

UNITED STATES NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Confidential

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Sixth Naval District

Subject: Salvage of the M. S. "LA PAZ".

Report Made at: District Intelligence Office, 6ND, Zone 4 **Date:** October 31, 1942.

Report Made by: Ensign Cleve W. ALLEN, Jr., USNR.

Period Covered: October 29, 30, 1942. **Status of Case:** CLOSED

Origin of Case: The M.S. "LA PAZ", a British freighter, torpedoed May 1, 1942, was salvaged by Mr. W. M. LOVETT, Jacksonville, Fla., and towed to Jacksonville on October 7, 1942.

Character of Investigation:

To obtain description of salvage operations and to ascertain present status of SUBJECT vessel.

Enclosures: (A) Eighteen (18) photographs of SUBJECT (ONI only)

Copy to: ONI - 2 (FIO)
6ND e 1
Sec. B-5 and B-8 - 1 Zone 4, 6ND - 1
7ND - 2
CG Intell. Offr. - 1

Source File No.

ONI File No.:

Synopsis:

The M. S. "LA PAZ", a British freighter of 6548 gross tons, torpedoed May 1, 1942, at 0440 EWT, was towed by M. V. "WORDEN", Bahama Shipping Co., to 1½ miles west of Cocoa Beach, Fla. Abandoned by crew 2½ days after torpedoed. Mr. William L. LOVETT, owner of M. V. "WORDEN", filed salvage claim in U. S. District Court on May 22, 1942, and purchased the ship at U. S. Marshal's sale for \$10,000. Ship was abandoned for approximately three weeks during which time considerable whiskey and other cargo was stolen by fisherman; rumored that U. S. Coast Guard participated in stripping ship. Ship's owners, the Pacific Steamship Navigation Co., Liverpool, England, gave ship up for total loss upon advice of ship's officers and company official. Five (5) professional divers, assisted by thirty-five (35) fishermen and high school boys under direction of Captain E. W. BORDEN of the M. V. "TRUXTON", succeeded in raising vessel which was towed to Jacksonville by Navy tug "WELLFLEET" on October 7, 1942. War Shipping Administration requisitioned SUBJECT vessel on Oct. 14, 1942. Ship scheduled to be rebuilt at Merrill-Stevens Dry Dock & Repair Co., Jacksonville, upon completion of dry dock in December 1942. Cost of salvage estimated at \$250,000.

~~Deletions:~~

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Authority NN-3-26-83-11By ch NARA. Date 06/12/17

Approved:
FRANK MORTON, S. W. SOUERS
Lt. Commander, USNR
Acting District Intelligence Officer