SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE **NAVY DEPARTMENT**

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY
O P 091520Z JUN 67
FM USDAO TEL AVI ISRAEL

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 12-11-2006 pursuant to E.O. 12859, as amended. ST case 51652.

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~~G60~~ – FLDS

~~S E C R E T~~ 0845 JUN 67.

AT 09/1300Z THE IDF ASSISTANT ARMY SPOKESMAN LT COL MICHAEL BLOCH TELEPHONED TO ALUSNA FOLLOWING SEEN POINTS AS QUOTE: FURTHER INFORMATION ON YESTERDAYS INCIDENT WITH THE AMERICAN SHIP. UNQUOTE.

1. SHIP WAS SIGHTED AND RECOGNIZED AS A NAVAL SHIP 13 MILES FROM COAST.

2. PRESENCE IN A FIGHTING AREA IS 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

CP-94 ROUTINE
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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 SEEN POINTS. ALUSNA PRESSED HIM FOR A LABEL FOR THE STATEMENT SKING IF THIS WERE AN OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF INCIDENT. COL BLOCH COULD NOT SUPPLY A PREAMBLE ON HIS OWN AND ALUSNA REQUESTED HE CONSULT WITH SOME AUTHORITY WHO COULD. BLOCH CALLED BACK IN TWO MINUTES WITH THE ABOVE 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 DIRLLED IN IDENTIFICATION OF EGYPTIAN SHIPS. EL QUSEIR IS LESS THAN HALF THE SIZE; IS MANY YEARS OLDER, Q 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 BEING SHARED BY IDF ARMY AND AIR FORCE AND IN WHICH NAVY WAS NOT SHARING. GP-3.

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