

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
AIR FORCE  
CARRIER AIR GROUP NINETEEN

CVG-19/A16-13(1)

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From: Commander Carrier Air Group NINETEEN  
To: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. PRINCETON (CV-37)  
Subj: Action Report for period 26 February 1951 through 2 April 1951  
Ref: (a) CNO restricted letter Op 345, ser 1197P34 of 3 Aug 50  
Encl: (1) Chart of Close Air Support Action  
(2) Chart of DAS, Night Heckler, and Fighter Action  
(3) Chart of Jet Reconnaissance Action  
(4) Chart of Bridges Damaged

1. The following action report of Carrier Air Group NINETEEN for the period 26 February 1951 through 2 April 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 the 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 of operation with the following aircraft and pilots assigned:

|                               | No. aboard | No. Available | Pilots aboard |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| (a) F9F-2B - Panther          | 17         | 16            | 28            |
| (b) F9F-2P - Panther Photo    | 3          | 3             | 3             |
| (c) F4U-4 - Corsair           | 30         | 30            | 44            |
| (d) F4U-5N - Corsair Night    | 4          | 3             | 6             |
| (e) AD-4 - Skyraider          | 17         | 15            | 26            |
| (f) AD-4N - Skyraider Night   | 2          | 2             | 5             |
| (g) AD-4Q - Skyraider Queen   | 2          | 2             | 2             |
| (h) AD-4W - Skyraider William | 2          | 2             | 5             |
| (i) HO3-S - Pinwheel          | 1          | 1             | 2             |

II Summary.

During the first eight days of operation (26 Feb to 5 Mar) after returning to the Task Force the F4U-4 and F4U-5Ns of VF-193, VF-192, and VC-3 ranged over the peninsula of Korea attacking rail and highway bridges, houses, supply dumps, warehouses, vehicles, ox carts, tunnels, railroad cars and locomotives and sidings, tanks, gun emplacements, and troops in close air support missions. During this period these squadrons flew one hundred thirty nine sorties comprised of NGF, CAS, Liaison, Recco, Pre-dawn and

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night hecklers and pre-briefed tunnel and bridge strikes. The loads were varied from ATARs, HVARs, 100# GP, 260# Frags, 500# GP, 1000# GP and Napalm to suit the mission.

Also during this eight day period the ADs of VA-195 and VC-35 flew ninety three combat missions against enemy forces. They destroyed bridges, highways, railroads, tunnels, entrenched troops, gun positions, banks, and supply areas. The planes were flown on armed recco flights covering the supply lines in NE Korea with excellent results achieved; close air support flights all along the battle line; and on a large number of "bridge and tunnel busting" missions.

While the F4Us and ADs were wrecking havoc on the bridges and troops of the enemy the F9F-2s of VF-191 flew forty seven sorties comprised of armed recco and photo escorts flights covering most of NE Korea. During these flights the F9Fs attacked any and all supply carrying vehicles and troops sighted as well as critical bridges and tunnels along the routes recording excellent results on the vehicles and troops and fair results against bridges and tunnels.

During the nine day period of 6 March to 14 March the F9F Panthers of VF-191 flew twenty four sorties on armed recco attacking houses, warehouses, barracks, railroad cars, locomotives, ox carts, and troops with excellent results. The jets carried ATARs and HVARs over the NE supply routes to seek out targets to destroy.

The AD-4N and F4U-5Ns of VC-35 and VC-3 were launched on 36 pre-dawn and night heckler missions that carried them over the supply routes of North Korea. They carried their varied bomb loads to numerous targets including tanks, troops, trucks, supply dumps, warehouses, trains, ox carts, bridges, and tunnels with outstanding success.

The ADs of VA-195 continued their very successful "bridge and tunnel busting" campaign as well as attacking troops in close air support missions. Other targets attacked in their eightysix sorties for the period were marshalling yards and supplies. The ADs recorded excellent hits on all targets attacked and their activities should be considered highly successful.

F4U-4s from VF-192 and VF-193 flew one hundred sixty two sorties during this period and carried napalm, 1000# GP, 400# GP, 100# GP and HVARs on their CAS, NGF, Recco, bridge and tunnel strikes. The F4Us inflicted heavy damage and casualties on the enemy troops on the battle front in the CAS missions. They also took a heavy toll of bridges, vehicles, tanks and supplies on the recco and NGF flights and contributed a great deal to the success of the interdiction program by destroying several bridges and tunnels with their 1000# GP bombs.

During the period between 15 March and 22 March the F4Us flew a total of one hundred seventy one sorties. This includes F4Us assigned to VF-192, VF-193 and VC-3. Assigned missions included naval gunfire spot, railroad

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and highway bridges, tunnels, tracks, supply dumps, marshalling yards, close air support, and lumber concentrations. The ordnance crews loaded the planes with varied types of rockets and bombs depending upon the mission. The use of napalm against lumber concentrations further impeded the repair of bridges generally the targets for the F4Us, located all along the East Coast of Korea or inland up to fifty miles.

The primary mission of the F9F jet aircraft during this period was reconnaissance. Forty sorties were flown during this period, six being escort assignments for VC-61 photo planes. Covering the major routes which extended on some flights to the Yalu River to the NW and also to the Yalu River to the North, the F9Fs augmented the interdiction program by supplying information on enemy activity. Rockets and 20 MM ordnance were expended on rolling stock, buildings, trees, ox carts, and troops along all routes.

This same period saw the ADs of VA-195 and VC-35 flying a total of one hundred twenty missions. For the most part the ADs concentrated on pre-briefed bridge strikes. Other assignments were CAS, reconnaissance routes, lumber strikes, and the seeding of railroad tracks. Flying inland and along the length of the Korean Coast the ADs effectively disrupted communication lines at all key points during this period. Hecklers proved their versatility by accomplishing many difficult assignments successfully.

During the period 23 March through 25 March 1951 the F9F-2B aircraft of VF-191 carrying ATARs and HVARs went on armed reconnaissance on the NE coast of Korea. Four sorties were flown. Four railroad cars were damaged and three tracks were destroyed. Buildings, ox carts, a railroad station, and a sawmill were also hit with undetermined damage.

The F4Us of VF-192 and VF-193 flew six NCF spot, fifteen railroad breaker, eight bridge destruction, and eleven close air support sorties. Napalm, bombs, and rockets were carried. The NCF spot aircraft struck targets in the firing area. All F4U flights were considered successful and good destruction was recorded. The AD-4 aircraft of VA-195 carried napalm and bombs and flew four railroad breaker, eleven bridge destruction and twelve CAS sorties with reported good results at all points.

The AD-4N and F4U-5N night planes carrying bombs, rockets, and flares flew four heckler sorties in the late evening against trains, trucks, supplies, etc. in NE Korea. Damage reports were excellent and included two trains, seven tracks, and troops and supplies. One AD-4N and one F4U-5N were damaged over enemy territory. Cause of damage was unknown and light and the planes were repairable aboard ship.

During the two day period of 27-28 March 1951 the AD-4 aircraft flew nine CAS sorties and one special CAS sortie in conjunction with the Air Group from the USS BOXER (CV-21). Napalm and bombs were carried, and excellent coverage reported although actual damage was unobserved. The F4U-4 aircraft, carrying rockets, napalm, and bombs, flew nine CAS sorties and one special CAS sortie with a flight from the USS BOXER (CV-21). Six buildings

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were burned and good coverage of the area was reported. One AD-4 was lightly damaged by bomb blast and was repaired aboard ship.

During the period 30 March through 2 April 1951 the F4U-5N and AD-4N night planes flew eighteen heckler sorties carrying bombs, rockets, and flares. Excellent results were reported. Trucks, troops, railroad tracks and cars, buildings and bridges were attacked and moderate to complete destruction was reported. All flights were launched before dawn and enemy movement during this time is great. One AD-4N, four AD-4, three F4U-4, and three F4U-5N aircraft, carrying 8-15 second delay and VT fused bombs, flew a special mission against railroad tunnels and tracks, and boxcars in an area approximately 20-40 miles south of Wonsan. Railroad cars and tunnels were damaged extensively. F9F-2B aircraft, carrying rockets, flew ten armed recco sorties in NE Korea, attacking and damaging or destroying bridges, buildings, tracks, camouflaged vehicles, ox carts, and troops. Jet aircraft also flew photo escort missions and attacked targets in the same areas as above with excellent results.

On 2 April 1951 two F9F-2B aircraft of VF-191, carrying two 250# GP bombs fused .01 nose, inst. tail, two 250# GP bombs fused 8-15 second delay nose, inst. tail, and two 100# GP bombs fused .01 nose, inst. tail each were launched against a railroad bridge near Songjin. The mission was highly successful and the target was completely destroyed. This was the first case of a jet aircraft being catapulted from a carrier deck when loaded with bombs.

The AD-4s of VA-195 carrying bombs, napalm, and rockets flew twenty six CAS, ten railroad breaker, twenty eight bridge, and one special CAS mission in conjunction with the Air Group of the USS BOXER (CV-21). All flights were reported successful with good destruction. The F4Us of VF-192 and VF-193, carrying napalm, rockets and bombs, flew thirty four CAS, fourteen railroad breaker, twenty seven bridge destruction and one special CAS sortie in conjunction with the USS BOXER (CV-21) Air Group. One ASP escort (F4U-4) attacked a raft with sail and severely damage it. A major RESCAP operation was flown on 31 March 1951 over an intelligence team which was surrounded by enemy forces about fifty miles south of Wonsan. Six AD-4 and ten F4U-4 sorties were flown over the target during the day. Although the rescue operation was not completely successful, rescued persons were taken out by helicopter despite high winds and terrain difficulties. The surrounding troops were kept under cover by bombs, napalm, and strafing attacks of the RESCAP. Five AD-4 and one F9F-2B aircraft were lightly damaged by bomb blast and one AD-4 and four F4U-4 aircraft were lightly damaged by AA fire and undetermined causes. All damaged aircraft were repairable aboard ship.

### III Photographic Missions.

VC-61 Detachment Easy, the photographic unit, flew a total of fifty eight sorties this period. This activity was still maintained in the furtherance of the Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN interdiction program which had been calculated to cut and slow down the enemy's supply lines through a complete and systematic procedure of destruction of their railway and highway

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bridges. Their photographic activity included all necessary scales of photography for planning purposes. The bridge strikes were briefed from photographs and the pilots were given target pictures with complete assessment of gun emplacements, etc. Also damage assessment photographs made accurate strike evaluation possible.

It is still felt and with greater conviction that our photographic operations during this period justify the two following conclusions:

- (a) That a properly planned and executed aerial photography is necessary to any large scale sustained program of interdiction.
- (b) That the F9F-2P aircraft represents a definite improvement over prop driven aircraft.

IV Ordnance Equipment.

Satisfactory - no additional comments.

V Battle Damage.

1. Own

| Type A/C | Failed to Return to friendly base. | Damaged beyond local repair, trans. or held for repair elsewhere. | Jettisoned or salvaged after return to base. | Damage from mission repaired on board. |
|----------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| F4U      | 2                                  | 0   | 0  | 0                                      |
| AD-4     | 1                                  | 0   | 1  | 8                                      |
| F9F-2    | 1                                  | 0   | 1  | 0                                      |

2. Enemy

|                  | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| Ox carts         | 105       | 4                  | 3       |
| Trucks           | 59        | 43                 | 24      |
| Railroad cars    | 50        | 13                 | 19      |
| Tanks            | 5         | 7                  | 0       |
| Bridges          | 0         | 0                  | 85      |
| Warehouses       | 8         | 8                  | 9       |
| Villages         | 11        | 0                  | 0       |
| Gun Emplacements | 9         | 5                  | 0       |
| Buildings        | 122       | 217                | 54      |
| Jeeps            | 3         | 1                  | 2       |
| Railroad tracks  | 91        | 3                  | 4       |
| Locomotives      | 2         | 1                  | 5       |
| Troops           | 735       | 48                 | 0       |

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|                   | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| Lugger boats      | 0         | 0                  | 5       |
| Tunnels           | 0         | 0                  | 22      |
| Horses            | 25        | 0                  | 0       |
| Oxen              | 3         | 0                  | 0       |
| Trains            | 5         | 0                  | 0       |
| Supply Dumps      | 2         | 6                  | 0       |
| Other Vehicles    | 10        | 0                  | 0       |
| Pipelines         | 1         | 0                  | 0       |
| Railroad switches | 5         | 0                  | 0       |

## VI Personnel.

### 1. Casualties.

LCDR John J. MAGDA, USN, was killed in action when his plane crashed into the sea off Tanchon. His body was recovered. 8 March 1951.

LTJG Baxter H. COOK, USN, was reported missing in action when his plane (FAU-5N) was seen to crash into the sea at Lat. 39-57N, Long 128-56E. 9 March 1951.

ENS William E. PATTON, USN, was reported missing in action when his FAU-4 crashed at CV 639477. 10 March 1951.

Mr. William H. GRAHAM, Civilian War Correspondent was killed following a water crash after take-off from carrier. 3 March 1951.

### 2. Performance and Training.

Mr. William H. Graham, Aviation Editor of the New York Journal of Commerce, who recently lost his life in a carrier accident, contributed an excellent idea during the time he was associated with this command. Using the "Ampro" tape recorder, he conducted discussions in each Ready Room to solicit pilot's comments on what they liked and didn't like about the aircraft they were flying. The discussions were approved by ComNavFE, subject to subsequent censorship by that command. The ultimate purpose of these forums was to provide BuAer with an unbiased source of "consumer" information relative to the planes operating on the front lines. It is important to obtain comments on aircraft operations or upkeep while an incident is fresh in a pilot's or mechanic's mind. The tape recording is highly advantageous here, for too often important points are overlooked or forgotten in the preparation of dry, formal reports on typewritten pages.

The foregoing idea has high merit, and it is recommended that each Air Group in the operating area be supplied with a tape recorder and directed to submit, direct to ComAirPac, periodical pilot interviews on subjects which that command deems of immediate interest and on which live comments are quickly desired.

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Pilot response to an audio interview is enthusiastic, and this system would eliminate the necessity for so many "visiting firemen" on field trips to the front lines at considerable expense to the Navy.

## VII Operations, Tactics, General Topics.

## 1. Summary of VF-191 Operations.

| <u>Type of Mission</u> | <u>No. of Sorties</u> | <u>Flight Hours</u> | <u>Hours/Sorties</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Recco.                 | 108                   | 167.8               | 1.55                 |
| TarCap                 | 68                    | 124.4               | 1.84                 |
| Photo & Escort         | 107                   | 195.0               | 1.82                 |
| Courier                | 6                     | 5.4                 | .90                  |

## 2. Summary of VF-192 Operations.

|                     |     |       |      |
|---------------------|-----|-------|------|
| CAP                 | 89  | 253.1 | 2.84 |
| ASP                 | 12  | 35.0  | 2.90 |
| CAS                 | 101 | 311.8 | 3.08 |
| Pre-Briefed targets | 163 | 454.9 | 2.80 |
| Test                | 7   | 16.7  | 2.40 |
| NGF                 | 22  | 60.2  | 2.70 |
| Courier             | 9   | 11.1  | 1.30 |
| Search & Rescue     | 6   | 17.7  | 2.95 |
| Ferry               | 1   | 2.9   | 2.90 |

## 3. Summary of VF-193 Operations.

|                |     |       |      |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|
| CAP            | 62  | 178.8 | 2.90 |
| Bridge Strikes | 119 | 352.3 | 3.00 |
| CAS            | 96  | 310.7 | 3.10 |
| Misc.          | 119 | 346.9 | 2.90 |

## 4. Summary of VA-195 Operations.

|               |     |       |      |
|---------------|-----|-------|------|
| CAS           | 96  | 318.0 | 3.30 |
| Bridge Strike | 217 | 635.9 | 2.90 |
| Tunnel Strike | 20  | 58.6  | 2.90 |
| ResCap        | 4   | 13.4  | 3.30 |
| Armed Recco   | 37  | 97.9  | 2.60 |
| Escort        | 12  | 39.6  | 3.30 |

## 5. Summary of VC-11 Operations.

|             |    |       |      |
|-------------|----|-------|------|
| ASP (Night) | 12 | 38.5  | 3.20 |
| ASP (Day)   | 37 | 114.5 | 3.10 |
| Ferry       | 2  | 2.7   | 1.35 |

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used. Most of the pilots recommend, because of climatic conditions in this area, some form of quick release harness be adopted that would permit the pilot to rid himself quickly of the chute in cases of water landings. Some thought the Chest Button type used by the Air Force or the British would be acceptable. Two pilots of this Group, who survived water landings, reported their hands were so numbed by the cold water, that they were unable to unhook the harness snaps and the seat pack tended to make them float seat up and face down. This latter would be an extremely important factor were the pilot even slightly dazed and unable to collect his thoughts quickly enough to "dog paddle" and keep his head clear of the water.

The pilots, in general, thought the recently issued Artic Shoe Pac was a very satisfactory type of footgear for cold weather. However, the jet pilots objected to the height of the Shoe Pac, reporting that it interfered with the leg of their "G" suit. The Group recommended a fleece lined boot, about 12 inches high and zippered nearly to the toe. This boot to have a hard sole and a built-in arch support to foster foot warmth and still be a good walking shoe. It is thought that it should also have some form of fastener to secure it to the legs of the "G" suit to prevent loss in case of a bail-out. Some pilots recommended that the Marine field boot be adopted for the all service flying boot.

The investigation brought out the many methods the pilots use to carry their survival gear. Some carry it in the pockets of their flight clothing, while others use the Air Force C-1 Vest, procured personally by them in the States from Surplus Stores. Nearly all had from one to ten different items tied to their Mae West, which could cause injury in case of a bail-out. The recommendation of the Group was that the C-1 Vest be procured and issued to all combat pilots for the purpose of carrying survival items.

R. C. MERRICK.