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COMMANDER CARRIER AIR GROUP SEVEN
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[redacted]

From: Commander Carrier Air Group SEVEN
To: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD (CV-31)

Subj: Action Report of Air Group SEVEN from 21 June to 27 June 1952

Ref: (a) OpNav Instruction 3480.1
(b) CincPacFlt Instruction 3480.1

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), subject report is submitted herewith for inclusion with the action report of the U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD for the same period.

G. B. BROWN

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PART ONE - MISSION

The mission of Air Group SEVEN is derived from Commander Task Force 77 Secret Operations Order No. 22-51. As the embarked air group of the U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD, CVG-7 took part in the combined strikes against the hydro-electric complex of North Korea, and conducted aerial interdiction against enemy lines of communications and supply. Attacks were also made against areas of troop and supply concentrations. Photographic reconnaissance was flown in support of all operations, and one weather reconnaisance mission was launched. No close air support missions were scheduled or flown.

PART TWO

A. COMPOSITION OF CVG-7

UNIT	ALLOW & TYPE A/C	OPERATIONAL A/C 6/21	OPERATIONAL A/C 6/27	PILOTS 6/21	PILOTS 6/27
VF-71	(16) F9F-2	16	16	25	25
VF-72	(16) F9F-2	16	16	24	24
VF-74	(16) F4U-4	16	14	25	24
VA-75	(16) AD-4	16	15	25	25
VC-4	(4) F4U-5N	4	4	5	5
VC-12	(3) AD-4W	3	3	6	6
VC-33	(4) AD-4NL	4	4	7	7
	(1) AD-3Q	1	1		
VC-61	(3) F9F-2P	3	3	4	4

B. CHRONOLOGY

21 June 1952 - U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD, with Carrier Air Group SEVEN embarked, departed Fleet Activities Yokosuka at 0600I for the Korean Combat Area. Fifty-nine refresher flights were launched.

22 June 1952 - Refresher flights were cancelled due to weather en route to join TF-77.

23 June 1952 - U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD joined TF-77 at approximately 0500I. At 0700I a four plane jet CAP was launched. A heavy strike schedule was to have been launched at 0800I against Fusen #1 and #2 and Kyosen #2 and #3 hydro-electric plants, but at 0740I the strike was postponed twenty-four hours.

However, at 1300I a modified strike schedule was ordered as part of a coordinated effort to knock out electric power plants throughout North Korea. Planes from the U.S.S. PRINCETON, U.S.S. BOXER, U.S.S. PHILIPPINE SEA and the U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD joined with several hundred Air Force planes to achieve maximum destruction of the assigned targets.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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COMMANDER G. B. BROWN (ComCVG-7) with 9 AD's, COMMANDER C. D. FONVIELLE, Jr. (C.O. VF-74) with 8 F4U-4's and LCDR A. W. CURTIS (C.O. VF-72) with 11 F9F-2's hit Kyosen #2 hydro-electric plant about 30 miles northeast of Hamhung. The transformer yard was severely damaged, and a large fire was started by a direct hit on a gasoline or oil storage tank.

COMMANDER H. K. EVANS (C.O. VA-75) with 6 AD's, LCDR D. V. SENFT (C.O. VF-74) with 6 F4U-4's and COMMANDER J. S. HILL (C.O. VF-71) with 7 F9F-2's hit Fusen #2 hydro-electric plant west of Kyosen. Two direct hits were made on the generator building, caving the roof in and starting a fire. In addition, severe damage was dealt to the transformer yard and surrounding buildings. This strike put Fusen #2 permanently out of commission.

No flak was encountered at Kyosen #2, and only meager, inaccurate flak at Fusen #2. However, one AD was badly damaged by flying concrete after a lead plane had hit the generator building. The newly-installed armor plate probably saved the pilot who landed safely aboard.

Twenty CAP launches were made during the day, and a total of 47 offensive sorties.

24 June 1952 - At 0800 both jets and pistons were launched to strike the North Korean hydro-electric complex once more. This time all CVG-7 aircraft were directed against Kyosen #4 plant, six miles inland from Tanchon. Complete destruction of the entire target area was achieved. No flak was encountered, probably due to the flak suppression runs made prior to the strike by VF-74's Corsairs. Following the strike on Kyosen #4, photo jets from VC-61 Detachment NAN covered the entire Kyosen complex.

In the afternoon, Skyraiders, Corsairs and Panthers struck rail and bridges northeast and northwest of Hungnam. Four railroad bridges were severely damaged and fourteen rail cuts were accomplished. Skyraiders and Corsairs hit a marshalling yard near Tanchon and damaged five boxcars that were found there. No flak was encountered.

VC-61 (Det. NAN) obtained photographic coverage of the area and of radar installations near Wonsan.

Thirty-one CAPS were launched during the day, and four ASP.

25 June 1952 - Bad weather prevented strike launches until 1230. However, a total of 14 planes were launched for CAP at 0800 and 0920, and a seven plane CAP was launched in the afternoon.

At 1230, Skyraiders, Corsairs and Panthers took off to attack area targets between Wonsan and the Bombline. The props dropped their loads on target from 4,000 feet saturating the area, and several large fires were started. The area had been reported to contain troop concentration and supply dumps, but it was not possible to assess results due to high altitude and the dense growth.

Before reaching the target, ENSIGN RONALD D. EATON, 543824/1325, USNR, VF-74 was hit by flak, probably 37MM, at an altitude of 8,000 feet. Oil pressure fluctuated, then dropped rapidly, and ENSIGN EATON was forced to bail out. The other three planes in the division took over RESCAP, and successfully protected ENSIGN EATON, who appeared to have landed without injury, from surrounding enemy troops by strafing the area. One RESCAP plane was hit in the port wheel well by what appeared to be 37MM, and proceeded to K-18 where it was landed safely. This aircraft was flown back to the ship on 26 June, but was off loaded at Sasebo due to damage to the main spar.

JOC Korea was immediately advised, and sent F-51's and a helicopter to take over rescue operations. ENSIGN EATON was successfully picked up, but the helicopter was shot down by small arms fire after it had gone about 1½ miles. The RESCAP later reported that enemy troops were seen capturing several of the downed personnel.

Forty-four offensive sorties were launched.

26 June 1952 - The BON HOMME RICHARD replenished at sea en route to Sasebo.

27 June 1952 - The Bon Homme Richard arrived at Sasebo at 0800I, and assumed ready carrier status.

PART THREE - ORDNANCE

A. Comments on Ordnance Equipment

The common malfunctioning of guns and bomb racks has been greatly reduced by efficient, squadron ordnance maintenance. A few isolated cases occurred, which were easily and quickly corrected.

Specific items of interest which are considered worth mentioning are as follows:

1. Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation report number 3076-91 of 4 March 1951. (Change to Aero-14A hydraulic gun chargers). This change is highly recommended. Higher firing averages have resulted since incorporation.

2. CV aircraft carriers should be equipped to service Aero 5A fire control systems (F9F-2 aircraft). Test equipment and spare parts should also be available.

3. It is believed that the present bomb handling equipment could be improved through the use of pneumatic tires on the bomb carts. Soft tires would allow smaller bomb-handling crews on the flight deck, due to the greater ease in crossing deck pennants and barrier cables.

B. Ordnance Expenditures

Ordnance expended for the period 21 June 1952 through 27 June 1952 by type aircraft is listed below:

	F9F-2	F4U-4	AD
20MM	11,298	-	4,510
50 cal.	-	32,215	-
250 GP	106	110	65
500 GP	-	30	29
1000 GP	-	30	108
2000 GP	-	-	27
Incendiary	-	32	56
Fragmentation	-	64	266

PART FOUR - INTELLIGENCE

A. General

During the period covered by this report the air group Intelligence Division functioned in a satisfactory manner in spite of the lack of experience of all squadron and group Air Intelligence officers.

B. Intelligence Materials and Information

In certain cases, target photographs and flak information were

not made available to the ship in time to be used on the missions for which they were required. It is believed that small scale oblique photographs of the coastlines of Korea would assist new pilots in making proper landfalls.

C. Equipment

Air Intelligence Officers, and other briefing officers, are handicapped by the lack of a public address or amplifying system in the ready rooms. When a large briefing is conducted in Ready Four, for example, it is necessary to shout in order for personnel in the rear of the room to be heard.

Debriefing areas have been created by the installation of curtains in the rear of the ready rooms, which helps to cut down on disturbing noises.

D. Rescue

It is desired that more information be made available on Army, Air Force and Marine rescue facilities, doctrines, methods and capabilities.

PART FIVE - BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Assessment of Battle Damage to the Enemy

1. The following tabulation represents a conservative estimate of the damage inflicted on the enemy. Figures are based on pilot reports, and whenever possible have been confirmed by photographs. Whenever results were unobserved, unassessed or probable, no destruction or damage has been claimed.

Assessment of Battle Damage to Enemy

Target	Current Period		Entire Tour	
	Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged
Kyosen #2		1		1
Kyosen #4	1		1	
Fusen #2	1		1	
Rail Cuts	14	3	14	3
Bridges		2		2
Troop concentration		1		1
Supply dumps		1		1
Truck farm		1		1
Marshalling yards		2		2

B. Battle Damage to CVG-7 Aircraft

Date	Type	BuNo.	Damage	Cause
6/23/52	AD-4	123934	D-3	C
6/25/52	F4U-4	81002	L	T
6/25/52	F4U-4	80893	D-2	T
6/25/52	AD-4	129006	D-3	T

C. Flak Damage Analysis

Combat operations of CVG-7 have been limited to three days. Therefore, it is believed that no concrete conclusions can be drawn from the flak damage encountered so far. The following tabulation represents flak hits for the three day period. A differentiation between small arms (SA) and automatic weapons (AW) is made. The latter includes 50 cal., 20MM, 37MM and 40MM.

Flak Damage Analysis

	F9F	F4U	AD	Total
1. Sorties	53	61	62	176
2. AW hits	0	1 or more *	1	2
3. AW/100 sorties	0	1.6%	1.6%	1.1%
4. SA hits	0	2	0	2
5. SA/100 sorties	0	3.3%	0	1.1%
6. Total hits	0	3	1	4
7. Total hits/100	0	4.9%	1.6%	2.2%
8. A/C lost	0	1	0	1
9. Losses/100	0	1.6%	0	.55%

* A/C lost in enemy territory. Believed hit by AW, but not proven.

D. Operational Damage to CVG-7 Aircraft

Date	Squadron	A/C	BuNo.	Cause	Damage
6/24/52	VA-75	AD	129005	Bomb drop *	D-2

* The suspension band on a 2,000 lb. bomb broke during a catapault launch, allowing bomb to drag between deck and aircraft, severely damaging fuselage.

PART SIX - OPERATIONS

A. Flight Summary

The following sorties were conducted during the current operating period:

	F9F	F4U	F4UN	AD	ADN	ADW	Total
Strike/Recco	53	61		59	3		176
CAP/RESCAP	69	2	2				73
Photo/Escort	8						8
NGF							0
Heckler							0
ASP/AEW						5	5
GATOR					4		4
							266

Sorties Scheduled	282	
Sorties Flown	266	% 94.3
Hours Flown	611.0	
Days Flight Operations Scheduled	3	
Average Hours Flight Day	203.7	

B. Force Disposition

The disposition of the carriers on the 2.5 circle in a four carrier formation cramped jet recoveries, particularly during light wind conditions when the carriers were searching for the wind line. It is recommended that the carriers be placed on circles in accordance with ATP-1.

C. Photo Reconnaissance

A second photo plane assigned as photo escort cannot be effective as both an escort and a photo reconnaissance plane simultaneously. It is strongly recommended that a jet fighter be assigned as photo escort with each photo plane regardless of the number of TARCAPS and other friendly aircraft in the area.

D. Training

Continuing emphasis should be placed on low altitude navigation and reconnaissance, utilizing 1:250,000 and 1;500,000 scale charts, with emphasis on pinpointing positions at any given time.

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During the four carrier operation, aircraft tactical calls were assigned by event number, and all strike aircraft were on a common strike frequency. It is recommended that the calls be assigned by mission rather than by event and, whenever possible, that separate strike missions airborne simultaneously use separate strike frequencies.

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While it is realized that the present call system is necessary for ship and aircraft strike control, it is recommended that a more simplified system be authorized for target tactical use. When aircraft of only one Air Group are involved, simplification could be achieved by using Modex of aircraft along with the call of the parent ship. For RESCAP aircraft working with JOC Korea these calls seem to be most important, and give more information than present strike calls.

F. Coordination

On strike missions made up of planes from two or more carriers, it is recommended that a strike coordinator be designated.

It is recommended that Air Groups be given information pertaining to the systems of rendezvous and recovery that are being used. This information is particularly important when three or more carriers are involved.

PART SEVEN - COMPOSITE SQUADRON DETACHMENTS

A. Anti-Submarine Patrol - AD-4W

For maximum 360 degree search coverage, the AD-4W should be flown at a speed of 160 knots. At this speed the designed two degree downward tilt of the maximum power lobe is constant through 360 degrees, and a snorkel can be detected at maximum range, which is about forty miles. Flights in excess of five hours are possible at an indicated air speed of 120 knots, but at this speed radar coverage is reduced to a very low proportion. At 160 knots the AD-4W can maintain a three hour schedule.

The search pattern and altitude, which depend on such factors as sea state and wind, which affect the radar presentation, can be determined only after becoming airborne. Consequently the search altitude and pattern should be determined by the pilot after an analysis of the contributory factors. Due to the lack of antenna stabilization, slight turns made by the aircraft blank out the radar presentation during the turns. Therefore, when possible, turns should be made at the discretion of the operator, and positive control of the aircraft by the controlling ships should be limited to those periods when the pilot so requests.

B. Night Attack - AD-4N

On the afternoon of 25 June 1952, Air Group SEVEN was assigned an area target southwest of Wonsan that consisted of possible storage, truck parking and troop bivouac. A positive geographic fix over the coast could not be made due to overcast and considerable time was spent in locating the target under marginal weather conditions. It is recommended that under such adverse weather conditions an AD-4N be sent with the strike group to provide radar navigation information. This aircraft could remain at sufficient altitude to be out of range of enemy fire during the attack.

In addition, the electronic equipment of the AD-4N is capable of giving a distinct indication when aircraft of the flight have been "locked on" and are being tracked by enemy fire control radar. Timely reports of such instances to the strike leader would have obvious advantages to the safety of our aircraft.

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PART EIGHT - MAINTENANCE

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Maintenance of propeller driven aircraft during the period was routine.

The long period of inactivity of aircraft, from 4 June to 20 June, caused excessive hydraulic leaks in F9F-2's. With the hydrolube fluid presently used in the hydraulic system, numerous O-ring seal failures occur after several days of inactivity.

Fuel pumps are a continuing source of trouble in F9F-2 aircraft, and it is urged that JP-A5 pumps be made available at the earliest possible date.

It was found that the new type F9F wing jury-strut does not prevent damage to wings and wing folding cylinders during high winds and rough seas. This jury strut will not prevent upward travel of the wing when in the folded position. While this strut is much more easily installed and removed than the old type, it is considered unsatisfactory because it will not prevent wing travel in an upward direction.

Several F9F-2 wing folding hydraulic cylinder failures occurred. It is understood that new production F9F aircraft are being fitted with an improved cylinder, but that no back fitting program is contemplated. It is recommended that all F9F-2 be equipped with the latest type wing folding hydraulic cylinders.

Maintenance has been handicapped to some extent by a lack of certain items of the Section "G" allowance list, specifically, test equipment for the capacitance type fuel quantity guage and an oxygen regulator test stand.

Ships being sent forward should be provided with a full Section "G" allowance.

PART NINE - SURVIVAL

Pilots' survival equipment such as PSK-1, C-1 vest and first aid kits, should be issued after embarkation on west coast. This would enable each pilot to get his equipment arranged to his personal satisfaction and get accustomed to wearing it during the period of training in the Hawaiian area.

The present flying suits are considered inadequate for this type of combat operation. There is a need for pilots to carry considerable survival equipment. Therefore, suits should be made to provide for those articles. It is believed that a two piece suit would prove to be more practical for use by downed pilots in enemy held territory.

It is recommended that two types of ADSK-1 droppable survival kits be provided - one for summer, and one for winter use. The kits issued were modified by CVG-7 for summer use by removing the heavy winter flight gear and replacing it with summer weight Marine fatigues. The additional space in the container was used to provide extra food and water. Contents of the kit were placed in a canvas container and then placed in the metal bomb, which permits quick removal and ease of transportation in addition to eliminating the weight of the can.

Only about half of the required CRC-7 radios are on hand or available. It is desired to place a CRC-7 radio in each parachute life raft kit and one in each ADSK-1 droppable kit. Pilots that landed at K-18 saw U.S. Air Force pilots with two-piece emergency radios that were designed to be carried in a C-1 or similar vest. This procedure appears to be highly desirable, as the pilot of Air Group

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SEVEN that bailed out over enemy held territory had to abandon all of his equipment that was not secured to his person, immediately upon landing, in order to avoid enemy troops that were in the immediate vicinity. Therefore, the CRC-7 radio which had been stowed in the parachute life raft kit was not available to him.

In order to avoid dropping the ADSK-1 kit in an unarmed condition, positive arming is provided by attaching the arming wire to the aircraft structure. Arming could be more expeditiously accomplished, and with less possibility of being overlooked, if a spring clip were provided on the end of the arming wire.

PART TEN - ELECTRONICS

Lack of bench test installations has seriously handicapped maintenance of certain airborne electronic equipment. Specific items for which complete test equipment is not available include AN/APS-31 and AN/ARR-27. Continuous effort has been made since the Air Group arrived in San Diego to obtain this equipment with no success. It is expected that all AN/APS-31 and AN/ARR-27 equipment will be inoperative within next six weeks unless adequate test equipment is made available.

The system that requires carriers returning to CONUS to turn in electronic supplies for issue to ships remaining in forward area should solve many problems. However, no direct results have been observed to date. It is hoped that many electronics supply items will be forthcoming when the ship next arrives at Yokosuka.