

LLOYD'S REGISTER OF SHIPPING

UNITED WITH THE BRITISH CORPORATION REGISTER

(Reconnu par la Loi Belge sur la sécurité des Navires)
(Arrêté Ministériel du 10 Janvier 1921)

1, Quai de Rouen, Antwerp

Telegrams: Register, Antwerp

30th November 1957

2-DEC-1957

Telephone 33.86.40

33.86.32

33.86.33

Ans'd

Dear Sir,

Chap.

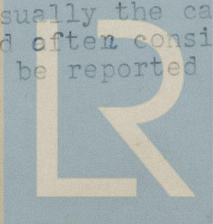
Tugs " ARTHUR BEMELMANS " & " VIVI "

In response to your enquiry of the 1st inst., regarding the present position of the above vessels, I called at the Owner's office this week and discussed these cases.

They informed me that they were still desirous of having these Tugs classed and the difficulties of meeting with our requirements were fully gone into.

Perhaps a brief description of the system of survey, hitherto, would make the matter clearer. Having neither permanent nor non-exclusive surveyors in the Belgian Congo, a scheme was put into operation whereby specially nominated & reliable Chief Engineers of the bigger, Compagnie Maritime Belge ships acted on our behalf. Their time for these surveys was limited to the brief stay of their ships at Matadi and also entailed a return journey from Matadi to Boma, where the tugs were drydocked, by river or road.

Again difficulty was encountered in arranging definite dates for the visits. Notice of Survey requirements was given to Messrs. Otraco, Brussels, who passed it on to their services in the Congo and they in turn eventually advised Brussels of the date on which the vessels could be withdrawn from service. This, of course, had to co-incide with the arrival of a C.M.B. ship at Matadi. If all went well, a first visit was made and recommendations left with the Repair Shop because usually they could not be completed and examined or tested before the Acting Surveyor left. If they could be seen and/or the Survey progressed by the next Acting-Surveyor calling at Matadi, all was well. If not - and this was usually the case - the Tug went back in service and often considerable time elapsed before everything could be reported as completed and satisfactory.



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The greatest difficulty facing Messrs. Otraco was (and is) that they were only allowed the use of the only available slip-way when its proprietors were not using it themselves and last minute refusals further complicated matters. This was, of course, beyond the control of Otraco. To remedy this, they have ordered an 1800 ton floating dock which is under construction, now, at Ostend, but it is doubtful whether it will be in service before the end of 1958. Construction was long delayed whilst the question of its lifting capacity was deliberated upon by the Ministry.

Difficulties over such dockings finally drove Otraco to have a refit carried out at Pointe Noire (French Congo) but the Survey, as reported by the French official appointed to supervise the work, was not deemed valid by us.

There the position rested.

One solution has occurred to me and that is, that our Surveyor resident at Lagos could go to Boma when required. By air the journey takes only 3 hours, I understand, and an entire S.S. could probably be completed in 2 days, ex repairs if any and these could be seen subsequently. In the long run, it is believed that this would be less expensive to the Owners and, from our point of view, would ensure that a proper Survey be carried out. Would there be any objection to this arrangement ?

As one alternative to the employment of engineers of the C.M.B., the Owners representative in Brussels suggested that Mons. Corillon (Ingénieur Civil des Constructions Navales, of Liège University), who is resident in Leopoldville as Manager of " Chanic ", might be asked to act on our behalf. I am not in favour of such an appointment, there being no opportunity of instructing this Gentleman in our requirements or standards, or of discussing the cases, as could be done under the previous arrangement. I think you will agree with me.



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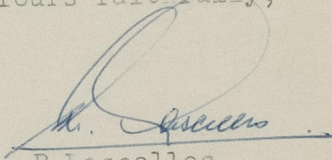
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Finally, whilst these two Tugs have been a source of worry from an administrative point of view, they are our only present contact with the Belgian Congo. In the light of forthcoming developments in that area, such as the "Inga" scheme which is exciting world-wide interest at the moment, it may be well worth the Society's while to retain even this small footing. All the more reason therefore to make our representative at, say, Lagos better acquainted with people and conditions in Leopoldville and district.

On receipt of your views, I will pursue the matter without delay.

Yours faithfully,


R. Lascelles.

The Secretary,
LONDON.



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CIN (GAE)

CLASSIFICATION

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ADMIN. ESTAB.

R.A.J.
There would be no objection to the
Lagos owners carrying out the
work provided the owners intend
not object to the survey or ask
unhedonists I'm ch
Mr. Maxwell



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