resolve to "deal swiftly with threats to Israel, regardless of the source of the threat." According to this account, Liberty was deliberately attacked because its activities were seen as a threat to Israel.

## ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY NOW IN FIFTH PRINTING

*Assault on the Liberty*, by Liberty survivor Jim Ennes, published by Random House in 1980, is still selling steadily. Ennes learned in August that the publisher's stock of 22,500 books has been completely exhausted and the publisher has ordered yet another printing of the book. The new, fifth edition will be available early in September. The publisher has not yet decided on the price, but indicates that the new edition will probably be priced at \$14.95 or \$15.95 depending on printing costs.

## Remember The Liberty!

(AGTR-5)



8 JUNE 1967

## C'MON, UNCLE SAM! TELL US THE TRUTH

Renewed interest in the **Liberty** has moved several citizens including a number of **Liberty** survivors to ask their representatives in Congress to comment on the attack on the USS **Liberty**. More often than not, members of Congress simply ignore inquiries about the **Liberty**. Responses that are made are regularly forwarded to us, and they span a remarkable range--from infrequent candor through evasive double-talk to shameless nonsense.

**Candor:** Refreshing candor is seen in a letter from Kentucky Congressman Larry J. Hopkins to a constituent dated May 31, 1985. Congressman Hopkins is one of the very few people anywhere in government who has taken the trouble to review the Navy Court of Inquiry file. Thus informed, Congressman Hopkins calls the **Liberty** "one of the most troubling issues" he has seen in the Congress, and one that "deserves the same contempt and condemnation as the murderous Soviet ambush of the Korean Airlines plane."

"It is inexcusable," writes Congressman Hopkins, "that the opportunity was, perhaps forever, lost to give this tragic episode the attention it deserved...so that the guilty could be held accountable."

Congressman Hopkins closes by remarking that there is "no effective interest" in the government in reopening the affair. "The book may be closed," he writes, "but the lesson will not and must not be forgotten. ...I will never permit such a contemptible travesty to repeat itself without appropriate response."

**Doubletalk:** Evasive doubletalk is seen in an official letter from Acting Secretary of the Navy James F. Goodrich to Florida Congressman Charles E. Bennett dated July 5, 1985, who inquired on behalf of a constituent.

In this letter, Mr. Goodrich simply informs Congressman Bennett that the Navy made a full investigation, transcripts are available, officers and men testified, no conclusion was reached as to the reason for the attack; and that Israel claimed "confusion," eventually apologized and paid compensation. Goodrich's reply, though less than forthcoming, at least makes no unwarranted pretense that the attack was accidental. Read carefully, Goodrich really says nothing at all.

**Shameless Nonsense:** The Department of State, on the other hand, in a letter from Assistant Secretary William L. Ball, III (Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs) to Kentucky Senator Wendell H. Ford dated June 26, 1985, pulls out all stops in a shameless demonstration of bureaucratic baloney.

Secretary Ball's letter gives Senator Ford the standard government spiel concerning past investigations, damage payments and the like, but presents the unwarranted and unjustified conclusion that "the Department has no information that would

corroborate these allegations [that the attack was deliberate]." Worse in our view, Mr. Ball informs the Senator, as if it were conclusive, that "the Israeli Government...found that the attack was the result of error and had not been deliberate."

Secretary Ball does make some mild sounds of discontent, in that he mentions that the Department was "deeply concerned" and that monetary compensation "is not adequate compensation," but his clear message is that the attack was an unfortunate accident which should be forgotten.

Nowhere does Secretary Ball provide any clue that the Department of State's own analysis of the Israeli excuse determined that the Israelis were lying about every important point in their version of the attack. Nor does he begin to reveal the degree of "concern" that actually existed within the government at the time--concern, for example, which prompted Secretary of State Dean Rusk to describe the attack officially as "military recklessness reflecting wanton disregard for human life." That is not concern. That is a mission of justified outrage.

The Liberty Veterans Association has sent Secretary Ball and Senator Ford packages of material which include the Department of State's own analysis of the Israeli excuse, Secretary Rusk's angry letter of protest to the Israeli government, and other material showing that several key military and government leaders of the era all reject the claim that the attack was an accident. We have asked Secretary Ball, in the interest of replying fairly to future inquiries, that he at the very least inform future inquirers that the question of deliberateness is less one-sided than his letter of 26 June would suggest.

## ISRAELIS ARE STILL TELLING THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY STORY

Israeli spokesmen were badly burned in September, 1984, when **Atlantic Monthly** published a 10,000 word apologia which attempted to explain away the **Liberty** attack as an understandable error made in the heat of war. The attempt backfired, as it inspired numerous rebuttals which helped bring the true story of the **Liberty** to a larger audience than that reached by **Atlantic Monthly**.

Undaunted, Israeli apologists continue to promote the discredited story. According to a display advertisement in the June 27, 1985, issue of **The Canadian Jewish News**, a free copy of the Schiff/Goodman article on the **Liberty** can be obtained by contacting the Community Action for Israel Committee, 4600 Bathurst Street, Willowdale, Ontario M2R 3V3, telephone 635-2883, attn.: Sam Resnick.

# USS Liberty

## MAX MORRIS STRIKES AGAIN

Rear Admiral Max Morris, USN (retired), was navigator in the carrier USS **Saratoga** on the day of the **Liberty** attack. Now, among other things, he writes a regular newspaper column for several Florida newspapers.

In 1982 Admiral Morris wrote a fine column questioning American devotion to Israel in which he described his feelings of frustration as he stood on **Saratoga's** bridge listening to **Liberty** radio operators still calling for help after the aircraft sent to their aid had been recalled by order of the White House.

Now he has written another hard-hitting column which appeared in several Florida newspapers during the second week of July, 1985.

'Who today remembers USS **Liberty**? Does anyone recall a ship christened USS **Pueblo**?' Admiral Morris asks. Those ships, he writes, along with eight others, were deemed 'provocative' by some members of Congress. Instead of retaliating against their attackers, **Liberty**, **Pueblo**, and all their sister ships were removed from service. Had they been available in 1985 as they were in 1967 they might have been able to prevent recent terrorists actions such as the TWA aircraft incident in Beirut, says Admiral Morris.

'The next time you see your Congressman,' Admiral Morris writes, 'ask him if he remembers **Liberty** and **Pueblo**. And also ask him why we unilaterally denied ourselves available intelligence by removing all Navy intelligence ships from service...'

## BUMPER STICKERS

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., have printed an additional 5,000 beautiful 3-3/4" by 15" **Remember the Liberty** bumper stickers. These are top quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, made with a silk-screen process. Send one dollar and a self-addressed, stamped (22 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, to Bob Casale, **Liberty** Veterans Association, 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Bob and Ted also offer **Liberty** T-shirts, tote bags, key chains and other items. For information, call Bob or Ted at 516 681-2221, or write to them at 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801.

## IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription expired with the last issue of Volume III. If your label reads B3 or smaller, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis copy. A1 and A3 designate former

crewmembers. A2 identifies family members. E82 identifies those who attended the 1982 reunion. H1 identifies voting members (former crewmembers) and H2 identifies associate members of the association. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Joyce Casale, **USS Liberty** Veterans Association, 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801. Contributions in excess of subscriptions and membership are tax deductible. If we are to survive, we must have your financial support.

## ELECTRONIC LIBERTY

For computer mail, the preferred method is VCI MAIL addressed to MCI account 247-4070. For TELEX address mail to TELEX account 550-2474070. For COMPU SERVE E-MAIL, address account 72366,2277. For direct computer connection, a Morrow MD-11 computer system with 20MB storage capacity is available 24-hours daily for messages or for uploading or downloading **Liberty** information. The system operates on a Hayes 300/1200 baud modem, uses a custom Citadel bulletin board program with password protection, and uses XMODEM protocol for file transfer. Call to the **Liberty** section of this bulletin board have come from as far as London. For a private password for the Morrow computer, send a self addressed postal card to **USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER**, POB 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 requesting and specifying the password you would like to use, or have your computer call 206 481-6549 directly and leave your request with the SYSOP (system operator). **NEWSLETTER** readers will be granted access within 24 hours.

\*\*\*\*\*

The **USS Liberty Newsletter** is the official journal of the **USS Liberty Veterans Association**, a California non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. Association Officers are Stan White, Chairman of the Board and President Emeritus, Box 169, Cavour, SD 57324; Joe Meadors, President, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 or (for direct mail) c/o ARAMCO, PO Box 1168, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Joyce Casale, Secretary/Treasurer; Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. Legal counsel is Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (phone 415 424-0160). The mailing address of the **USS Liberty Veterans Association** for subscriptions, donations, bumper stickers, brochures and souvenirs, is 3 Burns Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801. Send editorial material to **USS Liberty Newsletter**, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.



## U.S.S. LIBERTY



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WASHINGTON 6 071

**\*\*SPECIAL EDITION USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 1985\*\***

**USS LIBERTY FORUM:** Seventeen **Liberty** crewmen attended the USS **Liberty** Forum on June 7, 1985, at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The forum was attended by about 300 people in the hotel's Jefferson Room where seven men from the ship told their stories to a standing-room-only audience.

The forum was moderated by retired Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, who also fielded questions from the audience following the crew's presentation.

During a luncheon ceremony attended by more than 1,000 people, Admiral Moorer presented an award to the **Liberty** crewmen present in recognition of their service.

An Associated Press international wire service story, printed in many newspapers including the large Long Island daily **NEWSDAY** on September 8 and 9, reported Admiral Moorer's public charge that the attack could not have been a mistake along with his call for a Congressional investigation to "once and for all clear up the uncertainties, speculation, and unanswered questions surrounding this tragedy..."

**STAN AND BOB ATTEND THE NCVA CONVENTION:** On 1, 2 and 3 September, just before the **Liberty** Forum, Stan White and Bob Casale attended the annual convention of the Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland. Stan and Bob were pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming support for the USS **Liberty** Veterans Association received from NCVA members including present senior officers of the US Naval Security Group Command. Bob and Stan say they distributed hundreds of USS LVA brochures and received a great many requests for associate membership in the organization.

**"Everyone in Government Knows it Was a Deliberate Attack"** While in Washington, Stan, Bob and Jim met privately with several retired top military officers and a senior State Department official to discuss the **Liberty** cover-up. "Everyone in government knows it was a deliberate attack," the State Department Official told us off the record. "Unfortunately, the government made an unfortunate decision eighteen years ago to cover up the truth for political reasons. Had the truth been told then, the **Liberty** would not be the embarrassing issue that it still is today." (More about this in the next issue.)

**SPECIAL ELECTION HELD:** On Saturday, September 7, LVA Chairman Stan White called a special meeting of **Liberty** members to ratify recent changes in the LVA board. Members present unanimously reelected Stan White, Joe Meadors, Bob Casale, and Jim Ennes as directors and officers of the association. Joyce Casale was reelected as Secretary/Treasurer. Member Phil Tourney was nominated and elected Public Affairs Officer. Members who wish to make further nominations or to cast additional votes may do so by mail within the next 30 days.

**TAPE RECORDINGS ARE AVAILABLE!** A highlight of the gathering at the Hilton hotel was a tape recording of two songs about the USS **Liberty** written by shipmate Larry Thom. The songs are in the folk-song style of Joan Baez and are sung and played by an experienced singer and skilled musician. After receiving requests for copies from almost everyone who heard the tape, Larry agreed to make and sell copies at his cost of \$6.50 per tape, including packing and First Class postage. The tapes will be recorded on standard 120 minute cassettes and will include, at no extra cost, the full 90 minute USS **Liberty** Forum, including opening remarks by Admiral Moorer and the extended question period which followed. For a copy, send \$6.50 within the next 30 days to Larry Thom, Route One, Staples, Minnesota 56479.

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**1987 TWENTIETH REUNION PLANNING IS GOING FORWARD:** Everyone we talked to in Washington was excited about the upcoming 1987 reunion and eager to proceed. It is not too early to send your \$50 deposit to Bob Casale at 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Bob will hold the deposit in a special escrow account to be applied against your portion of reunion costs.

Meanwhile, for reunion planning and background information for our records, please clip the following coupon and return it in the enclosed envelope.

- 
1. I plan to attend the 1987 USS Liberty reunion. \_\_\_\_\_ Y/N
  2. I prefer (a) WASHDC, (b) SDiego, (c) elsewhere (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  3. I enclose my \$50 deposit for the 1987 reunion. \_\_\_\_\_ Y/N
  4. My battle station aboard the Liberty was \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Please tell me what I can do to be more active in the association. \_\_\_\_\_ Y/N

If your dues for the current year are not yet paid, please consider including your check for \$10 or \$15. We are making real progress and need your support as we continue to show a united front.

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_

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## *The* **USS Liberty** **Newsletter**



8 JUNE 1967

... VOLUME III, Issue #4 ...  
June, 1985

### 18TH ANNIVERSARY SPARKS PRESS INTEREST

The 18th anniversary of the attack on the *Liberty* sparked renewed press interest in the attack.

In New York, Bob Casale and Warren Heaney gave interviews to **NEWSDAY**, the large and well-known Long Island daily. Bob reports that days later his telephone and doorbell are still ringing with callers who want to congratulate him and wish him and his shipmates well.

In Lexington, Kentucky, LVA supporting members John Tabor and Shirley Paulette arranged for a *USS Liberty* memorial ceremony on June 8 which was conducted by Lexington military authorities with the U.S. Navy Color Guard and other local military representatives.

**The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs** on May 27 published a superb article by Admiral Thomas H. Moorer calling upon the United States Congress to clear up the unanswered questions surrounding the *Liberty*.

In Seattle, Joe Meadors and Jim Ennes gave a television interview for the Channel 11 Evening News on June 7. Because of favorable feedback, the segment was rebroadcast the next day.

Meadors and Ennes also gave a 30-minute radio interview by telephone to Tom Shire on station WTTP in Boston on June 8.

**The Spotlight** national newspaper (which claims to have been the first to tell the *Liberty* story publicly) wrote about The Salans Report in their June 3 issue.

**The Retired Officer**, official journal of the Retired Officers Association, published a three page article by Jim Ennes which brought many telephone calls and dozens of letters, all strongly supportive, including some new information from people who participated in the aborted rescue effort.

**The New York Times** printed another announcement in memory of the men who died during the attack. Similar announcements are appearing in newspapers across the country. Last year over 500 people wrote letters in reaction to the *New York Times* announcement.

### OTHER RECENT COVERAGE

As readers recall, the September issue of **Atlantic Monthly** magazine printed a 10,000 word article by two Israeli journalists attempting to prove that the attack on the *Liberty* was a "tragic error of war" for which the *Liberty* itself was partly responsible. According to the writers, we operated too close to shore in a theater of war, refused to identify ourselves, and tried to escape when taken under fire.

The article backfired. Instead of putting another coat of whitewash over the affair, it provided another opportunity for crewmen to speak out.

Associated Press writer David Smyth conducted his own investigation into the Israeli

EIGHTEENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



version of the attack. He interviewed over a dozen **Liberty** survivors plus several key government leaders of the era.

Smyth found, as we have maintained for years, that the official Israeli excuse as retold in **Atlantic** will not withstand scrutiny. The official Israeli version is contrary to official Navy records, sworn testimony of survivors, and the immutable laws of physics.

Smyth then interviewed State Department Secretary Dean Rusk, NSA Deputy Director Dr. Lewis Tordella, CIA Director Richard Helms, and JCS Chairman Admiral Thomas Moorer of the **Liberty** era. Each man told the Associated Press that he disbelieves the Israeli excuse and considers the attack to have been deliberate.

Smyth's first story was released in October, 1984. But, partly due to a misleading caption, it appeared in only two known American newspapers, the **Norfolk Virginian-Pilot** and **Charleston News and Courier**.

Undaunted, David Smyth expanded the story to about 1500 words and resubmitted it as a feature instead of a news story. This time it ran in about 300 American newspapers, including the **Houston Chronicle** and the **Los Angeles Times**. Many papers ran the story as a front page item with banner headlines.

Meanwhile, **Atlantic** published in their December issue letters from Jim Ennes, author Stephen Green, and others, effectively refuting the Israeli version. Reprints of the original **Atlantic** article also ran in the **Jerusalem Post** and the **International Jerusalem Post**, and were followed by rebuttals by Ennes. Typically, however, **Atlantic** gave the last word to two university professors and a former Marine Corps officer who informed **Atlantic** readers in the February issue that "only malice, or special interest, could make anyone believe the attack was deliberate while suggesting that only 'Arab propagandists' could claim that the attack was deliberate. Readers sent us a score of other letters they had sent to **Atlantic** supporting our position, but these were mostly ignored.

A one-hour television interview conducted in 1983 with former crewmen John Frankowski, Stan White, Bob Casale and Jim Ennes is now being shown on PBS and independent television stations, most recently in San Francisco and San Diego. The film was originally made for New York City Cable Television.

Last month Ennes gave a 20 minute television interview to independent producer Linda Simon who is affiliated with Tom Shire at WTTP in Boston. Linda reports that the film will be shown nationally by independent stations.

The March issue of **Mideast Monitor** carries an article about Israeli influence on American institutions by Cheryl Rubenberg. The article discusses Israeli efforts to suppress films, literature, radio, television and newspapers, and includes a section on Israeli efforts to suppress the **USS Liberty** story.

**BRAVE VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS:** Inspired by the sudden renewal of interest in the **Liberty**, we proposed a **Liberty** article to the editors of **VFW MAGAZINE**. Although the VFW national office has long been extraordinarily sympathetic and cooperative, we received an unusually quick and resounding rejection from editors of the magazine. A **Liberty** article was not deemed appropriate.

Next we queried **American Legion** magazine, which has been increasingly hostile ever since they were scolded in 1967 by Zionist organizations for asking the government to conduct a proper **Liberty** inquiry. To our amazement, **American Legion** magazine responded with an offer of \$650 for a 1500 word article. We produced the article, mailed it with full supporting documentation, and waited. Two months later the article was returned with a \$200 "bill tee" and an apologetic letter explaining that it had been rejected by the Legion's editorial board, which deemed the article too controversial for tender Legion sensibilities.

**Purple Heart** magazine accepted the twice rejected article. We gave them second serial rights, hoping to release first publication in a larger circulation magazine for veterans. Their plans, if any, are not presently known, but we suspect that the magazine has had a change of heart, since its editor has been replaced and the magazine will no longer answer our letters.

Finally, **The Retired Officer** magazine, official organ of the Retired Officers Association, accepted the article and ran it in full in their June, 1985, issue along with Stan White's mailing address. The magazine boasts 350,000 retired officer subscribers, who are now overwhelming us with mail, all of which has been supportive.

Our hats are off to **The Retired Officers Association** for having the courage to publish a story that so many other veterans organizations seem to find "too controversial" for their members.

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**New President:** I am pleased and proud to announce that Joe Meadors has agreed to assume the duties and responsibilities as President of the **USS Liberty Veterans Association**. I have discussed

version of the attack. He interviewed over a dozen Liberty survivors plus several key government leaders of the era.

Smyth found, as we have maintained for years, that the official Israeli excuse as retold in *Atlantic* will not withstand scrutiny. The official Israeli version is contrary to official Navy records, sworn testimony of survivors, and the immutable laws of physics.

Smyth then interviewed State Department Secretary Dean Rusk, NSA Deputy Director Dr. Lewis Tordella, CIA Director Richard Helms, and JCS Chairman Admiral Thomas Moore of the Liberty era. Each man told the Associated Press that he disbelieves the Israeli excuse and considers the attack to have been deliberate.

Smyth's first story was released in October, 1984. But, partly due to a misleading caption, it appeared in only two known American newspapers, the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot* and *Charleston News and Courier*.

Undaunted, David Smyth expanded the story to about 1500 words and resubmitted it as a feature instead of a news story. This time it ran in about 300 American newspapers, including the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Many papers ran the story as a front page item with banner headlines.

Meanwhile, *Atlantic* published in their December issue letters from Jim Ennes, author Stephen Green, and others, effectively refuting the Israeli version. Reprints of the original *Atlantic* article also ran in the *Jerusalem Post* and the *International Jerusalem Post*, and were followed by rebuttals by Ennes. Typically, however *Atlantic* gave the last word to two university professors and a former Marine Corps officer who informed *Atlantic* readers in the February issue that "only malice or special interest" could make anyone believe the attack was deliberate while suggesting that only "Arab propagandists" could claim that the attack was deliberate. Readers sent us a score of other letters they had sent to *Atlantic* supporting our position, but these were mostly ignored.

A one-hour television interview conducted in 1983 with former crewman John Frankowski, Stan White, Bob Casale and Jim Ennes is now being shown on PBS and independent television stations, most recently in San Francisco and San Diego. The film was originally made for New York City Cable Television.

Last month Ennes gave a 20 minute television interview to independent producer Linda Simon who is affiliated with Tom Shire at WTTV in Boston. Linda reports that the film will be shown nationally by independent stations.

The March issue of *Mideast Monitor* carries an article about Israeli Influence on American institutions by Cheryl Rubenberg. The article discusses Israeli efforts to suppress films, literature, radio, television and newspapers, and includes a section on Israeli efforts to suppress the USS Liberty story.

**BRAVE VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS:** Inspired by the sudden renewal of interest in the Liberty, we proposed a Liberty article to the editors of *VFW MAGAZINE*. Although the VFW national office has long been extraordinarily sympathetic and cooperative, we received an unusually quick and resounding rejection from editors of the magazine. A Liberty article was not deemed appropriate.

Next we queried *American Legion* magazine, which has been unceasingly hostile ever since they were scolded in 1967 by Zionist organizations for asking the government to conduct a proper Liberty inquiry. To our amazement, *American Legion* magazine responded with an offer of \$650 for a 1500 word article. We produced the article, mailed it with full supporting documentation, and waited. Two months later the article was returned with a \$200 "kill fee" and an apologetic letter explaining that it had been rejected by the Legion's editorial board, which deemed the article too controversial for tender Legion sensibilities.

*Purple Heart* magazine accepted the twice rejected article. We gave them second serial rights, hoping to release first publication in a larger circulation magazine of veterans. Their plans, if any, are not presently known, but we suspect that the magazine has had a change of heart, since its editor has been replaced and the magazine will no longer answer our letters.

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this change with other LVA officers and they all agree this would be a good move. Joe will be in this position until we have our next official meeting and a vote of new officers is held. Joe is full of enthusiasm, eager to get started and is writing letters at a torrid pace to people all over the world in the continued effort to tell the Liberty's story. I know he will do a superb job and that you will give him your full support. If there is any disagreement concerning this change, please write to me. If there is a majority of disagreement we will withdraw the change.

**Members - Supporters - Subscribers:** Please bear with us during this changeover time and while we get reorganized with the Newsletter. We will soon be motorizing right along with new leadership and a regular newsletter. Someday the world will know the story of the USS Liberty, I have faith.

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Bob Casale's wife, Joyce, has agreed to keep our books and finances until the next election. Please send all contributions, membership dues and subscriptions to Bob's address which is listed at the end of this newsletter.

**Reunion:** The reunion has been placed in a hold pattern for the time being. There were only fifteen to twenty people that indicated they were going to attend. There was no additional response from notices in the Newsletter or the personal letter from Bob Casale nor was Bob getting any assistance in his organizational efforts. Therefore, we have postponed the reunion until a later date when things look more promising for a large turnout.

**Movie:** This is a very touchy subject and one I won't dwell on long. Mr. Norn Wallen, whom I'm sure you have all heard from, seems very confident that he will be able to make a movie about the Liberty. Jim Ennes does not agree with Mr. Wallen on very many subjects and states that he knows of another group that is interested in doing a movie on the Liberty. I personally hope that Mr. Wallen and Mr. Ennes can come to some sort of an agreement regardless of whether they work together or not. I have been to California to visit with Mr. Wallen and he seems most sincere in his efforts and I hope he is successful in his endeavors. I don't want to hurt Jim, we have been friends too long and have worked many long hours together. I would just ask that if you are contacted by Mr. Wallen, talk to him and hear him out, then give Jim a call and hear him out, and if you are still undecided, please call George Golden or myself and we'll try to tell you our feelings. Again, make your own investigations, inquiries and decisions.

**Newsletter:** Jim is busy working on a new book and other responsibilities and has asked that he be relieved of his duties as the editor of the Liberty Newsletter. So, you lucky people, I am helping with this one until we work it out with Joe Meadors how he wants to handle the Newsletter in the future.

Hopefully it won't be so long between the next issues, my fault for not getting it done sooner. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim for his long hours of labor in putting out all the past Newsletters and for the terrific job he did on each one. They are all excellent and are scrapbook items for sure. Also, I would like to thank my beautiful wife, Laura, who is helping with these remarks, for the long hours and hard work of preparing all the past Newsletters. I'm also sure if Joe needs us in the future, she'll be right there by my side, plugging away.

**Thank you!!!** I want to thank you all for the honor and the privilege of being the first President of the USS Liberty Veterans Association and for the pleasure of serving in that position. I do feel that I have let you down in not accomplishing our goals and in not getting our story told, but I hope you realize it wasn't because I wasn't trying or because I didn't care. I'll never get over the frustration, sadness and disappointment of trying so hard and running into so many stone walls. Please forgive me for not making some major break through for us and for not seeing our reunion through to its scheduled date. I'm praying very hard for Joe's success and that all of you will do the same (he needs your personal efforts too, of course). You are the finest crew ever assembled by the U.S. Navy, your courage and bravery are beyond belief, you, your wives and your families are the nicest people I've ever met and long with our shipmates that gave their lives, I will remember always each and every one of you. God bless You, pray for us, and know that I am still in there swinging for the LIBERTY and always will be.

Stan

#### A WORD FROM JOE

**Kudos for Stan:** We are all indebted to Stan White for his many accomplishments as President of this association. His parting remarks are much too modest. It was under Stan's capable guidance and leadership that we located about 160 of our shipmates, enrolled most of them as members, held a very successful 1982 reunion, and told our story to millions upon millions of Americans. We have yet to crack the major television networks or the national news magazines, and both governments still pretend the attack was a mistake. But we are making progress all the time. Look at what we have done. We brought the crew together. We changed the Liberty tombstone to read "DIED - USS LIBERTY." We assisted several authors and numerous reporters who have written about the Liberty. Our story has been told coast-to-coast on PBS television, NPR and Mutual radio, UPI and AP news services. It has been told on the front page of the New York Times and in major articles in leading newspapers around the world including the Los Angeles Times, Houston Chronicle, Baltimore Sun, Washington Post, La



Nacion (Buenos Aires) and many others. It has been told in the VFW Magazine and even in Atlantic Monthly and The Jerusalem Post. The VFW passed a national resolution calling for an official monument in memory of our shipmates who died in the attack. Recently an important Associated Press article appeared in about 300 American newspapers. We have been supported editorially in a dozen newspapers and publicly by top military officers and leading government officials of the era. Several of the nation's most respected syndicated columnists have written about us. I think it is safe to say that most Americans by now have heard the Liberty story at least once. This could not have happened without Stan's energy, leadership and perseverance. Take a bow, Stan. And thank you!

**Change of Command!** As many of you know, I have been increasingly active in our organization for the past three years. During that period I have written several articles for both English and Arabic language newspapers in Saudi Arabia where I work for the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO). I have also sent literally hundreds of letters to American congressmen and other leaders seeking to tell our story. And I have filed numerous Freedom of Information Act and other requests for information with government agencies such as the Department of State, the Central Intelligence Agency, the United States Navy and others. (Some of that work has borne fruit. Some may yet.)

I have looked forward to the opportunity to run for President of our association during the scheduled June, 1985, meeting. Stan, meanwhile, had expected to be replaced at that time, having worked at an exhausting pace for the past three years. Then it became necessary to postpone the meeting. Consequently, after consulting with several of you, Stan asked me to serve as interim president until an election can be held. I am pleased and proud to do that and will do my best to earn your trust and confidence.

Meanwhile, like President Ford, I am an appointee rather than a duly elected president. I bring the appropriate humility to the task. Within the next few weeks, we hope to send postal card ballots to all paid up members in order to elect a new slate of officers as provided in our by-laws. I hope you will have enough confidence in me to allow me to remain in this position until the 1987 reunion.

**The Next Reunion:** We must have all been disappointed when it became necessary to postpone the 1985 reunion. In 1982 we had the inexhaustible Don Bialock and Terry McFarland to make arrangements in Washington, and Stan had the use of a toll free telephone and the time to use it to coordinate everything from his home in South Dakota. As we all know, Don died soon after the reunion and Stan's time and telephone are less available. Without Don in Washington to keep things going, the momentum unfortunately stopped. By January, only 22 people had sent deposits, even though over 100 had

indicated that they would attend. With no one available in Washington to do all the last minute planning and coordinating, it was reluctantly decided to postpone the reunion until 1987.

Several of you called to say you missed the sign-up but intended to come anyway. Unfortunately, it was too late. One of our experiences last year was that about twice as many people showed up as had made reservations. We learned later that Don Bialock quietly accepted responsibility for the extra costs that resulted and paid about \$700 from his own pocket without even telling anyone. We could not let that happen again.

So this year we asked for advance deposits, and the result was a different kind of confusion.

What we have learned from all this is that we simply cannot hold a reunion without someone on the scene who has the time and energy to plan and coordinate the affair. It cannot be planned long distance by remote control.

So we will try again in 1987.

Put the weekend of June 5-8 on your calendar.

Joe

#### A WORD FROM JIM

**What is it about this movie, anyway?** Over the past several months many of you have been bombarded with confusing and conflicting advice concerning a USS Liberty movie: a letter from Stan asked you not to cooperate with a San Marino or Pasadena promoter, a letter from George Golden asked you to cooperate, a newsletter asked you not to cooperate, now a note from Stan asks to listen to the promoter's pitch.

Is there anyone out there who is not confused?

Here is the story as I have lived it.

In 1982 I was approached by a California promoter who introduced himself as a wealthy ship owner representing 35 investors who were eager to make a full length feature motion picture based on my book. Funds were available and would be on hand within 60 days. The project, I was told, was supported by actor Charlton Heston and movie maker Louise or Lucille Carroll. Screenwriter Frank Russell was ready to write the screenplay. All that was needed was my signature.

Late in 1983, in return for motion picture rights to my book, the promoter agreed by contract to pay me \$28,500 within a few months plus \$2,000,000 (ten percent of production costs) when production started.

The 35 investors, however, failed to materialize. They were apparently invented solely to induce me to sign. Promised funding, therefore, was not available.

Three 'European millionaires' likewise vanished.

Charlton Heston failed to appear. Movie maker Carroll disappeared. A part time illustrator quit. Screenwriter Russell quit and advised me to do the same because, he said, the project was being mismanaged and would reflect badly upon everyone involved. The promoter commenced a high-pressure nationwide campaign to raise money from the public, often from middle class people who could not afford the risk; sometimes he falsely pretended that "only one share is left to sell," when in fact few if any shares had been sold.

The Seattle District Attorney's office advised me that the fund raising in this state was illegal and that a "cease and desist" order was being issued.

Attorney McCloskey and the Seattle District Attorney both advised me that the promoter appeared to be attempting to raise money under false pretenses.

The promoter missed two payments to me, then falsely pretended to have mailed a check. "I swear to you on my word of honor," he said, "that the check is in the mail." But he was lying.

He claimed to have raised huge sums of money, but could not or would not pay relatively small bills. He claimed to have produced 250 pages of screen play, but could not show me a single page.

The promoter had contracted to complete the screen play by May, 1984, but when that date came he had not produced a single page. Instead, he was browbeating middle class people from coast-to-coast to invest in what seemed an increasingly shaky enterprise, and had dropped share prices to \$2,000 each when he could not sell the \$8,000 units.

Meanwhile, Liberty attorney Paul McCloskey ever-more-urgently advised me to withdraw from the contract. I had nothing to lose financially by remaining (and much to gain if the project succeeded), but by this time I felt like an unwitting dupe in a scam. More important, it was unfair to involve my shipmates and the honorable name of our ship in a project that seemed increasingly questionable.

Early in 1984 I withdrew the promoter's right to use my book.

The promoter, however, continues to operate much as before.

He claims that I left in a dispute over money. Not so. He agreed in writing to pay me more than two million dollars. That amount, though large, was never in dispute and was never questioned until long after I withdrew--and it was always considered a negotiable figure. Our quarrel was not over money, it was over integrity. I left because I lost confidence in the integrity of the promoter.

Recently the promoter has claimed that the movie will now be based on a book being written by historian Richard K. Smith. But, Dr. Smith assures me that he has never agreed to write such a book.

He continues to use mailing lists and other materials which, by our agreement, were to have been returned to me when the contract ended.

For fund raising, he uses the mailing list of

an extremist group whose involvement would surely reflect badly upon a Liberty film.

He has no motion picture experience and is unknown in the motion picture industry. His screenwriter, Frank Russell (who returned in hope of recouping his losses), is almost totally blind and has no known screen credits.

Meanwhile, some of you have accepted the promoter's offer to visit Hollywood at his expense. (He is a persuasive and persistent salesman and seems to have unlimited resources for wooing people who might further his cause.) Others find the whole business very suspicious indeed.

Most of you seem to remain justifiably suspicious. A few of you may believe that any movie is better than no movie at all--that lies and deception are standard practice in the film industry and that we should go along just to have our story told.

These are decisions for you to make individually. Competent legal and business advice is that we should not cooperate with this project, and I agree. I cannot enrich myself by accepting money from a project whose integrity I do not trust.

**OTHER MOVIE MAKERS:** One well established company that hopes to make a major Liberty film is JHH PRODUCTIONS in South Pasadena. JHH has been exclusively engaged since 1954 in production of documentary, industrial and theatrical motion pictures. Among their clients are the Boy Scouts of America, Firestone Corporation, Mobil Oil, ADAMCO Corporation and the United States Navy. For the past twelve years JHH has been the official filmmaker for the Olympic Games. JHH consistently ranks among the top award-winning filmmakers in the world, having won scores of leading awards in international competition.

Recently, JHH hired a leading screenwriter to do some preliminary work toward a Liberty film. If a Liberty movie is possible, I think JHH Productions has the best chance of producing it.

Just this week a New York investor offered \$10,000 for a one year option on not on picture rights to the book. Eventually a Liberty movie will probably be made. More important than personal enrichment will be to choose a movie maker who will produce a product we can all be proud of.

Jm

#### HELP WANTED!

EDITOR FOR THIS NEWSLETTER. SHOULD BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION PREFERABLY WITH SOME EDITING OR PROFESSIONAL WRITING EXPERIENCE. SEND FEE REQUIREMENTS AND STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS OR SAMPLES OF PREVIOUS WORK TO JOE MEADORS. ALSO, READ TASK DESCRIPTION IN THE PARAGRAPHS BELOW.



The following is reprinted from the May 27, 1985, edition of *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*:

## USS Liberty: Questions Persist

By Thomas H. Moorer

June 8, 1985, marks the 18th anniversary of a major event which still leaves many questions to which some are searching for an answer while others fear the true story will be made public.

On that day, when visibility was excellent and the sea was calm, the USS Liberty was cruising about 15 miles off the Sinai coast of Egypt. This ship, which was converted from a merchantman, had a unique topside configuration due to communication antennae and special equipment installed in her superstructure. As a matter of fact, she was the only ship with such clearly identifiable characteristics operating in the entire Mediterranean Sea. She was the easiest ship in the U.S. Navy to identify.

All of a sudden, without warning, the USS Liberty was attacked repeatedly by machine gun fire, rockets, napalm, and, finally, torpedoes fired from Israeli jet aircraft and torpedo boats. When the smoke cleared and the Israeli forces returned to base, the 294 crew of the heavily damaged ship had suffered 34 Americans dead and 171 wounded. So, what did really happen? Why was the ship attacked?

Israel continues to insist that the attack was a case of mistaken identity. However, this claim simply does not hold water. I personally have spent thousands of hours in peace and war searching for and identifying ships on the high seas. Based on this experience, I am certain that a highly trained military force such as the Israelis possess could not have made such a tragic error of misidentification. As a matter of fact, in clear visibility this unique ship was flying a very large, eight foot American flag. Furthermore, Israeli planes circled the ship beforehand and then proceeded to attack her over an extended period of time. There is simply no way that the Israeli pilots and torpedo boat crews could have concluded that it was anything other than a U.S. ship.

While the Congress did have a subcommittee make a limited investigation, there was never a formal congressional hearing such as occurred in the case of the USS Pueblo, for instance. In addition, President Johnson, in reporting this event, significantly understated the extent of the casualties. Finally, only after much effort was it possible to change the stone markers over the graves of six Liberty men buried in Arlington National Cemetery from "dead in the eastern Mediterranean," to "killed USS Liberty."

Based on the manner in which this tragedy was handled in both the United States and Israel, one must conclude that there is much information that has not been made available to the public. In

fact, all the information available to the U.S. government indicating those who controlled this operation, together with the exact text of orders transmitted to the Mediterranean fleet and to the Liberty, has never been released.

Some Israelis now are claiming in published articles that the plots of ship positions maintained in their operations control room were changed between watch officers and that the Liberty was mistaken for a much smaller and older Egyptian ship which did not in the most remote way resemble the Liberty in either size or configuration. Once again, I would like to reiterate my personal opinion: In no way could this attack have been a case of mistaken identity.

Before as well as subsequent to the attack on the Liberty, the U.S. Congress has investigated in depth just about every incident of a similar nature in which the military forces participated. At the very least the Congress, in deference to the families of the men who died on board the Liberty, should once and for all clear up the uncertainties, speculations, and the unanswered questions surrounding this tragedy, which still is thought by many to be a deliberate coverup on the part of the government of Israel as well as the government of the United States.

Even after 18 years, the American people still are entitled to the answers to many, many questions. Here are just a few:

- Why was the Liberty attacked in the first place? Was the objective to hide the fact that Israel was planning to attack Syria the following day?
- Why did the Israeli reports and explanations differ so widely from the reports of the Liberty crew who held a ringside seat?
- Even granting the Israeli claim of mistaken identity at the time of the initial air attack, how could such a terrible mistake be continued for the extensive time required to conduct air attacks as well as torpedo boat attacks using guns, rockets, napalm, and torpedoes?
- Why was air support for the Liberty launched by the U.S. Sixth Fleet carriers recalled, and who gave the order?
- Why did President Johnson downplay the incident by understating the casualties suffered by the crew of the Liberty and why was the tombstone for the six men buried in Arlington cemetery inscribed in such a way as to mask the true nature of their deaths?
- Why has not the Congress conducted a full-scale hearing on the attack?
- Since the Israelis were aware that the USS Liberty was in the eastern Mediterranean should not they have been overly cautious to prevent attacking a proven friend without whose help they could never win a war?

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, U.S. Navy (Ret.), was Chief of Naval Operations from August, 1967-June, 1970, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from July, 1970-July, 1974. Currently he is a Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University.



### GOVERNMENT NOW DENIES EXISTENCE OF THE SALANS REPORT

In past issues we have reported about The Salans Report, that once-top-secret analysis by the Legal Advisor to the Secretary of State which reports, point by point, that the Israeli version of the attack on the Liberty is contrary to evidence in government files and sworn testimony of survivors.

The report was uncovered by LVA supporter Jim Miller in Minneapolis only through persistent Freedom of Information inquiries and more than \$15,000 invested in a FOIA law suit against the government.

Finally, among many other elusive documents, the government released The Salans Report, which reveals for the first time that the United States Government knew at the highest levels that the Israeli excuse was untrue.

In a previous issue we described the report and described how to obtain a copy from the Department of State Freedom of Information Office.

Now, however, we learn that FOI officers now longer release the report: people who ask for it are told that the Department of State cannot identify such a document.

Those who wish to try should ask State's FOI officer for the "ten pages of microfiche documents pertaining to the USS Liberty." At last report, those ten pages, about 1,000 Liberty documents, were available for \$10 from the Department and included the Salans report.

If unable to obtain the report from State, send \$1.00 and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the USS Liberty Newsletter.

### PLANS FOR THE REUNION THE NEWSLETTER AND THE ORGANIZATION

The 18th anniversary weekend saw meetings and telephone calls between several LVA members and elected officers to formulate a plan of action for the coming months.

Starting with this issue, we have engaged a commercial bulk mailer to print and mail the newsletter. (You should ignore the return address on the envelope. That is the bulk mailer's address and is intended only for the postman.)

Our postal costs will immediately drop from 22 cents to 6 or 12 cents per item, we will no longer be limited to four sheets (one ounce), and Stan and his family will be relieved of the burden of folding, stapling, stamping, and affixing address labels. Until now, they have licked more than 5,000 stamps, affixed more than 5,000 address labels, and stamped more than 10,000 return address and "Remember the Liberty" messages. All that will now be done by the bulk mailer.

At the same time, we will begin paying a modest fee to an editor. Jim has been doing this gratis, a task that consumes from 80 to 100 or more hours per issue, and one that may conflict with his other responsibilities. He has devoted more than 26 weeks to that task and can no longer do so. Maintenance of the approximately 400-name mailing list and printing the mailing labels takes even more time.

With this issue we ask members who would like to edit the newsletter to bid on the job. Jim will bid also, and the lowest qualified bidder will become the new editor. Send your bid and description of your qualifications to Joe Meadors. Access to a micro-computer with full feature word processor (with address list handling capability) and letter-quality printer is recommended. The past several issues have been produced on a TeleVideo terminal with a 1.2 megabyte 8" floppy disk drive using a Spellbinder word processing system and TranStar 140 precision printer.

If most members continue to renew their membership annually, we will have sufficient funds to produce this newsletter every 90 days like clockwork, while using a commercial service for the mechanical work and while modestly compensating the editor for his time and services. Renewals and contributions, however, will be vital if we are to survive.

# Remember The Liberty!

(AGTR-5)



8 JUNE 1967

## INSIGHT INTO THE NAVY'S TREATMENT OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY REPORT

One of the most puzzling aspects of the U.S. Navy's role in the Liberty cover-up is the official treatment given the Court of Inquiry report by the Navy.

Most striking is the apparent acceptance, without question, of the Findings of Fact reported by the Court. Everyone we know who has studied the file, including Navy Legal Officers who specialize in such things, agree that the report is filled with obvious errors.

For instance, several senior crewmen gave sworn testimony of extensive, low-level reconnaissance by Israeli aircraft while the American flag stood out clearly displayed in a good breeze. Ship's logs and testimony from an officer of the deck established that the flag flew freely in a twelve knot breeze. Yet the pertinent logs and UOD's testimony somehow failed to find their way into the official record, and the Court reported a Finding of Fact that the flag "probably hung limp at the mast on a windless day" where it could not be seen by the Israelis.

Although Navy Judge Advocate regulations require that all findings be supported by evidence in the record, no evidence whatsoever supports that and some other key findings of the Court of Inquiry. To understand what happened, one must ignore the findings and plunge into the testimony itself which, though inadequate and incomplete, gives a better picture than the official findings.

A senior officer who reviewed the file in London has told us that he refused to approve it because of discrepancies. Yet the file was ultimately approved and became the official American version of the USS Liberty affair.

This has always puzzled us.

Recently we held an extended conversation with a Navy JAG officer who has studied the Court of Inquiry file in depth.

He was struck, he said, by the unusually comprehensive forwarding endorsements affixed to the file as it made its way to through subordinate commanders to the Chief of Naval Operations (then, Admiral Thomas Moorer). The final endorsement by the Navy JAG (the top ranking Navy legal officer) is an almost unprecedented 23 pages and consists essentially of a summary of evidence in the court record while almost entirely ignoring the official "findings of fact" in the record.

And unlike the "findings of fact," which would have us believe that reconnaissance was almost nonexistent, the air still and the attack brief, the JAG endorsement describes eight reconnaissance flights, a flag that fluttered in a good breeze and an extended attack.

JAG, in other words, took its account from the testimony and evidence in the record, not from the official "findings."

"How can this be?" we asked our JAG officer friend.

"You must remember," he said, "that this report was prepared by a bright, young, up-and-coming admiral in an afloat unit. Washington commanders simply do not send reports back to fleet units no matter how error-filled, if it can possibly be avoided. 'Don't bug the fleet' is a maxim in the Pentagon. Yet this report was so self-contradictory that JAG apparently felt he could not send it to the Chief of Naval Operations as it stood. So someone did a very extensive analysis of that report and prepared a detailed 'Summary of Events' for top Navy brass to see. This was an extraordinary thing to do. But it served the purpose of producing a report for CNO that was at least consistent with evidence and testimony in the official files, and it did so without 'bugging the fleet'."

Thus, as far as the Navy was officially concerned, most gross inconsistencies in the report were corrected, at least for the eyes of top Navy officers.

Unfortunately, only a few very senior officers saw the corrected summary. And apparently Admiral Moorer, who was the ultimate approval authority, did not see the report or the corrected JAG summary. Final approval of the Court of Inquiry report came not from Admiral Moorer, but from a deputy. Had Admiral Moorer seen it, we suspect he would have sent it back with a list of hard questions.

## ISRAELI FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Israeli Foreign Affairs is a new monthly newsletter published by Jane Hunter, a Jewish woman in Oakland, California, to inform Americans of the behind-the-scenes activities of the Israeli government, particularly those activities that the Israelis prefer to keep secret.

The April 1985 issue features an interview with George Golden and Jim Ennes about their reactions to the Atlantic article and the attack on the Liberty.

Publisher Jane Hunter reports that the article received a "tremendous" reaction from her mostly-Jewish readers, many of whom had never heard of the USS Liberty before.

## USS LIBERTY FORUM

As this is being written, a USS LIBERTY FORUM is being planned for the first week in September to be held in Washington, D.C. Six Liberty survivors have agreed to participate in this panel discussion to be moderated by retired Chief of Naval Operations and JCS Chairman Admiral Thomas Moorer. Several other survivors and former civilian and military officials in key positions during the attack are expected to be in the audience, along with press representatives, present government officials, motion picture industry executives, and the public.

This is the first time witnesses to all the most controversial (and most frequently denied) aspects of the attack will be assembled at one place to be questioned in public by friend or foe.

For more information, send a self-addressed postal card or envelope to Joe Meadows at the Woodinville address at the end of this newsletter.

### NEW BOOK MENTIONS LIBERTY

Former congressman Paul Findley's long-awaited book on the Israeli Lobby was released this month. Paul Findley, one of the few members of Congress with the political courage to ask questions about Israel, was defeated by pro-Israeli money in 1982 after 22 years as a Republican representative from Illinois. Findley was not anti-Israel. But, unlike most of our elected representatives in Washington, Findley refused to vote blindly for every pro-Israel issue. He wanted to know "why," and he wanted to know what was best for America. So the Israeli lobby raised \$685,000 to drive Paul Findley from the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Findley's new book, *They Dare to Speak Out*, chronicles the experiences of American citizens who have dared to speak out against the wishes of the government of Israel. It describes in shocking detail the almost complete control the Israeli government now wields over the American Congress and the White House. It describes how presidential candidate Walter Mondale "regularly bounced ideas" off the Israeli lobby to assure he followed the Israeli line and how President Reagan appointed the head of the primary Israeli lobby to a board that decides how much aid to send to Israel.

According to Findley, most Middle East bills concerning Israel in any way are written, not by elected lawmakers, but by professional lobbyists for Israel. They are routinely approved in Congress, usually without discussion or debate of any kind.

The book describes the almost complete control Israeli partisans have over what is taught about the Middle East in American universities and colleges. Middle East Studies departments are typically run by Zionists. Jewish Studies are common, but Arab Studies are almost unheard of, Findley says.

Findley describes the experiences of Adlai Stevenson, George Ball, J. William Fulbright, Charles Percy, Paul McCloskey, Jessie Jackson, George Aime Geyer and others, and devotes a full chapter to the USS Liberty and the efforts of the Israeli lobby to conceal the truth about the attack.

The 362 page hard cover book is available from the publisher, Lawrence Hill & Co., 520 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880, for \$16.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and shipping or by telephone from Readers Express, 800 852-5000.

THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1985



Robert Casale, who says Israel deliberately attacked U.S. ship during 67 war

## Still Seeking Probe In Name of Liberty

By Phil Mintz

On June 8, 1967, the Navy intelligence ship Liberty, patrolling in the Mediterranean during the six-day Middle East War, was attacked by Israeli jets and torpedo boats that pounded the lightly armed ship for an hour and twenty minutes, killing 34 of the ship's 294-man crew and wounding more than 171.

Israel apologized for the incident, calling it an unfortunate mistake of war, and both governments now consider the case closed. But many of the survivors and other men who had been on the ship in the past years say the attack was deliberate and an official coverup has denied the dead and survivors their proper recognition.

Among them is Hicksville business man Bob Casale, an ex-crew member who has turned the memory of the Liberty into a personal crusade.

"I lost a lot of friends," the 42-year-old businessman said as he sat in the office of his plumbing supply company, founded in 1977 and named Liberty to commemorate the ship. Casale served on the Liberty for 15 months, but left the ship before it was sent to the Midwest.

Casale, a vice president of the Liberty Veterans Association, has turned the office of Liberty Plumbing and Heating Supply into a small Liberty museum, with photos, newspaper articles, uniform patches and other memorabilia of the ship. In addition, the company's two vans have been painted with an outline of the ship and the license plate of one bears the number - AGTR-5 - that were painted on the ship's hull.

"To this date, most people still don't know," Casale said, his "Remember the Liberty" T-shirt exposing a panther tattoo he got while in the service. "It's not mentioned in any of the history books. There is still a coverup."

Many of the former crew members believe that the Israelis attacked the

ship, which was assigned to eavesdrop on the communications of the warring nations, because it was in position to detect an Israeli attack on Syria. According to Casale, there are many inconsistencies between the official Israeli version of the incident and the testimony of crew members, but the incident was put aside to smooth relations with an ally.

One of the aims of the group, Casale said, is to get the full story of the Liberty attack told so that the ship's crew will be honored as heroes.

Casale maintains a lending library of books and magazine articles written about the incident, including a cache of 100 newspaper copies of a book about the attack written by a former officer of the Liberty. Casale has also produced thousands of bumper stickers, tote bags, T-shirts and key chains emblazoned with the "Remember the Liberty" message.

Casale said there have been charges that the Liberty group is being financed by Arab interests and that it attracts anti-Semites. "It's financed entirely by us," he said, adding that one of the most outspoken of the ship's officers is Jewish. About 150 former crew members belong to the organization, he said.

Casale said that he has devoted so much time to the Liberty because of the many friends he had on the ship who died in the attack. He said he figures that had he remained on the ship, he would have died too because a torpedo tore a hole in the side and exploded at his former station, killing his replacement. "I trained him," he said.

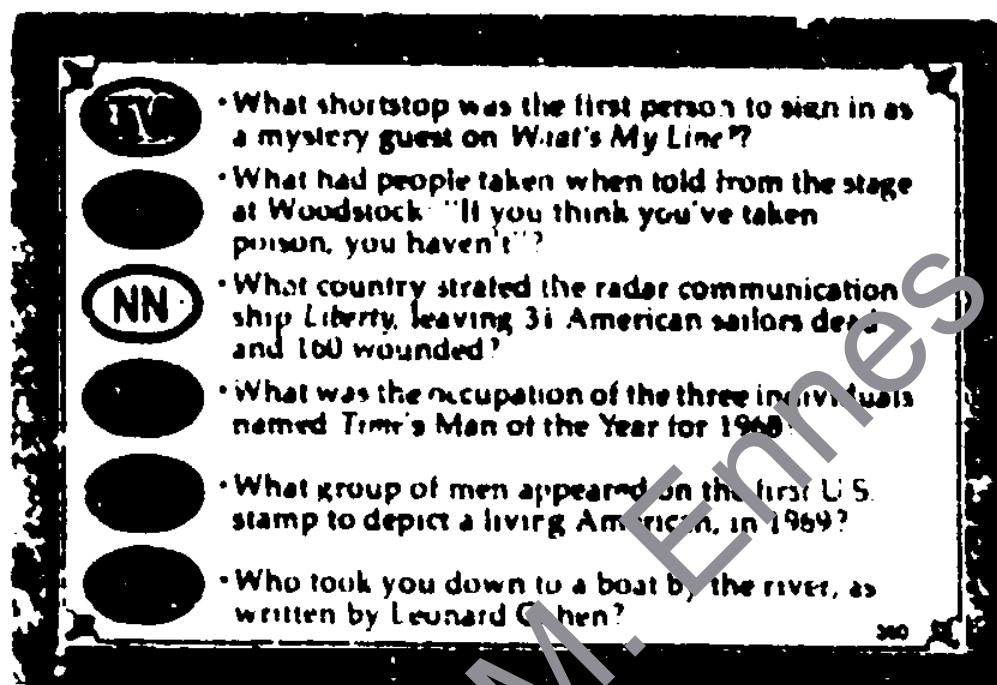
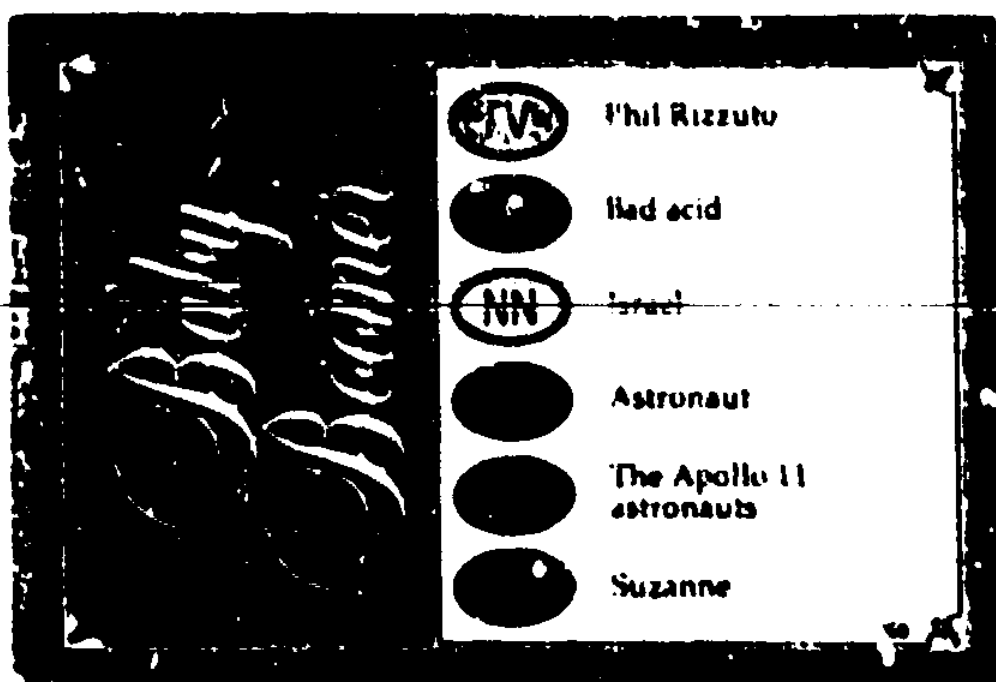
Another Liberty veteran, Warren Heaney of Bellmore, said that he agreed with Casale on the need to reopen the Liberty investigation. "If you make a mistake, live, own up to it," said Heaney, who was in the ship's galley making a sandwich when it was attacked. "We were attacked by a friendly ally. There are certain considerations that are taken."



## TRIVIAL PURSUIT GAME FEATURES USS LIBERTY

Thanks to shipmate Rick Ametti and his sister-in-law Jeannine Musselwhite for the question cards reproduced below from the Baby Boomer edition of the popular Trivial Pursuit game.

Trivial Pursuit has noticed the *Liberty*, even though most of the history books have not.



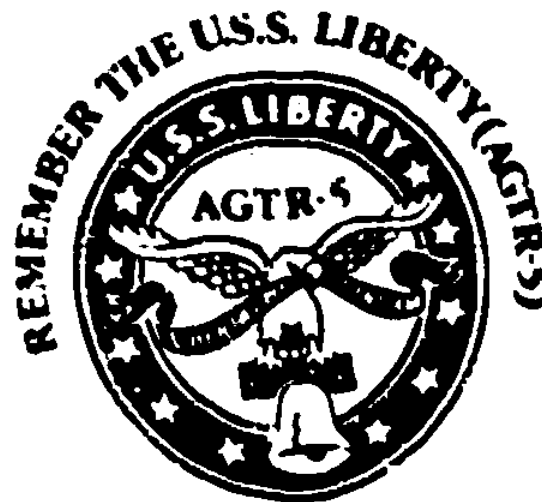
## BUMPER STICKERS

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., have just printed an additional 5,000 beautiful 3-3/4" by 5" **Remember the Liberty** bumper stickers. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, made with a silk-screen process. Send one dollar and a self-addressed, stamped (22 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, to Bob Casale, *Liberty Veterans Association*, 3 Burns Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801. Bob and Ted also offer *Liberty* T-shirts (\$8.50), tote bags, key chains and other items. For information, call Bob or Ted at 516 681-2221, or write to them in Hicksville.

## IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription is paid through four issues of Volume III, of which this is the fourth and last issue. If your label reads B3 or smaller, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. A1 and A3 designate former crew members. A2 identifies family members. E3 identifies those who attended the 1982 reunion. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Joyce Casale, *USS Liberty Veterans Association*, 3 Burns Ave, Hicksville, NY 11801. Contributions in excess of subscriptions and membership are tax deductible. If we are to survive, we must have your financial support.

The *USS Liberty Newsletter* is the official journal of the *USS Liberty Veterans Association*, a California non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. Association Officers are Stan White, Chairman of the Board and President Emeritus, Box 169, Cavour, SD 57324; Joe Meadors, President, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072; Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Joyce Casale, Secretary/Treasurer; Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 206 788-3519). Legal counsel is Paul H. McCloskey, Jr. (phone 415 424-0160). For computer mail, use MCI MAIL address JENNES. The *USS LIBERTY COMPUTER* contains downloadable back issues of this newsletter and other articles and information about the ship that can be transferred to your computer by telephone. For direct telephone connection with the LVA computer, send a self addressed postal card to the Woodinville address below and ask for the telephone number and password. The mailing address of the *USS Liberty Veterans Association* for subscriptions, donations, bumper stickers and souvenirs, is 3 Burns Ave, Hicksville, NY 11801. Send editorial material to *USS Liberty Newsletter*, Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.



# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



• • • VOLUME III Issue #3 • • •  
November 1984

## **A WORD FROM STAN**

Friends and Shipmates,

I'd like to give you a short status report, say thank-you, and just talk a bit.

**NCVA CRYPTOLOG:** The special edition of CRYPTOLOG, which all crew members received, was devoted entirely to USS Liberty as a courtesy of the Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association. The issue reproduces most of the uncensored portion of the National Security Agency's official 1982 report on the USS Liberty prepared by William D. Gerhard. We thank NCVA for the superb Liberty story and gratis copies for each of us.

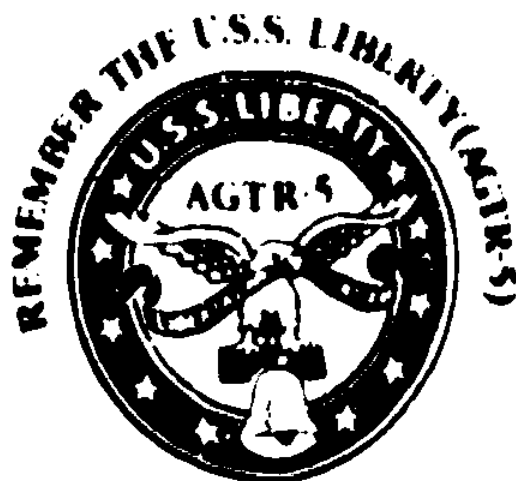
**LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION:** We are now a California corporation and, as of this writing, are close to tax-free status. When this is granted, donations and gifts to the LVA will be declarable as deductions on your income tax. We have former California Congressman Paul N. "Pete" McCloskey, Jr., and the law firm of Brobeck, Phleger and Harrison in San Francisco to thank for this.

**LIBERTY REUNION:** Bob Casale is working hard to get the second reunion off the ground with help from Joe Lentini in Washington, D.C. Bob can use all the help he can get. Soon Bob and the Hotel Washington will need some firm numbers on how many people to plan for. Bob has written to all of you. Please reply as soon as possible—today would be best—so that plans can progress.

This is an appeal to all crew members: Let's all get together June 7, 8 and 9, 1985, and enjoy each other's company as one of the finest crews ever assembled by the United States Navy.

There have been questions about who may attend. The consensus seems to be that the reunion is for all families of deceased crewmen, the crewmen themselves and their families, and personally invited guests who will be accompanied by a crew member. Of course, anyone may come to Washington, D.C., that weekend and meet a fantastic crew and their families, but the scheduled

events, the banquet, the cocktail parties, tours, and any special events will be restricted to those described above.



JUNE 8, 1967

**LIBERTY PLUMBING AND HEATING, HICKSVILLE, NEW YORK:** Writing about Bob reminded me that Bob and his partner Ted Swedalla not only have named their business after our lady the Liberty, but have also been plugging our ship and crew for a long time now. Their entry way is filled with pictures of ship and crew, patches, newspaper and magazine articles, photographs, and memorabilia. Their ad in the yellow pages displays a silhouette of the ship, as does each of their trucks. The "Remember the Liberty" bumper stickers (which seem to have inspired the recent article in *Atlantic Monthly* magazine) come from Bob and Ted, as do the recently advertised and much-in-demand T-shirts for \$8.50 including UPS delivery. For information about Liberty shirts, key chain, embroidered patches, overnight bags, or other memorabilia, call Bob or Ted at 516 681-2221. We look forward to seeing these fine gentlemen fine gentlemen at the 1985 reunion.

**VIRGIL BROWNFIELD RESIGNS:** I was very disappointed when Virgil resigned as our Secretary/Treasurer after two years of faithful service. Virgil has been extremely busy with his regular job as well as the new responsibilities in starting an air evacuation medical service in Florida, so I can certainly understand his reasons for leaving. We look forward to seeing you at the '85 reunion, Virgil.

**ORGANIZATION OFFICERS:** Like 1981, the 1985 reunion will include a business meeting. Please be thinking about officers for the next three to five year term. If you would like to run or otherwise to become more active in the association, let me know. If you have someone in mind for an association office and he cannot attend, ask if he will accept the nomination and try to get a written agreement from him to accept the nomination. Try to have your nominations in mind and any important business ready to present so this meeting can be short and to the point.

**SMALL WORLD:** Recently I took a new position in the city of Huron, South Dakota. (My old address is still good for a while.) To my astonishment, and a qualifier for the "it's a small world" category, I find, not only living in this same South Dakota city, but also working in the same company as myself, Everett Freese. Some of you may remember Everett as the RM3 who on June 8, 1967, was busily working in the radio shack trying to get us help. Well he tried, but where was the help?

Stan

#### WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LIBERTY MOVIE?

With all the conflicting stories circulating about "the Liberty movie," we think it is about time to set the record straight.

Almost two years ago Jim Ennes, Stan White and Pete McCloskey (attorney for the Liberty Veterans Association) were approached by California promoters who claimed to represent a group of investors eager to finance a movie based on "Assault on the Liberty." The promoters claimed to have the support of such leading Hollywood figures as Charlton Heston and a major studio. They promised to complete a screenplay within six months and to commence shooting within a year.

In October, 1983, Ennes signed a contract allowing the group to represent him in movie negotiations as long as certain milestones were met.

Unfortunately, it soon became clear that the promoters were not what they pretended to be. Their "group of investors" did not exist. Instead, the promoters used the contract (obtained by falsely claiming to represent existing investors) to conduct a nationwide fundraising campaign to find investors. We consider that to have been a major breach of faith and misrepresentation of facts.

By March it was clear that cooperating with the promoters had been a mistake: they had met none of the milestones; they were behind in payments to Ennes, to their screenwriter, and to an illustrator; the screenplay had not been started; fundraising had been a dismal failure with no significant funding in sight; the screenwriter had stopped work and was recommending that Ennes withdraw too; the illustrator had quit; and the promoters had established a pattern of unreliability.



that made any further reliance upon their word impossible.

Upon the advice of the attorney for the Liberty Association and after discussions with officers of the association and others, Ennes gave the promoters until 1 May 1984 either to make good on the guarantees or to void the contract.

The promoters, however, even after being notified that use of the book was being withdrawn, continued to attempt to raise money for "the movie about Jim's book." In one case after being notified of Ennes's withdrawal, they repeatedly badgered a Seattle woman with claims that her \$8,000 check was the last investment needed to "commence work on Jim's movie." A Midwest man did invest several thousand dollars under the false impression that Ennes's book was to be the subject of the movie.

At one point the promoter advertised by mail that a share of funds invested in the movie would go to the Liberty Veterans Association. That, too, we consider misleading, as this association did not agree to accept such funds and gave no permission to use our name in that manner. Since we do not support the project, we would not have agreed.

We have been told by experts that the promoter is not licensed as a fundraiser and that certain of his methods constitute attempts to raise money under false pretenses. That and other fundraising methods by the promoters is now being looked into by authorities in Washington State and elsewhere.

In the past several weeks, however, the promoter has embarked on a frenzied campaign to discredit Ennes and to misrepresent the circumstances of Ennes's departure. According to the promoter, Ennes sabotaged the project by demanding excessive royalties from the film. Not so. Ennes quit because he lost confidence in the promoters.

The promoters, meanwhile, claim that they are "more determined than ever" to go ahead with the project. That may be, but all the determination in the world will not make a brain surgeon or a moviemaker without skill, experience and money.

If you are contacted by anyone claiming to be preparing a motion picture about the Liberty, ask some hard questions before agreeing to invest or to cooperate. Ask the promoter to provide hard references from bankers and industry leaders, then check them out. Find out how much of the promoters own money is at risk and make them prove it. Get the names of investors and talk to them. Get reports by Dun & Bradstreet, Better Business Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, and Equifax of Atlanta. Demand financial statements and review them with an accountant. (The promotion manager represented himself to us as a wealthy ship owner supposedly doing this as a lark.) Find out what salary, fees and profits the promoters have drawn and expect to draw and check that against other businesses. If he claims that others are cooperating, ask for names and check it out. Get the name of the studio they claim to be working with; verify their claims.

The Liberty Association recommends that Liberty survivors wait for a more reliable, established motion picture maker. We believe that a moviemaker with experience and integrity will turn up, and we are currently carrying on some preliminary negotiations with promising candidates.

If, however, you find the promoter too smooth to resist—if he convinces you that he can make the pictures and that you should cooperate despite our experience—then at least do yourself the favor of checking his credentials.

If you are inclined to believe that Ennes sabotaged the film through greed and ignorance (which is the promoter's message), ask the promoter for copies of Ennes's and McCloskey's letters which explain the real reasons for Ennes's departure. Or call Ennes, White, Casale or McCloskey for details.

#### **MORE ABOUT JIM MILLER'S FREEDOM OF INFORMATION SUIT**

**By Jim Miller**

In July, 1981, after reading *Assault on the Liberty* I filed an FOIA request for all documents related to the USS Liberty and any documents which demonstrate that the attack was not deliberate. This simple move, inspired by curiosity, started a seemingly endless struggle which has yet to end.

The problem started with bureaucratic footdragging. Despite follow-up letters and two long-distance phone calls to Washington, by April, 1982, I had received only seven documents. The State Department claimed they could not send more at that time because they were "reorganizing files after the Ennes case" (which had ended 19 months earlier). I followed with an administrative appeal, which was denied.

A year after filing I had still received only seven documents and, since there was no sign of cooperation, I hired a lawyer, Mr. Gary Weissman, who filed suit on 25 June 1982.

Despite legal stonewalling, I did subsequently receive 259 documents. However, since 75 listed documents were missing, we asked the Justice Department for the missing documents. Our

**REMEMBER THE LIBERTY**

letter was ignored and Justice asked the court to dismiss our complaint since, they said, they had supplied all the requested documents.

On 2 June 1983 we complained to the Court that the State Department was acting in bad faith since, among other things, they had given Ennes 17 documents which they had failed to release to me and had given me a great many files that they had failed to give to Ennes.

At this point it had taken 26 months to get 333 Liberty documents. Forty-four identified documents are still missing, all of which are diplomatic notes or secretarial level documents which are permanent records. The only explanation given is that the documents are "missing but not lost," which is less than enlightening. To obtain the 333 documents required three hearings in Minneapolis Federal District Court attended by Justice Department lawyers from Washington, D.C. The State Department provided five affidavits, mostly necessary to correct earlier misstatements. Their attitude seems to be: incompetence isn't perjury, even if it is under oath.

Since 1967 at least 16 other individuals have made FOIA requests to the State Department for Liberty documents, and the three I have talked with all report wonderful bureaucratic stonewalling. In fact, only Jim Ennes and myself received anything more than token documents—but we were the only two to go to court.

If necessary, the State Department resorts to deception: For example, to explain to the court why Ennes received only 163 documents while I was given 333, the Department said that Ennes had made only a "Privacy Act" request. But when challenged, it admitted that Ennes had in fact filed an FOIA request.

Despite the problems, I am proud of my suit and proud of the issues of law we raised. Our complaint pointed out that the attack on the USS Liberty violated specific provisions of the 1954 Treaty of Friendship, Navigation and Commerce with Israel and that no documents can be legally withheld only because they conceal illegal or embarrassing activity. Unfortunately, the court sidestepped that argument and invoked the national security buraboo by stating that, "The needs of national security supercede both the FOIA and EO 12958."

In response to my request for documents demonstrating that the attack was not deliberate, the Department twisted that with official double-talk which said, "The Department has no information that would corroborate allegations of a deliberate attack," and that nonargument was accepted by the Court.

Now the bad news: Under the FOIA, if suit is necessary only to force the government to comply with the law, then the plaintiff is entitled to have his legal expenses paid by the government. Since the government quite clearly has not been complying with the act in this case, I expected to recover my legal expenses. On 14 July 1984 Judge Robert Renner ruled that I did not prevail and am not entitled to any legal fees. He gave no explanation.

To date I have risked \$14,211 in legal fees because my attorney and I believed that no reasonable judge could conclude that we had not prevailed in this case.

We believe there is a strong case for appeal, but must now seek additional financial help as further legal costs are beyond my financial means.

**Editor's note:** On Monday, August 27, the Minneapolis Star and Tribune ran almost a full-page story describing Mr. Miller's experiences. Miller, says the newspaper, is a \$35,000-a-year auditor with two children, and his quest for Liberty documents is taking a toll on his family. He has, however, decided to go ahead with an appeal. He has borrowed \$9,000 to clear his account with attorney Weissman, and has raised several hundred dollars from contributors to finance the \$3,000 appeal. Mr. Weissman has agreed to assume half of that cost. For the rest, almost \$1,000 has now been raised from contributors, including \$100 from the USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION.

We consider this a worthy cause and Jim Miller a valuable friend of the association. He is conducting a search that this association would be conducting if we had the resources. His search, though expensive, has not been for naught, however. Among the documents he has unearthed is "The Salans Report," a 1967 study of the Israeli excuse by the State Department Legal Adviser (reproduced in part on page 5) which shows that the excuse is not believable.

We encourage other supporters of the association to help defray Mr. Miller's expenses by sending funds for the appeal to Miller FOIA Appeal, French & Weissman, Attorneys at Law, c/o James Miller, 3402 East 125th St., Burnsville, Minnesota 55337. Jim tells us that if his appeal succeeds, he will return the contributions.

PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS:

STAN WHITE  
Rt. 1 Box 169  
Cavour  
South Dakota

PHONE:  
(605) 599-2843

57324

REMEMBER THE LIBERTY

4



**TOP SECRET**  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
The Legal Advisor

15424

September 21, 1967

TO : U - The Under Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S *feh*  
FROM : L - Carl F. Salans *CFS*  
SUBJECT: "The Liberty" - Discrepancies  
Inquiry and U.S. Navy Inquiry  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

THIS IS PAGE ONE OF THE OFFICIAL FIVE PAGE DOCUMENT WHICH REFUTES THE ISRAELI EXCUSE AND THE CLIFF/GOODMAN ATLANTIC ARTICLE. COMPLETE COPIES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICE, OR FROM THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION FOR \$1.00 AND A BUSINESS SIZE ENVELOPE WITH TWO STAMPS.

As you requested, we have compared the decision of the Israeli Judge, dated July 21, 1967, with the findings of the U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry, and the Clifford Report, concerning the Liberty incident.

The following discrepancies are noteworthy:

I. Speed and Direction of the "Liberty"

The Israeli report indicates that the torpedo boat Division Commander reported and reconfirmed the target's (Liberty's) speed at 28 to 30 knots and that it had changed its navigational direction shortly after 1341 hours.

- The U.S. Navy inquiry established that the Liberty had been on a steady course at 5 knots from 1232 hours until the attack.

II. Aircraft Surveillance

- The Israeli report indicates that a ship was reported in the area by reconnaissance aircraft at 0600 and that another report was received of a contact between an Israeli aircraft and a surface vessel about 0900.

- The Navy Court finding of facts, plus testimony of various members of the crew indicate reconnaissance overflights of the Liberty at 0515, 0850, 1030, 1056, 1126, 1145, 1220, and 1245.

III. Identification by Israeli Aircraft

The Israeli report indicates that the fighter aircraft carried out a run over the ship in an effort to identify it.

FILMED  
S. C. C.

**TOP SECRET**



## ISRAELI WRITERS IN 'ATLANTIC MONTHLY' CLAIM "NEW EVIDENCE SHOWS ATTACK WAS AN ACCIDENT"

Almost a year ago word came from Israel that Israeli writers Hirsch Goodman and Zeev Schiff were preparing an article for *The Atlantic Monthly* which, they said, would "thoroughly discredit everyone who has ever written about the attack on the USS *Liberty*."

We have looked forward with some glee to publication of that article, as we remain confident in our conclusions that the attack was deliberate and that both governments are lying about it. Since publication of *Assault on the Liberty*, authors Jim Bamford, Noam Chomsky, Donald Neff, Stephen Green, Alfred Lillenthal and others have rechecked and confirmed our conclusions, as have numerous American journalists and several government and military leaders such as Adlai Stevenson, Richard Helms, Admiral Thomas Moorer, and others.

Now the September, 1984, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* and dozens of newspapers around the world have published the long-awaited article or excerpts from it. And never did we suspect that two of the biggest guns in Israeli journalism could produce such slovenly, poorly researched, just-plain-wrong text or that so many editors would swallow it whole. Nor did we suspect that the task of refuting it would be so easy.

The authors clearly made no attempt to check the obviously relevant evidence that is readily available from US Government files and from *Liberty* crewmen. Instead, they drew their story almost exclusively from Israeli sources while using *Assault on the Liberty* for background material. The end result is a story that would draw a failing grade in any freshman journalism class. The article is grossly inaccurate throughout and reveals a departure from elementary scholarly standards that is astonishing.

For instance, the "new evidence" which is the heart of the Hirsch/Goodman story (a 1967 Israeli Court of Inquiry report by Israeli Lieutenant Colonel Justice Yeshayahu Yerushalmi), is not new at all. The Israeli Court of Inquiry report is mentioned in *Assault* (pages 153-158) along with reasons it cannot be believed. For years The *Liberty* Veterans Association has distributed retyped copies of that report (also known as IDF Preliminary File 1/67) to the press and public because, seen as a whole, the Yerushalmi report is not believable. Its assertions are false and its conclusions are wrong. Not only are the Yerushalmi/Hirsch/Goodman/Atlantic conclusions contrary to personal observations of *Liberty* crewmen, but they are contrary to sworn testimony and other evidence in official records of the United States Government.

Moreover, the Yerushalmi report was dismissed as not believable in an official study done for Dean Rusk and Eugene Rostow by the Legal Adviser of the United States Department of State and recently uncovered in James Miller's \$14,000 Freedom of Information lawsuit described earlier.

So the Hirsch/Goodman articles are not based on "new evidence" at all. Instead, they are based primarily on long-available and officially-discredited reports by an Israeli lieutenant colonel who was sitting in judgment on Israeli generals—a situation which could not have been expected to find the truth and which probably would not have been tolerated under any other circumstances.

The fact is, as more information becomes available about the attack, the conclusion becomes ever more inescapable that the attack was indeed deliberate. Stephen Green, in *Taking Sides* (Morrow, 1984) has now established that Israel planned more than 24 hours in advance to attempt to sink the *Liberty* and that the United States knew of the plan. Yet even with that certain knowledge of treachery, the Lyndon Johnson administration helped cover up the story to placate supporters of Israel.

The situation has not changed. The attack on the USS *Liberty* was deliberate and both countries are still lying about it.

For a retyped copy of the Yerushalmi report which Atlantic calls "new evidence," send one dollar and a self-addressed business size envelope with two stamps to the USS *LIBERTY* NEWSLETTER, POB 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. For both the Yerushalmi report and the official State Department report which refutes it, send two dollars and three stamps.

### LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

June 8, the 17th anniversary of the attack, saw a notice in the *New York Times* commemorating the loss of 34 men during the attack. Stan White wrote a letter to the editor of the *Rapid City Journal*, which was followed by an important front page interview with Stan. Author Stephen Green did a series of radio and television interviews which mentioned the *Liberty*. In June the *CRYPTOLOG*, newsletter of the US Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association, devoted their entire issue to the *Liberty*; also in June *The Link*, the small but highly respected journal of Americans for

Middle East Understanding, devoted their entire issue to the USS Liberty. Joe Meadors gave two interviews which became major stories in English language newspapers in the Middle East. The **Minneapolis Star & Tribune** ran almost a full page story about Jim Miller and his Freedom of Information lawsuit. Ron Kukal tried to get the Liberty mentioned in his local paper but was told, "Liberty is an old story." Radio KEX in Portland did a 30-minute interview with Ennes. Radio WXYZ in Detroit did a one-hour interview and public phone-in with Ennes at noon on Labor Day, a time the station claims to have 250,000 listeners. The **Seattle Times** and **The Washington Post** ran Letters to the Editor by Ennes. The **Baltimore Sun** called to say they intend to run a letter.

#### **MENSA TO ESTABLISH A USS LIBERTY STUDY GROUP** By Joe Meadors

For fifteen years after the attack I was willing, like most of us, to let the Liberty incident die a natural death. Then I read Jim's book and the embers turned to fire again. I found it very frustrating to study the incident and find all sorts of stories that bore no resemblance to the truth as I knew it.

I was on the bridge all morning. I saw the planes. I waved at the pilots. It was my responsibility along with Russell David's to be sure the flag was flying freely. I remember Jim telling us to change the steaming ensign that morning because the old one was getting ragged. Frank Brown and I raised the Holiday Colors when the steaming ensign was shot down. I was on the port wing of the bridge when the helicopters hovered a few yards away with troops dressed in battle fatigues carrying weapons. I even tried to communicate with them by semaphore. These are things people say never happened.

One day a friend asked, "Tell me about it, Joe." So I did. Afterward I felt as if an enormous load had been lifted from my shoulders; just telling the story made me feel better. I found that telling the story can be a very effective tool to vent the frustrations.

How many of us feel the same way? How many of us need a regular discussion vehicle to tell our story? Well, I have just been notified by the Special Interest Group Coordinator for Mensa that the **USS LIBERTY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP** has been approved and will be announced in the September issue of the **MENSA BULLETIN**. Membership in the SIG will be \$6.00 for non-Mensa members and \$5.00 for members. For more information write to Joe Meadors, c/o ARAMCO, POB 1257, Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia.

#### **LIBERTY MAILBAG**

Dear Stan: I just received all the newsletters and thank you for sending them. I read and reread them all and will read them again. I promise you I will do all I can to keep the Liberty alive. Thirty-four men were brutally murdered and justice has not prevailed yet.

I was proud of my profession even if I didn't always show it or realize it at the time. Today I miss the Navy! Those 3 years, 10 months and 15 days were among the best of my life. As I look back, friends in the Navy were real and genuine. I never had a brother, but I had a lot of brothers in the Navy.

My goal now is to do my part to try to bring justice to the guilty parties involved in the murder of our comrades. I have plenty of time and lot of paper and a pen so I can write letters. Where do I start?

Your shipmate, /s/ George "El Hombre" Vanderpool

#### **THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION GOES ON-LINE**

Members who subscribe to COMPUSERVE, the national Computer Information Service, may address COMPUSERVE EMAIL messages to the Liberty Veterans Association via account 72366.2277.

#### **BUMPER STICKERS**

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., still have some beautiful 3-3/4" by 15" **Remember the Liberty** vinyl bumper stickers on hand. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, apparently made with a silk-screen process. Send one dollar and a self-addressed, stamped (20 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, to Bob Casale, Liberty

Plumbing and Heating Company, 335 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801. Ask about T-shirt (\$8.50) and other items.

#### RUBBER STAMPS

We now have rubber stamps, like those used on all our envelopes and newsletters, which say **Remember the Liberty** with a small picture of the ship. They cost us \$3.50 each. If you want one, send \$5.00 to Stan to cover postage costs.

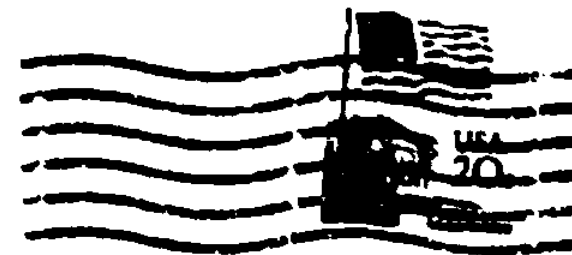
#### IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription is paid through four issues planned for Volume III, of which this is the third issue. If your label reads B1 or B2, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. A1? A3 designate former crewmembers. A2 identifies family members. E82 identifies those who attended the 1982 reunion. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Stan White, USS Liberty Veterans Association, Box 45A, Burbank, SD 57010. If we are to survive, we must have your subscription support.

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The USS Liberty Newsletter is the official journal of the USS Liberty Veterans Association. Association Officers are Stan White, President; Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 206 788-3519). Legal counsel is Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (phone 415 424-0160). For computer mail, use COMPUSERVE address 72366.2277. The mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association is (please refer to page four). Send editorial material to Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.

STAN WHITE





# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



• • • VOLUME III, Issue #2 • • •  
May, 1984

## **1985 LIBERTY REUNION TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Results of the April survey of Liberty crewmen show an overwhelming 70% preference for holding the next reunion in Washington, D.C. Planning will start immediately to secure hotel and banquet space for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 7, 8 and 9, 1985, probably at the The Washington Hotel, just a block from the White House.

Liberty crewmen planning to attend should be sure their dues are up to date, and send a \$50 per person deposit for banquet, bus and brunch to Stan White at the address listed later in this newsletter, and should expect to place secured reservations (cash deposit or credit card) with the hotel at least six months in advance.

As the reunion draws closer, you will hear from us more often. What we need most now are some volunteers from the Washington area who will help with planning.

## **IS A LIBERTY MOVIE BEING MADE?**

In the past four years we have been contacted at least 35 times by motion picture producers ranging from unknown independent operators to some giants of the industry. Most callers lose interest in producing a Liberty motion picture once they realize how much organized opposition there is to telling this story on film. Several months ago, however, we were approached with what seemed to be the most promising proposal of all. An independent businessman claiming the support of leading hollywood figures was planning to produce a major motion picture based on the book, **Assault on the Liberty**. Financing, we were told, was assured. A screenwriter had been hired. A studio was lined up. A full production staff was available. Shooting would start probably within twelve months.

Unfortunately, the project has not worked out. The expected funding did not materialize and the movie will not be made as originally planned.

We will continue to explore other possibilities, and talks continue with other producers. Meanwhile, however, Jim Ennes retains all motion picture rights to **Assault on the Liberty** and no one is authorized to use any material from the book.

If any of our members are contacted by anyone seeking interviews, information, anecdotes, publicity, investment funds or support of any kind for a movie about the USS **Liberty**, please inform Stan, Jim or Bob Casale immediately.

### ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA ON THE LIBERTY

As we all know too well, the USS **Liberty** is conspicuously absent from most history books, reference sources and encyclopedias. The Japanese attack on the USS **Panay** in 1937 is well covered, as is the North Korean capture of the USS **Pueblo** and many less well known naval incidents. But, from the coverage reflected in common reference sources, it is almost as if the USS **Liberty** has never been attacked.

In the past we have asked the Encyclopaedia Britannica Reference Service about the **Liberty**, and have received either a single 1967 newspaper clipping or nothing at all. Now that has changed.

A recent inquiry to the EB brought a full, 8-page report consisting of the complete text of Professor Richard K. Smith's report, "The Violation of the **Liberty**," from the June, 1978, U. S. Naval Institute proceedings; the June 4, 1982, report on the subject from the **Christian Science Monitor**; and a supplementary reading list which includes Cecilia Blalock's **Monitor** article, Jim Ennes's **Assault on the Liberty**, an **Armed Forces Journal** review, and other references. The story is slowly coming out of the closet.

### "WARRIORS FOR JERUSALEM" WINS POWERFUL ACCLAIM

Don Neff's long awaited sequel to **Warriors at Suez** (Linden Press) was officially released April 24 to a chorus of acclaim which should help propel the book to the place it deserves on American best-seller lists.

Former Undersecretary of State George Ball calls it a "beautifully written book . . . far more than a military history. [The book reveals] the pro-Israeli bias of American diplomats . . . and how the United States prejudiced any hope for a sustained Middle East peace."

A powerful pre-publication review in **The Christian Science Monitor** on April 11 says Neff offers "one of the most significant contributions to modern historical literature with his definitive book on the 1967 conflict, the narrative as readable as any John Le Carré thriller, but far more potent and real. [It is a] living, breathing drama that takes in the 'global scoreboard,' the dynamics behind foreign policy, the human dimension of hubris. It puts the entire era into context. Yet the color and detail is so vivid that a reader can almost see and hear the Israeli warplanes."

Originally scheduled for earlier release, the book was delayed to obtain some new material concerning Security Council Resolution 242, and for Neff to obtain a personal interview with King Hussein of Jordan. It was worth the wait. Neff learned from Hussein and confirmed elsewhere the existence of a secret agreement with American and Israeli officials concerning Israeli borders. The agreement was the basis for Arab acceptance of Resolution 242, but it was later disavowed by the United States and Israel.

Of particular interest for **Liberty** crewmen and supporters, the USS **Liberty** appears in nearly every chapter as Neff describes the powerful influences on the White House which eventually made it possible for the government to overlook the deliberate attack on an American naval vessel. A powerful chapter describes the attack itself and the government's failure to protect the ship while under attack. Neff, probably more than anyone before him, helps us to understand why the **Liberty** attack occurred and why it was ignored by our own government.

Don Neff is a prize-winning former **TIME** correspondent and long-time senior editor whose first book, **Warriors at Suez**, was nominated for the 1981 American Book Award in history.

### THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL REPLIES

We reported in a previous issue that, after a very careful review of the Navy Court of Inquiry report along with several hundred pages of supporting material and forwarding memoranda from the files of the Navy Judge Advocate General, we asked the Judge Advocate General to please help us understand several clear discrepancies in the official file.

For instance, we asked, since the official file contains verbatim sworn testimony of several crewmen who reported that pre-attack reconnaissance was close, frequent, intense, and was conducted during a strong breeze which held the American flag aloft clearly displayed, and since the wind speed of 12 knots was fully recorded in ship's logs, how could the Navy accept the Court's unsupported findings that the flag hung limp at the mast on a windless day and that preattack reconnaissance was sparse, distant, infrequent and inadequate? These findings of the Court, we pointed out, are directly contrary to evidence that was presented to the Court.

Since the Manual of the Judge Advocate General specifically requires that Findings of Fact be supported by evidence [rather than by wishful thinking or political convenience], we asked the Judge Advocate General to please review the Findings in this case, to note that many of the findings are in direct violation of the Navy's own regulations concerning Findings of Fact and the treatment of evidence, and to determine therefore whether the Inquiry was properly conducted.

After considerable delay, we received an impatiently worded missive signed by T. K. Woods, Jr., Captain, JAGC, U. S. Navy, Deputy Assistant JAG (Investigations) reading in part: 'With regard to your contention that the approved official record of the incident...does not in all respects conform to **your recollection of the events** (emphasis added), your attention is invited to the Third Endorsement on the proceedings, dated November 3, 1967, in which the Judge Advocate General concluded that the proceedings were conducted in substantial compliance with the requirement of the Manual of the Judge Advocate General and were therefore legal.'

Our inquiry was based on the transcript alone and had nothing to do with our 'recollection of the events.' To the contrary, our inquiry pointed only to conflicts and contradictions in the official record and to specific cases in which the official record is in clear violation of the requirements of the JAG Manual. Unfortunately, Captain Woods has chosen to ignore the basis of our challenge and to dismiss it on false grounds.

We have informed Captain Woods by letter that his reply fails to respond to our inquiry. Meanwhile, Joy Linn Evans (daughter of our lost shipmate Raymond Linn) has appealed to Captain Woods to treat our questions more objectively. There has been no further comment from JAG, and we expect none. One clue to the Navy's problem is the fact that the Summary of Proceedings was released to the public in June, 1967, while the report itself was not approved until more than four months later.

We have repeatedly asked Admiral Isaac Kidd, who conducted the Court of Inquiry, to please review and comment on the several glaring discrepancies we see. Although he once agreed to do so in conversation with Don Blalock, he has consistently refused to follow through.

### USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

In February, reviews of Stephen Green's new book, **Taking Sides**, were published nationally, including a UPI wire service story. Most of these stories highlighted Green's new evidence in which he established through a former member of Congress that the United States learned **24 hours in advance** that Israel had already decided to attack the **Liberty**.

Although the book is not widely known nationally, most of the over-20,000 copies sold to date have been sucked up by readers in Washington, D.C., where we are told the book is creating a minor storm. After weeks of rave comments in smaller, specialized publications such as **Defense Week**, Green still had no important national mention except the UPI story and a quickie by Connie Chung on the national NBC News, when suddenly **The Wall Street Journal**, **Washington Post** and **The New York Times** ran bitter denunciations of the book within three days of one another.

The **Post** review didn't bother to discuss the contents of the book. The review just damned it. Presumably **Post** readers are not entitled to know what the book is all about, only that the **Post's** reviewer doesn't like it. The **Times** didn't see fit to tell readers what it was about either. So the **Times** reviewer literally fabricated a wildly inaccurate account for **Times** readers to stew over, and then attacked Green for espousing positions which Green has never espoused.

The review (March 25, by Anthony Cordesman) is so outrageously misrepresentative of Mr. Green's book that it inspired Green's editor, Bruce Lee, to complain directly to editor Mitchel Levitas of the **Times** book review section--a highly unusual move.



Remarkably, Cordesman did find one point of agreement with Green. The Israeli attack on the *Liberty*, Cordesman reports, "was almost certainly" deliberate. Then he attacks Green apparently for failing to consider fully that the attack was justified by American slowness in supporting the Israeli war effort.

Stephen Green's book has inspired some powerful opposition, but no one has managed to discredit what it has to say.

The *Santa Barbara News-Press* on February 8 published a full page interview with *Liberty* skipper, Captain William McGonagle, who described some of his experiences during the attack. Asked if he considered the attack deliberate, McGonagle acknowledged that "one of his crewmen called it deliberate, but personally he was noncommittal. 'I have nothing to prove or disprove it,' he said. Describing the crew, McGonagle reported that "they performed their duties in a most magnificent fashion. If it had not been for their performance of duty under the most awesome circumstances, it would not have been possible to save the ship and the loss of life would have been greater. Their performance inspired me. Each of them shares in the honor that has been accorded me."

He is quoted as saying, "Nobody would give me a job [when I retired] because I was too old--at 49--or overqualified, or too honest to be a stockbroker. That's what I was told." So he went in business for himself. According to the story, Captain and Mrs. McGonagle now operate a consumer service center from their home in southern California and travel frequently in a motor home. In November he was grand marshal of the Veterans Day parade in Wichita, Kansas. And the family car displays a distinctive new California license plate reserved for Medal of Honor recipients: California Medal of Honor license plate number 28.

Meanwhile, frequent *Liberty* stories continue to appear. Jim Ennes did two more radio interviews in April. Joe Meadors has generated considerable interest in Saudi Arabia (where he is living) through three articles in Saudi newspapers and magazines (one of which he wrote himself). Dick Carlson continues to address civic and veterans groups in Maine. And even MENSA, the organization for people with super-high IQ scores, has formed a "study group" for Mensans interested in learning more about the *Liberty*.

#### AN ISRAELI MAJOR SPEAKS UPI

On March 19 a remarkable story moved on the UPI news wire, and for days afterward clippings of the story filled *Liberty* mail boxes. "Mystery Cleared Up," said many of the stories. "Truth Revealed," said some. The *Atlanta Journal* used the story as the basis for an editorial proclaiming that the "long-running puzzle" of the *Liberty* affair has at last been resolved in Israel's favor. Truth revealed! It was an accident. According to the published account, an anonymous former Israeli major has at last stepped forward to report that he was present in the Israeli war room during the attack. The Israelis attacked the *Liberty*, we are told, only after receiving assurances from the American Embassy that no American ships were nearby. Therefore, says the story, Israel attacked assuming the ship was either Egyptian or Russian. Russian? Does anyone believe Israel would attack a Russian ship?

Here is what really happened: In January, one of our shipmates was approached by a man claiming to be a former Israeli major who had observed the attack from the Israeli war room. "The business about no flag flying is a lie," the man said. "We could hear the pilots reporting during the attack that the ship flew an American flag." The man subsequently submitted to an extended interview in which he said that the *Liberty* was positively identified as the USS *Liberty* several hours before the attack. Close-up photographs of the *Liberty* were compared with a photograph of the ship in *Jane's Fighting Ships*. The man does claim that Embassy officials were asked to move the ship away from the Israeli coast, and he claims that U. S. Embassy officials insisted that there were no American ships in the area. However--and this is the key point--he reports that the denial only angered the Israelis as they knew perfectly well the ship was American and considered the [supposed] American disclaimer to be a bald lie. The identification was positive. They resolved, he said, to sink the ship even though they knew it to be American.

We passed that report to author Stephen Green, who reinterviewed the major with a witness and confirmed the original account. Stephen Green, in turn, passed the story to a Washington, D.C., reporter. And here it went off the track. Through haste, poor editing, or sabotage, the facts got twisted. The meat of the story, the fact that Israel deliberately attacked a ship it knew full well to be American, never saw print; only the claimed Embassy denial was published. The result is a story that reports just the opposite of what the Israeli major really said.

## ARTICLES TO LOOK FOR

As this is written, a 10,000 word article on the USS Liberty is about to be published in the May issue of **The Link**, published by Americans for Middle East Understanding, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 771, New York 10027. The fully documented article will discuss the Liberty story, the efforts to squelch the story, and the activities of the **Liberty Veterans Association**. A separate section will examine in detail the Israeli excuse for the attack and the discrepancies in the Israeli excuse. The publisher has offered to send copies to everyone on the Liberty mailing list.

Coming up some time this summer is a scheduled 7,000 word article on the Liberty in **Atlantic Monthly** to be written by two Israeli journalists, one of whom was the official spokesman for the Begin government. Don't expect this to be an objective account. According to our sources, the authors intend to 'thoroughly refute everything that has previously been written about the Liberty.'

We suspect that they are finding the task more difficult than they expected, since we remain confident that anyone who examines this story carefully will come away convinced that the attack was deliberate. Probably that is why the story has already slipped from scheduled spring publication to an indefinite spot in late summer.

## MORE ABOUT 'THE SALANS REPORT'

Soon after the attack on the USS Liberty, the Israeli government created an elaborately detailed phony excuse entitled 'Israeli Preliminary Inquiry 1967.' The report, dated July 21, 1967, and signed by Israeli Examining Judge Lieutenant Colonel Y. Yerushalmi, is an obvious fabrication designed to make the attack seem somehow acceptable to American officials. It will not withstand even casual scrutiny. It is easy to refute, because most of the key details are easily proven false. That is probably why the Israeli government had the report hand-delivered by Israeli Minister Evron to American Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Eugene Rostow, along with both written and oral requests that its contents never be revealed to the American people. It is still withheld, even though we obtained copies privately in 1980.

Recently, Liberty supporter Jim Miller of Burnsville, Minnesota, unearthed a related document that has been denied to previous researchers: an official State Department analysis of the Israeli excuse. The report is potentially explosive, because it discredits the Israeli excuse entirely. Point by Point, Department of State Legal Adviser Carl F. Salans examines and refutes the Israeli story. Salans makes many of the same arguments that Ennes, Green, Smith, Kilpatrick and others have made for years--and which have been consistently ignored by officialdom. Now, we find, 'officialdom' has made the same arguments--but has kept them secret because the truth embarrasses Israel.

Since Salans so thoroughly refutes the Israeli excuse, one would expect that Eugene Rostow (or Dean Rusk, if he saw it) would have asked the Israeli government to provide a more satisfactory story. But that is not what happened. Instead, the Salans study was hushed up, even within the government. Only three copies were made, it was classified Top Secret, and almost no one saw it until 1983 when it was unearthed by Mr. Miller.

The following is a summary of discrepancies noted by Salans:

I. **Speed and Direction of the Liberty:** The Israeli report claims that torpedo boat commanders reported and reconfirmed Liberty's speed at 28 to 30 knots [thus establishing that it qualified as an enemy warship under Israeli gunnery doctrine]. **Salans:** Liberty held a steady course at 5 knots.

II. **Aircraft Surveillance:** Israel claims that 'a ship' was sighted in the area at 0600 and 0900. **Salans:** Liberty crewmen reported reconnaissance overflights at 0515, 0850, 1030, 1056, 1126, 1145, 1220 and 1245. [For these, one must read the actual testimony of crewmen, as most of the overflights were strangely ignored by the Court of Inquiry].

III. **Identification by Israeli Aircraft:** Israel claims that, before opening fire, Israeli pilots made a run over the ship in order to identify it. **Salans:** The Navy inquiry reports no such reconnaissance run.

IV. **Identification by Torpedo Boats:** Israel claims that the torpedomen asked the ship for identification, but were told 'identify yourself first.' **Salans:** Not so. McGonagle could not

read the signals and sent no reply. No one said, 'identify yourself first.' [Unknown to Salans and apparently unknown to McGonagle, Signalman Russell David repeatedly signalled 'U S NAVY SHIP, U S NAVY SHIP' with the ship's 12" signal light as the boats approached. Signalman David assures us that no one asked the torpedomen to identify themselves first.]

V. **Flag and Identification Markings:** Israel claims that the fighter aircraft which reportedly made an initial pass over the *Liberty* was looking for a flag but found none; likewise, no other identification was observed. "...Throughout the contact, no American or any other flag appeared on the ship," claims the Israeli report. **Salans:** The ship was fully and properly marked, flew a standard 5x8' flag, and hauled up an oversize 7x13' flag five minutes before the torpedo boat attack.

VI. **Identification of the Ship as El Quseir:** Israel claims that the "target" was positively identified as the Egyptian freighter *El Quseir* [actually, a cavalry horse transporter] both by the division commander personally, and by the commander of another boat before the torpedo attack started. "I am satisfied that a likeness exists," reported the Israeli examining judge. **Salans:** Salans quotes Clark Clifford in his mysteriously lost report to Lyndon Johnson as saying, "That the *Liberty* could have been mistaken for the Egyptian supply ship *El Quseir* is unbelievable. *El Quseir* has one-fourth the displacement of the *Liberty*, roughly one-half the beam, is 180 feet shorter, and is very differently configured."

VII. **Speed of "Liberty" and "El Quseir" as Identification Factors:** Israel claims that the supposed 30 knot speed of the target assured that the target could not have been the USS *Liberty*, with its 18 knot top speed. **Salans:** That speed also should have warned the torpedomen that it was not the *El Quseir*, which has a 14 knot top speed.

VIII. **Failure to Relate "Liberty" to Bombardment Capability:** Israel claims that the attack was ordered because the town of El Arish was being shelled from the sea. **Salans:** It should have been clear to any trained observer that this target was incapable of a shore bombardment. [In fact, El Arish was never shelled from the sea or from anywhere else.]

IX. **Time Sequence of Attacks:** Israel claims that the boats were sent to investigate the shore bombardment and that the boats subsequently called in the aircraft after locating the target. The boats claim to have first located the "target" at 1341, tracked her for speed, reported the speed, rechecked, and called the boats "a few minutes later," with the first air attack occurring at approximately 1400. **Salans:** "It is clear that no significant time was expended in an effort to identify the ship from the air before the attack was launched." [Unknown to Salans, at 1341 the torpedo boats were so far beyond radar range that they could not possibly have made the radar plotting error that supposedly led to the attack.]

Despite numerous glaring weaknesses in the U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry report, we have maintained for years that the testimony in that report refutes the Israeli excuse. One must ignore the Court's "Findings of Fact," as they are foolish nonsense, and go directly to the sworn testimony of witnesses where the evidence is clear and uncolored by wishful thinking.

The Salans report uses that testimony to demonstrate once again that the Israeli excuse for the attack on the *Liberty* is demonstrably false. More important, it shows once again that the United States Government has long been aware that the excuse is false, but lacks the courage to say so publicly.

#### JIM MILLER CASE SHOULD BE CONCLUDED SOON

Jim Miller of Burnsville, Minnesota, is still pursuing his Freedom of Information suit in federal courts in Minnesota. Mr. Miller has been arguing persuasively that the government systematically and illegally withholds documents pertaining to the USS *Liberty* attack and has done so since 1967. His final arguments were presented several weeks ago in Federal District Court in Minneapolis, and are being studied by the magistrate as this is written. Mr. Miller has made an impressive study of the *Liberty* matter and has invested well over \$10,000 in his legal battle. He deserves our support.



## THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION GOES ON-LINE

The USS Liberty Veterans Association has made arrangements with 'The Screaming Eagle' electronic bulletin board in Redmond, Washington, to serve as a message service for personal computer owners who subscribe to this newsletter.

For the uninitiated, a personal computer and a telephone 'modem' will permit access to hundreds of electronic services, including a great many privately operated no-cost 'bulletin boards.' A call by computer to 206 883-2709 will provide instant access to a privately owned Eagle II computer using the CITADEL bulletin board program.

Callers who 'log on' with the password 'LIBERTY VET' will receive a message that cannot be read by other callers. The computer has a 'private room' which can be entered only by Liberty veterans. The command 'GOTO LIBERTY VETS' will allow a caller to enter the private LIBERTY area, unknown to other callers, where he can exchange private messages with Jim Ennes, Stan White, and other Liberty vets who call by computer. If you call, please leave a message in the LIBERTY VETS room so that we will know you have been there.

Any caller who wishes to exchange files directly with the Liberty computer should leave a request on the Eagle at least three days in advance, specifying the time he would like to call. We will arrange to have the Liberty computer on-line in auto-answer mode at the time requested. Callers may dial Jim Ennes directly at 206 788-3519 (voice) to arrange a convenient time.

Members who subscribe to COMPU-SERVE, the National Computer Information Service, may address COMPU-SERVE EMAIL messages to account 7060-2277, but EAGLE is preferred, since we check in almost daily with the EAGLE and only occasionally with CIS.

## BUMPER STICKERS

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., still have some beautiful 3-3/4" by 15" **Remember the Liberty** vinyl bumper stickers on hand. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, apparently made with a silk-screen process. Send a self-addressed, stamped (20 cents), business-size (5" x 9") envelope, to Bob Casale, Liberty Plumbing and Heating Company, 335 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801. If you include a dollar, Bob will print more when these are gone. If you want more than one, put another stamp on the envelope for each additional sticker and he will replenish the printing fund with your dollar. A black and white copy greatly reduced in size appears in a previous issue of this newsletter.

## RUBBER STAMPS

We now have rubber stamps, like those used on all our envelopes and newsletters, which say **Remember the Liberty** with a small picture of the ship. They cost us \$3.50 each. If you want one, send \$5.00 to Stan to cover postage costs.

## A TAX-EXEMPT CORPORATION?

The USS Liberty Veterans Association is now a non-profit California corporation. We have applied for California and federal tax-exempt status. If that is granted as expected, contributions to the association should be tax free to contributors.

## WHERE TO BUY THE BOOKS WE TALK ABOUT

The Green, Neff or Ennes books are all available in any bookstore, or can be ordered through Readers Express by calling toll free 800 852-5000.

**PLEASE NOTE: STAN HAS RETURNED TO SOUTH DAKOTA**

For those of you who carefully recorded Stan's new address in Tucson, please unrecord it. Stan has returned to his old address in Burbank, South Dakota.

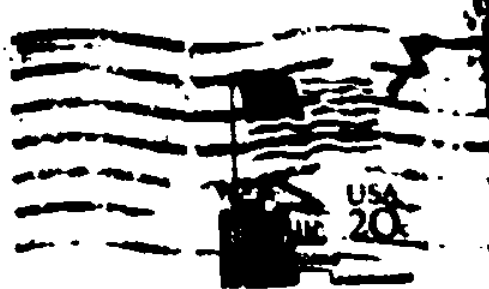
**IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?**

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription is paid through four issues planned for Volume III, of which this is the second issue. If your label reads B1 or B2, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. A1 and A3 designate former crewmembers. A2 identifies family members. E82 identifies crewmen who attended the 1982 reunion. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Stan White, USS Liberty Veterans Association, Box 45A, Burbank, SD 57010. If we are to survive, we must have your subscription support.

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The USS Liberty Newsletter is the official journal of the USS Liberty Veterans Association. Association Officers are Stan White, President (phone 605 356-2207); Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Virgil Brownfield, Secretary-Treasurer (phone 305 423-4260); Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 206 788-3519). Legal counsel is Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. (phone 415 424-0160). For computer mail, call The Screaming Eagle Bulletin Board, 206 883-2709 using password LIBERTY VET, or use COMPUERVE address 72366.2277. The mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association is Route One, Box 45A, Burbank, South Dakota 57010. Send editorial material to Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.

U.S.S. LIBERTY  
STAN WHITE  
RT. 1 BOX 45A  
BURBANK, S.D. 57010



# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

... VOLUME III, Issue #1 ...  
January 1984

## **U.S. DID KNOW THE ATTACK WAS COMING!**

**Astounding New Book Reveals  
That United States Knew in Advance  
of Israeli Plans to Attack the USS Liberty**

**Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a  
Militant Israel** by Stephen Green, published by  
William Morrow and Company, will begin to appear  
in bookstores this month.

Stephen Green's work is a monumental study of Israeli-American relations since the founding of the modern Israeli State in 1948. But unlike most previous researchers, Mr. Green has delved deeper into once-classified government documents to obtain the seldom-heard views of the experts--the official reports of American military leaders, diplomats, government investigators, Middle East specialists and others, to their superiors in the United States government. Much of Green's material, including documents from ancient archives, has never before been seen by any researcher. Indeed, much of the material was declassified at his request, and in some cases documents were released only after he filed suit against the government to force the release of documents that were being illegally withheld. In one case, material released to him was recalled and reclassified, even though it was more than 30 years old. Clearly, Stephen Green was probing in some politically sensitive areas.

Mr. Green's archival research is heavily supported by live interviews with many of the

principal actors. His work reveals startling contrasts between the calm, professional reports of specialists on the scene, and the far different stories told to and widely believed by the American public.

For instance, one event that captured Green's attention was the infamous Lavon Affair of 1954 in which a team of Israeli espionage agents firebombed American and British installations in Egypt. The scandal raged in Europe and the Arab world for almost ten years and was the object of widely attended trials in Cairo. Yet our elected officials ignored the implications of Lavon and the American press never quite considered the event worthy of mention, even though it eventually toppled the Ben Gurion government.

Other authors have reported the scandal, often drawing from European sources, but Stephen Green has gone farther and learned more. With typical Green tenacity, in addition to his unearthing of new and revealing government documents, Green tracked down and interviewed the former Israeli major who headed the operation. What emerges is a previously unreported story of an espionage team betrayed by leaders of their own country in order to sabotage peace initiatives then underway with Egypt. Moshe Dayan and David Ben Gurion, it seems, did not want peace. They needed war in order to grab ever-increasing amounts of Arab land. The Lavon affair was their way of assuring that Arabs and Israelis remained in a state of war.

In a like manner, Green has delved into case after case of American-Israeli relations, and in

**Remember the Liberty**



every instance he has uncovered new and startling information, usually putting an entirely new face on what has been considered "history".

**Israel the underdog:** Official American government reports reveal that Israel has never been an underdog. That has been a deception deliberately promoted by Israel for military advantage. From inception, the Israeli military was clandestinely supplied with an enormous arsenal of weapons, usually of Soviet origin, brought in through Czechoslovakia, sometimes by American air crewmen who were coerced into the illegal arms trade business.

**The assassination of UN Mediator Count Bernadotte:** Green's research points not only to direct Israeli government involvement in the murder of Count Bernadotte, but to American knowledge of Israeli government involvement.

**American impartiality in Middle East affairs:** Since the Lyndon Johnson administration, the American government has never been impartial. During the Six Day War, for instance, while the United States pretended to be even-handed, a supersecret airbase was set up in the Negev Desert. Manned by American Air Force intelligence experts in civilian clothing and carrying false passports, the intelligence team flew America's most advanced photo reconnaissance aircraft over Arab targets for the benefit of Israel.

**America's only friend in the Middle East:** A very different story emerges from Stephen Green's research. In actuality, what we see are consistent warnings concerning American relations with Israel. In case after case, government specialists warn of unreliability, noncooperation and treachery by the Israelis, and advise caution. Yet in virtually every case since John Kennedy, the experts have been overruled, ignored and silenced by politicians, usually for the narrowest of political considerations.

**The USS Liberty attack:** The book concludes with an extensive section on the USS Liberty. And here, too, we see the fruits of Stephen Green's scholarly, systematic research. In addition to studying all available reports on the subject, Mr. Green attended the Liberty reunion in 1982 where he interviewed dozens of survivors. Several of those contacts were later followed up by telephone. Leads developed during his research were exhaustively tracked down.

When the National Security Agency released a heavily censored report on the attack in 1982, Mr. Green was the first to make a reference to a previously unreported Congressional report on the subject. Checking further, he discovered that, almost concurrently with Admiral Kidd's Court of Inquiry hearings, an investigation was conducted by five Congressmen who made up the Intelligence Working Group of the Defense Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations.

Green discovered that this Congressional report on the Liberty attack, even sixteen years later, remains Top Secret. Typically undismayed, he tracked down committee members to get the story. What they told him is stunning.

The committee, Green was told by chairman Robert Sikes, was particularly interested in learning what motivated the National Security Agency and the Joint Chief of Staff, more than fourteen hours before the attack,

suddenly to revise Liberty's operating orders. Why, the committee wanted to know, was Liberty suddenly ordered to move far from the Israeli/Egyptian coastline? Was Liberty known, even then, to be in danger?

It all became clear when an officer of the Central Intelligence Agency testified under oath that the failed efforts starting June 7 to move the Liberty were made because the CIA received an intelligence report that the Israeli government intended to sink the ship if it came near the Israeli coast.

The plan was exposed when a CIA observer in the office of the U.S. Defense Attache in Tel Aviv learned of it and informed CIA headquarters, which in turn advised the National Security Agency and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the Liberty must immediately be moved. As we know, the several messages ordering the ship to move were all lost in the message pipeline.

When the Liberty arrived near the Israeli coast, the Israeli government attacked, just as predicted. This presented the Johnson administration with a richly deserved dilemma. Since Lyndon Johnson knew beyond any doubt that the attack was deliberate, he was forced either to expose Israel as having committed a calculated act of war against the United States, or to become a party to a coverup. As we know, LBJ elected to join in the coverup, as has every administration since.

This story has come to us previously from at least six sources, including a person who was in the U.S. Joint Reconnaissance Center at the time and a CIA analyst who participated in the failed recall efforts. Unfortunately, none of the previous sources was willing to be identified publicly as a source of the report. Now author Green has unearthed the sorry details through a brave former Congressman, and has further verified that report through interviews with former staff members of the House Appropriations Committee.

If ever there was doubt that the attack on the USS Liberty was deliberate or that the United States knew in advance of the plan and participated actively in the coverup that followed, Stephen Green's book forever blows the doubt away. This book names names and provides irrefutable sources. It will not be easily dismissed.

#### WARRIORS AT JERUSALEM A book review

Don Neff's sequel to his best-selling *Warriors at Suez* promises to knock the props from under those who will be lined up to try to discredit Stephen Green. For while Stephen Green concentrates on a series of incidents in American-Israeli relations, Donald Neff is primarily concerned with the political and diplomatic inner-dealings and back door shenanigans that characterize the relationship between the two states. The two books, while approaching a related subject from different directions, support and complement one another. Anyone who reads one, should read the other.

Mr. Neff is superbly qualified. He has been recognized as a leading professional journalist for most of his adult life. He has lived in Israel as a correspondent, and served for 16 years as a senior editor for TIME. He has won many awards for journalistic excellence, including

the Overseas Press Club citation for the best magazine article in 1979, TIME's cover story "The Colombia Connection."

So when Donald Neff focuses on Israeli-American relations, he brings some very finely honed skills to the task.

Despite administration efforts to block his access to key materials, Mr. Neff in *Warriors at Jerusalem* presents a clear view of the forces and influences that have made Israel-American relations what they are today. Among the previously untold tales, the reader will find an inside story of UN Resolution 242, and how it came to be. The details revealed by Mr. Neff are still officially withheld by the American government, but were unearthed only through the relentless sleuthing of a top notch investigative reporter.

Mr. Neff introduces the USS *Liberty* in his opening chapter. Throughout the book the reader will see the behind-the-scenes influence of the Israeli government, the back door meetings of Administration leaders with Israeli government representatives and, finally, the unblinking pro-Israeli American stance that results. Through it all the reader will follow the thread of the USS *Liberty*, first battered and then mauled by the political forces at work in Washington and Tel Aviv.

From reading this book, the reader will begin to understand the forces that have brought his own government to tolerate and even to cover-up the truth about a deliberate attack upon an American naval ship of the line. He won't like the situation very much, but he will understand it a little better.

Publication, originally scheduled for mid-February, was delayed until mid-March when the government tried to withhold some important documents. But the book should be available on special order perhaps two to four weeks earlier. Don't wait to find it on the shelf. Ask for it. The publisher is Linden Press, a division of Simon & Schuster.

#### 1985 REUNION By Stan White

June of 1985 may seem a long way off right now, but plans and reservations need to be completed at least a year ahead of time to get the necessary accommodations.

Crewmembers, please send me your recommendations for the location of your choice. We need your recommendation no later than January 31, 1984. On the first of February I will send everyone a ballot to select a site from among those that you recommend.

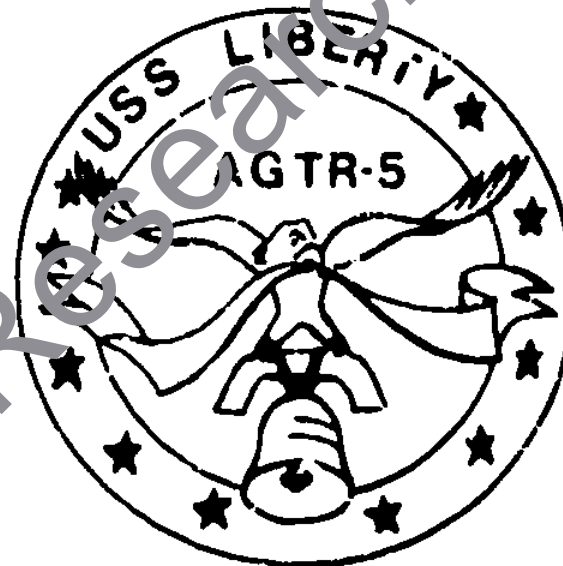
There are many excellent locations for a reunion of such a special group as the crew of the USS *Liberty*. However, let us remember that among our goals are obtaining proper recognition of Captain McGonagle and our dead shipmates. That is long overdue. So let us remember that to accomplish this, we need to meet in a place that is not only pleasant for seeing each other, but also where those who want to talk to the press will have an opportunity to do so.

#### New Officers By Stan White

Due to the sudden and tragic death of our shipmate and vice president, Don Blalock, it has been necessary to name three new officers of the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association.

Don, in addition to service as our vice president, was also the Public Affairs Chairman. To fill those positions we have named Bob Casale of Hicksville, New York, to serve as Vice-President; John Hrankowski of Rochester, New York, and Joe Lentini of Du King, Maryland, have been named to serve as Public Affairs Co-Chairmen. We expect John and Joe to become very busy in the coming months as the 15th reunion draws near.

All three men will serve until the 1985 reunion when new officers will be elected. Feel free to contact them with ideas and suggestions or for help if you need it.



The President of the U.S.S. LIBERTY  
VETERANS ASSOCIATION wishes you all  
Very Happy Holidays and a Prosperous  
1984

#### Commander Tansill, Again by Stan White

On Veterans Day, November 11, 1983, Commander X. Bender Tansill, USN, Retired, once again organized and led a ceremony at the Liberty gravestone at Arlington National Cemetery.

Wreaths were placed by the stone and the ceremony conducted with representatives present from the Retired Officers' Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the offices of Senators Denton, Pressler and Thurmond.

Our deepest gratitude and sincerest thanks to Commander Tansill and all others in attendance for their thoughtfulness and respect.



**Mr. John A. Tabor**  
By Stan White

I would like to say a few words of appreciation for a gentleman who has taken up the Liberty story and is running hard with it. Mr. John A. Tabor, a retired Warrant Officer of the U.S. Navy, is an incredible individual who will not take no for an answer. He has written the President (several times), the Presidential Candidates, Representatives, Senators, many newspapers and several organizations, always calling for proper recognition and a possible reinvestigation of the "Assault on the Liberty".

He has distributed hundreds of "Remember the Liberty" brochures. Recently a notice by Mr. Tabor about the Liberty in The Retired Officers Association magazine brought in a huge number of inquiries and over \$200 in new subscriptions.

John, we thank you.

Shipmates, don't give up. This man hasn't.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars**  
By Stan White

I guess this is the issue to say "thank you" to our supporters. This thank you is for the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

The VFW has been a strong and long-time supporter of the Liberty, her captain and crew. They have been represented at ceremonies we have held in Arlington. Their Commander-in-Chief last year on Veterans Day requested officially (but without success) that the Reagan Administration honor the Liberty dead and, as readers will recall from the previous issue, the VFW arranged for a beautiful service and permanent memorial at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, for our fallen shipmate, Duane Marggraf.

Their latest effort is VFW Resolution #685, passed at the 1983 convention, which officially calls upon the United States to provide a fitting memorial "honoring those men lost on the USS Liberty while in the service of their country."

While the Reagan administration has so far ignored the VFW appeal, as they have all previous such appeals, we are nevertheless grateful for the VFW effort. They have our enthusiastic thanks and appreciation, as we expressed recently in a letter to VFW Commander-in-Chief Clifford G. Olson Jr.

I'll pause for a commercial: The VFW is a fighter and protector of old and new veterans benefits and laws. Their lobbying ability is dependent on membership numbers, and all Liberty survivors of the June 8, 1967, assault are eligible for VFW membership. The VFW offers many personal benefits in addition to the pride of belonging to an organization that has the rare courage to speak out strongly on behalf of the Liberty. Join now. I did.

Thanks again, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

**A JEWISH SUPPORTER PICKETS FOR THE USS LIBERTY**

Hassidic Jews believe that they have a religious obligation to give their primary support to the state in which they reside. Consequently, they believe that the tendency of some American Jews seemingly to place Israeli interests ahead of those of the United States is contrary to Jewish law and religious teachings. In other words, they believe that Zionism itself is contrary to Jewish law.

One Hassidic Jew who stands up for what he believes in is Abraham Weiss of Mensey, NY. Having studied the circumstances of the Liberty attack, Mr. Weiss has concluded that the Liberty affair is an outgrowth of Jewish departure from basic Jewish teachings.

On October 19, dressed in traditional Hassidic garb, Abraham Weiss picketed the Israeli Consulate at the Crystal Building on Second Avenue in New York for four hours. He carried a copy of Assault on the Liberty and displayed a large sign reading, "Remember the Liberty".



**LIBERTY IN THE NEWS**

The name of the USS Liberty is popping up in some unexpected places. According to mail from our readers, the November 15 television showing of "The Jeffersons" included a scene in which an actor searched through a stack of very old newspapers and held up one newspaper with a headline reading: USS LIBERTY ATTACKED.

The Soviet shootdown of the Korean Air Liner reminded a great many people of two incidents: the Israeli shootdown of a Syrian airliner over Egyptian territory and the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty. We received over a dozen clippings of newspaper articles and letters to editors asking why our government reacted so



boldly to the Soviet shutdown yet so timidly to the **Liberty** and Syrian airliner incidents.

Nationally syndicated columnist Gary Wills noted the relative silence when the USS **Liberty** was attacked. Readers reacted with generally favorable letters, such as one from John Radu in the **Sacramento Bee** asking, "What if the Soviets had attacked? Would it have been suppressed."

The **Mount Vernon News** in Ohio has run a number of letters and is planning to run a three part series on the USS **Liberty** by Jim Netolick of Mount Vernon. Mr. Netolick has a special interest in the **Liberty** affair, since he was a friend of Carl Hoar, who died in the attack.

**Middle East International**, the highly respected journal of Middle East affairs published in London, has run another article on the **Liberty** by Jim Ennes. This one, published in the October 14 edition, provides a summary of the many efforts by Israeli supporters to suppress sales of **Assault on the Liberty**.

And about once a month we receive a call from students—high school through post-graduate college level—seeking information about the **Liberty** for research papers, usually in history and civic studies.

which he believes are being withheld illegally and which he has asked the court to review. He asserts that the government deliberately, systematically and illegally withholds material related to the USS **Liberty**. Barring government delays, his case should reach a conclusion soon.

Among papers sought by Mr. Miller are anything relating to a government conference held in 1980 called "The USS Liberty Conference." Mr. Miller has uncovered references to such a conference in other government documents. When asked directly for details, however, government officials give the usual dumfounded reaction and claim to know nothing of such a conference.

It seems clear, however, that such a conference was held soon after **Assault on the Liberty** was published. Ennes recalls, for instance, that soon after his book was published a call went to Ennes's publisher from the office of the Secretary of the Navy asking for a list of all publications that had reviewed **Assault on the Liberty**. When asked why that information was wanted, the caller did not answer the question. Jim Miller hopes to find documents that will provide answers.



We often mention Commander X. Bender Tansill, USN (Ret.), who supports us so well in Washington, D.C. Here is Commander Tansill addressing a news conference during the 1982 Reunion.

#### JIM MILLER CASE GOES ON

Jim Miller of Burnsville, Minnesota, is still pursuing his Freedom of Information suit in federal courts in Minnesota. Mr. Miller has identified numerous **Liberty** documents



This is our shipmate, Joe Meadors, answering questions from the press during the 1982 reunion. Joe and his wife flew in from Saudi Arabia to attend the reunion.

#### ANOTHER FASCINATING DOCUMENT

One of the documents recently obtained by Jim Miller is a report from the legal advisor, Department of State, to an Under Secretary of State detailing discrepancies between the official **Liberty** report filed by the government of Israel, and the findings of the U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry

report.

Originally top secret, the report dated September 21, 1967, highlights ten significant discrepancies between the Israeli and American versions, such as widely different descriptions of ship's speed, amount of surveillance preceding the attack, supposed absence of an American flag, and so forth.

The report quotes generously from something called "The Clifford Report." This is particularly interesting, since the government has long claimed to have no record of any report on the **Liberty** by Presidential Advisor Clark Clifford. We have long pursued that report, however, since we were told long ago by a senior aide to Lyndon Johnson that a report on the **Liberty** by Clark Clifford is what persuaded LBJ to sweep the **Liberty** matter under the rug. (See *Assault on the Liberty*, pp98, 100 and 163.)



Commander Lloyd Bucher addressed the **Liberty** reunion during Sunday brunch. Shipmate Dave Lewis is on Bucher's left.

#### LIBERTY MAILBAG

Dear Com patriot Stan White:

I Congratulate you and your shipmates and am proud to be an associate member of the USS **Liberty** Veterans Association. I particularly salute James Ennes for his outstanding book which needs a wide distribution in spite of the obstacles.

/s/ John G. Foster, Jr.  
RADM, USN (Retired)

Dear Mr. Brownfield,

Your publication is the most remarkable in the USA. The USS **Liberty** will not die, due to the courageous efforts of its crew. I admire your courage and am doing what I can to keep the memory of the ship and its men alive. Long live the **Liberty**!

/s/ Patrick F. Flynn  
Houston, Texas



Admiral Thomas Moorer, USN (Ret.) received a spontaneous standing ovation during the **Liberty** banquet when he told the assembled crewmen and their families that he "never could accept that the **Liberty** attack was a mistake."

#### IOWA LICENSE PLATE AGTR-5

Shipmate Mike Schaley and his wife, Linn, have found a unique way to honor and remember our ship. The family car displays Iowa license plate number AGTR-5. Great idea, Mike and Linn. We hope some others will do the same.

#### LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION GOES ON-LINE

The USS **Liberty** Veterans Association has made arrangements with "The Screaming Eagle" electronic bulletin board in Redmond, Washington, to serve as a message service for personal computer owners who subscribe to this newsletter.

For the uninitiated, a personal computer and an inexpensive "modem" will permit access to hundreds of

electronic services, including a great many privately operated no-cost "bulletin boards". A call by computer to 206 883-2709 will provide instant access to a privately owned Eagle II computer using the RIBBS bulletin board and BVE programs.

Once "on the system," a caller will see a simple menu which will allow him to send files and programs to or from the Eagle computer, or to read or write messages. If leaving a message, a caller may, if he wishes, select a codeword that will bar anyone (including the system operator) from reading the message unless he also knows the codeword.

Any caller can read messages to or from the Liberty Veterans Association by replying "LIBERTY" when asked for a codeword. Callers may leave messages for anyone associated with the Liberty Veterans Association, and should specify the same codeword, "LIBERTY," if they wish to limit access to readers of this newsletter. Readers may also leave files encrypted with the SIG/M file scrambler, SCRAMBLE.COM, using the key word, "LIBERTYX".

Members who subscribe to COMPUSERVE, the national Computer Information Service, may address COMPUSERVE EMAIL messages to account 72366.2277, but EAGLE is preferred, since we check in almost daily with the EAGLE and only occasionally with CIS.

Direct access to the LVA computer can be arranged by calling Jim Ennes to arrange for a convenient time.

#### BUMPER STICKERS

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., have personally spent several hundred dollars for some beautiful 3-3/4" by 15" **Remember the Liberty** vinyl bumper stickers. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, apparently made with a silk-screen process. They are available by mail for a self-addressed, stamped (20 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, sent to Bob Casale, Liberty Plumbing and Heating Company, 335 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801. If you include a dollar, Bob will print more when these are gone. If you want more than one, put another stamp on the envelope for each additional sticker and do help replenish the printing fund with your dollar. A black and white copy greatly reduced in size appears in the previous issue of this newsletter.

#### RUBBER STAMPS

We now have rubber stamps, like those used on all our envelopes and newsletters, which say **Remember the Liberty** with a small picture of the ship. They cost us \$3.50 each. If you want one, send \$5.00 to Stan to cover postage costs.

#### ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The Liberty Newsletter is a labor of love produced by LVA members in their spare time. Virgil Brownfield

handles the subscription list and finances, Stan White takes care of printing and mailing and is the lightning rod that keeps everyone else going, Jim Ennes does most of the wordsmithing and editing, and various shipmates and readers send information and editorial input.

As the mailing list has grown to well over 400, the task of producing the newsletter has increased. We need all the help we can get, and invite your comments, articles, opinions, and press clippings.

Originally we published six times annually, which soon slipped to four times. Lately we have slipped somewhat more, with almost five months passing between recent issues. When the situation demands, we will publish more often and expand the size of the issue as we did in August. A ten dollar subscription, however, buys at least four issues, regardless of the time span.

Please do keep your subscription paid up, and consider additional contributions and memberships in the association. Your financial support is the only thing that keeps us going.

#### A TAX-EXEMPT CORPORATION?

As this is written, application is pending in California for the USS Liberty Veterans Association to become a non-profit California corporation. We have also applied for tax-exempt status in California and, after that is granted, will apply for federal tax-exempt status. If that is granted, as we expect it to be, contributions to the association will be tax free to contributors.

#### AN EXCUSE OUT OF CONTEXT

When challenged concerning the USS Liberty affair, the Israeli government frequently cites testimony of then-Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in June, 1967. Secretary McNamara is frequently quoted by Israeli supporters saying, "At the same time [as the Israeli denials] I was denying that we had struck a Russian ship in Haiphong Harbor; and I proved to be in error. We had no more intention of attacking a Russian ship than Israel apparently did of attacking an American ship."

Not mentioned in the Israeli apologia, however, nor in the press reports of the McNamara statement, is the fact that Secretary McNamara was under extremely heavy and sustained fire by some very skeptical members of that committee. The following remarks are also out of context, but they tend to show the flavor of the hearing, which was hardly as one-sided as previous reports suggest:

Senator Aiken: We have never gotten a very good story on a certain episode.

Secretary McNamara: ...the attack on the Liberty, I think, represented a serious error of judgment and procedure by the Israelis. ...I find no intent...to attack a U.S. vessel.

Senator Hickenlooper: From what I have read I can't tolerate for 1 minute that this was an accident. I think it was a deliberate assault on this ship. I think they had ample opportunity to identify it. What have we done about the Liberty? Have we become so placid?



We have seemed to say, "Oh, well, boys will be boys." What are you going to do about it? It is most offensive to me. —I can't accept those explanations that so glibly come out of Tel Aviv and perhaps some rather confusedly come out of our own investigation.

—It is inconceivable to me that the ship could not have been identified. —If these people were as well trained as they allege they are, and did what they did, I don't know. It just doesn't add up to me. It is not at all satisfactory.

—The public is thoroughly dissatisfied with the situation. It is the seemingly cavalier attitude expressed by Israel in some ways apparently accepted by us on a very tragic situation. I think there is utterly no excuse for it.

—If they didn't identify that ship, then they are not as smart as I think they are.

—I suppose that is all we will ever get. It creates a sense of utter frustration when we can't find out what the facts are in this thing.

#### LVA OFFICERS ON VIDEO TAPE

As our readers are aware, last June four Liberty crewmen submitted to a one hour interview with Dr. Mohamed Mehdi on New York City cable television. Video tapes of that broadcast in VHS format are now available from this association in return for a three dollar postage fee and a \$10 refundable deposit sent to Stan White. Please keep the tapes no longer than seven days as the copies are limited.

#### MASSACRE AND MASQUERADE

Recently we reviewed a one-hour tape by independent producer Tito Howard called "The Massacre and the Masquerade," which is being offered to commercial and noncommercial television stations for public broadcast. The tape attracted our interest, because it is being hawked as a film "about the USS Liberty attack."

While the broadcast does include some powerful remarks about the Liberty matter by retired admirals Thomas Moorer and Arleigh Burke, we found that only about six minutes pertains to the Liberty. Most of the rest consists of brief interviews with leading anti-Zionist leaders, all airing their view about Israel—interesting for true believers, but unfortunately preaching to the choir.

The Liberty segment names two men whom Howard claims are Americans who participated in the air attack on the Liberty, names a "Navy Second Lieutenant" who supposedly served as courier for submarine films of the Liberty under attack, and names the submarine from which the pictures were taken as the USS Andrew Jackson. Unfortunately, we are unable to verify any of Mr. Howard's allegations. The pilots he named cannot be identified in the cities where he says they now live; the man he names as the Navy Courier is not listed in Navy rosters for the period (and, of course, the Navy has no second lieutenants), and logs of the USS Andrew Jackson show that she was not in the Mediterranean before June 14, 1967.

We have asked Mr. Howard to comment on these apparent discrepancies, but he has not responded.

#### The Sudden Death of Our Friend, Don Blalock

As the previous issue of this newsletter was going to press, we learned of the sudden and unfortunate death of our vice president and stalwart Washington, D.C., representative, Don Blalock. Since then we have received dozens of letters and telephone calls asking how he died.

Don suffered a sudden and incapacitating stroke late in July. He was hospitalized and apparently making steady progress when, early in the morning of Aug. 5, he died. No, conspiracy theorists, there is no hint of anything suspicious about his death. It was premature, but natural.

Don was an extremely conscientious and hard working man who assumed more than his share of Liberty responsibilities in addition to his own nationwide business installing ice hockey rinks. He single-handedly did most of the liaison work with the Hotel Washington for the 1982 reunion. He remained very active with Liberty matters. Among other things, he submitted to two interviews with the Baltimore Sun and at least one major radio interview, taped an interview with Ted Koppel (which, like the previous such interview with Ted Koppel, was not aired), held a long, private interview with former CIA director Richard Helms, and talked by telephone with Admiral Kidd.

Don was a valued friend and shipmate, and a valuable member of the association. He is missed.

In the days following our announcement of Don's death, many of Don's former shipmates sent expressions of condolence to the family. Cecelia Blalock has asked that we send her thanks and appreciation to all who have called and written.

#### MORE ABOUT THE "USS" STALWART

In the previous issue we mentioned a new fleet of twelve "spy ships" being built by the Navy, of which the first was described in the press as the USS Stalwart.

We have been informed by the Navy that the new ships will carry both civilian crews and civilian technicians, although the Navy tells us that the source of the civilian technicians has not yet been determined (which seems unlikely). Apparently the "USS" designation was an error in the syndicated reporting.

#### WHERE TO BUY ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

Copies personally inscribed and signed by the author are available for \$15 from PO Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. For an additional one dollar per book, we will forward books to Stan White to be signed also by Stan before forwarding to the buyer.

For the best price available anywhere, but not signed, single copies are available for ten dollars including postage from John Mahoney, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 771, New York, NY 10027.

### IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B3 means your subscription is paid through four issues planned for Volume III, which starts with this issue. If your label reads B1 or B2, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. A1 and A3 designate former crewmembers. A2 identifies family members. E82 identifies crewmen who attended the 1982 reunion. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars, or fifteen for a subscription and membership in the association, to Stan White, USS Liberty Veterans Association, Box 45A, Burbank, SD 57010 before we run out of money.

The USS Liberty Newsletter is the official journal of the USS Liberty Veterans Association. Association Officers are Stan White, President (phone 605 356-2207); Bob Casale, Vice President (phone 516 681-2221); Virgil Brownfield, Secretary-Treasurer (phone 305 423-4260); Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 206 788-3519). Legal counsel is Paul N. McCloskey (phone 415 424-0160). For computer mail, call The Screaming Eagle Bulletin Board, 206 883-2709 using codeword LIBERTY, or COMPUERVE address 72366.2277. The mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association is Route One, Box 45A, Burbank, South Dakota 57010. Send editorial material to Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.



U.S. President Stan White addresses the Liberty reunion banquet. Visible at the head table are Brigadier General Jerome Hagen, USMC; Commander X. Bender Tansill, USN (Ret.); Admiral Arleigh Burke, USN (Ret.); Mrs. Burke; facing the camera are Mike and Linn Schaley. In the foreground is our late vice-president, Don Blalock.

Why are we just getting to see these pictures after 18 months? Someone tucked them away in a drawer and we just received them.

**Late Note -**  
Chuck Rowley has a new  
unlisted telephone number:  
217 562-4705.

# THE Liberator

"LIBERTAS PER SCIENTIAM"

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It was only last week that we announced the LT. J.P. STOCKTON STRAIGHT ARROW AWARD, and the word from 22 Division is that they already have a candidate for the award. As you recall, the award is given "to an individual who, through some outstanding achievement, has caused attention to be focused on himself". The person is Bob Casale, CT2. Congratulations to Bob, it was a great effort on his part, but we find it hard to believe that Bob will call Capt. Nieland chief again.

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## Nostalgia time!

How many of our gallant shipmates will remember this masthead and news item from the USS Liberty newspaper, *The Liberator*, circa 1965. "Straight Arrow" Bob Casale, of course, is our vice president and resident New York agitator.

We are indebted to crewman Rick Newman, also known as "Fang" and "Der Fuhrer" for this and some related items. Fang describes himself as "the idiot who who worked in Admin and dressed like Hitler during the second Shellback initiation."



# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



... VOLUME 11, Issue #4 ...  
August, 1983

## **USS LIBERTY INCIDENT III?**

### **Will History Repeat Itself?**

An Associated Press story datelined Tacoma, July 9, 1983, reports: "New Spy Ship to be Launched - The USS Stalwart, the first of 12 surveillance ships being built by Tacoma Boatbuilding Co. for the Navy's Military Sealift Command will be launched Monday. The 224-foot, 2,265-ton, diesel electric ship is the forerunner of a new class of vessel carrying sophisticated listening devices to detect Soviet submarines."

Fifteen years after having abolished the Technical Research Ship program, it appears that our government is going back into the spy ship business, and in a bigger way than before. By contrast, USS Liberty was 455 feet and displaced 10,600 deadweight tons, while the Environmental Research Ship USS Pueblo reached only 177 feet and displaced 905 deadweight tons.

Since the Navy has never acknowledged the circumstances under which USS Liberty was lost in a deliberate attack by a supposed ally, and in fact is still working to cover-up that story, there have clearly been no lessons learned. One consequence of that cover-up was the successful capture of USS Pueblo seven months later.

While we support the need for a "spy ship" program, we feel strongly that the continued ignorance of our national leaders of the true circumstances of the attack on the USS Liberty is likely to lead them once again to place the new class

of surveillance ships in unnecessary danger without adequate fleet backup. The emergence of the newest version of spy ships compels us to work harder than ever to see that our story is known to the leaders and planners who will make life-and-death decisions concerning the crew of the USS Stalwart and her sister ships. We will keep you informed.

## **THE LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION IN NEW YORK CITY**

by Bob Casala

Windows of the World in New York's 110 story twin towers of the World Trade Center is a delight...the view magnificent. What makes the trip to the top more satisfying is knowing it's the start of a three day period of renewed interest in the USS Liberty.

A non-profit organization of New York businessmen called America First Incorporated, chaired by Matthew Balic and supported by a marvelous staff, has planned a cocktail hour to honor Jim Ennes and Stan White. Matt invited a few of his friends who have an interest in publishing and marketing books, literature and films. The group discussed various ways of getting wider distribution for "Assault on the Liberty," the possibility of a paperback edition, and the making of a big screen movie or television documentary. Former Congressman Pete McCloskey (R. - Calif.)

**'Remember the Liberty'**

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came from California to attend the affair and lend his support. His sustained confidence and interest in the *Liberty* has been an important boost, for his words are widely heard throughout the land.

On Thursday evening, a forum was held at the New York Athletic Club on the fringe of Central Park. Jim and Stan presented the story of the *Liberty* and the subsequent cover-up in detail and answered questions from a large group of invited guests. The *Liberty* was represented by Jim Ennes, Stan White, John Hrankowski, Warren Heaney, Jim Maloney, Tom Blaney, Mike Patton and Bob Casale. Friday morning Jim, Stan and John were invited to the CBS radio studios where Jim taped an interview with Don Swain, the CBS Radio Book Reviewer, which was later broadcast in two segments to the New York City radio audience.

At 11:00 o'clock, a press conference was held at the Women's National Republican Club of New York where Jim and Stan told the story of the *Liberty* and explained the goals of the *Liberty Veterans Association*. Although domestic press coverage was poor, the conference was widely covered and reported in the overseas press, and portions were broadcast later by National Public Radio during their national network of over 1,200 radio stations.

Friday afternoon found Jim, Stan, John and me in a video taping session for New York City Cable Television with the distinguished Dr. Mohammad Mehdi as host. Two 30-minute segments were filmed during which the attack and cover-up were discussed in detail. One aspect discussed at length was John Hrankowski's eye-witness report of the heroism of George Golden who ordered his men from the engine room when the torpedo attack was eminent.

The hour-long show was broadcast later on Channel C, and rebroadcast still later on Channel D in New York.

Ed note: As this is written, we have just learned that Dr. Mehdi was stricken with a very serious coronary arrest and is in critical condition in the intensive care at New York University Hospital. Our sincere best wishes for a complete and rapid recovery go to Dr. Mehdi, his family and staff.

#### VFW COMMANDER ATTACKED FOR SUPPORT OF LIBERTY STORY

We mentioned in a previous issue that James R. "Bob" Currie, then-National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, called publicly upon the Reagan Administration to "honor the enduring memory of all those who served on the USS *Liberty*" during the attack by Israel. Subsequently, Commander Currie visited VFW chapters around the country where he

frequently addressed the subject of the *Liberty* attack and the efforts of the *USS Liberty Veterans Association* to correct the official record.

Now Commander Currie has been attacked in print for his efforts by one Harris Stone writing in *The Jewish Veteran*. Mr. Stone, we are told, charges that Commander Currie has "dredged up an ancient and discredited story," that the attack was a case of mistaken identity for which Israel has apologized, and that "the U.S. Government accepted the apology."

We are attempting to obtain the full text of Mr. Stone's article. Stan White will prepare an official reply from the *USS Liberty Veterans Association* and will request that it be published by the same magazine.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL SPY SOCIETY FEATURES USS LIBERTY COVER STORY

**THE JOURNAL:** The Official Journal of the International Spy Society, Issue #5, is now in distribution. This issue features a five page cover story about the *Liberty* attack and cover-up that is certain to become a "must have" item among those interested in the *Liberty*. Single copies are available for \$1.00 each from Editor R. L. Krudson, Post Office Box 220, Oneonta, NY 13820. One year subscriptions (four issues) are \$12.00. A greatly reduced-size copy of the magazine cover is reproduced elsewhere in these pages.

#### NEW REPORT EMERGES

We have just received a copy of a 15 page "Report on the Medical Aspects of the USS *Liberty* Incident" prepared in August 1967. The report by the medical staff of the USS *America* details the *America's* treatment of *Liberty's* wounded starting at 1910 June 8, when a surgeon and two hospital corpsmen were lifted by helicopter from *America's* flight deck and subsequently lowered by sling to the deck of USS *Massey* for transport to the *Liberty*.

The report is historically valuable, as it discusses in some detail the specific injuries suffered by each of fifty men evacuated to the *America*, and the specific medical procedures used and problems experienced. Of particular interest is a statement that the only fully trained anesthetist aboard, Lieutenant Donald Griffith, left the ship two weeks later and was not replaced; had Dr. Griffith not been aboard to help treat *Liberty's* wounded, at least one man (Herold) and probably more would certainly have succumbed, according to the report.

The staff performed innumerable surgical

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procedures, exposed 311 x-ray films, conducted 113 laboratory studies, and administered 22 pints of blood. During this period the medical staff was assisted by the dental staff, which had been previously trained for such contingency use.

Like other reports from the scene, this report lauds the high morale of the Liberty crew and the 'outstanding performance of the commanding officer during the entire incident.'

Eventually 28 men were transferred to other hospitals and 22 more were returned to duty. Unknown to the America staff, many of those were promptly rehospitalized when examined by doctors ashore.

**WHY I AM SPEAKING OUT  
ABOUT THE USS LIBERTY**

by Richard Carlson

In 1980, our bank branch manager, a Naval Reserve Commander, showed me an article about the Liberty in the *Naval Institute Proceedings* along with a copy of Jim's book, *Assault on the Liberty*. After that, supported by the many pictures, I was able for the first time to tell many of my co-workers what happened to our ship.

Soon I was invited by that same branch manager to speak at the local Kiwanis Club, where I took the book and my notes and gave what turned out to be a cliff-hanger presentation that was not soon forgotten.

When I was transferred to the main office in Bangor, along with a promotion to officer status and other trappings, I was invited by a branch manager to speak at another Kiwanis Club. This soon led to an invitation to be guest speaker at a breakfast club affair which normally ended at 8:00 sharp, as most people had to leave for work. But when that time came, no one left. Instead, most people stayed to ask questions.

A person in that audience invited me to speak to a tri-county Shriners meeting in Maine attended by perhaps 200 people. Subsequently I

also received invitations to speak to the Bangor City Club and then to the Tarrantine Club of Bangor where I was accompanied by two senior officers of our bank (which is now picking up my travel and entertainment costs for these talks).

I normally begin my presentation by asking if anyone has ever heard of the USS Liberty. Usually, no one has. During the talk I usually refer to the Liberty chapter in *The Puzzle Palace* and circulate a copy of *Assault on the Liberty* so people have something to relate to. But the big plus is when they all come up afterward to ask questions and pick up copies of the *USS Liberty Veterans Association* 'Remember the Liberty' brochure.

In a few days I will be speaking at the Red Lion Inn in Bangor, and that will no doubt lead to other invitations. It has been a good experience. I try to relate my feelings as honestly as I can, just clearly informing people of what truly happened. I end with a description of the *USS Liberty Veterans Association* and our goals, and invite people to assist in any way they are comfortable. The key has been my willingness to share the story and to accept invitations to speak publicly and to answer questions about it.

**DUANE R. MARGGRAF HONORED**

by Stan White

On July 4, 1983, the 207th birthday of our great nation, I had the honor and privilege to travel to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, on behalf of the USS Liberty Association. The occasion was the dedication of a plaque in memory of Duane R. Marggraf, one of our fallen shipmates.

It was truly an impressive ceremony with a band, Navy representatives, VFW rifle squad, a large attendance and excellent press, radio and TV coverage. This all happened because one lady took our suggestion at the reunion last year when we said, 'Go home and see what you can do for the Liberty and her crew.' Duane's sister, Mrs. Lorna Stopper, called the VFW District Commander at





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Fond du Lac, Wayne Amend, to ask if he could help. Commander Amend took the challenge and spent the following year getting city and park approvals, planning an appropriate ceremony and getting the media coverage the event deserved.

In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Stopper and their children, Duane's sister Ginny Hoffman and her husband Bill attended, as did Liberty crewmember Duane Dorter and his family and a large crowd from the local military and civilian communities.

The new plaque reads, "In memory of CT3 Duane R. Marggraf USN and 33 of his shipmates, killed by hostile fire on June 8, 1967, while serving their country aboard USS Liberty (AGTR-5)." It is located in a beautiful park on the shores of Lake Winnebago at a point with an anchor, flagpole and lighthouse. What a beautiful sight!

I pray that there will be many more ceremonies honoring the exceptional captain and crew of the USS Liberty.



Stan White attended the ceremony at Lake Winnebago to install a brass plaque honoring Duane Marggraf and other men who died aboard the Liberty. The permanent memorial to Liberty victims was arranged by the Fond du Lac chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

#### NEWSWEEK

The special 50th anniversary spring issue of **Newsweek** magazine features 30 years of the Nuss family of Springfield, Ohio. Under a heading that reads, "A Tragic Mistake," the magazine devotes more than a half page with photography to Tommy Thornton, who died aboard the Liberty, and to describing how his family learned of and lived with the news of Tommy's death. Tommy's sister, Joanne, married Tom Nuss in 1955. The attack was, according to Newsweek, "a tragedy of errors, in Jerusalem's disputed version [emphasis added]."

#### IN MEMORIAM

Gentlemen,

I have some very sad news for all of you.

Earnie Goracci left the Navy on June 30, 1982 and was read on Sept. 25, 1982. It has been a very sad time for me. He turned 48 years old on June 14. So young. I can't talk about it still. It tears my heart out as I loved him so very much.

I would appreciate all of you who have served with him on the USS Liberty to please give a moment of prayer for his departed soul. Thanking all of you and may the new year bring you all much happiness and good health. With God's Blessings in Earnie Goracci's name, I am yours in gratitude, /s/ Eleanor Goracci.

#### THE USS LIBERTY MAILBAG

More mail from Israel:

Dear Mr. White:

Thank you for your letter of March 30, to the President [of Israel], receipt of which is hereby acknowledged.

We have noted your request that a review of "The Attack on the 'Liberty' Incident" be made in Israel.

The President has instructed us to transfer your letter with the attached material to the relevant Government departments for their consideration.

Yours Sincerely /s/ Hassia Weiner  
Personal Assistant to the President of Israel.

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Dear Mr. White:

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter of January 8, 1983, as well as that of Mr. Ennes.

In reply to your letter, I would like to inform you that our document in regard to the tragic 'Liberty' incident, was officially forwarded to the authorities of the U.S. Navy, after a thorough and professional examination of all our findings.

Sincerely Yours /s/ Ze'ev Almog, RADM  
CINC Israeli Navy

Dear Mr. Ennes:

Thank you for sharing the inscribed copy of your book with us. We look forward to enjoying it now and shall retain it for inclusion in our future Presidential collection. We sincerely appreciate your thoughtfulness and we send our best wishes to you.

/s/ Nancy and Ronald Reagan

(Although this 'personally signed' note was no doubt produced by machine, one lucky fellow in New York sent the book to Mr. Reagan in California shortly before he was inaugurated. In return, he received a thank you note on the then president-elect's personal 'Pacific Palisades' stationery. That note was personally signed by Mr. Reagan. At least a half dozen other readers to our knowledge have sent copies of *Assault on the Liberty* to the White House, which must by now be well supplied, and to most members of Congress.)

Dear Master Chief Petty Officer White,

Thank you most kindly for your and James Ennes' thoughtful and generous personalized gift [of *Assault on the Liberty*]--a truly just tribute to the USS Liberty.

With warmest personal regards and best wishes.

Sincerely /s/ R. H. Barrow  
General, U. S. Marine Corps  
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Dear Mr. White:

I received an invitation to visit with you and some of your shipmates in New York on June 23. I can't make it and I am sure my wife couldn't take it, even after all these years. However, I want you to know that all your endeavors to right this injustice are appreciated.

My son was only 21 years old and had his whole life before him until that fateful day in 1967. My wife and his fiancée were happily addressing wedding invitations when the news came over the

radio. For us and many others, the whole world shattered.

My son was taken, his fiancée was devastated for a long time, and my wife woke up crying every night for over six months. My wife developed acute asthma and respiratory problem from which she has never recovered.

Two years after the tragic incident my company asked me to leave because I was not aggressively enough pursuing my duties. I refused (with two sons in college) and was promoted four classifications and ended up in a rather menial position for a college graduate. Since then I have worked myself back up very well, but I will never achieve what my potential would have been with this company.

Being an ex Navy man, I found it difficult to concentrate after my son was lost serving his country under conditions which made it seem like he had done something wrong. Our country did not care about him and his fellow crewmen, but only wanted to quiet the incident. Who was in cahoots with who and why?

I feel like my hands were tied because one didn't need much intelligence to realize how hushed up the situation was: little news coverage, split up of the crew, etc. No, I will never forget the attack on the USS Liberty and the way our government stood behind its people.

I am thankful that James Ennes wrote his book and that many of you are making such an active effort to right this situation.

(Name withheld by request, but available privately.)

Dear Mr. White:

My son was killed aboard the Liberty. Four other members of my family have served our country, and I am a combat veteran of the famed 2nd Armored Division in WWII.

I am writing to express my thanks for the newsletter and for honorary membership in the USS Liberty Veterans Association. I appreciate the efforts made by members and others to make the truth known about the Liberty. Perhaps not in my lifetime, but eventually the story will come out.

/s/ (Name available by request.)

Dear Mr. Ennes:

I surely hope that the persistence of some of the Liberty survivors in calling for a real inquiry by the United States government will pay off. I admire and support them.

/s/ Helen L. Overdiek

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Dear Liberty crewmen:

I served 30 years in the U.S. Congress. When news of the attack on the Liberty broke I was one of only two members of the House of Representatives who took the floor. I pressed authorities in the Departments of State and Defense in what was unquestionably a cover-up. Of course a number of Zionists attacked me but I stood firm.

Some day maybe, just maybe, we will have a government with enough courage to condemn this cruel and unwarranted attack.

/s/ Thomas G. Abernethy, Sr.

honored to be able to offer my assistance at the Liberty stone dedication last fall. I hope my presence as the only member of Congress in attendance helped to bring greater recognition to this human tragedy.

/s/ Larry Pressler  
United States Senator

(Senator Pressler pledged last fall to work within the Congress to support the Liberty association and its goals. Since then we have tried repeatedly to contact the senator to suggest ways we might help. This is his first and only reply. He seems clearly to be bidding us adieu.)

Mr. John M. Hrankowski

Dear Mr. Hrankowski:

I am not sure there is any great public purpose in trying to reopen this incident after 15 years. The incident was thoroughly examined at the time and our government decided to accept the Israeli apology. Our relations with Israel are strained by more recent events... There is broad agreement that our national purposes would not be advanced by reopening the dispute.

/s/ Barber B. Conable, Jr.  
Member of Congress, NY

Dear Mr. White:

I heard Ennes two years in a row on KGO [San Francisco]. Ennes is a zero in educating the public as to the Zionist conspiracy which is destroying this country. Perhaps you are using the best tactic to tell your story, but I think you are avoiding the real issue. Cancel my subscription.

/s/ WPM, LTCOL, USAF, Retired.

(Politics, international relations, Middle East history, sexual abuse of children, and the strengths, weaknesses and goals of Zionism are among a long list of things we are not qualified to debate in public, so we concentrate instead on the things we know best. Our purpose is to tell the story of the Liberty.)

Dear Mr. White and the Liberty Crew:

I'm proud of all of you for what you're doing. I can see why your ship didn't go down. Your continued ability to stand up and fight back. Our country needs men like you. I'm so glad you are doing what you are and I wish you God's strength and wisdom to continue.

/s/ Helen Haley

Dear Jim:

Of course you may use my name on your letterhead and I am glad to serve as unpaid legal counsel [to the Liberty Veterans Association].

...the other evening I met the former director of [a leading intelligence agency] and asked him the square question: "Was the attack on the Liberty deliberate?" He shot back an immediate "Yes," and went on to describe how badly the senior professional military establishment felt when President Johnson aborted the retaliatory strike which was already in the air. I suspect that it was this action of Johnson's which has caused the government to want to throw a protective cloak over the whole affair, although the influence of the Jewish community lobby is also a major factor.

/s/ Paul N. McCloskey, Jr.

Dear Mr. White:

Now the Marine general has come back from Lebanon to comment attacks on our troops by Israeli soldiers in Lebanon, perhaps those who collaborated in the disgraceful coverup of the Liberty tragedy. They will be compelled to show their hand. You and your gallant associates deserve our respect and appreciation.

/s/ John Faulk

Dear Stan:

...I wish you and the other members of the USS Liberty Veterans Association best wishes in gaining wider public recognition of the sacrifices made by both the survivors, those killed, and the families of all involved.

Thanks again for keeping in touch. I was

(ed note: During our meetings in New York City, former Congressman McCloskey graciously offered to serve as legal counsel to the association without charge. Your association has accepted this generous and valuable offer. Congressman McCloskey's first service will be to



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help the association to qualify for tax exempt status as a non-profit organization.)

every statement. These are not little known books by unknown authors for minor publishers; both books will be major publishing events.



Dr. Mohammad Mehdi interviewing Liberty crewmen for New York City Cable Television. Left to Right: Dr. Mehdi, Jim Ennes, Stan White, John Frankowski, Bob Casale.

Notice the "Remember the Liberty" bumper sticker in the foreground.

### TWO NEW BOOKS ABOUT THE LIBERTY TO BE PUBLISHED SOON

As this newsletter is being written, two potentially explosive books about the Liberty are in their final stages of production in major New York publishing houses. We have been privileged to review manuscript of both books and can attest that they will be hard for the media to ignore, as they will make major new revelations about the background for the attack and cover-up. One of the authors attended the Liberty reunion in 1982 where he interviewed dozens of survivors; he has spent over three years in intense, full-time research, has traveled thousands of miles, and has uncovered startling new details. Readers will be astounded to learn that American leaders knew well in advance that Israel was planning to attack the Liberty, but chose to do nothing. A new and tantalizing theory is presented for Israel's decision to attack the ship, and a great many examples are given of highly irregular secret dealings between the Israeli and American governments. The degree of secret liaison between highest level American officials and Israeli government representatives is examined closely for the first time in print. Both books name names and provide solid documentation for virtually

Because of their provocative nature, both books are being produced under strict cloaks of secrecy with expected release about February, 1984. Magazines serializations are expected to start around Christmas. We expect to be able to reveal titles and more details in the next issue of this newsletter. Meanwhile, don't forget about these books. **They will be biggies!**

### 60 MINUTES NIBBLES AGAIN

TV GUIDE, April 16, 1983, carried a major story on the popular **60 Minutes** television series entitled, "How Good is it Now?" The conclusion: not as good as it could be, and not as good as it once was. Former CBS News President Fred Friendly commented, "If you made up a list of the serious subjects confronting this country...and then [checked to] see how many of those have been addressed in a serious way--well, that's what I would be concentrating on."

Apparently as a result of that criticism, CBS producers almost immediately telephoned two East Coast reporters who have written about the Liberty. Both were asked for solid source material

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concerning the **Liberty**. Both referred **60 Minutes** to Jim Ennes. But **60 Minutes** did not call Jim Ennes. **Sixty minutes** told Jim Ennes long ago that the **Liberty** story had been 'thoroughly covered' way back in 1967 by CBS News 'including interviews with the crew' and would not be covered again until someone from Israel defected with a documented inside story. Don't give up, **60 Minutes**. That may happen yet. A few weeks ago we had a long conversation with a senior Israeli military officer who participated in the attack and is willing to tell the story publicly when the conditions are right. **60 Minutes** just may run out of excuses.

**A NEW YORK TIMES  
OBITUARY NOTICE**

The obituary notice below appeared on the obituary page of the New York Times on June 8, 1983, the sixteenth anniversary of the attack. Efforts to learn who had placed the ad were unsuccessful.

**In Memoriam**

IN MEMORIAM  
WILLIAM ENBAUGH  
PHILIP A. THONG  
GARY D. ANCHARD  
ALLEN BLUE  
F. T. BROWN  
JOHN W. CAMPBELL  
JERRY CONVERSE  
ROBERT EISENBERG  
JERRY GOSS  
CURTIS GRAVES  
LAWRENCE HAYDEN  
WARREN HERSEY  
ALAN HIGGINS  
CARL HOAR  
RICHARD KEENE  
JAMES LENA  
RAYMOND LINT  
JAMES LUPTON  
DUANE MARGGRAF  
DAVID MARLBOROUGH  
ANTHONY MENDEL  
CARL NYGREN  
JAMES PIERCE  
JACK RAPER  
EDWARD REHMEYER  
DAVID SKOLAK  
JOHN SMITH, JR.  
MELVIN SMITH  
JOHN SPICER  
ALEXANDER THOMPSON  
THOMAS THORNTON  
PHILLIP TIEDYKE  
STEPHEN TOTY  
FREDERICK WALTON  
U.S.S. LIBERTY  
8 JUNE 1967

**'NBC IS NOT INTERESTED  
IN THE LIBERTY'**

During a recent visit to New York City, four former **Liberty** crewmen were approached by an NBC News camera team and asked for an interview for the NBC Evening News. When the men agreed, the field producer called his office for permission. The crew was on the scene with all their equipment. They had no other assignment.

The reply from NBC headquarters: 'NBC is not interested in the **USS Liberty**, and if you tape the interview you will just be wasting your time because it will never get on the air.'

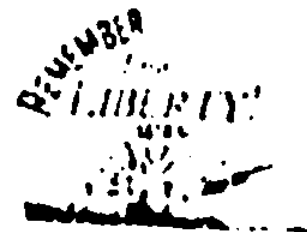
**BUMPER STICKERS**

Shipmate Bob Casale and his partner, Ted Swedalla, Jr., have personally spent several hundred dollars for some beautiful 3-3/4" by 5" **Remember the Liberty** bumper stickers. These are top-quality vinyl bumper stickers in bright red, white and blue, apparently made with an expensive silk-screen process. They are available by mail for a self-addressed, stamped (20 cents), business size (4" x 9") envelope, sent to Bob Casale, Liberty Plumbing and Heating Company, 335 West John Street, Hicksville, NY 11801. If you include a dollar, Bob will print more when these are gone. If you want more than one, put another stamp on the envelope for each additional sticker and do help replenish the printing fund with your dollar. A black and white copy greatly reduced in size appears on page three of this newsletter.

Already, we have learned that a large dairy in New York, most of whose milk truck drivers are off-duty and former Navymen, displays the **Liberty** bumper stickers on over 100 milk trucks. Bob Casale, of course, displays the bumper sticker on his delivery trucks, and so do many of his customers.

**RUBBER STAMPS**

We now have rubber stamps, like those used on all our envelopes and newsletters, which say **Remember the Liberty** with a small picture of the ship. They cost us \$3.50 each. If you want one, send \$5.00 to Stan to cover postage costs.



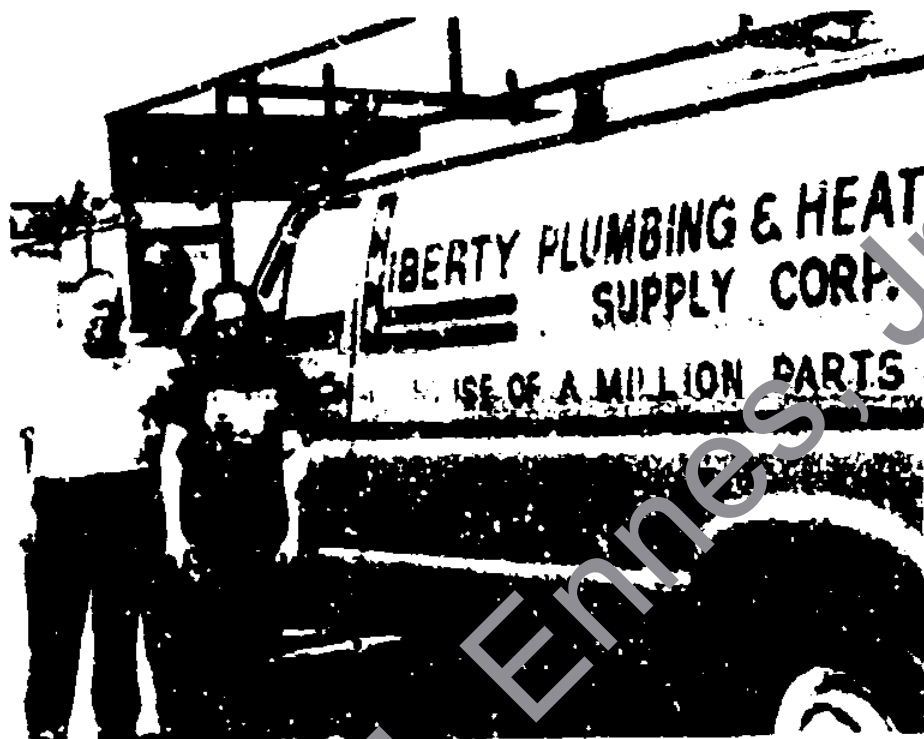
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**FAN TAIL NOSTALGIA  
AND LIBERTY PLUMBING SUPPLY**

Following the recent trip to New York, Stan and Jim spent the weekend in Hicksville and Bellmore as guests of Bob Casale (Liberty '66) and Warren Heaney, Liberty's popular ship's cook.

During the morning they met customers and friends of Bob Casale's at his plumbing and heating supply store in Hicksville, named after the ship. The store lobby features a large bulletin board with Liberty photographs and memorabilia.

The afternoon was a time that would have brought a nostalgic catch to the throat of the most unsentimental Liberty sailor. Just as he often did aboard ship, Warren treated his guests to a "fantail cookout" of hamburgers and hotdogs, serenaded us all on accordion, guitar and harmonica (often playing two instruments at once), and sang his own unique version of several old favorites.



Jim Ennes, Stan White and Bob Casale with one of Bob's "Liberty" delivery trucks. Bob is wearing a "Liberty Plumbing Supply" T-shirt.



Warren Heaney, Bob Casale, Stan White and Jim Ennes at Warren's "Fan Tail Barbecue, Swimming Party and Singalong."

**USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS**

Every year June 8 brings more media awareness of the Liberty affair. Although the attack on our ship has yet to be acknowledged in any known encyclopedia, reference work or fact book, this year the attack was mentioned briefly in a ("On this date in history...") calendar distributed nationally to media representatives. That brief mention brought a flurry of interview requests to Liberty survivors. Among them, Jim Ennes did several radio talkshows and interviews by telephone plus a taped television interview on the Channel 10 Evening News in Seattle and an article in *Middle East International* magazine, published in London; Don Follin did a front-page interview entitled "16-year-old coverup" for the *Bucks County Courier Times* and was asked to do a radio interview; Ron Kukal was asked to do both radio and television interviews. Others were Stan White, John Hrankowski and others. Tom Bradley made himself available for interview by a student doing a term paper on the Liberty at Elmira College in New York.

**JAMES MILLER STRIKES AGAIN, HARD**

A citizen in Minneapolis has long been intrigued by the Liberty affair and the obvious cover-up that surrounds it. But Jim Miller is a man of action. He works to uncover the elusive inside story.

For about the past two years Mr. Miller has bombarded government offices with a series of Freedom of Information Act requests for information. When information is denied or when the government claims that certain information is "withheld" or "cannot be located," he pushes harder.

He has now engaged an attorney to pursue the matter in the courts, and has forced a number of preliminary hearings in Federal District Court in Minneapolis--attended by government attorneys flown out from Washington for the purpose. Thus far Mr. Miller has been granted several hundred documents that have until now been withheld from other researchers, but he is not satisfied and not yet ready to give up.

Mr. Miller's counsel believe they can now prove in court that the Department of State has been deliberately evasive and unresponsive to Freedom of Information requests concerning the USS Liberty. They are now working to obtain a judgment to that effect and ultimately to have all Liberty materials brought to court for "in camera" review by a judge. The result may be fascinating.

Thus far Mr. Miller has invested several thousand dollars of his own money in these suits. A side suit asks the government to pay his legal fees, since the suits only became necessary because of



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the government's illegal and improper refusal to comply with the Freedom of Information Act. The government offered to pay \$1,000 of his legal costs, but Mr. Miller's attorney, in a letter to the Department of Justice, refused to accept that sum, stating that "any compromise, in effect, constitutes a subsidy of the State Department's wilful contravention of the statute.... [He is unwilling] to lose money for demanding that the State Department merely live up to its legislatively prescribed duty."

#### SUBMARINE FILMS

Several months ago Stan White filed a FOI request with the Navy Department requesting films of the attack which we have reason to believe were taken from an American submarine (not the USS **Andrew Jackson** as speculated by some other writers) during the attack. The Navy has replied, to no surprise, that they can find no record of such films.

#### A NEWLY RELEASED LIBERTY REI RT

Several weeks ago the National Security Agency released under the Freedom of Information Act a remarkable 71 page study of the USS Liberty affair.

Although about 30% of the document is blotted out by the government censor, it appears to be the most comprehensive such report prepared to date. Originally classified Top Secret and "not releasable to foreign nationals," the document was prepared in 1980 by a group supervised by William D. Gerhard (whose title at the Agency is also censored), and then completed by Mr. Gerhard in 1981 after his retirement from the agency. Sources cited include hundreds of government documents, several published sources (including **Assault on the Liberty**), dozens of photographs, and interviews with several **Liberty** crewmen then assigned to the National Security Agency, including Terry McFarland, Jim O'Connor, Paddy Rhodes and Clyde May.

The censor's ink blots render the document heavy and unsatisfying reading, since most of the major points made by the authors seem to have offended the censor. Nevertheless, enough comes through to reveal that this may be the first timid acknowledgment within our government that the attack on our ship may indeed have been more than "just an accident."

After first discussing in detail the progress of the Six Day War, the NSA report discusses in two top secret pages (of which all but about eighty words are censored) the rationale for sending the **Liberty** into the area in the first place--a decision

which was made within the National Security Agency.

Although the authors draw heavily from the original Navy Court of Inquiry, thus repeating many of the errors in that report, they reject without comment the Court's claim that the flag hung limp at the mast and instead report on page 25 that "a light breeze ruffled the **Liberty's** ensign in the hours preceding the attack. Most other details of the attack itself are taken directly from the highly-flawed scenario in the Court of Inquiry report.

Unfortunately, the report sheds no new official light on what our government was doing for the 2-1/2 hours while the ship was under attack and calling for help. The authors tell us that two hours flying time was required of the 1600 knot jets to cover the 400 miles to the ship's assistance but, like other government reports, this one makes no attempt to analyze or explain the arithmetic involved.

Although we continue to receive reports that nuclear armed aircraft were launched from the carrier **America** during the **Liberty** episode, this report mentions only that four Skyhawks (propeller driven fighters) were sent from the **America** along with a number of F4 Phantoms.

"The attack had demanded the very best from the **Liberty's** crew, and they had responded exceptionally well," the report reads. "Damage control competence minimized **Liberty's** structural wounds and kept her afloat. The engineering crew under Lieutenant George Golden maintained power to the engines.... The medical officer [Lieutenant Richard Kieffer] and his corpsmen needed help and they got it."

The official Israeli explanation, still treated as top secret information at the request of the Israeli government (although we have obtained copies privately) is blocked out by the censor in 2-1/2 pages of ink blots, followed by an author's comment that the explanation "reveals egregious errors in both command judgments and operational procedures" and another page of the censor's ink blots.

Finally, that section is concluded with a charge from Secretary of State Dean Rusk that the attack manifests "reckless disregard for human life" and a report that the Deputy Director of NSA, Dr. Louis Tordella, on 26 August 1967 answered the Israeli excuse by neatly penning his personal feelings in a margin. "A nice whitewash," he wrote.

In a concluding chapter titled "A Final Look," the authors comment that "exculpation of Israeli nationals [was apparently not] hindmost in the [Israeli] court's calculations." After three tantalizing pages of censored discussion, the authors tell us that "speculation as to Israeli motivation varied." Motivation? Accidents are not motivated. If NSA sees a motive, then NSA

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must see the attack as deliberate. Ponder this carefully. "Some believed that Israel expected that the complete destruction of the ship and killing of the personnel would lead the U.S. to blame the U.A.R. for the incident and bring the U.S. into the war on the side of Israel. Ironically, even though the Liberty had [five words censored], others felt that Israeli forces wanted the ship out of the way." The next ten lines are censored.

Finally, the report concludes: "There was one aspect of the Liberty tragedy which should not go unnoted. This was its adverse and lingering affect on the Liberty's survivors. Oral interviews with survivors some 13 years after the event, show that time has not healed all the scars. Apart from bitterness toward the Israeli government, there still remains dismay that the U.S. Government or Sixth Fleet did not come to Liberty's aid in timely fashion."

Despite many weaknesses and heavy reliance upon previous error-filled government reports, this is the first own government study since the Court of Inquiry that has bothered to consult survivors, and it is probably the only inquiry in which survivors were ever allowed to speak freely. (The Court of Inquiry seldom allowed the men to depart from a narrow range of questions--and the men were interviewed privately in advance, apparently to determine what their answers would be and thus to control the testimony that was given in court.) More important, this is the only known government report on this subject which suggests that the Israeli version may be less than candid and complete, and it is the only official report which acknowledges in any way that air support failed to arrive "in timely fashion." The USS Liberty called for help for 2-1/2 hours and air support failed to arrive at all.

#### IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B2 means means your subscription is paid through the second subscription year which ends with this issue. Unless your label shows code B3 or B9, your subscription has expired and we hope you will renew. If your label reads B0 or B1, you are a valued reader whose subscription expired some time ago and this is a courtesy copy sent in the hope that you will renew. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars or more to Treasurer Virgil Brownfield, USS Liberty Veterans Association, Box 8538A, Orlando, Florida 32856 before we run out of money.



Joe Lentini, feeling better aboard the USS America.



A Liberty survivor, probably Don Herold, being examined by a ship's doctor aboard the USS America.

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**COMMANDER TANSILL DOES IT AGAIN!**

On June 8, 1983, and again on July 4, 1983, Commander X. Bender Tansill again led a graveside ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery in remembrance of the 34 men who died aboard the *Liberty*. As in the past, representatives of almost every veterans' organization except the American Legion were present. Since being scolded by pro-Israeli spokesmen in 1967 for their official resolution calling for a proper investigation (and publicly rejecting the official Navy Court of Inquiry report as inadequate), the American Legion has steadfastly refused to have any more to do with the *Liberty* affair.

The *USS Liberty Newsletter* is the official journal of the **USS Liberty Veterans Association**. Association Officers are Stan White, President (phone 605 356-2207); Don Blalock, Vice President (phone 301 776-0858); Virgil Brownfield, Secretary Treasurer (phone 305 423-4260); Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 306 788-3519); Paul N. McCoskey, Jr., Legal Counsel (phone 415 494-6100). The mailing address of the **USS Liberty Veterans Association** for subscriptions and membership information is Post Office Box 8538A, Orlando, Florida 32856. Write to Stan at Route One, Box 45A, Burbank, SD 57010. Send editorial material for the newsletter to Jim Ennes, POB 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.



Captain (the Commander) James Kneale, Commanding Officer of America's Attack Squadron (VA) 64, known as the "Black Panthers." VA-64 was a light jet attack squadron of Douglas A4c "SKYHAWK" aircraft, said to be skilled in the delivery of "all types" of special and conventional weapons. Captain Kneale led one of the first flights of aircraft sent from the *America* in defense of the *Liberty*, but prematurely recalled while the *Liberty* was still under fire.



HMI Roger P. "Smokey the Bear" Annan taking a blood sample during treatment of *Liberty*'s wounded. "Smokey" is fondly remembered as an extraordinarily helpful corpsman.

We are indebted for these pictures and those on the two adjacent pages to Wayne Kyle, formerly of the *USS America*, who sent them to us from the *USS America* 1967 Cruise Book.



## AMERICA MEETS LIBERTY



After steaming towards each other all night, the AMERICA group rendezvoused on June 9 with USS LIBERTY (GTR-5) which was escorted by two Task Force 60 destroyers, USS DAVIS (DD-937) and USS MASSEY (DD-778). While the wounded were heloed to AMERICA, the crew viewed the effects of the previous day's attack.

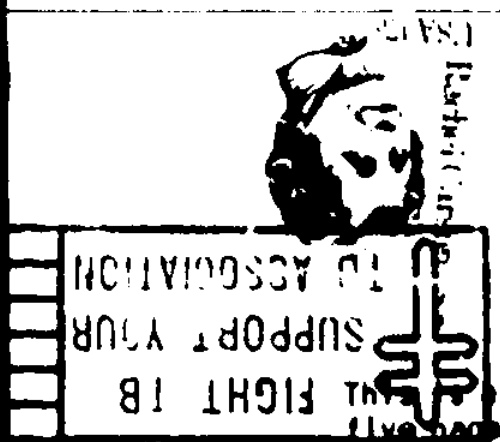
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U.S. LIBERTY  
STAN WHITE  
P.O. BOX 454  
BOERANK, S.D. 57010

This is a much-reduced size reproduction of the current cover of THE DOSSIER, which features a five-page article on the USS Liberty. For a copy of the magazine, send \$4.00 to Editor R. L. Knudson, Post Office Box 220, Oneonta, NY 13820.

# THE DOSSIER

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPY SOCIETY



ISRAELI  
ATTACK  
ON U.S.  
WARSHIP

TOP  
SECRET

ISSUE  
FIVE

# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



... VOLUME 11, Issue #3 ...  
March, 1983

## **A LETTER FROM ISRAEL**

### **The Israeli Defense Force Replies at Last**

The Liberty Veterans Association, in recent weeks, has sent several letters to Israeli and American officials challenging the 'official' views of the events of June 8, 1967.

In particular, we have strongly challenged Israel's 'official report' of June, 1982, which reasserts that the attack on the Liberty was a mistake and which presents an elaborately contrived explanation. Most key details of the Israeli explanation can be readily disproven, such as the Israeli assertion that the torpedo boats misidentified the Liberty after detecting her on radar at a range of 22 miles and miscalculated her speed at 31 knots (impossible, because the boats have a maximum radar range of 15 miles and because the ship was moving only 5 knots), that the pilots circled three times at low level looking for a flag before commencing the attack (we saw the aircraft approach and immediately commence firing), that no flag was flown, that Liberty refused a request to identify herself, that no rockets were fired, that no Israeli aircraft approached the Liberty at any time on June 8 (dozens of men, including your editor as officer-of-the-deck, recall repeated overflights at masthead level), and several other statements contrary to evidence.

The latest Israeli version, we have now learned through the Freedom of Information Act,

was transmitted in a personal letter from Rear Admiral Zeev Almog, CinC, Israeli Navy, to Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, then Chief of Naval Operations, following a visit by Admiral and Mrs. Hayward to Israel. Apparently Admiral Hayward inquired about the Liberty, and the 45 page 'official version' is Admiral Almog's reply. 'I hope this will convince you,' Admiral Almog wrote to Admiral Hayward, 'that the attack was a tragic mistake.'

The report is unconvincing, particularly to anyone who knows anything about the attack, and it does not seem to have convinced anyone in the Pentagon either. According to our contacts at the Pentagon, the 'official version' was filed away with Admiral Hayward's papers when he retired and was not routed to other officers at the Pentagon.

It is, however, the latest in a long string of 'official' versions, most of which sharply conflict even with one another, and cannot go unchallenged. We have, therefore, written directly to Israeli Colonel Uri Algom, Chief Historian for the Israeli Defense Force, to challenge some of the more glaring errors and tell him where to find the solid documentation to disprove the version which carries his signature.

We have now received the following message from Colonel Algom:

'Dear Mr. Ennes, I have recently received your letter from November 19th, 1982. I read your letter very carefully, and your notes are being checked now. Sincerely yours, /s/ Colonel Uri Algom, I.D.F.'

We will keep you informed.

**'Remember the Liberty'**



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**USS LIBERTY  
IN THE NEWS**

Continued uproar in the Middle East has brought renewed interest in the *Liberty*.

On February 2, 1983, in a very widely covered incident that seems to have many parallels with the USS *Liberty* affair, a United States Marine Corps captain stopped a column of three Israeli tanks at gunpoint in Beirut.

This incident brought important mention of the *Liberty* by newsmen and talkshow hosts across the country and, we have learned, caused ABC NIGHTLINE viewers to phone the studio asking for an update.

**Film Mysteriously Missing**

NIGHTLINE's first reaction was to call for a 30 minute film that had been prepared in June, 1982, during the *Liberty* reunion. At that time NIGHTLINE had filmed more than three hours of studio interviews and several more hours of field interviews with *Liberty* crewmen and others, all of which was edited for a full, 30-minute broadcast set for June 8, 1982. All this, we have been told, at a cost of more than \$100,000. Ironically, the broadcast was preempted because the Israeli invasion of Lebanon on June 7 was a bigger story.

Now, with a fresh Israeli-American military confrontation in the news, NIGHTLINE decided to bring that tape out of the archives. Alas, like so many other vital documents that deal with this story, NIGHTLINE's *Liberty* tape had mysteriously disappeared without a trace.

But all was not lost. NIGHTLINE producers invited *Liberty* survivors Joe Lentini and Don Blalock (both living near NIGHTLINE studios in Washington) to film a discussion of parallels between the *Liberty* and the tank incident for a NIGHTLINE broadcast set for February 3.

Unfortunately, we were bumped again! Host Ted Koppel personally called Blalock at home shortly before broadcast time to explain that the *Liberty* segment had to be scrapped because Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arens had agreed to discuss the tank incident by satellite from San Francisco, thus consuming *Liberty*'s scheduled time.

**CBS Radio News Steps In**

In another prominent broadcast, however, reporter Richard Hottelet, standing in for Dan Rather on February 3, devoted his entire ten minute CBS national radio news broadcast to discussion of the *Liberty* attack as an example of another Israeli-American military confrontation.

On February 4, during an interview with Jan

Mickelson on radio station CKNW (CBS) in Cincinnati, your editor and historian, Jim Ennes, confronted the first totally unfriendly phone-in response yet received. Several callers, in an obviously organized effort, all accused Ennes and host Mickelson of anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic propaganda.

Such response is not spontaneous. Israeli public affairs organizations regularly send "background papers" to their members instructing them how to respond if the *Liberty* attack is publicly mentioned. As a result, we find almost identical letters to editors and virtually identical talkshow arguments appearing across the country.

For example, when retired Rear Admiral Max Morris (a former commander of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis) wrote about the *Liberty* in several Florida newspapers, he was angrily attacked in letters from Israeli spokesmen. Some of those letters were identical to an attack on Ennes's book that was read on Seattle radio station KUOW more than a year earlier by an Israeli spokesman.

But most reaction is friendly. For instance, a one hour interview with Christina Bowers on WKRG (CBS) in Mobile, Alabama, on February 17 kept the phone lines jammed, all with favorable calls.

**The Christian Science Monitor**

A Christian Science Monitor article by Joseph C. Harsch dated February 10, 1983, features the *Liberty* prominently along with a discussion of the incident with the Israeli tank commander. Says Harsch, citing the *Liberty* attack as an example, "...Israel does not like having American observers watching its military operations...."

**The New York Review of Books**

A major review by Thomas Powers of *The Puzzle Palace* (James Bamford's best-selling investigative view of the National Security Agency) in the February 3 *New York Review of Books* includes prominent mention of the *Liberty*, including this paragraph, remarkable for a New York City publication: "It is not hard to understand why Israel insisted the attack was a mistake, or why Washington accepted the explanation at face value, but scholars and military experts who have studied the episode mostly take a different view. For them the hard question is not whether the attack was deliberate, but why the Israelis thought it necessary."

*The Puzzle Palace* is getting serious attention around the country, and author Bamford tells us that his *Liberty* chapter generates a large share of the discussion. Bamford, leaning heavily

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on a careful reading of *Assault on the Liberty* plus interviews with famed cryptanalyst Frank Raven, devotes most of a chapter to the *Liberty* attack. The book is being widely reviewed, was #1 best seller in Washington, D.C., for several weeks, and brings the *Liberty* subject repeatedly to public attention. *The Puzzle Palace* is 'must' reading.

#### The Larry King Show

Recently, for but one example, Bamford was interviewed for two hours by Larry King on his nationally syndicated radio talk show. During the show, a caller (Jim Netolic of Mt. Vernon, Ohio, who was a friend of *Liberty's* Carl Hoar), called on-the-air to ask Bamford about the *Liberty*. Both Netolic and Bamford told us later that Larry King seemed to drop the subject with undue haste--which he has done repeatedly with all *Liberty* questions since he interviewed us for two hours in September, 1980.

#### The Los Angeles Herald Examiner

A review of Chaim Herzog's *The Arab-Israeli Wars* (Random House) in the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Sunday, January 16, criticizes Herzog's book as "...hardly an unbiased history. Too much is missing or brushed aside; in one case, the 1967 attack on the USS *Liberty*, he parrots the easily discredited Israeli explanation and apology. One expects more from a historian."

#### The White House

According to Rowland Evans and Robert Novak in a nationally syndicated column dated February 9, "When Reagan heard about the [tank] incident between Israel and the Marines, he told aides that the Israelis must have threatened the Marines intentionally -- 'like they did with the *Liberty*.'"

#### ADMIRAL KIDD IN THE NEWS

An article by Thomas Hasler in *The Baltimore Evening Sun* dated September 26, 1982, reports that USS *Liberty* Veterans Association Vice President Don Blalock "...has been contacting high present and former government officials in an effort to persuade them to reopen the [*Liberty*] investigation."

"He has elicited at least a modicum of interest from retired Adm Isaac C. Kidd, Jr., who headed the Naval Court of Inquiry. Admiral Kidd,

who is now a consulting engineer in Washington, said recently that until now he had been maintaining a 'discreet silence' because he saw 'no reason to open up a Pandora's box.'

"However, after talking to Mr. Blalock, Admiral Kidd said he would be 'happy to take a look' at the discrepancies in the court record claimed by the men of the *Liberty*."

"The admiral said what particularly 'piqued my curiosity and interest' was the absence from the record of certain ship's logs. Missing from the record are the deck log, the quartermaster's notebook and the weather log (and the testimony of an officer of the deck)."

"Nonetheless, Admiral Kidd declared emphatically that there was no hard evidence to support the conclusion that the attack was intentional."

"Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, disagrees, contending unequivocally that the attack was 'absolutely deliberate' and any denial of such accusation was a 'damn lie.' He terms 'ridiculous' the Israeli commander's contention that the attacking torpedo boats identified the *Liberty* as an Egyptian supply ship."

Despite Admiral Kidd's offer, however, he has not responded further to Blalock's bid during the summer, nor to our letters of November and February. Our latest unanswered letter reads in part:

"We hope that you will either support us in our effort to correct the record or that you will help us to understand the reason for several major discrepancies in the official record. Particularly, we would value your comment concerning our conviction that vital testimony from the crew and ship's officers and vital records such as deck, weather and QM logs and a sworn statement by an officer of the deck were apparently ignored by the court over which you presided."

"You are one of the very few people who could clarify much of the mystery regarding the attack and coverup. Won't you reconsider your apparent decision to remain silent?"

#### WHERE TO BUY ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

Following our meeting in Minneapolis with a marketing executive of B. Dalton Books, *Assault on the Liberty* has been replaced on B. Dalton's microfiche and can again be ordered through any B. Dalton outlet. The book is also listed in *Books in Print* and can be ordered from the publisher by any book store willing to handle special orders.



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Copies personally inscribed and signed by the author are available for \$15 from PO Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. For an additional one dollar per book, we will forward books to Stan White to be signed also by Stan before forwarding to the buyer.

For the best price available anywhere, but not signed, single copies are available for ten dollars including postage from John Mahoney, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 711, New York, NY 10027.

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**A REVISED EDITION OF  
ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY**

Chances are excellent that **Assault on the Liberty** will be revised and updated soon for paperback or overseas publication. We hope to expand any future version to include more personal experiences of crewmen. Survivors or others with information are encouraged to write directly to Jim Ennes, POB 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 with any incidents, anecdotes, reports of heroics, or corrections for the upcoming edition. All recollections are desired, no matter how trivial they may seem or how briefly or casually written.

♦♦♦♦♦

**A PERMANENT REPOSITORY  
FOR USS LIBERTY PAPERS**

The University of Washington has offered to provide a permanent storage place and reference library for USS Liberty papers in the university library. Eventually the original manuscript for **Assault on the Liberty** will be stored there, along with all of the many thousands of pages of research papers, notes, Freedom of Information documents from over a dozen government agencies, several documents from Israel, tape recordings and photographs.

All Liberty survivors are encouraged to contribute recollections (written or tape recorded), memorabilia and documents to the collection. Several authors who have investigated the Liberty affair are also being encouraged to contribute their papers. For those who desire to contribute, but who are not yet prepared to make their information public, the library has offered to seal documents from all public view for any period specified by the donor. This should provide opportunity for some of the leading actors to reveal their stories without fear of retribution or retaliation. It is our hope that eventually the UW Liberty section will become the primary source of information on this subject.

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**USS LIBERTY MAILBAG**

"It was a beautiful time at the reunion. I can't wait until the next one. The politicians of New York state know me very well now. If they only had some back bone to help open up the USS Liberty case it would be wonderful. But I'm going to keep fighting. Until the next reunion. /s/ John Sk Frankowski."

♦♦♦♦♦

"John and I enjoyed the reunion so much for you all did a superb job of organizing and pulling off a very difficult task. It went so well that it really could not have been improved upon at all. What was particularly nice was that I believe the ves enjoyed themselves as much as you guys.

"Everything was well done from the name tags through to the banquet and Sunday brunch. The visit to Arlington was very beneficial and meant a lot to everyone. I am sorry Captain McGonagle was not able to come, but Admiral Moorer, Commander Bucher and Philip Geyelin were excellent speakers. Admiral Moorer is particularly entertaining.

"Like many others, we are looking forward to the next reunion. The turnout will probably be even better as more men are found and learn of the good time that was had by all. It was a super weekend, and we hope you know that all the hard work and effort was greatly appreciated. /s/ John & Sue Scott."

♦♦♦♦♦

"It was great to be together with the crew once more. The whole weekend was a complete success. Despite the rain, the service & wreath-laying at Arlington was very meaningful. The banquet & program was well organized, with interesting speakers. I particularly enjoyed getting together with fellows I worked with on board ship and renewing their acquaintances (as well as exchanging current addresses). The weekend flew by too quickly & I hope the time between now and the next reunion will go as quickly. /s/ Mike Pattno."

♦♦♦♦♦

"I was on the Liberty for 22 months, although i was not aboard during the attack. My wife and I went to the reunion, and we both enjoyed it very much, even though most of the people were new to us. It was fun seeing some of my old shipmates again, and also to meet new people. It was a special privilege and an honor to meet such people as Admiral



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Moorer, Admiral Burke, Commander Bucher, and some of the others who came to the banquet. The whole affair was quite an experience and we are looking forward to the next one. /s/ Rich Davis.

\*\*\*\*\*

"As much as we wanted to make the reunion, it was just too far from our duty station in Anchorage. It sounds, though, like everyone had a great time, and that you came a long way toward convincing the world that the attack was not the accident that it has been cracked up to be. One day perhaps our government will be forced to admit that what happened to us was deliberate and calculated. Keep up the good work! A check is enclosed for my dues, and I look forward to the next reunion in '85. /s/ Joe & Sharon Benkert."

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"I am a believing Jew; I first read **Assault on the Liberty** several weeks ago and have reread it several times since. Contrary to the claims of some who hope to discredit the book, there is absolutely nothing in **Assault on the Liberty** that is anti-Semitic. As proof, see how Mr. George Houston Golden is portrayed; here a Jew is clearly one of the real heroes of the affair. The pro-Zionist power structure in the U.S., who are really America's leading anti-Semites, use the label 'anti-Semitic' to discredit any and all stories that show their Zionist comrades in Palestine for what they really are. How may I help the Liberty veterans to tell their story? /s/ Abraham Weiss, Tonsey, NY."

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"After talking with Stan White and reading **'Assault on the Liberty'**, I must say I am surprised. I was 15 years old when my father, Raymond Eugene Linn, died in that attack. From the beginning I was told that 'the USS ~~the~~ Liberty was accidentally attacked by Israeli forces.' This quote was taken from the first telegram that I received. Because I was only 15 years old at the time, I never questioned the story, but I have always wanted to talk with someone who had first hand knowledge of the assault. Now the book and my talks with Stan have answered many of my questions.

"My heart really goes out for all the men who went through that horrible ordeal as well as for the 34 men who died. If the jets that left the Sixth Fleet had been able to complete their mission my father and the other 24 men would not have died from the torpedo attack. For this reason, I am very angry with our government for not responding to your radio call for help when they knew the Liberty was under attack.

I wish you all success. If I can be of any help, please let me know. /s/ Joy Linn Evans."

\*\*\*\*\*

To The President, The White House -  
"Dear Mr. President:

Recently I mentioned to my mother that I would be interested in going to the Air Force Academy. I am 17 years old and a junior in high school. She told me that, while it is a duty to serve my country, I had better know what I am willing to die for. She gave me some books to read and one of them was **'Assault on the Liberty.'** I am angry after reading this book, and I wrote a report on it for my history class. I am sending you part of my report.

In the paper today I read where the U.S. Marines have warned the Israelis to keep away from Marine lines in Lebanon. Could history repeat itself?

It is important for me to know if we have learned anything from the tragedy of the Liberty. If the Liberty were at sea today and I was on it, would you call back the American planes trying to save it? If I was a Marine in Lebanon and the Israelis attacked us, would you give me the help and support to defend myself?

I know I must serve my country, but will you come to my defense if I need it? I hope you answer this letter as it is important for me to have the answers to these questions. /s/ Scott Cooper, Rocky River, Ohio."

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#### WHAT IS 'THE DOSSIER'

**THE DOSSIER:** The Official Journal of the International Spy Society, is a fascinating new magazine devoted to the subject of real and fictional spies. The next issue, due in March or April, will feature an article about the Liberty by James Ennes. To subscribe in time to receive the Liberty article, send \$12 to Richard L. Knudson, The Dossier, State University of New York, Oneonta, New York 13820.

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#### CONTRIBUTE TO THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Association dues and contributions barely cover costs of printing, postage and occasional special

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mailings with little left over for research, special projects, and emergencies. Contributions are welcome and may be earmarked by the donor for a particular use. For instance, \$135 will buy a special printing of 'Remember the Liberty' bumper stickers; if funded, we will resell Liberty items through the newsletter and reprint whenever needed. \$300 will buy 100 'USS Liberty' lapel pins. \$100 will buy 300 'Remember the Liberty' 2-1/4" name badges. \$400 will buy 100 4" four-color embroidered replicas of the ship's patch. \$350 will buy 50 three-color T-shirt iron-on 'Remember the Liberty' designs. \$100 will pay the postage for one mailing of the newsletter. \$10 will buy a gift subscription for a member of Congress. \$600 will send a single copy to every member of Congress. If you wish to earmark a donation, just mail it to the Orlando address with your instructions.

#### WHAT HAPPENED TO VOL II, ISSUE 1?

To answer all you sharp-eyed readers: There was none. VOL II, Issue 1, was named VOL I, Issue 7 by mistake. That should have been the first issue of Volume II, and no issue was named VOL II, Issue 1. The current issue is the ninth issue published to date.

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#### A LETTER FROM LVA PRESIDENT STAN WHITE

Dear Shipmates:

As we approach one year since our first reunion, I would like to bring you up to date on our efforts on behalf of the USS Liberty Veterans Association.

**Locating Crew Members:** I really had high hopes that the publicity of the reunion would help us locate more of our shipmates, but it hasn't happened. It did help locate several right at the time of the reunion, but since then we have found only two, David Shaw and Bryce Lockwood. I am afraid I am out of clues and finding more will be difficult. Any ideas?

**Publicity and Requests for Assistance:** In our continuous search for help in getting our story told and possibly a new investigation, we have written to the following: *Newsweek*, *Time*, Senator Larry Pressler (South Dakota), Senator James Abdnor (South Dakota), The National Commander for the American Legion (requesting they take action on their resolution #508 which calls for a proper investigation of the Liberty attack), The Minister of

Justice of Israel (requesting a new investigation by Israel), The Chief Historian of the Israeli Defense Force (requesting correction of errors in his official report), Mr. William Clark (Asst. to the President for National Security Affairs), The Commander in Chief of the Israeli Navy, The Director of National Security and Foreign Affairs for the VFW (thanking the VFW for their efforts on our behalf and for flowers placed at the new Liberty gravesite), Mr. Ted Kopple of NIGHTLINE, the Chief of Naval Operations, the former Chief of Naval Operations, The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, and others.

Sadly, there has been little reaction. Most letters on this sensitive subject are ignored, but there are still some good possibilities. One thing for sure, we will not give up and I hope each of you is still making every possible effort to find our shipmates and to tell our story. John Frankowski has been working hard. He has done several radio and television interviews in New York and has been in contact with government officials in his area. Great going, John! Keep Plugging. Come on, guys, let's all work hard. It's only two years until our next reunion, and that's not very long.

#### IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION PAID UP?

Please examine your mailing label to determine subscription status. The code B2 means means your subscription is paid through the second subscription year which started September, 1982. If your label reads B0 or B1, your subscription has expired and this is a courtesy copy sent because we hope you will read the newsletter--and we also hope you will subscribe. B9 denotes a gratis subscription. Please use the enclosed coupon to update your subscription status by mailing your check for ten dollars or more to Treasurer Virgil Brownfield, USS Liberty Veterans Association, Box 8538A, Orlando, Florida 32856 before we run out of money.

♦♦♦♦♦

#### NEXT ISSUE

In 1981, 14 years after the Liberty attack, the National Security Agency produced a top secret, 71 page report on the affair. Despite some errors carried over from prior investigations, this is by far the most complete and perhaps the only fully objective official investigation ever attempted. The report has just been declassified and released. We will discuss the latest release in our next issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

The USS Liberty Newsletter is the official journal of the USS Liberty Veterans Association. Association Officers are Stan White, President (phone 605 356-2207); Don Blalock, Vice President (phone 301 776-0858); Virgil Brownfield, Secretary-Treasurer (phone 305 423-4260); Jim Ennes, Newsletter Editor and Historian (phone 206 788-3519). The mailing address of the USS Liberty Veterans Association is Post Office Box 8538A, Orlando, Florida 32856.

\*\*\*\*\*

The following letter to his daughter from our shipmate Raymond Linn was written just four days before he died. It illustrates the concern that was felt by much of the crew, and which Chief Linn expressed to his shipmates at the time.

USS Liberty  
4 June 1967

We very seldom ever saw another ship when we were working on the south African coast but here in the Med they are all over the place. A goodly number of them are Russian and some of them actually try to run into us but we have managed to avoid them so far. All they have to do is put one hole in us and this ship will go to the bottom. Most U.S. Navy ships are built so that if they get hit they can repair themselves and stay afloat but this ship was formerly a World War II freighter and wasn't built to stand up under that kind of punishment. We will probably make it back alright but just in case I have an insurance policy on myself with you as beneficiary and it is for quite a lot and Uncle Paul has the policy there in the house. I would rather you don't tell people where my ship is at as this information is supposed to be restricted. I think you will understand and thank.

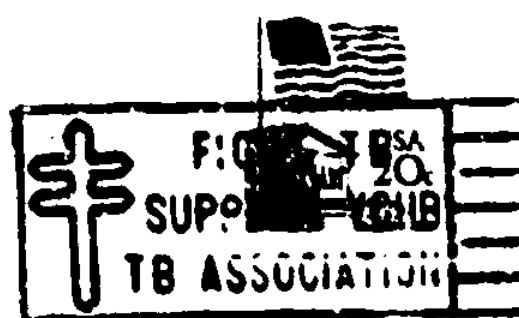
R.E. Linn GIC  
USS Liberty (AGTR-5)  
FPO New York 09501



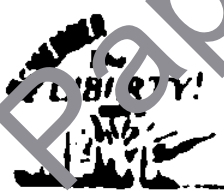
Miss Joy Linn  
164 East Main Street  
South Zanesville,  
Ohio 43701



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# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



... VOLUME 11, Issue #2 ...  
December, 1982

## **LIBERTY TOMBSTONE REPLACED**

### **Ceremony Held at Arlington Cemetery**

A small portion of the Liberty cover-up was pushed aside on October 6 when a evasive grave marker at Arlington Cemetery was replaced with one that recognizes the name of the ship where the men died.

For years Liberty survivors and interested citizens have complained to government officials that it was inappropriate for a stone marking the grave of six Liberty men to avoid the honorable name of their ship. The gravestone marking the final resting place of James Lupton, Jerry Goss, Lawrence Hayden, David Marlborough, Carl Nygren and Jack Raper originally read only, "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean." The new stone reads, "KILLED USS LIBERTY".

Complaints were ineffective until 1981 when 84-year-old Commander A. Bender Tansill took up the cause. Commander Tansill, a USMC veteran of WWI and a disabled USN veteran of WWII, visited the gravesite. His background in two military services caused him to identify closely with the men buried there. First, he held a private ceremony at the gravesite on the fourteenth anniversary of the attack, and then he began a campaign of letter writing and personal visits to government officials. He soon found support among Liberty survivors, and slowly gained the cooperation of government officials. On April 29, 1982, officials agreed to make the change.

### **Families Present**

A ceremony marking the unveiling of the new stone was attended by Mr. & Mrs. Harry Goss, Marilyn Bigelow, Susan DeVore and Scott Triplett, the parents, sisters and nephew of Jerry Goss whose remains are in the grave. Also present were Mr. and Mrs. William Allenbaugh, Sandra Allenbaugh, William B. Allenbaugh, Jr., and Patty Allenbaugh, the parents, widow and children of William B. Allenbaugh who died aboard the Liberty. Liberty survivors Joe Lentini, Rich Brooks, Dave Miller, Larry Bowen and Don Blalock were present, as was USS Liberty Veterans Association President Stan White.

Dignitaries present included Senator Larry Pressler of South Dakota; Colonel Ben Davis, Historian of Arlington National Cemetery; Brigadier General Jerome T. Hagen, USMC, representing the U.S. Marine Corps; Colonel Donald L. Wardle and Mr. Paul T. Bannai of the Memorial Affairs Office of the Veterans Administration; Lieutenant General Talbot, USAF (Ret) and Commander Homer Brett, USN (Ret) representing the Military Order of the World Wars; Brigadier General Gaynor, USA, DSC, representing the Legion of Valor; Colonel John Hinkle, author of **ARLINGTON, Monument to Heroes**; and many others.

### **The Ceremony**

Opening remarks were made by Commander Tansill

**Remember the Liberty**

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while a combined Navy and Marine Corps Color Guard stood by. The new grave marker was unveiled by Mrs. Goss, followed by an invocation by Arlington Chaplain Karl Justus. Stan White then read a statement by Liberty's Captain William McGonagle. Senator Pressler, in addressing the group, promised to investigate the Liberty matter further in the next session of Congress, an intention which was supported by many in the crowd, but which went unreported by the many newsmen who were present. Finally the ceremony was concluded with placing of wreaths, parading of the color guard, closing remarks by Commander Tansill, a benediction by Chaplain Dyke, USN, and Retreat of the Colors and conclusion of the ceremony accompanied by "taps" played by a distant tugler.

The ceremony was subsequently reported in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Times*, *The Navy Times*, in wire service stories, and in a fairly comprehensive story with photographs in *The Spotlight*.

♦♦♦♦

**LIBERTY VETERANS ASSN  
ASKS ISRAEL  
TO REINVESTIGATE**

The USS Liberty Veterans Association has officially requested the Government of Israel to reinvestigate the circumstances of the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty.

In a letter to the Israeli Minister of Justice in Jerusalem, Association President Stan White noted that the goals of the association are difficult to achieve and cooperation from our own government and television news media almost completely absent because of strong support for Israel in government and the media. "Therefore," Stan White wrote, "we are appealing to you to re-open or review the incident.... With your renewed interest and sense of justice, it may become possible for our own government and media to talk freely on the subject."

♦♦♦♦

**ISRAEL PUBLISHES  
"THE OFFICIAL VERSION"  
OF THE LIBERTY AFFAIR**

While Liberty crewmen met in Washington, D.C., last June, the Israeli government put the finishing touches on a remarkable document entitled, "The Attack on the 'Liberty' Incident."

Prepared by Israeli Lieutenant Colonel Matti Greenberg of the Combat Research Branch and

released by Colonel Uri Algom, Head of the History Department, Israeli Defence Forces, the document, dated June 1982, runs to 42 pages and about 27,000 words of microtype, plus an index and table of contents. Readers who wish to read the document can obtain copies from the Director of Naval Records and Information Management Division, Chief of Naval Operations, WASHDC 20350 under the Freedom of Information Act, and should expect to pay copy costs and postage charges of about \$6.00.

In a title page, Colonel Algom writes: "...with publication of the book, *Assault on the Liberty*, the American Congress appointed a committee, headed by Adlai Stevenson, for the purpose of investigating the affair and publishing the results of the investigation.... This article is the official version...."

It deserves careful reading, since it provides a great many specific details hitherto unavailable, but it also contains an abundance of serious errors if not outright fabrications guaranteed to raise the blood pressure of anyone who knows the truth. While the new paper adds little of substance to previous excuses, the latest excuse provides much more detail.

**The Israeli Version**

The heart of the Israeli excuse is that an Israeli torpedo boat detected the USS Liberty on radar almost an hour before the torpedo attack at 1341, from a distance of 22 miles, and erroneously calculated the ship's speed at 20 to 30 knots. This error was supposedly made simultaneously by two boats and subsequently rechecked and verified by both boats. Actually, the boats were probably closer to 30 miles from the Liberty at 1341 (judging from the distance they covered of about 75 miles in 2-1/2 hours), but even at 22 miles the boats were much too far away to have detected the Liberty at all. We believe that excuse was trumped up after the fact.

Next, the "official version" reports that Israeli forces conducted no reconnaissance whatsoever over the Liberty at any time preceding the attack. Any aircraft seen by Liberty crewmen, the paper reports, were actually high in the sky travelling to and from the front lines and probably didn't see the Liberty at all. This "official" statement ignores the fact that intercept operators both aboard the ship and stationed ashore heard the Israeli aircraft reporting that we were an American ship, that innumerable Liberty crewmen clearly recall Israeli reconnaissance aircraft circling the ship at masthead level, and that eight different reconnaissance sorties are documented in U.S. government files.

Before commencing the air attack, we are



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told, the Mirage formation flight leader, a concerned humanitarian with the comic-book name "Captain Spector," ("specter" means "ghost, phantom or apparition") "descended to a height of 3000 feet and circled the vessel twice; his number two executed one identification run" but could see no flag and determined that the *Liberty* was an Egyptian destroyer. This, of course, ignores clear recollections of crewmen who saw the aircraft commence an immediate attack without reconnaissance.

The attack itself, the "official version" tells us, consisted only of four passes by Mirage jets which carried no rockets, only cannon, and two passes by ~~Mystere~~ jets which carried only two napalm canisters between them and which accomplished only one hit. The "official version" conveniently ignores photographs which show hundreds of rocket holes and many areas scorched by napalm.

The "official version" attempts to convince the unwary that the *Liberty* flew no flag by reproducing two gun camera photographs taken from the Mirage jets. Although there must have been thousands of such photographs, the editors chose to reproduce only two photographs, both taken from dead ahead--the one angle from which the flag, which flew directly behind the mast, might be obscured from view.

The torpedo boats, we are told, also exercised great care and humanitarian spirit, approaching close to the ship to identify it carefully before commencing the attack. While doing so, we are told, they requested that the *Liberty* identify itself, but were brusquely told to "identify yourself first." This, of course, conveniently ignores several statements in official U.S. records and elsewhere by *Liberty* bridge personnel, including her valiant commanding officer, that no such request for identification was either received or sent.

Only after *Liberty* refused to identify herself and then brashly opened fire on the torpedo boats, we are told, did the boats return fire. Two minutes later, we are told, all firing stopped. If the life rafts were fired upon, the "official version" insists, this was incidental to other firing and was not intended.

#### A Letter to Israel

The "official version" appears to be an official Israeli attempt to provide enough detail to squelch any official American government inquiry which might uncover the many flaws in the story Israel has told since 1967 about this affair. Unfortunately, the writer appears to have been tasked with discrediting *Assault on the Liberty* rather than with seriously probing the facts and establishing the truth.

We have responded with a letter from the Association to the Israeli History Department highlighting several of the most serious errors and suggesting where in U.S. government files the truth can be found. Our letter, with a copy to the Chief of Naval Operations, asks the History Department to reinvestigate.

We have also filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the Navy asking to whom the "official version" was routed, and what official action, if any, resulted from the "official version." We have also asked for copies of the gun camera photographs of sufficient clarity that they can be reproduced.

#### RENEWED LEGAL ACTION!

Two *Liberty* survivors have joined forces in an effort to reopen a damage claim for personal injuries received in the attack on the USS *Liberty*. Although both men insist so far on anonymity, both feel that their original injuries were inadequately compensated. One man received compensation of \$1,000 for injuries later rated 40% disabling, while the other man received nothing for a disability later rated at 100%. An attorney has been engaged to determine what action, if any, is possible at this late date. Any others who feel they have grounds to join this action should contact any of your Association officers who will put you in touch with the men concerned. We will keep you informed.

#### LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

In the wake of the *Liberty* reunion, your editor, Jim Ennes, has been invited to several radio and television interviews, campus lecture dates, and community center meetings. In July he visited Sacramento, Richmond, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Sacramento, California. In September he visited Ann Arbor, East Lansing and Detroit, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois; Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota.

#### Trouble

In most cities he did at least a full hour on each of the major radio talkshows, with questions coming by telephone from the public. Most cities included newspaper interview, but relatively little television. Some cities, such as San Diego, were almost totally blind to the *Liberty* story. Our pro-Israeli listeners would object to any discussion

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of this subject,' San Diego station managers admitted as their reason for rejecting the requested interview. Few media managers are quite so candid.

East Lansing provided the first totally hostile interview we have experienced. Irene Doyle of WKAR attempted to disarm us with sweetness and praise for the book until the moment we went on the air. Then her eyes glazed over with open hostility as she asked, 'Aren't you trying to cash in on anti-Israeli sentiment?' and followed up with a rapid string of such hostile questions as, 'That sounds pretty crazy,' 'This is pretty hard to believe,' 'You apparently have an anti-Israeli stance,' 'Your conclusions appear to differ with the official reports,' and similar remarks, all sarcastically made.

Dick Pomerantz on station KSTP in Minneapolis provided our second experience with a hostile interview. Pomerantz, after rescheduling the interview twice and then cutting it to seven minutes from the originally scheduled hour, treated Ennes to a string of hostile questions and then cut short each attempt to respond.

Chicago was almost a total loss. Pro-Israeli influence in Chicago is so pervasive that no media coverage of any kind was available, and the one important radio interview that justified the trip was abruptly cancelled. Posters advertising a public address were torn down, and students carrying posters were threatened by persons who promised to break up any address by James Ennes. The address, however, was guarded by Chicago Police and came off uneventfully.

#### Successes

Most visits were successful, however. In the Midwest alone Ennes gave major talks at six universities, held press conferences in each city except Chicago and Detroit, was interviewed on about 25 radio stations including ten stations in Wisconsin, and gave several private interviews which resulted in major stories in important newspapers. He gave a well-attended talk at the University of Minnesota which was also attended by shipmate Gene Kirk.

But the highlight of the Midwest trip was a thirty-minute segment on the PBS LATENIGHT television show with Dennis Wholley which is broadcast nationally from Detroit and was seen in such key areas as San Francisco, Detroit, Boston, Chicago, Houston, New York, Portland, and more than 80 other cities. This is the first national television coverage of this story, and featured an interview of Jim Ennes followed by several photographs from the book, a telephone interview with Bob Schnell in Oregon, and several live telephone calls from viewers in Texas, New York,

California and elsewhere.

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#### JACK RAPER INQUIRY

In recent issues we have reported that our deceased shipmate, Sergeant Jack L. Raper, USMC, may have died while rescuing men from the flooded shipboard compartment after the torpedo explosion. One man insists that he saw Sergeant Raper enter the compartment more than once to rescue other men, and a check of official autopsy records brought a report that Sergeant Raper was the only man to have died of drowning. If the reports are true, Sergeant Raper should be eligible for a posthumous award for heroism.

On the other hand, Jack Raper's body is buried in the mass grave at Arlington because it was too badly mutilated to be properly identified. This fact cannot be reconciled with the official report of drowning.

Recently we have been in touch with former Staff Sergeant Bryce Lockwood who did reenter the compartment to rescue his shipmates and who received a Silver Star for heroism. Bryce Lockwood feels certain he would have been aware of any such activity by another Marine. Apparently the Marine thought to have been Jack Raper was actually Bryce Lockwood.

If anyone has any contrary information, please step forward. Otherwise we will consider the matter closed.

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#### WHERE IS THE BOOK?

Although **Assault on the Liberty** is properly listed in most book catalogs and can be ordered from any book store, we constantly receive mail from would-be buyers who find the author but cannot find a copy of the book.

While in Minneapolis we called personally on Kay Sexton, Vice President for Marketing of B. Dalton, the national bookseller, to ask why this book, which is in a fourth printing and still in demand, cannot be bought from B. Dalton. With over 300,000 books in stock representing nearly every trade book currently in print, why, we asked, was this popular book dropped from the B. Dalton book list?

Ms. Sexton told us that the book is not available because orders for it do not come from B. Dalton stores. She acknowledged, however, that B. Dalton stores cannot order the book because it is not on the B. Dalton microfiche, and that therefore it is impossible for orders to come in even if

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customers ask for it, as we know they do. And, we have discovered, if Dalton managers agree to order the book despite the fact that it is not on the microfiche, they order it directly from the publisher so Dalton cannot possibly become aware of the demand for the book. In other words, this is a Catch-22 situation which started with a premature deletion and could be corrected with a one-line addition to the microfiche, which Dalton refuses to do. Ms. Sexton did agree, however, to stock the book in Dalton stores in any cities that Ennes might visit in the future.

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**ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

Readers of the Newsletter frequently ask about membership in the USS Liberty Veterans Association. While full membership is limited to men who served aboard the ship or to their families, associate membership is available to any fully paid newsletter subscriber for an additional contribution of only five dollars. Associate members receive a special membership card.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦  
**THE SHIP'S BELL**  
Alive and well  
in Washington State

Long ago we found Liberty's wheel, compass binnacle, portions of the bridge railing and some other memorabilia in the Navy Cryptologic Museum in Washington, D.C. where they are part of a USS Liberty Memorial. Since then we have frequently been asked what ever happened to the ship's bell.

Now Liberty's bell has been found!

A former Navy pilot from the USS Saratoga called recently to say he had found the bell residing, of all places, at Liberty High School in Issaquah, Washington, a few miles east of Seattle. We subsequently met LHS principal Bob White, who assures us that the bell is genuine.

After the school was named, Mr. White reports, school officials asked the government for any appropriate artifacts with which to decorate the new building. Soon the bell arrived, and was permanently installed in a large glass case where it can be seen from inside or outside the building.

The school was named after liberty, the freedom; until the bell arrived, no one in Issaquah was aware that there had been a ship by that name. Now they are very much aware of the ship. The school library displays a signed copy of *Assault on the Liberty*, and the school also owns an embroidered USS Liberty patch and a USS Liberty lapel pin.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦  
**THE COURT OF INQUIRY REPORT**  
Was Signed by All Members  
of the Court

In a recent Newsletter issue we reported that official copies of the Navy Court of Inquiry Report distributed by the Navy Judge Advocate General lack the signature of one member, Navy Captain Bernard J. Lauff. Although two other members and counsel signed the document, Captain Lauff's name is typed but the signature line is blank.

We wrote to Captain Lauff to inquire whether failure to sign was an oversight or an act of protest, and to ask whether he had filed any official objection to the findings. We received no reply.

Then we filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the Navy to ask the same questions. Recently, the Navy Judge Advocate General responded to our request with a copy of the signature page which does bear Captain Lauff's signature. Captain Lauff, we are told, signed other official copies but through apparent oversight failed to sign the copy now held by the Navy Judge Advocate General.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦  
**NEW LIBERTY DOCUMENTS**  
RELEASED UNDER FOIA

Recently we filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the Navy seeking information or documents concerning any official review of the Navy Court of Inquiry, seeking Ennes's long-missing sworn statement for the Court of Inquiry, and asking how the Navy reconciled certain of the Court's official findings with the fact that those findings are unsupported by and even sharply contrary to the evidence that was presented to the court.

In reply, we received about 200 pages of previously unreleased Top Secret documents pertaining to the Liberty inquiry. They make fascinating reading and raise a host of new questions.

The documents consist primarily of forwarding endorsements to the official report of the Navy Court of Inquiry by senior Navy commanders, such as the Chief of Naval Personnel, Commander of the Navy Communications Command, and the Judge Advocate General. These, in effect, are the comments of senior Navy commanders which were appended to the Court of Inquiry report before it was shown to the Chief of Naval Operations.

JAG's endorsement alone requires 23 top secret pages. Most of JAG's endorsement consists of a summary of the 700 page report of the Court.



## 6

LATE BULLETIN - LATE BULLETIN - LATE BULLETIN - LATE BULLETIN - LATE BULLETIN

#### VFW CALLS ON REAGAN TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF THE USS LIBERTY

A VFW News Release dated 4 November 1982 reads as follows:

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- James R. "Bob" Currie, National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, today called upon the Reagan Administration to "honor the enduring memory of all those Americans who served on the 'USS Liberty' and were subjected to a murderous Israeli air and torpedo boat attack on June 8, 1967.

"There is finally," Mr. Currie continued, "a small monument to six Americans killed on the 'USS Liberty' and buried at Arlington National Cemetery in heretofore unmarked graves. (The other 28 Americans killed during the attack are buried elsewhere.) These 34 dead, the 171 wounded, and the 86 unscathed survivors met their fates in the service of the government of the people of the United States. For 15 shameful years, our government, presumably for domestic political reasons, has looked the other way. Well, the VFW will not 'look the other way.'

"We will lay our VFW wreath at the 'Liberty' monument at an appropriate time on November 11, 1982 -- Veterans Day.

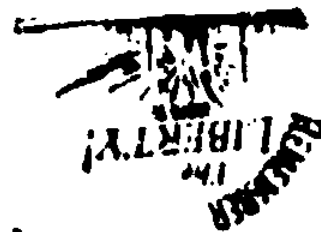
"I further call upon this Administration on November 11th, to so formally recognize the men who served on the 'Liberty.'

"Surely, an appropriate Administration official can render long overdue honors. The 'Liberty' monument is in Section 34, Arlington National Cemetery, just off Pershing Drive."

James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers



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U.S. LIBERTY  
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# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



VOLUME I, ISSUE #7

AUGUST, 1982

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The Official Organ of the USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION

**Officers:**

President: Stan White  
Vice President: Don Bialock  
Secretary/Treasurer: Virgil Brownfield  
Historian/Editor: Jim Ennes

**APOLOGIES**

The Staff of the USS Liberty Newsletter would like to apologize for the delay in the printing of this Post Reunion issue. Originally planned for a Washington, D.C. printing, with reunion pictures, technical difficulties prevented this from happening, so printing of this issue was delayed and then moved back to South Dakota. Once again we are sorry for the delay.

This will be the final issue on this subscription. USS Liberty Veterans Association members will continue to receive future issues through their membership dues to Virgil Brownfield. Non-members may obtain new subscriptions or renew old subscriptions by sending \$10.00 to USS Liberty Veterans Association, P.O. Box 8538A, Orlando, FL 32856.

Special Post-Reunion Issue

LIBERTY REUNION DRAWS ALMOST 100 SURVIVORS TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

"This trip cost me a thousand dollars," said Gene Kirk, now living in Albertville, Minnesota, "But I'd do it again if it cost five thousand." That sentiment was echoed throughout the group as survivors gathered at the Hotel Washington to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of their narrow escape from the Israeli attack upon the USS Liberty, and to honor their shipmates who did not survive.

Early arrivals started to trickle in on Thursday, and a minor traffic jam developed near the elevators as old friends greeted one another and swapped sea stories, even while porters waited nearby with luggage.

Joe Meadors came in from Saudi Arabia. Tom Moulton came down from Maine with his wife and children. "What about Mike Schaley," Joe asked, just as Mike stepped out of an elevator to another round of handshakes, backslaps and sea stories. Ron Grantski drove all the way from California. Carl Lamkin first heard about the reunion when he heard a radio interview with Don Blalock; he dropped everything and drove up from Florida. Bob Casale and Tom Blaney showed up wearing T-shirts from Bob's "Liberty Plumbing Supply Company, House of a Million Parts," named, of course, after the ship.

"Where is Chief Brooks?" Mike asked, and quickly added, "Do you remember when someone stole the CPO device off his hat? He wore the hat all day with no device? For weeks he raised hell and threatened everybody and held surprise locker inspections and he never found it?"

When the laughter died down Mike opened his jacket to display a bright, shiny belt buckle made from the long missing CPO cap device. "I hid it in the air conditioning vent," he said, and another round of laughter rocked the otherwise staid lobby of the Hotel Washington.

"Where is Brooks?" someone asked again. Soon Don Brooks arrived, admired Mike's unusual belt buckle, and laughed along with the rest. It was a time for fond memories and good cheer. From watching them, no one would guess that this group had survived perhaps the most serious, most one-sided, and most mis-reported peacetime naval "incident" of this century.

Ted Koppel's Nightline

Thursday afternoon a call came from a producer for Ted Koppel's nationally broadcast late-night television news program, ABC NIGHTLINE. Nightline had heard about the reunion and wanted to do a story. Could four of us come to the ABC studio at 7:00 P.M.? So that evening Jim Ennes, Don Blalock, Joe Meadors and Mike Schaley spent three hours under television lights answering questions about

the attack, the heroism, and the cover-up, while ABC collected eleven reels of tape. But that wasn't enough. To round it out the Nightline crew spent the next three days attending reunion activities, interviewing other men at the hotel, tracking down archive films of the ship's battered arrival in Malta, and editing it all into a logical story sequence. It was to be a thirty minute segment which would occupy the entire Nightline broadcast on June 1. The schedule was considered firm, but it was not to be.

#### Reunion Activities

Crewmen started arriving in droves about noon, Friday, and the first thing they saw was a Liberty table in the hotel lobby where Stan White, Laura White, Joe Meadors and others distributed specially made "REMEMBER THE LIBERTY" name badges and tiny "USS LIBERTY" lapel pins in the design of the original ship's emblem, a spread eagle on the Liberty Bell. Soon Liberty crewmen and their families were distinguished, not only by their camaraderie, but by the buttons and emblems they wore.

The roof garden of the Hotel Washington presents one of the most spectacular views in Washington, and it was here that the reunion officially opened Friday evening with a cocktail party over looking Pennsylvania Avenue and the White House. This was not the same raucous group that had terrorized Luanda, Abidjan, Cape Town, and the naval station at Rota, Spain, during the 1960's; this was a remarkably sober and settled group bound together as only a great battle or a great tragedy can bind people together. There was an uncommon closeness here that even outsiders noticed. These people were obviously having a good time, and they were genuinely pleased to get together again.

Saturday morning brought the Liberty group to Arlington National Cemetery where they first gathered at gravesite 1817, Section 34, the single resting place for the remains of Jerry Goss, Larry Hayden, Jim Lupton, David Marlborough, Carl Nygren and Jack Raper. While the Navy Chaplain read a eulogy, rain started to fall. No one moved. And although the rains grew steadily worse, every man slogged through the muck and the mud until all fourteen Liberty men buried at Arlington had been properly honored with fresh flowers.

#### A Visit to the USS Liberty Memorial

At noon, Saturday, the group arrived at the headquarters of the Naval Security Group Command where, by special arrangement, they were granted a tour of the U.S. Navy Cryptologic Museum which contains the USS Liberty Memorial. This was an unusual privilege, as the museum is not open to the public, and the visitors found it of very special interest. The museum contains the original ship's wheel and binnacle, a section of railing from the bridge, several pieces of shrapnel including a chunk from the torpedo itself and an engraved brass plate for each man lost in the attack. In addition, the museum contains a large collection of rare photographs depicting Liberty's battle damage.



### The Banquet

The main event of the weekend was the Saturday evening banquet in the hotel. This was attended by about 150 people, including selected members of the Washington press corps. Guests included former chief of naval operations Admiral Arleigh Burke and Mrs. Burke; Brigadier General Jerome T. Hagen, USMC, Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Marine Corps representing the Commandant of the Marine Corps; retired Commander X. Bender Tansill, USN, who has distinguished himself as a valued friend of the Liberty; noted artist Pierre Mion, who painted the cover illustration for Assault on the Liberty; syndicated columnist Georgie Anne Geyer; distinguished journalist Grace Halsell; and others.

Following dinner a traditional round of toasts was given to national and naval leaders, to the Commanding Officer of the USS Liberty, to the Engineer Officer, the Damage Control Officer, the Medical Officer, the Damage Control Team, and finally to the crew of the USS Liberty. Due to a logistics problem, most of the toasts were made with water, a failing for which our fallen comrades probably turned over in their graves, but the toasts were nevertheless sincere and deeply felt. Next, a tape recorded message from Captain McGonagle was played for the group.

### SPEAKERS

#### Admiral Moorer

The keynote speaker of the evening was former Chief of Naval Operations and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USN (retired). Admiral Moorer opened his remarks by noting that he is "no longer trying to get promoted, not trying to get appointed, and not trying to get elected. So I find myself in the delightful position of once again having inherited the rights guaranteed by the first amendment." Then he brought the entire room cheering to its feet when he announced: "I have never been willing to accept the Israeli explanation that (the Liberty attack) was a case of mistaken identity." He then went on to give several reasons why he cannot accept the Israeli excuse and concluded by telling the crew that "you survived...because you had heart. ...I am humble in your presence. The nation owes every one of you a great debt of gratitude."

#### Philip Geyelin

The next speaker was distinguished political analyst, syndicated columnist, widely travelled international journalist and Pulitzer prize winning reporter, Philip Geyelin. Mr. Geyelin served for 20 years with the Wall Street Journal, was chief of the Washington Post editorial page for twelve years, and is currently editor in residence for the Johns Hopkins School for International Studies in Washington.

Mr. Geyelin compared the Liberty's performance with that of troops in the battle for Iwo Jima, but noted that Liberty affair included "the common cloud of conspiracy, deception and even denigration that has denied those who were lost and even those who survived the full measure of recognition they so richly earned."

He went on to ask "...why, fifteen years after the fact, we do not have and cannot get...a credible explanation of how this seemingly senseless engagement came about. ... why we cannot get from our own United States government an admission that...Israel's explanation is simply not believable."

He concluded: "I congratulate you and your effort this weekend to keep alive and strong memory of the USS Liberty, and to widen as best you can the public knowledge of the event that brings you her tonight. In so doing you not only honor a gallant crew...you also serve a cause without end, the preservation of the most precious commodity in an open society, the faith of a free people in their government."

#### Discussion

A question and answer period following the speeches brought a lively discussion of the Liberty attack and cover-up.

Among the questions, a survivor asked why Captain McGonagle's Medal of Honor was presented privately and almost in secret rather than in the White House by the President as is customary. Dave Lewis commented that he was invited to the ceremony by Captain McGonagle by telephone just two hours before the ceremony was to be held, while several men remarked that not only were they not invited, they were never told that the medal was awarded at all. Chuck Rowley commented that, as a VFW member, he was embarrassed not to have been aware of the award ceremony.

Admiral Moorer remarked that Captain McGonagle's medal was the only one in his experience issued outside of the White House and added, "I didn't like it. We tried to change it. We were unable to do it. And I'm surprised that they didn't present it underneath the Fourteenth Street Bridge."

Mr. Shafer asked, "What can we do to stir it up? What steps can we take individually to make something come of this so that we can leave here Monday and start fighting?"

Admiral Moorer suggested that each Liberty survivor make sure his local newspaper and his congressman knows the Liberty story and the feelings of the crew. "It doesn't do any good today to write a Congressman," he said. "If ever there was a complete waste of time, that's it. ...eyeball him. Grab him by the lapels and talk to him. ...If you want to have a government of you by you and for you, you had better talk to these Congressmen yourselves. That's my number on advice."

The officers of the USS Liberty Veterans Association would like to echo Admiral Moorer's statement - word for word. Get interviews with your local papers, talk to your Congressmen, keep the Liberty in the public eye until the goals of our organization have been achieved. LETS GO, LIBERTY CREWMEN!

CREW'S MEETING SUNDAY MORNING: Where do we go from here?

Sunday morning, early rising Liberty crewmen assembled for a two hour business meeting. A few revelers slept through the meeting, while some others attended to children or had to make early flights home, but most let their wishes be known through others and every important decision was unanimous.

Should there be a permanent USS Liberty organization? The affirmative vote was unanimous. The name "USS Liberty Veterans Association" was chosen, and officers were elected for a three year period and given authority to make ordinary business decisions in executive session. Membership is limited to men who served aboard the USS Liberty before, during or after the attack. Dues were established at \$15.00 per year plus a first year voluntary initiation fee of \$35.00 (first year total \$50.00).

The USS Liberty Newsletter will be the official organ of the association, and will be published quarterly instead of six times annually as in the past. Goals of the association include putting the true story of the USS Liberty into the public consciousness; working to protect the erroneous version of the Liberty attack heretofore presented by the Navy and the American government; encouraging the Navy to reexamine the Navy Court of Inquiry Report in order to recognize that the major conclusions are unsupported by and contrary to the evidence; encouraging the American Legion to follow through on their resolution #508 of August, 1967, which calls upon the United States "to conduct a thorough investigation of this incident"; and to work toward gaining proper public recognition of the heroism of our lost shipmates and our commanding officer.

Toward those ends, the group resolved to work individually and together to call on their local newspapers and upon their Congressmen, to write letters to editors, and to do other things to tell our story publicly and to correct the public record.

The group voted unanimously to place a wreath on the USS Liberty mass grave at Arlington National Cemetery every Memorial Day (May 30) in symbolic tribute to all thirty-four men who died in the attack on our ship. Next-of-kin of those 34 men are automatically paid-up lifetime members of the association.

Finally, the group resolved to hold the next reunion in three years, on June 7, 8 and 9, 1985, at a place to be decided.



### Sunday Brunch

Commander Lloyd M. Bucher, USN (retired), was speaker at the brunch meeting. Commander Bucher had made some remarks from the floor the previous evening during the after-banquet discussion period, and had received a standing ovation from the assembled group. Following lunch he discussed the capture of his ship, USS Pueblo, by North Korean forces, the circumstances that led to the attack, and the many failings and mistakes that were common to both affairs. Commander Bucher made the point that, had the truth about the circumstances of the Liberty affair been known to appropriate leaders and decision makers, the Pueblo capture probably could have been avoided. The lesson from the Liberty story, then, is that by evading the truth about history, we tend to repeat it.

### Anti Israeli Propaganda?

A few days before the reunion, a powerful pro-Israeli public affairs organization in Washington, the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee, issued a bulletin to Israeli supporters in the United States warning of "anti-Israel propagandists" currently active. Highlighted with a double asterisk was a warning for Israeli supporters to be particularly alert to the USS Liberty reunion, which was supposedly organized by Jim Ennes (not so, the reunion was the brainchild of Stan White and was mostly organized by Stan White and Don Blalock), who is supposedly supported by several Arab organizations (also not so). Subsequently several men who had planned to attend, failed to do so. Three men who had planned to attend phoned instead to say that their employers had suggested that they stay away from the reunion and, in the interest of job security, they decided to follow that advice.

The publishers of that warning might be surprised to know that Israel was never even mentioned in the private meetings of the crew. The concern was not with Israel, but with the actions of our own government. The main purpose of the reunion was social, and to provide an opportunity for men to discuss a subject both among themselves and with the press, which they have been forbidden to discuss for the past fifteen years. The most common viewpoint we heard expressed during the reunion was that most men have never previously felt free to discuss their experiences during the attack, and that doing so, and hearing others do so, lifted a heavy burden. One after another, we heard men say that having done so was cathartic, that they felt refreshed and relieved for the first time in years.

### Money, Money, Money

Several lessons were learned about reunion planning. These will be applied in 1985, but it is too late to benefit from them in 1982. One lesson is to collect in advance for all group functions, plus a cushion, and to issue tickets. We collected \$15.00 for the banquet, which actually cost \$17.00, and a number of people failed to pay at all. This was to have been made up by

charging \$10.00 for brunch, for which the hotel charged only \$8.00. It was supposed that everyone from the Liberty who attended the banquet would also attend the brunch, but this was not the case. Consequently, through that and other fiascos, we went in the hole \$800.00. We hope to cover that through newsletter subscriptions, membership dues and contributions, but the unexpected expense will drain resources that should be devoted to the newsletter and to our new public affairs program, and it may strap us considerably

Contributions are eagerly sought to help cover that deficit. Anyone who can spare a dollar or several dollars, kindly send it the THE USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION, P.O. Box 8538A, Orlando, FL 32856. It's not tax deductible, yet. We're working on that. But it is a good cause.

#### Media Attention

Although a few news reporters attended some reunion functions as guests of individual Liberty crewmen, most reporters were barred from most functions in recognition of the private nature of the affair. The reunion banquet, however, was filmed for television. Several television networks interviewed crewmembers in the hotel lobby and in private sessions within the hotel. The primary press contacts were channeled away from the reunion functions, primarily to press conferences conducted by Don Blalock within the hotel on 4 and 7 June, before and after the conference. These were attended by representatives of every important newspaper and wire service in the area.

The reunion received very wide media coverage, including the following:

- 1 June - A letter by Ron Grantski in the Overseas Press Club Bulletin asking why American journalists seem to turn a deaf ear to the Liberty story.
- 3 June - A very widely syndicated column by James Jackson Kilpatrick.
- 4 June - A United Press story by William J. Small.
- 4 June - A UPI audio interview with Don Blalock broadcast over several hundred radio stations.
- 4 June - A major story in the Christian Science Monitor.
- 5 June - A story by Phil Gailey & Warren Weaver in the New York Times.
- 7 June - An editorial in the Portland (Oregon) Oregonian calling for public recognition of the USS Liberty.
- 7 June - A feature story by Paul Hendrickson in the Washington Post.
- 7 June - An important story by David Felton in the Washington Times.
- 7 June - An important story in NEWSDAY (Long Island, New York).
- 8 June - An interview with Jim Ennes broadcast nationally on the National Public Radio news show, All Things Considered (seven million listeners).
- 8 June - Interviews and Arlington Cemetery coverage broadcast over the KING Television Network with stations in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

- 8 June - A one hour interview with Enne and Blalock on WRC (NBC) radio in Washington, D.C.
- 10 June - A nationally syndicated column by Georgie Anne Geyer.
- 10 June - A nationally syndicated column by Philip Geyelin.
- 22 June - A story by Cecelia Blalock in the Christain Science Monitor.
- 23 June - Radio interviews in Altmore, Alabama; Austin, Texas; and Portland, Oregon.
- 24 June - A syndicated column in eight Florida newspapers by Rear Admiral Max Morris, USN (retired), reporting his frustration on the bridge of the USS Saratoga during the attack when he heard Liberty calling for help, but saw Saratoga's aircraft recalled prematurely by the White House.
- 24 June - A front page interview with Gene Kirk in the Flk River, Minnesota, Star News.
- 30 June - A radio interview with Jim Ennes on KGO (ABC) in San Francisco.
- 30 June - A front page story by Bryce Nelson in the Los Angeles Times.
  - Several AP and UPI wire service stories.
  - A radio interview with Ennes, Blalock & Brownfield in Orlando, Florida.
- 8 July - A column by Shelby Scates in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

#### Israeli Ambassador and Israeli Press were invited to ask questions

Invitations were sent to the Israeli Ambassador and to leading Israeli reporters to attend the reunion press conferences and to ask their toughest questions. Although a leading Israeli reporter phoned Blalock and indicated that he would be present, none came. Remarkably, not a single hostile question was asked by any reporter during the weekend, and certainly no difficult ones.

When Blalock and Ennes did a one hour radio interview on WRC in Washington, D.C., with Joel Spivak, not a single hostile call came in on the air. This is remarkable, because the last time we were interviewed by Joel Spivak the bulk of his callers were angry pro-Israeli people who lost their cool and screamed epithets into the telephone and over the air. This time, not a single caller spoke in favor of Israel or against our right to discuss the Liberty matter publicly. We found the same response on other shows we have done since. Such reaction does not whither spontaneously. We suspect that Israeli spokesmen have been instructed to ignore us in the hope that we will be ignored in the absence of controversy.

#### What happened to the Nightline Story?

The story scheduled for Ted Koppel's NIGHTLINE was to have run Monday evening, June 7. Unfortunately, Israel invaded Lebanon only hours before that story was to run. The invasion was considered a bigger news story, and so the



Liberty story was bumped. Liberty, in other words, was shot down by Israel again.

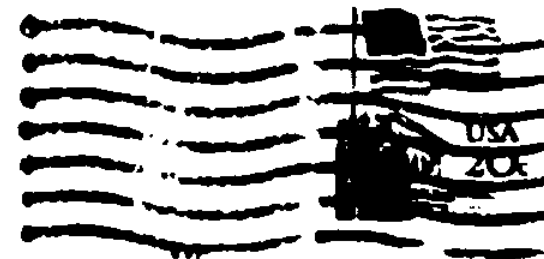
The Gravestone: "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean"

As readers of this newsletter know, Liberty survivors for years have chafed at the evasive wording, "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean," engraved on the stone marking the final resting place of six Liberty crewmen at Arlington National Cemetery. The wording suggests that the men were eaten by sharks or died in a warehouse fire rather than honorably in combat aboard the USS Liberty. We have griped about this, written letters to congressmen, talked to cemetery and veterans administration officials and veterans association leaders to no avail, until recently.

Commander Xavier Bender Tansill, USN (retired), was an enlisted Marine in WWI and served as a naval officer in WWII. More than a year ago he was drawn to that grave, since that grave represents both his Marine Corps and his Navy background. He held a Memorial Day ceremony at the gravesite, and he went on to complain personally to Washington officials about the evasive and inappropriate inscription.

A few weeks ago we received a letter from Donald L. Wardle, Director of Monument Service for the Veterans Administration, reporting that steps are being taken to replace the present stone with one that reads: "KILLED - USS LIBERTY". Recently we received word that the new stone will be in place by September 14, 1982, and that it will be installed with appropriate ceremony. We consider this a major victory in the battle to bring the USS Liberty into the open. We salute Commander Tansill for his perseverance on our behalf. Anyone interested in attending the ceremony or in the details of the ceremony can contact Don Blalock for the latest information. We encourage you to attend and to invite your Congressmen.

U.S.S. LIBERTY  
STAN WHITE  
RT. 1 BOX 45A  
BURBANK, S.D. 57017



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# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**



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## **REUNION PLANNING IS STORMING RIGHT AHEAD**

All is ready for the big June reunion

Liberty crewmen from the Washington, D.C., area have been making the final arrangements for the reunion. Buses have been reserved, halls have been hired, menus have been discussed, speakers have been arranged, and several more Liberty crewmen have been located. We now expect about 200 former Liberty crewmen and family members for a gala affair that will start Friday afternoon and evening, June 4, 1982, with a reunion gathering and cocktail party, and will wind up at noon Sunday with a festive Sunday brunch. We have three distinguished guest speakers that everyone will enjoy meeting. The reunion promises to be an affair that no one will want to miss.

**Reservations:** Those who have not yet made reservations for the reunion may call The Hotel Washington at 202 638-5900 or toll free at 800 424-9540. Be sure to specify that you are with the USS LIBERTY REUNION, as this will entitle you to a discount rate of \$50 for a single or \$60 for two persons. Also, send \$20 to Don Blalock, 9206 Vollmerhausen Road, Jessup, MD 20794 to reserve your place on the bus and for the banquet. Don also can tell you about less expensive arrangements that can be made at Fort Meade, or by parking your trailer or camper near Don's home at Jessup.

THE BIG PLAN:

Friday afternoon: A trusted coterie of your shipmates will be stationed in some central spot in the hotel, probably in or near the lobby, to greet weary travelers, to guide them toward other shipmates, and generally to help them settle in.

Friday evening: A cocktail party, beer fest, reunion get-together will be held in the hotel to help relax from the trip and to renew old friendships. This will be a relaxed, low-key affair for crewmembers and their families.

Saturday morning and early afternoon: We have reserved four 53-passenger buses for a trip to the Arlington National Cemetery where fourteen of our shipmates are buried, including six in a single grave. We expect to be accompanied by the Navy Chaplain from the Naval Chapel in Washington, D.C., who will lead a brief memorial ceremony. Next we will be taken by bus to the Naval Security Group Headquarters compound at the Naval Security Station near Ward Circle (about 20 minutes from Arlington) where special arrangements have been made for our group to visit the USS LIBERTY MEMORIAL in the Admiral Wenger Cryptologic Museum, also known as the U.S. Navy Cryptologic Museum. Following the museum visit, lunch and beer will be provided on the Naval Security Station grounds. This visit will probably afford an opportunity to meet several of the leading officers of the Naval Security Group Command.

Saturday evening: The highlight of the reunion will be the Grand Reunion Banquet. We are privileged to have two exceptional Americans as reunion guests and banquet speakers. Philip L. Gavelin is a widely read syndicated columnist, a member of the Washington Post Writers' Group, and Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute Editor in Residence. Thomas H. Moorer, Admiral, U.S. Navy (retired), served in his first U.S. Navy ship in 1933, served in numerous key commands over the next 41 years, including Chief of Naval Operations from July 1967 to 1970, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1970 to 1974. Although this will be a private banquet, Liberty crewmembers may invite special friends; the public, however, will not be admitted.

Sunday morning early: A business meeting for crewmembers will be held to decide on the future, if any, of the yet-to-be-officially-named "USS LIBERTY ORGANIZATION." Should we organize as a permanent entity, continue to publish a newsletter, collect dues and hold periodic reunions? Should we attempt to learn more about why we were attacked and why our government is so complacent about it all? What should be our goals? Who should be our officers? Or should we hang it all up and forget it? These questions will be asked and with any luck will be resolved by vote.

Sunday morning brunch: A late morning brunch in the hotel will feature guest speaker, Commander Lloyd M. "Pete" Bucher, USN (retired), former commanding officer of the USS Pueblo which was captured by the North Koreans just seven months after the attack on the USS Liberty. Startling similarities exist between the two attacks, as Commander Bucher will no doubt point out. Pete Bucher is a fascinating and engaging personality that no one will want to miss. His being last on the program will assure that all will want to stay on until the closing bell.



Before and after the festivities: A great many of the people planning to attend have expressed an interest in visiting with their congressmen or even in participating in a news conference while in Washington. Others want nothing to do with such activities. All agree that activities involving newsmen and media exposure should not interfere with or intrude on the primary purpose of our gathering, which is purely social. Therefore, any press interviews or press conferences will be held away from the main reunion gathering, either in a separate room in the hotel or away from the hotel.

A number of newsmen, television reporters, columnists and members of Congress have expressed interest in meeting Liberty crewmen. For the most part, such meetings will be arranged in the days before and after the reunion so as not to interfere with the reunion or to offend those who want their privacy maintained.

Visitors: Many members of the public who are interested in the Liberty situation have asked to attend reunion functions in order to meet and hear first-hand the stories of the survivors. Reunion planners have been advising such individuals that, while their interest is appreciated, the reunion is a private affair which is open only to crewmembers, their families including families of the men who did not survive, and invited guests of crewmembers. Strangers will not be admitted to Liberty reunion functions unless specifically invited by a crewmember.

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#### DID YOU SEE SERGEANT RAPEP AFTER THE TORPEDO EXPLODED?

On June 8, 1967, after the torpedo exploded and men escaped from the flooded Research Department spaces, Staff Sergeant Bryce Lockwood returned to the flooded compartment to search for and to rescue trapped men. Sergeant Lockwood saved at least a few lives and was eventually rewarded for his heroism with a medal and a citation which reads: "...despite severe burns, the rapid rise of water, heavy smoke and complete darkness, [Sergeant Lockwood] was instrumental in the rescue of personnel from the flooded compartments, thus averting even further loss of life." We have discussed his heroic acts at length with Sergeant Lockwood and others, and there is no doubt that he did the things he was cited for.

However, some of our shipmates insist that they also saw Sergeant Jack Raper enter the flooded compartment at least three times, but that the third time he did not return. The claim is that Sergeant Raper died attempting to rescue his shipmates. On the other hand, the Court of Inquiry includes a report that all deaths in that compartment resulted from blast injuries and that no one died from drowning. (But this, dear readers, is the same document that tells us we were only under attack for five minutes and, in a just released appendix, reports matter-of-factly that everyone on board will return promptly to full duty with no significant disability and that Sal Payan will recover completely in 28 days.)

There is, in other words, serious question about whether Sergeant Raper actually died rescuing his shipmates, or was ~~he~~ possibly mistaken for Sergeant Lockwood who survived after rescuing his shipmates. If Sergeant Raper in fact died a hero, as some men are convinced he did, then he deserves a posthumous award for heroism. Anyone who recalls seeing Sergeant Raper alive after the torpedo explosion, please write or call Stan White with details of what you recall. If his heroism can be established and documented, perhaps we who survived will be able to arrange to have his heroism properly recognized, even at this late date.

## A USS LIBERTY CRUISE BOOK?

Members of the reunion planning committee in Washington have suggested that we compile a (last) cruise book of the USS Liberty consisting of memories and recollections from the attack. Originally it was suggested that we publish a diagram of the ship's various decks for each man to pinpoint his location at various times during the attack. Unfortunately, no good quality, complete diagram can be found, and in any case could probably not be conveniently reproduced here as it would get muddled in detail.

The planning committee requests that each Liberty survivor, whether he plans to attend the reunion or not, sketch on a piece of paper an outline of the ship (as seen from above) and mark his location when the attack started, when the torpedo exploded, and at other key times during the afternoon. Then write a brief paragraph or two of his primary recollections. Particularly desired are each man's initial reaction, what he did, what he saw others doing, what heroism he observed, or any observations about the event that he might like to make. Please do that just as soon as possible and send it to Stan before the reunion or bring it with you to the reunion. Arrangements will then be made to copy all of the comments in one bound folder to be distributed to crewmembers along with other pertinent documents. Those who have photographs or other memorabilia are asked to bring them for possible use in this very special cruise book.

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A copy of ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY signed by everyone at the reunion? The editors plan to bring copies of ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY which they will then hope to have signed by everyone present. We particularly hope to identify and possibly obtain the signature of everyone in the photographs. Then we will store the signed book in some safe place along with grampa's gold cane and great grampa's silver skeet-shooting cup, to be treasured and passed on long after we are gone. Probably it will crumble to dust, but we will treat the signed book with proper respect in any case.

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS ARE STILL YIELDING FRUIT. In response to FOI requests filed several months ago, the Navy Judge Advocate General has just released about 150 pages of previously secret and top-secret material consisting primarily of final endorsements of the Court of Inquiry file by the Navy JAG summarizing the event for the Chief of Naval Operations. What is remarkable about the JAG endorsement is that it describes the pre-attack reconnaissance and other details of the attack in much more detail and much more clearly and comprehensively than can be found anywhere in the report which it supposedly summarizes. The impression is that JAG had other sources of information than just the then-Top Secret Court of Inquiry report. He probably had, among other things, the statements Ennes submitted to the Court which didn't find their way into the official record and which have subsequently disappeared. We have asked JAG howcum, and will let you know. Among the documents released, was a copy of the signature page which does include a signature of Captain Bernard Lauff, which is missing from previously published reports.



### ISRAELI EXCUSE FOR ATTACKING LIBERTY IS BLOWN OUT OF THE WATER.

Almost from the moment of the attack, Israel has claimed privately and confidentially to the United States that they attacked because, among other things, when they asked us to identify ourselves, we signalled "AA," as a demand that they identify themselves first. Russell David, who was Liberty's signalman during that period, denies sending any such signal and says the only signal he sent was "USS LIBERTY, U S NAVY SHIP." However, the Israeli excuse was made privately and confidentially, so it was difficult to refute an excuse made in secret.

Recently, however, we obtained and published a copy of the official Israeli Court of Inquiry which presents that excuse. Soon after we published the Israeli document, the official organ of the Anti-Defamation League published the same excuse (which makes it official, since one of the official missions of the ADL is to act as spokesman for Israel).

By coincidence, however, our FOI request to JAG yielded, among other things, the USS LIBERTY's previously SECRET U.S. EYES ONLY message which refutes that excuse and reports denials by Chief Thompson, Signalman David and Captain McGonagle that any AA signal was sent or that a request for identification was received. Since our government obviously did follow up on the Israeli excuse (as they did in other aspects of the Israeli story) and found it false (again, as in other aspects of the Israeli story), one must wonder why our government never apparently confronted the Israeli government with the flaws in their story.

A copy of the just-released message can be found on the next page.



Remember the Liberty! Where did the design come from? A few people have called and written to ask where the design came from and where they could go to have it reproduced. The ship design was done by a commercial artist. The smiling sailor, which we have been using on envelopes, is a photocopy of a Navy recruiting decal. We had both designs made into rubber stamps simply by taking a reproduction, like those shown here, to a print shop. In Seattle it can be done for about thirteen dollars.



Did the Liberty Sink? A recent issue of the Overseas Press Club Bulletin carries a letter by one Philip Hochstein, listed as editor of Jewish Week, informing OPCB readers that Ennes's book and a highly favorable review by Pulitzer prizewinner George Weller "both reek with hatred that is blind to facts." Editor Hochstein then advises his colleagues in journalism that "the tragic sinking (sic) of the Liberty was due to failure in communication...." One must wonder how a professional journalist, an editor who presumably edits other professional journalists, can pretend to be objective while so severely criticizing a book he so obviously has not read.

What weather should we expect? The average daily high temperature in Washington, D.C., in June is 85°; average daily low is 65°; the record high was 100° in 1969; the record low was 47° in 1972. June typically has nine days of rain, five days with thunderstorms, and eight days that exceed 90°. Relative humidity is 53% at noon and 76% at night. June typically provides sunshine during 64% of daylight hours. It is probably about the best weather that Washington, D.C., provides, so we have chosen a good time. ENJOY!



# The U.S.S. Liberty

**O**n June 8, 1967 — day four of the Six Day War — an American intelligence gathering ship, the USS Liberty, was attacked off the Sinai coast by the Israel air force and navy. The facts surrounding this incident have long been subjected to serious speculation and anti-Israel propaganda. Israel, however, has insisted that the attack on the vessel was a regrettable error, but one caused by a combination of factors tempered by the heat of battle.

The past few months have seen a revival in the international — and specifically the American — media of the Liberty affair. Israel is seen as having knowingly and with malice aforethought attacked the spy ship since it was interfering with Israel's conduct of the war. These reports, it is believed, were put out by parties with an interest in undermining the developing Israel/American military and strategic cooperation.

Hereunder follows the first full and unedited accounting of Israel's version of the actual events of June 8, 1967. It is based on the findings of the official board of inquiry into the affair. This report was never intended for public consumption and has been filed away in the Israeli national archives. The report substantiates the Israeli claim that the attack was an unfortunate accident caused by a series of errors in judgment. But it also shows that the American vessel refused to identify itself when asked to do so, thereby compounding the error of identification and contributing to the torpedoing of the ship.

- At 05:50 on June 8, an aircraft on a routine patrol mission in the Mediterranean spotted what was described as a destroyer sailing in the direction of Gaza. Two Israeli naval patrol boats were placed on alert. At 06:03 the ship was positively identified as a U.S. navy supply vessel. This was duly registered on the battle map at Naval H.Q. and the state of alert was cancelled.
- At 09:01 another report was received from aircraft returning from a combat mission in the Sinai concerning the presence of an unidentified warship 24 nautical miles north of the El-Arish coast and moving west.
- At 09:05 the pilot of one of the aircraft reported that he had been fired at by the ship, and Israeli destroyers, positioned 34 nautical miles away, were immediately dispatched on a course of interception. At 09:41, after yet another conversation with the pilot in question, officials at H.Q. came to the conclusion that the pilot's report was

inaccurate. Another check, completed at 10:54, again identified the ship as a supply vessel. As a result, the state of alert was cancelled, the destroyers recalled and the ship removed from the target acquisition board at H.Q.

- At 11:24 more reports started to flow into H.Q. from the air force on the presence of an unidentified vessel. Simultaneously, reports were received that El-Arish was being shelled from the sea. At 11:50 a report was received from Southern Command that two unidentified naval vessels were firing at El-Arish, but that their shells were falling short of the beach. This report was repeated at 11:58, and at 13:09 general command H.Q. Operations Section asked Navy H.Q. to verify that there were no Israel navy vessels in the area of El-Arish, so that the two ships in question could be attacked from the air.
- The Navy opposed this plan, and after some deliberation between naval H.Q. and the General Staff Command it was decided instead to send Israeli torpedo naval patrol boats from home base at Ashdod port to intercept the ships.
- At 13:18 an order was transmitted to the commander of the Israeli patrol, now 22 miles west of Ashdod, to tune into air force communications and to be ready for a possible attack.
- At 13:41 the target was sighted by the patrol's radar and at 13:45 the patrol was ordered to move in and positively identify the targets. At 13:47 the patrol boats reported that the target was sailing at 30 knots and that it was therefore impossible for them to achieve an interception for identification. The patrol boats were ordered to conduct a second check on the estimated speed of the target (the speed of a target is considered an integral indicator of the nature of the vessel in question; a ship moving at 30 knots was, in 1967, without doubt a vessel of war). Naval H.Q. ordered that a second check of the ship's speed be done, since it was not satisfied that a mistake could not have been made in the first estimate which took less than seven minutes to calculate.
- At this point all information (namely the vessel's speed, the combined intelligence reports from the spotter aircraft and southern command, coupled with the unexplained shelling of the El-Arish shore), led commanders at naval H.Q. to the conclusion that the ship was an enemy vessel, most probably a destroyer of the 'H' or 'Z' class. An attack on the ship was ordered. An order to attack was given to the commander of the Israeli patrol tracking the target, but he reported that a naval attack would be impossible due to the target vessel's speed and his inability to close the gap between them.
- At 14:00 the ship was attacked from the air, as requested by the naval commander. It was first strafed by two aircraft (identified

in the report by their Hebrew code-names) and then bombed less than two minutes later by a pair of Mystere jets. The ship immediately exploded into flame and was covered by a thick blanket of smoke.

- At 14:06 the aircraft were ordered to leave the area by the chief of naval operations, and simultaneously an order was handed down to the naval torpedo patrol boats to close in for a supplementary attack. At 14:18 the attacking craft were reported by the commander to be in attack formation. Four minutes prior to that, at 14:14, one of the pilots involved in the aerial attack reported to H.Q. that the letters CP 5730 had been seen on the ship's side (information which led to renewed doubts as to the true identity of the ship under attack). An immediate order was transmitted to the commander of the naval force suspending the attack (since there could be a problem with the identity of the craft) pending further verification. Helicopters were ordered to stand by for a possible rescue operation.
- At 14:03 the torpedo boats, which were now four nautical miles from the ship, reported that they were unable to identify the craft visually. The commander signaled the ship and requested that it identify itself by lamp. The ship signalled the letters AAA (the code for refusal to identify and a demand for reverse identification). The torpedo boats continued to close range and at 14:38 the commander of the attacking force identified the ship as an Egyptian supply ship, the "Al-Katir". His message continued that the target was burning and covered in black smoke. After receiving this report, and following a series of consultations at naval H.Q., an order was handed down to the torpedo boats to attack.
- At 14:40 the attacking craft opened fire on the ship. Fire was not returned. At 14:42 the attacking force went in for a final torpedo assault.
- Five torpedoes were fired within two minutes of each other, at distances of 1,000, 550, 2,000 and 1,500 yards. One hit was recorded and was seen to explode.
- After the initial attack the patrol commander decided to send one of the torpedo boats around the side of the ship to attack from the other side. While moving around the aft section of the stricken ship, the torpedo boat's captain reported that he could make out some letters on the side of the ship. He received a command to get in as close as possible to make a final identification and reported back that it seemed that the ship was Russian. It was only after a lifeboat was pulled out of the water that the ship was identified as an American vessel.
- After the identification, the torpedo boats attempted to offer rescue services. They received a negative response. Israeli helicopters dispatched to the area were informed by the stricken vessel that their help was not needed. The ship continued to make its own way, and no further contact was maintained between the ship and the Israel Navy.

MIDDLE EASTERN

INSIGHT

Volume I, No 1 February-March, 1982

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Editors: Kenneth Jacobson, Harry Wall

# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

REMEMBER  
The  
LIBERTY!



8 JUNE 1987

Volume 1, Issue #5

March/April 1982

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## **FINAL REUNION PLANNING NOW UNDERWAY**

Shipmate Don Blalock and a group of Liberty crewmen from the Washington, D.C., area are now at work on the final planning for the USS LIBERTY reunion to be held on the weekend of 5 & 6 June 1982, at the Hotel Washington. The affair will include an afternoon hospitality hour, an evening banquet with retired Admiral Thomas H. Moorer as keynote speaker and possibly one or more surprise guest speakers, trips to Arlington National Cemetery and to the Liberty Memorial at the Navy Cryptologic Museum, plus ample free time to renew old friendships and see the sights.

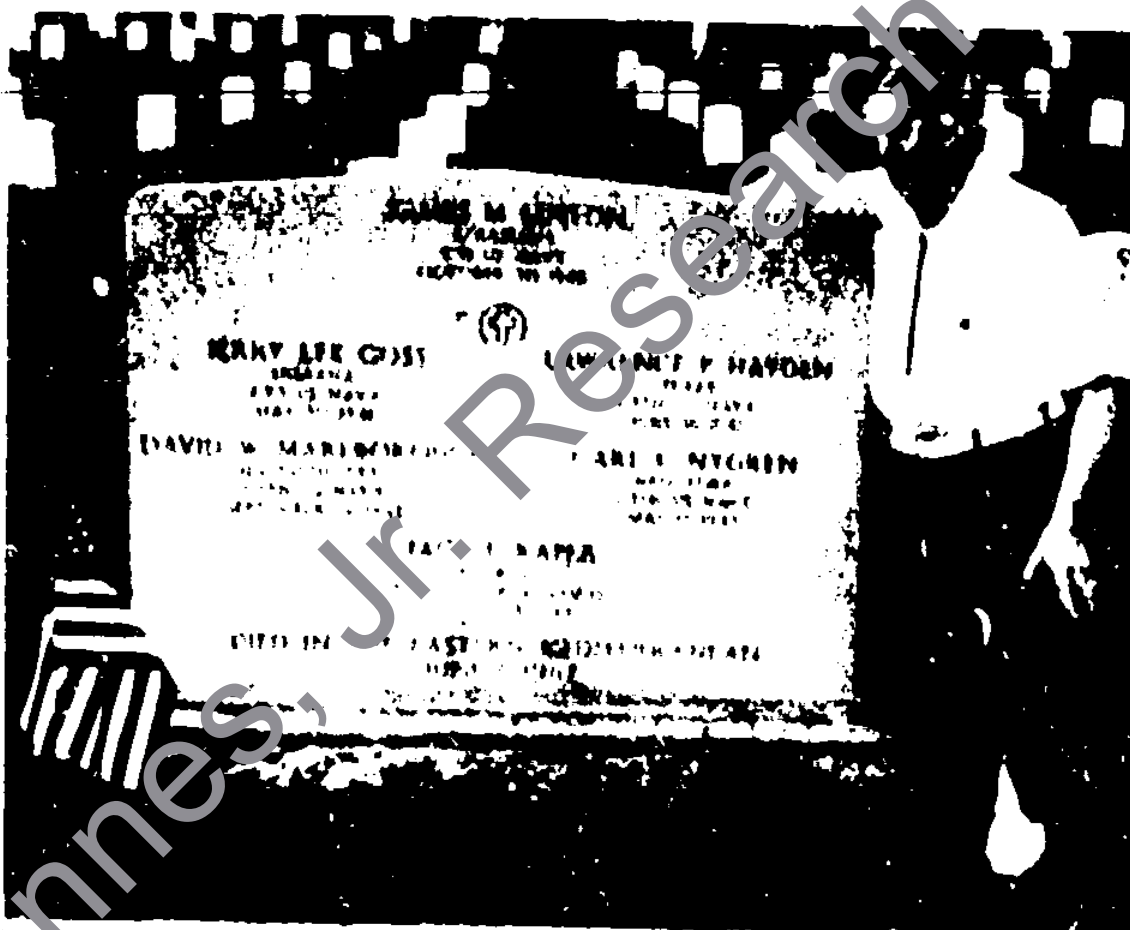
Liberty crewmen will receive, along with this issue of the newsletter, a separate notice of deposits that must be made to secure reservations for the reunion, and a deadline date. Please act promptly, as time is drawing short.

Did you identify the aircraft? The aircraft pictured in the previous newsletter issue were, from left to right: a Dassault Mirage III, which initiated the attack; a Dassault MD-452 Mystere IVA, which brought the napalm and other goodies not carried by Mirages; a Nord 2501 Noratlas, which participated in the preattack reconnaissance; and an Aerospatiale SA 321 Super Frelon helicopter, which brought combat troops with machine guns supposedly (they say now) to render assistance (although none was offered at that time). All the aircraft are French built. The torpedo boats used in the attack were also French built, while the torpedoes themselves were made in Italy.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?** Reunion planning is being conducted, mostly at long range, and entirely by individuals totally inexperienced in doing these things. During the planning period several individuals with reunion and convention planning and fund raising experience have offered to help. Now that the reunion is almost here, that help is very much needed. Funds are needed for bus and banquet hall rental fees, for service deposits, bartender and related hotel charges, and other group expenses. Some crewmen cannot afford the airline tickets, and these men could be helped if funds are available. The friends who have offered to support the reunion and others who would like to help are invited to send contributions to The Liberty Reunion at Stan White's address in South Dakota shown on page one of this newsletter.

#### MORE ABOUT THE GRAVESTONE

An earlier issue discussed the efforts of retired Navy commander X. Bender Tansill to replace the Liberty mass grave headstone with a more suitable inscription than the present one which reads simply, "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean June 8, 1967". Commander Tansill is still working hard on that project, and he is widely supported privately, by many citizens. Recently citizen Helen Haley of Cahokia, Illinois, appealed to her Congressman, Melvin Price, to look into the headstone issue. Mr. Price queried the Veterans Administration, which advised him by letter on February 9



Commander X. Bender Tansill visiting the LIBERTY mass grave.

that the Liberty headstone is consistent in size and inscription with other group burial markings in the cemetery, and sent along a number of photographs of other headstones. Mr. Price forwarded the VA opinion, and Mrs. Haley in turn agreed that, in retrospect, the Liberty gravestone seems adequately marked after all. We do not agree, and neither does Commander Tansill. To us, "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean" seems pale acknowledgement of combat death alongside stones that read, "Killed in Vietnam," "Died in Vietnam," and "Killed July 4, 1945, Celebes Island, Southwest Pacific". Any American must recognize Vietnam and all deaths as combat related. Few will ever suspect that men who died in the eastern Mediterranean died honorably in combat. More likely they will suppose that the men died (as historian R.K. Smith has so eloquently suggested) in a taxicab accident in Beirut or a warehouse fire in Istanbul.

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THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER is published by former crewmen of the USS LIBERTY. The newsletter is published six times annually, and will happily accept subscriptions from the public. To subscribe, send ten dollars to THE USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER, Route Two, Box 32, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069.



LETTERS

I was not a member of the Liberty crew, but am interested in your ship. I am a member of the USS Enterprise Association, having been aboard CV-6 during '42 and '43 as a member of the Air Department. I have been trying without success to find a copy of Assault on the Liberty by an officer who served aboard the Liberty, and have on several occasions even offered to pay \$100 to anyone who could find the book in south Florida. Radio talk show hosts refuse to discuss the Liberty matter with me and usually call me a bigot for even asking about it. Please give my regards to the crew, and I hope you have a very happy reunion.

John J. McNulty

As Captain Tully's XO in Saratoga I ran to communications on a call from the Captain. It was tough as hell to listen to the few transmissions from the Liberty and not be able to help. The anger and frustration still mounts as it did again when I read Ennes's book.

The lessons we should have learned in this incident and in the Pueblo incident apply today and just as strongly. I am not sure whether our decision makers today know this or would act differently under similar circumstances.

Keep up your efforts. I lend my copy of Ennes's book to those who will read it. The reaction is always the same, "I didn't know...."

Nelson Sabin  
Captain, U.S. Navy (retired)

The last issue of the newsletter was interesting. At first I was surprised at some of the letters from former shipmates, but after thinking about it I guess it should be expected that people will react differently, since not all of us think alike. Some day maybe it will all be explained to everyone's satisfaction and we will all be happy. Fat chance!

Name withheld because the writer is  
still on active duty

I hope your reunion will be a memorable one. I collect postmarks from envelopes mailed aboard U.S. Navy ships and am in need of a USS LIBERTY postmark--preferably the entire empty envelope. I would certainly appreciate receiving examples from any of the men from the Liberty.

Lewis E. Klotzbach, PO Box 235,  
Simpsonville, Maryland 21150

Are weird things showing up in your mailbox? Since the first issue of this newsletter published the editors' mailing addresses, Ennes and White have been deluged with a steady stream of weird mail. Several times each week the mailboxes yield fairly slick, mostly literate, mass-produced appeals to hate and narrow prejudices. The main lesson we have learned is that there is an amazing amount of organized hate out there. Now we learn that some of this material is being mailed to the few Liberty survivors whose addresses have appeared in the newsletter. We apologize to those who have received offensive material. In the future, only the editors' addresses will be published.

Whatever happened to the three magazine articles and at least one major newspaper article that were to have discussed the Liberty? Editors promise that the articles are still in the works, just delayed for various reasons. Henceforth we will not mention planned articles specifically in this letter, as public mention seems to be followed by mysterious withdrawal of coverage--particularly when television is the medium--but we do expect some important national news coverage in the next few weeks and will let you know after publication.

Liberty crewmen are still turning up regularly, although many more need to be found. In the past few days we have found John Popielski, Paddy Rhodes, Larry Rogers, Ray Buffin, David Russell, Jim DeGeronimo, Ken Gauthier, Ernie Goracci, Gary Tribble, Jack Cadman, Tom Massart, Ed Perkins, Sam Schulman, Tony Liefeld, Danny Warwas and Dennis Snader. Crewmen who would like to contact any of these men should call Stan White or Jim Ennes for their addresses and telephone numbers.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Because information has been in short supply, published LIBERTY material has been hard to find and often unreliable. For those interested in what has been published in addition to Ennes' ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY, we offer the following: NATIONAL REVIEW article by James Kilpatrick, 5 September 1967; PENTHOUSE article by Anthony Pearson, May & June 1976; RAMPARTS article, anonymous, August 1972; CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE by Anthony Pearson, published in England by Quartet Books, 1973; PEARL HARBOR II by Jim Taylor, apparently privately published by the author with a "Mideast Publishing Company" imprint, and supposedly the product of \$236,000 invested in research and travel; a chapter in THE ZIONIST CONNECTION by Alfred Lillenthal published by Middle East Perspective, Inc., 1978; a chapter in ROPES OF SAND by Wilbur C. Eveland, published by W.W. Norton in 1980; a superb article, in view of the obstacles, in the Naval Institute PROCEEDINGS, June and July 1978, by historian R.K. Smith. In addition, at least two books by recognized authors and several articles by established reporters are currently underway. (Don't overlook CONFIRM OR DENY by Phil Goulding, published by Harper & Row, 1970.)

**A New Liberty Memorial?** Recently an individual unknown to us has been seeking private contributions of about \$250,000 from private donors to build an elaborate outdoor memorial to the men who died in the "unprovoked treacherous sneak attack and calculated massacre" on the USS Liberty. One such letter was forwarded to us with a request for comment. The rhetoric suggests that the purpose is more to humiliate Israel than to honor our shipmates. We feel that the men, if to be so honored, should not be used as a political vehicle. Equally important, we feel such money could be put to better use, such as a scholarship fund. After consulting with Captain McGonagle and others, we advised the potential contributor that we could not support the project and that, in any case, such a project should be sponsored by a recognized veterans group such as the VFW or the Navy Cryptologic Veterans Assn.

This semi-official Israeli apologia for the Liberty attack was published in the November, 1978, issue of Naval Institute Proceedings soon after historian Dr. Richard K. Smith's fine article on the subject.

### "The Violation of the 'Liberty'"

By R. K. Smith, pp. 62-70, June 1978, S.C. Truett, pp. 91-93, September 1978, N. Polmar, p. 88, October 1978 (Proceedings)

Captain Yaakov Nitzan, Israeli Navy, Assistant Defense and Armed Forces Attache, Navy Embassy of Israel, Washington, D.C. — Richard Smith's article strongly suggests that the attack on the ill-fated *Liberty* was a cynical, deliberate, and premeditated act by Israel. In fact, the attack was due to a tragic error, and given the circumstances at the time, it is explainable.

Smith describes the attack, but presents an incorrect picture of the events that took place. Since he starts with the assumption that the attack was premeditated, he obviously has to justify his assumption. Thus, he almost ignores the Israeli version of what took place, and what little he does report, he treats with contempt.

The general impression the author gives is that the *Liberty* was easy to recognize and could not have been mistaken for any other ship. If more than 11 years ago, the Israelis too had the same 20/20 hindsight as Smith and the time to leisurely contemplate matters, the attack could not have taken place. However, as those who have been in battle know, under the stress of battle conditions, snap decisions must be made with the best data available. The history of war, let alone naval war, is full of incredible incidents involving mistaken identity that under normal peaceful conditions would never have occurred. In Vietnam the U. S. Air Force attacked an Australian destroyer, and as recently as 1974 we have the spectacle of a Turkish war plane sinking a Turkish destroyer during the invasion of Cyprus. Events that led up to the attack on the *Liberty* have been described in a report issued by the Israeli Court of Inquiry set up to investigate the attack and determine what took place.

On the morning of the attack, Israeli troops stationed at El Arish reported to army headquarters in Israel that they were being fired upon from the sea. It later turned out that the explosions that were the source of the report were due to other causes. But in response to this report the Israeli

Navy and Air Force were instructed to seek out a ship that might be responsible for what was thought at that time, the shelling of El Arish. Now the author states: On 7 June, "no one imagined the *Liberty* was in danger." That is certainly a matter of judgment. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Commander Sixth Fleet thought it was a danger zone as they ordered the *Liberty* 100 miles out, and on 6 June Egypt declared the area dangerous for shipping. The *Liberty* was moving barely in international waters parallel to a coast near El Arish, where for three days there had been tank battles comparable to or even larger than those of World War II. It was an area that merchant shipping had been avoiding, and Israel had not been told that the *Liberty* was operating there. With this background it is not too surprising that, when the Israelis spotted an obvious naval ship in warship gray, apparently heading for Port Said, they concluded that it was an Egyptian ship and attacked.

There is no mystery regarding the arrival of the two Israeli helicopters that "ominously" appeared and "mysteriously" departed. What is a mystery is how the author knows that they were carrying armed troops and were not there to offer assistance. The truth of the matter is that as soon as Israel Defense Force, General Headquarters (GHQ), realized that a mistake was made, an order was sent to Israeli Air Force HQ instructing them to send rescue helicopters to help the *Liberty*. The helicopters were well on their way when the torpedo boats signaled the Israeli Navy HQ that the *Liberty* had refused help. By the time Navy HQ signaled GHQ, who then signaled Air Force HQ, who in turn signaled the helicopters, they had already arrived, but as Smith states, "they had missed their cue."

The moment Israel discovered the identity of the *Liberty*, the motor torpedo boats offered their assistance, two helicopters were sent with medical aid, and a tugboat was ordered out of Ashdod for the direction of the *Liberty*. It should also be mentioned that the Prime Minister of Israel sent a personal message of sympathy to President L. B. Johnson after the incident.

Smith then contrasts "These Israeli attitudes" with what he apparently regards as the proper behavior of the Japanese after the bombing of *Panay* in 1937, but the main difference is that the *Panay* bombing took place in peacetime, while the attack on the *Liberty* occurred during war conditions.

Smith concluded with the somewhat sweeping concept that "nations do not have 'friends,' but 'only interests.'" This cynical approach is surely not applicable to the Israeli-U. S. relationship. A cornerstone of Israel's foreign policy is the maintenance of close friendly relations with the United States, the democracies of Western Europe, and with other Western-style democratic countries. In light of this long-term global consideration, it is ludicrous to think that Israel could have risked sacrificing these relationships for the imaginary short-term gains that in Smith's opinion might have resulted from an attack on the *Liberty*.

In conclusion, the attack on the *Liberty* was a case of mistaken identity, and, when that mistake was noticed, all practical steps were taken to assist the ship and compensate the wounded.

### ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

By James M. Ennes, Jr.

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### "I Was On Board the *Liberty*"

(Joseph C. Lentini in *The Washington Star* [letter to the editor], 4 October 1977)

I was on board the *Liberty* on 8 June 1967, and I feel the public has the right and the need to be reminded of the treachery then involved.

The *Liberty* was steaming in international waters about 15 miles off the Sinai Peninsula when the Israelis attacked her. In less than 39 minutes, a fine ship was reduced to a bullet-riddled, napalm-scorched, and helpless floating graveyard. In those 39 minutes, boys brought up in the peaceful aftermath of a horrendous world war experienced their first, and for some their last, trial by fire.

The tragedy was beyond recall. What solace there may be, however small, lies in the magnificent performance of the officers and men of the *Liberty* in an action of historic stature in the face of an unprovoked attack. Under the most difficult and trying circumstances, not only did the ship defend herself valiantly, but through superb seamanship on the part of all hands, she was brought safely into port.

The *Liberty* was in international waters, properly marked as to her identity. A 5'x8' U.S. flag flew from the masthead and must surely have been seen by Israeli pilots who surveyed the ship during that morning. Her name was lettered on the stern in English, which could not have been confused with the Arabic script on Egyptian ships.

Moshe Dayan claims complete innocence. He and other Israeli officials credited the attack to war-weary field commanders attacking a ship they mistook for an Egyptian tanker. They further claim that no flag was flying and that there were no discernible markings. All of these claims are proven false by ship's logs and eyewitness accounts.

The *Liberty*'s logs record both sur-

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The letter by *Liberty* survivors for other survivors and interested citizens. The letter discusses recent developments, new evidence, media reaction, attitudes and opinions of the crew and national leaders, and planning for a gala reunion of *Liberty* survivors set for summer, 1982.

For a sample copy send one dollar to Stan White, Route 2, Box 32, Vermillion, SD 57069. For a one year subscription (six or more issues) send ten dollars.

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face craft and aircraft, leaving the same Israeli port and heading directly for the *Liberty*. At 1208 hours, these aircraft were sighted, and moments later there began what was to be a half hour of studied destruction.

In the first passes, the unmarked jets shot rockets through each of the *Liberty*'s four machine gun mounts. The next runs saw direct hits on each of 20 or more antennas. After eliminating return fire and silencing communications, the jets concentrated fire on the ship's control center and on all means of escape for the crew. When the stricken ship later reached Malta, an inspection disclosed that all lifeboats and rafts had been destroyed, and that most watertight hatches topside had received at least one rocket penetration.

After the "softening up," torpedo boats flying the Star of David launched three torpedoes, scoring a hit with one. It was just after this torpedo hit that the Israelis purport to have realized their error. The jets retired to the safety of shore and the PT boats

retreated to a safe distance, in easy reach of land.

Israel claimed one of its boats had retrieved a life raft labeled "U.S. Navy" and this convinced them of their mistake. It is interesting to note that this sudden withdrawal in the face of victory occurred only seconds after armed aircraft had left the U.S. carrier *America* (CVA-66) in response to the only distress call received from the *Liberty*.

Planes and boats coming from the same Israeli-held port to launch a murderous attack, fire directed so accurately that it is obvious that all pilots had been well briefed on precise location of targets, a day admittedly clear with visibility unlimited, a well-marked ship and a proud flag flying overhead all represent but a small part of the evidence. A close examination of the now-realized Israeli objectives in the Mideast, and the timetable associating them with the *Liberty* show, then and now, that the infamous attack was calculated, premeditated murder.

# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

Volume I, Issue #4

January/February 1982

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## **REUNION PLANNING CONTINUES**

Within the past few days Liberty survivors have received postpaid reservation cards from The Hotel Washington for the nights of 4 & 5 June, 1982. The hotel requests return of cards by May 21. Within the next few weeks we will be making firm reservations for the banquet, and will need deposits at that time from all who will attend.

The reunion promises to be a memorable affair, with a minimum of structured activities and a maximum of opportunity to socialize with old friends and to renew old acquaintances. The weekend will include a trip to the Arlington National Cemetery where fourteen of our shipmates are buried, and a visit to the U.S. Navy Cryptologic Museum to see the USS Liberty Memorial. Those who wish to enjoy other highlights in our nation's capital will have ample opportunity to do so.

**SURVIVORS STILL BEING SOUGHT:** Accompanying the reservation cards is a letter from Stan White urging everyone to probe his memory for any leads that may help find our remaining shipmates. 294 men were aboard the ship when it was attacked. Thirty-four died in the attack, three are known to have died since the attack, and about 100 have been located. That leaves about 157 survivors yet to be found. Stan's letter urges anyone who is in touch with any of the remaining men or who has possible leads (such as home towns or last known addresses) to write or call him collect.



Can you identify these aircraft? For answers, see the next NEWSLETTER issue.

## A LETTER TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

Several weeks ago Stan White sent the following letter to the White House:

Dear Mr. President:

I am a retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the U.S. Navy, and was a member of the crew of the USS Liberty on June 8, 1967, when the ship was attacked by Israeli sea and air forces. There were 294 fine American men aboard the ship when the attack started, and when it was over 34 were dead and 171 wounded, many very seriously. But believe it or not, few Americans have ever heard of the attack on the Liberty.

On that day in 1967 I was many places throughout the ship and saw a dedicated, well trained U.S. Navy crew fighting against overpowering odds to save their ship, their shipmates, and their own lives. I saw the Captain of that ship provide his men with leadership, heroism, direction, stability and most of all hope. He did all this through the fiercest of fighting while seriously wounded himself and while all around him people were hurt and dying.

When the fighting was over the survivors were terrified, the wounded were in great pain, and the ship was in danger of sinking from a huge torpedo hole in her side. The Captain was still on the bridge, and he remained there until help arrived in the morning. He was a rock that we clung to, and my shipmates and I often wonder if we would have made it if the Captain had been killed.

Eventually the ship came home, not to honors and a place in Navy history where she belongs, but to silence and a totally unaware U.S. public. I saw heroic crewmen very quietly given President Unit Citations and other medals for heroism (well deserved, but not in secret). I saw deserving individuals receive their medals by mail, or in quiet ceremonies without fanfare. But the worst shock of all, I saw Captain William L. McGonagle receive his much-earned Medal of Honor, but how? In the White House by the President of the United States with much fanfare, TV and press coverage as is the custom? No--at the Washington Naval Station, attended by hardly anyone and with minimum press coverage. What a shame for this fine crew, this marvelous ship, and this magnificent Commanding Officer.

I am writing to ask your help to honor our Captain further at our reunion next June. Presently he does not plan to attend. We hope he will change his mind. But will you help us to honor him even in his absence.

Very respectfully, Stan White

Secretary of the Navy John Lehman replied on 15 December 1981:

Dear Master Chief Petty Officer White:

Thank you for your letter requesting help in honoring Captain McGonagle at the upcoming USS LIBERTY (AGTR5) reunion.

As much as he would like to, the President cannot reply personally to every communication he receives. Therefore, he has asked the departments and agencies of the Federal Government to reply on his behalf in those instances where they have special knowledge or special authority under the law. For this reason, your correspondence was forwarded to the Department of Defense.



I can certainly understand the personal concern which prompted you to write the President. There is no greater honor or form of recognition that could be offered to Captain McGonagle than the Congressional Medal of Honor which he received. To be of assistance, I am delighted to sign the enclosed message which can be read during the reunion.

I wish you a very successful reunion and the best of health and happiness in the years ahead.

Sincerely, John Lehman

#### USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS, ALMOST

Recently the government released the Findings of Fact in the case of the capture of the USS Pueblo. San Diego Union reporter Cliff Smith interviewed Pueblo's Commander Lloyd Bucher for about three hours and was told, among other things, of the many similarities and unlearned lessons in the two attacks: the fouled up communications, the promises of support, the rescue aircraft withheld. Smith's story as submitted to his editors included these words:

Another example (Bucher) cited was the failure of Navy authorities to brief him on the experiences of a similar incident a few months earlier when the intelligence ship Liberty was attacked by Israeli forces in their 1967 war on Egypt. "The Liberty had the same problems we had with the destruction of classified materials and the problems of communication," Bucher said. "The information from that experience was never passed along, probably because there was a lot of embarrassment in that case."

San Diego Union editors, however, gratuitously added the word "mistakenly attacked" before running the story in their newspaper. But Associated Press editors in New York went a step further: they cut all reference to the Liberty before releasing the story on the national news wire. One result was an abundance of unexpected mail criticizing Bucher for his apparent failure to mention the Liberty.

The AP action is in keeping with the way most Liberty stories are treated in the national media. The Union action is more surprising since the Union is one of several independent newspapers that have editorialized on the subject of the Liberty attack. On December 24, 1980, the Union said: "...the Israeli government ...explained that the attack was 'a tragic mistake.' It was almost certainly nothing of the kind. ...Liberty's dead and those who will bear the scars of this attack to their graves...deserve more than the transparent cover-up that continues today more than a decade after the bloodiest peacetime attack on a U.S. Navy ship in this century." We wonder if the recent turnaround represents a change of heart or a loss of nerve at the San Diego Union.

**KEEP WATCHING FOR LIBERTY NEWS:** As this newsletter goes to press, the gutsy and much-respected Christian Science Monitor plans a major story on the USS Liberty attack and cover-up. The story, to include interviews with key figures, will appear in the Thursday magazine section, most likely on February 11th, but possibly a week earlier or one or two weeks later. Watch for it. In addition, at least two other magazine stories are underway. We will keep you informed.

**ENNES IN ANCHORAGE:** On October 17, 1981, your editor, Jim Ennes, was a guest of the Navy League in Anchorage, Alaska, where he was speaker for the U.S. Navy 206th Birthday celebration in Anchorage. The station newspaper, THE NORTHERN LIGHT, described the talk as follows: "Chief Joseph Benkert introduced a fellow USS Liberty shipmate, our guest speaker LCDR James M. Ennes, USN (ret.). LCDR Ennes gave a very interesting account of his experiences while aboard the USS Liberty prior to, during, and after the Israeli attack during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. He credited superb training of the ship's company coupled with overall bravery and several acts of pure heroism for the survival of the ship. He pointed out that we must endeavor to ensure that the U.S. is at all times prepared to maintain freedom of the seas through personal diligence and sacrifice. LCDR Ennes was presented a gold pan by the Anchorage Navy League and a station plaque by the CO."

#### A MISSING SIGNATURE

When the Navy Court of Inquiry transcript was released in 1976 under the Freedom of Information Act, one of the many oddities was the absence of an important signature. The court consisted of a President, two members, and a law officer. Ordinarily, all members sign such reports. In this case, however, copies distributed by the Navy Judge Advocate General lack the signature of one member, U.S. Navy Captain Bernard J. Lauff. We have long wondered whether Captain Lauff's failure to sign the report was a highly unusual oversight, or perhaps an act of protest. A protest would not be unlikely, since many of the "Findings of Fact" published in the report are unsupported by and even in direct and striking conflict with the evidence. Since Navy JAG regulations require that Findings be supported by evidence, one wonders what sort of discussion led to the publication of Findings that cannot be supported. And Captain Lauff retired from the Navy not long after the report was published bearing his name but lacking his signature.

In an attempt to answer that question, we forwarded a letter to Captain Lauff via the Navy Retired Affairs Office. There has been no reply. In a further attempt to resolve the issue, we will ask the Navy Judge Advocate General if he can tell us why the signature is missing, and whether Captain Lauff or any member filed a statement of nonconcurrence with the published findings.

#### THE ISRAELI EXCUSE

Israel's most elaborate and detailed excuse for attacking the USS Liberty is contained in a 19 page report by Israeli Examining Judge Sgan-Aluf i. Yerushalmi, dated July 21, 1967. The report was delivered to the United States in August, 1967, along with a request that it be withheld from the American people. By separate message, the American Embassy in Tel Aviv conveyed a request to the Department of State that the document be kept from the public "because the circumstances of the attack strip the Israeli Navy naked" if one is to believe the extreme incompetence that must be assumed in order to accept the highly improbable scenario and the tortured reasoning presented by this Israeli Judge.

The Israeli excuse, titled "Israeli Defense Forces Preliminary Inquiry 1/67," is at odds with many of the essential facts. For instance, it is impossible for the Israeli motor torpedo boats to have spotted the Liberty by radar at the time claimed in the report; at that time, 1341, they were still about 35 miles away and well beyond radar range. In fact, the boats did not come within radar range of the

Liberty until almost the exact moment the air attack started. But the Israeli excuse depends upon a claim that the boats spotted the Liberty 19 minutes before the air attack started, that they erroneously clocked the ship's speed at 32 knots, that that they concluded that anything moving that fast could only be an enemy and therefore ordered the air strike. Actually, of course, the attack was ordered and coordinated by the Israeli War Room, not by the Israeli torpedo boat commander as claimed in this Israeli report.

Another key Israeli claim is that the torpedo boats pressed their attack because, when asked to identify ourselves, we replied "identify yourself first". Signalman Russell David, who was on the bridge frantically signalling "USS Liberty - U.S. Navy ship" with the twelve inch searchlight, insists that no one ever signalled "identify yourself first," and that no request for identification came from the boats until after the firing stopped.

The real reason for withholding the Israeli report from the public is probably that it is too weak to withstand close scrutiny. It is still being withheld in 1982. The Department of State and the LBJ Library both claim to be unable to identify such a document. The Joint Chiefs of Staff admit that they hold it, but they decline to release it because of the Israeli request that it not be released.

We have, however, obtained a copy through a confidential source who found it, with no restrictive caveats attached, in a government file. Liberty crewmen may receive a copy at no charge by calling or writing Stan White. Other newsletter readers may have one for one dollar to offset postage and printing costs. We invite comments.

#### THE CREW SPEAKS

I was one of the first to see the jets firing at us, and the picture still burns me as if it were happening just now. I was first to recognize them as Mirages, not Migs as one of our officers chose to argue. I was one of the first to be hit by shrapnel, and I was probably the first to realize that the premeditated, malicious attack on the Liberty was no mistake or accident.

The utter disregard for our lives is a slap in the face of every American. I feel that one of the reasons our elected officials wish to hush this up is that it is so hard to admit that the people referred to in the Bible as God's people could so cold bloodedly do this to other human beings and lie about it, BUT THEY DID.

Israel has an excellent intelligence force. Do they expect all Americans to believe that they don't have a copy of Jane's Fighting Ships? Do they expect people to believe that with Egypt as their neighbor they don't know every craft, its configuration, its speed and its capabilities to the letter?

It is totally inconceivable to me to believe that the Americans who are helping Israel with this coverup could be such totally stubborn idiots and still have the nerve to call themselves Americans. They should move to Israel.

To the unnamed officer who claims there is room for doubt that there is a coverup, I don't blame you for not wanting your name published. It takes less than a man to deny such glaring evidence of wanton murder and coverup. It takes an Israeli.

Sincerely, Russell O. David, Jr.



## OUR GOVERNMENT SAYS:

Many American citizens have written to their Members of Congress to ask for an explanation of the Liberty attack and subsequent coverup. Many of those citizens have forwarded the responses to us.

For example, when Congressman Harold S. Sawyer was asked by a constituent to urge a reinvestigation of the circumstances of the attack, Mr. Sawyer forwarded the request to the Department of State for comment. State, in a letter signed by the Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations but drafted by E. Cullison on the Israeli desk, brushed off the request with this language:

Both the U.S. and world news media covered the Liberty incident extensively at the time it occurred and have continued to follow the case in subsequent years. There is no basis for the suggestion that the news media or the U.S. Government have kept the incident from the American public.

Allegations have been periodically made that Israel deliberately attacked the Liberty. The Department has no information that would corroborate these allegations. In 1967, a U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry made a full investigation of the attack upon the Liberty. Officers and men of the Liberty testified at the inquiry, and message traffic to and from the ship was reviewed thoroughly. The transcript of the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry has been available to the public for several years. The Court reached the conclusion that it did not have sufficient information to make a judgment about the reasons for the Israeli action against the Liberty. It is doubtful that a new investigation at this time would resolve the different allegations about the incident, many of which involve assumptions that would be difficult to prove or disprove conclusively.

The same language was subsequently repeated by the Department of Defense in letters to Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Edward Kennedy, among others. Eventually we wrote to State and Defense to suggest that someone sit down and actually read the Court of Inquiry report before citing it as gospel. We suggested that someone should search the record for such critical and basic evidence as Ennes's deck logs for the period of reconnaissance preceding the attack, for the Quartermaster's Notebook and the weather observation sheet for the period before the attack, and for Ennes's sworn statement which was read to the Court but was not entered into the transcript. Someone should wonder why such vital documents are missing, and they should look for evidence in support of the conclusions published by the Court. Instead of finding supporting evidence, any such examination will uncover instead evidence to refute many of the Findings of Fact and very little to support them.

In true bureaucratic fashion, the Department of Defense replied on 24 November 1981 that the earlier response "remains our position on a new investigation of the Liberty attack." We did not request a new investigation! This is not a realistic objective in view of the official mind-set that exists in this case. Instead, we simply asked that someone read the existing investigation before pretending to the world that it is adequate and definitive.

A well tested bureaucratic tactic, when faced with a difficult question that will not go away, is to ignore the question and instead to answer a different question--to answer a question that was not asked. Often the poor, dumb citizen will stumble away in dismay and confusion, never to return. We are dismayed, but we are not confused, and we are still asking difficult questions.

Senator Moynihan, in transmitting Defense's comment, suggested that "There does not seem to be much more that can or needs to be done." Our reply was to request an appointment to discuss the official discrepancies with him and to answer any remaining questions. He has not responded to that request.

# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

Volume I, Issue #3

November/December 1981

Editors:

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Stan White, Route 2, Box 32, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069 Phone 605 624-5129

## **REUNION PLANNING CONTINUES**

### **ADMIRAL MOORER TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

#### **Area Coordinators Assigned**

Former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, USN, retired, has agreed to attend the Liberty reunion and to be keynote speaker for the reunion banquet. Admiral Moorer became Chief of Naval Operations about three weeks after the Liberty attack and later served as Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. The presence of this distinguished naval officer will be a proud addition to our reunion.

**COORDINATORS:** The following Liberty shipmates have agreed to serve as area coordinators to facilitate reunion planning. Contact these men for program suggestions, questions, comments, or gripes about reunion planning. This is your reunion. Your area coordinator will help assure that it is done your way.

Eddie Elder, 5600 Hearth Circle, Norfolk, Virginia 23462, Phone 804 424-1164  
Donald Blalock, 9206 Vollmerhausen Rd., Jessup, MD 20794, Phone 301 725-2756  
William Casper, 360 Lackawanna St., Forest City, PA 18421, Phone 717 785-5048  
Charles Rowley, 504 Kitchell Ave., Pana, Ill. 62557, Phone 217 562-4298  
Ronald Grantski, 1017 Marklee Way, Modesto, Calif. 95355, Phone 209 529-3181

**REUNION ACTIVITIES:** Suggested reunion activities so far include an opening hospitality hour with cocktails and hors d'oeuvre; a beer bust; a visit to the Liberty gravesites at Arlington National Cemetery; a visit to the Liberty memorial at the National Cryptologic Museum (the museum custodian has agreed to conduct a Saturday tour for our group); an organized tour of Washington tourist attractions such as the White House, the Capitol, the National Museum of Fine Arts, the Smithsonian Museums and the Washington Memorial; a tour of Washington night life; a banquet with or without a live band and dance; a press conference at the National Press Club (only for those who choose to attend); a bus trip to Capitol Hill for those who wish to call on members of Congress. Activities are limited only by our own imaginations and resources. If there is something you want to do, or if there is something you do not want to do, now is the time to contact your area coordinator and let your wishes be known.

**WHO HAS NOT BEEN FOUND?** Many Liberty survivors have not yet been located. We have now located about 100 of the 288 or so men who were aboard the Liberty on June 8, 1967. In addition, we have heard from several men who served before the attack and who plan to attend the reunion. Thirty-four men died in the attack and some have died since then. Another 150 or so have not been heard from. If any readers are in touch with any of the remaining men, please send their name and address and telephone number, or their home town, last known address and any possible leads, to the nearest area coordinator or to Ennes or White.

The remaining men are: Malcolm M. Watson, Reginald N. Addington, Gary L. Aftoora, Benjamin G. Aishe, James M. Anderson, Jr., Joe D. Anderson, Richard E. Anderson, Theodore L. Arfsten, Alvis L. Armstrong, Joseph W. Ashworth, Thomas G. Backskey, Rogelio M. Bagan, Richard K. Baker, Garry L. Barton, Edward H. Bechtel, Nathan D. Benedict, Jr., Lee P. Bennett, Gerald R. Bisher, Glenn L. Bloxham, John E. Bootn, Richard J. Brooks, Frank J. Brown, David W. Bundy, Danny R. Byrd, John J. Calligan, David N. Carnahan, Jeffery R. Carpenter, Joseph P. Carpenter, Calvin L. Chadsey, Fred M. Cleveland, Rodney C. Concepcion, Eddie L. Cook, James E. Cotton, Juan A. Craig, Rodney L. Dally, Dale E. Daniels, James R. Davidson, Rodolfo A. Diana, Edward J. Duea, Robert M. Dye, Kenneth P. Eakins, Alan W. Easton, Kenneth P. Ecker, Dennis M. Eikleberry, John W. Fisher, Donald F. Follin, Jr., Everett L. Freese, Ernest A. Gallo, Kenneth R. Gauthier, Larry D. Goins, Troy L. Green, Stephen C. Gurchik, James T. Halbardier, James V. Halman, Charles K. Hauck, David W. Hawkins, David C. Hazen, Warren D. Heaney, Charles R. Hendricks, Wayne L. Hildebrand, Jr., Jerry G. Hobson, Glen J. Holden, John S. Horne, Donald A. Hurst, Thomas F. Jackson, Frederick K. Johns, Duane D. Johnson, Melvin P. Johnson, Perry W. Johnson, Charles F. Johns, James P. Kavanaugh, Glenn D. Kelly, James F. Kelly, Kenneth R. Kimble, William M. Kram, Loren W. Kreun, Alan F. Kriner, John D. La Mar, Carlyle F. Lamkin, Calvin L. Landis, Dale D. Larkins, Steven J. Latorre, Joel W. Lehman, Terry W. Lehman, William M. Le May, Claude L. Lewis, Jr., Anthony J. Liefeld, Ronald L. Lippy, Bryce F. Lockwood, Benjamin L. Lomasang, Philip L. Long, Robert W. Long, Randy W. Lucas, Sofronio P. Marfil, John L. Massengale, James A. Matthews, Patrick W. McAndrews, Edward H. McClister, Garvin L. McMakin, Stephen E. Meyer, David V. Myers, James L. Needham, Richard D. Neese, Richard L. Newton, Glenn R. Oliphant, Eugene Owens, David W. Page, Donald W. Pageler, Herbert J. Parker, Dennis A. Patten, Garland W. Payne, Edward G. Perkins, Gerald V. Pierson, David T. Plasterer, Carl L. Pleasants, John G. Popielski, Martin D. Powledge, Harvey L. Purcell, David Ramey, John R. Randall, Robert D. Reilly, Thomas J. Reilly, Paddy "E" Rhodes, Stephen J. Richard, William R. Russell, Reynald S. Sarno, Robert A. Scarbrough, Robert J. Schneider, Robert J. Schnell, Samuel J. Schulman, Maurice B. Shafer, David A. Shaw,



Michael R. Simpson, Harold E. Six, James C. Smith, Jerry D. Smith, Dennis C. Snader, Larry L. Soper, Joseph D. Stoudt, Richard S. Sturman, John R. Sutter, Ralph B. Sweet, Charles J. Thome, Barry R. Timmerman, Michael J. Tobin, Phillip F. Tourney, Stephen B. Tracy, Ronald E. Trader, Jeffery L. Triplett, Sammy M. Uber, Donaciano Valdez, Thomas L. Van Cleave, George R. Vanderpool, Thomas E. Vanderschuur, Robert B. Vandeventer, Carl J. Vickers, Richard W. Wainwright, Robert M. Waltz, Jerry W. Ward, Joseph P. Ward, Daniel J. Warwas, Pedro P. Watan, Richard L. Weaver, Tommy W. Wheeler, Daniel B. Wood, Robert R. Zagar.

If your friend's name is on this list, please let us know. If your friend's name is not on this list and you want to contact him, we probably have his address; send us a stamped, self addressed envelope and we will send you the address.

#### SEAMAN DUEA

Still lost, but identified. Our previous newsletter asked readers to help identify CTSN Duea who worked in the materiel division of the Research Operations department. Although clearly recalled by his division officer and his division chief, Duea's name cannot be found on any of the official rosters filed with the Navy during the cruise or following the attack--no doubt due to a clerical error. The only documentary proof that such a man was aboard the ship was a handwritten roster that was carried by Stan White. Now Joe Benkert has produced a muster list dating from the visit to Rota, Spain, which lists CTSN Edward J. Duea, service number 918 95 37. So far, no one has been able to tell us what happened to Seaman Duea or why his name cannot be found on any of the official rosters of the crew.

#### THE CREW SPEAKS

*I don't care where the reunion is held--I'll be there. I've lost touch with the other survivors. Maybe they've been covered up as well. Why not? Everything else has. I agree that newsmen should be barred from the private meetings but I see no reason to bar them from the public ones. Maybe we should invite Woodward and Bernstein. Anyone brave enough to tackle Nixon has got to have the guts to attack "them," whoever "they" is.*

*I thought I could read Jim's book objectively and unemotionally because of the time that had elapsed. WRONG. I felt emotions I didn't know I had. I was torn between sadness for the friends who died so needlessly and anger for the ones who perpetrated the attack. I tell you I was hard to live with for the next few days. The book has renewed an interest in the Liberty and we should try to keep the interest up subtly but should avoid an exaggerated negative response. One way would be to have "Remember the Liberty" T-shirts and coffee cups. I don't want to demean or commercialize the occasion, but I think we could put the Liberty name in front of friends and co-workers without beating them over the head with it.*

Joe Meadors

I am not interested in "opening up the grave" at this reunion, and am going only to renew old friendships. I could care less if Larry King does or does not interview Mr. Ennes or if ABC NIGHTLINE mentions the Liberty attack. I have made peace in my heart with myself, with the attackers and with my God, and have no desire to stir up the matter again. I just want to see my friends again. I want to see how they recovered from the attack; I want to talk to many of them and find out how their families have handled this over the years.

I can relate to Richard G. Mumford's letter that what happened to him was God's will. Although I don't feel that it was God's will that men should die or that the event should take place, it was important for me to know that God cared and still does.

I remember after the attack some of the guys were weeping. Some were really mad, I mean really angry. I know we all were, but some were on the verge of becoming hysterical. Someone came in and told us of the guys they couldn't find after the torpedo hit, and when he said Red Addington my heart really sank. Red and I had been together for four or five duty stations and lived through the Cyprus evacuation and the Turkey exit. We had joked about how explosive things got when we were stationed together. Now I had lost a friend and a good shipmate and I knew I would have to visit his family, and those things were building up in my mind. Then I sort of fell asleep, and when I opened my eyes it was morning and there was Red. I grabbed him and just hung onto him. We were both crying and I was so happy to see him alive.

I get the impression that others have really gone through some trying years, and these are the ones I want to talk with. This is my reason for attending.

Richard C. Carlson

The whole Liberty affair was a nightmare for all of us. I had just about forgotten the whole thing and all of the really things that happened that day, but since receiving the newsletter I have given it a lot of thought. A lot of the crew got off that coffin after the attack, but some stayed. We had to walk around that hell hole for months and relieve it.

Well, I haven't seen anyone from the Liberty since I left the Navy and I do not wish to. The whole thing has left me very bitter toward the Navy, the U.S. Government, and Israel. Some people still claim the attack was a mistake. Well it was nothing but cold blooded murder. They have to live with that damned lie, but we know the truth, don't we?

Robert L. McAllister

I am enclosing a picture of the USS Liberty plaque. Anyone who wants one can purchase one from me for twenty-five dollars. Please write directly to me and I can arrange to fill the orders.

Jimmie L. Mathews  
Route Two, Box 80-A  
Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

I hope you will tone down the radical and extremist nature of the newsletter and that you will avoid outrageous claims. For instance, can you substantiate your claim that Liberty men were held against their will in San Juan and questioned while under the influence of sodium pentothal? I don't recall any press curb or coverup except before the court report was published or with regard to classified material. Can you substantiate those claims?

A Liberty officer who  
requests anonymity

This letter is troubling because it makes us wonder where the writer has been. We are inclined to think that he feels duty bound to support the "official" view, even though he must know better. In response, we sent him a transcript of a taped and witnessed interview with a Liberty survivor who described at some length his unwilling incarceration in a military hospital, his forced questioning while under the influence of sodium pentothal, and his resistance to military attempts to "treat" him with electric shock therapy. The incident is described briefly on page 184 of ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY. (For a copy of the transcript send \$2.00 and a self addressed, stamped envelope to Stan White. Proceeds, if any, will be used to help support the newsletter. Names are deleted for privacy.) Regarding the writer's claimed ignorance of a prolonged and comprehensive coverup, that and much of the supporting evidence is described in detail in chapter nine of the book.

And then there are complaints from strangers that the newsletter is not radical enough. A man in Oregon wrote angrily to imagine that we must be "shedding tears for Moshe Dayan who has just died without being brought to justice....At least the Dispossessed Palestinians know who their enemy is!" And an angry reader in Missouri dispatched 5,000 words breathlessly excoriating Ennes, White, Mumford, et al, for failing to display a suitable degree of good, Christian, stomach-churning rancor.

If the far right thinks we are too far left, and the far left thinks we are too far right, probably we are somewhere in the moderate middle, which we think is a reasonable place to be.

#### TAPS

Shipmate Timothy P. Areen died in a drowning accident while fishing.  
Shipmate J. C. Solston, Jr. died of cancer.  
Shipmate Donald Herold died in 1980 of a heart attack.

I am a former sister-in-law of Petty Officer Donald Herold. Donald was one of those critically injured by the vicious, deliberate attack on the Liberty. Donald died of a heart attack in April of 1980. His life since the attack was spent in poor health. When he died it was over quickly. What happened to Donald on the Liberty was only one of the many tragic events of his life. Donald was loved by us and the rest of his many in-laws. He was so likeable, with a heart of gold. He will always be missed.

Mrs. K. F. Glauford



## THE COVERUP CONTINUES

Defense Electronics magazine published in their October edition a major article by James Ennes entitled: Assault on the Liberty: Israeli Attack on U.S. Ship Reveals Failure of Command, Control and Communications. This is an expanded version of a similar article that was first commissioned by the Journal of Electronic Defense and then rejected for fear of advertiser reaction in an action which resulted in the resignation of the JED's editor.

The revised article, appearing in JED's major competitor, Defense Electronics, was to have been mentioned by Ted Koppel on ABC NIGHTLINE at the time of publication. Unfortunately, however, at least two overzealous souls learned of the planned story and called ABC to confirm the intent to mention the Liberty on the air. Apparently the queries reached ABC top management. Top Koppel went suddenly "on vacation" the evening the story was to have been aired and the Liberty story was killed. We have been told that a single ABC executive systematically kills any story that might include mention of the Liberty affair.

Publishers of Defense Electronics (EW Communications, 1170 East Meadow Drive, Palo Alto, California 94303) advise that single copies of the magazine are available for \$5.00. For reprints of the eight page article call Susan Thrasher at 415 494-2800, ext 87, or write to her at the same address. Ms. Thrasher reports that call for reprints is unusually heavy.

The Concord Monitor in Concord, New Hampshire ran an opinion piece about the Liberty by a local resident along with a rebuttal by the area Israeli Lobby spokesman who claimed that the Liberty was attacked because it resembled an Egyptian freighter. Ennes sent a counter rebuttal which was not printed. Monitor's Asst. Editor Tom Gerber explained later that Ennes's letter did not run because it exceeded the newspaper's 700 word limit. In fact, the letter was well under 700 words. We believe it was blocked because of factual content, not for its length.

The Peninsula Times Tribune of Palo Alto, California, ran a number of letters by a spokesman for Israel who criticized references to "a worn out piece of ancient history. Everyone knows that the bombing of the Liberty was an accident."

Jim Ennes, Stan White, Ron Grantski and at least one Palo Alto resident all responded with statements that the attack was no accident. Grantski said, "If your writer wants the truth she should support a request to reopen an inquiry into the attack to settle the matter once and for all."

Not unexpectedly, the editor let the Israeli spokesman have the last word and rejected all letters with an opposing viewpoint. A regular reader of the newspaper tells us that the newspaper continues to run strongly pro-Israeli letters but rarely finds room for other opinions.

So much for objective reporting in the American news media.

## ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

By James M. Ennes, Jr.

## THE TRUE STORY OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON AN AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SHIP

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# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

Volume I, Issue #2

September/October 1981

**Editors:**

Jim Ennes, Post Office Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 Phone: 206 788-3519  
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## **WASHINGTON, D.C., IS THE PLACE**

**Reunion Planning Continues.** More than 90% of the responses received have designated Washington, D.C., as the first choice for the planned 1982 reunion of USS Liberty survivors. Unless some unexpected obstacle develops, the reunion will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 5 and 6, 1982, with some activities probably set for Friday or Monday as well.

The hotel offers single rooms for \$50, doubles for \$60, and can provide facilities for a reception, banquet, cocktails and other activities. A forthcoming newsletter will establish a deadline for making reservations and will provide the name of a contact at the hotel and further details needed for advance registration.

**Agenda is Wide Open.** The schedule for the reunion is open to allow suggestions from members. Early on the schedule should be a membership meeting to determine whether we should organize a permanent USS LIBERTY VETERANS ORGANIZATION. If the vote is affirmative, we will need to elect officers, establish dues, consider by-laws, and generally to get organized. Proxies will be available for survivors who subscribe to the newsletter but cannot attend the business meeting.

**Suggestions are wanted.** Meanwhile, all survivors, whether they plan to attend or not, are invited to suggest activities for the reunion. One suggestion is that we request a tour of the Navy Cryptologic Museum. That museum, on Nebraska Avenue near American University, includes a memorial to the men who died during the attack on the USS Liberty. Another possibility is a visit to the final resting

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places of fourteen Liberty men at Arlington National Cemetery. Perhaps the Navy Chaplain from the Navy Chapel on Nebraska Avenue will agree to accompany our group to the cemetery. Some men hope to call on their members of Congress. Perhaps an organized visit can be arranged. Some men hope to discuss the attack and coverup with members of the press; while it would not be suitable to include reporters and other strangers in our private meetings, a special meeting could be arranged either elsewhere in the hotel or possibly at the National Press Club. All these things are possibilities for which we need discussion and feedback. All survivors are encouraged to write or phone Stan White with their views and suggestions on these things.

#### FEEDBACK

What is the "Few Friends" Part? A survivor asked about a purpose of the newsletter "to keep survivors and friends informed," and asks, "What good is the press corps and members of Congress?" He believes that "everyone should appreciate" the news contained in the letter, but has grave reservations about any possible presence of strangers in what should be a private social affair.

The comments are well taken. It is not the intention of anyone to invite the press, Congressmen or other strangers to the reunion. The newsletter was addressed to a number of newsmen, Congressmen, senior military officers, editors and other interested citizens who have shown an interest in the Liberty affair, but only Liberty crewmen have been invited to the reunion. Many recipients of the newsletter are able to help with publicity needed to locate other crewmen; others are senior military officers and leading citizens who are known to be interested. All are potential subscribers to the newsletter, and their paid subscriptions are helping to pay the bills for this remarkably expensive undertaking. The address "Survivors and friends" was intended to recognize such friends.

For example, a note from a "friend": I am a Jewish American. I enclose my \$100 check payable to "The USS LIBERTY Newsletter."

I believe that suppression of the truth is not in the interest of the United States, not in the interest of Jewish Americans, and not really in the long run interest of the State of Israel as it could encourage them to think they can do anything and that the United States will still continue to back them completely and uncritically.

I want you to understand that I strongly desire the continued existence of the Jewish State of Israel, but one living in peace and security and doing unto others as it would have others do unto it.

Keep up your good work. Feel free to solicit me again.

(name withheld by request)

A very similar note came from a Jewish subscriber in Maine. A man in New York sent \$90 and pledged another \$100. If we depended upon the few known Liberty subscribers alone, we would be unable to publish this newsletter. The "friends" are what make it possible. We agree, however, that the name we used is confusing and will look for a better one. Any suggestions? USS Liberty Veterans Organization?



## Liberty Crewmen Speak Out

I'll never forget the experiences I had aboard the Liberty, the friends I made and the countries I visited. I honestly believe these experiences have helped me to understand life and enjoy it to the fullest, to understand the cruelties of man, along with his friendship and loyalty.

I want to say thank you to the ship and the men aboard her who were more than friends. They were brothers in a time when we all needed brothers.

Ron F. Grantski

I just received the first issue of the Liberty Newsletter and want to give you a pat on the back for a newsletter well written. I had the 8-12 watch up forward on the starboard side and recall talking to Quartermaster Brown about the low level air surveillance planes. I saw two that were flying not more than 1,400 feet high. I remember Brown saying, "It's OK, Cosmo (my nickname), they have been reported." Unfortunately, Brown died later in the attack. Good luck with the reunion.

William E. Casper

A former shipmate called to tell me about the reunion and the newsletter, and it was interesting to learn that my friend had the same problems after the attack that I had. Much has already been said about what happened that day, and I thought you might be interested in a more personal perspective.

I think everyone aboard felt grief, anger, hatred, bitterness and just about every emotion before they finally became numb somehow. I think most of those on board that day spent some time in prayer. I know I did. I made some promises and failed to live up to them, and I did not again know peace until I made good on those promises.

I absolutely feel that what happened to my life that day was God's Will. I harbor no ill feeling toward the nation of Israel--now. The peace that I sought from a bottle of liquor became torment. The strength and confidence that I found in myself to handle my life my way just turned into further pain. I have not had a drink of alcohol for nearly six years and literally thank God for that. I have come to know another Jew, the Source of Peace, the Fountain of Life, Jesus Christ. Adjusting to Navy life was easy compared to becoming a "normal" civilian again after separation. Our Lord had a program that is out of this world. He is the only way I have found. Praise the Lord!

Richard G. Mumford

The USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER is published by Survivors of the USS LIBERTY, Post Office Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072. For a subscription, send ten dollars to USS LIBERTY NEWSLETTER, Route 2, Box 32, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069.

## USS LIBERTY IN THE NEWS

James Jackson Kilpatrick mentioned the Liberty in his syndicated column on August 29, 1981. In an essay arguing that Saudi Arabia should be allowed to buy AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) airplanes from the United States, Kilpatrick suggests that "the AWACS would be sitting ducks for Israeli fighters--and as the incident of the USS Liberty made clear in 1967, the presence of American airmen aboard the AWACS would not deter the Israelis' trigger fingers."

Garry Wills mentioned the attack in his syndicated column on August 24 in connection with a discussion of the Israeli attack on the Libyan reactors. Wills reports that an earlier mention of the Liberty affair brought angry reactions from some readers who "made it sound as if I were committing an aggression by mentioning the name of our ship. Three correspondents defended the Israeli attack by calling our ship's presence in neutral waters 'provocative.' We had been warned to stay away. Israel was about to launch its attack on Syria, and did not want us listening in."

Shana Alexander mentioned the attack on her syndicated television show, "What's Happening, America?", on about August 31. Apparently using Anthony Pearson as a source, Ms. Alexander reported that Liberty was attacked because she had uncovered an Israeli attempt to lure Jordanian forces to the West Bank through imitative deception, and that the U.S. had warned Israel to knock it off.

The English Language International Daily News published in Rome for English speaking readers throughout Europe printed a review of Assault on the Liberty on August 5, 1981. The review, by author/correspondent George Weller, calls the book timely "because of public pledges by Israel that they will attack the AWAC radar warning planes bought by Saudi Arabia and manned by American crews. The question is: Will Reagan obey rules of surveillance determined by Israel in the air as well as at sea?"

Defense Electronics, the Palo Alto based and internationally respected journal of electronic warfare, has confirmed that they will publish an important article by your editor, James Ennes, in the October issue. This is the same article that was earlier solicited and then rejected by The Association of Old Crows, publishers of the Journal of Electronic Defense. The issue of Defense Electronics will be released in time for the annual convention of the Association of Old Crows to be held 12-16 October in Washington, D.C., and should generate some hard questions about the editorial courage of the Old Crows.

ABC NIGHTLINE, the national late-evening news show from ABC studios in New York, has offered to release Ennes's Defense Electronics story about the attack on the Liberty to coincide with release of the magazine. That broadcast, barring possible schedule changes, should be aired Wednesday, October 7. This will be the first mention on national television of any crewmember's version of the attack.

Larry King, the nationally syndicated radio talkshow host with eight million listeners and over 200 radio stations, interviewed Ennes for two hours last year. Recently a listener called King on the air to ask to buy a tape of the broadcast, and was told by Larry King that tapes were not available, but that Ennes would be interviewed again soon. Since we were unaware of any such plan, a friend in Washington, D.C., called the studio to learn more about the interview and to confirm Ennes's willingness to appear again. The friend could not get past a male producer with a Jewish name who was extremely hostile to the suggestion of any



possible reinterview of Ennes and who assured the caller that Ennes would not again appear on the Larry King Show. "If Larry said that," the producer insisted, "he was talking off the top of his head and he was wrong." We wonder if Larry King is aware of his producer's heavy-handed slarming of this door.

### NAVY CRYPTOLOGIC VETERANS ASSOCIATION REUNION

The Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association, the association of U.S. Navy and Marine Corps cryptologic personnel, expects 200 members to attend the second annual NCVA reunion which will be held in Pensacola, Florida, on October 15, 16 & 17. The guest speaker will be Rear Admiral Paul W. Dillingham, Commander of the Naval Security Group Command. Membership in the Association, which is available to all former Navy cryptologists including all former members of Liberty's Research Operations Department, costs \$10 annually and includes a subscription to a fine quarterly newsletter. For an additional three dollars, members may buy a roster with the names and addresses of 3,000 cryptologic veterans.

The reunion requires a \$32 registration fee, and rooms at special rates of \$28 and \$35 can be reserved by calling the Sheraton Inn in Pensacola toll free at 800 325-3535. For more information write NCVA Vice President Al Pelletier at 203 Park Avenue, S.E. Milton, Florida 32570, or call Al at 904 623-8341.

### WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO SEAMAN DUEA?

Due to confusion, typing errors, sudden transfers, deaths and other problems, no two June 1967 rosters of the Liberty crew are identical. But one man seems to have vanished altogether. CTSN Duea worked in the materiel division of the Research Operations Department. His division chief petty officer was Stan White; his division officer was Jim Ennes. Stan's pocket muster list includes Duea's name both before and after the attack, and both Ennes and White recall Duea (pronounced "Dewey"). Inexplicably, however, his name does not appear on any of the several rosters we have seen, nor on transfer lists or lists of wounded, nor on the Navy Historian's official list of men who were aboard during the attack. Anyone who can clear up the mystery, or who recalls Duea's first name or home town, is invited to call or write.

### LAST MINUTE NOTE

A phone call to ABC NIGHTLINE brought a sharp report from a producer that Liberty will not be mentioned on that show. Last year ABC killed a Liberty segment scheduled for Good Morning America. The coverup continues?

### ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY

By James M. Ennes, Jr.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON AN AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SHIP

Educational reading.

SHIPMATE

Reads like a thriller. - THE WASHINGTON POST

A tribute to the Navy; the first book in decades that makes the reader take pride in American servicemen; one of the finest accounts of combat at sea; the most important book you'll read this year.

- THE HARTFORD COURANT

A painful but instructive reading exercise.

- THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

A lively, thoroughly researched account.

- ADLAI E. STEVENSON III

An important contribution... should be read by our policy makers and the public.

- J.W. FULBRIGHT

Every American should read Assault on the Liberty. - ADMIRAL THOMAS H. MOORER, USN (Ret.)

Random House \$13.95

For postpaid, signed copy send \$15

to Assault Book,

P.O. Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072

(206) 487-2531



## SHOULD THE GRAVESTONE BE REPLACED?

Grave #1817, Section 34, of Arlington National Cemetery is the final resting place of former shipmates Jerry Goss, Lawrence Hayden, James Lupton, David Marlborough, Carl Nygren and Jack Raper. The stone is evasively inscribed: "Died in the Eastern Mediterranean June 8, 1967", with no suggestion how the men died.

Historian R.K. Smith, who has written about the attack in the U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, has told us that he finds the evasion disgraceful. "From reading the inscription," Smith says, "you'd think these men died in a taxicab accident in Istanbul or a whorehouse fire in Beirut, rather than honorably in combat."

Another who is shocked by the misleading inscription is Commander X. Bender Tansill, USN, retired, of Chevy Chase, Maryland. Commander Tansill visits the grave periodically to honor our fallen shipmates, and last June 8, the 14th anniversary of the attack, he led a simple memorial ceremony at the gravesite.

Commander Tansill hopes to generate interest in replacing the headstone with one that reads: "Killed in action aboard the USS Liberty, June 8, 1967" or other suitable wording. First he must obtain permission from the next-of-kin, then he must raise perhaps \$3,000. Others who support him, as we do, may contact him at 4601 North Park Avenue, #705, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815.

Liberty Crew  
Remembered

A memorial has been dedicated at the Naval Security Group headquarters in Washington, D.C., to honor the Technical Research Ship USS Liberty (AGTR 5) and 34 crewmen who died on board on June 8, 1967. Captain William L. McGonagle, Liberty's commanding officer, and Mrs. P. M. Armstrong, widow of the ship's executive officer, unveiled the memorial listing the names and hometowns of the dead, a Presidential Unit Citation pennant, photograph of the ship, the ship's wheel, and photograph of Capt. McGonagle.

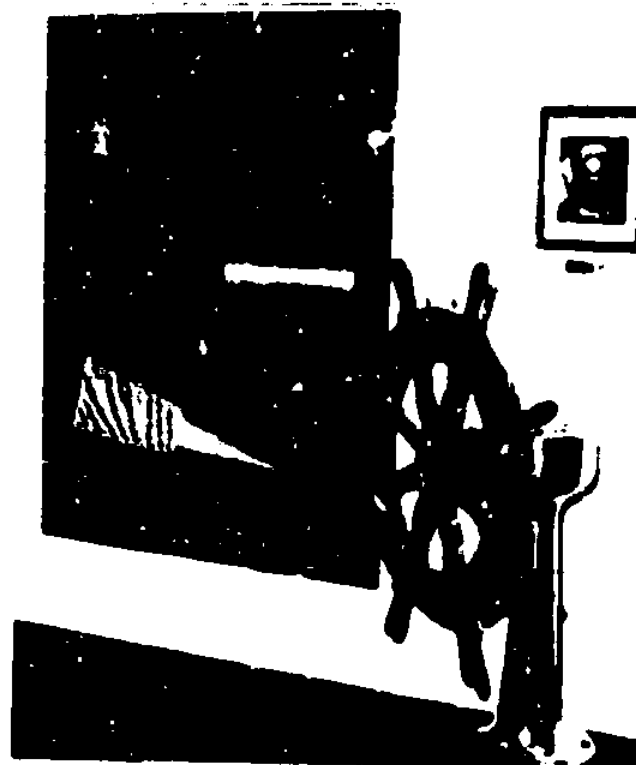
McGonagle (since retired), speaking on behalf of the crew, expressed pride in his men and their sacrifice. He said, "These are the kind of men who have made the Navy what it is today and what it has been through the years. They held important positions of trust, duty, and responsibility and they car-

Few Americans are aware that the men who died aboard the USS Liberty are honored in a permanent memorial in the Navy Cryptologic Museum, also known as the Admiral Benger Museum. The museum is classified top secret and is not open to the public. This announcement appeared in the September, 1977, issue of ALL HANDS, published by the Navy Chief of Information.

ried them out under the most trying conditions. . . ."

Liberty was the victim of mistaken identity and came under attack by Israeli air and naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean Sea during the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967. The attack and resulting struggle to keep the ship afloat took a toll of 34 killed and 170 injured.

McGonagle earned the Medal of Honor, four crewmembers received the Silver Star Medal, seven were awarded the Bronze Star Medal and two earned the Navy Commendation Medal for their roles in saving the ship and helping their shipmates.



According to our records, Liberty crewmen won thirty-eight awards for heroism, including Navy Cross awards to Philip Armstrong and David Skolak.

# **The USS Liberty Newsletter**

Volume 1, Issue #1

August, 1981

Editors.

Jim Ennes, Post Office Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072 Phone: 206 788-3519  
Stan White, Route 2, Box 32, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069 Phone: 605 624-5129

## REUNION PLANNED FOR SURVIVORS OF USS LIBERTY

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, LIBERTY SURVIVORS JIM ENNES AND STAN WHITE HAVE BEEN WORKING TO ORGANIZE A REUNION OF THEIR FELLOW SURVIVORS OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON THE USS LIBERTY. THE REUNION IS TENTATIVELY SET FOR THE WEEKEND OF 5 & 6 JUNE, 1982, IN WASHINGTON, D.C., AND WILL PRECEDE BY TWO DAYS THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON THE SHIP NEAR GAZA IN 1967.

THIS FLEDGLING NEWSLETTER, ADDRESSED TO ALL SURVIVORS WHOSE ADDRESSES ARE KNOWN AND TO A FEW FRIENDS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE ATTACK AND SUBSEQUENT COVERUP, IS THE VEHICLE THAT WILL BE USED TO KEEP IN TOUCH.

## REUNION PLANNING

Preferences Solicited: As this is written, about 87 men have been heard from. These include all of the officers except Watson and Bennett, many of the chiefs, and a scattering of men from every rating and every department of the ship. A few men are still on active duty, some have retired from the Navy, and others are doing everything from sorting mail to managing the Port of Tacoma. Most of the men we have heard from promise to attend the reunion, and most promise to batter down doors and overcome all obstacles in order to get there. We are eagerly tracking down leads to the remaining 165 or so, however, and we need all the help we can get. If any readers are in touch with any of the men we have not contacted, or know how they might be reached, please try to tell them about the reunion or let us know how to find them. We must find the men by ourselves because the law, due to Privacy Act restrictions, cannot provide any addresses.

A Permanent USS LIBERTY organization. If we can raise enough money to pay postage and printing costs (which so far have been paid out of your editors' household budgets), we hope to publish this newsletter regularly to keep interested survivors and friends informed of what others are doing, and to provide a forum for exchange of views among the group. We hope to form a permanent USS LIBERTY organization through this newsletter to help LIBERTY survivors keep in touch with one another even after this reunion. If funds permit, we hope to publish a membership roster for the exclusive benefit of former LIBERTY crewmen.

Approval Sought for Washington, D.C., location: If we are to proceed with planning for the reunion, we need your immediate approval of the proposed date and location. We propose to hold the reunion at the Hotel Washington in Washington, D.C. The hotel has offered to accommodate our large group at special rates of \$50 for a single room, \$60 for a double, and can provide for a banquet and for a reception on the terrace at going rates if we desire. The Washington location provides some excellent sightseeing, and also provides easy access to members of Congress and to the Washington press corps, many of whom are intensely interested in our experiences. Also, there is a possibility, though far from a certainty, that funds could be solicited from Washington businesses and veterans' groups to help defray the costs. All that will be explored further and presented for your consideration in further issues of this newsletter once we have agreement from enough Liberty survivors to assure that the reunion can be held.

Other Locations Are Possible: For those who prefer another location, we have also had offers from:

RAMADA O'HARE INN, Chicago, offers single or double rooms for \$48 per night and will provide free use of a penthouse suite for meetings.

HOLIDAY INN, City Center, Kansas City, Missouri, offers single or double rooms for \$44 per night.

INTERNATIONAL INN, Washington, D.C., can accommodate our group and offers single or double rooms for \$60 per night.

Within ten days, please return the coupon on the last page of this newsletter to indicate your plans and preferences. We must let the hotel know of our choice within the next few days. Once we have selected the hotel, someone will be

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contacting those interested within a few weeks to confirm reservation plans. Until then all inquiries are for planning purposes and there is no obligation, although please be fairly certain of intentions so that our planning will be reasonably accurate. It is important that we hear from everyone immediately, as we will be asking the hotel to hold a large block of rooms during a peak tourist season, and the hotel will require many months' notice.

If There Are Questions: If anyone has questions, call or write either Ennes or White at the address listed in this newsletter. If you write, please be certain to enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope, as it has become prohibitive for us to bear the postage budget for this project.

#### LETTERS SOLICITED FOR PUBLICATION

Several LIBERTY survivors have told us stories that deserve to be given wider circulation. At least five men have vividly described their recollections of watching the Israeli torpedo boats machinegun our liferafts in the water--an incident that Israeli spokesmen heatedly deny. Many LIBERTY men recall quite intense low-level air surveillance preceding the attack (and even relatively sanitized State Department files show eight separate surveillance missions), while Israeli spokesmen baldly insist publicly that there was no reconnaissance against our ship at all. A man told us of being trapped on an open deck during the air attack and being pursued by an Israeli pilot who maneuvered to strafe him repeatedly, apparently bent on the sport of destroying one defenseless sailor; the bullets came so close that they tore off his oxygen breathing apparatus, but the man escaped unhurt.

Men have told us of detecting Israeli aircraft with rockets aimed at our ship as much as 16 hours before the shooting started, and others have told us of hearing the Israeli reconnaissance aircraft informing their headquarters by radio before the attack that we were an American ship flying the American flag. At least three men were confined against their will in a mental institution where they were drugged and quizzed by government agents about their recollections of the attack. A senior CIA analyst told us of forwarding a report to the White House which reported the CIA's conclusion that the attack was deliberately conducted against a vessel known by the Israelis to be American. Many men have told shocking stories of illegal harassment and orders to discuss the attack with no one, not even with members of their immediate families, and some men have told us of emotional problems that resulted from this inability to discuss a major and traumatic incident in their lives. Many accounts of heroism went unrecorded and almost unnoticed in the confusion following the attack, and these deserve to be printed.

We believe that many of these stories deserve to be published as first-hand accounts. We invite survivors to submit brief reports of their experiences, thoughts, opinions, and reflections, before, during or after the attack, for publication in this newsletter. Such contributions, while eagerly solicited, cannot be returned and cannot be paid for. We reserve the right to condense or edit all contributions.

Letters and articles intended for publication should be sent to Friends and Survivors of the USS LIBERTY, Post Office Box 789, Woodinville, Washington 98072.

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## USS LIBERTY NEWS

## The Coverup Continues

Assault on the Liberty, by James Ennes, published by Random House in 1980, continues to be suppressed by every known Israeli spokesman and pro-Israeli organization. As a result, despite scores of rave reviews and dozens of strong endorsements from national leaders including two retired chiefs of naval operations, four U.S. senators and virtually every military journal, the book is almost impossible to buy.

Israeli Spokesmen Claim Ennes's Book is a Monumental Lie

Recently, for instance, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in Washington told a caller that the book is "a put up job, all lies, and was financed by the National Association of Arab Americans." The truth, of course, is that there is solid documentation for every statement in the book, and we never met an Arab until a few weeks ago when an Arab-American group invited us to speak. No one has financed this book, and no one but LIBERTY survivors helped produce it.

Israeli spokesmen, however, deny the story presented in the book despite overwhelming documentation. The tactic, usually, is to write or telephone newsrooms, radio announcers, book reviewers, and radio and television station managers, to complain that Assault on the Liberty is untrue and unworthy of mention. Although about 50 radio and television stations and perhaps 150 newspapers and magazines have ignored the pressure (or covered the story before pressure was applied), all the major national news magazines and all the national television networks have rejected the story, as has every book reviewer in New York City.

Usually, Israeli spokesmen simply reassert the original excuse of 1967 that the LIBERTY was mistaken for an Egyptian freighter, and they ignore all of the evidence and documentation in the book which they dismiss simply as "wrong" or "lies".

Remarkably, although Israeli spokesmen seem to see Israel as a "target" of the book, readers know that Ennes actually directs relatively little venom at Israel. He sees the attack as a deliberate, ruthless, and unforgivable act, but at least an understandable act of desperation on the part of a very senior Israeli military leader. Most of Ennes's wrath is directed, not at Israel, but at the American military and civilian leaders who failed to protect the ship once it came under fire and who conducted a shameful coverup after it was over.

Strong Military Support

Despite the fact that American failures are the primary targets of the book, most of the support for the story has come from senior American military leaders and from such official and unofficial military organizations as the Naval Institute, Naval War College, Navy League, Naval Academy Alumni Association, Military Order of the World Wars, Knights of Malta, and some in-house Defense Department publications which have reviewed the book favorably up to the top secret level.

News Coverage Suppressed

We have seen some stunning examples of the power of the Israeli public affairs apparatus to control news not to their liking. Shortly after the book was

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published Ennes was invited to an interview on the nationally televised ABC Good Morning America show. A specific date was set for the appearance, and the producer promised to invite Rick Aimetti and Duilio Demori as well, since both men live in New York, but first the network intended to inform the Israeli Embassy of the planned interview to give them a chance to appear on the show or to register a complaint. And complain they did! The interview was scratched.

More recently Ennes was invited to prepare a presentation for the top-rated CBS Sixty Minutes program. A producer asked him to summarize the case made in the book and to send some supporting documentation. The final decision, after apparently being approved at lower and intermediate levels, got bumped to CBS management for approval. A story about the USS LIBERTY is simply too sensitive to be approved by anyone at the working levels. The show was rejected. LIBERTY survivors will quake at the grounds for rejection: CBS management rejected the proposal to do a story on the USS LIBERTY because, they insisted, the story has been "thoroughly covered by CBS news, including interviews with the crew."

Just a few days ago Ennes was invited to write a guest editorial for the Journal of Electronic Defense, published by the Association of Old Crews for distribution to leading government officials, members of Congress, senior military officers, defense executives and the like. True to form, after the editorial was accepted by the editor, it was rejected by the publisher on the ground that the political situation was too sensitive to allow publication of a discussion of the LIBERTY story. The editor, complaining that this is exactly the mentality that has kept this story from public knowledge for fourteen years, quit his job in protest--but not without getting in a parting shot in the final issue which described the LIBERTY coverup as "one of the most shameful coverups" in American history. To our great glee, however, another publication, with a similar but somewhat larger readership, has picked up the editorial and will publish it soon.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Delay of Air Support: Since the book was published we have seen nothing to refute any of the important details presented there, and much to support them. One of the key charges in the book is that the Sixth Fleet simply failed to come to the ship's defense. Ennes charges that the first rescue effort was launched about fifteen minutes after the attack started, but was recalled by order of the White House, and that a second rescue flight was not authorized until ninety more minutes had passed. Meanwhile, twenty-five men died from a torpedo blast which probably could have been prevented if the Sixth Fleet had been allowed to do its job.

Recently we have heard from two retired admirals and a commanding officer of a major combatant who verify that story. The story, pieced together from their on-the-scene accounts, is that LIBERTY's call for help, after breaking through Israeli jamming, was first heard by operators on the carrier SARATOGA. The communication officer brought the message to SARATOGA's commanding officer, Captain Joseph Tully, on the bridge. Captain Tully immediately turned SARATOGA into the wind and passed LIBERTY's message to Admiral Martin by voice radio on the Primary Tactical Circuit (Pri-Tac), since he knew that Admiral Martin was on the Flag Bridge conducting a maneuvering drill. Admiral Martin immediately directed SARATOGA and AMERICA to launch aircraft to defend LIBERTY, but when the launch order was executed, only SARATOGA launched. AMERICA launched some F4s for fleet air defense (these were the aircraft that some men aboard the AMERICA mistakenly thought were armed with

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nuclear weapons, since it was widely known that nuclear armed aircraft were in a ready status), but AMERICA failed to launch any aircraft to defend LIBERTY. Captain Tully in SARATOGA flashed a "WTH?" to Captain Engen in the America, but received no reply. Moments later SARATOGA's twelve aircraft were recalled without explanation by Admiral Geis, who commanded the carrier task force. AMERICA, which had no conventional armament in position, started bringing up weapons from below decks; SARATOGA, meanwhile, was ordered to wait, apparently while White House authority was granted to use lethal force to protect LIBERTY. Finally AMERICA armed its aircraft, authority was granted to use them to save American lives, and the second batch of aircraft was launched at 1545, about 96 minutes after the first Sixth Fleet unit acknowledged our call for help and much too late to be effective. Before the aircraft arrived near LIBERTY, however, Israel--no doubt aware of the rescue effort since it was openly discussed on plain language radio--sent a hasty apology to the United States and the second flight of aircraft was recalled, since it was presumed to be no longer needed, and LIBERTY didn't even get a fly-over to see if she was still afloat.

This very reliable and thoroughly provable scenario is similar to the one told in the book, but provides some fascinating details previously unknown and helps to clarify the issue of the possible launch of nuclear armed aircraft. The delayed reaction to LIBERTY's call (nay, the non-reaction to LIBERTY's call) is the aspect of this story which should be of primary interest to military planners and government officials. Unfortunately for Americans, intense and continuing pressure from the Israel Lobby has so intimidated our elected officials that no government body is yet willing to ask why the USS LIBERTY was not protected while under fire.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION IS STILL POSSIBLE:** The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has turned away from a LIBERTY inquiry. Nevertheless, several members of Congress have written recently in support of a call for an investigation, and there is a fair possibility that some brave member will strike out on his own.

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**FOR PROMPT DELIVERY** of a copy of Assault on the Liberty, signed by the author, phone 206 487-2531 or send \$15 to Snitty's Book Store, Bothell, Washington 98011.

-----  
 Name.....Address.....  
 I plan to attend the LIBERTY reunion..... YES NO  
 A reunion at the Hotel Washington in Washington, DC, is OK with me.. ( ) ( )  
 I'll be there, but I'll make my own lodging arrangements..... ( ) ( )  
 I prefer a reunion at another location (specify)..... ( ) ( )  
 But I'll attend in Washington if the majority agree..... ( ) ( )  
 I plan to bring my wife..... ( ) ( )  
 Please list my name and address in a membership roster to be sent  
 only to other LIBERTY crewmen, and send me a copy..... ( ) ( )  
 I enclose \$10 to help pay for keeping in touch with my shipmates and  
 to provide for the continued receipt of this newsletter. (With-  
 out the \$10 the newsletter must stop & planning will be hampered.)

Mail this coupon to Stan White, Friends & Survivors of the USS LIBERTY, Route 2,  
 Box 32, Vermillion, South Dakota 57069.



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February 10, 1986  
Our reference: AG

Mr. James M. Ennes, Jr.  
Historian  
U.S. Liberty Veterans Association  
P. O. Box 789  
Woodinville, WA 98072

Dear Mr. Ennes:

It is my pleasure to acknowledge, with many  
thanks, receipt of the material mentioned below. We  
deeply appreciate your kindness in sending this material  
to the Library of Congress.

Sincerely,

Peter H. Bridge  
Chief

The material received:

The USS Liberty Newsletter  
Volume 1, number 2, December 1985

We will very much appreciate your placing our name on the complimentary  
mailing list to receive any available issues and future issues as published.  
A franked label is enclosed.

James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers

4



U. S. NAVY  
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—

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FM NAVCOMHUNT NAPLES

TO CNO

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SECRET U.S. EYES ONLY

FOR CAPT KING, OP0021 INFO ADM MCCAIN, CDR MCGONAGLE FROM  
ADM KIDD  
LIBERTY

1. REQ ADD FOLLOWING AMPLIFICATION AS APPROPRIATE ADDENDUM TO LIBERTY INQUIRY PURSUANT YOUR REQ FOR AMPLIFYING FACTS.
2. FOLLOWING ATTESTED TO BY CO LIBERTY CDR MCGONAGLE, CTC THOMPSON, AND SIGNALMAN DAVID THROUGH CDR MCGONAGLE.
3. VISUAL SIGNALLING NOTED BY C.O. AND SIGNALMAN DAVID (SUBSEQUENTLY WOUNDED AND HOSPITALIZED) DURING PT RUN-IN WAS NOT REPEAT NOT DISTINGUISHABLE THROUGH SMOKE/FLAME.
4. ALLEGED AA FROM PT'S WAS NOT REPEAT NOT READ BY LIBERTY PRIOR TORPEDO HIT.
5. CTC THOMPSON RECALLS REACHING POSITION ON LIBERTY BRIDGE SOMETIME AFTER TORPEDO HIT. THOMPSON NOW ESTIMATES TIME ARRIVAL ON BRIDGE SOME NINE TO TEN MINUTES AFTER TORPEDO HIT.
6. C.O. DID NOT REPEAT NOT ORDER AA SENT TO PT'S SINCE HE KNEW WHO THEY WERE, HAVING SIGHTED STAR OF DAVID INSIGNIA.
7. THOMPSON SAYS FIRST IDENTIFIABLE VISUAL TRANSMISSION FROM PT'S READ BY ANYONE ON LIBERTY WAS "DO YOU NEED HELP" FOLLOWED BY "DO YOU WANT US TO STAND BY" WHEN BOATS HAD PULLED CLEAR OF SMOKE OBSTRUCTED BEARING AFTER REPEAT AFTER TORPEDO HIT.
8. THOMPSON STATES AFTER ALDIS LAMP UNLIMBERED, WHICH WAS

302(1) VIA 9481SF ...ACT  
FILE(1) AND NO OTHERS

Encl (3) to CNO Memo Op-002  
000365-67 of 7/7/67

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NAVY MESSAGE

DECLASSIFIED

NAVY DEPARTMENT

AFTER HE GOT TO BRIDGE WHICH WAS AFTER TORPEDO ATTACKS, THE ONLY THING SENT BY LIGHT T. PT'S WAS "NO THANK YOU" IN REPLY TO OFFER OF HELP.

9. SUMMARY:

A. FIRST DISTINGUISHABLE PT VISUAL TRANSMISSION WAS OFFER OF HELP AFTER TORPEDO HIT! ALTHOUGH FLASHING LIGHT FROM CENTER PT WAS OBSERVED INTERMITTENTLY PRIOR THERETO.  
B. NO AA ORDERED OR ACTUALLY SENT FROM LIBERTY TO BEST OF ANYONE'S RECOLLECTION AT THIS TIME.  
C. WITH STBD SIGNAL LITE CAPABILITY WIPED OUT IN AIR ATTACK ALDIS LAMP NOT BROUGHT INTO USE UNTIL AFTER TORPEDO HIT.

10. PRECISE TIME SEQUENCING CONTINUES MOST DIFFICULT AS APPARENT FROM ABOVE; HOWEVER, C.O. AND THOMPSON ARE UNSHAKEABLE IN CONVICTION IMPOSSIBLE READ PT'S LIGHT PRIOR ATTACK AND ON FACT THAT LIBERTY ALDIS LAMP NOT UNLIMBERED UNTIL AFTER TORPEDO HIT. I AM CONVINCED THESE MEN KNOW WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT.

SP-4

NOTE

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REF. NO.	PAGE	OF	PAGE	TIME OF RECEIPT	DATE TIME PROC.
003659/1/TS	2		2	07/0335Z	061222Z JUL

DECLASSIFIED



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COURT OF INQUIRY

convened at London, England

by order of

Commander in Chief

U. S. Naval Forces Europe

To inquire into the circumstances

surrounding an armed attack on

USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) which occurred

at approximately 1400B, 8 June 1967

while steaming in the vicinity of

31°23'N Latitude, 33°25'E Longitude

Ordered on 10 June 1967



**TOP SECRET**

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS

7 JUN 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

SUBJECT: Record of Court of Inquiry into Attack on USS LIBERTY  
(AGTR 5) (U)

Reference: SecNav 20 Apr 68 memo on the above subject, ser 00026

By the reference, SecNav forwarded Copy #3 of the Court of Inquiry for transmittal on loan to the Surveys and Investigations Staff of the House Appropriations Committee in connection with their investigation into the effectiveness of DoD communications.

It is returned herewith as requested in the reference.

Enclosure  
a/s

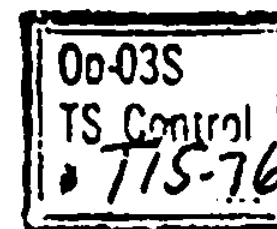
PAUL H. RILEY  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
(Supply and Services)

**DECLASSIFIED**

Classification (cancelled) (Changed to)  
by authority of OPNAV MSG 050100Z 32/731 21 Jun 76  
on 24 June 76 [Signature] JAG Sec Cont

(Date) (Signature) (Rank)  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

OATSD (LA)  
Control No.



Copy 1

TS-70-012

JAG TOP SECRET CONTROL  
NO. CNA 19-68

**TOP SECRET**

UPON REMOVAL OF ATTACHMENTS THIS  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20350

TOP SECRET

00026  
20 APR 1968

TOP SECRET - Downgraded to CONFIDENTIAL when enclosure (1) is removed

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
(INSTALLATIONS & LOGISTICS)

Subj: Record of Court of Inquiry into Attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR 5) (U)

Ref: (a) ASD(I&L) Memorandum of 1 April 1968

Encl: (1) Court of Inquiry Record of the Attack on the USS LIBERTY  
(AGTR 5) (Copy Number 3 of 6 Copies)

(C) Reference (a) requested that a copy of the Navy Court of Inquiry into the Attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR 5) be made available on loan to the Surveys and Investigations Staff of the House Appropriations Committee for use in their investigation into the effectiveness of DOD communications. Reference (a) stated that there was no objection to the release of the JCS messages contained in the Court of Inquiry to the Surveys and Investigations Staff.

(U) Accordingly, a copy of the Court of Inquiry (Copy Number 3) is forwarded for transmittal on loan to that Staff.

(U) Attachment Number 12 to the Inquiry contains photographs of damage done to USS LIBERTY. Copies of these photographs are available for viewing, if required, in the Office of the Judge Advocate General.

(U) When this copy has served its purpose, it is requested that the copy be returned directly to the Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

*Paul R. Ignatius*

PAUL R. IGNATIUS

DECLASSIFIED

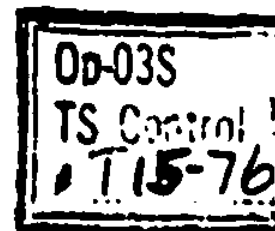
Classification (original) (changed to)  
( ) by authority of ONAV memo S1009D32/T31  
on 29 Jan 1976 (KSP) 21 Jan 1976  
(Date) (Signature) (Mark)

OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

Page 1 of 1 Page  
Copy 1 of 2 Copies

JAG TOP SECRET CONTROL  
NO. CNA 19-69

SecNav Cont. No. 15-236



TOP SECRET  
TOP SECRET

ED I&L CONT NO 85-68



ORIGINAL  
PAGE 2  
(NOT RECORDED)

NOTES

nothing was  
to be done

↓  
LUCAS, P15 : BRIDGE WATCH: CO, BROWN, LUCAS + LAMAR ON PHONE

P21: GOOD CONTACT ON CO.

P22: LUCAS MADE LOG ENTRIES 1446 - 1655

P26: QUINTERO ASKED, "SHOULD I FIRE BACK?"

PAINTER, P56 : POLLARD WAS HIT BY PORT HOLE GLASS

O'HALLEY WAS GOOD AT START OF ATTACK.

57 PAINTER CAME TO BRIDGE BEFORE TORP, THEN LEFT.

SCOTT 60 P-38 TYPE AT 0515 - 3,4 CIRCLES OFF PORT BEAM.

O'HALLEY 68 P-38 CIRCLED BEFORE BTW 1220-1230

KIEFER 78 "IS ANTONY GOING TO HELP US?"

86 "CO WAS A ROCK

THOMPSON 87 ATTACK APPEARED TO LAST 20-30 MINUTES.

LAMKIN 92 SMITH SAID JAMMING

RECORDS - 10-1-1968

C. H.

RECORDS - 10-1-1968  
CONTINUED - 10-1-1968  
by C. H.

Continued - 10-1-1968

by C. H.

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James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers

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XXXX 09510

FFI-3  
8330  
Ser 1588/13  
10 JUNE 1967

APPROPRIATE LETTER

From: Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe  
To: Rear Admiral Isaac C. KIDD, Jr., USN, 111045/1100

Subj: Court of Inquiry to inquire into the circumstances surrounding  
the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-8) on 8 June 1967

Ref: (a) JAG Manual

1. In accordance with section 0902 of Reference (a), a Court of Inquiry is hereby appointed to inquire into the circumstances surrounding an armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-8) which occurred at approximately 1230Z, 8 June 1967, while steaming in the vicinity of 31°33' North Latitude, 35°38' East Longitude. The Court will convene at Headquarters, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe, London, England, at 2000 on 10 June 1967, or as soon thereafter as practicable.

2. The Court shall consist of you as president, and Captain Bernard J. LAUFF, USN, 097651/1100, and Captain Bert M. ATKINSON, Jr., USN, 467088/1100, as members. Captain Ward BOSTON, Jr., USN, 416008/1820, a lawyer qualified in the sense of article 27(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, is hereby designated counsel for the Court, and Lieutenant Commander Allen FEINGERSCH, USN, 112119/1100, is hereby designated assistant counsel for the Court.

3. The Court is directed to inquire into all the pertinent facts and circumstances leading to and connected with the armed attack; damage resulting therefrom; and deaths of and injuries to naval personnel. After deliberation, the Court shall submit its findings of fact.

4. The duty of the Court to designate individuals as parties to the inquiry during the proceedings, when appropriate, is set forth in section 0902 of reference (a).

5. The Court is directed to take the testimony of witnesses under oath and to submit a verbatim record of the proceedings. Military witnesses will be warned of their rights in accordance with article 31 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice prior to the taking of their testimony.

EX

EX "A"



5  
FF 1-3  
6830

6. The Court will conduct its proceedings in closed session.

7. Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe, will furnish the necessary reporters and other clerical assistance to the Court for the purpose of recording the proceedings and preparing the record of this Court of Inquiry.

JOHN A. MCCANN, JR.

Copy to:

CRJ

CINCLANTFLT

COMSIXTHFLT

CAPT Bernard J. LAUFF, USN

CAPT Bert M. ATKINSON, Jr., USN

CAPT Ward BOSTON, USN

LCDR Allen PEDGERSKI, USN

-177- (NAVY)

Let the record show that a Court of Inquiry in its session, convened by Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe at London, England, on 10 June 1967, the date is 10 June 1967.

Present:

Rear Admiral Isaac NICH, U. S. Navy;

Captain Bernard J. LAFFE, U. S. Navy; and

Captain Bert M. ATKINSON, JR., U. S. Navy, Presiding.

Captain Ward Boston, Jr., U. S. Navy, counsel for the court.

I will now read the appointing order, which is prefixed, marked exhibit A. Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe, serial 1500/13 of 10 June 1967, from Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe to Rear Admiral Isaac C. NICH, U. S. Navy, 111003/1100; subject: Court of Inquiry to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LINNET (AGOS-5) on 8 June 1967, reference (a) JAW 11001. In accordance with section 6402 of reference (a), a Court of Inquiry is hereby appointed to inquire into the circumstances surrounding an armed attack on USS LINNET (AGOS-5) which occurred at approximately 1800Z, 8 June 1967, while operating in the vicinity of 31°25' North latitude, 33°25' East longitude. The Court will convene at Headquarters, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe, London, England, at 2000 on 10 June 1967, or as soon thereafter as practicable. The Court shall consist of you as president, and Captain Bernard J. LAFFE, USN, 097001/1100, and Captain Bert M. ATKINSON, Jr., USN, 447050/1100, as members. Captain Ward BOSTON, Jr., USN, 410003/1020, a lawyer qualified in the sense of article 27(c) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, is hereby designated counsel for the Court, and Lieutenant Commander Allen F. HARRISON, USN, 012107/1100, is hereby designated assistant counsel for the Court. The Court is directed to inquire into all the pertinent facts and circumstances leading to and connected with the armed attack, damage resulting therefrom and deaths of and injuries to naval personnel. After deliberation, the Court shall submit its findings of fact. The duty of the Court to designate





A. Yes, as Assistant Chief of Staff. I have the privilege of participating in the daily operations and intelligence briefings held in the Headquarters. An essential part of these briefings are the movements of ships in the NAVELM command area. The LIBERTY passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, entered the Mediterranean, and took a generally easterly course, culminating in the position at which she was hit.

Q. What identification is relevant to the ACIR-5?

A. This ship is a commissioned ship of the United States Navy, designated USS LIBERTY. She is a technical research ship commanded by a line officer.

Q. Do you have in your custody as Assistant Chief of Staff for Communications, any official records from the files of CINCSOUTH concerning the deployment of USS LIBERTY in the Mediterranean?

A. Affirmative, I do. I have with me tonight messages pertaining to communications problems and events prior to and following the time that she was hit.

At this time, Counsel for the Court will request the reporter to mark, as exhibits for the record, these messages which are offered into evidence of the proceedings of this Court of Inquiry. These messages will be marked Exhibits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

There being no objection, the exhibits were received in evidence.

I now request Captain Raish to read these messages.

Captain Raish: Exhibit 1 is a Joint Chiefs of Staff Secret message 011545Z JUN 67 from JCS to USCINCPAC, JCSO, CINCLANTFLT, CINCSOUTH, COMSIXTHFLT, CTF 64, USS LIBERTY, DIRNSA, NSASUR, DIRNAVSECGRU, ADIRNAVSECGRU, DIRNAVSECGRULANT, DIRNAVSECGRUEUR, subject USS LIBERTY SHED, reference DIRNSA G/104/311906Z MAY (NYAL-200). 1. When RFS request sail LIBERTY in accordance with the following schedule: A. 2 June depart Rota. B. 2-8 June ENROUTE VIA GIBRALTAR STRAIT CPA AS PERMITS. THEN VIA NORTHERN AFRICA COASTAL ROUTE TO POSIT 32-00N 33-00E. CAP MOROCCO 1000 8 NM CLAMMED DIST 3 NM. CPA SPAIN TUNISIA SARDINIA SICILY CRETE 7 NM. CLAIMS EFEDIT 6 NM. CPA ALGERIA LIBYA 13 NM CLAMMED DIST 12 NM. C. 9-30 June CONDUCT OPS SOUTH OF 32-00N AND BETWEEN 33-00E AND 34-00E.

Q. From the information in the exhibits, was USS LIBERTY at the time of the attack, at the position that she was ordered to proceed to?

A. Yes, however, she did not receive two key messages which in effect cancelled the orders under which she was operating.

Q. Which are the two key messages you are referring to?

A. JCS 030110Z and COMSIXTHFLT 000917Z.

Q. Will you please explain to the Court, in a narrative manner, the substance of those messages and the applicability of the messages to USS LIBERTY?

A. LIBERTY was operating pursuant to a JCS message, 011545Z June 67, which directed her to proceed to position 29° North, 33° East. These orders were later modified by JCS 072250Z, which specified that the operating area specified in JCS 011545Z was for guidance only and may be varied as local conditions dictate. This message also indicated "change the CPA to UAR to 20 NM and Israel 15 NM. The next message, JCS 030110Z, a Top Secret message directed USCINCPAC to change the operating area of LIBERTY such that she remained at least 100 miles off the coast of Syria, Israel, and UAR, and at least 25 miles off the coast of Cyprus. This message was also info to several addresses including CINCSOUTH, COMSIXTHFLT, and USS LIBERTY. Action on this message was directed to COMSIXTHFLT.

Q. Is there any information available that LIBERTY received the JCS message 030110Z?

A. The LIBERTY did not receive that message.

Q. On what basis do you form that opinion?

A. I form that opinion on the information received from COMSIXTHFLT, who had queried the Captain of the LIBERTY, COMSIXTHFLT 101205Z.

Q. In other words, it is clear and certain that USS LIBERTY did not receive the message directing it to stay outside of 100 miles of the coast?

A. Yes. Additionally, COMSIXTHFLT, by his 000917Z repeated the substance

of the JCS 080110Z when he directed the LIBERTY to comply with the later message.

Q. What response is indicated from the LIBERTY?

A. The LIBERTY did not receive that message either.

Q. As a communications specialist, will you please advise the Court your opinion predicated on the exhibits in evidence, why these two messages were not received by LIBERTY?

A. Yes. The analysis reveals that the JCS message 080110Z, was erroneously routed by the communications center ordering the JCS to NAVCOMSTAPNH for delivery to USS LIBERTY. At 080449 NAVCOMSTAPNH took the correct action and re-routed JCS 080110Z to NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO for delivery to LIBERTY. Up to the current time this message has not arrived at NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO, and we are still attempting to trace the reason for non-delivery to NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO. COMSIXTHFLT's 030917Z which directed LIBERTY to comply with JCS 080110Z and essentially repeated its text as well, was sent from the LITTLE ROCK at 081058. The elapsed time in getting this message off the ship was about one hour and 45 minutes. NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO routed COMSIXTHFLT's message to Asmara via San Pedro Spain Defense Communication System - USAF major relay. At 081200 COMSIXTHFLT's message was received by the U. S. Army Communications Center at Asmara for further relay to NAVCOMSTA ASMARA for placing on the broadcast to USS LIBERTY. At 081215Z the U. S. Army Communications Center Asmara relayed the COMSIXTHFLT message erroneously to NAVCOMSTA GREECE for relay to LIBERTY. At 081506, and there is some question about the preciseness of this time, NAVCOMSTA GREECE returned the COMSIXTHFLT message back to the U. S. Army Communications Center Asmara. At 081510 U. S. Army Communications Center Asmara then relayed the COMSIXTHFLT message correctly to NAVCOMSTA Asmara and it was placed on the broadcast at 081525. Clearly, LIBERTY had not received this message as she was hit at least three hours before.

Q. In recapitulation, the official records from CINCUSNAVEUR, which you have read into these proceedings, indicate that at the time USS LIBERTY



was under attack, she had not received either of these two messages, CONSTANTFLT 050817Z and JCS 050110Z?

A. Yes, that is correct.

Are any members of the Court have questions of the witness?

Captain LAUFF:

Q. Can you give an opinion, based on your experience, as to why these failures to deliver occur in our system?

A. Yes, in my opinion these errors in routing turned out to be human errors on the part of the persons doing the routing in the Communications Center serving the JCS and in the Army Communications Center at Ankara. I would like to further point out that at the time these mis-routes occurred we were several days in a critical situation in the Mid East with a tremendous volume of high precedence traffic being handled and that the undoubtedly young kids who were doing this work were up against traffic volume and probably lack of experience. Communication systems like weapons systems these days are sophisticated but still perform as well as the people who operate them.

Q. Under the conditions such as you have just described, what do you estimate normal delay time of the precedence of the JCS message 050110Z or the CONSTANTFLT message 050817Z - what would be the delay time to the ship on average?

A. It would be unrealistic to give you an average because there are so many contingencies. The DCA has established standards which we use for guidance, however, meeting these standards is difficult to achieve particularly under the circumstances that we have been involved over the past week.

Q. Had the errors connected with the routing of the messages in question not occurred, would the messages have been received by LIBERTY in a timely fashion?

A. The answer to that is yes.

Rear Admiral KIDD:

Do you gentlemen have any more questions?

Yes sir.

Captain, I have two or three questions I would like to ask.

Q. Are all of the terminals in the system related to delivery of the message in question, to the best of your knowledge, now on-line crypto equipped?

A. Affirmative.

Q. Has the introduction of the on-line system, in your experience, introduced a situation where we are perhaps becoming increasingly confident and dependent upon automation in general terms, beyond that which existed before the on-line systems were made a part of the communications network?

A. Yes sir. We are both confident and dependent, and in my opinion this is all to the good due to the increased capability of the system and increased speed of handling message.

Q. Has the incidence rate of identifiable problems typified by these two messages increased, decreased, or remained about the same since the introduction of on-line crypto?

A. I have no way of comparing that sir, this is like saying were there more automobile accidents in the 1947 model automobiles compared to the 1967 automobiles.

Q. I think captain, you have really answered the question indirectly in the affirmative, that there is an increased incidence rate because with the increased capability, has not the volume increased also?

A. It wasn't my intention to give you that impression, sir. Yes, there has been a quantum increase in volume, ergo, the chances for errors would be greater, I grant you that. But on a percentage basis, I doubt it. On the old system, you were dependent on human beings all along the line. Under the new system, of course, you are still dependent on human beings, but in fewer places.

Q. Are the human beings on whom we are depending now of the same or different qualification and experience levels?

A. Depending on the point you make the comparison, but prior to on-line systems we use to have officer coding boards usually made up of junior officers. Now coding boards are generally a thing of the past and enlisted men operating on-line equipment do this work. I would say, quality of personnel in some respects is down, particularly in the communications field, because reenlistments for hard driving communications is not the best. In my opinion, the Navy is accomplishing with youngsters, that is with strikers and third class petty officers, that which commercial communication companies wouldn't attempt to do unless they had personnel with considerably more experience. Efficiency of personnel is a relative thing as I see it, associated with experience. We are operating a sophisticated communications system with a substantial percentage of first term personnel. On the officer side, we are doing the job with essentially a hard corps of LDO's and the rest are young reserve officers, the great majority of whom are short timers.

Q. When a message of the precedence of the two in question is received in a communications terminal, what if any alarms or other signals are used to alert the individuals at the receiving point that a particularly important message has arrived?

A. The communicators are governed by precedences. They do not have the time nor are they expected to analyze texts of messages in addition to determining importance. Flash messages are associated by either alarm bells or a warning light of some kind. As I recall, neither of these were flashed. Operational immediate messages and the practice in communications centers to shout out "op immediate coming through" or something similar so that personnel concerned have their attention drawn to the fact that an op immediate is being processed.

Q. Now, when you have hundreds of op immediate messages arriving in the same center, then I would imagine that this system collapses of its own weight?

A. I wouldn't say it collapses, but human beings might tend to lose respect for the precedence because of its obviously excessive use.



However, wherever I have been, they say "op immediate coming through".  
Sometime several times a minute - they still say it - they try.

Q. The point I am seeking, Captain, relates to the order in which these messages could expect attention by the individual who would first address himself to it after it left the mechanical and electrical machines in order to first identify, in this case, an error in routing indicator.

A. The basic rule of communicators is "first in, first out by precedence". Thus, if there were twenty op immediates in process and the first came in, it would wait its turn and then move along.

Q. Does my recollection serve me correctly, Captain, that during the period of time under consideration, the days preceding, and immediately following, the LIBERTY's attack, the circuits were relatively well choked; or perhaps that is an over-statement with FBIS intercepts and similar traffic transmitted at a very high precedence?

A. We were very busy with traffic of that nature, particularly with FBIS intercepts. All of which were at least op immediate. However, these conditions had little, if anything to do in directly causing the mis-routes.

Q. My point, Captain, is that a mis-routed message arriving - it seems to me would have to wait its turn to find the mis-route and identify it, is that correct?

A. You are correct, sir, it would wait its turn under the first in first out by precedence rule.

Q. My next question, Captain, relates to possible safeguards in the communications system wherein a message originated with a particular precedence and which experienced inordinate delay, what safeguards, if any are available for intermediate stations to raise the precedence where delays have been experienced up to the time of receipt where the delay is identified?

A. Here is where experience counts. An experienced communicator will notice this and do something about it. This is something you can't legislate, sir. A mechanical safeguard is not feasible, but an experienced person can do something about it.

Q. Have you, in your career, had occasion to personally observe instances where precedences have been raised under such circumstances?

A. The assignment of a precedence is the responsibility of the originator, thus the communicators would not raise the precedence per se, however, depending on their experience, they could handle it in a manner as though it had a higher precedence; and this I have seen done often. For example, sir, in many cases there are either direct circuits or the NAVCOMOPREP available and messages can be sent over such circuits and taken out of competition with all other general traffic.

Q. Did Asmara, or does Asmara have such a NAVCOMOPREP?

A. Affirmative.

Q. I would gather then that the two critical messages in question did not enjoy this type of service, is that correct?

A. Certainly, the one message from CONSIXTHFLT was not routed over that circuit, it went over DCS circuit.

Q. Would the situation that we have just been discussing, Captain, come under the heading which you mentioned earlier, of lack of experience being a key to identifying a message that had been delayed, in this particular incident?

A. Possibly, sir, in the case of the CONSIXTHFLT message. This message was mis-routed by the Army's comm center in Asmara and sent to NAVCOMISTA GREECE. The soldier who did the mis-route may have been inexperienced, or what have you, but then NAVCOMISTA GREECE apparently was a little slow in getting this message back to Asmara and here experience might have been a factor. On the other hand, we know NAVCOMISTA GREECE had been handling a lot of FDIS type messages and the delay could have been under the first in first out rule. Also, the NAVCOMISTA GREECE personnel could have returned this message direct to NAVCOMISTA ASMARA had the experience factor been present. Mind you, this business is surmised because I do not know the rate and enlistment time of the traffic handlers involved.

Let the record show at this point that Captain Raish has been asked to develop a set of questions for submission to communication officers.

relay stations, and centers involved to ascertain the reason for the delays experienced by the two messages under discussion.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

The Court adjourned at 0230 hours, 11 June 1967, to be reconvened at the call of the President.

The President, Counsel to the Court and Reporter proceeded to Souda Bay, Crete and boarded USS LIBERTY at sea enroute to Malta. The Court met aboard LIBERTY at 0630 hours, 12 June 1967, but adjourned until arrival of LIBERTY at Malta to meet with full court. SHOULD SAY 14 JUN.

-SECOND DAY-

At Malta, the hour 0755, the date 13 June 1967, this Court of Inquiry is now in session again. All persons connected with the Court who were present when the Court adjourned in London, England on 11 June 1967 are again present in Court except that the Assistant Counsel for the Court who is now present will be sworn. SHIP'S HISTORY SAYS SHIP ARRIVED MALTA & CONVENED COURT ON 14 JUN AND (SEE) COURT RECEIVED ON 11 JUN.

The Assistant Counsel for the Court, Lieutenant Commander Allen Feingerach, U. S. Navy, was sworn.

Ensign David G. Lucas, U. S. Naval Reserve, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

#### DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by counsel for the court:

- Q. Please state your name, rank, organization, and present duty station.  
A. Ensign David G. Lucas, First Lieutenant and Gunnery Officer, USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5).

Let the record show that this witness is being called out of order in order that he may be medically evacuated to a hospital ashore for removal of shrapnel from a face wound and eye injury and that he is experiencing considerable physical discomfort at this time.

- Q. Mr. Lucas, as you are well aware, this Court of Inquiry has been convened to inquire into the circumstances attendant with the armed



attack on the U. S. Naval vessel, USS LIBERTY, which occurred on 8 June 1967. Will you please describe to the court the circumstances of that incident that you recall?

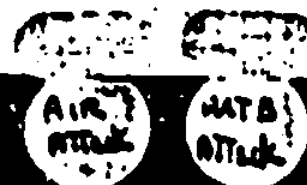
Q. Yes sir. We had a general quarters drill which occurred shortly prior to 1400. After securing from the drill I came to the wardroom and was in the presence of Lieutenant Golden and Ensign Scott. Ensign Scott left the wardroom and we heard the word passed over the ILC to be clear of the motor whaleboat while testing engines. Very shortly after that word was passed we heard what sounded like a very loud thump or crash. Mr. Golden and I both jumped from our seats. We looked at each other, and both thought that the motor whaleboat had fallen from its davit onto the deck. We went to the closest porthole, pulled the curtains, and did see some dust and black smoke rising. It was at this time that the general quarters alarm was sounded, and we knew that we had been attacked. I went into the passageway outside the wardroom via athwartship passageway to the starboard side of the main deck and from there used the ladder to go to the bridge, the 03 level. Upon arriving on the bridge I got my battle helmet and my life jacket from the starboard gear locker and was just getting ready to go to my general quarters station which is on the 04 level, the flying bridge. We were hit by what I assumed to be the second pass of aircraft. Another man was next to me. I think he was a signalman. We both hit the deck just outside the starboard hatch leading to the pilothouse. Three or four shells hit in our area. After that shelling had ceased, I went into the pilothouse, didn't figure it was too safe to go to the 04 level at that time. Another pass was made and everyone in the pilothouse hit the deck. When I did enter the pilothouse, the officer of the deck for general quarters, LT O'CONNOR, had already been injured and had been carried into CIC, which is just aft of the pilothouse. The junior officer of the deck at general quarters, LT ENNIS, was lying in the after portion of the pilothouse and appeared to have a compound fracture of the leg. I can't recall what other personnel were on the bridge at that time. It consisted

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ATTACK

attack on the U. S. Naval vessel, USS LIBERTY, which occurred on 8 June 1967. Will you please describe to the court the circumstances of that incident that you recall?

P. Yes sir. We had a general quarters drill which secured shortly prior to 1400. After securing from the drill I came to the wardroom and was in the presence of Lieutenant Golden and Ensign Scott. Ensign Scott left the wardroom and we heard the word passed over the IMC to stand clear of the motor whaleboat while testing engines. Very shortly after that word was passed we heard what sounded like a very loud thump or crash. Mr. Golden and I half jumped from our seats, we looked at each other, and both thought that the motor whaleboat had fallen from its davit onto the deck. We went to the closest porthole, pulled the curtains, and did see some dust and black smoke rising. It was at this time that the general quarters alarm was sounded, and we knew that we had been attacked. I went into the passageway outside the wardroom via athwartships passageway to the starboard side of the main deck and from there used the ladder to go to the bridge, the 03 level. Upon arriving on the bridge I got my battle helmet and my life jacket from the starboard gear locker and was just getting ready to go to my general quarters station which is on the 04 level, the flying bridge. We were hit by what assumed to be the second pass of aircraft. Another man was next to me. I think he was a signalman. We both hit the deck just outside the starboard hatch leading to the pilothouse. Three or four shells hit in our area. After that shelling had ceased, I went into the pilothouse, didn't figure it was too safe to go to the 04 level at that time. Another pass was made and everyone in the pilothouse hit the deck. When I did enter the pilothouse, the officer of the deck for general quarters, LT O'CONNOR, had already been injured and had been carried into CIC, which is just aft of the pilothouse. The junior officer of the deck at general quarters, LT ENNIS, was lying in the after portion of the pilothouse and appeared to have a compound fracture of the leg. I can't recall what other personnel were on the bridge at that time. It consisted

of several phone talkers and a third class quartermaster, BROWN, was at the helm, which was his general quarters station. I left the pilothouse, came to the wardroom to learn the condition of LT O'CONNOR and LT ENNIS. Came down the ladder in the superstructure. When I got to the 02 level, the men were carrying the Executive Officer, LCDR ARMSTRONG, down to the wardroom for medical aid. At the time I saw him, he appeared to be in shock, was very pale, and was not saying anything. Mr. ENNIS had gotten partially down - they were having difficulty carrying him down and he was in the passageway outside his stateroom, waiting for attention to his leg. I came into the wardroom and there were at least half a dozen casualties in there being treated. Several of the enlisted men had been in the spaces forward of the superstructure, in the IC shop and the emergency diesel room. Those areas had been shelled very heavily on one of the first passes. I found out the emergency diesel did not work and that the gyro was not functioning either. I left the wardroom area. Somehow we received word that there was a fire burning on the 01 level, port side. It was in the vicinity where two 55 gallon drums of P-250 fuel was stored. Some enlisted men in the passageways got a hose and were putting out the fire. The fire had spread aft of the P-250 cans and the four life rafts were burning on the 01 level. I can't remember the exact amount of time that I did spend in the superstructure area. When I was in the passageways, I hear we did receive some more shelling. I returned to the bridge. To the best of my knowledge, when I did return to the bridge, the only people present were the Commanding Officer, one phone talker, who was lying on the deck in the chart room, quartermaster BROWN on the helm and myself. Before I went back to the bridge, we had received word over the phones that were working. We had very little communications as such, the LNC was hit and not functioning. The only communications we had were via sound-powered phones. We had received the word "standby for a torpedo attack". It was very shortly after I returned to the bridge the Commanding Officer hollered in to pass over all circuits, "standby for another torpedo attack, starboard side".





The torpedo hit and it seemed like within a matter of seconds we had a ten degree starboard list. Shortly after that the Commanding Officer called me to the starboard wing, asked me to get some glasses to try to help him identify the patrol craft. He had been using his binoculars and was also taking photographs of the aircraft and of the three patrol craft. I did not actually see any of the aircraft. I was able to read the hull number on one patrol craft as it passed abeam to starboard, going in exactly the opposite direction that we were going, and it was at this time I told the Commanding Officer what the number was. He said, "log it" which I did, in the quartermaster's notebook. At that time, there was no quartermaster available. This was the first entry that I made in the log. I continued to make entries for approximately the next 45 minutes. There were still just the four people on the bridge. This was the Commanding Officer, third class quartermaster BROWN on the helm, and seaman LAMAR on the sound-powered phones, and myself. The Captain warned us to take cover, the shelling started again. Everyone took cover as best we could. There were shells, or fragments of shells, flying in through the starboard hatch, which no one had been able to secure. A quartermaster, when these shells started flying, stepped back from the helm to get as much protection from the corner of the chart room as possible. He still had his hand, one hand on the wheel. I was two paces to his left, and two paces behind him. A fragment hit him, I think from behind. It must have come through the bulkhead in the chart room. He let out a gasp, fell backwards into the chart room, and within, say a minute, was dead. I grabbed the helm, noticed that I had no power at all, the gyro repeater was not functioning, the rudder angle indicator was not functioning. None of the instruments there were working. We had been attempting to get away from the area as fast as possible, on an approximate course of 000. The Captain asked what the current heading was. We were turning in a fairly good sized arc at this time. I had no indication of how much rudder I had on. I could not correct it to steer something close to 000 magnetic. We got the phone

talker to contact after steering and shifted control to after steering. Even after control was shifted, the people back there were having a difficult time. I think to start with, they were steering by hand. There was some firing from the patrol boats. They had periodically fired at us. There was now a lull in the firing. And yet, it sounded as if the men at mount 53, this would be the 03 level starboard side aft of the main gun, it sounded as if they were firing at the patrol craft who at that time were within a thousand yards at an approximate relative bearing of 120. The Commanding Officer was on the starboard wing and had these patrol craft in view. He ordered me to tell the men on mount 53 to cease firing. A fire had started at this time on the starboard side. The hit had occurred somewhere in the vicinity of the bridge. The flames had gone back to the motor whaleboat, and it was burning rapidly at that time. I could not see mount 53 from the starboard side. I went out the port hatch. The first thing I noticed was mount 54 was vacant. The flames from the liferaft and the P-250 fuel had reached mount 54 and chased everyone out of there. I ran back to mount 54, looked over the skylight from the engineering space. Had a clear view of mount 53 from, say the waist level up, and there was no one on mount 53. The flames from the motor whaleboat were coming over the lip of the mount. I assume that the bullets that were in the gun, or bullets that were in a ready service ammunition box, very near there, were cooking off and firing. I ran back, reported to the Commanding Officer, that there was no one firing from mount 53, that the flames must be causing the bullets to cook off. Mount 51 and 52 on the forecastle had been long silent by this time. Many of the men, there were three assigned to each mount, many of the men were killed on the first strafing attack. When I first did look forward at the mounts, there was one man cut in half on mount 51, and it looked as if there were at least two men in mount 51 who were severed. After that time, I believe there was just one more shot fired. A man, LARKIN, was told to man mount 51, either told or he volunteered to, and he got off one shot, the Commanding Officer yelled for him to cease

fire, which he did. I can recall no further firing from either side after that time. The Commanding Officer hollered "cease fire", and it was approximately at this time the patrol craft were bearing approximately 160 relative. One of them was trying to signal us. The smoke from the motor whaleboat almost completely obscured the patrol craft from us. There was a second class signalman, DAVID, on the starboard wing. None of us were able to determine what the signaling was - the smoke was too intense. Shortly after that, another patrol craft approached us from the starboard side and did manage to get clear of the smoke. The signalman took the message, "Do you need help?" The Commanding Officer told signalman DAVID to give a negative reply. We still did not know the identity of the patrol craft itself other than the fact that we had gotten the hull number earlier. This appeared to be one of the same three boats that had attacked us earlier. The patrol craft then appeared to rendezvous at two to three thousand yards astern of us, a relative bearing of 20°. A helicopter was sighted, and then a second helicopter. Signalman DAVID who is very knowledgeable on aircraft and who had also been looking at James Aircraft several days prior to the attack, stated, "those aren't ours, they're Russian made, Sikorsky models". One of the helos came close to the port wing, came down to our level, and we tried to communicate with each other, but had no success. I was told to go to the forecabin to see if I could aid in a sling drop. It appeared as if they wanted to lower someone on the ship. We still could not get our signals straight. When I did get on the forecabin, I saw the Commanding Officer waving his arms in a negative sign. We waved the helicopter away from the area of the forecabin. It went back to the port wing again. Eventually, someone in the helo wrapped up a package of some sort and threw it to the people on the bridge. To the best of my recollection the people on the bridge were the Commanding Officer, signalman DAVID and a chief petty officer THOMPSON. The package had a calling card attached to it and it either said, "U. S. Naval Attache, Tel Aviv", or merely, "Naval Attache, Tel Aviv". We did

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get the numbers of both helicopters in the quartermaster's log. They were either "04 or D4" and "08 or D8". There also appeared to be a "Star of David" on the side of the helo. The helo was waved away shortly after the calling card was thrown over, we saw no more of the helos. Now it was the matter of still trying to get the ship out of the area. We had no idea whether we would be attacked again or not. The list had held steady at approximately ten degrees. After steering was able to keep us on somewhat of a northerly course, although we were weaving a number from 30 to 40 degrees either side of our chosen magnetic course of 000. I was getting the rudder angles to steer for awhile called back to after steering and then the Commanding Officer was giving them after that. The Commanding Officer had been injured in his right leg on what must have been the first aircraft pass. He was bleeding profusely. The Captain had been administered first aid and he had a belt tourniquet around his leg. He insisted on being everywhere that he could. He was on both wings, in and out of the pilothouse, taking pictures. I believe at the time I was giving orders to after steering the bleeding had started again on the Captain's leg wound. I'm just theorizing that the shell fragment that was lodged in the leg had been discharged by his movement. We called the corpsman, and the Captain was stretched out on the port wing, being administered first aid. He was still calling orders in to be able to relay on to after steering. Bleeding did stop and the Commanding Officer once again was well, this time he was placed in his chair on the port wing. He gave orders there for quite awhile. It was also a matter of identification. We, ourselves, were asking the question, "Who made the attacks?", "And why?". There was a time when I was in the pilot house that I heard the Commanding Officer holler to someone, perhaps signalman DAVID, to get the Ensign, the colors, off the deck. I went out to the starboard wing, and there was an Ensign on the deck. I went out a little bit further and looked up and we were flying over the Ensign. I found that later all of the starboard halyards or hoists had been shot down and that signalman DAVID had run up another Ensign.

Things quieted down somewhat at this time. We still had no indication if we were still under attack or not. I know that there were several times later in the afternoon and early evening that we did take cover at the order of the Commanding Officer when some aircraft did approach at a distance. We were still doing the best we could to head due North. We still had considerable deviation from the base course. I can't recall what speed we finally did attain. I think we tried to make turns for 8 knots, and found it too difficult at that speed to hold the course, and dropped back to all ahead 1/3. We had main control make turns for five knots. There were several times when we were almost dead in the water. Believe that just before or just after the torpedo attack we had no turns. Another time that I can recall that luber suction was lost. Both boilers were on the line. We had to wait until that situation was corrected. Seems as if there were several other occasions when it was not possible to get power. After the attack from the patrol boats had stopped, and before we had steadied up, or successfully steadied up, on an approximate count of 000, I was checking the fathometer, which was the only piece of equipment on the bridge that I know was functioning and it was only functioning on the 100 fathom scale at the time. Our readings started decreasing rapidly. Commanding Officer ordered me to go to the forecastle, get some men and to standby to let go an anchor. We proceeded to the forecastle, had the starboard anchor ready for letting go, the bridge said "make the port anchor ready". We were trying to pick up the chain stopper, but the pelican hook was up almost against the stopper and we could not raise the stopper. I grabbed a bar of some kind, another man grabbed a sledge and we were pounding at the stopper to try to raise it. We received an order from the bridge that was shouted to us from the Commanding Officer to let go the port anchor, and we could not let go the port anchor. We finally pried the stopper up, this was maybe a minute later, the ship was backing down at that time, all back 1/3. The readings were increasing, the fathometer readings. We received an order not to let go the port anchor. After backing down,

Getting a sufficient depth under the keel, we then came around to our northerly course again. After we got on our northerly course, the Commanding Officer came in to his chair inside the pilothouse and gave all orders to after steering. Later, this would have been perhaps 1800 or so, steering was shifted from after steering back to the bridge.

Rear Admiral KIDD:

Q. I'd like to interrupt and ask you a question at this point. Was the Commanding Officer on the bridge all this time?

A. The Commanding Officer never left the bridge, and there from the time CO was wounded. Perhaps he had stayed there since the drill had occurred. He did not leave the bridge until, I'd say, 1000 the following morning to make a head call. He made two or three head calls in the course of the morning, but he did not leave the bridge until the DAVIS was alongside the following morning at 0700, on the morning of 10 June. He wasn't positive that our magnetic compass was responding correctly. Every now and then the Commanding Officer would go out on the wing and would make minor course adjustments by sighting the North Star. Sometime after sunset, a message was delivered to the bridge from radio central and it stated that the attack had in fact been made by Israeli forces and that they had extended their apologies. Prior to this message, we had received word from the Sixth Fleet that help was on the way. I believe, initially, they just said, "help". Later on we learned that two destroyers were coming to rendezvous with us. During the night, as I said previously the Commanding Officer left the bridge only to make a head call and all during the evening, night, and following morning, until the arrival of the DAVIS, there was an officer with him at all times. Either LT BERNETT, LTJG PAXTER, or myself.

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. To your knowledge, was the Commanding Officer requested to leave the bridge by the doctor in order to obtain medical attention?

A. I didn't hear the order, it's quite possible, but it would have taken ten people the doctor's size to even begin to get him off the bridge.



Q. How would you describe his reaction to his injuries?

A. He was in great pain, there were several times when he was still yelling around, but it was obvious he was in great pain. He had lost a considerable amount of blood. At several times felt dizzy. He would not leave, but if he started to get dizzy, he would turn to me, or if Mr. BENNETT or Mr. PAINTER were there, he would say this is what course we're on, what speed to make. He would give instructions.

Q. Factoring to a point during the heat of combat, did you observe the Captain when he was initially wounded?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. And he continued on in this condition without stopping for assistance by medical?

A. That is correct. It was quite awhile before he did slow down enough to have the belt tourniquet put on the leg. I assisted with that. I used my belt, and after that a corpsman came up just long enough to adjust the tourniquet and take a look at the Commanding Officer. He did not want any further medical attention and he did not receive any more until the bleeding started a second time, when I think the shell fragment was worked loose.

Q. What period of time had elapsed?

A. Over an hour. I can't say for sure, but it had been at least an hour. How he managed to stay up on the bridge and keep on his feet, to keep the cool head the way that he did, is beyond me. He was giving orders to us in the pilothouse, he was taking photographs of the aircraft, the patrol craft, attempting to identify them with his binoculars, giving orders to the gun mounts when they were still manned, was directing the fire fighting parties, seemed like he was everywhere at one time. Also giving commands to get the ship out of the area, away from land as fast as we could.

Questions by Captain ATKINSON:

Q. Mr. LUCAS, approximately when did you receive word that the T-6 was

had attacked - about how long after the attack?

A. It was right around sunset.

Q. Until that time, you all felt you might be subject to re-attack?

A. That is correct.

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. At this point I would like to interrupt your narrative testimony in order to present this exhibit to the record. I have in my custody as Counsel for the Court, the quartermasters notebook, USS LIBERTY. I show you page 102 dated 8 June and ask you if this is the page you referred to when you testified to making entries in it?

A. That is the page, starting with the entry at the time 1446, and I continued making entries until 1657.

Q. Let the record also show that page 102 is considerably splattered with what appears to be blood.

A. It is.

I request the reporter to mark this exhibit number 6. At this time, the Counsel for the Court offers the quartermasters logbook into evidence, a true copy thereof will be substituted in its place.

Q. Will you please read this first entry?

A. "1446, one gunboat tentatively identified as number 206-17." And this was seen by both the Commanding Officer and myself from the starboard wing. I mentioned earlier, the patrol craft was going exactly the opposite direction that we were. This number was read when it was abeam to starboard at approximately 500 yards.

Counsel for the Court:

It is requested that the Court note page 133 of Jance Fighting Ships for 1966, which has Israeli vessels described on that page 138. I will now ask the witness to identify the patrol craft on page 138, and ask if it is similar to the one he saw?

A. The patrol craft here, THOMAS, appears to be the exact same one that I identified. If I had had a camera and taken a picture of it, I would have gotten the same angle, same presentation, as is present here in this photograph. There is one slight difference, there is no dash between the first three and the last two digits, and what I thought to be 17.

I found out later from Mr. KENNETH, when I examined this book, that it was an Israeli symbol that looks like a 17, but is connected by a horizontal line at the bottom. It's quite possible that, well I know that, it was difficult to read the number, not because of the distance but because of the bow wake coming over and obscuring the numbers. Counsel for the Court: I will now ask the court members if they have any questions on the exhibits that have been introduced.

Captain ATKINSON:

Q. You say communications were bad. What communications were you referring to?

A. I don't know much about the communications or research setup at all.

Q. This is not the bridge communications?

A. That is correct. I believe that was outgoing communications from the transmitter room.

Q. Were there voice communications passed to the bridge?

A. Not from radio central. We had communications with main control, damage control central and after steering.

Q. In radio communications, do you know where the hicom net is?

A. We knew nothing of what was going on. All messages, outgoing and incoming were hand carried up to the bridge from the radio central personnel. We had been receiving, monitoring Sixth Fleet communications several days prior to the attack, but during the attack only way we could get hold of somebody was after transmission of everything that was sent out or received came up to the bridge and message.

Q. Do you know specifically what circuits were being monitored when you said you were monitoring Sixth Fleet communications before the attack?



A. I don't know the call signs of the ships involved or still on the status board in the pilothouse, I can't recall.

Q. You mentioned that there were fathometer readings decreasing. Where were you getting this information from?

A. The only fathometer that was working was in CIC, just aft of the pilothouse, and at that time it was only working on the 100 fathom scale.

Q. Do you recall the depth?

A. I believe they rapidly approached the middle teens. You see, we had no radar. This was knocked out, evidently, on the first air pass. We had to DH from our last fix to give an approximate 1000 position. We included that position in the message requiring assistance.

Q. Were you in sight of land at about the time of the pass?

A. Yes, we were. After dinner, as is customary on here, we often go to the O1 level forward on deck chairs to soak up some sun.

Q. Excuse me, you mean noonday?

A. Noon. There were six officers on the O1 level forward until turn to at 1300. There was smoke visible from land off the port side and also during the general quarters drill. When I was on the O4 level more smoke was visible and the land itself was barely visible. This was through the telescope or high powered binoculars on the O4 level.

Q. In the first portion of your testimony, you mention shelling, what did you intend to convey by the word "shelling"?

A. The first hit, the first noise that LT GOLDEN and I heard when we were in the wardroom was obviously a heavy hit. I assumed this was aircraft and it sounded to us as if it hit on the starboard side. Like I said, we thought it was the motor whaleboat falling from its davit onto the deck. I mentioned shelling again just as soon as I had put on my battle helmet and life jacket on the bridge. This again, I would say was aircraft cause there was a whistling sound several seconds before the actual burst and noise itself came. After I had gone inside the pilothouse and was on the deck, there was another series of whistling sounds preceding the hits. Here again, I assume it was aircraft. When I had

come down to the wardroom, was lending a hand to getting the hose to fight the fire on the port side, there were more easily discernable whistling sounds, even in the passageways, that were aircraft hits. The two men who were handling the hose were keeping an eye out for aircraft. They would put out the fire until another plane came over and then they ducked back inside.

Q. Did the motor torpedo boats fire on you with ordnance other than torpedoes?

A. Yes, they did. This we could easily hear. I can recall it coming from the starboard side on several occasions. At the time quartermaster BROWN was on the helm, the fragment that caught him came from the starboard side and I can't be sure if it was from the gun boats or from our own shells baking off. I'm pretty sure it was from the gun boats. And there were several other occasions of obvious shelling from the torpedo or motor boats throughout the action.

Q. Do you have any idea how many aircraft were involved?

A. I did not actually see any of the aircraft. There were definitely three motor boats.

Q. Are you the Gunnery Officer?

A. Yes, I am.

Q. Do the surface lookouts come under your glance at general quarters?

A. There, at general quarters the lookouts are on the 04 level. The actual lookout training was done by the Navigator or another member of the Operations Department. They had received refresher training, this was sometime since we left Rota on the 2nd of June, and had been refreshed on reporting all surface contacts to include relative bearing, approximate range, and target angle. Had also been given refresher on reporting aircraft properly, on elevation, what angle, other factors pertaining to properly reporting all surface and air contacts to the officer of the deck. This had been stressed heavily in the first week in June, before we did reach our operating area.

Q. Was their method of reporting via sound-powered telephones?

A. When we were normally steaming at our modified condition three, the lookouts were on the port and starboard wings, so it was just a matter of shouting into the officer of the deck directly. We had stationed, or had one man in each of the two forward gun mounts. We had ammunition at the guns, but not actually in the breech. Those two men had sound-powered phones on. We could call them from the bridge anytime, but for them to call us on the circuit, they would blow a whistle and we would pick up the phone on the bridge. I can't recall what circuit it was, but at a toot of a whistle they could have someone on the bridge alerted to pick up the phone and talk with them.

Q. During the time that you were on the bridge, did you receive any lookout reports via sound-powered telephone?

A. During the attack?

Q. During the attack.

A. When I got up to the bridge, as I said I did not get to the 04 level which was my general quarters station. During general quarters, the two air lookouts were on the 04 level, but they had not made it up there either. I cannot recall seeing a surface lookout on either side of the bridge when I got there. The shelling from the aircraft had either injured them, or they had taken cover inside the pilothouse.

Q. During, and after the attack, did you have sound-powered communications with your gun mounts?

A. To the best of my knowledge, we never had contact with the gun mounts. Let me explain the connection there. My general quarters station is on the 04 level at gunnery control. To get an order to the gun mount, it was easier for the bridge to call a phone talker stationed on the 04 level. He in turn would convey the message to a second phone talker who had communications with all of the mounts. No direct communications from the mounts themselves to the pilothouse, and since no one was able to be on the 04 level, there was no direct communications. At one time, while the torpedo boats were firing at us, my man in charge of mount 53, seaman QUINTERO, hollered to me, "should I fire back?", and I gave him an



Q. Did you look and see the Ensign flying before the torpedo hit, or was it after?

A. I cannot honestly recall whether it was before or after.

Q. When did you receive your injuries?

A. As soon as I had gotten to the bridge and put on the battle helmet. I mentioned what I assumed were rockets from the aircraft hit in the immediate vicinity. I hit the deck and picked up several pieces of shrapnel in my left arm. One of them was bleeding enough that I took out my handkerchief and wrapped it around my arm. The piece of fragment that hit me in the head occurred much later, after I had been to the wardroom, returned to the bridge, and after the quartermaster had been killed on the helm. The commanding officer came from the port wing into the pilothouse, and he said "stand by for another attack". I don't recall if it was surface, air, or torpedo. He said "take cover". I heard some firing, some ricocheting off the starboard side. I assumed it was from the patrol craft. I was in the rear portion of the pilothouse and tried to crawl behind the water fountain as best I could, and I got most of me back when I felt something hit me just to the right of my right eye and it started bleeding rapidly. I tore off the sleeve of my shirt, put it over the wound and just continued on from there.

Q. When did you receive treatment for your wounds?

A. I didn't know that I had any metal in me, as much, the bleeding had stopped on the arm and also on my head. I had no pain. I would guess the first time that I was looked at was on the 10th of June. I went back to sickbay. The night before I had a little bit of swelling, so went back to have the doctor have a look at it. This was just the head injury. He took an xray and did find that there was a chunk of metal in there. I believe he said it was lodged between a muscle that controls the jaw, a vein, and the tear duct or tear gland.

Q. Do you recall that the patrol boats strafed the ship after the torpedo attack, and if so, how many times?

A. Sir, I cannot honestly answer that.

Q. Let me put the question a little bit differently - earlier in your statement you observed that the patrol boats were attempting to communicate with flashing light?

A. This was definitely after the torpedo attack.

Q. The flashing lights from the boats were after the torpedo attack?

A. Yes, that is correct.

Q. I also understood from you that the ship was unable to respond to the flashing lights from the boats?

A. To the first signalling, that is affirmative, because of the smoke that was between the patrol craft and us.

Q. And I believe, also, the starboard wing 14-inch searchlight had been shot away earlier in the action. Is that not correct?

A. The only signalling light we had available was a small portable light, the face of which was approximately six inches in diameter.

Q. I believe that he called an Alais lamp and the intensity of that light, from personal knowledge, would probably be completely inadequate to penetrate the smoke?

A. Yes sir. All power to all of the other lights was off. Even if it had been on, there was only one operative light on either the O3 or O4 level. The only one that had not been hit.

Q. To the best of your recollection, after the motor torpedo boats signalled, were there any further attacks from them?

A. No, there were not. After this first signalling, I don't believe so. After they signalled "do you need help?", and we answered in the negative, I am positive there were no more attacks after that time.

Q. With regard to the signal from the torpedo boats, when did you first observe the signalling, with respect to the torpedo attack?

A. The first signalling that I observed was the unsuccessful attempt to determine what they were signalling us, and of course, we did not have a chance to answer back to them. This was after the torpedo attacks. The only other signalling that I recall seeing is when we did successfully receive their message and sent a negative answer to it.

affirmative on that. This was before he and the other men in mount 53 had been chased away by the fire and flames from the motor whaleboat. On the forward mounts, I said we had no communications up there. My third class gunner's mate, THOMPSON, according to several witnesses, and to the members of repair two, which is located directly beneath mount 53, said that petty officer THOMPSON went to mount 51 when the attack was below decks. His station is with me on the 04 level. Gunner's mate THOMPSON figured he didn't have time to get up there. He went to the closest gun and from the account given by the people in repair two, it sounded as if he got off half a box of ammo at the aircraft. They somehow missed him on the first strafing attack. Several witnesses said that he had the aircraft under fire while it was circling for the second pass and it was during the second pass that he was cut in half by a rocket, but he had the aircraft under fire and got off at least half a box of 50 caliber ammo.

Q. Do you recall how long the Ensign was down?

A. I cannot recall for sure. From the first air attack, the radar was made inoperative, the antenna on the mainmast was damaged, obviously on the first air pass and the Ensign would be flying just below it and just aft of it. Evidently, the shelling that got the radar scope, well it could have very possibly severed the halyard lines at that time. I do not recall when the Commanding Officer saw the Ensign on the deck and told someone to pick it up, but I do recall going out on the starboard wing, looking up and seeing that there was an Ensign flying.

Q. Do you remember the time frame when you looked and saw the Ensign flying, was it during the surface or the air attack?

A. I can't set an exact time on it. I do believe that I recall that at this time the patrol craft was off our starboard side at an approximate bearing of 120. It seems to me that this might have been around the time when I investigated the firing coming from mount 53 and found it was bullets cocking off as opposed to men being there actually firing.



Q. Mr. LUCAS, did you bring with you any examples of ordnance or shrapnel recovered aboard USS LIBERTY subsequent to the attack?

A. With the exception of one fragment that was located this morning, the remainder of these fragments and shells were brought up to the pilothouse in the course of the evening and the following morning after the attack. These were turned in by various personnel throughout the ship. Several of these have been turned in since the night of the 8th and the morning of the 9th.

Counsel for the Court: At this time it is requested that these examples be marked exhibit 1, that they be introduced into evidence and copies of photographs be made for record purposes.

President: Let the record also show that these fragments are but a cross-sectional sample of the type of bullets and shrapnel which "holed" the ship.

President:

Q. A question if you please - would you be kind enough to expand on the performance of duty of a young man mentioned earlier in your testimony, named LARKINS?

A. Seaman LARKINS helps man mount 54, 03 level, port side, as his general quarters station. He was on that mount, and stayed on that mount, until the fire coming from the 01 level chased him away. He did recall seeing a plane approaching from the port side and lobbing a cylinder that was attached under the wing. A cylinder five to six feet long, approximately ten inches in diameter. This cylinder approached the 01 level port side in an end over end fashion. After it hit, and the fire started, he climbed over the skylight to mount 53 and helped the gun crew there until the fire from the motor whaleboat drove all people away from that mount. I later personally saw him helping to extinguish the fire on the port side and still later, he, by himself, manned mount 51 and fired one shot before he received a cease fire from the Commanding Officer.

President: No further questions - before you leave to go to the hospital, the Court would like to express itself with a feeling of great pride to



be associated with the service's uniform you wear, young man, and we thank you very much for your cooperation and fine testimony.

Mr. LUCAS: Thank you, Admiral.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

The Court recessed at 1045 hours, 14 June 1967 from taking further testimony in order to examine exhibits received by the Board.

The Court opened at 1300 hours, 14 June 1967. All persons connected with the inquiry who were present when the court recessed are again present in court.

Commander William L. McGonagle, U. S. Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by counsel for the court:

Q. Please state your name, rank, organization and present duty station.

A. Commander William L. McGonagle, U. S. Navy, Commanding Officer, USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5).

Let the record show that although the witness is experiencing considerable pain from shrapnel wound in his leg, that he willingly appeared at this hearing.

Q. Captain McGonagle, as you are well aware, this Court of Inquiry has been convened to inquire into the circumstances attendant with the armed attack on the U. S. Naval vessel which you command, USS LIBERTY, which occurred on 8 June 1967. Will you please describe to the Court the circumstances of that incident as you recall it?

A. At the time of the incident, LIBERTY was performing her mission in accordance with JCS message dte 011545Z June 1967. At the time of the incident, the ship was operating under the operational control of Commander, U. S. Sixth Fleet. The ship had arrived in its assigned operating area on the morning of 8 June 1967 after having departed from Rota, Spain on 2 June 1967. The ship was steaming in international

waters and was so at all times. A condition of readiness three modified was set. The condition three modified watch consisted of normal steaming watch with the exception that one man was stationed in the forward two 50 caliber machine guns 51 and 52. Lookouts on the bridge were designated to man machine guns 53 and 54 in the event of surprise air or surface attack. Each machine gun had a box of ammunition attached to the machine gun with a round up to but not in the chamber of each mount. During the 0800 to 1200 watch on the morning of 8 June at about 1030, a flight of two unidentified jet aircraft orbited the ship at about 10,000 feet three times at a distance of approximately two miles. It was not possible to identify any insignia on the aircraft and their identity remains unknown. A locating two report was submitted on this sighting. It is not known at this time whether the sighting report was transmitted from the ship or not. Records are not accessible at the time. It was also possible to see on the 8 to 12 watch in the morning the coastline of the Sinai peninsula. Aircraft activity of an apparent propeller patrol type flying at very low altitude and parallel to and over the coast in the vicinity of El Arish was noted. It is estimated that the altitude of this plane was approximately 500 feet. At no time did this plane approach the ship in any fashion. His distance remained approximately 12 to 15 miles. It was possible to visually sight the minaret which is quite conspicuous at El Arish. This was used as a navigational aide in determining the ship's position during the morning and afternoon of 8 June. It became visible at about 0930 and the ship's position was verified, and was within our established operating area. Radar ranges were taken on the nearest land on the same bearing as the minaret. The minaret was also identifiable by radar. There were no other conspicuous or outstanding navigational features in the area. At about 1056 in the morning of 8 June, an aircraft similar to an American flying boxcar crossed astern of the ship at a distance of about three to five miles. The plane circled the ship around the starboard side, proceeded forward of the ship and headed back toward the Sinai peninsula. A locating three



report was submitted. It is not known if this report was transmitted. This aircraft continued to return in a somewhat similar fashion approximately at 30 minute intervals. It was not possible to see any markings on the aircraft and the identity of this aircraft remains unknown. This aircraft did not approach the ship in any provocative manner. It made no attempt to signal the ship. The ship made no attempt to signal the aircraft. At 10300 the Minaret at El Arish was bearing 129°T, 17 miles. At the time the ship was on a course of 253 at speed five knots. At 1132, the ship changed course to 255 true, speed five knots and was on this course and this speed at the time of the attack. At about 1310, 8 June, the ship went to general quarters for drill purposes to conduct training for a mandatory non-competitive exercise to exercise the crew in nuclear attack procedures. The drill was performed in a satisfactory manner. Nearly all of the top-side personnel were exercised through the chemical decontamination station and were absent from their battle station for varying periods of time while performing this phase of the drill. After top-side personnel that had been designated to proceed through the decontamination station (these personnel were gun crew personnel and secondary con personnel) returned to their battle stations and the performance of the crew judged to be satisfactory the crew was released from battle drills at about 1350 and condition three modified was again set. At the commencement of the drill it was possible to see a large billowing cloud of black smoke rising from approximately 15 to 20 miles to the west of El Arish on the beach. The exact identity of the cause and the location of this explosion is not positively known, although it was believed to be near the beach in that area. This was noted at about 1300. At about 1330 a smaller cloud of black smoke was noted to the east of El Arish estimated five to six miles and also along the coastline. Before dismissing the crew from general drills, I gave the crew a short talk on the PA system, reminding them of the importance of expeditiously responding to general quarters and the setting of condition Zebra for drills and in the event

of an actual attack. So that they would be impressed I pointed out to the crew at that time that the column of black smoke on the beach should be sufficient evidence that the ship was in a potentially dangerous location. I had no evidence or indication that an attack would actually be made on the ship at the time that statement was made to the crew. The statement was made to encourage them to set condition Zebra in a more expeditious manner than they had done for the drill held that afternoon. As I recall all battle stations were reported manned and ready within three minutes for the afternoon drill, but the report of condition Zebra had not been received on the bridge until about four minutes forty-five seconds after the drill commenced. This I considered to be excessive. After conducting general drills, it is my usual practice to go to the wardroom and have a cup of coffee and critique the drill with the Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Armstrong, the Engineering Officer, Lieutenant Golden, and the Damage Control Officer, Ensign Scott, if I have not been particularly satisfied with the drill. If the drill has been satisfactory, usually I contact the officers on an individual basis at some later time during the day and indicate to them that I was satisfied with the drill and point out some of the errors in which improvement could be made and point out also to them the things that I felt had been done properly. With the exception of the length of time that it took to set condition Zebra I was satisfied with the performance of the crew for the afternoon drill and did not assemble the above mentioned officers in the wardroom for a critique. After general quarters was over from the drill, I lingered on the bridge for a few minutes. As I recall, the following officers were present on the bridge: LCDR ARMSTRONG, LT LEWIS, LT O'CONNOR, who is normally officer of the deck during general quarters, LT TOTU, the Operations and Navigator, also Intelligence Officer. LTJG PAINTER came onto the bridge after general quarters to assume the watch as the officer of the deck. As he assumed the officer of the deck watch, he indicated that he was having difficulty in obtaining an accurate ship's fix. At that time, and the

time was approximately 1400. I personally sighted the Minaret at El Arish to be on a bearing of 142 from the ship and the range as I recall from the radar was approximately 25.5 miles. I do not know that this radar range can be verified from the records available at this time. I had also earlier in the day established a danger bearing on the Minaret at El Arish to be 119 degrees true from the ship. The danger bearing was established to insure that the ship remained clear of shoal areas to the south of the southwesternmost edge of our operating area. It was not known if the Minaret would still be visible when we approached the southwest corner of our operating area or not, but the danger bearing was established to be used if the Minaret was visible when the ship arrived at that location. At this point in the preparation of my statement, I referred to the quartermaster's notebook. 12-1600 watch. Thursday, 8 June 1967. I referred to this log for the purpose of refreshing my memory as to the initial moments of the unexpected attack. The log shows that at 1351, LTJG PAINTER relieved LT O'CONNOR as officer of the deck. The log also shows that at 1355, ENS O'MALLEY, as junior officer of the deck under instruction assumed the con. The 12-1600 watch on Thursday, 8 June 1967 has no entry from the time frame 1356 until 1400. I shall relate in my own words and to the best of my knowledge and belief all events of which I have personal knowledge which occurred during that time frame. About 1400 the lookouts, who were stationed on the 04 level, immediately above the bridge, reported that jet aircraft were sighted in the vicinity of the ship. At that time, I went to the starboard wing of the bridge with my binoculars and there observed one aircraft of similar characteristics, if not identical to the two aircraft which were sighted earlier in the day and upon which a sighting report had been submitted. The relative bearing of this plane was about 135. Its position angle about 45 to 50 degrees. Its elevation approximately 7,000 feet, and it was approximately five to six miles from the ship. It appeared to be on a parallel course traveling in the same direction as the ship. While I observed this





aircraft, I did not see it approach the ship directly in a hostile attitude. Within a couple of minutes, a loud explosion was heard that appeared to me to come from the port side of the ship. I immediately ordered the general alarm to be sounded, and this was done. I went from the starboard wing of the bridge to the port wing to see the area of damage. I immediately noticed that the two 55-gallon gasoline drums stowed on the O1 level, portside amidships, were burning furiously. It was evident that it would not be possible to reach the quick release lever by proceeding down the outside port ladder of the ship. I ordered the Executive Officer to go to the starboard side of the ship and proceed down to the O1 level, cross over to the port side, and there release the gasoline cans. Lieutenant O'CONNOR was still on the bridge and he joined the Executive Officer and both proceeded to the starboard wing of the bridge, O3 level. Approximately the time they reached the top of the ladder to proceed down the ship received an apparent bomb hit in the vicinity of the whaleboat stowed on the O2 level starboard side, immediately aft of the bridge. Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. O'CONNOR and others in the bridge area were thrown back into the bridge and other personnel in the pilothouse were blown from their feet. At this time, I grabbed the engine order annunciator and rang up all ahead flank. Up to this time, the ship had one boiler on the line steaming at about five knots. The other boiler was not on the line but pressure was being maintained in order to be able to respond to speeds in excess of that which is capable with one boiler, approximately 11 knots, should it be necessary. Earlier in the day, the Engineering Officer had requested permission to let number two boiler cool so that he could replace a steamline gasket. This permission had been granted and the boiler had started to cool from about 1200 on 8 June. I do not know whether the engine room acknowledged by the engine order telegraph the flank bell or not, but smoke immediately commenced coming out of the stack and I assumed that they did. It seemed to me that shortly thereafter the ship increased speed. At this time I ordered a person, who



I believe to have been L. B. BARNETT, to report to CNO via the highcom that LIBERTY was under attack by unidentified jet aircraft and that immediate assistance was required. I do not recall whether I ordered any course changes to have the ship zig-zag or not. One helmsman was seriously injured in the starboard bridge bomb blast, and he was replaced by Quartermaster Third BROWN. I do not recall who had the helm at the time of the initial attack. The response of the crew to general quarters was very expeditious. I do not recall whether all of the bridge personnel ever arrived on station or not, but the public address system, the 21MC, and most sound powered phone circuits were severed or destroyed during the initial first or second of the total number of six to eight strafing attacks that occurred. It seemed to me that the attacks were made in a crisscross fashion over the ship, with each attack coming at approximately forty-five second to one minute intervals. After the starboard bridge bomb hit, I ordered personnel to be organized for a fire fighting party to put out the fire in the vicinity of the whaleboat. The whaleboat was burning furiously. It is estimated that the total air attack was completed in approximately five to six minutes. About midway during the attack, Ensign LUCAS was noted on the bridge and at that time he became my assistant and assisted me in every way possible. Runners were used to relay my orders to the repair parties, to main control and other vital stations. Sometime after the starboard bridge bomb hit while on the starboard side of the pilothouse, another attack from the starboard quarter proceeding forward was made and I was hit with flying shrapnel. I was not knocked off my feet, I was only shaken up and it made me dance around a little bit, but my injuries did not appear to me to be of any consequence. I noticed slight burns on my starboard forearm and I noticed blood oozing on my trousers right leg. Since I could walk and there was no apparent pain I gave no further consideration to these minor injuries. Shortly after this I opened the bridge safe and took out a camera which was maintained on the



bridge to take pictures of foreign ships and aircraft. I immediately took the camera to the port wing of the bridge and there was able to take several pictures of the planes as they had passed over the ship after their attack. In an effort to obtain documentary evidence to establish the identity of the aircraft, I retained this camera in my possession throughout the remainder of the attack. Later I took pictures of the torpedo boats before and after the torpedo attack, also the helicopter which approached the ship after the attack was over. This film has been turned over to the USS AMERICA for development and further disposition.

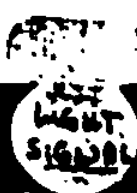
On what appeared to be the last air attack on the ship, I observed a cylindrical object dropped from one of the aircraft as it was passing from port to starboard ahead of the ship. This object landed in the water an estimated 75 to 100 yards directly ahead of the ship. There was no explosion from this object, but it shattered into several pieces. It appeared to me that it might have been an empty wing tank but I am not certain of this. In the latter moments of the air attack, it was noted that three high speed boats were approaching the ship from the northeast on a relative bearing of approximately 135 at a distance of about 15 miles. The ship at the time was still on course 263 true, speed unknown, but believed to be in excess of five knots. At no time did the ship stop during the air attack. It is believed that the time of initial sighting of the torpedo boats, the time was about 1420. The boats appeared to be in a wedge type formation with the center boat the lead point of the wedge. Estimated speed of the boats was about 27 to 30 knots. They appeared to be about 150 to 200 yards apart. It appeared that they were approaching the ship in a torpedo launch attitude, and since I did not have direct communication with gun control or the gun mounts, I told a man from the bridge, whose identity I do not recall, to proceed to mount 51 and take the boats under fire. The boats continued to approach the ship at high speed and on a constant bearing with decreasing range. About this time I noticed that our Ensign had been shot away during the air attack and ordered DAVID, signalman, to hoist a second





Ensign from the yardarm. During the air attack, our normal Ensign was flying. Before the torpedo attack, a holiday size Ensign was hoisted. I did not have an accurate ship's position at this time, but I knew that to the left of the ship's course at that time lay open waters and by turning to the left I would be approaching land closer than had been given me in directives which I held in that instant in time. I realized that if I attempted to turn to starboard, I would expose a larger target to the torpedo boats. I elected to maintain a heading of 283 at maximum speed. When the boats reached an approximate range of 2,000 yards, the center boat of the formation was signalling to us. Also, at this range, it appeared that they were flying an Israeli flag. This was later verified. It was not possible to read the signal from the center torpedo boat because of the intermittent blocking of view by smoke and flames. At this time, I yelled to machine gun 51 to tell him to hold fire. I realized that there was a possibility of the aircraft having been Israeli and the attack had been conducted in error. I wanted to hold fire to see if we could read the signal from the torpedo boat and perhaps avoid additional damage and personnel injuries. The man on machine gun 51 fired a short burst at the boats before he was able to understand what I was attempting to have him do. Instantly, machine gun 51 opening fire machine gun 53 began firing at the center boat. From the starboard wing of the bridge, 03 level, I observed that the fire from machine gun 53 was extremely effective and blanketed the area and the center torpedo boat. It was not possible to get to mount 53 from the starboard wing of the bridge. I sent Mr. LUCAS around the port side of the bridge, around to the ship's lights, to see if he could tell QUINTERO, whom I believed to be the gunner on machine gun 53, to hold fire until we were able to clarify the situation. He reported back in a few minutes in effect that he saw no one at mount 53. As far as the torpedo boats are concerned, I am sure that they felt that they

were under fire from USS LIBERTY. At this time, they opened fire with their gun mounts and in a matter of seconds, one torpedo was noted crossing astern of the ship at about 25 yards. The time that this torpedo crossed the stern is believed to be about 1426. About 1427, without advance warning, the ship sustained a torpedo hit starboard side forward, immediately below the waterline in the vicinity of the coordination center. The ship immediately took a 9 degree list to starboard and debris were noted coming from the starboard side following the explosion. There was no major resultant fire from this explosion. The explosion caused the ship to come dead in the water. Steering control was lost. All power was lost. Immediately, I determined that the ship was in no danger of sinking and did not order the destruction of classified material and did not order any preparations to be made to abandon ship. It was my intention to ground the ship on shoal areas to the left of the ship's track to prevent its sinking, if necessary. I believed that, if the ship was in a sinking condition, we would not be able to reach sufficiently deep water to avoid recovery of classified material on board. Immediately after the ship was struck by the torpedo, the torpedo boats stopped dead in the water and filled around astern of the ship at a range of approximately 500 to 800 yards. One of the boats signalled by flashing light, in English, "Do you require assistance?" We had no means to communicate with the boat by light but hoisted code lima infra. The signal intended to convey the fact that the ship was maneuvering with difficulty and that they should keep clear. Reports received from damage control central indicated the location of the torpedo hit and that flooding boundaries had been established and that the flooding was under control. During the strafing by the torpedo boats and immediately prior to being hit by the torpedo, quartermaster third ANTON, who was acting as helmsman at the time, was killed at his station. The mess deck was designated casualty collection station and casualties were taken to the collection station by repair party personnel and other members of the



crew able to assist. Following the torpedo hit, those personnel from the research area who were able to do so, left their stations. One of the torpedo boats was identified by a hull number of 204-17. Pictures were taken of the torpedo boats prior to and subsequent to the attack. About 1515, two helicopters approached the ship and circled around and around the ship at a distance of about 100 yards. The ensign the Star of David was clearly visible. Hull number on one of the helicopters was 04 or D4. The other had a hull number of 03 or D3. It was not known whether these helicopters intended to strafe the ship or not. However, they did not approach the ship in a hostile manner, but kept pointed parallel to the ship as they continued around and never made a direct approach as such. They were not taken under fire by Liberty, nor did they fire at us. The torpedo boats left the general area of the ship at about 1515. About 1537, after they had departed the ship and gone to a range of about five miles, they again headed toward the ship at high speed. Their intentions were unknown. At about this same time two unidentified jet aircraft were also approaching the ship from our starboard side, in similar fashion to that which preceded the initial attack. All hands were again alerted to the possibility of repeated attacks. No attacks occurred however and the jets disappeared from the scene. To further assist in identification of the ship, at 1611 I ordered the ship's international call sign hoisted. Both boilers had been put back on the line at approximately 1520, but at 1523 lube oil suction was lost to the main engines and the ship again became dead in the water. The heading of the ship at this time is not known. About 1555, communications were restored, and at 1600 a message was sent providing additional information concerning the attack by unidentified aircraft and the fact that the torpedo boats had been identified as Israeli. Preliminary estimate of the number of dead and casualties, as well as the condition of the ship, was also provided. At the time this message was being dictated to Lieutenant Bennett on the port wing of the bridge, I was laying on the deck with a





tourniquet being applied to my right leg at the thigh. A few moments prior to this I felt myself blacking out from loss of blood, and called for assistance of CTI Carpenter to apply a tourniquet. I had assumed the con immediately upon the air attack and retained the con until rendezvous was effected with the destroyers about 0630 on the morning of 9 June 1967, leaving the bridge only about 3 times during the night hours to make brief head calls on the 02 level. No bodies were noted in the area of ship following the explosion. Several life rafts, however, were released and placed into the water by various crew members whom I was unable to communicate with prior to their placing the boats in the water. They exercised their initiative on the scene, and no fault can be found with their estimate, not having the information that I had. When the messenger was sent to tell them to leave the lifboats alone, that the ship was in no danger of sinking at that time, but that the lifboats might be needed at a later time, no additional lifboats were placed in the water. Misinterpretation of the situation by personnel in combat following the order to prepare for torpedo attack to starboard also resulted in the ship's radar being purposely destroyed. Again, I find no fault with this action under the circumstances. At about 1637, the torpedo boat commenced retiring from the area without further signal or action. At this time, the ship was attempting to make good a course of 240 magnetic, at speed 8 knots. Emergency manual steering was being conducted from after steering. The amount of rudder was given to after steering over emergency rigged sound powered telephones. They would apply the rudder. When the ship had come to the approximate magnetic heading, the rudder would be shifted to attempt to maintain that heading. It was possible to maintain within plus or minus 30 degrees of the ship's heading most of the time. The exact position of the ship was not known at this time. At 1653 an attempt was made to steer and make good a course of 000 magnetic. It was not known what effect the nearby explosions might have had on the pilot house magnetic compass. The gyro compass was

out. It was not known what the azimuth of the setting sun was, but this was used as a rough guide and it appeared that the magnetic compass had not been unduly affected. The ship's fathometer in combat was working following the attacks. At about 163', the fathometer sounding reported approximately 26 fathoms under the keel. I realized at this point that the ship might be south of its track and could be approaching the shoal areas outside of our operating area. Since I was not positive of the ship's position, I ordered Mr. Lucas to round up as many personnel as he could, and proceed to the forecabin and attempt to anchor. My intention was to anchor until it became night so that I could visually sight the North Star to see whether the magnetic compass had been unduly affected or not. Once I was able to sight the North Star, then I would know in which direction the ship was actually proceeding. Mr. Lucas and personnel did go to the forecabin, and at one point I did order the port anchor to let go. But before the port anchor could be let go, I reversed my decision and backed all engines two-thirds to see if I could back clear of the apparent shoal area. I commenced backing the ship at about 1704 and continued backing until 1722, at which time the fathometer reading was approximately 48 fathoms under the keel. With the ship going ahead two-thirds and right full rudder we quickly came to a magnetic heading of about 350 magnetic and continued on to a heading of 025 magnetic about 1729. The ship was at this time making a speed of about 8 knots. At 1730, the ship lost lube oil to the main engines, and all engines were stopped. At 1731, the ship was on a heading of 022 magnetic with 30 fathoms of water under the keel. Lube oil pressure was regained to the main engines within a very short period of time, and the ship continued right to a magnetic heading of 040 at 1737, at which time 72 fathoms was indicated under the keel. At 1743, the ship's heading was 063 magnetic and 82 fathoms of water under the keel. At this time I considered the ship to have stood clear of the immediate danger of grounding and at 1748 increased speed to ten knots on a magnetic heading of 050. The ship remained at general

quarters, and reports from damage control central were to the effect that all watertight boundary bulkheads were holding satisfactory. Dr. MEYER, and the two corpsmen, were doing outstanding work in assisting injured crew members. They advised us from time to time of the number of casualties, the extent of injuries, and efforts being made. At 1750, a message was received from COMSIXTHFLT to the effect that escorts were on the way and that the ship was to proceed on a course of 340 magnetic at maximum speed until 100 miles from present position, then turn 270 magnetic. The ship attempted to carry out this directive. At 1757, COMSIXTHFLT advised that escorts were proceeding to rendezvous with us at maximum speed of destroyers. At 1841, an Israeli helicopter approached the ship and hovered at bridge level approximately 30 feet from the ship. They made various attempts to indicate by visual means that they wished to land a man on board. At one point, I considered granting the request, but considering the obstructions in the area of the forecabin, signalled a waveoff to them. Lettering on the tail of the helicopter was SA32K. On the fuselage were the numerals 06 or 06. At 1847, the helicopter dropped a message on the forecabin. The message was written on the back of a calling card, identified as Commander Ernest Carl Castle, Naval Attache for Air Embassy, USA. The message on the back read as follows: "Have you casualties". We attempted to advise them by flashing light with an Aldis lamp that, "affirmative", we did have casualties. It was evident that they were unable to understand what we were saying. After some ten to fifteen minutes of unsuccessful efforts to communicate between the helicopter and the ship, the helicopter departed from the area, at a time unknown, but as dusk was approaching the ship. Three musters were taken during the night to identify the dead, the seriously injured, and to determine those who were missing. It was believed that those initially reported as missing are entrapped in compartments in the forward part of the ship as a result of the torpedo explosion and resultant flooding. As of 1900,



11 June, two of the persons previously reported missing, have been recovered. One by removing him directly from the space on board ship. The other was recovered by the PAPAGO, a Fleet tug steaming approximately six miles astern of the ship on the morning of 11 June. It is not known at this time whether any of the other individuals reported missing have drifted free of the space through the torpedo hole and vanished from the area. It will not be possible to determine until the ship has been drydocked and the compartment dewatered and remains recovered. Preparation of casualty messages were completed as expeditiously as possible upon the completion of the musters, and necessary message notifications sent. The ship rendezvoused with the two destroyers on the morning of 9 June. Commander Destroyer Squadron Twelve reported on board to inspect damage and confer with the Commanding Officer. Personnel from the USS DAVIS immediately boarded the ship to render assistance with damage control and treatment of injured personnel. I have no complaint to lodge against any officer or man on board USS LIBERTY for any acts of commission or omission during the attack and post attack phase. I have nothing but the greatest admiration for their courage, their devotion to duty, and their efforts to save the ship. As the result of my personal knowledge of the manner in which the following personnel performed their duties during the attack and post attack phase, I intend to commend Ensign LUCAS; Signalman DAVIS; Quartermaster Third BROWN; Lieutenant George GOLDEN, Engineering Officer; and Ensign SCOTT, Damage Control Assistant. I have requested the officers and the petty officers of the ship to advise me of any other individuals, who, to their personal knowledge, performed in such a manner as to warrant special recognition. I also intend to address a letter of appreciation to Lieutenant Commander Bill PETTYJOHN, Chief Staff Officer, COMDESRON TWELVE, for the outstanding manner in which he has assumed the responsibilities of assisting the Commanding Officer in sailing the ship from point of rendezvous to destination of Malta. A message of condolence from the ship has been sent to BUPERS with the request that it

Washington 30 December 1964. The deployment initially commenced under the operational control of COMNAVFOR EIGHT. The first port of call was Abidjan, Ivory Coast with a scheduled arrival of 22 May 1967. LIBERTY arrived at Abidjan, Ivory Coast on the scheduled date. LIBERTY was scheduled to spend four days in Abidjan, Ivory Coast to depart on 26 May 1967. The operation order was similar to that under which the LIBERTY had deployed on four previous occasions. On the morning of 24 May, approximately 0345Z, a message was received from COMNAVFOR EIGHT with a dtg of 240020Z, May 67 in effect directing that LIBERTY get underway immediately and proceed to Rota, Spain for further operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Immediately upon receipt of this message, LIBERTY commenced preparations for getting underway. It was not possible to get underway, however, until about 0730 on the morning of 24 May 1967. The delay was due to awaiting for pilot, tug, and proper tide conditions for transit of the Vridi Canal. 1733 LIBERTY cleared the Vridi Canal approximately 0745, 24 May 1967, and set course via coastal route direct to Rota, Spain at best speed. An average of about 15 knots was maintained during the transit. During the transit from Abidjan, Ivory Coast to Rota, Spain, operational control of LIBERTY was changed from COMNAVFOR EIGHT to USCINCPAC. The reference for this operational control change is COMNAVFOR EIGHT 300202Z May 1967. This reference is not immediately available to me. Operational control of LIBERTY was again shifted from USCINCPAC to CINCPACFLT in accordance with USCINCPAC 300332Z May 1967. This change of operational control occurred as LIBERTY arrived at the sea buoy off the port of Rota, Spain at about 0930 local time, 1 June 1967. After completion of fueling, loading provisions, and accomplishing repairs to the special communications relay system (TRICOM) the ship was FPS at about 1330, 2 June, and at that time got underway in accordance with CINCPACFLT move order 7-67, dtg of this move order was CINCPACFLT dtg 311750Z May 67 modified by CINCPACFLT dtg 011305Z June 1967. JCS message dtg 011545Z June 1967 is considered pertinent in LIBERTY's schedule from the period 02 June until the time of the incident. This message gives departure date from Rota, route to

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follow, point to proceed to, and the operating area of Liberty during  
 the period of 9 to 30 June 1967. Paragraph 10 of this message is par-  
 ticularly pertinent. At 070001Z June 1967, operational control of Liberty  
 again changed from CINCUSNAVFLC to CQSDXNFLT in accordance with  
 CINCUSNAVFLC dtg 061357Z June 1967. This change of operational control  
 was made by message in which Liberty indicated to CQSDXNFLT that Liberty  
 was reporting to CQSDXNFLT in accordance with the CINCUSNAVFLC message  
 061357Z. This message also included Liberty endurance and provisions,  
 dry, frozen, and chill. It indicated that the ship had on board approx-  
 imately 85% fuel and utilized approximately 1% fuel per day while on  
 station. The message also indicated that Liberty self-defense capability  
 was limited to four 50 caliber machine guns. The dtg of this message is  
 062050Z June 67. USS Liberty was operating under the operational control  
 of CQSDXNFLT at the time of the incident. No additional messages were  
 in hand onboard Liberty concerning area of operation or other guidance for  
 the performance of our mission than previously mentioned in the JCS message  
 of 011545Z June 1967. CQSDXNFLT message dtg 060917Z June 1967, which  
 directed Liberty to proceed and operate within a 25 mile radius of 33.40  
 North, 32.30 East until further notice was not received until delivered  
 by hand on 10 June 1967. Had this message been received anytime prior to  
 the attack, Liberty would have attempted to open the range on the coast  
 of the countries indicated in the message to at least be 100 miles  
 specified. The existence of this message was not known by the Commanding  
 Officer of the Liberty at the time of the incident and no action was taken  
 to comply with it. During the four previous deployments of USS Liberty,  
 the ship aroused unusual curiosity only during the first and second  
 deployments. The configuration of the ship with unusual mast antennas  
 arrangements and dockhouse structures caused, so I understand inasmuch  
 as I was not on board as Commanding Officer at the time, some surveillance,  
 primarily surface, from the Southwest African countries during its first  
 two deployments. Lieutenant GOLDEI, who was aboard at the time, may be

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able to provide the Board with additional details in this area. There are probably many reasons why the aircraft were unidentified. One reason would be that the distance, and the speed at which the aircraft flew, was such that it was extremely difficult to make out any distinguishing characteristics by personnel on board who do not normally observe any jet aircraft in the area of the ship's operation. The ship normally steams on independent duty along the West Coast of Africa. These countries do not have sophisticated air forces with the possible exception of Angola. Angola does have some jet aircraft but they have been noted to fly over the ship only on one occasion to the Commanding Officer's personal knowledge while the ship was at anchor in Luanda Harbor. An occasional off-shore oil rig working an oil rig along the coast and infrequently commercial jet aircraft is about the extent of air activity observed by personnel aboard LIBERTY. A recognition manual for Israeli, USSR, aircraft and surface ships was not on board prior to proceeding to the area. General ship characteristic and plane characteristic recognition manuals are on board and were used to hold occasional recognition training sessions. These sessions were primarily devoted to ship recognition. It was not known whether any U.S. aircraft were in the area, but no known U.S. aircraft were sighted by anyone onboard at any time prior to or after the incident. On further recollection of the event involving machine gun 53 firing, the effectiveness of the firing lead me to believe that a person, whom I believe to be GUENTERO, Boatswain Mate Seaman, to have been on station at machine gun 53 and took the torpedo boats under fire. It is possible that he evacuated his station as a result of the fire and flames from the motor whaleboat prior to Ensign Lucas' arriving to determine who was on the mount. For clarification purposes, the 50 caliber machine guns that are onboard USS Liberty are Browning machine guns, M2, heavy barrel, with a rate of fire of 450 to 500 rounds per minute. These machine guns are mounted on a pedestal and are aircooled weapons. Two men can effectively serve the gun. One as gunner, who uses

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an open sight; the other individual, the loader, who keeps ammunition up to the chamber. These machine guns are manually controlled. There is no director means of controlling the fire. The limiting stops for arc of fire of these weapons consist of piping, bent in a shape to prevent the gun barrel from being pointed at a direction which would harm the ship or any portion of its structure, and the outer edge of the gun tubes themselves which offer very limited splinter protection. The machine guns themselves do not have any splinter shields attached. These machine guns are not considered mounts in the normal Navy terminology of a mount. They should be considered more as pedestal mounted machine guns. The time gap in the Quartermasters notebook resulted from the fact that there were insufficient number of people in the bridge area to maintain an accurate record of events as they occurred and execute the orders of the Commanding Officer simultaneously. With communications to various stations limited various personnel, as they were noted on the bridge, were used as messengers. At one time during this time frame, the only individuals seen in the bridge were Quartermaster BROWN, who was on the helm, Ensign LUCAS, and myself. Ensign LUCAS was busy relaying my instructions to the various battle stations. The smooth log will be a reconstruction of events as recalled by the Commanding Officer, who was present on the bridge throughout the entire incident and maintained his faculties at all times during the incident. At this time, I have related all of the events that are considered pertinent and should be brought to the attention of the Board of Inquiry. One additional fact, which should be noted by the board, is the fact that the chart used for plotting the ship's position and for laying out the operating area is identified as Portfolio A3259, Chart DC3974 Rev, Second Edition, September 30, 1963 (revised 5/4/64). This chart shows the approach to the operating area that the USS LIBERTY made, a diagonal transit from northwest to southeast. It lists point A, B, and C as the proposed southernmost limit of the operating area and the intended track of LIBERTY.

Q. Captain, you mentioned in your testimony that a helicopter hovered over Liberty and that an object was dropped which you recovered. I show you this card, and ask you if you recognize it?

A. Yes sir, I do recognize this card. It is a calling card.

Counsel for the Court: I'd like to offer this into evidence as Exhibit number 7, and to serve as identification, if there is no objection, I would like you to read it now?

A. I read from the card I now hold in my hand. It is a calling card from "Commander Earnest Carl Castle, United States Navy, Naval Attache for Air, Embassy of the United States of America, Tel Aviv." This is on the face of the card. On the back of the card is written, "Have you casualties?" It's noted that this card is encased with oil smudges on both sides.

Q. Thank you very much. You also mentioned in your testimony that you took a camera out of your briefcase and were able to start to take some pictures. I show you developed pictures and ask you if you recognize them?

A. Yes, I recognize most of these pictures as having been taken by myself during the attack. Some had been taken by another individual unknown, but I do recognize the scenes depicted therein.

Q. Therefore, will you mark the back of the pictures for record purposes so that identification will be known? and I offer them in evidence as Exhibit 9.

A. Yes sir, I will mark them so that they, the scene or object depicted will be clearly indicated.

President: I'd like to, at this point ask the Captain -- Did you not have wounded still lying about the deck at the time this helicopter was hovering over the ship?

A. Admiral, if you mean the helicopter which the attache was in, I'm not sure that the wounded were still lying around the deck, as such. By that time, most of our wounded had been taken to the casualty collection stations.



But there were people that were wounded. Whether they were evident to the Naval Attache from his position in the helicopter I do not know. There were injured on deck, however.

Counsel for the Court: In amplification of the Admiral's question, was there not a considerable amount of blood on the decks that would be obvious from a reasonable distance?

A. That is correct. There were numerous blood streaks the full length from the 01 level on the forecastle to the main deck at machine gun mount 51, where one body was still lying. I do recall that now. With his head nearly completely shot away. As I recall now, there was also another body in the vicinity of mount 51. The seriously injured were cared for before those obviously beyond help; were taken care of and removed from the place where they were hit.

Counsel for the Court: I'd also like to introduce in evidence at this point, separately from the chronologic 1 file of messages, LAO Tel Aviv 082100Z, as Exhibit 10.

Counsel for the Court: You have in your custody, USS Liberty charts that were used on the day of 8 June 1967?

A. Yes sir, I do.

Counsel for the Court: I request the recorder to mark such charts exhibits 11 and 12 and request photos be substituted in the record.

Counsel for the Court: Will you please read the information relative to this court?

A. From exhibit 12, this is a chart of the Mediterranean Sea from Antalya Korfesi to Alexandria including Cyprus. It is further identified by Chart No. DC3924 November, second edition, September 30, 1963, revised 3-4-64. This chart shows points A, B, and C. These three points limit the southern operating area in which Liberty intended to operate in carrying out the directives of the JCS message 011545Z.

Captain Lauff: Do I understand these to be the southernmost limit of your operating area?

A. Those points represent a point greater, a distance from the beach, greater than that specified in the JCS message, but closely approximate those limits. The lines between point A, B, and C were the intended track of Liberty during the forenoon and afternoon of 6 June 1967.

It was planned on arrival at point C to reverse course to the right and proceed again to point B, thence to point A, and continue a back and forth motion along these tracks during our entire stay in the operating area. It was planned to move point C to where longitude 35°W bisects the 100 fathom curve should it not be possible to obtain accurate fixes as the ship approached point C. The latitude and longitude of these points are as follows: Point A -- 31.27.2N 34.00E. This point is thirteen nautical miles from the nearest land. The coordinates of point B are: 31.22.3N 33.42E. This point is 14.6 nautical miles from nearest land. The coordinates of point C are: 31.31N 33.00E. This point is 13 nautical miles from nearest land. Closest point of approach to nearest land on a line between points A and B is 13 nautical miles. The closest point of approach to nearest land between points B and C is 14.1 nautical miles. Verbal instructions to the officers of the deck were that the ship was not to be to the south of a line connecting these points at anytime. Exhibit number 12 is a chart. The course between point A and B is 253 true. The course between point B and C is 283 true.

Counsel of the Court: Do any of the members of the Court desire to question the witness?

No response.

Witness: Exhibit number 13 is a Mediterranean Sea chart of Egypt and coastline from Damietta to Alrich. This is further identified as chart No. 3975, seventh edition, March 1931, revised 2/3/64. This chart has on it the previously described points A, B, and C. It also has on it the danger

bearing established on the conspicuous Manarat at Alarish of 139 degrees true from the ship. The shoal areas of five fathoms or less are circled in red to easily call attention to their location.

Counsel for the Court: Captain, do you have with you in your custody a CIC log and the radar bearing book for USS Liberty?

A. Yes sir, I do.

Counsel for the Court: Request the recorder mark the radar bearing book as exhibit number 13 and the CIC log as exhibit number 14. I now offer these exhibits into evidence.

Counsel for the Court: Do any members of the Court desire to question the witness concerning the charts, exhibits 11 and 12, or the radar bearing book and the CIC log, exhibit 13 and 14.

No response.

The witness was duly sworn and testified.



Lieutenant Junior Grade Lloyd C. PAINTER, United States Naval Reserve, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your name, rank and organization?

A. Lloyd C. PAINTER, Lieutenant (JG), USNR.

Q. On 8 June 1967, at about 1400 hours, an incident occurred aboard USS LIBERTY in which the vessel was attacked. Would you please relate to this Court of Inquiry what you recall concerning that incident?

A. Yes sir. I was at this time, the officer of the deck. I had the 12 to 1600 watch that afternoon, and we had had a practice general quarters drill at 1300 and secured from that at approximately 1345, 1350. And during general quarters I left the bridge and went to my general quarters station, which is repair three, located on the mess decks. After this drill was over, I went back up to the bridge to relieve the watch, and when I came up to the bridge, I was

Q. What time was that?

A. Sir, I think it was 1350, thereabouts. I came back up to the bridge and relieved Mr. O'CONNOR who was the general quarters OOD, and assumed the watch. The first thing I was concerned with was getting a fix, and I remember distinctly checking the radar, and the nearest point of land on the radar at approximately 1355 was 17.5 miles. And I remember distinctly asking the Captain if I could come back to our base course, which I believe was set at about 14 and a half miles. We were about three miles outside of base course. About this time, it was around 1400, the Captain was on the starboard wing. He was watching some jet aircraft. The Captain was on the starboard wing, and he was looking up in the air at a couple of jet aircraft. He called me out there and said, "you'd better call the forward gun mounts." He said, "I think they're going to attack," or words to that effect. So, I ran into the bridge area and tried to call the port and starboard gun mounts forward. I couldn't get them; I called them about three times, and about the third

time I said, "bridge, gun mounts 51 and 52." They were hit. I can't testify exactly which one was hit first, port or starboard; they were both hit so fast. I believe the starboard one was hit first. At this time, I still had the phone in my hand, I was looking through the porthole at the gun mounts. I was looking through the porthole when I was trying to contact those two kids, and I saw them both well, I didn't exactly see them as such. They were blown apart, but I saw the whole area go up in smoke and scattered metal. And, at about the same time the aircraft strafed the bridge area itself. The quartermaster, quartermaster third class POLLARD was standing right next to me, and he was hit, evidently with flying pieces from the porthole. I don't know why I came out without a scratch. I was standing, as I said, right next to him. Finally, about this time they started strafing and we both hit the deck, as well as Mr. O'HALLORAN, who was my JCO at the time. As soon as the first strafing raid had been made, we sounded general quarters alarm. The Captain was on the bridge. He was in the pilot house at this time. I don't know whether he was hit then or not, I can't remember. It was so sneaky. I took off for my general quarters station, which, as I said before, was repair three on the mess decks. On the way down I was running as fast as I could. By the time I got to the Chief's Lounge, the entrance through the lounge to the mess decks, I saw SPICER, our postal clerk, lying there out in half with strafing and the hospital corpsman was applying mouth to mouth resuscitation. This I later found out failed. He died right there. Well, anyway, I got down to the mess decks and all my men were assembling there as fast as possible. They went to full battle dress, and so did I. I can't recall exactly how long we were waiting for the strafing raids to be over, but I believe it was approximately 20 minutes. At this time someone, I believe it was one of the quartermasters, came down and called me to the bridge. He said, "the Captain's hurt and the operations officer was dead, and the executive officer was mortally wounded." I ran up to the bridge. And when I got up there, the Captain was laying on the stretcher up there while trying to get underway. He thought for a while I think, I'm not sure, that he would pass out, and he wanted somebody up there to take over. He wanted somebody up there in case



he did. I'm not sure, but I think that is why he had called me up there. I don't know whether he called me up there, or the quartermaster just took it on his own to get me up there. I never found out. So, I was up there for a few minutes and it looked like the strafing raids were over, and some of the people were coming out and looking around and my repair chief had come out to assess some of the damage. When I saw him on the 01 level deck, I told him to take over Repair Three as I would be on the bridge. Well, by this time, the Captain had regained consciousness and told me that I would best be needed in Repair Three.

Q. Was that the Captain?

A. Yes sir.

So I left and went back to Repair Three, and I don't know how long, time was slipping by so fast at this time, after that we had our first torpedo attack. It came over, well the LC was out, it came over the sound powered phones, "Prepare for torpedo attack starboard side."

So, we prepared for a torpedo attack starboard side, which we received in midships. I can't say exactly what time it was, maybe 1435.

Well, the ship at this time as soon as the torpedo hit midships, we began to develop a starboard list very quickly. So quickly that I felt as though we were probably going to lose it. At this time, the DC central passed the word to prepare to abandon ship. We then filed out to our life rafts which were no longer with us because they had been strafed and most of them were burned, so we knocked most of them over the side. At this time the torpedo boats, three of them, that had torpedored us, were laying off, waiting for us to sink, I believe. Anyway, they didn't come near us at this time.

However, we were able to maintain the ship and stabilize it. It didn't sink.

So the Captain said that everyone could go back to general quarters stations. At this time I went back to Repair Three on the mess decks along with the rest of my repair party. All during this time in Repair Three, my men were fighting fires and knocking burning liferafts, etc. So we were kept fairly busy down in Repair Three the whole time. Also they were checking bulkheads and shoring where needed. After I went back there, after the torpedo attack, we waited for what seemed like many, many hours, but I



imagine it was only 20 or 30 minutes; and in that time we were checking out the torpedo hit midships and doing what was necessary to prevent further flooding. About 30 minutes later we had word from the Captain that torpedo boats were approaching us again and to prepare for another torpedo attack starboard side. And I know that if another torpedo had hit us, it would have sunk us, so I told the men to standby to abandon ship. We prepared to abandon ship in case we were hit the second time. At this time we were dead in the water with no steering. However, we were able to regain our steering by manual means and able to make approximately five to six knots. The pit log was out, we were just guessing by the number of turns that were being made. We tried to maintain a course, this time, I'm not really sure, it was either 300 or 320 to take us out of there. After we had gotten underway, an Israeli helicopter came out and asked us if we wanted aid; well, they didn't ask us, they just came along side and acted like they wanted to help, but we waved them off. We maintained this course as best we could throughout the night. I was up on the bridge most of the night with the Captain, up until the destroyer, DAVIS, I believe it was, came alongside the next morning. Repair force on the mess decks was designated a casualty station because the wardroom, which was the normal casualty station, was so badly damaged that we couldn't keep them up there. The mess deck was a bloody mess that night. People were dying. It was a ghastly sight. That's about all I have to say.

Counsel for the Court: Did you have occasion to see the national ensign flying?

A. Yes sir, I did. I saw the national ensign flying after the, it was at the time I believe when we were going to abandon ship. I ran out on the main deck to get the life rafts ready. I remember distinctly looking back up and seeing the Ensign flying. This was, I think, after the air raid, after the torpedo attack.

Q. Had you seen it earlier that morning?

A. I saw it earlier that morning when I came up, I don't know when it was.

I came up on and off that morning checking a patrol plane that had been flying over us. The quartermaster, DAVID OW2, had told me that the night that he was wounded that he had put the flag up at 0730 that morning.

Q. So you, in recollection, recall seeing the flag flying in the morning and after the torpedo attack?

A. Yes, before and after the torpedo attack.

Q. Do you know whether or not it was the same flag?

A. I couldn't tell you sir. The way I thought at one time, what the heck was it, I noticed there was something funny about it. I might have seen the flag twice, because once I saw one that had been shot up and it was ragged, and the next time I looked at it I didn't notice whether it was ragged or not. I couldn't say either way whether it was the same flag.

A. Earlier in your testimony you mentioned that the LIBERTY was 17.5 miles from nearest point of land. How did you arrive at this?

A. By radar navigation.

Q. Did you take a fathometer check?

A. Fathometer checked, yes sir. Either 33 or 31 fathoms under the keel at this time.

Counsel for the Court: Does any other member of this Court have questions of this witness?

President: No further questions.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Ensign John D. SCOTT, U. S. Naval Reserve, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION:

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your full name, rank, and organization.

A. John D. SCOTT, Ensign, USNR.

Q. Mr. SCOTT, you know that this Court of Inquiry is interested in the incident involving USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. Would you please tell the Court what you recall of that incident?

A. Yes sir. On the morning of the 5th, I had the 4 to 8 officer of the Deck watch on the bridge. It was a routine watch. The only thing out of the ordinary was we had one reconnaissance plane that flew by us and made a few circles off our port beam. He circled around about three or four times, then took off.

Q. About what time?

A. About 0515. I was not able to identify the aircraft. We looked at it with the binoculars. Due to the distance we could not see any markings or insignia of any sort on it.

President: That was local time, Mr. SCOTT?

A. Yes sir. The plane circled around several times then took off in a true direction towards Tel Aviv. About 30 minutes later I got a call from coordination, sir, and Chief CT SMITH was on the phone; wanted to know if I had an air contact that was fairly clear in the last half hour.. I told him I did and he wanted to know which direction it went after it left the vicinity of the ship. I told him, "Tel Aviv." He said, "Fine, that's all I want to know." I did manage to take four pictures of the aircraft with the camera on the bridge. I didn't know what type it was. It was a double fuselage, twin-engine type. It looked somewhat like an old P-38 or a small flying boxcar. That's about the only significant thing that happened on the 4 to 8.

Q. Do you recall the flag or the national ensign flying?

A. Yes sir, it was flying. I noticed at first light that the ensign was flying. I looked up to it to check the wind direction just in the event I had to blow tubes and I wanted to have a favorable wind direction. That's about all I recall about the flag being up on the day and night while we were over here. I don't recall seeing it down at all. That's about all I have to say about the 4 to 8.

Q. Continue on during the day?

A. I wasn't aware of any aircraft overhead. I did notice that at about the noon hour there was smoke on the horizon. Could see results of bombing on the horizon. I had gone out and taken a picture. I wasn't aware of aircraft. After we secured from general quarters, I came in to





the wardroom and I just left when I heard the first hit. With that, I took off running to DC central. I did not come topside again until about 0500 the following day.

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions of this witness. Does any member of the Court?

President: Tell us a little bit about your damage control measures when the ship was hit from starboard,

A. Yes sir. When we were first hit, the first orders we got were, "two fires, one port side in the vicinity of the gas drums, one starboard side vicinity of the motor whaleboat." I ordered fire fighting parties out. Next we were ordered to pick up the wounded. We had a number of calls, repeated calls to pick up the wounded. I called back and said that every available stretcher was in use. They were using blankets and mattresses to haul the people back. After the fires were out, they burned for quite awhile before we got them under control. The next thing, we were told by the bridge to stand by for torpedo attack starboard side. The torpedo hit at approximately 1425 and 1445. As soon as the torpedo hit, I called main control. I don't keep a damage control log as such, my repair parties do. They log messages they receive in a book. Neither one of them, as soon as the attack started, kept a log. I kept message blanks coming into repair parties, but they were not timed. I had about ten or twelve message blanks prior to the torpedo hitting. I had the main damage, I had the large hole in the back berthing compartment, I had the hold in the diagnostic room, I had the two fires, the fires under control and one of them logged as out. But when the torpedo hit, the logroom in damage control central was in a shambles, the safe door blew open, logs went flying off the shelves, we were knocked on the deck, and shortly thereafter the order was passed down to set the destruction bill. And with that, we didn't bother to write down our messages anymore. Myself, my LJV talker, and my 2J2 talker commenced burning all confidential messages and pubs in DC central.

Q. That's fine. Tell me a little about your shoring.

A. It was necessary, after we investigated the diagnostic room, which is directly above the vicinity which the torpedo hit, I went in, it was next to DC central, I went in with the DC investigator from repair two. We saw the level of the water rising. I stuck my hand in the hole. It came out with black, black oil. With that I said, "It's still rising, we're going to have to shore-it." We brought shoring in and mattresses from the engineering berthing compartment and commenced shoring. We found another rupture out in the passageway and it was bulged out, but we had that area pretty well under control.

Q. To establish the watertight boundary after the torpedo attack, was there any question about anyone being left alive in the spaces below?

A. No sir. When I saw the black oil coming up, I knew it had ruptured the fuel tanks. I went down to main control. I called them first and told them I had ruptured tanks up here and told them not to take inspections from these tanks. Later on in the morning, I went down to main control and told them to take inspections from starboard tanks but not those two to correct the list. We went over to twelve degrees, and came back to ten. About 0500 in the morning we were down to about a 6 degree list.

Q. Who was in charge of the forward repair parties at that time?

A. Ensign LAYLOR. He was the Repair Officer. He was hit before he ever got to the repair locker. He wandered off on his own. He came down the passageway, stuck his head in DC central. I could see he was hit very bad. He said, "Scottie, I've been hit." I said, "I can't help you, go to the mess decks. I'll call them and tell them you're coming." I don't have a plotter or messenger, and there were just three people in DC central, so none of us could leave. Next, there was Chief THOMPSON, and I got the word that he was hit, but not bad. A little later the bridge called wanting a signalman. Both my signalmen had been hit, and I called repair and asked them if they had any signalmen, anybody, even enlisted men. Chief THOMPSON volunteered and went to the bridge. Then DLWARI, shipfitter third, took over.

President: This was Chief THOMPSON who volunteered, who was already wounded?

GOLDEN

A. Yes sir. And DEMORI was the on-scene leader.

Q. Is DEMORI still around?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Have you been to damage control school, Scottie?

A. Yes sir, I went ten weeks ago.

Q. Was it worth it?

A. Yes sir. I'd recommend it to anybody.

President: Scottie, I'm proud of you. Thank you very much, son.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Lieutenant George H. GOLDEN, United States Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your name, rank, and present duty station.

A. George H. GOLDEN, Lieutenant, Engineering Officer, USS LIBERTY.

Q. Lieutenant GOLDEN, you know that this Court of Inquiry has been convened to look into the circumstances incident to the attack on USS LIBERTY. Will you please tell the Court what, if anything, you recall about that incident?

A. Yes sir. At approximately 1145, I completed eating lunch, and went to the O<sub>1</sub> level forward to sunbathe along with the Captain and some of the other officers. I have a lounge chair, most of us do have; while laying on my back sunbathing, I noticed a plane flying over. I dozed off, and approximately 25 minutes or so later on, I woke up and saw a plane circling again coming from the port beam, crossing the ship. While watching it, I glanced up and noticed it just crossing over the stack area, and I noticed a small amount of smoke coming out of my stack, and also the flag was flying.

Counsel for the Court: Was it extended?

A. Yes sir, there was a slight breeze blowing.

Q. Where was the flag flying from, Lieutenant GOLDEN?

A. The foremast.



Q. And it was standing out where it could be seen?

A. Yes sir. Not completely the full length, but it was standing out.

At approximately 1255, I left the OI level forward, and then went forward

because I knew that the Commanding Officer was going to have a surprise

chemical attack for a drill between the crew. We went to general

quarters at 1310. Immediately after we went to general quarters, the

Commanding Officer addressed the crew concerning setting Zebra. He

explained to them that anything could happen at any time. It took us

four minutes to set Zebra, we should improve on that time. He explained

that there was smoke coming from the beach area, and that there was

possible fighting in that area. After completing general quarters, I

came from the engineering and went to the port side of the ship, the

motor whaleboat started smoking instantly, and walked into the wardroom to

have a quick cup of coffee before going to my office. I sat down in the

forward part of the wardroom, and I had no more had set down when the word

was passed to stand clear of the motor whaleboat while testing.

Immediately, there was a bang, and the first thought came to my head that

the whaleboat had been dropped into the water. I jumped to the porthole,

looked out, and there was black smoke coming up from the side of the ship.

I immediately ran to the door to the wardroom to go outside. The second

I hit the door, I heard the word passed, "General Quarters, all hands man

your battle stations." And then the alarm went off. Before I had gotten

clear of the door, the word was also passed over the PA system, which

sounded like the Commanding Officer's voice, telling radio central to

notify high command that we were under air attack. When I hit the deck

plate in the engine room main control in front of the throttle board at

1405, I knew it was this time because the tachometers were ringing up at

the same time flank speed. I had informed over the IMC the Captain

it would take me a couple of minutes to bring the other boiler on the

line, as we had just secured it to repair a gasket. The Commanding

Officer told me to get it on as soon as possible and give him all the

turns possible. Within a few minutes we were doing 86 rpm, until there

was a hit and I lost electrical power. We went dead in the water.

Counsel for the Court: Lieutenant GOLDEN, how many years have you been in the naval service actively?

A. Twenty-six years sir.

Q. This Court has heard many instances of loss of life, and the Court has viewed the inordinate amount damage to the vessel. Would you please tell the Court the nature of your personal possession loss incident to the damage to your stateroom?

A. There were two shells which could be 20mm, I'm not sure. There was one six inches in diameter, and another one approximately 7 or 8 inches in diameter, just aft of the center of my stateroom. Fragmentation from these two shells damaged the stateroom considerably. One came through the overhead of the stateroom. Bullets of unknown caliber came through the closet where my clothes hung. The bullets went completely through one of them through the other, ripping all of my clothing apart. Bullets entered the bottom of the room, into the drawers where I keep my shoes, tearing those up. The fire fighting water from where the repair party was fighting the fire on the starboard side of frame 80 came through these holes, both from the 01 level and the 02 level, and ruined the tape recorder which I had setting on my desk.

Counsel for the Court: Value of the tape recorder?

A. \$19.00 sir.

President: Let the record show at this point that Lieutenant GOLDEN's testimony on his personal loss is introduced as being typical of the type of personal loss realized by the officers of the LIBERTY. The effectiveness of aircraft strafing and rocketry against the topside of the ship virtually eliminated the usability of any and everything inside the staterooms themselves.

Counsel for the Court: Mr. GOLDEN, as Engineering Officer, do you have in your custody, engineering logs?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Do you also have the gyro compass record in your custody?

A. Yes sir, I do. I have that one particular record with me at this time, sir.

Counsel for the Court: Request the recorder mark the engineering log as exhibit 16, the gyro compass record as exhibit 17, and request they be accepted into evidence as 16 and 17.

Counsel for the Court: Would you please read pertinent extracts from these logs?

A. Aye, sir. In the engineering smooth log on the 12 to 1600 watch on 8 June 1967. The log is signed by R. J. BROOKS, Machinist Mate Chief, at 1405, general quarters under attack. 1406, granted permission to fire room to light fires in number two boiler. At 1406, informed throttlemate to maneuver at various speeds, to draw steam no less than 400 pounds. 1407, reported condition Zebra. 1408, secured number one and number two distilling units in order to have more steam or speed. 1435, lost electrical power due to hit believed to be torpedo. There was a vibration from this hit that knocked two people in the engine room off of ladders from the upper platform to the lower platform. It vibrated a light out of its socket. It knocked both generators off the line. Also lost communications to the bridge at this time. 1450, put number three generator to atmospheric ballast. 1453, generator on the line. During this period of time, there were both 20mm and two other smaller caliber bullets coming through the bulkhead from the starboard side from approximately frames 80 to 95. The last entry in the engineer's bell book was for 1405 when the bridge rang up for flank speed. There were no more entries in the engineer's bell book after 1405.

President: Tell me again, Lieutenant GOLDEN, how long your records or your memory indicates that you were without power after your circuit breakers tripped out and you lost the load?

A. From 15 to 20 minutes, I think sir.

Q. And your record shows that you lost the load at what time?

A. Lost electrical power at 1435 and regained electrical power at 1453.

President: Let the record show at this point, as a matter which is germane to all of the testimony wherein sequential and accurate times are



desirable but unavailable. That the early rocket attack against this ship shot and stopped, in some cases permanently and in others only temporarily, ships clocks through the ship. This fact has become increasingly evident throughout testimony received as well as in informal discussions with LIBERTY personnel.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Ensign Malcolm Patrick O'MALLEY, United States Naval Reserve, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your name, rank and organization?

A. Malcolm Patrick O'MALLEY, Ensign, USS LIBERTY AOR-4.

Q. And your duty status?

A. Assistant Operations Officer and Ship's Secretary.

Q. How long have you been in the Navy?

A. Since January 15th, 1967.

Q. Approximately six months?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Mr. O'MALLEY, directing your attention to 8 June 1967, will you please tell this court what you recall of the attack.

A. Yes sir. I had the con on the 12 to 1600 watch. From 1220 to 1230 is when an Israeli twin-engine plane, well we didn't know it was Israeli, just a twin-engine plane very similar to a flying boxcar, circled us once in a long elliptical circle and they drew near. We found out on questioning, after they went away, Mr. LEWIS said the plane had come out almost periodically every 20 to 40 minutes, and would make one pass in a high circle and head back to land. At 1319, I was relieved on the con by Mr. LEWIS, who was the JOOD for general quarters. Mr. O'CONNOR wasn't there so he stopped in the deck and relieved the con. When we went to general quarters, I went to my general quarters station in CIC. It was an extremely dull general quarters - we didn't do anything. We didn't have any contacts or anything significant to do. Some place between 1335 and 1350 I again assumed con from Mr. LEWIS. At about 1402, 03, or 04, something like that, I was looking at the radar screen and

trying to get a fix. I noticed three contacts coming off the shore and I said, "Lloyd, I think I have three contacts here." He said, "I think I'll talk to the gun mounts on the phone circuits." He tried to talk to them, and before I knew it, just as he was about to say "gun mounts 31 and 32" a jet opened up. It was just, "boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom," and all of a sudden I found myself down on one knee. Someone yelled general quarters, I yelled general quarters, and I left the bridge, and as I went passed, I noticed that the general alarm was sounding. I went into CIC. To return to what had elapsed, well, by the time I took over the con it was 12 o'clock, and the time I was relieved it was approximately 1345.

Counsel for the Court: Who relieved you?

A. Lieutenant James Ennes.

When we got up there, we only had one thing to shoot, and that was a tower, a signal tower. I can remember how it stood on the beach. What happened, was Mr. Painter and I were trying desperately to get a fix, to get an accurate fix, what we were trying to do was get a fix and we couldn't do it.

Counsel for the Court: Do you recall the national ensign flying?

A. No sir, I don't because we were not allowed to go to the 04 level, and from here I couldn't see it. I did see the torpedo boats when I came up to the bridge.

Captain ATKINSON: Are you also the CIC officer?

A. Yes sir.

Counsel for the Court: Mr. O'NEAL, do you have in your possession the INT log?

A. Yes sir, I do.

Q. Do you have the radar bearing book of USS LIBERTY also?

A. Yes, I do.

Request the recorder to mark the radar bearing book as exhibit number 18



and the DRT log, exhibit number 19. I now offer them into evidence, and request Mr. O'MALLEY to read pertinent extracts from 1400 hours on the 8th of June.

A. The radar in CIC went out on the first attack.

Q. Try 1200 hours.

A. I have at 1145 a bearing on 173 at 13.9 miles.

Q. Any subsequent entries? DRT from 1200 on hours?

A. Nothing from 1300 hours.

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions of this witness.

Does any member of the court desire to question the witness?

Captain ATKINSON: What was the last entry in the DRT log?

A. I believe it was 1300. 1300, yes.

President: What would be the reasons for no DRT entries after 1300?

A. I don't have any idea. Mr. Toth use to help me with the thing.

Q. What do you mean, he use to help you?

A. Well, he use to take charge of CIC.

Q. During general quarters?

A. No, not during general quarters. Actually, it was Mr. BENNETT's station. I was there in training. Mr. BENNETT wasn't there on that day.

Counsel for the Court: Mr. O'MALLEY, you indicated you were in the Navy for about six months?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Is this your first time at sea?

A. Yes sir, four months on the LIBERTY, sir.

Q. And your primary duty on USS LIBERTY is?

A. Ship's Secretary.

Q. Ship's Secretary?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Collateral Duty?

A. My collateral duty is Assistant Operations Officer with CIC.

Captain ATKINSON: Was the navigation plot maintained in combat?

A. No, we maintained our navigational plot.

Q. Who's he?

A. COCHAVITCH did, but he was doing what he said was taking fixes and he was just checking if they agreed with the OIP on the bridge in the chartroom. You see, we had two charts. We had one in the chartroom and one in CIC. We did have fixes - like I had a 1220 fix spotted on the chart when the tower was bearing 148, 16.5 miles.

Q. In combat?

A. No, in the chart house.

Q. What happened to that chart?

A. There was an overlay.

President: Would you repeat that fix and time again, Mr. O'MALLEY?

A. At 1220 the tower bearing 148 at 16.5 miles.

Q. Was it normally the ship's practice to use an overlay on a chart which they planned to use for a protracted period in a particular spot?

A. To my knowledge, no. This was the first time that I had seen it.

Q. As a matter of fact, he was putting it on when I came up.

Q. Have you ever been in a ship when it had a patrol station in a spot for a protracted period before this?

A. No, not really. We had gone up and down the coast of Africa, but that was not a patrol.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: I may have missed what you said before. I'm not clear as to whether it's normal practice or not to maintain a navigational track in CIC?

A. The reason why we didn't have it up in CIC, the reason why we hadn't been doing it for a long period of time, was because we had just come in sight of land on the previous watch, and that is why.

The witness was duly sworn and withdrew.

Counsel for the Court: The next witness will be LTJG Malcolm M. Watson, United States Naval Reserve.

Lieutenant Junior Grade Malcolm M. Watson, United States Naval Reserve, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Counsel for the Court: Will you please state your name, rank, and duty station.

A. Malcolm M. Watson, Lieutenant (jg), I. N. M. aboard the LIBERTY.

Q. Mr. Watson, did you know this court has been convened in order to ascertain the circumstances attendant with the attack on USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967? Would you please tell the Court what you recall of that incident?

A. Well, we had a practice CG approximately 1310. My CG station was the fire room down in the engine room. When we had secured from the practice CG, I then came up. I was standing by the wardroom pantry when the attack came. I ran back down the officer's ladder and went down to my station in the fire room. And shortly I was called up to sick bay. I'm narcotics custodian, and I had to open the narcotics locker. I came up from the fire room, went through the mess decks, up to sick bay. I got the key from <sup>the</sup> first class company, and a ~~senior~~ ~~KIRKIN~~ went with me back down to the mess decks, forward along the passageway, into the engineering berthing compartment, down the hatch, into the narcotics locker. I opened the locker, removed morphine, gave half of it to KIRKIN and told him to go on back up and I took the other half and left the safe unlocked but closed. I locked the door behind me, I came back up. As I passed by EOC central, I stopped in there and told them I had opened my fittings to get down to the narcotics locker and had reclosed it. At this time, EC Central is just forward of the diagnostic room,

WATSON

under which the torpedo hit. And at this time the torpedo had not hit the ship cause I would have known it because of the way the passageway was torn up. I went back up into sick bay with the morphine that I had, and gave the key back to the first class carpenter and told him what I had done and that I had left the locker open. There was a man laying on the operating table, and they didn't have too many people helping in sick bay at the time, so I helped them move the man off the operating table, and I helped move third class stowaway EASON onto the operating table. The Doctor told us there to get two bottles that he wanted. I thought we were done, and I helped him prepare things for operation, and by that time more people had just come into the sick bay to help out. So I said, "If you don't need me, I need to go back to my GQ station." And he said at the time, "Go ahead". So I went back down to my GQ station and from then on is we had one machinery casualty right after the other. High water, low water in the boilers, I lost the lube oil, just all kinds of machinery casualties. From there on out, I really don't know the sequence of events of anything that had happened. But I know that when I happened to think to look at my watch, it was 7 o'clock in the evening.

Question for the Court: Excuse me, any time prior to the attack, did you notice the national colors flying?

A. Yes sir. At lunch that day, we were discussing the situation and Mr. Golden made the statement that someone had said something about the ensign flying so the people would know who we were. Mr. Golden made the statement something like, "don't we have a bigger flag we can fly, maybe the holiday colors?" Then after lunch we went out on the O1 level forward and most of the officers were around there sunbathing immediately preceding 1300. At approximately 1245, an aircraft flew over approximately 5,000 to 8,000 feet, and his line of flight took it over the radar mast, and I was watching it and made a comment about it—that it looked





like a C-119 flying banner. And as it flew over the radar mast, the ensign was flying from the mast. I noticed that it was flying, at this time there was a breeze.

Q. Extended?

A. Yes sir.

President: Was it flying from the mast aft or the mast directly over the bridge?

A. The mast directly over the bridge, sir.

The witness was duly sworn and testified.

Lieutenant Richard F. Pfeiffer, US, U.S. Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

Direct Examination

Counsel for the Court: Will you please state your full name, rank, and duty status.

A. Richard Frank Pfeiffer, Lieutenant Medical Corps, duty station U.S. Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Q. On 8 June 1967, where were you at this time?

A. I was attending to my duties as medical officer, USS LINNET.

Q. Will you please tell this Court the circumstances as you recall them incident to the attack on the USS LINNET?

A. Well, we had secured from the General Quarters drill. I was standing in the passageway outside the pantry, which is on the main deck.

Suddenly, we heard a sound as a jet plane flying low and the steward to whom I was talking and myself thought that something had happened to one of the steam lines. Immediately after that, we heard an explosion, and we sounded general quarters. My general quarters station is on the main deck aft, the main battle dressing station. I went across the main deck, and at that point I saw another plane passing over the ship and letting loose its supply of rockets on the ship. It was passing from the starboard bow to the port side and aft. I went into the main dressing station as quickly as possible and avoided the flow of casualties that would come in. We sent the third class carpenter to the General battle dressing station

which was in the wardroom. In the main dressing station was the first class carpenter and myself. When I was in the main battle dressing station, we were relatively sealed off and we didn't hear very much of what was happening outside. At that point I would have thought it was a single or two planes that had strafed the ship once or twice. I didn't have an idea exactly how much had been done. And when they brought in the first aid patient who was a ~~man~~ with a collapsed lung, we thought he would be one of the few casualties that we got, and immediately took care of him, which involved an incision in his chest and packing of a post, good sized chest cavity to remove the blood and air to make it possible for him to breathe again. We then found Mr. Watson, who had the key to our narcotics safe in the medical storeroom. I sent the carpenter to get Mr. Watson to get me a supply of ~~drugs~~ and we started administering to the men. The time at this time was about a quarter to two, and it would be before the torpedo had struck. Someone told me that they wanted me on the bridge, and to get there I went through the mess decks which had a number of casualties there already. I passed the wardroom and found the forward battle dressing station was somewhat flooded by casualties, and went to the bridge where at that point, the Captain was the only person who was still functioning and the Captain had the helm. Again, the Captain had not been injured at that time. I took a look outside the bridge and saw the decks below the remains of our Navigator, Mr. Toth. The helmsman had died where he stood at the helm, and at that time there wasn't anything I could do for any of the men on the bridge except administer morphine to those who were injured and yet living and get men up with stretchers to evacuate them. It so happened the fire in the starboard side, the men had under control, and I returned to the wardroom where again we started caring for the casualties as best we could. We took care of the man in the wardroom and in the passageway on the main deck there were men wounded sitting shoulder to shoulder the full ~~length~~ of the passageway. On the port side in a stretcher was the executive officer who had compound fractures of three bones on one leg and two bones on the other leg, the senior research officer, Mr. Lewis, who had coal-flash burns of his face and had been temporarily blinded, and all the men that had been injured.

I found our third class corpsman, Shulman, with our mail clerk, Spicer, who had suffered bullet wounds and shrapnel wounds of his face and neck and was having difficulty breathing. Shulman was performing, or had finished performing an emergency tracheotomy on him in an effort to help him breathe.

President: Shulman's a third class?

A. Yes sir.

And, one of the other men had his arm in a sling and was operating the foot-powered suction pump enabling him to activate the man's trachean lunge to get the secretions from there.

President: Doctor, is this the foot-powered trachean pump which supports the microphone into which you are speaking?

A. Yes sir.

Sir, in the chief's mess, we found another man, this was Payon, who was also having difficulty breathing. He had a wound of his chest, and at that time we did not have the facilities on board to care for a second tracheotomy or to do an insertion of a tube into his chest, so the only thing I could do at that point was insert my finger in his chest wall and to allow as much blood to be drained out of that as possible. There was another man with a broken leg who we were just able to splint. As it turns out the last thing that we bought before we left Norfolk was a supply of air splints that were just coming in and being used as many as we had, and we could have used more. Then I returned to the main dressing station. At this time again I was going through the mess decks and there were more people there. I got to the main dressing station and found people on the floor, people in the beds, in the isolation room, and the clean room. One of the men in the bed was Blanchard, a man who had sustained a shrapnel injury in his back. The first class corpsman and I had examined him and we realized that we might have to operate on him. At that point we had also agreed though, unless it was an absolute matter of being certain he would die otherwise, we would not do anything to him. Then someone told me in a moment that the wardroom had been hit, and that the Captain

had been hit. We went by the wardroom and found fortunately that the hit had been away from where the people were being taken care of. A message while I was in the main battle dressingstation, they had announced to be prepared for a torpedo attack, and the torpedo hit and suddenly the ship started listing to starboard, rolled, becoming 9 degrees in a matter of a few seconds. At that time, Van Cleave and myself and as many people as we could get, we went down to the mess decks to try to evacuate anyone that we could from there in case the ship started going down. We were told that the destruction bill had been put into effect. The ship was stabilized after a couple of minutes and then I got the word to go to the wardroom and to the bridge. When I got to the bridge, the Captain had put a tourniquet on his own leg. He had lost a large amount of blood, but there was nothing I could do at this time. He was the only officer aboard at that time. The only other officer that I could find was Design O'Malley. I told him of the situation on the bridge, where the Captain had been injured and was the last officer I could find up there and suggested that he be prepared to go to the bridge if necessary. We then returned to the main dressing station, just in time to have a rocket land on the overhead near the mess room, and at this time the lights in the main dressing station went out. We decided at that time that we certainly couldn't care for the wounded in the situation that we were. We were told to brace ourselves for a second torpedo attack, and the only thing we could do was go inside and find a couple of the wounded on the floor to find places where they weren't wounded and lay across their bodies so in case the torpedo did hit they wouldn't be thrown around. I could hold on to one of the uprights, but they certainly couldn't. We decided at that time, that the only place where we could take care of the men was on the mess decks. The ship had stabilized. We went to the engine room to find out what had happened, if the engines had been damaged, or, if it would be a point of moving the men to the mess decks and then having the ship go down than having them die there. We found that as far as it went that the damage had been brought under control. We evacuated the men to the mess decks. We had just that morning finished restocking supplies in the



forward battle dressing station. They were still in the autoclave. When we went to the autoclave, we got as many men who could walk as possible, took them to the main dressing station and gave them supplies, it was dark and we couldn't really see what we were handling them, and they took it to main deck and piled it on the table. At that time was the first time we could evaluate the condition of the wounded. There was no question of our ability to keep records or anything at that point. We just couldn't. The only way we could tell if someone had been given morphine, when we gave it to him, we stuck a needle through an article of clothing on him. We got some gauze and hung the bottles from the lights in the mess decks. At that time it became evident that many of the men were going to require further surgery, but we established in a major hospital surgery is something that is done by three doctors, two nurses, and a support team outside, and that here we would be able to handle myself and one corpsman. We obviously weren't going to do any unless it was a life or death emergency. So we went on with it and tried to stabilize the people who were in shock, giving fluids. Then I organized a couple of teams of men. At that time we still had not found out what had happened. The men were confused, they couldn't understand where was the Sixth Fleet or where was the Air Force. Someone had told us that there was an Israeli helicopter outside, and it bolstered our morale a little bit, but we tried to find out the answers to the question, "is anybody going to help us?" "Or can we get messages out?" "Does anyone know we're hit, and how badly?" At this time, sir, we had organized teams to start from one end of the mess decks, we'd gotten surgical soap and water, supplies of sterile dressings, and started cleaning the wounds again as best we could. I went up to the bridge to see the Captain. The Captain had lost a tremendous amount of blood and was showing symptoms of early shock. The men who were showing symptoms of shock, the people that we couldn't get fluids to had just overrun the medical facilities for the ship. We had been giving out water, salt pills, bicarbonate soda, just to replace the fluids with anything that we could.

Now we had intravenous fluids that we were able to give them, but the Captain was showing the early symptoms. He said that he was feeling weak every time that he got up and was perspiring and was beginning to show one of the earlier signs of shock which is excessive anxiety. It's hard to think of how anxiety at that point could be described as excessive, but he had been talking about medical things that he had ascribed as a tremendous urgency to, and I just had interpreted this as a sign of shock. I told Mr. Lucas, the First Lieutenant, who was at the bridge about this and told him to be on the watch for this, dress the Captain's leg, remove the tourniquet, and went back below. There's not really much more tell of this, except how we should give the individual men, at that time someone had gotten a supply of brandy down to the men below and we were dispensing this to the men who were dazed or who were confused or anything, or excited. At one thirty it became obvious that Blanchard was not going to survive the night without an operation.

President: One thirty in the morning?

A. One thirty in the morning.

We went to the mess decks again, got some empty blood transfusion packs, collected two pints of blood from men who were his blood type, and took him to the valroom to operate on him. Unfortunately, his wounds were such that any attempts were hopeless. We determined this and closed the incision. We rendered final anesthetic which the first class and I administered, but he died during the operation. Again, after that, it was just a question of finding, doing certain mechanical things for the men, getting them all cleaned, getting new dressings on, treating their pain if this was required, and awaiting the arrival of help.

Counsel for the Court: Of the many injured, was Blanchard the only one who died after an operation?

A. Blanchard was the only one that died. The Executive Officer died soon after having been brought to the mess decks but we had seen him on the main deck, and the next time I saw him on the mess decks was to

pronounce him dead.

Q. How many other operations of a major nature did you perform?

A. Only this operation and the insertion of the tube in the man's chest.

Q. How long were you on your feet before you were able to rest?

A. 2 hours.

Q. Do you have a list of the personnel who died as a result of the attack?

A. Yes sir, I do.

Counsel for the Court: Request the reporter mark this exhibit number 20.

I now offer exhibit number 20 into evidence. Will you please read this for the record?

A. The following is a list of the dead personnel. The bodies of these persons have been recovered.

LCDR ARISTON, Philip H.	55303/1100
SM BLANCHARD, Gary R.	771 77 22
CM3 EICHL, Francis (a)	770 76 70
CM3 HIGGINS, Alan (a)	703 62 97
SM KORN, Carl	770 46 43
CM3 MEZLE, Anthony	771 62 61
ICM3 ENGLAT, David	520 17 03
PO2 SPICER, John C.	475 41 71
CM3 THOMPSON, Alexander	770 47 21
CM3 THOMPSON, Thomas R.	997 97 91
LT TORN, Stephen S.	60313/1100
CM1 WALTON, Frederick J.	236 31 06

Q. Did you bring a list of personnel who were declared missing in action during the attack?

A. Yes sir, I did.

Counsel for the Court: Request the reporter mark the missing in action

list as exhibit number 21. I now offer exhibit number 21 into evidence.

Will you please read this for the record?

A. Personnel missing

CM3 William E. ALLENBACH  
CM2 Romulo J. CAMPBELL  
CM2 Jerry L. CONVERSE  
CM2 Robert B. EISENBERG  
CM1 Curtis A. GRAVES  
CM3 Lawrence P. HAYDEL  
CM1 Warren E. HESSY  
CM2 Richard W. KENNEDY  
CM3 James L. LILLY  
CM3A David W. MARLBOROUGH  
CM3 Raymond E. LILLY

CM3 Duane R. HARGRAF  
LT James C. PIERCE  
CM1 John Caleb SMITH  
CM3 Melvin D. SMITH  
CM3 Phillippe C. TIEBERGE  
CM3 Carl C. HYOREN  
CM2 Edward E. RECHTER  
SMT J.L. RAPER  
CM3 Jerry L. COGS  
CM1 James M. LUFTON

Civilian Allen M. Blue

Counsel for the Court: Did you bring a list of the injured with you that you treated during the attack?

A. Yes sir, I have.

Counsel for the Court: Request the reporter mark the injured list as exhibit number 22. I now offer exhibit number 22 into evidence and will you please read it?

A. Wounded Transferred

Name	Rate	Ser No.
PAYAN, Salvador	SN	795 66 15
RILEY, T.J.	SN	915 59 66
COOK, E.L.	SN	997 59 72
HEROLD, Donald	CN2	677 72 18
BERNIE, Lee Roy	CN2	900 75 72
HAZEN, David Carl	CN2	739 81 93
LENN, William Michael	CN2	715 58 21
LESTINI, J.C.	CT1	994 81 55
O'CONNOR, J.G.	LT	671765
WARD, J.W.	TR3	719 76 78
WEAVER, R.L.	SN	999 68 63
FROMFIELD, V.J.	YB3	
LESTONIE, S.J.	ETH	914 73 69
LOCHMCOB, L.F.	COOT	
EMES, J.H.	LE	
LENN, L.E.	LCER	
WESLEY, D.R.	ETH	
CARPENTER, J.R.	CT1	
PAYSON, R.F.	RAS	
RADDALE, J.R.	ICI	
CASPER, W.E.	SN	(Deck Apt)
CONCEPCION, R.C.	SN	"
POLLIN, E.P. JR.	SN	"
PIENSON, G.V.	SN	"
SLAVES, L.J.	SN	"
SOFFER, L.L.	SN	"
WILSON, G.W.	SN	"
DAVID, R.O. JR.	CN2	"
LENN, J.D.	SN	"
MEAGERS, J.L.	CN2	"
POLLARD, P.H.	CN2	"
LENN, T.V.	CN2	"
MATTEL, S.P.	TH	"



NAME	RACE	DOB
MATHEWS, James L.	WM	
ADDINGTON, R.H.	WM	
ADDINGTON, J.H.	WM	
ADDINGTON, H.D.	WM	
ADDINGTON, J.A.	WM	
ADDINGTON, R.C.	WM	
CAMP BATES, J.P.	WM	
DAVISON, R.C.	WM	
DAVISON, R.B.	WM	
DAVISON, R.P.	WM	
DAVISON, D.W.	WM	
HARRISON, C.R.	WM	
JOHN, P.K.	WM	
HARRISON, G.T.	WM	
KIRK, E.H.	WM	
KIRK, L.W.	WM	
LEWIS, J.C.	WM	
McGOWAN, D.L.	WM	
LUCCAS, David L.	WM	7/10/1907
McGOWAN, W.L.	WM	4/10/1900
REED, H.	WM	12/12/1910
KIRK, R.P.	WM	
THOMAS, H.J.	WM	4/10/1907
WILLIAMS, W.L.	WM	5/10/1907
SCHULTZ, C.L.	WM	5/10/1907
ROTH, C.	WM	
ROTH, L.C.	WM	6/10/1907
LEWIS, C.F.	WM	5/10/1907
DUNN, H.	WM	5/10/1907
CULBERT, A.A.	WM	7/10/1907
STOUT, J.P.	WM	1/10/1907
CAMP, D.	WM	5/10/1907
AGNEW, J.H.	WM	6/10/1907
AGNEW, J.P.	WM	7/10/1907
THOM, L.B.	WM	
WILSON, W.D.	WM	5/10/1907
WILSON, D.A.	WM	5/10/1907
DOUGHERTY, D.R.	WM	7/10/1907
CORRIGAN, C.R.	WM	9/10/1907
LEWIS, L.J.	WM	5/10/1907
CAMPBELL, D.H.	WM	5/10/1907
KIRK, D.J.	WM	5/10/1907
REED, G.R.	WM	5/10/1907
DUNN, D.R.	WM	5/10/1907
THOMAS, J.L.	WM	5/10/1907
ANDERSON, R.E.	WM	5/10/1907
DEWITT, H.R.	WM	5/10/1907
DOUGLAS, S.	WM	5/10/1907
WILSON, J.H.	WM	5/10/1907
WILSON, P.	WM	5/10/1907

NATAJO, J.A.	FM	916 20 00
DALLEY, R.L.	CT2H	829 04 01

LOCASSO, G.F.	FM	796 10 05
VALDEZ, D.	SM2	570 52 50
DOOTH, J.E.	1513	593 19 47
PERKINS, E.G.	SM3	773 42 05
GILSON, R.D.	RD3	794 71 35

VEDIC, G.J.	CS2	423 92 04
KURAL, R.G.	CT1	552 00 54
DOYLE, L.L.	CT2	795 05 28
SWEET, R.B.	CT3	773 03 25
McFARLANE, T.L.	CT3	795 25 54
BLOOMIN, O.L.	CT2	774 27 59

SMITH, J.D.	CT2H	777 19 71
REEDER, D.H.	CT2	914 01 10

PLEASANTS, C.L.	CT1	555 78 10
DODD, H.F.	CT2	599 79 51

BUCK, R.D.	CT3	913 25 70
PERROTT, H.C.	CT2H	797 04 73
SHAIK, D.C.	CT2	773 28 16
POPLIELSKI, J.G.	CT2	773 00 05

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions of this witness. Do any members of the court have questions of this witness?

President: Approximately how many patients during this period did you have, Doctor?

A. At nearest number, 200.

Q. 200? How many men are on the ship, Doctor?

A. I think approximately 500.

Q. When we had two thirds casualties, one way or another?

A. Yes sir.

Captain ATKINSON: Are you a surgeon?

A. Yes, I am.

President: From this very harrowing experience that you went through, do you have any thoughts or ideas that the Navy might find useful?

A. Yes sir, I have.

Q. What are they?

A. First, when we were on the mess decks, as I said, we had placed our equipment into a single pile, and in somewhat a disorganized fashion.

HAYAO, J.A.	FM	916 29 01
BALLEE, R.L.	CTSM	829 04 91
LOGASSO, G.F.	FM	796 18 05
VALDEZ, D.	CM2	570 52 53
DOOTH, J.E.	CM2	993 19 47
PERKINS, P.O.	SM3	775 42 05
GILSON, R.D.	MD3	794 71 35
WEDIC, G.J.	CM2	433 92 34
KUSAL, R.G.	CT1	552 03 54
DOYLE, L.L.	CT2	795 05 23
SWLET, R.B.	CM3	775 05 25
McFARLANE, T.L.	CM5	795 29 54
BLOOMER, G.L.	CT2	774 27 59
SMITH, J.D.	CTSM	777 19 71
EDGEBERRY, D.H.	CT2	914 51 10
PLEASANTS, C.L.	CT1	555 78 10
DOUD, H.F.	CT2	599 79 51
DUCK, R.D.	CT3	913 25 70
PERKINS, H.C.	CTSM	797 04 78
SHADLER, D.C.	CT2	775 28 15
POPLIELSKI, J.G.	CM2	773 00 02

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions of this witness. Do any members of the court have questions of this witness?

President: Approximately how many patients during this period did you have, Doctor?

A. At nearest number, 200.

Q. 200? How many men are on the ship, Doctor?

A. I think approximately 300.

Q. Then we had two thirds casualties, one way or another?

A. Yes sir.

Captain ATKINSON: Are you a surgeon?

A. Yes, I am.

President: From this very harrowing experience that you went through, do you have any thoughts or ideas that the Navy might find useful?

A. Yes sir, I have.

Q. What are they?

A. First, when we were on the mess decks, as I said, we had placed our equipment into a single pile, and in somewhat a disorganized fashion.

When we would start a single intravenous transfusion on a person, what we would need was a bottle of intravenous solution, a supply of gauze to hang the bottle from one of the light fixtures overhead, a second set of tubing for this bottle, a needle through the man's shirt, some alcohol sponges to clean the area. This is a bottle containing a sweeter, a sterile dextrose, or salt and water which is administered intravenously. And, I think, many of these things are disposable, when they find themselves with the wrappers for them in their hands and no where to put them. One also finds with needles in hand there are some of the metal things that have been the seals that have been taken off the bottles. What I thought might be useful would be a vest sort of garment they could put on with large pockets in front with a supply of gauze, tape, needles, alcohol sponges, morphine syrettes, and a pocket in the back into which waste might be placed to enable one to more efficiently go through a large area and take care of more than one person on one trip. A second thing might be, as I put it out before, when we give an injection of morphine, about three hours later if the man was complaining of pain again, we would not know - we'd know if he had been given morphine, but we wouldn't know if he had been given it ten minutes before, and that his pain was still pain that he had because the morphine had not had a chance to be absorbed in his blood stream, or that it had been given three hours before and that his pain might just be a recurrent sort of thing, or that he had been given none and that his pain might be an early symptom of shock and at time the morphine might take away his body's protective mechanism. What I thought might be useful there would be a strip of copper with a oxidizing agent to it that could be taken off and pasted on the patient, that the mixture of copper and catalyst might be such that the copper would oxidize and thus change color from red to green in a specific amount of time, and that by then looking at the patient you would be able to tell; first, had he had morphine; second, how



long ago had he had it. A red strip would tell you give him no more, but a green strip would be the green light to tell you to go ahead and give him some. And that something of the same sort of an oxidizing copper strip might be available for use with intravenous solutions. As we did when a patient received intravenous solution, we just left the bottle hanging over him so that at a glance you could tell that the person had received one liter, three liters. If the person had received sugar, solution, salt, plasma, or blood. And, again we'd probably do well to have the period in which they had been administered those.

President: Did you have enough medical supplies?

A. Yes sir, we did.

Another thing I forget to mention was also during the night we broke into our supply of penicillin and the first class carpenter showed one of the seamen how to dilute this with sterile water and this man prepared a supply of diluted penicillin, and again we started all the men on antibiotics; so that by the time the other doctors from the Davis, and the Surgeons from the carrier came aboard, we could tell that that all the morphine had been taken care of. Everyone who was in shock had been taken care of. All the people had been started on antibiotics as a preventative measure for addiction.

Counsel for the Court: What was the primary cause of death?

A. Primary cause of death on some men was penetrating wounds of chest and lungs which made it impossible for them to breathe. Would to the heart, contracting injury with damage to brain. On The Executive Officer, I don't really know because of the way he died. Blanchard, the man on whom we operated, had massive injuries to his liver and to his right kidney, and he just died of blood loss and shock.

Q. Did you see many burns?

A. We had a moderate number of burn injuries. None of which were major burns.

Q. Was there any substance similar to napalm causation?

A. Some persons may have been. I never inquired of anyone because again we had burns of hands, a few flesh burns of faces. But I didn't treat anyone that I would think of as having a napalm burn.

President: We have no further questions, Doctor. We have nothing but the highest admiration for the success which you enjoyed. It's my understanding that none of those you treated and evacuated has subsequently died. Is that correct?

A. That is true, sir.

President: This speaks volumes for your professional competence and the efficacy of your preliminary casualty treatment. Let me ask you one question here that just occurred to me. What did you do and who did you use to do it to get the dead out of the way so that they wouldn't clutter up your sick bay?

A. Well, anytime we needed one volunteer we'd get ten. That, if anything had to be done, people would get on the stretchers, there were hands everywhere. When we asked for two pints of blood for transfusion, we had people on the adjoining tables who were saying, "if you need some, I have this type."

President: These were people already wounded?

A. These were people already wounded.

Q. What would you say about the morale contribution on the ship during that trying period of the action and person of the Commanding Officer?

A. The Commanding Officer at that time was like a rock upon which the rest of the men supported themselves. To know that he was on the bridge grievously wounded, yet having the con and the helm and through the night calling every change of course, was the thing that told the men, "we're going to live." When I went to the bridge and I saw this, I should say that I know that I could only insult this man by suggesting that he be taken below for treatment of his wounds. I didn't even suggest it.

Q. Although it was needed, medically?

A. Yes sir.

President: Well, Doctor, I am very proud to be wearing the same uniform that you are. Thank you very much for your most informative, professionally competent, illuminating, and very valuable statement. I'm very grateful to you.

Doctor: Thank you sir.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Chief Communications Technician Harold J. Thompson, U.S. Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by counsel for the court:

Q. Please state your full name and rate.

A. Harold Jessie Thompson, Chief Communications Technician, U.S. Navy, USS LIBERTY ACR-5.

Q. Do you know this Court of Inquiry has been convened to ascertain facts incident to the attack on USS LIBERTY?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Would you please tell this Court the event you recall of this attack?

A. We had just secured from general quarters drill and I had gone on main deck with petty officer HAROLD to discuss training and some of the attitudes toward training, when I heard a rocket come past and hit. At this time, I wasn't sure it was a rocket. I thought it was a shore battery, and I was either knocked down or I ducked quick. Then I got up and started running across the deck to repair two locker which is inside the forecastle. I was knocked down again, but made it inside to start breaking out the damage control equipment, getting stretcher bearers on deck, and taking stock of the situation. The attack appeared to last, I would say about 20 minutes to half an hour. Time is difficult to recall. Then I was alone and word was passed over sound powered phones to DC Central to standby for a torpedo attack. This was passed two on

three times, and I believe it was on the first time it was passed that we got hit. It seemed to take quite a while for the torpedo to hit. The explosion wasn't too loud where we were. The deck lifted about a foot I'd say, and then we settled right way to a starboard list to about ten degrees. Although at the time it seemed a little greater. Then we were strafed at about the same time. I couldn't say whether it was before or after by the patrol boats. At first I thought it was the ammunition box over the repair locker where the ammunition had gotten hot and was exploding, then we determined that it was a strafing attack. The sound would coupled with my sighting of the torpedo boat later would indicate 30 caliber and 40 mm. There were several holes in the forecabin and the area around the repair locker. Nobody was hit inside. Later on the bridge asked for signalman from various places on the ship. Nobody seemed to be available so I said I couldn't read flags but I could read light. They said they didn't need me at this time and that they wanted me to stay in the repair locker. Word was passed again to standby for torpedo attack starboard side and again the word went out for signalman. Once again I told them I could not read flags, but if I could be of service. I was asked to report to the bridge, which I did. When I got up there, signalman David was attempting to rig a hand light. I assisted him. We went to the starboard wing of the bridge and the torpedo boat was making a run straight at us off the starboard beam while the other two stood off. At the Captain's directions, David sent, "US Naval Ship" "US Naval Ship." When they were about 500 yards off, the torpedo boat turned astern and came up on the stern on the starboard side and flashed, "Do you need help?"

Q. Was this before the torpedo hit?

29 A. This was after the torpedo hit us, and we were surprised by the attack. The Captain was giving us word. He said, "no, thank you." We went this back to the boat, and our steering was somewhat erratic and they came up on the port side then. David went across, I followed him, and saw on the last part of that message, David said, "Do you want us to



standby?" I passed this word to the Captain. He said, "no, thank you." We sent this to the patrol boat. They came up along port side, I say roughly 100 yards off, flashed "good luck" and dropped astern along with the other two which had come up to the stern, to a mile or a mile and a half back, just about out of sight. Then they made one high speed run directly astern and somewhere between a quarter and a half mile back made a U-turn and disappeared. That was the last we saw of them. Shortly afterwards, an Israeli helicopter came, hovered off the bridge and tried to hand signal us, and dropped a note on the forecastle which was brought to the bridge. It was a card from the Naval Attache, U.S. Naval Attache in Tel Aviv, asking if we had casualties and could he come aboard. The Captain signaled to him, "Yes, we did have casualties, and no, he did not want him to come onboard." One time I forgot to mention is after the torpedo attack, before I went to the bridge, there was a pass made by an Israeli helicopter. One of the men in the repair locker stepped outside the forecastle and said it was a helicopter with a blue star on a white shield, I believe the colors are, and we determined it to be Israeli by this. I stayed on the bridge with the Captain and signalman David, who finally went below for medical assistance. We then posted a lookout and maintained a watch throughout the night. I was on the bridge off and on and on the mess decks.

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions of this witness.

Does any member have questions of this witness?

President: Have you been to damage control school, Chief?

A. Yes sir. I went the last in-port period.

Q. How long?

A. I went to one week basic, and one week advanced.

Q. Have all of the research personnel gone to damage control school?

A. No sir. We sent a number, I can't give any figures, but people who we assigned to repair parties as their CO station, we sent them to either fire fighting or damage control school. We have to have a damage control petty officer in research, and we have one in each watch section, sometimes

two, and these people we always send to DC school and the others when we can, to fill out the ship's quotas for fire fighting school.

Q. What was the condition of the Captain during the period you were on the bridge?

A. When I arrived on the bridge, the Captain was lying on the deck by his chair on the port wing of the bridge with his leg propped up and they were applying a tourniquet. It seemed to me a rather large wound. He was perfectly rational, in command. He asked for the Executive Officer to report to the bridge and was told the XO was wounded, and he said, or indicated that he got the message. The Captain stayed on the bridge all night and propped himself in his chair. He'd get up periodically to insure circulation.

President: Thank you very much, Chief, I certainly appreciate your kindness.

Chief Thompson: Thank you very much, Sir.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Carl Francis LAMKIN, CTC, USN, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, warned of Article 31, under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by counsel for the court:

Q. State your name, rank, organization and place of duty?

A. Carl Francis LAMKIN, CTC, USN

Q. You are aware Chief that this Court of Inquiry has been convened to ascertain the facts concerning the attack on the USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. Would you please relate what took place on that day?

A. Yes, sir, I was secured from GQ drill shortly before the attack and at the time of the attack I was in the dispensing of life. I noticed the initial shock and immediately headed for my GQ station which is repair three. As I was going to my GQ station the word was passed that we were being attacked by aircraft. Upon arriving to my GQ station I immediately started dispensing the gear, settling the men down.

Q. Your GQ station is where?

A. Repair Three. After there we got together. We had the men lay low on the deck, you could hear the strafing. At this time the word was passed that they had a fire in shaft alley and I took approximately four men and went down to shaft alley. The fire in shaft alley was under control in a matter of minutes. When I came back up they were calling for stretcher bearers and the men were dispensed for that. At this time they said they had a fire on the bridge in the motor whale boat and they were calling for assistance. I took repair three alpha plus some other men that were there and headed for the motor whale boat. As I was up on deck, portside by the U boat I was knocked down by some sort of explosion. I got up and went up and the men were already fighting the fire in the whale boat. It was pretty well destroyed at the time. As I was standing there we were strafed again and one of the men to my left fell. I don't remember his identity, he was picked up and drug inside. I turned to run forward when I came across the body of Mr. Teth who was pretty well messed up. I remember getting kind of sick at my stomach for a second or so. At this time I remember they had the fire pretty well under control. I went back down to my GQ which is repair three. I don't remember any of the time lapse during that time but I do remember them announcing to prepare for a torpedo attack starboard side. I told the men to brace themselves, to lay down on the deck if at all possible. The torpedo hit, it seemed like it was quite a while before the torpedo actually hit and the time we were told to prepare ourselves. The torpedo hit, there

was an explosion, immediate smoke and immediate list. Again we sent parties forward to investigate the resulting damage, so on and so forth, and any assistance that was needed. At this time I went back up, I was going to radio central I asked the men there if any kind of message had gotten out and they said it had. I asked them if they had means of communication here and they said they hadn't a voice transmitter they could key there in the blind. They weren't keying it at the time. I told them to keep keying it in the blind as often as possible. They immediately did so. From this time on I just spent most of my time from repair three and the radio transmitter room. There was quite a time lapse, I don't remember exactly how long. The thing I do remember is I started out the door and I could hear the motor torpedo boats or at least one of them to our port side. I looked out, but all I could see was the top of it. I immediately came back in and told the men to hit the deck. There was no firing or anything like this which surprised me, because at the time I figured they were just coming in to finish us off. Again, I say I don't remember the time lapse, but I was in there quite awhile when I heard aircraft. They first announced that an aircraft was coming in our area. I told all men to stay inside and keep low.

Q. How did your men react to this?

A. The men reacted fantastic as far as I'm concerned in the repair party. We had men that had never had experience before. There was one occasion where a man panicked on me, he started crying and screaming. I gave him a hit, and he came out of it. I remember seeing one boy throwing up. He had evidently seen one of the bombs that they had brought down. Other than that the response was excellent. There seemed to be naturally the fear that you would expect, but no panic.

Counsel for the Court: Very good, are there any questions from members of the Court?

President: What can you tell me with a little more detail, chief, about this keying the transmitter? Who was in there in charge?

A. I can't remember his name, sir, our second class radioman. I'm sorry, I can't think of his name. I remember the man explicitly, he was in there, there was a couple of radiomen in there, there was also an ET in there, working with the different transmitters. They told me they had then transmitting and a message had gotten out. The ET was doing everything possible checking the various transmitters. They only had one that was capable of transmitting voice at that time. I did tell them to keep keying it regardless. Each time he was keying it he noted that he was keying in the blind.

Q. But no receivers?



A. Yes sir, no receivers. He did keep trying it continuously.

Q. What was he transmitting?

A. The exact words, I can't remember but he was transmitting, I don't remember the call, he was transmitting that we were under attack, we had been attacked by aircraft, we had sustained a torpedo hit, and the list I believe of the ship. Counsel for the Court: Did you hear any report of the possible jamming of the transmitter?

A. Yes, sir I did. I heard this later from Radioman Chief S.D. 1. He said that definitely that he had notice that the jamming was so loud that, the jamming was so loud that he thought at first that it was our transmitters which were malfunctioning but he noted, regardless of frequency, this loud jamming noise. At that time we weren't aware of what they were transmitting at radio control. This is one reason I stressed the fact that the men keep transmitting. Mr. Feingersh: Do you know what circuit they were trying to transmit on, which not they were on.

A. No sir I don't, all I know is that it was voice transmission and I really couldn't say. I did ask them if they had receiving capability and they said no they were transmitting in the blind.

President: What repair party has the responsibility of buttoning up up there in the research spaces?

A. The research spaces up forward, I believe that is repair two sir, but at this time there were men dispensed all over. I had repair three men up there, also repair three alpha, which is an assist party. They were dispensed. We were also fighting this fire.

President: What outfit was up there after the torpedo hit? Would that have been repair two?

A. We dispersed repair three then, immediately, I was trying to think because right after we sustained the hit, I believe it was petty officer Neece, which is one of damage control petty officers. I have two damage control petty officers, petty officer Neece and Smith, and to my recollection it was Neece who grabbed the men and went up there.

President: Thank you very very much. We certainly appreciate your kindness.

The next witness will be Chief Wayne Smith.

Chief Wayne Smith, United States Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and examined as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Counsel for the Court: State your name, rate, and present duty station.

A. Wayne L. Smith, PFC, duty station aboard the USS LIBERTY.

Q. Chief Smith, as you know, this Court of Inquiry is investigating the circumstances of the attack on the USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. Will you please tell this Court the facts that you recall on that date?

A. Yes sir. On that date at approximately 1400 local time, we had heard a loud blast. I was in radio central at the time with my second class who was on watch at the time. We immediately set Zulu and closed the porthole covers, and as soon as we had got them closed, the second blast sounded and the word was passed on the LRC to pass over hicom that we were being attacked, to any station. I immediately picked up the hicom transmitter which was on UIC 32, auxiliary radio. We started to transmit with it. No station heard us, and five minutes or so later the transmitter was reported to have blown out. I immediately switched to a work two transmitter in the transmitter room, and we couldn't get out on that either, so, in between attacks by this time, I had went down to transmitter room and I found or discovered that somebody had accidentally knocked the frequency dial one KC off. I corrected this and ran back to the radio shack and we got hold of stationery schematics on which we passed the attack message. We did authenticate, and he authenticated correctly because he got a roger for it, my second class. Immediately after that, after we passed the word on the bridge that the message had got out, we had a power failure. After the power failure, I discovered that my control lines, remote lines were disconnected or in some way inoperable, so we passed control on the transmitter direct, but we still maintained a receiver on hicom. From that time on we passed all our traffic from the transmitter room and at 1227 they took control.

Counsel for the Court: Did you have occasion to see the national colors flying?

A. Yes sir. At the time I ran out of the radio central space to the transmitter room.

Q. What time was this?

A. I would say about 1225, this was about two minutes either way. And this was Zulu time because I'm basing it on the log here. I had occasion to look at it because I was under the impression we were being attacked by UAR, and I wanted to see, and by the time that report came down to us from the bridge that they were Israelites. I wanted to check myself personally to see if our flag was flying because I couldn't understand it. For some reason I saw the flag flying at that time. If this was the original flag or not, I do not know.

Counsel for the Court: I ask you if you have with you today in your custody the radio log for the 6th of June 1967 for the USS LIBERTY?

A. Yes sir, I do. I have the original log from 1227Z on, and I have the smooth log covering the total time at 1153Z. At this time, from 1158Z to 1227Z, it is a reconstruction and we did not keep a log in radio central.

Counsel for the Court: Request the recorder mark the original radio log exhibit number 23, and the smooth log exhibit number . . . I now request that they be admitted into evidence and request you read the pertinent times to the Court.

A. In our log 0430Z was the last entry, on hicom log. At 1158Z is when we started to call any station, this is ROCK STAR. We passed a Zulu precedence to this message. At 1200Z ROCK STAR was called by schematic saying "you are garbled". "Say again". We repeated three times to them that we were under attack. At 1204Z we had to switch transmitters. We called at 1208Z schematic and repeated three times that we were under attack. Immediately after 1208Z, still in the same minute, they rogered for the message. At 1209Z we repeated again we are under attack and this time we added "we need immediate assistance". At this time schematic asked ROCK STAR for authentication, at which time we gave them the correct



authentication. At 1214Z they rogered that. About 1217Z we called schematic again saying "be advised that we have been hit by torpedo, listing about 9 degrees, request immediate assistance". At 1220Z this message was received and rogered for. At 1224Z three unidentified aircraft approached the ship. We told this to schematic. At 1227Z they rogered for that message and that's when we had our power failure. We immediately shifted to the transmitter room.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: Which hicom?

A. E4.4.

Q. You're sure chief - the CINCUSNAVSTA hicom net - E4.4?

A. Yes sir. E4.4.

At 1233Z we had placed the emergency destruction bill in effect and I took it upon myself, not having any communications with the bridge, to hold emergency destruction. I only started emergency destruction on phase 1 and phase 2, which does not include unclassified matter. It only included HPS material that I had on hand. Well, we started to burn, and then the word came down from the bridge, finally, that there was never any order given to do this, so I had them halt and replaced all the ashes and the "foreign material" in the weighted bags.

Q. Did you throw anything over the side?

A. No sir. Nothing was thrown over the side. I have everything that we had up there. From 1233Z until 1323Z no signals were sent or received via hicom. All the traffic that we wanted to get out was out by the time the attack was over. At 1355 power was restored, passed down from radio central that the phone was inoperable and we shifted the control to transmitter room complete. By this I mean we had the receiver earlier. We gave them the receiver too.

Q. Did you note any jamming on the hicom circuit?

A. Yes sir. We did have jamming in my estimation. I was unable to determine this exactly, but every time it seems when an attack was made on us, or a strafing run, it was preceded by, anywhere from 25 to 30 seconds, carrier on our hicom circuit, and I had ascertained to check





Or On  
this by calling the transmitter room and they said that they had not keyed the transmitter. This prevailed during the attack and quite a bit after the attack, intermittently.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: Chief, can you tell me ordinarily what circuits are normally up on?

A. We're normally up on hicom, and we carry 500KCS receive only for distress and our 243.0 and 121.5 distress. On this occasion we had 139.4 set up, which, I'm not sure what frequency it is but it's a COMINTFLT frequency.

Q. This is in addition to the hicom?

A. This is in addition to the hicom, yes. And we did have 277.8 fleet common up at the time.

Q. How do you normally handle your ship-store traffic that's classified?

A. All traffic went out from down below except those they couldn't get on regular skeds. In which case they would off-line and we would send them out CW and this was no schedule, this was just on a case basis.

Q. The ship's general communication spaces doesn't have on-line capability?

A. No sir, they pass all traffic from down below on these circuits.

Q. What do you mean by down below?

A. I mean crypto one and crypto two. They had the equipment.

Q. I assume you copy fleet broadcasts in your spaces?

A. No sir, we do not. They copy fleet broadcasts down below.

Q. Do you know when the ship shifted from KR to JR?

A. This I have no knowledge of at all.

Q. You said that at the time 1204, I understood you said that prior to that time you had transmitted an attack report to schematic?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Did they acknowledge?

A. I am not able to say right now.

Q. And you said that you did not authenticate under initial transmission?

A. No sir, we did not.

Q. Authentication took place at time 1214?

A. That's when they rogered for it, yes sir. We authenticated at 1209.

Q. Were you challenged?

A. Yes sir, we were challenged by schematic.

Q. And at 1214 they rogered for your authentication?

A. Yes sir. The first rogered transmission was at time 1208 and the first rogered authenticated transmission was at time 1214 on the

CINCUSNAVEUR hicom Net between LINEMAN and schematic -- 01-60-8-9.

Counsel for the Court: As Counsel for the Court, I hereby submit exhibit number 25, which is a statement by Captain R. L. Arnold, Sixth Fleet Maintenance Officer. I now offer it into evidence and will read it.

" 1. A preliminary estimate of the time required to make permanent shell repairs and repairs to necessary associated interior strength members is two to three weeks.

2. A firm estimate will require a detailed survey, not expected to commence until 15 June."

THIRD DAY

Let the record show that the Court reconvened at 0820 on 15 June 1967, and the first witness having already been sworn and duly warned will be Eugene Aiken Platzek. Commander would you be kind enough to state your name, rank, and duty station.

A. Eugene Aiken Platzek, Commander, United States Navy, USN 3523. Counsel for the Court: Commander this Court is convened to hear into the prior circumstances and aftermath matters related to the incident involving the USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. It is the Court's understanding that you arrived at the scene in Malta in a technical capacity. If that is correct, will you tell the Court the capacity in which you are currently on board?

A. I'm currently on board as the representative of the Director of the Naval Security Group, OP-9, and I am part of the Task Force 100, designated as 100.4, under Captain Carl H. Smith.

President: Commander, the first question this morning, we will handle separately and introduce this part of your evidence into the medical portion of the report. In order to provide a record that is not disjointed, we will introduce you a second time, formally, and place that testimony on the material side if this is agreeable with you?

A. This is agreeable.

Q. The first and only question, then, relative to the medical side has to do with your personal continuing participation in the recovery of those in compartments which were flooded by the torpedo explosion and the question goes like this -- You were in the space the whole time assisting in the recovery of the remains. This was from my personal observation. From those remains recovered by you what in your judgment was the possibility of any of those remains having been alive after the initial torpedo explosion?

A. There was no possibility of any being alive after the initial torpedo explosion.

CDR PLATZEK

(C) (C)

Q. As I understand it, Commander, the degree of dismemberment and conditions of the remains are the facts which cause you to arrive at this conclusion. Is that correct?

A. That is correct.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Lieutenant Maurice H. Bennett, United States Navy was recalled as a witness, reminded that he was still under oath.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. Do you think anyone could have survived after the torpedo struck the compartment?

A. There is no possibility of any of the people being alive after the torpedo hit. This conclusion was reached, or is based on the degree of dismemberment and conditions of the remains upon recovery.

President: Thank you very much, Lieutenant Bennett.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Material Section

Commander PLATT was recalled as a witness, reminded that he was still under oath and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

President: You, in your technical capacity, are knowledgeable on installation and acquisition costs of the technical equipment in LIBERTY at the time of the attack, which now will require replacement, and/or rehabilitation of remaining equipment where possible. Would you be kind enough to address yourself to this area and give the Court of Inquiry your best estimate at this time of how long it would take to reacquire LIBERTY's technical capability through the acquisition of long-lead time procurements, new purchases, and rehabilitation of old equipment, in terms of time and dollar cost, if you please?

A. The equipment aboard the LIBERTY is relief equipment as much as it is research equipment. The length of time it would take to acquire this equipment would be approximately one year. The cost of this equipment, in my opinion, would be approximately six to eight million dollars. This



does not include the installation costs of this equipment. This is strictly procurement dollars.

President: Thank you Commander PLATZIK. Does any other member of the Court have questions at this time to which Commander PLATZIK might address his particular technical competence?

Council for the Court: Will the repairing of this equipment be done in the United States?

A. The repairing of this equipment will have to be done in the United States. I don't believe anyone else has the technical capability.

Q. What would be your estimate of completion date of repairs needed?

A. This I couldn't say until such time as I found out the extent of damage by actually taking equipment and testing, but I presume with all of the shocks that this equipment has taken, that it would have to be completely remanufactured or procured new.

#### DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Council for the Court: Captain Russell L. ARTHUR, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, UCMJ and examined as follows.

Q. Captain, would you be kind enough to state your name, rank, and duty station, and the reason why your technical competence finds itself here on this scene at this time?

A. Captain Russell L. ARTHUR, 415894, my permanent duty station is Fleet Material Officer, Service Force, COMSOMFLT, I have been ordered here in connection with the repairs to LIBERTY and have been designated as Task Group 100.2.

Council for the Court: Captain, based upon your preliminary estimate of both the topside structural and internal damage resulting from the attack on 8 June, what is your estimate in terms of time and effort for the complete restoration of LIBERTY into the condition she was in prior to the attack in question?

A. Admiral, including ripout restoration of all structure, foundations, cabling, and on the assumption that the equipment that is necessary to

CAPT. ARTHUR

install is pier-side at the time we require it during the period of the reconstruction program, I would estimate that we could restore everything to the condition existing prior to the attack in approximately four months for a cost of about two million dollars. This includes everything except the cost of the equipment, installation, checkout, testing, and restoration of all of the habitability features that were existing.

President: Captain, as a professional shipbuilder, would you be kind enough to explain in simple terms for the Board of Inquiry, how Commander FLATZKE's estimate of one year for long-lead and procurement relates to your statement just made of four months for re-equipping of the repairs. Now, in the shipbuilding business is this time separation or apparent disparity accommodated?

A. Generally, on new construction ships, of course, this is planned so that the equipment is dock-side in accordance with the erection schedule. In this case, the ship would be immobilized and unable to carry out its mission until the equipment were actually provided, and the estimate that I gave was based strictly on the structural and the reinstallation of existing items before. But the only way we could accommodate this is to delay the ship which would add to the cost of the repairs.

Q. Let me see if I understand this now, in simple terms, your estimate of four months presupposes availability before you start, of everything that is going to be in the ship at the time you finish?

A. Yes sir.

President: Do the other members of the Court have any questions?

Counsel for the Court: Your figure did not include cost of equipment?

A. No sir, not at all.

Q. For record purposes, the cost to repair the damage to the ship itself would be the figure you stated?

A. Yes sir, approximately two million dollars.

Q. In four months?

A. Yes sir.

Captain ATKINSON: And this includes all equipment plus hull repair exclusive of research equipment, is that correct?

A. Yes sir.

President: Now for the summary which I feel might be appropriate at this time, as I understand it, Captain, we would properly add your two million to Commander FLATZKE's six to eight million and come up with a high figure of ten million dollars and one year loss of the capability of this ship.

A. Yes sir, that's correct, Admiral.

Q. That's the way you do this, is that correct?

A. Yes sir.

Counsel for the Court: One last question, Captain. At the last meeting of the Court, not knowing you would be a witness before this Court, I had a statement received from you entered in the record, in which you indicate that it would be two or three weeks time to make the necessary shell repairs in order for this vessel to proceed back to the United States. What is your estimate of the cost of temporary repairs being made in this shipyard?

A. About fifty to sixty thousand dollars, and I have received no estimates from the yard. This is a rough estimate based upon the knowledge of how much general costs are in this area.

President: So that three week period and sixty thousand dollars would be additive to your two million and six month figure, is that correct?

A. Two million and four months, yes sir, that is correct.

President: Any further questions?

President: Thank you very much, Captain. Before you leave, would you be kind enough to confirm my understanding that you and Commander FLATZKE are having photographs taken, under your personal supervision, of the internal torpedo damage and the external hull damage, significant parts thereof, for inclusion in the record which we will introduce upon processing of the film?

A. Yes sir, that's being arranged now, Admiral.

President: Thank you very very much, Captain. We certainly appreciate your time. (The witness was duly sworn and withdrew).

Let the record show at this point that for completeness, this Court of

Inquiry does not consider itself competent at this time, with witnesses available, to address itself to such hidden cost as salaries of personnel, gratuities to those lost, loss of service of personnel injured, hospitalization costs, loss of use of the vessel, and similar cost which are incalculable based upon available information, but which should and must be included if there is an effort made to arrive at a total dollar value loss of this particular attack against the United States Navy.



DIRECT EXAMINATION

The witness took the stand, was duly sworn, and advised of his rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and examined as follows:

Counsel for the Court: Please state your full name, rate, and present duty station.

A. Joseph Paul Carpenter, 794 84 55, CT2, USS LIBERTY.

Q. You have been called before this Court of Inquiry to give information which you may possess concerning an incident which occurred on 8 June 1967, namely the attack on USS LIBERTY. I now turn over questioning to the Assistant Counsel for the Court.

Q. CARPENTER, I understand that the ship maintains, other than distress frequencies, that basically communications topside here consists of the CINCUSNAVFOR hicom net, unclassified voice hicom net. I'm curious, if you can tell me what broadcast you were copying upon inchope to the Med, and then whether or not you shifted to any broadcast there, and what broadcast you shifted to?

A. When we came into the Med, we were copying XR broadcasts and XR broadcasts, and then, I can't remember the exact day but I think it was approximately 4 June, we shifted to JR broadcasts.

Q. It's significant when you shifted to JR, and I'd like you to try and be sure, and if you're not sure, then I think we may have to try and research a little bit and come up with a specific time of shift. Now, after you switched to JR, do you recall any difficulty in copying the Navara fleet broadcasts?

A. Sir, every time I was on watch, the JR broadcast was up five by, we had no missing numbers.

Q. Now, you say every time you were on watch, do you remember what time frame we're talking about commencing with 070001Z June?

A. On 7 June, I had the evening watch, that was from 1600 to 2330 that night and then I had the day watch which started at 0630 in the morning.

Q. Now when you were on the watch at 071600 local time, were you missing any numbers since shift time according to your records?

A. Well, sir, to my knowledge, we had no missing numbers at that time.

Q. Could you tell me what your procedures are when you are missing numbers?

A. When we're missing a number, the first thing we do, we have a missing number sheet, we mark it down on that sheet. And it stays on there until it comes back again, and then we will cross it off, I'll mark how it came back, whether we serviced it or whether it was a rerun, but on a broadcast they have so many reruns that everything came back. We never had to service it.

Q. What would you estimate on an average, was the period of time that you are actually missing a number until it was rerun without a rerun request?

A. Is this on a JR broadcast?

Q. JR.

A. On the JR broadcast we'd usually wait about a day and a half because they rerun so much. We found out that on that broadcast they'd rerun as many as two to three times each day.

Q. I don't understand what you mean by a day and a half. Do you wait a day and a half, then if you didn't get a rerun you would request it?

A. Yes sir, because they would rerun three times. We figure if we're going to miss it three times, we better service it then.

President: Let me ask a layman's question here. Does this mean that the JR, and I'm really addressing this question to Commander KINGERSCH, in his technical communications competence, does this mean that the load of Asm would be so low as far as units are served that they could afford the luxury of rerunning a whole schedule three times, is that what he's saying?

A. Yes sir, Admiral. Asm only has a handful of subscribers and they can run up to a thousand messages a day and they're probably running in the neighborhood of two or three reruns.

President: At this point let the record show that the accommodation of communication traffic in LIBERTY was physically arranged where the torpedo hit has eliminated records to which the present witness and the following witnesses on the matter of communications, might logically be expected to

refer to. Therefore, any hesitancy or inability of communication witnesses must necessarily be viewed and read with this fact in mind. They are dealing entirely from personal memory. That's true?

A. Yes sir.

Q. You say that while you were on watch you had no trouble of copying JR?

A. On the JR broadcast, we never had very much. Down by Africa we had trouble.

Q. No, I mean while you were in the Med?

A. While in the Med, we, just when the actual changeover, we had a little bit of trouble first getting it in. Just what I've been told, I was not actually on watch.

Q. More specifically, getting to the 8th of June, let us say from 030001Z, do you recall whether you were missing numbers on that particular day?

A. I recall one time when I was down there that WALTON, CTI was down there, and he mentioned that he had no missing numbers at that time. I believe that was the day before the attack. He was the one that was primarily watching the broadcast at that time because we were so busy in the other room. We had such a backlog.

President: Where's WALTON now, son?

A. He's dead now, he was trapped in crypto.

Q. Do you recall missing very many numbers on the 7th of June on JARAD?

A. I don't recall, sir. There might have been a few KR numbers but no JR numbers.

Q. Getting away from the broadcast for a moment & now, on your ship-shore termination, what type terminations did you establish, how often, and with whom?

A. Well, for the past few days we had come up anytime we were able to, and we would come up ship-shore to Greece most often because they were the best as far as ship-shore QUESTES were concerned. We had one sked, I believe, in the last two days we were out and it was with HAVBECCRU Morocco, and we went through Greece, using their transmitters and their antennae in passing it from there to Morocco.

Q. I understand that you do not maintain a permanent ship-shore termination neither QUESTES nor VFTG. Is a QUESTES circuit that is that

you come up with when you have traffic periodically?

A. Yes sir. And then only real hot traffic.

Q. Without stating the reason, are there reasons why you, at certain times, can't come up on ONCESHIP ship-shore circuit due to what the ship may be doing?

A. Definitely, sir.

Q. Definitely there are reasons why you cannot?

A. Yes sir.

Q. During these periods when you cannot come up are they usually extensive periods of time, specifically can you recall on the 7th and 8th of June having extensive periods of time, where because of what the ship was doing, you could not come up and terminate the circuit and request missing broadcast numbers if you wanted to do so.

A. Yes sir, there were some times, it wasn't necessarily a long period of time that we couldn't come up, it's just that we didn't have enough time in between to get everything going and get going before they would tell us to shut down again.

Q. What the ship was doing?

A. Yes sir.

President: As I understand it, young man, these limitations on ability and inability to come up on a transmitter whenever you might wish to deal in this area of your technical research. As I recall, Admiral MARTIN mentioned you did some work on wave propagation, and from a layman's point of view, would it be reasonable to even assume that a transmitter of high power would affect your wave propagation research efforts?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Then, to be sure we're perfectly clear on this point, on missing numbers on the 7th and 8th of June, very possibly could have not been requested because of the transmitter interfering with the ship's research mission?

A. Well sir, we got all the general service out on the 7th. Every general service message that we had that I can remember.



Q. I'm talking about broadcast traffic missing numbers coming in from Amara, particularly on the 8th?

A. You mean we wouldn't be able to service this?

Q. You wouldn't have asked for a rerun because the ship was involved in its research mission, and you couldn't just come up on a transmitter because you were missing, say five numbers?

A. No sir, we probably couldn't have.

Q. Then, you would wait for the second or third rerun, which could take maybe 24 to 36 hours, in lieu of disrupting what the ship was doing?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Do you recall any missing numbers on the 8th, JARAD?

A. No sir, I don't.

President: Young man, is this procedure that you have described typical of the condition that exists aboard this ship anywhere you might be operating?

A. Yes sir, it is.

Q. In other words, this is not something new?

A. No sir.

Q. In other words, you have never felt compelled to service a number immediately, you have always felt comfortable in waiting for a rerun whether it was coming from Asmara, Annapolis, Philippines, Guam, or wherever, is that correct?

A. The only time we would service immediately is if we had had an outage of a period of time, say ten, fifteen, twenty minutes, as quite a few numbers would have been missed.

Q. You mean a receiver outage?

A. Yes sir.

Q. And you had no such receiver outage?

A. No sir.

Q. Let me put that question - it will be the same question, son, but put a little bit differently. You have had no cause for concern to feel compelled to take extraordinary measures such as telling somebody you had to stop listening to the moon, for example, in order to get a service on Asmara.

Is that correct?

A. No sir, we never did.

Q. You never had to do that?

A. No sir. We did it once when we had some flash traffic to send out, and some immediate traffic we'd tell them what we had to get out, and then they would...

Q. I'm talking just about traffic you would be receiving. I'm not talking about outgoing traffic.

A. As far as traffic we were receiving, they never bothered us at all.



Q. Ordinarily, how many KX37's do you have on a broadcast simultaneously?

A. We have two KX37's and we try to keep both of them on different signals so if one will drop out we have the other one as a backup. At that time I don't believe we did because we couldn't handle more than two signals and we had those two in diversity.

Q. Ordinarily, you have no reason to suspect copying two frequencies on the same broadcast simultaneously. You have no reason to suspect that you're going to miss a number?

A. We had no reason at that time to suspect that we were going to because they were so five by.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: I have nothing else.

Captain ATKINSON: One question, on the average since LIBERTY chopped in the Red, what was your daily traffic addressed to LIBERTY?

A. Addressed to LIBERTY, I would say around - well, it would vary from day to day. I'd say at the most we would get 25 and at the least we would get 7 or 8.

President: Would this be a comparably normal load, son?

A. That would be a normal load, yes.

Q. For any day, any place?

A. For any day, any place, sir.

President: Does any member present have for the record a feeling toward the number of subscribers of Asmara?

Assistant Counsel for the Court: Yes sir.

Q. Is it in the hundreds?

A. No sir, just COMBINATION basically. No sir, it's KM they use ordinarily. And a ship like the LIBERTY, very few. Five or six, not even a dozen, sir. Very few, except if we had a contingency in the Red Sea and we sent additional ships down.

President: Is this your first ship in the Navy?

A. Yes sir, this is my first ship.

Q. So you have nothing to compare, equipment-wise, from personal experience, the equipment on this ship with any other ship?

A. Well, I've been in the radio shack in other ships.

Q. What would be your opinion as to the comparability of the equipment that you were using in LIBERTY and the equipment as far as being modern, up to date, and the equipment in some of the other radio shacks you've been in?

A. I guess I could best describe that by what I heard a workman say when he came down there. He said "you have the best equipment I've ever seen in any radio shack anywhere."

President: Thank you very much.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: I have one more question that may be pertinent, Admiral. Do you recall ever getting much off-line encrypted top secret traffic on JARAD or KR aboard LIBERTY?

A. As long as I have been on here, we have never received anything off-line. Top secret off-line, never on J. broadcast. We never ever received anything off-line.

Q. How long have you been aboard the ship, son?

A. This was my third cruise.

President: Put on your thinking cap, son. Try to remember back, what you had till midnight on the 7th?

A. My watch on the 7th was the evening watch from 1600 local to 2330.

Q. On the 7th?

A. On the 7th, yes sir.

Q. And did we establish that when you came on watch, you did or did not have any known missing Annara numbers?

Q. From a technical point of view again, we're using Commander FEINGROEN as a technical expert. Would that JARAD number have been transmitted by 1600 on the 7th?

A. Yes sir. Probably for the second time.

Q. Probably for the second time?

A. Yes.

President: And the witness indicates that to the best of his knowledge, that there were no missing numbers. What conceivable explanation, and again we're theorizing and the Court is asking a technical witness in the



person of Commander FREEMAN, what could be an explanation for this apparent non-delivery?

A. To be perfectly honest, Admiral, there is none. A message receives a signed broadcast number, and then each subsequent message gets a consecutive number. Asmara has their logs where here, of course, they've been destroyed. Asmara has checked their logs and has said this number, and it's a repeat though garbled, was transmitted at such an such a time. I think we have to assume that Asmara, since he does have his logs, that this message was in fact sent at this time and the ship in fact did miss it.

President: I do not accept that. Just because I'm hard headed, I will accept it if we can find two other users of Asmara who can prove to this Court that they received that number prior to this young man coming on watch at 1600 on the 7th. And that alone will satisfy me that that message went on the JAFAD as advertised. And the reason for my doubt is because we already know that Asmara has made critical errors before.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: We can, if you so desire, sir, verify this.

President: Make that so, by phone, this morning to CINCUSNAVEUR.

Captain ATKINSON: One final question - did you have any missing numbers when you were relieved?

A. As far as I can remember, there was no change in status on relief.

President: Now, from a layman's point of view and in anticipation of there being other laymen via a via communications, reading this record, what way does a subscriber have of knowing that there is a message for him that he has missed?

Assistant Counsel for the Court: He does not know the missed number is specifically addressed to him, sir. He only knows that he has missed a message and he is required to maintain a continuous file of numbers. So, he must somehow, somehow, get that missed number and then he can determine whether or not if it is for his info or action. By the number itself, there is no way. He must see the message.

President: Let the record be at this time that the lack, as the result of destruction of LIBERTY records and files, combined with LIBERTY communications procedures, which will be expanded upon by subsequent testimony by

Lieutenant GOLDEN, the ship's communications officer, that if LIBERTY missed a JARAD number, and for example, had outgoing traffic to send, of both a technical nature relating to her mission and operational nature, all of this type of traffic had been and would have been in the hypothetical case being discussed, packaged together and sent to a single addressee for action, namely Naval Security Group Morocco. It is the Court's understanding that the burden would then be on the Naval Security Group Morocco to sort out the traffic received from LIBERTY, transmitted during one of the periods she could afford to transmit without interference with her technical mission, and then the recipient, Naval Security Group Morocco, in the case of missed JARAD numbers, would have informed radio Azmara via NAVSECSTA Morocco of LIBERTY's requirements. This is going to be possibly germane to this Court's inquiry to determine whether or not such was done, and the time delay experienced in Morocco which station is understood to have been saturated during this period of Middle East Tension, despite the fact that radio Azmara, by virtue of few subscribers, would have had a relatively low operational load.

The witness was duly sworn and withdrew.

Lieutenant Maurice H. Bennett, Jr., United States Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice and testified as follows.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your name, rank, and present duty station.

A. Maurice H. Bennett, Jr., Lieutenant, USN, 620123, present duty station USS LIBERTY.

Q. Lieutenant Bennett, as you are well aware, this Court of Inquiry has been convened to ascertain the circumstances attendant with the attack on USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. The Assistant Counsel for this Court will now ask you a few questions pertinent to the attack and to the duty station that you had.

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Q. Do you recall whether any JMWAVE messages were missing on the 7th and 8th? Was it reported to you that any messages were missing?

A. To the best of my knowledge, no messages were missing. I was the communications officer at the time of the incident. Therefore, I have no reason to have direct knowledge of any missing messages.

President: Who was the communications officer, Lieutenant Pierce?

A. Lieutenant James C. Pierce, who is now deceased. He was killed in the attack.

Q. Was the mission of the ship when on the 7th and 8th that it would have disrupted the missing messages, if it had been able to do so?

A. Excessive transmissions would. I thought only, however, the very nature of the situation dictated that we had come up in communication more frequently than normal in order to get pertinent messages and traffic originated by the ship.

Q. Who did you pass this traffic to on the 7th and 8th?

A. On the 7th and 8th of June, due to the inability to contact the USS Missouri, the majority, if not all, of our high precedence traffic was off-line encrypted and passed to the USS Missouri for further delivery.

Q. During these periods of transmission, if you were in fact aware of the missing number, would you have notified it at that time?

A. In most instances, no, because of the individual messages which dictated that this message go out, and again going back to the interior of the ship, to provide some information with the ship, or only out long enough to get the one or two high precedence messages out and then the transmitters were shut down.

Q. Why did you shift the JMWAVE on the 9th of June?

A. I don't know the exact reason. It was my understanding that it was necessary, and where I heard it from I don't recall. But, in certain cases instructions from when I don't know, that there is a different point that you shift breakers.

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C. This is 100% true. It is in JMWAVE 137. I was just curious if they were directed to shift to JMWAVE for any particular reason, or if they shifted just as a matter of normal communications procedure.

A. To the best of my knowledge we shifted in accordance with the communications procedure. And, as far as the type of my knowledge, in accordance with past known practice, the officer who was the communications officer, notification of the shift is usually sent, and I would presume within 15 to 20 minutes in advance.

President: I'd like to ask a third question. I just don't know, really, when you're in the JMWAVE system, you have to be in the system, which, even to my understanding, is a closed system, and you can't talk to anybody, you go to Moscow, and that's why I'm sure that the intelligence that they have had difficulty saying because, let's say, it's in the system, is it listening?

Assistant Counsel for the General: No sir, Moscow is not in the system of listening, but in the case of this particular ship, and the type of research traffic they are passing, the traffic is destined, or is actually destined, to go to MOSCOW, and Moscow. It would seem to require to the ship to send it to Moscow and Moscow first of all would have to be off-line encrypted because Moscow would not be permitted to read it, and Moscow would have to relay it to Moscow, it would have to be decrypted, and would just introduce many many delays. It would seem to be a disadvantage in the case of this particular ship to send it to Moscow and Moscow.

President: Now, would you expect to see a direct line from Moscow and Moscow to Moscow, and would you expect to see a direct line from Moscow and Moscow to Moscow?

A. In the case of this ship they are actually, I understand, in establishing their own line of communication with MOSCOW, and Moscow. Consequently, they would be in a direct line with Moscow and Moscow, and would be able to see this direct line and it is in the system, and so the signal is going through the system of Moscow and Moscow.



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a knot, so to speak, at Grand, but it still winds up in Mexico.

It's general service traffic that Grand personnel can read, they would have terminated the circuit, which they did on high of general service type traffic.

President: But, not always?

A. But, not always.

Q. In other words, this perhaps terminal point due to terminal go to increase off-line analysis.

A. If it went to CIRCUMVENT it would have went outside and because the proper job to the line is to be a signal passage as recalled.

President: Does the Court have any further questions of Mr. Long?

Mr. Long:

No questions.

The witness was called to the stand by the Court. The witness was called to the stand as a witness and by the Court, directed at the witness, a table 21, Western Gate of Mexico and Mexico and Mexico.

#### QUESTIONS BY COUNSEL FOR THE COURT:

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. State your name, rank, and grade and by position.

A. My name is Henry L. Long, Captain, United States Army.

Q. Long, you've been called before this Court of Inquiry under certain circumstances attendant with the subject of the 21st of June, 1964. The Court is very interested to know what certain circumstances which you might possess. Would you now answer questions that the Assistant Counsel for the Court will put before you.

A. Yes sir.

Q. Did you stand watch as far as the flight of the aircraft on the evening of 7th and 8th of June?

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A. Yes, I did sir. On the morning of the 8th I had the mid watch. I got off work at about 7 o'clock in the morning.

Q. Do you recall any difficulty in copying the JARAD broadcast from Amara during that period of time.

A. No sir. It was fairly clear. There were a couple of times that we had some problems because some equipment went down and we had to get out material men to repair it, but on the whole, it was a good signal and we were able to copy it.

Q. When you say equipment, did you drop out of sync?

A. No, it was the printer. The page print was being garbled because of some malfunctions within the gear.

Q. Were you getting on target?

A. Yes sir.

Q. And the tape was five by?

A. Yes sir.

Q. When you relieved the watch, do you recall any report or any indication that any numbers on the JARAD broadcast had been missed?

A. There were some that had been missed. I'm almost positive.

Q. Do you have a feel for the volume. Was it a matter of a few, or was it a matter of a whole block indicating maybe you dropped out of sync for an hour?

A. It appeared to me, as I remember, it may have been four or five, or maybe six messages that had been missed through some malfunction.

Q. Now, this is on the morning of the 8th, do you recall whether these messages were basically missing over a period of 12, 24, 48 hours, I know it's hard but generally speaking, do you have any feel for that?

A. No sir. The ones that I remember, there was a blank space on the message number log that we kept.

Q. As best your memory serves, while you had the watch and you had some trouble, can you recall at the time you were relieved of the watch, whether or not any numbers were missed during your time of watchstanding,

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from 060001 to 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning?

A. I don't believe we did, sir, because when we came on watch, we thought that we would very possible be very busy, and we switched - we were using the typewriter from one place and the page print from another place, so that we could use the good page print for running off copies that had to be distributed. We did this right at the beginning of the watch. We had some malfunction with the page printer, but we checked the tape to see how many of the messages that we did not have page prints on were to us.

Q. Under normal procedures when you come on watch or you've just been relieved, do you more or less depend on your log of consecutive numbers - take a glance at that to see if there were any missing numbers, or is it usually passed word of mouth, or just how do you know when you come on watch whether or not you're missing numbers on any particular gear regardless of what broadcast you're copying?

A. If the message had been missed that day, there would be blank spaces on the message number log. If it had been prior to that day, there was another page where numbers of all missing messages were noted, and when we got out a message or received a repeat on it, if we did not need it then it was logged out that we didn't need it; if we did need it, then it was copied down.

President: Then, on this sheet which was sort of a backlog sheet for time prior to the watch, were there any numbers on that backlog sheet for a couple, three days before?

A. Yes sir, there were. When we first picked up the J1 broadcast, we were having bad copy with them it would keep going out and we missed several numbers.

Q. When you say, it would keep going out, we're not communicators, what's going out?

A. The signal was fading. The transmission was weak. We were just having trouble from the weak signals we were receiving. And we just don't know if there were some missed because of that. It would be good for awhile and then it would fade out. It would become too weak for awhile. It would be good and it would go bad. It just kept doing that.

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Q. Now here's a real hard one - during the period of 6, 7, and 8 June, or I should say 7 and 8 June, could you give us any feel for what percentage of reliability JARAD was having, was it 50% reliable, was it 90% reliable, what would be your feelings?

A. It seemed to me that it was 80 to 90 per cent reliable. It was very good. I had the day watch on the 7th and I didn't lose the signal once. I copied it all day and didn't have trouble.

Q. On the 8th when you had the watch, did you establish a ship-shore termination to pass traffic to the beach on COMINT. Do you know if one was established when you had the watch?

A. On the 7th, they tried to, but there were some problems that came up and they never did get established as far as I know.

President: I just haven't got a feeling for what I heard. Now you said that you copied solid on the 7th when you had a day watch. You had a readable signal through it.

A. Yes sir.

Q. Now, does that mean that you had no missed numbers on your watch?

A. I cannot remember any, sir. To the best of my knowledge, there were none.

Q. There were no missed numbers on the day watch. That would have covered what period of time, on the 7th?

A. The day watch started -- we relieve about 6:30 to 6:45 local in the morning and we relieve for lunch at approximately between 11 and 11:15. We ate and came right back. I don't know exactly what time that was but we ate and came right back to work. We were relieved again approximately 4:30 in the afternoon.

Q. So, from 6:30 you can testify to the best of your knowledge you had no missed numbers on JARAD?

A. Yes sir.

Q. And when you came on watch in the morning, there were some missed numbers, is that correct?



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A. I seem to remember some.

Q. How many on that missed number sheet could you recall checking off on the reruns that occurred during your watch?

A. None, sir, because the JN broadcast was sending reruns from a period before we started the copying. They had not reached the missing numbers that we had.

President: I see. Well this is interesting then. The rerun repeats that we hear Amara has been able to do two or three times in a 24-hour period does not necessarily constitute 100% reruns?

A. No sir. The numbers we were receiving on the rerun were numbers from earlier in that month.

Q. Earlier in the Month?

A. Before we had started copying the other broadcasts.

Q. Now, a technical question, a procedure question for Commander Feinberg (asst to Asst), how does a transmitting station decide what they're going to rerun. Are they requests from users?

A. That's one source. They'll be requested from various people then during certain periods of the day when they feel that their propagation is at the least bit of efficiency, they will take the numbers that were run during that period of day without any requests and rerun those if capacity of work units permits. If they run 300 numbers and they have a capacity of 500, there's no reason why they shouldn't take 400 of those 300 and rerun them anyway. The transmitters there, traffic's off the air. But it's requests, and it's to their professional knowledge of propagation and location of ships, how many minutes do we run, what numbers do we run.

Q. One last question, son. When you were relieved of the watch, and turned over to your relief those sheets of paper showing missed numbers, I want to ask you again, had you added to that list in your handwriting, during your period of time on watch?

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A. I don't believe that I had, sir. If I did, I might have added some numbers while we were having trouble with the page print and then I remember I went back and I checked the reproof tape and read on to see if it was for us and checked them off.

Q. So, you didn't add any new ones. You don't remember whether you checked off any old ones?

A. I know that I did not check off any old ones.

Q. You did not check off any old ones, and as I understand you that was because what they were rerunning was stuff before you even picked up the broadcast?

A. Yes sir.

Q. When you assumed the watch on the 4th, you said there were some numbers missing before they shifted to the JANAD broadcast. KR numbers you said. Do you recall after shifting to the Asmara broadcast of anyone taking any action to get the, regardless of the number, missing KR numbers?

A. No sir, I don't. I was not on watch when they changed broadcast. They changed broadcast they were copying while I was in between strings of watches. I was out on a break when they changed, so I do not know if they took any action or if they did, what action they took.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Chief Warrant Officer Jack E. WICKHAM, U.S. Navy, took the stand as a witness, was duly sworn, advised of his rights under Article 31, UCMJ and testified as follows:

#### DIRECT EXAMINATION .

Questions by Counsel for the Court.

Q. Please state your name, rank, and present duty station.

A. Chief Warrant Officer Jack E. Wickham, 537925/7742, I am the assistant salvage and diving officer for Commander Service Squadron Eight, Norfolk, Virginia.

Q. You are well aware this Court of Inquiry has been convened to ascertain

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certain information attendant with the attack upon USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967. You have been called as a witness, to answer certain questions you may be able to answer. At this time, the President, Admiral Kidd would like to ask you a few questions.

Q. Mr. Wickham, your reputation is known to me in the salvage business, and if I recall correctly you have been involved in salvage operations, the recovery of the remains, and lengthy details incident to the salvage for some 20 years. Is that correct?

A. That is correct, sir.

Q. The question that I am going to ask you will be included in the medical portion of this report, and it goes like this. In your professional experience and based thereon what would be your opinion, from your duties yesterday incident to the recovery of the remains from the torpedoed compartment of the USS LIBERTY, as to the possibility or probability of any of those remains having been alive after the explosion?

A. In my experience with explosion of this type aboard naval vessels, I have no doubt of any kind that any person could have survived the initial explosion down there. I think death was instantaneous for every person in the immediate area.

Q. Now, I extend just a bit. Some of the people down there got out. There is the ever present possibility in the minds of next of kin, that in our determination to button up the ship quickly, that we might inadvertently trap men below. Now, would you comment on this aspect of this situation. As I understand it, from what you said, those who got out, got out because they were able to get out, and the rest were dead on the explosion?

A. Yes sir, that is my opinion.

Q. And from previous discussions with you, I understand that this opinion derived from the degree of dismemberment and like facts which caused this conviction?

A. Yes sir. Every body that I observed down there, there is no doubt in my mind that that person was dead at the time of the explosion.

President: Thank you very very much, Mr. Wickham.

The witness was duly warned and withdrew.

Commander William L. McDonagle, was recalled as a witness, reminded that he was still under oath and testified as follows:

## DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court.

Q. Captain, did you bring with you today the gyre compass record for USS LIBERTY?

A. Yes sir, I did.

Q. Is this it?

A. Yes sir, it is.

I request the recorder to mark this as exhibit number 25 and offer it into evidence as exhibit number 26.

Q. Will you please read pertinent extracts from that.

A. The ship's gyre was last inspected by the USS VULCAN qualified gyre inspection and repair personnel on 30 March 1967.

Q. Is that 30 March 1967 a timely inspection?

A. Yes sir, it is. The ship's gyre is required to be inspected whenever possible by tender or yard personnel specifically trained in this responsibility once each quarter. I would like to indicate that the log shows that the error at the time of this inspection was .1° westerly.

Counsel for the Court: I have no further questions. Does any member of the Court desire to question the witness?

President: Captain, in our previous discussions, you told us a story which I have since come to identify as remarkable humility and self-effacement on your part which I presume has caused you not to mention in testimony the way you revigored this ship out of dangerous waters after the attack. Will you please tell the Court how, while lying on your back, with no compass except the magnetic compass, and based upon your recollection of



your magnetic compass error in relation to the gyro compass book, you used the sun and subsequently the North Star to clear the area.

A. Admiral, after a time on the bridge, when I had received minor injuries, I lost considerable blood and attempts to stem the flow of blood by self-help were unsuccessful, I noticed myself beginning to lose consciousness. I immediately layed down on the deck flat on my back on the port wing, and raised the bleeding leg as high as possible, resting it on my port bridge chair, and there a first class communications technician by the name of Carpenter and other persons who I don't recall at this time, applied a tourniquet to my right leg which effectively stopped the flow of blood. I, at no time, lost consciousness and had my full faculties at all times. I realized by that time I had lost considerable amounts of blood because it was sloshing in my shoes and my right leg was completely soaked with blood. They cut the right pant leg off to get it out of the area of the wounds. I looked at my wounds at that time and they still did not appear to me to be serious and since the flow of blood had been stopped I gave no further consideration to - I didn't consider I had any more problem in that area. I asked them to bring me coffee, fluids, a couple of salt tablets, and so forth. I secured the ship by looking aft and by being able to see the wake of the ship I was able to tell after steering which way to apply the rudder and how long to leave it on to attempt to average out the best course that I felt the ship should travel on to stand clear of possible shoal areas. I remained on my back for approximately an hour and a half. I then felt that I had regained sufficient strength that I was able to get up from the deck and see the ship from the wing of the ship and from the pilot house. I couldn't get my leg in a comfortable position so I moved from one place to the other. I couldn't stay in any one place for too long a period of time. It seemed to me that my remaining on the bridge, this would be able to lessen the shock that the rest of the crew had received.

Counsel for the Court: Captain, predicated on your testimony at the last hearing in which you testified, the Court propounded certain questions for you to answer. Will you please now give the Court the answers to those questions?

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A. Yes sir, I will. The questions concern the following:

Q. The basic directives for your operations in the Eastern Mediterranean appears to be those contained in JCS message 011545Z which indicated you would operate south of 32°N during the period 9-30 June. Did you receive any directive to commence these operations before 9 June?

A. Directives received both before and subsequent to JCS 011545Z indicated the urgency of initiating operations in the Eastern Mediterranean as soon as possible. For example: COMUSMACV message 240020Z directed LIBERTY to depart Abidjan immediately and proceed at best speed to Rota for logistics and subsequent deployment in the Eastern Mediterranean. My 241732Z indicated ETA Port Said area about 061400Z June. This estimate allowed five hours at Rota for fuel, reprovision, and again got underway. Heavy seas and a boiler casualty delayed LIBERTY's arrival at Rota. Repairs to an antenna system were undertaken at Rota and the ship was directed to remain at Rota until repairs were completed. On the basis of telephone authorization LIBERTY departed Rota at 021230Z for the Eastern Mediterranean and reported that best speed would be utilized enroute (LIBERTY 022108Z).

LIBERTY 023300Z indicated that the ship would arrive at 32-00N 33-00E at 060000Z and commence operations within 50 miles from 32-00N 33-30E.

LIBERTY SITREP 070938Z indicated that pin would be stationary at 013300Z and operations would be within 30 miles of 31-00N 33-30E.

COMUSMACV 061357Z, which refers to both LIBERTY 021330Z (MOVREP) and 022108Z (SITREP on departure Rota), directed that COMUSMACV operate LIBERTY to derive maximum benefit from special capabilities.

LIBERTY shopped to COMUSMACV by message at 070031Z.

No messages were received which would indicate that the expressed intentions of LIBERTY was at variance with the implied desires of all higher commands concerned to effectively employ the unique capabilities of LIBERTY at the earliest possible time. Daily SITREPs/PIN reports were

submitted LIBERTY messages: 032020Z June, 042050Z June, 051934Z June, 061844Z June, 070908Z June, 080634Z June pertain.

In spite of the fact that outgoing transmissions were undesirable for research purposes in view of the operational importance of these messages to the ship's technical/operational commanders I directed that the SITREPS that these messages be sent irregardless of their undesirable effects on the effectiveness of the research mission, especially in view of the increased precedence for transmission directed and prior length of time to obtain TOD for further routing of the SITREPS submitted 1, 4 and 5 June.

JCS 062050Z June Priority (TOR 08/0555Z Jun) contains procedure to be utilized in developing and promulgating LIBERTY schedule and changes while operating in USCINCEUR's area of responsibility. Note that LIBERTY is not included in the framework of developing the schedule or changes and a specific note was included in paragraph 3 of that message to the effect that "... on all messages pertaining to asks for (sic or) asked changes ... USS LIBERTY is not an addressee on these messages." Since LIBERTY was not privy to background of schedule of changes there was no reason to believe that the reported actions and intentions of LIBERTY were not acceptable to operational/technical commanders nor was there any way to know that they were considering revisions to that schedule until a message is received which directs the ship to change its area of operation.

President: During your testimony yesterday, in relation to the loss of your quartermaster, the loss of your navigational capabilities, and related circumstances making it difficult to reconstruct navigational and chronologically exactly what occurred, you were asked to develop in conjunction with your ships officers and through the assistance of other assets available, such as your engineer's bell book, the CIC log, recollections of ships personnel the best available story, chronological in words and pictorial on charts and whyfore what happened. Have you done this?

A. Yes sir, we have.

President: Would you be kind enough to submit into evidence at this time, those documents?

Counsel for the Court: I ask you if you have the chronological listing of events relative to USS LIBERTY on 8 June.

A. Yes sir, I do.

Q. Would you provide it, please?

A. Here it is.

Counsel for the Court: Request this be marked exhibit number 27 and request that it be introduced into evidence. Will you please now read exhibit number 27 to the Court?

A. Exhibit number 27 is COMDESRON TWELVE Secret Message 150016Z JUN 67 to CINCSNAVEUR.

FOR ADMIRAL MCCAIN FROM KIDD. DELIVER AT \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, YOUR 141740Z NOT READ AS OF 142355Z; HOWEVER  
REQUESTED 8 JUNE CHRONOLOGY FOLLOWS:

A. APPROACHING LAND FROM THE WEST DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF 8 JUNE, PROJECTED OPERATIONS OF LIBERTY FOR THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON OF THE DAY WAS TO PROCEED TO A POINT 13 NAUTICAL MILES FROM THE COAST OF UAR AT 31-27.2N 34-47E (POINT ALPHA), THENCE TO 31-22.3N 35-42E (POINT BRAVO) THENCE TO 31-21N 35-47E (POINT CHARLIE) RETRACING THIS TRACK UNTIL NEW ORDERS RECEIVED, SHIP WOULD OPERATE NORTH OF THIS TRACK LINE AT ALL TIMES, IF FIXES COULD NOT BE ACCURATELY OBTAINED AS POINT CHARLIE WAS APPROACHED IT WAS INTENDED TO HEAD DUE NORTH UNTIL THE 167 FATHOM CURVE WAS CROSSED AND THE TRACK MOVED TO THE NORTH TO MORE OR LESS MOVE BACK AND FORTH ON THE GENERAL AVERAGE OF THE 167 FATHOM CURVE. NORMAL STEAMING SPEED WAS TO BE FIVE KNOTS. NORMAL STEAMING COLORS WERE FLAM AND NORMAL NAVIGATIONAL LIGHTS LIGHTED AT NIGHT. THERE WAS NO INTENTION TO SEARCH AT DARKEN SHIP AT ANY TIME



AND THE SHIP DID NOT EVEN EXERCISE AT DARKEN SHIP DRILL DURING THE DEPLOYMENT

2. ALL TIMES BRAVO UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

0754 STEAMING ON 1500, SPD 15 KNOTS

0840 PASSED THROUGH POINT ALPHA CHANGED CSE TO 253T

0854 SINGLE JET A/C (UNIDENTIFIED) CROSSED ASTERN DISTANCE 3 - 5 MILES - CIRCLED SHIP FROM STBD TO PORT AND RETURNED TO UAH MAINLAND. LOCATING TAO TRANSMITTED (LIBERTY 007422JUN).

0915 DECREASED SPD TO 5 KNOTS

1056 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP-HIGH

1126 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP LOCATING THREE BARRAGE FOR TRANSMISSION AT 081022Z (DOT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN TRANSMITTED)

1132 PASSED THROUGH POINT BRAVO C/C TO 053T

1310 EXERCISED AT O.R. DRILL

1348 BREWED FROM O.R. DRILL

1351 3 SMALL SURFACE CONTACTS HELD ON RADAR 32,551 YARDS BEARING

082T - RETURNED TO BRIDGE AS 3 SURFACE CONTACT

1353 RADAR REPORTS POSSIBLE A/C PASSING OVER SURFACE CONTACTS.

1358 SINGLE A/C SIGHTED APPROACHING SHIP FROM 135 DEG RELATIVE 5 - 6 MILES DISTANCE, ALTITUDE APPROXIMATELY 7777 FT.

A/C PASSED DOWN TRACK OF SHIP

1401 LOUD EXPLOSION - PORT SIDE AMIDSHIPS

1405 SOUNDED GENERAL ALARM - LARGE FIRE IN VICINITY OF FRAME 85,

01 LEVEL WHERE FUEL FOR MOTOR DRIVEN PIST PUMPS ARE LOCATED.

1405 ALL AHEAD PLANK SIGNALLED BY ENGINE ORDER TELEGRAPH.

1415 - 1419 SHIP UNDER REPEATED AIR ATTACK WITH TWO OR MORE A/C MAKING COORDINATED STAFFING, ROCKETS, AND INCENDIARY BOMBS OVER SHIP. THREE MAJOR FIRES TOPSIDE COVERING LARGE AREAS OF SHIP WITH FLAMES AND HEAVY SMOKE A TOTAL OF EIGHT MEN WERE KILLED OR DIED AS A RESULT OF INJURIES RECEIVED DURING THE AIR A

ATTACK, ONE KILLED AND ONE MORTALLY WOUNDED ON BRIDGE, TWO KILLED AT MACHINE GUN 51, ONE KILLED AT MACHINE GUN 52, ONE DIED FROM WOUNDS RECEIVED ON THE MAIN DECK STARBOARD SIDE AND TWO DIED OF WOUNDS RECEIVED ON THE #1 LEVEL PORT SIDE. APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY FIVE WOUNDED, INCLUDING COMMANDING OFFICER, THROUGHOUT TOPSIDE AREA FROM SHRAPNEL AND SHOCK OF EXPLODING ROCKETS.

1411 BEGAN MAKING TURNS FOR 18 KNOTS.

1424 3 RAD'S SIGHTED ABAFT STARBOARD  
IDEAL DISTANCE 4-5 MILES

1426 NOTICED NORMAL STEAMING ENSIGN SHOT AWAY DURING AIR ATTACK  
HOLIDAY SIZE ENSIGN HOISTED ON PORT MASTHEAD.

1428 MID SIGNALLING BY FLASHING LIGHT FROM STEER QUARTER. LIGHT  
OBSCURED BY DENSE SMOKE FROM BURNING MOTOR SHUTTERBAT.

1430 ONE ROUND FIRED BY MACHINE GUN 51. C.O. ORDERED HOLD FIRE.

1431 MACHINE GUN 53 OPENED FIRE. C.O. SENT ENS LUCAS AROUND PORT  
SIDE OF BRIDGE TO GET MACHINE GUN 53 TO CEASE FIRING

1431 WORD PASSED TO STANDBY FOR TORPEDO ATTACK TO STARBOARD.

MTB COMMENCED STRAPING STARBOARD SIDE OF SHIP

1434 TORPEDO PASSED 70 YARDS ASTERN OF SHIP.

1435 TORPEDO HIT STARBOARD SIDE AMIDSHIPS.

TWENTY SEVEN DIED AS A RESULT OF THE TORPEDO HIT AND MID  
STRAPING TARS.

1435 LOST ELECTRICAL POWER THROUGHOUT THE SHIP.

1436 LOST STEAM PRESSURE - SECURED ENGINES AND BOILERS -  
MANY QUAGES AND METERS IN FIREROOM AND ENGINE ROOM WERE KNOCKED  
OUT. TORPEDO HIT IN RESEARCH COORDINATION CENTER WHERE  
APPROXIMATELY TWENTY MEN WERE AT C.O. STATIONS. THESE SPACES  
FLOODED INSTANTLY AND MOST PERSONNEL IN THIS SPACE DIED OF  
EITHER BLAST OR DROWNING. NO SIGNS OF LIFE EMANATING FROM COORDINATION  
CENTER AND ADJACENT SPACES WHICH COULD NOT BE OPENED WITHOUT

17  
CUT  
DANGER OF FLOODING OTHER SPACES.

1445 MTB'S STANDING AWAY FROM THE SHIP. ONE MTB HAS HULL NUMBER 206-17

1503 ONE MTB RETURNED TO SHIP AND SIGNALLED "DO YOU NEED HELP" IN ENGLISH C.O. SIGNALLED "NEGATIVE"

1505 MTB'S RETIRED TOWARD SHORE

1507 HELICOPTER BEARING STAR OF DAVID MARKINGS APPROACHED SHIP, PORT SIDE. HOVERING AT ABOUT 500 YDS DISTANCE.

1508 SECOND HELICOPTER APPROACHED SHIP.

MARKINGS ON HELICOPTERS ARE 04 AND 03 OR D4 AND D8. HELICOPTER MADE REPEATED PASSES AROUND AND OVER SHIP. THEY WERE NOT OBSERVED TO PICK UP ANY BODIES, PERSONS OR DEBRIS.

1519 POWER RESTORED TO BRIDGE BUT RUDDER DID NOT ANSWER - CONTINUED STEERING FROM AFTER STEERING.

1536 MTB'S APPROACHING SHIP STARBOARD SIDE 7-8 MILES DISTANT. DURING NEXT HOUR AND A QUARTER THE MTB'S RETURNED TO THE SHIP HOVED AND BY 1615 THEY HAD RETIRED OUT OF SIGHT OVER THE HORIZON.

1615 TWO UNIDENTIFIED JET A/C APPROACHED SHIP FROM THE STEER SIDE AND RECONNOITERED FROM A DISTANCE.

1620 ATTEMPTING TO CLEAR AREA STEERING NORTHERLY COURSE AT SPEEDS VARYING FROM 0 TO 8 KNOTS. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES WERE TREATED IN THE WARDROOM ON A CONTINUING BASIS, DAMAGE CONTROL AND FIRE FIGHTING CONTROLLED FLOODING AND DAMAGE, ENGINEERING CASUALTIES WERE RESTORED BUT STEERING WAS BY HAND FROM AFTER STEERING.

1845 ISRAELI HELICOPTER APPROACHED SHIP - CIRCLED CLOSE ABOARD AND ATTEMPTED TO SIGNAL - THEY APPEARED TO DESIRE TO LOWER SOMEONE TO THE DECK - C.O. CONSIDERED RECEIVING HIM ON FORECASTLE BUT RULED THIS OUT AS TOO HAZARDOUS, REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO

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COMMUNICATE WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. AND AT 1052 COPTER DROPPED  
A MESSAGE PACKET ON FORECASTLE, THE MESSAGE, WRITTEN ON A CALLING  
CARD OF THE U.S. NAVAL ATTACHE TEL AVIV, ASKED "HAVE YOU CASUALTIES"  
SHIP TRIED BY SEVERAL MEANS TO INDICATE, DURING NEXT  
TEN MINUTES THAT THERE WERE MANY CASUALTIES BUT THERE WAS NO  
INDICATION THAT THE MESSAGE WAS UNDERSTOOD, THE MUTILATED  
BODIES OF THREE DEAD CREW MEMBERS HAD NOT YET BEEN REMOVED  
FROM THE FORECASTLE AND MUST HAVE BEEN OBSERVED FROM THE  
HELICOPTER. THE HELICOPTER DEPARTED THE SHIP SHORTLY BEFORE  
SUNSET (ABOUT 1945) SHIP CONTINUED STEAMING THROUGH NIGHT  
NEVU WITH ESCORTS DISPATCHED BY COMSIXTHFLT

3. FOREGOING CONSTITUTES DETAILED RECONSTRUCTION FROM ON BOARD BOOK,  
CIC LOG, BELL BOOK AND BEST RECOLLECTION OF CO/CHIEF ENJR/  
GUN CRT/BRIDGE PERSONNEL. ALL CONCUR  
OP-3  
BT



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Counsel for the Court: Captain, do you have with you today your readiness file and your gunnery procedures?

A. Yes sir, I have.

Counsel for the Court: This will be exhibit number 28, the modified condition of readiness three. Exhibit number 29 will be the guide for gunnery officers. I request that they be admitted in evidence.

Counsel for the Court: Captain, have with you today another chart which was requested by the Court of your projected track in relationship to the prescribed areas of operation.

A. Yes sir, I have, and the information requested by the Court has been placed thereon.

Counsel for the Court: I request this chart be marked by the reporter as exhibit number 30 and be admitted in evidence at this time. I also request that the reporter mark the following three exhibits, 31, 32, 33, exhibit 31 and 32 are maneuvering boards, exhibit 33 is bullet and projectile mark photographs. I request that these exhibits be entered into evidence as exhibits 31, 32 and 33.

Counsel for the Court: Captain, do you have with you information as to the number of bullet marks on USS LIBERTY as a result of the attack on 8 June 1967?

A. Yes sir, I have had a topside inspection of the ship made and have recorded the number of projectile hits in various areas of the ship.

President: What was the total number of hits you took, Captain?

A. We took a total of 821 plus one torpedo hit.

Counsel for the Court: That does not include shrapnel marks?

A. No sir, that does not include shrapnel marks which are innumerable.

Counsel for the Court: Does the Court desire to question this witness further?

Captain ATKINSON: One question, on your open fire doctrine, what is your open fire doctrine?

A. The open fire doctrine is that, except in a melee, all fire will be controlled by the Commanding Officer through his normal gunnery control organization. At surprise air and surface attacks, the gunnery personnel

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on the mounts are authorized to open fire if they are unable to communicate with gun control or the bridge.

President: Let the record show at this point that the <sup>a</sup>grizzly business of recovery of remains from the torpedoed compartments yesterday and last night resulted in starting out looking for 22 unrecovered bodies. We actually recovered 18 of whom we are reasonably confident that we identified accurately 15. Wholesale dismemberment resulting in many remains virtually being blown to bits made the recovery particularly difficult and identification even more complicated. It cannot be conclusively determined that the four missing of the 22 being sought are not in pieces in the spaces themselves. On the other hand, it is possible that we did lose four floating free after the attack or we may have lost those four immediately at the time of the attack dropping through the hole in the bottom. The degree of dismemberment was so extreme as to be typified by the fact that the last few cases we packed in the small hours this morning contained, for example, a head, and an arm in one and similar partial bodies.

The Court recessed for lunch at 1200 hours on 15 June 1967.

After recessing at 1200 hours on 15 June, the Court met again at 1330 hours on 15 June 1967.

Counsel for the Court: All persons who were present when the court recessed are again present in court. The Captain, USS LIBERTY is still on the stand and under oath. Commander, do you have anything else you'd like to present?

Commander McDonagles: I gave the list of recommendations to the yeoman and I hadn't completed writing out the last one, but the last one in substance that I would recommend that ships that are engaged in special operations of this type or others of which I'm not aware but that may be of critical importance that they be advised of the decisions of higher authority which are under consideration and could be of value to the ship in being able to respond to the desires of higher command in more timely fashion.

Counsel for the Court: Do any of the members have questions of this witness?

Assistant Counsel for the Court: Yes, I have a question, Captain, if I may. In general, could you tell me what the normal everyday procedures are, as relates to determination of when to come up on a transmitter for the purpose of establishing a ship-shore circuit.

A. Usually, the number of messages - of course, we have no way of knowing what the contents of a missing message number is. I check with the communicators, it is my usual practice to go to the research spaces every morning. At about 0815 there, I receive a sort of informal briefing on the research operations, I review the special traffic. The general service board is usually brought to me before I go down to the research spaces. And, the decision as to whether to come up on a transmitter or not would depend on the urgency of the message that I wanted my superior to be aware of. Generally, I try to deal with routine messages to the maximum extent possible. There are many items which cannot be handled at this level of course. With our defense operation there were times where there would be only a few hours difference when it was working between coming up on a normal transmitter and reducing our research effectiveness, or waiting a matter of a couple of hours until we got moon time to relay via the moon. In this case I might say wait and send this one by the moon if possible. There were a couple of times after minimize was imposed in the area where I felt that I could send a

message not meeting minimize criteria by the transcon system because it would not involve any of the mediterranean ships that were a transmitter receive station. I was discussing the matter of that I had authorized release of a routine message which would not normally qualify for transmission under minimize conditions. I specifically put on the bottom of this message "transmit via transcon equipment only" and it was for a spare part for the transcon system and we know that this would go from the ship direct to Washington via the moon in fact the relay station.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: I was wondering, Captain, in your routine scanning the traffic, was it a normal function for the Coms officer or what have you some personnel to inform you or to keep you cognizant about numbers of missing messages from broadcast files?

A. Not as an everyday occurrence. I did check to see what the backlog of outgoing messages were, sometimes two or three times a day. As usual there would be many times when we would have a backlog of several messages without specifying the number. They would usually let me know in the morning also what the backlog of messages for the night was. This leads me to believe that if we were able to get out we usually had no problems with incoming traffic.

Assistant Counsel for the Court: Would there have been any reason, Captain, on the days of 6, 7, and 8 June for it to be unwise to transmit on a ship-shore circuit terminating with a NAVCOMMSTA?

A. I'm not sure what you mean by unwise.

Q. You are steaming along doing your job, at 1500 on June 7th, let us say, would it have hurt things if all of a sudden you came up with a 500 watt transmitter on the line?

A. I can't answer that question specifically because I'm not an expert in that area, although my research officer requested that we hold the number of transmissions to an absolute minimum because we did know that whenever we transmitted our research capability was reduced, and I did this for the most part and the primary exception was the messages which I directed to be sent, FIM reports specifically, that I knew my operational and technical commanders were vitally concerned with receiving in a short period of time. I directed



the transmitters come up and transmit those messages regardless of the consequences upon the research function.

Q. The comm officer is deceased, I understand?

A. Yes, he is.

Q. Was he an Ensign?

A. No sir, he was a Lieutenant. A very capable individual. He had been in his particular specialty for a considerable period of time, the exact number of years I'm not sure, but he had been associated with tom for ten or fifteen years anyhow. The last seven or eight as an officer, and he had been on the ship approximately 11 months at the time.

Q. He was more of specialist than an operational type of officer, is that right?

A. Yes, he was and LDO and quite competent in his duties, and very thorough and conscientious.

Q. President: Captain McDonagle, before you is a message (Defense Attache Tel Aviv 091520) provided by the Court of Inquiry, purporting points advanced by the Israeli Government as justification for their unprovoked attack on USS LIBERTY on 8 June. Would you be kind enough to address yourself to those points.

A. Yes, sir, LIBERTY never approached the nearest land closer than 14 NM. The ship was in international waters at all times prior to, during and after the unprovoked attack. To my knowledge there was no declared war zone recognized or sanctioned by the United States Government. I had heard on VOA various statements broadcast by Mr. Rusk and Mr. Goldberg in the UN to the effect that the U.S. attitude of the U.S. Government was neutral in the conflict between Israel and UAR and did not intend to take a position for or against either side. The VOA broadcast and BBC indicated that Israel indicated a willingness to abide by the cease fire that the UN had asked for to be effective about 072000 local time. The above considerations coupled with the right of innocent passage recognized in international law refutes this allegation categorically.

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As counsel for the Court, I have in my possession a file containing messages from the official records of Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe. I received these messages from the communications officer, CINCUSNAVEUR, and they are available for the use of the Court relative to this case. Do any of the Court members desire to examine this file at this time?

Captain ATKINSON: This file contains all pertinent messages concerning USS LIBERTY operations from 24 May to 11 June, is this correct?  
Counsel for the Court: Yes.

The President of the Court adjourned the Court at 1445 hours, 15 June 1967, and will meet at his call in London, England.

FOURTH DAY

Counsel for the Court: This Court of Inquiry is in session again after having adjourned on 15 June 1967 on board USS LIBERTY in Malta. Today the date is 16 June, the time is 1345, the place is London, England Headquarters Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe. Captain Leonard Robert RAISH was recalled as a witness, reminded that he was still under oath and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Questions by Counsel for the Court:

Q. Captain RAISH will you now advise the court of information that you have to present in amplification of your prior testimony.

A. At the beginning of the court of inquiry I was directed by Admiral KIDD to prepare sets of questions to obtain detailed information on the attack of the LIBERTY. I did prepare sets of questions for NAVCOMSTA PHILIPPINES, NAVCOMSTA GREECE, NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO, Army Communication Facility Amara, and NAVCOMSTA ARABIA and I produce now the messages that answered the questions.

Counsel for the Court: These messages that I have received from Captain RAISH will be marked by the reporter as exhibits numbers 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, I now offer them into evidence, and hand them back to you Captain RAISH to read to the court.

FROM: CIRCUMNAVOUR TO NAVCOMSTA PHILIPPINES CONFIDENTIAL 141631Z JUN 67  
SUBJ: USS LIBERTY CONCENTRICATIONS (C)

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SESSION:

A. DID YOU RECEIVE JCS 072230Z JUN AND JCS 080102Z JUN FOR RELAY?

IF ANSWER TO 1 IS YES:

B. FROM WHOM AND AT WHAT TIME DID YOU RECEIVE THEM? TO WHOM DID YOU RELAY THEM AND AT WHAT TIME?

2. SUBMIT REPLY ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. OP-4

FROM: NAVCOMSTA PHILIPPINES TO CIRCUMNAVOUR CONFIDENTIAL 150346Z JUN 67

A. YOUR 141632Z JUN 67

RAISH

B. JCS 072230Z JUN 67

C. JCS 080110Z JUN 67

D. NAVCOMSTA PHIL 130041Z JUN 67

1. REF B ON 133Z/67 FROM NAVCOMSTA KINIA MSG 1700Z/67 TO B-1 ELSTA BASIS
2. REF C FOR 0400Z/67 FROM NAVCOMSTA KINIA FOR 0445Z/67 TO NAVCOMSTA GUM
3. REF D TRACER ACTION BY NAVCOMSTA PHIL FOR 1014Z TO REF C.

FROM: CIRCUMSTANCES TO NAVCOMSTA GUMCE CONFIDENTIAL 1414Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USG LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF JCS ON 1014Z JUN 67 IN  
REPLY:

A. FROM WHOM DID YOU RECEIVE CONFIDENTIAL 000917Z JUN 67? AT WHAT  
TIME?

B. WHO WAS NAVCOMSTA GUMCE TO PROTECT FOR IN REGARD TO THIS MESSAGE  
AS ASSIGNED BY THE ROUTING INDICATORS?

C. WHAT ACTIONS DID YOUR PERSONNEL TAKE WITH REGARD TO CONFIDENTIAL  
000917Z?

D. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE FOR YOUR PERSONNEL TO RECOGNIZE THAT  
CONFIDENTIAL 000917Z JUN HAD BEEN MISROUTED TO NAVCOMSTA GUMCE AND START  
ACTIONS TO RECTIFY?

E. COULD YOUR PERSONNEL, ONCE THE MISROUTE WAS RECOGNIZED, HAVE  
RECOVERED SOME OF THE LOST TIME BY REROUTING DIRECTLY TO NAVCOMSTA ARABAY?  
IF SO, WHY DIDN'T THEY?

F. HOW DOES THE MESSAGE TRAFFIC HANDLED BY NAVCOMSTA GUMCE FOR THE  
WEEK 3-9 JUN 67 EXCLUSIVE COMPARE WITH THE PREVIOUS WEEK (I.E., 29 MAY -  
2 JUN EXCLUSIVE) AS REGARDS VOLUMES AND FREQUENCIES USED? HOW DOES IT  
COMPARE TO A REPRESENTATIVE WEEK, SAY IN FEB 67?

G. WHAT IS THE PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE OF NAVCOMSTA GUMCE? HOW MANY  
DO YOU HAVE ON BOARD?

H. WHAT IN GENERAL IS THE LEADERSHIP AND EXPERIENCE LEVEL OF PERSONNEL  
ENGAGED IN MESSAGE HANDLING OPERATIONS?

I. FORMULATE IN NARRATIVE STYLE COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDED AND ACTIONS  
OF NAVCOMSTA GUMCE INCIDENT TO AND FOLLOWING THE ATTACK ON US LIBERTY.

J. SUBJECT REPLY ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. (P-1)



FROM: NAVCOGUSTA GREECE TO CIRCUMNAVOUR CONFIDENTIAL 190731Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS

A. YOUR 141659Z JUN 67

1. I AM REP A FOLLOWING INFO FORWARDED. SUB-PARAGRAPHS REFER TO REFERENCE.

A. COMEXTRELY COOPITE RECEIVED FROM NAVKLETA ASHARA (AM) AT 031230Z.

B. NAVCOGUSTA GREECE WAS INADVERTENT RELAY POINT. JOURNAL DELIVERY PATH FROM ORIGINATOR TO ADDRESSE WOULD HAVE BY-PASSED GREECE. ONCE RECEIVED, HOWEVER, NAVCOGUSTA GREECE HAD TO PROTECT FOR BUREAU NAVCOGUSTA ASHARA. THIS WAS THE ONLY ADDRESS IN THE ROUTING LIST RECEIVED FROM ASHARA.

C. HANDLED AS ANY OTHER MSG ALONG WITH OTHERS BY EQUAL AND HIGHER PRECEDENCE. MSG RELAY HANDLED FOR 11:00 AM ON 06 JUN 67. MSG TRAFFIC COUNT SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER, ESTIMATE 1500. EXACT COUNT WOULD REQUIRE SEVERAL DAYS EFFORT. TOTAL TRAFFIC HANDLED IN THIS TONEL TAFT RELAY ON 06 JUN WAS 774 MSGS.

D. NO PERSONNEL RECOGNITION OR SPECIAL ACTION REQUIRED ON THE PART OF GREECE MSG AS IT CARRIED A VALID ROUTING MULTIPLE ADDRESS PROCESSING UNIT (MAPU) AUTOMATICALLY RE-ROUTED MSG BACK TO NAVKLETA ASHARA (AM) SEND POSITIONS. MAPU IS A MESSY CORE DEVICE PROGRAMMED WITH PRE-DETERMINED ROUTING INDICATORS. ALL MSG TRAFFIC, REGARDLESS OF MESSAGE ORIGIN, WILL BE DIRECTED TO THE APPROPRIATE POSITIONS BY THIS DEVICE.

E. DUE TO EXTREMELY HEAVY TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE MESSAGE (NOT MISROUTED) MSG WAS EVER CONSIDERED FOR RE-ROUTE ACTION. GREECE HANDLES MANY MSGS TO NAVCOGUSTA ASHARA WITHOUT REQUIREMENT TO PASS VIA DIRECT CIRCUITRY. DIRECT CIRCUITRY CARRIES A DIFFERENT ROUTING THAN THE COMMON USED CIRCUITRY AND EVERY MSG IS DETERMINED BY THE ORIGINATOR, NOT THE RELAY STATION. MSGS DIRECT TO NAVCOGUSTA ASHARA WOULD HAVE ESTABLISHED A NEW RELAY. BY HAND, THEN PASSING TO A COMEXTRELY RELAY (NAVCOGUSTA ASHARA) FOR DELIVERY VIA DIRECT CIRCUITRY. THIS METHOD OF LOSS TIME BY THIS METHOD.

F. TRAFFIC VOLUMES 29 MAY - 2 JUN WERE APPROX THREE-FOUR TIMES AS HEAVY AS PERIOD 3 - 9 JUN. PRECEDENCES 29 MAY - 2 JUN MUCH LOWER. VERY LITTLE FLARE AND ONLY TRAFFIC PASSED. VOLUMES FEB VERSUS JUNE LESS THAN TWO-THIRDS AS HIGH. NO HIGH PRECEDENCE TRAFFIC OF CONSEQUENCE IN FEB. EXACT COMPARISON FIGURES CAN BE FURNISHED BUT WILL REQUIRE TIME FOR COMPARISON.

6. TOTAL PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE FOR NAVOCSTA GREECE IS 299. ON BOARD COURT IS 292. HQ/CIN COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE IS 175. ON BOARD 139. THESE ALLOWANCE FIGURES ARE FOR BOTH RECEIVER AND TRANSMITTER STYLE. CONTROL/TRAFFIC PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN IN A THREE SECTION WATCH STAFF FOR THE PAST 14 MONTHS.

7. LEADERSHIP AND EXPERIENCE LEVEL CONSIDERED MARITIME BUT NOTHING LACKING IN ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM. EXAMPLE: 24 MEN ALLOWED 27 ON BOARD, 12 MEN ALLOWED, 25 ON BOARD.

2. AT 061234Z JUN NAVOCSTA GREECE RECEIVED INITIAL LIBERTY ATTACK REPORT FROM THE USS SARATOGA ON THE CIRCUMNAVIER 204,04 VOICE KI-COM NET. THIS WAS PUT IN TTY FORMAT AND RELAYED VIA NAVOCSTOFT AND XRA ECST AS A NO DTC MSG, NAVOCSTA GREECE TDC OF FILE 12392/8 JUN. SUBSEQUENT TO THE INITIAL REPORT, SARATOGA AND NAVOCSTA GREECE PASSED ALL ACTIVITY INFO OBTAINED VIA XRA ECST, KI-COM NET, AND DIRECT TTY CIRCUITS. BUT LIBERTY DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO/FROM SHIP WAS LIMITED TO VOICE TRANSMISSIONS. AFTER INITIAL ATTACK REPORT THISTA REPLIED TO REPORT ANTENNAS TUNED/REMOVED TO IMPROVE SIGNAL QUALITY UNDER EXTREMELY NOISY CBT CONDITIONS. WILLIAM CBT WITH SARATOGA AND LIBERTY WAS MAINTAINED BY THEIR ACTION ALTHOUGH CIRCUIT DEGRADATION OCCURRED TO OTHER STATIONS ON THE NET. NAVOCSTA GREECE ASSUMED RELAY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LIBERTY AND COORDINATED SPEED, COURSE, AND ESCORT EDVU INSTRUCTIONS FROM COMNAVFLT. COMNAVFLT 12, ASSIGNED AS ESCORT, TERMINATED FULL PERIOD ORBITES THISTA AT 0030Z/9 JUN AND EDVU APPROVED 0044Z/9 JUN. COMNAVFLT 12 ASSIGNED COMN COAST FOR LIBERTY AND MAJORITY OF TRAFFIC PASSED AFTER EDVU WAS VIA DIRECT SHIP/SHORE TERMINATION.

2. COMNAVFLT 12 REMAINS TERMINATED NAVOCSTA GREECE UNTIL FURTHER

NOTICE. GP-4

FROM: CIRCUMNAVIER TO NAVOCSTA 100000Z COMNAVFLT 12 100000Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COORDINATE (C)

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SERVICE:

A. AT WHAT TIME DID YOU RECEIVE JCS 072230Z, JCS 080110Z, AND COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z ALL JUNE AND FROM WHOM?

B. FOR WHOM WAS NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO ASSIGNED TO PROTECT OR TRANSMIT THESE MESSAGES? HOW AND WHEN DID YOU DELIVER THEM?

C. DID YOU RECEIVE THESE MESSAGES FOR DELIVERY TO USS LIBERTY? IF SO, AT WHAT TIME AND FROM WHOM?

D. WHAT WAS THE GENERAL COMMUNICATION LOAD FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA DURING THE WEEK OF 4 JUNE? HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO AN AVERAGE WEEK OF, SAY, FEB 1967?

E. WHAT IS YOUR MARCH SITUATION? IS AVERAGE LESS THAN 1 IN 4, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN AT THIS LEVEL?

2. SUBMIT REPLIES ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. CP-4  
FROM: NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO TO CTRC HAVRE CONFIDENTIAL 142255Z JUN 67  
SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

A. YOUR 141628Z JUN 67

B. MY 131659Z JUN 67

MT MY 061751Z JUL 67

1. IN REPLY 1, THE FOLLOWING SUBMITTED:

A. JCS 072230Z INITIALLY RECEIVED FROM SAN PABLO AT 080523Z. RECEIVED AGAIN FROM WASHDC 081959Z. JCS 080110Z RECEIVED FROM WASHDC AT 080430Z. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z RECEIVED FROM COMSIXTHFLT AT 17Z.

B. JCS 072230Z: NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMSIXTHFLT ON INITIAL RECEIPT AND SENT TO COMSIXTHFLT VIA DIRECT CIRCUIT AT 080724Z. SECOND RECEIPT, MOROCCO HAD DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBERTY AND CTF 67. SENT TO SAN PABLO FOR FURTHER DELIVERY TO ASMARA AT 082012Z FOR LIBERTY, AND TO NAPLES FOR DELIVERY TO CTF 67 AT 082135Z. JCS 080110 MOROCCO HAD DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMSIXTHFLT. SENT TO COMSIXTHFLT VIA DIRECT CIRCUIT AT 080639Z. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z: MOROCCO HAD DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR USS LIBERTY. SENT TO SAN PABLO FOR FURTHER DELIVERY TO ASMARA 081100Z.

C. JCS 072230Z: AS NOTED ABOVE SECOND RECEIPT WAS FOR LIBERTY AT 081959Z FROM WASHDC. COMSIX 1Z 080917Z RECEIVED 081030Z FROM COMSIXTHFLT.

D. DURING PERIOD 4-10 JUNE HIGH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE TOTALS MOUNTED RAPIDLY WITH PEAK OCCURRING 8 JUNE. DUE TO IMPOSITION OF MOVICLES BY UNSICUTUR ON 5 JUNE THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN ADMINISTRATIVE TRAFFIC WHICH PARTIALLY COMPENSATED. AS NOTED IN REFERENCE 2, FLEET RELAY TRAFFIC WAS ALMOST THREE TIMES THAT OF AN EQUAL PERIOD IN FEBRUARY 67.

E. COMMENCED ONE IN THREE MATCHES ON 5 JUNE IN ANTICIPATION INCREASED COMM LOAD.

F. REF C MEETS ALSO. GP-4

FROM: CIRCUMNAVOUR TO USASTRATCOM PAC ASHMO CONFIDENTIAL 141627Z JUN 67  
SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

1. ON BEHALF OF AND TO ASSIST NAVY COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SESSION PLEASE FURNISH ANSWERS TO FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

A. AT WHAT TIME WAS COMMINTHELT 080917Z JUN RECEIVED AT YOUR STATION FOR RELAY TO NAVCOMSTA ASHMO? AND FROM WHOM?

B. WAS YOUR STATION HANDLING AN ABNORMALLY LARGE AMOUNT OF HIGH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE TRAFFIC ON 8 JUNE 67? IF SO, STATE ROUGHLY THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE OVER A ROUTINE DAY.

C. AT WHAT TIME DID YOUR STATION RELAY COMMINTHELT 080917Z JUN 67 TO NAVCOMSTA GREECE? AT WHAT TIME DID YOU RECEIVE IT BACK FROM NAVCOMSTA GREECE? AT WHAT TIME DID YOU RELAY IT TO NAVCOMSTA ASHMO?

2. REQUEST REPLY ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. COMMENTS IN ADDITION TO ABOVE QUESTIONS INVITED. GP-4

FROM: CO USASTRATCOM PAC ASHMO ETHIOPIA TO CIRCUMNAVOUR CONFIDENTIAL 150520Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

REF: CIRCUMNAVOUR MSG 141627Z JUN 67 (PASEP)

1. COMMINTHELT MSG 080917Z JUN 67 WAS RECEIVED BY THIS STATION FOR RELAY TO NAVCOMSTA ASHMO AT 081200Z JUN 67. IT WAS RECEIVED FROM MAJOR RELAY STATION SEVILLE SPAIN.

2. THIS STATION WAS HANDLING AN ABNORMALLY LARGE AMOUNT OF HIGH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE TRAFFIC ON 8 JUN 67. THE FOLLOWING IS THE MESSAGE TRAFFIC RATE



FOR A ROUTINE DAY AND 8 JUN 67:

	ROUTINE DAY (4 MAY 67)		8 JUNE 67		
	NR OF MSG	PCT OF DISTR	NR OF MSG	PCT OF DISTR	PCT OF INCREASE
FLASH	0	0	198	2.5	INDETERMINATE
IMMEDIATE	649	12.7	2188	30.2	268
PRIORITY	1776	34.8	3560	49.0	117
ROUTINE	2682	52.5	1447	18.3	85
TOTAL	5109		7693		56

3. COMBIXTFLT MSG 080917Z JUN 67 WAS RELAYED TO NAVCONSTA GREECE AT 081215Z JUN 67. IT WAS RECEIVED BACK FROM NAVCONSTA GREECE AT 081501Z JUN 67 AND RELAYED TO NAVCONSTA ASMARA AT 081501Z JUN 67.

FROM: CINCUSMAVEUR TO NAVCONSTA ASMARA CONFIDENTIAL 141626Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SESSION:

A. AT WHAT TIME WERE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES RECEIVED AT YOUR STATION FOR PLACING ON THE NAVCONSTA ASMARA BCST BEING GUARDED BY USS LIBERTY:

- (1) JCS 072230Z JUN 67?
- (2) JCS 080110Z JUN 67?
- (3) COMBIXTFLT 080917Z JUN 67?

B. FROM WHAT RELAY STATION DID YOU RECEIVE THE MESSAGES IN QUESTION AND AT WHAT TIME?

C. WHAT WERE YOUR "IN-HOUSE" HANDLING TIMES FOR THE ABOVE MESSAGES?

D. ACCORDING TO YOUR INFO, AT WHAT TIME DID USS LIBERTY SHIFT TO THE ASMARA FLT BROADCAST (JETT)?

2. SUBMIT REPLIES ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. OP-4

FROM: NAVCONSTA ASMARA TO CINCUSMAVEUR CONFIDENTIAL 141956Z JUN 67

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS

A. YOUR 141626Z JUNE 67

1. LAW REF A FULL DATA IS SUBMITTED

A. JCS 072230Z JUNE 67 WAS RECEIVED BY THISTA AT 082125Z JUN 67

B. JCS 080110Z JUN 67 CANNOT LOCATE ANY RECORD WHICH WOULD TEND TO INDICATE RECEIPT OF THIS MESSAGE TO DATE. HAVE INSPECTED FILED PAGE COPIES AND TAPE REELS OF ALL CIRCUITS TERMINATING THISTA FROM

080000Z TO DATE WITHOUT SUCCESS.

C. COMSIXTHFLT 100917Z JUN 67 WAS RECEIVED BY TELSTA AT 081510Z.

2. JCS 072230Z JUNE 67 AND COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z JUNE 67 WERE RECEIVED FROM THE MAJOR DCS RELAY STATION ASMAR (U.S. ARMY STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, ASMAR) AT THE TIMES LISTED PARAS 1A AND C ABOVE.

3. IN HOUSE HANDLING TIMES WERE:

A. JCS 072230Z JUN 67 - 10 MINUTES

B. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z JUN 67 - 15 MINUTES

4. THE LIBERTY SWITCHED TO JUNE AT 070001Z JUNE 67.

CP-4

BT

Q. Captain, will you now give your conclusions from the answers received from your queries?

A. Yes sir, the queries have confirmed information already available that the LIBERTY did not receive JCS 080110Z; that JCS 072230Z, being a priority message in competition with all the FLASH and OP IMMEDIATE messages, did not get on the Asmara Broadcast until too late; that COMSIXTHFLT's 080917Z also did not get on the Asmara Broadcast until too late. I conclude also that there was a tremendous surge of high precedence traffic injected into the communication system. For example, on 8 June alone NAVCOMSTA Greece handled 250 Flash messages, about 1500 operational immediate messages, and a total of 10,492 of all types of messages. Although the communication system was heavily loaded, it did not breakdown and undoubtedly we had reader saturation rather than communications saturation. My final conclusion is that the queries confirm previous information as regards personnel in that the communication system continues to be short in both manning level and experience level.

CAPT RAY: Gentlemen, in addition to the foregoing, I have here additional information that was assembled at the request of the JCS Fact finding group headed by MEER Rues. This information is in the form of compilations of messages handled by NAVCOMSTA Greece, NAVCOMSTA Morocco, NAVCOMSTA Asmara, NAVCOMSTUNT London. This information was compiled for the first 12 days of June for comparison purposes. We have compiled similar information for a similar period, namely 1-12 Feb. This is to give you an illustration of the burden on the system during this critical time as compared to normal operations, for example for the first 12 days in February NAVCOMSTA Greece handled 69,122 messages, for the first 12 days in June NAVCOMSTA Greece handled 1,190 Flash messages. Gentlemen, the same comparison is made on all the stations and the objective is to demonstrate to you the strain on the system at this time. I shall now read these into the record.

MEMORANDUM FOR RADM KIDD DATED 16 JUNE 1967 FROM CAPT L. R. RAISH, USN,  
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, COMMUNICATIONS.

1. ENCLOSED ARE COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGE HANDLING FIGURES FOR SELECTED  
NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATIONS IN THE EUROPEAN AREA DURING THE PERIOD 1 JUNE-  
12 JUNE 1967. FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES A COMPILATION HAS BEEN MADE FOR A  
SIMILAR PERIOD IN FEBRUARY 1967.
2. THE ATTACHED INFORMATION WAS ASSEMBLED AT THE REQUEST OF THE JCS PLCT  
FIELDING GROUP HEADED BY MGEN RUSS. IT IS FORWARDED TO YOU AS A MATTER  
OF INTEREST.

Very respectfully,

/s/ L. R. RAISH  
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF  
COMMUNICATIONS

NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATION GREECE

I. MESSAGE HANDLED

1 FEB	5,901	1 JUN	10,178
2 FEB	6,775	2 JUN	10,702
3 FEB	6,240	3 JUN	10,119
4 FEB	5,506	4 JUN	8,113
5 FEB	3,892	5 JUN	8,414

6 FEB 5,160  
7 FEB 5,941  
8 FEB 6,521  
9 FEB 6,539  
10 FEB 6,935  
11 FEB 5,271

12 FEB 4,419

TOTAL 69,122

6 JUN 9,906  
7 JUN 9,750  
8 JUN 10,074  
9 JUN 9,359  
10 JUN 10,499  
11 JUN 8,073

12 JUN 7,832

TOTAL 113,633

II. FLASH MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN 96  
6 JUN 206  
7 JUN 114  
8 JUN 251  
9 JUN 182  
10 JUN 341

TOTAL 1,190

III. SERVICE MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN 154  
6 JUN 218  
7 JUN 102  
8 JUN 181  
9 JUN 181  
10 JUN 172

TOTAL 1,055

NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATION MOROCCO

I. MESSAGES HANDLED

1 FEB 7,596  
2 FEB 7,663  
3 FEB 7,083  
4 FEB 7,370  
5 FEB 6,283

1 JUN 11,317  
2 JUN 10,871  
3 JUN 9,991  
4 JUN 8,049  
5 JUN 8,754



6 FEB	6,943	6 JUN	9,636
7 FEB	7,361	7 JUN	9,512
8 FEB	8,153	8 JUN	11,195
9 FEB	8,058	9 JUN	9,878
10 FEB	8,355	10 JUN	9,192
11 FEB	7,393	11 JUN	7,722
12 FEB	<u>5,205</u>	12 JUN	<u>8,771</u>
TOTAL	87,963	TOTAL	114,928

## II. FLASH MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN	23
6 JUN	16
7 JUN	25
8 JUN	124
9 JUN	12
10 JUN	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	203

## III. SERVICE MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN	109
6 JUN	107
7 JUN	133
8 JUN	278
9 JUN	52
10 JUN	<u>90</u>
TOTAL	749

## NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATION SPAIN

## I. MESSAGES HANDLED

1 FEB	6,873	1 JUN	9,023
2 FEB	7,182	2 JUN	9,418
3 FEB	7,639	3 JUN	8,184
4 FEB	6,645	4 JUN	5,990
5 FEB	4,467	5 JUN	7,224
6 FEB	5,906	6 JUN	7,073
7 FEB	6,620	7 JUN	7,191

8 FEB 7,351  
9 FEB 7,796  
10 FEB 7,716  
11 FEB 6,929  
12 FEB 4,992

TOTAL 80,103

8 JUN 8,409  
9 JUN 7,342  
10 JUN 6,768  
11 JUN 5,885  
12 JUN 6,561

TOTAL 59,068

II. FLASH MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN 37  
6 JUN 29  
7 JUN 31  
8 JUN 95  
9 JUN 13  
10 JUN 18

TOTAL 223

III. SERVICE MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN 163  
6 JUN 155  
7 JUN 119  
8 JUN 89  
9 JUN 173  
10 JUN 93

TOTAL 692

NAVAL COMMUNICATION UNIT LONDON

I. MESSAGES HANDLED

1 FEB 968  
2 FEB 927  
3 FEB 969  
4 FEB 872  
5 FEB 846  
6 FEB 842  
7 FEB 695  
8 FEB 704

1 JUN 1,538  
2 JUN 1,705  
3 JUN 1,278  
4 JUN 909  
5 JUN 1,406  
6 JUN 1,717  
7 JUN 1,648  
8 JUN 1,775

9 FEB 818

10 FEB 858

11 FEB 914

12 FEB 974

TOTAL 10,367

9 JUN 1,389

10 JUN 1,382

11 JUN 1,030

12 JUN 1,268

17,249

II. FLASH MESSAGES HANDLED

5 JUN 2

6 JUN 2

7 JUN 20

8 JUN 17

9 JUN 8

10 JUN 28

TOTAL 77

III. SERVICE MESSAGES HANDLED

3 JUN 153

6 JUN 148

7 JUN 176

8 JUN 202

9 JUN 201

10 JUN 244

TOTAL 1,214

NAVAL COMMUNICATION STATION ASHARA

I. MESSAGES HANDLED

1 FEB 1,019

2 FEB 1,233

3 FEB 1,229

4 FEB 1,054

5 FEB 974

6 FEB 828

7 FEB 1,039

8 FEB 1,094

9 FEB 955

1 JUN 1,568

2 JUN 1,891

3 JUN 1,696

4 JUN 1,652

5 JUN 1,570

6 JUN 1,575

7 JUN 1,579

8 JUN 2,228

9 JUN 1,837

10 FEB	880	10 JUN	1,430
11 FEB	772	11 JUN	1,394
12 FEB	925	12 JUN	1,273
TOTAL	12,002	TOTAL	19,695

Captain RAISH was asked the following questions from court members.

Q. What is the significance relative to the Naval communication system's capability of this increased volume of message traffic?

A. This reflects in my opinion the manner in which the Navy personnel rise to the occasion when called upon because this tremendous traffic load was handled by the same personnel without augmentation. The gratifying thing is that under this surge of traffic, I am not prepared to say how much of a surge we could have taken before the system had become saturated; however, considering the circumstances, the communication system was clearly responsible to the operational requirements of the time.

CAPT RAISH: Gentlemen, to assist you in evaluating all these high precedences from MCP 121, an official Defense Department publication, is available.

COUNSEL TO THE BOARD: This will be marked exhibit 46 and received into evidence as exhibit 46. Captain Raish, I will not ask you to read exhibit 46 as it will be appended to the record.

CAPT RAISH: I would like to call your attention to one point to illustrate what I mean by definit flash. Flash is reserved for initial enemy contact messages of extreme urgency, brevity is mandatory.



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If one station handles 231 flash messages in one day it is obvious that the use of precedences is being abused. I call this subject to your attention because it was not unusual for high precedence messages to be of a very lengthy character going back to the queries and answers a conclusion can be drawn that is confirmed that the experience level and the training level is low in the NAVCOMSOPs probably accurate throughout the services and must be taken into account when a crisis develops.

Questions from Capt Lauff:

Q. Of the total traffic load indicated of Radio Asmara during the period 4 to 9 June approximately how many of these messages had to be introduced on to the JMWTF circuit which provided the primary means of communications with the USS LIBERTY?

A. The JMWTF broadcast was relatively light during this time and had no more than 500 messages that is 300 to 500 total first run traffic daily during that period.

Q. Even though the load on the broadcast Asmara was light this does not mean in itself that a priority message would get on that broadcast in a priority fashion. Such a message would first have to compete with all the flash and op immediate traffic and priorities ahead of it in the system before it gets to Asmara.

Captain Raich was asked not to discuss his testimony and excul.

Cdr C.O. JORGENSEN, USN, Staff CINCUSMACV was called as a witness, was sworn in and advised of his rights pursuant to Article 31, UCMJ and testified as follows:

Q. What is your duty on CINCUSMACV Staff?

A. I am a Command Center Duty Officer, sir.

Q. Directing your attention to 8 June 1967 at or about 2330 through 0800, where you at this time?

A. I was the Command Center Duty Officer.

Q. In the capacity of Command Center Duty Officer were you aware of any incident involving the USS LIBERTY?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. I ask you now if you have a chronological incident report of the

watch that you stood on that day?

A. I have a chronological run down of incident to the LIBERTY.

Q. Request the reporter mark this exhibit 47 and I will introduce it into evidence as exhibit 47. CTR will you now read exhibit 47.

A. MEMORANDUM From: Contingency Watch Team, To: CINCUSMAVER, VIA:

Deputy Chief of Staff, dated 12 June 1967/1562 FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Subj: USS LIBERTY Incident

2. The following is a reconstruction of the sequence of events prior to and after receipt of JCS 080110Z by the Contingency Watch Team composed by Captain R.D. STEELE (Duty Captain), Commander G.D. [REDACTED] (Command Center Duty Officer), and Lieutenant E.L. GALAVOTTI (Duty Officer) for the period of 2230Z, 7 June to 0630Z, 8 June.

<u>TIMES</u>	<u>EVENTS</u>
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072330Z	Major REELOVE, JCS WASHDC, called the CINCUSMAVER Command Center on the VCCM and asked to speak to the Operations Duty Officer. LT GALAVOTTI, the US Duty Officer, took the call. Major REELOVE gave him a verbal directive to have the USS LIBERTY comply with the latest COMSIXTHFLT operating area restrictions as delineated in the last sentence, paragraph 2, of COMSIXTHFLT message 071403Z until further notice; that is, not to operate closer than 100 nautical miles to Israel, Syria, UAR, or closer than 25 nautical miles to Cyprus. Major REELOVE, when questioned, did not have a message date/time group, but said a message would follow later.
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LT GALAVOTTI then informed the Duty Captain, CAPT STEELE.

The Command Center Duty Officer was aware of the message, and

that LT GALAVOTTI, under CAPT STEELE's direction, was originating a message to COMSIXTHFLT.

080001Z	LT GALAVOTTI and CAPT STEELE were ready with their message to COMSIXTHFLT.
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TIMEEVENTS

080010Z CDR JORGESEN and CAPT STEELE advised CAPT HAWLEY of the call from Major BREELove, and of the message which had been drafted for release to CJSIXTHFLT.

CAPT HAWLEY directed us to hold up release of the message. He was concerned because JRC came direct to CINCPACFLT with only a verbal directive and without a date/time group of a message and had by-passed USCINCPAC. He wanted something more concrete than just a phone call since we had been burned in the past when a phone call directive was not backed up with a message.

CAPT HAWLEY directed the Command Center Duty Officer to call USCINCPAC, advise them of the phone call from Major BREELove, and that we were ready to comply, and requested that USCINCPAC confirm this directive with JCS and get us a date/time group. CAPT HAWLEY further stated that we were to release our message to CJSIXTHFLT if we received the date/time group from USCINCPAC.

080030Z The Command Center Duty Officer, as directed, called USCINCPAC and advised LCOL WAGNER of the call from Major BREELove. The above information from CAPT HAWLEY was passed. LCOL WAGNER said he would call back.

080325Z The Command Duty Officer called USCINCPAC, LCOL RUSSELL, and asked what action had been taken on the USS LIBERTY. LCOL RUSSELL asked what action CINCPACFLT had taken and was advised that we were still waiting for a call back from LCOL WAGNER. The Command Duty Officer then suggested that LCOL RUSSELL call Major BREELove, get a date/time group, or give us a directive (date/time group) from USCINCPAC.

LCOL RUSSELL called back shortly with JCS date/time group 080110Z. As he was relaying this information the Duty Yeoman handed the JCS 080110Z message, which had just been received, to CDR JORGESEN.

TIMEEVENTS080325Z  
(cont'd)

The Command Center Duty Officer then had communications set up a Telecon to CCRSIXTEFLT so that he could talk to CCRSIXTEFLT's staff duty officer.

080355Z

Considerable delay was caused by atmospheric difficulties. After being unable to establish a Telecon circuit, CDR JORGENSEN had the radio operator attempt CCRSIXTEFLT by SSN and request a Telecon with the Staff Duty Officer as soon as possible.

080410Z

Two way Telecon was established, with CCRSIXTEFLT still having difficulty receiving CINCUSNAVEUR. CDR BLISSER, CCRSIXTEFLT Staff Duty Officer, informed CDR JORGENSEN they did not hold JCS 080110Z. CDR JORGENSEN persisted to him three times before receiving an acknowledgment at 0440Z. He followed this immediately with a voice message FROM CINCUSNAVEUR COMMAND DUTY OFFICER TO CCRSIXTEFLT DUTY OFFICER RE ADVISED TAKE JCS 080110Z FORAC. OFFICIAL MESSAGE FOLLOWS."

CDR BLISSER advised CDR JORGENSEN didn't hold JCS 7357/072230Z (Reference A to JCS 080110Z) and requested a copy. Since CINCUSNAVEUR did not hold JCS 072230Z CDR BLISSER was advised that we would call USCINCPAC for it.

080507Z

CDR BLISSER was advised that CINCUSNAVEUR FORAC message was 080455Z.

080515Z

After talking to LCDR RUSSELL at USCINCPAC, CDR JORGENSEN sent the following message to CDR BLISSER "RECEIVED FROM USCINCPAC FOR YOUR INFO JCS 072230Z WAS GENERAL WIDE AREA CONCERNING "USS LIBERTY" OF AREA WITH DISTANCE RESTRICTIONS FROM MID EAST COUNTRIES. HAS SINCE BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS AND THUS CANCELLED. THE RESTRICTIONS IN JCS 080110Z ARE MORE STRINGENT."

TIMES      EVENTS

060521Z      Received receipt for above.

2. The times and events listed in paragraph 1 indicate every action the watch team took within its authority to insure that the USS LIBERTY received the new operating restrictions as expeditiously as possible.

3. This statement is submitted after a careful review of all logs kept by each individual watch team member and constitutes the events as they took place. Signed: CAPT R.D. STUEBE, USN      CDR G.D. JORGENSEN, USN

LT E.L. GALAVOTSI, USN  
The witness was duly warned and, withdrawn.

Gentlemen: The JAG Manual provides that the responsibility of Counsel for the Court is to exploit all practicable sources of information and to bring out all facts in an impartial manner without regard to the favorable or unfavorable effect on persons concerned.

I believe that the record of proceedings of this Court of Inquiry will reflect that all facts and information which are available concerning the unprovoked attack on USS LIBERTY on 8 June 1967, have been brought to your attention.

The only remaining responsibility which I have, while this Court is in session, is to give summation of the evidence introduced observing the caveat that the summation must be an impartial argument and not amount to partisan advocacy.

Even though I intend to temper my remarks within the peripheral limits of such a guide line, I must confess however, that after living intimately with the facts of this case for the past week, I have become more and more appalled that such a tragedy should have ever occurred. Therefore, I shall attempt to synopsise those salient facts which have influenced my judgement in this summation.

You have heard testimony and viewed incontrovertible documentary evidence which established the following factual setting:

USS LIBERTY, pictured, defined and described in Jones Fighting Ships as an armed U.S. Navy technical research ship, deployed to the Mediterranean pursuant to official orders and, on 8 June 1967, was on station in accordance with such orders. However, the Commanding Officer, USS LIBERTY, had not been appraised that LIBERTY's orders had been modified, apparently because of the Middle East War so, instead of the previously assigned area of operation being international waters contiguous to the coast of the United Arab Republic, the modification provided for removal to an area of operation 100 miles from the coast. The evidence clearly reflects that any dereliction for USS LIBERTY not having knowledge of the modification in orders is not attributable to LIBERTY. Nor is there any evidence of probative value establishing culpability in non-receipt.

Accordingly, no matter what conclusions are reached as to the cause of the incident, the horrendous impact of the effect should disturb even the most impassioned.

I will not depict again the awesome combined firepower of the aircraft and torpedo boats which was brought to bear on this helpless vessel resulting in inordinate injuries and loss of life to her personnel.

In conclusion, I respectfully submit that USS LIBERTY wrote another chapter in the great heritage of Navy gallantry and that her personnel, from Commanding Officer to the most junior seaman, deserve the highest accolades and acknowledgement it is possible to bestow for their valor and acts of courage.



No further witnesses were called and the President closed the Court  
at 1615, 16 June 1967 in order to deliberate and prepare findings  
of fact.

#### PROCEEDINGS

The Court of Inquiry experienced no unusual difficulties incident to conducting the subject proceedings except for the necessity of investigating such a major naval disaster of international significance in an extremely abbreviated time frame. However, because of the high degree of cooperation and assistance rendered by USS LIBERTY personnel in conjunction with the outstanding performance of duty evinced by clerical personnel assigned to the court, it was possible to complete the preparation of the record of proceedings in the allotted period of time. In regard to the aforementioned exemplary performance by clerical personnel, special recognition is given to Jerry SPENCER, YMC, CINCUSNAVEUR Staff and Robert W. JOHNSON, 112, COMPAIRED Staff.

The following FINDINGS are enumerated as a recitation of those facts established by the evidence of record; however, in those areas of interest wherein the Court could not affirmatively establish a fact per se, an ostensible supportable inference was stated.

The Court, after inquiring into all the facts and circumstances connected with the incident which occasioned the inquiry, and having considered the evidence, finds as follows:

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

- ✓ 1. Available evidence combines to indicate the attack on LIBERTY on 8 June was in fact a case of mistaken identity.
- ✓ 2. The calm conditions and slow ship speed may well have made the American Flag difficult to identify.
- ✓ 3. The ship's westerly heading at the time of attack - in the general direction of Egyptian ports may have reinforced elements of doubt in the minds of the several Israeli pilots who looked the ship over in the afternoon.
- ✓ 4. The colors were shot down early in the action and were replaced prior to the PT attack.
- ✓ 5. The immediate confused milling around astern followed by peaceful

overturned by the attacking surface forces after learning only the torpedoes of the air pressure available (two on each KC boat), indicate these craft may well have identified the colors for the first time when they got in close enough to see clearly through the smoke and flames billowing, at times above the mast head.

6. There are no available indications that the attack was intended against a U. S. Ship.

7. LIBERTY's position at the time of the attack has been seriously ordered changed farther to starboard by USS; however, the messages relating to these changes were not known to the ship before the attack took place. The reasons these messages were not known to the ship can be determined in all instances except for one. Since LIBERTY records and knowledgeable personnel were lost in the action, it is impossible to determine the disposition of the message.

8. The communication delays and mis-routing errors which caused these several non-deliveries combined with delays in initiating follow-up actions on operational instructions received, all contributed to the ship itself being unaware of plans and decisions made for her repositioning. A detailed accounting of the five pertinent messages are attached as appendices one through five.

9. The absence of any identifiable threat to the ship apparently caused the foregoing referred to operational actions to be taken and implemented in routine manner, i.e., without reporting to highest precedence (P1) traffic.

10. USS LIBERTY was assigned technical research tasks to be performed in the eastern Mediterranean by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. LIBERTY first became aware of this new tasking when she received sailing orders from Abidjan on the Ivory Coast on the 14th day of May 1967. The precise tasking by which LIBERTY was ordered to depart Abidjan is significant. In this tasking language, LIBERTY was directed to proceed to her operating area in the eastern Mediterranean via Malta for pick-up of supplies at "best speed."

11. LIBERTY received her basic operational and mission guidance from the JCS through her new operational chain in JCS 011505Z. LIBERTY proceeded to comply.

12. The Commanding Officer, USS LIBERTY conducted the operations of his ship in accordance with the intent of directives received by him.

The operating area of LIBERTY on 8 June was in accordance with the announcements of intended movement promulgated by the Commanding Officer USS LIBERTY. Such operating areas were normal to the accomplishment of LIBERTY's mission. These announcements were addressed to and presumably received, by all uniformed in the chain of LIBERTY's operational command. LIBERTY received no directive, prior to the attack, that higher authority desired that the ship operate at least 100 miles from the coastline of the UAR.

13. LIBERTY responded to her newly assigned mission by departing Aden promptly within four hours from the time of receipt of her sailing orders. LIBERTY experienced minor engineering difficulties enroute Rota which caused her arrival there somewhat later than originally planned. On departure Rota, LIBERTY filed her movement report and declared therein her intention to make best speed in compliance with the JCS detailed heading assignments set forth in JCS message 44g 011545Z June 1967. It is significant to note that in this JCS talking, two time frames were identified, one covering the period between 1 June through 8 June, the second covering the period 9 June to 30 June. During the first period (1 through 8 June), LIBERTY's movements were prescribed by the JCS to cover her transit along the north African littoral; and the JCS prescribed minimum closest points of approach allowed to national maritime boundaries. The terminal point in this 1 through 8 June time frame was to be a navigational position at latitude 30 North, longitude 33 East. The second time frame assigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, assigned LIBERTY an operating area bounded on the north by latitude 30 North, the north African/Israeli littoral on the south and between 15 and 33 East and 34 East. It might well occur to some that LIBERTY's attack occurred on 8 June, which would have placed her considerably farther to the north of the African coast, had she conformed explicitly with the aforementioned JCS directive. However, as LIBERTY proceeded eastward through the Mediterranean from Rota, she filed three separate messages



reports of position and intent which misled superiors of her plans to anticipate arrival on station - that is, to arrive somewhat earlier than prescribed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Moreover, LIBERTY advised superiors of her specific intentions to proceed to and operate in the closer of the two areas to the north African coast - that is, south of latitude 32 north. Finally in this regard, LIBERTY reported her arrival at her final destination to appropriate addressees.

14. It is understood from representatives of the JCS Pacific Staffing Group that it was receipt of LIBERTY's 7 June 0100Z report which established her final destination which prompted concern in the JFC as to her proximity to the African coast on the night of June the 7th. This concern by responsible authorities, who initially hesitated LIBERTY, resulted in follow-on actions and directives to the ship which were either never received or were transmitted on the first broadcast from MONROVIA station after the attack has taken place.

✓ 15. Pertinent to the findings of fact is the matter of communication conditions affecting the LIBERTY during the period 1 and 2 June. The ship is known not to have received at least five messages and prior to the attack, each of which was not only important but, in that respect, critical to which transpired in the subsequent attack on this ship on June the 8th.

✓ 16. Higher authority modified LIBERTY's original operational guidance between June first and the attack on the eighth, which, if she had received it, would have resulted in her being further off shore. 17. Combination and compounding of very delayed communication deliveries related to LIBERTY incident denied the ship the benefit of command decisions actually made prior to the attack which, among other things, would have caused the ship, at a minimum, to be heading further off-shore from her 031200Z report position.

18. Pre-attack circumstances of LIBERTY:  
(first air attack occurred at 1100 local)  
Unidentified aircraft circled LIBERTY at:

0950 (3 hours 13 minutes prior to attack) (111402Z refers)

1056 (3 hours 7 minutes prior to attack)

1126 (2 hours 37 minutes prior to attack) 031001Z refers

Hull markings were clean and freshly painted. No sign was flying from  
forward masthead.

19. Aircraft attack on LIBERTY.

Attack initiated by single aircraft, coming a few minutes after previous overflights. First warning that this aircraft was attacking ship was a rocket explosion about the bridge, part of the five of attacks from various angles, two or more jets at a time conducted strafing, rocket and incendiary attacks.

20. Water Torpedo Boat attack on LIBERTY.

Thirty minutes following the attack, LIB's closed ship to a position 2000 yards on starboard quarter and signalled ship by flashing light. At this time ship had been making turns for 51/2 hours speed for 9 minutes (Estimated SCA 15-17 knots). Liberty was flying from the starboard quarter for at least five minutes before torpedo attack was launched. LIBERTY 50 cal. guns opened fire while the WTB was signalling. The torpedo attack was launched shortly after the WTB was fired upon, and WTB sank the ship with machine gun fire as, at least, one WTB passed down the starboard side.

21. Offers of assistance.

Four air attack signalling by WTB (before torpedo attack), may have been an offer of assistance.

Thirty minutes after attacking LIBERTY the WTB signalled in English, "Do you need help?"

Two hours and 10 minutes after torpedo attack (2 hours 40 minutes after air attack) an Israeli ship apparently offered assistance.

Israeli defense forces reported they conducted air and surface searches for survivors at the scene of the attack responding to U.S. request.

22. Groups of up to two and three jets and propeller aircraft began circling

AIR  
STAKE  
MTA  
ADME

out from shore and circling ship at altitudes ranging from 500 up to several thousand feet at about eight hundred local on day of attack. Planes in question were otherwise active over El Arish on Sinai north coast which was plainly visible from the ship some sixteen miles off shore.

Ship's navigation was sound and practical, using bearings on aircraft in El Arish and radar range to track at that point.

23. The ship had exercises at full O. Q. and secured only a short time prior to the unprovoked attack. After securing from O. Q. the Commanding Officer had admonished all hands over the PA system that following clouds of black smoke ashore were evidence of intense military activity, therefore, crew should be "heads up ball players" as long as she was in that close.

✓ 24. From the time of first air attack onward, attackers were well coordinated, accurate and determined. Close-coasting rocket and machine gun runs from both bows, both beams, and quarters effectively choked up entire topside including ship control and tactical communications (sound powered) network. Well directed initial air attacks had wiped out the ability of the four 50 cal machine guns to be effective.

✓ 25. PT attack first developed from starboard side and was identified as a high speed run in. Center and lead PT began flashing signal lights and shortly thereafter the Commanding Officer identified the Star of David flag on this lead boat. LIBERTY's signal light had been shot away rendering dependence upon an Alis lamp to try and penetrate the smoke on the tracking of the PTs.

✓ 26. The Commanding Officer had passed word to stand by for torpedo attack and the forward starboard 50 cal. fired a very short burst in the direction of the boats on the gunner's own initiative. Having seen Israeli flag on the PT, the Commanding Officer waved to the forward gunner to cease firing. The after starboard gun, opened up at this point, with apparently no one pulling the trigger. The bridge could not see this gun for smoke and flame on the starboard side, so the Commanding Officer sent a runner to tell him cease fire. Before this runner could reach the after starboard

gun, effective high volume fire from this gun was peppering the water around the middle PT. It appears as though 50 cal. ammunition was cooking off from intense fire. The gun was seen to be firing with no one manning it.

27. The reaction of all three PTs immediately after launch, when they stopped and killed around close aboard LT 327 and then moved away by signal light, combined to indicate this was the first time the U. S. large colors flying were actually positively identified. Not having signal lights available, the Commanding Officer then used the international flaghoist meaning, "Not Under Command."

28. Flat, calm conditions and the slow five knot patrol speed of LIBERTY in forenoon when she was being looked over initially may well have produced insufficient wind for steering orders enough to be easily piloted.

29. USS LIBERTY had installed communications equipment whose reliability and degree of sophistication produced a feeling of maximum confidence in operators, the Communications Officer, and the Commanding Officer regarding the reliability of reception of their broadcasts which included the number of missed numbers.

30. In confirmation of the preceding statement, the superior communication capability inherent in LIBERTY's embarked element for technical research purposes combined with interests of economy in personnel have dictated that during LIBERTY's operation in her present configuration she used the best embarked equipments and personnel available to serve both her technical research requirements as well as operational and administrative requirements for the ship itself. The resulting consolidation of functions found LIBERTY organized internally in a way such that, in the person of a single officer we find both LIBERTY's Communication Officer and the Assistant Director of Technical Research.

This system had worked well. After the attack, those LIBERTY personnel alive who had been serving in combined capacities of this sort reported their conviction that such practices should continue.



31. The aforementioned facts relative to communication procedural peculiarities unique to ships of LIBERTY's mission resulted in the ship transmitting under the scheduling control of the research department. This practice permitted optimum performance by the research department, reserving outgoing transmissions during lull periods of research activities; furthermore, when available research lull periods were short, the practice had grown up, quite naturally, to combine in single transmission packages all of the outgoing traffic which had accumulated. Such procedures necessitated transmission of each ship communication package under a classification applicable to the highest classification of any single element within the package itself. Such transmission packages would frequently contain research material, ship position reports, and, periodically, requests for messages missed on the regular ship broadcast schedule. A built-in delay factor exists in this procedure however, inasmuch as not all shore-based terminals are equipped to accommodate research material. In the case of LIBERTY during the time period under consideration, the closest available eligible terminal for LIBERTY research material was NAVSTAAGUEZ Morocco, rather than NAVSTAASMA Azores, which happened to be serving LIBERTY as a subscriber at the time of the attack. The above conditions are detailed to point up occurrence of delays which must be anticipated in any such system. In summary, if LIBERTY had a normal outgoing message requesting missing identification numbers, it would first have to wait, under normal circumstances, for transmission during a lull period. It would next, by virtue of leaving the ship as part of a package containing research data, go to NAVSTAAGUEZ Morocco where the combined communication package would be broken down in its component parts; thirdly, the element of the package requesting retransmission of missed identification numbers would then be sent from NAVSTAAGUEZ Morocco back to NAVSTAASMA Azores for action, Azores being the transmitting station serving LIBERTY at the time.

32. Detailed questioning of available surviving communication witnesses disclosed that LIBERTY had never before found missing messages, subsequently requested and received, to have been critical to the ship's operational commitments.

This fact was explained by ship's personnel as being due to the very few messages ever missed. This condition was attributed to superior equipment

on the ship coupled with the fact that the ship operated as a regular practice and had not found herself wanting in this respect previously.

33. It is important to be aware at this point that there are no logs and no records available in LIBERTY. There are no communication officers left alive with first hand knowledge of the missed message backlog on 6 June. It could only be determined from testimony that the ship had been copying transmissions from H 602020Z Asmara with no apparent difficulty from 170031Z and the time of the attack. One witness who was on watch on the Asmara broadcast between the hours of 0645 and 1615 on 7 June stated that he had logged no missed message numbers during the period of his watch and that the reception of the JFRT broadcast was excellent.

34. LIBERTY's technical mission was one that made it necessary, in exercising the aforementioned close cooperation, to use minimum electronic transmissions and reflections on certain frequencies - radio transmissions particularly. LIBERTY was continually subjected to and used to the prejudicial effects such transmissions would have on the degree of efficiency of her primary functions. In summary at this point, ships of LIBERTY's configuration, like submarines, are masters a "silent service" all their own.

35. It is found that it has been, and continues standard practice, in ships of this type to cultivate great patience with regards to desires to get electrical traffic and the ship because of and prejudicial effect on the ship's mission.

36. It is evident that communications procedures for ships of this type would be improved were they to be considered in a communication category analogous to submarines.

37. On the matter of operational control of LIBERTY via a via the precise directives to the ship governing the application of her embarked capabilities, it is important to understand LIBERTY's situation as a mobile platform, under naval command, transporting capabilities belonging to a service or agency other than the Navy. This condition and situation, while not unique to naval platforms, requires a complete awareness and understanding of the very close coordination and cooperation between those responsible for operation of and positioning of the platform itself in relation to those responsible for the embarked capabilities. Detailed testimony discloses that LIBERTY found absolute difficulties accommodating to this condition, unique within the Navy to ships of this particular type.

38. The on-line crypto capability has engendered a dangerous willingness to send more classified traffic than in days of actual decoding without required proportionate increase in experienced supervisory personnel to ride hard on traffic and incidents. Conversely, we find often very inexperienced personnel being the first to give attention to misrouted messages such as those in question.

39. Messages critical to international relations were not in this case, paralleled on other circuits.

40. High precedence of operational messages is too often not enough to overcome circuit choking resulting from large volume of such as 1000 of the same precedence competing for inexperienced operator attention at the same time.

41. LIBERTY's embarked "warning" capabilities apparently gave no indication of impending danger during the period prior to the attack.

42. LIBERTY had experienced periodic reconnaissance on this and other operations which tended to create a feeling of "acceptance without undue concern" conditions as they were on 2 June 1967.

Reconnaissance experiences known to LIBERTY and other ships of LIBERTY's class in other parts of the world minimized concern by LIBERTY personnel

over recent efforts on 8 June.

47. Commanding Officer LIBERTY appropriately reported recent early on AM of 8 June through her "locating two". This report was transmitted promptly by ship despite temporary interruption of her mission, at the direction of the Commanding Officer.

48. Up to the time of the attack, testimony disclosed no reason to

report LIBERTY's mission in accordance with paragraph 1A of Annex B to SN 676-65 of 19 August 1965.

49. The degree of coordination and accuracy of the air and surface attacks first to wipe out defense and shipboard defenses followed by the crippling blow of a torpedo.

50. The Israeli aircraft rockets penetrated topside steel easily, leaving roughly five inch holes, with innumerable shrapnel pock marks on the inside of spaces penetrated.

51. The heroism displayed by the Commanding Officer, officers and men of the LIBERTY was exceptional. The Commanding Officer is being recommended for the Congressional Medal, and the ship for an appropriate unit citation. These planned actions are fully supported by testimony to the Court.

52. LIBERTY apparently experienced a phenomenon identified as electronic jamming of her voice radio just prior to and during air attacks. This jamming was described as a steady carrier without modulation.

53. Disparities in reported times relating to sequence of events can well be attributed to the number of ship's clocks on board hanging askew and often stopped from shock at various times. It was necessary to reconstruct time sequences because GI notebook was incomplete from 1355 to 1446 since the GI was killed during the first attack.

54. Extent of Damage. The major material damage to LIBERTY resulted from the torpedo explosion, as follows:

A. SHELL DAMAGE: Hole centered at FR 60 and extending 24 ft downward from just below second deck and longitudinally from FR 55

177  
TIME  
CLERK



to frame 66 (35 feet). The hole was teardrop in shape, larger at bottom.

B. Interior structural damage: Outboard 15 feet of first platform and associated structure badly damaged. Lesser damage to second platform deck (tank top). Second deck and frames buckled from frame 52 to frame 62 and extending inboard 15 feet.

C. Major damage to all interior joiner bulkheads between second deck frame 52 to 79, entire width of ship.

In summary of above, the two research compartments which extend the entire width of the ship, suffered severe structural damage and were flooded. Installed equipment and fittings were reduced to twisted wreckage.

Topside damage resulting from aircraft strafing and rocket attacks and from HIA strafing (ship was hit by more than 80 shells and rockets, many of them incendiary) summarized as follows:

Pilot house and signal bridge forward deck house, all gun tubes, many antennas including radar antennas, numerous bulkheads and decks holed by explosive rockets. Mainmast destroyed in davits by incendiary rockets and many life rafts holed or burned in their stowages. Flag bags burned and numerous fires resulting from incendiary munitions.


The gyro compass, air conditioning plant and many minor items of equipment, located in superstructure spaces, were damaged or destroyed. Numerous living spaces and personal effects damaged by shelling, strafing and wetting during firefighting.

Cost estimated - Value of destroyed research equipment \$6-8 million, 12 months lead time. Structural repairs to ship and ship's equipment \$2-3 million, 3-4 months.

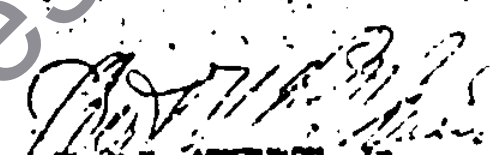
21. The Israeli government has furnished 7 points of rationing as evidence of their position relative to the attack on LIBERTY in USSAO Tel Aviv message LIO 091510Z. Local opinions and other comments on each is appended hereto (Appendix VI).

52. That all killed or wounded personnel attached to the USS LIBERTY during the attack are eligible for the Purple Heart under the provisions of 38 USC 1315 Chapter TWO SECTION THREE ARTICLE 231 Para 12 b. sub-para (4) and (5). The Commanding Officer, USS LIBERTY is preparing a listing of eligible personnel to be recommended.


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Isaac C. KIDD  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President

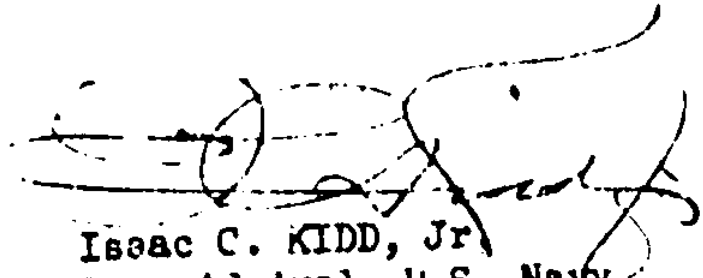
Edward J. LESTY  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Member

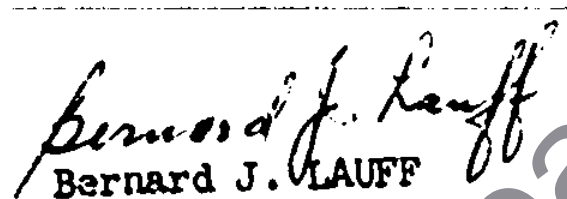
  
Earl H. ATKINSON, Jr.  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Member

  
Isaac C. KIDD  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President

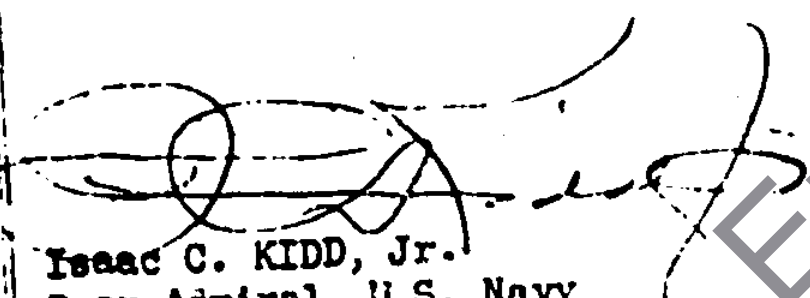
  
Ward KESTON, Jr.  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Counsel for the Court

1 ASKED JAG WHY CAPT LAUFF  
HAD NOT SIGNED THE REPORT.  
JAG SENT THIS COPY.

  
Isaac C. KIDD, Jr.  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President

  
Bernard J. LAUFF  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Member

  
Bernard M. ATKINSON, Jr.  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Member

  
Isaac C. KIDD, Jr.  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
President

  
Ward BOSTON, Jr.  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Counsel for the Court



That at 062349Z June 67 COMSINMFLT in part directed that LIBERTY would:

A. Maintain a high state of vigilance against attack in view of the Arab/Israeli situation.

B. Report by Flash precedence any threatening or suspicious action directed against LIBERTY.

C. Advise if local situation dictates change in area of operations assigned by JCS 011545Z June 67.

D. Report contact with ships, aircraft, and submarines which are unidentified, hostile or engaged in harassment.

E. Copy the JRAAT fleet BCST.

This message was not received until after the attack for reasons as follows:

A. Received at Naval Communications Station Morocco from COMSINMFLT at 070115Z.

B. Naval Communications Morocco entered the msg into the DCS for delivery to DCS Amara at 070131Z.

C. DCS Seville (San Pablo) transmitted to DCS Amara at 070300Z. DCS Amara claimed message was received from DCS Seville (San Pablo) at 070550Z (2 hours and 50 minutes time difference is unexplained).

D. DCS (STRATCOM) Amara relayed to Naval Communications Station Amara at 070525Z.

E. Naval Communications Station Amara transmitted message on JRAAT as JR NR 2077 at 070529Z.

F. COMDEASTFOR reports message was received at approximately 070531Z as JR NR 2077.

G. LIBERTY personnel do not recall receiving message.

APPENDIX I

That at 072230Z JUN 67 JCS directed that LIBERTY CPA to UAR and Israel be changed to 20 and 15 NM respectively and modified his basic directive concerning LIBERTY operations (JCS 011545Z JUN 67), "Ref for guidance only and may be varied as local conditions dictate." This message was not received until after the attack for reasons as follows:

A. Dept of the Army communication center (DACC) erroneously routed message to NAVCOMSTA Philippines. This error resulted in considerable time being expended for identification, recovery and correction.

B. Received at Naval Communications Station Philippines at 081350Z from DCS relay Kenya.

C. Naval Communications Station Philippines relayed to DCS relay DAVIS at 081700Z.

D. Message was received at Naval Communications Station Azores at 082125Z for transmission to LIBERTY

APPENDIX II

That at 080110Z JUL 67 JCS directed that LIBERTY CPA to UAE and Israel be changed to 100 131. This message was not received until after the attack for reasons as follows:

A. Dept of the Army Communication Center (DACC) erroneously routed message to Naval Communications Station Philippines. This error resulted in critical time being expended for identification, recovery and correction.

B. Received at Naval Communications Station Philippines at 084002Z from DCS Relay KUHIA.

C. Naval Communications Station Philippines relayed to U.S. Communications Station Guam at 080449Z.

D. Received at DACC at 080502Z.

E. DACC routed message to NSA.

F. Naval Communications Station America never received message for transmission to LIBERTY.

APPENDIX III

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That at 080625Z JUN 67 USCINCEUR officially confirmed by message a telephone conversation between the USCINCEUR and CINCUSNAVEUR Duty Officers for CINCUSNAVEUR to take JCS 080110Z JUN 67 for action. This message was transmitted on the JFATT ECSP at 081059Z as JR IN 2402. LIBERTY personnel have no knowledge of receipt of this message.

APPENDIX IV



That at 080917Z JUL 67 COMSIXTHFLT directed that LIBERTY CPA to UAR and Israel be changed to 100 NM in response to COMUSNAVELR 080455Z JUL 67 which directed COMSIXTHFLT to take JCS 081110Z for action. This message was not received until after the attack for reasons as follows:

A. Message received at Naval Communications Station Morocco from COMSIXTHFLT at 081050Z.

B. Naval Communications Station Morocco entered the message into the DCS for delivery to DCS Amara at 081100Z.

C. DCS Seville (San Pablo) transmitted to DCS Amara at 081230Z. DCS Amara reports receipt at 081230Z.

D. DCS Amara erroneously relayed message to Naval Communications Station Greece at 081215Z.

E. Naval Communications Station Greece returned message to DCS Amara at 081503Z.

F. DCS Amara relayed message to Naval Communications Station Amara at 081510Z for transmission to LIBERTY.

APPENDIX V

Comments on the seven points provided by LTJ FLO, LCDR MICHAEL BLOCH,  
as "Further Information on Yesterday's Incident with the American Ship".  
Point 1 - Ship was sighted and recognized as a naval ship 13 miles from  
coast.

Comment - From 0849 on 8 June LIBERTY was steaming in international  
waters on a track generally parallel to the coast of the UAR. At one  
point the ship was, in fact, 13.6 miles from the coast.

Point 2 - The presence (of a neutral-nation naval ship) in a belligerent area  
is against international custom.

Comment - The duties of a neutral under international law do not include  
a duty to ensure that its ships or personnel leave or refrain from entering  
an area of hostilities or an area adjacent to an area of hostilities.

Nationals of a neutral country who may happen to be in belligerent  
territory nevertheless retain their right to protection by their neutral  
home state; and a belligerent must grant to neutral diplomatic envoys --  
including those accredited to the enemy -- the right to quit the territory  
unmolested. A neutral nation, in this respect alone, thus has a legitimate  
reason and a legal right to dispatch a ship into international waters  
adjacent to an area of hostilities, in fulfillment of its obligation to  
protect its nationals and to evacuate those who desire evacuation. It was  
in fulfillment of such a mission that USS LIBERTY was engaged. Far from  
being contrary to international custom, the presence of neutral ships on  
just such missions as LIBERTY's is a common, if not a universal, incident  
of situations involving the outbreak of hostilities. So long as such a  
neutral ship maintains the impartial attitude of neutrality, each belligerent  
has a duty to refrain from attacking her. Action by such a neutral ship to  
repulse an unlawful belligerent attack by force, where the neutral has not  
first attacked the belligerent, does not constitute "hostilities" against  
the belligerent and does not constitute an abandonment or a violation of  
neutrality.

APPENDIX VI

Point 3 - The Area (Where LIBERTY was steaming when attacked) is not a common passage for ships.

Comment - Given the conceded proposition that a ship of a neutral is steaming in international waters, the question of whether or not such waters are a "common passage" is totally irrelevant to its right to be there.

Point 4 - Egypt (An opposing Belligerent) had declared the area (where LIBERTY was steaming when attacked) closed to neutrals.

Comment - Closing certain adjacent waters including those otherwise considered to be high seas, has some precedent in history as a belligerent practice, notably in World Wars I and II when most of the belligerents, including the United States, declared "war zones", "Military Areas", and "defensive sea areas" and either attempted to close such areas completely and to severely circumscribe passage through them as a neutral. The consistent position of the United States has been to reserve generally all of its rights in the premises, including the right not only to question the validity of such "war zones" but to present claims and claims in relation to any American interests which may be unlawfully affected, directly or indirectly, by virtue of their enforcement. As a general proposition, closing or attempting to restrict any portion of the high seas has not been recognized in international law as a belligerent right.

Point 5 - LIBERTY resembles the Egyptian supply ship EL QUSEIR.

Comment - While EL QUSEIR bears a highly superficial resemblance to LIBERTY, she more closely resembles the majority of older tramp steamers operating in ocean shipping. EL QUSEIR is less than half the size and lacks the elaborate antenna array and distinctive hull markings of LIBERTY. The location of the superstructure island, a primary recognition feature of merchant type ships, is widely different. By this criteria a justification for attack, any ship resembling EL QUSEIR was in jeopardy.

Point 6 - Ship was not flying flag when sighted. She moved at high speed westward toward enemy coast.

Comment - LIBERTY flew a size 9 (approx 5 feet by 8 feet) U.S. ensign from her foremast throughout the morning of 8 June and until it was shot down by the Israeli air attack. At least 5 minutes prior to the torpedo attack a size 7 ensign (approx 7 feet by 13 feet) was hoisted at the main yardarm. At 0849 LIBERTY changed course from 130°T to 253°T. At 0905 LIBERTY reduced speed to 5 knots and continued to steam at that speed until after the initial air attack. At 1132 LIBERTY altered course to 283°T and continued on this course until after the ship was attacked.

Point 7 - IDF Navy had earlier reports of bombardment of El Arish from sea.

Comment - It is inconceivable that either the IDF Navy or Air Force would associate LIBERTY with her <sup>4-50</sup>~~5-7~~ caliber machine guns, or EL QUSEIR, armed with two 3 pounders, with a shore bombardment.

APPENDIX VI

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EXHIBITS

(LESS 9, 48, 49)

AND THE OFFICIAL  
ENDORSEMENTS

MARK →  
SIGNIFIED MSG  
NOT IN MAIN  
MSG FILE

II

FOLDER 5

EXHIBITS

1. JCS SECRET MESSAGE 011545Z JUN 67 (LIBERTY SKED)
2. JCS CONFIDENTIAL MESSAGE 072230Z JUN 67 (REVISE SKED)
3. JCS TOP SECRET MESSAGE 080110Z JUN 67 (FURTHER REVISE SKED)
4. COMSIXTHFLT SECRET MESSAGE 080917Z JUN 67 (REVISE SKED)
5. COMSIXTHFLT SECRET MESSAGE 101215Z JUN 67 (TRACER ACTION)
6. QUARTERMASTER'S NOTEBOOK
7. PICTURES OF RECOVERED ORDNANCE (color slides)
8. CALLING CARD OF ALUSNA TEL AVIV (very poor copy)
9. PHOTOGRAPHS OF ATTACKING AIRCRAFT AND TORPEDO BOATS
10. MESSAGES (several) FROM USDAO TEL AVIV TO WHITE HOUSE
11. CHART (photo)
12. CHART (photo)
13. RADAR BEARING LOG
14. CIC LOG
15. ENGINEERING LOG
16. BELL BOOK
17. GYRO LOG
18. RADAR BEARING BOOK
19. DRT LOG
20. INITIAL LIST OF DEAD (bodies recovered on 8 June)
21. MISSING PERSONNEL WHO DIED IN FLOODED COMPARTMENT
22. LIST OF WOUNDED
23. ORIGINAL ROUGH RADIO LOG
24. SMOOTH RADIO LOG
25. STATEMENT OF SIXTHFLT MAINTENANCE OFFICER RE: REPAIRS
26. GYRO COMPASS CHECK LOG

27. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF EVENTS (Kidd's message to McCain)
28. McGONAGLE's MEMO REGARDING LIBERTY READINESS CONDITION
29. LIBERTY GUNNERY & OPEN FIRE DOCTRINE
30. CHART OF SHIP'S TRACK & PROHIBITED AREAS (missing)
31. MANEUVERING BOARD
32. MANEUVERING BOARD
33. LIST OF SHELL HITS ON LIBERTY
34. CINCUSNAVEUR MSG 141631Z JUN 67 (tracer)
35. NAVCOMMSTA PHIL MSG 150346Z JUN 67 (tracer)
36. CINCUSNAVEUR MSG 141629Z JUN 67 (tracer)
37. NAVCOMMSTA GREECE MSG 150731Z JUN 67 (tracer)
38. CINCUSNAVEUR MSG 141628Z JUN 67 (tracer)
39. NAVCOMMSTA MOROCCO 142255Z JUN 67 (tracer)
40. CINCUSNAVEUR MSG 141627Z JUN 67 (tracer)
41. USATRACOM ASMARA MSG 150520Z JUN 67 (tracer)
42. CINCUSNAVEUR MSG 141626Z JUN 67 (tracer)
43. NAVCOMMSTA ASMARA MSG 141956Z JUN 67 (tracer)
44. EUROPEAN AREA NAVCOMMSTA TRAFFIC VOLUME FIGURES
45. ARMY COMM FACILITY ASMARA MSG 150520Z JUN 67 (tracer)
46. MESSAGE HANDLING PROCEDURE PER ACP 121
47. STATEMENT OF CINCUSNAVEUR CONTINGENCY WATCH TEAM
- X. STATEMENT OF RADM WYLIE RE: TRAFFIC VOLUME & HIGH PRECEDENCE ABUSE
- Y. STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN M. J. HANLEY, USN, Deputy CoS, CINCUSNAVEUR



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YDR	13.10.1951
SDM	01/01/51
SDN	13

188A

MNNHCZCMB110ZCNGB329  
 PR RUDL  
 EX-15000 ZOV RUPBNA  
 CHAD197  
 ZCZCNA1117CBKA095  
 PP RUPBNA  
 DE RUEPJS 130C 1582241  
 ZNY CCCCC  
 P 072230Z JUN 67

FM JCS  
 TO RUPBNA/USCINCEUR  
 INFO RUEHAA/C EC2DROZFZROTYAUMHCLAN  
 RUEDHKA/CVJTBXPFENHDYNGIFKD/CINCUSNAVEUR  
 RUTPC/COMSIXTHFLT  
 RUMFCR/CTF 67  
 RUMFCR/US LIBERTY  
 RUFHAS/HQASAEUR  
 RUFHAS/HASAEUR OFF GERHANY  
 RUEPJS/DIRNSA  
 RUCINSA/DIRNAVSECGRU  
 RUCINSA/ADIRNAVSECGRU

RUEDHKA/DIRNAVSECGRUANT  
 RUPBNA/DIRNAVSECGRU  
 BT

SUBJECT: USS LIBERTY (U) JCS 7337 J-3 SENDS  
 REF: JCS 67-11945Z JUN 67  
 AREA SPECIFIED PRESENT SITUATION EAST MED. GP-4  
 AS LOCAL CONDITIONS DICTATE.  
 2. CHARGE C/A UA TO 2P NH, ISAZL IS NH, GP-4  
 BT

UNCLASSIFIED  
 BY 8763  
 10/16/76

DOC. 14 EX 48-LIBERTY

ORGANIZATION SECTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
ACTION DEPARTMENT																														

DATE	TIME	INITIALS
072230	1500	1500

072230, Jun 67

555

EXHIBIT 2

FORMER P555

188B





UNHVVV \* KXC122VVV AG8523VVV - PRC065

00 RUEKDD

DE RUTPRC 052 1590917

ZNY 855533

008 080917Z JUN 67

FM COMSIXTHFLT

TO RUTFP/USC LIBERTY

INFO RUEPJS/JCS

RUEPJS/USCENCEUR

RUEHAA/CNO

RUEHKA/CINCLANT

RUEHKA/CINCLANTFLT

RUEHKA/CINCLANTFLT

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DECLASSIFIED

Classification (canceled) (changed to)  
by authority of OPNAV/ARM Sec 309D32/131  
23 Jun 76  
21 Jun 1976  
The Sec (and)  
(Date) (Signature) (Initial)  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

PAGE TWO RUTP C 052 S E C R E T

USS LIBERTY OPERATIONS

JCS 079545Z JUN 67 (NOTAL)

JCS 080118Z JUN 67 (NOTAL)

COMSIXTHFLT 062345Z JUN 67

1. PAR REF C IS MODIFIED BY REF B. PROCEED IMMEDIATE TO OPERATE WITHIN A 25 MILE RADIUS OF POSIT 33-48N/32-30E UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. DO NOT APPROACH COAST OF UAR, ISRAEL, SYRIA OR LEBANON CLOSER THAN ONE HUNDRED MILES, AND CYPRUS CLOSER THAN TWENTY-FIVE MILES.

2. NO TASK ORGANIZATION ASSIGNED TO LIBERTY.

ACKNOWLEDGE

END

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EX 4

080917 JUN 67

SECRET  
(WHEN FILLED IN)

SAME MSG AS  
DOC 18, EX 48, P 433



NOV 1967 CLASSIFIED AG5832

COMM NOTE: UNDERLINED PORTION RECEIVED GAD6 ED  
MESSAGE IS IN SERVICE. CORRECTED COPY WILL BE  
ROUTED WHEN RECEIVED 12/18/12 JUN 67  
CORRECTED COPY  
DESTROY ALL OTHERS

TO: JAGC/CINCPACNAVEUR  
INFO: JAGC/CINCPACNAVEUR  
RUTP/USC LIBERTY  
BT  
A) CINCPACNAVEUR 181036Z JUN 67  
E) JCS 080110Z JUN 67  
G) ZEN FOR ACTION  
ACCORDING TO COUSINERTY, REF (B) AND ALL ASSOCIATED USS  
TO PASS CONTENT OF REF (B) WERE NOT RECEIVED ONBOARD LIBERTY  
PRICE TO ATTACK  
BT

COMM NOTE: UNDERLINED PORTION CORRECTED PER ORIG SVC:TR/W-2/17 JUN 67

DECLASSIFIED

Classification (changed) (Changed to)  
by authority of OPAW/NAAS Sec 004032/131  
on 28 June 76  
JAG Sec Cont  
(Date) (Signature) (Initials)  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
(Page 1 of)

SECTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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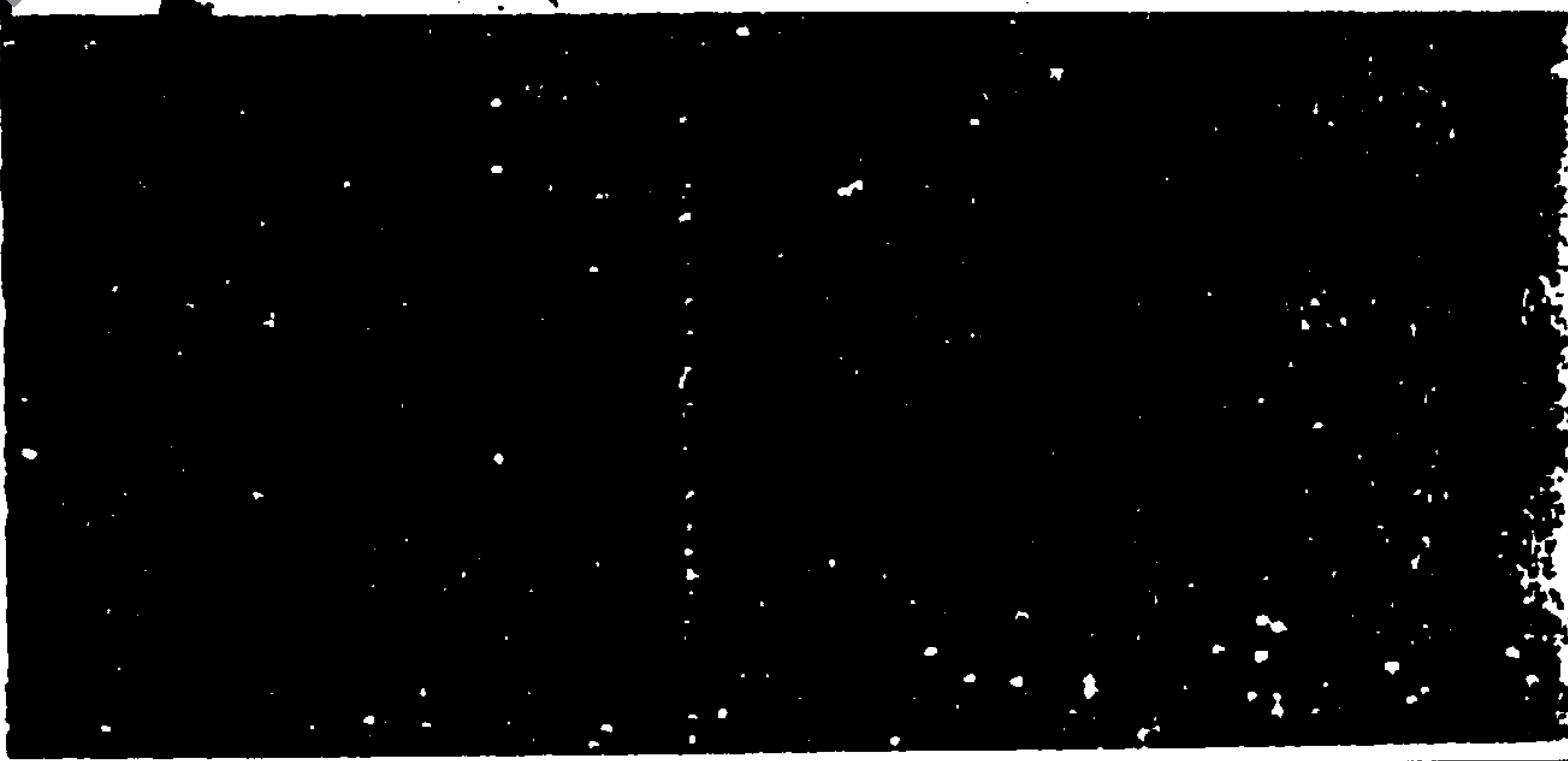
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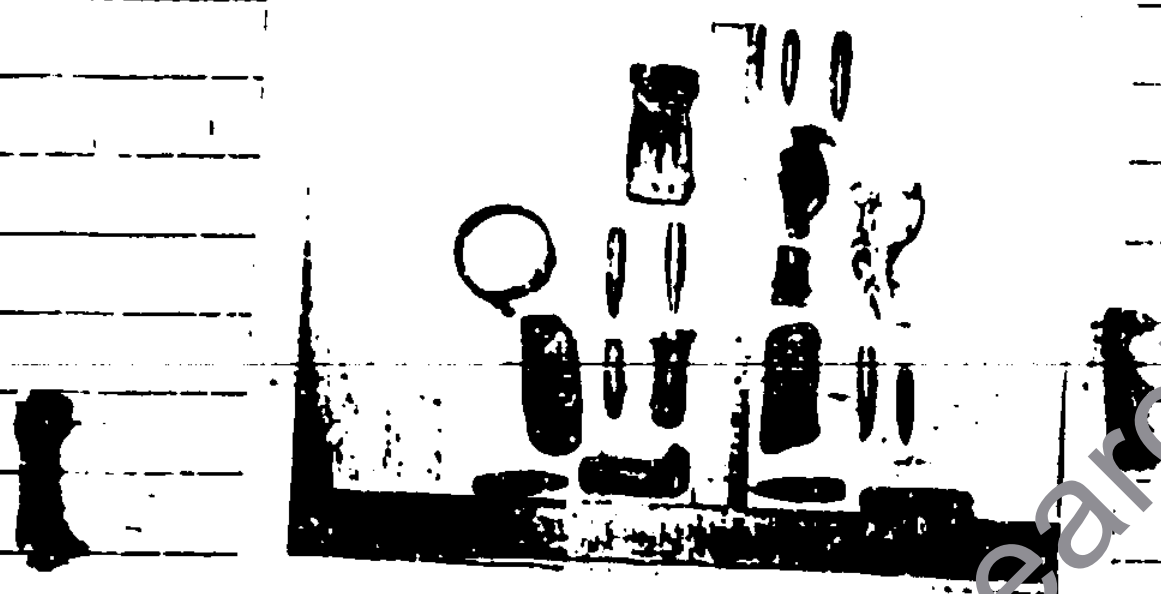
EX. 6 (1)  
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RECORD OF ALL EVENTS OF THE DAY	
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1498	INTERVIEWED A.S. IN A.S. ...
1499	INTERVIEWED A.S. IN A.S. ...
1500	INTERVIEWED A.S. IN A.S. ...

EXHIBIT 6(2) to LIBERTY COURT OF ...

Ex 6(1)  
192





EX. 7 TO LIBERTY  
COURT OF INQUIRY

7300-000-0073 ENVELOPE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_

Mag. Size \_\_\_\_\_ Classification \_\_\_\_\_

Location, Altitude, Orientation, Focal Length of \_\_\_\_\_

Lens, etc., as applicable \_\_\_\_\_

of All Official Prints \_\_\_\_\_

File \_\_\_\_\_

THIS SPACE FOR \_\_\_\_\_

APPROPRIATE FILING \_\_\_\_\_

LETTER (SEE ARTICLE \_\_\_\_\_

5700-2, MANUAL OF \_\_\_\_\_

NAVAL PHOTOGRAPHY \_\_\_\_\_

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PHOTO OF  
SHELL  
FRAGMENTS

OFFICIAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPH  
COMPLETE TITLE AND DESCRIPTION  
OF PICTURE

(Question, action, make, model, type, name, rank,  
rate, initials, address, serial, etc.)

If released for publication, Officer releasing sign  
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P193

EX 7



CALLING CARD  
COR ERNEST CARL CASTLE  
USA

LOOK ON REVERSE SIDE

EX 8

P194

EXHIBIT 8 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

PAGES 195-300  
WERE EXHIBIT 9  
PHOTOS  
MOVED TO A  
SEPARATE SECTION  
—  
ONE PAGE (199?)  
UNACCOUNTED FOR

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DECLASSIFIED  
DATE 07-07-01  
BY 10447

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FORM 25-1952 MAY 67  
25-16 822 MAR 67  
CITE UNCLD

Doc 104 Ex 48 Line

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RUE

Downgraded to  
UNCLASSIFIED  
by 67CS  
16 Nov 76

JCS 7037 J-7 25 AUG  
JCS 67242 1945Z JAN 67  
FOR SALES STAFF FOR GUIDANCE ONLY AND MAY BE VARIOUS  
TO JCS COMB-CONS DICTATED  
PAGE CPA TO 29 NOV ISAL (S) MM. GP-4

2000

CO.	
FOR	
DATE	
BY	

207223551

DISCLOSURE SHEET

080110Z JUN 67

DTG/MONTH/YEAR

308

FROM:

TO/INFO:

CINCUSNAVEUR

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COPY 22 OF 27 COPIES

EX 2



NNNNXNY

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DE RUEPJS 02100 1501545

ZNY 000000Z 1501545

FM JCS 000000Z 1501545

TO RUEPBBK/USCINCEUR

INFO RUEHAA/CNO

RUCDNKA/CINCLANTFLT

RUCDNKA/NCCCCINCLANTFLT

RUCDNKA/CINCSNAVEUR

RUCPBR/COMSINFLT

RUCIUA/CTF 64

RUCIUA/US LIBERTY

RUCPWS/CIR 64

RUCPBR/NSAEUR

RUCINSA/DIRNAVSECORU

RUCPBR/DIRNAVSECORU

RUCDNKA/DIRNAVSECORU

RUCDNKA/DIRNAVSECORU

BT

JCS 000000Z 150500Z

REF DIRNSA 07104/150102 MAY (NOTAL-BOX)

PAGE 2 RUEPJS 02100 1501545

1. (U) WHEN AFS REQUEST 5111 LIBERTY IAW FOLLOWING

SYND:

A. 2 JUN DEPART ROTA.

B. 2-8 JUN, ENROUTE VIA GIBRALTAR STRAIT CPA AS

SAFE

AV PERMITS, THAN VIA NORTHERN AFRICA COASTAL

ROUTE TO POSIT 32-00N 33-30E. CPA MORCCO NATA

3 NM CLAIMED DIST 3 NM. CPA SAHARA TUNISIA SARDINIA

SICILY CRETE 7 NM CLAIMED DIST 12 NM. CPA ALGERIA

LIBYA UAR 13 NM CLAIMED DIST 12 NM.

C. 9-30 JUN, CONDUCT OPS SOUTH OF 32-00N AND

BETWEEN 33-00E AND 34-00E. WHILE CONDUCTING OPS CPA UAR

12.5 NM CPA ISRAEL 6.5 NM

2. (U) REQUEST JCS (JRC) CNO CINLANI (JRC)

CINCLANTFLT 42 INCLUDE AS INXC ADDRES ON ALL MOVREPS,

DAILY SITING AND INCIDENT REPORTS.

3. (U) ENROUTE ENROUTE TASKING IAW REF.

4. (U) PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING JULY AXED FOLLOW.

OP-3

BT

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ACTION										CERAMOUNT										10/15/55										EX																																																																					

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PC RUHLEK  
ZNY-CCCC ZOV RUFBNB  
CHAD197  
ZCZCHAI112CBKA093  
PP RUFBNB  
DE RUEPJS 130C 1582241  
ZNY CCCCC  
P 072230Z JUN 67

FM JCS  
TO RUFBNB/USCINCEUR  
INFO RUEHAAA/C ECZDROZFZROTYAUMHCLAN  
RUECHKA/CVUT9BXPFNNDYNQIFKD/CINCUSNAVEUR  
RUTPRC/COMSIXTHFLT  
RUMFCR/CTF 67  
RUMECR/USC LIBERTY  
RUFHAS/HQASAEUR  
RUFHAS/HASAEUR OFF GERHANY  
RUEPUS/DIRNSA  
RUCINSA/DIRNAVSECGRU  
RUCIRSA/ADIRNAVSECGRU

RUECHKA/DIRNAVSECGRULANT  
RUFBNB/DIRNAVSECGRUTEUR

JCS 7337 J-3 SENDS

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY (U)

REF: JCS 6724/011545Z JUN 67

IN VIEW PRESENT SITUATION EAST. NO OPERATING  
AREA SPECIFIED REF FOR GUIDANCE ONLY. NO DEVIATION  
AS LOCAL CONDITIONS DICTATE.

2. CHAGE CPA UA TO 20 NM, ISRAEL 15 NM, 21-4  
BT

DOC. 14 Ex 48-11.

OPERATION SECTION									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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SON	19		

072230 JUN 67

SECRET

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92

SECRET JUN 67.  
09/1303Z THE 100 ASSISTANT ARMY SPOKESMAN

Classification (canceled) Changed to  
by authority of COMNAVSTA 16 and DIR-15  
on 16 Nov 1976 of pair TAG SC 46. A 203-3A of  
(Date) Signature V 18000 11 NOV 1976  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

COY.			
FOR	2914/9		
SIN	12		
CON	000000		

**SECRET**

EXH. B. 10 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY



PAGE 2 RUCMVL 2845 S E C R E T  
LT COL MICHAEL BLOCH TELEPHONED ALUSNA FOLLOWING  
SEVEN POINTS AS QUOTE: FURTHER INFORMATION ON YESTERDAY'S  
INCIDENT WITH THE AMERICAN SHIP. UNQUOTE.

1. SHIP WAS SIGHTED AND RECOGNIZED AS A NAVAL SHIP  
MILES FROM COAST.

2. PRESENCE IN A FIGHTING AIR  
DEB AGAINST INTERNATIONAL

CUSTOM.

3. THE AREA IS NOT A COMMON PASSAGE FOR SHIPS.

4. EGYPT HAD DECLARED THE AREA CLOSED TO NEUTRALS.

5. LIBERTY RESEMBLES THE EGYPTIAN SUPPLY SHIP EL QUSEIR.

6. SHIP WAS NOT FLYING FLAG WHEN SIGHTED. SHE MOVED AT

QUOTE HIGH SPEED UNQUOTE WESTWARD TOWARD ENEMY COAST.

7. IDF NAVY HAD EARLIER REPORTS OF BOMBARDMENT OF

EL-ARISH FROM SEA.

COMMENT: 1. AT FIRST COL BLOCH MERELY READ OFF SEVEN

POINTS. ALUSNA PRESSED HIM FOR A LABEL FOR THE STATEMENT.

ASKING IF THIS WERE AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF INCIDENT.

COL BLOCH COULD NOT SUPPLY A PREAMBLE ON HIS OWN.

ALUSNA REQUESTED HE CONSULT WITH SOME AUTHORITY WHO

COULD. BLOCH FLOP.

RMACK IN TWO MINUTES WITH THE ABOVE.

PAGE 3 RUCMVL 2845 S E C R E T

QUOTED HEADING. 2. WHILE EL QUSEIR BEARS A HIGHLY

SUPERFICIAL RESEMBLANCE TO LIBERTY, ALUSNA CAN NOT

UNDERSTAND HOW TRAINED PROFESSIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS

COULD BE SO INEPT TO CARRY OUT YESTERDAY'S

ATTACK. CERTAINLY IDF NAVY MUST BE WELL DIRTTLED IN

IDENTIFICATION OF EGYPTIAN SHIPS. EL QUSEIR IS LESS

THAN HALF THE SIZE, IS MANY YEARS OLDER, AND LACKS THE

ELABORATE ANTENNA ARRAY AND HULL MARKINGS OF LIBERTY.

3. ALUSNA EVALUATES YESTERDAY'S ERRONEOUS ATTACK

RESULTED FROM TRIGGER HAPPY EAGERNESS TO GLEAN SOME PORTION OF

THE GREAT VICTORY WHICH WAS SHARED BY IDF ARMY AND AIR

FORCE AND IN WHICH NAVY WAS NOT SHARING. GP-3.

DECLASSIFIED

Classification (cancelled) (Changed to)

by authority of

on

(Date) (Signature) (Title)

OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY



ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 03-01-2001 BY 60322 UCBAW/STP

2. COL. MICHAEL BLOCH, TELEPHONED FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TO NEWS: A. FOLLOWING ATTACK THREE ISRAELI MIB APPROACHED LIBERTY AND AT 1227Z ASKED BY LOOKER QUOTE DO YOU NEED HELP UNQUOTE. LIBERTY REPLIED QUOTE NO THANK YOU, WE DO NOT NEED HELP UNQUOTE. MIBS REMAINED IN AREA UNTIL 1304Z SEEN BY LOOKER WHILE MIBS WERE SEARCHING. WHEN ONE OF MIBS SAW SURVIVOR RECOVERED TWO RUBBER LIFE BOATS, ONE SURVIVAL KIT AND ONE PAMPHLET ON TRANSISTORS. MIB PERSONNEL NOW STATE POSITIVELY THEY SAW NO CREWMEMBERS JUMP INTO SEA AND NONE IN SEA. B. TWO IDF HELICOPTERS WERE OVER LIBERTY 1305Z TO 1312Z AND WERE WAIVED OFF BY SHIP. MIBS TOLD HELICOPTERS SHIP DID NO USEFUL HELP. HELOS CONDUCTED SEARCH OVER 5 KILOMETERS AROUND UNTIL 1304Z. C. LT COL BLOCH WAS INTERVIEWED AND PILOTS OF TWO OF HIS AIRCRAFT EXCEPT ONE WHO IS NOW ON ACH MISSION. ALL STAFF THEY SAW NO CREW. MIBS NEVER SAW AND FLEW IN SEA. D. IDF NAVY TURNED LIGHT BEAMS SEARCH UPON RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS THIS AFTERNOON AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL DARKNESS. STATED THEY WOULD HAVE DONE SO YESTERDAY IF THEY HAD BEEN INFORMED OF MISSING PERSONS. BUT UNDERSTOOD (MIBS NEEDED) NO HELP. E. IDF NAVY STAFF UNDER STANDARD MIB

-PAGE 6 RECEIVED 0049 S E C R E T  
JAN 8 1972

3. IF CERTAIN THAT LINDA STATED SHE NEEDED NO HELP AND WAS

ON POSITIVE STATEMENTS OF IDF FORCES AT SCENE THAT NO PERSONS ENTERED  
WAS IN WATER. CONSIDER SEARCH EFFORT ADEQUATE. HOWEVER, IN  
VIEW UNACCOUNTED CREWMEN IDF BELIEVE NO EFFORT TOO GREAT. IDF  
FORCES CONDUCT SEARCH OFFSHORE AREA AND INTEND TO GAZA COAST LINE  
BEGINNING FIRST LIGHT 10 JUNE AND WILL COMPLY ANY OTHER REQUEST.  
AS ABOVE BEING DRAFTED COLONEL BLOCH REPORTED LAST PILOT INTER-  
VIEWED. PILOT STATES HE THINKS HE SAW SIX TO TEN YELLOW BOATS  
WITH PEOPLE ON BOARD. SHIP. BLOCH DOES NOT CREDIT REPORT IN  
VIEW OTHER WITNESSES. HAS LIBERTY PROVIDED INFO WHICH COULD CON-  
FIRM OR DENY THIS POSSIBILITY.

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1. BY JUDITH M. O'NEAL SSID 12 AND DMS-129  
RDS 54 00 111X 1116

on 16 Nov 16 OK train JAG Sec <sup>RD</sup> <sub>Ag</sub>

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

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Constitution (Cancelled) Memorandum  
16 May 76 by authority of: SECDEF 5510-IE & DIA S-1159/RAS-3A g NAWX  
~~20 June~~ OR 8 June 76 21 June 76  
(1001) JN SACANT  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

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Doc 62-EX-48-ETDENTY

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FP RUDKND

DE RUMVIL 0900/1 1661620

ZNY 55305

P 071002Z JUN 67

FM USDAO TEL AVIV ISRAEL

TO RUDKND/CINCUSNAVEUR

INFO RUEPJSDIA

BT

USDAO TEL AVIV ISRAEL 0900/1 1661620, 67.

SECTION 1 OF 2

SUBJ: (U) USS LIBERTY INCIDENT.

REFERENCES:

A. TOUR 141200Z JUN 67

B. USDAO 0822 JUN 67.

C. USDAO 0827 JUN 67.

D. USDAO 0834 JUN 67.

E. USDAO 0841 JUN 67.

F. USDAO 0849 JUN 67.

G. USDAO 0852 JUN 67.

H. USDAO 0856 JUN 67.

I. USDAO 0859 JUN 67.

J. USDAO 0859 JUN 67.

K. USDAO 0852 JUN 67.

FOR RUMKIDD, PRESIDENT OF COURT OF INQUIRY. FOLLOWING IS

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Doc. 45 Ex 48-LIBERTY

1. By authority of OPNAV SEC 15 AND DIR 5-14.4N/EO 5.1A  
OF 11 NOV 1976

16 Nov 76. All copies of this document

Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy

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15/16/15 JUN 67

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(WHEN FILL IN)

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CHRONOLOG OF EVENTS SURROUNDING USS LIBERTY INCIDENT AS OBSERVED AND RECORDED BY ALUSNA TEL AVIV OUR EMO CASTLE, USNAR:

1. (C) ALUSNA CALLED TO ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCE FOREIGN LIAISON OFFICE (LIFLO) AT APPROX 081400Z. MET THERE BY LT COL MICHAEL BLOCH, ASSISTANT IDF SPOKESMAN WHO SAID ISRAEL AIRCRAFT AND MTB'S HAD ERRONEOUSLY ATTACKED AN UNIDENTIFIED U.S. SHIP AT 081200Z. PUSH 3120N 0035E. SAID MAYBE SHIP WAS U.S. NAVY. SAID HELICOPTERS IN RESCUE OPERATIONS. HAD NO OTHER INFO. MADE APOLOGIES AND REQUESTED INFO OF OTHER U.S. SHIPS NEAR WAR ZON COASTS. USSAO SENT FLASH MESSAGE, REF B.
2. (C) ALUSNA REPORTED INCIDENT TO U.S. AMBASSADOR WHO HAD JUST RECEIVED REPORT FROM ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTRY (FONMIN). AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED ALUSNA COULD BE FLOWN TO SITE OF INCIDENT TO ATTEMPT IDENTIFY SHIP AND REQUESTED HELI FLIGHT FROM DIRECTOR OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ISRAELI FOMIN.
3. (C) AT APPROX 081500Z DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF U.S. DEPT ISRAELI FOMIN CALLED ALUSNA AND SAID IDF HELOS HAD PUT U.S. SURVIVORS ABOARD ISRAELI NAVY SHIP AND THAT ALUSNA COULD BE FLOWN TO MEET THEIR ARRIVAL IN PORT. BEFORE DEPUTY DIRECTOR COMPLETED HIS STATEMENT LT COL BLOCH CAME ON SAME PHONE AND SAID THE REPORT OF

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- PICKING UP SURVIVORS WAS COMPLETELY INACCURATE AND THAT NO SUCH ACTION HAD TAKEN PLACE. BLOCH THEN SAID THE ATTACKED SHIP HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS USS LIBERTY AND THAT FLO WAS ARRANGING HELI FLIGHT FOR ALUSNA TO FLY TO SHIP AND COMMUNICATE WITH ELECTRIC MEGAPHONE WITH C.O. OF LIBERTY. USSAO SENT FLASH MESSAGE, REF C.
4. (C) AT APPROX 081946Z, FLO CALLED ALUSNA AND SAID TO PROCEED TO FLO TO PICK UP ESCORT FOR HELI FLIGHT. ASTALUSNA ACCOMPANIED ALUSNA.

(C) AT 081610Z (TIME RECORDED BY ASTALUSNA), HELI WAS AIRBORNE FROM DOV HUSS AIRFIELD ON NORTHERN EDGE OF TEL AVIV. HELI PROCEEDED ON DIRECT INTERCEPT TO SHIP. AT 081625Z, HELI PASSED OVER THREE OF HIS RUNNING NORTH. AT 081635Z, HELI WAS OVER USS LIBERTY BUT HAD NEITHER ELECTRIC MEGAPHONE OR HAND HELD SIGNAL LIGHT. ALUSNA HAD PLANNED TO BE LOWERED ABOARD LIBERTY FOR BRIEF CONFERENCE WITH C.O. ALUSNA IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND NOT ABLE TO CONVEY HIS IDENTITY TO BRIDGE OF LIBERTY. LIBERTY MADE PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE ALUSNA ABOARD ON FORECASTLE. SPEED OF SHIP (WHICH IT IS ASSUMED COULD NOT BE REDUCED FOR DAMAGE CONTROL REASONS) CAUSED HELI PILOT TO SAY HE COULD NOT MAKE TRANSFER. SHIP THEN WAVED OFF TRANSFER ATTEMPT. ALUSNA WROTE NOTE INQUIRING AS TO CASUALTIES

Classification (continued) ~~TOP SECRET~~ 5510-1E AND DIO 5-18, 99/800-3  
1. BY AUTHORITY OF OPNAV 5510-1E AND DIO 5-18, 99/800-3  
ON 16 NOV 76 OR by JAG Scully  
(S) (U) (C) (F) (N) (P)  
OFFICE OF THE JAG, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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PAGE 4 RUHVE 0500Z S E C R E T NOFORN  
ON CANNING CARD AND DROPPED IT ABOARD LIBERTY IN IMPROPER PACKAGE.  
ALUSNA UNDERSTOOD SHIP TO SIGNAL AFFIRMATIVE CASUALTIES AND THOUGHT  
THE NUMBER SENT WAS FOUR OR FORTY BUT IS UNCERTAIN OF TRANSMISSION  
FROM HAND HELD LIGHT. HELD HAD TO DEPART BECAUSE OF FALL OF  
DARKNESS. OFFICER ON BRIDGE GAVE A THUMB UP SIGN. ENTIRE HELD  
TRIP WAS FRUSTRATION AND ESSENTIALLY NON-PRODUCTIVE EXCEPT ALUSNA  
WAS ABLE TO OBSERVE LIBERTY UNDERWAY ON OWN POWER AND TO NOTE  
LIST AND SOME TOPSIDE DAMAGE. HELD DEPARTED LIBERTY AT 081700Z  
AND TOUCHED DOWN TEL AVIV 081700Z.

6. WHILE ALUSNA ON FLIGHT, DATT RECEIVED TELEPHONE REPORT  
FROM IDF ARMY SPOKESMAN OF

OF PRESS OFFICE ON INCIDENT WHICH  
WAS FOR RELEASE AT 081900Z. INTERIM COL TAYLOR OF DIA HELD PHONE  
CONF WITH DATT. DATT UNDERSTOOD FROM PRONECON THAT LIBERTY NOT  
SEEKING FOR ASSISTANCE AND THAT SHIP HAD SATISFACTORY RADIO COMM  
WITH US NAVY. INFO THIS PART AND OTHER AMPLIFYING REMARKS  
CONTAINED IN USDAO IMMEDIATE MSG REL D.  
7. ON RETURN EMBASSY ALUSNA INFORMED THAT GENL GETTY OF  
MICC REQUESTED PHONE REPORT WHICH WAS MADE AT APPROX 082100Z.  
EVIDENCE OF PHONE CON WAS AS PARA 5 ABOVE.  
8. AT APPROX 082500Z, ARMA RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM

PAGE 5 RUHVE 0500Z S E C R E T NOFORN  
QUOTE, PAGE 5 RUHVE 0500Z S E C R E T NOFORN  
GENL CASSIDY OF MICC ASKING USDAO TEL AVIV TO DETERMIN IF  
THE PLANES ON BRIDGE HAD SIGHTED ANY BODIES OR PICKED UP ANY  
BODIES. GENL CASSIDY ASKED IF BODIES WERE POSSIBLY  
ALL IN HAND OF LIBERTY. GENL REQUESTED PHONE REPLY IF ANSWER  
AFFIRMATIVE. ALUSNA PASSED ENQUIRY TO FLO.  
9. AT 091500Z, FLO COL BLOCH CALLED ALUSNA. ALUSNA WAS  
PAFELING REPLY TO INQUIRY ON MISSING MEN. INSTEAD BLOCH READ OFF  
LIST OF SEVEN POINTS OF FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING LIBERTY INCIDENT  
THESE WERE:

- SHIP WAS SIGHTED AND RECOGNIZED AS A NAVAL SHIP 13 MILES  
FROM COAST.
- PRESENCE IN A FIGHTING AREA IS AGAINST INTERNATIONAL CUSTOM.
- THE AREA IS NOT A COMMON PASSAGE FOR SHIPS.
- EGYPT HAD DECLARED THE AREA CLOSED TO NEUTRALS.
- LIBERTY RESEMBLES THE EGYPTIAN SUPPLY SHIP EL OUSEIR.
- SHIP WAS NOT FLYING FLAG WHEN SIGHTED. SHE MOVED AT QUOTE  
HIGH SPEED UNQUOTE WESTWARD TOWARD ENEMY COAST.
- IDF NAVY HAD EARLIER REPORTS OF BOMBARDMENT OF EL-ARISH FROM  
SEA.

ALUSNA PRESSED BLOCH FOR A LABEL FOR THE STATEMENT ASKING IF  
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 FINAL SECTION OF TWO  
 THIS WERE AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF THE INCIDENT. LCOL BLOCH  
 COULD NOT SUPPLY A PREAMBLE ON HIS OWN AND ALUSNA REQUESTED HE  
 CONSULT WITH SOME AUTHORITY WHO COULD. BLOCH CALLED BACK AND  
 GAVE ABOVE NON-COMMITAL HEADING. USDAO SENT IMMEDIATE MSG REF E  
 DESCRIBING ABOVE EXCHANGE AND COMMENTING ON UNDEVELOPED OF  
 PROFESSIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS CONFUSING LIBERTY AND EL GUSSEIR  
 AND EVALUATING NAVY'S ERRONEOUS ATTACK AS RESULT OF EAGERNESS  
 OF IDF NAVY TO GLEAN SOME PORTION OF GREAT VICTORY BEING WON  
 BY IDF ARMY AND AIR FORCE.  
 13. (C) AT APPROX 09:40Z, ALUSNA RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM  
 RADM MOORE AT NMCC REGARDING TYPE AND EXTENT OF SEARCHES FOR  
 SURVIVORS MADE BY IDF NAVY. RADM MOORE PUT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS  
 BUT PHONE CONNECTION VERY POOR. ALUSNA STATED HE UNDERSTOOD

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PAGE 2 RUOMVL 0908/2 SECRET NTFORM  
 TENDER OF QUESTIONS AND BULK ACT ON THAT BUT REQUESTED MSG  
 BACKUP WITH DETAILED QUESTIONS. ON QUERY ALUSNA TOLD RADM MOORE  
 THAT IN VIEW GENERAL RECENT NON-COOPERATION OF FLO REGARDING USDAO  
 REQUESTS FOR INFO ON HOSTILITIES, SLOWNESS OF REPLY TO QUERY  
 REGARDING POSSIBLE SURVIVORS, AND THE JUST RECEIVED QUOTE SEVEN  
 POINTS UNQUOTE THAT U.S. REQUESTS FOR ISRAELI SEARCH ACTION  
 WOULD PROBABLY GET BETTER RESPONSE AT LEVEL HIGHER THAN USDAO  
 TO FLO. REQUESTS FOR INFO AND RESUMED SEARCH WERE PASSED TO  
 FLO IMMEDIATELY.  
 11. (S) AT 091630Z, LCOL BLOCH TELEPHONE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS  
 TO ALUSNA:  
 FOLLOWING ATTACK, 3 ISRAELI MTB'S OFFERED HELP TO LIBERTY  
 BUT WERE REFUSED.  
 MTB'S CONTINUED SEARCH IN ATTACK AREA UNTIL 081504Z WITH  
 NEGATIVE RESULTS EXCEPT FOR RECOVERY OF RUBBER LIFE BOATS AND  
 OTHER EQUIPMENT.  
 C. MTB PERSONNEL STATE THEY SAW NO ONE JUMP INTO THE SEA OR  
 IN SEA.  
 D. IDF HELICOPTERS WERE OVER LIBERTY 081335Z TO 08131-Z AND  
 WERE WAVED OFF. HELOS CONDUCTED SEARCH UNTIL 081504Z

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E. LTCOL BLOCH HAD INTERVIEWED ALL PILOTS OF ATTACKING AIRCRAFT EXCEPT ONE. ALL STATED THEY HAD SEEN NO ONE IN OR ENTERING WATER.

F. IDF HAD INSTITUTED LIGHT PLANE SEARCH UPON RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS REGARDING SEARCHES AND WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL DARKNESS 9 JUNE.

G. IDF NAVY ESTIMATED STANDARD WIND AND CURRENT CONDITIONS WOULD CARRY SURVIVORS OR DEBRIS TO POINT ON GAZA STRIP COAST OPPOSITE CITY OF RAFAH.

H. IDF AGREED TO CONDUCT SEARCH ATTACK AREA AND WATERS TO GAZA COAST LINE BEGINNING FIRST LIGHT 9 JUNE.

I. AS ABOVE BEING DRAFTED AS USDAO FLASH MSG, REF F, LTCOL BLOCH TELEPHONED INFO THAT LAST PILOT HAD BEEN INTERVIEWED.

THAT PILOT THOUGHT HE SAW SIX TO TEN YELLOW BOATS WITH PEOPLE IN WAKE OF LIBERTY. BLOCH DISCREDITED THIS REPORT.

J. (S) AT 100730Z, LTCOL BLOCH REPORTED AIR SEARCH WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS BEGAN AT 100730Z AND THAT SURFACE SEARCH WOULD BEGIN IN AFTERNOON. ALUSNA RECOMMENDED TO US AUTHORITIES THAT IF NO RESULTS DEVELOPED BY NIGHTFALL, TERMINATION OF SEARCH BE AUTHORIZED. INFO THIS PARA SENT AS USDAO FLASH MSG, REF G.

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13. (S/NFO) AT APPROX 120930Z, USDAO SOURCE REPORTED SECONDARY SOURCE GAVE INFO GATHERED BY OVERHEARING IDF AF AIR-TO-GROUND CONTROL FREQUENCIES. INFO SUGGESTED THAT IDF AIRCRAFT MADE TWO OR THREE IDENTIFICATION PASSES OVER A SHIP SOMETIME PRIOR TO ATTACK ON LIBERTY. AIRCRAFT REPORTED SHIP HAD U.S. FLAG BUT NO PERSONNEL ON DECK. INFO THIS PARA FORWARDED TO

UNITED-ADDRESSEES INCLUDING CNO AND DIA IN USDAO 0854 JUN 67.

14. (S/NFO) AT APPROX 181915Z, IDF SPOKESMAN REPORTED NEGATIVE RESULTS FROM DAY LONG AIR AND SURFACE SEARCH BUT SAID IDF HAD STILL OPERATING IN AREA AND WOULD CONTINUE ALERT WATCH FOR SURVIVORS. THIS INFO SENT IN USDAO IMMEDIATE MSG, REF H.

15. (S/NFO) ON QUERY FROM DIA, USDAO TEL VIV IMMED MSG, REF I, REPORTED INABILITY TO RECHECK STORY OF SECONDARY SOURCE CITED PARA 13 ABOVE. HOWEVER USDAO WAS ABLE PROVIDE IN REF I INFO ON MTB ATTACK RECEIVED BY EMBASSY OFFICER FROM IDF NAVAL OFFICER WHO SAID HE WAS ABOARD MTB. SAID MTB'S LAUNCHED TORPEDOS AT LIBERTY WHEN THEY SAW HER UNDER ATTACK BY AIRCRAFT. MTB CREW SAW U.S. FLAG AFTER TORPEDO LAUNCH. SAID FLAG HAD BEEN OBSCURED BY SMOKE. IN SAME REF ALUSNA OFFERED PROBABLY BUT NOT CERTAIN SERIES OF EVENTS AS FOLLOWS:

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PAGE 5 RUHQVL 0903/2 S E C R E T NOFORN

A. IDF AIRCRAFT REPORTED AND IDENTIFIED LIBERTY AS U.S.

B. IDF AF HQ MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BROADCAST INFO TO ALL UNITS BUT PROBABLY UNINFORMED AIRCRAFT RETURNING FROM STRIKE IN EGYPT HAD ATTACKED LIBERTY.

C. IDIA'S SAW AIRCRAFT ATTACKING LIBERTY AND PRESUMED HER TO BE EGYPTIAN SHIP. THEY EAGERLY RACED INTO ACTION WITHOUT WAITING TO IDENTIFY OUR SHIP.

15. (S) AT APPROX 131200Z WHEN ALUSHA VISITED FLO ON OTHER BUSINESS. LTCOL BLOCH OPENED CONVERSATION BY SAYING HE WAS HEARING FALICIOUS UNTRUE STORIES ABOUT INCIDENT FROM U.S. (PRESUMABLY NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE ITEM). ALUSHA SAID QUOTE NALIC QUOTE THROUGHOUT STORIES AND

REMINDED BLOCH THAT SOME MONTHS EARLIER WHEN USN AIRCRAFT HAD ACCIDENTALLY PENETRATED THE ISRAELI AIR CONTROL ZONES, THE IDF AF CHIEF OF INTELLIGENCE HAD ARR GASTLY ALTHOUGH FACETIOUSLY SUGGESTED THAT NEXT TIME HE MIGHT HAVE TO ATTACK THE PLACES ON SHIP. BLOCH SAID THAT THAT OFFICER TALKS QUOTE A LOT OF NONSENSE UNQUOTE AND THAT HE HOPED ALUSHA DIDN'T THINK OTHER IDF OFFICERS WERE LIKE THAT. ALUSHA REPLIED HE JUST WANTED IT TO BE CLEAR THAT HE WANTED TO HEAR NOTHING BUT

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PAGE 6 RUHQVL 2903/2 S E C R E T NOFORN

OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE LIBERTY INCIDENT.

17. (S) AT 131255Z, LTCOL BLOCH CALLED ALUSHA TO REPORT IDF COFS GENL RABIN HAD APPOINTED AN OFFICIAL COURT OF INQUIRY IN THE INCIDENT INVOLVING USS LIBERTY. THIS INFO SENT AS USDAO IMMEDIATE MSG, REF J.

18. (C) ON 14 JUNE, ALUSHA WAS ASKED TO MEET IDF NAVY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, COMMODORE ERELL, AT FLO IN EARLY EVENING. COMMODORE ERELL PRESENTED APOLOGIES TO U.S. NAVY ON BEHALF OF IDF NAVY. ERELL STATED HE DID NOT WANT TO COMMENT ON ELEMENTS OF THE MISTAKE UNTIL AFTER COURT OF INQUIRY REACHED ITS FINDINGS. ON 15 JUNE ERELL SAID HE PRESUMED FINDINGS WOULD BE TRANSMITTED TO USDAO THIS INFO AND AMPLIFYING DETAILS SENT IN USDAO PRIORITY MSG, REF K.

19. COMMENT: A. ABOVE DOES NOT INCLUDE EXCHANGES BETWEEN U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT AND GOI OF WHICH U.S. MILITARY ATTACHES WERE AWARE BUT IN WHICH THEY TOOK NO PART.

B. DESPITE THE LENGTH AND DETAIL OF ABOVE IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT IT DOES NOT ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO REFERENCED MESSAGE REPORTS FROM INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO USDAO TEL AVIV IT CAN BE PRESUMED THAT ONLY THE IDF KNOWS WITH CERTAINTY THE EXACT SEQUENCE OF EVENTS THAT LED TO THE TRAGIC INCIDENT.

C. COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY. GF-3.

BT

Classification (continued) (continued)  
1. U.S. Authority of ONA 5510.1E AND DIA 5-18,  
on 16 Nov 76. OR 6/11/76 3A 6 of 11 Nov 1976  
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ACTION TAKEN

DE RUEKX 0927 1682302  
ZNY 55555  
P R 173300Z JUN 67  
FM USDAO TEL AVIV ISRAEL  
TO RUEKXO CINCUSNAVEUR  
INFO RUEPJS/DIA

JUN 10 4 25 AM '67

SECRET 0927 JUN 67  
YOUR 171947Z JUN NOTAL  
1. IDF FLO UNDERSTANDS REQUEST URGENT. COL BLOCH WILL TRY TO  
PROVIDE SOURCE OF POINT OF ENTRY. TIAN DECLARATION OF CLOSED AREA  
BY SUNDAY BUT SAYS IT MIGHT REQUIRE UNTIL MONDAY TO COMPLY.  
2. THERE HAS BEEN NO COMMENT ON ALLUSION BY ANY ISRAELI OFFICER  
TO ALLEGED QUERY ON LOCATION U.S. SHIPS. STATE DEPT MSG C TED  
BY MSG 0920 JUNE 15 ONLY MENTION RECEIVED THIS OFFICE SO FAR.  
GP-3.  
BT

RADM  
KIDD

16 NOV 76 (R) JAG Sec 17g1  
OPNAV SEC 12 AND OIA 5-18. 999!  
R03-38 OF 11 NOV 1976

SECRET

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DATE	172300Z
TIME	172300Z
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TO RUEPJS/DIA  
RUEHC/DEPT STATE  
RUEPJS/OSD

RUCNKG/USDAO AMMAN  
RUCNKT/USON  
INFO RUEPDSA/CINCPAC  
RUCNJR/AMCONGEN JERUSALEM  
RUEPJK/USCINCEUR-USEUCOM  
RUEPJS/CINCSNAVFOR  
RUTPRN/CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
RUEPFW/CINCSAFE  
RUEPAG/CINCUSAREUR  
RUEKCF/COMSIXTHFLT  
RUEKDA/JCS  
RUEPJS/USDAO LONDON  
RUTKRE/CTG SIX ZERO  
RUEVRA/EMBASSY JIDDA  
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16 NW 76 OR Spain  
OF NAVY 1510 1E AND DIA  
5-18, 1991/1005-3A OF  
JCS  
1976  
OFFICE OF THE NAVY

ORIGINATOR	SECTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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NAVEUR NCU LON 2100/2 (REV 10-65)

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Doc 64-EX-48-LINERTY





JOC.1 - EX 48 - LIBERTY

MMNDCZCKDB 613ZCNGT 56  
PP 100000  
DE RUONVL 0928/1 691050  
ZNY CCCCC  
P 161333Z JUN 67  
FM USDAO TEL AVIV ISRAEL  
TO RUEPWW/WHITE HOUSE  
RUEPJS/OSD  
RUEPNA/CNO  
RUEHC/DEPT STATE  
RUEKCF/COMSIXTHFLT  
RUEPDA/CINCSRIKE  
RUEKND/CINCNAVEUR  
RUEKDA/JCS  
INFO RUEPJS/DIA  
RUEHDT/USUN  
RUEPBA/CINCEUR-USEUCOM  
RUTPRN/CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
RUEPBU/USAFE  
RUEPAG/CINCUSAREUR  
RUTKRE/CTG SIX ZERO  
RUEKND/USDAO LONDON  
RUEJJC/USDAO PARIS  
RUEHCR/USDAO MOSCOW

16 JUN 76 ORS  
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INDICATOR SECTION		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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181030 JUN 67

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NAVEUR NCU LON 2100/2 (REV 13-65)

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C O N F I D E N T I A L 0926/1 JUN 67

SECTION I OF II.

SUBJECT: ISRAELI COURT OF INQUIRY IN USS LIBERTY INCIDENT.

ALUSNA CALLED TO FLO EVENING 17 JUNE. LTC EFRAT, AIDE TO GENERAL RABIN, IDF COS STATED FOLLOWING:

A. GENL RABIN EXTENDS HIS PERSONAL REGRETS TO THE CNO USN FOR THE SAD MISTAKE OF THE USS LIBERTY INCIDENT.

B. GEN RABIN DECIDED TO PROVIDE VIA ALUSNA A SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS OF IDF COURT OF INQUIRY ALTHOUGH THOSE FINDINGS HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED FINAL REVIEW FROM COL SHINGAR, THE IDF JAG.

C. AFTER REVIEW AND TRANSLATION TO ENGLISH, A FULL TRANSCRIPT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE IDF COURT OF INQUIRY WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE USG EITHER THROUGH AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV OR ISRAELI EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

(2) THE SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS OF THE IDF COURT OF INQUIRY AS TAKEN DOWN VERBATIM BY ALUSNA FROM COL EFRAT'S ORAL PRESENTATION IS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE

"A. IT IS CONCLUDED CLEARLY AND UNIMPEACHABLY FROM THE EVIDENCE AND FROM COMPARISON OF WAR DIARIES THAT THE ATTACK ON USS LIBERTY WAS NOT IN MALICE; THERE WAS NO CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE AND THE ATTACK WAS MADE BY INNOCENT MISTAKE.

Page 2/5 18 1030Z J41167

PAGE 3 RUMVL 0928/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L

B. ATTACK ROSE OUT OF A CHAIN OF THREE MISTAKES, EACH OF WHICH BY ITSELF IS UNDERSTANDABLE: FIRST MISTAKE WAS DECISIVE. NAVY AND AF HQ HAD RECEIVED A NUMBER OF WRONG REPORTS STATING EL-ARISH WAS BEING SHELLLED FROM THE SEA. THIS WRONG INFORMATION FORMED THE BACKGROUND AND MAIN FACTOR LEADING TO ATTACK ON LIBERTY. IDF CNO AND ASSISTANTS WERE CONVINCED THAT SHELLING WAS BEING DONE BY UNIDENTIFIED SHIP OR SHIPS WHICH WERE DISCOVERED AT THE TIME NEAR THE SHORE OF EL-ARISH. EVEN THE OFFICERS WHO KNEW OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF LIBERTY EARLY THE SAME MORNING DID NOT CONNECT LIBERTY WITH THE UNIDENTIFIED SHIPS SAID TO BE SHELLING EL-ARISH. THE IDF NAVY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MISTAKEN REPORT OF SHELLING AND THE REASONS FOR THE MISTAKEN REPORT ARE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE INQUIRY AT HAND. THE NAVY AND AF HQS TOOK THE REPORTS AT FACE VALUE.

SECOND MISTAKE, WHICH WHEN ADDED TO FIRST RESULTED IN AIRCRAFT ATTACK ON LIBERTY, WAS A MISTAKEN REPORT THAT LIBERTY WAS STEAMING AT 30 KNOTS. THIS MISTAKE HAS TWO SIGNIFICANCES. "A. WHEN LIBERTY WAS IDENTIFIED IN MORNING, HER MAX SPEED WAS DETERMINED FROM JAMES LIGHTING SHIPS TO BE 18 KNOTS. THEREFORE, EVEN IF THE UNIDENTIFIED SHIP WERE THOUGHT TO BE LIBERTY, THE FACT THAT SHE WAS REPORTED TO BE MAKING 30 KNOTS WOULD HAVE DENIED THE IDENTIFICATION.

CONFIDENTIAL (UNCLASSIFIED) 6 DKS-18, 7/7/ROS-3A 41110076

PAGE 4 RUQMVL 0928/1 C.O. CONFIDENTIAL

B. IN ACCORDANCE WITH IDF NAVY STANDING ORDERS, AN ENEMY SHIP IN ANY WATERS WHICH IS ATTACKING ISRAELI SHIPS OR SHELLING THE ISRAELI SHORE MAY BE ATTACKED. IF THERE IS INFO OF ENEMY SHIPS IN THE AREA, ANY SHIP OR SHIPS DISCOVERED BY RADAR WHICH ARE DETERMINED TO BE CRUISING AT A SPEED ABOVE 20 KNOTS MAY BE CONSIDERED AN ENEMY. SINCE THE SPEED OF THE UNIDENTIFIED SHIP WAS FIXED AT 28 TO 30 KNOTS, THE IDF NAVY WAS ENTITLED TO ATTACK WITHOUT FURTHER IDENTIFICATION IN VIEW OF THE BACK-GROUND OF INFO ON THE SHELLING OF EL ARISH. IDF NAVAL OPS SECTION HAD ORDERED THE MTB'S WHO REPORTED LIBERTY'S SPEED AS 30 KNOTS TO RECHECK AND ONLY AFTER CONFIRMATION OF THAT SPEED WAS THE INFO CONSIDERED RELIABLE AND AIRCRAFT WERE SENT TO ATTACK. THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE NEGLIGENCE IN ESTABLISHING THE SPEED AT 28-30 KNOTS WHEN IN FACT LIBERTY'S MAX SPEED IS 18 KNOTS IS DISCOUNTED BY THE D.CNO WHO TESTIFIED QUOTE THAT SUCH ESTIMATIONS REQUIRE EXPERIENCE. IN AN MTB THERE MAY BE GREAT DISCREPANCIES IN FIXING THE SPEED OF A VESSEL MOVING IN FRONT OF IT, ESPECIALLY IF THE ESTIMATE WAS MADE ONLY OVER A SHORT INTERVAL OF TIME. IT IS QUOTE EASIBLE THAT THERE MAY BE SUCH A MISTAKE EVEN IF YOU MEASURE IT TWICE OR MORE UNQUOTE. AS A RESULT OF THE INCIDENT MAYBE THE STANDING ORDER

PG 3 OF 5 14/03/67 Jun 67

PAGE 5 RUQMVL 0928/1 C.O. CONFIDENTIAL

SHOULD BE RECONSIDERED BUT NO CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE IS FOUND IN THE MTB'S FIXING OF LIBERTY'S SPEED.

THIRD MISTAKE CAUSED EXECUTION OF THE SECOND STAGE OF ATTACK ON LIBERTY, THIS TIME WITH TORPEDOS FROM MTB'S. THIS WAS THE MISTAKEN IDENTIFICATION OF LIBERTY AS THE EGYPTIAN SUPPLY SHIP EL GUSEIR. HERE I (THAT IS, THE OFFICER CONDUCTING THE INQUIRY WHO LTC EFRAT IDENTIFIED PARANTHETICALLY AS COL RAM RON, FORMER ISRAELI MILITARY ATTACHE TO WASHINGTON, D.C.) MUST STATE MY DOUBTS WHETHER THE IDENTIFICATION WAS NOT DONE WITH A CERTAIN OVEREAGERNESS AS THIS HAPPENED WHEN SERIOUS DOUBTS WERE ALREADY BEGINNING TO ARISE AS TO THE IDENTIFICATION AS AN EGYPTIAN SHIP. IT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BY THE EVIDENCE OF THE C.O. OF MTB DIV THAT THE DOUBTS WHICH HAD BEGUN TO ARISE IN THE PILOTS AS TO THEIR ACCURACY OF IDENTIFICATION DID NOT GET TO THE C.O. OF THE MTB DIV AT THAT TIME BUT WE ALREADY KNEW THAT THE SHIP WAS NOT A DESTROYER BUT A SUPPLY OR MERCHANT SHIP AND THIS SHOULD HAVE CAUSED EXTRA CAREFULNESS IN IDENTIFICATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, I (AGAIN COL RON) MUST STATE THE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND DIFFICULTIES OF IDENTIFICATION UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFICATION (Cancelled) Pursuant to  
 1. by authority of COMNAV 6510.12 RUQ DIA 5-18  
 on 16 Nov 76 DRG/pan JPS 501/11 NOV 1976  
 (Date) (Signature) (Name)  
 OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

702

FINAL SECTION OF II.

(1) SHIP WAS COVERED WITH THICK SMOKE. (2) WHEN ASKED TO IDENTIFY ITSELF, THE SHIP DID NOT DO SO AND BEHAVED SUSPICIOUSLY. (3) IT APPEARED TO THE DIVCOM THAT THERE WAS A GUN ON THE FORECASTLE OF THE SHIP AND THAT THE SHIP WAS FIRING TOWARD THE MTB'S. THESE OBSERVATIONS WERE RECORDED IN THE WAR DIARY AT THE TIME OF ACTION.

IF WE ADD TO THESE FACTORS THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN THE SHIP WAS COMPLETELY COVERED WITH SMOKE THERE WAS, IN FACT, APPARENTLY A GREAT SIMILARITY BETWEEN IT AND EL QUSEIR. TWO OFFICERS, A CDR AND A LT ON TWO DIFFERENT MTB'S WHO HAD NO COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THEM BOTH IDENTIFIED THE SHIP AT THE SAME TIME AS EL QUSEIR. ONE IDF CNO DECIDED THAT ON THE BASIS OF REPORTS ON HAND THAT THIS IDENTIFICATION WAS FEASIBLE. THEREFORE I (COL RON) HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO CRIMINAL OR SERIOUS NEGLIGENCE IN THIS CASE. FINALLY I (COL RON) HAVE TO ADD THAT A GRAVE ADDITIONAL MISTAKE NOT LESS DECISIVE THAN THE THREE ABOVE MISTAKES MADE BY IDF WAS MADE BY THE LIBEROY ITSELF. ON THIS QUESTION, I (COL RON) HAVE THE EVIDENCE OF THE IDF CNO AND JAG

Page 4/5 1310303 JUN 67

PAGE 3 RUOMVL 0928/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L  
WHICH COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER AND FROM WHICH IT IS CLEAR THAT THE AMERICAN SHIP ACTED WITH A LACK OF CARE BY ENDANGERING ITSELF TO A GRAVE EXTENT BY APPROACHING EXCESSIVELY CLOSE TO THE SHORE IN AN AREA WHICH WAS A SCENE OF WAR AND THIS AT A TIME WHEN IT WAS WELL KNOWN THAT THIS AREA IS NOT ONE WHERE SHIPS GENERALLY PASS, THIS WITHOUT ADVISING THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES OF ITS PRESENCE AND WITHOUT IDENTIFYING ITSELF ELABORATELY. FURTHERMORE, IT APPEARS THAT THE SHIP MADE AN EFFORT TO HIDE ITS IDENTITY FIRST BY FLYING A SMALL FLAG WHICH WAS DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY FROM A DISTANCE; SECONDLY BY BEGINNING TO ESCAPE WHEN DISCOVERED BY OUR FORCES AND WHEN IT WAS AWARE OF THE FACT THAT IT HAD BEEN DISCOVERED, THIRDLY BY FAILING TO IDENTIFY ITSELF IMMEDIATELY BY ITS OWN INITIATIVE BY FLASHING LIGHT AND BY REFUSING TO DO SO EVEN WHEN ASKED BY THE MTB'S FROM ALL THIS I (COL RON) CONCLUDE THAT THE SHIP LIBERTY TRIED TO HIDE ITS PRESENCE IN THE AREA AND ITS IDENTITY BOTH BEFORE IT WAS DISCOVERED AND EVEN AFTER HAVING BEEN ATTACKED BY THE AF AND LATER BY THE NAVY AND THUS CONTRIBUTED A DECISIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARD MISIDENTIFICATION AS AN ENEMY SHIP. END QUOTE.

COMMENTS: J. ALL ABOVE IS AS DICTATED BY LTC EFRAI WHO WAS TRANSLATING FROM A DOCUMENT WRITTEN IN HEBREW.

Classification (control) changed to  
by authority of

(Date) Signature (Rank)  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

DECLASSIFIED



PAGE 4 RUHVL 8928/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L

2. LTC EFRAT PAUSED AT ONE POINT IN HIS READING TO POINT OUT THE  
GOI HAD RECEIVED A STATEMENT FROM USG SAYING THAT LIBEROY HAD BEEN  
IDENTIFIED SIX HOURS PRIOR TO THE ATTACK RATHER THAN ONE  
HOUR AS STATED IN AN EARLIER USG COMMUNICATION.

LTC EFRAT PROBABLY NOTED ALUSNA'S APPEARANCE OF SURPRISE AND  
INCREDULITY AS HE READ OFF SOME OF THE ABOVE POINTS. WHEN HE  
FINISHED HIS READING HE ASKED WHAT ALUSNA THOUGHT OF THE FINDINGS  
QUOTE OFF THE RECORD UNQUOTE. ALUSNA PRETENDED HE HAD NOT HEARD THE  
QUESTION AND THANKED THE COLONEL FOR HIS TIME. THE BURDEN OF  
DIPLOMACY BORES HEAVILY ON ALUSNA WHOSE EVALUATIONS ARE:

A. THE IDF NAVY, STANDING ORDER TO ATTACK ANY SHIP MOVING AT  
MORE THAN 20 KNOTS IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

B. TWO OF THE IDF JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THEIR ACTION ARE MUTUALLY  
CONTRADICTORY. FIRST THEY SAY THAT SINCE THE SPEED OF THE UNIDENTIFIED  
WAS AS HIGH AS 30 KNOTS THEY COULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT IT WAS LIBERTY.  
THEN THEY SAY THE SHIP WAS EASILY IDENTIFIED AS EL QUSEIR. EL  
QUSEIR HAS A MAX SPEED OF 14 KNOTS, FOUR LESS THAN LIBERTY. IF THE  
QUOTE 30 KNOT SHIP COULDN'T HAVE BEEN LIBEROY UNQUOTE IT FOLLOWS  
IT ALSO COULDN'T HAVE BEEN EL QUSEIR.

70 5 OF 5 18 JUN 67

PAGE 5 RUHVL 8928/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L

C. THAT A PROFESSIONAL NAVAL OFFICER OF THE RANK OF COMMANDER  
COULD LOOK AT LIBERTY AND THINK HER A 30 KNOO SHIP IS DIFFICULT TO  
ACCEPT.

D. THE SMOKE WHICH COVERED LIBERTY AND MADE HER DIFFICULT TO  
IDENTIFY WAS PROBABLY A RESULT OF THE IDF AS ATTACKS.

WHILE WALKING TO THEIR CARS, LTC EFRAT MENTIONED THAT GEN  
RABIN HAS NEVER BEEN SO ANGRY AS WHEN HE READ THE CURRENT NEWSWEEK  
MAGAZINE COMMENT ON THE LIBERTY INCIDENT. ALUSNA REMARKED THAT HE  
TOOK NO NOTICE OF NEWS MEDIA REPORTING ON THE INCIDENT.

ALUSNA WAS CALLED TO HQ EARLIER IN THE DAY TO RECEIVE A COPY  
OF IDF CNO LETTER OF REGRET AND CONDOLENCE TO CNO USN. ALUSNA  
WAS INFORMED THAT THE ISRAELI MILITARY ATTACHE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.  
WILL DELIVER THE ORIGINAL TO ADM McDONALD.

BY COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY. GP-3

DECLASSIFIED

16 NOV 1976 DR 8000 OF 11 NOV 1976 JTC Sec Cont

OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

705



.. 0 JUN 57 14 30z

mc/04

0201/08770

(PAGE 1 OF \_\_\_\_\_)

COM			
TON	1432/P		
SSN			
DOB	12		

**3 CONFIDENTIAL**  
**(WHEN FILLED IN)**

Doc 75 Ex 48. LIBERTY 17

081414Z

DTG PROBABLY  
16 1945Z JUN  
BECAUSE: TOR 167/2010  
15 16/2000Z JUN  
15 CARRIED DTG  
15 161945Z

HHNNCZCZDAS27ZCNGX103  
CO TUBERO  
DE RUMIOL 1920 1672033  
ZNY CCCCC  
O JCSBORTZ JUN 67 17445  
FM USDA TEL ACIV ISRH  
HM  
TO CUCIJUA/CNO  
CUCIJUA/CINCPACNAVFOR  
CUCIJUA/COMSIXTHFLT  
RUFJSDIA  
BT

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION TAKEN  
1672033

copy to Admin. Head

BT  
C O N F I D E N T I A L 1920 JUN 67  
REF: A. STATE DEPT 211695 DTG 1700Z JUN 67  
B. C. AMEMB TEL AVIV 417Z JUN 67  
REF A MSG TO AMEMB TEL AVIV CITED WASHINGTON 16 JUN 67  
STATING ISRAEL GOVT. REPLIED ALUSHA ON 5 JUN AS TO  
WHETHER THERE WERE ANY AMERICAN SHIPS OPERATING OFF -INAI  
PENINSULA, STATE REQUESTED EMBASSY COMMENT.  
REF 3 MSG TO STATE DEPT CONTAINS DENIAL THAT SUCH MSG WAS  
MADE AND STATES ANY SUCH MSG WOULD HAVE BEEN FORWARDED  
IMMEDIATELY TO CNO AND OTHER HIGH NAVAL COMMANDERS AND  
FORWARDED TO STATE DEPT. GP-3.  
BT

1672033  
211 17 1500Z

DECLASSIFIED

16 NOV 76  
16 NOV 76  
16 NOV 76

Doc 57 Ex 48 LIBERTY 707

161945Z JUN

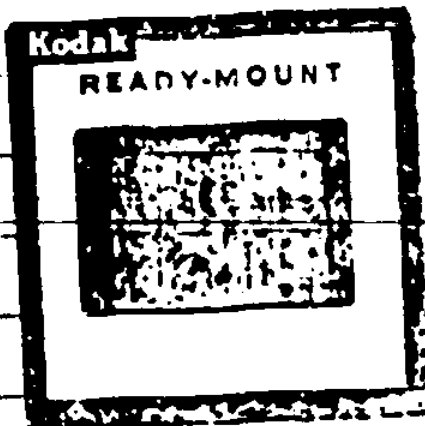
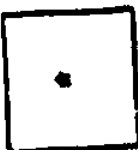


EXHIBIT II TO LIBERTY  
COURT OF INQUIRY

Print in Section



of Alphabetical Trail  
File

SIZE SPACE FOR  
APPROXIMATE  
LETTER SIZE  
6062, 6063, 6064  
NAVAL PHOTOGRAPHY

1-35MM  
COLOR SLIDE

730-13-070 ENVELOPE PHOTOGRAPHIC NEGATIVE

No. \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_  
Neg. Size \_\_\_\_\_ Classification \_\_\_\_\_  
Location, Altitude, Orientation, Focal Length, etc., as applicable

OFFICIAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPH  
COMPLETE TITLE AND DESCRIPTION  
OF PICTURE

(Operation, action, make, model, type, name, rank,  
rate, initials, address, arrival, etc.)

If referred for publication, (When releasing sign  
below)

Date

EX 11

3-8

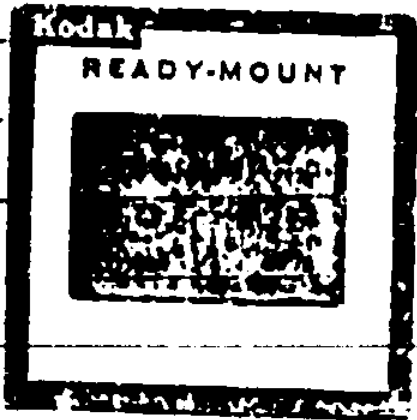


EXHIBIT 12 TO LIBERTY  
COURT OF INQUIRY

Filed in Section  
of Alphabetical Prime  
File

1-35MM COLOR  
SLIDE OF OP.  
AREA

7338-632-2273 EXHIBIT 12

No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_  
Neg. Size \_\_\_\_\_  
Classification \_\_\_\_\_  
Location, Altitude, Orientation, Focal Length of  
Lens, etc., as applicable.

OFFICIAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPH  
COMPLETE TITLE AND DESCRIPTION  
OF PICTURE  
(Location, action, date, model, type, name, rank,  
rate, initials, address, serial, etc.)

If released for publication, Officer releasing sign  
here.

Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ex 12

309



44-38861-100

1112

779

4152

**— 74 —**

Ex 13

~~SECRET~~ (308)

EXHIBIT 13 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INDIANA

5 JUNE

TIME

READING

RANGE

POINT

1003

5202

144/14

164

14

154

17.5

164

24.1

5203

24.5

211

24.1

1039

184

17

164

14

1112

162

13.6

173.2

14.0

294.5

15

CAND

1145

173/189

160

RAIR BEARING

400

EX 13

310

8 June 1967

1000-1000

COB LT O'CONNOR

CICAD 1000

1030 ASSIGNED THE WATCH 1000-1030  
1100 (1000) 1000-1030 1000-1030  
SPIN TO 1000-1030 1000-1030  
1000-1030 1000-1030 1000-1030  
SEA STATE 1000-1030 1000-1030  
1000-1030 1000-1030 1000-1030  
1000-1030 1000-1030 1000-1030

0500 C/O TO 1030

0330 1000-1030 1000-1030

1000-1030

1000-1030

COB EAS SCOTT

CICAD 1000-1030

1000 ASSIGNED THE WATCH 1000-1030 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1000-1030

1000-1030

1000

1000-1030

1000 ASSIGNED THE WATCH 1000-1030 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1000 C/O TO 1000-1030

1152 C/O TO 283 1000

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE USS LIBERTY  
(AGTR-5) UNDERWAY LOG

D.L. BURSON  
COMMANDING OFFICER

EXHIBIT 14 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

E 311





1617 Rem. Appearance. Submerged State at  
High Speed (100) (12 miles)

1618 Motion Torpedo. Submerged State.

1619 2. Under. Tor. Appearance. Subm.  
State. Subm.

1621 Start for Exercise. No Signal.

1622 Left Station. Radar.

1623 All Engines. Dead. 1/2

1624 Start. Radar. Subm. State.

1625 204-17. High Speed. Power. Point.

5000. Forward.

3000. Starboard.

Control. Boat.

1626 Motion. Subm.

1627 Boat. Power. Torpedo. Subm.

1628 "Torpedo. Boat. Subm. State. Subm.

Control. Subm.

1629 (Boat. Power. Subm.)

1630 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

1631 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

1632 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

1633 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

1634 (Boat. Power. Subm.)

1635 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

Power. State. Subm. State. Subm.

1712 (Boat. Power. Subm. State. Subm.)

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) UNDERWAY LOG

D.L. BURSON

215

WITNESSED TO BE A TRUE COPY,

# ENGINEER'S CELL BOOK

U.S. LICHTEN (PC-125) SHIP NO(S) I (ONE) DATE 8 JUNE 1967  
On route to PORT SPAIN to SEA

Record of all "BILLS," SIGNALS, and ORBITS received regarding movements of propellers this date

TIME ZONE DESCRIPTION -7-1300:0

Clocks 1st box or ahead

— **Two**

— 222 —

15

[illegible]

15 + 1 hour! (over 25 hours) FY 15

\_\_\_\_\_

10

USE REVERSE SIDE FOR ADDITIONAL REMARKS

TABLE 1. *Continued*

TABLE

ENGINE MILES: 10020 TAC: TIME TALK  
TIME OF WORKER TIMES: ENGINE SPEED

### INSTRUCTIONS

The Engineering Log may be written with pencil or pen, as most convenient. The Original writing is the LEGAL RECORD and must be preserved. It is not necessary to make a copy except when one or more pages are sent away from a ship in commission.

Table 1 and the REMARKS must be written at the time events occur. Other tables may be written before noon the following date.

REMARKS shall be written by "watch" underway; and by "day's duty" at anchor. They shall be signed by the Engineer Officer of the Watch or Day before going off duty.

Remarks of ... be a chronicle of important events. They shall include: first, boilers in use; second, engine combination in use; third major sea changes, such as "one-third," "standby," "full;" fourth, casualties to personnel or material within or under the cognizance of the engineer department; fifth, special entries required by Navy Regulations, Bureau of Ships' Manual, instructions and letters of the Bureau of Ships.

ALTERATIONS OR ERASURES ARE NOT PERMITTED. NECESSARY CORRECTIONS SHALL BE MADE ONLY IN THE MANNER PRESCRIBED BY ART. 1036 NAVY REGULATIONS.

## • Implication

for disposal of this record see current ~~NAVSOP~~ disposal instructions for  
vessels of the U. S. Navy.

[illegible]

### TABLE 1. Data on the 1990-1991 season

**MACB 50**

---

2 MINUTES AT

~~could have been referred to the Bureau for investigation.~~

45.0 knots, 10.0 knots at 1000 ft at 600 ft

13.0 Km. Tiff. 6.000 m. 10.000 m. 10.000 m. 10.000 m.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (When Filled In)

ALL PREVIOUS EDITIONS ARE OBSOLETE

EXHIBIT 16 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

Ex 16

315





ENGINEERING LOG CONTINUATION

VERIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY

U. S. S.

W. + (AC-8-5)

DATE 5-15-1967

[illegible][illegible]

DATE: 01-04-2001

**1992** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. 1. The first step in the process of the scientific method is to ask a question.  
 2. 2. The second step is to do background research.  
 3. 3. The third step is to form a hypothesis.  
 4. 4. The fourth step is to test the hypothesis by conducting an experiment.  
 5. 5. The fifth step is to analyze the data and draw a conclusion.  
 6. 6. The sixth step is to communicate the results.  
 7. 7. The seventh step is to repeat the experiment to verify the results.  
 8. 8. The eighth step is to publish the results.  
 9. 9. The ninth step is to use the results to develop a theory.  
 10. 10. The tenth step is to use the theory to make predictions.  
 11. 11. The eleventh step is to test the predictions.  
 12. 12. The twelfth step is to refine the theory.  
 13. 13. The thirteenth step is to use the theory to solve problems.  
 14. 14. The fourteenth step is to use the theory to design new experiments.  
 15. 15. The fifteenth step is to use the theory to develop new technologies.  
 16. 16. The sixteenth step is to use the theory to improve the quality of life.  
 17. 17. The seventeenth step is to use the theory to protect the environment.  
 18. 18. The eighteenth step is to use the theory to promote peace and understanding.  
 19. 19. The nineteenth step is to use the theory to advance the human race.  
 20. 20. The twentieth step is to use the theory to create a better world.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

31

● ● ● ● ●

NAVSHIPS 117A (1-59)  
U.S.S. Liberty (AGF-41) *Agility* DATE 8-1-1967

[illegible]

Robert K. Hancock, M.D.

[illegible]

Handwritten:  $\frac{1}{2} \times 100 = 50$  and  $\frac{1}{2} \times 100 = 50$

WATER LOST ALL 21 ST. ... 1.0000

**● ● ● ● ●**

DATE: 1-10-68

WILLIAMS BROTHERS LTD. 100 F. & C.

2.

08-13 (cont) 4:30 to 4:45 P.M. 1st ship service  
main line generator on the line parallel full 2 ship  
service main line generator. 0845 2nd ship  
main line generator off the line 09:01 and 3 ship  
main line generator on parallel supplying ship  
main line and lighting bus. 0922 2nd ship  
main line generator 1st ship service main line generator  
supply power service bus and 3 ship service  
main line generator supplying main line and lighting bus  
0942 2nd ship service main line generator on 2nd ship service  
generator with a load at 1200 P.M. Tested the  
load at 12:15 2nd ship service main line generator, trip out  
at 12:15 P.M. 2nd ship service main line generator 1st  
and 2nd ship service main line generator with 1st ship service  
main line generator supplying ship service bus line 0949  
09:51 1st ship service main line generator off the line  
09:51 2nd ship service main line generator supplying ship  
service bus line 1000 2nd ship service main line generator  
main line generator with a load at 1200 P.M. Tested  
the load trip out 1st ship service main line  
generator trip out at 1310 2nd ship service main line  
generator 1st ship service main line generator with 1st ship  
service main line generator supplying ship service bus line to  
1001 Parallel 3 ship service main line generator with  
1st and 2nd ship service main line generator supplying ship  
service bus and main line and lighting bus line 1030  
Requested permission to stop the test on 1st

U. S. S.

1. 881  
1. 8. 5 (19570-5)

RATE 12.00

08-12 (Cn Ed) E.C., permission not granted @1055 clearing  
and cleared channel on #1 tail @1109 Permission  
from the 000. 2nd class then on #2 tail @1109 Comm.  
Special clearing taken on #1 tail @1110 Took #3 ships  
service turbo-generator off the line leaving #1 and #2 ships  
service turbo-generators parallel supplying ships service  
low, vacuum and lighting load trial @1115 set the R.P.M.'s  
on #3 ships service turbo-generator with no load at 1200  
R.P.M.'s. Took the suspended trip on #3 ships service  
turbo-generator, two set at 1320, tests satisfactory @1120  
decided #3 ships service turbo-generator @1123 decided #3  
auxiliary condenser pump @1125 decided #3 auxiliary condenser  
pump @1125 Re-parallel clearing taken on #1 tail @1130  
refilled, inspected, and cleared later oil at main on other  
on #1, and #2 ships service turbo-generators.  
Under Permitting turbo and miscellaneous conditions manual

R. J. Brandyman

12-16 Wednesday and before sunset, @1155 Treated and dropped  
4-74-2-W into 5-17-0-W. Treated at 550 a.m. @1200 20 ft'd  
dist. date of 1/1/1911 (last before 3-25-0-W to 4-74-2-W.  
@1310 Second generation chicks @1311 1st Generation chicks @1  
3rd Generation chicks @1355 Second generation chicks  
@1401 Second generation chicks, 10 chicks right - 10 on  
the left. @1416 Transferring at 10-11-1911 @1419 2nd  
Generation chicks commenced shipping @1420 2nd  
Generation chicks commenced shipping @1420 2nd

1944 - 1945. 1946. 1947. 1948. 1949. 1950. 1951. 1952. 1953. 1954. 1955. 1956. 1957. 1958. 1959. 1960. 1961. 1962. 1963. 1964. 1965. 1966. 1967. 1968. 1969. 1970. 1971. 1972. 1973. 1974. 1975. 1976. 1977. 1978. 1979. 1980. 1981. 1982. 1983. 1984. 1985. 1986. 1987. 1988. 1989. 1990. 1991. 1992. 1993. 1994. 1995. 1996. 1997. 1998. 1999. 2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010. 2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032. 2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043. 2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054. 2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065. 2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076. 2077. 2078. 2079. 2080. 2081. 2082. 2083. 2084. 2085. 2086. 2087. 2088. 2089. 2090. 2091. 2092. 2093. 2094. 2095. 2096. 2097. 2098. 2099. 2100. 2101. 2102. 2103. 2104. 2105. 2106. 2107. 2108. 2109. 2110. 2111. 2112. 2113. 2114. 2115. 2116. 2117. 2118. 2119. 2120. 2121. 2122. 2123. 2124. 2125. 2126. 2127. 2128. 2129. 2130. 2131. 2132. 2133. 2134. 2135. 2136. 2137. 2138. 2139. 2140. 2141. 2142. 2143. 2144. 2145. 2146. 2147. 2148. 2149. 2150. 2151. 2152. 2153. 2154. 2155. 2156. 2157. 2158. 2159. 2160. 2161. 2162. 2163. 2164. 2165. 2166. 2167. 2168. 2169. 2170. 2171. 2172. 2173. 2174. 2175. 2176. 2177. 2178. 2179. 2180. 2181. 2182. 2183. 2184. 2185. 2186. 2187. 2188. 2189. 2190. 2191. 2192. 2193. 2194. 2195. 2196. 2197. 2198. 2199. 2200. 2201. 2202. 2203. 2204. 2205. 2206. 2207. 2208. 2209. 2210. 2211. 2212. 2213. 2214. 2215. 2216. 2217. 2218. 2219. 2220. 2221. 2222. 2223. 2224. 2225. 2226. 2227. 2228. 2229. 2230. 2231. 2232. 2233. 2234. 2235. 2236. 2237. 2238. 2239. 2240. 2241. 2242. 2243. 2244. 2245. 2246. 2247. 2248. 2249. 2250. 2251. 2252. 2253. 2254. 2255. 2256. 2257. 2258. 2259. 2260. 2261. 2262. 2263. 2264. 2265. 2266. 2267. 2268. 2269. 2270. 2271. 2272. 2273. 2274. 2275. 2276. 2277. 2278. 2279. 2280. 2281. 2282. 2283. 2284. 2285. 2286. 2287. 2288. 2289. 2290. 2291. 2292. 2293. 2294. 2295. 2296. 2297. 2298. 2299. 2300. 2301. 2302. 2303. 2304. 2305. 2306. 2307. 2308. 2309. 2310. 2311. 2312. 2313. 2314. 2315. 2316. 2317. 2318. 2319. 2320. 2321. 2322. 2323. 2324. 2325. 2326. 2327. 2328. 2329. 2330. 2331. 2332. 2333. 2334. 2335. 2336. 2337. 2338. 2339. 2340. 2341. 2342. 2343. 2344. 2345. 2346. 2347. 2348. 2349. 2350. 2351. 2352. 2353. 2354. 2355. 2356. 2357. 2358. 2359. 2360. 2361. 2362. 2363. 2364. 2365. 2366. 2367. 2368. 2369. 2370. 2371. 2372. 2373. 2374. 2375. 2376. 2377. 2378. 2379. 2380. 2381. 2382. 2383. 2384. 2385. 2386. 2387. 2388. 2389. 2390. 2391. 2392. 2393. 2394. 2395. 2396. 2397. 2398. 2399. 2400. 2401. 2402. 2403. 2404. 2405. 2406. 2407. 2408. 2409. 2410. 2411. 2412. 2413. 2414. 2415. 2416. 2417. 2418. 2419. 2420. 2421. 2422. 2423. 2424. 2425. 2426. 2427. 2428. 2429. 2430. 2431. 2432. 2433. 2434. 2435. 2436. 2437. 2438. 2439. 2440. 2441. 2442. 2443. 2444. 2445. 2446. 2447. 2448. 2449. 2450. 2451. 2452. 2453. 2454. 2455. 2456. 2457. 2458. 2459. 2460. 2461. 2462. 2463. 2464. 2465. 2466. 2467. 2468. 2469. 2470. 2471. 2472. 2473. 2474. 2475. 2476. 2477. 2478. 2479. 2480. 2481. 2482. 2483. 2484. 2485. 2486. 2487. 2488. 2489. 2490. 2491. 2492. 2493. 2494. 2495. 2496. 2497. 2498. 2499. 2500. 2501. 2502. 2503. 2504. 2505. 2506. 2507. 2508. 2509. 2510. 2511. 2512. 2513. 2514. 2515. 2516. 2517. 2518. 2519. 2520. 2521. 2522. 2523. 2524. 2525. 2526. 2527. 2528. 2529. 2530. 2531. 2532. 2533. 2534. 2535. 2536. 2537. 2538. 2539. 2540. 2541. 2542. 2543. 2544. 2545. 2546. 2547. 2548. 2549. 2550. 2551. 2552. 2553. 2554. 2555. 2556. 2557. 2558. 2559. 2560. 2561. 2562. 2563. 2564. 2565. 2566. 2567. 2568. 2569. 2570. 2571. 2572. 2573. 2574. 2575. 2576. 2577. 2578. 2579. 2580. 2581. 2582. 2583. 2584. 2585. 2586. 2587. 2588. 2589. 2590. 2591. 2592. 2593. 2594. 2595. 2596. 2597. 2598. 2599. 2600. 2601. 2602. 2603. 2604. 2605. 2606. 2607. 2608. 2609. 2610. 2611. 2612. 2613. 2614. 2615. 2616. 2617. 2618. 2619. 2620. 2621. 2622. 2623. 2624. 2625. 26

DATE RECEIVED 12/15/15 12:00 PM 320



DATE 8 JUL 1962

[illegible]

P. J. B. Smith

[illegible]

APPROVED: *[Signature]* DATE: *[Signature]*  
 SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE *[Signature]* LT  
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

# EXHIBIT 11 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

Ex 17

[illegible]

TIME	ALTIMETER READING	RANGE MILES	NOTES
1003	212.3	17.3	EL ALBA
	184	17	N.L.
	184	17.5	EL ALBA
	164	17.5	N.L.
	203	17.5	EL ALBA
	211	17.5	N.L.
1034	184	17.5	EL ALBA
	184	17	N.L.
	162	13.6	EL ALBA
1112	162	14.0	N.L.
	162	14.0	EL ALBA
	162	14.0	N.L.
	162	14.0	EL ALBA
1145	173	13.9	EL ALBA
	150		

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) BEARING LOG

D.L. BURSON  
COMMANDING OFFICER

EXHIBIT 18 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY EX-18 323

8 JUNE 1967				
TIME	LAT°	LONG°	ALT	REMARKS
0000	31°54'N	32°24'E	AFK	
0100	31°54'N	32°35'E	AFK	
0200	31°58.5'N	32°47.5'E	AFK	
0300	31°58'N	33°01'E	AFK	
0400	31°58'N	33°10'E	AFK	
0500	31°42'N	33°20'E	AFK	
0600	31°41'N	33°30'E	AFK	
0700	31°38'N	33°35'E	Cye	
0800	31°34'N	33°50'E	Cye	
0900	31°27'N	33°51'E	Cye	
1000	31°21'N	33°51'E	Cye	
1100	31°24'N	33°45'E	Cye	
1200	31°22'N	33°41.1'E	2121	
1300	31°22'N	33°35'E	Cye	

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) DRT LOG

D.L. BURSON  
COMMANDING OFFICER

19

EXHIBIT 19 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY EX 19 324



THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE DEAD PERSONNEL.  
THE BOOLES OF THESE PERSONS HAVE BEEN RECOVERED

LCDR ARISTONG, PHILIP M.	569025/1100
SN BLANCHARD, GARY R.	771 77 22
CM3 BROWN, FRANCIS (n)	778 76 70
CT3 HIGGINS, ALAN (n)	788 62 97
S HOAR, CARL	774 46 48
CM2 MENDLE, ANTHONY	777 62 87
SN SKOLAK, DAVID	250 17 83
POB SPIGHER, JOHN C.	473 41 77
CM3 THOMPSON, ALEXANDER	770 47 21
CT3 THORNTON, THOMAS R.	997 97 91
LT TOTH, STEPHEN S.	669613/1100
CT1 WALTON, FREDERICK J.	236 31 86

Ex. 20

EXHIBIT 20 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY 35

PERSONNEL MISSING

CT3 WILLIAM B. ALLENBAUGH 624-44-96 USN  
 CT3 HERMAN J. CAMPBELL 52-172-111  
 CT2 JERRY L. CONVERSE  
 CT2 ROBERT B. EISENBERG 4760935 USN  
 CT1 CURTIS A. GRAVES 5195224 USN  
 CTSN LAWRENCE P. HAYDEN 7705170 USN  
 CT1 WARREN E. HERSEY 9010711 USN  
 CT2 RICHARD W. KEENE 4762275 USN  
 CTSN JAMES L. LEVIAU 4415657 USN  
 CISA DAVID W. MARLBOROUGH 5100460 USN  
 CTC RAYMOND E. LIND 5112240 USN  
 CT3 DUNE R. MARGRAF 4759635 USN  
 LT JAMES C. PIERCE 6498576 USN  
 CT1 JOHN CALEB SMITH 2317254 USN  
 CTC MELVIN D. SMITH 4774576 USN  
 CT3 PHILLIPPE C. TIEDKE 4145214 USN  
 CT3 CARL C. NYGREN 4777716 USN  
 CPL EDWARD E. REMMEYER 2123417 USMC  
 SGT J.L. RAPER  
 CT3 JERRY L. COSS  
 CT1 JAMES M. LUPTON 5113116 USN  
 CIVILIAN ALLEN M. BLUE 5112327 06-7

EX 21

EXHIBIT 31 to LIBERTY COURT of INQUIRY 350

#### RESEARCH WOUNDED

The following is a list of the wounded Research Department personnel. Personnel are listed in alphabetical order according to name, and contains the rate and service number of each.

#### OFFICERS

LT. ENNES, James M.	653840/1615
LCDR. LEWIS, David E.	584572/1610
LT. O'CONNOR, James G.	621765/1615

#### ENLISTED

CT1 ADDINGTON, Reginald N.	349 53 80
CT3 ANDERSON, Joe D.	771 76 77
CT1 BAKER, Richard K.	486 80 12
CTSN BENEDICT, Nathan D.	139 55 74
CTSN BENNETT, Lee R.	998 1 71
CT3 BRONG, James V.	941 4 23
CT1 CARLSON, Richard C.	444 13 05
CT1 CARPENTER, Jefferie K.	535 14 05
CT2 DAVIDSON, James R.	699 64 72
CTSN EAKINS, Kenneth E.	794 04 69
CTSN ECKER, Kenneth P.	851 36 48
CT3 HAWKINS, David W.	118 73 49
CT2 HENDRICKS, Charles R.	685 56 42
CT2 JOHNS, Fredrick K.	794 91 14
CT3 JOHNSON, Melvin P.	997 32 29
CTSN KAVANAUGH, James R.	918 51 32
CTSN KIRK, Eugene M.	918 81 30
CT3 KREUN, Loren W.	538 49 74
CT1 LENTINI, Joseph C.	594 81 53
SSSGT LOCKWOOD, Bryce P.	185 98 56
CT2 McAGGON, David L.	774 71 98
CT2 MEYER, Stephen E.	771 42 03
CT1 ROWLEY, Charles L.	458 48 03
CT3 SHAFER, Maurice B.	695 94 76
CTSN SHAW, David A.	904 39 56
CT3 SIX, Harold E.	777 58 53
CTC THOMPSON, Harold J.	471 37 37
CT3 TIDGEMAN, Harry R.	770 11 63

#### CIVILIAN

BALLOCK, Donald L.

# Denotes United States Marine Corps  
\* Denotes Personnel retained on board

Ex 22(a)  
EXHIBIT 22(a) TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY 301

GENERAL SERVICE  
WOUNDED LIST

ENGINEERING DEPT

EM2	LEWIS, William M.	773 35 21
IC1	RANDALL, John R.	517 81 45

DEPT

SN	CASPER, William E.	796 40 74
SN	CONCEPCION, Rodney C.	674 38 09
SN	COOK, Eddie L.	997 59 71
SN	FOLLIN, Donald F. Jr.	917 66 74
QMG3	HAZEN, David C.	696 84 98
SN	JACKSON, Thomas F.	689 15 29
SN	PAYAN, Salvado (n)	796 66 15
SN	PIERSON, Gerald A.	794 07 20
SA	RIELLY, Thomas J. Jr.	913 50 66
SN	SLAVENS, Larry T.	916 92 00
SN	SOPER, Larry L.	698 89 98
WMSM	WARD, Jerry W.	775 76 67
SN	WEAVER, Richard L.	999 88 63
SN	WILSON, George W.	529 34 49

OPS DEPT

YN3	BROWNFIELD, Virgil L.	794 23 49
SM2	DAVID, RUSSEL O.	683 33 5
SN	LAWAR, John D.	779 56 36
SMEN	MEADORS, Joseph L.	871 04 56
Q43	POLLARD, Floyd H.	353 55 47

SUPPLY DEPT

SH2	HEROLD, Donald (n)	609 22 48
SN	LEMOND, Thomas W.	917 49 31
TN	MARFIL, Soferdo P.	776 90 09
SN	MATHEWS, Jerry L.	998 21 92

Ex 22 (b)

EXHIBIT 22 (b) to LIBERTY COURT OF IN

32



U.S.S. LIBERTY (AGTR-)  
RNO. NEW YORK 08801

Wounded Transferred

Name	Rate	Ser #
PRIDAN, Salvador	SN	756 66 15
REILLY, T. J.	SN	913 50 66
ROOK, E.L.	SN	997 55 71
ROOLD, Donald	SH2	609 22 48
SENNETT, Lee Roy	STSN	998 13 79
HAZEN, David Carl	GM3	969 84 98
LEHAY, William Michael	FM3	773 35 21
LENTINI, J.C.	CT1	594 81 55
O'CONNOR, J.C.	LT	671765
WARD, J.W.	BN3	775 76 78
WEAVER, R.L.	SN	999 88 63
BROWNFIELD, V.L.	YN3	
LATORRE, S.J.	EMFN	914 73 89
LOCKWOOD, BF	SSGT	
WINKS, JM	LT	
LEWIS, D.E.	LCDR	
TINSERMAN, B.R.	ET3	
CARPENTER, J.R.	CT1	
TAYLOR, R.P.	ENS	
RANDALL, J.R.	IC1	
CASPER, W.E.	SN	(Deck dpt)
CONCEPCION, R.C.	SN	"
FOLLIN, D.F.JR.	SN	"
PIERSON, G.V.	SNSS	"
SLAVENS, L.J.	SN	"
ROPER, L.L.	SN	"
WILSON, G.W.	SN	"
DAVID, R.O.Jr.	SH2	
LAHAR, J.D.	SN	
MEADORS, J.L.	SHSN	
POLLARD, F.H.	QM3	
LEHOND, T.W.	OTSN	
MARFIL, S.V.	TN	
MATHEWS, James L.	SN	
ADDINGTON, R. M.	CT1	
ROERSON, J.D.	CT3	
BENEDICT, N.D.	CTSN	
LONG, J.V.	CT 8	
CARLSON, R.C.	CT1	
CARPENTER J.R.	CT1	
DAVIDSON R.C.	CT2	
SAXINS K.B.	CTSN	
ICKER K.P.	CTSN	
HAWKINS U.W.	CT3	
HENDRICKS, C.K.	CT2	
JOHNS, P.E.	CT2	
KAVANACH, J.P.	CTSN	
KIRK, E.H.	CTSN	
KREUN, L. W.	CTSN	
LENTINI, J.C.	CT1	
MCPEGGAN, D.L.	CT2	

Ex 22(c)

EXHIBIT 22(c) TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

31

WOUNDED PERSONS STILL ON BOARD

LUCAS, David L., ENS	710315/1105
McGONAGLE, W.L., CDR	494467/1100
BENNETT, M., LT.	625123/1510
KIEFER, R.F., LT(MC)	
THOMPSON, H.J., CTC	471 37 37
VAN CLEAVE, T.L. HMC	298 39 72
SCHULMAN, S.L., HMC	353 96 33
BOSTIC, S., FN	
PAINTER, L.C., LT(JG)	602274/1105
LANKIN, C.F., CTC	518 69 43
DURZENSKI, H. SH3	546 83 16
QUINTERA, T.A. SN	796 43 22
STOUDT, J.D., BT2	376 41 42
OWENS, E., BT2	549 85 64
ASWORTH, J.W., FN	699 33 81
NEWELL, J.P., BT3	776 08 93
THORN, L.B., HMC	
NEANEY, W.D., SN	918 44 65
PATTEN, D.A., CS3	904 30 77
BOTMER, D.R., FN	779 52 59
CORNISH, C.R., HMC	998 07 12
LaTORRE, L.J.	
CARNAHAN, D.H., CS3	810 42 33
KISIEL, D.J., SA	998 70 04
BISHER, G.R., FN	810 22 23
BYRD, D.R., FN	290 54 86
TRIPLETT, J.L., FN	354 81 55
ANDERSON, R.E., FA	851 81 36
SIMPSON, H.R., FN	917 52 08
BOCCIELLA, S., CS3	796 37 68
HRANKOWSKI, J.M., FN	810 43 15
McINTURFF, P., CTSN	861 44 71
NABATO, J.A., FN	916 21 55
DALLEY, R.L., CTSN	826 14 11
LOBASSO, G.F., FN	716 14 83
VALDEZ, D., SK2	370 92 58
BOOTH, J.E., HMC	997 19 47
PERKINS, E.G., SK2	776 42 83
GILSON, E.D., HMC	794 71 33
WEDIG, G.J., CS2	428 92 84
KUKAL, R., CT1	539 00 34
BOWEN, L.L., CT2	796 85 28
SWEET, R., CT3	775 06 25
McFARLIN, T.L., CT3	795 25 54
McNAMARA, G.L., CT2	774 27 59
SMITH, J.D., CTSN	777 19 71
McKENNANY, D.H., CT2	914 81 10
FLASANIS, C.L., CT1	535 78 10
DODD, H.F., CT2	599 79 51
BUCK, R.D., CT3	918 25 70
PESTOOM, H.C., CTSN	797 04 78
WALDER, D.C., CT2	776 28 26
POPLIKSKI, J.C., CT2	778 80 00

ADMO 100

FORM 100-1 (Rev. 11-25) December 54

USS LIBERTY AGTR-5 OPERATOR VARIOUS CDR VAR. CDR DICO1 FREQUENCY

TIME TRANSMISSION

0000Z NEW RADIO DAY....FREESE RM3. *FREESE*  
 0430Z SEC TWO OFF TO SEC ONE....FREESE RM3. *FREESE*  
 0430Z SEC ONE ASSUMED GUARD THIS FREE *FREESE*  
 1100Z AS DE RS K  
 1100Z AS DE RS Z K  
 1100Z AS DE RS WE ARE UNDER ATTACK; BE ADVISED WE ARE UNDER  
 RS DE SM U ARE GARBLED, SAY AGAIN K  
 SM DE RS I SAY AGAIN WE ARE UNDER ATTACK, WE ARE UNDER  
 RS DE SM U ARE STILL GARBLED SAY AGAIN K  
 SM DE RS WE ARE UNDER ATTACK WE ARE UNDER ATTACK K  
 AS DE RS WE ARE UNDER ATTACK DO I READ ME K  
 1130Z SWITCHING XITRS BUT NO LUCK,  
 1200Z AS DE RS K  
 1200Z RS DE SM K  
 1200Z SM DE RS WE ARE UNDER ATTACK (REPEATED ABOUT 3 TIMES) K  
 1200Z RS DE SM R R AR  
 1200Z SM DE RS K  
 1200Z RS DE SM K  
 1200Z SM DE RS WE ARE UNDER ATTACK AND NEED IMMEDIATE ASSIST. K  
 1200Z RS DE SM R INT ZNB (ETC..) K  
 1200Z SM DE RS ZNB (ETC..) K  
 1200Z RS DE SM ZNB CORRECT AS I AM STANDING BY FOR FURTHER  
 1200Z TRF K  
 1200Z SM DE RS R R AR  
 1200Z SM DE RS K  
 1200Z RS DE SM K  
 1200Z SM DE RS BE ADVISED WE HAVE BEEN HIT BY TORPEDO LISTING  
 1200Z RS DE SM ABOUT 9 DEG REQUEST IMMEDIATE ASSIST K  
 1200Z SM DE RS R R AR  
 1200Z RS DE SM K  
 1200Z SM DE RS THREE UNIDENTIFIED A/C APPROACHING THE SHIP K  
 1200Z RS DE SM R R AR  
 1233Z DESTRUCTION WILL IN EFFECT  
 1323Z LOST POWER  
 1350Z COMM BACK UP  
 1400Z CC 70340 SPD 621.  
 1440Z FM CSE ASSISTANCE IS ON THE WAY.  
 1500Z LOST ALL POWER IN ROULENT

Ex 23 08 June 67 2  
 EXHIBIT 23 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

# RADIO LOG

FORM 3010-1 (Rev. 11-58) Standard Form 3010-1 (Rev. 11-58) Standard Form 3010-1 (Rev. 11-58)

ACTIVITY: USC LIBERTY (AGTR-5) OPERATOR: WARD, R. M. CIRCUM: SECT TWO HI COM FREQUENCY: 11256.5

TIME	TRANSMISSION
1750Z	FM CONSIXTHFLR TO LIBERTY
1755Z	FM CSF TO R S
1802Z	FM CS TO R S
1803Z	SCHEMATIC DE R
	RS DE FF
	FF DE RS
	RS DE FF
	FF DE RS
1847	RS DE FF
	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
	RS DE CP
1800Z	CP DE RS
1815Z	RS DE DR
1820Z	DR/DE/RS
	DR DE RS
	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
1829Z	RS DE CP R
1715Z	C P DE RB
	RS DE C P
	C P DE R S
1742Z	R S DE C P
1743Z	C P DE R
1800Z	R S DE C P
	CP DE RS
	CP DE RS
	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
	RS DE CP
1800Z	CP DE RS
1806Z	SM DE RS
	RS DE SM
	SM DE RS
1807Z	SM DE RS
1808Z	SM DE RS
	RS DE SM
	SM DE RS
1810Z	RS DE SM

ESCAPTORWAY 1750Z: DANGER AND IF  
 POSSIBLE CONT CUS 94 MAG MAN SP  
 1800Z EST POSIT K  
 RGR UR EST FROM EAST, CHARGER AR  
 K  
 B ADVISED STA BELMONT IS CALLING U  
 UR WEAK AND BRLY REPLY UNABLE TO  
 READ BELMONT K  
 B ZUJ AR  
 K  
 CALL SIGNS OF ESCORT ARE MATADORE  
 AND BIG DIPPER K  
 R AR  
 EX PASS FM FC DESTROYERS EXPECT TO  
 REDEVELOP WITH YOU AT 0700Z  
 TONIC 1800 K  
 R AR  
 AND U TOR JCS MSG 080110Z K  
 OUR FILES WERE DESTROYED AND WE  
 ARE UNABLE TO GET TO THEM WE DO NOT  
 ACKNOWLEDGE RECPY OF THIS MSG K  
 RGR AR  
 000 K  
 K  
 00-081715Z (SEE FILES)  
 QSL UR 081715Z AT TIME 1742Z K  
 R AR  
 K  
 K  
 GAY TIME GOLF ETA 0600Z HOLD EMPRE  
 DOROTHY 081612Z K  
 I READ BACK FOR POSS CORR (REPEATED)  
 C VA DOROTHY TO READ 081612Z K  
 R AR  
 K  
 INT TOR COMSIXTHFLT 081917Z K  
 INT CORR TOR COMSIXTHFLT 081917Z K  
 C VA COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z K  
 R AS AR  
 K  
 K  
 UNABLE TO LOCATE DUE TO CARPT SEALED  
 OFF K  
 R AR

08 JUNE 1967

834



Time	TELETYPE	TELEVISION
1810Z	T...O...L...E/JH/	
1812Z	RS DE SM	K
	SM DE RS	K
	RS DE SM	REQUEST YOU STEAR COURSE 300 DEG
		FOR RENDEZOUS MAKE FOUR HOUR POSIT
		HPTS THIS NET K
	SM DE RS	REQ U SAY AGAIN AA RENDEZOUS K
1817Z	RS DE SM	R I SAY AGQIN AA RENDEZOUS (REPEATED
1819Z	SM DE RS	R AR
	SM DE RS	K
	RS DE SM	K
	SM DE RS	WE ARE STEARING 300 DEG MAGNATIC
		AND ALSO WE ARE UNABLE TO GIVE POSIT
1824Z	RS DE SM	R AR
1830Z	RS DE CP	INT TRFC K
	CP DE RS	NEG K
1833Z	RS DE CP	R AR
1842Z	RS DE DR	K
	DR DE RS	K
1843Z	RS DE DR	RR AS AS
1844Z	RS DE DTG	K
	DTG DE RS	U ARE VERY WEAK AND BARELY READABLE
		REQ U REGAY THRU STA CP K
1845Z	RS DE DTG	R AR
1850Z	RS DE FC	K
	FC DE RS	K
	RS DE FC	INT U HAVE CAPABILITY OF SWIFTING
		FREQS K
	FC DE RS	BELIEVED ZUE HOWEVER IF NOT HEARD
		15 MIN REQ SWIFT BACK TO THIS FREQ K
	RS DE FC	R DO NOT SWIFT FREQS YET, I WILL
		CONTACT NCS K
1853Z	FC DE RS	R AR
1856Z	RS DE DR	K
	DR DE RS	K
	RS DE RS	INT KNOW FREQ 4B K
	DR DE RS	C K
1859Z	RS DE DR	R AS AR
1901Z	ATTEMPTING TO QSY	
1915Z	QSY COMPLETED	
1918Z	AA DE RS	RDO CK K
	DE RS	(GARBLED) K
	AA DE RS	SAY AGAIN AND GIVE LONG COUNT K
	RS DE BC	U GOOD AND READABLE K
1932Z	BC DE RS	R AR
	RS DE BC	RDO CK K
	BC DE RS	R K
	RS DE BC	R AR
	RS DE CP	RDO CK K
	CP DE RS	R K
	RS DE CP	R AR
	RS DE FC	RDO CK K
	FC DE RS	R K
	RS DE FC	R AR

James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers

OPNAV FORM 2010-1 (Rev. 11-84) Remarks Item #100 Cap 1 Start 0107 700 1000

ACTIVITY	OPERATION	CREW	CIRCUIT	FREQUENCY
USS LIBERTY AGTR-5	VARIOUS	VAR	6721 KCS	

TIME	FROM	TO	MESSAGE
1933Z	T.....O.....L.....E./JH/		
1939Z	RS DE BC		RDO CK K
	BC DE RS		R K
1940Z	RS DE BC		R AR
1941Z	RS DE BC		K
	BC DE RS		K
	RS DE BC		R REQUEST U CONFIRM NR OF ME
			SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AND NOT JUST WOUNDED
1943Z	BC DE RS		R AS AR
1945Z	BC DE RS		K
	RS DE BC		K
	BC DE RS		REF UR LAST 17 DEPT NR SERIOUSLY
			INJURED 15 - 25 AND NR JUST UNJURED
			100 K
	RS DE BC		R I READ BACK FOR POSS CORR (REPEATED
1950Z	BC DE RS		R AR K
1951Z	RS DE BC		R AR
	RS DE DTG		K
	RS DE SM		BQ ADVISED DTG CALLING U K
	DTG DE SM RS		REQ U SAY AGAIN K
	RS DE DTG		(GARBLED) K
	DTG DE RS		AS AR
	SM DE RS		REQ U ACK AS RELAY FOR ME K
1953Z	RS DE SM		R AR
1954Z	JTG DE RS		R UR LAST K
2019Z	RS DE SM		K
	SM DE RS		U ARE WEAK AND BARELY READABLE K
	BC DE RS		K
	RS DE BC		R K
	BC DE BC		REQ U AST AS RELAY BETWEEN SM AND ME
	RS DE BC		R AR
	RS DE BC		SM NEG TRF K
2019Z	BC DE RS		R AR
2023Z	RS DE FC		K
	FC DE RS		K
	RS DE FC		(GARBLED) K
	FC DE RS		BE ADVISED U ARE WEAK AND BEARELY
			READABLE AS AR
	BC DE RS		REQ U RELAY FOR SM FC K
	RS DE BC		I PASS FROM FC FM FC TO RS STEEL JAW
			702 WILL BE AIRBORNE 2100Z TO ASSIST
			RS IN NAVIGATION AND COMMUNICATION
2100Z	BC DE RS		BT K
2101Z	RS DE BC		R AR
	BC DE RS		K
	BC DE RS		K
	RS DE BC		INT SERIOUSLY WOUNDED 15 -25 INCLUDED
			100 NR WOUNDED 100 K

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Time	TRANSMISSION
2031Z	T....O....L....E/JH/ BC DE RS RS DE BC RS DE BC BC DE RS RS DE BC
2033Z	
2038Z	
2040Z	BC DE RS
2041Z	RS DE JTG JTG DE RS RS DE JTG FC DE RS RS DE FC FC DE RS
2042Z	
2201Z	
2305Z	RS DE FC NEW RADIO DAY.....09 JUNE 1967...FREE RM3
0000Z	RS DE BC BC DE RS RS DE BC RS DE SM SM DE RS RS DE SM
0020Z	
0138Z	
0139Z	

C K  
R AR  
K  
K  
I PASS FROM TOP HAND - REQ LIST OF  
MEN WOUNDED AND DEAD, NOT BY ANY INST  
BUT JUST NAME OF MEN DEAD AND WOUNDED  
R AR  
K RDO CK K  
U ARE VERY WEAK AND BARELY READABLE K  
R AR  
O K  
K  
-T-O-082202Z FM ROCKSTAR TO SECNAV  
INFO BUPERS, CHIEF BUREAU, NAVFINCEN  
CLEVELAND, COMFIVE, CNO, CINCSNAVEUR  
CINCLANFLT, COMSARFLT, COMSERVLANT  
COMSERVON EIGHT U7, C7 FILES BT K  
R AR  
RDO CK K  
I GOOD AND READABLE K  
R OUT  
RDO CK  
U GOOD AND RADABLE K  
U GOOD AND RADABLE ALSO NEG TRF AR

# RADIO LOG

FORM 1010-1 (Rev. 11-58) (GPO: 1959 O-510-708-1000)

UNIT: USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) OPERATOR: WARD, RMC CREW: SECT TWO HI COM 11250.5

TIME	TRANSMISSION
1707Z	FM CONSIXTHFLT TO LIBERTY
1750Z	FM CSF TO R S
1755Z	FM CS TO R S
1802Z	SCHEMATIC DE R
1803Z	RS DE FF
	FF DE RS
	RS DE FF
	FF DE RS
1842Z	RS DE FF
	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
	RS DE CP
1809Z	CP DE RS
1815Z	RS DE CR
1820Z	DR DE RS
	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
1829Z	RS DE CP R
1715Z	C P DE RB
	RS DE C P
1742Z	C P DE R S
1743Z	R S DE C P
1800Z	C P DE R S
	R S DE CP
	CP DE RS
	RS DE CP
	RS DE CP
1805Z	CP DE RS
1806Z	RS DE CP
	CP DE RS
	RS DE SM
	SM DE RS
	RS DE SM
1807Z	SM DE RS
1808Z	SM DE RS
	RS DE SM
	SM DE RS
1810Z	RS DE SM

TRANSMISSION

ESCORT WAY 170715Z DAMAGE RND 17

POSSIBLE CAP CUS 340 MAG MAG 5PP

UNCL 104 MI FM RND 1715Z TACK TURN 27

REQ UR 1800Z EST POSIT K

RGR UR 1ST FROM FAST CHARGER AR

K

K

B ADVISED STA BELMONT IS CALLING

UR WEAK AND BRLY RD/BL UNABLE TO

READ BELONT K

R ZUJ AR

K

K

CALL SIGNS OF ESCORT ARE MATADORE

AND CIG DIPPER K

R/R

XX PASS FM FC DESTROYERS EXPECT TO

RENDEVOUS WITH YOU AT 0700Z

TOMORROW

R/R

IND U TOR CCS MSG 080110Z K

OUR FILES WERE DESTROYED AND WE

ARE UNABLE TO GET TO THEM WE DO NOT

ACKNOWLEDGE RECPY OF THIS MSG K

000 K

00-081715Z (SEE FILES)

QSL UR 081715Z AT TIME 1742Z K

R AR

K

K

GAY TIME GOLF ETA 0800Z HOLD EMPRE

DOROTHY 081612Z K

I READ BACK FOR POSS CORR (REPEATED)

C WA DOROTHY TO READ 081612Z K

R AR

K

INT TOR COMSIXTHFLT 081917Z K

INT CORR TOR COMSIXTHFLT 081917Z K

C WA COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z K

R AS AR

K

K

UNABLE TO LOCATE DUE TO CARPT SEALED

OFF K

K AR

DATE: 08 JUNE 1967 PAGE NO: 327



1000 100

FORM 100-1 (Rev. 1-58) Standard Form 100-1 T-100 0107 700 1000

ACTIVITY  
USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) OPERATOR VARIOUS CRY VAR CRY HT COMM FREQUENCY 11256.5 KCS

TIME	TRANSMISSION
0001Z	NEW RDO DAY NEW LOG 09 JUN 67 ----- E. FREESE, RMS
0430Z	SECT TWO OFF TO SECT ONE E. FREESE, RM3
0430Z	SECT ONE ASSUMED WATCH THIS FREQ
1153Z	ANY STA DE RCK STR K
	A S DE R S Z K
	A S DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK WE ARE UNDER ATTACK
1200Z	R S DE SCHEMATIC U ARE GARBLED, SAY AGAIN K
	S M DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK WE ARE UNDER ATTACK
	A S DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK WE ARE UNDER ATTACK
	A S DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK DO U READ WE
1204Z	SWITCHING XMITRS BUT NO LUCK
	A S DE R S K
	R S DE SCHEMATIC K
1209Z	S M DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK ( RPTED ABOUT THREE TIM
	R S DE S M R R AR
	S M DE R S K
1209Z	R S DE S M K
	S M DE R S WE ARE UNDER ATTACK AND NEED IMMED ASSIST K
	R S DE S M R INT ZNB (ETC..) K
	S M DE R S ZNB (ETC..) K
	R S DE S M ZNB CORRECT AS I AM STANDING BY FOR
1214Z	SM DE R S FURTHER TRFK K
	S M DE R S R R AR
	R S DE S M K
1217Z	S M DE S DE ADVISED WE HAVE BEEN HIT BY TORPEDO
	S M DE S LISTENING ABOUT NINE DEG REQUEST IMMED
	S M DE S ASSISTANCE K
1220Z	R S DE S M R R AR
	S M DE R S K
1224Z	R S DE S M K
	S M DE R S THREE UNIDENTIFIED A/C APPROACHING SHIP K
1227Z	R S DE S M R R AR
1233Z	EVER DESTRUCT BILL IN EFFECT.
1233Z	FROM 1233 TO 1234 NO SIGS RECVD OR SECT
1233Z	POWER FAILURE, LOST POWER THROUGH SHIP
1355Z	POWER RESTORED, PATCH PANELS IN RDO CENT INOPP. SIFTED
	CONTROL TO XMITR ROOM
1355Z	XMITR ROOM ASSUMES CONTROL COMMUNICATIONS, WARD, RM2 SUPVSR.
1756Z	HAVE RDO COM XMITR ON AIR BUT HAVE NO RCVR IN POSITION.
1400Z	TEST CHARGER DE R S Z Z Z I PASS IN THE BLIND WE ARE UNDER
	ATTACK BY A/C AND HIGH SPD SURFACE CRAFT
	I SAY AGAIN Z Z Z I PASS IN THE BLIND
	WE ARE UNDER ATTACK BY A/C AND HIGH
	SPD SURFACE CRAFT K
1402Z	AT THIS TIME WE HAVE COORDINATION ESTABLISHED BETWEEN XMITR
	ROOM AND RDO CENTRAL RDO CENTRAL HAS RCVR
	AND WE HAVE XMITR IN LOCAL POSIT.
	WE PASS THE ON XMITR AND RDO RELAYS OTHER

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EX 24

EXHIBIT 24 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

DATE 09 JUN 67 PAGE NO 1 OF 3  
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TIME	TRANSMISSION
1402Z	T O L E STATIONS ANSWER, ADVISE OR INQUIRY.
1405Z	FAST CHARGER DE R S ZZZ K R S DE F C F C DE R S BT REQ IMMED ASSISTANCE. TORPEDO HIT STBD MIDSHIP. FLOODING. LIST WAS AT NINE DEG. APPROX CASUALTIES FOUR DEAD, THREE SERV WOUNDED, FIFTY WOUNDED. RADAR, FATHOMETER AND GYRO INOP. WILL REQUIRE NAV AID CONSISTING OF SEA AND AIR ESCORT. LAST KNOWN POSIT, TIME 1405Z THIRTY ONE DEG THIRTY FIVE POSIT FIVE MIN NORTH THIRTY THREE DEG TWENTY NINE MIN EAST BY K
1410Z	R S DE F C
1410Z	FROM 1 10Z TO 1 32
143Z	F C DE R S
1434Z	R S DE F C
1445Z	R S DE F C F C DE R S NO SIGS RCVD OR SENT CHANGED CUS TO 343 DEG AT EIGHT KTS K R AR K
1417Z	R S DE F C
1447Z	F C DE R S SOMETIME BETWEEN 1405Z AND 1445Z ET C HAVE RECOVERED A R390 RCVR TO POSITION. IN MIT ROOM AND NOW IS TUNED AND IN OPERATION MITR ROOM NOW ASSUMES ALL COMMUNICATIONS CONTROL .. JPW
1500Z	LOST ALL POWER
520Z	APPROX TIME .. POWER RETURNED ALL XMITRS INOP EXCEPT "RT-2 NUMBER TWO .. ALL ANTENNAS DESTROYED OR INOP EXCEPT PO T TOWER
1550Z	R S DE S M S M DE R S R S DE S M I PASS FM FAST CHARGER BY ESCORT ON WAY TO ASSIST DAMAGE AND IF POSSIBLE CONT CUS 340 MAGNETIC AND MAX SPD UNTIL 100 MILES FROM PRISE T POSIT THEN TURN TO 270 DEG K R AR
1552Z	S M DE R S
1555Z	R S E S M I PASS FM FAST CHARGER BY ESCORT PROCEEDING AT MAX SPD DESTROYERS K R AR
1555Z	S M DE R S
1602Z	R S DE CACTUS PITE C P DE R S R S DE C I PASS FM F C BT REQ UR 1900Z EST POSIT K R ZUJ AR K
1602Z	C P DE R S R S DE FF (FANFARE) FF DE R S K
1604Z	R S DE F F F F DE R S BE ADVISED STA BELMONT CALLING U K UR WEAK AND BARELY READABLE. UNABLE TO HEAD STA BELMONT K R ZUJ AR K
1604Z	R S DE F F R S DE C P C P DE R S R S DE C P CALL SIGNS OF ESCORT ARE MATADORE AND BIG DIPPER K R AR
1609Z	C P DE R S

# RADIO LOG

USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5)

WARD, RM2

COMP-0

COMM

TT236.5 K

TIME	TRANSMISSION
1609Z	T O L E
1611Z	C P DE R S K
	R S DE C P K
	C P DE R D
1611Z	R S DE C P
1617Z	JPW
1620Z	R S DE DERRAIL K
	D R DE R S K
	R S DE D R
1621Z	D R DE R S
1622Z	R S DE C P K
	C P DE R S K
	R S DE C P
1623Z	C P DE R S
1625Z	C P DE R S K
	P S DE C P K
	C P DE R S
1629Z	R S DE C P
1715Z	C P DE R S
	R S DE C P
	C P DE R S
1742Z	R S DE C P
1743Z	C P DE R S
1744Z	R S DE C P
1800Z	C P DE R S K
	R S DE C P
	C P DE R S
1805Z	R S DE C P
1806Z	C P DE R S
	R S DE S M
	S M DE R S
	R S DE S M
	S M DE R S
1807Z	R S DE C P
1810Z	C P DE R S
	C P DE R S
	R S DE C P
	C P DE R S
1810Z	R S DE C P

PASS TO F.C.M. 1800Z POSIT 31°35'N  
33° 32'E NORTH EAST AT 10 K

R AR  
K  
K  
PASS FROM FANFARE BT DESTROYERS EXPECT TO  
RECEIVE YOU WITH U AT APPROX 0700Z TOMORROW

R AR  
K  
K  
PASS FROM FANFARE BT INT TOR JCS MSG  
030110Z K

ZUJ AR  
K  
K  
PASS TO FANFARE BT OUR FILES WERE DESTROYED  
DURING BATTLE WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT  
OF THIS MSG RPT DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT  
OF THIS MSG K

R AR  
000 K  
K  
-C-031715Z (S/E FILE)  
CSL ON 031715Z AT TIME 17:22 K

R AR  
K  
K  
GAY TIME CULF ETA 0600Z HOLD E PRESS  
DOROTHY 031612Z K  
I READ BACK FOR PO S CORN (REPEATED) K

C WA DOROTHY TO 031612Z K  
R AR  
K  
K  
INT TOR COM IXTHELT 031917Z K  
INT CORP I.T TOR C.F 031717Z K

C WA C S F 030917Z K  
R ZUJ AR  
K  
K  
COMMUNICATIONS SPACES DESTROYED DURING  
BATTLE, UNABLE TO LOCATE SUBJ. DUE  
SPACES SEALED OFF DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT  
OF SUBJ MSG K

R AR

06 JUN 67

2 OF 320

Time	Transmission
1810Z	T O L F ...../JH/
1812Z	RS DE SM SM DE RS RS DE SM K K REQUEST YOU STEER COURSE 300 DEG FOR RENDEZOUS MAKE FOUR HOUR POSIT REPORTS THIS NET K REQ U SAY AGAIN AA RENDEZOUS K R I SAY AGAIN AA RENDEZOUS (REPEATED) K K AR K K WE ARE STEERING COURSE 300 DEG MAGNETIC AND ALSO WE ARE UNABLE TO GIBE POSIT K K AR INT TFC K NEG K R AR K K R AS AR K U ARE VERY WEAK AND BARELY READABLE REQUEST U RELAY THRU STA CP K R AR K K INT U HAVE CAPABILITY OF <del>SH</del> SHIFTING FREQS BELIEVED ZUE, HOWEVER IF NOT HEARD 15 MIN REQ SHIFT BACK TO THIS FREQ K R DO NOT SHIFT FREQS YET, I WILL CONTACT NCS K R AR K K INT KNOW FREQ 48 K C K R AS AR
1817Z	SM DE RS
1819Z	RS DE SM SM DE RS RS DE SM SM DE RS
1824Z	RS DE SM
1830Z	RS DE CP CP DE RS RS DE CP RS DE DERAILS DR DE RS RS DE DR RS DE DAY TIME GOLF GTC DE RS
1833Z	RS DE CP
1842Z	RS DE DERAILS
1843Z	DR DE RS
1844Z	RS DE DR
1845Z	RS DE GTC
1850Z	RS DE FASTCHARGER FC DE RS RS DE FC FC DE RS RS DE FC
1853Z	FC DE RS
1856Z	RS DE DR DR DE RS RS DE DR DR DE RS RS DE DR
1859Z	RS DE DR
1901Z	ATTEMPTING TO QSY 48
1915Z	QSY COMPLETED
1918Z	ANY STA DE RS RS DE BLUECAT BC DE RS RS DE BC BC DE RS RS DE BC BC DE RS RS DE BC RS DE CP CP DE RS RS DE CP FC DE RS RS DE FC
1923Z	RS DE BC
1924Z	BC DE RS
1925Z	RS DE BC
1930Z	BC DE RS RS DE BC RS DE CP CP DE RS RS DE CP FC DE RS RS DE FC
1931Z	RS DE CP
1932Z	RS DE FC
1933Z	FC DE RS RS DE FC
	RDO CK K (GARBLED) K SAY AGAIN AND GIBE LONG COUNT K U GOOD AND READABLE K R AR RDO CK K R K R AR RDO CK K R K R AR RDO CK K R K R AR RDO CK K R K R AR



RADIO LOG		DATE		TIME		FREQUENCY	
OPERATOR		SHIP		TYPE		FREQ	
USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5)		HAI MAN RH		ONE		6721.5K	
TRANSMISSION							
1933Z	T.....O.....L.....E/JH/						
1939Z	RS DE BC	RDO CK K					
	BC DE RS	R K					
1941Z	RS DE BC	R AR					
1942Z	RS DE BC	K					
	BC DE RS	K					
	RS DE BC	R REQUEST U CONFIRM NR OF MEN SERIOUSLY INJURED AND NR JUST WOUNDED K					
1943Z	BC DE RS	R AR					
1945Z	BC DE RS	K					
	RS DE BC	K					
	BC DE RS	REF YOUR LAST - 10 DEAD, NR SERIOUSLY INJURED 15 TO 25 AND NR JUST INJURED 100 K					
1950Z	RS DE BC	R I READ BACK FOR POSS CORR (REPEATED) K					
1951Z	BC DE RS	R AR					
	RS DE GTG	K					
	GTG DE RS	K					
	RS DE RS	BE ADVISED GTG CALLING U K					
	GTG DE RS	BE ADVISED U ARE HEAK AND BARELY READABLE SAY AGAIN K					
	RS DE GTG	(GARBLED) K					
	GTG DE RS	AS AR					
1953Z	SM DE RS	REQ U ACT AS RELAY FOR ME K					
1954Z	RS DE SM	R AR					
	SM DE RS	(GARBLED) K					
	BC DE RS	U ARE HEAK AND BARELY READABLE K					
	RS DE BC	K					
	BC DE RS	R K					
	RS DE RS	REQ U ACT AS RELAY BETWEEN SM AND ME K					
2016Z	RS DE RS	R AR					
2017Z	RC DE BC	SM NEG TRF K					
2018Z	BC DE RS	R AR					
2023Z	RS DE FC	K					
	FC DE RS	K					
	RS DE FC	(GARBLED) K					
	RS DE FC	(GARBLED) K					
	FC DE RS	BE ADVISED U ARE HEAK AND BARELY READABLE AS AR					
	BC DE RS	REQ U RELAY FOR FC K					
	RS DE BC	I PASS FROM FC FM FC TO RS STEEL JAW 702 WILL BE AIRBORNE 2100Z TO ASSIST RS IN NAVIGATION AND COMMUNICATION K					
2030Z	BC DE RS	R AR					
2031Z	RS DE BC	K					
	BC DE RS	K					
	RS DE BC	INT SERIOUSLY WOUNDED 15 TO 25 INCLUDED IN NUMBER 100 K					

RADIO LOG		FORM NO. 1 (Rev. 11-55) Recorder Type RPS-1		11-55 0107 700 1000	
USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5)		OPERATOR	FREESE RM3	CREW	T.O.
		CIRCUIT	HI-COMM	FREQUENCY	
		6721.5KCS			
TIME	TRANSMISSION				
0001Z	NEW RADIO DAY..... 09 JUNE 1967 /... FREESE RM3				
0020Z	RS DE BC RDO CK K				
	BC DE RS GOOD AND READABLE K				
0031Z	RS DE BC R AR				
0107Z	RS DE SM RDO CK K				
	SM DE RS U GOOD AND READABLE K				
0132Z	RS DE SM U GOOD AND READABLE ALSO NEG TFC AR				
0200Z	SHIFTED MOST TFC TO FLEET COMMON CHIEF				
0201Z	STATION BC CONTINUED TO GIVE RDO CKS EVERY 15 MIN.				
0500Z	SECURED FROM THIS CIRCUIT, STATION MATADOR ASSUMED GUARD				
	THIS FREQ / HALMAN RM2.....				
		DATE		PAGE NO	
		09 JUNE 1967		1 OF 1	
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June 1967

Statement by Captain R.L. ARTHUR, 41594/1401  
Sixth Fleet Maintenance Officer

1. A preliminary estimate of the time required to make permanent shell repairs requires to ensure necessary associated interior strength members is, two to three weeks.
2. A final estimate will require a detailed survey, not expected to commence until 15 June.

R.L. Arthur

EXHIBIT 25 TO LIBERTY COURT OF ENQUIRY

EX 25

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EXHIBIT 267 LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY										LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY									
NAME	AGE	SEX	RACE	RELIGION	EDUCATION	EMPLOYMENT	RESIDENCE	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH	NAME	AGE	SEX	RACE	RELIGION	EDUCATION	EMPLOYMENT	RESIDENCE	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH
1	21	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	1	21	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
2	22	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	2	22	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
3	23	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	3	23	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
4	24	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	4	24	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
5	25	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	5	25	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
6	26	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	6	26	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
7	27	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	7	27	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
8	28	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	8	28	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
9	29	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	9	29	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
10	30	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	10	30	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
11	31	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	11	31	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
12	32	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	12	32	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
13	33	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	13	33	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
14	34	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	14	34	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
15	35	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	15	35	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
16	36	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	16	36	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
17	37	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	17	37	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
18	38	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	18	38	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
19	39	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	19	39	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
20	40	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	20	40	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
21	41	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	21	41	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
22	42	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	22	42	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
23	43	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	23	43	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
24	44	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	24	44	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
25	45	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	25	45	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
26	46	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	26	46	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
27	47	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	27	47	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
28	48	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	28	48	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
29	49	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	29	49	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
30	50	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	30	50	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
31	51	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	31	51	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
32	52	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	32	52	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
33	53	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	33	53	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
34	54	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	34	54	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
35	55	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	35	55	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
36	56	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	36	56	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
37	57	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	37	57	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
38	58	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	38	58	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
39	59	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	39	59	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
40	60	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	40	60	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
41	61	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	41	61	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
42	62	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	42	62	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
43	63	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	43	63	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
44	64	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	44	64	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
45	65	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	45	65	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
46	66	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	46	66	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
47	67	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	47	67	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
48	68	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	48	68	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
49	69	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	49	69	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
50	70	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	50	70	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
51	71	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	51	71	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
52	72	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	52	72	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
53	73	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	53	73	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
54	74	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	54	74	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
55	75	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	55	75	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
56	76	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	56	76	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
57	77	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	57	77	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
58	78	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	58	78	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
59	79	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	59	79	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
60	80	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	60	80	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
61	81	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	61	81	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
62	82	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	62	82	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
63	83	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	63	83	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
64	84	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	64	84	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
65	85	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	65	85	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
66	86	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	66	86	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
67	87	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	67	87	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
68	88	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	68	88	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
69	89	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	69	89	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
70	90	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	70	90	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
71	91	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	71	91	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
72	92	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	72	92	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
73	93	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	73	93	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
74	94	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	74	94	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
75	95	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	75	95	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
76	96	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	76	96	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
77	97	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	77	97	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
78	98	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	78	98	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
79	99	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	79	99	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1
80	100	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1	80	100	M	W	C	H	1	1	1	1



27  
ZM XLVYVZFA ILCY  
Z RUOKRQ  
Z RUOKRM 001DLV 160016  
ZY SSSSS  
190016Z JUN 67 ZFFI  
COMDESRON ONE TWO  
RUOKRQ/CINCUSNAVEUR

SECRET  
ADMIRAL MCCAIN FROM KIDD. DELIVER AT BREAKFAST.  
REF TELECOM, YOUR 141740Z NOT RCVD AS OF 142355Z. HOWEVER  
REQUESTED 8 JUNE CHRONOLOGY FOLLOWS:  
APPROACHING LAND FROM THE WEST DURING THE EARLY MORNING  
HOURS OF 8 JUNE, PROJECTED OPERATIONS OF LIBERTY FOR THE  
MORNING AND AFTERNOON OF THE DAY WAS TO PROCEED TO A POINT  
NAUTICAL MILES FROM THE COAST OF UAR AT 31-27.2N 34-09E  
POINT ALPHA) THENCE TO 31-22.3N 33-42E (POINT BRAVO) THENCE  
31-31N 33-00E, (POINT CHARLIE) RETRACING THIS TRACK  
UNTIL NEW ORDERS RECEIVED. SHIP WOULD OPERATE NORTH OF THIS  
TRACK LINE AT ALL TIMES. IF FIXES COULD NOT BE ACCURATELY  
OBTAINED AS POINT CHARLIE WAS APPROACHED IT WAS INTENDED  
TO HEAD DUE NORTH UNTIL THE 100 FATHOM CURVE WAS CROSSED  
AND THE TRACK MOVED TO THE NORTH TO MORE OR LESS MOVE BACK AND  
FORTH ON THE GENERAL AVERAGE OF THE 100 FATHOM CURVE. NORMAL

RE TWO RUOKRM 001DLV SECRET  
STEAMING SPEED WAS TO BE FIVE KNOTS. NORMAL STEAMING COLORS  
WERE FLOWN AND NORMAL NAVIGATIONAL LIGHTS LIGHTED AT NIGHT.  
THERE WAS NO INTENTION TO STEAM AT DARKEN SHIP AT ANY TIME  
AND THE SHIP DID NOT EVEN EXERCISE AT DARKEN SHIP DRILL DURING  
DEPLOYMENT  
ALL TIMES BRAVO UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED  
54 STEAMING ON 130T, SPD 10 KNOTS  
49 PASSED THROUGH POINT ALPHA CHANGED CSE TO 253T  
50 SINGLE JET A/C (UNIDENTIFIED) CROSSED ASTERN DISTANCE 3-5  
MILES - CIRCLED SHIP FROM 0800 TO PORT AND RETURNED TO UAR  
INLAND. LOCATING TWO TRANSMITTED (LIBERTY 000742ZJUN).  
55 DECREASED SPD TO 5 KNOTS  
56 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP-HIGH  
57 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP LOCATING THREE DRAFTED FOR  
TRANSMISSION AT 0812Z (BUT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN TRANSMITTED)  
52 PASSED THROUGH POINT BRAVO C/C TO 263T  
10 EXERCISE AT G.O. DRILL  
18 SECURED FROM G.O. DRILL.  
51 3 SMALL SURFACE CONTACTS HELD ON RADAR 32,000 YARDS BEARING  
1T - REPORTED TO BRIDGE AS 3 SURFACE CONTACT

RE THREE RUOKRM 001DLV SECRET  
3 RADAR REPORTS POSSIBLE A/C PASSING OVER SURFACE CONTACTS.  
5 SINGLE A/C SIGHTED APPROACHING SHIP FROM 135 DEG RELATIVE  
MILES DISTANCE, ALTITUDE APPROXIMATELY 1000 FT.  
PASSED DOWN TRACK OF SHIP  
3 LOUD EXPLOSION - PORT SIDE AMIDSHIPS  
5 SOUNDED GENERAL ALARM - LARGE FIRE IN VICINITY OF FRAME 85  
LEVEL WHERE FUEL FOR MOTOR DRIVEN FIRE PUMPS ARE LOCATED.  
5 ALL AHEAD FLANK SIGNALLER BY ENGINE ORDER TELEGRAPH.  
5-1410 SHIP UNDER REPEATED AIR ATTACK WITH TWO OR  
3 A/C MAKING COORDINATED STAFFING, ROCKET, AND INCENDIARY RUNS  
ON SHIP. THREE MAJOR FIRES TOPSIDE COVERING LARGE AREAS OF  
SHIP WITH FLAMES AND HEAVY SMOKE A TOTAL OF EIGHT MEN WERE  
KILLED OR DIED AS A RESULT OF INJURIES RECEIVED DURING THE AIR A  
TACK. ONE KILLED AND ONE MORTALLY WOUNDED ON BRIDGE, TWO KILLED  
MACHINE GUN 51, ONE KILLED AT MACHINE GUN 52, ONE DIED FROM  
WOUNDS RECEIVED ON THE MAIN DECK STARBOARD SIDE AND TWO DIED  
WOUNDS RECEIVED ON THE 81 LEVEL PORT SIDE. APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY  
5 WOUNDED, INCLUDING COMMANDING OFFICER, THROUGHOUT TOPSIDE  
AS FROM SHRAPNEL AND SHOCK OF EXPLODING ROCKETS.  
5 BEGAN MAKING TURNS FOR 10 KNOTS.

RE FOUR RUOKRM 001DLV SECRET  
5 5 0010Z 07JUN67 07.00.00.00

HURT BY DENSE SMOKE FROM BURNING MOTOR WHALEBOAT.  
 ONE POUND FIRED BY MACHINE GUN 51. C.O. ORDERED HOLD FIRE.  
 MACHINE GUN 53 OPENED FIRE. C.O. SENT ENS LUCAS AROUND PORT  
 OF BRIDGE TO GET MACHINE GUN 53 TO CEASE FIRING  
 WORD PASSED TO STANDBY FOR TORPEDO ATTACK TO STARBOARD.  
 COMMENCED STRAFING STARBOARD SIDE OF SHIP  
 TORPEDO PASSED 75 YARDS ASTERN OF SHIP.  
 TORPEDO HIT STARBOARD SIDE AMIDSHIPS.  
 SIX MEN DIED AS A RESULT OF THE TORPEDO HIT AND MTB  
 FING FIRE.  
 LOST ELECTRICAL POWER THROUGHOUT THE SHIP.  
 LOST STEAM PRESSURE- SECURED ENGINES AND BOILERS -  
 GAUGES AND METERS IN FIREROOM AND ENGINE ROOM WERE KNOCKED  
 TORPEDO HIT IN RESEARCH COORDINATION CENTER WHERE  
 APPROXIMATELY TWENTY MEN WERE AT G.O. STATIONS. THESE SPACES

FIVE RUOKRM 081DLV S E C R E T  
 DIED INSTANTLY AND MOST PERSONNEL IN THIS SPACE DIED OF  
 OVER BLAST OR DROWNING. NO SIGNS OF LIFE EMANATING FROM COORDINATION  
 CENTER AND ADJACENT SPACES WHICH COULD NOT BE OPENED WITHOUT  
 RISK OF FLOODING OTHER SPACES.  
 MTB'S STANDING AWAY FROM THE SHIP. ONE MTB HAS HULL NUMBER  
 17  
 ONE MTB RETURNED TO SHIP AND SIGNALLED "DO YOU NEED HELP"  
 ENGLISH. C.O. SIGNALLED "NEGATIVE"  
 MTB'S RETIRED TOWARD SHORE  
 HELICOPTER BEARING STAR OF DAVIS MARKINGS APPROACHED SHIP,  
 SIDE, HOVERING AT ABOUT 500 YDS DISTANCE.  
 SECOND HELICOPTER APPROACHED SHIP.  
 MARKINGS ON HELICOPTERS ARE H4 AND H2 OR H4 AND H2. HELICOPTER  
 REPEATED PASSES AROUND AND OVER SHIP. THEY WERE NOT  
 ABLE TO PICK UP ANY BODIES, PERSONS OR DEBRIS.  
 POWER RESTORED TO BRIDGE BUT RUDDER DID NOT ANSWER -  
 CONTINUED STEERING FROM AFTER STEERING.  
 MTB'S APPROACHING SHIP STARBOARD SIDE 7-8 MILES DISTANT.  
 THE NEXT HOUR AND A QUARTER THE MTB'S RETURNED TO THE SHIP  
 SEVERAL TIMES AND BY 1713 THEY HAD RETIRED OUT OF SIGHT OVER

SIX RUOKRM 081DLV S E C R E T  
 HORIZON.  
 TWO UNIDENTIFIED SET H/C APPROACHED SHIP FROM THE STBD SIDE  
 RECONNOITERED FROM A DISTANCE.  
 ATTEMPTING TO CLEAR AREA STEERING NORTHERLY COURSE AT SPEEDS  
 RANGING FROM 8 TO 8 KNOTS. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES WERE TREATED IN  
 WARDROOM ON A CONTINUING BASIS. DAMAGE CONTROL AND FIRE  
 FIGHTING CONTINUED FLOODING AND DAMAGE. ENGINEERING  
 CASUALTIES WERE RESTORED BUT STEERING WAS BY HAND FROM AFTER  
 ENGINEERING.  
 ISRAELI HELICOPTER APPROACHED SHIP- CIRCLED CLOSE ABOARD  
 ATTEMPTED TO SIGNAL - THEY APPEARED TO DESIRE TO LOWER  
 LIFT TO THE DECK - C.O. CONSIDERED RECEIVING HIM ON FORECASTLE  
 RULED THIS OUT AS TOO HAZARDOUS. REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO  
 COMMUNICATE WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. AND AT 1852 COPTER DROPPED  
 MESSAGE PACKET ON FORECASTLE. THE MESSAGE, WRITTEN ON A CALLING  
 CARD OF THE U.S. NAVAL ATTACHE TEL AVIV, ASKED "HAVE YOU  
 CASUALTIES" SHIP TRIED BY SEVERAL MEANS TO INDICATE. DURING NEXT  
 MINUTES THAT THERE WERE MANY CASUALTIES BUT THERE WAS NO  
 INDICATION THAT THE MESSAGE WAS UNDERSTOOD. THE MUTILATED  
 REMAINS OF THREE DEAD CREW MEMBERS HAD NOT YET BEEN REMOVED

SEVEN RUOKRM 081DLV S E C R E T  
 IN THE FORECASTLE AND MUST HAVE BEEN OBSERVED FROM THE  
 HELICOPTER. THE HELICOPTER DEPARTED THE SHIP SHORTLY BEFORE  
 SET (ABOUT 1905) SHIP CONTINUED STEAMING THROUGH NIGHT TO  
 U WITH ESCORTS DISPATCHED BY COMSIXTHFLT  
 FOREGOING CONSTITUTES DETAILED RECONSTRUCTION FROM OWN NOTEBOOK,  
 LOG, BELL BOOK AND BEST RECOLLECTION OF CO/CHIEF ENGR/  
 OFF/BRIDGE PERSONNEL. ALL CONCUR

DECLASSIFIED

081DLV S E C R E T  
 21 JUN 76  
 OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF THE NAVY

Copy 4 of 4 copies  
 215

05 June 1967

MEMORANDUM

From: Commanding Officer, USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5)  
To: All OOD/JOOD/CIC Personnel

Subj: Modified Condition of Readiness Three and Unidentified Contacts

1. Effective immediately, two men will be stationed on the forecastle as additional lookouts/gun crews to establish and maintain a modified Condition of Readiness Three Watch on a twenty-four hour basis until further notice. All .50 caliber machine guns are to be kept on station with ammunition in mount tray. (Rounds to be next to but not in chamber). Lookouts and forecastle gun mount personnel are to man mounts on engaged side and defend the ship in the event of surprise air/surface attack while regular General Quarters teams are being assembled. Control of fire to be IAW LIBERTY Gunnery Doctrine.
2. Any unidentified surface contact approaching the ship on a collision or near collision course at a speed of 25 knots or more is to be considered acting in a hostile manner and condition of Readiness One is to be set immediately.
3. Any unidentified air contact(s) directly approaching the ship on an apparent strafing/bombing/torpedo attack is (are) to be considered acting in a hostile manner and condition of Readiness One will be set immediately.
4. When any craft - surface/air/sub surface is sighted and identified as enemy, condition of Readiness One will be set immediately to engage enemy and repel attack.
5. Maximum effort must be made to minimize personnel/material damage, safeguard the watertight integrity of the ship, and continue performance of primary mission. It is better to set general quarters in doubtful cases than to be taken by surprise and be unable to fight the ship. Take immediate action as may be required by the situation, then advise me of what steps have been taken.

Respectfully,  
*W. L. McGonagle*  
W. L. MCGONAGLE

Copy to:  
Executive Officer  
Gunnery Officer

Ex 28

EXHIBIT 28 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

28

346



## GUNNERY DOCTRINE

### 1. ORDNANCE INSTALLATIONS AND CAPABILITIES.

The ordnance installation aboard the USS LIBERTY consist of four single mount .50 caliber machine guns located port and starboard on the O1 level frame 37 and port and starboard on the O3 level frame 89. These guns are .30 caliber Browning Machine Guns, M2, Heavy Barrel with a rate of fire of 450 to 500 rounds per minute. The guns have a firing arc of 220° in the forward mounts port and starboard and 140° in the amidships mounts, all mounts have limit rails installed to prevent the guns from shooting in to the ship's superstructure. They may be used to defend against either low flying aircraft or small surface craft, but their primary function is to act as a deterrent to any attempt by hostiles to board the ship.

### 2. STANDARD COMMANDS AND REPORTS.

In order for the .50 caliber mounts to be as effective as possible, there must be a thoroughly understood and standardized system of commands and reports utilized.

a. Standard Procedures. The following actions will be carried out when General Quarters is sounded:

1. Gun crews proceed immediately to stations bringing the guns upside if not already mounted.
2. When sufficient personnel are on station, the station will report "Manned" to Gun Control over the 5JP circuit.
3. When ready to open fire at a reduced rate with sufficient personnel on hand, each station will report "Ready".
4. When the station is in a fully ready condition with sufficient personnel to service the station at a normal rate, and ammunition is nearby, the station reports "Manned and Ready".
5. During peacetime when conditions do not require the breaking out of ammunition, the reports of "Ready" and "Manned and Ready" will be modified by the words "Except for Ammunition".

#### b. Ammunition Commands.

1. "Ammunitions type" (followed by a type such as armor piercing or ball) is a command to gun crews to designate the type of ammunition.
2. "Replace ammunition" is a command to replace all ammunition expended from ready stowage. A report of completion is made when the ammunition has been replaced.

#### c. Firing Commands.

1. "Standby" is the command for loaders to prepare to load.
2. "Load" is a command to load the guns. This command may be omitted, in which case the guns are loaded at the command "Commence firing".
3. "Commence Fire" is the command from the controlling station to load and open fire on previously specified targets or to resume fire after a command to "Check Fire".

EXHIBIT 29, TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY 29



c. Firing Command (Cont'd)

4. "Check Fire" is the command to discontinue fire, usually temporarily. All other functions of the control parties and gun crews continue. Loaded hot guns must be fired as soon as possible on safe bearings in accordance with established procedures.

5. "Silence" is a command used in case of a serious or potentially serious casualty. It may be given by an observer or by any other person. At the command Silence every man in the vicinity freezes in his tracks and remains there without noise or confusion until further orders are given.

6. "Carry On" is the command to continue normal battery operations that have been interrupted by the command "Silence".

7. "Cease Fire" is the command to stop firing. A command to cease fire does not signify the end of an action or mission. As soon as "Cease Fire" is given, hot guns are unloaded on safe bearings as soon as possible. Immediately after "Cease Fire" all guns will report any casualties to material or personnel experienced during action and the status of the gun, whether loaded or clear followed shortly by an accurate account of ammunition expended.

8. "At Ease" is the command given to allow the men at stations to relax when they must remain at stations.

d. Open Fire Doctrine.

The command to "Commence Fire" will normally come from the Commanding Officer via the Gun Control Officer. Exceptions to this are made during wartime as follows:

<u>Surface Target</u>	<u>Gun Control</u>	<u>Mt. Operator</u>
a. submarine or periscope, not previously identified as being friendly, sighted.	X	
b. torpedo or wake directed toward ship.	X	
c. positively identified enemy close aboard during a melee.	X	X
<u>Air Target</u>		
a. Plane(s) making a threatening approach.	X	
b. Plane(s) making surprise attack.	X	X
c. Any plane attacking after an air engagement has started.	X	X
d. Radio control bomb or Rocket approaching.	X	X

3. TARGET DESIGNATION AND ACQUISITION PROCEDURES.

a. Bearing: All reports of bearing are given in three digits. All ciphers in bearing reports are pronounced "zero". For example bearing 050 is reported "zero five zero".

b. Range: 1. When the range is an even hundred or thousand, it is reported as the number of hundreds or thousands as in the following example:  
"Range eight hundred" (800)  
"Range three thousand" (3000)

3. TARGET DESIGNATION AND POSITION PROCEDURES.

2. When the range is below 1000 and not an even hundred each digit is pronounced. For example:  
"Range nine seven hundred" (970)

3. When the range is above 1000 and ends in an even hundred it is reported as follows:

"Range four seven hundred" (4700)

c. Altitude: The absence of height finding radar makes an estimate of altitude largely guess work and since there is no automatic or mechanical fire control it is largely unimportant.

d. Position Angle: The angle above the horizon of and aircraft in degrees as follows:  
"Position angle one" (1 degree)  
"Position angle forty seven" (47 degrees)

e. Due to the limited ordnance capabilities of LIBERTY the primary responsibility for target acquisition is with the mount operator. Initial target designation may come from gun control, but as indicated in Open Fire doctrine, it may be initiated by the mount operator.

4. FIRE CONTROL DOCTRINE-SURFACE.

a. Type and method of fire. Rapid continuous fire is accomplished in short bursts (three to five rounds per barrel) until hitting gun range is established, at which time a shift is made to normal rapid continuous fire.

b. Spotting is direct and will be corrected by the individual gunner.

c. Maximum range of opening fire is 1000 yards.

d. Type of projectiles AP1, AP1-T, and Incendiary.

5. FIRE CONTROL DOCTRINE - ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE.

a. Type and method of fire - All firing is continuous fire. Fire is interrupted only when the target is obscured.

b. Maximum range of open fire is 2000 yards.

c. Type of projectile - AP1, AP1-T, and Incendiary.

d. Priority of targets - based on best estimate of enemy capabilities or threat.

6. PREFIRE CHECK OFF LIST.

Prior to operation of the .50 caliber machine gun the following items must be checked by the mount operator. A similar inspection will be held after firing.

a. Check the general appearance of the weapon.

b. Pull the bolt to the rear, release, and check for smooth operation.

c. Check the cover latch and be sure that the spring has enough tension to keep the cover securely latched.

6. PREFIRING CHECK OFF LIST (Cont'd)

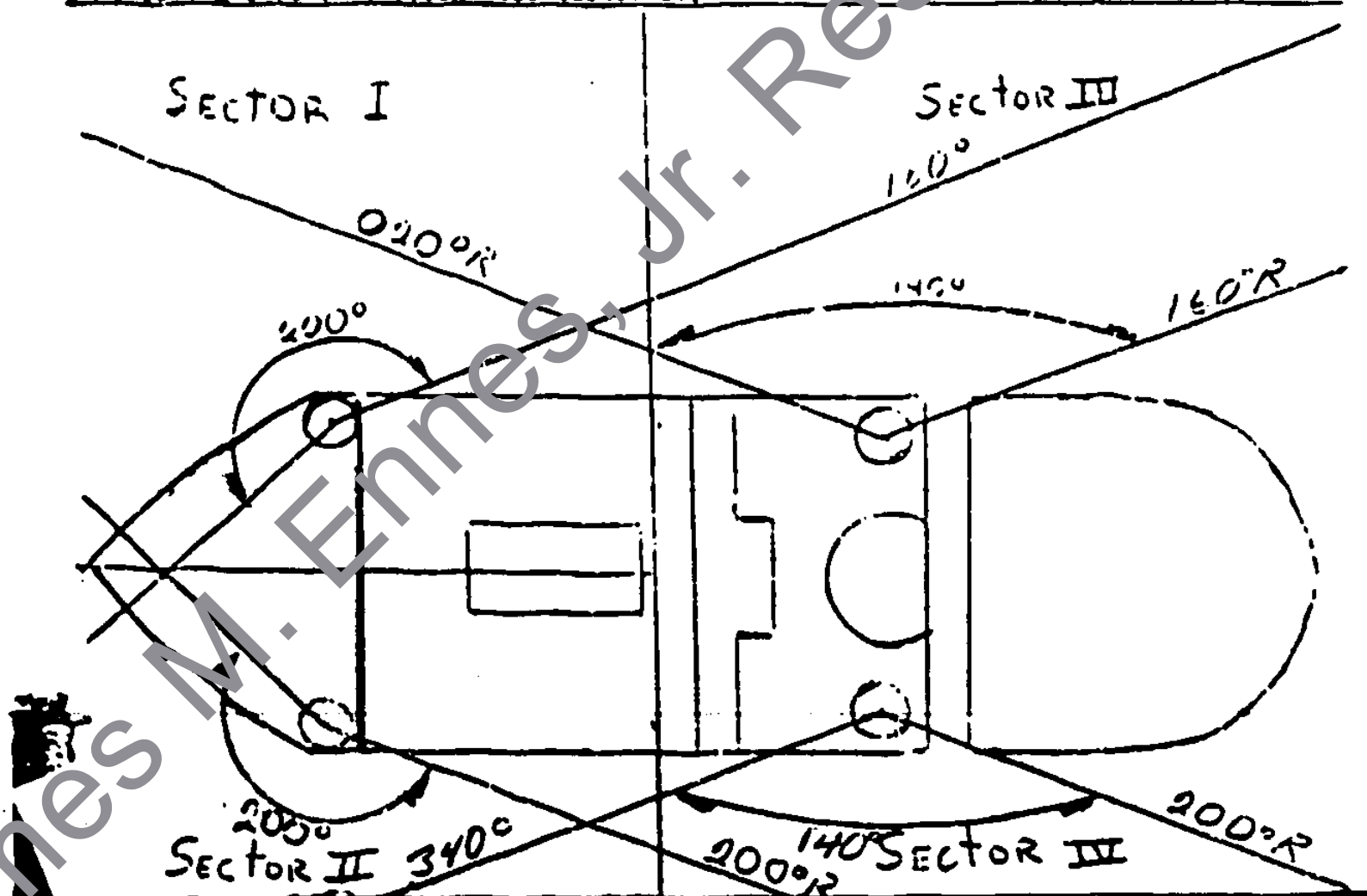
- d. Raise the cover and check the functioning of the cover detent pawl.
- e. Move the belt feed lever from side to side and make sure the belt feed mechanism moves in its full travel in both directions.
- f. Check the back plate latch and lock.
- g. Check to see if the bore is clear.
- h. Check the head space.
- i. Check timing.

7. FIRING SECTORS AND FIRING ARC.

The mount firing sectors are as follows: Mount 51 from  $000^{\circ}$  to  $090^{\circ}$ R; Mount 52 from  $270^{\circ}$ R to  $360^{\circ}$ R; Mount 53 from  $090^{\circ}$ R to  $180^{\circ}$ R; Mount 54 from  $200^{\circ}$ R to  $270^{\circ}$ R. Any target in these arcs or sectors is the responsibility of the respective mount.

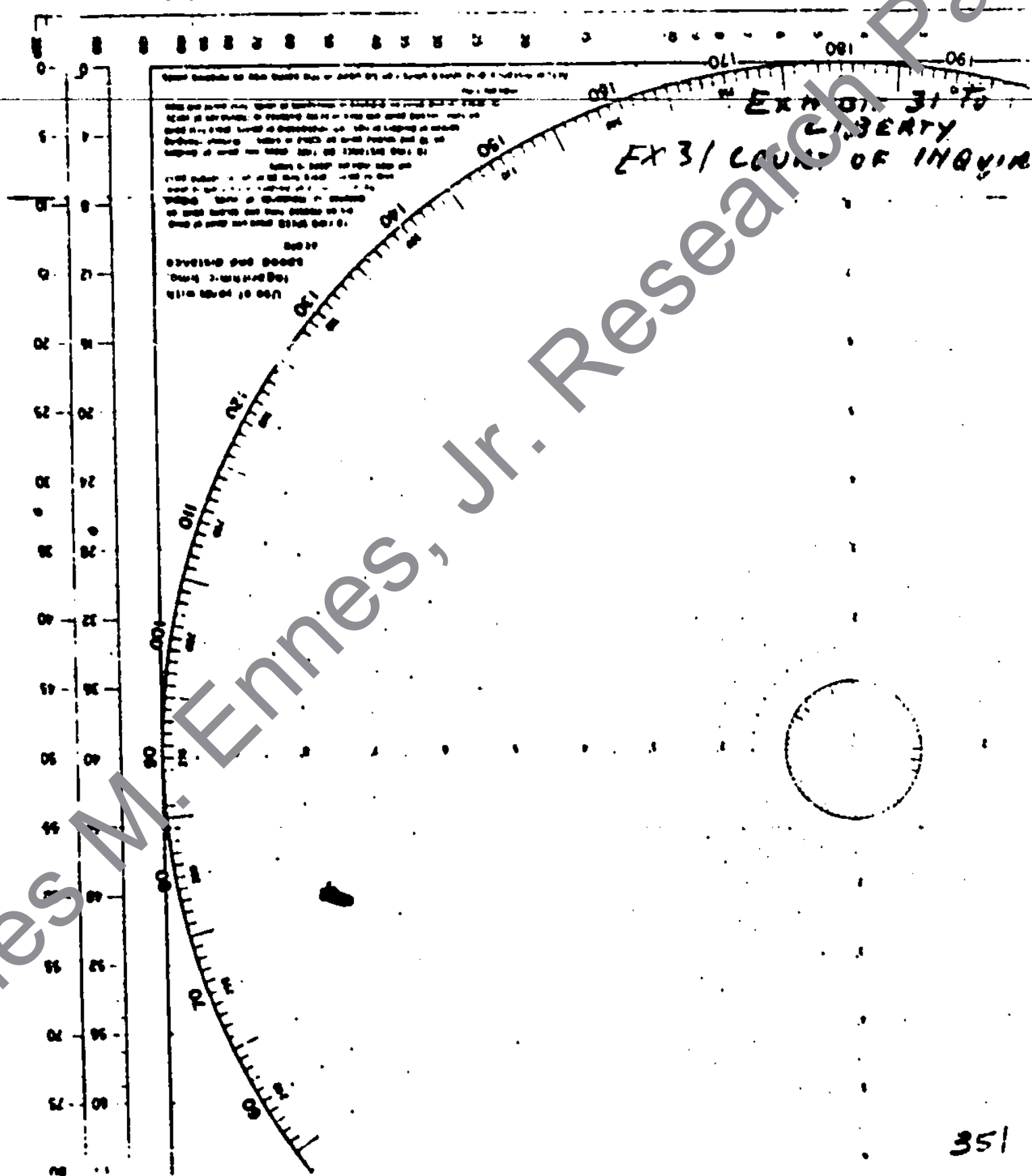
The mounts firing arcs are limited as follows: Mount 51 from  $320^{\circ}$ R to  $160^{\circ}$ R; Mount 52 from  $200^{\circ}$ R to  $040^{\circ}$ R; Mount 53 from  $020^{\circ}$ R to  $140^{\circ}$ R; Mount 54 from  $200^{\circ}$ R to  $340^{\circ}$ R.

Mount 51's firing sector is designate Sector I, Mount 52's firing sector is designated Sector II, Mount 53's firing sector is designated Sector III, Mount 54's firing sector is designated Sector IV.



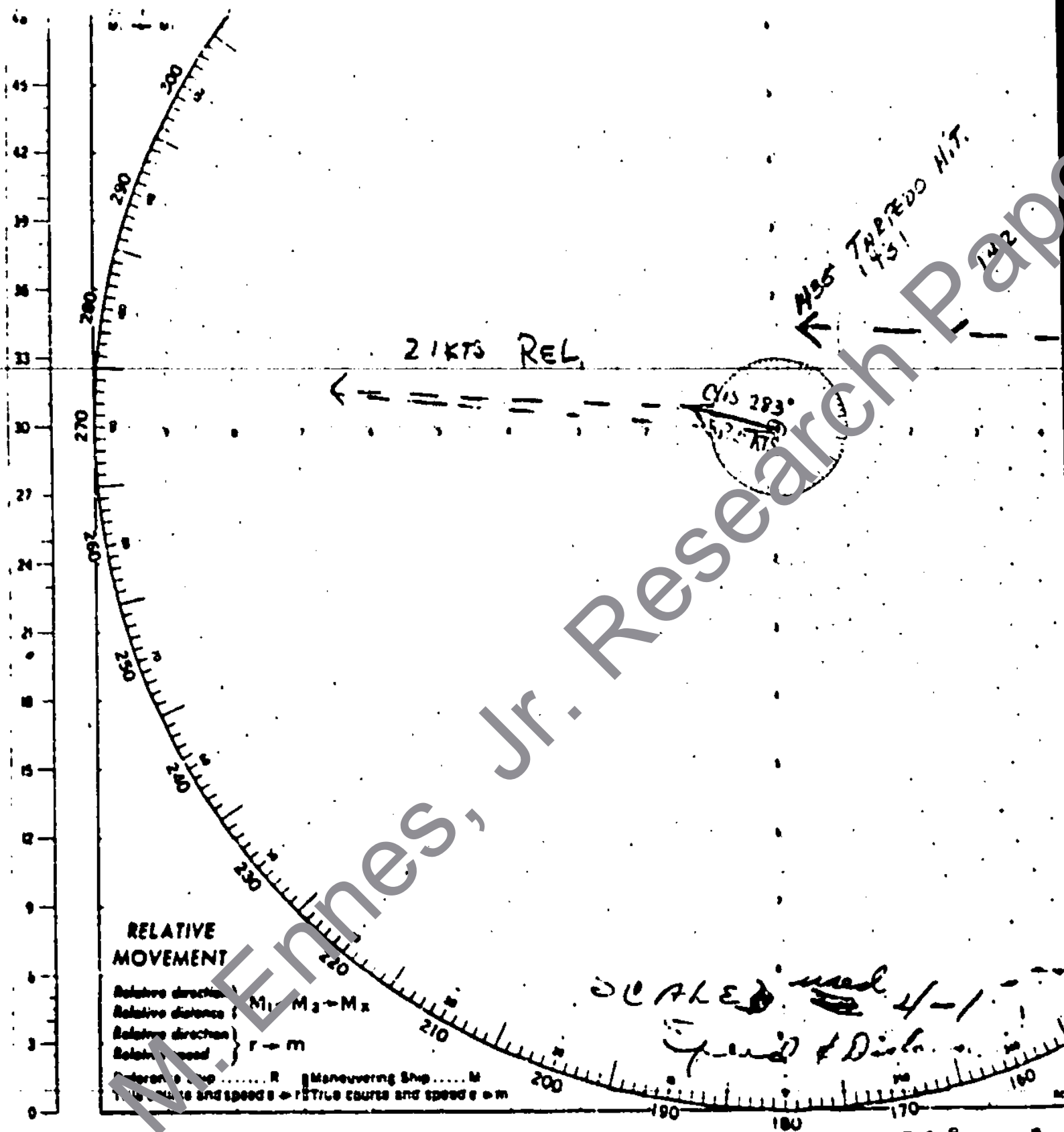
DISTANCE in yards  
Relative or actual  
DISTANCE in miles

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY



351





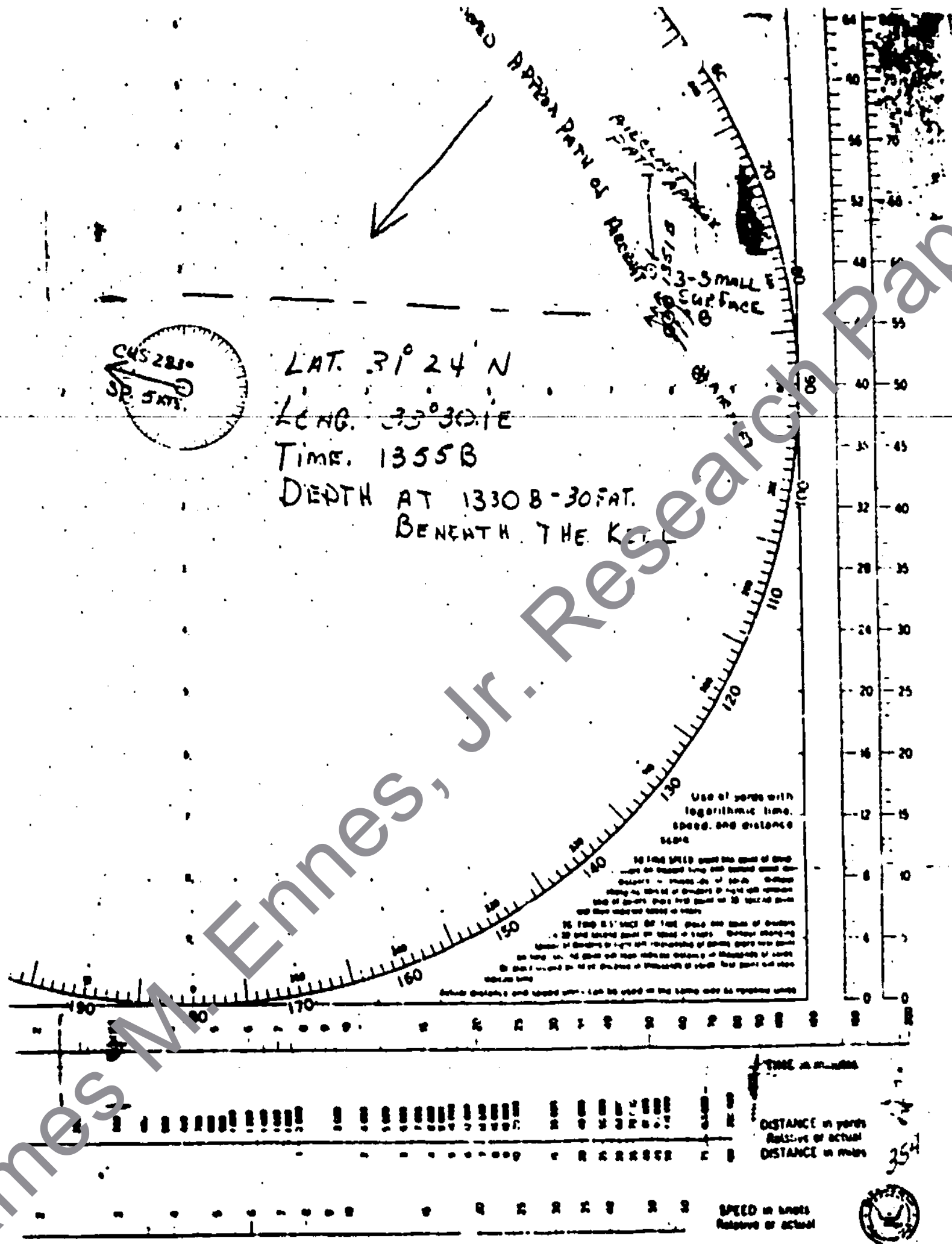
**QUANTITY TIME SPEED AND DISTANCE SCALE**  
 This scale is used for determining time, speed, and distance.  
 To find distance: Set 1000 on the scale of the ship's speed (in knots) over the scale of the observer's speed (in knots). The distance in miles will be read on the scale of the observer's speed.  
 To find time: Set the distance in miles on the scale of the observer's speed (in knots) over the scale of the ship's speed (in knots). The time in minutes will be read on the scale of the ship's speed.  
 To find speed: Set the distance in miles on the scale of the observer's speed (in knots) over the scale of the ship's speed (in knots). The speed in knots will be read on the scale of the observer's speed.  
 Actual distance and speed may be used in the same way as indicated above.

**Use of 3-scale nomogram**  
 Given any two corresponding quantities, solve for third by laying rule through points of proper scales and read intersection on third scale.

1 of 50  
 1665-10

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 in the Bureau of the U. S. Navy

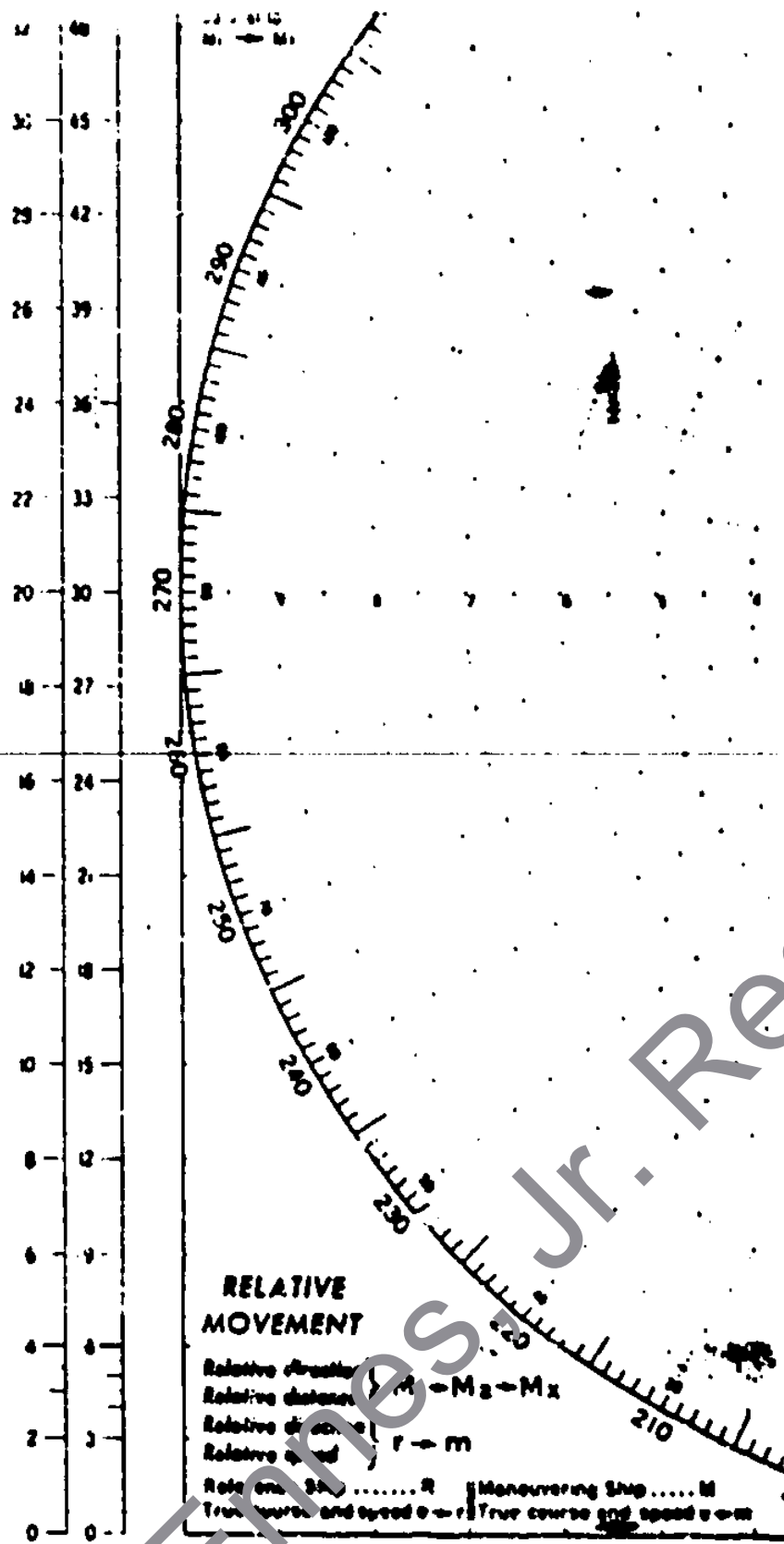




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5TH ED. JULY 1961

H.O. 2665-10



**LOGARITHMIC TIME, SPEED, AND DISTANCE SCALE**

Use of scale with logarithmic, time, speed, and distance scales.

1. To find the time in hours and minutes for a ship to travel a given distance at a given speed, place the ship's speed on the speed scale and the distance on the distance scale. Read the time on the time scale.

2. To find the speed of a ship in knots or miles per hour, given the time and distance, place the time on the time scale and the distance on the distance scale. Read the speed on the speed scale.

3. To find the distance traveled by a ship in miles or knots, given the time and speed, place the time on the time scale and the speed on the speed scale. Read the distance on the distance scale.

**Use of 3 scale nomogram.**

Given any two corresponding quantities, solve for the third by drawing a line through points on proper scales and intersection on third scale.

Price \$1.00  
 Per Pack of 50  
 H.O. 2065-10



The following is a list of steel hits, both holes and direct hits that did not penetrate ship.

Below MAIN DECK	Pact	36
	std	171

MAIN DECK	Pact	68
	std	103

01 Level Deck House	91
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01 Level Fwd + Aft	52
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FORECASTLE	26
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02 Level Deck House	53
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03 Level (Bridge) and 04 Level	164
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+ (this includes stack and  
machinery casing area)

821
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Steel side below MAIN DECK (EX 33) 34  
Torp. Hit EXHIBIT 33 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY

**CONFIDENTIAL (WHEN FILLED IN)** **NAVAL MESSAGE**

14 JUN 67 T-1 250

PREC: 42 01

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NNNNCZCKDBJ52ZCEGA732  
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ZNY CCCCC  
P 150346Z JUN 67  
FM NAVCOMMSTA PHIL  
TO RUDLKD/CINCUSNAVEUP

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BT  
CONFIDENTIAL  
A. YOUR 141632Z JUN 67.  
B. JCS 072230Z JUN 67.  
C. JCS 080110Z JUN 67.  
D. NAVCOMMSTA IHIL 130041Z JUN 67.  
7. REF B OR 133E/08 FROM NAJRELSTA KUNIA  
TOD 1700Z/88 TO DCS RELSTA DAGIS  
2. REF C TOR 0400/08 FROM NAJRELSTA KUNIA  
TOD 0449Z/88 TO NAVCOMMSTA GUAM  
39 REF D TRACER ACTION BY NAVCOMMSTA PHIL PERTAINING  
TO REF C.

BT

DECLASSIFIED

Classification (Control) (Control)  
1 by authority of OPNAV/NAVMIL 040012/131  
21 Jan 76  
29 Jan 76  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

35

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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CON	
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150346 JUN 67

CONFIDENTIAL  
(WHEN FILLED IN)  
EX 35 357

NAVEUR HCU LON 2100/2 (REV 10-65)

CONFIDENTIAL (WHEN FILLED IN)

NAVAL MESSAGE

36

REF ID: <i>JR 1000</i>	DRAFTED BY: CAPT L. R. RAISH	PRECEDENCE	CLASS	INDEXED	PROCESSED	ROUTINE	AIR MAIL
14 JUN 67	T-1	250			PPP		

FROM: QNCUSNAVEUR	TO: NAVCOMMSTA GREECE	INFO: CONFIDENTIAL	USC LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)
<p>DECLASSIFIED</p> <p>on 29 Jun 76 by AR/2211 T319 21 Jun 76</p> <p>by authority of COMNAVSTA SAV 027322</p> <p>DATE: 29 Jun 76</p> <p>OFFICIAL USE ONLY</p>			

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SESSION:
- A. FROM WHOM DID YOU RECEIVE COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z JUN 67? AT WHAT TIME?
  - B. WHO WAS NAVCOMMSTA GREECE TO PROTECT FOR IN REGARD TO THIS MESSAGE AS ASSIGNED BY THE ROUTING INDICATORS?
  - C. WHAT ACTIONS DID YOUR PERSONNEL TAKE WITH REGARD TO COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z?
  - D. HOW LONG DID IT TAKE FOR YOUR PERSONNEL TO RECOGNIZE THAT COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z JUN HAD BEEN MISROUTED TO NAVCOMMSTA GREECE AND START ACTION TO RECTIFY?
  - E. COULD YOUR PERSONNEL, ONCE THE MICROUTE WAS RECOGNIZED HAVE RECOUPED SOME OF THE LOST TIME BY REROUTING DIRECT TO NAVCOMMSTA ASMARA? IF SO, WHY DIDN'T THEY?

SECTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
SECTION	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

CONFIDENTIAL (WHEN FILLED IN)

358



TYPE WITHIN MARGIN ONLY

CONFIDENTIAL

F. HOW DOES THE MESSAGE TRAFFIC HANDLED BY NAVCOMMSTA GREECE FOR THE WEEK 3-9 JUN 67 INCLUSIVE COMPARE WITH THE PREVIOUS WEEK (I.E., 29 MAY - 2 JUN INCLUSIVE) AS REGARDS VOLUME AND PRECEDENCES USED? HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO A REPRESENTATIVE WEEK, SAY IN FEB 67?

G. WHAT IS THE PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE OF NAVCOMMSTA GREECE? HOW MANY DO YOU HAVE ON BOARD?

H. WHAT IN GENERAL IS THE LEADERSHIP AND EXPERIENCE LEVEL OF PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN MESSAGE HANDLING OPERATIONS?

I. SUMMARIZE IN NARRATIVE STYLE COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDED AND ACTIONS OF NAVCOMMSTA GREECE INCIDENT TO AND FOLLOWING THE ATTACK ON USS LIBERTY.

2. SUBMIT REPLIES ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. OP-4.

SSA 1194  
141629/JUN 67

PAGE TWO OF TWO

CONFIDENTIAL

NAVEUR HCU LON 2100/22 (9-65)

359

CONFIDENTIAL  
USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS

A. YOUR 141629Z JUN 67

1. MAY REF A FOLLOWING INFO FORWARDED. SUB-PARAGRAPHS KEYED TO SERIAL C OF THE NAME REFERENCE.

A. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z RECEIVED FROM MAJRELSTA ASMARA (AEZ) AT 081238Z.

5. NAVCOMMSTA GREECE WAS INADVERTANT RELAY POINT. NORMAL DELIVERY PATH FROM ORIGINATOR TO ADDEE WOULD HAVE BY-PASSED THISTA. ONCE RECEIVED, HOWEVER, NAVCOMMSTA GREECE HAD TO PROTECT FOR NAOPNA NAVCOMMSTA ASHARA. THIS WAS THE ONLY ADDEE IN THE ROUTING LINE WHEN RECEIVED THISTA.

C. HANDLED AS ANY OBOE MSG ALONG WITH OTHERS OF EQUAL AND HIGHER PRECEDENCE, DCS RELAY HANDLED 251 FLASH MSGS ON 12 JUN RADAY. OBOE TRAFFIC COUNT SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER, ESTIMATE 1989. EXACT COUNT WOULD REQUIRE SEVERAL DAYS EFFORT. TOTAL TRAFFIC HANDLED IN THIS TORN TAPE

PAGE TWO RUQKC 4337 C O N F I D E N T I A L  
RELAY ON 08 JUNE WAS 5718 MSGS.

D. NO PERSONNEL RECOGNITION OR SPECIAL ACTION REQUIRED ON THE PARTICULAR MSG AS IT CARRIED A VALID ROUTING. MULTIPLE ADDRESS PROCESSING UNIT (MAPU) AUTOMATICALLY RE-ROUTED MSG BACK TO MAJRELESTA ASMARA (AEZ) SEND POSITIONS. MAPU IS A MEMORY CORE DEVICE PROGRAMMED WITH PRE-DETERMINED ROUTING INDICATORS. ALL RUOP TRAFFIC, REGARDLESS OF RECEIVE ORIGIN, WILL BE DIRECTED TO THE AEZ SEND POSITIONS BY THIS DEVICE.

E. DUE TO EXTREMELY HEAVY TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE MISSENT (NOT MISROUTED) MSG WAS EVER CONSIDERED FOR RE-ROUTE ACTION. THISTA HANDLES MANY OBCE MSGS TO NAVCOMNSTA ASHARA WITHOUT REQUIREMENT TO PASS VIA DIRECT CIRCUITRY. DIRECT CIRCUITRY CARRIES A DIFFERENT ROUTING THAN DCS COMMUN USER CIRCUITRY AND DELIVERY MEANS

[illegible]

CON			
YOB	15/06/39		
SSN			
LOI			

NO. 150731 JUN 67

**CONFIDENTIAL**

(WHEN FILLED IN)

EXHIBIT 37 TO LIBERTY COURT OF INDIANA

IS DETERMINED BY THE ORIGINATOR, NOT THE RELAY STATION. RE-ROUTE ACTION DIRECT TO NAVCOMMSTA ASHARA WOULD HAVE ENTAILED CUTTING A NEW PILOT ON THE MSG BY HAND, THEN PASSING TO A COMPLETELY SEPARATE RELAY (NAVCOMMOPNET) AT THISTA FOR DELIVERY VIA DIRECT CIRCUITRY. CONSIDER NEGATIVE RECOUP OF LOST TIME BY THIS METHOD.

F. TRAFFIC VOLUMES 29 MAY-2 JUN WERE APPROX THREE-FOURTHS AS HEAVY AS PERIOD 3-9 JUN. PRECEDENCES 29 MAY-2 JUN MUCH LOWER. VERY

PAGE THREE RUQKC 4337 C O N F I D E N T I A L  
LITTLE FLASH AND OBOE TRAFFIC PASSED. VOLUMES FEB VERSUS JUNE LESS THAN TWO-THIRDS AS HIGH. NO HIGH PRECEDENCE TRAFFIC OF CONSEQUENCE IN FEB. DIRECT COMPARISON FIGURES CAN BE FURNISHED BUT WILL REQUIRE TIME FOR COMPILATION.

G. TOTAL PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE FOR NAVCOMMSTA GREECE IS 299. ON BOARD COUNT IS 292. RM/CY COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL ALLOWANCE IS 175. ON BOARD 139. THESE ALLOWANCE FIGURES ARE FOR BOTH RECEIVER AND TRANSMITTER SITES. CONTROL/TRAFFIC PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN IN A THREE SECTION WATCH STATUS FOR THE PAST 14 MONTHS.

H. LEADERSHIP AND EXPERIENCE LEVEL CONSIDERED MARGINAL BUT NOTHING LACKING IN ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM. EXAMPLE: 54 RM2 ALLOWED, 27 ON BOARD; 12 RMSN ALLOWED, 25 ON BOARD.

1. AT 081234Z JUN NAVCOMMSTA GREECE INTERCEPTED INITIAL LIBERTY ATTACK REPORT FROM THE USS SARATOGA ON THE CINCUSNAVEUR 204.04 VOICE IN COMM NET. THIS WAS PUT IN TTY FORMAT AND RELAYED VIA NAVCOMMSTA GREECE AND XRA BCST AS A NO DTG MSG, NAVCOMMSTA GREECE TIME OF FILE 1239Z/8 JUN. SUBSEQUENT TO THE INITIAL REPORT, SARATOGA AND NAVCOMMSTA GREECE PASSED ALL AMPLIFYI

INFO OBTAINED VIA XRA  
CST, HI-COMM NET, AND DIRECT TTY CIRCUITRY. DUE LIBERTY DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO/FROM SHIP WAS LIMITED

*FINAL PAGE of 2 150731Z JUN 67*

PAGE FOUR RUQKC 4337 C O N F I D E N T I A L  
TO VOICE TRANSMISSIONS. AFTER INITIAL ATTACK REPORT THISTA SHIFTED TO BEAMED ANTENNAS SEND/RECEIVE TO IMPROVE SIGNAL QUALITY UNDER EXTREMELY NOISY CKT CONDITIONS. RELIABLE COMM WITH SARATOGA AND LIBERTY WERE MAINTAINED BY THIS ACTION ALTHOUGH CIRCUIT DEGRADATION OCCURED TO OTHER STATIONS ON THE NET. NAVCOMMSTA GREECE ASSUMED RELAY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LIBERTY AND COORDINATED SPEED, COURSE, AND ESCORT RDVU INSTRUCTIONS FROM COMSIXTHFLT. COMDESRON 12, ASSIGNED AS ESCORT, TERMINATED FULL PERIOD ORESTES THISTA AT 0839Z/9 JUN AND RDVU AFFECTED 0424Z/9 JUN. COMDESRON 12 ASSUMED COMM GUARD FOR LIBERTY AND MAJORITY OF TRAFFIC PASSED AFTER RDVU WAS VIA DIRECT SHIP/SHORE TERMINATION.

2. COMDESRON 12 REMAINS TERMINATED NAVCOMMSTA GREECE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

GP-4  
BT

CONFIDENTIAL (WHEN FILLED IN)

NAVAL MESSAGE

DATE	14 JUN 67	TIME	T-1	FROM	CAPT L. R. HAIGH	PRECEDENCE	FLASH	INDEXED	PRIORITY	ROUTING	AIR MAIL
PHONE EXT. NO.	250	ACTION		INFO							

CINCUSNAVEUR

NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C) GENERAL OF THE

1. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF COURT OF INQUIRY NOW IN SESSION:

- AT WHAT TIME DID YOU RECEIVE JCS 072230Z, JCS 080110Z, AND COMNAVFLT 080917Z ALL JUNE AND FROM WHOM?
- FOR WHOM WAS NAVCOMSTA MOROCCO ASSIGNED TO PROTECT ON THESE MESSAGES? HOW AND WHEN DID YOU DELIVER THEM?
- DID YOU RECEIVE THESE MESSAGES FOR DELIVERY TO USS LIBERTY? IF SO, AT WHAT TIME AND FROM WHOM?
- WHAT WAS THE GENERAL COMMUNICATION LOAD FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA DURING THE WEEK OF 4 JUNE? HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO AN AVERAGE WEEK OF, SAY, FEB 1967?
- WHAT IS YOUR WATCH SITUATION? IF ANSWER IS LESS THAN 1 IN 4, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN AT THIS TEMPO?

2. SUBMIT REPLIES ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. GR-4

COORDINATING SECTION	NS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
ACTION DEPARTMENT	NS																														

COM	
INFO	
SEC	1193
DIS	

141628 JUN 67

CONFIDENTIAL (WHEN FILLED IN)

39

38

EX 38

36

EXHIBIT 38 to LIBERTY COURT OF INQUIRY



MINNSUVV KXC020 APB340VV APH470VV PCD 098

PP RUTPHQ  
DE RUTPC 232 1652255  
ZNY CCCCC  
P 142255Z JUN 67  
FM NAVCOMMSTA MOROCCO  
TO RUTPHQ/CINCUSNAVEUR  
BT

CONFIDENTIAL  
USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)

A. YOUR 141628Z JUN 67  
B. MY 131659Z JUN 67  
C. MY 091745Z JUN 67

1. IAW REF A, THE FOLLOWING SUBMITTED:

A. JCS 072230Z INITIALLY RECEIVED FROM SAN PABLO AT 060523Z.  
RECEIVED AGAIN FROM WASHDC 081959Z. JCS 080110Z RECEIVED FROM  
WASHDC AT 080430Z. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z RECEIVED FROM COMSIXTHFLT  
AT 1PZ.

B. JCS 072230Z: NAVCOMMSTA MOROCCO ALIVERY RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR COMSIXTHFLT ON INITIAL RECEIPT AND SENT TO COMSIXTHFLT VIA  
DIRECT CIRCUIT AT 080724Z. SECOND RECEIPT, MOROCCO HAD DELIVERY  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBERTY AND CTF 67. SENT TO SAN PABLO FOR  
FURTHER DELIVERY TO ASHARA AT 082012Z FOR LIBERTY, AND TO NAPLES  
FOR DELIVERY TO CTF 67 AT 082135Z. JCS 080110 MOROCCO HAD  
PAGE 2 RUTPC 232 CONFIDENTIAL  
DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMSIXTHFLT. SENT TO COMSIXTHFLT VIA  
DIRECT CIRCUIT AT 080639Z. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z: MOROCCO HAD  
DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR USS LIBERTY. SENT TO SAN PABLO FOR  
FURTHER DELIVERY TO ASHARA 081100Z.

C. JCS 072230Z: AS NOTED ABOVE SECOND RECEIPT WAS FOR LIBERTY  
AT 080559Z FROM WASHDC. COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z RECEIVED 081050Z  
FROM COMSIXTHFLT.

D. DURING PERIOD 4-18 JUNE HIGH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE TOTALS  
MOUNTED RAPIDLY WITH PEAK OCCURRING 8 JUNE. DUE TO IMPOSITION  
OF MINIMIZE BY USCINCEUR ON 5 JUNE THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT  
REDUCTION IN ADMINISTRATIVE TRAFFIC WHICH PARTIALLY COMPENSATED.  
AS NOTED IN REFERENCE B, FLEET RELAY TRAFFIC WAS ALMOST THREE  
TIMES THAT OF AN EQUAL PERIOD IN FEBRUARY 67.

E. COMMENCED ONE IN THREE MATCHES ON 7 JUNE IN ANTICIPATION  
INCREASED COMM LOAD.

F. REF C REFERS ALSO.

GP-4  
BT

OPERATOR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
RECEIVED																														
DEPARTMENT																														

NAVEUR NCU LON 2100/2 (REV 10-65)

NO	
DATE	
TIME	
FILE	
DISPOSAL CODE	
FILE	

COM	
TOP	0143/15
DATE	
TIME	

CONFIDENTIAL  
(WHEN FILLED IN)

EX 39

NAVAL MESSAGE

RELEASED BY

MAILED BY

~~CAPT L. R. RAISH~~

**PRE-CLEARANCE**

2430

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

11

1. **Introduction**

**1**

1

14 JUN 27

**T-1**

PUBLISHED E.V. NO.  
 250

**ALL T-1000**

\_\_\_\_\_



For

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[illegible]

\_\_\_\_\_

1	
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4

**CINCUSNAVEUR**

USASTRATCOMFAC ASKARA

CO USASTRATCOM-EUR

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C**

1. ON BEHALF OF AND TO ASSIST NAVY COURT OF INQUIRY  
NOW IN SESSION PLEASE FURNISH ANSWERS TO FOLLOWING  
QUESTIONS:

A. AT WHAT TIME WAS COMSIXTHFLT 080917Z JUN  
RECEIVED AT YOUR STATION FOR RELAY TO NAVCOMMSTA ASMARA?  
AND FROM WHOM?

1. WAS YOUR STATION HANDLING AN ABNORMALLY LARGE AMOUNT OF HIGH PRECEDENCE MESSAGE TRAFFIC ON 8 JUNE 67? IF SO, STATE ROUGHLY THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE OVER A ROUTINE DAY.

C. AT WHAT TIME DID YOUR STATION RELAY CONSIXTEFL  
080917Z JUN 57 TO NAVCOMSTA GREECE? AT WHAT TIME DID  
YOU RECEIVE IT BACK FROM NAVCOMSTA GREECE? AT WHAT  
TIME DID YOU RELAY IT TO NAVCOMSTA ASHARA?

COMPLETION SECTION	X	X	X	X	X				X	2
	O O	O I	O E	N T	N S	N A	N B	N V	C T R C	
NS										
ACTION DEPARTMENT										
MS	O O	O I	O E	O I	O I	O I	O I	O I	A I A	NEW
	I P	S B	B B	B B	I S	I B	I B	I V	A I A	/

CON			
TOR			
SON	1192		
SON	AB		

NO. 141627, JUN 67

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
(WHEN FILLED IN)

364

TYPE WITHIN MARGIN ONLY

CONFIDENTIAL

2. REQUEST REPLY ASAP BY PRIORITY MESSAGE. COMMENTS  
IN ADDITION TO ABOVE QUESTIONS INVITED.

PAGE TWO OF TWO

CONFIDENTIAL

SSN 1192  
141627/30167

HAVEUR NGU LON 2100/72 (8-65)

365









16 June 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR RADM KIDU

1. Enclosed are communication message handling figures for selected Naval Communication Stations in the European area during the period 1 June - 12 June 1967. For comparison purposes a compilation has been made for similar period in February 1967.

2. The attached information was assembled at the request of the JCS Fact Finding Group headed by W. M. HESS. It is forwarded to you as a matter of interest.

Very respectfully,

L. R. BAISE  
Assistant Chief of Staff,  
Communications

44

44

EXHIBIT 44 TO LINEAR  
COURT OF INQUIRY

EX 44

369



# Naval Communication Station Greece

## I. Messages Handled

1 Feb	8,901	1 Jun	10,728
2 Feb	8,775	2 Jun	10,723
3 Feb	8,840	3 Jun	10,119
4 Feb	8,506	4 Jun	8,113
5 Feb	8,892	5 Jun	8,414
6 Feb	8,150	6 Jun	8,906
7 Feb	8,941	7 Jun	9,750
8 Feb	8,521	8 Jun	10,074
9 Feb	8,839	9 Jun	9,979
10 Feb	8,935	10 Jun	10,459
11 Feb	8,293	11 Jun	8,073
12 Feb	4,419	12 Jun	7,835
Total	69,122	Total	113,622

## II. Flash Messages Handled

5 Jun	95
6 Jun	304
7 Jun	214
8 Jun	85
9 Jun	182
10 Jun	341
Total	1,190

## III. Service Messages Handled

3 Jun	134
6 Jun	218
7 Jun	162
8 Jun	181
9 Jun	181
10 Jun	179
Total	1,055



# Naval Communication Station Morocco

## **I. Messages Handled**

1 Feb	7,896
2 Feb	7,663
3 Feb	8,083
4 Feb	7,870
5 Feb	8,263
6 Feb	8,243
7 Feb	7,361
8 Feb	8,153
9 Feb	8,058
10 Feb	8,355
11 Feb	7,393
12 Feb	8,205

**Total**                    **87,963**

1 Jun	11,317
2 Jun	10,821
3 Jun	9,992
4 Jun	8,049
5 Jun	8,794
6 Jun	8,632
7 Jun	8,512
8 Jun	11,195
9 Jun	9,878
10 Jun	9,193
11 Jun	7,722
12 Jun	8,771

**Total**                    **114,928**

## **II. Flash Messages Handled**

5 Jun	23
6 Jun	10
7 Jun	11
8 Jun	14
9 Jun	12
10 Jun	3

**Total**                    **203**

## **III. Service Messages Handled**

5 Jun	109
6 Jun	107
7 Jun	133
8 Jun	258
9 Jun	62
10 Jun	90

**Total**                    **749**

# Naval Communication Station Spain

## I. Messages Handled

1 Feb	6,873	1 Jun	6,422
2 Feb	7,183	2 Jun	6,422
3 Feb	7,439	3 Jun	6,184
4 Feb	6,645	4 Jun	6,990
5 Feb	4,467	5 Jun	7,224
6 Feb	5,802	6 Jun	7,073
7 Feb	6,620	7 Jun	7,191
8 Feb	7,351	8 Jun	8,409
9 Feb	7,796	9 Jun	7,342
10 Feb	7,716	10 Jun	6,768
11 Feb	6,908	11 Jun	5,885
12 Feb	4,990	12 Jun	6,561
Total	80,103	Total	89,058

## II. Flash Messages Handled

6 Jan	37
6 Jun	12
7 Jun	21
8 Jun	15
9 Jun	13
10 Jun	18
Total	223

## III. Service Messages Handled

6 Jun	163
6 Jun	155
7 Jun	119
8 Jun	69
9 Jun	73
10 Jun	93
Total	692

# Naval Communication Unit London

## I. Messages Handled

1 Feb	968	1 Jun	1,558
2 Feb	927	2 Jun	1,507
3 Feb	969	3 Jun	1,275
4 Feb	872	4 Jun	809
5 Feb	848	5 Jun	1,408
6 Feb	842	6 Jun	1,717
7 Feb	895	7 Jun	1,848
8 Feb	704	8 Jun	1,778
9 Feb	818	9 Jun	1,589
10 Feb	858	10 Jun	1,382
11 Feb	914	11 Jun	1,030
12 Feb	954	12 Jun	1,268
Total	10,367	Total	17,245

## II. Flash Messages Handled

5 Jun	2
6 Jun	2
7 Jun	10
8 Jun	17
9 Jun	8
10 Jun	28
Total	77

## III. Service Messages Handled

5 Jun	153
6 Jun	148
7 Jun	176
8 Jun	292
9 Jun	201
10 Jun	244
Total	1,214

# Naval Communication Station Asuara

## I. Messages Handled

1 Feb	1,019	1 Jun	1,568
2 Feb	1,233	2 Jun	1,291
3 Feb	1,229	3 Jun	1,303
4 Feb	1,054	4 Jun	1,083
5 Feb	970	5 Jun	1,570
6 Feb	828	6 Jun	1,573
7 Feb	1,039	7 Jun	1,579
8 Feb	1,084	8 Jun	1,228
9 Feb	855	9 Jun	1,837
10 Feb	880	10 Jun	1,430
11 Feb	773	11 Jun	1,394
12 Feb	925	12 Jun	1,275
Total	12,002	Total	18,095



THIS IS  
DUPE of  
EX 45

020000Z 00ZCMGA303  
NO RULKD  
RE RUGPC 001 1670035  
NY 00000  
R 150000Z JUN 67  
TO USASTRATCOM FAC ASMARA ETHIOPIA  
TO 000000ZCINCUSNAVEUR  
INFO USAFAC/CG USASTRATCOM-EUR HEIDELBERG GER  
INFO USAFAC/CG USASTRATCOM-EUR SIG GP/MED LEGHORN ITALY

CONFIDENTIAL ASM 716703  
SUBJ: USS LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS (C)  
REF: CINUSNAVEUR MSG 141607Z JUN 67 (PASEP)  
1. CINUSNAVEUR MSG 000917Z JUN 67 WAS RECEIVED BY THIS STATION  
2. TO NAVCOMMSTA ASMARA AT 000000Z JUN 67. IT WAS RECEIVED  
3. BY STATION SEVILLE SPAIN  
4. THIS STATION WAS HANDLING AN ABNORMALLY LARGE AMOUNT OF HIGH  
5. PRIORITY MESSAGE TRAFFIC ON 6 JUNE 67. THE FOLLOWING IS THE MESSAGE  
6. TRAFFIC RATE FOR A ROUTINE DAY AND 6 JUNE 67:

	ROUTINE DAY (4 MAY 67)	6 JUNE 67
NR OF MSGS	NR OF MSGS	NR OF MSGS
IMMEDIATE	649	2338
PRIORITY	1778	3060
ROUTINE	2682	1447
TOTAL	5109	7893
PCT OF DIST	12.7	18.3
PCT OF MSGS	34.8	45.8
PCT OF MSGS	32.5	18.3

3. COMSIXTHFLT MSG 000917Z JUN 67 WAS RELAYED TO NAVCOMMSTA GER  
AT 000000Z JUN 67. IT WAS RECEIVED BACK FROM NAVCOMMSTA GREECE AT  
000000Z JUN 67 AND RELAYED TO NAVCOMMSTA ASMARA AT 001510Z JUN 67

DECLASSIFIED  
ON 21 JUL 76  
BY 1045  
REASON: 4.21  
EXEMPTED FROM AUTOMATIC DECLASSIFICATION  
ON 21 JUL 76  
BY 1045  
REASON: 4.21

EX 45 TO LIBERTY  
COURT OF INQUIRY

ORIGINATOR	SECTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
ACTION	DEPARTMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

EX 45

DATE	16/06/67
TIME	150520
BY	JV

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

3. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

4. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

5. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

6. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

7. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

8. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

9. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

10. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

11. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

12. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

13. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

14. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

15. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

16. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

17. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

18. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

19. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

20. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

21. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY: (C)

EX 46 TO LIBRARY COURT OF INQUIRY 46

396

1. THE FOLLOWING  
2. THE FOLLOWING  
3. THE FOLLOWING

4. THE FOLLOWING  
5. THE FOLLOWING  
6. THE FOLLOWING

- (1) Request for immediate medical aid.
- (2) Request for immediate aid in case of military or naval operations or in case of disaster.
- (3) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (4) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (5) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (6) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (7) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (8) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (9) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.
- (10) Request for immediate aid in case of disaster.

7. THE FOLLOWING  
8. THE FOLLOWING

9. THE FOLLOWING  
10. THE FOLLOWING  
11. THE FOLLOWING

(1) Information in this report.

(2) A brief summary of the following: a) the nature of the information received by friendly forces, or sources taking part in the operations conducted between friendly forces.

(3) The results of the large scale search.

(4) The type and frequency of messages.

(5) The degree of reliability of the strategic situation of the enemy.

James M. Ennes, Jr. Research Papers



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FFI-3  
H62  
12 June 1967

MEMORANDUM

From: Contingency Watch Team  
To: CINCSHAFVUR  
Via: Deputy Chief of Staff  
Subj: USS LIBERTY Incident

1. The following is a reconstruction of the sequence of events prior to and after receipt of JCS 080110Z by the Contingency Watch Team composed by Captain R.D. STEELE (Duty Captain), Commander C.D. JORGENSEN (Command Center Duty Officer), and Lieutenant E.L. GALAVOTTI (N3 Duty Officer) for the period of 2230Z, 7 June to 0602Z, 8 June.

TIMES

EVENTS

072350Z

Major BREKLOVE, JRC WASHDC, called the CINCSHAFVUR Command Center on the VOOOM and asked to speak to the Operations Duty Officer. LT GALAVOTTI, the N3 Duty Officer, took the call. Major BREKLOVE gave him a verbal directive to have the USS LIBERTY comply with the latest COMSIXTHFLT operating area restrictions as delineated in the last sentence, paragraph 2, of COMSIXTHFLT message 071503Z until further notice; that is, not to operate closer than 100 nautical miles to Israel, Syria, Iraq, or closer than 25 nautical miles to Cyprus. Major BREKLOVE, when questioned, did not have a message date/time group, but said a message would follow later.

LT GALAVOTTI then informed the Duty Captain, CAPT STEELE. The Command Center Duty Officer was aware of the message, and that LT GALAVOTTI, under CAPT STEELE's direction, was originating a message to COMSIXTHFLT.

080001Z

LT GALAVOTTI and CAPT STEELE were ready with their message to COMSIXTHFLT.

080010Z

CDR JORGENSEN and CAPT STEELE advised CAPT HANLEY of the call from Major BREKLOVE, and of the message which had been drafted for release to COMSIXTHFLT.

CAPT HANLEY directed us to hold up release of the message. He was concerned because JRC came direct to CINCSHAFVUR with only a verbal directive and without a date/time group

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EX 47 to LIBERTY COURT OF  
INQUIRY

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of a message and had by passed USCINCEUR. He wanted something more concrete than just a phone call since we had been burned in the past when a phone call directive was not backed up with a message. CAPT HANLEY directed the Command Center Duty Officer to call USCINCEUR, advise them of the phone call from Major BREKLOVE, and that we were ready to comply, and requested that USCINCEUR confirm this directive with JFC and get us a date/time group. CAPT HANLEY further stated that we were to release our message to COMSIXTHFLT if we received the date/time group from USCINCEUR.

080030Z

The Command Center Duty Officer, as directed, called USCINCEUR and advised LCOL WAGNER of the call from Major BREKLOVE. The above information from CAPT HANLEY was passed. LCOL WAGNER said he would call back.

080325Z

The Command Duty Officer called USCINCEUR, LCOL RUSSELL, and asked what action had been taken on the USS LIBERTY. LCOL RUSSELL asked what action CINCSNAVEUR had taken and was advised that we were still waiting for a call back from LCOL WAGNER. The Command Duty Officer then suggested that LCOL RUSSELL call Major BREKLOVE, get a date/time group, or give us a directive (date/time group) from USCINCEUR.

LCOL RUSSELL called back shortly with JCS date/time group 080110Z. As he was relaying this information the Duty Yeoman handed the JCS 080110 message, which had just been received, to CDR JORGENSEN.

The Command Center Duty Officer then had Communications set up a Telecon to COMSIXTHFLT so that he could talk to COMSIXTHFLT's staff duty officer.

080355Z

Considerable delay was caused by atmospheric difficulties. After being unable to establish a Telecon circuit CDR JORGENSEN had the radio operator contact COMSIXTHFLT by SSB and request a Telecon with the Staff Duty Officer as soon as possible.

080410Z

Two way Telecon was established, with COMSIXTHFLT still having difficulty receiving CINCSNAVEUR. CDR SLOSSER, COMSIXTHFLT Staff Duty Officer, informed CDR JORGENSEN they did not hold JCS 080110Z. CDR JORGENSEN passed it

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to him three times before receiving an acknowledgement at 0440Z. He followed this immediately with a virenote "FROM CINCUSNAVEUR COMMAND DUTY OFFICER TO COMSIXTHFLT DUTY OFFICER RE ADVISED TAKE JCS 080110Z FORAC. OFFICIAL MESSAGE FOLLOWS."

CDR SLUSSER advised CDR JORGENSEN didn't hold JCS 7337/072230Z (Reference A to JCS 080110Z) and requested a copy. Since CINCUSNAVEUR did not hold JCS 072230Z CDR SLUSSER was advised that we would call USCINCEUR for it.

080507Z CDR SLUSSER was advised that CINCUSNAVEUR FORAC message was 080455Z.

080515Z After talking to LCOL RUSSELL at USCINCEUR, CDR JORGENSEN sent the following message to CDR SLUSSER "RECEIVED FROM USCINCEUR FOR YOUR INFO JCS 072230Z WAS GENERAL GUIDE LINES CONCERNING "USS LIBERTY" OP AREA WITH DISTANCE RESTRICTIONS FROM MID EAST COUNTRIES. HAS SINCE BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS AND THIS CANCELLED. THE RESTRICTIONS IN JCS 080110Z ARE MORE STRINGENT."

080521Z Received receipt for above.

2. The times and events listed in paragraph 1 indicate every action the watch team took within its authority to insure that the USS LIBERTY received the new operating restrictions as expeditiously as possible.

3. This statement is submitted after a careful review of all logs kept by each individual watch team member and constitutes the events as they took place.

CDR R.D. STEIN, USN

CDR G.D. JORGENSEN, USN

CDR E.L. CALAVOTTI, USN

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CONFIDENTIAL

13 June 1967

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Rear Admiral J. C. Wylie, USN  
Deputy CINCUSNAVEUR  
To: Major General Russ  
Subj: Communication Problems

1. During the period of 5-10 June 1967 inclusive, the records of the Command Center indicate that 610 FBIS messages were received. Of these, 317 were OPIMMED, and 15 were FLASH precedence. The percentage of OPIMMED and FLASH was thus approximately 54%.
2. 19AF Seymour Johnson AFB AEO 00349 DTG 301730 1967 is an opplan concerning CINCFSTRKE's Operation "BRISK POINT" for evacuation of certain countries in the Middle East. Its precedence is PRIORITY. It contains 28 pages. It is addressed to 83 addressees from California to the Indian Ocean and 21 of these addressees are in Europe.
3. The CINCFSTRKE opplan for the "BRISK POINT" evacuation is CINCFSTRKE DPLWEN 33847 DTG 280051Z May 1967. It contains 46 pages. It is addressed to 81 addressees. Its precedence is PRIORITY.
4. I do not have at hand Changes 1 and 2 to the CINCFSTRKE opplan.
5. Change 3 to the CINCFSTRKE opplan is CINCFSTRKE DPLWEN 83362 DTG 020024Z June 1967. It contains 10 pages. Its precedence is PRIORITY.
6. Interim Change 4 to the CINCFSTRKE opplan is CINCFSTRKE DOPCER 00007 DTG 060725Z June 1967. It contains 10 pages. Its precedence is OPIMMED.

DECLASSIFIED

Classification (classification) 1000000-1  
1 by authority of OPRN/MEMO 52009D32/T31 J. C. WYLIE  
29 Jun 76 b/c/lin 21 Jun 76  
(Date) JAG Sec-Gen (Signature) (Name)  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF THE NAVY

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STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN M. J. HANLEY, USN

DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, CINCUSNAVEUR

(For the JCS Fact Finding Team and the Court of Inquiry)

Before getting into the details of what happened on the night of 7-8 June, it may be of assistance if I clarify my position on the staff; particularly as regards the movements of ships under CINCUSNAVEUR's operational control or, in the case of the USS LIBERTY, under CINCUSNAVEUR's operational cognizance (my definition).

During the present upheaval in the Middle East, the movements of U. S. Navy ships have assumed a political and diplomatic sensitivity that has naturally resulted in a close screening of all ship moves prior to the time that they are made. During the night no ship moves which have not been previously scheduled and about which CINCEUR has not been informed are made without calling me. It is my responsibility to determine whether the move is of such significance that it should be reported to and approved by either CINCUSNAVEUR or the Deputy CINCUSNAVEUR. Standard practice is to make no moves however insignificant without informing the USCINCEUR duty officer. This is as a result of both written directives from USCINCEUR and informal understandings with their senior officers.

On the night of 7-8 June our battle watch was set in the Operations Control Center and, at a time that I did not notice, I received a phone call from Commander Jorgenson, the Command Center Duty Officer, about a proposed unscheduled movement of the LIBERTY. Commander Jorgenson informed me that a major in the JRC had called him and stated that they wanted the LIBERTY to move out to at least one hundred miles from the coast to conform to the restrictions which CINCUSNAVEUR had originated on ship movements in the Eastern Mediterranean and which COMSIXTHFLT had reported to the JCS as policy restrictions on ship movements.

I asked Commander Jorgenson if, to his knowledge, USCINCEUR knew anything about this direct phone call from the JRC to CINCUSNAVEUR inasmuch as this was not a normal procedure. Generally we are informed of this type of movement by USCINCEUR. He replied in the negative. I did not ask Commander Jorgenson if he had asked for an authentication on the phone call.

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Classification (continued) ~~SECRET~~  
1 by authority of ~~USN~~ ~~NAV~~ ~~SEC~~ ~~009032/131~~  
on 21 Jun 76 ~~Ref: 131~~ 21 Jun 76  
The Sec. Gen.  
(DJI) ~~SECRET~~  
OFFICE OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY

Doc 52 Ex 48 - LIBERTY

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I instructed him to inform the USCINCEUR Duty Officer in the premises of the call. I further instructed him to tell the USCINCEUR Duty Officer that we were ready to carry out any directive on moving ships that USCINCEUR should so order. However, in this case, the movements of the ship were being controlled by the JCS directive and we would like to have the date-time group of the JCS directive include in our message to the SIXTH Fleet. We were dealing with a ship on a recognizably sensitive mission which was operating under a carefully drawn and very detailed JCS directive which had received a great deal of attention on our staff. He informed me that the messages directing COMSIXTHFLT to comply were already drafted and that he would get the JCS date-time group and release the messages to COMSIXTHFLT.

In this instance, because the LIBERTY was being moved from a recognized high risk area incident to her sensitive mission to an area that was not high risk, I did not consider it necessary to inform my superiors.

I might point out that our staff is particularly sensitive to directives to move ships by phone calls during this critical period without some indication that a written directive is being forwarded. Only the previous day, or perhaps the day before, we had as a result of a phone call sent out a flash message directing the amphibians to sortie from Malta only to cancel this within the hour by another flash message as a result of another phone call. This is but the latest in a series of similar incidents which would indicate that phone calls are sometimes not completely staffed. CINCUSNAVEUR policy is that we request the date-time group of substantiating messages for telephone-directed actions to move ships unless the call is received from a flag or general officer or higher authority. This does not mean that we have to receive the written message but only an indication that it has been staffed and released. In this case I was frankly disturbed that a major was the agent directing the movements of this very sensitive ship.

The LIBERTY represented an unusual ship as far as the normal ship that operates under CINCUSNAVEUR. While COMSIXTHFLT supposedly had her under his opcon, this was a misnomer. Her movements were not being directed by COMSIXTHFLT but by the JCS in view of her recognized high risk mission.

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I have knowledge of one other fact that bears on the LIBERTY incident as regards some of the communication difficulties. It is a matter of record that CINCUSNAVEUR recommended that minimize be instituted in the Mediterranean area. A modified form of minimize was adopted in the European area. Minimize as we intended to assist fleet communications was not adopted.

*M. J. Hanley Jr.*  
M. J. HANLEY, JR.

HANLEY NOT LISTED  
ON ACTIVE DUTY  
IN DECEMBER, 1970.  
REGISTER

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OFFICIAL  
U. S. NAVY  
ENDORSEMENTS TO  
(APPROVALS OF)  
THE COURT-  
OF INQUIRY

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NOTE THAT THESE LETTERS WERE  
USED TO MAKE SUBTLE CHANGES  
AND CORRECTIONS TO THE ORIGINAL  
REPORT. THE LONG JAG  
ENDORSEMENT IS ALMOST  
UNPRECEDENTED.

JE



board for redress of injuries to property, the reviewing authority's action shall be governed by chapter X of this Manual, or if the investigating body is inquiring into the loss, compromise, or subsection to compromise of classified information, the reviewing authority's action will be governed by paragraphs 4-102 and 4-104 of the Department of the Navy Security Manual for Classified Information, OPNAVINST 5510.1 Series.

c. *Disciplinary action.* Except where an individual has been fully accorded the rights of a party before a court of inquiry or a formal fact-finding body, non-judicial punishment may not be predicated exclusively upon the proceedings of a fact-finding body (see section 0101d), nor may the record of proceedings or report of such fact-finding body be used in lieu of a formal pre-trial investigation as authorized by Article 32 (c) UCMJ. Nevertheless, whenever punitive or nonpunitive disciplinary action is contemplated, initiated, or taken respecting any person as the result of the incident which was the subject of inquiry, such action (its specific nature, including current status) shall be noted in the endorsement of the convening or reviewing authority. Punitive letters of censure or copies or recommended drafts thereof shall be included in an investigative report as enclosures. Nonpunitive letters or copies, or recommended drafts thereof, are private in nature and shall not be included as enclosures in an investigative report, but shall be separately forwarded to the appropriate commander for issuance.

d. *Additional information.* Each reviewing authority's action will include any information known or reasonably ascertainable at the time of the review concerning actions taken or being taken in the case but not contained in the record or previous endorsements.

#### 0211 THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS AND COPIES DISPOSITION

a. *Routing.* Except as indicated below, the complete original record or report of every JAG Manual investigation shall be routed to the Judge Advocate General, Navy Department, Washington, D.C. 20370, in accordance with the intermediate routing provided in section 0210. Except when they have a direct official interest in the recorded facts and should be included as a via addressee, the routing of the record to other commands, bureaus and offices of the Navy

Department will be accomplished by the Judge Advocate General.

#### b. *Special Routing*

(1) Records or reports of investigations which involve Marine Corps personnel and relate to shortages of public property or public funds or contemplated or accomplished disciplinary action shall be forwarded to the Judge Advocate General via the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

(2) Records or reports of investigations into the loss of Government property entrusted to an accountable officer shall be routed as prescribed in section 0909.

(3) Records or reports of investigation which involve lost, missing, damaged, or destroyed property of the Marine Corps shall be routed to the Commandant of the Marine Corps as prescribed in paragraph 4022, Volume I, Marine Corps Supply Manual.

(4) Records or reports of investigations which involved loss, compromise, or subsection to compromise of classified information shall be routed in accordance with paragraph 6-104 of OPNAVINST 5510.1 series. These investigations are not sent to the Judge Advocate General.

(5) If a record of investigation is to be used as a pre-trial investigation pursuant to Article 32(c), UCMJ, and the original is desired in connection with a trial by general court-martial, the original shall be retained in the field for such purpose and a complete certified copy shall be forwarded to the Judge Advocate General via appropriate authorities.

(6) If a record or report of investigation involves a claims matter or redress of injuries to property under Article 139, UCMJ, see chapter X and chapters XX through XXIV as appropriate.

#### c. *Routing of copies*

(1) One complete copy of the record or report of investigation shall be forwarded with the original for each intermediate reviewing authority and an additional copy shall be forwarded for the Judge Advocate General. Additionally, if a shore command

## FACT-FINDING BODIES

0210

need not be classified for this inclusion alone, provided that the information paraphrased is not classified. When classified matter is necessarily included in the record of proceedings or an investigative report, the record or report shall be assigned the classification of the highest subject matter contained therein. Encrypted versions of messages shall not be included in or attached to records of proceedings or investigative reports in which the content, substance, or purport of such message is divulged, regardless of the classification given the record or report. See Department of the Navy Security Manual for Classified Information, OPNAVINST 5510.1 series.

d. *Privacy Act compliance.* When an individual is requested by a Government representative to supply personal information, it is mandatory that there be compliance with subsection (e)(3) of the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a) in accordance with section 0308 and Appendix A-3-a. The record of proceedings must reflect the foregoing compliance.

### 0210 THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS ACTION BY CONVENING AND REVIEWING AUTHORITIES

#### a. *Intermediate routing*

(1) The record of proceedings or report of a fact-finding body shall be forwarded to and reviewed by the convening authority and appropriate superior authorities in the chain of command. No precise rule can be laid down as to the identity of appropriate superior authorities in the chain of command. The subject matter of the inquiry and the facts found will dictate the routing of the record or report for review. The record or report should be made available to all superior commanders who have a direct official interest in the recorded facts.

(2) District commandants and other area coordinators of shore-based activities and immediate or subarea coordinators are considered to have a direct official interest in records or reports of investigations conducted by shore activities within the area of their cognizance and relating to a subject matter affecting their area coordination, command responsibility, or claims adjudicating authority, and, unless they direct otherwise, should be included as reviewing authorities whether or not in the chain of command.

(3) All flag and general officers in command may publish categories of subject matter of investigations which are of direct official interest to them and

to their subordinates and may direct that investigations involving other categories of subject matter be given exceptional intermediate routing. For example, a type commander might direct that investigations involving solely line of duty or misconduct determinations be routed directly to him, by-passing all echelons of authority between him and the convening authorities.

b. *Review and forwarding.* The convening authority and each field authority to whom the record of proceedings or report is routed shall transmit it by endorsement which will generally effect one of the following actions:

(1) Forward the record or report commenting that it contains no matter of direct official interest to the authority and that it is therefore transmitted without comment or recommendation.

(2) Return the record or report for further inquiry, noting any incompleteness, ambiguities, or erroneous action of the fact-finding body or a prior reviewing authority.

(3) Return the record or report for further corrective action, stating in detail the inadequacy or incompleteness noted.

NOTE: The authority who convened the fact-finding body has the primary responsibility to ensure that the investigation record is in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 before the record is forwarded. See section 0308. The officer exercising general court-martial jurisdiction who reviews the JAG Manual investigation record has the responsibility to review the record for compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974, and if the investigation fails to comply, he shall return it to the convening authority for remedial action prior to forwarding it to the Judge Advocate General.

(4) Forward the record or report setting forth appropriate comments and recording approval or disapproval, in whole or in part, of the proceedings, findings, opinions, and recommendations. For the benefit of subsequent reviewing authorities, each shall state clearly what action he has taken, or will take, and/or his recommendations as a result of matters contained in the record. If the investigative body is also conducting a claims investigation, the reviewing authority's action will be governed by the applicable provisions of chapters XX through XXIV of this Manual; if the investigating body is also acting as a



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON D.C. 20350

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IN REPLY REFER TO  
Op-333D/cd  
Ser 0007P33  
25 MAR 1968

TOP SECRET - Unclassified when enclosure is removed

From: Chief of Naval Operations  
To: Judge Advocate General

Subj: Record of Proceedings, Court of Inquiry to inquire into the  
circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5)  
on 8 June 1967 (U)

Encl: (1) RADM I. C. KIDD, USN ltr of 18 June 1967 with Endorsements  
one through six, forwarding subject record of proceedings

1. The remarks and conclusions of the first endorsement as modified by the second endorsement have been noted. Those relating to command and control and to communication actions and procedures are considered to be within the purview of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, since LIBERTY was carrying out a JCS-directed mission. As noted in enclosure (1) to the third endorsement, these aspects of the LIBERTY incident have been examined by a JCS-appointed fact-finding team. As a related matter, the Chief of Naval Operations has directed that a comprehensive study be undertaken to inquire into all aspects of the operations of all ships of the same general category as U.S.S. LIBERTY for the purpose of improving command and control procedures. This study is currently going on.

2. With reference to the remaining recommendations of the second endorsement:

a. Recommendation 4.b: the shortage of radiomen second class and above is a well-recognized problem of long standing. The Chief of Naval Personnel has advised that at the end of FY 1968 the projected strength of RM2 and above will be approximately 85% of stated requirements. Every effort is being made to fill the shortage. In regard to training and upgrading of RM2 and above, the Communications Systems Technical Control School provides graduates of the Radioman Class B School with twelve weeks of instruction in the communications systems used in the technical control centers of the Naval and Defense Communications Systems, leading to designation as Communications System Technical Operator (RM-2318) or Communications System Technical Supervisor (RM-2319). This school has been four classes per year, 30 RM2s per class. It is planned to double the output of the school.

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Classification (cancelled) (Changed to  
by authority of OPNAV Memo 522 0096  
on 22 Feb 68

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b. Recommendation 4.c: the Commander, Naval Communications Command has stated in paragraph 4 of the sixth endorsement that he, together with the Director, Defense Communications Agency and other interested commands and agencies, is taking action in respect to operational communications deficiencies.

c. Recommendation 4.d: appropriate notification of Defense Attache officers is being implemented on a case-by-case basis.

d. Recommendation 4.e: the Chief of Naval Operations agrees that damage control procedures used by LIBERTY personnel should be documented for Navy-wide information and use. By copy of this endorsement, the Commander Navy Ships Systems Command is requested to take appropriate action. He is also requested to study and make recommendations to the Chief of Naval Operations with respect to (1) improved visual identification measures as proposed in paragraph 14 of the first endorsement, and (2) the provision of emergency reserve signalling devices referred to in paragraph 3.d of the second endorsement.

3. Retain the report for historical purposes.

Copy to:  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
BUPERS  
CINCLANTFLT  
NAVSHIPSYSOM

*James M. Ennes, Jr.*  
J. B. COLWELL  
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations  
Fleet Operations and Readiness

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NC/N3/mpw  
Ser 0001-68  
5 JAN 1968

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second and third endorsements thereto

SIXTH ENDORSEMENT on ltr of Rear Admiral Isaac C. KIDD, USN,  
111645/1100 of 18 June 1967

From: Commander, Naval Communications Command  
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Record of Proceedings, Court of Inquiry to inquire  
into the circumstances surrounding the armed attack  
on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) on 8 June 1967

Ref: (b) SECNAV Memo to SECDEF ser 006874 of 4 December 1967 NOTED

1. Forwarded.
2. Concur in those findings of fact pertaining to communications  
less finding number 40. Subsequent investigation has indicated  
that FBIS messages did not contribute to message delays.
3. Reference is made to the Judge Advocate General third endorsement  
to the basic correspondence.
  - a. Do not concur in the estimated cost to effect repairs as  
indicated in paragraph 4. Reference (b) sets the cost of restoring  
LIBERTY, including its previous electronic configuration, at \$9.6  
million.
  - b. Concur in that portion entitled, "Messages of 7 and 8 June  
Ordering Changes of LIBERTY Operations."
4. Commander, Naval Communications Command, together with Director,  
Defense Communications Agency, and other interested commands and  
agencies is taking action to improve doctrine, procedures, installations  
and equipment in order to reduce delays and permit rapid flow of  
important messages during crisis situations.

*Robert H. Weeks*  
ROBERT H. WEEKS

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AGTR-5  
Ser S00043-67

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FIFTH ENDORSEMENT on Subject Record

From: Commander, Naval Ship Systems Command  
To: Chief of Naval Operations  
Via: Commander, Naval Communications Command

Subj: Record of Proceedings, Court of Inquiry to inquire into  
the circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY  
(AGTR-5) on 8 June 1967

1. Forwarded.

2. Examination of the subject record of proceedings does not reveal any evidence of material design deficiencies that contributed adversely to the events leading up to the attack or during the control of damage that followed.

3. The cost to restore USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) to the configuration that existed prior to the attack is shown in Appendix E to the Third Endorsement.

James M. Ennes, Jr.  
H. C. Jones  
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Ser F2-0002  
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CORRESPONDENCE)

FOURTH ENDORSEMENT on subject record

From: Chief of Naval Personnel  
To: Chief of Naval Operations  
Via: (1) Commander, Naval Ship Systems Command  
(2) Commander, Naval Communications Command

Subj: Record of Proceedings, Court of Inquiry to inquire into the  
circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY  
(AGTR-5) on 1 June 1967

1. Forwarded.

2. The subject record of proceedings disclosed that the USS LIBERTY, while engaged in peaceful operations in international waters of the Eastern Mediterranean, was subjected to an entirely unprovoked and unexpected armed attack by Israeli aircraft and motor torpedo boats. The attack resulted in 34 deaths and 171 injuries to personnel on board LIBERTY, and an estimated cost in excess of five million dollars to effect repairs of damage to the ship and equipment.

3. The Judge Advocate General commented that "the Israeli Government has admitted that this was a tragic accident and has agreed to make amends." Also the Judge Advocate General opined that the 34 deaths were not due to the intent, fault or negligence of anyone in the U.S. Naval Service, and that all injuries of personnel embarked in LIBERTY which resulted from the armed attack were sustained in-line-of-duty and not due to misconduct.

4. No one was designated a party to this inquiry. No disciplinary action was recommended, and none is contemplated by the Chief of Naval Personnel.

*GEO. E. FORD*  
GEO. E. FORD  
By direction

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3 NOV 1967

**THIRD ENDORSEMENT** on subject record

**From:** Judge Advocate General  
**To:** Chief of Naval Operations  
**Via:** (1) Chief of Naval Personnel  
(2) Commander, Naval Ship Systems Command  
(3) Commander, Naval Communications Command

**Subj:** Record of Proceedings, Court of Inquiry to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) on 8 June 1967

**Encl:** (1) Summary of Events

1. Forwarded for information, for such action and comment as may be deemed appropriate, and for return.
2. The letter of the Commander in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet of 6 September 1967 is considered the Second Endorsement.
3. Enclosure (1) has been prepared and attached to the record to aid in the review. The communications aspect of enclosure (1) has been prepared with the assistance of representatives of the Commander, Naval Communications Command. Not included with enclosure (1) but available for review, if desired, in the Office of the Judge Advocate General, are copies of the Certificates of Death (NAVMED N) for each deceased and those copies of the treatment records of injured personnel furnished by the Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.
4. The Court of Inquiry was charged with the task of investigating the armed attack of Israeli air and sea forces upon USS LIBERTY in the Eastern Mediterranean on 8 June 1967 which resulted in 34 deaths and 171 injuries to personnel embarked in USS LIBERTY. Of the number injured, 63 did not involve a loss of time from duty and as of 21 September 1967 all but 10 of the total injured have been returned to full duty status. The cost to effect repairs of damage to the ship and equipment is estimated at \$5,612,160.00.
5. The record discloses beyond any doubt that USS LIBERTY was, at the time of the attack, engaged in peaceful operations in international waters and that the attack of Israeli aircraft and motor

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torpedo boats was entirely unprovoked and unexpected. It has been determined that the Israeli Government has admitted that this was a tragic accident and has agreed to make amends. The State Department is currently preparing to claim compensation from the Israeli Government for damages resulting from the attack both on behalf of the U. S. Government and private individuals concerned.

6. The Judge Advocate General is of the opinion that the 34 deaths resulting from this incident were not due to the intent, fault or negligence of anyone in the U. S. Naval Service and that all injuries of personnel embarked in USS LIBERTY which resulted from the armed attack were sustained in-line-of-duty and not due to misconduct.

7. To expedite review of the record, a copy of the testimony of the medical officer which is unclassified has been extracted and forwarded by separate correspondence to the Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery for information and such action and comment as may be deemed appropriate direct to the Chief of Naval Operations with a copy to the Judge Advocate General, to constitute the BuMed action on the record.

8. The proceedings in this Court of Inquiry have been conducted in substantial compliance with the requirements of the Manual of the Judge Advocate General and are therefore legal.

  
WILFRED HEARN

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### SUMMARY OF EVENTS

On 10 June 1967 Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., USN, Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe, ordered a Court of Inquiry to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) on 8 June 1967. The Court consisted of Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Jr., USN, President, and the additional members Captain Bernard J. Lauff, USN, and Captain Bert M. Atkinson, Jr., USN. Captain Ward Boston, Jr., and Lieutenant Commander Allen Feingersch, USN, were designated to serve as counsel and assistant counsel for the Court respectively.

The Court was directed to inquire into all the pertinent facts and circumstances leading to and connected with the armed attack; damage resulting therefrom; and deaths of and injuries to naval personnel. The Court was directed to submit its findings of fact.

Pursuant to the direction of the convening authority, the Court conducted its proceedings in closed session. The Court met for the first time at 2314, 10 June 1967. Before the Court closed on 16 June 1967 in order to deliberate and prepare its findings of fact it had taken the testimony of 19 witnesses and received as exhibits 49 separate offers.

Enclosure (1) to JAG End. JAG:131.1DBB:as  
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It has been determined that a separate ad hoc factfinding team with Major General Joseph R. Russ, USA, as head, was appointed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to examine the circumstances relating to the command and control and communications actions and procedures associated with the events during the period 1-8 June 1967 which culminated in the attack on USS LIBERTY, 8 June 1967. The factfinding team was directed to ascertain the adequacy of the command and control and communications arrangements involved in the operational control of USS LIBERTY and accomplishment of her mission, to include:

- a. The manner in which command and control of LIBERTY was being exercised.
- b. The normal system for exercising command and control versus that which was in effect at the time of the incident, if different.
- c. The specific orders issued to LIBERTY between 1-8 June and the orders to which LIBERTY responded during the same period.
- d. Circumstances attending any conflicting directives, inordinate delays in the receipt of messages or other proper orders, or their non-receipt.

This team was directed to report its findings together with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The

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findings and recommendations of this JCS factfinding team are not included in this summary.

It has also been determined that a preliminary inquiry into this incident has also been conducted within the Israeli Government. The findings of this inquiry were forwarded by the U. S. Defense Attache Office, Tel Aviv, Israel on 14 August 1967 to the Chief of Naval Operations. The findings of the Israeli preliminary inquiry are not included in this summary. It is to be noted, however, that the report does reflect that USS LIBERTY was identified by Israeli Defense Forces as a U. S. Navy vessel earlier on the day of the attack and that the lack of knowledge of this identification on the part of the immediate commanders of the attacking Israeli air and sea forces led to the tragic incident.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Attached to this summary as Appendices A through E are the following documents to insure completeness of the record:

1. CINCSNAVEUR msg dtg 231620Z of June 67 to USMCINCEUR (C) (Appendix A)
2. EXASST to CNO memo, OP-002:tr, OP-00 memo 000365-67 of 7 Jul 67 w/4 encls; subj: USS LIBERTY Court of Inquiry; addenda to (TS) (Appendix B)

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3. List of deceased personnel from USS LIBERTY with copies of Certificate of Death NAVMED N (Rev 4-58) for each deceased (U) (Appendix C)
4. List of all injured personnel from USS LIBERTY with diagnosis and prognosis and copies of treatment record (U) (Appendix D)
5. Copy of ltr of Commander NavShipSysCom, AGTR-5 Ser. 527-1450 of 1 Sept 67 concerning estimated cost of repairs to USS LIBERTY (U) (Appendix E)

LIBERTY OPERATIONS 24 May 1967 - 8 June 1967

LIBERTY, under the command of Commander William I. McGonaglin, U. S. Navy, 494464/1100, departed ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, at 0530 Z, 24 May 1967 pursuant to orders from Commander, Service Squadron Eight (COMSERVRON EIGHT msg dtg 0240020Z, May 1967) which directed LIBERTY to proceed to ROTA Spain at best possible speed of advance (SOA). OPCON was to be shifted from CINCLANTFLT to USCINCEUR upon LIBERTY passing the sea buoy inbound to ROTA on 31 May 1967; upon assuming OPCON, USCINCEUR was requested to make preparations for the extended deployment of LIBERTY in the Eastern Mediterranean in accordance with a schedule to be passed ASAP (JCS msg dtg 291602Z, May 1967).

LIBERTY's operating schedule was set forth in JCS message dtg 011545Z, June 1967, which in pertinent part ordered LIBERTY to

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(1) depart ROTA Spain on 2 June, (2) during the period 2-8 June, proceed enroute via Gibraltar Strait to a position 32-00N, 33-00E via the northern African coastal route with 13 nautical miles as the closest point of approach (CPA) to the UAR, and (3) during the period 9-30 June, conduct operations south of 32-00N and between 33-00E and 34-00E. While conducting these operations, the CPA to the UAR and Israel were to be 12.5 and 6.5 nautical miles respectively.

LIBERTY message dtg 010712Z of June 1967 advised its ETA in ROTA as 010845Z and that it would chop to CINCUSNAVEUR at 010901Z without report. In CINCUSNAVEUR message dtg 010717Z, June 1967, LIBERTY was directed when RFS 2 June, to depart ROTA and proceed in accordance with the JCS directed operating schedule. LIBERTY advised CINCUSNAVEUR that departure from ROTA would be at 021230Z and that she would proceed at best speed in accordance with the operating schedule (LIBERTY msg dtg 011305Z June 67). By message dtg 022105Z June 1967, to CINCUSNAVEUR, LIBERTY announced its departure from ROTA at 021230Z and that its ETA on station was 080000Z. LIBERTY sitreps on 3 and 4 June reported the following: (1) LIBERTY message dtg 032028Z reported an 032400Z

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