

Government Ticker: March 16, 1942

H HAVANA.--THE NEWSPAPER EL MUNDO REPORTS TWO FREIGHTERS LOADED WITH SUGAR HAVE BEEN TORPEDOED AND SUNK OFF NUEVITAS, ON THE CENTRAL COAST OF NORTHERN CUBA.

THIRTY-SIX CREW MEMBERS DIED WHEN THE AMERICAN FREIGHTER COLABEE WAS TORPEDOED LAST THURSDAY NIGHT. MANY PERISHED IN THE SEA WHEN ONE LIFE-BOAT WAS WRECKED BY THE TORPEDO EXPLOSION AND THE OTHER WAS INUNDATED IN LAUNCHING. THE LONE SURVIVOR, FRANK ECKMAN, FIRST ASSISTANT MACHINIST, REMAINED ABOARD THE VESSEL UNTIL THE NEXT DAY, WHEN HE AND THE SHIP'S DOG WERE RESCUED BY THE AMERICAN TANKER KANSAS.

ONLY THE CAPTAIN WAS KNOWN DEFINITELY TO HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM AN UNIDENTIFIED VESSEL CARRYING 50,000 BAGS OF SUGAR TO THE U.S. WHICH WAS SUNK ABOUT 20 MILES NORTH OF NUEVITAS. CUBAN NAVAL LAUNCHES WERE SEARCHING THE AREA FOR MORE SURVIVORS.

A RADIO STATION AT SANTIAGO DE CUBA REPORTED LAST NIGHT THAT IT HAD HEARD AN SOS FROM A U.S. COAST GUARD VESSEL WHICH SAID IT WAS BEING SHELLED BY AN ENEMY SUBMARINE. THE VESSEL'S CALL WAS NOT HEARD AGAIN, IT SAID.

ECKMAN, WHO WAS LANDED AT MATANZAS, SAID THE COLABEE WAS ATTACKED BY "AN ENORMOUS SUBMARINE--ABOUT 120 FEET LONG," ABOUT THREE HOURS, NAVIGATING TIME OFF NUEVITAS.

3/16--R925A

*Adm. Schaller*

*Pls note reference to*

*E. G. Butler*

*Wm*

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