



CG-IOF-661

26 April, 1943

CONFIDENTIALMEMORANDUM:

Subject: Panamanian vessel ML ESTRO; report of fire on board.

1. Admiral Parker telephoned to me at 0930 this date the following preliminary report on the case of the ML ESTRO:

- (a) The vessel was at Caven Point, New Jersey when the fire broke out. (NOTE: Caven Point is an explosive loading terminal believed to have been constructed during the last year or so. It is located between Bayonne and Jersey City).
- (b) The fire is presumed to have started in the boiler room.
- (c) A 5-man Board of Investigation has been convened.
- (d) The fire was incapable of getting under control and the vessel was taken to deep water off Bayonne, where she was grounded and flooded. Coast Guardsmen and others fought the fire for several hours.
- (e) It is estimated that the vessel had a cargo of from 1800 to 2000 tons of mixed explosives, bombs, projectiles and smokeless powder.
- (f) The location of the grounded vessel is marked by buoys, and a notice to this effect has been broadcast.
- (g) Public reaction to the Coast Guard's handling of the disaster was favorable.
- (h) Mayor LaGuardia has shown much interest and is inclined to focus public attention on New York's marine fire department.
- (i) Intensification by the Coast Guard of inspection of boiler rooms, galleys and cleanliness of bilges is recommended by Admiral Parker in view of the fact that many fires apparently occur in boiler rooms, galleys and from unclean condition of bilges. Another contributing factor is the fact that fires have occurred on old vessels, some of which are of Panamanian registry. Also, some of the crews are careless and suffer from hang-overs.

*Returned to [unclear]
Noted [unclear]*

CONFIDENTIAL

62-107-001

Subject: Panamanian vessel EL ESTRO; report of fire on board. **26 April, 1943**

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM:

(j) The EL ESTRO, when the fire occurred, was about to leave her pier, and it is believed she had just lighted off her boilers.

1. Admiral Parker telephoned to me at CDRS this date the following preliminary report:
2. A formal report will follow shortly.

(a) The vessel was at Green Point, New Jersey when the fire broke out. (NOTE: Green Point is an explosive loading terminal believed to have been constructed during the last year or so. It is located between Bayonne and Jersey City.)
F. E. POLLIO

(b) The fire is presumed to have started in the boiler room.

- cc: Admiral Waesche
- Admiral Gorman ✓
- Captain Park
- Commander Coombs
- Lieut. Commander Gulick

The Board of Investigation has been convened. It is impossible of getting under control and she was grounded and flooded. Coast Guardsmen and others fought the fire for several hours.

(c) It is estimated that the vessel had a cargo of from 1000 to 2000 tons of mixed explosives, bombs, pyrotechnics and smokeless powder.

(d) The location of the grounded vessel is marked by buoys, and a notice to this effect has been broadcast.

(e) Public reaction to the Coast Guard's handling of the disaster was favorable.

(f) Mayor LaGuardia has shown much interest and is inclined to focus public attention on New York's marine fire department.

(g) Intensification by the Coast Guard of inspection of boiler rooms, galleys and cleanliness of bilges is recommended by Admiral Parker in view of the fact that many fires apparently occur in boiler rooms, galleys and from unclean condition of bilges. Another contributing factor is the fact that fires have occurred on old vessels, some of which are of Panamanian registry. Also, some of the crews are careless and suffer from hang-overs.