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NAVY DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE AUG 20 PM 2 28
COUNTER INTELLIGENCE BRANCH

Op-16-B-5

Date 19 Aug. 1943

FGH:REB

MEMORANDUM for Intelligence Officer, U.S.C.G. Hdqs., Rm. 7212
1300 E Street, Washington, D. C.

SUBJECT: SS BLACK POINT, Theft of drugs aboard

Enclosure: Copy of (1) /Conf memo from ADIO Zone II, (Intel. Off. Trinidad Sector) to DNI dated 9 August, 1943, same subject

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded for information and such attention as may be deemed appropriate.

2. The information forwarded herewith is extremely confidential in character and its security must be preserved, by carefully safeguarding its existence and source, as well as the names of any informants mentioned therein. In no case, if the report covers an investigation of an individual, shall the report be shown to the subject, nor shall copies be made of it, nor shall the Office of Naval Intelligence be mentioned in connection with any action taken on the basis of such report.

3. ~~Ultimate return of this correspondence to DNI is requested,~~
~~Op-16-B-5~~

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To safeguard the security of the information contained herein, please initial and return to Intelligence for filing when it has served its purpose

HAB

H. A. BURCH,
Lieut. Comdr., U.S.N.R.

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File

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By [unclear]

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in Reply Address
COMMANDANT
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REFER TO

U. S. NAVAL OPERATING BASE

1943 AUG 19 AM 8 06

TRINIDAD, B. W. I.

CONFIDENTIAL

TR/6-627

Serial 0930

JSF/ag

9 August 1943

MEMORANDUM

From: Assistant District Intelligence Officer, Zone II,
(Intelligence Officer, Trinidad Sector, C.S.F.)
To: Director of Naval Intelligence.
Subject: SS BLACK POINT, Theft of Drugs Aboard the.

1. On 7 July 1943 Leslie DAVIS, Coxswain, reported to this office that 4 boxes, each containing 5 morphine syrettes, and one bottle containing 1,000 opium pills, were missing from the Armed Guard medicine chest aboard subject vessel. The discovery was made on 5 August, Davis said.

2. Davis and Edgar Marshall, S1c said that James B. HUMPHRIES, Bos'n of vessel's merchant crew, two days before the drugs were missed had inquired if replacements could be obtained readily for morphine taken from Armed Guard medicine chest. Marshall said he asked Humphries why he wanted to know, and Humphries replied that he had heard someone had taken drugs from the BLACK POINT'S Armed Guard medicine chest in New York before it sailed. Since an inspection of the chest several days after leaving New York disclosed nothing missing, Humphries' statements prompted Marshall to take an inventory.

3. When questioned about his inquiry, Humphries told conflicting stories; first, that he had heard two men aboard the BLACK POINT (whom he could not identify) discussing morphine, one of these stated he had in his possession some morphine stolen from the Armed Guard medicine chest. A few minutes later Humphries said he knew the morphine was stolen in New York, because he saw an unidentified man take off a package containing morphine. He could not explain how he knew the package contained morphine, nor how the man hid the package from the gangway guard.

4. While Humphries was being interviewed, a search of his gear disclosed a hypodermic needle and a glass medicine dropper hidden in the lining of his suit case. The needle was fitted with a paper funnel into which the medicine dropper fitted exactly, forming a crude but effective syringe. No drugs were found in Humphries gear or quarters however.

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5. During the questioning, the investigating officer noted that the pupils of Humphries' eyes were dilated and that his eyes had an intense look similar to that of a person under the influence of a drug. On Humphries right forearm, was a red welt, similar to that caused by a hypodermic injection.

6. Humphries readily admitted his knowledge of the use and effect of morphine, stating that it had saved his life when he was wounded by a machine gun bullet in January after his ship, a U.S. tanker, had been sunk. Later in 1943, Humphries said he was on another U.S. tanker that was torpedoed off Curacao. Humphries stated that his experiences as a survivor had tended to make him highly nervous. His statements apparently were an explanation of why he had to use drugs although he could not officially admit either stealing or using them.

7. The Captain and the Chief Mate agreed that Humphries had been an able Bos'n. Both suggested that, although they were convinced by the evidence presented to them that Humphries used Morphine, that he be permitted to remain on this ship until it returns to a U. S. port, possibly Mobile, later in August, before any action was taken to remove or to prosecute Humphries.

8. In addition to the drugs missed from Armed Guard chest the Captain on examining the ship's medicine chest in his cabin on 8 August discovered that 40 morphine sulphate syrettes, issued by the U. S. Marine Hospital at Mobile, Alabama, were missing. He recalled that before the BLACK POINT left New York, Humphries approached him and asked him if the ship had a complete emergency medicine chest. On being assured in the affirmative, Humphries expressed satisfaction and explained that his life had been saved by such equipment. The Captain recalled further that in New York he noted that the seal on the Medicine chest had been broken but at the time he had assumed this was done by Inspectors.

9. Although there was considerable circumstantial evidence that Humphries used drugs and probably had stolen the missing drugs on the BLACK POINT, the evidence was not conclusive.

10. At the Master's request the Assistant District Intelligence Officers' office agreed to forward a report to the Director of Naval Intelligence, with a copy to the Eighth Naval

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District. On the ship's return trip the Captain and the Armed Guard agreed to maintain a discreet watch over Humphries actions, with the idea that he might disclose a possible hiding place for the missing drugs.

12. Humphries' seamans papers stated he was born at Clarke, Louisiana on 29 March 1910. His Z number is 101-097-D-1. He said he had spent 17 years at sea, 10 years as Bos'n. He presented a letter from the personnel office of the Bethlehem Steel Company (Hoboken, New Jersey, Navy Yard) asserting that James B. Humphries had been employed there as a rigger "off and on" between 5 December 1941 and 25 September 1942.

13. The Master requested a Navy boarding officer check with him at Mobile, Alabama, when the ship arrived, to obtain possible further evidence obtained on the return trip.

J. MARVIN KRAUSE.

cc: DIO-GND.
DIO-1OND.