

DATE: 11-14-2017

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DATE: 11-14-2017

FD-302 (Rev. 4-15-64)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/14/681

Chief LUTHER BATSON, United States Coast Guard, Tampa was furnished the following described evidence which had been recovered by the United States Coast Guard in the immediate explosion area aboard the Japanese freighter the "Asaka Maru", during the night hours of May 30, 1968:

- (1) One metal pipe approximately three feet in length.
- (2) Two pieces of related shell plating bearing substance which appeared to be black powder (this metal was shell plating fragments which were severed from shell plating in the immediate area of the explosion).

The foregoing evidence was released to Chief BATSON at approximately 8:45 a.m. on May 31, 1968.

On 5/31/68 Tampa, Florida File# TP 45-143
 by SA HOWARD H. NEUBERT:bap Date dictated 6/10/68

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57A-10028

DATE: 11-14-2017
FD-302 (Rev. 4-15-64)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/14/681

Commander ROGER MADSON, United States Coast Guard, Captain of the Port, Tampa, Florida advised that it was his opinion that the explosion aboard the Japanese freighter, "Asaka Maru", moored at Port Sutton, Tampa, Florida which explosion occurred at approximately 9:23 p.m. on the night of May 30, 1968 should be investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. His opinion is based on the fact that it appears that the explosion occurred as a result of someone placing a bomb in the rudder post area of this vessel. The act is a criminal act, further that his agency is not equipped to conduct a criminal investigation as such.

Commander MADSON was informed that the facts of this matter would be immediately discussed with the United States Attorney, Tampa for his opinion as to the section of the Federal Statute under which this particular violation would fall.

Shortly thereafter on this same date, May 31, 1968, Commander MADSON was informed that Assistant United States Attorney ROBERT H. MACKENZIE at Tampa, Florida had advised that the facts as known to date in regard to the explosion of the "Asaka Maru" would be covered under section 2275, Title 18, United States Code with regard to Crime on the High Seas - Firing Or Tampering With Vessel. Commander MADSON was further advised that the FBI would immediately undertake the investigation in this matter.

On 5/31/68 Tampa, Florida File # TP 45-143
by SA HOWARD H. NEUBERT:bap Date dictated 6/10/68

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514-1028

DATE 11-14-2017
FD-302 (Rev. 4-15-64)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/13/681

On May 31, 1968, W. K. ABERNATHY, Lieutenant, United States Coast Guard turned over to SA JOHN E. BUTENSCHOEN the following pieces of evidence that had been gathered at the scene of an explosion that occurred on May 31, 1968 at Port Sutton, Florida aboard the Japanese freighter "Asaka Maru". The following items are herein described:

Bits of hemplike material.

Small amount granulated substance.

One iron bar approximately 6".

One piece of hemp 4".

Three pieces of wire approximately 12".

One rocklike piece of apparent insulation.

Five pieces of related metal substance.

On May 31, 1968, SA JOHN E. BUTENSCHOEN had been in receipt of a pipe approximately three feet in length that had been in possession of Commander ROGER MADSON, U. S. Coast Guard, Captain of Port, Tampa, Florida. Commander MADSON advised that this pipe had been part of the evidence obtained at the scene of the explosion as above described.

On 6/1/68 at Tampa, Florida File # TP 45-143

by SA JOHN E. BUTENSCHOEN:bap Date dictated 6/7/68

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51A-10028

DATE 11-14-2017

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/14/68

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Lieutenant ROBERT GANECEK, United States Coast Guard, Tampa, Florida advised that when he initially interviewed Captain S. TANINO of the Japanese freighter "Asaka Maru", it was the belief of the Captain that the explosion aboard his vessel was caused by a mine or some external force which blew into the ship while moored at the pier of Port Sutton, Tampa, Florida on the night of May 30, 1968.

Commander GANECEK informed that he had difficulty in the course of his interview with the Captain in view of the language barrier and since the Captain spoke very little English.

Commander GANECEK said it was his opinion initially that the bomb caused the explosion placed there from within the vessel as opposed from being placed into the rudder post area from the outside. He said he based this opinion initially on the fact that it had been determined that the 17 or 18 nuts securing the hatch cover in the rudder post area appeared to have been removed recently as they were loosened in the presence of two of his officers, with very little effort. He said normally removal of this hatch would require quite a bit of exertion and one would normally have to have a hammer and wrench to loosen the nuts.

He stated, however, that the possibility exists that the bomb could have been placed through the aperture around the rudder post as the aperture area on Japanese vessels around the rudder post is from anywhere from three to four inches. Commander GANECEK said it was his opinion that on American vessels when the rudder post plating or rudder post splash plating is secured around the rudder post, the aperture around the rudder post is merely, approximately one half inch to one inch, and accordingly it would appear to be impossible for someone to place a bomb outside the vessel.

On 6/1/68 at Tampa, Florida File# TP 45-143

by SA HOWARD H. NEUBERT:bap Date dictated 6/10/68

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5/14-1972

DATE 11-14-2017

FD-302 (Rev. 4-15-64)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/14/681

On June 4, 1968, Ensign W. R. ABERNATHY, United States Coast Guard, Tampa, Florida advised that he in company with Lieutenant RUSSEL JUHL, Chief LUTHER BATSON, ROBERT LOCKLIN, BM2 and CARL RAMSDILL, EM3, all United States Coast Guard, had arrived aboard the Japanese freighter "Asaka Maru" shortly after the explosion on the night of May 30, 1968. He said during his examination at the outset, it appeared that the bomb might have been placed in the rudder section of the vessel from within the vessel as opposed to being attached from the outside of the vessel. He said he based this belief initially on the fact that he and Chief BATSON were present when the Japanese crewman, believed to be the engineer, removed a hatch cover containing approximately 17 or 18 nuts which cover was in the immediate vicinity of the explosion area. He said it was observed that the hatch cover was removed with very little exertion required which indicated to him that the nuts on this hatch cover had been recently removed. He said normally one would have to use a wrench and a hammer to loosen the nuts on this particular hatch cover inasmuch as one would not normally have occasion to enter this particular area more than twice a year.

On June 3, 1968, ABERNATHY advised that he had just received a call at approximately 11:15 a.m. on this date from Lieutenant (J. G.) MILLER, United States Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Galveston, Texas who informed his office that the Japanese freighter "Mikagegan Maru" moored at Galveston, Texas had suffered an explosion at approximately 3:50 p.m. on Saturday, June 1, 1968, which explosion was similar to that suffered by the "Asaka Maru" in Tampa on the night of May 30, 1968. He informed the explosion was in the rudder post area, however, damages were not as severe as those occurred by the "Asaka Maru".

On 6/30/68 at Tampa, Florida File # TP 45-143
 by SA HOWARD E. NEU AT:bap Date dictated 6/10/68

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