

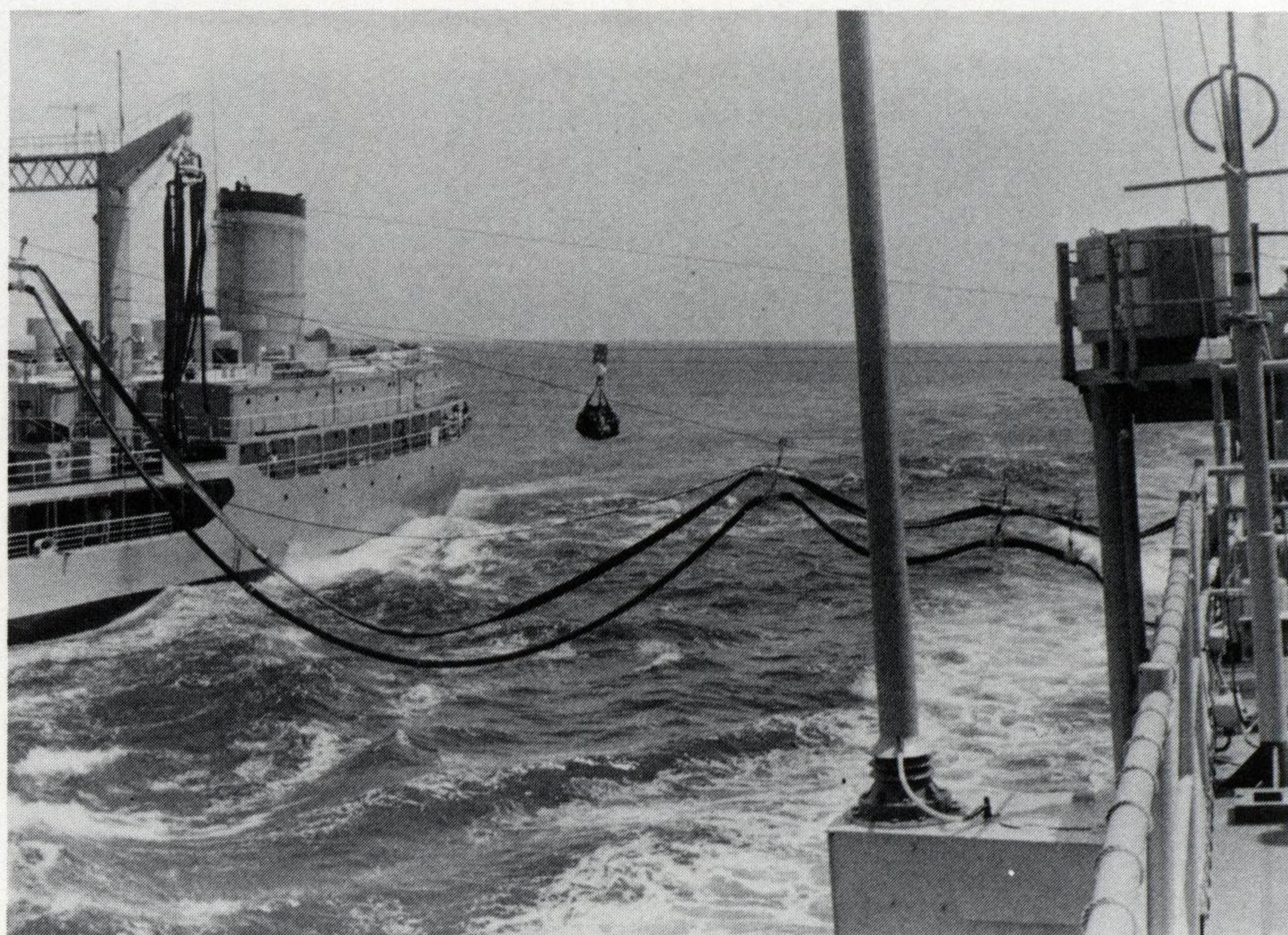
OPERATIONS

As with all ships deployed for extended periods far out upon the
briny
blue, many activities are required to keep Hepburn and her crew in
top fighting shape . . .

UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT



Captain & crew watch intently as ships maneuver within 140 feet of each other



The Russians are only just perfecting what we've been able to do for years . . .



Stores are secured to wooden pallets and transferred in cargo nets.

Underway replenishments at sea are both a blessing and a curse. Usually every three days, elements of the Battle Group cluster around their precious stores ship & receive fuel, food, & most importantly, mail. Unfortunately, these UNREPS usually occur at night or on Sunday, a traditional day of rest, even at sea. There is just nothing like getting up at 0100 for a 0200-0400 refueling evolution with the cold and wet whipping at your clothes; the slightest shelter from the wind is exquisite relief. Danger lurks there, too, for a parting line or an unexpected wave could sweep someone into the water in the blink of an eye. Vigilance, training, and discipline are the key ingredients which allow us to safely replenish time after time