



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Department of Justice filed a civil antitrust suit today charging that American Steamship Company, Buffalo, New York, and its controlling corporation, Oswego Shipping Corporation, New York City, violated the Clayton Act in the acquisition of two steamship companies operating on the Great Lakes.

Attorney General John N. Mitchell said the complaint and a proposed consent judgment were filed together in the United States District Court in Buffalo, New York.

The complaint charged that American Steamship Company and Oswego Shipping Corporation had violated Section 7 of the Clayton Act in acquiring Gartland Steamship Company in March, 1969, and Reiss Steamship Company in June, 1969.

The suit alleged that the acquisitions have eliminated actual and potential competition between American Steamship and the acquired companies, and that actual and potential competition may be substantially lessened and concentration increased in the transportation of bulk commodities on the Great Lakes and in the transportation of bulk commodities by self-unloading vessels (equipped to serve ports without dockside unloading facilities) between United States ports on the Great Lakes.

Assistant Attorney General Richard W. McLaren, in charge of the Antitrust Division, said the proposed judgment, which may

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become final in 30 days, requires that the defendants divest themselves of Reiss Steamship Company, the largest of the two acquired companies, within two years.

The proposed judgment also enjoins the defendants for a period of five years after entry of the final judgment from acquiring any interest in any self-propelled dry bulk cargo ship then or theretofore operated between United States Great Lakes ports, or from acquiring the stock of any company owning any such ship, without prior approval of the Department of Justice or the Court.

In 1968, American Steamship ranked first among U.S. self-unloading operators with approximately 33 percent of all such vessels. Reiss ranked third with 15 percent, and Gartland fifth with 5 percent.

American Steamship carried approximately 35 percent of the bulk commodities transported by self-unloading vessels of U.S. registry on the Great Lakes. Reiss carried approximately 10 percent, and Gartland carried approximately 3 percent.