

U. S. S. ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65)

F.P.O. SAN FRANCISCO 96601

1968

CVAN-65/17

5750

Ser: 2124

1 JUL 1969

From: Commanding Officer, USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65), FPO San Francisco,
California 96601

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2), Washington, D.C. 20350

Subj: OPNAV Report 5750-1; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12A

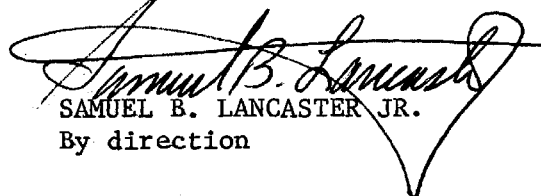
Encl: (1) Narrative Command History of USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65) for
1 January 1968 to 31 December 1968

(2) Chronology of Events from 1 January 1968 to 31 December 1968

(3) Biography and photograph of new Commanding Officer, CAPT For-
rest S. PETERSEN, USN

1. In accordance with reference (a), subject report is forwarded.
2. Enclosures (1) through (3) augment this report.

K.L. LEE



SAMUEL B. LANCASTER JR.
By direction

Copy to:
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)
CINCPACFLT
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COMFAIR ALAMEDA

ENCLOSURE (1)

USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65)
NARRATIVE COMMAND HISTORY 1968

After spending Christmas in her homeport of Alameda, California, ENTERPRISE sailed for her third Western Pacific cruise January 3, 1968.

In company with her two escorts, the nuclear-powered frigate USS TRUXTON (DLGN-35) and the conventionally-powered frigate USS HALSEY (DLG-23), ENTERPRISE steamed into Sasebo, Japan, January 19. ENTERPRISE and TRUXTON were the first elements of the U.S. Navy's nuclear-powered surface fleet to visit a Japanese port.

During the five-day inport period at Sasebo, the city suffered wide-spread controversy and violent demonstrations among its citizenry. Despite the underlying theme of "anti-Americanism" during the anti-nuclear riots, all three ships spent the entire inport period in Sasebo without one incident, desertion or absentee involving crewmembers.

ENTERPRISE departed Sasebo on the morning of January 23, enroute to Yankee Station in Tonkin Gulf. Shortly after sailing, she was suddenly ordered into the Sea of Japan, following the seizure of the Naval intelligence vessel USS PUEBLO (AGER-2) by a North Korean patrol boat. ENTERPRISE became the flagship for the specially-created Task Force 71, under the command of Rear Admiral Horace H. EPES Jr., remaining within the vicinity of South Korea for almost a month as part of the U.S. build-up of forces in the area in the aftermath of the crisis.

Following her relief in the Sea of Japan February 16, ENTERPRISE was once again ordered to Yankee Station. After two days of upkeep at Naval Station Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, she arrived on Yankee Station February 21, beginning combat operations the following day.

ENCLOSURE (1)

Upon her arrival at Yankee Station, ENTERPRISE encountered poor flying weather brought about by the Asian monsoon season. Nevertheless, two days after arrival, ENTERPRISE A6A Intruders from Attack Squadron 35 were able to carry out the first surprise raid on the port facility of North Vietnam's capital city of Hanoi. During the pre-dawn attack, the all-weather radar controlled bombers dodged a flurry of surface-to-air missiles and a heavy barrage of anti-aircraft fire, inflicting severe damages against the vitally important enemy supply center.

Two more strikes were made against the port facility during the following weeks. In each case, pilots of the highly sophisticated A6's reported good systems runs. The computerized flying systems were proving invaluable in only their second tour aboard ENTERPRISE. Loaded with far more ordnance than contemporary aircraft and depending on a computerized radar system to guide them to their targets, pilots of the Grumman-built Intruder actually welcomed the cover of darkness and inclement weather.

Throughout February and much of March, North Vietnam was shrouded in a blanket of heavy clouds and torrential rains brought about by the northeast monsoon. However, much like the proverbial mailman, the Intruders of Attack Squadron 35 penetrated the unkind monsoon night after night, striking repeatedly against the heartland of North Vietnam.

In the south along the Demilitarized Zone, A4 Skyhawks of Attack Squadrons 56 and 113 and F4 Phantoms of Fighter Squadrons 92 and 96 joined Air Force and other Navy fighter-bombers, disrupting enemy supply routes and destroying bunkers, storage areas and artillery positions.

At the same time, more Air Wing NINE airplanes joined with other Air Force and Navy planes in defense of the besieged Marine encampment at Khe Sanh. By the first week of March, Communist guerrilla forces

were at the fortress perimeter, digging assault trenches and bunkers. Armed with 1,000-pound bombs with delayed-action fuzes, ENTERPRISE planes were soon caving them in as fast as they were dug. ENTERPRISE pilots doggedly pursued their combat support missions around the strategically located encampment until the sustained air attack and improved weather conditions managed to break the seige. The cowered remnants of North Vietnamese units, beaten and forced to follow new strategy, withdrew into the jungle.

On March 13, a chance break in the weather permitted a large ENTERPRISE strike group to hit the Haiphong Rail and Highway Bridge West. In the air wing's only major multi-plane "alpha" strike into North Vietnam's heartland before curtailment of bombing above the 20th parallel, ENTERPRISE fighter-bombers dove through the parted monsoon clouds to complete their highly successful mission. Post-strike photography confirmed the bridge was down.

ENTERPRISE was on the line when President Johnson announced March 31 that bombing had been restricted to targets below the 20th parallel.

With the advent of the new bombing limitations and the breaking up of the monsoon weather, ENTERPRISE pilots concentrated their efforts against trucks, barges, bridges and storage areas near the city of Vinh. Strikes were heavy against the Vinh Transshipment point, the southernmost collection point for war materails before they are dispersed along the Ho Chi Minh Trail west into Laos and south into South Vietnam.

Typical targets in the area of Vinh were large truck convoys moving under cover of darkness. On the night of April 15, air wing pilots spotted an unusually large convoy movement. One pilot described it as "more trucks than I could count. Headlights stretched as fas as you could see and dispersed into the haze."

As Navy pilots began to systematically destroy bridges and roads and strike petroleum storage areas, the number of convoys and trucks sighted began to decrease sharply.

On May 8, Navy planes from carriers on Yankee Station in Tonkin Gulf, including a large complement from ENTERPRISE, struck what was described as the largest Communist petroleum and ammunition storage area south of the 20th parallel. In three days of ceaseless bombing, the Xom Trung Hoa Storage Area northwest of Vinh yielded to hundreds of secondary explosions as Navy pilots dropped bomb after bomb on the strategic supply center.

In May as diplomatic efforts were slowly leading toward peace talks in Paris, ENTERPRISE, continuing her air attacks on panhandle targets, remained in total combat readiness to thwart a possible "last push" the Communists were expected to make to improve their bargaining position in Paris.

On May 20, ENTERPRISE departed Yankee Station, and after a brief stop in Subic Bay, entered Hong Kong for a week of rest and liberty for the crew. The week-long portcall was a pleasant, relatively quiet experience for ENTERPRISE, despite a Communist Chinese protest that Seventh Fleet warships were allegedly using the British Crown Colony as a base of operations in the Vietnam war. The charge was quickly spurned by British authorities, and the ship sailed as scheduled May 30 for her final line period of the deployment.

On June 9, shortly after her arrival on Yankee Station, General William C. Westmoreland, Commander Military Assistance Command Vietnam, arrived on board ENTERPRISE. The general was enroute to Washington to assume the position of Chief of Staff of the Army. He had chosen ENTERPRISE as the setting for his farewell address to the Seventh Fleet.

Interdiction strikes over the panhandle of North Vietnam continued until June 26, when ENTERPRISE and her veteran air wing finished a third successful combat cruise and began the voyage home.

ENTERPRISE arrived at her homeport of Alameda July 18. After a brief stay, during which post-deployment conferences were conducted, she departed July 27 on "Operation Northwest Passage" enroute to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington. During "Operation Northwest Passage," dependents were invited to board ENTERPRISE for the trip to the yard. The operation was an overwhelming success with the number of dependents arriving aboard far exceeding the original estimate.

ENTERPRISE arrived in the yard July 29, where she remained until September 28, undergoing a much-needed overhaul. Upon departure from Bremerton, dependents were once again welcomed aboard, this time for the return to Alameda.

Back in Alameda, the newly rejuvenated carrier prepared for refresher training exercises off the coast of California. Departing Alameda October 9, she alternated inport periods with refresher training and combat readiness exercises along the West Coast until November 22, when she returned to Alameda for her annual Administrative and Material Inspection.

On December 3, ENTERPRISE joined 27 other ships and 31 air squadrons of the First Fleet for "Operation Beeftrust," a seven-day combat training exercise conducted off the coast of Southern California. The sixth and final exercise conducted by First Fleet for the year was designed to prepare the participating units for combat they would encounter not only in Vietnam, but anywhere in the Western Pacific.

Following "Operation Beeftrust," ENTERPRISE returned to port in Alameda and prepared for the Christmas holidays, prior to an expected fourth deployment to Southeast Asia in early January.

HISTORICAL DIARY INFORMATION
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS
1968

1. 1 January—Enterprise is docked at her homeport, NAS Alameda, California.
2. 2 January—Visitors included: Commander Carrier Division Seven, Commander Fleet Air Alameda, Vice Counsel of Australia, Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific.
3. 3 January—Enterprise departed Alameda enroute to Pearl Harbor. Side honors were accorded Commander Carrier Division Seven. Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific was a guest aboard.
4. 7 January—Commander Fleet Air Hawaii was a guest aboard.
5. 8 January—Enterprise arrived within Operations Area Hawaii.
6. 9 January—Enterprise is enroute to Midway Islands.
7. 11 January—Enterprise is enroute to Sasebo, Japan.
8. 18 January—Visitors included: U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Commander Naval Air Forces Japan, members of the Japanese Diet and other government officials, and members of the Japanese press.
9. 19 January—Enterprise arrived in Sasebo. The Mayor of Sasebo and Commanding Officer USS Truxton were visitors.
10. 20 January—Visitors included: Governor of Nagasaki, Mayor of Sasebo, Regional Commandant Sasebo, Destroyer Squadron Seven, and Commanding Officer USS Truxton.
11. 21 January—Visitors included members of the Japanese Diet.
12. 22 January—Visitors included members of the Japanese military and other government officials.
13. 23 January—Enterprise departed Sasebo enroute to Naval Base Subic Bay. Shortly after departure, she was suddenly ordered into the Sea of Japan following the capture of the USS Pueblo by a North Korean patrol boat.
14. 24 January—Enterprise began operations between Cheju Do, Korea and Fukoeshima, Japan.
15. 25 January—Enterprise began operations in the Sea of Japan.
16. 27 January—Commander Naval Forces Korea was a visitor.
17. 1 February—Visitors included: Commander Seventh Fleet, Republic of Korea Chief of Naval Operations, Republic of Korea Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Commander Naval Forces Korea, and Commanding General 314th Air Division.

18. 2 February—Commander Seventh Fleet was a guest.
 19. 7 February—Enterprise arrived in East China Sea for operations.
 20. 12 February—Enterprise officially became a part of the newly created Task Force Seventy-One.
 21. 16 February—Commander Carrier Division One transferred to USS Ranger.
 22. 17 February—Enterprise departed East China Sea enroute to Naval Station Subic Bay.
 23. 19 February—Enterprise arrived Leyte Pier, Subic Bay. Visitors included: Commander Naval Air Station Cubi Point, Deputy Commander Fleet Air Western Pacific, Commander Destroyer Flotilla Seventh Fleet, members Staff Commander Carrier Division Three.
 24. 20 February—Enterprise departed Subic Bay enroute Yankee Station.
 25. 21 February—Enterprise arrived Yankee Station. Commander Carrier Division Three embarked.
 26. 22 February—Prospective Commanding Officer USS Oriskany and members of the press were guests.
 27. 26 February—Visitors included: Commander Naval Air Systems, Forces Material Officer Naval Air Systems, and Avionics Officer Naval Air Systems.
 28. 28 February—Members of the press were aboard.
 29. 4 March—Commander Carrier Division Five was a guest.
 30. 12 March—Visitors included: Commander Carrier Division Five. A6A aircraft lost at sea; probable cause: flame-out. Crewmen were not recovered.
 31. 13 March—Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet, Commander Seventh Fleet and Commander Carrier Division Five were guests.
 32. 14 March—Commander Service Group Three and members of the German press were aboard.
 33. 16 March—A6A aircraft downed north of Hanoi. Pilot and bombardier/navigator believed captured.
 34. 17 March—Air Wing conducted awards ceremony.
 35. 18 March—Enterprise departed Yankee Station enroute to Subic Bay.
 36. 19 March—Enterprise arrived Subic Bay.
 37. 20 March—Members of the seventh and eighth grades from the Kalayaan School, Subic Bay were visitors.
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38. 21 March—Commanding Officer USS Hassayampa was a guest.
39. 22 March—Members of the Subic Naval Reserve Composite Company were aboard.
40. 23 March—Members of a girl scout troop sponsored by the Ship Repair Facility Subic and Clark Air Base were aboard.
41. 25 March—Arrived in the Operations Area Philippines for carrier quals.
42. 26 March—Enroute Yankee Station.
43. 27 March—RADM Wiendel assumed command of ComCarDivThree. Commander Seventh Fleet was a guest.
44. 29 March—ComCarDivOne and Assistant Wing Commander First Marine Air Wing were aboard.
45. 30 March—Ship's company was entertained by a USO show.
46. 31 March—Deputy Commander Republic Of Korea Forces Republic of Vietnam and staff members were aboard.
47. 4 April—ComCarDivOne, ComSeventhFlt and Commanding Officer USS Truxton were aboard.
48. 7 April—Commander Patrol Forces Pacific was aboard.
49. 10 April—Commander Naval Air Forces Atlantic was aboard.
50. 11 April—Members of the press were aboard.
51. 14 April—ComSeventhFlt and members of the press were guests.
52. 18 April—ComCarDivOne departed. Members of the press were aboard.
53. 23 April—ComCarDivOne raised flag on Enterprise.
54. 24 April—Enroute Subic.
55. 25 April—Arrived Subic.
56. 26 April—Commanding Officer USS Truxton was a guest.
57. 28 April—Members of the Olongapo City Chamber of Commerce and the Central Luzon (Province) Youth Camp were guests.
58. 29 April—Commander Underway Replenishment Group Two and Commander Naval Supply Depot Subic were aboard.
59. 30 April—Enroute ~~Yankee~~ Yankee Station.
60. 2 May—Arrived Yankee Station. Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific, staff members from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and members of the Naval Weapons Center China Lake were aboard.

61. 5 May--RA5C lost at sea.
 62. 7 May--F4B downed; probable cause: MiG fire. A4F lost in landing pattern. ComNavAirPac Weapons Officer, ComNavAirPac Ordnance Safety Team, officers of USS America, Executive Officer VA 85, Commander Destroyer Squadron One, ComCarDivTwo and staff members were aboard.
 63. 10 May--ComCarDivTwo and Commander Destroyer Squadron One were aboard.
 64. 11 May--Visitors included: ComCarDivSeven and staff, BrigGen H.A. French, USAF, and BrigGen J.E. Frizen, USAF.
 65. 13 May--A6A lost due to direct hit; crew recovered.
 66. 16 May--Members of the 30th Construction Regiment were aboard.
 67. 17 May--Commander Destroyer Squadron Seven was a guest.
 68. 21 May--Enroute Subic. Memorial ceremony was conducted.
 69. 22 May--Arrived Subic.
 70. 23 May--Enroute Hong Kong.
 71. 24 May--Arrived Hong Kong. Commodore Hong Kong and the Counsel General were guests.
 72. 26 May--Guests included citizens of Hong Kong, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Tanzania, Eire and China.
 73. 28 May--Commander British Forces Hong Kong was aboard.
 74. 30 May--Enroute Yankee Station.
 75. 1 June--Arrived Yankee Station. Visitors included: Director General Spanish Military Academy, Director Spanish Air University, Chief Army Central Staff (Spain), Director School Advanced Studies (Spain) and USAF escort.
 76. 2 June--F4B lost; probable cause: hydraulic system failure. Members of the press were aboard.
 77. 4 June--Members of the CinCPacFlt Quality Research and Control Electronics Warfare Systems Staff, the Southeast Asia Research and Evaluation Office, and the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Science Advisory Group were aboard.
 78. 6 June--Director of Operations 13th Air Force, Members of U.S. Army Company B Detachment First Military Intelligence Battalion, and members of the press were aboard.
 79. 7 June--Members of the press were aboard.
 80. 8 June--RADM Cagle relieved RADM Epes. ComCarDivSeven, ComCarDivTwo, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla Seven, Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Group One and Flag Commander Australian Fleet were guests.
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81. 9 June—General Westmoreland delivered farewell address to Seventh Fleet. ComSeventhFlt, ComCarDivTwo, ComCarDivSeven, Commander Anti-submarine Warfare Squadron Group One, and Commanding General Third Marine Amphibious Forces were guests.
82. 10 June—Military Assistance Command Vietnam Air Briefer, members of Combat Camera Group Pacific and the press were aboard.
83. 12 June—The Minister-Counsel to the Ambassador to the Republic of Vietnam, members of McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft Corp., and a midshipman indoctrination class were aboard.
84. 13 June—Commander Naval Communications Station Philippines and the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations Communications Representative were aboard.
85. 15 June—A4 lost at sea due flame-out; pilot recovered. A4 crashed on flight deck due nose wheel collapse; pilot uninjured.
86. 16 June—Crew was entertained by a USO show.
87. 20 June—CinCPacFlt and party, ComSeventhFlt and party, Naval Reactors Safeguard Team and the Officer in Charge Detachment C were aboard.
88. 23 June—A4 lost at sea due flame-out; pilot recovered. A4 crashed on flight deck due nose wheel collapse; pilot uninjured.
89. 24 June—A6 lost probable cause direct hit; pilot and bombardier/navigator missing in action. Deputy Commanding General Fleet Marine Forces Pacific was aboard.
90. 26 June—ComCarDivSeven, Commander Destroyer Squadron 21 and Commanding Officer USS Hornet were aboard.
91. 27 June—Enroute Subic.
92. 28 June—Arrived Subic.
93. 1 July—Communications Security Training visit by Naval Communications Station Philippines personnel.
94. 4 July—Ship at full dress. Gun salute fired by Naval Base Subic.
95. 5 July—ComCarDivOne departed. Supervisor of Ships Newport News, Commander Destroyer Squadron Seven, Commanding Officer USS Truxton, ComNavAirPac, CAFSU Drill Team and Commanding Officer HMAS Hobart were aboard.
96. 6 July—Enroute Conus.
97. 18 July—Arrived Alameda. Buraifl at sea; LCDR A.K. Tyszkiewicz. ComFair Alameda, Naval Architect Naval Shipyard Bremerton, Washington, ComCarDivThree and Commanding Officer USS Oriskany were aboard.
98. 19 July—Representatives from Naval Shipyard Bremerton were aboard.

99. 22 July—AIMD Post-Deployment Conference conducted.
 100. 27 July—Departed Alameda on Operation Northwest Passage.
 101. 29 July—Arrived Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton.
 102. 8 August—Commander Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Commander Sand Point Naval Air Station, Seattle were guests.
 103. 9 August—Members of the Bremerton Navy League were aboard.
 104. 11 August—Commanding Officer USS Sacramento was a guest.
 105. 15 August—ComNavAirPac and Commander Puget Sound Naval Shipyard were aboard.
 106. 26 August—Assistant Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy was aboard.
 107. 19 September—Commanding Officer Enterprise paid official visit to Commander Fleet Air Whidbey Island.
 108. 21 September—Members of the Bremerton Chamber of Commerce and Navy League were guests.
 109. 22 September—Open house conducted for shipyard personnel and families.
 110. 25 September—Bremerton High School band gave concert for crew. Mayor of Bremerton was a guest.
 111. 26 September—Fast cruise conducted.
 112. 27 September—Dependents embarked for second half of Operation Northwest Passage.
 113. 28 September—Enroute Alameda.
 114. 30 September—Arrived Alameda.
 115. 1 October—Commanding Officer USS Paracutin was aboard.
 116. 4 October—Awards ceremony conducted; Captain Lee received Legion of Merit, Enterprise and Air Wing received Navy Unit Commendation. ComNavAirPac, ComCarDivSeven, ComFairAlameda were guests.
 117. 6 October—Members of the Walnut Creek (Calif.) United Methodist Church were guests.
 118. 9 October—Enroute San Diego.
 119. 11 October—Arrived Operations Area Southern California.
 120. 12 October—Commander Naval Station North Island and members of Naval Air Forces Pacific were aboard.
 121. 14 October—Commander Fleet Training Group was aboard.
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122. 19 October--Arrived Naval Station North Island.
123. 21 October--Began operations in Operations Area Southern California.
124. 24 October--Arrived Coronado Roads, San Diego. Departed for Alameda.
125. 25 October--Arrived Alameda.
126. 28 October--Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific Board of Inspection and Survey was aboard.
127. 2 November--Began operations in Operations Area Northern California.
128. 4 November--A group of Secretary of the Navy guests was aboard.
129. 5 November--ComCarDivOne was aboard.
130. 10 November--Arrived Alameda.
131. 12 November--Enroute Operations Area Southern California.
132. 13 November--Arrived Operations Area Southern California.
133. 16 November--HC-1 helicopter lost at sea; pilot recovered but died later.
134. 18 November--ComCarDivOne Chief of Staff was aboard.
135. 22 November--Arrived Alameda.
136. 26 November--ComCarDivSeven arrived to conduct annual Administrative and Material Inspection.
137. 27 November--ComNavAirPac, ComFairAlameda, ComFairWhidbey and ComCarDiv-Seven were aboard.
138. 1 December--Observers from ComFairAlameda and ComCarDivOne arrived.
139. 2 December--Enroute Operations Area Southern California for Operation Beeftrust.
140. 3 December--Began conducting operations in Operations Area Southern California.
141. 9 December--Arrived Alameda.
142. 10 December--Commanding Officer, Executive Officer and Engineering Officer USS Bainbridge were aboard.
143. 17 December--Awards ceremony conducted. ComNavAirPac 3-M Team was aboard.
144. 25 December--Ship observed Christmas.