

Lotte Reith Sails Off As Wake Of Woes Widens

By Diane Maddex
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SAIPAN — Saipan's most recent landmark, the MV Lotte Reith, left the island Saturday afternoon -- free of the last of four arrest warrants.
Her departure ended 18 days of hovering around Saipan, nine of them outside the reef, nine berthed at Charlie Dock.
Participants in the multi-sided legal fray that erupted among

the vessel's German owner, the Transpacific Lines receivership, the Trust Territory government and numerous creditors said few, if any, tears were shed at the Lotte Reith's sailing.
Within hours the German container ship's berth was filled by Saipan Shipping Co.'s ailing M/V Normar (see story on page 33).
A receivership spokesman indicated he had heard the

Lotte Reith might be heading to Manila. He said its owner probably is not particularly anxious to divulge the Lotte Reith's whereabouts.
It is thought that other creditors may be waiting to attach new liens against the ship in other ports.
The Lotte Reith was free to leave after payment guarantee was arranged Friday for the last two of four liens placed on the

ship during its Saipan stay. The two were filed by Saipan Shipping Co. and Saipan Stevedoring Co. for more than \$13,000.
Their attorney obtained a \$15,000 "guarantee letter" from the Saipan branch of the Bank of America obligating the bank to satisfy the lien, plus interest and attorneys' fees.
The receivership spokesman said it was his understanding the arrangements made to satisfy the four liens outstanding against the Lotte Reith guarantee payment only if the court here rules in the creditors' favor. It is believed the ship owner intends to contest the liens in the TT High Court.
The other liens were brought by Marine Terminals Corp. of San Francisco, California, and Mobil Petroleum Co.
The spokesman also said the vessel's owner probably will file his own claims against the receivership and the TT government.
This is expected to be the vessel's last call in the TT. A special charter agreement with the Transpac receivership expired March 18, ending the vessel's service here.
A motion urging dissolution of the Transpac receivership will

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be heard at 2 p.m. tomorrow. It is expected the receivership will ask for a continuance until perhaps April 8 to allow more time to prepare its response. Several summoned witnesses also are off-island, including High Commissioner Edward E. Johnston, receiver John F. Meadows and TT

Transportation Director Joseph W. Beadles Jr.

Another complaint involving the handling of affairs of the now-bankrupt Transpac may be in the offing. Marianas Police Capt. Jose P. Mafnas has threatened to bring charges of obstructing justice against TT Transportation Division Chief Wayne C. Thiessen.

Mafnas has claimed in a

memorandum to the TT Attorney General that Thiessen prevented him from immediately serving arrest warrants on the Lotte Reith captain when the vessel pulled into port March 14.

Mafnas, acting chief of police at the time, asserted that Thiessen ordered him to wait outside the cabin while he talked to the captain. Other TT officials and a receivership representative also went inside with Thiessen, said Mafnas.

Mafnas calls Thiessen's actions "a blatant mockery of the judicial process" and willful interference with a police officer's duties.

The matter is under consideration by Deputy TT High Commissioner Peter T. Coleman, Mafnas said yesterday.

Thiessen is another witness summoned to testify at the hearing into the motion to end the Transpac receivership.