



was an all too familiar announcement over Benn's loud speaker system. During an average week Benn refueled six destroyers and received oil from at least one tanker.

Benn's planes kept a 24-hour watch while on Station. Every four hours the flight deck was a humdrum of revving engines and catapults being tripped. Finally, the last S-2E would be airborne and it would be time for a short break before the next cycle of air operations would begin. But the short rest didn't begin until the aircraft were lowered to the hangar deck. Then the wait for another launch found flight deck personnel catching moments of rest or going to chow.

The flight deck might have been calm during the interim periods, but the hangar deck was busy. Aircraft were being checked and re-checked day and night to keep them in top running condition for the heavy demands of Tonkin gulf operations. While in the heart of the ship, the engineers kept the ship ready for any demand the Captain might make, and the "Blackshoes" kept the ship supplied with goods, plotted all activity in the Gulf and kept the ship's paperwork up to date.

The first line period made veterans out of Benn men, and caused the ship to be an extremely popular ship among other ships in the Gulf. Messages, praising Benn for its fine job on the line, allowed the crew to enjoy the relaxation of a boxing smoker while enroute to Singapore.

July 21 will be remembered by more than half of Benn's crew. Pollywogs lined up dreading what they were facing. Shillslaphs, coffins, electric chairs, stockades, barbers and dentists eagerly awaited the Pollywogs. Clad in pirate garb Shellbacks administered the initiation as