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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM:

NO.

DATE

13 Aug. '53

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FWD'D		
1.	CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM RELEASE AS SANITIZED				PBFORTUNE FILE
2.					
3.	2003				
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
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EYES ONLY

13 August 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

VIA : Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : MISFORTUNE. Debriefing of LAURENCE SILLENCE and  
KENNETH T. OFFEN re LCFANGLED Recon #2.

1. LAURENCE SILLENCE and KENNETH T. OFFEN, Captain and Chief Engineer, respectively, of the LCFANGLED during Recon #2, were debriefed by Chief, Western Hemisphere Division and designated WH personnel on 6, 10 and 11 August 1953. Essential facts presented verbally and by written report are summarized as follows:

a. Prior to sailing, all repair work previously planned was completed and necessary stores and equipment put aboard.

b. The LCFANGLED sailed from [ ] at 0648 on 25 July 1953. At the time of sailing seven of the eight engines were in operation and an average speed of 5.88 knots was made on the first day's run. During the morning one engine failed as a result of a broken spline shaft and both bilge pumps became inoperative through shaft failure. Auxiliary gasoline pumps were used thereafter.

c. On 26 July a second engine gave out due to overheating. This reduced the average speed to 4.87 knots. A strong NE wind and sea set in and for the following six days seasickness was prevalent.

d. On 27 July Identity 1 was reached at 1410. A party was put ashore and a thorough reconnaissance completed by 1800. Motion pictures and stills are available at headquarters. After completing engine maintenance, anchor was weighed at 2200 and a course set for Identity 2.

e. On 28 July it became apparent that engine failures and consequent loss of power had seriously affected the LCFANGLED's navigability. The shallow draught vessel riding high in the water was markedly affected by driving wind and sea. Morning sun sights revealed that the ship had been driven well to the west and north of her desired position. Consequently, course was altered toward Identity 2, but at 1630 a third engine went out as a result of clutch failure. Since the weather was growing still heavier, it was decided to head for Identity 3, approximately 65 miles to the north, in the hope of completing that

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reconnaissance, effecting repairs in the lee of the island, and then reconnoitering Identity 2 southbound.

f. On 29 July a fourth engine developed excessive vibration and was kept on a standby basis. The effort to reach Identity 3 was continued until 1630 but the vessel no longer had power to beat to eastward against the weather. When this had been definitely proven, a course was set to the southward in the hope of reaching Identity 2 before the ship became completely unmanageable.

g. By the morning of 30 July the LCFANGLED had made 30 miles to the southerly and had been blown 40 miles to the westerly. Winds were at gale force and waves were up to 15 feet high. At 1900 a fifth engine went out and the vessel was no longer under control. Since a strong possibility existed of being blown onto a reef or the coast of Nicaragua, permission was requested by radio to scuttle and have the crew rescued by PBM seaplane. Darkness and heavy seas precluded the use of a PBM and other ships in the area were alerted.

h. On 31 July at 0930 the U.S. Navy destroyer Pervis, DD 709, came alongside and the executive officer boarded the LCFANGLED. In answer to his questions regarding identity he was referred to Coco Solo Naval Base. The DD 709 was replaced on the scene by the DD 706, Gainard. Engineers from the Gainard verified that repairs to the LCFANGLED could not be made at sea and at 1630 took her in tow. However, the tow line had been made fast to the LCFANGLED's anchor chain and this broke. It was then decided to scuttle and transfer the crew to the Gainard but, when an effort was made to lower the lifeboat, the davit broke away and fell into the sea. Since the boat was floating free, had some personal luggage aboard, and could not be recovered, it was sunk by rifle fire as a security measure. Orders were now received not to scuttle. The Gainard left at 1915 but returned on Navy orders at 2245.

i. On 1 August the auxiliary pumps broke down and a bucket brigade was necessarily organized. By 1340 the Gainard had succeeded in getting a line aboard and took the LCFANGLED in tow. Since the engines were now vibrating dangerously, increasing leakage, and threatening to throw a connecting rod, they were shut down. Under tow by the DD 706 the LCFANGLED proceeded toward [ ] .

j. On 2 August the salvage tug Recovery, ARS 43, took over the tow.

k. On 3 August the LCFANGLED was brought in and docked at 2320.

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1. Following return to port there was NO interrogation by local or Naval authorities.
2. KENNETH T. OFFEN feels that there is virtually no possibility that sabotage caused the breakdown of the LCFANGLER.
3. Both SILENCE and OFFEN consider crew performance and esprit to have been excellent despite adverse circumstances.
4. SILENCE and OFFEN agree that in point of overall condition the LCFANGLER is too far gone to be economically repairable.

WH/JCK/pw  
Distributions:  
Orig. & 2 - Addressee  
cc: CWH

J. C. KING  
CWH

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IDENTITIES

Identity 1

[ ]

Identity 2

[ ]

Identity 3

[ ]

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