UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
CARRIER AIR GROUP NINETEEN

CVG-19/KSV:ms

Serial: 012

[redacted]

25 February 1951

From: Commander Carrier Air Group NINETEEN
To: Commanding Officer, U. S. S. PRINCETON (CV-37)

Subj: Action Report for the period 18 January 1951 through 15 February 1951

Ref: (a) CNO rest ltr Op345 ser 1197P34 of 3 Aug 50

Encl: (1) Chart of strike actions
(2) Chart of bridges damaged

1. The following action report of Carrier Air Group NINETEEN for the period 18 January 1951 through 15 February 1951, as required by reference (a), is forwarded for inclusion in the report of the U. S. S. PRINCETON (CV-37).

I Mission and Composition of Own Forces:

1. During the above specified period, Carrier Air Group NINETEEN operated aboard the U. S. S. PRINCETON (CV-37), having as its primary mission the close air support of United Nations Forces in Korea and as its secondary mission the interdiction of enemy supply lines throughout the eastern half of North Korea.

2. The Air Group commenced this phase with the following aircraft and pilots assigned:

	No. on Board	No. Avail.	Pilots on Board
(a) Panther - F9F-2B	22	22	30
(b) Panther Photo - F9F-2P	3	3	3
(c) Corsair - F4U-4	26	26	46
(d) Corsair Night - F4U-5N	3	2	4
(e) Skyraider - AD-4	13	10	30
(f) Skyraider Night - AD-4N	3	3	5
(g) Skyraider Queen - AD-4Q	1	1	2
(h) Skyraider William - AD-4W	2	2	5
(i) Pinwheel - HO-3S	1	1	2

II Summary:

From 18 January through 11 February (our last day of air operations) Carrier Air Group NINETEEN flew 794 combat sorties, of which number 498 were close air support missions, 142 were pre-briefed bridge strikes, 93 were armed reconnaissance missions, and 61 were flown by night fighters and hecklers. These figures do not include routine Combat Air Patrols, Anti-Submarine Patrols, and Courier Missions which totaled an additional 157 sorties. This operation resulted in damage to the enemy, briefly, as follows: (a) 480 troops killed, (b) 156 vehicles destroyed, (c) 898 buildings demolished, (d) 56 bridges destroyed or damaged, plus and undetermined amount of damage inflicted during close air support and night heckler missions where a great deal of battle damage could not be accurately established. Refer to Section FIVE for additional details of enemy battle damage. In addition to the above, the photographic unit flew a total of

25 photographic reconnaissance sorties providing pre-strike coverage of 176 bridges located along approximately 600 miles of enemy transportation routes. Post strike damage assessment sorties were flown to cover the bridges that were reported hit.

The interdiction phase of the operation resulted in eleven primary bridges being hit and made unuseable, one of which was repaired and then hit again. In addition, three bridges were made unuseable due to damaged approaches. Refer to Section FIVE for additional details.

Close Air Support of friendly forces extended across the peninsula with concentrations being in the Charlie Sugar Area south of Inchon and Seoul and in the Dog Sugar Area around Wonju. Armed Reconnaissance Missions followed the eastern coastline north to Chongjin with attacks centered in the Kosong Area, the Wonsan Area, and Hamhung-Hungnam Area north to the Chosin Reservoir. The night hecklers found most of their targets in the Kosong Area, the Wonsan Area, and the Hamhung-Hungnam-Chosin Reservoir Area.

III Photographic Missions:

VC-61 EASY, the photographic unit, flew a total of 25 sorties during this period as indicated previously. This activity was in connection with the Task Force 77 Interdiction Program which was calculated to slow down the enemy's supply lines through the systematic destruction of his railroad and highway bridges. Photographic activity included strip photography, scale of 1:50,000 feet, for planning purposes, plus obliques and verticals covering 175 bridges. Bridge strikes were briefed from photographs, and the pilots were given target pictures for use during the missions. Damage assessment photography made accurate strike evaluation possible.

It is felt that our photographic operations during the recent period justify the following conclusions: (a) That properly planned and executed aerial photography is necessary to any large scale sustained program of interdiction, (b) That the F9F-2P represents an improvement over prop driven aircraft. It is believed that the high speed of this plane plus a minimum of vibration make it particularly suitable for photography wherein the tactical situation is sufficiently flexible to require the combination of speed plus precision accuracy.

IV Ordnance Equipment

Satisfactory - No additional comments.

V Battle Damage:

1. Own:

A/C	Failed to return to friendly base	Damaged beyond local repair, trans or hold for repair elsewhere	Jettisoned or salvaged after return to base	Damage from mission repaired on board
F4U	2	0	0	1
AD	1	1	0	0
F9F	0	0	0	1

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2. Enemy

	Destroyed	Probably Destroyed	Damaged
Warehouses	2	0	5
Buildings	590	120	160
Gun Emplacements	11	0	6
Carts	25	10	10
Barracks	2	0	0
Animals	51	0	0
Troops	270	110	100
Jeeps	0	0	1
Trucks	37	3	10
Bridges (not pre-briefed)	15	18	23
Supply Dumps	4	0	3
RR Tunnels	0	0	13
Villages	15	0	4
Tanks	3	1	10
Bull Dozers	0	0	1
Oil Storage Tanks	1	0	1
Snow Ploughs	0	0	1
RR Sidings and Tracks	10	0	2
Locomotives	5	2	6
Box Cars	10	2	38
Command Posts	2	0	1
People	3	0	0

3. Enemy Bridges - Pre-briefed Interdiction

Date	Coordinate	Type	Damage
1-28	DV-4547	RR	2 spans - Hit by AF 2-7 4 spans down 2-7
1-28	DV-0932	HWY	2 spans
1-28	DV-2532	HWY	1 spans
1-28	DV-2532	RR	2 spans - Repaired Hit again 2-7
1-30	DT-5941	RR	Approaches
1-30	DT-4865	HWY	Approaches
2-1	CT-5885	HWY	1 span
2-3	CV-5941	RR	Approach damaged
2-5	CV-5583	HWY	2 spans
2-7	DV-6754	RR	2 spans
2-7	DV-2532	RR	4 spans
2-10	CT-7984	HWY	1 span
2-11	CV-6830	HWY	1 span
2-11	CT-8671	HWY	5 holes in bridge

VI Personnel

1. Casualties

Ensign Evan C. HARRIS, 506994/1315, USNR - Presumed pilot suffered injury from ground fire or burns and crashed into water off SINPO

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1. Casualties (cont'd):

LTJG Marcus P. MERNER, 485423/1310, USN - Plane presumed hit by ground fire for pilot reported loss of oil pressure and runaway prop. Plane was ditched but pilot not recovered off SINPO.

ENS Harold (n) TROLLE, 508283/1310, USN - Pilot spun in to ground fully loaded while flying low and slow trying to locate a target.

2. Performance and Training:

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Continued emphasis must be placed on the problem of training pilots to properly use their ordnance panel switches. Mistakes are easily made under combat conditions unless the proper habits are developped by the pilot before he leaves the United States. An example of this problem can be seen by imagining one of our aircraft, an AD, loaded for a typical mission carrying one 1000# GP bomb (VT nose fuse and .01 second delay tail fuse), one 1000# napalm, eight 250# fragmentation bombs, 2 HVARS, and 2 ATARS. Against troops in a heavily wooded area, the air controller might call for napalm. This means that the run must be flown at a low altitude in a flat position. Should the 1000# GP bomb be dropped through cockpit error instead of the napalm tank, the aircraft undoubtedly be damaged with the possible loss of pilot. Another example of what to avoid would occur if the pilot fired a 250# fragmentation bomb instead of a HVAR while on a flat rocket run toward a cave.

VII Operations, Tactics, General Topics:

1. Summary of Jet Operations period 18 January 1951 through 15 February 1951:

Type of Mission	Number of Sorties	Flight Hours	Hours/Sortie
Recco	114	195.4	1.7
ResCap	2	3.6	1.8
Photo & Escort	48	86.9	1.77
CAP	18	30.0	1.66
Ferry	4	2.0	.5

2. Reports:

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The task of grinding out the reports required by the Combat Reporting Manual (OpNav P55-100) becomes an arduous one under combat conditions. Currently it requires approximately four hours per day to cut and run off the necessary stencils alone, and this figure will increase as the strike days grow longer and the numbers of sorties per day increases. The number of man-hours required to assemble the information for these reports is sizeable and has become a major portion of the daily job of the Intelligence Officers.

It is suggested that as many reports as possible be combined into a single report, and that the number of copies required by other activities be reduced

2. Reports (cont'd)

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to an absolute minimum and be commensurate with CNO's (Op-55) request for only the original plus one copy. Possibly a Combat Reporting Team complete with typewriters and Yeomen and attached to each Air Group or parent carrier would be the answer. Extra copies required beyond the original distribution should be reproduced (possibly by photographic means) in a non-combat area where additional clerical help is readily available. The latter is especially pertinent in view of latent requests by various activities for "Five Copies" or "Ten Copies" for "evaluation purposes" some two months after the report is first mailed. The reporting activity finds it extremely hard to anticipate such requests in view of the fact that mimeograph production of certain reports is inadvisable due to the printed form used.

K. S. VAN METER
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