

[November 20, 1944]

From: Lieutenant Commander Andrew W. Gavin D-M USNR (Inactive)
 Master S/S Alcoa Pioneer

To : The Commanding Officer, Armed Guard Center, 12th Naval District,
 Treasure Island, San Francisco, California.

Via : Commander Task Group 78.2 Administrative Senior Officer present
 at fleet, Leyte Gulf.

Subject: Report of action with enemy aircraft on the morning of Nov-
 ember 19, 1944; in San Pedro Bay, Leyte, and commendation
 of outstanding heroism of Naval personnel attached to this
 vessel.

SECRET

1. At approximately 0710 on November 19, 1944, a formation of three enemy fighter planes of the suicide squadron, dived out of a cloud from an altitude of approximately 6000 feet, and dived directly for this vessel. Holding a tight formation until approximately 2000 feet from the ship, two of the planes opened slightly to the right, one heading for the Norwegian S/S General Fleischer, and the other for the Cape Romano, both vessels being anchored within a radius of about 600 yards of this vessel. The third plane continued his dive for this ship.

This vessel was anchored closest to the beach in the direction the planes were coming in from, and consequently was the only one capable of opening fire. All anti-aircraft guns went into action immediately and although the entire action was only a matter of split seconds, they succeeded in diverting the dive on the Cape Romano, and the plane passed over, landing in the water farther on. The plane diving on the General Fleischer, was hit so badly, it was unable to reach its target and struck the water at the bow of the General Fleischer, causing only slight damage.

The plane that dived on this ship, was ablaze before hitting the ship, but crashed on the bridge deck, killing the Gunnery Officer, Lieutenant Howard Frederick Jersild, service number 200869, Walter Wayne HANCOCK, SM 3/c, #291-85-02, Lawrence Anthony Fahel, RM 3/c, #868-43-92, William George McGrath, SM 2/c, #862-47-11, and fatally wounding Edwin Olsen Bell, S 1/c, #504-40-2b, who died on the rescue ship a few hours later. Nine other members of the gun crew and five of the merchant crew were wounded, some critically.

The foregoing description of this brief action is from eye witness reports, and substantiated by the Commanding Officer and Officers of the U.S.S. PCM (R) 851 who were in the immediate vicinity.

Enclosure (A)

UNCLASSIFIED
SECURE

2. The following report is from my own observation, and I have approximately 30 feet of moving pictures that I took only a few seconds after the crash, which I am sending to the Armed Guard Center at San Francisco. If the pictures turn out alright, you will see courage and fortitude that is beyond description. You will see 20 millimeter Gun Tub #2 practically a sieve from shrapnel and still burning, and S 1/c Patrick Henry Stevens, #308-32-38, still pointing his gun, although badly burned and one arm almost severed. You will see in Gun Tub #4 and #6, Otis B. Garnley, S 1/c, #938-61-47, William Ellis York, S 1/c, #938-59-12, Carl Vinton Lee, S 1/c, #861-47-51, all standing at their guns although the entire under part of the gun platform is ablaze. Carnley and Lee are wounded.

In Gun Tub #3, Leroy Vincent Kirk, S 1/c, #313-27-02, is critically wounded, and Edward Leroy Grigsby, S 1/c, #382-89-75, although badly burned, and the tub full of shrapnel holes, is still sweeping with his gun. The same is true at all the guns.

At guns #5 and #7 which is abreast of the stack on the starboard side, Lloyd Earl Chapdu, Cox, #613-10-46, Edward Henry Komendera, S 1/c, #861-46-34, and Gilbert Orvin Baker, S 1/c, #867-25-92, were still at their stations, although the entire vicinity is a shambles. Chapdu and Komendera are injured. It was their gun that hit the plane diving on the General Fleischer.

There were so many other things that deserve special mention, for instance, Douglas Earl Ryder, S 1/c, was blown over board from Gun Tub #2, and was seriously injured. He was unnoticed for some time, when William Ellis York, S 1/c, although badly shaken up himself, dove over board and rescued Ryder. Lloyd Earl Chapdu, Cox, #613-10-46, although suffering from burns, lacerations, and a painfully sprained ankle, refused to be evacuated on the rescue ship, and immediately turned to the remainder of his crew, getting up ammunition and repairing the guns. On the next alert, a little over an hour later, he had replacements organized from the Merchant Crew and had all the guns manned and ready for action. It was several hours later that I finally persuaded him to accompany me over to the hospital ship for treatment. Also deserving special commendation is Carl Vinton Lee S 1/c, who although seriously injured himself, pulled Otis B. Carnley, S 1/c, out of Gun Tub #4, when he, unable to get out himself, as his foot was caught in rung of ladder and was hanging head down.

3. I can only add further to this report the credit due Lieutenant Johnson, in the example set by him. He was killed almost directly under the flaming plane, still directing the fire on the planes diving on the other ships when our ship's fate was inevitable.

/s/ Andrew W. Gavin

Enclosure:

One 100 foot reel undeveloped 16 M. film.
List of casualties.

4. The following is the total list of casualties injured in this

action...

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>SERVICE NO</u>	
Jersild, Howard Frederick	Lieutenant	230869	Killed
Huston, Walter Wayne	GM 3/c	291-85-02	Killed
Fansl, Lawrence Anthony	RM 3/c	868-43-92	Killed
McGrath, William George	SM 2/c	262-47-11	Killed
Bell, Edwin Oleen	S 1/c	564-40-25	Fatally
Kirk, Leroy Vincent (died)	injured, died 11/18 on board USS PCF (R) 851		
Ryder, Douglas Earl	S 2/c	313-27-02	Critically
Stevens, Patrick Henry	injured, transferred to USS PCF (R) 851		
Lee, Carl Vinton	S 1/c	819-66-32	Seriously
Hrubes, John William	injured, transferred to USS PCF (R) 851		
Carnley, Otis B. ^{NO}	S 1/c	306-32-38	Seriously
Chapdu, Lloyd Earl ^{NO}	injured, transferred to USS PCF (R) 351		
Grigsby, Edward Leroy Jr.	S 1/c	861-47-31	Seriously
Komendant, Edward Henry	injured, transferred to USS PCF (R) 851		
	GM 3/c	710-91-42	Burns and
	shrapnel wounds, treated and returned		
	on board.		
	S 1/c	938-61-47	Burns and
	lacerations, treated and returned on board.		
	Cox	813-10-46	Burns, lacer-
	ations, sprained ankle, treated and re-		
	turned.		
	S 1/c	382-99-25	Badly burned
	hand and lacerations, treated and returned.		
	S 1/c	851-46-34	Burns and
	shrapnel, treated and returned on board.		

Aviation Marine Personnel

Gavin, Andrew W.	Master	008933	Slight burns,
	lacerations, fractured rib, treated and		
	returned on board.		
Noonan, Daniel J.	Chief Officer	Z-161506	Seriously
McClement, William H.	injured, transferred to USS PCF (R) 851		
	Radio Operator	Z-251527	Shrapnel head
	wounds, broken ribs, treated and returned		
	on board.		
Gowen, Harold O.	Chief Cook	Z-454237	Flame burns,
	treated and returned on board.		
Fillmore, Carl E.	Baker	Z-419302	Flame burns,
	treated and returned on board.		

[4. For reference in following the testimony of Fort, in] the Special Investigation section below, the location of the gun positions on subject vessel, an early C-1 type cargo ship, are as follows:

- No. 1 - 3"-50 cal. in tub in bow.
- " 2 - 20 mm., in tub on flying bridge, port.
- " 3 - 20 mm., in tub on flying bridge, starboard.
- " 4 and 6 - 20 mm., in twin tubs over boat deck, port
- " 5 and 7 - 20 mm., in twin tubs over boat deck, starboard.
- " 8 - 20 mm., in tub aft over main deck, port.
- " 9 - 20 mm., in tub aft over main deck, starboard.
- " 10 - 4" -50 cal. in tub at stern (secured during air attacks).

The battle stations and assignments listed in the Special Investigation section are those in effect for the armed guard crew prior to the attack.

5. The following facts relative to the place and time of the attack, and other pertinent details, were obtained from a perusal of the ship's logs and from information supplied orally by the master:

(a) The SS "Alcoa Pioneer" was anchored on 19 November 1944 in San Pedro Bay at the northern end of Leyte Gulf, Phillipine Islands, in berth 16 several hundred yards off shore from "Red Beach", at the village of Palo, on Leyte Island. The ship was heading approximately 090 degrees true, with the shoreline of Leyte directly astern. Two other C-1 cargo ships were anchored within a 600 yard radius of subject vessel; (1) SS "Cape Romano" about one point on the starboard bow, and (2) the SS "General Fleischer" (Norwegian registry) between 3 and 4 points on the starboard bow.

(b) Weather was overcast, with cloud ceiling at about 6000 feet. The sea was smooth. At 0708 a shore battery fired three shots, which was the signal for an air alert. At 0710 enemy planes, probably Oscars, were sighted and the attack began. By 0711 the attack was over, with all planes downed, one of which crashed on the portside of the flying bridge of subject vessel. Destroyed or badly damaged were the flying bridge steering station, No. 2 gun and tub, stack, port lifeboat, temporary "doghouse", and cabins of chief officer and radio operator.

(c) The master stated that the above facts were confirmed by the commanding officer and officers of the USS PC(R)251, rescue vessel close by at the time of the attack, and that these officers also reported guns of subject vessel had shot down all three of the attacking planes.

Special Investigation

6. Leonard Ross BACHER, GMSc, 665-10-06, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, gave as his battle station assignment, 2nd loader for No. 1 gun. He was in gun tub at time of alert. Heard Case, the gun captain, say "Here they come"! Looked up to see 3 planes in formation just below clouds; saw nothing further of attack as he was occupied in getting ammunition from ready box.

7. Earl Matthew METCALF, Slc, 321-70-80, pointer, on No. 1 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in the wood "doghouse", located on the flying bridge just to port of the stack, when the alert was given. Upon reaching his station, he turned and saw three planes coming out of the clouds in a dive at about a 45 degree angle and from astern - 180 degrees to 190 degrees. Saw two planes attack two cargo ships anchored several hundred yards to starboard, and prepared to fire on plane attacking the SS "Cape Romano". He saw this plane trailing smoke before it crashed, and thinks this crash occurred at the instant of the explosion on subject vessel.

8. Edward Leroy GRIGSEY Jr., Slc, 382-99-75, sight-setter for No. 10 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in the "doghouse" when the alert was given. Proceeded to No. 3 gun. Upon reaching his station saw 3 planes off port quarter coming from inside cloud bank in formation, one behind the other, heading for subject vessel. As busy loading, when he saw one of the planes was about to crash the ship. Thinks plane dove at 15 degree angle from dead astern. Saw tracers going into attacking plane from 1000 yards. Did not notice if plane was afire. Plane kept coming directly at ship and was 150 feet astern when he last saw it. Thought it would hit No. 3 king post, so he ducked.

9. Isnhart Rudolph LANGE, Slc, 723-48-49, sight-setter on No. 1 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was asleep under No. 1 tub. Heard over phones "plane coming in". Saw 3 planes in formation, side by side, coming out of clouds in a dive. Had phones on all during attack, and gun was being trained and elevated. Saw nothing more of attack.

10. Walter Leroy CASE, GMSc 386-45-37, gun captain of 3"-50; when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in tub at time of alert. First saw 2 planes coming out of clouds diving at 40 to 45 degree angle and just splitting formation; one started to dive on subject vessel. Ordered gun trained on attacker but could not get on target because of traverse stops. Lost sight of attacker behind stack. Heard 20 mm's open fire. Observed plane attacking SS "General Fleischer" and prepared to get on this target. It appeared to be smoking just before crashing.

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11. Gilbert Orwin BAKER, S/c 967-25-92, Gunner for number 7
 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated at the time the alert sounded he was in the tub. Notice came over phones that 3 planes were coming in from port quarter. Saw 3 planes, dead astern in formation, one behind the other, well on way down in 30 degree angle dive; 2 planes veered off to port. Could not train gun on plane attacking subject vessel because boom No. 3 king post was in the way. Started to train gun on plane veering off on starboard quarter; heard Coxswain yell "Duck"! Last saw attacking plane over boom before ducking.

12. Anthony Joseph LANDENWICH Jr., S/c, 867-61-11, trainer on No. 8 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in tub at time of alert. First saw 2 planes astern just out of clouds; these peeled off, then dove at 45 degree angle; concentrated on plane attacking subject ship. Opened fire at about 1200 yards. Saw tracers going into the motor. Plane was smoking when it passed over. Looked as if it might clear bow, but Landenwich decided to duck. At time of explosion, felt only light concussion. Then manned gun again and could see that ship was afire. Noticed other 2 planes were afire and then saw them crash.

13. Lloyd William FITZG, S/c 868-46-25, first loader on No. 1 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in his bunk in forecabin at time of alert. Saw 2 planes (possibly three) come out of clouds, dead astern, in formation, at 45 degree angle dive; both disappeared behind stack, while 2000 feet away, still diving for subject vessel. Next saw plane, in flames, an instant before it crashed. Ducked and saw and heard shrapnel flying around. After looking up saw another plane, smoking, crash off the bow of the "General Fleischer".

14. Kenneth Leroy LOPEY, S/c, 886-38-76, gun-pointer on No. 9 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in sack in forecabin at time of alert. First saw 2 planes just coming out of clouds, in formation, flying level; planes peeled off into dive at 60 degree angle; opened fire on lead plane at 4000 feet. Appeared that tracers were going into plane. As it neared ship, fire was coming from port side of plane. At time of crash felt little concussion. After plane hit, ship was in flames forward and on bridge.

15. Edward Henry KOMENDARA, S/c, 861-48-34, gunner on No. 5 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in "doghouse" at time of alert. Was at station 2 minutes before planes were sighted. Saw 3 planes in formation; then they peeled off. Kept eyes on one of planes attacking other ships. Thinks tracers hit, but remembers nothing else. Was knocked down by concussion.

16. Douglas Earl RYDER, S/c, 819-55-32, loader on No. 2 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in the "doghouse" at time of alert. Stevens first saw planes; called out "Planes"! Ryder saw and reported 2 planes coming out of clouds from port quarter. When they began to peel off, kept eyes on only one plane, which came in dead astern at 45 degree angle.

[Stated he expected a suicide dive. Opened fire at 600 yards or more; could see tracers hitting plane. It started trailing smoke about halfway down in dive, and just before crashing was in flames. When plane was over ship, it dipped right wing and crashed portside of stack. Ryder was knocked against side of tub by concussion; noticed that flames were inside tub; stood up and "blacked out". (This man was found overboard soon after the explosion, and was rescued from water by York, Slc.). (MORE LIKELY jumped)]

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17. John William KRUBS, GMSO, 710-91-42, trainer on No. 1 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was asleep below No. 1 tub at time of alert. Sight-setter yelled "Here they come!" Saw one plane attacking the SS "Cape Romano", and prepared to get on the target when plane, which was in glide, entered his gun's firing sector. Gun Captain yelled "Plane is going to hit, take cover!"

18. William Ellis YORK, Slc, 938-59-12, gunner for No. 6 gun, when personally questioned by the reporting officer, said he was sleeping under his gun tub at time of alert. Stated alert was given at 0705, and heard GQ sounded on bell 3 minutes later. Member of merchant marine crew, known to relator only by name of Tommy, the 2nd cook, was assigned to this gun station as loader, but did not get to station prior to or during attack. Saw 3 planes bearing 200 degrees coming out of clouds; all peeled off, with lead plane coming in eastern at 30 to 35 degree angle. Opened fire at 1000 yards. Didn't see any hits and isn't sure whether smoke he saw was coming from the plane was from plane's guns being fired or result of plane being hit. York was able to fire 12 rounds. Saw plane come in at masthead height, and, after clearing the main-mast, dip its right wing and crash.

19. Oattie "E" CARMLEY, Slc, 928-21-47, gunner on No. 4 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated at time of alert was in cot below No. 4 tub. Heard "planes" called. Looked up and saw 2 planes at 190 degrees coming in at 30 to 45 degree angle dive below clouds. Opened fire when plane came into clear around boom, eastern. Saw tracers hit repeatedly. Looked as though plane was smoking before it crashed; last saw it at masthead height behind boom.

20. Raymond John JOHNSON, Slc, 377-94-20, gunner on No. 8 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated at time of alert was asleep in fore-castle. Went to gun station, saw 3 planes coming out of clouds slightly to port, coming in at 40 to 45 degree angle dive. Probably opened fire at 1000 yards; saw tracers going into plane; thought he was afire when he passed over, saw him smoking. Ducked just before crash.

Call Eugene Payne NOAGLAIN S-288-34-15, who manned?

phones at No. 9 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in forecastle below, at time of alert. Proceeded to gun station. Saw 3 planes, and asked "What are they?" Saw planes coming over low above hills, just beneath clouds, in dive attack toward ship but almost level because of low level attack; came in from astern. Saw tracers going into plane. Wondered why plane didn't blow up, as he thought it was a Zero. Saw stream of smoke coming from his tail. Came over ship at masthead height; noticed afterward that mast light had been bent over. Thought he would pass over ship, but then saw him dive down after clearing main-mast and crash against stack. Then ducked. Heard puff but doesn't recall any concussion. Wood splinters came flying aft. Said he heard no anti-aircraft fire in hills due west, which seemed to be a dead spot for radar. Heard GQ alarm bell sounded within seconds after shore battery fired three shots as alert.

22. Luther Bunyan SANDELL, Slc, 357-19-15, loader on No. 9 gun, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated at time of alert was in gun tub. Doesn't remember if GQ alarm was rung. Saw 3 planes coming in dead astern at 30 degree to 40 degree angle dive, one for subject ship, and other two evidently for other ships to starboard. Looked as though tracers were going into right wing. Saw plane smoking, but no fire; came over stern just above main-mast. Heard crash and felt wave of heat, saw flying pieces of burning wood. Felt very little jolt and no concussion. After ducking, looked up and saw another plane nearing bow of one of ships to starboard, but it landed in water nearby.

23. Charles Gilbert WUBNER, Slc, 843-25-14, loader on No. 8 gun; when personally interrogated by the reporting officer stated he doesn't remember where he was at time of alert. Went to No. 8 gun station. Saw 2 planes close together below clouds, off port quarter. These peeled off, and separated. Opened fire at about 300 yards at plane attacking subject ship. Saw tracers going in plane, and was smoking seconds before it came overhead. Last saw her directly overhead; heard no explosion, but felt heat wave.

24. Robert Wallace KILKORN, Slc, 313-25-52, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was in bunk in forecastle; had fever of 102 degrees.

25. Walson Earl FRENCH, Slc, 329-12-33, when personally interrogated by the reporting officer, stated he was confined to bunk in forecastle, sick.

[26. Roy Earl CHAPDU; Cox 613-19-46, platoon on file]

[No. 18 gun, when severely injured by the reporting officer,]

stated that at the time of attack he was standing on air alert watch on flying bridge. Went off to No. 7 gun, and acted as loader. Saw 3 planes coming out of clouds at 180 degrees or more, in close formation, estimated at 5000-foot altitude and in a 45 degree angle dive. Saw all 3 come in pretty close before 2 peeled off to attack other ships. Plane attacking subject ship couldn't be fired on because it was behind boom of No. 3 kingpost. Gun was fired at one of two other planes. Plane attacking subject vessel had just cleared main-mast, and appeared to drop down immediately afterward. As plane passed over, he yelled "Duck". Isn't sure whether plane strafed before crashing. Knocked down by concussion; struck by small particles of aluminum; burning pieces of wood were blown into tub. Heat flash overhead. Chapdu thought the plane at which his gun fired was trailing smoke, and appeared to graze the bow of the SS "General Fleischer" and crash into the water. (This petty officer assumed command of the armed guard crew upon the death of Lieut. Jersild, the armed guard officer, immediately after the attack).

27. The following list contains the names of the remaining armed guard personnel who were aboard at the time of the attack, all casualties. The battle stations and assignments, together with their stations or locations at the time of the crash, are also shown.

Name	Status	Battle station and assignment	Station during attack
Howard Frederick JERSILD Lieut., ser. #230869	Killed	Flying Bridge (Gunnery officer)	Flying Bridge
Walter Wayne HUSTON GM3c, svc. #291-85-02	Killed	Flying Bridge (Bridge speaker)	Flying Bridge
Lawrence Anthony FAESL RM3c, svc. #868-43-92	Killed	(Messenger)	Flying Bridge
William Leroy KIRK Slc, svc. # 313-27-02	Died aboard	No. 5 gun PC2(R)851 (loader)	No. 3 gun
William George McGRATH SM2c, svc. # 662-47-11	Killed	Flying Bridge (Messenger)	Flying Bridge
Edwin Oleen WELL Slc, svc. # 554-40-25	Died aboard	Flying Bridge (Messenger) PC2(R)851	Flying Bridge
Carl Vinton LEE Jr. Slc, svc. # 861-47-31	Hospitalized	No. 4 gun (loader)	No. 4 gun
Patrick Henry Stevens Slc, svc. # 308-32-38	Hospitalized	No. 2 gun (arm amputated) (gunner)	No. 2 gun

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28. None of the facts set forth in paragraph 27, report, obtained at the beginning of the investigation from the master, the ship's logs, and the gunnery officer's log, appear to be controverted as a result of interviewing the above eyewitnesses to the attack. Certain minor discrepancies, such as the nature of the formation of enemy planes when first observed and the degree of angle of the diving attack, naturally crop up in comparing the statements of several witnesses to any action which developed so swiftly and involved several objectives. In the opinion of the reporting officer, the description of the attack contained in the next paragraphs is a reasonably accurate interpretation of the event.

29. Two minutes after a shore battery fired an air alert signal, three enemy planes, probably Oscars, flying in an undetermined type of formation, were observed coming out of clouds from the west at an altitude of about 6000 feet in a glide, bearing 190 degrees from subject vessel. At this moment all armed guard personnel were at battle stations. Enemy planes then broke formation by peeling off to their right, and, each selecting a merchant ship as target, came down from astern in a 40 to 45 degree angle dive.

30. The plane attacking subject vessel came in from dead astern without varying course during entire dive, except that as it cleared the mainmast, the angle of dive was increased sufficiently to bring the plane down on the superstructure amidships when others might have crashed the bow or cleared the ship ahead. The fact there is no indication that the ship was strafed or hit during the entire dive is evidence that this was a suicide attack. Explosion of the gasoline tanks undoubtedly caused the fires and wave of heat. Bits of shrapnel or steel fragments found imbedded in gun tubs and elsewhere on the ship also indicate the plane carried a bomb which also exploded, but the men in the forward gun tub and in tubs 8 and 9 reported they felt no concussion, and it is believed the bomb carried was a small one, possibly not more than 100 pounds.

31. Neither of the planes attacking the SS "Cape Romano" or the SS "General Fleischer" were seen to drop a bomb or strafe, and both hit the water very close to their selected targets without apparently changing course or angle of dive, indicating that these were probably also suicide attacks.

32. The desirability of the inclusion of some heavier guns in the anti-aircraft armament of merchant ships is indicated by the inability of the 20 mm. guns to explode the enemy plane or knock it from its course, although the plane was hit repeatedly during its approach. The only heavier guns carried by subject ship were a 3"-50 cal. in the bow, which afforded protection only against attacks from ahead or on the port or starboard bow, and a 4"-50 cal. in the stern, incapable of being elevated above 30 degrees.

The latter gun therefore is always secured during air attacks. It is recommended that 4"-50 cal. guns on C-1 and other merchant ships be replaced with heavy dual-purpose guns whenever such ordnance is available for such ships; where this is not feasible, installation of 40 mm. anti-aircraft guns in one or more gun tubs aft is suggested.

33. Of the armed guard crew in gun tubs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, all on the flying bridge or above the boat deck, one of the men was fatally wounded and several others were burned or otherwise injured. However, the armed guard officer and four enlisted men, who were on duty on the flying bridge at the time of the crash but not protected by a gun tub or other steel and concrete barrier, were all killed, four of them instantly. In the opinion of the reporting officer, casualties aboard merchant ships from bombing, strafing and suicide dive attacks would be materially reduced if the steering and communication station on an exposed flying bridge were enclosed in a protective bulwark. Danger of injury from concussion, heat blast, and shrapnel resulting from bomb hits or plane crashes would be considerably lessened. Furthermore protection against bomb splinters from near misses would be afforded.

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USS ALCOA

