

U.S.S. LEYTE (CV-32)
Fleet Post Office,
San Francisco, Calif.

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From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. LEYTE (CV-32)
To : Commander SEVENTH Fleet
Via : Commander Task Force Seventy-Seven

Subj: Report of Operations 9 October through 29 October 1950

1. NARRATIVE:

On 9 October 1950, the LEYTE, with Air Group Three embarked, departed Sasebo, Japan, sortied with elements of the SEVENTH Fleet, and proceeded to the Sea of Japan via Tsushima Straits in accordance with Commander Carrier Division One Operation Order 3-50. At 0430I on 10 October, the Leyte commenced flight operations against the enemy with TARCAP, CAP, ASP and Photo Reconnaissance missions. On 11 October, the first strike by Air Group Three was directed against the SONGJIN area in KOREA. Offensive flights of all types in support of infantry operations during the advance and occupation of WONSAN and CHONGJIN, Korea were flown from 11 through 29 October. On 12, 16, 18, 23, 26, and 29 October the ship replenished at sea. Offensive air operations also were conducted on 12 October. NavSpec and aviation gasoline were replenished on all replenishment days. Ammunition and aviation ordnance was replenished on 12, 16, 23, and 26 October. Provisions were partially replenished, from the USS GRAFFIAS, on 26 October. GSK stores were received from the USS POLLUX on 29 October. The ship fired anti-aircraft gunnery exercises 18 and 23 October.

On completion of replenishment 29 October, the Leyte, with the remaining units of Task Force 77, departed from the operating area for Sasebo. At 300836I the LEYTE entered Sasebo, Japan and moored to buoy #17.

NAVAL OPERATIONS

1. AIR: During the period 11 October 1950 until 28 October 1950, air operations were conducted in accordance with directives of Commander Task Force 77 against North Korean objectives in support of United Nations Forces in Korea.

Primary objectives for the majority of strike-flights flown by Air Group Three were communications and transportation facilities in the Wonsan-Chongjin area, with penetrations by jet fighter sweeps to targets 20 miles south of the Manchurian-Korean border. Vital communications and transportation facilities were demolished, damaged and disrupted throughout this entire area. Important enemy communications and transportation installations which were rebuilt by North Korean Forces were re-destroyed on a priority target basis.

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On 11 October 1950 the USS LEYTE commenced a sustained strike flight period of five days continuous operations. In five days, 472 offensive sorties were flown against North Korean objectives and 56 defensive sorties for a total of 528 sorties. During this five day period, 61 napalm bombs, 2211 HVAR rockets, 121.5 tons of bombs, 93,009 rounds of .50 calibre machine gun ammunition, 29,204 rounds of 20MM cannon ammunition was hurled at the enemy. The following were the enemy's transportation and communications facilities losses for the period of sustained operations 11 October - 15 October 1950:

<u>Targets</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Small boats	9	13
Locomotives	2	3
RR box cars	51	45
Trucks	8	5
Warehouses	12	9
Gun emplacements	4	2
Tunnels	-	1
Floating crane	1	-
Barge	2	-
Tractors	2	-
Ammunition cars	1	-
Electric transformer	1	-
Dredge	-	1

A summary of Naval Air Operations by the USS LEYTE with Air Group Three embarked in support of the United Nations Forces in Korea for the period 10 - 29 October 1950 follows:

Offensive Sorties	1,040
Defensive Sorties	<u>145</u>
Total	1,185

Of the total of 2,956.4 hours flown it is interesting to note that only 633.2 were spent over the target areas.

Ammunition expended on North Korean targets: 61 napalm bombs, 3738 HVAR rockets, 268.5 tons of bombs, 158,874 rounds of .50 calibre machine gun ammunition, 54,267 rounds of 20MM cannon ammunition.

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Enemy losses for period 10 - 29 October 1950:

<u>Targets</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Locomotives	8	11
RR box cars	62	53
Ammunition cars	1	-
RR turntable	-	1
RR bridge	5	2
Tunnels	-	2
Trucks and other vehicles	37	46
Tractors	2	-
HW bridges	3	1
Small boats	11	15
Barges	2	-
Floating crane	1	-
Dredge	-	1
Minesweeper type	1	-
Warehouses	22	11
Huts and small buildings	29	-
Fuel dumps	1	-
Gun emplacements	5	7
Electric transformers	1	-
Troop casualties	----- 50 to 75 estimated -----	

2. LOGISTICS:

On 12 October 1950 from 1604I to 1758I the LEYTE replenished ammunition. During the first hour 78.6 tons of ammunition and aviation ordnance were transferred from the USS MOUNT KATMAI (AE-16).

3. SHIPBOARD PLANE HANDLING:

During the period of operations with CTF-77, use was made of the "split deck". This system gave maximum flexibility to deck operations and was especially effective when there were schedule changes which with normal spotting would necessitate a respot or an unacceptably slow launch. This spot is dangerous, however, as a catapult failure or a dud will cause a long delay .

It was found that it is advantageous to keep the special purpose aircraft, such as the F4U-5N and F4U-5P aircraft either on the flight deck or in such a position on the hangar deck that they were readily available for any unscheduled launch. Two AD-5W and two AD-3Q type aircraft were kept on the flight deck, whenever conditions permitted, to meet any tactical changes that might occur.

It is believed that consolidation of CV Air Groups into three operating units by type aircraft and the consolidation of the special purpose units into one administrative unit, or into the three main squadrons, depending upon the type of aircraft, would be more efficient, both administratively and operationally. Aircraft shifting to meet scheduled launches would be reduced to a minimum, administration requirements lessened and overall maintenance and availability improved.

The loading of AD-3 type aircraft for the early morning launch with loads that necessitated a wing spread proved time consuming because of the lack of space and necessity of accomplishing this re-arming during periods of darkness. Subsequent loadings during the day presented no problem because of the number of aircraft airborne.

4. INTELLIGENCE:

At the time the LEYTE commenced operating with CTF-77, intelligence procedures had been well established. The advice and recommendations received from ComAirPac, CinCPac Fleet and 7th Fleet were of great value in preparing this ship for immediate operations upon arrival. Maps, Target Dossier, Janis Publications, and Blood Chits had all been received and were ready for use when operations began.

Maps and charts were furnished this activity by ComAirPac. The most useful charts were found to be the Pilotage and Approach Aeronautical Charts (scale 1/500,000 and 1/250,000 respectively). The AMS L551 series (Scale 1/250,000) were also used to advantage. Twelve copies each of the AMS L751 (scale 1/50,000) series were issued to the ship. These were found to be extremely useful for briefing and generally requested by the pilots for use in the air in locating villages and specific targets such as bridges, RR yards and buildings. It is recommended that in future operations sufficient copies of this series be furnished for issue to each squadron (one per pilot or aircraft). It is recommended that copies of gazeteers of surrounding areas (China East Coast, Japan, Manchuria and Taiwan) be included in the ship's allowance. The terrain model of Korea furnished was found to be of use only for general familiarization of the pilots with the area. After making several strikes into the area the pilots became familiar enough with the terrain so that the model had lost a great deal of its value.

With respect to photography and its use in the operation it was found that invariably photography of a target for pre-strike briefing and familiarization was lacking. Also lacking was a program of damage assessment photography. The latter is considered essential to properly evaluate damage resulting from a strike and to corroborate the pilots estimates of damage. Gun camera film was not suitable for damage assessment in that in the majority of cases the pullout was made prior to the camera's recording of hits resulting in no photography at the time of impact, of bombs and rockets.

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In operation it was found that four officers permanently assigned to intelligence could handle the work load. One officer was assigned the task of keeping records including action reports and war diary. The remaining officers, while contributing to the report effort, were primarily assigned tasks of briefing and de-briefing, handling of strike flash reports and preparation of daily summaries. These officers also kept situation plots and assisted in photo interpretation. No photo interpreters were assigned to this ship at the time of entering the combat area. Subsequent to the commencement of operations, one officer from the staff was ordered aboard for temporary duty to act as photo interpreter.



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