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ORIGINAL

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
CARRIER AIR GROUP FIVE

CVG5/A9-9/A16-3/(jds)
Serial 077-50

21 November 1950

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From: Commander Carrier Air Group FIVE
To: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45)

Subj: Action Report for period 11 October - 31 October 1950

Ref: (a) CNO rest ltr Op 345 ser 1197P34 of 3 Aug 1950

1. The following action report of Carrier Air Group FIVE for the period from 11 October to 31 October 1950, required by reference (a), is forwarded for inclusion in the report of VALLEY FORGE.

I. Mission and Composition of Own Forces

1. During this period Carrier Air Group FIVE (USS VALLEY FORGE) operated in the Sea of Japan against North Korean targets, our primary mission being to assist as necessary in the amphibious landing at Wonsan. This operation was in compliance with:

(a) Com7thFlt Op Plan 10-50
(b) Com7thFlt Op Order 14-50
(c) ComCarDivONE Op Order 3-50

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

		Aircraft	Pilots
(a)	F9F-3 Jets (two squadrons)	26	37
(b)	F4U-4B Fighter-Bombers (two squadrons)	23	34
(c)	AD-4 Dive-Bombers (one squadron)	12	22
(d)	F4U-5N and AD-3N Night Unit	4	5
(e)	AD-3W ASW Unit	3	4
(f)	F4U-5P Photo Unit	1	2

II. Order of Events

1. Offensive flight operations for Air Group FIVE, coordinated with those of CVG-11 (USS PHILIPPINE SEA), CVG-3 (USS LEYTE), and CVG-2 (USS BOXER), were conducted on 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27 and 28 of October. Additional flights were conducted on 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 23, 26, 29 of October for routine defensive and utility operations.

2. During this period only minor assistance was required of the carriers in the Wonsan administrative amphibious landing. Preliminary softening attacks were made on islands controlling the approach to Wonsan Harbor plus a few close support hops for the ROK troops in the vicinity.

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In lieu of supporting the landing, air operations were diverted to armed reconnaissance, small interdiction strikes, coastal naval gunfire spotting, and jet sweeps, all in an area north and northeast of Wonsan.

The total hours and sorties for this period of flight operations were:

				Sorties over Korean targets	
Jet hours	290.8	Jet sorties	179	Jet	71
Prop hours	1642.1	Prop sorties	582	Prop	350
Total	1932.9	Total	761	Total	421

III. Ordnance Equipment

1. The 2000# bomb, with an instantaneous nose fuse and a .025 sec. tail fuse, was found to be the most effective weapon for the destruction of bridges. However, due to this carrier's limited 2000# bomb stowage capacity, this heavier bomb could not be carried as frequently as desired. Corrective measures are being made by the VALLEY FORGE to alleviate this shortage of heavy bomb stowage racks.

2. The Mark 66 napalm container is inadequate in size. The Mark 12 tank, with its larger capacity, is much more effective.

3. Use of the unspliced pigtail on the 5" HVARs considerably reduced the number of dud rockets brought back aboard. This single piece wire lead had the added strength necessary to prevent the pigtail from parting during high speed bombing dives.

   The variety of targets encountered necessitated the universal use of the instantaneous AN-M-149 nose fuse on the HVAR allowing a selection to be made between contact detonation or deeper penetration as offered by the standard base fuse.

4. The 20MM guns continued to give about 85% availability. This rate was higher for the F9F-3 and lower for the older and more heavily used F4Us. Contributing detrimental factors were:

   (a) Short life of the 20MM firing pin and driving spring.
   (b) Link chute jams in the F9F.
   (c) Inability of the spring tensioning coils to immediately cut out the booster motor operation when stoppages occurred in the F9F outboard guns. An overload in the feed chutes resulted.
   (d) Frequent jams from the Mark 7 belting links.

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DECLASSIFIED

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IV. Battle Damage

1. Own -

1 AD-4	Ditched after being hit in the oil system by 50 cal. bullets.
3 ADs	Minor repairable AA damage.
1 F4U	Minor repairable AA damage.

2. Enemy -

Type	Destroyed	Probably Destroyed	Damaged
Locomotives	8	-	5
Railroad Cars	21	-	75
Railroad Bridges	1	-	4
Oil Storage Tanks	1	-	-
Warehouses	1	-	8
Buildings (unidentified due to camouflage)	-	-	1
Ammo Dumps	1	-	-
Fuel Dumps	2	-	1
Trucks	180	-	48
Jeeps	1	-	-
Tanks	3	-	-
* Other Vehicles	40	-	44
Gunboats	1	10	-
Corvettes	1	-	-
** Miscellaneous Small Craft	19	-	56
Gun Emplacements	4	-	9
Villages (containing military targets)	-	-	38

Many attacks were made on hidden enemy troops as directed by Tactical Air Control personnel when the Air Group had planes on close support missions.

* Reconnaissance cars, buses, halftracks, autos, tractors, and carts.

** Junks, fishing boats, motor launches, schooners, and power boats.

V. Personnel

1. Casualties

a. A plane captain was critically injured by a propeller as he attempted to remove the rudder batten from his AD.

b. There were no fatalities.

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5

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2. Performance and Training

a. There have been two cases where replacement pilots, direct from the training command and lacking fleet experience were unable to quickly adjust themselves and step into the combat organization of the squadron. It is recommended that, before being sent into the combat area, replacement pilots should have had training in a fleet squadron and have been recently carrier qualified. "Bounce drill" and requalifications were an impossibility in the forward area.

b. A course in enemy camouflaging and how to detect it should be given pilots going to the Korean area. There are known instances of armed reconnaissance aircraft from newly arrived carriers passing over several camouflaged vehicles which were spotted and destroyed less than an hour later by our more seasoned pilots.

c. Pre-combat training in strafing and bombing under varying conditions should not be neglected. Low level and shallow attacks should be included. Targets located in varying terrain and altitude should be utilized with the aircraft flying in a fully loaded condition of bombs, rockets and fuel.

d. Although the operating schedule for this period was somewhat lighter than previously there were still occasions where working around the clock was necessary to keep up the availability of the aging aircraft. This situation was alleviated somewhat as squadron men, originally loaned to the ship to augment flight deck crews, were returned when drafts of new men were received by the ship.

e. Pilot complement for WesPac deployment should be increased to 1.5 per aircraft. In the undercomplemented Corsair squadrons there were cases of pilots flying up to 85 combat hours in a month.

f. The two-plane section reconnaissance sweep conducted by the jets during this period did much to increase the individual pilots proficiency in navigation, communications, leadership, objective observation and reporting.

g. It is recommended that the personnel of the night flying detachment be given a separate berthing space rather than being spread out in the spaces of several day operating squadrons. Similarly, the officers should room together.

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VI. Operations, Tactics, General Topics.

1. A 20MM ammunition loading of only HEI was found to be most successful by the night flying detachment. Pilots were not blinded during firing. Sight corrections could be made from the bullet explosions at the target.

2. Some means of illumination is needed for the RAPCAP aircraft in order to identify a surface target. Since the AD-3N is not provided with any lights it would be of more value on CAP or as a Night Intruder than as RAPCAP.

3. Night Intruder pilots felt their missions would be more successful if they could arrive at the target area with 30 minutes of daylight remaining on the evening hops or remain over the target for 30 minutes after daylight on the dawn flights.

4. Jets were employed for fast road reconnaissance and airfield sweeps in order to hold down enemy aircraft activity and spot any large troop or convoy movements. However, the rugged mountainous terrain precluded detailed searching by the F9F. This type work was handled by the prop aircraft.

5. Air Group FIVE maintained the only carrier-flown photo plane (F4U-5N of MAG-12 Detachment) equipped with an operating Sonne camera. Extensive use was made of this aircraft for obtaining "Stereo" pictures of future amphibious-landing beaches.

H. P. LANHAM

C. H. GATES,
By direction

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7