The USS Indianapolis had gained a respectable reputation in its time at sea and was even transported President Roosevelt during his tour of South America. The Indianapolis was chosen for a mission that, if successful, would have a huge impact on the end of the war. On July 30, 1945, the Indianapolis matched the cargo that would be transported to Truk. The mission was top secret, so only those who needed to know what was in the crate. The secrecy of the mission would have a terrible impact on the fate of the Indianapolis on what turned out to be its last voyage.

The Indianapolis was struck by torpedoes on July 30, 1945. A Japanese submarine was in the area and sank the Indianapolis by chance. Shortly after it was spotted, two torpedoes were sent after the heavy cruiser, resulting in the greatest naval disaster in United States history.

In just twelve minutes 333 men lost their lives and almost 900 were left in the Philippine Sea for four days.

The Indianapolis was one of 427 ships sunk during the war, but it was the only one to have its captain court-martialed. The Navy refused an escort but were aware of possible enemy submarines in the path of the Indianapolis. The sailors on board the Indianapolis were only trying to serve their country, and in return, they were met with a Navy that cared more about helping itself than the people who risked their lives to serve it.

The men who made it into the water were very lucky; they would be rescued in no time, unfortunately, that was not the case. No life was sent out from the ship just minutes before it sank down, so the sailors were left with no hope that their time in the shark-infested waters would be short. However, the secrecy of the mission caused the distress signals to be mistimed. The number of men remained in the open across days passed with no rescue. Each day in the water was a fight to survive, and only 346 men were alive at the end of it.

"Neither McVay nor anyone aboard would be told the contents of the shipment, which consisted of two cylindrical containers and a large crate. The cargo would be accompanied by two Army officers and was to be kept under armed guard at all times."

"They went out for the oil slick in the water, there is no telling how long the men would have been in the water. Lieutenant Wilbur C. Gwin spotted the oil slick from his plane while on routine practice flights. When he got closer to the water, he noticed the men from the Indianapolis floating and immediately called for help. It was completely by chance that they were found, and the Navy did not even realize they had gone missing. The men were picked up by other ships and taken to a hospital for treatment."

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"Despite the lack of precedent or compelling evidence, the court judged McVay guilty."

"The story now public, the Navy took immediate action to cover itself. [...] Admiral King recommended a court-martial. People have speculated why he did that, but the most obvious reason was to cover the Navy’s mistakes in not providing a destroyer escort..."