

U.S.S. Holder (DD-819) Challenging the Russians

We were enroute to Venice, Italy for a four-day visit. A full gale was blowing and the sea was rough. About midnight, we received a message to refuel and proceed to the Bay of Solomons, Libya, to monitor a Russian carrier.

U.S.S. Stormes (DD-780) was assigned to lifeguard duty for the refueling operation. As Holder was approaching the oiler, with waves breaking over the 01 level, Stormes sent a flashing light signal, "You have permission to surface". Once the coast of Libya was in sight, I ordered live ammunition up to the merry-go-rounds of 5"/38. Far removed from any possibility of support from the 6th Fleet units and in a tight situation, I voiced that there would not be another "Pueblo Incident".

Although this precaution proved unnecessary, the Russians were definitely not pleased with Holder's presence.

Submitted by CAPT Ace F. Trask, USN RET.