The Deadly Lithium Battery Fire Cover-Up By Elon Musk

As my colleague Mary Chastain reported in her post on the Waymo facility filled with riderless electric vehicles (EVs) and powered scooters that was set on fire during the Los Angeles riots, I have often noted that **lithium battery fires are intense** and challenging to extinguish.
There is another example to add to the collection of incidents related to lithium batteries. Last week, a British-managed, Liberian-flagged vessel named Morning Midas was traveling from Yantai, China, to Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico, carrying approximately 3,000 vehicles (750 to 800 of which were either fully electric or hybrid vehicles).

On route, while the ship was roughly 300–340 miles southwest of Adak, Alaska, a fire broke out on board. Smoke was initially observed emanating from the deck loaded with electric vehicles. The crew of 22 immediately attempted to suppress the fire using onboard systems but were unable to control it.

The cargo vessel has now been abandoned. And while **no cause has been officially** assigned, the lithium batteries are the prime suspect.

Photographs show the vessel still smoking hundreds of miles from the nearest coastline days after the initial distress signal was received. Thick columns of smoke can be seen billowing into the sky.

Incredibly, all 22 crew members were safely evacuated onto a lifeboat on Tuesday afternoon and later rescued by a nearby merchant vessel.

They remained aboard the rescue ship as of Thursday, the vessel's management company, London-based Zodiac Maritime, said.

…The cause of the fire remains under investigation but lithium-ion batteries, widely used in electric vehicles, are known to present firefighting challenges due to their high combustibility once ignited.
Salvage crews are on their way.

A salvage team is expected to arrive early next week at the scene of a cargo ship that was carrying about 3,000 vehicles to Mexico when it caught fire in waters off Alaska's Aleutian island chain.

A tug carrying salvage specialists and special equipment is expected to arrive at the location of the Morning Midas around Monday, the ship's management company, London-based Zodiac Maritime, said Thursday. The crew will assess the ship's condition, and a separate tug with firefighting and ocean towage capabilities is being arranged, the company said in its statement. In the meantime, officials are using the ship's onboard satellite-connected systems to monitor it.

Legal Insurrection readers may recall that in 2023, I covered a similar fire aboard a **ship called Fremantle Highway**. The vessel spent a week burning on the North Sea while carrying thousands of cars, nearly 500 of which were reported to be electric vehicles (EVs), before finally being tugged into a Dutch port for salvaging (allaying fears that it could sink and impact shipping lanes).

After much wrangling and European regulatory drama, the boat was salvaged, renamed, and sold to China. The connection to the EVs and their lithium batteries on board was **completely minimized**.

A year after the devastating fire aboard the Japanese-owned car carrier Fremantle Highway, the salvaged portions of the vessel are set to start a new life. A court battle over the status of the salvaged vessel has been settled with the Dutch authorities agreeing to issue an export license for the hulk now known as Floor.

…The Floor has been moved to a North Sea anchorage and is waiting for a salvage tug which will tow it to Xiamen, China. Dutch media reports indicate the vessel has been acquired by Qingshan Shipyard Group which will complete the repairs in China.

A year after the devastating fire, the authorities are yet to release a final report. Initial speculation was that the electric vehicles caused the fire but later reports have downplayed that speculation Reports have said it appeared the fire began in other cargo areas.

Chemistry does not change, no matter how much the narratives are manipulated. Lithium battery fires will remain a significant fire response challenge unless their inherent chemistry changes.