USS LIBERTY
(USN-855) (AGTR-5)

Chronology of Events

23 May
DIRNSA requested JCS/JRC to authorize diversion of the
USS LIBERTY due to Mid-East Crisis in view of the ship's
capabilities (better on-station time and collection platform)

25 May
Action was initiated to provide the USS LIBERTY with three
NSA civilians:

Mr. Allen M. Blue       GG-7
Mr. Donald L. Blalock   GG-7
Mr. Robert L. Wilson    GG-7

Tasking was coordinated for both the transit to the OP area
and during the time on station and supplied to USN-855. Tab B
(K12/585 292201Z, K12/606 022333Z, K12/611 022335Z)
29 May

JCS approved the diversion and requested that CINCLANT change OPCON of the LIBERTY to CINCEUR. Additionally, JCS informed CINCEUR to make preparations for extended deployment of the LIBERTY to the Mid-East area. Tab C (JCS 6499 2916022).

DIRNSA requested JCS approval of OP areas for the LIBERTY operations and proposed OP area 3 (Tab D) as the initial area subject to adjustment as necessary for operational and safety reasons (Tab E) (ADP/242-67 2920132).

1 June

JCS requested CINCEUR to deploy the LIBERTY to OP area 3 stipulating a closest point of approach (CPA) to Algeria, Libya and UAR of 13 nautical miles during the transit. Upon arrival at OP area 3 on or about 9 June the CPA directed by JCS was 12.5 nautical miles to the UAR and 6.5 nautical miles to Israel. (Tab F) (JCS 6724 0115452)

2 June

The LIBERTY deployed from Rota, Spain at 021230Z through the Straits of Gibraltar following a coastal route to OP area 3. (Tab G)
5 June.

In view of the outbreak of hostilities, Messrs. Harvey and Sheck, K12, called JCS/JRC and asked Mr. J. Connell, NSALO, if a change in CPA was contemplated. Reference was made to Mr. Connell of the 1962 Cuban Crisis. At that time the OXFORD was withdrawn from the Havana area and positioned further at sea. Mr. Connell conferred with LCDR Anderson, action officer for ship movements, JRC, and advised Messrs. Harvey and Sheck that no action was contemplated at that time.

6 June.

CINCUSNAVEUR directed the LIBERTY to change operational control to the Commander, Sixth Fleet and informed the Commander, Sixth Fleet of the change in order to "facilitate command and control and possible requirement for protection during Mid-East hostilities. The message also authorized modification of the JCS-originated plan of operations (Tab F) should safety reasons so dictate, (Tab H) (CINCUSNAVEUR 061357Z). Subsequently Commander, Sixth Fleet issued his OPCON change message to the LIBERTY (Tab I) (COM6THFLT 062349Z)
7 June

DIRNSA requested JCS for immediate action to change the
OP area of the LIBERTY from Area 3 to Area 2 in order to satisfy
tasking requirements. G considered that the changing target
environment dictated a change in OP area. (Tab J) (DIRNSA K12/631
072104Z)

The LIBERTY arrived on station at 072300Z in OP Area 3.
She reported her position at 070800Z and stated she would
remain stationary within 30 nautical miles of a point 68 nautical
miles northeast of Port Said and 33 nautical miles from the
closest land. (Tab K) (USS LIBERTY 070908Z)

On the afternoon of 7 June Mr. Connell from JRC telephoned
Messrs. Harvey and Sheek to inform them of discussions underway
between Navy and JCS/JRC on the possibility of changing the
CPA of the LIBERTY. Since the LIBERTY was 350-400 miles away
from the closest Sixth Fleet ships, there was concern within
JRC. CAPT Rorax, USN of JRC has questioned Mr. Connell
on a possible adverse effect on the SIGINT mission should JCS
change the CPA. Messrs. Harvey and Sheek declined to make
any statement to Mr. Connell, since changes in the CPA for

---SECRET SAVIN---
operational or safety reasons were considered a military command decision and NSA would not be involved. Prior to the close of business Mr. Connell saw a message from JCS/JRC changing the CPA of the LIBERTY to 20 nautical miles to the UAR and 15 nautical miles to Israel. A second paragraph changed the OP area to Area 2 as requested by DIRNSA on 5 June. However, the message as sent by JRC (Tab L) (JCS 6724 0722302) did not contain the change in OP area. It was decided (by CAPT Rorax) to do one thing at a time. It later turned out that JRC was overtaken by events in changing the OP area.

Later in the evening Mr. Connell received a call from JRC requesting a chop on a JCS message changing the CPA to 100 nautical miles. Captain Vineyard, JRC, indicated to Mr. Connell the reasons for the change were at the outset primarily political in origin. Since Ambassador Goldberg had stated at the UN that no U.S. Navy ships were within 350-400 nautical miles of the UAR/Israel area, the Chairman, JCS and the Navy felt that support should be given to the position. During the night a message was received by JCS from Commander, Sixth Fleet (Tab M) (COM6THFLT 071503Z) stating that "no operations,
either surface or air, were permitted within 100 miles of Israel, Syria, or Egypt or within 25 miles of Cyprus." This message is a status report of Sixth Fleet operations apparently prompted by the allegation in the UN by the Arabs of U.S. and British participation in the Israeli air strikes against the UAR. JCS reaction was to send a message to CINCEUR, INFO LIBERTY, cancelling the 20 nautical mile message (Tab L) and defining the new CPA "no closer than 100 nautical miles from Israel, Syria, Egypt and 25 nautical miles to Cyprus. (Tab N) (JCS 7347 080110Z).

Since the attack on the LIBERTY occurred at 081205Z, it is extremely unlikely that the LIBERTY could have received and taken action on the message in time. Additionally, CINCEUR would be required to send a message implementing the JCS decision.

(Tab O is Gen. Kellond's M/R concerning the NSA/JRC discussions. Additional information was provided by Mr. Connell and Mr. Sheck.)

8 June

COM6THFLT reported that at 1252Z the USS LIBERTY reported she was under attack at position 31.23N by 33.25E - *(a) hit by

*Letters are keyed to reported positions and depicted in Tab D.

6
torpedo and listing badly. (Tab P) (COMSTHFLT 081320Z) The
USS SARATOGA reported to CINCUSNAVEUR that the USS LIBERTY
had reported three unidentified gunboats approaching her
position. This message was readdressed from DIRNAVSECGRUEUR
to NSG info DIRNSA. (Tab Q) (DIRNAVSECGRUEUR 081335Z)

DIRNAVSECGRUEUR relayed another message to NSG, info
DIRNSA, from the USS SARATOGA reporting that the attack at
position 31.23N by 33.24N, (a) "hit by torpedo starboard side,
listing badly. Request assistance immediately." (Tab R)
(DIRNAVSECGRUEUR 081335Z)

COMCARDIV FOUR informed DIRNSA that the USS LIBERTY A
at position 31.23N by 33.35E (b) was hit by torpedo. (Tab S)
(COMCARDIV FOUR 081338Z)

DIRNAVSECGRUEUR message to NSG, info DIRNSA, quoted
USS SARATOGA quote of message from USS LIBERTY as follows:
"I am under attack. My position 33.25E by 31.23N, (a) I have
been hit. Request immediate (Missed portion)." (Tab I)
(DIRNAVSECGRUEUR 081338Z)

COMSTHFLT informed DIRNSA that the USS LIBERTY was at
position 31.23N by 33.25E (a) hit by torpedo on starboard side.
Three unidentified gunboats approaching vessel. LIBERTY listing badly. (Tab V) (COM6THFLT 081349Z)

The U.S. Defense Attache at TEL AVIV reported that "ALUSNA called for FLO to receive report that Israeli aircraft and motor torpedo boats erroneously attacked U.S. ship at 081200Z, position 31.25N by 33.33E (c) May be Navy ship. IDF helicopters in rescue operations. No other info. Israelis send abject apologies and request info of other U.S. ships near war zone coasts." (Tab V)

(USDAO TEL AVIV 081414Z)

 forwarded a message to DIRNSA originated by the USS LIBERTY to CNO that at 081205Z, while the ship was on a course of 283 degrees, at a speed of 5 knots, position 31.35.5N; 33.29E. (d) she was attacked by unidentified jet fighters, believed to be Israeli. Approximately six strafing runs were made on the ship. At approximately 1225Z, three Israeli torpedo boats approached at the starboard quarter at high speed, at approximately 1427Z, the USS LIBERTY took torpedo boat under fire by 50 caliber machine guns at a range of approximately 2000 yards. Torpedo boat launched torpedos in straffing attack. Approximately one minute later the USS LIBERTY sustained a torpedo hit on the starboard side.

EO 1.4.(c)
After attack ship had ten degree starboard list but watertight boundaries were established and holding. There was extensive superficial damage topside with lower deck spaces, forward destroyed.

Communications capabilities were limited. Number of dead was estimated at ten, seriously wounded estimated at 15, total wounded at 75 and an undetermined number of missing. The USS LIBERTY reported she was unable to carry out her mission. (Tab W) ☐818122

Following the incident, the USS LIBERTY proceeded north at eight knots to rendezvous with two DDRs sent to aid and escort her.

The following is a recapitulation of the Director's recollections of events incident to the attack.

On Thursday morning, 8 June, at approximately 0915 hours, the Director was informed by the NSA SIGINT Command Center through his Executive Assistant that the USS LIBERTY had been torpedoed somewhere in the Mediterranean, that she was listing badly, and that there was no other information available. A subsequent report placed her
some 50 miles off the coast of Cyprus; an even later report (subsequently found to be factual) placed her some 15 miles off the Sinai coast in waters of about 35-40 fathoms. The Director immediately directed:

The following actions are not chronological order or in order of priority and all were not taken at the initial notification. By 1100 hours, however, there were all fully in train as a result of discussions with senior officials of the Agency.

Reallocation of coverage to substitute, insofar as possible, for that lost by the LIBERTY;

Continuation of the ACRP flights from Athens;

Plans to rapidly refit and send to the Mediterranean the USS BELMONT (a similarly equipped ship), which was about one day out of Norfolk on the way in;

Immediate and continuous contact with NMCC, JRC, and the White House to insure full coordination of information;

SECRET SAVIN
A review of the current status for responsibility for command, control, security, combat support, and location of the vessel;

Necessary action to insure that, if the vessel were totally disabled or in danger of sinking, the security of the cryptographic assets be guaranteed either by removal to appropriate safekeeping or by destruction prior to sinking;

In the event of sinking, the location of the sinking must be secured and efforts made to refloat or at least re-acquire all of the sensitive materials on board;

The establishment of a small group in the outer office of the Director/Deputy Director to start recording a chronology of events, to keep it current, and to keep the Director/Deputy Director fully informed on the premises.

At about 0945 hours, the Director began to receive telephone calls from the NSA SIGINT Command Center, the
P2/Watch Committee office, the JRC, PROD, and others. Additionally, from the conversations held with Captain Cook (Director, NSG), Dr. Shinn (NSA member of the Watch Committee), and personnel from D1 and PROD, it soon became apparent to the Director that a considerable amount of misinformation was circulating within the Community and that some fairly precipitous actions seemed to be developing.

At about 1015 hours, the Director received a call from Secretary McNamara, who stated that he felt the need for making a public release immediately and that he needed facts. He asked the Director the name of the ship, if it had a Naval designation, and if there were any civilians on board. He was told the "LIBERTY" "AGTR" which stands for Technical Research Ship, and three civilians who could be considered technical representatives. When he asked about the complement of the ship, the Director told him he was not certain and would get the information for him. At this point, the Director
realized that the information Mr. McNamara wanted exceeded
that available in his office. He told Mr. McNamara he
would have Captain Cook, Director of NSG, telephoning him
immediately. The Director immediately called Captain Cook
to learn that he was at the dentist, the Director spoke to
Captain Thomas, Deputy Director, NSG, and instructed him
to call Mr. McNamara immediately, prepared to answer any
and all questions concerning the LIBERTY. Captain Thomas
replied that it would take him several minutes to get the
proper person but he would comply immediately. The
Director then called Mr. McNamara's office and advised
the telephone operator that a Captain Thomas would be
calling on his behalf and to put him through to
Mr. McNamara immediately. About ten minutes later,
Mr. McNamara called the Director and said he had not
been called by the person the Director said would call,
and asked for his name and telephone number. The Director
gave him Captain Thomas' name and telephone number 69444.
Then when the Director called Captain Thomas, he was
told that Captain Thomas was talking to Mr. McNamara.
Captain Thomas later told the Director that, when he called Mr. McNamara, he was diverted to one of Mr. McNamara's assistants who tried to take down the information. But Mr. McNamara personally called Captain Thomas and the latter was switched over to Mr. McNamara. After talking to Mr. McNamara, Captain Thomas called and advised the Director that he had confirmed the information already furnished Mr. McNamara and that he had reported a complement of 15 officers and 279 enlisted men, of which the SIGINT Detachment was six officers and 128 enlisted men (the latter figures were initially reported to Mr. McNamara as comprising the total complement of the ship by someone in the Pentagon). When Mr. McNamara asked about the ship's function, Captain Thomas replied quoting the unclassified mission statement: "conducting technical research operations in support of U.S. Navy electromagnetic communications and advanced communications systems to include satellites." Captain Thomas also reported that the ship had departed Rota, Spain, on 2 June.
Shortly after or during the foregoing dialogue, the Director called Captain Vineyard of the JRC (General Steakley was apparently with Mr. Vance and Mr. McNamara) and alerted him to the extreme sensitivity of the materials on board and the mission of the LIBERTY, and stated that if it appeared the ship was going to sink, it was essential that the security of the sinking site be maintained. The Director continued by stating that it would be necessary to get down and remove the sensitive material from the ship because he knew the ship was only about 15 miles off shore and in an area of 35-40 fathoms of water.

Captain Vineyard later called the Director to advise him that there were plans underway to sink the ship and asked for his views in this regard. The Director told him that to sink the ship at that depth would create a real security problem unless they had already destroyed their sensitive materials. He added that there were millions of dollars worth of very exotic equipment on board that should be saved if at all possible. While
engaged in this call, the Director received another call from General Spivey from the NMCC who was about to ask the same question about sinking the LIBERTY when the Director was informed that the LIBERTY was underway on her own steam at eight knots on course of 340°, that the listing had been controlled, that the emergency destruction of sensitive materials had been completed, and that there were four dead and more than 50 wounded. (General Spivey received this information while the Director was concurrently receiving it from his own Command Center via NSG.) General Spivey said there were several commercial vessels in the vicinity and asked if there was a security problem in having them help if needed. The Director told him that there was no security problem in light of the reported emergency destruction and since the skipper of the LIBERTY could easily separate or compartment any sensitive equipment. At about this time, information was received that the Israelis had admitted that they had mistakenly attacked the vessel and had submitted their abject apologies (The Director was previously informed that
aircraft had been dispatched to sink the attackers and, about this time, he was told the aircraft had been recalled).

JRC, NMCC, and NSG have been alerted by the Director to the sensitivity of the equipment and documents on board and the need for insuring their safekeeping.

The Director made two calls to Mr. Bromley Smith at the White House, keeping him up to date on the information available and the actions taken. Mr. Smith seemed to find this extremely helpful and of the highest order of immediacy since there was a meeting in progress at the White House (the participants were not mentioned), and he had supplied the information to them immediately. (The press later in the evening reported that President Johnson was on the "hot-line" with Premier Kosygin in the morning explaining the initial scrambling of Sixth Fleet aircraft, later recalled.

Sometime during the foregoing discussions, Captain Thomas informed the Director that the
it did not have the capabilities of the LIBERTY, it could be of some help.

The foregoing summarizes the Director's personal participation in the activities of this morning. In most of his conversations, Dr. Tordella was present or listening in on the other telephone and Mr. Burke or one of his assistants was present in the Director's office.
FROM:  DIR/NSA
TO:  JCS/JRC
INFO:  CNO
        CINCLANT
        CINCLANTFLT
        CONSERVANT
        CONSERVATION EIGHT

SUBJ:  DIVERSION OF USS LIBERTY

DUE TO PRESENT MIDDLE EAST CRISIS REQUEST USS LIBERTY BE DIRECTED TO DEPART ABIDJAN IMMEDIATELY AND PROCEED AT BEST POSS SCA TO ROTA SPAIN TO PICK UP TECH SUPPORT MATERIAL/PERSONNEL, THEN PROCEED TO CP AREA OFF PORT SAID. TASKING AND SPECIFIC AREAS WILL BE FWD ASAP GP-1.

M/R:  THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAS RESULTED IN NSA DECLARING A SIGINT READINESS BRAVO. IN ORDER TO AUGMENT COVERAGE IN THE AREA, THE DIVERSION OF THE USS LIBERTY (LMS-855) IS CONSIDERED A NECESSARY COURSE OF ACTION IN VIEW OF THE LIBERTY'S EXCELLENT COLLECTION, PROCESSING AND REPORTING CAPABILITIES AND HER ABILITY TO REMAIN ON STATION FOR EXTENDED PERIODS. USS VALDEZ WILL BE DIRECTED TO LEAVE ALL AVAILABLE ME TECH SUPPORT AT ROTA SPAIN WHEN SHE MAKES A SCHEDULED CALL 0/A 24/25 MAY.

SECRET SAVIN

KL2/585

COMMENT CONMSG NR 26

INTERIM TASKING FOR USN-855

I. GENERAL GUIDANCE: THE FOLLOWING CONSTITUTES TASKING FOR USN-855 UPON DEPARTURE ROTA, SPAIN, ON OR ABOUT 01 JUNE 1967. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS DEPLOYMENT, ALL PREVIOUS TASKING ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUSPENDED. THIS ASSIGNMENT IS AN INTERIM TASK AND WILL BE SUPPLEMENTED WHEN PLATFORM IS WITHIN HEARABILITY RANGE OF UAR TARGETS.

DESIRE TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS IS INTERIM TASKING ONLY AND IS NOT TO DELAY OR DIVERT THE PLATFORM FROM ARRIVING ON STATION IN EASTERN MED. DUE TO SOA OF PLATFORM NO ATTEMPT IS MADE TO REGULATE EMPHASIS OF TARGET COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, THE DELEGATED TASKS ARE LISTED IN GEOGRAPHICAL SEQUENCE AND EMPHASIS SHOULD BE BLENDED FROM ONE AREA TO ANOTHER AS HEARABILITY DICTATES.

II. Recap of positions tasked during this cruise:

6.88 MM
16 AM
5.88 RT

RELEASING OFFICER

RICHARD HARVEY/CH/KL2/30J2

PAGE 1 OF 5
III. USN-855

ALLOCATED POSITIONS: 6.08 MM
                        16.8 M
                        5.06 RT
                        2.06 RP

DELEGATED TASKS: SCH

A. MOROCCAN

(1) HF:

(2) VHF:

(3) UHF (WITHIN STATION CAPABILITY)

UHF ACTIVITY EMANATING FROM MOROCCO.

B. ALGERIAN

(1) HF:
REQUEST ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT ELECTRICALLY OF THIS MESSAGE AND INDICATE CAPABILITY OF EQUIPMENT RESOURCES TO PERFORM MISSION.

CONCUR: G694

SHOWN TO ADM: GTCS SCHAEFER

M/R: ROUTINE TASKING FOR USH-555 TRANSIT FROM FOTA TO PORT SALT OF AREA. SUBMITTED BY G694

P.L. 86-36

SECRET SAVIN
FROM: DIRNSA
TO: USN-855
INFO: DIRNAVSECGRU
DIRNAVSECGRULANT
DIRNAVSECGRUEUR
ASSTDIRNAVSECGRU (COURIER)
NSA EUR OFF GERM

SECRET SAVIN

K12/67

COMINT CONMSG NR 22

THE FOLLOWING CONSTITUTES COLL GUIDANCE FOR USN-855 DURING OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

1. ESTAB USN-855 COLL CFR NR 1

A. ALLOCATED POSITS

5.00 RT (HF/VHF)
6.00 MM
.16 AM
2.00 RP

C. REMK: AUTH GRANTED TO UTILIZE POSITS IN MOST PRODUCTIVE MANNER.
CONCUR: Gölh:  
Gööl:  
Til:  (DDI's ONLY)  
KL3:  

SHOWN TO ADNSG:  
CTG SCHAEFER  

M/R Routine Tasking  

SECRET SAVIN
EO 1.4. (c)
P.L. 86-36
EO 1.4. (c)
EO 1.4.(c)
CONFIDENTIAL
JCS 6499 3 SENDS.

SUBJECT: USS LIBERTY (U)

1. (C) FOR CINCLANT: UPON PASSING SEA BUOY INBOUND

2. (C) MAY REQUEST CHOP LIBERTY OPCON USCINCEUR.

3. (C) FOR USCINCEUR: UPON ASSUMING OPCON REQUEST

MAE PREPARATIONS FOR EXTENDED DEPLOYMENT EASTERN MED.

2 WILL PASS SKED ASAP. GP4

BT
FROM: DIANA
TO: JCS/JRC
INFO: CNO
cinclant
conservlant
consrvroneight
cinclantfl1
cinclusnaveur

SECRET

ADP/242 - 67

REF MY 2317292 ADP/224/67 (NOTAL)

1. REQUEST APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING OPERATIONAL AREAS FOR THE

USS LIBERTY OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AS FOLLOWS (COORDINATES

ARE OUTER LIMITS OF OPERATIONAL AREA):

OP AREA NR 1 32:00N - 29:00 TO 31:00 E

OP AREA NR 2 32:00N - 31:00 TO 33:00 E

OP AREA NR 3 32:00N - 33:00 TO 34:00 E

OP AREA NR 4 32:00N - 34:30 TO A POINT

OP AREA NR 5 33:00N - 34:30 TO A POINT

36:00N - 35:00 E

2. REQUEST USS LIBERTY OPERATE IN PROPOSED OPERATIONAL AREA NR 3

UNTIL FURTHER NOTIFIED. POINTS ABOVE AND ACTUAL OPERATING AREAS,

INCLUDING CPA SHOULD BE ADJUSTED AS NECESSARY FOR OPERATIONAL AND

SAFETY REASONS

SECRET

AGI 5455
AGI 5492

SECRET
CONCUR: F04
G04
G604

SHOWN TO ADNSG: CTC3 SCHAFFER

M/R: REF REQUESTED JCS/JRC TO DIVERT USS I/BERTY FROM ABIDJAN AFRICA TO EASTERN MED. MESSAGE INFORMED JCS/JRC SPECIFIC OP AREA WILL BE FORWARD FOR APPROVAL WHEN DETERMINED BY ANALYTICAL ELEMENTS (G GROUP).
FROM: JCS  
DATE: 02 JUN 67
INFO: K

TO: USCTGMC  
///ADV COPY P21 VIA DDP///
INFO: K

INFO: GNO  
CINCINFLTL  
CINCUSNAVFR  
COMSIXTHFLTL  
CTF 64  
USS LIBERTY
INFO: DIRNSA  
NSAUR  
DINAVSECGRU  
ASSTDIRNAVSECGRU  
DIRNAVSECGRULANT  
DIRNAVSECGRULFR
INFO: G

SECRET
JCS 6724 J-3 SENDS

SUBJ: USS LIBERTY SKED (U)
REF DIRNSA G/104/3119067 MAY (NOTAL-BOM)

1. (D) WHEN RFS REQUEST SAIL LIBERTY IAW FOLLOWING SKED:

A. 2 JUN DEPART ROTA.
B. 2-8 JUN ENROUTE VIA GIBRALTAR STRAIT CPA AS SAFE NAV PERMITS THAN VIA NORTHERN AFRICA COASTAL ROUTE TO POSIT 32-00N 33-00E. CPA MOROCCO MALTA 3 NM CLAIMED DIST 3 NM. CPA SPAIN TUNISIA SARDINIA SICILY CRETE 7 NM CLAIMED DIST 6 NM. CPA ALGERIA LIBYA UAR 13 NM CLAIMED DIST 12 NM.
C. 9-30 JUN CONDUCT OPS SOUTH OF 32-00N AND BETWEEN 33-00E AND 34-00E While Conducting Ops CPA UAR 12.5 NM CPA ISREAL 6.5NM

SECRET
2. (U) REQUEST JCS (JRC) CNO CINLANT (JRC) CINCLANTFLT BE INCLUDED AS INKO ADDDEES ON ALL MOVREPS, DAILY SITREPS AND INCIDENT REPORTS.
3. (U) ENROUTE TECH TASKING IAW REF.
4. (U) PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING JULY AKED FOLLOW.
DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

JCS PASS TO JRC
CINCPLANT PASS TO JRC
PIM (U)

1. 022433Z 06 09 67 POSIT 36-12N 003-29W

2. DEPARTED ROTA 021230Z 06 09 67 ETA ON STATION 060300Z 06 09 67

3. DURING TRANSIT STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR OVERTOOK AND PASSED THREE
SOVIET SHIPS OF UNDETERMINED TYPE STEAMING IN COLUMN ON
COURSE 285 SPEED 13 KTS. TWO SHIPS IDENTIFIED AS SEMEN
DESHNEV AND ANDREY VILISHKSIT. TWO SHIPS CALLED LIBERTY BY
FLASHING LIGHT. ONE ASK WHAT SHIP. REPLY SENT WAS QUITE
U.S. NAVY SHIP UNQUOTE. ONE SHIP ATTEMPTED TO SEND SHIPS
NAME BUT LIGHT UNREADABLE. NOT KNOWN IF SHIPS WERE ATTEMPTING
TO SHADOW OR NOT. UNODIR NO ADDITIONAL REPORTS WILL BE
SUBMITTED WITH RESPECT TO THESE CONTACTS.

4. RECEIPT OF 2400Z DAILY SITREP AND POSIT REPORT MAY
BE OCCASIONALLY DELAYED TO AVOID TRANSMITTING AT
TIMES WHICH WOULD HAVE DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON PRIMARY MISSION 684-BT

Classification (canceled) Released by authority of CIRV/NMC 09/08/13
29 June 1974

Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy

RECEIVED
14 HRS

NAVEUR NUCULON 2100/2 (REV 10-65)

(When filled in)
CONFIDENTIAL

USS LIBERTY OPERATIONAL CONTROL (U)

USCINCEUR FOR JRC, JCS FOR JRC, CINCLANT FOR JRC

A. MY 311750Z MAY 67 (LIBERTY MOVORD 7-67, WITH CH-1)
B. MY 031016Z JUN 67
C. USS LIBERTY 021330Z JUN 67 (MOVREP)
D. JCS 011545Z JUN 67 (USS LIBERTY SKED)
E. USS LIBERTY 022108Z JUN 67

1. FOR COMSIXTHFLT TO FACILITATE AREA COMMAND AND
CONTROL AND ANY POSSIBLE REQUIREMENT FOR PROTECTION DURING

DRAFTED: 
RELEASING OFFICER: 
RELEASED AT (ZULU): 

NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED

REFERS TO MESSAGE: 
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: 

CONFIDENTIAL
MID-EAST HOSTILITIES, USS LIBERTY WILL BE CHOPPED TO COMSIXTHFLTL AT 070001Z JUN 67. OPERATE LIBERTY IAW REF D TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM SPECIAL CAPABILITIES. REF D MAY BE MODIFIED FOR SAFETY REASONS AS DICTATED BY THE LOCAL SITUATION.

A. REQUEST CHANGE PIM REPORTS (REFS A AND B) TO AS OF 1800Z, CHANGE PRECEDENCE TO IMMEDIATE AND CHANGE ADDEE FOR USCGNEUR TO USCINCEUR FOR JRC.

2. FOR USS LIBERTY, CHOP TO COMSIXTHFLTL AT 070001Z BY MESSAGE.

A. PIM REPORT NOT RECEIVED SINCE REF E.

L23 NOTE: REF "C" IS AGI 41075
REF "D" — UNABLE TO LOCATE L23
REF "E" IS AGI 40957
CONFIDENTIAL

USS LIBERTY OPERATIONAL CONTROL

A. CINCUSNAVEUR 061357Z JUN 67 NOTAL
B. JCS 011545Z JUN 67 NOTALB
C. SLINCUSNAVEUR 311750Z MAY 67 (MOVORD 7-67) NOTAL
D. CINCUSNAVEUR 011305Z JUN 67 NOTAL
E. COMSIXTHFLT OPORD 1-66 NOTAL
F. CINCUSNAVEURINST P03120.5B NOTAL

1. UPON CHOP TO COMSIXTHFLT AT 070001Z, CONDUCT OPERATIONS IAW REF B, C AND D.

2. IN VIEW PRESENT ARAB/ISRAELI SITUATION AND UNPREDICTABILITY OF UAR ACTIONS, MAINTAIN A HIGH STATE OF VIGILANCE AGAINST ATTACK OR THREAT OF ATTACK. REPORT BY FLASH PRECEDENCE ANY THREATENING OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIONS DIRECTED AGAINST YOU OR ANY

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFTED: ED/LJH

RELEASED AT: ZULU

DOCUMENT MARKING

DECLASSIFIED AT 5 YR INTERVALS, DECLASSIFIED AFTER 15 YRS.

REFERENCE MESSAGE

AGI:

AGI NR.

CONFIDENTIAL
DIVERSION FROM SCHEDULE NECESSITATED BY EXTERNAL THREAT. ADVISE IF LOCAL SITUATION DICTATES CHANGE IN AREA OF OPS ASSIGNED BY REF B.

3. KEEP COMSIXTHFLT AND CTF 63 INFORMED OF LOGISTIC NEEDS SUFFICIENTLY IN ADVANCE TO ENABLE ORDERLY LOGSUP PLANNING. MAIL DELIVERY WILL BE ARRANGED IF FEASIBLE.

4. INCLUDE COMSIXTHFLT AS INFO ADDEE ON REPORTS REQUIRED BY PARA 2 REF B AS MODIFIED BY REF C AND D.

5. SUBMIT REPORTS OF CONTACT WITH SHIPS AIRCRAFT AND SUBMARINES WHICH ARE UNIDENT, HOSTILE, OF INTELL INTEREST OR ENGAGE IN HARASSMENT, IAW REF F. EMERGENCY PLAN CHARLIE NOW IN EFFECT IN SIXTHFLT.

6. COMSIXTHFLT OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS ON ALERTS, EMERG ACTIONS AND NUCLEAR RELEASE WILL NOT BE PROVIDED. THEREFORE, ACTION IS NOT REQUIRED ON NATIONAL EXERCISE AND DRILL MSGS IDENTIFIED BY FLAG WORD WHITE OR BLUE DELTA. NO ACTION REQUIRED NATO EXERCISE MSGS.

IN EVENT OF ACTUAL ALERT OR OTHER EMERGENCY, COMSIXTHFLT WILL SEPARATELY DIRECT LIBERTY BY CLASSIFIED MSG.

7. COMMUNICATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANNEX CHARLIE REF E.

A. COPY KR BROADCAST. ADVISE IF CARDS AVAILABLE TO COPY XRA BCST.

B. IF PERMANENT TERMINATION REQUIRED WITH MED COMM STA SUBMIT REQUEST IAW APPENDIX XVI TO ANNEX CHARLIE TO REF E.

C. ALTHOUGH NOT ASSIGNED TO TF 60 UTILIZE TF 60 TACTICAL CIRCUITS AS REQUIRED.

D. AUTHGRA TO ENTER SIXES ALFA AS REQUIRED.

ACKNOWLEDGE.
K12/631

USS LIBERTY OPERATIONAL SCHEDULE CHANGE

REF: A. UR 011545Z (NOTAL)

B. MY 292013Z MAY, ADP/242 (NOTAL)

REQUEST INITIATE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO AMEND REF BRAVO TO REFLECT OPERATIONS IN OP AREA 2 AS DEFINED IN REF ALFA TO SATISFY TECH REQUIREMENTS.

PAT-1

CONCUR: GO4 LIT. MCINTYRE

POL: [Blank]

SHOWN TO ADNSG; CTC MHRVOLD

M/R G GROUP REQUESTED USS LIBERTY'S OPERATING AREA BE CHANGED FROM OP AREA 3 TO OP AREA 2 TO SATISFY TASKING REQUIREMENTS.

P.L. 86-36

[Signature]

RICHARD HARVEY
RELEASING OFFICIAL
CH K12/38912

RELEASED AT (ZULU)

PAGE 1 OF 1
CONFIDENTIAL

JCS PASS TO JRC

USCINCEUR PASS TO JRC

CINCLANT PASS TO JRC

SITREP/POSIT

A. USCINCEUR Ø614-02 JUN 67 (NOTAL)


2. SUBSEQUENT PIM/SITREP WILL BE SUBMITTED AS OF Ø60028.

IN REF A,

GP-4

TW/ EJH

REL. OFFICER

RELEASING OFFICER

RELEASED AT (EU

1 OF 1

DOCUMENT MARKING

REFER TO MESSAGE

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

CONFIDENTIAL
Culto 710
NAME DIV NO.
Ribbons 80
NAME DIV NO.
00
STA NO.
01
STA NO.
SECRET

A. CONSIDHER

B. PRH+ T0.99627 JUN 67 SIXTHFIL AIRCRAFT WERE ENGAGED IN NORMAL TRAINING OPERATIONS IN THE SEA OF CRETE AND SOUTH OF THE WESTERN END OF CRETE. NO AIR OPERATIONS WERE AUTHORIZED EAST OF LAT 30°E OR WITHIN 100 MILES OF THE EGYPTIAN COAST. THESE RESTRICTIONS PROVIDED A MINIMUM APPROACH DISTANCE FOR AIRCRAFT TO THE COASTS OF ISRAEL AND SYRIA OF NO LESS THAN 240 MILES AND TO THE COAST OF EGYPT FROM ALEXANDRIA WEST OF NO LESS THAN 100 MILES. AT
Figures. During these flights no repeat no Sixthflt pilot either transmitted or received any radio transmissions from stations either in or under the control of any country in the Middle East engaged in the current conflict, either directly or indirectly by relay. In short, on 5 and 6 Jun no Sixthflt aircraft overflew Israel, Syria, or Egypt and no communications were established by Sixthflt pilots with any radio stations controlled or utilized by any of these countries.

5. No flight operations are scheduled for 7 Jun for either Saratoga or America, the limitations set forth in para 1 above continue in effect.
TOP SECRET

DTG 080110Z

FROM: JCS/JRC

SUBJECT: USS LIBERTY

REF: A. JCS 7337, 072230Z JUN 67

B. CONSHITHFLTG 071503Z JUN (NOTAL)

1. CANCEL REF A.

2. REQUEST LIBERTY COMPLY NEW OPS AREA DEFINED LAST SENTENCE PARA 2, REF B UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, I.E., NOT CLOSER THAN 100 NM TO ISRAEL, SYRIA, EGYPT AND 25 NM TO CYPRUS.
MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

8 June 1967

SUBJ: Positioning of the USS Liberty

Operating area for the USS Liberty was initially specified by JCS Message to USG Chair (DTG 011545Z, Reference 1) which defined area as south of 32-OON and between 33-OOE and 34-OOE with a CPA to UAR of 12.5 miles and CPA to Israel of 6.5 miles. This message prompted the phone call from K12 to JCS/JRC of 5 June (Reference 2). JCS/JRC consideration of NSA's concept is reflected in Reference 3.

The action taken by JCS was to send a message (DTG 072230Z - copy not available in NSA) instructing adherence to a CPA off UAR of 20 NM and a CPA off Israel of 15 NM. A CONS/LTH message issued previously (DTG 071555Z - copy not available in NSA) established different CPA's. JCS sent another message (DTG 080113Z, Reference 4), which cancelled their 072230Z and requested LIBERTY comply with new ops area defined in the CONS/LTH message until further notice. This area was not further defined by coordinates but was "not closer than 100 NM to Israel, Syria and Egypt and 25 miles to Cyprus."

A. W. KELLOGG
Chief, Operations Staff
Production

Incls:

a/s

"curiosity" per Selchik

SECRET
Memorandum for the Record

8 June 1967

During the morning of 05 June, Messrs Harvey and Sheck, K12, contacted JCS/JRC by phone, and discussed with Mr. John Connell, NSALO to JCS/JRC, the CPA closest point of approach of 12.5 miles off UAR which JCS had authorized for USS Liberty. The purpose of the phonecon was to ascertain if any change to the approved track and CPA would be made because of the commencement of hostilities. We reminded Mr. Connell that experience in 1962 during the Cuban crisis, the USS Oxford was withdrawn a considerable distance from its normal operating area off Havana. Mr. Connell stated that he did not know of any change to be made, but that he would check and advise if any change was contemplated.

RICHARD HARVEY, Chief K12, 3891s

EUGENE SHECK, K12, 3891s

HANDLE VIA CONMINT CHANNELS ONLY

SECRET

Reg 2
SITREP ONE

1. AT 081252Z USS LIBERTY REPORTED UNDER ATTACK AT POSIT 31.23N 33.25E, WAS HIT BY TORPEDO AND WAS LISTING BADLY.

ATTACK FORCES HEREBY DECLARED HOSTILE BY COMSIXTHFLT IAW CINCUSNAVINST P73120.5B. LIBERTY MESSAGE AUTHENTICATED.

2. HAVE DIRECTED TF 60 TO PROCEED TOWARD SCENE. TASK FORCE PRESENT POSIT 34.22N 24.28E

3. HAVE DIRECTED AMERICA TO LAUNCH FOUR ARMED A4'S AND SARATOGA TO LAUNCH FOUR ARMED A1'S WITH FIGHTER COVER TO DEFEND USS LIBERTY. PILOTS DIRECTED TO REMAIN CLEAR OF LAND.

TANKERS ALSO WILL LAUNCH, WILL RELIEVED ON STATION.

ETA FIRST ACFT ON SCENE ONE HOUR AND 30 MINS AFTER LAUNCH.

ESTIMATE LAUNCH AT 1345Z.
CONFIDENTIAL CONTROL CHANNELS

QUOTE

1. FOLLOWING QUOTED FOR YOUR INFO:

FM: C6U 60.2.9
TO: CINCUSNAVUR
INFO: CONSIDERFLH//CTG 60.2//CTF 68

FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM USS LIBERTY THREE UNIDENTIFIED GUNBOATS

APPROACHING OUR POSITION NOW. UNQUOTE

CFT 1591335 OTG 861335Z

123
SECRET
IMMEDIATE
FOUO

CLASSIFIED
FNIU 68.2.9

The following, is quoted for your info:

NCS GREG RELAYED FOLLOWING OMK EM, 83D

THE FOLLOWING RECEIVED FROM USS LIBERTY
UNEXPECTED NEED ASSISTANCE POST 1/22 N 3.25E

Hit by torpedo starboard side listing badly req assistance

ZM

INFO DIR/SHA

FM DIR/V SEC/DEC/REUR

FM 2KZ8 ZN ANI DE

11/19/73

581/376

DIR

POD (TBE)

S5 G5 T5 F5 X5 R5 Y5
CONFIDENTIAL

1. AT 081338Z RECEIVED VIA WSC CI NET FROM USS SARATOGA

THAT USS LIBERTY POSIT 19-25 N 133-35E HIT BY TORPEDO. GP-4

C FT 1596338 UTC 081338Z JUN
081338Z 43569

2ZEN9R0C70E2HD5F2DE

1. FOLLOWING QUOTED FM MSG RECEIVED FM USS SARATOGA:

QUOTE

FM USS SARATOGA
TO CINCUSNAVY
INFO COMSIXTHFLEET

CACHE SIX ZERO

FOLLOWING RECD FROM USSS LIBERTY

QUOTE I AM UNDER ATTACK. MY POSIT 33.25E 31.85N, I HAVE BEEN HIT.

IMMEDIATE (MISSING PORTION).

NO AUTHENTICATION RECEIVED. INTERCEPTED 834.04 FROM USS SARATOGA UNQUOTE
MEM: COMMANDER
TO: DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: USS LIBERTY, POSIT 31°31'N, 33°45'W, HIT OTX
TORPEDO STRAIGHT BOW E E E SIDE AT 081349Z, THREE UNIDENTIFIED CONNOAVERS APPROACHING VESSEL. LIBERTY LISTING.
Urgent message from Liberty authenticated.
LG FT 19913482 END LTC 081349Z CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL
TO RUEPWI/WHITE HOUSE
RUEPWS/OSD
RUEPAA/CGNO
RUEHC/DEPT STATE
RUESOF/COMSIXTHFLT
RUEPA/SACE/CINCBRIKE
RUEPA/CINCEUR
RUEPA/JCS
INFO RUEPWS/DIA
RUEHOT/USUN
RUEFRC/USEULCOM
RUTFN/CRC SIX ZERO PT 1H
RUTFN/USAFE
RUPMC/CINCBRIKE
RUTFN/CRC SIX ZERO

CONFIDENTIAL 0825 JUN 67.

ALUSMA CALLED TO FLO TO RECEIVE REPORT. ISRAELI AIRCRAFT
AND MTB'S ERRONEOUSLY ATTACKED U.S. SHIP AT 06/1200Z.

PAGE 2 RUQNL 0825 CONFIDENTIAL

POSITION 32°5' 33-53E. MAYBE NAVY SHIP. IDF HELICOPTERS
IN RESCUE OPERATIONS. NO OTHER INFO. ISRAELIS SEND ABDICT
APOLIGIES AND REQUEST INFO OF OTHER US SHIPS NEAR
WAR ZONE COASTS. SP. 3.
LAUNCH TO BE TOFFEE IN STRAFING ATTACK.

APPROX 0827 TAKE TOOFFED BOAT UNDER FIRE BY 52 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS AT RANGE OF APPROX 3242 YARDS AT 90 DEGREES.

APPROX 0910 TAKE TOOFFED BOAT UNDER FIRE BY 52 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS AT RANGE OF APPROX 163 YARDS AT 90 DEGREES.

ONE TOOFFED F4U-5 BELIEVED TO BE ISRAELI APPROACHED SHIP ON RAPID FIRE IN STRAFING RAPID FIRE ADDED ON SHIP APPROX 1200 FT. TIME 2237.

FIVE KNOTS POSITIVE 31 DEGREES, 50.2 MIN. 000.

The meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C., to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.
HIT STERN OF SHIP. CAPTAIN ORDERED STERN LIST.

WATER TIGHT TO THREE EMBERSIFIED AND HOLDING. AFTER SHIP
TORPEDO HIT, TROUGHT TO EAST ABOUT FICE MILES.
CLEARING AREA AT TEN KNOTS.

PHOTOS OF AIRCRAFT AND BOATS TAKEN. AFTER
ATTACK COMPLETED TWO ISRAELI HELICOPTERS ORBITED SHIP.

AT ABOUT 500-550 RANGE 500 YARDS, ISRAELI INSIGNIA
CHEEFLY VISIBLE. PHOTOS TAKEN. SEVERAL PROJECTILES HAVE
BEEN RECOVERED FROM TOPSIDE AREAS. NUMBER DEAD EIGHT TEN,
SERIOUSLY WOUNDED EIGHT FIVE, TOTAL WOUNDED SEVEN FIVE,
UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF MISSING.

SHIP UNABLE TO CARRY OUT MISSION. WILL SUEIT
PERSONNEL Capture ATAP SEPARATELY.

EXTENSIVE SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE TOPSIDE, LOWER DECK
SPACES, FORWARD DESTROYED.

COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES LIMITED. WILL
PROVIDE FILM AND PROJECTILES RECOVERED AS DIRECTED.

SHIP WILL REQUIRE DRY DOCKING AND EXTENSIVE
REFITTING.

NOTE. THIS STATION MONITORING SIXTH FLEET

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