

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

SEATTLE 4, WASHINGTON



ADDRESS REPLY TO  
DISTRICT COAST GUARD OFFICER  
THIRTEENTH NAVAL DISTRICT (int)  
AND REFER TO FILE: CG-6614

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INT

SEP 17 45 PM



13 September, 1945 1945 SEP 17 PM 2 43

To: The Commandant, Coast Guard Headquarters (INT)

Subj: SS JOHN LIND; complaint alleging delayed sailing due to Merchant Marine screening of crew

1. Further reference is made to DCGO, 13ND dispatch of 30 August, 1945 relative to subject.
2. The results of further investigation are embodied in the inclosed reports. Since no further action is apparently indicated by the Intelligence Officer, the case will be considered closed.

*Joseph L. Green*

JOSEPH L. GREEN  
By direction

Incls

1. Report dated 11 Sept., 1945
2. " " 6 Sept., 1945 with 2 incls.

*File given*

*Index  
File: [unclear] (5)  
[unclear]*

*Lieut. (jg) John Spencer, 21890K*

*Master*

11 September, 1945

Subj: SS JOHN LIND; report on

1. Subject vessel signed on 29 May, 1945 in Seattle, Washington. The boarding officers who handled the sign on report that no one was detained from signing on Subject vessel by them, that all seamen either possessed valid passports or had previously been screened in the Thirteenth or some other Naval District.
2. As Subject vessel sailed coastwise to Astoria, Oregon, it was not boarded upon departure from Seattle. A check of the Ship's Articles on file in the Shipping Commissioner's Office, Seattle, disclose that the following vacancies were not filled at the time of the sign on in this port: three radio operators, one cook, and a first, second, and third assistant engineer.
3. After reviewing Lt.(jg) Spencer's report, there appears no justification for the original complaint received in this office, "that Subject vessel was detained from sailing due to Intelligence clearance." It is suggested that a copy of Lt.(jg) Spencer's report, along with inclosures, be forwarded to Captain Pollio.

*James W. Brown*  
JAMES W. BROWN

Incl.#1

*Lieut. (jg) John Spencer, 21 Feb 46*

*Master*

6 September, 1945

Subj: SS JOHN LIND; report on

1. This report has to do with a complaint that the sailing of the SS JOHN LIND which departed from Seattle, Washington, for Astoria, Oregon, on 31 May, 1945, and departed Astoria for foreign on 10 June, 1945, was delayed due to Intelligence clearance by the Portland Intelligence Office in connection with the last-minute signing on of five or six firemen and oilers.
2. Records of the Coast Guard Intelligence Office at Portland reveal not only that representatives of this office did not board the JOHN LIND either upon its arrival or departure from Astoria but that this vessel had never been boarded by this office prior to its recent arrival at Portland on 26 August, 1945, which is the first time the vessel has ever been in Portland. This office was not advised of the ship's arrival or departure from Astoria, and in checking with the U.S. Immigration Service at Portland and the Shipping Commissioner's Office, both of these offices report that they did not board the vessel while it was at Astoria. However, the ship's log does contain an entry that the ship was checked by Immigration upon its departure from Astoria on 10 June, 1945. (There is an Immigration Inspector stationed at Astoria.) Again, in checking the names of the nine men who signed on the vessel at Astoria on 1 June, 1945, records of the Portland Intelligence Office reveal that only three of them had ever been screened by this office, and the latest date that any of these three had been cleared was 23 May, 1945, while the JOHN LIND did not arrive at Astoria until 1 June, 1945.
3. The JOHN LIND arrived at Portland on 26 August, 1945, concluding this same voyage. The vessel was boarded by the writer on 30 August, 1945, and the Master, Captain Frank Mechan, the Chief Mate, Fred M. Dunson, Jr., and the armed guard officer, Lieut. B. A. Stein, USNR, all were emphatic in their statements, when interviewed, that Coast Guard Intelligence had in no way delayed the sailing of the vessel at Astoria or at any other port during the voyage nor had any other department of the Coast Guard delayed the vessel's sailing at any time, nor as a matter of fact had there been any delays for any reason during the entire voyage. A statement was taken from Captain Mechan which is included as inclosure 1 with this report. Supplementing his statement, Captain Mechan added that he was positive the vessel had never encountered any delays of any kind because the vessel's agents, the American Mail Line, would have held him accountable for any delays in sailing, and this had not occurred. Captain Mechan was not aware that a complaint had been made and expressed surprise that such a complaint could have been made without his knowledge. Captain Mechan carefully checked his Secret Log in the presence of the writer to confirm his statements.
4. A statement was also taken from Chief Engineer K. V. Glessner, which is included as inclosure 2 with this report. Mr. Glessner stated that the

Lieut. (jg) John Spencer, USNR

FRANK MECHAN  
Master

Subj: SS JOHN LIND; report on

6 September, 1945

Coast Guard had never been responsible for any delays in sailing during the voyage with the possible exception of the ship's departure from Seattle on 31 May, 1945, when Coast Guard Inspectors had delayed the vessel's sailing for approximately two hours while some gear was re-stowed in one lifeboat and a gasoline line installed in another. Captain Mehan, when apprised of this, said that he vaguely recalled something about the matter but that he did not consider this a delay caused by the Coast Guard because it was just a routine matter that involved the seaworthiness of the vessel, and he was sure no complaint could have possibly stemmed from this. Mr. Glessner in his statement indicated that he had been inconvenienced prior to the ship's departure from Seattle because the 2nd Assistant Engineer, Franklin John Hall, who had been sent up from San Francisco, had quit the ship shortly before its departure and also that the 1st Assistant Engineer, George Guffy, had to be taken to the hospital. Mr. Glessner maintained, however, that the replacement of these men had not delayed the ship's departure. He also claimed that he did not know why Hall Quit. In this connection Mr. Glessner stated that he vaguely recalled that a Mr. Howard, representing the American Mail Line at Seattle, had expressed some concern over Hall quitting the ship after the company had brought him up from San Francisco but had indicated that he would not make a report of the matter if the company was reimbursed for Hall's airplane fare. Mr. Glessner said that he did not care to include this last information in his statement because it had happened so long ago he wouldn't want to be quoted as to exact details. While Mr. Glessner claimed he did not know why Hall quit, Chief Mate Dunson stated that he had heard that Hall and some other members of the engine department had been dissatisfied with the condition of the vessel's machinery.

5. The ship's articles and the official log were examined at the office of the Shipping Commissioner at Portland on 31 August, 1945. Inspection of the log revealed that the vessel departed Seattle on 31 May, 1945, arrived at Astoria on 1 June, departed Astoria on 10 June for Eniwetok Atoll, departed Eniwetok 15 July for Guam, departed Guam 9 August, and arrived at Portland on 26 August. There was no record in the log of any delays in sailing caused by the Coast Guard or for any other reason.

6. Examination of the Articles for this particular voyage, which was voyage #5, revealed that the articles had been signed at Seattle on 29 May, 1945, and that the ship had been payed off before the Shipping Commissioner at Portland on 29 August, 1945. The following men who signed on the ship at Seattle on 29 May failed to depart with the ship from Astoria on 10 June: at Seattle, Arthur F. Kelly, A.B., and Homer B. Alexander, messman, failed to join; at Astoria, Alvin E. Paulson, Chief Mate, paid off by mutual consent on 2 June, Jack H. Smith, utilityman, deserted on 3 June, and Peter C. Van Norstran, wiper, deserted on 4 June.

7. The articles reveal that the following nine men were signed on at Astoria on 1 June, 1945, before R. D. Lamb, Deputy Collector of Customs:

Lieut. (jg) John Spencer, 21888K

Master

Subj: SS JOHN LIND; report on

6 September, 1945

Thomas B. Murphy, Chief Radioman; Orville W. Best, 2nd Radioman; Fred M. Dunson, Jr., Chief Mate; LeRoy Nicholson, 1st Assistant Engineer; William J. Hyde, 2nd Assistant Engineer; Albert M. Dickison, 3rd Assistant Engineer; Henry P. Heffernan, fireman-watertender; Robert W. Ayers, assistant cook; and Marvin O. St. Martin, messman. Of these nine men, records of the Portland Intelligence Office reveal that only three of them ever came to the attention of this office in connection with the Merchant Marine Screening Program. They are the following: Dunson, screening completed on 19 December, 1944; Best, completed on 17 April, 1945; and Murphy, completed on 23 May, 1945. According to the ship's officers, the majority of these men came down on the ship from Seattle, while a few joined at Astoria by arrangement with the vessel's agents, the American Mail Line. It was determined that the ship loaded about 3/4 million feet of lumber at Astoria which was used in building bulkheads to secure the vessel's cargo.

8. In conclusion it can be stated that no vessel in the Portland area has ever been delayed in sailing due to the Merchant Marine Screening Program, nor has any complaint on the part of any union representative as a result of this program come to the attention of this office, at least since the writer has been designated Officer-In-Charge.

9. Attention is invited to the fact that there is some indication that a certain amount of dissatisfaction existed in the vessel's engine department before its departure from Seattle, at least in connection with 2nd Assistant Engineer Hall's quitting the ship, which is further borne out by the fact that three engineers and a fireman-watertender were signed on after the ship arrived at Astoria. It is believed significant that the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders Union, which is named as the source of the original complaint, would likely be interested in these men. It was determined that the Mr. Malone mentioned in the complaint is V. J. Malone, Secretary of the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders Union with headquarters at San Francisco. This is an independent union.

*John Spencer*  
JOHN SPENCER

Incls

1. Statement of Captain Mechan
2. Statement of Chief Engr. Glessner

*Lieut. (jg) John Spencer, USNR*

*Master*

SS JOHN LIND  
Portland, Oregon  
1 September, 1945

I, K. V. Glessner, Chief Engineer on the SS JOHN LIND voluntarily make the following statement:

I joined the JOHN LIND as Chief Engineer on 9 June, 1944. To the best of my knowledge, since being on this ship the Coast Guard has never been responsible for any delays in sailing with the possible exception of the beginning of Voyage #5, which commenced at Seattle, Washington, on 31 May, 1945. Prior to departure at this time I believe the Coast Guard Inspectors delayed the vessel's sailing for about two hours while gear was re-stowed in lifeboat #3 and a gasoline line installed in #4 lifeboat. I believe the Coast Guard Inspectors were fully justified in this action, and no complaint was ever made as far as I know.

On this voyage we departed Seattle, Washington, on 31 May, 1945; arrived at Astoria, Oregon, on 1 June, 1945, and departed Astoria, Oregon, on 10 June, 1945, for Eniwetok Atoll. We arrived at Portland, Oregon, on 26 August, 1945, and had not been in Portland previously.

I was somewhat inconvenienced prior to our departure from Seattle because the 2nd Assistant Engineer, Franklin John Hall, who had been sent up from San Francisco, quit the ship shortly after joining it on about 24 May, 1945, and the 1st Assistant Engineer, George Guffy, was taken to the hospital. However, these men were replaced prior to our departure from Seattle, and this did not delay the vessel's sailing. I do not know why Hall quit.

I have read the foregoing statement, and it is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

K. V. Glessner

*Kenneth V. Glessner*

WITNESSED:

*John Spencer*  
Lt. (j.g.) John Spencer, USCGR