

T561

RS 332

SS283/A14-5  
Serial #1

U. S. S. TINOSA (SS 283)  
Care of Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

DECLASSIFIED  
~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED - OPNAV INST 5500.30  
BY: H. Kien DATE: 4 Oct 60

ComSubPac Flt #S-5600RS # 382 PTL D.S. JACKET # 175

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: Commander Task Group SEVENTY-ONE POINT ONE.  
Subject: Special Mission.  
Reference: (a) Annex "Dog" to CTG 71-1 OPORD #5-44.

1. In accordance with reference (a) this vessel, on the night of 9 January 1944, took aboard four (4) rubber dinghies and five thousand (5,000) lbs of supplies for Python Two. The members and their personal gear came aboard prior to noon of the tenth, the Tinosa getting underway at 1310 the same day.

2. Prior to the above, I was informed of inadequate boat facilities on a previous mission and had the opportunity to discuss this phase with the officers in charge of Python Two. They informed me they were cognizant of the prior difficulties and had thoroughly checked their present equipment and found it more than adequate; in fact, twice as much as they needed as far as boat capacity was concerned.

3. A special station bill was made up to facilitate loading and launching of this party and its equipment. Each person in this party was then instructed in his duties. After fueling at Exmouth a full dress rehearsal was held in which the boats were inflated, loaded with supplies, equipment, and personnel, and launched by flooding down. The time and arrangements for loading and launching were found satisfactory. However, the four boats, though undoubtedly having sufficient weight capacity, were definitely inadequate as to volume and the Tinosa's boat was piled high with the remaining stores.

4. We arrived off Labian Point prior to dawn on 20 January 1944, and submerged, no signals having been seen as yet. The day signal was spotted shortly after sunrise and submerged reconnaissance of the coast for 7 to 8 miles either side of this spot was made during the day. We turned in toward the beach at 1645, rigged in the log and sound heads, and at 1745 imperceptibly grounded about 600 yards off the beach. Shortly after this one of the men on shore spotted our periscope, waved frantically, called the others from the bush and strutted up and down the small sandy beach waving a large American Flag. (What if we had been a Jap?). We remained

- 1 -

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submerged in this position until dusk about a half hour later, surfaced, exchanged recognition signals, told them to come out, and got all equipment topside and loaded as previously planned. However, our plans were changed immediately upon the arrival of the shore party in two native boats which were large enough to take all the gear, so the small rubber boats were unloaded and not used. It was a black night and the leader of the party, Major Chester, assured us of our safety, so we took all hands aboard for dinner. They ate like wolves. The officers and crew pitched in and gave them a plentiful supply of clothing and cigarettes, for which they were extremely grateful. At 2020 they were headed for the beach, the entire procedure having taken just two hours. Ten minutes later the Tinosa was on its way, it's special mission successfully completed.

D.F. WEISS.

PATROL NUMBER 5  
RETURN FROM PARADISE

TINOSA spent the summer Christmas season in Fremantle / Perth and the crew was able to enjoy the best liberty they had had since leaving stateside. Compared to the island stops made between previous patrols, Australia was indeed a paradise. Enough sea stories were accumulated there to entertain shipmates for at least the next patrol run.

During the upkeep, the problems with the Bendix log and the torpedo tube outer doors were given some attention, and the ship was decked out in a new coat of camouflage. On January 10, 1944, she was ready for sea, and at 1310 took departure Fremantle for Exmouth Gulf under the command of new skipper, Donald F. Weiss. The weapon load consisted entirely of Mk XIV torpedoes. (A happy innovation in the conduct of war was a load of Swan Lager in the chill box.)

In addition to the ships company, TINOSA carried a detail a six Australian Intelligence Force men under the command of Major W.J. Jinkins. The first order of business on this patrol was to land these men at Labian Point on northeast Borneo. There they were to engage in the perilous occupation of coast watchers. They would operate under the nose of the enemy, observing enemy ship movements, and radioing the

ENCOUNTER:

CHAPTER: 5

information to their headquarters.

TINOSA arrived at Exmouth Gulf at 0830 on 13 January, took on fuel, and set about conducting a training exercise for landing the Aussies. The exercise consisted of bringing three life rafts topside through the after torpedo room hatch, inflating them, and loading them with 5000 pounds of equipment and supplies. Then, with two men in each raft, the plan was to flood down and float the party off. When all was ready, the forward and after group vents were cycled and TINOSA settled in the water. The vents were recycled with no apparent result. The vents were cycled again and suddenly TINOSA went down fast -- by the stern. Bow bouyancy tank vent had not been opened! Water was pouring through the conning tower hatch before an emergency blow could get the boat back to the surface. The rafts floated off just fine though. They were recovered and piped below, and, in spite of the limited success of the exercise, TINOSA confidently sailed off for Borneo.

Progress was slowed by many contacts with patrolling aircraft which compelled TINOSA to submerge frequently. During the night of the 16th, she transitted Lombok Strait and entered the Flores Sea.

On the 17th at 1648, an object was sighted about three miles dead ahead. TINOSA started to develop an attack but the target suddenly disappeared. It was thought to have been an enemy submarine which had submerged. The next day there were sailing craft in sight all day. At 1628 TINOSA pulled up alongside a prau

which contained a crew of three who were interrogated in Malayan by one of the Aussies. No useful information was forthcoming, and, inasmuch as there were no Japanese on board, TINOSA proceeded on her way.

At 1730 a ship was sighted on the port bow at a range of ten miles. By 1808 this was identified as a destroyer, which, ten minutes later, spotted TINOSA and turned towards her. Weiss bent on two more main engines and was able to evade her in the gathering darkness.

TINOSA continued her transit of Makassar Strait toward the rendezvous point for landing the passengers. She arrived there on 20 January, submerged at 0542, and began a cautious approach to the beach. The shore party was to display a white sheet spread between two trees to indicate that it was all clear and to fix the exact site to land. The signal was sighted early in the afternoon and TINOSA headed for it. Shortly afterward it was determined that the sub was grounded and Weiss decided to sit there until dark. At 1820 she surfaced and closed the shore.

Unexpectedly, a prau came to meet TINOSA and moored alongside to take the landing party off. The occupants came aboard where they were fed and given some of the necessities of life, of which they had obviously been deprived for a long time. The makeup of this group consisted of a U.S. Army Captain, a Cavite Navy Yard worker, and two Philippine Scouts, all of whom had escaped from Bataan, and an Englishman who was living on Borneo when the war broke

out. They had been operating as coast watchers since the beginning of hostilities, in constant danger of capture. Their emaciated appearance bespoke the privation they had undergone and of the hard life in the tropical jungle. A submariner's lot did not seem so bad. At 2030 they left TINOSA with the Aussies and their gear.

The Australians had been very eager for TINOSA to sink an enemy ship while they were aboard, and they (especially Major Jenkins) spent considerable time on the bridge peering through binoculars. They were, of course, disappointed in this; however, the same party was taken off Borneo by HARDER on 8 June and on 9 June, HARDER sank the destroyer TANIKAZE in the Celebes Sea. Good on ya Yank!

TINOSA headed for Balabac Strait which was between the northern tip of Borneo and Palawan Island. She transitted the strait on the night of the 21st, and on the 22nd she was patrolling on the surface fifty miles to the west.

At 1439 smoke was sighted to the southwest at an estimated range of fifteen miles, and TINOSA moved into position for an attack. At 1508 she submerged and manned battle stations. At 1558 the convoy was identified as four ships arranged in two columns with one destroyer leading them. The convoy zigged as TINOSA closed to firing position, and it was necessary to maneuver for a stern shot. The two leading ships were overlapping, and Weiss decided to get them both with one salvo.

At 1634 TINOSA fired three stern tubes.