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Israel Continues to be Rewarded for Killing American Sailors: Remembering the USS Liberty



USS Liberty being towed to Malta after being attack by Israel air and naval forces. Photo: US Navy.

June 8, 1967 stands as yet another “date of infamy” in the annals of American history.

And even though numerically the dead and wounded American servicemen numbered in the hundreds instead thousands, June 8, 1967 is as heinous a date of infamy as the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the 9/11 attacks on New York, the Pentagon, and “Flight 93.”

And this time the perpetrator was not an enemy; rather, it was an ally whose existence, economy, and security have been solely dependent on America’s perpetual beneficence.

Not only did Israel murder and wound sailors, in cold blood, on an unarmed American ship, but they also got away with their murderous crime and, for the past 53 years, they have been handsomely rewarded for their crime.

For Israel, crime pays abundantly.

While each of the aforementioned tragedies is remembered as barbarically heinous crime/s against the United States, the June 8, 1967 “Assault on the USS Liberty,” an unarmed United States Navy ship moored in international waters in the Eastern Mediterranean (in close proximity to Egypt), has to be the most egregiously shameful act of political expediency and reprehensible cowardice committed by President Lyndon Johnson, the Pentagon, and the United States Congress.

In 1982 I had the privilege of attending a standing-room only presentation by James Ennes. For almost two hours the hushed audience listened to the decorated Lt. Commander James Ennes’ chilling personal account of the dastardly repetitive attacks perpetrated by Israel, the US’s so-called “only dependable ally in the Middle East.” Even though the ship displayed a large American flag, the iterated strafing and bombing (missiles, torpedoes, large caliber machine guns) by the Israeli Air force and torpedo boats incapacitated (but did not sink) the ship.

When it was all said and done over two hours later, 34 American sailors were killed and 174 wounded, many severely burned from the napalm explosives provided by the United States.

Experts agree that Israel’s deliberate attack had two motives: 1. The Israelis were worried that the American spy ship would discover their killing of hundreds of Egyptian prisoners of war in the Sinai. 2. They were also worried about the Johnson Administration’s discovering their plans to start a new front on the Golan Heights.

When Israel commits murderous acts and in typical Israeli fashion, their hasbara machine goes into overdrive; they initially hoped to pin the blame on Egypt. Caught in the bloody act by US intelligence, what followed was/is a national betrayal never witnessed on this scale.

Admiral McCain, John McCain’s father, ordered two U.S. jet fighters dispatched (to stop Israel’s carnage) from an American aircraft carrier in the waters of the Western Mediterranean to return to base – thus leaving the USS Liberty and her crew at the mercy

of bloodthirsty Israeli pilots and sailors. Like father like son, till the end of his life John McCain remained an ardent supporter of Israel. You'd think that having spent years in a Hanoi prison he'd had empathy for his fellow servicemen.

Subsequent to this brazen in-your-eye assault, the U.S. Navy dispatched all the surviving Liberty sailors to various ships and military bases and ordered them "to keep their mouths shut."

As recently as last year USS Liberty survivors' request for permission to participate in and to be represented (booth to tell their story and garner support for their hushed story) at the Veterans of Foreign Wars' annual convention in the nation's capital was shamefully nixed by the Pentagon and political hacks of every stripe and political affiliation.

A nation that selectively and dishonorably turns it back on its servicemen and servicewomen (every president since Lyndon Johnson, pentagon brass, and thousands of Congressional jackasses bought with AIPAC money) is a nation that has lost its soul.

During the Q & A session Lt. Commander James Ennes decried the United States Government's duplicitous and cowardly inaction (at every level) and the sweeping of this horrific assault under the rug. He was equally incensed by the fact that his book kept disappearing from university and public library shelves, including metropolitan bookstores – coast to coast. Ennes's detailed narrative of the malevolent napalm fiery strafing and large caliber bullets (over 800), the bloody carnage, the painful cries of dying and wounded sailors, and the United States Government's shameful cover up left his audience shocked, dismayed, angry, and, like the young man at the end of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Ennis left his audience "a sadder and wiser man [audience]."

In lines 139-142 Coleridge paints a perennially powerful image of the dead Albatross (killed by the Mariner). Coleridge's dead Albatross symbolizes human frailty and man's evil nature. "Ah! well a-day! / what evil looks / Had I from old and young! / Instead of the cross, the Albatross / About my neck was hung." To the Israelis, Coleridge's words (line 101) ring so true: "Twas right, said they, such birds [ship] to slay."

Since June 8, 1967 American taxpayers have shelled out billions upon billions of dollars to Israel compliments of Democrat and Republican politicians. To curry favor from Jewish donors and voters for this election cycle, last week this same bipartisan assortment

of clowns whored their principles by rewarding Israel with yet another 38 billion dollars' no-strings-attached gift. This, even as dire economic conditions loom heavy on the horizon.

Until and unless the 34 dead American sailors, the 174 wounded American wounded sailors, and the many who have died since that 1967 infamous day are recognized for their valor and sacrifice, and until their grievances are redressed, the Albatross of Shame will hang heavy over all the cowardly characters who wave the American flag and prostitute their principles; this includes the media, starting with Israel's mouthpiece, The New York Times, and coconspirators FOXNEWS, CNN, MSNBC and other tribal wannabe news outlets.

Lt. Commander James Ennes' autographed book, *The Assault on the Liberty* (Random House, 1980), is one of the most prized books that grace my book shelf. I urge the readers to acquire this book, to read it, and to gift it to others.

Denied a memorial to honor them and to commemorate their tragedy and "forbidden under oath to tell their story to the American people," the survivors have established an online site that can be reached by googling "USS Liberty Memorial." Additional information is available in the James M. Ennes Manuscript Collection, a 14.8 linear foot (37 manuscript boxes) at the Hoover institution, and Allison Weir's outstanding IFAmericansKnew Blog.

Yes, the Albatross of Shame hangs shamefully over the NSA (National Security Agency) and every single American Governmental agency (involved in the cover up) and their staff for keeping a tight lid on the findings.

And wouldn't it be an homage to valor and justice if Steven Spielberg produces a documentary or movie to inform the world about this shamefully brazen act of terror? Even if he dared go against tribal rules by producing such an overdue recording of history, not a single outlet would have the moral fortitude to air it.

Spielberg would be accused of being a self-hating Jew, and the spurious charge of Anti-Semitism, the sword and shield Israel employs to silence its critics, would thunder from the White House and through the halls of Congress.

This is the Albatross of Shame that will forever hang on the collective conscience of an America where truth and justice are disposed into the trash bin of amnesiac memory.

All the officers and sailors of the USS Liberty and their families deserve to have their story told.

It is apt that I close with the following succinct summary of the June 8, 1967 malevolently criminal assault on the USS Liberty by James Ennes's book The Assault on the USS Liberty:

In June, 1967, jet aircraft and motor torpedo boats of Israel brutally assaulted an American naval vessel, USS Liberty, in international waters off the Sinai Peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea. The attack was preceded by more than six hours of intense low-level surveillance by Israeli photo-reconnaissance aircraft, which buzzed the intelligence ship thirteen times, sometimes flying as low as 200 feet directly overhead. The reconnaissance pilots were heard by intercept operators in Germany and by American airborne intercept operators reporting to their headquarters that they could see an American flag and men sunbathing on deck.

The carefully orchestrated assault that followed was initiated by high-performance jet aircraft, was followed up by slower and more maneuverable jets carrying napalm, and was finally turned over to lethal torpedo boats which fired five torpedoes. Four missed. The one torpedo that hit the ship blasted a forty-foot hole in the ship's side.

The attack lasted more than two hours — killing 34 Americans and wounding 174 others — and inflicted 821 rocket and machine-gun holes. And when the Liberty stubbornly remained afloat despite her damage, Israeli forces machine-gunned her life rafts and sent troop-carrying helicopters in to finish the job. US Air Force intercept operators heard Israeli jets being vectored to “the American ship” which they were ordered to sink quickly. Those who have seen these transcripts insist that they leave no doubt that the Israelis knew they were attacking an American ship.

Before USS Liberty arrived in the area, U.S. Sixth Fleet Commander Admiral William Martin promised to provide air support within ten minutes if an emergency arose. Yet when the ship did come under attack, the White House blocked any air rescue for more than 90 minutes. Officers on the bridge of the aircraft carrier Saratoga heard Liberty's radio operators calling for help while bombs burst in the background, but were forbidden to help. When Navy jet aircraft were finally authorized to come to the ship's aid, the Israeli government suddenly ended the attack and withdrew, claiming that they had mistaken the ship for an Egyptian horse transport named El Quseir. Only then did the identity of the assailants become known.

Details of the attack were hushed up in both countries. Israel claimed that her forces mistook USS Liberty for an Egyptian ship, and our government publicly accepted that excuse despite evidence to the contrary. Meanwhile, in top secret diplomatic mail, US Secretary of State Dean Rusk accused the Israelis of demonstrating “blatant disregard for human life” and said that the attack was no accident. Then our government downplayed the intensity of the surveillance and the severity of the attack and imposed a news blackout to keep the official story under control. The official version is that the Liberty was reconnoitered only three times and then only from great distance. The American people were told that the air attack lasted only five minutes and that it was followed by a single torpedo and an immediate apology and offer of assistance. To honor the memory of all the deceased and the service of the surviving USS Liberty ship, please observe two minutes of silence.

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