~~TOP SECRET~~

NSA Rep

THE NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

08/1530 EDT

924

LIBERTY

8 June 1967
1530 EDT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD OF PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Subject: The USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) Struck by Torpedo

1. At 080911 EDT June, USCINCEUR notified the NMCC by phone that the USS LIBERTY was under attack, had been hit by a torpedo and was listing to starbord. The ship was operating in the Mediterranean Sea approximately 60-70 miles east-northeast of Port Said.

2. The oral report of the incident was confirmed by a COMSIXTHFLT message reporting the USS LIBERTY had been hit by a torpedo on the starbord side at 080830 EDT. Three unidentified gunboats were reported to be approaching the vessel with the USS LIBERTY listing badly.

3. At 081013 EDT a message from COMSIXTHFLT stated the attack forces were declared hostile. COMSIXTHFLT also reported the following actions: The USS AMERICA had been directed to launch four armed A-4s and the USS SARATOGA to launch four A-1s with fighter cover to defend LIBERTY. The pilots were directed to remain clear of land. In addition, TF-60 was directed to proceed toward the scene. Air refueling tankers were also ordered to launch, the first aircraft were on the scene at approximately 0945 EDT.

4. At 081045 EDT, a message was received from the USDAO in Tel Aviv stating that Israeli aircraft and motor torpedo boats had erroneously attacked a vessel in the Mediterranean Sea at 080800 EDT, which was thought to be a US Navy ship. Israeli helicopters were conducting rescue operations. The Israeli government sent abject apologies and requested information on other US ships near the war zone.

5. Late information discloses ten US killed and 75 wounded of whom 15 are in serious condition.

6. Two destroyers from TF-60 have been directed to proceed at full speed to the USS LIBERTY, now underway north on a northwesterly course at 8 knots. The rendezvous is estimated for 0001 EDT 9 June.

Declassified and approved for release by NSA and OSD on 12-27-2006 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended. ST case 51770

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7. LIBERTY declined the aid offered by the Israeli helicopters; the status of evacuation of wounded is unknown at this time, however, helicopter evacuation is not feasible.

8. A late report reveals that LIBERTY was subject to six aircraft strafing passes in addition to the attacks of the gunboats cited in paragraph 2, above.

C. M. GETTYS
Brigadier General, USA
Deputy Director for
Operations (NMCC)

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