NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

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March 30, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Secretary of the Navy.

To: Master ~~M.S.~~ S.S. Abel Parker Upshur 7177 Gross Tons.

SUBJECT: Instructions for Scuttling Merchant Ships.

1. It is the policy of the United States Government that no U. S. Flag merchant ship be permitted to fall into the hands of the enemy.

2. The ship shall be defended by her armament, by maneuver, and by every available means as long as possible. When, in the judgment of the Master, capture is inevitable, he shall scuttle the ship. Provision should be made to open sea valves, and to flood holds and compartments adjacent to machinery spaces, start numerous fires and employ any additional measures available to insure certain scuttling of the vessel.

3. In case the Master is relieved of command of his ship, he shall transfer this letter to his successor, and obtain a receipt for it.

/S/ FRANK KNOX

Port Director

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
Port

H. C. FENGAR,
Routing Officer

1/2/43
Date

Received copy of above letter

Robt C. Houston
MASTER

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Authority 750161