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SUBJECT <u>Inter-Racial Antagonism Among National Maritime Union Crew Members</u>			REQUEST NO.

1951 JUN 6 AM 8 49
 BRIEF (FOR REPORTS OF MORE THAN ONE PAGE, ENTER CAREFUL SUMMARY)

BRIEF: Eight members of the deck department crew of the SS JAMAICA quit their jobs on the arrival of the ship in New York 30 April 1951. The reason was found to be the discrimination against them by the Puerto Rican crew members.

REPORT: It is reported that on the arrival of the SS JAMAICA at New York on 30 April 1951 eight of the deck department crew members quit their jobs. The total deck department numbers twenty-four (24) men. The loss of one-third of the department, most of whom were "old-timers" and well-trained in their jobs, came as a blow to the operators. The excuse given by the men was "poor food." This was an obvious evasion, as the ship "feeds" well. They next gave "poor working conditions" as their excuse. This was equally fallacious. The men finally admitted the true reason, which was the "Puerto Rican" situation aboard the ship. The percentage of Puerto Ricans in the crew has been on the increase, and as that group found their strength on board augmented they became increasingly discriminatory in their treatment of the other crew members, particularly the "Deck Gang." The practices resorted to were the serving of cold meals, inferior meal portions, improper cleaning of rooms, etc.

The ship's articles for the last five voyages have been reviewed. The following tabulation clearly illustrates the increase in Puerto Rican crew members in the SS JAMAICA.

Sailed from New York	Puerto Ricans on board by Departments			Total
	Deck	Engine	Stewards	
13 February 1951	2	3	12	17
27 February 1951	3	4	12	19
14 March 1951	3	6	13	22
27 March 1951	3	3	13	24
18 April 1951	3	9	15	27

The total Ship's Company runs between 105-110. The Deck and Engine Departments are static with twenty-five (25) in each. The Stewards Department

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fluctuates between 55-60 persons. In addition to the Puerto Ricans in the Stewards Department there is also a group of nine Cubans. This latter group has remained constant and is apparently a neutral element.

REPORTING OFFICER'S COMMENT: This is not the first reported case of racial antagonisms engendered and fostered by non-white elements in ship crews. One white crew member in the SS INDEPENDENCE quit due to negro discrimination. There have been vague, unverified reports of an underlying inter-racial feeling in the NMU hall. Such antagonisms, at the present time, would serve the cause of the Communist Party, however, there is no direct evidence that the CP is involved in the SS JAMAICA incident. Occurrences such as the above tend to show the insincerity and self-serving nature of the "anti-discrimination" stand that has been the position of the colored and Puerto Rican element when they were in a minority.

JOHN LENHART, Commander, USN
Acting District Intelligence Officer

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