



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)
FPO NEW YORK 09501

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From: Commanding Officer, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)
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Encl: (1) Command History for USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) for calendar year 1978

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


J. H. MAULDIN

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COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1978

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CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS

From 1 JAN	USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) moored at Pier 12, U.S. Naval Station, Norfolk, VA
5-31 JAN	At-sea period in the Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, (ROOSRDS) operating area
21-23 JAN	In port, St. Thomas, USVI
15 FEB - 18 MAR	At-sea period in ROOSRDS and Jacksonville, FL (JAX) operating areas
22-27 FEB	Improved Rapid Rearming Program Evaluation (IRRP)
1 MAR	Carrier Air Wing SEVEN permanently assigned to IKE
4-7 MAR	In port, Fort Lauderdale, FL
17 MAR	Operation Shamrock (Presidential Visit)
27 MAR	Open House, Pier 12
28 MAR - 6 JUL	Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY), Portsmouth, VA
8 APR - 3 JUN	In drydock
6 - 9 JUL	Deperming
9 - 13 JUL	At-sea period in VACAPES (Father/Son cruise)
1 - 25 AUG	At-sea period (Damage Control training) Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
18 SEP - 26 OCT	At-sea period in ROOSRDS operating area
28 - 30 SEP & 9 - 11 OCT	In port, St. Thomas, USVI
2 NOV	Carrier Air Wing SEVEN Change of Command
14 NOV - 4 DEC	At-sea period (Gulf-Ex 79)
24 - 26 NOV	In port, Fort Lauderdale, FL
27 NOV - 1 DEC	Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination (ORSE)
4 DEC - 31 JAN	Moored, Pier 12, Norfolk, VA

USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

BASIC DATA

I. Command Organization

- a. Commanding Officer: Captain William E. Ramsey, USN, from 10 October 1975 through 31 December 1978
- b. Executive Officer
 - (1) Commander E. W. Clexton Jr., USN, from 10 October 1975 through 27 October 1978
 - (2) Captain E. D. CONNER, USN, from 27 October 1978 to present

II. Mission of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69). The mission of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) is to provide sea-based tactical air power for defense of America's right of freedom of the seas as well as the protection of United States Sovereignty. As part of this mission, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER is capable of projecting sea-based air defense and anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

III. Background

a. Named after the 34th President and General of the Army, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) is the third nuclear powered aircraft carrier ever built. The keel of the ship was laid on 15 August 1970 and was authenticated by the late President's grandson, D. David Eisenhower II. Five years later, on 11 October 1975, Mrs. Mamie Doud Eisenhower, widow of the President and ship's sponsor, christened the ship during launching ceremonies in Newport News, VA.

b. On 18 October 1977, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) was placed in commission in ceremonies at Pier 12, Naval Station, Norfolk, VA.

RESUME OF USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) OPERATIONS FOR 1978

The year 1978 was one of transition for USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69), for it recorded increasing at-sea operations, inspections, and evaluations for this recently commissioned (18 October 1977) ship and intensified training for both crew and air wing personnel in preparation for IKE's first forward deployment to the Mediterranean in January 1979.

USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER opened 1978 with a return cruise to the Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, operating area, leaving Norfolk 5 January. It was during this period, designed for flight operations and damage control training, that IKE made her first port visit outside the continental United States, visiting St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, from 21-23 January. Among the visitors to the ship was the governor of the Virgin Islands, the Honorable Juan Luis.

Returning to homeport 31 January, IKE spent the next two weeks making ready for another cruise. The ship sailed again to the Roosevelt Roads and Jacksonville, FL operating areas on 15 February. One week later, on 22 February, IKE's Weapons Department commenced its Improved Rapid Rearming Program Evaluation (IRRP), testing the ability of both crew and equipment to deliver ordnance to aircraft and launch to targets during a series of simulated war-time ordnance handling exercises. Throughout the five-day exercise, 3097 bombs were built up, delivered, loaded, and expended by the air wing.

On 1 March, it was announced that Carrier Air Wing SEVEN had been officially assigned to USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER. Also that afternoon, about 60 miles southeast of Jacksonville, FL, an HH-46A helicopter with a crew of four from Helicopter Combat Support Squadron SIXTEEN (HC-16), Naval Air Station,

Pensacola, encountered mechanical difficulties while in plane-guard position about 100 yards off IKE's starboard quarter. The aircraft crashed into the water and immediately began to sink. Two of the men were recovered by motor whaleboat. The other two, LTJG F. L. Bell and ADC J. R. Bazan, both of HC-16, were lost at sea, marking IKE's first, and only, flight-related fatalities of the year.

Three days later (4 March), IKE made her first visit to a U.S. port other than Norfolk when she visited Fort Lauderdale, FL for three days. Upon returning to sea, IKE began gearing up for the Combined Weapons Training Exercise (Operation Shamrock) that was held 17 March, about 60 miles off the coast of Savannah, GA. The guest of honor for the exercise was President Jimmy Carter. Among the official party with the President were: Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, National Security Advisor Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Secretary of Defense Dr. Harold Brown, Secretary of the Navy W. Graham Claytor, Georgia Senator Herman E. Talmadge, and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James L. Holloway III (enclosure (1)).

The President and his party were flown to IKE shortly after noon and spent the next five hours on board. During the visit, the Combined Weapons Training Exercise was conducted while the Presidential party watched from the flight deck. The exercise, involving Atlantic Fleet surface ships USS VIRGINIA (CGN 38), USS PETERSON (DD 969), and USS AINSWORTH (FF 1090) plus over 50 aircraft from both IKE and USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67), executed integrated combat maneuvers which would be employed in hostile action to maintain both effective control of sea lanes and tactical communications.

While on board, the President toured numerous spaces throughout the ship (enclosure (2)), negotiating about 50 decks (although some of the exertion was relieved by two trips up and down the personnel elevator in the island struct-

ure). Before departing, President Carter delivered a ten-minute speech to the crew in Hangar Bay #2 (enclosure (3)).

The following day, 18 March, IKE returned to Pier 12, Norfolk, to begin preparations for shipyard modifications. On 27 March, a dense fog blanketed the Norfolk area turning a planned one-day "Family Day Cruise" into a pier-side Open House for the over 10,000 dependents and friends who had embarked in IKE. The next day IKE maneuvered down the Elizabeth River to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY), Portsmouth, VA, for Post Shakedown Availability (PSA). On 8 April, the ship entered drydock for below-waterline hull sandblasting and painting as well as internal repairs and modifications to equipment and spaces. After a 6-9 July deperming evolution, IKE again put to sea for four days in the VACAPES Operating Area to test the various systems installed during PSA, embarking about 400 fathers and sons for a first "Father/Son" cruise. IKE departed Norfolk again 1 August for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, operating areas where combined intensive damage control training and flight operations were conducted, returning to Norfolk on 26 August.

After about two weeks in port, IKE departed 18 September for type training in the ROOSRDS operating area, embarking VF-142, VF-143, and VAQ-138 as new squadrons to CVW-7. An Operational Readiness Evaluation was given 20-22 October, followed by the conclusion of type-training 26 October. Also during this at-sea period IKE visited St. Thomas, USVI, 28-30 September and 9-11 October. On 18 October, the first anniversary of the ship's commissioning, a special reenlistment ceremony was held on the flight deck, reenlisting 69 members of the crew and air wing in a fitting match of the ship's hull number. The day following IKE's 26 October return to homeport, Captain Eugene D. Conner relieved Commander Edward W. Clexton, Jr., as the ship's Executive Officer.

On 14 November, IKE again put to sea for the Gulf of Mexico and north-

western Caribbean areas to participate in a 21-day exercise known as Gulf-Ex 79, designed to improve overall task force battle readiness through intensive training in carrier air strikes, dissimilar aerial combat training, anti-air, antisubmarine, and surface warfare. The exercise, under the command of Rear Admiral R. L. Walters, Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group Eight (embarked in IKE), involved more than 20,000 U.S. Navy, Air Force, Air National Guard, and Coast Guard active and reserve personnel plus Royal Navy personnel. It included approximately 36 surface ships, two nuclear-powered submarines, and more than 300 Air Force and Navy aircraft of at least 15 different types.

During this period, IKE dropped anchor off Fort Lauderdale, FL for a three day port visit 24-26 November. IKE's Reactor Department satisfactorily passed its Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination, conducted 27 November-1 December, before the ship returned to Norfolk on 4 December to begin both a holiday leave period and final preparation for the first major deployment (Mediterranean) in mid-January 1979.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS and EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter
National Security Advisor - Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Secretary of Defense - Dr. Harold Brown
Secretary of the Navy - Hon. W. Graham Clayton
Chief of Naval Operations - Admiral James L. Holloway III
Senator Herman E. Talmadge - (D) Georgia
Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) - Thomas Ross
Acting Director Office of Management and Budget - James McIntyre Jr.
Assistant to Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary - Hon. John Koester
Special Assistant to the President - Hugh Carter

Exercise Participants

-Battle Force Commander

Commander SECOND Fleet - Vice Admiral Wesley L. McDonald

-Commander Surface Units

Deputy Commander Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
Rear Admiral Thomas R. Kinnebrew

USS VIRGINIA (CGN 38)

Commanding Officer - Captain George W. Davis Jr.

USS PETERSON (DD 969)

Commanding Officer - Commander Stephen K. Chadwick

USS AINSWORTH (FF 1090)

Commanding Officer - Commander Robert J. Breton

-Commander Air Units

Commanding Officer USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)
Captain William E. Ramsey

Commander Carrier Air Wing SEVEN - Commander W. R. Westerman

Commanding Officer Attack Squadron

Sixty-Five: Commander W. R. Needham

Commanding Officer Attack Squadron

Sixty-Six: Commander S. J. Fitrell

Commanding Officer Attack Squadron

Twelve: Commander D. R. Edwards

Commanding Officer Air-Antisubmarine

Squadron Thirty-One: Commander H. L. Phillips

Commanding Officer Helicopter Antisubmarine

Squadron Five: Commander R. P. Murray

Commanding Officer Airborne Early Warning

Squadron 121: Commander D. E. Beyman