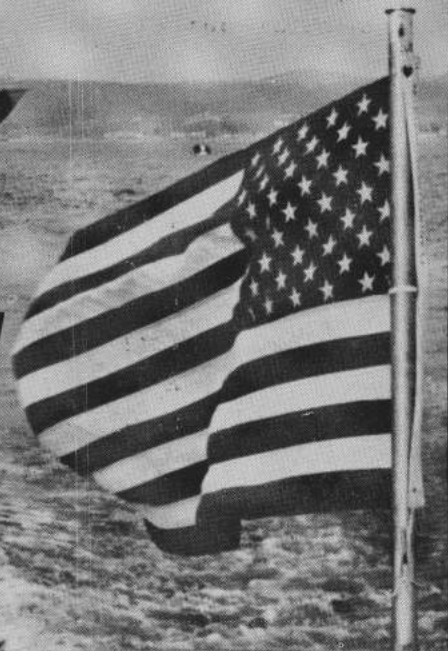


# USS YORKTOWN CVS-10

**"The Fighting Lady"**



- **Apollo 8 Recovery**
- **Cruise Around  
The Horn**



**October 16, 1968 To February 28, 1969**

# Apollo 8

## Recovery

December 27, 1968



# Apollo 8 Recovery Smooth



The recovery portion of the Apollo 8 mission moved as smoothly as the entire manned lunar orbit.

With astronauts Air Force Col Frank Borman, Navy Capt James Lovell, Jr., and Air Force Maj (later promoted to Lt Col) William Anders piloting their spacecraft through the final re-entry phase, the capsule splashed down in the Pacific, 1,000 miles southwest of Hawaii, at 4:52 am (Yorktown time) on December 27, only 2 1/2 miles from this 25-year-old carrier.

## MOON LANDING PLANNED FOR 1969

The Apollo 8, predecessor to a planned 1969 landing on the moon, made the first landing in darkness since the space program began.

**ASTRONAUTS ARRIVE--**(above) Astronauts James Lovell (L), Frank Borman (waving), and William Anders (R) step from HS-4 helicopter after historic Moon orbit flight; while (below) astronauts (from L to R) Borman, Anders, and Lovell are escorted down the flight deck between two rows of crewmembers by Capt Fifield. Photo above by Dr. Jerry L. Walker of the Yorktown Dental Department.





# Apollo 8

## Recovery

### *CREW SEES BEFORE DAWN RE-ENTRY*

Hundreds of the 1650-man crew saw the re-entry of the space scraft, traveling at seven miles a second through the re-entry zone, from the flight deck and island structure.

First to reach the capsule were three members of the Underwater Demolition Team 12 from the Naval Amphibious Base at Coronado, California.

STG3 Bob Coggin was the first in the 78-degree water to attach a sea anchor. Ltjg R.J. Flanagan and SFC Don Schwab followed soon after. Ltjg Flanagan attached another sea anchor and then the three began to put the flotation collar in place.

### *EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT IN CAPSULE*

"After checking with the astronauts to make sure everything was alright, we just took our time and did the job right", stated Ltjg Flanagan. The astronauts told the frogmen, over their intercom, to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. They expanded on their joke about the moon, saying, "It's not made of limburger cheese--it's made of American Cheese."

The astronauts were brought to the "Fighting Lady" by a helicopter piloted by Cdr Don Jones, commanding officer of HS-4. Crewmembers on the helo were Lcdr Carl Frank, co-pilot; and AWC Norvel L. Wood and AW2 James B. Dorsey, crewman. Chief Wood was first to visually spot the spacecraft in the water. After being greeted at the helicopter by John Stonesifer, senior member of the NASA recovery team, the first men ever to travel around the Moon were welcomed aboard the Yorktown by Capt J. G. Fifield.

The astronauts looked fit and trim as they bounced out of the helicopter and strode down the red carpet on the flight deck between two rows of Yorktown sailors. After a few brief words by Apollo 8 Commander Borman, thanking the crew for giving up their Christmas at home to wait for their splashdown, the astronauts were taken down on the ship's elevator to the hangar deck, to go immediately below into sickbay.

### *MEDICAL TESTS FOR FOUR HOURS*

Various tests by the 17-man NASA medical team, under the direction of Dr. Clarence A. Jernigan, took over four hours. Dr. Jernigan stated that the space travelers were in excellent condition after their six-day mission. Twice the tests were stopped. . . . Once while the astronauts got cleaned up and ate breakfast and again when they left sickbay to talk with President Johnson, who congratulated them on their successful ten-orbits of the Moon.

On their way to their quarters, in flag country, the astronauts stopped to view their charred spacecraft. They shared lunch with Capt Fifield in his inport cabin and spent the rest of the afternoon debriefing. After a formal dinner in the Wardroom with Capt Fifield and the officers of the "Fighting Lady", the world's latest heroes met the crew on the hangar deck for a re-enlistment ceremony and cake cutting party.

### *SPACE TRAVELERS FLY TO HAWAII*

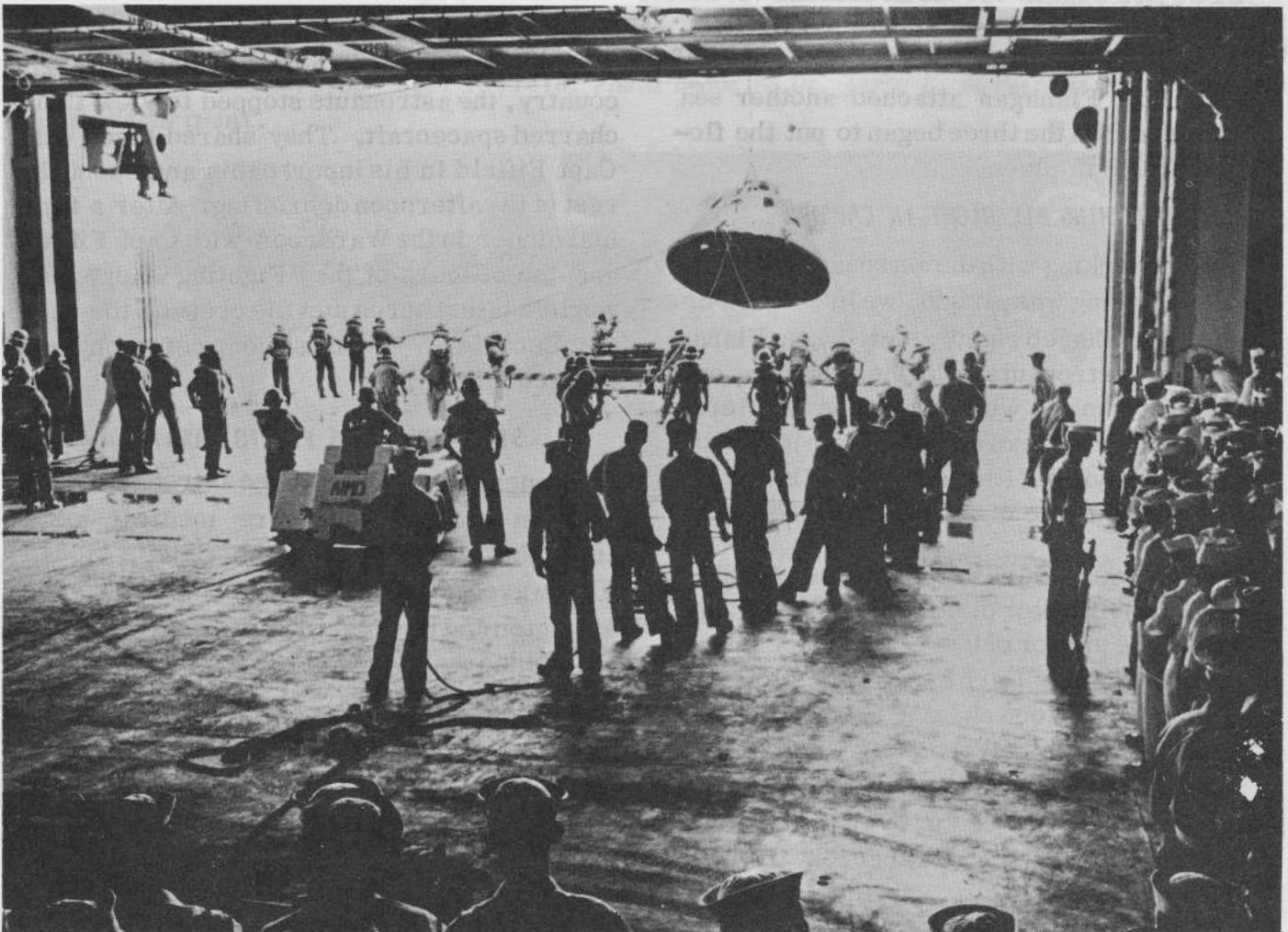
The next morning the three astronauts were back in sickbay for more medical tests and then ate brunch in the Chief's Mess. They waved goodbye to the communications ship Arlington and the Yorktown crew before boarding a plane that flew them 300-miles to Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, where they would board a C-135 for the rest of the trip back to Houston.

The Yorktown brought the silver-gold colored space capsule back to Hawaii on December 29.

The recovery operations were broadcast live in color throughout the world by the embarked television pool.

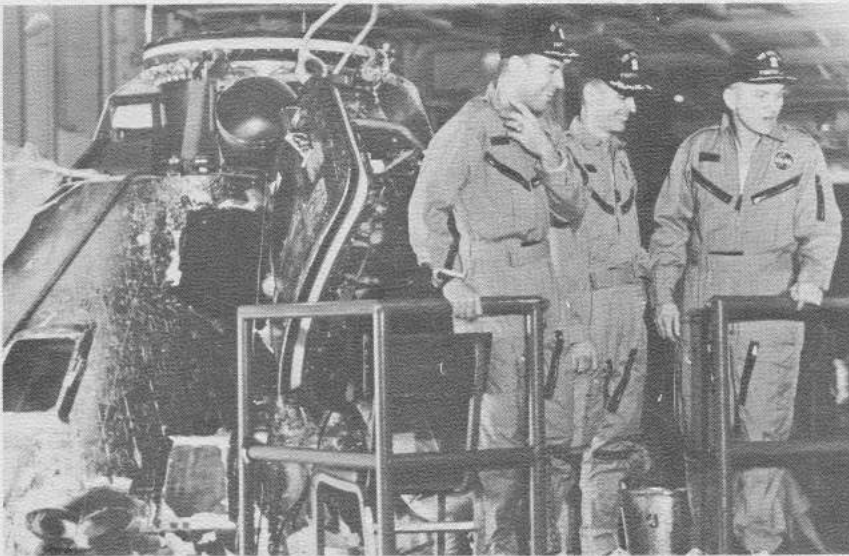


THANKS CREW--(left) Borman thanks Yorktown crew for being at sea for their recovery during Christmas, after being welcomed aboard by Capt Fifiield. Astronauts (from L to R) Anders and Borman look on; while (above) space travelers speak with President Johnson from outside sickbay.



APOLLO 8 CAPSULE BROUGHT ABOARD--The Yorktown's Weapons Department prepares to lower the Apollo 8 capsule on its dolly after bringing the lunar module aboard by the B and A crane.



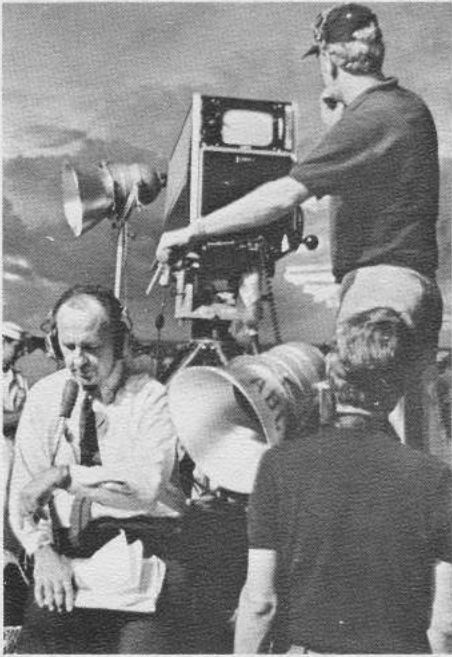


**INSPECT CHARRED CAPSULE**--Space travelers (from L to R) Lovell, Anders, and Borman return to view capsule they orbited the Moon in, after finishing four hours of medical tests in sickbay.

**DINE IN WARDROOM**--Astronauts have a candlelight dinner in the Wardroom their first evening back on Earth.



**SPACE-AGE RE-UP**--Astronaut Navy Capt James Lovell gives the oath of re-enlistment to BMCS Ed Corrie, BTCS Bob Groves, ENI William Oslund, RM3 Bob Hyde, AE2 Raymond Scott, AE2 Raymond Kissler, and ATN3 Wayne Spicier.



**LIVE COLOR TV--**Dallas Townsend, CBS correspondent, waits for astronauts arrival to continue live television coverage.

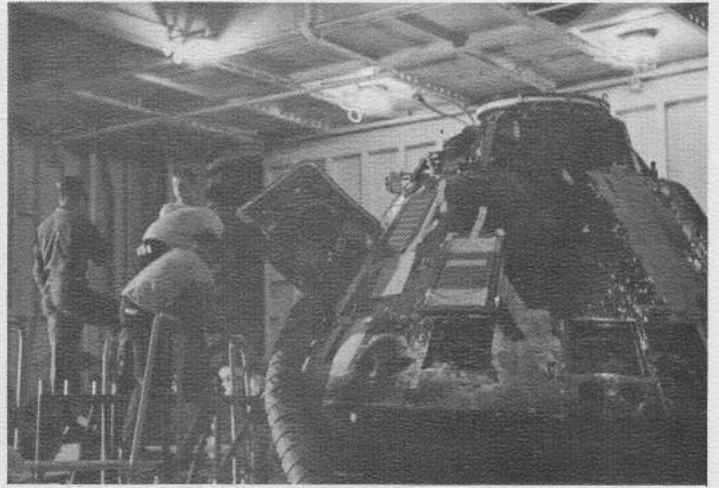
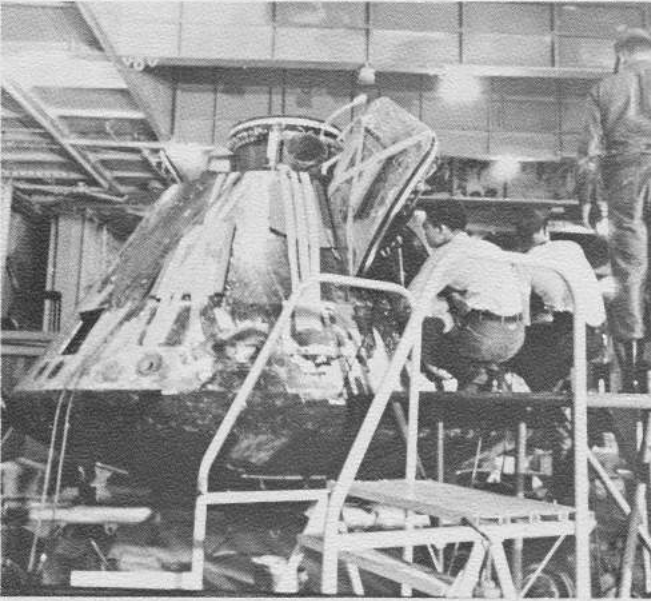


**DEPARTING YORKTOWN--**Moon orbiters (from L) Anders, Lovell, and Borman prepare to board plane for their flight to Hawaii, the morning after their lunar orbit.



**PRESS AND TELEVISION--**Members of the press and television, onboard for the Apollo 8 recovery, get still photos and live television coverage of the astronauts on that historic day,





**CAPSULE INSPECTION--**(left and above) Yorktown crewmembers inspect charred spacecraft in Hangar Bay Three.



**POST FLIGHT CHECK--**One member of the NASA recovery team worked on removing some 200 instruments and making the capsule ready for shipment back to Houston, after a post flight check,



# "Fighting Lady" Arrives At Pearl



**ANOTHER ACHIEVEMENT--**The "Fighting Lady" steamed back into Pearl Harbor with the historic Apollo 8 capsule onboard, adding another achievement to her own 25-year history.

## Recovery Team For Apollo 8 Pickup

Members of the Apollo 8 helicopter recovery team that picked up astronauts Frank Borman, James Lovell, and William Anders after their re-entry and splashdown were:

HS-4 Helo Crew--Cdr Donald S. Jones, pilot; Lcdr Carl J. Frank, copilot; AWC Norval L. Wood and AW2 James B. Dorsey, crewmen.

UDT-12 Team---Ltjg Richard J. Flanagan, SFC Donald L. Schwab, and Robert H. Coggin.

## Timetable Of Events For The Morning Of The Apollo 8 Pickup

0345--Launched Apollo 8 recovery aircraft.

0451--SPLASHDOWN, 21/2 miles off port quarter.

0459--Apollo 8 stable and upright in water.

0503--Astronauts confirm everything in capsule "AOK".

0535--First UDT swimmer in water.

0537--Sea anchor attached to capsule.

0540--Two more swimmers enter water.

0547--Swimmers attach and inflate flotation collar.

0555--Life rafts attached to capsule and inflated.

0604--Access hatch on capsule open.

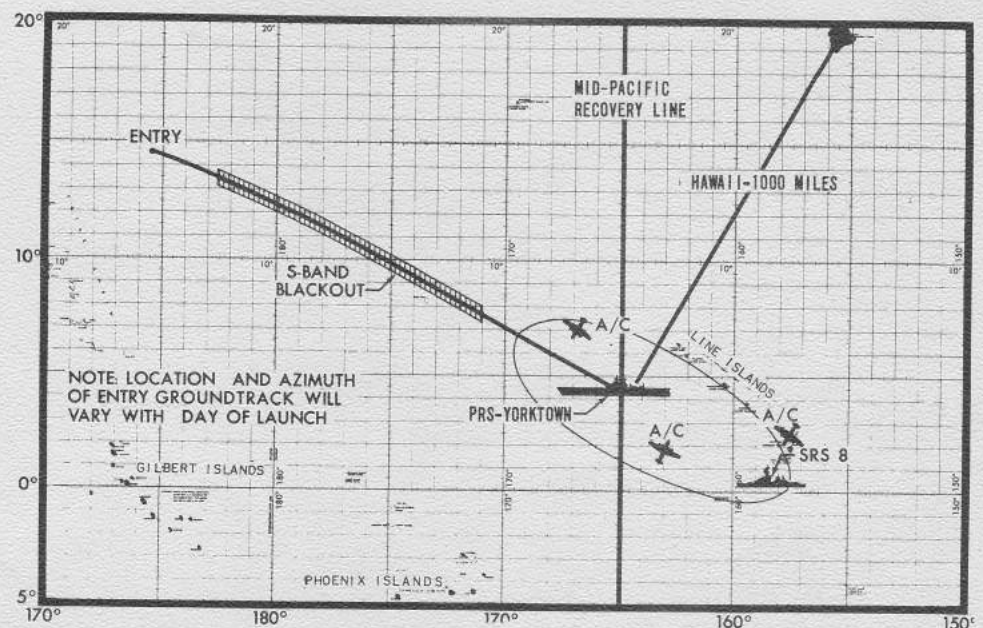
0605--Astronauts Borman, Lovell and Anders leave capsule and get into life rafts.

0615--All three astronauts in recovery helicopter.

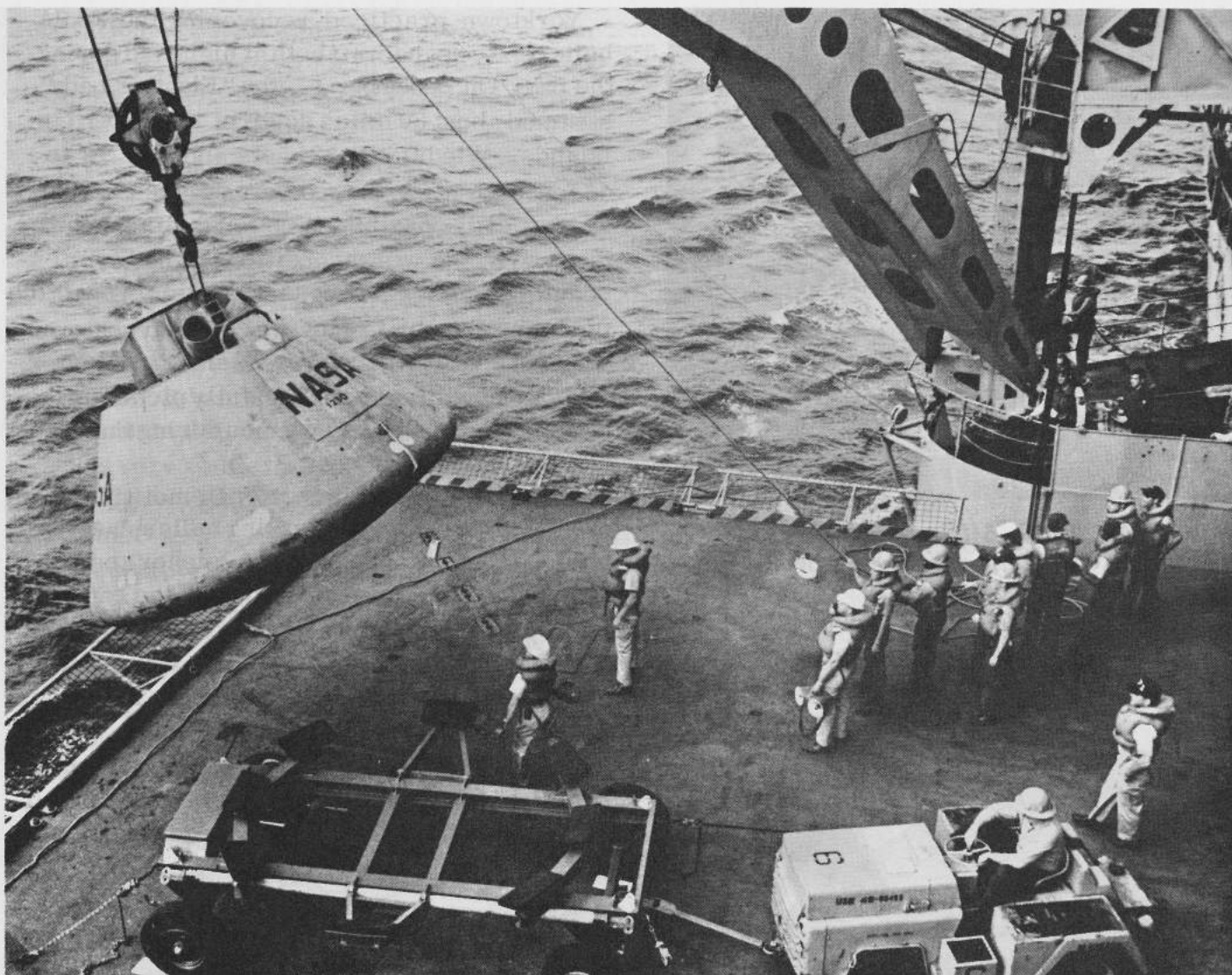
0621--Helo lands on Yorktown flight deck with astronauts.

0718--Spacecraft onboard Yorktown.

## PRIMARY LANDING AREA AND RECOMMENDED RECOVERY FORCE DEPLOYMENT



# Yorktown Practices Recovering



**PRACTICE SESSION BEGINS--**The ship's Weapons Department prepares to put the NASA boilerplate over the side, so the Apollo 8 recovery team can practice picking it up.

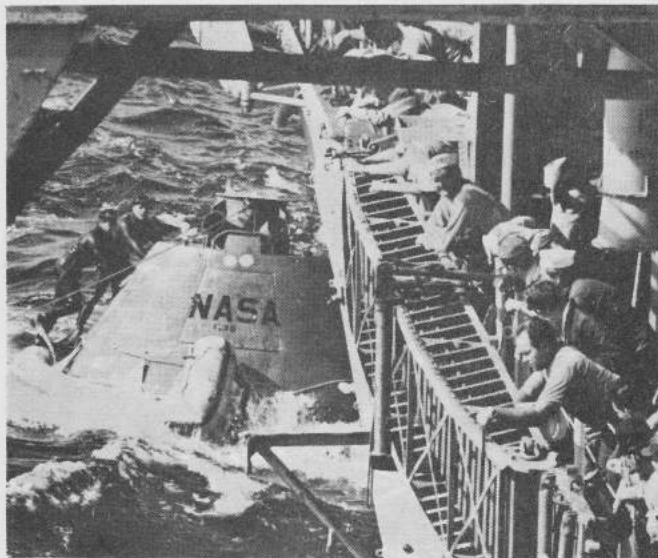


**LOADING GEAR--**Underwater Demolition Team 12 loads gear in HS-4 helicopter for a practice session of recovering the NASA boilerplate.

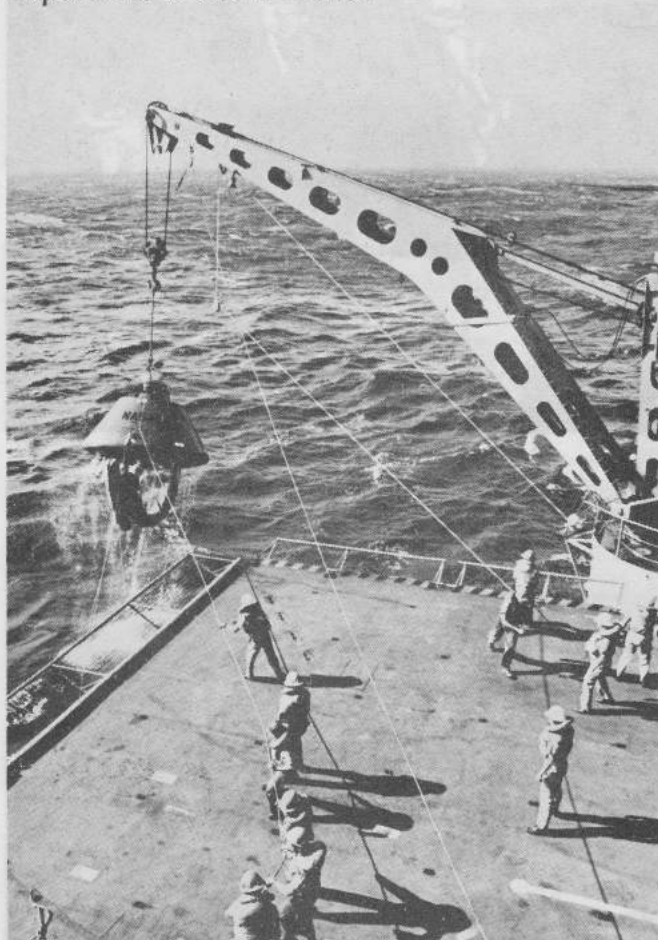




# NASA Dummy Spacecraft



**BOILERPLATE ALONG SIDE**--Crewmembers watch as UDT-12 frogmen prepare to hook dummy capsule to B and A crane.

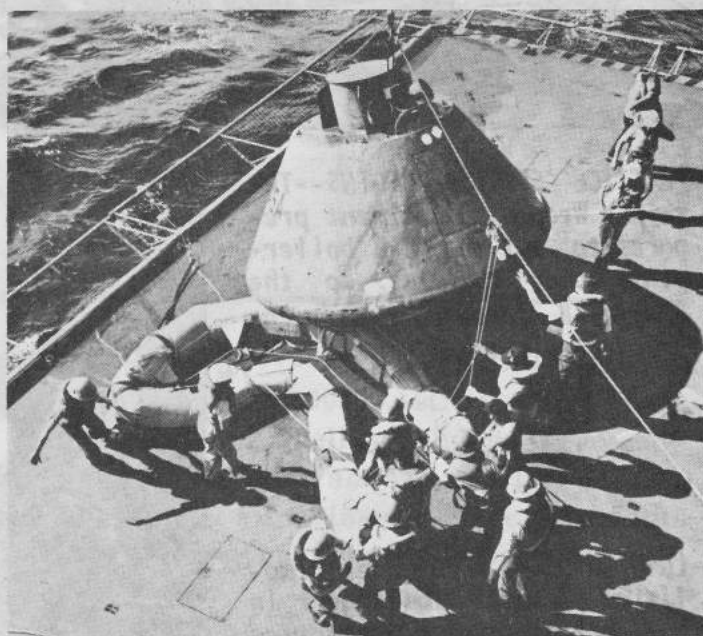


**OUT OF THE WATER**--The boilerplate is hoisted out of the water and swung over Elevator Number Three.

Yorktown practiced recovering the NASA boilerplate spacecraft both at night and during the day. On December 12, the "Fighting Lady" steamed about 60 miles south of the Hawaiian Islands. Winds up to 52 knots and seas 12 to 15 feet high made the recovery practice hazardous but still possible. One NASA official stated they were the worst conditions he had ever encountered during a recovery, either in practice or during an actual recovery. The Yorktown went out again on December 16 and, with better weather conditions, successfully picked up the dummy spacecraft three times during the day and three times at night.

Swimmers from Underwater Demolition Team 12 were dropped to the bobbing boilerplate by helo. They attached the sea anchor and flotation collar, and remained with the capsule until just before it was brought aboard the Yorktown by the Boat and Aviation Crane. The Yorktown's Weapons Department was in charge of lifting the capsule from the water.

While in the recovery area, several more practice recoveries were made before the real splashdown before dawn on December 27.



**COLLAR REMOVED**--After removing flotation collar, Weapon's Department personnel are prepared to place the capsule on a dolly.

# Weather Important To Apollo 8

Weather is something always critical to air operations. But, it was even a greater factor for the three astronauts in Apollo 8, as they completed their orbits of the Moon and splashed down in the Pacific.

A fourth man vitally interested in weather conditions in the recovery area, 1,000 miles Southwest of Hawaii, was LCdr Neil F. O'Connor, Yorktown's meteorologist.

His work began even before the capsule was launched from Cape Kennedy. He and his staff of 11 Navy aerographers provided NASA with a six day forecast prior to the launch.

"Fortunately, the weather in the recovery area is very stable this time of year," O'Connor said. "As far as weather is concerned, the impact area was about as good as we could have asked for," he added.

Weather forecasting is not new to LCdr O'Connor. His Navy career has spanned 23 years. He started out as an enlisted aerographer, and participated in the Bikini and Ewitok atomic tests.

Weather stations from the entire Pacific area were feeding information to space headquarters in Houston. Fleet Weather Central in Pearl Harbor had a vital role in forecasting wind and sea conditions in the recovery zone.

"My men made upper air as well as surface observations every three hours during the



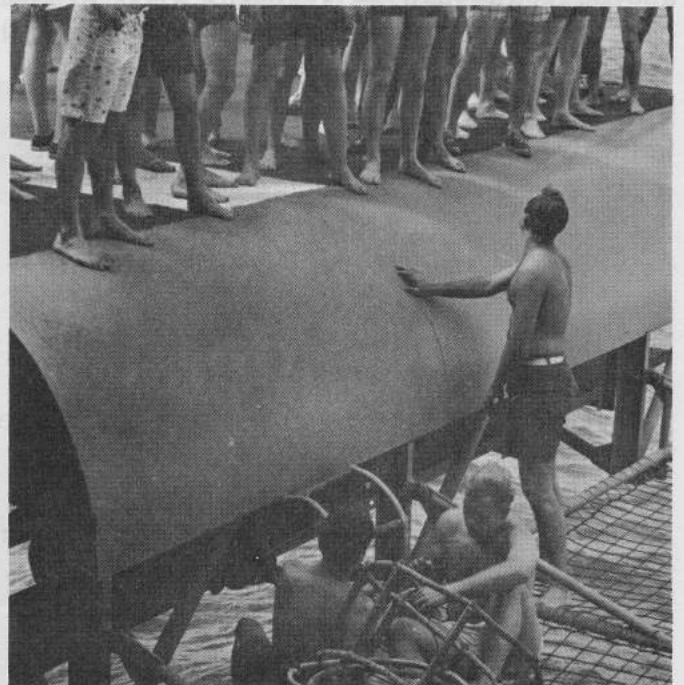
**PLOTTING WEATHER**--LCdr Neil F. O'Connor plots weather during Apollo 8 recovery.

entire mission," O'Connor said. "This information was made available to the astronauts before they splashed down," he added.

LCdr O'Connor is also Public Affairs Officer on the Yorktown, another job that kept him busy during the Apollo 8 recovery.



**SALUTE TO ARLINGTON**--Astronauts wave to crew of communications ship Arlington, before departing Yorktown for Hawaii.



**SHORTENED SWIM CALLS**--Two swim calls were cut short 1,000 miles from Hawaii while waiting for the Apollo 8 recovery. The first was due to rough water and the second because of a shark's appearance.



# Air Groups Embarked

## VAW--111, Det. 34

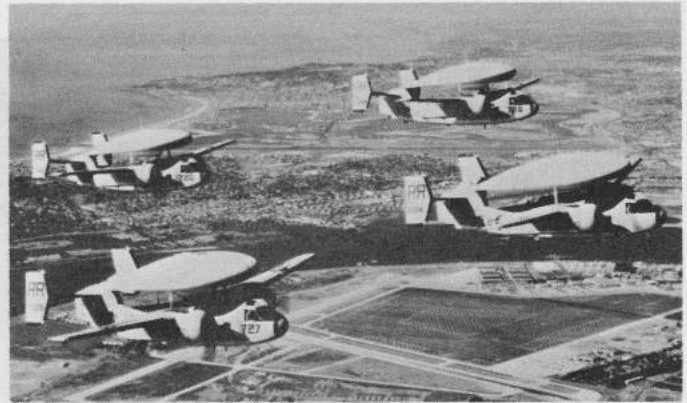


Cdr George Ormond, Jr., Officer-in-Charge of VAW-111, Detachment 34, was born on June 24, 1933, in Far Rockway, New York. He attended Long Island Agricultural And Technical Institute before entering the Naval Aviation Cadet program in Nov. 1953.

He was commissioned and designated a Naval Aviator in May, 1955.

His first duty assignment was with Attack Squadron 176, flying the A-1 "Skyraider". Subsequent assignments have included a tour at the Naval CIC School; duty as Assistant CIC Officer on USS Shangri-La; and a deployment to the Mediterranean as Officer-in-Charge of VAW-12's Detachment 42, embarked on USS Roosevelt.

Prior to reporting to VAW-111 in September, 1968, Commander Ormond attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.



The mission of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 111 is primarily used as airborne early warning to extend the radar coverage of the Yorktown. The aircraft carries a crew of five that can position jet-fighters to intercept enemy aircraft in the event of an air attack. The plane commander assisted by the co-pilot and thru the directions of the radar controller position the E-1B to provide the most effective radar capability and coverage. The complex electronics system is operated by two Naval Flight Officers as Radar Controllers and one Enlisted Flight Technician to maintain the system at peak performance.

An interesting feature of the E-1B is the massive radome. It is aerodynamically designed to provide it's own lift in flight thus producing a minimum amount of drag on the aircraft.



VR-30 CREW--Members of the VR-30 squadron that were onboard to fly the astronauts to Hawaii.

## VR--30, Det. "D"

VR-30's primary mission is logistic support for the West Coast. VR-30 is based at NAS Alameda, Calif., and fly C-131 and C-1 COD type aircraft. Assigned by AIRPAC to assist in logistic support for the Yorktown, Detachment "D" flew the astronauts and NASA personnel off the ship to Hawaii on the first leg of their trip back to Houston. LCdr Al Miller is the Officer-in Charge and Lt Stephen Collins and Ltjg Bill Barsz are co-pilots. AMH2 Clarence Atkinson and ADR2 Craig Ulrich are crewmen with the detachment.

# HS-4

Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Four was commissioned in June, 1952 at Auxiliary Landing Field Ream, San Ysidro, Calif. Since commissioning, the squadron has flown many different types of helicopters, including the HO-2, HO-4S, HSS-1N, SH-3A, and SH-3D. The squadron is now equipped with 17 SH-3D turbine powered helicopters.

HS-4 was the first ASW helo squadron to deploy aboard an aircraft carrier, the USS *Rendova* (CVE-114). In 1961 the squadron became the first command in NAVAIRPAC to achieve a 24-hour helo ASW capability with the HSS-1N.

The initiation of HS-4 into the "Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club" came during the 1966 WEST-PAC cruise. While operating in the Gulf of Tonkin, HS-4 pilots and aircrewmen rescued 24 downed airmen—the largest number recorded by any ASW squadron to date.



The SH-3D "Sea King" helicopter, built by Sikorsky Aircraft, is the latest model night, all-weather, anti-submarine warfare helicopter in use by the United States Navy. It is powered by two General Electric, T-58, gas turbine engines which produce approximately 1,250 continuous shaft horsepower each. The maximum endurance for the SH-3D is over 7 hours with a maximum range of about 700 miles.

With a normal crew of a pilot, co-pilot, and two airborne sonar technicians (Aircrewmen), the SH-3D is equipped with AQS-13 dipping sonar to carry out its mission of submarine detection and destruction. From its four external bomb racks the SH-3D can deliver either conventional or nuclear weapons.

One-time holder of the worlds speed record for helicopters, the "Sea King" has greatly reduced the time required to reach a contact area.

## Commanding Officer



Cdr Donald S. Jones, Commanding Officer of HS-4, was born in Madison, Wisconsin and attended high school and the University of Wisconsin there. He enlisted in the Navy in 1950 and a year later commenced flight training as a Naval Aviation Cadet. Upon graduation in February, 1953 he was commissioned as Ensign.

In 1955, while assigned as ASW Helicopter Project Officer with Air Development Squadron ONE (VX-1), he accepted a regular commission

as Ltjg, USN. Subsequent squadrons assignments have included HS-1, and two tours with HS-5.

In 1959 Cdr Jones completed post-graduate instruction at the Naval Intelligence School. He was later ordered to the Taiwan Defense Command in Taipei. Prior to reporting to HS-4 as Executive Officer he was assigned to the Strategic Plans Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. On November 27, 1968, Cdr Jones took command of HS-4.



# UDT-12

Underwater Demolition Team 12 assigned ten men; three officers and seven enlisted personnel, to the Apollo 8 recovery. Ltjg Richard J. Flanagan was the Officer-in-Charge of the recovery team.

UDT-12 is home based at the U.S. Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, Calif., and is part of the amphibious forces under the control of the Naval Special Warfare Group Pacific.

Deployments to WESTPAC are made on a rotation basis with UDT-11 and 13. While deployed, Team 12 is engaged in beach reconnaissance of friendly and hostile beaches in Vietnam, demolition jobs as well as clearing wreckage or blasting sandbars for landings, and accompanying Riverine Forces in the Mekong Delta. UDT-12 holds the Navy Unit Citation as well as numerous individual awards

among which are 17 purple hearts from their last deployment.

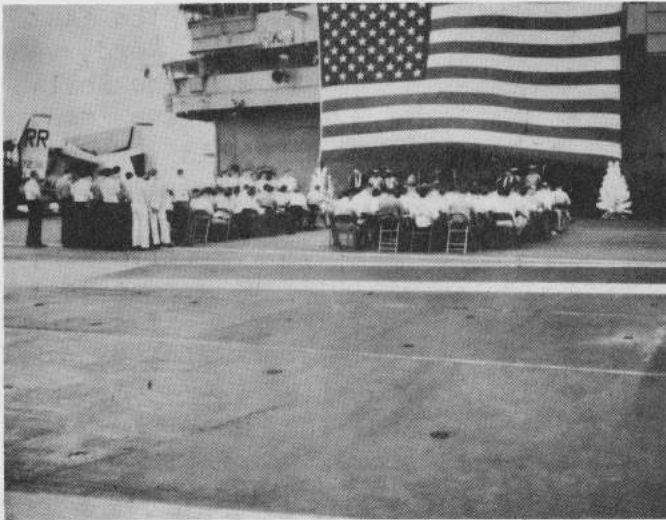
Training for the Apollo 8 recovery began last October in San Diego Bay. The prospective personnel became acquainted with the boilerplate and flotation collar. After the introductory phase, work began with the pilots from HS-4, practicing attaching the collar after exiting from the helicopter. Throughout the operation the job was made much easier by the skill and courage of the HS-4 pilots who maneuvered their helicopters to the most advantageous position for the swimmer even if that meant that the pilot could hardly see because of spray from the rotors.

Upon completion of training in San Diego final teams selected flew to Hawaii where they joined the Yorktown. More training followed in Pearl Harbor and at sea and then--December 27. Recovery went as smoothly as the practices due to the professional skill and cooperation among all the groups involved in the recovery.



**ONLY HITCH IN ENTIRE RECOVERY--**While accompanying capsule alongside Yorktown for pickup one of the frogmen from UDT-12 spotted a shark and warned his fellow frogman, who swam quickly to the raft.

# Christmas Services During Apollo 8



**JOINT CHRISTMAS SERVICE--**A joint Catholic-Protestant Prayer Service for World Peace was held on the flight deck on Christmas Day.

The Yorktown was a praying ship. Each night at taps Chaplain Lucian R. Brasley or Dean K. Veltman prayed with the crew for the safety of the astronauts, their families, and for all aboard who were to be responsible for their safe recovery. The three astronauts, Frank Borman, James Lovell, and William Anders, were in our thoughts on Christmas Eve when, just before our Candlelight Service, the word was passed that lunar ejection was accomplished and our comrades were on their way back.

Protestant Holy Communion and Catholic Midnight Mass were a time of prayers of thanksgiving--first, for the Prince of Peace and second, for those dedicated Christian officers in the command module who were heading over 200,000-miles straight for the Yorktown.

On Christmas Day a joint Catholic-Protestant Prayer Service for World Peace was held at 11 am on the flight deck. Biblical passages which spoke of the promised Prince of Peace were read from both Testaments. A joint choir led the singing of our common heritage of carols, and the prayers of men of faith representing all Christendom were said.

The ecumenical spirit of our day may

## Christmas

By Chaplain Dean K. Veltman

Christmas is the season of light. In a very real way it illuminates our paths throughout the new year which follows. Above all it is the season of sharing . . . gifts as did the wise men so long ago, praise just as the shepherds who left the tiny manger scene and returned to their work, love as given and returned within the holy family as they were drawn together by the new baby in their midst.

And so it was with Yorktown in this very holy time. Gifts from home, received and held for weeks, were opened beneath makeshift Christmas trees, praise in the form of Christmas carols were sung in Chapel services and played on the phonographs and sound systems throughout the ship, love was experienced over the distance, often in terms of loneliness and the heartfelt desire to be with those who were separated.

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yet lead to that universal time of peace promised prophetically so long ago: "They shall beat their swords into plow shears, and their spears into pruning hooks . . . neither shall they learn war anymore."