

I had much the same experience when I had command of the aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt*. I had a totally ineffective Supply Officer. This gets pretty important on a large carrier, for he not only has the supply responsibilities for the ship, but also must know how to provide for the air group when aboard. We had had a supply department administrative inspection that was far from encouraging. I sent a message to the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts and asked for a new Supply Officer. Within practically no time there arrived Commander Roland Rieve, later promoted to Rear Admiral, a damn good Supply Officer.

It's been my impression that if the Captain has backbone enough to lay it on the line, make a good case, that BuPers will back you up every time. This is one of the unfortunate duties confronting a Captain in managing his command. It can't be abused, and I don't believe that in either of these cases I abused it, but the net result was a great improvement in the performance of the ships and the crews.

PS: How much contact did you have with the British and the Chinese ashore in Hong Kong?

FLA: Not much if any with the Chinese except for our relationship with the police in our capacity of running the shore patrol. And then, of course, there was my little brush with the judge although in that case only the British were involved.

I made a point of becoming acquainted with the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. *Tamar*, the British dock yard there in Hong Kong. The Captain was named Pengelley. He and his wife were charming and they had a 15 year old son.

Captain Pengelley was a remarkable officer who came up "through the hawsepipe", the British term for an officer we would call a "mustang", I suppose. This is not anything common in the Royal Navy and spoke well for his capability. He was a fine gentleman and his wife was most gracious. They were fine hosts. I dined aboard *Tamar* with them and had them out aboard *Corson* frequently during our stay.

PS: It sounds as if your ship was sort of a vestige from a previous existence, and so the Navy had to be creative to find things to do with her.

FLA: As a matter of fact, the senior Admiral in the area, at least the one that we reported to, was Hugh Goodwin, Commander Naval Forces Philippines, if my memory serves me correctly. He was responsible for the assignment of the station ship at Hong Kong. When there was an AVP in the area I am sure that he used it for that job. It was really a natural since it was small and would have a Captain aboard. I know that there were two or three operational at the time. *Orca* was one. But I suspect that in reality your thought is exactly correct.

PS: A couple of them were the flagship for the Middle East Force training operations.

FLA: Yes, they were at the time regularly assigned to that duty in Bahrain. I can't recall what ship relieved us of the station ship responsibility, but I am quite certain that it was not an AVP

PS: How did you spend your time while underway?

FLA: For one period we were ordered into Manila to take aboard the local naval reserve officers for a two-week active duty period. There were about a dozen of them. This was appropriate, for the ship was capable of providing quarters for them where seaplane people would be billeted where we tending seaplanes. I don't recall that we were told exactly what to do with them, but I mapped out a two-week cruise around many of the islands in the Philippines; operating independently, of course. We visited six or eight ports. I recall one was Palawan, and another Zamboanga. We integrated the reserves into the watch parties putting them to work as though they were ship's company. I am sure that we were able to give them an interesting two-week active-duty program.

One of the more interesting things that I found was that in all, or most of these ports that we visited, the head man in the village was a retired Navy steward. This is not surprising since they were probably the wealthiest in the town, getting their U.S. Navy retirement paychecks every month, and could all speak English. Invariably we found that one of these was either the mayor of the town or his right-hand man.

I recall one port we visited. When I went ashore to make my official calls I was greeted on the street as I left the boat landing with a banner stretched across the street which read "WELCOME CAPTAIN ASHWART". I suspect that in Tagalog "th" is pronounced as "t" as it is in many languages. I pleased the mayor by asking that they let me take the banner with me when I left the port. They did and I carried it home with me. What has happened to it since then I really don't know!

Later, we visited Kaohsiung on the north end of Formosa --- Taiwan. I don't remember what our mission there was.

PS: You had to go somewhere.

FLA: Maybe that is it. In any event, this independent cruising was an irreplaceable experience for me to learn a little about how to operate a ship. Kaohsiung is an interesting port to get into. The entry channel is very narrow and very short, and if there are many ships in port you are confronted immediately on the end of the short channel with the ships anchored. Further there is always a quite strong current crossing the seaward entrance. So you must proceed into the port at a pretty good speed to handle the current, but once inside you are confronted with the ships at anchor, with a lot of way on and not much room to maneuver to avoid them. Exciting for a neophyte ship driver!

It was at this time that the Tachen Islands were being abandoned, and the Chinese guerrillas were redeploying back to Taiwan. I suppose that since we were the only U.S. ship in the port, the guerrilla general invited my Exec and me to lunch in their camp. The camp, not surprisingly, was makeshift to say the least, but the hospitality was outstanding. The General had seven or eight staff officers who joined us for lunch. This started off with the old Chinese custom of "Gombay", where each one of the hosts toasts the visitor individually and the visitor must respond to the toast of each individual. When the liquor is warm rice wine the results can be deadly.

When these formalities were over, the main course, was the only one, since things at the camp were pretty primitive, and obviously their supplies were very sparse. It was a large pot of

boiled chicken soup. At least I identified it as chicken soup when, as it was stirred and spooned out for us, there appeared on the surface a chicken leg complete with claw. I suspect that this was considered to be very special considering the fact that they had just arrived and I am sure were subsisting on what the island had to offer.

While "dining" on this delicacy, of course, the rice wine continued to flow. After lunch the General insisted on showing us around the fort where his guerrillas were living. We struggled through that and around 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock my Exec and I decided it was time to return to the ship.

We were now confronted with the problem of reciprocating and it seemed to be that the only way to do it would be to invite the General and his staff aboard for lunch with us. We issued the invitation and planned for the event. Then there arrived a message warning us of a coming typhoon and ordering us to sea immediately. So I sent an officer ashore to see the General and apologize for having to cancel the lunch date. Admittedly this was a relief for us, but it probably would have been an interesting day aboard.

PS: Did you have any dealing with the Taiwan Patrol Force?

FLA: No, none at all.

There was another experience worth talking about that took place while we were in Subic Bay. My Exec was Catholic, and he knew the local Catholic Chaplain there at Subic. This Chaplain invited us to take a jeep ride with him up into the jungle to see four Catholic missions that had been established in the Igorote country. The Igorotes are very primitive people, bordering on being pygmies. We must have traveled a 100 miles from Subic into the jungle and back, stopping at each mission for a few minutes to tour the mission and the neighboring village. Each mission was headed by a Catholic priest, and it was fascinating to see and talk with each of them. What struck me particularly was how they approached life there in the jungle. I have never been able to forget how ebullient, I guess is the word, they were. They each seemed to be happy with what they were doing. The priest at the outermost mission had been transferred there from a parish in Winnetka, Illinois, of all places, thinking of his present station. They were delighted of course, to have a visit from the Chaplain from Subic whom they were acquainted with.

One of the interesting things to me --- I don't suppose this is of much interest to Navy history --- was that we saw in the villages very small children, babes in arms. Then there seemed to be a hiatus until the kids seemed to be five or six years old, which said that a large percentage of the newborns just didn't survive. This is not surprising when you would see a tiny infant in rags sucking on a makeshift nursing bottle with rice water in it. Apparently after boiling rice they would drain off the water and feed it to the kids in a bottle and nipple arrangement. What real food they had seemed to be provided by the Catholic mission. For example, in our jeep, we carried several cases of evaporated milk for the missions.

That to me was a fascinating trip. As I said before, I've never been able to get out of my mind --- I think that if I were there, it wouldn't take very long for me to be totally depressed. But these Catholic priests --- it was just incredible, the frame of mind that they had about their assignment out there in the jungle, tending to not only the physical welfare of the natives, but

also their religious --- I think that obviously they were converting them to Christianity, which I guess is all right. I sometimes think that we tend to be a little overbearing on that in going into some of these foreign countries and why we think that we have to convert them to Christianity when they probably have their own religion with which they are quite content. But, that's not for me to say.

PS: That's the American way.

FLA: Yes, I'm afraid that's the American way.

PS: Did you have any discretion in your ship's schedule? Could you write some of your own tickets?

FLA: Frankly, I can't remember. Certainly the tour in Hong Kong was directed, as was the cruise with the reserve officers.

PS: It doesn't sound to me like you had any fleet commitments.

FLA: We didn't have any fleet commitments as such, I am sure. Of course, we requested replenishment at sea as we needed them, taking on diesel fuel and commissary supplies. I certainly refrained from in-port replenishment as much as I could because of the training I had from the at-sea operations.

PS: Was showing the flag part of your role?

FLA: I am sure that our cruise with the reserves not only provided training time for them, but the visits to several out of the way ports, rarely visited by Navy ships, was an important part of that cruise. It turned out that in several ports we were the only ship that had visited for a long, long time.

If we consider the three events that I have mentioned; station ship in Hong Kong for three months, the two-week reserve cruise, the visit to Taiwan and some support visits into Subic, and the fact that we were deployed for not more than six months, these visits took up most of that period. Since these were all officially directed operations, I guess that answers the question that I have been groping for.

If one analyzes the time spent during the year that I had command, it is not difficult to see how the time went. First, the six-month deployment to the Far East that we have talked about. Then there was the underway-training in San Diego for another couple of weeks. The trip to San Francisco for our operational readiness inspection with the training group people aboard and the time in our home port Alameda getting ready for these operations. These all add up fairly closely I think to cover the year.

PS: Where did you get your maintenance and logistic support?

FLA: Subic Bay provided most of this. I think that we did visit Cavite and may have had some help from there, I can't remember specifically. I think that Cavite was in operation at the time, I'm not sure.

PS: I don't know either.

FLA: Now my memory is getting jogged a bit for I do remember some upkeep time in Subic, and particularly a fine young Engineering Officer, "Hedy" LaMar, and his most attractive wife. The officers had many enjoyable times with them ashore in Subic Bay Navy Yard.

To go back a little in regard to our logistic support. I took command of *Corson* in Iwakuni, Japan, relieving Joe Toth, and there is another story in that regard. A couple of days after assuming command I took the ship to sea off Iwakuni to try out some of my book learning on ship handling. The first thing to learn was how to approach and tie up to a buoy. A box in the water was the target until I had nerve enough to return to port and do it for real. That was our mooring in Iwakuni. We tried out a couple of man-overboard Williamson turns and some simple turns, backing down, and the like. This was in preparation to carry out our orders to take on fuel in Kure Navy Yard across the Inland Sea for our return trip to Alameda.

Kure is not far from Iwakuni, and we were provided a Japanese pilot to take us to the fueling point at Kure. It turned out that he was not much help, because he knew not one word of English nor I of Japanese. He did soon point out where the Navy Yard was several miles ahead, and drew a small sketch of the fueling facility. It consisted of three buoys, two to take stern lines and one a bow line and in between a raft with the fuel connections. My job was to tie up to this, sort of a Mediterranean moor situation and get the hoses over the side. Believe it or not, we did it with no false starts, filled up with diesel, moved out of the fuel mooring and proceeded to the Navy Yard to moor at one of the piers, again pointed out by the pilot. So I was to make my first landing to a dock.

Again Crenshaw came to the rescue, and I made the approach and landing with only bouncing the anchor over the top of a couple of the piers' pilings. When we were tied up, the Navigator told me that he had been aboard the ship for more than two years and that was the first landing that he had seen without having been made by a pilot.

From then on, while making landings and departures from Alameda, I always took aboard a harbor pilot, but also made my own maneuvers alongside the pier leaving and arriving. I would tell the pilot that I would make the maneuver, but asked him to please hold my hand and not let me get into trouble. The pilots were really good about this and respected us for it. All along however, Crenshaw's book was the key to success.

PS: That's kind of hard to learn from a book.

FLA: Yes, I suppose so. But you can learn the principles, and with a little practice they work. It was great fun for a young aviator --- it was a liberal education and turned out to be most useful experience later when I had command of a carrier.

PS: Well, I think that I have exhausted my questions about your tour in *Corson*. After that, you went out to China Lake as commanding officer.

CHAPTER NINETEENNAVAL ORDNANCE TEST STATION, CHINA LAKE, CALIFORNIA
IN COMMAND

June 1955 - October 1957

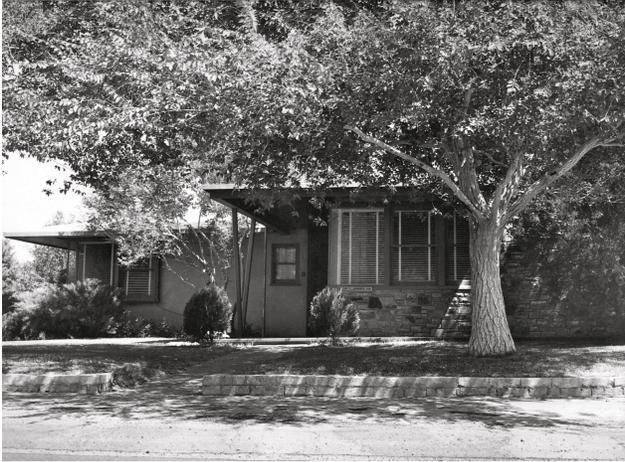


PS: After you were relieved of command of *Corson* you went to the Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake (NOTS).

FLA: Yes, that was next. While I was still aboard *Corson* I received a letter from the Bureau of Naval Personnel that I was being ordered to the Naval War College at Newport. I was happy about this, because so far I had missed all of the professional colleges. I believed that this was a logical step for me. Shortly thereafter, I received a letter from Admiral P.D. Stroop, then in the Bureau of Ordnance I think it was still called, which told me that I was to be ordered to the Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, as



Aerial view of the U.S. Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, California



Top left: #1 Enterprise, our new home

Top right: After Change of Command with Nan, Rick and Dave

Middle left: Reading my orders

Middle right: On another occasion, inspecting the Marine Detachment

Left: Change of Command Ceremonies



Good working relationship with Bill McLean (NOTS Technical Director, 1954 - 1967)

Commanding Officer. I told him that I didn't understand this, because I had already been notified that I was to go to the War College. It had been my understanding that War College orders took preference. But the long and the short of it was that Admiral Stroop told me that I was to go to China Lake in command.

NOTS was the largest Bureau of Ordnance laboratory and was almost entirely devoted to aviation ordnance weapon research and development. In addition to many minor laboratories and the ranges, the station was

supported by the Michelson Laboratory. There were more than 1,200 scientifically trained people on the station with a high percentage of Ph.D.s. It was a pretty high-powered organization.

After I reported for duty I went to call on Admiral Withington, then chief of the bureau, to pay my respects. He told me, "Well, I don't know what you are really going to do out there. Sidewinder development is about completed and that is about all there is going on. So you'll have to make the best of it." That came as a bit of surprise, so, when I returned to the station, I met with the Technical Director, Bill McLean, and reported to him my conversation with the Admiral. We had better get on the horse and come up with some weapon development proposals. As you might expect if you were familiar with Bill McLean, the laboratory had a stack of such proposals. Bill and I went back to the bureau for a sales job. The net result was that we were back in business.

NOTS, now called the Naval Weapon Center, had a very special way of operating that reflected the BuOrd way of running their laboratories with very successful results. Should we talk about that a little?

PS: That would be useful, because, I gather, the system served the bureau well.

FLA: I believe NOTS was the prime example of how to run a laboratory. Actually NOTS was established during World War II in 1943 when it was thought that rockets could make a major contribution to aircraft armament. Inyokern, in California just north of the Mojave Desert, was the area selected due to the availability of large areas of land to accommodate the need to not only research and develop weapons, but to take them immediately out on the test ranges integral with the station. Later the operations were moved about ten miles east, and the town of China Lake was established, which was made up of the laboratories, ranges and the housing for the people at work there.

Dr. L.T.E. Thompson was the first Technical Director, and it was he who developed the *modus operandi* and the principles of operation for the laboratory. Captain E.V. Burroughs, an ordnance P.G. and a naval aviator, was the first station commander. In accordance with these principles, I made it abundantly clear that it was my policy that this was a civilian operation supported by the military. The Technical Director was the technical boss, and in accordance with the charter, the Commanding Officer and the Technical Director were jointly responsible for the operation of the station. I made it a point to insure that Bill McLean realized that he had this responsibility as the technical boss.

It is important to note the difference here between the operation of the Bureau of Aeronautics development laboratories and those of the Bureau of Ordnance. In the former case the military commander was the overall boss, assisted by a Scientific Advisor. Note the difference in the responsibility of the senior technical person. It seemed to me that the very title of the civilian scientist advisor ensured that he had essentially no real technical responsibility. He provided technical guidance and assistance to the commanding officer.

One of the things that I detected very quickly, and I think it was true at NOTS, is the fact that basically a civilian scientist does not like working directly for a man in uniform. I believe that they consider themselves more technically sophisticated than the officer, no matter what his background might be. They simply don't like to be managed by a person in uniform.

One of the keys to the successful productivity of novel and workable weapons is derived from the so-called discretionary research money. This was money given to the laboratory to be solely controlled by the Technical Director, with no strings attached. He could work on anything that his fertile mind, hopefully, would come up with. He would account for it with the station commander and it could be used only for the work that he supervised. It was from this source of discretionary money that Sidewinder, the heat-seeking air-to-air missile, was conceived and developed until it became an official program of the bureau. Perhaps as a result of NIH (not invented here) that it was kept alive in the bureau by Admiral Parsons, calling it a fuse program so that money could continue flowing to the station as the development continued and until it became recognized for what it really was. There were objectors that we had to contend with who, since the missile was an infrared heat-seeker, said it would not function in a fog or in clouds. Studies were made to try to find out how much time in air-to-air combat there would be under conditions of clouds or fog. This turned out to be perhaps 15%. What's wrong with 85% workable? What was happening was that we were losing the battle with the bureau over the 15% of the time it might not be effective.

It didn't take too much further work and experimentation, firing on our own ranges, to prove its worth, and Sidewinder prevailed. One of the aspects of the Sidewinder development was McLean's objective of making the missile self-contained and always ready without prior tinkering. Load it on the aircraft, hook it up to the plane's monitoring circuits, and it was ready to go. It turned out to be a revolutionary aircraft weapon and one which soon became the standard throughout the Free World as a heat-seeker weapon and copied on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

This was the time I arrived at the station; a period which I call the "golden years" of NOTS. The lab came up with the 3.5-inch rockets packed in a pod, 5-inch rockets, radar-seeking air-to-ground missiles, air-fuel explosives, the antisubmarine rocket (ASROC), the submarine-



Discussing the Sidewinder missile with Bill McLean

launched rocket with a nuclear warhead (SubRoc), a series of new torpedoes, and many more. All the scientists lived aboard the station in government-built housing, thus having little or no outside influences hindering their work. One would find lights burning in Michelson Laboratory as late as 2:00 and 3:00 o'clock in the morning indicating that perhaps someone had formulated an idea late at night and couldn't wait to get into the lab to try it out.

The Bureau of Aeronautics laboratories, as far as I know, never had this

flexibility. Indeed, when I was Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Weapons, Research and Development, I tried to install these ideas into the laboratories that we inherited from the Bureau of Aeronautics. One such place was the laboratory at Johnsville, Pennsylvania, where I established the same sort of financial support as we were giving to our labs. Prior to this it was an aircraft modification center. I recall that shortly after my arrival in the Bureau of Weapons, there was one group at Johnsville that had some ideas for updating the antisubmarine installations in the maritime patrol aircraft. It had been dormant for lack of money and an opportunity to freewheel a bit. When the new financial support was installed, the group came alive and the antisubmarine warfare system (ANEW) was the result which was soon to be installed in all patrol aircraft.



Loading a Sidewinder missile aboard an F9F-8 aircraft

I am aware that those who were raised in the Bureau of Aeronautics won't agree with all this. I believe that this is so since the two bureaus were, in reality, in different kinds of work. As for the development of a new aircraft, they didn't have the capability to formulate the basic concepts of aircraft research and development. That belonged in the aeronautical industry and the NACA. It was the bureau's job to determine a set of operational characteristics and specifications for the aircraft and then turn it over to the industry to compete for and to build the airplane. They didn't have the in-house capability to complete the design.



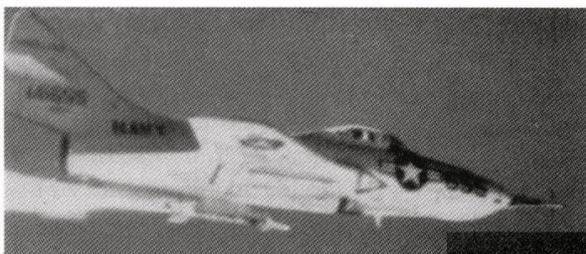
A pair of F9F-8 aircraft loaded with Sidewinder missiles

To make the point, there was a time that I can remember, when the Bureau of Ordnance had rooms of draftsmen who were designing guns and gun mounts and the relatively rudimentary stuff that we had in those days. So I think that it was a logical progression for BuOrd to organize their in-house laboratories in the manner that I have described. This was the environment that L.T.E. Thompson grew up in, and it was reasonable for him, having the opportunity to establish a new laboratory, to organize it around

his prior experience. And I do think that feeding these ideas and methods of operation into the BuAer laboratories improved their research and development capabilities.

PS: Did you see any of the turf fights between BuAer and BuOrd that later led to the merger?

FLA: There was a rather definite sense of competition between Point Mugu and NOTS, although we were in different fields of endeavor, Mugu oriented toward test and evaluation and NOTS toward early research, development, testing and provision of a design package for production of the weapons that we originated. This was the total package approach envisioned



Navy F9F-8 aircraft assigned to China Lake fires Sidewinder to score a direct hit on the target drone's wingtip flare.

by Dr. Tommy. As far as I am concerned personally, I was only in BuOrd for a year or so at the start of the war. Everyone was too busy to worry about areas of turf.

PS: When you were working on a missile, this was the claim. BuAer claimed that since it flew, they should have claim on it. Did you get any of that at China Lake?

FLA: Not to any extent. Of course, they were working on rather large missiles that could be considered to be pilotless aircraft. BuOrd's effort was more oriented toward smaller aircraft-mounted weapons such as airborne rockets and air-to-air missiles.

PS: So, Sidewinder was considered more an enlarged bullet than as a small airplane.

FLA: That is about the case. It was a small self-contained weapon, sometimes referred to as "a wooden weapon"; nothing to do to get it going. Contemporary with Sidewinder was the Bureau of Aeronautics' air-to-air missile, "Sparrow", a radar-follower guided missile. It was larger, had a larger warhead and was capable of longer ranges, a good adjunct to Sidewinder.

PS: It's remarkable that they're both still around.

FLA: Yes, and they are both effective weapons that operate in a different environment. One's a radar seeker which is indeed for an all-weather missile. But there were also things that Sidewinder could do in closer air-to-air combat circumstances.

PS: I can see a situation where if the Technical Director doesn't feel that he has full status or control, that would stifle the innovative initiative.

FLA: That is exactly the situation as I saw it.

PS: How do you exercise command at such a facility? That's obviously a far different environment from a ship.

FLA: I think that the personality of the commander comes into play here. You must depend on your organization. As far as technical command is concerned, I didn't feel that I had any authority over it. Although I was jointly responsible with the Technical Director, I didn't believe that I had any right to overrule him on technical matters even if I had the capability of doing so, which I didn't have.

Since then, I believe there have been some changes at China Lake, where the principles that I have described have been eroded. I was relieved by Bill Hollister, out of the Naval Academy class of 1931. He was an aeronautical engineering postgraduate. With that degree, I suspect he had a subtly different attitude about how things should operate and may have tried to exert some technical influence on the Technical Director. He was relieved by Captain Charley Blenman who, I have been told, carried things a bit further. I think that this has been detrimental to the laboratory with the Technical Director feeling somewhat inhibited. This is feedback that I

have had on some visits to the station. I think that I was the last Station Commander who subjugated the command features of the station, at least technically, in favor of the Technical Director. In the final analysis, my responsibility was to provide support for the civilian technical community. As is always the case, it is your subordinates who can make you or break you.

I was fortunate to have an absolutely outstanding Executive Officer, Freddie Chenault, Naval Academy class of 1936. He was an ordnance PG, a marvelous naval officer and executive. He took most of the support load from me, which permitted me to direct most of my efforts toward supporting the Technical Director, particularly in our relations with Washington. A command technique that I initiated that I think has been most beneficial was finding talent and developing it into different fields to take the greatest advantage of what you had available. Locally we called it "MixMaster".

This idea originated when I was confronted with the question of what to do with Barney Smith, an excellent weapon man, but who felt that he needed to broaden his field of interest. Barney was a civilian with a very interesting background. At the age of 34, a high school graduate and then a master welder, he decided that he had better things to do with his life. He was accepted and enrolled in Reed College in Oregon where he was graduated with high honors with a degree in physics.

With his diploma in his hand and with his wife and child, he traveled south down the coast looking for a job. He had no luck until he tried China Lake, where he was welcomed and put to work in aircraft weapon development. He said, "I will be forever grateful to the United States Government and the civil service establishment for giving me a job". By the time that I am talking about he was a GS-14.

Barney came to me one day and said, "I've been in the aircraft fire control business for quite a while. I need a change and hopefully one that will move me forward in life." I asked him if he had ever been involved in administrative things such as budgeting and personnel management. He said, "No, but I'd give anything to try." It turned out that we were having a turnover in the central staff and the director's job was open. I offered it to him and he leaped at it. Fortunately, he was well known around the station and highly respected, so there was no apparent objection from anyone as far as I could tell.

So we take this physics graduate, who was an expert in the development of aircraft fire control and put him in the central staff, a whole new field for him. But being intelligent, diligent, and a hard worker, he took charge of that office and its challenge, and did a crackerjack job. That was the start of "Mix Master".

At the same time we started moving department heads in the laboratory into other divisions and that's where I began to call it the "mix master." It might come as a surprise, but the idea took hold and the senior people who became involved were enthusiastic about it. The selection process was not easy, but as we got into it further, it seemed always to make sense and brought a fresh viewpoint into the station operations.

It is interesting to see how this novel idea, at least I thought that it was novel, finally grew. Some years after I was at China Lake, I became the Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Naval Weapons. I found that the position of Chief Engineer in my part of the bureau was vacant. I offered the job to Barney Smith who was still at China Lake. This gave him the opportunity as Chief Engineer to have some input into the engineering aspects of weapons development in the

bureau. I believe that he made an important contribution to the work of the research and development part of the Bureau.

After about a year, Barney came to me saying that he had a new job in mind. He wanted to go to the Naval War College. I can't recall the exact title of the job, but they have on the rolls a senior civilian who apparently requires the talent that Barney was able to bring to the college. So he spent, enthusiastically, a year at the War College on the staff.

About this time, the Technical Director's job at the Weapons Center Dahlgren, Virginia came open. Barney was selected for the job at a time when the fortunes of Dahlgren were at a low ebb and there was serious thought to close the station. He turned the station around and it became one of the strongest laboratories in the BuWeps system. One of his efforts there was to establish the mix master idea so that when it came time for him to retire he had six people in his organization qualified to take over his position as Director. One of these was Jim Colvard who later became Deputy Chief of Navy Material.

PS: Where did Barney Smith go from Dahlgren?

FLA: He retired; must have been in his 60s or older by this time. But he didn't retire his mind. He came up with an idea for a high speed train which would float on a cushion of air made by a modification to the rails which would trap the air between the rail and the wheel. Propulsion would be accomplished by an infinitely long squirrel-cage motor. Instead of rotating, the field would travel horizontally pulling the train with it. I took him up to Penn State and talked to the president about taking on the idea. They were somewhat interested, but it never came to fruition, at least along the lines that Barney had proposed. Perhaps some of the ideas are at work in the recent plans for high-speed trains.

While still at Dahlgren he became interested in sailboats. He designed one that had the minimum wetted surface area with double hulls and was driven by a fixed airfoil. His calculations indicated that the boat would travel faster than the wind velocity, and working models proved that he was right. The boats could be designed to make as much as 40 knots when full size, would be cheap to make and could be used as high-speed targets for gunnery practice at sea. They would be expendable due to the low cost. Barney has written and published a book describing the development. Since then I have lost track of him.

PS: I've talked to somebody who served with Fred Chenault in a previous billet. He was Executive Officer of the *New Jersey* in the Korean War, and he said that Chenault was a master psychologist. He had kind of a folksy manner and encouraged subordinates to contribute ideas, and in so doing, got them to do what he wanted them to do in the first place.

FLA: Yes, Freddie was remarkable. I certainly admired him, but there was one thing that bothered me a little bit. Fred enjoyed parties, and took on a fair load of booze. I've seen him collapse at the end of a party, with his head on the table. But I never saw the morning that this was a detriment whatsoever to his performance of duty. I simply took the position that's his business, not mine. As long as he's performing the way he was performing, if he wants to do that, that's all right, I didn't care.

PS: Apparently he was a workaholic who kept himself extremely well informed.

FLA: Yes. I think that puts it just about right. When he retired from the Navy at China Lake, he took over the Engineering Division on the station as a civilian employee running the machine shop, which was no small job since much of the weapon test components were made right there on the station. It also involved much of the basic engineering design of a lot of the product of China Lake. He is a very capable guy. I understand that he has cancer of the larynx now.

PS: Apparently lost his ability to speak, yes.

FLA: And Katie, his wife, is a wonderful woman. They are a great pair, those two, just wonderful.

PS: I wonder if dealing with civil service types was a new challenge for you, having dealt entirely with uniformed people, for the most part.

FLA: What I have to say about that is that I developed over the years at China Lake, and I have never lost it, a very great respect for civil service people. I think that by and large the civil service — the civil servants, so called, are terribly underrated. Oh sure, in the lower hierarchies of messengers, typists and perhaps on up to GS-7 level there are some goof-offs. But all my time at China Lake and in the Bureau of Naval Weapons as well, I have never been anything but impressed by the quality of these people and their dedication to the government and the jobs that they were doing. There is no limit to the amount of work they do, particularly in the super grades, the GS-15s and above. As far as I am concerned, you can depend upon them absolutely --- totally dedicated to their job. I never ran into one who wasn't completely qualified for his job both technically and administratively. Now I suppose other people have had unfortunate experiences in this, but not me. I have great admiration for civil service technical people. I haven't had much to do with the rest of them. I think generally they make a very important contribution to the working of the Navy.



U.S. Navy photo 033035

In a January 1958 ceremony in Washington, D.C., President Dwight D. Eisenhower presents Dr. William B. McLean with a special presidential gold medal for "exceptionally meritorious civil service."

PS: When you recruit people for jobs at a place like China Lake, how do you go beyond mere technical competence to find the guy who's got the spark of creative genius?

FLA: First, I have to say that it is impossible, at recruiting time, to find the person who may excel later in creativity. Einstein either failed or was kicked out of school sometime in his early years, maybe along about recruiting time.

At China Lake this was the responsibility of the Technical Director, and he took the job very seriously. We sent recruiting teams composed of our highest and most qualified people in the lab out to colleges and universities. These were at least heads of departments. It was our philosophy that we weren't recruiting for a job as much as we were selling the people who made the contacts with prospective hires. We hoped that he would meet the person we had sent and that he, the prospect, would think that here's the kind of person I'd like to work with. We believed that this would overcome any reluctance that might be there to be working in civil service. We hoped that the recruit would feel that if it is good enough for him, it is good enough for me.

PS: So they essentially looked for people who had the same qualities they did. That, of course, is both the strength and the complaint against selection boards, that they tend to perpetuate the kind of thing that naval officers have always been doing.

FLA: I suspect that that's probably true. You would hope, however, that the boards would be broader minded than that. I have never sat on a selection board myself, except one where we were to select chaplains for retention. So I haven't had any direct experience as to how they operate. But remember, we were trying to sell the personality and the obvious capability of the recruiter to the prospective recruit and entice him into the system by example and not necessarily by searching out someone to fill a billet that we may have had in mind.

PS: How much control did the bureau in Washington exert over your activities at China Lake?

FLA: There wasn't much direct kibitzing where they dabbled in the technical details of our programs. The most important aspect of their control had to do with the annual budget. The Technical Director and I would go back to Washington to make our pitch on the programs that needed funding, both ongoing and new proposals. We would deal with the sections of the Bureau that had responsibility. If they supported it, we would get the money.

PS: Would they tell you, "Go slower on this", quicker or faster on something else? Maybe they'd do that just by how much money they gave you.

FLA: That implies a control over the day-to-day management of a project, and I have to say that this was left up to us for the approved programs. By and large approved programs were funded pretty much to the extent we asked for in our budget proposals. There was a quite tight liaison between the bureau people and the scientists and engineers at the station. Not only did the

Technical Director and I make frequent trips to the bureau, but also the scientists and engineers directly involved in a project kept close contact with their opposite numbers in the bureau. I can't estimate what the travel bill was, but I think you have to weigh that against the improved efficiency. Face-to-face contact is much more effective than trying to conduct business over the phone. I suppose there were some boondoggles, but I doubt that this was any problem. So we had a steady stream of people going back and forth to Washington. You must remember that China Lake was the principal research and development laboratory for BuOrd in the field of aircraft weapons.

PS: What mechanism did you use to inject the fleet input into your work, to make sure that what you were doing was practical and would work once it got there?

FLA: We had people from the laboratory in the fleet with close liaison back to the station. They visited the ships that had our stuff aboard. There was continuous coverage of ships in the Mediterranean. These were some of our best people. It was a prized assignment, and we rotated them frequently enough so that things didn't just get routine in nature.

PS: Did you watch tests yourself?

FLA: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact I even participated in a few tests myself, particularly Sidewinder tests. There were many interesting things going on out on the ranges. China Lake had a high-speed track, maybe three or four miles long, that used a rocket-propelled sled, that could carry the items to be observed under high accelerations and terminal speeds. Supersonic speeds could be reached. One of the tests that I recall was done for the aircraft industry to analyze tail flutter at high speeds. The aircraft tail structure was mounted on the sled propelled by rockets and observed by instrumentation on the sled as well as by high-speed cameras.

Ours wasn't the only supersonic track. Holloman Air Force Base had one that was managed by a Major Stapp. He was a flight surgeon, and he even rode on the sled to experience firsthand the problems confronted by pilots under these high-speed conditions. I suspect that there was a major input into the problem of pilot ejection at high airspeeds. Tests were made on ejection seats for aircraft. Our part of this program was the development of rocket propulsion of the seat from the aircraft. It was from this work that the capability of making ejections at ground level came.



I made a point of getting around the station to see the tests as much as I had time for. In anticipation of my assignment to command the aircraft carrier *Roosevelt*, I had the opportunity to qualify to fly jet fighter aircraft. Thus, for one of the quality-control tests of Sidewinder, I flew the test aircraft carrying the missile. The target was a radio-controlled F6F conventional fighter. It was fitted with a flare on the tail section on which the missile could guide. It is a remarkably simple weapon. You listen for the tone when the missile locks on the heat source, press the “pickle” and away she goes. Mine functioned correctly and destroyed the drone.

Bill McLean originated the novel concept of a single-axis gyroscope as the principal guidance mechanism, responding to the infrared signals from the target. He held the patents on the design and when it was released to foreign countries, he received appropriate royalties. Of course, he didn't profit from domestic production.

As for the testing capability at the station, the particular advantage was that the ranges were right there on the station. Therefore the station had the capability of design concept, experimental testing, limited production capability to make the test units, and the engineering design capability to develop a design disclosure from which bids for contractor production could

be made. During early contractor production, the station kept close control in order to see to it that the product conformed to the original developed and tested design.

This was not the smoothest operation, because it was a continuous battle to keep the contractor from introducing his own ideas as to how the thing should be engineered. As a result, there were some difficulties in making the transition from engineering development into production. Perhaps the Bureau of Aeronautics system avoided some of this, since the design, engineering for production, and production was done in the aircraft industry itself.

PS: Presumably, it would be more expensive.

FLA: That's probably so. Another aspect of expense using



the aircraft industry is that the production contracts always contained a 20% factor to cover the cost of research. I don't know whether our system was more economical or not. Maybe it evened out in both cases. As I have mentioned, it did take a bit of doing to keep the production contractor in line doing things as we wanted them done. "OK, we hear you, but we want it done our way." We had that problem with Philco, who had the first production contract for Sidewinder. Of course, it was incumbent upon our people to be open-minded to grab on to good ideas that came along from the contractors when they satisfied our requirements

There are a lot of problems in getting weaponry out of research and development and into production, and this, I think, is one of the advantages of the ordnance laboratory system over the others. It is my impression that the Air Force had this problem. There has always been a lot of research going on by the Air Force, because they have some very good research laboratories. They didn't have the technique of moving the research and early development into production. Perhaps their problem was the absence of facilities to do testing while in the development stage to solve problems early that might arise. Further, being closely tied to the industry, I suppose that probably problems arose and were causing trouble when the production started without adequate development testing.

I could illustrate this by a situation we experienced in the Bureau of Naval Weapons. We may not want to get into this at this time.

PS: Sure.

FLA: I had the research and development part of BuWeps, and we found that generally, the avionics in the fleet, for some reason, were performing at a rate of about 20% of specifications. Obviously, this was unacceptable. There was a Marine Colonel in the electronics section of R&D, well qualified for his job, in charge of electronic and avionic development. He pointed out to me that the Air Force had done a lot of research on microelectronics, but they had never gone much beyond the early research work. It is this aspect of their programs that I have been talking about. The Colonel believed that we could get access to this basic research and that perhaps we could carry it forward into something that would result in improved avionic equipment in naval aviation. I concurred and asked him to set up a program to get on with his plan. A couple of months later he was ready to present a comprehensive plan to the appropriate people in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Then our trouble started. The plan was picked apart, and we were told to go home and fix it and come back and try again. Three times we went through this exercise before the program was approved. The end result was essentially what we had proposed six months earlier.

This is a clear example of what was wrong in the McNamara days. Their collection of "whiz kids" and lesser lights with too much power were bumps on the log of progress. Sure, they probably did screen out a few details that needed to be corrected, but the overall result in my opinion was to be large losses of time. I can't report on the ultimate results of the colonel's effort, because shortly after we had the program approved, I was ordered to sea.

PS: My impression is that things take even longer now.

FLA: Yes, I suspect this is so. As far as the generalities of my story are concerned, I should talk about my conversation with the people at Raytheon while all this was going on. One of their leading officials said, "I can understand what you're trying to do, but you are making a basic mistake. With the new science of microelectronics, you have upgraded your specifications by an order of ten, but you are going to go right back into the same boat you were in before. You're not going to be able to achieve the high level of specifications that you have set any more than you could do it before. You've set your sights too high. Now come down. Take advantage of the developments in microelectronics, but don't try to shoot the moon. Ask the new stuff to do all that you are asking the old stuff to do and you might reach it. You people do this all the time. You just ask too much of the new stuff. Just take advantage of what the new developments can offer and not try to go beyond that. Otherwise you will still have your 20% performance by the new equipment." I think that was a pretty good commentary on how we tried to operate, and maybe still do.

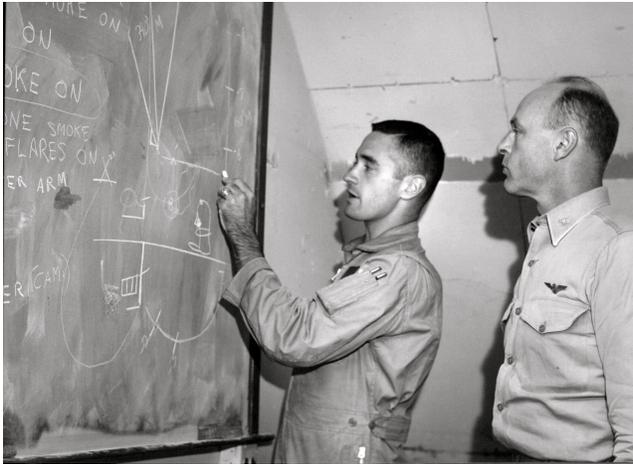
PS: Are there any other projects from China Lake that you want to mention before we move on?

FLA: Well, we had a very good, in my opinion, torpedo development program going on in the Pasadena annex of NOTS. The work there was devoted totally to under-water ordnance, mostly having to do with torpedoes, mostly aerial. The technique there was to do a new torpedo development in sort of quantum jumps. Let's not worry about getting a new torpedo started until we have improved and proven out all aspects of torpedoes that we now know how to build. In the meantime, component development would proceed along the lines of propulsion, under water form, guidance and war-head development. Then combine this information together to develop a new torpedo on a generational basis. So after you have pushed back the latest frontiers in torpedo development, put the whole effort into a new generation of torpedo.

The Mark 46



Variable Angle Launcher of the NOTS Pasadena Annex. Experimental aerial torpedoes were launched into the lake simulating launch from an aircraft. The angle of impact could be adjusted by varying the angle of the launcher.



Skull session at the chalkboard prior to my test shot of the Sidewinder missile.

torpedo is a good example. Pasadena dealt mostly in aerial torpedoes, and the Mark 46 was very successful in that environment. It was also applied to ASROC, the antisubmarine torpedo launched from shipboard by rocket propulsion, which would seek out its target by means of an established search pattern and a homing capability.

PS: Then you got from there back to sea again with a prized command.

FLA: Yes, indeed. I was comfortably located and happy at China Lake when I received an emergency order, I guess it could be called, to proceed as quickly as possible to the Mediterranean and take command of *Roosevelt* then in port at the island of Corfu.

PS: Do you want to mention anything about your jet transitional training?



FLA: Yes, but it was hardly training as such. I had never flown jets up until then, and of course all carrier aviation was jet and had been jet for years. I simply had not been aboard a carrier either as a pilot or ship's officer, as far as that is concerned, except for the duty aboard *Midway* as Executive Officer and while flying from *Saratoga* many years earlier. This is why I have said that the Navy took a tremendous chance on me, because I wasn't a carrier pilot in the modern sense. I had no background on carriers except that of 20 years earlier. I had never been a Flight Deck Officer nor Hangar Deck Officer.

PS: Never been an Air Officer.

FLA: Never been an Air Officer, never an Operations Officer. All I had ever been was Exec of *Midway* and most of that time was in the Navy Yard during overhaul. But apparently this didn't bother somebody too much so I was ordered to Corpus Christi for indoctrination and flight instruction in jet fighters. I was qualified for solo, had about 12 landings on the field, made one cross country and broke the sound barrier by standing the plane of its nose at about 25,000 feet and letting her go to supersonic at Mach 1.01 I guess. I was not checked out for carrier landings and not checked out aboard the carrier. But at least I had flown a jet.

CHAPTER TWENTY

U.S.S. *FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT*, CVA-42, ATLANTIC FLEET
IN COMMAND

October 2, 1957 - July 3, 1958



FLA: We packed up our things and headed for Jacksonville, Florida, pulling a small house trailer that we had used while on the station at China Lake and parked in the mountains of the High Sierra for weekend enjoyment when we might get

away. I must also mention that going with us was our cat, which we found was not the best trailer traveler in the world and she gave us a few hard times on the way, not worth elaborating on here. The first stop was Menlo Park, California, where we left off our oldest son Rick at the Menlo School. West of the Mississippi camping spots were easy to find, but from then on it was a question of parking wherever it looked adequate for the night.

When we arrived in the Jacksonville area, the house hunting started which led us to Atlantic Beach. There we found a beach house which was literally a beach house and made strictly for summer occupancy. There wasn't much time, for I had to get on to the Mediterranean, so anything that appeared to be adequate was welcome. It was our luck that the winter there in Atlantic Beach was the coldest on record. Temperatures down as low as 17 degrees. It turned out to be a rough



winter for my wife and our two kids.

I proceeded on to Naples and was flown to Corfu to join the *Roosevelt*. I was welcomed aboard with a large banner on “vultures’ row” on the bridge structure, and carried out a very abbreviated turnover with Captain Tommy Hopkins, whom I was relieving. The ship was to get under way for flight operations within the next three days.

Corfu is a rather restricted anchorage for a ship as large as the *Roosevelt*, which gave me a bit of trepidation, but I had handled that situation several times in the cruise aboard *Corson* in the Philippines. I called the Chief Boatswain to the cabin and asked him if anyone in his experience had ever cast this ship around on the anchor. He replied no, but he saw no reason why it shouldn’t be done. I warned him to not let me strain the chain, but otherwise we agreed that it was perfectly feasible and quite appropriate under the circumstances. So when the time came to get under way, I called for the Boatswain to weigh anchor to short stay, and I worked the engines against the anchor, turned the ship around and we left port as pretty as you please.

PS: I’d be interested in your recollections of the air operations, since that was much different than what you had experienced back in the *Saratoga*.

FLA: I think that the term “an order of magnitude” denotes a matter of ten times. Shall I say that the difference may be on at least a magnitude of two or three relative to those days. I suppose that we thought that things were pretty complicated on the straight-deck carrier with our propeller-driven aircraft. But it is impossible to compare the tempo of the flight deck operations those days with what I witnessed on *Roosevelt*. I have always marveled over the thought that I had never had any experience on a jet aircraft carrier, and there I was on the bridge in command of the whole operation.

I think that I was fortunate to have aboard Admiral Dutch Duerfeldt, the Carrier Division Commander. There were a couple of times that I knew that he felt it necessary that I not screw things up, for he gave me a few pointers aimed at keeping me out of trouble. Once when we were experiencing bad weather and had recovered the air group and were re-spotting the deck, we were not as fast as we should have been, for



Aboard FDR with Admiral Dutch Duerfeldt, Carrier Division Commander. Here I am selling him a raffle ticket for a VW Bug we had bought in Rome. It would support the ship’s welfare program.



Flight Operations Aboard The FDR

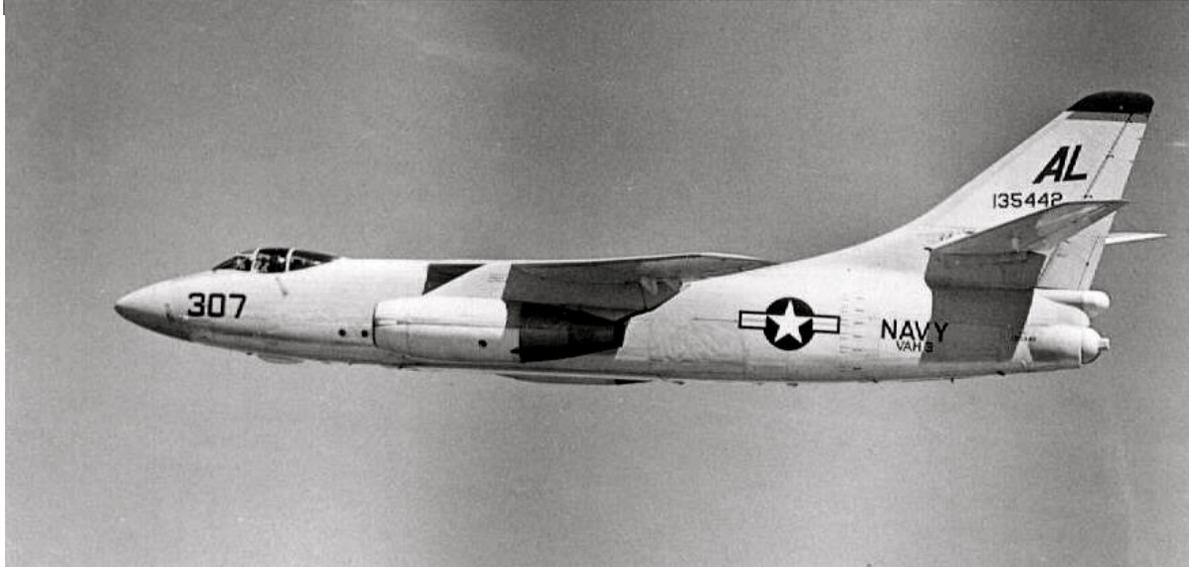
Top Left: F4D Skyray jet fighter approaching touchdown into carrier landing gear.

Top Right: F2H Banshee

Left Below F4D: Douglas AD taxiing on carrier flight deck

Left: F4D Skyray nuclear and conventional bomber.

Below & second row right: An A3D Skywarrior, designed as a nuclear bomber, but used mostly as an airborne tanker.



there were several planes still forward on the flight deck. Admiral Duerfeldt came up from the flag bridge, asked permission to come on the bridge, and told me quietly, “The only Captain who commanded *Roosevelt* that didn’t make Admiral got caught with planes forward on the flight deck in bad weather.” “Yes, sir. Thank you sir.” The Air Officer got the message right away.



Flight Operations: “F9 at the cat”

Another time I got a little sage advice from the Admiral. Although I wasn’t overly pleased with the Air Officer, the rest of the flight deck officers were excellent and the flight deck crew reflected that. However, they had a habit during launching operations of aiming the next aircraft for launching toward the catapult which appeared to be the next available for launch. Frequently however, there was a delay in launching that aircraft so that the catapult on the other side would be ready first. This, of course, required that the aircraft aimed at the delayed catapult had to be maneuvered toward the other catapult, with the obvious loss of time for the launch. The Admiral made it very clear to me that if I would have the Catapult Officer hold the next aircraft in position so that it could be placed on either catapult as it came available, we could save time. Obvious in hindsight, but at least the Air Officer had not recognized the problem, nor had I. I

corrected that, and although I sensed that the

flight deck crew would prefer to continue to do it their way, it didn’t take much from the bridge to convince them who was boss.

I had some problems with Captain Bud Needham, the Chief of Staff. He had just come from a carrier command.

PS: The guy who was kind enough to get you to the *Midway*?

FLA: Yes, the same. He thought that since he was highly experienced, he should coach me on my job, usually using the squawk box between his bridge and the pilothouse. It got to the point where I had to complain to the Admiral telling him that if things didn’t change, we would have a situation where the responsibility would lie somewhere between his bridge and mine. The Admiral agreed with me and saw to it that this practice was changed.

But, here again, you cannot run the flight operations from the bridge. I think that is what got my predecessor into trouble for his quick relief was followed by my coming aboard. I think that he was typical of the “white knuckled” skipper who tried to hold all the reins in his own hands and run things from his bridge. I learned later that Hopkins got into a problem right under the nose of Admiral Cat Brown, Com6thFlt, who was aboard to watch night operations. He lost

a plane over the side after a string of bad piloting. That was the straw that broke the camel's back. I was ordered to relieve him.

So, again, you have to depend on your crew. They knew much more than I did, and I think that they welcomed the change that they were running the flight deck and I wasn't. It's the Air Officer's job to run, not the Captain's.

As our time in the Med progressed, it was quite obvious that our capability improved. Later when we sailed out of the Med for the States, I would have given anything to be just entering with the capability that we had then.

We frequently operated in company with *Randolph* when Com6thFlt brought his two task groups together to operate as a combined task force. We sailed in a circular disposition, normally with the carriers in line abreast at the center of the formation. It was then that the competition began, both of us running the same cycles, a good way to compare the flight operations of the two ships. *Randolph* had a very good reputation and was under command of Lou Kirn. I believe that his predecessor was Dog Smith. Both knew what carrier aviation was all about.

PS: Dog Smith had the *Forrestal*, or maybe it was the *Randolph*.

FLA: I thought that he did have the *Randolph*, but I may be wrong. Anyway, *Randolph* sure kept us on our toes to compete.

PS: I am struck by the inference that the *FDR* was striving to be as good as *Randolph*. In Jimmy Thach's oral history he talked about operating the *FDR* in the Med, and he said that the *Essex*-class carriers could not do as well as the bigger decks, because they didn't have the capability.

FLA: Well, I would certainly defer to Admiral Thach. He knows more about carrier aviation than I ever knew. I expect that he has forgotten more about it than I ever knew. However, my experience was limited to the situation I have described with the two carriers in line abreast operating the same cycles with the same aircraft. It seemed that invariably when we operated like this, that --- maybe this says more about the capability of *FDR* --- *Randolph* seemed to beat us in terms of catapult intervals, and landing intervals.

PS: She was starting at a much higher level.

FLA: I believe that is true. However, I think what we are talking about, if indeed the big-deck carriers were able to outperform the *Essex* class as Admiral Thach is suggesting, may be a result of more "real estate" for handling aircraft during launching and landing operations. As for speed of operations in regard to intervals, the reverse may be true since the *Essex* class operates in a more compact environment. Initially, we were a bit behind the *Randolph*, and I thought that we were doing pretty darn well to eventually end up matching *Randolph*.

PS: Maybe, as for Admiral Thach, it was just his particular expertise rather than the performance of the ship.

FLA: Well, as I said before, you can't run a ship from the bridge. But perhaps with his superior experience he was able to demand a higher performance from the flight deck crew than I could when, to a certain extent, I didn't know what to look for in inefficient performance; all the details that is. I suspect that Admiral Brown recognized that the *FDR* was just not performing when he asked for Hopkins's relief. Apparently the decision to do so came when the A3D Whale was lost over the side. Admiral Brown was aboard, and when it came time to send him back to his flagship by high line, the weather had really gone bad, and discretion would have dictated that he remain aboard over night and be transferred the next morning when the weather was better. Actually, in the high line transfer, they very nearly dumped the Admiral in the water.

PS: It could be that to satisfy Admiral Brown, you had to really take more risks than you should.

FLA: I don't think so. He was a Naval Aviator. He knew what carrier operations were all about, and I don't think that he was demanding any special risks. He just wanted performance. I had a chance to put myself in his shoes sometime later when I had command of the Sixth Fleet. I have to say that he operated boldly and demanded the best performance from the whole command. We did things under Brown that I didn't demand of the fleet. Perhaps had I ended up with as much experience in that job as Brown had, I might have been bolder. He had command at least two years. I was relieved after one year, which gave me only one tour around the Med. I could have tackled that second year with a lot more confidence were I to have had the chance.

PS: For example, I've heard that he would want to go ahead and operate in weather that some people might consider marginal.

FLA: I don't recall any situations like that when I had command of *FDR*. However, I have to say that he had but one objective, and that was to bring the fleet up to the highest capability to perform in wartime. For example he did the "zipping the fly" replenishment operation with the entire fleet operating together. That can be hairy, and there is a lot of room for accidents if the maneuver is not carried out to perfection. That is particularly true doing it at night. Two carriers, a couple of cruisers, a troop transport or two, some supply ships and scads of destroyers all approaching the replenishment group at 25 knots. On the final turn to the base course, still at 25 knots, and all you can see up ahead is a sea of red truck lights. You pray that the flagship's navigation and maneuvering board work is exactly right, and if so, you end up making your approach to your assigned replenishment ship. He didn't do this for the excitement of it. He knew that in wartime replenishing his force is its most vulnerable time. The sooner you can get it over with and the forces separated, the better.

PS: Maybe it's like Ty Cobb managing a baseball team. He expects everybody else to be able to do the things Ty Cobb can do, and they can't.

FLA: I think that I would put it a little differently. He demanded that we work to meet his standards, and that, is the essence of command.



Replenishment at sea.

We were at a slight disadvantage, however, because the ship was named “Franklin Delano Roosevelt”. Admiral Brown had a psychological antithesis to the ship and anything else that had anything to do with *FDR*. Sometimes I suspected that he wouldn’t carry Roosevelt dimes around in his pocket. It has always been my opinion

that he set me up over the catapult ball story.

PS: I haven’t heard about that one before.

FLA: Well, he knew that we were scheduled to go into Rhodes for an in-port period. He called me over to his flagship and told me that the last time he was in Rhodes the mayor promised him a pair of matched catapult balls for his garden back home. Would I please see the mayor while there and pick up the catapult balls. I guess that he knew that there was a big dredging operation going on in the port, and always many catapult balls from the Crusades days come up with the mud.

I made my call on the local officials when we arrived, but failed to see the mayor because he was away from the city. I saw the deputy mayor instead. I told him of my mission. Had he ever heard about it? “No”, he said, with quite a bit of reluctance, but “I will see what I can do”. After some discussion with other officials he told me to go to the port waterfront, pick out a couple of balls that met my requirements, mark them and come back after dark and take them away. He would see that the guards were notified of the deal.



Heavy seas give way before “42’s” Hurricane Bow during an Atlantic gale. Glad we don’t have to replenish today.

I thought that this didn’t sound quite right, since any artifacts of this kind belong to the Greek government. I also knew that Admiral Brown was held in very high regard by the Greeks and had been made an honorary citizen of Greece. Maybe he did have some sort of inside commitment.

I returned to the ship, got a hold of the Boatswain and told him what we had to

do. We went ashore and picked out two balls that appeared to meet Brown's requirements and noted where they were located so that we could find them later after dark. On the way back to the ship, Boats said, "Captain, do you really want to do this?" That woke me up, and I told him, "Of course not"; it didn't make any sense.

Sometime later in a different port, I called on the Admiral to report my failure to carry out his orders. He grunted, and said something to the effect that he wasn't surprised. I still think that he set me up with this, --- another goof-up by the *FDR*. I think he was feeding me, the sheep, to the wolves.

PS: If it worked out all right, he benefitted. If not, you suffered.

FLA: I guess that's about the size of it. In any event, I don't remember that I was ever pushed beyond our capability and into some disaster as a result.

PS: Could just be individual experiences I've heard about.

FLA: I suppose so, particularly since in the oral history work, you have heard them all!

PS: What do you remember about your relationship with CAG (Air Group Commander)?

FLA: Quentin Crommelin¹ was the Air Group Commander, and I think, a very good one. He had grown up in carrier jet aviation and knew his business as I suppose all the Crommelins did. I was smart enough to know that I didn't know as much as he did, and when he recommended against flying, I agreed with him. I never pushed him. I suppose that it would be possible to be taken advantage of in a situation like this. But since he knew that I was depending on him to advise me correctly he would not let me down. Again, another example of letting your people work for you and backing them up.

As far as relations between the ship and the air group, I let my Executive Officer, Bill Lloyd, take care of this, and he did it very well. I think, from that point of view, we had a very happy ship. Bill was an experienced Naval Aviator and a graduate of the test pilot school. He was in a position to demand respect from the air group people. I was disappointed when he failed selection for Captain and his leaving the Navy to work for Boeing-Vertol.

PS: What was the nuclear weapons capability of the ship by that time?

FLA: We had a full load of weapons and proper storage for them and the necessary people to manage them. One of the things that bothered me particularly were certain provisions of the SIOP, the nuclear weapon targeting directive. To abide by these plans, certain aircraft were required to be loaded with nuclear bombs and to be on instant standby. The net result was that the flight deck was essentially locked up by these aircraft on a ready spot. It was difficult, if not

¹ See footnote in Chapter 10 for reference to the Crommelins. Quentin was the youngest of the four brothers. An experienced Naval Aviator and a fine leader of the air group that was embarked aboard *Roosevelt*.

impossible, to respond on short emergency notice with conventional bomb loaded aircraft. All the carriers had this problem, and we all complained about it. We did get relief from this problem, and we were able to have conventionally loaded aircraft on ready alert as well.

I don't know whether this is what happened to Bill Martin, then Commander Sixth Fleet, at the time of the *Liberty* incident where she was being attacked by Israeli boats and aircraft. The way I got the story was that he was ordered to send air support to the *Liberty* and that the aircraft that were launched were loaded with nuclear weapons. Have you heard of this?

PS: I have indeed, and that he got directed from Washington to recall them.

FLA: I don't know whether you want us to put this on tape or not, but the way I heard it was that Admiral McDonald, the Chief of Naval Operations, got on the radio direct to the ship and told Martin to "Get those (f word) aircraft back aboard."

PS: That's essentially the way I heard it.

FLA: Some sailor, who is supposed to have heard the conversation said, "My, he sounds just like a sailor!". I don't know whether this was a disconnect in the communications between Com6thFlt and the carrier, --- I mean that somebody thought that nukes should be launched or whether these were the only aircraft immediately available due to the locked-up deck situation that I have mentioned. It just seems incredible to me that anyone would have --- of course hindsight is always 20/20 --- launched an airplane with an atomic bomb aboard under these circumstances. Perhaps the situation got away from Bill Martin before he understood what was going on.

This is all hearsay to me. Dave Cooney, who was my public affairs officer when I had the Sixth Fleet, was still aboard. He told me once that he had a pretty good idea of what happened, he'd tell me sometime, but I have never had the opportunity to talk to him about it.

PS: Did the ship send out attack planes on low-level navigation simulated nuclear weapon runs?

FLA: Yes. This usually happened when the Sixth Fleet was under NATO and became Striking Force South and the NATO was under Defense Readiness Condition (DefCon Three). Simulated attacks were made in conformance with the SIOP.

PS: Do you have anything else to say about Admiral Duerfeldt's role? He sounds like the ideal guy to have had on board for you.

FLA: There is no question about that! He held my hand when it needed holding, he was friendly, and he didn't heckle me; he helped me more than he hindered me. I felt exceedingly fortunate to have him aboard and not some others I have known. Of course, from his point of view, *Roosevelt* was his flagship and he didn't want to see the ship screw up any more than I did.

I didn't see that as division commander he had much to do. Usually we were not in company with the other carrier in the fleet, except when Brown brought the force together. Then he assumed tactical command.

PS: How much ceremonial role did you have in that role?

FLA: Since it turned out that the division commander didn't have a too active job, there wasn't much ceremonial activity from that. However, since we seemed always to be in company with the fleet flagship, we got a lot of attention from the fleet commander. We were required to house and entertain dignitaries that weren't high enough to be billeted aboard the fleet flag. At least, he would send them aboard *Roosevelt* to witness flight operations. This included news media people.

One day we had aboard from the flagship an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, I think it was, who the Admiral had ordered us to have him back aboard the flagship at a particular hour, around noon meal time I think it was. There was a delay on our flight deck in getting the helo off to the flagship with the Secretary. Maybe five minutes or so after the time Admiral Brown had asked to have him back, he came on the air, for all the fleet to hear, "Youngster (our voice call), this is ____ (I can't remember what Brown's call was), I am continually annoyed at your always failing to keep prescribed schedules." My answer: "Roger, out."

It turned out that the delay was caused by his chief of staff, Lot Ensey, who was talking I guess, with our Admiral. Here, I think, is a typical example of the low regard that Brown had for the *Roosevelt*.



Of course I depended on my Executive Officer, Commander Bill Lloyd, to keep on top of these things which he did very effectively.

PS: You've got this big ship with all these airplanes and thousands of people. How does the CO spend his time?

FLA: Well, you spend most of your time on the bridge. You are either on the bridge or in your sea cabin while you're at sea, because you have to be where the action is on the flight deck. Your entire job is geared to the flight operations. If you are in a fleet formation, which we were on occasion, you have to keep a weather eye on what the Officer of the Deck and the Navigator are doing to maintain position in the formation. If there are no flight operations and you are

essentially just cruising, you can devote interest to other things and let the Officer of the Deck keep things going.

In port, being the Skipper, you are relatively relaxed. Hopefully the Exec is managing things. Of course there is most every day when you put on your “fatherly” hat and try to give a little guidance as well as a little punishment for offenses that require it.

PS: Does this routine at sea create a problem for stamina?

FLA: I suppose that it depends on the personality of the Skipper. If uptight all the time, I’m sure that he’s going to be tired after a long period at sea. This is where you can get some peace of mind when you have confidence that your people are doing their jobs. I don’t believe that there should be any reason, at least in my limited experience, to get ulcers or have a nervous breakdown. The key is to have confidence in your people, and how much confidence you have depends upon to what extent you let them do their job, and train them so that they know what you expect.

I suspect that there are Captains who had that sort of laid-back approach who got caught. I’m sure that it has happened sometime or other. I guess perhaps I was just fortunate either that the events were such that I didn’t get exposed to that or the people in my crews took care of me, and probably as much the latter as anything.

I remember the Utility Wing Commander I had early in my aviation career who used to say, “My seniors mark me, but my juniors make me.” I subscribe to that completely. I think that whatever success I had was because I had good people working for me and I let them do their jobs.

PS: How much night work did you do?

FLA: The air group aboard flew night operations frequently, at least 50% of the time. And this, of course, gets hairy. I mean, this is rough business, particularly for the “nuggets”, the new guys. I am sure that the Flight Surgeons have some sort of an explanation for this, and you have probably heard it from a dozen carrier Captains. The inexperienced pilot, if he starts to get into trouble, say for example, he bolts on his first landing and he has to go around again for a new approach. Maybe he is waved off for a bad approach, or gets a cut for landing but misses. Perhaps as a result of hook skip or something, he has to go around again. Now he’s beginning to clutch a bit. Then comes the fourth pass. This time he is too high and another waveoff. Things always seem to go from bad to worse, and pretty soon you’ve got a problem on your hands and you have to do something with the guy.

He doesn’t seem to want to get aboard, and by this time he has used a lot of fuel. Of course the Air Officer makes a recommendation. Do we “bingo” this guy, send him ashore to the nearest air field if one is available within his range? Then, too, you start to think about having him land into the barrier. Hopefully you get him aboard eventually, or he is able safely to land ashore.

This is exactly what happened, as far as I have been able to learn, to Captain Hopkins, my predecessor. This case involved an A3D during the early days, and the plane and crew were lost

over the side attempting a landing into the barrier. For some of the pilots the plane was flying them, not vice versa.

PS: I've talked to a number of flag officers who said that big-ship command probably was the most satisfying tour, and I wonder if that would be your case.

FLA: I can understand that point of view, and I certainly share it. However, from a personal, private point of view, I think the most satisfying job I had was putting Torpedo Squadron 11 together with 18 kids right out of college, all of them first class youngsters, and fresh out of flight training, and taking them out to Guadalcanal and fighting a bit of the war, although admittedly a comparatively tame operation. So, from a personal leadership point of view, I got as much or more kick out of that as from any duty that I had. But I must admit, to sail *Roosevelt* out of the Mediterranean after taking over the ship in the middle of her cruise and recognizing that by that time we had a first-class operation going (and I think everybody felt this way about it) there was a lot of personal satisfaction in that, no question about it.

PS: Was there any conflict at all with the Soviets in the Med in that era?

FLA: I can't recall that we had any contact with them at all while in the Med aboard *Roosevelt*. There were never any trailers that I recall. This was 1958 that we are talking about. I think that the big buildup of the Soviets there started later. I do remember that when I had command of the Sixth Fleet in 1966-1967 that buildup had already started, and we occasionally ran into a Soviet ship. One day we came across the flagship of the Soviet fleet in the area. He turned toward us, and I asked the skipper of the flagship to turn toward him so that we passed about 1,000 yards abreast. All hands topside on both ships were staring at each other through binoculars. Two ships passing in the day time, is what it amounted to, really. At that time they would anchor in the Gulf of Sidra, off Libya. They did very little cruising around the sea.

PS: Well, that was their pattern for years after that, too.

FLA: Sure. I don't recall any contact with them while I had the *Roosevelt*. In the Sixth Fleet we had to go looking for them.

PS: Did you have communications technicians on board to monitor various listening posts in the Mediterranean?

FLA: I have a little difficulty on this, keeping things sorted out between various jobs. We certainly had them on the Sixth Fleet flagship, and there was a security group on board *Oriskany* when I had command of Carrier Division One. We were overflowed by a Russian Bear on our transit to the western Pacific. The security group aboard was reading the conversations of the Russians while they were overflying us.

PS: You said in your memoir that was actually counterproductive.

FLA: Yes, because the Admiral, me, butted in where he didn't belong. I was getting the information from the security group on what they were saying, and the word that I got was that they were reducing altitude. I mentioned this to the Fighter Director Officer who was monitoring the fighters that we had launched to intercept, and he ordered them to descend. It turned out that they did not reduce altitude. The net result was that we were overflowed by the Bear. He got us cold. It was my fault.



Captain's personnel inspection at sea

PS: What do you remember about inspections, both of the personnel and the ship on board *Roosevelt*?

FLA: I demanded personnel inspections, but not very frequently. I think that personnel inspections are important, but I do remember when I was growing up as an Ensign on the battleship. We had inspections in full dress just about every week. Saturday morning you showed up at quarters with cocked hat, swabs and the swallow-tailed coat, big gold stripe down the

sides of our trousers and all the rest of it, and I just think that's a waste of time and effort. In those days we didn't have much to do. However, personnel inspections are important when carried out at reasonable intervals. They keep the crew on its toes; it keeps the people looking well, and insures a full bag. It should not be run into the ground, which I guess some Captains do. I suspect that on a lot of ships, there are too few inspections and the appearance of the crew reflects it.

We had below-deck inspections every Friday afternoon. I would inspect different spaces in the ship while the Exec and department heads would cover the other areas. Eventually, I think I covered just about all the accessible spaces. That's perfectly standard practice in the Navy, as you well know, and I think that it's something that needs to be done.

PS: Anything to comment on about your relationship with your Officers of the Deck?

FLA: Well, yes. They were all good as far as I was concerned. I had one that was a bit shaky and needed close attention. One of the things that I did was to invite the Air Group Commander to nominate, if he wanted to, aviators to qualify as Officers of the Deck underway. I insisted on a full watch team with at least a Lieutenant who would assume the duties of Officer of the Deck

with one or two more as Junior Officers of the Deck and assistants, and usually a fourth for learning purposes.

I insisted that if they wanted to qualify for top watch, that would be their 100% occupation for the entire underway period at sea. They would not fly in between times. I would tell the CAG (Air Group Commander), "If these officers want to qualify for top watch underway, then it's up to you to see that this is their prime duty for that particular period at sea". He usually gave me three teams from the air group. I crossed my fingers and took the regular watches off and put the aviators to work. Of course, I monitored them pretty closely. It turned out that after ten days at sea some of these teams were as good as the regular ship's officers that they relieved. And I think that this says something else about aviators. Maybe I am biased. But it has always been my experience, in most cases anyway, that the aggressive nature that an aviator has to have in order to survive becomes sort of built in, and he will grab a situation like this and run with it.

The teams that we put together worked out excellently and I was quite confident in them whether we were steaming in formation at night or independently. The people in the air group were enthusiastic about it. I ran into one of the aviators who had gone through this, one that I was particularly impressed with, some years later who told me that this was one of the best things that happened to him as he progressed through his career. He could claim with confidence that he had qualified for top watch underway on a carrier.

I had it on my record that I was qualified for top watch when I was in the air group aboard the *Saratoga*. I stood a few midwatches and that was all. I resolved then that if I ever had the opportunity, I would do better by the aviators.

By and large, I was confident in the regular ship's officers standing deck watches. I remember that we had one who was a little shaky. One night we were joining up with the formation after launching or recovering aircraft, I can't remember which, and were in that tough situation where you might be operating in the opposite direction of the base course of the formation. To get back into formation you are in a tail chase at high speed to get there. It seemed that I was frequently in this situation when around Admiral Brown. He didn't miss an opportunity to tell me what he thought of my performance. The Roosevelt syndrome again, I guess.

Anyway, for some reason, I don't remember what, I happened to be in the sea cabin when I heard the ship's whistle. I jumped to the bridge and saw a merchantman that was privileged passing through the entire formation. We came pretty close to colliding with him. I asked the kid on watch what happened. He said, "Captain, the last time I got into a situation like that I froze. I'm glad that I didn't this time." I said that I was glad he didn't either. He took the proper action. But here was a guy who didn't feel totally confident as the watch officer. So I was a bit back to the situation I had on *Corson* when the young Officer of the Deck told me that he was never confident on watch on the bridge. So that's one requirement for the skipper, to feel confident that he has trained his officers well.

PS: What happened to the regular deck watch officers when the aviators were standing the watches?

FLA: I guess that they did their paper work.

PS: What did you do about communicating with the families back home during the deployment?

FLA: I haven't the vaguest idea. I guess this is another thing that the Exec took care of.

PS: Next question! Did you get involved in any fleet operations, either with the Sixth Fleet or NATO?

FLA: There were occasions when the Sixth Fleet became Strike Force South and under NATO control. I remember one in which we were to transit from one area to another, or some such requirement. As I started out to follow the orders, Admiral Duerfeldt asked me, "What are you going to do to keep from being detected by the other side?" I said that, "I hadn't thought about that." He said, "Well figure something out. For starters why don't you head down to the south coast and join the stream of merchant shipping that transits there regularly? Let's act like you're in wartime conditions and do something maybe to keep from being detected by "enemy" scouts. Try to camouflage your movements." Admiral Duerfeldt holding my hand again!

I have mentioned some of the Sixth Fleet operations such as when doing underway replenishment and carrying out flight operations as an integral part of the task force.

PS: That mobile logistics support has been a hallmark of the Sixth Fleet for 40 years.

FLA: As Sixth Fleet Commander I never did operate the fleet together as a unit, the whole fleet together. I can't tell you now why not. I am sure that it would have been fun. I think that had I had a second year in command, I probably would have reached the point where I would have made this a routine. However, it was always my opinion that it was desirable to keep the carriers separated. We never had them together in the same port except on very special occasions. One was when I was about to be relieved of command and I wanted to get all the Captains and Flag Officers together to wish them well. I have a picture of that, and it is inspiring to see all the ships anchored together in the same roadstead.

PS: Do you have any particular recollections about any visits that you made into foreign ports?

FLA: Not particularly, I suppose, because after all, at least the way I did the job as Commanding Officer, I didn't spend much time ashore. I was pretty much aboard ship all the time. Of course, there was the escapade about the catapult balls that I have already mentioned.

I do remember a Christmas visit in Cannes. The ship was anchored and I was aboard as usual, when the Officer of the Deck's messenger informed me that there was a small boat cruising around the carrier. "There's a Frenchman down there with a woman aboard the boat, who speaks good English and would like to come aboard and see the Captain." I went down to the quarterdeck to find out who it might be. He introduced himself as "The Compte de Pertuis" and asked if he could visit the ship. I agreed and assigned him a guide for the routine foreign visitor tour. I asked that when he was through with the tour, if he would like to come up to the cabin for a cup of coffee. He allowed as how that would be fine.

It turned out that he was from Paris and visiting on the Riviera with this lady who was not his wife. They were delightful people and invited me to come ashore that night and have dinner with them, which I did and had a pleasant evening.

Several years later, while I lived in Santa Fe, I had known a friend whose wife was American, but essentially was French because she was raised in France (and her father, who had been a member of the Lafayette Escadrille, insisted that she be raised as if she were indeed French). There was a woman visiting her from Paris who turned out to be the Contesse de Pertuis and the wife of the guy that had come aboard *Roosevelt* many years earlier. Neither Mrs. Kerr nor the Countess really believed my story, but I gave them enough details that they finally agreed that my story must be true in spite of the coincidences involved. Every once in a while you realize how small the world is. Not a very significant experience, but it is the only one that comes to mind.

PS: Were your cases of discipline essentially comparable to what you'd had when you were in *Midway*?

FLA: Much the same, as I recall. I don't remember any particular problems discipline-wise. We had a pretty good ship, and I think that the crew was happy with their lot. I suppose that there were a few routine AWOLs and things like that, but I tended to be fairly generous. I would listen to the youngster's story, and if it made sense, we usually ended up with a warning. If he came around the second time for the same thing, then you get a little more severe. But I always felt that these youngsters were responsible. If they had a good excuse for having a problem, I always thought that that's worth taking into consideration. I don't recall any court-martial cases. The guys handled themselves pretty well ashore. And I think that was typical of all the sailors in the Mediterranean. They recognize that they are on display and that they are ambassadors from their country in a foreign land. I can't think of anything else that is worth commenting on in this regard.

PS: Could you detect the morale of the crew improving as the ship's performance improved?

FLA: Oh, I think so. That's a little hard to detect, but I think that if you see an improvement in performance on the flight deck, for example, you should be confident that the people are happy. I am sure that when the officers found that they indeed had a job to do and were expected to do it, that the Captain was depending on them to do their jobs, there is usually a definite improvement in how they respond.

I recall an incident when the ship was visiting Salonika. As usual, the carrier was scheduled to take a break in the port visit to go to sea to exercise the air group. Usually the routine visits were of about ten days' duration, so in the middle of the period, the ship and air group needed exercising. As I have mentioned earlier it was a practice of Admiral Brown, Com6thFlt at the time, to invite military and news people from the local area to go aboard to witness the operations. And so it was on the visit into Salonika.

When we first entered the port, I had the Combat Information Center (CIC) navigate us into port and to our prescribed anchorage. It so happened on the day of the at-sea flight

operations with the visitors aboard, on our return to port we were confronted with a heavy fog. I had the choice of anchoring until the weather cleared or proceed into port. The approaches to Salonika are delta-like with very little except the channel buoys for navigation purposes and it must be at least twenty miles to reach the port anchorages. I called the CIC and told them that they were to navigate us into port and to our anchorage, just as they had done before. This time it was for keeps. We proceeded into port with no problems, and CIC gave me the word when to drop anchor. In the morning we were but 250 yards from our assigned anchorage. They had done a first-class job and they knew it, and I let them know that I knew it too. I believe in situations like that, when you permit people to do the jobs that they have been trained for, they really respond. And that breeds good morale.

PS: Did you communicate with the crew as you had with the crew of the *Corson*?

FLA: No, it just was not practicable, the ship was too large. I would, on occasion, go on the general announcing system --- "This is the Captain speaking," sort of thing to try to communicate, and I suppose with some success, but that in no way substituted for the direct approach of "All hands up and aft". I tried to keep the officers informed of our plans and commitments and asked them to pass the word on to the crew. Operations in the Sixth Fleet were pretty much routine because a schedule is published by Com6thFlt and it is widely known in the fleet what that schedule was to be.

PS: You had a lot of experienced talent working for you. I'm thinking of a man I interviewed, Chief Warrant Officer Cecil King. He'd been a yeoman, had over 20 years of experience, he'd worked in the front office of the CNO, so you don't have to worry about a lot of things.

FLA: That's for sure. He worked in the personnel office for me aboard *Midway*. Was he aboard *Roosevelt* as well?

PS: He was aboard both. I don't know if it was the same time you were in command.

FLA: I certainly remember him well when I was Exec of *Midway*. He was such a capable guy, a big tall, good-looking individual and exceedingly capable. Again I was blessed by capable people who could, and would, keep me out of trouble.

I was again fortunate in *FDR* to have a Chief Warrant Officer for a writer. Mike Degnan. He wasn't exactly in a class with King, but he was excellent at PR things. He had a great organizing capability.

PS: Anything else you remember about King? In his interview he said that the key to his success was to make sure that you never had any unpleasant surprises. If there was a problem coming up, he'd warn you in advance so that you could deal with it.

FLA: Well, of course that's the way any good sailor or officer should work, and I am sure that is why he later got to be so successful. It wasn't just anyone who could be the administrative

assistant to Dr. Glenn Seaborg, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Maybe we can say he had good training!

PS: Anything else to say about the ship?

FLA: The only thing that I can think of that we haven't talked about has to do with taking the ship into the New York Navy Yard after our deployment in the Med.



PS: That's a good point. What was accomplished during the time in New York?

FLA: Well, I don't know about that, because I was detached immediately after we arrived and turned command over to a new Captain, Ralph Shifely, a class mate of mine.

The fun part was taking the ship up the Hudson River, under the Brooklyn Bridge and into the Navy Yard. For a ship the size of the *FDR* there isn't much clearance under the bridge. It requires a bit

of calculating; knowing your exact draft and the exact state of the tide when the transit is to be made. If things work out right, you have no more than 15 or 20 inches between the pig stick² and the bottom of the bridge. Temperature makes a difference also because the bridge contracts and expands so that the height above the water varies as much as 15 inches. It is hard to believe that these things become so important, but otherwise you might leave something on the bottom of the bridge. Even after all that, you can't help wonder as you approach the bridge whether you have taken everything into account and you will actually clear as you pass under. It's that close.

PS: Did you have to take any radar antennas in?

² The "pig stick" is a very small flagstaff lashed to a halyard at the very topmost point on the mast structure. When there is no admiral aboard, as indicated by the absence of the "Admiral's Flag" flying, the ship's Commission Pennant" is flown from the "pig stick".

FLA: No, because there were none that high up. It was the very highest point on the mast that mattered, the pig stick, I think.

We got into the Navy Yard in good shape and the work started immediately. I hadn't been there more than a week before --- it was the weekend of the Fourth of July --- I was detached and headed for the Naval Academy.

I should note that earlier, on our return to Mayport from the Med cruise, Admiral Kenny Craig met me there. He was at the time Deputy Chief, Bureau of Naval Personnel. He told me then that I was to be ordered to the Naval Academy as Commandant of Midshipmen. I asked him, "Since I seem to have had a relatively successful cruise aboard *Roosevelt*, I thought that maybe I had as good a chance as anyone for selection to flag rank." He said, "That's probably so, but if you are selected, you'll stay at the Academy just as Charlie Buchanan and several others have."

Well, it didn't turn out that way, as we were to find out later.



Birthday cake January 24, 1958 on the flight deck while at sea. The officer to the right is my Executive Officer, Commander Bill Lloyd. Of course it was his idea that my birthday should be recognized on the flight deck before the crew.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY - SHORT TOUR

COMMANDANT OF MIDSHIPMEN

August 1958 - September 1958

OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, ATOMIC ENERGY DIVISION

September 1958 - June 1960



Piped overboard for the last time - on to the Naval Academy

PS: So you were detached from command of U.S.S. *Roosevelt* and moved to the Naval Academy to take over the job of Commandant of Midshipmen.

FLA: Yes, I was detached from the ship on the third of July, I think it was. We had been in the yard for several days because Mike Degnan organized a big ship's dance in one of the hotels in New York for the crew and for the dependents who had arrived in the area while the ship would be in the yard. We had carried a load of automobiles belonging to the ship's company from Mayport to New York, so there were quite a few of the dependents in the area.

In any event, I was detached and my wife and three boys traveled by auto to New York. My wife and the kids had driven up from Atlantic Beach and we drove on to Annapolis.

I reported in at the Academy to relieve Captain Al Shinn. He told me that I had a choice to make. He had already

promoted money to have the Commandant's quarters refurbished, but the work had been delayed until my arrival. I could move in as the house was or take temporary quarters on Porter Road. I chose the latter and we moved aboard. I felt that if they had the money, we had better use it, or we might lose it.

About three weeks passed, as we were settling in, when I received a phone call from the Superintendent. He asked me if I had seen the selection list for Admiral and I said that I had. He told me that they wanted to see me in Washington and that I should report to Admiral Nappy Kivette. I did, and he said to me, "I hope that you haven't unpacked yet over there at

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Annapolis.” I said that I had, but he said that they were moving me to Washington. He told me that the selection board had taken me with the proviso that I be put to work in the atomic energy field. My selection was early, in the second group in the class to be selected. Tom Moorer , my classmate and later the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Charlie Duncan were in the first group. Admiral Kivette told me that I was to take over the Atomic Energy Division, OP-36 in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. It turned out that before I got out of that job it was transferred from Operations to Research and Development and designated OP-76. So I participated in the establishment of OP-36 and presided over its demise, in name at least.

So that is why I didn't conform to the past practices of being frocked as Admiral and stay on as the Commandant.

PS: I think this might be a useful point, with all these disruptions to your family, to just discuss the kinds of sacrifices a Navy family makes.

FLA: Yes, I agree. I think that my family represents a good example. If one concludes that packing up the household effects and moving out as one move, and unpacking and moving in as another move, we did it six times in eleven months. Something like this has to be a disruption in family life, but the kids get used to it. My youngsters were teenagers or just prior to teens, and they had become accustomed to the moves. In this particular case, however, we were anxious to have them exposed to the Naval Academy environment, which of course, we lost. But I am not sure that this would have made any difference. None of the kids seemed to be headed toward the

Naval Academy. Two of them ended up in the Navy; Dave a Naval Reserve Captain and Steve enlisted, and Rick ended up as a Captain in the Air Force. I don't think that our experience is any different than that of all Navy families as they move about the world from assignment to assignment.

PS: But it is very different from the civilian's experience, where Dad comes home every night.

FLA: Oh, no question about that. I don't think that people begin to understand what a service family, and particularly the wife, goes through. My wife, I think, did her job as a naval officer's wife in a first-class fashion. One of the things that interested me was that on the long deployments (in those days we were deploying for as long as nine months into the Pacific and Atlantic tours of duty), while the children were growing up, my wife never let the kids forget who their father was. There was none of that business of, "Who's that man that just arrived in our house?", when you get back from a long absence. It's, "Dad is home!" I think that this is a very important function for the wife of any service man, which my wife performed exceptionally well. She was very flexible. "Okay, we move, we move. We pack and we unpack." As a matter of fact, the kids got into the same frame of mind, "Well, where are we going next time and when? I'm getting sand under my feet and want to keep moving." It broadens the children, there's no question about that. They go to different schools, and they have to get used to new friends. Whereas I suppose, that they're disappointed to lose the friends they have, they look forward to meeting new people. It's a special life; there's no question about it. They say, "The service, like the clergy, is a way of life." Certainly a service wife has a special responsibility and an especially hard and trying job. I don't think the general public has any concept of this.

PS: Did you take them (the families) on board ship to give them an appreciation for what you were involved with?

FLA: We tried to do that as much as possible. However, for the families to actually get aboard for operations at sea, that is difficult. Sometimes commands have "family day on board" when the ships put to sea for a day. Otherwise, they can only visit when ships are in the home ports.

As for later assignments, when I had command of the antisubmarine warfare carrier division and then the attack carrier division, I was away from home the entire time. The attack carrier division was in the Pacific and the ASW division in the Atlantic.

When the children become teenagers, you want to try to keep them in the schools where they are, in so far as possible. This is why later, so much of the time, my family didn't follow me around. For example, while I was in CNO we had bought a house in Washington, and instead of going to Quonset Point, the home port of the ASW flagship, my wife and children stayed there. They were in school there. The same situation happened when I had the carrier division in the Pacific. I moved to San Diego, the home port of the flagship. Finally, however, when I was ordered to Paris to the European Command, we had enough warning that my wife was able to put our house in Washington on the market and actually negotiated the sale of the house, stubbornly holding out until she got the price she was asking. When I got there from San Diego, she had

sold the house and we were free to go together to Europe. It was just a question of packing up our stuff, putting some in storage and sending the rest to France.

The Navy wives --- the service wives --- I don't think that a Navy wife is any different than the Army and Air Force wives when it comes to what we have been talking about, were always on the move. Perhaps there is a little difference in their lives, since it is my impression that in the Army and Air force they are more apt to find themselves in quarters more frequently than naval officers. As far as I can recall now, we were assigned quarters only three times. One was what they laughingly called quarters in Patuxent River, a very fine set of quarters at China Lake, and then Maryland House at Norfolk, which was only so-so at best.

So the rest of the time you have to scratch gravel finding a place to live. The places you rent are usually dirty, and you have to clean them up before you feel comfortable moving in. I feel like for 35 years we cleaned up a lot of other people's messes around the world. The wives take whatever facilities are available in rental houses and make the best of it, including kerosene stoves as we did in Los Alamos. The one that we had there is a typical example.

You remember that most of the kerosene stoves that you have ever heard of had a knob that when you turned it, the wick went up and down so that you could light it or turn it off. The one we had in Los Alamos during the "atomic age", I think it was either a two or three burner, had knobs that when you turned them to turn the stove on, it simply let kerosene into the sump where the bottom end of an asbestos wick would be submerged. The wick was fixed and when the kerosene was soaked into the asbestos wick, after about fifteen minutes, you could light the thing off. Slowly the flame would work around the wick and you had a flame that you could cook over. When you wanted to turn the stove off, you closed the knob that stopped the flow of the kerosene into the sump and the flame finally burned out. Pretty soon there is not enough kerosene to support combustion, but it smolders and gives off a smelly smoke until it finally dies out. That was the kind of stove that my wife cooked with at Los Alamos.

As you might expect, most people there bought electric roasters and hot plates as substitutes. However, the wiring in the houses was fused for light loads and the accepted procedure was to put a penny behind the fuse which, of course, made the fuse useless, but the electrical equipment worked in spite of it.

Where I lived in Los Alamos we were assigned quarters, pre-fabricated plywood houses, maybe about thirty feet square. It was divided up into three small bedrooms and a living room/dining room arrangement and a kitchen. Located in the center of the living room was a kerosene heater. The kitchen was equipped with a stove that I have described and a kerosene water heater. Once, when my wife was trying to light it, the trapped vapor exploded and blew her halfway across the room. I don't know whether it blew up or just puffed and she jumped halfway across the room. There were no injuries. Lesson learned!

One of our kids was in diapers at the time, and these were the days of the cloth diapers that needed to be washed daily. We had a Bendix washing machine, old-fashioned type, which was bolted to the floor. When that thing was loaded with diapers the machine would take off vibrating so it would shake the whole house.

The house had one door. It seemed that I was rarely at home with the weekly trips to Wendover and frequent officer messenger type trips, so my wife had to get along by herself a large part of the time. Once she was snowed in for four days. Those were the days of gasoline

rationing, five gallons a month. She was able to make not more than two trips a month to Santa Fe.

My middle son, David, then not yet two, came down with pneumonia. I was in the Pacific delivering the letter to Admiral Nimitz about the atom bomb and scouting for the ground on Tinian for the bomb operations there. The doctors on the hill advised my wife to get him off the hill or we would lose him for sure. At that time one of the doctors, an Army radiation specialist at the time, but basically a pediatrician, planned to leave Los Alamos on leave. He delayed his departure until my wife could arrange to go east by train to New England, her parents' home. He went with her to take care of the boy. Of course, she was traveling in a compartment. The doctor went into the compartment every six hours, day and night, to give David penicillin shots. The doctor got off at Buffalo. A kindly old lady in the car nearby said to Rick, my oldest boy who was then about four, "Well, I guess you must be sorry to see your Daddy leave you, aren't you?" To which he replied, "He's not my Daddy," which I suppose shocked this kindly old lady.

PS: Raised a few eyebrows?

FLA: Yes, I suppose, but David survived. There is another incident worth noting that took place at this time. Recall the fact that gasoline rationing precluded much travel by car, so my wife scraped up the money for the train tickets and Pullman and gave it to a WAC, the Women's Army Corps, through some administrative channel, to go to Santa Fe to purchase the tickets. Somehow, we never learned why, the money disappeared. My wife had to borrow the money from Captain Parsons. Immediate cash was not usually available in those days. The loss was around \$800.00.

My wife was quite upset because Parsons refused to send a message to me about the temporary move and David's condition. He told her that, "There is nothing he can do about it. No, I am not going to bother him with this news."

Later, after I had returned to Los Alamos from Tinian, I had orders to report to Washington. Our furniture and things were packed up by a local moving company, and in this case manned by local Indians. When we arrived in Washington and unpacked, we found that everything was accounted for except all of our kitchen knives and the Maria Indian pots which she had made personally for my wife. Maria pots are now nearly priceless.

So that's a sample of what service life is like and the trials and tribulations that service wives have to put up with.

PS: Well, one difficulty that Navy wives have that Army and Air Force wives don't, is that ships deploy.

FLA: Yes, that is certainly true, but I know that there are "unaccompanied" assignments in the Army and Air Force, possibly as long as a year. Long assignments, two or three years, are usually "accompanied" --- by the family, that is.

PS: Well, we got you to Washington. What sort of reaction does one get on being selected for Rear Admiral?

FLA: I guess that to answer that question I have to go back to the conversation that we had that approached introspection more than anything else. Then I told you that I sometimes wonder about myself, why I don't seem to get excited about these sorts of things. I was gratified, of course. This is the goal most of us set for ourselves. I was particularly gratified to have been selected in the second group of my class. Tom Moorer and Charlie Duncan were selected first; then George Miller and I were in the second group. We were about three years ahead of the normal progression. I had some reservations --- well, I don't know that I had some reservations or not, probably did. Let's put it this way. I felt afterwards, after being selected, that this forced me to miss a lot of duties that I should have had to make me a better flag officer. I had lost out on the Naval War College. I missed out on the National War College. I didn't get to go to any of the advanced service colleges. The only one that I did go to was the Naval Postgraduate School, but that was earlier and arrived in proper timing. I lost the opportunity to be a chief of staff for a carrier division commander. So, whereas I ended up being selected at a younger age, and therefore, theoretically at least, I had a longer period to serve as a flag officer, I paid the price in not having professional jobs which I should have had to prepare me for flag command. I did work on Kelly Turner's staff, but in a relatively unimportant job and in the rank of Commander, and I didn't have any operational duties to be responsible for. I wasn't preparing staff papers. I have felt that there was a big gap in my service. For example, I didn't consider that I was well prepared for the job as Deputy Chief of Staff of the U.S. European Command. I don't feel that I was particularly prepared to be the Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of the Atlantic Fleet, which is a glorified title for the Chief of Staff. I had never participated in the nitty-gritty work of being on a staff. I never felt comfortable in this sort of duty. I always wanted to be an operator.

PS: You have to play the hand that you're dealt, and that's what you did.

FLA: Well, that's right. When they threw me out of Washington after the TFX debacle, the Navy didn't send me to Siberia. They put me in the operational business, and that was just great.

PS: Before we get to that, you went to the Atomic Energy Division of OpNav, and you mentioned earlier that you worked for Admiral Griffin and Admiral Beakley. I'd be interested in your recollections of both those officers.

FLA: Admiral Griffin was the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Operations). Admiral Beakley was a Vice Admiral and had the DCNO job before Griffin. He had come from Commander Seventh Fleet in the Pacific and had a reputation from that job. Frankly, I had a difficult time with both. I later worked with Griffin in my Sixth Fleet duty when he was Commander Allied Forces South, a NATO command. When Allied Forces Europe were placed under NATO command, the Sixth Fleet became Striking Force South, at which time I would be reporting to Griffin. However, Griffin made it clear to me that since he was the senior U.S. naval officer in the Mediterranean, he expected me to keep him informed at all times regarding Fleet

operations. As the same time as Commander Sixth Fleet I reported to my boss, Admiral Thach, who was Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Europe. Needless to say, I owed him my first allegiance and sometimes I failed to keep Griffin happy.

Beakley was just hard-nosed and difficult to get along with. I have heard that this is not peculiar to me. My problem with him came about, again, from his desire to be kept informed of what I was doing. Since this was largely atomic matters, of which he knew nothing and for which I don't recall that he had the necessary security clearance, I could never figure out a satisfactory channel to him. First, I would try talking to him, and that didn't seem to be effective or what he wanted. Then I started bombarding him with informative memoranda, telling him what I thought he ought to know. He would make some such remarks as "What are you sending all this stuff up to me for?" Admiral Beakley was living up to his reputation.

I have often thought since, that maybe I was the problem, that I didn't know how to work in the staff and administrative areas. Remember, I have complained many times in this interview that I missed out on a lot of duty which would have better prepared me for flag rank by having been selected for promotion early.

PS: Well, he was rather a severe person anyway, wasn't he?

FLA: Yes, I would agree with that. Of course you have to remember that he had a very difficult situation at home, because his wife had had a stroke and was essentially in a vegetative state. I remember calling on him, and she was sitting in a chair, but completely out of it, at least from any external evidence. I don't know that this had any bearing on his daily demeanor or not.

PS: I wouldn't be surprised. I think that he later shot himself when his second wife died, so that must have been a very important thing to him and a big distraction.

FLA: That's right, I am sure. I understand that before his first wife finally died he had been in love for some time with the woman that he later married. The way that I understood it was, that when the second wife died, he committed suicide the next day simply out of grief. I can understand this. When I think of that, frankly, I kind of run that by myself right now. If something like that happened to me, it would be a terrible blow, because I think that I have finally found someone that I really want to live with for the rest of my life. Yes, I can understand how this might go.

I have heard some stories about when Admiral Beakley had command of the Seventh Fleet, which I suppose you have already heard about here. Maybe not stories, but that he was a pretty hard guy to shave at that time.

PS: Yes.

FLA: As far as Admiral Griffin is concerned, we got along pretty well. It was not to be for very long, for when Admiral Hayward became OP-07, Deputy for Research and Development, OP-36 was transferred to his organization and changed to OP-76.

PS: Do you think that was a good move?

FLA: I don't think that it made much difference either way, frankly, because we continued to get into the operational aspects, particularly as regards the movement of nuclear powered ships which continued to keep me in the game with the "Kindly old Gentleman", Admiral Rickover. I can give you volume, book and verse on my experiences with Admiral Rickover, during the period as OP-36 and as OP-76, which were uncomfortable, to say the least. He was irascible, I guess is one word for it. He was the most blasphemous man I have ever known. His language, in my opinion, was uncalled for --- not aimed at me in particular, but largely aimed at the hierarchy that wanted to move nuclear-powered ships into various harbors for reasons that, in his opinion, were not rational.

When OP-03 planned to make such a move, it was my job to bundle up the charts of the particular harbor, the tide tables and any other information that I could find such as Sailing Directions. Then I would have to familiarize myself with the tides so that it would be possible to make some guess as to the tidal flushing characteristics of the harbor. This, of course, had to do with what might happen in the event of a radioactive spill from the ship or submarine. I would take these documents to the Admiral prepared to make a case for the Chief of Naval Operations for the planned movement.

First, I would have to discuss the matter with the Admiral's civilian assistant, Mr. Rockwell. I was never sure that he totally understood the oceanographic aspects of the plan, but in any event he would take the stuff in to the Admiral to talk it over with him, I suppose. Then I would be called into the inner sanctum to make the case for the operators. It was here that the language took off, largely telling me how stupid everyone over in the Pentagon was, and didn't they realize that one spill would result in all nuclear powered ships being berthed 50 miles to sea. He would tell me that it would be necessary to have the Reactor Safeguard Committee study the matter and that he would let me know of their decision. I have often wondered if these things ever reached the committee, but maybe they did. In any event, if my memory serves me, each request was approved. I don't know whether this procedure is still in effect or not. I should hope not.

I have often thought later that I would like to have had a pocket tape recorder with me to make a record of these "adventures", just for posterity. It was really quite revealing of the man.

Then there was another experience that shows a lot about him. One day Admiral Rickover called me up and told me that the Navy was in very deep trouble as far as the operation of nuclear-powered ships was concerned, and that I was going to have to do something about it. This was just after Admiral Strauss had left the Atomic Energy Commission to become Secretary of Commerce, a job for which he was not confirmed by the Senate. In his new capacity, Strauss called Rickover and demanded to know what he, Rickover, was doing to protect his, Strauss's, harbors from contamination by the Navy's nuclear-powered ships.

Rickover told me to have a meeting set up that afternoon between him, the Chief of Naval Operations, the operational deputy and anybody else "over there" who had anything to do with moving these ships. I said, "Aye, Aye, sir, I'll try."

You don't just tell the Chief to come to a meeting. I did get the Vice Chief and Admiral Griffin, I think it was then, and the nuclear submarine and ship operational people. There were about 20 people at the meeting.

Admiral Rickover started off by saying that the Navy had to face the fact that operating nuclear ships was hazardous and that the Secretary of Commerce had to be satisfied that the Navy knew what it was doing in this regard and provided adequate instructions for these ships' movements in and out of "his" ports. Then he said, "I have prepared a CNO Instruction on the subject which I recommend be adopted and published to the fleet." It said what you would expect it to say, and there was essentially no discussion. Of course, all present were completely familiar with the Admiral's way of operating. When the meeting broke up, there was the usual friendly banter with laughter between people who might not have seen one another for awhile before they went back to work.

I left the room ahead of the Admiral and waited for him in the corridor. When he came out, his face was livid. "See", he said, "they're smirking at me, they're smirking at me!" I tried to calm him down, and we went our separate ways. This is an example of one side of the man, maybe always there, but not often witnessed. It usually, I suspect, was the other way around, with him on the offensive.

Another incident might be worth touching on involving Rickover. When I was ordered to Norfolk as the Deputy Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff, Atlantic Fleet, my Aide, unbeknown to me, had prepared framed photographs of all the ships that I had commanded and the flagships that I had served in. They were hung on the wall in my office.

One day Admiral Rickover was in the headquarters and came into my office to chat, I suppose. He noticed the pictures on the wall and took particular interest in the dates that were shown as to my tours of duty in each. He said, "Do you mean to tell me that you had command of *Franklin D. Roosevelt* for only eight months?" I said, "Yes, that's right." "A carrier division for only a year, and the Sixth Fleet for only 11 months?" Then he said, "Do you mind if I write down these dates?" I said, "No, go ahead." He did, and then said, "The next time I talk to the congressional committee, I'm going to talk to them about this. This is ridiculous, you can't run a Navy like this!" Of course, nothing ever came of it. I guess this was just Rickover at work again! But to give him his due, I probably hold the record for short tours in my lifetime in the Navy.

PS: Of course, he was at the other end of the spectrum, having one job for 30-some years.

FLA: Yes, I suppose this did influence his ideas of how the Navy should operate.

But to get back to your question about moving us from operations to research and development, I got along quite well with Hayward. Here again, I had some very good people working for me. It was a small group, and I think that we covered our responsibilities quite well.

PS: Maybe you could sketch in some detail just what it was you were supposed to do.

FLA: Well, I'll give you one example, and this again bears on Admiral Rickover. They were opening up McMurdo Sound in Antarctica. Maybe it had already been established, I forget the

dates exactly. But in any event, there was a move afoot to provide the base with some portable nuclear power sources. There was development underway to make them available for advanced-base operations. Admiral Rickover had one foot in the Atomic Energy Commission and one in the Navy, responsible for nuclear power. He was the one to whom I should talk about it. As soon as I broached the subject to him, the Admiral was all over me, “This is my business, not yours.” I had better stay in my own cabbage patch!

However, should portable nuclear power units ever be developed there would be a need for trained operators, and this was my business. So, without reference to Rickover, I started negotiating with Oak Ridge to set up a training school for these people, the potential operators for these advanced-base power plants.

It wasn’t long before I got a call from Rickover. “What the hell are you doing down at Oak Ridge setting up a school for operators?” I told him that there would be a need for operators and it was our responsibility to get them. Then he told me that he was going to talk “to Congress” about me and that I would regret ever getting into his business. Again, as far as I was ever aware, this was just another “Rickoverism”. In any event, we finally got some schools started.

We also impacted with OP-06, the plans and programs people, particularly Tom Connolly who had some responsibility for weapons planning, numbers, storage and tactical uses.

PS: Did you have any ties with the Polaris development program?

FLA: Certainly, Admiral Hayward was directly involved with supporting Admiral Raborn¹ in any way that he could. I don’t recall that I personally was involved, but that may be a slip in memory.

PS: What about the development of nuclear power plants for the surface ships that were coming along?

FLA: Here again, Hayward was dealing directly with Rickover. However, recall that Rickover had two hats for this, one in the commission and one in the Navy, BuShips. So he was sitting astride both parts of it and largely running it himself, and woe unto anybody that stuck his nose in his business.

PS: Did you have any weapons development during that period?

FLA: I think that we have covered that about as well as I can remember.

PS: Well, of course, the Polaris missile was a nuclear weapon.

¹ Rear Admiral Raborn was the first director of the new Polaris submarine program. He was given top priority in the Navy much as General Groves was given the same in the Army during the war. The Polaris submarine program was to become the Navy’s contribution to the nuclear weapon “triad”, the national nuclear deterrence program. Submarines on station at sea armed with ballistic missiles that could be launched from the submarine while submerged. The missiles would be fitted with nuclear warheads.

FLA: Yes, of course, but Raborn and the Polaris organization was working directly with the laboratories, Los Alamos and Livermore, on the development of the nuclear warhead. Raborn's first Technical Director was L.T.E. Thompson, and I know that the matter of the warhead for the missile was a direct responsibility of his. Remember that the Polaris program was set up as a total organization, responsible for all parts of the program, and I think that that is the principal reason the program was the success that it was, and was completed in the time it was.

My memory is pretty poor when it comes to many of these details, and that is precisely why I am dragging my feet on writing some kind of so-called book about my experiences. I believe that the things that I can remember are largely superficial. Any book that I could write would be one full of anecdotes and not real history. Of course, I could get off my butt and go to Washington and roam the archives and do the required research to produce a factual document. That would be a major job and take both money and time. I know that there are a lot of papers available that would make such a book a useful one². Also, unfortunately, I never kept a diary or a journal where I could have so easily recorded so much important stuff. Therefore, to do this oral history is certainly the next best thing. With a journal at hand, I would really write a book. But this is the next best, I am sure.

PS: Beakley or Griffin, neither one, was a nuclear weapons specialist, so they must have relied on you a good deal.

FLA: Yes. Even as late as we are now talking about, there weren't many people in the Pentagon who had much background with the weapon programs. I remember that Tom Connolly was in Plans and Programs, OP-06, but he was involved in planning. When it came to any technical background, I guess I was about the only one of contemporary rank for them to call on. Neither of them put their finger in my pie, and this is why I tried to keep them advised of what was going on in my areas of responsibility, without much success.

PS: Is that a way of saying that they weren't interested?

FLA: I am afraid I have to say that is probably the case.

PS: And that was only a part of a lot of other things that they were concerned with.

² Once, while in Washington in the mid-1990s, Ericie and I visited the National Archives with the intent of finding out just what would be involved in a detailed search for and examination of papers that I had written which might be available and from which an accurate story of the period could be made. We were given "Researchers' Credentials", which made us legitimate customers in the Archives. I told the attendant that I would like any papers written by me while I was the Executive Secretary of the Military Liaison Committee to the Atomic Energy Commission during the years 1945 and 1946. After waiting for about an hour, the attendant arrived with a file of maybe six documents, none of which turned out to be of any interest or even pertinent. From that we learned that to collect the evidence that I would need to be able to write a book that would be backed up by actual documentary evidence of the times, would require hours and hours in the Archives and many weeks living in Washington, neither of which did I feel up to.

FLA: That is certainly true and probably explains their lack of direct interest.

PS: But the proviso that your selection board put on you going right into this work suggests that there was a fairly urgent requirement for your services in that area.

FLA: Obviously Navy operations bumped into continuing requirements for work in the nuclear field. This was more than ten years after the war, and nuclear power was well established and surface ships were being provided with bombs, particularly the aircraft carriers. However, we must not forget that the joint organization, the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project (AFSWP), was well established by this time and had strong Navy participation. Most of the postwar experienced people were pretty much assigned there.

PS: You have mentioned that Eli Reich was quite a help when you got into the budgeting area.

FLA: I had been in OpNav for quite awhile by this time and was slated to go to sea sometime soon. I was relieved of OP-76, by Joe Jaap, if I recall correctly, and was very much in limbo as a result. I was given the job as head of the R&D budgeting office when its head, Rear Admiral Willie Coates, was relieved or retired, I can't remember which. It had an OP number, but that too escapes me now. But the strength of the office was Captain Eli Reich. This was an entirely new field for me and, needless to say, I let Eli continue to do just as he had been doing. We had many sessions together working out the budget for R&D, but he was the real responsible person. He was an outstanding officer and knew his budget business from start to finish. I was glad to see that he was selected for promotion to flag rank when the time came and further promotion to Vice Admiral, I believe.

To show you how much I was in limbo at this time, I was selected to escort Admiral Halsey's body from New York to Washington, where his funeral service was to be held in the National Cathedral.

The only other time that I got into budget work was when I was Assistant Chief of Bureau of Naval Weapons, but here again, I was only on the fringes. Captain Bob Townsend was the comptroller for the bureau and it was through him that I worked to get the R&D part of the bureau's work funded. He was hard headed and fair. Of course I had experienced budget people in my part of the bureau working directly with Bob Townsend.

PS: Did it really require a specially trained flag officer in that OP-36 job?

FLA: Your question indicates to me that possibly I haven't been very successful in describing the work of that office. But to respond to your question, I think that the answer is definitely yes. Admiral Rickover would eat anybody alive that couldn't talk at least some of his language and who did not have a recognizable background in the nuclear business.

PS: Were transportation and storage and handling of nuclear weapons part of your operation?

FLA: This is an area of the program that was taken over by AFSWP immediately after the war. They had complete control when weapons were turned over to the services by the Atomic Energy Commission. BuShips was responsible for the installation of bomb-handling equipment in the carriers. AFSWP trained the service teams responsible for the weapons when in service custody.

PS: Did you have any contact with Admiral Burke in that job?

FLA: Not very much. I can recall one incident that stays clearly in my memory. Admiral Burke invited, from time to time, flag officers to his quarters on the Naval Observatory grounds for dinner. The time that I was so invited we were deep into the Polaris program. In the course of the conversation about the subject I stuck my neck out and offered the opinion that the Polaris was useless unless you didn't have it.

PS: What did you mean by that?

FLA: My thought was that here we have tremendous effort going on and the chance that one of these ships in the program launching a nuclear warhead missile in anger was zero. We had the submarines. They weren't any good for anything. You couldn't use them in the attack role. So here they were cruising around the world doing essentially nothing. But the point was, if we didn't have them, then we lacked the deterrent capability that they so uniquely offered. Probably this didn't make sense to anyone but me, because Admiral Burke jumped all over me. He said, "I don't understand what you are trying to say. Of course these ships are important." Again, I stated, "Yes it's important because if you didn't have them, then it becomes an important capability to have. Otherwise they make no contribution whatever." I guess that's rather obtuse reasoning, but my point that I was trying to make is that they were never going to do what they were built for.

PS: You hoped they wouldn't.

FLA: Sure. You hoped they wouldn't, and they most probably wouldn't. They never have and we hope they never will. And so you have all this tied up in something that doesn't ever do anything. If you didn't have them, then they become terribly important to have, I guess is what I am trying to say. They don't make a tangible contribution to the offensive capability of the Navy.

What few contacts that I had with Admiral Burke I found him to be friendly and understanding, unlike Admiral Beakley. I am sorry that I can't recall any specific sessions that I had with him directly except the one that I guess turned out to be a disaster!

PS: Did your organization have any tie-in with the establishment of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff out at Omaha, the Navy input?

FLA: None that I can recall. This is the area that Tom Connolly was working in over in OP-63, I think it was called. They were dealing in that kind of nuclear weapon planning.

PS: Well, on to the U.S.S. *Essex* and the Antisubmarine Warfare Carrier Division 18.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

ANTISUBMARINE WARFARE CARRIER DIVISION 18 - ATLANTIC FLEET IN COMMAND

June 1960 - January 1961



U.S.S. Essex, CVS-9, flagship Antisubmarine Carrier Division 18

FOREWORD: Throughout this autobiography there have been many references to Navy aircraft carriers, the names usually followed by reference to their type in Navy jargon, commonly referred to as CVs. I'll try to clarify: "C" designates an aircraft carrier. "V" designates "heavier than air aircraft" as opposed to lighter than air; dirigibles and the like. Therefore, CV designates a carrier for conventional aircraft. There is also a numeral after the CV which indicates the chronological order in which each was built. *Roosevelt* was CV-42. As the aircraft carriers were found to be useful for different aspects of air warfare at sea, they were given an additional letter designator. "A" for attack, and "S" for antisubmarine duties. Hence we have CVAs and CVSs. There is no significant difference between an attack carrier and an antisubmarine carrier; only the type aircraft

assigned to each. The antisubmarine aircraft came into existence after World War II, but was phased out as the allowed number of carriers was reduced. My flagship while in command of Antisubmarine Carrier Division 18 was the U.S.S. *Essex* designated a CVS. My flagship while in command of Attack Carrier Division One was the U.S.S. *Oriskany* a CVA.

PS: You must have been one of the last of your class of Naval Aviators to get to an *Essex*-class carrier (CV-).

FLA: That may be true, I don't know.

I think that in my conversation about disruptions to family life, I noted that I went alone to the carrier division (CarDiv) home port while my wife and family remained in our home in Bethesda. Our two older boys were enrolled in the Longfellow School in Bethesda, a private school, and the third in the local public school. As it happened, this was a logical thing for us to

have done because I was aware that the CarDiv would soon deploy to the Atlantic area. The home port was Quonset Point, Rhode Island. I immediately moved aboard ship when I arrived.

PS: I wonder how you would evaluate the CVS as a type and its effectiveness in the antisubmarine role.

FLA: First, let me say that this was to be my first exposure to antisubmarine warfare (ASW). All that I was to know about it came from that tour of duty. After spending almost a year, almost all of which involved at-sea operations in the role, it is my opinion that it was a very good concept and could make a major contribution to the effectiveness of attack carrier operations at sea, if given the chance to exercise at its trade. Of course, when the crunch of reducing forces came to pass and carriers had to go, it made sense that the first casualties would be the CVSSs, the antisubmarine carriers. As you know, after that, to cover the ASW requirement, ASW-capable aircraft, mostly helicopters, were placed aboard the attack carriers. This became possible, without too much impact on the regular carrier load of aircraft with the introduction of the large-deck carriers like the *Forrestal*. I believe that this is not to say that the job could be done as well

with that arrangement as with a specialized carrier and its load of aircraft and their well-trained crews.

Note that I said, “if given the chance to exercise at its trade.” Let me illustrate that. The first at-sea operation of *Essex* was to accompany and provide anti-submarine warfare support to a group of ships, which I suppose today would be called a “Battle Group”, on the way to European waters to participate in a NATO exercise. It was under the command of Tom Moorner, who was at the time, I think I’m correct, Commander Carrier Division Six. We would be in the support role for the Atlantic transit, after which time my division was to break off and proceed to Pakistan via the Suez Canal to participate in MIDLINK III, an operation with the Navies of Pakistan, India and elements of the Royal Navy.

It was my impression that neither Moorner nor I knew exactly



MIDLINK III, joint operations with the U.S., British, Pakistani, and Iranian Navies. Pictured here in Karachi, Pakistan with Admiral Khan, Chief of Naval Operations, Pakistan Navy

what was to be expected from the ASW group during the transit. However, we did what we thought was correct by conducting fixed-wing and helicopter ASW surveillance of the areas around and ahead of the transiting force. As you might have guessed, it was not long before we were ordered to keep clear of the main force and their flight operations. This seemed to put an undesirable crimp in the effectiveness, if any, of our work, and of course our aircraft moved out and away from the main force. It was easier to establish ASW search patterns closer to the main force than it was when we had to move away and hence were responsible for a larger area.

It was about this time that a procedure had been worked out by the oceanographers ashore to try to predict areas of the ocean where bathymetric characteristics led to the most effective detection of submarines using sonar and sonobuoys. As you know, almost from time immemorial, ships at sea have measured and recorded such things as water temperature and salinity along their tracks so that there is an enormous library of this information on file. With this information oceanographers can forecast what the sonar conditions might be in any particular area. In our case, knowing the route of the task force, information was provided to us from which we could recommend to the task force commander the areas most conducive to good submarine detection that he should pass through during the transit. Each evening I would transmit to the task force commander what changes of route that appeared to take the force through these areas. We thought that this might make our support the most effective.

PS: How were you getting this information? From your staff?

FLA: We were getting it by radio, probably teletype, and the staff was putting the information together to provide us information to recommend to the force commander.

PS: Had that kind of thing been done before?

FLA: No, I don't think so. This was fairly early in the program. I would hope that this has been continued, and improved upon, for I think that it should have had great promise.

I would send recommendations to the task force commander, Tom Moorer, "Let's move over in this area. We will have better submarine detection chances passing through that area." Essentially, I got the answer back to mind my own business. Then, I was told that if I wanted to do something in the ASW line I could sanitize an area ahead of the force. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as "sanitizing" an area. You can search the area for submarines, but there is no guarantee that they will stay out of the area. You look for submarines in the most desirable area, sonar condition wise, attack and kill. You can't send out a bunch of airplanes, do some sonobuoy searches and say that the area is sanitized. It just doesn't work that way.

So that Atlantic transit I thought was fun, but sort of useless because we weren't permitted to try to do what we thought we were capable of doing, namely finding submarines around the main body and attack. We had some very good destroyers with us. There was an

augmented squadron of them, 12 in all, and the air group of S2Fs¹ and helicopters were well trained to do their job. I think that we found that out later during the MIDLINK operation.

When we arrived in the Eastern Atlantic, my group was detached, and we headed into the Mediterranean. At that time I detached four of the destroyers that were with us that were being transferred to Spain. The rest of the task group proceeded on through the Suez Canal to participate in MIDLINK III.

In regard to your question as to my opinion of the effectiveness of the ASW carrier, I have to mention that later when I had just assumed command of the Sixth Fleet, and Secretary Nitze was asking me what I planned to do with the Fleet and what did I think about its capability, I told him that I would like to have a CVS carrier division because I thought that our main problem in the Mediterranean was the threat of Soviet submarines. Whether the new load of dunking sonar helicopters and S-3² jet aircraft on board the attack carriers can do the job or not, I don't know, but I don't think that they can take the place of an ASW carrier with its specialized aircraft and integral destroyers.

PS: The other part of it is that there was more flexibility under the setup that you had, that the attack carriers didn't necessarily have to be in the same place.

FLA: Yes, that is true. So I think that it was a shame that we weren't given a chance to make an effective contribution during the transit.

PS: Well, this ASW business was all new to you. How did you go about learning on the job?

FLA: It was certainly a case of on-the-job training for me, but I was fortunate to have Frank Price, an old destroyer sailor, as Chief of Staff. There were others on the staff who had been through it all, and as I mentioned, the group of destroyers that I had with us were all outstanding, a much better trained and aggressive group than I had been exposed to before.

¹ The fixed-wing aircraft designated "S2F" was a specially designed carrier aircraft, built by the Grumman Aircraft Corporation, equipped with special instruments for the detection and attack of "enemy" submarines. Incidentally, the ASW equipment in the aircraft was the ANEW system that was developed during my tour in the Bureau of Naval Weapons. A few of these aircraft were placed aboard the attack carriers after the CVS had been phased out to provide minimum antisubmarine protection. Some were later configured for in-flight refueling of the carrier-borne jet fighters.

² The S-3 aircraft referred to here is a successor to the S2F mentioned in the footnote above. Here we see the results of Secretary McNamara ordering the Navy to change their designation of aircraft types to that of the Air Force. The Navy system was, in my opinion, a much better system. Unfortunately McNamara couldn't understand it. The wartime purpose of the aircraft was designated by letters, "S" for Scout, "F" for Fighter, "B" for Bomber, etc.. We labeled aircraft manufacturers with letters, i.e., Grumman was "F", "H" was for McDonnell. Between was a number that indicated the number of aircraft designated by the manufacturer for that particular type, i.e., "F9F" said the ninth fighter designed for the Navy by Grumman. Additional numbers could be added to designate major changes to that particular design, i.e., "F6F-5". Thus the whole history of the design and changes of a particular aircraft was clearly shown. The Air Force system simply assigned numbers following the type of aircraft, i.e., "F-22". It was necessary to know by memory what number referred to what aircraft.

PS: I have heard good things about Frank Price. Can you elaborate any on his character or qualities?

FLA: He was a very calm and quiet person; very thorough and unflappable. He assumed responsibility and ran the staff very efficiently. He knew ASW. The Air Group Commander, whose name I have now forgotten, was also very good at his profession. But as Flag Officer in command, you don't really get your hands into the day to day operations. If you are fortunate



Grumman TF-1 Trader (TF COD) also S2F Tracker (ASW)

enough to have someone like Frank Price around, you don't have to get into the details. I used to spend a lot of time in the ready rooms talking to and learning from the pilots. And, perhaps not for the record, the ship's Boatswain procured a boatswain's pipe and taught me how to blow it. Further, I appointed myself, so to speak, as one of the pilots for the TF COD³ aircraft and flew it whenever local flights might be available. I would fly in the left seat with the regular COD pilot in the copilot's side. I told him to hold my hand and not let me get into trouble, and it was great refreshing carrier

landings from 15 or 20 years before. But I have digressed from Frank Price.

PS: He later ran the FFG-7 program.

FLA: Yes. He was OP-03, Deputy CNO for Operations, too, wasn't he?

PS: Yes, when that became surface warfare.

FLA: Right. I thought that he was a fine officer. Again, I was very fortunate to have these people working for me.

PS: Who was your Flag Captain?

FLA: The first Flag Captain was Dick Fowler, and he was excellent. He was later killed in a fire at the Great Lakes Training Center. As I recall, the Captain's quarters caught fire and he never got out. His wife, Medaris, married a classmate of mine, MacPherson. Fowler was relieved by a classmate of mine, Pete Searcy, who now, I understand has Alzheimer's, which is unfortunate because he was also a fine naval officer. I felt a little sorry for him having to work for a classmate. I don't think that he was the seaman that Fowler was, but he ran a good ship as you might expect after Dick Fowler. He was with us when we did the MIDLINK exercise.

³ TF COD - T for transport, F for Grumman, COD for Carrier On-board Delivery.

There is one thing that happened that I remember before we departed for the Atlantic transit. The *Essex* entered Halifax for a reason that now escapes me. Here we were exposed to the “Knock and Knock” agreement between the United States and Canada. This agreement says that if a U.S. ship does damage to Canadian port facilities the Canadians pick up the repair bill. If a Canadian ship does damage in an American port we pick up the tab. While going alongside the pier in Halifax harbor, the overhang of the carrier deck impacted a small building on the pier. I don’t know whether it was a customs station or what it was. The incident required no action on our part since, under the agreement, the Canadian government took care of it. Dick Fowler was a fine officer with a great future, I thought.

PS: Do you feel a frustration there in that you don’t have the control that you had when you were a skipper?

FLA: Not particularly in my experience. It wasn’t my way of operating to try to take control of the operation of the flagship. If things weren’t done the way the staff wanted them to be done, then certainly I would have had words with the Flag Captain. I had been exposed to that some when I had command of *Roosevelt*. I wasn’t kibitzed by the Admiral. It was his Chief of Staff that gave me trouble. That is a bad situation for it leads to split responsibility, and there is no place for that in managing a ship at sea. So the flag aboard should not heckle the ship as long as operations are being carried out the way he wants them to be carried out.

PS: Well, you were particularly sensitive on that point having been a victim yourself. How did the operations of a CVS differ from those of an attack carrier?

FLA: The main difference has to do with the different types of aircraft being operated in each case. Jets were on the attack carrier and propeller types and helicopters were on the CVS. Therefore the tempo of launch and recovery cycles is much faster on the attack carrier. The cycles are shorter and the whole operation is speeded up on deck to handle this. Cycles were about 45 minutes in duration.

PS: That seems awfully short.

FLA: Sure, because jets use a lot of fuel. The ASW aircraft operate close aboard the task group, and reciprocating engines are much more economical on fuel. The cycles on the CVS could be as long as two or three hours. The CVS operations were more like the propeller aircraft operations from the carriers in World War II.

PS: What do you remember about running the tactical picture from that ship?

FLA: The staff kept the tactical picture in the flag plot based upon the directives to the ship where we wanted the ASW searches to be conducted. As for the local details at the datum, tactical control resided in the ship’s combat information center. The flag does the tactical planning for the day’s operation; the ship carries it out. As far as this transit operation with

Moorer's task force was concerned, we were attached to his force to give us an opportunity to exercise with a task force, and also because we were moving to the Eastern Atlantic area at the same time.

PS: Did you get submarine services to work against?

FLA: Not during the transit operation. However, later during MIDLINK we did have submarine opposition. There were two U.S. Navy submarines in the operation, one of which was a nuclear attack submarine. There were also at least two British submarines in the exercise as well.

The MIDLINK operation plan was to simulate, with one or two cargo ships, a transit from Karachi to the entrance to the Persian Gulf, south into the Indian Ocean and return to Karachi for a period of about two weeks at sea. Underway replenishment was provided and cross training in the form of replenishing the Pakistani, Indian and Royal Navy ships from the *Essex* as well. We had no trouble managing the replenishment from the oilers provided by the Pakistanis. The operation was under the command of Admiral Khan of the Pakistan navy.

The principal object of the exercise was to protect the convoy from submarine attack, so it was made to order for us. We were particularly successful, as I remember it, and were able to keep the submarines pretty much away from the convoy. The nuclear U.S. boat was a different story, although we detected him once and made a successful attack to which he later admitted in the final "wash up" (British for "critique") for the exercise. Of course, it turned out that he had been cruising for quite a while under *Essex* and I am sure could have sunk us whenever he might have wanted.

PS: Any other specific memories about MIDLINK operations?

FLA: I was particularly impressed by the operations of the Royal Navy squadron of destroyers that was with us under the command of Captain Josef Bartosik, RN. He had a remarkable history as an RN. officer.

At the start of World War II he had command of a destroyer in the Polish Navy and was operating from ports in Africa. When the Germans invaded Poland, he sailed his ship from Africa to England, turned it over to the British and asked to join the Royal Navy. Apparently he had already established a reputation, for he was accepted and given a commission.

In the course of the MIDLINK operation, while in port at Karachi, Captain Bartosik made his official courtesy call on me, which I promptly returned aboard his flagship. I was met by Captain Bartosik on his quarterdeck and noted that he carried what appeared to be a long glass under his arm, much as our Officers of the Deck do when in port and on duty. When we had retired to his quarters and passed the formalities of the call, I told him that I was surprised to see that he, as Squadron Commander, carried a long glass as a "badge of office" as we were accustomed in the U.S. Navy for the Officer of the Deck to do. He laughed and said that it was proper in the RN for him to carry a long glass, but what he was carrying was not a long glass, it was a piece of swab handle wrapped with cord as we do our "badge of office" long glasses. Then he told me the story.

Some years earlier, when he was in command of an RN destroyer, during a belowdecks inspection, he found a compartment that was not up to his standard of readiness. He asked who was in charge, picked up a swab and bashed the unlucky fellow with it in a not so gentle, but authoritative fashion. Sometime later, when he was detached from command of the ship, that sailor presented him with a piece of the very swab handle that he had used against him, all fixed up as a “badge of office” long glass.

Captain Bartosik conducted me on a tour of his flagship and I was again impressed by the fact that about six or eight of the officers were Lieutenant Commanders and had been on board for as long as 12 years. I could not help but recall that we are fortunate to have officers aboard for longer than a couple of years. Maybe that is why the Royal Navy has such a good reputation for operations at sea.

After some two weeks of at-sea operations, the “wash-up” completed and a final evening cocktail garden party for the officers that was hosted by Admiral and Mrs. Khan, it was time for us to leave. We planned a standard sortie, with the smaller ships leaving port first to take up an antisubmarine screen around the entrance, to be followed by the larger ships. *Essex* would be the last ship to get under way. She was anchored in deep water off the port entrance. We watched the small-boy destroyers coming from the inner harbor, the last being the squadron of British destroyers in column. Just as soon as the last ship cleared the entrance, all ships increased speed to 25 knots and, still in close column, the lead ship headed straight for the bow of *Essex*. As she passed under the bow it was hard left rudder and along the port side of the carrier. Hard left around the stern and up the starboard side, all ships still in column not more than 250 yards apart. Just as the last ship in column passed under the bow, the lead destroyer passed astern of her and headed for the open sea. A maneuver known as “cutting a dido”. It was quite a demonstration of seamanship and prompted a “well done” from me to the Squadron Commander. I wondered if our destroyers could put on a show like that.

PS: How capable were the other navies in the mission?

FLA: Well, as I say, the British squadron was outstanding. I thought that both the Pakistani and Indian Navy ships operated well. It was gratifying to see that replenishment went well and that procedures were pretty much standard among us all. Apparently ASW doctrine was much the same for all of us, because all the ships operated together effectively in the ASW mission. English was the common language. It was my impression that Admiral Khan was very pleased with the overall operation.

PS: Any recollections of being ashore over in that area?

FLA: There were a couple of incidents worth noting. While passing through the Red Sea en route to Karachi we entered Aden for fuel. At that time Aden was under the control of the British and a British Air Marshal was in command. We were in port for only two days, as I recall, and on one of them the wife of the Air Marshal took me shopping in Aden. My wife had asked me to try to bring home some genuine curry powder since she prepared excellent Indian curry. This non-plussed my guide since normally curry spices, I guess you call them, don't come in powder

form, but are made up from various ingredients as needed. Nevertheless, we looked for the stuff and finally found some packed in a can about the size of a Baker's chocolate can. It turned out to be excellent and provided my wife with the curry seasoning that she needed for several years.

I went ashore once in Karachi and was taken shopping by one of the Pakistani naval officers. I purchased a couple of brass coffee tables for which the area is noted.

At the conclusion of the MIDLINK exercise I was invited by the head of the Pakistan Air Force to fly with him into the Khyber Pass and land where we could look into Afghanistan. It was an intriguing offer which I wanted very much to do, but the timing was such that *Essex* would be under way for home while I would be gone. It would require that the TF COD aircraft remain behind to fly me aboard after the trip to the Pass. I got cold feet on that one and passed it up.

So, I left as I was supposed to do aboard ship and we headed back to the Suez Canal for transit into the Mediterranean. Admiral Anderson was Commander, Sixth Fleet at the time and I made my protocol call aboard his flagship, *Springfield*, which would be my flagship sometime later. We had been ordered to join with the French Navy for another ASW convoy exercise from Toulon to Oran, Algeria.

PS: You had some very interesting and worthwhile experiences during that ASW command tour.

FLA: Yes, and I expect quite rare in the normal course of events. The exercise with the French was interesting and during the "wash-up", I was introduced to Philippe de Gaulle, a Captain in the French Navy, General de Gaulle's son. All comments during the "wash-up" were required to be in English, which was done by the French Captains very well indeed. I am glad that I was not asked to make my report in French.

It is interesting to note here that later, when I was assigned as Deputy Chief of Staff for Commander U.S. Forces, Europe, one of my duties was to deal with the French committee that had been set up to aid Allied Forces in their relationship with the French government. The chairman of the committee was one Monsieur Dambeza. At my first meeting with him he told me, "Je parle Anglais, mais maintenant, Le President, General de Gaulle, a dit, il faut toujours parler Francais." So I had a good chance to exercise the French that I had taken at the Army Language School in Monterey prior to my duty in Europe. At the "wash-up" in Oran, that would have been impossible for me to do.

PS: De Gaulle then carried it a step further by pulling France out of the military structure of NATO.

FLA: Yes, that's correct. I got mixed up with that when I had command of the Sixth Fleet and had to move the flagship from her home port in Villefranche.

An experience at sea in the Mediterranean at the time of the ASW operation is worth mentioning. After a couple of days of excellent weather, we experienced the Mediterranean phenomenon known as the "mistral". Since we were operating off the coast of France in the vicinity of Toulon, we were in the exact area for a mistral. This is a high wind of as much as 60 knots that comes from the land after it passes down the Rhone River Valley. The boundaries of

the wind area are very well defined. In it the seas are as high as you might expect from a 60 knot breeze and comprises an area perhaps 50 or 60 miles wide, extending to seaward as much as 30 or 40 miles. On each side of the rough seas the sea is quite calm and clearly defined. At the time that this happened for us, the weather was excellent with no high clouds and a bright sun. Flight operations were undesirable in the mistral area so it was necessary to move out of the breeze and into the calmer waters on either side. I believe that this high-velocity wind can last for several days until the atmospheric ashore in the Rhone valley change.

PS: In talking about this ASW business, again the name of the operator comes up --- Jimmy Thach. He had command of Task Force Alfa in developing some of this hunter-killer doctrine. How much of that did you use in your work?

FLA: I suppose that much of what we did was based on the doctrine he developed. Beyond that I can't say specifically, for again, much of the detail has escaped from my memory circuits. It must have been contained in the Naval Warfare Publications, and we must have used that in planning for our air and surface operations.

PS: In this operation it sounds like it was essentially defensive ASW rather than offensive.

FLA: Oh, yes, that is correct for both the MIDLINK and the French operations. In each case we were to protect a convoy of merchant ships in transit. In MIDLINK it was from Karachi to the mouth of the Persian Gulf, south into the Indian Ocean and back to Karachi. In the latter case it was a convoy from Toulon to Oran, Algeria. We, together with ASW ships, mostly destroyers provided by the French, protected the convoy from submarine attack. I can't remember whether we had actual submarine opposition or not for the exercise in the Med, but we went through all the motions. I don't know whether they are still doing MIDLINK exercises or not.

PS: I don't think we're all that friendly with India and Pakistan anymore.

FLA: Yes, I suspect that you are correct. However, the atmosphere when I was there was very friendly and I thought that the operation was good for all who participated. I think that these kinds of international operations are useful for both sides.

PS: And I think that there's a brotherhood of naval officers that transcends national lines.

FLA: That is for sure. It's an excellent point. Automatically there is a rapport that comes simply from the common profession.

PS: Because the sea is the common element for all. Did you have a good mix of specific individual talents in your staff?

FLA: Yes, I think so. The whole cruise was particularly worthwhile, and I guess the reason is that everyone did his job.

PS: I can guess the answer, but I presume you didn't encounter Soviets during these operations.

FLA: Not any that were obvious. Whether there were any Soviet nuclear submarines following us or not, I don't know.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

BUREAU OF NAVAL WEAPONS, WASHINGTON, D.C.
ASSISTANT CHIEF, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
February 1961 - May 1963

PS: Your transit back to the United States while in command of Carrier Division Eighteen must have been a satisfying way to complete that duty and you had, then, your orders to duty in the Bureau of Naval Weapons.

FLA: Yes, that is correct. It was a wrench to leave that duty since sea duty is the name of the game. I knew how things would go in Washington. It is a frustration factory with six-day work weeks, usually working Saturday mornings.

PS: Were you in the bureau at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

FLA: Yes. I remember that there was some kind of dinner at the Army-Navy Country Club at that time, which my wife and I were attending. Admiral Anderson, who was the Chief of Naval Operations, was the principal speaker. It was then that he announced that President Kennedy had just made the decision to establish the quarantine of Cuba to intercept and board all Soviet ships that might be carrying ballistic missiles to Cuba.

PS: That would be a great time to have command of an antisubmarine carrier division like the one that you had just commanded.

FLA: It would have, indeed! As a matter of interest have you made an oral history interview with Admiral Anderson? If so, you know about the episode in the CNO flag plot about Secretary McNamara's directive, "Get those ships back where they belong."¹

PS: Yes, we have that interview, and that story is why, we believe, that Admiral Anderson has directed that he approve any access to his oral history. I guess he still considers that incident sensitive.

FLA: I had not heard that he approved access to his interview. I thought that by now that was a well-known yarn. So back to the Bureau of Naval Weapons.

PS: The merger of the Bureau of Aeronautics and the Bureau of Ordnance into the Bureau of

¹ The story goes that the Secretary was making his daily visit in the CNO flag plot to review the situation in the Cuban quarantine operation. There he could see where all the ships were at that moment that were involved in the operations. There was one ship that was quite away separated from the rest of the ships in the area. The Secretary asked Admiral Anderson what that ship was doing so far away from the others. Admiral Anderson said that he didn't know exactly, but he suspected that it was a destroyer prosecuting a submarine contact. "What, you don't know!" the Secretary asked incredulously and added, "Order that ship back with the rest of your ships."

Naval Weapons had taken place about two and a half years before. What can you say about the nature of the consolidated beast?

FLA: I think that it was probably the thing to do. I guess that as long as aviation ordnance was as elementary as it was in those early days, and by that I mean simpleminded machine guns or no computing gunsights of any sort, there was no conflict. We just looked through a telescope to aim the machine guns. I don't think that even then the fighters had any more fire control capability than that. I've forgotten now, but it was something probably as elementary as that. Bomb racks were simpleminded. So there wasn't much reason for there to be conflict between BuAer and BuOrd as regards these aviation ordnance items which had been the responsibility of the Bureau of Ordnance. Then things became more complicated with such controversies as who would have control of guided missiles, for example.

PS: Well, apparently it was the advent of the missile that really led to the jurisdictional disputes.

FLA: Yes, I think that is about it. I suspect that it resulted in overlapping areas of presumed responsibility, and everybody thought that areas were well defined, but things never seemed to work quite that way as the situation began to get more complicated technically. The thought was, I believe, that if there was one commander, he would have all the areas of responsibility in the field and could keep things effectively sorted out. Admiral Charles Martell was given the job of trying to analyze the command relationships and the assignment of areas of responsibility and make a study of the practicality of merging the two bureaus. Have you talked to him?

PS: No. I've certainly heard the name.

FLA: He was the guy given the job to put the two bureaus together. Sometime earlier he spearheaded a study to sort out responsibilities for antisubmarine warfare. It was from his study that the "Antisubmarine Warfare Czar" idea came. It is interesting to note that his assignment to the merger job probably rankled the Bureau of Aeronautics people because he was an Ordnance Postgraduate and certainly oriented toward the way Ordnance did its business. For reasons that I may touch on later, this resulted in a wide gap of ideas as to how things should be done. BuOrd was used to doing things "in-house" while BuAer depended on industry to do much of their research and development and certainly production.

PS: Well, wasn't Admiral P.D. Stroop the first Chief of the Bureau of Weapons?

FLA: Yes, and if I remember correctly, the first Deputy Chief was Rear Admiral Bill Schoech after the decision had been made to merge the two bureaus. Admiral Stroop held the job for a couple of years, at least. Schoech was later made the Chief of Material in 1963 after he had commanded the Seventh Fleet and been DCNO (Air). It was Charlie Martell's job to work out the plans and procedures to accomplish the merger when it was decided that this was what was wanted to be done.

PS: I see.

FLA: We used to call Martell “Gromyko” because just about everything that you ever wanted, the answer was “NO”. Martell was a surface officer, and an Ordnance-trained officer. I suspect that the Bureau of Aeronautics people thought that they were getting short shrift in all this, but the net result was that the two bureaus were merged and became the Bureau of Naval Weapons. It probably was the right thing to do at the time.

PS: That was a marriage that lasted only about seven years.

FLA: Well, that’s right, and I don’t know whether what they have now is any better or not. One of the things that, as far as I know, was never clearly resolved was the interface between the carrier catapults and arresting gear (BuAer’s responsibility) and the Bureau of Ships’ ship construction responsibility (a further complication). However, it was after my time, but I suspect that when “The Chief of Material” was established later to also include the Bureau of Ships, he may have been able to knock heads together and settle any controversies. On the other hand, maybe not, because that position was soon abolished.

Of course, people can wreck anything like this if they want to, regardless of the organization, and I suppose there were people who were still dragging their feet on both sides, and there’s a lot of room for that as long as people want to do it. However, basically, I think it was a reasonable arrangement.

When I was the Assistant Chief for Research and Development for the Bureau of Naval Weapons, I had aviators in charge of aeronautical matters. The Aeronautical Division was headed by a Captain, aeronautical engineering duty only, with aeronautical Postgraduate training as well. As for the areas in which we were involved that had to do with missiles, I had assigned an Ordnance Postgraduate surface officer.

PS: Then in your position you personally had a foot in each camp with your ordnance postgraduate and with aviator’s wings.

FLA: Yes, that’s right. I must admit that when I held the job of Assistant Chief, I came to appreciate much more than I had before, the aeronautical position in this whole area. When I say the aeronautical position, I am thinking in terms of those things that the Bureau of Aeronautics people probably felt the ordnance-trained people were interfering in. I’m not expressing that very well, but when I saw the roots of any conflict from all this, I began to appreciate more of the reasons as to why they might feel that way.

I tried very hard, being an ordnance-oriented guy and having had command of the largest Bureau of Ordnance R&D center, China Lake, to understand and be empathetic with the views of the aviators. This was, I think, a bit of growing up for me.

PS: On the other hand, it would be difficult to exercise some forbearance when you felt that the ordnance philosophy was superior.

FLA: Well, sure. Let's take the laboratory situation, for example. They all came under my general area as Research and Development Chief. And take Johnsville, Pennsylvania; it had been under the Bureau of Aeronautics supervision and it was called an "Aircraft Modification Center". Not a title which would be conducive to original thinking in the areas of research and development. On the other hand, there is China Lake, then called The Naval Ordnance Test Station, and the Naval Ordnance Laboratory as examples, typical of the ordnance-run establishments and both oriented to research, development, testing of their products and into pilot production.

I tried very hard to try to insert into the former Aeronautics organizations some of the philosophy that we used in operating the Ordnance laboratories and, I think, to their advantage.

PS: So you got them to change their ways of doing business?

FLA: Yes, somewhat, I believe. I think that we were able to make some inroads into their philosophy of operation. We changed the title of the place, I can't now remember to what, but it had the research and development connotation which was missing before. We gave them "discretionary research" money that they could use, unaccounted for, to develop new and radical ideas. It was this source of money, for example, which permitted China Lake to bring to fruition the brilliant and innovative ideas that came to be Sidewinder, the air-to-air guided missile. Needless to say, the scientific people were delighted to be released from the "tin-knocking" work into creative effort in which many of them were highly qualified.

A typical example of this change in philosophy was at Johnsville. Not long after I visited the establishment and told the technical people what I had in mind, I learned that they had been thinking, outside of their basic mission, about some ideas which became the ANEW system for the management of antisubmarine operations conducted by the P-3, the Lockheed, four engine turboprop patrol-type aircraft. Even now it is our major platform for conducting aircraft antisubmarine reconnaissance and attack operations and I believe that much of the ANEW system has been incorporated into the carrier

based antisubmarine aircraft, the S-3.



Lockheed P-3 Orion (ASW)



Lockheed S-3 Viking (ASW)

I had the feeling that the ANEW system was the sort of thing that Johnsville probably would not have been able, or maybe I should say, be allowed,

to come up with, if they had not been freed to do a little freewheeling thinking. And they just ate it up, and the system they developed was very good. Sure, it has been modified some since its initial introduction into the fleet, but basically it was a major step forward in this category of airborne equipment.

PS: You have said that you thought there was somewhat of an Ordnance bias in the way the two

bureaus came together. How was that manifested?

FLA: Maybe I should have said earlier that this might not be real, but that I suspected that there had to be an Ordnance bias because the merger was put together by an Ordnance-oriented person. I can't give you any specific examples of the problem, but the thing was ram-rodged through based upon the originator's background.

PS: And also it would depend on the kind of tone the bureau chief set.

FLA: That is correct certainly, and that may have been the thinking of the hierarchy that appointed Bill Schoech, an aeronautical postgraduate, the new Deputy Chief. He was followed by Admiral Stroop an ordnance postgraduate.

PS: Was Stroop the bureau chief when you were there?

FLA: Yes, and I think that I was there for a short time under Schoech.

PS: What do you remember about Stroop specifically?

FLA: As for being specific, he let me do just about my own thing. I think that he was confident in the way that I was doing my job. As long as I kept him up-to-date with the things that I thought that he should know, he was satisfied. Stroop was a super sort of a person and well liked by all who knew or served with him.

PS: The impression that I've gotten of Schoech was that he was sort of a crusty individual.

FLA: No, I wouldn't say that, at least insofar as my relationship with him is concerned. In some ways I felt more comfortable with him than I did with Stroop. It was my feeling that Stroop tended to hold one more at arm's length. I had known Stroop for some time prior to this experience. Schoech was new to me then.

PS: As was the case with Admiral Kenny Craig, Schoech had command of one of the training carriers in the Great Lakes during World War II.

FLA: I was not aware of that, but I did know that he had command of the Seventh Fleet at one time. It certainly could be that he was more "crusty" in that job than when I knew him.

PS: The picture that I got of him was from reading Paul Nitze's memoir, and he considered Schoech to be very obstinate when he, Schoech, was Chief of Naval Material.

FLA: Well, okay. Probably because he didn't agree with him, perhaps. And if that's the case, more power to him for standing up to him and saying his piece in front of the boss. I had a lot of admiration for Bill Schoech.

PS: Do you have any examples that would illustrate that relationship?

FLA: I don't know whether this answers your question or not, but I came to know him a bit better when we were involved with the source selection for the TFX, the new swept-wing airplane that Mr. McNamara had edicted for use by both Navy and the Air Force. There had to be as much "commonality" of parts and as nearly an identical plane as practicable. In my capacity as the Navy member of the source selection committee, I had frequent discussions with Schoech about the problem the Navy would have trying to make a carrier-compatible airplane that would meet the Air Force requirements as well.

Schoech pointed out to me that we all recognized that aerodynamically the specifications for the Air Force and the Navy were worlds apart, and from the technical point of view they were impossible to be encompassed in one aircraft. The Air Force wanted an airplane that would fly at Mach I or better and very low to avoid detection as well as carry a nuclear weapon. The Navy wanted an airplane that would fly at high altitude and loiter there ready to launch missiles against incoming enemy aircraft. This had been the so-called "Missileer" concept of the Navy which had been shot down, I believe, by the Secretary of Defense.

When the TFX program reared its head, the Navy thought that here would be their chance to put the Missileer program together. However, since the aerodynamics characteristics dictated by the two diverse missions of the plane were so different, it appeared that it would be impossible to follow the Secretary's concept of one fundamental airplane. We needed to develop a story that would make these problems clear to the Defense officials. In the Bureau of Weapons Research and Development Division there was a "new concepts" group that came over from the Bureau of Aeronautics which was highly qualified to look into the future of naval aircraft and associated equipment. Admiral Schoech asked me to have that group go over all the past designs of aircraft used by the Navy and look for two things. Find all the past aircraft that had been used commonly by the Navy and the Air Force and why they were successes or failures. The second part of his proposal was to find out what characteristics of any new development aircraft made those aircraft turn out to be a "dog".

As for the first, it was found that the only aircraft that had successful joint careers had identical missions in both services such as for training and transportation. In the case of radically new developments it was found that aircraft that pushed the state of the art usually were unsuccessful, and vice versa. Examples were the Douglas attack plane, the AD series, progressed into many variations of the same plane because all design characteristics had been tried and true. No aerodynamic breakthroughs were tried. The tailless Vought F7U, which was a failure, is an example of attempting to push the state-of-the-art. The planned TFX was clearly recognized as pushing the state-of-the-art with its variable geometry swept-wing concept. It is interesting to note that the experience of attempting to design the wing structure of the TFX led directly to the very successful swept-wing fighters, the Air Force F-15 and the Navy F-14.

PS: His logic sounds excellent.

FLA: It made good sense. It turned out that we were unable to convince anyone that the



Grumman F-14 Tomcat



McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagle

Secretary's idea was flawed for aerodynamic reasons, if for no others. General LeMay, who we all know, and Admiral Russell, the Navy's senior naval aviator and an aeronautical engineer, personally talked with McNamara on this, but were told, "Tell me your requirements and I'll make the decision." Ultimately, however, the F-111B, the Navy version of the TFX concept, was killed because, as expected, it failed completely to meet the Navy requirement for carrier operations. As I have mentioned, however, the Navy F-14 and the Air Force F-15 aircraft were derived from the work done on the development of the TFX concepts.

PS: And the weapon system.

FLA: Yes, the weapon system planned for the "Missileer" was developed and finally went into the F-14.

In the course of the source-selection process I made the worst decision of my naval career. Out of frustration over McNamara having turned down four recommendations by the source-selection committee, I finally signed off for the Navy saying that, although we were not particularly happy with either design, we could live with either one. Presumably this gave McNamara the opportunity then to make the decision himself, which he did and awarded the contract to General Dynamics. It may be a bit presumptive for me to say that my bad decision gave McNamara the out to make the decision that he wanted anyway. However, it certainly indicated to him that he would probably get no more argument from the Navy. Andy Kerr, who was then legal advisor for Secretary of the Navy, Fred Korth, has written a book about this period, as we talked about earlier, and probably it was based upon his association with Korth. In this book he has expressed this view about McNamara's decision to give the contract to General Dynamics.

PS: Well, maybe McNamara was going to keep turning things down until he got the recommendation he wanted from the committee.

FLA: Perhaps that is the case. I am sure that you are aware that Congress was particularly interested as to why, after four recommendations by a technically qualified source-selection committee, the Secretary of Defense decided to ignore the recommendation and make his own

decision as to the prospective contractor for the program. They even went so far as to charge the General Accounting Office, I believe it was, to make an investigation into the purchases of General Dynamics stock of 100 shares or more prior to the General Dynamics decision. As far as I know, they found nothing suspicious in that investigation. Many years later, when I was in the Military Applications Division of the Atomic Energy Commission, I had a conversation with Mr. Gene Zuckert, a commissioner at the time, but who was the Secretary of the Air Force during the TFX fiasco. He told me point blank that, in spite of the recommendations made by the source-selection committee, the right decision was made.

PS: George Spangenberg² was for the Boeing proposal?

FLA: Absolutely.

PS: Andy Kerr says that he looked at it and you could justify the General Dynamics proposal.

FLA: Did Spangenberg ever say that ?

PS: Oh, no. Kerr had to defend this position against Spangenberg's attacks.

FLA: Well, of course Andy Kerr wasn't really in a position to defend much of anything in this field. He's a lawyer, not an aeronautical engineer, and if he wants to stand up and argue with George Spangenberg, he'd better have his ducks in line. There's no question about it, George was obviously of the opinion that the Boeing proposal was the better of the two, but he still was not very enthusiastic about either of them as a prospective naval carrier aircraft.

PS: The program came to the outcome it deserved, but it caused a lot of heartburn for a lot of people before that happened.

FLA: First, I think that it is a fact that Admiral George Anderson lost his job over it. And it cost millions of dollars. Boeing and General Dynamics must have spent millions of dollars on the repeated proposal modifications. And we ended up, actually, just exactly as we knew was going to happen; we got a compromise airplane. The Air Force may make noises as if they liked it, but I don't think they really do. They didn't get what they wanted and the Navy wouldn't have gotten what we wanted. Fortunately for the future of Naval Aviation, the Navy version, as it finally got started, was canceled and the program stopped. This was a typical McNamara operation.

² George Spangenberg was a civil service aeronautical engineer, and a member of the Advanced Concepts Group that I mentioned earlier. He was recognized, certainly in the Navy, as the dean in his profession. He was realistic, hardheaded and had been involved in the development of Navy aircraft for more than the last 20 years. When George spoke people listened. I was fortunate that during the congressional hearings as to why the selection was made of General Dynamics over Boeing as contractor for the TFX, he was my back-up, and I used him freely during my testimony.

It is interesting to note that in connection with the congressional hearings on the source selection, Admiral Tom Connolly, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air, testified, and in response to a question from one of the Senators said, "Senator, there is not enough thrust in all Christendom to get that aircraft off and on an aircraft carrier." After that, the Navy was authorized to stop any participation in the program.

PS: Did you, in the research and development job, have to put up with the systems analysis focus that the McNamara people had?

FLA: Yes, we did indeed. There are two examples of this that I think are revealing.

First, the head of the airborne electronics division under me in the bureau, was a Marine Corps Colonel. He came to me and said, "The Air Force has done a great deal of research and development work in micro-electronics that is adaptable to our problems with airborne avionics." We recognized that current Navy equipment was operating at not much better than 25% up to specifications. We needed to do something about it.

It has been always my view that the Air Force has had trouble getting material into production after the research and development has been done in industry. Apparently this was the case in this micro-electronic program, because, as the Colonel told me, the Air Force seemed to only be researching the area and nothing was producing results for operational avionics equipment. My head of electronics proposed that we investigate the work that had been done for the Air Force to see if it might lead us out of our operational problems with our airborne electronic equipment.

I thought that this was an excellent suggestion and asked the Colonel to work up a program that we could present to the Secretary of Defense (McNamara's analysis people) in order to get approval to proceed along these lines. After a couple of months we had a proposal for the work and presented it to the analytical people. Well, they found things wrong with it and told us to revise it along those lines. So, we did and resubmitted the revised plan. This went on for about six months, if I remember correctly, when they finally approved the program, essentially as we had first submitted it. Six months had been lost in the bureaucracy.

I don't know whatever happened to the program, for what usually happened in these cases, I was transferred to a new job. This was one of our problems in those days. You get into a position of authority and responsibility, get something started and then you are transferred before things come to fruition. Someone else picks up the program, that is if the newcomer happens to agree that the program is really worthwhile. Shades of Admiral Rickover!

PS: Rickover's point had some validity, then?

FLA: If you mean his point that we never leave our top people in jobs long enough to see them through, yes, there is a lot of validity in that. There has been some progress in this regard for now the major programs have Program Managers who see a program through to its conclusion. To make this idea work however, some of these programs become so large and time consuming, it represents nearly a career for the Program Manager (PM). Something has to be done to protect

these people professionally as regards promotions and the like. I think that much thought and work has been done to make the PM idea work.

PS: You mentioned that there was another program that reflected the McNamara micro-management habit.

FLA: This is one that really rankled me for it showed how McNamara's organization really held up progress in introducing new equipment to the operating forces.

This one had to do with developing new-generation aircraft engines. It takes about ten years to get a new engine developed, tested and qualified for use in service. This particularly is the case if more or less radical or new concepts are to be introduced.

We had a strong aircraft engine division in the Bureau of Weapons that had years of experience behind it in executing such programs. In this particular case the engine division was ready to start the development of a new turbojet engine and of course, this program had to be approved by the analysis people in the office of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. McNamara. When we made the presentation of the program for approval together with all the more or less revolutionary aspects that were part of it, the first question asked was, "What aircraft do you intend to use this engine in?" We pointed out that we were not in a position to answer that definitively, because it would be so long before the engine would be tested and qualified and that there could be radical changes in the requirements and design of any new aircraft in the meantime.

"Not good enough." said the analysts. "Tell us what airplane will use the new engine and we will consider its approval." We made the point that in past years there had never been a case where there was not a new aircraft waiting for the engine. Again, I don't know what was the ultimate outcome of the case, but I suspect that the engine went ahead in development under subterfuge. Such were the joys of working in Washington in the McNamara regime.

PS: If you use that way of thinking, there is no basis at all for pure research.

FLA: That is certainly a good point. What I have been describing is pretty much the way McNamara and his band of analysis and evaluation people operated. In my opinion his management of the Department of Defense was the greatest detriment to progress in the military establishment that we have had to live with. I think that there are a lot of people that would agree with me.

PS: There are, indeed. You were talking earlier about this bringing together of Aeronautics and Ordnance with perhaps the perception of bias. The big advantage that one would hope to gain is that you get the people talking together as part of the same organization, and so there's loyalty to a common goal. Did it work out in practice that way?

FLA: I am sure that this is true. I think that this idea must have been one of the basic concepts that Martell used to justify the merger. I am sure that what you suggest actually did happen to a considerable extent. It had to, because we were all sitting together with the same general

objective.

PS: Admiral Pride provided the counter view, he having been in Aeronautics.

FLA: Bureau of Aeronautics.

PS: Yes, you are correct. He told me that if you had a person doing a function in Aeronautics and a person doing the same function in Ordnance, you're still going to have those same people doing these two functions. Now you are going to have a supervisor for both of them, so you have added a bureaucratic layer.

FLA: I think that does not need to be the case if the responsibilities of each is spelled out and the aeronautic-trained person and the ordnance-trained person work in their own area and the two need not overlap. Would it be your impression that the new concept of system commands may have solved this problem, if there was one? Actually, it seems to me that when the Air Systems Command and the Ship Systems Command were established, the two fundamental organizations that we have been talking about were separated again.

PS: I got the impression from Admiral Kent Lee, who was commander of the Air Systems Command, that he felt that taking them apart again was a good move.

FLA: Did they really separate ordnance out from.....?

PS: Yes. For a while, it was a separate command in the late 60s, until later it was merged with the Ship Systems Command, And that is now called the Naval Sea Systems Command, so it's a different merger.

FLA: That is all after my time, but it would appear that this arrangement might have solved one of the problems that I started out talking about, namely the conflict between ship construction and the design and installation of catapults and arresting gear aboard the aircraft carrier. This was a "sea system". However, the problem is sufficiently complicated and the organizations so large that there may be no optimum solution as to the organization and assignment of responsibilities.

PS: How much contact did you have with McNamara or the Secretary of the Navy?

FLA: The only personal contact that I had with McNamara or the Secretary of the Navy had to do with my duty on the TFX aircraft source-selection committee. I was the designated Navy voting member. You will recall that the Chairman of the Senate Government Operations Committee, Senator McClellan, ordered an investigation into the decision of the Secretary of Defense when he had refused to accept the recommendation of the committee after four separate deliberations evaluating the four proposals submitted by the prospective contractors. We had four times recommended Boeing. After each time the Secretary refused to accept our

recommendation. Then the Secretary arbitrarily gave the contract to General Dynamics.

Of course, the hearings were announced and McNamara knew that they would soon be held. The source-selection committee was also preparing for the required testimony. In preparation for the hearings, McNamara called a meeting of all the principals involved. They were: General LeMay, Chief of Staff of the Air Force; Admiral Jim Russell, Vice Chief of Naval Operations and the chairman of the source-selection committee; an Air Force Major General (whose name I have forgotten); Major General Momyer, Commander of the Air Force Tactical Air Command (the so-called using organization in the Air Force); and I had two stars as a Navy Rear Admiral. All in all it was a formidable group of some of the most senior aviators in the Air Force and the Navy.

We met in the Secretary's office in the Pentagon. The Secretary reviewed the fact of the upcoming hearings and then told the assembled Flag and General Officers of the Navy and the Air Force, "Now, I want you all to understand very clearly that when you testify before this committee of the Senate, that you must tell the truth." I was totally flabbergasted by this, because I couldn't quite understand what he expected these very senior Flag Officers, some of the most senior in their service, were going to do when testifying under oath. But, I am afraid, this was typical of McNamara. He always seemed to be totally oblivious to the personal attributes of his people.

All through the deliberations of the source-selection committee and in my capacity of Assistant Chief of the Bureau, I was closely associated with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research and Development, Dr. Jim Wakelin. This was on a fairly friendly and informal basis, because it turned out that he had been a classmate of mine while we both attended Dartmouth College. However, he was still "Mr. Secretary" as far as I was concerned, even though he was easy to be with, and I think that we had, at the time, a relationship which was good for both of us mutually.

As for Fred Korth, the Secretary of the Navy, my contacts were less frequent and on a much more formal basis. I always felt that the relationship was quite impersonal and I had the sense of being held at arm's length. Perhaps the reason for this showed up for me several years later after I had been retired. I learned that Mr. Korth believed that I had lied to him in our discussions during the progress of the TFX source-selection process.

It seems that one Captain Vince Thomas, whom I had known while in the European Command as a Public Affairs Officer, wrote me a letter to relate an experience that he had just had with an officer who had served in Secretary Korth's office, probably as a legal advisor. In the course of their conversation one evening Thomas made the remark that he thought that it was a shame that Ashworth had been kept on the back burner for three stars (Vice Admiral rank) for such a long time.

The Korth officer piped up immediately, and said, "And they damn well should have." Thomas raised his eyebrows. We were friends, and I think that he thought well of me. "Well" he said, "What's that all about?". He replied, "Ashworth lied to the Secretary of the Navy. I don't blame them for holding him back." Apparently this all came about in relation to the matter of making cost estimates during the deliberations of the source-selection committee and in my reports of progress to Mr. Korth.

It had been decided that the Air Force contractor proposal analyzers would be solely

responsible for evaluating all cost-estimate data in the submissions. Therefore I always took the position when asked about matters of cost, that the Navy was not in a position to comment since that was an area of Air Force responsibility in the evaluations. Thus, when we discussed cost with the Secretaries I always said that the Navy was not involved and therefore we were not informed of the data in any detailed manner.

Well, the allegation was that even though this was our position, I had made speeches, on the record, about cost matters in the proposals during the congressional hearings. I had, then, lied to the Secretaries by not making the same speeches on the subject with the Secretaries. Obviously, during the hearings matters of cost were discussed and I suppose that I probably made some comments from the Navy point of view in regard to costs. It stands to reason, I think, that any remarks that I may have made were based on the cost analyses by the Air Force evaluators.

As I now look back on it, there was a point somewhere along this time, that my relationship with Secretary Wakelin cooled. I have never seen or heard from him since to be able to talk about it.

PS: Well, it's unfortunate that you didn't hear about this perception until after the fact, so you couldn't confront it at the time.

FLA: If there was any perception of this kind I would rather that they had put me on the carpet and try to clear it up.

PS: Well, that's a good point, of course. They could have drawn this interpretation and wondered why you said one thing to them and another to Congress, and asked you why you did it, instead of imputing a lie to you.

FLA: Exactly. Of course, this is all hearsay as far as I am concerned. But I still have Thomas's letter reporting this conversation to me.

PS: But it gives you an explanation for the coolness from Wakelin which you have no other explanation for.

FLA: I would have hoped that I would someday have had an opportunity to talk to him about it and talk it out, but I don't know where he is now.

You have asked the question about the relationship with the Secretaries. Any that I had with Secretary Korth was largely oriented to the TFX evaluation. The appropriate channel from the Bureau of Weapons to the Secretary would normally, and mostly, be between him and the Chief of the Bureau. My business at the Secretary level would be with the Assistant for Research and Development.

PS: Did you work at all with the Office of Naval Research?

FLA: Not specifically that I recall.

PS: What about OP-05³?

FLA: Probably not as much as I should have, since his responsibility was more in operational matters. Recently, however, Admiral Pirie wrote an article for the magazine *Wings of Gold*, the “house” organ for the Association of Naval Aviation, about his experience while he was the Deputy CNO for Air during the TFX affair. In this article he talked about the people in the Navy who were his advisors in regard to the TFX aircraft development and contractor selection, Admiral Chick Hayward, the Deputy CNO for research and development, Admiral Schoech and some others that I have forgotten. I was never mentioned as such, although I was signing off for the Navy in an important Navy aircraft development and procurement. I can’t say why this was. It may very well be that it was I who missed the boat with Pirie. Actually, I remember some discussion with him about the program. And I am sure that Admiral Stroop did, also.

PS: Did you get into any avionics or airborne Electronic Countermeasure (ECM) equipment in that work?

FLA: Except for what I have already talked about, namely our attempt to take advantage of the Air Force work in micro-electronics, I can’t recall anything else specifically.

PS: Apparently the ECM program was much more of a crash program once the North Vietnamese fire-control radars were such a problem.

FLA: Now we are talking about a much later period of that war. I retired in 1968 and the war was beginning to really heat up at that time.

PS: It was at its height at that time. But what I am saying is that when the threat came, it had to be dealt with very quickly. It wasn’t something that you had been building toward.

FLA: That is true. However, as far as I personally am concerned, I was completely out of that circuit for five years before I retired. According to Admiral Anderson, during a conversation with him on the flag bridge of the Sixth Fleet flagship, he was ordered by McNamara to get Ashworth out of Washington as long as he, the Secretary, was in town. So I was out of the system from around 1963 after the hearings until I retired.

PS: I know that you are not an emotional person, but I would think that would have been a very draining experience.

FLA: Do you refer to the TFX thing? Particularly the hearings were rather a traumatic experience for me. Recall that this was a Democratic administration at the time and the important members of the committee were Democrats, obviously. There was a Republican

³ OP-05 was the organizational designation within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations for the Deputy Chief for Air matters, Vice Admiral Robert L. Pirie.

member from Nebraska, Carl Curtis, that I recall attended all the meetings. I expect that he had been told to keep track of the hearings for the Republican leadership. Then there was Senator Scoop Jackson from Washington, Boeing's hometown. He was a regular attendee, as was Senator Muskie from Maine. I think that he was the Democrat designated hatchet man, because he asked all the tough questions of our members of the committee testifying. Of course, Jackson had an axe to grind, because I am sure that he was biased toward Boeing and wanted to find out why Boeing didn't get the contract.

So one day, we testified for about ten hours; Muskie zeroed in on me, asking me questions about the committee's deliberations. I tried to answer these questions as directly as I could, trying to say, "Yes, sir" or "No, sir." I think, in retrospect, that Muskie being a lawyer was also a trial lawyer by experience. He asked me a series of rather complicated questions, which I tried to answer, "yes" or "no". And after about 10 or 15 minutes of this, I discovered that I was beginning to contradict myself. Finally, he asked me a long, rambling, detailed question. I said to Senator Muskie, "I have been trying to answer your questions as completely as I am able. This question I simply do not understand. There is too much involved. I don't know how to answer it." That was the end of it. He was able to destroy my testimony, and that was all he wanted to do.

After this particular session was over, Senator McClellan's senior administrative staff man came to me and asked, "Didn't anyone ever brief you on how to testify before one of these Congressional committees?" I answered, "No, not particularly." "Well", he said, "No wonder you got yourself in a box. You were trying to answer the questions with "yes" or "no" and he got you exactly where he wanted you. Don't ever do that. The only sensible answer you made was the last one".

That was a liberal education, as far as I was concerned, but it was a little late and embarrassing for me, because he had gotten me around to the point where I was contradicting myself in testimony under oath, and that is not very comfortable.

PS: I wonder if this was considered one more strike against you with the McNamara people.

FLA: Oh, I don't know, perhaps. I don't know the degree to which they read the testimony, but I'm sure the staff people do.

It got to the point after the first couple of days that I seemed to be the focal point for the questions, and maybe properly so since I seemed to be the amateur in the group. So, after one of the sessions, I asked Senator McClellan's head staff person why they were asking me all the questions; I was not the chairman of the committee. The Air Force General is the chairman. He said, " Well, you talk English."

I was fortunate that George Spangenberg was sitting right behind me, and if I didn't know the answers to the questions, I could get help from him. We had a great time together.

PS: Please tell me more about him.

FLA: George was sort of a curmudgeon in a sensible way. Let me tell you something that illustrates what I mean. I have read recently somewhere that he was asked to write a paper on

advanced planning in aircraft design. His answer was, “No, I won’t. There’s no such thing as advanced planning in aircraft design. It is evolutionary. You work your way through it. Period.” That is typical. He was raised in the profession by a Navy Captain who had been doing this type of work for years, and George was his assistant, and apprentice, so to speak. When it came time, George took over his work. His main job was to evaluate contractor proposals in competitions for new aircraft design and contractual production. He was very opinionated, but his opinions were hardly ever challenged. He was very good at his work!

PS: Then he was probably one of the principal people putting together this report for Admiral Schoech on the dogs and the successes and so forth.

FLA: Yes, I am sure that is correct. There isn’t very much more to be said about George except that I was gratified to see that they had inducted him into the hall of fame at the Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida. It is also worthwhile to note that another civilian was inducted there also, Ed Heinemann.

PS: But he’s from private industry.

FLA: Yes, but in my opinion that fact makes it more noteworthy.

PS: Well, I’ve exhausted my questions on the subject of your tour in the Bureau of Naval Weapons.

FLA: There are a couple more comments that I would like to make about the matter of weapons conception and development. It was in the time period of 1962 and 1963.

While I held my job as Assistant Chief for R & D, the Naval Ordnance Laboratory in White Oak, Maryland came up with the idea for a new antiship mine. They called it “Captor”. The idea was to encapsulate a homing torpedo in a watertight capsule that would sit on the bottom of the harbor, or where it was needed, to do things that mines do. The unit would sense the passing of a ship, release the homing torpedo which would swim out in pursuit of the target and, when close enough, detonate either by contact or by proximity influence.

While in the bureau, we tried in the hardest way to sell the concept to the authorities in the Defense Department. We never could get it off the ground. Now, I understand, some 20 years later, the Captor system is one of the most respected antishipping mine developments we have.

PS: Why was there the opposition?

FLA: I don’t know, exactly. We just couldn’t get anybody to buy it. Perhaps “NIH, not invented here”, at work. But it highlights the problems of getting anything done when the bureaucracy is top-heavy.

PS: Do you remember anything about work on air-dropped mines?

FLA: I don't believe that there had been much done in that field except for the Captor system that I have mentioned. I was involved in laying a field of air-dropped mines during World War II when Admiral Mitscher wanted to close off the harbor area at the south end of Bougainville Island. We operated out of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. These were simply bottom influence mines that sensed the close passage of a ship which would cause the mine to detonate. These of course probably now have been replaced by the generation of air-dropped mines of the Captor type.

PS: That is all that I can talk about in connection with your duty in the Bureau of Naval Weapons. So, now we are ready to move on from Washington to the U.S.S. *Oriskany*, your flagship as Commander, Carrier Division One.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
APPLIED PHYSICS LABORATORY



Members of the Staff of the Laboratory
hereby record
their admiration of the statesmanship and leadership
which

Rear Admiral H. L. Ashworth, U. S. N.

has brought to the mutual endeavors of the Laboratory and the Navy
in his capacity as Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Naval Weapons
for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation.

His insight into the administration of research, gained from
outstanding experience in military operations and technology,
together with the courage and integrity to implement this insight,
have won our deepest respect.

Dick carries to his new assignment the affectionate friendship
of all who have worked with him and look forward to the day
when his warm understanding and incisive humor
will again illuminate the Washington scene.

W. H. Murray
A. L. Carlton

W. H. Mauch
J. J. McClellan

A. R. Eaton

Chas. F. Meyer

J. B. Garrison

R. C. Morton

H. N. Gore

H. A. Porter

W. Kerche

A. G. Schulz

A. Kossiakoff

T. W. Sheppard

R. W. Larson

A. M. Stone

P. S. Horn

May 8, 1963

NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION, INC.



SPACE and INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

R. F. WALKER
VICE PRESIDENT
& GENERAL MANAGER

April 5, 1963

Rear Admiral F. L. Ashworth
Assistant Chief, Bureau of Weapons
Department of the Navy
Pentagon Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dick:

I have been carefully following the news on the TFX investigation. It certainly has been a difficult situation for all of you who were trying to do a straightforward job of source selection. Appreciating that situation, I was prompted to drop a line and express my admiration for the stand you have taken. There are too few individuals who will defend a position that they believe to be right in the face of the type of political opposition you have encountered. I know that this has been one of your outstanding qualities in the years we have been acquainted and for what it is worth, I say, keep up the good work.

If at any time you are in the Tulsa area, please be sure to get in touch with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dick".

RFW:dck

26 April 1963

Dear Dick:

Thanks so very much for your note of April 5th. It was here when I returned from a most enjoyable vacation in the Virgin Islands, rested and ready for another round.

Perhaps you know I was relieved of my duties as Assistant Chief on April 3rd by Rear Admiral Emerson Fawces. My new job is in the Pacific as Commander Carrier Division ONE, which I hope to join soon, if the powers that be in the TFX permit me to be detached.

The hearings have been most trying. There seems to be a real concern on the hill over the decision that was reached. It gets doubly confusing when the reasons for the decisions turn out to be almost exactly the ones that prompted all of us to select Boeing. But, from my own point of view, it is easy to tell the truth. I have also learned more completely than ever of the quality of people we have here in the Bureau. I think we have preserved our image of integrity and reinforced the respect held in the industry for the Bureau. These are the two most important points of all.

Again thanks, Dick, for your kind note. I appreciate it deeply.

Sincerely,

F. L. ASHWORTH
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy

Mr. R. F. Walker
Vice President & General Manager
Space and Information Systems Division
North American Aviation, Incorporated
2000 North Memorial Drive
Tulsa, Oklahoma

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

ATTACK CARRIER DIVISION ONE (CarDiv1), PACIFIC FLEET COMMANDER June 1963 - February 1964



*U.S.S. Oriskany, CVA-34, Flagship of Carrier
Division One*

PS: We are ready now to move from Washington to U.S.S. *Oriskany*, your flagship as Commander, Carrier Division One.

FLA: Perhaps this fine assignment came to pass as a result of what Admiral Anderson told me later when he was aboard the Sixth Fleet flagship in the Mediterranean. He was then Ambassador to Portugal. It was then that he told me that Secretary McNamara had told him to get Ashworth out of Washington and don't let him back as long as he was Secretary. This was a result apparently of my testimony before the McClellan committee in regard to the selection of the TFX aircraft contractor. I have always found this difficult to believe, but Admiral Anderson told this to me directly and personally. So I guess the first move in that regard was my orders to command Carrier

Division One. I think this reflected my feeling that the Navy, at least, decided to back me up. They didn't send me to Siberia. They gave me nothing but good jobs until I retired except the last one, which I was never very happy with --- namely, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff CinCLantFlt, which is a glorified title for the Chief of Staff job. It better would have been a senior Captain billet.

These orders came as very much of a surprise, albeit a welcome one, because here I was about to embark on my second carrier division command and actually, I had very little carrier experience and none in the jet age. CarDiv One was home-ported in San Diego, North Island, alongside the adjacent interrupted piers. My boys were in school in various places. Dave at the Loomis School in New England, Rick at a prep school in Bethesda and Steve in a public school also in Bethesda. The family headquarters remained in Bethesda, Maryland, where we had purchased a home a few years before.

I proceeded to San Diego to report to the CarDiv, joined my staff and fortunately found myself in the hands of some super people. My Chief of Staff was Captain Roy Swanson who had just reported from the attack carrier *Independence* as commanding officer. The Operations Officer was a Captain John Shepherd, an aeronautical engineering trained postgraduate, and had been an engineering duty only officer (EDO). It was about this time that the EDOs were given the opportunity to revert to the regular line. I had known Shepherd before, since he was a

member of the Navy evaluation team for the TFX source-selection board. So I was familiar with him and, since he was fairly senior in that group, I was quite well acquainted with how he operated. Although I can't recall whether or not he was offered to me before his assignment, but if he was, I was prepared to accept him without any reservations. He had not had much carrier flying experience. However, I was not too concerned about that since Swanson, the Chief of Staff, had grown up in carrier flying all the way to command of an aircraft carrier. I had a very good staff navigator, a qualified surface officer. So, all in all, I was quite confident that I would have a fine staff to hold my hand!

The flagship, *Oriskany*, was the first carrier to have the new Naval Tactical Data System (NTDS) installed and the Admiral, Paul Masterton, my classmate whom I relieved, had just completed a West Pac deployment with the system. Masterton had spent a lot of time on that deployment shaking down the system and learning how to use it. When I relieved him, he told me that I would have a great opportunity to see how the system could be used in the operational environment and to find out whether it was actually as good as it appeared to be. Of course, this was right up my alley. I was used to this business of fooling with new stuff and rather enjoyed the prospect. So we deployed to the Western Pacific.

PS: It is my recollection that it was during this time that the Soviet Bears made a practice of overflying any important U.S. Navy ship in transit across the Pacific. Did you have any



Russian Bear aircraft overfly Carrier Division One. These photos were taken from our fighters (McDonnell F-4 Phantoms) launched to intercept the Russians.

experience with this?

FLA: We were warned that this would be a possibility, and indeed, it turned out to be in our case.

The Bears were detected maybe a hundred miles away from the formation, and according to standard practice we launched four, I think it was, of our F-3s or F-4s, I can't remember which now. We had a small detachment from the National Security Agency on board, and they were reading the conversation between the Soviets. I took my station in Combat Information Center (CIC) to monitor the operation, and I was connected by phone to the NSA group. Everything was going just as it should have been with the fighters climbing to intercept. At one point in my



McDonnell F-3 Demon



McDonnell F-4 Phantom

communication with the NSA people I was told that they heard the Bear talking that they were descending, probably to overfly us closely. I reported this conversation to the Fighter Director Officer, and, as I

suppose should have been expected, this word was transmitted to the fighters who, thereupon, started to descend to intercept during the descent. I should point out that the F-3 and the F-4¹ were large and heavy fighters, generally underpowered for their size and poor climbers. I suspect that they welcomed the order to stop the climb. In any event, the first thing that we aboard ship saw were two Soviet Bears close aboard. So, because the “old man” stuck his nose in the business of the fighter directors, the Soviets overflew us successfully.

One of the first things that we were ordered to do, by Com7thFlt in the Pacific I guess it must have been, was to proceed to an area off Viet Nam to remain out of sight from shore and carry out our routine flight operations, avoiding flying within sight of land. This was just after the coup that resulted in the death of Diem and when Big Minh took over. This lasted about 30 days and we were detached from that duty. I wish that I could recall our exact schedule, but that is impossible now.

PS: What was the command arrangement? Did you work for CTF 77² when you were over there?

FLA: We were at no time directly with CTF 77. Remember, this was in 1963 and there was not much action yet in the Viet Nam theater. I suppose that we were getting our orders from CTF 77, but I can't remember anything that connected us with him directly.

During the deployment we visited Sasebo, Hong Kong for the usual R&R, Subic Bay and Manila. I was granted leave in either Yokosuka or Sasebo. My wife had come out, and we visited the Army recreation center in central Honshu for a week or ten days. All in all, the operations around WestPac during our deployment were quite uneventful. Actually I had command of the CarDiv for only seven months and two months of that was in the Army

¹ F3H - the third fighter built for the Navy by McDonnell - was redesignated F-3 in 1962 . F4H - the fourth fighter built by McDonnell for the Navy - was redesignated F-4 in 1962.

² CTF 77, Commander Task Force 77, was the lead and senior Navy Task Force Commander in the Western Pacific area in the vicinity of Viet Nam. He had command of the aircraft carriers that were on station there to support the troops ashore. Senator John McCain was flying from one of the Task Force 77 carriers when he was shot down over Viet Nam.

Language School in Monterey, California. I'll talk about that in a minute.

There is one operation that is worth mentioning. There was a representative from the Operations Evaluation Group on board the flagship. With his enthusiastic concurrence with an idea we had, we put together a rather detailed and complex operation to test the NTDS. The idea was to work out an attack against the carrier by a large group of our own aircraft. There would be two identical operations. One where the defense of the task group would be controlled in the conventional manner, and an identical attack to be controlled using the NTDS. The operations were carried out successfully, and it was our opinion that the control by NTDS was far superior to that by conventional means. We would brief CinCPac on the results of the operation when we passed through Pearl Harbor on the way back to the States.

Another event that I recall rather well took place when my little task group of the carrier and our squadron of destroyer escorts was joined by a heavy cruiser with a cruiser-destroyer flotilla commander aboard, Rear Admiral Lot Ensey. It turned out that I had been his Plebe at the Naval Academy. He was in the class of 1930. It was fun when he called on me shortly after arrival to pay his respects.

On one occasion when Admiral Ensey was with us, after some rather heavy air group training days, we decided to have the air group stand down for three or four days to rest and bring up the maintenance of the aircraft. I sent a message to Ensey to this effect and told him that as of a certain time he would take tactical command of the task group for the next three or four days. Well, that time arrived, and nothing happened. I expected a long string of messages describing the cruising instructions and his plans for the period. So we continued steaming as we were when the time came for him to take over; the task group under no one's command. After a period of an hour or two, I sent Ensey a message by blinker light, "Did you receive my so and so message?" After about 20 minutes he came back with a negative, and then, apparently he found it in his communication system and reacted with all the necessary messages to take over tactical command. He ran the task group for the next few days. I suspect that this was maybe the first time he had a chance to do anything like this for he had newly arrived in WestPac. Things went well from then on. I saw him later and he apologized for the goof-up and thanked me for my patience.

Another interesting thing was done with the task group and that was the attempt to maneuver by flaghoist. In those days the flag bags were more for sleeping on than using the flags contained in them. Things went pretty slowly for a few days until the ships recognized that I wanted this to happen. Then we did most of the maneuvering with the flaghoists. Of course, the group had to be close aboard one another for the signals to be seen, but all in all, it was a successful experience and the ships seemed to respond enthusiastically.

We attempted to replenish at sea at every opportunity and in each case I ordered the "zipping the fly" procedure that I had been exposed to with Admiral Brown in the Sixth Fleet. This is such a high-speed maneuver that the signal hoists would be too slow and radio was used for the simultaneous turns required. We found that somehow one or two destroyers seemed to get caught in the inside as we made the final turn to the replenishment course, which we corrected by a timely voice radio signal to the destroyers to scatter to replenishment positions in the formation. It was fun for the staff, and with an excellent navigator, who was an expert on the maneuvering board, everyone involved found it exciting.

PS: Do you have any more recollections on Captain Swanson, your Chief of Staff?

FLA: Roy was a most outstanding officer in all respects, and a highly qualified Naval Aviator in all aspects of carrier air operations. You have asked me somewhere in this interview about my evaluation of the aviation cadets, particularly as to how, in my experience, they performed. Roy Swanson was one of them who was promoted to Admiral. There were a lot of them who followed the same route, and those who reached that level were all outstanding. Roy had command of a fleet oiler before assigned command of *Independence* and knew the aviation game in a first-class fashion. Perhaps that is why they assigned him to my staff.

PS: Well, by this time, you were getting some carrier experience, too.

FLA: Yes, I suppose so, but in a vicarious way watching other people doing it. I still miss the fact that I never really participated in it in the high-speed times of jet aviation. Even though I checked out to solo the F9F, I never had an opportunity to qualify in it for carrier landings, although I don't see that there would have been any problem in doing it. The plane flew just like any other aircraft, and I don't think that I would have had any more trouble with the jets than I did with the earlier aircraft.

PS: Swanson had been Exec of the aircraft carrier *Shangri-la* and I interviewed his skipper, Francis Foley, who was very high on him, also.

FLA: I can understand that for he must have been a perfect Exec, because he was a perfect Chief of Staff. We worked together very well, which reminds me of an operation we had with the task group off Southern California after we returned to our home port.

It was standard practice for a CarDiv to stand down for a month after a WestPac deployment. I turned command over to the Chief of Staff so that I could go to the language school in Monterey to learn more French than I had learned at the Naval Academy, in anticipation of orders to Europe. This turned into a two-month period, one month short of the regular three-month course because we were ordered to conduct an at-sea operation. But more on the language school later.

When we wrote the operation order for this two-week operation, I was resolved that there had to be a better way of writing an op-order than the usual 40- or 50- page document that told the ships how to do everything short of making coffee. It seemed to me that much of the stuff that was usually included in these orders was already written down somewhere in standing instructions like the Naval Warfare Information Publications (NWIP). I tried to identify as much of this as possible so that we could simply reference these publications in the order. They covered all the normal cruising instructions and things of that nature. Then about all we needed were the identification of the operational area, designation of a few reference points, a communication plan, any special cruising instructions and the like material special for that particular operation, an order of about ten pages. The electronic countermeasures annex simply said "Everything off unless the Captain decided he needed to use it in an emergency or whatever,

in his personal opinion, a radar search or radio communication was necessary for the safety of his ship.” It was the Captain’s decision to make. Needless to say, the Captains loved it and although we were monitored continuously for electronic emissions we were told that none had been detected. I find this not quite correct, for we were using the NTDS with its medium-frequency links that must have been readable for miles. But in any event, we were complimented for our silent operation.

PS: Were any of the families of the ship or staff in the forward area and did you have a chance to bring any of them aboard to watch air operations?

FLA: Yes, there were three or four of the staff officers’ wives and possibly some from the ship’s company there with us. On one occasion we crossed the Inland Sea from Iwakuni to Beppu on a daylight trip and invited those who wanted to go with us. We ran some abbreviated flight operations and made some tours of the ship. My wife was aboard, and I took her up to “vultures’ row”, the platform above the flight deck at about the flag bridge level where you can get a good view of the operations. She thought that catapulting must be fun, but after one of the F-8s came in for an arrested landing with all its noise, sparks and general clatter, she turned to me and asked, “Is that what you want my little boy, David, to be doing?” David was in his last year at Stanford in the Navy ROTC and looked forward to flight training.

PS: How about protocol activities in some of these ports, did you have that to do?

FLA: Most of the ports that we visited required only the routine calls and return calls for the local officials, both military and civilian. At Beppu things got a little more interesting. The Mayor invited my wife and me and the Chief of Staff to dinner at a local restaurant together with some of his entourage. We were required to remove our shoes and put on slippers. We sat on cushions on the floor and used chopsticks as best we could. The only liquor that was served was beer and the typical saki. I noted that the Mayor seemed to be getting more and more inarticulate, and then saw that he had a bottle of Scotch behind him from which he had been taking nips. It was not too long before he excused himself and staggered out. That was our dinner with the Mayor of Beppu.

PS: Admiral Hyland said that when he was over there as the Seventh Fleet Commander, Johnnie Walker was the most popular gift he could give.

FLA: I agree with that, and my experience has been that it is the same in Europe as well.

PS: You mentioned earlier that you were able to attend the language school at Monterey in anticipation of orders to France. Tell me how that came about.

FLA: Although I had not received orders at the time, I had been advised that I was to go from the CarDiv to the headquarters of the U.S. European Command in Paris as Deputy Chief of Staff. I thought that the stand-down period after the deployment would be an excellent time to brush up

on my French. At that time the amphibious command in Coronado was running French language courses for people being ordered to Viet Nam where French was a second language. First, however, I needed permission by my bosses, ComNavAirPac and Com1stFlt, to hand command of the CarDiv over to the Chief of Staff and take the time off to attend language school.

PS: I think that Taylor Keith had the First Fleet around then. Do you recall him?

FLA: No, it was Admiral Eph Holmes. My old friend P.D. Stroop was Commander Naval Air Force Pacific. These were my two bosses. First I asked Admiral Stroop if my plan was OK with him, and he said that he guessed so as long as it would be OK with Holmes. I saw Holmes, and he said that he guessed it would be OK if it was OK with Stroop. I told him that Stroop had said the same thing, so I presumed that I had their permission.

My contact with the amphibious force school struck out. They said that they were too busy with their people going to Viet Nam. I thought that this was a little cavalier treatment of a Rear Admiral, but I knew that there was an Army Language School in Monterey. It was then called the Defense Language School. I flew to Monterey, talked to the Army colonel in charge, telling him that, although I did not yet hold orders, I was to be transferred to Paris in the European Command. He picked up the telephone, called Washington, told them that there was a Navy Admiral in his office who wanted to enroll in a French class at the school. He hung up after a few seconds, literally, and told me that my class had already convened and to be at the school the following Monday morning. He made another call and asked for a set of French tapes and a tape recorder for me. I began in a class that had already been in session for a month, but they thought that with my background in college and at the Naval Academy that would be a good place to start.

PS: Was it ever identified during visits to Japanese ports that you'd been there before in August of 1945?

FLA: No. The Public Relations people put out biographies in ports that we visited, but I purposely had it left out of my biography that I had anything to do with the bomb. I did visit Hiroshima and went to the atom bomb museum there, and later had a brief visit in Nagasaki.

I was granted leave for a week or ten days and took a bus trip to an Army rest and recreation hotel, the exact location, I can't recall now, but it was around the city of Gotemba. There was a stop in Gotemba and as we stretched our legs, a young Japanese student, I am sure from his uniform, approached us and told us in very good English that our President Kennedy had been shot.

PS: What are your recollections from visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

FLA: It was the younger people who, when they recognized us as Americans, felt free to talk to us. You had the sense that the older people clearly resented our presence. The thing that impressed me the most, I think, in talking to younger Japanese people, you got the sense that they didn't blame the United States for the loss of life and the destruction of the cities. They

blamed their own government, because it became well known that their government had been warned, in leaflets dropped prior to the bombs, that the Potsdam ultimatum had been defied and that if the government did not surrender, their cities would be systematically destroyed. The people were urged to ask their government to surrender. The Japanese people seemed to feel that their government had betrayed them.

The “Peace” museum at Hiroshima had the usual collection of photographs of the damage to their city and the plight of the survivors immediately after the bomb detonation. I suppose that a case can be made that this is good for future generations. There is left standing in Hiroshima what is left of a church, much as the Germans left the bombed-out cathedral in Berlin. I didn’t visit the museum in Nagasaki. It was too attractive a city, and we were there for only one day.

PS: Had the devastation there been repaired.

FLA: Oh, yes. There was no evidence that anything had happened in Nagasaki, at least in the areas where I had time to visit. To a large degree, the city had not been as badly damaged as had Hiroshima, due to the fact that, luckily, we put the bomb in a different area a mile or so away from the main part of the city, and there was a range of hills between so that much of the shock wave damage was deflected from the city proper.

We returned to San Diego and, according to standard practice for ships after an extended deployment to WestPac, the CarDiv was ordered to stand down for a month.

PS: Where was the ship home-ported? Was it Alameda?

FLA: San Diego.

PS: So Coronado would have been much more convenient if you could have gone to the language school there.

FLA: That’s right, but I contacted them to ask if they could take me. They said, no, that they were already too full to take any more students. They were training people to go to Viet Nam.

PS: You haven’t talked in any detail about the language school itself. Are there any recollections from that?

FLA: Yes, of course. This was a very interesting and useful experience for me. It turned out, I don’t know how things are now, but I was the most senior officer that had attended the school, but I didn’t get any special attention in class out of this. Mostly, I was treated as just another student.

The school was run on the so-called total-immersion principle which required that only French be spoken at all times in class. Classes were held from 8:00 o’clock to 4:00 in the afternoon and as much as two hours of homework was expected to be done. Each day we had a little skit to put on. The manuals told who the participants were, members of the class took the

parts, and you carried on in French reciting your part. We never knew which part we would be required to take, so it was necessary to learn it all. It gave us the chance to stand on our feet and recite in French from memory. These usually took about 15 or 20 minutes each to do. Then there were frequent quizzes to test what we had learned.

It is worth noting that during the instruction we had several different instructors, some men and some women. There was a woman from Paris, so we were exposed to the Parisian accent. There was one woman from Algiers. There was a man instructor from the south of France. Another woman was a typical “black Mama”, my best description, from Haiti. Strangely, I was able to understand her French best of all. Of course, the object of this was to expose us to the different accents that we might encounter.

The first class that I was assigned to was their regular three-months course. But after a few days we recognized that after my experience in high school, Dartmouth College and the Naval Academy, I was more advanced than those in that class so I was advanced to a class that had been underway for a month. I was able to step into this class with no problem. So, effectively, I was able to complete the three-month course in two months that I was permitted to stay at the school. Then duty called in San Diego.

During the last couple of weeks of the course I was privileged to have some one-on-one instruction with the head of the department, who was totally bilingual. We conversed in French much as I was likely to do when in Paris. This was a most helpful experience for I learned some of the protocol language that I would probably have to know in my job at the European Command. Incidentally, he told me that they could make a person fluent in six months, but not in three months.

I discovered that when we got to Paris, I didn't have any trouble in the *marches* and also in conversations with Monsieur Dambeza, the head of the Committee for the Assistance to the Allied Forces in France. President de Gaulle had directed that all official business with the Allies be conducted in French, typical of the great General.

Well, I have gone astray a bit about the language school. There isn't very much more to be said about it, except that it's an exceedingly effective way of learning a language. I have reached the opinion that the advertising for the language tapes that you can order and make yourself fluent in 30 days is a total hoax. I tried one of these out before I went to Russia a couple of years ago and found that they were useless. Probably you can memorize a few expressions, but I think that the tapes are hopeless, unless you have some acquaintance with the grammar, if you want to be able to think in the language. You have to get into the grammar, the declensions and conjugations and understand the tenses. As for French, you can get along quite well with the present, future and past tenses. That's all that I ever really learned.

PS: Did you get some culture along with the language itself?

FLA: Yes, to some degree, but not much. Actually that was another of the advantages of having instructors from various areas and dialects. They did give us some information about their particular parts of the country. But our course was devoted more to conversation.

I think that it is a shame that we don't educate more of our people in foreign languages. Sometime later I was a member of a curriculum review board for the Naval Academy. I held out

for requiring a background, probably at the high school level, for a foreign language for entry into the Academy, but not requiring that the language be studied there as it was during my time. Certainly, a language should be offered to those who had become fairly proficient before entrance, assuming that there were instructors qualified to teach it, and that is no easy assumption. But it should not necessarily be required as a course of study for everyone. Then later, when an officer is to be ordered to duty that would require knowledge of the local language, I recommended that time be taken out of the officer's life to attend the language school and really learn the language. So what if it takes six months or even a year out of his service time, the payoff in his new duty would be worth it.

I know that you can't learn a language conversationally in the courses that we were exposed to at the Academy when I was there. We had two years of it. Before graduating we were offered the opportunity to try to qualify either as a "translator" or "interpreter. I tried and after having had two years of French in high school, one year at Dartmouth and two years at the Academy, I qualified as "translator", but failed the "interpreter" test, and properly so; I couldn't speak French.

Let me give you an example of my thinking on this. When I was in the European Command Headquarters, our chief French translator and interpreter was an American girl who was a graduate of the University of Delaware, majoring in romance languages, Phi Beta Kappa. After graduating, she went to France to exercise at her trade as a French linguist. She quickly discovered that she couldn't speak the language well enough to qualify for any position that she hoped to get. She returned to the States, got a Fulbright Scholarship at the university in Montpellier in the south of France. She lived with a French family for a year while going to school, and ended up fluent in the language, essentially bilingual.

I think that says precisely what the problem is. It's very difficult to learn a foreign language so that you can use it with some degree of fluency in the home country. The language school can teach it because you are living with the language for six months under the total immersion idea. It certainly won't substitute for the program that my friend traveled, but six months at the school will go a long way toward the goal of good conversational language. This is why I feel that if an officer must go to a duty station where command of a language is required, send him to an intense instruction program where he can really learn, based upon having had some exposure to the grammar, such as the Academy entry requirement that I have suggested.

It is a poor commentary that I was the most senior officer to have attended the Defense Language School up to that time. We say that the officer cannot be spared for the time that the instruction would take. I don't buy that for in my case it was just by my own brute force and my personal effort to try to pick up my French, and the world didn't stop while I was at the school. It was certainly worth its weight in gold when I got to Europe and particularly while in command of the Sixth Fleet.

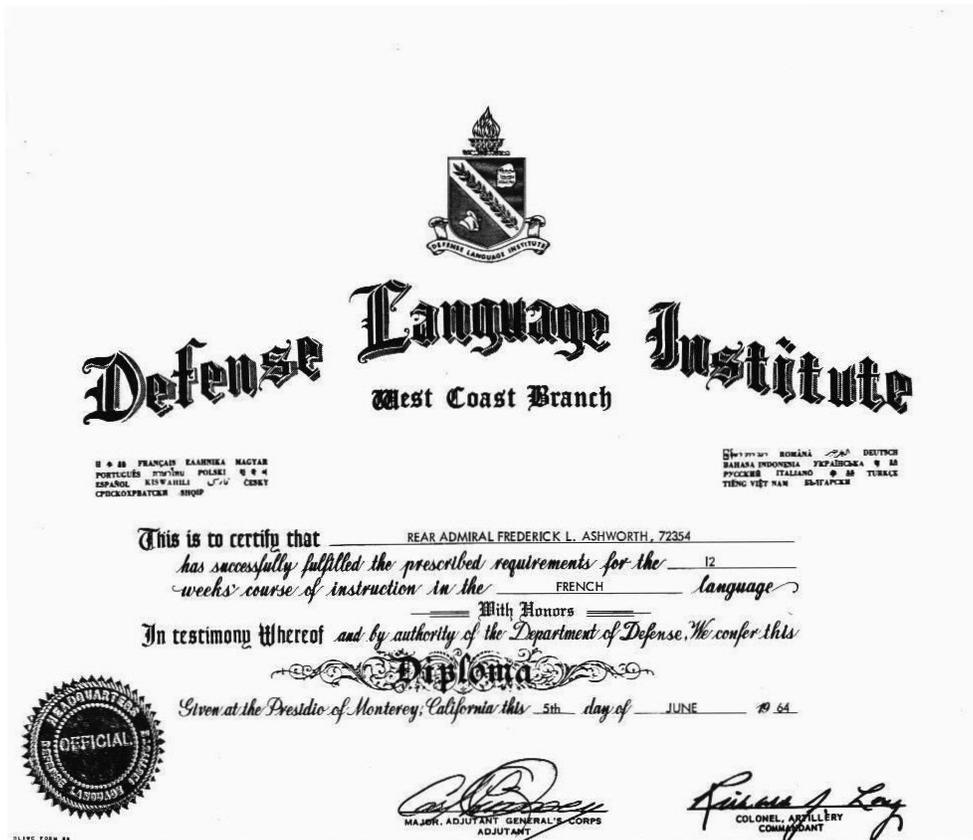
PS: Again in relation to the carrier command. How much interaction did you have with the top commander, Naval Air Force Pacific?

FLA: In this regard I have to say again that I had only a couple of weeks in San Diego before

we deployed west. And all told I had only about four or five months with the division, all the time deployed, before I returned to San Diego and turned over command to Eddie Outlaw. I suppose that the at-sea exercise that we had after the stand-down was ordered by Com1st Flt.

The one thing that we have not covered that I mentioned earlier has to do with the air defense exercises we held using conventional and NTDS control. With the help of the Operations Evaluation Group (OEG) representative we had with us, we prepared a discussion of the exercises for presentation to Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet, Admiral Oley "8:00 o'clock" Sharp. This turned out to be somewhat of a disaster I felt, mostly because it was my impression that Sharp didn't believe we knew what we were talking about, and by his few questions thought that it was much ado about nothing. We were particularly criticized for placing the one heavy cruiser we had on the attack axis and well ahead of the rest of the force. That, he said was an invitation to disaster and a good way to lose a cruiser. Perhaps so. I am not enough of a tactician to know. At least it was what the OEG rep thought was the best position for it for early radar warning and missile attack against the incoming raids. In any event, I think that the exercise was worthwhile, and it became evident after analysis that we had far better control of the defense forces and protected the force better under the NTDS control, which was what we were trying to investigate.

PS: We're ready next to take advantage of the French language training once you got to Paris.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND, PARIS, FRANCE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF March 1964 - May 1966



Steve, Nan and me arriving at Le Havre, France



FLA: Finally, my orders to the U.S. European Command arrived in San Diego, I was detached from the CarDiv and proceeded to Washington to join my family and prepare to travel to Europe. My wife had already sold our house in Bethesda. My oldest son, Rick, was in college in Hartford, Connecticut, and Dave, middle son, was in Stanford. Steve, our youngest, would go to Paris with us to finish his 11th and 12th grades at the Paris American High School.

I can't remember how it came to pass, but we were booked aboard the S.S. *United States* for the trip to Le Havre. The trip was uneventful until the last two days out when we ran through a typical North Atlantic storm. Actually, it was pretty mild, and most people seemed to have suffered little, if any, ill effects. We arrived at Le Havre on schedule, were met at the dock by a staff car from the headquarters, and drove to Saint-Germain-en-Laye, a suburb of Paris, where the headquarters was located. Actually, the headquarters was located in Camp de Loges, a section of Saint Germain-en-Laye.

The details of getting settled escape my memory, but we hired a small house in Saint Germaine that belonged to a Paris radio personality. It was very comfortable and located in a neighborhood of small homes. It is interesting to note that in the year and a half that we lived there we only became acquainted with our neighbors when we invited them to come and have cocktails and the like in our home. Our scotch whiskey went a long way to making the evening a congenial one. It is just the French way, I guess.

Most of the officers in the European



*28 Alle du Levrier, Le Vesinet, S&O, France.
Left: Flies the American flag on Armistice Day. Right: Nan enjoys a spring day.*



Command and the NATO headquarters lived in an American compound called Bel Manoir. We insisted that we live “on the economy”. I relieved a very senior Captain, Robert Campbell and during the very brief relieving ceremony, I piped him “over the side”, and out the front door of the headquarters, using my newly acquired skills on the boatswain’s pipe. He was pleased with that, and I went to work.

So, again, I found myself in more or less unfamiliar working circumstances, confronted with a job for which I had not had much experience as a senior staff officer. As I have already pointed out, I was promoted to flag rank out of the period of my professional life when I should have been chief of staff of a carrier division command, or in some staff organization. My time on the amphibious staff during the war hardly counted, for it was not

much of a job, with little staff responsibility. I was also promoted out of all the senior service colleges where I might have learned a little about staff duty.

I didn’t find that the job of the Deputy Chief of Staff was very well defined. The Chief of Staff was an Army Lieutenant General. My predecessor was the first naval officer to hold the Deputy job. I should note that I was relieved by a Navy Rear Admiral, a Naval Academy classmate, who later took over the job of Chief of Staff and promoted to Vice Admiral, an interesting situation where the bulk of the forces in the European Command were Army.

General Lemnitzer was not only the Supreme Allied Commander of the NATO forces, but also in command of the United States forces stationed in Europe and as such he was also the commander of the United States European Command. General Lemnitzer delegated his responsibility for the European Command to an Air Force General, Jake Smart. He was out of

the class of 1931 at West Point and a fine person, very easy to work for. He was a bachelor, having been shot down during the war over Schweinfurt, captured, declared missing in action and his wife having then divorced him. He was never married since. General Smart was a gentleman in all respects and the finest Air Force officer that I ever met.

PS: What, briefly, were your duties as Deputy Chief of Staff?

FLA: I never thought that the duties were very well defined. I did hold staff meetings every morning to talk about the latest situation in the command, and then briefed the Chief of Staff on what I had learned. One of the better aspects of the job was that the Deputy had been assigned supervision over the Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAG) in Europe. Probably “supervision” is not exactly the right word. I expect that “oversee” would describe the responsibility better. The best part of it was that to “oversee” what was going on in the MAAGs it became “necessary” to make inspections from time to time. This took me to Norway, Sweden, Italy, Germany, Greece and to Turkey, if I remember correctly. Each trip required about a week. So I did have the opportunity to see a bit of Europe.

I rationalized as part of my duty to make a visit with the Army on a major field exercise in Germany. I was given permission to do so and spent about ten days with the Seventh Army. I was assigned a general officer’s field living accommodation which was essentially a cabin mounted on a truck chassis. Very comfortable with all the amenities, but somehow they left out the heating plant. It was cold in northern Germany in the winter time. The only casualty was when my shaving cream froze. The Army people seemed to be genuinely pleased to have a representative from the top command with them, and the fact that it happened to be a Navy Flag Officer lent a little spice to it.

The Assistant Commander of the infantry division was designated as my sponsor and each day was spent flying around the exercise area by helicopter, looking in on all the scattered units of the command. I used to think that the Navy had communications problems. But my impression was that they were nothing compared with the Army trying to keep in effective touch with all their small units scattered about the area.

Even after a week I found that I had gained very little concept of what they were trying to do. Ground fighting over a big area seems to get to be very complicated with effective communications the key. In this case they were exercising in a nuclear weapon environment, so there were small units scattered about the exercise area. Usually there would be a Colonel or Lieutenant Colonel in charge.

Each evening the Commanding General of the division would hold a critique of the day’s operations with each subordinate commander reporting. My impression was that if the Army had any problems in running a field exercise like this, it had to be communications. As I listened to the reports, I finally made a comment to General Connor, “I’m astonished at what appears to be a lack of communications between the scattered units.” Strangely enough the General agreed with me and said that this is one of their major problems about which something had to be done. How an Army division, scattered out like this, and how any kind of centralized command can be executed without good communications absolutely escapes me. Maybe the Assistant Division Commander flying around in the helicopter can coordinate things, but I don’t think so. Actually

what was going on with the helicopter tours was largely to give me a sightseeing tour and maybe to get me out of the hair of the headquarters. But, in any event, it was really very interesting.

PS: A lot more interesting than paper work. It appears to me that you had an opportunity to see a good bit of Europe while you were there.

FLA: Yes, and I took every opportunity to do so. I made one trip into West Berlin as the guest of the Army's Berlin Brigade Commander, General Freeman. He was an exceedingly fine gentleman and obviously a good commander who demanded the deep respect of all the troops in the command. I was interested to learn later that he had cancer of the colon and carried a colostomy around throughout all this. I was amazed that under these circumstances he was still on active duty. I guess the Army recognized a good man when they saw one!

I was given a helicopter tour around Berlin, but was not permitted to go into East Berlin on the ground. I was able however, to have pointed out to me the "Femina" night club that I had gone to as a midshipman, now known as the "Sexy Club". Later my wife made a tour to Berlin with some of the wives of the headquarters including a side trip into East Berlin where she did some shopping and sightseeing.

PS: I presume that your past knowledge of nuclear things and current allied plans for Europe precluded your visit to East Berlin.

FLA: That is correct, I am sure. I don't think that any of the top commanders in Europe were permitted to visit East Berlin on the ground at that time.

PS: Another point on this Army communications thing is that the Navy operates all the time, peace and war, and has it more or less mastered. The Army doesn't operate so much continuously. So, it's communication systems are that much more important.

FLA: Yes, I guess that is generally correct. I sometimes wonder about our own communications now, though. Back in the 30s the Navy had the supreme communication capability, within the constraints of the equipment of the period. I know that then it was far more dependable than that of the Army. Of course, as far as the Army is concerned, and the Marine Corps too, we are talking about portable equipment that must be carried on a soldier's back or on a Jeep and must be pretty difficult to keep running under those circumstances. I hope that maybe some of work in the BuWeps in micro-electronics might have fixed some of this.

PS: You haven't mentioned anything about your need to use your French training.

FLA: There are a couple of things worth mentioning. General de Gaulle, who was then President of France, was running for re-election at the time that I was there. He was scheduled to make a campaign speech in the central square of the city of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Someone decided that it would be a good thing to have all the general and flag officers in the European Command headquarters meet the President. A large platform had been built in the square from

which he would speak. We were all lined up along the walk that he would use to climb the stairs to the platform. He was introduced to all of us as he passed by. He came to me, and in my best French from the language school I said, "Je vous present mes respects, Monsieur le President". "I present to you my respects, Mr. President." He looked me straight in the eye with not a flicker and moved on. I was a little surprised at this, because I don't think anyone else addressed him in French and this is the highest compliment that you can make. I learned that during my one-on-one lessons with the head of the French language department at the school in Monterey.

PS: So he was just going through the motions.

FLA: I suppose so. I am sure that it didn't take him by surprise. He has had such things happen before, I am sure. There is a story in France that once in a conversation with his wife, she came out with "Mon Dieu" to which he interjected, "You, Madame, may call me Mon General".

In any event, he gave his speech and was considered to be a good speaker. His French was not too difficult to understand. I can't for one second say that I hoisted aboard his entire speech, but I could get a lot of it because his enunciation was excellent, and that is what is very helpful in understanding the language, any language, I suppose.

I may have mentioned it before; one of my duties was to provide the liaison between our headquarters and "Le Committe Pour l'Assistance des Forces Allie en France" headed by a Monsieur Dambeza. At this late date I am not sure of the French in that title, but it is close. After a couple of sessions with M. Dambeza during which he spoke English with me, DeGaulle ordered that all official communication with any French activities be conducted in French. M. Dambeza apologized, pointing out that we had been getting along fine in English. So it was my turn to use my French in these meetings and again, we got along quite well. As you can see he was a complete gentleman, one of the most pleasant French persons I met there.

PS: I would be interested in some of your observations on living on the French economy.

FLA: This was a fairly good neighborhood where we lived. It was an outlying "banlieu" of Paris called Le Vesinet, probably out about ten miles from downtown Paris. As far as I could tell, there was a fairly good cross section of people in our immediate neighborhood. All the houses were built close together and each had a high wall surrounding it. The French seem to want privacy, and that goes for their immediate neighbors. It is hard to get to know any of them behind their tight walls. We decided to force the issue, so to speak, and invited several of our neighbors into our home for cocktails. All of those who were invited, came, maybe out of curiosity, but probably because they knew that good old scotch whisky would be flowing. That is their favorite hard drink. Bourbon is considered to be unfit for drinking.

It was our impression that none of the people who came knew one another very well, if at all, even though they were all neighbors and seemed to be meeting for the first time. That's the French way I guess. And, of course, only French was spoken with which my wife and I were able to hold our own quite well.

One of our neighbors across the street was a Monsieur LeBard. During the course of the evening he was looking at a French wall clock that we had recently picked up. It was a

pendulum movement, with the pendulum made of tin, and about three feet long. The face of the clock was also made of tin and the whole thing painted a gilt color. As Monsieur LeBard looked at the clock, he said, “Ou sont les coins?” “Where are the corners?” I said that “j’ai coupe les coins.” I had cut off the corners because the face looked better. He was incensed that anyone would do such a thing, and I am sure that he was correct. The clock was supposed to be mounted in a case like a grandfather clock. Now that I have been exposed to some of the people who deal in and love antiques, I know what he thought about it. I had pretty much ruined a good old French clock.

That’s the last we heard from our neighbors. Invitations were not returned, nor was the party acknowledged. It is said that it is not that the French don’t like Americans, they don’t like one another, and that is particularly true in Paris. In the south of France you find a much more friendly environment. However, there was one incident that tends to disprove what I have just said.

At the time of the party, my wife mentioned that we liked cats, but had not brought one with us. One day one of our neighbors came to our door with a small kitten that she wished us to have. It had been abandoned when they found it. So we had a kitten for a while until it fell out of a tree and injured its back. I think that it had always been slightly disabled before it was picked up by the neighbor, hence not very agile in climbing trees. So that was the end of “Monsieur Petiot”, whose name I took from the principal character in the little skits that we had to memorize in French class at Monterey.



“Monsieur Petiot” named for the principal character in my French language school skits. Unfortunately M. Petiot fell out of a tree in our backyard and injured his spine. We had to have him put to sleep. I think that the fact that he fell out of the tree indicated that there was already something wrong with him.

Paris policemen are totally impatient with our more or less feeble attempts to speak their language. Again, this is not true

with the taxi drivers and much less so in the south off France. They, and those out of the city of Paris, seemed to be much more appreciative of us at least trying to speak their language.

As for the Paris police, I recall an incident that occurred a few years later on a visit. One morning while there, as I was dressing I discovered that my wallet was missing. In trying to reconstruct what might have happened to it, I remembered that we had boarded the Metro in Pigalle, and while it was waiting to move, there was a man who came running to board the train. He got in OK, bumped me, said “Pardon, madame” to my wife and left, running away across the metro station. It was a neat job for sure, and one that I should have recognized. But he had taken my wallet as neatly as you please. There was neither money in the wallet nor my passport,

but it did contain my Navy ID card and some credit cards.

The next day I went to the American Embassy to report to the Naval Attaché that someone was around Paris with my Navy ID card. I was not permitted to see the Attaché, but was advised to report the incident to the police, which I did. “Est’ce qui’l y a person ici qui parle Anglais?” “Is there anyone here who speaks English?” Reply, “Vous parlez Francais.” “You speak French”, so I had to carry on from there in French. The long and the short of it was that although frequently they find stolen wallets in trash cans around the city, mine was never found and turned in to the Embassy.

PS: Were there any military operations carried out while you were on the staff?

FLA: There was only one, and that occurred when there was an uprising in Kinshasa, in Zaire, that used to be the Belgian Congo. It was decided that there had to be an immediate airlift of Belgian paratroops into the area to stabilize the situation. The timing was very short, and it required around-the-clock planning and execution for the operation. This was done largely in the operations division under the guidance of an Air Force Lieutenant General, the division head. The operation went smoothly and after a couple of days the uprising had been put down.

PS: Of course it’s probably hard to remember all the details required for such an operation because that was a force in readiness, not a force that was doing a lot.

FLA: Well, that’s right. It was more a problem of planning the logistics and the details of the airlift and the selection of the troops to do it. Apparently it was considered proper to use Belgian troops since they were probably most familiar with the area and the people.

PS: Was there a fair amount of harmony in the staff of these various services represented?

FLA: Oh, yes. There was no problem there. There didn’t appear to be any service jealousy. Since the command was in a pretty relaxed attitude there was not much turmoil and since turmoil tends to breed controversy, I didn’t detect any inter-service problems. Perhaps this reflects the attitude of General Smart. Although he was Air Force, you would not detect any bias either way as far as I was able to see.

PS: Wasn’t it about this time that the French pulled their military out of the North Atlantic Alliance?

FLA: Although I wasn’t on the staff when the full impact of this hit, I did get involved later when I had command of the Sixth Fleet. I think that the original intent was that I would fleet up to the Chief of Staff job, but that did not happen because, one day I was called by phone by Captain Ike Kidd, Admiral McDonald’s front office assistant, to tell me that I was to be ordered in command of the fleet in the Mediterranean. I did become involved early in my responsibility for relations with the Committee for the Assistance of Allied Forces in France that I mentioned earlier. It was decided to move both the SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe)

and the U.S. Forces Europe headquarters to Brussels. But I was gone before they got down to the details. I was looking forward to my new job.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL LESLIE R. GROVES
2101 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008

February 18, 1966

Dear Ashworth:

I was delighted to see in the Armed Forces Journal that you were the new Commander of the Sixth Fleet and that this included your promotion to Vice Admiral. My congratulations to you.

I was long ago convinced that you would reach a high level of command in the Navy and that once you had reached it, no one would ever regret your selection.

With very best wishes.

Sincerely,

Leslie R. Groves

24 March 1966

Lieutenant General Leslie R. Groves
2101 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20008

Dear General Groves:

Your very kind note was forwarded to me here in Paris from the SIXTH Fleet flagship, since I have not yet assumed command. This will be May eleventh. Of course, Nan and I look forward with great expectation to our new responsibilities. She has asked me especially to tell you that she promises never again to address any other General as Admiral.

I particularly appreciate your expression of confidence because I know from experience it is not given lightly.

Certainly your travels must take you into the Mediterranean area on occasion and, if so, our warmest hospitality is always open to Mrs. Groves and you. In the meantime, Nan joins me in sending our very best to you both.

Sincerely,

F. L. ASHWORTH

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

UNITED STATES SIXTH FLEET, MEDITERRANEAN
COMMANDER
May 1966 - April 1967



FLA: After Ike Kidd had called me to tell me that I was to be ordered to command the Sixth Fleet, I made a couple of flying trips down to Villefranche, the home port of the flagship, U.S.S. *Springfield*, a light cruiser, on the French Riviera. I started the search for some place for my wife and me to live in the area.

Villefranche-sur-Mer is located a few miles east of Cannes and just west of Monaco. It is a beautiful little harbor set in a magnificent location. The town is a small fishing village of only a few hundred people, but is a popular place for tourists to visit.



*United States Sixth Fleet
May 11, 1966
U.S.S. Springfield
Change of Command Address*

Your Highness, Mr. Secretary, Admiral Griffin, distinguished guests, officers and men of the flagship and of the staff. To assume Command of the United States Sixth Fleet is indeed a singular honor for any Naval officer in the service of his country. I accept that honor with great humility and I accept it with full understanding and recognition of the responsibilities that I will assume to the United States and to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

To Admiral Ellis and Mrs. Ellis, I wish you the best of great good fortune in your coming new responsibilities with the assurance that Mrs. Ashworth and I will continue the work that you both have now completed so brilliantly here in the Mediterranean for the United States.

And to the officers and men of the Flagship and the staff and their ladies, be assured that we both are delighted to join you here and work together with you toward this goal.

Secretary of the Navy, The Honorable Paul Nitze, addresses the Change of Command ceremony at Villefranche.



Vice Admiral W. E. Ellis and Vice Admiral F. L. Ashworth render honors during National Anthem.





As new Commander of the Sixth Fleet, flying into Messina



Messina, Italy. Saluting the Italian Navy Honor Guard



Nan arriving in Rome by Navy transport aircraft. She is greeted by the wife of our Naval Attaché. As Commander United States Sixth Fleet we will make our protocol calls on Italian Navy, Government and City officials. Note Honor Guard, left and right.

I learned later that in the late 1880s the U.S. Navy Mediterranean squadron of square-rigged frigates also used Villefranche as their homeport. I was given some photographs of these ships at anchor in the harbor made by a photographer's shop in Nice which I have since given to the Naval Institute for their photo files. It is worthwhile noting that during the month of August, when most of Europe and certainly just about every one in France goes on vacation, they head for the French Riviera. And here, moored in this beautiful little harbor is a superb example of the United States Navy in the Mediterranean for everyone to see, the Sixth Fleet flagship. I suppose more than 100,000 Europeans vacation on the Riviera during August. If I remember correctly Admiral Forrest Sherman, the first fleet commander, established the flagship homeport there. It was to be my lot later to move the home port when President de Gaulle decided to force the NATO military part of the Atlantic Alliance out of France.

PS: Did Captain Kidd give you any explanation of why you especially had been picked for the job?

FLA: Not any special reason that I recall. There are a couple of things that might have influenced the decision. First, I was already in France with duty in the headquarters of the U.S. European Command to which the Fleet reported when not under NATO command. It may have been thought that this would be a logical progression. Then there is the expense of moving me and part of my family which would not be required since we were already in France. Then, you recall that I had become involved in the TFX airplane source-selection process and thereby had gotten a bit crosswise with Secretary McNamara. Ike was Admiral Anderson's executive assistant during the TFX fiasco, and I had worked fairly close with the CNO while this was going on. I like to think that this might have been a bit of compensation by the Navy as a result of my exposure in Congress during the hearings, with the job of telling the committee that my boss, Secretary McNamara, had made a mistake, that they gave me this especially desirable job. Finally, I hope that someone, probably Admiral McDonald, thought that I could do the job!

While Admiral Anderson, when he had command of the Sixth Fleet, lived in a small chateau on the shore of Villefranche harbor, expensive I presume, I found a small studio apartment in a compound that overlooked the harbor and was quite satisfactory for my wife and me.

I moved to Villefranche alone about a month before my wife arrived since she had to stay in Paris until Steve, our youngest, finished Paris-American High School. Steve was a little hard to handle, and nothing would do but that he would join the Navy. He had no interest whatsoever in college. So when school was out, my wife took him to London, enlisted him in the Navy at the embassy, and proceeded on to Palo Alto, California, to see our middle son, David, graduate from Stanford University. She then joined me in Villefranche.

PS: This was when she encountered your new personality?

FLA: Yes, if that is what it should be called.

PS: You said that you were trying to become more outgoing.

FLA: Precisely. She didn't like what she saw. She said that I had changed and that she didn't like it. I'm afraid that this was characteristic. All during my married life, any contact, social that is, with other women was forbidden. There was, I am afraid, no degree of trust, for which there was no reason to doubt. It was just the way she was raised; that's all. It was unfortunate, because --- but anyway, I have to say



Steve enlists in the Navy at the US Embassy in London

right now that she did an admirable job as the wife of the Sixth Fleet Commander. She had taken the trouble to study and brush up on her college French skill while still in Washington while I was deployed in the Pacific with the CarDiv. This made her an excellent hostess aboard ship where we did all our official entertaining. We discovered that most of the officials that we did business with or entertained, if not able to speak English, spoke French. Our ability to speak French with some fluency was really very useful. My wife had no trouble dealing with the French market keepers either while in Paris or in Villefranche.

Related to what we have been talking about, we visited Beirut --- the flagship visited Beirut, and we made the usual official calls, including a call on the President of Lebanon, President Helou, at the time. At the start of the visit the President apologized for his poor English. I responded "*Pas de probleme Monsieur le President, nous pouvons parler Francais, si vous voulez.*" "No problem Mr. President, we can speak French if you wish." He was obviously pleased, and we proceeded to hold our conversation for about 20 minutes speaking French. Nothing complicated, indeed, but we got along fine.

I did have one little problem which the American ambassador who was with me helped out. He spoke excellent French, but let me go ahead on my own, for which I appreciated. It turned out that the President was chastising me a little because he wasn't very happy with our American AID program, particularly because they wanted and were promised some aircraft from us which it seemed they weren't going to get. At one point he made a statement about "*le bles avant le nez*". Well, I couldn't get this one, and finally the Ambassador came to my assistance --- I raise this because it does show that my French was not all that good, but it was good enough to hold a simple, mostly social conversation.

"*Le bles avant le nez*" was "The wheat in front of the nose." like the carrot and the stick. What he was saying was that the AID was always just keeping the bait out in front of him, but was never producing anything. I felt that he was punishing me a little on this. But the

Ambassador took over and made the necessary diplomatic statements on the subject.

I had nearly the same experience with President Bourguiba in Tunisia. He had no gripe over the AID; at least he didn't mention it to me. But he did give me an escorted tour through the palace, mostly to show off the modernization program that he had started. Modernization is not the right word. What he was trying to do was to bring the palace up to its original quality, and he was using the few old-time artisans left to do the work, but at the same time, to train new and younger people to carry on the art. This, of course was all in French aided at times by the Ambassador. Incidentally, I was quite happy with most of our Ambassadors with whom I came in contact in the Mediterranean.

Again, I returned a call by the Chief of Naval Operations of the Tunisian Navy, a young Lieutenant Commander, in Tunis, I believe it was. In his little reception he addressed me formally in English, which, of course, called for me to respond in French. I did, but when I took one look at my wife who was pulling for me so hard, I lost it, and had to shift to English, saying that when it came to matters that came from the heart one needed to speak in his own language. Not a very good performance.

In any event, I learned that the local people in Villefranche called me, "*L'Amiral Americain, qui parle Francais.*" "The American Admiral who speaks French."

I could never understand quite how a Sixth Fleet Commander could entertain officially and make official calls throughout the Mediterranean without some knowledge of a language, and French would be the most useful. I know that neither my predecessor nor his wife spoke any French. The net result, I suppose, is that with no one speaking any common language everybody just looks at one another with a blank stare, or the conversation is monopolized by whoever among the guests spoke English.

Well, that's about what the protocol life in the Fleet is about.

PS: I think that you have mentioned that Secretary Nitze was the principal Navy official when you assumed command of the Fleet from Admiral Bill Ellis.

FLA: Yes, that is correct. Secretary Nitze was on board the flagship at the change of command. After the ceremony I invited him to the flag wardroom for refreshments, and we talked for a couple of hours. What he wanted to know, essentially, was what I intended to do with the Sixth Fleet.

PS: You have said that you weren't particularly forthcoming and that you thought that he might have held that against you.

FLA: Well, yes. I was inclined to say to him, "Well, look, Mr. Secretary, I've been here for only about an hour and a half." I did have some ideas, which I'll talk about in a moment, but they had not jelled to the point where I really wanted to get into this.

I have been told that Mr. Nitze carried a little black book with him, in which anytime he ran into more or less senior Admirals, he recorded his impressions about the person for future reference, particularly when selections for promotion to higher assignments would be considered. I have a sneaking suspicion that my entry into his book from this particular

conversation may not have been very good. I didn't believe that I was impressing the Secretary very much, and I have often thought later that I know plenty of people who could have and probably would have tried to snow him under with all their plans and ideas, and would then perhaps have had some very glowing comments in his little book.

The one thing that I did tell him was that if I had a choice for additional forces in the fleet, I would very much like to have an antisubmarine warfare carrier division assigned. I believed that one of our main problems in controlling the Mediterranean would be that presented by the presence of Soviet submarines in the area. We needed to know at all times where those submarines were. I got no particular comment from him on that. He was there to listen, I am sure.

After the change of command ceremony and this conversation, we took the Secretary and Mrs. Nitze back to their hotel in Beaulieu, a neighboring village, and later went to dinner at the Coq d'Or in Vance, a few miles inland from Villefranche. On the way out to dinner we rode in two cars. My wife rode in one with the Secretary and I in the other with Mrs. Nitze. We felt later that we handled ourselves quite well. We had an enjoyable evening.

While I was in Paris, I had gained the general impression that the image of the Americans in Europe was not particularly good. I wasn't able to put my finger exactly on what was wrong, but it was an impression that I had gained during the previous two years. I had an experience later which might be an example of the problem that I thought that I had detected.

During an official, and an unofficial, visit with the Chief of Naval Operations of the Greek Navy, he told me that he had issued orders to his officers that none should go aboard to visit any of the modern ships of the U.S. Navy. When I asked him why, he said, "I find that they are a little embarrassed and perhaps gather a sense of inferiority because your ships are so much more modern and technically advanced than ours." I sensed that he felt that there also was a little of "looking down the nose" as far as our officers were concerned. This seemed to characterize what I had sensed while in Paris and while going around to the various countries on our inspections of the Military Assistance Groups.

So I felt that maybe I could, as the Commander of the Sixth Fleet, make a contribution toward helping the problem, if indeed it did exist, around the Mediterranean. So one of the first things that I did after taking over was to write to all the American Ambassadors around the littoral, saying that it had been my impression that our image was not particularly good, and I knew that this was a matter of prime interest to them. I wanted to help in any way that we might be able in the Fleet.

It was fascinating to see what came back. From two or three I received good long constructive answers. The majority were noncommittal, saying that they didn't think that there really was a problem and that the best contribution that we could make would be to continue the exemplary behavior of the sailors while ashore. So actually the whole effort didn't result in much of anything constructive, and maybe there really wasn't a problem, but at least they knew that there was a new guy on the job, and it did help when we visited ports around the Med.

We impressed upon the Commanding Officers of all the ships how important it was that they see to it that their sailors, while ashore, be impeccable in uniform and behavior and always keep in mind that the Europeans were to draw their conclusions about Americans by their individual behavior. This has always been the watchword in the Fleet, and it is amazing how the

sailors have responded over the years. I hope that this is still true there.

It was about in the middle of my cruise with the Fleet that President de Gaulle decided to remove all NATO military forces and establishments out of France. France maintained her membership in the Alliance, but made no military contribution except by maintaining their sovereign military forces ready to respond as required by the provisions of the Charter. As a result, for example, the headquarters of both the Supreme Allied Commander and the U.S. European Command were moved from the vicinity of Paris to Brussels, Belgium.

While I had been in Paris I had made an official call on the American ambassador to France, Chip Bolen, and what a great person he was! We had some discussion about the moves being made out of France, and although he was aware that I was to be assigned to command the Sixth Fleet, the matter of the location of the flagship homeport never came up. After I assumed command, the matter was never mentioned by higher command during the first several months. I began to get a little nervous about this, although I was telling myself that maybe the silence was because they wished that the matter not be raised, and perhaps there would be an attempt to keep a foot in the door in France. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer, so I wrote Ambassador Bohlen a letter to ask that the matter be clarified. It was clarified all right, and without any delay. The Sixth Fleet flagship will also be removed from France, and I had better get going doing something about it. So this became my major effort for the next several weeks. As we reviewed the options, we discovered just how difficult the solution was going to be. Spain had possibilities, and we would probably have been welcome there. But it was too far west and remote from the principal operating areas of the Fleet. Greece was also a possibility and we might have been welcome there, too. But at the time there was a lot of political unrest that we did not wish to become involved with. Strategically, it had possibilities, for Greece lay just about central to the Mediterranean.

And while all this was going on, there were a couple of external pressures. The ambassador on Malta thought that it would be great were we to move there, basing in the Grand Harbor of Valetta. He generated a stream of messages to the State Department making his case. We were also getting pressure from Washington suggesting that we move to Naples. Although Malta was strategically a fine location, being almost in the center of the Med, I seriously objected to having our families confined to the "rock" while the flagship would be at sea about 50% of the time. Naples, I believed, was unacceptable because we would lose the attractiveness and the image of the flagship that we had in Villefranche. There were 17 other flag and general commands in the area, and we would be confined to a mooring at some pier in the port, not a pretty place for us to carry out our official entertaining responsibilities.

In a small sense of desperation, and when I was in Rome making calls, I discussed my dilemma with the Chief of Naval Operations of the Italian Navy, Admiral Michelangeli. He asked me if I had ever been to Gaeta. I replied that I had never heard of it. It is a small fishing village on the west coast of Italy about halfway between Rome and Naples. He told me that the Italian Navy operated out of there for many years, there was a good pier and mooring buoys in the harbor. A good operating area was only a few steaming minutes from the port. This description really intrigued me, because it sounded as if we might recover some of the desirable features of Villefranche. I believed that it was very important to retain this for the homeport for the flagship.

We made a quick visit to Gaeta and found it much as the Admiral had described. It certainly wasn't the beautiful surroundings that we had in Villefranche, but it was close. The only drawback would be that it would be necessary to construct some buildings, or find some adequate for the purpose, for a small school and a small commissary to provide the minimum support that would be required by the flagship families. It didn't seem as if this would be insurmountable.

I had the staff prepare a message to the Chief of Naval Operations recommending that the use of Gaeta for the homeport be approved. I did some word engineering on the message to strengthen it and to make it crystal clear that we had studied the matter and were firmly of the opinion that here was the place to move to. Well, we got an answer from the CNO which said that the Secretary of Defense was demanding that a study be made to compare the desirability of Gaeta over Naples. We

went to work on this immediately and found that from a cost point of view Gaeta was the better choice. From the point of view of the numbers which McNamara had in mind, it came down to the question of the cost of water for the flagship. Since the harbor at Naples was so polluted, it would be necessary to buy water when in port. In Gaeta we would be able to make our own water. We figured that this amounted to about \$10,000 difference. And much to our surprise and elation, Gaeta was approved, and we moved the flagship there.

Admiral Emmett Riera was stationed in Naples as Commander Fleet Air Mediterranean and he bet me a bottle of Pinch Bottle Scotch whisky that we would be ordered to Naples. I took up his bet, won, and would you believe, I still have that bottle of scotch. I tried to get Emmet to come and have a few drinks on me, but it never worked out.

PS: He's a good guy.

FLA: Yes, he is a fine fellow, and I still wait his sharing the bottle of scotch.

So we moved to Gaeta in the winter of 1966. This came as quite a shock to the village, for this was their first close exposure to Americans, at least living there in town with them. It didn't take long for the families to find places to rent and get settled down. I found a place that

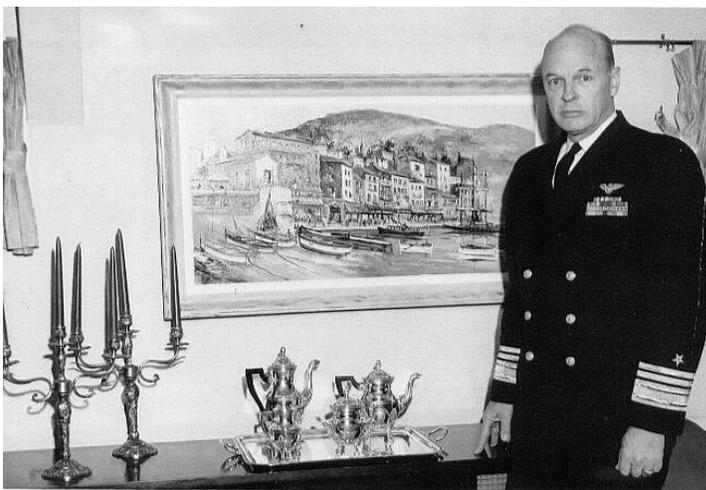


I visit with Admiral Michelangeli, Chief of Naval Operations, Italian Navy. The Admiral plants the seed that leads to our move to Gaeta.



“The Ice Palace”, our new home in Gaeta. So called because there was no heat and it was winter and cold. The landlord lived in the other half of the house. It was here that, one night when I was at sea, Nan’s electric blanket caught fire while she was asleep. By great good luck, she woke up before it was too late and got the landlord to help put out the fire. Apparently, contrary to instructions with electric blankets, we had shipped it where there were some mothballs in the packing. It seems to break down the insulation and short circuits are the result. We were lucky.

him hot coffee, but after a couple of weeks I asked the city to discontinue the protection. I didn’t think that we needed it, but it was a good gesture on the part of the town officials and was typical of the support we received. I am sure that the village was proud that we had selected it for this important part of the American fleet.



The painting is of Villefranche, the home port of the Sixth Fleet flagship in France. It was given to me by the fishermen’s association in Villefranche. The silver service was from the City of Villefranche.

was very nice and well located where we over looked the village. There was essentially no heat in the place, but we thought that we could manage that for the few cold months of winter left. We called it “The Ice Palace.” It had marble floors throughout. The house was fairly well furnished so that with the small amount we brought with us was quite adequate. Fortunately, it turned out, the owner had a small apartment in the same building, completely separated from us, so that wasn’t any problem.

Shortly after we moved in, we noticed that there was a local police officer on duty outside the gate to the place for protection 24 hours a day. It was cold out there for him and we frequently gave

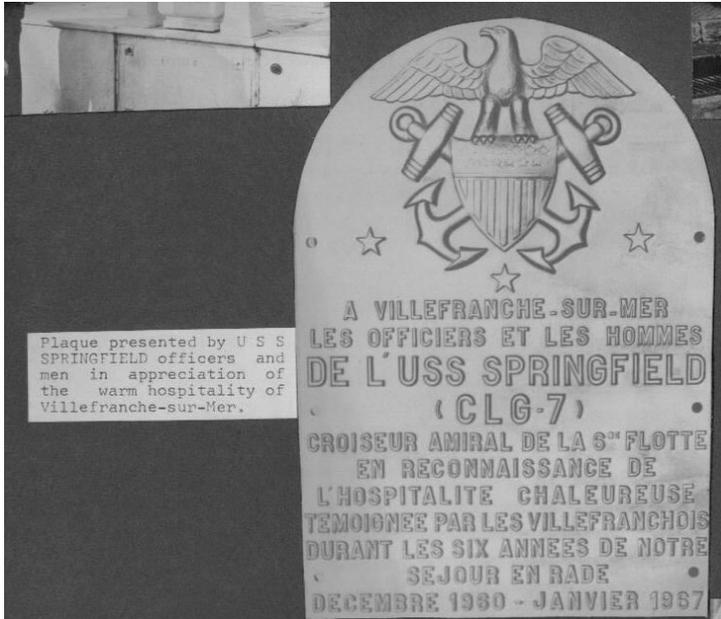
We found a building to rent for the school and the small commissary, and made our own water to save \$10,000 per year.

PS: Well, to the McNamara bean counters, that was very important.

FLA: Yes, very important I suppose.

So that’s how the flagship was moved. It was a shame to have to move from Villefranche. Our Navy had been there for a long time. As a matter of fact there are six American seamen buried in the local cemetery, presumably killed when they fell from the rigging of the

frigates that were stationed there. Then shortly after the war, World War II, Admiral Forrest Sherman, the first commander of the Fleet, established the homeport there. It would seem that he had the same things in mind as I did when he selected the place. The flagship had really gotten to be a fixture there in Villefranche, and it was a bit of a wrench for both of us to have to



leave. There was a small, but nice, celebration for us when the day to move finally came. The Mayor gave a speech. The local fishermen's association presented me with a painting of the sea side of the town with all the restaurants facing the water and my barge alongside the officers' landing. A small girl, maybe five years old, came aboard the ship and presented me with a bouquet of roses.

The *Springfield* presented the village a small bronze plaque mounted close to the landing and next to the Welcome Hotel, which I am sure

curled us many times when our noisy diesel powered boats came into port at 6:00 o'clock in the morning to take on the liberty party.

I was in Gaeta for only about two months when I learned that I was to be detached. I received a back-channel message from Admiral McDonald, then the Chief of Naval Operations, telling me that I was to be ordered to Norfolk as Deputy Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff, Atlantic Fleet. He said that no one knows better about being short toured than he did --- remember, he had been short toured all the way up to Chief of Naval Operations. He said, "But we're going to move you to Norfolk as Deputy



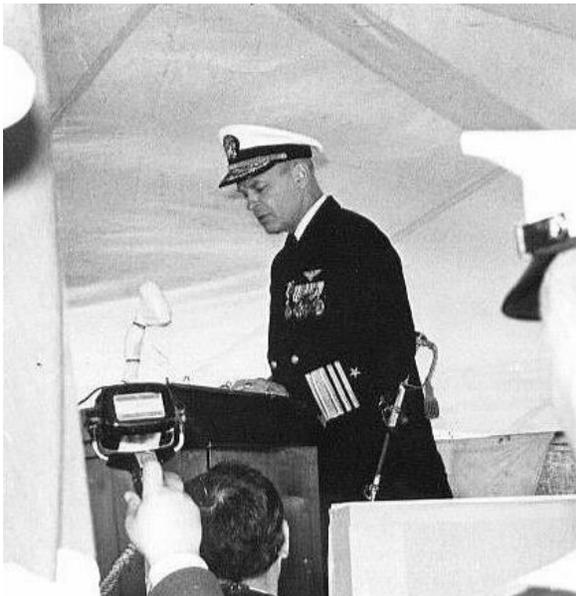
Five-year-old Gisella Roux presents me with a bouquet of freshly cut flowers during a farewell ceremony aboard the USS Springfield.

CinCLantFleet and Chief of Staff. I can assure you that this is best for you personally and for the

Navy.” and then “comment?” or something to that effect.

PS: What could you say?

FLA: So you say, “Aye, aye, Boss. Whatever you say.” So, indeed, my orders came through shortly thereafter. In the meantime *Springfield* had been relieved by *Little Rock* with the turnover being carried out at Rota, Spain. I had one more port visit after the change in Casablanca. Then we returned to Gaeta to get ready for my change of command, with Bill Martin, Naval Academy class of 1934 to take over. I don’t think that Bill Martin liked very much that we changed command in Gaeta. I am reasonably certain that’s a fact, because he did something quite different when he was relieved later. I insisted on having my change of command in Gaeta. I believed that we had become part of the town. Since we had come there only very recently, I was more interested in having the officials from the town, the governing officials, the church, the police. All the top-side people were the invited guests. They, to me,



Reading my orders relieving me of command.

were more important than would be a gaggle of Navy people imported from Naples. I thought that it was important to foster our relations with the local area.

Well, I am not sure about how Bill Martin felt about that. I can only draw the conclusion from the fact that later when he was relieved of command, he had the change aboard an aircraft carrier in Naples. Everybody to his own thing. I won’t comment on that any more than I have.

Admiral Thach, CinCUSNavEur, came down from London to be the principal official.



Admiral Thach pins on the Distinguished Service Medal during the Change of Command Ceremony.

Things went adequately, I think. I was decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal and piped over the side, given a 15-gun salute and all appropriate honors, and Martin was the new Fleet Commander.

Speaking of a 15-gun salute, I do have a bit of memorabilia relating to that when Captain Jack Kane, then commanding *Springfield*, presented to me a saluting battery one-pounder shell case, nicely placed in a walnut box labeled, "The first gun of 15 guns fired in honor of Vice Admiral Ashworth on the occasion of his assuming command of the United States Sixth Fleet." Of course, I prize this very highly. It isn't everybody that has a 15-gun salute fired in his honor, and it was a fine gesture on the part of Jack Kane. I hope it is being continued, but I don't know.

PS: What other recollections do you have of him as shipper of the flagship?

FLA: Jack Kane was an excellent Commanding Officer of the flagship. He was an excellent seaman. He handled all the ceremonial things frequently required in a meticulous fashion. His people knew what to do and never missed on any of it. Jack was a fine naval officer and an outstanding Captain of the flagship.

I was a little unhappy when he was relieved in that I was not given a chance to evaluate or comment on his relief. I had never heard of him nor had most any on the staff. Those who did know him told me, "Admiral, you're not going to like him." I was aboard *Springfield* only about a month or so with the new Captain, so I didn't really have a chance to evaluate him. Frankly, I was not particularly impressed. I apologized to Bill Martin. I told him that I hope that he works out all right.

PS: Is this the man in the *Little Rock*?

FLA: No, I am speaking about *Springfield*, Jack Kane's relief. It appeared to me that he was more interested in being a cruiser Captain than a flagship Captain, which is something that you couldn't say about Kane. He was the flag Captain, he knew it and he performed that way. The new Captain gave you the impression that he was a little aloof about the whole job. I have never had the opportunity to talk to Bill Martin about it. I hope that he worked out all right.

PS: It would be useful for you to spend just a little bit explaining the distinction when you needed a flagship Captain instead of a cruiser Captain.

FLA: First, you wanted the flagship to be the smartest-looking and best-performing ship in the Fleet. That may be the most important of all. You certainly want someone who is absolutely meticulous in rendering honors, and Jack Kane had his people finely trained in this part of his job. The flagship Captain has got to ensure that his crew understands that they are aboard to support the flag and the staff. In this regard we had a great relationship with the *Springfield*. This is not to say that a cruiser Captain shouldn't strive for the best-looking and best-performing ship in the Fleet, or not to have a ship with high morale. But it's a little bit special, I think, when



Change of Command. With Admiral J.S. Thach, Commander in Chief United States Naval Forces Europe. We are at salute while the flagship salutes Admiral Thach with his 17-gun salute.



On our way to the reception aboard Little Rock after the Change of Command ceremonies, Nan and I pass between eight "side boys" as part of the honors for a Vice Admiral.



From the Admiral's barge; saluting farewell to my flagship, the U.S.S. Little Rock.



The Admiral's barge standing off from the flagship as my honors of a 15-gun salute is fired by the flagship.

you're hauling around the Fleet Commander's flag and you're on display.

Not related to what we have been talking about here, but important to mention, I think, has to do with a decision I made in regard to the command arrangement within the Fleet. By doing so, I got myself a bit crossways with the aviation community.

The Sixth Fleet was organized into two task forces each with an aircraft carrier assigned. Each task force had a squadron of destroyers assigned as escorts for the carrier. One of the carriers had aboard an aviation Rear Admiral, a Carrier Division Commander, in command of that task group. The other task group had a Rear Admiral Cruiser Division Commander assigned as commander of that task group. Although a carrier division nominally had two carriers assigned, it was more often the case that the two carriers were not together, because just the matter of rotation in and out of overhaul and the like would result in the nominal carriers of the division frequently not being together. Hence the practice of making the Cruiser Division Commander the commander of the other task group.

PS: Pretty likely, as a matter of fact.

FLA: Sure, very likely. It's exactly what happened to me when I had command of Carrier Division One. My ships were the *Constellation* and the *Kitty Hawk*. My flagship was *Oriskany* and I never saw the ships nominally in my division.

Each of the two task groups in the Sixth Fleet was assigned exactly the same mission. Aboard the carrier with the aviation Admiral there was a complete carrier division staff and some other support such as a National Security Agency detachment to provide high-level intelligence information for the task force commander. The commander of the other group remained aboard the cruiser with his small staff of about a dozen people with no extra staff support. In a manner of speaking he was out in left field trying to run his task group by remote control. I believed that this arrangement did not make sense in any fashion. So I decided to move the Cruiser Division Commander to the carrier in his group in order that he could have the aviation support, that was aboard the carrier, that he would need to command the group effectively. When I told the cruiser Admiral that I intended to move him and his staff aboard his carrier, I asked him to come aboard the flagship to get the ground rules that I was to insist upon. He would never make a decision that involved aircraft without the advice of the carrier Captain. I made it clear that I would have his hide should he get into trouble as a result of not asking for and taking that advice. There had been past experiences in the Sixth fleet when surface Admirals ordered carrier aircraft operations that came close to becoming a disaster. There was no argument whatsoever about this order.

When Admiral Paul Ramsey, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air, came to visit shortly thereafter, he made it abundantly clear that he didn't agree with this operation, but would take no action to veto it. I don't think that he had such authority, but the thought was still there. You just don't put surface Admirals either on board or in command of air operations. He finally ended up saying, "Well, you are running the Sixth Fleet. You can do it the way you want to, I suppose."

While I had command of the fleet, there were only two Cruiser Division Admirals who served as Cruiser Division Commanders and whom I placed in command of the task group. One was Gene LaRocque and the other John Bulkeley. As far as their reaction to this, I think

LaRocque was the more enthusiastic. He flew in all the aircraft that had two seats and probably had more flight time than any Admiral in the Navy at the time. I think that was good education for him, but apparently it didn't take on him in view of his current activities in the Center for Defense Information ¹ with Admiral Carroll and his associates.

PS: How was he as a task group commander?

FLA: Well, as far as I was concerned, he did his job. There was no backlash from the aviators aboard his carrier, but he was aboard for only a short time. Actually there was no way to evaluate his performance since the fleet never operated together while I had command. I would liked to have, but never had the opportunity when they moved me out about the time I was learning what the fleet was all about. I would have put the forces together at times had I had the opportunity for a normal tour of two years like everyone else did. I was short toured before I had developed the confidence to try the operation.

PS: What do you recall about Admiral Bulkeley?

FLA: He was all for it, but had the misfortune, I have to say, of going aboard the *Saratoga*. She was in bad engineering shape. She seemed always to be in bad shape and had the reputation of having to pump bilges 20 hours a day.

PS: As a matter of fact, she had to get her turbines replaced not long after she went into commission.

FLA: I hadn't heard that, but I am not surprised. And so, Bulkeley, on his own....

PS: His own initiative, I'd think.

FLA: Initiative, yes, I was groping for the word. He spent most of his time aboard the ship in the engineering spaces trying to help, to see what he could do to help out the situation. This seems to have forecast his later experiences and perhaps his motivation for being head of the Board of Inspection and Survey.

PS: Did you change your views as a result of Ramsey's visit?

FLA: I did not change, because I thought that what I was doing was exactly the right thing to do

¹ The Center for Defense Information is a private organization dedicated to the dissemination of information publicly related to defense matters. The top man in the organization is retired Rear Admiral Carroll. I am not acquainted with him personally. However he has a poor reputation in the Services because the information that his organization disseminate is usually anti-our military and at times been labeled subversive. During the Cold War he had a tendency to be biased toward the Soviet military. Rear Admiral Gene LaRocque, after retiring, he and Carroll co-founded the Center. It is my opinion that not much of the good things that I know he learned while serving with me has penetrated his new organization.

considering the tactical aspects of Sixth Fleet operations. I have no idea whether Bill Martin continued this or not. Perhaps not, because he was totally in the aviation mold. He had been in aviation all his life with lots of carrier experience both during the war and afterwards. However, it is my impression that after some years, what I had done became standard practice.

PS: Who were your Carrier Division Commanders?

FLA: Let's see. One was George Koch, aboard *Independence* as his flagship. The Captain was named Fox, as I recall, who had only been aboard for a short time. He had held the same job that Ike Kidd had in OpNav for a later CNO.

Shortly after Fox had come aboard, Koch, during a replenishment operation, ordered a course change. Later, he said that the carrier skipper should be able to handle this. But here's a situation where a brand-new Captain is in his first replenishment and the replenishment group is ordered to change course. I should point out that George had never had command of a carrier and had never tried the operation himself. The result was an emergency breakaway.

I was listening to all this chatter on the radio and sent George a message to the effect that, "Come on, this is good to know how to do, but let's be a little more considerate with the Commanding Officers as to whether they are ready to get into these more difficult operations. When you think that they have the experience and have been alongside a number of times and there is good cooperation between the engine room and the bridge, okay, let's exercise at this difficult stuff. In the meantime, let's be a little more circumspect about what you ask the Captains to do."

George called on me a little later. He was a classmate of mine, so you have to be diplomatic. He was apologetic, but not too apologetic, really. He said, "Okay, I understand. I read you." Had he have had a carrier command, he might better have appreciated the ramifications of what he was asking.

PS: That's a little bit like hazing a Plebe.

FLA: Yes, you're right. An emergency breakaway causes a lot of damage. You get oil all over the place. It's an awful mess and requires a tough clean-up job on the part of both the oiler and the carrier. Further, much of your replenishment fittings are either broken or damaged and need repair or replacement. When I had command of *Roosevelt*, we regularly made course changes when required, but that was after I knew the engine room and had experience conning the ship alongside to hold position as we made the turn. You'd do it in degree changes, take it easy, work it around, and if the engine room crews on each ship are working their rpms more or less constant, the turn can be negotiated without much trouble. Weather, of course, is a prudent consideration, but certainly there are times when the maneuver has to be done, particularly when you consider that a carrier remains alongside an oiler as long as eight hours at a time during refueling.

PS: You have suggested that you didn't get along too well with Admiral Griffin when you were in that job.



This photo was taken years earlier aboard the Roosevelt when we had a visitation from some NATO military and is only interesting because it sort of shows how things went in NATO — everyone going in different directions!
Left to right: Vice Admiral Cat Brown, Commander US Sixth Fleet; Rear Admiral Dutch Duerfeldt, Commander Carrier Division Six; NATO General and Admiral names unknown; and, an unknown US Navy Commander. In the background a Navy atom bomb capable aircraft, designated A3D: A for attack, D for Douglas, and 3 for the third attack aircraft built by Douglas for the Navy. These designations, which made good sense, were not understandable to Secretary McNamara, so he changed the system to more like the Air Force.

FLA: Oh, yes. Admiral Griffin was CinCSouth of the NATO command in Naples. Of course, one of his responsibilities as CinCSouth was to command Strike Force South, which was the Sixth Fleet when it was under NATO command. So indeed, he had his hooks into the fleet, without any question. I was a little derelict, I guess. I couldn't quite keep it in my mind that every time I turned around I was supposed to inform Admiral Griffin what I was doing.

PS: Since you were working for Admiral Thach in London?

FLA: Exactly. Later, when I called on him officially there in Naples --- well, I didn't call on him right away, because I didn't get to the Naples area right away. When I did call on him, we had done a few things that I hadn't informed him of, and he let me understand in no uncertain terms that he was the senior U.S. Navy officer in the Mediterranean area, and he darned well wanted to know what was going on in the Sixth Fleet. I think what miffed him more than anything else was that I didn't cut him in on the selection of our new homeport. We didn't have any altercations as much as a three-star Admiral can have with a four-star Admiral, but he made it abundantly clear that at times he wasn't very happy with my failure to keep him informed of what we were doing selecting the new homeport and I didn't think that this was necessary. I didn't think of it at the time, and I think now that maybe he was wanting us to move to Naples where he would be able to exercise his command more as he wished.

There is another thing which may be of interest in this discussion. One of the things that bothered us mostly was the Russian submarines. Every once in a while one would pop up, like, for example, one would come from somewhere and anchor, joining some of their other ships in the Gulf of Sidra off Libya. It was disturbing that you didn't have any idea where he came from, and you began to wonder what he had been doing in the meantime.

It turned out that Admiral Sir John Hamilton, Royal Navy, the senior British officer in the Med, located at Malta, had the same concern. He sent me a message that he was worried about the Soviet submarine situation in the Mediterranean and asked me if I would come to Malta to talk about it. The net result was the establishment of what he called "Operation Spyglass", a plan that he proposed to me when I met with him.

It was obvious that he already had the proposal in his hip pocket when I arrived. What he had in mind was that anytime we spotted a Russian submarine tender, we should put a "tail" on her and follow it wherever it went, hoping that ultimately a submarine would surface and go alongside the tender. Hopefully we would then get some idea of the operating areas of the submarines and give us a better idea as to their movements. I thought that this was a good enough idea to try.

We realized that it would take ship time committed to the task of tracking the tender, a job which neither the British nor I would be able to spare full time. However, since he was the NATO commander afloat in the Med he was in a position to issue orders direct to the NATO navies to contribute ship time to the project. Thus, he could get a fairly rapid response time regardless of where the contact with the tender might happen.

It wasn't too long before we made contact with a Russian submarine tender and Admiral Hamilton ordered a British destroyer to track it. When that ship had committed as much time as it could to the operation, I ordered one of our destroyers to relieve her on station and continue the

tracking. Actually, this did not give us much information, for, if I recall correctly, the tender ended up in the Gulf of Sidra, a common anchorage for the Russian Mediterranean ships. I thought, however, that the idea had merit and was prepared to support it completely. In addition it would give our ships something different to do operating independently, which all skippers like.

So, again, I had no opportunity to pursue the idea since shortly after the operation started, I was relieved and sent to Norfolk. I don't know whether the idea was continued after Bill Martin was in command. If nothing else, it seemed to indicate that with Admiral Hamilton's authority, a coordinated NATO navy operation could be possible.

PS: Do you want to talk about the role of the carriers at that point in executing the SIOP?

FLA: Yes, that would be worthwhile, I think. The SIOP was the plan for nuclear attack in case of war. It designated the targets, which aircraft would strike which target, and prescribed the timing of each attack after the order was issued to implement the plan. This was supposed to eliminate overlap and interference between attacks. Of course, the targets were mostly in the Soviet Union.

The plan required the Navy carriers to keep aircraft ready on the flight deck for immediate launch when ordered, loaded with nuclear weapons and targeted as required to meet the provisions of the plan. Of course, I don't know whether we're still giving "no comment" to whether or not our ships are carrying aboard nuclear weapons. But nevertheless, for the purposes of this discussion we had nuclear weapons on board our aircraft carriers.

I was directly exposed to this exercise when I had command of *Roosevelt*, and later as the Fleet Commander. From the carrier point of view the matter of maintaining loaded aircraft on the flight deck ready for immediate launch was fine for nuclear attack readiness, but complicated badly the regular flight operations. A critical part of the flight deck would be locked up with these ready aircraft standing by in the launching area of the flight deck. Should there be orders to mount a conventional weapon attack, confusion always arose trying to maintain the nuclear readiness required and launch the conventional attack at the same time. The problem always arose during NATO exercises, and frequently during regular Fleet operations.

This became such a nuisance for the carrier Captains that they appealed to the Fleet Commander for help. I proposed to the NATO authorities that this degree of nuclear attack readiness be relaxed to allow for immediate response to requirements for conventional attacks. At least the catapults would be clear. Certainly Bill Martin would have faced the problem during his tenure in the fleet. I hope that the new relaxation of the plan helped during the *Liberty* attack.

I have often thought that they should have hired me to stay on in the Med, or anywhere else for that matter, because nothing ever happened when I was around. I am sure I can't say this because they knew that I was there and that they weren't about to start anything. The facts of the matter are that there were few if any Russian ships around when I had command, and we had to go looking for them. There were no incidents, nothing going on when I was there.

So it was about a month or two after I left the fleet that the Greek coup took place and then the *Liberty* incident so Bill Martin got himself in on a crisis or two. I have heard that in the case of the *Liberty*, he launched aircraft in response to the call for help, and that they were

nuclear loaded, the SIOP ready planes perhaps? This seems incredible to me that those aircraft would have been used, but, as I have heard later, the Chief of Naval Operations was informed of the fact and went on direct voice radio to the flagship, in the clear, and told him to get those f----- aircraft back aboard, and fast. I understand that some of the sailors who heard the conversation down in CIC or somewhere, said, "Gee, he sounds just like a sailor!" I can't imagine the situation, but I think that you told me that you had heard the story before.

PS: Yes.

FLA: I just stated in reference to the action taken by Bill Martin in the *Liberty* case, that "he launched aircraft in response to the call for help, and that they were loaded with nukes". It would be better to say that he ordered one of the carriers, the closest one to *Liberty* presumably, to launch aircraft to assist the *Liberty*. Although I can't state it from direct knowledge, I think it is believed in most circles that the carrier Captain made the decision to launch those aircraft in response to the order from Commander Sixth Fleet, and either he knew it or didn't know that they were loaded with nukes. It may be accurately known in some circles exactly what and why it happened, but I have no first hand knowledge of either of the two decisions. I do know that when I had the Fleet, the carriers were relieved of the nuclear-loaded ready aircraft.

PS: One thing that happened about this time, and I'm not sure whether it was on your watch or Admiral Martin's, was the destroyer *Bache* ran aground, I think off Rhodes. Do you recall that?

FLA: Yes, I recall the incident, but I don't recall that I had any thing to do with it.

PS: You don't have a clear recollection of dealing with it, it sounds.

FLA: I don't have a clear recollection of having to deal with it, but I do have a clear recollection of seeing the hulk. It was off Rhodes, wasn't it?

PS: Yes.

FLA: I have to say again, "Wuz you der, Charlie?", because now that you bring it up, there surely would have been a flurry of messages out of our ship, but now I think it happened before my time.

PS: It was about that time. Ike Kidd had come out after that, and he was, I guess, the on-scene commander for the salvage effort.

FLA: I remember the incident, because I recall now seeing the ship high and dry on the rocks. So it had to have happened before my time.

PS: You talked when we didn't have the recorder running, about the business of taking over the staff from Admiral Ellis and building them back up.

FLA: Yes, I don't mean to criticize Admiral Ellis. But this is what I found when I first went aboard the flagship the first three or four days getting my skull practice for the turnover and getting ready for the change of command. I ate in the flag mess, of course, and I was impressed immediately with the tenseness of the whole organization and the monologue that came from Bill Ellis. He did all the talking, and everybody else did all the eating. That's about the size of it.

When I relieved Ellis and continued seeing what was going on in the mess, I couldn't believe the tenseness of everyone. It took about two weeks to get the people to the point where they seemed to be relaxed a bit, talking, and acting like they were enjoying life. I suppose that this is one way to run an operation. Maybe I was missing the boat, but this was the impression that I had.

I learned later that the Chief of Staff, Captain Jack Beardall, had a problem with Ellis. Gradually the details came out, and apparently Bill Ellis was very critical of him because his wife was doing a fair amount of drinking. This, according to Jack, was reflected in his fitness reports. "Well," I said, "what about it?" because I had not noticed any of this in the short time that I had been aboard. Of course, I became acquainted with her immediately in our social activities and she seemed to be doing fine, no problem. Jack then told me that between the Admiral and Mrs. Ellis, his wife was so uptight, she just couldn't take it. He said, "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid that this is doing me damage."

I didn't notice any of this. Certainly she wasn't getting any heckling from me, and she wasn't getting any heckling from my wife, and Jack indicated to me that she was very much relaxed and that there was a great improvement. I went so far, when I wrote up his fitness reports, as commenting on this and trying to explain the past problem, hoping that I could recover some ground for the Chief of Staff. Apparently it did no good for he was never selected for promotion.

I think that Ellis was an effective Commander, and I think that Mrs. Ellis did a good job. I must admit that I was surprised to learn that most of their official entertaining was done ashore. I presume that by doing this, they were able to serve something beside water for beverages. We did just the reverse. I did it all aboard the flagship. The facilities were just fine for it and I had an excellent Flag Secretary who ran the mess.

A minor point. There were in the flag mess a set of silver goblets that had been extracted at some time from some ship's silver service. From the source, you might guess that they were pretty elaborate. And I found out, as I moved about the Med, that they were famous and kind of a logo for the Sixth Fleet. We always felt that to serve only water in them when entertaining at dinner was a little below their potential. Maybe that is why Bill Ellis entertained ashore! Apparently for some time past, I learned, Tom Moorer wanted those goblets back in Washington, I suppose to be used in his quarters. He had been foiled up to my watch. I hope that they are still there.

So we had the facilities to do it, and we had the capability both in the cooks, the Mess Attendants and the Mess Caterer for entertaining aboard ship.

PS: That ship symbolizes the Fleet, so that makes sense.

FLA: That's the way that I felt about it.

PS: How did your Chief of Staff do as a Chief of Staff?

FLA: Jack Beardall was there when I arrived, and I found that he was very good. He ran the staff well and things seemed to run smoothly. He was not a very dynamic individual, but maybe that is a point in his favor. The fact that all the others on the staff were very capable and performed well says that the Chief of Staff was doing his job. About in the middle of my tour Jack was relieved and they sent me a Captain Smith, and again, I was not given the courtesy of approving of his assignment. He was less a ball of fire than Jack. Certainly with all the talent that had to be available for a job as important as this one, there should have been better people for the job. But Captain Smith was all right, no ball of fire, didn't have the drive you like to see. His wife was very attractive and active on her side of the staff and well liked.

PS: Any others that you particularly liked?

FLA: Yes. I had a supply Captain by the name of Van Pelt who was outstanding. He finally went to Stanford. I think it was after he left the staff, when he earned a Ph.D. degree. I don't think that he was selected for flag rank --- too much education maybe?

I had problems with Flag Lieutenants. Again, I was not given the chance to review their record. I guess they figured I could get along with anybody. They did the job, but not like some I have seen serving Admirals. I think that this is an important job for his first responsibility is to see to it that all the protocol procedures and honors are carried out meticulously.

When I went back to Norfolk, I had another one assigned, again unknown to me. I don't know why he wanted the job. He wasn't much help. One day I stood up the Vice Chief of the Thai Navy when I was supposed to bid him goodbye at the airfield. I got involved in something at the time I should have been there. That's what Flag Lieutenants are for, to see that you do the things you are supposed to do. That's what he gets paid for. Unfortunately, finally, the Admiral boarded his plane and left. I was terribly embarrassed about that, but these things happen.

PS: How well did the ships of that class, the *Springfield* and *Little Rock* serve your need as a flagship?

FLA: Well, these two ships were not of the same class. *Springfield* was classified as light cruiser and *Little Rock* a heavy cruiser. But from my point of view there was no choice between them. *Springfield* felt a little more homey. I felt that I was getting all the command and control capability that I needed in both ships.

While I was in the Fleet, Admiral Thach in London had his headquarters completely computerized. Apparently, someone up there thought that we should be computerized to match in order to fit into their command capabilities. I was supposed to tell them what it was I wanted a computerized headquarters to do for me, so they sent some guys down to set up an equivalent operation aboard the flagship. It seemed to me that the best way to get that message across to them was to have each member of the staff outline, in as much detail as possible, exactly what



U.S.S. Springfield



U.S.S. Little Rock

his particular job on the staff was and how he carried it out. Then I would ask them how they would set up the system to take over those duties. Of course, intelligence was an important requirement and should be plugged in closely with Admiral Thach's headquarters in London.

Then the continuing job of scheduling the movements of the Fleet ships certainly should also be amenable to being instrumented. We gave the people these pitches, they left the ship and that was the last we ever heard from them. Maybe they concluded that we were doing so well it couldn't be improved! I don't know whether the flagship was ever set up to tie into Admiral Thach's set up. I did hear some remarks about that arrangement that it was much too complicated and there was too much information floating around so that it was hard to sort out what was relevant.

PS: The flagships had NTDS didn't they?

FLA: Frankly, I can't remember. I suppose that they did for the system was already operational in the Navy

PS: It sounds as if the command and control facilities served your needs.

FLA: Yes, at least I felt comfortable with what we were doing. We did have some operations with NATO when we became Strike Force South, but as I recall nothing very complicated. Remember, I had time for only one tour around the Med. It took me about 11 months or a year, and I was sent back to CinCLant in Norfolk. Most of my predecessors stayed on for an additional year. I wish that I had had that opportunity, I would have been far better qualified for the job.

PS: Did you have any particular philosophy in the scheduling and the operations of the fleet, or was it pretty much status quo.

FLA: It was pretty much the way it had been when I arrived. There was not much to change. We never put both carriers in the same port at one time. An exception might be for port visits for Christmas. We wanted the people to have a good liberty port at that time. It also made sense that the two task forces generally be located more or less in each end of the Med so that reaction time would be less if needed anywhere in the area. The scheduling was a complicated operation and surely could better have been done by computer --- I think. Probably by now the whole operation is tied into NavEur or the European Command and maybe CinCSouth.

PS: Were you successful in getting an ASW carrier into the Mediterranean?

FLA: No, we were never able to accomplish that. I was not surprised, for I think that it was about this time that the ASW carriers were being phased out.

PS: Well, it was a little after that. Was there any substance to your conversations with the foreign leaders, or were those mostly just protocol things?

FLA: They were nearly all simply protocol. The most tangible result had to do with my talks with Admiral Michelangeli of the Italian Navy in regard to the selection of a new homeport for

the flagship. The timing was such for my call on him in Rome that we were in search of a place to go. Since the subject was very much on my mind, it was natural for me to raise it with him. He understood and enthusiastically offered Gaeta as a possibility.

PS: Was this a job you enjoyed? Did you feel comfortable?

FLA: Oh, yes. I was completely comfortable. Maybe I shouldn't have been, but I was. As I have said, nothing happened while I was in command. I guess that the proof of the pudding would have been had we had an incident like the *Liberty*. I guess it goes back to the theme I have tried to get across all through these interviews, and for a long time in thinking about my naval career. I have never felt that I had been really tested during my 35 years of Navy career.

PS: Well, I would disagree with that.

FLA: I can understand how you might feel about that. What I have always felt is that I had certainly not been tested while in a responsible command position, as for example a *Liberty* situation, or all of a sudden to have been thrust into a situation where I really had to react immediately and where my decisions would be matters of international importance, for example, or would commit the United States to a course of action. I simply feel that I have never been thrust into a situation like that, and I am not sure of my performance under such situations.

PS: What about Guadalcanal? What about Nagasaki?

FLA: Nagasaki certainly bears on what I am saying, and I am sure a lot of "testing" was involved. The decisions that I made were only those open, which might result in a successful mission. Of course, luck had a huge factor in the thing turning out right, and I suppose that is a major factor in most successful actions. I never was exposed to a Coral Sea or a Midway situation, and I held the rank where I could have been placed in such a situation. I was never exposed to major combat situations even as a staff officer where I could have watched and learned how others made their decisions either right or wrong. That's the sort of thing I have in mind.

Maybe I am selling myself short again, but I wonder how I would have reacted to the *Liberty* situation. I wonder how I would have reacted to, let's say, something like a Qaddafi patrol boat raid on some of our ships.

PS: Well, you don't have to feel guilty because these things didn't happen.

FLA: Well, that's right and I don't feel guilty about it, but I just feel that, I wish.....

PS: Do you feel disappointed?

FLA: Sure, I feel disappointed, because I don't know how I would react in a big command situation. Another reason that causes me to have this feeling is that I never did any war-gaming,

for example. That is where you find out how you'd react to some of this stuff. I didn't go to the Naval War College where I could have experienced this. It is not the strategic stuff that worries me; that comes from higher command. It is the tactical plain war-fighting situation that bothers me.

PS: It's an unanswerable question.

FLA: I am just being perfectly honest and frank with you. I don't go out and bare my soul all the time like this. Maybe it's good for people to read something like this. I'm not sitting here running myself down just to make you think, "Well, gee, this guy is a pretty good guy. He's not a braggart or all the rest of it."

PS: It is refreshing. I don't have any more questions on the Sixth Fleet, so we can move to Norfolk and Deputy CinCLantFlt and Chief of Staff.



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PARIS

April 14, 1967

Dear Admiral Ashworth,

Thank you very much for your kind letter of 31 March 1967, which has just reached me. Because I know you have already relinquished command of the Sixth Fleet, I am sending this to your new address.

First, may I extend my warmest congratulations to you for the year you have just completed as Fleet Commander. It has been a time of change and development in which both patience and initiative have been required. I believe that during your tenure as Commander, the Sixth Fleet has shown both to an exemplary degree and has served the interest of our country in important ways which are in addition to its vital military role. Your recognition of the value of these ancillary contributions which a fleet can make and your personal interest in their implementation have been most effective and welcome.

I have read the enclosure to your letter with interest. Much of what you say reflects the briefings you and your staff so ably provided during my visit to you. I found them thought-provoking and timely then, and I think they are equally so today. It would seem to me that such a document will well serve as a definition of Sixth Fleet objectives in furtherance of U. S. policies. If I was able to contribute to this, I am gratified.

Your new assignment will, I am confident, prove to be challenging as well as satisfying, and I wish you all measure

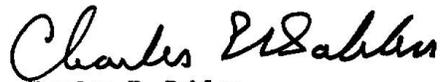
Vice Admiral Frederick L. Ashworth, USN
Deputy Commander in Chief
U. S. Atlantic Fleet
Norfolk, Virginia 23511

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of success in it. Your service in and understanding of this area should be of continuing value to you and to the Navy.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,


Charles E. Bohlen

WILLIAM H. BATES
6TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
JOINT COMMITTEE ON
ATOMIC ENERGY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

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DISTRICT OFFICES:
208 POST OFFICE BUILDING
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS 01970
210 POST OFFICE BUILDING
LYNN, MASSACHUSETTS 01901

February 2, 1966

Admiral Frederick L. Ashworth
Commander
Sixth Fleet
Post Office New York 09501

Dear Fred:

I was real pleased to be advised of your appointment as Commander of the Sixth Fleet, and I sincerely trust that before your tour of duty has terminated I will have an opportunity to visit with you in the MED. I am enclosing herewith a copy of the Salem News of January 26, in which the announcement appeared.

In the meantime, if I can be helpful in any way at any time, please let me know.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



William H. Bates

WHB:jwm
Enclosure

Wenham Native Appointed Commander of Sixth Fleet

Rear Adm. Frederick L. Ashworth, a 54-year-old Wenham native who made the decision to drop the atom bomb on Nagasaki during World War Two, has been appointed commander of the Sixth Fleet, the White House announced today.

Ashworth, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ashworth of Main street, Wenham, who is being nominated for promotion to vice-admiral, will relieve Vice-Adm. Willis E. Ellis who is becoming chief of staff, Supreme Allied Command, Atlantic.

The Sixth Fleet, which has headquarters in the U. S. operates in the Mediterranean.

Ashworth, who is married to the former Nan Bliss, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Bliss of Gardner Hill, Peabody, is a 1933 Naval Academy graduate. His most recent assignment was as deputy chief of staff for the U. S. European command.

On Aug. 9, 1945, Ashworth participated in dropping the second atomic bomb at Nagasaki, Japan. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for his wartime work with the atomic bomb project and the Silver Star for his flight aboard the B-29 bomber that carried the Nagasaki bomb to its destination.

Ashworth has had a varied career in the Navy, being associated with the

Atomic Energy commission, commander of a Navy aircraft torpedo squadron and duty with various types of ships.

After graduating from Beverly High school in 1928, he attended Dartmouth for a year before receiving his appointment to the Naval academy by the late Cong. A. P. Andrew in 1929.

Between 1937 and 1939 he was fleet air photo officer and assigned to Utility Squadron No. One, leaving that post to take post-graduate work in engineering at the Naval academy between 1939 and 1940.

Just prior to the outbreak of World War Two he was with the Navy's bureau in Washington, and in September, 1942, went to the Pacific as commander of an aircraft torpedo squadron operating out of Henderson field on Guadalcanal.

In September, 1943, he went into staff work, being assigned to the staff of the commander of the Amphibious Forces of the Central Pacific.

After three campaigns in the Pacific, he went to the Naval Proving Ground at Dahlgren, Va., in July, 1944, as a senior aviator.

He was assigned to the Manhattan District project in Los Alamos, N. M., in November, 1944, and the following June his unit moved to Tinian with component parts of several atomic bombs.

On Aug. 9, 1945, as technical commander of the "Great artiste," Ashworth made the most momentous decision of his life — the decision to bomb the alternative target of



REAR ADMIRAL ASHWORTH

Nagasaki — where the B-29 fliers found their prime target obscured by clouds.

He returned to Washington in September, 1945, and was assigned to a newly organized group in the office of Chief of Naval Operations to establish Navy policies in the use of atomic energy.

Since then, Ashworth has been commander of several units and following duty as executive officer on the carrier USS Midway, he returned to the Atomic Energy commission in November, 1951. Three years later he took command of the USS Corson, a seaplane tender, then operating in Japan as part of the Seventh fleet.

Following a period of shore duty, he assumed command of the carrier USS Franklin D. Roosevelt in October, 1957. In June, 1958, he was selected commandant of midshipmen at the U. S. Naval academy at Annapolis, Md.

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NATO UNCLAS MED 0329.
 PERSONAL FOR ADMIRAL ASHWORTH FROM ADMIRAL HAMILTON.
 AS YOU HAUL DOWN YOUR FLAG I WISH TO EXPRESS TO YOU MY WARMEST
 APPRECIATION FOR THE KEEN PERSONAL INTEREST YOU HAVE TAKEN
 FOSTERING THE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN SIXTH FLEET AND ALLIED
 FORCES MEDITERRANEAN. YOUR LARGE SCALE CONTRIBUTION TO
 OUR EXERCISES AND YOUR READINESS TO DISCUSS MUTUAL PROBLEMS HAVE
 BEEN A VERY GREAT HELP. I HAVE VERY MUCH ENJOYED WORKING WITH YOU.
 I AM SORRY YOU HAVE TO RELINQUISH SO SOON THE
 GREAT AND IMPORTANT SEA COMMAND WHICH YOU HAVE HELD WITH SUCH
 DISTINCTION AND I SEND YOU MY WARMEST GOOD WISHES FOR SUCCESS IN THE
 IMPORTANT TASK WHICH LIES AHEAD OF YOU.

BT

26 April 1967

Dear Admiral Hamilton:

Your very kind message of April 10th on the occasion of my relief as Commander SIXTH Fleet has just been received by me here in Norfolk, Virginia, where it was sent by mail from the flagship. I very much appreciate the thoughts you expressed in regard to the cooperation we have been able to develop between the SIXTH Fleet and Allied Forces Mediterranean. I believe firmly that this cooperation is crucial to the success of all of us working in the Mediterranean. Without your warm friendship and sympathetic understanding, it would not have been possible. There is much more to be done, which I would so much have enjoyed to continue working at; I do hope Admiral Martin will pick up where we left off.

Mrs. Ashworth joins me in sending our great respect and admiration and warmest personal regards to you and Lady Hamilton.

Sincerely,

F. L. ASHWORTH
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy

Admiral Sir John Hamilton, Royal Navy
Commander in Chief
Allied Forces Mediterranean
Fleet Post Office
New York, New York 09529

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

DEPUTY COMMANDER IN CHIEF AND CHIEF OF STAFF
U.S. ATLANTIC FLEET, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
May 1967 - September 1968

FLA: Before we proceed with this new assignment, I think that it would be appropriate to talk a bit more about the back-channel message that I received from Admiral McDonald while he was Chief of Naval Operations in which he told me that I was to be relieved of the Sixth Fleet and ordered to Norfolk.

PS: Was there a sense of letdown?

FLA: Not so much a sense of letdown as a sense of personal satisfaction that I had been Commander of the United States Sixth Fleet, that I had done a good job within the limits of the time that I had to do the job. They had given me a Distinguished Service Medal, which I suppose is the Admiral's good conduct medal, much as it is sometimes said in the Army that the Legion of Merit is the Colonels' good conduct medal.

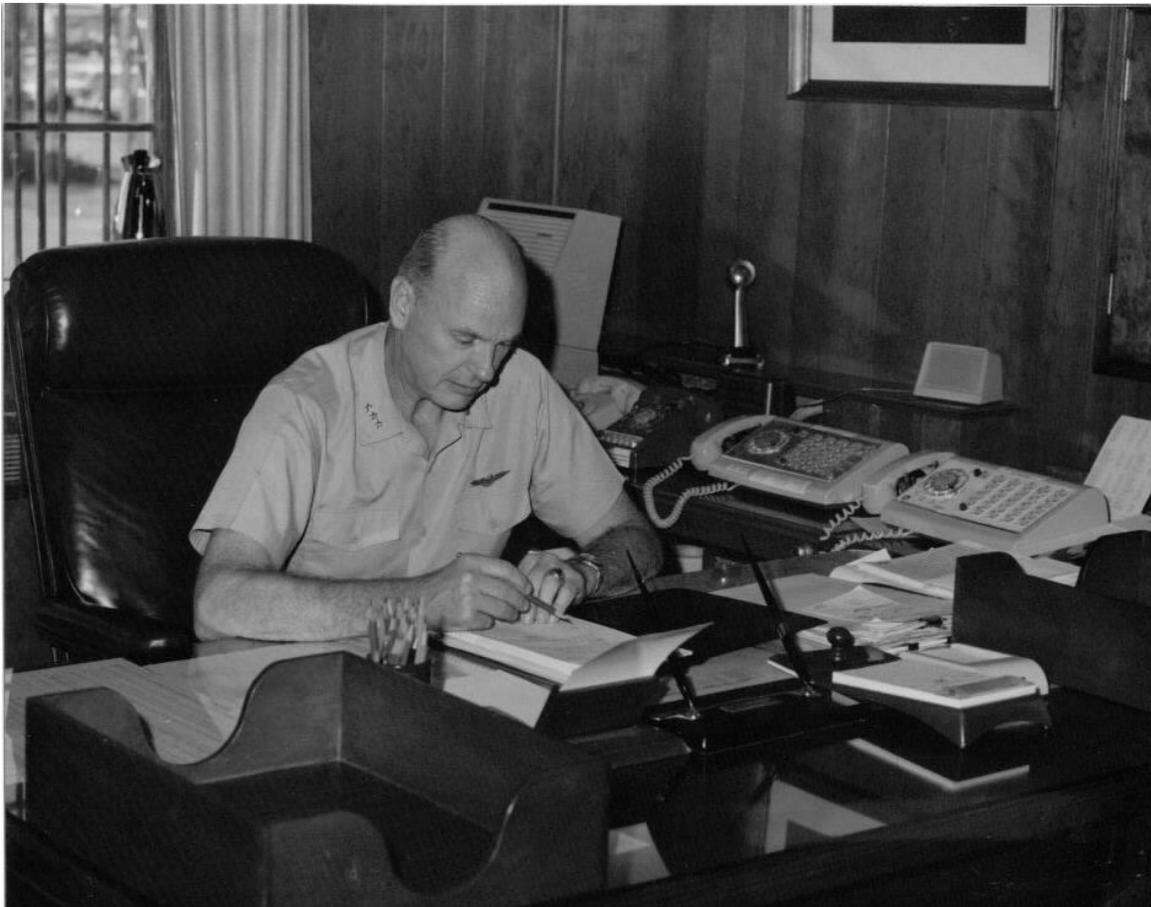
It was a letdown in that I wanted very much to continue in the job for the normal two year tour. However, I felt that I had done a good job, and I think that it was recognized as such. As a matter of fact, I had people in NavEur tell me that I was the best Sixth Fleet Commander since Admiral Sherman, the first Sixth Fleet Commander. I certainly was not happy to leave, but I felt content that I had done a good job. There was also niggling in the back of my mind the wording of Admiral McDonald's message. He said that the move was best for me and best for the Navy. I suppose that had two possible interpretations. But it appeared to me that maybe he was talking about the possibility of splitting the Atlantic Fleet and the Atlantic Command into two parts, separating the Fleet from the other. Were that to happen there might be four stars in the offing. But there was nothing of the kind coming my way. Some years later I met Admiral McDonald at a reunion of the Golden Eagles in Jacksonville. In the course of our conversation I asked him if he remembered the back-channel message that he sent to me in the Sixth Fleet about my being sent to Norfolk which was to be best for me and for the Navy. He looked me in the eye, grinned and walked away.

So who knows. Did I leave with reluctance? Yes, but I left with confidence that I had done a good job. I should have stayed on another year, because it takes that long at least to really learn the job and have confidence in what you are doing. The way they changed horses in those days was scandalous in my view. You were sent somewhere else before you had really learned the job that you were already in. If you look at the chronology of my naval career, you'll find that I'm in most jobs less than a year, particularly in sea commands where one can't possibly learn the trade in such a short time. It has all the earmarks of card punching. Maybe that's because I wasn't hacking the job or they wanted me somewhere else. I never knew.

PS: Sometimes it's a case of politics.

FLA: Yes, I guess that often that's a big part of it. Well, so I had some leave, drove through Switzerland and France to Paris and flew Pan American, first class, to Norfolk. Did I relieve anyone? No. I think that Bill Martin was in the LantFlt job when he was ordered to relieve me so there was no turnover. I quickly recognized that this was a fancy title, Deputy and Chief of Staff Atlantic Fleet. The real job was Chief of Staff. My boss at the time was Eph Holmes, and it was obvious that he would run the LantFlt, and rightly so. I was indeed the Chief of Staff.

Actually, Tom Moorer was CinCLantFlt when I arrived, but was moved to Washington after a couple of months to become Chief of Naval Operations. The job was totally a desk job paper pushing. I didn't have anything to do with running the Atlantic Fleet. I was the one who attended changes of command, made speeches and who entertained the visitors that the boss didn't want to bother with. He entertained all the interesting people; we got the bridesmaids. The Admiral's house was furnished with everything for entertaining, we made do with what we had. I had to buy flat silver to fill out our set to 18 places and provide our own linen. All in all, I thought that the job was for the birds and certainly a letdown from my previous duty. I didn't enjoy it, but I didn't let that influence my performance. My philosophy in the Navy had always been to do the best that I could and if that was not good enough, so be it.



A letdown from the great duty in the Sixth Fleet. A desk job, pushing paper.

However, all this time I knew that the CinCUSNavEur job was going to be vacant in the not too distant future, because John McCain had it, much to everybody's surprise, I might say, and I think that he was soon to go out to the Pacific.

PS: Yes, he did.

FLA: So I was there thinking to myself, gee, I had gotten to know a lot of the foreign military people in Europe and a lot of the diplomatic officials both on the continent and around the Mediterranean. I had command of the Sixth Fleet, and now was getting familiar with the Atlantic Fleet from which all naval forces, Europe come from. I thought that I had all the marbles for the game in London, so I figured that I was better qualified than any of my contemporaries and as good a bet as anyone for the four-star job in London. So one day I read in the newspaper that Wally Wendt, my classmate, and incidentally Tom Moorers's roommate at the Naval Academy, was being ordered to London to relieve McCain.



A bright spot during my tour in Norfolk. I am proud to pin the Navy wings of gold on my son Dave.

One day, a few days later, I happened to be talking to Tom Moorers about LantFlt business while Eph Holmes was away. After he finished with his business I said, "Well, Tom, I was disappointed to see what I had read in the newspaper recently." Tom said, "What was that?" I said "Well, about Wally Wendt going to Europe." Dead silence for about ten seconds. Tom said something to the effect, "Oh well, you are a good material man, you're good in the material business." I told him that was how I had figured it and I guess I had some thinking to do. "Don't think too hard. Don't worry." So 24 hours later I put in my papers for retirement. I felt that this was a job I had all the experience for and was better qualified from that point of view than anyone. As I have said, I always thought that if I couldn't go up it was time to get out. I was then 56 and could have stayed in for maybe another six years.

Well, that was about the first of July 1968. It takes about three months for retirement papers to go through the system. An interesting thing to me was that as my request went forward there was no one who called me to ask if I really wanted to do this. "Look, you have some time left, why move out now?" I don't know what other jobs might have been available. Chief of

Naval Material might have been a logical job for me, but I wasn't really very much interested in it. I didn't like the concept when they set it up, and I was gratified to learn some time later that it was abolished, and one layer of control was correctly removed from the system.

PS: What about CinCSouth? Was that a possibility?

FLA: The normal progression to that job then was to move down from CinCUSNavEur. I don't know whether Jim Russell did or not.

PS: He came from Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

FLA: Yes, I recall that now. It was a good job for him to finish off a good career.

But as for my retirement papers --- Chick Clarey was Vice Chief at this time. One day I was on the phone with him about some staff business. When we concluded that, he said, "I just passed your retirement papers through, and I was sorry to see that you wished to retire." I said, "Well, look, Chick, the writing was on the wall. If they didn't want me for the London job, they didn't want me for any four-star job." His comment was. "You must remember that we have to nominate people who are acceptable". "Yes", I said, "I can understand that." And that was the end of the conversation.

There are lots of ways that you can take that. Unacceptable because someone didn't think that I could hack the job. Unacceptable because of politics stemming from the TFX airplane fiasco. Unacceptable because my write-up in Mr. Nitze's little black book wasn't very good, as I suspect that it wasn't. Maybe unacceptable for some reason known only in the higher levels of the Navy. So be it. On the first of September 1968, I was retired in the rank of Vice Admiral.

PS: Can we talk some before we get to that, about your relationship with Admiral Holmes?

FLA: Admiral Holmes was a fine naval officer. He was a complete gentleman. One couldn't ask for a better person to work for. He was understanding. He was the kind of person you work your heart out for, and I think that he has always been that way. He expected me to do my job, and I think that he depended upon my advice when he asked for it. Remember the fire on the flight deck of *Enterprise*?

PS: That would have been *Forrestal* in 1967.

FLA: Yes, you are right. The results of the investigation came through and didn't assign any responsibility to the Commanding Officer. The cause of the accident was the hooking up of the rocket pigtailed before they should have been. The safety regulations provide that they be connected on the catapult the last minute before launch. Then in case of premature firing they fire into the sea with no harm. I told him that I believed that it was the Captain's responsibility to see that regulations as important as these must be complied with. Admiral Holmes bought my view and forwarded the report on, recommending action against the Captain. Of course, this was

academic since the Captain had already been selected for flag rank.

I noticed that he didn't stay in on active duty more than a couple of years before he retired. This has always escaped me why these people, and there have been quite a few, retire after only holding the flag rank for a year or two. That says that someone was passed over who might have been ready to serve a full term. The skipper of *Forrestal* in this incident was one of them who probably caused that to happen.

So Admiral Holmes accepted my recommendation on this and went forward with it. You like to work for a guy like that!

PS: Did you get any fallout from the *Liberty* incident?

FLA: Not that I can recall. Of course, she was operating independently and reporting to the National Security Agency, I suppose.

There was one incident that I recall that occupied us for a while, namely the loss of the *Scorpion* during its submerged transit from Europe to Norfolk. The last message that we had from her was administrative traffic in regard to her upcoming overhaul. As was the case with all the nuclear-powered submarines, her transit was submerged all the way so it was not unusual that we heard nothing after that. She should have reported after surfacing off Norfolk.

Came the day that she should have arrived, we went out with the "Sub-Miss-Sub-Lost" procedures and started the search. After several days and the *SOSUS* submarine surveillance tapes had been examined in detail, there was turned up an indication of some sort of underwater disturbance that fitted nicely with her possible position at the time. That area was searched with deep-submergence equipment, and the hulk was found on the bottom. I don't recall whether it was ever decided what had happened aboard her to cause her destruction.

PS: If so, I don't think it's been made public. I have a question on a selfish interest from this period. My ship, *New Jersey*, was recommissioned during your time in that duty. Did you get involved in any way?

FLA: I have no recollection of being involved in that in any way.

PS: Did you have any role in providing support for the Vietnam War?

FLA: Not that I recall. I suppose some Atlantic Fleet ships were involved, but if so, I don't recall any details.

PS: Some ships with Atlantic homeports did go over. I remember the cruiser *Boston*, for example, and I think some of the destroyers.

I must tell a story I heard from John Miller, who is a retired Marine Colonel here on the staff of the Institute. He mentioned this at a staff meeting when I said that you would be coming. He said that a Marine aviator had come in to see you because there were some problems with the CH-46 helicopters. Apparently he had just gotten into his briefing when the Klaxxon alarm went off that announced a nuclear alert or something. You told this somewhat chagrined Marine that

the alarm would go off if he told any lies.

FLA: I don't remember that. I guess I shot from the hip a lot. I wish I thought that I was that clever.

PS: You were talking about this process of your papers going through the mill and then your retirement. This is quite a change of life after being in uniform since 1929.

FLA: This came as a rather precipitous decision. I had made no plans for retirement. When my papers had been submitted and I was committed, I had an eye toward the Seattle area. I joined my first ship in the Navy Yard at Bremerton, and the whole Northwest is really good country --- when it doesn't rain that is. I had talked to my wife about the possibility of the area to retire to. She had never been there and I thought that perhaps we should go out and see what things looked like there. At Christmas time I had about ten days' leave and I decided that perhaps this would be a good opportunity to scout the place. I went to the ticket office on the base to buy airline tickets. But I saw a poster with a mountain scene of Austria and went home with two tickets to Vienna instead. I told my wife, "Look, we can go to Seattle any time; let's go back to Europe."

That was a fun trip even though Vienna in the winter time is pretty dismal, but we still had the problem of finding somewhere to live when I retired, and that was not too far ahead. We went to Seattle, looked at several houses to buy and ended up buying the first one we had looked at. So on the first of September 1968 I retired, and we moved to Seattle to our new home on Mercer Island.



Norfolk, Virginia, September 1, 1968. I am Deputy Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. I am reading my retirement orders for retirement from the Navy.