



ELEVENTH NAVAL DISTRICT  
~~TREASURY DEPARTMENT~~

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

U. S. COAST GUARD (11)

REC'D NOV 21 1941

17 November, 1941.

From: Senior Coast Guard Officer, Eleventh Naval District.

To: Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard.

Subject: S.S. MARIPOSA; removal of three persons from.

Reference: (a) Letter, C.O. L.A. Base, 15 November, 1941 (661).  
(b) Letter, Master S.S. MARIPOSA, 15 November, 1941.

Enclosure: (A) Copy of Reference (a).  
(B) Copy of Reference (b).

1. The Enclosures are forwarded for the information of Headquarters. The three men who were removed from the subject vessel are now confined in the Immigration Station, Terminal Island, California, and the British Vice-Consul at San Pedro has been requested to take prompt action toward their removal from the United States in a British vessel.

*L. L. Bennett*  
L. L. BENNETT

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NN3-26-83-11  
By LW NARA. Date 6/21/17

*[Handwritten initials]*

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NOV 21 1941



Subject: SS MARIPOSA; removal of three persons from.

LOS ANGELES BASE

San Pedro, California.

15 November, 1941.

From: Commanding Officer, Los Angeles Base.  
 To: Captain of the Port, Los Angeles.  
 Subject: SS MARIPOSA; removal of three persons from.

Reference: (a) Letter of Captain Wm. R. Meyer, Master of the SS MARIPOSA.

(b) Section 1, Title II, Espionage Act, as amended.

Inclosure: (A) News clipping (Los Angeles Examiner, 16 November, 1941) attached to original.

1. G. McKinlay, W. Gordon, and J. McCauley were removed from the MARIPOSA at about 2000 this date by a Coast Guard Detail in command of Lieutenant R. E. Wroczkowski. The men were taken from the ships' offshore side into the CGR-295 and were at no time on shore within jurisdiction of the State of California. They were landed on the Government reservation at Terminal Island and confined for safe keeping in the United States Immigration Detention Station.

2. The SS MARIPOSA (18017 Gross Tons) is an express passenger vessel of the Oceanic Line. It is enroute from San Francisco to Australia via Los Angeles and Honolulu. The vessel has about 800 passengers and a full cargo of freight including defense materials for Pacific ships and stations.

3. Last night, 14 November, the Matson Navigation Company informed this office that they had arranged with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to have the ship boarded outside the harbor. It was desired by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Matson Navigation Company to have this accomplished by Coast Guard craft.

4. Information then available was given the Captain of the Port. His instructions were that co-operation be given the Federal Bureau of Investigation by furnishing the means by which they might board the vessel and proceed with their investigations.

5. Ninety-nine British merchant seamen, mostly of stoker and seaman ratings, were first-class passengers in the MARIPOSA. They had come from Liverpool. During the trans-Atlantic voyage there occurred violence and severe trouble on board the ship while enroute to the United States. At San Francisco there was a drunken and violent brawl at the time of boarding the MARIPOSA and the police clubbed some of them into submission after injuries had been sustained by both themselves and the British seamen.

REC'D NOV 21 1941



661

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6. The men are not traveling in uniform. Their first class staterooms are not grouped to a particular part of the ship. No licensed or Board of Trade certificated officer is in charge to maintain discipline. A man of the Stewards Department has their transportation papers. He is nominally in charge but is without authority to compel their good behavior. There being no boss, the men have apparently succumbed to leadership of a violent element who seized advantage of this situation. On the high seas while enroute from San Francisco, one of the men was apprehended in the stateroom of the Brazilian Consul to Sydney. He is alleged to have stolen jewelry of Senora H. Mario Santos valued at \$15,000.00. The seamen have the run of the public rooms. They are alleged to have accosted women about the ship and also engaged in some purse snatching. The Master states that some of the passengers are becoming terrorized and the situation is bad.

7. The Master does not have a prison on board or proper facilities to confine the unruly men. On the long voyage to Australia he anticipated trouble with them and indicated that it might reach into difficulties by fraternization with some of his own crew. His letter is inclosed.

9. The Federal Bureau of Investigation boarded the MARIPOSA with 5 agents. They worked on the jewel robbery from 1100 to about 2200 when the ship sailed without ascertaining information sufficiently conclusive for an indictment. They may continue the case with the alleged ring leaders who have been withheld here.

10. The Master indicated that the arrest of men soon taken off the vessel here in irons would have a profound effect on the others. Such failure to take action would ruin the voyage, jeopardize the ship and have a lasting detrimental effect on the prestige of the United States Merchant Marine.

11. This office made investigations throughout the day and received reports from Mr. Vincent who was in charge of the Federal Bureau's agents. This office concurred with the opinion of other investigators that the ring leaders should be removed from the MARIPOSA at this port.

12. It is unsatisfactory that out passenger vessels are not equipped with adequate ship prison facilities and that masters, during such times, do not always take summary action to suppress disorderly conduct from the start of it. There are, of course, difficulties in some situations.

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REC'D NOV 11 1941

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13. There were telephone conversations between the British Consulate at San Francisco and at San Pedro. Sener Santos wired the Brazilian office at Washington. Mr. John Blood Smythe, British Vice-Consul, San Pedro, was most helpful to the United States authorities and is believed to have inaugurated measures which may prevent re-occurrence of such happenings.

14. The prisoners are detained at the Immigration Station because they are aliens, because the Coast Guard does not have a prison nor the authority to confine aliens taken from ships in local jails.

From: Wm. R. Meyer

15. It is recommended that authorizations be made to confine persons taken from ships. There are times when it is a responsibility of the Captain of the Port to remove persons but the instructions are incomplete because no place is designated for their confinement.

16. The men confined were enroute to Australia to man British merchant vessels. It is recommended that the British Ministry of War transport be charged with the cost of their detention and that they be shipped out of the United States by the next British merchant vessel to leave Los Angeles. I request their removal here in Los Angeles Harbor.

These men have been violent and I, D. HICKEY, reasonable grounds to believe they have participated in a felony aboard the vessel. They have also selected other passengers and willfully failed to obey orders from the ship's officers to refrain from using vile and obscene language, replying to the officers' orders, that the officers have no authority over them.

\* SCGO does not mention Room 144  
J. McCauley 278  
" 301

/s/ Wm. R. Meyer.

a correct copy  
J.F. Barrett

REC'D NOV 21 1941  
U. S. COAST GUARD (1)  
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MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY

Wilmington, Calif.  
15 November, 1941.

To Captain of the Port  
Port of Los Angeles, Calif.  
San Pedro, Calif.

From: Wm. R. Meyer  
Master  
SS MARIPOSA

Sir:

The presence of the men listed hereunder, passengers on board this vessel from San Francisco to Sydney, Australia, during the remainder of the voyage may jeopardize the safety of the passengers and the ship and be obstructive to the commerce of the United States, I request their removal here in Los Angeles Harbor.

These men have been violent and there are reasonable grounds to believe they have participated in a felony aboard the vessel. They have also molested other passengers and willfully failed to obey orders from the ship's officers to refrain from using vile and obscene language, replying to the officers' orders, that the officers have no authority over them.

G. McKinlay	Room 144
W. Gordon	" 278
J. McCauley	" 301

/s/ Wm. R. Meyer.

*a correct copy*  
*J. J. Bennett*

U. S. COAST GUARD (11) GRAND TACKLE S. U.  
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