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1980
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS TARAWA (LHA-1)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96622

LHA1/37:djt
5750
Ser C-06
1 Mar 1981

From: Commanding Officer, USS TARAWA (LHA-1)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1) (U)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12C

- Annexes:
- (1) (U) USS TARAWA Officer Precedence List December 1980
 - (2) (U) Listing of distinguished visitors to TARAWA during 1980
 - (3) (U) Listing of Inspections and Awards during 1980
 - (4) (U) Compendium of embarked commands and units during 1980

1. (C) The calendar year 1980 Command History for the USS TARAWA (LHA-1) is submitted in accordance with guidance contained in reference (a).

a. (C) Basic History

(1) (U) Command Organization

(a) (U) Commanding Officer

1 Jan 80-24 Jun 80: Robert E. KLEE, Captain,
US Navy, [REDACTED],
Lineal #001339-30
DOR 1 Feb 1974

24 Jun 80-31 Dec 80: Dwight D. TIMM, Captain,
US Navy, [REDACTED],
Lineal #001478-60
DOR 1 Jul 1976

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Copy to:
Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)
Washington Navy Yard
Washington, D.C. 20374

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(b) (U) Mission and Function of Command:

The Amphibious Task Force, which executes tasks in support of the Navy's force projection mission, can be composed of LHA, LPH, LPD, LSD, LKA, or LST class ships. TARAWA, the lead ship of the LHA class of General Purpose Amphibious Assault Ships, combines the functional capabilities of the LPH, LPD/LSD, and LKA to deliver a balanced payload, by air and/or surface operations, in an amphibious assault. Explicitly, the Chief of Naval Operations defined the LHA's mission: "To embark, deploy, and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in an assault by helicopters, landing craft, amphibian vehicles, and by any combination of these methods".

(c) (U) Composition of Command

The command is composed of the USS TARAWA (LHA-1) and organic assets which include one UH-1H HUEY helicopter BUNO 160830, and two LCM-6 and four LCPL assault boats. Ship's complement includes 55 Commissioned Officers and 817 enlisted.

(d) (U) TARAWA was home ported in San Diego, CA, during the calendar year.

(2) (C) Summary of Operations for Calendar Year 1980

- 1 Jan-31 Dec Assigned to the United States Pacific Fleet and to Naval Surface Forces, Pacific
- 1 Jan-5 Nov Assigned to the United States Third Fleet
- 6 Nov-31 Dec Assigned to the United States Seventh Fleet
- 1 Jan-31 Dec Assigned to Amphibious Squadron SEVEN for immediate operational and administrative control
- 1 Jan-5 Nov Assigned to Amphibious Group Eastern Pacific
- 6 Nov-31 Dec Assigned to Amphibious Forces Seventh Fleet (Amphibious Group ONE, Task force designation: Commander, Task Force SEVENTY-SIX)
- 6 Nov-31 Dec Assigned to Amphibious Ready Group Alfa; Commander, Task Group SEVENTY-SIX POINT THREE
- 1 Jan-28 Apr Planned Restricted Availability, San Diego, CA
- 29 April Underway Southern California (SOCAL) Operating Area for Sea Trails
- 30 Apr-27 May Restricted Availability, San Diego, CA
- 28 May-11 Jun Assigned to Fleet Training Group, Pacific for Interim Refresher Training SOCAL Operating Area

18 May-5 Sep Pacific Training Midshipman Cruise - 3 consecutive groups of Midshipmen

2 June Visit by People's Republic of China delegation including Vice Premier Geng BIAO

12 June Naval Gunfire Support Qualification San Clemente Island, CA

13-18 Jun Inport San Diego for Engineering Training (Mobile Team Training) and repair of Number 1 boiler

19 June Underway SOCAL Operating Area for Mobile Team Training (MTT)

20 Jun-7 Jul Inport San Diego, CA for routine upkeep

8-11 Jul Underway SOCAL Operating Area to conduct MTT

12-13 Jul Inport San Diego, CA

14-17 Jul Underway SOCAL Operating Area for Independent Training

18-19 Jul Inport San Diego, CA

21-31 Jul Assigned to Commander, Naval Beach Group, Amphibious Refresher Training Group ONE for Amphibious Refresher Training SOCAL Operating Area

1-17 Aug Inport San Diego, CA for upkeep

14-17 Aug Embarkation of Landing Force

18-28 Aug Assigned to Task Force 176 for Amphibious Landing Exercise KERNAL BLITZ (PHIBLEX 2-80). Commander, Amphibious Squadron SEVEN (COMPHIBRON SEVEN) and Commander, Amphibious Group Eastern Pacific (COMPHIBGRUEASTPAC) embarked.

18 Aug Underway SOCAL Operating Area for PHIBLEX 2-80

29-30 Aug Inport San Diego, CA

1-5 Sep Underway SOCAL Operating Area for MTT

6-8 Sep Inport San Diego, CA

9-12 Sep Underway SOCAL Operating Area for Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE)

11 September Load Landing Force Operational Reserve Material, Long Beach, CA

- 13 Sep-13 Oct Pre-overseas movement period. Inport San Diego, CA. Scheduled repairs to both main circulating water pumps and unscheduled repairs of superheater headers in both boilers.
- 14-23 Oct Underway transit to Hawaii with units of Amphibious Squadron SEVEN. COMPHIBRON SEVEN embarked.
- 21-23 Oct Safe to Steam Assessment by COMPHIBGRUEASTPAC
- 24-26 Oct Inport Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Embarked Battalion Landing Team 1/3, 31st Marine Amphibious Unit Headquarters, and Helicopter Composite Squadron HMM-265, including a detachment of 6 AV-8 HARRIER aircraft.
- 27 October Underway, Amphibious Operations, Hawaii Operating Area 27-29 Oct.
- 28 October Final evaluation of Optical Landing System for AV-8 HARRIERS
- 30 Oct-14 Nov Transit to Subic Bay, R. P.
- 6 November Turnover Operations with USS NEW ORLEANS
- 15-16 Nov Inport Subic Bay R.P. Embarked Surgical Platoon. Work-up for Amphibious Landing Exercise 1-81, Exercise VALIANT BLITZ
- 17-24 Nov Underway for Mindoro, R.P. Participated in PHIBLEX 1-81, Exercise VALIANT BLITZ
- 19 November D-Day, Exercise VALIANT BLITZ. Visit by U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines and high ranking R.P. Military Officials
- 25 Nov-14 Dec Inport Subic Bay, R.P. for scheduled upkeep at Ship Repair Facility (SRF)
- 15-16 Dec Routine training exercises and drills in Subic Bay Operating Area
- 17-21 Dec Transit to Phattaya Beach, Thailand
- 22-26 Dec Inport Phattaya Beach, Thailand (Anchored)
- 23 December Visit by CINC Royal Thai Navy and Commandant Royal Thai Marine Corps and 28 other Royal Thai Navy Admirals and Captains.
- 27-29 Dec Transit to Singapore
- 29-31 Dec Inport Singapore (Anchored)
- 31 December Tour of ship by U.S. Ambassador to Singapore

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b. (C) Narrative History and Special Topics

(1) (U) 1980 was a year of achievement and further development for the Navy's first-of-a-class General Purpose Amphibious Assault ship (LHA). With the exception of one day of sea trials in April, the first five months of the year were devoted to Restricted Availability in port San Diego, California. During this period, flight deck capabilities were significantly upgraded with the addition of AV-8 short take-off and landing (STOL) line and nozzle rotation lights (LHA Shipalt 123), overhead white floodlights (LHA Shipalt 156) and over 400 additional aircraft securing fittings (LHA Shipalt 161). TARAWA was also selected to evaluate the British double AV-8 STOL line (Tram line) flight deck markings.

(2) (C) As a prelude to a full deployment to the Western Pacific, TARAWA participated in Interim Refresher Training (REFTRA) 28 May-11 June. On 19 June, TARAWA's new satellite communications link became operational with the installation of the Common User Digital Information Exchange (CUDIX) system.

(3) (U) Operations increased in June and July, with underway periods for Naval Gunfire Support Qualification, and Carrier Qualification (CQ) periods for various Santa Ana and Camp Pendleton based Marine units and Navy helicopters from HC-11 and HS-84. Engineering preparations for the Operational Propulsion Plant Exam (OPPE) were accomplished during Mobile Team Training 19 June and 8-11 July. Amphibious Refresher Training (AMPHIBREFTRA) in July was the next pre-deployment hurdle. TARAWA was successfully exercised in all phases of amphibious operations during AMPHIBREFTRA, 21-31 Jul, including an amphibious assault of Silver Strand and Camp Pendleton, California.

(4) (C) The month of August was indeed a landmark period. First, work was begun to install the British HAPI/CAI/HPI Optical Landing system, which would provide TARAWA with the first-of-class capability to land the AV-8 HARRIER at night. Secondly, TARAWA participated in Exercise KERNAL BLITZ (PHIBLEX 2-80) 18-28 August, as flagship for the Commander of the Amphibious Task Force, COMPHIBGRUEASTPAC, and COMPHIBRON SEVEN. During the embarkation phase, approximately 1,400 USMC troops and 1,670 tons of equipment and landing craft were embarked. TARAWA provided near continuous well deck and flight operations of troops ashore and simulated medical casualties (MEDIVAC) which were returned to TARAWA for treatment. With a deck load of 10 H-53, 6 H-46, 8 AH-1J, 4 AH-1T, 6 UH-1N, 4 AV-8 and the ship's organic UH-1N, the flight deck and hangar deck held the largest aircraft loading in TARAWA's history - fifteen more than normal. One record day produced 170 take-offs and landings and 154 hot refuelings totaling 27,000 gallons - 10,000 gallons above the previous record. On D-Day, 24 August, a single beach simultaneous surface and airborne Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB) size assault was executed. Of note, TARAWA effectively demonstrated the capability to establish a data link (LINK-11) with a USAF E-3A Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft, thus significantly increasing the air and surveillance resources available to the Amphibious Task Force.

(5) (C) Final preparations for deployment were completed in a six week period during September and October. Underway periods for

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Engineering Mobile Team Training and Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE) were conducted 1-5 September and 9-12 September, respectively. In addition, extensive repairs to both boilers were accomplished during the pre-overseas movement period, 13 September-13 October. On 4 October, the PARKHILL KY-75 Secure Voice System was installed, providing TARAWA with advanced and reliable secure voice communications. On 10 October, an upgrade of the Ships Signal Exploitation Space (SSES) was completed, giving TARAWA the most extensive special intelligence communications suite installed in any amphibious ship. The first aircraft to be embarked for deployment, 4 AH-1T's from HMA-169 and 6 AV-8A's from VMA-513, were loaded onboard 9 and 10 October, and TARAWA was underway from San Diego on 14 October for her second deployment.

(6) (U) The second deployment of TARAWA to the Western Pacific was highlighted by numerous significant operations and exercises which characterized the ship's unique capabilities.

(a) (C) During the westbound San Diego to Hawaii transit, 14-23 October, the following goals were accomplished: the Optical Landing System (OLS) was certified for night VMC/IMC operations for the AV-8 HARRIER, making TARAWA the first-ever LHA to be so certified; and the Engineering Plant was certified safe to steam by COMPHIBGRUEASTPAC, culminating over five months of training and preparation.

(b) (C) On the heels of these evaluations came the first amphibious exercise of the deployment and the first combined AV-8/Helicopter operations of the deployment. A surface assault and a heliborne turnaway assault were conducted against Kahoolawe Island in the Hawaii Operating Area on 28 October. AV-8's were integrated into a Combat Air Patrol (CAP) role and functioned concurrently with helicopter operations supporting the airborne assault.

(c) (C) The second amphibious exercise of the deployment, Exercise VALIANT BLITZ 81-1, took place between 17-24 November off Mindoro, R.P. The exercise was the largest amphibious exercise held in SEVENTH Fleet since 1977, and involved all aspects of Naval and Amphibious Warfare, and Command and Control. Landing force operations commenced 19 November (D-Day) with a two-beach surface and heliborne assault. On D-Day, TARAWA completed a total of 272 take-offs and landings and hosted a visit by the American Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines. As Primary Casualty Receiving and Treatment Ship, a total of 34 MEDIVAC's were accomplished and the exercise validated the requirement for an embarked Surgical Platoon Cadre Medical support personnel.

(d) (U) Following an upkeep period in port Subic Bay, R.P., 25 November-14 December, TARAWA was once again underway, this time for Phattaya Beach, Thailand. Arriving in Phattaya Beach on 22 December, TARAWA hosted a visit by senior officers of the Royal Thai Navy, including ADM Sanuit SAHANAVIN, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy. TARAWA departed Phattaya Beach on 29 December, and another milestone in the ship's history was reached when an AV-8A made the 18,000th landing aboard TARAWA's flight deck.

(e) (U) The year 1980 ended with TARAWA conducting another highly successful WESTPAC port visit in Singapore. On 31 December, the U.S. Ambassador to Singapore toured the ship.

(7) (U) Annexes (1) through (4) are attached as documentation for special interest items and for amplification or selected areas of TARAWA's performance during 1980.

c. (U) Statistical highlights for 1980

(1) (U) During 1980, TARAWA's two boilers were steamed as follows:

| | <u>Underway Steaming</u> | <u>Auxiliary Steaming</u> |
|-----------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Boiler #1 | 1529.0 hours | 969.7 hours |
| Boiler #2 | 1867.7 hours | 817.1 hours |

(2) (U) Fuel consumption during 1980 was 4,594,484 gallons of DFM. Fifteen underway replenishment operations were conducted in 1980, transferring 3,248,245 gallons of DFM and 192,486 gallons of aviation gasoline.

(3) (U) A total of 61 ballast/deballast operations were conducted and TARAWA logged over 539 landing craft launches and recoveries during the year.

(4) (U) 3,806 landings representing 2,592 flight hours were conducted from TARAWA's flight deck during 1980. Total includes 278 AV-8 HARRIER landings, of which 102 were night recoveries.

(5) (U) The ship's organic UH-1N helicopter, Eagle One, flew 315 sorties for a total of 614 flight hours during 1980.

(6) (U) TARAWA's reenlistment summary by rate for 1980 was:

| Rate | E-3 | E-4 | E-5 | E-6 | E-7 | Total |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| ABH | 1 | 8 | | 1 | | 10 |
| AD | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| AE | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| AG | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| AMH | | | 2 | | | 2 |
| AMS | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| ASH | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| ASM | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| AS | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| AT | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| AZ | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| BM | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| DP | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| DS | | | 4 | | | 4 |
| DT | | | 1 | | | 1 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EM | | 4 | 1 | 1 | | 6 |
| ET | | | 2 | 3 | | 5 |
| EW | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| FTG | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| FTM | | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 4 |
| HM | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| HT | | | 2 | 1 | | 3 |
| IC | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| IS | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| MM | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| MS | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | | 9 |
| OS | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| RM | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| SH | | 2 | 1 | | | 3 |
| SM | 1 | | | | | 1 |

Total Reenlistments onboard TARAWA in 1980: 76

(7) (U) During 1980, a total of 342 instances of Commanding Officer's Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP), 11 Summary Courts Martial and seven Special Courts Martial were processed by TARAWA.

(8) (U) The Supply Department Sales and Services Division turned over \$36,000 to the TARAWA Welfare and Recreation Fund in 1980. The Stores Division expended a total of \$2,394,400 in consumables and repair parts with 46,377 line items maintained in stock. Over \$1,375,073 was obligated for the purchase of aviation stores in 1980, with a year-end inventory of 20,461 line items.

(9) (U) The Medical Department treated 404 inpatients and 4,664 outpatients in 1980. In supporting this workload the Pharmacy filled 10,184 prescriptions, the Laboratory performed 6,752 tests, and the X-ray technicians took 2,340 X-rays.

(10) (U) A total of 96 rounds were expended from TARAWA's 5 inch guns during gunnery exercises conducted during 1980. No missiles were launched from either Basic Point Defense Missile System (BPDMS) launcher.

(11) (U) EM3 [REDACTED], USN, [REDACTED], was selected as TARAWA's 1980 Sailor of the Year.

D. D. Timm
D. D. Timm

Distinguished Visitors

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Visitor</u> |
|---------------|---|
| 11 Jan 1980 | Senator Sam Nunn, of Georgia |
| February 1980 | The Honorable Edward Hidalgo, Secretary of the Navy |
| 2 Jun 1980 | Vice Premier Geng Biao, People's Republic of China and Chinese delegation |
| 19 Nov 1980 | Mr. Richard Murphy, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines BGEN Magno BGEN J. Foss, USMC CHJUSMAG BGEN McLintock, USMC BGEN R. M. Punsalang Commodore S. N. Aejandro BGEN A. B. Ramos, Philippine Constabulary Regional Commander BGEN Gacis BGEN Luga |
| 23 Dec 1980 | ADM Samut Sahanavin, CINC Royal Thai Navy (RTN) ADM Sobhon Suyarnsestakorn, Asst CINC RTN VADM Yuthaya Cherdboonmuang, Commandant RT Marine Corps VADM Presert Taenkam, Commandant Sattahip Naval Base RADM Vinai Chaiperm, Director Intelligence RTN RADM Komut Kamalanauin, Director of Operations RTN RADM Preecha Sa-Naguansin, Commander Amphib/Service Sqdn RTN RADM Vinit Sripochart, Commandant, Naval Academy RTN |
| 31 Dec 1980 | Mr. Harry Thayer, U.S. Ambassador to Singapore |

Annex (2)

USS TARAWA (LHA-1) Inspections and Awards, 1980

12 Jan Navy Postal Inspection

10 Feb Brig Technical Assist

11 Feb Command Inspection by Commander, Amphibious Squadron SEVEN.
Recreation Fund and Special Services Inspection

15 Feb Troop Berthing/Cargo Space Inspection

20 Feb Disbursing Review

27 Feb Communication Security Material (CMS) Inspection

1 Mar Human Resource Management Availability

12-13 Mar Numbers 1 and 2 boilers Inspection

15 Apr Radiation Health Survey and Environmental Health Survey

7 May Underwater Hull Groom

8 May Medical Readiness Evaluation and Supply Management Inspection

23 Jun Diesel Engine Inspection

24 Jun 3-M (Material Maintenance Management) Inspection

27 Jun TEMPEST Inspection (Check for radio-frequency leakage)

14 Jul Degaussing Range Check

13 Aug Naval Weather Service Facility Technical Assist

15 Aug Commander, Amphibious Group Eastern Pacific presents the
Admiral Flatley Memorial Award for the most outstanding
achievements in aviation safety and operational readiness for
LHA/LPH class ships in calendar year 1979.

4 Sep ULM-4 Range check. Check of Electronic Countermeasures Equipment.

19 Sep Shipboard Explosive Safety Inspection

8 Oct Combat Systems Readiness Test and Ship's Signals Exploitation
Space (SSES) Inspection

10 Oct Pre-overhaul Test and Inspection

23 Oct Operational Propulsion Plant Examination

Annex (3)

AWARDS Received

1. Amphibious Assault Award
2. Red Engineering 'E'
3. Yellow Air Dept 'E'
4. Black AIMD 'E'
5. White Missile 'E'
6. ADM Flatley Memorial Award

Annex (3)

Commands and Units Embarked
USS TARAWA during 1980

| | <u>USMC</u> <u>Officer</u> | <u>USMC</u> <u>Enlisted</u> | <u>USN</u> <u>Officer</u> | <u>USN</u> <u>Enlisted</u> | <u>Other</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Jan-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| Nucleus Landing | | | | | |
| Force Staff | 3 | 16 | | | |
| Combat Cargo | 1 | 3 | | | |
| 18-29 Aug 1980 | | | | | |
| (PHIBLEX 2-80) | 224 | 1193 | 3 | 16 | 1 Off Army 2 Civilian |
| 11 Aug 1980 | | | | | |
| NAB Coronado | | | 12 | 26 | |
| 5 Sep 1980 | | | | | |
| USS ST LOUIS | | | 12 | 25 | |
| 14 Oct-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| COMPHIBRON SEVEN | | | 13 | 27 | |
| TACRON ONE | | | 5 | 12 | |
| VMA 513 | 16 | 88 | | | |
| HMA 169 | 8 | 32 | | | |
| UDT 11 | | | 2 | 22 | |
| TOW CO 2nd Battalion | 1 | 30 | | | |
| 1st Tank Battalion | | 29 | | | |
| 27 Oct-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| BLT 1/3 | 48 | 881 | 3 | 39 | |
| HMM 265 | 42 | 214 | | | |
| 27-29 Oct 1980 | | | | | |
| HQ 37 MAU | 11 | 35 | | | |
| 29 Oct-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| HQ 31 MAU | 13 | 57 | 1 | | |
| MSSG 31 MAU | 1 | 9 | 1 | | |
| 15 Nov-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| HQ RLT 4 | 20 | 37 | | | |
| FOX CO 2/4 | 6 | 195 | | | |
| SURGICAL TEAM | | | 6 | 10 | |
| 15-31 Dec 1980 | | | | | |
| SURGICAL SUPPORT TEAM | | | 2 | 10 | |
| <hr/> | | | | | |
| Totals | 394 | 2819 | 60 | 187 | 3 |

Annex (4)