

UNITED STATES FLEET  
 HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
 NAVY DEPARTMENT  
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



21 September 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL MC CANN:

Subject: Recommendation for Reassessment of Attacks.

1. Commander Knowles has submitted the attached list of attacks for reassessment. Reassessment is indicated by information contained in the German records.
2. In each case the new plotting room opinion is given, followed by a short summary of the incident, and the tactical analysis officer's opinion. In each case, a thorough search of the records and a review of all possible attacks narrows the field down to the one considered.
3. Since Captain Moore is being detached on 1 October, it is recommended that assessment of these cases be expedited so that if it becomes necessary, a meeting can be called prior to his detachment.

Very respectfully,

*R. D. Shepard*  
 R. D. SHEPARD,  
 F-4020.

Incident No.  
 1528  
 ✓ 3154 } There are 4 votes  
 { 3068 } in agreement on each  
 { 3002 } of them.

— 2403 — This incident is equally divided and a meeting is still needed for it.

PLOTTING ROOM OPINION:

Findings: There were two U-boats operating in the Gibraltar Area during February 1945:

- 1) U-300 who arrived in Gibraltar area about 15 February. She torpedoed "Regent Lion" and "Michael J. Stone" in Convoy UGS-72 in Gibraltar Strait on 17 February, was damaged extensively on 19 February in same area and was sunk by HMS Recruit & Company on 22 February in 36-29N 08-20W.
- 2) U-869 who was estimated to have arrived in Gibraltar area about 1 February. She made no reports in operating area and was presumed lost by BDU (Commander U-boats) on 20 February.

Comment: Since U-869 departed Kristiansand South on 8 December 1944, she had been at sea 75 days on 20 February and could have remained in her operational area until at least 1 March. B.D.U. apparently chose 20 February for her loss without any other basis than the fact that U-869 made no reports while in her operational area and the date therefore would have to be an arbitrary one.

It is noted that there were no attacks made on shipping in the Gibraltar Area while U-869 was there, other than the aforementioned attacks by U-300 on 17 February.

There were several attacks during February which could have resulted in the loss of U-869, namely:

- 1) USS Atherton attack at 1651Z/18 February,
- 2) USS O'Toole attack at 0120Z/26 February,
- 3) USS Fowler and F.S. L'Indiscret attacks at 0648 and 1500Z/28 February.

Of these attacks, (3) above appears the most promising, particularly the resulting debris where depth of water was 1265 fathoms.

Recommendation:

- 1) Reassess (3) above from G to B - Probably sunk.
- 2) In event none of the above attacks is acceptable to the Committee, it follows that loss of U-869 must be attributed to "Cause Unknown".

SUMMARY:

All of the attacks made in the above area during the critical dates were reviewed; the attacks made by FOWLER and F.S. L'INDISCRET appear to be the most promising. FOWLER established sonar contact at 2900 yards. A pattern of magnetic depth charges was dropped and

two explosions occurred 12 and 20 seconds later, followed by 3 or 5 explosions 92 to 128 seconds after the dropping of the first charge. 15 minutes later debris was seen rising to the surface at the scene of the attack. Another pattern of magnetic depth charges was dropped in the middle of the debris, which covered an area of approximately 250 yards. Two explosions occurred 100 and 120 seconds after dropping of the first charge, with no further evidence of damage. The debris reported appeared to consist of lumps and balls of heavy oil sludge. No samples were recovered. Depth of water was 1265 fathoms. 8 hours and 15 minutes later the F. S. L'INDISCRET attacked a sonar contact in the same area, which "caused a large black object to break surface and immediately sink." The object was unidentified and no debris was sighted. No action report was received from L'INDISCRET, the information on her attack being obtained from an intercepted despatch. Contact was not regained.

TACTICAL ANALYSIS OFFICER'S OPINION:

It is recommended that Incidents 7850, FOWLER, and 8988, L'INDISCRET, be raised from G to B - probably sunk, since it is not possible to differentiate between the relative effectiveness of the two attacks.

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Incident No. 704      USCG NIKE      1535Z/22/5/42      27-11N 79-56W

PLOTTING ROOM OPINION:

Findings: German records show no U-boat in area at this time.

Recommendations: Lower assessment from B to I - non sub.

SUMMARY:

NIKE established sonar contact and attacked with six depth charges. Contact was regained and two more attacks were made. Contact was thereafter maintained on a bottomed stationary target for 13 hours. Depth of water was 100 fathoms.

TACTICAL ANALYSIS OFFICER'S OPINION:

It is recommended that the assessment be lowered from B to I - non sub.

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Incident No. 882      USCG NORTHLAND      0931Z/18/6/42      65-05N 30-01W

PLOTTING ROOM OPINION:

Findings: German records show no U-boat in area at this time.

Recommendations: Lower assessment from B to I - non sub.

SUMMARY:

NORTHLAND established sonar contact at a range of 2300 yards. Propeller sounds were heard and five depth charges were dropped which