

U. S. S. BATAAN CVL 29  
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**DECLASSIFIED**

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BATAAN(CVL-29)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Via: (1) Commander Task Group 96.8  
(2) Commander Seventh Fleet  
(3) Commander Naval Forces, Far East  
(4) Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

Subj: Action Report; period 2-15 January 1951 - submission of.

Ref: (a) Navy Regulations, 1948  
(b) CNO ltr Op 345/aa, Ser 1197P34 dtd 3 Aug 1950  
NDB 15 Aug 1950

Encl: (1) Action Report period 2-15 January 1951

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosure (1), with Parts I, II, III, IV, V, and VI, is submitted herewith.

2. During the period covered by this report U.S.S. BATAAN operated with TG 96.8 off the West Coast of Korea.

3. When enclosure (1) is detached downgrade to restricted.

  
E. T. NEALE

Copy to:  
ComCarDiv 15

PART I  
NARRATIVE

Pursuant to orders of Commander SEVENTH Fleet of 1 January 1951 BATAAN, with USS MADDOX (DD-731) and USS SAMUEL M. MOORE (DD-747) as escorts, was detached from TF 77, then operating off the east coast of Korea, on 2 January to proceed via Tsushima Strait to the operating area off the west coast of Korea to join TG 96.8. At 0739, 3 January 1951 rendezvous with TG 96.8 was effected in the vicinity of Lat. 36.40'N Long. 125-20'E. Major units present were USS BADOENG STRAIT (CVE-116) and USS SICILY (CVE-118) in formation 4R, screened by ships of DesRon 7. CTG 96.8 was Rear Admiral R. W. RUBLE, ComCarDiv 15 in BADOENG STRAIT, guide. TG 96.8 was then operating in accordance with ComCarDiv 15 OpOrder No. 16-50.

From 3 January through 7 January BATAAN operated with TG 96.8, conducting normal carrier task group air operations in support of the Eighth Army in Korea. These operations comprised normal Close Air Support, Armed Recco, and Task Group Combat Air Patrol missions.

During this period, each carrier and two or three destroyers of the screen were withdrawn from the Task Group by CTG 96.8 to join and replenish from TG 79.3 in the vicinity of Lat. 34-40'N Long. 124-10'E. SICILY, MAC KENZIE, TAUSSIG, and SMALL replenished on 5 January. At 2125 5 January BATAAN, BOLE, and LOFBERG formed TE 96.83, CTE 96.83 in BATAAN, and detached pursuant to orders of CTG 96.8 to join TG 79.3 for replenishment. At 0608 rendezvous was effected with the replenishment group consisting of USS CIMMARON (AO-22), OTC, USS POLLUX and USS CHARA and CTE 96.83 assumed tactical command. Formation 4F, USS CIMMARON guide was formed and replenishment commenced at 0812. Replenishment was completed at 1652, TG 79.3 was detached, and TE 96.83 proceeded to rejoin TG 96.8. As BATAAN and screen rejoined TG 96.8 at 2243 BADOENG STRAIT, HANSON, MOORE, and MADDOX were detached to replenish. BATAAN, SICILY and remaining destroyers then composed TG 96.8 and the Commanding Officer, USS BATAAN was designated OTC. BADOENG STRAIT and destroyers rejoined at 1958 and ComCarDiv 15 resumed OTC. At 2030 TG 96.8 left the west coast operating area and proceeded to Sasebo, Japan. On the morning of 8 January, while enroute to Sasebo, rendezvous with TG 79.3 was effected and BADOENG STRAIT and destroyers completed replenishment which had not been accomplished the day before.

[REDACTED]

At 0900 BATAAN arrived at Sasebo in company with other units of TG 96.8 and moored to Buoy 21 for a period of upkeep and provisioning. On 14 January, pursuant to orders of ComNavFE BATAAN reported to CTF 95 for duty.

PART II

CHRONOLOGY

- 2 January 1951 Departed TF 77, orders changed, ordered to rendezvous with TG 96.8, west coast Korea. No air operations.
- 3 January 1951 Rendezvoused with TG 96.8, off west coast of Korea, OTC Rear Admiral Ruble, ComCarDiv 15. Launched 4 offensive sorties, all CAS.
- 4 January 1951 Operating with TG 96.8. Launched 22 offensive sorties, all CAS.
- 5 January 1951 Operating with TG 96.8. Launched 20 offensive sorties, all RECON and 8 CAP.
- 6 January 1951 Replenished at sea with TG 79.3.
- 7 January 1951 Operating with TG 96.8. Launched 25 offensive sorties, all CAS.
- 8 January 1951 Operating with TG 96.8. Enroute west coast Korea to Sasebo, Japan for period of upkeep.
- 9 January 1951 Arrived Sasebo, Japan in company with TG 96.8.
- 10-14 January 1951 Sasebo, Japan for upkeep.
- 15 January 1951 CTG 96.8 departed Sasebo. BATAAN remained Sasebo and ordered to take DesDiv 72 under orders and depart for the west coast of Korea to relieve HMS THESEUS and screen as TE 95.11

PART III

PERFORMANCE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND  
EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE

1. Shipboard Material and Equipment

- (a) As a result of frequent heavy seas over the bow, considerable difficulty was experienced with grounds in the exposed wiring of the forward 40 mm mount. Initially, this was traceable to deteriorated cable insulation and was corrected by renewal of affected cables. However, exposed cables continued to suffer damage from heavy seas with further grounds occurring. Renewal of cables appears to be the only remedy for this difficulty with the mount as now designed. It is recommended that in future automatic gun designs every effort be made to shield all cable of forward exposed mounts from the battering effect of the sea.
- (b) No other difficulty with the ship's ordnance installation was experienced.

2. Aviation Ordnance

- (a) During this period, despite the normal low temperature experienced, good results were obtained from the Napalm mixture by heating the gasoline to approximately 90°-95° in a mix heating device on plans the PHILIPPINE SEA had used, satisfactory results were attained.
- (b) Failures of HVAR's to fire and 100# bombs carried on the 100# bombrack assembly to drop were attributable to firing circuit discrepancies. Carrier landings made with unexpended HVARs and 100# bombs on wing rocket stations resulted in weakening and ultimate failure of rivets securing rocket launcher posts to the wings. Repairs were frequently required and necessitated grounding affected aircraft for refit or replacement of rocket launcher post assemblies. The frequency of damage was reduced by more careful attention to loading and the reduction of firing circuit discrepancies. However, no ready field fix was devised. It is anticipated that the installation of Aircraft Armament Service Change #52, when material is received, will correct this discrepancy.
- (c) No other difficulty with aircraft ordnance was noted.

3. Ammunition expended

50 cal. AMG	59,200 rounds
F51 Napalm tanks	28
Napalm thickener	1,512 pounds
100# G.P.	149
500# G.P.	37
5.0 HVAR	309

PART IV  
BATTLE DAMAGE

(A) Own

5 January, F4U-4 BuNo 97191 suffered one hit by 50 cal. bullet. Creased starboard wing 3 feet from tip but did not penetrate. Ground fire.

(B) Enemy

<u>Targets</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Warehouses	10	10
Buildings	141	49
Supply Dumps	2	
Fuel Dumps	1	
HW Bridges		1
Trucks	1	
Carts 3	3	
Oxen	1	
Freight Cars	1	

Casualties inflicted on enemy troops, estimated 138.

**PART V**

**PERSONNEL; PERFORMANCE, and CASUALTIES**

The performance of all personnel was excellent. Shortages of radiomen, quartermasters and radarmen worked a hardship on these personnel in frequency and length of watches. It is anticipated that this condition will be relieved when additional personnel now ordered are received aboard, and when sonar-men are fully capable of handling the duties of radarmen on watch. Additional seamen still are needed to adequately man gunnery stations and handle deck details.

There were no personnel casualties during the period of this report.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Operations (General)

- (a) It was noted that the majority of documents and despatches which required frequent reference and deserved prompt and wide dissemination during operations were over-classified for these purposes. Generally, the documents themselves contained no provision for downgrading at any time.

It is strongly recommended that every effort be made to keep the security classifications of operational information as low as possible and where initial classification necessarily is high, provision be made for downgrading as soon as possible after an operation is underway.

- (b) At replenishment, the ammunition ship reported unable to commence replenishment at first light as requested due to late receipt of requirements and resultant delay in breakout. Delay in receipt of requirements was due to the short notice given to replenish and to normal delays in encryption and transmission of the requirements report.

It is recommended that replenishment plans reach individual ships at least thirty-six hours in advance of scheduled replenishment. This normally will ensure delivery of requirements in ample time for replenishment ships to complete breakout even in event the military situation permits breakout only during daylight.

- (c) The codes used in TG 96.8 in reporting ammunition expenditures and receipts and in requesting ammunition for replenishment differed from those in use in TF 77. Neither code filled all needs in that fuzes and types of ammunition were not covered in sufficient detail.

In consequence it is recommended that one code be promulgated for use by all commands and that this code cover fuze types in detail and distinguish between the various types of ammunition of a given caliber.

- (d) There appears to be need for both Anti-aircraft and Air Defense exercises on a group basis under the present

operating conditions which make it unpractical to conduct normal AA and Air Defense training exercises.

It is recommended that elements of the CAP be used as simulated targets for Air Defense exercises as the military situation permits and that tow planes be provided each carrier task force. In event tow planes cannot be made available it is recommended frequent "surprise burst" practices be conducted.

## 2. Air Operations

- (a) The daily air ordnance plan generally specified one bomb fuzing only; instantaneous nose and non-delay tail fuzes. Pilots reported many instances in which short delay fuzes would have been more effective and they also reported instances where "daisy cutters" would have been very effective.

It is realized that in selecting the fuzing to be used not all contingencies can be provided for. However, since selective arming features are incorporated in aircraft ordnance systems, it is recommended that advantage be taken of this fact in specifying a broader choice of bomb fuze settings in future air plans.

- (b) During this period of operations, the absence of TACP's at the battalion, company, and patrol levels prevented effective close air support. Flights which departed on close air support missions found it necessary to divert to general air support or armed recon to dispose of their ordnance loads when no controllers were available. This greatly reduced the efficiency of the flight and lowered pilot morale when no worthwhile targets could be found in the time available.

It is strongly recommended that when the ground forces are unable to maintain sufficient TACP's and TAC's in contact with the enemy that augmenting TAC's be provided by the carrier force itself.

## 3. C.I.C.

- (a) Efficiency of CIC has been affected, in many cases, by replacement of experienced regular Navy personnel by reserves recalled to active duty and reporting directly to the ship. Many of these men have, either by inclination or circumstances, not maintained the minimum requirements for their respective rates or kept abreast of the developments affecting CIC equipment or organization.

Recommendation is made that insofar as is practicable all reserves recalled to active duty, especially petty officers, be thoroughly screened upon recall and, where necessary, be sent to various service schools for re-training prior to assignments to fleet units.

- (b) The over-all training program carried on in CIC would have been helped considerably had all of the new men a more thorough knowledge and understanding of the true functions of CIC and its inter-ship and force relationship.

Recommendation is made that various service schools, apart from instructing enlisted students in the mechanical operation of various equipments, make an all-out effort to indoctrinate all men with the functions of CIC as a component of a task force or task group.

- (c) An appalling number of radarmen have either little or no knowledge of aircraft types, recognition or performance of either U.S. or foreign aircraft. It is considered that recognition by type and performance is as important for radarmen as visual recognition is for lookouts. This deficiency is being taken care of in the ship's training program.

Recommendation is made that more stress be placed on aircraft recognition courses in the various service schools and that "performance recognition" of current aircraft types be included in proficiency tests for advancement in rate for radarmen.

#### 4. Communications

- (a) Direct communications from ship to shore for onward routing to the various FOX schedules appeared to be the most reliable and rapid means of passing messages to commands in adjacent operating area. Force and Group common circuits for the most part were overloaded with high precedence traffic almost continuously. It was not uncommon to receive a signal to the effect that "Your turn is number 7" when operational immediate traffic was on hand for transmission.

It is recommended that (1) the ship/shore guard for all ships in a group be assumed by the group commander who should accept all traffic originated within the group for relay over this circuit or such other circuits as available. This would eliminate considerable calling

and answering by individual ships and stations on the ship/shore series and, although it would cause considerable load on the group commander, it is believed that communications could be handled much more rapidly and effectively. (2) Individual ships should not attempt to clear traffic on force or group commanders circuits unless specifically directed by the group commander to assume guard for the group on the circuit, but the group commander should accept all traffic requiring relay over the group common circuit, or intership RATT circuit or by visual.

- (b) The Group Common UHF RATT Circuit proved to be a most reliable and rapid means of exchanging messages between the larger ships in the group. Its amplified and continued use is highly recommended.
- (c) A considerable number of messages of high precedence, containing extremely long headings, were received daily over "FOX" circuits, group commanders and other circuits. It was noted that a great number of dispatches containing as many as 20 addressees, with texts consisting of from 200 to 800 groups, were originated by some commands daily.

In the interest of traffic reduction and to speed up the internal handling of certain types of messages, it is recommended that Addressee Indicating Groups be assigned to cover certain types of messages, such as general situation reports, operational intelligence reports, search summaries, etc. It is further recommended that Commanders of Task Groups required to make daily high precedence reports concerning the above subjects, address them for action to the Force Commander with no information addressees and, further, that the Force Commander summarize these reports and transmit them to those commands who need to know in a single message. It is believed that such a system will greatly speed up messages handling in general and should relieve the cryptographic load considerably.

- (d) Visual signalling remains the desirable means of handling communications within the group. Frequently, however, this ship was in receipt of long messages in both plain language and code of high precedence requiring relay during hours of darkness. Although delivery may be effected by "Nancy" the time and effort expended for the transmission and reception of long messages make it doubtful that "Nancy" is adequate for handling certain types of messages.

~~SECRET~~

It is recommended that messages which require visual relay at night be limited to short or low precedence traffic during periods when radio silence is not in effect and messages of high precedence and of considerable length be delivered over group common CW circuit as task group commander "FOX" serially numbered message.