Chapter 6

The Cold War

1946–1949

The problems of demobilization, organizational readjustment, and the tense beginning of the Cold War highlighted the years following World War II. Six years of waging the bloodiest war hitherto endured by man had exhausted the warring powers and brought the wartime alliance system to collapse. Two superpowers emerged into the ensuing void, the United States–led Western alliance and the Soviet-dominated Eastern Bloc, and their struggle for world mastery overshadowed the second half of the century.

American demobilization proceeded rapidly. Sailors and Marines placed ships and submarines into "mothballs" and aircraft into storage, even as shore stations at home and abroad deactivated. Within a year after the end of hostilities, the on-board figures for the men and women who comprised naval aviation fell to a quarter of the peak wartime strength. Only a skeleton of the force remained to carry out the new operational demands that arose.

The unsettled international situation raised familiar problems for the Navy. Fleet elements assigned to areas for the purpose of supporting occupation forces began to receive the additional yet familiar task of supporting the nation's policy in areas on opposite sides of the world. A task force built around an operational average of one to two carriers sailed into the Mediterranean, and as the years passed, the force became a fixture there. A similar force in the western Pacific provided the same tangible symbol of U.S. might and determination to support the free peoples of the world.

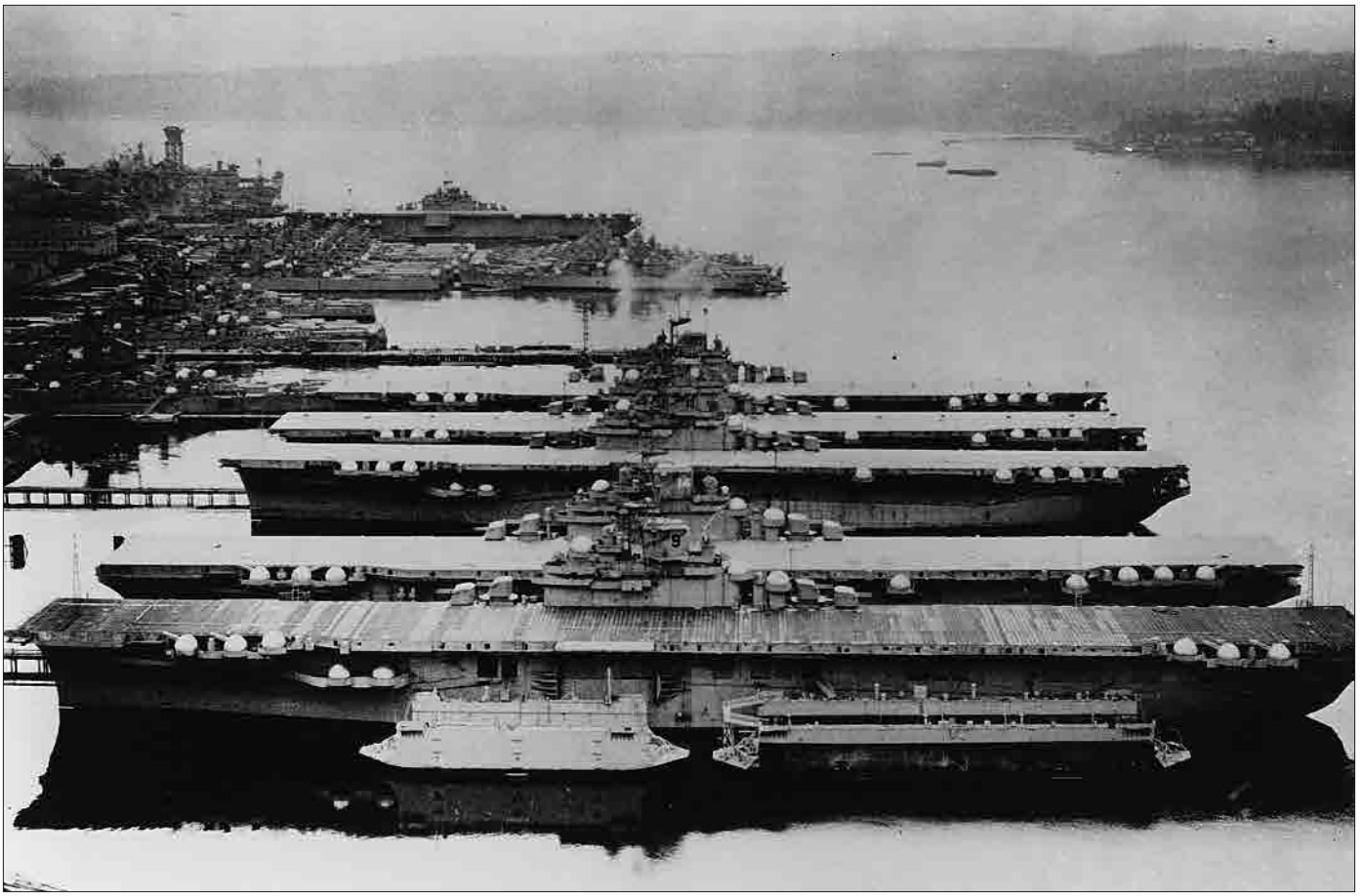
The organizational readjustment of naval aviation took place at several levels. At the upper echelons, problems ensued from the adjustment of a new departmental organization formed by what was, in effect, a compromise agreement. At the bureau and office level, the Navy dealt with the problems related to reducing staffs and realigning the functional elements of technical and administrative units to meet new requirements.

The fleet experienced problems of transition, partly in size, but particularly in regard to weapons and tactics developed as a result of combat experience or from technological advances. The introduction of jet aircraft posed special problems for carrier operations, and their employment renewed the dilemma that, as navies developed increased capability aircraft, they encountered the additional challenge of finding the means of taking them to sea.

These changes occurred at an ever accelerating rate. Technological and scientific advances built rapidly upon each other, and newer and greater advances superseded existing designs. New concepts included guided missiles, which had been introduced during World War II but were still in their embryonic development and, therefore, required additional efforts in all areas—from design through operational deployment. The need to complete this transition without a temporary loss of combat effectiveness increased the degree of difficulty.

A constant readjustment in planning, the continual adaptation of force organization, and the repeated revision of tactical doctrine highlighted this period. Urgency existed, largely accelerated by an appreciation of the destructive power that had been unleashed in the New Mexico desert in 1945 by the explosion of the atomic bomb. In other respects, however, the period appeared much like a repetition of the 1920s. Leaders and journalists clamored for a separate air force and for a merger of the services, which occurred by unifying them first, in 1947, under the National Military Establishment and then, in 1949, under the Department of Defense. The study of aviation and of the national air policy by a presidential commission and a congressional committee proved reminiscent of the Morrow Board and Lampert Committee of 1925. Despite infighting, the services reluctantly agreed on their respective missions and functions.

The armed forces also disputed their respective roles as they sought sufficient shares of a decreasing budget,



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Essex (CV 9)-class carriers mothballed at Puget Sound, Wash.

and their chiefs raised old charges of duplication. Critics of naval power renewed their declaration of navies as obsolete in the atomic era, and they shifted their derision from battleships to aircraft carriers by citing the ships' expense and vulnerabilities. Opponents claimed that the capabilities of aircraft carriers to perform atomic missions duplicated effort and that their value for conventional warfighting was too limited to warrant continued existence. Those who supported carriers retaliated with criticism of the Strategic Air Command's Convair B-36 long-range bombers as being equally vulnerable, expensive, and unable to fulfill their allotted roles in national defense.

During the height of this controversy, Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson canceled *United States* (CVA 58), designed to carry Navy long-range attack planes, while under construction. Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan resigned in protest. Journalists labeled this "The Revolt of the Admirals," even as the Air Force publicly attempted to tell the Navy how to carry out its mission and what tools the sea service needed to accomplish its tasks. Congressional hearings ended the dispute. The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 generated more immediate problems, but provided a greater national appreciation of the necessity for adequate military forces in an era when communist aggression endangered the survival of the free world.

1946

2 JANUARY • Fleet Air Wing 17 was disestablished in Japan.

26 JANUARY • The Naval Aviation Ordnance Test Station was established at NAAS Chincoteague, Va., under the cognizance of the Bureau of Ordnance and under the air station for administration and logistic support. The establishment order also provided for the transfer of all Bureau of Ordnance guided missile test facilities and staff from Johnsville, Pa., to perform tests and modifications as necessary to develop aviation ordnance and guided missiles at the new location.

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Carrier qualification trials of jet and piston engine–propelled FR-1 Fireballs take place on board *Ranger* (CV 4), May 1945.

1 FEBRUARY • A major reorganization of the Bureau of Aeronautics aligned the technical divisions into two groups—Research Development and Engineering and Material and Services—according to function. An additional assistant chief was established over each group and the former assistant chief, and their staff divisions strengthened by the reorganization and their title of deputy and assistant chief.

1 MARCH • *Midway* (CVB 41), Rear Adm. John H. Cassady commanding, sailed from Norfolk, Va., for Operation Frostbite— weather tests. From 7 to 22 March, the task force operated in the Davis Strait, off the coast of Labrador, and above the Arctic Circle. The expedition carried out flight operations with World War II–type aircraft, newer F8F Bearcats, the combination prop-and-jet FR-1 Fireballs, and HNS-1 Hoverfly helicopters.

2 MARCH • Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz established an aircraft storage program

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The F8F Bearcat was designed as an interceptor.

to stockpile up to 6,000 aircraft of operational types against future needs, together with the preparation of an additional 360 F6F-5 Hellcats for future conversion to drones.

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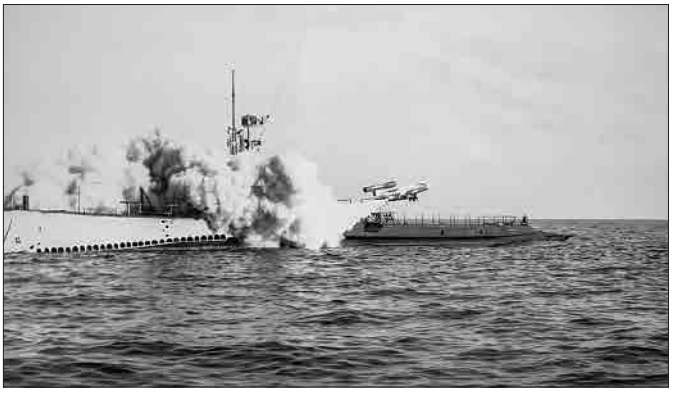
An F6F-5 Hellcat (BuNo 94409) launches a Tiny Tim rocket during testing at NAF China Lake, Calif., 6 November 1945.



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Submarine *Carbonero* (SS 337) launches a Loon guided missile adapted from the German V-1 rocket, 1949.

5 MARCH • Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal approved the conversion of two submarines into guided-missile launching vessels. The two later selected for this conversion were *Carbonero* (SS 337) and *Cusk* (SS 348).

7 MARCH • The Chief of Naval Operations directed the adoption of ground-controlled approach equipment as the standard blind landing system for the Navy.

11 MARCH • A modification of the class designation of naval aircraft eliminated the VB and VT used for bomber and torpedo aircraft, and created VA to identify aircraft with a primary mission of attacking surface targets. This change was responsible for the subsequent redesignation of BT2D and BTM aircraft as AD and AM, respectively.

12 MARCH • In a reorientation and consolidation of Navy guided-missile developments, the Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz directed the discontinuance of the development of Glombs, Gorgon II-Cs, and Little Joes; limiting Gargoyles, Gorgon II-As, Gorgon III-As, and Doves to test and research vehicles; the continuance

of Loons as launching test vehicles and possible interim weapons; the continuance of Kingfishers, Bumblebees, and Larks as high-priority missiles, and the completion of SWOD (Special Weapons Ordnance Device) Mark 9 Bats.

15 MARCH • The Bureau of Aeronautics chief formally proposed to the commanding general of the USAAF the establishment of a joint Army-Navy project to develop an earth satellite.

15 MARCH • Coast Guard aircraft scouted for ice and determined the limits of the ice field from the air during the first Coast Guard aerial patrols of the International Ice Patrol through 27 July 1946.

25 MARCH • The first twin-engine XHJD-1 helicopter, BuNo 43318, made a hovering flight. McDonnell Aircraft Corp. designed the helicopter for experimental use in a flight development program, and for tactical use in utility and air-sea rescue operations.

3 APRIL • Douglas received a contract for the design and construction of the XF3D-1 night fighter.

15 MAY • The designation of patrol squadrons reverted to their prewar status and changed back from VPB to VP.

21 MAY • Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz outlined a program for the operational introduction of Bat missiles that called for their assignment to VP-104 in the Atlantic Fleet. He also directed the transfer to VP-104 of all PB4Y-2 Privateers already modified to operate Bats.

22 MAY • The initial operational tests of an XCF dunking sonar carried in an HO2S-1 concluded off NAS Key West, Fla. During three months of testing, Lt. Stewart R. Graham, USCG, and Ens. William H. Coffee, USCG, piloted the helicopter, and Lt. Cmdr. Roy Rather, J. J. Coop, and C. V. Scott operated the sonar. The XCF provided good sonic and supersonic listening ranges and a high degree of bearing accuracy against both conventional and snorkel-type submarines.

29 MAY • The Aeronautical Board acted upon a BUAER proposal for a joint Army-Navy earth satellite project by approving the establishment of an earth satellite subcommittee to coordinate projects already underway.

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In the emergent helicopter technologies of the mid- to late-1940s, the lone XHJD-1 with its lateral twin-rotor configuration was designed to compete with tandem rotor designs.

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The first production tailless F7U-1 Cutlass runs through its paces with the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Md., c. August 1950.

6 JUNE • A charter of the Secretaries of War and Navy created the Joint Research and Development Board for coordinating all research and development activities of joint interest to the two departments. Its several committees embraced aeronautics, atomic energy, electronics, geographical exploration, geophysical sciences, and guided missiles.

24 JUNE • North American Aviation, Inc. received a defense contract for the design and construction of three XAJ-1 aircraft, thereby beginning active development of a long-range carrier-based bomber capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

25 JUNE • The Navy issued a contract to Chance Vought for the development and construction of three tailless, high performance XF7U-1 carrier fighter prototypes powered by twin turbojet engines.

26 JUNE • The Aeronautical Board agreed unanimously on the adoption of the knot and the nautical mile by the USAAF and Navy as standard aeronautical units of speed and distance, and directed the specification of the use of the terms in all future procurement of air speed indicators, charts, related equipment, and future issues of applicable handbooks and technical orders.

1 JULY • Operation Crossroads began—a series of tests to determine the effects of atomic bombs on naval targets at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific. In the first—Test Able—a Boeing B-29 Superfortress dropped a Nagasaki-type bomb from 30,000 feet aimed at battleship *Nevada* (BB 36) centered amid 82 other ships of all classes anchored in the lagoon. The bomb missed its intended target, but the ensuing detonation sank five vessels outright and heavily damaged nine others.

On 25 July a shallow underwater burst, designated Test Baker, sent water nearly 6,000 feet into the air and raised the total number of vessels sunk directly or indirectly to 32. *Saratoga* (CV 3), with 19 years of active service, sank in shallow water and, on 28 August, *Independence* (CVL 22), which received severe damage and contamination that rendered her unfit for use, was decommissioned.

These tests had a broad national impact on the Navy and on naval aviation and made clear the importance of atomic weapons for control of the sea. In addition, the evaluations provided detailed data on the effects of atomic blasts and a sound technical basis for intensification of efforts to develop tactics and equipment to minimize the damage of such attacks against naval task forces.

1 JULY • The Naval Air Reserve Program was activated under the Naval Air Training Command with 21 reserve activities already in operation.

1 JULY • VX-3 was established at NAS New York, N.Y. The squadron studied and evaluated the adaptability of helicopters to naval purposes.

3 JULY • Fleet Air Wing 8 was disestablished at NAS Alameda, Calif.

11 JULY • To create clear-cut relationships for aircraft maintenance, Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz directed the disestablishment of all carrier aircraft service units (CASU) and other maintenance units, and their replacement by fleet aircraft service squadrons (FASRON) by 1 January. According to the aircraft types serviced, FASRONs comprised three kinds of squadrons. These new organizations were designed to promote higher standards, uniformity, and efficiency in aircraft maintenance.

13 JULY • Eight specially modified aircraft—two SOC-1 and one each SOC-2 and -3 Seagulls, three PBM-5 Mariners, and an HNS-1 Hoverfly—embarked on board seaplane tender *Norton Sound* (AV 11), netlayer *Whitewood* (AN 63), cargo ships *Alcona* (AK 157) and *Beltrami* (AK 162), and Coast Guard icebreaker *Northwind* (AG 278), at Norfolk, Va. The ships sailed to operating areas north of the Arctic Circle for cold weather testing designated Project Nanook. The aircraft scouted ahead of the ships for icebergs, pack ice, and other hazards to navigation, and conducted photoreconnaissance of the coastline. On 18 September, the vessels returned to Virginia waters.

21 JULY • In the first U.S. test of the adaptability of jet aircraft to shipboard operation, Lt. Cmdr. James J. Davidson made successful landings and takeoffs (non-catapulted deck launches) in an XFD-1 Phantom on board *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42).

1 AUGUST • An act of Congress established the Office of Naval Research to plan, foster, and encourage scientific investigation. The redesignation of the earlier Office of Research and Inventions, which had been established by secretarial order in May 1945, enabled the new office to open on 21 August.

8 AUGUST • *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42) sailed to the Mediterranean. From 5 to 9 September, the ship called at Piraeus (Athens) as a show of support for the Greek government's efforts to stem the tide of communism in the embattled country, and launched 78 aircraft over the task force during her departure. On 30 September, President Harry S. Truman declared the permanency of the U.S. naval presence in the region, primarily to contain Soviet aggression. On 4 October, the carrier returned home.

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Lt. Cmdr. James J. Davidson, in front of the second XFD-1 prototype after completion of the first carrier tests of a pure-jet aircraft on board *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42), 21 July 1946.

13 AUGUST • Congress approved the Hale Plan, also known as the Flying Midshipmen or Aviation Midshipmen Program. This was designed to provide the Navy with qualified pilots in the post–World War II period after the loss of a large segment of experienced naval aviators to civilian life. The plan would pay for two years of college and training as naval aviators in exchange for a service obligation. Those who completed flight training and were designated naval aviators did not automatically commission at the same time, but remained as aviation midshipman and served as pilots but not commissioned officers. After a period of service in the fleet, they usually received their commissions. Early in 1950 the Naval Aviation Cadet program replaced the Flying Midshipmen program. Of the 3,000 aviation midshipmen, approximately 1,800 received designations as naval aviators including later-astronaut Neil A. Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon. The Navy recalled many aviation midshipmen to active service during the Korean War.

14 AUGUST • Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz standardized missile terminology within the Navy to the extent that he directed the use of the term "guided missiles" for all types developed by the sea service. He allowed past practice by authorizing the continuation of model designations, the description of missile classes, the Bureau of Ordnance term SWOD (Special Weapons Ordnance Device), and the Bureau of Aeronautics term pilotless aircraft (P/A).

15 AUGUST • The Instrument Flight Standardization Board was established under the operational control of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air), at NAS Anacostia, D.C. The board was to determine the means to improve the instrument flight proficiency of pilots.

1 SEPTEMBER • A reorganization of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) placed its divisions into four groups entitled plans, personnel, readiness, and air logistics. The Air Planning Group was also set up on the DCNO (Air) staff to facilitate planning at the top policy level and to coordinate and direct the work of all divisions toward the same goals.

18 SEPTEMBER • A Belgian Sabena Airlines DC-4 registered OO-CBG, carrying seven crewmembers and 37 passengers en route from Brussels, Belgium, to New York, crashed during harsh weather 24 miles southwest of Gander, Newfoundland. Rescue Officer Eastern Area Capt. Richard L. Burke, USCG, organized the rescue. Lt. Cmdr. James N. Schrader, USCG, piloted a Coast Guard PBY-5A Catalina, BuNo 34008, carrying the helicopter pilots over the scene of

USCG

These crews of two Coast Guard helicopters rescued 18 survivors of a commercial airliner crash on 18 September 1946 from a remote area near Gander, Newfoundland. From left are: Lts. A. N. Fisher and Stewart R. Graham; AMMCs Oliver F. Berry, Leo Brzycki, and Cozy Eldridge; and AMM1 Merwin Westerberg.

the crash from Argentia, Newfoundland. On 20 September, a USAAF C-54 Skymaster carried an HOS-1 overnight to Gander from CGAS Brooklyn, N.Y. A second Skymaster flew an HNS-1 Hoverfly from CGAS Elizabeth City, N.C. Coast Guard helicopter crewmembers included pilots Cmdr. Frank A. Erickson, Lts. A. N. Fisher, Stewart R. Graham, August Kleisch, and Walter C. Bolton, and aircrewmen AMMCs Oliver F. Berry, Leo Brzycki, and Cozy Eldridge, and AMM1 Merwin Westerberg. These Coast Guardsmen rescued 18 survivors during 40 helicopter evacuation flights. At times, Cmdr. Larry L. David, USCG, flew an additional PBY-5A, BuNo 48314, and Lt. j.g. Charles E. MacDowell, USCG, piloted one of two PB-1Gs, BuNo 77247 (the other was 77249), that searched for survivors and dropped food and medical provisions.

29 SEPTEMBER • Cmdrs. Thomas D. Davies, Eugene P. Rankin, and Walter S. Reid, and Lt. Cmdr. Roy H. Tabeling manned the *Truculent Turtle*, a P2V-1 Neptune, BuNo 89082, during a 55 hour, 17 minute flight from Perth, Australia, to Columbus, Ohio. The plane arrived on 1 October after a journey of 11,235.6 miles, breaking the world distance record for unrefueled flight.

1 OCTOBER • The Naval Air Missile Test Center, Capt. Albert N. Perkins commanding, was established at Point Mugu, Calif., to conduct tests and evaluation of guided missiles and their components.

2 OCTOBER • The Bureau of Aeronautics recommended adoption of the designation XF9F-2 in lieu of XF9F-1,

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The Truculent Turtle's record flight stood for 16 years.

thereby reflecting a decision to abandon development of the four-engine night fighter in favor of a single-engine day fighter. The decision included the substitution of a British Rolls Royce Nene engine for Westinghouse 24Cs and subsequently led to U.S. production of Nene engines.

27 OCTOBER • Airship XM-1, Lt. Harold R. Walton commanding, departed NAS Lakehurst, N.J., followed the Atlantic coast to Savannah, Ga., headed seaward to the Bahamas, then to Florida, Cuba, across the Gulf of Mexico, and, on 3 November, reached NAF Glynco, Ga. The flight of 170.3 hours set a world record for duration in self-sufficient flight for any type of aircraft.

30 OCTOBER • Under a project conducted by Naval Air Material Center Philadelphia, Pa., Lt. j.g. Adolph J. Furtek made a successful ejection from a JD-1 Invader flying at about 250 knots at 6,000 feet over NAS Lakehurst, N.J. The event marked the Navy's first live test of an ejection seat.

7 NOVEMBER • The Navy adopted a letter identification system for marking all Navy and Marine aircraft including trainers and those of the Naval Air Reserve. All carriers and wings, groups, and squadrons not assigned to carrier operations received letter assignments. Instructions further placed a wide

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Cmdr. Thomas D. Davies commanded the P2V-1 *Truculent Turtle* during an unrefueled long-distance record flight of 11,235 miles from Perth, Australia, to Columbus, Ohio, 29 September to 1 October 1946.

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The AD-2 Skyraider was just one of seven major models and 28 versions of Douglas' attack aircraft. More than 3,000 were built over its 12-year production run, 1945–1957.

orange stripe around the fuselage, forward of the empennage, on all aircraft of the Naval Reserve. A change issued on 12 December discontinued the assignment of letters to carriers; carrier air groups and Marine squadrons operating on board escort aircraft carriers received the letter assignments instead.

8 NOVEMBER • The Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Special Weapons) was disestablished, and its functions relating to guided missiles were reassigned to a new Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Guided Missiles) and a Guided Missiles Division, both established under DCNO (Air).

11 NOVEMBER • Lt. Col. Marion E. Carl Jr., USMC, completed two catapult launches, four free take-offs, and five arrested landings in a jet propelled Lockheed P-80A Shooting Star on board *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42) off the Virginia Capes. Carl made the first catapult launches on 1 November. These operations comprised part of an extensive investigation of the carrier suitability of jet aircraft that began on 29 June 1945 with the delivery of a P-80A to NAS Patuxent River, Md.

15 NOVEMBER • Sweeping changes occurred in air unit designations to correct the results of demobilization that left squadron numbers out of sequence. Carrier air groups of four types received designations according to their assigned ship: CVBG–battle carrier; CVG–attack carrier; CVLG–light carrier; and CVEG–escort carrier. The action limited carrier squadrons to fighter and attack and thus abolished the VBF, VB, and VT designations, and these squadrons received suffix letters to indicate their carrier assignments. Patrol squadrons were redesignated to show an abbreviation of their aircraft class in addition to the VP (i.e. VP-MS-1 for Patrol Squadron 1 that operated medium seaplanes). Observation squadron numbers followed the parent ship division but received the addition of the suffix letters B or C to differentiate between battleship and cruiser units. The VJ for utility became VU, VPP replaced the VD for photographic squadrons, and VPM replaced VPW for meteorological squadrons. Reserve units switched to the same system but received consecutive numbers of a higher series. The changes did not affect Marine Corps commands.

20 NOVEMBER • Lt. Cmdr. Merl W. Davenport took off in an F8F Bearcat in a distance of 115 feet from a standing start and climbed to 10,000 feet in 94 seconds at Cleveland, Ohio, to set an unofficial world record.

25 NOVEMBER • The Navy approved a report of a board headed by Rear Adm. Thomas S. Combs established to consider the steps required to adapt the Integrated

Aeronautic Maintenance, Material, and Supply Program to postwar conditions. The board's recommendations largely concerned improved program administration measures to provide for exact planning, rigid adherence to schedules and complements, the receipt of complete information from the field, and its proper evaluation. Some proposals touched on areas that were considered critical and that warranted action before their final approval.

6 DECEMBER • Capt. Victor D. Herbster (Naval Aviator No. 4) died at Naval Hospital, St. Albans, N.Y. Herbster served continuously in naval aviation from first reporting for flight training on 8 November 1911 at Annapolis, Md., until his retirement on 1 July 1936. He served again from his return to active service in August 1940 until retirement on 29 March 1946.

6 DECEMBER • VA-19A accepted delivery of the first AD-1 Skyraider for fleet service.

1947

1 JANUARY • Adm. John H. Towers (Naval Aviator No. 3) assumed the duties of the newly created post of Commander in Chief, Pacific Command.

2 JANUARY • The Navy issued a directive to display unit identification letters, which had been assigned on 15 November 1946, on both sides of the vertical fins and rudders of its aircraft, and on the upper right and lower left surfaces near the wing tips. This placement required relocation of several standard aircraft markings.

2 JANUARY • The promulgation of a new specification for aircraft color required the use of glossy Sea Blue on all shipboard and water-based aircraft and all helicopters. Landplane transports, utility aircraft, and advanced training planes retained Aluminum, and primary trainers similarly retained glossy Orange Yellow paint. Special color schemes included land camouflage (Olive Drab above and Light Gray below) for Marine observation planes, glossy Insignia Red for target drones, glossy Orange Yellow wings with glossy Sea Blue fuselages and glossy Insignia Red wing bands and rudders for target towing aircraft.

11 JANUARY • The XF2H-1 made its first flight.

14 JANUARY • A horizontal red stripe, centered on the white horizontal bar, was added to the national star insignia on all U.S. military aircraft.

15 JANUARY • Pilot Lt. James A. Cornish, USCG, and observer PhoMC Everett F. Mashburn, USCG, completed the first Coast Guard helicopter flight to the station at Little America, Antarctica. Cornish and Mashburn made the flight in an HNS-1 Hoverfly they named *Flutterbuggy* from Coast Guard cutter *Northwind* (WAG 282).

29 JANUARY • From a position 660 miles off the Antarctic continent, *Philippine Sea* (CV 47) launched the first of six R4D transport aircraft she ferried from Norfolk, Va., to Little America as part of Operation Highjump. Cmdr. William M. Hawkes piloted the first plane, which carried Rear Adm. Richard E. Byrd Jr. as a passenger. The Skytrains used JATO to takeoff, and skis attached to their landing gear facilitated ice cap operations. The event marked the first carrier takeoff for Skytrains.

2 FEBRUARY • Col. Bernard L. Smith, USMC, the second Marine aviator (Naval Aviator No. 6), died from injuries received when his car struck a train at Coral Gables, Fla. Smith served with Marine and Navy aviation elements in a variety of duties, including intelligence assignments overseas, from when he reported for flight training on 18 September 1912 at Annapolis, Md., until his resignation on 20 January 1920. From 1931 to 1937, he served as a member of the Naval Reserve, then transferred to the Marine Corps Reserve, and returned to active duty during World War II until his retirement in December 1946.

12 FEBRUARY • Submarine *Cusk* (SS 348) launched an American adaptation of the German V-1 rocket, dubbed the Loon, from off Point Mugu, Calif. The event marked the first firing of a guided missile from a U.S. submarine.

MARCH • The growing importance of maintaining strength in the Mediterranean Sea prompted the establishment of Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. On 1 June 1948, the command was redesignated the Sixth Task Fleet and, on 12 February 1950, the Sixth Fleet. The cruise of *Randolph* (CV 15)

USMC 44731

This dual-seat -2N night-fighter version of the twin-engine F7F Tigercat was flown by Marines of VMF(N)-531 out of NAS Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas, in late 1945.

initiated a regular schedule of deployment of carriers to the region. She returned to the United States on 21 December.

1 MARCH • A Bureau of Aeronautics contract with P. R. Mallory & Co. initiated the development of titanium alloys for aeronautical applications. The agreement covered the study of methods of producing titanium metal and alloys and of determining their essential properties.

4 MARCH • Operation Highjump air operations in the Antarctic ended. From 24 December 1946, six PBM Mariners based on seaplane tenders operated in the open seas around the continent, and from 9 February 1947, six R4D Skytrains were based ashore at Little America. Altogether these planes logged 650 hours on photographic mapping flights that covered 150,000 square miles of the interior and 5,500 miles of coastline.

16 APRIL • On 30 January 1947, the Greeks proclaimed martial law in response to the rising threat posed by communist insurgents during the Greek Civil War. On 21 February, the British announced the reduction of their forces deployed to the eastern Mediterranean and the withdrawal of military assistance to the Greeks and Turks effective on 1 April. U.S. intervention against communist expansionism in the ensuing power vacuum included a visit on this date by *Leyte* (CV 32) to Greece as a show of support for that country's government.

30 APRIL • The Army and Navy adopted a standard system for designating guided missiles and assigning them popular names. The basic designation adopted consisted of a two-letter combination of the three letters; A (air), S (surface), and U (underwater); in which the first letter indicated the origin of the missiles and the second letter their objectives, followed by the letter M for missile. Thus, surface-to-air missiles were designated SAM. This basic designation was followed by an odd model number for Army missiles and an even number for Navy weapons. For popular names, the services agreed upon naming ASMs for birds of prey, AAMs for other winged creatures, SAMs for mythological terms, and SSMs for astronomical terms or bodies.

2 MAY • Amid ongoing Soviet pressure against the Turks and the British withdrawal from the eastern Mediterranean, U.S. ships including *Leyte* (CV 32) made a show of support for the Turkish government during a week-long visit to Istanbul.

20 MAY • Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal directed the relocation and redesignation of Navy Pre-Flight at NAS Ottumwa, Iowa, to Naval School, Pre-Flight, NAS Pensacola, Fla. The move was to occur from 1 June to 1 August 1947.

4 JUNE • Chief of Naval Operations Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz approved new aircraft carrier characteristics for incorporation into Project 27A—a program to improve *Essex* (CV 9)-class carriers to meet new operating requirements resulting from developments in aircraft and weapons. Designers directed the principal changes toward a capability for operating aircraft of up to 40,000-pounds including the installation of two H-8 catapults, the strengthening of flight decks and the clearance of guns from these decks, an increase of elevator capacity, and the addition of special provisions for jet aircraft such as blast deflectors, increased fuel capacity, and jet fuel mixers. On 1 October 1947, *Oriskany* (CV 34) began her conversion at New York Naval Shipyard, N.Y., as the first of nine carriers scheduled for modernization under this project.

7 JUNE • Fleet Air Wing 10 was disestablished at NAB Sangley Point, Philippines.

17 JUNE • The Navy awarded a contract to the Douglas Aircraft Company for design study and engineering data for a delta wing fighter. On the basis of the technical information thus obtained, the service subsequently initiated development of the XF4D-1.

26 JUNE • The development of low-drag bombs began as the Bureau of Aeronautics authorized the design by Douglas Aircraft Company at El Segundo, Calif., of a bomb release system with clean flight characteristics at subsonic speeds. This was to overcome aircraft buffeting induced by conventional bombs when being carried externally at three-quarters the speed of sound. The basic goal was the development of an external store shape to house conventional bombs, machine guns, and rockets, and capable of adaptation for use as an external fuel tank.

30 JUNE • Fleet Air Wing 18 was disestablished at NAS Agana, Guam.

9 JULY • A Northrop P-61C Black Widow air-launched a subsonic ramjet-powered Gorgon IV (PTV-2) that made a 28-second free flight at NAMTC Point Mugu, Calif.

24 JULY • The Chief of Naval Operations initiated the adaptation of helicopters to amphibious warfare by establishing a requirement for a type capable of transporting assault troops from escort carriers, and landing them ashore with their necessary combat equipment and supplies.

26 JULY • President Harry S. Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 into law. The measure provided the most basic reorganization of defense activities affecting the Navy Department since its creation in 1798. It established the National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Resources Board, and the National Military Establishment headed by the Secretary of Defense. Within the National Military Establishment, the act redesignated the War Department as the Department of the Army and established a third service, the Air Force, along with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Research and Development Board, and Munitions Board. In addition, the act defined the Navy as "including such aviation as may be organic therein."

7 AUGUST • An act of Congress restored the Aeronautical Engineering Duty Only (AEDO) designation that had been abolished in 1940, by authorizing the assignment of qualified officers of the line including those designated EDO.

13 AUGUST • The establishment of Naval Air Development Station, Johnsville, Pa., replaced Naval Aircraft Modification Unit. The station's mission was the development of aircraft electronics, pilotless aircraft, guided missiles, and aviation armament, and research and development in the field of aviation medicine that pertained to the human centrifuge. Four appropriately named laboratories performed these functions.

704422

The D-558-1 Skystreak experimental jet was the Navy's contribution to a national program for solving high-speed flight issues. It held the world speed record until bested by the rocket-powered Bell X-1.

USMC 11986

Maj. Marion E. Carl Jr., USMC, set a world speed record in the D-558-1 on 25 August 1947.

20 AUGUST • Cmdr. Turner F. Caldwell broke the world speed record in the Douglas D-558-1 at 640.663 mph over a Muroc, Calif., three-kilometer course.

626130

F2H-4 Banshees of VF-12 fly over *Coral Sea* (CVB 43), 12 June 1951.

25 AUGUST • Maj. Marion E. Carl Jr., USMC, set a new world speed record in the D-558-1 Skystreak of 650.796 mph over the three-kilometer Muroc, Calif., course.

25 AUGUST • Tests of the Douglas Aircraft Company low-drag bomb shape began at the Southern California Cooperative Wind Tunnel at Pasadena, Calif.

6 SEPTEMBER • *Midway* (CVB 41) launched a V-2 rocket from her flight deck in the first firing of a large ballistic missile from a ship at sea. The rocket behaved abnormally after liftoff, but the launch demonstrated the feasibility of the concept.

17 SEPTEMBER • Naval aviator James V. Forrestal of World War I service took the oath of office as the first Secretary of Defense. The following day, the National Security Act of 1947 became effective, and the Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force became constituted as integral parts of the National Military Establishment.

30 SEPTEMBER • The Research and Development Board, which superseded the Joint Research and Development Board and dealt with research and development coordination, planning, and direction, was formally set up in the National Military Establishment. Dr. Vannevar Bush took office as its chairman. At its first meeting on 19 December, the board accepted the credentials of all of its members. One of the two Navy members was the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air).

1 OCTOBER • *Coral Sea* (CVB 43), Capt. A. P. Storrs III commanding, was commissioned at Newport News, Va.

1 NOVEMBER • The Naval Parachute Unit moved from NAS Lakehurst, N.J., to NAS El Centro, Calif. Its mission was the research, development, and testing of parachutes, parachute recovery systems, and ejectable seat capsules.

21 NOVEMBER • The Grumman XF9F-2 made its first flight.

24 NOVEMBER • The first launch of a liquid-fueled RTV-N-8 Aerobee rocket for the Navy took place at White Sands Proving Ground, N.M. The rocket, designed primarily for upper atmospheric research, reached an altitude of 34.7

1053788

Tandem-rotor HRP-1s of HMX-1 lift off from Quantico, Va.

miles. The United States launched more than 1,000 Aerobees in various configurations through 1985.

28 NOVEMBER • Seaplane tender *Norton Sound* (AV 11) was assigned to the Operational Development Force for use as an experimental rocket-firing ship. The following March, the ship began the necessary alterations at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, Pa.

1 DECEMBER • HMX-1, Col. Edward C. Dyer, USMC, commanding, was established at MCAS Quantico, Va. Its mission was development of techniques and tactics for the use of helicopters in amphibious operations.

19 DECEMBER • The New Development Board was established to review the programs of the various bureaus and offices, and to recommend the priorities of development projects to the Chief of Naval Operations. In May 1948, the Research and Development Review Board, consisting of the Chief of Naval Research and people in the Office of the CNO responsible for development, replaced the New Development Board.

19 DECEMBER • The Research and Development Board directed its committee on guided missiles to coordinate the Earth Satellite Vehicle Project, thereby taking over this function from the Aeronautical Board.

30 DECEMBER • Chairman Thomas K. Finletter of the president's Air Policy Commission submitted the commission's report *Survival in the Air Age*, based on extensive hearings over three months. The report was a broad review of the international situation in terms of the proven effectiveness of air power and its added potential for destruction with the advent of atomic weapons. It stressed the need to maintain military forces large enough to make aggression dangerous, and emphasized the urgency of building strong military aviation with its supporting industry and civil air transport, and of encouraging a progressive research and development program to maintain the existing margin of U.S. superiority.

1948

1 JANUARY • The headquarters of the Naval Air Basic Training Command shifted from NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, to NAS Pensacola, Fla., and Naval Air Training Bases, Corpus Christi, was disestablished. The establishment of the Naval Air Advanced Training Subordinate Command occurred simultaneously at Corpus Christi.

1 MARCH • Sen. Ralph O. Brewster (R-Maine), chairman of the Congressional Committee on National Aviation Policy, submitted the committee's report. The deductions of the members differed in some respects from the earlier report submitted by the president's Air Policy Commission, but generally reiterated the conclusions in regard to the effect of air power on national security, and the need for a national policy to build a strong military air force supported by a vibrant aircraft industry and civil aviation.

1053785

This FJ-1 Fury in Naval Air Test Center markings participated in carrier trials, c. 1947.

424773

An HTL-3, one of only nine built, takes off from *Valley Forge* (CV 45), parallel with an HO3S in the background, c. January 1953.

11 MARCH • Interservice conflict over the respective roles and missions of the services prompted Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal to convene meetings of the Joint Chiefs at NAS Key West, Fla. These conferences resulted in limited concessions by both the Navy and the Air Force. The Navy acknowledged the primacy of the Air Force in strategic bombing, and the Air Force agreed not to hinder the construction of the world's largest carrier—a 65,000-ton, 1,090-foot long flush-deck ship without an island superstructure, designed to launch aircraft carrying atomic bombs, and subsequently named *United States* (CVA 58).

29 MARCH • The Technical Evaluation Group of the Research and Development Board noted its conclusion concerning the feasibility of the development of an earth satellite. The board recommended the delay of construction until researchers clearly established the project's utility.

30 MARCH • Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan approved the establishment of a Naval Air Reserve Advisory Council. This consisted of 50 Reserve aviation officers appointed from civilian life with the purpose of making available to the Navy the experience and continuing advice of reservists, who had held key positions while on active duty during World War II.

4 MARCH • The Test Pilot Training Division was established at NATC Patuxent River, Md. The division instructed experienced fleet pilots in aeronautical engineering and techniques of flight testing. Ten years later it became the Naval Test Pilot School.

10 MARCH • Pilots Cmdr. Evan P. Aurand and Lt. Cmdr. Robert M. Elder of VF-5A tested the carrier suitability of FJ-1 Furies on board *Boxer* (CV 21) off San Diego, Calif.

1 APRIL • HU-1, Cmdr. Maurice A. Peters commanding, was established at NAS Lakehurst, N.J., as the first helicopter squadron in the U.S. Navy.

21 APRIL • The Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum for the secretaries within his department, attaching a paper defining the functions of the armed forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Based on the policy embodied in the National Security Act, this event marked the first functions paper drawn

up by the services following their reorganization, and is commonly referred to as the Key West agreement.

27 APRIL • In the first carrier launchings of planes of this size and weight, pilots Cmdr. Thomas D. Davies and Lt. Cmdr. John P. Wheatley made JATO takeoffs in two P2V-2 Neptunes from *Coral Sea* (CVB 43) off Norfolk, Va.

29 APRIL • Amid fears of a communist coup in Norway, *Valley Forge* (CV 45) made a four-day visit to the capital of Oslo.

30 APRIL • The Martin XP5M-1 made its first flight.

1 MAY • Changes in aircraft marking specifications made it mandatory for carrier squadrons to use distinguishing colors on propeller spinners and across the top of vertical fins and rudders. The colors Insignia Red, Insignia White, Light Blue, Light Yellow, Light Green, and Black outlined in white marked squadrons one through six, respectively, of each carrier air group. The changes also required the painting of arresting hooks in alternate 4-inch black-and-white bands.

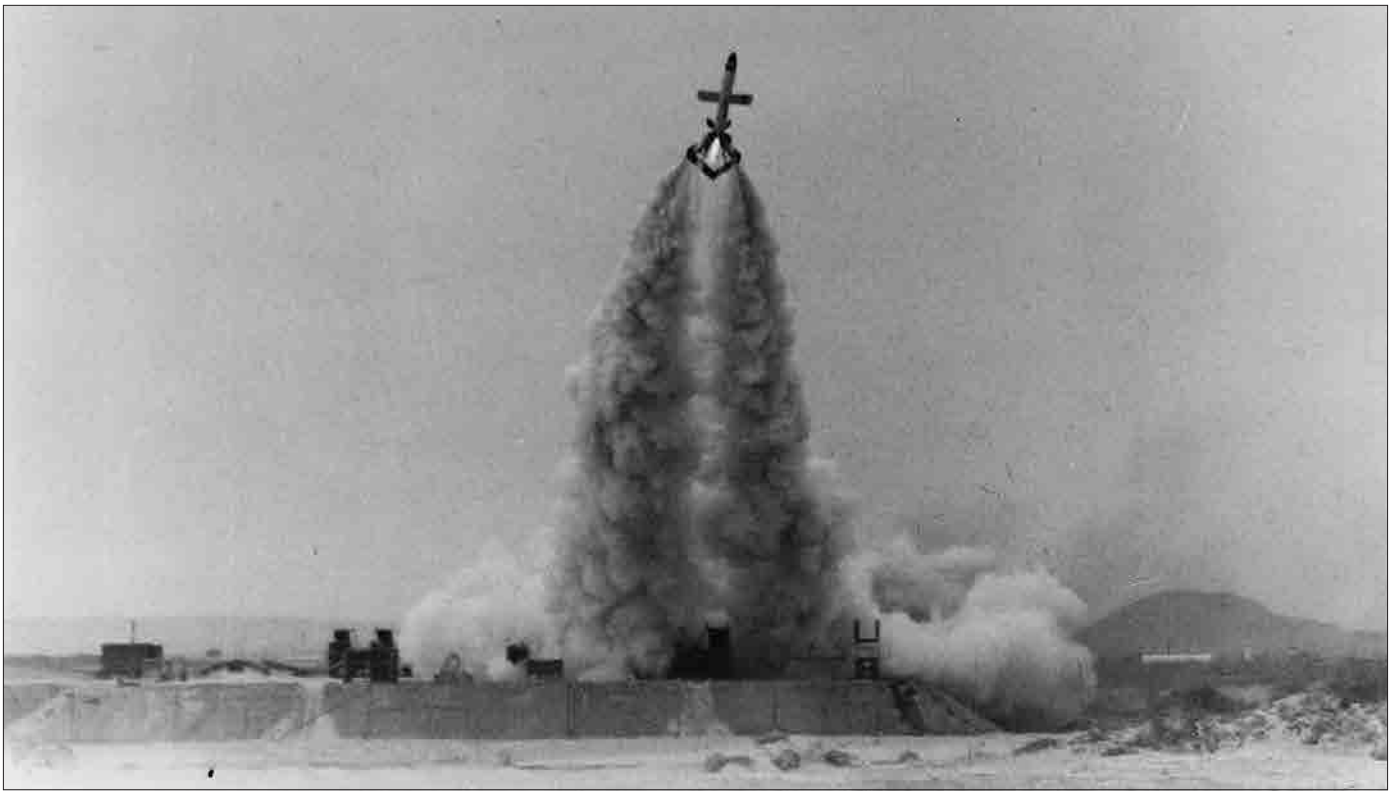
1053754

The P5M-1 Marlin was an evolution of Martin's PBM Mariner. These are from VP-56, c. 1954.

5 MAY • Submarine *Cusk* (SS 348) launched a Loon missile off NAMTC Point Mugu, Calif., guided it over a 46-mile course, and crashed the weapon within 100 yards of its target, Begg Rock.

5 MAY • VF-17A became the Navy's first carrier-qualified jet squadron. During three days of operations on board *Saipan* (CVL 48), all the squadron's pilots and Commander CVG-17 qualified in 16 FH-1 Phantoms with a minimum of eight takeoffs and landings each.

8 MAY • Michelson Laboratory at the Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, Calif., was dedicated. This marked a major step in the transition of the station from a rocket test range to a research and development activity specially equipped to study the various aspects of rocketry and guided missiles.



400916

A Lark guided missile hurtles skyward from Point Mugu, Calif. Originally designed to combat *kamikazes*, the missile was not developed in time for World War II and never got beyond the prototype stage.

18 MAY • The Goodyear Aircraft Corporation received a contract for the design of a submarine-hunting airship with an envelope volume of 825,000 cubic feet, approximately double that of K-class airships. The proposed airship was to carry a crew of 14, extensive antisubmarine equipment, and in-flight refueling capabilities. Through subsequent contractual action initiated in September, the Navy ordered prototype ZPN-1.

25 MAY • Two support wings were established and placed under a Commander, Fleet Logistic Support Wings. They provided, subsequent to the merger of Navy and Air Force air transport commands, air logistic support services over routes of sole Navy interest as required for the internal administration and fulfillment of naval missions.

1 JUNE • The consolidation of the Naval Air Transport Service and the Air Transport Service of the Air Force's Air Transport Command formed the Military Air Transport Service as a unified element of the National Military Establishment. The service operated under the command and direction of the Air Force.

4 JUNE • To establish and maintain close relationships between the operating forces and planning agencies, arrangements were made for an air board to meet quarterly with principal members Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air), the chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, ComAirLant, and ComAirPac.

4 JUNE • The Airborne Coordination Group was redesignated Naval Aviation Electronics Service Unit.

11 JUNE • The Chief of Naval Operations issued standards for training aviators as helicopter pilots and provided for the retention of their qualification of helicopter pilots previously trained by the Coast Guard or VX-3.

18 JUNE • The chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics authorized NAMTC Point Mugu, Calif., to train (on a non-interfering basis) the Air Force 1st Experimental Guided Missile Group in the operation of the Lark guided missile.

22 JUNE • Under a plan that in essence reactivated the Aviation Cadet program, men between the ages of 18 and 25

with at least two years of college became eligible for flight training. Candidates were required to serve on active duty for four years, after which they returned to inactive duty as members of the Reserve. A limited number of the cadets gained the opportunity to remain on active duty with the possibility of transferring to the regular Navy. The first of the new Aviation Cadets under the program reported for training in late August.

1053786

The radical XF5U-1 had a nearly disk-shaped wing for maneuverability and a short takeoff run.

24 JUNE • In a reaction to ongoing Allied efforts to consolidate control of their zones of occupation in divided Germany, the Soviets initiated a blockade of Berlin by cutting off all road, rail, and waterborne traffic into the German city. Despite international condemnation of their actions, the Soviets claimed that they experienced "technical difficulties" in maintaining the lines of communication into Berlin. The Allies subsequently responded with Operation Vittles—an airlift to feed and supply the troops and civilians entrapped within the city. Naval aircraft operated during the airlift, and at least one carrier battle group normally steamed in the North Atlantic.

29 JUNE • The development of TACAN –Tactical Air Navigation system– began with a Bureau of Ships contract with the Federal Telecommunications Laboratory for development of a surface beacon and airborne receiver capable of determining the direction of aircraft from surface stations. The stringent accuracy requirements originated from needs that grew out of carrier operational experience during World War II. A year later and following tests of the initial model, the company received contracts for development of equipment that also measured distances.

1 JULY • The Naval Air Transport Service was disestablished. The command had remained in existence following the establishment of the Military Air Transport Service to assist in the transfer of Navy commands to the new organization.

1 JULY • The Naval Aeronautical Rocket Laboratory was established at Lake Denmark, N.J. The laboratory provided an East Coast rocket testing facility similar in function to the Air Force Rocket Test Facility at Muroc, Calif.

3 JULY • The Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld requested that the Bureau of Ordnance develop a 250-pound bomb on the lines of the Douglas Aircraft Company shape and a container to the same lines that could carry a number of conventional 250-pound bombs. The move initiated the ordnance aspects of low-drag bomb development.

6 JULY • VAW-1 and -2 were established in the Pacific and Atlantic Fleets, respectively, responsible for organizing and training airborne early warning (AEW) teams for carrier operations. Although AEW aircraft had operated from carriers, and land-based squadron VPW-1 was established on 1 April 1948 with a secondary mission of AEW, these wings marked the first naval commands organized specifically for the AEW mission, and the first to provide the fleet with AEW services from carriers.

20 JULY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld directed the change of the standard composition of carrier air groups to comprise three fighter and two attack squadrons; thus adding an additional fighter squadron to each group. To compensate for this increase, the Navy later reduced squadron aircraft complements.

1053758

The JRM *Philippine Mars* transport, BuNo 76820, uses jet-assisted takeoff at NAS Alameda, Calif. It was one of only seven built.

22 JULY • The assembly and repair departments at Navy and Marine air stations were redesignated overhaul and repair departments.

23 JULY • The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air approved a plan to develop a fleet aviation center in the area of Jacksonville, Fla. The plan included reactivation of facilities at Cecil Field and Mayport to help support the air groups assigned to the center, and the relocation of the Naval Air Advanced Training Command based at NAS Jacksonville.

29 JULY • President Harry S. Truman approved the construction of *United States* (CVA 58). The Naval Appropriation Act of 1949 provided funds in a private shipyard for the ship at Newport News (Virginia) Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company.

1 AUGUST • The dissolution of the Aeronautical Board ended more than 30 years as an interservice agency for cooperation in aviation. The National Security Act of 1947 assigned most of the board's functions to other boards.

17 AUGUST • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld informed the chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics of his intention to assign antisubmarine warfare as a primary mission to most patrol squadrons, and requested the institution of a vigorous program by the bureau to outfit patrol planes with the necessary equipment.

20 AUGUST • Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal convened at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., a second meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in an effort to clarify the rationale concerning each service's national security responsibilities. Although the meeting resulted in designating the Air Force as the interim executive agent for the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project (which controlled the atomic weapons stockpile), it also provided the Navy with the authority to participate in atomic bombing.

28 AUGUST • The JRM-2 *Caroline Mars*, BuNo 76824, from VR-2 completed a record nonstop flight of 4,748 miles from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Chicago, Ill., in 24 hours, 12 minutes with 42 persons on board and carrying a 14,000-pound payload.

1 SEPTEMBER • The Navy simplified the system of group and squadron designations in effect since November 1946. The action redesignated carrier air groups as CVG without regard to their carrier assignments; changed the numbers of most squadrons to conform to the previous system (VF and VA were assigned two or three digit numbers,

the first of which was the same as the parent air groups, and suffix letters were dropped); redesignated fighting squadrons as fighter squadrons; reverted patrol squadrons to the simple VP designation; redesignated VRF and VRU as VR—development, helicopter, lighter-than-air, and observation squadrons remained the same—and some VC became VAW to reflect their air warning mission, while others were redesignated VFN or VAN to reflect all-weather capabilities. These changes did not affect Marine Corps squadron designations.

5 SEPTEMBER • The JRM-2 *Caroline Mars*, BuNo 76824, from VR-2 carried a 68,282-pound cargo on a 390-mile flight from NAS Patuxent River, Md., to Cleveland, Ohio. The event marked the heaviest payload ever lifted in an aircraft to date.

9 SEPTEMBER • VC-5 was established as a result of a Navy effort to provide carriers with atomic capabilities. The squadron initially received P2V Neptunes and developed tactics and procedures to takeoff with nuclear weapons from the decks of carriers.

1 OCTOBER • Seaplane tender *Norton Sound* (AV 11) completed conversion at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, Pa. After a brief shakedown, she began operations as the Navy's first guided missile experimental and test ship. The ship was redesignated AVM-1 on 8 August 1951.

27 OCTOBER • VR-6 and -8 of the Military Air Transport Service received orders to move from their Pacific bases to the Allied zones in West Germany to take part in Operation Vittles—the Berlin Airlift.

1 NOVEMBER • The Naval Air Advanced Training Command shifted from NAS Jacksonville, Fla., to NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, in accordance with plans to convert the Jacksonville area into a fleet aviation center.

5 NOVEMBER • To meet the requirements of landing aircraft weighing up to 50,000-pounds at speeds as high as 105 knots, a project began for the design of Mark 7 high energy–absorption arresting gear at the Naval Aircraft Factory at Philadelphia, Pa.

9 NOVEMBER • VR-6 and -8 of the Military Air Transport Service began flying cargoes into Soviet-besieged Berlin.

17 DECEMBER • To meet the mounting requirements for transatlantic airlift in support of Operation Vittles, VR-3 switched from flying domestic routes to flying the run from Westover, Mass., to Frankfurt, Germany.

1949

23 JANUARY • *Palau* (CVE 122) completed 12 days of tests off the New England coast as part of an effort to develop carrier capabilities in conducting air operations under cold and severe weather conditions. This marked the Navy's continuing interest in cold weather evaluations first demonstrated by *Langley* (CV 1) in the same area 18 years before.

26 JANUARY • Seaplane tender *Norton Sound* (AV 11) launched her first Loon guided missile off NAMTC Point Mugu, Calif.

707741

Marines embark in HRP-1s during a vertical envelopment amphibious exercise on board *Palau* (CVE 122).

415146

Seaplane tender *Norton Sound* (AV 11) fires a Loon guided missile off Point Mugu, Calif., 26 January 1949.

27 JANUARY • Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld authorized the conversion of all newly constructed cruisers to accommodate helicopters.

3 FEBRUARY • The Lockheed XR6O-1, which the Navy had accepted the day before at NAS Alameda, Calif., inaugurated its transcontinental service with a flight from NAS Moffett Field, Calif., to Washington, D.C. The 92-ton Constitution established a new record for the number of people carried on a transcontinental flight—18 crewmen and 78 passengers—and crossed the continent in 9 hours, 35 minutes.

25 FEBRUARY • The JRM-2 *Caroline Mars*, BuNo 76824, from VR-2 broke the world record for passenger lift by transporting 202 passengers from NAS Alameda, Calif., to San Diego, Calif. The plane carried 218 people on the return flight to break the record again the same day. These loads were in addition to its crew of four.

4 MARCH • The JRM-2 *Caroline Mars*, BuNo 76824, from VR-2, set a new record for persons carried aloft by transporting 263 passengers and a crew of six on a 2 hour, 41-minute flight from San Diego, Calif., to NAS Alameda, Calif. The passengers included officers and men of CVG-15 on a routine transfer of station.

7 MARCH • Pilot Capt. John T. Hayward of VC-5 launched in a P2V-3C Neptune from *Coral Sea* (CVB 43) off the Virginia Capes with a 10,000-pound load of dummy bombs, crossed the continent to drop the load on a West Coast target, and returned nonstop to NAS Patuxent River, Md.

24 MARCH • Pilot Lt. Stewart R. Graham, USCG, and aircrewman AM2 Robert McAuliffe, USCG, set the record for the longest unescorted helicopter flight to date when they ferried an HO3S-1G, designated Coast Guard Aircraft No. 234, from CGAS Elizabeth City, N.C., to CGAS Port Angeles, Wash. Graham and McAuliffe arrived on 3 April after a total of 57.6 hours in flight.

31 MARCH • In the highest monthly amount of the airlift to date, U.S. aircraft delivered 154,475 tons of cargo to West Berlin, East Germany. In addition, VR-8 set an airlift record to date of 155 percent efficiency for the month, and a daily utilization of 12.2 hours per squadron aircraft.

5 APRIL • The initiation of a plan to use helicopters in place of fixed-wing aircraft on board battleships and cruisers began, and VO-2 was disestablished as the last of the observation squadrons. The events marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. The changeover was to be completed by 30 June.

23 APRIL • Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson abruptly halted the construction of *United States* (CVA 58), just five days after her keel laying at Newport News (Virginia) Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. The secretary made his decision without consulting Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan or Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld. Secretary Sullivan subsequently resigned in protest, and President Harry S. Truman appointed Francis P. Matthews in his place.

19 MAY • The JRM-1 *Marshall Mars* broke the record for the number of people carried on a single flight with 301 passengers and a crew of seven from NAS Alameda, Calif., to San Diego, Calif.

15 JULY • Douglas Aircraft Company test pilots completed an initial flight evaluation of the low-drag external-store shape on an XF3D-1 at Edwards AFB Calif. The aircraft carried two of the shapes, and it attained a top speed of 51 knots greater than when carrying two conventional 2,000-pound bombs and 22 knots greater than with two 150-gallon external fuel tanks.

31 JULY • VR-6 and -8's participation in the Berlin Airlift ended. During their eight months in Germany, the squadrons flew a total of 45,990 hours, carried 129,989 tons of cargo into Berlin, and established a record of payload efficiency and aircraft utilization at the hitherto unparalleled figure of better than ten hours per day per plane for the entire period.

1 AUGUST • The Seventh Task Fleet stood up as the forward-deployed U.S. naval force in the western Pacific.

1 AUGUST • The Navy established Naval Air Development Center, Johnsville, Pa., and disestablished Naval Air Development Station.

9 AUGUST • Lt. Jack L. Fruin of VF-171 made the first operational use of an ejection seat for an emergency escape in the United States. He survived ejection from an F2H-1 while the Banshee flew at more than 500 knots in the vicinity of Walterboro, S.C.

10 AUGUST • An amendment to the National Security Act of 1947 provided for an increase in the authority of the Secretary of Defense and replaced the National Military Establishment with the Department of Defense. The change further provided the continuance of the separate administration of the three military departments, and that naval aviation was to "be integrated with the naval service . . . within the Department of the Navy."

1 OCTOBER • An exchange program to indoctrinate selected Air Force, Navy, and Marine pilots in the operational and training activities of each other's service began with the exchange of 18 pilots from the services for one year. The move

652827

A twin-jet F3D-2 Sky Knight of VF-14 overflies *Intrepid* (CV 11) during carrier qualification trials, November 1954.

407668

A dozen P2V-3 Neptunes were modified to the -3C specification for a carrier-launched nuclear bomber. To verify the ability to launch and range to get to the target, Cmdr. Frederick L. Ashworth flies from *Midway* (CVB 41) off Norfolk, Va., on a 4,800-mile route to San Diego, Calif., 5 October 1949.

1053787

The photoreconnaissance F2H-2P Banshee had all its armament removed and replaced with cameras. This is a Marine Banshee of Headquarters Squadron 2.

accorded with an interservice agreement reached in July, which provided for the qualification of all pilots in the type of aircraft operated by the commands in which they served, and their occupation of regular pilots' billets in their new assignments.

5 OCTOBER • Pilot Cmdr. Frederick L. Ashworth took off in a P2V-3 Neptune from *Midway* (CVB 41) at sea off Norfolk, Va., flew to the Panama Canal, northward over Corpus Christi, Texas, and on to San Diego, Calif. Ashworth completed the 4,800-mile nonstop, unrefueled flight in 25 hours, 40 minutes.

5 OCTOBER • Congress opened hearings on unification and strategy. In a controversy that journalists subsequently dubbed "The Revolt of the Admirals," Adm. Arthur W. Radford spearheaded the testimony of Navy witnesses against Air Force charges of the sea service's obsolescence during the atomic age. On 17 October, despite the objections of Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson and Secretary of the Navy Francis P. Matthews, the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Louis E. Denfeld supported the statements of preceding witnesses against defense policies that centered on the intercontinental bombing of enemy cities by Air Force

1053755

Patrol Squadron (VP) 21 received its first P4M-1 Mercator in June 1950.

bombers and marginalized naval aviation, as exemplified in the development of the Convair B-36. Admiral Denfeld's stand prompted his removal from office on 1 November; however, the controversy resulted in Congressional support that preserved a role for naval aviation in national deterrence.

30 OCTOBER • Lt. Giuseppe A. Rullo and M. D. Kembro of the Civil Air Patrol flew an HO3S-1 in 10 hours, 50 minutes from NAS Seattle, Wash., to NAS Alameda, Calif. Their achievement unofficially bettered the existing distance record for helicopters with a flight of 755 miles.

1 NOVEMBER • Adm. Louis E. Denfeld's controversial decision during the congressional hearings on strategic posture triggered his removal as Chief of Naval Operations, and naval aviator Adm. Forrest P. Sherman became the 12th CNO the next day.

1 DECEMBER • The consolidation of all air transport wings under a single command—the Fleet Logistic Air Wing—resulted in the dissolution of the Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Logistics Support Wings.

1053756

A landing signal officer directs an HO3S-1 landing on board *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42).

9 DECEMBER • The reorganization of the Naval Air Reserve was completed. This placed 128 fighter, 41 attack, 25 composite, 29 patrol, 26 transport, 57 service, and 5 blimp squadrons under the command of 27 air wings established at the same number of Reserve air stations across the United States.

1949 continued

29 DECEMBER • Earlier in the month, the Chinese Communists had defeated the Chinese Nationalists on the mainland and driven them to Formosa (Taiwan). On this date, the Navy announced the reinforcement by *Boxer* (CV 21) to the U.S. presence in the western Pacific in an effort principally to deter Chinese Communist expansionism.