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NAVAL MESSAGE NAVY DEPARTMENT

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UNCLAS E F T O SECTION ONE OF SEVEN

A. COMSIXTHFLT 151250Z JUN 67

1. IAW REF A THE TRANSCRIPT OF COMSIXTHFLT'S MEETING WITH THE PRESS IN COMPANY WITH CAPT ARTHUR AND LT SCHIENER FOLLOWS. WITH THE ADDITION OF THIS INTERVIEW OF P JUN, THE TOO CYNUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONCERNING LIBERTY INCLUDING THOSE OF 9 AND 11 JUN IS THREE.

2. A TAPE OF THE INTERVIEW BELOW HAS BEEN AIR MAILED TO CHINFO THIS DATE.

3. (TRANSCRIPT)
[illegible]IRAL MARTIN
[illegible]ENTLEMEN, AFTER I GOT BACK TO THE FLAGSHIP YESTERDAY, AFTER [illegible] BEEN ABOARD LIBERTY AND TALKED TO THE 8 SURVIVORS THEY [illegible]VER THERE, ALL OF THEM INJURED, NONE OF THEM SERIOUSLY, [illegible] THEM ABLE TO TAKE WITH ME, ALL IN SICKBAY, ALL IN BED, ALL [illegible]OOD SPIRITS. IN TALKING WITH THEM I BEGAN TO PIECE TOGETHER [illegible]EAL HEROIC JOB THE SHIP HAD DONE. I ALREADY HAD THIS FEELING [illegible]TER A FEW MINUTES ABOARD THE SHIP, THEN WHEN CAPTAIN RUSSELL [illegible]RTHUR, WHO IS THE MAINTENANCE OFFICER FOR SIXTH FLEET, HE [illegible]AME ABOARD LAST NIGHT, HE WENT ABOARD LIBERTY AFTER I HAD [illegible] THERE. HE CAME ABOARD LITTLE ROCK LAST NIGHT AND SPENT THE [illegible]GHT WITH ME. AND AFTER TALKING WITH HIM, I BEGAN TO SEE WHAT [illegible]TREMENDOUS JOB THIS LIBERTY HAS DONE. AND MY REASON FOR [illegible]BING HERE IS TO TELL YOU ABOUT IT. WHILE I WAS ABOARD THE SHIP I TALKED WITH THE COMMANDING OFFICER, COMMANDER MCGONAGLE, AND

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NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

MY FLAG LIEUTENANT...WHEN HE GOT INTO THIS AREA OF WHAT HAPPENED, I ASKED LIEUTENANT COMMANDER, MY AIDE, TO TAKE SOME NOTES AND HE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO TALK TO YOU ALSO. WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME LAST NIGHT TRYING TO DETERMINE WHERE TO TAKE THE SHIP, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE. SOME BODPCN,48. 5#3 S#80. THE TORPEDO OPENED UP A WIDE HOLE IN HER. SHE ASSUMED A 9 DEGREE LIST IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TORPEDO HIT AND THROUGH DAMAGE CONTROL MEASURES WAS ABLE TO HOLD THAT LIST, AND SHE WAS ABLE TO KEEP HER POWER PLANT GOING AND TO GET OUT OF THAT AREA. I WOULD LIKE NOW...YOU OTGHT BE INTERESTEED IN THE CONDITION OF THE SHIP AND I WOULD LIKE FOR CAPTAIN ARTHUR TO TELL YOU JUST WHAT THE CONDITION OF THE SHIP IS, AND I THINK YOU WILL SEE THAT WITH THE FIRES GOING ON TOPSIDE AND THE DAMAGE DOWN BELOW, THAT CREW DID A REMARKABLE JOB.

CAPTAIN ARTHUR

I WENT ON BOARD YESTERDAY WITH THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE, INSOFAR AS YOU CAN DETERMINE IT WITHOUT AN UNDERWATER INSPECTION AND TO DETERMINE THE UC CIRCUITS WHICH WERE STILL IN OPERATION AND THOSE WHICH WERE NOT AND WHICH EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS WERE AVAILABLE FOR THE SHIP TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER UNITS OF THE FORCE, FLEET. THE TORPEDO STRUCK AT ABOUT FRAME 60 ON THE STARBOARD SIDE, AND THE TOP OF THE HOLE IS JUST AT THE TOP OF THE WATER LINE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL THE PRECISE DIMENSIONS OF THE HOLE BECAUSE OF THE REFLECTIONS OF THE WATER WHEN YOU LOOK AT IT FROM A BOAT OR A HELO. I LOOKED AT THE AS LOW AS I COULD GET FROM A HELO GOING OVER THE PLACE WHERE THE TORPEDO ENTERED. IT APPEARS FROM THE HELO TO BE SMALLER THAT IS APPERS FROM A BOAT. FROM A BOAT IT APPEARS TO BE ABOUT 13 FEET WIDE. SO, THIS IS A CONSIDERABLE HOLE. I INSPECTED ALL OF THE FLOODINILBOUNDARIES THAT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED ON THE SHUQ. THEY EXENDED FROM FRAME 52 FORWARD, WHICH WAS ONLY ABOUT 8 FRAMES FORWARD OF THE TORPEDO HIT, AND THE AFTER BOUNDARY WAS ESTABLISHED AT FRAME 70. FRAME 70 IS THE FORWARD BULKHEAD OF THE MAIN ENGINEERING SPACE. NOW, THE FRAME SPACING ON HHE SHIP IS 36 INCHES IN THIS AREA. SO, YOU CAN SEE, THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A LENGTH OF ABOUT 75 TVS80 FEET

Q. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT AGAIM, SIR.

A. 75 FEET IN LENGTH.

Q. THAT WAS FLOODED?

A. THAT WAS FLOODED.

Q. FROM FRAME 60 YOU SAID?

A. FRAME 52 WAS THE FORWARD FLOODING BOUNDARY THAT WAS ESTABLISHED.

Q. HOW MANY FRAMES ARE THERE ON THE SHIP?

A.

/ OH, AROUND 220, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

Q. ARE FRAMES 4 FEET.

A. 3 FEET.

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NAVAL MESSAGE **NAVY DEPARTMENT**

Q SHE'S 455 FEET LONG?
A YES THEY VARY TROUGH, THEY GET CLOSER TOGETHER IN THE BOW. IF YOU MULTIPLY 3 FEET FROM FRAME 52 WHERE WE ESTABLISHED THE BOUNDARY, YOU WILL COME OUT WITH THE WRONG NUMBER AS ZDE DISTANCE FRM THE BOW BECAUSE THEY BECOME CLOSER TOGETHER AS YOU GET UP NEAR THE BOW. SO, IT'S ABOUT FROM THE BOW TO FRAME 52. ABOUT 125 FEET, FROM THE BOW, IS THE FORWARD FLOODING BOUNDARY AND ABOUT 25 FEET AFTER THAT IS WHERE THE CENTER OF THE HOLE IS. NOW I INSPECTED THE FLOODING BOUNDARIES THROUGHOUT FROM TOP TO BOTTOM. AS MUCH AS I COULD GET IN THE SHIP, THE FORWARD BOUNDARY HAS EVIDENCE OF BEING BULGED FORWARD BECAUSE THE TORPEDO EXPLODED INSIDE AND BULGED THAT BOUNDARY FORWARD, THE AFTER BOUNDARY THE FORWARD BULKHEAD OF THE ENGINE ROOM THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF DAMAGE WHAMOEVER AND NO EVIDENPK OF ANY LEAKAGE AT ANY SEAMS IN THESE TWO BULKHEADS. THIS IS THE FORWARD ENGINE ROOM BULKHEAD. LET'S SEE THE FORWARD ENGINE ROOM BULKHEAD THE FORWARD BOUNDARY IS BULGED FORWARD IN BY THE EXPLOSION. YES SIR, NO DAMAGE TO THE REAR BOUNDARY NO WHERE AND THE REAR BOUNDARY IS JUST AFT OF THE-- IT FORMS THE FORWARD BULKHEAD OF THE MAIN ENGINEERING SPACE. THE UPPER BOUNDARY IS THE SECOND DECK THE WATER LEVEL IS ACTUALLY ABOUT A FOOT BELOW THE SECOND DECK. THE SECOND DECK WOULD HOLT AT ABOUT FRAME SIXTY RIGHT THROUGH A HOLE ABOUT TWO FEET IN DIAMETER ON THE STARBOARD SIDE OF THE SHIP. THIS HAS BEEN SHORED, PLATES LAID OVER IT PADDING LAID OVER IT TO MAKE IT WATER TIGHT AND AGAIN THE PLATING WHERE THIS EXPLOSION APPARENTLY TOOK PLACE RIGHT IN THIS AREA IT LIFTED THE UP SO THAT IT TORE IT LOOSE FROM THE SKIN OF THE SHIP AND IT'S A HOLE AT THE SIDE YOU CAN LOOK RIGHT OUT THROUGH THE SIDE AND SEE THE WATER RIGHT IN THE AREA WHERE THE TORPEDO PENETRATED THE SHIP. BUT IT'S A SMALL HOLE ABOUT A FOOT OR SO ABOVE THE WATER LINZMTHIS IS ALL UNDER CONTROL AND FLOODING BOUNDARIES ARE ESTABLISHED AND I THINK IT WILL HOLD WITHOUT ANY PROBLEM. YOU MEAN THE SECOND DECK JUST AT THE WATER LINE IS TORN FROM THE SIDE FROM THE SKIN OF THE SHIP, AND IS ALSO A SMALL HOLE YOU CAN SEE DOWN THROUGH THE SKIN OF THE SHIP WHERE THE TORPEDO ENTERED SO THAT YOU CAN ACTUALLY SEE DAYLIGHT INCE THE HOLE ITSELF IS JUST PARTLY ABOVE WATER. WHERE HAVE YOU PUT THE PLATES SIR? THE ON THE SECONEDECK ON THE STARBOARD SIDE AT FRAME SIXTY ABOUT TEN FEET IN [illegible]STYE [illegible]BOARD
[illegible] OF THE SHIP WE HAVE SHORED IT TO THE MAIN DECK ABOVE WITH [illegible] AND PLATES LAYED OVER THE WHOLE TO CONTROL ANY POSSIBILITY OF FLOODING THROUGH THAT SPACE. OH I SEE IT BLEW A HOLE THROUGH THE-

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UNCLAS E F T O SECTION TWO OF SEVEN

SECOND DECK AND WE WERE AND THE WATER LEVEL IS ACTUALLY BELOW THERE WE HAVE SHORED THAT AND ESTABLISHED A BOUNDARY ON THE SECOND DECK. CAPAIN CAN YOU TELL US WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE INTERNAL COMPARTMENTS SPACES OF THE LIBERTY HAS BEEN IMMOBOLIZED THOUGHOUT. WE CAN GIVE IT TO YOU IN FEET I BELIEVE. I'VE JUST GIVEN IT TO YOU IN FEET REALLY A BH THE OTHER SPACES ARE ACCESSABLE NOW THE PLACES THAT YOU CANNOT GET TO ARE BELOW THE SECOND DECK EXCEPT FORWARD OF FRAME 52. I WENT BELOW THE SECOND DECK FORWARD OF FRAME 52 AND CHECKED WATER TIGHT BOUNDARIES WHERE THEY MEET THE DECK LEVEL ON THE OVERHEAD. WE WERE ALSO DETERMINED THE BULGING AND AFTER YOU GO ALL THE WAY FROM THE STD OF THE SHIP TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SHIP RIGHT UP TO THE SECOND DECK LEVEL AND CHECKED THAT HOLE IN THE BULKHEAD AREA WHICH I DID THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF DAMAGE AT ALL BUT IN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION SPACES THEN YOU WOULD GO FROM FRAME 52 TO FRAME 70 BELOW THE SECOND DECK ON THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SHIP NOW THERE IS A FIRST PLATFORM AND A SECOND PLATFORM WHICH ARE BOTH FLOODED AND BELOW THAT WE HAD TANK TOPS OF AND WHICH CONOIN EITHER FUEL OR WATER AND THERE IS EVIDENCE FROM THE OIL LEAKAGE OUT THAT THERE IS A TANK TOP HAS WELL BEEN RUPTURED BETWEEN THE ACCESS IS... WOULD NORMALLY GO. THE FIRST AND SECOND PLATFORMS BELOW THE SECOND DECK BETWEEN FRAME 52 AND 70. THERE WERE OPERATIONAL SPACES AND WERE WHERE PEOPLE WOULD BE EXPECTED TO BE. THIS AREA THAT HAS ALL OIL OVER IS REULT OF THE (GARBLE) I THINK ITS LESS THAN THAT BECAUSE WE WERE TALKING ABOUT BELOW THE SECOND DECK. NOW IF WE WERE RESTRICED BELOW THE SECOND DECK THEN ITS JUST A QUESTION OF ARITHMETIC OF HOW MUCH THE LENGTH OF THE SHIP IS IMMOBOLIZED BETWEEN ABOVE THE SECOND DECK IS ALL.....THE SECOND DECK IS RIGHT ON THE WATER LINE JUST ABOUT A FOOT ABOVE I WOULD ESTIMATE. NOW MANY DECKS ARE THERE ON THE SHIP. WELL YOU HAVE THE LOWER HOLD THE FIRST PLAYFORM THE SECOND PLATFORM THE SECOND DECK THE MAIN DECK THE 01 LEVEL THE 02 LEVEL AND UP TO THE BRIDGE O
LEVEL . IS THE OIL LEAKAGE A
PROBLEM CAPTAIN. WELL IT WOULD BE TAKEN INTO PORT ITS NOT A

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SPECIFIC PROBLEM [illegible] IT DOES NOT ENDANGER THE SHIP. NO ACTUALLY [illegible] THE CONTROL OF [illegible] THE SHAPE OF EXPLOSIONS AS I UNDERSTAND IT [illegible] TO THE TANK TOPS THAT ARE RUPTURED RIGHT UNDERNEATH THE AREA WHERE THE TORPEDO ENTERED THE THE BIRATION IS HAS RESULTED OF THE EXPLOSTION MAY HAVE OPENED UP A SEAM IN ANOTHER TANK WHICH IS DRIBBLING OUT BUT WHETHER WE CAN'T TELL THAT UNTIL WE MAKE AN UNDERWATER BODY INSPECTION THE FUEL TANKS IN THAT AREA IS FUEL TANKS ARE BELOW THAT AREA. WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE FAST ACTION OF THE DAMAGE CONTROL CREWS SAVED THE SHIP FROM SINKING, I MEAN IT HAD RECEIVED WHAT COULBKBE TERMED A MORTAL BLOW TO THEM AND IF THEY HADN'T ACTED FAST AS THEY DID ALL THEIR ESTABLISHED AND FLOODING BULKHEADS IT COULD VERY WELL HAVE HAPPENED. FIRST OF ALL THE FORWARD BULKHEAD AND THE AFT BULKHEAD WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED AS FLOODING BOUNDARIES OR HEAVE NO PENETRATION ARE DESIGNED THAT WAY. YOU CAN'T LEAVE A HATCH OPEN AND CLOSED AND THESE TWO HELD WHICH SHIPS THE PRINCIPLE THING THAT KEPT IT FROM SINKING. IF THE AFT BULKHEAD HAD LET GO OR BEING HOLED IN ANY WAY YOU WOULD HAVE HAD IT SHORED UP IN THE ENGINEERING SPACES AND SHE'S GONE STRAIGHT DOWN, BUT THEY ESTABLISHED THESE IN THE DECKS AND THEY DID IT QUITE QUICKLY AND WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE FAST ACTION OF THE CREW SAVED THE SHIP. WILL IT CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTED. COULD YOU GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN SIR THE SHIP IS SO DESIGNED THAT THE BULKHEAD IS FROM FRAME 52 TO BULKHEAD FRAME 70 AT THESE BULKHEADS ARE CLOSED AS SOON AS YOU GO TO BATTLE STATIONS THERE ARE NEVER OPEN. WHETHER YO GO TO BATTLE STATIONS OR NOT THEY ARE DESIGNED SO THAT THERE ARE NO OPENINGS IN THEM THERE ARE NO HATCHES YOU YOU ALSO THEN YOU HAVE TO GO UP AND OVER THUS TO PREVENT THEY ARE THERE TO LOCALIZE DAMAGE WHETHER OF THESE WERE BROKEN AND THUS AND THIS IS WHAT REALLY WE BUILD ALL THE SHIPS THIS WAY. IF IT HAD BEEN ONE OF THOSE THEY HAD NOT HOLED IT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE GONE. WE BUILD ALL SHIPS THIS TO... A DAMAGED COMPARTMENT WE HAVE COMPARTMENTS THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF A SMALL SHIP HAS TO GO THROUGH ON THE COMPARTMENTS HE HAS TO GO UP AND COME BACK UP THE ABOUT THE THIRD DECK I THINK AND THEN GO BACK DOWN AND THEN BACK UP THATS QUITE A JOB. EVEN IF THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THIS SHIP HAS NEVER SEEN ALL THE COMPARTMENTS AND EVEN IF HE WERE FOR THREE YEARS HE WOULDN'T HAVE I WOULD THINK HE COULD SEE ALL OF THEM AND STILL DO HIS JOB. CAN YOU PHYSICALLY DESCRIBE THESE BULKHEADS ABOUT HOW BIG THEY ARE THEY ARE NEW THEY RUN FROM SKIN TO SKIN THAT IS FROM PORT TO STARBOARD ALL THE WAYPOHETC APPEAR TO BE ABOUT 3/8 PLATE BUT I DON'T HAVE THE PLANS IN FRONT OF ME AND I DON'T HAVE THEM ON THE SHIP THUS JUST A GUESS ON MY PART THAT THEY MAY BE A LITTLE LIGHTER BUT I THINK THEY ARE 3/8M PLATE, 3/8 OF AN INCH -- 3/8" INCH OF AN INCH AND STEEL AND THEY ARE WELDED TOP AND BOTTOM AND TO THE SKIN OF THE SHIP. CAPTAIN WHEN WAS THIS TYPE OF SHIP THIS IS HOW OLD, I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW OLD IT IS ITS A C-2 HULL 455 FEET LONG 70 FOOT BEAM IT DISPLACES 10,500 TONS WHEN ITS FULLY LOADED. IT NORMALLY SGAWS 23 FEET OF WATER ITS NOW

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DRAWING 26 FEET FORWARD ITS THE OLD CARGO ITS A C-2 HULL BUILT UNDER THE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION. THE VICTORY SHIPS, NO THEY A C-2 HULL. SHIP A MARITIME IS A SMALL SIZE FREIGHTER, 10,000 TONS ITS A C-2 HULL LIKE CHARLIE-2 FROM CAN'T DO YOU KNOW WHEN IT WAS BUILT. NO. JAMES SAID VICTORY. WELL, I'VE ALWAYS REFERRED TO THEM AS C-2 THE OLD VICTORY ARE C-2S AND C-4S YOU HAVE TWO NUMBERS DEPENDING WHICH ONE YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT AND ONE THIS MOST COMMONPLACE USE IS THE C-2. THEY WERE BUILT POST WAR? AT THE END OF THE WAR I WOULD ESTIMATE. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN OPERATING AS A RESEARCH SHIP? I DON'T KNOW SIR. IS IT DIESEL POWER NO SIR STEAM, GEARED STEAM TURBINE. COULD YOU TELL US WHAT THE CREW DID TO CONTRIBUTE TO SAVING THE SHIP, PRINCIPALLY BY ESTABLISHING THE FLOODING BOUNDARIES AND CHECKING THEM, IF THEY HAD LEFT THEM OPEN AND IF IT HAD GONE DOWN A CONTINUED TO KEEL OVER. THE FIRST THING YOU HAVE TO DO IS ESTABLISH FLOODING BOUNDARIES THEY ESTABLISHED THE SECOND DECK AND SHORED THEM TO INSURE THAT THEY HAVE WATER TIGHT BOUNDARY ON THE SECOND DECK AND PLUGGED ALL THE HOLE WITH DAMAGE CONTROL THEMSELVES THEY WERE UNSURE OF SINKING AND THIS THEY DONE RATHER QUICKLY. HOW LONG HAS THE SHIP, ITS 455 FEET. HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE TO ESTABLISH FLOODING BOUNDARIES. I DON'T KNOW I WASN'T ON BOARD THESE IT MAY SEEM LIKE AN ETERNITY TO PEOPLE CHECKING THEM IT MAY TAKE A FEW MINUTES.
THE AIRCRAFT CAME BACK ON THE STARBOARD SIDE AND MADE MORE PASSES ON THE SHIP, HOWEVER, ALL RUNS WERE MADE FROM FORWARD, ALL RUNS WERE MADE FROM FORWARD AFT, THERE WEREN'T ANY RUNS THAT CAME FROM THE STERN.
Q. WERE THEY COMING IN FROM THE SUN?
A. I DON'T KNOW, I DON'T KNOW.
Q. DID HE MENTION ROCKETS, YESTERDAY THEY SAID THEY WERE FIRING ROCKETS.
A. HE DIDN'T MENTION ANY ROCKETS.
Q. JUST STRAFING?

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UNCLAS E F T O SECTION THREE OF SEVEN

A. YES. AFTJ SOME STRAFING RUNS, AS THE ADMIRAL MARTIN SAID. NOT KNOWN EXACTLY HOW MANY. THE COMMANDING OFFICER AVLS MEMBERS OF THE CREW OBSERVED 3 MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS AT A GOOD DISTANCE. HOWEVER, AT THE TIME, THE MAJOR ATTENTION OF THE SHIP WAS GIVEN TO ATTACKING AIRCRAFT. THE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS WERE COMING IN ON THE STARBOARD QUARTER AT 135 DEGREES RELATIVE, APPROXIMATELY 135 DEGREES RELATIVE, THE SHIP WAS GOING IN THIS DIRECTION, THEY WOULD BE COMING IN LIKE ABOUT THIS (INDICATING WITH GESTURES).

Q. THEY WERE COMING IN FROM THE REAR?

A. THEY WERE COMING IN FROM THE STARBOARD QUARTER.

Q. THEY SAW 3 MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS?

A. THREE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS WERE IN A TRIANGULAR FORMATION, 1-2-3 (INDICATING WITH GESYURES). THE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS CONTINUED TO CLOSE AND THE AIR ATTACK WAS OVER, AND THE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS CONTINUED TO CLOSE. THEY WERE DOWN TO ABOUT 3 TO 4 THOUSAND YARDS AT THIS TIME. THERE WAS A LOT OF SMOKE ENGULFING THE BRIDGE AREA AND PORTIONS OF THE LIBERTY BECAUSE OF THE FIRE FROM THE GASOLINE CANS AND THE FIRE IN THE MOTOR WHALE BOAT. THE NATIONALITY OF THE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS WAS NOT KNOWN AT THIS TIME BY ANY BODY ON THE SHIP. THE CAPTAIN HAD SINCE THIS TIME ORDERED ALL AHEAD FLANK SPEED, WHICH WOULD BE EXCESS OF 15 KNOTS. THE SHIP AS I MENTIONED BEFORE STARTED OUT AT 5 KNOTS, BUT BY THIS TIME HE HAD ORDERED ALL AHEAD FLANK SPEED, 15 KNOTS.

Q. THAT'S THERE TOP SPEED ISN'T IT?

ADMIRAL MARTIN: HER TOP SPEED IS LISTED AT ABOUT 16 KNOTS. EVERY PROUD SKIPPER SAYS HE CAN MAKE AT LEAST ONE MORE KNOT THAN THAT. YOU WILL NOT FIND A SKIPPER WHO WILL NOT SAY THAT HIS SHIP WILL NOT DO 1 MORE KNOT THAT THE PUBLISHED MAXIMUMBN

Q. WHAT WILL THE AMERICA MAKE, ADMIRAL?

A. ASK THE SKIPPER!

NORMALLY IT WOULD TAKE PERHAPS 10 MINUTES TO CHECK IT OUT.

Q. YOU MENTIONED COMMUNICATIONS. WHAT COMMUNICATIONS DOES SHE HAVE REMAINING?

A. SHE HAS 2 TRANSMITTERS AND 1 RECEIVER THAT ARE OPERATIONAL, NOW. SHE HAS SEVERAL MORE STANDARD NAVY TRANSMITTER TYPES. I DON'T

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THINK. . HAVE VERY LITTLE IF ANYTHING WRONG WITH THEM. THEY MAY HAVE A FEW MINOR THINGS THAT WHEN WE GET THE TENDER PEOPLE ABOARD WE SHOULD HAVE THEM OPERATIONAL IN A DAY OR SO.
Q. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAVE SEEN THE PRESS REPORTS, BUT SOME NAVAL SPOKESMAN WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT IT WAS A SPY SHIP. THEY HAVE SPIES AND SO DO WE.
ADMIRAL MARTIN: I THOUGHT THAT WAS GOING TO COME UP, AND I HAVE PREPARED A SPEECH AND IF YOU DON'T MIND, I HAVE TIME. SO IF YOU DON'T MIND IF WE COVER THE REST OF THIS NOW, DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?
Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SHIP?
CAPTAIN ARTHUR: WELL RIGHT NOW... AND REALLY IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR DETAILS ON THE DAMAGE...THERE IS FLOODING DAMAGE. WE HAVE OTHER DAMAGE AS YOU SAW FLYING AROUND IN A PLANE. I KNOW SOME OF YOU WERE IN A HELO OVER THERE, WE'VE GOT SHELL HOLES AND CANNON HOLES ALL OF THE TOPSIDE. IT LOOKS LIKE A SEIVE, BUT NONE OF THESE REALLY HAVE ANY...THEY ARE SUPERFICIAL FOR THE MOST PART. THEY CAN BE FIXED IN 3 OR 4 DAYS. THAT'S TEMPORARY REPAIRS OR EMERGENCY REPAIRS. WE WILL JUST PUT DOUBLER PLATES OF THEM AND WELD THEM UP TO ASSURE WATER TIGHT INTEGRITY IN THESE AREAS. IN ADDITION TO THAT, THERE WERE 2 FLASH FIRES THAT BROKE OUT, ONE ON THE PORT SIDE ABOUT FRAME 75 DUE TO RUPTURED GASOLINE DRUMS WHICH THE SHIP CARRIES FOR ITS P500 AND P250. THE BULLETS RUPTURED THESE DRUMS AND DROPPED 110 GALLONS OF GASOLINE OUT AND IT FLARED UP AND IT LOOKS TERRIBLE FROM THE OUTSIDE. THE PAINT IS BLISTERED AND BLACK IN THIS WHOLE AREA RUNNING FOR 20 FEET AND THROUGH THE SECOND DECK LEVELS. ON CHECKING THE INTERIOR DECK SPACES, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DAMAGE. IT WAS CONTROLLED SO QUICKLY, AND THIS IS [illegible]...THE CREW ACTED TO SAVE THE SHIP. THESE FIRES CAN GET OUT OF CONTROL SO DAMN FAST THAT YOU BURN UP BEFORE YOU KNOW YOU ARE IN TROUBLE. BUT THEY GOT THESE FIRES OUT SO QUICKLY THAT THERE IS NOT EVEN ANY BLISTERED PAINT INSIDE THE COMPARTMENT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BULKHEAD.
Q. THESE HOLES IN THE STACK, WERE THEY CAUSED BY 20 MILLIMETER? DO THEY LOOK LIKE 20 MILLIMETER?
A. THEY APPEAR TO BE. THE STACK IT LOOKS LIKE A SEIVE TOO AND THERE MUST BE 19 OR 20 HOLES IN THE THING. THEY LOOK LIKE 20 MILLIMETER BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE. THE HOLES ARE ABOUT 2 INCHES IN DIAMETER IT LOOKS LIKE FOR THE MOST PART.
Q. HOW LONG CAN THIS SHIP STAY AT SEA TILL YOU CHECK THIS OIL FLOW?
A. I WOULD SAY RIGHT NOW UNDER HER PRESENT CONDITION IT WOULD BE INDEFINITELY, BECAUSE WE HAVE GOOD FLOODING BOUNDARIES ESTABLISHED OR IF NO ADDITIONAL FLOODING...
ADMIRAL MARTIN: WE ARE NO LONGER CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE SHIP. OUR GREATEST CONCERN NOW IS TO GET HER WHERE WE CAN GET THE BODIES OUT. THAT'S THE MOST URGENT CONSIDERATION...
Q. WHEN WILL THAT BE?

A. I [illegible] KNOW, WHEN WE CAN GET HER INTO DRYDOCK.
Q. ARE YOU TAKING HER INTO DRYDOCK NOW?
A. YES. IF THERE IS A DRYDOCK AVAILABLE, WE HAVE TO CHECK AVAILABLE DRYDOCKS AND WE WILL TAKE HER TO A DRYDOCK THAT IS AVAILABLE.
Q. WHAT TYPE OF CREW IS IN THAT COMPARTMENT? [illegible]
CAPTAIN ARTHUR I DIDN'T CHECK. I AM PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN DAMAGE CONTROL. IT IS FORWARD OF THE MAIN ENGINEERING SPACES, BUT IT IS A GENERAL PASSAGEWAY AREA THERE THROUGH IT. THE SECOND DECK, SO ANYBODY COULD HAVE BEEN IN IT.
Q. WERE THESE CREW COMPARTMENTS PER CHANCE?
A. I AM NOT SURE OF THAT EITHER. MOSTLY I THINK SHIP'S OPERATIONS COMPARTMENTS, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THERE WERE ANY CREW SPACES BUT I COULD BE WRONG. I DIDN'T CHECK THE GENERAL PLANS ON EVERY COMPARTMENT, BUT I DID LOOK AT THE BOOK OF GENERAL PLANS AND THEY APPEAR TO BE OPERATIONAL TYPE COMPARTMENTS.
Q. COULD YOU CHECK FOR US? I THINK WE WOULD BE INTERESTED.
A. I DON'T HAVE THE BOOK OF GENERAL PLANS HERE.
Q. HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU BELIEVE ARE PROBABLY IN THESE COMPARTMENTS? IS THERE AN ASSUMPTION THAT THERE IS 22 SINCE WE HAVE GOT 9 BODIES?
ADMIRAL MARTIN? THAT'S WHAT WE ARE ASSUMING.
Q. WHAT WAS THE PROBABLE CAUSE OF DEATH, DROWNING?
A. EXPLOSION, DROWNING, COMBINATIONS.
ADMIRAL MARTIN: BEFORE WE GET INTO THAT, COULD WE GET INTO AN INTERESTING THING WE HEARD FROM THE SKIPPER YESTERDAY. THE COMMANDING OFFICER WAS IN HIS BUNK. HE HAD A LEG INJURY, A BRUISE FROM SHRAPNEL ON THE INSIDE OF HIS RIGHT THIGH. HE IS A RUGGED LOOKING CHARACTER, AND HE REALLY IS RUGGED, THE CREW SWEARS BY HIM. HE LOOKED TIRED AS I SAY, BUT HE WAS NOT ABOUT TO LEAVE HIS SHIP. WE COULD HAVE RELIEVED HIM WITH SOMEBODY WHO HAS QUALIFIED IN

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THAT TYPE, BUT HE WANTS TO STAY ABOARD AND THE DOCTOR DID NOT OPPOSE THAT. SO HE IS ABOARD, WHILE HE WERE THERE, HE TOLD ME THE STORY AND I BELIEVE MY NOTES WILL COVER IT PRETTY WELL. I WOULD LIKE FOR LIEUTENANT SCHEINER, WHO WAS TAKING NOTES, TO GIVE YOU THE INFORMATION HE GAVE US ON THE NARRATIVE OF WHAT WENT ON.
LIEUTENANT SCHEINER
Q. LIEUTENANT, MAY WE FIRST HAVE YOUR FULL NAME?
A. ROBERT SCHEINER.
Q. WHAT IS YOUR HOME TOWN?
A. NEW YORK CITY.
Q. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION?
A. FLAG LIEUTENANT TO ADMIRAL MARTIN.
ADMIRAL MARTIN: HE IS NOT ONLY A LIEUTENANT IN GRADE, BUT ALSO A FLAG LIEUTENANT ON MY STAFF.
LT SCHEINER: ADMIRAL MARTIN AND MYSELF ARRIVED ON BOARD LIBERTY YESTERDAY AT 1340 LOCAL TIME. WE CAME IN BY WELD SLING AND IMMEDIATELY MARTIN WENT TO SEE THE COMMANDING OFFICER, COMMANDER MCGONAGLE. COMMANDER MCGONAGLE WAS CONFINED TO HIS BED. AS ADMIRAL MARTIN MENTIONED, HE HAD A LEG WOUND, SHRAPNEL IN HIS UPPER RIGHT THIGH, INSIDE RIGHT THIGH. IN ADDITION, HE HAD NUMEROUS SMALL PIECES OF SHRAPNEL. YOU COULD SEE THE DIRED BLOOD. SMALL SHRAPNEL FLAKES ALL OF HIS RIGHT LEG. I NOTICED THEM, SMALL, LIKE 80 SHOTS. PIECES OF SHRAPNEL WITH CRUSTED BLOOD AROUND THEM. COMMANDER MCGONAGLE HAD LOST A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF BLOOD AND HE WAS FAIRLY FATIGUED AS THE MEDICAL OFFICER HAS STATED. THE STORY AS I TOOK THE NOTES AND I HAVE SOME AMATUER SHORTHAND NOTES OVER HERE SOME FIGHTER AIRCRAFT WERE NOTICED BY LOOKOUTS. THE AIRCRAFT WERE AT APPROXIMATELY 8 TO 10 THOUSAND FEET. AT THAT DISTANCE OF COURSE, THE LOOKOUTS WERE UNABLE TO MAKE OUT THE NATIONALITY OR THE TYPE. SOMETIME AFTERWARD, AND OF COURSE THERE WANS'T ANY COMPLETE LOG KEPT THAT WAS AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS TIME. THE AIRCRAFT CAME IN AND STARTED STRAFING THE SHIP. THE FIRST AIRCRAFT CAME IN ON THE PORT BOW, COMING IN FROM PORT BOW TO STARBOARD STERN, STRAFING THE SHIP FORWARD AND JUST WALKING DOWN TOWARDS THE BRIDGE AREA, AND THEN FLEW BY. THE SECOND AIRCRAFT CAME IN OFF THE PORT BOW, EXCUSE ME, THE FIRST AIRCRAFT CAME IN OFF THE STARBOARD BOW AND SECOND OFF THE PORT BOW. AT THIS TIME SOME FIRES STARTED. PROBABLY

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THE GASOLINE.
Q. DO YOU HAVE THE TIME OF THE ATTACK?
A. 1205 ZULU.
Q. THAT IS GMT?
A. YES. 1405 LOCAL TIME ON THE...
Q. THE SECOND AIRCRAFT CAME ACROSS THE PORT BOW AND REPEATED THE PROCESS?
A. YES.
THE SECOND AIRCRAFT CAME ACROSS THE PORT BOW AND REPEATED THE PROCESS, IS THAT CORRECT.
A. YES
Q. 1405 THIS TIME ARE WAS IT 1505 THEIR TIME ZONE?
A. 1405 OUR LOCAL TIME. I THINK THEY ARE ON CHARLIE TIME.
Q. SECOND AIRCRAFT CAME IN OFF THE STARBOARD BOW?
A. SECOND AIRCRAFT CAME IN OFF THE PORT BOW AND STRAFED. AS A RESULT OF THIS, STRAFING IT WAS NOT KNOWN WHETHER IT WAS THE FIRST PASS OR THE SECOND PASS, FIRES WAS IGNITED. GASOLINE CANS CAUGHT FIRE AND ALSO A MOTOR WHALE BOAT ON THE STARBOARD SIDE CAUGHT FIRE ALSO. THE SHIPS WAS DOING APPROXIMATELY 5 KNOTS AT THE TIME.
Q. AT THIS TIME?
A. AT THE TIME OF THE ATTACK, COMMANDING OFFICER WAS ON HIS WAY UP TO THE BRIDGE AT THE INSTANCE OF ATTACK, AND HE IMMEDIATELY ORDER GENERAL QUARTERS SOUNDED. THE CREW THEN WENT TO THEIR GENERAL QUARTERS STATIONS, AND THEN HE TOLD US THAT THE AIRCRAFT CAME BACK, THIS TIME OFF THE STARBOARD SIDE.
Q. DID THEY COUNT THE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT?
A. HE THINKS THERE WERE THREE. HE ISN'T SURE. HE ALSO STATES THEY MADE SIX STRAFING RUNS, BUT HE'S NOT SURE OF THAT.
ADMIRAL MARTIN: AS I RECALL ON THE FIRST PASS THEY IGNITED GASOLINE CONTAINERS UP NEAR THE BRIDGE.
Q. JUST WERE WAS THESE GASOLINE TANKS?
A. UP NEAR THE BRIDGE, NEAR FRAME 75 ON THE 01 LEVEL.
Q. DID THEY ESTABLISH THE NATIONALITY OF THE ATTACKING AIRCRAFT? WERE THEY MARKED IN ANOWAY?
A. NO ONE HAD ANY IDEA. HE SAID THAT NONE OF THE PEOPLE HE TALKED TO COULD IDENTIFY THEM.
Q. BUT THEY WERE JETS?
Q. EXCUSE ME ADMIRAL. THE LT THAT GOT KILLED, WAS HE MARRIED?
A. YES HE WAS.
LT SCHEINER: AS I MENTIONED IT STARTED A FIRE. IN ADDITION ON THE FIRST OR SECOND STRAFING RUN, TWO QUARTERMASTERS ON DUTY WERE HIT. THIS OCCURRED JUST A FEW FEET AWAY FROM WERE COR MCDONAGLE. THE COMMANDING OFFICER WAS STANDING. THE QUATERMASTERS WERE NOT KILLED IMMEDIATELY, BUT THE WERE TAKEN BELOW TO A MEDICAL CASUALTY STATION. I BELIEVE THEY DIED LATER.
BY THIS TIME GENTLEMEN THEY HAD AMMUNITION ON THE MACHINE GUNS ON BOARD LIBERTY AT THE GUNS AND THE FLAMES FROM THE MHB STARTED TO COOK OFF SOME OF THE ROUNDS ON THE STARBOARD AMIDSHIPS ABAFT THE

BRIDGE MACHINE GUN, STARBOARD ABAFT THE BRIDGE MACHINE GUN, THERE WAS A MMB AFIRE AND WAS THIS THAT STARTED TO COOK OFF THE AMMUNITION THAT WAS NEAR AND THE HEAT OF THE FIRE EXPLODED THE AMMUNITION. Q. THIS WAS THE STARBOARD AFT MACHINE GUN. A. YES JUST AFT OF THE BRIDGE. Q. HOW MANY MACHINE GUNS ALL TOGETHER. FOUR. THESE ARE JUST SHORT-RANGE DEFENSE AGAINST PROWLERS, SMALL 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS. THE CAPTIAN COMMANDER MCGONAGLE MENTIONED AT THIS TIME HE NOTICED ONE OF THE MTP FIRED A TORPEDO. Q. DID HE SAY WHAT TIME HE SAW THAT? NO HE DID NOT. Q. HOW FAR WAS THE PT BOAT WHEN HE FIRED? A. I'VE GOT A NOTE HERE THAT HE WAS AT A DISTANCE OF ABOUT 1000 YARDS BUT THAT'S NOT THE SPECIFIC ANSWER TO THE QUESTION. HE FIRED WHEN ABOUT 3000 YARDS FROM THE SHIP. THE NOT JUST SAYS THAT THE PT BOATS CAME IN THAT FAR IN TO A 1000 YARDS AND THIS TORPEDO INCI-DENTALLY WHCIH WAS FIRED THE CAPTAIN SAID HE SAY THE TORPEDO WAKE PASS ABOUT 25 YARDS UNDER THE STERN OF THE SHIP. THIS TORPEDO DID NOT HIT THE SHIP. BEHIND OR UNDER THE STERN. AFT OF THE STERN. NEXT THING HE REMEMBERS IS THAT THE SHIP TOOK A HIT AND THAT IT IMMEDIATELY WENT TO A 9 DEGREE LIST AND HE WAS VERY PROUD TO MEN-TION IT DID NOT GET ANY WORSE THAN A 9 DEGREE LIST. DID HE SEE THE SECOND TORPEDO? HE DID NOT MENTION IT, I DON'T KNOW IF HE SAW IT. GENTLEMEN WE WERE NOT ASKING HIM ANY QUESTIONS AT THIS TIME HE WAS JUST TELLING ADMIRAL MARTIN WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND I WAS TAKING NOTES. THE COMMANDING OFFICER DID NOT BELIEVE AND DOES NOT BELIEVE ANYBODY WENT OVER THE SIDE AS RESULT OF THE EXPLOSION NOR DOES HE THINK THAT ANYONE WAS BLOWN OVER THE SIDE. ANOTHER ITEM WAS THAT THE MTBS WERE STRAFFING THE SHIP ALSO WITH THEIR MACHINE GUNS AND AT WHAT TIME IT HAS WAS NOT EXACTLY KNOWN. BUT AFTER THEY MADE THEIR TORPEDO RUN AND SPED AWAY THEY DID NOT COME IN FOR A SECOND

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EFTO

UNCLAS E F T O SECTION SIX OF SEVEN

I WOULD TELL I'D LIKE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION THAT SHIP WAS UNDER MY OPERATIONAL COMMAND. SHE WAS TOLD TO REMAIN IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS IN A POSITION WHICH SHE COULD CARRY OVER HER PRIMARY MISSION WHICH WAS COMMUNICATIONS AND HER COMMUNICATIONS MISSION WAS TO BE AVAILABLE FOR AN EVACUATION OPERATION IF IT SHOULD BE ORDERED, HER POSITION MAKES COMPLETE LOGIC TO ME. IN A POSITION WHERE SHE COULD BE CONTACTED BY ANY EMBASSY OR CONSULATE INVOLVED. THIS CONTACT MIGHT BE VERY LOW POWERED TRANSMITTER AND SOME COMMUNICATIONS AS YOU KOW THAT IS LIMITED TO LINE OF SIGHT. FOR SHE'S THE ONLY SHIP OF HER KIND ENGAGED IN THAT TYPE OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THAT AREA. I NORMALLY AS SOON AS SHE THE WORK THAT SHE DOES IS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND MOST OR THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT IS CLASSIFED ALMOST ALL OF IT. YOU EMPHATICALLY DENY THAT SHE WAS FUNCTIONING AS A SPY. I EMPHATICALLY DENY IT. I EMPHATICALLY DENY THAT. I EMPHATICALLY TELL YOU THAT WE WAS THERE TO BE A COMMUNICATIONS GUARD IN CASE WE HAD TO MASS EVACUATE. DOES THE ISRAELI'S (GARBLE) I DO NOT KNOW. YOU DIDN'T INFORM THE EGYPTIANS? I DON'T SEE WHY WHEN WAS OPERATING IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS. WE WERE INFORMED THAT A PLANE EGYPTIAN FLEW OVER THE SHIP THE DAY BEFORE. NO I DON'T KNOW THIS IS A SURPRISE TO ME THIS ATTACK ON AN UNARMED NON-COMBATANT UNARMED EXCEPT FOR 50MM WHICH WAS FOR CLOSE DEFENSE IS THAT 50MM OR [illegible] I'M SORRY. ADMIRAL WHEN YOU SPOKE OF LOW POWERED TRANSMITTERS DO YOU MEAN THE EMERGENCY TRANSMITTERS THAT THESE SHIPS HAVE. YES I DON'T REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT COMMUNICATIONS SHE HAS BUT WE DO ALL KNOW THAT THESE EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES HAVE BEEN RAN-SACKED AND HAVE BEEN UNDER ATTACK AND THAT THEY WOULD COMMUNICATE WITH WHATEVER THEY HAVE. THEY MIGHT EVEN TRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH A AMATEUR SET. HOW LONG HAS THE SHIP BEEN IN THE GENERAL AREA. SHE HAD ARRIVED THAT MORNING. ADMIRAL IF WE COULD GO BACK FOR JUST

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A MOMENT BEFORE HE GET TO FAR AWAY FROM THESE OTHER QUESTIONS
WHEN HE LEFT OUR RESPONSE WE HAD SEEN PLANES IN THE AIR YOU ORDERED
TO PROTECT LIBERTY, WOULD THEY ATTACK ONLY THOSE PLANES OR MISSILES
THAT WERE ATTACKING LIBERTY, WHY DID YOU CALL THEM BACK AND WHAT
WHAT SORT OF INFORMATION DID YOU HAVE OR HOW WAS THE INFORMATION
RELAYED TO YOU THAT CAUSED YOU TO CALL THE PLANES BACK. I RECEIVED
A MESSAGE THAT THE ATTACK WAS BY ISRAELI FORCES AND IN THE SAME
MESSAGE THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD APOLOGIZED FOR IT. WHERE
DID THAT COME FROM? WAS IT A MESSAGE FROM WASHINGTON, THAT
MESSAGE NO THAT MESSAGE WAS FROM OUR EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV. HOW
LONG AFTER THE ATTACK WAS IT RECEIVED BY YOU ADMIRAL? THE
MESSAGE RECEIVED WAS APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES AFTER OUR
AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN LAUNCHED.
WERE YOUR AIRCRAFT LESS THAN 30 MINUTES AWAY? THE AIRCRAFT WERE
LAUNCHED I HAD THE MESSAGE THAT THE ISRAELI HAD ADMITTED THAT THEY
HAD MADE THE ATTACK AND THEIR APOLOGIES AND THIS IS WHEN THE AIR-
CRAFT WERE RECALLED. WHEN WERE THE AIRCRAFT LAUNCHED. WELL THAT
INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE. I DON'T CARE TO BE PINNED DOWN TO
EXACT TIMES. RIGHT NOW I DON'T HAVE THE RECORDS OF EXACT TIMES
WITH ME. THERE WERE TWO PLANES ON THE DECK AT THIS TIME THEY WERE
SENT OUT OF WERE ABOUT 480 IN THE AFTERNOON. ADMIRAL WHEN THE
LIBERTY WAS ATTACKED DID YOU CALL THE EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV AND WHO
DID YOU MAKE YOUR REPORT DIRECT TO WASHINGTON. THAT I WAS SENT
PLANES TO DEFEND THE SHIP. I, WE GOT THE WORD FROM WASHINGTON
THAT THE PRESIDENT USED THE HOT LINE TO CALL THE RUSSIAN PRIMIER
TO EXPLAIN THAT THE PLANES HAD BEEN LAUNCHED. COULD YOU TELL US HOW
SOON AFTER THE PLANES WERE LAUCHED THAT WASHINGTON KNEW YOU
HAD TAKEN THIS ACTION, NO I DON NOT, DID YOU HAVE TO GET
PERMISSION FROM WASHINGTON BEFORE YOU COULD LAUNCH THE AIRCRAFT
OR DID YOU DO SO ON YOUR OWN, I HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO WHEN THERE
IS NOT SUFFICIENT TIME AND WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO SEND AIRCRAFT
TO DEFEND IT PROTECT THE LIBERTY IT WAS IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS,
ADMIRAL HOW FAR WAS THE AMERICA FROM THE LIBERTY AT THAT TIME.
JUST ROUGHLY ABOUT 8
HH XM TESBH
THIS MAY BE PART OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THAT ARE
IN THAT SHIP.
Q. ADMIRAL, ONE OF THE HELO PILOTS YESTERDAY SAID HE THOUGHT ONE
OF THE TORPEDO BOATS CAME BACK ACROSS THE BOW OF THE SHIP AND
THAT HE ALSO THOUGHT A HELO OVERFLEW THE SHIP YESTERDAY. DO
YOU HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THAT.
A. NO I DON'T HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THAT,
Q. HOW DID THE ISRAELIS FINALLY IDENTIFY IT AS AN AMERICAN? BY
HEARING OUR SIGNALS?
A. NO.
Q. WHEN YOU SAID HE WAS PREPARING TO LEAVE THE AREA OF DANGER
SO THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY FURTHER ATTACKS, DID YOU MEAN AT
THAT POINT YOU FELT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO ASK...? WOULD NOT

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MAKE SENSE TO ASK THE ISRAELIS FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SINCE SHE WAS GOING TO LEAVE THE AREA.
A. I [illegible] THINK SO. I KNEW THAT WE WERE GOING TO GET ASSISTANCE TO THEM.
Q. IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF EVENTS, COULD THE ISRAELIS HAVE KNOWN THE LIBERTY WAS IN THAT POSITION.
A. I DON'T KNOW. THEY WERE APPARENTLY PREOCCUPIED THEMSELVES. I THINK EVERYBODY IN THAT AREA WAS PRETTY WELL PREOCCUPIED.
Q. DO YOU KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE ISRAELIS COMMUNICATED ANY MESSAGE TO THE LIBERTY FOLLOWING THE ATTACK?
A. NO I DON'T, AS I SAID, THE LIBERTY HAD ONLY THIS ONE VOICE CIRCUIT.
Q. THE LIBERTY APPARENTLY CAME TO THAT AREA THE SAME MORNING, WHERE WAS IT THE PREVIOUS DAY?
A. IT DEPARTED ROTA, SPAIN ON THE END OF JUNE AND CAME UNDER MY OPERATIONAL CONTROL AT THAT TIME, AND SHE WAS SENT INTO THAT AREA AS A COMMUNICATIONS GUARD, PURE AND SIMPLE. OUR CIRCUITS, OUR COMMUNICATIONS CIRCUITS HAVE BEEN VERY HEAVILY LOADED. THEY HAVE BEEN HEAVILY OVER LOADED FOR OVER A MONTH AND THEY ARE ALWAYS HEAVILY LOADED, BUT THEY CAN ALWAYS TAKE ON MORE. THEIR LOAD SINCE THE TENSION STARTED, WHICH WAS SOMETIME IN MAY, HAS BEEN INCREASED ABOUT 30 PERCENT. IF YOU GOT INTO A VERY EXTENSIVE EVACUATION SITUATION, THE COMMUNICATIO R BECOME VERY OVERLOADED AND YET WITHOUT IT YOU CANNOT CARRY OUT AN EVACUATION OPERATION. IT IS SO ESSENTIAL TO GET A COMMUNICATIONS GUARD CLOSE ENOUGH THAT OUR EMBASSIES CAN GET IN TOUCH WITH SOME HELP.
Q. HAS ANY SHIP BEEN SENT IN TO TAKE CARE OF THIS COMMUNICATION GUARD WITH THE LIBERTY OUT OF THERE NOW?
A. NO.
Q. ADMIRAL, TO GET BACK TO AN EARLIER QUESTION, IS IT KNOWN IF THAT AFTER THE TORPEDO HIT DID THE 3 ISRAELI BOATS TURN AND LEAVE THE SCENE OR DID THEY STICK AROUND?
A. NO, I DON'T KNOW THAT. I AM NOT SO SURE. WHEN YOU GET A SHIP THAT IS IN AS MUCH TROUBLE AS THAT SHIP WAS IN, YOU HAVE EVERYBODY AT BATTLE STATIONS. AT THIS POINT, THE SAFETY OF THE SHIP, TO

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UNCLAS E F T O SECTION FIVE OF SEVEN

ATTACK. THEY DID NOT COME IN FOR A SECOND ATTACK. THE THREE BOATS. HOW CLOSE DID THEY GET ALTOGETHER--ABOUT A THOUSAND YARDS-- THAT ANYONE OBSERVED AT ANY ONE TIME?
I THINK SO I THINK THIS IS CORRECT ABOUT 1000 YARDS, BY THIS TIME AND THIS IS AFTER THE TORPEDO EXPLOSION AND AGAIN THIS IS NOT THE EXACT MINUTE THE CAPTAIN, COMMANDER MCGONAGLE TOOK A LEG WOUND A PIECE OF SHARP METAL GOT HIM IN THE LEG ON THE BRIDGE AT THIS TIME, HE TRIED TO STEM THE FLOW OF BLOOD WITH HIS LEFT HAND, BOTH HANDS TRYING TO BLOCK THE FLOW OF BLOOD OUT OF HIS RIGHT THIGH, HE WAS UNABLE TO DO THIS BECAUSE THE WOUND WAS SO HUGE AND SOME-BODY--TWO MEN APPLIED A TOURNIQUET TO HIS LEG. HE WAS IN COMMAND OF THE SHIP AT ALL TIMES. HE WAS ON THE DECK OF THE PILOT HOUSE, HE WAS LIFTING UP INTERMITTENTLY TO SEE WHERE HE WAS, NOW THIS IS AFTER THE EXPLOSION FROM THE STRAFFING BY THE TORPEDO BOATS HE GOT HIT. I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY IT WAS SOMETIME AFTER THE AIRCRAFT AND BEFORE THE END OF THE TORPEDO RUNS. I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS DURING THE STRAFFING THAT THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE THE TWO QUARTERMASTERS WHO WERE NEXT TO HIM ON THE BRIDGE WERE HIT AND TAKEN BELOW AND DIED. THIS INJURY I THINK WAS ABOUT THE SAME TIME, IT CAME FROM THE PLANES. I TOOK IT WAS BECAUSE IT WAS SCHRAPNEL BECAUSE THE BRIDGE AREA FROM THE GASOLINE THAT WAS STORED IN THE BRIDGE AREA AFT OF THE BRIDGE WAS ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL OF THE BRIDGE WHERE MOST OF THESE WERE FIRED OFF. AND YOU CAN SEE FROM THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCES OF THE SHIP THE BURNING HAD LET OFF THE--THE DAMAGE WAS ALL SUPERFICIAL. IT LOOKS BAD, IT LOOKS BLACK, IT LOOKS CHARRED--THE BRIDGE WAS RATHER ENGULFED IN SMOKE AND FLAMES. I DO NOT
Q. DO YOU THINK HE STAYED ON THE BRIDGE WHILE HE WAS WOUNDED?
A. OH YES, I AM SURE, THAT WAS HIS REPORT.
LT SHCEINER: GOING BACK TO THE FIRST PASS BY THE AIRCRAFT, HIS FIRST

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PACS KNOCKED OUT THE SHIPS GYRO SYSTEM AND ITS RADAR, ALSO ITS FATHOMETER, DEPTH MEASURING DEVICE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE CONNING OF THE SHIP WAS DONE BY THE CAPTIAN USING THE SHIP'S WAKE. HE JUST LOOKED AFT AND SAW WHAT THE SHIP'S WAS AND HE KNEW WHAT HIS DIRECTION WAS AT THE POINT OF INITIAL ATTACK, AND HE CONTINUED CONNING THE SHIP ON THE SHIP'S WAKE.

Q. HOW DO YOU DO THAT?

A. WELL, IF YOU ARE GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AWAY FROM LAND, YOU MAKE SURE YOU HOLD A STRAIGHT LINE. YOU MAKE SURE YOUR WAKE IS DIRECTLY STRAIGHT.

Q. DID HE SAY HOW LONG THE ENTIRE ATTACK LASTED?

A. HE DID NOT.

Q. DID HE SAY WHEN HE SENT OFF THE FIRST MESSAGE.

A. HE DID NOT MENTION THIS EITHER.

Q. HE DIDN'T SAY WHAT THAT MESSAGE WAS?

A. NO. WE DID NOT ASK HIM THIS QUESTION SPECIFICALLY.

Q. AT WHAT TIME DID HE ORDER TO COMMENCE FIRING?

A. WE DON'T HAVE A TIME SEQUENCE OF EVENTS HERE BY THE MINUTE. ADMIRAL MARTIN: HE SAID YESTERDAY, INITIALLY THE CONDITION THE SHIP WAS AT THERE WAS NO QUARTERMASTER, BUT I THINK HE HAD A TALKER AND A HELMSMAN. HE APOLOGIZED BECAUSE THERE ARE GOING TO BE SOME LOGS FOR THIS SHIP THAT WERE NOT GOING TO BE WRITTEN AS NORMALLY ARE. HIS IDEA OF TIMING IS GOING TO BE RATHER RELATIVE.

Q. IN RELATIVE TERMS. DID HE ORDER COMMENCE FIRING DURING THE FIRST STRAFING, AFTER THE FIRST STRAFING?

A. HE DID NOT SAY.

Q. WHAT DOES THE QUARTERMASTER DO ON THE BRIDGE DURING ACTION?

[illegible]

VOICE

TRANSMISSION. DO YOU HAVE THE ACTUAL WORDING OF THIS OR A RECORDING OF THAT? WE DO I DON'T HAVE THEM HERE BUT THE WORDS WERE HE WAS UNDER AIRCRAFT ATTACK AND SHORTLY AFTER THAT WITH THIS VERY WEAK SIGNAL GETTING THROUGH AND THE FIRST PART OF IT WAS RELAYED TO ME AND EVENTUALLY WE KNEW WHAT CIRCUIT HE WAS WORKING. I WAS ABLE TO GET INFORMATION PART OF IT DIRECT! YOU THEN WERE ABLE TO TALK TO CAPTAIN MCGONAGLE AFTER -- I WAS ABLE TO TALK TO HIS OPERATOR WHO WAS WORKING I CONFIRMED YESTERDAY THATNHE WAS A YOUNG FELLOW HE OBVIOUSLY HAD A YOUNG VOICE BUT HE HAD A VERY MATURE DEMEANOR.

RIGHT NOW YOU RECIVED WORD AND WHAT WAS OUR RESPONSE. I THATS WHEN I ORDERED AIRCRAFT TO PROTECT AND PROTECT ONLY THE USS LIBERTY. PROTECT AND PROTECT ONLY I COULD WE GET THIS STRAIGHT DO YOU MEAN THE AIRCRAFT WERE UNDER ORDERS TO FIRE ONLY ON AIRCRAFT AND MISSILES THAT WERE ATTACKING THE LIBERTY.

THATS WERE WHERE YOU PUT A LOT OF TRUST IN THE PILOTS AND THEY ARE WELL TRAINED IN THIS SORT OF THING BUT THEIR INSTRUCTION WAS TO PROTECT THAT SHIP. DID YOU KNOW ACTUALLY WHERE HE WAS THEN DID YOU HAVE THE PRECISE LOCATION? YES HE HAD A LATTITUDE AND A LONGTITUDE THAT INDICATED THAT SHE WAS FIFTEEN MILES OFF THE COAST. OFF THE COAST OF ISRAEL? YES OFF SINAI. WERE.... YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU COULD DIRECT YOURSELF TO THE QUESTION WHETHER THE SHIP WAS COLLECTING INTELLIGENCE?

UNCLAS E F T O FINAL SECTION OF SEVEN

CONSERVE THE SHIP. TO KEEP IT FROM SINKING IS THE PRIMARY MISSION OF EVERYBODY ON THERE. YOU TRY TO KEEP IT IN CONTROL AND TRY TO LEAVE THE AREA OF DANGER.
Q. WHEN THIS WAS GOING ON, AND YOUR PLANES WERE ABOUT TO BE LAUNCHED, ETCETERA, JUST BEFORE THAT, YOU HAD A RUSSIAN PCE OUT HERE HARRASSING THE SHIPS IN THE FLEET. DID YOU SEND HIM ANY KIND OF MESSAGE AS TO WHAT WAS GOING ON OR TO HAVE HIM GET OUT OF THE WAY, OR ANY OTHER COMMUNICATION?
A. WE DID NOT. I INVITED HIM TO LEAVE OUR FORMATIONS

ANSMIT ANY MESSAGE TO THE RUSSIAN CRUISER, THE FLAGSHIP HERE, AND TELL HER WHAT WAS GOING ON?
A. NO
Q. WHY DID YOU THINK THE RUSSIANS SUDDENLY STARTED BEHAVING THEMSELVES AND STOP HARRASSING OUR FLEET? THIS IS AFTER THE INCIDENT. AN ANSWER SOUNDED LIKE IT CAME FROM OTHER NEWSMAN! YOU SEE WHAT YOU SEE AND YOU MAKE YOUR OWN GUESSES.
Q. DIDN'T YOU HAVE A GROUP OF RUSSIAN DESTROYERS AND THE CRUISER COMING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS TOWARD THE SIXTH FLEET ABOUT THAT TIME? WASN'T THERE AN APPROACH AT THAT TIME TOWARD THE FLEET?
A. THERE WERE SOME OTHER NAVAL UNITS ON THE HORIZON. I DON'T RECALL ANY PLANNED ACTION LIKE THAT.
ADMIRAL MATINI IT WAS NOTHING THAT WOULD CAUSE ANY ALARM. NOTHING REALLY SO UNUSUAL ABOUT THE WAY THEY HAVE BEEN OPERATING.
Q. AFTER YOU FOUND OUT THE LIBERTY WAS UNDER ATTACK, DID YOU INFORM WASHINGTON?
A. ABOUT THE VERY FIRST THING I DID WAS TO GET THE AIRCRAFT MOVING TO PROTECT THAT SHIP. THAT'S THE FIRST THING TO DO. IS TO PROTECT THE SHIP.
Q. AND THEN HAVING DONE THAT....
A. AND THE STEPS THAT I TOOK TO DO THAT WERE SENT TO MY SUPERIORS. THE STEPS THAT I TOOK TO DO THIS WERE SENT TO MY SUPERIORS IMMEDIATELY. THEY WERE INFORMATION ON EVERY MESSAGE IN CONNECTION

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WITH THUS THAT I SENT TO THE TASK FORCE COMMANDER.
Q.SIR, WERE YOU ON THE PHONE TO THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY?
A. NO.
Q. WERE YOU TALKING TO THE JOINT CHIEFS IN WASHINGTON ON THE PHONE?
A. NO
Q. THIS WAS ALL RADIOTELETYPE MESSAGES THAT YOU USED. DID YOU GET ANY INSTRUCTIONS FROM THEM IN WASHINGTON AT ANY TIME?
A. NO
Q. DID YOU KNOW WHO WAS...DID YOU HAVE ANY IDEA AT THE TIME WHO WAS ATTACKING THAT SHIP WHEN YOU DID GET THE WORD AND YOU SENT OUT....
A. NONE WHATSOEVER.QQ
ADMIRAL MARTIN: I WOULD LIKE TO DISPELL ANY IDEAS THAT YOU HAVE THAT THIS SHIP WAS IN THEIR FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE EXCEPT FOR AN EVACUATION OPERATION. IT WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE SHIPS THAT ARE GOOD COMMUNICATORS. THAT IS.... HER MAJOR PURPOSE IS FOR THINGS THAT THE CHIEF OF NAVAL RESEARCH IS INTERESTED IN. AND AN OPERATOR DOESN'T KNOW ALL OF THE THINGS THAT HE IS DOING. BUT, I HOPE THAT HE IS WORKING ON THINGS THAT IMPROVE OUR COMMUNICATIONS AND IMPROVE ALL OUR ELECTRONICS IN EVERY AREA OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WHERE WE NEED SOME IMPROVEMENT.
Q. CAN YOU TELL US THE NAME OF THE SHIP THAT RECEIVED THE DISTRESS CALL FROM THE LIBERTY?
A. NO I COULDN'T. THERE WERE MORE THAN ONE RELAYS THAT WERE HEARING IT, AND THIS IS A MATTER OF PIECING TOGETHER THE INFORMATION FROM MORE THAN ONE SOURCE OF RELAY, BUT I WAS ABLE TO PIECE ENOUGH TOGETHER TO CONVINCE ME THAT THIS WAS A BONA FIDE TRANSMISSION AND THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE USS LIBERTY AND THAT'S WHEN THE PROTECTIVE AIRCRAFT WERE LAUNCHED.
Q. WERE THERE 3 CIVILIANS ABOARD TLD CIVILIANS OR TECH REPS?
A. MORE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TYPE PROBABLY.
Q. I MEAN CIVILIANS IN THE MILITARY, DOD. THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CALL THEM TECHNICAL ADVISORS.
A. I WOULD IMAGINE THEM TO BE THE PEOPLE THAT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS AND BOUNCING THESE THINGS OFF THE MOON AND THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC AREAS. THERE ARE MANY AREAS RIGHT HERE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WHERE COMMUNICATIONS ARE NOT GOOD AND WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHY. AND THIS IS WHY THIS SHIP WAS GOING...TO TRY TO FIND OUT WHERE THESE AREAS ARE. I FREQUENTLY MOVE THE FLAGSHIP FROM AN AREA WHERE I AM NOT GETTING COMMUNICATIONS INTO ANOTHER AND I IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS. THERE MAY BE A PATTERN TO THIS AND I HOPE THAT SHIPS LIKE THE LIBERTY CAN FIND OUT WHERE THESE PATTERNS ARE. AND I HOPE THAT ONE OF THEM WITH POOR COMMUNICATIONS IS NOT MY HOMEPORT.
Q. DOES THE FACT THAT YOU DON'T REPLACE THE LIBERTY MEAN THAT YOU DON'T EXPECT TO BE INVOLVED IN ANY EVACUATION?

A. IT APPEARS TO ME THAT THE EVACUATION REQUIREMENT IS REDUCING BECAUSE THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE LEAVING BY VARIOUS MEANS DAILY. HOWEVER, SHORT OF GETTING INTO A CONFLICT, AND THIS SITUATION WAS NOT A CONFLICT, THIS HAS [illegible] CONSIDERED A PURE MISTAKE, AND SIMPLY DEPOURED US A LITTLE FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, BUT THE SITUATION EXCEPT FOR THAT IS ABOUT THE SAME AS IT WAS BEFORE IT OCCURRED.
Q. ADMIRAL, WAS THIS DISTRESS CALL ON THE INTERNATIONAL DISTRESS FREQUENCY?
A. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE CIRCUIT WAS. IT WAS A HIGH FREQUENCY CIRCUIT; I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T THINK IT WAS.
Q. SIR, DO YOU HAVE COMMANDER MCDONALD'S FIRST NAME.
A. WE CAN GET IT.
Q. HAS THE MANUFACTURERS ORIGIN OF THE AIRCRAFT OR THE PATROL BOATS BEEN ESTABLISHED?
A. NO
ADMIRAL MARTIN: GENTLEMEN, I HAVE TRIED TO BE JUST AS OPEN AND FRANK WITH YOU AS I KNOW HOW TO BE. I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THIS, THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION IN ANY WAY. WE BRIEFED YOU YESTERDAY AND THE DAY BEFORE AND I TRY TO KEEP YOU INFORMED OF THIS. I THINK MOST IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE UNDERSTOOD, AS UNCLE CARL VINSON USED TO SAY ABOUT A SITUATION THAT'S AS CLEAN AS A HOUND'S TOOTH, AND THIS ONE IS CLEAN AS A HOUND'S TOOTH, AND I WOULD HOPE AND EXPECT THAT ANY INTERPRETATIONS THAT YOU TRY TO MAKE OUT OF IT WOULD BE IN THE LINE OF THE FACTS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN AND TO AVOID SPECULATIONS THAT MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED. I SEE NO OCCASION FOR SPECULATIONS OTHER THAN THE FACTS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN.