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Ser. 06

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE PACIFIC FLEET
CARRIER AIR GROUP FIFTEEN

[redacted]

9 February 1952

From: Commander Carrier Air Group FIFTEEN
To: Commanding Officer, USS ANTIETAM (CV-36)

Subj: Action Report of Carrier Air Group FIFTEEN for period of 16 January 1952 through 9 February 1952.

Ref: (a) OpNav Inst. 3480.4 of 1 July 1951.

Encl: (1) Subject Action Report.

1. This report is forwarded as enclosure (1) for inclusion in the action report of the USS ANTIETAM (CV-36) as required by reference (a).

2. Information, comments and recommendations are presented under the headings indicated below:

I Mission and Composition
II Chronology
III Ordnance
IV Damage
V Personnel Performance and Casualties
VI Comments and Recommendations

A. Operations
B. Intelligence
C. Maintenance
D. Electronics
E. Survival

R.F. Farrington
R.F. FARRINGTON

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ACTION REPORT OF CARRIER AIR GROUP FIFTEEN
for period 16 January - 9 February 1952:

PART I MISSION AND COMPOSITION

a. Departing Yokosuka 16 January 1962, Carrier Air Group FIFTEEN, embarked aboard the USS ANTIETAM (CV-36), proceeded to the area off the east coast of Korea and reported to CTF 77. Operating under CTF 77 Op Order 22-51 (Second revision), and in accordance with the daily Air Plan promulgated by ComCarDivs ONE and FIVE, the mission of the Group was to perform interdiction flights consisting of strikes, armed reconnaissance flights and heckler flights directed primarily against North Korean Supply routes including railroad track and equipment, bridges, highways, and supply areas. Defensive missions including CAP and ASP were scheduled.

b. Composition of the Air Group

(See table on next page)

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PART I

B. Unit Commander	Type A/C	Operating A/C 1/16/52	Operating A/C 2/9/52	Pilots available 1/16/52	Pilots available 2/9/52	Total Flight Hrs.	Avg. Flight Hrs per Pilot	Avg. Flights Per Pilot
CAG-15 CDR R.F. FARRINGTON				*Note 1 2	2			
VF-713 LCDR R.L. DOERING	F4U4	15	15	27	26	591.8	21.9	7.9
VA-728 LCDR S.T. BITTING	AD4 AD2	17	16	24	24	611.1	23.5	8.0
VF-831 CDR A.J. DENMAN	F9F2	16	16	20	20	394.9	19.7	13.0
VF-837 LCDR R.H. KENTON	F9F2	16	14	20	20	393.8	19.6	12.2
VC-3 Det "D" LT H. FLEMING	F4U5NL	4	2	5	5	73.3	14.7	5
VC-11 Det "D" LCDR C.D. CONYERS	AD4W	3	3	4	4	86.3	21.6	8
VC-35 Det "D" LT R.C. BARTLETT,Jr	AD4Q	4	4	6	6	121.8	20.3	6.8
VC-61 Det "D" LT G.C. YOUNG	F9F2P	3	2	4	4	68.3	17	12

*Note 1: Two (2) pilots assigned to CAG-15 flew regularly with squadrons so "Total Flight Hrs", "Avg. Flight Hrs per Pilot" and "Avg. Flights per Pilot" are included with VA-728

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PART II CHRONOLOGY

16 January 1952 - Departed NOB Yokosuka at 0730I for return to Korean Theater of war.

17 January 1952 - Passing through straits a total of 49 refresher sorties were flown. This included simulated attacks on our own force and simulated bomber attacks on the Air Force Field at Itazuki. LT MODANSKY of VF 831 made a crash landing after taking off in an F9F-2. He was successfully rescued by pinwheel pilot, LT WILSON.

18 January 1952 - A total of 71 sorties was the greeting the enemy received from Air Group FIFTEEN on its initial strikes against installations and supply lines. A summary shows 32 rail cuts, one bridge destroyed, seven boxcars destroyed and eleven damaged. Two locomotives were damaged, two ox-carts destroyed, a supply depot damaged along with three buildings. These strikes were successfully led by CDR R. F. FARRINGTON, LCDR RICHARDS OF VF 713, LT WISNYI and LCDR KENTON of VF 837, CDR DENMAN, LT SANDERS of VF 831. VA 728, led by LCDR S. T. BITTING made 21 rail cuts to be added to their already impressive record.

19 January 1952 - A full days operations were carried out as 78 sorties plus 2 sle-times were flown. LT W. MOOERS and ENSIGN WHITE while flying Panther Jets comletely demolished one bridge while LT BETZ and LTJG R. KING were silencing gun positions defending the area. CDR FARRINGTON led one strike of Skyraiders and Corsairs which accounted for part of the days damage of 35 rail cuts, one truck heavily damaged, one bunker destroyed, eight warehouses damaged, two repair party personnel killed and one bridge destroyed. ENS CHADWICK of VF 837 made the 22,000th landing aboard the carrier.

20 January 1952 - Replenishment Day.

21 January 1952 - The third day back in action again caused much destruction to the enemy as 86 sorties were flown. LT JAMES WALLEY of VA 728 was shot down by enemy anti-aircraft fire. After ditching his plane off Wonsan Harbor, he was successfully rescued by the pinwheel from the USS WISCONSIN.

The night-hecklers commenced the days activities after being launched in a mild snow storm LT SELLS of VC-3 on the first nite-heckler mission completely demolished two trucks with a direct 500# GP bomb between the two targets. LTJG's LEO GARODZ and ROBERT HENSLEY of VC-35 D also accounted for one enemy truck apiece while damaging another truck and numerous boxcars and buildings.

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LCDR M. C. FRIEDMAN of CAG-15 led his team of Skyraiders and Corsairs to enemy rail sections and accounted for a total of twenty-one railcuts, completely knocked out one railroad bridge, and damaged a rail car loaded with new railroad cuts. The action can better be described by the following dispatch from CTF 77:
"Well done to both carriers for their work today."

22 January 1952 - Perfect flying weather enabled the Air Group to fly a total of 80 sorties. LCDR R. I. DOERING, VF 713, CDR R. F. FARRINGTON, CAG-15 and LCDR S. T. BITTING led the prop-strikes on enemy rails and marshalling yards. Direct hits were scored on three repair shops, one turntable, one roundhouse, four bridge spans, and forty-seven railcuts. LT BARTELUCE, VF 831, CDR DENMAN, VF 831, LT VAN GORDON and LT WISNYI, VF 837 led jet strikes and recco flights.

23 January 1952 - The day was spent once again by heckling, interdicting and reccoing the enemy supply lines. 86 sorties were flown in excellent flying weather.

24 January 1952 - Replenishment Day

25 January 1952 - No air operations due to inclement weather and heavy seas.

26 January 1952 - As the skies cleared Air Group FIFTEEN once againflew 70 sorties harassing the effort by the enemy to keep their supplies moving.
The number one target for the day was rails which were demolished by flights led by LCDR B. RICHARDS and LCDR F. SAIN of VF 713, LT MARLIN, VA 728, LCDR DONAHOE, LT VAN GORDON of VF 837, and CDR A DENMAN, LCDR RYAN and LT W. MOORS of VF 831.
LTJG's DONAHOE, GARODZ and FOSDICK of the nite-heckler teams caught a ten-car enemy train crossing a railroad bridge. LTJG LEO GARODZ scored a direct 500# GP hit which blew up one boxcar, dropped a bridge span which caused one boxcar to fall through the bridge. The other two pilots heavily damaged the remaining cars by repeated strafing runs with their 20MM cannons.

27 January 1952 - Today while flying 75 sorties the Air Group chalked up a total of 117 railcuts of which 68 were recorded by one flight of AD's and F4U's led by LCDR R. L. DOERING, A no wind, no flak condition enabled LTJG GOODELL and ENS A. R. COWAN of VF 713 and LT C. J. NOTH and ENS R. L. THOMAS of VA 728 to score many of the direct hits of that flight. The two jet squadrons also played havoc by destroying six trucks, one railroad bridge, six excarts and damaging a railroad station. CTF 77 sent the following message:
" My congratulations on an excellent performance".

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28 January 1952 - Replenishment Day

29 January 1952 - Today a total of 81 sorties were flown by Air Group FIFTEEN with two pilots injured and one pilot presumed killed.
ENS. W. W. MARWOOD, VF 713, crash-landed his aircraft in water at CU 874298 after making a diving run. He was not seen to escape. A search was conducted with negative results. He is presumed dead.

LT S. MURPHY, VC-3D was shot down by enemy aircraft fire and landed north of Hamhung. The ResCap escorted a helicopter which successfully rescued him after he had been wounded by enemy small-arms fire.

LT S. KALAS, VC-61 crashed in the ocean after hitting the aft end of the carrier on a landing. He was successfully rescued by the helicopter pilot, LT WILSON, after the crewman, L. J. HARWOOD, AL3, went into the water to aid in the rescue of LT KALAS.

30 January 1952 - A total of 75 sorties were flown while the pilots cut rails in 83 places, damaged 8 boxcars, killed 8 troops, destroyed 5 excarts and damaged 3, destroyed one truck and damaged one.
The AD's and F4U's were led by LCDR M. C. FRIEDMAN and LCDR S. T. BITTING and were responsible for the numerous cuts and boxcars damaged.

31 January 1952 - The pre-dawn hecklers from VC-3 D and VC-35D commenced the destruction today as 80 sorties were flown. LTJG's LEO GARODZ and JAMES WHYTE destroyed several trucks and damaged four.
Again the AD's and Corsairs continued to demolish rails as 78 cuts were recorded on flights led by CDR R. F. FARRINGTON and LCDR B. RICHARDS.
The jets led by CDR A. DENMAN, LT BARTELUCE, LCDR R. KENTON, LT WISNYI, LT CRAPSER and LT SANDERS heavily damaged boxcars, cut rails, destroyed excarts, and damaged enemy warehouses.

1 February 1952 - Replenishment Day

2 February 1952 - Rough seas and high winds curtailed today's operations as 25 sorties were flown. Two CAP events were flown plus 15 prop-strikes.
LCDR S. T. BITTING leading a flight or Corsairs and Skyraiders cut several rails and damaged two boxcars as the total flight recorded 26 rail cuts, 6 boxcars destroyed, and four damaged.

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3 February 1952 - 82 sorties againfound the Air Group raising havoc with the enemy supply lines. 32 prop-strikes accounted for many rails cuts, and buildings destroyed while 23 jet strikes did similiar damage.

4 February 1952 - The USS PHILIPLINE SEA joined the Task Force today. CVG-15 pilots to as their guides and instructers in carrying out their assigned missions over Korea. A total of 84 sorties flown. LTJG CHARLES GILLETTE of VF 713 was forced to ditch his plane near Wonsan Bay. He was successfully rescued without injuries. ENS R. E. WILSON of VF 837 was also forced to ditch his F9F-2 as engine trouble developed. Fortunately he ditched within the screen of the Task Force and was immediately rescued by a helicopter flown by LT JENKINS of HU-1 Unit attached to the USS ANTIETAM (CV-36).

5 February 1952 - Replenishment Day.

6 February 1952 - CDR R. F. FARRINGTON led his Air Group for a total of 44 sorties against the enemy. Thirty railcuts, one motorcycle, several trucks destroyed and two buildings left burning was the work done by the pilots before retiring from the line.
The USS ANTIETAM (CV-36) retired from action and headed for NOB YOKOSUKA for upkeep, maintenance, rest and recrestion.

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SUMMARY OF SORTIES (BY DATE & TYPE)
16 January 1952 - 6 February 1952

DATE	SORTIES	ABORTS	ARMED JET STRIKES	RECCO NITE HECKLERS	PROP STRIKES	PHOTO	PHOTO ESCORT	NGF	CAP	ASP	SPECIAL
1952											
16 JAN	NO AIR OPERATIONS										
17 JAN	49 REFRESHER SORTIES										
18 JAN	71	0	16	0	25	4	4	0	16	6	0
19 JAN	78	1	23	0	25	4	4	2	16	4	0
20 JAN	REPLENISHMENT DAY										
21 JAN	86	0	22	4	32	4	4	2	12	6	0
22 JAN	80	2	22	3	29	3	3	2	12	6	0
23 JAN	86	0	17	3	33	4	4	2	16	6	0
24 JAN	REPLENISHMENT DAY										
25 JAN	NO AIR OPERATIONS DUE INCLEMENT WEATHER AND HEAVY SEAS.										
26 JAN	70	2	13	3	28	2	2	0	16	6	0
27 JAN	75	0	21	0	28	3	3	0	16	4	0
28 JAN	REPLENISHMENT DAY										
29 JAN	80	0	21	5	28	4	4	0	12	6	0
30 JAN	75	1	22	0	32	3	4	2	8	4	0
31 JAN	80	2	22	2	32	4	4	0	12	4	0
1 FEB	REPLENISHMENT DAY			0	14	0	0	0	8	2	0
2 FEB	24	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	8	2	0
3 FEB	82	0	23	3	32	3	3	0	12	6	0
4 FEB	84	0	24	4	28	3	3	0	12	4	0
5 FEB	REPLENISHMENT DAY										
6 FEB	44	0	16	4	16	0	0	0	8	2	0
	*1017	8	263	31	382	41	42	16	176	56	0

*Note: This does not include 49 refresher sorties on 17 JAN 1952,

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III ORDNANCE

ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

TYPE A/C SQUADRON	F4U4 VF713	AD4 VA728	F9F-2 VF837	F9F2 VF831	F4U5NL VC-3	AD4C AD4NL VC-35	TOTAL
TYPE ORDNANCE							
2000# GP		82					82
1000# GP	208	432				2	642
500# GP	2	2	90	102	16	29	241
260# Frags			10	8	45	68	131
250# GP		1445	177	154	49	66	1891
100# GP	1682	3			16	38	1739
NAPALM						7	7
ASAR-3"					6	22	28
20 MM		20,400	35,342	29,526	4,800	4,770	94,838
.50 Cal.	113,400						113,400
350# Depth Charge						54	54
Bombs Total lbs	377,200	958,250	91,850	91,580	33,550	79,680	1,632,110
Bombs Total tons	188.61	479.12	45.93	45.79	16.77	39.84	816.06

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TOTAL BOMBS IN LBS AND TONS EXPENDED

SQUADRON TYPE A/C	VF-713 F4U4	VA728 AD4	VF831/VF837 F9F-2	VC-3 F4U5NL	VC-35 AD4NL AD4Q	TOTAL
3rd period 16 Jan 52 to 9 Feb 52						
LBS	377,200	958,250	183,430	33,550	79,860	1,632,11[illegible]
TONS	188.61	479.12	91.72	16.77	39.84	816.06
2nd period 26 Nov 51 to 31 Dec 51						
LBS	562,150	1,554,530	397,677	95,932	654,609	3,264,898
TONS	281.10	777.36	198.90	48.00	327.36	1,632.5[illegible]
1st period 15 Oct 51 to 14 Nov 51						
LBS	382,70[illegible]	1,414,040	125,200	88,520	70,980	2,081,440
TONS	191.35	707.02	62.60	44.26	35.53	1,040.76
GRAND TOTAL LBS	1,322,050	3,926,820	706,307	218,002	805,269	6,978,448
TONS	661.06	1,963.50	353.22	109.03	402.64	3,489.4[illegible]

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B. Performance of Ordnance Material

1. F9F Type Aircraft.

(a) 20 MM guns

(1) Type of stoppages of 20 mm guns:

Chargers and pressure switches -	76
Feed Mechanism	27
Link Jams	15
Broken Parts	13
Feed Chutes	8
Firing solenoids	2
Failure to Extract	11
Unknown	6
Total	152

F9F - 600 rounds per stoppage (after electrical change)

2. All 20MM guns have been completely winterized including the feed mechanisms. The following change was made in the gun firing system on all planes of this command. Wire #A270C20 was removed from junction point of wires #A270B20 and #A270E20 and replaced at the junction point of wires #A47M20 and #A47L20 for the outboard bank of guns. The same was done on the inboard bank of guns by removing wire #A272C20 from the junction point of wires #A272B20 and #A272E20 and replacing it at the junction point of wires #A43M20 and A43L20. Effectively this holds the exhaust valve of the 4-way charging valve open when the gun selector switch is in the "ready" position. If the pressure switch fails in any way the hydraulic fluid ordinarily trapped in the charging cylinder is now free to leave.

In the past, 70% to 75% of all stoppages (failure to fire) have been attributed to the malfunctioning of the pressure switch causing a hydraulic cushion in the charging cylinder. After the above change was made there was no appreciable stoppage due to hydraulic discrepancies. A speedletter report of this recommended change was submitted by VF 837 speedletter dated 2 January 1952 to ComAirPac, copy to BuAer, BuOrd.

(b) Bomb Racks

Prior to joining Task Force 77 for the third tour on the line, all MK55 Bomb Racks were disassembled, cleaned and filed down according to ComAirPac Instructions. Six F9F aircraft operated with the MK55 bomb rack. The remainder used the MK51 racks only. The sway braces were modified for the MK55 bomb racks that were to be used on aircraft not able to use the MK51 type rack.

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b. Bomb Racks (cont'd)

During this period the bomb dud rate averaged 2-1/2% and only one hung bomb was encountered. No trouble was encountered with either type of bomb rack although this is not conclusive evidence that the difficulties mentioned in previous reports pertaining to the MK55 bomb rack have been permanently overcome. It is felt that after continued use of these racks they will again have to be disassembled and filed down.

c. Four Aero 2-C controllers went out of commission. Two were repaired by renewing the polarized relay. The remaining two could not be fixed or replaced as the ship does not stock spares.

3. F4U4 Aircraft

a. 50 Cal. guns

(1) .50 cal. guns presented more difficulty this period with cold weather the greatest contributing factor. The present gun heaters are inadequate for the -20° to --30° F. temperature encountered at altitude target run in. Gun chargers have been found to freeze up in the extreme cold and refuse to function until thawed out on return to the ship and removal from guns. Gun heaters were turned on while on the deck immediately after turned up. Winterization, maintenance work is being emphasized in an effort to improve the performance.

(2) One gun explosion on the outboard starboard gun was encountered. The explosion took place back around the breach of the gun, damaging adjacent ribs and resulting in a wing change. The cause was directly attributable to unburned "blow back" gases from the blast tube.

(3) A plague of broken gun parts was encountered during this period. No one particular part is failing and most are traceable to wear.

b. Bomb Racks.

This was the first period where all F4U4 aircraft were equipped with the MK14A wing racks (San Diego version). They operated without difficulty. The most serious deficiency of the type rack is the inability to carry 250 lb. bombs on the wing stations, with the wings in a folded position. The schedule cannot be met unless F4U's can fold their wings on deck.

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4. VC-3 "D" - F4U5NL

The VC-3 Detachment "D" fired 4800 rounds of 20MM ammunition during the period. The discrepancies noted were: Feed mech. jams generally due to inability to calibrate ammunition when loading ammo can. During a brief period no pneumatic tools were available for gun cleaning. Hand cleaning proved unsatisfactory due to excess carbon deposits. The guns have been winterized in accordance with OP 1910 letter Ordnance OHL 18-51.

The Detachment dropped 132 bombs and had no difficulty with the MK55 bomb racks.

The Detachment has dropped six MK6 MOD5 parachute flares with approximately 50% working properly. The reason for this discrepancy is believed to be the old age of the flares in use.

5. AD TYPE AIRCRAFT

AD ordnance operations improved greatly during this period as a result of a concerted winterization and maintenance program.

A. 20MM Gun.

1. The major difficulty during this operating period was freezing of the 20MM gun. Five sorties reported both guns not functioning due to freezing. This has been eliminated to a great extent by not arming the guns until over the target.

2. The remainder of gun stoppage was due to feed mechanism and gun parts wearing out which consisted of 16 jams during the entire operating period. This has been alleviated by closer inspection of gun and feed mechs.

B. BOMB RACKS.

1. No appreciable trouble was encountered with the bomb racks other than six cases of the rack freezing causing a hung bomb.

C. AD-4NL

1. About 25% of the MK6 Mod 5 parachute flares were duds.

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PART IV DAMAGE

A. OWN DAMAGE

1. DAMAGE TO AIRCRAFT DUE TO ENEMY ACTION

DATE	SQD	TYPE	BUNO.	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE
1/18/52	VF 837	F9F-2	127160	Small Arms	Bottom nose section
1/18/52	VA 728	AD-2	122248	Small Arms	Flash plate on stbd; cut electrical leads to oil regulator valve.
1/18/52	VA 728	AD-2	122329	20MM	Bottom fuselage; stbd wing stub.
1/18/52	VA 728	AD-4	123951	Small Arms	Stbd. windshield
1/19/52	VF 713	F4U-4	81573	30 Cal.	Nose cowl into spark plug #12 cyl.
1/19/52	VF 837	F9F-2	127143	40MM	Stbd. leading edge.
1/19/52	VF 837	F9F-2	125095	Small Arms	Port wing.
1/19/52	VA 728	AD-3	122771	20MM	Leading edge port wing; stbd. side fuselage.
1/19/52	VA 728	AD-2	122315	20MM	Port wing outer panel.
1/21/52	VF 713	F4U-4	81079	50 Cal.	Nose cowl under armor plate; right wing.
1/21/52	VA 728	AD-3	122815	Bomb Blast	Bottom port wing butt.
1/22/52	VC 35	AD4Q	124063	20MM	Stbd. wing aft.
1/22/52	VA 728	AD 2	122304	20MM	Stbd. wing butt.
1/22/52	VA 728	AD-3	122829	Small Arms	Stbd. elevator
1/22/52	VF 831	F9F-2	127142	UNKNOWN	Bottom left tip tank
1/23/52	VF 837	F9F-2	127160	Small Arms	Stbd. wheel fairing.
1/23/52	VA 728	AD-2	122333	Small Arms	Penetrated leading edge stbd. wing; Aileron excess flap, stbd aileron.
1/26/52	VF 837	F9F-2	127160	Small Arms	Passed thru stbd. wing.
1/26/52	VA 728	AD-2	122326	20 MM	Penetrated port hell door.
1/26/52	VA 728	AD-2	122304	40MM Small Arms	Port wing; flap; Wing & glanced off fuselage.

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