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THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

14 January 1938

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

In further answer to your memorandum in regard to Newport News Shipbuilding Company's lagging in construction, I attach a preliminary report which indicates some of the causes for delay.

A more comprehensive study is being made and a further report will be submitted to you later, but I was anxious to get something in your hands before leaving for my three weeks' trip.

Also, I have telephoned Mr. Ferguson, President, Newport News, and asked him to prepare a statement, as well, in explanation of the situation and he has agreed to do so.

Recently my office and the Shore Establishments Division have been somewhat reorganized. I now have Captain Church available, who was brought here mainly for the purpose of working on expediting the shipbuilding program. He will cover not only the Washington end of it, but also make frequent trips into the field. I hope better results all around will be attained.

Charles Edison

Charles Edison

DELAY ON VESSELS BEING CONSTRUCTED AT NEWPORT
NEWS.

ENTERPRISE (CV6)

Original contract date of completion	2/3/37
Extended " " "	7/3/37
Estimated " " "	5/12/38

Five months' delay was granted because of change in the composition of the gasoline stowage tanks and extension of flight decks. The vessel would probably have been delivered on 15 December 1937 but replacement of the main reduction gears was found necessary. The vessel is now substantially completed except for the replacement of the gears and the work incidental thereto. The first set of gears was delivered on 27 December 1937 and the last set is expected on 1 February 1938. The additional five months' delay has been reported as having been caused by late delivery of shaft struts, gun control equipment and flame-proof cable, heavy snow (4 days), defective armor plate and shortage of mechanics.

BOISE (CL47)

Contract date of completion	8/22/37
Estimated date of completion	7/15/38

No delay has been granted on this vessel. Delays are claimed for: Late delivery of armor, turrets, diesel generators, government furnished material (Ordnance), and plans from the New York Shipbuilding Company, heavy snow (4 days), and re-arrangement of superstructure and plotting room. This vessel would probably have been completed on 15 May 1938 if the ENTERPRISE had not experienced difficulty with her reduction gears. This vessel was delayed by the Contractor in order that they would not be completing two major vessels at the same time.

ST. LOUIS (CL49)

Contract date of completion	1/2/39
Estimated " " "	4/1/39

No delay has been granted for this vessel. The Contractor claims delay for change in the design of the cooling system for the diesel generators, delay in the receipt of special treatment steel, boiler material, and fire control S.T.S. tubes; difficulty in obtaining satisfactory steel castings; non-receipt of information concerning fire control equipment (Ordnance), and delay in action on certain plans.

MUSTIN

Contract date of completion	4/12/39
Estimated " " "(BuEng Est)	7/12/39

A delay of two months has been granted due to the relocation of the auxiliary diesel generators. The contractor has also reported a delay due to a change in the turbine drawings and due to non receipt of structural plans.

RUSSELL

Contract date of completion	6/12/39
Estimated " " "(BuEng Est)	8/12/39

Remarks are the same as for the MUSTIN above.

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THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

Edison

1 April 1938

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE PRESIDENT.

Attached is a brief factual statement in regard to delays on the WICHITA, HONOLULU and HELENA.

Most of the causes for delay appear to be something over which the building yard had no control.

The situation in regard to delays in ship-building is regrettable not only on the above ships but on many others.

Yesterday, Secretary Swanson placed the responsibility for coordinating all phases of the Ship-building Program squarely on me and announced this to the Bureaus. It may be said that I already had this obligation but it was all rather vague to the Bureaus and many times I did not get a chance to get in on some decision or lack of it until I stumbled over a situation.

Now, with everybody aware of the fact that there is one point of focus it is my hope that some improvement may be effected in our building schedules.

Respectfully

Charles Edison

Charles Edison

NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

SOSED-1-Kr-3/30

30 March 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

Subject: Construction Report.

1. With reference to the memorandum of the President, dated 16 March 1938, the following are the principal causes of delay on the cruisers WICHITA, HONOLULU and HELENA:

C.A. 45 - WICHITA - (Philadelphia).

Contract date of delivery 1 January 1938.

Probable date of delivery 1 February 1939.

Delay of Department on turret plans over which Yard has no control - 7½ months
Development of an entirely new design over which Yard had no control - 4-6 months
Contributory and concurrent delays caused by changes in fire control arrangement with consequent electrical and structural changes; changes in ventilation layout which resulted in scrapping a considerable amount of design work; changes in compartment and access, and berthing and messing plans which resulted in scrapping a considerable amount of design work; changes in conning tower, late delivery of armor, lack of machine tool capacity, rejection of turbine castings with subsequent delay in awarding another contract

4 months

C.L. 48 - HONOLULU (New York).

Contract date of delivery 1 September 1937.

Probable date of delivery 1 August 1938.

Delays on BROOKLYN are reflected in this vessel. Ship delayed by Yard in order to avoid an inefficient labor policy and maintain a more even work load.

11 months

Contributory and concurrent causes are late delivery of 5" A.A. battery; late delivery of interior side armor; late delivery of turret armor; late delivery of fire control apparatus

11 months

C.L. 50 - HELENA - (New York).

Contract date of completion 16 May 1939.

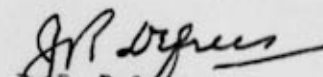
Probable date of completion 2 January 1940.

Late delivery of turbine castings from the Norfolk Navy Yard, over which the New York Yard had no control.

7½ months

Contributory and concurrent causes are late delivery of fire control tubes; late delivery of structural tubing; late delivery of piping system tubing.

5½ months


J. R. DeFrees.