

As the war game gathered momentum, the Otago pulled alongside Benn to refuel. What could have been a routine replenishment turned into a good show. Otago crewmembers, dressed in the traditional costume of New Zealand's Maori tribesmen, performed a ceremonial dance for Big Benn on top of Otago's bridge. Later Captain R. T. Hale, the frigate's commander, presented the sacred spear, Taiaha, to Rear Admiral Moran.

According to Maori tradition, the Taiaha is given to a visiting native after a ceremonial dance to determine if the guest is a friend or a foe. During the ceremony, the dancer spins and twirls the spear no more than 15 or 20 feet away from the guests, keeping his eyes on the visitor at all times. When the dance is completed, the Taiaha is laid upon the ground in such a fashion that the visitor can pick it up. If he picks it up, he is considered a foe of the host native and may strike the host; if he does not pick it up, he is considered a friend but is given the Taiaha anyway. Apparently Admiral Moran made the right move.

The stage was set. Bennington passed her CRE and time was taken by the crew to enjoy its first taste of the lush 50th State. Pearl Harbor's tragic past was evident all around as Bennington maneuvered through the narrow channel surrounding Ford Island to her Merry Point berth. Dec. 7, 1941, was relived by some as the ship passed rusted smoke stacks and the sunken hull beneath the Arizona Memorial. Benn's upper decks were silent as men saluted in tribute to the lost sailors of the ill-fated battleship.

The ship remained in Hawaii for five days as some men enjoyed their first stay and others struck out for well-known spots. On liberty Benn men could be found sun bathing on the white

