

Copies 5-6-40 MMR
4 Coordinator
3 Coast Guard
1 Mr. Harris
1 Mr. W. R. Johnson

C In a telephone conversation on June 29, 1940, the
Deputy Collector Hoge stated that the ARAUCA was sealed in such
a manner that it could have been opened without breaking the seal, but
P that there was no evidence, physical or circumstantial, indicating
Y that it had been so entered.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

United States Customs Service

Tampa, Fla.

July 1, 1940.

The Commissioner of Customs,
Washington, D. C.

Washington, D. C.

Respectfully,

GERMAN SS ARAUCA

Sir:

/s/ A. G. Watson, Jr.

The Deputy Collector at Port Everglades, Florida, called this office on long distance on the 29th of June stating that information had been received from a reliable source indicating that there was available through members of the crew of the German SS ARAUCA radio apparatus, and that communication had been had between the ARAUCA and Germany.

It seems that some member of the crew of the ARAUCA had boasted to someone in the Coast Guard personnel guarding the ship that the ARAUCA could communicate with Germany at any time.

The Deputy Collector was instructed to confer with the commanding officer of the Coast Guard in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, to organize a searching squad and thoroughly search the vessel. It was suggested that every effort be made to avoid suspicion that this inspection was for the purpose of examining into the condition of the vessel with a view of taking her over for the use of the United States as was done at the time of the outbreak of the World War.

There is inclosed herein a report received from the Deputy Collector. It appears that all of the crew were mustered by the Immigration Service and the craft thoroughly searched by the Coast Guard and Customs; that suspicion was allayed by informing the master of the ARAUCA that there was a change in officers in charge of the Coast Guard and that the new commander desired to inspect the vessel before receipting his predecessor to ascertain that all matters for which he was responsible were in the situation required by the regulations. The Deputy Collector reports that this satisfied the curiosity of the matter.

Nothing of a contraband nature was found as a result of the search. In the fifth paragraph of the report the Deputy Collector refers to the sealing of the radio room and indicates that the room had been entered without destroying the seal.

In a telephone conversation with this office on Saturday Deputy Collector Hogeboom stated that the room was sealed in such a way that it could have been opened without breaking the seal, but that there was no evidence, physical or circumstantial, indicating that it had been so entered.

A copy of this report is being sent to the District Commander of the Coast Guard in Jacksonville.

Respectfully,

/s/ A. G. Watson, Jr.

Assistant Collector of Customs.

cc District Commander of
Coast Guard, Jacksonville.