ORIGINAL

DECLASSIFIED

3-5

U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)
% FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

CVE118/A16-13
LMR/20/mls
Ser. 0212

2 OCT 1952

[redacted]

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

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: (1) Commander Task Force 76
(2) Commander SEVENTH FLEET
(3) Commander Naval Forces, FAR EAST
(4) Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report 6 October through 16 October 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 3480.4
(b) CINCPACFLT Instruction 3480.1
(c) COMPHIBFORFE Operation Plan No. 101-52

1. In accordance with references (a), (b), and (c) the Action Report for the period 6 October through 16 October 1952 is hereby submitted.

2. This report is divided into six (6) parts, as listed below:

Part I - General Narrative

Part II - Chronological Order of Events

Part III- Performance of Ordnance Material and Equipment including Ammunition Expenditure

Part IV - Own and Enemy Battle Damage

Part V - Personnel Performance and Casualties

Part VI - Comments and Recommendations

[redacted]

ORIGINAL

[redacted]N

PART I

GENERAL NARRATIVE

A. During the period of this report the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), under the command of Captain Almon E. LOOMIS, 62535/1310, USN, with Marine Attack Squadron Three Hundred Twelve (VMA-312), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel R. E. CAMERON, 007027, USMC, embarked, operated as a part of Task Force 76 in the U.S. SEVENTH FLEET.

B. The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118), assumed the title of CTG 76.2 at 052300Z. At 090300Z the SICILY reported to Task Group 76.5 and assumed CTE 76.52. At 111908Z, upon being detached from Task Group 76.5, the SICILY assumed CTG 76.2. At 130945Z the SICILY rejoined Task Group 76.5 enroute to operating area and assumed CTE 76.52. Upon entering the vicinity of the objective area the SICILY was detached from Group 76.5 and again assumed CTG 76.2 at 141908Z and retained this designation until JOINT AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE 76 was dissolved at 161000Z.

The Group consisted of one (1) escort carrier and two (2) destroyers acting as screen.

C. The Task Group operated as part of Task Force 76 in the Sea of Japan and against enemy forces in the Wonsan Bay - Kojo Peninsula area.

D. The enemy forces were the North Korean Peoples Army and "Volunteer" Chinese Communist Forces in enemy held North Korea.

E. The mission of the Task Group was to provide Air Support in accordance with Annex H, Commander Amphibious Force, Far East Operation Plan No. 101A-52.

F. During the movement phases of the Task Force this Task Group engage in training and exercises in preparation for the coming operations. Daily classes in Naval Gunfire Spotting and Tactical Air Observer

[redacted] DECLASSIFIED

PART I (Cont'd)

procedures were conducted for all VMA-312 pilots. The movement phases allowed ample time for thorough Intelligence and operational briefings prior to the arrival of the Task Group in the objective area.

Continuous reconnaissance of the lines of communications in and leading to the objective area revealed a complete lack of major enemy movement throughout D-Day and D+1 Day.

All flights, upon returning from the objective area, reported Anti-Aircraft fire of the "Automatic weapons" type in the vicinity of the beach and along all main supply routes in the area. The above reports were consistently evaluated as moderate and accurate anti-aircraft fire. Only one F4U from the SICILY suffered serious damage from anti-aircraft fire and the pilot of that aircraft was able to accomplish a successful emergency landing at K18.

At 160215Z two (2) F4U's, while in the vicinity of UTM Grid CU 4035, sighted six (6) MIG-15 type enemy fighters. The F4U's were at an altitude of 7000 feet and flying on a course of 210° True. The F4U pilots heard a transmission on VHF stating that MIG's were in the area and, upon hearing this report, one of the pilots sighted the MIG's at six (6) o'clock. The F4U's initiated a defensive weave.

After following the F4U's for approximately 5 minutes, the MIGS departed without taking any hostile action. The MIGS remained at an altitude of approximately 15,000 feet throughout the encounter.

CIC aboard the SICILY was assigned control of the CAP in the objective area and it is felt that valuable experience was gained by all air controllers and CIC personnel in this operation.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART I (Cont'd)

The total number of sorties for the period was 127 with a total of 374.5 hours flown. The following is a breakdown of the total sorties flown: 41 CAP; 36 Naval Gunfire Spot; 28 Tactical Air Observer; and 22 reconnaissance.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART II

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

0608272 The U.S.S. SICILY under the command of Captain Almon E. LOOMIS departed Sasebo, Japan for Otaru, Hokkaido, Japan. VMA-312, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel R. E. CAMERON, USMC, was embarked. The screen consisted of the U.S.S. BLUE (DD-744) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748).

070542Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. BLUE (DD-744).

070714Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748).

082217Z Arrived Otaru, Japan.

090300Z Commanding Officer U.S.S. SICILY assumed CTE 76.52 and reported to Task Group 76.5.

090545Z Underway from Otaru and joined Task Group 76.5. Enroute to the objective area.

100001Z Exercised at tactical drills.

100634Z Exercised the crew at general quarters.

111908Z Detached from TG 76.5 and assumed CTG 76.2.

111950Z The U.S.S. KNOX (DD-742) and the U.S.S. HOLLISTER (DD-788) joined and formed screen.

112102Z Commenced flight operations for Rehearsal of Joint Amphibious Landing.

120920Z Secured from flight operations. During this day with twenty-four (24) aircraft on board, an average of seventeen (17) aircraft were available. A total of twenty-six (26) sorties were flown.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART II (Cont'd)

Fifteen (15) of these were CAP flights, three (3) were for tactical air observation and eight (8) were simulated naval gunfire spot and close air support. A total of 81.5 hours were flown during the day.

122100Z Commenced flight operations.

122139Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. HOLLISTER (DD-788).

122300Z Commenced refueling the U.S.S. KNOX (DD-742).

130850Z Secured flight operations. During this day there were twenty-four (24) aircraft on board and an average availability of sixteen (16). Fifteen (15) CAP flights were flown for a total of fifty-six (56) flying hours.

130945Z Rejoined TG 76.5.

132057Z Commenced flight operations.

140619Z Secured from flight operations. During this day twenty-four (24) aircraft were aboard and an average of nineteen (19) aircraft were available. Eight (8) CAP flights were flown for a total of twenty-five (25) flying hours.

141908Z Detached from TG 76.5 to operate as TG 76.2 with the U.S.S. ROGERS (DD-876) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748) as screen.

141955Z Commenced flight operations.

150803Z Secured from flight operations.

During this day there were twenty-four (24) aircraft on board and an average of twenty (20) aircraft were available during the day. The SICILY provided Tactical Air Observers for the landing forces and air spotting for the bombardment

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

ships. Twenty-nine (29) sorties were flown for a total of eighty (80) flying hours. Twelve (12) sorties were supplied for naval gunfire spot, eight (8) for reconnaissance missions and nine (9) to act as tactical air observers. Only the reconnaissance flights were loaded with an external bomb load. Therefore very few targets were struck by aircraft from this ship. The following is a list of the damage inflicted by SICILY aircraft.

TARGET	RESULT
Building	Destroyed
15 Buildings	Damaged or Destroyed
Supplies	Damaged
Road Bridge	Damaged

151134Z Joined Task Element 76.00.

151956Z Detached to operate as TG 76.2 with the U.S.S. ROGERS (DD-876) and the U.S.S. HUBBARD (DD-748) as a screen.

152100Z Commenced flight operations.

160215Z Two (2) F4Us sighted six (6) MIG-15s. The MIGS followed the F4Us for about five (5) minutes and then departed without taking hostile action.

160811Z Secured from flight operations. During this day there were twenty-one aircraft on board and an average of eighteen (18) aircraft were available. Forty-seven (47) sorties, consisting of sixteen (16) tactical air observers, and one (1) CAP flight were flown with a total of

DECLASSIFIED

one hundred thirty-two (132) flying hours for the day. The following damages were inflicted on the enemy during the day:

TARGET	RESULT
Buildings	3 destroyed, 2 damaged
4 railroad cars	2 heavily damaged
Trenches	Troops strafed. No damage assessed.

161000Z Joint Amphibious Task Force 76 was dissolved.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART III

EFFECTIVENESS OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT
INCLUDING AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE

A. A total of 148 rockets were loaded during the operation. Seven (7) rockets, or a total of 4.7% of those loaded, were returned to the ship as duds.

TYPE	No.	CAUSE
HVAR	4	Pigtail improperly engaged in igniter receptacle.
HVAR	1	Dud rocket.
HVAR	1	Faulty igniter receptacle.
HVAR	1	Pigtail was broken due to ejected links and brass from guns.

B. Ammunition expenditures:

1. VMA-312 aircraft:

500 lb. G.P. Bombs	22
5" Rockets (HV AR)	152
20 MM Rounds	7,035
50 Cal. Rounds	20,875

2. U.S.S. SICILY:

No ammunition was expended by the U.S.S. SICILY.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART IV

SUMMARY OF OWN AND ENEMY BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Own Battle Damage.

1. No damage was inflicted on ships in this Task Group.

2. For damage sustained by VMA-312 aircraft see Naval Air Warfare Reports submitted for this operating period.

3. For operational damage suffered by VMA-312 aircraft see Operational Damage Report for 1 October to 18 October, 1952, submitted by the U.S.S. SICILY (CVE-118).

B. Battle Damage Inflicted on the Enemy:

1. No battle damage was inflicted on the enemy by the U.S.S. SICILY.

2. The following is battle damage inflicted on the enemy by VMA-312 aircraft:

TARGET	RESULT
Building	4 Destroyed
15 buildings	Damaged or destroyed
Supplies	Damaged
Road Bridge	Damaged
Buildings	2 damaged
4 railroad cars	2 heavily damaged
Trenches	Troops strafed. No damaged assessed.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

[redacted]

PART V

PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE AND CASUALTIES

A. The following dispatch was received from CTF 76:

"PERFORMANCE OF AIRCRAFT, CIC AND AIR CONTROL PERSONNEL SICILY DURING JOINT AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE CONSIDERED OUTSTANDING."

B. Casualties:

No casualties were inflicted on personnel of this Task Group.

C. The present ship's COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER with the complement of forty-five (45) enlisted men and six (6) officer air controllers proved adequate for this operation. However, extended operations of this type would require additional enlisted personnel.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

[redacted]

PART VI

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Naval Operations.

1. Surface.

Due to the low top speed of the CVE class carrier the usual difficulty of regaining station after flight operations by the "Baker" method was experienced.

In a cruising formation such as 92R when air operations are to be conducted by the independent method, it is recommended that carriers be assigned any one of the following four stations: Van, rear, and flanks. After flight operations the carrier could then return to the most advantageous of the four stations and a great deal of unnecessary steaming and time out of formation could be avoided.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

[redacted]

PART VI (Continued)

2. Air.

(a) Air operations were carried on with no unusual incidents. All flights scheduled were flown. The aircraft maintenance crews performed a commendable job in keeping the aircraft flying.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

[redacted]

PART VI (Cont'd)

2. Air (Cont'd)

b. Two (2) barrier crashes occurred in which the tail wheel yoke housing assembly failed. In one case the assembly collapsed, but the tail hook held and the plane stopped short of the barriers. In the second case, the assembly parted and the plane hit barriers number 2, 3, and 4. The tail wheels were unlocked and the landings were made tail wheel first, but in a slight wing-down attitude. The landings did not seem hard nor the skid severe enough to cause material failure. A possible contributing factor, which maintenance personnel aboard the ship were unable to check for, was the possible presence of imperceptible fractures in the metal. If Dye Penetrant kits were available to the ship, these fractures could be detected. These Dye Penetrant kits are available on the open market and should be made available to fleet maintenance personnel. The kits are small, inexpensive, and simple to use.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART VI (Cont'd)

2. Air (Cont'd)

c. The two day turn around in port provided insufficient time for preventive checks and necessary engine changes. A minimum of five days should be allowed.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART VI (Continued)

3. Air Defense

b. Identification and evaluation of air contacts by the use of the UTM grid proved cumbersome and inaccurate in the limited objective area of this operation. It is felt that a system of reporting air contacts from a prominent radar reference point in the objective area would permit more expeditious handling of bogies.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART VI (Cont'd)

6. The SP radar, due to the nonavailability of spare parts proved to be totally inadequate. This radar is becoming obsolete due to the development of improved types. It is felt that an improved height finding radar is necessary in the effective handling of aircraft and should be installed aboard this type carrier as soon as available.

not being done
SP is being retained in
this class carriers

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

D. Intelligence:

3. A detailed Flak analysis would be very beneficial to a carrier entering this type of operation in an unfamiliar area. If this information were included in the Intelligence Annex, it is felt that better results would be obtained from the aircraft and possibly a saving in material and availability of aircraft would result.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

E. Logistics:

2. Logistic Support was furnished by Commander Fleet Air Japan and NSD Yokosuka. The action taken to expedite delivery of parts required for AOG planes was very good considering the short time allowed. However, it is believed that even better results might have been obtained had it been possible to keep Commander Fleet Air Japan informed of the SICILY's schedule.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

J. Material

1. Bureau of Aeronautics

a. Overage cement in Kits, Repair (Stknr R37-K-500) for MK III Anti-exposure Suits - It is recommended that all subject Kits in stock in NSD Yokosuka and in stock on board the U.S.S. CHOURRE (ARV-1) be inspected and replaced if the cement therein is found to be overage (6 months is the storage limit). It is further recommended that the following action be taken:

(1) Discontinue procurement of the Kits (R37-K-500).

(2) When stocks of Kits are exhausted, issue cement (Stknr R52-C-1557), byrd cloth and neoprene impregnated tape.

(3) Add cement (Stknr R52-C-1557), byrd cloth and neoprene impregnated tape to the Section "A" Allowance list for all applicable supply supporting activities, and symbol code these items (CW) indicating cold weather material.

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART VI (Cont'd)

1. Bureau of Aeronautics (Cont'd)

b. Tube Assembly, Drop Tank (Stknr R82-CV-VS-48817) - The replacement rate of the tube (commonly referred to as a "goosenock") is high (about 8 tubes per 10 tanks dropped). It is recommended that the source code be changed from M-1 to P or P-1. It is further recommended that it be added to the Section "B" allowance list for F4U-4/4B aircraft. The numerical allowance should be 80% of the allowance of MK 12 external auxiliary fuel tanks.

Almon E. Loomis

Almon E. LOOMIS

Copy to:

CNO (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMNAVFE (1) Advance
COMNAVFE EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMSEVENTHFLT (1) Advance
CTF 76 (2) Advance
COMAIRPAC (5)
COMSERVPAC (1)
COMFAIRJAPAN (1)
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE (1)
COMCARDIV 17 (1)
COMCARDIV 15 (1)
CO, FAIRBETUPAC (2)
COMMARCORPS (1)
CG FMFPAC (1)
CG AIRFMFPAC (1)
CG 1st MAW (1)
CG, MAG-12 (1)
CO, VMA-312 (1)
U.S.S. BATAAN (CVL-29) (1)
U.S.S. RENDOVA (CVE-114) (1)
U.S.S. BAIROKO (CVE-115) (1)
U.S.S. BADOENG STRAIT (CVE-116) (1)
U.S.S. POINT CRUZ (CVE-119) (1)

[redacted]

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

PART VI (Cont'd)

1. Bureau of Aeronautics (Cont'd)

b. Tube Assembly, Drop Tank (Stknr R82-CV-VS-48817) - The replacement rate of the tube (commonly referred to as a "goosenock") is high (about 8 tubes per 10 tanks dropped). It is recommended that the source code be changed from M-1 to P or P-1. It is further recommended that it be added to the Section "B" allowance list for F4U-4/4B aircraft. The numerical allowance should be 80% of the allowance of MK 12 external auxiliary fuel tanks.

Almon E. Loomis

Almon E. LOOMIS

Copy to:

CNO (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT (2) Advance
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMNAVFE (1) Advance
COMNAVFE EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMSEVENTHFLT (1) Advance
CTF 76 (2) Advance
COMAIRPAC (5)
COMSERVPAC (1)
COMFAIRJAPAN (1)
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE (1)
COMCARDIV 17 (1)
COMCARDIV 15 (1)
CO, FAIRBETUPAC (2)
COMMARCORPS (1)
CG FMFPAC (1)
CG AIRFMFPAC (1)
CG 1st MAW (1)
CG, MAG-12 (1)
CO, VMA-312 (1)
U.S.S. BATAAN (CVL-29) (1)
U.S.S. RENDOVA (CVE-114) (1)
U.S.S. BAIROKO (CVE-115) (1)
U.S.S. BADOENG STRAIT (CVE-116) (1)
U.S.S. POINT CRUZ (CVE-119) (1)

[redacted]