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From: Commanding Officer, USS MOCTOBI (ATF-105)
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: 1967 Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAV INST. 5750.12

Encl: (1) My Secret ltr ATF105/00:rr 3800 ser 001 of 5 Sep 1967
(2) FIRST ENDORSEMENT on subj ltr
(3) SECOND ENDORSEMENT on subj ltr

1. The command history required by reference (a) is heraby submitted.
2. Chronology. The highlights of 1967 are as follows:
 - a) regular overhaul completed 16 March
 - b) deployed to WESTPAC 5 June
 - c) trawler surveillance began 12 July
 - d) RAdm N.G. Ward, Commander Task Force 73 visited the ship 25 September
 - e) returned from WESTPAC 8 December
3. Narrative.
 - a) Command Organization.
 - (1) Lt. A.R. Erwin 671 944, USN relieved LCDR D.D. Pizinger 576 357 USN as Commanding Officer USS Mootobi (ATF-105) on 20 July 1967.
 - (2) As of 31 December 1967 MOCTOBI had five officers and sixty-nine enlisted men.

b) Operations.

The fourth regular overhaul ended 16 March 1967. After a week of well deserved rest and relaxation on Maui, Hawaii, MOCTOBI plunged into underway refresher training, from 3 to 22 April. Instead of the next six weeks signalling normal routine, the officers and men turned to and prepared for deployment to WESTPAC along with the

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installation of new communication equipment. This period occasioned the Pre-deployment Inspection. Its end occasioned a hearty farewell from dependents as MOCTOBI sailed for Subic Bay on 5 June with APL 21 in tow.

Guam was an intermediate stop for upkeep where the days 22 to 28 June were spent accomplishing repairs. The voyage terminated at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines on 8 July. The heat proved a prelude to the climatic conditions of the next five weeks. Preparations were completed when the electronic equipment of the Beach Jumper Unit ONE detachment "C" was installed. On 12 July MOCTOBI sailed for trawler surveillance duty at "Yankse" station.

Arriving on station 13 July, MOCTOBI relieved USS Sproston (DD577) as CTU 77.0.3 and began four hot, monotonous weeks of shadowing SS Gidrofon, the Russian trawler. The mission was to make daily reports of "Ivan's" positions and activities and prevent him from interfering with carrier operations. Manuevering to shoulder the trawler away broke the monotony. It almost broke the MOCTOBI. On 26 July while shouldering "Ivan", MOCTOBI was forced to steer to within 400 yards of USS Forestal (CVA 59).

Trawler surveillance duty ended on 13 August when USS Bridget (DE 1024) assumed duties as CTU 77.0.3. MOCTOBI shaped course for DaNang, RVN arriving 14 August. The Beach Jumper Unit was off loaded. MOCTOBI personnel briefed their counterparts aboard USS Cree (ATF-34) and then sailed for Hong Kong, B.C.C. With salutes rendered to HMS Tamar, MOCTOBI tied up on 17 August. The rest and relaxation were

interrupted by a typhoon registering 72 Kts at the Royal Observatory. After two days moored in the bay the men hurried ashore, the morning of the 23rd, to collect purchases.

MOCTOBI sailed 23 August and arrived at Kaohsiung, Taiwan for upkeep 24 August but on the 25th rushed to near the entrance of Hong Kong to assist USS Grasp (ARS 24), who had lost all power. After rendezvous on the 28th of August Grasp with power up did not then need assistance. However, MOCTOBI escorted her to Kaohsiung, arriving 30 August. Even though the Grasp rendezvous precluded repairs in Kaohsiung, it underscored the unglamorous yet sometimes vital mission of our ship.

The ship arrived in Subic Bay 2 September and proceeded to Sangley Point. With BG 6384 in tow, MOCTOBI sailed on 8 September for Nhabe, RVN. On 12 September tension gripped the men in Vung Tau where the ship anchored overnight. This exposure to distant machine gun and artillery fire was the first for many members. The movie officer picked that night for The Guns of Navarone. After a night at condition of readiness III the ship sailed up the Saigon River at General Quarters. Tension mounted with each turn in the river, but no enemy was seen. The tow was delivered 13 September in Nhabe. MOCTOBI departed for Subic Bay the following morning; as she stood out from Vung Tau, nerves relaxed.

After arrival in Subic Bay 17 September, the next ten days were spent working with Harbor Clearance Unit ONE, which is related in paragraph c. The next mission was to tow two YON's from Subic Bay

to Sangley Point. Cracks in the concrete hulls of the 17,000 ton behemoths caused anxiety, but YON 144 and YON 162 were delivered safely. Intending to remain at Sangley Point for rest and relaxation, the ship was called out to assist USS Abnaki (ATF 96) with the Geiger salvage operation at DaNang. After arrival on the 7th found SS Geiger afloat, MOCTOBI was detailed to tow YOG 56 to Subic Bay. The night of 8 October saw SS Exhibitor drag her anchor and drift toward the MOCTOBI. Fast manning of sea and anchor detail stations and faster maneuvering saved MOCTOBI from near collision. The period 14 to 27 October passed as local operations. On 28 October the ship got underway to tow YFNB 16 to Sasebo, Japan from Nhaba, RVN. The trip up the Saigon River was as uneventful as the first one. MOCTOBI proceeded to Sasebo 1 November and arrived on the 12th. The days spent in upkeep and Christmas shopping ended 25 November. The voyage to Pearl ended 8 December, the remaining days of 1967 being devoted to leave and upkeep.

c) Special Topics.

(1) The tour on "Yankee" Station occasioned two noteworthy incidents. The first was the Forrestal disaster. At 1102 29 July the bridge personnel saw a series of fireballs on the horizon followed by columns of smoke. MOCTOBI headed for the stricken vessel but never sighted her. Upon reaching an area littered with flotsam, MOCTOBI searched for swimmers but found none. The second incident was that the Gidrofon attempted to salvage wing tanks and other floating objects. Though MOCTOBI prevented this many times, she did get one.

(2) From 20 to 27 September HOCTONI crewmen worked with personnel from Harbor Clearance Unit ONE at Subic Bay. The ship served as a diving platform for an experimental diving apparatus, called Advanced Diving System Number 4, which Ocean Systems, Inc. developed. It consisted of two bottle shaped compression/decompression chambers joined at the neck. At the joint fitted a spherical diving bell which could be lowered into the water. The two chambers allowed divers to compress or decompress while others were lowered over the side in the bell. On 25 September RADM N.G. Ward Commander Task Force 73 came aboard to inspect the operation. He descended in the bell to 22 fathoms. After being hoisted aboard, the admiral made a brief tour of the ship and chatted with various members of the crew. He was then piped over the side.

4. Documentary Annexes.

The final report and endorsements of trawler surveillance duty is included as enclosures 1,2, and 3 to further document the mission on "Yankee" Station.



A. R. ERWIN

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