

coming:

\$50 fare to Europe by superliner!

by James C. G. Conniff

DOES A \$50 FARE to Europe sound like a pipe dream? It isn't. Twin 90,000-ton superliners, the *SS Peace* and *SS Good Will*, are so close to reality that the energetic, farsighted New York hotelman who fathered the idea will sign a contract shortly for laying their keels.

So, with 6,000 other Americans on a one-way, four-day passage, you could figure on going to Europe for the price of a clutch job on your car. What's more, you will enjoy the same spaciousness as today's luxury liners, with more comforts thrown in than even our finest motels offer.

Motels, in fact, along with other low-cost accommodations for the go-minded American public, are what got H. B. Cantor started in his campaign to beat down the doors of transatlantic travel tradition and throw open the scenery, culture, cooking, and allure of the Continent to us all, instead of just the wealthy for whom passenger ships have been designed up to now.

Cantor is president of Carter Hotels, a New York-Boston area commercial chain catering to patrons who want comfort at economy prices. His 35 years of success in providing it made him wonder if the same principle couldn't be applied with equal success to the "floating hotels" called ships.

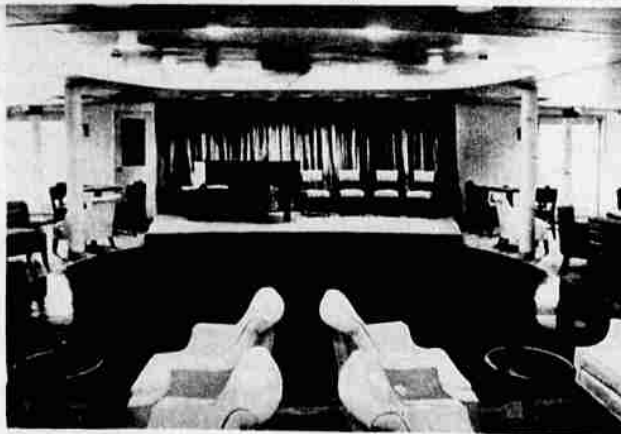
"After all," he told me, "bus lines offer a cross-country fare of \$69.50. You can fly coast-to-coast by nonscheduled airliner for \$88. By 1960 the jetliners should cut operating costs 40 percent and lower fares in proportion, though it will be a while before jets hit commuter-fare levels. Right now you can go from New York to London by conventional airplane for \$360 round trip. But you can't go by even the cheapest ship for anything like that."

To remedy the huge gap in low-cost ocean travel, Cantor decided we needed a "cafeteria ship." It would have to be big enough to carry thousands of people without cramping, yet so fast that volume traffic would permit the operators to transport them for \$50 each. The 83,673-ton *Queen Elizabeth*, Cantor knew, has a passenger capacity of 2,233, with one-way fare many times \$50. His "cafeteria ship" would have to do much better than that and still stay within physical limits of port facilities on both sides of the water. Was it possible?

Vladimir Yourkevitch, designer of the *Normandie*, said it was. When he had listened to Cantor's idea

When two mammoth
6,000-passenger steamships
are completed, almost anyone
will be able to afford
a transatlantic vacation.

All passengers may use superliners' lounge areas. Prefabricated staterooms will cut costs considerably.



Superliners will serve food in mammoth cafeteria.



for a superliner, he liked it so well he recommended construction of two superliners. Why? Because with that much space and speed on two ships you could operate a two-way shuttle across the Atlantic and, by offering departures every four days, guarantee both volume traffic and the \$50 fare that would be necessary to attract it.

Cantor was delighted. The endorsement of one of the world's leading naval architects meant that his idea was much more than a dream. Eager for details, he learned from Yourkevitch that a vessel to do the job would need to be 90,000 gross tons (almost 7,000 tons heavier than the *Queen Elizabeth*). It would be 1,152 feet long, against the *Elizabeth's* 1,031 and our *United States' 917*.

By Yourkevitch's estimate, each superliner will

develop 300,000 horsepower for a top speed of 34 knots and a cruising speed of 30. By comparison, some aircraft carriers can turn up as much as 200,000 horsepower.

Passenger capacity? To meet Cantor's requirements of safety, comfort, and dollar return, Yourkevitch worked things out so that 6,000 passengers can be accommodated with ease on each ship. A crew of 1,350 will see to their wants.

Though elimination of "luxury frills," which he is convinced most people don't want and can't afford, is a prime concern with Cantor, he will nonetheless air-condition both ships and equip each cabin with individual controls. In addition, every one of the presently projected 2,750 cabins on each ship will have its own 21-inch TV set.



Hotelman Cantor had a dream.

