

(CMI)

CG-MIN-3-18225

15 May, 1944

Mr. Nathan Davis, Chairman
Ships Committee
JOHN ERICSSON
c/o U. S. Lines
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Davis:

A thorough inspection has been made of the conditions on board the JOHN ERICSSON, (ex KUNGSBOLM), including the possibility of changing or altering crew accommodations and the installation of new gravity type davits, as referred to in your previous correspondence and telegram of 13 May, 1944.

The JOHN ERICSSON was acquired by the Maritime Commission under the Act of 6 June, 1941, and is therefore subject to limited inspection under regulations promulgated pursuant to said act, which are contained in Section 150.1 Subchapter "G". Upon inspection of the subject vessel it was found that her condition, including crew accommodations and lifesaving equipment, was in full compliance with these regulations, as well as the International Convention For Safety Of Life At Sea, 1929, but would not be in compliance with the Coast Guard's requirements for new passenger vessels. The subject vessel in certain respects exceeds the safety requirements which are legally applicable and in this respect it has more lifesaving equipment than is the case of other troop transport of comparable size and date of construction.

Serious consideration was given to the alteration or changing of the crew accommodations and the installation of gravity type davits in lieu of the mechanical type davits which are now on board the vessel. It soon developed that manufacturing facilities were not available for the manufacture of gravity type davits for installation on board the subject vessel. Even if available, it was most conservatively calculated that to remove the mechanical type davits and install gravity type davits on the subject vessel would require a laid-up overhaul period of 4 or 5 months, or possibly longer, as in addition to the time required for the shifting of the davits, extensive structural alterations and

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strengthening would be required to accommodate the heavier gravity type davits. You are undoubtedly aware that a most critical situation exists with regard to the availability of ship repair facilities and that only vessels with extensive damage are accommodated in repair yards at this time.

After a most careful consideration of the facts and possibilities in the premises, as above indicated, and as the subject vessel is in full compliance with the safety statutes of the United States and regulations thereunder, as well as the Safety Convention of 1929, it has been concluded that no action is feasible at this time which would necessitate the withdrawal of the subject vessel from service and place her in an idle status when she is most urgently needed in the war effort.

It is regretted that the situation is such that more positive action cannot be instituted. You may rest assured however, that the Coast Guard appreciates your interest in safety of life at sea, and that the Coast Guard has and will take every action possible for the highest standard of safety in marine transportation consistent with the prosecution of the war.

Very truly yours,

R. R. WAESCHE
Vice Admiral, USCG
Commandant

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