

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS

SECOND SESSION

REPORTS ON SEIZURES FOR THE FIRST TWO QUARTERS OF 1947

(Item 6(c) of the Provisional Agenda)

Case of the "Saint Tropez" Report by the French Government

Note by the Assistant Secretary-General in Charge of the  
Department of Social Affairs

The Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Social Affairs has the honour to submit to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs a letter from the Government of France giving additional information on a seizure made on 16 March 1947, on board the S.S. SAINT TROPEZ in New York. (See document E/NS.1947/187, being a seizure report bearing on this case communicated by the Government of the United States of America)

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/Ministry of Foreign

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Secretariat des Conférences

Liberty - Equality - Fraternity  
Republic of France.

3 June, 1947

Sir,

I have the honour to send you, in accordance with Article 23 of the 1931 Convention, a report from the office of the Police Judiciaire on the seizure of narcotics from the "Saint Tropez" when in New York.

The investigation is continuing and any further information will be communicated to you immediately. The report emphasizes the interest that there would be in obtaining statements from the accused as to the source of the drugs found in their possession.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient servant

(signed) ... J. Fouques Duparc

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Trygve Lie,  
Secretary General of the United Nations,  
Lake Success

/28 June 1947

28 June, 1947

TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS

Concerning the  
"Saint Tropez"

The "Saint Tropez", belonging to the Cyprien Fabre Co., of Marseilles, left Marseilles for New York on 8 February 1947.

After calling at Djidjalli and at Lisbon, she arrived in North America on 13 March 1947. A customs search on arrival revealed nothing.

On Sunday, 16 March, at about 1:30 p.m., New York Customs officials arrested one of the crew at the exit to the docks: NEGRO Cesar, who was found, on being searched, to be carrying 4 small bags of heroin of about 2 Kilogs total weight.

Following this arrest, the American authorities carried out an inquiry on board the boat and arrested one of the stewards: BRUCHON René, and after a renewed search, discovered a quantity of heroin totalling 12 Kilogs., and a revolver.

After two days, a sailor, ROSSI Michel, was stated to have deserted, and it was thought that he was involved in the affair.

Brought before the American Justice, NEGRO and BRUCHON were condemned as follows: 7 years prison and a fine of £500\* for NEGRO, 2 years prison and a fine of £10,000\* for BRUCHON.

After these events, the ship left New York on 29 March and returned to France. She arrived at Marseilles on 1 May 1947. An inspection carried out on board before she tied up did not arouse any suspicions in the way of articles or documents which could be connected with the facts ascertained in America, and it was the same in a search carried out among the bags and suitcases which belonged to the arrested sailors, and which the ship had brought back to France.

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\* Marked 500 "L" and 10,000 "L" in the French text.

The Captain of the ship, M. RICODEAU, and the officers and men, who were questioned, could not give us any further information to complement the reports which the Administrator of Marine Registration in New York had already furnished us.

It seems in the light of these investigations that BRUCHON, René is the instigator of the smuggling. It was he who had in his possession the key to the hold where the narcotic drugs were discovered, and it was also he who asked the sailor CAPHARSIE for the key to hold #4, for, according to rumours on board, the drug was first hidden in this hold in a load of cork, and was transferred by BRUCHON after the first search to the linen cupboard, to which he had the only key, when he thought that all the trouble was over. It is very likely that BRUCHON has been connected for a long time with drug smuggling circles.

NEGRO, César, who had good references, seems to have been led into this by BRUCHON who must have promised him an important commission. According to what he has written to his family since this arrest, he let himself be led into it in order to get together a small sum of money which would allow him to marry a girl in Marseilles to whom he had been engaged for some time.

As soon as he was arrested, he admitted to the American police exactly what had taken place between him and BRUCHON, and his statement led to BRUCHON's arrest, but afterwards, probably on the latter's intervention, he denied his statements and insisted that he alone was responsible for the smuggling. This explains the disparity in the penalties which they received.

As to ROSSI, Michel, it seems as though he had been mixed up in this affair by mistake. His wife who lives in Marseilles recently received a letter from him informing her that he had been arrested by the American authorities as a deserter, and that he was at present interned at ELLIS ISLAND in New York Harbour, Room 206, New York 4.

/His wife

His wife did not hide the fact that her husband had decided before he left not to come back to France, but to settle in American after deserting. Therefore it would seem that it was only by coincidence that he disappeared from the "Saint Tropez" at this time. He does not seem to have hidden from any Police search, but only to have deserted from the ship.

These facts having been stated and verified, it remained to discover the source of the drugs which were found on board.

In spite of all the investigations which have been carried out, this has not been possible. The different circles frequented by BRUCHON, NEGRO and even ROSSI have been watched without result.

One piece of information furnished by the Customs Office, which also carried on an inquiry, seemed to indicate that the drug might have been brought aboard at Lisbon. This could not be verified, but is worth while noting, that the Second Captain, on 22 February 1947, on the eve of the departure of the "Saint Tropez" from Lisbon, noticed that, on going ashore, NEGRO entered into conversation on the quay with three civilians. Except that he saw NEGRO, he did not pay any particular attention, as he had a great deal of work to do on board.

As pointed out in the report to the Procurator, it would be very useful to obtain statements from BRUCHON and NEGRO, now held in New York, as to the source of the drug found in their possession.

It is only on the basis of information on this subject that an inquiry could be carried out. However, examinations are being undertaken in smuggling circles, and all information which might be connected with this case will be sent to you immediately.

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