

USS HUGH PURVIS (DD- 709)
FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

3 October 1961

Dear PURVIS Family and Friends:

As our long deployment nears its end, we think it appropriate to record for posterity a resume of all the highlights of the cruise as well as a list of the ports we visited.

The ship got underway for her big deployment about noon on 8 March 1961, following a three week period alongside USS CASCADE (AD-16) in Newport. For two days she steamed south toward Bermuda and on 10 March rendezvoused with Charleston-based Destroyer Squadron Four, composed of five other destroyers. Steaming in company with USS NANTAHALA (AO-60), the squadron set course for Gibraltar, fueling every third day and conducting as many communications, CIC, and maneuvering drills as possible in preparation for joining the SIXTH Fleet. While refueling on 13 March, PURVIS six-member band made its first appearance and received compliments from the oiler and the squadron commander. It was a fine and encouraging start for the band, which was to become well known in the Mediterranean as the only destroyer band in the Fleet.

The task group transited the Strait of Gibraltar on 18 March and from there steamed toward Pollensa Bay, Mallorca, where the turnover was to take place. PURVIS relieved USS MOALE (DD-693) on 19 March and took her place in the U. S. SIXTH Fleet. She departed Pollensa with Destroyer Division FOUR TWO on the afternoon of 19 March, and headed for Istanbul, Turkey. The ships refueled from USS SALAMONIE (AO-26) in the Aegean Sea on 23 March, rendezvoused afterward with USS SHANGRILA (CVA- 38), USS LITTLE ROCK (CLG-4), and Destroyer Division 322 and commenced the transit of the Dardanelles, The Sea of Marmara was reached by 1900, and on the morning of 24 March. Task Unit 60.2.1 arrived in Istanbul, the first liberty port in the Mediterranean.

PURVIS left Istanbul alone on 27 March to visit Alexandroupolis, Greece, a small port in the northern Aegean, The ship arrived the next morning, 28 March, and as she was the first U. S. Navy ship to visit in almost a year, she had the red carpet rolled out for her. The townspeople were very cordial and the entire crew enjoyed the short visit. The band played several nights in the city square, and was enthusiastically received. A reception was held on board for local officials on the first night and a return reception held ashore the following evening. There were visitors to the ship every day and Boy Scouts and orphans were entertained aboard on the last day. When the ship left Alexandroupolis on 31 March, it was with the happy feeling that she had made many friends ashore during the visit.

Task Unit 60.2.1 rendezvoused again in the Aegean Sea on 31 March and commenced steaming toward the island of Rhodes, arriving there the next day. The entire crew was impressed with the beauty of Rhodes and it was a pleasant port in which to spend Easter Sunday.

The task unit departed early on the morning of 4 April for PURVIS first period of fleet operations in the Mediterranean. Operations lasted from 4 - 8 April, and consisted of Anti-submarine warfare exercises with USS SEA OWL, (SS-405), anti-aircraft firing at a drone from LITTLE ROCK, plane guarding, refueling, and formation steaming. PURVIS was detached about noon on 7 April to proceed to Augusta Bay, Sicily, arriving the next morning for a five day up-keep period.

Leaving Augusta on 13 April, the ship rendezvoused with the USS CONE (DD-866) and USS JOHNSTON (DD-821) and commenced a four-day NATO exercise. It consisted of anti-submarine warfare operations with friendly submarines and PURVIS first anti-air warfare exercise. PURVIS was released with USS SPRINGFIELD (CLG-7) and USS MANLEY (DD-940) early on 17 April to proceed to Beaulieu, France.

The ten days in Beaulieu were scheduled as a tender availability alongside USS SHENANDOAH (AD)-26, and the crew enjoyed it as the finest liberty port yet visited. PURVIS left France on 27 April and steamed independently to Naples, Italy, arriving the next day. It was the first of six visits to Naples but lasted only one day. On the 29th, Task Unit 60.2.9 got underway for a period of operations in the Ionian Sea. The task unit, including USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (CVA-42), transited the Straights of Messina during the night of 29 April and then proceeded to stations for the anti-air warfare exercise scheduled 30 April. Ships stayed on station through 2 May, PURVIS remaining with the carrier until released to proceed toward the Eastern Mediterranean. On 3 May, the ship conducted shore bombardment at barren and isolated Avgo Nisi Island in the Aegean Sea, and then proceeded to Beirut, Lebanon.

The visit to Beirut lasted from 5 - 9 May and it was here that PURVIS Goodwill Campaign got off to its big start. The crew collected \$200 and contributed the money to the Lebanese University for the use of a needy student during the autumn semester. The ship will learn later this fall the name of the student who received the assistance. The departure from Beirut on 9 May was accompanied by feeling of anticipation among the crew, because it was from here that the ship began ITS deployment to the Middle East Force, The transit of the Suez Canal was completed on 11 May and the ship relieved USS LAFFEY (DD-724) in Port Suez, Egypt the same day. Actually the Middle East deployment was largely uneventful and consisted mostly of slow, independent steaming between ports. The weather was very hot, especially in port and tropical routine was observed, the working day ending at 1300 each day. Entertainment during the deployment consisted of bridge, pinochle and cribbage tournaments, movies, and Sunday evening smokers on the fantail. The latter consisted of a meal cooked on the fantail followed by entertainment presented by one of the ships divisions. PURVIS steamed in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea), and the Persian Gulf and visited Massawa, Ethiopia, Djibouti, French Somaliland, Aden, Aden Protectorate,; Karachi, Pakistan; and Sitra, Bahrein Island. It was not with much regret that the ship arrived in Port Suez again on 22 June to be relieved by USS CONE (DD-866). The northbound transit of the Suez Canal was completed on the 24th, and from there the ship steamed to Athens, Greece, arriving on 25 June during the observance of Royal Hellenic Navy Week. The visit to Athens was especially pleasant for the Captain, because his wife, son, and daughter were there on tour. Otherwise,

however, the stay was uneventful as the ship (was) overshadowed by the very impressive Greek Fleet. Nevertheless, Athens was enjoyed as a good liberty port, especially after those of the Middle East. The ship departed 1 July and arrived in Naples again on 3 July.

Independence Day was celebrated in Naples, and on 5 July Task Unit 60.2.1 was underway for another period of operations. This one consisted of refueling, anti-aircraft firing at both sleeves and drones, plane guarding with ROOSEVELT, and the first major underway replenishment. The replenishment ships were an oiler, a stores ship, an ammunition ship and a reefer. During this operation period, PURVIS had aboard two officers and four enlisted men from the Royal Hellenic Navy for a training cruise. The Greeks had come aboard in Athens.

On 10 July the task unit arrived in Genoa, Italy for a week Long visit and it was here that the Greek navy men left the ship and PURVIS acquired ten U. S. Midshipmen and one Italian Midshipman. They were aboard for the next operating period, which commenced 17 July and consisted of more anti-aircraft gunnery, more refueling, more plane guarding, more exercises of all kinds, and more formation steaming. On 22 July, the task unit entered Naples harbor to transfer the U. S. Midshipmen who were about to return home and receive more who had just arrived in the Mediterranean. Underway again the same day, the ships steamed all night and arrived in an isolated anchorage in Sardinia the following morning. Numerous meetings were held, and the newly arrived Midshipmen were welcomed by Commander SIXTH Fleet himself. The departure from the anchorage was of a practice emergency nature, opposed by friendly submarines.

Soon after the sortie, PURVIS and USS MITSCHER (DL-2) were released to proceed back to Naples for a tender availability, again alongside USS SHENANDOAH (AD-26). That period was from 24 July to 7 August. Task Group 60.1 had arrived on 29 July and all got underway on the 7th for another period of operations.

Commencing with anti-aircraft gunnery on the 7th and PURVIS second major underway replenishment on the 8th, this operation period was to be considerably different from those before it. The ten U. S. Midshipmen were transferred to USS HOLDER (DDE-819) after the replenishment was completed and then PURVIS was released with USS CONE (DD-866) and USS ELLISON (DD-864) for surface gunnery exercises with USS PETREL (ASR-14) towing a sled. Afterwards, since CONE had an engineering casualty, Commanding Officer of PURVIS became Commander - Task Unit 60.5.1 and Commander Task Group 61.3. PURVIS and ELLISON, as Task Unit 60.5.1, proceeded to Cape Teulada at the southern tip of Sardinia and there joined the amphibs, becoming Task Group 61.3. Their mission was shore bombardment in support of an exercise landing by the Marines of Task Force 62.

The two ships conducted simulated firing all day on the 9th and were joined by USS DEWEY (DLG-14) that evening. All three ships conducted simulated firing on the 10th. Getting underway at 1800 on the 10th, Task Unit 61.3 proceeded to rendezvous with USS MISSISSINAWA (AO-144) to refuel at 0300 and then return to Cape Teulada for actual shore bombardment firing on 11 August. ELLISON departed about, noon that day and PURVIS and DEWEY got underway in the late afternoon in order to arrive in Ajaccio, Corsica the next morning.

The visit to Ajaccio from 12 - 17 August coincided with that city's celebration of the 192nd anniversary of Napoleon's birth there. The two ships bands, together comprising twelve members, participated in the festivities by leading the big parade through the city streets on the last night of the celebration. The band made a striking hit with the local population and largely made the visit the success it was. In addition, many of the local townspeople visited the two U. S. Navy ships and a large reception aboard the DEWEY on the last evening in port ended the visit on just the right note.

DEWEY and PURVIS got underway on 17 August and participated in another week-long period of operations, including anti-submarine warfare exercises, refueling and anti-aircraft firing. PURVIS acted as rescue destroyer with USS INTREPID (CVA-11) for three of the seven days since other destroyers were having engineering difficulties. She entered Naples, Italy on the 24th in company with Task Unit 60.2.1.

The Naples stay was to have been through 5 September, but Purvis got underway 28 and 29 August to act as rescue destroyer with USS INTREPID again, since another destroyer had an engineering casualty. INTREPID lost an aircraft on the evening of the 28th and PURVIS and one other destroyer searched until the afternoon of the next day with no success. The ship returned to Naples late on the 29th and two very successful ship's parties were held at the Chief Petty Officers' Club in Naples on the 30 and 31 August.

The Italian Midshipmen who had been aboard since the middle of July left the ship in Naples and four officers of the Federal German navy came aboard prior to departure on 5 September. Until the 12th, PURVIS participated in SIXTH Fleet exercises, consisting of the last major replenishment at sea, another anti-air warfare exercise, more anti-submarine exercises, and more plane guarding. On the 8th, the ship acted as drone recovery ship while the SIXTH Fleet Flagship, USS SPRINGFIELD (CLG-7), conducted actual TERRIER missile firing exercises. The Federal German Navy Officers were transferred by helicopter to USS DUPONT (DD-941) on the 10th.

The last major operations' were NATO's big Fall Exercises, CHECKMATE I and CHECKMATE II, lasting from 12 - 18 September. The first consisted only of plane guarding for PURVIS, but during the second the ship for the first time had her own station in a major anti-air warfare exercise which lasted three days. On the evening of the 18th, Destroyer Squadron FOUR rendezvoused in the southern Ionian Sea and commenced steaming toward Polensa Bay, Mallorca, arriving on 21 September.

That same day, Destroyer Squadron FOUR was relieved by Destroyer Squadron TWO, PURVIS turning over to USS PIERCE (DD-753). In the afternoon both squadrons got underway and Destroyer Squadron FOUR began the long trip home. Gibraltar was transited in the wee hours on the 23rd and the rest of that day was spent fueling at Roto, Spain. The entire squadron plus the USS NANTAHALA (AO-60) steamed west from 23 September to 2 October, when Purvis was detached to proceed

independently to Newport. During her seven months she had visited the following ports:

Istanbul, Turkey	24 March - 27 March
Alexandroupolis, Greece	28 March - 31 March
Rhodes, Greece	1 April - 4 April
August Bay, Sicily	8 April - 13 April
Beaulieu, France	17 April - 27 April
Naples, Italy	28 April - 29 April
Beirut, Lebanon	5 May - 9 May
Port Suez, United Arab Republic	11 May
Massawa, Ethiopia	15 May - 18 May
Djibouti, French Somaliland	22 May - 25 May
Aden, Aden Protectorate	16 May - 29 May
Karachi, Pakistan	2 June - 5 June
Sitra, Bahrein Island	8 June - 10 June
Aden, Aden Protectorate	15 June - 16 June
Port Suez, United Arab Republic	22 June
Athens, Greece	25 June - 1 July
Naples, Italy	3 July - 5 July
Genoa, Italy	10 July - 17 July
Naples, Italy	22 July
Naples, Italy	24 July - 7 August
Ajaccio, Corsica	12 August - 17 August
Naples, Italy	24 August - 28 August
Naples, Italy	29 August - 5 September
Rota, Spain	23 September

October 4th is the long-awaited date of arrival. It has been a fast-moving and satisfying experience to be part of the SIXTH FLEET, but all hands are more than ready for the return to home and families.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNED HERE BY

G. S. DAVIS, Jr.
Commander,
U. S. Navy
Commanding Officer

(Microsoft Word automatically reformatted this document from the original, which was scanned in and processed by optical character recognition software. The original wording was left intact. EES)