

Bids Submitted On Giant Liner

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1—(AP)—A low bid of \$67,350,000 for construction of the largest passenger liner ever built in the United States was submitted to the Maritime Commission today by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., of Newport News, Pa.

Bethlehem Steel Corporation bid \$75,649,000 to construct the proposed 46,000-ton ship which would become queen of the American Merchant Marine.

These were the only two bids received by the commission for building the vessel which would compare in size with the largest U. S. warships now afloat. The new luxury liner, however, would be smaller than the Navy's new super-carrier, the keel of which is expected to be laid early next year.

An official of the U. S. Maritime Commission, which opened the bids, said neither offer has been accepted.

Newport News Shipbuilding said it would take that firm 1218 calendar days to build the ship.

The United States will operate the 980-foot luxury liner. The firm plans to finance a share of the construction, while the federal government — through the Maritime Commission — will subsidize about 45 per cent of the costs.

As a peacetime craft, the new American giant will provide facilities for 2,000 passengers. In event of war, it could be quickly converted into a 12,000-man troop ship. No name has been announced yet for the vessel.

The ship will cruise at 28.5 knots, as fast as Britain's queens—the Elizabeth and Mary.

The U. S. vessel, however, will be about half the size of the 86,000-ton Queen Elizabeth.

The liner, America, now operated by U. S. lines, is the largest ship in the U. S. merchant fleet now afloat. The America is 26,314 gross tons, is 663 feet long and cruises at 22 knots.

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