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U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45)
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SECURITY INFORMATION

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NAVHISTDIVINST 5500.1
By: OP-09892C

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: (1) Commander Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN
(2) Commander SEVENTH Fleet
(3) Commander Naval Forces, FAR EAST
(4) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report for the period 3 March 1952 through 4 April 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 3480.5 dated 1 July 1951

Encl: (1) Commander, CATG ONE conf ltr ser 07 of 7 April 1952 p. 13

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Action Report for the period of 3 March through 4 April 1952 is hereby submitted:

PART I

COMPOSITION OF OWN FORCES AND MISSION

In compliance with CTF 77 dispatch 280118Z of February 1952, the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45), CAPTAIN OSCAR PEDERSON Commanding, with ComCarDiv FIVE (REAR ADMIRAL F. W. MC MAHON) embarked departed Yokosuka, Japan, for the operating area on 3 March 1952.

On 5 March 1952 the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) joined Task Force 77 close to the 38th Parallel on the east coast of Korea. The Task Force was commanded by REAR ADMIRAL JOHN PERRY, ComCarDiv ONE, aboard the USS ESSEX (CV-9) and operating under Task Force 77 Operation Order 22-51 (2nd Revision) dated 6 December 1951. It was composed of USS ESSEX (CV-9), USS ANTIETAM (CV-36), USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45), USS ST PAUL (CL-73), USS ROCHESTER (CA-124), USS J. A. BOLE (DD-755), USS LOFBERG (DD-759), USS EUCK (DD-761), USS B. BASS (DD-887), USS STICKELL (DD-888), USS CHEVALIER (DDR-805) and USS A. J. ISBELL (DD-869).

On 2 April 1952 the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) departed Task Force 77 in accordance with CTF 77 dispatch 280236Z of March 1952 and arrived in Yokosuka, Japan 4 April 1952 for a period of maintenance and upkeep.

The mission of Task Force 77 was as follows:

- (1) Conduct air operations from an operating area off the east coast of Korea to provide close air support of friendly troop operations, interdiction to enemy routes of movement and supply, and armed reconnaissance of enemy installations and lines of communications.
- (2) Provide air cover for replenishment ships and other friendly naval surface forces when necessary.
- (3) Protect the force against air, surface and subsurface attacks.

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Commander Carrier Air Task Group ONE is CDR C. H. CRABILL, Jr., USN. The Group had the following on-board count of pilots and aircraft at the beginning of flight operations on 4 March 1952.

<u>SQUADRON</u>	<u>NO. OF PILOTS</u>	<u>NO. OF AIRCRAFT</u>
VF 52	20	12 F9F-2
VF 111	23	11 F9F-2
VF 194	26	10 AD2(3), 2 AD-2Q
VF 653	25	16 F4U-4
VC 3 (Detachment)	5	3 F4U-5N
VC 11 (Detachment)	4	3 AD-4W
VC 35 (Detachment)	5	3 AD-4NL
VC 61 (Detachment)	4	3 F9F-2P
HU 1 (Detachment)	2	1 HO 3S-1
TOTAL	114	64

PART IICHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

3-3-52: Departed Yokosuka, Japan for the operating area. Conducted training exercises and routine ship drills.

3-4-52: Conducted refresher air operations in Area FOX during the afternoon. The ship conducted training exercises and battle problems.

3-5-52: Air operations were conducted during the morning in preparation for combat operations. Planes transferred from the USS ESSEX (CV-9) were landed aboard during the morning operation which brought the on-board count of aircraft to 81.

3-6-52: Air operations were conducted aimed at the destruction of the North Korean rail net. The morning hecklers sighted a total of 6 locomotives to which flights were diverted throughout the day. Two locomotives were completely destroyed and the 4 others severely damaged. 50 rail cuts were made, 46 boxcars destroyed and 22 boxcars damaged. A total of 87 sorties were flown.

3-7-52: Routine air operations continued. A total of 91 sorties were flown and a total of 124 rail cuts were made. This score set a record for rail cutting for the VALLEY FORGE to date.

3-8-52: Air operations were hampered due to bad weather. Our morning hecklers and one flight of 4 F4U's were the only planes over Korea today. A total of 30 sorties were flown and the damage amounted to 3 trucks, 8 rail cars, 3 supply buildings and rails were cut in 8 places.

3-9-52: Routine air operations were conducted as scheduled. A total of 5 planes suffered flak damage, although only one, LTJG R. KOMEROFF, VF 194, was forced to land at King 50, an emergency field. All the others returned safely aboard. A total of 87 sorties were flown scoring 70 rail cuts.

3-10-52: Replenished at sea.

3-11-52: Air operations resumed as scheduled. LT H. L. WRIGHT, VF 653, flying an F4U, was hit by flak while flying an inland reconnaissance route. The

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3-12-52: Routine air operations continued as scheduled. A total of 6 planes suffered flak damage. Two, LTJG J. M. THAYER, VF 194 and LT H. A. BORGERDING, VF 194, were forced to land at King 18 and King 50, respectively. All the others returned safely aboard. A total of 90 sorties were flown scoring 97 rail cuts, destroying 11 trucks and 2 railroad cars.

3-13-52: Routine air operations continued. A total of 4 planes suffered flak damage. Two, LCDR R. S. SCHREIBER, VF 194, and LTJG N.J. JOHNSON, VF 194, were forced land at King 18. All the other planes returned safely aboard. The night hecklers were launched 50 minutes early to lend Air Support to TR 95.21 which was under fire from shore installations. Pilots reported the mission successful, having been given a "Well Done" by the USS MANCHESTER (CL-83). A total of 100 sorties were flown, scoring 71 rail cuts, destroying 3 trucks and 3 shore batteries.

3-14-52: Replenished at sea.

3-15-52: Air operations resumed as scheduled. A total of 10 planes suffered flak damage, but all returned safely aboard. A total of 90 sorties were flown scoring 84 rail cuts, destroying 2 locomotives, 5 trucks and 3 rail bridges.

3-16-52: Routine air operations continued as scheduled. A total of 7 planes suffered flak damage, but all returned safely aboard. A total of 91 sorties were flown scoring 118 rail cuts.

3-17-52: Routine air operations continued as scheduled. LCDR H. L. BASLEE, Commanding Officer, VF 52, flying a F9F-2, was hit by AA at CU 515520. The pilot did not bail out, and his burning plane exploded on impact. There was no chance of survival. A total of 6 planes suffered flak damage. One, LT R. P. TAYLOR, VC 3, was forced to land at King 18. All the other planes returned safely aboard. A total of 90 sorties were flown scoring 88 rail cuts.

3-18-52: Replenished at sea.

3-19-52: Air operations were cancelled because of inclement weather.

3-20-52: Air operations resumed as scheduled. A total of 6 planes suffered flak damage. LTJG C. GARDNER, VF 653, and LT R. S. GEFFEL, VF 653, were forced to land at King 50. LTJG J. E. GRAY, VF 653, and LT E. L. KEARNS, VF 653, were forced to land at King 18. All the other planes returned safely aboard. A total of 88 sorties were flown scoring 108 rail cuts and destroying 4 railroad cars and 11 trucks.

3-21-52: Air operations were continued as scheduled. LTJG C. G. STRAHLEY, VF 52, received major flak damage while flying a routine reconnaissance mission. LTJG STRAHLEY made a conventional bail out over water near Hungnam. Upon the arrival of the rescue helicopter the body was sighted under the surface entangled in the shroud lines. There was no chance of survival. An unsuccessful attempt was made to recover the body. LTJG S. W. BERRY, VF 194 and LTJG J. P. COOPER, VF 194, were forced to make emergency landings at King 18 and King 50 respectively. LTJG COOPER suffered minor wounds about the face. Other planes received flak damage but returned safely. A total of 89 sorties were flown scoring 74 rail cuts, destroying 2 railroad bridges and 6 trucks.

3-22-52: Air operations were continued as scheduled. The night heckler flight was cancelled due to inclement weather. ENSIGN K. A. SCHOCKER, VF 194, received lacerations about the face when a AA shell penetrated his cockpit. The pilot

3-24-52: Air operations were cancelled due to inclement weather.

3-25-52: Air operations resumed, but weather conditions allowed only one event. A total of 20 sorties were flown destroying 25 buildings and starting fires in a lumber storage area.

3-26-52: Air operations resumed as scheduled. Two planes suffered flak damage, but returned safely aboard. A total of 88 sorties were flown scoring 113 rail cuts.

3-27-52: Air operations continued as scheduled. A total of 6 planes suffered flak damage. ENSIGN J. L. AKAGI, VF 194, hit by AA, was forced to land at King 18. A total of 90 sorties were flown scoring 99 rail cuts, destroying 9 trucks and 10 buildings.

3-28-52: Air operations continued as scheduled. A total of 4 planes suffered flak damage but all returned safely aboard. 89 sorties were flown scoring 62 rail cuts, destroying 10 trucks, 7 gun positions and 7 railroad bridges and by-passes.

3-29-52: Replenished at sea.

3-30-52: Air operations were resumed as scheduled. A total of 6 planes suffered flak damage. Due to such damage, ENSIGN N. E. STERRETT, VF 653 was forced to ditch his F4U in Wonsan Harbor. The pilot was immediately rescued by the helicopter from BELTING (LST-799) and suffered no injuries. ENSIGN F. C. JOHNSON, VF 194, was forced to land at King 18. All the other planes returned safely aboard. A total of 89 sorties were flown scoring 144 rail cuts. This is claimed as a record number of cuts scored by one carrier for one day's operations. One locomotive, 19 trucks, 3 rail by-passes and 1 rail bridge were destroyed.

3-31-52: Air operations continued. The night heckler flight was cancelled due to inclement weather. Two planes suffered flak damage but both returned safely aboard. A total of 85 sorties were flown scoring 111 rail cuts and destroying 3 trucks, 22 buildings, 10 rail road bridges and 4 rail by-passes.

4-1-52: Air operations were hampered due to inclement weather conditions. However, 54 sorties were flown scoring 27 rail cuts and destroying 5 railroad by-passes. A total of 3 planes suffered flak damage, but all returned safely aboard.

4-2-52: Replenished at sea. Departed Task Force 77 for port at Yokosuka, Japan.

4-3-52: The ship conducted two damage control battle problems plus engineering, CIC, and communications drills while enroute to port.

4-4-52: Arrived at Yokosuka, Japan for a period of maintenance and upkeep.

PART III

PERFORMANCE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT

5. Ammunition Expended:

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Napalm	127
20mm Ammunition	200,300
.50 Cal. Ammunition	245,480
5"/38 Cal. AA	136
40mm Cal. AA	807

PART IV

BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Damage to Ship:

Heavy weather encountered 23 thru 25 March 1952 caused the following damages:

a. 40mm Mounts 1 & 2:

Both radar antennas were ripped off and broken. One ring sight was broken. Loading platforms were bent.

b. Directors 1 & 2 (for 40mm Mounts 1 & 2):

Director stations were flooded and radar sets damaged. Some of the equipment is salvageable.

c. Flight Deck Supports:

The riveted doubler plates, which secure the port forward "H" beam stanchion to the under side of the flight deck girder, all the way forward on the forecastle, were sheared. This "H" beam supports the forward port corner of the flight deck. The two forward transverse bents on the forecastle had their webs dished aft appreciably on the starboard side.

d. Miscellaneous:

Two ports were stove in in officer's country. Several small sections of flight deck catwalk were carried away or badly twisted. Limit switches on the port jet blast deflector shorted and allowed the motor to over-run, breaking the hoist cable. Gasoline piping between stations 1 and 2, Flight Deck, was torn loose from its supporting brackets.

B. Damage to Aircraft:

<u>No. of Planes</u>	<u>Types</u>	<u>Causes</u>
32	F9F-2	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
1	F9F-2F	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
16	F4U-4	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
4	F4U-5N	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
18	AD-2(3)	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
1	AD-4L	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
4	AD-4NL	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.

C. Loss of Aircraft:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Squadron</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Bu. No.</u>	<u>Causes</u>
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D. Damage inflicted on Enemy:

	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Trucks	120	7
Tanks	2	2
Oxcarts	120	
Hiway Bridges	6	2
Supply Dumps	7	4
Fuel Dumps	2	4
Ammo Dumps	2	
Factories	4	6
Barracks and Buildings	152	190
Warehouses	5	23
Gun Emplacements	42	2
Lumber Piles		25
Wagons	2	
Oxen	76	
Boats	155	240
Bunkers	5	
Marshalling Yards		20
RR Bridges	36	15
RR Cars	170	132
RR By-Passes	35	9
Highway By-Passes	6	
Roundhouses		2
Bulldozers		2
Rail Cuts	1,615	
Crane	1	
Repair Depot	2	
Mines		1
Troops	601	

The above mentioned table represents a conservative estimate of the actual damage inflicted on the enemy during this operational period. Only those instances where the damage could be assessed by the pilot were used in compiling this table. There were many attacks where the results were obscured and could not be assessed. There was no close air support flown during this period.

PART V

PERSONNEL

A. Performance:

During this operating period the average-on-board count of personnel was 1965, which number was satisfactory. The total losses for various reasons were 24; this was offset by 73 gains. Twenty (20) men were away on temporary additional duty and 8 absent on leave.

The critical shortage of petty officers continues in the Gunnery, Communications, Electronics, and Engineering ratings. Every effort is being made to prosecute a vigorous on-board training program to train lower ratings to perform the assignments of these higher rates which are and will remain critical.

B. Morale:

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Sunday, in addition to daily Roman Catholic Mass and the evening prayer, are now conducted.

Mail service has been satisfactory. It has been improved for this period on the line by the addition of delivery of second class matter, enabling the enjoyment of relatively recent periodicals.

The use of the 1 MC circuit to broadcast through the ship a summary of the day's combat operations, which practice this ship inaugurated in 1950 and found to be highly successful is being continued. In this way members of the ship's company not engaged in flight deck operations are made acquainted with the result of the strikes carried out by members of the Air Group. In addition, the RBO system offers continuous programs throughout the day and evening over two channels. One channel carries Armed Forces Radio Programs, the other live and transcribed programs originating in the ship's broadcasting booth. An officer with experience in broadcasting has been assigned the collateral duty of supervising these programs. The inadequacy in number of RBO speakers available (23 for the entire ship) limits the effectiveness of this program. Correspondence is being prepared to recommend to BuShips that more RBO outlets be provided.

In port the ship offers opportunities for athletics, motion pictures, and a generous liberty policy. Personnel are afforded leave privileges at rest hotels to the fullest possible extent.

D. Public Information Office:

It is recommended that, while the ship is deployed, a Journalist rating serve aboard to assist the PIO. It is considered that this professional assistance is necessary to keep the public adequately informed of the numerous events occurring aboard a carrier. Correspondence to recommend this provision in the enlisted personnel allowance will be submitted.

E. Casualties:

LT Hull Leroy WRIGHT, USNR, 325815/1315, VF 653. On 11 March 1952, while flying an F4U, purpose 1T1, cause TARE, he parachuted from the plane at low altitude and struck the ground with partially opened burning parachute. LT WRIGHT was reported killed in action.

LTJG Alan (n) HOFF, USN, 466541/1310, VF 111. On 11 March 1952, while flying an F9F-2F, purpose 1V1, cause TARE. The plane rolled over after being hit by AA fire and dove into ground, exploding on impact. LTJG HOFF was reported killed in action.

LCDR Herbert Lester BASLEE, Jr., USN, 165577/1310, VF 52. On 17 March 1952, while flying an F9F-2, purpose 1T1, cause TARE, his plane was hit by AA fire while attacking an AA position. The aircraft crashed into side of hill in shallow dive, exploding on impact. LCDR BASLEE was reported killed in action.

LTJG Charles Glasgow STRAHLEY, USN, 513261/1310, VF 52. On 21 March 1952, while flying an F9F-2, purpose 1T1, cause TARE. Shortly after being hit by AA fire the aircraft caught fire. The pilot parachuted over water, but failed to clear chute after a water landing. LTJG STRAHLEY was reported killed in action.

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On 22 and 23 March, the strongest winds and highest seas of the period were encountered, with maximum winds of 50 to 55 knots with gusts to 65 knots. These winds resulted from a weak low center moving into the Sea of Japan from southern Manchuria on 22 March, deepening rapidly, and accelerating. Early on 24 March the low center had moved eastward out of the Sea of Japan and the winds decreased to near normal, but a northeasterly swell of 5 to 10 feet continued throughout the day, decreasing to 2 to 5 feet on the 25th.

(1) Communications:

Facsimile (Aerology Laboratory): The reception has continued to improve over that of the first and second operating periods.

Radioteletype: Reception was average.

Radio (CW Radio): CW reception of weather was fair to average.

(2) Recommendations:

Same as submitted in Action Report of 7 December 1951 thru 19 January 1952.

b. Air Intelligence:

During the period of this report an increased number of 37mm positions were noted on the main rail lines between Hamhung and Wonsan. Comparison of photography indicates that these additional guns (approximately 8 37mm positions) were removed from rails running immediately west from Kowon. Generally, 37mm positions are located on opposite sides of the rails and spaced from 2 to 3 miles apart. Latest photographs show the concentration to be on the rail lines from Yonghung south to Wonsan and at the railroad bridge immediately south of the city of Hamhung. As the previous reports indicate mobility of these positions point out the necessity of obtaining late photographic coverage on all heavily defended rail lines prior to strikes.

Coordinated events were scheduled designed to suppress flak along certain selected sectors of rail in advance of a rail-cutting event. Consideration was given to (1) the best section of track to be hit, (2) varying type of ordnance, (3) annotated photographs pin-pointing flak positions within effective range of the selected sector of track, and (4) the air space involved over the area. Results have been satisfactory, and indications are that more use of coordinated strike type of flak suppression will be utilized as the situation dictates.

The establishment of the Air Navigation Office, located at ComFairJAP, Atsugi, has greatly aided in matters of supply. It is recommended that Air Intelligence personnel, upon arrival in the forward area, become personally acquainted with this facility and the services it affords.

c. Combat Information Center:

(1) Radars:

During this period all radars operated normally and were available

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(2) Communications:

Communications were generally satisfactory and range on FAD nets was excellent. There is still a considerable amount of cross-talk on the AN/ARCs in CIC and also on primary and secondary tactical and CI primary. It has been observed that upon joining the Task Force for the first time or rejoining from port all ships, including this one, have considerable communications trouble which results in a general delay in passing of information when speed is most important. This occurs in spite of in-port prevention maintenance.

(3) Flag Operations:

CIC functioned as Flag CIC for Task Force 77 during this period.

d. Communications:

Radio communications continued to be satisfactory in the main. As in preceding periods, the volume of traffic taxed the capacity of available personnel and equipment. A total of 22,847 messages were handled in Radio I during the period 5 March through 1 April, of which 3,838 were transmitted and 19,009 were received. Numerous frequency shifts were required daily, a total of 280 for the period being accomplished by Radio II and 359 by Radio III.

The wear and tear on equipment from constant usage is beginning to be manifested in more frequent breakdowns and failures of equipment. In-port periods permit only the accomplishment of emergency repairs and replacements of worn-out elements.

The problem created by the shortage of qualified personnel remains critical and will be intensified by additional losses during the next two months. Non-rated men are showing constant and satisfactory improvement. However, it will be impossible for them to obtain sufficient training and experience to become qualified watch standers to replace losses of rated personnel as they occur.

The following recommendations are made in the interest of improving communications and adapting message traffic to the limitations of personnel and equipment.

(1) Sending speed of Radio Guam on the GEORGE FOX should be slowed to 18 words per minute. Strikers are unable to copy FOX schedules at the present speed which varies from 22 to 28 words per minute, but they can qualify very quickly to copy the recommended speed. At present many operators in smaller ships are unable to copy at the existing rate of sending and request numerous retransmissions or repetitions from this ship and other larger ships.

(2) Division of long daily summary reports into several short messages sent at intervals would increase accuracy, security and speed. If this method of handling is not feasible, such long reports should be broken into parts, each of which parts should be sent as a separate message. The daily OPSUM encrypted and transmitted by the communications organization of this ship as flagship for CTF 77 has to be re-encrypted or retransmitted in full or in part an average of 5 or 6 times daily as a result of request for services received from addressees.

(3) CTF 77 should be assigned a RATT circuit with Radio Guam. All ships

c. Photo Interpretation:

The purposes of aerial photography flown during the operating period were for (1) flak studies, (2) damage assessment, (3) target search, and (4) call photography.

The production of flak studies or "Touraids" continued during this period. The preparation of a route flak study necessitates several runs along the route at a preferable scale of 1/5000 to 1/6000. The number of runs required vary with the route under study. Generally, routes with heavy flak will require three runs, while two runs are adequate for routes of light flak. A small scale strip along the route has proven to be necessary in the preparation of mosaic for flak studies. This is due to difference in scale of the parallel large scale strips and the sometimes lack of necessary side lap.

Coverage at least once a week along the heavy flak routes is considered the minimum necessary to maintain flak studies up-to-date. Recent studies are necessary whenever flak suppression strikes are planned.

Most 37mm A/W positions are in two or four-gun positions strategically located for commanding fire over the target area. The pattern of the gun arrangement is governed by terrain and insofar as possible will be in a box or diamond arrangement. Four gun positions invariably show a director position.

Large numbers of empty positions for A/W guns are present. There is little difficulty in determining that an A/W position is empty but careful study is necessary to locate new A/W positions when camouflage is practiced. Track activity and difficulty in adequately hiding an A/W gun should make location of all such guns possible.

Location of active light AA positions present the greatest problem. Other than noting the gun in a position, track activity is most important in indicating that the position is active.

More thorough training in flak identification is recommended for all photo interpreters prior to assignment to this theater.

Increasing attention has been given to target search. The use of civilian and damage shop and factory type buildings for military purposes is most often indicated by track activity. Increasing attention should be given to track activity indicative of a military target.

The F9F-2P is restricted to the K-17 camera carrying a maximum cone of 12". This necessitates the pilot flying at low altitudes to obtain necessary coverage adequate for flak interpretation. The loss of one F9F-2P and photo pilot during this operation period occurred on such a mission. Prior to the assignment of the F2H (Banshee) for photo reconnaissance work, it is strongly recommended that a modification of the F9F-2P be carried out to enable the plane to carry cameras of greater focal length, reducing the necessity of the planes flying at lower altitudes where their vulnerability to AA fire is much greater. In addition a view finder, such as was provided the F6F-5P in World War II, should be provided the F9F-2P. Although newer models of photographic VF configurations will carry cameras of greater focal length and be equipped

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of readiness which would be difficult or impossible to attain under a less vigorous training program. Every effort should be made to exploit opportunities for this type of drill before entering a combat area. When this ship first arrived in the combat area for this tour (the ship's third) difficulty was experienced in acquiring jet targets.

Two AA firing exercises were conducted during the period of this report. On 3 March 1952 firing exercises were conducted by the 5"/38 and 40mm batteries against a towed sleeve making UNCLE type turns with good results. On 2 April 1952 firing exercises were conducted by the five inch and 40mm batteries against a towed sleeve making GEORGE type runs with excellent results. Three out of eight sleeves were destroyed, hits were scored on two other runs.

b. Material:

Considerable storm damage was received by 40mm mounts one and two, located on the bow, and their associated fire control equipment during a period of heavy weather 23-24 March 1952. Both radar antennae, Mk 4 Mod 1 were broken off their mounts, requiring eventual replacement of the antennae and the Mk 25 antenna mounts. The radar sets in the radar control rooms were damaged by salt water and most of the wiring between the radar rooms and the mounts was damaged. All electrical equipment on the mounts was damaged, and minor structural damage was incurred. All damage except to the radar was repairable by ship's company, but the radar repair will require replacement equipment not readily available. It is recommended that consideration be given to replacing the Mk 51 Mod 6 (Mk 63 director) GFCS on these mounts with Mk 51 Mod GFCS. Storm damage to equipment in this location must be expected, the simpler non-blind firing system will suffer less damage and be easier to repair than the present equipment, thereby resulting in a major saving of money and the time of skilled electronic technicians. The system, also, would be out of commission for a shorter time after damage, resulting in a higher degree of readiness. This will be the subject of special correspondence.

c. Replenishment at Sea:

The third replenishment station between ammunition ship and carrier—a wire highline from #4 cargo hatch to the hangar opening at frame 74—was used successfully during each replenishment. The rig was strengthened at the carrier end by rigging a five point bridle with two legs to heavy padeyes inboard in the hangar overhead, two legs to the regular highline padeyes, and one leg to a deck padeye. It is estimated that this rig is safe for 2000 pounds loads. The most successful transfer of 29 March added 11.7 short tons per hour to the overall loading rate.

C. Navigation:

a. Ship Control:

In addition to the Officer of the Deck and Junior Officer of the Deck this ship has used a third officer as part of the underway bridge watch who acts as TACTICAL COMMUNICATOR. Among his duties are: (1) prompt delivery of all incoming TBS traffic as received on primary and secondary tactical circuits, (2) preparation and transmission of outgoing signals, (3) translation of all general and tactical signals received, (4) maintenance of a complete log of all transmissions on tactical circuits, (5) custody of tactical publications, voice call

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D. Air Group:

The ship concurs with the comments contained in enclosure (1) in their entirety.

2. During the first two weeks of operations light winds prevailed throughout the period. This necessitated considerable high speed running and maneuvering of the Task Force. CTF 77 sent to TF 77 the following message:

"THE PAST TWO WEEK PERIOD OF OPERATIONS HAS BEEN AN EXCELLENT ONE. WHILE LOW WINDS DURING ALMOST THE ENTIRE PERIOD FORCED MUCH HIGH SPEED RUNNING THERE WAS A COMMENDABLE LACK OF STEERING CASUALTIES. REPLENISHMENT OPERATIONS WERE SMARTLY CONDUCTED. THE RESULT OF AIR OPERATIONS IN TERMS OF DAMAGE TO THE ENEMY REACHED NEW HIGHS. SURFACE GUNFIRE SUCCESSFULLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE TOLL. WELL DONE TO ALL HANDS."


OSCAR PEDERSON

Distribution List

CNO (2 advance)
CINCPACFLT (5 advance)
COMAIRPAC (10 advance)
COMFAIRLAMEDA
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP
COMSEVENTHFLT (1 advance)
CTF 77 (2 advance)
COMCARDIV ONE
COMCARDIV THREE
USS ESSEX (CV-9)
USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CV-31)
USS ANTIETAM (CV-36)
USS PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47)
USS PRINCETON (CV-37)
USS BOXER (CV-21)
USS KEARSARGE (CV-33)
CVG 2
CVG 5
CVG 11
CVG 15
CVG 19
CVG 101
CVG 102
ATG 1
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE (2)
COMFAIRJAP
COMSETPAC