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ORIGINAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
United States Atlantic Fleet
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
Norfolk, Virginia 23511

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Ser 00073 /J141
6 September 1967



From: Commander in Chief U.S. Atlantic Fleet
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Court of Inquiry to inquire into the circumstances surrounding
the armed attack on USS LIBERTY (AGTR 5) on 8 June 1967 (U)

Ref: (a) CNO ltr Op-61B/jrb Ser: 000204P61 of 21 June 1967

1. (U) In accordance with the request contained in reference (a), enclosure (1) thereto has been reviewed.
2. (TS) A review of the proceedings reveals that the court was not required by the convening authority to submit opinions and recommendations and none were in fact submitted.
3. (TS) The Commander in Chief U.S. Atlantic Fleet generally concurs in the comments of CINCUSNAVEUR except as stated in this paragraph. CINCLANTFLT is of the opinion that:

a. The senior officers in the operational chain of command who received the JCS directive to move the LIBERTY to 100 miles off the coast of Israel should have taken direct and positive action to inform the implementing agent, COMSIXTHFLT, without delay.

b. The U.S. Army Communications Center, Asmara should be required to furnish a detailed report of the reason for the failure to pass the CS message 080110Z correctly to its proper destination, if this has not already been done.

c. There is a critical shortage of experienced communications personnel assigned to communications stations.

d. Lack of emergency reserve signaling devices on board LIBERTY for use after the signal lights were destroyed may have contributed to the MTB attack since the IDF claims that the MTBs attempted to contact the ship prior to their attack.

e. Inadequate physical identification by Israeli forces engaged in the attack may be correctly cited as the reason for the attack on LIBERTY.

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f. The investigation does not adequately portray the magnitude of the damage wrought by the IDF. (As an example, no mention is made of the use of napalm or anti-personnel type bombs.)

g. Defense Attache Officers should be furnished with current information relating to the presence of a ship with the configuration and mission of ships such as LIBERTY.]

4. (TS) CINCLANTFLT recommends as follows:

a. Senior Watch Officers and action staff officers throughout the armed forces should be emphatically reminded of their responsibilities in handling directives of high priority and sensitivity.

b. The qualifications of radiomen, particularly in the grade of second class and higher, be reviewed with a view to establishing training programs and upgrading where necessary and further testing if such is indicated.

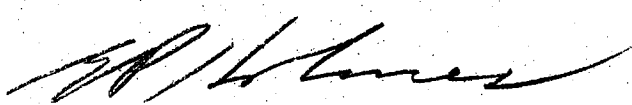
c. The Defense Communications Agency be requested to review communications procedures with a view to reducing the number of messages which are clogging the communications system, and thus permit the rapid flow of the truly important messages.

d. Implementation of opinion g. which is stated in paragraph 3 hereof.

e. Damage control procedures used by LIBERTY personnel be documented for future use Navy-wide as an example of outstanding performance of duty under the most adverse circumstances.

5. (U) CINCLANTFLT will initiate action to implement the items recommended in paragraph 4 which can be implemented within the resources and authority of the Commander in Chief.

6. (U) Subject to the foregoing, the proceedings, findings of fact, and recommendations of Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, Europe, are concurred in.


E. P. HOLMES

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