

confused the USS *Liberty* with the *El Quseir*, an Egyptian ship allegedly firing upon its forces in the Sinai. But there was no Egyptian naval bombardment that day; nor did the *El Quseir* (an unarmed 1920s-era horse carrier out of service in Alexandria) bear any resemblance to the *Liberty*.

6. Isn't it difficult to identify a ship if you're in an airplane? In 1967, the USS *Liberty* was the most sophisticated intelligence ship in the world, with dozens of large antennas, including a large moon-bounce "satellite-dish" mounted on a tall structure near the stern. It may have been one of the most easily identifiable ships of any navy in the world. With a displacement of 10,000 tons, it was four times the size of the antique Egyptian transport it is claimed to have resembled. Freshly painted, the *Liberty* carried large white identification numbers on its bow. Egyptian hull numbers are painted black.

7. Doesn't Israel say that the *Liberty* flew no flag? According to American survivors, a 5-by-8 feet American flag was hoisted early that morning and was flying all day until it was shot away by attacking aircraft. Within several minutes, it was replaced by the giant 7-by-13 feet holiday ensign, which flew for the duration of the attack.

8. Could Israel have thought the ship was in a war zone, acting suspiciously? According to surviving crewmembers, Israeli reconnaissance aircraft closely studied the *Liberty* over an eight-hour period prior to the attack, one flying within two hundred feet of the ship. At all times the *Liberty* was a clearly marked American ship in international waters, proceeding at a speed of only 5 knots.

9. What was the weather like the day of the attack? Weather reports confirm that it was a clear day with unlimited visibility. The Israeli reconnaissance planes could have seen the *Liberty's* crew sunbathing on the upper decks just before the attack. The flag was flying in a 12-knot breeze for most of the afternoon.

10. Doesn't Israel say they ended the attack the minute they saw someone hoist an American flag? The Israeli attack by combined air and naval forces spanned two hours—as long as the attack on Pearl Harbor. The air attack alone lasted approximately 25 minutes: consisting of more than 30 sorties by approximately 12 separate planes using napalm, cannon, and rockets which left 821 holes in the ship. Following the air attack, three Israeli motor torpedo boats torpedoed the ship, causing a 40' x 40' wide hole in her hull, and machine-gunning firefighters and stretcher-bearers attempting to save their ship and crew. More than 3,000 machine-gun bullet holes were later counted on the *Liberty's* hull. After the attack was thought to have ended, three life rafts were lowered into the water to rescue the most seriously wounded. The Israeli torpedo boats returned and machine-gunned these life rafts at close range. This was followed by the approach of two large Israeli Army assault helicopters filled with armed commandos carrying what appeared to be explosive satchels (they departed after hovering over the ship for several minutes, making no attempt to communicate).

11. Did the *Liberty* send out a distress signal when it was under attack? Throughout the air attack, the *Liberty's* radio operators found it difficult to transmit a distress signal because the attacking Israeli aircraft jammed all five of the *Liberty's* American, not Egyptian, emergency radio channels. However, a call for help did reach the U.S. Navy command in the Mediterranean.

12. What was the American response time? Although American carrier-based air support was only 40 minutes away, help did not reach the USS *Liberty* for seventeen hours. Navy

fighters were launched from the aircraft carriers *America* and *Saratoga* while the *Liberty* was under attack. However, they were quickly recalled by the White House. This is the only instance in American naval history where a rescue mission was cancelled when an American ship was under attack.

13. Why would Israel have deliberately attacked an American ship? Israel's motive for launching the attack has never been determined with certainty. This is why an impartial investigation is critical. One hypothesis is that Israel intended to sink the ship (with no survivors) and blame Egypt because this might have brought the United States into the 1967 war. Another hypothesis is that the *Liberty* was gathering intelligence about activities that Israel did not want revealed. Examples might include the massacre of Egyptian prisoners of war that was then occurring in the Sinai, as well as Israel's impending invasion of Syria.

14. Has the incident been investigated in the past? Some people say that there have been "thirteen official investigations" all concluding the attack was a case of mistaken identity. Several were conducted by Israel. Upon examination, however, every one is based upon the conclusions of the original 1967 U.S. Navy Court of Inquiry, which accepted the Israeli version, but which has been exposed and discredited by its chief attorney as a cover-up.

15. Did the surviving crewmembers testify in the other investigations? In not one of these "investigations" were any of the *Liberty's* surviving crewmembers permitted to publicly testify.

16. Why would the White House prevent the rescue of an American ship? This is, perhaps, the most disturbing question arising out of Israel's attack. It is why there needs to be a thorough investigation of the actions taken by the White House and the Secretary of Defense. Why did they order the recall of the planes that had been sent to rescue the *Liberty*? Why did they order that the survivors be silenced and the true facts be withheld from the American people?

17. What kind of investigation are you calling for? We are calling for a new Court of Inquiry by the Department of the Navy, with congressional oversight, to take public testimony from surviving crewmembers and otherwise thoroughly examine the circumstances of the attack.

18. Why are you calling for a naval—and not a congressional—investigation? We believe this would remove the inquiry from the political pressures traditionally exerted by special interest groups upon individual congressional offices. Fundraising and election pressures have prevented an honest investigation from being conducted for the past 36 years.

19. Why is this significant for the American people 36 years later? We have a duty to the crew of the USS *Liberty*, while the survivors are still alive to testify, and while the perpetrators can be brought to justice. Furthermore, any policies that paralyze our elected leadership to the extent they become unable or unwilling to protect Americans and American interests, endangers not only the safety of all Americans but also the national security of the United States.

20. Doesn't America have a special relationship with Israel? No nation or people should be above the law; nor should American interests be subordinated to the interests of any foreign nation. Those Israelis responsible for ordering the attack and the resulting murder of American sailors must be held accountable for their actions.

#### THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff—The distin-

guished naval career of Admiral Thomas H. Moorer spanned 41 years. Following his Graduation from the Naval Academy in 1933, he became a Navy pilot, a war hero, and a ship's captain. On December 7, 1941, as a naval aviator, Lieutenant Moorer was one of the first pilots off the ground following the attack on Pearl Harbor. A hero of the Battle of Midway, his numerous decorations for valor during WWII include the Silver Star and Purple Heart. In 1957, Moorer was promoted to the rank of Admiral. In 1965, he broke new ground, becoming the only American admiral to have ever commanded both our Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. He later served as Chief of Naval Operations, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The F-14 Tomcat, the Navy's main fighter for many years, was named for Admiral Moorer. Since his retirement in 1974, Admiral Moorer has served on the boards of many American corporations, and is a tireless advocate for American veterans. Working with Admiral Arleigh Burke (CNO), Admiral Moorer was instrumental in establishing the United States Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. He is currently Chairman of the Liberty Alliance, an organization dedicated to obtaining an honest investigation of Israel's attack on the USS *Liberty* and the official cover-up that followed.

General of Marines Raymond G. Davis (MOH), former Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps—General Davis, one of America's most decorated heroes, passed away on September 3, 2003. As a combat veteran of three wars and a dedicated member of the Marine Corps for 34 years, General Davis received the Congressional Medal of Honor—the nation's highest award for valor—as well as the Navy Cross, two Distinguished Service Medals, two Silver Stars, two Legion of Merit awards, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. General Davis was renowned for his exploits in the Pacific during WWII, as a battalion and regimental commander during the Korean War, and as Commanding General of the 3rd Marine Division in Viet Nam. Attaining four-star rank in 1971, Davis served as Assistant Commandant of the Corps before retiring in 1972. A strong proponent of veterans' issues, General Davis served as chairman of the advisory board to the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., dedicated in 1995. Prior to his death, General Davis served as Vice Chairman of the Liberty Alliance and was a principal member of the Commission of Inquiry into the cover-up of the attack on the USS *Liberty*.

Rear Admiral Merlin Staring, former Judge Advocate General of the Navy—Merlin Staring's distinguished naval career, which spanned nearly 25 years, began as an ensign in December 1941. Among his numerous decorations, Admiral Staring was awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal. In June of 1967, Staring served as Staff Legal Officer to Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., the Commander-in-chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe (CINCUSNAVEUR) in London, which encompassed the Mediterranean, and was assigned to review the record of the Navy Court of Inquiry's investigation into the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*. Admiral Staring later served as the Navy's legal advisor to Secretaries of the Navy Paul R. Ignatius and John H. Chafee. Attaining the rank of Rear Admiral in 1972, he was appointed Judge Advocate General of the Navy—the Navy's chief attorney—a position he held through 1975. Currently, Admiral Staring is Treasurer and a director of the Liberty Alliance.

Ambassador James Akins, former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia—James Akins served his country for 25 years as a distinguished member of the diplomatic corps. From 1963–1965, he served as an attache at