

BOX 168. 1. A-16/3 WARFARE -- Pacific Area (General): June, 1942 - March, 1945.

Contains miscellaneous reports on such topics as Indo-China, Hainan, Pacific Island Airdromes, Conditions of By-Passed Japanese Troops, British Participation in the Pacific War, Future Operations in the Pacific, excerpts from diary of a Japanese officer on Saipan, and approximately 100 pages of action reports re the Battle of Midway both naval, submarine, and air.

2. PACIFIC WAR COUNCIL: April, 1942 - April, 1944.

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A16/Pacific

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 8, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR FILES:

On 8 March I called Mr. Jonathan Daniels to ask if he knew anything about the rumor that I have heard in the Navy Department that Mr. Elmer Davis is understood to have informed the Navy Department that the President wishes three French correspondents sent to the South Pacific as far as the Philippines for the alleged purpose of working up sentiment in France in favor of giving us a free hand in the Pacific.

Mr. Daniels said he would take the matter up with Elmer Davis before tomorrow's press conference.

WILSON BROWN.

*Later said the matter  
had been referred to  
the JCS.*

In Reply  
Refer to:

*Am Pacific*

U.S.S. LOUISVILLE

January 10, 1944.

President Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I am taking the liberty of writing this while returning to base through still dangerous waters because I have been so impressed by the action of this ship.

We were consistently attacked by Jap planes all the way to Luzon. Despite a hit, which knocked out one of our three turrets and forced the flooding of another, we bombarded in Lingayen Gulf. On the way out, we were hit a second time. In my opinion only the bravery and extraordinary ability of the crew, operating under a strain I myself have never known before despite a fairly long experience of war, carried us through. I say this, having been in action on other warships, including a cruiser.

I was the guest of Rear Admiral Ted Chandler, whom I had known in the Spanish civil war and whose grandfather was a Secretary of the Navy and whose grandfather was an Admiral. Although suffering from shock and burns, which led to his death a few hours later, Ted helped enlist men man a hose to put out a serious blaze, had to be forcibly ejected from the bridge and then insisted on walking below without assistance. I talked to him just before he lost consciousness and he said, "We have to pay prices for big gains."

I wanted you to know about this, although I presume you are already in possession of the official reports, and hope you won't mind my passing this on.

This evening, I have no hesitation, in saying, I would much rather be on the train to Hyde Park than where I am. But acts like Admiral Chandler's are an inspiration to me as they were to every man on this ship and must be to the entire Navy.

With best regards,

/s/ Frank L. Kluckhohn

Frank L. Kluckhohn

A TRUE COPY:

*George V. Kendall*  
GEORGE V. KENDALL,  
Colonel, AUS.

A16

*J*

*File*  
*W*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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January 11, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The secret report by the Commanding Officer of the WASP dated 7 November contains the following comment:-

"4. No 'well done' however strong is adequate to express the feeling of admiration and to convey the congratulations of WASP personnel to the officers and men of Air Group FOURTEEN who were responsible for its outstanding performance of duty and the conspicuous success achieved by it in inflicting major damage on the enemy in a sustained series of intense actions. Having served since commissioning on board WASP, Air Group FOURTEEN has been responsible for the following destruction in enemy planes and ships: A total of 151½ planes shot down plus 10 probables and 48 damaged in the air. In addition pilots of Air Group FOURTEEN destroyed 248 planes on the ground and damaged 254 others on the ground. They sank 70 ships of various types and damaged 144 others including major units of the Japanese fleet. With pride in having served with them and real admiration for their many accomplishments and sacrifices we wish them continued good hunting."

Very respectfully,

*W. B.*  
WILSON BROWN.

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON

*Show to President*

*Admiral Brown  
to file -  
A16/Pacific*

22 November 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL LEAHY:

I have read the estimate which the Joint Staff Planners prepared for you on an Indo-China operation. The enclosed study concerning an operation against Hainan alone was prepared by my staff and is of interest as an operation which would assist the Chinese and throttle completely the movement of Jap shipping between Japan, Malaysia and the NEI. The chief obstacle in the way of launching the operation is the shortage of resources, particularly service troops, if we are to meet the requirements of the main effort in the Pacific.

*Operations in the European theater terminated three months prior to the latest date for Hainan because most of the difficulties referred to would be solved.*

*Chief of Staff.*

*F-Je  
W.*

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OPERATIONS AGAINST HAINAN

1. Problem. To consider the seizure of Hainan prior to the Kyushu operation.
  
2. Hainan is about 200 miles long by 100 miles wide and approximately the area of Formosa. It contains 3 major and 4 minor air fields at the present time and is suitable for extensive air field development. The present road net on the island is probably adequate with improvements for any of our requirements. The Japanese have a naval base at Samah at the south tip of the island. The total capacity of the 3 ports should be adequate for the needs of the forces we might wish to install. There are adequate beaches for landing operations. From the weather standpoint, operations are feasible any month except probably September. The best weather may be expected from October to May.
  
3. According to Intelligence estimates there are 15,000 Japanese on the island now. These may increase to 35,000 by 1 April. In case we attack Hainan the Japanese may further reinforce the island by at least an additional division in driblets mostly at night. We need not expect to meet more than 150 Japanese air planes. The Jap naval reaction to an assault on Hainan, after the Luzon and Okinawa operations, would be minor on the basis of the present assumptions that practically all Jap naval units will be withdrawn from the NEI and Malaysia by that time.

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4. Chinese "Communits" claim to have 5,000 guerrilla troops on Hainan operating from three guerrilla bases. Their military capability is believed to be extremely limited.

5. Forces Required. The Japanese will retain the capability of reinforcing Hainan until our forces control the entire island. The maintenance of a limited lodgement in the face of this Japanese capability is impractical, since our forces would be continuously engaged in a battle which might require the diversion of additional forces and would be a constant drain on resources of all kinds. Forces allotted to the operation should, therefore, be sufficient to gain control of and subsequently occupy the entire island.

It is estimated that four infantry divisions, with the supporting and service troops required for a land campaign of this size, and forty land based air squadrons, will be needed. An accurate determination of naval forces cannot be made without a joint study, but probably the 7th Fleet will be sufficient, providing the Japanese have withdrawn their naval forces to home waters. It may be necessary to add some carriers to the 7th Fleet in view of the fact that the initial air support for the assault will have to be primarily from carrier based air. Details of the movement and employment of the British fleet in the Pacific are still uncertain, but it might develop that any needed reinforcement of the

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7th Fleet could be with British units. Assault shipping must be provided by the U.S. and would be available any time between 1 March and mid-July. Garrison requirements will probably equal the assault ground and air forces plus naval forces necessary to interdict completely Jap sea lanes in the vicinity.

6. Value and Use of Hainan. Air forces based on Hainan could interdict any overland route which the Japs are able to open to Indo-China, give effective support to Chinese armies and supply Chinese guerrilla forces in the areas of east China. In combination with our forces in the Philippines, air and naval forces in Hainan could completely cut the throat of Japanese sea traffic to the NEI and Malaysia. There is a limited number of targets within range of Hainan suitable for strategic air forces. From the standpoint of potential facilities, the island is suitable for a base for British Lancaster bombers. However, it is out of reach of Japan and most of the suitable strategic targets. The island could be developed as an ATC base, eventually replacing Assam as the outer terminal on the route to China. Development would require several months after the seizure of the island and probably would not increase the tonnage delivered to China since the available bases in China will soon be saturated with planned air traffic from Assam.

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7. Availability of Resources. CINCUSWESPAC should be able to use the Australian corps of two divisions which was set up for Aparri. One or two U.S. divisions would be required depending upon whether MacArthur could use the Australian division now at Aitape. It would have to be replaced at Aitape by a U.S. division. Present British plans indicate little likelihood that any other British ground forces could be made available before late 1945 at the earliest. The Australians might be able to provide supporting and service troops on a corps basis for their own forces. Other supporting and service troops, including all troops for port and base development, would have to come from U.S. sources. Unless the European war ends in the near future they could be provided only at the direct expense of base development on Luzon and Okinawa and the extension of our holdings in the Ryukyus in preparation for Kyushu.

On the basis of limited available information, the Australians could provide about three quarters of the combat air units for the operation. Most of the air service units would have to be U.S. and some U.S. air units might have to replace Australian air units withdrawn from New Guinea and the Solomons.

As to equipment and supplies, a logistical study is required in order to determine availability. On the critical matter of cargo shipping, there is not now sufficient in sight for the Okinawa operation and base

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development. An operation against Hainan before mid-1945 would develop an added cargo shipping requirement which the shipping planners see no way of filling at the present time unless Germany is defeated by January 1945.

8. Target date. From the assault shipping standpoint, mid-July is about the latest date the operation could be launched without affecting the Kyushu operation now planned for 1 October. It appears possible to launch the operation any time between 1 April and mid-July, assuming it can be executed without waiting for the release of naval forces from Okinawa.

9. Effect on other operations. From the present outlook, certain critical resources, such as service and supporting troops and cargo shipping which are essential to the Hainan operation, can be provided only at direct expense to the main effort against Japan. Provision of these resources would be reflected in: base development in Luzon and clearing of the Philippines to release U.S. forces for Kyushu; base development in the Okinawa area; and seizure of additional bases in either the Ryukyus or China Coast, or both, to give direct support to the Kyushu operation. The exact effect of the Hainan operation on the foregoing, all of which are essential to the Kyushu operation, is not yet calculable but would be severe. One yardstick for esti-

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inating the effect is to consider that every airfield built on Hainan will cost us at least one airfield, either in the Ryukyus within fighter range of Japan or in Luzon.

10. Conclusions.

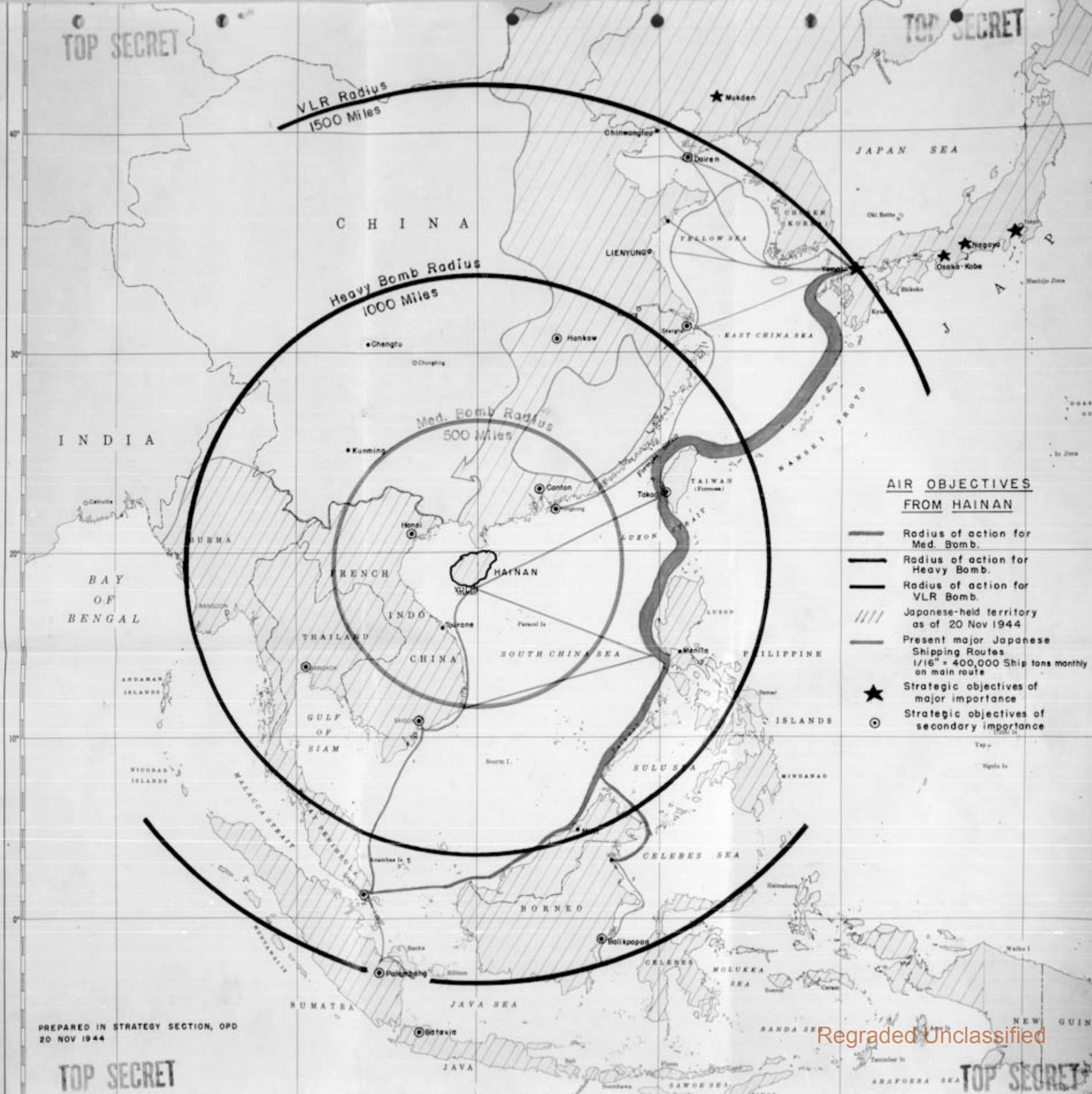
- a. Seizure of Hainan is feasible with a target date any time between 1 April 1945 and 15 July 1945.
- b. The provision of resources for the operation would affect the main effort in the Pacific to a degree not yet calculable. It would definitely result in a reduction in the total air effort against Japan proper prior to invasion and in the direct support of the Kyushu assault.
- c. The operation could be essentially Australian, in so far as combat troops are concerned, providing such use of these forces is acceptable to the Australian government. The U.S. would have to provide an appreciable increment of combat support, service troops, and base development forces.
- d. Although the operation offers many advantages, its execution will detract from our main operations against Japan. It now appears that the cost to the main effort can be justified only if no other objectives which assist directly the main effort can be seized between the Okinawa and Kyushu target dates.

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**AIR OBJECTIVES  
FROM HAINAN**

- Radius of action for Med. Bomb.
- Radius of action for Heavy Bomb.
- Radius of action for VLR Bomb.
- /// Japanese-held territory as of 20 Nov 1944
- Present major Japanese Shipping Routes 1/16" = 400,000 Ship tons monthly on main route
- ★ Strategic objectives of major importance
- ⊙ Strategic objectives of secondary importance

PREPARED IN STRATEGY SECTION, OPD  
20 NOV 1944

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM ADMIRAL LEAHY

The establishment of communications with China through Indo-China would require: a. seizure and defense of air bases on Hainan and seizure and defense of the Tongking Plain; b. expansion of the port areas of Haiphong; c. improvement of existing, and construction of additional communication lines within Tongking; d. rehabilitation of the demolished rail line to Kunming and development of road, pipeline and air transport facilities.

The Japanese are now strengthening their position in East China and Indo-China in anticipation of a landing on the Asiatic Mainland and would welcome the opportunity to engage large Allied forces diverted from a potential invasion of the Japanese homeland. They would initially have deployed in the area of operations 2-3 divisions, which they could reinforce to 9-10 divisions within 3 months. We could reasonably expect our forces to be engaged in practically a continuous battle resisting the enemy's attempt to drive us from our lodgment.

Except for support from air forces in China, India-Burma and Luzon, no direct support could be afforded these operations from adjacent areas. Neither the Chinese nor the Indo-Chinese could provide effective assistance for the operations; however, after a period of equipping and training they might give some aid in defense of the supply corridor.

Tongking, because of its lack of beaches with suitable exit inland, its low central plain subject to inundation, and its rainy weather, is an undesirable area for either amphibious or overland maneuvers. The only suitable beaches for a landing in force are about 100 miles south of Haiphong.

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Security of the attack forces and our lines of communication make air and naval bases in the Philippines and air bases in Hainan prerequisites to a successful assault on the Haiphong-Hanoi area. For this reason, projected operations against Luzon must be completed and bases established there prior to initiation of the Hainan-Indo-China operations. Because of the necessity for completing the Luzon campaign first, operations against Hainan-Indo-China could not be initiated until at least March 1945 at which time there remain only six weeks of favorable weather before the rainy season. It is doubtful, however, that sufficient forces and resources could be found to initiate the operation successfully in 1945 except at the expense of other operations leading more directly to the defeat of Japan.

Operations, shown on the attached map, involve the seizure of southern Hainan Island by 2 divisions on D-Day. Twenty days later 2 assault divisions with a 5 division follow-up commence the invasion of Tongking. Hanoi would be captured an estimated 25 days later by overland advance; and subsequently Haiphong and the remainder of the corridor would be secured by overland advance with amphibious support. The initial phases of these operations could be logistically supported only by the rapid development of additional lines of communication in Tongking. Nine reinforced divisions with adequate air and naval support would be required, totaling approximately 400,000 men ashore. Thereafter, 7 divisions plus air forces, line of communication and air transport troops would be required indefinitely for defense and operation of the supply corridor.

Even though these operations could be launched successfully in March 1945, only a trickle of supplies could reach China over this route by 1 January 1946. This trickle would increase to a maximum capacity of approximately 90,000 dead weight tons per month (nearly half of which would be by air) over the road, rail, pipeline and air transport routes. This maximum capacity,

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however, would not be reached until September 1946, or 12 months after the presently planned date for the invasion of Japan proper. Because of the long turn around, the services of over 200 Liberty ships will be required at that time to deliver the 375,000 dead weight tons per month required for the Indo-China theater of war. Of that amount only 25 per cent would reach China, the remainder being used by the defense force and on the lines of communication.

Undertaking the operations in March would require the diversion for that purpose of the entire forces and resources set up for the Ryukyus (directed for 1 March 1945), together with a considerable augmentation. Because of weather conditions, and regardless of additional forces that might be released from Europe, the Ryukyus campaign could not then be undertaken until at least 6 months later. Since positions in those islands are necessary for the pre-invasion softening of Japan, it is concluded that operations in Indo-China would mean a cost of at least 6 months delay in the invasion of Japan proper. These operations are, therefore, not in consonance with our agreed strategy for the prosecution of the war against Japan.

THIS AREA ALL JAP CONTROLLED

15 ENEMY DIVS  
IN SOUTH CHINA

## PHASE II

## ASSAULT

D + 20 Day

1 Div

## POSITION-UP

D + 27 Day

1 Div

D + 28 Day

1 Div

D + 30 Day

1 Div

D + 30 Day

1 Div

D + 40 Day

1 Div

## SCHEME OF MANEUVER

## PHASE I

Preliminary - D-Day to D + 20

- 2 Divs capture Thanh Hoa
- Area on Hanoi Island
- to establish land-based air forces.

## PHASE II

Assault - D + 20 to D + 45

- 1 Div secures south flank
- 2 Divs advance to Hanoi

## PHASE III

Exploitation - D + 45 to D + 70

- 2 Divs advance to Hanoi
- 1 Div = to Lang Son
- 1 Div = to Vinh Yen
- 1 Div = to Vinh Yen
- 1 Div constitutes south flank of corridor
- 1 Div constitutes general reserve

## PHASE IV

Active Defense - D + 71 to D + 1

- 1 Div defends - Diang-Tien area
- 1 Div defends - Langkin-Eng Khe area
- 1 Div defends - Langkin-Eng Khe area
- 1 Div constitutes general reserve

## PHASE I

D-Day

1 Div

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS IN  
NORTHERN INDO-CHINA

MILES

XX REPRESENTS DIVISION DEFENSIVE AREA

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E N C L O S U R E

INDO-CHINA AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE  
BURMA SUPPLY ROUTE

Report by the Joint Staff Planners

THE PROBLEM

1. To determine the feasibility of operations to open French Indo-China as a means of providing supplies to China, and the effect of such operations on the over-all strategy for the defeat of Japan.

DISCUSSION

2. Situation in Asia. Our lodgment in the Philippines will accelerate Japanese preparations and dispositions to resist a landing on the continent. By February it is estimated the Japanese will have completed strengthening their positions along the coast of Indo-China and south and east China. They will have most probably overcome the Chinese in the Kweilin-Liuchow-Nanning area and established a continuous line of communications between the Yangtze Valley and Indo-China. Allied operations in Upper Burma to reopen land communications with China should be nearing successful completion with a resultant deterioration to the enemy position in south Burma. Enemy air strength in south China and southeast Asia will be reduced to limited defensive capabilities, while his navy will be lurking in home waters. His ground strength in China, Manchuria and the Homeland will still retain considerable offensive power, and he would welcome an opportunity to engage us on the Asiatic mainland where he could tie down large Allied forces thus diverting us from a potential invasion of Japan proper.

While our initial operations in Indo-China and Hainan Island will encounter only 2-3 enemy divisions, these could be reinforced to a total of 5 divisions within 30 days. Subsequently the enemy could bring against us 2 additional divisions from the south and

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3 from the north. He would eventually oppose us with 9-10 divisions with which he would continue sustained action to eject us from the mainland.

During the initial operations we could expect little assistance from either the Chinese or the natives of Indo-China. The military strength of the Chinese, except for those forces in Burma, would probably be at an all-time low. The unorganized Indo-Chinese would be capable of little more than guerrilla action. Eventually when our supplies commence to flow into the area we could begin equipping and organizing both the Chinese and French Indo-Chinese to assist in defense of the supply corridor. It is doubtful, however, if this responsibility could be assumed by them before the invasion and defeat of Japan, under the present concept of operations.

3. Physiography and conditions affecting the operations. (See attached map).

a. General. The shortest supply route through Indo-China from the sea toward Kunming, extends along the Haiphong-Hanoi-LaoKay axis in Tongking. Haiphong, on the Gulf of Tongking, is the port serving Hanoi, 63 miles inland. Road communications fan out to the north and south from Hanoi; one coastal railroad leads to the south, and another meter-gauge railroad connects Hanoi, LaoKay and Kunming. The Chinese have removed a considerable portion of that section of the railway within China and some of the tunnels and installations are reported destroyed. The distance by rail from Haiphong to Kunming is roughly 524 miles.

Haiphong is the only port for deep draft vessels in northern Indo-China. Its peacetime capacity is 4000 measurement tons per day but preliminary logistic estimates indicate that considerable increase is possible. Vessels with draft up to 26 feet can reach this city. The Song Ka (Red) River at high water

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can take drafts up to 9 feet as far as Hanoi.

Haiphong and Hanoi are situated on a broad delta of the Song Ka (Red) and the Thai Binh Rivers with their tributaries. This area is flat and practically level, except for the high dikes along the rivers. It contains a network of natural water courses and canals, bars and rice fields, and is partially under water most of the time.

The 265 mile coast line of the Thai Binh and Song Ka deltas, with the exception of the Do Son Peninsula, is generally of soft mud with swamps and rice fields inland making landings impossible except up the rivers at docks and wharves. The only feasible landing area in this general vicinity is a one-to-two mile stretch of sandy beach in the vicinity of Thang-Hoa, cleared to the interior by an all-weather road and a meter gauge railroad to Hanoi, 100 miles distant.

Hainan Island guards the entrance to the Gulf of Tongking. With an area of 14,000 square miles, it is slightly larger than Formosa and has been extensively developed by the Japanese into a naval and air base. There are extensive airfield and naval base facilities at Samah in the southern part of the island, from which the use of the remaining island installations could be denied the enemy, and the entrances to Tongking Gulf could be controlled. A number of suitable beaches would give access to a perimeter of hills encompassing this area. The enemy could be prevented from reinforcing Hainan by way of Hainan Strait to the north.

Tongking Gulf is approximately 240 miles long and 140 miles wide, its longer axis extending in a NE-SW direction. The southern and more navigable entrance to this gulf is 140 miles wide extending between Hainan Island and the mainland of Indo-China. With regard to direction of prevailing wind and depth of water, Tongking Gulf is favorable for carrier operations.

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b. Weather. Mid-October to mid-April, the period of north-east monsoons, presents acceptable conditions for amphibious operations against the south coast of Hainan Island and in the Tongking Gulf area. The period mid-April to mid-October is that of the southwest monsoon and is rainy and generally unfavorable for military operations. Typhoons occur most frequently between July and November, inclusive, and are rare during the period January to April. Mid-October until the end of January presents optimum flying conditions, whereas the least desirable flying weather occurs during February, March and April. Since rains would seriously interfere with an overland advance in the Tongking Plain area after mid-April, operations should preferably be initiated in that area in such time as not to extend into the rainy season.

4. Possible support from other Allied areas. Except for air support as described below, no other substantial direct support could be expected from other theaters for the initial operations.

Luzon based air forces (heavy bombers - fighter escorted) can operate against shipping to and from the Gulf of Tongking via passages north and south of Hainan, maintain continuous reconnaissance of the South China Sea, and soften the defenses of Hainan. However, Tongking Gulf and points on the Indo-China coast inside the gulf are beyond bombing range of these aircraft (Clark Field, Luzon - Haiphong, 865 nautical miles).

India-Burma based air forces could be assigned the task of softening up the defenses of the Haiphong area, and interdicting the overland communication lines north and south from Hanoi. Hanoi is within heavy bomber range and long range fighter escort is possible (570 nautical miles).

China based air forces from the Kunming area, while providing limited direct support of the operations, will be able to furnish valuable indirect support in their normal role of support-

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ing the Chinese Army against the Japanese forces in China, interdicting enemy lines of communications through East China, attacking ports and installations on the south and east coasts of China, and attacking coastal shipping. B-29's from Chengtu should not be diverted from their strategic bombing effort except in emergency. (Kunming to Haiphong, 325 nautical miles).

5. Operations.

a. The opening of Indo-China to reestablish overland communications with China would necessitate seizure of the Hanoi-Haiphong area and establishment of a defensive corridor to secure the sea approaches and land routes to China. Operations for this purpose would initially require amphibious assault and overland operations to seize the Tongking Plain. Amphibious landings would be restricted to the coastal area north of Vinh where overland advance would not be bottlenecked in the narrow corridor between mountains and the sea, and south of the Red River delta, as the seacoast to the north thereof is broken and interspersed with numerous streams, canals, and swamps. Prior landings should be made on the south coast of Hainan Island to neutralize that threat to our east flank and to establish land-based air support for the ground campaign and for the protection of carriers in Tongking Gulf.

b. Timing. Base facilities, both air and naval, will be required in Luzon to support these operations. Operations in the Philippines, to which we are now committed, will culminate with the assault of Luzon on 20 December 1945. It is estimated central Luzon will be in our control by early February, and an Indo-China operation could be supported from there during March. Mid-October through mid-April are the only acceptable months as regards weather for amphibious operations in this area. Hence, it would be necessary to initiate operations as early as practicable in March in order to establish a firm lodgment

ashore before the rainy season. In this connection it is likely that the exploitation phase would extend into the rainy season, and thus probably delay the expeditious completion of the operations. A March target date for Indo-China could be met only by diverting, for that purpose, the forces and resources set up for the Ryukyus, with some augmentation.

c. Concept of the operations. (See attached map).

Preparatory Phase. Softening of Hainan by Luzon based air. Softening of Indo-China by Burma-India based air. Interdiction of South China communications by China based air. Intensified submarine, surface, and aerial patrol of the South China Sea. Preparatory carrier strikes.

Phase I (Preliminary) D-Day to D/20. Amphibious assault by 2 divisions to seize the Samah Peninsula on southern Hainan for the establishment of air forces to permit the safe introduction of carrier task forces into Tongking Gulf, to support the ground operations, and to interdict enemy lines of communication within the area. Assault divisions remain for initial defense of installations until situation stabilizes sufficiently to pass to garrison forces.

Phase II (Assault) D/20 to D/45. Initial amphibious assault by 2 divisions in the Thanh-Hoa area, with a 5-division follow-up from D/22 to D/45. Secure the south flank and advance overland to capture Hanoi. (It is estimated the principal engagement will be fought prior to D/40, when 5 of our divisions will probably be opposed by 3 enemy divisions).

Phase III (Exploitation) D/46 to D/70. Advances to capture the port of Haiphong, and to secure land routes to China, as follows:

Haiphong - 2 divisions assisted by minor amphibious forces.  
Lang Son - 1 division.  
Thai Nguyen - 1 division.  
Vinh Yen - 1 division.  
South flank - 1 division.  
Reserve - 1 division.

Phase IV (Active Defense) D/70 to ?. The enemy will be able to bring to bear against us during this period about 9-10 divisions. However, our defensive position, our air strength, and the nature of the terrain will preclude his concentrating in force at any one point. Since we would gain no advantage, nor wish to deploy additional forces to push the enemy on beyond the corridor necessary to protect communications with China, we must maintain an active defense of that corridor by occupying key points on the perimeter backed by a central reserve. This would require seven divisions as follows:

- 1 division - Dinhlap-Tien area
- 1 division - Lang Son-Dong Khe area
- 1 division - Bac Kan-Cao Bang area
- 1 division - South flank
- 1 division - Along Red River Valley
- 2 divisions - General Reserve

Moreover, we would be forced to maintain these defense forces until either Japan surrenders, or reconstituted French Indo-Chinese forces, or possibly Chinese forces, were willing and able to assume this responsibility.

d. Availability of forces and resources. Regardless of the termination of the European war, forces and resources are prospectively available in the Pacific Ocean Areas to undertake these operations, but only at the expense of presently directed operations as indicated in paragraph 7 below. The Hainan-Indo-China operations will require, exclusive of service troops for development of communications with China, 9 reinforced Army or Marine divisions (360,000 men), 5 of which must be amphibiously trained and combat loaded, with supporting naval and air forces.

e. Logistic support of the operation. Preliminary estimates based on maximum development of existing lines of communication, indicate that the initial operations cannot be adequately supported. However, by the construction of additional roads, and the utilization of all available means including inland water transport, it is believed practicable to get the necessary supplies to the advancing troops. The creation of these additional communication facilities is likely to delay the operations. Subsequently additional logistical support would be furnished by expanding the facilities of Haiphong. Maintenance of an active defense of 7 divisions plus garrison air forces will require approximately 300,000 measurement tons of supplies per month.

6. Logistic feasibility of the supply for China project.

Assuming that the assault is successful, the first requirement would be the development of the north Indo-China ports to their maximum estimated capacity of 420,000 measurement tons per month. Required additionally would be the improvement of interior communications in Tongking to meet the needs of the defense forces, the construction of air fields, the rehabilitation of the meter gauge railway to Kunming, the development of the motor roads and pipe lines to China, the construction of housing, storage and hospitalization facilities, and expansion of existing port facilities to clear an additional 196,000 measurement tons per month.

In order to obtain commensurate return for the sizable military expenditure required, all possible routes to China should be developed to maximum capacity.

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The routes of supply to China could be developed to carry a maximum combined capacity of 153,000 M/tons per month (80,000 by air, 20,000 by rail, 20,000 by motor road, 33,000 by pipeline). In order to deliver this tonnage to China, 616,000 M/tons would have to be laid down each month at the north Indo-China ports. Thus only approximately 25% of the supplies shipped to Indo-China would actually reach China, 50% of the total being consumed by the defense forces, and the remaining 25% for the maintenance of facilities and lines of communication. The equivalent of 216 Liberty ships would be required to deliver this tonnage to Indo-China.

It would require approximately 10 months after the initiation of the assault to commence the first trickle of supplies to China and it would require 18 months before the ultimate maximum capacity of 153,000 M/tons could be realized. Assuming that the assault is launched on 1 March 1945, supplies would not commence to flow into China by this route until 1 January 1946 and the ultimate capacity of all supply routes would not be attained until 1 September of that year, which is 12 months later than the presently planned invasion of Japan proper.

The foregoing estimates are optimistic since they do not take into account the development and improvement of means for reception and distribution of the supplies at the already congested China terminals, and their transfer to the points where they will be used in China; nor do they consider the provision of equipment and supplies for the reconstitution of French Indo-China forces.

7. Effect of these operations on the over-all strategy for the defeat of Japan. Since the security of our lines of

TOP SECRET

communication to this area, and the provision of base facilities to support these operations, would require the completion of projected operations against Luzon and the establishment of bases there, before the assault against Hainan-Haiphong could be successfully launched, the earliest practicable target date for the Hainan-Indo-China assault is concluded to be 1 March 1945.

The assault on the Ryukyus is, however, scheduled for that date, and even though conditions permit their reorientation to the Pacific early in 1945, sufficient resources will not be available to implement simultaneously the operations envisaged in this study and those against the Ryukyus. The initiation of these operations would necessitate the postponement of Ryukyus until the next favorable weather period beginning late in the summer of 1945, for which time the preparatory phase of the invasion of southern Kyushu is being planned.

Our present campaign in the Pacific is designed at once to utilize most effectively all available resources and to exploit the most favorable weather conditions, with a view to maintaining and extending unremitting pressure against the enemy and attaining positions from which to force his ultimate surrender.

The project to open north Indo-China has no prospect of duplicating the capacity of the existing Burma supply routes before early 1946. It is therefore out of phase with our accepted Pacific strategy. Furthermore these operations will involve a reorientation of our effort away from Tokyo, are likely to delay the assault on the Japanese homeland by 6 to 9 months, and are not in consonance with the agreement reached at OCTAGON, "To continue operations leading to the earliest practicable invasion of Japan."

8. Possible air transport line to China from Hainan Island.  
Consideration has also been given to the seizure of only Hainan

TOP SECRET

Island to establish a base for air supply to China, either as a substitute for, or in addition to, that now functioning from India-Burma. Such a project would require operations to capture all of Hainan Island, using for this purpose 4 reinforced divisions. Due to interference from enemy air forces in Indo-China and China, fighter escort would be required for all air transport movements. Extensive air base development would be necessary. A large ground and air defense force would be required to prevent continuous hostile interference and counter-attack. Maintenance of the garrison, support of construction, and transit of China bound freight would require the handling of large quantities of supplies through Hainan ports. Preliminary estimates indicate that the present capacity of the India-China air route could not be duplicated from Hainan in less than nine months, and even then only at the cost of extensive port and communications developments. For these reasons this course of action has been rejected as being both militarily unsound and logistically impracticable.

CONCLUSIONS

9. The **attached Appendix**, a proposed memorandum for the President, summarizes the conclusions developed from this study.

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET  
NAVY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON

**SECRET**

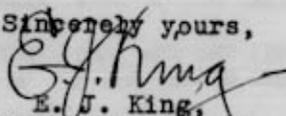
January 1, 1942

Dear Mr. President:

I enclose copy of a despatch which was sent to Admiral Hart last night.

This despatch - identically worded - was sent to General McArthur by General Marshall, and to the senior British commanders in the Far East by their respective British Chiefs of Staff (now in Washington).

Sincerely yours,

  
E. J. King,  
Admiral, U.S. Navy

## NAVAL MESSAGE

## NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>COMINCH</u>	FOR ACTION	CINCAF	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY _____			ROUTINE
DATE _____			DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM _____	INFORMATION	CINCPAC OPNAV (MAIL)	PRIORITY
DECODED BY _____			ROUTINE
PARAPHRASED BY _____			DEFERRED

INDICATE BY ASTERISK ADDRESSEES FOR WHICH MAIL DELIVERY IS SATISFACTORY.

312300

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE.

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME DATE TIME GCT

TEXT

CinC CIPHER

THE GENERAL STRATEGIC POLICY FOR OPERATIONS IN THE FAR EASTERN THEATER WHICH HAS BEEN AGREED UPON BY THE US AND BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF IS

AS FOLLOWS AFIRM TO HOLD THE MALAY BARRIER PAREN DEFINED AS THE LINE MALAY PENINSULA SUMATRA JAVA AND NORTH AUSTRALIA PAREN AS THE BASIC

DEFENSIVE POSITION IN THAT THEATER AND TO OPERATE SEA LAND AND AIR FORCES IN AS GREAT DEPTH AS POSSIBLE FORWARD OF THE BARRIER IN ORDER

TO OPPOSE THE JAPANESE SOUTHWARD ADVANCE BAKER TO HOLD BURMA AND

AUSTRALIA AS ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING POSITIONS FOR THE THEATER AND

BURMA AS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUPPORT OF CHINA AND TO THE DEFENSE OF INDIA CAST TO REESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

WITH LUZON AND TO SUPPORT THE PHILIPPINES GARRISON DOG TO MAINTAIN ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE THEATER PARA IN DISPOSING OF THE

REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVING IN THAT THEATER YOU SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE ABOVE POLICY AND CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF THE THEATER AS A WHOLE X TO

THIS END CLOSE COOPERATION AMONG THE BRITISH DUTCH AND UNITED STATES COMMANDERS IS ESSENTIAL AND YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO CONCERT THE MEASURES

ACCORDINGLY PARA BRITISH COMMANDER IN CHIEF FAR EAST WILL INFORM THE DUTCH AND REQUEST THEIR COOPERATION

# WAROPS SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to communication watch officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

37140

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

*A16/Pacific*

*File*

<b>SECRET</b>	
By Authority of The Commanding General Army Air Forces	
<b>AFIAN-FE</b>	
...19 Nov... Date	<i>jm</i> Initials
20 NOV 1944	

MEMORANDUM FOR WHITE HOUSE LIAISON OFFICER

Subject - Possible Pacific Island Airdrome Sites with Underground Dispersal Facilities.

1. Gilbert Islands: All of the islands in this group with the exception of Nauru and Ocean are atolls and have not sufficient elevation for horizontal excavation. Ocean and Nauru are small islands with some elevation, but do not possess airdrome sites or harbor facilities suitable for supporting extensive air installations.

2. Marcus Island: This island is an atoll and does not offer any possibility for construction of underground dispersal.

3. Marshall Islands: These islands are atolls and offer no possibilities for underground construction.

4. Bonins: The Bonins and Volcano Group form a chain of small islands of volcanic origin. They are extremely precipitous and rugged and offer only limited sites for airfield construction. Iwo Jima presents the most feasible location for airfields and possesses a small but good harbor. High ground rising from the existing and potential airfield sites topographically indicates a possibility for some underground dispersal construction. However, engineering surveys suggest that such construction would be extremely difficult if not wholly impractical. The limited harbor facilities and airdrome sites would preclude the possibility of any large-scale air installation.

5. Caroline Islands: These islands present the best possibilities for large-scale airdrome construction coupled with first-class harbor facilities and the capability of some underground dispersal construction. Several islands in the group, possessing airfield sites with possible underground dispersal construction, are disqualified from supporting any large air installation by the inadequacy of harbor facilities. The only island in the group to offer the combination of first-class harbor facilities and adequate existing and potential airdrome sites for large air installations, together with the possibility for some underground dispersal, is Truk. On Moen Island, in the Truk group, exists a large Japanese airdrome; there is an additional site nearby where construction may be underway and where a large airdrome could probably be built. Terrain adjacent to these airdromes is topographically suited to underground dispersal. There exist caves in this area which might be expanded to provide aircraft dispersal underground.

6. Palaus: The islands of Peleliu and Babelthaup in this group com-

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Memo for White House Liaison Officer

bine first-class harbor facilities with major existing airdromes capable of being enlarged, together with a possibility of limited underground dispersal construction. On Babelthai the present airdrome on the south end of the island adjoins high ground to the north which is topographically suited to horizontal excavation. The existing airdrome on Peleliu has some adjacent high ground and there is a slight possibility that minor underground dispersal could be constructed here.

7. Marianas: Of these islands, Tinian and Guam offer the only possibilities for underground dispersal plus extensive existing airdrome and airdrome sites, coupled with good harbor facilities. While the harbor at Tinian is of moderate capacity, there exist at least two large airdrome and airdrome sites with adjacent high land topographically suitable for underground dispersal. At Guam an excellent harbor and at least six to eight existing airdromes and airdrome sites provide the capability for large-scale air installations. However, the terrain adjacent to these airdrome sites is such that underground dispersal construction would be extremely difficult if not wholly impractical. Limited harbor facilities at Saipan, together with only a very few terrain features offering possibilities for underground construction adjacent to existing airfields or airfield sites, render this island inadequate for the type of installation under discussion.

8. General: The above information is based on terrain studies and cannot be considered conclusive. It is the opinion of this office and the Air Engineers that a definitive study of underground dispersal capabilities in the islands under discussion would require exhaustive field surveys. It is further the opinion of the Air Engineers that any such construction, even where indicated above as possible, would be extremely difficult and everywhere limited. It should be pointed out that underground dispersal for large aircraft would require a vertical depth of some 50 feet for B-29 aircraft, and that in view of the very large wing span of all types of heavy bombers, the dispersal of any numbers of such aircraft would demand lateral space not to be found in the terrain of the relatively small land masses under consideration.

For the Commanding General, Army Air Forces:

JEAN K. FOGLE  
Colonel, Air Corps  
Chief, Analysis Division  
Office of Asst. Chief of Air Staff  
Intelligence

TOP SECRET

2 OCT 1944

FJ  
W

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Condition of By-Passed Japanese in Pacific Area from November 1943 to September 1944.

The operations in the Pacific Area from November 1943 to September 1944 have resulted in by-passing an estimated 325,300 Japanese who have now been reduced by minor operations, bombardment, starvation, suicide and other means, to an estimated 218,300. These hostile elements are cut off from their lines of communications by air, sea and land blockade. This blockade has forced the Japanese to subsist off of the country. Their inability to replenish munition, food and medical supplies results in starvation, ill health, low morale and deterioration of fighting units.

The breakdown of the several operations are listed below chronologically by dates:

November 1943

BOUGAINVILLE:

Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 40,000  
Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 13,000

Prisoner of War report of mid-July 1944 indicates that the ration is about four ounces per man per day. The troops are discouraged and have low morale. However, evidence indicates that these troops probably can exist on locally grown produce unless driven from gardens. Allied Air, recognizing this, have improvised means for spraying oil on these gardens. The following quotation from a captured diary illustrates conditions in this area: "The bombardment keeps up without change; walking or sleeping I think only of eating; in dreams all kinds of good things float before me but I cannot get them into my mouth."

February 1944

MARSHALL GROUP (including WAKE, OROAN and NAURU ISLANDS in the GILBERT Group):

TOP SECRET

**TOP SECRET**

**Memorandum for The President (Continued)**  
**Subject: Condition of By-Passed Japanese**  
**in Pacific Area from November 1943**  
**to September 1944.**

**Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 24,000**  
**Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 21,800**

An occasional submarine has landed rice and other food stuffs which is barely enough to keep them alive. Due to high disease rates and shortage of medicines, these troops have undergone considerable deterioration.

March 1944

NEW BRITAIN - NEW IRELAND:

**Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 70,000**  
**Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 47,000**

Gardens throughout the Rabaul Area alone cover an estimated 3,000 acres. The estimated present yield would enable a garrison of 40,000 troops to receive 2.8 pounds of vegetables per day. It is believed that approximately one supply submarine, principally loaded with rice, visits this area each week.

April 1944

NEWAK (Northeast New Guinea):

**Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 64,000**  
**Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 33,000**

Troops have deteriorated materially, lost most of their arms and equipment previously stockpiled and are using staple rations. Half of the troops are sick with the seriously wounded only being hospitalized. Estimated medical supplies on hand are sufficient to the end of September. It is probable that some supplies also have been brought into this area by submarine. The desperate status of these troops probably cause the suicidal attempts to break out of the trap.

May 1944

SANMI (Northwest New Guinea):

**Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 8,500**  
**Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - - 1,000**

**TOP SECRET**

TOP SECRET

Memorandum for The President (Continued)  
Subject: Condition of By-Passed Japanese  
in Pacific Area from November 1943  
to September 1944.

A serious shortage of clothing and equipment is indicated in this area by salvage from the dead. Seriously wounded are being evacuated only upon order and the slightly wounded are being retained in the front lines. To supplement the ration in this area, sago trees are being felled to produce sago flour by native method. Half of the labor troops employed in this project are sick. Therefore, production is nil.

June 1944

ROTA ISLAND (Marianas Group):

Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 2,800  
Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 2,800

Continued air strikes have forced these Japanese to live under ground. Food stuffs and medical supplies are short.

July 1944

GEELVINK BAY (Northwest New Guinea):

Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 20,000  
Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 12,000

Natives report troops in this area disorganized and starving; they are breaking into small groups to raid native gardens. This condition has resulted in many suicides, and attempts to use inland trails to the West in an attempt to be picked up on Western New Guinea beaches by small boat or barge for evacuation to Ceram, Halmahera or other localities. The inland trails are reported covered with Japanese and Formosans who are escaping. Probably the larger part of the 8,000 shown as lost in this area have made good their escape. A report of the Noenfoor Operation (23 June 1944 to 31 August 1944) indicates that cannibalism was practised; prisoners of war report that Formosans have been taken out on patrol, killed, and their flesh returned to bivouac areas to be eaten.

September 1944

CAROLINE GROUP (including YAP and PALAU):

Initial Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 96,000  
Current Estimated Japanese Garrison - - - 86,500

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Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET

Memorandum for The President (Continued)  
Subject: Condition of By-Passed Japanese  
in Pacific Area from November 1943  
to September 1944.

The Japanese in this area are believed to be in a near normal condition because of home gardening, supplemented by food and medical supplies landed by submarines. Continuous air strikes on these islands are causing considerable decline in their present conditions since they are now living almost entirely under ground. Ground operations are now in progress on Palau.

(S&B) G. C. MARSHALL

Chief of Staff.

TOP SECRET

15408

Serial: 002782

26 SEP 1944

W.P.  
F.P.  
W.P.

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

Subject: Report from Ambassador Kirk regarding the views of British naval authorities on Pacific war.

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but the transfers to China of Hong Kong and any other British holdings in the Far East should not be insisted upon, since never, under any circumstances, would Britain agree to return Hong Kong to China and also Britain planned to hold on to anything else she had in the Far East. Attention was called to the fact that the prestige of the white man in the Far East, both that of the British and the Americans, had suffered a great deal since the beginning of the war and a display of overwhelming force is the only way to restore it, since this is the only thing the oriental, with his special philosophy, would respect. Such a policy is just as much of interest to the U.S. as it is to Great Britain and hope was expressed the U.S. would be realistic in its attitude toward the current situation in the Far East, but, regardless, the British would never, under any circumstances, cede any part of New Guinea, of the Strait Settlements, or anything else. This matter has been gone into thoroughly with the Portuguese and the Dutch, by the British Government, and it was found that the Dutch and Portuguese Governments shared these same views.

The idea was expressed in regard to Italy that after the war the Italian fleet should be divided among the victorious powers, inasmuch as Italy could not afford a Navy. It was suggested the Russians should be given one battleship, the Yugoslavs another and the Greeks another, which, alone, wouldn't be a generous act, inasmuch as one battleship without its ancillaries was absolutely impracticable and of very little use. The British, on the other hand, would rather take their share of the Italian Navy in destroyers and cruisers.

*E. J. King*

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

**TOP SECRET**

Serial: 002782

UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.**TOP SECRET**TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

26 SEP 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR: ADMIRAL LEAHY  
GENERAL MARSHALL  
GENERAL ARNOLD

Subject: Report from Ambassador Kirk regarding the views of British naval authorities on Pacific war.

Set forth below is a paraphrase of a despatch from Caserta (Ambassador Kirk) reporting on interesting comments by high British naval authorities in the Caserta area. I am sending this information to you personally as the wide distribution of a J.C.S. memorandum appears undesirable.

Considerable concern exists in the British Navy in regard to the war in the Pacific and it should be clearly pointed out that, after Germany is defeated, the British participation with the U.S. in the Far Eastern war will be confined principally to the British Navy, inasmuch as it would be absolutely essential for any government in Great Britain to bring about some demobilization and to return certain troops to England, when Germany is defeated. It was pointed out that many British soldiers had, at the present time, been in the Army for over five years, and there is, of course, a limit to human endurance.

It was held that the British Navy, of course, would take its place alongside of the U.S. Navy in the war in the Far East, but there was quite a bit of apprehension among some of the British naval officers and naval ratings concerning the views of the U.S. on the Far East. The protestations by the U.S. concerning the freeing of the Philippines and liberating China from the present Japanese yoke were accepted at their face value,

A16/Pacific

The Prime Minister mentioned to the President today that Admiral King was alleged to have said that there were "political" reasons against employing New Zealand troops in the Pacific.

The President said that in any case this was not the attitude of the U.S. Government. There was a lack of New Zealand manpower, rendering their active co-operation difficult, but they could at least be used for policing.

The Prime Minister explained to the President that the issue had arisen in connection with the employment of New Zealand air squadrons and argued that they should be given a place in the line of Battle. The President appeared to accept this.

(init'd) WSC

18 Sept /44

Sept. 15, 1944.

File as a matter of record  
WAZ

File  
WS

A16/Pacific

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

6 September 1944

Admiral Brown  
The President  
has read

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Admiral Brown

The attached report summarizes the very brief correspondence of the President and the Prime Minister on British participation in the Pacific War. The Prime Minister has made no commitments on this subject other than to approve a SEXTANT agreement for a British Task Force in the Pacific in 1944, an agreement from which he was subsequently released.

All other statements of his have been of a general nature.

Very respectfully,

George W. Elsey

File  
WB

BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN THE PACIFIC WAR

The Prime Minister has written several times to the President since the Cairo Conference in December 1943 that British forces will play a significant role in the war against Japan but he has never been specific as to the strength, time, or place that his forces will be committed in Pacific operations.

The final report of the Combined Chiefs of Staff to the President and the Prime Minister, submitted at SEXTANT and approved by them, stated that the C.C.S. had "approved in principle as a basis for further investigation and preparation" an overall Plan for the Defeat of Japan. This Plan called for the sending of a British Task Force to the Pacific Ocean by June, 1944 consisting of one old battleship, two carriers, six light cruisers, seven or eight escort carriers and numerous escorts and auxiliaries.<sup>2</sup> The Prime Minister referred to the SEXTANT Report and its accompanying plans when he first made overtures to the President in March, 1944 about British participation in the Pacific War. It was not an auspicious beginning; Mr. Churchill asked to be released from the Cairo agreement. The message is his fullest statement on the British position and is therefore worth quoting at length:

"Although you and I both initialled the final report, neither of us had had the opportunity of going into these matters personally as we were concerned with affairs of more immediate urgency. Since then the War Cabinet and Chiefs of Staff have been "investigating" and we have not so far reached united conclusions. Meanwhile the Japanese Fleet has arrived at Singapore which constitutes in my mind a new major fact.

"After the surrender of the Italian Fleet in September,

1943 I was very keen on sending a detachment of our Fleet as quickly as possible to the Pacific, but when I opened this to Admiral King he explained to me how very strong the United States Navy was already in those waters compared to the Japanese, and I formed the impression that he did not need us very much. I have also seen several telegrams from our Naval Representatives in Washington which tend to confirm the above impression. On the other hand, I am told that Admiral King has informed the First Sea Lord that he would like to have our detachment, provided it did not arrive until August or September, when its logistic requirements could more easily be met. I am, in the upshot, left in doubt about whether we are really needed this year.

"I am personally still of the opinion that amphibious action across the Bay of Bengal will enable all our forces and establishments in India to play their highest part in the next 18 months in the war against Japan. We are examining now the logistics in detail and prima facie it seems that we could attack with two or three times the strength the islands across the Bay of Bengal and thereafter the Malay Peninsula than we could by prolonging our communications about 9,000 miles round the south of Australia and operating from the Pacific side and on your southern flank. There is also the objection of dividing our fleet and our effort between the Pacific and Indian Oceans and throwing out of gear so many of our existing establishments from Calcutta to Ceylon and way back in the Suez Canal zone."

The Prime Minister concluded his message with a direct request -- "I should like to know.....[if] your Pacific Operations would be hindered if, for the present at any rate and while the Japanese Fleet is at Singapore, we kept our centre of gravity in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal and planned amphibious operations there as resources come to hand."

The President's reply, prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff at his direction, released the British from the SEXTANT agreement. "There will be no specific operation in the Pacific during 1944 that would be adversely affected by the absence of a British Fleet Detachment," he wrote, nor would it "now appear that such a reinforcement will be needed before the Summer of 1945." The President agreed with the Prime Minister that in view of current conditions, Royal Naval forces would be of more value by remain-

ing in the Indian Ocean.<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact, the strategic situation had altered considerably since December with the advent of strong Japanese Naval forces at Singapore in February and instead of British forces entering the Pacific, a U.S. aircraft carrier with destroyer escort were sent to bolster the British Eastern Fleet at Ceylon in early March.

In early April the Prime Minister broached the question of the Far Eastern War again by asking the President to keep up the U.S. building rate of LST's to meet an estimated shortage in shipping the British would have for operations against Japan in the spring of 1945. Mr. Churchill did not specify the operation nor establish definite need for additional LST's and he spoke in general terms, "It is my earnest wish to operate against the Japanese as soon as our amphibious resources are released from the European Theater and I very much hope you will find it possible to meet this request."

The President's reply commented that British plans were not mature and he declined to change the building program for the sake of indefinite future operations. "In view of a better knowledge as to U.S. requirements in the Pacific," he explained, "the United States Chiefs of Staff believe that the Combined needs for prosecuting the war against Japan can be met under present programs and that allocations should not be made until operations have been definitely decided upon."

Since April the Prime Minister's references to the Pacific War have been few and couched in general terms. In regretting the American refusal to build additional LST's, Mr. Churchill said, "Our only wish is to help you as much as possible in the war against Japan in accordance with our pledge.... We are working very hard to prepare plans for amphibious operations destined

to support your left flank against Japan, and I hope soon to have definite proposals to make to your Chiefs of Staff. Perhaps you will allow me to recur to the above topic then." On two occasions he has used the war against Japan as an inducement to the President for an early meeting between them. In May he wrote, "This meeting is also becoming a practical necessity in respect of the Chiefs of Staff. We have the whole Far Eastern Campaign to discuss and our execution of our promise to help in it to the very utmost of our strength." In August he raised the issue again. "There are several serious matters in the military sphere which must be adjusted between our staffs. I, too, would greatly welcome a few frank talks with you on matters it is difficult to put on paper. We have to settle the part the British Empire should take in the war against Japan after Germany's unconditional surrender."

Although the United States Chiefs of Staff and the British Chiefs of Staff have examined in detail future plans for the defeat of Japan, their work has not yet won a place in the correspondence of the President and the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has made no commitments to the President on British participation in the Pacific War other than to approve a SEXTANT agreement for a British Task Force in the Pacific in 1944, an agreement from which he was subsequently released. All other statements of his have been of a general nature.

## REFERENCES

1. C.C.S. 426/1, 6 December 1943. (Final SEXTANT report to the President and the Prime Minister.)
2. C.C.S. 417, 2 December 1943. (Overall plan for the Defeat of Japan.)
3. Message to the President from the Prime Minister, Number 617, 10 March 1944.
4. Message from the President to the Prime Minister, Number 497, 13 March 1944.
5. Message to the President from the Prime Minister, Number 636, 4 April 1944.
6. Message from the President to the Prime Minister, Number 520, 13 April 1944.
7. Message to the President from the Prime Minister, Number 645, 14 April 1944.
8. Message to the President from the Prime Minister, Number 680, 25 May 1944.
9. Message to the President from the Prime Minister, Number 750, 10 August 1944.

COPY

*A16/Pacific*

*Adm Nimitz*

COPY

071/272  
Ser. 022-3

HEADQUARTERS  
NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE  
IN THE FIELD

14 July 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

From: AC of S, G-2.  
To : All units concerned.  
Subject: Lieutenant General SAITO's last message to Japanese officers and men defending SAIPAN, transmittal of.

1. A reproduction of Lieutenant General SAITO's last message to Japanese officers and men defending SAIPAN is transmitted herewith.
2. A translated copy of the message was issued by this Headquarters on Memorandum No. 18-44, dated 12 July 1944.

T. R. YANCEY,  
Lt. Col., GSC,  
AC of S, G-2.

Distribution:-

JIGPOA- 1	Army Garrison Forces- 1
Com5thFlt- 1	XXIV Corps Arty.- 1
CTF 52- 1	CG 27th Inf.Div.- 1
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CTG 52.2- 1	
CG 2dMarDiv- 1	
CG 4thMarDiv- 1	

CONFIDENTIAL



*Adm Nimitz*

1990-5-30  
069/247

HEADQUARTERS,  
NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE,  
IN THE FIELD.

12 July 1944.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE)

MEMORANDUM NUMBER.....15-44) : Lieutenant General SAITO's last message to Japanese officers and men defending SAIPAN.

1. The following message is a translation by the D-2 Section 4th Marine Division. The intelligence Officer of the Japanese 43d Division, captured 9 July, 1944, stated that this message was delivered by SAITO at approximately 0800 the morning of 6 July, just prior to the General's death at 1000 that day.

"MESSAGE TO OFFICERS AND MEN DEFENDING SAIPAN"

"I am addressing the officers and men of the Imperial Army on SAIPAN.

For more than twenty days since the American Devils attacked, the officers, men, and civilian employees of the Imperial Army and Navy on this island have fought well and bravely. Everywhere they have demonstrated the honor and glory of the Imperial Forces. I expected that every man would do his duty.

Heaven has not given us an opportunity. We have not been able to utilize fully the terrain. We have fought in unison up to the present time, but now we have no materials with which to fight and our artillery for attack has been completely destroyed. Our comrades have fallen one after another. Despite the bitterness of defeat, we pledge "Seven lives to repay our country".\*\*

The barbarous attack of the enemy is being continued. Even though the enemy has occupied only a corner of SAIPAN we are dying without avail under the violent shelling and bombing. Whether we attack or whether we stay where we are, there is only death. However, in death there is life. We must utilize this opportunity to exalt true Japanese manhood. I will advance with those who remain to deliver still another blow to the American Devils, and leave my bones on SAIPAN as a bulwark of the Pacific.

As it says in the "SENJINKUN" (Battle Ethics), "I will never suffer the disgrace of being taken alive," and "I will offer up the courage of my soul and calmly rejoice in living by the eternal principle."

C O N F I D E N T I A L

1990-5-30  
069/247

HEADQUARTERS,  
NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE,  
IN THE FIELD.

*Adm Nimitz*

12 July 1944.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE)

MEMORANDUM NUMBER.....15-44) : Lieutenant General SAITO's last message to Japanese officers and men defending SAIPAN.

1. The following message is a translation by the D-2 Section 4th Marine Division. The intelligence Officer of the Japanese 43d Division, captured 9 July, 1944, stated that this message was delivered by SAITO at approximately 0800 the morning of 6 July, just prior to the General's death at 1000 that day.

"MESSAGE TO OFFICERS AND MEN DEFENDING SAIPAN"

"I am addressing the officers and men of the Imperial Army on SAIPAN.

For more than twenty days since the American Devils attacked, the officers, men, and civilian employees of the Imperial Army and Navy on this island have fought well and bravely. Everywhere they have demonstrated the honor and glory of the Imperial Forces. I expected that every man would do his duty.

Heaven has not given us an opportunity. We have not been able to utilize fully the terrain. We have fought in unison up to the present time, but now we have no materials with which to fight and our artillery for attack has been completely destroyed. Our comrades have fallen one after another. Despite the bitterness of defeat, we pledge "Seven lives to repay our country".\*\*

The barbarous attack of the enemy is being continued. Even though the enemy has occupied only a corner of SAIPAN we are dying without avail under the violent shelling and bombing. Whether we attack or whether we stay where we are, there is only death. However, in death there is life. We must utilize this opportunity to exalt true Japanese manhood. I will advance with those who remain to deliver still another blow to the American Devils, and leave my bones on SAIPAN as a bulwark of the Pacific.

As it says in the "SENJINKUN" (Battle Ethics), "I will never suffer the disgrace of being taken alive," and "I will offer up the courage of my soul and calmly rejoice in living by the eternal principle."

C O N F I D E N T I A L

NORTHERN TROOPS AND LANDING FORCE MEMORANDUM NUMBER 15-44. (Cont'd).

Here I pray with you for the eternal life of the Emperor and the welfare of the country and I advance to seek out the enemy.

Follow me!"

\*\* "Seven lives to repay our country." was July, 1944  
the password designated by the Bn. Order  
(26 June) setting the attack that re- C.O. NORTHERN MARIANAS  
sulted in a breakthru from NAFUTAN Point. DEFENSE FORCE  
C.O. DISTRICT FLEET

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL HOLLAND M. SMITH:

G. B. ERSKINE,  
BrigGen., U. S. Marine Corps,  
Chief of Staff.

DISTRIBUTION: COM5THFLT (1) Army Garrison Forces (15)  
CTF 52 (1) XXIV Corps Artillery (10)  
CTF 56 (1) 27th InfDiv(USA) (20)  
CTG 52.2 (1) War Diary (4)  
CG, 2dMarDiv (20) All General & Special Stf Sect (1)  
CG, 4thMarDiv (20) F I L E.

O F F I C I A L:

*R. L. Mansfield*  
R. L. MANSFIELD,  
Major, USMC.,  
Adjutant, NTLF.

- 2 -

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Ser.00216-3

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS,  
NORTHERN TROOPS & LANDING FORCE,  
IN THE FIELD.

From:  
To:

AC of S, G-2.  
Distribution List.

14 July, 1944.

Regraded Unclassified

071/271  
Ser.00216-3

HEADQUARTERS,  
NORTHERN TROOPS & LANDING FORCE,  
IN THE FIELD.

SECRET

14 July, 1944.

From: AC of S, G-2.  
To: Distribution List.

Subject: Captured Japanese officer's personal account of "The Last Days of Lieutenant General SAITO".

1. The following is a translation from a captured Japanese officer's personal account of the last days of Lieutenant General SAITO, the Commanding General of all Army forces on SAIPAN. The personal story of this officer who participated in the counter-attack against our forces the morning of 7 July, 1944, reveals a vivid picture of events leading up to the attack that occurred on the above date.

"I don't remember the exact date too well, because of the intense bombardment and the naval shelling, but about the time that the Field Headquarters moved stealthily in the middle of the night from among the mountains in CHACHA to the fourth position (4 kilometers into the mountains due EAST of the NORTHEASTERN limit of GARAPAN Town), the 135th Infantry, by now robbed of the summit of TAPOTCHAU, was chased far into the TALAFOFO area by the enemy forces along the eastern sea coast.

"At the new Field Headquarters a conference was quickly held to decide how to extricate themselves quickly from this predicament.

"Some officers proposed that 'we should die gloriously in battle with a final charge now, in this place'.

"However, General SAITO ordered 'Because there are many military units which were left scattered on the field of battle, gather these all together and construct positions from here toward the NORTH in the narrowest portion of SAIPAN Island. You must chew the AMERICAN forces to pieces!'

"At this point the staff determined those positions on maps. They fell in a line running from NORTH of TANAPAG through HILL 205.2 to TALAFOFO.

"However, in order to carry out the construction of that defensive line, they had to gather picks and shovels. They were all in BANADERU.

"I did not think that the plan, as General SAITO conceived it, would work under these conditions.

"However, before the positions were completed, the enemy was upon our front lines and we couldn't spare even one man as a runner during that day. This was 2 July. Because our lines of

Subject: "The Last Days of Lt.Gen. SAITO (cont'd)

14Jul44

communication were broken all control had to be carried out at night. Moreover, under these conditions of retreat, it is impossible to control the situation except at night.

"Here is an example of that.

"The 135th Infantry drew back to rear positions a day before they were supposed to. When the Division Headquarters learned of this it was already too late to stop it. Because of this, the strategic plan of the Division was ruined. That is to say, the Naval forces and the portion of the Army forces which had been fighting bravely and stubbornly around GARAPAN Town were cut off from a patch of withdrawal. The 136th Infantry and other Army units which were on the EAST slope of TAPOTCHAU were isolated. And what aggravated the condition most and was most bothersome, was that we could not transport back to the new positions the provisions to halt the enemy advances.

"We did not stay long in this fourth headquarters. Caught in the concentration of Naval gunfire the wounded and dead continued to increase.

"We stayed at the fifth headquarters only 2 days. On about 3 July (I'm not sure of exact date) we moved to the sixth and final headquarters.

"This area is generally called THE VALLEY OF HELL and we felt that this was an unpleasant hint and suggestion concerning our future.

"The intelligence which managed to reach me at this last place was all depressing.

"On 4 July, an enemy unit appeared on the other side of the valley and fired at us with heavy automatic weapons. At that time I felt we were entirely surrounded and had lost all hope.

"General SAITO was feeling very poorly because, for several days he had neither eaten nor slept well and was overstrained. He was wearing a long beard and was a pitiful sight.

"That morning that very valley received intense bombardment (I don't know whether it was Naval gunfire or pursuing fire from artillery, but it was the second most intense bombardment I had been in.) It was so fierce that I thought maybe the cave where the headquarters was would be buried. At this time the Staff and Lt.Gen. SAITO received shrapnel wounds.

"I felt that the final hour was drawing near.

"Lt.Gen. SAITO called his Chief of Staff and held a secret conference of his unit commanders. The contents of that conference

were never revealed to us but nevertheless it was undoubtedly aimed at taking a final action in realizing the end in true Japanese Army fashion. This final decisive action had to be simply one of two courses. First, to remain as we were and starve to death or secondly, to make a last attack and fight to the finish. Of course, the Division Commanding General and Chief of Staff chose the latter. However, in order to carry out the latter there were many difficulties to be encountered. First of all, to what extent could the soldiers be assembled? Even if they could be assembled, only a few could be supplied with weapons. Furthermore, it would take two days and two nights to assemble them and issue the orders. Whereupon, the evening of 6 July or 7 July was decided upon. Having lost the freedom of maneuverability there was only one road left open, a last all out desperate attack. There was no hope for success. The final order and instructions were written up and undoubtedly resulted in the order to carry out the forementioned ceremonial action. The opinion of Vice Admiral NAGUMO was probably received but even though he was in the vicinity there was no communication between the two headquarters. Under these conditions the final plan was drawn up. However, since the fighting on SAIPAN Island was under the command of SAITO, combining both Army and Navy forces, this was quite proper.

"Officer messengers took a period of four days and nights to disseminate orders to the unit commanders in various places.

"After issuing the orders, it seemed that the work of headquarters was finished. Everybody put his personal belongings in order. By the kindness of the headquarters cook a farewell feast for General SAITO was prepared for the evening of the 5th. However this consisted of only sake and canned crab meat.

"Why did they have this last farewell feast? Since General SAITO, because of his age and the exhausted condition of his body, would not participate in the attack of the 7th and had decided to commit suicide in the cave, it was fated. 10 A.M. 6 July!! This time was set by the General himself as the final hour. I had to be up at the front that morning in a liaison capacity so I was unable to witness the final hour.

"I think that it happened in the following manner.

"Cleaning of a spot on the rock himself, SAITO sat down. Facing the misty EAST saying 'TENNO HEIKA! BANZAI!' (Hurrah for the Emperor!), he drew his own blood first with his own sword and then his adjutant shot him in the head with a pistol.

"When I returned to the headquarters from my duties, (10 P.M. 6 July) they had already cremated the General's body. He had probably said 'It makes little difference (in this battle) whether I die today or tomorrow, so I will die first! I will meet my staff in YASUKUNI Shrine!' 3 A.M. 7 July!

SECRET

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Subject: "Last Days of Lt.Gen. SAITO" (cont'd)  
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14Jul44

"This was the time ordered for the commencement of the attack.

"Because the units were confused and mixed as described previously, from the middle of the night of 7 July, we set out for MATANSHA to gather the troops. However, as usual, we were shelled enroute.

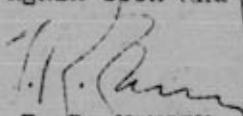
"At 0330, the troops who were able to gather at MATANSHA, the non-combatant troops of the headquarters, all together totaled barely 600. Many had no weapons. The total participants I would estimate at about 1500, mixed Army and Navy!

"The Battle commences!

"We had only one machine gun but it kept firing bravely, making night into day! About the time the gun was silenced the whole attack came to an untimely end, fading like the dew on the dawn of the 7th.

"7 July! This is a significant day in the war. This was the day marking the end of the fighting on SAIPAN; the day when the brave officers and men of the Japanese Army followed General SAITO to his end.

"I will attack the enemy alone again soon and join my brave comrades!"

  
T. R. YANCEY,  
Lt. Col., GSC,  
AC of S, G-2.

-----  
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SECRET

*to Adm. br. ms  
file.  
WHL*  
SECRETCOPY NO. 45J.C.S. 713/4

(LIMITED DISTRIBUTION)

12 March 1944508Pages 36 - 38, incl.JSSC 19  
JCS 386 Series  
JFS 219/D  
JSSC 21  
JMT 30  
JCS 713 SeriesJOINT CHIEFS OF STAFFFUTURE OPERATIONS IN THE PACIFICNote by the Secretaries

1. At their 152d Meeting, 12 March 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff amended the message to the Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, and the Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, contained in J.C.S. 713/2, and directed that it be dispatched.
2. The message as amended and approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and dispatched to the Commanders indicated is circulated herewith.

A. J. McFARLAND,  
E. D. GRAVES, JR.,  
Joint Secretariat.

S E C R E T

FROM: Joint Chiefs of Staff.

TO: CINCPOA  
CINCSOWESPAC

INFO: COMSOPAC

1. With reference to our dispatch of 2 March (4785 to CINCSWPAC, 729 to COMGECENPAC) the Joint Chiefs of Staff have further decided that the most feasible approach to the FORMOSA-LUZON-CHINA Area is by way of MARIANAS-CAROLINES-PALAU-MINDANAO area, and that the control of the MARIANAS-CAROLINES-PALAU area is essential to the projection of our forces into the former area, and their subsequent effective employment therefrom. Examination leads us to the decision that effective lodgment in the former area will be attained by the following main courses of action;

a. Cancellation of FOREARM. Complete the isolation of the RABAU-L-KAVIENG area with the minimum commitment of forces.

b. Early completion of Manus occupation and development as an air and fleet base.

c. Occupation of Hollandia by CinC SOWESPAC, target date 15 April 1944. The objective is the establishment of heavy bombardment aircraft for preliminary air bombardment of the Palaus and neutralization of western New Guinea-Halmahera area.

d. Establish control of Marianas-Carolines-Palau Area by POA forces -

(1) By neutralization of TRUK.

(2) By occupation of the southern Marianas, target date 15 June. The objective is to secure control of sea communications through the Central Pacific by isolating and neutralizing the Carolines and by the establishment of sea and air bases for operations against Japanese sea routes and long range air attacks against the Japanese homeland.

S E C R E T

(3) Occupation of the Palaus by POA forces, target date 15 September. The objective is to extend the control of the eastern approaches to the Philippines and Formosa, and to establish a fleet and air base and forward staging area for the support of operations against Mindanao, Formosa and China.

e. Occupation of Mindanao by SOWESPAC forces, supported by the Pacific Fleet, target date 15 November. The objective is establishment of air forces to reduce and contain Japanese forces in the Philippines preparatory to a further advance to Formosa either directly or via Luzon, and to conduct air strikes against enemy installations in the N.E.I.

f. Occupation of Formosa, target date 15 February 1945, or occupation of Luzon should such operations prove necessary prior to the move on Formosa, target date 15 February 1945. Planning responsibilities as follows: Formosa - CINCPAA; Luzon - CINCSOWESPAC.

2. Action addressees submit to Joint Chiefs of Staff and to each other at earliest practicable date outline operation plans to support the foregoing concept.

3. We direct that CINCSWPA:

a. Cancel FOREARM operation and complete the isolation of the Rebaul-Kavieng area with the minimum commitment of forces.

b. Expedite occupation and development of the Admiralties as a base for -

(1) SWPA air forces to complete the neutralization of Rebaul and Kavieng, and assist in the neutralization of Truk and Palau.

(2) POA air forces to assist in the neutralization of Truk and Palau.

(3) Units of the United States Fleet as required by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

c. Should additional air base facilities be required, Emirau and Mussau should be occupied and developed for this purpose.

SECRET

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(2) POA air forces to assist in the neutralization of Truk and Palau.

(3) Units of the United States Fleet as required by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

c. Should additional air base facilities be required, Emirau and Musseu should be occupied and developed for this purpose.

Regraded Unclassified

S E C R E T

d. Occupy Hollandia, target date 15 April. Forces available are those assigned your area plus Pacific Ocean Area forces allocated for FOREARM-MERCANTILE, excluding those Marine units assigned for these operations, fast carrier groups and old battleships. All Pacific Fleet APA, AKA, AGC, allocated for FOREARM-MERCANTILE-ABSTRACT will be returned to Guadalcanal or other designated SOPAC ports and released to CINCPAC not later than 5 May.

Pacific Fleet combatant vessels including Cardiv 22 and 24 with screens will be released by you and returned to CINCPAC control not later than 5 May.

e. Following Hollandia, with available forces conduct operations along New Guinea coast and such other operations as may be feasible in preparation for support of the Palau operation and the assault on Mindanao.

4. We direct that CINCPAC:

a. Institute and intensify to greatest practicable degree aerial bombardment of the Carolines from bases in Marshalls and Admiralties in order to hasten the neutralization of Truk and the other islands of this group. Conduct carrier strikes against Marianas, Palaus, Carolines, and other profitable targets.

b. Provide cover for the occupation of Hollandia and other operations in the Southwest Pacific Area.

c. Occupy the Southern Marianas target date 15 June, and establish land-based aircraft, VLR bases and secondary naval facilities.

d. Occupy the Marianas-Palau line.

5. We direct that CINCPAC and CINCSWPA or their representatives confer and prepare plans for the coordinated and mutual support of the operations ordered in paragraphs 3 and 4.

6. With reference to the forces of the Southwest Pacific and Pacific Ocean Areas, a redeployment is now under way and completion will be expedited.

A16/Pacific  
COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

**SECRET**

February 16, 1944

Memorandum for the President.

Via: Naval Aide. ✓

Subject: Radio and Press Predictions of Pacific Operations.

Reference: (a) President's Memorandum re subject dated February 15th.  
(b) Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to President.

1. Reference (b) concerns itself with security matters which will be presented to you by Admiral Leahy. It includes measures (which the Joint Chiefs of Staff propose for your consideration) which are pertinent to the situation dealt with in your memorandum (reference (a)).

R. J. KING.

SECRET

NAVY DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON D. C.  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
UNITED STATES FLEET

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*Cew*

SECRET

SECRET

February 15, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Subject: Radio and Press Predictions of  
Pacific Operations.

1. It has been brought to my attention that the Columbia Broadcasting Company at 8:00 a.m. this morning announced the heavy bombing of ENIWETOK and predicted an early landing and occupation there.

2. I would be interested to know how you and Admiral Nimitz view such conjecture by radio announcers who have greater opportunity to form an opinion by observation and conversation than has the enemy.

3. Do you think any action should be taken by me or by Nimitz to govern for the future?

F. D. R.

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A16-8000

~~SECRET~~  
~~SECRET~~

February 3, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT.

The early and unexpected success in the Marshall Islands has made it possible to speed up the tempo of the whole Central Pacific campaign.

Numerous exchanges of messages and formulation of plans are at present in progress with the highlights as follows:

- (a) It is proposed to carry out a carrier strike on TRUK as soon as possible. Three of the four Carrier Groups as organized for the MARSHALLS will approach TRUK from the North-eastward with the fourth group covering from the Westward of ENIWETOK. Admiral Halsey is furnishing photo reconnaissance as soon as possible. Fuel and ammunition are apparently available at KWAJOLEIN.
- (b) It is further proposed to proceed immediately with the capture and occupation of ENIWETOK utilizing the forces which have been allocated for the capture of MAJURO plus the Corps reserve which was not used at all. Rear Admiral Hill would be in command of this Attack Group.
- (c) It may be necessary to interchange the order in which the two operations mentioned above will be undertaken but the strike on TRUK is desired prior to the capture of ENIWETOK in the fear that the latter operation may cause surface units to evacuate from TRUK.
- (d) It appears that carrying out these two operations at the present time may delay the scheduled operations in the NEW GUINEA-NEW IRELAND AREA, the target date for which is April 1st. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have granted permission for this slight delay if it proves necessary.

It appears more than ever that the MARSHALLS operation is most gratifying to all concerned.

Very respectfully,

CHESTER C. WOOD.

SECRET

WH. A16-3 (Pacific)

COMINCH FILE

A16-3(1)

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UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

**SECRET**

August 13, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT - Via Admiral Leahy.

Subject: Reinforcements to the Pacific.

1. The reported loss of 3 of our CA's in the TULAGI area plus indications that the enemy are massing forces for strong action in the general area of RABAU, with the probable intention of driving us out of the TULAGI area, have impelled the following changes in disposition of U.S. Naval forces:

- (a) SOUTH DAKOTA plus 3 DD's to transit Canal about Aug. 20th.
- (b) WASHINGTON, when ready (after test firing of main turrets following repairs thereto) plus 3 DD's to transit Canal about Aug. 30th.
- (c) JUNEAU to join SOUTH DAKOTA detachment if time allows, otherwise to join WASHINGTON detachment.
- (d) WICHITA and 2 DD's to sail for U.K. to U.S. as soon as may be. TUSCALCOOSA and 2 DD's to come home upon completion of British-assigned task involving trip to KOLA INLET. These two ships will be made ready for possible transfer to Pacific.

N.B. - The arrangement was that the above ships (Task Force 99) were to continue at disposal of British CinC Home Fleet until August Convoy to MALTA had been run, i. e. - until about the middle of August.

2. MASSACHUSETTS reported for duty July 28th - is now shaking down - estimated ready for service end of September. INDIANA reports for duty Sept. 1st - estimated date of completion of shakedown - ready for service - November 1st.

*E. J. King*  
E. J. KING

Copies:

Adm. Leahy  
Vice CNO  
Staff Circ.  
Desk Copy

*Mr Terry*

*In our files  
JLmcC*

*Capt. Inclusion*

Cincpac File No.

A16/MIDWAY/(90)

Serial 02463

**SECRET**

SECRET

*copy room*

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

lh

AUG 8 1942

From: Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
To: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.

Subject: Battle of MIDWAY, Second Supplementary Report.

Enclosures: (A) Comsubpac FF12-10/A16-3 Ser.0867  
dated 31 July 1942.  
(B) Copy of Comsubpac FF12-10/A16-3 Ser.0737  
dated 28 June 1942.

1. Enclosure (A) completes the reports of Task Force Commanders on the Battle of Midway. Enclosure (B) contains comments of Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet, on extracts from War Diaries pertaining to the Midway action. The Diaries themselves have been submitted separately.

2. Our forces should have destroyed many enemy ships on 5 June. A foremost cause for their not doing so was TAMBOR's faulty reporting of contact along with her overcautious maneuvers for the four hours she was in sight of Japanese vessels west of MIDWAY beginning 0215 5 June (Plus 12). The TAMBOR passed up an unexcelled opportunity to torpedo enemy war ships. Far wider in its consequences was her failure to report course and speed of enemy ships sighted and to give amplifying reports of enemy movements. When the contact report was received of "many unidentified ships" at 89 miles from MIDWAY, the assumption by Task Force Commanders and this Command was that the landing was being attempted. As a result, submarines were retired toward MIDWAY and Task Force SIXTEEN closed the Island to oppose the landing. Both of these movements reduced chances for attack on fleeing enemy ships during the fifth.

3. Two other submarines had opportunities that might have resulted in damage to enemy ships had they been pursued as resolutely as the NAUTILUS did her contact. Above everything else, a submarine is an offensive weapon that must be employed aggressively and boldly.

Cincpac File No.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

A16/MIDWAY/(90)

1h

Serial 02463

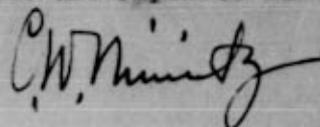
**SECRET**

SECRET

Subject: Battle of MIDWAY, Second Supplementary Report.(Cont'd)

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4. Although there were some critical mistakes by individual Commanding Officers, as a group the submarines were handled well, supplied important information, and filled an essential need in the strategy of the operations by providing both a secondary scouting and a strong close in striking force. They might well have played the decisive role in the battle had the Japanese fleet pushed in to MIDWAY and attempted a landing.



C. W. NIMITZ

1942 AUG 15 14 41  
8 272  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
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REFER TO NO.

FF12-10/A16-3

Serial 0867

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET

Es

SUBMARINES, PACIFIC FLEET

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,

31 JUL 1942

S-E-C-R-E-T

From: The Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet.  
To : The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Subject: Battle of Midway - Submarines report of.  
Reference: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920, Article 712.  
Enclosure: (A) Position of submarines at daylight, June 4.  
(B) Position of submarines at daylight, June 5.  
(C) Position of submarines at daylight, June 6.  
(D) Position of submarines in immediate vicinity  
of Midway at daylight, June 6.  
(E) Position of submarines at daylight, June 7.  
(F) Position of submarines in immediate vicinity  
of Midway at daylight, June 7.

1. Submarines were organized into three groups for the Battle of Midway as follows:

(a) Task Group G 7.1:

7.1.1 CACHALOT	7.1.7 GROUPE
7.1.2 FLYING FISH	7.1.8 DOLPHIN
7.1.3 TAMBOR	7.1.9 GATO
7.1.4 TROUT	7.1.10 CUTTLEFISH
7.1.5 GRAYLING	7.1.11 GUDGEON
7.1.6 NAUTILUS	7.1.12 GRENADIER

(b) Task Group G 7.2:

7.2.1 MARWHALE  
7.2.2 PLUNGER  
7.2.3 TRIGGER

(c) Task Group G 7.3:

7.3.1 TARPON  
7.3.2 PIKE  
7.3.3 FINBACK  
7.3.4 GROWLER

REFER TO NO.

FF12-10/A16-3

**UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET**

Ee

Serial 0867

**SUBMARINES, PACIFIC FLEET**

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,

31 JUL 1942

S-E-C-R-E-T

Subject: Battle of Midway - Submarines report of.

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In addition to the above, the GREENLING, DRUM, POLLACK, TUNA, POMPANO and PORPOISE, enroute Pearl from patrol stations, were supplied information on the estimated location of Japanese units and ordered to attempt to intercept these units as they retreated. Patrol stations ordered for Task Groups G 7.1, G 7.2 and G 7.3 at daylight, June 4, are shown on enclosure (A).

2. The submarines assigned to Task Groups G 7.1, G 7.2 and G 7.3 departed from Pearl Harbor and stations they had been patrolling at various times. All submarines were on station by the morning of June 3.

3. Task Group G 7.1 was ordered to patrol a line perpendicular to the median of their assigned sectors, except for the CACHALOT, FLYING FISH and CUTTLEFISH which were to conduct station patrol. Task Group G 7.1 was ordered to conduct periscope patrol during daylight and be ready to surface and chase the enemy upon receipt of contact report. Task Group G 7.2 was ordered to conduct submerged station patrol and move the line or chase the enemy when ordered. Task Group G 7.3 was ordered to conduct station submerged patrol and to move the line or chase the enemy when ordered. All groups were ordered to disregard station boundaries when in contact with the enemy. Task Group G 7.1 was informed that no U.S. surface forces, except PT boats, would operate west of Midway prior to enemy contact.

4. On June 1, notified Task Group G 7.1 that our own forces, including carriers, might operate westward of meridian of Midway. Previous orders were modified as follows on verbal request of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet: submarines of Task Group G 7.1, less CACHALOT and FLYING FISH, were directed to operate within circle of 20 miles of mid-point of their sector chord; also, submarines were informed they would be notified by the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, if it was desired for them to leave their assigned stations and CUTTLEFISH was ordered to continue submerged patrol on assigned station.

5. On the night of June 3, sent information bulletin to all submarines reporting Japanese attack on Dutch Harbor and the sighting of a large Japanese force 700 miles west of Midway.

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6. At 0700 VW, June 4, received message from CUTLEFISH stating that she was trailing a tanker bearing 260°T, distance 650 miles from Midway. At 0715 ordered CUTLEFISH to continue trailing. At 0750 informed TUNA, en-route Pearl from patrol station off the Empire, that enemy submarine tender was reported servicing submarines 700 miles west of Midway.

7. At 0940 VW, June 4, notified all submarines of the sighting of the enemy main body northwest of Midway and gave them the position, course and speed of the enemy. Directed all submarines of Task Group G 7.1, less CACHALOT, FLYING FISH and CUTLEFISH to close the enemy.

8. At 1900 VW, June 4, received a report from the NAUTILUS that she had made three torpedo hits on a SORYU type carrier at 0200 GCT, June 5, which was left sinking, and that she had been depth charged by cruisers, but not damaged. At 2100 ordered NAUTILUS to investigate burning ship reported bearing 320°T, distance 170 miles from Midway.

9. After consultation with the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and believing that a landing attempt by the forces proceeding toward Midway from the west was still possible, submarines were ordered to form on the 100 mile circle from Midway by dawn, June 5. Positions are shown as enclosure (B). In addition, Task Group G 7.2 was ordered to proceed west at best speed until further orders.

10. During the evening of June 4, the FULTON was ordered to proceed to the rescue of survivors of damaged surface vessels. The FULTON departed Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, at 2207 VW.

11. At 0630 VW, June 5, received a report from the TAMBOR of many unidentified surface ships sighted at 1417 GCT in position Latitude 28-23 N., Longitude 179-05 W. After consultation with the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and believing that some of the enemy forces were still attempting to get in position to make a landing on Midway, at 0845 directed Task Group G 7.1 to a radius of 5 miles from Midway, remaining in present assigned sectors. At 0900 another dispatch from

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TAMBOR reported two MCGMI cruisers, damaged, proceeding west at 17 knots from position 272<sup>OT</sup>., 115 miles from Midway. Later, at 1153, ordered Task Group G 7.2 to proceed to stations on 12 mile circle from Midway via points 100 miles north of Midway in assigned sectors. At 1159 ordered Task Group G 7.1 to take station on 12 mile circle from Midway.

12. At 1330 notified Task Group G 7.1 that Task Force Sixteen might cross submarine areas pursuing Orange Units. At 1412 notified both Task Group G 7.1 and G 7.2 to be careful not to attack units of Task Force Sixteen and Seventeen.

13. Having received report of a damaged enemy BB circling in position 264<sup>OT</sup>., distance 125 miles from Midway, at 1454 ordered TAMBOR, TROUT and GRAYLING to proceed to that position and sink it - TAMBOR five miles south and GRAYLING five miles north of position indicated.

14. Since the locations and intentions of the enemy were not yet clear and the possibility existed of a raiding force proceeding toward Oahu, at 1517 ordered Task Group G 7.3 to take station on 250 mile circle northwest of Oahu in locations shown on enclosure (C).

15. At 2031 GROUPEER, FLYING FISH and GUDGEON were ordered to positions bearing 310<sup>OT</sup>., distance 200 miles from Midway, shown on enclosure (C), to search for two BB, 3 CA, about 10 DD and 2 burning CV reported in that position. At the same time, ordered remainder of Task Group G 7.1 and Task Group G 7.2 to take station on 12 mile circle from Midway in positions shown on enclosure (D). CUTTLEFISH ordered to search for stragglers in present position.

16. At 0715 VW, July 6, ordered TAMBOR, TROUT and GRAYLING to continue west in search of the enemy. At 0755 informed all submarines that fuel was available at Midway. At 0756 TRIGGER reported being aground in Eastern reef, Midway. At 0925 TRIGGER reported being afloat with no apparent damage and proceeding to assigned station. At 1044 ordered FLYING FISH, GROUPEER and GUDGEON to keep going on prescribed route another 300 miles. At 1125 directed Task Group G 7.3 to return Pearl.

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At 1135 ordered GATO, GRENADEIER and NARWHAL to return Pearl. At 1343 cancelled previous instructions directing Task Group G 7.3 to return Pearl. At 1400 informed CUTLEFISH that two enemy CA and one DD were in position Lat. 28-55 N., Long 175-11 E., course 215, speed 15. At 1427 directed TAMBOR, TROUT and GRAYLING to intercept same unit and informed them that CUTLEFISH was attempting to intercept them. At 1525 directed CUTLEFISH to proceed Pearl if no contact made prior to dark. At 1550 directed FLYING FISH, GROUPEE and GUDGEON to retire toward Midway if no contact made before dark. At 2115 informed PORPOISE and GREENLING that two enemy DD and two CA were in Latitude 28-55 N., Longitude 175-11 E., speed 15, course 215<sup>0</sup>T. and directed them to intercept the enemy. At 2130 directed TAMBOR, TROUT and GRAYLING to continue search; directed FLYING FISH, GROUPEE and GUDGEON to continue on courses 310<sup>0</sup>T., 300<sup>0</sup>T. and 320<sup>0</sup>T., respectively, and as a precaution against a landing attempt by a small unlocated unit, directed remainder of Task Group G 7.1 to form on 25 mile circle from Midway in positions shown on enclosure (F).

17. At 0130 VW, June 7, directed CUTLEFISH to proceed and sink apparently abandoned BB in Latitude 28-55 N., Longitude 173-08 E. At 0155 received report from GRAYLING that she had been bombed by three fortresses out of a group of twelve in Latitude 27-35 N., Longitude 174-38 E. at 0440 GCT, June 7; no damage received from near misses. About this same time received report that Army fortresses had bombed an enemy cruiser which sank in fifteen seconds. A later check of times and positions indicated the two reports concerned the same incident. At 0300 GROUPEE reported closing burning carriers on June 4, but not able to attack; bombed by planes and HIBIKI class destroyer for 12 hours; one air bank leaking; fired two circular torpedoes, one explosion, no more depth charges; on June 5 lost depth control and went to 600 feet, no apparent damage on later dive to 200 feet; fired torpedo at periscope at 2035 GCT, June 6, no hit. Approximate positions of submarines at daylight, June 7, are shown on enclosure (E). At 1200 ordered TUNA to return Pearl, searching for BB that CUTLEFISH was also attempting to locate. At 1430 directed TROUT to proceed east through Latitude 29-00 N., Longitude 168-E., TAMBOR on track 30 miles north and GRAYLING on track 30 miles south. At 1435 directed DRUM to proceed Pearl. At 1440

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directed Task Group G 7.3 to proceed Pearl. At 1555 ordered TRIGGER to proceed Pearl. At 1649 notified FLYING FISH, GROUPER, and GUDGEON that Commander-in-Chief, Japanese First Air Fleet, was in unknown ship, Latitude 35 N., Longitude 172-25 E. At 1520 ordered CACHALOT, NAUTILUS, DOLPHIN and PLUNGER to enter Midway and prepare for patrol. At 2125 TAMBOR reported: green flares 263<sup>OT.</sup>, 460 miles from Midway between 1300 and 1430 GCT, June 7; sighted unidentified flyboat (not Catalina) at 1735 GCT, 262<sup>OT.</sup>, 530 miles from Midway; sighted cruiser scout plane 264<sup>OT.</sup>, 545 miles from Midway at 1830 GCT; attacked by aircraft at 1920 GCT, 14 miles further west. At 2130 CUTTLEFISH reported being bombed by plane with Japanese markings, 0100 GCT, June 8, 270<sup>OT.</sup>, 420 miles from Midway. At 2131 ordered CUTTLEFISH to continue search in morning for abandoned BB and if not located to return Pearl. At 2330 ordered FLYING FISH and GROUPER to return Midway and prepare for patrol; ordered GUDGEON to return to Pearl.

18. At 1532 VW, June 8, FULTON moored at Berth S-12, Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, bringing to port 2025 survivors of surface ships engaged in battle of Midway. At 2345 VW, June 8, directed TROUT and TUNA to pass through large area covered with wreckage reported at Latitude 28-52 N., Longitude 173-18 E., and to pick up and bring to Pearl any material that would identify ship or furnish other information.

19. At 0200 VW, June 9, received report from TUNA of large amount of oil four miles wide from 16 miles west to 8 miles east of point she was directed to pass through. At 0820 VW, June 9, informed GRAYLING of an enemy unit in Latitude 28-00 N., Longitude 170-40 E. on June 6, southerly course, speed four knots and directed her to investigate. At 0948 VW, June 9, directed GREENLING and PORPOISE to proceed Pearl. At 1100 received message of praise and appreciation of submarine services during Midway engagement from the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. At 2246 directed TAMBOR, TROUT and GRAYLING to proceed Pearl. At 2330 TROUT reported search of area resulted in two Japanese prisoners suffering from four days exposure, pieces of ship's boat, one swab and sample of oil sludge.

20. At 0030 VW, June 10, TUNA reported three red flares in Latitude 28-55 N., Longitude 175-06 E.

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21. All reports from and orders to submarines were sent to the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, for information.

22. The success of the submarines in this engagement depended primarily on adequate and reliable communications. Submarines were directed to stand continuous watch on 26.1 kos. from NPM, using the submerged loop when conducting periscope patrols. The distances involved made reception by this means most unreliable. Nearly all submarines used their periscope antennae when possible and were thus able to receive nearly all messages immediately. All important messages were rerun on the night schedules of NPM. To control such a large number of submarines, many of which require special orders, a separate transmitter under the exclusive control of this command would be invaluable. One communication difficulty experienced was caused by the fact that some submarines were equipped with CSP 889 while others had only strip ciphers, requiring the paraphrasing and separate enciphering of many messages. General information messages were usually long and had to be enciphered using a strip cipher available to all submarines.

23. The submarine is primarily an offensive weapon and should usually be employed only on offensive missions. This particular engagement, where the known objective covered a very small area, represents a particular case where submarines may be employed efficiently as a defensive weapon. It is believed that the submarines would have given a very good account of themselves if a landing had been attempted. Submarines are under a great handicap when chasing damaged enemy units within the range of our own aircraft since it is often necessary for them to submerge to avoid attack, thus greatly reducing their mobility.

24. There were no personnel casualties in the submarine force during the engagement.

25. Material casualties were very minor, mostly from bomb and depth attack, except for small amount of underwater damage received by TRIGGER on grounding.

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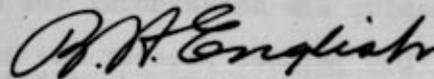
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26. The Commanding Officer of the NAUTILUS has been recommended for the award of the Navy Cross.

27. All members of my staff under my personal observation carried out their duties in a most creditable manner.



R. H. ENGLISH.

End (A)

To: \_\_\_\_\_ P  
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CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet.  
 To : Submarines, Pacific Fleet.  
 Subject: Battle of Midway - Extracts from War Diaries.

1. The following extracts from various war diaries covering the period of the Battle of Midway, with comments by the Type Commander, are forwarded for information and guidance:

- (a) "Sighted large heavy tops of two vessels bearing 020° T. on course 250° T., turned to normal approach course and studied them. Appearance indicated two Japanese BB's similar to HARUNA with heavy forward tower, one stack close behind and stick mast aft. Dove to attack at full speed. - - - - - Closed on normal approach course for 45 minutes, did not sight targets again."

Comments by Type Commander:

Under the circumstances, it is considered that this submarine should have developed the contact further while still on the surface.

- (b) Having conducted a chase on a heavily laden tanker and missed out on an attack because the submarine was sighted in the moonlight before obtaining an attack position, submarine reported "Started chase all over again but was forced to dive by approaching daylight before we could attack. Sent contact report and commenced trailing submerged, changing course to north to remain between tanker and main body."

Comments by Type Commander:

Trailing submerged a ship with the probable speed of this tanker is considered to be futile, especially since there was no enemy activity indicated at this point. A valuable vessel such as this, upon which the future operations of the main body must depend so much, should have been kept in sight as well as possible by trailing on the surface, if no opportunity to attack occurred, and further contact reports should have been sent in order that planes could be directed to the tanker for her destruction.

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(c) "Encounter With Japanese CAs and DDs.

At 0215 in position 279 T, 89 miles from MIDWAY on course 185 T speed 18.5 knots, weather clear, sea calm, sighted the loom of four large ships on the horizon distributed across our bow. Estimated range 3 miles. Estimated angle on the bow 45 port.

"Ignorant of the location and exact composition of our own surface forces and forewarned that they might cross the submarine area during the night, we turned to starboard (at 0217) to shadow these ships from the westward (it being just after moonrise) and try to identify them by silhouette. While turning three other ships were sighted to the southwestward with small angle on the bow. We put these astern of us, steadying on course 030 T. We maintained speed 18 knots. They drew slowly to starboard. At 0229, having lost contact, we changed course to the left to 270 T. and at 0234 again to the left to 180 T. Regained contact at 0238, the ships bearing southwestward and heading northward. Changed course to 000 T to parallel them. At 0251 they altered course to the left and we came left with them to 310 T., and seven minutes later to 270 T., trying to get them in the moonstream. At 0306 lost contact and came left to 250 T. Regained contact at 0311, with the ships in south edge of the moonstream, to the eastward on a northwesterly course. We paralled them on course 310 T. then but lost contact shortly afterward. At 0319 began altering course to the southward to regain contact and at 0325 steadied on course 200 T. At 0342 regained contact with two ships, apparently maneuvering on southerly courses, bearing still to the eastward. Changed course to 235 T., trying to gain bearing to the southward before daybreak.

"We were still uncertain as to whether or not the ships were enemy. We judged that those in sight were destroyers and that those first contacted were larger ships, probably heavy cruisers. We estimated that these latter were beyond the destroyers to the eastward now.

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(c) (continued)

"We had transmitted a radio report of the contact with 'many unidentified ships', giving their position, and received a receipt from MIDWAY for it at 0306 but if anyone knew from that report that the ships could not be units of our own surface forces he did not give us information.

"At 0412, with visibility range increasing as dawn approached, the enemy character of the ships was definitely established when the near one turned to head directly for us, challenging 'XJ' by flashing light. We submerged immediately and rigged for depth charge attack. Estimated range at time of diving was 4000 yards.

"At 0437 having been unable to detect propeller noises by sound, made a periscope exposure and sighted two MOGAMI cruisers. The near one bore 109 T. distant 9000 yards and the far one 105 T. distant 13,000 yards. The far cruiser was on course about 265 T., the near one on about 235 T. Each ship was doing a great deal of signalling with a brilliant all-directional blinker light at the foremast-head.

"This latter fact indicated (a) that the contact at 0342 was not with destroyers but with two of the 'large ships' sighted at 0215, (b) that their larger silhouettes had caused us to underestimate their distance when 'challenged', (c) that we had not been challenged at all, nor sighted, but that (d) instead the two ships had begun using the all-directional light for maneuvering signals shortly before daybreak and (e) that they had been maneuvering at considerable distance to the eastward of us while we were awaiting depth charge attack.

"Even so, we were in fair initial position for an attack on the far cruiser provided he held his course, as we were less than 6000 yards from his track. He apparently followed the other cruiser on a jog to the southwestward, however, for at 0458, after we had been running at full speed for twenty minutes on course 200 T., the distance to his track had opened to 8000 yards and his angle on

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(c) (continued)

the bow increased to 60 starboard. Both cruisers then were on course about 270 T. During the next twenty minutes more signalling and maneuvering ensued and at 0504, just after a periscope observation, we heard the sound of a distant explosion. With renewed hope we again made a long run at full speed but at 0516 there was no improvement in the situation.

"It was noted before the explosion that the trailing cruiser had about forty feet of her bow missing. Her speed by plot was 17 knots.

"At last observation, 0602, both ships were heading west, distant about 20,000 yards. At 0617 obtained receipt from both MIDWAY and HONOLULU for our contact report of 'Two MOGAMI Cruisers' giving their course, speed, and position."

Comments by Type Commander:

This submarine was in contact with a considerable sized enemy force for a total of about four hours, two hours of which the submarine was attempting to identify the forces by silhouette inasmuch as our own forces were believed to be operating to the westward of Midway and the position of our own forces was not known to the submarine. After failing to recognize the vessels by silhouette in the early stages, the force should have been closed and attack position obtained and recognition signals employed. The contact report "many unidentified ships" was received by Task Force Commander. This contact report of unidentified ships gave no course and conclusion was reached that a landing on Midway was being attempted. Submarines were therefore ordered to close in on Midway. As a matter of fact, enemy heading was northerly and the failure to report it most unfortunate. It was assumed that every means of identifying the ships while in contact had been employed and that the submarine was no longer in contact with these ships. At this time, the Task Force Commander was also uncertain of the position of our surface forces, and, therefore, could not aid the submarine, which was in contact with the ships, to identify them. At 0412, when

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(c) (continued)

enemy character was finally established and when one of the ships had turned towards submarine, an excellent opportunity was presented to inflict damage on the enemy by remaining at periscope depth and maneuvering for attack, but instead the submarine went to deep submergence and "rigged for depth charge attack". Submarine should have attacked on surface or should have made every effort to pick up target through periscope and sound after submergence. The opportunity was too great for less than positive and aggressive action. It must be impressed on all submarine personnel that the chance to inflict damage on enemy combatant ships comes very infrequently to a submarine and that the submarine must take a calculated risk in proportion to the damage which might be inflicted on the enemy. In passing, the Type Commander wishes to point out that even if the submarine's main objective is evading an attack, which it should seldom be, coming to periscope depth to observe the enemy may well be the best method of doing this. As it turned out in this case, no attack was made on the submarine and the chance of a lifetime was missed.

- (d) (1) Submarine reported having received contact report from Commander Task Force Seven of two carriers and main body in which it was directed that all vessels of Task Group 7.1 go after them. Submarine was submerged at this time and reported "Changed course to 240, speed six knots".

Comments by Type Commander:

Submarine was in a position to close on the surface, but apparently elected to remain submerged.

- (2) "Sighted a number of planes on the horizon bearing 310° T. The distance was too great to tell much about them, but they appeared to be taking off from a carrier."

Comments by Type Commander:

In view of the previous contact report, submarine should have immediately surfaced and proceeded towards the suspected carrier.

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(3) "Sighted a type "O" fighter diving into the periscope window. Pulled down the periscope and ordered 140 feet. This order was followed by a long burst of machine gun and cannon fire that seemed to be hitting the bridge structure."

Comments by Type Commander:

It is doubted that machine gun and cannon fire can hit the bridge structure even at high periscope depth.

(4) "Increased depth to 200 feet as it seemed the planes were able to see us at 140 feet."

Comments by Type Commander:

Exhaustive tests in the Hawaiian Area under ideal conditions, with a submarine painted the color of this submarine, have indicated that a submarine completely fades out below 120 feet.

(5) "Nothing heard all morning on listening equipment. Came to periscope depth and sighted two large clouds of smoke that appeared to be burning ships bearing 311° T., distance about 10 to 12 miles. Changed course to 311° T. to close and sink burning ships." An hour and a half later, "Changed course to 290° T. thinking we might have underestimated the range to the burning ships and they might sink on top of us. Did not come to periscope depth as we did not desire to attract any more aircraft bombs."

Comments by Type Commander:

A statement such as this, in the midst of an all out engagement, clearly shows the mental attitude of the commanding officer. The abandonment of an attack through fear the target would sink on top of him is inconceivable. During the morning and early afternoon, he reported a total of over 100 "heavy explosions", many of them "close aboard" and during the course of the entire day, approximately 200 such explosions were reported, submarine being at deep submergence practically the whole time, yet at the

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(d) (5) (continued)

end of the day, even after a depth charge attack, he reported "No glass was broken and no apparent internal or external damage resulted from the attack". It is inconceivable that so many bombs would have been expended on a submarine at deep submergence and it is felt that most of the explosions heard were bombs being dropped upon the burning carriers by own forces. Periscope observations were necessary to develop the important contacts and would have done much towards clarifying the whole situation.

(6) "Lookout sighted periscope on port beam distance about 2 miles. O.O.D. turned hard right to place the periscope astern. One torpedo in the after room was made ready. Depth setting 45 feet and slow speed setting for a long range run. The propellers were stopped as range was rapidly increasing and the C.O. and O.O.D. had not yet sighted the periscope."

"C.O. and O.O.D. sighted the periscope."

"Fired one torpedo, lead 6 degrees, range 6000 yards. Hot, straight and normal. Increased speed to 17 knots. Periscope dropped."

"No explosion noticed."

Comments by Type Commander:

No attempt was made at recognition before firing, although the commanding officer was well aware that a great number of his own friendly submarines had been chasing about in that area and might have been forced down by some plane. It is considered that this was a serious error in judgment to have fired at the submerged submarine.

(e) "0755. Tops of masts appeared dead ahead. While making this observation, was strafed by aircraft. Changed depth to 100 feet. Echo ranging was first heard at this time.

"0800. Sighted a formation of four ships. One battleship of ISE class and one cruiser drew toward the starboard bow, two other cruisers toward the port bow. Decided to attack the battleship and changed course to draw

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(e) (continued)

ahead. Sighted and bombed by plane. A cruiser of the JINTSU class approached to attack with depth charges. at least two ships were echo ranging on the \_\_\_\_\_.

"0810. JINTSU class cruiser dropped pattern of 5 depth charges followed seven minutes later by a pattern of 6 depth charges.

"0819. Went to 90 feet to avoid scouting planes. Nine depth charges dropped at distance of about 1000 yards. When attack ceased, planed up to periscope depth to observe.

"0824. The picture presented on raising the periscope was one never experienced in peacetime practices. Ships were on all sides moving across the field at high speed and circling away to avoid the submarine's position. Ranges were above 3000 yards. The JINTSU class cruiser had passed over and was now astern. The battleship was on our port bow and firing her whole starboard broadside battery at the periscope. Flag hoists were being made; searchlights were trained at the periscope. The exact position of the \_\_\_\_\_ may have been known by the enemy at this time because #9 deck torpedo was running hot in the tube as a result of the shearing of the torpedo retaining pin during the depth charging. Periscope estimate was made on the battleship and put on the Torpedo Data Computer. Range estimated as 4,500 yards, angle on the bow 80° starboard, speed 25 knots.

"0825. Fired #1 tube at battleship followed by #2 tube with a 1° right offset. After firing #2 it was found that #1 had not fired. Battleship changed course to the left and headed directly away. Range to battleship had now increased to 5,000 yards and track was 180°. Held further fire. During this time echo ranging by surface ships was continuous and accurate. Immediately after our firing at the battleship, the JINTSU type cruiser headed for \_\_\_\_\_.

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(e) (continued)

"0830. Went to 150 feet. Depth charge attack began. No damage. During depth charging this day a short shrill whistle was heard in the supersonic receiver an instant before distant depth charges exploded. Close charges sounded like a severe hammer blow on the hull and were not preceded by the whistle.

"0846. Ordered periscope depth. Battleship and other accompanying ships, except JINTSU type cruiser, were well out of range. Echo ranging by cruiser was still accurate.

"0900. Raised periscope and sighted aircraft carrier bearing 013° relative. Carrier was distant 16,000 yards and was changing course continuously. She did not appear to be damaged, but was overhung by anti-aircraft bursts. \_\_\_\_\_ was on a converging course. While making this observation the JINTSU type cruiser began to close again at high speed.

"0910. When cruiser reached 2,500 yards fired #2 torpedo tube. Cruiser was observed to change course.

"0918. A cruiser attacked with 6 depth charges. These were more accurately placed than previous charges. Went to 200 feet, used evasive tactics at slow speed, but continued advance to close the carrier. Cruiser continued echo ranging and at 0933 two of her depth charges landed close.

"0955. Echo ranging ceased. Ordered periscope depth to estimate the situation. On looking found that the entire formation first seen, including the attacking cruisers had departed. The carrier previously seen was no longer in sight.

"1029. Saw 3 masts on the horizon bearing 0050 T, distance 10 miles. Changed course to 0050T. Raised the vertical antenna and intercepted a radio message stating that a CV was damaged. Large clouds of grey smoke were seen at four places over the horizon. The nearest cloud of smoke had not previously been sighted, so continued to close it at the best speed that the condition of the battery and probable future operations for the day would allow.

Serial 0737

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
June 28, 1942.CONFIDENTIALSubject: Battle of Midway - Extracts from War Diaries.  
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(e) (continued)

"1047. Sighted three planes approaching. Lowered periscope and vertical antenna and continued approach at periscope depth.

"1145. Identified the source of smoke as a burning carrier. The carrier was still about 8 miles away and was in latitude 30° - 13' N longitude 179° - 17' W. Decided to overtake if possible and to attack.

"1224. Range not having decreased appreciably, changed speed to 2/3 ahead on both motors after estimating that sufficient battery capacity just remained for operations until night fall.

"1253. Range decreased. Sighted two cruisers escorting the carrier. Tentatively identified CV as a carrier of the SORYU class. The carrier was on even keel and the hull appeared to be undamaged. There were no flames and the fire seemed to be under control. Accompanying cruisers were about two miles ahead of the carrier.

"1300. The CV, which had been making 2-3 knots when the approach began, was now stopped. At closer range it was seen that efforts were being made by boats under her bow to pass a towing hawser and many men were seen working on the forecastle.

The decision had to be made in which order to attack the targets presented. Attack on the cruisers and later on the carrier was considered, but the remaining capacity of the battery would not allow a further chase of several miles to catch the moving cruisers, even if it were possible to overtake them. The decision was therefore made to complete the destruction of the CV before she could be repaired or taken in tow. Approach continued at periscope depth. An approach course was chosen to give torpedo hits on the starboard or island side of the carrier. During the next hour a repeated check was made of the silhouettes of American and Japanese carriers in order to be certain of the identity of the target. The target was a carrier of the SORYU class.

FF12-10/A16-3

SUBMARINES, PACIFIC FLEET

Ee

Serial 0737

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,

June 28, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Battle of Midway - Extracts from War Diaries.

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(e) (continued)

"1359. Fired three torpedoes at the carrier from periscope depth. Attempts to fire #4 torpedo tube were unsuccessful. Immediately prior to firing each torpedo, the Torpedo Data Computer generated bearing was checked by a periscope bearing. Mean run of torpedoes was 2700 yards. The wakes of the torpedoes were observed through the periscope until the torpedoes struck the target. Red flames appeared along the length of the ship from the bow to amidships. The fire which had first attracted us to the attack had been underneath the demolished after flight deck and was nearly extinguished by the time the \_\_\_\_\_ reached the firing point. This fire again broke out. Boats drew away from the bow and many men were seen going over the side. All 5 officers in the conning tower observed the results of the torpedoing.

"1405. Fired last of three torpedoes at the carrier. Cruisers began reversing course at high speed and started to echo range.

"1410. Cruiser passed directly over the top of the \_\_\_\_\_. Changed course to 190° T and went to 300 feet. A prolonged depth charge attack now began, eleven charges being dropped on the first attack. This entire barrage was close and well placed except that charges were set too shallow and exploded above the ship. A few small leaks were sprung. At this time a sound was heard like that which would be caused by a chain being dragged across the ship. It may be interesting to note that a similar noise was heard by a British submarine under depth charge attack about one year ago.

"1431. Depth charge attack continued. A sound similar to heavy objects landing on the deck was heard twice. The sound operator reported the noise of propellers all around the dial.

"1445. Changed depth to 200 feet. Ten minutes later the last two depth charges were dropped some distance away.

Serial 0737

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
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June 28, 1942.CONFIDENTIALSubject: Battle of Midway - Extracts from War Diaries.  
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(a) (continued)

"1610. Came to periscope depth. Saw carrier, but the escorting cruisers were no longer in sight. They had abandoned the carrier and she was afire along the entire length.

"1800. Heavy black smoke enveloped the carrier and formed a cloud over the ship to a height of a thousand feet. The officer making this observation compared the cloud to the oil smoke which arose from the U.S.S. ARIZONA when that ship burned at Pearl Harbor, T.H., December 7-9. Nothing could be seen of the carrier's hull.

"1840. Heard heavy subsurface explosions and went to depth charge stations. A search by periscope failed to reveal any object in the vicinity except the still greater cloud of black smoke from burning oil. If the carrier was not found by patrol planes which searched the vicinity the following morning, the Commanding Officer believes that she was destroyed at this time by fire and internal explosions. He did not however actually see her sink.

"1941. Surfaced with exhausted battery and returned to patrol area. Four torpedoes expended, forty-two depth charges received."

Comments by Type Commander:

This is an excellent example of a submarine doggedly pursuing his objective in the face of severe enemy opposition and the commanding officer has been credited with sinking the carrier of the SORYU class.

R. H. ENGLISH.

DISTRIBUTION:

(2108-42)

List I, Case 3:

SSs less DD, ASR, AT.

Special: Cominch(5),

CinCPac (5), ComSublant(2),

ComSubSIPac(2).

E. R. SWIBURNE,

Flag Secretary.

-12-

22

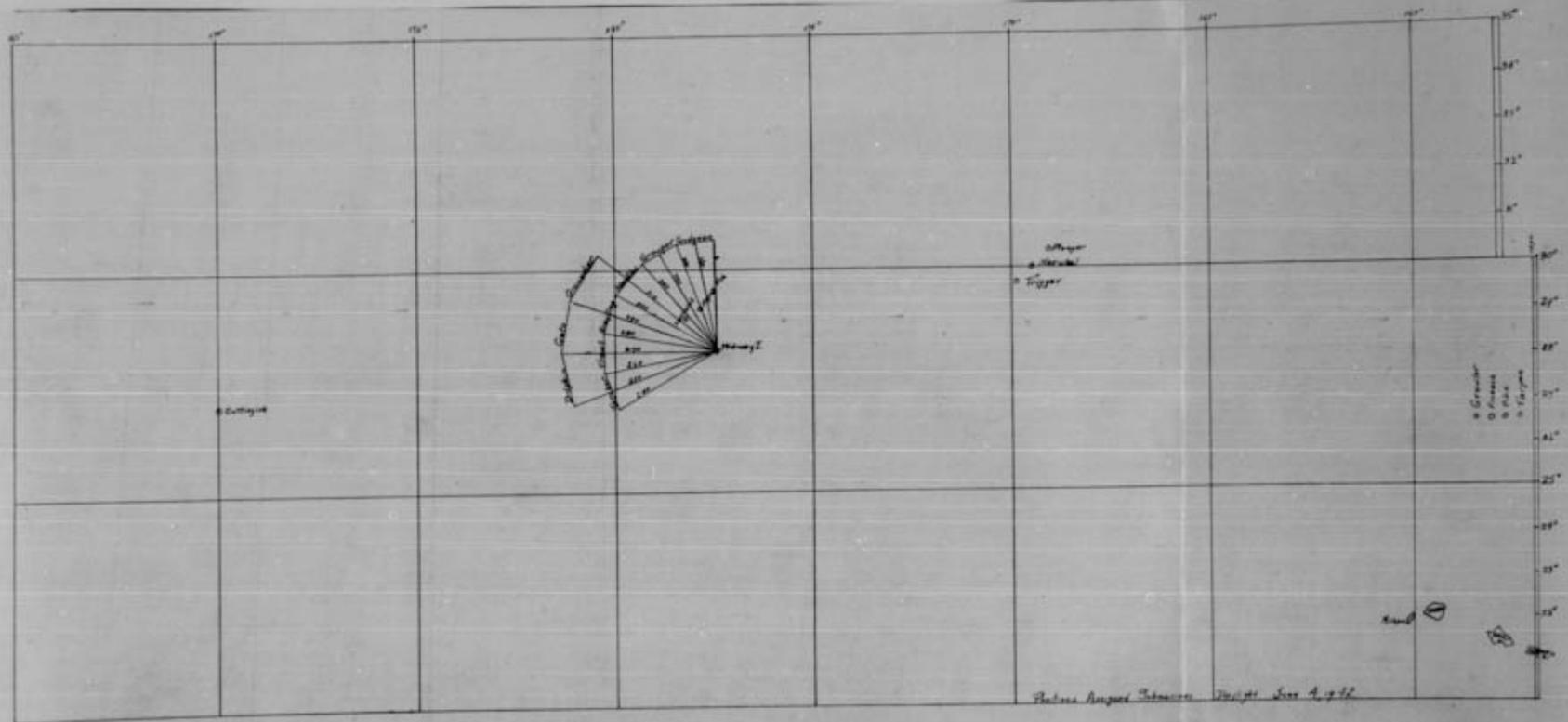




Diagram  
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Part Two: General Submarine Design June 1942 Lecture 25

Regraded Unclassified


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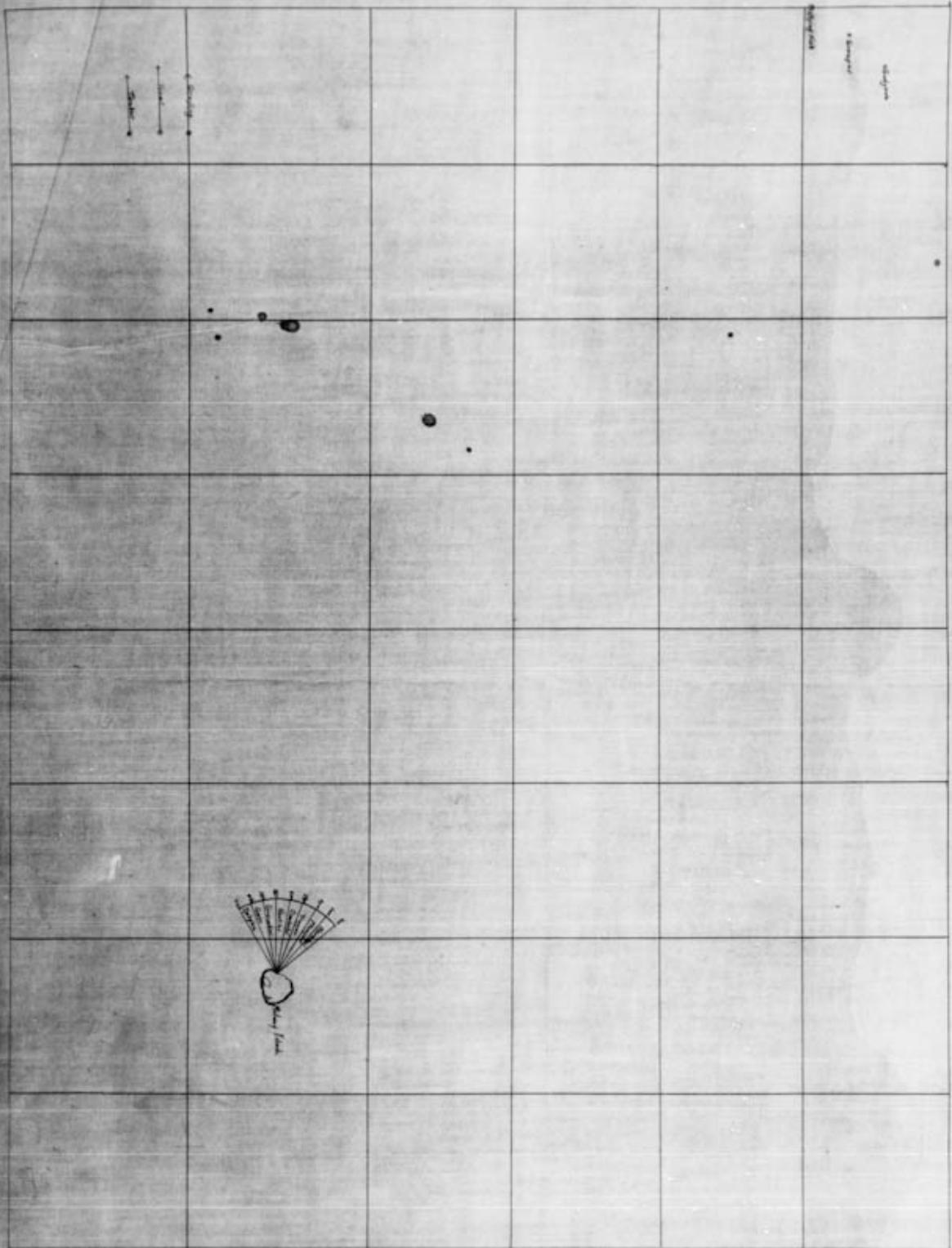
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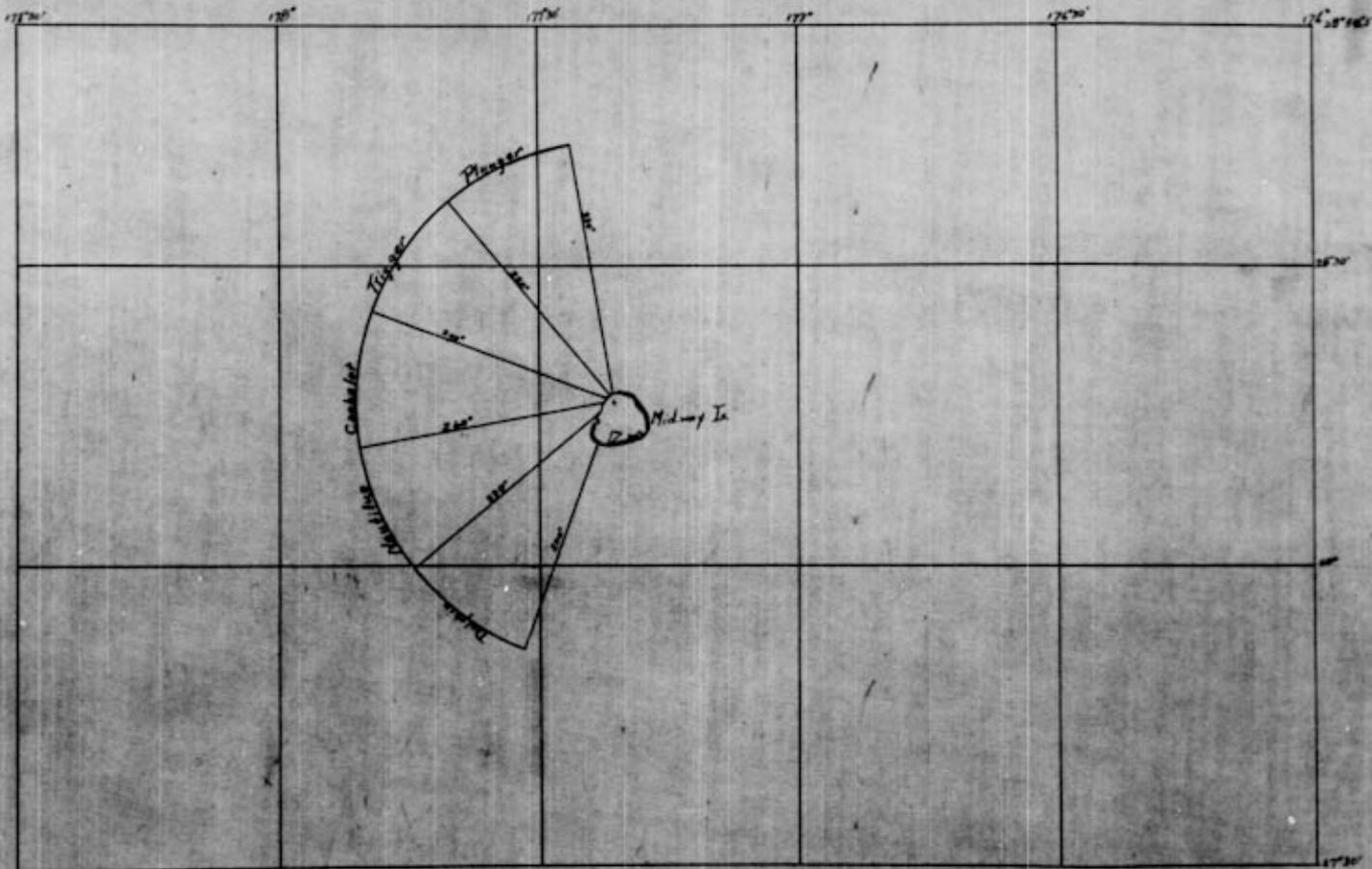
Project Beyond Science, 1964, Jan 6, 1964

Regraded Unclassified





Positions Assigned Submarines Daylight June 6, 1942 Enclosure "D"



Midway Area

Baltic Fleet Assigned Submarine Daylight  
 Jan 7, 1942. Enclosure "F" 33

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

**SECRET**

Pres. Aide

*Capt. MacCree*

OFFICE  
DELIVERY  
NO. 3316

Final Report  
Without Enclosures

How President  
Has Seen

**SECRET**

(18)

UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D.C.

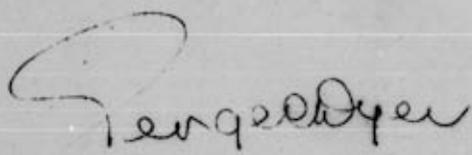
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July 18, 1942.

NOTE:-

Attention is invited to the fact that information concerning the loss of the YORKTOWN has not been released.

Full SECRET classification shall be given to this information until it is released.



GEORGE C. DYER.

NOTE:- TO BE RETURNED TO COMINCH SECRET MAIL ROOM -  
ROOM 3053A.

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COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
FLAG OFFICE

Cincpac File No.  
Al6

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

01849

SECRET

From: Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
To: Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.

Subject: Battle of Midway.

Reference: (a) CincPac Al6/(90) Ser. 01693 of 6/15/42.

- Enclosures:
- (A) Track of the Battle of Midway - Composite of All Reports. *noted*
  - (B) Copy of Cincpac A8/(37)/JAP/(26.2)(no date) and Cincpac A8/(37)JAP/(26) Ser. 01753 dated 21 June 1942.
  - (C) ComCru, Task Force SEVENTEEN Al6-3/(013) dated 12 June 1942.
  - (D) Copy of Comtaskforce SEVENTEEN Al6-3/A9(0029N) dated June 26, 1942.
  - (E) Copy of NAS Midway NA38/Al6-3 Serial 075 dated 18 June 1942 with ComHawSeaFron. 1st End. thereon.
  - (F) Summary of Army Aircraft Attacks at Midway, ComGen.Haw.(8672).

*Returned  
to Cominch  
8/20/42*

1. In numerous and widespread engagements lasting from the 3rd to 6th of June, with carrier based planes as the spearhead of the attack, combined forces of the Navy, Marine Corps and Army in the Hawaiian Area defeated a large part of the Japanese fleet and frustrated the enemy's powerful move against Midway that was undoubtedly the keystone of larger plans. All participating personnel, without exception, displayed unhesitating devotion to duty, loyalty and courage. This superb spirit in all three services made possible the application of the destructive power that routed the enemy and inflicted these losses:

- (a) 4 CV sunk - AKAGI, KAGA, SORYU, HIRYU - with the loss of all their planes and many of their personnel. Estimated 275 planes, 2400 men.
- (b) 2 probably 3 BB damaged, 1 severely.
- (c) 2 CA sunk - MOGAMI, MIKUMA - 3 or more others damaged, some severely.
- (d) 1 CL damaged.
- (e) 3 DD sunk, 1 other possibly sunk.
- (f) 4 AP and AK hit, 1 or more possibly sunk.
- (g) Estimated total number of personnel lost 4800.

2. These results were achieved at the cost of the YORIKITOWN and HABERMANN sunk and about 150 planes lost in action or damaged beyond repair. Our total personnel losses were about ninety-two(92) officers and two hundred and fifteen (215) men.

41273

**UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

A16

SECRET

Subject: --- Battle of Midway. (Cont'd) ---

PRELIMINARY OPERATIONS

3. After the Battle of the Coral Sea it became evident that Japan was concentrating her fleet for movements of major importance against the Aleutians and Midway. Later indications were that the Midway expedition was a powerful fleet composed of a Striking Force, Support Force, and Occupation Force. An estimate of the composition of this fleet, since largely verified by reports of the battle, was:

<u>STRIKING FORCE</u>	<u>SUPPORT FORCE</u>	<u>OCCUPATION FORCE</u>
<u>Cinc 1st Air Fleet (F)</u>	<u>Crudiv 7</u>	<u>1 TAIRO Class CA</u>
<u>Cardiv 1</u>	<u>MOGAMI (F)</u>	<u>1-2 MYOKO Class CA(?)</u>
AKAGI (F)	MIKUMA	<u>Airon 7</u>
KAGA	SUZUYA	<u>CHITOSE</u>
<u>Cardiv 2</u>	KUMANO	<u>CHIYODA</u>
<u>SORYU (F)</u>		
HIRYU	<u>Cardiv ---</u>	<u>AIRON 11(?)</u>
<u>Desron 10</u>	<u>1 CV or XCV</u>	<u>2-4 KAMIGAWA Class XAV</u>
<u>NAGARA (F)</u>		
12 DD	<u>Batdiv 3 2nd Sect.</u>	<u>Transdivs ?</u>
<u>Batdiv 3</u>	<u>HIYEI</u>	<u>8-12 AP</u>
<u>HARUNA (F)</u>	KONGO	
<u>KIRISHIMA</u>	<u>CRUDIV 4 Part</u>	<u>Transdivs</u>
<u>Crudiv 8</u>	<u>1 ATAGO Class CA</u>	<u>4-6 AK</u>
<u>TONE (F)</u>		
<u>CHIKUMA</u>	<u>Desron 2 Part</u>	<u>Desron 4</u>
	<u>JINTSU (F)</u>	<u>12 DDs</u>
	10 DD	

In addition, the plan was believed to provide for approximately 16 SS to be on reconnaissance and scouting mission in the Mid-Pacific - Hawaiian Islands area.

4. The status of the important Pacific Fleet forces at the time the afore-mentioned threats developed was as follows:

- (a) Task Force 17 had fought the battle of the Coral Sea from 4 to 8 May and was still in the South Pacific. The LEXINGTON had been sunk and the YORKTOWN damaged to an

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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
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SECRET

Subject: Battle of Midway. (Cont'd).

extent which might require a considerable period of repair -- possibly even a trip to a West Coast Navy Yard. The remainders of the air groups of these two carriers were on the YORKTOWN, urgently requiring reorganization and rest. This force had been continuously at sea since February 16.

(b) Task Force 16 (ENTERPRISE and HORNET with supporting cruisers and destroyers) was in the South Pacific, having arrived just too late for the Coral Sea action. It had been sighted recently, however, by an enemy reconnaissance plane and thus probably prevented an enemy occupation of Ocean and Nauru Islands.

(c) Task Force 1 (containing battleships and a small destroyer screen) was on the West Coast.

5. It was evident, if estimates of the enemy's strength and intentions were true, that the situation was most serious. Midway itself could support an air force only about the size of a carrier group; our carriers were far away; and perhaps only two would be fit to fight. Task Force 17 had already been recalled for repair and replenishment. Task Force 16 was immediately ordered north. At the same time a new force, Eight, was formed out of all cruisers within reach (five) and all destroyers available, (four), and sent to Alaskan waters to assist the Sea Frontier forces which were being assembled in that Area.

6. Midway was meanwhile given all the strengthening that it could take. Long range Navy and Army aircraft, though necessarily difficult to protect on the ground and water, were moved in. It was considered most important that the enemy be discovered at a distance and promptly attacked. To provide essential close in air striking power, the Marine Air Group was increased to approximately 30 fighters and 30 dive bombers supported by six Navy new TBF torpedo planes and four

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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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Subject: Battle of Midway. (Cont'd).

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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

SECRET

Subject: Battle of Midway. (Cont'd).

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Army B-26's fitted for dropping torpedoes. Many of these planes arrived just before the engagement. Despite a heavy inflow of planes from the mainland to Oahu and from there to Midway, the available numbers were never large enough to give a comfortable margin for losses. So critical, in fact, was this condition that after the first morning attacks at and off Midway the dive bombers, fighters and torpedo planes stationed there were nearly wiped out. Replacements of these types on Oahu were scanty and could not be got to Midway for the remainder of the battle.

7. Midway's ground defenses were strengthened by the emplacement of new batteries, completion of underwater obstacles, laying of mines, etc. Additional Marine forces were moved in, including a part of the 2nd Raider Battalion with special equipment for meeting a mechanized landing assault. Other reenforcement included motor torpedo boats and YP's.

8. Thirteen submarines were stationed on the 200 and 150 mile circles covering the western and northern approaches to Midway. A few submarines were placed in support on the 800 mile circle northwest of Oahu, and the last ones to become available on the 100 mile circle from that place. All submarines which could reach the Oahu-Midway area were employed and the consequent cessation of their offensive patrols accepted.

9. Full consideration was given to employment of Task Force ONE in the defense of Midway. It was not moved out because of the undesirability of diverting to its screen any units which could add to our long range striking power against the enemy carriers. Events proved that every air unit which was employed could have ill been spared from the purpose for which it was used, even though the results were far beyond the expectations of most.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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Subject: Battle of Midway (Cont'd) -----

As our air forces increase in strength relative to the enemy, and surface screening forces become available to permit a balanced force, the application of battleships' striking power will become practicable.

10. The Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet estimated that the enemy's plans included an attempt to trap a large part of our Fleet. He directed that strong attrition tactics, only, be employed and that our carriers and cruisers not be unduly risked. The whole situation was a most difficult one requiring the most delicate timing on the part of our carriers -- if they could reach supporting stations in time. It so happened that they did. Task Force 16 arrived at Pearl Harbor on 26 May and departed on the 28th under command of Rear Admiral R. A. Spruance, U.S.N. as Task Force Commander, with Rear Admiral T.C. Kinkaid in Command of Cruiser Group, and Captain A.R. Early in Command of the Destroyers. Task Force 17 reached here on the 27th and sailed on the 30th, under Command of Rear Admiral F. J. Fletcher as Task Force Commander with Rear Admiral W. W. Smith in Command of the Cruiser Group, and Captain G. C. Hoover in command of the Destroyers. It was found, most fortunately, that the YORKTOWN and her aircraft could be placed in reasonable fighting condition in three days. Excellent work by the Navy Yard, the Service Force and all supporting services at Pearl Harbor made possible these prompt sailings.

11. Task Forces 16 and 17 joined at assigned rendezvous northeast of Midway on 2 June, having previously refueled at sea. In compliance with my directive, Rear Admiral Fletcher, Commander Task Force 17, then moved the combined forces to an area of operations north of Midway.

12. Enclosures show composition of our own forces, which will not be relisted here. Broad tactical direction of all the forces in the Midway Area was retained by the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.

13. The Battle - 3 June

The enemy Occupation Force and perhaps part of the Support Force (see paragraph 1) was picked up in several contacts west of Midway on the 3rd, as shown on plot of battle, enclosure (A). The first contact was at about 0900 when a large number of ships

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Subject: Battle of Midway. (Cont'd)

(later reported as 11) were sighted by a Navy patrol plane, bearing 261° distant 700 miles from Midway, reported course 090, speed 10. (All times in this report are Zone plus 12. In studying Task Force 16 and 17 reports it must be kept in mind that times given by them are Zone plus 10.) There were several smaller groups of ships, indicating that the escort group for the occupation force and the various ships of this force were converging on a rendezvous for the final advance on Midway.

14. About 1623, striking unit of 9 B-17's with four 600# demolition bombs each, contacted and attacked the large group. They reported the force now consisted of 5 BB or CA and about 40 other ships - DD, AP, AK, etc. The course made good since the morning contact was about 081°, the bearing of Midway. Distance was then about 570 miles from Midway. Two ships, a CA or BB and an AP or AK were hit and injured severely so that they fell out of column and sent up "huge clouds of black smoke which mushroomed above them". One other CA and one other AP or AK were possibly damaged.

15. This was the only attack of the day, though at its close 4 PBV's armed with torpedoes were enroute to attack. Estimated results are:

- 1 CA - damaged
- 1 CA - slightly damaged
- 1 AP or AK severely damaged
- 1 AP or AK slightly damaged.

4 JUNE

16. Attacks on the Japanese fleet began early this day and continued in force until nearly noon, with other attacks before sunset. Between 0130 and 0200 the 4 PBV's found and 3 attacked probably the same force the B-17's had hit; 10 or more big ships in 2 columns with 6 DD were observed. There were indications of

**SECRET****Subject:** ----- Battle of Midway (Cont'd) -----

another large group nearby. Bearing was still about 261° from Midway, distance reported about 500 miles, though part of the enemy force was closer. Two of the planes were able to press home attacks unobserved and each hit an AP or AK. This night attack by Catalinas was a daring and historical feat. Estimated results are 1 AK or AP sunk, 1 AK or AP damaged severely.

17. The Japanese Main Striking Force assumed to have 4 carriers was not sighted on the third. These ships were apparently riding a weather front bearing down on Midway from the northwest. One carrier had been reported among the ships west of Midway, but this contact was not verified. It is possible that the Japanese had five carriers off Midway and that the fifth one moved from the west to the northwest for the engagements of the fourth of June, but there is no clear evidence yet to bear this out.

18. Before dawn on 4 June, PBY's took off from Midway continuing their invaluable scouting that contributed so greatly to the success of the action. 16 B-17's were despatched by Commanding Officer, Midway, to attack the enemy transport force to the westward. At 0545 the most important contact of the battle was made. A PBY reported many planes heading for Midway 150 miles distant on bearing 320; 7 minutes later another PBY sighted 2 of the enemy carriers and many other ships on the same bearing, distant 180 miles, coming in at 25 knots on course 135.

19. All serviceable planes at Midway were in the air before 0600 (except for 3 SB2U spares); 6 Navy TBF and 4 Army B-26 armed with torpedoes, and 27 Marine dive bombers were despatched to strike the enemy carriers. The B-17's proceeding westward were also diverted to the carriers. Midway radar picked up the enemy planes and, at 0615, 14 of the 27 fighter planes available made contact 30 miles distant with 60 to 80 dive bombers (possibly a few of these were twin engined horizontal bombers) and about 50 fighters. Severe fighting continued as long as our fighters were in the air, which was not long for most of them against

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Subject: Battle of Midway. (cont'd)  
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these odds, accentuated by the poor maneuverability of these planes. Of the 27 fighters available, 15 were lost and 7 severely damaged. Statements from 9 of the 11 surviving pilots show that they shot down a total of 3 Japanese zero fighters and 8 Aichi Type 99 dive bombers. Survivors believe the total number destroyed by all the fighter planes was probably 8 zero fighters and 25 dive bombers.

20. The first bomb hit Midway at about 0633 from horizontal bombers. Dive bombing and strafing continued for about 17 minutes. Considerable damage was done to nearly all structures above ground, the most serious at the time being the destruction of the power plant on Eastern Island. Little damage was done to the runways, the Japanese apparently leaving these intact for their own anticipated use. The antiaircraft batteries shot well, downing 10 planes and, with the fighters, damaging many more, so that our returning airplanes reported "large numbers of enemy planes down on the water and falling out of formation."

21. The B-26's found their targets, 2 CV, about 0710 and made a most gallant attack. This is likewise another historical event, and, it is hoped, one soon to be repeated under better conditions - our Army's first attack with torpedo planes. Heavy fighter concentrations were encountered; 2 of the 4 planes did not return; one was shot down before launching his torpedo, and possibly the other, though it is said to have attacked and in pulling out touched the flight deck of the target before crashing into the sea. Both of the 2 planes that did return were so badly shot up by the terrific fighter and AA fire encountered that they were unserviceable. Survivors had no time to observe results, but approaches were such that it is believed probably one torpedo hit.

22. The TBF's made a similarly gallant attack almost simultaneously with the B-26's and against an equally determined and overwhelming number of fighters. At least 2 of them were shot down before they could launch torpedoes. Only one badly shot up plane returned. The pilot could not tell what happened to the remainder of his unit or how the attack fared. A B-17, on reconnaissance, reports seeing one of the planes make a hit.

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Although the TBF is a well armed plane, it is obvious that it cannot go through fighter opposition without fighter protection.

23. At 0755 a group of 16 Marine dive bombers, under Major L. R. Henderson, USMC made a gallant glide bombing attack on one of the carriers in the Striking Force. The planes had been received too recently for training in dive bombing, so the Commander chose this less effective and more hazardous method of attack because it permitted lower pull outs. His and 7 other planes were shot down by overwhelming fighter opposition. The 8 planes that did return were badly shot up, one having 210 holes. The target, probably the SORYU, was hit 3 times and left afire.

24. Soon afterward, at about 0820, the 11 SB2U Marine bombers from Midway made a glide bombing attack on a battleship, likewise against heavy fighter attack. Two hits are reported. When last seen the battleship was smoking and listed.

25. The B-17 unit of 16 planes, under the Commanding Officer of the 431st Bombardment Squadron, Lt. Col. W.C. Sweeney, U.S.A., who led each flight he made in an outstanding manner, was directed to change its objective from the transport force to the carriers. Promptly and with skillful navigation the planes proceeded, picked up the enemy fleet on bearing 320° about 145 miles from Midway, and at 0814 began attacking from 20,000 feet, each plane carrying 8 500-pound demolition bombs. Result: Total of 3 hits on carriers, possibly 2 carriers hit with heavy smoke from one; carriers still maneuvering and operating normally. Since only one carrier was reported smoking, this was probably the same one, SORYU, the Marine dive bombers had set afire a few minutes earlier with 3 hits.

26. The Midway Forces had struck with full strength, but the Japanese were not as yet checked. About 10 ships had been damaged, of which 1 or 2 AP or AK may have sunk. But this was hardly an impression on the great force of about 80 ships converging on Midway. Most of Midway's fighters, torpedo planes and dive-bombers -- the only types capable of making a high percentage of

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hits on ships -- were gone, and 3 of the Japanese carriers were still either undamaged or insufficiently so to hamper operations.

27. This was the situation when our carrier attack began. Task Force 16 and 17, ready about 200 miles to the northeast of the Japanese carriers, had intercepted the first contact reports by the Midway scouts. At about 0700 launching commenced of the following attack groups, YORKTOWN's being temporarily held in reserve until her scouts returned (majority of fighters retained for combat patrol):

HORNET - 35 VSB, 15 VTB, 10 VF  
ENTERPRISE - 35 VSB, 14 VTB, 10 VF

(Bombers carrying 1-1000 lb, or 1-500 lb, or 1-500 and 2-100 lb bombs)

These two groups proceeded independently to attack.

28. Dive bombers proceeded at a high altitude with the torpedo planes at about 1500 feet below the cloud base. Fighters failed to accompany the torpedo planes. HORNET's accompanied dive bombers expecting to provide protection for bombers and torpedo planes over enemy fleet. Torpedo planes proceeded separately and contact was lost with them. ENTERPRISE's fighters likewise operated at a high altitude expecting fighters there and were not able to reach torpedo planes in time to assist. Lack of fighter support, visibility conditions, distance of attack, delay in locating the Japanese force, and Japanese tactics of concentrating fighters on torpedo planes all combined to prevent coordination of bombing and torpedo attacks, with resultant heavy loss of torpedo planes.

29. Sometime after 0830, when the last attack that morning by Midway planes was completed, the Japanese striking force commenced retirement to the north or northwest. Consequently it was not found in the estimated position by our carrier attack groups. HORNET Group Commander made the decision to turn south, to search along the enemy's reported track, and failed to make contact. All

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10 of the fighters were forced down for lack of gas and lost at sea, though 8 of the pilots have been recovered. All but 2 of the dive bombers eventually got back to the HORNET (11 via Midway) without attacking.

30. The ENTERPRISE Group Commander, proceeding separately decided to turn north to search, estimating that enemy must have reversed course. This was one of the most important decisions of the battle and one that had decisive results. Soon after 1000 he made contact and prepared to attack.

31. Meanwhile the HORNET's torpedo squadron led by Lt. Comdr. J. C. Waldron had found the enemy and without hesitation at about 0920 conducted a most gallant and heroic attack entirely unsupported. They were met by overwhelming fighter opposition about 8 miles from the 3 carriers they attacked, and followed all the way in, being shot down one by one. The remnant drove in their attack to close range. Voice intercepts indicate that they shot down some Japanese fighters and made some hits.

32. Not a plane survived this magnificent devotion to purpose. One pilot, after attacking and probably hitting the KAGA at close range, with his gunner already killed, crashed near the AKAGI, ducked under his seat cushion to prevent being machine gunned, and from this reserved position observed the fierce attacks that followed.

33. YORKTOWN and ENTERPRISE torpedo squadrons led respectively by Lt. Comdr. L. E. Massey, U.S.N. and Lt. Comdr. E.E. Lindsey, U.S.N. attacked later with equal courage and determination, and similar crushing losses. Both are believed to have made hits, but both were almost completely destroyed, ENTERPRISE losing 10 out of 14 planes and YORKTOWN 10 out of 12. Despite the many difficulties, exact coordination with dive bombers was almost achieved, the torpedo planes launching their attack only a few minutes before the bombers. Even had they attacked later, in perfect coordination, without adequate fighter protection their losses would have been probably

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as great. Recognizing the torpedo plane for the menace it is, the Japanese concentrated most of their fighters and anti-aircraft fire on it. The result was that the VT squadrons were a sacrifice that enabled the dive bombers to make their attack almost unopposed, with disastrous results for the enemy.

34. At 0830 YORKTOWN commenced launching the following attack group, dive bombers being armed with 1000 lb. bombs:

17 VSB                      12 VT                      6 VF

These proceeded with VT's at 1500 feet, 2 VF at 2500 feet, 4 VF at 5-6,000 feet and bombers at 16,000 feet. Contact was made at about the same time as by the ENTERPRISE planes and attack delivered almost simultaneously.

35. When the HORNET torpedo squadron attacked, there were 4 carriers dispersed in a wide roughly circular formation. AKAGI, KAGA and SORYU were in the same general vicinity, probably having just landed planes. SORYU was smoking, showing signs of heavy damage, as was also a ship some distance away that resembled a battleship. The surviving HORNET VT pilot, Ensign Gay, USNR, had been in the water only a few minutes when the ENTERPRISE and YORKTOWN dive bombers struck hard and most effectively. Both KAGA and AKAGI, between which he lay, were hit repeatedly, the planes on deck that they sought to launch being ignited until the two ships burned fiercely from stem to stern. SORYU was also hit again and continued to burn.

36. The dive bombing attacks by both ENTERPRISE and YORKTOWN squadrons began at about the same time, between 1020 and 1025. Many hits were made on each carrier. Some pilots considering them destroyed attacked other ships. The following damage was inflicted:

3 carriers - AKAGI, KAGA, SORYU set afire and ultimately destroyed.  
2 Battleships - 1 1,000 lb. hit each, one a mass of flames.  
1 CL or DD - 1 1,000 lb. hit, believed DD sunk.

37. All submarines were ordered to close on the enemy Striking Force but the only submarine attack of the day was by

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NAUTILUS which at 0710 sighted smoke from torpedo plane hits and anti-aircraft fire on bearing 331° True. After closing, she sighted a formation including a carrier and battleship which she attacked unsuccessfully at long range, and was herself depth charged. About 1000 the ships had disappeared. At 1029 4 large columns of grey smoke (probably from dive bombing attack) showed over the horizon; NAUTILUS closed the nearest of the 4 and at 1359 fired the first of 3 torpedoes into the smoking carrier SORYU. The GROUPE in a similar situation was unable to get in to attack because of the enemy's intensive anti-submarine measures.

38. At the time SORYU was on even keel, hull apparently undamaged, fires under control, towing arrangements in process. The three hits caused fires to break out again and personnel to abandon ship. Cruisers escorting the carrier depth charged NAUTILUS which went to deep submergence. When the periscope was raised at 1610, the SORYU was observed burning fiercely and escorting vessels had departed. At 1840 heavy underwater explosions occurred accompanied by a billowing cloud of black smoke. At 1941 NAUTILUS surfaced. No ship, smoke, or flame was in sight.

39. At 0815 Task Force SIXTEEN radar had picked up a twin float seaplane, 36 miles to the south, which probably reported our formation's position. During YORKTOWN and ENTERPRISE Group dive bombing attacks on the Japanese carriers, the KAGA and AKAGI tried to launch planes. They were probably at the time preparing to attack our carriers. The carrier HIRYU, according to survivors picked up on 18 June (4 officers and 31 men), at this time drew off to the northward undamaged. Soon afterwards a Japanese message was intercepted "inform us position enemy carriers".

40. Lacking complete information on the number and location of enemy carriers, at 1150 YORKTOWN launched scouts to search sector 280-030 to 200 miles. Immediately thereafter at 1152 YORKTOWN's radar picked up many planes approaching from Westward, distant 32 miles. These were later determined to be 18 dive bombers and 18 fighters. As one fire precaution YORKTOWN drained the gas system and introduced CO<sub>2</sub>.

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41. The Combat Air Patrol of 12 fighters located the enemy planes at about 9,000 feet altitude and attacked, shooting down 11 of the bombers. Out of the melee from time to time seven planes broke out and dived through heavy antiaircraft fire. Of the first 3, one was caught by a 5" burst and disintegrated; the second dropped its bomb, which was a miss and plunged into the sea; the third was cut into fragments by automatic gun fire, but the bomb tumbling down exploded on the flight deck aft of the island and wiped out two 1.1 mount crews. At 1214 a hit in the uptake forced the YORKTOWN to stop, largely because boiler gases were drawn into firerooms making them uninhabitable. A third hit landed in the forward elevator well starting fires adjacent to the forward tanks of gasoline without igniting it.

42. At 1402 with all fires extinguished and temporary repairs to the uptake completed, YORKTOWN was able to go ahead. Her position then was Latitude 33-51 N, Longitude 176 W, course 090. Speed was gradually increased to 19 knots by the time of the next attack. PENSACOLA, VINCENNES, BALCH, and BENHAM had meanwhile joined from Task Force SIXTEEN.

43. Approaching aircraft were again picked up on various bearings, the largest group being on 340°, distant 25 miles at 1433. The total attacking force was 12 to 15 torpedo planes and 10 to 18 fighters. The fighter combat patrol shot down 4 to 7 of the planes. About eight of the torpedo planes came on into the fire of YORKTOWN's screen which was so heavy that observers thought it incredible that any got through. Three were shot down. Fighters just launched by YORKTOWN went into the heavy antiaircraft fire to attack the remaining five, which succeeded nevertheless in launching torpedoes. The last two, released at about 800 yards, at 1445 hit YORKTOWN amidships on the port side. All the torpedo planes were shot down, three by fighter and ship fire before or as they passed the YORKTOWN, two as they attempted to pass through the heavy fire of the screen.

44. Within ten minutes after being hit, YORKTOWN was listed 20 to 25° to port. In another ten minutes personnel began abandoning ship. It seemed that the YORKTOWN might capsize, and that she cer-

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tainly would should she be hit again. Another attack seemed imminent throughout the afternoon. Radar contacts of unidentified planes were frequent, three of which at different times turned out to be Japanese seaplanes. The ship, however, continued to float through the night, list remaining about constant.

45. Both attacks on YORKTOWN were made by the HIRYU planes. At 1430, just as the HIRYU torpedo planes were coming in radar range of YORKTOWN, one of the YORKTOWN's scouts contacted the HIRYU with 2 BB, 3 CA and 4 DD in 31°-15' N, 179°-05' W, course north, speed 20. Task Force 16 launched an attack group of 16 dive bombers from HORNET and 24 from ENTERPRISE (14 of these being YORKTOWN planes) which beginning at 1705 for half an hour dived on the Japanese formation. Only 6-12 fighters were encountered, good evidence that Japanese plane losses had been very heavy in the day's fighting. Results of attack were:

CV HIRYU ..... Hit many times and aflame from bow  
to stern.  
1 BB ..... 2 500 or 1000 lb. bomb hits.  
1 BB ..... 2 1000 and 1 500 lb. bomb hits.  
1 CA ..... 2 500 lb. hits.

With the destruction of the HIRYU our forces had won mastery of the air, although at the time it was not clear whether all carriers had been accounted for and whether or not more than four carriers were in the area.

46. Between 1810 and 1830 twelve (12) B-17's in several flights struck the last blow of 4 June. Of these, 6 planes, attacking directly out of Oahu, in order to conserve gas did not climb to the usual attack level but made runs at 3600 feet. Each group was attacked by zero fighters. These may have come from the HIRYU. Some of the flights report a large CV burning and 1 or 2 small CV; but the unit most experienced in operations over the sea reported only one carrier which was burning, and a burning BB or CA accompanied by a number of other ships. Three 500 lb. bomb hits are reported on the damaged CV, one on a BB (probably CA), one on a CA (smoking badly), and one on a DD (probably sunk). A patrol plane, in this vicinity until about 1800, from a distance reported that a ship sank when hit by a salvo of bombs.

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47. Summary of losses inflicted on the enemy on 4 June.

MIDWAY FORCES

Time	Attacking Unit	Type Attack	Ship Sunk	Ship Damaged
0130	4 PBY	Torpedo	1 AP or AK (estimate)	1 AP or AK 1 hit
0710	4 B26 & 6 TBF	Torpedo	-----	2 CV (estimate 2 hits)
0755	16 VMB	Glide Bombing	-----	SORYU (CV) 3 hits
0820	11 VMB	Glide Bombing	-----	BB 2 hits
0814	16 B17	Horizontal High Altitude	-----	1 CV 1 hit SORYU (CV) 2 hits

Only 1 Carrier, SORYU, damaged enough to limit operations at this time.

CARRIER FORCES

0920	15 VTB (HORNET)	Torpedo	-----	KAGA (CV) 1 hit 1 CV 1 hit (estimated)
1020	26 VTB (ENTERPRISE) (YORKTOWN)	Torpedo	-----	1 CV 2 hits (estimated) 1 CV 1 hit (estimated)
1022	50 VSB (ENTERPRISE) (YORKTOWN)	Dive bombing	AKAGI - Hit many times, burning fiercely. KAGA - Hit many times, burning fiercely.	SORYU - several hits. 1 BB 1000 lb. hit, severe damage, mass of flames. 1 BB - 1-1000 lb. hit. 1 CL or DD - 1-1000 lb. hit believed sunk.

After these attacks 3 carriers out of action and later sank.

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A16

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
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Subject: Battle of Midway (Cont'd) -----

47. Summary of losses inflicted on the enemy on 4 June (Cont'd).

<u>Time</u>	<u>Attacking Unit</u>	<u>Type Attack</u>	<u>Ship Sunk</u>	<u>Ship Damaged</u>
<u>SUBMARINE</u>				
1359	NAUTILUS	Torpedo	SORYU - 3 hits; this ship sunk by aircraft and submarine.	

CARRIER FORCES

1705	40 VSB (HORNET) (ENTERPRISE & YORKTOWN)	Dive Bombing	HIRYU - Many hits, sank next morning.	1 BB - 2 hits 1 BB - 3 hits 1 CA - 2 hits
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After this attack 4 Japanese carriers were out of action.

MIDWAY FORCES

1810	12 B17	Horizontal Bombing	1 DD	AKAGI(CV) 3 hits 1 CA - 1 hit 1 CA - 1 hit, smoking.
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5 JUNE

48. After attacking the HIRYU, Task Force 16 stood to the eastward and back to the westward during the night. Fighter attacks on B-17's before sunset indicated possibly a fifth Japanese carrier northwest of Midway and there was every indication that the enemy was continuing to close. The first information on the 5th was TAMBOR's report of many ships 90 miles west of Midway. This looked like a landing attempt, so Task Force 16 changed course to a point north of Midway and increased speed to 25 knots. When

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reports after daylight made it clear that the Japanese had reversed course, the Task Force headed west and then northwest in pursuit of a burning CV lagging behind 2 BB (1 damaged), 3 CA and 4 DD. At 1500-1530 a striking group of planes from each carrier set off in a 250 mile search to the northwest, unsuccessfully; the only quarry found were 2 DD (possibly only 1) which were bombed but not hit.

49. Because of the night contact indicating that the enemy was persisting in his plans for a landing attack, all submarines were directed to close Midway in order to take advantage of the opportunity to attack transports and supporting ships when they were most vulnerable. After the retirement of the enemy became apparent, the fastest submarines were sent in chase and others returning from western patrols were directed to the expected lines of retirement of the enemy.

50. There were several contacts on the 5th by scouting planes, the two major ones being:

- (a) a transport group west of Midway trailed by 2 damaged CA (reported as BB);
- (b) the already mentioned retiring striking force of 2 BB (1 damaged), 3 CA, 4 DD trailed by a burning carrier to the northwest.

About 0430 12 B-17's departed in search of the western group but because of unfavorable weather could not locate them. Later, as more patrol plane reports came in, they found the target and attacked just after a group of 12 marine dive bombers. These leaving Midway at 0700 had struck a wide oil slick about 40 miles from the CA's and followed it in to attack position. Dives began at 0808. Results were:

1 CA (already damaged)	1 hit forward
	1 close miss astern.

When the planes left between 0820 and 0830 the CA was listed "badly" to starboard and turning in sharp circles to starboard.

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51. Eight B-17's attacked both the damaged CA's about 0830 with 4 to 8-500 pound bombs per plane, altitude 19,000 - 20,000 feet. They report one certain hit on stern of 1 CA.

52. At 1320 in the afternoon, 7 B-17's armed with 8-500 bombs each set out to the northwest to attack the remnants of the Japanese striking force; and at 1545 another group of 5 departed. Enroute, the first group sighted 1 CA but found nothing beyond. On the return journey, bombing from 9,000 to 16,000 feet, they report making 3 hits on the CA, bearing 300°, distant 300 miles from Midway. The second group likewise found and attacked only 1 CA, bearing 320°, 425 miles from Midway, no hits. On this attack one pilot dropped his bomb-bay gasoline tank with the bombs and did not return. One other plane ran out of gas and landed in the sea 15 miles from Midway, plane and 1 of the crew lost. These were the only losses of B17's attack on the Japanese fleet.

53. Summary of losses inflicted on the enemy 5 June:

1 CA (already damaged)	1 hit (Both hits may have
1 CA (already damaged)	1 hit been on same CA)
1 CA	3 hits

6 JUNE 1942

54. Task Force 16's search to the northwest on 5 June had been unsuccessful and weather conditions there were deteriorating. The best opportunity for contacting any of the fleeing enemy units appeared to be to the West. Therefore, on the evening of 5 June the force was turned to a westerly course, and speed reduced to 15 knots because of a growing shortage of fuel in the destroyers.

55. At 0510, 6 June, 18 VSB were launched for a 200 mile search in the western semicircle. Two contacts were made almost simultaneously. The first at 0640 was of 2 CA and 2 DD on course SW, speed 15 bearing about 275, distance 400 miles from Midway. The second at 0645, bearing about 280°, distance 435 miles from Midway, though variously identified, appears to have been the MIKUMA and HOGAMI with 3 or 4 DD on course west, speed 10.

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56. The HORNET's planes launched the first attack, striking the MOGAMI group between 0930 and 1000. Positions plotted on chart of battle are estimated from all data available and do not accord with HORNET's plot. Results appear to be:

1 CA - 2-1000 lb., 1 - 500 pound bomb hits.

1 CA - 2 - 1000 lb. bomb hits

1 DD - 1 - 500 lb. bomb hit. A cruiser SOC pilot saw this ship sink.

57. ENTERPRISE Group now attacked most effectively. After sighting 2 CA with 2 or 3 DD, part of the group searched ahead for the reported BB. One of the VB Squadrons, however, quitting the search began attacking the two CA at about 1140. The other squadrons came in at intervals later so that the last attack was not finished until after 1300. From the stories of survivors of MIKUMA it appears that the first planes at 1140 hit and disabled the MIKUMA and the last ones about 1300 finished her off when a bomb amidships detonated her torpedoes. The ENTERPRISE Group reported 1 CA as "dead in the water burning furiously with heavy explosions" shattered and abandoned. If they had waited a few minutes their account would have been different. She heeled over and sank very soon after the last hit.

58. The other CA, apparently the MOGAMI, was also hit but proceeded westward making an oil slick and smoking heavily. Two destroyers accompanied her.

59. Two hours later the HORNET launched the final attack of the four day battle with 1000 pound bombs, leaving the MOGAMI gutted and abandoned, and reporting hits on another CA or CL and one hit on a destroyer. A photographic plane, which obtained the pictures accompanying enclosure, while over the MOGAMI hulk about 1730 saw a CL and a destroyer fleeing to the westward.

60. The only other attack on 6 June was by a flight of 11 B-17's sent out to attack the transport force on its estimated retirement course. This force was not found. On the return by separate routes one section of 6 of these at 1640, bearing about 262, 400 miles from Midway, dropped a pattern of 20-1000 and 1100

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pound bombs and reported two hits on a cruiser which "sank in 15 seconds". This was the U.S.S. GRAYLING hastily submerging. Fortunately she received no damage.

61. Results of attacks on 6 June were:

2 CA, MOGAMI and MIKUMA, sunk.

1 CL or DL damaged.

1 DD sunk.

1 DD damaged by strafing.

62. After YORKTOWN was abandoned on 4 June, HUGHES was left to guard her during the night. Task Force 16 cruisers re-joined their force. Part of Task Force 17 proceeded to tanker rendezvous for fueling; remainder of Force proceeded to eastward clear of YORKTOWN with plans for salvage next day. VIREO, SEMINOLE, NAVAJO, and FULTON, had meanwhile been dispatched to assist. The following morning the HUGHES rescued from YORKTOWN 2 wounded enlisted men, who had not been found in the darkened damaged ship when she was abandoned, and a YORKTOWN fighter pilot, shot down in action, who rowed up in his boat. VIREO joined about noon 5 June and at 1436 began towing at about 2 knots on course 090. GWINN joined about 1600 and put salvage party aboard. MONAGHAN joined soon afterwards. Salvage party was removed at dusk.

63. At 0220 on 6 June HAMMANN, BALCH and BENHAM joined under commanding officer YORKTOWN. Destroyer screen circled at 12-14 knots. Salvage party went aboard (later HAMMANN secured alongside to assist) and had reduced list several degrees when at 1335 torpedo wakes were observed. At 1336 YORKTOWN received 2 hits, and HAMMANN 2 hits, one under her bridge and the second just abaft the mainmast. HAMMANN sank at 1339 with many heavy explosions, probably depth charges or warheads, which killed a number of personnel in the water. Questioning of HAMMANN personnel has brought out that

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not only were safety forks in place, but they were inspected after HAMMANN was hit. There is a possibility that another torpedo struck as she sank, detonating war heads or depth charges.

64. Remaining salvage party was removed from YORKTOWN and surviving personnel rescued from the sea. Search for the submarine continued with intermittent contacts (many false) and depth charge attacks all afternoon, one bringing up heavy oil. At 1845 heavy black smoke was sighted on the horizon 19,000 yards from the destroyers and was soon identified as coming from an enemy submarine (smoke probably from Diesels) proceeding away from YORKTOWN at high speed. Destroyers gave chase and opened fire. Submarine submerged at about 2127 with last splashes on in deflection and apparently straddling. Search was continued until about 0300, 7 June with no results except location of a large oil slick, diesel odor. It is believed the submarine was damaged but not sunk.

65. After slowly capsizing to port, at 0501, 7 June, in about 30-36 N, 176-34 W, YORKTOWN sank.

LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ACTION

66. This action brings out some new lessons and drives home other definite ones previously learned. For convenient reference, at the expense of some repetition, these are discussed in this section.

67. The Concept of a Mobile Air Force is not acceptable for the Mid-Pacific area with present planes and present facilities. For a long coastal district it may be possible to maintain large air forces at major dispersing centers and to move them effectively from point to point as the situation requires. This is not true of the area in which Oahu is the central base. Most points are too weakly held and do not yet have adequate service units and facilities. Pilots in our rapidly expanding air forces are not and will not for some time be sufficiently trained to operate effectively in a number of remote and unfamiliar localities. Distances over water between landing fields are too great - we could not get fighter reinforcements to Midway on 4 June after virtually all the fighters there had

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been put out of action combating the one short Japanese raid. The lesson is simply that we must provide more and more planes permanently based at those advanced stations which are subject to enemy attack.

68. Planes for Army and Navy. One of the primary weaknesses which showed up quickly in action was the Navy's lack of certain plane types already in use by the Army, and equally the unsuitability of certain Army types for the type of job required of them in these island areas. Each service must obviously have the types of planes it requires, regardless of any earlier agreements of Joint Boards which limit types or functions.

(a) The Navy PBY's, while excellent for long range search, do not have the performance or defensive characteristics required to stand up against strong enemy air opposition. The vital requirement of continuous tracking, therefore, fails when enemy air enters the picture. On the other hand, the Army has its B-17's and B-24's, types which are very well adapted to this service. Sufficient numbers of these types should be immediately made available to the Navy for long range search and tracking purposes.

(b) High altitude horizontal bombing has proven itself relatively ineffective against maneuvering surface vessels. As Commander Cruiser Division SIX states, "Our own sea forces, and apparently enemy sea forces, have little respect for high altitude bombing, the results of which are mostly 'near misses'," and not near enough. Even in peacetime, high altitude horizontal bombing from about 10,000 feet results in only a small percentage of hits on a maneuvering target of battleship size, and as the altitude increases the percentage goes further down. Such results will not stop a determined fleet. On the other hand, the aircraft torpedo and dive bomber have proven themselves, in this action as well as in all prior experience of other belligerents, to be the only truly effective weapon for such attack. Island and coastal based planes should consist of a large percentage of these types, whether they are manned by the Army or the Navy.

(c) It has been our practice to complement Marine fighter squadrons on shore with planes of carrier type. This results in a distinct and unwarranted reduction in performance and ability to

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combat the enemy. Having adequate ground facilities, the Marine VF squadrons ought to be furnished with the very best fighting planes available to the country. Because of the limitations which carrier operation imposes on Naval planes, suitable fighters will naturally be Army types.

69. More Planes are Required in Oahu. We must speedily increase the flow of planes of all types, with service units, facilities and personnel, to the Mid-Pacific area. Strong aircraft reinforcements in the Hawaiian-Midway area were received in flights of B-17's from the west coast and in the highly valuable HAMMONDSPORT and KITTYHAWK during the last half of May. Even so, the shorebased aircraft strength in this area was not adequate in numbers or in types and could not alone have stopped or even checked the Japanese advance. Had we lacked early information of the Japanese movement, and had we been caught with Carrier Task Forces dispersed, possibly as far away as the Coral Sea, the Battle of Midway would have ended far differently.

70. A Grid System Capable of Easy Application to extensive joint over water operations by Army and Navy, or by either or both in conjunction with Allied air or naval forces, is a necessity. Neither the Navy basic grid, nor the Air Warning Service grid, is universally adaptable. Each possesses particular advantages for particular uses. Both were available during the Battle of Midway. Neither was used. Instead, recourse was had to designating positions either by bearing and distance from a prearranged reference point or in latitude - longitude coordinates, the only two methods quickly applicable by an air pilot or navigator without extensive advance preparation. The present British lettered coordinate system, S.P 02274, provides for designating positions by either bearing and distance from any even degree latitude-longitude intersection or in encoded latitude-longitude coordinates. This system has worldwide application, distribution to allied naval forces is already complete, and security is good. We should adopt it.

71. The excellent Coordination of Dive bombing and torpedo plane attacks, so successful in the Coral Sea, was missing in the Battle of Midway. Chief among the factors preventing coordination were the Japanese tactics in concentrating fighters on

SECRET

Subject: Battle of Midway (Cont'd)

our torpedo planes. This let the dive bombers in so that we sank their carriers just the same, but at the very high cost of most of our torpedo planes.

72. TBD planes are fatally inadequate for their purpose. The loss of the brave men who unhesitatingly went to their death in them is grievous. The TBF is much improved, but still cannot attack ships defended by fighters without fighter support. Long range carrier fighters must be developed.

73. The Japanese apparently had fighter protection over their carriers from about 20,000 feet on down to the torpedo plane attack level. We shall have to establish at least 2 levels of fighter combat patrol.

74. Our F4F-4 is markedly inferior to the Japanese Zero fighter in speed, maneuverability, and climb. These characteristics must be improved, but not at the cost of reducing the present overall superiority that in the Battle of Midway enabled our carrier fighter squadrons to shoot down about 3 zero fighters for each of our own lost. However much this superiority may exist in our splendid pilots, part at least rests in the armor, armament and leak proof tanks of our planes.

75. In most engagements our fighters were outnumbered. For this campaign the number of fighters in each carrier was increased from 18 to 27. It may be necessary to increase even further the percentage of VF types carried.

76. Replacement carrier air groups must be ready ashore so that after battle a depleted carrier group can be brought to a shore station for refreshment and replacements. Each replacement group should be kept as a complete unit and should be highly trained before going to sea.

77. Satisfactory training still shows up as one of the greatest difficulties in war operations, both for antiaircraft gunners and aircraft personnel. Task Force commanders are taking every opportunity possible underway to fire practices and train pilots in attack procedures. At best, this training can only

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

SECRET

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Battle of Midway (Cont'd) \_\_\_\_\_

prevent deterioration of skill. Basic and thorough refresher training must be given at shore schools. The proficiency of our personnel, both ship and aircraft, will not reach the level desired until shore schools and training devices under development are fully in service.

78. Aircraft should be launched and attack completed with the absolute minimum loss of time. Once the attack was joined, our pilots pressed it home with resolution and matchless audacity; but it is believed their successes would have been greater and their losses smaller had there been closer coordination of attacking types.

79. Aircraft tracking of enemy formations has been unsatisfactory because of inadequate types and numbers of planes. Early, accurate, and continuous information of the enemy is essential for successful attack by carrier groups. Contact once made must be held and tracking information broadcast. Tracking should be conducted by shore based planes, when in range of suitable bases. The Japanese employment as scouts of seaplanes carried by tenders warrants study. No matter how efficient this search and tracking, carriers should still maintain an alert search with their own planes, accepting reduction in offensive power for greater security. The Japanese have been very successful with non-carrier searching, but in the Coral Sea and at Midway they were caught with planes on deck.

80. Fighter direction was much better than in the Coral Sea. Over half the bombers and torpedo planes that attacked the YORKTOWN, along with a number of accompanying fighters, were shot down. Development of tactics in stationing fighters at various altitudes and distances from the carrier, along with the Fighter Direction School now being established in Oahu, should produce further improvement.

81. Superfrequency voice sets are needed for fighter direction and other limited range voice communication.

SECRET

Subject: Battle of Midway (Cont'd) -----

82. Communications were swift and efficient. By placing all Midway planes, whether Army or Navy, and all submarines operating there on a common radio frequency with provision that surface craft intercept these reports, many relays of enemy information were eliminated with consequent earlier receipt by interested commanders.

83. All carriers must have two search Radars one (if not both) of which is at least equal in performance to CXAM. The SC does not meet this requirement.

84. Gasoline fires in carriers are a serious menace. YORKTOWN, though hit by three bombs and set afire, had no gasoline fires, possibly because of the effective use of CO<sub>2</sub> in the gasoline system.

85. Gunnery still improves on those ships that have been in action a number of times. Some crews have been in enough battles to consider themselves seasoned veterans. Part of the improvement is in better fire discipline that comes with battle experience. A very important part comes from the greater number of automatic weapons now on our ships. Most ships need more of these. The greatest need, at present, is for the directors and lead computing sights now under manufacture for automatic weapons.

86. Effectiveness of aircraft torpedoes and bombs must be increased.

(a) A larger torpedo warhead is urgently required. The present strengthened torpedo is a favorable step in the right direction, but the torpedo must be designed for much higher speed drops. In the Midway action the B-26 and TBF planes received their most serious losses from Japanese fighters when they slowed down to limiting torpedo dropping speed.

(b) Had the 1000 lb. armor piercing bomb under development been available for dive bombers, fewer of the many ships that were hit would have escaped; and fewer hits would have been needed to destroy the carriers.

**SECRET**

Subject: Battle of Midway (Cont'd) -----

87. The value of a close screen in protecting carrier against torpedo planes was demonstrated during the attacks on the YORKTOWN. Not over 4 planes got through to launch torpedoes. Unfortunately she was slowed down by previous damage or she might have avoided these. A strong screen of 4 cruisers and a squadron of destroyers is the present minimum requirement for task forces containing a carrier. Present reorganization of forces places them at approximately this strength.

88. Combined training is needed by land based aircraft and Fleet units to provide for better exchange of information and coordination of attack. The superior operations of the unit of B-17's under Lieut. Colonel W. C. Sweeney, U.S.A. of 431st Bombardment Squadron show the benefit of prolonged experience with naval forces which this squadron had obtained during coordinated patrol operations. All units require more training in sending clear, complete and accurate reports that will give a commander all the information he needs to know, completely correct, without repeated questioning.

89. Correct information is still one of the hardest things for a commander to get in action. It is especially difficult in such a battle of many battles as this one was, spread over a vast sea area. Training, suitable tracking aircraft, and some of the other steps mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs should alleviate this difficulty. It is considered that Commanders of Task Force SIXTEEN and SEVENTEEN and Naval Air Station Midway showed sound judgement and decision in correctly interpreting the many confused situations that came up during the action.

90. The performance of officers and men was of the highest order not only at Midway and afloat but equally so among those at Oahu not privileged to be in the front line of battle. I am proud to report that the cooperative devotion to duty of all those involved was so marked that, despite the necessarily decisive part played by our three carriers, this defeat of the Japanese Arms and ambitions was truly a victory of the United States' armed forces and not of the Navy alone.

*C. W. Nimitz*  
C. W. NIMITZ

A16-3 (Pacific Area - General)

COMINCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

July 12, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Pacific Operations.

There is no completed detailed plan for major offensive operations in the Pacific. Such plans are in process of being developed. Our current strategy contemplates the strategic defensive in the Pacific and offensive in the Atlantic. A change therein would require a great deal of detailed planning which will take considerable time.

Operations now underway with a target date of August 1 contemplate an advance to the northwestward from the South Pacific area initially to capture and occupy the Solomon Islands. For these we have been limited in planes, landing boats, parachute troops, etc. In case conditions are favorable this advance will be extended to include the occupation of hostile positions in New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago.

A major factor affecting plans for an offensive against Japan is whether or not war breaks out between Russia and Japan. In any event the plan would include an advance from the South and Southwest Pacific areas to the northward along the TRUK - GUAM - SAIPAN line, and/or to the northwestward through the Malay barrier and Borneo to the Philippines. This might be accompanied by action from Siberian Russia, in case Russia is at war. Planning for any action in the Siberian area will have to be based on information as to facilities now in the area or which can be established there. At present we do not have this information. Eventually our plans might well include operations based in China.

AIR FORCES

We would immediately augment air forces in the Central, South and Southwest Pacific to the extent practicable with the facilities now available or which can be quickly established. In addition we would build up in the continental United States an air force in readiness for use in eastern Siberia or China. Service troops would be rerouted to Australia and the South Pacific in order to prepare facilities for use of the augmented air forces. It is estimated that about two-thirds of the 52 groups now set up for Bolero could be used in the Pacific area, including the Alaskan area. That part of the 34 groups for which facilities can be provided in the South and Southwest Pacific would be used in those areas. The remainder would be held in the

UNITED STATES FLEET  
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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

July 12, 1942.

United States and Alaska in readiness for use in Siberia. The date at which these additional air forces could be effectively used would approximate the dates these units would be available for Bolero, as modified by the greater distance involved. The increased air strength made available under this plan should give us control of the air in the Pacific theatre.

The remainder of the Bolero air forces (approximately 18 groups) would be available for use in the United Kingdom. Present commitments of air forces for the Middle East (9 groups) and for the India-China area (4 groups) would be carried out, with a possibility of increase for the latter. The Russian protocol would be maintained.

NAVAL FORCES

A direction of our major effort to the Pacific would result in no major change in the present naval forces in the Atlantic. It would, however, allow some strengthening of anti-submarine measures in the Atlantic.

GROUND FORCES

We should complete the relief of the British troops in Iceland and carry out our previous commitments under MAGNET for ground forces in the British Isles. These measures would require a strengthening of the Iceland garrison by about 15,000 and the movement of two additional divisions to the British Isles. A very large reduction of service troops now planned for Bolero would be made and these troops would be turned to the Pacific. The airborne and parachute troops now planned for Bolero and three Army amphibious divisions would be dispatched to the Pacific theater where they are urgently required. Additional troops would be required to garrison the islands wrested from the Japanese. No estimate can be made at this time as to the number which might eventually be required.

The great bulk of the landing craft now set up for BOLERO would be diverted to the Pacific operations where a large number of these craft would be necessary.

SHIPPING

Bolero shipping for August and September approximates 100,000 men with equipment per month. About one-half of this is British shipping. Approximately three-fourths of the Bolero shipping might be diverted to the Pacific. If British Bolero shipping remains available, it would provide a

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NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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July 12, 1942.

troop and cargo capacity of 40,000 men per month in the Pacific. The reduced capacity is due to the longer turn around.

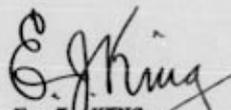
All of the foregoing figures are based on a hurried survey of the situation. More exact data will be developed in the course of planning for a major offensive in the Pacific.

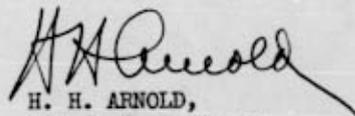
EFFECT ON RUSSIAN AND MIDDLE EAST FRONTS

Russian. Turning to the Pacific would adversely affect the United Nations' effort on the Russian-European front. If the Japanese attack the Russians, strong offensive action on our part in the Pacific would have a favorable effect on the Russian-Asiatic front.

Middle East. The Pacific operation would have little direct or immediate effect on the Middle East situation. Strong action on our part against Japan would serve to eliminate the danger of a Japanese move against India.

  
G. C. MARSHALL,  
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army.

  
E. J. KING,  
Admiral, U.S. Navy.

  
H. H. ARNOLD,  
Chief of Air Corps,  
U.S. Army.

A16-3 (Patrol Report Submarines)

*Not to be placed in secret file*

FF12-10/A16-3

Submarines, Pacific Fleet

Jk

Serial: 0750

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
June 30, 1942

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

For Month of June

For War

(n) Total number of submarines returned from patrol

11

41

2. Combatant ships included in paragraph 1 above are as follows:

For Month of June

For War

(a) Total Tonnage sunk

12,035

19,595

(b) Total tonnage damaged

0

1,500

(c) Type ships sunk

1 - AV  
2 - SS

1 - AV  
6 - SS  
3 - Patrol Vessels

(d) Type ships damaged

--

1 Patrol Vessel

(e) Submarines accounting for above tonnage

11

(f) Tonnage damaged

16,100

(g) Ships damaged

R. H. ENGLISH

(h) Submarines accounting for

2

DISTRIBUTION:  
(21CM-42)

105

List I, Case 3;

23.8%

SSs

Special:

44.2%

Cominch

ComsubSWPac

Comsublant

7,742

OinC Subschool NL

(i) Average number days enroute to and from patrol area

28

(j) Average number days in assigned patrol area

COPY

Show to President

*Capt McCrea*

FF12-10/A16-3

SUBMARINES, PACIFIC FLEET

Serial: 0750

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
June 30, 1942

C O N F I D E N T I A L

From: The Commander Submarines, Pacific Fleet.  
To : The Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.  
Subject: Summary of Information on Submarine Attacks.

1. A summary of information on war operations of Submarines, Pacific Fleet, is furnished herewith. The data is compiled from reports submitted by submarines which have returned from war patrols or from despatch reports of submarines not returning to this command. This summation includes, therefore, all reports submitted to date, but does not include data for submarines of this command which are now absent on patrol missions; a lag in reporting results of sinkings by patrolling submarines is inevitable in this report due to necessity of maintaining radio security.

	<u>For Month of June</u>	<u>For War</u>
(a) Total tonnage sunk	130,940	352,804
(b) Total ships sunk	29	61
(c) Submarines accounting for above tonnage	11	29
(d) Tonnage damaged	16,100	56,800
(e) Ships damaged	2	10
(f) Submarines accounting for above tonnage	2	7
(g) Torpedoes fired	105	312
(h) Percentage of hits	23.8%	26.3%
(i) Percentage of successful attacks	44.2%	40.9%
(j) Average number miles enroute to and from area	7,742	6,909
(k) Average number days enroute to and from patrol area	28	29
(l) Average number days in assigned patrol area	28	22
(m) Length of patrol in days	55	51

A16-3/A9 (Mid-Pacific)

AR/137/147 (26.2)

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**UNITED STATES FLEET**  
**HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF**  
NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

FF1/A16-3(1)(2)/

Serial

1st Memorandum Endorsement on

GinCpac conf. ltr., File No. A8/(37)/JAP/  
(26.2), Serial 01848, of JUNE 28, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.  
To : The Vice Chief of Naval Operations  
(The Director of Naval Intelligence).

Subject: Interrogation of Japanese Prisoners rescued  
at sea off Midway on 19 June, 1942.

1. Forwarded.

G. L. RUSSELL,  
By direction.

AS/(37)/JAP/(26.2) UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF AEV

Serial 01848

CONFIDENTIAL

June 28 1942.

From: Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
To: The Chief of Naval Operations (Director of Naval  
Intelligence).  
Via : Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.  
Subject: Interrogation of Japanese Prisoners rescued at sea off  
Midway on 19 June, 1942.

1. The following is a report of the preliminary interrogation of thirty four Japanese prisoners, who were picked up 19 June, 1942, to the westward of Midway by the U.S.S. BALLARD. These prisoners were taken to Midway, where they were interrogated on 20 and 21 June by two Japanese language officers from this command, who were flown there from Pearl Harbor. This interrogation covered only points which were of immediate tactical value and it is believed much additional information may be forthcoming upon arrival of these prisoners at Pearl Harbor.

2. The prisoners were all on the carrier HIRYU and consisted of Engineering Commander Elso, who was Chief Engineer, Engineering Lieutenant Kajishima, Engineering Ensign Mandai, Engineering Warrant Officer Suruda and thirty (30) men of the engineering force. The majority of these men were from the engineroom force of the HIRYU, although a few were from the boiler room force and one was an electrician. Most of the prisoners, including the officers, were willing to talk about any subject of which they had knowledge. Their stories concerning the Battle of Midway were rather sketchy because all their battle stations were below decks.

3. The HIRYU, in company with one or two destroyers, left Sasebo on 20 May and proceeded by way of the Bungo Channel to Hashirajima, an island in the Inland Sea near Kure. Here the HIRYU joined up with some of the units, including part of Batdiv 3, which were to constitute the Midway Striking Force. Batdiv One was also reported to be present at this time. The HIRYU's planes were delivered to her here. She had taken aboard all her ammunition at Sasebo. While at Hashirajima the HIRYU exercised at carrierlandings, carried out an engineering overhaul and received fuel from the TOYO MARU, a 9000 ton tanker. This part of the Striking Force left Hashirajima on about 27 May and proceeded directly to Midway by way of the Bungo Channel. The HIRYU received fuel two or three days before the attack on Midway from a tanker similar to the TOYO MARU.

4. The composition of the Striking Force at Midway was as follows:

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Subject: Interrogation of Japanese Prisoners rescued at sea off  
Midway on 19 June, 1942.

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Carriers

CarDiv One

AKAGI  
KAGA (Flag)

CarDiv Two

SORYU  
HIRYU (Flag)

BatDiv Three

HARUNA  
KIRISHIMA (or KONGO)

Heavy Cruisers

CruDiv Eight

TONE  
CHIKUMA

Destroyers

DesRon Ten

NAGARA (CL) -Flag.

8 to 12 destroyers

5. The following is a narrative of the Battle of Midway reconstructed from the stories of the prisoners. All times are Midway (plus 12), although minus nine time was used by the Japanese aboard ship.

- (1) Between 0430 and 0500 on 4 June, the HIRYU launched planes for the attack upon Midway.
- (2) At 0900 the Striking Force was attacked by our planes. In this attack the AKAGI, KAGA and SORYU were hit and caught fire. The HIRYU received one near miss but no hits. None of this attack nor the damage to any of the other ships was observed by any of the prisoners, all of them remaining at their battle stations. The damage to the other three carriers was announced by loudspeaker which said that the SORYU, in particular, was burning very badly and that it was "now up to the HIRYU to carry on the fight for the glory of greater Japan."
- (3) Shortly after the above attack the HIRYU recovered her own planes and left the Striking Force in company with two destroyers and proceeded to the North (direction not certain) to search for and attack enemy carriers believed to be in the vicinity.

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- (4) Planes were launched again and recovered prior to the second attack upon the HIRYU. The times of launching and recovery of this flight was not known. It was rumored that they had set fire to one enemy carrier (stated by Commander Eiso to be the YORKTOWN) and perhaps to two carriers.
  - (5) At about 1700 the HIRYU received a terrific attack at which time she received an indefinite number of dive bomb hits, four at least. She was further attacked by planes during the night. The HIRYU received no torpedo hits. She caught fire forward and aft and burned throughout the night. Evidently the whole upper portion of the ship with the exception of the engineering spaces was on fire at one time or another during the night.
  - (6) The HIRYU sank at about 0900, June 5. The fact that three wrist watches, obtained from survivors who had jumped over the side just previous to the sinking, had stopped at between 0607 and 0615 (-9 time) lends credence to the fact that this was the time that the HIRYU sank.
  - (7) There were no planes on deck when the HIRYU sank. The prisoners stated definitely that the planes did not take off after their return from the attack upon our carriers.
6. The prisoners had remained in the engineering spaces for some time after all engineering equipment had ceased running and until the smoke there had become intolerable. They had to break through a deck to get clear. When they got topside they found that they were the only ones left aboard ship, the rest of the officers and crew having transferred earlier to the two destroyers, which had accompanied the HIRYU. The prisoners and particularly Lieutenant Kajishima seemed very surprised and disgusted that the Commanding Officer had left the ship, while they were still aboard. The prisoners dove over the side and swam to a lifeboat. There were thirty nine of them at the beginning. Four died at sea and one aboard the BALLARD. The lifeboat was equipped withhardtack, tallow, water and beer. It appears that the Chief Engineer disposed of a little more than his share of this, for which reason, it was rumored, the men were considering throwing him overboard.

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7. One prisoner stated that he thought the cause of sinking of the HIRYU was an explosion in a powder magazine. Another stated that at about 0600, 5 June, he heard a very loud explosion aboard.

8. In addition to the statements of every prisoner that they had been attached to the HIRYU, letters addressed to the HIRYU were taken from the prisoners and a life preserver and an oar of the lifeboat from which these men were recovered were marked "HIRYU". This lifeboat is being brought to Pearl Harbor by the BAILLARD.

9. None of the prisoners wish to return to Japan, nor do they wish that the Japanese Government be informed of their capture, preferring to have it believed that they sank with the ship.

10. The tonnage of the HIRYU was stated by several to be 10,050 tons and had a maximum speed of about 30 knots. The Chief Engineer said that it was 20,000 tons and could make 33 knots, which he said was also the top speed of the KAGA and AKAGI.

11. The HIRYU had 4 propellers, 4 enginerooms and eight boilers.

12. The island of the HIRYU was on the port side amidships, whereas that of the SORYU was on the starboard side. Some stated that they believed the islands of the AKAGI and KAGA were likewise on opposite sides.

13. The HIRYU had two stacks on the starboard side amidships and two signal masts on each side aft. These masts could be raised and lowered through an arc of 90 degrees. Behind the bridge was a tripod mast.

14. The ship had three elevators - forward, amidships and aft. Six aircraft arresting wires were placed athwartships from midship aft. The deck had three longitudinal white lines running fore and aft with a large red circle surrounded by a border of white painted forward. The fantail was painted with red and white longitudinal stripes and projecting out from each side of the stern like ears were nets.

15. No definite information could be gained of the intended future movements of the Striking Force. Commander Elso said that they were to go South after the attack on Midway. A petty officer stated that he thought they were going North.

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16. The December 7th attack on Hawaii was carried out by the forces previously determined, including six aircraft carriers.

17. The HIRYU did not take part in the Battle of the Java Sea. It did take part in the Battle of Ceylon, however. Through further interrogation it is believed an almost exact schedule of at least CarDiv 2 since the beginning of the war may be obtained.

18. Ensign Mandai stated that there is no CarDiv 3. A seemingly most alert and intelligent petty officer stated that CarDiv 3 consisted of the RYUJO and HOSHO and that CarDiv 4 consisted of the ZUIHO and SHOHO. Commander Eiso said that he did not know what ships were in CarDiv 3, but that he thought that the RYUJO and JUNYO made up CarDiv 4. This point may be cleared up through further interrogation. The composition of CarDivs One, Two and Five are as we previously estimated.

19. There had been no carrier "RYUKAKU". The carrier that we have been calling "RYUKAKU" which was sunk in the Coral Sea was the "SHOHO", formerly the submarine tender TSURUGIZAKI. The ZUIHO was the sister of the SHOHO and was converted from the submarine tender TAKASAKI. These two ships were said to be less than 10,000 tons, probably about 8,000 tons.

20. No one knew much concerning the carrier HIYO. It may be that this ship, which is possibly a sister ship of the JUNYO, has not been completed as yet. It is believed that the JUNYO and HIYO are converted carriers.

21. The tonnage of the ZUIKAKU was said by all to be between 20 and 30,000 tons. It was admitted that the SHOKAKU had been damaged in the Battle of the Coral Sea and is now in Kure undergoing repairs.

22. The information regarding converted merchantmen was rather confusing, but it appears definite that there is a converted carrier called the "KASUGA MARU". It is probable from various statements made that several other large passenger liners have been or are being converted into aircraft carriers.

23. The intelligent petty officer mentioned above also stated that a sister ship to the battleship YAMATO called the "MUSASHI" was being built in the Mitsubishi Yards in Nagasaki. He was quite definite about this and further stated that he thought the YAMATO had been built at the Kure Navy Yard. Ensign Mandai mentioned a carrier called the "AOTAKA".

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24. The battleship division organization is as has been estimated, except that the YAMATO may not be assigned to any division.

25. Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo was stated to be the Commander of the First Air Fleet and ComCarDiv One. Vice Admiral Nobutaka Kondo Commander-in-Chief Second Fleet. Vice Admiral Inouye Commander-in-Chief Fourth Fleet and Rear Admiral Tamon Yamaguchi ComCarDiv Two. Note that Yamaguchi was Naval Attache in Washington at the time of the Farnsworth case.

26. The destroyers KIKUZUKI and MIYATSUKI were said to be in DesDiv 23. One prisoner had served in the NOJIMA a ship of about 600 tons which is on patrol duty in the Yangste River. Another had had duty in the tanker NOTORO, about 8,000 tons, which he says is no longer in use. Another had served in the destroyer TADE which he says is now a training ship. The destroyer HAITAI was said to be in the 29th Division. A destroyer "HAYATE" has been carried in this division.

27. The Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet in the YAMATO, along with battleship divisions, are thought to have spent a great amount of time at Hashirajima since the beginning of the war. Hiroshima Bay at this place is a small island-locked bay, ideal for the protection of ships from submarine attack and the entrances to this bay are reported to be mined. There are no navy yard facilities here.

28. These prisoners are being transferred to Pearl Harbor. It is believed that much more valuable information can be obtained from them.

C. W. NIMITZ

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C.T.F. 18	(1 copy)

C O P Y

# 6

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
FLAG OFFICE  
RECEIVED

Cincpac File No.  
Al6/(90)  
Serial 01693

**UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

6 318 JB  
1942 JUN 20 11 53

S-E-C-R-E-T

From: The Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
To: The Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.

Subject: Battle of Midway - Advance Report of.

- Enclosures:
- (A) CO ENTERPRISE Serial 0133 with Track Chart.
  - (B) CO ENTERPRISE Serial 0137 with Track Chart of Air attack Group.
  - (C) Statements from various Marine Corps Air Personnel from Midway.
  - (D) Extracts from Communication Logs.
  - (E) Memorandum from Rear Admiral Spruance with several memoranda attached.
  - (F) Patrol Report of U.S.S. NAUTILUS.
  - (G) CO HORNET Serial 0018 with Track Chart, etc.
  - (H) Comcrupac Ltr of 14 June 1942.

1. AS an advance report on the Battle of Midway Enclosures are forwarded herewith.
2. The report is being transmitted to the Commandant, Twelfth Naval District, in the custody of Commander Jeter, with the request that the Commandant, Twelfth Naval District dispatch it immediately via officer messenger to the Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.
3. The enclosures have just arrived and are being forwarded, without delay for analysis, in order that the Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet, may have immediate details concerning the battle. These reports give only a partial picture of events in the Battle of Midway. When all accounts are available it may be possible to determine whether 4 or 5 Japanese carriers were involved and how many ships of the enemy's navy were sunk in this decisive victory.
4. A complete report giving a comprehensive account of the action with comments by the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, will be forwarded as soon as a thorough study can be made of the engagement.

*Without Photos*

*C. W. Nimitz*  
C. W. NIMITZ

①

A

CV6/A16-3/(60-Br) U. S. S. ENTERPRISE  
( 0133 )

**CONFIDENTIAL**

At Sea;  
June 8, 1942

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Via: Commander Task Force Sixteen.  
(Rear Admiral R.A. Spruance, U.S. Navy).  
Subject: Battle of Midway Island, June 4 - 6, 1942 -  
Report of.  
Reference: (a) Articles 712 and 874, U.S. Navy  
Regulations, 1920.  
Enclosures: (A) Track Chart.  
(B) Photographs of enemy CA, damaged in  
the action of June 6, 1942.  
(C) Executive Officer's Report.

**I. PRELIMINARY.**

1. On the afternoon and evening of June 3, 1942, the general situation prior to the battle was as follows (times throughout are Zone plus 10): Task Force Seventeen and Task Force Sixteen had previously rendezvoused in the general vicinity of "Point Luck", approximately 350 miles northeast of Midway Island and were operating in that area closing Midway during darkness and opening during the day, remaining east of the longitude of Midway. Both Task Forces had completed fueling to capacity and the oilers despatched to their rendezvous. The Senior Officer Present Afloat and Officer in Tactical Command was in YORKTOWN. The two task forces were separated but were within visual contact. They were operating independently but generally conforming in their movements. At 2150 course was changed to 210°T. toward a 0630, June 4, rendezvous (31° 30' N; 176° 30' W) designated by Commander Task Force 17. At 1812 a radio message from Flight 312 to Radio Midway was intercepted "2 enemy destroyers 2 cargo vessels course 020 speed 13".

2. At 2000, June 3, 1942, ENTERPRISE, Flagship of Commander Task Force 16 was in position 33° 16' N, 175° 46' W, in the center as guide of Cruising Disposition 11-V, axis 270°T, course 100°T, speed 15 knots and zigzagging according to Plan Number 7. Wind south 9, clouds cumulus 7, visibility 30, sea smooth.

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3. The following significant messages were received during the night of June 3 - 4:

At 0447 - from Flight 44 to Radio Midway "large enemy forces bearing 261°T, distance 500 course 080 speed 13 x ten ships".

At 0734 - from Flight 58 to Radio Midway "enemy carriers".

At 0753 - from Flight 58 to Radio Midway "many planes heading Midway bearing 320 distance 150".

At 0803 - from Flight 92 to Radio Midway "2 carriers and battleships bearing 320° distance 180 course 135 speed 25".

At 0807 - from Commander Task Force 17 to Commander Task Force 16 "proceed southwesterly and attack enemy carriers when definitely located".

## II. THE ACTION.

June 4, 1942. Wind SE 5, clouds cumulus 4, visibility 50, sea smooth.

### Time

- 0906 - Commenced launching attack group of 33 VSB, 14 VT, 10 VF.  
15 VSB armed with one 1000 lb. bomb each.  
12 VSB armed with one 500 lb. bomb and two 100 lb. bombs each.  
6 VSB armed with one 500 lb. bomb each.  
14 VTB armed with torpedoes.
- 1015 - Type 97 enemy twin-float seaplane sighted bearing 180°T., distance 72,000 yards. Combat Patrol failed to find this plane although radar and lookouts confirmed its position.
- 1129 - 1132 - Launched 8 VF for second Combat Patrol.
- 1145 - 1152 - Landed first Combat Patrol 8 VF.
- 1202 - Commander ENTERPRISE Air Group sighted Japanese Force composed of 4 CV, 2 BB, 4 CA, 6 DD.
- 1220 - VT commenced attack; probably one hit on CV.
- 1222 - VSB commenced dive bombing attack; two (2) CV badly damaged with many direct bomb hits, left in flames. Position of enemy force, Lat. 30° 05' N, Long. 178° 50' W.
- 1244 - 1247 - Launched 8 VF for third Combat Patrol.
- 1255 - Commenced landing VF escort.

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At Sea;  
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- 1316 - 1329 - Landed second Combat Patrol 8 VF.  
1337 - 1340 - Launched 8 VF, fourth Combat Patrol.  
1405 - 20 enemy planes reported bearing 310° coming in.  
(Attack on YORKTOWN followed).  
1410 - Completed landing attack group.  
1433 - 1435 - Launched 8 VF, fifth Combat Patrol.  
1437 - 1438 - Landed 5-B-3 and 5-B-16 (YORKTOWN planes).  
YORKTOWN pilot reported YORKTOWN in bad shape. Heavy  
smoke seen from YORKTOWN.  
1442 - 1448 - Landed 5-B-7, 5-B-8, 5-B-9, 5-B-10, 5-B-12, 5-B-14,  
5-B-15 (YORKTOWN planes).  
1451 - 1459 - Landed 5-F-2, 5-F-3, 5-F-6, 5-F-21, 5-B-4, 5-B-5,  
5-B-6, 5-B-11, 5-B-13, 5-B-17 (YORKTOWN planes).  
1504 - 1505 - Landed 5-F-10, 5-F-15 (YORKTOWN planes).  
1539 - 1541 - Launched 6 VF, sixth Combat Patrol.  
1547 - 1559 - Landed third and fourth Combat Patrol, 16 VF.  
1610 - VF shot down seaplane tracker 50 miles south of our force.  
1645 - Received message from YORKTOWN scout, "1 CV, 2 BB, 3 CA,  
4 DD, 31° 15' N, 179° 05' W, course 000, speed 15."  
1730 - Commenced launching second attack group composed of  
24 VSB.  
11 VSB armed with one 1000 lb. bomb each.  
13 VSB armed with one 500 lb. bomb each.  
1742 - 1752 - Landed fifth and sixth Combat Patrols 10 VF.  
6-F-12 Mach. Warden missing and reported to have landed  
in water out of gas. Also landed 3 VF and 3 VSB from  
YORKTOWN. Landed 6-S-16 from Attack Group.  
1835 - Combat Patrol (6-F-1 shot down 4-engine enemy seaplane).  
1842 - 1846 - Launched 12 VF for ninth Combat Patrol.  
1850 - 1852 - Landed 5 VF of seventh Combat Patrol. Also landed  
1 VF and 4 VSB from YORKTOWN.  
1905 - Attacked Japanese Force composed of 1 CV, 2 BB, 3 CA, 4 DD,  
position Lat. 31° - 40' N, Long. 179° - 10' W. Left  
1 CV and 1 BB severely damaged and mass of flames.  
1928 - 1930 - Landed 2 VF of eighth Combat Patrol and 1 VF from  
YORKTOWN.  
1958 - 2005 - Launched 20 VF for tenth Combat Patrol.  
2008 - 2034 - Landed 20 VSB of Attack Group. (3 did not return).  
Landed 9 VF of ninth Combat Patrol. Landed 2 VF of tenth  
Combat Patrol.  
2034 - Completed landing attack group.

JVS/A13-3/(60-Br)  
(0133)

U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

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2045 - 2056 - Landed 17 VF of tenth Combat Patrol.  
2120 - Landed 1 VF of tenth Combat Patrol. Last plane landed.

During the night June 4 - 5 distance from Midway of approximately 150 miles was maintained by steaming east and north and then retracing the track.

June 5, 1942

Wind SE 9, clouds cumulus 9, visibility 20, sea smooth.

1025 - 1029 - Launched 13VF for first Combat Patrol.  
6 YORKTOWN VF to land aboard HORNET upon completion of patrol.  
1300 - 1302 - Launched 3 VF for second Combat Patrol.  
1315 - 1318 - Landed 6 VF of first Combat Patrol.  
1616 - 1619 - Landed Second Combat Patrol 6 VF.  
1700 - Commenced launching attack group composed of 32 VSB (VB-5, VB-6, VS-5, VS-6). Objective 1 burning CV. 2 BB, 3 CA, 4 DD. Position of objective given as at 1000, Lat. 32° - 00' N, Long. 179° - 32' W, course 310, speed 12 knots. (Approximate distance estimated to be 230 miles).  
32 VSB with one 500 lb. bomb each.  
2030 - Objective not found. Attacked 1 CL position Lat. 35° - 00' N, Long. 177° 00' E. Damage undetermined.  
2058 - 2100 - Landed third Combat Patrol.  
2205 - Completed landing group; 30 VSB plus 5 VSB from HORNET.

During the night June 5 - 6, the course was 280°T, the speed 16 knots and zigzag Plan Number 6 was followed during moonlight.

June 6, 1942

Wind SW 16, clouds cumulus 2, visibility 50, sea smooth.

0702 - Launched search group of 18 VSB to search relative sector 180° - 360° (T) distance 200 miles.  
18 VSB with one 500 lb. bomb each.  
Four of these landed on HORNET.  
Fourteen returned with bombs.  
Launched first Combat Patrol 6 VF.

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U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

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- 0759 - Landed 6-B-17 - Deferred forced landing.
- 0845 - 8-B-2 (operating from ENTERPRISE) contacted enemy,  
1 CV, 5 DD, position Lat. 29° - 33' N, Long. 174° - 30' E,  
course 270°.
- 0930 (about) - Contact report on enemy - 2 CA, 2 DD, Lat.  
28° - 55' N, Long. 175° - 10' E, course 215°, speed 15.  
Contact by 8-B-8, and reported by message drop.
- 0952 - 0954 - Launched 6 VF second Combat Patrol.
- 0959 - 1009 - Landed first Combat Patrol 6 VF.
- 1015 - 1039 - Landed 14 VSB from morning search.
- 1231 - Launched 8 VF third Combat Patrol.
- 1245 - Commenced launching attack group composed of 31 VSB,  
3 VT, 12 VF, position of objective given as of 1350,  
Lat. 29° - 33' N, Long. 175° - 35' E, course 270°,  
speed 15 knots, armed as follows:  
31 VSB with one 1000 lb. bomb each.  
3 VTB with torpedoes.
- 1313 - 1316 - Landed second Combat Patrol, 6 VF.
- 1350 - Commenced attack, dive bombing and VF strafing. VT did  
not attack. Damage: left 1 CA (MOGAMI) severely  
damaged and aflame, 1 CL damaged, 1 DD damaged with  
minor explosions. (Note: There was no CV in this group.)
- 1527 - 1615 - Landed third Combat Patrol, 6 VF. (HORNET took  
over Combat Patrol). Landed 10 VF of Attack Group.  
Landed 28 VSB of Attack Group. Two HORNET planes and  
6-B-1 landed on HORNET.  
Landed 3 VTB of Attack Group with torpedoes, attack  
not completed.
- 1753 - Launched 2 VSB for photographic flight of above damaged  
ships. Photographs are Enclosure (B).
- 1829 - 1833 - Launched 12 VF for fourth Combat Patrol.
- 1844 - Landed 6-F-7. Could not retract wheels.
- 1950 - Landed 6-F-26. Deferred forced landing.
- 2100 - Landed fourth Combat Patrol.
- 2107 - Recovered photographic group.

At Sea,  
June 8, 1942.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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III. PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL.

1. The attack delivered upon enemy carriers by the torpedo squadrons of our forces is believed to be without parallel for determined and courageous action in the face of overwhelming odds. These crews were observed to commence their attack against heavy anti-aircraft fire from the enemy carriers and supporting vessels while opposed by enemy zero fighters in large numbers. The enemy fighter opposition was so strong and effective that ten torpedo planes out of fourteen of Torpedo Squadron SIX did not return. It is recommended that the Navy Cross be awarded to each pilot and gunner of Torpedo Squadron SIX who participated in this bold and heroic attack. A separate letter containing details of all aircraft attacks and specific recommendations for awards will be submitted.

2. Personnel losses in the Air Group were heavy, particularly Torpedo 6. A summary to date which is subject to final check is as follows:-

TORPEDO SIX

<u>Plane</u>	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Gunner</u>
6T1	LtCdr. E.E. Lindsey, USN.	GRENAT, C.T., 279 45 11, ACM, USN.
6T2	Ens. S.L. Rombach, A-V(N), USNR.	GLENN, W.F., 360 18 53, ARMC, USN.
6T6	Lt(jg) J.T. Eversole, USN.	LANE, J.U., RM2c, 299 90 90, USN.
6T9	Ens. R.M. Holder, A-V(N), USNR.	DURANA, G.J., 300 32 99, ARMC, USN.
6T10	Lt. A.V. Ely, USN.	LINDGREN, A.R., 223 42 09, RM3c, USN.
6T12	Ens. F.C. Hodges, A-V(N), USNR.	BATES, J.H., 368 48 44, RM2c, USN.
6T13	Lt. P.J. Riley, USN.	MUSHINSKI, E.J., 268 28 74, ARMC, USN.
6T14	Ens. J. W. Brock, USN.	BLUNDELL, J.M., 410 41 61, ARMC, USN.
6T7	Lt(jg) L. Thomas, USN.	LITTLEFIELD, H.F., 238 59 08, ARMC, USN.
6T8	Mach. A.W. Winchell, USN.	COBBITT, D.M. 413 55 55, A 6 RM3c, USNR.

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BOMBING SIX

<u>Plane</u>	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Gunner</u>
6B5	Lt(jg) W.E. Roberts, A-V(N), USNR.	STEINMAN, W.B., 376 01 68, ADMlc, USN.
6B6	Ens. D.W. Halsey, A-V(N), USNR.	JENKINS, J.W., 372 17 00, RM3c, USN.
6B8	Ens. T.F. Schneider, A-V(N), USNR.	HOLDEN, G.L., 300 09 02, ARM2c, USN.
6B9	Ens. E.A. Greene, A-V(N), USNR.	MUNTEAN, S.A., 401 42 22, RM3c, USNR.
6B11	Ens. T.W. Ramsay, A-V(N), USNR.	DUNCAN, S.L., 376 06 50, ADM2c, USN.
6B13	Lt(jg) J.J. VanBuren, USN.	NELSON, H.W., 382 02 50, ADMlc, USN.
6B14	Ens. W.F. Vandivier, A-V(N), USNR.	KRANEY, L.E.J., 283 21 96, Sealc, USN.
6B15	Ens. G.H. Goldsmith, A-V(N), USNR.	PATTERSON, J.W., 376 23 15, ARM3c, USN.
6B18	Ens. B.S. Varian, A-V(N), USNR.	YOUNG, C.R., 356 55 07, ARM3c, USN.
6B3	Ens. F.T. Weber, A-V(N), USNR.	HILBERT, E.L., 302 18 65, ADM3c, USN.

SCOUTING SIX

<u>Plane</u>	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Gunner</u>
6S3	Ens. J.Q. Roberts, A-V(N), USNR.	SWINDLELL, T.R., 262 28 14, ADMlc, USN.
6S15	Ens. J.R. McCarthy, A-V(N), USNR.	HOWELL, E.E., 382 11 71, RM3c, USN.
6S12	Ens. C.D. Peiffer, A-V(N), USNR.	JECK, F.C., 224 16 97, Sealc, USN.
6S4	Lt. C.R. Ware, USN.	STAMBAUGH, W.H., 297 22 69, ADMlc, USN.
6S5	Ens. F.H.C'Flaherty, A-V(N), USNR.	GAIDO, B.P., 300 20 05, ADMlc, USN.
6S6	Ens. F.A. Shelton, A-V(N), USNR.	CRAIG, D.W., 412 11 15, RM3c, USNR.
6S14	Ens. J.C. Lough, A-V(N), USNR.	HANSEN, L.D., RM3c, 308 49 16, USN.
6S1	Ens. J.N. Vanman, A-V(N), USNR.	CLARK, H.W., ADM2c, 356 14 29, USN.

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3. Aircraft losses as the result of 3 days action:

<u>Torpedo SIX</u>	<u>Bureau No.</u> (Ten (10))
6T1 - TBD-1	0289
6T2 - TBD-1	1512
6T6 - TBD-1	0366
6T7 - TBD-1	0294
6T8 - TBD-1	0367
6T9 - TBD-1	0378
6T10- TBD-1	0342
6T12- TBD-1	0365
6T13- TBD-1	1505
6T14- TBD-1	0327

<u>Bombing SIX</u>	<u>Bureau No.</u> (Eleven (11))
6B3 - SBD-3	4682
6B5 - SBD-3	4561
6B6 - SBD-2	2153
6B7 - SBD-3	4532
6B8 - SBD-3	2105
6B9 - SBD-2	2123
6B11- SBD-3	4620
6B13- SBD-2	2180
6B14- SBD-2	2125
6B15- SBD-3	4542
6B16- SBD-2	2145

<u>Scouting SIX</u>	<u>Bureau No.</u> (Nine (9))
6S1 - SBD-3	03207
6S3 - SBD-3	8524
6S4 - SBD-3	03206
6S5 - SBD-3	03224
6S6 - SBD-3	03225
6S10- SBD-3	03208
6S12- SBD-3	4600
6S14- SBD-3	4612
6S15 -SBD-3	4615

<u>Fighting SIX</u>	<u>Bureau No.</u> (One (1))
6F12 - F4F-4	5062

A 8

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U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

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4. Ammunition expended:

Expended

57	1000-lb. bombs
87	500-lb. bombs
22	100-lb. bombs
48,000	.50 caliber
40,000	.30 caliber

5. Steps have been taken to replenish Air Group losses of personnel and material.

6. The ship, although subjected to threat of air attack on several occasions experienced no actual attack and suffered no damage during actions on June 4 - 5 - 6.

7. It is extremely difficult to determine the extent of the damage inflicted upon the enemy by ENTERPRISE, as the air groups of all carriers, as well as land based aircraft at Midway, participated in continuous attacks on enemy units throughout the three days action. Based upon reports available to ENTERPRISE, it is estimated the following damage was inflicted upon the enemy:

- 3 CV's sunk.
- 1 CV on fire and badly damaged (probably sunk night of June 5).
- 1 CA wrecked and abandoned.
- 3 CA heavily bombed.
- 3 DD sunk.

8. The efficiency of the ship for war operations is considered outstanding and all munitions of war are considered satisfactory.

G. D. MURRAY.

B

# U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

CVG/A16-3(10-11t)  
Serial 0137

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Air Battle of the Pacific, June 4-6, 1942, report of.  
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(d) Fighter Escort: The need for adequate fighter escort on every attack mission cannot be overemphasized. Without this support our attack groups are completely at the mercy of Japanese "O" fighters as demonstrated in the initial engagement of June 4. Adequate support implies not only fighters in sufficient numbers but fighters at least the equal to the enemy.

4. CONCLUSION: ENTERPRISE Air Group, both pilots and gunners, displayed a spirit of utter fearlessness, resolution and determination throughout all air actions. This spirit, though shared by pilots and gunners alike, found its highest expression in the person of the Air Group Commander, LtComdr G.W. McClusky, Jr., U.S.N. On June 4, prior to intercepting the main enemy forces, it was his decision, and his decision alone, that made the attack possible which led to the destruction of a major part of the enemy forces. It is the considered opinion of the Commanding Officer that the success of our forces hinged upon this attack. Any other action on the part of LtComdr McClusky would inevitably have led to irreparable loss to our forces.

The entire ENTERPRISE Air Group merits the highest praise and commendation for a hazardous job well done. In separate correspondence, recommendations for awards and citations will be submitted.

G.D. MURRAY

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## U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

CV6/Al6-3(10-11t)  
Serial 0137

### CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Air Battle of the Pacific, June 4-6, 1942, report of.  
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#### "I" Bombs and Ammunition Expended.

57	-	1000 lb. bombs
67	-	500 lb. bombs
22	-	100 lb. bombs
48,280	rds	.50 cal. ammunition
40,000	rds	.30 cal. ammunition

3. SUMMARY: The following observations incident to the foregoing operations are submitted:

(a) Contact Reports: Numerous contact reports initiated from the forces at Midway had a negative evaluation. The absence of amplifying reports after the initial contact report was made at 0810, June 4, might have been disastrous to our forces. Lack of amplification of contacts and failure of Midway based planes to provide continuous tactical scouting on June 4 and June 5 probably prevented complete destruction of enemy forces.

(b) From the initial contact with the major Japanese Force about 1200 Thursday, June 4 and during subsequent air attacks on their dispersed forces, no aircraft of our own forces were observed at any time in the immediate vicinity of these Japanese Forces, except own carrier based aircraft. It is therefore the considered opinion of the Commanding Officer that all damage to enemy forces reported herein was imposed by the Air Groups of Task Forces 16 and 17.

(c) Material (planes): The disastrous loss of our TBD's needs no further comment; it is earnestly hoped that steps will be taken to provide TBF's for all carrier Air Groups immediately. The TBD is now obsolescent due to its slow speed. Our fighters, F4F-4's, are completely outclassed by Japanese "O" fighters in speed, climb, and maneuverability. It is recommended that immediate action be taken to remedy this inferiority.

CV6/Alb-3(10-11t)  
Serial 0137

## U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

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"F" Summary of ENTERPRISE Air Group Personnel Losses.

	<u>Pilots</u>	<u>Gunners</u>
VF-6	0	--
VB-6	7	7
VB-6	7	8
VT-6	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
	24	25

NOTE: In addition, the following YORKTOWN personnel were lost after joining this vessel June 4 and 5:

	<u>Pilots</u>	<u>Gunners</u>
June 4 VB-3	2	2
June 5 VS-5	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	3	3

"G" Summary of ENTERPRISE Air Group Plane Losses.

VF	1	F4F-4	(out of fuel, landed in water, pilot recovered).
VSB	20	SBD	(6 pilots, 5 gunners recovered).
VT	<u>10</u>	TBD	
	31		

NOTE: In addition, 2 YORKTOWN SBD's (VB-3) were lost in the second attack launched June 4 and another SBD (VS-5) June 5, Total 3.

"H" Damage Inflicted on Japanese Fleet.

- 3 CV (KAGA, AKAGI, and HIRYU Class) severely damaged and burning, all of which may have sunk later.
- 1 BB Badly damaged.
- 1 CA (MOGAMI Class) Severely damaged and aflame.
- 2 CL Damaged.
- 1 DD Badly damaged.
- 24 aircraft destroyed in air combat as follows:
  - 1 Nakajima dive bomber, 1 twin-float 97 seaplane fighter, 2 single-float seaplanes, 4 torpedo planes, 1 Messerschmitt type fighter and 15 "O" fighters.
- 1 CV NOTE: Severely damaged by YORKTOWN (VB-3) in addition to the 3 CV's enumerated above. (Reported by YORKTOWN pilots operating from ENTERPRISE after first attack).

## U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

CVG/A16-3(10-11c)  
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(7) See "Search and Attack" (Fourth Attack) of  
Enclosure (A).

### "B" Combat Patrols.

(1) During the entire daylight period of this engagement, 4-6 June, combat patrols were conducted by VF-6 at high and intermediate altitudes. On June 4, the day of intense air operations, a total of 9 patrols were flown. At 1400, June 4, one Nakajima 97 dive bomber snoopers was shot down. At 1830 a combined dive bombing and torpedo attack with the YAMATO as objective was intercepted by our fifth patrol with the following results: one enemy VT plane, approaching at 300 feet, shot down on second run; one twin float Nakajima 97 seaplane fighter, on an opposite course above, exploded; (fighter pilot reports seeing a large bundle attached to harness of chute of pilot who had bailed out); two "O" fighters in section formation, rear plane weaving back and forth attacked by one of our fighters and as tracers were seen by the wing man he went into a vertical climb leaving the section leader a sitting shot going down in flames; our fighter pilot, continuing his dive, sighted an enemy VT plane at 300 feet and shot it down in one short burst; two additional VT planes were shot down by another combat patrol pilot; three combat patrol pilots in initial attack on two "O" fighters failed to account for the Japs and in ensuing dog-fight were no match for the performance of the "O's". They were saved from embarrassment by friendly planes with an altitude advantage who shot both "O's" down.

(2) About 1800, two sections of combat patrols were vectored to intercept "bogies" in the vicinity of YAMATO. One single float seaplane reconnaissance was intercepted and shot down after repeated runs. Another combat patrol pilot, after an extended chase and after expending a large amount of ammunition, shot down a second single-float seaplane. The comparatively fast speed and extreme maneuverability of their seaplane to turn sharply, offers a difficult target for the unmaneuverable, over-loaded F4F-4. During this day's operations, VF-6 shot down a total of 9 enemy planes evaluated as follows: 1 Nakajima dive bomber, 1 twin-float 97 seaplane fighter, 2 single float seaplanes, 1 "O" fighter, and 4 torpedo planes.

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ENTERPRISE at 1315 and climbed slowly to about 22,500 feet, maneuvering to lose time to permit the VF planes to effect rendezvous. Radio or sight contact between VF and VSB was never attained. The attack group passed the enemy formation, 2 heavy cruisers, 2 destroyers, up sun at maximum altitude, and searched ahead for about 30 miles. The visibility was excellent but no vessels were sighted ahead. At this time the accompanying VF planes identified the larger ships of the formation as battleships and the attack group returned and started a long approach from about 21,000 feet from out of the sun and down wind. At about this time, the OTC ordered the group to expedite attack. In the meantime, one of the VB squadrons had departed from the search ahead and about 1350 attacked the rear heavy cruiser. Until this time the enemy formation was on course 240°T, speed about 28 knots. As the last ship was attacked she made a right turn; the leading vessel followed her movements and headed down wind. By this time the squadron was in about a 70° dive at about 14,000 feet on the leading heavy cruiser. The vessel put up a heavy stream of automatic gun fire, but this was considerably reduced after the first bomb hit. Five direct hits were scored and two close misses. The target (MOGAMI Class CA) was dead in the water, burning, and emitting heavy black smoke when last sighted. The second cruiser (CL) was also smoking heavily but continued underway leaving an oil slick. She was escorted by the two destroyers, course 270°, speed 10 knots.

(4) Six VF strafed each destroyer to point blank range knocking off huge pieces of metal, causing a small explosion and a fire on each ship. About 4,000 rounds of .50 caliber were expended on each ship.

(5) Our Group sustained no losses or damage.

(6) At 1753 a photographic group of 2 VSB was launched for photo mission over burning heavy cruiser (MOGAMI). This group landed aboard at 2107 after a successful flight. A close scrutiny of the excellent photographs, the observations of an experienced photographer, and a direct comparison with our 8 inch cruisers, leads to the firm belief that this MOGAMI Class heavy cruiser is in reality a battle cruiser of at least 20,000 tons, mounting 11 or 12 inch guns.

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zigzagged to avoid attack presenting an elusive target and firing a large volume of small caliber and anti-aircraft fire. No direct bomb hits were observed, with one possible and several close misses. At 2203, group landing operations were completed, 33 VSB being recovered, 5 of which were HORNET planes. These landing operations were conducted during darkness with many inexperienced pilots who had not qualified in night landings. The performance of the entire group was excellent, including ENTERPRISE Landing Signal Officers, whose performance have been outstanding throughout these prolonged engagements.

(2) Our loss sustained during this attack was one TBD shot down by anti-aircraft fire. One of our group landed aboard the HORNET.

(3) See "Search (Third) Attack" on track chart of Enclosure (A).

### "D" Search and Attack (Fourth Attack), of June 5, 1942

(1) At 0710 a search group of 18 VSB completed launching to search a relative sector of 180° - 360° T, distance 200 miles. At 0845, plane B-3-2, operating from the ENTERPRISE, contacted and reported an enemy force of 1 carrier, 5 destroyers, position Latitude 29-33 N, Longitude 174-30 E, course 270°. Upon return from search this plane dropped messages on deck verifying previous report, then landed aboard HORNET. Later interrogation of the pilot disclosed that he meant a battleship and 5 destroyers instead of 1 carrier, 5 destroyers.

(2) At 1345 an attack group was launched consisting of 31 TBD's, armed with 1000 lb. 1/100 second fuse bombs, 3 TBD's with torpedoes and 12 VF for strafing. Position of objective at 1350, Latitude 29-33 N, Longitude 175-35 E, course 270° T, speed 15 knots.

(3) Soon after launching, orders were transmitted to attack group by voice radio to search for and attack battleship believed to be about 40 miles ahead of force previously assigned as targets and that 3 torpedo planes would be launched to join attack group. The attack group departed from

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separated by several miles. Beyond, and to the south, the attack group sighted three large columns of smoke near the scene of the first engagement. At 1905, from an up-sun position, 19,000 feet altitude, the attack started. At this time enemy "O" fighters appeared, estimated between 6 to 12, and attacked during the push-over, followed down and attacked after pull-out. The attack group (24 SBD's) split the attack between the carrier (SOBYU Class) and an unidentified battleship. Six direct hits were observed on the carrier and 2 on the battleship. An accurate count of hits is again impossible due to the flames and resulting smoke. The carrier was aflame from bow to stern. One SBD was shot down by "O" fighters prior to dive and 2 SBD's were shot down after pull-out. Heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered during dive and after pull-out. Three planes returned with holes from 20 mm and small caliber machine-gun fire from the "O" fighters, making them inoperative for further operation. At 2034 the attack group completed landing operations aboard ENTERPRISE. Losses were as follows:

2 SBD's (VB-3 planes from YORKTOWN)  
1 SBD (VB-6 planes from ENTERPRISE)

(3) See "Second Attack" track on track chart of  
Enclosure (A).

"C" Search (Third) Attack, June 5, 1942

(1) On the basis of a 1000 contact report, (PEY), an attack group consisting of 32 SBD's (VS-6, VB-6, VB-3, VS-5) completed launching at 1728. Objective was a damaged carrier, 2 battleships, 3 heavy cruisers, and 4 destroyers; position of objective at 1930, Latitude 33-12 N, Longitude 177-48 E. The attack group remained at low altitude with 16 scouts forming a scouting line. The group continued on course 324° T for 265 miles, no contact was made. The ceiling was 15,000 feet, heavy overcast above and general hazy visibility. Course was then changed to 230° T for 33 miles, then to 150° T. Shortly thereafter, at 2030, one enemy light cruiser (KATORI Class) was contacted on course 310° T, speed 20 knots. Climb to 11,000 feet was effected and attack commenced. The light cruiser immediately increased speed and

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(8) Maneuvers by enemy ships were so timed that it was impossible to obtain an advantageous point from which to drop. Indication of ships' position is only approximate and incomplete as the Torpedo Squadron concentrated on the carrier indicated. Accurate plotting of ships' positions was impossible due to their wide separation and the distraction of pilots caused by fighters and anti-aircraft fire. Retirement and return to the carrier were made by single plane units.

(9) The weather at the scene of this initial attack was clear and visibility excellent, with scattered cumulus clouds from 1500 feet to 2500 feet, ceiling unlimited. The surface wind was 5 - 8 knots from southeast with sea rather calm.

(10) The number of enemy planes shot down by our attack groups is undetermined due to the heavy losses sustained by our planes. Our losses in this initial phase were as follows:

- 1 F4F-4 (water landing, out of gas; pilot recovered).
- 18 SBD's (6 pilots and 5 gunners recovered).
- 10 TBD's.

(11) See "First Attack" track and "Torpedo Plane" track on track chart of Enclosure (A).

"B" Second Attack, June 4, 1942

(1) About 1630 a YORKTOWN SBD (5-S-15) on search mission made contact and reported an enemy force consisting of 1 carrier, 2 battleships, 3 heavy cruisers, and 4 destroyers, position Latitude 31-15 N, Longitude 179-05 W, course 000°, speed 20 knots. This contact was received about 1645. Upon completion of search, this plane and 7 additional scouts from YORKTOWN landed aboard ENTERPRISE.

(2) At 1730 an attack group of 24 SBD's, (these included reinforcements by YORKTOWN planes), 11 armed with 1000 lb. 1/100 second fuse bombs, and 13 with 500 lb. bombs, was launched for attack on the force reported above. Position of enemy was given, as of 1900, as Latitude 31-40 N, Longitude 179-10 W. At 1850 this force was sighted about 30 miles ahead on course 280°, speed 20 knots. The heavy ships, each accompanied by a destroyer, were

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apply to all types of ships in the task force but applies particularly to the carriers. Other ships of the task force maneuvered independently and became widely separated.

(6) Torpedo Squadron Six attacked about 1230, and was subjected to the concentrated fire of all types of surface ships and numerous fighters of the "O" type. The torpedo attack had been completed and the remaining planes were clear of all screening vessels when the first bomb from the dive bombers hit the carriers of the task force. The loss of such a large number of torpedo planes (10) is attributed to the lack of coordination and support by fighter escort, which unknowingly, had joined up with HORNET VT squadron, launched at about same time, as well as attacks by numerous enemy fighters, approximately 25 in all. It is believed few, if any, planes were lost due to anti-aircraft fire. Fighters attacked repeatedly but would not press home an attack in the face of accurate fire from the free gunners who were using the twin mount, .30 caliber gun. On the whole, anti-aircraft fire from surface ships was close but not effective and it is believed that anti-aircraft bursts were used as a "fighter director" in that they appeared to "point out" the approximate position of attacking planes to their fighter patrol in this manner.

(7) Approach to dropping positions and retirement after dropping were such that no accurate summary can be made of the individual directions of approach and withdrawal. The initial part of the approach from time of sighting to the time when fighters attacked and anti-aircraft fire became intense is shown below:

NOTE: The fourth carrier was not seen by any of the 4 torpedo plane pilots who returned from the attack.

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(3) carriers were left severely damaged with raging fires and mountainous clouds of smoke filling the horizon. It was later learned that VB-3 from YORKTOWN arrived at approximately the same time and attacked one of the two remaining carriers.

(3) During the approach and dive there was no fighter opposition and comparatively light anti-aircraft fire, due to torpedo plane attacks commencing prior to and ending during dive bombing attack. After pull out from dives, several planes were attacked by "C" and Messerschmitt type fighters. It is to be noted that Japanese fighter pilots seem loath to press home an attack when two or more of our planes are joined up in formation for mutual protection. Anti-aircraft fire from screening vessels was also concentrated on dive bombers while retiring.

(4) Eighteen (18) TBD's failed to return from this first attack. (NOTE: Two pilots and two gunners were recovered later the same day and four additional pilots and three gunners have been recovered since). The exact number shot down is unknown. At least 4 additional pilots reported by voice radio they were about to land in water and may eventually be rescued by searching patrol planes. Several planes were badly damaged by shrapnel and machine gun fire making them unavailable for subsequent attacks.

(5) Torpedo Attack: At 0949 the torpedo attack group of 14 TBD's and a fighter escort of 10 F4F-4's was launched. Proceeding independently, contact was first made with enemy forces about 1200, zone 10 time at an altitude of 1500 feet and a distance of approximately 30 miles, bearing 320° from the attacking group. At the time of initial contact the enemy appeared to be on a course 270° and in the subsequent approach their course changed from 270° to 000° and before dropping point was reached, course had been reversed to 180°. These changes in course enabled the carriers to keep the attacking torpedo planes continuously on their quarter necessitating a long period in which attacking planes were under anti-aircraft from surface ships and attack by fighters. This maneuver does not strictly

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expected interception no contact was made. With few broken clouds and excellent visibility, a thorough search of the area was made with negative results. The Air Group Commander made the decision to fly a reverse course of the enemy force, assuring that they had retired. (NOTE: This was the most important decision of the entire action.) After flying 30 miles on course 315°, contact was made with a lone destroyer or light cruiser on a northeasterly course. The dive bombing group then changed to that course, northeast, and 15 minutes later, at 1202, contact was made with a Japanese striking force consisting of 4 carriers (definite), 2 battleships, 4 cruisers, (or 6 cruisers), and 6 destroyers, position Latitude 30-05 N, Longitude 173-45 W. With broken clouds and from an altitude of 19,000 feet, positive identification of battleships and cruisers was impossible. The Japanese force appeared to be in a widely separated circular disposition with each carrier and accompanying vessels maneuvering radically.

(2) At 1222 the dive bombing attack commenced from a high altitude, the Group Commander section and VS-6 attacking the carrier in the northwest sector and VB-6 the carrier to the immediate right. These are believed to have been KAGA and AKAGI. Upon initial sighting and during the dive no apparent damage had been inflicted on this enemy force. This statement is based upon interrogation of the Air Group Commander and all pilots who returned from the attack. Scouting Six, (each armed with 1-500 lb. bomb, 1/100 second fuse, and 2-100 lb. bombs) obtained at least 3 direct hits on assigned target, the smoke from resulting fires making an accurate count impossible. Bombing Six (each armed with 1-1000 lb. bombs, 1/100 second fuse) first division commencing attack on right hand carrier which was observed to be landing planes. This division obtained at least three (3) direct hits and this carrier became a mass of flames and smoke. The second division leader, delaying attack momentarily, observed misses near left hand carrier and decided to dive on that target. Several hits with 1000 lb. bombs were observed with violent explosions resulting. The third division divided between both carriers under attack. Hits cannot be accounted for, as only one pilot of the third division returned. When this attack was completed, three

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June 13, 1942

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Via: Commander Task Force Sixteen.  
(Rear Admiral R.A. Spruance, U.S. Navy).  
SUBJECT: Air Battle of the Pacific, June 4-6, 1942, report of.  
Reference: (a) Articles 71E and 874, U.S. Navy Regulations 1920.  
(b) C.O. ENTERPRISE Conf. Serial 0133 of June 8, 1942.  
Enclosure: (A) Track Chart of Air Attacks, June 4-6, 1942.

1. In reference (b) a chronological narrative of the Battle of Midway, based upon information available at that time, was submitted.

2. In amplification of and supplementary to the report contained in reference (b), the following report of air attacks, conducted by ENTERPRISE Air Group during the period June 4-6, 1942, against the Japanese Fleet off Midway Island is submitted:

NOTE: Some discrepancies will be noted between figures appearing herein and those contained in reference (b) with respect to personnel losses and estimate of damage inflicted upon the enemy. In the case of personnel, the figures given herein are correct for the reason that some personnel were recovered after submission of reference (b). With regard to estimate of damage inflicted upon enemy ships, the figures given in reference (b) are the Commanding Officer's estimate of enemy damage, based upon all information available to him, whereas the estimates of damage to enemy contained in this report are based upon observations of damage inflicted on enemy by our own pilots.

"A" First Attack June 4, 1942

(1) Dive bombing attack: At 0906, June 4, 1942, the first group consisting of 33 TBD's (Group Commander Section, VS6, VS6) was launched. About 0945, the Air Group was ordered to proceed on assigned mission. At 0930, the position of the enemy, based on the O810 contact report, was Latitude 30-05 N, Longitude 179-03 W, course 135° speed 25 knots. At the time of



U. S. S. ENTERPRISE

Al4-3

8 June 1942

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**From:** The Executive Officer.  
**To :** The Commanding Officer.

**Subject:** Conduct of Ship's Company during Battle of Midway Island from Thursday, June 4 to Sunday, June 6, 1942. (Kono Plus Ten).

**Reference:** (a) Article 948, U.S. Navy Regs. 1920.

1. On Thursday, June 4, 1942, ENTERPRISE, operating as a unit of Task Force 16, launched its Air Group in offensive operations against the Japanese Aircraft Carrier Force which launched an air attack on Midway Island.
2. On Friday, June 5, 1942, the retreating enemy was pursued without making contact with major units.
3. On Saturday, 6 June, 1942, scouting operations resulted in contact with important enemy units which were repeatedly attacked.
4. The ship itself neither engaged nor was it attacked by enemy forces.
5. The operations conducted were of a most advanced nature, including night operations and the landing on board and later employment of aircraft from a damaged carrier.
6. The losses of aircraft and personnel of the Air Group were heavy but no serious injuries to personnel occurred on board the ship.
7. The conduct of the officers and men of the Ship's Company was exemplary. The operations as a whole were characterized by routine precision and efficiency.
8. Not being faced with any emergency situation on board there were no incidents requiring special mention or commendation of individuals.

T. P. JETER.

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STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN JOHN F. CAREY, USMC, VMF-221:

We had been on the alert before daylight. Then, the alarm came at about 6:30 a.m. We all got into the air and there was a little mix-up among the Grummans as the planes took to the air. From the Radar we were directed up to 310....Many bandits at 12,000 feet altitude. We went out there and contacted them and there were about nineteen carrier dive-bombers escorted by approximately ten "Zero" fighters. The dive-bombers were in four and five plane "V"s and the "Zero" fighters were about 2,000 feet above them. There were only three of us.

I went ahead after the leader of the division of bombers and while making the first run, an overhead approach on the division leader of the dive-bomber formation, I got a bullet through the wind shield but continued my attack and shot down the division leader. Then I made an above side approach on the center plane of the formation, hit the leader and think I got one of them. Just then I got shot through the right knee and left leg. I kept going right down, got out of my dive and returned to Midway. I returned with great difficulty and attempted to make a landing which ended in a ground loop as I had a flat tire and could not control the plane because of the wound in my leg.

In talking it over with the other pilots who returned they invariably had tangled with two to five "Zero" fighters and were unable to shake them. The only maneuver which would evade them would be a vertical dive and then a pull-out at high speed just over the water.

The "Zero" fighters out-maneuvered, out-performed and out-climbed the Brewsters and Grummans in ever respect. The only advantage the Brewsters and Grummans has was in armor.

While the fighters were attempting to stop the dive-bombers and intercept the oncoming fighters, the Scouts and B-17's had gone on out farther to attempt to intercept the surface craft.

JOHN F. CAREY,  
Captain, U. S. Marine Corps.

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STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN R. L. BLAIN, USMC., VMGB-241:

Alarm sounded at 0630, June 4th. We took off and rendezvoused at point affirm. (Bearing Zero 90°, Distance--20 miles from Eastern Island.) I was given the signal to attack (Bearing 320°. Distance 180 miles; we departed for the enemy fleet.) Our flight composed of about 17 SBD's under Major HENDERSON and 12 SB2U's under Major NORRIS when we departed to complete our mission.

Upon arriving at enemy position about one hour and ten minutes later, we sighted a large task force. Just how many we could not make out because of the heavy cloud formations. Thereupon Major HENDERSON gave the signal for the First Division to attack the first carrier. Captain TYLER to attack the second carrier. The Second Division made a direct hit and one (1) hit right along the plates. All planes were equipped with 500 lb. bombs. Thirty fighters came at us. We were out numbered at least two (2) to one (1) and the anti-aircraft was very dense at 8,000 feet. After the attack everyone scrambled. It was estimated that we had a direct hit and one close aboard hit along the side. The ship was of a good size, one of the more heavier type.

We headed for our rendezvous but it turned out to be an unsafe place due to the Jap fighters on our tail so everyone seemed to take to his own get away. Everyone flew close to the water to avert the tactics of the A.A. guns on the ships. After a short time, noting that the fighters were drilling holes in my wings and fuselage, I thought I would try for the clouds. This proved very successful in that I lost the enemy after the first cloud. To add to my troubles about four minutes after I hit the carrier my fuel pump went out of action and I had to use the wobble pump from then on until I was forced down from shortage of fuel, about 35 minutes later. I took over the wobble pump until we lost the fighters and then McFeely took over after that. At one time the engine stopped completely and I had given my rear seat man orders to brace himself, but when we were about 200 feet from the water the engine caught and I was again able to fly for a few more minutes. I was very fortunate that the engine did catch for I had not put my landing flaps down. This luck did not last long as I made my final approach for a water landing a few minutes later.

The ship stayed afloat from two (2) to three (3) minutes during which time we were able to get some float lights out, a flare pistol and cartridges, and the first aid kit. I also took one parachute to use as a sea anchor. Upon pulling the valve of the CO<sub>2</sub> bottle we found, to our disgust, that they had left the emergency inflation valves open. This meant that the hand pump came in very handy. After we had the boat inflated we found a hole about level with the water line which we tried to patch; and succeeded in stopping the leak to a certain extent. Nothing to do but bail the water out, which was done with the use of a helmet.

The first day we did not make contact with any airplanes but sighted a great many, at 0600 on the morning of the 5th, after a 'Helluva' night due to the fact that we were shipping water all the time, we heard the sound of an engine. We looked up to see a patrol boat heading directly toward us. We succeeded in

(Continued)

STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN R. L. BLAIN, USMC., VMSB-241:

attracting his attention, which he verified when he circled us flashing the Aldis light on us that he was sending help, and then he went on his mission. I felt certain that the reason he did not land was due to a full tank of gas. This turned out to be correct. About three hours later our supposed help came within ten (10) miles of us and ran a course parallel to us for about one hour and a-half. But all this time too far away for us to attract his attention. So we just settled down and waited some more.

That afternoon the sea became glassy calm and our drift was cut down to a little or nothing. Late in the evening we could see the patrol boats and the flying fortresses coming back from their missions but all of them were out of range. That night proved to be a little better than the first night in that we did not ship water at all, but by this time our legs had become rather cramped due to the small space in the boat.

Sometime during the course of the night I lighted a float light with the hope that I would attract an airplane that was passing overhead; but no luck. About 0545, on the morning of the 6th, I heard the engines and then saw a patrol boat about eight (8) miles away. So with our last float light and probably the last chance for help for that day we succeeded in attracting their attention after they had gone some five (5) to eight (8) miles past us. I am thankful for the keen sight of the gunner and for the blister of the patrol. The patrol plane came back, looked over the situation, checked up the wind and then landed (after several unsuccessful passes due to the ground swells which made his landing very hazardous. Also, he had a full tank of gas aboard.

Words cannot express how glad I was to see him land successfully.

The pilot turned out to be Lt. OGDEN of VP 23, whom I had known in Pensacola. After climbing aboard we found our legs rather wobbly but we managed to get in a position so Lt. OGDEN could take off and complete his Scouting Mission.

We arrived back at Midway at 1715 on the evening of the 6th.

NOTE: I was informed, on the evening of June 6th, by Captain DELALIO, that the following officers and pilots of VMSB-241 had not returned from engaging the enemy.

Major HENDERSON, L. R.	2dLt TWEEDY, A. W.	2dLt EK, B. H.
Major NORRIS, B. S.	2dLt HAGEDORN, B. P.	2dLt CAMPION, K. O.
Captain FLEMING, R. E.	2dLt GRATZEK, T. J.	

RICHARD L. BLAIN,  
Captain, U.S. Marine Corps.

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STATEMENTS OF CORPORAL EUGENE T. CARD, USMC., VMSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

- Q. What time did you start?  
A. Took off at 0600.
- Q. Where was the enemy fleet?  
A. 150 miles due north.
- Q. Did you meet any aircraft on your way to the enemy fleet?  
A. No.
- Q. How many enemy planes did you see?  
A. There were about three (3) to one (1). A total of at least 50 or 60.
- Q. How many enemy ships were on the surface?  
A. I saw four (4) carriers, one (1) battleship and about ten (10) cruisers and destroyers.
- Q. Did you run into any aircraft opposition?  
A. Yes. They came at us about three to our one.
- Q. What type of plane?  
A. Zero fighters.
- Q. Any other types?  
A. Only one seaplane -- single float biplane.
- Q. Did you separate in the attack?  
A. Yes.
- Q. How far apart were the ships on the surface?  
A. About  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and turned at a 90° angle into the wind.
- Q. Did you see any hits?  
A. No.
- Q. After the attack, how far away were you attacked?  
A. Ten miles at least.
- Q. How close did they attack?  
A. They fired at long range, coming in within 300 or 400 yards and peeling off as soon as we fired.
- Q. How many planes with you?  
A. In two (2) flights there were 17 SBD's and 11 SB2UJ's.
- Q. Did you see any of the ships put out of action?  
A. No.
- Q. Do you know who was lost?  
A. No.

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(Continued)

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STATEMENTS OF CORPORAL EUGENE T. CARD, USMC., VMSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

Q. Did you see any damage done to carriers?

A. No.

Q. What altitude did you release bombs?

A. We pulled out at about 300 feet.

Q. Did you get any hits?

A. Yes. I never saw results but I think we hit the forward part of the ship.

Q. Were you hit?

A. Yes. Three (3) times with shrapnel; in both legs and the right wrist.

Q. Did your ship get hit?

A. Yes. A few holes.

Q. Whom were you riding with?

A. Captain Fleming. He was shot in the arm, but I don't know how bad.

Q. Did the enemy fighters have much advantage in flying?

A. Yes. Very much in speed and maneuvering. We made 180 knots and they made at least 250 knots.

Q. Did they dive much?

A. No. They were just too many of them at all altitudes.

Q. Were they in formation?

A. I did not notice.

Q. After the attack did you go back to the Island?

A. Yes. We met Captain Glidden and came back with him at about an altitude of 1,000 to 1,500 feet.

Q. How high were you when you attacked?

A. About 7,000 feet. I had twin guns and they did not work so well.

Q. How many cracked up landing?

A. Two. Lt. Bear ran out of gas, landed in water. Lt. Iverson made a one (1) wheel landing.

Q. Do you remember how many ships were damaged?

A. No. I do know seven (7) or eight (8) SED's were still flying that evening.

Q. Anything you would like to add?

A. I saw Major Henderson's left wing was afire prior to the attack. He dove down a smokestack on one of the carriers. In my opinion it was a deliberate dive. I also saw one man bail out but did not see them shoot at him.

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STATEMENTS OF CORPORAL JOHN H. MOORE, USMC., VMSB-241:

Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

- Q. What did you think of the enemy planes?  
A. The Japs have very good fighters in the "Zero" plane.
- Q. Were there many enemy planes?  
A. About four (4) to one (1).
- Q. Did you get any hits?  
A. Yes. I shot one (1) Jap plane down.
- Q. Whom were you riding with?  
A. Captain Delalio.
- Q. How many enemy ships on the surface?  
A. About ten (10) or fifteen (15).
- Q. Did our planes split and attack all four (4) carriers?  
A. I did not notice. I was in the next to last section and it was so cloudy I couldn't see.
- Q. Did you release bombs?  
A. Yes. At five hundred (500) feet.
- Q. Any hits?  
A. I do not know as there was too much smoke and flames to see clearly.
- Q. Were the enemy ships well armed?  
A. The ships were well armed with antiaircraft guns.
- Q. What do you think of the Jap "Zero" planes?  
A. The Jap planes were very fast and could out fly any planes we had.
- Q. How was your armor plate?  
A. Armor plate worked fine. The gunner for Lieutenant Iverson was hit but the shots did not penetrate. They just glanced off.
- Q. Were you four (4) the only gunners shot?  
A. No.
- Q. Where were the injuries?  
A. All injuries were in the arms and legs.
- Q. Do you know how many people on the ground were shot?  
A. I do not know but don't think there were many.

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(Continued)

STATEMENTS OF CORPORAL JOHN H. MOORE, U.S.M.C., VMSB-241:

Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

Q. Did they attack anyone in the messhall?

A. No. All men were removed from the messhall.

Q. Do you know of any hits on the island?

A. Yes. They dropped bombs on runway three (3) but very few casualties, if any, were rendered.

Q. Did you return to the Island alone?

A. No. Technical Sergeant Stamps' plane came back with us.

Q. Is there anything you would like to add?

A. Yes. The SED's seemed to lose their life rafts but I don't know how.

NOTE: Moore was shot in left leg, above the knee; bullet still there.

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STATEMENTS OF PRIVATE TEMAN WILHITE, USMC., VMSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

- Q. What time did you take off?  
A. Around 0530 to 0600.
- Q. How far out were the enemy?  
A. About 180 miles. It took about one hour and a-half to get there.
- Q. What altitude were you when you started attack?  
A. About 14,000, but went down to a cloud about 7,000, then dove to attack a heavy cruiser.
- Q. When did you meet enemy fighters?  
A. One Zero fighter hit me (I was on the port side forward) ten (10) miles before we reached the enemy fleet. Zero fighter was shot down by free gunfire. I was using a single plane gun.
- Q. How many times was the plane hit?  
A. I do not know but it was hit a number of times with .20 caliber M.M. fire. On the oil tank, radio and tail surface.
- Q. Who was the pilot?  
A. Lieutenant Ramlo.
- Q. How many times were you hit?  
A. Two. I was wounded in the right wrist and right leg, below and above the knee.
- Q. How did the armor plate stand up?  
A. The armor plate worked fine. It and the scarf frame were both hit but not damaged.
- Q. At what altitude did you release bombs?  
A. At about 600 feet. Made a hit on cruiser. All four planes in dive made hits. Returned at low altitude, under 100 feet. Was unable to climb due to gunfire ruining controls.
- Q. How many planes cracked up?  
A. I don't know, but a number of planes landed in the water on return to Island due to damaged landing gear. We landed and ground looped but did not hurt the plane anymore than it was.
- Q. How many fighters did you see?  
A. Three attacked us and hit the engine several times. We were the last plane to make attack and were attacked by three Zero fighters. They had us in a cross fire and we could not pull up. The plane was badly shot up with many holes in the cockpit. It was too damaged to fly again.

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(Continued)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
STATEMENTS OF PRIVATE CHARLES W. HUBER, USMC., VMSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

Q. What altitude did you come back at?

A. We came back at about 300 feet.

Q. Did you see any people bail out?

A. I saw one pilot bail out and he was shot at. Jap fighter planes followed him and they were shooting at him.

Q. Did you separate for the attack?

A. Yes. The last division attacked a carrier and the other divisions attacked other ships.

Q. How were the Jap planes in comparison with your own?

A. They were very fast and could out-fly and out-maneuver us.

Q. From how far did they attack?

A. They would start firing at very distant ranges but would quit as soon as they saw our tracer bullets coming at them. I was able to shoot at the plane on my tail but my gun jammed and I was unable to fire any more.

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STATEMENTS OF PRIVATE CHARLES W. HUBER, USMC., VMSSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

- Q. What time was the alarm sounded?  
A. About 0600 they told us to stand by. Between 0630 and 0700 we took off. The fighters took off first then the TBF's and then the SED's and SB2U's.
- Q. Who was your pilot?  
A. I was with Lieutenant Moore.
- Q. How far out was the fleet?  
A. They were about 180 miles out, coming in at about 25 knots.
- Q. Did you meet any planes on your way out?  
A. No.
- Q. How many ships were in the attacking fleet?  
A. I counted ten (10) ships but there probably were more.
- Q. Could you tell what types they were?  
A. I recognized four (4) carriers, two (2) troop ships and one (1) battleship. It was impossible to tell what the others were.
- Q. Were there many enemy airplanes?  
A. Yes. We were outnumbered at least four (4) to one (1).
- Q. At what altitude did you dive on the ships?  
A. At about 7,600 feet. We dove and attacked individually.
- Q. How many of the ships did you see hit?  
A. Can't say. We were in the last division and did not see the bombs hit.
- Q. Do you know at what altitude you released bombs?  
A. I do not know. Altimeter was hit first.
- Q. Did you see the results of your bombs?  
A. Yes. We attacked a carrier and hit it.
- Q. Were you hit?  
A. Yes. I was hit two times, in the leg and arm. I don't know if the pilot was hit or not. Probably not, because he was O.K. when I saw him at the landing.
- Q. Have you any idea of who was hit?  
A. Yes. Major Henderson was hit.
- Q. How many planes did you see come back?  
A. Only eight (8) or ten (10).

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(Continued)

STATEMENTS OF PRIVATE TERRY WILHITE, USMC., VMSB-241:  
Inquiry by LtCol. L. B. Stedman, Jr., USMC.

Q. How did you get away from the Jap planes?

A. They followed us 80 miles after the attack. The planes that followed us could out-fly and pass up anything we had. They started firing at extremely long ranges, continuing fire until fired on and as soon as our tracers were observed they broke up the attack.

Q. What speed do you think they had?

A. I do not know.

Q. Do you know of any losses?

A. In the Scout Squadron very few were lost at the scene of the attack from gunfire, but a number were wrecked in landing on return to Midway.

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PERTINENT EXTRACTS FROM COMMUNICATION LOGS RELATIVE TO MIDWAY ATTACK

3 June (zone plus 10)

LCT :	GCT :	FROM :	TO :	MESSAGE :
1004:	2104:	Plane 8 of Flt. 55	:Midway	: 2 Japanese cargo ves-
:	:	:	:	: sels bearing 247 470
1122:	2122:	Plane 7 of Flt. 55	:Midway	: I request instructions
:	:	:	:	: Fired on strange cargo
:	:	:	:	: vessel bearing 258
:	:	:	:	: distance 625 ships
:	:	:	:	: course 50 x I request
:	:	:	:	: instructions
1124:	2124:	Plane 8 of Flt. 55	:Midway	: Mein body.
1209:	2209:	Midway	:Plane 8 of Flt. 55	: Amplify report of main
:	:	:	:	: body.
1240:	2240:	Plane 8 of Flt. 55	:Midway	: 6 ships in column.
1249:	2249:	Midway	:Plane 8 of Flt. 55	: What type curse and
:	:	:	:	: speed
1322:	2332:	Midway	:Plane 8 of Flt. 55	: Return to base.
1806:	0406:	Cdr.Flt. 372	:Midway	: Investigate suspi-
:	:	:	:	: cious vessels. Contact
:	:	:	:	: bearing 261 distance
:	:	:	:	: 700
1812:	0412:	Cdr.Flt. 312	:Midway	: 2 enemy destroyers 2
:	:	:	:	: cargo vessels course
:	:	:	:	: 20 speed 13
2003:	0603:	Plane 6 of Flt. 92	:Cdr.Flt. 92	: Attacked alone bombs
<u>4 June (zone plus 10)</u>				
0406:	1406:	Plane 3 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: 1 troop transport afire
:	:	:	:	: Am beign attacked by
0407:	1407:	Plane 4 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: aircraft.
:	:	:	:	: Attacked - - enemy
:	:	:	:	: bearing 260 distance
:	:	:	:	: 500.
0416:	1416:	Plane 4 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: Resume search.
0447:	1447:	Plane 13 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: Large enemy force bear-
:	:	:	:	: ing 261 distance 500
:	:	:	:	: course 080 attacked
:	:	:	:	: with torpedoes attacked
:	:	:	:	: by aircraft I am re-
:	:	:	:	: turning to base.
0455:	1455:	Plane 2 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: Attack completed main
:	:	:	:	: body.
0512:	1512:	Plane 4 of Flt. 210	:Midway	: Affirm.
0514:	1514:	Plane 1 of Flt. 44	:Midway	: Attack completed hit
:	:	:	:	: large transport bearing
:	:	:	:	: 260 distance 500 enemy
:	:	:	:	: speed 13 course 080
:	:	:	:	: 10 ships.
0633	1633:	Flt. 44 CC	:Flt. 44	: Identify enemy plane
:	:	:	:	: disposition report
:	:	:	:	: result.
0642:	1642:	COFlt 92	:Flt. 92	: Attack immediately.
0723:	1723:	Plane 4 of Flt. 58	:Midway	: Aircraft sighted.

LCT :	GCT:	FROM	:	TO	:	MESSAGE
0728:	1728:	Plane 4 of Flt. 58	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: One engine seaplane.
0734:	1734:	Plane 4 of Flt. 58	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: Enemy Carriers.
0740:	1740:	Plane 4 of Flt. 58	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: ED 180 sight 320.
0753:	1753:	Plane 3 of Flt. 58	:	Midway	:	: Many planes heading Midway
----	----	Plane 6 of Flt. 58	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: bearing 310 distance 150
0803:	1803:	OinC Flt. 92	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: Twin float seaplane bearing
:	:	:	:	:	:	: 336 distance 148
0807:	1807:	CTF 17	:	CTF 16	:	: 2 carriers and battleships
:	:	:	:	:	:	: bearing 320 distance 180
:	:	:	:	:	:	: course 135 speed 25
:	:	:	:	:	:	: Proceed southwesterly and
:	:	:	:	:	:	: attack enemy carrier as soon
:	:	:	:	:	:	: as definitely located I will
:	:	:	:	:	:	: follow as soon as planes
0815:	1815:	CTF 16	:	TF 16	:	: recovered.
0816:	1816:	CTF 16	:	TF 16	:	: Prepare to launch aircraft.
0808:	1818:	OinC Flt. 44	:	Cdr. Flt. 44	:	: Go to general quarters.
0822:	1822:	CTF 17	:	CTF 16	:	: Rendezvous hisianski.
:	:	:	:	:	:	: Have you received report 2 CV
:	:	:	:	:	:	: and BB bearing 320 distance
:	:	:	:	:	:	: 180 miles from Midway course
0834:	1834:	CTF 16	:	TF 16	:	: 135 speed 25 x This on 4265.
:	:	:	:	:	:	: At 0800 two enemy CV and BBs
:	:	:	:	:	:	: 30-30N Long 179-35W Course
0838:	1838:	Midway	:	All Aircraft	:	: 135 speed 25.
0841:	1841:	Plane 4 of Flt. 58	:	OinC Flt. 58	:	: Air raid Midway.
:	:	:	:	:	:	: I am returning to Pearl Harbor
0843:	1843:	Plane 11 of Flt. 55	:	Midway	:	: unless otherwise instructed.
0845:	1845:	CTF 16	:	Hornet and Enterprise:	:	: Proceeding to Haysan Island.
0846:	1846:	CTF 16	:	All ships this type	:	: Use deferred departure.
0848:	1848:	CTF 16	:	Hornet	:	: Launch aircraft at 0900.
:	:	:	:	:	:	: Midway planes have been sent
0850:	1850:	Plane 1 of Flt. 55	:	Midway	:	: to attack carriers.
0859:	1859:	OinC Flt. 55	:	Plane 5 of Flt. 55	:	: I am proceeding to rendezvous.
0905:	1905:	Plane 5 of Flt. 55	:	OinC Flt. 55	:	: Act at discretion.
0909:	1909:	Plane 8 of Flt. 55	:	Midway	:	: I am proceeding Hisianski Island.
:	:	:	:	:	:	: Fired at by small vessel course
:	:	:	:	:	:	: 085 bearing 264, true distance
0920:	1920:	OinC Flt. 55	:	All stations this	:	: 340.
:	:	:	:	circuit.	:	: Authenticate all transmissions
:	:	:	:	:	:	: on this circuit.

LCT	GCT	FROM	TO	MESSAGE
0930:	1930:	Plane 3 of Flt. 55:	OinC Flt. 55	:I am proceeding to Hisianski
:	:	:	:	:unless otherwise directed.
1027:	2027:	CTF 16	:TF 16	:Prepere to repel attack.
1038:	2038:	Plane 19 of Flt.55:	OinC Flt. 55	:4 CA enemy DDs, 2 tankers 2
:	:	:	:	:AP bearing 265 distance 400
:	:	:	:	:course 085.
1050:	2050:	OinC Flt. 23	:Cdr. Flt. 23	:Direct 3 patrol planes be
:	:	:	:	:vicinity Hermes 1500 report.
1057:	2057:	Cdr. Flt. 92	:OinC Flt. 92	:Attack completed on carrier
:	:	:	:	:one damaged is it clear to
:	:	:	:	:land.
1105:	2105:	Plane 9 of Flt. 55:	OinC Flt. 55	:8 enemy cruisers course 080
:	:	:	:	:bearing true and distance from
:	:	:	:	:ships previous report 320
:	:	:	:	:miles (plane previous report
:	:	:	:	:was bearing 265)
1114:	2114:	CTF 17	:CTF 16	:Launched three fourths of
:	:	:	:	:group at attack same carriers
1128:	2128:	-----	:Midway	:626 circling field your front
:	:	:	:	:wheel is not down bail out
:	:	:	:	:over lagoon.
1130:	2130:	Plane 3 of Flt. 4:	:Midway	:No gas.
1138:	2138:	Plane 3 of Flt. 23:	Cdr. Flt. 23	:Radio compass out request
:	:	:	:	:bearing IFF.
1143:	2143:	Plane 4 of Flt.458:	??	:Bearing 357 distance 210.
1147:	2147:	OinC Flt. 92	:Plane 16	:Proceed to Midway immediately.
1154:	2154:	OinC Flt. 23	:COFlt. 23	:Proceed to Midway immediately.
1201:	2201:	Ent attack group	:CTF 16	:We have been over the enemy
:	:	:	:	:for the last half hour x 8 DD
:	:	:	:	:2 BB 2 CV.
1209:	2209:	Ent.	:EAGC	:Attack immediately.
1214:	2214:	CTF 16	:CTF 17	:Report received from entgroup
:	:	:	:	:cdr at about 1200 quote x No
:	:	:	:	:combat patrol over target x
:	:	:	:	:8 DDs 2 BEs 2 CVs course about
:	:	:	:	:north quote x my course 285.
1215:	2215:	EAGC	:HAGC??	:(Name could not identify)how
:	:	:	:	:about you take the one on the
:	:	:	:	:left I'll take the one on the
:	:	:	:	:right x I'm going to make an
:	:	:	:	:attack x you take the noodle
:	:	:	:	:over the left side I'll take
:	:	:	:	:the other one on the right.
1221:	2221:	CVB 6	: VB 6	:My div stay with me x I am
:	:	:	:	:going to over Gallaher may
:	:	:	:	:take next target.
1223:	2223:	Cdr. VB 6	: ----	:1st div 2nd div stay with me
:	:	:	:	:and come on over - don't let
:	:	:	:	:this carrier escape.

ECT	GCT	FROM	TO	MESSAGE
1234	2234	Plane 3 of Ft. 58	Cdr. Flt. 58	Sector covered to 320 miles heavy front penetrated 100 miles I am proceeding to base 344 distance 360 from Hisianski island 950 fuel.
1300 1304	2300 2304	Plane 4 of Flt 458 CTF 17	Oinc Flt. 458 CTF 16	Attacked by aircraft. Whey your planes return give me enemy position course speed x I ha have one squadron bombers ready.
1306	2306	CTF 17	CTF 16	Propose Yorktown search northwest quadrant x advise.
1308	2308	Hornet	CTF 16	Our planes apparently returning x Desire recover soon as possible after arrival.
1310	2310	CTF 16	CTF 17	at 1215 estimated enemy position lat 30-38N Long 178-30W x circling speed 25.
1315 1320	2315 2320	Plane 3 of Flt. 44 Plane 7 of Ft. 58	Midway Oinc Flt. 58	Down at sea. No info 475 miles bearing 344 I am proceeding to base hisianski Island.
1339	2339	??	??	I am landing in water 10 miles away bearing 140.
1341	2341	OTC	Maury	Proceed to posit bearing 140 from OTC distance 10 miles rescue flight personnel x if not found rejoin promptly.
?	?	CTF 16	CTF 17	Your 042359 suggest Yorktown locate track carriers already attacked x in addition search northwest quadrant for possible third carrier x we will strike again.
1355	2355	CTF 16	Ent and Hornet	Report number of missing planes by types.
1402	0002	??	??	Fog bank northeast of Hisianski.
1404	0004	CTF 16	TF 16	Prepare to repel attack.
1441	0041	CTF 17	CTF 16, Cincpac	Have been attacked by air 150 miles north of Midway.
1457	0097	Hornet	CTF 16	Aircraft accounted for as follows 1 VT 14VSB 10VF
1510	0110	Hornet OV 67	CTF 16 CTF 17	We have 20 SED ready. Lost-using search and attack frequency.
1543 1618	0143 0218	Midway Plane 4	Flt. 237 - 238 Oinc FAt 55	Seaplanes return to Pearl Harbor We three Pearl Harbor unless otherwise directed.
1637	0237	Plane 10	Oinc Flt. 58	I am returning to ship tie of arrival 1517 X I request instructions.

LCT	GCT	FROM	TO	
1642:	0242:	Plane 11	: CinC Flt. 58	: Proceeding to French Frigate Shoals.
1645:	0245:	Plane 7	: CinC Flt. 57	: 1 CV 2 BB 3 CA 4 DD 179-05W
1710:	0310:	CTF 16	: Hornet	: 31-15N course 000 speed 15
1710:	0310:	CinC Flt. 97	: Cdr. Flt 97	: Prepare to launch attack group immediately information later.
1723:	0323:	Plane 11	: CinC Flt. 55	: Attack enemy carrier bearing 338 178 miles from Midway.
1730:	0330:	COFlt 58	: Flt 58	: Fueled Haysan Island shall I return Midway or Pearl Harbor hull damaged.
1740:	0340:	Plane 3	: Midway	: Patrol planes report position or location and destination.
1745:	0345:	Plane 3	: Midway	: Down at sea need help.
1747:	0347:	Midway	: Plane 3	: Is help coming.
1800:	1400:	Plane 1	: CinC Flt. 58	: As soon as we find where you are.
1803:	0403:	Plane 6	: CinC Flt. 58	: 3 burning ships bearing 320 distance 170.m
1807:	0407:	CinC Flt. 92	: COFlt. 92	: Bearing 063 distance 122 from Midway.
1809:	0409:	Plane 1	: CinC Flt. 58	: Attack carrier bearing 338 distance 170 from Midway
1945:	0545:			: 3 burning ships are enemy CVs damage ship 2 enemy cruisers 4 DD bearing 320 distance 170 I am trailing enemy.
1950:	0550:	CEAG	: EntAG	: Have been opposed by AA gun-fire 2 cruisers bearing 320 distance 170.
1955:	0555:	Midway	: Ft29-30	: Lat 30-30 long 175-50 course 280.
2000:	0600:	Plane 1	: CoFlt 58	: Ft 29-30 proceed mission assigned.
2011:	0611:	CTF 16	: CTF 17	: Forces engaged in battle bearing 355 distance 150 x I am returning to base
2021:	0621:	Plane 1	: CinC	: Hornet and Enterprise groups now attacking fourth carrier reported by one of your search planes x Hornet about 30 miles east of me x intend stand west until recovery air group x have you any suggestions for further operations.
2024:	0624:	CTF 16	: CTF 17	: Am being attacked by Zero Jap fighters.
2027:	0627:	Hornet	: CTF 16	: What measures can I take towards salvage of Yorktown 16 SBD launched at 1804 to attack enemy carrier.

TIME : FROM : TO :

0620 OC 58 Plane 1 Well Done.

0627 HORNET CTF 16 16 SBP launched at 1804 to attack enemy Carrier.

*GCT* → 0624 CTF 16 CTF 17 What measures can I take toward salvage of YORKTOWN.

0621 Plane 1 OC 58 Am being attacked by Zero Jap Fighters.

0643 CTF 17 CTF 16 Your 0624 thank you no assistance required. WIREO due tomorrow.

~~4205~~ Plane 6 OC 58 Landing at sea 129 or 342 distant from Midway

0600 Plane 1 CO 58 Forces engaged in Battle Bearing 355 distance 150. I am returning to base.

0704 OF 97 COFLY 97 Attack Carrier Bearing 338 distance 170 from Midway.

0545 Plane 1 OC FLY 58 3 burning ships are Japanese (Enemy CV(s) damage ship 2 enemy cruisers 4 enemy DDs bearing 320 distance 170 I am trailing enemy.

*7/10* 1647 OC 92 CO 92 Attack immediately enemy cruiser 40 to 90 bearing true 276.

1816 Plane 3 Midway ~~large~~ oil slick bearing 280 distance 95.

1855 OC 92 CO 92 Attack 2 damaged battleships bearing 264 distant 125 course 268 speed 15.

1857 Plane 7 OC 55 Bearing 325 164 miles men boat.

1919 Plane 7 OC 55 5 ships bearing 325 200 miles.

1906 Plane 5 OC 55 3 submarines (surfaced) bearing 305 distance 190.

1915 Plane 4 OC 55 2 enemy light cruisers bearin 286 distance 174 miles course 310 speed ---

1900 Plane 3 Midway 3 Battleships now in clear area (force is part of one previously reported).

1858 Plane 2 OC 55 Continuing search.

1902 HORNET CTF 16 2 strange aircraft sighted bearing 330 low.

C O P Y

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C O P Y 6

TIME :	FROM :	TO :	
1840	Plane 2	OCFLT 55	(1 group garbled) Damaged stranding oil.
1920	Midway	Plane 3	What is your position.
1940	OCFLT 92	OCFLT 92	Target bearing 270 distance 130.
1632	Plane 2		Sighted 2 Battleships bearing 264 distance 125 course 268 speed 15.
1940	Plane 3	Midway	Harx assistance been sent estimate position bearing 103 from Midway distance approx. 160 miles sea calm visibility good can send MO's answer.
2010	OCFLT 92	COFLT 92	Target bearing 270 distance 130.
2022	Plane 10	OCFLT 55	Carrier believed friendly has cruiser escort.
2056	Plane 10	OCFLT 55	1 Carrier (friendly) investigating suspicious vessels.
2052	OCFLT 55	Plane 10	Have you seen 2 Carriers or 1?
2045	OCFLT 92	OCFLT 92	Target bearing 270 distance 130.
1536	Plane 1	OCFLT 58	Plane Patrol undamaged send fuel my posit is bearing 030 distance 30.
2115	Plane 4	OFILT 55	2 enemy destroyers bearing 120 course 300 speed 20
2135	Plane 1	OCFLT 55	I an trailing enemy battleships bearing 265 distance 138.
2217	Plane 10	OCFLT 55	Friendly force bearing 018 true distance 80 miles.
2213	Plane 5	OCFLT 55	Sight contact 4 torpedo patrol Boats and friendly force bearing 304 distance 25.
2348	Plane 4	" " "	I suspicious submarine (submerged) bearing 134 T. Distance 52.
0230	COFLT 92	OCFLT 92	Large friendly Task Force Bearing 322 distance 105 course 322.
0412	Plane 1	Midway	1 Carrier, 2 BB, 3 CA, 5 DD, course 280 speed 10 bearing 325.
0635	Plane 2	OCFLT 56	12 _____ S bearing 313 distance 350.
0610	COFLT 92	OCFLT 92	Unable locate target dropped 1 Bomb 1 enemy same posit request MO's 555.

TIME : FROM : TO

TIME	FROM	TO	DESCRIPTION
0652	Plane 2	OCFLT 56	Large Carrier retiring into front 9 VF "V" formation 10,000 feet approximate course CV 315 distance 425.
0700	Plane 2	OCFLT 55	Being attacked by fighters.
2053	OURSRKFRS		Do you see the carrier? No but I will pretty soon.
0705	OCFLT 236	COFLT 236	Landing field clear use identification approach.
0754	OCFLT 236	COFLT 236	Investigate suspicious vessels perar and and Hermes reef.
0805	OCFLT 56	Plane 2	Amplify report of 20 ships.
1716	CTF 16	HORNET	Report when ready to launch attack group. What strength/ Enterprise will search Western semicircle 200 miles.
0847			Sighted enemy 1 CV 5 DD lat 29-38 Long 174-00 Course 270
1904	CTF 16	CDR 1	Enemy located. Will proceed toward him at 25 knots to attack. Send destroyers which are short of fuel to rendezvous with CIMARRON. Her 2130 Z 8 June Posit Lat 32 Long 178 West. She will reach that Posit. from Lat 32 Long 169 West.
0910	OCT	CCD 6	Search reported 1 enemy CV 5 DD. Enemy Posit 0900 Lat 29-33 Long 174 Course West Speed 10 distance 150 bearing 239 from our 0900 Posit. Search immediately 60° Sector Median 239 to 150 miles locate enemy maintain contact track and report No bombs on planes maximum fuel. Relieve as necessary. We will close on contact.
1913	CCD 6	CTF 16	Did you receive contact report on Approx. 6290 KCS at 18407.
1920	CTF 16	CCD 6	Your 1900. Negative.
0933	OCT	HORNET	As soon as you are ready launch attack Group attack enemy CV 5 DD 0815 Posit Lat 29-33 Long 174-30 Course 270 Speed 10.
1950	CTG 16.2	FREDJACK	Launch two planes each immediately. Search sector 209-269 distance 150 miles. Single plane. Locate enemy. Maintain contact Track and report. Fuel 170 no bombs. Relieve on station 1430. Formation will close enemy reported posit

Lat 29-33 Long 174.

TIME	FROM	TO	
1038	HORNET	OTC	Pilot in Search Sector Bearing 230-240 States No CV sighted 1 BB. Request you inform group.
2050	ENTER	ATK GRP	Target BB instead of CV Repeat Blue Attack group from ENTERPRISE target may be BB Instead of Carrier same Posit.
2105	CTF 16	TF 16	2 Ships previously reported are enemy.
2117	HORNET	CTF 16	Search was discontinued by pilots sighting enemy BB this morning in Sectors 220-250. This leaves an area from ahead and to Port Beam of Enemy BB not searched where Carrier May be.
1136	Plane 2	OTC	Contact (tacke bearing on Me).
1135	NORTH	CTF 16	At 1135 Hornet Attack Group Bearing 215 distance 123 miles.
1150	OTC	ALL	We have just intercepted a Message from CinC Orange Fleet that he is being attacked We believe he is in the Battleship being bombed.
1206	ATKGRP	OTC	No CV sighted Attack CA supported by 3DD course 270 speed 25 no air opposition.
2300			Carrier sunk. 2 CA 2 DD course 275 Spd 22.
2300	NEW OR	CTF 16	Our plane reports enemy Lat 29-18 Long 172-53 Course 258 Speed 15 type not stated time 2230 Zed.
2312	NEWBRL	OTC	2 DD changed to course 270 positive CV has sunk.
2318	Plane 2	OTC	Last CA reversed course.
2254	OTC	Plane 11	Report type course speed position and damage to target use plain language.
2308	OC FLT57	Plane5&7	---CA BB Search sector limiting bearing 265 and 285 distant 500 miles.
2318	COCRUIS	CTF 16	Carrier Sunk.
2348			4 Ships 2 CL 2 DD course 245 speed 20. DD previously reported slow now making Speed. The Group left scene of our last Attack.

TIME	FROM	TO	
2348	Plane 17	OTC	All 4 ships trailing Oil.
3095	Plane 2	OTC	Two CA MOGAMI CLASS course 245 speed 20. One cruiser one destroyer leaking oil.
2342	Plane 6	OCFLT 57	4 unidentified ships are being attacked by aircraft bearing true 277 distance 525 course 200 speed 30 have been opposed by AA fire as we approached proceeding on mission assigned.
0004	Plane 17	OTC	Tracking reports made so far have been made on same force.
1404	ENTATKGRP	TORPGRP	There is 1 CA Light CA and 2 DD.
1408	VS 5		Target is BB, target is BB Negat at present.
0100	CCD 6	CTF 16	Following received from PBY Plane "4 unidentified ships bearing 277 from Midway distance 550 miles.
0100	Plane 7	OC FLT 57	Objective previously reported apparently enemy BB enemy CA (s) opposed by friend- ly cruisers destroyers bearing 277 (T) dist. 550. My position is bearing 280 T. Dist. 425. I request instructions send- ing message by light to our forces.
1524	EAGC	OTC	Correct Posit BB Lat 29-28 Long. 173-11 Did you receive my last message.
1516	ENTATKGRP		There is ----- on my starboard bow.
1516	ENTERGRCD	ENTER	Posit of BB is Lat 28-55 Long 173-00E.
1517	NOYLE	GRAY	Turn right 30 degrees - follow me.
1527	ENTGRCDE		The ship is to our left everybody to the right of me close in. CA hit on course 240 speed 15 kts. Larger ship is still stationary at Lat and Long giv.
0232	Plane 1	Midway	Submarine bearing 263 true dist 320 course 180 submerged on sight.
1650	HOR B-10	HORNET	Attack completed - BB afloat afire other BB on fire 1 DD had heavy explosion 1 ship no damage from this attack.
0313	Plane 1	Midway	Submarine bearing 254 dist.400 submerged on sight.

Time : FROM : TO :

0303 Plane 5 OCFLT 56 Survivors found landing made.

0355 JACK  
Planes picked up enemy main body at 1115 in posit Lat 29-30 Long 173-25. Both Pilots positively identified ships as 1 Mogami cruiser and 1 Nachi cruiser 2 DD total 4 ships. Identification made from 5 miles pilots circled formation at 25 miles and no other ships observed. Only apparent damage to enemy was slight leaks from 1 CA and 1 DD. At 1415 enemy bore 265 distance 90 miles on course 225 speed 20 25. Planes arrived after 1st attack and departed prior to 2nd attack.

0443 HORNET CTF 16  
BB Magazine exploded. A fire from bridge to after turret and personnel abandoning ship. CA at least 2 additional hits. Afire. DD 1 bomb hit on fantail. 1 DD left to rescue survivors. strafed by Machine gun fire.

0523 HORNET CTF 16  
Our pilots report enemy BB has white cross forward similar to those on our Carriers.

0515 HINIE CTF 16  
Your 0408 mean enemy posit at 1430 was 29-00 173-20 average course 225. Enemy force contacted 3 DD 1 Mogami CA one other possibility judging by large wake. Mogami determined by twon-mount AA fire. Speed 15-20. DD's and BB trailing oil. 1 Pilot reports sighting Carrier under attack at first contact. No carrier sighted on closing. Definitely no carrier within 20 miles at 1430. All VCS reports were on same force. 1 DD seen to sink after first attack.

2127 Plane 3 OCFLT 55  
Enemy plane positively identified did not attempt to engage. notified 180/115 army May be intercepted that vicinity.

2101 OCFLT 55 Plane 3  
Amplify are you definite was enemy 4 B-24 returning from Wake.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF COMMANDER CARRIERS

June 13, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

The following points were emphasized in the  
Battle of Midway, 4-6 June, 1942:

1. Losses in attacking planes are due primarily to enemy VF and not to AA fire.
2. Ships unsupported by VF are easy prey for CV air attack.
3. In duel between CVs side which is able to strike first blow without being itself hit wins.
4. CVs are most vulnerable to damage from fire. This is especially true when they are caught with planes on deck.
5. Carrier air groups should be complete units which have been highly trained while operating from a shore base before they go on board carrier.
6. A carrier air group which has been in action and has suffered heavy losses should go ashore to receive its replacements and to train these until the squadrons and the group are again ready for combat duty. This means that replacement air groups must be ready.
7. A.P. bombs suitable for our present dive bombers are required. With present bombs attack against armored ships does not disable until ship has been knocked to pieces by many more hits than should be necessary.
8. Strafing attack against DDs by VFs temporarily stops their AA fire by driving exposed personnel to cover.

ALS-3/

June 13, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: Cincpac (Cont'd).

9. Dive bombing attacks on DDs are not profitable because of the difficulty of obtaining hits on such a small and highly maneuverable target. Such attacks should not be made if a larger and more valuable target is available.
10. Early and accurate information of movements of an enemy force to be attacked is essential for successful carrier operations. This should be obtained, whenever possible, by other than CV aircraft, both to retain maximum CV striking power and to avoid disclosing the fact that any CVs are in the area.

R. A. SPRUANCE.

2

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF COMMANDER CARRIERS

June 13, 1942.

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Memorandum for Rear Admiral Spruance.

1. The following additional features occur to me as having been high-lighted in the actions 4-6 June, 1942:
  - (a) Our F4F-4. Performance greatly inferior to Jap "zero" VF. Fire power of our fighter appears superior. Range and endurance totally inadequate. (See (b) below).
  - (b) Aircraft Torpedo Attack. TBD performance fatally inadequate. VF must accompany if enemy VF opposition present (hence range and endurance essential in our VF). Our present aircraft torpedoes too slow and not enough punch. (Three VF rons attacked enemy CV's; it is a practicable certainty that some hits were made; bombing and other planes observed no evidence of slowing or other damage from such hits; more speed will get more hits; more war head will make them more effective.)
  - (c) Horizontal high altitude bombing attack is relatively ineffective against ships which retain speed and control.
  - (d) Contact once made must be held and tracking information broadcast. MO's are constantly and effectively used by Jap trackers.
  - (e) Jap seaplane carriers are effectively used; we do not have but should.
  - (f) Japs do not search using their CV planes - these are held cocked and primed. Excellent when proper coverage by other means (they depend on shore air when available - on seaplane carriers when former is not) is available. Serious weakness if not fatal to them at Midway and nearly so in Coral Sea. We should always exploit this feature of their use of air afloat.

A16-3/

June 13, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Memorandum for Rear Admiral Spruance (Cont'd).

- (g) Marking our CV's shouldn't be done - it: (1) makes them a bulls-eye for enemy; (2) leads our people to expect an easy solution of a problem which cannot be easily solved. (Marks may be covered, obliterated, enemy may see and copy, etc.)
- (h) Great advantage of 2 CV Task Force.
- (i) Training of our carrier air groups in attacking procedures has suffered badly since the outbreak of war. It is submitted that it is imperative that greater opportunity for such training be made available for groups which are necessarily held in the combat zone (including the Hawaiian area).

Respectfully,

M. R. BROWNING.

**UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF COMMANDER CARRIERS**

Subject: Report of Damage to Enemy June 4,5,6, 1942.  
-----

3. June 6, 1942.

- (a) Attack on enemy force, approximate position at 1300 LCT., Lat 29-33N., Long 175-35W.
- (b) Composition of enemy force: 4 ships. 1 BB, 1 CA, 1 CL, 1 DD or 2 CAs and 2 DDs.
- (c) Damage:
  - 1 CA or BC - dead in the water, helpless and being abandoned.
  - 1 CA or CL - two direct hits and a fire. Making 10 knots on westerly course.
  - 1 DD - sunk.

4. The above assessment of damage is taken primarily from reports of ENTERPRISE pilots and YORKTOWN and HORNET pilots who have been aboard ENTERPRISE at one time or another. More complete reports from the HORNET and YORKTOWN may reveal additional damage, particularly the first HORNET attack on June 6th which may have been executed against a reported enemy group to the southwest of the group attacked by the ENTERPRISE.

5. Without exception all reports indicate that the four enemy Carriers as well as the four Battleships and Heavy Cruisers first attacked by the Carrier Air Groups at noon on June 4th, showed No sign of any previous damage. All ships were maneuvering at high speed and No smoke or fire was visible. All Carrier decks were intact - one with many planes aboard, the second, with fourteen to twenty planes on stern and launching aircraft, and the third, one plane taking off but with few others on deck. The fourth Carrier at 1900 was intact, and had a short time before launched its planes for the second attack on YORKTOWN.

*Julian P. Brown*  
JULIAN P. BROWN,  
Lieutenant Colonel, USMC.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF COMMANDER CARRIERS

June 12, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR: Commander Task Force SIXTEEN.

Subject: Report of Damage to Enemy June 4, 5, 6, 1942.

From a careful study and check of pilot's reports the following damage to enemy surface vessels by Air Groups from Task Forces SIXTEEN and SEVENTEEN appear to be reasonably certain:

1..June 4, 1942

(1) First Attack.

- (a) Time of attack: 1225 - 1250
- (b) Composition of enemy force: 3 CV - 2 BB - 8 DD.
- (c) Damage:

3 CVs hit several times by 1000 lb and 500 lb bombs. All were burning fiercely, heavy explosion observed in one. These CVs tentatively identified as KAGA - AKAGI and 1 SORYU class.

1 CA - one or two direct hits. In flames but underway when last seen.

1 CL - burning lightly.

(2) Second Attack.

- (a) Time of attack: 1905 - 1915.
- (b) Composition of enemy force: 1 CV - 2 BB - 3 CA - 4 DD.
- (c) Damage:

1 CV hit repeatedly by 1000 lb and 500 lb bombs. Burning fiercely from stem to stern. Squadron leader reports that at 1940 CV burning heavily but moving with fleet. Also he reports that at this time 3 large columns of smoke were observed 40 miles to the south from three hulks and that 3 DDs were proceeding from that direction toward the northwest.

1 BB - one or two direct hits. Stern was in flames.

2. June 5, 1942.

(1) Search and attack enemy surface vessels encountered.

- (a) Time of attack: 2030 LCT.
- (b) Composition of force: 1 CL.
- (c) Damage: nil.

	First Attack				Second Attack				Third Attack															
	Launched		Combat loss		Launched		Combat Loss		Launched		Combat loss													
	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total												
ENTERPRISE:	33	14	10	57	18	10	0	28	24	0	0	24	3	0	0	3	32	0	0	32	31	0	0	31
HORNET	34	15	10	59	3	15	10	28	16	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	33	0	0	33	1	0	0	1

	Fourth Attack				Fifth Attack											
	Launched		Combat Loss		Launched		Combat Loss									
	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total								
ENTERPRISE:	31	3	12	46	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	24	0	0	0	0
HORNET	26	0	8	34	1	0	0	1	24	0	0	24	0	0	0	0

RECAPITULATION

	1st Attack		2nd Attack		3rd Attack		4th Attack		5th Attack		Totals	
	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost								
ENTERPRISE:	57	28	24	3	32	1	46	0			159	32
HORNET	59	28	16	0	33	1	34	1	24	0	166	30
<u>Grand Total</u>											325	62

1/2 About 9 of these ran out of fuel due to increased consumption or bullet holes in tanks;  
 6 pilots and 5 gunners have been recovered.  
 # 1 VF made water landing out of fuel, pilot recovered.  
 2 were YORKTOWN planes.  
 ? YORKTOWN plane.  
 4 ENTERPRISE plane.

	First Attack				Second Attack				Third Attack												
	Launched		Combat Loss		Launched		Combat Loss		Launched		Combat Loss										
	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total									
ENTERPRISE:	33	14	10	57	18	10	0	28	24	0	0	24	3	32	0	0	32	1	0	0	1
HORNET	34	15	10	59	3	15	10	28	16	0	0	16	0	33	0	0	33	1	0	0	1

	Fourth Attack				Fifth Attack											
	Launched		Combat Loss		Launched		Combat Loss									
	VSB	VT	VF	Total	VSB	VT	VF	Total								
ENTERPRISE:	31	3	12	46	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	24	0	0	0	0
HORNET	26	0	8	34	1	0	0	1	24	0	0	24	0	0	0	0

RECAPITULATION

	1st Attack		2nd Attack		3rd Attack		4th Attack		5th Attack		Totals	
	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost	Launch	Lost
ENTERPRISE:	57	28	24	3	32	1	46	0			159	32
HORNET	59	28	16	0	33	1	34	1	24	0	166	30
	<u>Grand Total</u>										325	62

- % About 9 of these ran out of fuel due to increased consumption or bullet holes in tanks; 6 pilots and 5 gunners have been recovered.
- # 1 VF made water landing out of fuel, pilot recovered.
- \$ 2 were YORKTOWN planes.
- ? YORKTOWN plane.
- ‡ ENTERPRISE plane.

SS168/A12-1

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

F

Serial ( 027 )

Care of Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California,  
June 7, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To : Commander Submarine Division Forty-two.  
Subject: Patrol Report of U.S.S. NAUTILUS.  
Enclosure: (A) Extract from War Patrol Report.

1. Enclosure (A) is a record of the activities of this ship on June 4, 1942. It is forwarded at this time because of its possible current interest. Enclosure (A) will also be included in the regular patrol report submitted at the end of the cruise.

Wm. H. Brockman, Jr.

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

Narrative of 4 June 1942

L.Z.T. + 12 Z.D.

- 0420 Submerged.
- 0544 Message received that many planes were headed for Midway from a point bearing  $320^{\circ}$ T distance about 150 miles from that island. This point was on the boundary of the NAUTILUS patrol area.
- 0658 Sighted a formation of six planes.
- 0710 Sighted smoke of bombing and anti-aircraft fire beyond the horizon bearing  $331^{\circ}$ T. Changed course to close the action and went to battle stations submerged.
- 0755 Tops of masts appeared dead ahead. While making this observation, was strafed by aircraft. Changed depth to 100 feet. Echo ranging was first heard at this time.
- 0800 Sighted a formation of four ships. One battleship of ISE class and one cruiser drew toward the starboard bow, two other cruisers toward the port bow. Decided to attack the battleship and changed course to draw ahead. Sighted and bombed by plane. A cruiser of the JINTSU class approached to attack with depth charges. At least two ships were echo ranging on the NAUTILUS.
- 0810 JINTSU class cruiser dropped pattern of 5 depth charges followed seven minutes later by a pattern of 6 depth charges.
- 0819 Went to 90 feet to avoid scouting planes. Nine depth charges dropped at distance of about 1000 yards. When attack ceased, planed up to periscope depth to observe.
- 0824 The picture presented on raising the periscope was one never experienced in peacetime practices. Ships were on all sides moving across the field at high speed and circling away to avoid the submarine position. Ranges were above 3000 yards. The JINTSU class cruiser had passed over and was now astern. The battleship was on our port bow and firing her whole starboard broadside battery at the periscope. Flag hoists were being made; searchlights were trained at the periscope. The exact position of the NAUTILUS may have been known by the enemy at this time because #9 deck torpedo was running hot in the tube as a result of the shearing of the torpedo retaining pin during the depth charging. Periscope estimate was made on the battleship and put on the Torpedo Data Computer. Range estimated as 4,500 yards, angle on the bow  $80^{\circ}$  starboard, speed 25 knots.
- 0825 Fired #1 tube at battleship followed by #2 tube with a  $1^{\circ}$  right offset. After firing #2 it was found that #1 had not fired. Battleship changed course to the left and headed directly away. Range to battleship had now increased to 5,000 yards and track was  $180^{\circ}$ . Held further fire. During

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

- this time echo ranging by surface ships was continuous and accurate. Immediately after our firing at the battleship, the JINTSU type cruiser headed for NAUTILUS.
- 0830 Went to 150 feet. Depth charge attack began. No damage. During depth charging this day a short shrill whistle was heard in the supersonic receiver an instant before distant depth charges exploded. Close charges sounded like a severe hammer blow on the hull and were not preceded by the whistle.
- 0846 Ordered periscope depth. Battleship and other accompanying ships, except JINTSU type cruiser, were well out of range. Echo ranging by cruiser was still accurate.
- 0900 Raised periscope and sighted aircraft carrier bearing 013° relative. Carrier was distant 16,000 yards and was changing course continuously. She did not appear to be damaged, but was overhung by anti-aircraft bursts. NAUTILUS was on a converging course. While making this observation the JINTSU type cruiser began to close again at high speed.
- 0910 When cruiser reached 2,500 yards fired #2 torpedo tube. Cruiser was observed to change course.
- 0918 A cruiser attacked with 6 depth charges. These were more accurately placed than previous charges. Went to 200 feet, used evasive tactics at slow speed, but continued advance to close the carrier. Cruiser continued echo ranging and at 0933 two of her depth charges landed close.
- 0955 Echo ranging ceased. Ordered periscope depth to estimate the situation. On looking found that the entire formation first seen, including the attacking cruisers had departed. The carrier previously seen was no longer in sight.
- 1029 Saw 3 masts on the horizon bearing 005°T, distance 10 miles. Changed course to 005°T. Raised the vertical antenna and intercepted a radio message stating that a CV was damaged. Large clouds of grey smoke were seen at four places over the horizon. The nearest cloud of smoke had not previously been sighted, so continued to close it at the best speed that the condition of the battery and probable future operations for the day would allow.
- 1047 Sighted three planes approaching. Lowered periscope and vertical antenna and continued approach at periscope depth.
- 1145 Identified the source of smoke as a burning carrier. The carrier was still about 8 miles away and was in latitude 30° - 13' N longitude 179° - 17' W. Decided to overtake if possible and to attack.
- 1224 Range not having decreased appreciably, changed speed to 2/3 ahead on both motors after estimating that sufficient battery capacity just remained for operations until night fall.
- 1253 Range decreased. Sighted two cruisers escorting the carrier. Tentatively identified CV as a carrier of the SORYU class. The carrier was on even keel and the hull appeared to be undamaged. There were no flames and the fire seemed to be

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

under control. Accompanying cruisers were about two miles ahead of the carrier.

1300 The CV, which had been making 2-3 knots when the approach began, was now stopped. At closer range it was seen that efforts were being made by boats under her bow to pass a towing hawser and many men were seen working on the fore-castle.

The decision had to be made in which order to attack the targets presented. Attack on the cruisers and later on the carrier was considered, but the remaining capacity of the battery would not allow a further chase of several miles to catch the moving cruisers, even if it were possible to overtake them. The decision was therefore made to complete the destruction of the CV before she could be repaired or taken in tow. Approach continued at periscope depth. An approach course was chosen to give torpedo hits on the starboard or island side of the carrier. During the next hour a repeated check was made of the silhouettes of American and Japanese carriers in order to be certain of the identity of the target. The target was a carrier of the SORYU class.

1359 Fired three torpedoes at the carrier from periscope depth. Attempts to fire #4 torpedo tube were unsuccessful.

Immediately prior to firing each torpedo, the Torpedo Data Computer generated bearing was checked by a periscope bearing. Mean run of torpedoes was 2700 yards. The wakes of the torpedoes were observed through the periscope until the torpedoes struck the target. Red flames appeared along the length of the ship from the bow to amidships. The fire which had first attracted us to the attack had been underneath the demolished after flight deck and was nearly extinguished by the time the NAUTILUS reached the firing point. This fire again broke out. Boats drew away from the bow and many men were seen going over the side. All 5 officers in the conning tower observed the results of the torpedoing.

1405 Fired last of three torpedoes at the carrier. Cruisers began reversing course at high speed and started to echo range.

1410 Cruiser passed directly over the top of the NAUTILUS. Changed course to 190°T and went to 300 feet. A prolonged depth charge attack now began, eleven charges being dropped on the first attack. This entire barrage was close and well placed except that charges were set too shallow and exploded above the ship. A few small leaks were sprung. At this time a sound was heard like that which would be caused by a chain being dragged across the ship. It may be interesting to note that a similar noise was heard by a British submarine under depth charge attack about one year ago.

1431 Depth charge attack continued. A sound similar to heavy objects landing on the deck was heard twice. The sound operator reported the noise of propellers all around the dial.

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

- 1445 Changed depth to 200 feet. Ten minutes later the last two depth charges were dropped some distance away.
- 1610 Came to periscope depth. Saw carrier, but the escorting cruisers were no longer in sight. They had abandoned the carrier and she was afire along the entire length.
- 1800 Heavy black smoke enveloped the carrier and formed a cloud over the ship to a height of a thousand feet. The officer making this observation compared the cloud to the oil smoke which arose from the U.S.S. ARIZONA when that ship burned at Pearl Harbor, T.H., December 7-9. Nothing could be seen of the carriers hull.
- 1840 Heard heavy subsurface explosions and went to depth charge stations. A search by periscope failed to reveal any object in the vicinity except the still greater cloud of black smoke from burning oil. If the carrier was not found by patrol planes which searched the vicinity the following morning, the Commanding Officer believes that she was destroyed at this time by fire and internal explosions. He did not however actually see her sink.
- 1941 Surfaced with exhausted battery and returned to NAUTILUS patrol area. Four torpedoes expended, forty-two depth charges received.

Upon surfacing no smoke or flame of any sort was seen.

The note below might be of some value in determining if the Japs do have a new underwater sound apparatus. Observations were made by I. E. Wetmore, C.R.M. (AA), U.S. Navy.

"In connection with the depth charge attacks made on us this morning and this afternoon, the following facts were noted specifically:

1. Just before the start of the attacks, or at least before the enemy closed on us, a peculiar crackling noise was heard approximately on the bearing where the enemy was seen by periscope. This occurred in each instance before his propellers were heard and continued until about the time the first of the charges were dropped.

2. The bearing of this sound was quite sharp (about 2 or 3 degrees) although it could be heard from quarter to quarter astern.

3. The best description I could give of the character of the sound was that it sounded like someone dragging a stick rapidly and at a steady rate along a picket fence, and there was a hollow-

U.S.S. NAUTILUS

sounding background to the noise.

4. The possibility of the enemy having some type of underwater-sound "RADAR" is advanced. They seemed to get our approximate location in the morning, and our exact location this afternoon, very quickly - even before closing to attack."

The performance of duty of the officers and men of this ship during this strenuous day was in accordance with the best traditions of the Navy. The work of the diving officer, Lieutenant Hogan, needs special mention for his expert diving of the ship. All officers performed their duty in an excellent manner.

U.S.S. HORNET

OF10/LA

CVS/A16-3

Serial 0018

San Francisco, Calif.,  
June 13, 1942.

**From:** Commanding Officer.  
**To :** Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
**Via :** Commander Task Force SIXTEEN.

**Subject:** Report of Action - 4-6 June 1942.

**Reference:** (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, Art. 712.  
(b) CincPAC despatch of 6 June 1942.

**Enclosure:** (A) Photograph of burning Japanese Cruiser.  
(B) List of casualties.  
(C) Recommendations for awards.  
(D) Report of Commanding Officer, VF-3.  
(E) Copy of reference (b) (paraphrased).  
(F) Squadron track charts.  
(H) Statement of Quillen, L. ARM3e, U.S. Navy.  
(I) Constructive Time analysis of events of June 4, 1942.

1. In accordance with CincPAC Operation Plan 29-42, the HORNET got underway from Pearl Harbor at 1130, May 28, 1942, recovering the Air Group at sea, at 1630 the same afternoon. One SBD would not start at EWA Field, and the pilot was flown to the ship in the rear seat of a TBD. This particular pilot, Lieutenant W.J. Widhelm, U.S.N., was later credited with two direct 1000-lb. bomb hits on a battleship, or heavy cruiser, on June 6. An additional SBD, Ensign R.D. Milliman, U.S.N.R., pilot, was lost the following morning when it crashed about 15 miles from the ship while on intermediate air patrol, probably due to engine failure. No personnel were recovered. The Air Group then consisted of 27 VF, 35 VSB, and 15 VTB, which aircraft strength was maintained until contact was made with the enemy, except for temporary decommissionings for minor repairs.

2. After passing through KAUAI Channel, course 296°T. was maintained until the afternoon of May 31, when course was changed to 290°T., and maintained until arrival at Point "Luck" on 1 June. On the night of May 30 a CincPAC intelligence report, giving an accurate estimate of the Japanese Midway force organization, was received. During May 31 two reports

SECRET

CV8/A16-3  
Serial 0018

OF10/Ld

June 13, 1942

Subject: Report of Action - 4-6 June 1942.  
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were received that Japanese bombers had been sighted northwest of Midway. At 1630, June 2, Task Force 17 was sighted. The two forces remained separated, but usually within visual contact. Task Force 16 remained in the vicinity of Point "Luek" until June 3. Word having been received that the enemy main body had been sighted bearing 261° T., 700 miles from Midway, course was set to the southwest.

3. It was at about this time that several despatches were sent to the Task Force Commander in high command ciphers. It is strongly recommended that carriers be issued a class 5 cryptographic allowance; these ships may well become separated during continuous air operations and the carrier commanding officers require all available information. The receipt of this information will obviate the necessity for a large part of the visual traffic so difficult to deliver by semaphore from the Task Force Commander to the carriers.

4. The first indication of the possible location of another enemy force was received at 0810, June 4, in CinCPAC 041807 which reported the sighting of a seaplane bearing 320° T., 100 miles from Midway. Two minutes later came a report of many planes in the same vicinity, and 14 minutes later another of 2 enemy CV on the same bearing, distance 180 miles. The ship was called to General Quarters, and remained in that condition until after dark.

5. At 0900 (all times given hereafter are zone plus 10) commenced launching the Air Group for attack; VSB loaded with 500-lb. bombs, VTB with torpedoes and VF with M.G. ammunition only. The objective, enemy carriers, was calculated to be 155 miles distant, bearing 239° T. from this Task Force; one division of 10 VF, Squadron Commander (Lieutenant Commander S.G. Mitchell, U.S.N.) in charge, was sent with 35 VSB and 15 VTB, to afford fighter protection. Deferred departure was used. A combat air patrol had been maintained since one half hour before sunrise. An unfortunate aerological feature of the day's action was the fact that the wind was light (about 4 knots) and directly away from the enemy; every time the combat patrol was relieved, or a forced landing was recovered, our attack planes had a longer run back to the ship, and increased the distance between this force and the enemy. ~~Between this force and the enemy.~~ Between 1320 and 2100, launching and recovery operations were being conducted almost continuously on a generally easterly heading and at high speed. The VSB returned from the search in groups, Scouting 8 and Commander HORNET Air Group together. One section of Bombing 8 returned alone. Thirteen planes of Bombing 8 landed at Midway due to lack of gas; two of

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these ran out of gas and landed in the Lagoon at Midway. The remaining eleven were gassed, ordered to attack the enemy, and return to HORNET if possible. They were unable to locate the enemy and landed on board at 1727.

6. None of Scouting 8 or Bombing 8 made contact with the enemy on the above flight. After searching the prescribed bearing the Squadrons turned south to search in the direction of enemy advance. As it turned out, had they turned north, contact would probably have been made. This was due to the fact that when planes took off, they took course to intercept the enemy, at that time reported headed on course 140° T., speed 25 knots. About one hour after the planes had departed the enemy reversed his course and started his retirement. We did not break radio silence to report this to the planes. None of Fighting 8 which went with the attack group returned to the ship. They remained with the VSB until forced to head for Midway due to lack of gas. Five pilots have been rescued; without information as to point of rescue. They are assumed to have landed in the water on a line running 320° T. from Midway.

7. Torpedo 8, led by Lieutenant Commander John C. Waldron, U.S.N., was lost in its entirety. This squadron flew at 100 knots below the clouds while the remainder of the group flew at 110 knots, climbing to 19,000 feet. Lieutenant Commander Waldron, a highly aggressive officer, leading a well trained squadron, found his target and attacked. Attention is invited to Enclosures (C) and (D) and to reference (b). This Squadron is deserving of the highest honors for finding the enemy, pressing home its attack, without fighter protection and without diverting dive bomber attacks to draw the enemy fire. Ensign G.H. Gay, A-V(N), U.S.N.R., is worthy of additional praise for making a torpedo hit and for the presence of mind he showed in hiding under his seat cushion, after being shot down, for several hours, thereby probably saving his own life and giving us an excellent eye-witness picture of the damage caused by the attack on the enemy carriers.

8. Very little was seen by this ship of the enemy attacks on the YORKTOWN. At 1410, enemy torpedo planes were reported to be attacking Task Force 17, which was almost hull down on the horizon to the northwestward. Many anti-aircraft bursts were clearly visible, and at least 3 planes were seen to fall in flames. Heavy columns of dark smoke seen rose from the direction of the YORKTOWN. Commander Task Force 17 and PORTLAND plain language despatches reporting the air attack were intercepted shortly thereafter. During the attack VF-8 fighters shot down three enemy Zeros and two dive bombers; one VF-8 plane was shot down. YORKTOWN planes were noted approaching this ship to land and one section

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of VSBs was, for a short while, thought to be enemy VTB. One YORKTOWN fighter plane, whose pilot was wounded in the foot, crash-landed aboard. He had not cut his gun switch. Upon crashing, all six of his machine guns commenced firing in the direction of the island and continued firing for about 2 seconds. .50 caliber bullets sprayed the after end of the island, killing the after 5-inch gun control officer, Lieutenant R. R. Ingersoll, U.S.N., (son of Vice Admiral Ingersoll), and 4 enlisted men, and wounding 20 others, the majority of whom were in Battle II behind one-inch, especially hardened armor plate. The bullets penetrated not only this armor plate but also penetrated a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " steel I-beam.

9. Aircraft operations on easterly courses shortly caused this ship to lose sight of the YORKTOWN. The VSBs were being re-armed. When the 11 planes of VBS returned from Midway they had only to be gassed. Had they located the enemy and made their attack prior to their return, they probably would not have been ready to send on the next flight.

10. At 1644 the ENTERPRISE was apparently attacked by enemy aircraft, no damage being done. At this time the ENTERPRISE was about 12 miles to westward. This ship was not attacked.

11. At 1803 commenced launching the second attack group, consisting of 16 VSBs. The target was then assumed to bear 278° T., distant 162 miles and was supposed to consist of two or three burning CVs, 1 or 2 BBs, CAS and DDs. At 1930 the attack was commenced; three hits were made on one BB (2 1000-lb. bombs and 1 500-lb. bomb); 2 500-lb. bomb hits were made on a heavy cruiser. All planes returned from this attack, the last plane landing aboard at 2059. The one enemy CV sighted was not attacked, as it was burning through-out its entire length and was assumed to be of no further value as a target.

12. During the night of 4-5 June the task force retired to the eastward until 0200, 5 June, when course was changed to 000° T., and at 0348 to 270° T. At 0110, 3 June the casualties, resulting from the accidental firing of the VF machine guns, were buried at sea. During the night, information received indicated that an enemy force was bearing 320° - 340° T., 170 - 200 miles from Midway, on course West to Northwest, and that there was a probability that a carrier was still able to operate planes.

At 0930, speed was changed to 25 knots and the force maintained generally westerly courses throughout the day. At 1712, commenced launching the attack group, consisting of 26 VSBs. The

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enemy force at this time was thought to bear 325° T., distant 240 miles from Midway, and to consist of 2 BBs, 4 CAs, 1 CV and some DDs. At 2004, having failed to sight any major enemy force after conducting a 315-mile search, the attack group attacked an enemy OL or DD in a position 278 miles bearing 315° T. from the HORNET position at time of launching. No direct hits were observed; it is estimated that 5 500-lb. bombs landed within 100 feet of the target. All planes returned with the exception of one which landed in the water near the ENTERPRISE due to fuel exhaustion; personnel were recovered in a fine manner in the darkness by the AYLWIN. Most of the landings were made after complete darkness had set in. Few of the pilots had previous night carrier landing experience. All planes returned with very little gas; one plane landed, out of fuel, in our arresting gear.

14. Course 280° T., speed 15 was maintained during the night, the enemy having been reported to be heading slightly south of west, probably to join the Southern forces. Shortly before sunrise ENTERPRISE launched a reconnaissance flight to search the area from 180° through West to 360° for a distance of 200 miles. Contact was made by the pilot in the section 230° - 240° T., the enemy bearing 239° T., distant 150 miles from this force. The contact report made by radio and due to voice error the expression "BB" was heard as "CV". Accordingly, 1 CV was reported to Commander Task Force 16. The pilot immediately returned to base and reported correctly 1 BB, 1 CA, 3 DD, by message drop and verbally. Cruisers were then ordered to gain and maintain contact with their SOCs, track the enemy and keep the OTC informed. It is conceivable that, had this procedure been followed on the previous day, some enemy units which escaped might not have been able to do so.

15. At 0957, commenced launching air group of 26 VSB and 8 VF. The latter were ordered along in case of previously undetected air opposition. They aided in the attack by effectively strafing destroyers. At 1150 the Air Group commenced its attack on the enemy force which consisted of 1 BB, 1 CA, and 3 DDs, 142 miles bearing 235° T. from HORNET 1015 position, resulting in the following: 2 1000-lb. bombs and 1 500-lb. bomb on the BB plus two 1000-lb. near misses within 50 feet of BB; two 1000-lb. hits on a CA; one 500-lb. hit on the stern of a DD. Four VF strafed one DD which probably sustained heavy personnel casualties on the bridge and upper works. One of HORNET VSB was apparently hit and shot down by AA fire in this attack. All pilots of this attack insist that the principal target was definitely a BB (probably KIRISHIMA class) and not a CA. All planes except the one shot down were recovered at 1245 and rearmed.

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16. At 1239 ENTERPRISE launched her only attack of this day, 31 VSB believed launched. Interceptions on the voice attack frequency indicated a large measure of success, after a long delay while waiting for 3 VTB to reach the target.

17. The wind was light but favorable throughout the day, blowing straight from the enemy; launching was conducted occasionally without deviation from Fleet course or speed.

18. Upon the return of the ENTERPRISE Group, 24 VSB were launched at 1530 for what proved to be the final attack of the three-day action. One deferred forced landing returned at 1602. At 1645, the attack was begun on the enemy force consisting of 1 CA (probably KINUGASA class), 1 CA or CL, and 2 DDs. The enemy force was at this time about 110 miles 264° T. from HORNET position. Results of this attack are as follows: One 1000-lb. bomb hit on CA, six 1000-lb. bomb hits on CA or CL, 1 1000-lb. bomb hit on DD. Very heavy explosions were seen in the CA, and it was left completely gutted by fire, personnel abandoning ship. At 1728 the attack group returned, without losses, and was recovered. Retirement was commenced on a northeasterly course. Cruiser seaplanes assumed the inner air patrol.

19. At 1544, the following TBS message was received from CTC: "Have you painted white cross on topside as previously directed?" This was answered in the affirmative. At about 1700 one pilot saw a white cross on the forecastle of the CA which he attacked. It is considered highly probable that the foregoing TBS transmissions were intercepted, for although this equipment is known to be reliable for only short distances, it is also known that super-frequency transmissions have been heard for at least 300 miles.

20. The Commanding Officer desires to commend the entire crew of the HORNET to the Commander-in-Chief as deserving of high praise for their performance of duty during the subject action. All hands conducted themselves in a manner fitting the Navy's best traditions. There were no outstanding individuals, as the action was purely an air action, and there is no cause for censure. Recommendations for awards to the Air Group are contained in Enclosure (C).

21. Recapitulation of own and enemy losses follows (personnel casualties by name are included in Enclosure (B)):

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Our losses:

- 15 TBD on 4 June (1 pilot rescued).
- 12 F4V-4 on 4 June (6 pilots rescued).
- 5 SBDS 4-6 June (4 pilots and 4 RM rescued).

Enemy losses as a result of HORNET group offensive action:

- 1 torpedo hit on CV (Ensign Gay) (Probably more by VTS).
- 3 zero fighters shot down.
- 2 dive bombers shot down.
- 2 1000-lb. bomb hits on BB.
- 1 500-lb. bomb hit on BB.
- 2 500-lb. bomb hit on CA or CL.
- 2 1000-lb. near misses (under 50') on BB.
- 1 DD strafed by 4 VF.
- \*2 1000-lb. bomb hits on CA.
- 1 500-lb. bomb hit on DD.
- 1 1000-lb. bomb hit on CA.
- 6 1000-lb. bomb hits on CL or CA.
- 1 1000-lb. bomb hit on DD.

\*NOTE: Made by YORKTOWN pilots flying with VS-8.

22. Following are conclusions drawn from the action which are particularly applicable to aircraft:

- (a) A fighter capable of coping with the Zero fighter is urgently required.
- (b) VF which accompany the attack group should have the same cruising range as the aircraft they accompany.
- (c) Combat patrols should consist of elements at intermediate and high altitudes. Vectoring a fighter from 20,000 feet to 1000 feet and back to 20,000 feet consumes an inordinate amount of fuel.
- (d) Increased emphasis on the simplification and workability of aircraft radios is needed. Throat microphones are generally unsatisfactory.
- (e) When carriers are widely separated, each carrier should conduct its own fighter direction, and all carriers, in addition to the one in which the OTC is embarked, should be informed of the number, type and location of the planes which all other carriers have launched. Lack of this information was a continual source of alarms.

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Serial 0018

0710/1A

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Subject: Report of Action - 4-6 June 1942.

23. (a) As a result of remarkable intelligence work, the tactical situation was in our favor! It is not believed that the enemy knew the whereabouts of our carriers until after radio silence was broken; when was on the fighter director circuit. It is felt that this violation of radio silence could have been avoided had all friendly aircraft, both shore based and ship based, been equipped with standard I.F.F. equipment.

(b) Two hours and nineteen minutes elapsed between the time that many planes were sighted approaching Midway and the receipt of identical information on the Fox schedule. This points to a definite need for direct communication between patrol craft and the attacking carriers.

(c) It is believed that these errors and delays are responsible for the fact that a more complete victory was not gained, and are submitted in the hope that their correction will enable us to gain victories in the future when the strong tactical advantages which we held this time may not always be ours.

24. Attention is particularly invited to Enclosure (C). Inasmuch as the action covered by this report was an action involving actual combat by aircraft only, as far as this vessel was concerned, and considering the strategic importance of the battle, it is urged that the awards recommended in Enclosure (C) be granted. In particular, the Commanding Officer feels that the conduct of Torpedo Squadron Eight, led by an indomitable Squadron Commander, is one of the most outstanding exhibitions of personal bravery and gallantry that has ever come to his attention in the records of the past or present.

M. A. MITTSCHER.

8

ENCLOSURE (E) to Hornet Serial 0018 dated June 13, 1942.

SECRET-

060625

SECRET-

RESCUED AND NOW AT MIDWAY ENSIGN GAY OF TORPRON EIGHT SCORED  
HIT ON CARRIER BUT WAS SHOT DOWN ON DEPARTURE BY ZERO  
FIGHTERS X SAW FOLLOWING WHILE HIDING UNDER CUSHION AND NOT  
INFLATING HIS LIFE RAFT UNTIL DARK X QUOTE X CARRIER SLIGHTLY  
SMALLER THAN TWO GIANTS BURNING AND A SHIP THOUGHT A  
BATTLESHIP ON FIRE X SAW SEVERAL HITS DIVE BOMBERS FROM HIS  
GROUP AND BOTH BIGGEST SIZE CARRIERS STARTED BURNING FIERCELY  
X CRUISER TRIED TO RESCUE PERSONNEL NEAREST HIM LATER BEGAN  
FIRING TO SINK IT X IDENTIFIES THIS SHIP AS KAGI OR AKAGI X  
CARRIER HE HIT WITH TORPEDO AND, LATER BY DIVE BOMBERS NEARLY  
DEAD IN WATER ALL AFTERNOON X DESTROYER LATER CAME ALONGSIDE  
NEAREST CARRIER AND TOOK OFF PERSONNEL X NEAR MORNING HE  
HEARD A NUMBER OF TREMENDOUS EXPLOSIONS X ALL THREE CARRIERS  
WERE SEEN BURNING FIERCELY X JAP PLANES CIRCLED OVERHEAD A  
LONG TIME X UNQUOTE X NOW THAT ENEMY IS WITHOUT AIR CONSIDER  
IT A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY ATTACK LIGHT FORCES

FROM : CINCPAC

TO : CTF 16

INFO : CTF 17

JUNE 6 1942 PARAPHRASE NO 237 RTC--SECRET--

SECRET

In Reply Refer to  
No.

# U. S. S. HORNET

ENCLOSURE (A) to Hornet Serial 0018 dated June 13, 1942.



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Enclosure (B) to Hornet Serial 0018 dated June 13, 1942

List of Casualties

Killed in Action (Ship's Company)

Lieutenant Royal Rodney Ingersoll Signal Number 4714 USN.  
Platoon Sargeant William Burt Ignatius Serial 222784 USMC.  
Private First Class Fred Wilfred Cummings Jr. Serial 311871 USMC.  
Private Lowell Edward Humfleet Serial 316213 USMCR Class JB.

Killed in Action

VB 8

Elmer Arthur Meyer 283 49 50 Sea2c USN.

Missing in Action.

VT 8

Lieutenant-Commander John Charles Waldron Signal No. 1927 USN.  
Lieutenant Raymond Austin Moore Signal Number 5620 USN.  
Lieutenant James Charles Owens Jr. Signal Number 5515 USN.  
Lieutenant (jg) (T) Jeff Davis Woodson USN.  
Lieutenant (jg) (T) George Marvin Campbell USN.  
Ensign William Robinson Evans Jr. A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign Harold John Ellison A\*V(N) USNR.  
Ensign William Wilson Creamer A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign John Porter Gray A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign Ulvert Mathew Moore A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign Henry Russell Kenyon Jr. A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign William Warner Abercrombie A-V(N) USNR.  
Ensign Grant "W" Teats A-V(N) USNR.  
Tom Hartsel Pettry 265 84 38 ARM1c USN.  
Ross Eugene Bibb Jr. 407 46 85 ARM3c V-3 USNR.  
George Arthur Field 403 73 26 ARM3c USN.  
Otway David Creasy Jr. 405 75 01 ARM2c V-3 USNR.  
Francis Samuel Polston 342 45 77 Sea2c USN.  
Max Arthur Calkins 316 65 55 ARM3c USN.  
William Franklin Sawhill 283 43 86 ARM3c USN.  
Amelio Maffei 375 79 10 ARM1c V-3 USNR.  
Darwin Lawrence Clark 321 42 11 ARM2c USN.  
Ronald Joseph Fisher 372 14 32 ARM2c USN.  
Aswell Lovelace Picou 664 01 61 Sea2c V-2 USNR.  
Bernard Phillip Phelps 337 27 89 ARM2c USN.  
Horace Franklin Dobbs 316 05 20 CRM(PA) USN.  
Hollis Martin 385 85 69 ARM2c USN.  
Robert Kingsbury Huntington 382 44 48 ARM3c USN.  
Robert Bruce Miles 368 33 64 AP1c USN.

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List of Casualties (Con't)

Missing in Action

**VV 8**

- \* Lieutenant Commander Samuel David Mitchell Signal Number 2872 USN.
- \* Lieutenant Stanley Erdman Rushlow Signal Number 5193 USN.
- \* Lieutenant (jg) Richard Gray Signal Number 5500 USN.
- Ensign Charles Markland Kelly Jr. A-V(N) USNR.
- Ensign George Russell Hill Jr. A-V(N) USNR.
- Ensign Stephan William Groves A-V(N) USNR.

**VB 8**

- Ensign Don "T" Griswold A-V(N) USNR.
- Kenneth Cecil Bunch 321 34 35 ARMLC USN.

\* Rescued

ENCLOSURE "C" - to the report of action.

1. The Board of Awards is requested to devote the utmost consideration to the following recommendations for awards for conspicuous gallantry and exceptionally distinguished service during the Battle of Midway.

2. To the following personnel of Torpedo Squadron Eight, U.S.S. BOSTON, all except one killed or missing in action, the Medal of Honor with the following citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and exceptionally distinguished service in gallantry delivering a torpedo attack against the enemy, knowing full well they had no fighter protection and insufficient gasoline to return to their carrier. For driving home an effective attack against a terrific hail of murderous assaults of many Japanese fighter planes, far above and beyond the dictates of duty".

Lt. Comdr. John C. Waldron, USN	( Missing in action )
Lt. James C. Owens, USN	( Missing in action )
Lt. Raymond A. Moore, USN	( Missing in action )
Lt. (jg) Jeff D. Woodson, USN	( Missing in action )
Lt. (jg) George M. Campbell, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. William W. Abercrombie, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. Ulvert M. Moore, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. William W. Greener, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. John P. Gray, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. Harold J. Allison, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. Henry R. Kenyon, Jr., USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. William W. Evans, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. Grant W. Teate, USN	( Missing in action )
Ens. George R. Gay, USN	( Rescued )
APic Robert B. Miles, USN	( Missing in action )



**BOOZING LIGHT**

Lieutenant-Commander W.F. Rodes, U.S.N.  
Lieutenant W.J. Vidhelm, USN  
Lieutenant B. Moore, USN  
Lieutenant E.E. Stebbins, USN  
Lieutenant (jg) L.A. Whitney, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign P. J. Rusk, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign I. L. Swepe, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign W. E. Woodman, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign J. M. Forbes, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign S. R. Helm, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign P. E. Tepas, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign B. Tappan, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign D. Kirkpatrick, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign H. E. Hoerner, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign A. H. Wood, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign R. B. Movina, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign H. White, A-V(N) USNR

CLANTON, J. L.	AGRM
HONEYCUTT, J. H.	ARM2c
BRINDLE, H. L.	ARM2c
MCAFFE, G. A.	ARM2c
BRANTH, R. W.	ARM3c
BLAKE, J. H.	ARM2c
GILLES, A. D.	ARM2c
JOHNSTON, K. R.	ARM3c
STOKELY, G. D.	ARM1c
WOODSON, R. T.	ARM2c
MANUS, D. T.	ARM3c
HILLHOUSE, H. R.	ARM2c
TERRESEKERE, J. L.	ARM3c
LUFFBROW, C. B.	ARM3c
MCEWAN, R. C.	ARM1c
ORRAN, J. S.	ARM3c
BOYKILL, M. J.	ARM3c
BUNN, K. C.	ARM1c (Killed in action)
SOBEL, A. A.	ARM1c (U.S.S. YORKTOWN)
STRICKLAND, E. C.	ARM3c (U.S.S. YORKTOWN)

Succintly, the circumstances supporting the recommended award are:

Task Force 16, having received definite information of the presence of several enemy carriers, ordered a group attack on those ships as primary objectives. Accordingly, all planes capable of being airborne were launched at 0900 LCT on the morning of June 4th, 1942. Included in this group was Torpedo Squadron Eight, ably Commanded by Lt-Comdr. John C. Waldron, USN. Just prior to launching, he has reported to the Commanding Officer for final instructions and has stressed the point that his squadron was well trained and ready and that he would strike his blow at the enemy regardless of consequences. His grim determination to press home an attack against all obstacles, his foreknowledge that there was the possibility that his squadron was doomed to destruction with no chance whatever of returning safely to the carrier, impressed all present, with the remarkable devotion to duty and the personal integrity of an officer whose pilots asked only that they be allowed to share in the dangers and disastrous fate sure to follow such an attack.

Torpedo Squadron Eight, flying low, beneath the broken clouds, became separated from the remainder of the group, which flew at higher levels. They found the enemy carriers, those at high altitude did not. Beset on all sides by the deadly zero fighters, which were doggedly attacking them in force, and faced with an seemingly impenetrable screen of cruisers and destroyers, the squadron valiantly drove in to short range. Plane after plane was shot down in flames by fighters, anti-aircraft bursts were searing faces and tearing chunks of fuselage, and still the squadron bore in. Those who were left dropped their torpedoes at point blank range, saw them run true and explode with blinding flashes against the sides of the enemy carriers. They had made certain for Task Force, and for the Navy, that Japanese air power was crippled at the start.

Only one survivor, from the fifteen planes and thirty men who manned the torpedo planes, is left to tell the story. The suggested citation speaks for itself. No higher praise nor traditions of the service could possibly be cited that gallant band.

This flight is of historical importance, as it is believed that a Japanese battleship was sunk by dive bombing. The attack groups were launched on the morning of June 4th, 1942, to bomb an enemy force consisting of a BB, 1 or 2 CA's and several destroyers. Arriving over this force, the air group was immediately made the focus of all anti-aircraft batteries. One plane, insign. Griswold, pilot, was shot down, and several other aircraft were hit by fragments.

Coolly and deliberately, all pilots dived on their selected targets, obtaining hits on the BB, CA and a DD. After they had unloaded their bombs, and knowing that .50 caliber bullets could cripple a destroyer, the pilots and rear gunners strafed destroyers and the cruiser, shattering the bridge structure, killing topside personnel and creating panic among the enemy.

W. A. MITCHELL,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.  
Commanding Officer.

SECRET

U.S.S. HORNET

" Fighting Squadron Three Partial Bag For Battle of Midway "

(Reports of action have not been received from eight pilots)

NAME	Enemy Shot Down-Certain	Probably shot Down or Damaged
Lt. Comdr. J.S. Thach (VF-3)	3VF, 1VT	1VT
Lt(jg) W.N. Leonard (VF-42)	1VT	1VT
Lt(jg) R.G. Crommelin (VF-42)	1VF	1VF
Lt(jg) A.J. Brassfield (VF-42)	4VB	2VB
Lt(jg) E.D. Mattson (VF-42)	1VB	-
Lt(jg) E.S. McCuskey (VF-42)	3VB, 2VF	3VB
Lt(jg) W.W. Barnes (VF-42)	1VB	2VB, 1VF
Lt(jg) W.A. Haas (VF-42)	1VT	-
Ens. J.P. Adams (VF-42)	1VT	1VT
Ens. J.B. Bain (VF-42)	1VF	-
Ens. D.C. Sheedy (VF-3)	1 VF	?
Ens. R.A.M. Dibb (VF-3)	1VF	-
Ens. H.A. Bass (VF-3)	1VB	1VF
Mach. D.C. Barnes (VF-3)	2VT	2VF

Total Certain Bag: Enemy VF - 9  
" VB - 10  
" VT - 6

Grand Total 25

Total Probable Bag (Damaged or Shot Down):

Enemy VF - 6  
" VB - 7  
" VT - 2

Grand Total 15

Enclosure (D)

18

BOMBING SIGHT

Pilot

Commander S.C. Ring, USN  
Lieutenant-Commander R.R. Johnson, USN  
Lieutenant (jg) F.L. Bates, USN  
Ensign W. D. Carter, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign P. F. Grant, A-V(N) USNR  
Lieutenant J.E. Voss, USN  
Lieutenant J.J. Lynch, USN  
Lieutenant A.B. Tusker, USN  
Ensign R. P. Frieze, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign J. R. Riner, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign A.C. Cason, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign H. J. Nickerson, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign A. P. Gee, A-V(N), USNR  
Ensign C. E. Fisher, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign E. E. Christofferson, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign D. D. Adams, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign J. W. King, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign J. E. Barrett, A-V(N) USNR  
Ensign G. G. Bebas, A-V(N) USNR

Radio-Operator

PARKER, A.M.2e  
MCCOY, J.G. ACM  
MONTENSEN, C.S. ARM1e  
MOORE, O.L. AR2e  
RIDER, R.H. ARM2e  
YEWONISHION, J. ARM2e  
WOODS, W.L. ARM1e  
STUART, C.T. ARM1e  
KILEY, C.C. ARM1e  
KILMER, P.A. ARM2e  
WILLS, A. D. ARM3e  
JACKSON, E.N. ARM1e  
GANFIELD, D.L. ARM1e  
FENGUNOR, G.E. ARM3e  
POORMAN, B.V. ARM2e  
BROUGHTON, J. B. ARM2e  
ALSH, T.(M) ARM3e  
BERTHOLD, W.H. ARM3e  
BINGRESSY, A.W. RM3e.

SECRET

U.S.S. HORNET

FIGHTING THREE - ACCOUNT OF AIRCRAFT

Plane	Disposition	Total	Final Disp.
3F-13	Landing crash 29 May.)	2	Left on YK'TN
3F-14	" " " " )		" " "
3F-6	Shot up while on Torpedo escort to Jap.CV)2		" " "
3F-24	" " " " " " )		Hornet pushed over side.
3F-9	Shot down while on Torpedo escort to Jap.CV. 1		Lost
3F-2	Shot down during Torpedo attack on Yorktown.		Lost
3F-7	" " " " " "		Lost
3F-18	" " " " " "		Lost
3F-8	" " " " " "		Lost
3F-16	Shot up & crash on YKTN.after Torpedo Escort.		Left on YK'TN.
3F-23	Left on YKTN. because very low on gas.		" " "
3F-17	Crash on Enterprise by VF-6 pilot.		Left on ENT.
3F-3	Left on Enterprise for minor repairs.		" " "

TOTALS:	Available Hornet	Thrown over side Hornet	Lost	Left on Yorktown	Left on Enterprise	Grand Total
	14	1	5	5	2	27

J. S. THACH,  
 Lieut. Comdr., U.S.N.,  
 Commanding, VF-3.

Enclosure (D)

20

SECRET

U.S.S. HORNET

REPORT ON VF-3 PILOTS NOT ABOARD U.S.S. HORNET

NAME	REMARKS	ACTION
Lt(jg) B.T. Macomber (VF-42)	Left on Yorktown	VT escort for attack on enemy carriers.
Lt(jg) E.S. McCuskey (VF-42)	Left on Enterprise	VB & VT attacks on Yorktown.
Lt(jg) W.S. Woollen (VF-42)	Missing in Action	VT & VB attack on York'tn
Ens. E.R. Bassett(VF-42)	" " "	VT escort for attack on enemy carriers. Probably shot down.
Ens. R.L. Wright(VF-42)	Left on Enterprise	VB attack on York'tn.
Ens. H.B. Gibbs (VF-42)	Missing in Action	VB & VT attacks on Yorktown.
Ens. G.F. Hopper (VF-42)	Missing in Action	VT attack on Yorktown.
Ens. H.J. Eppler (VF-3)	Left on Yorktown	Did not fly.
Ens. R.C. Evans (VF-3)	" " "	Did not fly.
Ens. V.H. Morris (VF-3)	" " "	Did not fly.
Ens. M. Tootle (VF-3)	Landed in water after VT attack on Yorktown	Believed picked up by DD.
Mach. T.F. Cheek (VF-3)	Left on Yorktown	VT escort for attack on enemy carriers.

Enclosure (D)

21

SECRET

U.S.S. HORNET,  
June 6, 1942.

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER, HORNET AIR GROUP:

1. Attached is a signed statement by WILLEN, Leroy, RM3c, U.S. Navy, of Bombing Squadron EIGHT.
2. I interviewed Ensign R. B. WHITE and he tells me WILLEN is reliable and would not say he actually heard something unless it were true and accurate. Ens. WHITE himself was so busy at the time he had his volume turned way down and did not hear very much of the conversation that was on the air at the time. He cannot amplify WILLEN'S statement in any way.

Respectfully,

GEORGE H. FLINN, JR.,  
Lieutenant, USNR.

(H)

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SECRET

Enclosure (H) to Hernet Serial 0015 dated June 13, 1942.

STATEMENT OF GUILLEN, Leroy, ARM30, U.S. NAVY, BOMBING SQUADRON EIGHT, ON FIRST FLIGHT, JUNE 4, 1942, SEARCH IN PLACE 8-b-2 (Ensign E. B. WHITE, Pilot).

I heard some conversation on the air that I am sure came from the Torpedo Squadron EIGHT planes. I don't know exactly what time it was, but we had been gone quite a while and shortly afterward we headed into Midway. What I heard was "Johnny One to Johnny Two". I am quite sure it was Lieutenant Commander WALDRON'S voice as I have heard him on the air a number of times. I also heard him say "watch these fighters"; also "see that splash"; also "How am I doing DORSEY; or maybe it was just "How am I doing", and he mentioned DORSEY'S name some other time; also "Attack immediately"; also "I'd give a million to know who done that". I also heard someone say "There's two fighters in the water". I also heard someone say "My two wing men are going in the water". I think it was Mr. Waldron who said those last two things too.

We got in to Midway a while later and landed safely. I was talking to a man there who were in the crew of a B-17 (a Flying Fortress) who had just come in. One of them told me he saw a group of torpedo planes attack a Jap force and he thought there were hits made on two Jap carriers and one hit on a Jap battleship. He was a medium size fellow with dark hair. Someone told me he (the fellow I talked to) was a Lieutenant and a Bomber. From what he told me, he must have been up pretty high when he saw this because he told me that at about that time his plane got orders to go down to 10,000 feet so they could bomb the Jap ships too, or maybe it was his plane was waiting until the torpedo attack was finished before his plane bombed them.

While we were on Midway we saw the hangars and the gasoline tanks burning. Also the canteen had been hit. They told me that seven THFs with torpedoes had left Midway in the morning and only one had come back and that plane was all shot up and the pilot had a bullet wound in the neck. He (the wounded THF pilot) told someone that the Japs shot them down easily when they slowed to drop their fish.

LEROY GUILLEN,  
ARM30, U.S. Navy.

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CVS/A16

U. S. S. HORNET

OF29-AS

**SECRET**

1st Endorsement to:  
Air Operations Officer  
letter dated 6/12/42

June 12, 1942

**From:** The Air Officer.  
**To :** The Commanding Officer.  
**Via :** The Executive Officer.

**Subject:** Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.

1. Forwarded, concurring in the recommendations  
of the basic letter.

A. SOUCEK,  
Commander, U. S. Navy.

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CVS/A16

U.S.S. HORNET

OF11-CMH

S-E-C-R-E-T

2nd Endorsement to:  
Air Operations Officer  
letter dated 6/12/42.

June 12, 1942.

**From:** The Executive Officer.  
**To :** The Commanding Officer.

1. Forwarded concurring in the basic recommendations.

G. R. HENDERSON.

(I)

**SECRET**

June 12, 1942

**Subject:** Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.

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frequencies, codes and authentications and a common call system.

(b) All aircraft engaged in a common mission should be supplied with standard I.F.F. equipment, thus eliminating early and unnecessary breaking of radio silence.

(c) A sufficient number of strongly protected aircraft; such as, the Army B-17, should be employed on scouting and trailing missions with instructions to frequently broadcast enemy's composition, position and movement. Both keyed and voice transmissions should be made using code and/or authenticated plain language.

(d) Experienced Naval observers are recommended for assignment to these Army planes used on scouting and trailing missions in order to assure the information desired by our surface and air force commanders.

(e) Carriers should search the most probable area for enemy forces in conjunction with land based forces until experience proves that cooperation between Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard forces has reached the stage where absolute reliance can be placed in shore based scouting.

5. As the tactical situation was in our favor, it was only through errors on our part that we did not gain a more impressive victory. The remarks and recommendations made herein are made with a view to adding to the sum of facts and recommendations which will result from the battle of Midway. It is believed that if we are to continue successful operations against the enemy that the apparent faults must be overcome. Through superb intelligence work we were given the advantage, however, we can not expect such advantages on every occasion in the future. It is with this in mind that this report is submitted for what value it may be in making the action report of this vessel.

J. G. FOSTER, Jr.,  
Lieut-Comdr., U. S. Navy.

**SECRET**

June 12, 1942

**Subject: Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.**

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by water landings from lack of fuel can be partly attached to this unfortunate lack of information on the enemy's movements.

(d) It appears that the enemy was most certainly ignorant of the presence of Task Forces 16 and 17 until radio silence was broken. It is likely that he did not realize the presence of our carriers until he had been attacked by our carrier aircraft at 2225, even though radio silence had been broken by our forces at 2016. This assumption is supported by the fact that the enemy was first heard to ask for our position at 2259. Little time was wasted by the enemy in attacking our forces with aircraft after asking for our position, as the Yorktown was subjected to its first attack at about 0014 or 1 hour and 15 minutes thereafter.

(e) The breaking of radio silence some 3 hours and 42 minutes prior to the first definite contact with enemy aircraft was unfortunate in as much as the unidentified aircraft, as far as our records show, were found to be friendly. This performance indicates the immediate necessity for standard I.F.F. equipment in all planes of all the services - Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

(f) From the information available, it appears that the first definite information of the enemy carrier which was attacking our forces was obtained by Yorktown scouting planes. This failure to receive adequate information from our land based forces raises the question as to whether or not full dependence can be placed in units other than our own.

(g) It appears that further attacks against this force, after the second attack against the Yorktown, would have taken place had it not have been for the attack made by the Enterprise and Hornet groups against the enemy carrier and accompanying ships as a result of information gained by Yorktown scouts.

4. The following recommendations are made for improvement of cooperation and elimination of serious faults:

(a) All search-attack aircraft, both shore based and ship based, engaged in a common operation should use the same

**SECRET**

June 12, 1942

**Subject: Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.**

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previously sighted and contacted were found to be friendly.

(l) About 2 hours and 30 minutes elapsed between first and second attacks on Yorktown.

(m) Three hours and twenty minutes elapsed between time enemy planes first detected approaching this formation and the receipt of definite information by this vessel of the location of the carrier attacking our forces.

(n) One hour and twenty three minutes after second attack on Yorktown, Enterprise and Hornet launched an attack against an enemy carrier and accompanying ships. No further attack was launched against our forces after completion of our attack against one carrier, one battleship and one heavy cruiser.

3. The following comment is made in regard to the facts presented in paragraphs 1 and 2:

(a) The 2 hour and 19 minute delay on the Fox schedule of the original contact of enemy planes reported approaching Midway is entirely too great a time lag and indicates that only direct communication is sufficient. This is especially so where aircraft are involved.

(b) The period of 2 hours and 33 minutes between the sighting of enemy planes approaching Midway and the report of enemy surface force position, course and speed was entirely too long and inadequate under the conditions obtaining and especially so in as much as the enemy's tactics conformed to prior estimates.

(c) The lack of information on the enemy's surface forces between 1823 and 2200 was serious and jeopardized the tactical advantage we enjoyed over the enemy. The delay of the Enterprise's Air Group attack against the enemy carriers and the failure of the Hornet's VSB planes to make contact with the enemy can be attributed to this lack of information. Further, the loss of planes from the Hornet and Enterprise

June 12, 1942

**Subject: Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.**

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(a) Original contact report of planes heading for Midway was received on Fox schedule 2 hours and 19 minutes after receipt of original report.

(b) First report of enemy's position, course and speed was received 2 hours and 33 minutes after enemy planes had been sighted headed for Midway.

(c) Orders to launch and attack received 30 minutes after receipt of contact report. No point option given but in lieu thereof closing of the enemy was indicated.

(d) Due to deferred departure, group did not proceed toward destination until about 45 minutes after start of launching or 1 hour and 15 minutes after receipt of contact report.

(e) No information on enemy's course and speed from 1823 until 2200, a period of 3 hours and 37 minutes after original contact report or 3 hours after launching of attack group.

(f) About 3 hours and 25 minutes elapsed between launching and indication of starting attack.

(g) Some 2 hours and 40 minutes elapsed between departure and attack.

(h) Enemy asked for our position 2 hours and 43 minutes after breaking of radio silence.

(i) Enemy planes picked up on radar approaching formation 59 minutes after enemy had requested bearing.

(j) Enemy planes attacked Yorktown about 1 hour and 15 minutes after enemy had asked for bearing of this force.

(k) As far as can be determined enemy planes were not contacted in the vicinity of this force until 3 hours and 42 minutes after breaking radio silence, all unidentified aircraft

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on June 4, 1942.**

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(r) At 050226 received information that three Orange units were located on 295 kcs bearing 331 from Midway.

(s) At 050231 Yorktown heard directing fighters to intercept unidentified aircraft believed to be high. Directing continued until 050243. At 050241 Yorktown announced a torpedo attack was in progress against her. Enterprise took over all fighter directing about 050245.

(t) At 050315 O.T.C. stated that he had no idea of position of enemy carriers attacking Yorktown.

(u) At 050317 received report that an enemy unit reported some unit bearing 090, distance 40 on course 180 at 050235.

(v) At 050318 received visual from O.T.C. reporting one carrier, two battleships, three heavy cruisers, four destroyers lat 31 - 13 N Long 179 - 05 west on course 000 speed 15.

(w) At 050339 received orders to launch attack group less fighters. Point option 280 speed 20.

(x) At 050404 launched 16 SBD to attack enemy carrier.

(y) At 050516 received information that three burning ships were carriers and not damaged ships. Two cruisers and four destroyers bearing 320 distance 179 from Midway. Patrol plane trailing above ships. Task Force 16 ordered to attack carrier bearing 338 distance 170 miles from Midway.

(z) At 050658 Hornet planes returned from attack. Reported attacking one battleship and one heavy cruiser as carrier was burning fiercely from stem to stern and appeared to be being abandoned.

(a-1) Task Force 16 received no further attacks.

2. From the information listed in paragraph 1, the following is deduced:

**SECRET**

June 12, 1942

**Subject: Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.**

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and stated that unidentified aircraft was friendly. Fighter directing continued intermittently throughout remainder of day.

(i) At 042152 heard a transmission from unknown plane stating he was over target, running short of fuel and would have to return to base soon.

(j) At 042200 voice referred to in (i) identified as Grey (squadron and base unknown) and stating that he had been flying over the enemy fleet of eight destroyers, two battle-ships and two carriers. Course of enemy north. No enemy combat patrol.

(k) At 042225 - 042230 on 6330 kos transmissions indicated that enemy carriers were being attacked. Squadrons and base could not be identified, however, names used and voices indicated that no Hornet personnel were involved.

(l) Received report that unknown Jap originator asked where enemy carriers were at 042259.

(m) Between hours 042318 and 042345 twenty VSB planes returned from first attack mission after not having contacted enemy. Eleven VSB planes landed at Midway. 10 VF, 3 VSB and 15 VT missing. At 050256 the eleven VSB which landed at Midway returned to ship.

(n) At 042358 Yorktown detected enemy planes on radar approaching this force at altitude 10,000 feet; distance 50 miles, bearing 255.

(o) At 050005 - 050020 air battles and attack upon Yorktown in progress.

(p) At 050145 received report that information on dead Jap indicated enemy position as 31 - 11 and 178 - 9. Same despatch indicated Midway patrols had seen but two enemy carriers.

(q) At 050233 received report that enemy was detected on 255 kos bearing 335 to 341 from Midway at 050150.

**SECRET**

June 12, 1942

**From:** The Air Operations Officer.  
**To :** The Commanding Officer.  
**Via :** The Air Officer.  
**Subject:** Defects Observed During the Action off Midway  
on June 4, 1942.

1. The following is a chronology of information and events which were available to air plot during the action on June 4, 1942:

(a) At 041550 intercepted a message from a patrol plane to Midway giving information that enemy planes were heading toward Midway with bearing of 320 degrees and distance of 150 miles.

(b) At 041809 received the information listed in (a) on the Fox schedule.

(c) At 041823 received information on Fox schedule giving position of enemy, 2 CV's and Main Body, bearing 320, distance 180, course 135, speed 25.

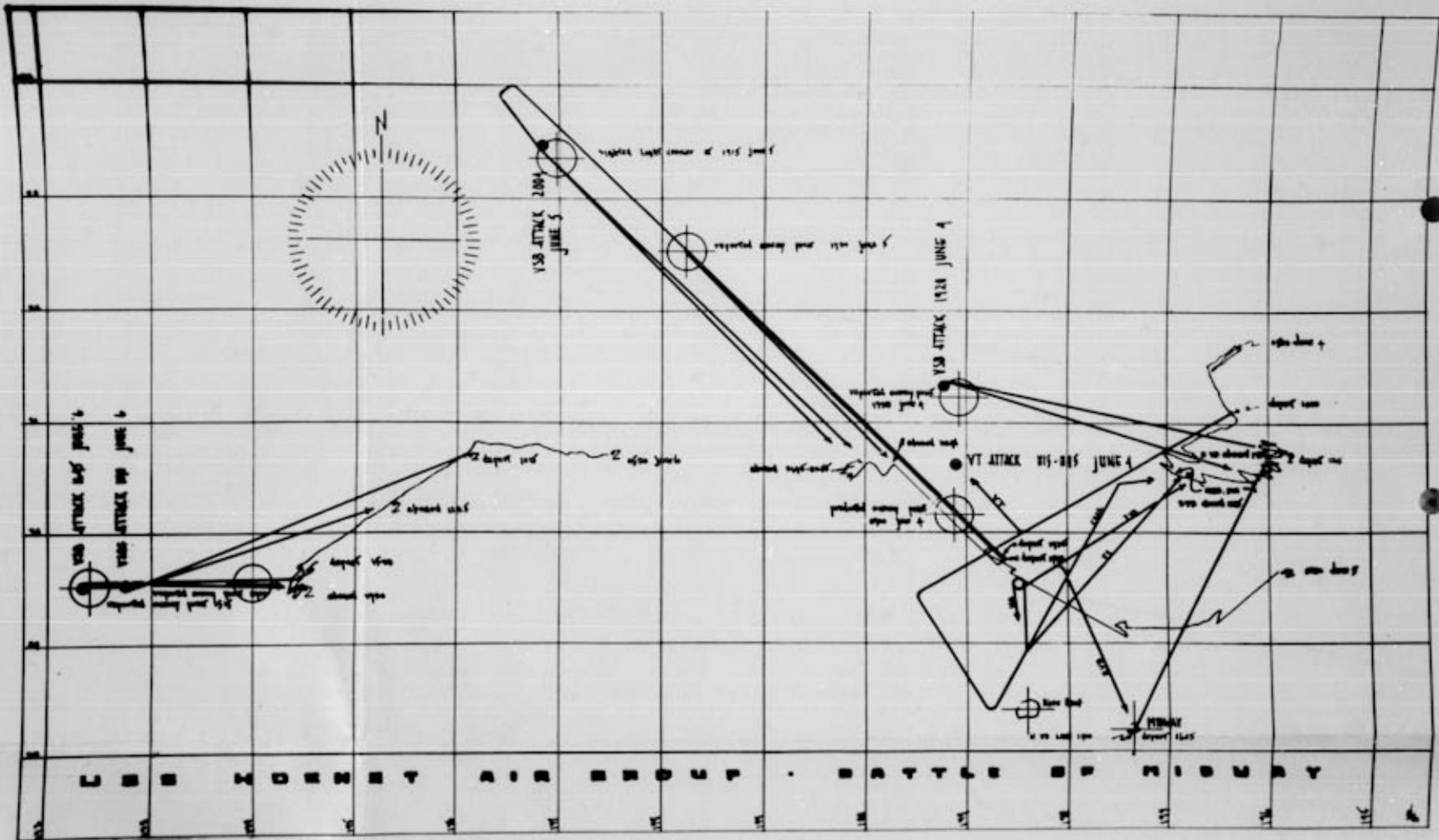
(d) At 041853 received orders from U.P.C. via visual to launch attack group, employ search-attack procedure and each group attack one carrier. Deferred departure was ordered.

(e) At 041900 started launching attack group and eight plane combat patrol.

(f) At 041942 completed launching attack group 10 VF, 34 VSB and 15 VTB plus 8 VF for combat patrol.

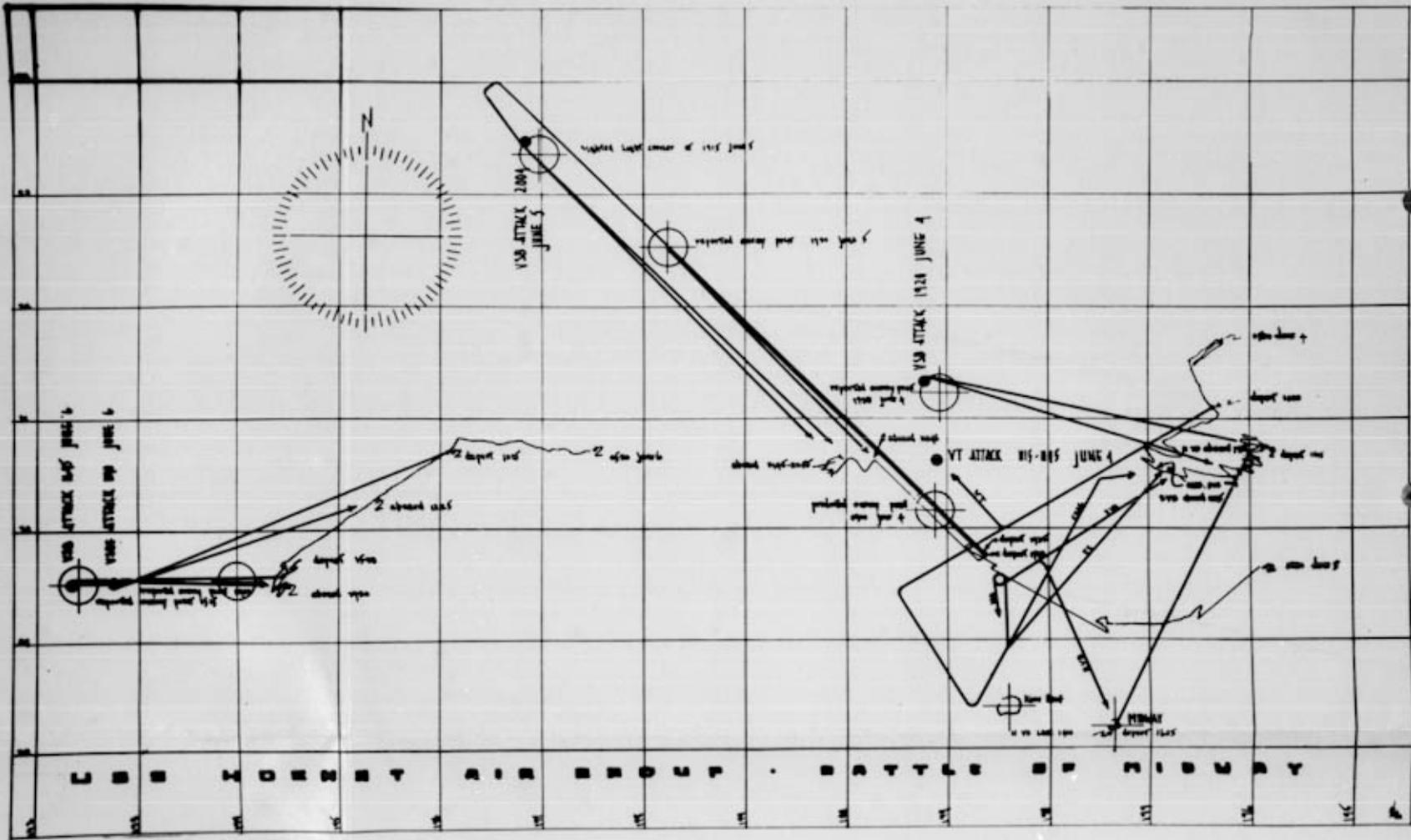
(g) At 042016 Enterprise broke radio silence on 6290 kos. (combat patrol frequency) to direct fighters for intercepting unidentified aircraft.

(h) At 042048 after numerous transmissions on 6290 kos Enterprise directed fighters to return to combat stations



Enclosure (B) to Home Serial 0018 dated 12 June 1947

Regraded Unclassified



Enclosure (A) to Hornet Serial 0018 dated 13 June 1944

CRUISERS, PACIFIC FLEET

Pearl Harbor, T. H.,  
14 June 1942.

SECRET

From: Commander Cruisers, Pacific Fleet.  
To: Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
Subject: Battle of Midway.

1. The following general account of the Battle of Midway is submitted pending receipt of reports from subordinate commanders and the preparation of a detailed report.
2. All times are local, plus ten zone.
3. Task Force SIXTEEN was sighted in Latitude 32 - 04 N., Longitude 172 - 45 W. at 1730, June 2, 1942, and was directed to operate ten miles to Southward of Task Force SEVENTEEN. Both forces proceeded to the west during the night, and on the Third to the North. Searches of sector 240°- 060°, distance two hundred miles were conducted by YORKTOWN air group but poor visibility and rain squalls reduced their effectiveness. ENTERPRISE and HORNET maintained their air groups in readiness as a striking force. During the night of June 3-4 both forces proceeded toward a point two hundred miles North of Midway. Reports of enemy forces to the Westward of Midway were received from Midway and Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet. These reports indicated the location of the enemy Occupation Force but not the Striking Force.
4. At 0620, June 4, YORKTOWN launched security search of Northern semi-circle distance one hundred miles and combat air patrol. ENTERPRISE assumed functions of fighter director. The two forces were directed to operate five to ten miles apart, Task Force SIXTEEN to Southwestward. Course was initially to Eastward. At 0808 received contact report from Midway plane of enemy force consisting of two carriers and other types including battleships bearing 320°, distance 180 from Midway on course 135°, speed 25 knots. Directed Task Force SIXTEEN to proceed to Westward and launch attack groups against enemy force. At 0845 landed YORKTOWN scouts and relieved combat air patrol. Changed course to 225° and speed to 25 knots. At 0910 Task Force SIXTEEN commenced launching attack groups and gave as their Point Option course 240°, speed 25 knots. YORKTOWN attack group was held in reserve pending receipt of information on additional enemy carriers which it was hoped would soon be located by our shore based aircraft. No such report having been received by 1036 and fearing that we might be caught with all planes on board it was decided to launch half the bombers and

CRUISERS, PACIFIC FLEET

SECRET

Subject: Battle of Midway.  
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all torpedo planes with six fighters as escort to attack the same objective as Task Force SIXTEEN. Launching was completed at 1106 and combat patrol was relieved at 1118. Remaining half of bombers were brought up from hanger deck and made ready for an attack on the still unlocated additional carriers. During this period Task Forces SIXTEEN and SEVENTEEN drew out of sight of each other due to former proceeding to the westward and the latter having to head Southeastward for launching. After launching Task Force SEVENTEEN took course 240°, speed 25 knots.

5. Many radar contacts commenced to develop about noon but there was no certainty as to their friendly or enemy character owing to their multiplicity and the fact that the aircraft of Task Forces SIXTEEN and SEVENTEEN were returning and the exact location of the former was not known. Radio intelligence indicated that the enemy had sighted our carriers. At 1327 bombers returned from the attack and reported having bombed and possibly destroyed one enemy carrier. A radar contact at 1335 bearing 320°, distance twenty five miles was believed to be enemy but fighter interception failed. It was decided to launch a search group as we still had no report of enemy carriers other than the one group sighted in the morning. At 1350 completed launching search group to search sector 280°-030°, distance 200 miles and twelve fighters for combat patrol. Search group was armed with bombs to attack enemy if located.

6. At 1352 radar contact bearing 275°, distance 32 miles closing. Increased speed to 30 knots. Fighters intercepted and shot down many enemy planes. At 1407 bombing and torpedo attack commenced on YORKTOWN and continued until 1415 at which time radar was out of commission and YORKTOWN had received three bomb hits causing YORKTOWN to stop. The fire from the island structure which resulted from bomb hits made the communication office and flag plot untenable and the Force Commander and Staff personnel assembled on the flight deck. Because of temporary loss of radar and difficulty of communication from the YORKTOWN and control of the Task Forces, and because of the immobility of the YORKTOWN, the Force Commander decided to shift his flag to the ASTORIA. This was done at 1500. Air coverage was requested from Task Force SIXTEEN and Midway. PORTLAND was directed to prepare to take YORKTOWN in tow.

7. The PERACOLA, VINCENTES, BAYON and BELLEAU joined from Task Force SIXTEEN at 1530. The 1600 position of YORKTOWN was latitude 33 - 51 N., Longitude 176 - 00 W. Shortly after 1600 YORKTOWN was able to increase speed and by 1625 was up to

CRUISERS, PACIFIC FLEET

**SECRET**

Subject: Battle of Midway.

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17 knots. A visual message from YORKTOWN indicated that her search group had sighted previously unlocated enemy carrier which was later attacked by Task Force SIXTEEN. Radar contacts indicated enemy planes approaching. Those fighters which had been refueled were launched. About two fighters remained on board. At 1635 fighters intercepted and engaged enemy torpedo planes and fighter escorts, destroying many. At 1641 enemy torpedo attack was directed at YORKTOWN scoring two hits. The heavy explosion was followed by loss of light, power and mobility. The ship commenced listing to port and list increased to about twenty seven degrees. At 1714 started abandoning ship in anticipation of her capsizing and further enemy attacks. About twenty three hundred survivors were picked up by destroyers. At 1827 enemy single float seaplane sighted and destroyed by fighters. Other seaplanes were sighted during the following hour, some of which were probably destroyed by fighters. About 1830 completed recovery of survivors and due to reduced fighting efficiency as a result of overcrowded conditions and lack of air coverage, the Force proceeded to the Eastward. HUGHES was left to guard YORKTOWN. PENSACOLA and VINCENTNES were detached to rejoin Task Force SIXTEEN which was sighted shortly before dark. It was intended to transfer survivors from destroyers to PORTLAND during the night and have her return with them to Pearl. ASTORIA and destroyers were to return to YORKTOWN at daylight to attempt her salvage. A despatch was subsequently received from Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, directing the transfer of survivors to FULTON which he was sending out from Pearl Harbor. Key personnel were to be returned to YORKTOWN for salvage operations. Captain Buckmaster and about 180 of his key officers and enlisted men were placed aboard HANSMANN as a salvage party. HANSMANN, BALCH and BENHAM were detached and returned to YORKTOWN. Other ships proceeded to Eastward to fuel and join SARATOGA (Task Group 11.1) in accordance with orders from the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.

FRANK JACK FLETCHER.

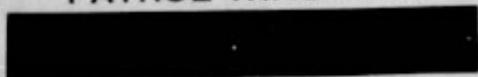
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1023

3r.

ALB-3/ALB-3/VL/  
(0027)

PATROL WING TWO



June 15, 1942

Subject: Air Operations of Midway Defense Forces during Battle  
of Midway May 30 to June 6, 1942.

18. The following planes of the Midway forces were lost in  
action:

SB2U-3's	5 out of 12 engaged
SBD's	7 out of 13 engaged
F2A-3	13 out of 21 engaged
F4F-3	2 out of 6 engaged
B-26	2 out of 4 engaged
TBF	5 out of 6 engaged
B-17's	0 out of 26 engaged
TBY's	1 out of 31 engaged

Additional planes were damaged by action with the enemy. One B-17 was  
lost because of faulty navigation and one is missing. One J2F was  
destroyed on the ground.

LOGAN C. RAINBOW,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Copy to:  
ComTaskForce 9  
CinCpac  
ComIneh

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
FLAC OFFICE  
RECEIVED

6 388  
1942 JUN 23 14 08

(19027)

Subject: Air Operations of Midway Defense Forces 09/18/42  
 of Midway May 30 to June 6, 1942.

14. On June 6 two enemy groups were located. One, included a damaged battleship and several cruisers and was steaming northwest. The other, consisting of 2 heavy cruisers and 2 destroyers was headed southwest. It was assumed that Task Force 16 would dispose of the northern group and consequently all available B-17's (26 as it later developed) were dispatched to attack the group headed southwest. It was hoped that this group would rendezvous with the transports and thus produce profitable targets. However, the only contact made by these B-17's was with what one group of ten reported as a cruiser. This, they claimed to have hit with 2 1100 pound demolition bombs, resulting in the sinking of the vessel in 15 seconds.

15. On June 7 a motor search was made to 550 miles between the bearings of 263 and 283. Coverage was excellent; results were negative. In addition 21 patrol planes made a rescue search, covering the area 220 miles north of Midway by 350 miles to the westward. A number of pilots, not only from Midway forces, but from Task Forces 16 and 17 as well, were recovered. This rescue search is still continuing.

16. A copy of this report is being forwarded directly to the Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet due to my present Geographical separation from the U. S. Naval Air Station, Midway.

17. The following damage to the enemy is reported as having been inflicted by forces operating from Midway:

- 34 aircraft destroyed } Marine Air Group plus
- 14 damaged } 6th, Defense Battalion AA fire
- 2 hits on a carrier, setting it on fire (Marine Air Group)
- 1 hit on a carrier, setting it on fire (Lt-Col. Sweeney's B-17 squadron)
- 1 hit on a battleship, setting it on fire (Lt-Col. Sweeney's B-17 squadron)
- 2 hits on a burning carrier (B-17 group enroute from Pearl)
- 1 hit on a battleship (cruiser ?) (Lt-Col. Sweeney's B-17 squadron)
- 1 hit on a transport (Lt-Col. Sweeney's B-17 squadron)
- 1 hit on a damaged heavy cruiser (Marine Air Group)
- 1 hit on a heavy cruiser (Lt-Col. Sweeney's B-17 squadron)
- 2 torpedo hits on transports (Lt-Mohrhardt, Patrol Plane Night Torpedo Attack)

10027)

Subject: Air Operations of Midway Defense Forces during Battle  
of Midway May 30 to June 6, 1942. June 15, 1942

situation was that he was following the original plan to create a diversion to cover the attack of a landing party. However, in view of the losses sustained by the Japanese, it was felt that, when nothing further developed, that a retreat had been ordered, and that the Japanese submarine commander was the proverbial one "who didn't get the word". The usual routine was followed: search planes in the air at 0415, B-17's immediately thereafter, with a target to be given after take-off. By 0430 they were all in the air. Meanwhile, a submarine had reported a large enemy force at 28 -23 north 179 - 09 west. This was passed to the B-17's. At 0615 the B-17's reported unfavorable weather and their inability to locate a target. At 0625 this group was ordered to return to base and await orders. At 0630 2 V 55, a patrol plane, reported two battleships bearing 265°, distance 125 miles, course 268°, speed 15. This confirmed our estimate that a retreat had been ordered. At 0632 the same patrol plane reported that these ships were damaged and were streaming oil. At 0700 4 V 58 reported two enemy cruisers bearing 286°, distance 174, course 310, speed 20. At 0719 7 V 55 reported five ships, course 338°, speed 25, latitude 31 - 15, longitude 179 - 55. At 0800 6 V 55 reported two battleships, one carrier on fire, three heavy cruisers bearing 325°, distance 240, course 310, speed 12; followed by an amplifying report that the light vessels were screening the burning carrier and that the battleships were well ahead. At 0855 8 V 55 reported one carrier bearing 335°, distance 250, course 245. At 0821 10 V 55 reported Enterprise on fire and sinking. (This was Yorktown). At 0850 a submarine reported a land-plane 279½°, distance 570. At 1000 V 92 (B-17's) reported making hits on a Japanese battleship (later reported as a cruiser). At 1220 the remains of the Marine Air Group scored a dive bombing hit on a damaged enemy cruiser to the westward. The plane scoring the hit was shot down by AA fire. At 1320 a second trip for the B-17's launched to attack the crippled carriers to the northwest. At 1430 this flight (which had a Navy observer on board) reported Task Force EIGHTEEN bearing 322°, distance 105, course 322, speed 25. At 1545 despatched another group of B-17's to attack the enemy to the northwest. At 1610 1 V 56 reported one carrier, two battleships, three heavy cruisers, five destroyers, course 280°, speed 10, bearing 325, distance 110, friendly ships. At 1800 V 92 (B-17's) reported they could find only a single cruiser. They scored near misses. At 1845 2 V 56 reported being attacked by 12 fighters bearing 313, distance 350 (This was later corrected to scouting planes, not fighters). One B-17, 2 V 93, was never heard on the radio and failed to return. Another 3 V 93 never appeared on the radar screen (within 93 miles of Midway) and efforts to use lost plane procedure with radio direction finder bearings were not successful due to the prior exhaustion of his fuel supply.

ALB-3/ALB-3/VZ/  
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damage to Japanese carriers are noted as being made earlier, those from the Marine Air Group were made by voice to Eastern Island and had not been received at the Command Center. Our estimate at this time was as follows: One Japanese carrier had been damaged by the Army. The losses of the Marine Air Group were so heavy that it appeared their attack had been broken up before reaching the enemy. The Yorktown had been hit. The battleships to the northwest, the four cruisers on 265°, the possible enemy carrier on 262°, and the large group to the west were all boring in. Three enemy carriers appeared to be left to deal with Task Force 16. Consequently, it was decided to evacuate all Task Force MILM personnel not essential to the functioning of the Naval Air Station, Midway. Commander Hughes was ordered to depart and collect all patrol planes at the two rendezvous and act at his discretion after that action. It appeared that it was quite possible we would be under heavy bombardment from surface vessels before sunset. The PT group was warned to be ready to deliver night attacks. Thirty minutes later, however, the picture changed with startling rapidity. More combat information was received, from the Marine Air Group, indicating that fires had been started on two Japanese carriers and one battleship. This data was received just before 1 V 58, a patrol plane, made the following report: "Searched sector assigned to 700 miles information negative bearing 296°, distance 300 from Midway fuel 600. I request instructions". He was ordered to search the sector with a median bearing of 335° from Midway. At 1558 he reported three burning ships bearing 320°, distance 170, plus two cruisers. At 1610 we ordered V 97 (a flight of B-17's coming out from Pearl, to attack before landing at Midway. (This message was repeated ten times before a receipt was obtained). At 1745 1 V 58 reported the three burning ships were Japanese carriers and that two cruisers and four destroyers were with them, bearing 320°, distance 170. At 1800 1 V 58 reported forces engaged in a surface battle distance 180, and that he was being attacked by zero fighters. At 1830 a flight of B-17's from Midway (second trip) reported having attacked a cruiser and set it on fire and that they had not located the carriers. At 1920 all seven PT boats were dispatched to the northwest to deliver night torpedo attacks. At 2030 the flight of B-17's from Pearl reported having made two hits on a burning carrier and near misses on a destroyer.

13. On June 5 the daily search was modified to cover sector 250 to 020 to a distance of 250 miles. The coverage on this search was excellent throughout. At about midnight, a flight of two patrol planes was ordered to deliver an attack on the transport group to the westward with torpedoes. At 0130 a submarine shelled Midway. Local batteries returned the fire, claiming one hit. At this time our estimate of the

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two planes were reported on fire 25 miles to the north of Midway. At 0635 the air raid began. I observed three groups of nine high altitude horizontal bombers at 12,000 feet and a hit by the anti-aircraft batteries of Midway on the leader or number 2 man of the closest group before I was able to induce Captain Simard to return to the underground Command Center. The patrol planes had been ordered to report all contacts fully and search to 425 miles unless 4 enemy carriers were located earlier. They were then to rendezvous at Laysan and Lisianski Islands and await orders. It was felt that keeping them on the scene would merely result in their being shot down. At 0710 NFM advised us we were observing improper circuit discipline. At 0715 8-V-55, a patrol plane, reported being attacked by two enemy observation planes. (This plane was shot down in flames and 6 men killed). At about 0720 the second wave of the attack came in and at 0725 all power was off. Auxiliary power was switched on, but communication with Eastern Island was lost, except by radio, due to a direct hit on the Eastern Island Command Center. At about 0750 the remnants of the Marine Air Group returned, and we received a report that only 3 fighters able to fly were remaining. At 0843 a patrol plane reported 4 CA, 2 AK, 2 AO, many DD bearing 265, distance 400. At 0900 the B-17 group, led by Lieutenant Colonel Sweeney, reported attack completed and 1 enemy carrier damaged. At 0910 9-V-55 reported 8 cruisers course 085, distance 320, bearing 265. At 0915 4-V-58 was attacked by a single engine seaplane fighter (many other such attacks were probably made, of which I have at present no information). At 0930 received reports that only 1 TBF and 2 B-26's had returned. They dropped at carriers, but no results were observed due to the necessity for defense against zero fighters. At 0945 the B-17's were back and were ordered to refuel and rearm. At 0951 8-V-55, a patrol plane, reported a large vessel, possibly an aircraft carrier, and a destroyer bearing 262, distance 330. This incomplete report is understandable, as the plane was, at the time, being attacked by enemy aircraft. At 0958 the Marine dive bomber group reported two hits on an enemy carrier and one on a battleship and that fires were started on each. At 1100 5-V-58, a patrol plane, reported being attacked by enemy aircraft. At 1125 we found a position in English numerals on a dead Japanese aviator bearing 329°, 129 miles from Midway (It was in latitude and longitude). At 1150 scouting squadron EIGHT from the Hornet landed for fuel. At 1200 received a report that Hornet was bearing 310°, distance 212 from Midway. At 1252 Yorktown reported being attacked 150 miles north of Midway. At 1253 V92 (6 B-17's) reported proceeding to Oahu unless otherwise directed. (This message was, for some reason, overlooked in the turmoil and no directions were given). At this time things looked very black. While the reports of

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this plane reported 2 transports and 2 destroyers bearing 261, distance 700. It made no other contacts. At 1640 the attack group made its attack. This group, led by Lieutenant Colonel Sweeny, reported bombing from 9 and 10 thousand feet and making a hit on a battleship and one on a transport. (One man's bombs hung and he later made an individual attack which accounts for the transport hit). At 2115 we launched an attack group of 4 PBY-5A planes led by Lieutenant W. L. Richards, USN, executive officer of Patrol Squadron FORTY-FOUR, to deliver a moonlight torpedo attack on the "main body". These pilots were volunteers. At 2145 the last Army bomber returned. (Lieutenant Colonel Sweeny's group was the most experienced group of B-17's and its effectiveness, resolution, and communication efficiency and discipline were outstanding). It now appears that Flight 44 (the night torpedo attack by 4 patrol planes) made two torpedo hits on transports. Apparently this attack was a complete surprise to the Japanese as one pilot approached the formation singly, maneuvered to make an up-moon approach, dropped his torpedo and escaped - all without being fired upon. The other 3 planes, attacking in a group, were not fired upon until they had gotten clear. It appears likely that two separate formations were attacked. The distance from Midway at the time of these attacks was 560 miles.

12. On June 4, 1942, it was expected that the enemy would attack Midway. We had previously estimated that the attack would commence at about 0600 yoke. The search group was dispatched as usual at 0415 and the B-17's launched immediately thereafter. The Marine Air Group, plus the 4 B-26's and the 6 TBF's, were manned and their engines warmed. As we could not afford to land the B-17's until their load had been lightened, they were ordered to attack the enemy group to the westward which we estimated would be about 480 miles out. However, they were cautioned to be on the alert for orders to change their attack to a carrier group which we expected to find to the northwest. If the carriers had not been located in time for this change of objective it was hoped that this group would be able to land, rearm, refuel, and take off again between raids. There were 16 B-17's in the group. However, at 0545 a patrol plane reported in PLAIN ENGLISH (the first use of plain english that was made) "Many planes heading Midway bearing 320, distance 150". At 0550 the RADAR on Midway picked up many planes, distance 93, altitude 10,000. At 0552 another patrol plane reported 2 carriers and main body ships, carriers in front, course 135, speed 25. At 0555 the air raid alarm was sounded and prior to 0600 the field was clear; all planes able to take the air being off with the exception of one J2F. Meanwhile, the B-17 group had been ordered to change its objective and attack the carriers. At 0622

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excellent except, that beyond a line running east and west and 300 miles to the northward, no search was possible due to fog. There were no surface contacts. One air contact was made by our patrol planes, almost on the direct line to take and a little farther from Midway than on the previous day. (We had varied the time of take off of our search group for two reasons: (1), to get an earlier start, and (2), by varying the time of take off of the take search group if they were observing a routine. As a result of this we were able to confirm our previous estimate of the time take off and it also appeared that they searched only on alternate days). Again, the weariness of the PBY was obvious, and only the fact that a second PBY in the adjacent sector joined in the air contact prevented the probable loss of a patrol plane. The B-17 group was again dispatched to the expected enemy rendezvous 700 miles to the westward; again with negative results as they failed to reach the desired point due to unfavorable weather.

10. On June 2, 1942, the same search was made with no contacts, either air or surface. Coverage was excellent except that between 292 and 315 beyond 400 miles coverage was practically nil. A special long range B-17 with no bomb load was dispatched to search to 800 miles to the westward, results negative. This mission was dispatched because of the strong representations of General Hale.

11. On June 3, 1942, the usual search was made. Coverage was excellent except beyond 400 miles to the north-northwest. At 0430 yoke all search planes were in the air. At 0904 the FIRST AIR-SURFACE CONTACT was made when a patrol plane reported "Two Japanese cargo vessels sighted bearing 247 degrees, distance 470 miles. Fired upon by AA". This was followed by a report from another plane at 0925 of "Main body bearing 261, distance 700, six large ships in column." This was amplified to 11 ships, course 090, speed 19. As the reporting plane did not have sufficient fuel to remain long on station, and as it would probably have been shot down had it attempted to track, it was ordered to return to the base. At 1130 another patrol plane reported two cargo vessels and two small vessels, course 050, bearing 251, distance 270. (This distance was obviously in error as the plane was at this time about 500 miles out). Meanwhile, the long range B-17's (half bomb load and one bomb bay gas tank) were ordered to take off and attack the "main body" bearing 261, distance 700. At 1200 they took off (refueling after the early morning safety flight take off took time). At 1240 the special long range B-17, with a Navy observer aboard, was dispatched to track enemy forces, as we felt that a B-17 had a chance to fight off enemy aircraft. At 1640

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However, the hazard of having the B-17's caught on the ground was so great, this difficulty had to be accepted.

5. During the opening phases our greatest concern was as to whether or not we might be hit during the night by planes operating from Wake. Particularly, we feared a night gas attack on Eastern Island. The difficulties of night navigation over the distance involved are not insuperable, particularly if the attacking planes are equipped with RADAR.

6. The Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet, ordered that, if practicable, the expected enemy rendezvous, 700 miles to the westward be investigated by B-17's on May 31st and June 1st at about 1500 yoke each day.

7. On May 30, 1942, the area between the bearings 200 to 020 from Midway was searched to 700 miles with no surface contacts. Coverage in the search was excellent except to the northward of bearing 325 and beyond a distance of about 350 miles, where low visibility prevented a thorough search. Two air contacts were made at the two points where the 500 mile circle from Midway intersected the 600 mile circle from Wake. From this, and the estimated speed of the Japanese bombers used, it was possible to make a good estimate of the time the patrol from Wake was begun. This deduction indicated clearly that if Wake was to be attacked, that the proper time for such an attempt was just at sunset, as only then could these planes be caught on the ground. The question of putting some B-17's in the search was considered and discarded for two reasons: (1) reduction in the striking force would be involved; (2), it was desired to conceal from the enemy that Midway had 4-engined landplane bombers as long as possible. In these two contacts the weakness of the PBY as a search plane was apparent. Any type of Japanese plans could, and did, assume the offensive against the PBY. Several men were wounded and two PBY's put out of commission as a result of the contacts on this date.

8. On May 31, 1942, the same search was made. Coverage was excellent except to the northward of 285 degrees beyond 300 miles, where practically zero-zero weather prevented all search. There were no contacts. The B-17 striking force was dispatched to the expected enemy rendezvous bearing about 270, distance 700 from Midway, with negative results. These planes, in returning, became lost and were finally homed by a combination of RADAR and radio direction finder bearings. The last plane landed at about 0330 yoke, May 30, 1942, being then about 4 1/2 hours overdue.

9. On June 1, 1942, the same search was made. Coverage was

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June 15, 1942

**From:** Commander Logan C. Halsey, U.S. Navy.  
**To :** The Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.  
**Via :** (1) The Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Air Station,  
Midway Island.  
(2) The Commander Task Force NINE.

**Subject:** Air Operations of Midway Defense Forces during Battle of Midway May 30, 1942, to June 6, 1942.

1. The following report concerning the air operations by Midway Defense Forces covers the period May 30 to June 6, 1942.

2. The general plan of procedure was based upon the following assumptions:

(a) That ordinarily an area of reduced visibility could be expected about 300 to 400 miles to the northwest.

(b) That, as a result of (a), the discovery of enemy carriers approaching Midway from this direction the day prior to any attack could hardly be expected. Accordingly, on any given date, we on Midway might expect an attack early in the morning. However, just as the low visibility area to the northwest covered the night run of the enemy, it also prevented a sufficient degree of accuracy in their surface navigation to permit a night launching. Consequently, we assumed that the enemy would pass out of the bad weather area in the wee small hours but would not launch until he had obtained a navigation fix at morning twilight. From this premise we decided that the enemy would launch about 0430 to 0500 yoke from about 150 to 200 miles out and would therefore strike Midway about 0600 yoke. (The first bomb dropped at 0635).

3. Based upon the foregoing we decided to launch our search group each day as early as practicable and to have the heavy planes in the air immediately thereafter. The usual times were: search group 0415 yoke; B-17's 0430 yoke. Other planes at Midway, which, in addition to the 27VF and 27VB of the Marine Air Group, consisted of B-26's and 6 YF's loaded with torpedoes, were kept on the ground in the fully alert status until after the search group passed beyond 400 miles on their outward legs.

4. This daily plan definitely increased the logistic problem on Eastern Island as it was not possible to have the B-17's land again until they had been in the air for at least four hours in order to reduce their landing to a point where safe landing was practicable.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
FLAGSHIP OF COMMANDER CARRIERS

June 8, 1942.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Dear Admiral:

In view of the prospective movement of Task Force 16 to the Aleutian area and the consequent delay in my being able to see you and to submit my official report, it seems advisable to give you a general outline of what happened during the three days of the Battle of Midway.

Commander Jeter, now Executive Officer of the ENTERPRISE and under orders to Washington, will go in in the CIMARRON. He can give you and Cominch a personal account of the action and answer your questions.

There is enclosed a track chart of the movements of Task Force 16 for the three days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. This shows the wind conditions prevailing. The wind had a great effect on where the carriers were able to get to during daylight hours.

There is also enclosed a file of messages sent by the planes during the attacks on Saturday. One or two of these would not pass the censor, but I think you will enjoy them nearly as much as we did at the time. They will give you the general atmosphere of the attacks that day. With no VF opposition and increasingly ineffective AA fire, the pilots apparently were having a thoroughly enjoyable time.

The following is a general outline of what happened during the three days.

Thursday. We received our first contact report at 0740 (plus 10) Task Force 17 was about 10 miles to the N.E. of us with search in the air. Task Force 16 headed toward the contact at 25 kts. When we got within striking distance, about 0900, we turned south into the wind and launched attack groups. The order of launching was: (1) VF for fighter patrol, (2) dive bombers armed some with 500, remainder with 1000 lb. bombs, (3) Torpedo planes, (4) VF to accompany TBDs. Launching time was about one hour. Carriers then headed for contact at 25 kts.

Our estimate of enemy CV movements was that he would continue into wind to close Midway, so as to recover, reservice and launch new attack. We felt that we had to hit him before he could launch his second attack, both to prevent further damage to Midway and to ensure our own safety.

Unfortunately, our presence was discovered by an enemy seaplane scout while we were launching. As this plane was to the southward of us, I assume he may have come from a seaplane tender southeast of Midway, near Pearl and Hermes Reef in all probability. Whatever the cause, enemy CV turned back to the northward instead of continuing toward Midway, as we have figured he would. Our dive bombers who were conducting a modified search enroute to the target, failed to make contact at first and did not arrive until after the TBDs and their accompanying VF.

By this time enemy CVs, two and perhaps the third, had recovered their planes and were preparing to launch their second attack, which would undoubtedly have been on our CVs and not on Midway. The presence of the third carrier was not known when we launched our attack; and the presence of a fourth was not realized until much later, as she appears to have been separated from and to the northward of the first three.

Very unfortunately for themselves but very fortunately for the fate of the action, our TBDs gallantly attacked without waiting for the arrival and support of our dive bombers. The torpedo plane attack, while not in itself very effective, caused the enemy to maneuver radically and prevented him from launching. Our dive bombers arrived in the nick of time, caught one enemy CV (Akagi) with most, if not all, of his planes on deck. The other carriers had some planes on deck. This resulted in the burning and subsequent destruction of the first three carriers. The wiping out of our torpedo plane squadrons was, I believe, done largely by enemy VFs. This seems to have pulled enemy VFs down and left the air clear for our dive bombers. The heavy losses in dive bombers appear to have occurred through forced landings, out of gas. We rescued the crew of one such ENTERPRISE plane Friday afternoon. I hope many of the others have been sighted and rescued from Midway.

The YORKTOWN air group played an important part in this first attack. Their search gave us that afternoon the information of the location of the fourth carrier. This enabled us to launch the late afternoon attack which crippled the fourth carrier and gave us incontestible mastery of the air. After the first attack

on the YORKTOWN her planes then in the air landed on the ENTERPRISE and HORNET. They took part in all subsequent attacks and were of the greatest value in making up for planes lost in the first attack.

When the first attack was made on the YORKTOWN, she was nearly out of sight of us to the northwestward. From the heavy smoke that appeared, I judged that she had been hit. Our aircraft operations and the relative direction of the light wind prevailing prevented us from ever even getting a good look at her until she had been abandoned after the second attack. I sent two CAs and 2 DDs to her assistance after the first attack and continued to furnish VF protection. Our late afternoon attack on the fourth carrier was, except for this, the best action we could take for the protection of all hands.

After recovering our air groups following their second attack, Task Force 16 stood to the eastward, southward and back to the westward during the night. I did not feel justified in risking a night encounter with possibly superior enemy forces, but on the other hand, I did not want to be too far away from Midway the next morning. I wished to have a position from which either to follow up retreating enemy forces or to break up a landing attack on Midway. At this time the possibility of the enemy having a fifth CV somewhere in the area, possibly with his Occupation Force or else to the northwestward, still existed.

Friday. At daybreak Friday Task Force 16 was headed to the westward at 15 kts. in an area of bad flying weather. Our first contact was the one made by the TAMBOR reporting the enemy 90 miles west of Midway. This looked like a landing, so we took a course somewhat to the northward of Midway at 25 kts. As the forenoon drew on, reports began to come in which indicated a retreat and not an attack. While I had not believed that the enemy, after losing four carriers and all their planes, would remain in an offensive frame of mind, still that possibility could not be overlooked, especially with the uncertainty about a fifth carrier in the area. The TAMBOR's report might mean only that the retirement order had been slow in being issued or had failed to reach the ships she sighted.

About 1100 (plus 10) we sighted a VP on the water. I sent the MONAGHAN to take off the crew, but told her not to destroy the plane. About 1300 the MONAGHAN signalled that the bombsight had been overlooked and was still in the plane. I sent her back to get the bombsight and ordered her to report to the YORKTOWN.

As the general situation (and the weather) cleared, it became evident that a choice of objectives for chase and attack was the next matter for decision. We had reports of two groups either of which contained good targets. One was to the west of Midway, the other to the northwest. I chose the one to the northwest. It was farther away, but it contained the crippled CV and 2 BBs, one of them damaged.

We stood to the northwestward at 25 kts., using the position reported during the forenoon by a VP. There were no trailing reports, and, as the day wore on, this position began to grow rather cold, but it was the best we had. About 1600 a flight of B-17's overtook us. Our challenge was unanswered, but I signalled them that we would launch an attack about 1700. We heard them report our position, so we knew you were informed of our movements. Later we received the disquieting information that they were returning without having located their target.

Our attack groups were launched after 1700, went out 250 miles, but only sighted and bombed two small vessels, reported as CLs or DDs. I believe they were DDs and I doubt if any hits were made, although one was claimed. Our aircraft got back in the growing darkness, which required lights and searchlights. All landed safely, except one VSB of the HORNET which crashed astern of the ENTERPRISE, personnel saved by DD.

The situation which presented itself that night was that no targets had been sighted for 250 miles ahead on the last reported course of the enemy, and the planes reported the weather ahead as not so favorable. I figured that the enemy DDs would report our attack and that he might either get the protection of bad weather ahead or else change course to the westward to head for Japan and to throw us off. In either event a change in our course to the westward seemed desirable. Accordingly we took course 280°, speed 15 kts., for the rest of the night, and at daylight launched a 200 mile search, covering 180° - 360°. That night the undesirability of running down any enemy BBs in the dark presented itself as a reason for slowing, as did the growing shortage of fuel in DDs.

Saturday. Our search was fortunate in finding two groups of enemy vessels to the southwestward about 40 miles apart. The more southerly group was reported as 2 CAs and 2 DDs; the other as 1 CV and 5 DDs, later changed to 1 BB and 3 DDs.

The HORNET air group, VSBs and VFs, was launched to attack the BB and DDs. Half of them found the CA group first and attacked these ships, while the other half went on to the BB group. By the time the HORNET planes had returned, the ENTERPRISE was ready and her air group was sent in to attack the BB group again. This was followed by a second attack by the HORNET on the same objective.

As a result of these attacks, the following damage was reported: (1) One or two hits on CAs first attacked, (2) at least ten hits on BB, one DD sunk, two DDs strafed by VFs, and two or three hits on what was reported as a CA which was with the BB. All hits were 1000 lb. bombs in these attacks. The BB was reported as wrecked and being abandoned.

After the last attack group had returned to ENTERPRISE we launched two photographic planes, one with still, the other with movie camera. The stills are enclosed. The movie film is also being sent in for development.

All through the day there had been no question in our minds that a BB was involved. That evening, when questioning the pilots of the two photographic planes, I found one of them quite certain that a CA of the Mogami class, and not a BB, was involved. The photographs bore him out. The ship is the same as the one appearing in the 1940 Jane. Everyone who saw this ship says she appeared to be much larger than a CA. From this fact and from her toughness I suspect that her displacement may be considerably in excess of 10,000 tons. She was definitely larger than the other cruiser accompanying her, which may have been a 7000 ton CA. The smaller cruiser with a DD was last seen leaving a heavy oil streak about 15 miles away. These ships left many survivors on board the big CA and in the water. I believe the larger ship sank during the night.

The high speed steaming on each of the three days had reduced our DD fuel on hand to a point where vessels were approaching the lower limit. I sent the MAURY and WORDEN back to the rendezvous with the CIMITON. This left us with 4 DDs, below which number it seemed inadvisable to go on account of Jap BSs reported in the area.

The operations during this period have been most interesting and instructive. We must, I think, improve our identification of types from the air. At present, this is very uncertain, except for CVs. It seems difficult to distinguish accurately, BBs, CAs, CLs, and DDs. Because of enemy action observing planes will

nearly always be kept at such a distance that accurate observation is difficult. However, study of enemy ship models and characteristics should improve matters.

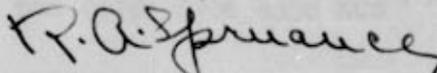
Another point is that emphasis should be placed on continued tracking of enemy forces by shore based planes whenever conditions permit. It would have been of great assistance if the damaged CV had been tracked on Friday. As it is, we do not know whether she escaped to the northwestward, or was finally sunk and her survivors taken on board the two DDs our planes encountered. She was astern of the two BBs and still burning that forenoon, so I am inclined to think she may have sunk.

For use against CVs, particularly those caught with planes on deck, our present bombs are perfect. For use against tough ships with armored decks we must have an armor piercing 1000 lb. bomb. Against such targets I would use about half of each. The present type works terrible destruction on the unarmored portion of the ship, but it does not disable except after many more hits than should be necessary. We have a 1600 lb. AP bomb now, but to use it our present dive bombers have to reduce their gas carried, which is not a satisfactory solution.

This letter has been much longer than I had expected it to be, but I cannot close it without expressing my admiration for the part that Fletcher in the YORKTOWN played in this campaign. We had a fine and smoothly working co-ordination between the two Task Forces before the fighting commenced. When the battle started, the YORKTOWN's attack and the information her planes furnished were of vital importance to our success, which for some time was hanging in the balance. The YORKTOWN happened to be between the HORNET and ENTERPRISE and the enemy's fourth and still functioning carrier, so she took his blows.

Halsey's splendid staff have made my job easy. I appreciate more than I can tell you the fact that you had sufficient confidence in me to let me take this fine Task Force to sea during this critical period. It has been a pleasure to have such a well trained fighting force to throw against the enemy.

Sincerely,



R. A. SPRUANCE.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, U.S.N.  
Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

FROM 8 SAIL 23

6 JUNE 1942

TO OTC

SIGHTED ENEMY 1 CV 5 DD LAT 174 LONG 29 COURSE 270

TOR (GCT) 1845 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

TO ATTACK GROUP

TARGET MAY BE BATTLESHIP INSTEAD OF CARRIER. ATTACK!

TOR (GCT) 2050 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

THIS IS RED BASE. BLUE ATTACK GROUP REPORT POSITION AND RESULTS YOUR ATTACK. GO AHEAD.

TOR(GCT) 2155 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

WHAT IS BEARING AND DISTANCE OF TARGET AND RESULTS OF YOUR ATTACK? GO AHEAD.

TOR (GCT) 2207 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE AIR GROUP COM 6 JUNE 42

TO OTC

NO CV SIGHTED. ATTACKED CA SUPPORTED BY 3 DD. ONE HIT.

ENEMY COURSE 270 SPEED 25 NO AIR OPPOSITION.

TOR (GCT) 2206 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

TO ALL FIGHTER PATROLS

TAKE STATION 240 5 MILES FROM THIS DISPOSITION.

TOR (GCT) 2225 6330 KCS

16

FROM OTC 6 JUNE 1942  
TO ENTERPRISE AIR GROUP COMMANDER  
BB IS YOUR TARGET. MAY BE FURTHER ALONG ON COURSE.

TOR (GCT) 2257 6330 KCS

FROM OTC 6 JUNE 42  
TO ENTERPRISE ATTACK GROUP  
3 VTB ARE COMING UP BEHIND YOU. ACKNOWLEDGE.

TOR (GCT) 2310 6330 KCS

6 JUNE 1942

-BROADCAST TO PATROL AIRCRAFT-

HORNET PATROL ARROW 230 LOW 5 MILES INVESTIGATE BOOGIE.  
STEP ON IT!

TOR (GCT) 2316 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL 6 JUNE 1942  
TO NO CALL  
I HAVE THE ENEMY IN SIGHT. I AM GOING TO ATTACK. I AM  
GOING DOWN.

TOR (GCT) 2350 6330 KCS

FROM (WALLY) 6 JUNE 42  
TO ATTACK GROUP  
DO YOU HAVE THEM IN SIGHT.

TOR (GCT) 2349 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL 6 JUNE 1942  
TO NO CALL  
NO. I DON'T HAVE THEM IN SIGHT.

TOR (GCT) 2350 6330 KCS

17

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL  
THEY ARE OVER HERE.

6 JUNE 42

TOR (GCT) 2351 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

1 CA 1 CL 2 DD IN THE SAME POSITION WE THOUGHT HE WAS.  
I AM GOING OVER AND TAKE THE SOUTH ONE. YOU EASE OVER  
AND GET THE CLOSE ONE. MAKE ONE ATTACK: THAT IS ALL YOU  
HAVE TO DO. WE WILL RENDEZVOUS ABOUT 20 MILES ASTERN.

TOR (GCT) 0005 6330 KCS

FROM WALLY  
TO NO CALL  
TARGET IS BB.

6 JUNE 1942

TOR (GCT) 0009  
~~0009~~ KCS

FROM (WALLY)  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 42

THIS IS WALLY. TARGET IS BB NEGAT AT PRESENT. BB AHEAD  
ABOUT 40 MILES.

TOR (GCT) 0010 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 42

JACK. THE BB IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT 40 MILES AHEAD.

TOR (GCT) 0011 6330 KCS

FROM (GRAY)  
TO LEADER

6 JUNE 1942

LEADER FROM GRAY  
THERE ARE 3 VTB'S. DO YOU HAVE US IN SIGHT OR DID TOJO AMSCRAY?

18

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

TO 6-F-1 6-F-11

ARROW 000 15 MILES LOW. ACKNOWLEDGE.

TOR(GCT) 0022 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 42

TO 6-F-1 6-F-11

CANCEL MY LAST TRANSMISSION. BOGIE IS PHY. RETURN TO  
COMBAT STATION.

TOR(GCT) 0025 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THERE IS BB OVER THERE!

TOR(GCT) 0025 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LET'S GO! THE BB IS IN THE REAR OF THE FORMATION.

TOR(GCT) 0028 6330 KCS

FROM (WALLY)

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THIS IS WALLY. WATCH IT ON THIS ATTACK.

TOR(GCT) 0033 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

TO ENTERPRISE ATTACK GROUP

EXPEDITE ATTACK AND RETURN. ACKNOWLEDGE.

TOR(GCT) 0035 6330 KCS

FROM (GRAY)

6 JUNE 1942

TO (SMITH)

SMITH FROM GRAY.

LAST SHIP IS A BB I BELIEVE.

TOR(GCT) 0040 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

WHERE IS THE REMAINDER OF OUR ATTACK GROUP?

TOR(GCT) 0041 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

WE ARE RIGHT BEHIND YOU. GET GOING!

TOR(GCT) 0041 6330 KCS

FROM (WALLY)

6 JUNE 1942

TO SMITH

SMITH FROM WALLY. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING OVER HERE?

TOR (GCT) 0042 6330 KCS

FROM (WALLY)

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

PUSHING OVER ON REAR SHIP NOW.

TOR (GCT) 0044 6330 KCS

FROM WALLY

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

ENTERING DIVE. OUR OBJECTIVE IS THE REAR SHIP.  
STEP ON IT! ARE WE GOING TO ATTACK OR NOT?

TOR (GCT) 0044 6330 KCS

20

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THEY'RE ALL BURNING!

TOR (GCT) 0049 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LOOK AT THAT SON-OF-A-BITCH BURN!

TOR (GCT) 0049 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

HIT THE SON-OF-A-BITCH AGAIN!

TOR (GCT) 0050 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THAT SCARED HELL OUT OF ME. I THOUGHT WE WEREN'T  
GOING TO PULL OUT.

TOR ( GCT) 0050 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LET'S HIT THEM AGAIN. LET'S HIT THEM ALL.

TOR (GCT) 0050 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

YOU ARE GOING TO HIT THEM RIGHT ON THE FANTAIL.

TOR (GCT) 0051 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

YOUR BOMB REALLY HIT THEM ON THE FANTAIL. BOY, THAT'S  
SWELL!

TOR ( GCT ) 0052 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LET'S GET A COUPLE OF THOSE DESTROYERS.

TOR (GCT) 0053 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THESE JAPS ARE EASY AS SHOOTING DUCKS IN A RAINBARREL

TOR (GCT) 0057 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

GEE, I WISH I HAD JUST ONE MORE BOMB!

TOR (GCT) 0058 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THESE JAPS COULDN'T HIT YOU WITH A SLING SHOT.

TOR (GCT) 0058 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

TOJO, YOU-SON-OF-A-BITCH, SEND OUT THE REST AND WE'LL GET  
THOSE TOO.

TOR ( GCT ) 0100 6330 KCS

22

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL  
SEE THAT SHIP OVER THERE?

6 JUNE 1942

TOR (GCT) 0101 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

I WONDER WHERE WE RENDEZVOUS AFTER WE GET THAT SHIP.

TOR (GCT) 0102 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

I AM GOING HOME, I DO NOT HAVE ANY GASOLINE TO SPARE  
AROUND HERE.

TOR (GCT) 0103 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

LOOKS LIKE A BB GOING NORTH ON FIRE.

TOR (GCT) 0108 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

REPORT POSITON OF BB LAT AND LONG GO AHEAD.

TOR (GCT) 0110 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

HEY MONK I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL THIS IS.

TOR (GCT) 0111 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

ONE SHIP OF THE FOUR IS MOVING NORTHWARD. ONE CA IS BURNING AND ONE BB IS BURNING FIERCELY. APPARENTLY THE BB IS ASKING FOR HELP FOR HER ENTIRE PERSONNEL.

TOR (GCT) 0114 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE

6 JUNE 1942

TO ENTERPRISE AIR GROUP COMMANDER

VERIFY AND REPEAT THE COURSE OF TARGET. THIS IS IMPORTANT. GO AHEAD.

TOR (GCT) 0115 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE AIRGROUP COM 6 JUNE 1942

TO ENTERPRISE

POSITION OF BB IS LAT 28 55 NORTH LONG 173 00 EAST.

TOR (GCT) 0117 6330 KCS

FROM ENTERPRISE AIRGROUP COM 6 JUNE 1942

TO ENTERPRISE

CORRECT BB 28 29 173 11. ACKNO LEDGE.

TOR (GCT) 0123 6330 KCS

FROM GRAY

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THE SHIP IS TO OUR LEFT. EVERYBODY TO THE RIGHT OF ME CLOSE IN.

TOR (GCT) 0125 6330 KCS

FROM 6-T-4

6 JUNE 1942

TO ENTERPRISE

CRUISER IS DAMAGED ON COURSE 240 SPEED 15. OTHER SHIP IS STILL STATIONED AT LAT-LONG GIVEN.

TOR (GCT) 0125 6330 KCS

24  
Regraded Unclassified

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE IS VERY HEAVY.

TOR (GCT) 0230 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

VERY GOOD. MY GOD, WHAT A SMOKE.

TOR (GCT) 0230 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LOOK AT THAT SMOKE FLAME OF THAT BATTLESHIP.

TOR (GCT) 0230 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

GOT ANOTHER HIT ON THE CRUISER.

TOR (GCT) 0240 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

LOOK AT THAT BATTLESHIP BURN.

TOR (GCT) 0241 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

TO NO CALL

THIS IS WALTER ONE. RENDEZVOUS WITH ME ON THE RIGHT.

TOR (GCT) 0243 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL  
ATTACK COMPLETED.

6 JUNE 1942

TOR (GCT) 0244 6330 KCS

FROM NO CALL  
TO NO CALL

6 JUNE 1942

WALTER ONE FROM EASY ONE

DID YOU SEE THE RESULTS OF MY ATTACK?

TOR (GCT) 0244 6330 KCS

6 JUNE 1942

-BROADCAST FROM ATTACKING GROUP-

ATTACK COMPLETED BB FLOAT AFIRE OTHER BB ON FIRE DD HAD  
HEAVY EXPLOSION ONE SHIP NO DAMAGE FROM THIS ATTACK.

WELL DONE, WELL DONE!! (FROM SHIP)

TOR (GCT) 0250 6330 KCS

26

A16-3/A9 (Mid-Pacific)

The Area Files  
Confidential

Cincpac File No.

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
U. S. S. PENNSYLVANIA, Flagship

SECRET

SECRET

June 12, 1942.

BRIEF OF THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present a broad description of the Battle of MIDWAY in advance of official reports. It is made up from despatches and other information made available to me by the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

While times, positions, and numbers and types of vessels shown, are believed to be reasonably correct, the date must be used with caution as it has not been checked against the reports of the commanders who were engaged in the battle. This brief report cannot, therefore, be considered completely accurate for historical purposes.

BACKGROUND

It will be recalled that the battle of the Coral Sea took place just about a month ago. The Japanese therefore knew that we had large forces in the South Pacific and that it would be difficult for us to refit those forces for action in the Hawaiian Area in time to oppose them the first week in June. About May 18th, as a result of a strategic estimate in which radio direction finder bearings and general intelligence played a big part, there was established the probability that Orange planned a strong attack on the MIDWAY - OAHU line for the purpose of occupying MIDWAY and possibly raiding OAHU. Steps were immediately taken to effect the deployment of our forces to oppose the enemy in both the Central and North Pacific Areas.

THE DEPLOYMENT

On May 27, 1942 the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet issued his Operation Plan outlining the disposition of forces and their tasks. Its provisions were briefly as follows:

(a) Carrier Striking Forces under the senior force commanders in the area were:

Task Force 16, under Rear Admiral Spruance, composed of 2 CV, 5 CA, 1 CL, 2 DL, 10 DD.

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## Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

Task Force 17, under Rear Admiral Fletcher, composed of 1 CV, 2 CA, 6 DD.

Task Force 11, under Rear Admiral Fitch, composed of 1 CV, 1 CA, 1 CL, 6 DD. (This force did not arrive in time to participate).

(b) Submarines, under Captain (now Rear Admiral) English, composed of 16 fleet submarines.

(c) Hawaiian Sea Frontier, under Rear Admiral Bagley and composed of:

(1) Midway local defenses, Captain Simard:  
4 YPs, 11 PTs;  
6th Marine Defense Battalion reinforced;  
Marine Air Group plus aircraft reinforcement  
from Patrol Wings at OAHU and the Hawaiian  
Air Force.

(2) Johnston Island patrol planes who assisted in the searches.

(3) Island patrols of YPs stationed along the island chain with fuel, food and water.

The armament at MIDWAY consisted of 8 37mm AA, 24 3" AA, 4 3", 4 7", 6 5". Troops were - officers 141, enlisted 2886. Planes of the Navy were 24 VP, 27 VP, 36 VSB.

(d) The U.S. Army, Hawaiian Department, was instructed to provide long range bombers and torpedo planes to operate under the Commanding Officer MIDWAY, and to hold special long range bombers in readiness at OAHU - KAUAI area to attack enemy forces striking MIDWAY.

(e) The submarines were disposed in the following manner: 4 submarines covering a zone from 250° to 330°, 150 to 200 miles distant from MIDWAY, each of the 4 submarines taking 20° of search. Covering a sector of 240° - 360° (N) for a distance of 60 - 150 miles from MIDWAY, 6 submarines covered 20° each. For the remaining distance to MIDWAY and covering an area 315° to 360° 2 submarines were assigned an area of 22½° each. It was stipulated that there was to be no bombing of submarines 215° to 360° in an arc of 200 miles distant from MIDWAY.

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Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

ORDERS TO TASK FORCES

General instructions for the forces were given as follows:

1. Hold MIDWAY.

2. Use strong attrition tactics, under the principle of calculated risk, i.e. never closing with the enemy where there is any question of his numerical superiority or in such manner as to unduly risk our carriers. Commencing 30 May initiate intensive search to northeastward of MIDWAY (this to supplement regular long distance searching by patrol planes based on MIDWAY). Submarine priority of targets to be in the following order: CVs, BBs, Transports, CAs, Auxiliaries. Instructions were given to carrier striking forces to operate initially to the eastward of the Meridian of MIDWAY. This to prevent being surprised and to keep them out of the submarine area.

ENEMY FORCES

In Admiral Nimitz's Operation Plan he stated that: the enemy is expected to attempt the capture of MIDWAY in the near future, and for that purpose it is believed that the enemy will employ approximately the following - 2-4 fast BB; 4-5 CV; 8-9 CA; 16-24 DD; 8-12 SS; a landing force with seaplane tenders. The attack on MIDWAY may be preceded or followed by an attack on OAHU. In the order also the nature of probable enemy operations were listed, stressing probable persistence.

ENEMY MOVES

As the result of air search reports and other information it is now evident that the main enemy effort was divided into two parts. The first, approached generally from a position west of MIDWAY and was composed of two BB, two to three CAs, a DD screen plus auxiliaries and transports, total twenty to twenty-three ships. Behind this force came auxiliaries such as repair ships total number undisclosed and unsighted.

The second main force approached on a bearing approximately 320° from MIDWAY and consisted of about 4 CVs, 2 BBs, 4 CAs, with DD screen. The latter force was approximately one day closer to MIDWAY, the strategy appearing to call for an intensive possibly two day aerial bombardment of MIDWAY by the CVs to be followed by an expected easy landing to be accomplished in approximately one day.

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Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

THE NARRATIVE

June 3rd.

Long range air search developed a report on 3 June listing two Japanese cargo vessels bearing 270°, distance 470 miles from MIDWAY. This was almost immediately followed by a report listing a main body (nomenclature not clear) bearing 261°, distance 700 miles from MIDWAY. 9 B-17s were sent to attack this main body which was then observed as eleven ships bearing 261° distant 700 miles from MIDWAY, speed 19 knots. Two AKs and two smaller soon were reported 251°, distant 500 miles. Air search to the northwestward and north of MIDWAY was seriously impaired by low ceiling, poor visibility and bad weather and no enemy sightings were reported from this area during daylight 3 June. The B-17s reported they had attacked 3 BBs (at least one of these is believed to have been a cruiser), leaving one afire, scoring close misses on the second and no observation on the 3rd. They also reported setting a troop ship afire and that the main body of eleven ships consisted of 2 BB, 1 CV, 2 to 3 CA, and eleven ships in all. Four Navy Catalinas with torpedoes were sent to attack by moonlight and it soon developed that this main body consisted of 23 ships in three columns. The results were hits on two transports. The PBY torpedo attack was completed on bearing 260° distant 500 miles from MIDWAY.

June 4th to end of battle.

In the early morning 15 B-17s took off to attack the force sighted the day before. Soon after, however, the report of an Orange seaplane bearing 320° distant 100 miles, was received. This report was followed 25 minutes later by a PBY who had sighted many planes heading toward MIDWAY bearing 320° distant 150 miles. Very shortly afterwards a PBY sighted the enemy CV striking forces bearing 320° distant 180 miles. MIDWAY switched its attacking B-17s to shoot the works against this main body. Early the morning of the 4th of June MIDWAY reported an air raid lasting approximately one hour. EASTERN ISLAND suffered some damage to buildings including the power plant, resulting in power failure, but runways, possibly deliberately, not damaged. SAND ISLAND suffered some unimportant damage to buildings but casualties to ground personnel were very small. MIDWAY sent his full fighters to intercept and his dive bombers to Northwestward to attack the enemy. They disrupted the attack on MIDWAY to a considerable extent and got two bomb hits or torpedoes on first BB, one hit on second BB, two hits on CV, which was reported smoking. B-17s reported two hits on a second CV and heavy smoking. During the attack on MIDWAY the position of enemy CV was

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Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

found on Jap Pilot shot down on MIDWAY and this was furnished to carrier groups. MIDWAY suffered severe casualties in torpedo and fighter planes as they flew right in to their targets.

The Jap main force to the northwest discovered the presence of our Task Forces 16 and 17 and switched their immediate target from the bombing of MIDWAY to the destruction of our Carriers. The enemy striking force by this time had approached on a bearing 320° and distant 135 miles from MIDWAY. Task Force 17 attacked 2 CVs and reported that it was being attacked 350 miles North of MIDWAY. Task Force 17 asked Task Force 16 to join as soon as possible. Their joint air groups attacked CVs of an enemy force consisting of possibly 4 CVs, 2 BBs, 4 CAs, and the DD screen. All four enemy CVs were believed to have been badly damaged and two other ships hit. Our carriers suffered heavy plane losses. The YORKTOWN (TF 17) received three bomb hits, and in a second attack, two torpedo hits. She listed badly, but did not settle although temporarily abandoned. She reported first that two enemy CVs had been destroyed. Arrangements were made for the towing of the YORKTOWN. The two carriers of TF 16 were not attacked. In the meantime the force from the westward seemingly composed of 8 CAs, two large AKs, 2 AOs, and other auxiliaries continued to approach from a bearing of 265° from MIDWAY. These were attacked by 6 B-17s from MIDWAY. Both Task Forces and MIDWAY, however, were concentrated on the enemy main body to the Northwest. The submarine NAUTILUS put three torpedoes into an enemy CV of the SORYU class. B-17s flying from Pearl with half bomb loads proceeded to the attack securing two hits on a smoking CV, distance 170 miles from MIDWAY, and saw four other ships burning in the general area, before returning to fuel at MIDWAY. Task Force 16 reported that they had attacked an ORANGE force of one CV, 2 or more CA and several DD, scoring hits on the enemy CV which was burning fiercely. Four hits on a BB also burning, one hit on a burning CA, in a position Latitude 30-41 N., Longitude 177-41 E. Task Force 16 also reported three ships believed to be carriers burning fiercely after an attack, thus indicating 4 CVs possibly accounted for. A summary would indicate a conservative claim to this time, of damage to the main enemy bodies as follows: To the Western body one BB and one or two large CAs damaged, also at least three transports. In the main body to the North Westward three CVs burning, plus one burning and hit by three torpedoes. One or two BBs damaged plus other ships. Our air losses on Task Force 16 and 17 heavy. YORKTOWN out of action and the following air losses at MIDWAY: 4 out of 12 SB2U, 7 out of 17 SBDs, 13 out of 21 F2A, 2 out of 6 F4F3s, 2 out of 5 B-26s, 5 out of 6 TSFs, possibly 1 out of 22 B-17s.

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Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

It was thought that the enemy would close to the landing attack in spite of losses. His transports had approached to 100 miles at 2:20 a.m. local on the 5th. But he must have begun his withdrawal about 3 a.m. (local) on the 5th. There was a very short submarine bombardment from the South on the Islands of MIDWAY. MIDWAY sent all available B17s and 13 dive bombers after the retreating units which were becoming more distant and scattering somewhat. Bomb hits were reported on these units. Our Task Force 16 was unable to close in time on a force containing two smoking carriers on 5 June. On 6 June TF 16 reported attacking 1 BB, 5 DDs in Latitude 29-30, Longitude 174-30 E, headed Westward, at a slow speed. Task Force 16 continued to attack, reported 1 hit on 2 CAs and separate attacks on a CA of the Magami class, which was left gutted and abandoned. All searches and Task Force observers reported no trace of the two burning enemy CVs sighted the day previous. As the battle dwindled, an enemy DD was sunk and by the 7th the enemy fleet retreated beyond air reach and reasonable advance westward by our Task Force. Unhappily, in the meantime, the YORKTOWN, which was being towed back to Pearl, was hit by enemy submarine torpedoes as well as one of our DDs that was alongside her and ships finally sank.

The following planes were left on our CVs on June 7. ENTERPRISE - 26 VF, 14 VSB, 3 VTB, HORNET - 13 VF, 31 VSB, 0 VTBs. Divided between the above CVs from the YORKTOWN, were 16 VFs, 19 VSBs, and no VTBs. The battle was now virtually at an end except for pursuing submarines. Because of need for fuel Task Force 16 proceeded Eastward to a tanker rendezvous.

GENERAL COMMENT

- (a) The enemy was greatly surprised by the presence of our CVs and Task Forces and was forced to shift his objective to the former, disrupting his whole plan, with evidence of resulting confusion.
- (b) The presence on MIDWAY not only of a strong AA defense but more important of a strong striking air force land based, enabled our forces to attack at a considerable distance before the enemy plan could be developed. Together with the carrier Task Force aircraft, this resulted in a 2 way attack against all units of the enemy main body which was more than he could handle. It emphasizes the vulnerability of battleships as well as other ships once away from the protection of an air umbrella.
- (c) Coordination of MIDWAY forces, Task Forces, submarines, and Air Forces on HAWAII was excellent and with relatively minor exceptions care used in identification of enemy forces seems to have resulted in very few cases of mistaken identities, in spite of great air and submarine activity.

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Brief of the Battle of MIDWAY.

(d) It should be noted that our air search was hampered by the relative ineffectiveness of PBV type plane and the superiority of Japanese fighters. It was evident that the Navy needs land plane types for scouting, striking, and amphibious operations.

(e) A calculated risk was most certainly assumed by the Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, concentrating such a large portion of his forces against this one attack, but the decision based on accurate intelligence forecasting an all out Japanese effort, seems to have been most fully justified by the results. All the eggs were in one basket, but it was the right basket. Under different circumstances as to intelligence, there would not be time to get either land based aircraft or fleet task forces to the point of attack. Each base must be strong enough within itself to punish the enemy severely and give time to move against him. Aircraft and more aircraft are needed for these far flung and widely separated bases.

*James Roosevelt*  
Major U.S.M.C.R.



U.S.S. NAUTILUS

Narrative of 4 June 1942

L.Z.T. plus 12. Z.D.

- 0420 Submerged.
- 0544 Message received that many planes were headed for Midway from a point bearing 320° T distance about 150 miles from that island. This point was on the boundary of the NAUTILUS patrol area.
- 0658 Sighted a formation of six planes.
- 0710 Sighted smoke of bombing and anti-aircraft fire beyond the horizon bearing 331° T. Changed course to close the action and went to battle stations submerged.
- 0755 Tops of masts appeared dead ahead. While making this observation, was strafed by aircraft. Changed depth to 100 feet. Echo ranging was first heard at this time.
- 0800 Sighted a formation of four ships. One battleship of ISE class and one cruiser drew toward the starboard bow, two other cruisers toward the port bow. Decided to attack the battleship and changed course to draw ahead. Sighted and bombed by plane. A cruiser of the JINTSU class approached to attack with depth charges. At least two ships were echos ranging on the NAUTILUS.
- 0810 JINTSU class cruiser dropped pattern of 5 depth charges followed seven minutes later by a pattern of 6 depth charges.
- 0819 Went to 90 feet to avoid scouting planes. Nine depth charges dropped at distance of about 1000 yards. When attack ceased, planed up to periscope depth to observe.
- 0824 The picture presented on raising the periscope was one never experienced in peacetime practices. Ships were on all sides moving across the field at high speed and circling away to avoid the submarines position. Ranges were above 1000 yards. The JINTSU class cruiser had passed over and was now astern. The battleship was on our port bow and firing her whole starboard broadside battery at the periscope. Flag hoists were being made; searchlights were trained at the periscope. The exact position of the NAUTILUS may have been known by the enemy at this time because #9 deck torpedo was running hot in the tube as a result of the shearing of the torpedo retaining pin during the depth charging. Periscope estimate was made on the battleship and put on the Torpedo Data Computer. Range estimated as 4,500 yards, angle on the bow 80° starboard, speed 25 knots.
- 0825 Fired #1 tube at battleship followed by #2 tube with a 1° right offset. After firing #2 it was found that #1 had not fired. Battleship changed course to the left and headed directly away. Range to battleship had now increased to 5,000 yards and track was 180°. Held further fire. During

this time echo ranging by surface ships was continuous and accurate. Immediately after our firing at the battleship, The JINTSU type cruiser headed for NAUTILUS.

0830 Went to 150 feet. Depth charge attack began. No damage. During depth charging this day a short shrill whistle was heard in the supersonic receiver an instant before distant depth charges exploded. Close charges sounded like a severe hammer blow on the hull and were not preceded by the whistle.

0846 Ordered periscope depth. Battleship and other accompanying ships, except JINTSU type cruiser, were well out of range. Echo ranging by cruiser was still accurate.

0900 Raised periscope and sighted aircraft carrier bearing 013° relative. Carrier was distant 16,000 yards and was changing course continuously. She did not appear to be damaged, but was overhung by anti-aircraft bursts. NAUTILUS was on a converging course. While making this observation the JINTSU type cruiser began to close again at high speed.

0910 When cruiser reached 2,500 yards fired #2 torpedo tube. Cruiser was observed to change course.

0918 A cruiser attacked with 6 depth charges. These were more accurately planned than previous charges. Went to 200 feet, used evasive tactics at slow speed, but continued advance to close the carrier. Cruiser continued echo ranging and at 0933 two of her depth charges landed close.

0955 Echo ranging ceased. Ordered periscope depth to estimate the situation. On looking found that the entire formation first seen, including the attacking cruisers had departed. The carrier previously seen was no longer in sight.

1029 Saw 3 masts on horizon bearing 005°T, distance 10 miles. Changed course to 005°T. Raised the vertical antenna and intercepted a radio message stating a CV was damaged. Large clouds of grey smoke were seen at four places over the horizon. The nearest cloud of smoke had not previously been sighted, so continued to close it at the best speed that the condition of the battery and probable future operations for the day would allow.

1047 Sighted three planes approaching. Lowered periscope and vertical antenna and continued approach at periscope depth.

1145 Identified the source of smoke as a burning carrier. The carrier was still about 8 miles away and was in latitude 30°-13'-N longitude 179° - 17' W. Decided to overtake if possible and to attack.

1224 Range not having developed appreciably, changed speed to 2/3 ahead on both motors after estimating that sufficient battery capacity just remained for operations until night fall.

1253 Range decreased. Sighted two caruizers escorting the carrier. Tentatively identified CV as a carrier of the SORYU class. The carrier was on even keel and the hull appeared to be undamaged. There were no flames and the fire seemed to be

under control. Accompanying cruisers were about two miles ahead of the carrier.

1300. The CV, which had been making 2-3 knots when the approach began, was now stopped. At closer range it was seen that efforts were being made by boats under her bow to pass a towing hawser and many men were seen working on the fore-castle.

The decision had to be made in which order to attack the targets presented. Attack on the cruisers and later on the carrier was considered, but the remaining capacity of the battery would not allow a further chase of several miles to catch the moving cruisers, even if it were possible to overtake them. The decision was therefore made to complete the destruction of the CV before she could be repaired or taken in tow. Approach continued at periscope depth. An approach course was chosen to give torpedo hits on the starboard or island side of the carrier. During the next hours a repeated check was made of the silhouettes of American and Japanese carriers in order to be certain of the identity of the target. The target was a carrier of the SORYU class.

1359 Fired three torpedoes at the carrier from periscope depth. Attempts to fire #4 torpedo tube were unsuccessful.

Immediately prior to firing each torpedo, the Torpedo Data Computer generated bearing was checked by a periscope bearing. Mean run of torpedoes was 2700 yards. The wakes of the torpedoes were observed through the periscope until the torpedoes struck the target. Red flames appeared along the length of the ship from the bow to amidships. The fire which had first attracted us to the attack had been underneath the demolished after flight deck and was nearly extinguished by the time the NAUTILUS reached the firing point. This fire again broke

out. Boats drew away from the bow and many men were seen going over the side. All S officers in the conning tower observed the results of the torpedoing.

1405 Fired last of three torpedoes at the carrier. Cruisers began reversing course at high speed and started to echo range.

1410 Cruiser passed directly over the top of the NAUTILUS. Changed course to 190<sup>OT</sup> and went to 300 feet. A prolonged depth charge attack now began, eleven charges being dropped on the first attack. This entire barrage was close and well placed except that charges were set too shallow and exploded above the ship. A few small leaks were sprung. At this time a sound was heard like that which would be caused by a chain being dragged across the ship. It may be interesting to note that a similar noise was heard by a British submarine under depth charge attack about one year ago.

1431 Depth charge attack continued. A sound similar to heavy objects landing on the deck was heard twice. The sound operator reported the noise of propellers all around the dial.

- 1445 Changed depth to 200 feet. Ten minutes later the last two depth charges were dropped some distance away.
- 1610 Came to periscope depth. Saw carrier, but the escorting cruisers were no longer in sight. They had abandoned the carrier and she was afire along the entire length.
- 1800 Heavy black smoke enveloped the carrier and formed a cloud over the ship to a height of a thousand feet. The officer making this observation compared the cloud to the oil smoke which arose from the U.S.S. ARIZONA when that ship burned at Pearl Harbor, T.H., December 7-9. Nothing could be seen of the carrier's hull.
- 1640 Heard heavy subsurface explosions and went to depth charge stations. A search by periscope failed to reveal any object in the vicinity except the still greater cloud of black smoke from burning oil. If the carrier was not found by patrol planes which searched the vicinity the following morning, the Commanding Officer believes that she was destroyed at this time by fire and internal explosions. He did not however actually see her sink.
- 1941 Surfaced with exhausted battery and returned to NAUTILUS patrol area. Four torpedoes expended, forty-two depth charges received.

Upon surfacing no smoke or flame of any sort was seen.

The note below might be of some value in determining if the Japs do have a new underwater sound apparatus. Observations were made by I. E. Wetmore, C.R.M. (AA,) US Navy.

"In connection with the depth charge attacks made on us this morning and this afternoon, the following facts were noted specifically:

1. Just before the start of the attacks, or at least before the enemy closed on us, a peculiar crackling noise was heard approximately on the bearing where the enemy was seen by periscope. This occurred in each instance before his propellers were heard and continued until about the time the first of the charges were dropped.

2. The bearing of this sound was quite sharp (about two or three degrees) although it could be heard from quarter to quarter astern.

3. About the best description I could give of the character of the sound was that it sounded like someone dragging a stick rapidly and at a steady rate along a picket fence and there was a hollow sounding background to the noise.

1000  
1448

4. The possibility of the enemy having some type of underwater-sound "RADAR" is advanced. They seemed to get our approximate location in the morning, and our exact location this afternoon, very quickly - even before closing to attack."

The performance of duty of the officers and men of this ship during this strenuous day was in accordance with the best traditions of the Navy. The work of the diving officer, Lieutenant Hogan, needs special mention for his expert diving of the ship. All officers performed their duty in an excellent manner.

A16-3 (Patrol Reports  
Submarines)

CONFIDENTIAL

EXTRACTS

FROM THE REPORT OF THE FOURTH WAR PATROL OF

THE USS SEAWOLF (SS 197)

-oOo-

February 15, 1942

to

April 7, 1942

-oOo-

F. B. WARDER  
Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy,  
Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

EXTRACTS  
FROM REPORT OF THE FOURTH WAR PATROL OF  
THE USS SEAWOLF (SS 197)

February 15, 1942

1450 Got under way from SURABAYA ROADSTEAD [JAVA] and stood out of WEST GATE at various courses and speeds.

[The SEAWOLF proceeded through the JAVA SEA and LOMBOK STRAIT to intercept the Japanese occupation force moving towards BALI to the east of JAVA. Shortly after making contact with this force, the SEAWOLF ran into trouble.]

February 19, 1942

0642 Hit bottom violently, starboard side, entire length of ship. All stop, surface, blowing SAFETY only.

0643 All back emergency. All stop. I went on bridge and found myself well fenced in with coral patches and discolored water. Raining heavily, visibility 500-1000 yards. Picked myself a hole and went ahead, starboard ahead standard, left full. Then port ahead standard, right full.

0654 All shoal water now cleared.

[The SEAWOLF then began maneuvering for an attack on the Jap force, consisting of about 4 transports, 2 cruisers, and 4 or 5 destroyers.]

1442 Observed DD range 1800 yards, lying to with "AA" MG batteries manned, and all his people looking up, or to shoreward. He looked too good so I turned left at full speed to give him straight bow attack.

1446 Observed DD for firing but he had kicked ahead, so continued for AP's.

1536 Commenced firing and at

1537 completed attacks. Observed smoke from first two fired pass to left, i.e., ahead, of southernmost freighter. Could not see wakes themselves. Water is much riled up, considerable debris floating.

1542 Slowed to 1/3 and at 1543 two strings of three [depth charges] each were dropped just forward of starboard beam fairly close. If I had made full speed from the firing point they would have had us. The conning tower

that ship was DESTROYER [Destroyer]

was doing a dance by the time I got out of it. There followed 18 minutes of heavy depth charging. There is no accurate count of number, but I think there were about 43. The charges were dropped so close together that counting was impossible. I went to 110 feet as soon as depth range showed us we had that much water and some to spare (Bottom is hard in this vicinity). My face was stung with flying cork and paint chips, my ears were deafened and my eyes were kept busy watching the gauges and manifolds dance. On one blast the overhead appeared to come in 6 inches. This ship is strong. Behavior of officers and men uniformly excellent. Employed high speed evasion tactics and periods of silent running.

1618 Ordered 63 feet [periscope depth.] [This was to observe results.] 1643. One AP missing, remaining one, which is standing out, appears to be down by stern and listing to starboard. No possibility further approach work account excessive range. Stood out STRAIT to southward.

[After this successful attack, the SEAWOLF patrolled the southern approaches of the LOMBOK and BADUNG STRAITS attempting to intercept Japanese forces reinforcing BAIL. While patrolling in BADUNG STRAIT, she had her second opportunity for attack.]

February 25, 1942

0528 Observed AP similar to SINSYU MARU.

0539 Observed ship similar to one which I first approached, but on same sweep at 0540 found much larger ship similar to SADO MARU, and decided to shoot him. At 0543 attacked with tubes 5, 6, and 7 aimed at bow, stern, and forward goal post. Watched one torpedo hit just forward of bridge, throwing up a sheet of water to top of bridge. Felt a distinct thud with the deck moving out from under me. Motor Room and After Torpedo Room personnel reported 2 explosions. There is not enough of a bang out of these fish to suit me.

0555 Observed CL or DD. Study of pictures afterwards leads me to believe that ship was SIGURE [Destroyer.]

0559 Commenced firing tubes 1, 2, and 3. Saw none of these torpedoes running but believe this due to insufficient periscope exposure. Sound reported "Two of those hit something." At about this time a series of explosions to starboard which I took for depth charges so abandoned conning tower and went to depth charge quarters. My last impression of DD was that his stern was coming out of water. I was very sharp on his quarter by this time. I also heard and felt one good bang on the port bow about 2 minutes after firing, as I was leaving the conning tower. I am of the opinion that one of this salvo struck a ship of the convoy which was strung along to the right and left of the destroyer at which the salvo was directed. (I noticed in the radio broadcasts of the following evening that an allied plane observing had given us credit for sinking 4 ships including 1 warship). I think we most probably sank two; possibly three, and that a bare possibility exists of there being four ships sunk by the six torpedoes fired. There followed a pretty bad four and one half hours. Everytime we would start a pump to get down the bilge water, or run up a periscope to take a look, or start the hydraulic plant to hold out the sound head, a DD would start for us. They were more sparing of depth charges than were the gang on the 19th but the charges appeared to be heavier and deeper and more accurately dropped. No serious damage was done. I had intended to go in after them but they left two DD's out in the eastern approaches with us and the sea was flat calm. I watched one of them sight my feather [wake of the periscope] once at 4 miles and turn and head for me. (This DD had about 10 lookouts standing on top of the conning tower). Three times they passed right overhead without cans dropping. The record shows only 21 charges were dropped but I think there were at least 30.

[After these attacks, the SEAWOLF patrolled the area south of BALI and JAVA, and the SOENDA STRAIT west of JAVA. The few

contacts with enemy ships provided no opportunities for attack until the SEAWOLF proceeded to CHRISTMAS ISLAND, which the Japs were expected to seize shortly. After three days of reconnaissance to determine the most likely landing spots, the commanding officer proceeded to FLYING FISH COVE.]

March 30, 1942

1950 Surfaced in moonlight and proceeded at 12 knots, towards FLYING FISH COVE; giving land an 8 mile berth. I have now decided that cove is only practicable place for landing attempt. Other possibilities are impractical due to deep water close to shore, cliffs and rocks, wooded banks, heavy swells, and small landing areas.

[The commanding officer's decision to patrol the mouth of this cove was justified when ten hours later his sound reported the approach of the Jap landing force. This was later determined to consist of 11 transports, 3 cruisers, and 4 destroyers. After 2 hours of attempting to break into the formation, depth charge attacks by Jap destroyers and evasion tactics, the SEAWOLF drew close to a light cruiser.]

March 31, 1942

0726 JINTSU type CL, which appears to be flagship (searchlight flicking in all directions and first to break flag hoists) and which has been "lone wolfing" it around among the others, bore 228°, 4600 yards. Clipper bow with striking CHRYSANTHEMUM or RISING SUN figure head.

0847 Final observation prior to firing, 1400 yards, speed 15.

0848 Commenced firing. Fired 4 fish.

0849 Completed firing. Chief of Boat watching clock in Control Room said first explosion was 1<sup>m</sup> 10<sup>s</sup> after first fish. It seemed like a year to me. Observed men to be running and shouting on cruiser quarterdeck and measured range as 700 yards. I am still forward of CL beam and he is turning towards me. I can see smoke from torpedo tracks drifting across field of vision.

0853 A series of explosions sounding like about 8 depth charges with much water swishing noise, close aboard. We're going to have one helluva time.

0859 Seven depth charges astern. There follows 7-1/2 hours of pinging, listening, high speed screws and depth charges to a total of 25 charges. Every time a pump runs they come in on us. This was the worst pounding the ship has had but there wasn't much of it. Two gyro repeaters went out; radio transmitter went haywire; valve wheels flew around the engine rooms. The engine blower casings did the "Tokio Trot", the depth gauge needles whipped 16 feet. Ship retired to north and west.

2326 Received Com Subs Asiatic Fleet's congratulatory message. It helped a lot. We were feeling pretty well beaten down, so we put it on the Bulletin Board.

April 1, 1942

0300 Sighted ship, silhouette is sufficiently large to be cruiser.

0432 Made out target as NATORI cruiser.

0446 Commenced firing tubes 5, 6, and 7.

0447 One violent explosion. Watched the target. No flames. Moon is obscured and observation becoming more difficult.

0453 Target smoking heavily. 0454 Target disappearing from sight; feel positive he is sinking.

0634 Moonset. There followed a day full of contacts and attempted approaches, the crew being at Battle Stations from 0825 until attack on JINTSU was completed at 1703; after which we were on depth charge alert until midnight. NATORI, JINTSU, and 4 DD's worked our side of the island in early forenoon. As we would close one of them for attack, they would move somewhere else. It was most maddening. As sea freshened the rascals worked over to the northwest into the lee of the island.

1634 JINTSU zigged away and put me on his port bow.

1654 He has zigged back. This is where he made his mistake.

1702 Fired tubes 7 and 8.

1703 One violent explosion followed by 3 depth charges and a series of minor explosions as we stood out to westward. Sound did not hear this fellow's propellers again, and I feel sure we got him. Judging by rapidity with which NATORI sank this morning I do not think these CL's can take much.

[Following these attacks, the SEAWOLF set her course for FREEMANTLE, AUSTRALIA.]

April 5, 1942

A peaceful Easter Sunday. Steaks for dinner which have been aboard since early December (from Philippine Cold Storage).

April 7, 1942

0519 Anchored in GAGE ROADS, AUSTRALIA.

GENERAL REMARKS

Morale is extremely high and is inspiring to me. If the cheerfulness, loyalty, aggressiveness, devotion to performance of duty of this ship's company is indicative of that of the Navy as a whole (and I feel sure it is) there can be no doubt as to the eventual outcome of the conflict. The ship was in a number of "tight spots" and suffered a number of casualties. Always obedience was prompt, duties were performed smartly without indication of panic, and labor was performed without thought of rest.

F. B. WARDER  
Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy,  
Commanding

