

it was a fantastic specimen the likes I have never seen presented, it's head was realistically as large as a horse. We saw him for two or three minutes and he submerged. In the boredom of being at sea the life that can be found is gloried over. Finding a different bird, a huge herd of dolphins or porpoises, or a whale becomes an event. A dead whale at sea once turned almost the entire crew out. It was a big one being munched on by sharks. He had bled all his blood out and looked like a tore up gray mountain of grey blubber, the water about the carcass churned with feeding sharks. We saw a few huge kites that looked something like abatrosses in the Arabian sea later in the cruise.

Many oil tankers were laying out in Port Said waiting to get a clearance to proceed, we got held up some hours but had a priority on this military mission. I noticed some PLOs get on the pilot boat while we waited. Others saw it too, but nothing was done. We were all the forces in the area and a few PLOs slipping away at this point apparently didn't make a lot of difference. I got see a Russian ship while we waited around. They sail with women, and men, were they some women. The Russian clothing was poor and so were the boats which were really unkempt and unpainted. The gals that sailed were big and fleshy though and looked very strong. They must have been fun on a long cruise.

We made it through the canal part of the Suez in one night under condition three. Extra watches were set up and I assume we were the targets as PLO sympathizers might not be too happy about what was being done. Our second day in the Suez started in a large lake surrounded by oil tankers and a huge refinery area whose name we were never informed on. The lake or lagoon was surrounded on all sides by barren red hills. By the last day of the month we made it to Jiddah, the few days from the canal to that town were extremely hot. Temperature were up a good twenty degrees compared to the Mediterranean and we all were uncomfortable. I thought it would be nice to kick back on lower level watch in a big vent breeze but that was not where I was at. We refueled and started working our way back north in the Red Sea. This time I happened to see some of the oil rigs. At night they a particularly a sight burning off the natural gass in the desert heat. Watching those hundred foot flames while you broil on the sea in the sun of the deserts on each side is something of the epitome of hot. The heat overwhelms you to a point you gain a new sort of comfort by loosing your regular behavior and thoughts. The body eventually realizes there is going to be no relief from the heat.

Within three days we picked up two more vessels full of PLOs. This time the captives look more spread out and comfortable than on the Nereus. These ships favor the look of the first and again seem to be auto ferrys. They are called the Snatorini and the Paros. I roughly estimate there are 800 men women and children on the two boats. On this trip south I was picked for a week of working on the O3 level by the rocket director stripping and painting the deck. We slow to a crawl and stop ~~by~~ as one of the boats has engine failure. In few hours we crawl on with a ship at half power. This group is not going to the same place as the first and will find up in Yemen Arab Republic. I believe the town they go to is Hodeida. We do not pull in with them but leave them at sea. My priority concern now is my sunburn which got really bad while stripping and painting the deck. I got the cooks tour of the fire tech and gunner's mate included in the deal so it was not a wasted time. The P.O.