

**Dear family and friends of PRIME,**

**It is now mid December and our first patrol off the coast of South Viet Nam is drawing to a close. We have been on station since 12 November and remain until 22 December when, after being relieved by another Minesweeper, we will set sail for the wintry climate of Sasebo, Japan, arriving 31 December.**

**Our patrol duties have consisted mostly of identifying and keeping track of ships passing through our assigned area, and inspecting local fishing and small cargo craft to insure they are not smuggling weapons and supplies to the Viet Cong.**

**You may be asking yourself how a ship can possibly remain at sea for a total of 52 consecutive days without putting into port for supplies and fuel. This is accomplished by the underway replenishment system employed by the Seventh Fleet. Oilers and Stores ships (Reefers) periodically pass through our area bearing with them gifts of fuel oil, food, movies, newspapers, and the most popular item of all, your mail. It is a happy day indeed when the familiar silhouette of an Oiler appears on the horizon, and the speed of the crew manning their replenishment stations would make the Keystone Cops seem as statues in the park.**

**During the past month we have had the opportunity for a closer look at Viet Nam by stopping very briefly at two costal ports, NHA TRANG and the celebrated CAM RAHN BAY, the scene of President Johnson's visit a few months ago. These were "strictly business" stops and our liberty consisted of whatever we could see through binoculars and telescopes**

**Shortly after arriving on station, we were involved in fighting a fire on board a merchantship in NHA TRANG. This story is told in the PRIME NOTES.**

**On board we continue to have our nightly movies, cokes, and popcorn to help pass the evening hours and provide a means of relaxation. We have also made Sundays more special by having a cook out on the fantail for the evening meal and playing BINGO before the movie.**

**The Holiday highlight of this past month was our Thanksgiving Dinner a copy of the menu can be found in the PRIME NOTES. The meal was outstanding: the only thing missing was he presence of our family and friends.**

**I will take this opportunity now to personally wish all of you a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR. We will be at sea this Christmas but our thoughts will be home with our wives, parents and friends.**

**C. T. O'NEILL**

## **PRIME NOTES**

### **1. PRIME NOTES**

On Sunday evening, 13 November, PRIME received a message to proceed immediately to Nha Trang harbor to assist in fight a fire which had broken out aboard a Los Angeles merchantman, the RUTGERS VICTORY.

PRIME and THEODORE E. CHANDLER (a destroyer) arrived on the scene shortly after noon and went alongside the RUTGERS VICTORY. Both ships provided fire hoses and other equipment as necessary to combat the fire aboard the Merchantman.

The fire was out at 5:30 P.M. and at 6:30 P.M. PRIME was underway once more to conduct her patrol duties.

PRIME and CHANDLER received several well dones for their prompt action in fighting the fire. One of the messages received by PRIME follows:

**From: Commander SEVENTH FLEET  
To: USS PRIME**

**Your ready, prompt and expert assistance provided in combating SS RUTGERS VICTORY fire is a fine example of the actions desired and Expected from SEVENTH FLEET Units. Well done and keep up the good work.**

## **VICE ADMIRAL HYLAND**

### **2. MORE PRIME MEN ADVANCE**

The following advancements have taken place since the Last Familygram

#### **15 NOVEMBER**

**J. D. BOTTOMS to FN  
A. F. DODSON to FN**

**D.F. GERARD to FN  
D. F. STUTTS to FN**

#### **16 NOVEMBER**

**J.W. MC LEOD to SM3**

**R. J. OLIVER to IC3**

#### **1 DECEMBER**

**D. J. JONES to SN**

### **3. POWER OF ATTORNEY**

It has come to the attention of the command that some of the Power of Attorney documents obtained prior to the ship leaving Long Beach lack an official seal. Without this seal. They have no legal meaning. If you have power of attorney document, check it for the seal. If it does not have a seal, you may obtain one at building 44 at the Naval Base.

### **4. THANKSGIVING FEAST**

#### **PRIME's THANKSGIVING MENU**

##### **APPETIZERS**

**SHRIMP COCKTAIL                      SPLIT PEA SOUP W/CRACKERS**

**MIXED NUTS                      APPLES                      ORANGES**

##### **ENTRÉE**

**ROAST TOM TURKEY                      BAKED VIRGINIA HAM**

**GIBLET GRAVY**

**BUTTERED WHIPES POTATOES                      CANDIED SWEET POTATOES**

**WHOLE KERNEL CORN, BUTTERED                      GARDEN GROWN PEAS**

**HOT DINNER ROLLS**

##### **SALADS**

**LETTUCE WEDGES**

**SPRING SALAD**

**RUSSIAN DRESSING**

**GARLIC DRESSING**

##### **BEVERAGES**

**ICED TEA W/LEMON WEDES                      COFFEE                      TEA                      AND MILK**

##### **DESERTS**

**APPLE PIE ALA MODE**

**MINCEMEAT PIE W/HARD SAUCE**

### **5. BIRTHDAYS**

**NOVEMBER – CAPT C. T. O'NEILL, EMFN HICKS, STGSN JOHNSTON, SN JONES**

**DECEMBER – DC2 DRAUGHAN and TN ELLA**

## **6. BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Commanding Officer, LCDR C. T. O'NEILL, became the first in PRIME to become the father of a "deployment baby", Mrs. O'NEILL gave birth to an 8 pound baby girl on 16 November.

## **7. CHRISTMAS WISH**

Although we are separated by thousands of miles during this Christmas Season, we will be close in spirit. Along with the many good wishes you received during this holiday season, may we add those of the officers and men of PRIME. May we all gain strength from the fact that this separation will help to insure that the Christmas's to come can be spent by all peace, fully in a FREE COUNTRY.

### **THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**

The Engineering Department consists of a group of 22 highly trained men who have the responsibility of providing and maintaining in good working order PRIME's propulsion, electrical and ventilation systems. Their average age is 23 and they represent 17 states and one foreign country.

To be a "snipe" (as engineers are called), an electrician, or a shipfitter in a Minesweeper is to be a man of many trades. The number of problems encountered daily seem oftentimes insurmountable for the manpower available, but still the problems are solved. It is because the men of PRIME's engineering department have pride in their work; a pride that reflects all the mechanical training and ability they possess. It is because each member knows that he serves a vital function and because he realizes his responsibilities. It is because each man is proud of his department, his ship and the Navy. Here are the men that surmise the Engineering department of "The Best In The West".

The engineering department is headed by Chief Petty Officer LANGREHER ENCS, a man with over 20 years experience in the Navy. By coordinating the efforts of his Petty Officers, the Chief distributes the engineering work-load in an effective manner facilitating proper plant operation and minimum repair time. Not only does the Chief act as the senior representative for the Engineering department but he is also representative of all enlisted men aboard PRIME. Finally, Chief LANGREHER as the Chief -Master-At -Arms, sees that all Master- AT- Arms carry out their assigned duties, which consist mainly of insuring that the crew complies with the ship's routine and regulations. In other words he is the head of the Police Department aboard PRIME.

EN1 FROST and EN1 DAHLHEIM are in charge of the after engine room, where PRIME's four main engines are located. Working for FROST and DAHLHEIM in the after engine room are the following engineering firemen: FN GIRARD, FN BOTTOMS, FN DUNN AND FN MORIZ. It is the responsibility of these men to keep an over vigilant watch over the proper operation of the main engines, and to detect trouble before it

starts. This is accomplished by observing temperatures, pressures, and by conducting various other checks continually throughout the day. When these men are not taking readings, they are conducting repair work involving anything from head gasket replacement to the long tedious job of replacing a blown cylinder head. The third leading Petty Officer back aft is EN2 Brewster who not only stands top watch but has several other titles and duties. EN2 Brewster is PRIME's "oil king" and also the engineering logroom yeoman. By virtue of being oil king, he is responsible for keeping an accurate record of fuel oil, lube oil, and water consumed. His chief function and engineering logroom yeoman is the maintenance of the many important engineering operating records.

In the forward engine room, PRIME has three ship's service generators to provide electrical power throughout the ship, and two generators to provide electrical power for acoustic and magnetic minesweeping operations. The generators are the responsibility of the electrical gang led by EM1 OROGO. EM1 OROGO is the overall coordinator of all electrical work. It is through his efforts that the electrical work is distributed and accomplished. Watch standers up forward consist of EM2 VAN DENBURGH, EM2 SHERIDAN AND EM3 HICKEY. These three men along with EMFN HICKS are not only responsible for the ship's generators but all things electrical aboard PRIME. The electricians also contribute to the crew's recreation by showing movies. They are responsible for the upkeep of the projector and the film itself. IC3 Oliver is responsible for all of the ship's interior communications and central gear. It is this man's responsibility to make repairs and keep the ship's gyro compass functioning properly for safe and accurate navigation.

Also down in the forward engine room are the men responsible for keeping generator engines operating properly. This group of men is comprised of EN3 HUGH, EN3 YORK and EN3 JUSTUS. These men not only take care of the engines, but also the ship's auxiliary machinery as well. For example, EN3 JUSTUS is in charge of the boilers EN3 YORK and EN3 HUGH handle the refrigeration and water supply.

The Shipfitters and Damage Control personnel are led by DC2 DRAUGHAN. It is this man's responsibility to train each member of the crew in how to combat fire, flooding and other damage which may be suffered by this ship> Many hours of lectures and demonstrations must be given on those topics until each man is completely familiar with the procedures and requirement that one day might serve his ship. To aid DC2 DRAUGHAN in his work are SPF3 HAVEN and FN. HILLARD. On the shoulders of these men fall the difficult arts of carpentry, welding, pipe work and valve repair aboard the ship.

A man we soon hope to get down in the "hot box" (meaning the engine room since the spaces are always quite warm) is FN Dodson. As all new personnel do soon after reporting aboard, he is serving as an assistant to the ship's cook for a three month period. He is responsible for setting up meals, the general sanitary conditions of the dining mess and, in general assisting the cook in any given task.

**So there you have PRIME's engineering department in a nutshell. A group of devoted sailors, dedicated to applying a maximum effort to keep PRIME running smoothly wherever she goes, whenever she is called, no matter what the conditions. They play a major role in keeping PRIME the BEST IN THE WEST,**