USS ESSEX (CVA-9)
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

CVA9/A16-13
Ser 0203

7 DEC 1952

DECLASSIFIED
CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION

From: Commanding Officer
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

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

Subj: Action Report for the period 1 November through 24 November 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3480.4

Encl: (1) Air Task Group TWO Action Report, 1 November to 24 November 1952.

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Action Report for the period 1-24 November 1952 is hereby submitted.

PART I GENERAL NARRATIVE

a. During the period 1-24 November 1952, USS ESSEX (CVA-9) was a unit of Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN which at various time included the following additional units: USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31), ComCarDiv ONE, RADM, W. D. JOHNSON, USN, embarked; USS KEARSARGE (CVA-33), ComCarDiv FIVE, RADM. R. F. HICKEY, USN, embarked; USS MISSOURI (BB-63), ComSEVENTHFlt, VADM J. J. CLARK , USN, embarked; USS ORISKANY (CVA-34), and other support and screening ships.

b. During this period ESSEX operated off the East Coast of Korea in accordance with CTF 77 Operations Order 2-52 plus supplemental plans and orders issued during this period.

c. The mission of this force was as set forth in CTF 77 Operations Order 2-52.

PART II CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

ESSEX departed the operating area for Yokosuka, Japan on 1 November, arriving 3 November. The ship remained in Yokosuka until 13 November for upkeep, rest and recreation, rejoining TF 77 and commencing operations on 16 November. The morning of 17 November ESSEX aircraft joined with those of ORISKANY in a coordinated attack on Chongjin while KEARSARGE aircraft were striking Kilchu. In the afternoon, KEARSARGE and ORISKANY aircfaft attacked Chongjin while ESSEX planes concentrated on supplies and warehouses at Kyongsong. On 18 November the planes from ESSEX and KEARSARGE joined in a raid on the border city of Hoeryong, causing heavy damage to bridge, rail and billeting facilities. Throughout the remainder of the period ESSEX planes were executing heavy attacks on enemy frontline facilities and other supply and troop areas. On 20 November, the port catapult suffered a major casualty while launching an F2H-2P. On 24 November, ESSEX left the force to return to Yokosuka for repairs to this catapult.

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PART III ORDNANCE

1. Ship's Ordnance Expenditures for training was as follows:

74 rounds 5"/38 AAC

1 round 5"/38 (VT) none frag

10 rounds 3"/50 FCL (VT) Service

317 rounds 3"/50 FCL (VT) non frag

2. Air Ordnance. (See enclosure (1))

PART IV BATTLE DAMAGE

Battle damage sustained by ESSEX aircraft and damage inflicted on the enemy are listed in enclosure (1). The ship sustained no battle damage.

PART V PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIES

The performance of all personnel has been excellent and morale has been a factor requiring no special attention. Action casualties were three pilots of Air Task Group TWO; details are included in enclosure (1). There was one psychiatric disorder: PATTERSON, Cecile Ray, RD3, 231 88 58, USN was admitted to the sick list from CIC at 2200, 23 November 1952 with Schizophrenic Reaction.

PART VI SPECIAL COMMENTS

1. Operations Department.

a. Intelligence. COMCARDIV FIVE has originated a method of distributing flak data which appears to be the best system used so far in the Korean War. Flak is plotted on 1:250,000 maps, duplicates of which are run off on Ozalid foil transparencies, and distributed to the carriers in the force. This works in very well with the ESSEX flak system where all flak is plotted by ship's AIO's on transportable maps which are then used by the squadron AIO's for their briefings. The 1:250,000 Ozalid foil transparencies are issued approximately every two weeks and are taped over a 1:250,000 map, which is used in briefing all reconnaissance flights. Strikes are briefed from 1:50,000 maps, the data for which is taken primarily from the index of flak issued by CTF 77 staff simultaneously with the transparencies. Maps are corrected daily from the data published in the TF Air Plan. The problem of delection of the flak positions has been partially solved by issuing lists of positions to be removed both in the Daily Air Plan and in the Bi-weekly Flak Summaries.

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The plotting of machine gun postions has proven useless. The guns are to easily moved, too hard to spot exactly either by PI or pilot reports, and too numerous to keep plotted.

b. Photographic Interpretation. Damage assesment assignments in the front line area brought out the continued necessity for pre-strike photography. Small targets such as artillery positions and personnel bunkers are very difficult to detect after having been bombed and require previous photography for accurate comparison. Continued distribution of photography between carriers is considered imperative for accurate and complete photographic interpretation. Comparision of photos is necessary for both damage assessment procedures and routine surveillance.

2. Air Department

a. Catapult. On 20 November 1952, while firing a F2H-2P from the port catapult, machinery failure resulted in the plane's loss of the towing bridle. The resultant runway shot caused major damage to the sheaves and cable system of the engine. The plane was unable to stop before reaching the end of the flight deck and crashed into the water. The pilot was rescued. The reason for failure has not yet been ascertained; however, non-functioning the runaway shot preventer is attributed to a broken CRP switch. The ship maintained scheduled operations through 23 November with the starboard catapult.

b. Aircraft Ordnance Handling Equipment. All MK5 2,000 lb bomb skids are in poor condition. Eight (8) of these skids have been on order for approximately ninety (90) days and to date only one (1) has been received. Due to the critical need for these skids for operations, the ship's force is attempting to manufacture parts for repairs.

3. Air Task Group TWO. (See enclosure (1))

B. B. C. Lovett

B. B. C. LOVETT

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CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP
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COMSEVENTHFLT (1) Advance
CTF-77 (1) Advance
ComCarDiv 1
ComCarDiv 3
ComCarDiv 5
COMAIRPAC (10)
COMSERVPAC
COMFAIRALAMEDA
COMFAIRJAPAN

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
USS BOXER (CVA-21)
USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
USS VALLEY FORGE (CVA-45)
USS PHILLIPINE SEA (CVA-47)
USS PRINCETON (CVA-37)
USS ORISKANY (CVA-34)
USS KEARSARGE (CVA-33)
CVG-2
CVG-5
CVG-7
CVG-9
CVG-11
CVG-15
CVG-19
CVG-101
CVG-102
ATG-1
ATG-2 (5)

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