



New Orleans Notes

By FLOYD HEPTING
Port Agent

Plenty of jobs with few takers! That continues to be the word locally, and from what I hear, seems to be the case elsewhere. We've all been through this before, and know that there are always two parts to this story; the shortage, then the oversupply, created by meeting the shortage, when the ships return to the reserve fleet. Needless to say, we are doing everything possible to man every ship without delay, and to prepare for the situation when the crisis in Southeast Asia ameliorates.

At the moment, we are faced with the difficult task of finding men for jobs. We have advertized in the news media, scouted around military separation centers for retirees, passed the word on through other sources, investigated all possibilities, and have generally neglected no approach to solving the problem of this shortage no matter how tedious or difficult. Despite this, our success often generates a collateral problem such as in the case of the s/s *HIGH POINT VICTORY*.

This vessel, operated by Lykes for MSTs, required a Radio Officer in the latter part of August. We had no men, anywhere. The company and subsequently the Maritime Commission was advised of this and also that we were in contact with Mr. Howard King, of Amarillo, Texas, who had the FCC license and six months endorsement, and had applied for USCG Radio Officer license at Houston, Texas. He was eager to go and was immediately available. We requested that

they assist in getting him cleared by the Coast Guard licensing department as soon as possible as he was the sole prospect for employment on that ship. The Coast Guard refused to grant him a waiver; they said he must have a complete security check for this "sensitive" position and this would take about 45 days. I have personally known other applicants to wait over three months for this.

Finally, sailing day came, and we still had no one but King. The officials of this Union, the Maritime Commission, and Lykes Brothers SS Co., urged and pleaded with the USCG, to grant him a waiver for this one trip pending final clearance; especially as King is a current member of the U.S. Naval Reserve! We had to enlist the aid of members of Congress in order to move them, and after the ship was idle alongside the New Orleans docks for ten days, King was rushed to sail her with vital cargo for our Armed Forces in Vietnam on September 19, 1966.

What really grabbed me was that about this time, a sick Radio Officer on an American ship had been relieved in the Philippines by an alien Radio Officer enroute to the War Zone. No radio silence in effect, no convoys, no secret codes in possession of the Radio Officer, and they can't clear a native-born American, recent from the U.S. Navy, and currently in the

VIETNAM MAIL

After considerable insistence by all maritime Unions, the following arrangements have been made for mail to merchant crews aboard USNS tankers and ship operating under General Agency Agreement or Time Charters for MSTs account: You may be reached via Fleet Post Office addresses by unregistered first class and air mail. Examples:

John Doe, Radio Officer
s/s RUSTBUCKET (MSTs)

or

USNS RUSTBUCKET (T-AO)
FPO San Francisco 96601

or

FPO New York 09501

MSTs in parenthesis must be used in address of Time Charter or General Agency ship, as shown in above examples.

Naval Reserve, to supply the urgent demand of a ship about to sail for the front. This is ridiculous, but to delay the sailing of that ship for ten days awaiting security clearance for King is incredible!

Throughout all this Brother King persevered and sweated it out like a trouper. He is now on his way and should be in Southeast Asia by the time that this is written. . . .

NOTE TO ALL "OLD TIMERS"—As some of the men now being assigned have had no previous commercial experience, please assist them as much as you can with operating information, procedure, contract, ARA Press, etc., and by keeping a kindly ear for their calls on the traffic lists when they are in your vicinity. . . .

The Port of New Orleans is still the nation's second port, according to figures compiled by the U.S. Department of Commerce for 1965. New construction for this area is: Avondale Shipyards:

Frederick Lykes, projected deliver date, 11/25/66; Howell Lykes, 12/30/66; Dolly Turman 2/17/67; Velma Lykes 3/17/67; Letitia Lykes, 10/1/67; Genevieve Lykes, 12/1/67. States Steamship Company, anticipated delivery dates: MA Hull Number 210, 8/7/68; No. 211, 11/5/68; No. 212, 2/3/69; No. 213, 5/4/69; No. 214, 8/2/69.

At Ingalls Shipbuilding Company, American President Lines: President Van Buren, 6/9/67, President Grant, 8/11/67; President Taft, 10/6/67; President Johnson, 11/17/67; President Fillmore, 3/1/68. Moore McCormack Lines: MA Hull Number 221, 12/16/68; No. 222, 3/16/69, No. 223, 6/14/69; No. 224, 9/12/69.

The outstanding social note is Frank Gruber getting spliced; we all extend our best wishes and heartiest congratulations.



Brother Howard J. King, who prevailed over Government redtape and was assigned to the SS High Point Victory.

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