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NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON

December 20, 1942

From: Director of Naval Intelligence.
 To: Addresses Listed Below.

SUBJECT: Sabotage Techniques.

Enclosure: (A) A Review of Certain Current and Potential Sabotage Techniques.

1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded for information and guidance.

2. If the addresses so desire, the substance of enclosure (A) may be passed on in paraphrased form to Naval Inspectors of Materials and authorized persons in charge of security at industrial plants or waterfront facilities, provided attention is drawn to the necessity of the maintenance of security of such classified material.

FILE

/s/ Wallace S. Wharton

Wallace S. Wharton,
By direction.

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SABOTAGE TECHNIQUES

1. It was reported recently from the West Coast that a donor to a blood bank narrowly escaped death when the vacuum bottle used in drawing blood from the donor's vein was found to have been sealed under pressure. When the valve was opened, air was forced into the vein, and only the quick action of the doctor and the fact that the tourniquet was securely fastened saved the donor's life. This occurrence is interesting in view of reports from abroad that the Germans have disposed of their badly wounded soldiers and have executed numerous Polish Jews by injecting air into their veins. This method is considered by the Germans to be the quickest and cheapest method of execution. The damaging effect on public morale of the publication of "accidents," such as the incident on the West Coast, might be disastrous to the entire program of blood banks. While precautions are taken by attending physicians during blood transfusions, it is possible that pressure in the bottle would not be apparent until the damage had been done. The best opportunity for tampering with vacuum bottles arises when the bottles are on the vacuum pump. Unless the valve on the pump is sealed, the valve can be reversed momentarily, creating the pressure.

Subsequent investigation disclosed that the above occurrence was possibly the result of a leak in the seal of the bottle, which permitted the vacuum to become neutralized. Such bottles are usually stored in refrigerators, or at least in cooled parts of the building, and just prior to their use, will be taken into rooms where the temperature is from 20° to 50° higher. This procedure will tend to expand the air that has leaked into the bottle and create a positive pressure. The lack of an appreciable number of similar instances does not eliminate the possibility of this method being used by enemy agents.

2. It was reported that on October 14, 1942, a fire was started under a pier in Brooklyn harbor when sparks from an acetylene torch fell on a patch of oil floating on the water under the pier. A few weeks later, a pasteboard box floating in New York harbor suddenly burst into flames. On November 27, 1942, a patent flare, known as a "Res-Q-Lite," floated against the piling of a pier in Brooklyn. It was discovered and extinguished just as the flame was coming in contact with the wooden structure. These three occurrences illustrate the possibility of planned sabotage. An oil slick could be created with relative ease. In the center of this slick, where it would maintain its position, a fairly accurately timed incendiary device could be placed. By gauging tides and currents, the slick could be floated against waterfront installations and ignited at the approximate time of contact.

3. During the first World War, certain Italian power plants and factories were seriously damaged when contact bombs were

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floated by German agents into the river intake valves of these plants. In view of recent reports that objects have passed at least some of the protective screens of American power plants and have lodged in the last trap, attention is drawn to the possibility of this technique being revived. Bridges and dams are also, of course, vulnerable to this method of attack.

4. The British have reported that delayed action mines have been attached to their ships in harbors. Two Italians, operating from a neutral vessel in a British harbor, were apprehended in the act of attaching magnetic mines to a British vessel. The presence of diving equipment on board any neutral ship should be investigated. A precaution against this method of sabotage is to maintain a constant slow motion of the propellers in reverse. This creates a slip stream along the hull of the vessel, which would make it exceedingly difficult for divers to work near the hull.

5. Three reliable sources have reported information on an effective incendiary capsule. No firing or timing agent is necessary in this device, since it functions under the influence of a relatively low temperature. The ease with which the capsule could be planted or thrown into strategic places without damage to itself makes the device particularly effective. Warehouses, ships, passing freight cars and trucks would be unusually vulnerable. The device is described as a flexible, yellow gelatine capsule, about six inches long and one and one-half inches in diameter. The hollow casing contains a highly volatile liquid, and is covered by a sticky black carbon or graphite compound. One-half of the capsule is enlarged by a heavy coating of magnesium compound. The dimensions of the device as given above are those of one which was actually found. They are unimportant in view of the numerous variations which could be made in its appearance and size.

6. A review of the strikes, work stoppages, and alleged slowdowns has failed to develop, at this date, a pattern of production curtailment, attributable to enemy influence. The slowdowns investigated have been the result of attempts to oust an unpopular foreman, attempts to increase earnings by bringing about an increase in the piece-work wage scale, a desire on the part of labor or of management to prolong a contract job or work time on a cost-plus basis, and a desire on the part of labor unions' stewards to maintain a standard output by all workmen and all shifts. The effectiveness of slowdowns in retarding the war effort cannot, however, be ignored. Particular attention must be given to any interruption of work in an effort to detect the subtle work of enemy agents. The following practices are described as particularly effective in hampering production, and could be used by foreman, leadmen, and plant or production superintendents:

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(2) Establish shop rules such as no smoking, no

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- (1) Ignore and discourage honest suggestions by workmen to improve production methods.
- (2) Establish shop rules such as no smoking, no talking, or no eating during work.
- (3) Establish pay irregularities.
- (4) Promote jealousy and suspicion among the different shifts.
- (5) Hire "efficiency experts" to change production methods.

These are, of course, only a few of the ways in which dissatisfaction and confusion can be created in a manufacturing concern. Any one of them, however, may give a clue to actual subversive practices. The ease with which subversive activity of this type can be disguised or justified by men in key positions necessitates close scrutiny into all such reports.

Reports from the West Coast and from the Detroit area indicate that the labor unions are attempting to accomplish their purposes of expansion by the use of walkouts and strikes. On the West Coast, it was reported that independent unions of welders have sprung up in an attempt to recruit the numerous workers who have come into this trade for the first time. Their success has not been outstanding so far, but the agitation of the organizers has had a disrupting influence on labor circles. From Detroit it is reported that there is evidence of activity on the part of Communist Party labor leaders to strengthen their position and to enlarge their influence. Their activity has resulted, in a number of cases, in the serious interruption of the war effort. The overall impression obtained from a review of this situation is that certain organizers and committeemen are unwilling to sacrifice their personal gains and the opportunities that all unions have at this time to materially increase their membership and income for complete cooperation on war production.

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