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December 21, 1942MEMORANDUM FOR FILE

SUBJECT: Summary of Statements by Survivors of SS ANNE HUTCHINSON, American Cargo Ship, 7165 G.T., owners - Sudden & Christenson, Sanson St., San Francisco, California.

1. The ANNE HUTCHINSON was torpedoed and shelled without warning at 1655 GCT on October 26, 1942, at 33.12 S - 29.03 E, while enroute from Aden, via Suez to Capetown, in ballast, and 8000 bbls. of oil in Nos. 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 tanks, draft forward 7'4", aft 17'. The ship broke in two pieces and was sighted drifting in this condition by aircraft at 0800 (Time Zone unknown) on October 28 at 34.13 S - 26.55 E. Later the after portion sank; the forward portion was towed to Port Elizabeth by a British trawler at 0800 on October 31.

2. The ship was on course 245° true, speed 12 knots, zigzagging, 90% blacked out, radio silent for past two days at which time they reported sighting a sub; 4 lookouts--1 in crow's nest, 1 aft, 2 at the turret port and starboard. The night was dark, sea had a heavy SE swell, wind of force #5, visibility fair, no ships in sight.

3. At 1655 GCT the torpedo struck abaft the engine room in the #4 hold on the starboard side, slightly below the waterline, ripping a hole 14' to 16' in diameter, and throwing black soot all over the ship. However, the watertight bulkheads on either side of #4 hold remained intact. The explosion completely crippled the ship, cutting off the electric power and stopping the engines. Distress signal was not sent, due to lack of power. There was no armed guard action. About 30 minutes after torpedo struck, the sub surfaced on the port side, firing one shot which struck the midships house. The master of the ship failed to destroy the confidentials when the ship was abandoned and made no attempt to rescue them after torpedoing, while the ship was still afloat. They remained unattended from 0703 October 26 until 0800 October 31, when South African Naval Force arrived and took them into custody. None of the codes were missing.

4. Shortly after 1730 GCT, ship was abandoned in two lifeboats; 44 in one boat, 10 in the other. The 10 survivors were picked up by the STEEL MARINER and landed at Durban on October 28. The larger group, including the master, landed at Port Alfred early on October 28, and were later sent to Port Elizabeth. Ten survivors arrived in Baltimore on December 9 from Durban on the SS FREDERICK LYKES. Six survivors were landed on December 13 at Philadelphia by the SS ROBIN DONCASTER from Capetown. Remainder of the survivors including the captain, are awaiting transportation at East London, South Africa. Three of the total crew of 57 are known to have been lost.

5. The submarine was not sighted by this group of survivors, for they abandoned ship on the starboard side and the sub fired its single shot from the port. It is possible that it was seen by the larger group of survivors, who abandoned ship on the port side.

6. When the South African Naval Forces boarded the ship on October 31, they took charge of the confidentials. Inventory showed none to be missing. While there is a possibility that the German submarine commander could have gone aboard and examined the codes, such is believed remote by members of the Royal Navy and South African Naval Force, who have thoroughly investigated the matter. The captain is not to be commended for abandoning ship before all his crew were off, or for abandoning the confidentials in such summary fashion.

ROBERT G. FULTON,  
Lieut. (jg), USNR.

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