

necks crained, as sailors tried to see what this mysterious visitor looked like.

The 10-day exercise came to a close as Bennington entered her second Japanese port; Sasebo. Sasebo became Bennington's home away from home with 20 days spent in this port during two visits. Within this time Benn men grew accustomed to the traditions of Japan, mastered a few Japanese expressions and were able to see many of the sights in and around Sasebo.

During Bennington's first Sasebo stay, she got her first and last look of the Yorktown, Benn's Yankee Station predecessor, just prior to her return to the States. On June 19, two days before steaming south to the Tonkin Gulf, Bennington officially relieved the Yorktown of her Vietnam duties.

Bennington assumed her first vigil on Yankee Station June 25 for 23 days. New jobs faced the anti-submarine carrier in the alert for submarines, Bennington undertook logistics, spotting and surface-subsurface plotting.

With HC-7 Detachment 110 aboard, Benn became the center of logistics in the Tonkin Gulf. Mail, cargo and personnel were on the move constantly between the ships, and it was Benn's job to keep this flow moving efficiently. Det. 110, known as the "Tonkin Gulf Taxi Service," relied on Benn's own HS-3 to help on extra heavy days. When Det. 110 wasn't playing taxi to the fleet, it was busy on search and rescue missions. Two helicopters of the squadron were on 15-minute alert 24 hours a day and it usually took them less than that to respond to a distress call from a downed pilot.

Bennington also doubled as an oiler for her escort destroyers. "The smoking lamp is out except in specially authorized spaces while transferring black oil"

