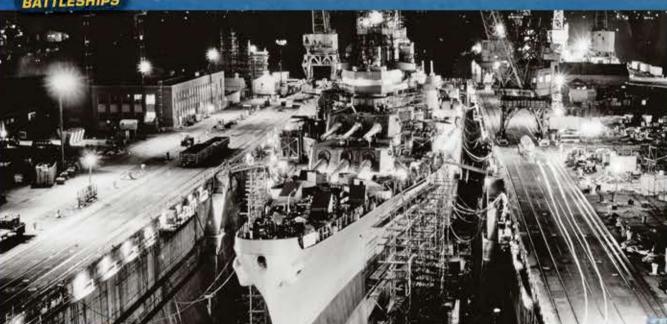


THEIR GUNS WERE ALWAYS READY PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE MIGHTY IOWA-CLASS BATTLESHIPS - THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WARSHIPS. IN THIS SIXTH INSTALLMENT COVERING USS NEW JERSEY, THE BATTLESHIP HEADS TO A NEW WAR - PART ELEVEN

BY JAMES THOMPSON



New Jersey in dry dock as modernization work is underway to prepare the battleship for a new war.

Recommissioned for the war in Vietnam, USS New Jersey (BB-62) was little modified. She is seen off Oahu, Hawail, on 11 September 1968 and although she appears festooned with antennas, in fact her communication suite was extremely austere. This symbolized a key problem of the Reserve Fleet. Communications equipment changes relatively rapidly and ships otherwise quite usable may be entirely unable to communicate with more modern craft unless they are given entirely new radio systems. The huge number of aircraft being lost to enemy action caused Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to authorize a study aimed at determining what would be required to get New Jersey reactivated. This was done on 31 May 1967 and the study was returned as favorable so, during August 1967, McNamara made the decision to recommission New Jersey "for employment in the Pacific Fleet to augment the naval gunfire support force in Southeast Asia." This was done because New Jersey was in better condition that the other lowa-class ships.

On 24 July 1968 On 24 July 1968,
New Jersey receives
16-inch shells and
power tanks from
Mount Katmai (AE16) by conventional
highline transfer and
by Sikorsky helicopter
lift. This was the first
time heavy battleship time heavy battleship ammunition had been transferred by helicopter at sea. During her sea trials following modernization, New Jersey set the battleship world speed record by achieving a speed of 35.2 knots and maintaining that speed for six hours.

Recommissioned



