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NAVAL MESSAGE ~~SECRET~~ **NAVY DEPARTMENT**

IMMEDIATE
O 151003Z JUN 67
FM CINCUSNAVEUR

TO SECNAV
CNO

M551

~~S E C R E T~~ PART ONE OF TWO

FOR SECNAV AND CNO FROM MCCAIN
LIBERTY CHRONOLOGY EIGHT JUNE (U)

1. 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 34-00E (POINT ALPHA) THENCE TO 31-22.3N 33-42E (POINT BRAVO) THENCE TO 31-31N 33-00E. (POINT CHARLIE) RETRACING THIS TRACK UNTIL NEW ORDERS RECEIVED. SHIP WOULD OPERATE NORTH OF THIS TRACK 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 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 THE DEPLOYMENT.

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2. ALL TIMES BRAVO UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED:
   0754 STEAMING ON 130T, SPD 10 KNOTS
   0849 PASSED THROUGH POINT ALPHA CHANGED CSE TO 253T
   0850 SINGLE JET A/C (UNIDENTIFIED) CROSSED ASTERN DISTANCE 3-5 MILES - CIRCLED SHIP FROM STBD TO PORT AND RETURNED TO UAR

DOCUMENT INFORMATION NOT TO BE DISSEMINATED OUTSIDE OF NSA WITHOUT PRIOR P28 CLEARANCE

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~~SECRET~~

MAINLAND. LOCATING TWO TRANSMITTED (LIBERTY 080742Z JUN).

0905 DECREASED SPD TO 5 KNOTS

1056 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP - HIGH

1126 ANOTHER A/C CIRCLED SHIP LOCATING THREE DRAFTED FOR TRANSMISSION AT 081022Z (BUT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN TRANSMITTED)

1132 PASSED THROUGH POINT BRAVO C/C TO 283T

1310 EXERCISED AT G.Q. DRILL

1348 SECURED FROM G.Q. DRILL

1351 THREE SMALL SURFACE CONTACTS HELD ON RADAR 32,000 YARDS BEARING 082T - REPORTED TO BRIDGE AS THREE SURFACE CONTACTS

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 7000 FT. A/C PASSED DOWN TRACK OF SHIP

1403 LOUD EXPLOSION - PORT SIDE AMIDSHIPS

1405 SOUNDED GENERAL ALARM - LARGE FIRE IN VICINITY OF FRAME 85, 01 LEVEL WHERE FUEL FOR MOTOR DRIVEN FIRE PUMPS ARE LOCATED.

1405 ALL AHEAD FLANK SIGNALLED BY ENGINE ORDER TELEGRAPH

1405-1410 SHIP UNDER REPEATED AIR ATTACK WITH TWO OR MORE A/C MAKING COORDINATED STRAFING, ROCKET, AND INCENDIARY RUNS 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 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 01 LEVEL PORT SIDE. APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY FIVE WOUNDED, INCLUDING COMMANDING OFFICER, THROUGHOUT TOPSIDE AREAS FROM SHRAPNEL AND SHOCK OF EXPLODING ROCKETS.

(TIME GARBLED) BEGAN MAKING TURNS FOR 18 KNOTS

1425 THREE MTB'S SIGHTED ABAFT STARBOARD BEAM DISTANCE 4-5 MILES

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1426 NOTICED NORMAL STEAMING ENSIGN SHOT AWAY DURING AIR ATTACK. HOLIDAY SIZE ENSIGN HOISTED ON PORT YARDARM

1428 MTB SIGNALLING BY FLASHING LIGHT FROM STBD QUARTER. LIGHT OBSCURED BY DENSE SMOKE FROM BURNING MOTOR WHALEBOAT.

1430 ONE ROUND FIRED BY MACHINE GUN 51. COMMANDING OFFICER ORDERED HOLD FIRE.

1431 MACHINE GUN 53 OPENED FIRE. COMMANDING OFFICER 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 STRAFING STARBOARD SIDE OF SHIP.

1434 TORPEDO PASSED 75 YARDS ASTERN OF SHIP.

1435 TORPEDO HIT STARBOARD SIDE AMIDSHIPS. TWENTY SIX MEN DIED AS A RESULT OF THE TORPEDO HIT AND MTB STRAFING FIRE.

1435 LOST ELECTRICAL POWER THROUGHOUT THE SHIP.

1436 LOST STEAM PRESSURE - SECURED ENGINES AND BOILERS. MANY GUAGES AND METERS IN FIREROOM AND ENGINE ROOM WERE KNOCKED OUT ENG. 3 499, 2343 975. TORPEDO HIT IN RESEARCH COORDINATION CENTER WHERE APPROXIMATELY TWENTY MEN WERE AT G.Q. STATIONS. THESE SPACES FLOODED INSTANTLY AND MOST PERSONNEL IN THIS SPACE DIED OF EITHER BLAST OR DROWNING. NO SIGNS OF LIFE EMINATING FROM COORDINATION CENTER AND ADJACENT SPACES WHICH COULD NOT BE OPENED WITHOUT DANGER OF FLOODING OTHER SPACES.

1440 MTB'S STANDING AWAY FROM THE SHIP. ONE MTB HAS HULL NUMBER 206-17.

1503 ONE MTB RETURNED TO SHIP AND SIGNALLED

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S E C R E T PART TWO OF TWO

"DO YOU NEED HELP" IN ENGLISH. COMMANDING OFFICER 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 08 OR D4 AND D8. HELICOPTER MADE REPEATED PASSES AROUND AND OVER SHIP. THE 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 SEVERAL TIMES AND BY 1713 THEY HAD RETIRED OUT OF SIGHT OVER THE HORIZON.

1615 TWO UNIDENTIFIED JET A/C APPROACHED SHIP FROM THE STBD SID 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 -

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CIRCLED CLOSE ABOARD AND ATTEMPTED TO SIGNAL - THEY APPEARED TO DESIRE TO LOWER SOMEONE TO THE DECK - COMMANDING OFFICER CONSIDERED RECEIVING HIM ON FORECASTLE BUT RULED THIS OUT AS TOO HAZARDOUS. REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO COMMUNICATE WERE UNSUCCESSFUL, AND AT 1852 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 1905). SHIP CONTINUED STEAMING THROUGH NIGHT TO RDVU WITH ESCORTS DISPATCHED BY COMSIXTHFLT.

3. FOREGOING CONSTITUTES DETAILED RECONSTRUCTION FROM QM NOTEBOOK, CIC LOG, BELL BOOK AND BEST RECOLLECTION OF COMMANDING OFFICER, CHIEF ENGINEER, GUNNERY OFFICER AND BRIDGE PERSONNEL ALL CONCUR.
GP-3

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