

UNITED STATES NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Confidential**INVESTIGATION REPORT****Sixth Naval District****Subject:** TUG "GUMCO", LABOR TROUBLE ABOARD.**Report Made at:** The District Intelligence Office, GND.**Date:** October 23, 1942.**Report Made by:** Lieut. J. B. FENNIER, USNR.**Period Covered:** Oct. 16, 17, 18, 19, 1942.**Status of Case:**

PENDING

Origin of Case: Information received from Ensign W. M. WALKER, USNR, Coastal Information Officer, Section Base, Southport, N.C., stating three (3) negro seamen aboard SUBJECT vessel refused to sail due to sickness. Rest of crew would not sail with relief crew (3) from U.S.S. RUBY as they were not union men.

Character of Investigation:

To establish reason for labor trouble aboard Tug GUMCO.

Enclosures: (A) COMINCH directive 05/1240Z OCT. Copy to: ONI - 2 B-548, GND - 2
 (B) Boarding report & recommendations by officers of NYIU. GND - 2 NYIU, GND - 2
 (C) Statement of Lt. G. D. KISSAM, C.O. of U.S.S. RUBY. DOGO-GND - 2 F.B.I. (Sav) - 2
 (D) Crew list of Tug GUMCO. Capt. of Port, Chas. - 2 BIO-GND - 2
 (E) Report of Action Taken by Capt. of Port, Charleston, S.C. CRSP - 2 Dist. Op, GND - 1

Source File No.**ONI File No.:****Synopsis:**

Oct. 14, 1942, Tug GUMCO was ordered by COM GND to proceed to Southport, N. C., to tow U.S.S. RUBY to Charleston. Arrived Southport 16/2250Q. On Oct. 16, 1942, Ensign WALKER, Coastal Information Officer, Section Base, Southport, reported three negro seamen aboard Tug GUMCO refused to sail. It was the general opinion that they were malingering. Three men from U.S.S. RUBY were assigned to take their place and rest of crew aboard GUMCO then refused to sail because the men from U.S.S. RUBY were not union men. Lt. Cmdr. MERRAVY, District Operational Officer, was cognizant and called Lt. Cmdr. HASKELL, OIC Section Base, Southport, referring him to Enclosure (A) and instructing him to call in the Coast Guard and have them advise the crew of the GUMCO to either get underway or be subject to arrest. This action was taken and subsequently Tug GUMCO sailed from Southport at 16/1330Q with U.S.S. RUBY in tow. An oiler, four firemen and an armed guard of six men from U.S.S. RUBY were placed aboard GUMCO for trip to Charleston. Arrived Charleston 17/0500Q. Lt. Cmdr. Ernest BURWELL, USNR, OIC, NYIU, boarded GUMCO for complete investigation. His report and recommendations are included in Enclosure (B). Also included in Enclosure (B) is a complete statement from

(Continued)

Deductions:

Tug GUMCO delayed sailing Southport due to labor trouble among crew. Investigation revealed disagreement between O. W. STEIN-PIRING, Master; Geo. O. G. MIDGETT, Second Mate; and Branson B. HALL, Chief Engineer, main source of trouble.

UNDEVELOPED LEAD:

DIO-GND requested to report results of trip from Charleston to Morehead City, and any action taken by Captain of Port, Morehead City, N. C.

Approved: FRANK MORTON

Lt. S. W. SOUERS
 Commander, USNR
 District Intelligence Officer

- 2 - Acting

COPY

subject: TUG "CUMCO", LABOR TROUBLE ABOARD.

Synopsis: (CONTINUED)

O. W. STEEN-PERING, Master of CUMCO. Enclosure (C) is statement of Lt. Gordon D. KISSAM, USNR, Commanding Officer U.S.S. RUBY. Enclosure (D) is crew list of Tug CUMCO which was checked against DIO suspect files with negative results. These investigations and statements revealed that Second Mate Geo. O. C. MIDGETT and Chief Engineer Branson B. HALL of Tug CUMCO were the main sources of trouble. Lt. Cmdr. W. L. MALONEY, USCG, Captain of the Port of Charleston, S. C., was contacted to learn what action his office had taken in the matter. The report of action taken is contained in Enclosure (E). Tug CUMCO departed Charleston 19/18179. As disclosed in Enclosure (E), at the master's request MIDGETT and HALL were allowed to sail with him.

OTHER OTHER COMMANDERS NOT ACCOUNTABLE TO THEM. THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER INCIDENTS OF LACK OF DISCIPLINE, SOME OF THEM FLAGRANT, AND ALL OF THEM DETRIMENTAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR OPERATIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION, ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE FACT THAT THESE TYPES (MEN) OF NAVAL CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS, PARTICULARLY THE ONE IN THE LAST PARAGRAPH. IT IS THE DUTY OF EACH VESSEL AND EACH OFFICER TO ENFORCE THIS AUTHORITY DIRECTLY OR BY DELEGATION IN SPECIFIC CASES WHENEVER THE SITUATION OF MILITARY OPERATIONS SO DEMANDS. REFUSAL TO COMPLY WITH ORDERS GIVEN BY SUCH OFFICERS IN THOSE SITUATIONS IS PUNISHABLE BY MILITARY COURT OR BY FEDERAL CIVIL AUTHORITY. OFFENDERS MAY BE ARRESTED AS NECESSARY AND

TURNED OVER TO WHICHEVER TRIAL BODY IS DEEMED MOST DESIRABLE THE LATTER. ENFORCEMENT SHOULD BE BY THE COAST GUARD WHEN FEASIBLE. ALL WATERS OUTSIDE NEUTRAL AND UNOCCUPIED COUNTRIES ARE TO REMAIN A ZONE OF MILITARY OPERATION.

CONFIDENTIAL

PARAGRAPH ONE

COPY

ENCLOSURE "A"