

Op-16-B-5

NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

1 April 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILE
ALL TIMES GCT

SUBJECT: Summary of Statements by Survivors of the MS ERLING BROVIG, Nor. Tanker, 9970 G.T. operating under Notra Ship.

1. The ERLING BROVIG was torpedoed at 0150 GCT 23 Feb. 1944, in 13.40N-48.40E enroute from Abadan to Suez via Aden in convoy PA-69 with 14,546T of British Admiralty Fuel Oil. The ship's back was broken but she did not sink and was towed to Aden by the seagoing tug HMS OCEAN SALVA^R arriving 3 March.
2. Ship was on course 250° true, #62 in a 19-ship convoy, speed 9 knots, not zigzagging, blacked out, proper lookouts on watch. Weather clear, smooth sea, light NE wind, no moonlight, other ships of convoy in sight.
3. At 0150 a torpedo struck port side between #5 and #6 tanks and broke the back of the vessel. Torpedo was seen 45° on port bow, 150 yards away, and appeared to be running on a shallow setting. Track appeared clear and white and a very large column of water was sent up by explosion. Vessel could not be maneuvered. The SSSS message was sent and received, no counter-offensive possible. The interviewing officer stated that it was barely possible that ship could have been boarded by the enemy after being abandoned before being taken in tow, but there was no possibility of codes having been compromised.
4. Ship abandoned in the boats under orders of the escort vessel with no casualties. Crew of 41 and 4 gunners landed in Aden 24 Feb.
5. The sub was not sighted at any time.

NOTE: The MT SAN ALVARO and the SS E.G.SEUBERT were torpedoed and sunk in the same convoy. See Summary of Statements by survivors of the E.G.SEUBERT for convoy comment.

/s/ Catherine Challenger

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Ensign, W-V(S) USNR

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