

Chapter 1 : Charles B. McVay III - Wikipedia

Correspondence, speech, writings, newspaper clippings, printed matter, photographs, and other papers relating chiefly to McVay's duties as commander-in-chief of the U.S. Navy Asiatic Fleet in and

Of all captains in the history of the United States Navy , he is the only one to have been subjected to court-martial for losing a ship sunk by an act of war, despite the fact that he was on a top secret mission maintaining radio silence the testimony of the Japanese commander who sank his ship also seemed to exonerate McVay. Following years of efforts by some survivors and others to clear his name, McVay was posthumously exonerated by the th United States Congress and President Bill Clinton on October 30, McVay returned the ship safely to Mare Island in California for repairs. Sinking of Indianapolis Later that year, Indianapolis received orders to carry parts and nuclear material to Tinian to be used in the atomic bombs which were soon to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After delivering his top secret cargo, the ship was en route to report for further duty off Okinawa. Early in the morning of July 30, , she was attacked by the Japanese submarine I under Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto. Hashimoto launched six torpedoes and hit Indianapolis twice, the first removing over forty feet of her bow, the second hitting the starboard side at frame forty below the bridge. Indianapolis immediately took a fifteen degree list, capsized and sank within 12 minutes. Of the crew of 1, men, men died. Delayed rescue About of the 1, men on board died in the initial attack. The rest of the crew, men, were left floating in the water without lifeboats until the rescue was completed four days hours later. Because of Navy protocol regarding secret missions, the ship was not reported "overdue" and the rescue came only after survivors were spotted by pilot Lieutenant Wilber Chuck Gwinn and co-pilot Lieutenant Warren Colwell on a routine patrol flight. Most of the casualties of the survivors in the water were due to injuries sustained aboard the ship, dehydration, exhaustion, drinking salt water and shark attacks [2] The seas had been moderate, but visibility was not good. Indianapolis had been steaming at When the ship did not reach Leyte on the 31st, as scheduled, no report was made that she was overdue. This omission was officially recorded later as "due to a misunderstanding of the Movement Report System ". He repeatedly asked the Navy why it took four days to rescue his men but never received an answer. The Navy long claimed that SOS messages were never received because the ship was operating under a policy of radio silence; declassified records show that three SOS messages were received separately, but none were acted upon because one commander was drunk, another thought it was a Japanese ruse, while the third had given orders not to be disturbed. McVay was charged with failing to zigzag and failure to order abandon ship in a timely manner. He was convicted on the former. Prior knowledge of Japanese submarines being identified in the area was withheld from the court and from McVay, prior to sailing, as well. American submarine experts testified that "zigzagging" was a technique of negligible value in eluding enemy submarines. Hashimoto also testified to this effect. For instance, McVay requested a destroyer escort for the Indianapolis,[8] but his request was denied because the priority for destroyers at the time was escorting transports to Okinawa and picking up downed pilots in B raids on Japan. On 24 July , just six days prior to the sinking of the Indianapolis, the destroyer Underhill had been attacked and sunk in the area by Japanese submarines. Yet McVay was never informed of this event, and several others, in part due to issues of classified intelligence. Although about ships of the U. Navy were lost in combat in World War II ,[9] McVay was the only captain to be court-martialed for the loss of his ship. As part of a school project for the National History Day program, the young man interviewed nearly survivors of the Indianapolis sinking and reviewed documents. His testimony before the U. Congress brought national attention to the situation.

Chapter 2 : Capt Charles Butler McVay, III () - Find A Grave Memorial

Charles B. McVay III (July 30, - November 6,) was an American naval officer and the commanding officer of USS Indianapolis (CA) when it was lost in action in , resulting in a massive loss of life.

McVay returned the ship safely to Mare Island in California for repairs. Sinking of the Indianapolis Edit Later that year, Indianapolis received orders to carry parts and nuclear material to be used in the atomic bombs which were soon to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Tinian. After delivering her top secret cargo, the ship was en route to report for further duty off Okinawa. Early in the morning of July 30, , she was attacked by the Japanese submarine I under Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto. Commander Hashimoto launched six torpedoes and hit the Indianapolis twice, the first removing over forty feet of her bow, the second hitting the starboard side at frame forty below the bridge. The Indianapolis immediately took a fifteen degree list, capsized and sank within 12 minutes. Of the crew of 1, men, men died. It was the worst disaster at sea during the entire war for the US Navy. Delayed rescue Edit About of the 1, men on board died in the initial attack. The rest of the crew, more than men, were left floating in the water trying to survive without lifeboats until the rescue was completed four days hours later. Because of Navy protocol regarding secret missions, the ship was not reported "overdue" and the rescue only came after survivors were spotted by pilot Lieutenant Wilber Chuck Gwinn and co-pilot Lieutenant Warren Colwell on a routine patrol flight. It has been part of folklore that most of the casualties of the survivors in the water were due to shark attacks; however, most died from injuries sustained aboard the ship, dehydration, exhaustion, and the result of drinking salt water. The seas had been moderate, but visibility was not good. Indianapolis had been steaming at When the ship did not reach Leyte on the 31st, as scheduled, no report was made that she was overdue. This omission was officially recorded later as "due to a misunderstanding of the Movement Report System ". It was not until They were sighted by a plane on routine patrol; the pilot, LT Wilbur C. Gwinn, first spotted the oil slick and survivors in the water at about 11 a. A Catalina flying boat was directed to assist and arrived at about 3: En route, it passed over the destroyer escort Cecil J. Doyle and informed the captain of the distress call. While so engaged, they observed men being attacked by sharks. Disregarding standing orders not to land at sea, Marks landed and began taxiing to pick up the stragglers and lone swimmers who were at greatest risk of shark attack. Learning the men were the crew of the Indianapolis, he radioed the news, requesting immediate assistance. The Doyle responded she was enroute. When the fuselage of his aircraft was filled to capacity, Lt Marks had additional survivors lashed to the wings. All in all, his crew rescued 56 sailors that day, even though the wings of the PBY Catalina were so damaged that it had to be sunk. The Doyle arrived a few hours later to rescue 93 and recover 21 bodies. Other ships arrived during the night to complete the rescue; the Doyle was the last to leave on 8 August. Secretary of the Navy W. After receiving the location from the seaplane, without orders, Captain Claytor took the initiative to speed to the area to check the reports of men floating in the water. As he approached at night, he turned searchlights on the water and straight up on low clouds, lighting up the night and exposing his ship to possible attack by Japanese submarines, but rescuing almost survivors of the sunken cruiser. However, the effort was able to save only of the crew of 1, men. Controversy Edit McVay was wounded but survived and was among those rescued. He repeatedly asked the Navy why it took five days to rescue his men, and he never received an answer. The Navy long claimed that SOS messages were never received because the ship was operating under a policy of radio silence; declassified records show that three SOS messages were received separately, but none were acted upon because it was thought by one commander to be a Japanese ruse, another had given orders not to be disturbed, and a third was drunk. American submarine experts testified that "zigzagging" was a technique of negligible value in eluding enemy submarines. Hashimoto also testified to this effect. For instance, Captain McVay requested a destroyer escort for the Indianapolis, [5] but his request was denied because the priority for destroyers at the time was escorting transports to Okinawa, and picking up downed pilots in B raids on Japan. On 24 July , just six days prior to the sinking of the Indianapolis, the destroyer Underhill had been attacked and sunk in the area by Japanese submarines. Yet McVay was never informed of this event, and several others, in part due to issues of classified

intelligence. After the torpedo attack, no rescue was initiated, because the Navy did not track the Indianapolis. On 6 November , McVay committed suicide by shooting himself with his service revolver at his home in Litchfield, Connecticut, holding in his hand a toy sailor given to him by his father. As part of a school project for the National History Day program, the young man interviewed nearly survivors of the Indianapolis sinking and reviewed documents. His testimony before the US Congress brought national attention to the situation.

Chapter 3 : Charles B. McVay Jr. - Wikipedia

Charles B. McVay Jr. (September 9, - October 28,) was an admiral in the United States Navy after World War I. After the cruise of the Great White Fleet, he commanded the tender USS Yankton.

Share By Richard Hulver, Ph. She sank in less than fifteen minutes. Several hundred Sailors and Marines went down with their ship; the rest drifted at sea for four days with few or no supplies until a patrol plane found them by chance and the Navy organized a rescue. Less than a third of the 1, men aboard survived the ordeal. For the skipper, Capt. Charles McVay III, the weight and burden of command was readily visible in his words and actions following the disaster. His motivations may never be fully understood, but the emotional weight of the loss of his crew and ship likely played some role. Many families put pen to paper and thanked McVay for reaching out to them. Family members often had many questions and engaged McVay in somewhat lengthy correspondence. Neu was assurance that this member of his crew was surely gone. McVay wrestled with the question of his own survival during the ordeal and afterward. When he sat down with Navy interviewers for his post-war oral history just months after the loss of his ship he told them that thoughts of dying with his ship crossed his mind. As the ship went down he understood the humiliation that would come if he was the only officer left and his ship was gone. He also candidly spoke of survivor guilt. I hated to think of having to see their wives and a great many of them I knew quite well. I knew there was nothing I could say to them. Navy captain at sea is responsible for the safety of ship and crew. This was an absolute then as it is today. At the same time, the Navy also affords a captain a great deal of discretion in the maintenance of said safety. Captain McVay was aware of his accountability as captain and his actions following the sinking are commendable. He was pulled from his life raft onto the deck of the high speed transport Ringness APD around He remained captain of a group of survivorsâ€™9 men with 4 life rafts and a floater net. These men looked to him for leadership. He assessed and rationed the meager supplies that they had available: Upon being rescued he immediately made it known that his ship had not been zigzagging at the time of the attack. He had listened to nearly two weeks of highly publicized testimonyâ€™including that of the Japanese submarine captain who sank his shipâ€™ and now Rear Adm. He remained silent on the more serious charge of hazarding his ship through negligence by failing to order the running of a zigzag course. The silence meant that the court had found McVay guilty and that their verdict awaited approval from a higher authority. Unbeknownst to McVay, the Court had also unanimously signed a statement indicating their belief that the sentence for the conviction be remitted in its entirety. McVay would receive no official punishment, but his prospects of career advancement were at an end. He would never again be given command at sea or rise to a flag rank on active duty. He became the only U. Commander Eugene Own examines dressings of Dr. Haynes at Naval Hospital Guam. Captain McVay stands at right. Legally the verdict was sound. McVay was charged with a very technical offense that was almost impossible to disprove given the outcome of the attack on his ship. He was sunk by an enemy submarine firing from close range after maneuvering into attack position undetected for thirty minutes. He essentially stated that zigzagging would have made little difference in the outcome of his attack given the favorable conditions he faced. McVay was not tried for the loss of his ship or the large loss of life. Still, the conviction for hazarding his ship stood. The court found that as the commander of a combatant ship, he had violated standard Navy tactical doctrine. The approval of the conviction by the highest authorities at the time and the remittance of any damages against McVay set the outcome in stone. Unable to appeal the verdict through the military courts, he could also make no appeal in civilian courts because his conviction caused him no tangible losses, aside from a tarnished reputation. The Navy handled the McVay case poorly. The Court-martial took place with the recommendation of a court of inquiry that met a month after the sinking to investigate the loss. He thought that McVay had erred in judgment by not zigzagging during a time of night when visibility was good enough for an enemy to make visual contact and launch an attack. However, Nimitz felt that a letter of reprimand was sufficient punishment. Secretary of Navy Forrestal and Adm. King then Chief of Naval Operations disagreed. Theories as to why Forrestal and King moved forward with the court-martial have been posed over the years. Charles B McVay, Jr. Navy service, his leadership during

tragedy, and the weight of loss he shouldered for the remainder of his life. Captain William Toti Ret. The Veterans Crisis Line offers confidential support for active duty personnel, reservists, veterans and their families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Chapter 4 : Charles B. McVay III | Revolvry

American Captain of the cruiser Indianapolis when it was sunk by a Japanese submarine on July 30th, after delivering the first atomic bomb to the air force.

His treatment by the Navy was unforgivable and shameful. McVay returned the ship safely to Mare Island in California for repairs. On July 16, , the Indianapolis sailed from California with a top secret cargo to Hawaii for refueling, then to Tinian where it unloaded its cargo, the uranium and major components of the atomic bomb to be dropped on Hiroshima by the Enola Gay on August 6. The Indianapolis was then routed to Guam enroute to Leyte in the Philippines. It was at Guam that the seeds for the destruction of the Indianapolis were laid. Hostilities in this part of the Pacific had long since ceased. The Japanese surface fleet no longer existed as a threat, and 1, miles to the north preparations were underway for the invasion of the Japanese mainland. These conditions resulted in a relaxed state of alert on the part of those who were to route the Indianapolis across the Philippine Sea. Here is some of the evidence as indicated in "The Story": Although naval authorities at Guam knew that on July 24, four days before the Indianapolis departed for Leyte, the destroyer escort USS Underhill had been sunk by a Japanese submarine within range of his path, McVay was not told. Although a code-breaking system called ULTRA had alerted naval intelligence that a Japanese submarine the I by name which ultimately sank the Indianapolis was operating in his path, McVay was not told. Classified as top secret until the early s, this intelligence -- and the fact it was withheld from McVay before he sailed from Guam -- was not disclosed during his subsequent court-martial. Although McVay was told of "submarine sightings" along his path, none had been confirmed. Such sightings were commonplace throughout the war and were generally ignored by navy commanders unless confirmed. No Navy directives in force at that time or since recommended, much less ordered, zigzagging at night in poor visibility. At about 11pm on Sunday night, July 29, the Indianapolis traveling alone was about halfway across the Philippine Sea. There was heavy cloud cover with visibility severely limited. Captain McVay gave orders to cease zigzagging and retired to his cabin. Minutes later the ship was spotted as an indistinct blur by Japanese submarine commander Mochitura Hasimoto of the I It was coming directly toward him from the east. Shortly after midnight the ship was struck by two torpedoes and sank in about twelve minutes. When the ship failed to arrive at Leyte on Tuesday morning, a series of blunders ensued. First, there was confusion as to which area the Indianapolis was to report when it arrived. Second, there was no directive to report the non-arrival of a combatant ship. As a result, the surviving crew of the Indianapolis was left floating in shark-infested waters until 11am on Thursday, August 2, when Lt. Gwinn, the pilot of a Ventura scout-bomber, lost the weight from his navigational antenna trailing behind the plane, a loss which was to save the lives of men. While crawling back through the fuselage of his plane to repair the thrashing antenna, Gwinn happened to glance down at the sea and noticed a long oil slick. Back in the cockpit, Gwinn dropped down to investigate, spotted men floating in the sea, and radioed for help. Horrified at the sight of sharks attacking men below him, Marks landed his flying boat in the sea, and, pulling a survivor aboard, he was the first to learn of the Indianapolis disaster. Murphy, USS Indianapolis survivor Upon their rescue by different vessels, the Indianapolis survivors were scattered at various Pacific bases. Captain McVay was taken to Guam where he faced a board of inquiry ordered by Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz CINCPAC which convened on August 13, one day before the sinking of the ship was announced to the public simultaneously with the announcement that the Japanese had surrendered, thus insuring minimum press attention. Conceding that they "were starting the proceedings without having available all the necessary data," the board nonetheless recommended a general court-martial for McVay. Nimitz recommended a letter of reprimand which constituted a slap on the wrist but was far from career-ending punishment. Overriding the opposition of both Nimitz and Admiral Raymond Spruance for whom the Indianapolis had served as Fifth Fleet flagship , naval authorities in Washington, specifically Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal and Admiral Ernest King, Chief of Naval Operations, directed that court-martial proceedings be held against McVay, and the trial was scheduled to begin on December 3, , at the Washington Navy Yard. Captain McVay was notified but not told what specific charges would be brought against him. The reason was simple. The

Navy had not yet decided what to charge him with. Four days before the trial began they did decide on two charges. One, failing to issue orders to abandon ship in a timely fashion. And, two, hazarding his vessel by failing to zigzag during good visibility. Cady was selected for him. McVay was also denied a delay to develop his defense, and thus Cady, a line officer with no trial experience, had only four days to prepare his case. He was ultimately found not guilty on this count. That left the second charge of failing to zigzag. Incredibly, the Navy brought the commander of the Japanese submarine, Mochitura Hashimoto, to testify at the court-martial which was held at the Washington Navy Yard. Hashimoto implied in pretrial statements that zigzagging would not have saved the Indianapolis but was not pressed on this point during the trial itself. One prosecution witness which they wished they had never called was a veteran Navy submariner named Glynn Donaho. His answer was, "No, not as long as I could see the target. It involved the testimony of a Captain Oliver Naquin who had been in charge of the routing instructions for the Indianapolis from Guam to Leyte. The phrase was "during good visibility. This is pertinent for two reasons. First, as stated in an earlier section, no Navy directives in force at that time suggested, much less ordered, zigzagging at night with visibility limited. It is reasonable to assume from the evidence that a decision to convict McVay was made before his court-martial began. McVay was found guilty on the charge of failing to zigzag. The court sentenced him to lose numbers in his temporary rank of Captain and numbers in his permanent rank of Commander, thus ruining his Navy career. He took his own life in There is another officer, Captain William Thomas Turner of the Lusitania, whose experience was remarkably similar following the sinking of his ship off the southern coast of Ireland with the loss of more than 1, civilians and crew. It was a disaster often given as the reason for the entrance two years later of the United States into World War I. We both cherish the memories of two gallant sea captains who suffered a similar injustice, but whose reputations have been restored, albeit long after both men were dead, by the passage of time and by the disclosure of facts not revealed at their trials. Moreover, our two sites are now linked, and you can access their site and the story of Captain Turner [click here](#). We highly recommend it to you.

Chapter 5 : Charles B. McVay IV Obituary - Brookline, MA

Rear Admiral Charles Butler McVay III (July 30, - November 6,) was the Commanding Officer of the USS Indianapolis (CA) when it was lost in action in , resulting in massive loss of life.

One Question Too Many: The Trial of Captain Charles B. What ensued was a nightmare. The Indianapolis, or "Indy" as she was known, had a crew of men and was almost feet long. The huge cruiser quickly turned over on her side and sank within 15 minutes. Approximately men who survived the initial explosions either fell or jumped into the black, foot seas. After five torturous days clinging to debris and treading water above sharks clearly visible beneath them, about were rescued. Very first light, chief. The sharks come cruising. Sometimes that shark, he looks right into you. Right into your eyes. So, eleven hundred men went into the water. Three hundred sixteen men come out, the sharks took the rest, [July] the 29th, Anyway, we delivered the bomb. To this day, the court martial of Captain McVay has to rank among the most unfair trials in history. It is a lesson in not only how imperfect human systems of justice can be, but also illustrates, for lawyers today, the danger of asking what Irving Younger once described as "one question too many. The Trial Stunned by the loss of the Indianapolis, and its own inexplicable failure to rescue her survivors for almost five days,² the United States Navy quickly decided to place blame on Captain McVay. His court-martial represented the first time that any wartime Navy captain was indicted for losing a ship to enemy action. Against the recommendation of Admiral Nimitz, the Navy brought two charges against him: The Navy provided McVay with notice of the charges against him on November 29, Incredibly, the trial was to begin less than a week later, on December 3, On the first day, the judge advocate asked McVay whether he was ready to proceed. The transcript shows that McVay replied, unsurprisingly, "in the negative, stating that he did not feel that sufficient time within which to properly prepare the case for the defense had elapsed" since receiving the charges. McVay then requested, and was granted, a one-day postponement of the trial. He then pled "not guilty" to both charges. But on the issue of zigzagging, the Navy was determined to obtain a conviction. To do this, it shocked many by calling the commander of the Japanese submarine that sank the Indianapolis, Mochitsura Hashimoto. The trial transcript clearly shows the animus against the Japanese at the time, which was only six months after V-J day. If the court please, I wish to make a formal objection to the idea of calling one of the officers of the defeated enemy who, as a nation, have been proven guilty of every despicable treachery, of the most infamous cruelties, and most barbarous practices in violation of all of the laws of civilized warfare, to testify against one of our own commanding officers on a matter affecting his professional ability and judgmentâ€¦ If the proposed witness Hashimoto is to be called, I will also make legal objection on the grounds of competency, since his nation is not of Christian belief, thus affecting ability to take the oath as a witness to tell the truth. After much skirmishing over whether Hashimoto could be admitted as a witness, his examination began. Speaking through an interpreter, he preliminarily stated that he believed that "the soul exists after the death," and was "fully aware of the meaning of truth and falsehood. This was the purpose of flying him around the world to testify against McVay. Apparently having learned of pre-trial statements by Hashimoto which supported McVay, however, the prosecution did not ask him on direct examination whether zigzagging was an effective defensive measure. It did not even inquire whether the ship had been zigzagging. It passed over the topic in total silence. And, as the prosecution had feared, Hashimoto testified on cross-examination that zigzagging would have made no real difference in the method of firing the torpedoes, but only the way in which he maneuvered his submarine before firing: Was the target zigzagging at the time you sighted it? At the time of the sighting of the target, there was an indistinct blur, and I was unable to - - unable to determine whether or not it was zigzagging. Was it zigzagging later? There is no question of the fact that it made no radical changes in course. It is faintly possible that there was a minor change in course between the time of the sighting and the time of attack. Would it have made any difference to you if the target had been zigzagging on this attack? As given by interpreter Commander Bromley It would have involved no change in the method of firing the torpedoes, but some changes in the maneuvering. This was of course not the testimony the Navy wanted to hear. What Hashimoto was essentially saying was that his submarine, which was less than a mile away from

the Indianapolis, would have made no real changes to her firing method if the ship had been zigzagging, and would have sunk her regardless. At the time, Japanese torpedoes traveled 50 miles per hour. When she was struck, the Indianapolis was moving at approximately 20 miles per hour -- toward the submarine. Donaho, a highly decorated American submarine commander. In a normal setting, it should have secured an acquittal: Based on your experience as outlined above, what is your opinion of the value of zigzagging of a target as affecting the accuracy of torpedo fire? Is it a reasonable inference from what you have just said that zigzagging as an anti-submarine measure is of no value to surface ships? The prosecution now had the Japanese commander Hashimoto and the American submarine expert Donaho, mortal enemies only months before, agreeing with each other that zigzagging was not an effective defensive measure. In a seeming panic, the judge advocate questioning Donaho repeatedly attempted to get him to state that zigzagging was, in fact, an effective anti-submarine measure for surface ships. But Donaho, a four-time recipient of the Navy Cross, stubbornly maintained his position that zigzagging had no effect on when he would fire his torpedoes, or the likelihood that they would hit the target. He conceded only the truism that once torpedoes were fired, a ship could take evasive action by altering course one way or the other. This answer seemed to exasperate the prosecution: I mean no discourtesy, Captain Donaho, but I should remind you that in your capacity here as a witness you have been accepted as a submarine expert, and that you are a professional naval officer; is that correct? I think so, sir. And the way the question was put to you was to obtain your understanding as such a professional naval officer of the value or lack of value of zigzagging as an anti-submarine measure. Captain Donaho, I will be very glad to have the question read back to you, to have the reporter do it. My previous answer is my conception of the zigzag after the torpedoes have been fired, that is, the advantages of a zigzag as well as the disadvantages. If the torpedoes had not been fired, it will delay the firing by having to get a new setup on a target whose zig I have seen before I have fired. Is it a fair assumption, then, Captain Donaho, that you believe the various instructions for surface ships concerning zigzagging have some value? After your torpedoes are fired, it does. I beg your pardon? This did not happen. Instead, he had to settle for counsel whom Stanton describes as "inexperienced. Though his performance was superb in many other aspects of the trial, it was this last, unnecessary question which some believe gave the court members the fig leaf they needed to convict McVay, regardless of the earlier exculpatory testimony: Is it disconcerting to you as a submarine commander to have a ship, a target, zigzag? Yes, because you may be -- just before firing, a zigzag throws your calculations off, and you have to get a new setup. The transcript seemingly indicates an understandably awkward silence after this answer. Clearly having expected a "no" response to this question, counsel for McVay seemed nonplussed, and asked nothing further. The judge advocate and court declined to examine further, and Donaho was dismissed. It made instead an extremely technical argument that McVay should be found guilty because he allegedly violated Navy regulations regarding zigzagging a ship in conditions where visibility was good at night "if and when the moon arose. When McVay retired that night, the moon had not risen. The Navy made much of the fact that his night orders that night gave no instructions regarding zigzagging if and when the moon arose. But his standing orders, or "ship doctrine," were that zigzagging was to resume if visibility improved. Estimating the base course presented no problem at all to an enemy submarine commander, since the route [from Guam to Leyte] was practically the straight line between two of the largest ports we had in the area. Thus the situation was the very one which Captain Donaho described, in which zigzagging is of no avail. His impressive record of twenty-three consecutive, successful attacks on the enemy, all of whom were zigzagging, lends much weight to this point of view. After closing arguments, the court found McVay guilty of the first charge. He was sentenced to a loss of points in his "temporary grade of captain. In consideration of the outstanding previous record of the accused and our belief that no other Commanding Officer who lost his ship as a result of enemy action has been subjected to a court martial, we strongly recommend Charles B. McVay, 3rd, Captain, U. Navy, to the clemency of the reviewing authority. Virtually no one in town knew his background, but got to know him as a friendly neighbor who enjoyed socializing. In the early afternoon of a dreary November day in , however, he told his housekeeper that he would eat his sandwich later. He had shared with her earlier that he had been having nightmares about sharks. He then walked into the front yard, lay down, and shot himself in the head. He was holding a toy soldier his

father had given him as a boy. Twenty-three years after the disaster, and years of receiving Christmas hate mail blaming him for the loss of loved ones, his mental anguish over the catastrophe was finally over. His question - why the Navy had taken five days to rescue him and his men, has never been satisfactorily answered. As one of the Marine survivors, Melvin C. Jacob, recounted in an interview, McVay repeatedly raised this question to anyone who would listen. But there was no answer. As Jacob stated, had even one more day gone by, there would have been no survivors from the Indianapolis: But he did come and he got a royal welcome from all of us, him and his wife. Oh, you think you were that close. That must have been terrifying.

Chapter 6 : One Question Too Many: The Trial of Captain Charles B. McVay III

Charles McVay is most known in U.S. naval history for captaining USS Indianapolis when two Japanese torpedoes from submarine I struck and sunk her on 30 July. Survivors of the sinking drifted unknown in the Philippine Sea for four days and sailors out of a crew of 1, were lost.

The court met at 10 a. Vice Admiral Charles A. Navy, Vice Admiral George D. Navy, Rear Admiral Francis E. Navy, members; and Captain William E. Navy, judge advocate. The judge advocate introduced Fred R. Wall, chief yeoman, U. Lawlor, chief yeoman, U. Naval Reserve; William Al. Behrens, chief yeoman, U. Naval Reserve; and Kenneth R. Heller, yeoman first class, U. Naval Reserve, as reporters. The court was cleared and the judge advocate read the precept, original prefixed hereto. All matters preliminary to the inquiry having been determined and the court having decided to sit with closed doors, the court was open. Each member, the judge advocate, and reporters were duly sworn. No witnesses not otherwise connected with the inquiry were present. The court announced that it would adjourn to the U. Navy Base Hospital 18, Guam. All the members, the judge advocate, and reporter Fred R. Naval Reserve, assembled in the Chapel of the Thirty-fourth Construction Battalion, adjacent to and temporarily used by the U. Navy Base Hospital 18, Guam, where the commanding officer, and such other surviving officers and crew of the U. Indianapolis as could be assembled were collected. The commanding officer, Captain Charles B. Navy, read the official report and personal narrative of the loss of the U. Examined by the court: The following questions were addressed to the surviving commanding officer, Charles B. Have you any complaint to make against any of the surviving officers and crew of the said ship on that occasion? The following question was addressed to the surviving officers and crew of the U. Have you any objections to make in regard to the narrative just read to the court, or anything to lay to the charge of any officer or man in regard to the loss of the United States Ship Indianapolis? All of the witnesses were duly warned and withdrew. The court announced that it would adjourn to its regular place of meeting at Headquarters, Commander Marianas, Guam. Naval Reserve, returned to the regular place of meeting, where the court was reassembled. No witness not otherwise connected with the inquiry were present. Navy, Commanding Officer, U. Indianapolis, was called as a witness by the judge advocate, entered and was informed of the subject matter of the inquiry. Navy, informed the court that he had an interest in the subject matter of the inquiry in that he was the commanding officer of the U. He requested that he be allowed to be present during the course of the inquiry, examine witnesses, and introduce new matter pertinent to the inquiry in the same manner as a defendant. The request of Captain McVay was granted. Naval Reserve, and his counsel, and Captain Thomas B. Navy, as associate counsel. The court warned the witness that his oath previously taken was still binding, and informed him of the provisions of article 60, Articles for the Government of the Navy. The witness stated he had no objections to testifying. Examined by the judge advocate: State your name, rank, and present situation. Navy, surviving Commanding Officer, U. The court is inquiring into all the circumstances surrounding the causes for the loss of the U. Indianapolis, the damages resulting therefrom, and loss incurred thereby, and responsibility therefor, and also matters pertaining to the rescue operations and the delay in connection with reporting the loss of that ship. Have you anything to state at the present time in addition to that made in your statement concerning the causes for the loss? Have you anything further to add concerning the damages resulting therefrom? I would like to stress the point that I believe it was underwater damages which caused the ship to sink. I do not believe it was other explosions. Do you mean by underwater damages, damages from outside rather than inside the ship? Where was your gasoline stored? We have one gasoline tank forward at frame 15, the second tank was removed from the ship some time during battle by the damage repair party between May 2 and July 6. This tank holds approximately 3, gallons of gasoline. You mentioned two explosions, please elaborate on their locations. I feel quite sure there was two underwater explosions. One, I believe, occurred approximately at frame 65, the other forward of this, the distance forward I am not able to even guess. The estimated time between the first and second explosion was three to four seconds. Were you out in the open at the time of these explosions so that you could visibly see them? No, I was in my bunk the first explosion, on the deck of the emergency cabin for the second. I could see

nothing. You refer in your statement to the ship being in a watertight condition YOKE modified. Please explain this condition. It was a material condition which allowed sufficient ventilation so that people could sleep before decks. It refers more to a lessening in ventilation closures rather than other watertight closures. This condition could be maintained only for short durations of time because of the antiquated ventilation system of the ship. Did you as commanding officer receive any report on the night in question that the ship was fully in modified YOKE condition? Is there anything within your knowledge which precludes the possibility that at least one of the explosions you referred to make have had origin in the ship? The whip of the ship and the vibration was, to me, exactly similar to what occurred when a Kamikaze bomb exploded outside the skin of the ship on 30 March. Could one of these explosions have been a mine rather than a torpedo? I cannot answer that. You refer to giving instructions to the navigator. Were those instructions ever carried out? It apparently was impossible to get a message off the ship. Who was on the bridge on duty at the time you arrived there? Lieutenant Orr had the watch, Lieutenant Commander Moore had the supervisor watch, he is the Damage Control Officer, and immediately went below after the first explosion. The witness was duly warned. The court then, at 12 noon, took a recess until 1: All the member, the judge advocate, the party to the inquiry, and his counsel, and Thomas E. No witnesses no otherwise connected with the inquiry were present. Navy, the witness under examination when the recess was taken, was warned that the oath previously taken was still binding, and continued his testimony. Referring to the USF 10 Able, what was the material condition of the Indianapolis at the time of the loss specified in that book? Material condition YOKE modified was set. Could any of these so-called minor modifications have radically affected the stability? I do not believe so. Just before adjournment you mentioned four officers on the ship, are any of these officers survivors? None of them are survivors to my knowledge. Please state as fully as you can remember the wording of the reports made to you as to the condition of the ship by the Officer of the Deck, Executive Officer, and the Damage Control Officer. The Officer of the Deck said that he had no information since all communications were out. Within two minutes of that time the Damage Control Officer came onto the bridge and said we were badly damaged forward, taking water rapidly. Give me any further information. I recommend that we abandon ship. Only that Lieutenant Orr was greatly concerned because he could not give word to stop all engines, and I knew that with the damage forward we would be taking in a great deal of water while going ahead. I know what he had in mind because he mentioned backing the engines. To you knowledge, were any emergency flares sent up by the ship before she sank. I am quite sure that there were none. Describe to the court the location of the radio rooms.

Chapter 7 : Charles B McVay III | Symon Sez

Rear Admiral Charles Butler McVay III (July 30, - November 6,) was a career naval officer and the Commanding Officer of the USS Indianapolis (CA) when it was lost in action in and rescue efforts were delayed, resulting in massive loss of life. In the wake of the incident he was.

Sources say that Ike abandoned his family religion but that religion was still important to him and in , he was baptised as a Presbyterian, less than a year into his first term as President. Ike Liked the Motto Today people claim the insertion of God into state mottoes and the pledge is a violation of the separation of church and state. However, there are many who say that the founders intended on the Constitution to protect the churches from the government, not the government from the church—the proverbial freedom of religion, not freedom from religion. You make the call. The cruiser was returning from Tinian Island where it had secretly delivered the atomic bomb. Because it was a secret mission, details of its schedule were shrouded. So much so that its late arrival went unnoticed. The Americans had intercepted a message from the sub describing the ship they had sunk. If you remember Jaws then you know the story as told by Captain Quint, who said he was a crew member of the doomed ship. Nearly men were on the ship. Captain McVay About died from the torpedo blast. Some men went into the water but only were rescued. No one showed up for a rescue for 84 hours in during that time nearly men were devoured by sharks. McVay committed suicide in and many speculate he took his own life due to guilt. Wed Evening Weather Bottom Line: We have some consensus and also some disagreement in the forecast for the next several days. First off, we had a lot of clouds on Tuesday and even some showers with rumbles of thunder. That put the kabash on any chance we had of getting to 90 and it now looks inevitable that we will not get to 90 degrees for the entire month of July in Louisville. First time since records have been kept—I think since —. Remarkable considering that the official numbers are now kept at the airport. We have agreement that a front is coming through. We have agreement that a wave will ride along that front. The timing is the issue. Both suggest a relatively mild and dry weekend. Now, the parameters for all data are not overly exciting. Strong storms with gusty winds from time to time are possible, but nothing appears imminent on the severe weather front.

Chapter 8 : Excerpt from the Congressional Record on USS Indianapolis Capt. Charles B. McVay | calendar

Recollections of Captain Charles B. McVay, III, USN, Commanding Officer of USS Indianapolis (CA) which was sunk by Japanese submarine I on 30 July near the Philippines Source: Charles B. McVay, III, interview in box 21 of World War II Interviews, Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Center.

McVay returned the ship safely to Mare Island in California for repairs. Sinking of Indianapolis[edit] Later that year, Indianapolis received orders to carry parts and nuclear material to Tinian to be used in the atomic bombs which were soon to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After delivering his top secret cargo, the ship was en route to report for further duty off Okinawa. Early in the morning of July 30, , she was attacked by the Japanese submarine I under Commander Mochitsura Hashimoto. Hashimoto launched six torpedoes and hit Indianapolis twice, the first removing over forty feet of her bow, the second hitting the starboard side at frame forty below the bridge. Indianapolis immediately took a fifteen degree list, capsized and sank within 12 minutes. Of the crew of 1, men, men died. Delayed rescue[edit] About of the 1, men on board died in the initial attack. The rest of the crew, men, were left floating in the water without lifeboats until the rescue was completed four days hours later. Because of Navy protocol regarding secret missions, the ship was not reported "overdue" and the rescue came only after survivors were spotted by pilot Lieutenant Wilber Chuck Gwinn and co-pilot Lieutenant Warren Colwell on a routine patrol flight. Most of the casualties of the survivors in the water were due to injuries sustained aboard the ship, dehydration, exhaustion, drinking salt water and shark attacks [2] The seas had been moderate, but visibility was not good. Indianapolis had been steaming at When the ship did not reach Leyte on the 31st, as scheduled, no report was made that she was overdue. This omission was officially recorded later as "due to a misunderstanding of the Movement Report System ". He repeatedly asked the Navy why it took four days to rescue his men but never received an answer. The Navy long claimed that SOS messages were never received because the ship was operating under a policy of radio silence; declassified records show that three SOS messages were received separately, but none were acted upon because one commander was drunk, another thought it was a Japanese ruse, while the third had given orders not to be disturbed. McVay was charged with failing to zigzag and failure to order abandon ship in a timely manner. He was convicted on the former. Prior knowledge of Japanese submarines being identified in the area was withheld from the court and from McVay, prior to sailing, as well. American submarine experts testified that "zigzagging" was a technique of negligible value in eluding enemy submarines. Hashimoto also testified to this effect. For instance, McVay requested a destroyer escort for the Indianapolis, [8] but his request was denied because the priority for destroyers at the time was escorting transports to Okinawa and picking up downed pilots in B raids on Japan. On 24 July , just six days prior to the sinking of the Indianapolis, the destroyer Underhill had been attacked and sunk in the area by Japanese submarines. Yet McVay was never informed of this event, and several others, in part due to issues of classified intelligence. Although about ships of the U. Navy were lost in combat in World War II , [9] McVay was the only captain to be court-martialed for the loss of his ship. As part of a school project for the National History Day program, the young man interviewed nearly survivors of the Indianapolis sinking and reviewed documents. His testimony before the U. Congress brought national attention to the situation.

Chapter 9 : CHARLES McVAY Obituary - Brookline, MA | Boston Globe

McVAY CHARLES B. McVAY, IV June 11, ~ February 28, Charles Butler McVay IV was born on June 11, in Honolulu, Hawaii, the eldest of two sons.