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NINETEENTH DAY

HEADQUARTERS THIRD NAVAL DISTRICT
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
90 CHURCH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y.

Sunday, 23 January 1944.

The court met at 9 a. m.

Present:

Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy,
Captain, U. S. Navy, and
Commander U. S. Navy, members; and
Lieutenant (jg) (S), U. S. Naval
Reserve, judge advocate.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the inquiry were present.

The court continued its deliberations.

The court then, at 12:25 p. m., took a recess until 1:15 p. m., at which time it reconvened.

Present: All the members and the judge advocate.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the inquiry were present.

The record of proceedings of the eighteenth day of the inquiry was read and approved.

The court, having thoroughly inquired into all the facts and circumstances connected with the allegations contained in the precept and having considered the evidence adduced, finds as follows:

FINDING OF FACTS

1. That, at about 0800, 3 January 1944, the U.S.S. TURNER (DD 648), while at anchor, capsized and sank as a

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result of underwater damage sustained during a series of internal explosions in that vessel.

2. That the first explosion occurred at about 0617, 3 January 1944.
3. That the point of origin of the first explosion was in the vicinity of No. 2 Upper Handling Room and the Anti-Submarine Projector Ready Stowage Room.
4. That the exact cause of the first explosion is not determined.
5. That the first explosion was followed immediately by an intense fire in the ship from about frame 35 to about frame 70, and that, thereafter, there followed a series of explosions which culminated in the sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER.
6. That, at about 0705, all personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER had abandoned ship, with the exception of those who were beyond possibility of rescue.
7. That the final and most violent explosion occurred at about 0750, 3 January 1944.
8. That the spaces named in Fact 3 contained 50 rounds 5"-38 caliber ammunition and 49 fuzed rounds Mark 22 Projector ammunition, respectively.
9. That the first explosion blew a triangular hole (apex down) in each side of the ship, from just below the forecastle deck to just above the water-line; ruptured the forecastle deck plating from side to side, just abaft 5"-38 caliber Gun No. 1; demolished the rear portion of the shield of 5"-38 caliber Gun No. 1; and distorted the entire bridge structure in such a manner that it inclined aft and slightly

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to starboard of its normal position.

10. That, after the first explosion, that portion of the ship forward of the fire was without water and electric services and there was no direct means of access to or communication with the other portion of the ship.

11. That no attempt was made to flood the forward magazines.

12. That, prior to the time of "abandon ship" (Fact 6), there was no evident damage abaft frame 67 -- the forward bulkhead of the forward fireroom.

13. That, immediately after the first explosion, the ship listed to starboard at an angle of about four degrees.

14. That, at no time subsequent to the first explosion, was adequate or normal pressure in the fire main available in the after portion of the ship.

15. That all fire and flushing and all fire and bilge pumps were connected to the fire main but no effective steps were taken to segregate the damaged section thereof.

16. That no effective steps were taken to flood the after magazines.

17. That a number of small isolated fires were found in the after portion of the ship and were extinguished by members of the crew before they abandoned ship.

18. That, after "abandon ship," the fire spread aft rapidly to such an extent that the entire after portion of the ship was ultimately in flames.

19. That factors facilitating the spread of the fire aft were:

- (a) a wind from ahead;
- (b) flying, burning debris;
- (c) burning oil on the surface of

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the water in contact with the
ship's hull;

- (d) burning of the paint on the side
of the ship.

20. That, at the time of the first explosion, the U.S.S. TURNER was preparing to get underway at 0715 to proceed to an anchorage in Gravesend Bay, New York.

21. That, upon anchoring in Gravesend Bay, the following ammunition was to have been transferred from the U.S.S. TURNER to the U. S. Naval Magazine, Fort Lafayette, Brooklyn, New York.

- (a) all ammunition from No. 4 Magazine;
- (b) all ammunition from the 40 mm. Magazine;
- (c) all ammunition from the after 20 mm.
Magazine;
- (d) all Mark 22 Projector ammunition;
- (e) all impulse charges;
- (f) all depth charges.

22. That no preparations for landing this ammunition had been made prior to the time that the U.S.S. TURNER anchored.

23. That fuzes were to be removed from fuzed Mark 22 Projector ammunition prior to landing ammunition.

24. That the U.S.S. TURNER was supplied with Mark 131, Mod. 1 fuzes for use with Mark 22 Projector ammunition.

25. That fuzed and ready Mark 22 Projector ammunition was used frequently in loading drills in which the element of speed was stressed.

26. That the torpedo personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER were charged with preparing Mark 22 Projector ammunition for service and with disassembling it for storage or transfer.

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27. That none of the torpedo personnel attached to the U.S.S. TURNER on 3 January 1944, ever had disassembled Mark 22 Projector ammunition prior to that date.

28. That, on 3 January 1944, _____ (TM1c), while enroute to breakfast, discussed Mark 22 Projector ammunition with a shipmate and that he _____, after breakfast, informed _____ (TM2c), in the forward mess hall, that he was going to defuze the ready Mark 22 Projector ammunition, in No. 2 Handling Room; whereupon _____ left the mess hall.

29. That, within a short period of time after _____ departure from the mess hall, the first explosion occurred.

30. That examination by divers of the wreck of the U.S.S. TURNER reveals the following:

- (a) the U.S.S. TURNER sank at her anchorage, breaking into two major sections -- a forward section and an after section;
- (b) the portion of the ship between frame 35 and frame 67 has not been found, but a mass of unidentified tangled wreckage lies generally between the two major sections which are about 100 feet apart;
- (c) in the after section, the starboard side of the hull is blown out from about frame 140 to about frame 180;
- (d) In the after section, in the port side a large hole, which extends partially into the main deck plating, is blown out in the general vicinity of No. 4 boiler;
- (e) in the after section, the deck houses to a large

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extent are demolished; however, the torpedo mount and tubes remain attached and five unexploded torpedoes are in the tubes.

31. That the U.S.S. TURNER, having been at sea on a continuous voyage for about sixteen days, anchored at about 0300, 3 January 1944, in position 3-1/2 miles bearing 322° (true) from Ambrose Channel Lightship.

32. That, at the time the U.S.S. TURNER anchored, the U.S.S. STEVENSON, U.S.S. THORN, U.S.S. STOCKTON, U.S.S. STANTON, U.S.S. INCH and U.S.S. SWASEY were also at anchor in that vicinity.

33. That, after anchoring, no readiness for action condition watch was set in the U.S.S. TURNER.

34. That, after anchoring, material condition B, normal deck watch with the officer of the deck on the bridge, and full steaming watch, except in after fireroom, were set in the U.S.S. TURNER.

35. That, until the time of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, readiness for action condition watches were set and being maintained by the U.S.S. STEVENSON and the U.S.S. THORN.

36. That the U.S.S. STEVENSON and the U.S.S. THORN, during the period they were at anchor, maintained a continuous all around underwater sound search.

37. That, up to the time of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, no unusual nor abnormal conditions had been noted in the ship.

38. That, at the time of the first explosion, preparations for getting underway were being made in the U.S.S. TURNER in accordance with normal routine procedure,

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Lieutenant C. F. Rees, U. S. Navy -- the Engineer Officer -- being the officer of the deck and on the bridge.

39. That, as of 0600, 3 January 1944, there was a total of approximately 59,600 gallons of fuel oil in the U.S.S. TURNER, of which 24,300 gallons were in the forward tanks and 35,300 gallons in the after tanks.

40. That the time of sunrise at Ambrose Channel Lightship, on 3 January 1944, was 0820 and that weather conditions at 0630 in that vicinity were as follows:

- (a) overcast with light snow;
- (b) surface visibility ten miles, decreasing;
- (c) wind northeast, about ten miles per hour;
- (d) sea moderate.

41. That the Senior Officer Present was Captain U. S. Navy, in the U.S.S. STEVENSON.

42. That, after the first explosion, vessels in the vicinity of the U.S.S. TURNER, including several Coast Guard craft, proceeded to the scene with despatch and rendered assistance.

43. That, immediately after the first explosion, other naval vessels present manned their general quarters stations.

44. That, at 0627, the Senior Officer Present directed all destroyer escorts present to get underway and render services.

45. That, at 0631, the Senior Officer Present directed all U. S. naval ships in the vicinity to send boats to rescue personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER.

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46. That, upon the order of the Senior Officer Present, two destroyers conducted a search for enemy craft.

47. That the searches found in Fact 36 and Fact 46 failed to disclose the presence of other than friendly vessels.

48. That the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SWASEY placed his vessel at a distance of about 60 feet from the U.S.S. TURNER and endeavored to fight the fire, but to no avail.

49. That the U.S.S. SWASEY dispatched fire and rescue parties that landed alongside a Coast Guard craft secured to the U.S.S. TURNER, and the officer in charge endeavored therefrom to report for duty to a person in authority in the U.S.S. TURNER.

50. That the following Coast Guard vessels arrived on the scene soon after the first explosion and assisted in the rescue of surviving personnel: CG 83306, CG 83359, CG 83337, CG 83343, CGR 1904 and Motor Lifeboat 36319.

51. That the Commanding Officer of the USCG 83306, the first Coast Guard craft to arrive on the scene, laid his vessel alongside the port bow of the U.S.S. TURNER with her stern abreast the blazing section and successfully removed an undetermined number of survivors, estimated to be about forty, who were isolated on the forecastle of the U.S.S. TURNER.

52. That the U.S.S. TURNER was commanded by Commander _____, U. S. Navy, and had on board, when she anchored, 17 officers and 276 enlisted men.

53. That as a result of the explosion, fire, and sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER, fifteen commissioned officers and one hundred twenty-four enlisted men of various ratings are missing. The names, rank or rating, and serial number of missing personnel are:

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OFFICERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>No.</u>
	Commander, U.S.N.	
	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	
	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	
	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	
	Lieutenant D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Lieutenant D-V(S) U.S.N.R.	
	Lieut. (jg) D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Lieut. (jg) D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Lieut. (jg) G-V(S) U.S.N.R.	
	Lieut. (jg) MC-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Ens. C-V(S) U.S.N.R.	
	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	
	Ens. U.S.N.	
	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	

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ENLISTED MEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
	WT2c, O-1 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM2c, V-3 U.S.N.R.	
	RT3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	GM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	GM3c, V-6, M-2 U.S.N.R.	
	Flc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RdM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, SV U.S.N.R.	
	RdM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	EM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, SV U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	StM2c, V-6 SV U.S.N.R.	

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ENLISTED MEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SoM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, U.S.N.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	GM3c, U.S.N.	5
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	FC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, M-1 U.S.N.R.	5
	F2c, U.S.N.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	CPhM(PA), V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	EM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	QM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	FC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SF1c, U.S.N.	
	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F1c, I, U.S.N.R.	
	MM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	StM1c, SV U.S.N.R.	
	S1c, V-6, U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	StM2c, SV U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	GM2c, U.S.N.	
	SC2c, U.S.N.	
	MM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	PhM2c, U.S.N.	
	EM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	

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ENLISTED MEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
(n)	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, U.S.N.	
	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	FC1c (M) U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	SC2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	16
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RT1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	WT2c, U.S.N.	
	StM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	FC2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Y1c, M-2 U.S.N.R.	
	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, U.S.N.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SM2c, U.S.N.	
	WT2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, O-1 U.S.N.R.	
	TM1c, O-1 U.S.N.R.	0
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	StM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	MM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	TM3c, U.S.N.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	B1c, U.S.N.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	5
	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SM2c, U.S.N.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	WT2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
V	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	SoM2c, U.S.N.	
	MM1c, U.S.N.	
	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	F1c, U.S.N.	
	F1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	
	EM2c, U.S.N.	

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54. That it is reasonable to infer that the officers and men listed in Fact 53 lost their lives either as a result of the explosion and fire, or as the result of drowning in the sea.

55. That the death of each officer and man enumerated in Fact 53 was due to injuries received in the line of duty and was not the result of his own misconduct.

56. That the following members of the ship's company of the U. S. S. TURNER were hospitalized as a result of injuries received incident to the explosion and fire:

At the U. S. Army ^{Post}~~Station~~ Hospital, Fort Hancock,
New Jersey:

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
	CCSTD (PA) U.S.N.	
	GM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	4
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, U.S.N.	
	Slc, U.S.N.	
	GM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Slc (SV) U.S.N.R.	3
	CRM (PA) U.S.N.	3
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	RM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	CBM(AA) U.S.N.	
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	FC3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	7
	F2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Cox. U.S.N.	
	TM2c, U.S.N.	12
	OC3c, U.S.N.	
	Bkr. lc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	SoM3c, U.S.N.	4
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Cox. V6, U.S.N.R.	
	CSM (AA) U.S.N.	6
	S2c	
	Slc(SV) U.S.N.R.	
	Mlc, V6, U.S.N.R.	6
	Y3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	62
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	TM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	2
	SC1c, U.S.N.	
	CMM(AA)V6, U.S.N.R.	2
	CQM(PA)U.S.N.	
	SoM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Y3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	CEM(PA)V6, U.S.N.R.	1
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	QM3c, U.S.N.	
	CFC(AA) U.S.N.	
	RdM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	GM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	8
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	8
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	7
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	8
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	GM3c, V2, U.S.N.R.	
	Flc, V6, U.S.N.R.	

At the U. S. Naval Hospital, Brooklyn, New York:

	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	4
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	SK2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	1

At the U. S. Marine Hospital, Staten Island, New York:

	QM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	4
	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	
	F3c, U.S.N.	
	GM3c, U.S.N.	3

57. That the injuries of the men enumerated in Fact 56 were received in the line of duty and were not the result of their own misconduct.

58. That the Commander of the Destroyer Squadron of which the U. S. S. TURNER was a unit, after his most recent inspection, classed the U. S. S. TURNER as "Good to Very Good" and considered her capable of performing all military combatant duties very satisfactorily.

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59. That the Squadron Commander considered the repair parties of the U. S. S. TURNER well trained and thoroughly familiar with the use and stowage of the damage control equipment but that the other members of the crew were apparently not well trained to assist them.

60. That, on 17 December, 1943, the fire fighting equipment, drainage pumps, bilge drains and other damage control equipment of the U. S. S. TURNER were in good order and ready for use.

61. That ineffective efforts to fight the major blaze were made by a relatively small number of men on the after portion of the ship.

62. That the men who were isolated in the forward portion of the U. S. S. TURNER included all but two of the surviving chief petty officers and that they, after escaping to a Coast Guard craft by way of the forecastle, made no effort to re-board, or to communicate with, the after portion of the ship.

63. That, from the time of the first explosion until the ship was abandoned, there was no experienced officer or line chief petty officer to coordinate the activities of the personnel in the after portion of the ship.

64. That, at the time of abandoning ship, a search was made through all accessible parts of the ship and no persons or bodies are known to have been left therein.

65. That injured personnel were removed to comparatively secure parts of the ship and first aid administered to them as expeditiously as practicable by members of the crew.

66. That Ensign E-V(G), U. S. Naval Reserve, was the senior surviving officer.

67. That the U. S. S. TURNER was placed in commission on 15 April 1943.

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OPINION

1. That there is no evidence obtainable in any form which would indicate the exact cause of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, and, further, that no such evidence will be forthcoming from wreckage or other material which may be recovered.

2. That major explosions in the U.S.S. TURNER occurred in the following order:

(a) general vicinity of No. 2 Upper Handling Room;

(b) forward five inch magazine groups;

(c) general vicinity of No. 3 Upper Handling Room;

(d) after five inch magazine groups.

3. That the first explosion was not the result of enemy action.

4. That the first explosion was not the result of sabotage.

5. That the first explosion was not instantaneous in its nature but required such a time to develop its maximum intensity that its initiation was felt, seen and heard and, as such, was distinctly recognized by several witnesses.

6. That explosions subsequent to the first were caused by the spread of fire to spaces not originally affected.

7. That, subsequent to the capsizing and sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER, an explosion in the after boiler room blew out the port side of the hull and righted the after section of the ship which, in sinking, had landed on the bottom on its starboard side.

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8. That, had the U.S.S. TURNER been swung and held in a position across wind soon after the first explosion, and had her crew, utilizing all of her available equipment, fought the fire intelligently, and had these efforts been augmented by other vessels in the vicinity, the fire in the U.S.S. TURNER could have been brought under control.

9. That, as a result of the first explosion, all officers attached to the U.S.S. TURNER with the exception of two young reserve ensigns, were either killed or immediately incapacitated.

10. That, considering the physical and psychological effects to be expected upon personnel who have been subjected to such an entirely unexpected and disastrous blow, the surviving personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER, after the first explosion, reacted reasonably well and, while there were no determined and coordinated efforts to take damage control and rescue measures, these men, perhaps unconsciously, resisted panic and such confusion as did exist was subsiding when the ship was abandoned.

11. That the decision of Ensign S.
Naval Reserve, to abandon the U.S.S. TURNER, was influenced by an officer apparently senior in rank and experience whom he considered to be in a better position to analyze correctly the over-all situation, by the absence of obvious determined effort from outside his ship toward any other end than rescue, and by the fact that a ready avenue of

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escape was at hand for his already stunned and injured crew.

12. That there was no disaffection or reprehensible conduct on the part of any member of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER.

13. That the U.S.S. TURNER could have been saved, but this opinion is arrived at only after a recital and studied evaluation of the entire train of events, which information, as such, was not available to those individuals who were faced with the immediate necessity of making important decisions.

14. That, although the Senior Officer Present, Captain [redacted], U. S. Navy, did not take steps that it now appears should have been taken to prevent the loss of the U.S.S. TURNER, it is recognized that he had no immediate information from the stricken ship as to conditions existing and measures taken, or in progress, to combat the fire or minimize its effects. At no time did Captain [redacted] possess this information or have communication with the U.S.S. TURNER. His flagship could not get underway until about 0640 and, by the time he was in a position to make an evaluation from his own personal observation, the fire had been raging for about thirty minutes and he was aware that the opinion of the commanding officer of a vessel very close aboard was that it would do no good to put hoses on the U.S.S. TURNER. Captain [redacted] reached the opinion that it might be possible to save the U.S.S. TURNER by use of fireboats and requested that they be dispatched to the scene of the fire. Prior to this, Captain [redacted] had very promptly directed those vessels capable of getting underway with the least delay, to do so,

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to render services. He had directed that steps be taken to rescue personnel as soon as advised that men were abandoning the U.S.S. TURNER. He also took appropriate action to determine the presence of enemy craft and, for the conditions as he saw them, adequately discharged his responsibilities as Senior Officer Present.

15. That, although there was an implied lack of alertness in the U.S.S. TURNER during the period between anchoring and the first explosion, perhaps induced by the action of her commanding officer in securing all readiness for action condition watches, there is no indication that this lack of alertness contributed in any manner to the inception of the tragedy. It is recognized that there is an ideal state of training which should result in essential emergency reactions becoming certainly automatic but it also is recognized that a sixteen-day voyage in a destroyer is physically fatiguing, that this crew was young, that there was an absence of experience and naval background among the majority of the officers, petty officers and non-rated men, that all surviving personnel had been subjected to a severe and terrifying shock which affected their mental faculties to different degrees and for varying periods of time and, therefore, it is not considered that the state of training in the U.S.S. TURNER was below the average existing in other vessels of the United States Navy.

16. That the loss of approximately ninety percent of the officers of the U.S.S. TURNER and the isolation forward of all line chief petty officers of the U.S.S. TURNER was due to a great extent to their being quartered and messed in one part of the ship.

17. That the efforts of the individual members of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER in rescuing shipmates resulted in

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the saving of several lives and in some instances were performed at jeopardy to life and limb.

18. That the staff of the U. S. Army Post Hospital, Fort Hancock, New Jersey, efficiently and capably took prompt and proper measures for treatment of the 55 injured survivors brought to that hospital.

19. That Coast Guard craft that came to the assistance of the U.S.S. TURNER were efficient and effective in saving life and evacuating personnel.

20. That Lieutenant (jg) _____, USCGR, commanding USCG 83306, in placing his vessel alongside the port bow of the U.S.S. TURNER displayed excellent seamanship, initiative, and daring that were most commendable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That no further proceedings be had in this case.
2. That future design provide suitable and adequate quarters for officers and chief petty officers in at least two parts of the ship widely dispersed and that every practicable effort be made to effect such a dispersal in ships of current design.
3. That Lieutenant, junior grade, _____, U. S. Coast Guard Reserve, who, with a total disregard for his own safety and that of his ship, successfully evacuated members of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER from the forecastle of that ship, be commended for his initiative, daring and tenacity of purpose. (Opinion 20)
4. That certain enlisted personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER, listed hereunder, be given suitable recognition for their

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prompt and courageous efforts and initiative in rescuing and caring for the injured (Opinion 17):

HCE

Name

Rate

s
J.

MoMMLc, U.S.N.R.
CTM (AA), U.S.N.
Flc, U.S.N.R.
SC2c, U.S.N.
GM3c, U.S.N.R.
Cox, U.S.N.
S2c, U.S.N.R.
MM2c, U.S.N.R.

7.4 M.C.M.
Aineland 899
act-1-3-44

James C. Jones, Jr.
JAMES C. JONES, JUNIOR,
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy, President.

John B. W. Waller
JOHN B. W. WALLER,
Captain, U. S. Navy, Member.

John G. Spangler
JOHN G. SPANGLER,
Commander, U. S. Navy, Member.

The record of proceedings of the nineteenth day of the inquiry was read and approved, the court being cleared during the reading of so much thereof as pertains to the proceedings in cleared court, and the court having finished the inquiry, then, at ⁶ p. m., adjourned to await the action of the convening authority.

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[Signature]
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy, President.

[Signature]
Lieutenant (jg), L-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve,
Judge Advocate.

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NINETEENTH DAY

HEADQUARTERS THIRD NAVAL DISTRICT
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
90 CHURCH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y.

Sunday, 23 January 1944.

The court met at 9 a. m.

Present:

Rear Admiral James C. Jones, Jr., U. S. Navy,
Captain John B. W. Waller, U. S. Navy, and
Commander John C. Spangler, U. S. Navy, members; and
Lieutenant (jg) Henry C. Eidenbach, L-V(S), U. S. Naval
Reserve, judge advocate.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the inquiry
were present.

The court continued its deliberations.

The court then, at 12:25 p. m., took a recess until
1:15 p. m., at which time it reconvened.

Present: All the members and the judge advocate.

No witnesses not otherwise connected with the inquiry
were present.

The record of proceedings of the eighteenth day of the
inquiry was read and approved.

The court, having thoroughly inquired into all the facts
and circumstances connected with the allegations contained in
the precept and having considered the evidence adduced, finds
as follows:

FINDING OF FACTS

1. That, at about 0800, 3 January 1944, the U.S.S.
TURNER (DD 648), while at anchor, capsized and sank as a

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result of underwater damage sustained during a series of internal explosions in that vessel.

2. That the first explosion occurred at about 0617, 3 January 1944.

3. That the point of origin of the first explosion was in the vicinity of No. 2 Upper Handling Room and the Anti-Submarine Projector Ready Stowage Room.

4. That the exact cause of the first explosion is not determined.

5. That the first explosion was followed immediately by an intense fire in the ship from about frame 35 to about frame 70, and that, thereafter, there followed a series of explosions which culminated in the sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER.

6. That, at about 0705, all personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER had abandoned ship, with the exception of those who were beyond possibility of rescue.

7. That the final and most violent explosion occurred at about 0750, 3 January 1944.

8. That the spaces named in Fact 3 contained 50 rounds 5"-38 caliber ammunition and 49 fuzed rounds Mark 22 Projector ammunition, respectively.

9. That the first explosion blew a triangular hole (apex down) in each side of the ship, from just below the forecastle deck to just above the water-line; ruptured the forecastle deck plating from side to side, just abaft 5"-38 caliber Gun No. 1; demolished the rear portion of the shield of 5"-38 caliber Gun No. 1; and distorted the entire bridge structure in such a manner that it inclined aft and slightly

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to starboard of its normal position.

10. That, after the first explosion, that portion of the ship forward of the fire was without water and electric services and there was no direct means of access to or communication with the other portion of the ship.

11. That no attempt was made to flood the forward magazines.

12. That, prior to the time of "abandon ship" (Fact 6), there was no evident damage abaft frame 67 -- the forward bulkhead of the forward fireroom.

13. That, immediately after the first explosion, the ship listed to starboard at an angle of about four degrees.

14. That, at no time subsequent to the first explosion, was adequate or normal pressure in the fire main available in the after portion of the ship.

15. That all fire and flushing and all fire and bilge pumps were connected to the fire main but no effective steps were taken to segregate the damaged section thereof.

16. That no effective steps were taken to flood the after magazines.

17. That a number of small isolated fires were found in the after portion of the ship and were extinguished by members of the crew before they abandoned ship.

18. That, after "abandon ship," the fire spread aft rapidly to such an extent that the entire after portion of the ship was ultimately in flames.

19. That factors facilitating the spread of the fire aft were:

- (a) a wind from ahead;
- (b) flying, burning debris;
- (c) burning oil on the surface of

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- the water in contact with the ship's hull;
- (d) burning of the paint on the side of the ship.

20. That, at the time of the first explosion, the U.S.S. TURNER was preparing to get underway at 0715 to proceed to an anchorage in Gravesend Bay, New York.

21. That, upon anchoring in Gravesend Bay, the following ammunition was to have been transferred from the U.S.S. TURNER to the U. S. Naval Magazine, Fort Lafayette, Brooklyn, New York.

- (a) all ammunition from No. 4 Magazine;
- (b) all ammunition from the 40 mm. Magazine;
- (c) all ammunition from the after 20 mm. Magazine;
- (d) all Mark 22 Projector ammunition;
- (e) all impulse charges;
- (f) all depth charges.

22. That no preparations for landing this ammunition had been made prior to the time that the U.S.S. TURNER anchored.

23. That fuzes were to be removed from fuzed Mark 22 Projector ammunition prior to landing ammunition.

24. That the U.S.S. TURNER was supplied with Mark 131, Mod. 1 fuzes for use with Mark 22 Projector ammunition.

25. That fuzed and ready Mark 22 Projector ammunition was used frequently in loading drills in which the element of speed was stressed.

26. That the torpedo personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER were charged with preparing Mark 22 Projector ammunition for service and with disassembling it for storage or transfer.

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27. That none of the torpedo personnel attached to the U.S.S. TURNER on 3 January 1944, ever had disassembled Mark 22 Projector ammunition prior to that date.

28. That, on 3 January 1944, Schlessinger, H. A. (TM1c), while enroute to breakfast, discussed Mark 22 Projector ammunition with a shipmate and that he (Schlessinger), after breakfast, informed Gray, M. G. (TM2c), in the forward mess hall, that he was going to defuze the ready Mark 22 Projector ammunition, in No. 2 Handling Room; whereupon Schlessinger left the mess hall.

29. That, within a short period of time after Schlessinger's departure from the mess hall, the first explosion occurred.

30. That examination by divers of the wreck of the U.S.S. TURNER reveals the following:

- (a) the U.S.S. TURNER sank at her anchorage, breaking into two major sections -- a forward section and an after section;
- (b) the portion of the ship between frame 35 and frame 67 has not been found, but a mass of unidentified tangled wreckage lies generally between the two major sections which are about 100 feet apart;
- (c) in the after section, the starboard side of the hull is blown out from about frame 140 to about frame 180;
- (d) In the after section, in the port side a large hole, which extends partially into the main deck plating, is blown out in the general vicinity of No. 4 boiler;
- (e) in the after section, the deck houses to a large

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extent are demolished; however, the torpedo mount and tubes remain attached and five unexploded torpedoes are in the tubes.

31. That the U.S.S. TURNER, having been at sea on a continuous voyage for about sixteen days, anchored at about 0300, 3 January 1944, in position 3-1/2 miles bearing 322° (true) from Ambrose Channel Lightship.

32. That, at the time the U.S.S. TURNER anchored, the U.S.S. STEVENSON, U.S.S. THORN, U.S.S. STOCKTON, U.S.S. STANTON, U.S.S. INCH and U.S.S. SWASEY were also at anchor in that vicinity.

33. That, after anchoring, no readiness for action condition watch was set in the U.S.S. TURNER.

34. That, after anchoring, material condition B, normal deck watch with the officer of the deck on the bridge, and full steaming watch, except in after fireroom, were set in the U.S.S. TURNER.

35. That, until the time of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, readiness for action condition watches were set and being maintained by the U.S.S. STEVENSON and the U.S.S. THORN.

36. That the U.S.S. STEVENSON and the U.S.S. THORN, during the period they were at anchor, maintained a continuous all around underwater sound search.

37. That, up to the time of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, no unusual nor abnormal conditions had been noted in the ship.

38. That, at the time of the first explosion, preparations for getting underway were being made in the U.S.S. TURNER in accordance with normal routine procedure,

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Lieutenant C. F. Rees, U. S. Navy -- the Engineer Officer -- being the officer of the deck and on the bridge.

39. That, as of 0600, 3 January 1944, there was a total of approximately 59,600 gallons of fuel oil in the U.S.S. TURNER, of which 24,300 gallons were in the forward tanks and 35,300 gallons in the after tanks.

40. That the time of sunrise at Ambrose Channel Lightship, on 3 January 1944, was 0820 and that weather conditions at 0630 in that vicinity were as follows:

- (a) overcast with light snow;
- (b) surface visibility ten miles, decreasing;
- (c) wind northeast, about ten miles per hour;
- (d) sea moderate.

41. That the Senior Officer Present was Captain John Connor, U. S. Navy, in the U.S.S. STEVENSON.

42. That, after the first explosion, vessels in the vicinity of the U.S.S. TURNER, including several Coast Guard craft, proceeded to the scene with despatch and rendered assistance.

43. That, immediately after the first explosion, other naval vessels present manned their general quarters stations.

44. That, at 0627, the Senior Officer Present directed all destroyer escorts present to get underway and render services.

45. That, at 0631, the Senior Officer Present directed all U. S. naval ships in the vicinity to send boats to rescue personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER.

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46. That, upon the order of the Senior Officer Present, two destroyers conducted a search for enemy craft.

47. That the searches found in Fact 36 and Fact 46 failed to disclose the presence of other than friendly vessels.

48. That the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SWASEY placed his vessel at a distance of about 60 feet from the U.S.S. TURNER and endeavored to fight the fire, but to no avail.

49. That the U.S.S. SWASEY dispatched fire and rescue parties that landed alongside a Coast Guard craft secured to the U.S.S. TURNER, and the officer in charge endeavored therefrom to report for duty to a person in authority in the U.S.S. TURNER.

50. That the following Coast Guard vessels arrived on the scene soon after the first explosion and assisted in the rescue of surviving personnel: CG 83306, CG 83359, CG 83337, CG 83343, CGR 1904 and Motor Lifeboat 36319.

51. That the Commanding Officer of the USCG 83306, the first Coast Guard craft to arrive on the scene, laid his vessel alongside the port bow of the U.S.S. TURNER with her stern abreast the blazing section and successfully removed an undetermined number of survivors, estimated to be about forty, who were isolated on the forecastle of the U.S.S. TURNER.

52. That the U.S.S. TURNER was commanded by Commander Henry S. Wygant, Jr., U. S. Navy, and had on board, when she anchored, 17 officers and 276 enlisted men.

53. That as a result of the explosion, fire, and sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER, fifteen commissioned officers and one hundred twenty-four enlisted men of various ratings are missing. The names, rank or rating, and serial number of missing personnel are:

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OFFICERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>No.</u>
WYGANT, Jr. , H.S. JR.	Commander, U.S.N.	63316
PAYNE, W.A.	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	81023
REES, C.F.	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	85197
ALEXANDER, A.F.	Lieutenant, U.S.N.	85307
WINSLOW, W.	Lieutenant D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	85500
TURNER, F.E.	Lieutenant D-V(S) U.S.N.R.	149759
HAMPTON, E.W.	Lieut. (jg) D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	266188
MURRAY, H.S.	Lieut. (jg) D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	118860
ALBACH, J.I.	Lieut. (jg) C-V(S) U.S.N.R.	196374
FLANAGAN, J.E.	Lieut. (jg) MC-V(G) U.S.N.R.	234931
FORSYTH, S.E.	Ens. C-V(S) U.S.N.R.	214459
BRIGGS, H.B.	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	188275
WRIGHT, C.D.	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	244721
GROSS, A.P.	Ens. U.S.N.	283414
RANKIN, J.T.	Ens. D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	265267

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
ADER, John William	WT2c, O-1 U.S.N.R.	404-90-84
ALLEN, Rueben B.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	864-32-40
AMRHEIN, James Francis	RM2c, V-3 U.S.N.R.	600-54-04
ANDERSON, Robert Ervin	RT3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	833-45-36
ANDERSON, Toxie (n)	GM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	644-75-63
APPEL, Albert Jr.	GM3c, V-6, M-2 U.S.N.R.	650-81-12
BALL, Ralph Edward	F1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	658-07-23
BALUTA, Walter Andrew	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	245-29-87
BARNES, Clyde V.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	641-23-36
BEASLEY, Sykes Lee	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	552-62-61
BEHLER, George Durling	RdM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	726-34-48
BOURNE, Raymond Everett	S2c, SV U.S.N.R.	801-38-70
BOYER, William Henry	RdM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	245-27-93
BURTON, Robert F.	RM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	658-24-51
BUXTON, Norman A.	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	607-97-90
CARLTON, Harold V.	EM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	556-05-98
CLAYPOOL, Edward G.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	652-00-35
CLIFF, Eldon L.	S2c, SV U.S.N.R.	801-20-50
COLEMAN, Gerald E.	S2c, U.S.N.	305-45-50
COLETTI, Anthony J.	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-53-62
COLLINS, Harold C.	S1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	643-06-09
CONNORS, Thomas F.	S2c, U.S.N.	212-83-70
CONSTANTINO, Edward (n)	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	205-33-60
COOK, Boyd F.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	209-02-78
COOK, Roosevelt	StM2c, V-6 SV U.S.N.R.	857-50-16

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ENLISTED MEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
CORMIER, Francis F.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	643-04-07
CORNELIUS, Harry R. Jr.	SoM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	830-24-67
CORRIGAN, Leo J.	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	653-51-68
COTTY, Francis E.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	710-28-42
COWHER, John B.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	653-52-43
CROSBY, William E.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-65-86
CROSSLAND, John P.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-53-42
CULLEROT, Maurice L.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	573-15-00
CURRIE, Samuel F. Jr.	S2c, U.S.N.	250-84-60
CUSEO, James V.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	643-06-11
DANCHANIN, John Jr.	F2c, U.S.N.	250-84-36
DEL VECCHIO, Joseph, Jr.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	643-07-57
DEVEAU, Paul M.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-64-88
DOMKE, Robert J.	GM3c, U.S.N.	250-84-56
DONOVAN, Warren Robert	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-64-52
DOUGLAS, George T.	FC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	645-51-86
DUCHAINE, Napoleon F.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	666-81-95
DUCLOS, Fred B.	SC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	620-15-50
DUFFY, John F.	F2c, M-1 U.S.N.R.	205-09-05
DUFFY, Richard D.	F2c, U.S.N.	238-91-79
DUFRESNE, Joseph C.	S2c, U.S.N.	207-41-61
DUNKEL, Herbert A.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	653-56-11
DUNNING, Edward Paul,	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	761-53-89
EISENBERG, Francis X.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	653-60-55
EPPERSON, William A.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	855-83-02
EUBANKS, William Edwin	CPhM(PA), V-6 U.S.N.R.	423-00-62
FAHEY, George W.	EM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	203-55-46
FAUGHT, Penland E.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	618-65-91
FINNEY, William U.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	875-17-74
FORD, Malcolm (n)	QM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	642-73-12
GRAHAM, James P.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	203-48-75
GRANT, Francis W.	FC3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	208-76-63
GROSVENOR, Edward E.	SFlc, U.S.N.	336-48-73
GRUND, Jacob P.	F2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	861-30-55
GUERTIN, Marcel B.	F1c, I, U.S.N.R.	807-37-67
GUTZLER, Edwin J.	MM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	639-45-14
HADDEN, Nathaniel J.	StM1c, SV U.S.N.R.	850-65-03
HAINES, Raymond E.	Slc, V-6, U.S.N.R.	244-46-43
HALL, George McLean	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	204-92-79
HANSER, Rutherford (n)	StM2c, SV U.S.N.R.	843-45-28
HARR, John Joseph	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	707-51-12
HEINTZE, Robert W.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	821-78-08
HENDRICKSON, Hjalmar B.A.	GM2c, U.S.N.	299-86-72
HIBBLE, James L.	SC2c, U.S.N.	268-59-50
HICKS, William R.	MM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	657-56-47
HORN, Grover G.	PhM2c, U.S.N.	274-69-49
HOVIE, Delmer L.	EM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	639-13-25

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ENLISTED MEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
JULIANO, Peter (n)	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	646-78-85
LAMOREAUX, Ralph L. Jr.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	249-90-82
LAURITANA, Frank	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	908-31-71
LICKFELT, Robert H.	Slc, U.S.N.	615-42-57
LITERAL, John Thomas	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	655-34-44
MADDOX, Earl C.	FC1c (M) U.S.N.R.	287-46-80
MAIER, Edward T.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	706-93-01
MATTHEW, Ralph A.	S2c, U.S.N.	376-88-03
MC DANIEL, George A.	SC2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	556-68-00
MC DONALD, James T.	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	612-36-16
MC GAUGHEY, Ralph L.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	607-68-65
NEWELL, Henry L.	RT1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	328-27-72
NORRIS, Paul R.	WT2c, U.S.N.	337-15-16
NUNLEY, William (n)	StM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	843-56-76
OLMSTEAD, Harlan W.	FC2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	726-03-61
O'REAR, Walter L.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	605-87-06
PACHECO, Ignacio J.	Y1c, M-2 U.S.N.R.	680-18-95
PEELER, Clarence N.	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	758-54-73
PFEIFER, Joseph Anton	Slc, U.S.N.	329-25-02
POLIVY, Calvin	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	708-93-41
PURDY, Robert Jr.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	669-37-46
RANDALL, Harry F.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	653-31-21
RASH, Jack M.	SM2c, U.S.N.	372-35-07
ROCHEDIEU, Henry E.	WT2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	228-10-97
ROSS, Charles E.	F3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	826-58-81
RYDELEK, Frank E.	Slc, O-1 U.S.N.R.	411-32-51
SCHLESSINGER, Harvey A.	TM1c, O-1 U.S.N.R.	410-85-00
SHOCKLEY, Clovis A.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	755-89-38
SENIQUAR, Alphonse (n) Jr.	StM2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	576-27-67
SHANKS, Reed G.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	623-60-93
SHARP, Glen H.	MM1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	755-56-76
SHOPLAK, Michael (n)	TM3c, U.S.N.	283-78-71
SMITH, Loran M.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	612-76-61
SOMMER, Louis A.	Blc, U.S.N.	291-20-14
SPARKS, Howard	S2c, U.S.N.	279-62-25
STANKO, John J.	TM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	652-61-83
STROUD, James H.	SM2c, U.S.N.	272-27-93
TACKETT, Clayton E.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	828-57-25
TOMLIN, Noah (n)	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	828-57-08
TREUBIG, Charles F.	WT2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	104-59-79
TROY, John F.J.	RM3c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	642-44-54
VANDRIESSCHE, Harry N.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	875-21-47
WALDRUP, Robert C.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	843-82-43
WALLACE, Cecil Huston	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	605-79-20
WEIRICK, Morris E.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	875-21-11
WICKER, Roy E.	SoM2c, U.S.N.	337-94-12
WILKINS, Charles H.	MM1c, U.S.N.	272-20-62
WILLIAMS, Milton T.	S2c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	801-72-03
WOODWARD, Lyman Jr.	F1c, U.S.N.	212-63-84
WRIGHT, Walter E.	F1c, V-6 U.S.N.R.	666-79-19
WRONSKI, Edward F.	Slc, V-6 U.S.N.R.	725-93-98
YOUNG, Richard J.	EM2c, U.S.N.	224-94-99

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54. That it is reasonable to infer that the officers and men listed in Fact 53 lost their lives either as a result of the explosion and fire, or as the result of drowning in the sea.

55. That the death of each officer and man enumerated in Fact 53 was due to injuries received in the line of duty and was not the result of his own misconduct.

56. That the following members of the ship's company of the U. S. S. TURNER were hospitalized as a result of injuries received incident to the explosion and fire:

At the U. S. Army ^{Post}~~Station~~ Hospital, Fort Hancock,
New Jersey:

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
CASE, Paul Reid	CCSTD (PA) U.S.N.	320-56-77
CHEATWOOD, Edley W.	GM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	604-66-96
COAKLEY, James E.	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	761-64-68
COLLINS, Roger (n)	S2c, U.S.N.	212-83-91
CONLEY, Roy Hayward	Slc, U.S.N.	841-16-18
CURRIER, Donald E.	GM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	601-14-14
DAWSON, George R., Jr.	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	573-13-31
DICKER, Arthur A.	Slc (SV) U.S.N.R.	824-95-18
DONDAJEWSKI, Edmund R.	CRM (PA) U.S.N.	305-06-58
DULAC, Druet A.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	209-02-18
DZUBAK, Steven W.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	653-51-99
ESTABROOKS, Gurney B.	RM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	761-65-10
FREDERICK, William F.	CBM(AA) U.S.N.	380-50-01
FOLSOM, Frederick R.	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	600-81-85
FREDENBURG, Arthur D.	FC3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	638-77-07
FRANCE, Burton E.	F2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	863-01-67
FREER, Robert L., Jr.	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	836-60-93
GORDON, James F.	Cox. U.S.N.	299-76-54
GRAY, Marvin G.	TM2c, U.S.N.	295-87-43
GREENE, Burks G.	OC3c, U.S.N.	268-62-34
GROCE, John P.	Bkr.1c, V6, U.S.N.R.	634-00-64
HAMMOND, James H., Jr.	SoM3c, U.S.N.	291-70-54
HARNED, Robert F.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	708-92-78
HENRY, John J.	Cox. V6, U.S.N.R.	606-13-94
HEBERT, Joseph G.	CSM (AA) U.S.N.	274-20-06
HUBBERT, Richard F.	S2c	552-50-44
LABONTE, Clifford L.	Slc(SV) U.S.N.R.	806-73-33
LESAGE, Paul (n)	M1c, V6, U.S.N.R.	650-78-03
LONGENECKER, Harry J.	Y3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	621-30-19
MAGLIOLA, Richard N.	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	642-42-33

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>
MALESKY, Joseph J.	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	244-54-99
MILLER, Paul A.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	627-30-78
MCCUE, John J.	TM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	706-96-22
MCKINSTRY, William A.	SC1c, U.S.N.	243-75-80
MUCHA, Walter (n)	CEM(AA)V6, U.S.N.R.	250-29-97
PETERSON, Harry O.	CQM(PA)U.S.N.	282-97-03
PETERSON, Warren A.	SoM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	607-35-79
PADDEN, Marshall LaVerne	Y3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	724-88-11
POST, Russell E.	CEM(PA)V6, U.S.N.R.	299-59-11
RASBEARY, Earl G.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	576-32-30
RAFTER, Francis J.	QM3c, U.S.N.	244-23-36
ROBERTS, Edward P.	CFC(AA) U.S.N.	212-40-39
SEMRAU, Robert J.	RdM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	623-61-30
SMITHIES, William A.	GM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	647-00-50
SPENCER, Arthur T.	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	210-80-45
SPIRES, James A.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	893-22-15
STOUT, Morton K.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	709-61-03
THOMAS, Richard D.	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	651-22-58
TUSSEY, Paul E.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	828-57-02
VAN HORN, James H.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	875-20-57
WADE, Billy J.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	557-01-63
WALCZEWSKI, Alexander J.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	875-20-76
WESTHOFF, Junior M.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	306-00-30
WIEDE, Aron A.	GM3c, V2, U.S.N.R.	616-74-15
ZAIKIS, Algirda E.	F1c, V6, U.S.N.R.	203-53-29

At the U. S. Naval Hospital, Brooklyn, New York:

BUCKMASTER, Harlan Emmet	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	666-12-34
MCDONALD, John J.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	305-97-95
SPIERS, Oliver W.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	602-83-25
VIVIAN, John T.	SK2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	707-96-11

At the U. S. Marine Hospital, Staten Island, New York:

CARAMANNELLO, Anthony R.	QM3c, V6, U.S.N.R.	819-53-04
COVER, Albert L.	S2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	761-67-31
CUSTODIO, Manuel (n)	Slc, V6, U.S.N.R.	203-67-41
MCINTIRE, Ralph W.	MM2c, V6, U.S.N.R.	133-37-17
PAULSEN, Jack K.	F3c, U.S.N.	258-59-45
ROBERT, Allen L.	GM3c, U.S.N.	372-46-58

57. That the injuries of the men enumerated in Fact 56 were received in the line of duty and were not the result of their own misconduct.

58. That the Commander of the Destroyer Squadron of which the U. S. S. TURNER was a unit, after his most recent inspection, classed the U. S. S. TURNER as "Good to Very Good" and considered her capable of performing all military combatant duties very satisfactorily.

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59. That the Squadron Commander considered the repair parties of the U. S. S. TURNER well trained and thoroughly familiar with the use and stowage of the damage control equipment but that the other members of the crew were apparently not well trained to assist them.

60. That, on 17 December, 1943, the fire fighting equipment, drainage pumps, bilge drains and other damage control equipment of the U. S. S. TURNER were in good order and ready for use.

61. That ineffective efforts to fight the major blaze were made by a relatively small number of men on the after portion of the ship.

62. That the men who were isolated in the forward portion of the U. S. S. TURNER included all but two of the surviving chief petty officers and that they, after escaping to a Coast Guard craft by way of the forecastle, made no effort to re-board, or to communicate with, the after portion of the ship.

63. That, from the time of the first explosion until the ship was abandoned, there was no experienced officer or line chief petty officer to coordinate the activities of the personnel in the after portion of the ship.

64. That, at the time of abandoning ship, a search was made through all accessible parts of the ship and no persons or bodies are known to have been left therein.

65. That injured personnel were removed to comparatively secure parts of the ship and first aid administered to them as expeditiously as practicable by members of the crew.

66. That Ensign John Julian Clemens, E-V(G), U. S. Naval Reserve, was the senior surviving officer.

67. That the U. S. S. TURNER was placed in commission on 15 April 1943.

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OPINION

1. That there is no evidence obtainable in any form which would indicate the exact cause of the first explosion in the U.S.S. TURNER, and, further, that no such evidence will be forthcoming from wreckage or other material which may be recovered.

2. That major explosions in the U.S.S. TURNER occurred in the following order:

- (a) general vicinity of No. 2 Upper Handling Room;
- (b) forward five inch magazine groups;
- (c) general vicinity of No. 3 Upper Handling Room;
- (d) after five inch magazine groups.

3. That the first explosion was not the result of enemy action.

4. That the first explosion was not the result of sabotage.

5. That the first explosion was not instantaneous in its nature but required such a time to develop its maximum intensity that its initiation was felt, seen and heard and, as such, was distinctly recognized by several witnesses.

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6. That explosions subsequent to the first were caused by the spread of fire to spaces not originally affected.

7. That, subsequent to the capsizing and sinking of the U.S.S. TURNER, an explosion in the after boiler room blew out the port side of the hull and righted the after section of the ship which, in sinking, had landed on the bottom on its starboard side.

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8. That, had the U.S.S. TURNER been swung and held in a position across wind soon after the first explosion, and had her crew, utilizing all of her available equipment, fought the fire intelligently, and had these efforts been augmented by other vessels in the vicinity, the fire in the U.S.S. TURNER could have been brought under control.

9. That, as a result of the first explosion, all officers attached to the U.S.S. TURNER with the exception of two young reserve ensigns, were either killed or immediately incapacitated.

10. That, considering the physical and psychological effects to be expected upon personnel who have been subjected to such an entirely unexpected and disastrous blow, the surviving personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER, after the first explosion, reacted reasonably well and, while there were no determined and coordinated efforts to take damage control and rescue measures, these men, perhaps unconsciously, resisted panic and such confusion as did exist was subsiding when the ship was abandoned.

11. That the decision of Ensign John J. Clemens, U. S. Naval Reserve, to abandon the U.S.S. TURNER, was influenced by an officer apparently senior in rank and experience whom he considered to be in a better position to analyze correctly the over-all situation, by the absence of obvious determined effort from outside his ship toward any other end than rescue, and by the fact that a ready avenue of

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escape was at hand for his already stunned and injured crew.

12. That there was no disaffection or reprehensible conduct on the part of any member of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER.

13. That the U.S.S. TURNER could have been saved, but this opinion is arrived at only after a recital and studied evaluation of the entire train of events, which information, as such, was not available to those individuals who were faced with the immediate necessity of making important decisions.

14. That, although the Senior Officer Present, Captain John CONNOR, U. S. Navy, did not take steps that it now appears should have been taken to prevent the loss of the U.S.S. TURNER, it is recognized that he had no immediate information from the stricken ship as to conditions existing and measures taken, or in progress, to combat the fire or minimize its effects. At no time did Captain Connor possess this information or have communication with the U.S.S. TURNER. His flagship could not get underway until about 0640 and, by the time he was in a position to make an evaluation from his own personal observation, the fire had been raging for about thirty minutes and he was aware that the opinion of the commanding officer of a vessel very close aboard was that it would do no good to put hoses on the U.S.S. TURNER. Captain Connor reached the opinion that it might be possible to save the U.S.S. TURNER by use of fireboats and requested that they be dispatched to the scene of the fire. Prior to this, Captain Connor had very promptly directed those vessels capable of getting underway with the least delay, to do so,

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to render services. He had directed that steps be taken to rescue personnel as soon as advised that men were abandoning the U.S.S. TURNER. He also took appropriate action to determine the presence of enemy craft and, for the conditions as he saw them, adequately discharged his responsibilities as Senior Officer Present.

15. That, although there was an implied lack of alertness in the U.S.S. TURNER during the period between anchoring and the first explosion, perhaps induced by the action of her commanding officer in securing all readiness for action condition watches, there is no indication that this lack of alertness contributed in any manner to the inception of the tragedy. It is recognized that there is an ideal state of training which should result in essential emergency reactions becoming certainly automatic but it also is recognized that a sixteen-day voyage in a destroyer is physically fatiguing, that this crew was young, that there was an absence of experience and naval background among the majority of the officers, petty officers and non-rated men, that all surviving personnel had been subjected to a severe and terrifying shock which affected their mental faculties to different degrees and for varying periods of time and, therefore, it is not considered that the state of training in the U.S.S. TURNER was below the average existing in other vessels of the United States Navy.

16. That the loss of approximately ninety percent of the officers of the U.S.S. TURNER and the isolation forward of all line chief petty officers of the U.S.S. TURNER was due to a great extent to their being quartered and messed in one part of the ship.

17. That the efforts of the individual members of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER in rescuing shipmates resulted in

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the saving of several lives and in some instances were performed at jeopardy to life and limb.

18. That the staff of the U. S. Army Post Hospital, Fort Hancock, New Jersey, effeciently and capably took prompt and proper measures for treatment of the 55 injured survivors brought to that hospital.

19. That Coast Guard craft that came to the assistance of the U.S.S. TURNER were efficient and effective in saving life and evacuating personnel.

20. That Lieutenant (jg) John C. Dean, USCGR, commanding USCG 83306, in placing his vessel alongside the port bow of the U.S.S. TURNER displayed excellent seamanship, initiative, and daring that were most commendable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That no further proceedings be had in this case.

2. That future design provide suitable and adequate quarters for officers and chief petty officers in at least two parts of the ship widely dispersed and that every practicable effort be made to effect such a dispersal in ships of current design.

3. That Lieutenant, junior grade, John C. Dean, U. S. Coast Guard Reserve, who, with a total disregard for his own safety and that of his ship, successfully evacuated members of the crew of the U.S.S. TURNER from the forecastle of that ship, be commended for his initiative, daring and tenacity of purpose. (Opinion 20)

4. That certain enlisted personnel of the U.S.S. TURNER, listed hereunder, be given suitable recognition for their

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prompt and courageous efforts and initiative in rescuing and caring for the injured (Opinion 17):

H.C.

Name

Rate

✓ LOCKWOOD, James	MoMM1c, U.S.N.R.
✓ FLYNN, Edmund F.J.	CTM (AA), U.S.N.
✓ BROWN, Irving M.	Flc, U.S.N.R.
✓ MCKINSTRY, William A.	SC2c, U.S.N.
✓ SCOTT, Harold T.	GM3c, U.S.N.R.
✓ O'CONNOR, James C.	Cox, U.S.N.
✓ DELANNOY, Gustave, Jr.	S2c, U.S.N.R.
✓ McINTIRE, Ralph W.	MM2c, U.S.N.R.

n.v.m.c.m.
Cincinnati 899
at 1-3-44

James C. Jones, Jr.
 JAMES C. JONES, JUNIOR,
 Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy, President.

John B. W. Waller
 JOHN B. W. WALLER,
 Captain, U. S. Navy, Member.

John G. Spangler
 JOHN G. SPANGLER,
 Commander, U. S. Navy, Member.

The record of proceedings of the nineteenth day of the inquiry was read and approved, the court being cleared during the reading of so much thereof as pertains to the proceedings in cleared court, and the court having finished the inquiry, then, at ⁶ p. m., adjourned to await the action of the convening authority.

H.C.E

James C. Jones, Jr.
 JAMES C. JONES, JUNIOR,
 Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy, President.

Henry C. Eidenbach
 HENRY C. EIDENBACH,
 Lieutenant (jg), L-V(S), U. S. Naval Reserve,
 Judge Advocate.

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