

Lawyers Still Working To Settle Claims Arising From Andrea Doria Tragedy

By FREDERICK M. WINSHIP
United Press Correspondent

New York — One year after the sinking of the Andrea Doria six lawyers are working full time to settle claims arising from the tragedy, engineers and salvagers are pondering salvage methods, and a movie producer is preparing to film the wreck of the luxury liner.

On July 26, 1956, the pride of the Italian Line plunged 250 feet to the ocean floor a little less than 11 hours after she and the Swedish-American liner Stockholm collided with a loss of 50 lives. An additional Doria passenger died of injuries last April, and several are still under medical care. One of the 1,663 survivors recently drowned on an outing.

Fifteen-year-old Linda Morish, the girl who was lifted from her Doria berth and borne to safety in the crumpled bow of the Stockholm, has recovered from her injuries and will be a sophomore at a Quaker school in Bucks county, Pa., next fall.

"They've been calling me a 'miracle' survivor for a long time," said Linda in Snohomish, Wash., where she is visiting relatives for the summer. "I guess that's the only way to describe it. It was a miracle!"

Safe Mode of Travel

The loss of the 29,000-ton three-year-old Doria ironically pointed out the fact that North Atlantic liner travel is one of the safest modes of transportation. From 1918 to the time of the unprecedented Doria-Stockholm collision, not one liner passenger lost his life due to sinking, shipwreck or accident on Atlantic and Mediterranean runs.

The headline publicity, prolonged for months by dramatic pre-trial testimony by officers of both ships, had no ill effect on liner bookings, according to statistics provided by major passenger lines. The Swedish-American Line reports this season's tourist volume is up 10 per cent over last year's, and the Italian Line has a slight increase in Europe-bound bookings. The Stockholm has capacity bookings through September.

Capt. Gunnar Nordenson, 63-year-old master of the Stockholm at the time of the collision, now is in command of the new Swedish-American flagship, the Gripsholm. Ernst Carstens-Johannsen, officer in charge of the bridge when the Stockholm's prow gouged a 70-foot hole in the Doria's side, still serves Nordenson as third mate.

Capt. Piero Calamai of the Doria, whose health was broken by the experience of losing his ship, was recently retired on pension by the Italian Line and is living in Genoa. He originally had been scheduled for retirement on his 60th birthday next December. His second and third mates, who were with him on the bridge at the collision hour, are still in service.

Building New Hull

In a Genoa shipyard, the hull of the 31,500-ton replacement for the Doria—the Leonardi da Vinci—is taking shape. The Da Vinci's keel was laid June 23 and the ship will be ready for launching in 1960. The Italian Line is building her with \$19

million paid by Hull Insurance Underwriters toward the Doria's \$30 million loss plus a multi-million dollar grant from the Italian government.

The Leonardo da Vinci will be equipped with one of the new types of "true motion" radar plotting screens perfected since the sinking of the Doria. Radar ships indicating the position of vessels to fade out in three seconds. Now they can be retained on the screen for as long as a half hour, giving a clear picture of the heading and relative speed of approaching vessels.

Experts say new radar systems, such as the one in use on the Gripsholm, should virtually eliminate the chance-in-a-million accident like the Doria-Stockholm collision, if deck officers are thoroughly trained to use the equipment intelligently. Another aid to safety at sea would be the development of a standard short range radio phone circuit so that ships of different countries could communicate by

phone. The various AM and FM systems now in use are incompatible.

Home Holdouts

Progress in equipment standardization, agreement on sailing routes, and adoption of maximum safety standards in ship construction has been hampered by failure of the United Nations to obtain ratification of its Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (INCO). Seventeen countries have ratified it since it was organized on paper nine years ago, and the backing of only four more nations is necessary. Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Russia are the major maritime holdouts.

The legal aftermath of the Doria tragedy remains a headache for two New York law firms who have three lawyers each and a score of assistants assigned exclusively to the out-of-court settlement of third party claims for injuries and loss of life, baggage and cargo. The Italian and Swedish-American

lines agreed last January to end attempts to fix blame for the collision on each other and establish instead a joint liability fund of \$5 million to \$6 million.

The lawyers are trying to pare down 1,200 claims totaling more than \$100 million to the size of this liability fund. Spokesmen estimate that 10 per cent of the total claims and 25 per cent of the passenger claims already have been settled, although no money has yet been paid the claimants.

Claims To Be Paid

All claims may well be paid off in two or three years, or less than half the time originally estimated.

The Italian Line is making no plans to salvage the Doria, which is fair game for anyone according to maritime law, and no serious consideration is being given the project by any of the big salvage firms here or abroad.

Most shipping experts rule out lifting the liner or dismembering her with underwater cutting equipment due to the depths involved and the storm hazards of open sea salvage. But an official of the nation's biggest salvage firm, Merritt-Chapman & Scott Corp., said the project should not be pigeonholed as "impossible," although it might not be economically feasible.

U. S. Rubber Company scientists have disclosed they are working on a method of salvaging ships by the use of huge air-inflated rubber tubes that would be attached to the sides of sunken vessels like water wings.

They say it may eventually provide a way to raise the Doria. An engineer, Robert K. Bedell, has offered the U. S. Maritime Administration a plan to float the Doria by filling its holds, staterooms and corridors with inflated bags.

To Film Hull

Since department store heir Peter Gimbel's daring skin-diving visit to the Doria's port side, some 160 feet below the surface, filming of the sunken sea queen has been a matter of speculation in movie circles. Next month, French diver Dmitri Rebikoff will try to get enough film footage for an 85-minute color documentary by riding around the wreck on film torpedoes equipped with 90,000 candlepower lighting and 16 mm. Beaulieu cam-

eras. Independent film producer Dick Flower of New York has raised \$100,000 from American and foreign interests for the project.

None of the Doria survivors interviewed by this correspondent expressed a desire to see a film of the ship where they spent some of the most horrible hours of their lives and where 43 bodies still are trapped. Mrs. Marion Woyer of Greenwich, Conn., whose shipboard suite was sheered away by the Stockholm minutes before she had planned to go to bed, summed it up by saying:

"It was like a bad dream—the kind you don't want to dwell on. I am just so happy to have gotten out alive. There are too many new, wonderful ex-

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Quotes From the News

By UNITED PRESS

Cleveland, Ohio — W. Kenneth Davis, director of the Atomic Energy Commission's Reactor Development division, on Russia's "grandiose" nuclear plans:

"It would be silly indeed to let unsupported and irrational claims as to Soviet capabilities distort and warp sound U.S. policies and programs."

Newark, N.J. — Gov. Robert B. Meyner, pooh-poohing the possibility of running in 1960 as vice president on a Democratic presidential ticket headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, a Republican:

"My concern right now is to be reelected governor of New Jersey."

Long Beach — Lovely, young Gladys Zender of Peru, reigning supreme as Miss Universe after nearly being disqualified on a technicality:

"I am very, very grateful for the understanding shown by the other contestants and my other friends in Long Beach."

London — The Rev. Canon H. G. Rorison, chaplain at Glamis Castle, on why he refused to marry a cousin of Queen Elizabeth to a commoner:

"I considered it unsuitable to marry them. I could not do it without the consent of the rest of the family."

Peiping Radio Has Quiz Show Program

Tokyo — Communist China's Peiping radio has fallen victim to the capitalistic quiz show programs.

The show started recently, with master of ceremonies, tricky questions and prizes — none of them worth \$64,000.

Questions included such things as who was the famous Italian traveler who journeyed to China in the 13th century (Marco Polo), and name an important product used all over the world that was first invented in China (gunpowder).

"Remember," the announcer said after posing this week's question, "Your correct answer must be posted within three days to qualify for a prize."

He did not say what the prize would be.

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Oregon Archers Win Robin Hood Festival

Sherwood — Oregon archers Saturday won the Robin Hood festival archery competition for the second successive year over bowmen at Nottingham, England.

Total score for Oregon archers Friday was 10,418. Results of a similar archery shoot in Nottingham were cabled to Sherwood and showed a total score of 9,721. Winning team each year is awarded a silver trophy.

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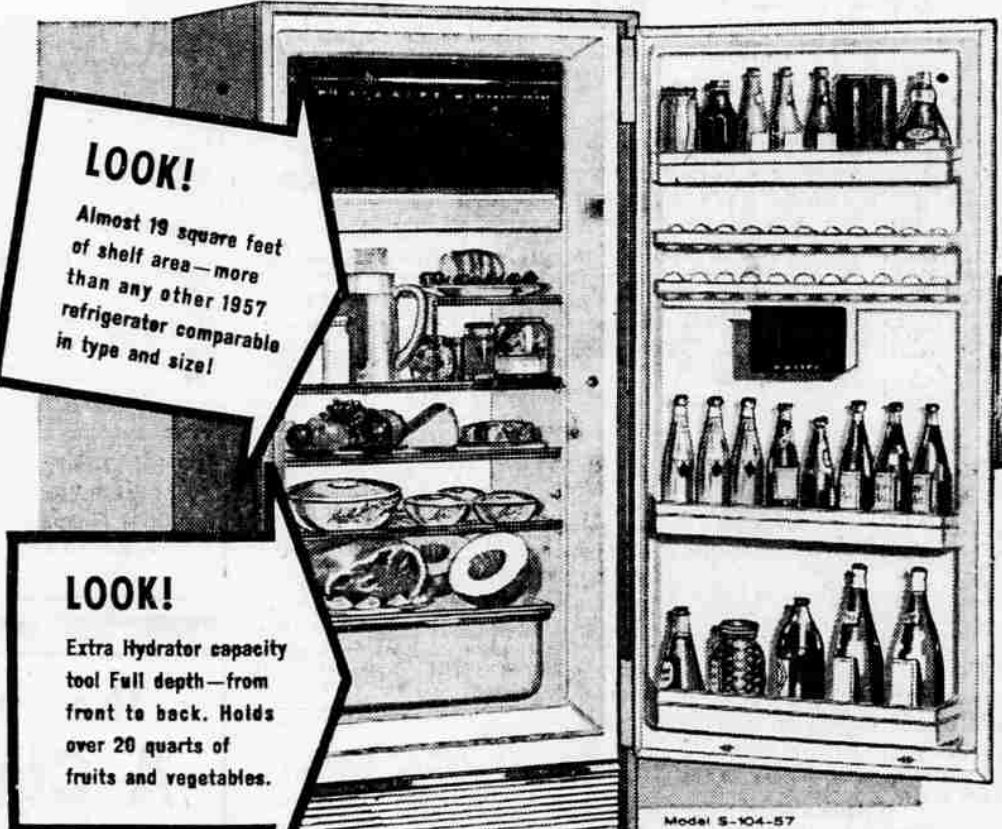
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