

Reg. No. 281
R. S. No. _____

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt 4 0414

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander Task Unit 51.29.2 (Captain J.K. DAVIS, USN).
(2) Commander Amphibious Group TWO, Pacific (Commander Task Group 51.21).
(3) Commander Administrative Command, Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
(4) Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

Reference: (a) Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 1CL-45.

PART I BRIEF SUMMARY

No remarks.

PART II PRELIMINARIES

A. No remarks.

B. This vessel sortied from ULITHI on 5 March, 1945, with task unit 12.6.1. This ship left task unit 12.6.1 on 13 March, 1945, and joined task unit 12.6.2. Anti-aircraft firing practice at sleeve targets was held on sortie from ULITHI. Daily damage control drills were held enroute to objective.

PART III CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT (All times Zone KING)

A. 14 March 1945:

0732 Anchored at beach blue two, east anchorage, Iwo Jima.
1300 TQM conference at 4th Marine Division Headquarters, beach blue, loading plans completed. Staff communication team moved aboard ship.
1455 Ship left anchorage.
1555 Anchored off beach purple, west anchorage, Iwo Jima.

16 March 1945:

1135 Commenced loading LVTs in No. 2 hold.
1354 Stopped loading cargo, having loaded eight LVTs.
1600 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 0; 17% loaded.

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

4 - 0414

17 March 1945:

1618 LSM 45 came alongside starboard side No. 2 hatch. Rough sea.
1645 Commenced loading troops aboard.
1650 Parted new 8" bow line. Lock-link chain embarkation nets badly damaged, chains parted. Made repairs.
1710 Parted new 8" bow line and 7/8" wire to bow of LSM.
No cargo was loaded until all troops aboard due to risk of vehicles hitting them as ship rolls.
1819 Commenced loading cargo No. 2 hatch.
1859 Commenced loading cargo No. 1 hatch.
1910 Parted 8" breast line to LSM.
1940 Parted 8" bow line to LSM.
2000 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 0; 17% loaded.
2100 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 0; 17% loaded.
2200 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 5; 19% loaded.
2300 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 10; 25% loaded.
2335 Completed taking cargo from LSM.
2352 Cast off LSM 45.

18 March 1945:

0000 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 13; 28% loaded.
0018 LSM 141 moored starboard side No. 5 hatch. Secured with six 8" lines, one 7/8" wire cable.
0050 Parted 8" breast line.
0100 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 14; 30% loaded.
0115 Parted 7/8" wire bow line.
0120 Parted 8" breast line.
0155 Commenced loading cargo at No. 5 hatch.
0200 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 14; 35% loaded.
0210 Pulled mooring chock off deck of LSM.
0300 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 14; 41% loaded.
0400 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 14; 49% loaded.
0500 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 25; 60% loaded.
0544 Stopped loading cargo at No. 5 hatch.
0600 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 31; 64% loaded.
0620 Cast off LSM 141.
0700 Shifted berth to east anchorage.
Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 31; 64% loaded.
Hourly cargo reports continued the same until 1100, 19 March 1945.

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

18 March 1945: (Continued)

1648 LSM 140 moored starboard side No. 2 hatch.
1710 Commenced embarking troops.
1715 Parted 1½" towing wire being used as bow line.
1725 Stopped embarkation to repair nets. Unable to hook onto vehicles due to motion of LSM and ship.
1814 Parted doubled-up, new 8" bow line.
1845 Parted single 8" breast line.
1850 LSM carried away outrigger to ship's jumbo boom starboard side of No. 2 hatch. Cast off LSM 140. No cargo received.
2115 Request of Commanding Officer to stop loading until sea moderated was refused. LSM 264 moored starboard side of No. 5 hatch after smashing ship's starboard boat boom. Unable to secure LSM close alongside due to 15 foot surge.
2135 Cast off LSM 264.

19 March 1945:

0756 Shifted anchorage to berth 20.
0815 LSM 264 moored starboard side amidships.
0825 Commenced embarking troops.
0913 Cast off LSM 264.
1005 LSM 140 moored to starboard side forward.
1045 Commenced loading cargo at No. 1, 2, 3 hatches.
1100 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 31; 64% loaded.
1200 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 35; 72% loaded.
1300 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 39; 78% loaded.
1325 Cast off LSM 140.
1357 LST 247 moored starboard side.
1400 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 43; 86% loaded.
1415 Commenced loading troops and cargo.
1500 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 43; 94% loaded.
1520 Completed loading cargo in No. 1 and No. 2 hatches, covered up.
1555 Completed loading cargo in No. 3 hatch. Cast off LST 247.
1600 Hourly cargo report: Net loads - 47; 100% loaded.
1645 Hoisted LCMs aboard forward.
1730 Completed loading plans and passenger rosters sent to O.T.C. by officer messenger mail.
1800 Shifted anchorage to west side of Iwo Jima.

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt

23 March 1945

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

PART IV ORDNANCE

Ordnance not used.

PART V DAMAGE

None.

PART VI SPECIAL COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

- A. No remarks.
- B. No remarks.
- C. AMPHIBIOUS ACTION

1. Troops and cargo

(a) The following units were embarked on board this vessel:

| <u>ORGANIZATION</u> | <u>USMC</u> | | <u>ARC</u> | <u>USN</u> | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | <u>Off</u> | <u>Enl</u> | | <u>Off</u> | <u>Enl</u> |
| Headquarters Co, HqBn, 4thMarDiv | 59 | 179 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| 4th Signal Co, HqBn, 4thMarDiv | 16 | 246 | | 0 | 0 |
| MP Co, HqBn, 4thMarDiv, FMF | 4 | 71 | | 0 | 0 |
| Reconn. Co, HqBn, 4thMarDiv | 3 | 89 | | 0 | 4 |
| 1st Provisional Rocket Det, HqCo, HqBn, 4thMarDiv | 2 | 48 | | 0 | 0 |
| 5th AmpTrBn, FMF | 21 | 302 | | 1 | 5 |
| 3rd AmpTrBn, FMF | 6 | 294 | | 0 | 4 |
| Hq, VPhibCorps | 5 | 0 | | 1 | 0 |
| 1st Joint Assault Signal Co, FMF | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 0 |
| H&SCo, 4th Pioneer Bn, 4thMarDiv | 0 | 0 | | 1 | 1 |
| H&SCo, 4th Medical Bn, 4thMarDiv | 0 | 1 | | 2 | 5 |
| Ordnance Co, 4thService Bn, Service Trps, 4thMarDiv, FMF | 5 | 145 | | 0 | 0 |
| HqCo, 4thService Bn, Service Trps, 4thMarDiv | 6 | 29 | | 2 | 6 |
| 4thService Bn, Service Trps, 4thMarDiv | 6 | 234 | | 0 | 8 |
| 25th Marines, 4thMarDiv | 0 | 2 | | 0 | 0 |
| Navy Casuals: (Destination Guam) | | | | 0 | 25 |
| Navy Casuals: (FFT U.S.S. FAYETTE) | | | | 1 | 23 |
| Navy Casuals: (FFT ComTransRon 11) | | | | 1 | 1 |
| TOTALS: | <u>134</u> | <u>1643</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>92</u> |
| GRAND TOTAL: | 1885 | | | | |

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103) CJB/Pt

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945

- (b) Troops were embarked on 18 and 19 March, 1945, except preliminary details which embarked on 16 and 17 March, 1945. All troops were embarked at Iwo Jima.
- (c) Type and quantity of cargo embarked were as follows: (See Appendix "A", "Consolidated Unit Personnel and Tonnage Table").
 - (1) Stowage was conventional combat loading without priorities. Cargo was loaded from LSMs and LST by ship's cargo booms.
- (d) Cargo was loaded at Iwo Jima, 16-19 March, 1945. Cargo will be discharged on arrival in rear port.

2. Landing Craft

- (a) Two LCVPs were carried but not used for loading cargo or troops.

D. No remarks.

E. No remarks.

F. COMMENTS

Upon arrival at Iwo Jima it was found that complete and efficient planning by the TQM Headquarters of the 4th Marine Division had eliminated any delay in obtaining details for loading troops and cargo. Stowage plans were completed and would have been satisfactory except for the fact that the transport characteristics for this ship supplied to the 4th Marine Division by Fleet Marine Force TQM Section Headquarters, Pacific, dated 2 August 1944, were obsolete on dimensions, cargo and troop capacities. Stowage plan was corrected to conform with new ship's characteristics resulting in removal of 41 vehicles from plans. (Corrected copies of new ship's characteristics have been forwarded to the above headquarters.)

Very changeable weather conditions were noticeable at both east and west anchorages of Iwo Jima. Calm conditions prevailed for loading of the eight LVTs on 16 March, while very choppy sea prevailed on 17 and 18 March,

AP103/AL2-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

moderating on 19 March. Considerable damage to hull and gear of both this ship and the LSMs alongside resulted, but no actual casualties. Damage to vehicles was negligible due to experienced winch drivers and hatch tenders and good guide line handling. A minimum of cargo lights were used, all being well shielded from above the horizontal. Floodlights on the LSMs proved very valuable under the difficult conditions experienced.

The Marine TQM was unable to come aboard the ship prior to the arrival of the first cargo LSM. Sequence of vehicle loading at the beach for proper stowage aboard the ship was fairly good but could have been improved had the TQM been sent aboard to study loading restrictions and stowage spaces.

Billeting of 110% load of troops was accomplished with some difficulty by using cots in the capstan flat, trunk room, GSK 'tween deck, and crew's compartment in No. 4 hold. No "hot bunking" was necessary. Lack of mess gear among approximately 40 percent of the troops embarked made necessary the use of one mess kit by two troops, slowing messing time considerably but causing no sanitation problem due to efficient washing facilities in the mess compartment. Water was changed often and live steam fed into basins continuously. Laundry facilities were made available to troops and troop officers the day after embarkation. Appreciation by troops of fresh meat, fresh bread, and three hot meals a day was very apparent. Movies were shown in the mess compartment every night to a portion of the embarked troops.

The ease with which the lock-link chain parts in chain embarkation nets was again very noticeable. Splinters from broken wooden rungs caused some injury to hands of troops. Distribution of manila nets is strongly recommended when they again become available.

Lack of mooring chocks from frame #70 to frame #151 on this vessel makes it necessary to put mooring lines to all landing craft over sharp rails or waterways where they quickly part if the craft is surging alongside. During the rough seas experienced 17 and 18 March, breast lines parted so often that their use was completely discontinued in favor of doubled bow lines and one very long spring line, with a stern line brought from the ship's boat deck to the LSMs until the lifeboat bitts carried away, after which the stern line had to be led forward from frame #152 to the LSM with great difficulty because of the distance involved. Alteration requests for installation of chocks at frames #45, main deck, and #79, #97, and #125, upper deck, have been submitted. Small "Y" bitts should be installed inboard of the chocks.

The ten foot outrigger for the outboard jumbo guy has proven very valuable in efficient and safe operation of the jumbo boom in the last three operations. Its installation at last yard overhaul has prevented any loss of gear, wire whips, penants, blocks, or cargo as had previously been the case.

AP103/A12-1
Serial: 021

U.S.S. PRESIDENT POLK (AP 103)

CJB/Pt

23 March 1945.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

Subject: Action Report - IWO JIMA Operation, 14-20 March, 1945.

After damage during this operation by the bow of an LSM, the outrigger was ready for use to full capacity within four hours, since the double-action gooseneck allowed the outrigger to swing in to the ship's side after the preventer stay had parted with no damage to the outrigger itself.

Forms 1, 3, 4, 4 (reverse), and 7 as given in the TRANSPORT DOCTRINE, September 1944, Chapter XIX were used in compiling reports and stowage plans for this operation. Enclosures (A), (B), (C), (D), and (F) of Amphibious Forces Circular Letter AL17 - Rev. 1, dated 25 October, 1944, will be used in place of the forms in the TRANSPORT DOCTRINE for all future operations. Since question invariably arises as to which set of forms should be used by TQMs in these advanced areas, it is recommended that all ships of the Amphibious Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and all Marine and Army loading authorities be issued specific orders as to which forms are preferred as standard forms by higher authority.

PART VII PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIES

1. There were no personnel casualties and no casualties were evacuated.

C. J. Ballreich
C.J. BALLREICH.

cc:
Cominch (Direct) (1) ✓
Cincpac (Direct) (3)
ComAdComPhibsPac (Direct) (1)
File

CONSOLIDATED
UNIT PERSONNEL AND TONNAGE TABLE

4 0414

| Troop Officers | | <u>150</u> | Troop Enlisted | <u>1735</u> | Total | <u>1885</u> | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|-------------|---------------|-------------|--|
| | Line No. | | Sq.Ft. | Cu.Ft. | (lbs.) Weight | | |
| T S R P O A C O C P E | 1 | SEA BAGS | x | 292 | 5,090 | | |
| | 2 | OFFICE EQUIPMENT | x | 791 | 17,466 | | |
| | 3 | TOTAL - LINES 1 and 2 | x | 1,083 | 22,556 | | |
| G E N E R A L C A R G O | 4 | COMBAT EQUIPT. W/O VEHICLES | x | 2,040 | 67,125 | | |
| | 5 | SUPPLEMENTARY EQUIPMENT | x | | | | |
| | 6 | MESS EQUIPMENT | x | | | | |
| | 7 | CAMP EQUIPMENT | x | | | | |
| | 8 | SPECIAL EQUIPMENT (REEFER) | x | 70 | 800 | | |
| | 9 | AMMUNITION (Small arms) | x | 63 | 6,000 | | |
| | 10 | RATIONS | x | 61 | 2,100 | | |
| | 11 | AUTOMATIC SUPPLIES (less rations, gas, and oil) | x | | | | |
| | 12 | POST EXCHANGE SUPPLIES | x | | | | |
| | 13 | TOTAL - LINES 4-12 | x | 2,234 | 76,025 | | |
| | V C E L H E I S | 14 | HAND CARTS | x | | | |
| | | 15 | VEHICLES (Wheeled & tracked) TOWED GUNS TRUCKS (67) | 6,427 | 40,510 | 449,215 | |
| | | 16 | TOTAL - LINES 14 and 15 | 6,427 | 40,510 | 449,215 | |
| S S P T E O C W I A G L E | 17 | HIGH EXPLOSIVES | x | | | | |
| | 18 | PETROLEUM PRODUCTS | x | | | | |
| | 19 | PYROTECHNICS | x | | | | |
| | 20 | TOTAL CARGO: Lines 3, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19: | 6,427 | 43,827 | 547,796 | | |
| | 21 | WEIGHT OF PERSONNEL: 224 lbs. per man | x | x | 422,240 | | |
| | 22 | TOTAL WEIGHT IN POUNDS | x | x | 970,036 | | |
| | 23 | TOTAL WEIGHT IN SHORT TONS | x | x | 485 | | |

FORM -1- (Marine Corps.)

APPENDIX "A"

8