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UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
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P.C. ckm  
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11 August, 1945

To: The Commandant (INT)

Subj: American SS JOHN STEVENS; sabotaged hawser

PREDICATION: This report is predicated upon information furnished by Port Security, COTP, Baltimore, and is submitted for information. F.B.I., Baltimore, has been made cognizant.

1. The American SS JOHN STEVENS arrived this port on 5 August, 1945, sailing coastwise from New York, Nils P. Johansson, Master. The vessel is operated by the War Shipping Administration, and Waterman Steamship Corporation, 1825 O'Sullivan Building, Baltimore, are the local agents. The last previous foreign voyage of the JOHN STEVENS was from Boston, on 27 April, 1945, to Antwerp, Cherbourg (6/12/45 - 6/22/45), Le Havre, and paid off 12 July, 1945, at Whitestone, Long Island, New York. In addition to the Master, the deck engineer and a steward are still on board the JOHN STEVENS; all others paid off in New York.

2. On 12 July, 1945, the following damage was discovered and reported by the Master to the Waterman Steamship Office in New York:

- 2 porthole ventilating fans pulled from bulkhead, smashed on deck, wires cut
- 5 pillows, 3 mattresses slashed with a knife
- Moving gears of large machine vise thrown overboard

On 12 July, 1945, the Master reported that the previous evening, the second cook, McCarthy, John C., 2500983, was stopped by the night mate while carrying off a side of bacon. The second cook reputedly knocked the mate out and disappeared. The Master was instructed that the matter would be taken care of, and was told to pay the second cook off. It was also discovered on 12 July, 1945, that all gear stowed in upper fore peak had been dumped in lower fore peak.

3. On 6 August, 1945, the present bos'n of the JOHN STEVENS discovered that 8" manilla hawsers stored portside in the lower fore peak were coiled counter-clockwise, against the lay of the rope. One hawser, about 80

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fathoms, was hauled out topside, and when hauling out a second 80 fathom hawser which had lain underneath, it was discovered to be sliced in five places. A photograph of the damaged hawser is inclosed herewith. The damaged hawser, likewise coiled counter-clockwise, had an eye spliced on one end. The first cut is about 15 feet back from the eye; following cuts are between 50 to 75 feet apart. Apparently the hawser had been cut at the time of being coiled away. A small hatch from upper fore peak to lower is secured by hatch boards when at sea. The valuation of the damaged hawser is approximately \$1000.

4. 368 U.S.A. troops were transported from LeHarve to New York. No suspicion is directed toward any of the Army personnel for any of the damage. All members of the ship's deck gang had access to the fore peak.

5. From conversation with the Master, deck engineer, and steward, this date, it appears that considerable trouble was caused on the last voyage by the cook's department. The second cook was reportedly an ex-Boston prize fighter. The chief mate, BREATH, James J., Z-103374, age 27, comes from Somerville, Massachusetts, and was said to be friendly with the cooks. The Master stated he did not log anyone on the voyage, for nothing was brought to his attention, but he admitted that one man was beaten up by the chief and second cook, receiving medical attention in Cherbourg. The Master also stated that he heard rumors of food from the galley being sold at Cherbourg, but could not catch anyone doing it. According to the deck engineer, ALMEIDA, Louis, Z-235937, the following men were beaten up by the cooks department at one time or another:

WOLF, Elmer	Z-411724
REED, Joseph	Z-488186
STRUDEMAN, Joseph	Z-615936
ASHER, Louie	Z-402965
ESTABROOK, Roy B.	Z-496597

The deck engineer further stated that because of the bullying tendencies of the cook's department, the entire crew was anxious to pay off when the ship reached New York. A copy of the crew list of the JOHN STEVENS' last foreign voyage is inclosed herewith.

6. The Master stated that the hawser could have been damaged on 12 July, 1945, at the time the crew was paid off in New York. No records are kept, however, of when the fore peak was last inspected, nor could it be established when the hawser in question was brought on board. The JOHN STEVENS departed New York for Baltimore on 3 August, 1945.

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7. The present chief mate stated that when he took over, he discovered a machine gun from a British tank in the crew's quarters which he turned over to the Bureau of Customs at Whitestone, Long Island.

*F.W. Stetson Jr.*

F.W. STETSON, Jr.  
Intelligence Officer  
Baltimore, Maryland

Incl-

1. Photograph of damaged hawser
2. Crew list of JOHN STEVENS

cc: DCGIO, 5ND  
COTP, Baltimore