

USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco 96601

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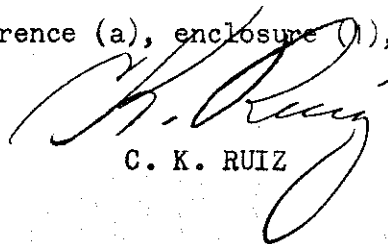
From: Commanding Officer, USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05A5G)

1967
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Subj: Command History; submission of

Encl: (1) Command History USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) for the
calendar year 1967

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


C. K. RUIZ

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COMMAND HISTORY 1967

USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)

(U) As 1966 was a year of preparation, i.e., overhaul, mobilization and retraining; 1967 was, in contrast, a year of operational accomplishments.

(U) At the beginning of Calendar year 1967, USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31), was at homeport in San Diego, California in leave and upkeep status with Captain G. F. COLLIERAN, USN, in command. As a participant in the First Fleet training exercise "SNATCH BLOCK", BON HOMME RICHARD put to sea on 6 January 1967. The fleet exercise was also the opportunity for the ship's pre-deployment ORE (Operational Readiness Evaluation). This period of operational training at sea, which terminated on 13 January, was designed to provide realism and familiarize both the ship and embarked Attack Air Wing (TWENTY-ONE) with operational tactics employed in Southeast Asia.

(U) The period 14 through 25 January, was spent in homeport, San Diego, in POM (Preparation for Overseas Movement) status and the Air Wing was ashore making final preparations for deployment.

(U) On 26 January, BON HOMME RICHARD, with Attack Carrier Air Wing TWENTY-ONE embarked, departed San Diego, enroute to the Far East for her third deployment in support of the Vietnam Conflict. On board

Group 4
Downgraded at 3-year intervals;
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as guests for the passage to Hawaii was Mr. Richard A. BEAUMONT, Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy and several major corporation executives as guests of the Secretary of the Navy.

(U) During the period 31 January through 2 February, Commander Fleet Air Hawaii conducted an ORI (Operational Readiness Inspection) of the ship and the Air Wing, during which Yankee Station operations were simulated.

(U) On 31 January the first personnel casualty of the year was experienced when Airman Apprentice Ronald D. THOMASON, USN, B80 96 32, was lost at sea while engaged in flight deck operations.

(C) On 4 February BON HOMME RICHARD departed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and proceeded to Yokosuka, Japan. The most significant events of this passage were five Soviet reconnaissance over-flights of the ship. On 10 February BON HOMME RICHARD chopped to Commander, Seventh Fleet and on 12 February arrived in Yokosuka, Japan.

(U) While in Yokosuka, Rear Admiral T. J. WALKER, USN, Commander, Carrier Division THREE (see enclosure 4) broke his flag in BON HOMME RICHARD and embarked his staff prior to departure on 17 February enroute to Subic Bay, Philippines. During transit from Yokosuka to Subic Bay, BON HOMME RICHARD participated in Exercise BLUE SKY conducted by Commander, U.S. Taiwan Defense Command, at the conclusion of which

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Vice Admiral William G. GENTNER, USN, and several high ranking Nationalist Chinese officers visited the ship. Further, enroute to Subic Bay, BON HOMME RICHARD participated in Exercise NEWBOY, a joint U.S. - Republic of the Philippines exercise. Arriving in Subic Bay on 22 February, BON HOMME RICHARD's last in-port period prior to combat operations was uneventful and on 24 February the ship proceeded enroute to Yankee Station for operations under Commander, Task Force 77, as Task Unit 77.7.1. One day after arrival on Yankee Station, 27 February, a UH-2B helicopter crashed into the sea with the following casualties (all attached to Helicopter Combat Squadron ONE, Detachment L):

Lieutenant Litchfield P. HUIE, USNR (Pilot)

Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Edward N. LETCHWORTH, USNR, (Co-pilot)

Airman Bernhard J. SAUSE, Jr., USN

Parachute Rigger Airman Ronald L. ZEMPLE, USN (see enclosure 9)

(U) On 8 March Captain Charles K. RUIZ, relieved Captain Gerald F. COLLERAN as Commanding Officer.

(C) On 10 March 1967 BON HOMME RICHARD's Air Wing conducted strikes against Hon Gay ammunition storage area using A-4 attack aircraft from squadrons VA-76 and VA-212. On the 11th the Air Wing hit the Cam Ly ammunition storage area, approximately 35 miles Northeast of Hanoi; and the Sam Son army barracks, the latter target being the first upon which the Walleye Glide Bomb was used (see enclosure 2-11). On 12

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March Carrier Air Wing TWENTY-ONE struck the Thanh Hoa railroad yards and the Thanh Hoa railroad and highway bridges.

(U) On 20 March, Major General Lew Byong Hion, Commander of the Tiger Division, Republic of Korea Expeditionary Forces in Vietnam and his staff came aboard to witness carrier operations. (see enclosures 2-3,4,5)

(U) On 22 March the ship departed Yankee Station for Sasebo, Japan. While in transit, the ship participated in Exercise AUTUMN FLOWER and arrived in Sasebo, on 26 March.

(U) On 28 March Rear Admiral S. HOSHINO, Commander Training Fleet, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force, came aboard to call on Rear Admiral T. J. WALKER (see enclosure 2-6,7).

(U) On 3 April the ship departed Sasebo for Hong Kong, British Crown Colony for a scheduled period of rest and recreation for the officers and crew. On 9 April preparations were made to avoid typhoon Violet; however, later that day it was apparent that Violet would not affect the Hong Kong area and on 11 April the ship set sail for Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines.

(U) On 14 April, Rear Admiral V. P. dePOIX, USN, Commander Carrier Division SEVEN, embarked in BON HOMME RICHARD and assumed the duties of Commander Task Group 77.7, relieving Rear Admiral T. J. WALKER, USN, Commander Carrier Division THREE. On 16 April the BON HOMME RICHARD

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departed Subic Bay and arrived at Yankee Station on the 17th.

(U) On 18 April Admiral Roy L. JOHNSON, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, arrived on board accompanied by Vice Admiral J. J. HYLAND, Commander Seventh Fleet and Vice Admiral R. C. NEEDHAM, Inspector General of the Navy and departed on 19 April (see enclosure 2-8,9,10, 11,12).

(U) On 20 April Attack Carrier Air Wing TWENTY-ONE pilots went after the numerous water-borne logistics craft and the Hon Gay ammunition storage area just East of Haiphong. During these attacks they experienced only light anti-aircraft fire.

(U) On the evening of the 20th of April the officers and crew of the BON HOMME RICHARD relaxed to enjoy the USO Troupe "The Three D's and Sandi and Salli", a much appreciated musical show. On 22 April the ship was again fortunate to have another USO Show, this time being entertained by the "Dale Robertson USO Troupe and the Two Joys".

(C) On 24 April the BON HOMME RICHARD Air Wing attacked the Hon Gay railway center 25 miles East of Haiphong destroying numerous box cars and interdicting much of the track. On 25 April the Air Wing again was in the air, this time attacking the Haiphong ammunition depot resulting in many secondary explosions. On the 26th the target of the day was the Hon Gay railroad yards and the newly constructed road West of Ha Tinh,

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in southern North Vietnam. Bad weather conditions precluded further inland strikes at this time.

(U) On the 28th of April the officers and men had the great pleasure of hearing Mr. Richard Tucker of the New York Metropolitan Opera in concert on the BON HOMME RICHARD Hangar Bay "Stage 1". It was a performance much appreciated and well remembered (see enclosure 2-17,18,19,20).

(C) On the 1st of May the weather had cleared and it was decided that the Air Wing should have a May Day celebration at Kep Airfield (see enclosure 1-1): The goal was Migs and flak sites. . LCDR WRIGHT, flying an F8-E from Squadron VF-211, scored the first of many air kills when he shot down a Mig with a Sidewinder missile. The A-4 Skyhawks then took over the show and concentrated on the grounded Migs, putting five of them permanently out of action and making the runway unusable.

(U) The next few days the BON HOMME RICHARD Air Wing attacked logistics craft and supply routes.

(U) On 8 May BON HOMME RICHARD departed Yankee Station and proceeded to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines for upkeep and repair, arriving on 9 May.

(U) On the 14th the ship was again underway for Yankee Station and arrived on 16 May.

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(C) On the 19th the pilots of the BON HOMME RICHARD fighter and attack squadrons made a raid on the Hanoi thermal power plant using the Walleye Glide Bomb. The power plant located in the center of Hanoi, suffered severe damage during the attack. Our planes were again challenged by Migs, resulting in the downing of 4 Migs. As a result of the days air action, the BON HOMME RICHARD had the honor of having the first Navy Ace Squadron of the Vietnam Conflict - Fighter Squadron 211. BON HOMME RICHARD now had a total of 10 Migs: five during air duels, and five during ground raids.

(C) On 20 May the target was the Bac Giang thermal power plant, and on the 21st it was the the Hanoi thermal power plant. Subsequently BON HOMME RICHARD Air Wing concentrated its attacks on the various supply routes and water-borne logistic craft of the North Vietnamese. A change of pace on the 25th brought "BONNIE DICK" pilots over the Kien An Air Field; no planes were spotted but severe damage was inflicted on the runways. On the 26th of May the target was the Uong Bi Thermal Power Plant, located about 10 miles North of Haiphong. LT Dick THOMAS of Attack Squadron 212 stated that he experienced moderate antiaircraft fire and for the first time noticed blue balloons floating in the sky around Haiphong. These balloons were evaluated as an aid to direct ground fire against the planes.

(U) On 27 May Representative Olin E. Teague (D-Texas) came aboard to

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visit the BON HOMME RICHARD (see enclosure 2-21,22,23).

(C) On 30 May BON HOMME RICHARD pilots went after and destroyed the Phu Ly bridges (see enclosure 2-21,22,23) and followed this up on the 31st with a raid of Kep Airfield; there were no planes on the ground but the runways were again placed out of operation.

(U) The next few days were spent searching out and destroying the various supply routes. While engaged in this endeavor, LCDR Paul HOLLINGSWORTH of VA-76 reported seeing two 150 foot supply barges camouflaged to look like islands.

(C) On 8 June BON HOMME RICHARD hosted official visitors, Dr. John S. FOSTER, Jr., Director of Defense Research and Engineering; Dr. Donald McARTHUR, Deputy Director of Defense Research and Engineering; Dr. William McMULLAN, Scientific Advisor, Commander U.S. Military Advisory Commission, Vietnam; and Rear Admiral William N. LEONARD, Assistant Director (Operational Test and Evaluation), Defense Research and Engineering.(see enclosure 2-24).

(C) On 10 June the Air Wing again hit the Hanoi thermal power plant and claimed another of Hanoi's Migs as an aerial prize. On the 11th, the Uong Bi thermal power plant was the target (see enclosure 1-4,5,6) and as a result of the days action, LTJG MILLER whose plane was shot down, spent an agonizing 30 minutes waiting to be rescued. Later in

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Saigon LTJG MILLER was quoted as saying "I just sat there; it was the most lonesome feeling in the world". On the 12th the targets were the Thanh Hoa thermal power plant and the Thai Binh petroleum storage area. On 13 June the target was the Cam Ly ammunition storage area. The next few days were again spent hitting the North Vietnamese supply routes.

(U) On 17 June the officers and men were entertained by a USO Troupe, "The Twilighters" an Australian musical variety group (see enclosure 2-25). On 19 June the ship left the line and arrived in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines on the 20th. On 26 June BON HOMME RICHARD departed Subic Bay for her fourth and final line period on Yankee Station, arriving on 27 June.

(C) During the next few days attacks were continued on North Vietnamese supply routes by hitting such targets as the Hai Duong railroad, Sung Van railroad siding and Sung Van Dredge.

(U) On 30 June BON HOMME RICHARD was honored with a visit by ADM T. J. MOORER, USN, prospective CNO; VADM J. J. HYLAND, USN, Commander SEVENTH Fleet; RADM M. W. WHITE, USN, Commander Fleet Air Western Pacific; and RADM R. W. MEHLE, Commander Task Force 77. (See enclosure 2-26).

(C) On 4 July the attack concentrated on the Thanh Lien railroad bridge 10 miles Southeast of Haiphong (see enclosure 1-7) and the Chink Dai Area

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16 miles Northeast of Thanh Hoa (see enclosure 1-8,9). On 5 July a SAM site was spotted 31 miles Southeast of Hanoi, concealed in a village. While bombing the site many secondary explosions occurred, and a SAM snaked around causing the village to be set aflame. On the 7th, strikes were conducted against the Phu Ly Bridge complex (see enclosure 1-12) and various North Vietnam petroleum storage areas such as: Tram Bac (see enclosure 1-10,11), Loi Dong, Thai Binh, and Don Son. After destroying a major portion of the North Vietnam oil supply, strikes followed on the Co Trai, Ap Mai Trung, Ninh Loa, and Tam Da railway areas, leaving vital rail links out of commission.

(C) On 19 and 20 June targets included the My Xa and Don Son petroleum storage areas, Nhat Tui Army Supply Depot and Ninh Binh bridge (see enclosure 1-13,14).

(C) On 21 July strikes against the Ta Xa petroleum products storage area just 20 miles north of Haiphong were conducted. Challenged by 8 more Migs, the F-8 all weather Crusaders savagely bit into the ranks of the Migs with 20mm cannon fire and sidewinder missiles, sending three plummeting to the ground. At the conclusion, the Mig box score to date was 9 Migs destroyed in the air and 5 destroyed on the ground. That evening the officers and men enjoyed the Sammie Spear USO Show (see enclosure 2-27, 28,29).

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(C) From 22-29 July BON HOMME RICHARD pilots again concentrated strikes toward the destruction of North Vietnamese supply routes (see enclosure 1-15,16).

(U) On 29 and 30 July BON HOMME RICHARD rendered medical aid and facilities to USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59) during the latter's most disastrous fire.

(U) On 31 July after 34 long days BON HOMME RICHARD left Yankee Station and arrived in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. On 3 August the ship departed Subic Bay enroute to Yokosuka, Japan arriving on the 8th. After being relieved by the USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43) of Yankee Station duties the BON HOMME RICHARD set sail on 15 August, chopped to Commander FIRST Fleet on 17 August, and arrived in San Diego on the 25th of August.

(U) In all BON HOMME RICHARD had been away from home port 211 days, at sea 166 days, in port 45 days and on the line 112 days: 15,252 aircraft were catapulted, 14,915 arrested landings made, used 11,595,445 gallons of JP-5 jet fuel and 873,242 gallons of aviation gasoline.

(C) On 5 September 1967 the ship departed San Diego and entered Long Beach Naval Shipyard for restricted availability. While in the shipyard the flightdeck surface was renovated. The Operations Department had automatic IFF units and additional radar repeaters installed, and a new

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Master Romeo 8 System replaced the previously used single station unit.

(U) On 25 October BON HOMME RICHARD got underway from Long Beach Naval Shipyard for post-restricted availability sea trials and returned to the shipyard that day. Underway again on 30 October, general drills and ISE were conducted prior to return to homeport, San Diego, on 3 November. The period 13-18 November was spent at sea conducting ISE drills and aircraft operations. 18 and 19 November were spent in-port San Diego.

(U) On 20 November 1967 BONNIE DICK was again underway for the final phase of refresher training. On 21 November the V-6 Division was disestablished and re-formed as the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) with LCDR Richard SIMIA as Department Head. Also on the 21st BON HOMME RICHARD conducted the final battle problem of underway training and upon completion chopped to Commander FIRST Fleet and moored in San Diego. Underway again on the 27th, BON HOMME RICHARD conducted air operations, general quarters, and underway replenishment drills, returning to San Diego on 4 December.

(U) On 6 December RADM Horace H. EPES, Jr., Commander Carrier Division ONE, conducted an administrative inspection, assigning a grade of EXCELLENT.

(U) On 9 December BON HOMME RICHARD set sail on her annual Dependents Day Cruise, returning that evening to San Diego, to embark Attack Carrier Air Wing FIVE. On 11 December the ship was again underway to conduct.

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air operations with the Air Wing, replenishment, and general quarters drills, returning to San Diego on 20 December. 1967 ended with BON HOMME RICHARD in homeport San Diego.

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BON HOMME RICHARD CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

6 Jan 1967 Departed San Diego, California for Predeployment ORE
13 Jan Arrived San Diego, California
26 Jan Departed San Diego, California
30 Jan Arrived Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
31 Jan Departed for Special Operations (ORI)
2 Feb Arrived Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
4 Feb Departed for Yokosuka, Japan
10 Feb Chopped into COMSEVENTHFLT
12 Feb Arrived Yokosuka, Japan
17 Feb Departed Yokosuka for Subic Bay, Philippines
22 Feb Arrived Subic Bay, Philippines
24 Feb Departed Subic Bay for Yankee Station
26 Feb Arrived Yankee Station for Special Operations
22 Mar Departed Yankee Station for Sasebo, Japan
26 Mar Arrived Sasebo, Japan
3 Apr Departed Sasebo for Hong Kong
6 Apr Arrived Hong Kong
11 Apr Departed Hong Kong for Subic Bay, Philippines
13 Apr Arrived Subic Bay, Philippines
16 Apr Departed Subic Bay for Yankee Station
17 Apr Arrived Yankee Station for Special Operations
8 May Departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay, Philippines
9 May Arrived Subic Bay, Philippines
14 May Departed Subic Bay, Philippines for Yankee Station
16 May Arrived Yankee Station for Special Operations
19 Jun Departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay, Philippines
20 Jun Arrived Subic Bay, Philippines
26 Jun Departed Subic Bay for Yankee Station
27 Jun Arrived Yankee Station for Special Operations
31 Jul Departed Yankee Station for Subic Bay, Philippines
1 Aug Arrived Subic Bay, Philippines
3 Aug Departed Subic Bay for Yokosuka, Japan
8 Aug Arrived Yokosuka, Japan
15 Aug Departed Yokosuka for CONUS
17 Aug Chopped to COMFIRSTFLT
25 Aug Arrived San Diego, California
5 Sep Departed San Diego for Long Beach Naval Shipyard
5 Sep Arrived Long Beach Naval Shipyard for RAV
25 Oct Departed Long Beach for Sea Trials
25 Oct Arrived Long Beach Naval Shipyard
30 Oct Departed Long Beach
3 Nov Arrived San Diego, California
9 Nov Departed San Diego
9 Nov Arrived San Diego
13 Nov Departed San Diego for Refresher Training
18 Nov Arrived San Diego

20 Nov 1967	Departed San Diego, California
21 Nov	Chopped to COMFIRSTFLT
21 Nov	Arrived San Diego
27 Nov	Departed San Diego
4 Dec	Arrived San Diego
9 Dec	Departed San Diego for Dependents' Cruise
9 Dec	Arrived San Diego
11 Dec	Departed San Diego
20 Dec	Arrived San Diego