



USS NASSAU (LHA-4)
FPO NEW YORK 09557

IN REPLY REFER TO:
LHA4/00:jl
27 June 1981

Dear Families and Friends,

I expect you wonder why I stopped writing, especially after so many of you sent letters to me expressing appreciation for my attempts to keep you informed. The answer is simple--when you can't answer even that most basic question "When are you going to bring _____ back to me?" it's almost impossible to write.

But now all that has changed. As I write this letter we're heading at full speed in your direction. By the time this gets into the postal system, you, of course, will know all about our homecoming and will have heard directly from your Nassau man about the things we did (and why we did them) during our extended absence. The purpose of writing now is not to tell you about those last weeks in the Mediterranean but instead to look ahead and to describe our schedule for these next few months so that you can know what to expect. Starting with our three week period inport in Norfolk immediately after tying up it looks like this:

1-26 July	Inport, Norfolk
27-30 July	Engineering training, Virginia Capes
31 July-2 August	Inport, Norfolk
3-6 August	At anchor (no liberty) for ammunition on loading
7-9 August	Inport, Norfolk
10-20 August	Underway for Amphibious Training at Littlecreek and vicinity Onslow Bay, North Carolina
21-31 August	Inport, Norfolk
1-3 September	Engineering Trials, Virginia Capes (Propulsion Examining Board)
4 Sept-25 October	Inport, Norfolk
26 Oct-17 November	Caribbean Operations
18 Dec-24 January	Inport, Norfolk
27 January 1982	Underway for the Mediterranean (Return 29 June)

Somewhere in that schedule, perhaps on the 4th of September, I still hope to be able to have a "family cruise" for Nassau families and friends. Such an event would include getting underway at about 9:30 a.m., steaming out through Hampton Roads and Lynhaven Roads into the Atlantic and then returning to tie up again by 3:30 p.m. We would try to schedule helicopter and boating demonstrations for you (and of course a special "picnic" lunch) but the day would be primarily one of relaxation and a chance to see where your Nassau man works and what he does. (If we can get it into our schedule, I'll make sure that you're given plenty of advance warning.)

And now back to these last 10 weeks for a moment. While everyone's attention has been focused on Nassau over 5,000 miles away, back on the home front some really fine work has been going on. Our two Ombudsmen, Lyn Louk and Anita Williams, have done a magnificent job during our absence. They

have had to handle the very worst situation any Ombudsman can be faced with: that of trying to answer questions concerning a Ship's schedule when absolutely no-one (not even the JCS in this case) knew the answers. They're the ones, too, who sent the telegrams informing concerned fathers of the birth of their sons and daughters and, of course, they kept the information tape up to date and answered the phones hour after hour. And they had help! Sharon Alderman helped put out the Ombudsman letter, Pat Warren (and so many others of the Enlisted Wives Club) pitched in whenever needed. To all of you who were concerned and loving and willing, you have our gratitude as well as our admiration.

I'd like to close this letter now with some quotes from the Admirals that Nassau works for so that you can better appreciate just how fine a job your men have done and can see just why I'm so proud of them:

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"When your deployment grew longer, because of unforeseen tension in the Middle East, you were prepared to meet the challenge. You can be rightfully proud of your professional performance in all your actions. You are well on your way to building in Nassau a proud spirit that will endure throughout her career of service."

Vice Admiral J. D. JOHNSON, USN
Commander, Naval Surface Forces,
U. S. Atlantic Fleet

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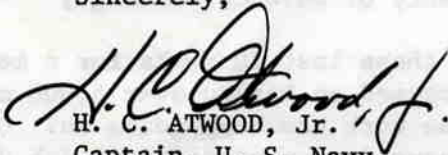
"Enthusiasm, flexibility, dedication and professional pride are the characteristics of performance I have come to expect of Nassau. Perhaps the toughest job to accomplish is the one with an open-ended contract. Your superb performance in the face of an uncertain end-date has been inspiring. You should all take special pride in your dedicated response to contingency operations. I am especially proud of the Nassau families at home who have also been performing superbly."

Rear Admiral W. C. HAMM, Jr., USN
Commander, Amphibious Group TWO

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As I said in my last letter, "separations aren't fun but sometimes service to our country asks for a little bit extra from all of us." We come home to you now proud that we did well and proud of you for the support you gave us.

Sincerely,


H. C. ATWOOD, Jr.
Captain, U. S. Navy
Commanding Officer