

OUR LEADER *Captain Paul W. Welker Commanding Officer*



I reported as Commanding Officer USCGC Bibb late in March 1968, concerned over the state of readiness of a 30 year old ship and her equipment and the state of training of a relatively new crew. From the beginning at GITMO, great strides forward were made as each piece of equipment was checked out and each man proved himself capable. As I sailed westward, each sunset saw us more and more ready and as Bibb passed the memorable landmarks of Culebra, Panama, Pearl Harbor, Guam and finally arrived at Subic Bay my concern grew to confidence. Subsequent patrols on the barrier, NGFS missions, UNREPS, SOPA Hong Kong, R and R in Singapore and Bangkok welded our individualism into an efficient operational team. Now sailing eastward, homeward bound almost a year later and considering the many accomplishments my confidence turns to pride. Our beloved late president, John F. Kennedy stated, in part, in his first inaugural address, "... Let every nation know, whether it wishes well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge - and more ... " The officers and crew of the Bibb have worked and sacrificed to fulfill this pledge. I am extremely proud to have been privileged to serve as the Commanding Officer of the best team I have ever known. Most certainly this is the highlight of my career and I extend my heartfelt best wishes for further successes to each member of the Bibb, May God bless you all.

Paul W. Welker