

Op-16-B-5  
CONFIDENTIAL

NAVY DEPARTMENT  
 Office of the Chief of Naval Operations  
 WASHINGTON

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December 29, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR FILE

SUBJECT: Supplement to the Summary of Statements by Survivors of  
 SS ANNE HUTCHINSON, American Cargo Ship, 7165 G.T., owners -  
 Sudden & Christenson, Sansom St., San Francisco, Calif.

Reference: (a) Summary of Statements by Survivors of SS ANNE HUTCHINSON,  
 etc., prepared by Op-16-B-5, and dated December 21, 1942.

1. Information from other survivors furnishes the following information: A South African minesweeper and a harbor tug attempted to tow the ship to port, but were not powerful enough. Dynamite charge was placed aft under the ship, cutting it in two. The after-third was allowed to sink, and everything forward of the after engineroom bulkhead was towed to Port Elizabeth on November 1, 1942. The hulk was held in custody at first by the Naval Forces, but is now provisionally under the Harbor Administration which is protecting both the interests of the harbor and of the owners or those who have an interest in it.

The legal status of the hulk and the question as to whether claims for salvage will stand under the circumstances appears to be uncertain and the South African authorities are apparently waiting for a decision from the U.S. Government. Considerable pilferage is known to have taken place while in charge of the Naval Forces. This temporary policy was decided by the System Manager of Railways and Harbors at a meeting held on November 21.

2. The submarine surfaced 1200-1500 yards away, after the second torpedo. It was described as of medium size, painted blue or black with a high, cylindrical conning tower and high, sharp bow. There were possibly white markings on the conning tower.

3. An affidavit was secured from the captain of the ship, stating: "In the excitement caused by the torpedoing of my ship, I failed to remember about the codes and other confidential matter which were therefore left unlocked on board ship when it was abandoned." The British Naval Liaison Officer examined all codes and documents and is confident that they have not been compromised. The captain obviously failed in his duty as far as abandoning the codes and leaving the ship before all were off. The armed guard were the last off the ship. There is also a question of whether he should not have returned to the ship when it was seen to stay afloat. The conduct of the crew was satisfactory throughout.

4. In all, three torpedoes were fired; one which passed some 20 yards off the bow, another before abandonment and the third some 30 minutes after abandonment. The first torpedo which struck, blew away the plating on the starboard side and deck, #4 hatch was blown away and the deep tank in #4 hold was punctured. The main shafting was broken and the main engine was moved several feet. No. 4 hold was flooded immediately. The only result of the second hit known to survivors, was the explosion of the starboard boiler.

(over)

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cc: ONI-B-8, 16-Z(4 copies), F-10, COMINCH, COMINCH F-21-22, F-252, F-353, F-37(C&R),  
 Op-20-G-M, Op-23-L, Op-28, Op-30, Op-39, BuShips, BuOrd(Re-6-B), BuOrd, Atlantic Fleet