

U.S. NAVY & MARINE CORPS CRISIS RESPONSES

1950's - 1960's - 1970's - 1980's

1950's

6/27/50 During the Korean War, USN forces were ordered to the Formosa Straits on a number of occasions to counteract threats of a People's Republic of China (PRC) invasion of Taiwan. For example, at the very beginning of the war, aircraft from the carrier 'Valley Forge' flew over Taipei in a demonstration of U.S. commitment to the Republic of China. In April 1951, TF 77 was ordered to the Taiwan Straits from Korean waters to counteract a threatened invasion of Taiwan from Communist China. TF 77 operated in the Straits from 11 to 14 April, then returned to Korean waters.

7/16/50 With the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula, it was feared that the Soviets would invade Western Europe. Over the next two years, U.S. forces were built up in Europe.

8/14/50 At the request of the Lebanese Government, USS Midway (CVB), Leyte (CVL), Salem (CA), Columbus (CA), and destroyers visited Beirut and gave a carrier aircraft demonstration. This demonstrated U.S. presence in the Mediterranean in spite of the deep U.S. involvement in Korea.

3/15/51 In the Summer of 1948 Yugoslavia was expelled from the Comintern. Over the next several years, there were serious tensions between Yugoslavia and its Communist neighbors. In March 1951, Tito claimed that Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Soviet Union were massing forces along Yugoslavia's border. In mid-March, a reinforced Marine Corps battalion arrived in the area. Later in March, the relief force for the Mediterranean arrived six weeks early to cover 'the politically critical spring period.' In the last week of May, the Fleet was augmented with another aircraft carrier. In September 1952, President Tito went to sea aboard the carrier Coral Sea (a demonstration to the Soviet Union that American aid was available and acceptable to Yugoslavia).

2/2/53 Three years after President Truman gave TF77 orders to operate in the Formosa Straits to both prevent an attack by the PRC on Taiwan and by the ROC against the mainland, President Eisenhower ordered that TF72 should cease the blockade of Taiwan. Eisenhower's goal was to 'de-neutralize' the island.

3/13/54 On 13 March 1954, the battle for Dien Bien Phu began in earnest as the Viet Minh launched their first major assaults on the French garrison. On 19 March, USN forces in the region, including the carriers Wasp and Essex were put on alert. The carrier task group steamed on 22 March for a position off the Indochina coast. On 18 April, USN pilots flew 25 aircraft from Saipan (CVL-48) to a French airfield in Indochina. On 7 May, Dien Bien Phu fell.

5/20/54 14 In January 1954, the leftist Guatemalan Government requested arms from the Soviet Bloc in reaction to a U.S. decision to support an anti-Government 'liberation' movement. On 20 May the first Soviet arms shipment arrived. On that day, the Caribbean Sea Frontier established air-sea patrols in the Gulf of Honduras to protect Honduras from invasion and to control arms shipments to Guatemala. On 3 June, the U.S. airlifted arms to Honduras, and on 18 June, the U.S. announced a complete arms embargo against Guatemala. The crisis ended after a 29 June coup that led to an anti-Communist government in Guatemala.

7/24/54 On 23 July 1954, aircraft shot down a Cathay Pacific (U.K.) airliner, killing 10 of 18 aboard (including 6 Americans). USN aircraft from the carriers Philippine Sea and Hornet provided air cover to the rescue operations. On 26 July, three aircraft from Philippine Sea shot down two PRC fighters that had fired upon them.

Aug-54 Acting under the terms of the Indochina accords of 1954, the USN and USMC assisted in the relocation of civilians and materiel from North to South Vietnam. Over the course of operation 'Passage to Freedom,' over 310,000 civilians, 88,000 tons of cargo, and 8,100 vehicles were transported. The operation involved 109 ships and craft, 59 of which were from the amphibious forces.

10/7/54 On 5 October 1954, an agreement settling the nine-year-old Trieste discord was signed. Ships from the Sixth Fleet moved into the Adriatic Sea as the 3,000 U.S. Army occupation troops were withdrawn. The withdrawal was completed on 26 October.

2/8/55 In January 1955, PRC forces began to bombard the Tachen Islands, and, in early February, the ROC decided to evacuate of the islands. The U.S. Navy evacuated over 15,000 civilians and 11,000 military personnel from the islands.

Feb-56 In response to the growing tension in the Middle East (which centered around the Suez Canal), a destroyer patrol was formed in the Red Sea.

Mar-56 Following a period of growing internal tension and foreign policy turmoil, King Hussein dismissed British General Glubb as Commander of the Jordanian Arab Legion. In reaction to this move, two carriers (Coral Sea and Randolph) and an amphibious force were moved into the Eastern Mediterranean. The formation of a new cabinet in May effectively ended this crisis.

Aug-56 Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956. Tensions immediately rose as both France and the United Kingdom began preparations for military operations. Two carriers (Coral Sea and Randolph) and an amphibious force (which was reinforced in early September) were moved into the Eastern Mediterranean. The fleet dispersed in mid-September as the level of tension in the area appeared to subside.

10/30/56 On 29 October 1956, Israel attacked Egypt and, the next day, the United Kingdom and France joined in the invasion. The United States opposed the invasion. Major portions of the Sixth Fleet, including three carriers, were moved into the Eastern

Mediterranean. Amphibious forces evacuated over 2,000 endangered Western nationals from the region.

11/6/56 On 5 November 1956, the Soviet Union sent threatening diplomatic notes to Israel, France, and the United Kingdom. The next day, a ceasefire took effect and Egyptian President Nasser requested the assistance of the Sixth Fleet to forestall Soviet intervention. On 7 November, Washington received reports that the USSR would transit six ships from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. In response, the CNO ordered that a three carrier task force to sail from the U.S. to the Western Pacific and a two-carrier task force was directed to the Azores. USN forces worldwide were ordered to maintain readiness to execute emergency war plans. Surveillance operations in the Mediterranean were intensified as well. Tensions continued at a high level until U.N. forces were brought into Egypt to serve as a 'buffer' on 15 November. The Sixth Fleet was removed from 24-hour alert status on 13 December.

Dec-56 During the final phases of Castro's campaign from late 1956 through early 1959, U.S. Navy and Marine forces deployed intermittently to the area. The most significant event came following a 23 October 1958 request by the State Department for the evacuation of U.S. nationals from the Cuban port of Nicaro. The next day Kleinsmith (APD-134) conducted the evacuation without incident. The carrier Roosevelt stood by farther out to sea as a contingency force to cover the operation.

4/25/57 On 15 April 1957, King Hussein dismissed the Jordanian cabinet, leading to urban demonstrations on the 22nd through the 24th. On the 25th, the new royalist government declared martial law. On the same day, major elements of the Sixth Fleet deployed towards the Eastern Mediterranean to demonstrate American support for the King.

6/14/57 On 14 June 1957 Haiti's provisional government was overthrown by a military coup. The United States responded with a theater alert of amphibious and surface units of the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron.

Jul-57 In June 1957, a build up of PRC forces opposite Taiwan was reported. In response, Navy forces were deployed to the region with a maximum concentration (three aircraft carriers) occurring in September.

8/21/57 Because of changes in the Syrian Government, Syria's relations with both the United States and neighboring countries deteriorated. Major portions of the Sixth Fleet were moved to the Eastern Mediterranean, and aircraft were redeployed from Western Europe to Adana, Turkey, as the U.S. made assurances to Syria's neighbors that the U.S. would support them against external aggression.

12/10/57 From December 1957 through June 1958, there were a number of revolts against the authority of the Sukarno regime. Primarily because of concern over the safety of U.S. citizens and their property, a contingency evacuation force operated north of

Sumatra for much of this period. The standby force was disbanded after the central government contained the rebellions in June 1958.

5/13/58 On 13 May 1958, a mob attacked the motorcade carrying Vice President Nixon from the airport to Caracas. Two companies of the 2nd Marine Division were airlifted from Camp Lejeune to Guantanamo, Cuba, where they boarded an amphibious ship. Two Army companies of airborne infantry were moved from Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, to Puerto Rico. The alert was cancelled on the 15th, following the Vice President's departure from Venezuela.

5/15/58 On 15 May 1958, Lebanese President Chamoun informed the U.S. ambassador that U.S. assistance might be requested because of the entrance of Syrian partisans into Lebanon. Three aircraft carriers and a reinforced Marine force were deployed off Lebanon's coast. By 1 July, reports that there had been no massive infiltration of forces led to the withdrawal of most of the forces from the area.

Jul-58 On 14 July 1958, following a turn for the worse with serious rioting in Beirut, Lebanese President Chamoun requested U.S. assistance. On the same day there was a coup in Iraq that overthrew a pro-Western government. The first Marine Corps unit landed the next day. The supporting naval force included over 60 vessels, including 3 carriers and an 8-ocean-going minesweeper (MSO) mine force.

7/17/58 Following the coup against the pro-Western Iraqi Government, Jordan's King Hussein requested and received a contingent of British paratroopers. Several surface vessels were redeployed in connection with the British operation.

Aug-58 On 23 August 1958, PRC forces began to shell the Quemoy Islands group, raising the possibility that the islands be cut off from Taiwan. By the first week of September, a Marine Amphibious Ready Group and six CVs were in the area, and three USMC fighter squadrons had moved from Japan to Taiwan. Elements of the Seventh Fleet escorted ROC resupply vessels to within 3 miles of the islands. Tensions eased with a ceasefire on 6 October.

4/30/59 On 25 April 1959, a small force landed on Panama's Caribbean coast. The United States offered the Panamanian Government small arms, and a small surveillance patrol was established off Panama's coast to deter additional landings. The invaders surrendered on 1 May.

May-59 From fall 1958 on, there was a growing tension over Berlin as the Soviets threatened to turn control of access to the city over to the German Democratic Republic. From April through September 1959, the Soviets interfered with the transit of supply trains to West Berlin. There was a general alert of Navy forces throughout the world during most of the May through September timeframe. The most immediate and visible part of the Navy's response came in the Mediterranean, where the carrier force was brought to an advanced state of readiness and deployed in an alert posture. The response

terminated on 30 September 1959 following the end of Soviet harassment along the access routes to West Berlin.

Jul-59 In early July 1959, the Laotian Government requested U.S. civilian technicians to assist in the training of the Royal Laotian Army and, later that month, Pathet Lao forces launched an offensive along the North Vietnamese border. In mid-July elements of the Seventh Fleet (including one CVBG and an amphibious force) were deployed near the Vietnamese coast for possible intervention in Laos. The Seventh Fleet returned to normal operations in October after tensions subsided.

7/5/59 In relation to growing tensions between the PRC and ROC in Korea, and in support of U.S. operational activity off the coast of China, a two-carrier battle group (Ranger and Lexington) conducted operations in the vicinity of Taiwan.

Aug-59 In reaction to growing civil disorder in Panama, surface combatants were used for surveillance operations. The surveillance operations continued through November 1959.

1960's

7/1/60 The former Belgian Congo (now Zaire) became independent on 30Jun60. Elements of the army quickly revolted, and widespread civil disorder resulted. CVS Wasp with a Marine helicopter detachment [HMR-264] aboard, was dispatched to assist in the evacuation of Western nationals. During the remainder of the year, the USN supported U.N. forces in the Congo by providing sealift for U.N. force contingents.

11/14/60 At the request of the Nicaraguan and Guatemalan Governments, President Eisenhower ordered the Navy to establish a patrol off of their Caribbean coasts to guard against possible infiltration. The patrol force included one CVA (Shangri-La), one CVS (Wasp), and eight surface ships.

11/30/60 "G" Company 2nd Battalion 6th Marine Regiment 2ndMARDIV depart CONUS for Solant Amity 1, aboard USS Graham County LST-1176. Additional Marine units, including Recon and a detachment of helicopters [HMR-264] are also dispatched as part of the TaskGroup aboard USS Hermitage LSD-34.

1/1/61 Following the Pathet Lao capture of strategic positions on the central plain of Laos, Seventh Fleet forces (including two CVAs (Lexington and Coral Sea), one CVS (Bennington), and an amphibious force) were ordered to the South China Sea. After the situation in Laos stabilized, the units were directed to withdraw on 6 January.

1/6/61 Elements of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion of the 6th Marine Regiment, out of Camp LeJeune, North Carolina provide a demonstration landing on the beaches of Monrovia, Liberia. It was the first time that forces of the United States had ever visited that nation.

1/14/61 Three rifle platoons of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion of the 6th Marine Regiment out of Camp LeJeune, NC and part of the Solant Amity 1 Task Group disembark USS Graham County due to emergency in Congo and boarded accompanying destroyers DD710 Gearing, DD-862 Vogelgesang and Oiler AOG-55 Nespelen to make space aboard the LST Graham County for evacuated UN forces.

1/25/61 "G" Company [3rd Platoon] aboard USS Gearing DD-710, during Solant Amity 1, departs Abidjan on the Ivory Coast to commence search for passenger ocean liner Santa Maria that had been hijacked by Portuguese terrorist rebels under the leadership of Henrique Galvao.

1/31/61 "G" Company [3rd Platoon] aboard USS Gearing DD-710, during Solant Amity 1, depart Recife Brazil after embarking Rear Admiral Allen Smith Jr., Commander Caribbean Sea Frontier, LCDR Huffman (his aide) and CDR Rainey Public Information Specialist and Mr. Harry Quinn, Political Advisor from the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and sixty-six (66) correspondents and photographers from all corners of the world. After dawn, the Gearing made first contact with the Santa Maria. On Feb 2, the Santa Maria entered Recife, its passengers disembarked, the ship was occupied by Brazilian Marines and, on Feb 3, the hijackers gained asylum in Brazil ending the incident successfully.

2/2/61 In early February 1961, the Amity I task force (two amphibious ships, and two destroyers) provided troop lift for U.N. forces in the Congo.

2/5/61 "G" Company [3rd Platoon] aboard USS Gearing DD-710 depart Recife Brazil to resume operation Solant Amity 1.

5/5/61 With both the political stability and military situation deteriorating in the Congo regions of Africa, forces of the Solant Amity I Task Force are rerouted to the Gulf of Guinea-Congo region, apparently at the request of the U.S. Ambassador. On 7 March, the same force was released from contingency operations.

3/21/61 Because of the deteriorating position of government forces in Laos, elements of the Seventh Fleet were ordered to the South China Sea. While on station, U.S. Navy aircraft conducted reconnaissance missions over Laos. The alert status of the force was relaxed following the start of ceasefire negotiations in mid-June.

Apr-61 On 17 April 1961, American-trained and -supported Cuban exiles invaded Bay of Pigs, Cuba. By 20 April, Cuban forces had decisively defeated the exiles. Carrier task forces and at least one Marine Corps battalion stood by during the operation. USN units remained in the vicinity, as the U.S. attempted to ensure that the captured exiles were not abused by the Cuban Government and tried to negotiate terms for their release.

5/15/61 Naval Task Group forces part of Solant Amity I return to CONUS.

5/30/61 General Rafael Trujillo was assassinated on 30 May 1961. The Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron was reinforced by two additional amphibious squadrons, and a three-carrier task force deployed to the region. The alert was cancelled on 10 June as the Dominican Republic's domestic situation stabilized.

Jun-61 In response to rioting on Zanzibar, the vessels of the Amity II force moved to the vicinity of the island. The safety of the U.S. space tracking station on the island was a principal concern.

7/4/61 Shortly following Kuwait's independence (19 June 1961), Iraq claimed that Kuwait had been improperly withheld from Iraq and that Iraq planned to annex Kuwait. On 30 June Kuwait requested assistance from the United Kingdom, and Royal Marines landed within 24 hours. On 4 July, the five vessels of the Amity II cruise were directed to sail to the vicinity of Aden to serve as a contingency force. This order was cancelled on 7 July.

Jul-61 Following a period of increased Soviet pressure over the status of Berlin, German Democratic Republic forces established barriers along the border between the two sectors of Berlin on 13 August 1961. In response, the U.S. sent reinforcements to the Berlin Brigade. Prior to this, in response to the mounting Soviet pressure, the Navy's forces were augmented with 33 reserve ships and approximately 8,000 Naval Reserve personnel. Elements of the Sixth Fleet were put on alert and a CVS group was moved to the Northeast Atlantic.

11/18/61 On 18 November, Dominican President Balaguer declared a state of emergency following the return to the Dominican Republic of two brothers of the slain Trujillo (see response 60). The Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron was deployed off the coast and was reinforced by the Roosevelt CVBG. Operational activity included amphibious force feints directed at the beach and flyovers of A-4Ds just outside Dominican territorial waters to underscore Secretary of State Rusk's statement that the U.S. would not 'remain idle' if the Trujillos attempted to reestablish the dictatorship. The Navy's response ended following the formation of a Council of State on 19 December.

Dec-61 During the December 1961 through August 1962 period, the U.S. increased its military involvement in Vietnam. In December, for example, the first major U.S. Army contingent arrived. On 22 December, a newly formed USN anti-infiltration coastal patrol began operations. These patrols terminated on 1 August 1962.

1/18/62 On 18 January 1962, a coup ousted the regime in the Dominican Republic. Within six hours, a USN force was ready for a planned show-of-force operation. The deployment was cancelled on 19 January, apparently because the U.S. was satisfied with the course of events in the Dominican Republic.

3/14/62 Following student rioting on 13 March 1962 which led to an outbreak of more general civil disorder, the U.S. established a precautionary deployment off the coast of

Guatemala. The force included CVA Midway and the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron.

4/15/62 On 15 April 1962, a Marine company arrived in Saigon. It was the first USMC advisory unit to arrive in the Republic of Vietnam, and its arrival denoted a qualitative change in Navy/Marine Corps operations in South Vietnam.

5/10/62 Following major victories by Pathet Lao forces that moved their units closer to the Thai border, the U.S. carried out an administrative landing of Marine forces in Thailand at the request of the government of Thailand. About 3,400 Marines moved to Thailand between 17 and 20 May. The United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand sent forces to Thailand as well.

7/25/62 For the first eight months of 1962, there was a particularly serious period of harassment of the U.S. base at Guantanamo. A major response took place in July when it was feared that the security of the installation might be threatened in conjunction with Cuban celebration of the 26th of July revolutionary holiday. The Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron deployed to Guantanamo on 25 July, and major air demonstrations were conducted over the base that evening. The alert was terminated on the 27th.

Aug-62 In early August 1962, U.S. decision-makers were apprehensive concerning potential civil disorders in Haiti. In response the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron was positioned for possible employment and a two-destroyer patrol was established in the Gulf of Gonave.

10/14/62 Cuban Missile Crisis: A 14 October overflight provided evidence that Soviet MRBMs were deployed in Cuba. On 22 October, President Kennedy announced a quarantine of the island nation. Approximately 180 U.S. Navy ships, including 8 carriers and a 60-ship amphibious force, were involved in the response. The blockage was lifted on 20 November.

11/19/62 Indian War, Indian Prime Minister Nehru requested U.S. fighters for possible combat operations against the PRC. In response, an American aircraft carrier was dispatched from the Pacific towards Indian waters; but the crisis passed 24 hours after Nehru made this appeal, and the CV turned back before it reached the Bay of Bengal.

Apr-63 After Pathet Lao forces had inflicted serious defeats on the neutralist faction in Laos, U.S. forces deployed to the area. The two carriers (Ticonderoga and Ranger) and a three-ship amphibious group returned to normal Seventh Fleet assignments on 5 May, two weeks after a cease-fire agreement was reached.

4/29/63 On 16 April 1963, the Haitian Government announced it had uncovered a plot to overthrow the Duvalier regime. Over the coming weeks, tension continued to mount. On 29 April, a 30-man USMC training force was withdrawn from Haiti. On 8 May, Navy ships evacuated 2,279 civilians. Both the United Kingdom and France deployed ships during the crisis. On 17 May, the U.S. broke diplomatic relations with Haiti. On 3 June,

following stabilization of the situation, the U.S. resumed diplomatic relations and the Navy forces were released from contingency tasking.

8/6/63 Haitian Civil War : Groups of Haitian exiles invaded Haiti on 5 and 15 August 1963. On 6 August the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron sailed to the Gulf of Gonave, where it remained until 22 August. The Haitian Government easily defeated the rebels.

8/25/63 U.S. Navy forces responded to domestic disturbances in South Vietnam that culminated in the 1 November 1963 coup overthrowing President Diem. On 25 August, CINCPACFLT was ordered to station Naval forces off the South Vietnamese coast prepared to evacuate American nationals. On 11 September, CINCPAC returned all Navy forces to normal operations. This deployment was the first of several in the worsening South Vietnamese internal crisis. Shortly following the coup, two aircraft carriers (Hancock and Oriskany) and an amphibious force were operating off the Vietnam coast. On 7 November, the last units were released for normal operations.

9/20/63 On 20 September 1963, the CVA Hancock was directed to move to a position off Taiwan in anticipation of a PRC bombardment of the offshore islands. This followed a period of active ROC raiding of the mainland.

9/25/63 On 25 September 1963, a coup overthrew the government of President Bosch. The United States suspended diplomatic relations and cut off economic aid. The Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron was alerted for the response. The alert was cancelled on 14 December.

Oct-63 The Federation of Malaysia was created on 16 September. The Sukarno regime in Indonesia laid claim to some of Malaysia's territories and conducted a guerilla war in provinces on the island of Boreno. The Western response was carried out primarily by the United Kingdom. There were, however, a number of demonstrative actions taken by the U.S. included a 29 November through 17 December port visit by the seaplane carrier AV Salisbury Sound to Singapore.

1/12/64 On 12 January, a rebel movement overthrew the regime in Zanzibar. On 13 January, the U.S. DD Manley evacuated 54 U.S. citizens and 36 nationals of other countries to Tanganyika.

1/15/64 As a result of possible arms smuggling, a two-destroyer patrol was stationed in the southern Caribbean for surveillance and interception operations.

1/20/64 On 20 January 1964, there was an army mutiny in Tanganyika. The DD Manley was directed to return there for possible evacuations. On 25 January, British forces landed and put down the mutiny.

Jan-64 Following serious rioting in the Canal Zone (which left 4 U.S. soldiers and 20 Panamanians dead), the Government of Panama suspended diplomatic relations with the

United States on 9 January. An amphibious force was kept in the region until a week following the 3 April U.S.-Panamanian agreements that restored diplomatic recognition.

Jan-64 The U.S. established special surveillance operations in response to reports that Cuba was supplying Venezuelan rebels with arms and personnel. The patrol aircraft and surface ship patrols were terminated on 7 November, after observing more than 200 vessels.

1/22/64 After conflict between Greek and Turkish factions renewed on 21 January 1964, elements of the Sixth Fleet were deployed to the vicinity of Cyprus. While U.S. Navy vessels conducted patrols off Cyprus throughout this period, there were several phases to this conflict. Aircraft carriers were deployed off Cyprus for most of March, early June, and from 8 August to 2 September.

3/31/64 Following domestic unrest, the Forrestal CVBG moved off Santos, Brazil. This unit was on station from 31 March to 3 April. There was a military coup, and a new President was sworn in on 2 April.

4/21/64 Following an abortive rightist coup attempt on 19 April, Pathet Lao units made gains. On 21 April the Kitty Hawk CVBG was ordered to a position in the South China Sea. On 18 May carrier aircraft began low-level aerial reconnaissance missions over Laos. Following the 7 and 8 June shooting down of Navy reconnaissance aircraft, planes from Constellation and Kitty Hawk flew air strikes against Pathet Lao anti-aircraft positions. On 21 May, the standing carrier presence at Yankee Station in the South China Sea was initiated.

5/1/64 In the midst of serious Cuban harassment of the Guantanamo base, on 27 April 1964, there were indications that the Government of Cuba intended to have demonstrations take place along the base's perimeter. The Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron deployed to the base for the period 1-7 May.

5/7/64 Because of fears that violence might accompany the Panamanian presidential elections, the Caribbean Ready Amphibious Squadron was deployed off the coast of Panama. It remained there for a week following the 13 May certification of the election results.

7/24/64 U.S. Navy surface ships and patrol air craft conducted four days of special patrol operations designed to detect Cuban arms shipments directed at the Dominican Republic.

8/2/64 Gulf of Tonkin: On 2 August 1964, North Vietnamese MTBs engaged USS Maddox; two of the patrol boats were sunk. On 4 August, two destroyers were engaged, and again two patrol boats were sunk. On 5 August, aircraft from the carriers Ticonderoga and Constellation carried out retaliatory strikes against the North Vietnamese mainland.

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution of 10 August 1964 is used as the starting point for the Vietnam-Indochina War. U.S. Navy activity in the region from this point through the evacuations in April 1975 are considered to be part of the conflict and thus are excluded from consideration in this work.

8/7/64 On 7 August 1964, CINCLANT initiated a two-day surveillance operation designed to locate a ship that was believed to be connected with Haitian military forces.

1/7/65 In anticipation of possible rioting that might accompany the first anniversary of the 9 January 1964 riots, forces in USCINCSO were put on alert. One LST was put on alert for the 9-12 January period.

1/17/65 On 17 January 1965, a destroyer was ordered to move to a position off Tanzania following the request by the Department of State for a ship for potential evacuation of U.S. nationals from the country. The alert was cancelled later that same day.

Jan-65 In response to reports of clandestine arms shipments and movement of personnel, surface ship and patrol aircraft surveillance patrols were established in the Caribbean.

Apr-65 In response to domestic violence, air and surface patrols were established. On 11 April Navy aircraft located a Cuban ship that was believed to be carrying arms to rebel forces within British Guiana. Surveillance was held until a Royal Navy vessel arrived on the scene.

4/25/65 Following a period of mounting tension in the Dominican Republic, on 25 April 1965, the U.S. Embassy indicated that a landing might be required to protect American lives and conduct evacuations. Between 27 and 30 April, some 2,400 evacuees were removed by the deployed amphibious force. The first troops went ashore on 28 April, and by 1 May, a total of 1,580 Marines and 2,262 Army troops were on the island. On 28 June 1966, U.S. forces began to be withdrawn from the country.

Jul-65 July and August 1965 were critical months in the Yemeni civil war. MIDEASTFOR surface combatants carried out surveillance and presence missions during this period.

8/3/65 During a period of growing tension on Cyprus that centered on proposed changes to the electoral system, a CVBG and an amphibious force operated off the island.

10/2/65 On 30 September 1965, there was an abortive rebellion involving elements of the Indonesian Communist Party and the Indonesian army. An amphibious task force stood by as a contingency evacuation force following the attempted coup.

9/11/65 The Indo-Pakistani War broke out in the first week of September 1965. On 11 September, two ships from MIDEASTFOR left Bahrain en route to Karachi, Pakistan, to act as a contingency evacuation force. On the 15th, USAF planes evacuated U.S. civilians from West Pakistan.

4/21/67 The military coup occurred on 21 April 1965. In response, the America CVBG was immediately dispatched to the Ionian Sea. Two amphibious groups were included in the contingency task force.

6/6/67 On 13 May 1967, Egypt reinforced its forces in the Sinai border and Israel mobilized in response. Following several weeks of growing tension, the war commenced on 5 June. The fleet was initially held back to indicate American noninvolvement in the fighting. On 6 June, two carrier task forces moved closer to the fighting. On 10 June, the President ordered a high-speed carrier movement toward Syria to facilitate a cease-fire agreement.

10/21/67 On 21 October 1967, Egyptian ships sunk the Israeli destroyer Eilat using surface-to-surface missiles. In response, two carrier task forces were ordered to a position 100 miles north of Egypt.

11/15/67 On 15 November 1967, there was renewed communal violence on Cyprus. This led to a contingency deployment of Sixth Fleet units in anticipation of possible evacuations. On the 24th, U.S. citizens were evacuated by commercial aircraft with no military involvement.

1/24/68 On 23 January 1968, North Korean Forces seized USS Pueblo in international waters. On the 24th, TG 70.6 (CVA Enterprise) was directed to Korea. Through 22 March, a standing two-carrier force was maintained off Korea, and intermittent deployments were maintained after that point until the release of Pueblo's crew on 22 December.

4/15/69 On 15 April 1969, a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane was shot down by Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korean) fighters over the Sea of Japan. SAR efforts began immediately and TF 71 was activated, drawing units from South-East Asia (including four aircraft carriers). After 26 April, the force was reduced to a one carrier battle group.

5/31/69 Because of riots in Curacao, the fast element of the Caribbean Ready Force (one cruiser and three amphibious ships) was reconstituted on 31 May 1969 and ordered to a position off Curacao in anticipation of possible evacuations. Order was quickly restored and, at sunset on 31 May, the group was ordered to return to normal operations.

10/26/69 On 1 September 1969 a coup overthrew the Libyan monarchy. At the same time conditions were very unsettled in Lebanon, leading to the 22 October resignation of the Lebanese Prime Minister. Contingency forces in the period 26-30 October included two carrier task forces and the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group.

1970's

4/22/70 The Government of Trinidad and Tobago declared a state of emergency on 21

April in response to civil unrest and a mutiny of 80 troops. The Caribbean Ready Group was ordered to sail to the vicinity in preparation for evacuation operations.

6/11/70 On 9 June 1970 the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) seized 32 hostages in a hotel in Amman; 14 Americans were among those held. In addition, on the same day, there was an unsuccessful assassination attempt against King Hussein. CVA Forrestal moved to the Eastern Mediterranean to provide air cover for potential evacuation operations. While the situation in Jordan abated, tensions flared in neighboring Beirut, with an attack on the Jordanian embassy on 12 June. The situation in Lebanon calmed on the 15th, and U.S. forces returned to normal operations on 17 June.

9/2/70 Sixth Fleet units were put on alert on 3 September 1970 because of rising tensions in the region. On 6 September, the PFLP hijacked civilian airliners and took them to Dawson Field. Fighting soon broke out between Jordanian and Palestinian forces. Two CVs and the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) were in the Eastern Mediterranean. Following Syrian intervention on 18 September, CVA Kennedy and elements of the 8th Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB) were ordered from the East Coast to the Mediterranean. On the 19th, troops in Germany and CONUS (82nd Airborne Division) were alerted for movement. By 24 September, all Syrian forces were out of Jordanian territory and, by 5 October, only one carrier was on station in the Eastern Mediterranean.

4/22/71 Haitian President Francois Duvalier died on 21 April 1971 and was succeeded as chief of state by his 19-year-old son Jean-Claude. A surface patrol was established in the Windward Passage because of the possibility that the situation might be exploited by Haitian exiles and/or Cuban forces. Additionally, USMC BLT 2/3, in the U.S., was alerted and carried out a contingency reaction drill (no amphibious ships were diverted to support this).

12/10/71 The Bangladesh war began on 3 December 1971 and, on 7 December, the head of the U.N. relief mission in East Pakistan (Bangladesh) indicated that evacuation of foreign civilians might be required. On 10 December, a CVBG (CVAN Enterprise) and an amphibious ready group were ordered to the Indian Ocean. On 12 December, the Royal Air Force evacuated Western nationals from East Pakistan, thereby eliminating the requirement for an American evacuation operation.

12/15/71 Following seizure of the steamer Johnny Express by Cuban naval forces on 15 December 1971, two U.S. Navy destroyers were put on alert. The remaining four ships of the exile-owned Bahama lines were escorted through the end of January 1972.

5/3/73 On 3 May 1973, the Palestinian Yarmuk Brigade entered Lebanon from Syria. Two CVBGs (Forrestal and Kennedy) were alerted for potential evacuation operations. By 9 May, the situation had stabilized.

10/6/73 On 6 October 1973 Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a surprise attack on Israel. U.S. Navy forces quickly sortied in response to the war, with two CVBGs

(Independence and Roosevelt) and an amphibious force in the Mediterranean and a CVBG (Kennedy) in the Eastern Atlantic. On 25 October U.S. forces went on Defense Condition (DEFCON) III alert status, as possible intervention by the Soviet Union was feared. The Kennedy CVBG and additional amphibious forces entered the Mediterranean. On 26 October, CINCSAC and CINCONAD reverted to normal DEFCON status. On 31 October USEUCOM (less the Sixth Fleet) went off DEFCON III status. The Sixth Fleet resumed its normal DEFCON status on 17 November.

10/24/73 On 24 October, the U.S. merchant ship LaSalle was shot at at the mouth of the Red Sea. Over the next month, a MIDEASTFOR destroyer escorted U.S. merchant ships in the lower Red Sea.

10/25/73 Following the initiation of the oil embargo in the midst of the October War, a CVBG (Hancock) was ordered from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean.

7/15/74 On 15 July 1974, immediately after a coup on Cyprus, the carrier America was ordered to augment the Sixth Fleet instead of returning to the U.S. At the same time, port calls for the Forrestal CVBG and the Sixth Fleet amphibious groups were cancelled. On 22 and 24 July, evacuees from Cyprus were brought aboard USN vessels. For the next month, Sixth Fleet units remained on a high state of readiness in the area as the situation remained tense on the island. On 2 September, the last units were released from contingency tasking.

1/18/75 Following violent Greek Cypriot demonstrations, some of which were outside the American Embassy in Nicosia, the Joint Chiefs ordered a precautionary deployment of a carrier group to a position southwest of Cyprus. In addition, units of the Sixth Fleet's amphibious force were alerted for possible evacuation duty. By 21 January, the situation had quieted and the alert situation was relaxed.

2/3/75 In 1974, elements of the Ethiopian military seized control of the government and overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie. As the Ethiopian civil war intensified, a two-ship contingency force took position in the Red Sea for potential evacuation of American citizens who operated the U.S. Navy Communications Station in Asmara. On 4 February, these civilians were evacuated by commercial airliners. On 6 February, the contingency force was released.

5/12-16/75 On 12 May 1975, the US merchant ship Mayaguez was seized by Cambodian gunboats and escorted to Koh Tang Island. On 14 May, U.S. Marines recaptured the Mayaguez and went ashore on Koh Tang Island, releasing the crew. Air cover was flown by USAF fighters operating from Thailand and by aircraft operating off Coral Sea. Forever remembered as the Mayaguez incident, more can be learned about it at http://members.tripod.com/~GranzowMissingLinks/POW_MIA.html and by reading a book entitled [The Last Battle: The Mayaguez Incident and the End of the Vietnam War](#), written by Ralph Wetterhahn, a scathing indictment of all things wrong in both the military and the executive branch of our nation at the time, when decisions affecting the

lives of men half-way around the world were being decided in the cloakrooms of Washington, DC.

Aug-75 During 1974 and 1975, the situation in Lebanon generally deteriorated as the nation headed toward civil war. In late June, a U.S. Army colonel was kidnapped and held for two weeks. Starting in August, a contingency evacuation force was maintained for the potential evacuation of the approximately 100 U.S. Government employees and 1,000 U.S. citizens in Lebanon.

1/5/76 On 3 January 1976, the Moroccan Navy stopped a Soviet cargo ship off the Spanish Sahara and found a cargo of arms. In response to the evidence of increased Soviet support for the Polisario rebels, U.S. Navy vessels made three port visits in Morocco during January 1976.

7/27/76 To reassure Tunisian officials following Libyan threats against Tunisia, the U.S. Embassy at Tunis requested that the port visit by two vessels to Tunis be extended. A frigate made a port visit at Sfax several weeks later at the request of the State Department.

7/8/76 Because of the possibility of Ugandan military operations against Kenya following the Israeli raid on Entebbe airport, the Ranger CVBG was ordered from the South China Sea to the Western Indian Ocean. In addition, two MIDEASTFOR frigates made successive port calls in Mombassa in mid-July. Ranger was released on 27 July.

8/19/76 Following the murder of two U.S. Army officers (and wounding of four U.S. and five South Korean soldiers) on 18 August 1976 in the demilitarized zone, a general buildup and alert of forces occurred in South Korea. The Midway CVBG was ordered from Yokosuka to an operating area in the approaches to the Korea Strait, where it remained until released on 8 September.

2/25/77 In response to restrictions placed on Americans in Uganda by President Amin, the Enterprise CVBG was ordered to move to a position off the coast of Kenya. The CVBG was released to normal operations after Amin lifted all travel restrictions on Americans.

Feb-78 In late February 1978, surface ships from MIDEASTFOR began surveillance operations of the Somali invasion of the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. Following the collapse of the Somali army in the Ogaden, the Kitty Hawk CVBG was ordered to a holding point north of Singapore. On 23 March, the CVBG was released without having been sent into the Indian Ocean.

6/15/78 Following increased Soviet military activity in the Far East, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown asserted that the U.S. did not recognize the Sea of Japan as a Soviet sanctuary. A week later, three USN ships began operations in the Sea of Japan to underscore the Secretary of Defense's comments and to demonstrate the right of free navigation in international waters.

Jul-78 During the growing unrest in Afghanistan, the Enterprise CVBG was ordered to remain in the vicinity of Diego Garcia. Enterprise was released as of 31 July.

9/16/78 Following a period of growing civil strife in Nicaragua, on 16 September 1978 CINCLANTFLT ordered surface ship surveillance operations off the west coast of Nicaragua. The operations commenced on 20 September and continued to 1 October.

12/6/78 On 6 December 1978, following a deterioration in the internal situation in Iran, three surface vessels were ordered to remain in the Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea region following completion of exercise 'Midlink.' From 28 December through 28 January 1979, the Constellation CVBG was kept in the Singapore area for possible deployment to the Indian Ocean. On 14 February, armed leftists briefly took over the American Embassy in Tehran. On 18 and 21 February, Western nationals were evacuated from Bandar Abbas and Chah Bahr by RN and commercial ships (many of the evacuees were transferred to USN ships in international waters).

2/25/79 In response to the 22 February 1979 PRC invasion of North Vietnam and a large Soviet deployment of vessels to the region, USN vessels including the Constellation CVBG entered the South China Sea to monitor the situation.

3/6/79 On 6 March 1979, the Constellation CVBG was ordered from the South China Sea to the Gulf of Aden. The deployment to monitor the fighting between North and South Yemen was, most likely, meant to reassure the Saudis that the U.S. intended to remain in the region despite the fall of the Shah. A carrier presence was kept in the region until 6 June.

10/2/79 On 2 October, the JCS issued an executive order directing the establishment of a Caribbean contingency task force, following a month of news reports about the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba. On 11 October, 1,800 Marines left Morehead City en route to Guantanamo as part of REINFORCEX. In mid-October, the Forrestal CVBG transited close to Cuba in conjunction with the U.S. policy of an increased Navy presence in the Caribbean.

10/9/79 In October 1979 the U.S. relationship with the Islamic Republic worsened as riots and massive demonstrations outside the American Embassy in Tehran became a common occurrence. On 9 October, a 20 October deployment of the Midway CVBG to the region was ordered. On 4 November, Iranian students seized the U.S. Embassy and took the personnel hostage. On 20 November, the President ordered the Kitty Hawk CVBG into the Indian Ocean. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late December reinforced the decision to maintain two CVBGs in the Indian Ocean. On April 24, an attempted rescue mission failed, with eight U.S. servicemen dead. On 21 January 1981, the hostages were released, after 444 days in captivity.

10/26/79 Following the assassination of South Korean President Park Chung Hee, DEFCON 3 was declared on 26 October 1979. The Kitty Hawk CVBG was ordered to a position south of Korea. On 5 November, the DEFCON alert returned to normal.

1980s

5/27/80 In 1980 a growing storm of protest calling for democratic reforms led to the declaration of martial law in South Korea and the massacre of several hundred people in the town of Kwangju. A carrier moved to the area in late May and a carrier presence was maintained through 28 June.

9/30/80 Following the Iraqi invasion of Iran on 22 September 1980, four USAF AWACS aircraft were deployed to Saudi Arabia on 30 September. On 11 October a reinforcement of the MIDEASTFOR was announced. In mid-October about 60 U.S. British, French, and Australian warships were in the region to prevent potential Iranian interference with oil traffic through the Straits of Hormuz. In February 1981, a decision was made to maintain two CVBGs in the Indian Ocean even though the hostages had been released.

12/9/80 Because of instability along the Polish/Soviet border, the chairman of the NATO Military Committee ordered that STANAVFORLANT would not be released for the Christmas holiday. At the same time, the U.S. decided to supply NATO with four AWACS aircraft to monitor the border situation.

1/29/81 The Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Department of Defense, decided that a well-publicized U.S. Naval visit to Agadir would be desirable to send a signal to the Soviets in response to the positioning of three Soviet Navy ships in the region. A three-day visit by CG-20 Turner (CG-20) early in February followed.

4/1/81 On 1 April President Reagan ordered a company of Green Berets and a Navy destroyer to Liberia to show support for the government of Samuel K. Doe. On 10 April the Green Berets arrived for 30 days of training exercise with Liberian troops. On 12 April, DD-988 Thorn arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, for a three-day port visit.

5/3/81 Following Israeli reprisal raids against Syrian SAM positions in southern Lebanon, the Forrester CVBG and the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group were ordered into the Eastern Mediterranean on 3 May 1981. In mid-May, the Independence CVBG was retained in Eastern Mediterranean on 3 May 1981. In mid-May, the Independence CVBG was retained in Eastern Mediterranean following a transit through the Suez Canal from the Indian Ocean. On 26 May, Independence was released. On 14 September, the response posture for amphibious forces to conduct evacuation operations was cancelled.

8/1/81 In response to extensive Libyan claims of sovereignty over international waters, the President authorized Naval exercises in the Gulf of Sidra. During the Freedom of Navigation (FON) operations, two Libyan Air Force fighters were shot down by USN fighters on 18 August.

10/7/81 Following the 6 October 81 assassination of Egyptian President Sadat at a military parade, a CVBG and the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group were ordered to a position 120 n.mi. north of Egypt. The forces were sent to the region because of the

possibility of Libyan involvement in the assassination and because of fears of Libyan aggression against either Egypt or the Sudan.

10/16/81 Amidst growing official concern over arms shipments to rebels in El Salvador, a series of maneuvers began in the Caribbean. On 23 December, DD-989 Deyo was tasked to sortie to the coast of El Salvador to conduct surveillance operations. On 2 February, because of the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, the Defense Mapping Agency issued Special Warning #57 warning mariners to avoid Nicaraguan harbors. On 16 February, DD-970 Caron completed turnover with Deyo, and surveillance operations were to continue in the region for the indefinite future.

6/8/82 On 6 June 1982 Israeli forces entered Lebanon in operation 'Peace for Galilee.' On 8 June the Secretary of Defense ordered the MARG at Rota to the Eastern Mediterranean for potential evacuation of American citizens from Beirut. On 28 June, Israeli forces began a siege of West Beirut. On 20 July, the MARG response posture was relaxed.

8/10/82 On 10 August the alert posture of the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group was heightened in light of a likely deployment as part of a peacekeeping force to oversee the evacuation of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forces from West Beirut. On 24 August (EDP), the first of 800 Marines began going ashore at Beirut as part of a joint U.S.-French peacekeeping force. On 8 September, following the removal of the PLO forces from West Beirut, the Marines redeployed aboard the MARG ships.

9/22/82 On 22 September 1982, following the Phalangist Christian force massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps, the Mediterranean Amphibious ready Group was ordered to the Eastern Mediterranean. From 27 September through 21 January 1983, two carriers were tethered to Lebanon to provide support for the Marine Corps forces ashore. On 11 February, the response posture for carrier support was relaxed as the situation had stabilized.

2/14/83 Following Libyan threats against Sudan, the Enterprise CVBG moved from a position off Lebanon to a position north of Libya. USN aircraft from Nimitz operated in the Tripoli Flight Information Region and the Nimitz closed to within 85 miles of the Libyan coast.

6/14/83 In 1983, the U.S. Government expressed great concern over the safety of Honduras, citing the threat of invasion from neighboring Nicaragua. On 14 June, 100 Green Beret military advisors arrived in Honduras. On 18 July, the Ranger CVBG was diverted from a planned Indian Ocean deployment to the vicinity of Central America through 12 August. On 16 August, the Coral Sea CVBG arrived off the east coast of Nicaragua and, on 26 August, New Jersey arrived on station west of Nicaragua. These vessels departed the region in mid-September.

8/29/83 The Eisenhower CVBG was ordered to return at 'best speed' to the Eastern Mediterranean on 29 August as the situation in Beirut worsened with more frequent gun battles and growing numbers of USMC casualties. On 12 September, ARG Alpha, the

Pacific Amphibious Ready Group, arrived off Beirut. On 4 October, the Eisenhower CVBG was authorized to leave the Beirut area and, on 9 October, ARG Alphas return to PACOM via the Suez was authorized. On 23 October 1983, a suicide bomber struck the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, killing 241. On the same day, another suicide car bomb killed 85 French paratroopers. Various Sixth Fleet units were ordered to Beirut, both to reassert the U.S. presence and to assist in rescue operations. Following the attack, the Ranger CVBG was diverted from port calls in Australia to the North Arabian Sea, where it operated for 122 days. On 26 February 1984, the withdrawal of the USMC contingent of the international peacekeeping force was completed.

8/1/83 Following Libyan aggression against Chad, aircraft from CVN-69 Eisenhower operated in the Gulf of Sidra. CV-43 Coral Sea's departure from the Mediterranean was delayed for a day because of uncertainty over the situation.

9/1/83 On 1 September 1983, a Soviet air defense fighter shot down Korean Air Lines flight 007 (KAL 007), killing all 267 aboard. USN surface ships were moved to the vicinity to search for debris and provide an American presence.

10/8/83 Following an 18 September 1983 Iranian threat to block oil exports from the Persian Gulf, ARG Alpha was ordered from the Eastern Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean on 8 October. On 10 October, the Ranger CVBG arrived in the northern Arabian Sea. Ranger, which had been scheduled to depart the region on 18 October, remained through the new year.

10/11/83 During the Secretary of Defense's attendance of funeral ceremonies for the 21 South Korean officials killed by a North Korean bomb in Burma, the Vinson CVBG's departure for the U.S. was delayed. The CVBG operated in waters off Pusan, South Korea, to underscore the U.S. commitment to South Korea.

12/3/83 On 3 December, two F-14s flying over Lebanon were fired upon by Syrian anti-aircraft artillery. On 4 December 82, aircraft from Kennedy and Independence were launched against Syrian targets; two were shot down, and one U.S. airman was taken prisoner by Syrian troops.

10/20/83 On 19 October, in response to mounting political strife in Grenada, the JCS issued a warning order indicating the possible requirement for U.S. military assistance to evacuate U.S. citizens from the island. On 20 October, the Independence CVBG and the Amphibious Ready Group en route to the Mediterranean from CONUS were diverted to sail to the vicinity of Grenada to signal U.S. concern regarding events on the Island. On 25 October Marines and Rangers landed on the island and, by 27 October, all major objectives were secured. On 4 November, Independence and the Amphibious Ready Group renewed their transit to the Mediterranean.

3/13/84 In late January 1984, the Secretary of Defense authorized an increase in U.S. Navy presence operations off Central America during the period of 1 February through 31 July to demonstrate support for El Salvador during elections, deter Nicaraguan

aggression, and build confidence in the U.S. commitment to Central America. On 13 March, America left for operations off the east coast of Central America that coincided with Salvadoran elections on 25 March. Similar operations through the year included battleship, carrier, and amphibious warfare operations.

Apr-84 Following Iraqi initiation of a major antishipping campaign, the commitment to a continuous CV presence in the North Arabian Sea was renewed. In late May, MIDEASTFOR ships began to escort U.S. flag merchant ships because of the escalating violence in the region. On 4 June, DOD officials announced that the U.S. had sent AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia. (The next day, Saudi warplanes, guided by an AWACS, shot down an Iranian plane in Saudi airspace.)

8/3/84 On 9 July 1984 a Soviet merchant ship was struck by an unidentified explosion in the Red Sea. On 3 August, following a number of additional mine strikes and an Islamic Jihad announcement that it had laid 190 mines in the Red Sea, a small U.S. mine-countermeasures team was sent to the Red Sea. On 9 August, U.S. minesweeping operations using helicopters operating off USN ships began. In addition to the U.S. efforts, vessels from France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union conducted minesweeping operations.

9/21/84 On 21 September, amidst renewed terrorist threats against the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, three ships were ordered off Lebanon to provide a sea-based contingency response capability. On 18 October, Sixth Fleet units in the Cyprus area were placed on alert because of a terrorist threat to the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia.

11/6/84 Following the 5 November hijacking of a Saudi airliner to Iran, the Enterprise CVBG was ordered to the northern Arabian Sea. On 6 November, the order was cancelled

11/30/84 On 30 November, Nimitz (CVN-68) and an escorting cruiser were ordered from Charlotte Amalie to an area just off the Cuban coast when a Navy-chartered vessel broke down and drifted into Cuban water. The response was cancelled when the USCG ship Reliance took the stricken vessel under tow and removed it from Cuban waters.

Mar-85 Following threats against U.S. personnel at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, the Eisenhower CVBG was diverted from Majorca to the Eastern Mediterranean while U.S. personnel were evacuated by helicopter to Cyprus.

6/14/85 On 14 June 1985, TWA Flight 847 was hijacked to Beirut by Shiite terrorists. The Nimitz CVBG was ordered from Italy to the Eastern Mediterranean, along with the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group with 1,800 Marines embarked. Nimitz was on station in the Eastern Mediterranean until 24 July, following the release of the passengers and aircraft.

9/13/85 On 13 September 1985, COMIDEASTFOR ordered the escort of an MSC ship because of recent Iranian seizures of merchant vessels. On 22 September, two vessels

were diverted from an ASW exercise with the Kitty Hawk CVBG to resume Persian Gulf surveillance operations.

10/7/85 On 7 October 1985, following the Palestinian terrorist hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro, Sixth Fleet vessels (including CV-60 Saratoga) moved to the Eastern Mediterranean. On 10 October, F-14s from Saratoga forced an Egyptian airliner with the hijackers aboard to Italy, where the hijackers were taken into custody.

11/23/85 On 23 November 1985, an Egyptian airlines was hijacked to Malta. USN ships, including CV-43 Coral Sea responded to the hijacking and moved toward Malta for contingency purposes.

1/12/86 The tension in the Persian Gulf persisted as the Tanker War continued unabated. The 12 January 1986 Iranian boarding of the SS President Taylor led to closer USN escort of U.S. merchant vessels. On 12 May, the destroyer David R. Ray deterred an Iranian Navy attempt to board another U.S. merchant ship.

Jan-86 In January 1986, amidst the bloody civil war in South Yemen, vessels from the Middle East Force, including the flagship La Salle, moved off the Yemeni coast for potential evacuation operations. An RN vessel carried out endangered Western nationals.

Jan-86 Following terrorist attacks on 27 December 1985 in the Rome and Vienna airports, a series of Freedom of Navigation operations in the Gulf of Sidra (Operations in the Vicinity of Libya, OVL) were approved. Code-named 'Attain Document,' the first two (26-30 January and 12-15 February) occurred without incident, During 'Attain Document III (23-29 March 1986), two SA-5 missiles were shot at U.S. aircraft by a SAM Site on 24 March. Over the next 16 hours, two Libyan patrol boats were sunk by USN aircraft.

Mar-86 A USN vessel was diverted from a point off the coast of Lebanon to stand by to pick up hostages. The vessel was soon returned to scheduled operations as no hostages were released.

4/10/86 On 5 April, the La Belle Discotheque in the Federal Republic of Germany was bombed, resulting in the death of one U.S. serviceman and many injured. On 14 April, aircraft from the carriers Coral Sea and America, as well as USAF FB-111s from Lakenheath AFB in the U.K., struck targets in Libya.

Sep-86 Following the hijacking of a Pakistani airline, the Forrestal CVBG was ordered to head toward the Eastern Mediterranean in case the aircraft took off for Larnica in Cyprus or Beirut. The vessels were soon released for normal operations as this did not occur.

Jan-87 The U.S. operations in the Persian Gulf were perhaps the most involved use of USN forces since the Vietnam War. U.S. operations increased in intensity during 1987, as the U.S. agreed to reflag and escort ten Kuwaiti oil tankers. Notable points in the operations include: 17 May 1987, an Iraqi Exocet missile hit the frigate Stark, killing 37

U.S. sailors; 21 July 1987, 'Earnest Will' escort operations began; 22 July, the tanker Bridgeton struck a mine; 21 September, US forces captured an Iranian vessel laying mines; 6 October, the destruction of three Iranian small boats; 19 October, the destruction of an Iranian oil drilling platform; 14 April 1988, FFG-58 Roberts struck a mine; 18 April, retaliation operations against two Iranian oil platforms led to a day-long naval battle in which many Iranian naval units were damaged or sunk; and, on 3 July 1988, in the midst of a surface engagement, CG 49 Vincennes shot down an Iran Air Airbus, killing all 290 passengers and crew. On 20 August 1988, a U.N.-sponsored cease-fire went into effect, ending the nearly eight-year-long war.

Feb-87 In response to growing tension over hostages in Lebanon, the Kennedy CVBG was ordered to a MODLOC off Lebanon for potential evacuation operations.

Sep-88 During the Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, the U.S. deployed forces to deter North Korean disruption of the Olympics. At one point, two CVBGs (Nimitz and Midway) were operating in the Sea of Japan providing Olympic presence.

Oct 88 During unrest in Burma, Amphibious Ready Group ALPHA was sent to a MODLOC off Burma for possible evacuation of U.S. citizens. The endangered U.S. citizens finally left Burma by commercial air.

11/17/88 The Nimitz battle group was put on alert to provide a U.S. presence near the Maldives. The movement was cancelled after Indian troops sent to the island chain quickly repelled the attempted coup by an armed group of 'probable' Sri Lankan Tamil mercenaries.

Feb-89 During February 1989, fighting in Beirut intensified. In mid-February, following the outbreak of fighting in close proximity to the U.S. Embassy, the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group was ordered to move to the Eastern Mediterranean for potential evacuation operations.

Jun-89 During the demonstrations in China and through the military crackdown in Beijing, a carrier battle group steamed in the South China Sea.

5/11/89 Following a violent election campaign and annulment of the results by Panamanian President Noriega, President Bush ordered a reinforcement of U.S. forces in Panama. A light infantry battalion from the U.S. Army's 7th Infantry Division and a company from the 2nd USMC division were flown to Howard Air Force Base outside Panama City. U.S. Navy vessels alerted in support of this contingency response included an aircraft carrier.

8/1/89 Following the Israel capture of Sheik Obeid and claims that Lt. Col. William R. Higgins, USMC, had been killed, USN forces were ordered to steam toward Lebanon and Iran. The America CVBG was ordered from Singapore to the Arabian Sea; the Coral Sea CVBG left a port call in Alexandria, Egypt, ahead of time; and BB-61 Iowa broke off a port call in Marseilles, France, to steam east toward Lebanon. The cruiser Belknap, with

the Sixth Fleet commander aboard, headed to the waters off Lebanon, canceling its participation in a port call in the Soviet Union.