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ABRUPT CHANGES IN SCHEDULES

Early publication of monthly schedules was necessary to allow ample time for MSTS and Navy to coordinate, through maritime and commercial authorities, the availability of berth, tug support, and delivery of perishable food and other supplies, etc., with the arrival and departures of other vessels.

Abrupt changes in schedules also involved other agencies such as the U.S. State Department in arranging for port clearances and visas for personnel joining the ship at foreign ports.

In emergency or quick reaction situations these inconveniences could not be avoided but it was generally recognized that mid-stream changes in schedules required strong justification.

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(b) (3)-50 USC 403  
(b) (3)-18 USC 798  
(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36CONVERSION TO MSTs

The use of AGTRs as TRSs (entirely Navy manned) was challenged in November 1963 and again in February 1964 by RADM J.W. Ailes III, Commander, Service Force, Atlantic Fleet. His objection was based on the use of naval personnel and naval fleet units for support of [redacted]

The objection was forwarded to CNO with a proposal to convert the TRSs to MSTs operations in support of [redacted] thus releasing the involved Navy billets for fleet operations. (6)

The recommendation was rejected by CNO in June 1964, but was subsequently approved by that office in November 1964. At that time CNO directed a program be prepared for an orderly transfer of the Navy's responsibility for operation of the AGTRs to MSTs. (b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

The Bureau of Ships estimated the cost for conversion at 1.4 million per ship and the time in the yard to accomplish conversion at 4 months. MSTs estimated annual operating cost for the three Liberty ships at 1.42 million and the two Victory ships at 1.65 million. (7)

[redacted] and [redacted] then met to develop a schedule of conversion that would allow for the fullest use of [redacted]

The plans for modification of the ships to accommodate [redacted] bogged down in 1966 for the following reasons: [redacted] going on the assumption that the ships would be manned by units of specified numbers, obtained an estimate of costs to convert all 5 TRSs from the BUSHIPS. The estimate, in April 1965, of eight dollars for expenditure in FY68 was subsequently approved by SECDEF in a PCR of 21 December 1966. However, in 1966, in addition to other alterations, the number of personnel to be accommodated rose from 735 to 813 and it became apparent the basis for SECDEF's approval for conversion was unrealistic.

(6) COMSERVLANT ser: 70/00368 dtd 21 November 1963, "Use of Fleet Units in Support of Non-Military Operations".

(7) BUSHIPS ltr ser: 44-042, dtd 29 May 1965.

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The revised estimate came to 28.7 million. This included increased manning figures, habitability improvements, addition of machine automation equipment and Coast Guard certification. Subsequently it was decided that it was not feasible to convert five ships in one year and in view of the fact that only eight million was included in FY67 CCP for conversion of all five ships it was necessary for Navy to reprogram its manpower resources in FY68 to provide for continued operation of these ships during that fiscal year.

[redacted] and Navy's proposed programs for conversion demonstrated the advantages of operating under MSTs in peacetime conditions. Operational days per year under MSTs operation would be 259 compared to 193 under Navy operation.

NSA's proposal, however, called for conversion of only the two Victory ships with an estimated life expectancy of ten more years. If accepted, this program would require that one ship be out of operation for most of FY68 and one for seven months in FY69. Under the Navy program one ship would be out for most of FY68 and three in FY69 and one in FY70.

When the above proposals were submitted to the OSD Review Group during the CCP submission 67-73, the group decided that the operational need for the AGTRs would not decline in the coming years and that until [redacted] [redacted] it would not be feasible to allow any ship to be out of service during FY69.

Therefore, the Review Group recommended the 5 AGTRs continue to be operated by the Navy and that [redacted] [redacted] be adjusted accordingly.

The recommendation was subsequently approved by SECDEF.

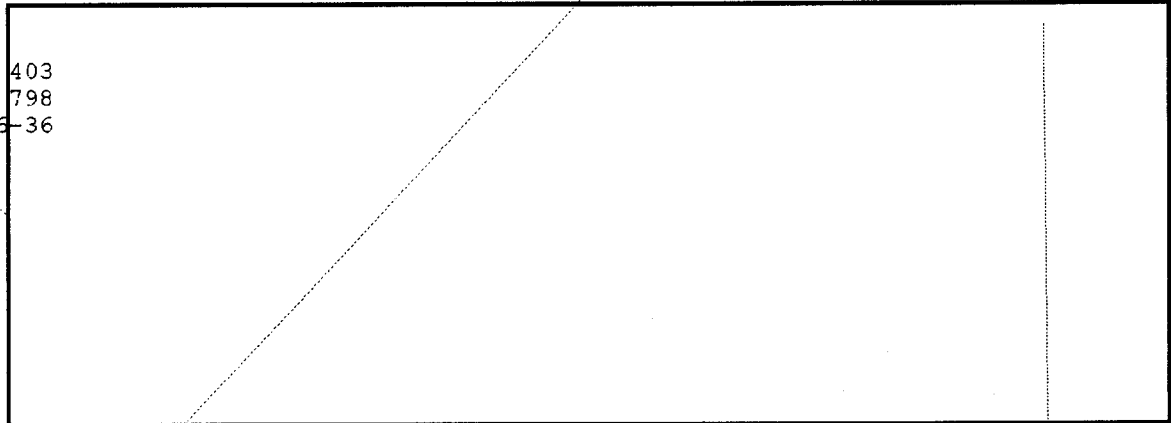
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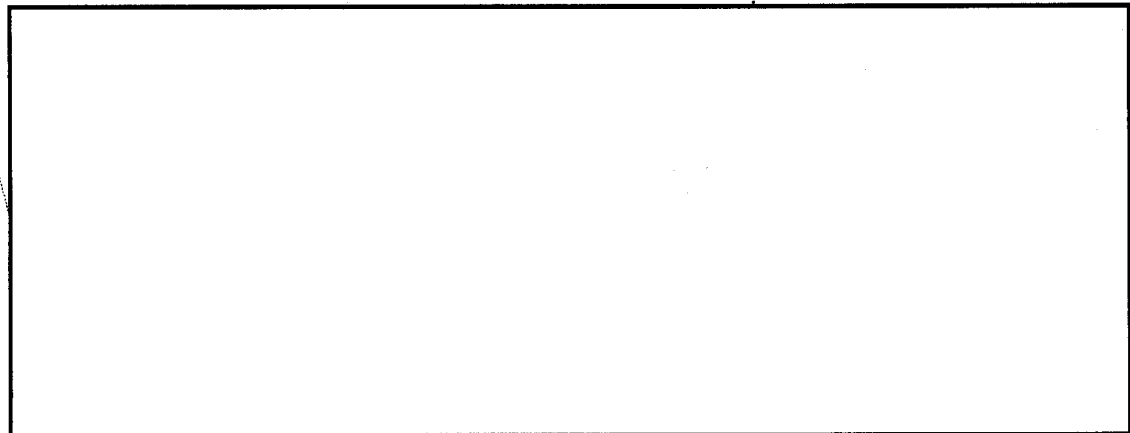
AS A RESULT OF CLOSURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN PORTS TO U.S. NAVAL VESSELS

As a result of an incident involving U.S. Military personnel from the USS ROOSEVELT while in Capetown, South Africa in Feb 67, the U.S. State Department announced the unofficial closure of South African ports to U.S. ships.



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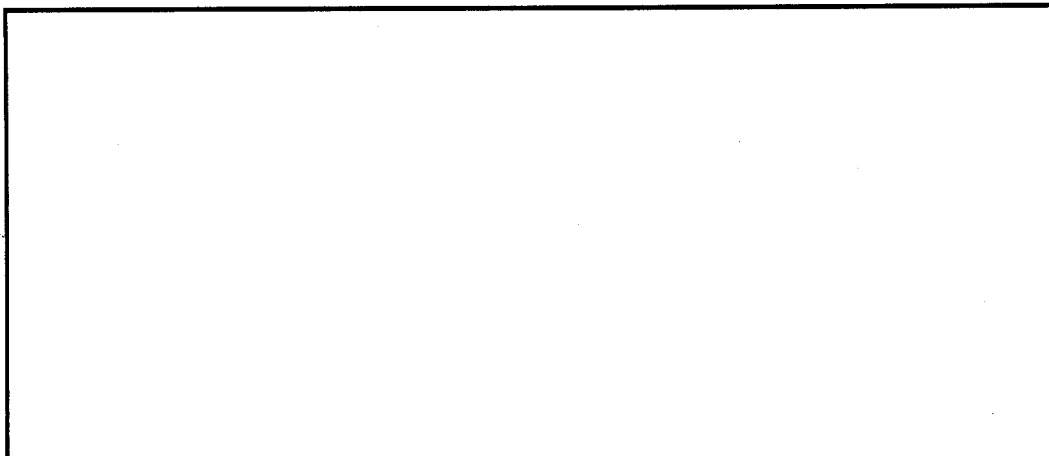
The loss of these ports [redacted] by requiring long transits to and from suitable ports for overhaul and logistics. The material reliability of the ship was reduced as voyage repair facilities were reduced in quality and there was an increase in cost and time for VALDEZ's surface and air logistics support now coming from the U.S. to other African ports where the service was erratic. (8)



(8) Department of the Navy Memo dtd 4 March 1967, "DOD Requirement for Facilities and Contractual Support in the Republic of South Africa."

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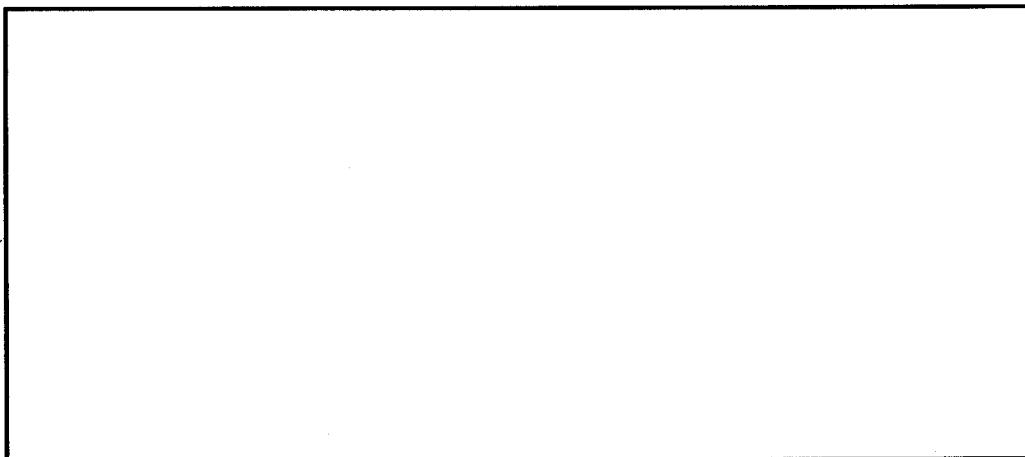


[redacted] incorporated into DDR&E's paper, as well as studies from Navy, Air Force and NASA, were forwarded on 5 June to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and thence to the Under Secretary of the State Department for review.

In the interim, [redacted] an exchange of correspondence with CNO and MSTs in order to develop mutually acceptable plans for maximum use of the extremely limited port facilities.

On 27 April 1967, COMSTS provided CNO with comments and recommendations for alternative solutions:

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(9) [redacted] dtd 20 March 1967, "DOD REQUIREMENTS FOR FACILITIES AND CONTRACTUAL SUPPORT IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (U)".

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(10) COMSTS 261324Z April 1967, "AGTR/MSTS Deployments".

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COMSTS also pointed out that limitations of good port facilities would require larger and more frequent shipments of all supplies to the ships operating in the area and because of this, operating flexibility would be reduced by the necessity to schedule operations around surface transport rendezvous. COMSTS estimated a 25% reduction in productivity from the VALDEZ as a result of these new restrictions.

CINCLANTFLT, in providing comments to CNO on the effects this new situation would have on [redacted] [redacted] stated:

...present 16 week deployment remains most efficient in utilization and productive coverage of desired areas, recognizing that there will be some degradation of effort during latter part of deployment due material problems, inadequate logistic support and operator fatigue...with 10 day logistic resupply period at Rota, deployment can be increased to 21 weeks without degrading operational capability of AGTR...If Navy responsibility extended to cover east coast in addition to west coast during overhaul of MSTs ship, 21 week employment with 10 day logistic support stop at Rota in mid-cruise feasible...any increase over 16 week deployment should include commensurate increase from 8-11 weeks CONUS time between deployments... (11)

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In July, [redacted] representatives met with JCS, CNO and [redacted] representatives to discuss the denial of South African ports to U.S. Naval ships. The result was a proposal to initiate a test action by scheduling a port call for the USNS VALDEZ at Durban, South Africa. The Director of African Region, ISA, indicated a willingness to process such a request and try to obtain State Department clearance. A message was sent to ASD/ISA [redacted] requesting ASD/ISA make preliminary approach to State Department to help insure a favorable response in regard to Durban entry when JCS/JRC request for clearance was presented.

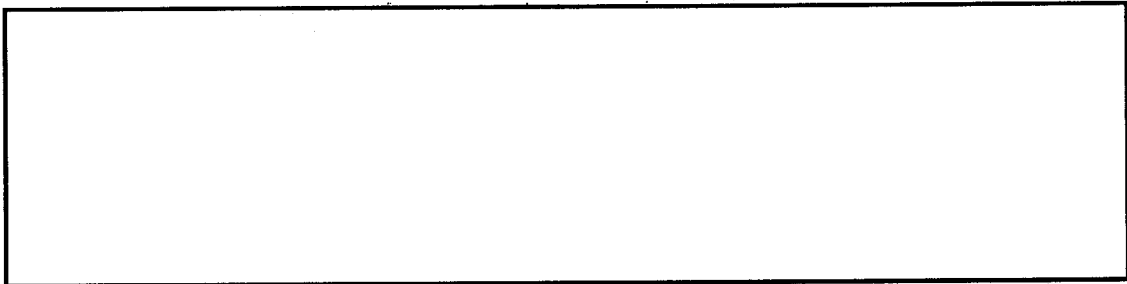
Through informal channels, [redacted] was advised that clearance for the ship's entry into Durban would not be forthcoming but State Department had indicated that if sufficient justification was provided, they would not object to a port call in South Africa by a TRS.

(11) CINCLANTFLT 050028Z May 1967, "AGTR DEPLOYMENTS".

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Between July of 1967 and the final departure of TRSs from the African waters in 1969, no situation of sufficient urgency arose that would permit the suggestion to be tested again.



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CPA RESTRICTIONS

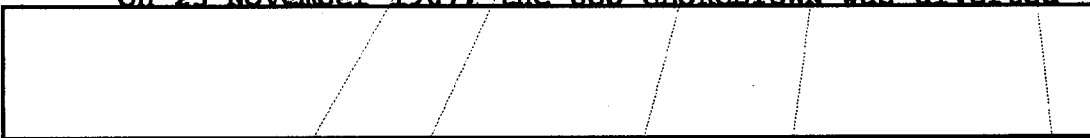
Claimed territorial sea is the area of water over which a country claims territorial rights. CPA is the closest point of approach a ship may make to the foreign landmass, and is measured from the coastal baseline of the country in question.

Although the U.S. does not recognize any claimed territorial seas beyond 3 NM, Technical Research Ships usually conducted operations outside the claimed territorial waters (e.g., [redacted] claimed territorial sea is [redacted] USNS MULLER operated at [redacted]. In cases in which there were overriding [redacted] considerations, request for operations within claimed territorial waters would be considered on an individual basis. (12)

The JCS and commanders of the Unified and Specified commands designate sensitive areas for programs where appropriate, and when required, designation of such areas include geographical boundaries.

The Unified and Specified Commands may increase but not decrease CPAs below the limits established by JCS.

On 23 November 1967, the USS GEORGETOWN was diverted



On 21 December, the USS GEORGETOWN received sailing orders from COMSIXTHFLT, then her parent command, with CPAs affixed as follows:

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>CPA</u>	<u>CLAIMED DISTANCE</u>
[redacted]	6	6
[redacted]	25	6
[redacted]	25	6
[redacted]	25	6
[redacted]	25	unspecified

(12) [redacted] "Operational Guidance for [redacted] Programs and Certain [redacted] [redacted] (U); Appendix D."

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CONTINUED:

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>CPA</u>	<u>CLAIMED DISTANCE</u>
[REDACTED]	25	12
	25	6
	25	12
	12	12
	6	6

(13)

After her January port call, the GEORGETOWN commenced operations on 6 February under SAILO 1-68 which stated, "CPA for [REDACTED] shall be thirty-five miles, or beyond the 100 fathom curve whichever is greater." (14)

At the termination of the GEORGETOWN's Mediterranean cruise, [REDACTED] provided CINCUSNAVEUR with a summary evaluation of [REDACTED] SIGINT operations in the Med.

The original diversion of the GEORGETOWN was due to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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(b) (3)-18 USC 798  
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(13) COMSIXTHFLT SAILO 2-67 for USS GEORGETOWN, dtd 212340Z December 1967, [REDACTED]

(14) [REDACTED] to JCS/JRC, ADP-43, 262149Z January 1968.

(15) [REDACTED] to CINCUSNAVEUR, K-137, 182248Z "USS GEORGETOWN MED OPS (U)".

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On 14 February 1969, [redacted] forwarded a deployment recommendation for the USS BELMONT, to CINCLANT. This proposed a deployment to the Mediterranean Sea [redacted]

[redacted]

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On 13 June, JCS approved the schedule for the first month of the proposed deployment except for the CPA to [redacted] which was increased from 12 NM to 50 NM. (16)

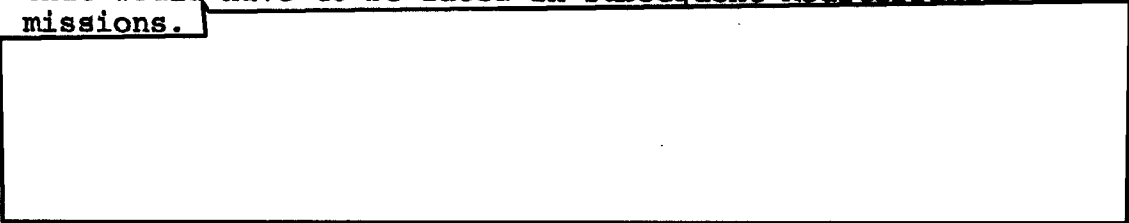
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- (16) JCS 132052Z Jun 69, "JUNE RECON SCHEDULE".
- (17) USCINCEUR 251519Z July 1969, "RESTRICTIONS ON [redacted] OPERATIONS".
- (18) CINCUSNAVEUR 251349Z July 1969, "RESTRICTIONS ON [redacted] OPERATIONS".
- (19) COMSIXTHFLT 091510Z August 1969, [redacted]

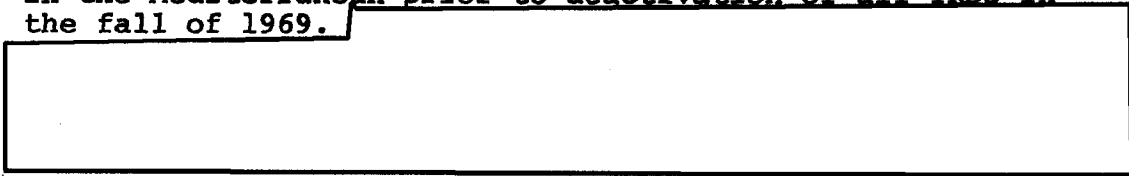
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While the USS BELMONT was successful in completion of her primary mission, the cruise pointed out a problem that would have to be faced in subsequent Mediterranean missions.



The USS BELMONT's summer cruise was the last by a TRS in the Mediterranean prior to deactivation of all TRSs in the fall of 1969.



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ESCORT AND PROTECTIVE OPERATIONS

When the first TRSs were introduced to [redacted]  
[redacted] they were not armed for two primary  
reasons: [redacted] and (2)  
it would be free of the restrictions applied to U.S.  
warships in foreign ports.

For six years, the TRSs operated [redacted]

The immediate solution to the problem was to provide the ships with the protection they needed in order to carry out their operations without undo risk to the ships themselves. This was a command decision and took the form, in certain instances, of armed escorts (usually DDs) and air cover.

There was initial concern over the question of whether the appearance of an armed vessel in company with a TRS might not provoke the very hostile reaction we were trying to avoid. It was deemed however, that if the role of the DD escort was fairly passive, i.e., it remained outboard of the TRS, maintaining a loose patrol and not close in unless requested to do so by the TRS, it probably would not cause overt hostile reaction.

[redacted]

The mission of the escort was to provide protective cover for the USNS MULLER [redacted]

[redacted]

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"Enclosure (7) to CINCLANT letter serial 000278/331 of 15 September 1966...provided guidance for protective measures to be taken in applying the right of self-preservation in peacetime and rules of engagement [redacted] In addition to these rules, the following rules of engagement were provided:

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- (1) If for some reason MULLER is forced to enter [ ] territorial waters, the commanding officer of the escort is authorized to pursue.
- (2) In the event of an engineering or other casualty to MULLER which causes the ship to drift into [ ] territorial waters, every effort shall be made to tow the MULLER into international waters. The escort vessel, in any case, will remain with MULLER to provide protection in the event the MULLER drifts into [ ] territorial waters.
- (3) In the event [ ] forces are declared hostile ...U.S. forces in self-defense, may deliver such fire and perform such tactics as are necessary to provide for defense of MULLER as well as themselves, including firing into [ ] territorial waters and airspace." (20)

The destroyer escort assigned to the MULLER normally maintained a loose patrol 4-8 miles outboard of the ship whenever she moved [ ]. The destroyer assignments for duty were levied by COMSECONDFLT and COMASWFORLANT on a quarterly basis.

In addition to the destroyer, fighter aircraft, as made available to COMWESTFOR, were put on alert. These aircraft were expected to be on station approximately 10 minutes after call and had an estimated stay time of approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes.

The requirement for destroyer escort, which remained in effect until the MULLER discontinued operations, though not hampering MULLER's activities to any extent, did result in several changes in her routine.

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The destroyer, according to Navy regulations, had to maintain 70% of its fuel at all times. This made it necessary for the escort to leave station to refuel at Key West approximately every 9 days. This, of course, affected the MULLER, not allowed to remain [ ] North without her escort.

Situations occurred, [ ] that required the MULLER to be on station during a period when she was scheduled to be in Key West with her escort. Normally, a schedule modification for the MULLER would quickly amend the situation, but in view of the escort, two schedules had to be taken into account.

(20) CINCLANTFLT 022304Z February 1968, CINCLANT OPORD 2130, "USNS MULLER PROTECTIVE OPERATIONS".

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In urgent situations however, the destroyer could remain on station longer, or, if lead-time permitted, be brought into Key West early for fueling. During several instances when rescheduling of the escort was necessary in order to satisfy high priority technical requirements, [redacted] found CINCLANT most helpful in assisting in the arrangements.

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Like the MULLER, the USS GEORGETOWN, conducting operations in the Mediterranean at the time of the [redacted] [redacted] was assigned a destroyer escort. ADMINSO CINCUSNAVEUR in January 1968, directed one destroyer escort provide direct support to USS GEORGETOWN while she operated in area [redacted]

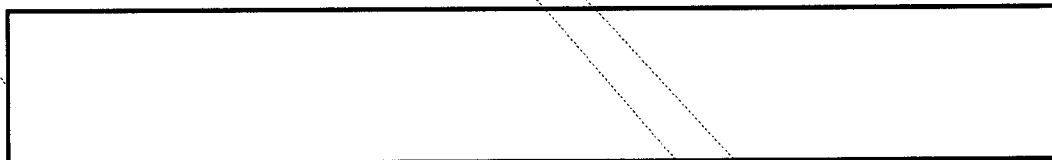
[redacted] The destroyer was to patrol between GEORGETOWN and the shore, and maintain a CPA of no less than 25 NM. (21)

JCS approved the GEORGETOWN's February [redacted] schedule with one exception; the escort was to remain 10 NM outboard of GEORGETOWN's track. (22)

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On 11 February, one UAR Beagle aircraft made three low passes over the GEORGETOWN. As a result of the overflight, COMSIXTHFLT took further precautionary measures for advisory warning to the ship. In addition, the USS F.D. ROOSEVELT and her escorts the USS PUTNAM and USS CONINGHAM, were placed on one hour notice in support of GEORGETOWN's operations. (23) The USS STORMES was assigned as an additional escort for the ROOSEVELT. The USS TALAHATCHIE COUNTY was placed on two hour standby. Further, one VP aircraft was placed on 24 hour coverage to maintain and document a continuous navigational plot of the ship.

Later, an SP2H aircraft was assigned to report all surface contacts within 50 NM of the GEORGETOWN. (24)



- (21) CINCUSNAVEUR 291741Z January 1968, [redacted]
- (22) JCS 8863, 012317Z February 1968, "FEBRUARY 1968 RECONNAISSANCE SCHEDULE".
- (23) CINCUSNAVEUR 111135Z February 1968, [redacted]
- (24) CTF 67 112038Z February 1968.

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Unlike the USNS MULLER, the USS GEORGETOWN's CPA's were increased in addition to the escort. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Although her escort did not hamper her operations the excessive protective cover involved a number of Mediterranean resources and considerable reaction planning.

The requirement for escort was dropped as GEORGETOWN moved eastward and eventually out of the Mediterranean.

Again, unlike the USNS MULLER, the USS GEORGETOWN's escort and cover was not to become a routine operation since the Mediterranean was not her permanent operations area.

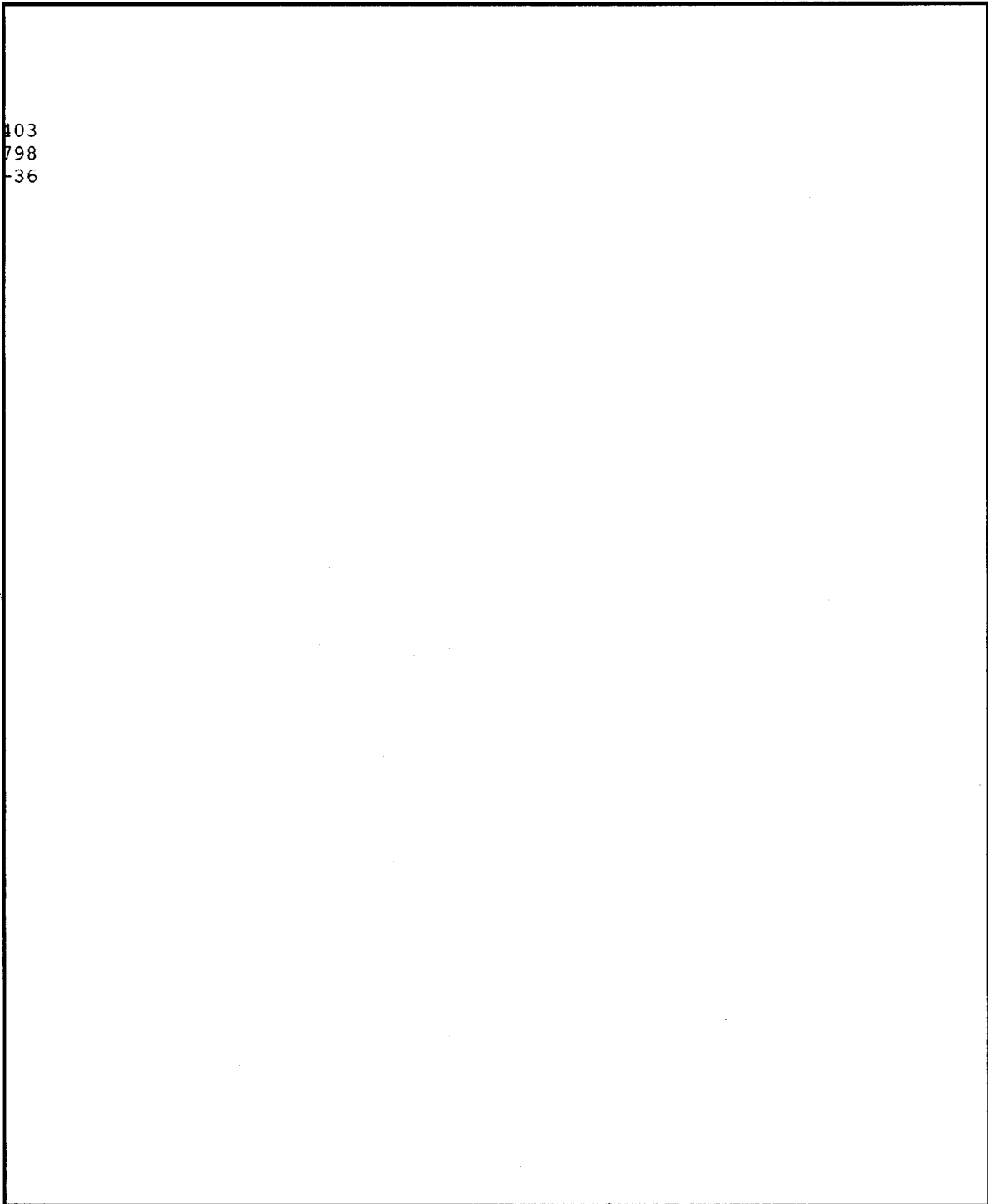
Evaluation of the two situations (the smooth transition to escort and protective cover by the MULLER; the rapid addition of escort and protective cover perhaps as an over-reaction to the UAR overflight), indicated that requirement of escort for TRSs did not degrade [REDACTED] but did point out that escort operations and protective cover planned in advance created less upheaval in fleet operations and allowed for the proper programming of the resources involved.

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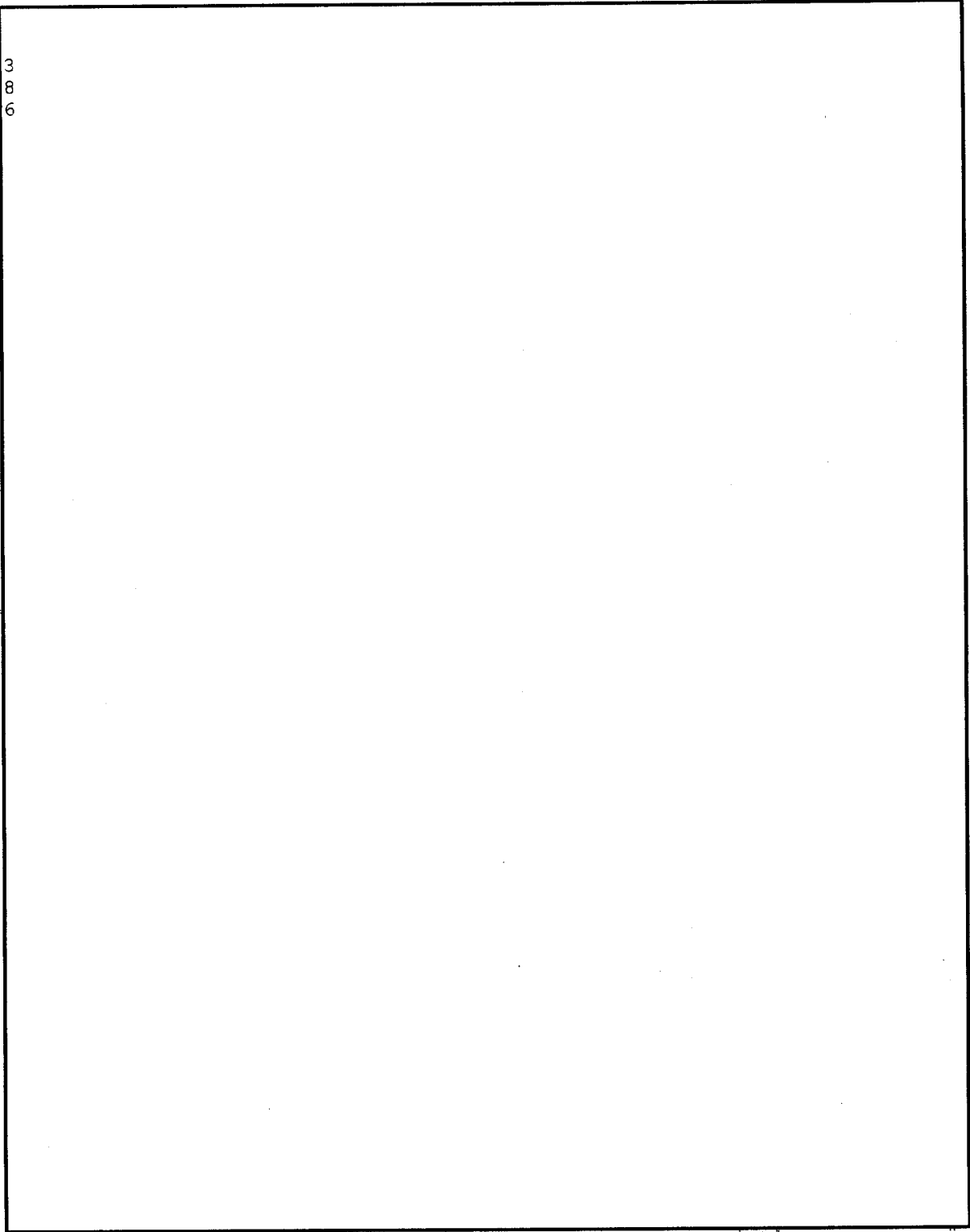
(25) G-1174-67, dtd 20 September 1967. "Diversion of the USS BELMONT (AGTR-4)".

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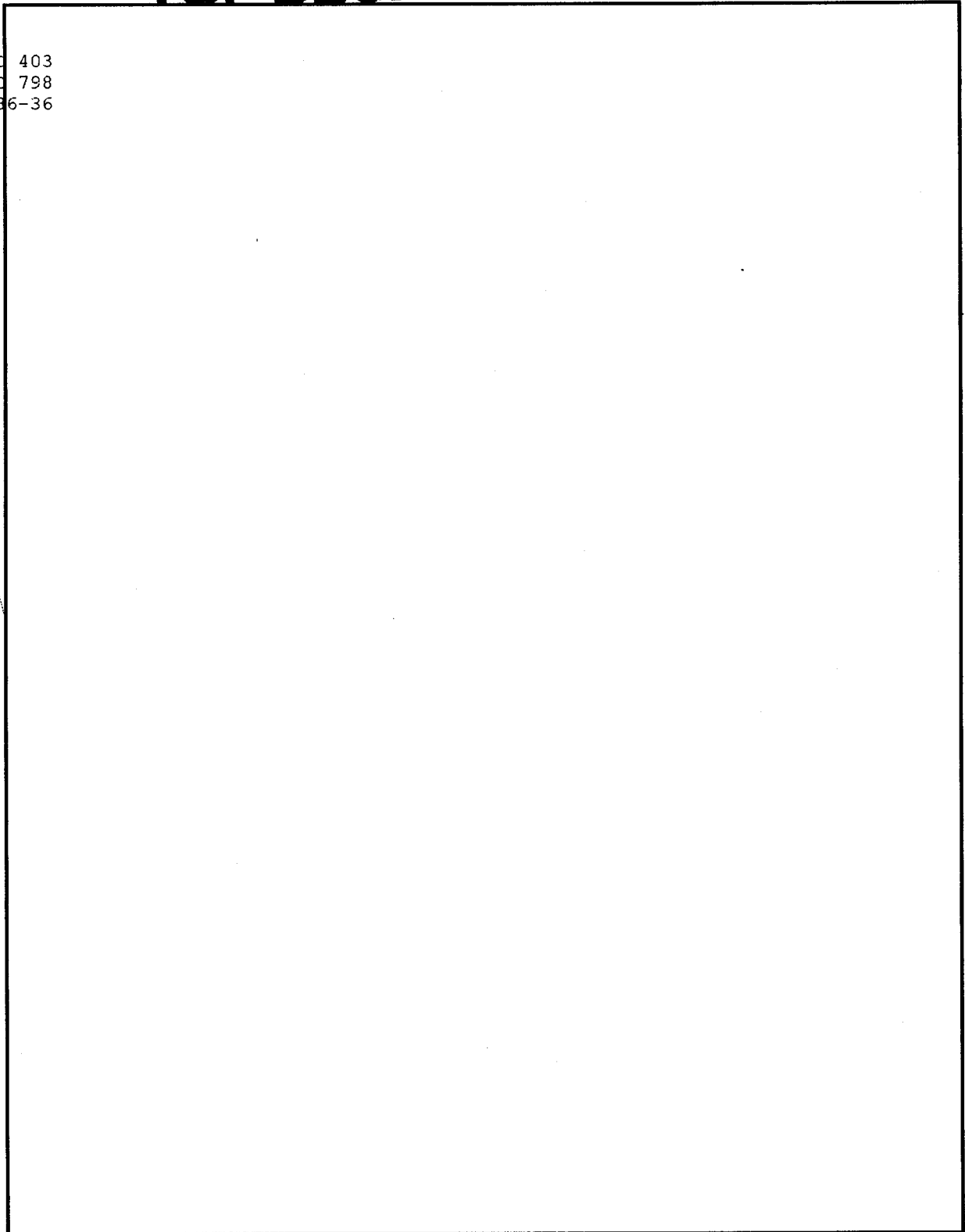
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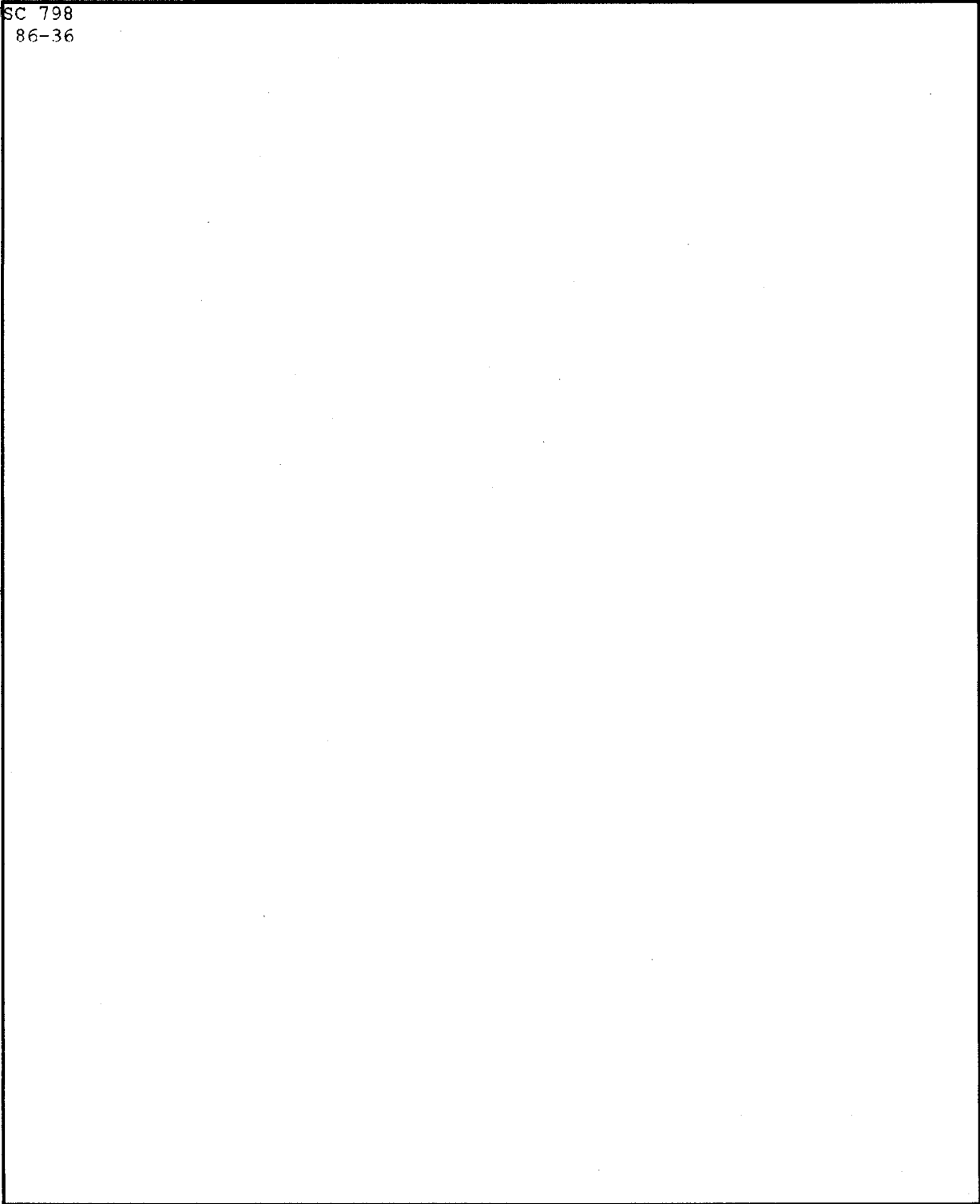
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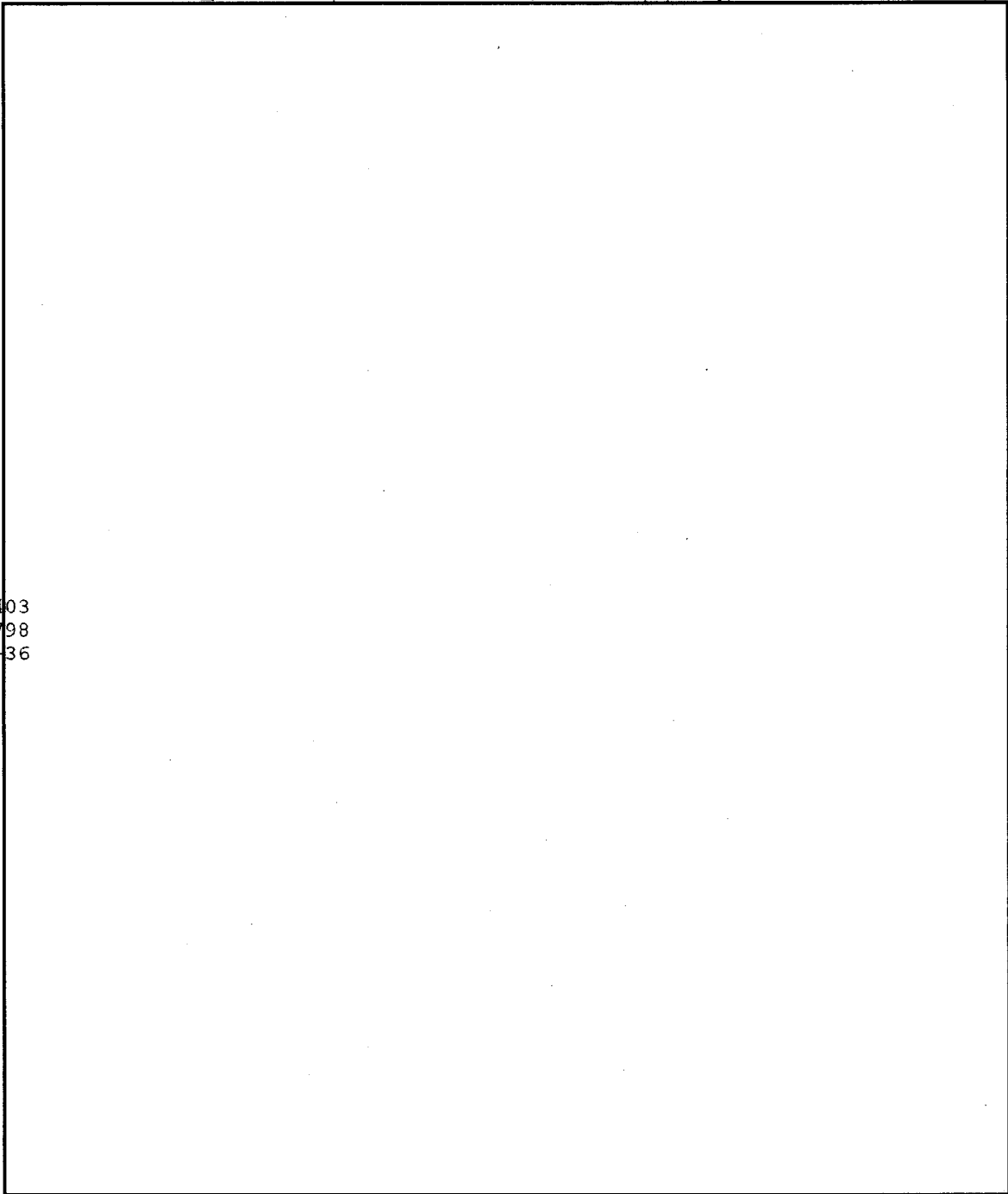
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COURIER PROBLEM IN AFRICA

In February 1969, a recurring problem involving the disposition of courier material handled by TRSS operating in African waters was addressed by the CO, Research Operations Detachment, USNS VALDEZ.

Until this time, when a ship arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, a courier from the research department had to fly to Nairobi to deliver the outgoing ARFCOS material to the American Embassy and pick up the incoming material. The problem was a matter of security. The couriers traveled in civilian clothes and carried only their military I.D. and government passports. On demand by local military or police authorities to open the package the courier would have no choice but to comply. Though the Kenyan government was traditionally pro-West, the generally unstable conditions throughout Africa made such procedures risky and revelation of some sensitive material could prove extremely embarrassing to the U.S..

[redacted] recommended that the Department of State arrange to have the American Embassy provide courier service to meet the ship on arrival in Mombasa or provide the RSCHOPDET with some kind of authorization which would grant the detachment couriers diplomatic immunity for these trips. (31)

Liaison with the Pouch and Courier Division, U.S. Department of State revealed the fact that the courier service is operated from Washington and is not subject to local controls nor is the service obligated to handle ARFCOS or other Department of Defense courier material beyond the limits of established courier routes. Nairobi, Kenya is a point of entry for State Department courier material and a regular stop on State Department courier routes; there is no U.S. consulate or other post in Mombasa.

The U.S. Embassy in Nairobi had no resources specifically allocated for courier duties and used its own personnel to perform courier functions. It performed similar functions for U.S. naval ships on a courtesy basis when personnel were available.

(31) T-AG-169 ser:014 dtd 13 Feb 69, "Courier Material".

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Taking the above into account, [redacted] proposed two possible solutions to NSA/ NIC, and DIRARFCOS. The Pouch and Courier Division, U.S. Department of State advised [redacted] that it could request the Ambassador to Kenya to provide letter of identification for specified couriers of the RSCHOPSDET VALDEZ. These letters would protect the material only and confer no diplomatic immunity on the couriers. Additionally, funds would probably have to be provided to cover commercial air costs between Mombasa and Nairobi.

On the other hand, VALDEZ could discontinue using Mombasa as a courier port while continuing to utilize port facilities there for liberty and dock services. The material would be handled only through African ports where the State Department maintained foreign missions with TOP SECRET CONTROL Officers such as Aden, Mogadiscio, Dar es Salaam, Lourenco Marques and Capetown. This would result in an undesirable accumulation of sensitive material on board the ship and would require rescheduling procedures to arrange for courier drop-offs in ports not normally utilized. (32)

The addressees of the memorandum were asked to comment on the proposals with respect to the adequacy from a standpoint of security and the feasibility from an operational standpoint.

[redacted] then involved in an on-going review of the world-wide [redacted] recommended the problem not be addresses at that time. (33) There were no ships [redacted] then and later events involving deactivation of the TRSS eliminated the problem for the moment.

If, however, at any time in the future, US Navy vessels [redacted] [redacted] the problem will have to be addresses again.

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(32) [redacted] ser: 006103, dtd 6 May 1969, "Courier Material for RSCHOPSDET Aboard USNS VALDEZ (T-AG-169)".

(33) [redacted] 094, 281728Z May 1969, "MOVEMENT OF COURIER MATERIAL AT MOMBASA KENYA".

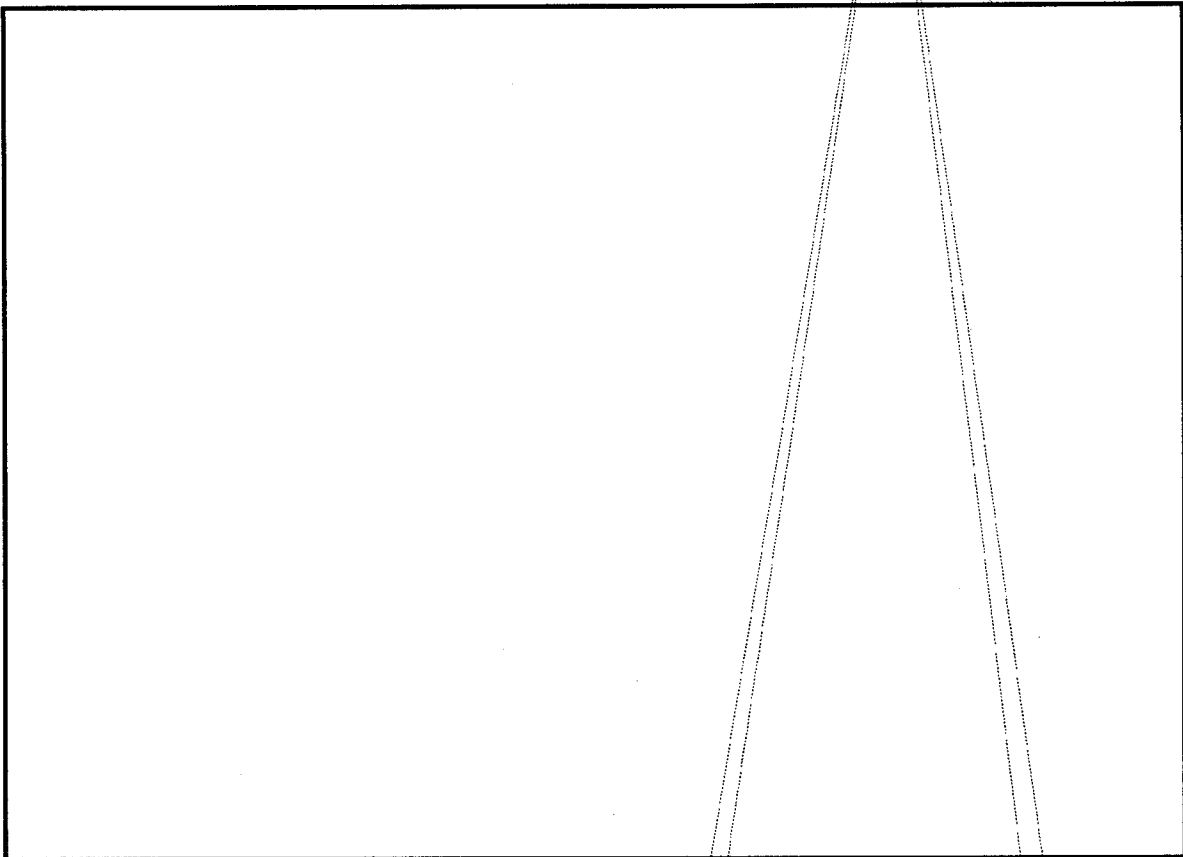
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DOCUMENT CONTROL/DESTRUCT/SCUTTLE



In addition, CNO authorized the use of certain existing ordinance devices for destruction purpose. They were the M-3 Destruction Kits permanently installed in the Research Operations spaces of some ships in metal bins which also serve as the normal storage location for [redacted]

[redacted] the ABC M-4 File Destroyers for use in classified files, located in separate compartments throughout the ship and the [redacted]

With slight variation, the TRSS were equipped with the "VALDEZ Quick-Fix" type system for equipment/document destruction and scuttling:

"The USNS VALDEZ has on board devices to scuttle the ship and to destruct electronic devices and documents. An electric ignition and firing method has been provided...The scuttle devices are 14 square shaped explosive charges which will cause a total of

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14 approximately 18" square hull penetrations below the waterline in 3 compartments...The file destruct are standard stock items (sodium nitrate) (M-4). The electronic equipment destruct devices are standard stock items (thermit) (M1A2). The document and circuit board destroyers are standard stock items (sodium nitrate or sodium tricalcium nitrate) (M-3). NWC China Lake devised and installed a method to electrically ignite file and electronic destruct devices from a central point within the research spaces, scuttle charges are fired from outside the research spaces. Scuttle firing and destruct ignition are installed separately by standard mine safety appliance blasting units. These are battery powered and independent of ship's power." (34)

The destruct devices were repeatedly tested for effectiveness. The system was never proven totally satisfactory regarding the 30 minute goal set for destruction; however, it was determined that if allowed to fire, after 30 minutes, the process of conflagration would be too great to reverse.

Prior to the deactivation of the TRSSs, no incident occurred that warranted the use of these devices so to date the system has never been tested under actual conditions.

(34) COMSTSLANT 031818Z February 1969, "Scuttle and Destruct Report on Interim Installation."

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AGING HULLS

Repetitive mechanical failure was a problem common to all the Technical Research Ships. The original TRS program called for retirement of the first ships as it advanced towards that time when TRSs were newly constructed from the ground up, but, when the time came to retire the USNS VALDEZ in 1964, the program had reached a point where funds were not available for new construction and strong justification for such on-going construction was required.

Funds and justification for further ships were never approved so the original 6 ships represented the total resources of the TRS program until its conclusion. (The VICOTRY ships LIBERTY/BELMONT had a life expectancy of 10 years beyond 1967; the Liberty ships OXFORD/GEORGETOWN/JAMESTOWN had a life expectancy of 5 years beyond 1967).

Though yearly overhauls and periodic upkeep was the standard operating procedure, the vessels and installed equipment suffered numerous casualties that can be blamed primarily on "old age" factors and the problems involved with [redacted] on a vessel not constructed originally for that purpose. For example: the USS GEORGETOWN suffered a boiler casualty off Venezuela on 25 March 1967 which required 15 days in port for repairs; lost pump engine 14 December 1967 while enroute to the Mediterranean on a quick reaction mission; suffered a generator outage 1 - 26 May 1968; main engine disablement 27 May - 06 June 1968; failure of a fuel injection system in August 1968; lost SA-01 position due to a hydraulic pump failure 14 - 25 August 1968; experienced boiler steam main damage 13 - 16 November 1969; and had a crank shaft damaged beyond repair December 1968 - 18 January 1969. The USNS MULLER lost two generators 11 - 29 July 1969; suffered a main engine failure 23 March - 05 April 1966 which required the ship to be towed to safety; lost DCGB-04 position due to a short in the equipment with no spare parts available on board 21 December - 29 December 1968; and lost a diesel generator 12 June 1969.

The problem can best be summed up by a statement from CINCLANT concerning the delay of GEORGETOWN's last proposed deployment:

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"The extent of GEORGETOWN's engineering problem... cannot be determined for several days because of lack of information on availability of parts for an ancient power plant which has been out of production for many years." (35)

With every material casualty the reliability of a vessel decreased and as the days off station for repairs increased [redacted] At a time when TRSs were being looked to as resources for quick reaction and [redacted] many were approaching retirement and unable to satisfy these requirements.

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(35) CINCLANT 051640Z July 1969, "USS GEORGETOWN Deployment Recommendation".

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(b) (3)-50 USC 403  
(b) (3)-18 USC 798  
(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36SECTION 6DEACTIVATION OF TECHNICAL RESEARCH SHIPS

In July 1969, OSD because of budgetary limitations, proposed a reduction to each DOD department's [redacted]. Each department was asked to submit a plan based on a 5% and 10% proposed reduction to indicate from where the cuts would come.

CNO subsequently advised [redacted] of those [redacted] programs considered most expendible and proposed the immediate inactivation of the USNS VALDEZ and USNS MULLER, "...in view of the high cost and difficulty in protecting these [redacted] and due to the fact that the program does not provide sufficient resources for adequate upgrading." (36)

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On 18 July, [redacted] forwarded to DEPSECDEF, the program adjustments for FY70 based on a 5% and 10% reduction in funds. With the 10% reduction, [redacted] to retain only 2 ships for deployment in [redacted] waters and one for deployment [redacted] with a possibility of other deployments in the future if priorities change. (37)

The first indication of Navy's actual deactivation move came in August when CNO, because of reduction in operating funds, initiated some preliminary ship movements prior to the final desposition determination by DEPSEC. The AGTRs were placed on the Navy's 703 list- the names of the ships to be inactivated as a result of budget cuts and the USS GEORGETOWN, undergoing upkeep prior to relief of the MULLER, was ordered to remain in port until further notice.

As a result, CNO advised COMSTS that obligation to cover [redacted] operations of the VALDEZ and MULLER would be withheld effective 1969. (b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

Estimating that 60 days would be necessary to strip the equipment, obtain disposition directions and prepare the ships for lay up, COMSTSLANT recommended that CNO direct the VALDEZ, then operating off the [redacted] [redacted] be returned to CONUS immediately for deactivation.

On 22 August, CNO directed CINCLANT to return the VALDEZ and indicated the MULLER would continue operating [redacted] until early September before deactivation. (38)

(36) CNO 092141Z July 1969, "Program Adjustments, FY70".

(38) CNO 222054Z August 1969, "Deactivation of USNS VALDEZ and MULLER".

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Shortly thereafter, [redacted] concerned with the potential loss of shipborne capability, forwarded a message to CNO expressing reaction to the moves taken by that office to deactivate the ships. These actions were neither coordinated [redacted] nor reported [redacted] until after the fact.

[redacted]

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In view of the possible deactivation of the TRSs, [redacted] requested comments from the CINCs regarding their position on this matter. CINCLANT recommended retention of one or more of the TRSs for use in contingency support role. CINCPAC recommended retention of the two TRSs in Southeast Asia because of their "vital role in supporting current and future allied operations." Stating that he could not [redacted] of the AGTRs, USCINCEUR advised that his requirements for [redacted] could best be satisfied by other means.

JCS then advised OSD (DDR&E) that the military requirement to retain three AGTRs as previously suggested [redacted] was not of sufficiently high priority to warrant the removal of the AGTRs from the Navy 703 List.

[redacted]

(39)

252114Z August 1969, [redacted]

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[redacted] 121246Z SEP 69, "Deactivation of Technical Research Ships."

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By mid-September, Deputy Secretary of Defense had not yet made a final decision concerning the disposition of the TRSSs. In the mean while, CNO proceeded with deactivation planning. The USNS VALDEZ was ordered home and arrived in Norfolk on 18 September to commence deactivation and the MULLER departed station 7 October and proceeded from Port Everglades to Norfolk to arrive 16 October.

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On 01 October, Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard concluded that "retention of the 4 AGTRs in the active fleet is not required to satisfy [redacted] or military requirements." (41)

[redacted]

The study had been concluded apparently with out knowledge of the DEPSEC's final decision on 01 October to deactivate the MULLER. In view of his decision, no further action on the report was considered necessary. The first enclosure to the memo was hwoever, forwarded to DEPSEC as additional information relating to the deactivation of the USNS MULLER.

Once the decision on final disposition was firm, schedules and guidelines for deactivation were formulated for each vessel.

The USNS VALDEZ arrived in Norfolk 18 Septmeber 1969. The USNS MULLER arrived in Norfolk on 16 October and completed deactivation on 28 October 1969.

The USS GEORGETOWN, in port Norfolk since 7 MAR 1969 completed deactivation on 19 December 1969.

The USS OXFORD and JAMESTOWN commenced deactivation in Yokosuka, Japan on 4 November. Since these two ships were stricken from the Navy ledger, and the ships were to be stripped for resale no formal deactivation notices were forwarded.

The USS BELMONT the last to commence stripping, completed deactivation in January 1970.

(41) DEPSECDEF Memo 920425 dtd 01 October 1969, [redacted]

[redacted]