

Encl. to 1741/3/39

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Ambassador Steinhardt last night fully discussed the status of the City of Flint with the Foreign Office along the lines of the instructions he had received from the Department. At 11:30 p.m. the Soviet radio announced that after examination of her cargo, the naval authorities "have decided to release the City of Flint on condition that she leave the port of Murmansk immediately."

The Tass despatch as published in the Russian morning newspapers which only appeared at noon, read:

"The order, the maritime authorities at Murmansk concerning the liberation of the steamship City of Flint. Murmansk, Tass, October 26.

"After the verification of the composition of the cargo on the steamship City of Flint the maritime authorities at Murmansk have issued an order to free the vessel with the obligation to leave the port immediately."

Reporting this text at noon today (Moscow time) Ambassador Steinhardt stated that he is continuing to use every means in an endeavor to obtain further details, particularly as to which crew is to take the vessel out. He was still endeavoring to get another appointment at the Foreign Office.

Ambassador Steinhardt reported this morning that he was continuing his efforts to establish telephonic communication with the captain or a member of the American crew of the City of Flint. He had been promised telephone communication at 8 o'clock this morning but although temporary communication with the Murmansk operator was established, the Ambassador was unable to make the desired contact. As calls for Murmansk are only accepted for certain hours during the day, Ambassador Steinhardt expected to make the next attempt at 1:30 p.m. today.

Ambassador Steinhardt is still endeavoring to obtain permission for an airplane and pilot to take Charles E. Bohlen to Murmansk if the crew is still there.
