

# Exhibit 4-29

swing the ship broadside toward the attackers, giving them a larger target.

(U) When Robert L. Wilson heard the torpedo attack warning, he remembered one of the seamen telling him to sit on the floor and brace his feet against the wall.

(U) In the processing and reporting area, CT Terry McFarland was told to "tuck pant legs into your socks, button top collar, get rid of loose material, and lie flat on floor and hold your head in your hands to protect your face."

(U) When the motor torpedo boats were approximately a mile away, the center boat was seen flashing a signal light. Because of smoke and flames in the direction from which the boats were approaching, Commander McGonagle could not read the signals, but he saw what he believed to be an Israeli flag. As the air attack had knocked out the *Liberty's* starboard signal light, he attempted to signal with a hand-held Aldis lamp. This may not have been powerful enough to penetrate the smoke pouring from the fires started by the attackers. Believing that the air attack might have been in error, Commander McGonagle quickly shouted to the starboard forward gun to withhold fire. The gunner fired a short burst at the motor torpedo boats before he understood the CO's order. At the same time, though unattended, the after gun on the starboard side opened fire: flames from the burning whaleboat had ignited bullets in the gun and in the

ammunition box, causing the gun to fire in the direction of the attacking boats.

(U) At this time, the motor torpedo boats opened fire with their gun mounts, killing the *Liberty's* helmsman. In a matter of seconds one torpedo crossed astern of the ship at about 25 yards. The time was then 1434 hours. A minute later, a second torpedo struck the ship on the starboard side, just forward of the bridge and a few feet below the water line. Again, using the hicom net, the *Liberty* broadcast that the ship had been torpedoed and was listing badly. The *Saratoga* picked up the transmission and relayed it to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Navy Europe and to the Commander, Sixth Fleet.<sup>15</sup>

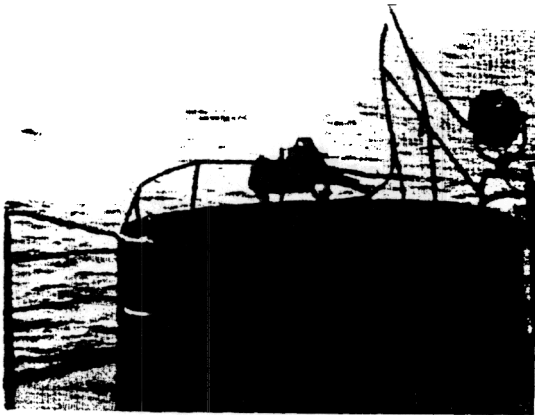
(U) To Lieutenant O'Connor, lying on the floor of the combat information center, the torpedo's deafening explosion seemed to lift the ship right out of the water, and when it settled back he thought it was going to roll over.

(U) In the Research Department where the torpedo struck, everything went black; oil and debris were everywhere. Water rushed in and equipment fell over Terry McFarland, but he managed to keep clear and make his way in the darkness to the ladder to go topside. When he got out there was about a foot and a half of air space left.

(U) CT Clyde W. Way was in T-Branch spaces above the processing and reporting area. With the explosion below, all equipment fell to the floor and smoke poured from the P&R hatch. Way started pulling men out as they came up the ladder. There was no panic. A Marine went down the ladder to help locate men possibly trapped in the water. As the water rose in the Research Department, Lieutenant Maurice Bennett realized that he had to close the hatch to contain the flooding. Attempts to contact the Marine who had gone back failed, and Lieutenant Bennett reluctantly and sorrowfully ordered the hatch closed. McFarland and Way then went topside to help fight fires and attend the wounded.

(U) The torpedo explosion had torn a hole in the side of the ship that extended from a few feet above the water line to below the turn of the bilge. It was shaped like a tear-drop, and was 39 feet across at its widest point. Its immediate effect was to flood all compartments on two decks below the water line, from frame 53 to frame 66. These frames supported water-tight bulkheads, and marked the location of the *Liberty's* Research Department and store rooms. Twenty-five men died in these spaces some from the blast, others drowned.

(U) The torpedo hit did not start a major fire, probably because of the immediate flooding of the



(U) During the attack, severe damage was done to one of the two forward area 50-caliber gun mounts.

~~(C-GG)~~ Photograph courtesy of Robert L. Wilson, NSA.)  
(Figure is UNCLASSIFIED)