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Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

71, Fenchurch Street, E.C.3.

ENCLOSURES.

8th September, 1936.

Dear Sir,

M. Reverting to your letter of the 18th ultimo and to mine of the 31st ultimo respecting the case of your Steamer "NORA MAERSK", I beg to inform you that the three questions raised on the second page of your letter have been very carefully looked into, namely :-

1. By what means can the danger of fire breaking out be avoided or reduced ?
2. By what means can the likelihood of a fire, that has broken out, spreading be avoided or reduced ?
3. If we fail therein, by what means can we reduce the possibility of a fire developing into a destructive calamity ?

It may be observed that the vessels owned by your Companies are either cargo vessels or tankers, and so far as the former are concerned it is assumed that you are aware of the usual causes which lead to fire. There are :-

- (a) Bad stowage, by which parcels of unsuitable cargo are stowed in close proximity to each other;
- (b) Spontaneous combustion, as in the case of coal; and
- (c) Careless operating of the ship in respect of the use of unprotected lights and imperfect control over electric leads.

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As a practical shipowner of great experience you will be fully aware of the dangers involved in these respects, so that there is no need to enlarge upon them, but it is thought it may be of interest to send you an advance copy of the Paper on "Safety at Sea", prepared by Dr. Montgomerie, the Society's Chief Ship Surveyor, which is to be read in New York on 15th instant, and to direct your attention to that part dealing with fire, which begins on page 12. A copy of the Report entitled "Fires in Merchant Ships", which was prepared for the information of the Committee of this Society and was dated November, 1932, is also enclosed.

I may also state as follows :-

When a fire has broken out it can only spread if a sufficient supply of air is available to support and maintain the combustion, and therefore the arrangements which are usually made to limit the effect of a fire are in the direction of limiting the air supply. There are three methods usually quoted in this connection, namely :-

- (a) A chemical form of fire extinguisher, in the form of Carbon Di-oxide or Sulphur Di-oxide gas. This involves a plant of some complexity and weight.
- (b) Water; and
- (c) Steam.

A great deal of difference of opinion exists as to the relative efficiency of these various methods of extinguishing a fire. So far as the first is concerned, a cargo owner must consider that its use may raise questions as to the integrity

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of cargo carried in other parts of the ship away from the immediate scene of the fire, the consignee of which may make claims in respect of damage due to faults of taste, smell, or colour.

Water is, strictly speaking, not a method of limitation of air to the seat of the fire but an endeavour to limit its scope by reducing the temperature. If water is used, a suitable installation of deck piping fed by an ample supply of water, and with numerous hose connections to the various parts of the ship, should be provided.

As steam is generally available, even on motorships, it provides a convenient means of dealing with fires, and by using the winch pipes and by adapting the hold sounding pipes an installation can be arranged at relatively small cost.

The Society's Surveyors have witnessed tests of these various methods, and certain observations are contained in the Report of November 1932 above mentioned. Experience available does not justify any definite preference being expressed.

In the case of tankers, the systems of fire extinguishing by steam or by Carbon Di-oxide gas have their advocates, but the leading Tanker Companies in this Country lean to the view that the provision of perforated steam pipes in the different compartments is the most efficient means of dealing with an outbreak.

Some of your ships are of the shelter deck type, and experience has proved that the fitting of steel fire-resisting

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bulkheads in positions corresponding to the watertight bulkheads below have a decided effect in limiting an outbreak of fire when it occurs. In the Chief Ship Surveyor's paper, of which a copy is enclosed, certain actual cases are mentioned which are characteristic of several others in which it is clear that the presence of bulkheads or other fire-resisting material in the shelter 'tween deck has substantially reduced any risk of damage to cargo and loss of life.

Trusting that these remarks will be of assistance to you,

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

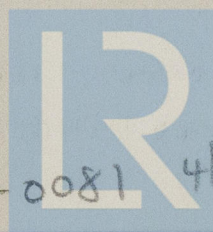
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