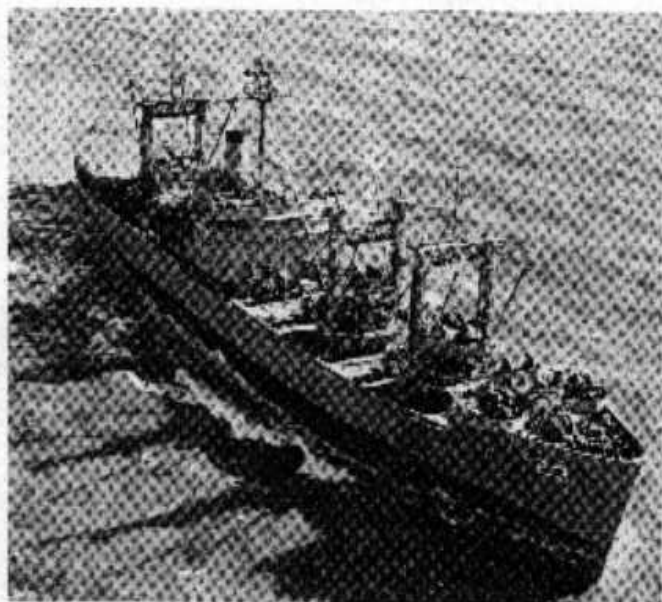


CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY



**UNITED STATES SHIP NITRO
AE-23**

**BETHLEHEM STEEL SHIPBUILDING DIVISION
EAST BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

6 AUGUST 1971

PROGRAM

U.S. NAVY BAND

ARRIVAL OF OFFICIAL PARTY

NATIONAL ANTHEM

INVOCATION

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ROBERT E. GORDON, CHC, U.S. NAVY

ADDRESS

CAPTAIN W.H. PATILLO, U.S. NAVY
COMMANDER SERVICE SQUADRON TWO

REMARKS AND READING OF ORDERS

CAPTAIN THOMAS HOWE, U.S. NAVY

READING OF ORDERS AND RELIEVING OF COMMAND

COMMANDER HARRY L. DAVIS, U.S. NAVY

BENEDICTION

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ROBERT E. GORDON, CHC, U.S. NAVY

CAPTAIN THOMAS HOWE, U.S. NAVY



Captain Howe was born in December 1924. He was commissioned and graduated from the University of Virginia in January 1946. Following duty in USS CLEVELAND CL-55, USS FRASER DM-24, USS TACONIC AGC-17, USS GRAMPUS SS-523, and USS POMPON SSR-267, he was assigned to the Bureau of Ships for a shore duty tour. Following that were tours as Executive Officer, USS BLACKFIN SS-322, Commanding Officer, USS CUTLASS and the special Projects Office in Washington D.C. After two years on CINCLANT Joint Staff (Polaris Operations) he commanded Submarine Division 52 in San Diego; then served as Chief Staff Officer, Commander Submarine Flotilla Seven at Yokosuka, Japan. He next commanded USS MAZAMA AE-9 until it was decommissioned and then assumed command of NITRO in April 1970.

Captain Howe is married to the former Mary J. O'Leary of Newton, Massachusetts. They have five children.

COMMANDER HARRY L. DAVIS, U.S. NAVY



Harry Leland Davis was born 18 February 1927 at Fresno, California. He began his naval career in March 1944 when he enlisted the first time. In 1955, as a Chief Electrician's Mate, he was selected for Officer Candidate training at Newport, Rhode Island.

Upon completion of Officer Candidate School in September 1955, he was commissioned as Ensign and assigned to the submarine USS GRAMPUS SS-523 as Communications and Gunnery Officer. In March 1957, Lieutenant J.G. Davis went to USS REDFIN SS-272 and served as Weapons and Engineering Officer. As a Lieutenant, he reported for duty to the Precommissioning Detail of USS ROBERT E. LEE SSBN-601. During his four years in LEE, Lieutenant Davis served as Supply Officer, "A" Division Officer, and Navigator. In 1964, he was assigned to the staff of the Naval Guided Missile School at Dam Neck, Virginia. His duties there were Fleet Ballistic Missile Navigation Officer and Officer in Charge of Fleet Ballistic Missile Navigation Training. In February 1966, Lieutenant Commander Davis served as Executive Officer of USS BASHAW AGSS-241. He was ordered to the Staff of Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier in September 1967 as Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer and Special Operations Officer. In October 1969, Commander Davis reported to the Precommissioning Detail of USS DETROIT AOE-4 as the Prospective Executive Officer. Upon commissioning of DETROIT on 28 March 1970, he served as Executive Officer until 15 June 1971. Commander Davis is married to the former Miss Martha Porter Harmon of Onley, Virginia. The Davis's are presently living in Newport, Rhode Island.

USS NITRO (AE-23) is the first of the modern Nitro class ammunition ships. The keel was laid down at the Bethlehem Steel Sparrows Point Shipyard, Inc., Sparrows Point, Maryland, on 20 May 1957. Nitro was christened on 25 June 1958 by Mrs. Randolph M. Pate, wife of the then Commandant of the Marine Corps.

In assuming the name "NITRO", the present USS NITRO fell heir to the proud traditions established by her predecessor, USS NITRO (AE-2) which was decommissioned in 1945 following more than 25 years of service. During World War II, NITRO (AE-2) supplied ammunition to units in the Caribbean, assisted in the invasion of Southern France, and reamed the invasion fleets during the attacks of the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

Ammunition ships have traditionally been named after volcanoes or terms associated with ammunition. It was therefore fitting to name this new ship Nitro after the ingredient in much of our conventional explosives; but it was made more appropriate by the fine combat record established by the original USS NITRO.

Following delivery of NITRO to the Navy at Norfolk, commissioning ceremonies were held on 1 May 1959. After a near record outfitting time, NITRO loaded ammunition for the first time and headed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for extensive underway training. And by August 1959 she had completed Final Acceptance Trials.

In February 1960, NITRO deployed for the first time to the Mediterranean. In September, there followed a 10 week yard period in Boston, three weeks of underway training, followed by a seven month Mediterranean deployment. After operations with the Second Fleet and a tender availability in the spring of 1962, NITRO left for an operational and goodwill visit to Northern Europe. In the fall of 1962, NITRO engaged in the quarantine of Cuba. Another MED deployment followed from February to September 1963. After receiving the Battle Efficiency "E" in November, NITRO was outfitted with a prototype FAST (Fast Automatic Shuttle Transfer) system.

NITRO travelled once again to Guantanamo Bay in March 1964 and departed in July for the Mediterranean where she participated in the Cyprus Patrol. The ship returned to Davisville in January 1965. November brought another cruise with the Sixth Fleet that

In May 1966, USS NITRO was placed in the care of Maryland Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. in Baltimore for a major conversion and overhaul period. This time four FAST stations were installed and a helicopter flight deck over the fantail was added to provide vertical replenishment capabilities.

After refresher training in Cuba in early 1968, she conducted an evaluation of vertical replenishment operations and once again deployed to the Mediterranean for six months.

Following a brief stay at home, NITRO left for the MED in July 1969, spending six months there before returning just in time for Christmas.

February of 1970 found NITRO again traveling to the Caribbean. While participating in a RIMEX there, NITRO carried out the largest transfer of missiles using the STREAM, (formerly FAST) system in the history of the U.S. Navy. Just prior to a later RIMEX in June, NITRO spent two weeks of Refresher Training in Guantanamo Bay.

After a load-out in October 1970, NITRO departed again for the Mediterranean, returning more than six months later on 5 May 1971. The ship arrived in Boston 27 July to commence a four month regular overhaul.

COMMANDING OFFICERS OF USS NITRO (AE-23)

Capt. W.E. Hall, USN	May 59 - Apr 60
Capt. T.J. Walker, USN	Apr 60 - Oct 60
Capt. D. Cone, USN	Oct 60 - Dec 61
Capt. E.L. Dashiell, Jr., USN	Dec 61 - Dec 62
Capt. R.W. Hyde, USN	Dec 62 - Dec 63
Capt. G.L. Cassell, USN	Dec 63 - Sep 64
Capt. A.L. Stickles, II, USN	Sep 64 - May 66
Lcdr G.M. Hatcher, USN	May 66 - Aug 67
Capt. J.M. Snyder, Jr., USN	Aug 67 - Feb 69
Capt. R.S. Smith, USN	Feb 69 - Apr 70
Capt. T. Howe, USN	Apr 70 - Aug 71
Cdr H.L. Davis, USN	Aug 71 -



COMMODORE, NITRO MEN, GUESTS AND FRIENDS.....

THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF THE CHANGE OF COMMAND

FUNCTION IS TO INFORM SHIP'S COMPANY THAT THE TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SHIP IS BEING LIFTED FROM ONE OFFICER AND PLACED ON THE SHOULDERS OF A NEW CAPTAIN.

CONSEQUENTLY THEN, MY REMARKS ARE DIRECTED TO NITRO.

YOU KNOW YOU HAVE TURNED IN AN OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE - NITRO'S REPUTATION CONFIRMS THIS. THAT TAKE'S A LOT OF WILL POWER IN THIS AGE OF MEDIOCRITY AND ANTI-MILITARISM.

(1)

YOU WILL HAVE TO CONTINUE THAT WILL POWER UNTIL THE TV AND PRESS NEWSMAN AGAIN REALIZE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PUBLIC SERVICE IN A DEMOCRACY IS SECURITY. FOR IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO SECURE YOUR LIBERTIES, THE REST IS TRIVIA.

SO, SPENDING SOME PORTION OF YOUR LIFE IN THE SMALL GROUP OF MEN WHO MAINTAIN THE SECURITY OF OUR LIBERTIES IS GOING TO CONTINUE TO BE FRUSTRATING FOR SOME TIME, BUT AMERICANS CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS. AMERICAN CITIZENS CAN'T PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON THEIR OWN SECURITY AND THEN FAIL TO INSIST THAT MILITARY PEOPLE

(2)

BE TREATED WITH DECENCY AND RESPECT THROUGHOUT OUR SOCIETY. YOU YOURSELVES MUST REMEMBER AND REMIND OTHERS THAT IT IS ONLY WITHIN THE PERIMETER MANNED BY OUR ARMED FORCES THAT ALL OF US ARE ABLE TO LIVE OUR LIVES IN COMFORT AND FREEDOM, TO PURSUE HAPPINESS EACH IN OUR OWN WAY.

BUT IN THE MEANTIME REMEMBER THAT THROUGHOUT HISTORY, NOT JUST AMERICAN HISTORY, TIME AFTER TIME IT IS JUST A FEW, LIKE YOURSELVES WHO HAVE MADE THE SACRIFICES, THAT INITIALLY SECURE LIBERTIES OR EMANCIPATION FOR THEIR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN AND HAVE

(3)

BESS CONSTANTLY VIGILANT TO MAINTAIN THEIR FREEDOMS.

I WISH YOU CONTINUED SUCCESS WITH CDR. DAVIS AT THE COMN.