

November 17, 1986

Dear Mr. Lent:

This responds to your referral of 29 October 1986, concerning the Israeli attack on USS LIBERTY.

Our source of information consists of the 1967 record of proceedings of the Navy Court of Inquiry which has been available to the public since 1978. Some of the events cited by Mr. Casale cannot be substantiated by that record. The transcript, however, does indicate that aircraft from USS SARATOGA and USS AMERICA were recalled following the receipt by Commander, Sixth Fleet, of a message from the U.S. Defense Attache in Tel Aviv, Israel, stating that Israeli aircraft and torpedo boats had erroneously attacked a U.S. ship and that rescue operations were underway. Copies of the relevant messages are enclosed.

As stated in our previous correspondence of 14 April, 1986, reinvestigation of this incident is not warranted since the Government of Israel accepted complete responsibility and paid the claims of the U.S. Government.

I hope this information will be of assistance.

Sincerely,  
William D. Cohen, Captain, JAGC  
U.S. Navy Deputy Chief of Legislative Affairs