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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

19 January 1955

2003

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: M/S ALFHEM - Inspection of Ship and Interrogation of
Crew at Key West, Florida, 28 May 1954

1. On Sunday, 16 May 1954, word was received from Guatemala that the M/S ALFHEM had arrived the day before at Puerto Barrios, the Caribbean port of Guatemala, and rumors were circulating that she was unloading a large cargo of arms. Subsequent events proved this to be correct. The ship departed from Puerto Barrios late Sunday evening 23 May 1954 and her master was advised by the owners in Sweden that they had cancelled the charter under which she was operating, and he was to proceed to Key West to "give the American authorities all wanted information."

2. It was estimated that the ALFHEM would arrive at Key West about Friday, 28 May, and plans were made to send a team to Key West to interrogate the crew. The Navy, through Commander Sullivan at ONI, advised that they would track the ship to make sure that she came to Key West. Through Mr. H. Chapman Rose, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, and Mr. Chester A. Emerick, Deputy Commissioner of Customs, Customs and Coast Guard personnel at Key West were alerted. Through Mr. Helms, Mr. Samuel Papich of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was contacted and it was agreed that, although they might alert their local agents to watch any of the crew who came ashore, they would not be concerned with any shipboard interrogation.

3. Suddenly about 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, 27 May, word was received from the Coast Guard via Mr. Emerick that "the ship will arrive at Key West at 3:00 p.m., and will anchor offshore for two or three hours." This inaccurate ETA resulted from a Coast Guard air reconnaissance the night before, and was disputed by ONI, but it was decided to get a team on the way on a crash basis. Accordingly, the following left Washington on Eastern Airlines at 11:45 a.m. arriving in Miami at 2:00 p.m.:

Department of State:

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Department of State: Edward A. Jamison, Deputy Director, Office of
Regional American Affairs
Orray Taft, Jr., Office of Munitions Control

Central Intelligence Agency: C

J Chief, Economic Warfare Division,
Political and Psychological Staff
J Economic Warfare Division, PP
J , PBSUCCESS
J PBSUCCESS (interpreter)

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A Coast Guard plane was waiting in Miami and the party went straight through to Key West where they arrived about 4:00 p.m.

4. Lieutenant John B. Hayes, Coast Guard Captain of the Port, met the plane and asked C J and Jamison to ride with him to his office where they could get a briefing. He advised that the ship had not yet been sighted, and he did not believe she would arrive until midnight. This was contrary to the information we had received in Washington, but exactly in accord with the ONI estimate.

5. The following were present at the Port Captain's Office:

- Roy H. Alderman, Deputy Collector of Customs at Key West
- C. A. McPherson, Immigration Officer in Charge, Key West
- Edward F. Shaffer, Public Health Quarantine Inspector, Key West
- Messrs. MacWilliams and Lazoli (first names unknown) Miami Customs Office

Lt. Henry J. Gardner, Coast Guard Intelligence, Miami

Only Jamison and C J of the Washington party were present, but we assumed that the others had been delayed in transport from the airport.

6. Not knowing the temper of the ALFHEM's captain or how long he would be willing to stay in Key West, we endeavored to keep the original boarding party to a minimum, but it was immediately apparent that everybody at the meeting wanted to go aboard and felt they had valid reasons why their official duties required them to be present.

7. After a long discussion, it was finally agreed that C J and Jamison would start the interrogation, accompanied by C J as interpreter. The Public Health Officer insisted that he should be the first aboard to check for any illness, in order to prevent the boarding party from being quarantined on board the ship for thirty days, if sickness were discovered later. Customs Officer Alderman agreed to stand by and come aboard later with a team of ten Coast Guard inspectors when preliminary negotiations with the captain indicated that he was willing to have the ship searched. The Immigration Officer, Mr. McPherson, was finally persuaded that he could waive intensive examination of the crew and other

formalities

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formalities since it had been decided that, for security reasons, none of the crew would be permitted ashore. He later presented a waiver for signature by the undersigned, copy of which is attached.

8. After about an hour of this discussion, word was received that the Acting Commandant of the Naval Station was waiting for us in his office. There we found three of the angriest four-strippers we had ever seen, together with the rest of the Washington party. Apparently Lt. Hayes of the Coast Guard had pulled a fast one in taking Jamison and [] in his car to his office, whereas the other cars at the airport were Navy vehicles with instructions to take the entire party to the Commandant. (See memorandum attached from Lt. Gardner, United States Coast Guard, regarding the background of this jurisdictional hassle between the Coast Guard and the Navy. One explanation for the animosity between these two services, subsequently provided by Mr. Emerick in Washington, was the fact that shortly before our arrival, the Coast Guard had arrested several Navy personnel for running liquor into Key West from Cuba.)

9. It was finally agreed with Captain William H. Truesdale, Acting Commandant (the Admiral in command being absent), Captain Charlton L. Murphy and a Captain Momm that the Navy would post a destroyer at the entrance to Key West anchorage after the ship's arrival with instructions to detain her there, by force, if necessary, until released by [] The Coast Guard was to meet the ship at the sea buoy, escort her to anchorage and maintain picket boat surveillance on a 24-hour basis as long as she was at anchor. It might be noted here that the Navy was particularly annoyed because they had not been officially advised of the ALFHEM's arrival, and the first word that they had gotten was from a fuel oil salesman in Key West who had inquired about his chances for bunkering the ship. Matters finally simmered down and ultimately Captain Murphy proved most friendly and cooperative, but there was some loose talk about [] and Jamison having been kidnapped by the Coast Guard when the meeting first started.

10. The only additions to the boarding part resulting from the second conference were two ONI representatives, Henry G. Swicord and William S. Douglas.

11. While all this was going on, DD/P held a meeting in Washington at which he and Mr. Raymond G. Leddy for the Department of State, and the Honorable H. Chapman Rose, Assistant Secretary of Treasury; Admiral Alfred C. Richmond, Commandant, United States Coast Guard; and Mr. Chester A. Emerick, Deputy Commissioner of Customs, Treasury Department, agreed to the measures to be taken for the inspection of the ALFHEM and the interrogation of the crew. See DD/P original memorandum dated 27 May 1954 initialed by all present, attached hereto.

12. The Washington party

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12. The Washington party was put up at the Bachelor Officers Quarters but Mr. Taft elected to spend the night on a picket boat with Lt. Hayes, USCG. They were to meet the ship and determine whether the rest of the party should be awakened and brought out to the anchorage or whether the captain would wait until daylight.

13. The vessel arrived at the sea buoy at 2:30 a.m. and the captain said that he wanted to wait for daylight before coming into the harbor. A pilot was put aboard at 5:30 a.m. and she dropped anchor at 7:30 a.m. At 8:15 a.m., the boarding party arrived along side and after a ten minute cursory questioning, by Mr. Shaffer, the Quarantine Inspector, Messrs. Jamison [] and [] went aboard.

14. Captain Johan Henry Lind proved to be a very agreeable and apparently cooperative Swede with a good working knowledge of English. At the preliminary conversation in his cabin, he readily agreed to a thorough inspection of his ship by the Customs people, interrogation of any and all members of his crew, photostating of the ship's documents, including time charter, loading plan, crew list, ship's log, and radio log, all of which he turned over to us without question. He also agreed to go ashore and he spent the next eight hours at the Office of the Captain of the Port working out his formal affidavit. [] was assigned the task of drafting this document, questioning the captain and recording his answers and observations. The transcript and typing were done by Mrs. Constance W. Weatherford, a Notary Public in Captain Murphy's office. [] took over the photostating of all the documents, which was done through Captain Murphy's office, who also supplied photographs of the ship at anchor. The officers and crew were formally interrogated by Lt. Gardner and his Coast Guard intelligence people together with representatives of the Office of Naval Intelligence. [] circulated around informally and engaged the crew in conversation on an off-the-record basis. The vessel was searched by Customs Officer Alderman and Mr. Taft and ten Coast Guardsmen who found a few odds and ends of printed material, tags, newspapers, burlap bags, etc., but nothing of any importance.

15. When we checked in with Headquarters by telephone on arrival, DD/P passed on three specific questions to which he wanted as adequate answers as possible.

a. Was the ship carrying any passengers who debarked at Puerto Barrios?

We were not able to find any information to substantiate this rumor. In private conversation the steward said that he would have been responsible for providing meals, even if the passenger had been hidden on board, and he was certain that there was no such situation.

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b. Is there

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b. Is there a second vessel following the ALFHEM with more arms?

Apparently the first any of the officers and crew heard about this story was at Puerto Barrios. Second Engineer Johnsson reported he had met a Guatemalan Major Manuel Somoza whom he had known on a Swedish Red Cross ship returning from Korea, who had told him this story about the second ship. It was clear that nobody on board had heard the story before arriving in Guatemala.

c. Which crew member wanted to see a Swedish Consul?

This reported request was the reverse of the facts. Second Engineer Johnsson received word from the Swedish Consulate in Guatemala City that the Consul wanted to see him, Johnsson. The latter had no idea why and as his week-end pass to Guatemala City was cancelled, he never made the contact.

16. The Chief Officer reported that two members of the crew had jumped ship at Puerto Barrios, but thought that this was not significant. This desertion was properly recorded in the ship's log, and the deserters' few possessions were being taken back to Sweden for delivery to the ship's owners.

17. Several members of the crew were found to be in need of medical attention, and Dr. Ralph Herz of the Public Health Service was sent out to the ship. Second Cook Ekeberg had a bad cut on his leg and First Motorman Kampf had an infected ear. Upon the doctor's orders, both of these men were taken to the Monroe General Hospital for treatment and remained there after the ship sailed. They were subsequently interrogated by Lt. Gardner of the Coast Guard Intelligence and his report is attached hereto. The doctor was paid \$100 to guarantee the hospital bills of the sick crewmen and eventually sent in what we regarded as an exorbitant bill of \$2,200 for sewing up Ekeberg's leg and treating Kampf's ear. Two other crew members were taken ashore for preventive shots but returned aboard immediately.

18. The search of the vessel and the formal interrogation of the crew were finished by mid-day. As shown by the various reports and affidavits in the file, the captain and officers firmly denied any knowledge of the nature of their cargo. Most of the crew seem to have suspected what they were carrying, but could merely provide guesses in their statements.

As the preparation of Captain Lind's formal affidavit kept him ashore all day, the interrogators (C J and the ONI and CG personnel) had an opportunity to fraternize with the officers and crew on a very informal basis for several hours. Schnapps and beer were provided by the ship's personnel, but even under such informal and friendly circumstances, nothing of consequence was developed regarding our basic question of just what the cargo had consisted of.

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19. The Coast Guard

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19. The Coast Guard maintained close surveillance of the ship and prevented any representatives of the press from coming aboard. However, both Key West and Miami papers featured the story of the M/S ALFHEM. Copies of these papers are attached.

20. Late in the afternoon, Mr. Henry F. Holland, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, asked by telephone that signed and sworn statements be obtained from some of the officers to the effect that they were not permitted to look at the cargo; that the unloading at Puerto Barrios was surrounded with unusual security precautions; that access was denied to the public and press; etc. These statements were drafted and authenticated by Lt. Gardner who, as Coast Guard Officer, is authorized to take acknowledgments.

21. Two incidents on the lighter side occurred during the day that are worth recording. Mr. Taft discovered a Chinese ideograph painted on the side of the vessel's hold. After a great deal of effort, he located the one Chinese resident of Key West named Pong working in a local restaurant. He was taken on board and translated the ideograph as meaning, "Happy New Year."

Late in the afternoon, one of the service interrogators, who must remain nameless, after partaking of the Swedish hospitality of the crew for several hours, solemnly informed the undersigned that there was one item of intelligence which he felt he needed to complete his report and which he believed I was keeping from him, namely: "The true nature of the cargo." When asked what the blank he thought the objective of the entire exercise was, he wandered off into the sunset.

22. The expedition ended on a happy note with the entire Washington party in the captain's cabin for an excellent dinner of marinated herring washed down with schnapps and beer and presided over by Mrs. Lind, a very pleasant Swedish woman.

23. Captain Murphy drove the party out to the airport about 9:00 p.m. where a Coast Guard plane took us to Miami for the night. Returned to Washington the next morning, Sunday, 30 May, via commercial plane, arriving about noon.

24. A verbal report of the expedition was delivered that afternoon to Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Henry F. Holland, Mr. Leddy, DD/P and various other interested officials.

25. The ship was proceeding to Cuba to load sugar at Antillas and later stopped at Havana, where arrangements were made for further interrogation. [] was sent there and his report is in the attached file. There he was able to obtain a photographic copy of the original receipted

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Bill of Lading

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Bill of Lading. A carbon copy had been provided by Captain Lind at the first interrogation, but it was unsigned and he was unwilling to take the original ashore. This Bill of Lading, together with the corresponding loading plan, declared the cargo to be composed entirely of innocent items like shovels, nails, machine tools, laboratory glass, etc. The admission later by Guatemalan officials that arms had been transported on the ALFHEM proved the deception involved in the whole operation.

[]

Assistant Deputy Director
(Administration)

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University of Michigan

May 31 1951

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University of Michigan

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[REDACTED]

MEMORANDUM BY

Henry J. Gardner, Lt., JG
United States Coast Guard Intelligence

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Inspection of M/S ALFHEM

and

Interrogation of Crew

at

Key West, Florida

28 May 1954

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M/V ALFHEM

On Wednesday, 26 ~~April~~ May 1954, information was received from the Naval Intelligence Officer in Miami, Lt. E. Swicord, that the ALFHEM would be arriving in Key West on 27 May. This information originated from a secret message from COMSIX to Naval Intelligence in Miami with Naval Base, Key West as info addressee. A conference was held in the office of Cdr. 7 CG District between Capt. Swicegood, Cdr. Sharp, Lt. Swicord, Mr. Brantley, Deputy Collector of Customs, Miami, and Lt. Gardner. It was pointed out to Naval Intelligence that regardless of the source of information the handling of a category vessel ~~is~~ was a Coast Guard responsibility. COMSIX had ordered Naval Intelligence to conduct a NIRMS 2 and 18 coverage of this vessel. The information was that the vessel had been ordered into Key West by the owner in order to cooperate fully with U. S. authorities. Capt. Truesdell, Acting Commanding Officer, ~~NAV~~ NOB Key West, had indicated to Swicord that if COMSIX had wanted the Coast Guard in on this case we would have been addressee to the message. Capt. Swicegood contacted Capt. Denty in HQ, and indicated to him that some sort of coordination was in necessary on a HQ level. Apparently, Coast Guard HQ had no knowledge of the vessel's expected arrival in Key West.

On the afternoon of 26 May I proceeded to Key West, Fla. Late that night a conference was held at the Hotel LaConcha between Coast Guard Intelligence and Naval Intelligence. It was decided that the vessel would be boarded in accordance with the Commandant's orders for a Category B type vessel. It was agreed that Naval Intelligence could board the vessel under ~~the~~ cover as a Customs or Immigration official.

On the morning of 27 May Lt. J. B. Hayes, Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Base, Key West, was made cognizant of the operation. Hayes stated that he had received information from a Miami Herald reporter that the ALFHEM, which had discharged arms in Guatemala, was arriving in Key West some time soon. This information originated from the Associated Press in Washington. NOB Key West had advised the press that they had no comment. This confirmed the reporter's suspicion that the information was accurate. Capt. Swicegood advised me that a party consisting of Central Intelligence agents and State Department representatives ~~was being flown~~ was being flown from Washington to Miami, where the party was to be met ~~by the Coast Guard~~ by the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard was then to fly this party and two Customs searchers from Miami to Key West.

JCIA, was to be given full cooperation. The vessel was to be detained by force if necessary upon entry into Territorial waters. The Commanding Officer Coast Guard Cutter ARIADNE was ordered to stand by and provide any assistance required.

Cdr. Culjat, Operations Officer VP 5, contacted me personally and advised that his plane had picked up the ALFHEM at 0100, 27 May, off Cape San Antonio, with a speed of advance of 15 knots. This information would have made the ETA at approximately 1500. Plans were made to board the vessel and hold her under the guise of a Customs search waiting arrival of State Department representatives from Washington. Mr. Roy Alderman, Deputy Collector of Customs,

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was made cognizant of the entire situation, and stated that he had received orders from Washington to give me full cooperation in this matter. Mr. ~~McPherson~~ McPherson, Inspector of Immigration and Naturalization Service, Key West, was called in and promised his full cooperation. Mr. Shaffer, U. S. Public Health Service (Quarantine) Key West, was advised that a Swedish merchant ship was expected from Guatemala, and stated that he would board the vessel in the customary manner.

Capt. Murphy, Chief of Staff, at MOB Key West, showed me the messages which he had received from COMSIX ~~at CNO~~ and CNO. Capt. Murphy stated that he was not aware of the Navy's responsibility in this matter, but that he would cooperate to whatever extent was required. Arrangements were made for all interested parties to meet at the office of Lt. Hayes. Lt. Hayes went to Meecham Field to meet the party from Washington. The Admiral's Aide also was at the field to meet his party. It was discovered that Capt. Truesdell had given orders to the Admiral's Aide to bring the party directly to his office. At approximately 4 o'clock Lt. Hayes arrived at his office with [redacted] and most of his party. Some of the party, however, were at Capt. Truesdell's office. [redacted] was briefed on the Coast Guard's position in this case, and then taken to Capt. Truesdell's office. After a lengthy and confused meeting, it was decided that the Coast Guard picket boat would meet the vessel at the sea buoy, and the master would be given a choice between being boarded immediately or waiting until day break and being boarded. The vessel's ETA at this time was 0200, 28 May. The party from Washington consisted of [redacted] Mr. Jamison, State Department, [redacted] [redacted] CIA, [redacted], USAF, representing the Department of Defense, and Mr. Roary Taft, State Department.

The vessel arrived at 0230, 28 May, and was met at the sea buoy by Lt. Hayes and Mr. Taft, aboard the Coast Guard picket boat. The master stated that he desired to wait until day break before proceeding to anchorage. At 0530 Pilot Russell was put aboard the vessel by the Coast Guard, and the vessel was escorted to an anchorage off the Mole. At 0730 the vessel dropped the anchor and pilot. At 0815 the vessel was boarded by [redacted] Jamison, [redacted] Alderman, McPherson, Shaffer, Swicord. At 0820 the Boarding Party, consisting of myself as Coast Guard Boarding Officer, 2 customs searchers from Miami, 10 men from the ARIADNE, and W. H. Johnson, Investigator, Coast Guard Intelligence, boarded the vessel. Mr. Taft was also in this party. Under the supervision of Customs, a search was instituted in the vessel's holds. The master of the vessel advised the State Department that it would be permissible for them to take all ship's papers, including log books, charter parties, bills of lading, radio logs, ~~etc~~ ashore. These papers were taken ashore, and under the supervision of [redacted] photostats were made. The Navy arranged for photographs of the vessel to be taken from helicopters. The vessel was kept under surveillance by Coast Guard 52 footer, and no person was permitted aboard without the permission of myself. No news-men at any time boarded the vessel.

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INFORMATION RECEIVED THROUGH INTERROGATION OF CREW MEMBERS

The Chief Mate, Carl Axel Ohlsson, told me in substance as follows: That he joined the vessel in Copenhagen early in April; that it was his understanding from the person who employed him in Stockholm that the vessel was taking general cargo to South America. He stated that the vessel arrived in Stettin, Poland, at 0830 on 9 April 1954, and departed at 1325 on 17 April 1954. He stated this was his first trip aboard this ship or with this Company. He stated that he noticed in Stettin that the freights seemed to be too tightly packed to have contained the hardware which was supposed to have been loaded on board. He stated that while at sea he made an inspection of No. 5 hold and noticed that one case had broken into and recooped. He claims that he had no actual knowledge of the arms having been on board the vessel. He stated that the first information he had that there had been arms on board the vessel was from the Swedish radio after the vessel had left Puerto Barrias. He stated that the vessel left ~~Stettin~~ Stettin for Dakar for orders. Prior to ETA Dakar the orders were changed by radio to Curaco. Prior to ETA Curaco the orders were changed to Honduras. Prior to ETA Honduras the orders were finally changed to Puerto Barrias. He stated that he did not go ashore in Poland or Puerto Barrias. He stated that he has a family in Sweden, and never goes ashore in any port, except Sweden. Later he told me that some of the cargo was also glassware. He gave me the information as to the vessel which was required for me to complete my boarding report. The Captain had been taken ashore and interrogated by members of the State Department. Throughout the day the Chief Mate was concerned about the Captain, and stated "Where is my Captain?"

The Second Mate was interrogated by Swicord for several hours, and the information ~~xxx~~ obtained will be available at a later date.

The Captain's wife acted as hostess for all U. S. authorities aboard, and had the Steward set up an elaborate lunch and supplied a large quantity of Dutch gin, beer, cigars, cheese, etc. She stated her name was Bjorn Lind, and gave her address in Sweden as Bohuslandska Kustun, Udevalla, Sweden. Every time the interrogation turned to the information desired Mrs. Lind became very evasive. She advised that her son, Alf O. Hran Lindsrom, age 17, was a member of the crew, and that they had taken him out of college and brought him along because he refused to study. Mrs. Lind spoke excellent English, and used several American slang terms and idioms. She stated that she had never been in the States, but had spent some time in England, and that she read several American detective stories. She told me that it was her desire to cash her insurance and take a trip to the States without any of her family. She stated that the Chief Mate and the Chief Engineer were very good friends, had wonderful senses of humor, and were excellent officers. She said the crew members were unusually young and inexperienced. Mrs. Lind's 3 year old daughter was also aboard the vessel. It was noted that Mrs. Lind claimed that the son is actually hers, but her age is listed on the crew list as 34. Mrs. Lind stated she was married at the age of 20.

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Mrs. Lind stated that the wife of the First Engineer and his 6 year old son were aboard the vessel. During the conversation Mrs. Lind remarked that Sweden has always managed to remain neutral but will not be able to do so next time. Mrs. Lind is obviously a woman with an excellent education and background. She performed her duties as hostess in a manner which indicated that she had previous experience.

The Third Mate, a Norwegian named Olsen, was rather difficult to get information from. He spoke good English, and stated that his wife and children were in Norway, but that an Englishman had taken his wife away from him. He stated that he has spent considerable time in the States, and mentioned that on one occasion he spent 14 days in Miami living with a woman who was using morphine. He stated that he went ashore at Guatemala and got drunk. He was with some of the native Guatemalan girls. While in Guatemala he went swimming with his clothes on. This was the first night in port. He said that he heard the information that night in Puerto Barris that ~~the cargo~~ the ALFHEM's cargo consisted of arms. He said it was general scuttelbutt among the crew that the cargo consisted of arms. It is believed that the Third Mate, had knowledge of the arms in Poland. The Third Mate was dissatisfied with the fact that he had the 12-4 watch instead of the 8-12. He agreed that it was customary that the Third Mate have the 8-12 on merchant ships, but seemed bitter toward the Captain causing him to stand the Second Mate's watch on Third Mate's pay. It was a very close relationship between the Third Mate, the Steward, Second Engineer, and the wife of the First Engineer. x

I was invited in to the Steward's room where he served brandy and coce. Mrs. Anderson later came in to the room, and shortly thereafter the Third Mate came in. Mrs. Anderson stated that she worked in a jewelry store in New York for eight years, from 1938 to 1946. She claims she met her husband in New York. She stated that while the vessel was in Puerto Barrias her husband had an attack of malaria, and that she went ashore with the Steward. They returned to the vessel at 6 a. m., and her husband had passed the crisis, and was angry because she had stayed out so late. The Steward is Danish, and has a wife and two children in Denmark. The Steward left the room for a few minutes, and the Third Mate remarked that the Steward was too good a steward for that ship. Mrs. Anderson remarked that "several of us" were too good for the ship. The Third Mate became disturbed at her remark, and signalled to her to keep quiet. Mrs. Anderson claimed that she spent \$100 while ashore in Guatemala. It became obvious after a period of time that Mrs. Anderson was sleeping with the Steward, Second Engineer, and Third Mate. Her husband apparently spent a considerable amount of time off watch drinking and sleeping. This was later confirmed by Kamph. Mrs. Anderson claimed to have gone ashore in Poland without permission. She was also interested in sneaking ashore at Key West. This information was developed by Johnson, USCG. The First Engineer had ordered his wife to keep her mouth shut about the arms. Later he came in to the Steward's room, and it was difficult to obtain any further information at that time.

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The Radio Operator was interrogated by me. His English was not too good. Several times he contradicted himself. First he denied that he had been ashore in Poland. Later on he admitted that he had gone ashore during the day time on four occasions at ~~Stok~~ Stettin. He claimed to have no knowledge whatever of the arms. He denied having heard of it, even by radio. He turned over to me a pack of Polish cigarettes which he said had been left aboard by the previous radio operator. Some of his notes and messages received by the ship's radio were surreptitiously taken from his waste basket. Part of these notes contained messages which were quoted in Swedish, and one message was in English from the owner ordering the ship into Key West and to give the U. S. authorities all wanted information. Upon arrival in Stettin the Radio Operator stated that all binoculars, telescopes, and cameras aboard the ship were sealed in the radio shack. The Captain took all the radios on board the ship and locked them with the ship's stores. All members of the crew who were allowed ashore were given landing cards. Loss of the card resulted in a fine. Every crew member was allowed to take a small amount of money, Polish, one pack of cigarettes, and no other article from the ship's store. Armed guards patrolled the dock. The Radio Operator reported that he saw the vessel "RITA", owned by Heindel & a Schander, Gothenburg, Sweden, about 3,000 gross tons, in Stettin. He claimed he saw ships of the German, Dutch, Polish, and Norwegian flags there. He stated that on the 8th of April, at Swindande, he saw several Polish and Russian torpedo boats.

The Boarding Party returned to the ship with the Captain late in the afternoon. The State Department officials stated that they believed they had all the information desired. Sworn statements were taken by me from the Third Mate, Chief Mate, and First Engineer. Copies of these statements will be made available by the State Department later. It is interesting to note that the First Engineer having first made sure the Captain was not present stated that he knew in Poland that the cargo consisted of arms from the shapes of the boxes. The Boarding Party departed the vessel at approximately 2015. A surveillance was maintained by the Coast Guard 52 footer. Two of the members of the crew required medical assistance, and Public Health Service doctor examined them on the ship and ordered them hospitalized. The Chief Mate was quite disturbed about the fact that these men were going off the ship. These men were placed in Munroe General Hospital, Key West. [redacted] requested that I follow up on the interrogation of these two crewmen.

The officials from Washington were returned to Miami via Coast Guard plane, and returned to Washington from Miami via commercial aircraft.

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On 29 May, Bror Henry Kamph, First Motorman, was interrogated for approximately 4½ hours. Kamph let it be known at the outset that there was a considerable amount of friction between him and the Captain, and he did not want the Captain to know that he had given us all his information. Kamph feared that he would be blacklisted. Kamph wants to be paid off the ship and to return to Sweden. He stated that he will not under any circumstances return to the ship. Dr. Ralph Herz, Public Health Service, stated that Kamph has x cellulitis of the face, neck, and ear, extending beyond the mastoid process, and that he will be hospitalized for approximately 7 to 10 days. The prognosis is good, but had it not been for immediate treatment this would have caused a probable abscess leading to the brain. Kamph is in extreme pain unless he is given regular hypo's. Kamph stated that there was no doubt in his mind but that the Captain, Chief Mate, and Chief Engineer had actual knowledge that the cargo was arms in Poland. He stated that the Captain and Chief Mate could not have been so naive as not to know. He stated that the Chief Mate and Chief Engineer were very close and apart from the other officers. As Journeyman, Kamph was required to discuss the crew's business with the Captain. Kamph stated that he has been going to sea for 5½ years, and has never seen a Captain react as did Captain Lind. Whenever Kamph attempted to present any crew problems to the Captain, the Captain would tell Kamph that he had a lot of worries on his mind, and could not be bothered with the crew. Kamph described Mrs. Lind as a very lovely woman, who helped him out on these crew matters. Kamph said he has been in the States several times, and only recently has been to Communist China. He stated that when he told the Captain that he wanted to see a doctor at Key West, the Captain said it would not be necessary and that he would be treated on the ship. Kamph told the Captain that unless he saw a doctor he would arouse the crew. The Captain finally consented. Kamph is afraid that the Captain will cause Kamph to be blacklisted in Sweden and that Kamph will be unable to get another ship. Kamph described the food on the ship as good, and said the crew was very unrestful, and most of the crew members were afraid. He stated that the Messman and Motor Apprentice who jumped ship in Guatemala came aboard late at night to get their papers, and told Kamph that they were going to try to reach British Honduras and return to Sweden. Kamph advised that the Captain's son was an informer for the Captain, and that anything discussed among the crew in the Captain's son's presence was carried to the Captain. This was discovered early in the trip. Kamph refuses to state that he has any knowledge of any one on the ship being a Communist. Kamph feels sure that the Third Mate had knowledge of the arms. Kamph has a brother whom he claims was deported from California for having been on Iron Curtain runs. Kamph stated that the Chief Mate was very mysterious about warning him concerning the cases which had been broken into in No. 5 hold. Kamph stated that the Chief Mate told him that it would be forgotten but that if there was any more of that some of the crew would be imprisoned ~~mark~~ upon the vessel's return to Sweden. Kamph does not want to see the Swedish ~~mark~~ Consul unless necessary in order to return to Sweden. In Poland Kamph was told by the Chief Mate that the cargo consisted of glassware and silk, and that the crew were to ask no more questions concerning the cargo. Kamph is

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afraid that the Master will find out that he went down into the hold and examined the cargo. Kamph stated that he does not know who broke into the cargo originally, but stated that the Chief Mate could not have discovered this without having examined the cargo himself. It is felt that Kamph has knowledge of who broke into the cargo originally, but since the man is still aboard the ship will not reveal his name. Further interrogation may provide this information. Kamph stated that when the case of machine guns fell on deck the two AB's, HJELANDER and MOLLER, who also saw this, were too afraid to discuss it with any one. Kamph has read the newspaper articles concerning this ship. He read these articles after the interrogation but prior to signing the statement. He read the statement very carefully before signing it, and stated "I am willing to help the free people". Several of the background information about officers and crew members that were obtained by other sources were confirmed by Kamph. Kamph is an intelligent and observant man. The information which he gave seemed to be confirmed wherever possible. Kamph went aboard the ALFHEM on 1 April 1954. He stated that the AB's who joined the ship in Copenhagen were Swedish and Danish. Kamph stated that he went ashore in Stettin in the day time with no money. He sold razor blades, 5 for \$1.00. He stated that American cigarettes are worth about \$7.50 a carton in Poland. He saw one Russian passenger ship of approximately 8,000 tons, and one Russian cargo ship, which was an American liberty ship. He saw two ~~exact~~ small Danish cargo ships, one small West German cargo ship, one Dutch small cargo vessel, and the Finnish cargo ship KORSO. He saw the Swedish cargo ships SINGOLALLA and ASPEN.

Kamph served on the Swedish tanker CARINA from November 1953 until February 1954. In November 1953 the vessel went to NOVOROSISK, Russia. When the tanker reached a certain point after entering the Black Sea, a Russian DE came near the ship and escorted her into port. The same procedure was used upon departure. The ~~escort~~ escort remained with the CARINA for about 1½ days each way. There is a Navy Yard in this port. Several Czech torpedo boats were in the harbor. These were new and very streamlined. There were two aircraft carriers, three battle ships or heavy cruisers, and six destroyers. When the vessel arrived at port approximately 25 armed Russian soldiers boarded the vessel and stationed themselves throughout the entire ship. Kamph ~~sk~~ said "It seemed like the whole Russian army was coming aboard". The quarantine doctor asked each member of the crew if he had been to the States before, and when Kamph said he had he was restricted to the ship. Kamph also noticed the British tanker there, which was under Panamanian flag.

Going back to Puerto Barrias, Kamph stated that when the First Engineer was accused of sabotage the Second Engineer told the Guatemalan's that ~~them~~ if they were going to blame any one they should blame him because he was the engineer on watch. Nothing ever came of this.

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Kamph stated that the crew also heard about the vessel having arms the first night in Puerto Barrias from the Western Union office in town. Kamph also remembers seeing minelayers in Stettin. Kamph said the Second Mate probably had no knowledge of the arms, and described the Second Mate as not being very bright. The men who jumped ship at Guatemala are Olsson, Messboy, and Camitz, Motor Apprentice. Kamph described the spare parts as breech bolts for rifles. He described the ~~water~~ machine guns as hand machine guns, thirty some odd inches in length.

Kamph believes the vessel is not going ~~back to Cuba~~ to UK after Cuba, but that it is going back to Poland. He said that this is a typical Communist run.

The following is from the Lloyd's Register concerning the vessel:
"Alfhem" ex "Gausdal" #35693 Lloyds Register, supplement #8, Twin screw, 4,840 Tons Built in 1930 at Odense Owners Angbats, Bohuslanska & Kusten, 386 Feet in Length 54 Feet Beam, 25 Foot Draft Port of registry is Uddevalla Swedish"

The Second Cook, Ekberg, is also in the hospital with Kamph. He has no information of any value, and speaks practically no English. He also wants to return to Sweden, but all papers necessary have been made up for him and there should be no difficulty. Kamph on the other hand has only his gear and his papers, and no papers for paying him off has been drawn.

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FR 5-6207

27 May 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:

SUBJECT: Measures for the thorough inspection of the SS ALFHEM and interrogation of the Master, officers and crew.

1. Upon the policy authorization of the State Department and with the confirmation of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Bureau of Customs and the United States Coast Guard will undertake the following steps to implement the above-mentioned examination and interrogation.
2. Customs will instruct local Customs authorities in Key West, Florida, to do everything possible to see to it that the examination and interrogation shall be made possible and that the vessel shall remain either at anchorage or in port for a sufficient length of time to enable this to be done.
3. Customs will board the ALFHEM at Key West and advise the Master that he is not to depart until permission is obtained from the Deputy Collector of Customs in Charge. Customs will then advise the Coast Guard senior officer of the instructions given to the Master and Coast Guard will keep the vessel under surveillance and take any action deemed necessary to prevent his unauthorized departure. It is understood that Customs is delaying departure of the ALFHEM at the request of the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency and Customs will be governed by the instructions received from Mr. [C] of CIA who will arrive at Key West, Florida, early this evening.
4. It is further understood that the action to be taken by the Coast Guard in this connection will be as Customs Officers acting under the authority of Sec. 1581 of Title 19, US Code Annotated.
5. A partial but very important basis for the foregoing decisions and proposed action is the understanding of CIA, Customs and Coast Guard, received from State Department, that the owner of the vessel has stated that he has dispatched instructions to the Master to proceed from Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, to a US port for the purpose of submitting to inspection and interrogation by American authorities for the information they want. The owner has given his verbal assurance that no indemnification of any kind will be sought for any resulting delay to the ship, and the Swedish Government has extended full cooperation to the United States Government in effecting these arrangements with the owner and is aware of the proposed examination.

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6. It is further understood that in connection with the entire handling of this matter, all appropriate measures will be taken and observed to avoid publicity. However, it is anticipated that these efforts could not be entirely successful in view of the fact that the vessel is so well known and is such a target for the press.

7. The following representatives of the departments and agencies referred to in the above, were present at the meeting at which this memorandum was prepared, and acknowledge the accuracy of the above-stated understanding:

FOR THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT -

The Honorable H. Chapman Rose,
Assistant Secretary

Rear Admiral A. C. Richmond
Assistant Commandant, US Coast Guard

Mr. Chester A. Emerick
Deputy Commissioner of Customs of the
Investigations Division

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE -

Mr. Raymond G. Leddy
Officer in Charge Central America and
Panama Affairs

FOR THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY -

Mr. Frank G. Wisner
Deputy Director (Plans)

[]
FRANK G. WISNER
Deputy Director (Plans)

OK.
HCR
(In addition to Sec. 1581 of Title 19, US Code Annotated, cited above, a further possible legal basis for this action is the Magnussen Act, the Executive Order issued thereunder, and the Coast Guard Regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.)

cc: Mr. Rose (2)
Mr. Leddy (1)

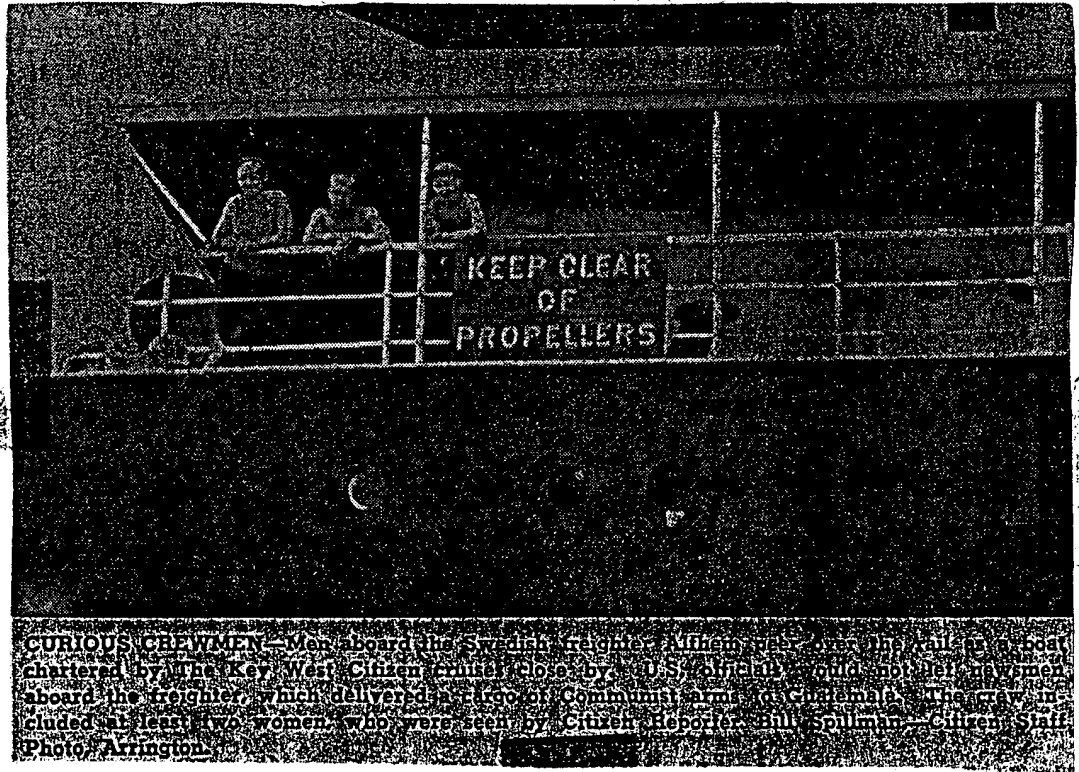
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The New York Times
THE SOUTH BRITISH NEWSPAPER IN THE
Citizen

Swedish Freighter

Is

Questioned Here



CURIOUS CREWMEN—Men aboard the Swedish freighter *Milham* (left) on the rail in a boat chartered by The Key West Citizen Club, close by U.S. ship, could not tell newsmen aboard the freighter, which delivered a cargo of Communist arms to Guatemala. The crew included at least five women, who were seen by Citizen Reporter Bill Spillman. Citizen Staff Photo: Arrington.

U.S. Authorities Ask About Red Arms Shipment To Guatemala

By DENIS SNEIGR

The Swedish mystery freighter *Alfhem* today anchored off Key West and its crew was being questioned by U. S. authorities about an arms shipment the freighter delivered to Guatemala.

It has been reported that the cargo of arms was picked up at a port behind the Iron Curtain.

The big, dirty freighter anchored off the Mole at the Naval Station at 7 a. m. today.

Standing farther out was a destroyer escort.

The Navy and State Department both released statements here on the arrival of the ship.

Last Sunday two fleet-type submarines departed from the Naval Base here.

The departure of the subs was shrouded in secrecy and the Navy here would make no comment when asked about the subs or their destination.

Speculation On Subs

There was speculation here that the sailing of the subs may have had some connection with the arrival of the *Alfhem* in a United States port.

The submarines sailed so unexpectedly, it was reported, that some crew members who were on leave in Miami were left behind. These crew members, it was said, were flown to meet the subs at another port.

Concerning the arrival of the *Alfhem* here, the U. S. Customs and the U. S. Coast Guard would make no comment.

Navy Arrives

The following is the text of a release from the Navy Public Information Office here.

The S.S. *Alfhem*, of Swedish register, arrived off the Sea Bort early this morning and was escorted to an anchorage opposite Ft. Taylor by the U. S. Coast Guard where she anchored at 0700 this morning.

"U.S. authorities who had been flown to Key West yesterday from Washington, D. C. boarded her with local harbor officials at 0800.

"Captain John Henry Lind and the crew of the *Alfhem* cooperated with the Naval authorities one hundred per cent."

State Dept. Release

The U. S. State Department also issued a release here.

Although the State Department release was handed to newsmen by Capt. C. L. Murphy, chief of staff, Capt. Murphy was very explicit in saying that the Navy had nothing to do with the State Department release.

He said he was merely acting as an agent for the State Department in handing the release to newsmen.

Asked if he had ever acted in such a capacity before, Capt. Murphy replied, "No."

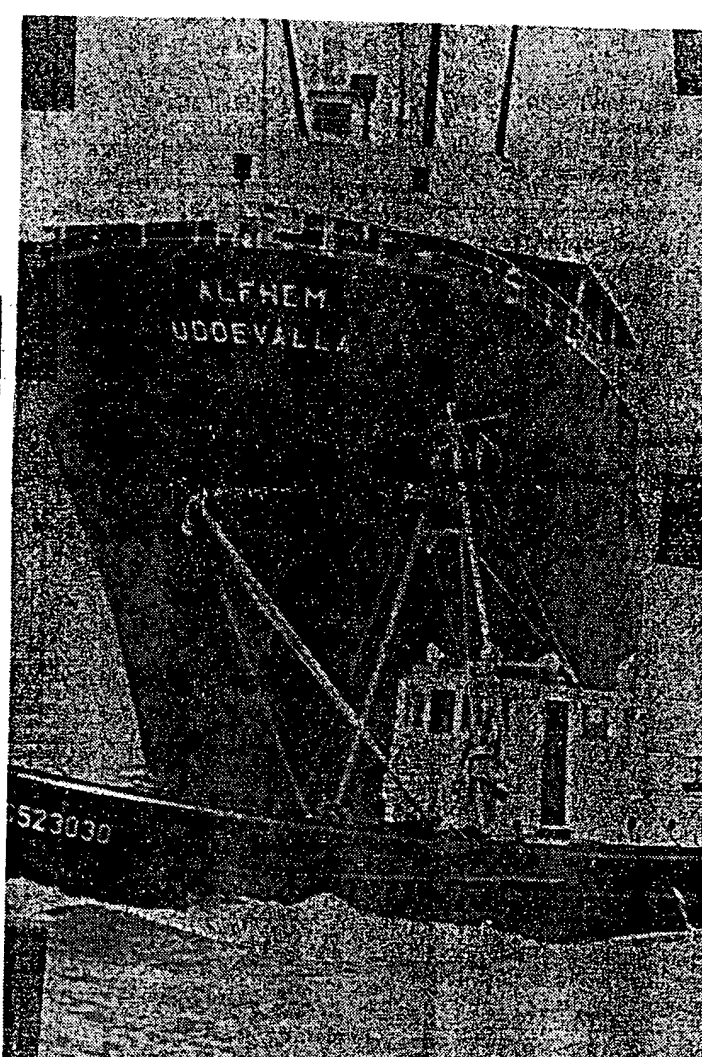
Text By State Dept.

The following is the text of the State Department release:

"The ship has arrived in Key West in accordance with instructions issued Captain Johan Henry Lind by the ship's owner. The Captain and other members of the crew are being questioned about the recent cargo of arms which the ship delivered to Guatemala.

"Secretary of State Dulles stated in his recent press conference the shipment of arms cargo by the ship to Guatemala 'was effected under the conditions considered far from normal.' Because of these conditions and the complete secrecy surrounding the arrival and loading of the ship at Puerto Barrios, it has not been possible at present to obtain desired information from the officers of the vessel concerning the transaction.

"The officers and crew members who are being questioned are cooperating on a purely voluntary basis."



COAST GUARD RUNS INTERFERENCE—A U.S. Coast Guard boat runs in between the Swedish freighter *Alfhem* and a boat chartered by The Key West Citizen. The freighter, which delivered a cargo of Communist arms to Guatemala, anchored here this morning. Officials would not let newsmen aboard her. The Coast Guard boat warned The Citizen boat away but not before photos were made.—Citizen Staff Photo, Arrington.

Reporters Try Visit To Vessel

Photographer Gets
Pictures, Reporter
Falls On Interview

By BILL SPILLMAN

The Citizen Investigated
report this morning that
the Swedish frigate in Key
West Harbor, Fla., was
quickly surrounded by
police and news photographers
Monday.

Coast Guard boat was asked
No answer at the boat was
The officer in the boat was
wearing a holster and a pistol.
After several attempts to get
around the vessel the Citizen
photographer was asked.

Washington, D.C. (AP)—A
group of reporters from
the Citizen Investigated
attempted to board the
Swedish frigate in Key
West Harbor, Fla., Monday.
The boat was surrounded
by police and news
photographers. The
reporter fell on the
interview. The
photographer got
pictures. The
reporter was
asked to get
around the vessel.
The Citizen
investigated
report this
morning that
the Swedish
frigate in
Key West
Harbor, Fla.,
was quickly
surrounded
by police and
news
photographers
Monday.

When the boat was
asked to get
around the vessel
the Citizen
photographer was
asked. No answer
at the boat was
The officer in the
boat was wearing
a holster and a
pistol. After several
attempts to get
around the vessel
the Citizen
photographer was
asked. The
reporter was
asked to get
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news
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MIAMI DAILY NEWS

PHONE 2-5211

MIAMI 30 FLOOR

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 28, 1964

Swedish Arms Ship Held At Key West

By MILT SOSIN

Miami Daily News Staff Writer

A Swedish freighter which delivered arms to Guatemala was ordered into Key West today and was boarded by U. S. State Department officials.

The officials were questioning the captain and crew of the freighter Alfhelm about delivery of arms valued at \$10,000,000 at Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, last week.

The arms originated in the Communist port of Stettin in Poland.

The U. S. destroyer-escort Loeser stood guard a few hundred yards away as the Alfhelm lay in the harbor at Key West, about two miles offshore, according to The Miami Daily News Key West bureau.

The Alfhelm was diverted from a Cuban port of call and sent to Key West on instructions of her owners — apparently at the request of the U. S. State Department.

No Comment By Navy

The Alfhelm was scheduled to arrive at the port of Antilla, on Cuba's north coast, today, to take on a cargo of sugar.

Newshawks Shooed Off

A reporter and news photographer who tried to board the Swedish freighter Alfhelm today off Key West were warned away by the Coast Guard.

Bill Stillman, reporter for the Key West Citizen, and Mrs. Sybil Arrington, a photographer for the same newspaper, chartered a boat and approached the ship which had delivered \$10,000,000 in arms from Communist Poland to Guatemala.

Aboard at the time were U. S. State Department and customs officials probing the arms delivery.

Instead, sometime during the night, she entered Key West harbor, escorted by a Coast Guard vessel which guided her to a point off Fort Taylor, where the Alfhelm dropped anchor.

Navy officials in Key West, when questioned by newsmen, said they had been instructed to refuse all comment on the presence in Key West of the Alfhelm. In Washington, the Navy Department referred all questions to the State Department.

Skipper Is Quizzed

Lincoln White, State Department press officer, then revealed in the capital that the Alfhelm "has arrived at Key West in accordance with instructions issued to the captain by the ship's owner" and that "the captain and other members of the crew are being questioned by U. S. officials concerning the recent cargo of arms which the ship delivered to Guatemala."

After the secrecy had been lifted by the State Department in Washington, the Navy in Key West revealed that investigators and officials of the State Department had arrived from Washington by plane at 3 p. m. yesterday and had boarded the Alfhelm at 8 a. m. today.

Both departments emphasized that Capt. Johann Lind, master of the vessel, and the crew members were "cooperating."

The State Department pointed out that Secretary of State Dulles had said, in a recent press conference, that the shipment of arms carried by the Alfhelm to

Guatemala "was effected under conditions which were far from normal."

"Because of these conditions," said the statement released by White, "and the great secrecy which surrounded the arrival and unloading of the ship at Puerto Barrio (Guatemala) it has not been possible previously to obtain desired information from the officers of the vessel concerning the transaction."

"The officers and crew members who are being questioned are cooperating on a purely voluntary basis."

It was learned in Havana that the Swedish minister to Cuba, Carl Borgenstern, had notified the Cuban Foreign Ministry several days ago that the owners of the Alfhelm had asked for cancellation of the agreement chartering the freighter to a British company.

The Swedish diplomat said the charter contract specifically forbade the use of the Swedish ship to transport arms.

The \$10,000,000 cargo from Communist Poland, which the Alfhelm delivered to Guatemala consisted of almost 2,000 tons of small arms and ammunition.

Meanwhile, French Line representatives in Panama said today that U. S. Customs men who hunted for contraband arms aboard the freighter Wyoming ended their search without finding "anything abnormal."

Customs men halted the Wyoming Wednesday as she headed for the Panama Canal en route to El Salvador and Guatemala with a cargo from London and Antwerp. The search was conducted with permission of owners of the French Line

and the French government. There was no official announcement on the results of the search but the Panama Canal press office said last night the Wyoming's manifest included one case of Browning automatic rifles consigned to El Salvador.

Other developments were: Guatemala, without air service for 25 hours after a ban imposed following the dropping of anti-Communist leaflets on the capital Wednesday by a mystery plane got its regular flights back. A large number of businessmen and tourists had been stranded while an investigation was made. There was no report on the outcome of the investigation.

Guatemalan Foreign Minister Guillermo Toriello announced, meanwhile, his government has offered to sign a bilateral non-aggression pact with neighboring Honduras.

The step appeared designed to remove danger of border incidents between the two lands.

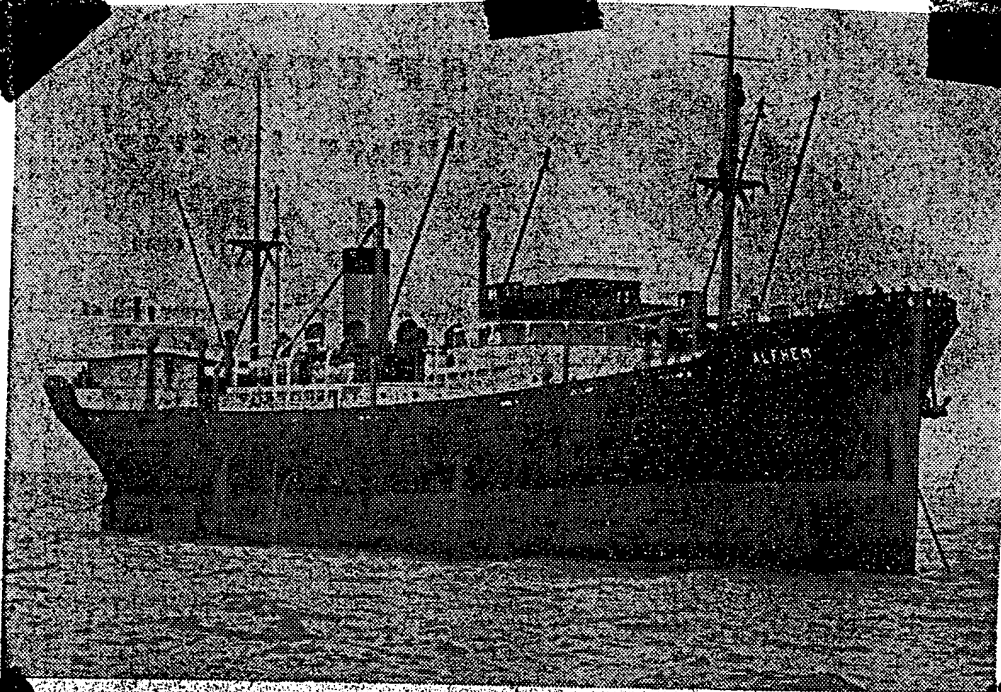
The

Saturday, May 29, 1954

Miami Herald

No. 178 / Florida's Most Complete Newspaper / 44th Year / 40 Pages / 5 Cents

A Latin American Edition Is Published



SWEDISH FREIGHTER ALFHEM BOARDED BY U.S. AGENTS AT KEY WEST
... Alleged to have carried Red arms to Gu...

—United Press Photo

Ship at Key West

Crew Quizzed In Guatemalan Arms Shipmen

By PAT MURPHY
Herald Staff Writer

KEY WEST—Central Intelligence agents from Washington boarded a heavily guarded, British-leased Swedish freighter here Friday and questioned its crew about delivery of 1,900 tons of arms to Red-tinged Guatemala.

State Department officials emphasized that crewmen of the 4,600-ton *Alfhem* and its master, Capt. Johan H. Lind, submitted to interrogation on a voluntary basis.

The *Alfhem* earlier this week unloaded \$10,000,000 worth of weapons and ammunition at Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, after picking up the cargo in the Communist Polish Stettin and following a zigzag course across the Atlantic which was unexplained.

Owned by Alfred Christensen but leased to E. E. Dean of London, the *Alfhem* was escorted into Key West early Friday after being diverted from a course to Cuba where it was to take on a cargo of sugar.

CIA agents from the State Department boarded the vessel at 8 a.m. and finished their questioning of the crew by mid-afternoon.

While anchored several hundred yards off the Navy's main Key West base, a curtain of security was imposed by naval officials acting on orders from Washington.

A destroyer escort, the *Loefer*, and several smaller patrol boats patrolled near the *Alfhem*. Newsmen were denied access to the area.

Department agents and, moreover, were completely inaccessible for comment. Any questions concerning the ship's unexpected appearance and results of the official crew questioning were referred to Washington officials.

The ship is said to have a Navy escort will continue its course to Antilla, Cuba, thence home.

Lincoln White, State Department press officer in Washington, was quoted as saying the ship's owner ordered the vessel into Key West, presumably at the request of United States officials.

Boarding of the *Alfhem* by United States officials is the first direct action taken since Guatemala became the focal point of diplomatic concern of the American government.

Guatemala's Communist Party...
...United States...
...denied buying...
...weapons, then said that it...
...wasn't any business of the...
...United States.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, in a press conference statement, said shipment of the arms to Guatemala was made under conditions "far from normal."

Another vessel suspected of transporting contraband arms to Latin America also was searched Friday in the Panama Canal, but customs officers reported nothing unusual could be found aboard the French Line vessel bound for El Salvador.

Other Guatemalan developments Friday, the press department's Foreign Minister, Gerardo Toriello, announced plans to sign a bilateral non-aggression pact with neighboring Honduras, and resumption of the capital city's air service, banned for 25 hours after an unidentified plane dropped anti-Red leaflets on the city.

A secret radio urging Guatemalans to fight communism and attacking the government continued its broadcast Friday presumably from a Guatemalan hideout.

While no official announcement has been made from Washington about the State Department's interrogation of Swedish crewmen aboard the arms-carrying *Alfhem*, the United States is trying to learn where the weapons were manufactured, who tried to disguise the weapons as optical and laboratory equipment and why orders were mysteriously issued diverting the vessel three times before it reached Guatemala.