



HEADQUARTERS

ADDRESS THE COMMANDANT, U. S. COAST GUARD  
AND REFER TO NO.

## TREASURY DEPARTMENT

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON

May 16, 1938.

### MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY GIBBONS

The Earhart article carried in the "New York Times" on Sunday, May 15, 1938, was prepared by Mr. Alfred T. Reck of the Oakland, Calif. "Tribune", and distributed by the North American Newspaper Alliance. This article was prepared in cooperation with the San Francisco Division office, and based on the official report submitted by the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Cutter ITASCA, which was assigned to duty in connection with the Earhart flight. The article was based entirely upon the official record.

The last message received from the Earhart plane was received at 8:44 a.m., Howland Island time, July 2, 1937. The text was as follows:

WE ARE ON THE LINE OF POSITION 157-337, WILL REPEAT  
THIS MESSAGE, WE WILL REPEAT ON 6210 Kc WAIT LISTENING  
ON 6210 Kc WE ARE RUNNING NORTH AND SOUTH

Other persons in the radio room heard this transmission the same, which is made by voice on 3105 Kc with a signal strength 5. Nothing was heard on 6210 Kc.

On October 18, 1937, in response to my inquiry, Commander W. K. Thompson, Commanding Officer of the ITASCA at the time of the Earhart flight, advised as follows:

"I have your letter of the 15th instant and wish to assure you that, rumors notwithstanding, there is no basis for any of the rumors which have been brought to your attention relative to Amelia Earhart's loss. I was personally present in the radio room during the last hour she was on the air and heard all of her transmissions, as she was coming in very clearly on the loud speaker. From the time she apparently had reached the end of her dead reckoning run until she finally ceased transmitting her voice rose constantly in pitch and quite evident tension. Up to the last hour she seemed to be very cool and her voice was well modulated and apparently normal, but towards the end I could distinctly notice an inflection of tension coming into it and a decided increase in the pitch as though she was talking under a great deal of stress or emotion. I do not believe that the rumors originated on the ITASCA, although her quite evident tension was a matter of open comment. It is possible and in fact highly probable that

MEMO FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY GIBBONS (CONTD)

May 16, 1938.

the comments made about the change in her voice may have been garbled to a point where rumor gave them out as a scream. I can assure you personally that she did not scream and even though she was apparently under a tremendous strain, she seemed to be definitely removed from any idea of hysteria."

The comment made by Commander W. K. Thompson in his personal letter, bears out the remarks contained in the official report of the ITASCA dated 19 July, 1937, file 65-601, transmitting the radio transcripts of the Earhart flight. Page 43 of this report contains the following statement:

"Toward the end, Earhart talked so rapidly as to be almost incoherent."

Page 47 contains the statement - "Earhart's last message was hurried, frantic, and apparently not complete. Earhart did not return to air on 6210 Kc."

These statements were made as the result of personal observation of Commander Thompson and other personnel in the radio room who had equal opportunity to hear Miss Earhart's voice come in over the loud speaker.

It is believed that everything possible was done by the United States Coast Guard and other Government agencies to insure the successful completion of the Earhart flight, and that no reliable statement can be made as to the conditions existing aboard the plane at the termination of the flight.

R. R. WAESCHE,  
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard,  
Commandant.