



Emergency on Board USS Abraham Lincoln: The Difficult Conditions of the US Crew

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The prolonged mission of the aircraft carrier **USS Abraham Lincoln** has spotlighted the severe difficulties experienced by the personnel of the **United States Navy**. Deployed in the waters of the Middle East, the ship and its over **5,000 sailors and marines** are facing a record deployment that has exceeded **250 consecutive days at sea** without touching land.

Living conditions at the limit and critical logistics

The testimonies collected from family members and disseminated by specialized outlets describe an extremely critical logistical and sanitary situation within the U.S. military ship:

- **Lack of basic goods:** there are reports of exhaustion of fresh food supplies, rationing of meals, and scarce supplies of personal hygiene products.

- **Onboard malfunctions:** broken plumbing systems, out-of-service toilets, laundries blocked for weeks, and prolonged periods without hot water.
- **Environmental issues:** humidity has favored the proliferation of mold in shower areas and rest areas.

The long shadow of conflicts: PTSD and post-9/11 suicides

The drama experienced on board fits into a broader structural context that dramatically links operational service to invisible human costs. Statistics related to recent campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq highlight an alarming crisis: there are over **30,000 suicides among post-9/11 veterans**, a tragically four times higher number compared to those recorded directly in combat theaters. Additionally, about **30-31% of deployed military personnel** develop significant rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injuries (TBI), confirming that psychological wear and tear represents the true silent wound of the U.S. armed forces.

The psychological impact on personnel

The prolonged isolation, the absence of port calls, and the continuous postponements of the return date to the **United States** have generated devastating psychological pressure on the crew. The tension has reached such levels that some sailors have resorted to extreme actions to escape the exhausting routine of the mission.

The crucial role of the chain of command and psychological support

In such extreme operational contexts, the resilience and safeguarding of the crew depend critically on the active presence of the **Command Sergeant Major (CSM)** and the **onboard psychological personnel**.

- **The human filter of the Command Sergeant Major:** the CSMs represent the fundamental bridge between the ordinary sailors and the higher operational levels. They are the field reference figure capable of promptly intercepting signs of emotional collapse, mitigating burnout, and voicing the real conditions of discomfort of the crew.

- **The importance of psychologists:** the constant presence and clinical listening by mental health specialists are essential to identify symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress, and despair before they turn into irreversible tragedies.

Conclusions

The stories and hardships emerging from the USS Abraham Lincoln invite a deep reflection on the long-term sustainability of prolonged missions. Finding a balance between the strategic needs of power projection and the protection of the dignity and health of those operating on the front lines becomes a delicate but essential step, so that operational commitment never compromises the psychophysical well-being of those who wear the uniform.

Sources



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