

USS Liberty - Israeli Pilot Speaks Up

7-14-3

"We had been surveilled all morning and part of the afternoon by Israeli forces. They knew who we were. We heard them reporting over radio who we were and how we were sailing and where we were sailing. They saw the flag and everything else. We were in international waters."

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(1) Adlai Stevenson supported USS Liberty

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<http://ussliberty.org/>

Adlai Stevenson supported USS Liberty

Senator Adlai Stevenson III in 1980, his last year as a United States Senator from Illinois, invited Jim Ennes to his Senate office for a private, two hour meeting to discuss the USS Liberty attack and coverup. Following the private meeting, Ennes was invited back the next day to discuss the attack

with members of Stevenson's staff, along with members of the staff of Senator Barry Goldwater and members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

In that meeting, staff members told Ennes that they found his story convincing, but that they would recommend to both senators that they not pursue an investigation because an investigation would only antagonize Israeli interests while "nothing good could come of it." Goldwater accepted that staff recommendation. Stevenson did not. Instead, Stevenson called a news conference in which he announced that he was convinced that the attack was deliberate and that the survivors deserved an investigation. He would, he said, spend the remaining few weeks of his Senate term attempting to arrange for an inquiry.

Almost immediately, the government of Israel contacted the White House and offered to settle the outstanding \$40million damage claims for \$6million an amount equal to one dollar for each Jewish victim of the Holocaust. Vice President Walter Mondale quickly agreed to that offer just before Christmas while Congress and President Carter were on vacation. The Department of State followed immediately with a press release, reported on the front page of the New York Times, which announced, "The book is now closed on the USS Liberty."

Indeed, from that point on, it was impossible to generate any congressional interest in the Liberty at all. Senator Stevenson's staff told me later that they felt the settlement was directly related to Senator Stevenson's announced plan to hold an inquiry, and was engineered to block forever any inquiry plans. Israel did subsequently pay \$6million in three annual installments of \$2million each. Secretary of State Dean Rusk said later that he considered the payments meaningless, as Congress merely increased the annual Israeli allotment by that amount.

Adlai Stevenson later ran for Governor of Illinois. He was strongly opposed by Israeli and Jewish interests. He lost.

Many feel it was his support for the Liberty that cost him the election. Many also feel it was Stevenson's experience with the Liberty that has intimidated other Members of Congress who might otherwise support the survivors.

Cover Up Claimed In Attack ExAdmiral Questions Facts of Liberty Raid

WASHINGTON (AP) Retired Adm. Thomas Moorer accused the U.S. and Israeli governments yesterday of covering up evidence surrounding the 1967 Israeli attack on the American intelligence ship USS Liberty.

Thirtyfour American crewmen were killed and 171 wounded in the combined air and sea attack June 8, 1967, against the reconnaissance ship, cruising in international waters 15 miles off the Sinai Peninsula during the SixDay War.

Israel maintains its fighter pilots, who buzzed the ship for eight hours before the attack, and torpedo boat crews, mistook the Liberty for an Egyptian ship.

"The Israelis maintain this was simply a case of mistaken identity, but this clearly does not hold water," said Moorer, who was chief of naval operations at the time of the attack. "In clear visibility, this unique ship was very easy to identify.

"The Israeli forces circled the ship and then proceeded to attack over an extended period of time. There is Simply no way the fighter pilots and torpedo boat crews could have come to such a conclusion," he said.

Moorer, a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, joined a dozen surviving crew members of the USS Liberty at a seminar during the annual convention of the AmericanArab AntiDiscrimination Committee in Washington.

He suggested the incident was a deliberate attack to prevent the Liberty from picking up signals that could have forewarned the United States of an Israeli military push into

Syria the next day.

"Based on the way this tragedy was handled, both in the United States and Israel, one must conclude there is much information that has not been made available to the public," Moorer said.

The U.S. 6th Fleet, positioned nearby, received a distress call from the Liberty, and one carrier dispatched a squadron to search for the disabled ship. Before the ship was found, the fleet received orders from Washington ordering the planes back. Moorer called on Congress to, once and for all clear up the uncertainties, speculation and unanswered questions surrounding this tragedy, which is still thought by many to be a deliberate coverup on the part of the government of Israel as well as the government of the United States.

The following appeared in the Fall, 1995 (Vol 8, No 3) Issue of the International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence

The Attack on the Liberty: an "Accident"? by Reverdy S. Fishel

Although David Rodman's review of *The Secret War Against the Jews: How Western Espionage Betrayed the Jewish People*, by John Loftus and Mark Aarons, notes some of the serious flaws in that work, his critique contains its own serious flaw that should gall anyone who knows a few basic, uncomplicated facts about Israel's 8 June 1967 attack on the electronic intelligence ship U.S.S. Liberty.

All serious scholarship on the subject accepts Israel's assault as having been perpetrated quite deliberately, but Rodman says that the "most credible" explanation of the attack is that it was an "accident." To see so flagrant a misstatement in IJIC, considering its standards of factuality, is startling. *Assault on the Liberty* (1980), by James Ennes, a lieutenant who was on the bridge during the attack, was a very big seller; so the facts of the case need not be out of anyone's

reach. In fact, Israel's attack on the Liberty was as accidental as Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

SCANNING THE SKIES

The U.S. Government had posted the Liberty off the coast of Gaza, in international waters, to monitor developments in the region during the Sixday War. (The Liberty's mission will be discussed in detail below.) At dawn 8 June, Israeli aircraft began reconnoitering the ship, some flying so close that the pilots could clearly be seen, and as low as masthead height, obviously photographing it. This extensive observation lasted seven hours and involved eight separate observations, at about 0600, 0900, 1000, 1030, 1100, and 1130, 1200 and 1215 p.m. U.S. intercept stations twice overheard Israeli pilots reporting that the ship was American. The visibility conditions were perfect; the ship's American flag was flying free and clear in a good breeze.

At 1400 a well coordinated attack by jet aircraft and torpedo boats began. Jets hammered the virtually unarmed ship with cannon and rockets, and napalmed it. Its forward machineguns were wiped out in the first firing pass, and whatever transmitting antennas survived that pass were disabled by the second. Nine minutes into the attack, crewmen juryrigged a transmitter to an antenna. But the radiomen discovered that four out of five of the ship's radio frequencies, including the international distress frequency, were being jammed. Ironically, the only time Liberty could transmit was while the jets were firing their missiles. A frantic cry for help was sent to the Sixth Fleet, only 400 miles away and off Crete; despite the Israeli jamming, the Liberty's plea for assistance was received. The patchwork transmitting arrangement ceased functioning soon afterward.

Torpedo boats soon arrived and continued the attack, firing five torpedoes, with one hitting and killing 25 men. They then leisurely circled the defenseless ship for 40 minutes, pumping hundreds of 40mm, 20mm, and 50cal. rounds at wounded men on deck, stretcher bearers and fire fighters. Thinking the

ship was about to sink, the crew threw life rafts over the side; the attackers machinegunned those too. With increased radio activity from the U.S. Sixth Fleet indicating an impending U.S. response (many of the Fleet's messages bore "Flash" precedence), the Israelis suddenly contacted the U.S. embassy and informed it of this "accident." It was probably the longest "accidental" attack in the history of naval warfare an hour and 15 minutes.

Two separate flights of jets from the carriers America and Saratoga were recalled by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the first flight probably because Washington was not absolutely certain of the attackers' identity and was leery of starting a war with the Russians if they were the guilty party. The second flight was recalled after receipt of the Israeli explanation.

MORE EVIDENCE OF GUILT

In addition to the abovementioned circumstances which show that Israel's attack was deliberate the lengthy and careful surveillance, the radio jamming, etc. numerous other details belie Israel's professed innocence. They include: * The Israelis initially claimed they had "mistaken" the Liberty for the Egyptian ship El Quseir. But the El Quseir was only 40 percent the size of Liberty (4000 vs. 10,400 tons). The El Quseir was an old, rustedout horse transport that bore about as much resemblance to the Liberty as a rusty VW does to a new Cadillac. The Liberty was arrayed with numerous specialized antennas, and an ultramodern (for 1967) 16foot microwave dish, a device possessed by no other ship in the world except her sister ship Belmont. She bore standard U.S. Navy markings, which included a freshly painted 10foothigh hull number, and Liberty on the stern.

* The radio jamming is by itself damning evidence that the assailants knew exactly whom they were attacking. Such jamming requires intimate advance knowledge of the target being jammed, obtained by extended monitoring of its signals. And this was selective jamming; it struck Liberty's

frequencies and no others.

Afterward, in one of their ever changing explanations, the Israelis claimed to have learned the ship's identity when they heard its distress signals. But the attack continued for sixty six minutes after the first distress signal, which the Israelis had jammed, was sent. Had this particular Israeli claim been true, they would have recalled the torpedo boats before they even reached the ship.

* The Israelis claimed that the ship's U.S. flag hung limp because there was no wind. Later, when presented with the fact that the flag had been perfectly visible, they claimed that they thought that the ship was an enemy vessel flying false colors. The extended radio monitoring, exposing considerable advance investigation of Liberty's communication facilities, refutes this claim.

* The Israelis claimed that the torpedo boats, after first sighting the ship, had called in the aircraft to attack after the ship refused to identify itself. This is an obvious lie, because the attack was clearly a preplanned and well coordinated onetwo punch employing different branches of the Israeli Defense Forces. The jets were already intent on attacking the ship before the Liberty came into the torpedo boats' radar range. Directly contradicting themselves, the Israelis later claimed that their aircraft had called in the torpedo boats.

* The Israelis eventually admitted that before the attack, their commanders had compared reconnaissance photos of the Liberty with Jane's Fighting Ships. But they claimed that before the attack they twice telephoned the U.S. naval attache in Tel Aviv inquiring whether the Liberty was a U.S. ship and were told that there were no U.S. Navy ships in the area. They claimed that having received a negative reply, they decided that the ship had to be the El Quseir. However, the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, and later the naval attache, emphatically stated that no such inquiries were made. The Israelis not only knew the ship's nationality and that she was an "ELINT" ship; they also knew she was the Liberty herself.

* Immediately preceding the attack, an Israeli pilot recognized Liberty as a U.S. ship and radioed this information to IDF headquarters. He was instructed to attack anyway. This dialogue was intercepted at the U.S. embassy in Beirut. Former U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Dwight Porter revealed the existence of this intercept in 1991.

* Finally, there is evidence, circumstantial but clear, of a relationship between the attack on the Liberty and a postponement of Israel's planned attack on the Golan Heights. The Golan attack was scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on 8 June; the Liberty was spotted by 6 a.m. or earlier; lastminute orders delayed the Golan attack; the Liberty was put out of commission; and the Golan attack occurred shortly thereafter. The vaunted IDF made very few mistakes in that war.

After the attack Secretary of State Dean Rusk recommended a strong response, and Presidential Counselor Clark Clifford advised President Johnson to treat Israel in the same manner as the U.S. would treat the Soviets or the Arabs if they had committed the atrocity. The U.S. would certainly not have taken this insult in silence had the offender been any country but Israel. But President Johnson stoically accepted Israel's explanation. The Navy conducted a Court of Inquiry, which ignored and even suppressed testimony that the attack had been deliberate; it dealt only with the actions and performance of the Liberty crew. State Department legal advisor Carl Salans performed an assessment of Israel's official explanation; with only the Navy's highly incomplete and erroneous preliminary investigation to go on, he thoroughly discredited the Israeli Government's claims of innocent error. The logical next step was to confront the Israelis with his findings, but that was not done. The U.S. Government's inaction was completely out of keeping with the outrageousness of the attack.

What was Israel's motive for this act? The scheduling of the Israeli assault on the Golan Heights for 8 June was a move to defeat an intense effort in the United Nations to halt the war,

a ceasefire having been scheduled for 9 June. Such pressure was also being applied by the U.S. Government. The IDF leaders were under pressure to acquire the Golan before the ceasefire was imposed, preferably without being labeled the aggressor (as in 1956 when Israel had colluded with Britain and France to attack Egypt). But with all the pressure to attack Syria, and after all the hurried preparations to do so, the Golan attack was suddenly called off within hours of its scheduled commencement. Why? Obviously, someone in the IDF leadership feared the Liberty might intercept some of the many signals then filling the air that would expose Israel's preparations for invasion. They might then be forced into a ceasefire before they conquered the coveted territory.

THE LOFTUS AND AARONS BOOK

Loftus and Aarons's book, the subject of Rodman's critique, is a collection of preposterous and demonstrably false theories and allegations. With regard to the Liberty attack, the only significant detail they get right is that it was deliberate, but they actually make the ludicrous statement that Israel's attack was justified because "the Liberty was gathering electronic information on Israeli troop movements and sending it to British intelligence, which in turn relayed it to the Arabs." Not only does this statement lack any genuine authentication, it also betrays a conspiracymindedness that makes all their other concoctions suspicious. Another claim born of this same freeranging inventiveness is that "U.S. intelligence attempted to curry favor with the Arab oil producers by giving the precise details of Israel's order of battle to the Arabs during the war."

Other ridiculous claims:

* "Civilian `spies' of the National Security Agency (NSA)" had wrested control of i.e. hijacked the Liberty from the U.S. military and the Joint Chiefs of Staff; "Commander McGonagle [Liberty's skipper] did not know it at the time, but the real masters of his ship were the civilian spies of the NSA." That U.S. ELINT ships' collection assignments were

drawn up at NSA is well known; it is not the big secret that the authors make it. They state that only an individual known as an NSA "Major" and two others "had access to the supersensitive communications areas" on the ship, where in reality well over 100 men worked. The individual they refer to was Allan Blue, a 23yearold Arabic linguist, who was killed. Blue was a GS7 a relatively low level civilian NSA employee, not a "major"; and NSA certainly does not confer military rank.

* "The Israelis tried to jam the ship's frequencies, to no effect. The Liberty's equipment was much too sophisticated to be stopped in that fashion." Anyone who wants to believe this statement should ask the American radiomen who were desperately trying to find an open frequency with which to alert their potential rescuers, while their comrades were falling dead around them.

* Liberty "was there to spy on the Jews. That was its only mission." Had this been the case, Hebrew linguists would have been aboard; there were none. There were at least four Russian and three Arabic linguists aboard, however; that indicates the ship's intelligence targeting. Additionally, Ennes has recently disclosed that a special tasking of the ship, apart from gathering all the information on every party it could, was to determine if TU95 "BEAR" Bombers of the Egyptian Air Force were controlled and flown by Soviets. Ennes also says that "at least two men recall that their orders were to concentrate on Soviet intercepts and to ignore any Israeli signals they happened to hear. The order was `Note the signal and, if it is Israeli, drop it.'"

Loftus and Aarons's other falsities concerning the Liberty incident let alone those included in the rest of their work are far too numerous to mention here. They continually cite unidentified sources "confidential interviews" of "former CIA officer[s]" and "former NSA employee[s]," etc; thus they are free to invent whatever suits them. Yet Rodman says this work "deserves to be taken seriously." They allege "a massive espionage campaign against Jewry and Israel by western

intelligence agencies," and claim that these agencies "aided Arab armies during the many ArabIsraeli wars." Rodman terms this work "an important subject that has thus far not received its due."

A QUESTION OF MOTIVATION

Rodman's treatment of the Liberty attack resembles the accounts put forth by the Israeli Government. He repeats Israel's obviously false initial explanation of mistaken identity, stating that the Liberty was "roughly the same size and shape" as the El Quseir. He admits to some knowledge of the arguments regarding the deliberateness of the attack mentioned above; therefore he cannot claim innocence, but he states that those who maintain that the attack was deliberate "are unable to present incontrovertible evidence" of their claim. He would have us believe that "Until proved otherwise, the official explanation remains the most credible." The only official explanations, apart from the ever changing ones presented by Israel, are the seriously incomplete Navy inquiry and the Salans report, which fails to address much of the evidence described above. These lack authority because of those flaws. But while the U.S. Government has never officially examined most of the above circumstances or admitted that Israel's attack was deliberate, it also has never accepted the Israeli claim that the attack was in error. Liberty survivors have presented voluminous evidence of Israel's guilt to the U.S. Congress and have requested an investigation, but without success.

As to the motivation for the attack, Rodman omits the oftmentioned theory concerning the Golan invasion presented above, which is plausible, probable, and damning. However, he states that "many unofficial accounts of the incident assert that the attack was deliberate, part of a devious Israeli plot." The many "unofficial" accounts that assert Israel's guilt have been provided by persons of such stature and reputation as Dr. Louis Tordella, NSA's Deputy Director in 1967, who termed one of Israel's explanations "a nice whitewash"; a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral

Thomas Moorer; former Secretary of State Dean Rusk; and Liberty survivors.

One of Rodman's errors is of a different nature: he frequently misuses the term antisemitic. Semites are descendants of Shem Jews and Arabs. Rodman even applies the term antisemite to Saudi King Ibn Saud, himself a semite. Liberty survivors, some of them Jewish, have been given this label simply for calling attention to Israel's attack, as are many other people who criticize the Israeli Government. Rodman states that the Liberty attack caused "some" loss of life. Thirtyfour Americans killed, 171 wounded 205 purple hearts out of a crew of 293. Some casualties indeed.

Note on sources: Ennes's Assault on the Liberty, is out of print, but autographed copies with updating enclosures are available through Terry's Book Store, P.O. Box 789, Woodinville, WA, 98072, for \$20. A more recent study, also definitive, is John Borne's book, The USS Liberty: Dissenting History vs. Official History. Borne's work is especially valuable for findings that have turned up in the years since Ennes's book came out. It is available by writing to AET, PO Box 53062, Washington, D.C., 20009, for \$13.95. Numerous survivors' accounts and official documents are in the author's possession, such as the "Israeli Preliminary Inquiry 1/67," otherwise known as the "Yerushalami Report,"; the State Department's "Salans Report;" the report of the U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry, and State Department telegrams. The Liberty literature also includes numerous articles in such periodicals as the Naval Law Review and Middle East Policy.

Two other books are devoted to the attack: Conspiracy of Silence and Pearl Harbour II; both contain many serious factual errors and outlandish claims, the latter being the source of the "NSA Major" myth that is repeated by Loftus and Aarons. Warriors For Jerusalem by Donald Neff, provides a good account of the UN proceedings dealing with the Sixday War and of the Israeli Syrian conflict during that period.

Statement by survivor John Hrankowski:

We had been surveilled all morning and part of the afternoon by Israeli forces. They knew who we were. We heard them reporting over radio who we were and how we were sailing and where we were sailing. They saw the flag and everything else. We were in international waters.

At 2:00 the action started when we had just completed a general quarters drill. I had just come out of the engine room to get some fresh air when the firing started. That's when I took my shrapnel hit, nothing fantastic but pieces of shrapnel. I went back to the boiler room and prepared to start lighting off number one boiler to get steam to get out of there.

This persisted for probably 25 or 35 minutes with the aircraft rocketing us and hitting us with everything they had, napalm and cannon fire and after that there was a comparatively small lull. We heard that they were getting hit all over the place and we could see the torpedo boats moving in and firing torpedoes at us, and then one hit and put a 40 foot hole in the side of the ship and knocked all power off.

By that time the ship's interior was blackened, you couldn't see anything except with battle lanterns. We were still in the process of lighting off the boiler and trying to head the ship out to sea. The ship was listing and we got the word to prepare to abandon ship. We were ordered by Lieutenant Golden who was in charge in the engine room to exit, and the last one out of there was myself, and I had to cut off the boilers' fuel supply. I was the last one.

We got outside at the main battle dressing station where a lot of injuries were. We were just about to go topside when we heard a lot of shots and canon fire and machine gun fire. Evidently they were trying to pick off people who were fighting fires and trying to put life rafts in the water. They were picking these people off with machine guns. We were told, I didn't see them, but we were told that they were shooting up the life rafts that were in the water, so needless to

say they weren't going to take survivors at all.

And so we headed back to our spaces and did not abandon ship. We stayed with it. And it continued probably for another 40 minutes with them shooting and finally after seeing that the ship was not going to sink they grabbed one of the life rafts and they exited the scene. And through that, the helicopters had come over loaded with Israeli troops.

This lasted almost two hours and finally we got the ship turned around and boilers lit off and headed out to sea.

We also heard that nine minutes into the attack we had reached a message to the Sixth Fleet and they were on their way with aircraft to help us. Little did we know until afterwards that three sets of aircraft were turned back.

To be lied to is the supreme insult, it carries the implication that you are stupid enough to be misled and manipulated, thereby affirming the liars own superiority. To be successfully lied to confirms it. {NLE}

(Israel officially states the attack on the USS Liberty was accidental. Ask your congressman if he believes the attack on the USS Liberty was accidental, or deliberate. Join the call for a congressional investigation. {NLE})

(2) USS LIBERTY in Ha'aretz (goes on Associated Press as Well)

Date: Thu, 10 Jul 2003 10:03:04 EDT From:
MORRIS434@aol.com

Recordings Vindicate Israel- Back Israel Claim on Spy Ship

Wed Jul 9, 5:21 PM ET

By PETER ENAV, Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM - Newly declassified transcripts back up

Israel's claim that its sinking of a U.S. spy ship during the 1967 Middle East war was an accident, a Florida judge who has been investigating the case for 16 years said Wednesday.

Israel has always maintained it thought the USS Liberty was an Egyptian military supply ship when it ordered its forces to attack on June 8, 1967, killing 34 American sailors and wounding 171. But critics charge Israel knew the ship was American. Questions about the case have long dogged U.S.-Israel relations.

Miami Judge A. Jay Cristol received transcripts of transmissions from two Israeli helicopter pilots, sent to check for survivors after the attack. The pilots referred to the ship as Egyptian and were surprised to discover it was flying an American flag.

The recordings, in Hebrew, were made by a U.S. spy plane hovering over the site.

Cristol told The Associated Press he received the transcripts after submitting a Freedom of Information request to the U.S. National Security Agency, which had kept the recordings secret for 37 years. After his request was denied, Cristol filed suit in federal court and forced their release.

Agency spokesman Patrick Weadon confirmed Cristol had been sent the transcripts.

"We provided the tapes as part of the historical record," Weadon said. "The agency takes no official position on what happened to the Liberty."

Cristol, who has written a book about the case, said, the tapes "show both the helicopter pilots and their controller ... believed the Israeli air force had targeted an Egyptian ship." A National Security Agency summary of the incident says the Israelis were confused over the stricken ship's identity more than an hour after the attack.

Cristol provided the summary and full transcripts of the pilot and tower recordings to The Associated Press.

Israel has long maintained the attack was the result of a tragic mistake during the heat of battle. Israel was at war with Egypt, Syria and Jordan at the time.

An Israeli commission of inquiry concluded the Israeli air force believed the targeted ship was an Egyptian cargo vessel ferrying supplies to Egyptian troops fighting Israeli forces.

However, some of the Liberty's survivors and some officials in the U.S. defense establishment have rejected this view, contending Israel deliberately targeted the ship to keep the United States from learning that Israel was planning to attack Syria as part of its strategy during the war.

The Israeli daily Haaretz, which first reported the disclosures in its Wednesday edition, quoted Cristol as saying the tape transcripts were the last classified intelligence about the Liberty.

(3) USS Liberty Israeli Denial - Israeli Pilot Speaks Up

From: Ian Henshaw

A few days ago came the latest Israeli attempt to deny that allegations that the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty during the Seven Days War in 1967 was a cold blooded murder designed to trigger a US attack on Egypt.

The Israeli story has always been that they mistook a modern US surveillance ship flying then US flag for an Egyptian boat, not once but in multiple attacks. This excuse is not credible, as the recent BBC documentary showed. The film screened by BBC 2 in June 2003 had a US radio intercept officer recounting on camera that he heard the Israeli pilots twice warn their base that the ship was American.

They had a US commander state that US planes were on their way to Cairo in retaliation with a nuclear payload, and that, as the news unexpectedly leaked out that the ship had been destroyed by Israel, Johnson and McNamara had to personally abort the operation. It was even suggested that the White House had planned the operation with Israel, sending the ship undefended a few miles off the Gaza coastline. Now this version is confirmed from the following leak from the Israeli side. Ian Henshall, publisher www.911dossier.co.uk, www.dumpblair.co.uk

Israeli Pilot Speaks Up

<http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/0693/9306019.htm>

Fifteen years after the attack, an Israeli pilot approached Liberty survivors and then held extensive interviews with former Congressman Paul N. (Pete) McCloskey about his role. According to this senior Israeli lead pilot, he recognized the Liberty as American immediately, so informed his headquarters, and was told to ignore the American flag and continue his attack. He refused to do so and returned to base, where he was arrested.

Later, a dual-citizen Israeli major told survivors that he was in an Israeli war room where he heard that pilot's radio report. The attacking pilots and everyone in the Israeli war room knew that they were attacking an American ship, the major said. He recanted the statement only after he received threatening phone calls from Israel.

The pilot's protests also were heard by radio monitors in the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon. Then-U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Dwight Porter has confirmed this. Porter told his story to syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak and offered to submit to further questioning by authorities. Unfortunately, no one in the U.S. government has any interest in hearing these first-person accounts of Israeli

treachery.

Key members of the Lyndon Johnson administration have long agreed that this attack was no accident. Perhaps most outspoken is former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Thomas Moorer. "I can never accept the claim that this was a mistaken attack, " he insists. Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk is equally outspoken, calling the attack deliberate in press and radio interviews. Similarly strong language comes from top leaders of the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency (some of whose personnel were among the victims), National Security Council, and from presidential advisers such as Clark Clifford, Joseph Califano and Lucius Battle.

A top-secret analysis of Israel's excuse conducted by the Department of State found Israel's story to be untrue. Yet Israel and its defenders continue to stand by their claim that the attack was a "tragic accident" in which Israel mistook the most modern electronic surveillance vessel in the world for a rusted-out 40-year-old Egyptian horse transport. Despite the evidence, no U.S. administration has never found the courage to defy the Israeli lobby by publicly demanding a proper accounting from Israel.

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