



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS TRENTON (LPD-14)

FPO NEW YORK 09588

LPD 14/MHW:mn
5750
Ser

From: Commanding Officer, USS TRENTON (LPD 14)

To: Director of Naval History (OP-0989)

Subj: 1981 Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5720.12C

Encl: (1) Command Organization and 1981 Highlights
(2) Summary of Operations
(3) Narrative History

1. Enclosures (1) through (3) are forwarded in accordance with reference (a).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. K. Hannah, Jr.", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

E. K. HANNAH, JR.

Copy to:
COMNAVSURFLANT
COMPHIBGRU TWO
COMPHIBRON EIGHT

Command Organization and 1981 Highlights

1. Commanding Officer: Captain ELMORE K. HANNAH, JR.
2. Homeport: Norfolk, Virginia
3. Command Association: Under the administrative and operational command of the Commander Amphibious Squadron Four from 1 January 1981 to 19 October 1981 and the administrative and operational command of Commander Amphibious Squadron Eight from 20 October 1981 to 31 December 1981.
4. Operations Summary

a. Deployments

1. TRENTON got underway for her first deployment of the year from homeport Norfolk, VA, on 20 January 1981 after making final preparations during the weeks preceding the movement. The day 20 January marked the commencement date of MARG 1-81 which including four major exercises and numerous training exercises and selective exercises. During MARG 1-81 TRENTON deployed with the partial assets of 32 MAU., PHIBCB 2, BMU 2, and ACU 2.

2. On 24 AUG, TRENTON was underway for a week long cruise to the city of Boston, MASS. During her stay, TRENTON fulfilled her mission as an ambassador of goodwill for the Navy.

3. On 14 SEP, TRENTON was underway to Port Everglades, FLA. to conduct engineering tests and make a short goodwill visit to the city of FT Lauderdale, FLA.

4. On 13 OCT, TRENTON got underway for local OPS in the Virginia Capes OP-Caps AREA and arrived at the Cheatham Annex, Yorktown, VA. on the 15th to act as a support ship for the 1981 Yorktown Bicentennial Celebration. The celebration was highly successful and the TRENTON was instrumental in the success with her support efforts.

5. On 30 NOV, TRENTON was underway to the Virginia Capes OP-AREA to participate in the MARG 1-82 WORKUP. The WORKUP brought together most of TRENTON'S Marine and Navy personnel for an 18 day rehearsal period in preparation for the upcoming MARG, and included Multi-ship operations with USS NASSAU (LHA-4) and USS NEWPORT (LST-1179).

b. Exercises

1. MARG 1-81 Caribbean Ops-Exercise Quick Look, JAN. 25 1981. Exercise Quick Look afforded TRENTON an opportunity to refine her amphibious surface wave timing and non-combatant evacuation operations. In addition the exercise allowed TRENTON to fine tune all other aspects of her mission prior to INCHOP SIXTHFLEET.

2. PHIBLEX 2-81 FEB. 13, 1981. PHIBLEX 2-81 was conducted at Garrucha, Spain and involved all MARG 1-81 units. This exercise required TRENTON to utilize all available assets, air and surface to effectively contribute her part in the overall effort.

3. Sardinia 81, MAR 7, 1981. Exercise Sardinia was conducted off the southern coast of Sardinia and from anchorage at Capo Teulada. The exercise unified units from the Italian, French and US Navies and rehearsed all aspects of a real amphibious landing, including live naval gunfire support.

4. PHIBLEX 3-81 Vatika, Greece MAR. 27, 1981. PHIBLEX 1-81 proved TRENTON as well as the other MARG units' ability to operate under adverse conditions during an amphibious landing. During the exercise, troop assets and support equipment were successfully inserted on the beach despite the rough seas and persistently low visibility.

c. Public Relations

1. TRENTON made port visits in Malaga, Spain; Naples, Italy; Alexandria, Egypt; Rota, Spain; Ft Lauderdale, FLA; Boston, MASS; and Yorktown, VA. and hosted over 8,000 visitors during open houses and special tours while deployed.

2. During 1981 TRENTON entertained an additional 1,218 guests during open house while in port Norfolk, VA.

3. TRENTON participated in the 1981 Yorktown Bicentennial Celebration as a vital, if not particularly visible, platform from her berth at Cheatham Annex, Yorktown.

d. Statistics

1. Repair Parts and Ship Support	\$203,626
2. Ammunition Expended	183 Rounds 3" 50
3. Safe Flight Deck Evolutions	1,758 Landings
4. Salaries Expenses	\$2,492,353.94
5. Engine Miles Steamed	30,691 miles
6. Hours Underway	
7. Ships Fuel Consumed	2,568,150 gallons

e. Special Topics

1. During her port visit to Alexandria, Egypt TRENTON was chosen to test the concept of using an LPD as an SSN submarine tender for the USS Jack.

2. TRENTON received a satellite navigation system which greatly enhanced her ability to accurately navigate 23 NOV 1981.

3. TRENTON underwent a thorough Tycom 3-M inspection during the month of October and received a well done with overall score of 85.2%.

4. The week of 2 NOV 1981 TRENTON underwent an INSURV inspection. TRENTON performed exceptionally well, particularly in the open and inspect phase which the inspection board felt one of the best they had yet seen.

5. TRENTON received the following VIP'S onboard:

a. RADM CLARA	10 March 1981	(COMINDIV THREE, IN)
b. VADM ROWDEN	13 June 1981	(COMSIXTHFLT)
c. ADM HAYWARD	03 June 1981	(CNO)
d. RADM KEARNS	02 July 1981; 27 October 1981	(COMPHBGRU TWO)

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

01 JAN - 19 JAN Inport Norfolk, VA
20 JAN Underway for Morehead City for embarkation of 32 MAU
21 JAN - 22 JAN Embarked elements of 32 MAU at Morehead City, NC
22 JAN Depart Morehead City during morning hours for transit to Caribbean
25 JAN - 28 JAN Assigned to CTF 140 for Caribbean Operations
26 JAN - 27 JAN VIEQUES PHIBLEX
28 JAN Depart Caribbean. Commence trans-Atlantic transit
10 FEB CHOP to COMSIXTHFLT. Arrive Rota, Spain. Commence turnover
12 FEB COMPHIBRON FOUR/MARG 1-81 Assumed duties as CTF 61/TF 61
12 FEB - 13 FEB Transit to Spanish ports
14 FEB - 16 FEB Port Visit: Malaga, SP
17 FEB - 18 FEB Transit to Garrucha, Spain for PHIBLEX 2-81
18 FEB - 24 FEB PHIBLEX 2-81, Garrucha, Spain
25 FEB - 26 FEB Transit to Spanish ports
26 FEB - 04 MAR Port Visit: Malaga, SP
04 MAR - 06 MAR Transit to LA MADDALENA
06 MAR - 08 MAR Opposed Transit from LA MADDALENA to CAPO TEULADA
10 MAR RADM CLARA, IN, CTF 703, visits MARG
08 MAR - 14 MAR SARDINIA 81; French, Italian, US Joint Exercise
14 MAR - 16 MAR Transit to Naples, Italy
16 MAR - 25 MAR Port Visit: Naples, Italy (all ships) ?
26 MAR - 27 MAR Opposed Transit to VATIKA, GREECE for PHIBLEX 3-81
27 MAR - 02 APR PHIBLEX 3-81, VATIKA, GREECE
03 APR Transit to EMED
04 APR SUEZ CANAL/Indian Ocean Operations cancelled
05 APR - 12 APR MODLOC Operations, Central Med
13 Apr - 19 APR Port Visit: Bari Italy

20 APR - 26 APR	Transit from Italian ports to Eastern Mediterranean ports
25 APR - 01 MAY	Port Visit: Alexandria, Egypt
01 MAY	TF 61 Rendezvous in Eastern Mediterranean
02 MAY - 03 MAY	ENCOUNTEREX with CTF 60 Battle Group
04 MAY	Received orders to go to Eastern Mediterranean MODLOC position and commence contingency operations
04 MAY - 13 JUN	MODLOC Contingency Operations in Eastern Mediterranean
03 JUN	CNO, ADM Hayward visits USS TRENTON
13 JUN - 16 JUN	Transit to Naples
16 JUN	BSC Naples. VADM Rowden visits USS TRENTON
16 JUN - 18 JUN	Transit to Western Mediterranean for rendezvous with COMPHBRON SIX
18 JUN - 20 JUN	Transit to Rota, Spain
20 JUN - 21 JUN	Inport Rota, Spain for DESNAIL Operations
22 JUN	Commence trans-Atlantic Transit
23 JUN	Chop to CINCLANTFLT
01 JUL	Arrive Morehead City, NC conduct offload elements of 32 MAU Underway for Norfolk, VA
02 JUL	COMPHIBGRU TWO, RADM Kearns visits MARG 1-81 Arrive Norfolk, VA
02 JUL	Offload remaining Marines/Equipment
02 JUL - 23 AUG	Inport Norfolk, VA
24 AUG	Enroute Boston, MASSACHUSETTS for port visit
24 AUG - 28 AUG	Port Visit Boston, Massachusetts
29 AUG	Enroute Norfolk, VA
31 AUG	Arrive Norfolk, VA
01 SEP	Conduct Joint Helo training with 101st Airborne Division
03 SEP - 13 SEP	Inport Norfolk, VA
14 SEP	Enroute for Port Everglades, Florida for engineering trials
17 SEP	Port Visit: Port Everglades, Florida

21 SEP	Enroute Norfolk, VA
25 SEP - 12 OCT	Inport Norfolk, VA
13 OCT - 14 OCT	Local Operations
15 OCT - 24 OCT	Cheatham Annex for participation in Yorktown Bicentennial
24 OCT	Enroute Norfolk, VA
24 OCT - 29 NOV	Inport Norfolk, VA
02 NOV - 06 NOV	INSURV. Inspection by SUBINSURV, Norfolk.
30 NOV - 18 DEC	MARG 1-82 WORK-UP
18 DEC - 31 DEC	Inport Norfolk, VA (holiday stand down)

COMMAND NARRATIVE

THE NEW YEAR 1981 FOUND TRENTON IN HER HOME PORT OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA CARRYING OUT ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGES THE NEW YEAR WOULD BRING. BY THE 20TH OF JANUARY TRENTON HAD ONCE AGAIN ASSUMED HER FULL READINESS POSTURE AFTER A WELL DESERVED HOLIDAY STAND DOWN PERIOD AND HAD TIED UP ALL LOOSE ENDS IN PREPARATION FOR HER FIRST COMMITMENT OF 1981, MARG 1-81. TRENTON DEPARTED NORFOLK ALONG WITH THE OTHER MARG 1-81 UNITS ON 20 JANUARY 1981 ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NORTH CAROLINA TO EMBARK THE THIRTY SECOND MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT. EMBARKATION COMMENCED 21 JANUARY AND WAS COMPLETED 22 JANUARY. TASKED TO OPERATE UNDER COMMANDER TASK FORCE 140, TRENTON HEADED SOUTH IN THE COMPANY OF MARG 1-81 UNITS TO ATLANTIC FLEET WEAPONS TRAINING FACILITY, ROOSEVELT ROADS, PUERTO RICO. ON 26 AND 27 JANUARY TRENTON MADE USE OF RANGE FACILITIES AT VIEQUES WHILE CONDUCTING THE FIRST AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE OF THE MARG. THE TRAINING RECEIVED DURING THIS TIME WAS BOTH INTENSE AND HIGHLY BENEFICIAL. TRENTON DEPARTED THE CARRIBEAN 28 JANUARY ENROUTE ROTA, SPAIN. TRENTON CONDUCTED A MYRIAD OF TRAINING TO INCLUDE: DIVTACS, BECCE'S, BDCE'S, GUN SHOOT, UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT AND VARIOUS SELECTED EXERCISES.

TRENTON ALONG WITH MARG 1-81 INCHOPPED TO OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF COMSIXTHFLT THE MORNING OF 10 FEBRUARY AFTER ARRIVING IN ROTA, SPAIN AT APPROXIMATELY 0800 THAT DAY. TRENTON RECEIVED TURNOVER BRIEFS FROM USS EL PASO, LKA 113 AND ASSUMED ALL ASSIGNED DUTIES ON THE 12TH OF FEBRUARY AS A PART OF TF61 (MARG 1-81).

FROM ROTA, TRENTON TRANSITED TO MALAGA, SPAIN FOR A RELAXING THREE DAY PORT VISIT. AFTER THIS "QUICK STOP" TRENTON RENDEZVOUSED WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE MARG 1-81 UNITS AT GARRACHA, SPAIN AND FROM 18-24 FEBRUARY CONDUCTED AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE (PHIBLEX) 2-81. THE EXERCISE WAS FAST PACED AND INVOLVED AN UNUSUALLY HIGH NUMBER OF AIR MISSIONS BY TRENTON AND ALL OTHER AVIATION CAPABLE UNITS INVOLVED. THE EXERCISE WAS AN UNQUESTIONABLE SUCCESS BUT ENDED ON A SOUR NOTE FOR TRENTON WHEN A USMC AH-2T COBRA HELO CRASHED KILLING IT'S PILOT AND EMBARKED MEDICAL OFFICER.

FOLLOWING PHIBLEX 2-81, TRENTON'S CREW ONCE AGAIN VISITED MALAGA, SPAIN BEFORE MOVING ON THE THE NEXT AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE; EXERCISE SARDINIA 81. SARDINIA 81, CONDUCTED FROM 6 MARCH TO 14 MARCH, WAS A TRI-LATERAL JOINT EXERCISE. TRENTON SORTIED FROM LA MADDALENA THE MORNING OF 7 MARCH ALONG WITH SHIPS OF THE U.S., FRENCH, AND ITALIAN NAVIES FOR AN OPPOSED TRANSIT TO THE LANDING SITE AT CAPO TEULADA. ON 10 MARCH TRENTON RECEIVED RADM CLARA OF THE ITALIAN NAVY (CTF 703) AS A GUEST. THE ENTIRE EXERCISE WENT VERY SMOOTHLY WITH ALL OF TRENTON'S PERSONNEL EXIBITING THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF PROFESSIONALISM. ALL PLANNED GOALS WERE ACHIEVED INCLUDING UTILIZATION OF TRENTON'S LCM-6'S AND CREWS TO OPERATE WITH THE ITALIAN AMPHIBIOUS FORCES.

UPON COMPLETION OF SARDINIA 81 TRENTON ACCOMPANIED THE OTHER TF 61 UNITS TO NAPLES, ITALY FOR A PORT VISIT. FROM NAPLES, IT WAS ON TO VATIKA, GREECE, FOR PHIBLEX 3-81 FROM 27 MARCH to 2 APRIL. ENROUTE, TRENTON PARTICIPATED IN AN OPPOSED TRANSIT. ALL THE GOALS OF THE EXERCISE WERE ACCOMPLISHED WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT HEAVY WEATHER CAUSED THE CANCELLATION OF THE SCHEDULED NON-COMBATANT EVACUATION EXERCISE.

ON 4 APRIL TRENTON AND THE MARG, WERE SCHEDULED TO TRANSIT THE SUEZ CANAL AND CHOP TO SEVENTH FLEET BUT, THE DAY PRIOR TO TRANSIT OF THE CANAL, THE SHIP WAS ORDERED TO MODLOC IN THE INDIAN SEA FROM 5 TO 12 APRIL DUE TO THE EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN POLAND. THE WEEK IN MODLOC PASSED QUICKLY AS THE CREW LOOKED FORWARD TO A HASTILY SCHEDULED PORT VISIT IN BARI, ITALY, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A 4 DAY VISIT IN ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT. BOTH PORT VISITS WERE WELL RECEIVED BY TRENTON SAILORS AND MARINES AND THE OPPORTUNITY ALLOWED TRENTON TO FURTHER CEMENT RELATIONS WITH ITALIAN AND EGYPTIAN CITIZENS. FOLLOWING THESE PORT VISITS, TRENTON PARTICIPATED IN A MAJOR ENCOUNTEREX BETWEEN THE SIXTHFLT BATTLE GROUP AS BLUE FORCES AND TF 61 AS ORANGE FORCES IN THE EASTERN MED. THIS EXERCISE DID MUCH TO IMPROVE THE TACTICAL EXPERTISE OF TRENTON, AND ALSO GAVE THE CV BATTLE GROUP A HEALTHY NEW RESPECT FOR THE "GATOR NAVY".

A MUCH ANTICIPATED THREE WEEK RAV IN NAPLES WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF EVENTS IN THE SYRIA/LEBANON/ISRAEL THEATER OF OPERATIONS. TRENTON ONCE AGAIN WENT TO MODLOC, THIS TIME HOWEVER, FOR MORE THAN 41 DAYS. DURING MODLOC, TRENTON MAINTAINED HER HIGH STATE OF READINESS BY CONDUCTING INTENSIVE TRAINING AND SELEX'S AND THROUGH INTERACTION WITH THE CV BATTLE GROUP. TRENTON WAS HONORED BY A VISIT FROM THE CNO, ADM HAYWARD ON JUNE 3. THE VISIT WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY TRENTON'S CREW, AS IT GAVE THEM A RENEWED FEELING OF SUPPORT FROM BACK HOME.

ON JUNE 13 THE OPERATIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON MARG 1-81 WERE LIFTED AND TRENTON WAS ABLE TO MAKE A BRIEF STOP AT NAPLES TO RECEIVE MATERIALS MISSED WHEN THE AVAILABILITY WAS CANCELLED DUE TO MODLOC. ALSO WHILE INPORT NAPLES, TRENTON RECEIVED A VISIT FROM COMSIXTHFLT, VADM ROWDEN. THE TURNOVER OF UNITS (TRENTON WITH USS PONCE (LPD 15)) TOOK PLACE UNDERWAY IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND WAS COMPLETED BY NOON ON THE 18TH OF JUNE.

TRENTON ARRIVED AT ROTA, SPAIN THE AFTERNOON OF 20 JUNE AND IMMEDIATELY COMMENCED DESNAIL OPERATIONS. BY THE AFTERNOON OF THE 21ST, TRENTON HAD RECEIVED A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH AND WAS READY TO GET UNDERWAY THE MORNING OF THE 22ND. THIS WAS AN IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE BY ALL MARG 1-81 UNITS, SETTING A RECORD FOR EXPEDITIOUS DESNAILING.

THE LEG HOME WAS FILLED WITH BECCE'S, BDCE'S, GUNNERY EXERCISES, SELEX'S AND DAILY TRAINING PACKAGES. THE SHIP ARRIVED AT MOREHEAD CITY THE MORNING OF 1 JULY AND COMPLETED THE MARINE OFF-LOAD IN TIME TO GET UNDERWAY ENROUTE NORFOLK BY LATE THAT AFTERNOON. DURING THE TRIP TO NORFOLK, FATHERS, SONS AND MALE FRIENDS WERE EMBARKED TO ALLOW THEM A FIRST HAND LOOK AT OUR SHIP. A HAPPY SHIP ARRIVED IN NORFOLK THE MORNING OF 2 JULY AS TRENTON MOORED PIERSIDE, WENT ON SHORE POWER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FIVE AND ONE HALF MONTHS, AND COMMENCED A WELL DESERVED STANDOWN PERIOD.

THE INPORT PERIOD LASTED UNTIL THE 24TH OF AUGUST, WITH ONLY A SLIGHT SLOW-DOWN FROM THE RAPID UNDERWAY PACE OF THE MARG. STILL, OUTSTANDING COMMITMENTS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR KEPT TRENTON ON HER TOES AND WORKING HARD. ON THE 24TH OF AUGUST TRENTON DEPARTED NORFOLK ENROUTE BOSTON, MASS. THE TRIP TO BOSTON WAS MADE PRIMARILY TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE NAVY AND THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON. AFTER RETURNING AGAIN TO NORFOLK, TRENTON CONDUCTED JOINT HELICOPIER TRAINING WITH THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION THE AFTERNOON AND NIGHT OF 1 SEPTEMBER. THE EVOLUTION WAS EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL AND HELPED TO FURTHER REALIZE TRENTON'S JOINT SERVICE MISSION POTENTIAL. TRENTON REMAINED INPORT UNTIL THE 14TH OF SEPTEMBER WHEN SHE DEPARTED FOR PORT EVERGLADES, FLA, TO CONDUCT ENGINEERING DRILLS ENROUTE AND ON THE RETURN LEG. DURING THE STAY AT PORT EVERGLADES, TRENTON'S CREW ENJOYED 4 DAYS OF LIBERTY IN THE TOURIST CITY OF FT LAUDERDALE AND CONDUCTED A VERY SUCCESSFUL OPEN HOUSE.

TRENTON REMAINED INPORT FROM 31ST SEPTEMBER TO 12 OCTOBER CONDUCTING ROUTINE MAINTENANCE. ALSO DURING THIS INPORT PERIOD, TRENTON UNDERWENT A SHIPWIDE 3-M INSPECTION, RECEIVING A WELL DONE WITH A SCORE OF 85.2% OVERALL. ON THE 13TH OF OCTOBER, TRENTON GOT UNDERWAY FOR TWO DAYS OF LOCAL OPERATIONS IN THE VIRGINIA CAPES OP AREA IN PREPARATION FOR HER PARTICIPATION IN THE UPCOMING YORKTOWN BICENTENNIAL. THE 1981 YORKTOWN BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION FROM 15 TO 24 OCTOBER WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS. ITS SUCCESS WAS THE DIRECT RESULT OF THE VOLUNTARY EFFORTS OF THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE AND COAST GUARD PERSONNEL. TRENTON DID MORE THAN HER SHARE TO ASSIST WITH THE CELEBRATION BY ACTING AS THE HOST SHIP FOR MILITARY DRILL TEAMS SENT FROM THROUGHOUT THE NATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CEREMONIES AND FOR COORDINATING ALL BOATING SUPPORT FOR THE EVENT.

DURING THE WEEK OF 2 TO 6 NOVEMBER TRENTON WAS INSPECTED BY THE BOARD OF INSPECTION AND SURVEY AND PERFORMED EXCEPTIONALLY WELL, PARTICULARLY IN THE OPEN AND INSPECT PHASE WHICH THE INSPECTION BOARD FELT WAS ONE OF THE BEST THEY HAD SEEN.

THE REST OF NOVEMBER FOUND TRENTON PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING MARG 1-82 WORKUP WHICH COMMENCED ON THE 30TH OF NOVEMBER. THE WORKUP LASTED A TOTAL OF 18 DAYS WITH A TWO DAY BREAK ON THE 5TH AND 6TH OF NOVEMBER. THE WORKUP WAS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL FROM A TRAINING STANDPOINT. ALL FACETS OF THE AMPHIBIOUS MISSION WERE AGAIN REHEARSED, AND THE OPERATIONS INVOLVED A COORDINATION OF TRENTON AND MARINE ASSETS. BOTH THE SHIP'S CREW AND EMBARKED MARINES CAME AWAY WITH A SOUND WORKING RELATIONSHIP, LOOKING FORWARD TO MARG 1-82. THE RETURN HOME FROM THE MARG WORK-UP CONCLUDED TRENTON'S LONG LIST OF COMMITMENTS FOR THE YEAR 1981, AND COMMENCED THE HOLIDAY STANDOWN PERIOD.