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H.M.A.S. DERWENT,
at Hong Kong.

5 July 1966.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - JUNE 1966
(All times local)

Sir,

I have the honour to report the proceedings of Her Majesty's Australian Ship DERWENT for the month of June 1966.

2. Exercise SEA IMP was still in progress at the beginning of the month and DERWENT had been relieved from screening duties on USS YORKTOWN and now formed part of the smaller convoy screen. Later the convoy group and ASW Group 'A' integrated and the combined force was subjected to submarine, surface and air attack. During this phase the force moved into the shallower waters of the Gulf of Thailand where submarine safety restrictions prevented the streaming of the VDS which, until then, had given a most satisfactory performance. DERWENT was detached at 0001 on Sunday 5 June to rendezvous with TG 327.5 off the Condore Islands.

3. The Flag Officer, Second in Command Far East Fleet, Rear Admiral C.P. MILLS, CB, CBE, DSC* embarked in DERWENT by helicopter at 1400 on Saturday 4 June. Rear Admiral MILLS attended an Ikara demonstration and transferred by jackstay to his flagship, HMS DEVONSHIRE, at 1630.

4. Exercise SEA IMP was a realistic exercise which provided a much needed period of intensive training especially for the Command Team, the AIO and communications branches both of whom however, were obliged to work in two watches.

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THE FLAG OFFICER COMMANDING,
H.M. AUSTRALIAN FLEET.

(Copy to: The Commander, :
Far East Fleet.
The Flag Officer, Second in Command,
Far East Fleet.
The Captain (F),
First Frigate Squadron, HMAS YARRA.
The Captain (D),
Tenth Destroyer Squadron, HMAS VAMPIRE.)

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5. At 0800 on Monday 6 June, DERWENT made rendezvous with HMA Ships MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, YARRA and VENDETTA to the east of the Condore Islands. After fuelling from MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE and YARRA detached. VENDETTA and DERWENT then escorted SYDNEY to Cap St. Jacques anchoring off Pt. Ganh Rai at 1600. The ship's company remained at defence stations and assumed Awkward State 2 while SYDNEY unloaded. Fortunately SYDNEY lent a Zodiac dinghy to DERWENT to assist with bottom searches and this enabled DERWENT to contribute to the constant boat patrol which was maintained around the anchorage.

6. At 0800 on Wednesday 8 June DERWENT weighed anchor and in company with VENDETTA carried out an A/S search to seaward of Cap St. Jacques. Both ships screened SYDNEY when she left harbour at 1320 and escorted her to the south. During the afternoon DERWENT fuelled from SYDNEY and at 1730 detached to proceed independently to the Singapore area.

7. At 0800 on Friday 10 June rendezvous was made with HMS DELIGHT and both ships carried out an LRX and AALRF. At 1300 Clearance Diving Team One from HMAS SYDNEY was transferred by jackstay to HMS LOCH PADA for passage to Singapore. A successful SULRF was conducted against a towed target during the afternoon.

8. DERWENT carried out patrols in Singapore Strait between Horsburgh Light and Johore Shoal Buoy on the nights of 10/11 and 11/12 June. These patrols were without incident. There appeared to be a marked decrease in merchant ship traffic through the Strait; perhaps because of the shipping strike in the United Kingdom.

9. After fuelling from RFA TIDEFLOW at 0800 on Saturday 11 June DERWENT anchored off Tg. Kelesam until 1540.

10. At 1140 on Sunday 12 June DERWENT anchored off the eastern side of Pt. Pioman joining HMS AJAX (D24) and HMNZS OTAGO. The RFAs TIDESPRING, FORT LANGLEY and FORT DUNVEGAN were also at the anchorage.

11. At 0645 on Monday 13 June DERWENT, in company with AJAX and OTAGO (with D24 embarked), weighed and proceeded to sea for the inspection of OTAGO by Captain (D), 24th Escort Squadron, Captain A.G. TAIT, DSC, RN. From 0700 - 0800 OOW manoeuvres were conducted. During the remainder of the day until 1530 DERWENT screened the three RFAs and took part in a Casex C1/A17 and an Air Defence exercise. After replenishing with fuel from RFA TIDESPRING, DERWENT was detached at 1530 and carried out a quarterly full power trial en route to Singapore Naval Base. DERWENT secured port side to HMS MULL OF KINTYRE at number 13 berth Singapore naval dockyard at 2035.

12. The ship remained alongside at Singapore until Monday 20 June carrying out self maintenance. There was insufficient time and spares to complete repairs to L turbo alternator, and arrangements have been made for this work to be done in Hong Kong in mid July. The defective UA8/9 aerial outfit AYL was replaced and the electronic warfare equipment now appears to be performing satisfactorily. Ikara demonstrations were given on three afternoons and fifty officers from ships in harbour and local establishments attended. Amongst these visitors were Rear Admiral D.H. MASON, Chief of Staff to the Commander, Far East Fleet.

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13. At 0725 on Monday 20 June DERWENT cast off and proceeded to the explosive anchorage off RNAD Singapore. During the forenoon RN ammunition which had been embarked from RFA FORT LANGLEY during exercise SEA IMP was exchanged with RAN stocks held in Singapore. DERWENT weighed anchor and proceeded to sea at 1030. A two hour aircraft tracking exercise commenced on clearing Horsburgh Light.

14. DERWENT carried out Singapore Strait patrol from Johore Shoal Buoy to Horsburgh Light each night from Monday 20 June to Thursday 23 June. All patrols were without incident with the exception that a burst of small arms fire across the bows was necessary to stop an unlit barter trader at 0538 on 22 June. This boat was later allowed to proceed.

15. On Tuesday 21 June DERWENT took part in Exercise Angle Iron. This exercise was designed to test the efficiency of the air defences of Singapore against a predominantly low level air threat. The ship anchored 30 miles east of Jason's Bay and acted as a radar picket. The enemy consisted of Meteor, Hunter, Canberra and Vulcan aircraft. An RAF officer was embarked and controlled CAP aircraft allocated to DERWENT. This proved a most valuable exercise as it was the first joint air defence exercise DERWENT had taken part in for 18 months.

16. DERWENT stood by HM Submarine AMPHION while she carried out sea trials on Wednesday 22 June. An LRF followed by two AALRF and a live mortar firing were carried out the following day.

17. At 0730 on Friday 24 June DERWENT anchored off Loyang and fuelled from a lighter from Singapore Naval Base. The ship weighed anchor at 0925 and proceeded to Malacca Strait where deterrent patrols were carried out in accordance with FOEI 4104 Annex 'A'. Patrols were as follows:-

KEMBUNG	-	nights 24/25 and 29/30/31
MABROK	-	nights 25/26 and 28/29
AROA ISLANDS	-	night 26/27
BERHALA ISLANDS	-	night 27/28.

With the exception of the evening of 29 June when DERWENT encountered what appeared to be two Raum Boats while patrolling off Kembung all patrols were without incident. The ship anchored off Port Dickson on 26 June and 29 June to collect and land mail.

18. On Tuesday 28 June DERWENT made rendezvous with RFA TIDEFLOW to the northwest of One Fathom Bank to refuel and for the first time ever, two hoses were taken. Despite the different distances between TIDEFLOW's derricks and DERWENT's fuelling positions the arrangements were quite satisfactory although a defective coupling at the after position leaked after sixty tons of fuel had been passed, and sprayed oil over the quarterdeck and mortar well.

19. On Thursday 30 June DERWENT returned to Singapore Strait where a patrol was carried out between Johore Shoal Buoy and Horsburgh Light that night. During the passage down Malacca Strait an Indonesian BT boat was seen alongside two small sampans in international waters. There have been

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instances of BT boats stealing Malaysian fishing craft so DERWENT circled the BT boat for approximately twenty minutes at a range of five hundred yards before proceeding. By this time it had been established that the sampans were Indonesian.

20. Information that DERWENT's past service in Borneo waters qualified her personnel for Repatriation Benefits, and particularly War Service Homes, was received on board most favourably.

21. The health, conduct and morale of the ship's company is satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J.D. Stevens
(J.D. STEVENS)
COMMANDER R.A.N.
CAPTAIN

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