Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

Hey, Iâ€™ll keep doing this until someone tracks back! But, Iâ€™ll keep doing it anyhow.

So last week, SteelJaw Scribe posts â€œReflections â€“ Sympathy for an HTâ€• discussing a unique condition where biology, man made items and the environment all conspired to make for a most fragrant setting on his carrier, just prior to the visit of a VIP.

This day, I add a story I heard, just after arriving aboard to become the Engineer Officer.

USS CONOLLY (DD-979) was on the annual UNITAS XXIV (1983) cruise, part party cruise, part show the flag, and part actually conduct maritime operations with the navies of the countries of Central and South America. She was the flagship for the group of ships that fall, and therefor carried Southern Command, RADM Clint Taylor, USN. ADM Taylor was berthed in the Captainâ€™s Inport Cabin, while the CO occupied the At-Sea Cabin just aft of the Bridge, on the starboard side.

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So, one dark evening, somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, south of the Panama Canal (I believe) ADM Taylor had a call from nature and proceeded to the head in his cabin.

Several decks below, in the bowels of the ship, where the â€œupper deckâ€• types fear to tread, were the components of the forward sewage system, made by Jered. There was a duplicate set of parts, arrayed similarly, aft in the engineering spaces, to handle, under normal conditions, the â€œeffluentâ€• from the after three Enlisted Berthing compartments and Officerâ€™s Country. The two systems were connected, forward to aft, by a pipe so waste could be transferred to the other systems for disposal, in the case of an equipment casualty. The sewage system placed aboard the SPRUANCE Class destroyers, as well as the similarly built hulls of the TICONDEROGA Class cruisers and KIDD Class guided missile destroyers, in the manner of conserving water, used a vacuum system to draw the by products of the human digestive system to a holding tank, where it was ground up and incinerated.

In order to effect the transfer, valves would be realigned to close the â€œdowncomersâ€• from the berthing areas and open the pipe to the other tank. A charge of air would then be used to push the mass to the other tank.

So, on this dark (and I donâ€™t know if it was stormy) night, HT2 Mergner (so Iâ€™m told) was to transfer sewage from the forward system, to the aftâ€¦.but it seems one critical downcomer value wasnâ€™t in the closed position.

As the Admiral stood, in front of the toilet and preparing himself to use the facilities, the air charge not only entered the forward tank, and the aft running pipe, but the line to the Inport Captainâ€™s Cabin head, propelling a significant volume of â€œmaterialâ€• from the toilet to the overhead, and some of it managed to find itâ€™s way all up the Admiralâ€™s back, as he stood in his white t-shirt and khaki trousers.

Iâ€™m sure there was no way to have a lookout plan the â€œdischargeâ€• in such a timely manner, but the net result was it found itâ€™s unwitting, surprised, and according to reports from those who were there, unwilling, target.

The story went on to say the Admiral, attired as mentioned just above, and with slippers, stepped onto the darkened bridge of his Flagship, and, in a loud, commanding tone, demanded the presence of the Auxiliaries Officer IMMEDIATELY! The AUXO, LTJG Steve (for this tale the last name is slipping my memory), was summoned by the Officer of the Deck and then had a one way discussion with the Admiral, while trying not to laugh out loud.

And so, on that dark night in the Pacific in 1983, a sea story was created. It is, too this day, speculated that the entire event may not have been caused by an accidental misalignment of valves, or oversite, but only one petty officer knows that answer for sure.

Tracked back @ SteelJaw Scribe

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Date Created
May 16, 2007
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