

SS JEAN NICOLET

On 2 July, 1944, the SS JEAN NICOLET was torpedoed, shelled, and sunk by a Japanese submarine in position 03.00 S, 74.30 E., while independently enroute from San Pedro to Freemantle with 7,000 tons of military cargo. One and one-half hours after the survivors abandoned ship in four lifeboats, three liferafts and two life floats the submarine surfaced and ordered the survivors to leave these lifesaving appliances and board the sub. While waiting to be individually processed with clubs through a Jap gauntlet on the aft end of the sub, the survivors were forced to kneel on the forward end of the sub, stripped of their belongings, including life preservers, with hands tied behind their backs and foreheads touching the submarine's deck while the Jap tormentors clubbed them at random.

Finally the motors of Allied planes forced the submarine to crash dive with no thought of the bound survivors of the JEAN NICOLET. Only 23 of the 100 personnel on board finally survived on rubber rafts and "Mae Wests" dropped by Allied planes and they related the sordid details of this infamous disaster.