

Access road leading to the main gate of  
MTMTSTTU.



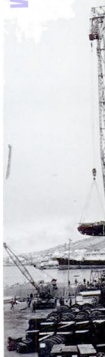
MTMTS personnel at work

# NEAR THE SHADOW OF ACROPOLIS

Captain Stephen R. Norton, USA



100 ton crane working at face of MTMTSTTU  
pier.



SFC Torres in Free Zone.



ALMOST WITHIN THE shadow of the Acropolis, in full view of the site of the famous Salamis naval engagement between the Persians and the Greeks in 480 B.C., lies the Port of Piraeus, one of the largest and most modern in the Mediterranean. This port, founded by Themistocles in 493 B.C. and

completed by Pericles in 431 B.C., has an annual volume of approximately 22,000 vessels, 12 million tons of cargo and more than five million passengers.

An important part of this ever growing port is the Military Traffic Management and Terminal Service Transportation Terminal Unit (MTMTSTTU), Greece. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Robert D. Hagee, USA, and his executive officer, Army Major Robert I.C. Hawley III, this TTU handles more than 600 vessels and approximately 200,000 measurement tons of cargo annually. Passenger traffic ranges from 100 per year on the Greece-Italian ferry service coordinated by the TTU to a peak of more than a thousand during Navy homeporting in 1972.

The Port of Piraeus is now in the midst of a five-year development program, begun in 1972. The program calls for a capital expenditure of \$112 million and provides for the increase of quayways for loading and discharge by 100 percent; the increase of quayways for ship repair services by 100 percent; expansion of open storage areas by 70 percent and covered storage by 50 percent; and procurement of two gantry cranes and six straddle-carriers for container operations; additional conventional cranes, materials handling equipment and floating craft.

When the development is completed in 1977 the Port of Piraeus should be one of the finest in the Mediterranean.

The cargo statistics previously mentioned for TTU tell *what* is handled. The *who*—the customers—include Joint U.S. Military Aid Group, Greece; U.S. Embassy, Athens; 7206th Air Base Group, USAF; U.S. Sixth Fleet; U.S. Army 558th Artillery Group; Hellenic Army, Navy and Air Force; 6931st Security Group (USAFE); U.S. Naval Detachment, Souda Bay, Crete; U.S. NAVCOMMSTA, Nea Makri; U.S. Navy Fleet Support Office, Athens; and European Exchange System, Athens.

Activities of the TTU have been many and varied since its inception in mid-1959. As a special foreign activity of MTMTS, its parent organization is Eastern Area MTMTS in Brooklyn, N.Y. Operational control is exercised by the Chief, Joint U.S. Military Aid Group, Greece (JUSMAGG). In general terms, the mission of the TTU is to provide ocean terminal services for Department of Defense-sponsored Military Assistance Program cargoes and U.S. troop support cargoes, U.S. sponsored passengers and mail, moving into or out of Greece and Crete. In addition, the TTU provides husbanding services for U.S. Government-controlled vessels at all ports in Greece and for the U.S. Sixth Fleet when the fleet calls in Piraeus. The TTU also represents Military Sealift Command in Greece.

The TTU is operated by 11 assigned U.S. Army personnel, one attached U.S. Navy cargo



sorter and 29 local nationals employed by the U.S. Department of State. Additionally, the TTU draws upon the labor pool of the various port monopolies within Greece and also has contracts with two local cargo handling companies.

In recent years the *modus operandi* of cargo handling has changed from predominantly breakbulk to containerized cargo. In 1969 only 137 containers were handled; this increased to 2255 in 1973, most of which were of the 40-foot variety. The assigned military enlisted personnel, while practicing container handling, stowing and control procedures, are still able to keep their breakbulk stevedore training updated by working conventional U.S. Navy, time charter and commercial vessels carrying military assistance cargo, ammunition and general cargo of a troop support nature.

The main office and pier facilities of TTU, west of the main Port of Piraeus, are provided by the Hellenic Army which shares the area and warehouse facility. TTU has exclusive use of office space and 13,000 square feet of warehouse space. The piers can accommodate one C-4 type vessel and a small coastal vessel at the same time. The face of the pier, 400 feet in length, can accommodate a Victory class ship working three or four hatches. A landing ramp

for LST class vessels is utilized on the pier face for LST operations by Hellenic forces and Mike Boat operations by the U.S. Navy and the TTU. Port clearance is performed either by truck or by U.S. Navy Mike Boats.

The main lifeline for the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy on Crete is provided by transshipment of cargo through Piraeus using local ferry boats, cargo vessels and USNS vessels, when available. These ships are always a welcome sight to the Service member since, in addition to troop support cargo, they carry POVs, household goods, post exchange and commissary items.

In terms of accomplishment, the MTMTSTTU, Greece team is proud of its history of service to the host nation, the Military Sealift Command and the various U.S. Government agencies in and around Greece who rely on the terminal unit for support.

At times the TTU's services have been newsworthy. An example was the unit's involvement during the first U.S. Navy homeporting project in Greece (TRANSLOG, November 1972). But it is not upon these special missions alone that TTU measures its success. Success is keeping the cargo moving, in normal times and in times of crisis, in a professional manner governed by the MTMTS motto, "Serving the Armed Forces."



Above left: SFC Gosselin (L), Chief, Container Branch, and SFC Torres (R), Chief, Stevedore Branch, enroute to Port Free Zone.

Above right: Discharging the USNS O'BRIEN at Iraklion, Crete.

Above: The MTMTSTTU, Greece emblem and its designers, Mr. Angelakis, left, Mr. Halavazis, kneeling, and Mr. Lavrendides. The outside circle is the "Greek Key" and the ship is an Athenian Trireme.



## TRIRENE LIVES ON IN UNIT'S EMBLEM

Just outside the main Port of Piraeus, at a spot which is in full view of the MTMTS Transportation Terminal Unit, Greece, the famous Salamis sea battle was fought. During this battle, in 480 B.C., Themistocles, leading a small Greek force of fewer than 400 vessels, made famous a ship called the Athenian *trirene* by defeating a much larger force which was under the direction of the Persian King Xerxes.

The *trirene* was long, fast and maneuverable—120 feet or more from stem to stern, with a beam of 14 to 18 feet and three or four foot draft, powered by 170 oars arranged in three tiers. These vessels, each capable of being turned around on its own axis, could be maneuvered easily in squadron formations. According to Herodotus, the Athenian fleet was made up of 200 *trirenes* and something less than 200 vessels of other types. Xerxes' opposing fleet consisted of a thousand vessels of many types, most of which had been commandeered from conquered ports in Egypt, Phoenecia and Asia Minor.

Themistocles employed the *trirenes* and other vessels so efficiently in the Salamis battle that only five Persian vessels escaped destruction. Xerxes, observing the battle from a temporary throne on a nearby hilltop, ordered the execution of his surviving captains.

During the preparation for *Project Marathon* in 1972, the first U.S. Navy homeporting project in Greece, it was agreed that the Transportation Terminal Unit needed an emblem. A contest was held, and after due deliberation, the judges decided to take parts from several designs. Appropriately the result was a design incorporating an Athenian *trirene* as the central element.