

CRIPPLED LIBERTY ON WAY TO MALTA

U.S. Warship Attacked by Israelis to Be Repaired

12 Jun 67

By NEIL SHEEHAN

Special to The New York Times

ABOARD U.S.S. AMERICA,
in the Eastern Mediterranean,
June 11—The Navy electronics
ship Liberty, crippled by an ac-
cidental attack by Israeli tor-
pedo boats and jet fighters in
the Mediterranean off the Sinai
coast Thursday, was on her way
to Malta today, where she will
go into dry dock, a Navy
spokesman said.

At Malta, the bodies of 22
men still trapped in flooded
compartments below the second
deck, where an Israeli torpedo
hit, will be recovered and sent
to the United States for burial.
The bodies of nine other men
have been taken from the ship
and were flown yesterday from
this carrier to Athens for the
trip home.

Seventy-five of the Liberty's
15 officers and 275 men were
wounded during the attack. Of
these, 59 hospital cases were
brought to the carrier and the
accompanying cruiser, Little
Rock, the flagship of Vice Adm.
William I. Martin, the Sixth
Fleet commander.

Three of the most serious
cases, with head and eye
wounds, were flown from the
carrier to a military hospital
in West Germany. The less
seriously wounded men have
stayed aboard the Liberty.

The spokesman said the Lib-
erty was expected to arrive in
Valletta Harbor in Malta Tues-
day morning. The Liberty was
proceeding toward Malta, in the
central Mediterranean, this
morning at a speed of about
10 knots and at last report was
southwest of Crete.

List Is Partly Corrected

Her eight-degree list to the
starboard has been reduced
three to four degrees by emer-
gency repairs.

The Liberty is being accom-
panied by the destroyer Davis
and the tug Papago. Comdr.
William L. McGonagle of Lake-
wood, Calif., the captain of the
Liberty, has remained with his
ship despite a leg wound.

Although Navy officials have
said the ship was in position 15
miles offshore to relay commu-
nications for the evacuation of
American civilians from the
Middle East, it is believed she
was performing an intelligence
role and monitoring Egyptian
and Israeli communications.

The spokesman said that
after the bodies have been re-
covered from the Liberty at
Malta, an extensive technical
investigation of the damage
would be conducted and repairs
would be made as quickly as
possible.