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Bateau Mouche IV

Anonymous

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Lloyd's List Jan 1989

BATEAU MOUCHE IV

Rio de Janeiro, Jan 1 — Many New Year revellers were feared dead today after passenger vessel *Bateau Mouche IV* sank in half a minute near Copacabana beach just before midnight yesterday. Coast Guards said that 20 people had been rescued from the vessel, which had been carrying at least 130 people, and 49 bodies had been brought ashore. Survivors said the flat-keeled vessel was overloaded and lacked lifejackets but the owners said it had capacity for 153 people. Some survivors said the vessel had been stopped by police and ordered to return to shore but set out a second time. The passengers, wealthy Brazilians and foreigners who had paid \$150 each for the outing, were on a trip to watch Rio de Janeiro's New Year fireworks display. Survivors said Americans, Italians, French, West Germans, Portuguese and Danes were on board but most were Brazilian. A survivor said that when the vessel sank many passengers were on a congested lower deck. — Reuter.

Rio de Janeiro, Jan 1 — The death count rose to 51 today as divers pulled more bodies from the wreck of the *Bateau Mouche IV*. Lieutenant-Colonel Jefferson Cardoso de Bem, of the Coast Guard, said waves had been 13 ft high and the Coast Guard had earlier issued warnings to people planning to sail. Several passengers said the vessel, estimated to be about 70 ft long, was stopped by harbour police, who counted numbers before she continued on her trip. A survivor said: "When we reached the Sugar Loaf mountain and met the first waves of the Atlantic, it took one minute. We met one wave and the vessel just went over." — Reuter.

Rio de Janeiro, Jan 2 — The *Bateau Mouche* (? *Bateau Mouch IV*) capsized and sank, drowning at least 51 passengers and leaving nine people missing, rescue officials said. The vessel, an excursion vessel and floating restaurant, was carrying about 130 people on a cruise which included a fireworks display when she sank three minutes before the New Year began, military police spokesman Jose Santos said. "Apparently the ship capsized because she was overloaded," Santos said. Santos said many people were carried out to sea in the choppy waters at the mouth of Guanabara Bay. Another police spokesman said 70 people were rescued or swam ashore. Fifty-one bodies had been recovered and nine people were listed as missing when rescue work was called off for the day yesterday because of darkness. Witnesses and police said officers of a Brazilian Coast Guard patrol vessel had intercepted the vessel and ordered her to return to port earlier in the evening because she was overloaded. After returning to port, she promptly sailed again in choppy seas, the witnesses said. The chief of the fire department's marine rescue group said six divers had been searching the hull and

ocean floor 55 ft below the surface at a point between Sugar Loaf mountain and Cotunduba Island near the entrance to Guanabara Bay. — United Press International

TMS 1988 student Alberto Wajngarten, Brazil, and his family were drowned in this accident.