

## US frigate sets sail today for exercises with SA Navy

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INWARD from West Africa, the US frigate Robert G Bradley, named after a decorated hero killed in the World War 2 battle of Leyte in October 1944, berthed at the Waterfront on Thursday during her round-Africa training voyage.

She is commanded by Commander Clint Carroll, an officer with a range of experience including time on board destroyers and the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz. His fluency in French, gleaned during a scholarship to a French university, was useful during his vessel's calls at Francophone African ports.

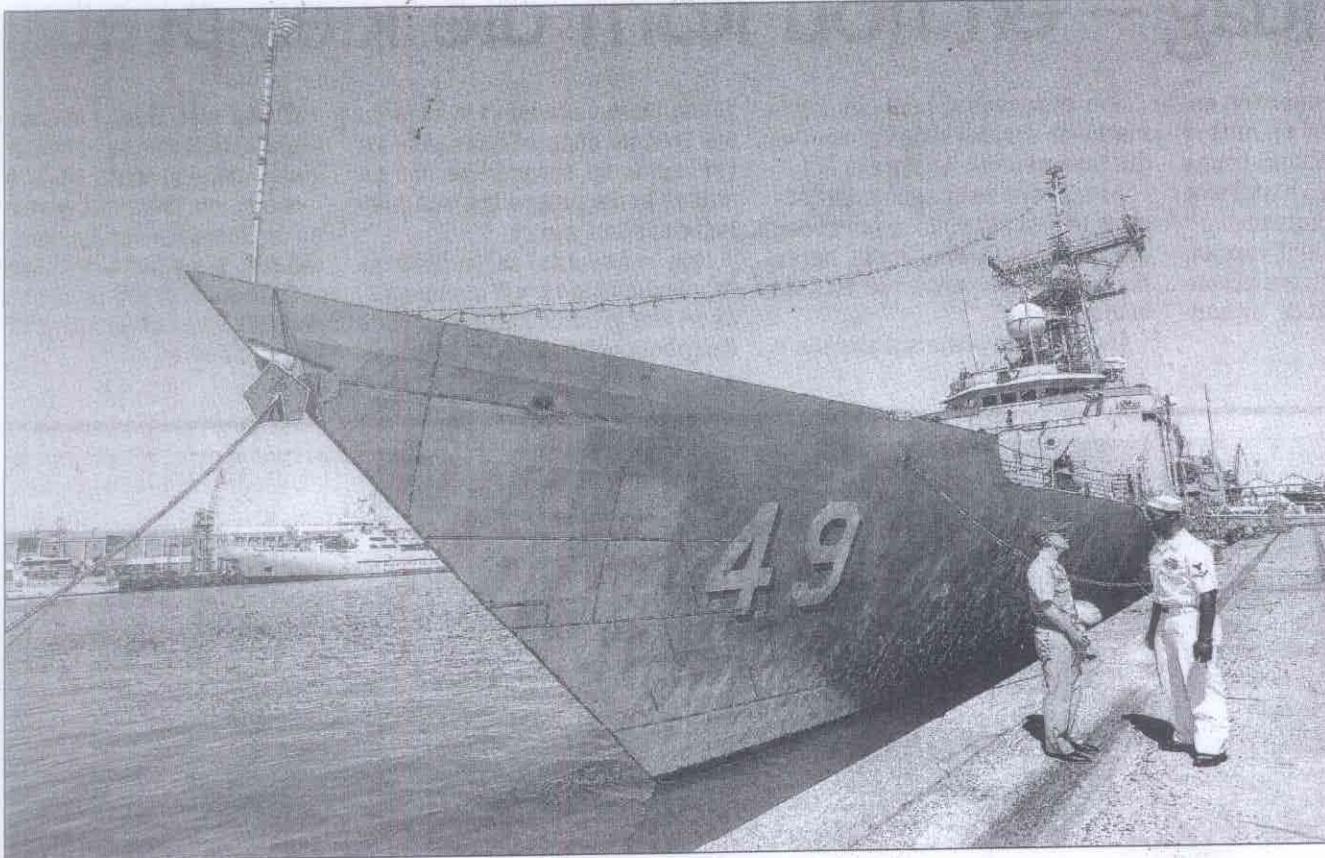
It sails today bound for Maputo, where it is to engage in exercises with the South African frigate Mendi. Neither Carroll nor Commodore Nick Holman, who was also on board, would be drawn on whether the frigate would join the anti-piracy patrol off the Somali coast where about four

US warships are operating.

Although unconnected, the frigate's arrival comes soon after the world's three largest container-ship operators announced that their megaships on European-Asian services would proceed around the Cape of Good Hope rather than through the Suez Canal.

These huge vessels join fleets of tankers, bulk carriers and smaller container ships whose owners have diverted them around the Cape rather than run the gauntlet through the pirate-infested Gulf of Aden where another ship was captured late last week. Somali pirates continue to hold hostage 11 ships and more than 200 seafarers.

Some have expressed concerns regarding an extension of piracy further south along the East African coast, and possibly into the Mozambique Channel, especially if the situation in Madagascar deteriorates, while transit through the Suez Canal is expensive and fragile in a politically volatile region.



Kdr. Tim Sparks (links) en elektroniese tegnikus (3de klas) Tele-Max Morgan van die USS Robert G. Bradley, geniet gister 'n lige oomblik met 'n bietjie vastigheid onder hul voete.

Foto: NEIL BAYNES

## Vriendelike Amerikaanse fregat het ook byt

MARCO BOTHA  
Kaapstad

Die wapperende Amerikaanse vlag voor op die USS Robert G. Bradley (FFG 49)-fregat, maak dié oorlogskip van 138 m lank in die Kaapstadse hawe selfs nóg meer vreesaanjaend.

Maar die Amerikaners kom in vrede, en kdr. Clint Carroll, bevelvoerder van dié grys gevaar, meen die Suid-Afrikaners se "warm ontvangs en handdrukke" doen wondere vir internasionale betrekkinge tussen die twee lande.

Die Amerikaners het Donderdag in Kaapstad vasgemeer as deel van 'n veldtog om hoofsaaklik maritieme veiligheid, vaardigheid en sekerheid aan die kus van Afrika op te skerp.

Hulle het die afgelope agt weke verskeie lande aan die vasteland se westerlike kus besoek, waar hulle ook gemeenskapswerk gedoen het.

Hulle sal Maandag voor hul vertrek na Maputo aan 'n gesamentlike vloot-oefening in Simonstad met hul plaaslike eweknie deelneem.

Adm. Rusty Higgs van die SA Vloot in Simonstad het gesê die samewerking help Suid-Afrika om 'n ondersteuningsbasis van internasionale vennote in vreemde waters op te bou.

Ofskoon dié Robert G. Bradley in 1984 as 'n volbloed-vegskip in gebruik geneem is, het hy nou 'n aansienlik vriendeliker gesig.

'n Missiellanseerdeur is ses jaar gelede van die skip verwyn, aangesien dit as oorbodig beskou is.

'n Volledig ingerigte gimnasium en 'n reuse-Thermo King-vrieskas, staan in die plek waar twee SH-60 Sea Hawk-helikopters normaalweg sou staan.

Dit beteken egter nie die skip het net blaf en nie byt nie. Die grootste wapen aan boord is 'n 76 mm/62-kaliber snellvurende kanon wat 80 rondes per minuut kan afvuur. Verder beskik dié seevaarder oor 'n masjiengeweer wat met behulp van radar aankomende missiele in hul pad kan stuit.

En hoewel hulle nie op 'n veldtog is om seerowery te bekamp nie, is hulle gereed om plan te maak indien hul dienste in dié verband verlang word.

Die Bradley kan teen meer as 28 knope vaar, weeg 4 100 ton en word gestuur met 'n stuurwiel wat nie veel groter is as 'n badprop nie.