

Well the 2nd of August [1990] when the invasion took place the first thing that came to our minds, my mind, over in the Military Sealift Command was to ensure that the maritime preposition ship squadrons were absolutely ready to deploy, because the situation as it was developing was exactly the scenario for which these squadrons were put together and these ships were put out on station. We had, we quickly ran a check of the materiel condition of all the ships, we know what it is on a daily basis anyway, but we ran through that to see if there was anything they needed to ensure that they were ready to sail. The ships that were on station were, there was no question, were ready to go on a minute's notice. We had one ship from that squadron that had departed Diego Garcia and was, had come around the Cape of Good Hope and was its way up to Jacksonville, Fla., and on the 2nd of August it was coming back for a refit period and to rework the equipment it carries, and that ship was turned around and started back into the Indian Ocean immediately. We had another ship from the Guam squadron that had been back to the US and done an exercise up in the state of Washington, an offload exercise. It was about at the international date line on its way back out to Guam, and we of course were monitoring her knowing that if the ships from Guam sailed she would have to catch up enroute. So we looked at how we would put them all back together, get the squadron back together. If you're not familiar with them, each of those squadrons is married up to a specific Marine expeditionary brigade. The squadron in Diego Garcia, NPSRON 2, is the counterpart for the Seventh Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 29 Palms Calif. And the squadron in Guam marries up with the First Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Hawaii. And the concept is that when the decision is made to sail them and deploy them the squadron sails and then the air flow starts with the Marines and they marry up at their destination. So on the 2nd that was all being looked at at least as a very real possibility. And that's why we looked at those ships getting back to their squadrons as soon as possible.

On Aug 2nd we had of course the two squadrons closest to the theater, one in Guam, one in Diego Garcia. We had one of the ships from the Guam squadron that was coming back across the Pacific and we alerted them that they could very well have to catch up with their squadron en route to the theater. We had a ship from the Diego Garcia squadron that had turned around the Cape of Good Hope and was off southwest Africa. We turned that ship and started it back and at the same time we ensured that the materiel condition of all these ships were ready to sail.

On the 7th of August when the deployment order came we immediately sailed the NPSRON2 from Diego Garcia and that's the squadron that matches up with the Seventh Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 29 Palms. We sailed immediately the NPS Squadron 3 from Guam and that's the squadron that matches up with the First Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Hawaii. So both of those effect immediately when the deployment order was issued. Also on the 7th of August we notified and

On the 7th of August when the deployment order was issued we immediately sailed Maritime Prepositioned Ship 2 from Diego Garcia and Maritime Prepositioned Squadron 3 from the Guam area. These are the squadrons that match up with the Seventh Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 29 Palms and the First Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Hawaii respectively and that started the flow of the ship carried ? and the air flow that would bring in the Marines out to the theater. Also on the 2nd, the 7th of August we had the fast sealift squadron which was designated to carry the 24th Infantry Division Mechanized from Savannah, GA. We lit off those ships and told them to get under way and proceed to their port of embarkation which in this case was Savannah. These ships have 96 hours once alerted to light off. They sit partially manned with a crew that can get the light off started and then they are fully manned by the operator as we , when we call for them. So on the 7th we started lighting off those ships and had them proceed to Savannah, GA. These broke ships broke out in 48 and in 72 hours very quickly and converged on the port of Savannah to carry the 24th Division, an Army division from the US out to the theater.

On the 8th of August we put out a what we call a request for proposals to bring US flag merchant ships on line to help us. These are operating US flag merchant ships to bring them on line to help us on the

On the 7th of August we sailed the Maritime Prepositioned Ships, the two squadrons, one from Diego Garcia and one from Guam. This is Maritime Prepositioned Squadron 2, is homeported in the Diego Garcia area,

that matches up and marries up with the Seventh Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 29 Palms; and Maritime Prepositioned Squadron 3 from the Guam area and that marries up with the First Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Hawaii. And that starts the flow of the equipment by sea and the Marines, and the personnel by air, and they marry up in the theater. Also on the 7th of August we alerted the float preposition force, this is a force that somewhat similar in concept, but not made up the same way as the Maritime preposition ships. And these ships carry Army and Air Force primarily, the base equipment. They are also forward deployed and we had nine of these ships out in the Indian Ocean, in the Diego Garcia area and they were alerted to be prepared to sail but we did not sail them on the 7th. We just had them get ready, get lit off and be ready to go. And the whole idea being that we knew we would have those two squadrons converging in the area with the combat elements and we wanted the other ships to come behind and not all converge on the port at the same time. So on the 7th it's was sail in the maritime preposition ships, it was alert the afloat preposition force which carries bare base and sustainment equipment. AND then on the 7th again the third item that we did was to alert the alert and light off the fast sealift ships. These are the very big cargo carrying ships that we have outported in the US on the east coast and gulf coast and which are designed to carry heavy combat elements over to the theater, in this case the fast sealift squadron was assigned to carry the 24th infantry division mechanized and army heavy infantry division to the theater. So those ships were activated on the 7th, and they are given 96 hours in which to light off, fill out their crew and sail and they all sailed in better time than that. They sailed at 48 hours and 72 hours. One of them was in overhaul and it had to be reassembled, it sailed in ten days, but she fit right into the queue at Savannah and there was no problem with that. So those were the events of the 7th. The Maritime Preposition Ships, the afloat preposition force, and the fast sealift ships. ON the 8th of August and we could see that we had a significant lift, we knew we would need more than we currently had on hand, so on the 8th of August we put out a request for proposals to the American flag merchant fleet to see what dry cargo ships were available that we could then charter to add to this lift package that we were starting to form. And that was really the event of the 8th of August. On the 9th of August we sailed the afloat prepositioned force from Diego Garcia. This was the group that we alerted earlier and we sailed them. So we had ships moving on the 9th and on the 9th of August we received the returns from our request for proposals and on the morning of the 10th of August we chartered our first American flag ships. We chartered the Lakes Lira, a Roll on Roll off American flag ship manned by American merchant marine sailors and that became the first of the merchant ships to come on line to help us. And we took Tampa Bay and Cleveland were two American break boat that came to the force at that time. By noon on Friday the 10th of August it was very obvious that the size of the force to be deployed was considerable and we would need even more shipping to be able to take the units out that we could see developing. And on the afternoon of the 10th of August we then went to the Maritime Administration and I contact Capt. Levack at the Maritime Administration and we started the activation of the ready reserve force and these are the ships that have been sitting quietly, unmanned. They're in the James river in Virginia, they're in various ports around the country, they're placed where they're hopefully near where their cargo is going to be picked up and we started activating these. And these ships take a longer time because as I said, they're unmanned, you have to remove them from these nests up in the James River and so forth, take them to a breakout repair yard, where they're lit off and then the crew falls in on them and they sail. We broke out the first 17 of those commencing the afternoon of the 10th of August.

What that shows you, that's the sea lift package, your maritime preposition ships are the ones you'd expect to go first because they'r fully manned all the time and their equipment is in top condition and they're the first people to go. That's the expeditionary force that brings in the expeditionary Marines. The second force of course is the afloat preposition force which brings in your bare base equipment and your sustainment and some infastructure for the forces to follow on behind the first of the combat elements. So those are the first two to move, those ships are fully manned with American merchant marine sailors, they fly the AMERICAN flag, they are privately owned American ships under charter or leased to the government through the military sealift command. The third element is the fast sealift ships. These ships are in a reduced operating status partially manned all the time so that their maintenance is being looked at and it permits them to be broken out more rapidly and of course that's the third part of the fast sealift force, I should say of the strategic sealift force. And the fourth element is the US flag merchant marine, the operating ships flying the American flag that are out in the world ocean and we brought that on line as I said toward the end of the week and knowing we needed more lift then you go to your ready reserve force, ships that have been sitting idle for , some of them for some

months, some for some years, and they get broken out and manned by, again by American merchant marine sailors that fall in on those ships as their engineering plants are being brought up on line and made ready to steam.

By the 15th of August and that was Sea plus 8, C-day being the 7th, on the 15th of August the first heavy combat elements were arriving in the theater and they were brought in by Maritime Prepositioned Ships from the Maritime Prepositioned Squadron 2 from Diego Garcia. The Marines were landing and the equipment was there and we had tanks off the ships on the pier and out on to the desert starting as early as the 15th of August. AND then subsequent to that the afloat preposition force came in with the infrastructure and sustainment equipment that was carried in these ships and the fast sealift ships then started arriving with the equipment from the US for the 24th division, they started arriving on Cplus 20, the 27th of August.

There's one other thing that I should mention that as we got, and this fits in with what you just asked, as we got to the middle of August it was obvious that using our entire sealift force that we had, the strategic sealift force and including the ready reserve force ships, that we still had a requirement for more lift and that's when we went out on the 17th of August and chartered our first foreign ship to help us with the lift. We needed, it was obvious early on, we needed more roll on, roll off assets than we had either in the American flag fleet or in the ready reserve force and including the fast sealift ships we still needed more roll on roll off type ships and that's when we went out the middle of August and started to charter foreign ships to come in and help us with this lift. AND the real challenge during that period in the month of August was to ...to have the requirements firmly established so that we could provide the lift required for the..for the requirements as seen by the CINC.

The biggest single issue that we faced as we went through the month of August was to clearly have in hand the requirements as expressed by central command, Gen. Schwartz. and his staff out there, as to what was actually going and the size of the units deploying. We started out with a plan that, we started out with a plan that to move about two and a third divisions and we ended up moving in that first phase, in the Desert Shield phase, a force that was just about five division size. So you can see that that enlarged the lift and we had to ensure we had the assets to meet all of those requirements. There was a decision early on in the deployment to move more infrastructure out and that came from Fort Bragg.

There was a decision made early on to move more equipment in a corps support, of a corps support type and that would include artillery and your truck companies and again I want to fall back on infrastructure....

The plan that we started to deploy under was an effort that called for moving a 2 and 1/3 division size force and the movement that we eventually completed was a five division size force, just about five division size. And that grew primarily during the month of August as we were moving the 24th division out to the theater and as they began to arrive out there in the theater there was a clear recognition by the central command staff and Gen. Sw. that in addition to the combat elements coming they needed more of the support equipment and that support equipment came out of Fort Bragg, NC, and it increased the requirement of the ships dramatically because the plan initially called for as I said, moving the 24th division and moving the armored units out of the Texas ports, Houston and Beaumont, and getting them to the theater. In the middle of all of that we then added in this later development of moving the support equipment from North Carolina that put a tremendous increase on the number of ships we needed to carry all that out to the theater.

When the first of the combat elements arrived in theater and of course the central command staff and Gen. Schw. were there, there was a clear recognition early on that in addition to the combat elements and because of course we're working with some of the most modern ports in the world but once you moved inland there was no real support structure there, that there was a clear need to move more of the support structure from the US out to the theater. This added a tremendous increase to the requirement for shipping that we had on hand at the time because in the deployment plan we were focusing on moving the combat arms out of Savannah, GA., that was the 24th division and we were taking the armored out of the Texas ports, out of Houston and Beaumont. We had to make a significant shift during the month of August to provide the shipping up to North Carolina to take the artillery and the truck companies and so forth which provided the support needed in the theater for the combat elements out there. A significant increase in ships and we had

to go out then and obtain those and that's what brought on the tremendous surge in the contracting and chartering of ships during the month of August. The other element that added to that of course was that we were deploying according to plan. The planners would look for a certain amount of shipping to carry a division out to the theater. It was very obvious to us when we loaded the 24th division that the combat commander who was going off to a situation where he could very well be in combat within hours after arriving, he knew what he wanted to take. So the plan called for a certain amount of equipment to arrive in Savannah and that division came significantly larger because Gen. McCaffrey wanted to have all of his materiel with him and he did so to the point where when he left Ft. Stewart, GA, he made the comment that the only thing he left behind was the street signs. What that meant was that we had to add shipping to carry that division out and that became shipping that was not available for somebody else and had to be replaced in kind out of the American flag fleet or the ready reserve force or from foreign charter.

I think one of the most significant signals that we gave early on in this whole campaign was in the month of August when another part of our sealift force and I'm talking about the two hospital ships. When these ships were activated and we downmanned two major hospitals, Naval Hospital Bethesda and National Medical Center Bethesda provides the staff primarily for USNS Comfort and Naval Hospital Oakland, CA provides the staff for USNS Mercury. When we downmanned those hospitals, activated those ships, and sailed them in August, that was a very very clear signal to people that we were serious about this effort.

I think one of the most significant events during the month of August was when we activated and sailed the two hospital ships that are also part of the sealift force. And I feel that by sailing those ships we probably sent one of the strongest signals of our intent during Desert Shield and what became Desert Storm, and that intent was that in addition to the carrier battle groups that are really always out and forward deployed, in addition to the amphibious ready groups that are always out and forward deployed, that we were actually sailing from the US our two hospital ships and the signal there was that we were prepared to take ground casualties.

If I were to be asked whatIf I were to be asked what would be the single biggest success in sealift in Desert Shield and Desert Storm the answer would be the Maritime Prepositioned Ship concept and the execution of the Maritime preposition force during Desert Shield.

I think one of the biggest success stories of Desert Shield and Desert Storm was right at the very beginning with the deployment of the Maritime Prepositioned Ship squadrons from Diego Garcia and from Guam. These ships were on station and sailed on a moment's notice when they were notified and were the first to provide heavy combat power on the ground. They worked exactly the way they were designed to.

In my estimation the single biggest success with respect to the sealift effort for Desert Shield and Desert Storm was the performance of the Maritime Prepositioned Ships squadrons. They were on station exactly where they were designed to be. The situation developed that called for their use exactly the way these were initially conceived. They sailed on time, they arrived on time, and they put the first heavy combat power on the ground on the 8th day of the effort out there in the desert.

During Desert Shield and Desert Storm the way I look at it there were two different phases. There was phase one which started in early August and brought us up into late October and early November and that was the deployment of the Desert Shield force really and that was the blocking force that we put out there in place to ensure that there was no further incursion down into Saudi Arabia. That force was delivered, and I could give you an example of the size, on the 28th of September which was probably the peak of phase one as I call it. We had 110 ships involved, carrying dry cargo, at that time, and on the 28th of September we had, we had 69 ships that were outbound primarily in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, 69 ships outbound; we had another 21 that were returning from the theater and were homeward bound during that period.That number of ships, 90 ships and you look at the, take 8700 miles from the port of Savannah to the theater and do your division on that, you end up with about one ship every hundred miles if you had them evenly spaced. And that gives you an idea of the intensity of the effort when you considered that one ship

under military seat of command's control during that period every hundred miles between Savannah, GA and DaMOM in the Persian Gulf 8700 miles away, you can see the intensity of the effort in phase one. Then we of course on the 8th of November the President came on television and announced that we were going to have a second phase and this was to put a force in place of sufficient size to go on the offensive if we needed to in order to enforce the UN resolution by the 15th of January. And that was another large deployment again with movement out of continental US, but a tremendous deployment out of Europe, the 7th Corps coming out of Europe, and that force peaked in deployment around the end of December and early January. On the 2nd of January for example we had 143 ships that were outbound and 33-34 returning home and if you do the same kind of math that I described previously that would give you one ship between the east coast of the US and the gulf about every 50 miles. So you can see the magnitude of that lift. And only a maritime power like the US could put that kind of a lift package together and we're talking at that time of about 238 ships involved overall in carrying Desert Storm, I should say Desert Shield cargo in preparation for Desert Storm.

During Desert Shield at the peak of the movement we had over 230 ships involved carrying dry cargo out to the theater and that's a total carried tonnage of about three and a half million short tons of cargo.

Well the highlights would be the highlight in the first part in the Desert Shield phase of course was that it was an overall 120-day deployment plan and it was delivered in 93 days. So with all of the, with all of the increased requirements, with all of the necessity to go out and bring additional ships on line and the concerns about moving cargo to the theater it arrived almost a month early. The force was in place almost a month early. IN the second phase, in the second phase to me the highlight is just the magnitude of the lift that we were able to put in place to get the force capable of going on the offensive in place by the middle of January and evidenced by the huge number of ships we had under way in late December and early January timeframe that carrying the cargo out to the theater, over 200, over 230 ships involved.

.....We moved more, we probably, this is probably a faster buildup and more rapid deployment than we've ever had in history.And I know it is significantly faster than Korea, than what we did in Korea, significantly larger and faster than what we did in Korea and it's probably the most rapid buildup and most rapid deployment than we've had at any time in our history to move a force of that size that distance, we're talking about the equipment and the sustainment supplies for a force of 500,000, 500,000 people really on the other side of the world.

Anytime that you're deploying a large force overseas there's a place for both airlift and sealift. However when you have moved the whole force, and no matter where you're going and how far you're going, when you've moved the whole force you will always find that as you get to the end you will have moved about 95 per cent by sea because that's where the bulk of your carriage comes and it always will be by sealift.

During Desert Shield and Desert Storm, 95 percent of the cargo that was moved and moved to the theatre in support of our troops on the ground over there, and the people afloat, was moved by sea, and historically, if you were to go back and look at any one of our major conflicts it will always come out to be in the vicinity of 95% moved by sea lift.

Note: mentions here the other kinds of ships under sealift command: fleet oilers etc. Can't use so DR did not transcribe.

One of the things that we always have to keep in mind and with respect to sealift and delivering cargoes to that theater was that we were working through two of the most modern ports in the world. And while we had great success with the logistics deployment effort, and we had those ports to utilize, we have to always keep in mind that we could be called on at another time to go to another place where those ports didn't exist. And we we have to continue to work on our ability to deploy to a more primitive area where going ashore won't be quite that easy. And that's something that we have always been working on and will continue to do so, and we have to continue down that track.

The two principal ports that we used in the theater were Ad Dammam and Al Jubail, both in Saudi Arabia.

The fast sealift ships, these ships of course are capable of travelling at speeds greater than 30 knots in the open ocean, and as a result the fast sealift ships, the first ones to go out there, Capalla, for example, she was the first ship to deploy with the 24th Division, here's a ship that left Savannah, transited the Suez Canal and arrived in the port of Da Maam and the total transit time was 13 days. Phenomonal when you think about that. That's a 30+ knot ship and she arrives out there in 30 days. The otehr ships in the force run the spectrum of times enrout with a, say, 15-16 knot ship taking somewhere in the vacinity of 24-25 days to be able to get out there into the theater. One of the significant things that people forget and there was considerable discussion about the use of foreign ships, was the number of foreign ships utilized and during this effort... The beauty of having ships like the fast sealift ships, the maritime perpositioning ships, and our own ready reserve force, is that these are big, very capable ships. The fast sealift ship turnaround is about a month, and that includes transit out, offload time, transit back. And as a result, by January, fast sealift ships, for example, like Pollux, had made six round trips to the theater. And these are very big ships, carry a tremedoius amount of cargo and you can turn them around and get the back our there very, very rapidly. The ships that we brought on that are chartered are smaller and slower and don't perform nearly as well as these great big fast sealift ships and the big roll-on/roll-off ships from the Ready Reserve Force. And I think that's an important point to make in there. Somewhere is the capability, is the return tripsis the turnaround time of the mbig ships that we ahve in the sealift force. CApe Inscription form the Ready Reserve Force, she's a 21-knot ship and she had made 6 trips out to the theater and back by the time the ground war commenced.

During Desert Shielt and Desert Storm, the fast sealift ships averaged between 6 and 8 turnaround trips during that period.

The United States Merchant Marine and the maritime industry performed exceptionally well during Des. Shield and Des. Storm.

The United States Merchant Marine and the maritime industry in this country performed exceptionally well during Des. Shield and Des. Storm. They were on hand in the repair yards to bring the Ready Reserve force ships on line, they came from out of retirement and from all walks of life to man the ready reserve force ships, and throughout Des. Shield and Des. Storm their performance has just been superb. It's a clear, clear indication that the United States is a maritime power and will continue to be a maritime power as long as we have people like this to work with us.