



**CHAMPION HOG-CALLER DIDN'T LIKE PRIZE**  
Four-year-old John Mangrich charms (left) a small herd of swine and a large crowd of humans as he won the 1964 hog-calling championship of the Los Angeles County Fair at Pocono, Calif., Wednesday. But the 8000-yr. sooo-ey king, who edged an 85-year-old woman for the title, didn't think much of his prize, presented by Fair Princess Lana Gieselmann. (AP Wirephoto)

# Latest Tonkin Gulf Incident Remains Shrouded In Mystery

By FRED S. HOFFMAN  
WASHINGTON (AP)—Nearly two weeks have passed since the latest shooting incident in the Gulf of Tonkin and still many of the details are shrouded in official secrecy. Many of these details apparently are not known even to the U.S. government, but such specifics as the names of the two U.S. destroyers involved have been withheld.

Sources said intelligence authorities have objected to identifying the destroyers, possibly because the ships may be equipped for special tasks such as electronic monitoring of Communist North Vietnamese and Chinese communications and radar.

There are strong indications that the defence department is reluctant to open up about the latest shooting incident because officials still are not certain what the two destroyers fired at and whether they struck anything.

Official statements about the incident have been meagre and cautiously phrased.

Information from a variety of sources—woven together with officially released data—makes it possible to reconstruct the events of Friday, Sept. 18, this way:

The two destroyers, from a carrier task group standing outside the Gulf of Tonkin, were about midway through a four-day patrol.

In these international waters, surrounded on three sides by Communist territory, two other destroyers had been attacked by North Vietnamese torpedo boats in early August.

The destroyers of this patrol had been within a dozen miles of the North Vietnamese coast in daylight but, in accordance with the patrol pattern, they were standing out about 40 miles.

"Blips" appeared on the radar screens. They were several miles away but how far away is one of the factors not yet clear—and appeared to be coming toward the destroyers at high speed.

How many blips were there? Sources said the messages indicated varying numbers and the official version now says four vessels threatened the destroyers.

The blips seemed to be closing in at attack formation, and the skippers ordered their five-inch guns to fire in warning—reported to be at a range of not around eight miles.

The destroyer commanders flashed reports to the 78,000-ton carrier Constellation and Rear-Admiral William S. Guest, the task group commander, aboard her.

The flash report—the exact words of which have been classified secret—sped across the Pacific to Pearl Harbor, the U.S. command post for that entire vast theatre. It went to the Pentagon, 12,000 miles away.

**HANDLED NOTE**  
Defence Secretary McNamara, winding up a press conference in the Pentagon, was handed the alarming message from the command centre.

Stepping next door to his office, McNamara got on the phone with the top U.S. commander in the Pacific, Al Pearl Harbor, Sharp's headquarters. It was 4:30 a.m.

President Johnson said that some time during the day, it was established that neither American destroyer had been damaged and no Americans had been killed or wounded.

At the White House, President Johnson still was in bed, reading a morning file of reports from the Central Intelligence Agency, the state and defence departments.

There was no evidence, in fact, that the destroyers had been fired on.

Out in the gulf, the destroyers had opened fire with their five-inch and three-inch guns at a reported range of four to five miles. This time they shot to kill.

Reports suggesting that a new Tonkin gulf shooting incident had occurred were on the news wires and pressure grew for some official statement.

At 3:35 p.m., a Pentagon spokesman issued a 35-word statement issued under McNamara's name. It said: "Preliminary and fragmentary reports have been received of a night-time incident in international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin. There has been no damage reported by American vessels and no loss of American personnel. The reports of the incident are being investigated. We will have nothing further to say until our investigation has been completed."

At 4:32 p.m., the White House press secretary, George Reedy, held his afternoon briefing, but declined to talk about the Tonkin gulf situation.

At the state department, Secretary Dean Rusk kept an 11 o'clock appointment with Foreign Minister Spyros Kyprianou of Cyprus and then drove to the Pentagon.

Johnson had appointments to receive credentials from three new ambassadors at 15-minute intervals starting at 6 p.m. It was after 7 p.m. before Johnson saw the first of the three, and he gave them barely five minutes each.

**SUN WAS RISING**  
As night fell over Washington, the sun was rising over the Gulf of Tonkin.

Reconnaissance planes and the destroyers now had a chance to comb the surface of the water for evidence.

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