



TREASURY DEPARTMENT

22 July, 1941.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

HEADQUARTERS

SS CONTE BIANCAMANO, Cristobal, Canal Zone.

WASHINGTON 22 July, 1941.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: GIUSEPPE FERRARA action in the war, the BIANCAMANO be destroyed by SS CONTE BIANCAMANO, Cristobal, Canal Zone. Is damage to the Panama Canal.

Reference:

Summary of Information:

*Original vessel
It's seized*

Information has been received that an attempt at sabotage was made on the engines of the Italian ship SS CONTE BIANCAMANO in port at Cristobal, Canal Zone, prior to its being taken over by the United States on March 30, 1941. When the motors were inspected, it was found that the drive shaft was disconnected and the pressure lubricating system for the engine had been damaged by the removal of the gauges indicating pressure which rendered the automatic alarm and engine control useless. Inspection also revealed the ruin of port high-pressure turbine bearings and blading.

The crew, except Michael Angelo Fedali, the purser, was deported from the Canal Zone to the U.S. via the U.S. A. T. Leonard Wood and entered at the New York Harbor. They were turned over by the U. S. Marshal to the U. S. Immigration Service and are presently being detained at Fort Missoula, Montana. The ship is in the custody of the U. S. Marshal.

Members of the crew were interviewed at Missoula, Montana, and they stated that they had seen Giovanni Bruni, representative of the Italian Lines, and Italian Minister Silenzi aboard the ship several times but they disclaimed any knowledge of instructions to damage the ship's engines or how it had happened. They stated that Captain Ferrara was a "hard man", disliked by the crew, and if he had received instructions for the damage, they (the crew) would be unlikely to hear of it.

It was reported that the purser of the ship, Michael Angelo Fedali, had blue prints relative to the apparent sabotage of the engines, but they have not been located. At the present time he is in Cristobal, Canal Zone, and it is believed that he delivered the blue prints to the Italian Consulate there for safe keeping. It is further reported that he has recently been in contact with his wife in Firenze, Italy. Information indicates that apparently the Italian Government directed its Consul in Panama to arrange that, in the

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GIUSEPPE FERRARA

SS CONTE BIANCAMANO, Cristobal, Canal Zone.

event of American participation in the war, the BIANCOMANO be destroyed in such a way as to cause the greatest possible damage to the Panama Canal.

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