

Master
USNS GENERAL JOHN POPE (T-AP 110)
CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96601

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19 April 1966

From: Commanding Officer, Military Department, USNS GEN. JOHN POPE (T-AP 110)
To: Commander, Military Sea Transportation Service, Pacific Area, Fort Mason, San Francisco, California
Subj: USNS POPE Lift of 4051 troops of 26th Regimental Combat Team of ROK Tiger Division from Pusan, Korea to Qui Nhon, Vietnam 10-16 April 1966; detailed report of
Encl: (1) Orientation Briefing
(2) Medical Aspects

1. This report is submitted for the purpose of providing information to ships which may be involved in future ROK lifts.
2. The outstanding marks received in the Trip Summary Report might indicate to some that there were no problems associated with this voyage. Such was not the case - problems were many and varied - but the great majority of these problems were solved, and in our opinion the mission was most successful.

3. Embarkation:

a. About 2 weeks prior to the ship's arrival in Pusan, the POPE was advised that 175 officers and 3438 troops would embark. Since this figure was not in excess of the ship's total capacity, no emergency berthing was installed. Upon arrival in Pusan on 8 April, the ship was informed that the lift had been increased to 206 officers and 3845 enlisted. This necessitated a crash project of installing approximately 400 additional bunks in the squares of several hatches. This was accomplished by the morning of 9 April when the Main Body of troops arrived. Earlier notification of the increase would have been appreciated.

b. As previously warned in ELTINGE's report of her October 1965 ROK lift, ceremonies on the pier were indeed a great hindrance in getting the troops settled in their compartments and in organizing the Voyage Staff. It was very difficult to keep the advance party of KPs, Mess Cooks and Guards at their posts while bands were playing and movie stars were singing on the pier during the entire afternoon of 9 April. On the evening of 9 April, the Regimental Commander (SUC) and all of his officers left the ship for a round of official functions and did not return until after midnight. On 10 April (sailing day), approximately 10,000 Korean dependents swarmed onto the pier, and it was necessary to post several Korean guards at the gangway to prevent their entry into the ship. For approximately 30 minutes prior to sailing, both the Master and COMILDEPT were required to be on the pier to participate in ceremonies. An overwhelming force of dignitaries (including the Prime Minister of Korea, and many American and Korean generals and admirals) then came aboard for coffee in the Master's cabin and a tour of the ship. It was with a great feeling of relief that the ship finally sailed.

c. Inasmuch as it is impossible to properly organize the Voyage Staff prior to sailing, it is recommended that future sailing times be scheduled immediately after all troops have embarked.

4. Enroute:

a. Immediately after sailing, an orientation briefing (enclosure (1)) was given by the COMILDEPT, with the aid of an interpreter, to all Korean officers embarked. This briefing, which was later translated into the Korean language and passed out to all officers and key NCOs, proved to be an invaluable aid in getting the Regimental Commander (SUC) and his Staff to understand the daily routine and what was expected of the embarked troops. Although the ship's SOP was passed out to the Voyage Staff, it was far too detailed to be of any value.

b. My first daily inspection of all troop compartments took place at 10 A.M. on Monday, 11 April. Much to my surprise, all troop compartments and heads were in an excellent and clean condition. The Regimental Commander, once he knew what was expected of him and why, organized his Regiment well to get the job done. Only on the 2nd day at sea, when the ship experienced rough weather, were the compartments below par due to seasickness.

c. The Abandon Ship Drill, anticipated with much apprehension on my part, was executed with dispatch by a well-organized Regiment. Although the Regimental Commander had been told the goal was to get everyone out on deck in 15 minutes, the job was accomplished in less than 10. Military Department personnel, assigned to each of the 13 troop compartments, led each group on deck, assisted with lifejackets, and organized the troops into formation at their boat stations. This procedure worked out very well.

d. During the voyage, communications was, to be expected, at all times a problem. The Regimental Commander's official interpreter, a member of his Staff, spoke very poor English. Although several enlisted men were found who could speak English almost perfectly, Colonel PAK refused to allow an enlisted man to be used as an interpreter between American and Korean officers. These men were used to good advantage, however, by the MILDEPT CMAA in the troop compartments, in Sick Bay, on the Mess Decks and in the Galley. Any word passed to all hands over the ship's announcing system had to be done by an officer, however.

e. Although the Koreans were looking forward to seeing American movies - particularly Westerns or Musicals - five Korean movies were brought aboard by their Public Affairs Officer for showing to the troops. A compromise was reached by alternating the movies - Korean one night, American the next.

f. The "Off Limits", "No Smoking" and "Keep Off" signs suggested by the ELTINGE proved to be of value. These were run off on stencils prior to embarkation and placed throughout the ship.

g. On Sunday, 10 April, Protestant Divine Worship was conducted jointly by Korean Chaplains and the ship's Chaplain. Daily prayers over the LMC were said in both the English and Korean language.

h. Feeding a full load of non-English-speaking troops proved to be the biggest problem of the voyage, particularly in view of the fact that the largest previous lift by the POPE since reactivation was 1700 troops. The entire Steward's Department deserves commendation for their cheerful and untiring efforts at bringing order out of chaos. Initially the Koreans had several 2nd Lieutenants in charge of the Mess Details - none were able to exert any influence over their men. When the Regimental Supply Officer - a Major - was placed in overall charge of the Mess, this situation was corrected.

i. At the Captain's Dinner on the final night at sea, the Koreans caught the ship somewhat by surprise by presenting gifts to the Master, COMILDEPT, Chief Engineer, 1st Officer, Chief Steward, Doctor, Chaplain, XOMILDEPT, and several troop stewards and waiters. Luckily the Master had prepared a framed and autographed portrait of the ship to present to the Regimental Commander, and a large and expensive embroidered picture of a Tiger was hastily commandeered from the XOMILDEPT and presented to the Regiment. Ships involved in future lifts of organized ROK units should be prepared for this eventuality.

5. Debarkation:

a. As scheduled, USNS POPE anchored off Qui Nhon, Vietnam at 0700 on 15 April. At that time all troops had been fed, all compartments, heads and the Mess Decks were clean, and the entire 1st Battalion of 750 troops was on deck ready for debarkation. In addition, all blankets and sheets had been turned in, and approximately 750 box lunches had been prepared for troops debarking through the noon hour. At 0730 the ship was informed by voice radio that no troops would be debarked until the following morning! This was due to ceremonies on the beach, which were not scheduled to commence until the following day. Once again, earlier notification of this fact would have been appreciated.

b. Debarkation on 16 April was accomplished very smoothly, with both the forward and after 3rd deck sideports being utilized. A barge was secured at each sideport, and 4 LCUs alternated in shuttling troops to the beach. Although an hour was allocated for loading two LCUs, the Koreans were able to fill two boats (about 750 men) in an average time of 20 minutes.

c. A 250-man work detail was utilized in cleaning up the ship after debarkation. Although a 1000 inspection revealed little progress and many discrepancies had to be pointed out, a re-inspection at 1400 found the ship in a satisfactory state of cleanliness.

6. Summary. As Dr. KITZMILLER states in enclosure (2), a busy, unique and rewarding experience can be anticipated from such a lift. The Koreans are a proud people - proud of their record in Vietnam, proud of their Unit, and

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desirous of doing the right thing and making a good impression on board your ship. The only problem is to hurdle the communications barrier and make them understand what is expected of them. Once this is accomplished, the job will be done - with efficiency and dispatch.

WB Cobb
W. B. COBB

Copy to:
Master, USNS POPE

USNS GENERAL JOHN POPE (T-AP 110)

ORIENTATION BRIEFING

Welcome to the General John Pope. I am Lieutenant Commander COBB, United States Navy, Commanding Officer, Military Department. I am the Administrative Commander of all troop passengers on board this ship. Colonel PAK-WAN-SIK, as the Senior Unit Commander, is the operational commander of all troops on board. This ship is operated by a civilian master and civilian crew. The Master, Captain HEINZ, is in Supreme Command of everyone on board the ship.

Daily routine will be as follows:

For troop enlisted men -

0400 - KPs report to Mess Hall for duty.

0430 - Reveille for all troops. Early chow for KPs.

0500 - 0800 - Breakfast

1000 - 1300 - Lunch

1500 - 1800 - Supper

Movies for troops will be shown in the large troop recreation room. Showings will be at 1300, 1500, 1700 and 1900.

2130 - All troops return to their compartments.

2200 - Taps. Lights out.

Daily routine for Officers:

Meals will be served in 2 sittings in the Officer's Dining Room - 1st sitting will be for senior officers - 2nd sitting will be for junior officers.

Breakfast - 0715 - 1st Sitting

0800 - 2nd Sitting

Lunch - 1130 - 1st Sitting

1215 - 2nd Sitting

Supper - 1630 - 1st Sitting

1715 - 2nd Sitting

Movies for Officers will be shown in this Lounge as follows:

1800 - 1st Movie (senior officers)

2000 - 2nd Movie (junior officers)

Tomorrow afternoon at 1300 we will hold an Abandon Ship Drill. At that time all troops and officers will be told to report to their compartments and staterooms. Everyone will then put on a life jacket and head covering and stand by for further instructions. On signal all personnel will proceed to the open decks to their life-boat stations. A Navy guide will be in each troop compartment to lead everyone in that compartment to their station on deck. Please carry out the instructions of the Navy Guide. It is hoped that everyone can be out of their compartments and on deck in 15 minutes or less. All officers will report here to the officers' lounge. Colonel PAK, I would like for you to come with me to the Bridge to assist the Master.

At 1500 today, a combined Korean-American Protestant Church service will be conducted in the Large Troop Recreation Room.

Rules and Regulations:

No smoking is permitted in Troop Compartments, Troop Mess Hall, or Officers' Dining Room. The decks above the Main Deck are off-limits to troops. Troop Officers may use the 01 and 02 decks, but remain clear of the Bridge area.

All troops must keep off of machinery on deck. Keep both feet on deck at all times - don't lean on railings.

Compartment Commanders must make sure that your men know where their latrines are located in the ship. All troop latrines and showers are located in either the bow (front end) or stern (back end) of the ship. I have already received complaints that many troops are using civilian crew-members showers and latrines. All Civilian living spaces are off-limits to all troops.

At 1000 each morning, I will inspect all troop compartments, washrooms and latrines. I request that Colonel PAK or his Executive Officer accompany me. Also the Police and Sanitation Officer, a Doctor and an interpreter. All troops must be out of their compartment on deck until the inspection is completed. I would like the Compartment Commander and his Compartment Non-commissioned officer standing by. There must also be a senior non-commissioned officer in charge of each troop latrine.

It will be your responsibility to keep all areas clean that your personnel use. This includes compartments, mess decks, latrines, ladderwells (stairways), the large and small troop recreation rooms, and the open decks. Permanent troop working details will be needed as follows:

- (1) KPs - 230 men
- (2) Guards - 31 Guard Posts to be manned 24 hours a day.
- (3) Troop Cleaning Gear Issue Rooms (6 men - 1 NCO).
- (4) Latrines (2 men in each) - There are 4 on the ship.
- (5) Topsides Sweepers - 40 men and 4 NCOs.
- (6) Ladderwells - 1 NCO plus 6 men in each ladderwell (12 ladderwells).
- (7) Large and Small Recreation Rooms - 1 senior non-commissioned officer and 15 men.

My Chief Master at Arms, Chief GEARY, will contact your Police and Sanitation Officer to arrange for these details.

The Troop Office must be manned 24 hours a day (3rd deck, #5 hatch). You should have your Officer of the Day on duty there. There should also be an Interpreter in the Troop Office at all times to answer the telephone. Your Adjutant, several messengers, and Sergeant of the Guard should also be stationed in the Troop Office.

The Announcing System in the Mess Hall has certain restrictions on its use. The troop circuit may be used 24 hours a day. The passenger and open deck circuits may only be used from 0800 - 1800. You should have someone permanently assigned to pass the word. He should be on duty in the Troop Office.

Nothing will be thrown over the side of the ship except on the fantail (stern of the ship). Do not throw lighted cigarettes over the side.

No gambling is permitted on this ship.

No alcoholic beverages will be consumed on this ship.

Weapons should be stowed in your compartments and not carried about the ship. Weapons will not be loaded.

Dr. KITZMILLER will now explain sick call procedures. Are there any questions?

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16 April 1966

From: Medical Officer, USNS General John POPE (T-AP 113)
To: Interested Medical Personnel

Subj: Medical Aspects of Korean Troop Lifts

1. The Korean medical personnel are able and eager to work. The doctors are well trained in fundamentals, and all speak English fairly well, and read and write it even better. The "Aid Men" (Corpsmen) were able to handle a screening sick call efficiently, and are trained to do minor surgery, such as I & D, etc.
2. As reported earlier by the USNS Eltinge, the predominate medical problem was skin infection and cellulitis of all types. Many abscesses were seen of the most severe degree. Double the normal amount of minor surgery instruments will be needed sterile each day. The Korean doctors state that this situation is due to rigorous field training these units undergo prior to embarkation.
3. Initial seasickness was largely circumvented by giving every soldier 50mg of Dramamine approximately one hour prior to sailing, despite rumors as to the susceptibility of the Oriental to motion sickness.
4. Perhaps humorously, many cases of very severe indigestion were seen due to overeating of strange foods. Soldiers were seen to heap two plates high with every food offered. This should be discouraged by mess line personnel.
5. In the same regard, the Koreans were quite satisfied and the feeding time of 4,000 troops cut in half by limiting the menu to one goulash type food to be placed over rice, e. g. Chop Suey.
6. Sanitation of the mess hall and troop galley was initially a problem due to poor liaison and lack of supervision of the clean up crews. This was easily corrected by a Korean officer taking overall charge of this phase, and by the end of the voyage the mess hall was shipshape in every way.
7. Once the proper method of use and cleaning of heads was adequately demonstrated, sanitation here was no problem.
8. A medical officer should anticipate a large Korean troop lift to be a busy, unique, and rewarding experience.


J. L. KITZMILLER
LT, MC, USN

Copy to:
CO, Mil Dept
Colonel SCHELL, KMAG
Medical Records Office

ENCLOSURE (2)