

SS United States At Bremerhaven

THE UNITED States Line's new passenger liner United States was welcomed into Bremerhaven Jan. 3 at a ceremony marking the first call of the transatlantic record-holder to a German port. Heading the official party greeting the officers, crew and passengers to the North German port were Samuel Reber, acting US high commissioner for Germany; Dr. Hans-Christoph Seebohm, federal minister of transportation, and Wilhelm Kaisen, president of the Bremen Senate. Following addresses by Mr. Reber and Dr. Seebohm (printed below) and brief greetings by Mr. Kaisen, the officials inspected the liner which will continue to call regularly during the next few months at Bremen. Shown in the photograph were (left to right) Mr. Reber, Dr. Seebohm and Mr. Kaisen on the flag deck of the SS United States.

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Translation of Address

By Dr. Christoph Seebohm

Federal Minister of Transportation

I AM SINCERELY glad to welcome this proud ship on its first visit in a German port. I extend greetings also to all of those assembled here for the occasion. For myself, and also in the name of the president of the Federal Republic and of the Federal Government I return their friendly words and wishes.

The entire German nation is greatly interested in this festive event which is taking place today on board of the world-famous flag-ship of the United States Lines now lying in this North Sea port. For, everything which shows evidence of our cooperation with the United States finds a strong and happy echo in our country. We consider it a good and happy sign that we can start this new year with a welcoming greeting for the largest and fastest ship of the American merchant marine which has come to Bremerhaven for the first time. Let us take this event as a symbol for the successful and fruitful cooperation between us and the United States, and especially between the merchant marines of the two countries.

We realize that the free world is in the same boat for better or for worse, and we know how important it is for us to live in stable friendship with all nations which carry and guard Western civilization. However, cultivation of the common elements of Western thought alone is not sufficient. We also need practical-minded men

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Touring the SS United States during welcoming (left to right), Acting U.S. High Commissioner Samuel Reber, Bremen Senate President Wilhelm Kaisen, and Federal Traffic and Transportation Minister Hans-Christoph Seebohm.

Address

By Samuel Reber

Acting US High Commissioner

DURING THE first days of a new year and on the occasion of the first arrival of the liner United States, the newest ship of the US Merchant Marine, in the newly rebuilt port of Bremerhaven, I should perhaps speak exclusively of new things. But new things must be set against a background of old, which in this case is the long commercial relationship between the United States and the Free Port of Bremen.

I have before me a transcript of a document, signed by George Washington, dated 1794, appointing as United States Consul one Arnold Delius of Bremen. The President said: "I have nominated and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate do appoint him consul of the United States of America for the Port of Bremen."

With these words began the formal relationship between Bremen and the United States.

Despite its ancient traditions and close links with the older maritime nations, Bremen, then as now devoted to the principles of free trade, demonstrated its youthful capacity for growth and its youthful capacity to accept new ideas and trade associations which quickly led to the establishment of its active commerce between its ancient port and the new republic of the West.

By 1830 Bremen was the most important world market for American tobacco, twenty years later it also became the principal continental market for American cotton.

In 1874 a Cotton Exchange was founded in Bremen and this exchange became the focal point for the distribution of American cotton marketed in Europe. Bremen's role in the marketing of US cotton, tobacco and other commodities, which dates from this period, has continued to the present day. As of September 1951, the exports from Bremen to the United States were twice as large as those to any other country and the imports from the United States through the port of Bremen are currently DM 875,000,000 (equivalent to \$208,250,000).

WHAT I HAVE tried to indicate in these passing references to the trade relations between the United States and the Free Port of Bremen is that a firm commercial link exists between this city and our country. A full exposition of this common market will be shown in an exhibition to open in our America House here next week, which I hope you may all have an opportunity to visit.

I have one more historical reference to make. The arrival of the packet George Washington in Bremen in 1847 marked the first occasion when a ship of what is now the United States Line arrived at the port of Bremen. It is a miracle to us today that the sail and steam vessels of the 19th century could make the Atlantic crossing and arrive in this port in 17 days; yet we take it for granted that modern ships, like the United States, can make the same voyage in less than seven days.

It is with pride that I speak to you in the dining saloon of this great ship, the finest ocean liner that the United States has ever built. We are proud that the United States now holds the record for the fastest transatlantic crossing, and I believe that its arrival in Bremen on its first voyage here gives further evidence of the developing Bremen-American and hence of German-American trade relations.

As you know, the United States has, as have other American vessels coming to this port, brought the families of many American soldiers stationed in Germany. These men and their families are here today not so much because of events in the past or because of any belligerent designs for the future, but because my country and its partners in the Atlantic community recognize the urgent need to reinforce the defenses of western Europe including those of Germany. These men have come not as part of an army dominating foreign territory but as members of a defense force needed to maintain a strong position in the face of the Communist might in the East and to preserve the peace. That is their role and as citizen soldiers of a democratic community they recognize their mission and understand why they are here.

THIRTEEN MONTHS ago, when High Commissioner John J. McCloy addressed the National Defense Transportation Association in Bremerhaven*, he spoke

*see "Defense of Common Freedom" in Information Bulletin, November 1951.

with optimism of the understanding of the nations of Europe as to the role they must play as a defensive union to preserve the freedom of the nations of the West.

The signatures in Bonn and in Paris last May of the Contractual Agreements and of the Treaty establishing the EDC, as did the establishment of the Coal and Steel Community somewhat earlier, marked further milestones in the achievement of an integrated European community, itself part of a developing Atlantic community. In the association of free peoples Germany is to be a partner accepting its full share of responsibilities as well as all the benefits which such membership entails. Only through the consolidation and development of such a community of free democratic peoples, strong enough to resist any totalitarian menace from whatever source it may come, can the firm basis of a lasting peace be laid and assurances for a developing prosperity and economic security be given.

The President-elect of the United States has said in his New Year's message, as the divided strength of the western and continental Europe nations becomes combined, "its effectiveness will be multiplied so that western Europe will have a vigorous community for peace and freedom." He added that his ideas on this subject had been reinforced as more and more he saw the "Feebleness of alternatives."

I can only say at this moment, when we are commemorating the continued development of trade relations under peaceful conditions, and when we take cognizance of the enormous economic recovery of Germany in the brief span of years since the close of the Second World War, that progress toward the achievement of this goal has not been as rapid as my government and its people would have preferred to see and that these continued delays, understandable though they may be, can be detrimental if unduly prolonged.

My associates and I in the High Commission for Germany, who have worked so many months to see that the benefits of the new German sovereignty treaties may be realized as soon as possible, believe that the treaties will be approved by all other signatories as have the Bonn Agreements by the United States and Great Britain. We are also confident that the approval thereof will represent more than approval in the letter only and that their entry into force will herald a new day for peace.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the United States Lines on having forged another link of understanding between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. In bringing their greatest ship here they have paid the port of Bremen a compliment that it richly deserves and I trust that it is a foretaste of ever-increasing relations in all fields of human endeavor between Bremen as a great port of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States.

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