U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD (CV 31)
Care Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

CV31/20:rx
A16-3
Serial: 0108

20 October 1951

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD (CV 31)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Commander, Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN
Commander, SEVENTH Fleet
Commander, Naval Forces, FAR EAST
Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report for the period 19 September through 18 October 1951

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instructions 338.4 dated 1 July 1951

Encl: (1) Commander, Carrier Air Group ONE HUNDRED TWO letter of 18 October 1951 p19

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Action Report for the period of 19 September through 18 October 1951 is hereby submitted:

PART I

COMPOSITION OF OWN FORCES AND MISSION

After ten days of repairs and upkeep, the USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CV 31) departed Yokosuka, Japan 17 September by order of CTF 77 Confidential dispatch 020732Z. The destination was designated "Sugar" area. This area was near the coast of Korea close to the 38th parallel and was reached on 19 September 1951. The Task Force was commanded by RADM W.G. TOMLINSON aboard the USS BOXER (CV 21) and operated under Task Force Operation Plan 22-51 dated 1 July 1951. It was comprised of the USS BOXER (CV 21), USS ESSEX (CV 9), and other units composing a submarine radar screen. Aboard the USS BON HOMME RICHARD was Carrier Air Group 102. After 30 days of operations, the ship departed for Yokosuka, Japan for another period of maintenance and upkeep, leaving the action area on 18 October 1951.

The mission of the Carrier Groups of Task Force 77 was as follows:

(1) Conduct air operations from an operating area off the coast of Korea to provide close air support of friendly troop operations, interdiction of enemy routes of movement and supply and armed reconnaissance of enemy installations and lines of communications.

(2) Provide air cover for replenishment ships and other friendly naval surface forces when necessary.

(3) Protect the force against air, surface and subsurface attacks.

(4) Provide air spot bombardment forces when directed.

(5) Conduct photo and visual reconnaissance as required.

(6) Coordinate air operations with the 5th Air Force through JOC, Korea.

(7) Exchange intelligence information with friendly naval forces engaged in surface interdiction operations on the east coast of Korea.

[redacted]

CV31/20:rx
A16-3

The Commanding Officer of Carrier Air Group 102 is CDR. H.N. FUNK, USN, with the following complement of pilots and number of aircraft at the beginning of flight operations on 19 September 1951:

SQUADRON	NO. OF PILOTS	NO. & TYPE OF AIRCRAFT
VF-781	30	24 F9F-2B
VF-783	25	16 F4U-4
VF-874	20	16 F4U-4
VA-923	27	16 AD-3
VC-3	6	4 F4U-5NL
VC-11	6	3 AD-4W
VC-35	6	3 AD-4N
VC-61	4	3 F9F-2P
CAG-102	6	2 AD-4Q
HU-1	2 (attached to ship)	1 HO3S-1

PART II

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

9/19/51: The USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CV 31) joined Task Force 77 at 1300. Two events scheduled for the afternoon were cancelled. Reasons for cancellation were not revealed.

9/20/51: The ship returned to full flight activities with nine events consisting of anti-sub patrol, hecklers, combat air patrol, reconnaissance, close air support, bridge strikes and photo hops. 90 sorties were flown, of which 19 were defensive and 71 offensive. 5 bridges, 9 buildings, 20 railroad cars, 140 feet of track, 9 boats, 4 trucks and 8 oxcarts were destroyed. 7 bridges, 21 railroad cars, 7 buildings, and 4 trucks were damaged. Close air support reported 60 to 100% coverage; bridge strikes were exceptionally successful.

9/21/51: Flight missions remained the same as the previous day except that no close air support was flown. 94 sorties were launched with only 19 of them being defensive. 26 buildings, 2 trucks, 5 gun positions, 3 railroad cars, 1 bridge and 1 factory were destroyed. 14 bridges, 3 trucks, 6 vehicles, 1 gun position, 15 railroad cars, and 2 locomotives. 1,350 troops were strafed and numerous rail centers attacked with unassessed damage. 15 troops were confirmed dead.

9/22/51: No flight activities were conducted. The efforts of the BON HOMME RICHARD were directed to replenishment activities.

9/23/51: All missions were flown with 64 sorties being launched. 7 sorties were defensive and 57 offensive. 26 railroad cars, 1 locomotive, 2 bridges, 4 oxcarts, 4 buildings and 1 vehicle were destroyed. 2 buildings, 8 bridges, 6 railroad cars and 1 highway appliance were damaged. Low clouds and rainy weather hampered flight operations.

9/24/51: Reconnaissance, photo hops, combat air patrol, naval gunfire spotting, bridge strikes, and anti-sub patrol were flown today. 79 sorties were flown of which 16 were defensive, with the remaining 63 being offensive, missions. 22 railroad cars, 45 feet of track, 3 oxcarts, 5 buildings, and 6 vehicles were destroyed. 42 railroad cars, 2 bridges, 1 locomotive, 2 oxcarts, 2 vehicles, 1 AA position and 8 trucks were damaged.

[redacted]

2

9/25/51: 79 sorties were flown with 16 defensive and 63 offensive missions. 19 trucks, 39 buildings, 8 oxcarts, 2 bridges, 1 AA position, 1 wagon and 30 railroad cars were destroyed. 36 railroad cars, 1 bypass bridge, 22 buildings, 5 oxcarts, 2 bridges, 19 trucks, and 1 gun position were damaged. Several tunnels and strategic bridges were seeded with large bombs. An estimated 252 troops were killed.

9/26/51: Flight activities were not conducted because of replenishment activities.

9/27/51: 30 sorties were flown as bridge strikes; this was more than 1/3 the total of 83 sorties flown for the day, and almost one half of the 64 offensive sorties. 5 oxcarts, 1 railroad handcar, 5 railroad cars, 3 trucks, 1 oxcart, 2 bridges, 10 buildings and 1 vehicle were destroyed. 17 railroad cars, 28 buildings, 19 bridges, 1 tank, 1 tunnel and 4 trucks were damaged. An estimated 60 troops were killed.

9/28/51: Only heckler, anti-sub patrol, combat air patrol and weather reconnaissance flights were attempted due to bad weather over the action area. 18 sorties were flown of which 12 were defensive. 5 oxcarts, 7 buildings and 2 trucks were destroyed. 1 oxcart, 7 buildings, 1 bridge and 2 trucks were damaged.

9/29/51: Only 22 sorties were released because of the continued bad weather, and only 6 of these were offensive. Only reconnaissance was attempted as an offensive movement. 1 locomotive, 7 railroad cars, and 1 weapons carrier were destroyed. 2 railroad cars and 1 factory building were damaged.

9/30/51: No flights were made due to replenishment activities. RADM W.G. TOMLINSON, CTF 77 and ComCarDivTHREE transferred with his staff from the USS BOXER (CV 21) to the USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CV 31). The BOXER was scheduled to return to the United States.

10/1/51: Flight activities approached normality with 77 sorties. 16 sorties were defensive and 61 were offensive missions. 13 buildings, 18 railroad cars, 2 wagons, 2 horses and 1 truck were destroyed. 34 buildings, 2 railroad bridges, 2 PT type boats, 2 vehicles and 5 railroad cars were damaged. Many primary targets were rained in, but pilots utilized dump targets and reconnaissance to the highest degree possible. An estimated 15 troops were killed.

10/2/51: Despite heavy weather, BON HOMME RICHARD pilots continued to attack enemy targets. 85 sorties were flown of which 20 were defensive and 65 offensive sorties. Because of the weather most of the damage was unassessed. An estimated 40 workers and troops were killed in the action. 1 railroad car, 4 gondolas, 10 buildings, 2 boats, 9 trucks, and 2 bridges were damaged. Several sorties were utilized to "cut" railroad lines by tearing up track in assigned areas. The cuts are made approximately one mile apart and away from towns and villages where workers can be recruited. With the assumption of this type of target a proportional decrease in bridge strikes may be noted.

10/3/51: This was one of those days when fate acted against the pilots of the BON HOMME RICHARD. Three planes were lost and one ace pilot was killed. Weather prevented 75 sorties from doing but little damage to the enemy. 65 offensive sorties were flown and 10 defensive missions. Some consolation was achieved in the killing of 140 troops by jet reconnaissance. 5 trucks, 13 oxcarts, 2 railroad cars and 1 building were destroyed. 1 building, 3 bridges, 9 railroad cuts, 10 railroad cars and 5 trucks were damaged.

10/4/51: Drills were conducted on the BON HOMME RICHARD but no flight activities were attempted due to weather and replenishment activities.

10/5/51: 82 sorties were flown, 16 were defensive and 66 offensive missions. 8 railroad cars, 24 buildings, 6 trucks, 1 water tank, 3 bridges, 11 oxcarts and 3 supply dumps were destroyed. 7 buildings, 1 radio station, and 45 railroad cars were damaged. 51 railroad cuts were strategically made. 23 troops were killed.

10/6/51: A full schedule of bridge strikes was conducted on this day. 82 sorties were flown of which only 16 were defensive. 7 trucks, 5 buildings, 5 railroad cars, 3 oxcarts, 1 boat, 1 vehicle, 1 tank and 1 jeep were destroyed. 9 trucks, 11 buildings, 21 railroad cars, 1 oil tank, 7 bridges, 8 piles of supplies, 2 jeeps and 4 oxcarts were damaged. 18 railroad cuts were made. An estimated 32 troops were killed.

10/7/51: The seige on bridges, rails and troops continued along with the constant demolishing of supplies. 77 sorties were flown, only 14 of which were defensive missions. 21 buildings, 2 boats, 8 railroad cars, and 5 oxcarts were destroyed. 15 buildings, 4 trucks, 21 railroad cars, 8 bridges, 5 boats and 1 bypass bridge were damaged. 15 rail cuts were made. Troops were attacked but only 16 were noted as probably killed.

10/8/51: No flight activities were attempted due to replenishment activities.

10/9/51: 84 sorties were launched only 12 of which were defensive. Main event for the day was led by Commander FUNK, Air Group 102 Commander, with 16 sorties striking with high success. In this one event, a battalion headquarters building, a mining laboratory, 36 barracks type buildings and several gun emplacements were demolished. In addition pilots from the USS ESSEX (CV 9) isolated two supply trains by cutting the tracks on both ends of the trains. BON HOMME RICHARD pilots then aided in destroying the trains. The day's total consisted of 9 railroad cars, 2 oxcarts, 24 buildings, 2 gun emplacements, 1 locomotive, 3 vehicles and 3 trucks destroyed, plus 5 vehicles, 29 buildings, 1 transformer, 1 locomotive, 15 boxes of supplies and 4 trucks damaged. 24 railroad cuts were made. The whole day was highly successful.

10/10/51: Weather hampered flight activities to such an extent that only 58 sorties were flown. 14 of these were defensive. 2 trucks, 48 oxcarts and 12 railroad cars were destroyed. 1 bridge, 1 bypass, 1 vehicle, 8 buildings, 8 railroad cars, 25 oxcarts and 5 trucks were damaged. 29 strategic rail cuts were made. An estimated 55 troops were killed.

10/11/51: This afternoon, 16 AD's and F4U's of the BHR joined with 11 planes from the ESSEX in a special strike mission against an enemy ordnance depot north of Hungnam. The pilots reported that the primary targets were destroyed and secondary targets from 50% to 80% damaged. Huge explosions were reported as well as 17 distinct fires. A total of 71 sorties were launched for the day. Only 12 of these sorties were defensive. 13 buildings, 11 railroad cars, 11 trucks, 1 horse cart, 1 oxcart, 150 foot boat and 1 bridge were destroyed. 2 bypasses, 14 railroad cars, 3 trucks and 6 buildings were damaged. 21 railroad cuts were made.

10/12/51: This day was devoted to replenishment activities.

10/13/51: Weather prevented all but 32 sorties from being launched. Only 22 of these were sent on offensive missions. The low ceiling almost totally prevented assessment of the damage inflicted. An estimated 35 troops were killed. 1 house and 5 oxcarts were destroyed. 4 railroad by-passes and 5 oxcarts were damaged. 30 railroad cuts were made.

10/14/51: Weather prevented all but 24 sorties from being launched. 6 of these were defensive. 3 oxcarts, 1 building, and 4 boxcars were destroyed. 1 vehicle, 5 oxcarts, 1 tunnel, 1 railroad bypass and 1 railroad car were damaged. 17 rail cuts were made. 500 troops and supplies were attacked with an estimated 300 casualties.

10/15/51: Despite bad weather 64 sorties were flown, 15 of which were defensive. 7 buildings, 1 oxcart. 1 boat, 1 truck, 2 boxcars and 1 bridge were destroyed. 9 railroad cars, 4 boats, 2 trucks, 1 bridge, 10 buildings, 1 tunnel and 2 oxcarts were damaged. 25 rail cuts were recorded. 15 to 20 troops were killed.

10/16/51: The Bon Homme Richard along with the USS ESSEX (CV 9) and the USS ANTIETAM (CV 36) had a prosperous day. 78 sorties were flown with 66 of these consisting of offensive missions. When strikes were made in Event 6 and 14, it was discovered that Bon Homme Richard planes were carrying 10 500 pound and 18 100 pound dud bombs. This of course, marred the success of the day. 5 buildings, 1 locomotive, 3 railroad cars, 4 trucks, 2 stacks of supplies, 1 boat, 4 oxcarts, 1 jeep and 1 gun emplacement were destroyed. 5 trucks, 1 building, 2 locomotives, 11 railroad cars, 4 bridges, 6 bypasses, and 3 warehouses were damaged. 40 rail cuts were made.

10/17/51: This day was utilized for replenishment.

10/18/51: The ship left the action area for Yokosuka, Japan and a period of rest and repair. Gunnery exercises were conducted enroute.

PART III

PERFORMANCE OF ORDNANCE MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT

A. Gunnery Exercises

Enroute to the operating area from Yokosuka, the ship conducted AA exercises "Z-5-G","X-7-G"and "Z-12-G" on 18 and 19 September. AA exercises "Z-7-G" were conducted on 22, 26 and 30 September and 8 and 12 October. No significant material casualties occured during or as a result of practice firings and results obtained were considered satisfactory. A total of 739 rounds of 5"/38 caliber ammunition and 12,341 rounds of 40MM ammunition were expended during the course of these exercises.

B. Maintenance

Hydraulic seals and packing and amplifier units, where subjected to extreme vibration, continue to be the largest material maintenance problem.

C. Deck Evolutions

During this period a total of 32 DDs were taken alongside for transfer of passengers, baggage, freight, guard mail, movies and fuel. The ship obtained aviation gasoline and fuel on seven different occasions. 1,118 short tons of ammunition were received in addition to approximately 100 tons of fresh provisions and stores. All transfers were handled without incident.

D. Ammunition expended

2,000# G.P. bombs	122	20MM ammunition	136,942
1,000# G.P. bombs	579	50 Caliber	508,495
500# G.P. bombs	648	F51 Drop tank	73
250# G.P. bombs	1,403	Parachute Flares	220
100# G.P. bombs	3,040	Napalm mix	4,380 lbs.
260# Frag bombs	649	6.5" ATAR	326
350# Depth bombs	14	5" HVAR	830
3.5" Rockets	54		

PART IV

BATTLE DAMAGE

A. Damage to ship

None.

B. Damage to Aircraft

No. of Planes	Types	Causes
12	F4U-4	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
13	AD-3	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
4	F9F-2B	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
1	AD-4N	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
1	AD-4Q	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.
1	F4U-5NL	Enemy anti-aircraft fire.

C. Loss of Aircraft

Date	Squadron	Type	Bu.No.	Causes
9-20	VC-3	F4U-5NL	124556	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.
9-21	VC-3	F4U-5NL	124557	Lost at sea. (catapult)
9-24	VF-874	F4U-4	82076	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.
9-27	VF-783	F4U-4	82088	Lost over Korea. (enemy AA)
9-27	VA-923	AD-3	122730	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.
10-3	VF-783	F4U-4	97325	Lost at sea. (possibly enemy AA)
10-3	VF-874	F4U-4	81591	Lost over Korea. (enemy AA)
10-3	VA-923	AD-3	122753	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.
10-5	VF-874	F4U-4	97083	Lost over Korea. (enemy AA)
10-6	VA-923	AD-3	122852	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.
10-6	VF-874	F4U-4	97307	Lost at sea. (ditched due to enemy A.

D. Damage Inflicted on the Enemy

Targets	Destroyed	Damaged	Probably Damaged
Buildings	195	201	65
Factories	1	4	4
Warehouses	16	17	0
Locomotives	4	9	3
Railroad cars	192	937	342
Vehicles	234	175	45

Damage Inflicted on Enemy

Targets		Destroyed	Damaged	Probably Damaged
Tanks		1	1	1
Boats		15	21	9
Bridges		17	98	20
Tunnels		0	5	5
Gun Positions		10	4	42
Supply Dumps		7	7	6
Ammunition Dumps		4	0	0
Fuel Dumps		0	1	0
Ore Mine		0	1	0
Roundhouses		0	1	1
Radio Station		0	1	0
Lumber Piles		0	3	2
Bunkers		10	1	0
Water Tank		1	0	0
Rail Cuts	291			
Highway cuts	10			
Troops Killed	991 (estimated)			

E. The foregoing represents a conservative estimate of the damage inflicted on the enemy. Only those instances where the pilots could assess the damage to a definite total or felt that damage had been inflicted were used in these tables. Close air support was recorded only by percentage of coverage or in other generalized terms. In other attacks on military targets weather, flak, darkness, or shortage of fuel prevented the pilots inspecting the damage. Results of numerous strafings, fires, delayed action bombing or seeding obviously may never be known. An estimated 3,000 troops were attacked during this period. Of this number it is conservatively estimated that 991 were killed.

PART V

PERSONNEL

A. Performance

Each action period seems to bring out better performance from the men of the Bon Homme Richard. Typical of the continually improving performance is the catapulting of 8 jets at an interval of 15.5 seconds. Other units were equally proficient.

The outstanding feature of this action period was the spectacular rescue of three of our pilots from enemy troop infested areas in North Korea. Commenting on the most spectacular of these, when one of our pilots was snatched from almost certain capture or death and scores of enemy troops were slain, the Commander of the Seventh Fleet said:"Your 270300Z makes me very proud of the privilege of being in the Fleet. The initiative, aggressiveness and boldness of all participating deserves a well earned well done."

During this period raids were conducted on two strategic targets. "Well Dones" were extended on both by the Commander of Task Force 77.

The pilots of the Air Group were, however, noticeably disappointed on receipt of news that the Task Force would no longer play a major role in

close air support. This type mission has always been most appealing to them.

Morale continued high and will probably climb higher as the time to return to the United States approaches. Performance and efficiency will undoubtedly increase simultaneously.

The ship was shocked and saddened by the accidental death of one of the flight deck crew. This accident marred the almost perfect safety record of the ship, but this gave warning that "accidents will happen" and it is now expected that higher records in safety will be achieved in the future.

B. Casualties

LTJG J.W. ROBERTS, 504285/1315 On 24 September while making a bombing and strafing run on AA positions in North Korea, LTJG ROBERT'S plane was struck by 40mm fire. Proceeding immediately to Wonsan Harbor, he ditched the plane and was picked up by a helicopter in a short time. He sustained a minor hand injury.

LTJG Leslie R. DOWNS, 522168/1310 While flying an F4U on a rail cut strike about 60 miles west of Wonsan on 3 October 1951, LTJG DOWNS'S plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire. He headed toward the harbor, but because of the rough-running engine was forced to bail out over enemy territory. The plane was a ball of fire by the time he made a delayed jump from 8,000 feet. Landing on the side of a hill LTJG DOWNS made his way to the top where he waited until a helicopter picked him up and took him to an LSD for treatment of many severe second degree burns.

LT Leonard A. GUNDERT, 157638/1315 On 3 October 1951 after spotting for naval gunfire at Songjin, LT GUNDERT and his wingman attacked railroad tracks in that area. Upon pulling out from his run, LT GUNDERT'S plane was observed to be on fire. The flames seemed to be coming from the nose and the accessory section and reached back beyond the cockpit. The plane zigzagged out over the ocean and was getting dangerously low (about 600 feet) and almost on its back when the pilot's body was seen to leave the plane. The chute opened at about 150 feet and he seemed to enter the water at a fairly normal rate of descent. A destroyer was dispatched to pick up LT GUNDERT, who was pronounced dead upon recovery.

LT H.C. INGLE, JR. 453365/1315 While making a strafing run on railroad cars at Tongha-ri on 5 October 1951, his F4U-4 was hit by a 40mm shell in the forward part of the accessory section. The plane was ditched in a river in the general area, and LT. INGLE was knocked momentarily unconscious as a result of his safety belt being unfastened. Corsairs flying protective cover held the enemy troops at bay, and after 45 minutes on the ground, he was picked up by a helicopter from the USS NEW JERSEY. Bruises and superficial cuts on the outside of the upper right arm, inside of the right foot and leg, a bump on the head, and slightly chipped teeth were the result. After medical treatment aboard the battleship, LT INGLE was returned to the carrier.

ENSIGN William C. BAILEY, 507924/1315 On 6 October 1951 while flying an AD-3 on a bombing mission over North Korea, ENS. BAILEY'S plane was hit by light anti-aircraft fire, forcing him to make a water landing. The plane sank in less than a minute, and the pilot remained in the water for fifteen minutes before a raft was dropped to him. An hour later a helicopter from the LST 799 picked him up and returned him to that ship for treatment for exposure.

LTJG R.D. SORENSEN, 470604/1315 On 6 October 1951 after spotting for naval gunfire in the vicinity of Songjin, LTJG SORENSEN attacked a shore battery in that area. After releasing his bomb at 3,000 feet, his F4U-4 was hit by ground-fire. Dumping his remaining bombs and heading seaward, LTJG SORENSEN made a water landing near the USS HELENA and was picked up by its whaleboat. Treated for exposure, shock, and for injuries to his back, neck, and head, the pilot was returned to this ship.

WILLHOITE Everett Ray, 988 95 02, AA, USN On 2 October while assisting in preparing planes for launching on the flight deck, Everett Ray WILLHOITE, AA, apparently lost his balance and was blown by the propeller blast of one plane into the revolving propeller of a plane directly behind. Critically injured by the blow on the head, he was rushed to the sick bay, where, despite the best efforts of the Ship's Doctors and the entire medical department, he died an hour later.

C. Other Losses

LT John J. WRIGHT, 383397/1315 On 20 September 1951 while cruising at 7,000 feet over North Korea, LT WRIGHT'S F4U-5NL was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and he was forced to ditch at sea. The landing was smooth and uneventful; the plane sank in 58 seconds; the pilot climbed aboard a life raft and in a short time was picked up by a whaleboat from the destroyer, USS PARKS.

LT Howard H. SOESTER, 364051/1315 21 September 1951 a victim of a pre-dawn launching accident in an F4U-5NL, LT SOESTER left the catapult without gaining flying speed and went over the bow into the water. Escaping from the plane easily enough, he was rolled and ducked several times before being able to use his survival equipment. After being in the water for twenty minutes, LT. SOESTER was picked up by a destroyer and returned to the carrier in good condition. He sustained severe body bruises.

LTJG Robert C. BROWN, 499805/1310 On 27 September 1951 upon sustaining a hit from enemy anti-aircraft fire while making a bombing attack on a bridge northwest of Hamhung, LTJG BROWN was forced to crash land on a sand bar in the center of the Song Chon River. After evading enemy troops in the area for one hour and twenty minutes, the pilot was rescued by a helicopter from an LST.

LT. J.A. RENARD, 176852/1315 On 27 September 1951 while recovering from a bombing run on an enemy target in the Sinop railroad yards, LT RENARD'S AD-3 was struck by ground fire and suffered an immediate loss of oil pressure. He ditched the plane at sea and inflated his life raft without trouble. Thirty minutes later the pilot was picked up by a helicopter and taken aboard the LSD-5.

LTJG R.W. PROBYN, 470589/1310 On 3 October while on a railroad destruction flight over North Korea LTJG PROBYN'S AD-3 was struck by flak on its first run. After making four more runs the engine developed an electrical fire, and the pilot headed for sea. Upon reaching the Task Force and while on his downwind leg, the engine quit. Because his wheels were down in anticipation of a carrier landing the plane immediately went over on its back upon hitting the water. LTJG BROBYN dove clear of the airplane, and was picked up by a helicopter and returned to the ship.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

CV31/20:rx
A16-3

PART VI

GENERAL COMMENTS

A. AIR DEPARTMENT

1. Catapulting

The catapult crews, with the cooperation of VF-781 pilots, have become exceedingly proficient in catapulting aircraft, particularly the F9F's. Our record and the one which is believed to be an unofficial fleet record is the catapulting of 8 jets in 124 seconds for an interval of 15.5 seconds. Other excellent catapult launches of 8 jets are: 128 seconds for a 16.2 interval, 138 seconds twice for a 17.2 interval and 142 seconds for a 17.7 interval.

2. Aviation Ordnance

The Mark 10 type suspension band furnished for use with the 2000# GP bombs is much easier to install than the Mark 34 type which requires spacing of each band and the tightening of numerous bolts. For carrier use, where space and time are limited the Mark 10 is highly recommended.

No Mark 1 arming wires have been available during this period. Mark 2 (double strand) arming wires have been adapted for use. One wire of the Mark 2 is cut a short distance from the ferrule and crimped back so that the remaining wire will not pull out of the loop.

3. Flight Operations

Prior to deployment to WestPac, this ship had installed a two-way combination ready light and buzzer attention signal between Primary Fly and the bridge. In Primary Fly there is a red and blue light. These lights are actuated by a switch on the bridge and indicate to the Air Officer if the bridge is "ready" or "not ready" for the launching or the recovery of aircraft. A red and blue light on the bridge, actuated by a switch in Primary Flight Control indicates to the bridge if the Air Officer is "ready" or "not ready" for the launching or recovery of aircraft. A buzzer at each station actuated by the button at the other station is used as an attention signal whenever the lights are changed.

The above described system has worked out exceedingly well. The greatest single advantage is that it always provides for both the Air Officer and the bridge a definite check on the other's readiness for air operations. The light and buzzer system proves much faster than a visual system or the use of sound powered phone talkers and often provides for the recovery of an aircraft that might otherwise be waved off. The approach of winter greatly enhances the value of this system.

4. Aviation Electronics

The operation of the Aviation Electronics Shop under the supervision of the Air Group Staff Electronics Officer continued to function in a well organized manner with both Air Group and ship personnel performing like tasks in the maintenance of electronics equipment. By this combined arrangement loss of personnel which occurred to both Air Group and ship personnel during this period was alleviated. And replacements during the remainder of the cruise were not considered necessary.

Difficulty was again experienced with the 28 volt power supply furnishing power to the shop. Failure of this unit would have left the ship without any power to maintain and service electronics equipment since no replacement 28

[redacted]

Volt generator was available in the forward area. Through foresight, the Air Group Staff Electronics Officer installed, in a semi-permanent manner, a 28 volt selenium rectifier formerly used for supplying power to the 50 caliber gun turret trainer formerly installed in the Anti-aircraft training room. This temporary installation has permitted the shop to continue maintenance without interruption. It is therefore recommended that consideration be given to providing an emergency power supply for the aviation shop or provide available generator replacement in the forward area for such emergencies.

Continued difficulty is being experienced with the auxiliary power units provided for maintenance work. Since the start of this cruise two of the units have become completely worn out and replacements are needed. The exceedingly short life is due to the fact that it is necessary to use high test aviation gasoline in the engines which are normally designed to operate with ordinary gasoline. Therefore rings and cylinder walls are worn, and since no replacement parts are provided, maintenance cannot be performed. Replacement units are not available in the forward area, and a shortage of units now exists. It is recommended that the number of units allowed be increased to insure that an adequate number be available, or that replacement units be provided in the forward area.

B. AEROLOGY

1. September Weather Summary

The following summary includes observations made while in an area in the Sea of Japan boundaried by the 37th and 41st parallels on the south and north and the 131st meridian and the Korean Coast on the east and west. The period covered includes the 1st to 5th and the 19th to the 30th of September 1951.

Winds: Prevailing wind direction was west 30% of the time with south and north winds 20% and 14% respectively. Calm winds were observed for a total of 6 hours. The strongest wind velocity was 33 knots from the south and lasted 3 hours. Periods of winds over 20 knots were 6, 8, 12 and 17 hours.

Air Temperature average for the month was 74 degrees with high and low daily average of 76 and 60 degrees.

Maximum temperature average was 71.4 with high and low daily maximum of 76 and 61.

Minimum temperature average was 65.3 with high and low daily minimum of 73 and 60.

Sea water temperature average for the month was 70 degrees with an average maximum of 74 degrees and an average minimum of 65 degrees. The highest sea water temperature observed was 78 degrees and the lowest was 58 degrees.

Ceiling:

Greater than 9,950 feet	79%
Greater than 4,950 but less than 10,000	11%
Greater than 2,450 but less than 5,000	2%
Greater than 950 but less than 2,500	4%
Less than 1000 feet	4%

Visibility

Over 6 miles	96%

Visibility

3 to 6 miles inclusive	1%
1 to 2½ miles inclusive	3%
Less than 1 mile	0

Precipitation occured on 3 days of the month with the longest period of continuous rain lasting 10 and one half hours but of intermittent type. The total rainfall was 15 hours.

2. October Weather Summary

The summary presented below includes observations taken while in an area of the Sea of Japan boundaried by the 37th and 41st parallels on the south and north and the 131st meridian and the Korean coast on the east and west. Period is from the 1st up to and including the 15th of October 1951.

Winds: The prevailing wind direction was south 38% of the time with west and east winds 30% and 15% respectively. There were no calm winds observed during the period, but there were 24 hours of winds with a velocity under 5 knots. The strongest wind velocity was 35 knots from the west, which lasted only one hour but was preceded by 4 hours of winds averaging 32 knots. Periods of winds of velocity over 20 knots were 6, 8, and 11 hours.

Air temperature average for the month was 62 degrees with a high and low daily average of 70.8 and 59.5 degrees.

Maximum temperature for the month was 63.7 with high and low daily maximum readings of 72.4 and 57.6 degrees.

Minimum temperature average for the month was 61.0 degrees with high and low daily minimum readings of 70 and 55 degrees.

Sea water temperature average for the month was 66.6 degrees with an average maximum of 72 and an average minimum of 63 degrees. The highest sea water temperature observed was 77 degrees and the lowest was 60 degrees.

Ceiling:

Greater than 9,950 feet	78%
Greater than 4,950 but less than 10,000	12%
Greater than 2,450 but less than 5,000	7%
Greater than 950 but less than 2,500	3%
Less than 1000 feet	0

Visibility:

All visibility recorded was over 6 miles.

Precipitation

The only precipitation that occurred was a few scattered rain showers on the 14th which lasted for slightly less than one hour.

Radio facsimile recording equipment, Type RD-92/UX, was installed at the Navy Base, Yokosuka, on the 15th of September. With the exception of normal interference, which at times made reception impossible, the equipment has been working very satisfactorily. Recent intership transmissions from another carrier in company have been received with excellent clarity.

C. COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER

1. General

The operations during this period were conducted as before and have been covered in previous reports. CIC handled Radar Guards, Radio Guards, and Air Control as assigned by the OTC in an efficient and satisfactory manner. The personnel and equipment were superior in operation to any other period due to training, becoming better acquainted with operations, and better efficiency in all matters of men and material. The last half of the period the ship operated as a flagship, and though there were deficiencies in the physical set-up of CIC, the Flag commented that in general the performance was most satisfactory, and they were able to carry out their duties with a minimum of trouble and confusion to the shipboard CIC organization. The deficiencies noted above will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

2. Radars

(a) SPS6/B was used constantly except when secured for maintenance and during some periods when no guards were assigned. At night it was placed on standby in accordance with existing instructions. In general the performance was good to excellent, but in this period it was secured for repairs approximately twice as long as any comparable period before. This was due to a lack of experienced maintenance personnel due to transfers and the release of some men from the service. The radar was consistent in picking up 2 jets at a range of 40 miles, but on some days, due to unusual circumstances, ranges of more than 80 miles were reported on 2 F9F's at 15,000 feet. The reliable range on prop aircraft was 50-55 miles on 2 AD's at 5,000 feet. The radar will never function any better until the antenna is raised to a height that will clear the stack, yardarm, tripod mast, and the SK antenna. This handicap reduced the effectiveness on the starboard side by more than 50% through 130 degrees beginning at 025 relative.

(b) SK was used to supplement the SPS6/B because it is mounted on the starboard side clear of the obstacles that hinder the SPS6/B. In general the performance was far below that of the SPS6/B as is to be expected, but on occasions gave information that was unobtainable from any other source. It was also used to interrogate the Mark III, IFF.

(c) SM is still a very hard radar to maintain, and the technicians had no previous training on this equipment before they came onboard. This period it operated about 25% of the time, and the altitudes given were within the limitations of the radar, as designed. It is a poor substitute for any other height gear, but is better than none at all when it is operating.

(d) SG1/B was satisfactory in station keeping, and in surface search it was in constant use. The newer antenna would improve the range, which is 36,000 yards on a DD.

(e) Under Radars Mark 5/10 IFF has worked exceptionally well but as it is coupled with the SPS6/B, it necessarily has been secured for repairs more during this period than in any other period. The performance would be improved with a slave antenna and thus could be used with other than the SPS6/B radars. Also the Mark 5 as installed on this ship, is limited in that only one code can be interrogated at a time on all remotes, since they are all tied in series. The range continues to be more than 125 miles and has been a most valuable aid in Strike Control as well as CAP Control.

3. Communications

The radios were good during this period except for about 10% of the time when they were secured for repairs. This figure is much higher than previous periods due to the Flag coming aboard, and since they required several more circuits than the ship, it became impossible to maintain standbys on the most important circuits. Whether the ship remains a flagship or not, another UHF unit should be installed as a standby CI net. This is the primary circuit in use in CIC, and when it is out the efficiency drops to 50%. It is strongly urged that a second AN/ARC be installed in CIC and with the Flag it is mandatory. To remain a flagship at least 3 more TDQ/RCK units should be made available to CIC; at the present time only five VHF channels are available on TDQ/RCK units.

4. Flagship Difficulties

In addition to the communications difficulties experienced, the following items should be taken into consideration: The radars aboard are inadequate and obsolete with the exception of the SPS6/B. The location of CIC on the lower decks makes the rapid dissemination of information difficult, and the liaison between Air Plot, Flag Plot, Air Intelligence and Communications Office is seriously hampered. To function as the Flag wishes, at least two and preferably three, remote PPI's should be installed. These would be assigned as follows: The first two to the Flag, one for the watch officer, and one for the gunnery officer. The third would be used by the ship's company and assigned to the second air controller.

D. COMMUNICATIONS

1. General

With the coming of ComCarDiv3 to this vessel, the communications load has more than tripled. The volume of communications traffic is excessive, and only the close cooperation between ship and Flag personnel, both under-complemented, made it possible to handle and process this voluminous correspondence.

All radio transmitters on board, low, medium, high, very high, and ultra-high frequencies, are in use, with some having to perform double duty, such as shifting for short scheduled transmissions and then back again to the continuous circuit.

The lack of spare equipment eliminates any flexibility and places full dependency on rapid repair to prevent the placing of impossible loads on some radios. Fortunately, during this period, circuit outage was at a minimum and probably is the result of the maintenance program and good fortune. The fates still smile on the Bon Homme Richard as of yore.

The use of HF ratt circuit to ComNavFE for ship to shore and relay circuit is excellent, and with the volume of messages passing between these two stations, such a circuit is necessary if long traffic delays are to be avoided. Unfortunately the excessive vibration in Radio 3, which causes the TBK-FSA combination to shift frequency beyond acceptable standards, excludes the use of that frequency shift equipment. This makes it necessary to depend on the one piece equipment installed in Radio 2 with the resultant circuit outage time when shifting frequency.

This outage time has been reduced to an excellent minimum by drill and training in rapid frequency shifting.

If this type of operations now being conducted in this area is to be the pattern for future operations, it is recommended that additional LF-HF radio equipment be installed on Task Force flagships and that at least 3 additional sets of UHF radio equipment be added. Radio 3 equipment should be adequately shockproof mounted or the excessive vibration eliminated in some other manner.

E. AIR INTELLIGENCE

1. Search and Rescue

During this period major attention was devoted to search and rescue matters. SAR Instructions as promulgated by Commander, Task Force 77 were followed meticulously with highly successful results, and certain techniques improvised by the pilots were effectively employed on several occasions.

As planes get older and enemy counter-measures are intensified, interest in search and rescue matters increases and pilots are eager to have as much information as possible on the subject. Pilots are always anxious as to the locations of helicopters.

Once a pilot gets into trouble over enemy territory, standard procedure is to head for the coast, East preferably, but West if necessary to avoid enemy capture. On this tour seven pilots whose planes were hit were able to clear the East coast and ditch in the Sea of Japan. Six of these stayed with their planes and all were rescued by either helicopter or naval vessels dispatched to the scene. The seventh jumped at a low altitude and, although his parachute opened and he was seen to enter the water in a proper manner, he was dead, but floating in his inflated life jacket, when picked up by a destroyer a few minutes later.

Jig and Charlie points are well known to all pilots and have been of assistance to rescue craft in locating downed aviators in the sea. Procedure demands that at least one section of planes orbit to guide the helicopter or ship to the pilot. This system of positioning the pilot has been one hundred percent effective to date.

If the pilot is unable to reach the coast, experience has shown that ditching on a sand bar or in a river bed in enemy territory affords the best chance of a safe landing and prompt rescue. To capture the pilot, the enemy would have to expose himself to our orbiting RESCAP, which he at times is seemingly reluctant to do. And, usually firing distance from the hidden enemy to the plane is such that only sporadic and inaccurate fire is encountered. When a pilot ditches over land, a relatively simple and well organized chain of events is put into motion which, to date has led to the successful evacuation of every pilot who landed alive on enemy-held soil.

CTF-77 Instructions advise the pilot to gather all available survival equipment and leave the aircraft to seek cover a safe distance from it. It has not at all times been practical or even possible to take all survival equipment, since running to nearby brush or hills is often the only means of evading the enemy gunfire, and some pilots admittedly over-burdened themselves

with extra smoke flares, pistols, and ammunition. The Mae West, placed near the plane if ditched, or near the spot where the pilot landed by chute, is an excellent means of notifying the RESCAP that he has not been seriously injured in landing. At that time, after taking his bearings, "making oneself scarce" is excellent advice, since enemy troops will make a determined effort to effect a capture if the pilot's position is known, and there is no effective air opposition. However, it is in slaying enemy troops or keeping them under cover that the RESCAP has been most effective. Its first duty is to get word through to the nearest rescue center and then to the Task Force. A wide orbit at varying altitudes, with occasional directional feints, is necessary to avoid indicating the pilot's exact position, but at the same time the orbiting pilot must not lose sight of the location of the pilot. It is also necessary in most cases to indicate to the downed flyer that he has been seen, thereby enabling him to take the best cover available until the rescue craft shows itself.

A pointer cloth made by one of the pilots has been useful to indicate to the RESCAP the origin of enemy gunfire. One pilot suggested, however, that some means be devised by which a pointer could be used without exposing the user to the enemy.

Limitations of the helicopter are recognized. To date no helicopter pilot has failed to perform his mission despite hazards of terrain and heavy enemy fire. Of the three pilots who went down in enemy territory, all were rescued by helicopter. One of the three parachuted (his plane was in flames), and the other two rode their planes in to comparatively smooth landings. The one who bailed out left his plane at 8,000 feet and delayed his jump until he was approximately 3,000 feet, the purpose of this being to lessen the period of time the enemy could fire on him while descending. As it turned out this was a providential precaution, since, as soon as he landed, he was fired upon from the surrounding countryside by enemy forces.

Rescued pilots have made these suggestions:

(1) Do not take excess survival gear.
(2) Ride the plane down, if possible. It is safer than bailing, because the plane gives protection. A man in a parachute is an easy target.
(3) "If you can keep calm, keep thinking, and know how to pray, you still have a chance."

Statistically, there were eleven planes lost during this operating period; one of these was lost on launching and the pilot was picked up by a destroyer. Of the remaining ten planes, seven were ditched and three were landed in enemy territory. All pilots were rescued. One, as previously mentioned was dead, but his body was recovered.

2. Photographic Interpretation

(a) Flak

A great increase in the number of anti-aircraft guns was noted during this period of operations. As many as 50 guns were found defending a single railroad bridge. The AA caliber varied from light A/W to 40MM; the latter were often found in four gun radar controlled batteries.

20MM AA positions were usually installed in column on ridge tops; these guns also were often radar controlled. All of this was observed by close scrutiny of photographs.

Annotated photo mosaic flak maps were made up for most of the bridge targets. Two flight strips of 4 or 5 photos of the target and adjacent areas were prepared for pilot briefing; all AA positions were annotated; a scale of 1 to 7500 proved best for this type of study. This scale easily covered all of the AA positions which might defend a target. Because of the increased amount of AA, the pilots enthusiastically welcomed the photographic picturing of the AA positions. Danger from these flak positions was thus minimized.

(b) Observations of Photo Pilots

As has been proven many times, photographic pilots are excellent observers. During this period one pilot observed and photographed a large concentration of troops which was later successfully attacked by other jet aircraft. Another photo pilot skillfully observed and photographed a previously unreported airfield that was under construction. Such observations are commendable because they are not just accidental, but these properly demonstrate the high degree of training and alertness maintained by photographic pilots.

F. SUPPLY

1. Aviation Supply

For the current operational period the logistic support of combat aircraft has been maintained in a satisfactory manner. There has been an unusually large number of wings required, four R82-CVVS-37013-1 and two R82-CVVS-37013-2, due to explosions of wing guns. A large number of propellers have also been used, two for F4U-4 and eight for AD-3 planes.

No difficulty has been experienced on routine or emergency replenishment, and it is believed that a minimum amount of delay has been experienced on emergency requests of a high priority nature.

2. GSK

Replenishing and freight transferring at sea, rather than requisitioning material to be picked up the next availability, has proved very satisfactory.

The USS CASTOR is to be highly commended on the expeditious handling and service rendered this ship.

3. Ship's Service

Excellent service in replenishing was supplied by the USS CASTOR, but they were rather slow in furnishing priced invoices.

There is an acute shortage in this area of Officers and CPO cap frames, cameras and film.

4. Clothing and Small Stores

There is a shortage of many clothing and small stores items including khaki shirts, khaki trousers, rating badges (all colors), distinguishing marks and service stripes.

5. Commissary

The replenishing service, in the operation area, is found to be very good although there is a limited variety of items, and invoice procedure is slow from all activities and especially from Fleet Activities, Yokosuka.

Usually stores are received in fair to good condition, but fresh vegetables are not too good.

G. ENGINEERING

1. Machinery and Equipment

During the period from 19 September to the present there was no machinery disarrangement. Repairs required were minor and were considered as shipboard routine maintenance.

CECIL B. GILL

DISTRIBUTION:

Original- CNO (plus 4 for chain of command)
CNO (2 advance)
ComAirPac (10)
CinCPac (5 advance)
CTF-77 (2 advance)
ComCarDivONE (2)
ComCarDivTHREE (2)
ComCarDivSEVENTEEN (2)
CO USS PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47) (1)
CO USS BOXER (CV-21) (1)
CO USS PRINCETON (CV-37) (1)
CO USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) (2)
CO USS ANTIETAM (CV-36) (2)
CO USS ESSEX (CV-9) (2)
ComCarAirGruTWO (1)
ComCarAirGruFIVE (1)
ComCarAirGruELEVEN (1)
ComCarAirGruFIFTEEN (1)
ComCarAirGruNINETEEN (1)
ComCarAirGruONE HUNDRED ONE (1)
ComCarAirGruONE HUNDRED TWO (14)
ComCarAirGru (ATU) ONE (1)