

Second Mate recommended more drinking water in lifeboats. Also, that officers of vessel should discuss plans in case of attack, before ship sails.

Chief Mate stated that the boats and gear were as good as he had seen, or had been made, and he could not see where there could be any improvement.

Testimony indicated that the men had no detailed duties at boat drill. (Army transport.)

Second Mate attempted to lower #2 boat but was unable to do so because it had become fouled from the wire bridle holding it against the strong-back in the hand grabs. He recommended that rope should be used in making bridles instead of wire, so that it could be cut easily in an emergency. Also recommended that protruding ends be cut off the grab rails.

WEST HARDAWAY (June 15, 1942)

At the time of the first torpedoing, the radio operator was unable to send out an SOS. The set refused to transmit - apparently the shock had jarred the tubes. On the second boarding party, he changed all the tubes in the set, and when he turned on the switch, it worked. It was an emergency set. He was able to get his message off to Puerto Rico and Trinidad.

Master stated that "the low rig of the lifeboat, the sail, should be more or less a sloop rig, because you can't sail these boats less than 6 points into the wind, and if you were trying to make up a port tack, that would be in the wind a little closer and you wouldn't be able to make it because it's very difficult to tack and sail close into the wind with a low rig. You can sail closer with a sloop rig, and I believe that everything should be done, for the lifeboats should be able to sail as close as possible, that is, for the size they are and the sail that they have."

NEW JERSEY (May 28, 1942)

Master recommended more carlocks in the lifeboats. Also suggested double bottoms in the boats for water tanks, in compartments, with plugs on the outside in ~~the~~ case the boat turns over.