

(50) File Room

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OFFICE OF THE NAVAL ATTACHE
AMERICAN EMBASSY
BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA

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L11-3
Serial L-056 (A)

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CONFIDENTIAL

414
RECEIVED S-C FILES
Room 2055
6 JUL 1946

3 June, 1946.

ROUTE TO: L11-3
File No. (SC)
Doc. No.
Copy No. 1 of 1
Reg. No.
Abbot Mills
1946 C.T.

From: The Naval Attache.
To: Commander Naval Forces Mediterranean.
Subj: "S.S. ABBOT MILLS", destruction of guns on.
Ref: (a) ComNavMed Disp. 231500, April, 1946.
(b) Alusna Belgrade Disp. 291715A, May, 1946.

- In compliance with Reference (a) and as stated in Reference (b), the two guns, 3" 50 caliber, and 4" 50 caliber, on board the "S.S. ABBOT MILLS", which is at Gruz, were made inoperative by destroying the breech locks and scoring the barrels with an acetylene torch.
- The 20 millimeter anti-aircraft guns, together with all spare parts, were shipped via the "BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE" to Bari, addressed to Commander Naval Forces Mediterranean.
- On 18 May accompanied by Mr. William T. Harvey, of the War Shipping Administration, I visited the "ABBOT MILLS" to determine what should be done to accomplish the task. Since no tools were available for removing the breech locks, it was decided to destroy them by torch on the spot. Arrangements were made that a local firm should come on 20 May to do the necessary work, but when the contractor was told what was required he stated that his equipment was out of order, which, of course, was merely an excuse, as it was realized that the man was afraid of reprisals from the Yugoslav authorities. Consequently a written document was obtained from the local OZNA (Secret Police) authorizing the firm to do the work. On 21 May the two guns were rendered inoperative as stated above.
- In view of the fact that it was impossible to hide from the local authorities any work that was being done aboard the "ABBOT MILLS", it was felt that it was better to act quite openly in the matter. In requesting the written permission from OZNA, it was explained that the ship is United States property and, therefore, that no exception should be taken to any disposition that might be taken of such property by the representatives of the United States Government. Nevertheless there was considerable anxiety on the part of the contractor and the Yugoslav guards aboard the "ABBOT MILLS", all of whom particularly requested that I remain on the spot until everything had been completed.

ERNEST ISELIN, JR.

CC: CNO ✓

7/12/46 advised Board and W.D.A. that ship was disarmed 5/21/46. ECC

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