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C-130 Hercules – Workhouse of the World - II

Lead: One of the reasons for the success of the C-130 Hercules aircraft was the sheer lack of limits to the ways it could be configured for service - even from a Navy aircraft carrier.

Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts

Content: At first the Lockheed C-130A was designed to carry cargo. Because it was literally overpowered by its four huge Allison turboprop engines, it could land and

take off on paved or dirt runways in remarkably short distances – 800 feet to take off as compared to the thousands of feet other aircraft of its size required. So powerful were its engines that once in the air the plane could fly on three or even two engines with little loss of performance.

From almost the beginning the ever-creative designers at Lockheed Martin demonstrated the variety of uses to which this airframe could be put. In addition to its cargo conformation, the C-130 is currently built in 11 variants with 16 mission configurations including medical evacuation, a feared and powerful gunship providing close air support for ground operations, maritime patrol, a covert insertion vehicle, a search and rescue airframe, and a hurricane hunter. It even ferries supplies to Antarctica using Teflon coated skis on landing and take-off. On October 30, 1963 an only lightly

modified KC-130F transport became the largest and heaviest aircraft to land and take off from an aircraft carrier. Five hundred miles east of Boston the plane, emblazoned with the sign, “LOOK MA, NO HOOK,” landed and took off repeatedly.

More than 2500 of these planes have been manufactured and are flying all over the world, making it one of the most successful airframe programs in post-WWII aviation.

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