

i was assisting checked the rocket launchers and radio gear toward the stern of the ship and let me in the receiver and transmitter room to cool as the gear had good air conditioning. There is an Enlisted Surface Warfare program for all hands and I was able to get to some of those lecture from time to time and got all around the dship. The gear my temporary supervisor was in charge of was tied into a centralized computer that made the split second decisions on targets attacks and the rest. Another room was set up for command for the human inputs of the situation. I became interested in the tactical computer and had a chance to take the Digital computer basics course and later the Data Systems 3&2 correspondence course. It was all basic information and the gear was only secret and I didn't pry into it that far, but it was interesting to understand the basics of the system. The Educational officer was pushing me to cross rate to electronics but I was just to dumb and pig headed to see what a good idea that would have been. I figured I'd still get to work in the BT rate for a job on another ship, I was thinking of a career out of the Navy. I had this plan because I could see the people I was meeting in engineering were really lowlifes born and raised and like being a punk as possible. I had no experience with the people in the electronic rates, it is possible they could have been more cerebral, but I doubt it. The deckhands were almost as bestial as the engineering crowd, so I figured it would be best to try to stick it out on another ship and hope for the best on the outside in the regular economy.

When we dropped the last two boats full of PLOs we headed to refuel at Djibouti, a french port. When we got there I was surprized to see over a half dozen French Navy ships just sitting there. It dawned on me that this mess with Beirut could have just as well been the problem. I don't know why the French had the ships stationed there but they were no help at all at this time. One of their F-4 style jets gave us a real surprise at quarters one day. If it was indeed a french jet. At the time most of us thought we were under surveillance or attack. Later I figured it was the French who sent a plane over to check us out. I never picked up any marking on the pas so who knows. I was sure the fighter passed fifty feet over the radar masts because I felt I was being sucked off the deck.

When we made it to Djibouti there was no liberty. The ship tied up and refueled. The captain and the French military let go out on the pier and drink some beers. I wasn't feeling up to it in the heat and sun and just took it easy while the party was going on. I saw that the town look real provincial and observed through the big eyes as we could not go to shore, that there was a tent town on the other side of the bay. Things looked very desperate there. The pier was guarded and had a roof erected as a storehouse for donated foodstuffs, corn, rice and other grain. French military aircraft flew to an airbase here as well. It was not a long party and pleasantries were exchanged for an hour or two. This was going to be our last stop for quite a while. We got to check out a couple of sun bathers from the bigeyes. Djibouti is not a tourist town and a family had a pleasure boat and the females lounged in the 12 degree latitudes getting quite brown. The young ladie had a two peice on and was in the teens. We took turns ogling her. I got a real surpruse, as they didn't know we were watching. Her bottoms were fairly loose and as he pulled apart her knees to move from the deck house where she was sunbathing exposed her untanned crotch, yes I skipped the beer but I got the beaver shot.