

USS NITRO (AE-23)
Fleet Post Office
New York 09501

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5750
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From: Commanding Officer, USS NITRO (AE-23)
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: Command History; forwarding of (Report Symbol OPNAV 5750-1) 1972

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (1) is submitted herewith.

C. G. CASSETT
C. G. CASSETT

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DATE	EVENT
01 JAN	Moored Larr Drydock, Bethlehem Shipyard
10 JAN	Underway for EAST Cruise and sea trials
11 JAN	Moored Bethlehem Shipyard
17 JAN	Underway for South Boston
//////	Arrive South Boston
21 JAN	Underway for Davisville, R.I.
22 JAN	Arrive Davisville, R.I.
31 JAN	Underway for NAD, Earle, N.J.
01 FEB	Arrive NAD Earle, N.J.
04 FEB	Underway for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
11 FEB	Arrive Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
14 FEB	Commander Service Squadron TWO Visit
16 FEB	Underway
17 FEB	Replenished two ships
22 FEB	Replenished one ship
24 FEB	Replenished one ship
25 FEB	Replenished and refueled one ship
29 FEB	Anchored Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
02 MAR	Underway for Port au Prince, Haiti
04 MAR	Anchored Port au Prince, Haiti
10 MAR	Underway for NAD Earle, N.J.
14 MAR	Arrive NAD Earle, N.J.
19 MAR	Four USNR officers and twenty-eight USNR enlisted men reported aboard for ACDUTRA
21 MAR	Underway for JAX OPAREA, replenished one ship
24 MAR	Replenished one ship
26 MAR	Replenished one ship
27 MAR	Replenished two ships, refueled one ship
28 MAR	Replenished two ships
29 MAR	Replenished (silent) one ship
31 MAR	Arrive Yorktown, Va.
01 APR	USNR officers and enlisted men debarked
05 APR	Underway for Davisville, R.I.
07 APR	Arrive Davisville, R.I.
19 APR	Underway for NAD Earle, N.J.
24 APR	Underway for Panama Canal
29 APR	Transit Panama Canal
30 APR	Replenished one ship
11 MAY	Arrive Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
12 MAY	Underway for Subic Bay, R.P.
25 MAY	Arrive Subic Bay, R.P. Commence loadout
29 MAY	Underway for Vietnam Operating Area (OPAREA)
30 MAY	Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
13 JUN	Depart OPAREA, enroute Subic Bay, R.P.
15 JUN	Moored NAVMAG, Subic Bay, R.P.
24 JUN	Underway for OPAREA
26 JUN	Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
28 JUN	Collision to port with USS ORISKANY (CVA-34) at approximately 2100.
29 JUN	Departed OPAREA, enroute Subic
02 JUL	Anchored Subic Bay, R.P.
03 JUL	Underway for NAVMAG Subic
//////	Moored NAVMAG Subic, Commence Offload

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06 JUL Underway for Ship Repair Facility, Subic
///// Moored SRP, Subic, Commence repair of collision damages
09 JUL Underway for NAVMAG, Subic
///// Moored NAVMAG, Subic, Commence loadout
13 JUL Underway for OPAREA
15 JUL Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
26 JUL Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
28 JUL Arrive NAVMAG Subic, commence loadout
01 AUG Underway for OPAREA
03 AUG Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
15 AUG Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
17 AUG Arrive NAVMAG, Subic
22 AUG Underway for HONG KONG
24 AUG Arrive HONG KONG
30 AUG Underway, enroute OPAREA
31 AUG Available for SVCS in OPAREA
10 SEP Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
12 SEP Arrive NAVMAG Subic, commence offload
15 SEP Underway for Ship Repair Facility, Subic. Commence
UPKEEP period.
26 SEP Underway for NAVMAG Subic. Arrive NAVMAG, commence
loadout
30 SEP Underway for OPAREA
02 OCT Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
10 OCT Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
12 OCT Arrive NAVMAG Subic, commence loadout
18 OCT Underway for OPAREA
20 OCT Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
29 OCT Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
31 OCT Arrive NAVMAG Subic, commence loadout
05 NOV Underway for Kao-hsiung, Taiwan
07 NOV Arrive Kaohsiung, Taiwan
13 NOV Underway for OPAREA
15 NOV Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
01 DEC Depart OPAREA, enroute SUBIC
03 DEC Arrive NAVMAG Subic
04 DEC Underway for Pontoon Pier, NAVMAG Subic. Arrive
Pontoon Pier, commence loadout
09 DEC Underway for OPAREA
11 DEC Arrive OPAREA, available for SVCS
26 DEC Depart OPAREA, enroute Sattahip, Thailand
27 DEC Arrive Sattahip, Thailand
Anchored in Sattahip, Thailand until end of year

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A. Command Organization and Relations

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The Commanding Officer USS NITRO (AE-23) was Commander Harry L. DAVIS. NITRO was homeported throughout the year at the Construction Battalion Center at Davisville, Rhode Island. The year was devoted to carrying out the ship's mission of delivering ammunition at sea, but the ship also performed various other tasks such as delivery of fuel, mail, movies, personnel, and food. NITRO also completed a major overhaul on 17 January 1972. During the calendar year approximately 61% of the crew was changed due to transfer or discharge, and 9 of 15 officers aboard on 31 December were new for a turnover rate of 60%.

B. Operations and Activities

The year 1972 began with NITRO in Bethlehem Shipyard in Boston, Massachusetts for the completion of a major overhaul. Upon completion of the overhaul on 21 January, NITRO spent a week and a half in her homeport at CBC Davisville. On 31 January NITRO got underway for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and much needed refresher training. Enroute, NITRO put into WAD Earle, N.J. to on-load ammunition. Arriving at Guantanamo Bay on 11 February, NITRO's new crew then underwent 3 weeks of intense training. Departing Guantanamo Bay on 29 February, NITRO arrived at Port au Prince 3 days later for some well deserved rest and recreation. After 3 days there it was back to WAD, Earle. From Earle, NITRO went to Jacksonville, Florida to take part in JAX OPS. After one week, NITRO departed the OPARNA and proceeded to Yorktown, Virginia to offload, commencing the off-load on 31 March. Then NITRO returned to Davisville on 5 April, and began a two week leave period. Unbeknownst to a majority of the crew, this was to be the last time NITRO would see her homeport for some 11 months. On 19 April NITRO got underway from Davisville, Rhode Island, for a deployment to WESTPAC in support of U.S. Naval Forces operating in the coastal water of Southeast Asia. Enroute NITRO had a 4 day onload at WAD, Earle, N.J. and she transited the Panama Canal on 29 April. She arrived at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 11 May, and finally at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines on 25 May. From this point until the end of the year, NITRO saw the heaviest operating schedule in her history with normal operating periods of ten days to 2 weeks, interspersed by 5 day periods of onloading at NAVMAG, Subic Bay, R.P. NITRO maintained an excellent safety record during this period of heavy operations, with only one significant incident taking place. That was a minor collision with the USS ORISKANY (CVA-34), on the evening of 28 June as she was making her approach to port for an UNREP.

The WESTPAC deployment offered NITRO the opportunity to visit several excellent Far East liberty ports. She

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visited Hong Kong for 1 week late in August. Then early, in November, NITRO spent six days in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Then on 27 December she arrived at Sattahip, Thailand, for rest and recreation in Bangkok, Thailand. She stayed at anchor in Sattahip for the remainder of the Calendar year 1972.

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ANNEX 1 (Employment Data 1972)

I. Days Not Underway

- A. In home port
- B. In Other than home port
- C. In Seventh Fleet Port
- D. Evolutions at anchor

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
A.	8	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.	20	6	15	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C.	0	0	0	0	5	9	7	11	17	7	11	9
D.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

II. Days Underway

- A. Transit
- B. Minor Fleet Exercises
- C. Major Fleet Operations
- D. Special Operations

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
A.	4	7	8	11	25	3	4	6	3	7	4	6
B.	0	16	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C.	0	0	0	0	0	18	20	14	11	10		
D.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

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ANNEX II (WESTPAC Cargo Statistics)

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Replenished: 136 Destroyers
9 Carriers
9 Cruisers
1 LSD
58 CONSOLS to Other Service Force Ships

Transferred: 140,000 Gallons NSFO to Destroyers
7,321 Short Tons Gun Ordnance
11,118 Short Tons Aviation Ordnance
80 Short Tons Fleet Freight
13,375 Pounds Mail
279 Passengers

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Annex 3 (List of Competitive Exercises)

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NITRO completed the following competitive exercises during calendar year 1972.

<u>EXERCISE</u>	<u>DATE COMPLETED</u>
Z-4-N	10 FEB 72
Z-5-N	11 FEB 72
Z-10-CC	25 MAR 72
Z-3-AA	25 MAR 72
Z-10-C	23 MAY 72
Z-28-S	12 AUG 72
Z-31-S	12 AUG 72
Z-5-N	17 OCT 72

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